

# Ancient Journeys: A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene Numa Lane

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# Cathy Callaway, Introduction

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In the Spring of 1998 I was contemplating the next Greek tragedy to be discussed in my class at the University of Missouri-Columbia, when Victor Estevez came in to chat. He was preparing to retire early for health reasons and was interested in our plans for his retirement celebration. "I want a big party," he told me, "but when Gene retires, he deserves something more. He is a scholar of international renown, and should have a symposium or Festschrift." Hence this idea was born, and I am saddened that Victor did not live to see his own much-anticipated party (he died on August 16, 1998) nor the fruition of his idea to honor Gene.

The above anecdote both illustrates how this project got started as well as in what high regard people who know and know of Gene hold him. I first met him in the Spring of 1978 when I visited the University of Missouri-Columbia as a prospective grad student. He gave me a painstakingly thorough tour of the library, sure that everyone treasured books as much as he did, and that this one tour of the library would convince me that UMC was the school to choose. Perhaps it was the library that did it, but I like to think it was Gene and the other people in the Department of Classical Studies that made my choice an easy one. I was fortunate to take many classes with him, serve as a grader for him, get to know him and his family, and finally return to the department, after getting my PhD at the University of Washington, and relate to him as a colleague. Some readers of this may not have known Gene as long; many have known him longer. As the organizer of this communal effort, I get to share a few anecdotes out of the thousands that others have.

In an early Aristophanes class, where as new graduate students we minced our way through The Birds, we were amazed and chagrined as Gene could balance his checkbook while we stumbled out a translation. He corrected us frequently, made pertinent comments on the Greek grammar and the subject matter of the passage, all without looking at the text. This is the same class that was invited on a bird watching expedition when our knowledge of the different species cited in Aristophanes proved woefully inadequate. I remain certain to this day that he has complete texts of numerous Greek authors floating in his head, waiting to be called upon. Never at a loss for a pithy quote, I still remember him quoting Herodotus as we both gazed out at a lovely snowstorm: "It's raining feathers."

The regular entertaining of graduate students and faculty in the department in his home was always appreciated and is still remembered. He and his wife Carol adopted those of us in need, providing storage for precious possessions, advice about travel to their beloved Greece, and their famous egg nog at Christmas time. All this along with raising two wonderful and successful children: Michael and Helen.

I have known Gene as a professor, colleague, and friend and can never hope to describe how much he has meant to me in each role. I could certainly never dare to give voice to the gratitude of others, but I hope this project will serve to remind him of our esteem, and as Horace put it, perhaps it will raise him to the stars. At least, thanks to the Internet, somewhere in the aether!

After that initial discussion with Victor Estevez in the Spring of 1998 I began contacting possible contributors. There were many who said yes, and many others who had to decline due to other pressing matters that appear in the academic world and life in general. Several had to drop out along the way, which is not unusual in a project such as this, but all those who wanted to contribute an article but were unable, contributed in other, important ways. A few served as referees, some acted as advisors in their field of expertise, many provided support, suggestions and even money. Below is a list of people that deserve thanks. They know what they have given to this project and I hope they realize how grateful I am to them, along with Gene and all the other participants in this endeavor. Everyone involved showed a great deal of patience and faith in the idea that this would actually come into being in one guise or another. To you all, and of course, to Gene, I say, Thank You.

My thanks especially go to Pamela Draper, Anne Mahoney, Ross Scaife, and Robert Seelinger. Without their guidance, help and support, this project would never have reached completion!

Introduction. Cathy Callaway. 2002. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2002.



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**Pamela A. Draper,**

When I remember graduate school at the University of Missouri, invariably the first class I think of is Gene Lane's "History of the Greek and Latin Language." Gene's knowledge of the subject was awe-inspiring. It was the hardest class I ever took, but I am grateful to this day that he challenged us and insisted that we meet his high expectations. Studying with a scholar of Gene's distinction was a great privilege. His publication list is evidence of the impressive contributions he has made to the study of the ancient world. But while Gene's significant scholarly achievements are apparent from the list, it doesn't reveal what only those of us who were lucky enough to be his students know. Not only amazingly erudite, he was also enthusiastic, willing to share his knowledge, and that special kind of teacher who didn't think teaching stopped in the classroom. For example, when our Greek comedy class read about lentil soup in The Wasps, he invited the entire class to his home to sample some. He was always accessible, helpful, and never too busy to answer a question or provide research guidance. When I began my dissertation, he arranged for the library to purchase books I needed for my research and, although he was on sabbatical in Greece for part of the time I was working on it, he sent back detailed critiques of my dissertation chapters.

In addition to being an excellent teacher, he was concerned for his students as people. My first semester at Missouri was the first time I had ever been away from my family for Thanksgiving. I will never forget Gene and Carol's kindness in inviting the "orphan" graduate students to their home and treating us as part of the family.

Gene is not only a scholar and a teacher, but also a person of conviction who is concerned about the welfare of the entire community. A staunch supporter of environmental protection, he worked ceaselessly on behalf of the establishment of a beverage container deposit ordinance in Columbia, a cause in which he deeply believed, and which, after several setbacks, finally came to fruition. He is a shining example of someone who sees a problem and rather than complaining about it, works to create a solution.

It has been a privilege to work with Cathy and the distinguished contributors to this Festschrift. It makes me happy to think that I was able to help bring into existence this well-deserved tribute to Gene Lane, a highly-respected scholar, an excellent teacher and a person for whom I have the deepest respect and admiration.

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# Cathy Callaway, Introduction

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[Michael Muchow, Eugene Lane and Ellis Library](#)

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## **Michael Muchow,**

When I first came to Ellis Library as a humanities librarian, people warned me about the faculty liaison for the Classics department, Gene Lane. "He's a curmudgeon," they told me. "He won't give you a moment's rest."

Over the course of many years I have decided that, despite his reputation, Dr. Lane is not a curmudgeon. He is a gadfly in the mold of Socrates. While Socrates attached himself as a gadfly to the Athenian state stinging and goading its citizens so they would care for virtue, Dr. Lane has attached himself to Ellis Library. He goads and stings us to take care and maintain the classics collection.

For the ten years I have known him, Dr. Lane has never stopped rousing and urging the library to do better. When necessary, he reproaches the library for its shortcomings, but he also commends it when it gets something right. Though he might chide the librarians inside the library, outside the library he has been the library's staunchest supporter, fighting to protect the library's budget whenever it was threatened.

Dr. Lane has been the Classics department's library liaison for his entire tenure at Mizzou. This is remarkable because it is a position that professors try to avoid if possible. Junior faculty, who are too green to know better, are usually tricked into the job. As soon as they wise up, they try to get out of the job. In reality, a liaison can do as much or as little as he likes. Most prefer to do little.

Not so Dr. Lane. He is the most conscientious of library representatives. He looks at every approval book that comes into the library. He signs every publication announcement slip remotely connected to the ancient world. Sometimes, he is too conscientious. When I arrived at Ellis Library, I inherited a file cabinet full of book purchase requests. When I asked Dr. Lane why we kept hundreds of book order slips, more than we could ever afford to buy, he told me that six or seven years earlier the state legislature had given the library a million dollars to purchase books and he wanted to be sure that the Classics department would have titles ready if funds became available.

That is typical of Dr. Lane. He is always looking to the future of the library and its users, whoever they might be and whatever interests they might have. Unlike most professors, he is interested in books outside his research interests. He takes a broader view and looks to the collection as a whole. His tendency to be

all-inclusive has sometimes frustrated me, but, on the whole, it has worked rather well. Instead of a collection that is deep in a half dozen areas, the collection is good in almost all areas. When the Classics department hired a scholar interested in Late Antiquity, I feared he would break the budget with orders to fill holes in the collection. As it has turned out, he has not broken the budget and I have not had to order as many books as I feared. Instead, I have discovered that the library has a good collection for the study of late antiquity. I give all the credit to Dr. Lane.

Unlike so many of the newer faculty, Dr. Lane loves books and libraries. He comes into the library at least once a week--more often three or four times a week-- and wanders through the entire library. He has been on every floor and, I think, walked down every book aisle. As he goes down the aisles something strange happens. Miscataloged and mislabeled books jump off the shelf and attach themselves to him as if he were electrostatically charged. I don't know how he does it, but he has found more mislabeled books than anyone who works in the library.

Everyone who knows Dr. Lane knows his formidable intellect. He seems to know everyone who wrote in the ancient world. Obscure authors are his favorites and I am always glad that I do not have to face him in an oral examination. But people might not know that he also has a complete knowledge of the Library of Congress classification scheme. He often discusses it with the Ellis catalogers and explains their mistakes to them. When they appeal to the Library of Congress as their authority, he writes letters to the catalogers there and explains their mistakes to them.

His knowledge extends beyond mere classification schemes, however. He also makes a point of knowing the names of the people who work in the library, from the staff at the circulation desk to those in the acquisitions department. As a humanist, he wants to know your name if he is going to goad and sting you.

Like a good gadfly, Dr. Lane is persistent. If something is not right, he stings and presses until it is made right. Sometimes journals need claiming. Sometimes books need claiming. Books go missing from the Classics Seminar Room. Whatever it is, he never forgets until it is corrected.

Dr. Lane has kept me so busy there have been times when I thought that I worked for him and not the library. But, to be fair, there have also been times when I thought that Dr. Lane worked for the library and not for the Classics department. When we were moving books out of the library to an offsite depository, Dr. Lane spent days looking through books one at a time to be sure that nothing important would be sent away by mistake.

As I am frequently the object of his stings and goads, I have frequently been tempted to offer Dr. Lane a cup of hemlock, but I know that all his goads and stings are for a greater purpose--the library collection, and I reconsider.

The University of Missouri will lose an excellent teacher now that Dr. Lane has retired, but the library will not lose its gadfly. I expect Dr. Lane to keep coming into the library once or twice a week and to continue sending me e-mails telling me to claim this or that journal issue. Dr. Lane shaped and maintained the classics collection before he retired, and he will continue to shape it after he retires.

Future students and scholars who use the collection may not know why it is a good collection, but those of us who know Dr. Lane will. Thank-you Dr. Lane.

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**Robert A. Seelinger, Jr.,**

I have known Gene Lane since 1974 when I began a doctoral program in Classics and Classical Archaeology at the University of Missouri. For many of us Gene has always epitomized the quintessential graduate instructor. No one seemed to know the primary and secondary source material better than he did; he was not only profoundly engaged in his own professional projects but also excited and intrigued by the projects and papers of each of his students; and he always maintained an unquenchable curiosity for the ancient world in all its manifestations. As all good graduate instructors, Gene helped his students become more critical and discerning evaluators, and most of us soon discovered that much of what we thought we knew was based on questionable assumptions and shaky evidence. Whatever the course was, it seemed like we first began by dismantling all that we thought we knew and ended with reconstructing the world of our course on the basis of what we actually knew and on assumptions whose validity we could defend. On many occasions we came away with the important recognition that our understanding of the world of antiquity is often based on the fragile and incomplete record of evidence and a long trail of assumptions and contentions that are accorded more weight than they deserve. In essence, Gene taught us to be demanding of our evidence, distrustful of longstanding generalizations, and always open to re-evaluating our views on the ancient world.

Gene's own professional interests and areas of expertise have always been wide-ranging, e.g. ancient religion, historical linguistics, numismatics. Although he usually describes himself as a Hellenist, he has always seemed to be equally comfortable linguistically and culturally with both the Latin and Greek world. In turn, Gene most frequently has returned to the places and times of the Roman empire where the blend of Latin and Greek is so evident in terms of language, literature, religious practice, and material culture. The world of the second sophistic particularly comes to mind.

Gene's knowledge of and love for modern Greece (actually for Greece of all periods) has also had a defining effect on his professional and personal life and by extension on the lives of his students. Among other things Gene inspired many of his students to see the ancient world in a fuller cultural and historical context. In turn, Gene's own enthusiasm for Greece has led many of his students to travel, study, and even live there for extended periods of time. As always Gene is eager to share details of recent trips to Greece and discuss his own plans and those of others for future travel there.

In addition to his commitment and dedication as a scholar, Gene has also devoted his time and energy to a great number of community and social issues. He has especially been interested in environmental issues and has been both a vocal and active supporter of the development of the Katy Trail (a rails to trails initiative) and a local recycling program involving returnable beverage containers. His tireless commitment and persuasive action has done much to better Columbia and the entire mid-Missouri area.

Throughout his life and professional career Gene has been a person who feels strongly about his work and his causes and demonstrates his sentiments by his actions. Through this manifestation of personal integrity and social and professional commitment Gene has made and continues to make profoundly positive contributions to his friends, colleagues, community, and students.

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# Biography

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Eugene Numa Lane was born on August 13, 1936, in Washington, D.C. He first attended public schools in Chapel Hill, N.C. and then Episcopal High School, in Alexandria, Va., where he graduated in 1954.

He received his A.B. from Princeton University in 1958 and was Salutatorian of his graduating class; his M.A. from Yale University in 1960 and his Ph.D. from Yale in 1962. He spent his junior year abroad in Munich and did one year of graduate study at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens. He is married to Carol Gault Lane, and they have two children, Michael and Helen. He was Assistant Professor of Classics at the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, from 1962 until 1966. He then moved to the University of Missouri at Columbia, where he served as Associate Professor, then Professor of Classical Studies. He became Professor Emeritus in March of 2000.



His departmental service was notable, especially his role as library representative for the last thirty-four years, except while on leave. He served one three-year term as chair of the department, as well as Director of Graduate Studies for two years. In addition he was on the following committees for the College of Arts and Science: (an asterisk indicates committees he chaired) Linguistics Committee, \*Policy Committee, Curriculum Committee, and the Arts and Science Planning Council. In the Graduate School he served on the \*Ancient Studies Committee and the Committee for the selection of NEH fellowship nominees. Campus wide, Gene served on the \*Library Committee, the Committee on Revision of Records, the Faculty Council, the Committee on Honorary Degrees, and the Student Conduct Committee. Finally, for the entire University of Missouri system, he served on the University Press Committee.

Gene taught a wide variety of courses throughout his career, ranging from small seminars for upper-level and graduate students to lectures in Classical Mythology for up to 400 students. Most of the courses were language courses, usually in Ancient Greek (Gene has from time to time offered courses in Modern Greek), but a few have been in Latin. Other classes covered Classical Civilization and were taught in English. He has served on numerous M.A. and Ph.D. committees, not only in his own department, but also in the History and Art History/Archaeology departments, and occasionally farther afield. He has directed five Ph.D. dissertations. Currently as Emeritus he is directing three more.

Gene was the director of the first summer session of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens in 1992. He served as an Archaeological Institute of America traveling lecturer in 1984 and has been a guest lecturer in Athens, Germany, and several other places. He was the numismatist for the University of Arizona excavation at Kourion, Cyprus in 1985. He has held offices in local chapters of the Archaeological Institute of America and Phi Beta Kappa. He was the chief organizer of the Classical

Association of the Middle West and South (CAMWS) meeting in Columbia in 1990. He currently serves as a member of the Managing Committee of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens.

Gene's scholarly accomplishments are impressive, as the publication list below demonstrates. He has made significant contributions to the study of ancient religion, especially in the area of the cults of the Roman period. His assembly and evaluation of evidence for the cults of Men and Sabazios in the Brill Études Préliminaires aux Religions Orientales dans l'Empire Romain series are achievements that will be of tremendous value to all future researchers on these cults. One review of the first volume of the Corpus Monumentorum Religionis Dei Menis commented on the "energy and thoroughness" with which the monuments were presented and pointed out the "exemplary" bibliographies accompanying each item. A reviewer referred to the Corpus Cultus Iovis Sabazii, of which Gene did the second and third volumes, as "definitive" and deemed it "essential to any library with a serious concern for Greco-Roman religion." A review of the second volume mentioned the "scholarly service" provided and noted the difficulty of the task of compiling evidence from so many different and often hard to locate sources. Another reviewer referred to the third volume as "exemplary," "well-documented," and "clear and persuasive." His valuable collection of primary sources, Paganism and Christianity, A Source-Book, co-authored with Ramsay MacMullen, has become a standard textbook for history and religion classes focusing on ancient religions during the early years of Christianity. In short, Gene's work has advanced our knowledge and understanding of the ancient world and will continue to provide important assistance to the scholars of the future.

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## **Publications: Books**

Corpus Monumentorum Religionis Dei Menis, four volumes (Leiden, Brill, 1971-1978).

Corpus Cultus Iovis Sabazii, Parts II - III (Leiden, Brill, 1985-1989). [Part I was done by M.J. Vermaseren et al.]

Paganism and Christianity, A Source-Book, co-authored with Ramsay MacMullen (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1992).

Cybele, Attis, and Related Cults: Essays in Memory of M.J. Vermaseren (Leiden, Brill, 1996). [Served as general editor and contributed one article on the subject of the Galli.]

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## Publications: Articles

"An Unpublished Inscription from Lakonia," Hesperia 31 (1962) 396.

"A Re-Study of the God Men," Berytus 15 (1964) 5-58; 17, 1967-68, 13-47 and 81-106.

"A Group of Steles from Byzantium," Muse 3 (1969) 35-41.

"Three New Inscriptions from Ayasören," Anatolian Studies 20 (1970) 51-53.

"Two Votive Hands in Missouri," Muse 4 (1970) 43-48.

"A Syncretistic Statuette," Muse 8 (1974) 34-37.

"Two Notes on Lydian Topography," Anatolian Studies 25 (1975) 105-110.

"The Italian Connection: An Aspect of the Cult of Men," Numen 22 (1975) 235-9.

"A Statuette of Attis and his Cult," Muse 11 (1977) 38-46 (with Bill Barnes).

"The Temple Type of Prostanna: A Query," Studien zur Religion und Kultur Kleinasiens (Dörner Festschrift), (Leiden 1978) 540-545.

"Sabazius and the Jews in Valerius Maximus: A Re-examination," Journal of Roman Studies 69 (1979) 35-58.

"Towards a Definition of the Iconography of Sabazius," Numen 27 (1980) 9-33.

"Corpus Monumentorum Religionis Dei Menis: Addenda, 1971-1981," The Second Century 1 (1981) 193-209.

"New Ideas about the Destruction of Paphos," Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus (1981) 178-183 (with David Soren).

"A Spoon for Hecate," Muse 16 (1982) 50-55.

"A New Fragment of the Dedicatory Inscription of Apollo Hylates," Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus (1983) 242-4 (appendix to article by David Soren).

"On the Date of PGM IV," The Second Century 4 (1981) 25-27.

"Nachlese zum Mondgott Men," Istanbuler Mitteilungen 34 (1984) 355-70 (with Dieter Salzmann).

"Two Portrayals of the Moon-god Men," Muse 18 (1984) 55-61.

"Sabazius-Artifacts from Cyprus," Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus (1986) 197-201.

"A Men-Stele from Phrygian Hierapolis: Further Considerations," Epigraphica Anatolica 7 (1986) 107-109.

"Pastos," Glotta 66 (1988) 100-123.

"A Bronze Base from Syria," Muse 23-24 (1989-90) 74-81.

"Men, A Neglected Cult of Roman Asia Minor," ANRW II, 18, 3 (1990) 2162-2174.

"Vorschlag zum Verständnis einer Sühneinschrift aus Bergama," Epigraphica Anatolica 15 (1990) 120.

"Six Plaques of the Danube-Rider Cult," Muse 27-28 (1993-94).

"On the Use of the Word "Pastos" in Patristic Greek," in Discourse Analysis and Other Topics in Biblical Greek, ed. S.E.Porter and D.A. Carson (Sheffield 1995).

"Chrysippus, Philodemus, and the God Men," Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik 117 (1997) 65-66.

"A New Coin of Prostanna," Numismatic Circular 109:4 (August 2001) 246-47.

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# Biography

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## **Publications: Additional**

Gene has reviewed books for the following journals: [American Journal of Philology](#), [Classical Journal](#), [Classical Outlook](#), [Classical World](#), [Religious Studies Review](#), [The Second Century](#), [Biblical Archaeologist](#), [Bryn Mawr Classical Review](#).

Currently, Gene has a [Muse](#) article in press on the worship of Men Ouarathos and he is in the process of working with several other scholars on a volume with translation, introduction, and commentary of the portion of John Zonaras' [Chronography](#) which covers the years 235-395. They hope to publish it as a [Historia Einzelschrift](#). A steadfast supporter of the electronic format, Gene currently serves, with several other noted scholars, on the editorial board of the website [De Imperatoribus Romanis](#).

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# Paul Alessi, The Iconography of Amor in Propertius

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“quicumque ille fuit, puerum qui pinxit Amorem,  
nonne putas miras hunc habuisse manus?  
is primum vidit sine sensu vivere amantes  
et levibus curis magna perire bona.  
idem non frustra ventosas addidit alas,  
fecit et humano corde volare deum:  
scilicet alterna quoniam iactamur in unda,  
nostraque non ullis permanet aura locis.  
et merito hamatis manus est armata sagittis,  
et pharetra ex humero Cnosia utroque iacet:  
ante ferit quoniam, tuti quam cernimus hostem,  
nec quisquam ex illo vulnere sanus abit.  
in me tela manent, manet et puerilis imago:  
sed certe pennas perdidit ille suas;  
evolat, heu, nostro quoniam de pectore nusquam  
assiduusque meo sanguine bella gerit.  
quid tibi iucundum est siccis habitare medullis?  
si pudor est, alio traice tela tua!  
intactos isto satius temptare veneno:  
non ego, sed tenuis vapulat umbra mea.  
quam si perdidideris, quis erit, qui talia cantet  
(haec mea Musa levis gloria magna tua est),  
qui caput et digitos et lumina nigra puellae  
et canat, ut soleant molliter ire pedes? (Prop. 2.12)

1

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”Any critical study or analytic treatment of the iconography of Amor in Propertius must begin with [elegy 2.12](#). Described as clever and admired for its simple yet elegant structure, the poem presents a subject that is rooted in the Hellenistic tradition, particularly in art.<sup>n1</sup> This paper will not be concerned with the Hellenistic background of the poem, a subject well synthesized in the major commentaries, but will explore the Propertian treatment and contribution to a well-known theme.<sup>n2</sup> In the first half of the elegy Propertius depicts Amor as the willful boy with bow and arrows striking his victim who is unaware of his destructive powers. After he makes this somewhat familiar sketch of Amor, in the second part of the poem Propertius turns to present a vivid picture of the effects of love upon him and ends by commenting upon his mistress' striking qualities.

In Book I Propertius had previously alluded to the god Amor as an armed boy. Specifically, in [1.7](#), a poem addressed to the epic poet Ponticus, Propertius doubts the efficacy of epic should Love strike with unerring aim: “[te quoque si certo puer hic concusserit arcu,](#)  
[quod nolim nostros eviolasse deos.](#) [\(15-16\)](#)

” The metonymy of the boy smashing Ponticus with his bow and the reference to the gods of Propertius' own experience leave no doubt that the [puer](#) is none other than Amor. Similarly, in poem [1.9](#), also addressed to Ponticus and wherein the poet defends the elegist's lifestyle and poetry against the claims of epic, Propertius again envisions the portrait of Amor armed with a bow by which weapon he strikes the innards of his victim: “[quam pueri totiens arcum sentire medullis.](#) [\(21\)](#)

” Tellingly, Propertius reuses the image of love's power affecting the marrow in 2.12 where he questions the effects of love in his own experience [[quid tibi iucundum est siccis habitare medullis?](#) [\(17\)](#)]. In Book I of the [Elegies](#) there are only two other references to the god as a boy ([1.6.23](#) and [1.19.5](#)). In neither case does Propertius describe or specify the iconographic features of wings, bow, arrows, or quiver. However, in both passages the allusion to Amor refers to the divine possession or power of the god. In no other instances does Propertius delineate Amor as a boy. The four passages in Book I which have been cited and the reference in [line one of 2.12](#) to Love as a boy ([puerum](#) ... [Amorem](#)) reiterated later in [line 13](#) ([puerilis imago](#)) complete Propertius' first aspect of the iconography of Amor.

In the other poems there are scant references to the remaining parts of the pictorial description of Love outlined in the first half of [elegy 2.12](#). At [2.30.31](#), in a poem whose central theme is the inescapable might of Love, Propertius alludes to Amor as the "Winged One" with weapons ([quod si nemo exstat qui vicerit Alitis arma](#)). Similarly, in the same [1.9](#) mentioned above, Propertius warns Ponticus that "Love never offered his wings to anyone without a price" [[nullus Amor cuiquam facilis ita praebeuit alas](#) (23)]. Finally, at the beginning of the very next poem following 2.12, Propertius mentions the darts that are part of Amor's armory and with which the god affects him [[spicula quot nostro pectore fixit Amor](#) ([2.13.2](#)) ]. At this point we can say that very few passages prepare the reader for a look at the iconography of Amor before [2.12](#) and after this elegy there are even fewer references to the pictorial image of the god. Yet Propertius personifies the figure of Amor numerous times in the corpus, particularly in Books I and II. No reader of Propertius should be surprised at this observation as the first two books show a preponderance of poems that center around the theme of love, especially detailing Propertius' imagined depiction of the vicissitudes of the love affair with Cynthia. The numerous personifications of Amor in Propertius, often modified by adjectives, underscore the Propertian conception of his love. Adjectives such as [improbis](#), [tardus](#), [vacuus](#), [nudus](#), [durus](#), [serus](#), [adversus](#), [labens](#), and [iniquus](#), all found in Book I, do not illustrate Love's physical appearance and attributes, but comment on the god's power and Propertius' perception of this power upon his experience as lover and poet. <sup>3</sup> Also, those occurrences in which the word Amor is not modified relate more directly to Propertius himself and can be thematically integrated or linked to the drama and poetic conception of the individual poems where the personified figure of Amor is introduced. Quite often in these situations Propertius inserts the figure of the god in a gnomic statement underscoring basic theme of his power. For example, [1.5.23](#) ([nescit Amor priscis cedere imaginibus](#)) mocks Gallus' noble birth and emphasizes by way of contrast the life of the poet different from that of the arrogant Gallus. That is to say, Propertius suggests that Love is a force or obsession that overpowers the lure of wealth and good breeding.

As indicated previously, in the personifications of Amor that precede 2.12 Propertius is more concerned with intimating the independent force of Amor that affects him and defines his relationship. Therefore, when readers reach [2.12](#), whose evocative image is that of Amor and his representation in art, they should not be too surprised to discover that Propertius will not concentrate on some traditional portrait but

proceed to delineate the power of the god, to recall previous themes, and to fashion a new poem consistent with the perception and treatment of his imagined experience.

After the introductory couplet that sets the scene for the iconography of Amor, the second distich provides an unexpected turn. We seem to be promised a detailing of the artist who painted Love as a boy, but the next couplet furnishes us a description of the god's power upon lovers. It would be extremely difficult, if not entirely impossible, for a painter or sculptor to represent lovers living without thought or wasting great goods in petty cares or concerns. Commentators have noted the impossibility of depicting these qualities in art and some have been puzzled by the confusion of imagery and the juxtaposition of the youthful archer with a tormenting force.<sup>n4</sup> The subsequent couplet continues to mix these two separate ideas. The hexameter ([line 5](#)) returns to the pictorial representations of the god; in the pentameter ([line 6](#)) Amor is envisioned as fluttering in the human heart or flitting from heart to heart, depending upon how one construes [humano corde](#) of line six.<sup>n5</sup> No matter which of these two interpretations is chosen, one is forced to admit that neither scene is found in the repertory of art or could be represented in painting or sculpture. Propertius deliberately leads us not only to view a picture but also to consider the implications of the iconography of the god. The verbs [vidit \(3\)](#) and [fecit \(6\)](#) introduce aspects of Love's effect and the words, although they can be considered apt in describing the activity of an artist, are neutral enough to be applied to almost any observer or artifex.

One should recognize, then, that even in the first section of the elegy, ostensibly a pictorial account of the god Amor, Propertius engages the reader to consider the power of Amor upon the emotions of all and prepares him for the specific reactions to the god's influence and the plight of the poet that are detailed in the last half of the poem. For example, the phrase [sine sensu vivere amantis \(3\)](#) recalls the description of Propertius' [furor](#) outlined in [1.1](#) where Propertius claims that he lives a life without scheme [[nullo vivere consilio \(6\)](#)] as a result of the violent activity of [Amor improbus](#). Later in the poem the medical image in [nec quisquam ex illo vulnere sanus abit \(22\)](#) evokes the metaphor of love as a sickness frequently exploited in previous poems and reinforces the idea of mental instability mentioned in [line 3](#). Also, in [line 7](#) the allusion to the mutability of love, expressed metaphorically as the up and down action of a wave ([alterna ... unda](#)), reminds us of the "wheel of love" of [2.8.8 \(vinceris aut vincis, haec in amore rota est\)](#). The image may be different but the idea is the same: in love the lover faces an ever-changing situation--a theme that King has shown occupies Propertius and his poetry in the first half of Book II.<sup>n6</sup>

In the second part of the poem (13-24) Propertius shifts attention to himself, but continues the military image of the armed god wreaking havoc on his victim. The effect upon Propertius has been particularly damaging: the darts of the god remain fixed in him ([13](#)), his marrow is desiccated ([17](#)), he has been diseased with poison ([18](#)), presumably from the tip of Amor's arrow, and he has become an unsubstantial shadow of his former self ([19](#)). After this litany of ailments, Propertius reminds Amor and his audience that alive he can fashion poetry, a monument to his tormentor ([22](#)). He then ends the poem presenting a brief portrait of his mistress that Love has inspired. One should not be too surprised that Propertius directs attention to his love affair and his art as an elegiac poet. His apostrophe to Amor concerning his poetry ([22](#)) clearly indicates his interest in linking the god to the making of poetry. The adjective [levis](#) modifying [Musa](#) characterizes elegiac poetry, as so often in Propertius. The idea of the slight Muse is foreshadowed early in the poem with the use of the phrase [levibus curis \(4\)](#). Certainly Propertius could have employed another adjective at his disposal other than [levis](#) to describe the lovers' concerns and to mark the contrast with [magna bona](#) in the line. The choice of [levis](#) introduces the suggestion that poetic principles are involved in the iconography of the god. Such a possibility is reinforced later by the word [tenuis \(20\)](#). This word recalls and intimates the slender style of Propertius' Alexandrian predecessors, a debt he later acknowledges employing the verb [[tenuare dicite, quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro? \(3.1.5\)](#)]<sup>n7</sup> Propertius is borrowing and appropriating [tenuis](#) as a poetic term for Alexandrian style from Vergil [[silvestrem tenui Musam meditaris avena \(E. 1.2\)](#)] who adopted it to describe his own type of poetry

drawn from Alexandrian sources. Nor should we overlook the use of [cantare \(21\)](#), a word from the time of Cicero often associated with neoteric and lyric poetry.<sup>n8</sup>

The content and direction of the poem have led the poet to comment on the nature of his poetry. The [last line](#) that seems so natural in closing Propertius' elegant but sketchy portrait of his mistress ([et canat ut soleant molliter ire pedes?](#)) also evokes associations of elegiac poetry. [Pedes](#) not only describes the walk of the mistress but can also refer to metrical rhythm.<sup>n9</sup> The addition of the adverb [molliter](#) confirms the reference to poetry. Propertius uses some form of the adjective [mollis](#), or the adverb [molliter](#), or the verb [mollire](#) some 43 times throughout the corpus.<sup>n10</sup> He frequently designates his genre of poetry by this term. For example, when he champions his genre and themes to Maecenas in elegy [2.1](#), Propertius speaks of his [mollis ... liber](#) (2). And even more importantly for this argument, we return to elegy [1.7](#) where Propertius derides Ponticus for the uselessness of epic poetry in the face of love. Shortly after the allusion to Amor as the boy with the crack-shot bow (15-16), Propertius predicts to Ponticus that he will lack the ability to compose elegiacs, the "tender verse" necessary for the lover/poet [[et frustra cupies mollem componere versum](#) (19)]. Thus, in both poems, 1.7 and 2.12, we meet the pictorial figure of Amor and the reference to elegiac poetry. Therefore, the closing clause of elegy [2.12](#) suggests the poet's writing of elegiac verse as well as stating the gentle gait of his lover, and it fittingly concludes Propertius' concern with the influence of Love on both his affair and his poetry.

Propertius has adroitly prepared the reader to accept his reflection on the nature of his art. Interspersing vignettes of the iconography of Amor with a portrayal of Love's power and influence, Propertius relates these two features to his own love affair and poetic art. As pointed out earlier in this paper, Propertius alludes to the iconography of Love in [Book I](#). Whenever he does make an allusion, he incorporates the theme of the value of his elegiac poetry. Poems [1.7](#) and [1.9](#), which delineate Propertius' spirited defense of his genre vis à vis epic, contain three allusions to the pictorial representation of Amor. The only other explicit reference to the iconographic aspects of Amor appears in the first section of [2.13](#), immediately following the more developed treatment in [2.12](#). [2.13A](#) underscores the themes introduced in 2.12, namely that Propertius is a victim of an overwhelming power that spurs him to write and to express pride in his work.<sup>n11</sup>

If we recognize the importance that Propertius attaches to the iconography of Amor in association with his poetic principles, we can begin to appreciate the outline and aim of elegy [2.12](#). Critics who have been puzzled by the fact that Propertius includes details of the iconography of Love that could not be represented in painting or sculpture have failed to realize and evaluate the poet's attention to the depiction of his art. Thus, because of their literal approach to the evocative scene in [2.12](#), they have missed a possible interpretation in identifying the [artifex](#) heralded in the opening couplet. It is true enough that a painter or sculptor cannot portray in his respective medium lovers living thoughtlessly, or Love fluttering in human hearts. However, a poet can represent not only the pictorial qualities of Amor sketched in this poem but also the powerful effects of the god. As Propertius has illustrated by this poem, it is the poet/lover, not the sculptor or painter, who is aware of the true implications of Love. He has correctly understood and depicted Amor's nature, a nature which defines an emotional attachment and inspires elegiac poetry.

1 Max Rothstein, *Die Elegien des Sextus Propertius* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1920 reprinted New York: Garland [1979]) 286; Jean-Paul Boucher, *Etudes sur Properce: Problèmes d'inspiration et d'art* (Paris: De Boccard, 1965) 46-48; R. O. A. M. Lyne, *The Latin Love Poets from Catullus to Horace* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1980) 83-86; L. Richardson, *Propertius, Elegies I-IV* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma, 1977) 245; P. J. Enk, *Sex. Propertii Elegiarum Liber Secundus* (Leiden: Sythoff, 1962) 169-170.

2 Kenneth Quinn, Latin Explorations: Critical Studies in Roman Literature (London: Routledge, 1963) 168-182. Boucher, (above, [note 1](#) 46-48, 266, 325, 366, 375, and 424. The portrayal of Eros as a boy with devastating power and carefree attitude begins with *Ibycus 287* [Dennis L. Page, Poetae Melici Graeci (Oxford: Oxford University, 1962)]. [Theocritus 19](#) playfully picks up the theme. Timothy Long, "Two Unnoticed Parallels to [Propertius II.12](#)," CPh 73 (1978) 142 argues that the starting point of the poem lie in rhetoric and that Propertius is drawing his treatment from the debate and dispute of the classroom.

3 Erich Burck, "Amor bei Plautus und Properz," Arctos, Acta Philologica Fennica N. S. Vol I (1954) 55.

4 Harold E. Butler and Eric A. Barber, The Elegies of Propertius (Oxford: Oxford Clarendon, 1933) 210; W. A. Camps, Propertius: Elegies Book II (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1967) 112-113 refers to a passage from *Athenaeus (XIII 562C)* that indicates that even the ancients were bothered by the attributes of the wings.

5 D. R. Shackleton Bailey, Propertiana (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1956) 85-86 discusses the various views and concludes that some literary matter was the source of Propertius' description.

6 Joy K. King, "Propertius 2.1-12; His Callimachean Second Libellus," Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft N. F. 6b (1980) 61-84.

7 The idea is repeated at [3.1.8](#) in the expression [tenui pumice](#) that metaphorically suggests the polish of the verse. With the word [tenuis](#) Propertius is representing the Callimachean [μοῦσα λεπταλή](#).

8 Walter Allen Jr., "Ovid's Cantare and Cicero's Cantores Euphorionis," TAPA 103 (1972) 1-14.

9 Maria Wyke, "Written Women, Propertius' [scripta puella](#)," JRS (1987) 56. In regard to [pedes](#) see also 1.1.4 ([et caput impositis pressit Amor pedibus](#)) where "Love's feet stomping on Propertius' head" suggests the poet's tortured poetic self, succumbing to the destructive and debilitating power of his genre.

10 Brigitte Schmeisser, A Concordance to the Elegies of Propertius (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1972) sub [mollis](#), [mollio](#), and [molliter](#).

11 Burck, (above, [note 3](#)) 47 notes the pride that Propertius takes in the source of his poetry resulting from his encounter with Love.

The Iconography of Amor in Propertius . Paul T. Alessi. University of Texas, San Antonio . 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# Jane Biers, Tapping Hooves: Small Bronze Figures of Dance- loving Pan

section:

[Figures](#)

1

The goat-god Pan is one of the lesser gods of the Greek pantheon, but representations of him in ancient art are numerous and varied.<sup>n1</sup> This paper discusses only one type, a group of small bronze figures of the god dancing. I offer it to Eugene Lane in memory of many years of pleasant collaboration in acquiring works from antiquity representing other lesser, but nonetheless interesting, gods for the Museum of Art and Archaeology at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

Arcadia, the mountainous central area of the Peloponnesos of Greece, is the original home of Pan.<sup>n2</sup> There he was considered a major god. Small bronze figures of votaries, most carrying animals, and some with dedications to Pan incised on them,<sup>n3</sup> attest his worship in the region from as early as the 6th century B.C. but the cult came later to other parts of the Greek world. Soon after 490 B.C. it spread to Attica, slightly later to Boeotia in Central Greece, and then to the rest of Greece and the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>n4</sup> In Arcadia, Pan was worshipped both at rustic shrines and in cities. In Attica and elsewhere he was worshipped in caves, and in association with Hermes and the Nymphs, and other gods.<sup>n5</sup>

In appearance, Pan combined animal and human features. He usually appears with shaggy legs and goat hooves, bearded, goat-like face and horns, but human torso, arms and upright stance.<sup>n6</sup> His nature as described in the literature reveals him to be lusty and aggressive.<sup>n7</sup> He brought fertility to livestock and protected herdsmen. In later times, in the Hellenistic period, he was also linked to war. From the Hellenistic period on, he was considered capable of creating panic in the enemy, and thus soldiers worshipped him. The word is erroneously thought to derive from the name Pan.<sup>n8</sup>

Although many ancient authors describe Pan's worship, appearance, and nature, one set of references is of particular relevance here. They indicate the importance of dance for his cult. They describe Pan as dance-loving, as dancing with the nymphs, or as leader of the dance in heaven.<sup>n9</sup> Several small bronze figures of the god emphasize this aspect. One of these figures was purchased by the Museum of Art and Archaeology at the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1985 from a private collection (Figs. 1-3).<sup>n10</sup>



Pan dances with his right leg raised, his weight resting on his left leg. The god has both arms outstretched, his right one held straight out at shoulder height, his left one lower and slightly bent. He once held two objects, one in each hand. Both objects appear to have been round in section judging by a short, bronze plug that remains in the

1. Pan, bronze, Museum of Art and Archaeology University of Missouri-Columbia,



2. Missouri Pan, rear view. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri-Columbia

left hand; the curve of the god's right hand suggests that this hand originally held a similar object. Although his torso and arms are human, his goat-like nature is immediately revealed by the lower part of his body, which resembles a goat's hooves and hind legs; the shaggy hair on the thighs is indicated by short, semicircular incisions on the front and sides. The hair on his head forms a kind of cap from which two goat horns project to left and right. The features of the face are crudely modeled with large, irregularly placed, almond-shaped eyes, small pug nose, thick lips, and pronounced groove from nose to corners of mouth. On his receding chin is a small beard, which reaches to the base of his neck. He has small, low set, protruding ears that continue at the back of his head into a ridge below his cap-like hair. When viewed from the back or side, the most noticeable feature is the pronounced curve of the back of his thighs where a lightly incised, leaf-shaped design is evident on the smooth surface. The inner area of his legs is flat. His tail is a small stub, and the modeling of his torso is superficial with shallow grooves marking his shoulder blades, a shallow, vertical groove and a horizontal ridge on his torso at the front indicating his rib cage, and an incised circle denoting his right nipple. A very shallow scratched circle forms his belly button. The hoof on the one preserved leg is indistinctly rendered.

85.59, Weinberg Fund. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Art and Archaeology University of Missouri-Columbia. Front view.



4. Pan, bronze, Oriental Institute Museum A 7448, front view. Photo courtesy of the Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago.

A number of similar, small bronze figures exist, some of which have appeared on the art market in the last decade, while others have been known for a long time. One of the latter is a Pan in the Oriental Institute Museum in Chicago (Figs.4-6).<sup>n11</sup> This figure is less worn than the one in the Museum of Art and Archaeology with incisions indicating shaggy hair preserved on the chest, as well as on the front and sides of the thighs. The inner surface and back of his legs are smooth like the Missouri Pan, but this figure does not have the lightly incised leaf-pattern of the Missouri figure on the back of the thighs. His lower left hoof is broken off, but his right leg preserves part of a strut. His left arm curves further forward than the left arm of the Missouri figure, but like the Missouri figure the objects he once held are missing. The hands do, however, preserve the cylindrical shape of whatever was once in them. The Missouri and Chicago figures appear to be of identical size, and were presumably cast from beeswax working models formed in the same master mold. They



3. Missouri Pan, side view. Photo courtesy of the Museum of Art and Archaeology University of Missouri-Columbia

seem to be part of the same series.<sup>n12</sup>

A third figure of this type was once in the Schimmel Collection and is now in the Israel Museum, Jerusalem.<sup>n13</sup> It is better preserved than the two figures so far discussed and is of better quality with much more incised surface decoration, such as chest hair, pubic hair, notching on top of horns, edge of cap, contour of hair in back, eyebrows, and mustache. The beard is forked, and incised wavy lines indicate the strands of hair; its pupils are drilled. All these details are lacking in the Missouri and Oriental Institute Pans. Like the Missouri Pan, however, there is a leaf-shaped design incised on the back of the thighs. The Israel Museum Pan preserves a small, round plinth and a strut that connects the raised right hoof to it. The front and sides of the strut are notched. The position of the arms is closer to the Missouri Pan than to the Oriental Institute one; the figure is the same size as the other two. This figure was made with much greater care



5. Oriental Institute Pan, rear view. Photo courtesy of the Oriental Institute

than the two figures discussed above. Although the same master molds may have been used, the beeswax working model was more carefully worked.

of The University of Chicago.

Three other figures closely resemble the first three discussed. Two were on the New York art market in 1990 and 1992 (ex Hunt and Schmidt collections); the third is now in the Bastis Collection.<sup>n14</sup> The current location of the two that were sold in New York is unknown, but the photographs published in the sale catalogues show that they are very similar to the Israel Museum Pan both in size and amount of detail. The figure from the Hunt collection is the closest and has the same height. The Pan from the Schmidt collection is slightly smaller than the Israel Museum example and appears to lean to the right, whereas the other figures are vertical. The Pan in the Bastis collection, although obviously the same type, is a much cruder version with gouged incisions for the shaggy goat hair on the thighs, disproportionately large hooves, and large protruding ears. It is about the same size as the Pan from the Schmidt collection. All these three figures preserve a plinth and a strut that connects the right hoof to the plinth.

There are thus six figures of dancing Pan, all approximately the same scale and closely resembling each other. The Israel Museum Pan, and the figures from the Hunt and Schmidt collections apparently represent one series, while the Missouri and Oriental Institute Pans, lacking the details of these three, are perhaps a separate series. The Pan in the Bastis collection stands alone. One or two further examples may also belong with these figures, but their whereabouts is unknown. Dietrich von Bothmer mentioned two that Frank Brommer had seen, one in Ankara, the other in Istanbul.<sup>n15</sup> One of these may be the figure that is now in Missouri.<sup>n16</sup>



6. Oriental Institute Pan, side view. Photo courtesy of the Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago.

Four other small bronzes also show Pan dancing. One is in Lyon, the second in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and two were on the New York art market.<sup>n17</sup> The stance of all four figures is the same--right leg raised and arms stretched wide--, but in other respects they differ from the first six figures discussed. These four figures have a more sculptural treatment of the modeling of the body, and the representation of the hair on the thighs is very different. Instead of being treated as surface decoration, it forms thick rolls or folds over the front and sides of the thighs; the Metropolitan Museum Pan almost appears to be wearing a pair of breeches. On three of the figures, the Lyon Pan, the Metropolitan Museum one, and no. 4 in [note 17](#), the surface on the backs of the thighs is smooth, because the shaggy hair on front and sides does not continue here. (The published photograph of no. 3 in [note 17](#) shows only a front view.) This smooth area, in a sunken leaf shape, is reflected in the surface decoration on the backs of the thighs of the Missouri and Israel Museum figures. There are also differences between the four figures discussed in this paragraph. The Pan in the Metropolitan Museum is the most detailed and, unlike any of the other bronzes, wears the phorbeia, or head strap that held the double pipes in place. The Lyon Pan has realistic locks of hair that are arranged in three tiers on the back of the head, whereas the hair of the Metropolitan Museum Pan is arranged in plain, horizontal rolls. The two on the art market preserve objects in their hands, the only two figures to do so. One figure holds the Pan pipes, or syrinx, in his left hand, the normal attribute of the god.<sup>n18</sup> The other holds the pipes in his left hand and a torch in his right.<sup>n19</sup>

A further example of a dancing Pan was once on the Swiss art market.<sup>n20</sup> This figure is somewhat smaller than the others and appears to have a longer torso and shorter legs, although his proportions approach those of the Lyon Pan. He is a much less detailed version than any of the others discussed above with no horns but a cylindrical object on his head.

Dates for these small bronzes are not easily established. The Lyon Pan, the figure with the earliest publication date, is assigned to the 5th to 4th centuries B.C. in the 1970 publication. Stephanie Boucher

compared it to the one on the Swiss art market. This latter figure was, however, assigned a date in the 5th to 4th centuries without any parallels to securely dated works.<sup>n21</sup> Boucher also tentatively proposed a comparison with a terracotta figurine from Olympia,<sup>n22</sup> but this figurine bears no stylistic relationship to the Lyon Pan and does not appear to be a valid comparison. The Metropolitan Museum Pan is compared to the Lyon bronze and dated to the late 5th or 4th centuries B.C.,<sup>n23</sup> the Bastis Pan and the example on the New York art market in 1996 are dated by comparison with the Lyon bronze and the Metropolitan Museum one,<sup>n24</sup> the bronzes from the Hunt and Schmidt collections are compared to the Bastis, Lyon and Metropolitan Museum figures.<sup>n25</sup> The Israel Museum Pan is dated to the late 4th or 3rd century without any reasons being given.<sup>n26</sup> Thus, the dating of most of the figures of dancing Pan is based on the evidence of the Lyon Pan, which itself is not securely dated. Without parallels from excavated objects, the dates must remain problematical.

These small figures of dancing Pan must have had some function in antiquity. Dietrich von Bothmer suggested that the Israel Museum Pan might have formed a group together with the similar ones known to Brommer and perhaps were attached to the rim of a cauldron, or to another vessel, or utensil.<sup>n27</sup> Marquard briefly discussed the function of those figures known to her. She also felt that they were originally attached to a vessel, pointing out that the hands of two of them, the Bastis Pan and the one at Sotheby's in 1990,<sup>n28</sup> seemed to have been firmly soldered around something that made her think that the figures were on the upper part of a vessel with the hands touching the rim.<sup>n29</sup> Like Eileithyia, Pan belongs to a class of divinities who appear as multiples.<sup>n30</sup> Groups of Pans are quite common in Greek vase painting.<sup>n31</sup> Thus, a group of small bronze Pans on a bronze vessel would not seem out of place, and in the Classical and Hellenistic periods small bronze figures continued to be produced for attachment to vessel lids and shoulders.<sup>n32</sup> The smooth surface on the backs of the thighs might then be a feature of the placement of the figures on a vessel. The Israel Museum Pan, the only example that preserves its base and that is also available for examination, has, however, no marks of attachment. Furthermore single figures of dancing Pan would not be unsuitable dedications to the god since dancing was integral to his worship.<sup>n33</sup>

As well as questions about their date and function, the figures raise other questions. Where were they made, what did they hold in their hands, and why was a strut thought necessary to support the right foot? Only two of the figures have any possible provenience. The Missouri Pan was acquired in Turkey; Professor Gottheil published the Oriental Institute figure as coming from Tyre, although in his correspondence with the Oriental Institute this was not mentioned.<sup>n34</sup> Other figures are described as Greek and some are tentatively said to be Peloponnesian, although no reasons are given. As for the objects held by the figures, they may not all have held the same ones. The Metropolitan Museum Pan presumably held the double pipes, since he wears the [φορβεία](#).<sup>n35</sup> Two of the figures hold the syrinx in their left hands. Perhaps they held the [λαγώβολον](#) in their right hands. Both objects are appropriate for Pan.<sup>n36</sup> The Missouri, Oriental Institute, and Israel Museum Pans may have held torches, one in each hand. Pan running with one torch occurs in the tondo of a black-figure kylix by the Haimon Painter Group.<sup>n37</sup> He holds two torches on a gem in Munich.<sup>n38</sup> The cylindrical impression in some of the hands, or the remains of a cylindrical object, support this suggestion, whereas the arms are perhaps too widely spread to be playing the double pipes. The presence of a strut on these small figures is puzzling. Other small bronzes of dancing figures with one leg raised have no strut, and so a strut was not necessary to support the leg.<sup>n39</sup> Perhaps the strut is a design feature that relates to the placement of the figures on a vessel.

These ten bronzes form an interesting group, linked by the dancing pose with right leg raised and arms outstretched. The treatment of the back of the thighs--smooth skin represented without hair--also links many of them. While their dates and function remain problematical, and the quality within the group

varies widely, they represent a substantial body of evidence for a small-scale sculptural type of dancing Pan.

## Figures

- Figs. 1-3. Pan, bronze, Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Missouri-Columbia, 85.59, Weinberg Fund, front, side and rear views. Photos courtesy of the Museum of Art and Archaeology University of Missouri-Columbia.
- Figs. 4-6. Pan, bronze, Oriental Institute Museum A 7448, front, side and rear views. Photos courtesy of the Oriental Institute of The University of Chicago.

1 See K. Wernicke, "Pan (Kunstdarstellungen)," ML 3 (Leipzig 1897-1902); R. Herbig, Pan, der griechische Bocksgotte: Versuch eine Monographie (Frankfurt am Main, 1949); F. Brommer, Satyroi (Wurzburg 1937) 1-19; F. Brommer, "Pan in 5. und 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr.," Marburger Jahrbuch für Kunstwissenschaft 15 (1949/50) 5-42; F. Brommer, R.E. Suppl. 8 (1956) cols. 949-1008, Pan; K. Schauenberg, "Pan in Unteritalien," MDAI(R) 69 (1962) 27-42, pls. 10-17; H. Sichtermann, "Pan," EAA : (1963) 920-922; Hans Walter, Pans Wiederkehr: Der Gott der griechischen Wildnis (Munich 1980); N. Marquardt, Pan in der Hellenistischen und Kaiserzeitlichen Plastik (Bonn 1995); J. Boardman in Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (LIMC) (Zurich 1997) 923-941. For images of Pan in later art, see J. Boardman, The Great God Pan, the Survival of an Image (London 1998).

2 M. Jost, Sanctuaires et cultes d'Arcadie, Études Péloponnésienes 9 (Paris 1985) 456-460; P. Borgeaud, The Cult of Pan in Ancient Greece (Chicago 1988, English translation of 1979 publication) 47-48.

3 Jost, (above, [note 2](#)) 467-468.

4 Borgeaud, (above, [note 2](#)) 48. The introduction of the cult into Attica is recorded in the well-known story in Herodotus (6.105). Before the battle of Marathon in 490 B.C. Pheidippides, sent by the Athenians to ask Sparta for help against the Persians, encountered Pan in the hills above Tegea, a city in the Peloponnesos. Pan told him to ask the Athenians why they paid him no attention. Pan goes on to say that he felt kindly toward the Athenians, had been useful to them in the past, and would be again in the future. According to Herodotus, the Athenians believed Pheidippides' story, and once they had prospered they established a shrine to Pan under the Acropolis. At an annual festival they made sacrifices to him and ran torch races. This is the earliest mention of the god in ancient literature. See R. Garland, Introducing New Gods, The Politics of Athenian Religion (Ithaca, NY, 1992) 47-54 for discussion of the incident.

5 A shrine to Pan and the Nymphs discovered in a cave on the north slope of the Acropolis dates to the early part of the 5th century and accords well with the story in Herodotus. See Garland, (above, [note 4](#)) 59 John Travlos, A Pictorial Dictionary of Athens (Princeton 1971) 91-94, 417-421.

6 The earliest extant representation of Pan occurs on an Attic black-figure neck-amphora dated to about 490 B.C. He is shown as a goat standing beside a woman, perhaps a maenad. Only his upright stance distinguishes him as Pan (South Africa Cultural History Museum L64/4; J. Boardman and M. Pope, Greek Vases in Cape Town (Cape Town 1961) 7-8, no. 2, pl. 2; LIMC 8, 924, no. 3). On a fragment of another black-figure vase of about the same period he is playing the double pipes (Allard Pierson 2117/8; Brommer, Satyroi, (above, [note 1](#)) figs. 3, 4; Brommer, Marb. Jahrb., (above, [note 1](#)) 15, fig. 14; LIMC 8, 924, no. 4).

7 R. Parker, Athenian Religion; a History (Oxford 1996) 74-81; Borgeaud, (above, [note 2](#)) 74-87.

8 The etymology of the word Pan is uncertain. Borgeaud, (above, [note 2](#)) Appendix, 185-187, favors an etymology derived from pa(s), designating guardian of flocks.

9 E.g. Aischylos, The Persae, 449, "dance-loving Pan"; Athenaeus, XV. 694D, "O Pan, ruler over glorious Arcadia, dancing attendance on the Nymphs"; Homeric Hymn to Pan in D. L. Page, Poetae Melici Graeci (Oxford 1962) 936, "the god dances readily among the chorus of mountain nymphs"; Sophocles, Ajax, 698, "leader of the dance in heaven." See Borgeaud, (above, [note 2](#)) 150-151.

10 Acc. no. 85.59; restored height 12.1 cm. Weinberg Fund. Bronze. Solid cast. Left leg broken off from just below the knee and restored in wood. Unpublished. Provenience: originally acquired in Turkey. Professor Saul S. Weinberg and I planned to publish a joint article on the Missouri Pan. His death in 1992 prevented this. He discovered the Oriental Institute Pan discussed below and had collected many of the other examples of figures similar to the Missouri Pan that are discussed here.

11 OIM A 7448; preserved height 11.8 cm. Purchased. Bronze. Solid cast. Left foot broken and missing. Published: Richard Gottheil, "Figurines of Syro-Hittite Art" Studies in the History of Religions, Presented to Crawford Howell Toy by Pupils, Colleagues, and Friends (New York 1912), pp. 361-365. Provenience: the Oriental Institute acquired the figure in 1931 from Professor Gottheil who had bought it in Jerusalem in about 1912. In the publication he stated that the figure was "said to have been dug up at Tyre," (p. 361), but in the correspondence about the purchase, preserved in the archives of the Oriental Institute, he wrote that when he bought the figure he was not then told where it had been found (letter February 4, 1931, Director's Office Correspondence Files, 1930/1931, Oriental Institute Archives. Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago). I am grateful to John A. Larson of the Oriental Institute for tracking down the publication and for providing me with access to the correspondence in the archives.

12 See C. C. Mattusch, Greek Bronze Statuary: from the Beginnings through the Fifth Century (Ithaca, NY 1988) 10-30 for technology of bronze casting. For discussion of Greek serial production, C. C. Mattusch, Classical Greek Bronzes, The Art and Craft of Greek and Roman Statuary (Ithaca and London 1996) 18-21.

13 Israel Museum inv. 91.71.327, Greek. H. with plinth 13 cm. Schimmel Bequest. Bronze. Solid cast. Provenience: unknown, but said to be Peloponnesian. Published: D. von Bothmer in Ancient Art: The Norbert Schimmel Collection, ed. O.W. Muscarella (Mainz 1974) no. 25; Von Troja bis Amarna (Mainz, 1978) no. 30; News, The Israel Museum, Jerusalem, March-July, no. 2/92, illustrated on the front cover. Date: perhaps end of 4th or 3rd c. B.C.

14 (1) Greek. H. with plinth 13 cm. Bronze. Provenience: unknown (ex Hunt Collection). Published: Antiquities and Islamic Art, Sotheby's, Nov. 28, 1990, no. 79. Date: ca. 4th c. B.C. (2) Greek. H with plinth 12.3 cm. Bronze. Provenience: unknown, but said to be Peloponnesian (?) (ex Schmidt Collection). Published: Antiquities and Islamic Works of Art, Sotheby's, June 25, 1992, no. 84. Date: ca. 5th c. B.C. (3) Greek. H. with plinth 12.6 cm. Bronze. Provenience: unknown. Published: Antiquities from the Collector of Christos G. Bastis (Mainz 1987) no. 99. Date: 4th c. B.C.

15 Von Bothmer, (above, [note 13](#)) no. 25.

16 The late professor George Hanfmann knew the Missouri Pan, and it is possible that Professor Bromme heard about it from him. Unfortunately, Professor Brommer's death in 1993 made it impossible to verify this.

17 (1) Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. L 74, Greek. H. 12 cm. Bronze. Provenience: unknown, acquired in 1850. Published: S. Boucher, Bronzes grecs, hellénistiques et étrusques (Lyon 1970) 23, no. 6. Date: 5th

- 4th c. B.C. (2) New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 1989.281.55. Greek. H. 13 cm. Bronze. Provenience: unknown but said to be Peloponnesian (gift of Norbert Schimmel Trust). Published: Von Bothmer, (above, [note 13](#)) no.25 bis and Von Troja bis Amarna (Mainz 1978) no. 31. Date: Late 5th or 4th c. B.C. (3) Greek. H. 12.7 cm. Bronze. Provenience: unknown. Published: Antiquities and Islamic Art, Sotheby's, June 13, 1996, no. 97. Date: 5th/4th c. B.C. (4) Figure on the art market, NY. No further information available. Unpublished.

18 G. Haas, Die Syrinx in der griechischer Bildkunst (Vienna 1985) 51-52; Borgeaud, (above, [note 2](#)) 80-83.

19 The torch held by Figure no. 4, [note 17](#), may be a restoration.

20 Greek. H. 10.3 cm. Bronze. Provenience: unknown. Published: Kunstwerke der Antike, Auktion XXII, May 13, 1961, 34, no. 61; Sotheby's, June 11, 1977, no. 172; LIMC 8, 929, no. 105. Date: 5th/4th c. B.C. Two other figures of dancing Pan, in Swiss private collections and also from Greece, are mentioned in Kunstwerke der Antike. Marquardt, (above, [note 1](#)) 293, is surely correct to assign a modern date to a Pan with right leg raised that appeared on the art market in 1988 (Fine Antiquities, Christie's, London, June 8, 1988, 51, no. 224).

21 Boucher, (above, [note 17](#)) 23, no. 6; Kunstwerke der Antike, Auktion XXII, May 13, 1961, 34, no. 61.

22 H. Walter, "Eine Tonstatuette des Pans," in Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Olympia VI (Berlin 1958) 195-199, figs. 126-127.

23 See above, [note 17](#) (2).

24 See above, [note 14](#) (3) and [note 17](#) (3). Marquardt, (above, [note 1](#)) 294 agreed with a 4th century date for the four figures she discussed: the Lyon Pan, the Metropolitan Museum Pan, the Bastis Pan, and the Pan from the Hunt collection at Sotheby's in 1990.

25 See above, [note 14](#) (1) and (2).

26 See above, [note 13](#).

27 Von Bothmer (above, [note 13](#)) no. 25.

28 See above, [note 14](#) (1) and (3).

29 Marquardt, (above, [note 1](#)) 294.

30 W. Burkert, Greek Religion (Cambridge, Mass. 1985) 173.

31 For example, three Pans dance on a red-figure vase that depicts the return of Persephone from the underworld (Dresden 350 [destroyed]; ARV, 1056, 95; Brommer, Marb. Jahrb. (above, [note 1](#)) 20 and fig. 25, p. 22; pl. 16, fig. 53); two Pans dance around a goddess who rises from the earth on a skyphos in Boston (01.8032; ARV 888, 155; Brommer, Marb. Jahrb., (above, [note 1](#)) fig. 27; Cl. Bérard, Anodoi, essai sur l'imagerie des passages chthoniens [Rome 1974] pl. 12, fig. 42); several dance on the neck of a red-figure krater as a goddess rises from the earth (Berlin 3275 [destroyed]; ARV 1276; Brommer, Marb. Jahrb., (above, [note 1](#)) figs. 28 and 30; Bérard, Anodoi, pl. 16, fig. 58; and many Pans dance on a red-figure krater in London (E 467; ARV 601, 23; Brommer, Marb. Jahrb., (above, [note 1](#)) fig. 32. See also the much larger pair of bronze Pans, possibly attachments for a piece of furniture, The Gods Delight, The

Human Figure in Classical Bronze (Cleveland 1988) 142-147, no. 23; Glories of the Past, Ancient Art from the Shelby White and Leon Levy Collection (New York 1990) 188-190, no. 136.

32 For discussion, see B. Barr-Sharrar, "The Private Use of Small Bronze Sculpture," in The Fire of Hephaistos, Large Classical Bronzes from North American Collections (Cambridge, Mass. 1996) 104-121. For good examples of bronze vessels with figures attached from the first half of the 5th century, see Cl. Rolley, Greek Bronzes (London 1986) figs. 130, 131.

33 Borgeaud, (above, [note 2](#)) 150-151, and fn. 114 for references to depictions on Attic and South Italian vases where Pans are shown dancing. See [note 31](#) above for description of some of these vases. The bronze group of four figures dancing in a circle from Petrovouni in Arcadia is now thought not to represent Pans but rather masked men. See Jost, (above, [note 2](#)) 464; Borgeaud, (above, [note 2](#)) 209, n. 64 who quotes R. Hampe, who has re-examined the group (R. Hampe, Gymnasium 72 [1965] 77-79).

34 On worship of Pan in Asia Minor, see K. Tuchelt, "Pan und Pankult in Kleinasien," IstMitt 19-20 (1969-1970) 223-236. See [note 11](#) above for the Oriental Institute correspondence. There was a sanctuary to Pan at Banias in the northern Gallilee. Z. Ma'oz, "Banias," in The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavation in the Holy Land, I, ed. E. Stern (New York 1993) 140-141; Z. Ma'oz, Panion I, Excavations at the Sanctuary of Pan at Banias/Caesarea Philippi (in press).

35 See above, [note 17](#) (2).

36 See above, [note 18](#) for Pan and the syrinx.

37 E. Simon, "Ein Nordattischer Pan," Antike Kunst 19 (1976) 19-23.

38 Antike Gemmen in deutschen Sammlungen, Munich I, 1, no. 335.

39 See, for example, two Etruscan figures, a dancing woman (G. Richter, Furniture of the Greeks, Etruscans and Romans [London 1966] fig. 468) and a silenus in Boston (M. Comstock and C. Vermeule, Greek, Etruscan and Roman Bronzes in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston [Boston 1971] no. 182). Also, compare a small Hadrianic bronze of a dancing child (Musée du Petit Palais, Bronzes Antiques de la Collection Dutuit [Paris 1980] no. 12).

Tapping Hooves: Small Bronze Figures of Dance-loving Pan. Jane Biers. University of Missouri - Columbia. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# Victor Estevez, Horace, Odes 1.31: The Construction of a Priamel

section:

[The Priamel as a Whole](#)

1

In this essay I wish first briefly to review William H. Race's description of the priamel as a rhetorical device in Greek and Latin poetry and his assessment of Horace's usage in this regard, particularly Carm. 1.31; then to add a good deal to his necessarily brief assessment of the poem's priamelic structure; finally to offer a new view of that priamel and hazard a guess as to how its unique structure may have come about.

According to Race, "Next to Pindar's choral lyrics, Horace's Odes exhibit the most sophisticated use of priamels [in Greek and Latin literature]." <sup>n1</sup> In his preface he describes the priamel as follows: "a poetic/rhetorical form which consists, basically, of two parts: "foil" and "climax." The function of the foil is to introduce and highlight the climactic term by enumerating or summarizing a number of "other" examples, subjects, times, places, or instances, which then yield (with varying degrees of contrast or analogy) to the particular point of interest or importance. <sup>n2</sup>" Then, more briefly, he describes the function of the priamel: "to single out one point of interest by contrast and comparison". <sup>n3</sup> Later, in his review and critique of the work of his predecessors, he shows in particular how he has drawn on Dornseiff, Kröhling, Schmid, and especially Bundy in formulating his description. <sup>n4</sup>

Using a sort of bare bones priamel, Antigone 332, the first line of the "Ode to Man": [πολλὰ τὰ δεινὰ  
κούδεν ἀνθρώπου δεινότερον πέλει](#), Race indicates five features he considers characteristic of a true priamel, though each "can be subject to considerable variation":

- 1) a general context or category ([τὰ δεινὰ](#))
- 2) an indication of quantity (elsewhere quality) ([πολλὰ](#))
- 3) a capping particle ([καί](#))
- 4) an indication of relative merit ([οὐδέν . . . δεινότερον](#))
- 5) the subject of ultimate interest ([ἀνθρώπου](#))

. . . [No. 1] may be inferred from examples or context. . . . Quantity or diversity can be indicated in summary form . . . or through a list (i.e. two or more) of particular examples. . . . [No. 3] manifests considerable variety; . . . Greek particle (or adversative asyndeton). . . . In Latin . . . [sed](#), [at](#), and [tamen](#) frequently appear; adversative asyndeton is very common. In both languages there is a marked tendency to place key words at the head of (or in prominent position in) the statement which forms the climax. . . . other important signals of a climax: 1) change of person, 2) . . . of syntax, 3) . . . of subject, 4) . . . of mood, 5) vocatives, 6) deictic words. [No. 4] is the only one of the five elements which is not indispensable, but it occurs so

frequently that it is worth noting. [regarding 5] There must be some "point" to the priamel. . . . For that reason, in opposition to . . . Bergmann, Dornseiff, and Kröhling, I am excluding from consideration those lists of examples which simply follow a general statement to justify it and do not lead up to anything. Such lists are remotely related to the priamel. <sup>n5</sup>

For Race, Horace is at his most innovative in manipulating the many possible permutations of the priamel in his geographical lists, and pride of place in this regard goes to Carm. 1.7: "[it] begins as a "recusatio," in which he delegates to others the praise of various cities . . . . The me (10) introduces the poet's own choice and as a neat variation, he includes two additional cities, Lacedaemon and Larisa, before stating his προαίρεσις Tibur. <sup>n6</sup>" In the foil, Horace pursues several possible rhetorical strategies, passing from laudabunt alii (1), a variation on the permissive subjunctive seen in other priamels, to sunt quibus (5) and finally plurimus (8), a variation on alii. <sup>n7</sup> The me in line 10 suggests we have arrived at the climax (which Race identifies as 10-14). But we have, and yet we haven't. The addition of two cities (two more foils): me nec tam . . . Lacedaemon . . . nec tam Larisae . . . campus opimae (10-11) is indeed a "neat variation." But the poet exercises the priamel form even further than Race suggests. For the climax, signaled by the me, a climax which is really an anticlimax, introduces two more rhetorical strategies. He leads off with yet another priamelic variation: a foil of the type non . . . non . . . or nec . . . nec . . . (with the climax usually in sed or at), but within the structure of a tam . . . quam . . . correlative, with quam substituting for the otherwise expected sed or at. <sup>n8</sup>

Horace disguises what he is up to here as long as he can: for the tam of me nec tam patiens Lacedaemon may modify patiens. In the case of the second tam: nec tam Larisae percussit campus opimae: two possibilities exist: tam . . . percussit, which may look to a possible quam or a consecutive clause and, somewhat less likely perhaps, tam . . . opimae. The resolution of this syntactical slight of hand adds emphasis to the Horatian term of the figure, a preference with, so to speak, triple underlining, by: 1. the entire figure itself (1-14), the whole point of which is to highlight the Horatian choice; 2. the tam . . . quam . . . gambit; 3. the quadruple representation of Tibur: echoing oracle, plunging Anio, grove of Tiburnus, and irrigated orchards. In sum, Race's climax (10-14) to the preceding foil (1-9) assumes the form of a second priamel in its own right, with its own foil and climax:

me nec tam patiens Lacedaemon  
nec tam Larisae percussit campus opimae  
quam domus Albunae resonantis  
et praeceps Anio ac Tiburni lucus et uda  
mobilibus pomaria rivis.

[As for me, neither tough Sparta nor the fertile plain of Larisa have impressed me as have the seat of the the echoing Albunian sibyl and the headlong Anio and the grove of Tiburnus and the orchards moistened by running rivulets.] <sup>n9</sup>

This second priamel leads off with a me, which we ordinarily expect in a climax that highlights the writer's preference or situation rather than in the foil of such a priamel, but this instance is not unique in Horace. See, for instance, Carm. 2.18.1-10: Non ebur neque aureum / mea renidet in domo lacunar, / non . . . neque . . . nec . . . at fides et ingeni / benigna vena est.

Carm. 2.9, Non semper imbres, contains two separate priamels in quite a different sense from what I have suggested above for 1.7. Lines 1-12: the weather's variability is contrasted with the invariable erotic laments of Valgius, with foil 1-8 and climax 9-12; and 13-18, where exempla of ceaseless mourning are contrasted with a climax which also forms the opening to the poem's paraenesis: desine mollium / tandem querellarum, etc., with foil, 13-17 and climax/paraenesis 17-24. <sup>n10</sup>

We come, then, priamel-fashion, to Carm. 1.31. Although 1.7 contains a priamel about place preference, in this ode geography provides a unifying theme to the six rejected foils and stands for various kinds of assets, <sup>n1</sup> while the poet contrasts wealth and, to a certain extent, βίoi in one form or another, with his own simple needs and the object of his prayer: enjoyment of what lies at hand, health of body and mind, a dignified old age, and continued poetic ability. The climax contains no geographical references, although the "things at hand" contrast with the distant places mentioned earlier. <sup>n2</sup>

While Race views 3-15, non . . . impune, as the foil of the priamel and the remainder, 15-20, me . . . carentem, the climax, Nisbet and Hubbard appear to see me . . . malvae (15-16) as a transition to or preparation for a climax consisting of the last strophe alone. <sup>n3</sup> In either case the strophe answers the questions quid possit? and quid orat?, and for that reason is climactic quite apart from the priamelic structure.

1 William H. Race, The Classical Priamel from Homer to Boethius. Leiden, 1982, 122.

2 Race (above, note 1) ix. For practical purposes in this essay I will use the word "foil" in two ways: in Race's collective sense, that is, the part of the priamel that is contrasted or compared with the climax; and in an individual sense: that is, if Horace lists three wines to contrast with his own favorite, I may speak of the first (Caecuban), second (Calenian), and third (Falernian) foils.

3 Race (above, note 1) x.

4 Race (above, note 1) 1-13.; F. Dornseiff, Pindars Stil (Berlin 1921) and Die archaische Mythenzählung, (Berlin/Leipzig 1933); W. Kröhling, Die Priamel (Beispielreihe) als Stilmittel in der griechisch-römischen Dichtung (Greifswald 1935); U. Schmid, Die Priamel der Werte im Griechischen von Homer bis Paulus (Wiesbaden 1964); E. L. Bundy, Studia Pindarica I and II, University of California Publication in Classical Philology 18 (Berkeley 1962).

5 Race (above, note 1) 13-16; F. G. Bergmann, "Priamel," Reallexikon der deutschen Literaturgeschichte, I (1926-28) 723-25.

6 Race (above, note 1) 126.

7 Race (above, note 1) 126; text throughout is from D. R. Shackleton-Bailey, ed., Q. Horati Flacci: Opera. Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1995).

8 Race (above, note 1) 115, 124, 147 cites a number of Latin priamels constructed around correlative pairs:

9 This and all other translations are mine.

10 Race (above note 1) 125-6; in his section on Horace, Race (above, note 1) 122-29, does not concern himself solely with the Odes but analyzes as well priamels from both Satires and Epistles.

11 Race (above note 1) 128.

12 Race (above, note 1) 129.

13 R. G. M. Nisbet and Margaret Hubbard, A Commentary on Horace: Odes Book I (Oxford 1970) ad loc. So also Hans Peter Syndikus, Horaz: Eine Interpretation der Oden: Erstes Band (Darmstadt 1973) 281-82

Horace, Odes 1.31: The Construction of a Priamel . Victor Estevez. University of Missouri-Columbia . 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# Dale Grote, The Character of Orestes in Sophocles' Electra

1

## I The Problem of Orestes

Sophocles' Electra has taken more than its fair share of abuse over the years. Schegal's remark that it is nothing more than a play of "good spirits and matricide" ([Gellie 130](#)) is perhaps the most widely quoted, but there are many others just as trenchant. In 1880, the normally gentile Mahaffy had to complain that, its poetic qualities notwithstanding, the play represented a "great step backwards in the history of moral" ([290](#)). Gilbert Murray, no great supporter of Sophocles in any account, condemned the play for having shown the conservative poet's preference for the old archaic heroes who "killed in the fine old ruthless way" ([237](#)). Waldock would not even allow that it was a tragedy, though he found one reason it should still be read and studied: "In what other play of the seven can we so observe the sleights of the Master" ([195](#)). These critics, and many others, are all taking aim at the same problem: the failure of the play to take the morality of the matricide seriously, or to take it up at all. This deficiency is all the more evident when Sophocles' Electra is compared to Aeschylus' Oresteia and Euripides' own Electra.<sup>1</sup> In these plays, the matricide and its implications for the characters drawn into it are the central events around which everything else in the drama must turn.

This is another way of saying that there is a problem with Sophocles' characterization of Orestes, the unavoidable central figure in any treatment of the matricide in the inherited myth. The other two tragedians recognized that fact. Aeschylus' Orestes hesitates, needing the encouragement of his friend and Electra, to say nothing of the threats of Apollo, to help him along his way. There are the Furies to punish him, which leads to a divisive quarrel among the gods themselves as to whether there can ever be any justification for what Orestes has done. Euripides' Orestes is a pathetic coward, who finally realizes the horror of what he has been planning to do and is driven mad by it. By stark contrast, Sophocles' Orestes never breathes a single word of doubt, at least in any obvious way, and never needs or seeks reassurance.<sup>2</sup> Worst of all, there is no unambiguous indication anywhere in the play that he will be pursued by the Furies.<sup>3</sup> Their absence is, as Gellie ([130](#)) put it, "thunderous." Sophocles' play ends with an unmistakable appearance of final resolution and a triumphant exit.

The best that can be said is that in Sophocles' version of the myth, the matricide is deliberately suppressed to allow greater dramatic elaboration of Electra's troubles at home.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, he "spends all his psychology on Electra" ([Letters 245](#)). An implication of this line of reasoning, however, is that as Sophocles ignores Orestes, he also ignores the morality of the matricide itself.<sup>5</sup> Even if it is true that

Electra is delivered from her torment by her savior brother then the play is nothing more than a melodrama.

Needless to say, Sophocles is not without his defenders on this and other counts, and scholarship on the play is as richly varied and delightfully combative as it is on most important questions in classical literature.<sup>6</sup> [Kells](#) has performed an invaluable service for laborers in this field by classifying the variety of approaches to the play as "ironic," "justificatory", or "amoral," the difference being how each understands Sophocles to have handled the matricide.<sup>7</sup> [Kells](#), taken together now with [Kitzinger \(298-310\)](#) brings the survey of scholarship up-to-date.

My suggestion begins with the play as it appears to us. A morally blank Orestes kills his mother, and, in deliberate opposition to the [Choephoroi](#) and the [Eumenides](#), he walks away from it unscathed. We are right to be disturbed by him, and this feeling of disruption or betrayal is what Sophocles wanted to produce. I suspect that Sophocles drew his portrait of Orestes not from the Homeric warriors of myth, but from an increasing social fact of his own day. Sophocles' Orestes is not the result of dramatic necessity, nor was he toned down in order not to distract from Electra. Orestes is a portrait of a new generation of war-hardened youth produced in Athens by its long struggle with Sparta. The [Electra](#) therefore is not just another reworking of a traditional tale. Rather it is a richly subtle comment on the moral devastation the war was visiting upon the new generation in Athens.

1 Much time has been spent discussing which came first, Sophocles or Euripides' [Electra](#). There are of course three possibilities: 1) Sophocles' came before, 2) came after, or 3) was performed in the same year as Euripides'. Aside from noting the obvious, I do not think anything much more definitive can be said until some more information is literally unearthed. The last effort I know of to argue, as distinct from assert, a relative chronology was Voegler in 1967, who puts Sophocles' version in 416-4, followed by Euripides' in 413. The general consensus is not to insist too much on which is the correct arrangement, even though there is a preference to put Euripides' just before Sophocles' ([Kells 1-2, n.2](#)). In any case, the argument of my article is not affected by how this question is decided, and so it will not be addressed.

2 If there is life or moral depth anywhere to be found in Orestes, many think it comes only during and after the recognition scene, where, it is held, Orestes is so touched by the sight of his sister's awful oppression that he is changed. He came to reassert justice, from which he was emotionally removed, but he learns that there is a deeply human dimension to his mission. That is, he matures. But this suspicion must somehow account for the fact that during Electra's rapturous lyrics in the recognition scene, Orestes never once deviates from his plodding iambs and never once uses a word derived from the root ([Blundell 174](#)). Far from being carried along by Electra's joy, Orestes is a no more than a droning note throughout her song, a contrast which would be obvious when the scene is sung -- as, of course, it was intended to be.

3 Along with many others, I am unconvinced by efforts to detect future punishment awaiting Orestes. [Whitman \(153\)](#) "There is not the sign or hint of a Fury." Similarly, [Bowra \(258\)](#); [Letters \(246\)](#); [Musurillo \(108\)](#); [Ronnet \(215\)](#); [Webster \(195\)](#). On the other side of the debate: [Thomson \(359\)](#); [Winnington-Ingram I \(20-6\)](#) and [II \(217-47\)](#), who found the Furies at work throughout the play in Electra's soul. Even if it is true that the Furies are at work in Electra's soul, what then? They would have no role in addressing the moral problem of the matricide -- unless we are to envision Electra, possessed by Furies, somehow torturing Orestes for the matricide. [Winnington-Ingram II \(227\)](#) perceptively remarked that if there are no Furies, then the play does not end happily: "The reverse is true. No pursuit by the Furies, then no Delphi, no Athens, no Areopagus, no acquittal, and -- above all -- no reconciliation of the Furies." His warning is on the mark, and this, I think, is precisely Sophocles' point.

4 [Bates \(132\)](#): Orestes is "not particularly noteworthy...and after the deed is done he shows no sign of regret." [Ronnet \(208-9\)](#): "Oreste, vide de toute sensibilite, n'est guere qu'une machine a tuer." [Winnington](#)

Ingram (229): "Orestes is military, cold and calculating." [Letters](#) (245): "It would have been easy to make the hero more human and interesting by showing him agonized, or at least profoundly moved by what lies before him. But Orestes, as far as we can judge, is as impassive, impersonal and (so to speak) numbly instrumental as a eunuch-executioner." [Whitman \(155\)](#): "He is so unlike the rest of the play in tone and character that it seems almost as if Sophocles conceived him as a sort of frame for Electra, who is the real tragic picture; the frame is formal and chaste and does not partake of the colors of the picture, but only emphasizes them, as a frame should do... [H]e is scatheless and outside all evil, and obviously more a symbol than a character."

5 [Jebb](#), *Electra* (Cambridge 1894) xl-xli. [Waldock \(170\)](#), who scorned any attempt to find moral difficulties in the play, made a keen observation (though for a different reason from what he intended): "The problem of this play arises because it is sometimes felt that [Sophocles] should have embodied more." [Kitto \(132\)](#): "Though the punishment of crime may sometimes be painful, in no civilized society can it involve anything so hideous as matricide." [Aylen \(96\)](#) even more explicitly projected his own moral sense into the play: "I may be naive, but I believe that it is wrong to kill one's mother. I am sure Sophocles thought so too."

6 My favorite is Rose's recommendation for "those who find anything resembling punishment for Orestes in the *Electra*...to consult a good psychiatrist and get their wits cleared" [\(2\)](#). As a brief demonstration of the extreme diversity of opinion: [Musurillo \(19\)](#) concludes that by the end of the play "the once dishonored alien living in her father's accursed halls has shown the nobility of her seed, and through her sterling courage the works of dike are accomplished on earth." [Johansen \(32\)](#) wrote that "am Ende dieser dü steren Tragödie, als letzte Folge des göttlichen Auftrags, sehen wir nur einen unsicher gewordenen Jungen und eine innerlich gebrochene Frau." Trying to appease both sides, [Buxton \(29\)](#) suggested a compromise: "It would seem that the *Electra* is a play in which the significance of the ending may legitimately be molded by a director in either a positive or negative sense without his being false to the text." I prefer, nonetheless, to assert a liking for the ironic interpretation, guided by Lawton's observation that "the calm atmosphere of this piece is so alien to its plot that it finally comes to have a certain haunting horror of its own" [\(207\)](#). We can, I believe, peer somewhat into the adjectives "certain" and "haunting" and begin to see shapes.

7 [Kells](#) accurately described the vast majority of scholarship on the play, and provided a fairly good prediction of what would follow. A recent entry, however, defies his categories. [Batchelder](#) argues that the play is really an extended metaphor of the playwright's art.

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# Dale Grote, The Character of Orestes in Sophocles' Electra

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## II The War Youth in Athens and the Disappearance of Moderation

"Once lead this people into war and they'll forget there ever was such a thing as tolerance. To fight you must be brutal and ruthless and the spirit of brutality will enter into the very fiber of our national life. Woodrow Wilson on the eve of the United States' entry into World War I" ([Burns 441](#)).

There is plentiful evidence that Athens in the late fifth century was witness to an emergence of a new generation of young men with a ruthless passion for the war.<sup>8</sup> In Euripides' *Suppliants*, produced anytime between 427-417, Theseus makes an obvious reference to current Athenian politics when he charges the with having a reckless lust for war (231-7):

You destroyed the state when you were led by young men [] who delight in being honored and who multiply wars without justice. They are destroyers of the city. One wants to be the general, another wants to abuse the power which he acquired, and still another who for the sake of gain doesn't care at all whether he harms the people.

In the *Peloponnesian War*, Nicias tries to discredit Alcibiades during the debate by referring to his youth, appealing to the older men in the Assembly not to be intimidated by the young men around them (6.12-13). For what it is worth, Plutarch (*Nicias* 11.3) writes that the Sicilian debate was a contest between the young war enthusiasts and the older members of the peace party: "To sum it up, it was a debate between the young war-makers against the older peace-makers, one group supporting Nicias, the other supporting Alcibiades."

Just as revealing of this new "war youth" are the events before and during the Oligarchic Coup in 411.<sup>9</sup> After the destruction of the Sicilian expedition in 413, the Athenians created the board of the to direct the affairs of the city. The only two members certainly known to have served on the board were the playwright Sophocles and Hagnon, a son of Pericles.<sup>10</sup> Both men were well-off, respected, and, perhaps their most important qualification, advanced in years. Hagnon was more than sixty at the time, and Sophocles was certainly more than eighty. Thucydides also reports that the majority of the members of the board, if not all of them, were chosen from among the of the city (8.1.3). Kagan says this indicates a conscious effort to prevent the young from having any more political influence: "It is revealing of the state of Athenian

politics that the Athenians believed they must seek such qualities in an earlier generation, that men in their prime could not be found or trusted to provide it" (7). Later, during the Oligarchic Coup, a commission of thirty was set up to investigate the ancestral constitution and to draft a program for revising and purging Athens of its perceived democratic excesses. The original ten were among the thirty, and once again all thirty of the were older men (A.P. 29.1,3). The oligarchs relied on the young men whenever there was any "rough work" () to be done (Thu. 8.69.4), and when the the Four Hundred appeared in the Assembly to take the places of the duly-empowered Assemblymen, they were accompanied by a gang of one-hundred twenty young men, the so-called "Hellenic Youth," armed with daggers (Thu. 8.66).

These young men engaged in nothing less than a terrorist campaign against the moderates in the city, <sup>11</sup> encouraging their flight from active involvement in the city and into ("detachment"; "serenity"). These "quiet Athenians," as Carter called them, extolled the virtues of in direct contradiction to Pericles' democratic ideal of the man of public affairs. But it was among the young men, especially among the young aristocrats who were being exposed to some of the more extreme teachings of the sophists, that this emerging "war youth" first appeared. This is not to say, obviously, that sophistic education created the disposition to violence, but it was an undeniable co-factor in the way these young men perceived the world.<sup>12</sup>

1 Attic theater was saturated with caricatures of the young men of affairs (Connor 147). Hyperbolus was one of the precocious politicians in Eupolis fr. 238 and Cratinus fr. 262. In Eupolis' *Demes* (ca. 411), Nicias, who was distressed by the plight of Athens, summoned great sages from the past, probably Miltiades, Aristides, Gelon and Pericles. The play is generally considered to have been a complaint about the youth in politics (Norwood [183]). In his *Acharnians*, 697-718, Aristophanes depicts young, sharp-witted, litigious men dragging old men into court--a veritable stock element in Attic comedy (Carter [119-128]). In the *Heracles* (ca. 415), fr. 257, the are the revolutionary followers of Lycus, and the aged chorus is set in opposition to the new, younger rulers. The old king in the *Erectheus*, fr. 362, advises his young son to associate only with the elders.

2 It may be countered here that this observation requires a date for the *Electra* that is later than is typically conceded. For the activity and nature of the Coup to have any bearing on the character of Orestes, the play would necessarily, or likely, have to have been performed after 411. It would naturally strengthen my case if such a date could be established. But the Coup, which is a datable event for us, surely had a prehistory and is the culmination of growing social and political forces that Sophocles could have observed even before 411.

3 Rhet. 1419a25-30. Jameson (543) finds no compelling reason to doubt that the Sophocles mentioned here was the poet and lays the burden of proof on those who hold that it was not. Also Karavites (363-5), and Calder (172-4).

4 Reading "Ἕλληνες νεανίσκοι at 8.69.4 with AEF; BC read only "Ἕλληνες νεανίσκοι. See Gomme (176) for the violence of these youth clubs.

5 Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.2.9) says that the youth deeply absorbed anti-democratic ideas (presumably of the sophists) which made them hateful of the constitution. Imperialism was the path Athens followed to its greatness, but it was "Athenian restlessness and passion, followed by a loss of moral standards and the proclamation of a fundamental immoral principle, that made imperialism a force which in its self-destruction destroyed Athens as well." Ehrenberg (51): "This νόμος τῆς φύσεως...is the final result of the struggle between νόμος as law on the one hand, and νόμος as human nature on the other. The belief in the compelling force of nature...expressed above all in sexual passion and lust for power, could rationally be supported...by the theory that moral criterion lies in sumpheron, and that therefore the personal advantage of the 'stronger' provided all the moral justification. In adopting these sophistic ideas, the

Athenians based their policy on a general law, which, if true and universally acknowledged, would justify all their deeds and misdeeds." See also Jones (64), and Carter (15).

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## III Educating Orestes

[Croiset \(36\)](#) complained that Aristophanes had missed the true danger of sophistic education because he depicted the corruption of a country lad instead of a young aristocrat in the Clouds:

Had the poet really cared for the interests of the aristocracy, so far as they were connected with the interests of society, or had any of his patrons made them clear to him, he ought to have tried to open the eyes of his fellow citizens to this serious and really fatal error. And then he would have had to represent, not a good fellow from the country, as the victim of the sophists, but rather the descendant of some great family, as reduced by them and undermining the moral inheritance of his race through selfish ambition.

Croiset could have been describing Orestes in the Electra.

Like the Philoctetes, which is universally recognized to be concerned with the question of education, the Electra begins with the entrance of a teacher and his young charge. In neither the Choephoroi nor Euripides' Electra does the Paedagogus contribute even a fraction as much to the story as he does in Sophocles' Electra. Yet the relationship between the young Orestes and the Paedagogus, which is explicitly developed in the play, has received little attention. Those who have commented on the figure of the Paedagogus judge him harshly.<sup>13</sup>

The prologue establishes two important facts: 1) Orestes was raised, perhaps from infancy, for no other purpose than to be prepared to kill Clytemnestra and Aegisthus at the right moment, and 2) Apollo's will is of very little importance for Orestes. His true motivation, implanted by the Paedagogus, is a sophistic combination of self-glory, a utilitarian view of social justice, and the urgent sense, encouraged by the Paedagogus, that the for action has arrived.

As if to underline how completely Orestes is his creation, the Paedagogus uses an important metaphor derived from sophistic educational theory when he recalls his service for Orestes. At 13-14, he says [ἦνεγκα κάξεσῶσα κάξεθρεψάμην τοσόνδ' ἐς ἥβης, πατρὶ τιμῶρο φόνου](#). Beginning with the assumption that human was no more than bare substratum, mere potential, the sophists argued that it could be channeled into an infinite variety of directions with teaching and diligence. Though the vocabulary is somewhat flexible, there existed among the sophistic thinkers a trinity of elements required for the craftin;

of souls (See [Shorey](#)): natural ability (), diligence (), and training or lessons (). In this system, had been emptied of the aristocratic presumption of natural excellence and reduced to raw potential or mere receptivity -- and anyone, regardless of his social class, could possess a strong . To bring all the conditions together for successful education, a remarkable analogy was drawn between education of the young and the act of raising a crop in agriculture that enjoyed a wide-spread popularity in the late fifth-century (Protagoras, [Great Speech D.K.](#) 80 b3; [D.K.](#) 80 b11).<sup>14</sup> The best fifth-century evidence we have for it is Hippocr. [Nomos](#) 3, and this fragment of Antiphon ([D.K.](#) 87 b60):

"As one sows, so can one expect to reap. And if in a young body one sows a noble education, this lives and flourishes through the whole of his life, and neither rain nor drought destroys it" (tr. Freeman).

It is significant here that in this analogy the child is not equated with the seed but the soil. That is, the child does not have any innate code of development it will follow. In this analogy, the child is nurture for the idea or planted in it. The nature of the soil merely acts as a limit on the amount of the yield.

It is quite apparent that Sophocles manipulates the chronology of the myth, which requires Orestes to be about 18 to 20 years old, and he is possibly doing so in order to confirm this analogy. The Paedagogos says that he "took" Orestes from Electra and "raised him up" (13). One scholiast comments that the verb "[ἤνεγκα](#)" suggests that Orestes was literally passed into the Paedagogos' arms since Orestes was, according to the note, "not yet able to walk." Again, at 603, Electra uses the verb when she tells Clytemnestra that if she had been able, she would have raised Orestes herself as a . The verb implies a relationship more nearly approaching that of a mother and child than brother and sister; hence Electra must have last seen Orestes when he was much younger than his early teens. Electra also remembers affectionately how Orestes called her (1148). There is hardly anything exceptional about an eleven or twelve year old boy saying "sister," but if Orestes were just old enough to speak, it would explain why the memory is still so touching and vivid for Electra. After the Paedagogos' fictitious tale about Orestes' death, Clytemnestra is struck for a moment by a deeply felt sorrow and mourns her child (776), "Gone from my breasts and nourishment." Clytemnestra last remembers Orestes as a nursing infant, not as an eleven or twelve year-old boy. Certainly, none of these observations taken by itself proves conclusively that Sophocles is trying to alter the chronology of the myth, but their collective force is strong. Judging from the results, at least, he succeeded, as many commentators on the [Electra](#) feel that Orestes was taken away from Mycenae at a much younger age than the logic of the myth allows.<sup>15</sup>

He learned his lessons deeply. Orestes is marked throughout as completely subordinate to his master. "No way!" the Paedagogos snaps at 82 when Orestes asks whether they should stay behind to investigate cries coming from off-stage.<sup>16</sup> After Orestes and Electra have been celebrating their reunion, the Paedagogos bursts in and sternly scolds them for carrying on (1326): [ὦ πλεῖστα μῶροι καὶ φρενῶν τητῶμενοι](#). At 15, the Paedagogos addresses Pylades, ". Eight lines later at 23, mimicking his master, Orestes repeats ". The Paedagogos constantly urges Orestes to action by stressing that the has arrived. The Paedagogos' word at 22 is repeated by Orestes at 31, 39, and at 75-6. The Paedagogos frequently uses the root to indicate that a plan is clear, or that knowledge is obvious, and so forth. At 18, he says the sounds of the birds are . Orestes repeats at 23 in the same position in the line, and again at 41, again at the same position in the line. After the recognition scene the Paedagogos urges Orestes and Pylades to act (1335): [καὶ νῦν ἀπαλαχθέντε τῶν μακρῶν λόγων](#). At 1353, Orestes turns to his sister and warns her not to question him further, imitating his teacher's impatience with excessive speech: [ὄδ' ἐστί: μὴ μ' ἔλεγχε πλείοσιν λόγοις](#). Finally, Orestes turns to Pylades at v. 1372 and quotes nearly verbatim the Paedagogos' earlier advice: [οὐκ ἄ μακρῶν ἔθ' ἡμι οὐδε ἄ λόγων](#). Since he was trained from infancy for no other purpose than to avenge his father, we cannot even say that Orestes was corrupted by the Paedagogos, since that

suggests a warping or perversion of an innate shape. He was created from nothing to be what he is the play: a cold-blooded, unthinking killer.<sup>17</sup>

However much importance we should place on these references to contemporary education, Orestes has clearly learned something unsettling from the Paedagogus. His purpose is to achieve and through whatever means necessary (59-61): "Why should it concern me, if I die in a speech but am saved in reality and win glory? I think nothing is evil when it brings gain." When he offers a prayer to the local gods for their help (69-73), he does not pray in resolve to act in the name of divine justice. He simply asks that he not be sent away unsuccessful and dishonored. Even then, his prayer rings hollow, as he rounds it off with a flatly prosaic expression amounting to little more than "that said" (73): [εἶρηκα μὲν νῦν ταῦτα](#). Finally, his last lines in the play are unsettling. Coming just at the moment when we should expect something deeply religious or noble from him, they are hardly more than a bare recitation of social utilitarianism (1505-1507): "[χρῆν δ' εὐθὺς εἶναι τήνδε τοῖς πᾶσιν δίκην, ὅστις πέρα πράσσειν τι τῶν νόμων θέλει, κτείνειν: τὸ γὰρ πανοῦργον οὐκ ἄ ἦν πολὺ](#)."<sup>18</sup>

(There should be this punishment for everyone who wants to break the laws: that way, there wouldn't be so much crime.)

1 [Sheppard II \(5\)](#): [Orestes'] "affections have been all his life exploited for the purpose of the vengeance." Kells (11) calls the Paedagogus "sinister" and "the spirit of vengeance incarnate." According to [Suys \(121-2\)](#), it is the Paedagogus "qui a developpe chez le fils du roi lachement assassine la haine des meurtriers et la soif de vengeance." And further, Orestes' hatred is the result of this long education, "toute orientee vers ce but".

2 Also Antiphon ([D.K.](#) 87 b60, b61 and b62); Phocylides (fr. 11); Hippocr., [Nomos 2](#); A.I. ([D.K.](#) 89 1,2); and later in the [Republic](#), 377a11-378b2.

3 Adams 63, said that Orestes was trained "from infancy" for the murder. Similarly [Kitto 1958 5](#), [Gellie 106-7](#), [Moulton 150](#), and [MacGregor 94-7](#).

4 [Sandbach \(71-3\)](#) argued that the lines 80-85 should be reassigned, so that it becomes the Paedagogus who asks Orestes whether they should investigate the cries, and Orestes who refuses with a sharp . I find this suggestion incongruous with the scene directly following the recognition scene (1326-1383), where the Paedagogus urges the lagging Orestes on, and with Orestes' general submission to the Paedagogus. But it is revealing that Sandbach found it so wrong for the Paedagogus to scold his master that he suspected a false line attribution.

5 A tremendous amount of weight is often placed ([Kells \[5\]](#), [Johansen \[27\]](#)) on a brief exchange between Electra and Orestes just after the matricide (1424-5) where Orestes appears to display a deepening awareness of the moral complexity of the matricide: [τὰν δόμοισι με καλῶς, Ἀπόλλων εἰ καλῶς ἐθέσπισεν](#). This is just another way of saying "Orders," and of blithely transferring all moral responsibility to a higher authority.

6 Some readers are so disappointed with these lines that they would have them omitted. Kamerbeck (ad loc.) doesn't care for the lines, but sees no reason to omit them. But no one has seen the striking similarity between them and Cleon's remark during the notorious debate over the fate of the Mytilenians (Thuc 3.38.1): [ἐγὼ με οὖν ὁ αὐτός εἰμι τῇ γνώμῃ καὶ θαυμάζω με τῶν προθέντων αὐτίς περὶ Μυτιληναίων λέγει καὶ χρόνου διατριβῆ ἐμποησάντων, ὃ ἐστὶ πρὸς τῶν ἡδίκηκότων μᾶλλον \(ὁ γὰρ παθὼ τῷ δράσαντι ἀμβλυτέρα τῇ ὀργῇ ἐπεξέρχεται, ἀμύνεσθαι δὲ τῷ παθεῖν ὅτι ἐγγυτάτω κείμενον ἀντίπαλον ὁ μάλιστα τῇ](#)

τιμωρίαν ἀναλαμβάνει), θαυμάζω δὲ καὶ ὅστις ἔσται ὁ ἀντερῶν καὶ ἀξιώσων ἀποφαίνει τὰς με  
Μυτιληναίων ἀδικίας ἡμῖν ὠφελίμους οὔσας, τὰς δ' ἡμετέρας ξυμφορὰς τοῖς ξυμμάχοις βλάβας  
καθισταμένας.

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## IV Conclusion

Orestes is a problem in the play because we want him to be more than he is. The moral action in the play is centered on him. Like his other education play, the Philoctetes, Sophocles begins the Electra with a conversation between a pupil and his teacher, who it turns out is a corrupting influence. The difference is that there is no redemption at the end of Electra, and no lessons learned. Orestes does not possess a dramatic depth in an obvious way, but he does have tremendous social meaning which extends beyond the theater. If it is true that Sophocles drew the character of Orestes from the war-hardened youth which were assuming an increasingly influential role in the formulation of Athenian war policy, then what has been mainly perceived to be the central problem of the play--Orestes' indifference to the matricide--becomes the key operative element in the play. It drives home Sophocles' point. He is saying

"Here is a dramatization of what this war is doing to the mentality of our city. What was a mere war policy in one generation has become the entire moral world of the next. There are no more Oresteses in the Aeschylean sense, in our city anymore, young men who find themselves thrust into a violent world, but who struggle to find a balance between the need for violence and the desire for peace. Our generation has instead raised an army of soldiers, who have never acquired the moral foundation that we took for granted, and who can kill without remorse or reflection for no other reason than a vague promise of glory and power. Here is my Orestes. Here are our sons."

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# Michael Hoff, Athens and Pompey: A Political Relationship

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During the first century B.C., many Roman visitors passed through Athens' gates in official and non-official capacities. Some came as visitors and tourists to bask in the reputation of the venerable city. Others came to Athens acting in an official capacity. In either case, the fortunes of Athens often came to be affected--for good or bad--by those Romans who would use the city to further their own political gains. Although no longer a major political power and declining in importance during the Hellenistic period, Athens still held tremendous weight as among the more influential Greek cities in terms of regional politics and trade. The cultural prestige and historical preeminence of Athens were the main reasons that attracted Roman officials to its gates. Among those who came to the city was Pompey the Great.

In the spring or early summer of 67 B.C., Pompey was charged by the Roman Senate under a plebiscite of the [Lex Gabinia](#) to rid the Mediterranean from the threat of pirates. The need for this law arose because pirates, operating from bases primarily along the Rough Cilician coast, severely jeopardized the steady supply of grain to Italy.<sup>n1</sup> Any resistance within the Senate to this unprecedented investiture of power on one individual was allayed by the need for grain by the urban populace of Rome. In addition to the real threat to the Roman supply routes, there also existed a perceived notion that Rome's mastery of the eastern Mediterranean was at risk. Pirates, operating openly on Rome's Mare Nostrum, demonstrated that Rome's imperium in the East was incomplete and thus threatened to undermine the political stability of Rome's relations with her subject cities and nations.<sup>n2</sup> As a graphic example of Rome's weakness in the open sea, the pirate Athenodoros, with backing from the Pontic king Mithradates, easily raided the island of Delos, an Athenian possession, in 69. The pirates captured many inhabitants to be sold into slavery and put many of the commercial and sacred structures to the torch.<sup>n3</sup> Gaius Valerius Triarius, a legate under Lucullus, recaptured Delos later that same year and constructed a fortification wall around the city to provide protection against future attacks. Nevertheless, Rome was still not able to guarantee the island's safety from the pirates.<sup>n4</sup>

Under the provisions of the extraordinary imperium, the Senate provided Pompey with 500 ships, 20 legions, and almost unlimited funds at his disposal. In a coordinated and seemingly simple effort, Pompey's naval squadrons squeezed the pirates back to the Cilician coast--all in a mere 40 days. With the pirates hemmed in by Pompey's legates, it fell to the imperator himself to secure the final victory. According to Plutarch, our best source for these events, Pompey departed from Brundisium for Cilicia and made haste toward the East, avoiding most cities and other ports-of-call along the way, except for Athens. There Plutarch mentions that Pompey stopped briefly, "sacrificed to the gods, and addressed the [δῆμος](#) (Pomp. 27)."<sup>n5</sup>

Pompey subsequently departed the city for his ships waiting anchored in the Piraeus harbor. As Pompey exited the city, presumably through either the Dipylon or Piraeus Gates, he was able to read two lines of poetic verse hastily inscribed for his benefit, one line (perhaps painted) on the inner façade and one on the outer. Plutarch records the inscription and the side of the gate upon which each is inscribed:

Interior:

To the extent that you know yourself to be mortal, the more you are a god.

Exterior:

We awaited, we worshipped, we saw, we send forth.<sup>n6</sup>

It was an expected occurrence for a Roman official to visit Athens, if only for a short period, on his way to -or from--the East.<sup>n7</sup> In 120 B.C., Mucius Scaevola augur visited the city when returning from Asia, as did the questor Licinius Crassus orator around 110 B.C. According to Cicero, Crassus wished to be initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries, but arrived after the ceremonies had been completed. When the Athenians refused to repeat the rites for him, Crassus abruptly departed in anger.<sup>n8</sup> Anticipating the future movements of Pompey, the proconsul Marcus Antonius, grandfather of Mark Antony, stopped in Athens on his way to fight the Cilician pirates in 102. Antonius tarried for several days in Athens and while in the city engaged in philosophical and rhetorical discourses until he was able to depart for Side. The remainder of his fleet, however, remained anchored in the Piraeus for the winter (Cic. *De Or.* 182).<sup>n9</sup> Other Roman magistrates who visited Athens in an official capacity include Cicero, who came in 51 while on his journey to Cilicia to take up his post as proconsul and also on his return a year later.<sup>n10</sup> On both occasions, he stayed for some time.

Not all Romans came to Athens as benign visitors. In the early 80s a populist upheaval in Athens caused the citizenry to align themselves on the side of Rome's enemy, Mithradates of Pontus.<sup>n11</sup> Upon learning of this revolt, the Roman Senate dispatched L. Cornelius Sulla to wrest control of Athens and the Piraeus away from Pontic forces. In 87 Sulla arrived in Attica and quickly besieged Athens and the Piraeus. The siege lasted for months until spring 86 at which time the Romans, having discovered a weakness in the Athenian fortifications, stormed the city and ruthlessly sacked it. The historical sources and the archaeological evidence point to wide-scale damage to buildings and tremendous loss of life. Sulla did not remain long in Athens after the siege, departing hurriedly to pursue the Pontic force of Mithradates. Sulla returned to the city in 84 while on his return journey to Rome.<sup>n12</sup> During this visit, Sulla appropriated the Library of Apellikon, which contained manuscripts of Aristotle and Theophrastos, along with columns from the unfinished Olympieion.

Archaeological evidence of the sack of 86, particularly from the Agora, indicates complete destruction of several buildings and damage to many others. Most of the damaged structures were not repaired for decades, an indication that the city's economy was in dire straits. Equally significant, the manufacture of ceramic fine ware, often an indicator of economic prosperity, was curtailed in the immediate aftermath of the Sullan sack.<sup>n13</sup> Another indicator of a poor economy is the dearth of amphora imports to the city. E. Will has documented a vibrant economy in the years prior to the Sullan sack based on the importation of Italian wine and oil jars.<sup>n14</sup> Will finds evidence, however, that following the destruction of Delos in 88 and Athens in 86, vessel imports come to a halt. Although Delos never fully recovers, Will notes a resurgence of trade around 50 B.C. in Athens.

Considered as a whole, the evidence paints a picture of Athens in severe difficulties after 86. Compounding their recovery efforts was the constant threat of pirates playing havoc with shipping routes

throughout the Mediterranean. The recent sack of Delos by the pirates in 69 would have certainly affected Athenian economy. But the island's association with Athens, along with pirate raids at Epidauros, Argos and Isthmia, may have revealed how vulnerable Athens actually was.<sup>n15</sup> News of Pompey's successful sweep of the Mediterranean by his squadrons, which must have preceded his arrival, brought a great sense of relief to the Athenians. It is no wonder then that the Athenians held Pompey in such high regard when he arrived in the city on his way to Cilicia--even though the final victory over the pirates at Korakesion was still weeks away--and afforded him such good will upon his entry to the city.

The epigram inscribed upon Athens' gate implies that the Athenians awarded Pompey with divine honors ([ἰσόθεοι τιμαί](#)) during his hasty visit; [προσκύνειν](#) can hardly mean otherwise. If he were indeed afforded divine honors, he would have been the first Roman official so exalted by the Athenians. It is equally likely that Pompey politely declined these honors. The phrasing of the epigram suggests that Pompey declined on account of his mortality. Later emperors often politely refused divine honors on similar grounds; [ὤν ἄνθρωπος](#) from the Athenian epigram closely echoes this formulaic denial.<sup>n16</sup>

Athens would not have been alone among eastern cities paying homage to Pompey. On Delos, which had incurred a pirate attack, an association of the Pompeiastae was formed and its members, many of whose members were likely Athenians, erected a monument in his honor.<sup>n17</sup> At Side, Pompey was honored as [ἰσόθεος](#), and at Mytilene as [θεός](#), [σωτήρ](#), and [εὐεργέτης](#); the Mytilinians also renamed a month in his honor.<sup>n18</sup> Cicero mentions that Greek cities, as a result of Pompey's actions against the pirates and Mithradates, regarded his actions as nearly divine.<sup>n19</sup> Indeed, temples may have been dedicated to Pompey in the East as implied from the epitaph carved on his gravestone on Alexandria's shores: "How pitiful a tomb for one so rich in temples."<sup>n20</sup>

In the spring of 62, following the Mithradatic War and the re-establishment of the [pax Romana](#) in the eastern provinces, Pompey returned triumphantly to Italy, allowing for several stopovers en route. Plutarch catalogues the stops from east to west and the benefactions Pompey made ([Pomp.](#) 42, 7-11): in Mytilene, he restored freedom to the city and the citizens honored him with an inscription for "having put an end by land and sea to the wars besetting the world."<sup>n21</sup> On Rhodes he attended the philosophical schools and bestowed a talent on each philosopher, according to Plutarch. Pompey then arrived in Athens where he reportedly provided a similar benefaction to the philosophers in residence there. Plutarch (42,11) reports that Pompey donated 50 talents to the city to help in its restoration. Pompey's purpose in these private and civic endowments, according to Plutarch, was to enhance his reputation. Undoubtedly Plutarch is correct in his simple assessment, but in light of other references to his benefactions in Athens, Pompey was sowing the seeds of allegiance owed to him by the cities of the Greek East in his upcoming war against Caesar in 48. We do not know if the Athenians ever acknowledged Pompey's generosity with statues, as none has ever come to light. It is also implausible that statues of Pompey would have survived after Pharsalos in 48.<sup>n22</sup> Yet statues to Pompey's grandfather and father, Sex. Pompeius and Cn. Pompeius Strabo respectively, that were set up on the Akropolis, possibly on the occasion of Magnus' visit in 62, are preserved.<sup>n23</sup> Their survival post-48 would likely not have been an issue to the victorious Caesar.

There is recent speculation that Pompey may have been initiated into the Eleusinian Mysteries during his visit in 62.<sup>n24</sup> As the initiation rites are held in late September, it is possible that Pompey could have coordinated his journey back to Italy with a stopover in Athens timed to coincide with the ritual.

Plutarch does not record how the Athenians used the 50 talents other than "restoration" ([εἰς ἔπισκεύην](#)). The repairs to which Plutarch refers almost certainly should be applied to the damage caused by Sulla in 86, 24 years earlier. The implication is that for almost a quarter century many of the buildings and monuments of the city remained unrepaired.<sup>n25</sup> Pompey's benefaction is the first recorded instance of

repairs to the city. At least part of Pompey's funds was apparently used towards the repair of the city's commercial infrastructure. IG II2, 1035 is a fragmentary catalogue of repairs to sanctuaries in which a "Deigma of Magnus" is recorded. It is generally understood that the "Magnus" must be Pompey the Great.<sup>n26</sup> The Deigma apparently served as a waterfront bazaar in the Piraeus where goods were displayed and sold.<sup>n27</sup> The Piraeus was especially hard hit during the Sullan siege of 87/6. After the departure of the Pontic forces, which were headquartered in the fortified Piraeus, and the capitulation of the Athenians in March 86, Sulla razed the Piraeus.<sup>n28</sup> The reconstruction of at least part of the Piraeus represents a significant step in the rebuilding of Athenian commerce and economic infrastructure. Yet a comment by Cicero suggests that Pompey was not content with the manner in which the Athenians utilized the funds he donated. In a letter to Atticus Cicero reports the following piece of gossip concerning Pompey in early February of 50:

And by the way, has Herodes really extorted 50 Attic talents out of Caesar for you Athenians? I hear Pompey has become very angry on account of it. He thinks that you Athenians have squandered his money...<sup>n29</sup>

Caesar evidently matched Pompey's 50 talents (given 12 years earlier) with an equal sum provided to the Athenians. Cicero does not record what use the Athenians intended for Caesar's benefactions, but it is likely that the funds were meant to be used to construct the Roman Market whose extant dedicatory inscription (IG II2, 3175) records Caesar's gift.<sup>n30</sup> The Athenian mentioned by Cicero as having "extorted" funds from Caesar, Herodes of Marathon, is well known. He is the earliest known member of a distinguished Athenian family whose ranks will produce the second-century A.D. wealthy benefactor, Herodes Atticus.<sup>n31</sup> The earlier Herodes was a friend of Cicero's, and even served as a tutor to Cicero's son who was studying in Athens. Later in the first century, Herodes' son Eukles, also according to the Market's dedicatory inscription, was successful in soliciting funds from Augustus to complete the Market's construction.

Pompey was angry at the Athenians, Cicero reports, because he felt that his funds were not used to full advantage, and through his comments Cicero implicitly suggests that Caesar's 50 talents were put to better use. The Roman Market was to be built within the city, adjoining the Agora and close to the Akropolis. Caesar's Market would thus have greater visibility and a more preferable location than Pompey's waterfront bazaar. Cicero's comment suggests several significant points. First, it appears that Pompey may not have had, or at least he might not have desired to exercise, the prerogative of specifying the use of his funds. Cicero indicated that Herodes "extorted" a donation from Caesar; acquiescence to such a request would likely have occurred if Caesar knew beforehand the target for his donation. It should be assumed that he was aware of Pompey's benefaction twelve years earlier and its directed purpose. Herodes must have understood the political implications of making such a request from Caesar, as Cicero implies--masterfully playing the two great antagonists off each other. There seems little doubt that Caesar, in donating funds earmarked for such a visible civic edifice, was trying to win some support for his political aims.<sup>n32</sup> At this point, however, it is difficult to know whether Herodes--and by implication the Athenian nobility--was in 50 shifting political allegiance from Pompey to Caesar. It may also be possible that the two equal donations indicate an Athenian desire to remain equal in dealings with the two competing emperors.<sup>n33</sup> Nevertheless, it would seem that the Athenians risked losing patronage from Pompey. Two years later in 48, however, the Athenians joined the Pompeian cause against Caesar. Whatever prestige Pompey felt he lost to Caesar in 50 was restored.

After Pompey fled Italy in 49 for Greece to set up his second front against Caesar, he sought contributions from eastern cities in the form of troops, ships and funds to aid in his efforts. Although Athens clearly contributed forces to Pompey's coalition, our sources provide a confusing account of the degree of

Athenian participation. Appian (Bellum Civile 2.70) reports that by proclamation (apparently by both sides) the Athenians were exempt from any fighting and were to do no harm to either side due to their consecration to the Thesmophoroi (i.e., Demeter and Kore). Nevertheless the Athenians joined Pompey's forces because, according to Appian, they wished to share in the glory in this contest for Rome's leadership. The motivation behind this curious passage has puzzled scholars. E. J. Evans sees an altruistic notion in that "both sides cared enough for this old and venerable city to invite it to avoid suffering."<sup>n34</sup> Habicht instead interprets the passage as an attempt by the Athenians to seek neutrality in the coming conflict.<sup>n35</sup> The Athenians would understandably seek an excuse from fighting when they recalled the disastrous results during Sullan times when they entered into an alliance against Rome. An echo of this neutrality perhaps may be found in a letter sent by Caesar's legate Dolabella, a partisan of Caesar's, to his father-in-law Cicero, who was with Pompey in Greece. In the letter Dolabella exhorts Cicero to withdraw from Pompey's camp and seek asylum "in Athens or some other quiet city."<sup>n36</sup> Dolabella likely would not have suggested Athens as a place where Cicero should proceed if it were on the side of Pompey.

If indeed Athens at the beginning wished not to favor either side, her neutrality was apparently short-lived since she did join in the fray. It would appear then that the Athenians voluntarily aligned themselves with Pompey at the eleventh hour, hoping for political advantage after their side emerged victorious. It may be that victory under Pompey's banner seemed inevitable as his forces, swollen by eastern allied contributions, enjoyed superiority over Caesar's in numbers.<sup>n37</sup> The Athenians dispatched two or three ships to join Pompey's fleet stationed in the Ionian Sea to help prevent Caesar's ships from crossing over to Greece.<sup>n38</sup> The conscription of infantry, however, was much higher, as Lucan notes (3.181)--although likely with some exaggeration--that Athens was emptied of its fighting men.<sup>n39</sup>

At some point before the battle at Pharsalos Caesar dispatched Quintus Fufius Calenus along with fifteen cohorts into southern Greece.<sup>n40</sup> While Calenus occupied the Piraeus and besieged Athens, Athens had joined the Pompeian cause. One of Calenus' objectives may have been to contain a Pompeian contingent possibly stationed in Athens.<sup>n41</sup> Although Calenus devastated the Attic countryside, the city was able to hold out until Caesar's victory. It can be inferred from Dolabella's letter that the Athenians likely did not endure Calenus' siege for very long--perhaps only a few weeks--before the battle.<sup>n42</sup>

Athens' buildings suffered little, if any, physical damage as a result of Calenus' siege.<sup>n43</sup> Immediately after Pharsalos, an Athenian delegation appeared before Caesar, according to Dio, in supplication. Caesar refrained from punishing the city as Sulla had a generation earlier. Instead he merely rebuked the citizens by asking them, as reported by Appian: "How often will the glory of your ancestors save you from self-destruction?"<sup>n44</sup> Evidently several more times, as their record of aligning themselves on the losing side in subsequent Roman civil wars, e.g., with Brutus and Antony, will demonstrate.

1 Lex Gabinia: Miltner, RE 21 (1952) 2093-98; S. Jameson, "Pompey's Imperium in 67: Some Constitutional Fictions," Historia 19 (1970) 539-60. On the grain supply and the pirate threat, see G. Rickman, The Corn Supply of Ancient Rome (Oxford 1980) 50-51.

2 Cic. Leg. Man. 53 and 56. Also, see R.M. Kallet-Marx, Hegemony to Empire. The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C. (Berkeley 1995) 316-17. For recent discussions on the pirates see H. Pohl, Die römische Politik und die Piraterie im östlichen Mittelmeer vom 3. Bis 1 Jh. V. Ch (1993); P. De Souza, Piracy in the Graeco-Roman World (Cambridge 1999); and N. Rauh et al., "Pirates in the Bay of Pamphylia: An Archaeological Inquiry," in J.S. Oliver et al. eds., The Sea in Antiquity. BAR International Series 899 (Oxford 2000) 151-80.

3 Phlegon, FGrHist 257 F 12 and 13. On the attack on Delos see M.-F. Boussac, "Sceaux déliens," RA (1988) II 307-40.

4 For the wall, see P. Bruneau and J. Ducat, Guide de Délos<sup>3</sup> (Paris 1983) 198. Triarus issued a series of silver coins possibly for payment to workmen engaged in constructing the wall; see J. Kroll, The Athenian Agora. XXVI. The Greek Coins (Princeton 1993) 84 and 250 no. 830. Triarus was honored by the Delians with several monuments in his honor: Phlegon, FGrHist 257 F 12 and 13. I Délos 1621 and 1855-58. See P. Roussel, Délos. Colonie Athénienne (Paris 1916) 331-32; Ch. Habicht, Athens from Alexander to Antony (Cambridge, Mass. 1997) 342.

5 One can assume that Pompey's speech, most likely delivered to a hastily convened meeting of the ἐκκλησία, was given from the βῆμα in the Agora; on the βῆμα see T. L. Shear, "The Campaign of 1937," Hesperia 7 (1938) 324. Athenaeus 5, 212 e-f, in recounting Athenion's pro-Mithradates speech in 88, mentions the βῆμα. For its location at the eastern side of the Agora on axis with the Stoa of Attalos, see H.A. Thompson and R.E. Wycherley, The Agora of Athens, Agora XIV. The Athenian Agora (Princeton 1972) 51-52.

6 Plut. Pomp. 27: Ἐφ' ὅσον ὄν ἄνθρωπος οἶδας, ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον εἶ θεός: Προσεδοκῶμεν, προσεκυνοῦμεν, εἶδομεν, προπέμπομεν. Cf. J. Zonaras, 10,3.

7 For a recent study concerning Roman citizens residing in or visiting Athens during the Republic, see Habicht, "Roman Citizens in Athens (228 - 31 B.C.)," in M.C. Hoff and S.I. Rotroff, The Romanization of Athens (Oxford 1997) 9-17, esp. 10.

8 Mucius Scaevola: Cic. Fin. 1.8-9; see Habicht, Athens, (above, note 4) 293-94. Licinius Crassus: Cic. D Or. 3.; see K. Clinton, "The Eleusinian Mysteries: Roman Initiates and Benefactors, Second Century B.C. to A.D. 267," ANRW II: 18.2 (Berlin 1989) 1503.

9 ILLRP 342 l. 5 and 6; see Kallet-Marx, (above, note 2) 204-05, and Habicht, "Roman Citizens", (above, note 7) 10.

10 Cic. Att. 5,10.2; 5,21,14; 6,1,26; cf. Habicht, Athens, (above, note 4) 10. In 79, Cicero spent six months in Athens as a private citizen, engaged in study and was initiated into the Mysteries at that time; Cic. De Leg. II,36; Clinton, (above, note 8) 1504.

11 For an account of events leading up to the siege and destruction, see M.C. Hoff, "Laceratae Athenae: Sulla's Siege of Athens in 87/6 B.C. and its Aftermath," in Hoff and Rotroff, (above, note 7) 33-51.

12 Plut. Sull. 26.

13 S. Rotroff, "From Greek to Roman in Athenian Ceramics," in Hoff and Rotroff, (above, note 7) 102-04

14 E. Lyding Will, "Shipping Amphoras as Indicators of Economic Romanization in Athens," in Hoff and Rotroff, (above, note 7) 127.

15 For pirate raids at Epidauros, Argos and Isthmia, see Plut. Pomp. 24.4-6; other plundered cities and sanctuaries mentioned in the ancient sources include Knidos, Colophon, Samothrace, Claros, Didyma, and Samos (Cic. Leg. Man. 33.53; Phlegon, FGrHist 257 F 12.13.)

16 This formula is similar to Tiberius refusing divine honors, "ego me...mortalem esse et hominum officia fungi satisque habere" (Tac. Ann. 4, 37,38). For discussion, see M.P. Charlesworth, "The Refusal of Divine Honors: An Augustan Formula," PBSR 15 (1939) 1-10.

17 I Délos 1641; see Roussel, (above, [note 4](#)) 333; see J. Day, An Economic History of Athens under Roman Domination (New York 1942) 160-61.

18 For the honors at Side, see I Side 101 = AE (1966) 462; Mytilene: IG XII, 2.59 line 18. For further divine honors to Pompey, see L Cerfaux and J. Tondriau, Le Culte des souverains dans la civilisation gréco-romaine (Tournai 1957) 284-85.

19 Cic. De Imp. Cn. Pomp. 41: "...[de caelo delapsum intuentur](#)."

20 Appian, Bellum Civile 2.86: "[τῶ ναοῖς βρίθοντι πόση σπάνις ἔπλετο τύμβου](#)." See Anth. Pal. 9, 402. No temples to Pompey have yet been identified.

21 Syll3 751; also, see V.I. Anastasiadis, "Theophanes and Mytilene's Freedom Reconsidered," Tekmeria 1 (1995) 1-14.

22 A statue inscription in Demetrias in Thessaly, which was originally dedicated to a supporter of Pompey, C. Caelius, and was re-carved shortly after Pharsalos to honor Caesar, echoes this new anti-Pompey/pro-Caesar Zeitgeist. On this statue see A.E. Raubitshek, "Epigraphical Notes on Julius Caesar," JRS 44 (1954) 66-67.

23 Sex. Pompeius: IG II2, 4100; Cn. Pompeius Strabo: IG II2, 4101. The statue of Sex. Pompeius has been dated to the time of his pro-consulship in Macedonia; see T.R. Broughton, The Magistrates of the Roman Republic vol. 3 (New York 1986) 166. Letter-forms on the inscriptions, however, do not suggest to Kallet Marx, (above, [note 2](#)) 52 a date in the second century. Kallet-Marx sees either visit of Pompey's as a likely occasion for its dedication, although the briefness of the first visit suggests the latter as the likelier candidate.

24 Coins from the Agora, which bear on the obverse a dolphin and trident, symbols of Poseidon, may be associated with Pompey. On the reverse are ears of wheat, that perhaps refer to an initiation of Pompey into the Eleusinian Mysteries; see Kroll, (above, [note 4](#)) 99.

25 See Hoff, (above, [note 11](#)) 38-44.

26 Day, (above, [note 17](#)) 145-46; G.R. Culley, "The Restoration of Sanctuaries in Attica, II," Hesperia 46 (1977) 286.

27 The term [δεῖγμα](#) is often translated as meaning 'bazaar' but this is rather vague. [Δεῖγμα](#) is derived from the verb [δείκνυμι](#), which suggests a place where goods could be exhibited. Literary evidence seems to place the Deigma right at the shoreline of the Piraeus, perhaps on a quay (Xen. Hell. 5.1.21; Dem. Or. 35.29). Because of its close proximity to the harbor and docks, the Deigma may have operated as a specially defined area, perhaps architectural, where samples of goods direct from moored ships could be displayed and sold. See also Poll. 9,34 and the Scholion to Aristophanes' Knights, 979; cf. RE 4 (1901) 2388, s.v. [δεῖγμα](#) (Szanto), W. Judeich, Topographie von Athen2 (Munich 1931) 448, and most recently, R. Garland, The Piraeus, (London 1987) 154.

28 Hoff, (above, [note 11](#)) 38 and note 36; also, R. Garland, The Piraeus (London 1987) 56.

29 Cic. Att. 6.1.25: [Et heus tu, genua vos a Caesare per Herodem talenta Attica L extorsistis? In quo, ut audio, magnum odium Pompei suscepistis; putat enim suos nummos vos comedisse](#)....

30 See E. Rawson, "Cicero and the Areopagus," Atheneum 63 (1985) 44-45; M. Hoff, "The Early History of the Roman Agora at Athens," in S. Walker and A. Cameron, eds., The Greek Renaissance in the Roman

Empire. Papers from the Tenth British Museum Classical Colloquium. BISC Suppl. 55 (London 1989) 1-3; M. Hoff, "The Roman Agora at Athens" (Diss. Boston U. 1988) 95-96.

31 D. Geagan, "A Family of Marathon and Social Mobility in Athens of the First Century B.C.," Phoenix 46 (1992) 29-44.

32 As per Rawson, (above, [note 30](#)) 46.

33 P. Graindor, Un Milliardaire antique. Hérode Atticus et sa famille (Cairo 1930) 7, ignorant of the Cicero letter, suggests that Caesar's purpose in donating the funds was to outdo Pompey.

34 E.J. Owens, "Increasing Roman Domination of Greece in the Years 48-27 B.C.," Latomus 35 (1976) 720.

35 Habicht, Athens, (above, [note 4](#)) 351. The allusion to Demeter and Kore may suggest ties between the two protagonists and the Eleusinian Mysteries. It has already been suggested above that Pompey may have been initiated into the Mysteries during one of his visits to Athens (above, [note 24](#)). Caesar is not known to have visited Athens before 47, when he came to the city after defeating Pharnaces (Cass. Dio 42.14), nor is there any evidence that he was ever initiated into the Mysteries.

36 Cic, Fam. 9.9: "[petere...ut tu te vel Athenas vel in quamvis quietam civitatem](#)." Cf. Habicht, Athens, (above [note 4](#)) 351 note 62.

37 Plutarch reports (Caes. 42) that Pompey's troops outnumbered those of Caesar's by over two to one.

38 Lucan, Pharsalia 3.181-83: "[exhausit totus quamvis dilectus Athenas, / exiguae Phoebæ tenent navalia puppes / tresque petunt verum credi Salamina carinae](#)." Livy (109, fr. 36) specifies "[nam Athenienses de tanta maritima gloria vix duas naves effecere](#)." Compare Caesar (Bellum Civile 3.3), who simply states that Athens contributed ships to Pompey. The low number of ships in the Athenian levy likely reflects the poor state of naval preparedness in the years following Sulla and also Roman desire to keep a limit on military equipment.

39 Appian, Bellum Civile 2.315.

40 Caes. Bellum Civile 3.56; Cass. Dio 42.14.1-2; Plut. Caes. 43.

41 A Latin inscription in Athens records an epitaph (ILLRP 502) for a centurion, N. Grannonius, in Pompey's Second Legion; see Rawson, (above, [note 30](#)) 46 and Habicht, "Roman Citizens" (above, [note 7](#)) 9.

42 Plutarch (Caes. 43) reports that immediately before the battle Caesar asked his troops whether they should wait for Calenus to arrive from Athens or attack without reinforcements from Calenus.

43 Although in a letter written in March of 45 to Cicero (Fam. 5.4), Servius Sulpicius Rufus, the governor of Achaia, laments the present state of several Greek cities, including the Piraeus and Megara which had been recently damaged by Calenus.

44 Appian, Bellum Civile 2.88; cf. Cass. Dio 42.14.2.

Athens and Pompey: A Political Relationship. Michael Hoff. University of Nebraska. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# James C. Hogan, David J. Schenker, *Challenging Otherness: A Reassessment of Early Greek Attitudes Toward the Divine*

1

“There is one  
race of men, one race of gods; but we both have breath  
of life from a single mother. But sundered power  
holds us divided, since the one is nothing, while for the other the brazen sky is  
established

their sure citadel forever. Yet we have some likeness in great  
intelligence or strength to the immortals,  
though we know not what the day will bring....  
”

[Pindar, Nemean 6, 1-6<sup>n1</sup>](#)

“In those days, mortal men sat and dined  
together with the immortal gods.

”

*Hesiod, fr. 1.6-7<sup>n2</sup>*

Despite similarities in nature and origin, and despite the remembrance of shared feasts and kin, the difference is clear: a fundamental and indisputable line of demarcation divides gods from mortals. Such is the consensus of early Greek poetry, and so, we are told, the consensus of the early Greeks. The stories reveal that the gods were unapproachably other, beings of an entirely different order, their alterity one of the essential means by which mortals defined their own limitations.

The aim of this essay, though, is to suggest that this matter of otherness is not quite so straightforward, that the boundary between god and mortal was often tested and redrawn, and, thus, that the process of human self-definition was ongoing, rather than fixed and immutable. The question is one of emphasis; while others consider an endpoint, where the gods do stand clearly apart, our focus is on the repeated and continuing resistance to arriving at that point. Buxton, for example, discusses well the shifting human-divine relations in the *Iliad*, noting the "oscillation between divine involvement and divine aloofness," but concludes that "in the end divine power asserts itself by re-emphasising the boundary with mortality."<sup>n3</sup>

Indisputably true, but in his focus on that end, Buxton loses sight of the extensive and multi-faceted process that underlies his conclusion. The same tendency is apparent in his statement about theomachia, that "heroic myths narrate what happens when proper distances are elided: Thamyras, Arachne, Marsyas, and a host of others fail to appreciate the riskiness of competing with those who are, by definition, hors de concours."<sup>n4</sup> Yes, each failed attempt reinforces that proper distance, but the multitude of those attempts suggests that the limits of the competition are not so firmly fixed, at least for these heroes. And Buxton is by no means alone in this emphasis. A common solution is to note the pattern as "a recurrent motif," and then to move on to conclusions about the unbridgeability of the divide.<sup>n5</sup>

This modern view does draw on solid ancient foundation, a wealth of stories that center on the great distance between mortals and gods. Yet, on their most literal level, the very stories that are said to underscore this distance, those that pit humans against the gods, depend on the physical, spatial, and temporal immediacy and proximity of all the agents. The quantity and diversity of such stories preclude anything like a complete coverage of the theme, and its implications, in this essay.<sup>n6</sup> What we offer here is a survey, beginning with Homer and Hesiod, of some appearances of the theomachos in early Greek poetry and myth.<sup>n7</sup> Our primary aim is to question and complicate, if not to replace, the prevailing view that early Greek myth and religion assumes an absolute and unbridgeable divide between man and god.<sup>n8</sup>

We appeal to myth, as scholars constantly do, for information about Greek religion and Greek religious attitudes;<sup>n9</sup> ever mindful that our literary versions can be no more than a solitary frozen extract from the ongoing and ever-changing flow of myth. Further, these versions are pressed by dramatic or narrative needs that might conflict with an original theology inherent in them. To have any sort of dramatic value in a story about gods and men, the divine cannot be portrayed as absolutely other, transcendent, beyond man's ken and understanding and experience. Which is to say that the more theologically sound the story is, the less dramatic value it is likely to have.<sup>n10</sup>

These points in mind, we use what we have. In addition to asking of these stories, as scholars often do, what sort of crimes and blasphemy the gods punish, we consider also what leads to, motivates, and makes possible the transgressions. What notions, that is, about the relation between men and gods are implicit in the stories? Is it enough to label every theomachos as mad, or -- the same explanation, but from a different point of view -- to suggest that each of the stories reads a lesson to mortals, repeatedly, about our subordinate status? While those factors are certainly relevant, they cannot, by themselves, explain the range and multitude of theomachos myths. The Greeks saw their gods as beings of a higher order, but the stories we look at here reveal that traces of a different perception persist.<sup>n11</sup>

For all of their vestiges of more direct, physical involvement of the gods in human affairs, the two Homeric epics are the beginning, for us, of that "distance" between god and man that Pindar and modern commentators like to emphasize. The Homeric gods can be hurt, of course, both physically and emotionally, as we see from *Iliad* 5, where Diomedes wounds Aphrodite (335) and Ares (435), and from Zeus's grief for Sarpedon (16.431-61). Dione generalizes the case of mortals injuring the gods, referring allusively to Ares enchained by the Aloids, and to both Hera and Hades struck by Heracles' arrows (5.381-404). Aphrodite is to be comforted not only because all who attack the gods are doomed, but also because she is not, by any means, alone in being so attacked. Reference and allusion to these and other theomachos suggest that in earlier poetry Achilles might not have given up so readily to Apollo:

“Now you have robbed me of great glory, and rescued these people  
lightly, since you have no retribution to fear hereafter.  
Else I would punish you, if only the strength were in me.

”

## Iliad 22.18-20

Achilles has just waded into Scamander and very nearly been overwhelmed ([21.222-26](#)), but more typical of Homeric attitudes is this frustration at Apollo's mocking rebuke.<sup>n12</sup> Diomedes, for example, carefully prefaces his challenge of Glaucus:

“But if you are some one of the immortals come down from the bright sky,  
know that I will not fight against any god of the heaven,  
since even the son of Dryas, Lykourgos the powerful, did not  
live long; he who tried to fight with the gods of the bright sky . . . .  
But the gods who live at their ease were angered with Lykourgos,  
and the son of Kronos struck him to blindness, nor did he live long  
afterwards, since he was hated by all the immortals.

”

## Iliad 6.128-33;138-40<sup>n13</sup>

Later, Apollo's treatment of Patroklos ([16.786ff.](#)) is an object lesson in the distance between gods and mortals, even when they share the field of battle. Patroklos never sees Apollo, and the god, eschewing the weapons of mortals, stuns Patroklos with a slap on the back. Yet even these stories underline the proximity of gods and humans. And for every circumspect avoidance of conflict, there are those who do not hesitate to challenge divine powers; and the gods, after all, do accept the challenges.

Our final Homeric example is Bellerophon, whose case is illustrative of this dual view of human/divine interaction. At the end of a particular account ([Iliad 6.155-202](#)), Glaucus concludes

“But after Bellerophontes was hated by all the immortals,  
he wandered alone about the plain of Aleios, eating  
his heart out, skulking aside from the trodden track of humanity.

”

## 6.200-202

Bellerophon's assault on Olympus is evidently already familiar to Homer's audience, as Glaucus's allusive telling implies; but we learn nothing of that here. The attentive listener, however, will have heard Diomedes' description of another who was "hated by all the immortals" ([ἀπήχθετο πᾶσιν θεοῖσιν](#)), Lycurgus (6.140 = 200); Glaucus, perhaps, does not want to put his celebrated grandfather in the company of such a god-defier, but the tug of the tradition cannot bury it altogether. Homer is not alone in treating so allusively Bellerophon's failed flight to Olympus: Apollodorus ([2.3](#)) ends his story happily, and Pindar, silent on that part of Bellerophon's career in [Olympian 13](#), offers something more like a conclusion in [Isthmian 7](#).

“Yet Pegasos  
the winged, cast down  
Bellerophon, his lord, when he strove to reach  
the houses of the sky and the fellowship  
of Zeus. An end in all bitterness awaits  
the sweetness that is wrong.

Glaucus' version of the Bellerophon story is thus the earliest of several that downplay the direct conflict between man and god or include only inorganically his attempt on Olympus.<sup>n14</sup> Motivation and causality are tight until the end, as the story gets its coherence from familiar social conventions (exile after murder, need for purification, rules governing hospitality) as well as from equally familiar narrative motifs (the lewd wife; magical help, here in the form of Pegasus; divine aid, either Poseidon's or Athene's). Nothing, however, in the social norms of myth requires an attempt to reach the halls of the gods, much less to challenge the gods directly; and though the theomachos might be called a conventional narrative motif, after the apparent closure of "wife and kingdom" in this story, we are bound to ask why.<sup>n15</sup> The usual answers, from Homer ([Iliad 6.201](#)) to modern commentators, are madness and hybris. While fair enough as post hoc evaluations, we may nonetheless pause to wonder. Nothing in the career of Bellerophon, save possibly the killing of his brother, argues either madness or hybris, which are after all more a pair from frequent association than from natural pathology. Bellerophon sanely sought purification, eluded the grasp of Sthenoboea out of sexual restraint, accepted the commissions of Proetus and then of Iobates without complaint, and did not attempt retaliation on his would-be persecutors. Neither madness nor hybris seems organic to his character.<sup>n16</sup> The more general question is why any mortal would attack the gods, who as immortal seem by definition invulnerable, and who as "the stronger" must necessarily win such contests.<sup>n17</sup>

The matter is more centrally thematic, if still allusively handled, in Hesiod, our other early witness to its evolution. Two different strands contribute to the issue: on the one hand, in the [Theogony](#) Hesiod's narrative on the rise of Zeus repeatedly emphasizes a world made from a succession of conflicts between god and god. Uranus, dimly defined as a person, instinctively represses his children, attempting to deny them any opportunity to seize power. Correctly, for his manners, if not their nature, inspire rebellion, and he is castrated and removed from the throne. Cronus is no less violent, and even when he has been tricked into regurgitating Zeus and the other future Olympians, a trial of strength ensues: Zeus must combat the Titans and remove them to Tartarus before any true reign can begin. That rule, however, is itself insecure until the monstrous power of the earth, Typhon, is put away. As so often happens with the poets, a theme (here the celebration of Zeus) and the poet's moralizing restrict our view: Apollodorus ([1.6.3](#)) offers a more dramatic version of the battle with Typhon, in which Zeus loses the first round (the monster cuts out his sinews, hides them, incapacitates the god). Thus we see that Hesiod recognizes the history of violence, but includes only those parts of it (repressing, e.g., the battle of the gods and giants, which Apollodorus places prior to Typhon) that contribute to his theme.<sup>n18</sup>

The prime focus of the [Theogony](#) is on the gods and the struggle for supremacy. When Hesiod includes man in his perspective, the trend from primitive violence toward reason and law seems reversed, as the poet describes (in the myth of the five ages) a world beginning in bliss and ruefully falling away to harder and harder times: war and pestilence become common and man loses his direct, immediate contact with friendly gods. Particularly suggestive are hints of common dining and amicable gathering.<sup>n19</sup> Far from focusing on basic antagonisms in the cosmos, this perspective suggests a social unity symbolized by the shared meal. Mortals dined with the gods, enjoyed their company, received favors from them and put them under social obligation; there was a time, in this mythical perspective, when hospitality was indifferent to boundaries between mortal and immortal.

In this scheme, where humanity's relation to the gods is very much the issue, the conflict between generations of the gods is replaced by conflicts between man and the gods. The division of sacrifice at Mecone ([Theogony 535ff.](#)) seemingly takes place in the context of peaceful, customary dining together,

yet if 535 means "they were in the process of coming to a settlement" ([ἐκρίνοντο θεοὶ θνητοὶ τ' ἄνθρωποι](#)), then apparently some unspecified antecedent decision or action has led to a rupture (represented by the prospective division of the food), or perhaps the usual division of the meal, according to proper [τιμῆ](#), became the occasion of the trickster's ruse.<sup>n20</sup> Whatever the occasion for the dining and the impulse to divide the meal, no hostility appears until Prometheus attempts to trick Zeus. Whether Zeus "knows the show" or not, man pays for his patron's cunning division.<sup>n21</sup>

From the viewpoint of theomachia, the succession myths offer a paradigm of vulnerable gods who are repeatedly challenged, know they are susceptible to deposition, and must turn to others for help in maintaining their rule.<sup>n22</sup> No god's power is absolute: they have achieved their station through physical violence and live in the shadow of insecurity. Zeus may swallow Metis or cause Thetis to wed Peleus, but his success derives from the help of others (oracles, feminine powers); he is not omniscient and his lust constantly reminds him of his vulnerability. Much later the [Prometheus Bound](#) continues to draw on the strength of this theme.

The sacrifice at Mecone sheds light on the status of the divine from a different angle. Gods and men meet to share a meal. Prior to Mecone there was no question of decorum, of who would have which portion. The drama of the story implies a time of social affability. Gods may have been superior in happiness and power but they were hardly remote; they entertained heroes, got children by their daughters, accepted their supplications, even enjoyed human cleverness and wit. Such is the world of Prometheus, Tantalus, Niobe, Ixion, and Sisyphus, all of whom are close enough to the Olympians to think of turning against them. The Mecone story offers one explanation for the rift between man and god.<sup>n23</sup> The divine trickster wins for man something he must have, nourishment and fire, at the price of division, animosity, even guilt.<sup>n24</sup> Man is condemned to sacrifice, to cheat, and to recognize his dependence on the gods even in the act of asserting his independence. Whatever Prometheus' motivation for tricking Zeus, he, with cruder monsters such as Typhon, provides a prototype for successful, if limited, defiance of divine authority. He has disturbed a social equilibrium and made enemies of those who were friends.

At the risk of losing sight of the particular purposes of each telling, we move now to a thematic overview of several of the central theomachos stories. Two rather different lines feed into "fighting the god." On the one hand we find duplicity, with violations of hospitality, featuring cannibalistic feasts and sexual assault; on the other, direct challenge and physical attacks reminiscent of Typhon and the Giants. The first implies social intimacy and compatibility, the second alienation and inveterate hostility. In either case, whereas our commentaries and many an ancient poet emphasize the abyss separating the immortals and mortals, these stories recall an era in myth when man was a good deal less sensitive to his limitations. We recognize, of course, that multiple sources and versions for most of the stories make categorization difficult, if not impracticable. For example, if we accept Calypso's protest to Hermes, we have a happy mating of Orion and Eos, terminated by divine jealousy and the arrows of Artemis:

“You are hard-hearted, you gods, and jealous beyond all creatures beside, when you are resentful toward the goddesses for sleeping openly with such men as each has made her true husband. So when Dawn of the rosy fingers chose out Orion, all you gods who live at your ease were full of resentment, until chaste Artemis of the golden throne in Ortygia came with a visitation of painless arrows and killed him;

”

The scholiast on this passage, however, reports that Orion had attempted a sexual assault on Artemis, while Apollodorus ([1.4.5](#)) says that Orion challenged the goddess at throwing the discus. It is probably hopeless to reconcile these versions, though a good deal of scholarship has been devoted to such projects.<sup>n25</sup>

In a number of stories we can detect the assumption of a time when gods and men lived and feasted in something like a social unity. The crimes and misdemeanors of Tityus, Tantalus, and Sisyphus ([Odyssey 11.576-600](#)) are predicated on familiar intercourse with the gods. Admittedly, Tityus is "earth-born" ([11.576](#)) and huge, yet also in some versions, like Tantalus, a son of Zeus; he is guilty of trying to rape Leto, which distinguishes him from true monsters such as Typhon. The variety of Tantalus' activities all take place against a background of daily business with the gods. In a lost epic he was said to have been given a wish by Zeus and to have embarrassed the god by asking to live the life of the gods.<sup>n26</sup> The Homeric punishment in Hades responds to this episode: he lives within sight and sound of divine ease but cannot have the fruits. Again, the story that he fed Pelops to an assembled gathering of the gods recalls not only the dining at Mecone but also Lycaon's damned feast; these feasts are based on trust, hospitality and frequent social intercourse. Pindar ([Olympian 1](#)) wants to deny the mutilation of Pelops, but he is sure Tantalus entertained the gods (lines [36-39](#)), which gave him the opportunity to commit another crime:

“because he stole  
and gave to his own fellowship  
that ambrosia and nectar  
wherewith the gods made him immortal.

”

### [Olympian 1.60-64](#)

Lattimore's "fellowship" ([ἀλίκησσι συμπτώταις](#)) designates his friends, mortals whom Tantalus, like Asclepius, apparently would free from mortal coils. Since the gods already have a distinct food, we are looking at a version not easily reconciled with the Promethean division, even though a common table, at least for favored mortals, is taken for granted. Unlike man's share at Mecone, the stolen portion makes possible immortality, and Tantalus himself has already benefitted from that gift.

Tantalus is also charged with the tamer, euphemistic vice of not being able to hold his tongue ([Orestes 10](#)), which may hint at something like Sisyphus' crime of revealing Zeus's rape of Aigina, or to mysteries of the gods revealed (e.g., Phineus at [Argonautica 2.178-93](#) and [Apollodorus 1.9.21](#); and Teiresias, at [Apollodorus 3.6.7](#)). More in the nature of a folk tale is the story of Tantalus and the golden dog of Zeus. Scholia on the [Odyssey](#) and Pindar tell how Tantalus received from Pandareos, son of Merops, a golden dog stolen from the shrine of Zeus. When questioned by Hermes, Tantalus swore that he had never seen it. Hermes found him out and he was punished. Given the number and variety of tales linking Tantalus with divine society, we cannot be surprised that Niobe is described as "divine and descended from the divine" ([Antigone 832](#)), and it may be their happier times as friends of the gods that provides the context for Sappho's line (fr. 142), "Leto and Niobe were dear companions." Tantalus, the son of Zeus, while dining with his father and their friends, is granted by the gods his dearest wish, which is to be like them. But he ruins the divine banquet by introducing a cannibalistic feast, and has not the restraint to refrain from blabbing to mere mortals the intimacies gained from his favor, not to mention a desire to share immortality with mortals. Just as the punishment differs, so we should not expect to see all of these motifs in any one version. His motives are hardly evident. Divine in his associations; all too mortal in his manners.

There is more behind Tantalus' behavior than a desire to share the happiness of the gods.<sup>n27</sup> The feast of Pelops, which of course took a central place in the tradition and suggests a testing of the gods, i.e., a denial of godhead, seemingly at odds with an impulse to participate in their good life. This violent, hostile test, however, is deeply rooted in Greek myth. According to Hesiod (fr. 163 MW), Lycaon responded to Zeus's debauchery of his daughter Callisto by entertaining the god at a dinner composed of the flesh of her child.<sup>n28</sup> As usual, the Hesiodic narrative tells us little enough, but an invitation to dinner may argue the unsuspecting god thought he had seduced the girl without rousing Lycaon's anger.

Ixion also breaks the rules of friendship. Having killed his father-in-law, he finds that only Zeus will receive him for ritual purification.<sup>n29</sup> Yet he cannot live with good fortune and so attempts to rape Hera. Hence his punishment on the wheel. Pindar treats the story in [Pythian 2.24-6](#), where he ignores the murder to focus on Ixion's ingratitude: "To your benefactor return ever with kind dealing rendered. He learned that lesson well. By favor of the sons of Kronos, he was given a life of delight but could not abide the blessedness long....

" His "delightful life" ([γλυκὺν ... βίον](#)) is that of the immortals, but he is not granted immortal lust and so becomes the father of a monstrous breed. As Gildersleeve notes, "he had presumed as if he were a god; or, we might say, he had presumed as if the gods were men. Endymion, too, "was brought up to heaven by Zeus," only to be blasted by lightning after attempting Hera (Hesiod fr. 260). No leveler like sex, as the Hymn to Aphrodite makes plain, and no inspiration to leveling like lust, as Anchises says:

“And so neither god nor mortal man will restrain me  
till I have mingled with you in love  
right now; not even if far-shooting Apollon himself  
should shoot grievous arrows from his silver bow.

”

### [Hymn to Aphrodite 149-52<sup>n30</sup>](#)

When a hero wants to name the ultimate limit on action, one beyond which he is willing to go, he names the appropriate god. This is usually in the context of boasting.

Orion reminds us of ambiguous figures who are larger than life but mortal and not usually monstrous in form. Homer's allusions to the sons of Aloeus ([Iliad 5.385-91](#); also [Odyssey 11. 305-20](#)) report both the famous attack on Olympus as well as an initially successful binding of Ares, who is at length rescued from his bronze caldron by Hermes. Apollodorus ([1.7.4](#)) has a familiar motif, that they attempted sexual assault on Hera and Artemis.<sup>n31</sup> In the *Odyssey* their size, strength, and good looks suggest a combination of heroic handsomeness and the power attributed to such as Tityus and Typhon. The tradition evidently regarded them sometimes as sons of Poseidon, sometimes as sons of Aloeus. Odysseus calls Orion "gigantic" ([πρωτόγονον](#)) and Tityus covers nine acres ([11. 572](#) and [577](#)). Sisyphus is not normally so strong but his stone is also described as "gigantic" ([11.594](#)).

Calypso knows that not all wooing is rape, and in some cases the mortal contends with a god and lives to hear his own fame. A difficult passage in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* ([208-13](#)) probably intends to celebrate the god's victories in several wooings: "Or am I to sing of you as wooer and lover of maidens, sing how, wooing the daughter of Azas, you raced against godlike Ischys Elationides, possessed of good horses, or against Phorbas sprung from Triops or against Ereutheus? Or in the company of Leukippos' wife,

you on foot and he with his horses?

” In [Pythian 3](#) Apollo punishes Koronis, daughter of Phlegyas, for having shared her bed with Ischys after she was pregnant (with Asclepius) by Apollo. We are not told of any punishment of Ischys; of Phorbas we know nothing, save that his father is Triops, brother of Aloeus (perhaps contention with the gods ran in the family, or Phorbas was emulating his cousins). Nor is Ereutheus known to us. Leukippos would seem to allude to a contest for Daphne,<sup>n32</sup> but no such connection is made in our early sources. Possibly all these male contestants were punished by the gods, but this poet's business is to celebrate the god, not the ambition of mortals. Nonetheless, these passages do reveal, if only incidentally, how ready these poets were to see gods and men engaged in typically mortal contest.

Another rivalry with Apollo features Idas, the son of Aphareus, who was preferred by Marpessa to the god because, as Apollodorus has it, she feared the god would desert her when she grew old ([1.7.8-9](#); [Iliad 9.556-65](#)). Zeus himself finds a rival for Semele's favor in the person of Actaeon.<sup>n33</sup>

But of course the rivalries and affronts are not all sexual. A commonplace of tragic boasting carries a defiance of some god:

“How can I tell you how Capaneus raged?  
For he came with the steps of a long ladder.  
This was his boast, that Zeus's awful fire  
Could not hold him back from overturning the city.

”

#### [Phoenician Women 1174-77<sup>n34</sup>](#)

Neither Capaneus nor the tragedians have a monopoly on boasting: the lesser Ajax raped Cassandra on the altar of Athena, for which the homecoming Greek fleet was struck by a storm. Proteus tells Menelaus that

“Aias would have escaped his doom, though Athene hated him,  
had he not gone wildly mad and tossed out a word of defiance;  
for he said that in despite of the gods he escaped the great gulf  
of the sea, and Poseidon heard him, loudly vaunting  
and at once with his ponderous hands catching up the trident  
he drove it against the Gyraean rock, and split a piece of it,  
and part of it stayed where it was, but a splinter crashed in the water,  
and this is where Aias had been perched when he raved so madly.

”

#### [Odyssey 4. 502-509](#)

Ajax utters his defiant boast even after Poseidon has shattered his ship. This is more than pride, and Proteus, like many another storyteller, calls it madness (the [ἄτη](#) stem, here verbal, occurs in 503 and 509). Here a kind of layering of explanations is found: initial defiance takes the form of violating the altar (a religious perspective on his character); then he escapes a storm (the god's power has shifted its modality); finally the boast, a revelation of hybris which the poets see as rooted in delusion, imbalance, and self-infatuation.

Skill-challenges are numerous and would not have appeared in the tradition before the divinities began to claim specific powers and functions. Homer knows Niobe ([Iliad 24.602-17](#)) who "likened herself to Leto" and observed that the goddess had only two children, whereas Niobe had many. The Cypria assigned Agamemnon's troubles, at least in part, to his boast that not even Artemis could shoot better.<sup>n35</sup> A number of stories focus on the divinity's special skill or province: Marysas challenges Apollo in music, Thamyras makes light of the Muses, and Eurytus the archer thinks himself superior to Apollo. Surviving literature concerning these contests is allusive, but we know of their popularity.<sup>n36</sup> Telamonian Ajax's dismissive boast (Sophocles, [Ajax 764-76](#)) asserts his autonomy and independence, with what, as in so many cases, we can only call needless provocation. Capaneus and Ajax make light of divine power: they will do as they will, regardless of god.

Boasts of prowess and self-assertion are moderation itself compared to desecration and blasphemy. Ajax need not have offended Athena when he raped Cassandra; Pelias, who killed Sidero on the altar of Hera ([Apollodorus 1.9.8](#)), and Neoptolemus, who killed Priam on the altar of Zeus (*Pindar, Paian 6.113-5*), incur the wrath of the gods for what seems gratuitous impiety. Proteus actually says the lesser Ajax would have survived the first wave had he not mocked divine wrath. Niobe could have been proud (our usual translation/gloss on these heroic vices) without publicly insulting the goddess.<sup>n37</sup> Salmoneus wins the prize, however, though in truth he does little more than say overtly what the behavior of others implies:

“Salmoneus at first dwelt in Thessaly, but afterwards came to Elis and there founded a city. And being arrogant ([ὕβριστής](#)) and wishing to put himself on an equality with Zeus, he was punished for his impiety; for he said that he was himself Zeus, and he took away the sacrifices of the god and ordered them to be offered to himself; and by dragging dried hides, with bronze kettles, at his chariot, he said that he thundered, and by flinging lighted torches at the sky he said that he lightened. But Zeus struck him with a thunderbolt, and wiped out the city he had founded with all its inhabitants.

”

### [Apollodorus 1.9.7](#)

The fact that we know his daughter Tyro survived her father's and people's punishment because she protested his blasphemy is accidental, depending on the survival of a papyrus fragment (Hesiod fr. 30). Pindar calls Salmoneus a "bold-devisor" ([Pythian 4.143](#)) and the scholiast on that passage cites lines from Hesiod in which he is called "unjust" ([ἄδικος](#)). There is little doubt that Salmoneus' denial of Zeus' godhead and parodic arrogation to himself of divine power goes back to Hesiod. He is not alone: Ceyx and Alcione call themselves Zeus and Hera ([Apollodorus 1.7.4](#)); Caeneus demands that his people worship his spear ([Apollodorus, Epitome 1.22](#)).

To say "I shoot as well as Apollo" dismisses the god's superiority; Salmoneus dismisses the god. Religious and theological challenges are common.<sup>n38</sup> For most readers the opposition to Dionysus will come to mind immediately. The folly of Lycurgus, Pentheus and the women of Argos simply resides in the denial that Dionysus is a god. These so-called resistance myths, characteristic of Dionysus, are a separate category in that a question of the god's divinity is the impulse for the story. This god proves himself in epiphany, validating the moral "madness" by visiting on his opponents self-destructive mental aberration. This is very different from attacking one's benefactor and host. Confrontation is initiated by the god, albeit passively. The essence of the problem is theological, i.e., a matter of belief and the power of divinity, not moral, as it is turned in Ovid's tales of Lycaon and of Baucis and Philemon.

Neglect of sacrifice often figures as a significant narrative motif in other stories. Minos is a notable example: granted a bull from the sea as a sign of his divine right to rule, he refuses to sacrifice that animal to his patron (Zeus or Poseidon). More often we are told of "neglect" or forgetfulness, as when Oeneus fails to sacrifice to Artemis and finds himself the victim of the Calydonian boar ([Apollodorus 1.8.2](#)); Tyndareus inadvertently neglected Aphrodite (Stesichorus fr. 223) who punished his daughter; Pelias, like Neoptolemus, kills his enemy (Sidero) on an altar ([Apollodorus 1.9.8](#)). There is no such thing as innocuous neglect: as in ritual, so in myth, to fail in one detail is to ruin the whole. Wild beast and pestilence fall on those who cross the divine power. More remote cousins of these attitudes are found in the stories of Laius and Laocoon, both of whom violate sexual restraints imposed by Apollo's oracle.

In the "crimes" of Sisyphus and Asclepius we may detect other nuances of man-against-god. The famous trickster reveals Zeus' liaison with Aigina to her father. Zeus sends Thanatos to seize Sisyphus, who contrives to bind Death and temporarily annul the distinction between mortal and immortal. His personal success in tricking Hades and returning to finish his natural span strikes a different tone, more intellectual and more peculiar to the trickster, but the idea abides. Asclepius may or may not have successfully cured death; a variety of early sources report that he was blasted by Zeus for intending to.<sup>n39</sup>

Heracles in the context of theomachia, as in most, is a special case; he has more reason to be a theomachos.<sup>n40</sup> Already in Homer he is the pre-natal object of Hera's angry persecution, and Agamemnon's apology ([Iliad 19.78ff.](#)) tells the tale of the hero as ground of divine contention: Zeus and Athena will always aid him; Hera will continue her aggressive brutality. If Heracles is to win through, he must be strong, and while many heroes luckily survive nasty attacks on their infancy, Heracles is credited with throttling snakes sent by Hera and biting the nipple of his stepmother Hera, who has been deceived by Athena into nursing the needy prodigy.<sup>n41</sup> More relevant to an examination of early Greek evidence is Dione's catalogue, cited above, of those who have attacked the gods ([Iliad 5.382ff.](#)). After mentioning the Aloids, Dione adds,

“Hera had to endure it when the strong son of Amphitryon struck her beside the right breast with a tri-barbed arrow, so that the pain he gave her could not be quieted. Hades the gigantic had to endure with the rest the flying arrow when this self-same man, the son of Zeus of the aegis, struck him among the dead men at Pylos, and gave him agony;.... Brute, heavy-handed, who thought nothing of the bad he was doing, who with his archery hurt the gods that dwell on Olympos!

”

[Iliad 5.392-400; 403-4](#)

(See [Apollodorus 2.7.3](#))

For us it little matters whether Dione refers to one or two confrontations. Perhaps the allusion to Hades takes us to a version of his visit to the underworld, perhaps not. If Burkert is right in describing Heracles as a "master of animals" and Hades as a kind of cattle baron from the dark side, then this particular struggle will apparently find its roots in the earliest, non-Greek, versions of his story.<sup>n42</sup> In any case the violence so characteristic of this hero targets two divinities, and in a certified physical assault. There is also the wounding of Ares after the killing of Cygnus ([Aspis 460-63](#); at [359ff.](#) Heracles brags of an earlier defeat of Ares at Pylos). Further allusion to such conflict, and perhaps to the same one as that of [Iliad 5](#), is found in [Olympian 9.30-35](#), where Poseidon, Hades, and Apollo are all listed as opponents of Heracles.

Dover observes that over 150 vases and sculptural representations illustrate Heracles trying to carry off the tripod of the Pythia, and one of these is dated to around 700, though the greatest interest begins in the mid sixth century.<sup>n43</sup> Apollodorus has Heracles visit Delphi before (2.4.12) and after his labors, and it is the murder of Iphitus that prompts the second petition (2.6.2), the Pythia's refusal to respond, and the hero's decision to plunder the temple and carry off the tripod. As in Heracles' battle with Ares, Zeus intervenes between his sons and a compromise is effected. Zeus is represented as arbitrator and mediator, a role he also plays in the contest between Idas and Apollo for Marpessa (Apol. 1.7.9). Clearly, this defiance of Delphi's authority cannot have the antiquity and near-eastern antecedents which Burkert finds in most of the labors.

A much younger hero, Neoptolemus, also challenges the god at Delphi when the son of Achilles demands compensation for the death of his father (Euripides, [Orestes 1655-58](#) and [Andromache 49-53](#)). Earlier he had slaughtered Priam on the altar of Zeus, and in some versions his death at Delphi was attributed to Apollo's vengeance on behalf of Zeus.<sup>n44</sup>

Neoptolemus and Heracles have little in common besides this hostility towards Apollo. In a sense, neither takes the god seriously, or at least no more seriously than he would take any other proprietor. The search for meaning is darkly labyrinthine at times, and most scholars prefer ritual to theology; avoiding literalism and the suggestion that Heracles' manners represent any attitude toward divinity, Burkert explains: "Still more ancient, and immensely popular, is the story of how Heracles fought Apollo for the Pythian tripod. This may or may not reflect the memories of a Dorian invasion and the take-over of a pre-Dorian cult-site in any case, the fact that two polarized groups arose in the Delphic ritual, each struggling for the sacrificial meat -- which, of course, would have been kept in the tripod -- and the fact that the 'robbers' in this ritual were those who were truly obedient to the god are good indications that the ritual provided the story's basic structure and that it was not just a product of chance."<sup>n45</sup>

" Perhaps the story does reflect cult, but that does not explain why the storytellers chose to transpose it into this theological key, nor the extraordinary popularity of the story, which as the art testifies, extended well beyond Delphi. Fontenrose has a good deal to say about theomachy, but his conclusion about Neoptolemus/Pyrros solves the problem by denying it: "It is likely, therefore, that the Delphic Pyrrhos represents the pre-Apolline deity who fought with the dragon of death and chaos, but was ousted by Apollo from his prominent position; i.e., his cult was subordinated to Apollo's, and Apollo took over the champion role. The supersession of his cult by Apollo's was reflected in myth as hostility between Apollo and Pyrrhos, so that Pyrrhos became confused with the old enemy Python-Dionysus."<sup>n46</sup>

" Again, such an explanation may or may not describe the historical process; it does not explain how and why a hero's rash demand for compensation from a god was accepted and achieved universal standing.

Most of the stories cited above are familiar. As narratives they get their dynamics from man's confrontation with the divine. What are the conditions and context of these confrontations? Most of these myths assume that man has frequent business with the gods. A minor offender like Oeneus, for example, has previously received the vine from Dionysus; Minos refuses the god his due but there is no question that the bull was a gift of the god; Theseus and Pirithous know they are raiding Hades and act as if that is as natural as raiding Sparta; Tantalus and Lycaon are accustomed to entertaining the gods. No significant "distance" separates man from the gods: the lust of Ixion and Orion, not to mention the success of Tithonus and Anchises, stipulates proximity and normal sexual intercourse. Odysseus refers to Minos as a "familiar" of Zeus.<sup>n47</sup> Like the Phaeacians and Ethiopians, these men of myth live near the gods. God's power is greater, and man is usually punished for his presumption, but most of the human protagonists act as if a god can be beaten at running, shooting, or wooing. While some of the figures are god-defiers, even god-deniers, most seem to act as if "god" simply denotes another class of being, one very like their own,

though happier, more affluent, more powerful. Still, these divinities can be, and have been, bound, wounded, deceived, and cheated. Yes, they are immortal, but they have given that precious immortality to mortals, and Hades and Death have been denied their own.

All this seems a matter of degree: how much greater are the gods than man? The answer obviously depends on the poet and the story. Nemean 6, quoted at the beginning of this essay, starts famously with a contrast between the gods' sure abode and man's ephemerality. What separates the two races is power ([δύναμις](#)). Sisyphus, Eurytus, and Idas do not seem to have read Pindar, nor do they realize that the divine is "inexorably other." Heracles does not think he is so inferior in mind and nature when he attacks Hera and Ares and struggles with Apollo for the tripod. These, of course, are implications, i.e., what the stories imply for us about the attitudes of their protagonists. Some poets, like Pindar, clearly don't like these implications but have some trouble separating the hero from his deeds, less trouble in condemning the deed.

Piety does not need the stories and may find them offensive. Experience cannot verify their theology. We should not be terribly surprised to observe that the myths themselves call into question the notion of the divine they purvey. All of the stories mentioned above assume the gods are little better than super-mortals like other men, they are challenged to combat; they are tricked, seduced, or at least subjected to overwhelming lust; their honors are ignored, neglected, or simply denied. Would Minos deny Poseidon the god's own bull if the king did not suppose he could get away with a substitute, inferior gift? Would Tantalus and Lycaon offer the gods a cannibalistic feast if they thought the gods could not be tricked? Would Theseus and Pirithous attempt Hades if they did not think they could carry off Persephone? Would Actaeon vie with Zeus for the hand of Semele, or Idas challenge Apollo for Marpessa, if the mortal thought his chances hopeless, his doom certain?

The stories themselves call attention to the ontological status of the "divine". Agents like Salmoneus and Caeneus, not to mention the playthings of Dionysus, are there because they question or deny god's power, even the very divinity of divinity. That is to say, the stories would be nonsensical if we assumed the agent really believed that the gods were, in significant ways, different from and superior to themselves. Of course, if we can put aside "god" as expressive of anything more than quantitative superiority (a quicker hand, a heavier blow), then the idea makes sense in this sector of myth. For it is certain that the gods generally have a life mortals prefer to their own, as it is that they generally defeat man's effort to get around them. If one takes the common line that the stories are told for the moral, i.e., that the meaning/message of the story is to prove the agents wrong, that does not remove the problem: the story revolves around a person who imagines, if only through his actions, a cosmos radically different from that of the narrator. In such stories it seems impossible to separate religious and narrative values.

If Bellerophon thought, like Tantalus, that he wanted and could achieve heaven's gate, he is either thinking of a real possibility or is indeed mad. Our poets, of course, opt for the second. It is curious that this power begotten madness directs its attention at attacking or appropriating some aspect of divine power, when, for example, the hero might come to a bad end through tyrannical behavior at the expense of his fellows. Iris seems to have it right:

“Let him [Heracles] learn what Hera's anger is,  
and what is mine. For the gods are nothing,  
and men prevail, if this one man escape.

”

If man does not pay the penalty (842) for recognizing that the gods are "nowhere" (taking the idiom of 84 literally), then men are great ("prevail"). On a very literal level, Bond may be right that the "primary and adequate motivation for Hera's punishment [is] that Heracles is the bastard of her husband Zeus."<sup>n48</sup> If, however, these stories have any religious and theological dimension, on another level, and not a very remote or nebulous one, Heracles' defiance of Hera denies the divine altogether and represents man's achievement as all man should imagine.

1 All translations of Pindar are from Richmond Lattimore, The Odes of Pindar (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1947)

2 All citations of the fragments of Hesiod from R. Merkelbach and M.L. West edd. Hesiodi Fragmenta Selecta (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1970). This translation from C.W. Macleod, ed. and comm. Homer: Iliad 24 (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982) ad 463-4.

3 Richard Buxton, Imaginary Greece: The Contexts of Mythology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994) 148. Cf. Mario Vegetti, "The Greeks and Their Gods," in The Greeks, ed. Jean-Pierre Vernant, trans. C. Lambert and T.L. Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995) 263: "...the worlds of gods and men are constantly interweaving and overlapping."

4 Buxton (above, [note 3](#)) 150.

5 As in, e.g., M.L. West, The East Face of Helicon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997) 124.

6 In his paper on the theomachos in Greek tragedy Kamerbeek goes so far as to say "It would be tedious, however, to enumerate the many cases where men are literally in battle with the gods". J. C. Kamerbeek, "On the Conception of THEOMACHOS in Relation with Greek Tragedy." Mnemosyne 4th series, Vol I (1948) 282. Wolfgang Kullmann, Das Wirken der Götter in der Ilias (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1956) briefly discusses opponents of the gods (141-46).

7 For versions of the stories and their sources see Timothy Gantz, Early Greek Myth (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993). Because we are more interested in early Greek stories, we have avoided references to what seem to be Hellenistic versions and the turns given Greek myth in Ovid and other Latin poets. Apollodorus is a good source for early versions but has bowdlerized and abbreviated in the manner of a schoolbook; on which see M. van der Valk, "On Apollodori Bibliotheca," Revue des Etudes Grecques 71 (1958) 100-68.

8 As seen in, e.g., Buxton (above, [note 3](#)). Jean-Pierre Vernant, in "Mortals and Immortals: The Body of the Divine," in Mortals and Immortals: Collected Essays, ed. Froma Zeitlin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991) 27-49, reassures us that the gods are really quite splendidly "other". His examples from myth do not call upon any of the stories discussed in this essay. P. E. Easterling, in her edition of Sophocles' Trachiniae (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982) 10, suggests that Homer studied to enhance "the great gulf between human and divine knowledge." The impulse behind much "distance/otherness" seems to be to elevate Greek theological speculation, or, to put it another way, to make the gods worthy of their name. A different kind of othering is evident in Kirk's note to Iliad 5.436-9: "Similarly some particular but unrecoverable act of imagination must have initiated the physical-attack-on-a-god idea, though that certainly lay far in the past, perhaps in a Mesopotamian rather than a Greek context." (G.S. Kirk, The Iliad: A Commentary [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985-93]). This seems a variant on the idea found in the RE articles on Bellerophon and Tantalus that these figures are ancient daimons or fallen gods. Cf. E.R. Dodds, in his commentary on Bacchae (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960) ad 229-30: "Ino, Actaeon, Aristaeus (1371) seem to be old gods or δαίμονες who have been worked into the genealogy."

9 Readers on myth and religion will be familiar with the variety of opinion about the relation of the two. Many would argue, with Jean Rudhardt, Notions fondamentales de la pensée religieuse et actes constitutifs du culte dans la Grèce classique (Geneva: E. Droz, 1958), that the connection between myth and religion is largely one of shared names, i.e., that myths do not signify or describe the objects of faith (59-60). We have found Rudhardt's discussion useful but cannot subscribe so confidently to his notion that the two areas represent different forms of consciousness. See the remarks of Buxton, (above, [note 3](#)) 157-65. W. Burkert, in Greek Religion, trans. John Raffan, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), consistently appeals to poetry and myth for description and elucidation of the Greek divinities. See also the formulation (8-9) of John Gould, "On Making Sense of Greek Religion," in Greek Religion and Society, edited by P.E. Easterling and J.V. Muir (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 1-33; and the comments of J.M. Bremer, "The So-Called 'Götterapparat' in Iliad XX-XXII," in Homer: Beyond Oral Poetry, edited by J.M. Bremer, I.J.F. de Jong, and J. Kalff (Amsterdam 1987) 31-46.

10 Cf. Vegetti (above, [note 3](#)), 264: "The existence of omnipotence clearly excludes the possibility of narrative, which requires a plurality of agents whose deeds and intentions act upon one another to produce the events of the story."

11 The historian of religion is caught between the gods' all too human nature and the conviction that divine power belongs to a different order: "For the early period the anthropomorphic gods were a matter of course, though it is difficult to understand this in all seriousness. A god is a god in that he reveals himself; but the epiphany of anthropomorphic gods could never be spoken of in anything but a vestigial sense." (Burkert [above, [note 9](#)] 186.

12 In the quotation, "punish" (20) is the verbal of "retribution" (19, [τίσαιμεν](#) after [τίσιβ](#)): "You do not fear retaliation; surely I would take recompense from you, if I had the power ([δύναμις](#))." On Achilles and Apollo see Jasper Griffin, Homer on Life and Death (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980) 85-89. Griffin thinks that Zeus "loves" Hector, Achilles, Patroclus, and Sarpedon (his notes refer to various forms of [φίλος](#)); perhaps we need a definition of "love".

13 Cf. the Thamyras story in (2.594-600). All translations from Homer are from the Chicago University Press versions of Richmond Lattimore (Iliad, 1951; Odyssey, 1965).

14 On the exclusion of contact with the gods, cf. Iliad 24.463-64, Hermes to Priam: [νεμεσσητόν δέ κεν εἶη ἀθάνατον θεὸν ὧδε βροτούς ἀγαπαζέμεν ἄντην](#). Macleod (above, [note 2](#)) helpfully assesses the evolution, but overstates the difference -- traces of the old are still evident in Homer. It is Bethe (RE 3. 244) who calls the episode inorganic.

15 G.S. Kirk (above, [note 8](#)) speaks of "excess against the gods" (ad 6.200-2); M.P.O. Morford and R.J. Lenardon, in Classical Mythology 6th edition (New York: Longman, 1999) 493, speak of him as "attempting to rise too high" and as someone who "abused the friendship of the gods." In Isthmian 7.44-47, Pindar says Pegasus threw his master, who wished to come into the company of Zeus.

16 It seems fair to speak of "character" even in such schematic versions as that of Apollodorus, if we keep in mind that it is defined simply as the acceptance or rejection of the conventions within the stories.

17 So Kullmann (above, [note 6](#)) 24. For L. Sechan, Le Mythe de Prométhée (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1951) 20, *hybris* covers all the theomachoi. Ruth Padel comments briefly on madness and fighting the god in Whom Gods Destroy (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995) 201-4. In her In an Out of the Mind (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) 128 she asserts that "Obvious theomachia is more than useless. It is impious, fatal." Should we not, then, ask why impiety is so pervasive? Is it sufficient to answer that the Greek poets were reading their audiences a lesson, again and again?

18 We are assuming, with Robert Mondi, "The Ascension of Zeus and the Composition of Hesiod's Theogony." GRBS 25 (1984) 325-44, that Hesiod was selective in both the stories he chose to use and in what he incorporated from the variety of narratives available to him. To "repress" something found in a later version, then, claims that (1) Hesiod knew stories and variants of them which he did not use and (2) Hesiod exercised a certain artistic and intellectual control over these traditional, oral songs, although he was not able to integrate all his materials seamlessly and without contradiction and obscurity (on which see the remarks of Mazon Hésiode [Paris, 1972]13-29. It will be clear from this paragraph and the following discussion that we do not accept the analysis of Jean-Pierre Vernant, who treats the Hesiodic corpus as a single, integrated field of metaphor. See, e.g., "At Man's Table: Hesiod's Foundation Myth of Sacrifice" in The Cuisine of Sacrifice among the Greeks, edd. Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant, trans. Paula Wissing (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989). An earlier analysis will be found in his Myth and Society in Ancient Greece, trans. Janet Lloyd (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, 1980) 168-85.

19 The myth of the five ages occurs at Works and Days 108-201; see also Hesiod fr. 1 and M.L. West, The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985) 3, 56.

20 The transition at 535 is abrupt. West's references ad loc. seem to point in the direction of our translation; cf. Vernant's (above, note 18) 226, "It was a time when gods and mortal men became separate from each other (ἔκρίνοντο) at Mecone." Fritz Graf, on the other hand, in Greek Mythology, trans. Thomas Marier (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993) 85, thinks that "What took place between Prometheus and Zeus was of great importance for the men of Hesiod's time. However men understood their earliest status, the sacrifice at Mecone was seen as integrating them into Zeus's world." It is hard to see how the imperfect can be translated "when gods and mortals reached a settlement at Mecone" (81-2). For a survey of the problems in this passage and special attention to Prometheus as a trickster, see Eliot Wirshbo, "The Mekone Scene in the Theogony: Prometheus as Prankster," GRBS 13 (1982) 101-110.

21 Hesiod would have us believe Zeus intentionally chooses the poor portion (Theogony 544 and 551); we may detect an earlier version in which Prometheus deceived the god. See M.L. West, ed. and comm. Theogony (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966) ad 551, and Burkert (above, note 9) 57.

22 Zeus needs the hundred-handed ones to defeat the Titans and, more significantly, the gods must turn to a mortal hero to beat the Giants (Apol. 1.6.1).

23 We can assume that many such attempts at explanation and aetiology occurred to the Greeks before Homer and Hesiod. We may presume multiple answers led to a variety of explanations and stories, which would have, through time, interacted. At some point, and such a hypothetical "moment" would seem to be well before our poetic sources, which, specifically in Hesiod, show signs of incorporating reflection on myth into myth, historical self-consciousness began to reflect on the stories and their meanings. Man sacrifices to the gods, who are not present, who demand obeisance but in fact receive the lesser portion.

24 Guilt is emphasized by Burkert, Homo Necans, trans. Peter Bing (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), though not particularly with reference to Mecone. In Wirshbo's reading, the trickster's role is seen, for example, in that "the emphasis is entirely on the unequal portions rather than on who specifically gets which portion" (above, note 20) 106. We may agree with Wirshbo that Hesiod's Prometheus is not the cultural hero of Prometheus Bound, but it does not seem impossible that some of the confusion in the Theogony results from competing, interacting traditions and perspectives, to which a proto-cultural hero could have contributed.

25 Calypso's second example, Demeter and Iasion ([5.125-28](#)) tells of another voluntary mating of divinity and mortal, which rouses the indignation of Zeus, who kills the mortal. Behind the elaborate game of the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite may lie a simpler version in which the goddess chose a mortal mate. The sophisticated poet makes her infatuation the work of Zeus, then dramatizes the hero's response and Aphrodite's ambivalence. Anchises is at first reluctant, recognizing in Aphrodite's beauty a divine apparition ([92-106](#)), and is terrified after their intercourse ([181-190](#)). One thinks of Ishtar's "Come Gilgamesh, be thou (my) lover!" (cited from The Ancient Near East, vol I, ed. James B. Pritchard (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958) 51. On this theme and possible connections between the Iliad and Gilgamesh see W. Burkert, The Orientalizing Revolution (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1992) 96-99.

26 For Tantalus' wish see Nostoi fr. 4 in Albertus Bernabé, ed. Poetae Epici Graeci (Leipzig: Teubner, 1987). For a collection of references to Tantalus see Gantz (above, [note 7](#)) 531-36, and 532-33 for the problems of Olympian I, which have been studied by J.G. Howie, "The Revision of Myth in Pindar Olympian 1," Papers of the Liverpool Latin Seminar 4 (1983) 277-313.

27 We might compare the lack of clarity in Bellerophon's motives: was his flight to Olympus hostile in intent, or founded in a desire to live with the gods?

28 Since Apollodorus ([3.100](#)) explicitly denies Hesiodic authority for Callisto as daughter of Lycaon, and because we have Arcadian genealogies tracing descent from Arcas, there is some question about this attribution. West, (above, [note 19](#)) 91-92, follows Carl Robert's suggestion that two different Hesiodic poems provided the variants.

29 Regarding Ixion: the scholia on Phoenissae 1185 (Pherecydes fr. 103) offers a version in which Zeus not only received the murderer but gave him a share of immortality, too. Apart from the famous example of Heracles, we should also note that Tantalus, Tithonus, Kleitos (Odyssey 15. 250-51), Diomedes (Thebais fr. 5 Davies, cited by Burkert [above, [note 29](#)] 205 n. 9), Aristaeus (Pythian 9.68), and Phylonee daughter of Tyndareus (Apol. 3.126) become immortal. And in the Aithiopis, both Memnon and Achilles were given immortality (a "deflation of the Il.'s tragedy of heroic death" according to M.W. Edwards, comm. Iliad: Books 17-20 [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991] 141. More frequently we hear of the offer of immortality, e.g., to Demophoon (Hymn to Demeter 242 and Apol. 1.5.1-2), and to Tydeus (contemplated by Athena, Apollodorus [3.75-76, 3.6.8](#)).

30 This and other translations from the hymns are by Apostolos N. Athanassakis, The Homeric Hymns (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976).

31 Gantz (above, [note 7](#)) 79 and 170-71, notes the two references (Il. and Od.) seem at odds: the Iliad tells a "completely different story." Gantz also finds an allusion to this and to Artemis' hand in their deaths depicted on a red-figure bell krater (c 450 BC).

32 Gantz (above, [note 7](#)) 90.

33 For Actaeon in the Hesiodic Catalogue see West (above, [note 19](#)) 87-88; for a survey of sources see Gantz (above, [note 7](#)) 478-9.

34 Cf. Seven Against Thebes 424-29. The translations from tragedy are from The Complete Greek Tragedies, edd. David Grene and Richmond Lattimore (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1958).

35 According to Proclus' summary, this boast occurred at the second gathering at Aulis; see PEG (above, [note 26](#)) 41. Apollonius (Argonautica 1.466-71) **makes Idas swear by his spear, which aids him more**

than Zeus, that "no contest will be unaccomplished, not even if a god opposes him." Hermann Fränkel ("Ein Don Quijote unter den Argonauten des Apollonius," *Museum Helveticum* 17 (1960) 1-20 relates the foil Idas to Caeneus and Vergil's Mezentius.

36 For Marsyas see [Apollodorus 1.4.2](#) and Gantz (above, [note 7](#)) 95; Thomas H. Carpenter, *Art and Myth in Ancient Greece* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1991) 80-1, discusses Marsyas, Actaeon and Thamyras in early painting. Eurytus is a negative paradigm for Odysseus ([Odyssey 8.224-8](#)); cf. [Argonautica 1.87-89](#). Thamyras is mentioned at [Iliad 2.594-600](#). Sophocles wrote a play about him and another about the lesser Ajax.

37 Ovid ([Metamorphoses 6.170-72](#)) makes Niobe ask why Latona is worshiped when her own numen is unattended. Her inflammatory rhetoric adds the favors shown Tantalus, her grandfather Atlas, and Jupiter himself, a relative on both sides. Ovid may have invented Niobe's claims to divine honors, but note that in Achilles' version ([Iliad 24.611-12](#)) Zeus has turned her people to stone. Comparing the fate of Salmoneus' people, we might speculate that the ossification was a penalty for acquiescing in the queen's demand for divine honors.

38 There is a difference: 'religious' challenges appear only after cult has become a motif in the stories. Theology is there from the moment god/man, mortal/immortal is effective.

39 [Pindar, Pythian 3.55ff](#); [Eur. Alcestis 3-4](#).

40 For references, see Gantz (above, [note 7](#)) 91-2.

41 There is apparently no source before Lycophron for this incident; see Gantz (above, [note 7](#)) 378.

42 Walter Burkert, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979) 78-98.

43 K.J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978) 8, where he notes that despite this copious evidence in iconography the story "is known in extant classical literature only from a single oblique allusion in Pindar ([Olympian 9.32f.](#)). See also Carpenter (above, [note 35](#)) 43 and figures 72 and 73.

44 For Neoptolemus at Delphi see Pindar, [Paian 6.111-16](#) and Gantz (above, [note 7](#)) 690. Burkert, (above, [note 24](#)) 120-21, does not mention the motif found in Euripides.

45 Burkert (above, [note 24](#)) 121-122. Burkert does not tell us who suggested that the story was just a product of chance.

46 Joseph Fontenrose, *Python* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959) 400.

47 Minos is mentioned allusively by Odysseus at [Odyssey 19.179](#). The writer of the Platonic *Minos* interprets: "Minos was a disciple of Zeus... So every ninth year Minos repaired to the cave of Zeus, to learn some things, and to show his knowledge of others that he had learnt from Zeus in the preceding nine years. Some there are who suppose he who has colloquy is a cup-companion and fellow-jester of Zeus" (*Minos* 319e, trans. W.R.M. Lamb in the Loeb edition, [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1927]). It is not a long stride from the spirit of this passage to comedy.

48 G.W. Bond, ed. and comm. *Euripides: Heracles* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1981) ad [841f.](#)

Challenging Otherness: A Reassessment of Early Greek Attitudes Toward the Divine. James C. Hogan. Allegheny College. David J. Schenker. University of Missouri-Columbia. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# Dan Hooley, 'What? Me a Poet?'

## Generic Modeling in Horace Sat.

### 1.4

1

“Horace still charms with graceful negligence,  
And without method talks us into sense. [n1](#)”

”Pope sings an old tune here [n2](#) and adumbrates a troublesome paradox: Horatian didaxis that is not quite didaxis in the sense expected, teaching us as it were glancingly. Or perhaps not really teaching, but charming us with an air of Socratic sagesse into the easy comfort of seeming to learn good things (“sense” while avoiding issues that matter. Nowhere does the question come up more conspicuously than in Horace’s critical writing which is at once phenomenally influential and, it is often said, superficial, concerned with technique, finish, literary (and literal) politics, self interest. No systematic Aristotelian wrestling with fundamental questions of the nature of art, of its deep affiliation with the frequencies of human emotion; no reasoned theory (beyond formal matters) of genre formation or adequate discussion of metaphor or of the status of fictional representation; no (Ps.)Longinian treatment of poetry and emotional transport; no Platonic meditation on the dangers to the soul of that transport, of poetry’s lies, its temptations, its power.

On the other hand, many of his readers have not held Horace to so strict a standard. He has been for them the paradigmatic poet-critic, precursor to Sidney, Jonson, Dryden, Pope, Johnson, Coleridge, Wordsworth Shelley, Arnold, Eliot (and many others outside the English tradition), writers who speak from within their art. For the most part, we do not expect them to be systematic critics, critics with a theory; their grasp of art is intuitive, we say, and while treasuring the gems of insight they turn up, we believe that yield to be almost accidental: artists are not good explainers of their crafts. Horace thus has become in his long Rezeptionsgeschichte largely an emblem for certain critical values: good taste, balance, classicism, post-Callimachean urbanity, the labor-intensive, self-critical art of poetry. With that neat package comes, gratis a raft of durable Horatian mots: [purpureus pannus](#) ; [nec verbo verbum curabis reddere fidus interpres](#) ; [in medias res](#) ; [scribendi recte sapere est et principium et fons](#) ; [omni tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci](#) ; [dormitat Homerus](#) ; [ut pictura poesis](#) and all the rest.

Many of us still like these turns of phrase, finding in them the kind of homely pragmatism that transcends and outlasts more rarified and systematic theories of poetry. There is perhaps nothing wrong with this, though it leaves untouched the conceptual gap between the great critics of antiquity and Horace. Ambitious technical analyses of the literary [Epistles](#) (Bk. 2 and the [AP](#)) in recent years have sought to bridge that gap, and with some success. Most prominently, Charles Brink’s study of the literary [Epistles cum](#) commentary has been an unparalleled advance in this regard; through it we have a clearer understanding than ever before of Horace’s dependence on the peripatetic tradition via Neoptolemos:

Aristotle is suddenly not so distant from the unsystematic, Epicurean poet-critic.<sup>n3</sup> More recently, intersections of literary and political discourses have begun to be explored in particular regard to the Epistles, registering not only points of political pressure but places where literary-critical and political concerns meld almost indistinguishably.<sup>n4</sup> The other great locus of Horatian critical thought, the programmatic Satires, have too received due and productive attention. Yet for all we now know, or think we do, about the sources of, and political pressures on, Horace's critical thought in the Epistles and Ars Poetica, about the position of Horace in debates of contemporary poetics, about his programmatic formulations in the Satires, not enough has been done to explore Horatian innovation in critical deliberation, its independence and contribution to the tradition in terms other than the familiar ones outlined above. Horace after Brink is far-better explicated, but has not become an appreciably more important critic.

One reason for this is the form of attention he has traditionally received. The obvious texts of interest, where Horace's criticism takes on something approaching a technical character, are limited to the literary Epistles and programmatic Satires, and scholars have quite naturally flocked to them. Horace's reaction to Lucilius, his conception of satura, his literary Alexandrianism, the relation of satire to comedy, iambic, and diatribe, its function as social criticism, the characterization of right poetry in the epistle to Florus, the struggle between ancients and moderns and poetry's importance to the state in the epistle to the Augustus, the multiple thematic strands of the Ars Poetica; all these have been well sorted through and have become the familiar stuff of handbooks. Far less attention has been given to the Epodes and Odes, where metapoetic comment is rife.<sup>n5</sup> And even in the Epistles and Satires critics have tended to focus on those passages that answer to our sense of "formal" literary criticism or programmatic statement rather than on those intriguing places in our texts where art and criticism seem to meld—yet it is precisely this melding that may be Horace's most distinguishing importance for the history of criticism, establishing the explicit model of the poet-critic thinking on his art through his art.<sup>n6</sup> Horace makes us realize to some extent the falseness of the old segregation of discourses; as Denis Feeney has put it, "We are not dealing with a problematic body of material ('literature') which can be explained with the aid of a less problematic body of material ('criticism'): we are dealing with numerous, often contesting, strands of problematic material which interact with each other in innumerable categories of time and space."<sup>n7</sup> Feeney writes here in general terms about the relation between literature and criticism; Horace is the special case where the separate elements fuse yet more dramatically into a single though multiply textured interpretandum. This is, I think, clearly the case in respect Horace's contribution to the theory of literary genre. In which regard, Frans de Bruyn, in a good handbook article on genre criticism, comments not untypically on

...the Roman poet Horace, whose Art of Poetry reformulated and popularized Aristotelian precepts. Though not himself an original thinker, Horace is important chiefly as a bridge between classical thought and the Renaissance. Much of the Renaissance restatement of classical genre theory is guided by Horace's urbane pronouncements. Thus, his emphasis on order and coherence in the work of art is echoed in the neoclassical doctrine of the unities (of time, place, and action), and his idea of decorum, the insistence that each genre has a subject-matter, characters, language, and metre appropriate to it becomes a central doctrine in the 17th and 18th century criticism.<sup>n8</sup>

Histories of criticism make Horace precisely, and merely, the transitional figure we see in this excerpt: he imbibes ideas from Aristotle, Neoptolemus, Philodemus and the Epicureans, reacts to elements of the current literary climate, formulates an unsystematic, epistolary "treatise" whose effect in literary history, despite Quintilian's early notice, only begins to be felt long after his death. Many centuries after, in fact: in Marco Gilolamo Vida and the 16th century Italian theorists, Sidney, Boileau and the French neo-classicists, Dryden, Pope, and the English Augustans.

Faced with a long and fairly unanimous tradition that has seen Horace's value to genre theory as chiefly one of mediation between classical and renaissance literary sensibilities, it is only natural to think a little harder about what precisely Horace might have contributed in an original way as a critical thinker in generic terms. Most have sought answers in the explicitly theoretical *Ars Poetica*, in whose Aristotelian and Hellenistic principles many readers see a kind of personal aesthetic manifesto.<sup>n9</sup> But I would like to look elsewhere, scumbling just a bit the conceptual categories of Horatian critical expression, the 'genres' of the poet's critical voice, by considering a paradigmatically "programmatic" poem, *Sat.* 1.4, in modified (to some degree other than programmatic) terms. That is, rather than seeking to comment once again on those features of the poem that describe Horace's satiric program in contradistinction to that of his great predecessor in Satire, Lucilius, we may be able to notice some of the ways in which *Sat.* 1.4 addresses larger issues of generic formation and identity. Particularly the ways in which the poet Horace remakes "himself" within the poems, fashions an emblematic satiric identity that functions as calculated indicator of the tenor and generic "norm" within the literary kind he is effectively recreating. The critical yield will not be, as it might from the *AP*, explicitly theoretical, yet its theory-in-praxis formulation may make more potent suggestions toward an understanding of ancient genre than anything gleaned thus far from the *AP*. Composed perhaps before 39-7 BCE, near the beginning of his acquaintance with Maecenas and inclusion in that celestial literary circle, *Sat.* 1.4 shows early engagement with the tradition of satire inherited from Lucilius, and, within the drama of the first published book (balancing as it does the nuancing and resolving *Sat.* 1.10), signals a point of abrasive generic conflict. The Aristotelian beginning and end, 1.4 and 1.10, comprise a plot whose plotting, thick with fiction all through, adumbrates a story/mythos that will seek to account for the nature of the radically new poetry of his first book of *Satires*;<sup>n10</sup> *Sat.* 2.1 will begin again, telling another tale about that very different second book and, reflexively, the first book as well. Central to *Sat.* 1.4 is the (now, to us) tired old question about whether Horace really thinks satire is not real poetry (to which he ascribes *ingenium*, *mens divinius*, and *os magna sonatorum*, vv. 43-44)—a prominent element of the vexing burden of the first 62 lines of the poem. Though I will touch on it, I don't propose here to try to resolve that issue directly. Or rather, it seems to me (*pace* Brink<sup>n11</sup> and others) that "what does Horace mean by real poetry and how does satire (not) fit the paradigm" is the wrong question to ask of this poem; or rather, again, it may not be the only right question to ask. Another (perhaps right) question: how does Horace's statement make sense within the discursive frame of this poem in particular and Horace's reinvention of satire in general? I will try to show that Horace's voice in this work is a designed, positioned element within a generically modeled world, and that what this "Horace," or "new satirist," says, has a meaning and bearing within that context somewhat different from the traditional understanding (that understanding being that the poem shows Horace the poet writing in *propria persona* on the art and function of his satire). The poet's primary goal, as I see it, is not to "tell" his readers whether satire is elevated or refined enough to be called poetry, or even to tell his readers what satire ought to do, but to map the genre he is in the process of redefining, reprogramming, and to play out that very reforming gesture in the mixed impertinence, anxiety, temerity, and authoritative grasp of tradition one hears in this experimental satiric voice constructed for the occasion.

Back, then, to those familiar first 62 verses, familiar enough that a simple outline will do for starters. Horace 1) responds to the criticism of harsh invective by instancing the precedents of Old Comedy and Lucilius, 2) separates himself from Lucilius on grounds of *ars*, 3) claims that human folly cries out for poetic redress and that most of us for that reason resent poets, 4) asserts (lest we fret about that redress) that he is no real poet, for his plain *sermo* has not the fire and pitch of real art. Scholarship has long puzzled over the lines, particularly point 4 concerning Horace's denial of the poet's mantle, settling into familiar positions—well known, and we all have our views.<sup>n12</sup> P.M. Brown takes a middle course in averring that "[Horace's] real object [rather than exclude satire from the realm of poetry altogether] is to distinguish the stylistic requirements of the less elevated poetry of satire and comedy from those of grander poetry like epic, lyric and tragedy."<sup>n13</sup> Recently Kirk Freudenburg and, jointly, Steven

Oberhelman and David Armstrong<sup>n14</sup> have come to the conclusion that Horace, while explicitly claiming poetry to reside in generic registers higher than plain sermo (in which, metathesized, one could not find those certifying, scattered limbs of a real poet), is essentially speaking, as Freudenburg writes, through the mask of his (largely Stoic) critics, and voicing poetic principles contrary to his own. Yet in so setting out this perspective, Horace demonstrates, through his own artfully contrived word order and placement, his authority as poeta. Others take other routes to a similar conclusion,<sup>n15</sup> a common understanding that Horace means something quite other than he says in these lines. Oberhelman and Armstrong go still further in examining, through the lens of Philodemus' poetics, pairs of oppositions: res / verba, ars / ingenium as Horace treats them in relation to Lucilius, not only in 1.4 but as well in 1.10, which offers a kind of chiasmatically structured resolution to the issue of what constitutes true poetry. So—and one can hardly quibble with the force of these arguments—Horace the satirist is a true poet and meant to say so through the canny misdirection of his intriguing little satire.

Yet it may be possible to maintain a degree of reservation as to whether this is all Horace meant. The modesty topos has been worked thus many times, seemingly by Lucilius himself (on which, see below), and it is possible that Horace suggests here something more complicated. At very least it might be fun to consider the prospect. Let's look again at lines 39-48: “primum ego me illorum dederim quibus esse poetis excerptam numero: neque enim concludere versum dixeris esse satis neque, si qui scribat uti nos sermoni propria, putes hunc esse poetam. ingenium cui sit, cui mens divinior atque os magna sonaturum, des nominis huius honorem. idcirco quidam comoedia necne poema esset, quaesivere, quod acer spiritus ac vis nec verbis nec rebus inest, nisi quod pede certo differt sermoni, sermo merus.”

”

“First, I would exclude myself from those who can properly be called poets. You would not consider it enough simply to produce a metrical line. Nor, if a man wrote, as I do, in a style rather close to prose, would you count him a poet. The honour of that name should be reserved for someone with a natural gift, an inspired soul, and a voice of mighty music. That's why the question has been raised whether comedy is genuine poetry, for in language and subject matter it lacks the fire and force of passion, and only that it differs from prose in the regularity of its rhythm, it is prose pure and simple.<sup>n16</sup>”

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.39-48*

Now it is easy to see irony here, especially in that ingenium, mens divinior, and os magna sonaturum, and certainly possible if one looks closely, as many have done, to see the artful arrangement of this sermo which does, in fact, distinguish it from comedy, despite the generic consonance on the level of poetic diction that Horace takes rather elaborate pains to point out. But there is another duplicity here. Long ago, "persona theory" reminded us to avoid easy assimilation of poet and speaker.<sup>n17</sup> That general caution, though far less central after New Historicism's reconnection of poet with "context," still has some useful

purchase, though now it might be nuanced through lenses of refining distinction offered from a variety of critical perspectives. Narratological and related criticism alerts us to levels of "authority" within the text (real author, implied author, narrator(s), and on),<sup>n18</sup> and others focus on shifting dynamics of voice or "face" with respect to diverse audiences within and without the poem's discourse—as has Ellen Oliensis recently.<sup>n19</sup> The authorial distantiation from represented voice(s) in respect to different available audience entailed in the poem's enactment is complex and subtle, though it will not be my purpose here, in this limited space, to address the issue in detail. Instead, my effort will be to take the critical scruple in a slightly different direction, beginning with an elementary, categorical caveat: any time we see Horace using the first person we must remind ourselves that this may be—almost certainly is, given the conventions of Roman poetic composition—at some crucial level of literary reality not Horace tout court.<sup>n20</sup>

The poet is hardly shy about leaving signals to this effect. He constructs a speaker's identity defined through a conspicuous counter-typology: not forerunner Lucilius who swashbuckled his way through Roman rascality; not contemporary Stoic-poetaster Crispinus who, like the prolific Lucilius and vainglorious Fannius, shamelessly churned the stuff out. Instead we have (thus negatively described—a virtual study in negativity) shy and modest "Horace," too abashed to swashbuckle or even recite publicly, too dim to have any really interesting thoughts. And he's happy about it, for it keeps him off the spot: "[di bene fecerunt](#), [inopis me quodque pusilli finxerunt animi](#), [raro et perpauca loquentis](#); . . . .  
 . . . [beatus Fannius ultro delatis capsis et imagine](#), [cum mea nemo scripta legat](#), [volgo recitare timentis ob hanc rem](#), [quod sunt quos genus hoc minime iuvat](#)...

”

“Thank God for giving me a timid mind with few ideas,  
 one which seldom speaks and then says practically nothing. ...  
 Fannius is happy to present his works unasked, complete  
 with a case to hold them and a bust of himself. But no one reads  
 what I write; I'm afraid to give public recitations for this reason:  
 there are certain people to whom this kind of writing is anathema. . . .

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.17-18; 21-24*

This Horatian persona has been called, quite rightly, [doctor ineptus](#).<sup>n21</sup> But it is too often read as merely that, Horace putting on a buffoonish turn, perhaps cobbling this self-portrait out of his current and real insecurities. There are, however, signs of canner intent. This voice seems fashioned to mark out generic ground in relation to established authority and school: Horace does not just happen to be not-Eupolis, Cratinus, Aristophanes, Lucilius, Crispinus, Fannius, or any of the [scurrae](#), back-biters and scandal mongers, that come later in the poem. "In reality," like "any human being" he and his art share characteristics with all, or most, of these; but he defines his speaker in contradistinction, and that is the salient point. We need not reason from probability: that this poet Horace is already at the time of writing beyond his early, uncertain years, has been military tribune and friend to Brutus, has survived the civil war only to land among privileged friends, poets and patrons; that such a one is anything but timid of mind or ambition and is, as any young poet on the make must be, busy giving recitations at the drop of an invitation to sympathetic audiences.<sup>n22</sup> All the reader need notice is what Horace the poet gives us by way

characterization, a portrait that scarcely disguises a carefully plotted critical mapping; one that, beyond invoking the usually-seen measures (the satiric tradition of Old Comedy; the invention and characteristics of Lucilian satire; Hellenistic literary values; new comedy), creates a satirist made to order for satire's new order. This "Horace" is meant to have definitive meaning and place within the frame of this poem, which seems so evident that it is a wonder so many have fallen for this near-Prufrock and considered him something like the real Horace saying these things, meaning other things, about his life, his art, and so forth.

Now one way to look at this self-fashioning is to go back to earlier scholarship and see it in the programmatic terms proposed by George Converse Fiske: Horace presents himself as a satirist in the later Cynic tradition, to be contrasted with Lucilius and the earlier Cynics with their fondness for obscenity and "brutal frankness."<sup>n23</sup> This new Cynic satirist has picked up good ideas from Panaetius via Cicero on the style appropriate to the satirist's urbanity, free from the slashing, illiberal humor of the earlier (Old) comic and iambographic tradition, particularly that represented in the Aristotelean [βωμόλοχος](#) (buffoon). Instead, Horace embodies the satiric spirit of the "liberal jest" couched in terms of the plain style as dictated by Republican rhetorical theory. Fiske has made a good case in these terms, particularly in respect to those sections of the poem where Horace seems to negotiate the rough edges between his satire and common assumptions about the abuses and malignant spirit of iambographic poetry as popularly understood, as for example in passages spoken by a hostile [adversarius](#) : "[faenum habet in cornu; longe fuge: dummodo risum excutiat, sibi non, non cuiquam parcat amico; et quodcumque semel chartis illeverit, omnis gestiet a furno redeuntis scire lacuque, et pueros et anus.](#)"

”

“There's hay on his horns! Give him a wide berth! If he can  
Raise a laugh he'll have no respect for himself or his friends.  
And when he has smeared some dirt on his page, he is bursting to pass  
It on to all the servants and old women on their way home  
From bake-house and tank.'

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.34-38*

“ ['laedere gaudes'](#)  
[inquit, 'et hoc studio pravus facis.'](#) [unde petitum](#)  
[hoc in me iacis?](#)

”

“ 'You like giving pain,'  
says a voice, 'and you do it out of sheer malice.' Where did you get  
that slander to throw at me?

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.78-80*

As this last protest would seem to indicate, Horace's affiliations with popular ethical Cynicism, his want of malice, his desire for a sophisticated rather than common audience, his dedication to Ciceronian and Hellenistic stylistic standards, his disavowal of high poetic ambition—all seem to set him apart from the out-of-control muckraker of an earlier tradition. Horace's self-characterization in these terms is thus a good and consistent "fit" throughout the poem.

Yet all this is no less an artificial construction, despite Fiske's reading this satiric character as Horace's own literary and personal apologia. The very language of the self-fashioning is a construal of a specified set of aesthetic variables, this "Horace" no more than the sum of a number of rhetorical and "philosophical" decisions presented in the context of a number of other possible decisions. Fiske's Horace not only speaks the language of literary critical contestation deriving ultimately from Aristotle, but is a creature of that language—and of Fiske's very local reading. As is natural enough: any self-consciously programmatic poem is bound to be a construction of the aesthetic and philosophical stuff to hand, as colored by the lens through which it is read; its biographical reliability inherently dubious—as Fiske himself comes close to acknowledging when he describes the Cynic and comic underpinnings of Horace's notable portrait of his father (more on which later).<sup>n24</sup>

But acknowledging differences between real and portrayed Horace is scarcely enough. That merely tells us that we are presented with an "unreliable narration," a narrative/dialogic space where fiction and history overlap in distractingly imprecise ways. Does Horace "mean it" when he, through his speaker, criticizes Lucilius, denies poetic status to satire, speaks of proper satire as composed of Republican/Hellenistic aesthetic values and moral force, attributes that force to early training from his stern and observant father, and so on? Or where, precisely, does invented speaker and poet's real history coincide, and how does that matter to the poem's program or the literary values espoused? More disconcerting still: why does Horace play the autobiographical card at all, knowing as he does that some elements of this self-presentation will be seen, transparently, as fitted out for the poem's occasion? Lacking the time machinery necessary for an interview, we might approach the problem, with fair responsibility to its complexity, from another direction: considering how Horace plays the game of generic revision.

In simple and, I think, uncontroversial terms, Horace at very least puts on offer here something new; we'll call him the "new satirist"—the new satirist talking about his art. Under an earlier dispensation this would be called simply programmatic, a misleading designator, for "programmatic" entails an assumption of the poet speaking directly about his own aesthetic program. Horace gives us, rather, displaced aesthetic talk. Displaced and contextualized in a way that stages a literary conversation through what is sometimes called a discursive modeling system that re-presents the larger world in a certain fashion. Bakhtin and Medvedev's formulation goes this way: "every genre has methods and means of seeing and conceptualizing reality, which are accessible to it alone," or, later, "every significant genre is a complex system of means and methods for the conscious control and finalization of reality."<sup>n25</sup> "Finalization" (zavershenie) suggests closure, structured wholeness, so that genre, rather than being merely the additive sum of a collection of conventions (as Bakhtin and Medvedev see formalist conceptions of genre), constitutes a literary universe not just of selected things, but as well of the "natural" laws of its operation. "Each genre possesses definite principles of selection definite forms for seeing and conceptualizing reality, and a definite scope and depth of penetration."<sup>n26</sup> Genre, as such a discursive system, selects and transfigures elements from "reality" and authorizes them as essential bearings in relation to which the generic code functions. Those bearings we most commonly associate with those conspicuous features of characterization or setting that are said to mark the genre. Examples are not merely the familiar, designating characters—clever slaves and guileless adolescents of New Comedy, the shepherds and groves of pastoral—but the different rules of interaction, valorization, and so forth. Gian Biagio Conte enriches it all by pointing out that, despite clear delimitations of setting, manner, tone, and characterization, each genre is capable of reducing the larger world of experience and discourse

to its own terms.<sup>n27</sup> Genre translates experience to a modality of discourse. Genres' exclusions, then, are not chiefly a means of segmenting reality (this place for lovers, this for students of philosophy) as a massive translation of a larger incoherence to a conceptualizing discourse that enables coherence. Under such a view literary genre is not, or not only, that set of thematized formal conventions that identify literature as literature and provide its differentially organized languages, but a kind of "language place" where reality and the conventions of its reception or conception are negotiated. A further dimension is described by Conte: "the sensitivity of Roman poets toward genres [a parte subjecti](#) is confirmed by the curious phenomenon of 'empty slots.' Within the development of Roman poetry, the tension directed toward a canon of genres is so strong that expectations are created concerning 'unoccupied' spaces, blanks created and delimited at the borders of already existing genres."<sup>n28</sup>

It is the poet who, when he is bold enough, negotiates these margins, and Horace here, bold even in offering to public view his mask of modesty, is setting out to create a new discourse world at the margins of what he would have called traditional satire. This is crucially not the same as seeking to spruce satire up with Hellenistic aesthetics, or even to flirt with other generic manners Kreuzung-style, drawing them significantly into satire's multiply-composed stuffing. Rather, it is to create a modeled world of language, within which things make a certain kind of sense, configure selected aspects of reality and experience coherently. Seen this way, much of what Horace does to set up his speaker's intriguing disavowal indicate a plausible strategy—one that touches on a further necessary element in this generic gamesmanship. The speaker opens the poem by instancing "the poets Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophanes" for the sole reason (apparently) of invoking their satiric authority, that is, their representation of that iambographic tradition of satire—the connection represented in Diomedes: [carmen maledicum ad carpenda vitia hominum archaeae comoediae caractere compositum](#) (abusive poetry written in the manner of Old Comedy to attack the vices of humankind).

Horace writes at lines 3-5: "[siquis erat dignus describi, quod malus ac fur, quod moechus foret aut sicarius aut alioqui famosus, multa cum libertate notabant.](#)"

”

“If any person deserved to be publicly exposed for being a crook and a thief, an adulterer or a cut-throat, or for being notorious in some other way, they used to speak right out and brand him.

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.3-5*

That old Comedy fairly represents this traditional conception of the satiric is true enough.<sup>n29</sup> Yet, as others have noticed, this is only a partial reading of the generic character of Old Comedy, which is concerned with the project of attacking vice only along the way to more central concerns.<sup>n30</sup> Thus comedy's and satire's being defensibly part of the tradition of personal and social criticism along with invective, diatribe epigram, (some) didactic and more is no argument for generic identity or function, especially in a literary world where there is such heightened awareness of the canonicity and hierarchy of genres; Horace makes his knowing this clear in lines to follow. The question raised for us is: how are we to place this enacting, generic triangulation? Lucilius comes next: "[hinc omnis pendet Lucilius, hosce secutus mutatis tantum pedibus numerisque.](#)"

”

“Lucilius derives entirely from them: he followed their lead changing only their rhythms and meters.

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.6-7*

Again, Lucilius does plausibly follow in the comic invective tradition, but Horace has it [hinc omnis pende](#) --entirely derives from them, and this is clearly not true in one obvious sense: Lucilius did not write Old Comedy with but changed meter. The overstatement flags an issue, an awkward hitch in the logic of argument. It is apparent that this opening gambit is, again, not an attempt to define generic identities, but to designate points of relationship (conceivably focalizing that marking, at this point, via the [fautores Lucili](#) he will mention in [Sat. 1.10](#)—how that Lucilian claque might view satiric genealogy<sup>n31</sup>) in a larger generic conversation, call it tradition. Horace, then, seems to place genres into a kind of mobility and to raise questions about where one begins and another ends—hinting at those empty spaces Conte mentioned

But it is not just a case of one genre (problematically) leading (or not) to another, sharing pedigrees or elements. Horace's invocation of Eupolis, Cratinus, Aristophanes, and Lucilius locates, as we have said, crucial generic relationships, and, as we have further said, the common assumption has been to see them a continuous—sharing somehow the Geist of satire's job, a job he wants to take on in his own way. It is possible, however, to see Horace's lumping together of four individual poets as performing an alienating rather than proximating function. Lucilius is not quite the same as the writers of Old Comedy who are themselves dissimilar in notable respects from one another. Placing them together can effectively mark out distance between an older iambographic generic identity and the new; these writers are similar in all being not-Horace. The point of (ostensible) specific difference between new and old is stylistic, with Lucilius the target:<sup>n32</sup> “[hinc omnis pendet Lucilius](#), [hosce secutus mutatis tantum pedibus numerisque](#); [facetus](#), [emunctae naris](#), [durus componere versus](#): [nam fuit hoc vitiosus](#): [in hora saepe ducentos](#), [ut magnum](#), [versus dictabat stans pede in uno](#): [cum flueret lutulentus](#), [erat quod tollere velles](#): [garrulus atque piger scribendi ferre laborem](#), [scribendi recte](#);

”

“Lucilius derives entirely from them; he followed their lead changing only their rhythms and metres. He was a witty fellow with a keen nose, but harsh when it came to versification. That was where his fault lay. As a tour de force he would often dictate two hundred lines an hour standing on his head. He was a muddy river with a lot of stuff that should have been removed. A man of many words, he disliked the effort of writing—writing properly, that is;

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.6-13*

What is overt in all this is reductionism. Lucilius is like the comic poets and Lucilius's Latinity is, in the language of the new Hellenism, a muddy stream. Conspicuously elided at this point are the exceptional

learning, the cultured sophistication, the metrical experiment and invention, prominent Callimachean influence, Lucilius's own exacting metrical and compositional studies (Bk. IX), the stylistic ingenuity as recorded by Cicero, and the opinion represented later by Quintilian's rejection of the Horatian characterization.<sup>n33</sup> Horace, it is clear, caricatures Lucilius, presents him to us readers in singular, memorable, and rather down at heels dress. The bold, aristocratic swashbuckler, scourge of the city, has something of the vulgar about him—and so the vulgar poetasters Crispinus and Fannius are made to join the company, an insinuating equation between an indubitably great poet and the scribblers.<sup>n34</sup> The rhetorical gambit fools no one but the most naïve (for instance, those he defends himself against in *Sat.* 1.10, [adversarii](#) for the occasion); Horace rather shows us the process of Lucilius's antiquing, his speaker painting over the yellow glaze so thickly that only broad, prominent outlines show through. And behind that film, another layer, with just the shadows of Aristophanes and his generic kin—all but some vague family resemblance gone. The fun is in the doing it, demonstrating all the while how it is done. Horace, among Lucilius's other readers, cannot but know what is left out in this portrait; and so a doubled perspective, literary portrayal as a kind of negative allusion "intended to" but of course not able to disremember a literary antecedent. The reader recalls Lucilius in some greater wholeness, despite the obliterating caricature. The distance between Lucilius and his Horatian version corresponds to that between the poem's Horace and the poet himself. Each writer, as represented in the satire, plays a role, stands for a certain kind of generic configuration, even while the poem foregrounds the omissions necessary to enable the fictive contestation. The signal is almost flagrant: "look what fun I have with my misprision of Lucilius; now watch what I make of 'me' as satirist." And so the story of the harmless, dutiful son's satire unfolds.

But why the acute focus on, and distortion of, Lucilius [qua](#) writer? There is obviously a degree of expediency and convention in this procedure; genre's identification is frequently managed, in classical poetics, metonymically, major genres and innovations identified by their founders or prominent innovators.<sup>n35</sup> Lucilius stands conventionally for satire, and is here made obsolete in that representation: that kind of satirist, that kind of satire. But the case of Lucilius is a special one, for he, first in Latin literature, formulates the idea of poetry as personal expression ( [ego ubi quem ex praecordiis ecfero versum](#) . . . (when I bring out any verse from my very heart. . . [670-71 [ROL](#)]); for Lucilius, satire becomes the literary space in which poet can openly express feelings about himself and the world. Certainly this is how Horace reads the precedent, though he combines the notion with commonplaces inherited from the Greek tradition when he describes the intimate relation between Lucilius and his poetry books in *Sat.* 2.1.30-34: "[ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim credebat libris neque, si male cesserat, usquam decurrens alio neque si bene; quo fit ut omnis votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella vita senis. sequor hunc...](#)<sup>n36</sup>

”

“In the past he would confide his secrets to his books. He trusted them like friends, and whether things went well or badly he'd always turn to them; in consequence, the whole of the man's life is laid before us, as if it were painted on a votive tablet. He's the man I follow...

”

*Hor. Sat. 2.1.30-34*

This intense connection between poet and his verse becomes canonical in Roman satire—it is seen most vividly in Persius. One of the central elements of the satiric formula after Lucilius and Horace, thus, is the identification of author and satirist; the genre precisely invites such a reading. But we have seen Horace destabilize that self in the case of Lucilius and, crucially, misread it. Horace, then, offers a second invitation: read satire "as if" its author were speaking personally, but read it, too, suspiciously, aware that any authorial presence in the poem is (only) that made-up self the composer wants there. Satire in short must seem, but only seem, to speak from the heart, [ex praecordiis](#). And, once again, Horace shows us how it is done: misreading and estranging Lucilius from his intended literary program, Horace creates his own (seeming) modest, poetically unassuming satiric self before our eyes in this first program poem.

And does so with remarkable literary/allusive complication. For the very self-creation that antiquates, makes obsolete, the genre's founding master Lucilius, depends in subtle allusive chemistry on Lucilius himself. Fiske's foundational work on the dependence of Horace on Lucilius is perhaps overly keen to locate affinities, and when finding them reads Horace chiefly as an "imitator" of Lucilian language and idea. Still, the traces are numerous enough to suggest that Horace's rejection of Lucilian precedent is a highly qualified and canny one; again, there is much seeming here. Notable, for the purposes of this essay is Fiske's suggestion that in fr. 1064 [ROL](#) ( [cui sua committunt mortali claustra Camenae](#) [me, to whom, a mere mortal, the [Camenae](#) entrust their bolts (or keys)]) lurks evidence that Lucilius too denied the status of poetry to his work. The temple of the [Camenae](#) at Rome is alluded to; the epicizing diction and style mindful of Horace's quotation of Ennius at 60-61; Lucilius, like Horace after, stands apart from the [collegium poetarum](#).<sup>n37</sup> Fiske's argument may here seem conjectural, even thin; but there is little doubt that Lucilius preferred to call his verse anything but poetry: [sermo](#) (talk), [schedium](#) (cobbled verse), [lusus](#) (trifle) being the favored terms.<sup>n38</sup> Marx's reconstruction of fr. 1131 [ROL](#) ( [qui schedium fa](#) ...) is rather too hopeful, but nonetheless suggestive of how short the distance to Horace is: [ego non poeta sum, qui schedium faciam, tantum non carmina vera](#).<sup>n39</sup>

This is background noise; just loud enough to ensure that we are aware of "something" going on behind the sweeping disavowals, ensuring, in turn, that we see the artfulness of this satiric/programmatic confession. Satire will, after Horace, be a personal, confessional genre, the product of a highly visible poet-speaker; but Horace's allusive complications, his overt misprisions, prevent us from reading that speaker naively—it is, always in Horace, the product of sophisticated artifice. So too, the satirized "world," of which the satiric voice is seen to be both a creator and a part. For (Old Comedy's) targets-in-life, mentioned by this speaker, are of a curiously singular character, already translated into satiric idiom, marked out for satire. Again, lines 3-5: "[si quis erat dignus describi, quod malus ac fur, quod moechus foret aut sicarius aut alioqui famosus](#)...

”

“If any person deserved to be publicly exposed for being a crook and a thief, an adulterer or a cut-throat, or for being notorious in some other way...

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.3-5*

The passage anticipates 24-33: “...[utpote pluris culpari dignos. quemvis media elige turba: aut ob avaritiam aut misera ambitione laborat: hic nuptarum insanit amoribus, hic puerorum;](#)

[hunc capit argenti splendor](#); [stupet Albius aere](#);  
[hic mutat merces surgente a sole ad eum](#), [quo](#)  
[vespertina tepet regio](#), [quin per mala praecepta](#)  
[fertur uti pulvis collectus turbine](#), [nequid](#)  
[summa deperdat metuens aut ampliet ut rem](#):  
[omnes hi metuunt versus](#), [odere poetas](#).

”

“...because most men deserve a scolding. Pick anyone you like from a crowd;  
you'll find he's plagued with avarice or else the disease of ambition.  
One is obsessed with married women, another with boys.  
One loves the glitter of silver; Albius is entranced by bronze.  
One barter his wares from beneath the eastern sky  
to lands warmed by the evening sun; he is swept headlong  
through hardships, like dust raised by a whirlwind, in constant dread  
of losing a penny of his capital or failing to make a profit.  
Such men are all afraid of verses and detest poets.

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.24-33*

The passages are prominently linked by parallel rubrics: [dignus describi](#) and [culpari dignos](#). Muecke comments perceptively: "I take these correspondences (especially [dignus describi](#) and [culpari dignos](#)) as showing that Horace's position in relation to society is analogous to that of the Attic comedians and Lucilius, analogous but not exactly the same. The difference in expression indicates a difference in approach. In lines 3-5 the individuals are totally identified with their [vitia](#), as [fur](#), [moechus](#), [sicarius](#) and so on. But in the later passage the emphasis is on the [vitia](#) themselves, which individuals may be taken as exemplifying, while still, we note, being named."<sup>n40</sup> The first part of this seems to me precisely right: "analogous but not exactly the same," and "the difference in expression indicates a difference in approach." But the distinction is a mechanical one, perhaps not taking us as far as it might into Horace's satiric method. Let's see what happens if we emphasize the verbs rather than those parallel [digni](#), particularly following that loaded hypothetical, [siquis](#): "this lot, if any should just happen to fit the usual profile, should be done up in verse." [Describi](#) and [culpari](#) both designate, despite their indifferently broad general sense, a fairly specific literary response. Muecke,<sup>n41</sup> who invokes Brink on [A.P.](#) 183, observes that [dignus](#) can suggest "fitting" as in "fitting of description" and "may imply literary appropriateness as well, the characters of comedy being [φᾰῦλοι](#) . . . ." It is possible to understand this beyond the issue of the local case, [φᾰῦλοι](#) and comedy, and suggest that Horace here is designating a characteristic literary nexus: just as comedy "writes up" certain kinds of stock figures in its literary formula, so does satire (write up different kinds), and in the writing up transforms the "targets" into a new ontological status: no longer realistic specimens of vice in society but satiric specimens as seen through, and transformed by, the generic lens.

Literary treatment appropriates and transforms. These characters are [digni](#) of writing up because they have become part of the genre's langue. Horace thus identifies a particular relationship: a certain delimited kind of vice and poetry. "Who" gets so treated is not, from the very beginning of this poem, a matter of selection of likely candidates from the ordinary course of life—these are not, as a category or class of targets, real people. Nor are they a higgledy-piggledy gatherum from related genres: none of Old Comedy's fantastic creatures or real-life butts of parabasis-diatribes, no tragically flawed protagonist, no extravagantly demonized object of invective derision (Tigellius and Canidia are mere cartoons in the

Satires), no ordinary, reasonably complex middle class Romans who speak the prose he claims to versify.<sup>n42</sup> Horace, in short, creates a language world peopled by the usual sort of satiric suspects even when reading comedy's reading of so-called real life. The usual sort, that is, as they will come to be, for Horace is, in these early poems of the first book, playing his show for the first time with this cast of characters. Here, the contrast with Lucilius is pointedly vivid. Put another way, Horace, despite the plenty of anti-social writing behind him, introduces the fiction of satire's critical relation to society (Horace's poem is meta-critically about Lucilius's and his own practice), codifies for the first time a literary medium that has so seemed to gravitate to the "natural" axis of iambographic writing (Lucilius' articulate growl) that the novelty of the thing is usually overlooked.<sup>n43</sup> Horace's satiric targets, in short, come to readers translated in this satire, generically estranged from the analogues (whether "vice" or individuals) in the real and ordinary world, as Horace himself is estranged. It is easy to see this in self-protective terms, as has too-often enough been done; or as a categorical "fictionalizing" of the verse, but the diffracting lens of genre is no real impediment to the presence of real politics (and/or other issues) in the poetry. The crucial point is Horace's denial of naïve transparency; if we are to discern those places where Realien impinge, we will have to understand, so this "programmatic" poem tells us, the transposing generic system Horace has created for his new satire, take it into account in our reckonings of how Horace's poetry works in his (real) world. Some, of course, won't notice, and that suits speaker-Horace just fine: this carefully constructed satirist does not want to go out on a limb, wants to stay in his quietly sinecured study, out of the way: no ground-breaking for him. Hence, he (seems to) present his satire as the old thing all over: Old Comedy, Lucilius, New Comedy, life, his father's moralizing lessons—all the same, really, a harmless continuum.

Why the indirection? Why this formulation from within the disguise, or more precisely, through the eyes of a character set in a constructed literary universe? Possibly because the thing really can't be done otherwise. The overview of formal literary theory, or even the ad hoc potshots in a compendium like the AP, being rather like trying to describe a language (think here of "programmatic poems") by setting out its grammar in full detail; one comes, through the resulting μέγα βιβλίον, to understand lots about that language, but doesn't get the thing itself. Thus playing with the notion of generic description (rules and strictures are formulated, all right, and they are good rules: on rough versification, on copiousness, on tenor, on carelessness of all sorts), Horace demonstrates, through his ironically timorous speaker, both the insufficiency of extra-mural generic assertion—this "Horace" hand to hand with Lucilius?!—and the potency of the creating word, of the generic world, this new satire within which the new satirist lives. This is, after all, a Horace we have believed in for quite a time.

We also see in this world, beyond stock vice, the hostility generated as per satire's formula, again Horace's creation (33): "Such men are all afraid of verses and detest poets": the satirist presumes to be stalking the world's sinners and is in turn stalked by the lurking resentment of the characters of his dramatized world. So when the satirist says, I am afraid to give public recitations because certain people resent it, people who are avaricious, ambitious, love-obsessed and the rest, we know we are in a literary cityscape in which these are our neighbors; in the modeled world of elegy, or epic, or even comedy, we'd be on a decidedly different part of town.

As, for instance, we are when (at 45) the speaker mentions comedy as potentially non-poetry in response to which an interlocutor instances a stock comic scene: " ...!at pater ardens saevit, quod meretrice nepos insanus amica filius uxorem grandi cum dote recuset, ebrius et, magnum quod dedecus, ambulet ante noctem cum facibus.' numquid Pomponius istis audiret leviora, pater si viveret? ergo non satis est puris versum perscribere verbis, quem si dissolvas, quivis stomachetur eodem

[quo personatus pacto pater.](#)

”

“ 'But you see the father  
in a blazing temper because his wastrel of a son dotes on a call-girl,  
refuses to accept a wife who would bring him a fat dowry,  
and causes dreadful embarrassment by parading drunkenly with torches before dusk.'  
But surely young Pomponius would receive  
Just as severe a scolding from a father in real life?  
So it isn't enough to write out a line in plain words  
which rearranged could be spoken by an angry father  
like the one in the play.

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.48-56*

The point made by the satirist is that wrathful words alone do not make up true poetry's [acer spiritus ac vis](#), that poetry's [virtus](#) should resist metathesis, that its language should not be too base (hence the ugly [stomachetur](#)), and so forth.<sup>n44</sup> Yet in the apparent denial of poetry's status to comedy, Horace demonstrates comedy's autonomy as generic system. For this little vignette is a précis of the real thing, conspicuously: [senex](#), [adulescens](#), [meretrix](#), the standard situations, New Comedy's sons and fathers. Its characters are decidedly, again, not ordinary Romans, nor are their situations anything but the stuff of comedy. This little in-structured juxtaposition, a canonical comic situation over against its real-life counterpart (Pomponius and father) becomes deictic, gestural, marking a boundary between what falls within generic formula and what does not (despite, again, the satirist's arguing that a common linguistic register inhabits both—as do a number of elements, hence, the old and faulty commonplace about comedy's "realism"<sup>n45</sup>). And this is how the metapoetic trick works in this poem; comedy here is instance seen from without; the reader looks not through the fiction of comedy, suspending disbelief and the rest, but as it were from above, as a specimen of the way things might be formulated, composed. The same holds true, more complexly, for the generic setting that is this poem: always a double perspective pertains, the "world" seen from within, through the eyes of this interestingly diffident speaker, and the satiric world as modeled reality seen from without, through the eyes of Horace, say, or his audience(s) thinking about what is being created in this poem. The doubleness enables metapoetic implication and inference; allows the reader both to see with and look at this "Horace" writing (about) satire.

Horace's new formulation, however, is more than the sum of this poem's parts viewed stereoscopically. The satire creates its own foundation myth. Having established a congruency of "satiric spirit" between the writers of Old Comedy and Lucilius ([hinc omnis pendet](#)), he, as virtually everyone says, establishes a similar closeness of register between New Comedy and his own satire. Again, not, as in the earlier case, to establish generic identity, but in illustration of a mobile textual continuity that permits formative gestures at the margins of prior and other generic definition. Not unrelated, of course, is the thematic focus of the New Comic précis on fathers and sons and the obvious stress throughout the poem on generic parentage. Lucilius is the rejected father figure, Horace's strong precursor, and his speaker's anxiety of influence is conspicuous. This will do well enough for a beginning. Later in the poem (103ff.) our speaker will instance at length another filial relationship, where our speaker explains how his father's assiduous ethical training has led him to write as he does. “ [liberius si dixero quid, si forte iocosius, hoc mihi iuris cum venia dabis: insuevit pater optimus hoc me, ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quaeque notando.](#)

cum me hortaretur, parce frugaliter atque  
viverem uti contentus eo quod mi ipse parasset,  
'nonne vides, Albi ut male vivat filius utque  
Baius inops? magnum documentum, ne patriam rem  
perdere quis velit.' a turpi meretricis amore  
cum deterreret: 'Scetani dissimilis sis.'  
ne sequerer moechas, concessa cum venere uti  
possem: 'deprensi non bella est fama Treboni'  
aiebat...

et, sive iubebat  
ut facerem quid, 'habes auctorem, quo facias hoc'  
unum ex iudicibus selectis obiciebat;  
sive vetabat, 'an hoc inhonestum et inutile factu  
necne sit, addubites, flagret rumore malo cum  
hic atque ille?' avidos vicinum funus ut aegros  
exanimat mortisque metu sibi parcere cogit,  
sic teneros animos aliena opprobria saepe  
absterrent vitiis.

”

“ Yet if I'm a little outspoken or perhaps  
too fond of a joke, I hope you'll grant me that privilege.  
My good father gave me the habit; to warn me off  
he used to point out various vices by citing examples.  
When urging me to practise thrift and economy and to be content  
with what he himself had managed to save he used to say:  
'Notice what a miserable life young Albius leads and how Baius  
is down and out—a salutary warning not to be so quick  
to squander one's inheritance.' Steering me away from a squalid attachment  
to a prostitute he would say: 'Don't be like Scetanus!' To stop me  
chasing someone else's wife when legitimate sex was available:  
'It isn't nice to get a name like that of Trebonius—he  
was caught in the act'...

Recommending something he'd say:  
'You have a good precedent for that,' and point to one of the judges  
selected by the Praetor; or by way of dissuading me: 'How can you doubt,'  
he'd say, 'whether this would be a foolish and dishonourable thing to do  
When X and Y are the centre of a blazing scandal?' Invalids  
who are tempted to over-eat are given a fright by the funeral  
of the man next door, and the terror of death compels them to go easy;  
in the same way young folk are often deterred from doing wrong  
when they see the notoriety of other people.

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.4.103-15; 121-29*

Sometimes that passage is read naïvely, as genuine autobiography; more usually, it is pointed out that the passage derives from New Comic roots.<sup>n46</sup> For Horace's father, as presented here, is a character drawn from comedy, specifically Demea from the Adelphoe (see especially 441-43). Neither view is theoreticall!

exclusive of the other or of probability: a father could plausibly moralize in this way and Horace could have selected the given literary language of comedy to illustrate an obvious generic affinity, New Comedy and paternal moralizing/satire being kin. Yet there are problems: as moral education this is poor stuff. However readers might enjoy a back-to-the-fifties look at a Roman "father knows best," this heartwarming ethical didaxis belongs in the Neverland of children's stories. Or in the never-never land of New Comedy where precisely such facile child-raising formulae, in the mouth of the impossible Demea, come in for robust critique. The young intellectual Horace was raised on richer stuff, his father not the simple freedman of the *Satires*.<sup>n47</sup> And inconcinnity is signalled; for an upright, homespun (Cynic, according to Fiske) moralizer this father is surprisingly broad minded—and strangely random: 'if you're after good sex, my young lad, go for prostitutes or freedwomen instead of chasing others' wives; don't squander your inheritance (see X); don't become a glutton (see Y)'; and so on. We seem not to be in the land of real temptation or error, or at least realistic response to same, but of canonical vices recycled from literary precedent. So maybe this is a version of New Comedy after all; Horace as guileless *adulescens* hoping for a happy ending. But just as Lucilius' satire is not Old Comedy hexametered, Horace's version of all this is not New Comedy, with its very different literary objectives and appeals; instead, and precisely, it is a catalogue of the subject matter, the *res*, of his art, drawn from the various corners of the related literary past and reconstituted in satiric idiom: prostitutes, other men's wives, squandered inheritances, scandal, gluttony, and the rest. The "moral" axis of the *Satires* is, therefore, as artificial as the simplified homiletics of this paternal guidance, and meant to be seen as such. Does satire address the real world? Yes, with allowances made for the obliquities and transpositions of literary space. Hence, the generic invitation to see the satirist's voice as both poet and other. Thus too, satiric father leading satiric son (and his readers) through this poetry's brave new world, pointing out the things satire, or the new satirist, should notice. Has, in fact, noticed, for the conspicuous self-allusion, at 111-14 to *Sat.* 1.2, on the subject of licit and illicit sex is a dead give-away. Even that poem's punch line, the *in flagrante* surprise and disarrayed flight of this "Horace" himself is alluded to so markedly so as to be virtually transposed into the later satire.

[“discincta tunica fugiendum est ac pede nudo,  
ne nummi pereant aut puga aut denique fama.  
deprendi miserum est...](#)

”

“I have to run off barefoot with my clothes in disarray, otherwise  
My cash or my arse or at least my respectability has had it.  
It's tough to be caught...

”

*Hor. Sat. 1.2.132-34*

[“ne sequerer moechas concessa cum venere uti  
possem 'deprensi non bella est fama Treboni'...](#)

”

“ To stop me  
Chasing someone else's wife when legitimate sex was available;  
'It isn't nice to get a name like that of Trebonius—he  
was caught in the act.'...

”

Trebonius and satirist share their dubious mortification, after all, despite the paternal wisdom. Moral edification, or reminiscence of same, or even the moral force of satire's criticisms, then, is not the point. Rather it is the making of a world in which such characters—glutton, lecher, dissolute heir, upright fathers pious if somehow compromised sons—live. Our poem's speaker is just such a son, being made up before our eyes, given one parent (for satire does not care for good mothers), a certain education, a certain attitude and view of life. How artificial and selective it all is.

But the objective is not realism, or illusion or persuasion, but rather the fashioning of a poetic place in which things fit. That "fit" is genre, the formulated thing. Here re-formulated: brazen Lucilius has become this amusingly modest, but literate little chap Horace presents, and he too can do satire, for he's got the pedigree—just look at his father, not the literary fathers Lucilius or Aristophanes but this better-than-Demea-Daddy, rehabilitated for the occasion, laying down the generic rules this satirist and all of us readers of satire will live by. Of course, the language too is new. We have seen this speaker claim, alluding coyly to Lucilius himself or focalizing his remarks through the lens of those [fautores Lucili](#) that are supposed to represent, but aren't really, his fathers/masters, that his verse is too close to prose, that it lacks "mighty music"; like New Comedy it lacks the "fire and force of passion" and differs from prose only in rhythm; it would not greatly suffer from metathesis. Believing or not believing this speaker "as Horace" or the issue is not really the point. More important that we recognize that speaker's foregrounded self-doubt and, precisely, the unconventionality of this literary space announces errancy, rule-breaking, and thus dramatizes the instant of generic reformulation. And so another distinction is made through the poem's dance of perspectives: one between "tradition" and generic definition; whereas tradition offers an overlapping artscape, a massive intertext of related forms and functionalities (Old and New Comedy, invective, Lucilian satire, diatribe and all the rest), genre represents moments of poised coherence in that continuum, where, precisely, there is no confusion.

When new coherence occurs at the edges of the old, there is entailed both transgression and doubt. Hence, the hard business with Lucilius, and, hence, that tentative speaker with his troubling disavowal. Horace himself, we may believe, had no doubts: his [sermo](#) here and elsewhere is the achieved stuff of genuine poetry, and Horace the poet will scarcely have believed that anyone would think otherwise. But, again, the query and hesitancy come from within the modeled, selected, strange landscape of new-minted satire, and the question thus dramatizes the moment of change: is this good satiric son's step out of the old paradigms real poetry? Will this new generic model, shy and retiring pilot at the helm, fly? We'll see, he says in v. 63 invoking the stereoscopic generic focus and indicating that such judgment is to be made elsewhere, from without, beyond the boundaries of the literary space he will call satire: [alias iustum sit necne poema](#) . . .

1 A version of this essay was presented as part of a panel on Horace's literary criticism at the annual meeting of the Classical Association of the Midwest and South in April of 1998. I am pleased to offer it to this collection honoring my colleague and friend Gene Lane, whose particular combination of learning and [humanitas](#) is reminiscent of Horace's best self.

2 See Scaliger's harsher version, in regard to the AP: [Horatius Artem quam inscripsit adeo sine ulla docet arte](#) (Pref. to Poetics, 1561). Discussed in D. A. Russell, "Ars Poetica," in C.D.N. Costa, ed., Horace (London, 1973) 130.

3 C.O. Brink, Horace on Poetry: Prolegomena to the Literary Epistles (Cambridge, 1963); Epistles Bk. II (Cambridge, 1982); the Ars Poetica (Cambridge, 1971).

4 See, for instance, A. Barchiesi, "Insegnare ad Augusto: Orazio, ep. II.1 e Ovidio, Tristia II," in J.S. Clay et al., eds., The Didactic Addressee [MD no. 31 (special issue)] 149-84.

5 But see G. Davis, Polyhymnia: The Rhetoric of Horatian Lyric Discourse (Berkeley, 1990) and M. Lowrie, Horace's Narrative Odes (Oxford, 1997), both compelling treatments.

6 Bob Rabel reminds me here of Fraenkel's Horace (Oxford, 1957, repr. 1980), 124: "Latin poetry, a child of the Hellenistic age, has almost [ab origine](#) been 'self-conscious' in the primary sense of the word, that is to say given to reflecting upon itself, aware of its own limitations, of the means at its disposal, and of the ends it was aiming at. Theoretical reflection had considerable share in producing it."

7 D. Feeney, "Criticism Ancient and Modern," in D. Innes et al., eds. Ethics and Rhetoric: Critical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday (Oxford, 1995) 305.

8 F. de Bruyn, "Genre Criticism," Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms, I. R. Makaryk, ed. (Toronto, 1993) 80.

9 Though B. Frischer, Shifting Paradigms: New Approaches to Horace's Ars Poetica (Atlanta, 1991) does not. Rather, he finds deep and pervasive parody, a fascinating view which may overreach; but at bottom, the poem quite likely does contain as much irony as critical truth (or truism), and sorting out the difficult balances of ironic/parodic edge and genuine didaxis may lead us as near as we are likely to get to a sense of what Horace really thought about poetry in the abstract. Clearly there is more to find in this intriguing puzzle of a poem that may yet give the lie to easy dismissals of Horace's originality.

10 "Aristotelian" because these poems mark out a metapoetic mythos, a story about the poetry of Satires I that has everything poetry itself has: plots, complications, resolutions. . . The first book itself "begins" of course with the diatribe Satires 1-3, but what these mean for the new generic type Horace is creating is entailed in what he says about the book in 1.4 and 1.10. Most work on Sat. 1.4 has, one way or another, explicitly addressed or entailed less directly questions about Horace's "sincerity" or the historicity of the presumed attacks on the free-wheeling, aggressive satire that this poem seems to explain/defend/rationalize to readers, as well as, of course, about the reliability of the "autobiographical" revelations that come later. Good arguments for the differing views can be found in W.S. Anderson, "The Roman Socrates: Horace and his Satires" in Essays in Roman Satire (Princeton, 1982) 13-49; C.O. Brink, Horace on Poetry: Prolegomena to the Literary Epistles (Cambridge, 1963) 172-73; E. W. Leach, "Horace's Pater Optimus and Terence's Demea: Autobiographical Fiction and Comedy in Serm. 1.4," AJP 92 (1971) 616-32; F. Muecke, "Horace the Satirist: Form and Method in Satire 1.4," Prudentia 11 (1979) 55-68; N. Rudd, The Satires of Horace (Cambridge, 1966) 88-124, and "Had Horace Been Criticized? A Study of Serm. 1,4," AJP, 76 (1955) 165-75; J.E.G. Zetzel, "Horace's Liber Sermonum: The Structure of Ambiguity" Arethusa 13 (1980) 59-77. I will consider the problem of persona and the related issue of "fictionality" within the poetry shortly.

11 Brink (above, [note 3](#)) 161-64.

12 In undertaking this look at Sat. 1.4, I confess that I feel a bit like one of G. L. Hendrickson's geese, or rather Dr. Barclay's geese, instanced at the head of Hendrickson's seminal article on the poem (see below) geese which come along to the field after the reapers and gleaners have done their work, and "still continue to pick up a few grains scattered here and there among the stubble, and waddle home in the evening, poor things, cackling with joy because of their success." The bibliography is large; a selection of essentials, beyond those mentioned in note 3, would have to include the following: P. M. Brown, Horace: Satires 1 (Warminster, 1993); A. Courtault, Étude sur les Satires d'Horace, (Paris, 1899); G. C. Fiske, Lucilius and Horace (Madison, 1920); E. Fraenkel, Horace (Oxford, 1957); K. Freudenburg, The Walking Muse: Horace on the Theory of Satire (Princeton, 1993); G. L. Hendrickson, "Horace, Serm. 1.4: A Protes and a Programme," AJP 21 (1900) 21-42; F. Muecke, "The Audience Of/In Horace's Satires," AUMLA 74 (1990) 34-47; N. Rudd, The Satires of Horace (Cambridge, 1966) and Themes in Roman Satire (London,

1986); C. A. van Rooy, Studies in Classical Satire and Related Literary Theory (Leiden, 1965) and "Arrangement and Structure of Satires in Horace Sermones Book 1," Acta Classica 11 (1968): 37-72, 13 (1970) 7-27 and 45-59, 14 (1971) 67-90, 15 (1972) 37-52; W. Wimmel, Zur Form der Horazischen Diatribensatire (Frankfurt, 1962).

13 Brown (above, [note 12](#)) 127.

14 K. Freudenburg (above, [note 12](#)) esp. 145-50; S. Oberhelman and D. Armstrong, "Satire as Poetry and the Impossibility of Metathesis in Horace's Satires," in D. Obbink, ed, Philodemus and Poetry (Oxford, 1995).

15 "The claims [of non-poetry and the rest] are disingenuous," is the blunt declaration of I. M. Le M. DuQuesnay, "Horace and Maecenas: The Propaganda Value of Sermones 1" in A. Woodman and D. West eds., Poetry and Politics in the Age of Augustus (Cambridge, 1984) 26, n. 37. DuQuesnay's article makes strong case, by the way, for the political relevance of Bk. 1 of the Satires and thereby for the transparency of satire to the life and principals it describes. This piece will take a contrary view, though I think that many of DuQuesnay's conclusions about Horace's relation to the political climate remain valuable.

16 Verse translations throughout are N. Rudd's, The Satires of Horace and Persius (Harmondsworth, 1973), still the best available modern English rendering.

17 See W. S. Anderson, "Roman Socrates," (above, [note 10](#)); see also G. Highet, "Masks and Faces in Satire," Hermes 102 (1974) 321-37.

18 This is ground covered insightfully and informatively, in a Horatian context, by F. Muecke, "The Audience Of/In Horace's Satires," (above, [note 12](#)).

19 E. Oliensis, Horace and the Rhetoric of Authority (Cambridge, 1998). This is not the place to engage the argument of Oliensis' fascinating and important thesis in any detail, though its broadly New Historicist approach, with respect to the Satires, may be said to unpack Horace's strategies of self-defense and self-presentation, facework, in light of his own insecure status during his rise to prominence as friend and protégé of Maecenas. Oliensis isolates a number of "faces" in a complicated sociolinguistic calculus and in so doing arrives at compelling readings. One point of quibble might stem from a sense that some of the confusions that early persona-theory meant to fix remain unaddressed: "Horace's poetic 'face' is not identical to Horace, but it will be identified with him. When Horace calls upon the services of a persona in the strict sense—a differentiating character usually distinguished by a distinctive proper name (Alfius in Epode 2, Ofellus in Satires 2.2)—it is precisely in order to disavow his authorial responsibility: 'this is not Horace speaking'"(2). The quibbler would aver that there is no theory here for deciding when the speaker "Horace" is to be, or not to be, identified with the ambitions, hopes, fears, reality of the poet Horace, merely the presumption of, in this case, a pragmatically useful coincidence. Specifying a distancing speaker in some instances cannot logically preclude the possibility, or even probability, of a "masked" Horace or literary ventriloquism elsewhere. That said, I think (what persona play is this? . . .) that Oliensis's initial formulation is essentially right: the poem's speaker is both not Horace and to be identified (provisionally) with Horace; it is just this marked ambiguity that enables a crucial dimension of genre construction, on which below. On Horace's variable self-presentation in respect to different audiences within the poems, see also R. McNeill, "Horace in the Mirror: Techniques of Address and Self-Presentation," diss. Yale University, 1998.

20 Freudenburg (above, [note 12](#)) has set out the persona of the diatribe satires at length. The poet presents his speaker as doctor ineptus, deriving from comedy: inept, incompetent, and inconsistent, making "himself" the chief object of satire (see esp. 21-27).

21 Freudenburg (above, [note 12](#)) see note 18.

22 F. Muecke in her 1979 article ("Horace the Satirist," (above, [note 10](#), 59) offers irony as diagnosis: "The whole question of publication is surrounded with irony. Even at the stage at which the Satires were not circulating officially, the claim that they were written solely for Horace's edification and that of his friends would have been contradicted by their evident status as pieces of writing. In any case, what he represents as fear of publication soon reveals itself as contempt for the mass of uneducated or indiscriminating readers ( [vulgus](#) 23, cf. 71ff.)."

23 Fiske (above, [note 12](#)) 279.

24 Fiske (above, [note 12](#)) 298-99.

25 P. N. Medvedev and M. M. Bakhtin, The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship: A Critical Introduction to Sociological Poetics, tr. A. J. Wehrle (Baltimore, 1978 [1928]) 133.

26 Medvedev/Bakhtin (above, [note 25](#)) 131.

27 G. B. Conte, Genres and Readers: Lucretius, Love Elegy, Pliny's Encyclopedia, G. W. Most, tr. (Baltimore, 1991) 116.

28 Conte (above, [note 27](#)) 116-17.

29 Cf. Brink (above, [note 10](#)) 157 and note.

30 Zetzel, (above, [note 10](#)) 62; see also A. Parker, "Comic Theory in the Satires of Horace," diss., University of North Carolina, 1986.

31 A point I owe to Kirk Freudenburg.

32 M. Lowrie (above, [note 5](#)) makes a subtler argument about the relation of style to genre, see 40-42.

33 Cicero, de Or. 3.171; Quintilian 1.8.11; 10.1.94.

34 Horace takes it all back, of course, in Sat. 1.10, and 2.1—almost all; but that is another story.

35 On this traditional identification, see T. G. Rosenmeyer, "Ancient Literary Genres: A Mirage?" Yearbook of Comparative Literature 34 (1985) 74-84. Thanks to Michèle Lowrie for the reference.

36 Porphyry and ps.-Acro cite the lyric poets, both mentioning Aristoxenus: Sappho, Alcaeus, and Anacreon "had their own writings in place of friends." See Brink (above, [note 10](#)) 172, n. 2. Brink, 173, n. 2, quotes ps.-Acro: hoc Lucilius ex Anacreonte Graeco traxit et Alcaeo lyricis quos ait Aristoxenus libris propriis vice amicorum usos esse.

37 Fiske (above, [note 12](#)) 288-89.

38 Fiske (above, [note 12](#)) 288. Lucilius does once use the word [poema](#) of his work (fr. 1091 ROL).

39 Fiske (above, [note 12](#)) 290.

40 Muecke, "Horace the Satirist," (above, [note 10](#)) 57-8.

41 Muecke, "Horace the Satirist," (above, [note 10](#)) 57, n.12.

42 Real people of course do appear in the Satires, so frequently that there is no need to itemize them here; one may refer to the helpful lists compiled by N. Rudd, Themes in Roman Satire (above, [note 12](#)) 54-57. But once part of the poems, their identity is transposed into the key of the satire's tenor/approach/idiom. 1.5, for instance, conspicuously plays with the real Apollodorus/Heliodorus, Maecenas, Cocceius Nerva, Fronteius Capito, Varro Murena, Varius, Vergil and the rest, enframing their identities and the real politics of the journey to Brundisium/Tarentum in a Lucilian literary exercise—not a simple or unproblematic one it may be added. Freudenburg, forthcoming, has interesting things to say about this poem. Similarly, poems' addressees, Maecenas and others, become part of the poem's artscape, invoked and "used" for this association or that, and therefore always partial, estranged from real-life identities ("and what have you done with me in your latest, Horace?").

43 Hendrickson (above, [note 12](#)) 124 is surely correct: "I do not believe that Horace is here justifying himself before the harsh criticisms of a public which felt aggrieved and injured by his attacks, nor do I believe that the contents of the satire and the criticisms of himself which it presents are drawn from life. It is, on the contrary, a criticism of literary theory put concretely." Hendrickson goes on to assert that 1.4 outlines an essentially non-Lucilian program. This, now ancient view, surprisingly contested, is solid but needs to be amended: Horace is not merely setting out an anti-Lucilian satiric program, but piecing together out of the fragments of tradition, formulating for the first time, a coherent literary cosmos.

44 Muecke, "Horace the Satirist" (above, [note 10](#)) 60 notes the "prosaic" stomachetur and cites Nisbet and Hubbard on Odes 1.6.6.

45 Which goes way back—to Cicero at least; see Muecke, who endorses it ("Horace the Satirist," above, [note 10](#)) 61 and notes.

46 Many have discussed the allusion; Leach (above, [note 10](#)) and Freudenburg (above, [note 12](#)) most recently and insightfully.

47 See Zetzel (above, [note 10](#)) 62 and, most fully, G. Williams, "Libertino Patre Natus: True or False," in S. J. Harrison, ed., Homage to Horace: A Bimillenary Celebration (Oxford, 1995) 296-313. See also D. Armstrong, Horace (New Haven, 1989) 10-12.

'What? Me a Poet?' Generic Modeling in Horace Sat. 1.4. Dan Hooley. University of Missouri. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.

# **Remedium Amoris: A Curse from Cumae in the British Museum**

David Jordan

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## *Remedium amoris:* A Curse from Cumae in the British Museum

One of the very first publications of lead curse tablets (*defixiones*, *καταθέσεις*) in modern times is that by Wilhelm Henzen, who presented, in 1846, along with a drawing of it made under the supervision of Theodor Mommsen himself, an example, of Roman Imperial date, that had been found in a grave at Cumae and was then in the possession of William Temple, British legate at Naples. I have been able to study the tablet in the British Museum, where it is now housed, and to arrive at fuller readings. These last I am happy to offer here to Eugene Lane, in whose contributions to our studies we all rejoice.<sup>1</sup>

It is a text of particular human interest, having as its purpose not only to bring supernatural vengeance on an errant wife but to enable the wronged husband, evidently still in love with her, to hate her and to lose the memory of his desire for her. As such it is both a request for vengeance, “because she first broke faith with ... her husband,” and a *Trennungszauber* that is so far unique in being written on behalf of one of the parties to be separated.<sup>2</sup>

Its bibliography may be briefly summarized. Not long after Henzen’s edition of 1846, which was evidently based on autopsy, Johann Franz presented, as *CIG* III 5858b,<sup>3</sup> a slightly different text along with a drawing (*Fig. 2*) whose source is unrecorded; this last is presumably only a simplification of that published by Henzen (*Fig. 1*). Whether or not the tablet was available to Franz, he apparently did not examine it: if he had, he no doubt would have abandoned certain of his assumptions of errors in the drawing. For example, Henzen’s transcription, the drawing, and indeed the tablet itself show βερβερουθ at the end of line 29; this being, however, unbelievable as Greek, Franz emended the text to βέρβεραι [ὄνδ]ματα. The text has been reproduced, occasionally with new readings from the drawing or with conjectures, by Carl Wachsmuth (1863:562), Georg Kaibel (*IG* XIV 872, with the drawing of *CIG*), Richard Wünsch (*DTWü* p. xv), René Cagnat and Jacques Toutain (*IGRR* I 415), and Auguste Audollent (*DTAud* 198).<sup>4</sup> My autopsy may well be the first since 1846. Henzen’s readings are the best of those published; Kaibel’s, largely conjectural, which are reproduced by Cagnat and Toutain, are easily the worst.

A few edges and some of the inscribed surface have corroded away since Henzen’s time. A chief

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<sup>1</sup>I would thank the staff of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities for their kindnesses, Jaime B. Curberra and Olli Salomies for useful suggestions about the proper names, and Allaire Stallsmith for the information about the modern Cretan spell (notes on 15-18 *infra*).

<sup>2</sup>Requests for vengeance: The basic treatment is Versnel 1991. For the publication of some 120 further examples, in Latin, see Tomlin 1988 (Bath, Rom.Imp.). Prayers/requests for vengeance normally eschew the apparatus of “black” magic, such as *voces magicae*, maternal lineage, and the application of analogies; all three occur in our text, which according to Versnel’s classification would fall into a “borderland” between prayer and magic.

*Trennungszauber*: We have such separative curses on lead tablets (Attica: *DTAud* 68-69 [IV<sup>a</sup>, see note on line 24 *infra*], *SEG* 35.220-22 [III<sup>p</sup>]; Boeotia: Ziebarth 1934:1040-42, nos. 22-23 [Hell.]; Nemea: *SEG* 30.353, Miller 1980:67, inv. IL 367, 372 [Hell./Rom.Imp.?]; Oxyrhynchus?: *SupplMag* 55 [III<sup>p</sup>]; Rome: Bevilacqua 1997 [Imp.], papyrus (e.g. *PGM* LXVI [III<sup>p</sup>/IV<sup>p</sup>]), and even gemstones (e.g. Bonner 1950:277, no. D150 [Rom. Imp.]: *Χωρίσσετε Ἰερσακίωνα ... ἐπὶ Σερηνίλλως ...*; Grammatikaki and Litinas 2000 [Rom. Imp.], same formula but with *χωρίσσον*); for examples in Demotic and Coptic see the list at *SupplMag* II, p.222, n.1). It is common to find such separative magic as part of positive love-charms—“turn X away from Y so that X will come to me” (e.g. Voutiras 1998 [Pella, IV<sup>a</sup>], *PGM* 0 2 *Κωσον, πύρω<sup>28</sup>σον τήνψυχήν Ἀλλούτος, <sup>29</sup>τὸ γυναικίον σῶμα, τὸ μέ<sup>30</sup>λη, ἕως ἔποσση ἐπὶ τῆς οἰ<sup>31</sup>κίας Ἀπολλωνίου ... <sup>40</sup>Ἀπέλλοξον Ἀλλοῦν ἐπὶ Ἀ<sup>41</sup>πολλωνίου, τοῦ ἐνδρὸς ἐσπῆς* [III<sup>p</sup>])—but this is not the case in the Cumaean curse.

<sup>3</sup>*CIG* III appeared in fascicles in the years 1845-53; I do not know the exact date of that with 5858b.

<sup>4</sup>Karl Wessely (1886a, on lines 6-10; 1886b:181, on lines 7-9) has discussed the *voces magicae* of the text. Audollent noted that G. Minervini (1847-48, *non vidi*) had also treated of the text.



- 28 [—<sup>c.17</sup>—]εχεαι Τυφῶν  
 29 μα[<sup>-c.6</sup>]ον Βαρβάρουθ  
 30 αικαι οχων. Δότε {εἰςμ[εἰ-]  
 31 σος} Βετρουβίω Φήλικι, ὄν'ε[τεκ]ε Βε-  
 32 τρουβία Μαξιμίλλα, ὄν'εσπειρε Β[ετ]ρου-  
 33 βιος Εὐέλπιστος, εἰς μείσος ἐλθεῖν  
 34 καὶ λήθην λαθεῖν τῶν ποθῶν  
 35 Οὐαλερίος Κοδρ[α]τίλλης, ἦν'εσπειρε  
 36 Βα[λέριος Μ]υσε[κ]ί[ο]ς, ἦν'εσκε Βολερία  
 37 [Εὐνοια <sup>-c.7</sup>]τρο. Κατέχετε ὑμεῖς  
 38 [—<sup>c.11</sup>—]ταῖς λοιπαῖς πειμωρίαις  
 39 [—<sup>c.13</sup>—]ας, ὅτι πρώτη ἠθέτησε  
 40 [Βετρούβιον Φ]ήλικα τὸν ἐσσητῆς ἄνδρα  
 41 [—<sup>c.12</sup>—]Ιεκουβητηντων[<sup>-c.3</sup>]τα  
 42 [—<sup>c.14</sup>—]?'[<sup>c.4?</sup>]

13 γίνεται 24 μισίτω 30/31 μίσος 33 μίσος

1-3 untranscribed by Henzen, who suggests \*ὀφιοφόριος, from \*ὀφιοφόρος, in 2 ὀ[ρφ]ν[ε]αῖα ὀφιοφόρος Franz 2/3 γλώ[σσ]ῆς Franz; [: three *caraktères*? 3 ὑπ' ἐμῶν δεσμῶν Henzen; σ[ε] ὑπ' ἐμ[ὸ]ν δεσ[μὸν] ἄγω] Franz 4/5 τῷ τὸ'πρω Franz; τῷ τὸ'πρω Kaibel, Wunsch; (τῷ) τὸ'πρω Audollent 6 ὄν[αμ]α edd. 7 ερηκισθη(?)ρηδρα-ραρα οχρονσηθι Henzen; ερηκισθηρηδρα- Franz βισοφλων Henzen 9 γ(?)καπαιμουπορδρητι-ναξο Henzen; εκτ-, φθην-Franz; τὸν Ἄιδ[ι]ην τινάξω conj. Kaibel 10/11 ἐξογέρθητ / ὀ Wunsch, ἐ. [καὶ] / ὀ *alii* 11 ἐξοφε[ (ε or η): ἐξοφέ[θητ] Henzen; ἐξοφ[έθητ] Franz; ἐξοφῆ[θητ] Audollent, ἐξο[νάσθητ] Kaibel 15 ὄξ ... 20 α[<sup>-4.6</sup>] <sup>c.5</sup> left untranscribed by Henzen, who suggests ὡς τὸ φῶς ἀγγέ[λη] (15), τοῖς / δ' ἐν φῶτι ... [εἰ]ς μείσος (19/20), and κατεπρώην 15 τὸ φῶς ἀγγέ[λη] Franz ὡς [σ]οφῶς ἀγγέ[λω] Kaibel; (σ)οφῶς (τοφῶς tab.) ἀγγέ[λ] [λω] Audollent 16 [τὰ] πῶσι ἔχθησται [τοῖς] κατὰ σ[κ]ότος Franz; [τὰ] ὑπὸ σ[κ]ότος Kaibel; ... κότος Wunsch κατ' ἐπιτολήν: κατεπρώην Franz; κατεπρομ[ε]ν[ε]ν[ε] for κατεπρομ[ε]ν[ε]ν[ε] Kaibel 17 ... φ ο φ ο ρ μ α ... μενοροστεγνος Audollent; unread by others 18 μεν --- [τῆ]ν ὀργήν τῆν Franz; δι-οκῶφ[ω]? Kaibel 19 φιλίαν ... Τάρ[τα]ροι: [τὸν] ἔνε ρθε [θ]ε[ω]ν τῆν τ[ε] π[α]ρα (παρὰ Kaibel) τοῖς Franz 20 δὲ ἐν: δ' ἐν Henzen; [ἐν] Franz; [-ε]ν Kaibel δὲς α[<sup>-4.6</sup>] <sup>c.5</sup>: [φ]ί[λι]αις εἰς μείσος edd.; 21 θεῶν εἶσω [προς?] ἐλθέτω Henzen; εἶσω ... ἐλ[θ]έτω Minervini, εἰς [ὀργήν] ἐλ[θ]έτω Franz 24 μισοει[?]ν Henzen 28 ... οχρητωφων Henzen; — Τυφῶν Franz 29/30 μ ... ωχι βαρβαρουθ / δα ... ιοχων Henzen; βάρβαροι ὄν[αμ]α[κ]α[λ]οχῶν Franz 37 [Εὐνοια] ἔποκατέχετε Henzen; [Ε. ὕ]πο- Kaibel 38 [αὐτῆν] καὶ ἐ[σ]χάτοας τ. Henzen 39 [καλῶ]ξετε αὐτῆν(?) ὅτι Henzen; [καὶ] ποινά[ς] ὅτι Franz 40 ... [Φ]ήλικα Henzen; [τῆν] πῶσι (vel φιλίαν Kaibel) πρὸς Φήλικα Fran 41 ... Αἰεκού ... Henzen; *fortasse* [κ]αὶ ἄκου[σ]α[τ]ε[ ] vel ἄκού[σ]α[τ]ε[ ] κτλ. Kaibel; αἰεκουεται Wunsch; αἰεκουημτος ... τα Audollent

“I. (a) OR[—]NAIAOPHIOPHORIOS [—]ÊTH TOUTÔ SOUPEMONDES[—], (b) demons and spirits in this place, of <sc. prematurely dead persons> female and male, I adjure you by the holy name of ERÊ-KISIPHTHÊ ARARARACHARARA ÊPHTHISIKÊRE IAÔ IABEZBYTH LANA BESAPHLAN.[—] NKÊIPAMMOURO-PHAËNTINAXO[—]. (c) King of the ..., arouse yourself, and king of the dead, ... with the underworld gods. (d) For these things come about through Valeria Quadratilla, whom Valeria Eunoëa bore, whom Valerius Mysticus begot.

“II. (a) As the light announces to gods the things in darkness under orders of ..., cut off the delight, the love (for her). (b) Bind (?) her into Tartarus. And grant those in (the) light to (hate her?). Let Valeria Quadratilla, whom Valeria Eunoëa bore, whom Valerius Mysticus begot, enter into hatred of gods, into fear. Let Vitruvius Felix, whom Vitruvia Maximilla bore, whom Vitruvius Euelpistus begot, hate her, come to have forgetfulness of her.

“III. (a) [—]ECHEAI Typhon, MA[—]ON BARBAROUTH DATA ACHON, (b) grant (pl.) {—} Vitruvius Felix, whom Vitruvia Maximilla bore, whom Vitruvius Euelpistus begot, to enter into hatred and to have forgetfulness of his desires for Valeria Quadratilla, whom Valerius Mysticus begot, whom Valeria Eunoëa bore. [—] Control (pl.) (sc. her), you [—], with remaining (?) punishments ... (c) because

she first broke faith with Vitruvius Felix her own husband.

“IV. [—] ΙΑΚΟΥΒΕΕΙΥΝΤΟΝ[—]ΤΑ ....”

2.-3. How much, if any, of these lines we should consider Greek words I would not guess. We have several magical texts, roughly contemporary with the Cumaean, in which the syllables *borphor-* and the like appear, e.g. the curse tablets *SEG* 35.213-23, invoking Typhon, who appears in line 28 below. What is preserved of line 2 is suspiciously similar. Editors have tried ὀφιοφῶρ(ι)ος, which, if a Greek word, is a *hapax*; Kaibel proposed ὀ[ρφν]αία. For 2/3 Henzen proposed γλώ[σσας], and Franz dismissed the drawing and read γλώ[σσ]ης, but there is too much room in the lacuna, and line 3 inescapably has ηθ. I should not rule out the possibility that we have not γλώ[ but further *charaktères*. In the next line the editors may be right in seeing not *voces magicae* but τούτω and ὑπ' ἐμὸν δε αμῶν, which would in fact fit the traces, but it is hard to interpret as Greek the σο immediately preceding the last phrase. A possibility for the lacuna at the end of line 3 is νεκυ], i.e. νεκυ]δίαμονες.

4.-5. Cf. *PGM* IV Ὁρκίζω πάντας τοὺς δαίμονες<sup>346</sup> τοὺς ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ συνπεφασταθήνηα τῷ θεῷ<sup>347</sup> μολι τούτῳ· καὶ ἀνεγείρε μοι σεαυτόν, ὅστις ποτ' εἶ,<sup>348</sup> εἴτε ἄρρηγν εἴτε θήλυς, in a formula for an erotic charm, which was evidently quite popular, for five curse tablets from Egypt (*SupplMag* 46-50, IIP/IIIP) reproduce it. The accompanying instructions in the papyrus state that the lead tablet on which the formula is to be inscribed should be placed παρὰ τοῦ ρουῆ βιῆ σου θήκην (333), at the grave of someone whose death has been premature or violent. This would be the meaning of ἐν τῷ [τό]πῳ τούτῳ on the Cumaean tablet. The papyrus formula allows that the dead person may be either male or female; so too the Cumaean text, which was evidently copied from a formulary with a similar phrase, but here something has gone wrong, the syntax of θήλυκῶν καὶ ἀρρενικῶν] being awkward. We need not begrudge our writer the use of the masculine article after the neuter in line 4, but we note that the phrase καὶ πνεύματα in fact does not appear after δαίμονες in the popular erotic formula. May the anomalies have a common source, the displacement of καὶ πνεύματα from its proper place in the formulary that the Cumaean writer was using, the original having, for example, δαίμονες οἱ ἐν τῷ τόπῳ τούτῳ καὶ πνεύματα (sc. e.g. ἄνθρωπ) θήλυκῶν καὶ ἀρρενικῶν?

7.-9. The palindrome here is quite common in magical texts of Imperial times; I have counted 19 other instances. Here it is slightly misspelled: -φθ- is repeated rather than reversed, and the normal form has αραραραραρα. As to whether any of it has any recoverable meaning, there are the speculations adduced at Preisendanz 1949:135-36. The “holy name” (3) here includes the palindrome, Ιωω (Yahweh), and Ιαβεζεβεβυθ, which in several texts directly follows the palindrome. The vocables λωωα and βεσοφλωω] seem to be unique here. We often find the palindrome Αβλωωαβωωαβω as part of the Hebrew divine name, e.g. *PGM* VIII Ιωω: Cαβωωθ: 61 Αδωωαε Αβλ., V' Εγω εἰμι 472 ὁ ἐπιτελοῦμενος σε ... Ἐβρωσσί 476 Αβλ. αβρωσλωα; I am therefore tempted to wonder whether the syllables λωωα βεσοφλωω]—] may have begun life as a miscopying of it.

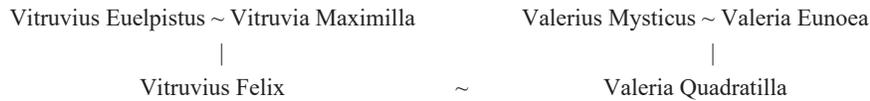
10.-11. Presumably the two kings should have complementary rôles or realms; the ὄλων of line 10, as corresponding to the φθιμένων of line 11, is probably not right. Is it a corruption of θεῶν?

12.-13. Τῶν τε ἀρ γείνεται διὰ Οὐολερίων Κοδρόπλωω. This is the first sign that the text is an appeal for vengeance, the writer being careful to note that the spell is a reaction to another's deeds rather than merely the aggressive magic motivated by *phthonos* or the will to dominate. We may compare the phrases ἐξίωι (sic) οὐν ἐδικού<sup>26</sup>μενος καὶ οὐκ ἐδικῶν<sup>27</sup> πρότερος on a curse tablet from Oropos (Petraikos 1997:745α, Π<sup>a</sup>) and ἐξερρούμε (for ἐξερρούμεα) τὸν καταγράφοντα καὶ τὸν ἐπολιέσσαντα, ὅτι οὐκ ἐ<sup>3</sup>κῶν ὄλων ἀλλὰ ἀνεωκαζόμενος διὰ τοὺς<sup>4</sup> κλέπτες τοῦτο ποιεῖ on another, from the Athenian Agora (*SEG* 30.326, IP-IIP). Below (39-40), the *defigens* includes another justification for his actions: it was she who first broke faith with him, her husband.

14.-15. Nothing is commoner in Greek magical texts under the Empire than identification by maternal lineage, with the ritual formula οὐρήν ἔτεκεν or, less often, ἐγέννησεν (see Jordan 1976, Curbera 1999); the present spell is apparently unique in giving both parents' names. (K. Preisendanz prints *PGM* LXXI as if both mother and father are to be named, οὐ ἔτεκεν ἢ δίνει, ἐγέννησεν [ὁ δίνει], but,

like Franz and Kaibel, he often, as here, uses [ ] where the Leiden Convention would require < >; the papyrus is indeed intact in this line, ἐγέννησεν being no doubt a marginal gloss wrongly incorporated into the main text. As in Modern Greek, it would mean “bore,” not “begot.”)

Having both maternal and paternal lineage for each spouse, we may reconstruct a stemma:



The parents were evidently all *liberti*, receiving their masters’ *gentilicia*; in addition, three of them have Greek *cognomina*, another possible indication of servile background.

15.-18. I have not found, in magical texts, any good parallel for the conceit of the light announcing dark matters to gods. There is a curiously similar passage, however, also with the phrase κατ’ ἐπιτολήν, in a speech addressed apparently to the Sun: *PGM* LXII Διαστολήτω<sup>30</sup> τὸ σκοτός κατ’ ἐπιτολήν (iambic trimeter) τοῦ θεοῦ ὑψίστου καὶ προσελθέτω τὸ ἱερὸν φῶς<sup>31</sup> ἐκ τοῦ ἀπείρου εἰς τὴν ἔβυσσον, in which the light overcomes the darkness by order of the cosmic god. We may compare addresses to the Sun, XIV 11 κατ’ ἐπιτολήν τοῦ θεοῦ (unnamed) and XII κατ’ ἐπιτολή<sup>4</sup>[γ]ήν τοῦ ὑψίστου θεοῦ Ἰωῦ Ἀδωνεα Ἀβλωνεαθωνεαβια. The Cumaean text has already invoked his name in line 8, which is that of the ὑψίστος θεός. In lines 17-18 he is given apparently another mystical name, whose elements I have not found in other magical texts, but the transcription is far from sure.

The sentence beginning ὡς τὸ φῶς makes us expect a correlative, “so too ...,” possibly something on the order of “so too let this tablet announce the wickedness of Valeria Quadratilla;” what we find, though, is an awkward shift of thought: “interrupt the delight, the love....” We may suspect that the entire formula for the analogical magic that is implied here was once longer but over time has become truncated. We may compare an instance of analogical magic on a curse tablet from Olbia (*SEG* 37.673, Hell.; cf. Jordan 1997), whose text, addressed to a ghost, begins [Ἰ]σπερ σὲ ἡμεῖς οὐ γινώσκουμε<sup>2</sup>ν, οὐτως Εὐπόλις (plus other names), ἐπὶ [ὄκο]νον προμα παραγείνοντα ... “Just as we do not know you, so too may Eupolis ..., at whatever lawsuit they are present ....” The verb of the οὐτως clause has somehow dropped out, but it was no doubt something like “fail to know how to offer their evidence.” We may also cite a spell for warts from today’s Crete, also based on analogical magic and also to be performed at a grave, whose occupant is presumably also unknown to the speaker. If there is any continuity in these matters, its beginning and that of the Olbian spell have a common background: Ὅπως δεῖν ξέρω ποιός εἶναι εἰδὼ μέσαι “Just as I do not know who is here inside.” We expect “so too may the warts not know how to stay on my hands” or the like, but we find instead ἔτσι ναμην ξέρω πότε θα φύγουν οι κουτσόκοι από τα χέρια μου “thus may I not know when the warts will leave my hands.” But ignorance is not the purpose of the spell, which is rather to get rid of the warts. The analogy has somehow degenerated, conceivably through the omission, over time, of phrases in the original.

We are not explicitly told whose delight and love are to be cut off. I assume that it is Vitruvius Felix’ and others’ for Valeria Quadratilla. Below (24-25, 33-34) he is to come to hate her and to forget his desire for her.

18.-20. Although plural beings are addressed in line 6 (ἐξορκίζω ὑμῶς), the verbs here are in the singular. Such shifts are hardly infrequent in magical texts: cf. *DTAud* 241 (Carthage, IIP?), which begins in the plural (ἐξορκίζω ὑμῶς ... ἵνα ἑκατόησθητε πέντε μέλος ...), shifts to the singular (κατόησον ἐν τῶν τὰ σκέλη ...<sup>13</sup>... ἐμσώρωσον ἐν τῶν τὰ<sup>14</sup> ἄμματα, etc.), and then returns to the plural (<sup>17</sup>κατόησσε[ε]). R. Wünsch (1911:11) remarks that “zwei fluchrezepte sind hier ineinander geflossen: das erste setzte mehrere geister..., das andre nur einen dämon in bewegung.... Später wird zum ersten formular zurückgekehrt.” The present text returns to the plural in line 30 (ἵστε).

The editors have transcribed ] παραὲ (or π]απαὲ) τοῖς δεῖ ἐν φωτῇ, some restoring part or all of ἐν. The particle δεῖ, however, suggests that τοῖς should begin a new sentence, and indeed autopsy shows

that the  $\pi$  of  $\pi\alpha\rho\acute{\alpha}$  is an impossible reading. The first letter is  $\tau$ , the high horizontal extending well to the right of the vertical; elsewhere on the tablet,  $\pi$  is formed without any such extension. We therefore presumably have a very short sentence between  $\phi\lambda\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha\upsilon$  and  $\tau\omicron\iota\zeta\delta\acute{\epsilon}$ . I restore  $[\epsilon\acute{\iota}\zeta\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\rho]\tau\epsilon\alpha\rho\epsilon\iota$  *exempli gratia* and propose  $\delta\eta\eta\zeta$  rather than the editors'  $\delta\acute{\iota}\delta\zeta$  as the verb. Its second letter is  $\eta$ ,  $\epsilon$ , or  $\sigma$ . If  $[\epsilon\acute{\iota}\zeta\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\rho]\tau\epsilon\alpha\rho\epsilon\iota$  is correct, the phrase  $\delta\acute{\iota}\delta\zeta\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\upsilon$   $[\epsilon\acute{\iota}\zeta\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\rho]\tau\epsilon\alpha\rho\epsilon\iota$  is hardly idiomatic, however, but it happens that a formula recurrent in contemporary curse tablets from the Athenian Agora has a similar phrase with the substandard positive subjunctive of command:  $\delta\eta\eta\zeta\ \epsilon\acute{\iota}\zeta\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\upsilon\ \tau\eta\zeta\ \lambda\acute{\eta}\theta\eta\zeta\ \acute{\alpha}\phi\acute{\omega}\tau\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \alpha\acute{\iota}\omega\upsilon\upsilon\alpha\ \kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\ \kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\mu\acute{\upsilon}\xi\eta\zeta\ \kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\ \acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\omicron\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\eta\zeta$  etc. (*SEG* 35.213-24).

For the phrase  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \phi\omega\tau\acute{\iota}$  in the next sentence I have found no parallel, but the concept is perhaps to be found in a recently-published curse tablet from Spain (Barchín del Hoyo, Cuenca, I<sup>a</sup>-IP, Curbera et al. 1999), in which the writer invokes those below and then those above (*ceteros quos merito devovi supra*; cf.  $\tau\omicron\iota\zeta\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \phi\omega\tau\acute{\iota}$ ). The verb itself in 20 is almost certainly  $\delta\acute{\iota}\delta\zeta$  ( $\sigma$  or  $\epsilon$ ). The command with the plural  $\delta\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon$  below (30-34) has the structure  $\delta\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\epsilon$  plus dative plus infinitive. Here presumably the structure is “and to those in (the) light, grant ( $\delta\acute{\iota}\delta\zeta$ )” plus another infinitive. The traces would allow  $\mu\epsilon\iota\sigma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$   $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\upsilon$ ,  $\alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\upsilon\ \mu\epsilon\iota\sigma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  or the like; if the conjecture is correct, Valeria Quadrilla is literally to be sent to Hell, to the realm of the “king of the dead” (11), to incur the  $\chi\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omicron\varsigma$  of the chthonians subject to him (12), and those ( $\tau\omicron\iota\zeta\ \delta\acute{\epsilon}\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ \phi\omega\tau\acute{\iota}$ ?) ruled by the other king who is summoned (10)—the living? the gods of the heavens as opposed to the chthonians of line 12?—are to hate her.

22.-23. Note the spelling  $\Theta\acute{\upsilon}\sigma\lambda$ - here and above but  $\beta\sigma\lambda$ - elsewhere.

24. In an Attic curse tablet of IV<sup>a</sup> we apparently have the motif of the spouse's forgetting his desire: *DTAud* 68A  $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\lambda\alpha\theta\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\theta\epsilon\alpha\ \chi\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha\ \theta\epsilon\sigma\delta\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha\zeta$   $\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\alpha\tau\epsilon\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma$   $\tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\sigma\delta\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha\zeta$   $\acute{\epsilon}\pi\lambda\alpha\theta\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\theta\epsilon\alpha\ \chi\alpha\rho\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha$   $\kappa\alpha\acute{\iota}\ \tau\eta\zeta\ \kappa\omicron\iota\tau\eta\zeta\ \tau\eta\zeta\ \pi\acute{\rho}\omicron\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\sigma\delta\acute{\omega}\rho\alpha\zeta$ .

28.-30. The curse tablets from the Athenian Agora cited above (18-20) also invoke Typhon, giving him the Hebrew divine name  $\zeta\alpha\beta\alpha\omega\theta$ ; the opening of line 28 presumably consisted of epithets and other *voces magicae*, which would have extended into line 30. In line 29 the letters are more widely spaced than elsewhere, the  $\nu$  of  $\tau\omicron\upsilon$  standing beneath the  $\epsilon$  of the  $\tau\epsilon\alpha\rho\epsilon\iota$  of 28.

30.-31. The phrase  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\zeta\ \mu\epsilon\iota\sigma\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  is superfluous here, occurring as it does in line 33.

37. LSJ list both Henzen's  $\acute{\alpha}\pi\omicron\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\tau\epsilon$  (“*dub.l.*”) and Kaibel's  $\acute{\upsilon}\pi\omicron\kappa\alpha\tau\acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ , citing this passage as the one instance of each verb. Both entries should be deleted, for  $\eta\pi$  cannot be read. The letter is  $\tau$ , formed like that of  $\tau\epsilon\alpha\rho\epsilon\iota$  (19). I have not found a restoration for the unpromising  $\eta\tau\alpha$ , however.

39.-40. Here we have the main justification for the curse. Editors have supplied  $\tau\eta\upsilon\ \pi\acute{\iota}\sigma\tau\alpha\upsilon$  (or  $\phi\lambda\acute{\iota}\sigma\alpha\upsilon$ )  $\pi\acute{\rho}\omicron\varsigma\ \Phi\eta\gamma\lambda\iota\kappa\alpha$ , but consistency demands a *gentilicium* here, and the verb  $\acute{\alpha}\theta\epsilon\tau\epsilon\acute{\iota}\nu$  can in fact take a personal object, e.g. LXX Isaiah 1.2, Mark 6.26.

41. A final magical name. The traces at the right of the first lacuna are compatible with  $\tau\epsilon\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\beta\acute{\iota}$ -, which is found, for example, at *SEG* 35.227 (curse tablet, Athenian Agora, IIP), in the appellation  $\tau\upsilon\phi\acute{\omega}\nu$   $\chi\omega\chi\epsilon\lambda\omega\psi\ \tau\epsilon\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\beta\acute{\iota}\ \tau\epsilon\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\beta\acute{\iota}\ \tau\epsilon\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\beta\acute{\iota}$  etc.;  $\tau\epsilon\alpha\kappa\omicron\upsilon\beta\acute{\iota}$  are part of a common *logos*: cf. Moraux 1960:17 n.4.





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# Susan Langdon, Trial by Amazon: Thoughts on the First Amazons in Greek Art

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To Heinrich Schliemann's stunning record of archaeological firsts can be added the discovery, among a handful of pictorial sherds excavated at Tiryns, of the earliest known Amazon in Greek art. Admittedly he did not recognize the fragmentary image as such, and his description of the sherds with "legs of an upright-standing warrior turned towards the right, with a part of the coat of mail with meander stripes," is as far as anyone could decipher this image for half a century.<sup>1</sup> Starting from the small fragments found by Schliemann and Wilhelm Dörpfeld in their Tiryns excavations of 1884-85, and augmented by Emil Kunze during his 1926 excavations, the pieces gradually were reassembled into [a small terracotta shield of Subgeometric style](#). This remarkable object has figured in the literature on the Amazon warrior as mythic and artistic topos, yet it tends to be subsumed into interpretations of later material rather than analyzed within its own cultural context. That the Amazons entered Greek art on the first waves of orientalizing representations of myth may occasion little surprise, and their introduction within the competitive milieu of the early seventh century Argive plain --home of Bronze Age heroes and object of intercommunal conflict-- seems satisfyingly appropriate. Yet these warrior women are not strongly associated with the Argolid in myth, art, or cult. Tombs of Amazons, for example, are attested in Attica, Boeotia, Euboea, Megara, and Thessaly, but not the Argolid. One promising but overlooked starting point from which to explore this puzzle is the ritual context in which the Tiryns shield was found. I am pleased to continue the discussion of this provocative object as a tribute to Gene Lane, who in his teaching as in his research has demonstrated the importance of resiting ritual artifacts within their social and historical settings. It seems especially appropriate that I began my study of this artifact at a cozy desk in North Carolina, Gene and Carol's beloved second home.<sup>2</sup>

Amazons --fierce female warriors of a variable but usually northern origin at the edge of the known world - are a stock motif of classical art and myth. Their unconventional gynocentric culture has provided western civilization with one of its most useful tropes of alternative culture and classical Greece with a quintessential icon of topsy-turvy, the antithesis of proper social ordering in the polis. The Amazon motif has been readily adapted to changing historical and social circumstances, in both ancient and modern uses.<sup>3</sup> The Athenians, for example, shifted the focus from Achilles to Herakles or Theseus in combat with the warriors, according to prevailing political contingencies.<sup>4</sup> Interest in gendered and social approaches to Greek culture in recent decades has focused on the ideological value of Amazons to the androcentric society of democratic Athens. Exploited particularly on public works of the fifth century, Amazons represented forces of hostility to marriage in particular and the polis by extension, a point frequently reinforced by their juxtaposition with a centauromachy.<sup>5</sup> These versions share a basic pattern: the Amazon stands as foil for the prevailing social norm, whether that foil happens to represent woman, Persian, or

non-Athenian. In this larger fixed sense lies the enduring value of the theme, one of many such fixtures in the Greek imaginary by which art and myth conjoin to construct oppositional analogues to Greek identity.

The very success of such icons tends to blur their origins. The interpretation of the Amazon as the classic Other who stands as antithesis to Greek values is grounded in the social and political realities of Classical Greece, specifically Athens. The tendency in scholarship to reduce this complex theme to a one-dimensional paradigm of (gendered) opposition misses the subtleties with which the Greeks explored and employed it.<sup>6</sup>The Amazons' first appearance in art on the Tiryns shield at the turn of the eighth to seventh century B.C. provides an opportunity to articulate the cultural complexity of the motif. Although its pride of place has been regularly noted, the terracotta image has never been studied as a totality of object and context but simply as a detached, free-floating scene.<sup>7</sup>The history of this image --it was depicted on a votive shield, deposited in a ritual context, situated on the citadel of Tiryns, dedicated to Hera, and created during a period of social upheaval, state formation, and political maneuverings-- suggest that there is a lot more to understand about Amazons and Greeks. This study explores the cultural meanings surrounding the appearance of Amazons in art by examining the Tiryns shield within a coherent artistic and mythical setting as a product of early Iron Age ritual and society.

The terracotta votive shield was made about 700-680 B.C. The larger part of the shield was found in a bothros 22 meters east of the great Mycenaean megaron on the Tiryns citadel, together with material ranging in date from the mid eighth to the mid seventh century.<sup>8</sup>Interpretation of the bothros and its contents is tied to a controversial narrow structure in the megaron (Building T). Long considered an eighth century temple of Hera, the building has become increasingly accepted as a twelfth century reconstruction of the damaged palace.<sup>9</sup>While the date of the bothros and its connection to a nearby Mycenaean altar rebuilt in the eighth century are not disputed, the cult to which these belonged and the identification of the possible temple are uncertain. Ancient authors tell us that Hera had a very old cult on the Tiryns acropolis but later epigraphic evidence for local cults of Athena, Herakles, and Zeus has led to reassessment of the cults on the citadel that confirms Hera as recipient of the Geometric-period cult.<sup>10</sup>The presence of bronze pins and rings, and female figurines, pomegranates, and wreaths of terracotta gives a very Hera-like character to the votive assemblage found by the earlier excavators.<sup>11</sup>The material from the bothros includes pottery datable to 750-650, several much-discussed helmet-like masks, and fragments of a second, smaller shield of the same shape but somewhat earlier in style.<sup>12</sup> The shield fragments found by Schliemann and Dörpfeld join those excavated by Kunze in the bothros, linking the votive deposits.

The shield is decorated in brownish-red slip with added white details. It bears on the front surface a pair of warriors in combat, with a Greek warrior grasping by the helmet plume an attacking female warrior.<sup>13</sup> He brandishes his sword, she aims her spear. The larger context of the battlefield is indicated by three secondary figures, one female and two males, one of whom lies dying at their feet. A bulky bird holding a fish fills the space above the spear of the female protagonist. All three secondary figures are of smaller scale than the primary combatants. The women are identified as female by the faint indication of breasts on the larger figure (the torso of the second is missing), by their smooth chins (in contrast to the bearded male warriors), and by their long garments. These highly patterned slit skirts derive from oriental, specifically Assyrian dress, and are conventionally employed by early Greek artists to characterize monsters, Amazons, and Persians.<sup>14</sup> For nearly a century this Subgeometric Amazonomachy remained an isolated occurrence.<sup>15</sup>

The Tiryns shield is well known, not least for its eerie prefiguring of a famous red figure kylix by the Penthesilea Painter some 250 years later, in which Achilles and Penthesilea dominate the tondo in interlocked, eroticized combat while a comrade of each figure and a dying Greek warrior below fill out the battlefield.<sup>16</sup>Any compositional analysis of the earlier Amazonomachy must begin with its visual source in

a series of imported Phoenician silver bowls found around the Mediterranean in the eighth and seventh centuries.<sup>17</sup> All the formal elements, including a triumphant warrior to the left grasping the crest or hair of his foe, the pair flanked by two smaller figures, the large bird overhead, and the crawling or prone figure below, derive ultimately from pharaonic imagery featured in Phoenician bowls. The date and striking resemblance of the Tiryns shield to oriental models indicate that its artist was working more or less directly from such a bowl. The freely translated image on the later kylix raises the possibility that other examples of the shield type may have survived above ground as late as the mid fifth century.<sup>18</sup>

Past interpretations of the Tiryns shield have centered on identifying the specific characters represented, but such an iconographic approach has produced only inconclusive results.<sup>19</sup> Those who favor Herakles for example, identify the Amazon's broad crosshatched belt as Hippolyte's girdle, even though it differs little from the belts worn by the Greeks.<sup>20</sup> The presence of secondary figures, especially the dying Greek, suggests a battlefield but no specific event or location.<sup>21</sup> True to its Late Geometric roots, the scene is both clear in action and rich in generalized detail: Greeks are differentiated from Amazons but not from each other. Nor are the primary actors necessarily distinguished from secondary actors within the constraints of the tondo frame and its inherited scheme. Homeric sources do not mention the most familiar Amazon encounters featuring Achilles, Theseus, and Herakles, which in itself suggests that the entry of the Amazon into Greek culture was not made through the mythical biography of any single hero. The *Iliad* characterizes them as *antianeirai*, "equivalent of men" or "manlike," worthy opponents against whom heroes test their mettle.<sup>22</sup> Bellerophon and Priam are the heroes who have met this match (*Iliad* 3, 188-9; 6 186). The Amazons, in other words, are fearsome enough for heroes to make their reputation by defeating them. The shield fits more easily this Homeric version than the particularized Archaic and Classical duels that pair a hero with a named Amazon. On the shield the heroic women appear in the midst of battle and on the verge of defeat.<sup>23</sup> Yet the conflict is not yet over and the Amazons have scored their points as well; the only mortally wounded figure depicted is Greek. The artist could hardly have illustrated the quality of *antianeira* more clearly.

The striking appearance of the Amazons on the front of the shield has overshadowed the fact that its reverse is also painted.<sup>24</sup> The inside bears the remains of a broken handle. A large centaur with human forelegs extends across the surface, his horse and human parts decorated in linear patterns. The presence of a branch held in either hand and animal companions characterizes him as a creature of woods and hills. From one branch a tiny dappled fawn hangs by its feet. A small stag stands beneath the centaur's horse-like body. The centaur looks back toward three does, the farthest of which nurses a second fawn, while the closest reaches to nuzzle the captured fawn. In contrast with the strongly orientalizing imagery of the outer face, this scene is wholly Greek. Since Achilles and Herakles have connections with centaurs, proponents of both heroes have been able to link iconographically the two sides of the shield.<sup>25</sup> Klaus Fittschen, followed by Josine Blok, demotes all horse/man hybrids, including the figure on the shield and most centaurs in Late Geometric art, to "*Rossmenschen*," "horse-men," accepting as true centaurs only those involved in narrative situations.<sup>26</sup> This interpretation necessarily precludes any connection with the imagery on the front of the shield. Only Page duBois has suggested that this pairing of motifs anticipates the Classical juxtaposition of Amazonomachies and Centauromachies found on temples and vases.<sup>27</sup>

The peaceful Tiryns centaur, however, is hardly the prototype of his bride-mauling Classical colleagues. I would argue for connecting the two sides of the shield not on the basis of an individual hero's life but on a logic that derives from the object's intended ritual function. Certainly the shield centaur can be identified as Cheiron, the mentor of heroes, on his own iconographic merits. His patterned torso shows him to be dressed, unlike most other Geometric centaurs, and he has human rather than equine front legs. His hunter's catch sets him apart from other Late Geometric centaurs who use their branches for fighting. These collective hallmarks of civilization --clothing, male body, and hunting prowess-- in fact soon

become standard iconography for Cheiron.<sup>28</sup> Later sources, moreover, note that Cheiron hunted does and fawns to feed their marrow to the infant Achilles.<sup>29</sup>

There is indeed support for an early identification of a centaur as Cheiron. The well-known [Lefkandi centaur](#), a terracotta statuette of c. 900 B.C., is commonly thought to represent Cheiron on the basis of two features: six incised fingers on his hand and an apparently deliberate gash on the left knee.<sup>30</sup> As on the shield, his broken left hand can be reconstructed as having once shouldered a branch. Cheiron is thus characterized by his wisdom, symbolized in the six fingers of his right hand, and his myth: immortal yet critically wounded on the knee, he chose death over eternal suffering.<sup>31</sup> His patterned torso, if representing clothing, further supports this identification. The figurine was found in unusual circumstances. The head was broken from the body in antiquity and the two parts were placed in separate graves. The head was found in Toumba T.1, which was identified by the small size of two bronze bracelets as the grave of a child, while the centaur's body came from T.3, possibly the grave of an adult buried with an ivory-handled knife.<sup>32</sup> It is not difficult to understand why the Cheiron statuette might have been placed in a grave. His wisdom and knowledge encompassed the healing arts, particularly those effective in battlefield wounds (e.g. Iliad 4, 216-19; 11, 829-32); thus, his own wounded figure embodies a comforting tale of ultimate healing. Cheiron's other role in the arts of civilization more satisfactorily explains the breakage and sharing of the Lefkandi terracotta. In myth he is mentor and tutor of heroes of no less stature than Achilles, Jason, Herakles, and Asklepios, roles that translate into ritual as an initiator figure. Indeed, his shamanic knowledge of medicines defines his pedagogical qualifications.<sup>33</sup> Straddling categories of nature and culture, Cheiron serves as intermediary between the gifts of nature and their cultural transformations. He leads initiation candidates from wild, untamed childhood to maturity through the survival skills and military arts that are the mainstay of young men's rites of passage.<sup>34</sup>

This interpretation is reinforced by an earlier find from Phylakopi on Melos. A headless terracotta male figure of c. 1150-1120 B.C. found in the West shrine bears strong resemblance to the Lefkandi centaur.<sup>35</sup> A break at its buttocks, thought by the excavators to be evidence of a detached support strut, has been reconstructed by Angeliki Lebessi as the remains of the equine part of a centaur.<sup>36</sup> Like the Lefkandi terracotta, this one has a similarly cross-hatched torso. The West shrine at Phylakopi was furnished with two altar-like platforms separated by some distance. The platform to the southwest contained an assemblage of animal and female figurines not unusual for Late Bronze Age shrines, while on the northwest platform the "centaur" was accompanied by other male figurines --a very unusual group for the time.<sup>37</sup> The excavators believed that this area of the shrine was strongly identified with a male deity or some other male usage. Lebessi now convincingly proposes it as a site of boys' initiation rites involving centaur symbolism for the elite youth of Phylakopi. On the model of better-known Cretan initiation rites, the centaur embodied in demonic form the role of the pedagogue-philetor.<sup>38</sup> The Lefkandi centaur may have played a similar symbolic role, after which it was intentionally broken to be shared between the young initiate and his teacher.<sup>39</sup>

Evidence of initiation returns us to the Tiryns bothros where the votive shield was found. Included in this collection of discarded offerings and ritual items were [three nearly identical masks](#) which are generally thought to be among the earliest representations of gorgons. Although not yet fully formed Medusas, these masks have the basic elements of grinning, tusked mouths, enormous ears, bulging eyes, and striated cheeks.<sup>40</sup> The presence of earring holes in the preserved ears of one mask supports a female identification. There is good evidence these masks were used in initiation rites that combined a dramatized contest with the use of frightening imagery. Michael Jameson has used two Archaic inscriptions at nearby Mycenae that mention children in a judged contest to reconstruct similar rites for the local hero Perseus.<sup>41</sup> Such a ritual would include a performance at which boys were threatened by a person or persons wearing

terrifying masks whom they had to fight, perhaps using a sickle, the traditional instrument for sacrifices, decapitating gorgons, and castrations.<sup>42</sup> Terror and humiliation are standard aspects of maturity rites, and masks are particularly associated with aggression.<sup>43</sup> Parallels for such masked play in early Greece come from a slightly later series of masks representing a handsome hero, an old man, and other types used in ritual plays at the Artemis Ortheia sanctuary in Laconia.<sup>44</sup>

The boys who emerged victorious from this contest would have been graduated from childhood to adolescence, the first of the two ceremonially recognized stages of pre-adulthood.<sup>45</sup> It is no accident that the monstrous adversaries embodied in the gorgon masks were female, nor that Perseus was the initiate model. The slaying of a female figure, Philip Slater suggests, could symbolize the boy's readiness to leave the female-dominated household and join the male community.<sup>46</sup> The Perseus story includes a particularly telling angle. Perseus was sent on his quest by the local king Polydektes who, wishing to marry the youth's mother, needed to eliminate him; killing the gorgon enabled Perseus to prevent the marriage. The hero is not only the model for the monster-slayer but also the arranger of women's lives and the community's social order, and has thus graduated to adult male obligations. With further parallels in the masks and sickles dedicated at Sparta beginning in the seventh century, these Argolid communities are linked with other Dorian groups in Crete and Sparta in maintaining and transforming archaic institutions long into the historic era.<sup>47</sup> There is more to pursue with respect to the gorgon, Perseus, and masks, but what is significant for understanding the Tiryns shield is that they establish a particular ritual activity --initiation via dramatized contest-- commemorated by the offerings in the bothros.

The apparent dedication of the shield to Hera may similarly mark the occasion of a youth's trials in a rite of passage toward adult status in the community, and might even have been used in a play against a masked adversary.<sup>48</sup> The shield's diameter of only 40 cm. was determined not by votive function but by the scale of its intended bearer. The image of Cheiron the mentor decorates the inside with the handle, facing the boy as he held it, while on the outside the trial by Amazon looks toward his opponent. The placing of the small but very masculine stag beneath Cheiron's protective body, nicely paralleling the nursing doe behind him, underscores the centaur's role as nurturer of boys. Indeed, such an identification would make a tidy (if logically circular) link with the hero on the reverse as Achilles, Cheiron's most famous pupil who also fought Amazons. Yet the chief local hero at Tiryns, Herakles, was another Amazon-fighter and also one of Cheiron's initiates. Herakles had a cult on the Tiryns acropolis at least by the late seventh century.<sup>49</sup> Even if the Amazon-slaying scene were intended in a generalized rather than specific way, this need not have hampered a viewer's specific reading of the imagery.

What exactly does an Amazonomachy signify in the context of initiation? Or to put it another way, how does the context of initiation at Tiryns elucidate the "invention" of the Amazon motif? Homer offers no hints of the Amazons' peculiar gynocentric living arrangements-- later authors elaborate that they kept no husbands, raised no sons, ruled themselves-- and it is not at all certain that the Amazon myth had yet developed.<sup>50</sup> All that was initially important was that they were female warriors, and that confrontation with them was a major heroic feat. Without any mention of their social life in epic, there is no evidence that they represented at the outset a threat to civilized society by their rejection of family life and normal gender boundaries. Amazons, as Blok demonstrates, evolved with their epithet *antianeirai* within the epic tradition as a means of articulating the heroic ethos: "Heroic death was the high prize of aristocratic masculinity, to be won at an equally high price."<sup>51</sup> The real prize --imperishable fame-- could result only from combat between equals. The Amazons, undeniably female, offered not simply more fodder for the heroic canon, but a means to explore the "tension between similarity and difference between heroic opponents, reinforced by the anxiety of masculine identity,  $\Lambda$  cast in the terms of sexual difference...."

Paradox and ambiguity are their *raison d'être*. As the purpose of passage rites is to redefine the boy as adolescent by strongly signalling his separation from a world of women and his entrance into the world of men, so the Amazons' femininity was central to their significance. The visual impact of the hostile confrontation of male and female can hardly be ignored, and yet it is not emphasized on the shield as it would be in later art. One characteristic of initiator figures is a basic sexual ambiguity that confers a frightening alienness and allows it access to liminalities faced by the initiate.<sup>52</sup> Such ambiguity characterizes the gorgon and the centaur (whose peculiar non-reproductivity is violently at odds with its legendary hypersexuality) and explains the depictions of Amazons in early literature and art as more androgynous than female. Goldberg emphasizes that to Archaic and Classical Athens the Amazons were far from being regarded as simply transgressive women who warranted defeat. Rather, they represented both masculine and feminine gender roles in a way that associated them closely with their patron goddess Athena whose positive qualities they shared: warrior-protectors, beautiful yet subdued in their fertility, talented in the crafts of both men and women. Their ambiguity, which combines male and female natures to create a third, anomalous category, a woman as powerful and active as a man, also renders them sacred "active figures of mediation."<sup>53</sup> For Goldberg, this role enabled the Athenians to use the Amazons in art and myth to explore the ambiguities and problems inherent in their social and political world. This important insight into the nature of Amazons is equally useful in understanding how they might have played a role in the early Argolid, much like the gorgon and the centaur, as figures of mediation in the social process of maturation.<sup>54</sup>

The shield can thus be interpreted as a complex iconographic entity whose function originates in ritual and whose imagery adapts myth to a specific initiatory role. The Amazons entered art in the context of boys becoming men and preparing, like Perseus, for a lifetime role in the social ordering of a community. Their appearance at the outset of the seventh century in a cult deposit to Hera on the Tiryns citadel becomes easier to comprehend in this social setting. The shield like the gorgon masks can be understood within the local mythic genealogy of the eastern Argive Plain. Perseus and Herakles were the culture heroes of Mycenae and Tiryns, respectively, ancestors of the Perseid dynasty whose Bronze Age past was inextricably rooted in the local landscape.<sup>55</sup> Perseus was revered as the founder of Mycenae, while his great-grandson Herakles was (by one tradition) born at Tiryns, and both communities are linked through the Herakleidai, the exiled descendants of Herakles who returned to claim the thrones of Mycenae and Tiryns. The early elaboration of their cults and mythology at these sites can be seen as part of a strategy of territorial legitimation by emphasizing differences from other communities and from Argos in particular through cult, myth, burial customs, and even dialect. Part of this strategy, Jonathan Hall contends, was the particular honor accorded Hera on the two citadels and elsewhere in the eastern Argive Plain.<sup>56</sup> The possible etymological links between Hera, "hero," and Herakles ("the Glory of Hera"), as well as her epic associations with Mycenae and the Argive Plain, support the continuing importance at these sites of the goddess in her Bronze Age guise as helper of heroes.<sup>57</sup> This association places the final piece into the puzzle of the shield and masks. A boy led toward adulthood at Tiryns through role-playing Perseus, Herakles, or a similar hero was initiated not simply into a new communal status but into a group intimately identified with a specific heroic genealogy and its divine patronage under Hera.

This reading, logical as it may seem, is tied to the distinctive identity of Tiryns at the expense of possibilities offered by a less site-specific interpretation. Tiryns and Mycenae may well have had reason to distance themselves materially and mythologically from Argos, but there are also undeniable cultural links among the three cities and indeed the greater Argolid Plain that may further illuminate the meaning of the shield and its imagery. It is important, particularly in the absence of complete publication and especially fabric study, not to assume that the shield was made in Tiryns for local use. Any inter-communal competition and hostilities that might have beset the region would have posed no impediment to the circulation of ceramics in the area. Late Geometric pottery originating in Argos is found in other

communities of the eastern plain, including Asine, whose inimical relationship with Argos is well known.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, the shield's Subgeometric painting style belongs to a vigorous tradition that is well attested in Argos and not, as yet, with any certainty elsewhere. Most telling perhaps is the fabric of the shield itself. Schliemann described it as "reddish" with a polished surface. Morgan and Whitelaw noted that for Late Geometric pottery "it is easy ... to distinguish blonde Tirynian fabric from more orange Argive (which often has a hard burnished surface and a heavy grit content)..."<sup>59</sup>

The possibility that the shield was made in Argos rather than Tiryns opens a rich vein of symbolic association. Shields loom large in the cultural traditions of Argos, some elements of which can be traced back into the Early Iron Age. The city could lay claim to the shields of several heroes. That of Diomedes was installed in Argos (Callim., Hymn 5, 11, 35ff.), while Menelaos supposedly dedicated the shield of Euphorbus in the Argive Heraion (Paus. 2, 17, 3). Apollodorus tells that shields were first invented by Acrisios and Proitos, great-grandsons of Danaos (Argos' own culture hero) in their struggle for the throne of Argos (Apoll., Bibl. 2, 2, 1). Best known is the ritual of the *Aspis*, "the Shield of Argos," a contest in honor of Hera that occurred during the festival of the *Heraia* (Hecatombaia).<sup>60</sup> The aition as related by Hyginus was embedded in the Proitid genealogy of Argos: Lynkeus became the king of Argos by handing down to his son Abas (father of Proitos and Acrisios) a bronze shield that his father Danaos had dedicated to Hera, thus instituting Argive kingship with Hera's own shield (Hyginus, Fab. 273). The *Aspis* games were part of the great procession from Argos to the Heraion, in which the winner of a race in armor bore the bronze shield of Hera. Joan O'Brien has claimed this ritual as part of her evidence for a prehistoric "shield goddess" Hera. François de Polignac has more plausibly set the *Aspis* ritual within a wider phenomenon of military displays and offerings at sanctuaries beginning in the later eighth century that arose from concerns for protecting sovereign territories. The sources for the *Aspis* games are Hellenistic and later, and the *Heraia* festival is epigraphically attested only in the fifth century, although it probably began earlier.<sup>61</sup>

There is no material or literary evidence of the shield ritual from the eighth or seventh century. It is more plausible to see this later accumulation of shield symbolism at Argos as stemming from the kourotrophic character of Hera in the Argive Plain, which may well have early roots. Hera, along with Athena and Aphrodite, is one of the goddesses who can have a military aspect and serve as protector of citadels, as she does at Tiryns and Mycenae, as well as on the *Aspis* citadel of Argos. It is these goddesses, rather than male gods, who most often receive votive shields among their offerings. Raoul Lonis has shown that the goddesses' military aspects are derived from their function as kourotrophos.<sup>62</sup> Accordingly, Hera's role as nurturer of the young and protectress of youths at the point of their initiation into adult military roles is reflected in votive shields of bronze and terracotta found in a number of her early sanctuaries.<sup>63</sup> Walter Burkert has recognized in the Argive *Aspis* contest a rite of passage for the youths who, attaining ephebic status, were symbolically carrying on the order of Argos, just as had Lynkeus and Abas, under Hera's power.<sup>64</sup> Most significant is the evidence from the Samian Heraion, where the large number of Geometric and Archaic votive shields includes two figural examples datable to before 670 B.C., thus providing the best parallels for the Tiryns shield. Preserved only in a small fragment, one of the Samos shields features a spear-bearing warrior who might be female --perhaps another Amazon.<sup>65</sup> It is undoubtedly significant that recent excavations at the Samian Heraion have reportedly discovered masks reminiscent of those used in initiatory plays at the Sanctuary of Artemis Orthia, but these await publication.<sup>66</sup> Philippe Brize notes close cultic associations of the Samian Heraion with the Argive Heraion (whence came the Samian xoanon of Hera) on the one hand, and with the Sanctuary of Kato Syme on the other, the latter through epigraphic evidence and votive material of an initiatory character, including miniature shields.<sup>67</sup> Hera's capacity as patron goddess of citadels and of the military sphere at numerous Greek cities was linked with her important role as overseer to boys' initiations.<sup>68</sup>

In their earliest preserved artistic representation, the Amazons can best be understood within the specific cultural milieu of the Argive Plain. Their basic sexual ambiguities befit their role in ephebic initiation and their heroic qualities, far from constructing a simple gender role inversion, liken them to qualities of the kourotrophic Hera as warrior goddess. She was revered in the Argolid not only as the special protector of heroes but also, in tales such as those of Herakles rooted deeply in the soil of Tiryns, as the source of heroes' trials and ordeals. Despite these suggestive circumstances, I have resisted naming the hero who slays the Amazon on the Tiryns shield. Although he was undoubtedly known to the original viewers, contemporary evidence from epic literature supports only formulaic combats with interchangeable heroes. This flexibility, in fact, reveals the adaptability of the myth to ritual use. It is significant that Amazons next appear in Argive art on the bronze shield-strap reliefs dedicated at Olympia, Delphi, and Perachora from the late seventh to the mid sixth centuries. Three of the nine known examples bearing Amazonomachies are identified with Argive inscriptions as Penthesilea and Achilles.<sup>69</sup> The pair appear on attachment plates in vertical series of heroic duels and confrontations including Perseus and Medusa, Herakles and the Nemean Lion, Theseus and the Minotaur, and numerous Trojan episodes. Nanno Marinatos has recently demonstrated connections between these shield-strap reliefs and the themes of ephebic initiation, noting the regular appearance of gorgons and other motifs symbolically connected with Artemis as kourotrophos.<sup>70</sup> Although she disregards the Amazonomachy motif, it clearly belongs to the realm of shields, Amazons, and boys' initiations for which the Tiryns shield forms the earliest evidence.

As a culture replicates itself both biologically and culturally through its children, rites of passage are structured to create a new generation of men and women. These rites embody a community's values, identity, and social structures encoded in myth and ritual. The initiation of a boy into adolescence through playing the warrior-hero readily fits the Early Iron Age social patterns of the Argive Plain, where elite male burials are marked by weapons and armor, a definition of masculinity that persists even as burial patterns at Athens and elsewhere abandon this practice.<sup>71</sup> The early role of the Amazons, "equivalent of men," in the construction of male gender marks the beginning of this exceptionally fertile cultural resource that would evolve along with Greek society in the centuries ahead.

*Ahlberg-Cornell, G. 1992. Myth and Epos in Early Greek Art. Representation and Interpretation. SIMA 100. Jonsered: Paul Åströms Förlag. Amandry, P. 1980. "Sur les concours argiens." In Études argiennes, 211-53. BCH Suppl. 6. Paris: Boccard. Antonaccio, C.A. 1994. "Placing the Past: the Bronze Age in the Cultic Topography of Early Greece." In Placing the Gods, edited by S.E. Alcock and R. Osborne, 79-104. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Arnold, I.R. 1937. "The Shield of Argos." AJA 41: 436-40. Auberson, P. and K. Schefold. 1972. Führer durch Eretria. Bern: A. Francke AG Verlag. Blok, J.H. 1995. The Early Amazons: Modern Perspectives on a Persistent Myth. Leiden: E. J. Brill. Boardman, J. 1982. "Herakles, Theseus and Amazons." In The Eye of Greece. Studies in the Art of Athens, edited by D.C. Kurtz and B. Sparkes, 1-28. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Boardman, J. 1998. Early Greek Vase Painting. London: Thames & Hudson. duBois, P. 1979. "On Horse/Men, Amazons, and Endogamy." Arethusa 12: 35-49. duBois, P. 1982. Centaurs and Amazons: Women and the Pre-History of the Great Chain of Being. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan. Bol, P.C. 1989. Argivische Schilde. OI Forsch 17. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. Bothmer, D. von. 1957. Amazons in Greek Art. Oxford: Clarendon Press. Brize, P. 1997. "Offrandes de l'époque géométrique et archaïque à l'Héraion de Samos." In Héra. Images, espaces, cultes. Actes du Colloque Internationale de Lille, edited by J. De La Genière, 123-39. Naples: Centre Jean Bérard. Brommer, F. 1953. Herakles. Die zwölf Taten des Helden in antiker Kunst und Literatur. Munster: Bohlau. Burkert, W. 1979. Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual. Berkeley: University of California Press. Burkert, W. 1983. Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth. Berkeley: University of California Press. Burkert, W. 1985. Greek Religion. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Burkert, W. 1992. The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influence on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age. Cambridge, MA:*

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1 [Schliemann](#) 104-5, pl. XXIII. The image on the front was first identified as an Amazonomachy (specifically Penthesilea) by [Roland Hampe](#) (1936, 81), and the shield was published by [Hilda Lorimer](#) in 1947 from notes made before the war in 1938. The best reproductions of both sides can be found in [Hampe and Simon](#), pls. 95-96. See additional references below, [n. 13](#).

2 I began this study while a fellow at the National Humanities Center in 1999-2000. I am grateful to the Center for its hospitality and for discussion with colleagues during my fellowship year.

3 Excellent surveys of the historiography on Amazons in Greek culture are those of [Goldberg](#) and [Blok](#). [Ise Kirk](#) looks at modern uses of the myth, 33-37.

4 [Boardman 1982](#); [Hardwick](#); [Morris](#), 343-6; [Henderson](#).

5 Fundamental to these interpretation are the works of duBois ([1979](#), [1982](#)) and [Tyrrell \(1984\)](#).

6 [Blok](#) (126-43 and passim) and [Goldberg](#) (89-90, 96) make this point especially well; see also [Hardwick](#) (20-3, 32-5).

7 This is true even of [Blok](#) (356-73), who has given the shield its lengthiest analysis since Lorimer's publication. Her treatment of the Amazon image is sensitive and thorough, but she dismisses the imagery of the other side as irrelevant and ignores the object's archaeological context.

8 Bothros bibliography, [Mazarakis Ainian](#) 160 n. 1132; bothros material by category, [Jantzen](#) 203-4. This material still awaits complete publication, [Hägg](#) 17-18, n. 64.

9 [Frickenhaus et al.](#) 1-13, 31-41; P. Gercke in [Jantzen](#) 97-9; [Morgan and Whitelaw](#) 87-8; [Mazarakis Ainia](#) 159-61 with extensive bibliography, figs. 218-19.

10 U. Naumann in [Jantzen](#) 103-5; [Foley](#) 145-7; [Antonaccio](#) 92, n. 50; Hall [1995b](#) 598; [1997a](#) 103.

11 P. Gercke in [Jantzen](#) 160; [Morgan and Whitelaw](#) 88; [Hall 1995b](#) 598.

12 The fragmentary smaller shield bears on its outside a richly caparisoned horse drawing a chariot, and on the inside a large male warrior duelling with sword and shield. For illustrations, see Lorimer [1947](#) pl. 1: lower; [1950](#) pl. 10; [Courbin](#) 24 fig. 14 bottom. For date, [Courbin](#) 23 n. 4. The two shields likely served similar ritual purposes. While these objects and the rest of the bothros still await complete publication, this shield will be concerned with only the larger, slightly later shield.

13 Nauplion museum 4509, 40 cm diam. [von Bothmer](#) 1-2, pl. I, 1a-b; Lorimer [1947](#), [1950](#) 170-71, pl. 9; [Schefold](#) pl. 7B; [Fittschen](#) 177 SB 83; [Jantzen](#) 160 fig. 71; [Ahlberg-Cornell](#) 69-70, fig. 105; [Blok](#) 356-73.

14 [Lorimer](#) (1947, 135) first noted the similarity of the Amazons' dress to Assyrian male ceremonial garb, as well as other Assyrian-inspired details. See also [Ahlberg-Cornell](#) 69 and [Markoe](#) 300-1; [Blok](#) seems unaware of this identification. Gorgons wear this foreign dress as well: e.g. the Eleusis amphora, [Ahlberg-Cornell](#) fig. 203. Later Amazons with this dress: Early Corinthian aryballos, [Blok](#) pl. 7; [Ahlberg-Cornell](#) fig. 174.

15 A fragmentary terracotta shield from the Samian Heraion, discussed below, has been accepted by some as depicting another Amazon. The next earliest representations of Amazons are a bronze shield band from Olympia ([Ahlberg-Cornell](#) 69 no. 44, fig. 102), an aryballos from Samothrace ([Ahlberg-Cornell](#) fig. 174) and a small inscribed terracotta relief in the Metropolitan Museum, (42.11.33, [Ahlberg-Cornell](#) fig. 103) all dating to the end of the seventh century.

16 First noticed by [Hampe 1952](#) 38, figs. 21-22. Kylix by the Penthesilea Painter in Munich, Antiken. 2668 (J.300), [von Bothmer](#) pl. 71, 4.

17 [Morris](#) fig. 18; [Markoe](#) 300-1, figs. 5 and 6.

18 The identity of the Penthesilea Painter's figures is not certain. The cup has been thought by some to have been influenced by Mikon's famous painting in the Stoa Poikile in Athens, which depicted Theseus against the Amazons, not Achilles and Penthesilea. On this problem see [von Bothmer](#) 147.

19 For Achilles and Penthesilea: Hampe [1936](#) 81; [1952](#) 30, 45 n.23; [Lorimer 1950](#) 170-1; [von Bothmer](#) 1-2; for Herakles and Hippolyte: [Kunze](#) 151 n. 1; [Brommer](#) 72 n. 41; for Herakles and the Amazon queen Andromache, [Schefold](#) 24-6.

20 [Boardman \(1982\)](#) and [Blok](#) (349-430) demonstrate that the story of Herakles' theft of Hippolyta's girdle originated no earlier than the end of the sixth century.

21 [Fittschen](#) likes Themiskyra as the location, 177-8 and n. 848. [Blok](#) (149-50 n.10 and 275-6) objects that Themiskyra could not have been considered a settlement until well after the fourth century B.C.

- 22 [Blok](#) examines this phrase at length, 146-93. The dating of the [Aithiopsis](#), source of the story of Achilles and Penthesilea, is much disputed, particularly in relation to the Iliad. [Kopff](#) has argued for their contemporaneity.
- 23 [Dowden](#) cites a common view that Amazons "exist in order...to be defeated" (1992, 168), but [Goldberg](#) demonstrates that this is not at all the case.
- 24 Illustrations of this side can be found in [Lorimer 1950](#) pl. 9; [Schiffler](#) pl. 6; [Hampe and Simon](#) pl. 96.
- 25 [Lorimer](#) (1950, 170) and [von Bothmer](#) (1-2) link the two sides of the shield through Achilles and Cheiron; [Brommer](#) (1953, 345) as Herakles and Pholos.
- 26 [Fittschen](#) 96 R17 and n. 483; [Blok](#) 365 n. 46.
- 27 [duBois 1982](#) 53-4; [Blok](#) disputes this, 364-5 and n. 46.
- 28 [Schiffler](#) 62, 119, 170-2. She does not accept the Tiryns shield figure as Cheiron apparently because of the decoration of his horse part, which precludes interpreting his torso as clothed (65). I do not see that this must follow.
- 29 [Lorimer 1950](#) 170 n. 7.
- 30 [Popham and Sackett](#) 215, 344-5.
- 31 For interpretation as Cheiron, [Auberson and Schefold](#) 158; [Popham and Sackett](#) 345.
- 32 [Popham and Sackett](#) 168-70.
- 33 [Napier](#) 79-82. [Blok](#) (365-6 and n. 49) disputes a tutoring relationship between Cheiron and Achilles in the *Iliad*. I see Cheiron's ash spear, which Achilles alone (significantly, not Patroklos) can wield to kill Hektor (*Iliad*, 16, 139-44; 19, 30-91; 22, 317-19), as signifying a special connection between the two ([Morris](#) 16). It happens to be this spear with which Achilles kills the Amazon Penthesilea, according to Quintus Smyrnaeus (*Posthom.* I, 593).
- 34 On centaur as mediator between nature and culture, [G.S. Kirk](#) 152-62; [Burkert 1979](#) 136-7. On Cheiron as initiator, [Jeanmaire](#) 261-2; [Lebessi](#) 149-50. On skills for initiation, [Vidal-Naquet](#) *passim*; on initiation generally, [van Genep](#); [Burkert 1985](#) 260-4.
- 35 [Lebessi](#) 148, pl. 54; [Renfrew](#) 223, 226 fig. 6.12 SF 1553, 229.
- 36 [Lebessi](#) 148. E. French also considered a connection between the two figures, in [Renfrew](#) 223.
- 37 [Renfrew](#) 223, 370-1; [Lebessi](#) 149.
- 38 [Lebessi](#) 148-50.
- 39 [Lebessi](#) 149-50.
- 40 [Jantzen](#) 161 fig. 70; [Napier](#) 86, pl. 34; [Jameson](#) 219, fig. 8a-b. [Marinatos](#) thinks the masks represent lions (60).
- 41 [Jameson](#) 213-15.

42 [Jameson](#) esp. 216-20. Also [Burkert 1992](#) 85; [Marinatos](#) 59-61. [Kron](#) lists sickles found in sanctuaries starting in Geometric (195-204).

43 [Turner](#) 172-3; [Burkert 1985](#) 260; [La Fontaine](#) 100.

44 [Carter](#); [Jameson](#) 217, figs. 3-5.

45 [Jameson](#) 220.

46 [Slater](#) 319-28.

47 [Jameson](#) 215; [Murray](#) 176-7.

48 The shield and the gorgon masks, while roughly contemporary, were not necessarily used together. Nevertheless, they both suggest dramatizations of heroic contests.

49 [Foley](#) 147; [Hall 1997b](#) 97 n. 163.

50 [Goldberg](#) (92) notes that the attribution of more "feminine" qualities to the Amazons are late.

51 [Blok](#) 435.

52 [Napier](#) 89; [Turner](#) 95, 106, 173.

53 [Goldberg](#) 92-3.

54 Amazons have been discussed in relation to girls' initiation, most notably by Dowden and Zeitlin, who find their "militant virginity" and their patterns of gender inversion to replicate a state of adolescent liminality ([Dowden 1989](#) 62; [Zeitlin](#) 136; see also [Blok](#) 250 n. 148). Their later attachment to Artemis cults and incorporation into tales of abduction and girdles suggest they were eventually drawn into the tradition of female initiation motifs. The earliest evidence from epic and art, however, supports their original development in connection with warrior codes of honor, definitions of masculinity, and, as I argue here, boys' initiation.

55 This and the following discussion owes much to the work of Jonathan Hall [1995a](#), [1995b](#); [1997a](#), [1997b](#); contra, [Kelly](#) 60-72; [Morgan and Whitelaw](#).

56 [Hall 1997b](#) 104-6.

57 [O'Brien](#) Chapter 5; [Potscher](#); [Jameson](#). 220; [Hall 1997a](#) 103-4.

58 [Morgan and Whitelaw](#) study pottery style as an index of these community interactions. I simply note by way of example that works by the same Late Geometric painters are found at sites around the plain. E.g., [Coldstream](#) 133 Painter of the Sparring Horses nos. 1, 2 (from Tiryns), 3 (from Argos); 134 Fence Workshop no. 2 (from Tiryns), nos. 3, 4, 5 (from Argos), no. 6 (from Asine).

59 [Morgan and Whitelaw](#) 91.

60 Discussions of the Shield of Argos ritual: [Arnold](#) 436-8; [Burkert 1983](#) 162-4; [de Polignac](#) 46; [O'Brien](#) 145-7; [Kelly](#) 127-8.

61 [Amandry](#); [Kelly](#) 128, 193-4 nn. 50, 51; [de Polignac](#) 47.

62 [Lonis](#) 199-230, esp. 209-11; [Brize](#) 134-7; [de Polignac](#) 43-5. Hera is kourotrophos for both sexes, but in the present study I am concerned only with her protection of young men. .

63 [Brize](#) 132-7, figs. 16-19; [Levi](#) 223, figs. 16-19, 274 fig. 71, 278, fig. 75.

64 [Burkert 1983](#) 163-4.

65 Fragmentary terracotta shield from the Samian Heraion of approximately 700 B.C.: [AM](#) 58 (1933) 120 pl. 37, 1; [AM](#) 60-61 (1935-36) 285, fig. 7; [von Bothmer](#) 2-3, no. 2; [Blok](#) pl. 4B; [Brize](#) 133 fig. 17. The fragment preserves the upper body of a warrior with spear raised in right hand and facing left. One and possibly two small incised circles on the figure's chest might be breasts. The helmet crest and the earlobe resemble those of the Tiryns figures, but the use of incised details suggests a slightly later date.

66 Masks at the Samian Heraion, [Brize](#) 136; at Artemis Ortheia, [Carter](#).

67 [Brize](#) 134-5; [Ergon](#) 1974, 120; 1976, 181.

68 [Iliad](#) 4, 51-6; [Lonis](#) 209; [Hall 1997b](#) 105; [O'Brien](#) 160; [Marinatos](#) 92.

69 [Kunze](#) 148-51; [von Bothmer](#) 4-5 nos. 5-14; [Blok](#) 225-8. [Bol](#) (69-70) adds two more examples to this list, not included in Blok's discussion.

70 [Marinatos](#) 97-105.

71 Whitley [1991](#) 189-91; [1996](#); [Hall 1997a](#) 93.

Trial by Amazon: Thoughts on the First Amazons in Greek Art. Susan Langdon. Lexington, KY. Stoa Consortium. 05.23.2001.



# Victor A. Leuci, Chance Remarks On Dreams in Aelius Aristides

1

What are 'chance' remarks on dreams and how valuable are they? In his book Greeks on Dreams, Van Lieshout says: "It should be stated explicitly beforehand that those casual references to dreams and dreaming register a low esteem for dream-knowledge in Plato's mind. This observation should continue to counterbalance any view gained from the substantial evidence."<sup>n1</sup> Van Lieshout's 'casual references' are what I have chosen to call 'chance' remarks. His statement says, in essence, that 'chance' remarks are as valuable in revealing an author's true view on dreams as his substantive statements. The aim of this paper is to assess the value of 'chance remarks' on dreams in the writings of another author, Aelius Aristides, a person whose personal views on dreams are well documented and whose public writings afford us examples of 'chance' remarks. Thus we will be able to determine whether the assumption Van Lieshout made about Plato is valid for Aristides as well, that 'chance' remarks do indeed reflect an author's actual views on dreams.

Aelius Aristides, the son of a wealthy landowner in Mysia, lived in the second century A.D. and was one of the well-known orators and writers of the Second Sophistic.<sup>n2</sup> Aristides' education was typical for someone of his socio-economic background for his time period. He studied Greek literature under Alexander of Cotiaeum, who also tutored the emperors Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. Several famous orators took him on as a pupil: Antonius Polemo in his native Smyrna, Claudius Aristocles in Pergamon and later Herodes Atticus in Athens. After Aristides' formal education was completed, he traveled to Egypt to broaden his education and declaimed at various cities and islands along the way.<sup>n3</sup> While in Egypt he fell ill and was forced to go back to Smyrna. It was at this time that he turned to the god Sarapis for healing.<sup>n4</sup> After his recovery Aristides made the customary trip to Rome to further his oratorical career. A cold which he got just before his starting out for Rome in December of 143 progressed into a very severe illness by the time he reached Rome, no doubt because of the harsh conditions and weather along the way.<sup>n5</sup> This caused him to shorten his stay at Rome and return home to Smyrna.

After the failure of the medical profession both in Rome and later in Smyrna to cure him, Aristides turned first to Sarapis and then to Asklepios for assistance. The appearance of Asklepios in one of Aristides' dreams had a profound influence on his life. From then on he came to rely more and more on the guidance of Asklepios through the medium of dreams, in regard to his public life, speeches, travels, exercise, eating habits, bathing, even in his choice of toothpaste. From 145 to 154 he divided his time between Smyrna, his estates in Mysia, and the Sanctuary of Asklepios at Pergamon. After the first few years of his illness he began again to write, deliver speeches, and lecture; at first before some of his friends at the Sanctuary, the later to larger groups. His Sacred Tales provide evidence for some of the medical practices in the second century A.D. and also describe the personal religious experiences of their author. By 154 he was well

enough to make lecture tours throughout Greece and conduct a successful speaking engagement at Rome. He started to accept students but refused payment, possibly because he was uncomfortable about making any long-range commitments. In 165 he contracted smallpox, which was spreading throughout the empire at the time.<sup>n6</sup> The psychological effects of the disease lasted long after his health returned.<sup>n7</sup> He stayed thereafter mainly on his estates in Mysia and only occasionally made public appearances. It was in Mysia that he died around the age of sixty-three.<sup>n8</sup>

Let us look at some examples from the Sacred Tales illustrating the importance of dreams to Aristides.<sup>n9</sup> Bathing or not bathing was a prominent topic of Aristides' dreams. He was often given specific instructions on when and where to bathe, or how long to abstain from bathing. Or, in Aristides' own words: "I have not bathed for five consecutive years and some months besides, unless, of course, in winter time, he [the god] ordered me to use the sea or rivers or wells" (Sacred Tales I. 59). One of his more memorable baths occurred at Smyrna in 149 on account of a dream. As Aristides says: "It was the middle of winter and the north wind was stormy and it was icy cold, and the pebbles were fixed to one another by the frost so that they seemed like a continuous sheet of ice, and the water was such as is likely in such weather. (20) When the divine manifestation was announced, friends escorted us and various doctors, some of them acquaintances, and others who came either out of concern or even for the purposes of investigation. There was also another great crowd, for some distribution happened to be taking place outside the gates. And everything was visible from the bridge. ... (21) When we reached the river, there was no need for anyone to encourage us. But being still full of warmth from the vision of the god, I cast off my clothes, and not wanting a massage, flung myself where the river was the deepest. Then as in a pool of very gentle and tempered water, I passed my time swimming all about and splashing myself all over. When I came out, all my skin had a rosy hue and there was a lightness throughout my body. There was also much shouting from those present and those coming up, shouting that celebrated phrase, 'Great is Asklepios'" (Sacred Tales II. 19-21).

The "tale of the tumor," as one might call it, in 147-148, is also worthy of note. Again in Aristides' words. (62) "And a tumor grew from no apparent cause, at first as it might be for anyone else, and next it increased to an extraordinary size, and everything was swollen and terrible pains ensued, and a fever for some days. At this point, the doctors cried out all sorts of things, some said surgery, some said cauterization by drug, or that an infection would arise and I must surely die. (63) But the god gave a contrary opinion and told me to endure and foster the growth. And clearly there was no choice between listening to the doctors or to the god. But the growth increased even more, and there was much dismay. Some of my friends marveled at my endurance, others criticized me because I acted too much on account of dreams, and some even blamed me for being cowardly, since I neither permitted surgery nor again suffered any cauterizing drugs. But the god remained firm throughout and ordered me to bear up. He said that this was wholly for my safety, for the source of this discharge was located above, and these gardeners did not know where they ought to turn the channels. (64) Wonderful things kept happening. There were approximately four months of this kind of life. But during these, my head and upper intestinal tract were as comfortable as one could pray for. There was also, as it were, a national assembly in the house. For my friends, who were the foremost of the Greeks of that time, were always coming to see me and were present for my speeches. For I declaimed right from my bed. (65) ... All these things were done while the inflamed tumor was at its worst and was spreading right up to my navel. (66) Finally the Savior indicated on the same night the same thing to me and to my foster father--for Zosimus was then alive--, so that I sent to him to tell him what the god had said, but he himself came to see me to tell me what he had heard from the god. There was a certain drug, whose particulars I do not remember, except that it contained salt. When we applied this, most of the growth quickly disappeared, and at dawn my friends were present, happy and incredulous. (67) From here on, the doctors stopped their criticisms, expressed extraordinary admiration for the providence of the god in each particular. But they considered how the loose skin might be restored to normal. Now it seemed to them that there was full need of surgery, for it would not otherwise be

restored to its original state. And they thought that I should grant this, for what concerned the god had been wholly accomplished. (68) He did not even allow this. And he brought everything back together, so that after a few days had passed, no one was able to find on which thigh the tumor had been, but they were both unscarred in every respect" (Sacred Tales I. 62-68).

Aristides attributed both the life and the death of Zosimus to Asklepios. When Zosimus fell quite sick in the summer of 148, Aristides entreated Asklepios in a dream to save Zosimus from death, and "Zosimus recovered beyond all expectation" (Sacred Tales I. 72). Several month later, because of a dream, Aristides commanded Zosimus not to move about. But, as Aristides notes, out of concern for another fellow slave, Zosimus "disobeyed me and went, and because of this he died" (Sacred Tales I. 76).

Asklepios also helped Aristides with his profession: "Indeed the greatest and most valuable part of my training was my access to and communion with these dreams. For I heard many thing which excelled in purity of style and were gloriously beyond my models, and I dreamed that I myself said many things better than my wont, and things of which I had never thought. As many of these as I remembered, I put in the copies of my dreams (Sacred Tales IV. 25)."

Finally, on a lighter note, Asklepios also told Aristides, through dreams, how to take care of his teeth: "Burn the tooth of a lion, and grinding it up, use it as a toothpaste. Second: Clean your teeth with that famous ointment, sap of silphium. After this, pepper, which he added for warmth. After all these things, came Indian nard, this also as a toothpaste (Sacred Tales III. 36)."

From all of the above it should be clear that dreams were of supreme importance to Aristides and that he would do whatever the dreams commanded, no matter how insignificant or how foolish or how dangerous it appeared to be. But what of his 'chance' remarks? How does he refer to dreams and dreaming in his speeches? It should come as no surprise that there are instances in his speeches where he treats dreams and dreaming with the same high regard as he does in the Sacred Tales. In fact Asklepios gave Aristides the topic for one speech, and even supplied the opening for him. Naturally enough the speech was about the sons of Asklepios (Oration 38). But is that the only way he refers to dreams in his speeches? The answer is that is both a simple and perhaps surprising "No." Let us look at these remarks more closely.

There are three references to dreams in the Panathenaic Oration, and all three qualify as 'chance' remarks. In the first example he compares the sight of Attica, as one approaches it from the sea, to "a joyful dream" ὄνειρατος εὐφροσύνη (Orat. 1. 12). Just after this he also compares this sight to "a preliminary initiation into a sacred ceremony." Later on he states "what fair dream" ποῖον ὄναρ χρηστόν (Orat. 1. 137) was left to the other Greeks if in 480 B.C. the Athenians had sided with the Persians or had left Greece for some other land. In the last example from this speech he compares Lysander's belief that he had conquered Athens to a "childish dream" ὠνειροπόλησεν τοῖς παισὶ παραπλησίως (Orat. 1. 268). None of these three examples demonstrate that Aristides has a belief in the power of dreams, though the first example is not dissonant with such a belief. The second example is simply a metaphorical way of saying the Greeks didn't have any chance of success against the Persians without the Athenians, and the implication concerning dreams and dreaming is that they are less than waking reality. The last example is clearly pejorative. Thus the examples from the Panathenaic Oration are not exactly a ringing endorsement of the value of dreams.

In several other speeches Aristides uses dreams as a metaphor to indicate that something is unattainable or unreal. For example, in To Plato: In Defense of the Four, (Orat. 3. 116), he says to Plato "either you are telling us a dream or a riddle, or I know not what"--this in reference to Plato's charges that Pericles made the Athenians "garrulous, idle, cowardly and illiberal" despite the fact that Pericles was a good speaker, capable of action, courageous and superior to money. Later in Orat. 3. 382, he refers to the fact that Plato has been turned over by Dionysius to a Spartan to be sold is so unexpected as to be "beyond dreaming:"

[οἴου μηδ' ὄναρ ἤλπισεν](#). In [On Sending Reinforcements to Sicily](#), ([Orat.](#) 5. 48), Aristides states that the Athenians won't have "even a dream of conquest" [καὶ οὐδ' ὄναρ ὑμῖν τῶν ἐκεῖ πραγμάτων ἐπιλείπετο](#) left to them if they do not send reinforcements to Sicily. In [On Making Peace with the Athenians](#), ([Orat.](#) 8 15), when the Spartans have defeated the Athenians and are deliberating what to do, he states "those many glorious enterprises [that is, those of the Athenians] like a dream have flown away from them and are gone." In his speech [Concerning Concord](#), ([Orat.](#) 23. 63), Aristides compares the rivalry among the cities of Asia for titles and symbols of rank to dreaming and fighting over shadows. In his speech [Regarding Rome](#), Aristides states Athens and Sparta did not in fact possess real empires; they just dreamed ([ὄνειροπολήσαντες](#), ([Orat.](#) 26. 43), that they did. Later in the same speech, ([Orat.](#) 26. 69-70), Aristides describes the idyllic state created by the [Pax Romana](#) and that the former hostilities and conflicts between peoples have been forgotten, much as those who awaken forget their dream--in fact the people now believe those conflicts to be myths. There is no hint here of Aristides' belief in dreams or that there is any important information to receive from dreams. Instead, Aristides gives us a simple description of a well-known fact: that people usually forget their dream once they awaken. The combination, however, of this casual reference to dreaming with the use of myth in the next sentence to refer to the same thing would speak against a belief in dreams. From all of these examples it should be clear that Aristides does not always employ 'chance' remarks to refer to dreams in a positive light and as inspired by the gods, yet we know from the [Sacred Tales](#) that he did believe this.

It could be suggested that these speeches were written before Aristides' "conversion," if we may call it that. While some of these orations are undated, and hence might reinforce this idea, [On Sending Reinforcements to Sicily](#) was written after 147, the [Panathenaic Oration](#) was written in 155, and [To Plato: In Defense of the Four](#) sometime during the period 161-165, [Regarding Rome](#) in 155, and [Concerning Concord](#) in 167--all after his "conversion."

It might be asked whether, in each individual speech, Aristides only referred to dreams one way, i.e. either positively or negatively. While this is true for the most part, there is an example where he combines the two, namely, [To Plato: In Defense of Oratory](#), written between 145-147 during Aristides' first serious illness. Towards the beginning of the speech, Aristides uses the value of oracles, such as those at Delphi and Dodona, to refute one of Plato's arguments against oratory. In the course of this argument ([Orat.](#) 2. 70 75), Aristides raises dreams to the level of the oracle of Delphi as a means of receiving communication and/or aid from the gods and cites personal experience. Indeed, he attributes his being alive to the aid received from the gods through dreams. Much later in the speech ([Orat.](#) 2. 400), however, he makes a harsh statement against dreams: "from the matter itself it is clear that this is no vain myth or dream, but reality and a factual account." Here dreams are like "vain myths" and are clearly inferior to "reality"--quite different from his statement earlier in the speech which elevates them to the level of the oracle at Delphi. This speech illustrates that Aristides had no qualms in referring to dreams in a pejorative fashion, and yet could in the same speech praise them very highly and even credit them with saving his life.

I hope this brief overview has shown the contrast between Aristides' attitude toward dreams in the [Sacred Tales](#) and in his other works. The [Sacred Tales](#) reveal a strong belief in the power of dreams, but 'chance' remarks in other works treat dreams as anything but positive and valuable. Further investigation may reveal why we see this dichotomy between his 'chance' remarks and what we know to have been his personal beliefs. However, just the fact that Aristides' 'chance' remarks do not reflect his true attitudes argues that this may be true for other authors as well, challenging Van Lieshout's statement about Plato and demonstrating that there is no reason to believe that 'chance' remarks about dreams give true insight into an author's beliefs.

## Appendix

### I. Examples from the [Sacred Tales](#)

- I. 59, a recounting of his bathing the past five years, winter 171
  - [Τὸ μὲν οὐτῶν ἀλουσιῶν τί τις ἂν λέγοι...](#) ἤδη γὰρ καὶ πέντε ἐτῶν συνεχῶς ἐγένοντό μοι καὶ προσέτι μηνῶν, ὅσα γε μὴ χειμῶνος ὥρα θαλάτῃ ἢ ποταμοῖς ἢ φρέασιν ἐκέλευσε χρῆσασθαι.
- II. 19-21, a memorable bath in a river near Smyrna in 149
- I. 61-68, the tale of the tumor, Oct. 147-Jan 148
- I. 72-76, concerning salvation then death of Zosimus the summer of 148
  - [ἐγὼ οὐ ἐπὶ τούτῳ τῷ ὄνειρατι οὐκ εἶων αὐτὸν κινεῖσθαι,](#) ὅθ' ἢ [περὶ οἰκέτου ἡ ἀγγελία.](#) ἢ [δ' ἀπειθήσας ὥχετο,](#) ἐκ δὲ τούτου ἢ [τετελευτη ἐγένετο αὐτῷ.](#)
- IV. 25, assistance given to Aristides' oratory by Asklepios
  - [πολλὰ μὲν γὰρ ἤκουσα νικῶντα καθαρότητι καὶ λαμπρῶς ἐπέκεινα τῶν παραδειγμάτων,](#) [πολλὰ δ' αὐτὸς λέγειν ἐδόκουν κρείττω τῆς συνηθείας καὶ ἂ οὐδεπωποτε ἐνεθυμήθην:](#) ὡσα γε ἐμνήσθην ἐν ταῖς ἀπογραφαῖς τῶν ὄνειράτων ἔστησα
- III. 36, prescriptions for toothpaste, 170/171
  - [Ἰάματα δὲ ὀδόντων ἔδωκε.](#) [πρῶτον μὲν ἠλέοντος ὀδόντα καΐσαι καὶ κόψαντα χρῆσθαι σμήματι,](#) [δεύτερον δὲ ὀπῶ διακλύζεσθαι,](#) [ταύτῳ δὲ τῷ χρίματι:](#) [μετὰ ταῦτα πέπερι, κα προσέθηκεν Ὀθέρμης οὐνεκα':](#) [εφ' ἅπασιν δὲ στάχυσ Ἰνδικός, σμήμα καὶ οὐς.](#) [καὶ ταῦτα μὲν τῶν νεωστὶ φανθέντων ἐστίν.](#)

## II. Examples of 'chance' remarks from Aristides' speeches

- Oration 38: The Sons of Asklepios, opens thus:
  - [Κλυτε φίλοι, θεῖός μοι ἐνύπνιον ἠόνειρος,](#) = ἔφη αὐτὸ τὸ ὄναρ: [ταύτην γὰρ δὴ ἐδόκουν ἀρχὴν τοιεῖσθαι τοῦ λόγου](#)
- Oration 1: Panathenaic Oration
  - 12 [οὕτῳ γὰρ παντάπασιν ἡ ψυχὴ προκαθαίρεται καὶ μετέωρος καὶ κούφη γίνεταί καὶ σφόδρα τῶν Ἀθηνῶν τῶς θεάς ἐν παρασκευῇ ὥσπερ ἐν ἱεροῖς προτελουμένη.](#) ... [ὥστε ἔοικεν ὄνειρατος εὐφροσύνη τὰ θεάματα](#) ...
  - 137 [τίς μηχανὴ σωτηρίας ἢ ποῖον ὄναρ χρηστὸν κατελίπετο τοῖς ἄλλοις](#)
  - 268 [καὶ τότε δὴ Λύσανδρος ἀκριβῶς ἤσθετο, ὅτι οὐχ, ὡς ὤετο, ἐνενη?κει τὴν τῶν Ἀθηναίων πόλιν, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ὠνειροπόλησεν τοῖς παισὶ παραπλησίως.](#)
- Oration 3: In Defense of the Four
  - 116 [ἢ γὰρ ὄναρ λέγεις, ἢ γρίφον, ἢ οὐκ ἔχω τί θῶ.](#)
  - 382 [οἴου μηδ' ὄναρ ἤλπισεν](#)
- Oration 5: On Sending Reinforcement to Sicily
  - 48 [ἀπανιστάμενοι μὲν ἐκεῖθεν πάσας καταλύσετε τὰς ἐλπίδας, καὶ οὐδ' ὄναρ ὑμῖν τῶν ἐκεῖ πραγμα?των ἐπιλείπεται](#)
- Oration 8: On Making Peace with the Athenians
  - 15 [τὰ δὲ πολλὰ καὶ λαμπρὰ ἐκεῖνα ὄναρ δὴ διαπτάμενα αὐτοῖς οἴχεται](#)
- Oration 23: Concerning Concord
  - 63 [τί οὖν μαθόντες εἶπέ μοι πράγματα ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς παρέχομεν καὶ ὄνειρώπομεν καὶ περὶ τῆς σκιάς μαχόμεθα](#)
- Oration 26: Regarding Rome
  - 43 [ὄνειροπολήσαντες ἡγεμονίαν μᾶλλον ἢ κτήσασθαι δυνηθέντες](#)
  - 69-70 [ἀλλὰ πεπόνθασιν οἷον οἱ ἀφυπνισθέντες καὶ ἀντὶ τῶν ὄνειράτων ὧν ἀρτίως ἐύρων ἐξαίφνης ταῦτα παριδόντες καὶ ἐν αὐτοῖς γενόμενοι. πόλεμοι δὲ οὐδ' εἰ πόποτε ἐγένοντο ἔτι πιστεύονται, ἀλλ' ἐν ἄλλως μύθων τάξει τοῖς πολλοῖς ἀκούονται](#)
- Oration 2: To Plato: In Defense of Oratory

- 67-75 Aristides cites his own experience of receiving healing and aid from the gods through dreams.
- 400 [ὅτι δ' οὐκ ἄλλως μῦθος ταῦτα οὐδ' ὄναρ, ἀλλ' ὕπαρ, καὶ ὁ τῶν πραγμάτων αὐτῶν ἐστὶν λόγος δῆλον ἐξ αὐτῶν.](#)

1 R.G.A. Van Lieshout. Greeks on Dreams. (Utrecht 1980), 104. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Gene Lane for all the aid and stimulus he provided me while working on my M.A. and Ph.D., especially as my dissertation adviser, at the University of Missouri-Columbia. In fact, the topic of this article sprang from a seminar I had with him on the Age of the Antonines and is a reflection, favorable I hope, of his interest in various aspects of Greek religion. This article is a slightly revised version of a paper I gave at the 1995 CAMWS annual meeting.

2 A good introduction to the Second Sophistic is G. Bowersock's Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire (Oxford 1969). For a more detailed account of Aristides' life, see Wilamowitz-Möllendorff, "Der Rhetor Aristides," SPAW, 28 (1925), 333-353; A-J Festugière, review of C. A. Behr, Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales. Amsterdam 1968 (Behr 1968) in REG 82 (1969), 117-153; R. Klein Die Romrede des Aelius Aristides (Darmstadt 1981), 71-90; and C.A. Behr, P. Aelius Aristides: The Complete Works, Vol.II (Leiden 1981-1986), 1-4. The most complete discussion of Aristides' life is by Behr (1968), 1-115. Behr's latest views are in "Studies on the Biography of Aelius Aristides," ANRW II. 34.2 (1993), 1140-1233. A-J Festugière has an excellent chapter dealing with the nature of Aristides' religious experience in Personal Religion among the Greeks, Sather Classical Lectures Vol. 26 (Berkeley 1954), 85-105. This chapter (in French) forms the introduction to his translation of the Sacred Tales: Aelius Aristide, Discours sacrés: Rêve, religion, médecine au IIe siècle ap. J.C., published posthumously with preface by J. Le Goff and notes by H.D. Sattrey (Paris 1986), 12-27. The most complete bibliography on Aristides is in P.W. Van der Horst's Aelius Aristides and the New Testament (Leiden 1980), 87-93. All dates in this section, unless noted otherwise, are A.D.

3 E.g., Kos, Knidos, Rhodes, and Alexandria after he arrived in Egypt. See Or. 33. 27; 24. 53.

4 See Or. 36. 49 and Behr 1968, (above, [note 2](#)) 21-22. For Aristides' relationship with the Egyptian gods, see C. A. Behr, "Aelius Aristides and the Egyptian Gods," Hommages a' Maarten J. Vermaseren Vol. I, ed M.B. de Boer and T.A. Eldridge, EPRO 68 (Leiden 1978), 13-24.

5 For more on the illnesses and the journey, see Behr 1968, (above, [note 2](#)) 23-26.

6 For symptoms and identification, see Behr 1968, (above, [note 2](#)) 96 n. 8 and 166-167 n. 13, and more recently R.J. and M.L. Littmann, "Galen and the Antonine plague," AJP 94 (1973), 243-255.

7 See Sacred Tales II. 37-45; IV. 9; V. 25.

8 Behr 1968, (above, [note 2](#)) 162-165.

9 The translations I will use are all by Behr.

Chance Remarks On Dreams in Aelius Aristides. Victor A. Leuci. Lexington, KY. Stoa Consortium. 05.23.2001.



# Danielle A. Parks, Epitaphs and Tombstones of Hellenistic and Roman Cyprus

1

## I. Introduction

Tombstones and their epitaphs yield excellent evidence on the nature of the population of Hellenistic and Roman Cyprus.<sup>1</sup> Analysis of these monuments can reveal who the deceased were, their social classes, ethnic origins, and religious beliefs. The material provides commentary on the status of women and children, the relative prosperity of the island, and the degree of aggregation of the inhabitants to the culture of its rulers, be they Ptolemaic kings or Roman emperors.

Discussion of the tomb markers and related funerary sculpture proceeds by type, and is comprised of a description, discussion of its material, function, distribution through time and space, and the issue of local vs. foreign origin.<sup>2</sup> The epitaph formulae are defined in Part III, and the questions addressed are similar to those discussed in Part II, with the added concerns as to who was commemorated, including issues of gender, age, class, ethnicity, profession, religious affiliation, and the identity of the mourners. Of particular interest is what these monuments reveal about the interactions of Cyprus with the rest of the eastern Mediterranean during the Hellenistic and Roman periods.



Figure 1:  
Mitford's  
division of  
Cyprus into  
districts

1 This article summarizes the findings presented in Chapter 3 of my PhD dissertation ([Parks 1999](#)). Dr. Eugene N. Lane was unstinting in his assistance, particularly with the handling of the epitaphs. In gratitude, I offer this article for his . Thanks are owed to F.J. Garrod and D. Barber for their assistance with the graphics.

2 Discussion of geographical distributions will rely upon Mitford's analysis of the organization of Roman Cyprus ([Mitford 1980](#)). The Iron Age city-kingdoms each controlled a substantial hinterland, evolving into the Ptolemaic administrative organization, which subsequently was transformed into the Roman district system. While Mitford's contention that Ledri was no longer extant by the Roman period is incorrect, the configuration of the coastal districts is sound ([Parks 1999](#), Chapter 2). Mitford divided the interior of the island between Tamassus and Chytri Districts; allowance must be made for the territory of Ledri. For the purposes of this article, Mitford's system will be followed, see Fig. 1.

Epitaphs and Tombstones of Hellenistic and Roman Cyprus. Danielle A. Parks. Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute.



# Danielle A. Parks, Epitaphs and Tombstones of Hellenistic and Roman Cyprus

2

## II. Survey of Tomb Marker Types

Tomb markers became much more common during the Hellenistic and Roman periods on Cyprus, but their presence is noted during the Archaic and Classical eras.<sup>n3</sup> Pre-Hellenistic tomb markers tend to be [στήλαι](#), many of which are plain limestone or sandstone slabs. Sometimes a simple painted fillet was "tied" around the [στήλη](#). The most elaborate variety depicts the deceased, either seated or standing, alone or in variations of the farewell scene.<sup>n4</sup> Local limestone was employed for most of these figured [στήλαι](#), but others were of fine marble, imported as finished products.<sup>n5</sup> Two varieties of pre-Hellenistic funerary sculpture are known. Guardian lions are reported from cemeteries at Tamassus and Marion (later Arsinoe) some bearing epitaphs.<sup>n6</sup> A series of large-scale terracotta statuary was peculiar to the Marion area during the Classical period.<sup>n7</sup> Subjects include seated men and women, banqueters, mourners, mistresses and servants, and mothers with children, themes that persist in later funerary [στήλαι](#) and statuary. Epitaphs consist of the name of the deceased in the nominative or the genitive, often accompanied by a patronymic.

During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, tombstones of various types marked the locations of tombs. Many of their epitaphs are still legible, naming the occupants who once lay below. Sepulchral monuments identified tombs externally and internally, indicating that tomb locations were not intended to be concealed. Placement divides tomb markers into external and internal monuments, according to when the viewer would encounter the particular type. Cuttings, some with [στήλαι](#) still [in situ](#), confirm that these monuments stood over tomb chambers. Other types, such as the ubiquitous [cippi](#) (see below), were similarly placed. Plaques bearing inscriptions could be housed above or beside doors to identify the occupants to the passerby. Freestanding statuary, the rarest class of externally placed memorials, also could stand above the tomb. Other markers identified specific burials within tombs. These often took the form of plaques, but epitaphs could be engraved or painted directly on the wall near particular [loculi](#) or [arcosolia](#).<sup>n8</sup> Individual sarcophagi could be similarly inscribed.

The [cippus](#) was the tomb monument par excellence of Roman Cyprus, with over 690 published examples. It is freestanding and relatively simple in shape, essentially a short columnar altar.<sup>n9</sup> The base is clearly delineated, rising into a narrower shaft and broadening again to a capital proportionately smaller than the base. Moldings and engraved bands emphasize these three elements. Further bands sometimes divide the

shaft into two or three panels. [Cippi](#) are furnished with two circular or rectangular cuttings, one in the upper surface, the other directly opposite in the base.

Local workshops mass-produced the [cippi](#). The cuttings in the top and base served to fix the [cippus](#) for shaping on a lathe. The moldings were also cut in this manner, confirmed by overlapping lines creating the panels. Any additional sculptural decoration was added subsequently, the moldings refined, and ultimately plaster and paint applied. [cippi](#) remained blank in readiness for use, awaiting the final inscription at the behest of the purchaser. Aupert cites several unfinished and uninscribed [cippi](#) from Parekklesia in Amathu District, which he attributes to a nearby workshop.<sup>n10</sup>

Shape and overall proportions vary somewhat with district. [cippi](#) in Tamassus and Citium Districts can be quite slender, almost attenuated and deceptively tall, while those from Curium and Amathus Districts tend to be rather fat. Such differences reflect local workshops, or perhaps the tastes of the clientele. Many [cippi](#) are relatively plain, with moldings providing the only decoration. Some [cippi](#) retain patches of white plaster, and traces of red paint pick out details, particularly moldings and inscriptions. A singular instance of engraved decoration, a pair of upraised forearms and hands, is attested at Klerou in Tamassus District.<sup>n11</sup> The motif, which could be interpreted as a gesture of prayer or entreaty, is characteristic of Asia Minor as is the type of epitaph employed.<sup>n12</sup>

Relief ornamentation, requiring greater care and expense, occasionally decorates [cippi](#). Swags of foliage or wreaths sometimes adorn the shafts, perhaps in imitation of real garlands draped over [cippi](#) as offerings.<sup>n13</sup> Garlands were common funerary tokens throughout the Mediterranean, and routinely sculpted on Roman sarcophagi and altars. Wreaths can be interpreted as victory emblems, symbolic of triumph over death. Portraits carved into the bodies of [cippi](#) involve great effort, and were correspondingly rare. These high relief images probably depict the deceased, and examples include representations of a beardless youth, a young woman, and a bearded man.<sup>n14</sup> In this instance, a characteristically Cypriot funerary monument has been combined with the archetypal Roman funerary portrait. Portrait-bearing [cippi](#) are confined to central and southern Cyprus, specifically to Citium and Tamassus Districts, paralleling the distribution of free-standing portrait busts discussed below. Finials in the form of large stylized pinecones were sometimes inserted into the upper surface of the [cippus](#), making secondary use of the extant cutting.<sup>n15</sup> The hidden seeds may have symbolized rebirth, and Mitford comments that stone pinecones do not fade like flowers and would act as perpetual offerings.<sup>n16</sup>

Egalitarian monuments, [cippi](#) served the middle class and wealthy alike. Numbers indicate that they were the preferred monument, in the clear majority among Roman tombstones on Cyprus. Expensive marbles and sculptural decor permitted elaboration to the satisfaction of wealthier clients, while plainer versions in local stone sufficed for the less well-to-do. All [cippus](#) epitaphs are in Greek. Over 80% belong to the common [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) formula, with variants remaining infrequent, but the presence of [MNHMHΣ XAPIN](#) is notable in Tamassus District. Men outnumber women two to one. These monuments usually honor single individuals, but sometimes as many as four. In such cases, the [cippus](#) might commemorate members of the same family or could reflect happenstance appropriation. Occasional Christian references occur, in the form of tilted Xs or the substitution of [XPICTOΣ](#) for [XPHΣTE](#), with none assigned to a date later than the 3rd or early 4thc AD.<sup>n17</sup>

As with [σπήλαι](#), the most likely site for a [cippus](#) is the flattened area above the tomb chamber, as size and bulk renders it too large for placement within or before the chamber. In addition to functioning as tomb markers, [cippi](#) probably played a role in funerary rituals. The designation [cippus](#) or altar implies this second use, in all likelihood correctly. Garlands could be suspended from [cippi](#), and the monuments girded with wreaths and fillets. The flat upper surface of the [cippus](#) easily accommodates flowers, vessels

containing food or drink, and burning lamps, left on the occasion of anniversaries and festivals of the dead.<sup>n18</sup>

The chronology for [cippi](#) is difficult to refine. The shape remains constant over a long period of time, and cannot assist in tightening the chronology. [cippi](#) are rarely associated with securely dated contexts; consequently, the best means of dating relies upon epigraphic criteria. The rough consensus attributes the beginning of [cippi](#) to the end of the Hellenistic period, with their apogee in the 1st- 3rdc AD, but not continuing beyond the 3rdc.<sup>n19</sup>

Mitford observes that [cippi](#) are most common in the neighborhoods of Citium and Amathus, and to a lesser extent, Curium.<sup>n20</sup> He adds that they are rare in the northern Mesaoria, completely lacking in Paphos, Arsinoe, and western Soli Districts, with their absence in the north and the central massif a consequence of the lack of suitable limestone. While the outlines of this picture are correct, the details need to be modified.

Amathus, Citium, and Curium are certainly the major producers of [cippi](#), with a distribution extending into their hinterlands. Inland, Tamassus District produced a substantial number of [cippi](#), and Ledri itself also contributed a number. While the northern districts, Lapethus, Soli, Chytri, Ceryneia, Carpasia, and Salamis, were not as prolific, their efforts should be noted, and so should those of Paphos. Although limestone was the material of choice, sandstone and marble were also employed.

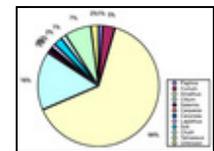


Figure 2:  
Distribution of  
[cippi](#)

[Cippi](#) were the characteristic burial monuments of Roman Cyprus. Fairly plain and serviceable tombstones, they commemorated all classes, even resident foreigners. Materials and decoration tend to be restrained, but some elaboration was possible. Epitaphs offer minimal information regarding the deceased. These tombstones served as funerary monument and altar combined, placed above chamber tombs. Funerary altars are well attested throughout the Mediterranean particularly during the Roman period.<sup>n21</sup> No exact parallels for the Cypriot [cippus](#) can be found, but it is clearly related to types found in the Eastern Mediterranean. Asia Minor in particular ought to be noted as a source of cylindrical altars, including examples inscribed with the [MNHMHΣ XAPIN](#) formula type seen on some Cypriot examples, and others bearing depictions of garlands in relief.<sup>n22</sup> The closest parallel for the shape is found in late Hellenistic and Roman Rhodes; Rhodian altars are very similar in size and proportion to the Curium [cippi](#) but with differences in the details of the capitals and epitaph formulae.<sup>n23</sup> Syrian funerary altars, in shape rough shafts, sometimes bear the [XPHΣTE simpliciter](#) epitaph type seen in Cyprus.<sup>n24</sup>

Columns rarely functioned as tomb markers in Hellenistic and Roman Cyprus; only ten have been published. All are quite plain, and consist of the shaft only, lacking base or capital. Epitaphs are in Greek, and follow the practices observed on [cippi](#). The [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) formula is most common, with [MNHMHΣ XAPIN](#) occurring in Tamassus District. Most columns commemorate men, including Christians and a nobleman from Asia Minor, whose origin and status are indicated by his name, titles, and the use of the epithet ['HPΩΣ](#).<sup>n25</sup> All column tomb markers have been dated to the Roman-Late Roman period, with the majority belonging to the 2nd-3rdc AD, coinciding with the floruit of the [cippus](#). All originate in the proximity of major settlements, if not from the cities themselves, where column drums were readily available. Columns of Late Roman date may reflect partial abandonment of the site of provenance. Column tomb markers probably functioned in the same way as [cippi](#), marking the tomb externally and serving as altars. The drums approximate the [cippus](#) in size and shape, and the formulae employed in the epitaphs of most of these monuments reflect those seen on [cippi](#). Given these similarities, it is very possible that most of these columns were appropriated to secondary use as tomb markers. All were found in areas where [cippi](#) have been reported; perhaps there was no [cippus](#) to hand, and a column

drum was used instead. From the scarcity of the type, it is apparent that this was not a usual method to mark tombs.

[Στήλαι](#) are second to [cippi](#) in popularity. The 150+ [στήλαι](#) follow canonical form, consisting of a rectangular stone slab taller than it is wide. The class is intended to stand upright, either fixed into a slot cut in the ground or into a base. Although the viewer was able to walk around the entire monument, decoration and inscriptions are generally confined to one side, the "front," facing the passerby. The type appears in on Cyprus the Archaic and Classical periods, continuing into Hellenistic and Roman times, with epitaph and style determining date.

Many [στήλαι](#) are relatively plain or topped with simple moldings or pediments. Unadorned rectangular [στήλαι](#) appear to be rare during Hellenistic and Roman times; the most popular variety consists of a gently tapering shaft topped by a pediment. About one-third of published [στήλαι](#) belong to this group, ranging from schematic to quite elaborate, consisting of a miniature rendition of the architectural original, complete with geisons, cornices, dentils, and acroteria. The type is a simple one, found outside Cyprus, and common in Egypt and Greece.<sup>n26</sup> Epitaphs are inscribed on the bodies of the [στήλαι](#), with red paint for emphasis.

Various elaborations of the pediment type are attested. Rosettes and a shield in the round respectively embellish two Hellenistic [στήλαι](#) from the Amathus region, while a wreath surmounts the epitaph of a Roman tombstone from Citium.<sup>n27</sup> Painted decor was also an option. Red sashes appear on at least five Amathus [στήλαι](#), perhaps in imitation of actual fillets knotted around tombstones, during the first half of the Hellenistic period. This type follows a custom seen earlier in Cyprus, and parallels Hellenistic examples from Alexandria.<sup>n28</sup> Occasionally, pediments are the subject of sculptural elaboration, and include representations of rosettes and elaborate acanthus scrolls.<sup>n29</sup>

[Στήλαι](#) are well suited for the display of figural scenes, be they sculpted or painted. Figural monuments can be seen as a development of the pedimented type. The blank space on the shaft is given over to a scene, with the architectural elements serving as a frame. Sculpted [στήλαι](#) begin during the Archaic Period on Cyprus, continuing through the Classical and into the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Several groups can be discerned among the approximately 50 sculpted [στήλαι](#) reported.

The first of these groups belongs firmly to the late Classical tradition epitomized by Attic [στήλαι](#), continuing into the early Hellenistic period on Cyprus. Some of the [στήλαι](#) bear sculpted groups, usually farewell scenes, while others portrayed individuals.<sup>n30</sup> A related series consisting of eight painted [στήλαι](#) from Amathus bears scenes resembling their sculpted counterparts of the late Classical and early Hellenistic periods. All are made from local limestone, surmounted by pediments with acroteria, which are often offset by a painted egg-and-dart molding. The scenes are very classical in conception, with regards to subject, composition, and manner.<sup>n31</sup> Subjects include farewell scenes as well as solitary standing or seated figures similar to those seen on their sculpted associates. The painted [στήλαι](#) belong to a narrowly defined series, limited in both chronological and geographical disposition. All known examples of this type from Cyprus were found at Amathus. Hinks dates the British Museum examples to the 3rd c BC, presumably on a stylistic basis. Hermary refines that date, adding that the [στήλαι](#) clearly owe a debt to 4th c BC Attic sculpted predecessors, and should be dated to the first half of the 3rd c BC. Nicolaou dates the two surviving inscriptions to the early 3rd and to the 3rd-2nd c BC respectively.<sup>n32</sup> The genre did not endure, nor did it spread to other cities in Cyprus. While material indicates that the [στήλαι](#) are local products, in style and subject they are akin to similar works of the early Hellenistic period from Alexandria, Macedonia, and Thessaly.<sup>n33</sup> The Cypriot [στήλαι](#) probably imitate those from Alexandria, which in turn copy northern Greek works. The two preserved inscriptions commemorate foreigners, one

from Kalymnos, the other a Babylonian. Nicolaou suggests that many of the ethnics cited on tombstones of this period attest to the presence of foreign mercenaries brought to Cyprus by the Ptolemies.<sup>n34</sup> Ptolemaic officials and their dependents residing at Amathus may have commissioned these painted [στήλαι](#), or perhaps members of the local upper class in imitation of Alexandrine custom.

In types ultimately descended from the old Attic models, the Hellenistic and Roman [στήλαι](#) of a subsequent group feature single or grouped protagonists. Their subjects are not rendered in a purely Classical manner, since the subjects often stare boldly out at the viewer and are frontally posed as seen on Roman [στήλαι](#) in Italy and the provinces.<sup>n35</sup> Twelve architectural [στήλαι](#) framing single occupants are reported from around the island during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, concentrating in Amathus and Citium Districts. The niche and surmounting pediment are often quite rudimentary. Men and women are represented in equal numbers, often depicted standing, looking out at the passerby, and cradling a bird or piece of fruit in the hand; a few examples of soldiers also occur.<sup>n36</sup> Hairstyles, particularly during the Roman period, reflect current fashions. While the type usually represents a single person standing within a niche, pairs exist.<sup>n37</sup> A related type portrays seated subjects, usually a woman, but sometimes a couple.<sup>n38</sup> The [στήλαι](#) are made from local limestone, and presumably were produced on Cyprus, an assumption which the sculptural styles support. The areas of Amathus and Golgoi are likely candidates for workshops in view of the numbers of [στήλαι](#) found there and given the Golgoi sculptural tradition and the existence of [cippi](#) workshops near Amathus.

The banquet group is an elaboration of the Atticizing [στήλαι](#) group, with 14 examples reported. In this type, the usual individual or farewell scene occupies the greater part of the [στήλη](#) surmounted by a second vignette.<sup>n39</sup> This second scene, contained within its own frame and sometimes crowned by a pediment, depicts a banquet, probably funerary in nature. One or more individuals recline on a couch facing the viewer, sometimes filling the entire scene. Often there are additional figures, either sitting or standing, and usually depicted on a smaller scale, indicative of servile status. The banqueters do not adhere to the Classical canon, possessing overlarge heads with their bodies in lower relief and more cursorily defined, which is characteristic of provincial work. The banqueting type seems to be confined to the areas of central and eastern Cyprus, specifically to Golgoi, Tamassus, and Salamis. Golgoi was home to a thriving sculptural school at this time, and could easily have produced [στήλαι](#) of this type. The use of local limestone and the rather "naive" style also point to Cypriot manufacture. Tatton-Brown dates the beginning of the banquet scene type to the second quarter of the 5thc BC, and adds that it does not owe anything to similar slightly later examples from Greece.<sup>n40</sup> She assigns its combination with the larger figural panels to the Hellenistic period, continuing into Roman times. Around the time of this combination the cast of the banquet expands beyond a single individual, often encompassing an entire family.

Sculpted [στήλαι](#) very close in spirit to Roman funerary portraits seen in Italy and throughout the empire comprise a final group.<sup>n41</sup> The best-known example of this group, a [στήλη](#) from Tremithus, depicts a closely-knit group of parents and son surrounded by an elaborate architectural frame.<sup>n42</sup> Variations exist, with differences lying in the numbers of individuals represented and their sexes.<sup>n43</sup> A singular late example from Phasoulla dating to the 4thc AD depicts parents and their daughter in a flat schematic Syrian style and attests to the longevity of the type.<sup>n44</sup> All of these romanizing portrait reliefs are made from local limestone. For the most part, they originate in Tremithus and Golgoi in central Cyprus, products of local sculptural workshops. Scholars date these portraits to the 1stc AD, associating them with freestanding portrait busts described later in this article. The Phasoulla [στήλη](#) is an isolated example, but may be evidence for other Late Roman examples that have not survived. These [στήλαι](#) and the related portrait busts should not be considered portraits in the true sense. Rather than representing specific individuals, these monuments depict idealized images of the deceased.

All [στήλαι](#) epitaphs are in Greek. Most of the Hellenistic epitaphs follow the simple nominative, as do a few of the Roman examples. During the Roman period, as seen on [cipri](#), the [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΡΕ](#) formula with its usual variations is the most common type found on [στήλαι](#). Metric epitaphs, the third most frequent formula on [στήλαι](#), straddle both periods, appearing equally in each. Epitaphs reveal that [στήλαι](#) commemorate over twice as many men as women. Nicolaou ascribes the prevalence of ethnics attached to men's tombstones during the Hellenistic period to the presence of Ptolemaic mercenaries, and this seems quite plausible.<sup>n45</sup> Age is cited relatively frequently, more often for men. [Στήλαι](#) epitaphs are also rather informative with regards to professions. The percentage of military men supports Nicolaou's supposition regarding the presence of mercenaries. To be noted, particularly for such a large class of monuments, is the complete absence of Christian references. This is partially a consequence of the rarity of [στήλαι](#) in Late Roman times, but scarcity did not inhibit Christian references on [cipri](#).

Evidence for the placement of these funerary [στήλαι](#) includes the following. Incorporated into the epitaph are such phrases as [ΕΝΘΑΔΕ ΚΕΙΜΑΙ](#) and [ΕΣΤΙ ΤΟ ΣΕΙΜΑ](#), which imply that the deceased lies nearby and that the tombs are likewise in the proximity of the [στήλαι](#). While most [στήλαι](#) are not found in situ, some retain their bases, while rectangular cuttings to house [στήλαι](#) can still be seen in the bedrock directly above tomb chambers at Amathus and Curium.<sup>n46</sup> [Στήλαι](#) may have been placed outside chamber entrances, but they were too large to be accommodated within the chamber proper. The most likely site for these [στήλαι](#) remains the surfaces above the tomb chambers, similar to the placement of [cipri](#). As with [cipri](#), garlands and sashes might have been draped over [στήλαι](#) during funerary rituals.

[Στήλαι](#) are particularly common in the vicinity of Amathus and Citium, but are found throughout the island, particularly at the district seats, although not in large numbers. [Στήλαι](#) appear earlier than [cipri](#) and continue in use alongside them, albeit in decreasing quantities. Dated by a combination of epitaph and style, they occur continuously throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods, maintaining an earlier tradition. Two peaks of occurrence, during the early Hellenistic (3rd c BC) and the high Roman (1st-3rd c BC) periods, should be noted.

Freestanding sculpture comprises another class of funerary monument. Sculpture was displayed on the interior and exterior of tombs. Foreign influences provide the inspiration for a custom that was never widespread, though there are Classical precedents on Cyprus, particularly at Marion. It is not always easy to ascertain whether a particular sculptural work was funerary in nature as very few examples have been found in situ. In some instances, monuments have been identified as funerary based on foreign parallels, while others have been retrieved from known cemeteries. Two types are attested: guardian lions and portraits.

Two particularly fine examples of lions from necropoleis have been published, one from Nea Paphos and another from Curium.<sup>n47</sup> Both lions crouch, preparing to spring, and are made from fine imported white marble. Vermeule attributes the Nea Paphos example to an Attic master dated to just after 325 BC, and believes the Curium work to be contemporary or perhaps slightly earlier (340-320 BC), also an import.<sup>n48</sup> Clearly these two monuments are of considerable intrinsic worth, and suitable to adorn the funeral monuments of wealthy patrons. Such large-scale sculpture would require a substantial base like the built bases discovered at Amathus and Curium.<sup>n49</sup> Lions functioned as guardians, intended to ward off intruders from the tombs they defended. They were traditionally appropriate guardians and can be seen protecting Roman tombs in Asia Minor.<sup>n50</sup> Lions are also attested on earlier funerary monuments in Cyprus.<sup>n51</sup> Although the two monuments under consideration are clearly imports, local tradition was receptive to their subjects.

The largest body of freestanding statuary consists of portraits, including busts and two full-length statues. The busts are related to the portraits incorporated into [cipri](#) and relief [στήλαι](#) previously discussed.

Twenty-six portrait busts of men and 12 of women survive.<sup>n52</sup> Men are depicted as beardless, ageless in aspect, with wreaths of rosettes or flowers binding their short hair. Women appear ideally young, usually veiled but sometimes bare-headed, and adorned with jewelry, including fillets peeping out from under their veils. The veils and fillets of the women and the wreaths of the men may reflect the "participation" of the deceased in funerary rituals marking their burials, stone counterparts of gold funerary diadems and wreaths binding the brows of their corpses. Nearly all of these portrait busts are made from local limestone, and traces of coloured paint survive. Only one portrait is accompanied by an inscription; consequently dating of the portraits is primarily based upon sculptural style and the coiffures of the subjects.<sup>n53</sup> The consensus assigns the main body of the limestone busts to the late 1stc BC - 1stc AD.<sup>n54</sup> Most originate in the area of Golgoi and share a common style. The region possesses a steady supply of workable limestone, and was home to known sculptural workshops.

These busts could have been displayed in various manners. All face front and their backs were often left plain, a fact suggesting that these busts were intended to be viewed from the front. Possibly they were housed in niches on tomb exteriors; perhaps incorporated into the facades. Equally probable is the idea that they were placed within the tomb. There may be some ritual function attached to these portrait busts: fire blackening on some could be a consequence of oil lamps left lit nearby or of incense or food burnt in front of the portraits.<sup>n55</sup>

The association between portrait busts and tombs is well documented across the Roman Empire. The style of Cypriot sculpture during the Roman period has not been well studied, but on Cyprus this form of portrait bust appears to be a Roman phenomenon. Adopted in imitation of the Roman custom, it was either transmitted directly from Italy or via the other provinces.<sup>n56</sup> The production of portraits appears concentrated in the central part of the island during the early Roman period. Since only one spurious inscription survives, there is no indication as to whom these portraits commemorated. While the portraits are local products, the patrons may have been foreigners in residence on Cyprus. Equally probable is the idea that they were made for local inhabitants adopting a common Roman custom. The cost of such a monument would have resided in the artistry, and was probably within the grasp of the middle classes, though the taste may have been confined to the romanized upper classes.

Full-length depictions also occur in Cypriot funerary sculpture of Hellenistic and Roman date, albeit rarely.<sup>n57</sup> Two examples of mistress-and-maid groups are known, one from an excavated context at Arsinoe. The Arsinoe example stood on a platform above the tomb in association with a group of terracotta funerary sculpture, and is dated to ca. 325 BC, presumably on kinship to Attic [στήλη](#) reliefs.<sup>n58</sup> The motif recurs in a large-scale sculpture from Golgoi dated to the late 1stc AD, signed by a local artist, Zoilos of Golgoi.<sup>n59</sup> The subject matter would be appropriate for a woman of some means, a "society matron," as it was among the earlier Attic funerary [στῆλαι](#).

In addition to freestanding monuments, the Cypriots employed inset plaques and blocks. Inscribed or painted epitaphs performed a similar function. Some were clearly intended for tomb exteriors where they were visible to passersby. Others identified individual burial places within a tomb, such as [arcosolia](#) or [loculi](#).

Stone plaques were fixed to exterior facades or interior walls of tombs, with over 70 examples reported.<sup>n60</sup> In form, they are thin slabs, usually rectangular but sometimes square in shape. As a class, plaques are very plain, relying upon fine finish or expensive marbles for effect, with paint sometimes emphasizing the lettering. Ivy leaves punctuate a few epitaphs, while simple moldings constitute the borders of others.

All but three epitaphs occurring on plaques are in Greek, and one of these plaques is a bilingual monument. The most frequently encountered formula among the Greek epitaphs is the metric type,

accounting for over 30% of published examples. At the other end of the spectrum, the simplest types of epitaph also occur, particularly the nominative (over 20%), with [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΡΕ](#) ranked as the third most popular type (over 15%). The three Latin epitaphs follow proper Roman conventions, employing the [Dis Manibus](#), [HS Est](#), and [Monumenti Causa](#) formulae.<sup>n61</sup> Among the deceased, men appear twice as often as women. Several of the dead bore Roman names, while foreign ethnics describe others. Ages at death are given on a number of plaques. Two Latin examples specifically refer to class, including a freedwoman and an equestrian. Professions are mentioned for an unusually large proportion of the honorands of these plaques, an indication of their relatively high social status. Several plaques identify Christians.

Plaques were popular throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods. During the Hellenistic period, they are most frequent during the 3rd-2ndc BC, decreasing in the 1stc BC. There is a resurgence during the Empire, remaining steady in the 1st-3rdc AD. Not many tombstones of any type are preserved for the Late Roman period, but plaques persist.

Although no plaques were found in situ and only a few remained in proximity to their original settings, there are various clues to their original placement. Depressed rectangular panels above chamber tomb doors of an appropriate size and depth to house plaques indicate that at least some were affixed to the facades. This practice is well paralleled, particularly in Italy, and the epitaphs themselves confirm such a placement.<sup>n62</sup> Metric epitaphs sometimes directly address the passerby as [ΞΕΙΝΕ](#), [ΠΑΡΟΔΕΙΤΑ](#), or [ΟΔΟΙΠΟΡΕ](#), while others refer directly to a "monument," a construction found above a tomb rather than inside it, and along with it, the identifying plaque. Other plaques were placed inside a tomb, identifying individual occupants in the same way as epitaphs painted or inscribed on walls and sarcophagi. Such plaques were set into a tomb wall, particularly when the structure was equipped with many [loculi](#).<sup>n63</sup> Others were attached to sarcophagi.

Nearly 95% of the published plaques have a provenance, representing every district except Carpasia.

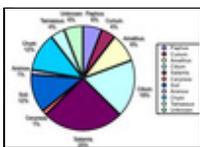


Figure 3:  
Provenance of  
published  
plaques

Salamis District produced the largest number of plaques (26%), all associated with its capital. Citium District, the second largest producer of funerary plaques (19%), assigns its majority to the district seat and one to Idalium, an ancient city-kingdom. Soli District should be considered the third largest producer of funerary plaques (12%), with all coming from the district seat. All plaques from Amathus, Tamassus, and Curium Districts derive from the respective district seats, as do the single examples from Ceryneia and Lapethus Districts. Paphos District has produced 5 plaques, 3 from Nea Paphos, and isolated examples from Peyia and Pissouri, the former a major settlement. Chytri contributed 8 plaques, but as 7 derive from the same tomb, they should really be considered as a single occurrence.<sup>n64</sup> The only published example from Arsinoe District comes from Steni, which is not a major settlement. The distribution of funerary plaques clearly centers around district seats. The high incidence of imported marbles, associated with the metric epitaph type, both forms of display, indicates that the plaque was favored by the well-to-do, both Cypriot and foreigner.

Another category of tomb marker consists of epitaphs inscribed on stone blocks, with 14 examples preserved.<sup>n65</sup> These blocks are of the type employed in building construction, differing from plaques in their thickness but not necessarily in their width or height. Like the columns, this type does not constitute large group. Blocks may have been [ad hoc](#) substitutions for plaques, much in the same way that columns replaced [cippi](#). Alternatively, they could have been incorporated into monumental bases for the display of funerary sculpture or into the architecture of the tomb itself. None have been found [in situ](#). The placement and function of blocks probably did not differ substantially from those of plaques. Only two blocks bear any sort of incised decoration, consisting in both cases of a single motif, a simple cross and an ivy leaf marking the end of one line.<sup>n66</sup>

Twelve examples bear epitaphs in Greek, while two are characteristically Latin. The Greek epitaphs vary widely in their choice of formula. Epitaphs of the metric type adorn four blocks, making this the most frequent variety. Four follow variations of the [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) type seen so frequently on [cippi](#). Two are for the simple nominative. An epitaph from Vitsadha in Chytri District is not only inscribed in Latin, but follows a characteristically Roman formula, indicating that the deceased was Roman.<sup>n67</sup> Several eastern ethnics occur among the Greek epitaphs. With one exception, the blocks commemorate men. In the exception, the epitaph states that a man hired an architect to build a monument -- a heroon, a term used in Asia Minor -- for his wife and daughter, into which it is presumed this block was inserted.<sup>n68</sup> Three men followed a military profession: one a Ptolemaic mercenary, the others Roman soldiers; a doctor and a deacon are also present. Four epitaphs commemorate Christians.

The blocks are equitably distributed across a very long span of time, from the beginning of the Hellenistic period into Late Roman times. In provenance they are more confined, with all except two coming from major cities on the south coast and their immediate vicinities. Inhabitants of these cities possessed the funds to commission elaborate tombs or freestanding sculptural monuments to be placed above their tombs, and these tombs in turn incorporate inscribed blocks in their facades or monument bases. Epitaph evidence, including the use of metric epitaphs and pertinent personal details, points to patrons of high status, as does the presence of marble. Proximity to cities also provided access to construction materials for recycled use as funerary markers. One Christian epitaph from Palaipaphos is inscribed on appropriated material, with earlier text on its second side.<sup>n69</sup> At the late date of this monument, areas of Palaipaphos had been abandoned, giving the makers of tomb monuments a ready supply of scavengeable material.

The most basic means of identifying the dead was to inscribe or paint the epitaph directly onto the walls of the tomb near the place of deposition, and is seen throughout the Hellenistic and Roman Mediterranean. Reports mention only a dozen such epitaphs, but it is very likely that many more once existed, and have faded with the passage of time.<sup>n70</sup> Some are placed on the walls of the tomb near the entrance, perhaps naming the owner or builder of the tomb. More often they mark an individual burial place, such as a platform, [loculus](#), or [arcosolium](#) and identify the occupant, or at least one among several -- probably the original burial. Red paint is often used to enhance inscriptions, and sometimes a [tabula ansata](#) or other device framed the epitaph.<sup>n71</sup> The epitaphs are all in Greek, generally consisting of text only. The type favors the genitive (4 examples), emphasizing ownership of a specific burial place, with two epitaphs following the [XAIPE simpliciter](#) formula, and others the [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) formula. These brief epitaphs do not provide much information beyond the names of the deceased. Eight examples commemorate men; only one belongs to a woman. Four sites are represented: Nea Paphos, Peyia, Carpasia, and Ceryneia, with examples dating to the Hellenistic to Late Roman periods.

The simplest way to identify the deceased buried inside a sarcophagus is to label the container itself, a custom widely paralleled throughout the Mediterranean.<sup>n72</sup> Inscribed plaques sometimes performed this function, but it would have been easier to inscribe the epitaph directly. Sarcophagi were often reused, but given the care expended on the epitaphs, the inscriptions probably referred to the original occupants. The majority of sarcophagi found in Cyprus are uninscribed; if the occupants were identified, it was in paint long since disappeared. Ten sarcophagi with epitaphs inscribed on their bodies or lids and a plaque have been published. Placement on the "front" provided the best visibility. Framing devices occur, such as [tabulae ansatae](#) and elegant moldings. The sarcophagi vary in their materials. Five are marble, pointing to an origin outside of Cyprus, such as Greece or Turkey, while others are made of local limestone. Sarcophagi were costly, as emphasized by the sculptural decoration on several. The manufacturing workshops left the epitaph panels blank, to be inscribed according to the wishes of the purchaser.

The epitaphs are all in Greek. There are four metric epitaphs, including two Christian curses. Nominatives account for four epitaphs, two occurring on the same monument. Two genitives are attested, and one

Tamassus sarcophagus opts for the [ΜΝΗΜΗΣ ΧΑΡΙΝ](#) formula. As with epitaphs inscribed or painted on walls, those inscribed on sarcophagi convey relatively little information about the deceased. Among the eight examples where the gender of the deceased is determinable, only one commemorates a woman and it was later reused for a man. One epitaph names the multiple occupants of a single sarcophagus. Only one sarcophagus indicates ethnicity; three belonged to Christians.

All of these inscribed sarcophagi derive from the necropoleis of large cities. The cities where these sarcophagi are found form a band down central Cyprus, from the north to the south coast: Soli, Chytri, Tamassus, Ledri, and Citium, with a single example from Salamis. This distribution may be a consequence of the small sample size, but it is significant that the major sites of Paphos, Curium, and Amathus are not represented. Inscribed sarcophagi are a subset of a larger group, and their distribution should be considered in relation to that of sarcophagi in general, particularly vis à vis imported marble sarcophagi. Inscribed sarcophagi range in date from the Hellenistic to the Late Roman periods, distributed somewhat evenly.

1 [I. Nicolaou 1971](#), 14-5; [Cassimatis 1973](#), 123-4; [Tatton-Brown 1986](#), 439-53; [Wilson 1970](#), 103-11. See also I. Nicolaou's series "Inscriptiones Cypriae Alphabeticae" in the [RDAC](#) (= "ICA").

2 The farewell scene is a motif with a long history in Classical funerary art, and depicts relatives bidding farewell to the deceased, often clasping hands.

3 For examples in Aegean and Pentelic marbles dating to the end of the Classical period, see [Vermeule 1976](#), 47-8.

4 [Buchholz 1978](#), 201; [Buchholz and Untiedt 1996](#), 44; [Nicolaou 1971](#), 11.

5 [Raptou 1997](#), 225-37.

6 [Arcosolia](#) and [loculi](#) are receptacles cut into tomb walls, or built-in coffins. [Loculi](#) are essentially rectangular compartments opening off a chamber, while [arcosolia](#) lie parallel to the wall, consisting of a rectangular trough surmounted by a rock-cut vault.

7 Numerous examples of [cippi](#) are published in I. Nicolaou, "ICA." Archaeologists of the 19thc were the first to apply the term [cippus](#) to these monuments, implying that they functioned as altars. More conventional Latin terms for tombstone include [monumentum](#) and [lapis](#), but Horace uses [cippus](#) ([Satires](#) 1.8.12). The [cippus](#) is also employed on Cyprus for dedications to the [Θέος](#) ([Υψιστος](#), [Aupert and Masson 1979](#), 380-3; I. Nicolaou, "ICA XXXII, 1992," [RDAC](#) (1993) 223. The only connection appears to be in function as an altar. For information on this deity, [Kraabel 1969](#), 80-93.

8 [Aupert 1980](#), 257.

9 I. Nicolaou, "ICA V, 1965," [RDAC](#) (1966) no. 5.

10 For a discussion of the [ΜΝΗΜΗΣ ΧΑΡΙΝ](#) formula type, see Section III of this article. [MAMA](#) 5 (1937) 109-09 no. 225; [SEG](#) 26.1429, 2nd-3rdc AD.

11 [Cesnola 1885](#), 146.1151-2, 147.1162; [Gunnis 1936](#), 314; I. Nicolaou, "ICA IV, 1964," [RDAC](#) (1965) no. 1; [Mitford 1980](#), 1374.

12 [Cesnola 1885](#), 148.1173-4; 1903, Suppl. no. 20; 1877, 436, no. 105; [Buchholz and Untiedt 1996](#), pl. 55c; [K. Nicolaou 1976](#), 293.

13 [Cesnola 1877](#), 54; 1885, 121.882-91. [I. Nicolaou 1971](#), no. 41a; "ICA II, 1962," [RDAC](#) (1963) no. 5.

14 [Mitford 1990](#), 2204.

15 [Mitford 1980](#), 1374.

16 [Mitford 1980](#), 1374; [Mitford 1990](#), 2203.

17 Mitford assigns the beginning of the [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) formula to the early years of the 1stc AD or perhaps to the second half of the 1stc BC, and on that basis dates the [cippus](#), while the absence of letter forms characteristic of the middle to late 3rdc AD indicates their demise before that date ([Mitford 1980](#), 1374). I. Nicolaou assigns the majority of [cippi](#), those bearing the [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) formula, primarily to the 2nd-3rdc, occasionally as early as the 1stc AD, while recording the smaller group engraved with [XAIPE simpliciter](#) as late Hellenistic (see "ICA"). During the course of the Department of Antiquities' excavation of the Amathus cemetery, 31 [cippi](#) were found in association with tombs. Nicolaou finds that the burial gifts confirm the dates assigned on the basis of the inscriptions, but since these tombs were in use from the Archaic period onwards, it would be difficult to contradict her epigraphical dating ([I. Nicolaou 1991](#), 207). Aupert prefers a slightly earlier date for these tombstones, finding the [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) variety as early as the Hellenistic period, with a floruit about a century earlier than Nicolaou's, in the 1st-2ndc, continuing into the 3rdc AD ([Aupert 1980](#), 237- 58).

18 [Mitford 1980](#), 1374-5.

19 [Kurtz and Boardman 1971](#), 237, 301; [Toynbee 1971](#), 253-4.

20 [Åström 1968](#), 167-9; [Kurtz and Boardman 1971](#), 301; [SEG](#) 7.715, 721, 723, 726-7, 736, 747; 14.798-9 802, 805; 17.606-7; 26.1420-1, 1423, 1426-7.

21 [Aupert 1976](#), 722.

22 [Conteneau 1920](#), 49-50.

23 I. Nicolaou, "ICA III, 1963," [RDAC](#) (1964) no. 9.

24 [Breccia 1912](#), 1:23; [Kurtz and Boardman 1971](#), 218ff.

25 I. Nicolaou, "ICA XIII, 1973," [RDAC](#) (1974) no. 3; 1971, no. 40; [Hermay 1987](#), 71-2.

26 [Hermay 1987](#), 73. For Alexandria, [Breccia 1912](#), 2:pl.XXXIII.38.

27 [Mitford 1950a](#), no. 22; Hermay dates the pediment to the late Classical or early Hellenistic, but the vegetal ornament appears to be more at home in the Roman period ([Hermay 1987](#), 71).

28 [Vermeule 1976](#), 50; [Cesnola 1885](#), no. 104.629.

29 [Hinks 1933](#), 5-6; [Hermay 1987](#), 72-5.

30 [I. Nicolaou 1967](#), 19 no. 7, 28 no. 36.

31 See [Hinks 1933](#), 6 no. 9; [Breccia 1912](#), 1:6-22, pls. XXII-XXXIII; [Kurtz and Boardman 1971](#), 235, 302; also [Tatton-Brown 1985](#), 67- 8.

32 [I. Nicolaou 1967](#), 30-3.

33 [Kleiner 1992](#); [Toynbee 1971](#), 246-50; [Kurtz and Boardman 1971](#), 220-35; [Breccia 1912](#), 1:2-6; [Breccia 1912](#), 2:pl.XX-XXI; [Muehsam 1953](#), 55-113.

34 I. Nicolaou, "ICA XXXI, 1991," [RDAC](#) (1992) no. 8; [Karageorghis 1960](#), 269; [Karageorghis 1966](#), 333-5; [Cesnola 1885](#), no. 104.634; [Hogarth 1889](#), 103; [Buchholz and Untiedt 1996](#), pl. 56a,b,d; [I. Nicolaou 1961](#), 407. For soldiers, see [Masson 1977](#), 322; [Cesnola 1885](#), no. 138.1031.

35 e.g. [I. Nicolaou 1961](#), 406; [Cesnola 1885](#), 126.917.

36 e.g. [Cesnola 1885](#), nos. 104.633, 121.892, 122.906; [Caubet 1977](#), no. L.1.

37 e.g. [Cesnola 1885](#), nos. 121.897, 128.922; [Caubet 1977](#), 172-6; [Tatton-Brown 1986](#), 439-53.

38 [Tatton-Brown 1986](#), 443-5; also [Kurtz and Boardman 1971](#), 234.

39 Particularly the Republican and early Imperial portraits (see [Kleiner 1992](#)).

40 Dated early 3rd c BC by [Vessberg and Westholm](#) (1956, 84); dated c280 BC by [Vermeule](#) (1976, 54); [Tatton-Brown](#) prefers a 1st c AD date, which is preferable (1985, 61). The [στήλη](#) could even date later.

41 e.g. [Hogarth 1889](#), 39; [Masson 1977](#), 322; [Cesnola 1885](#), nos. 121.894, 899, 902, 128.1033, 141.1054; [Ergülec 1972](#), 31.

42 The [στήλη](#) was found at Phasoulla, near Amathus ([Karageorghis 1976](#), 846) and clearly resembles Syrian works.

43 [I. Nicolaou 1967](#), 15.

44 [Karageorghis 1984](#), 956; [Parks 1996](#), 129.

45 [Tatton-Brown 1985](#), 62; [Karageorghis 1983](#), 910; [Vermeule 1976](#), 35.

46 Master of the Peiraeus Museum No. 285 ([Vermeule 1976](#), 35); [Karageorghis 1983](#), 910.

47 [Karageorghis 1981](#), 1021; [McFadden 1946](#), 449-89.

48 [Kubińska 1968](#), 61-3. For lions from the Greek world, Archaic and later, perhaps the most famous being that at Chaeronea, see [Kurtz and Boardman 1971](#), 238-9, pls. 64-7.

49 [Buchholz 1978](#), 201; [Buchholz and Untiedt 1996](#), 44; [Gjerstad et al. 1935](#), 324; [I. Nicolaou 1971](#), 11; [Myres 1914](#), 241-3.

50 [Cesnola 1885](#), 144.1129-38, 145.1139-43, 1145-8; [Myres 1914](#), 213; [Bruun-Lundgren 1992](#), 9-35; [Connelly 1988](#), 10; [Albertson 1991](#), 17, 29; [Cesnola 1882](#), 108; [Karageorghis 1985](#), 96; 1989, 849, figs.153-4.

51 On the basis of this inscription, Cesnola identifies the tomb where the portrait was found as belonging to the Roman proconsul ([Cesnola 1882](#), 109 n.1). Given Cesnola's penchant for exaggeration, the evidence ought to be weighed with caution. Vessberg and Westholm state their doubts about the authenticity of the inscription and that it was in fact ancient ([Vessberg and Westholm 1956](#), 99). In view of the superb quality of the surviving portrait, and that the tomb is identified as having belonged to the proconsul, surely his

family would have been able to afford a properly inscribed epitaph rather than one roughly scratched into the base of the portrait.

52 [Vessberg and Westholm 1956](#), 96, 99; [Connelly 1988](#), 9-10; [Bruun-Lundgren 1992](#), 20; [Karageorghis 1985](#), 147; [Albertson 1991](#), 24.

53 For examples of burning, [Karageorghis 1985](#), 147; [Bruun-Lundgren 1992](#), 12, 18-9; [Connelly 1988](#), 9.

54 Bruun-Lundgren prefers to see the adoption of portrait busts on Cyprus as a reflection of contemporary Egyptian mummy portraits ([Bruun-Lundgren 1992](#), 20-3). However, Cypriot portrait busts and Egyptian mummy portraits should be seen as contemporary responses to an empire-wide interest in portraying the deceased.

55 [Gjerstad et al. 1935](#), 330; [Cesnola 1885](#), 1032.

56 Vessberg and Westholm use the melon frisure coiffure and the hierarchical scale of mistress and maid to confirm the dating ([Vessberg and Westholm 1956](#), 83-4).

57 The hairstyle is characteristically Flavian, and serves as the basis for the dating.

58 e.g. I. Nicolaou's "ICA" series; 1971; [Mitford 1950a](#); [Mitford 1950b](#); [Mitford 1971](#); [Mitford and Nicolaou 1974](#).

59 I. Nicolaou, "ICA VIII, 1968," [RDAC](#) (1969) no. 5; 1971, no. 37; [Cesnola, 1903](#), 149.18.

60 e.g. [Calza 1940](#).

61 [I. Nicolaou 1968b](#), 76-84; [I. Nicolaou 1971](#), 32.

62 [I. Nicolaou 1968b](#).

63 e.g. [Peek 1955](#), nos. 902, 1509; [Mitford 1971](#), no. 147; I. Nicolaou, "ICA."

64 [Mitford 1950b](#), no. 18; [CIL](#) 3.215.

65 [CIL](#) 3.215.

66 [Mitford 1950b](#), no. 20.

67 [Mitford 1950b](#), no. 18.

68 e.g. I. Nicolaou, "ICA"; [Hogarth 1889](#), 11; [Anastasiadou 2000](#), 336-7; [Seyrig 1927](#), no. 12.

69 A [tabula ansata](#) is a common framing device used in epitaphs, and consists of a rectangular panel with triangular "ears" or handles flanking the sides.

70 [I. Nicolaou 1967](#), no. 24; "ICA XII, 1972," [RDAC](#) (1973) no. 4; [K. Nicolaou 1976](#), 292; [Mitford and Nicolaou 1974](#), no. 88; [Mitford 1950b](#), no.9, 165, 169; [Mitford 1950a](#), no. 21; [Vermeule 1976](#), 73; [Peek 1955](#), no. 1325; [Buchholz 1973](#), 369.

Epitaphs and Tombstones of Hellenistic and Roman Cyprus. Danielle A. Parks. Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute.



# Danielle A. Parks, Epitaphs and Tombstones of Hellenistic and Roman Cyprus

## III. Survey and Analysis of Epitaph Types

This section addresses epitaphs and the information they convey. The formulae followed in the epitaphs are grouped according to types, with a summary of the relevant monuments and deceased, accompanied by chronological and geographical distributions. The issues addressed concerning the deceased include gender, age, religion, ethnicity, class, and profession. Some epitaphs are unintelligible, others convey unintentionally bizarre meanings, while still others are not translatable but their meanings are evident. This is particularly true of the metric epitaphs. It may be that epitaphs were borrowed from "copybooks" by engravers not entirely sure of their meanings, and viewed by patrons equally unable to judge. Many of the simplest epitaphs, particularly those on [cippi](#), include errors in spelling and grammar, reflective of a degree of illiteracy among the general populace, and confirming that these monuments mainly served a provincial middle-class clientele.

The largest group of epitaphs comprises nearly 80% of those published from Cyprus. The majority of this group adhere to the [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#) formula, with the remainder subscribing to one of two variants, [ΧΑΙΠΕ simpliciter](#), and less frequently, [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ simpliciter](#). [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#) can be paralleled in Roman Asia Minor, particularly in combination with [ΗΡΩΣ](#).<sup>n73</sup> [ΧΑΙΠΕ simpliciter](#) is a frequently encountered epitaph in the eastern Mediterranean, simple and effective.<sup>n74</sup> [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ simpliciter](#) appears in Syrian epitaphs.<sup>n75</sup>

The most common among this category by far is the [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#) formula type, dominating Cypriot epitaphs in toto at 75%. The deceased is addressed in the vocative, described as good, and bidden farewell. The type commemorates men and women equally, in proportion to the ratio represented on tombstones (6 to 34%). Most often, no further information is given (53%), but patronymics occur frequently (40%), with grandfathers, metronymics, husbands, sons, and friends cited rarely (7%). Additional information concerning the deceased is equally infrequent, but includes ethnics (2%), adjectives (1%), profession (1%) and class (3 examples). Ethnics reflect mostly eastern Mediterranean origins. Roman names (5%) could point to an Italian presence, but given their frequent conjunction with Greek patronymics, they probably reflect the romanization of Cyprus. Adjectives are generic in nature, praising the virtue of the deceased. Rare references to the upper classes and freedmen confirm that [cippi](#) were essentially a middle-class monument.

Occasionally, the supplemental phrase [ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΑΘΑΝΑΤΟΣ](#) appears, as seen in Judaea, indicating that the deceased was a Christian.<sup>n76</sup>



Figure 4: The epitaphs on the cippi

The various distributions make the following apparent. [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#) is seen most frequently on [cippi](#) (89%), appearing notably on [στήλαι](#) (5%), but sporadically on other monument varieties. Geographically, the formula type is strongest in the Curium-Amathus-Citium-Tamassus stretch, paralleling the occurrence of [cippi](#). In the northern Soli and Lapethus and the eastern Carpasia and Salamis Districts, the percentages are in proportion to the number of [cippi](#), confirming the link between epitaph and tombstone types. The dating of the [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#) formula is essentially Roman, and closely tied to that of [cippi](#).<sup>n77</sup>

Some epitaphs of the [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#) class omit the descriptive adjective, reduced to [ΧΑΙΠΕ simpliciter](#) accompanied by the name of the deceased. This variation never becomes common (3% of all Cypriot epitaphs). With regards to gender, the percentages of men and women celebrated favor men slightly relative to overall ratios (72 vs. 28%), probably a consequence of the higher percentage of Hellenistic monuments present. As with the [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#) type, these epitaphs do not often reveal any information beyond the name of the deceased (54%), but patronymics occur (25%) and metronymics rarely. Adjectives praising the virtue of the deceased figure, while ethnics and Christian references are rare. (Fig. 4)

Like [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#), [ΧΑΙΠΕ simpliciter](#) appears most often on [cippi](#) (68%), followed by [στήλαι](#) (14%). The remainder encompasses more monument types than its associate. [ΧΑΙΠΕ simpliciter](#) is the most popular formula in Ceryneia District and the western territories of Paphos and Curium. Occurrence is low in Citium, Salamis, Chytri, and Tamassus Districts, and is completely lacking in the northern districts of Arsinoe, Soli, Lapethus, and Carpasia. Nicolaou sees [ΧΑΙΠΕ simpliciter](#) as a forerunner of [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#), dating it to the late Hellenistic period.<sup>n78</sup> Some [cippi](#) with this formula type date to this time, but others are Roman, ranging from the 1st into the 3rd AD. If [ΧΑΙΠΕ simpliciter](#) is the precursor to [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#), it continues alongside its progeny.

[ΧΡΗΣΤΕ simpliciter](#) can also be considered an abbreviated form of [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#). Describing the deceased briefly as good, the type accounts for even a smaller percentage than [ΧΑΙΠΕ simpliciter](#) (<1%). With respect to gender, women are better represented than usual in this category, outnumbering men (60 to 40%), but that may be a consequence of the small sample size reported. Patronymics are often associated with the names of the deceased, though the names as often remain unencumbered. The epitaphs of this type provide no further information. (Fig. 4) [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ simpliciter](#) appears on [cippi](#) only, with the exception of a single [στήλη](#). Geographically, the formula is confined to Amathus and Citium Districts. Reports do not discuss the dating of this type, but assign it to the 1st-3rd AD in parallel with [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΠΕ](#) and [cippi](#).

A related but distinct formula group consists of the name of the deceased in the nominative, followed by the wish, [ΜΝΗΜΗΣ ΧΑΡΙΝ](#) – for the sake of memory, sometimes abbreviated to [ΜΝΗΜΗΣ](#). Although not common, its presence is significant (2% of all epitaphs). This variety of epitaph figures on a quarter of Tamassus District monuments, appearing sporadically in only three other districts. The formula is frequently seen in Asia Minor, and probably originates in that area.<sup>n79</sup> In Cyprus, it is more commonly associated with female burials than with men (50 vs. 40%). Patronymics are often mentioned (35%); followed by husbands for women or an absence of cited relatives; sons, friends, mothers, brothers, and grandfathers are rare. As in other types, Roman names do not guarantee the presence of Romans, but there is an example of an ethnic, as well as a Christian and some slaves. (Fig. 4) [ΜΝΗΜΗΣ ΧΑΡΙΝ](#) is strongly associated with [cippi](#) and the related columns, with one example of a plaque and sarcophagus respectively. The linkage with [cippi](#) indicates that this formula type is contemporary with those tombstones and the

[XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) formula. The examples of [MNHMHΣ XAPIN](#) from Asia Minor also belong to the 2nd-3rdc AD, confirming this chronology.

The epitaphs of a third category are very short and to the point. For the most part, they consist of the nominative, but the genitive and the vocative also function in this capacity, with no real meaningful distinction to be seen. These very basic means of identifying the deceased enjoyed a long history across the Mediterranean world.

Nominative citations of the deceased's name occur in significant numbers among Cypriot epitaphs during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, as they did in previous times, forming the second largest class (9% of all epitaphs). Nominatives are most common in the early Hellenistic period, regaining strength in Late Roman times. In effect, the epitaph states, "this is X." Male epitaphs are three times as frequent as female, partly a function of the large number of plaques in this class. It is also a consequence of date, since many of these epitaphs belong to the early Hellenistic and Late Roman periods, when fewer women are commemorated. Patronymics are most often mentioned (51%), followed by no cited relatives at all (44%); husbands and brothers, both associated with female burials, trail. This class of epitaph, despite its simplicity, is the most informative about the deceased. Over 50% mention an ethnic, more than 15% an age, while others identify professions or refer to the deceased as Christians. The ethnics are closely tied to the early Hellenistic [στυλαί](#) associated with foreign mercenaries, which constitute a sizeable proportion of this formula category. The Christians belong at the other end of the chronological spectrum, to the Late Roman period. Age and profession are often mentioned with both of these groups. (Fig. 4) In contrast to the previously discussed formulae, nominatives figure most frequently on [στυλαί](#) (38%) as to be expected from their concentration in the early Hellenistic period, followed by plaques (28%), with [cippi](#) in third place (19%). Geographically, their distribution favours those districts where [cippi](#) are not so common, appearing rarely where the [cippus](#) is the monument of choice.

The genitive formula type consists of the name of the deceased in the possessive, indicating that the burial place belonged to the dead person. Although less common than the nominative, its numbers are still significant (2% of all epitaphs). The sample is small, but very strongly favors men (93%). Generally, this type is confined to the name of the deceased, with patronymics occurring in 20%. Several epitaphs mention age, while others belonged to Christians. (Fig. 4) The genitive is usually seen where it would directly identify an individual's burial place, such as a [loculus](#) or sarcophagus, directly inscribed into its surface or on a nearby plaque. Epitaphs on [cippi](#) and the single column in this group do not present as direct a connection with the deceased. Distribution of the genitive type follows that of labeled [loculi](#) and sarcophagi, occurring sporadically in certain coastal districts. With regards to date, the span of this type includes the entire duration of the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Equally basic, the vocative formula names the deceased, as if addressing him or her. As with the genitive, numbers are small (about 1% of all epitaphs). Most of the deceased were male (88%). Patronymics and a lack of cited relatives are equally common (50% each). (Fig. 4) The vocative formula is not characteristic of a specific monument type, but is evenly distributed among several types. It is also scattered geographically, appearing for the most part in isolated instances, and skipping some districts altogether. Dates extend throughout the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

Metric epitaphs, or carmina, are the most elaborate found on Cyprus, with a long history in the eastern Mediterranean.<sup>n80</sup> Ranging widely from simple couplets to long, involved curses, all employ poetic devices and at least attempt to meet the requirements of meter. Generally, they praise the virtues of the deceased, bemoaning their premature demise. Many were probably not composed for a specific funeral, but had personal details inserted into a generic verse. It is a popular type (7% of all epitaphs), almost equaling the combined numbers of the simple type. Over two-thirds of the type celebrate men. Relatives of all varieties figure, particularly parents. Although patronymics occur, most parents are usually described in

their capacity as mourners, left behind by the deceased. Often nameless, these parents may be a poetic device to render the epitaph more poignant, or they may have been the dedicants of the tombstones, as were other named relatives. While adjectives describing the virtues of the deceased were part and parcel of the type, other details are more personalized. Ethnicity (24%) and age (31%) figure prominently, profession (17%) to a lesser extent, all lending themselves readily to the poetic form. (Fig. 4) Metric epitaphs are closely tied to monument type and geographical distribution. Approximately 50% occur on plaques and 25% on [στήλαι](#), whose shapes are well suited to longer epitaphs. Their strong presence in Salamis is closely associated with the frequency of marble plaques at the district seat, with the carmina and material clear indicators of status. Numbers suggest that the type was also popular in Paphos, Soli, and perhaps Citium Districts. Data are too limited to confirm trends in Ceryneia, Lapethus, and Arsinoe Districts, but metric epitaphs were not in favor in Curium, Amathus, Tamassus, and Carpasia Districts. Moreover, almost all metric epitaphs derive from district seats. With regards to date, they enjoy popularity in the early Hellenistic period, dropping off thereafter, and make a strong comeback in the High Empire during the 2nd-3rd AD. Several Christian examples attest to the survival of the type into Late Roman times.

Latin epitaphs appear occasionally in Roman Cyprus, and their presence should be regarded as significant (1% of all epitaphs). These epitaphs follow well known Roman formats.<sup>n81</sup> The rarity of Latin inscriptions on Cyprus and the equally uncommon occurrence of typically Roman epitaphs suggest that these were meant to honour Romans, rather than locals adopting the custom of Rome. Two epitaphs are bilingual, the Greek and Latin portions employing equivalent formulae.<sup>n82</sup> Three quarters of the Latin epitaphs celebrate men. Dedicants are explicitly named, including a wife, a brother, fellow freedmen, and soldiers. All those celebrated in Latin epitaphs possess Roman names. Age, profession, and class ranging from freedman to eques are cited, as is common among Roman epitaphs. (Fig. 4) The majority of these epitaphs are inscribed on plaques, a typically Roman type. As one might expect, the distribution almost exclusively encompasses three of the most important district seats, Nea Paphos, Salamis, and Citium, where one would find Romans. All of these monuments belong to the period of the High Empire, bearing witness to the presence of Romans on Cyprus.

Analysis of epitaphs contributes the following conclusions concerning the deceased that they commemorated. On average, epitaphs province-wide indicate that tomb monuments were twice as likely to honour men as they were women. Examination within districts is best performed with Amathus, Citium, and Tamassus Districts, the three regions with statistically valid sample sizes, and it indicates some variation. Women were most often commemorated in epitaphs in Tamassus District (50%), followed by Amathus (33%), and then Citium (28%). Distribution across the districts is heavily weighted in favour of the district seats, but in Amathus and Tamassus Districts outside the district seats women are more often encountered on tombstones (43% and 44% respectively), while in Citium District, they are less frequent (25%). Over time, men are better represented during the early Hellenistic and Late Roman periods, with the numbers of women increasing during the High Roman era. Many men during the Hellenistic period may have been Ptolemaic mercenaries, while those from the Late Roman period were often church officials. The [pax Romana](#) seems to have encouraged mourners to commemorate their dead female relatives.

In contrast to gender, age at death is not often cited. When it occurs, it tends to be in metric or nominative epitaphs. In metric epitaphs, age emphasizes the sense of premature bereavement, as it is generally associated with children or young adults survived unnaturally by their parents. References to death prior to marriage also feature in this type of epitaph. When age is incorporated into epitaphs of the nominative type, it appears as a simple statement of fact. These seem to be true ages, spanning the entire range. Age is as likely to be associated with men as with women, in line with the overall ratio of the sexes.

Epitaphs sometimes convey information regarding social class, profession, ethnicity, and religious preferences. Class does not feature prominently in epitaphs, but references are about evenly divided between freedmen and the upper classes, with middle-class status not meriting mention. All are of Roman date, and all but one refer to men. About half derive from Latin epitaphs, whose formulae often allude to class. Freedmen and the upper classes were the most likely to stress class, one anxious to indicate that they were no longer slaves and the other proud of its inheritance. Adjectives beyond the conventional [XPHΣTE](#) praise the upright moral character of the deceased, but remain rare, with men more likely to be so described. Probably a Roman trait, most occur on [cippi](#) or in metric epitaphs.

Ethnicity can be declared on tombstones in a variety of ways. Roman names, not uncommon (appearing in 6% of epitaphs), in most cases should be viewed as an indication of the romanization of the province, particularly at the large cities of Nea Paphos and Salamis. Latin epitaphs, however, commemorate Roman according to the traditional formulae of their homeland. Links with Asia Minor are reflected in the use of the [MNHMHΣ XAPIN](#) formula and the epithet ['HPΩΣ](#).<sup>n83</sup> Ethnicity are quite common, appearing in 8% of epitaphs, and more frequently associated with men. Often appearing in nominative formulae, they usually point to eastern Mediterranean origins. As many are men, when they date to the early Hellenistic period, the epitaphs likely refer to mercenaries.

Professions appear sporadically, and almost all describe men. Two major categories include soldiers and Christian officials. Both provide evidence for dating. Many soldiers are attested on early Hellenistic tombstones, a period of considerable military activity while the Christian references belong to the Late Roman period. Rare examples include a cook and a possible gravedigger.

Religious references are infrequent and belong to Christian burials. Earlier references are discreet, with crosses replacing Xs and [XPICTOC](#) inserted for [XPHΣTE](#) in [cippus](#) epitaphs and the occasional supplemental [OYΔEΙΣ AΘANATOC](#), a Christian formula paralleled in Judaea.<sup>n84</sup> Late Roman epitaphs are much more likely to commemorate men rather than women, and are more overt in their Christianity, utilizing psalms and mentioning church offices. No other religious affiliations occur on Hellenistic and Roman tombstones.

Relatives are often named in epitaphs. Some may be responsible for commissioning the tombstone in question, but often the cited family members identify the deceased much in the way of a modern surname.<sup>n85</sup> About half of the epitaphs do not mention any relative, with male and female deceased present proportionally. Epitaphs in the genitive tend not to designate a relative, while metric epitaphs usually refer to the parents. Parents appearing as pairs tend to be nameless entities in metric epitaphs, possibly a poetic device emphasizing the pathos of a premature bereavement, but also potential dedicants of the relevant tombstones. Fathers named in metric epitaphs, however, were more likely to have been dedicants. The [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) group and [MNHMHΣ XAPIN](#) epitaphs employ patronymics and other named relatives about half the time. Parents, particularly fathers, appear most often when a relative is cited. Patronymics in these epitaphs were intended to differentiate individuals bearing the same name as was the custom among the living, with men and women so identified in equal proportions. Grandfathers and great-grandfathers occur only in conjunction with a patronymic as a more precise identification of the deceased, rather than naming dedicants. Metronymics are rare and more likely to individualize men, but probably functioned in the same manner as patronymics. Spouses, however, are usually cited on women's tombstones, sometimes in conjunction with patronymics. A named husband can identify the deceased in the same manner as a patronymic, but husbands, being younger than fathers, were more likely to outlive their wives and dedicate tombstones. Wives mentioned in epitaphs probably did not identify the deceased, but should be seen as the commissioners of the monuments. Siblings, very rarely mentioned, could function in either capacity. Friends and clients, when acknowledged on a tombstone, should be considered as responsible for its placement.

Epitaphs provide the only evidence that chamber tombs were family owned. Names held in common among several tomb markers found in a single context indicate that members of a single family were interred within the same tomb, confirming that at least some tombs belonged to individual families and that more than one tomb marker could be associated with a single tomb. Tombstones with multiple epitaphs served several individuals, sometimes related, based on the evidence of patronymics or explicitly stated kinship. In other cases links between tombmarkers are indicated by identical patronymics. At present there is no evidence for other types of organizational groups, such as the burial clubs known in Italy.

1 [Åström 1953](#), 206- 7. Lattimore cites an example of Roman date from Larissa ([Lattimore 1942](#), 282).

2 [Butler 1913](#), 392; [SEG](#) 17.715, 26.1489, 1679; [Breccia 1912](#), 1:xxxviii-xix.

3 [Conteneau 1920](#), 49; [SEG](#) 26.1655.

4 e.g. [SEG](#) 14.833; 17.780.

5 Mitford finds the beginning of the [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#) type early in the 1stc AD or perhaps in the second half of the 1stc BC, which he links to the dating of [cippi](#) (1st- 3rdc AD) ([Mitford 1971](#), 295 no.152; [Mitford 1950a](#), 71; [Mitford 1980](#), 1374; [1990](#), 2203). [Aupert and Masson](#) agree (1979, 361-89). I. Nicolaou dates inscriptions on the basis of letter shape, and usually assigns this type to the 2nd-3rdc AD when found on [cippi](#). She places some [σπῆλαι](#) bearing this type of epitaph as early as 50 BC, see "ICA."

6 I. Nicolaou, "ICA XXVIII, 1988," [RDAC](#) (1989) 145.

7 e.g. [SEG](#) 14.789, 798-9, 802, 805; 17.557, 605-8, 621, 667, 709, 721, 723, 726-7, 736, 747; [SEG](#) 26.1418, 1420-2, 1423-4, 1426, 1429.

8 [Kurtz and Boardman 1971](#), 261-6.

9 [Calza 1940](#), 263-368; for examples of DM epitaphs from Ostia, see [CIL](#) vol. 14, Suppl. 1-2; for examples from Rome, see [CIL](#) vol. 6, part 6, no. 2; vol. 6, part 7, no. 2.1.

10 [Cesnola 1903](#), no. 149; [CIL](#) 3/4.12110.

11 I. Nicolaou, "ICA (III) 1963," [RDAC](#) (1964) 197; idem, "ICA X, 1970," [RDAC](#) (1971) 69; cf. [Lattimore 1942](#), 97.

12 [SEG](#) 14.833; 17.780. Mitford indicates that this type of epitaph occurred on both Christian and Jewish tombstones, and was of Egyptian origin ([Mitford 1971](#), 300). Lattimore also comments on an Egyptian variant ([Lattimore 1942](#), 253), which is seen in one Curium epitaph.

13 For the most part, Cypriot tombstones provide too little information to permit reconstruction of family structure on the island. When only a mother is named, it may imply a female head of household, while patronymics were probably used as "surnames." For examples of such studies, see [Saller and Shaw 1984](#); [Martin 1996](#).

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## IV. Conclusions

Tombstones and epitaphs existed on Cyprus prior to the Hellenistic period, but it is during Roman times that they come into their own. The prosperity enjoyed by the province under the empire may have provided the requisite conditions and funding for the proliferation of funerary monuments in this period. Tidy little [cippi](#), with the occasional [στήλη](#) or statue interspersed, dotted the cemeteries, adorned with bright flowers or garlands, fillets, and offerings. Occasionally addressing passersby, their presence announced ownership of individual tombs, acting as visual statements of possession and identifying the deceased within. For the most part, epitaphs are statements of possession, farewell, or mourning; none convey any vision of the afterlife. A few tomb-markers bear curses, and were intended to protect the tombs. Epitaphs provide the best evidence to date that at least some chamber tombs served family groups. Chamber tombs were clearly marked; it is not certain whether cist tombs were also identified as no tombstones survive in association. [cippi](#), columns, and [στήλαι](#) could have stood above both chamber and cist tombs, while other types, for example plaques, were confined to chamber tombs. Tomb markers and funerary sculpture, interior and exterior, provided the focus for funerary rituals during the Hellenistic and Roman periods, both during the actual interment and during subsequent commemorations. Some tomb markers performed a function during funerary rituals, serving as altars or receiving offerings on behalf of the deceased.

Among the 1020+ monuments recorded, the [cippus](#) is by far the most common tombstone type at 67%, followed at some distance by [στήλαι](#) (15%); plaques (6%); sculpture (4%); and blocks, sarcophagi, columns, and inscribed/painted on tomb walls (each 1% or less). Upon closer inspection by district this picture varies.

[cippi](#) (22%) and tomb wall epitaphs (19%) are the most common tomb markers in Paphos District. Curium District is closer to the overall provincial mean, with [cippi](#) comprising the greatest number (66%), and [στήλαι](#), plaques, blocks, and sculpture less frequent. Amathus District also conforms to this norm, as is to be expected considering the large number of monuments recovered from the district, with [cippi](#) constituting 83% of its tomb markers, followed by [στήλαι](#) (13%); plaques, columns, and blocks are rare, and funerary sculpture, wall epitaphs, and inscribed sarcophagi completely absent. [cippi](#) are also the most common tombstone type (65%) in Citium District, but the sculptural types, both [στήλαι](#)

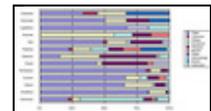


Figure 5: Tomb marker types by district

are also the most common tombstone type (65%) in Citium District, but the sculptural types, both [στήλαι](#)

and freestanding, occur in proportionally greater numbers than elsewhere on the island. Plaques, inscribed sarcophagi, and blocks are less common, while wall epitaphs and columns are absent. Among Salamis tomb markers, plaques are most frequent (33%), followed by [στήλαι](#) (22%) and [cippi](#) (15%); inscribed sarcophagi are rare, and other types unrecorded. While few monuments are known from Carpasia District, its distribution is closer to the norm, with [cippi](#) most common, followed by inscribed walls, [στήλαι](#), and columns. [cippi](#) are also the most popular in Ceryneia District (50%), with columns, plaques, [στήλαι](#), and inscribed walls less common, and other types seemingly absent. Lapethus' few reported monuments indicate that [cippi](#) are likewise in the forefront, succeeded by inscribed sarcophagi. [cippi](#) occupy first place in Soli District (48%), followed by plaques (24%) and [στήλαι](#) (15%), while inscribed sarcophagi, columns, and sculpture are rare. Arsinoe, clinging to Classical tradition, prefers [στήλαι](#) (57%), with single examples of blocks, plaques, and sculpture recorded. [cippi](#) (43%) and plaques (35%) occur in approximately equal numbers in Chytri District, with a few examples of inscribed sarcophagi, [στήλαι](#), and blocks; wall epitaphs, columns, and funerary sculpture are lacking. Tamassus District reverts to the usual distribution, [cippi](#) predominating (82%); [στήλαι](#), plaques, columns, and inscribed sarcophagi are rarer, occurring in similar numbers. Funerary sculpture, blocks, and wall epitaphs are absent.

The large numbers of [cippi](#) from Amathus District, and to a lesser extent Citium District, distort the overall picture. The events of 1974 have also greatly reduced the numbers reported from the districts now in occupied northern Cyprus, including Salamis, Carpasia, Ceryneia, Lapethus, Soli, and Chytri. Paphos and Arsinoe District finds are surprisingly slim, with no motivation readily apparent. But even assuming a recovery rate for Amathus and Citium at a half or even a third of what it has been, the following conclusions can be offered. [cippi](#) dominate by a wide margin, performing especially well in the Curium-Amathus-Citium stretch, extending northwards into Tamassus and Chytri Districts. They skip Arsinoe District altogether, and are proportionately restricted in Salamis District to the east. [στήλαι](#) are the second choice in the Curium-Amathus-Citium-Tamassus group, and also in Salamis District. They lead in Arsinoe District to the northwest, probably because of lingering attachments to Greece. Their popularity is reduced in the other northern districts of Carpasia, Ceryneia, Lapethus, Soli, and Chytri, and surprisingly, in Paphos District to the west. Plaques, in contrast, are more prominent in the north, particularly in Salami and Soli Districts, but are third place in the Curium-Amathus-Citium-Tamassus block. Two minor groups inscribed/painted tomb walls and funerary sculpture, center around particular areas, the first around Paphos and the second focusing on Citium District and its sculptural workshops.

Certain epitaph formulae are more closely associated with particular monument types than with others, resulting in parallel distribution patterns. During the Hellenistic period, [στήλαι](#) bearing nominative epitaphs prevail across the island, succeeded to a lesser extent by [στήλαι](#) of the [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΡΕ](#) type. The popular [ΧΡΗΣΤΕ ΧΑΙΡΕ](#) formula, so tightly tied to the [cippus](#), dominates, particularly in the Curium-Amathus-Citium-Tamassus belt during Roman times. In contrast, plaques bearing metric epitaphs, often of marble, prevail in Salamis District.

Examination of tombstone materials also reveals some patterns, some linked to local availability, others to trade and class. Limestone is the most common material employed in funerary monuments at 68%, reflecting its accessibility. Sandstone ranks second overall at 20%, while marble is third at 11%. Within the individual districts, however, the picture varies from the province norm. Limestone dominates the Curium-Amathus-Citium-Tamassus-Chytri group, as well in Arsinoe, Carpasia, and Ceryneia Districts. Sandstone assumes second place within Amathus-Citium-Tamassus, as it does in Carpasia District to the northeast; third place in Paphos, Curium, Salamis, and Arsinoe Districts; but is completely lacking in Ceryneia, Lapethus, Soli, and Chytri, all northern districts and a consequence of geology. Marble is the material of choice for Salamis and Paphos Districts, and as frequent as limestone in Lapethus and Soli; second choice in Curium and Arsinoe; third choice in Citium, and completely lacking in Amathus, Tamassus, Carpasia, and Ceryneia Districts. Marble does not occur naturally on Cyprus, and must be

imported. Marble is more prevalent in the west, north, and east, probably reflecting directions of overseas trade, with marble tombmarkers all deriving from district seats, good markets for the costly material.

By monument type, [cippi](#) and blocks are most commonly made of limestone (71 and 54% respectively), followed by sandstone (27% and 31%), and then marble (2 and 15%). Given the scarcity of marble [cippi](#), does not appear they were being made outside the island for the Cypriot market. It is possible that manufacturers pared down preexisting marble column drums or altars into the canonical [cippus](#) form. Marble and sandstone are equally common among [στῆλαι](#) and columns (7 and 33%), with limestone (87 and 33%) maintaining its dominant position. Marble is the material of choice for plaques and inscribed sarcophagi (76 and 67%), followed by limestone (22 and 33%) and sandstone (2 and 0%). The trade in marble sarcophagi is well documented, and those examples found in Cyprus traveled to the island as nearly completed works of art. Marble [στῆλαι](#) may have been imported as unfinished slabs to be carved locally or with their reliefs executed. Epitaphs were carved onto marble plaques as needed. With the exception of [στῆλαι](#), marble is associated with Roman monuments, particularly with plaques. Marble, moreover, is concentrated at district seats, as is to be expected of an import, with distance a factor in its lack of penetration to Tamassus. Such cities provided the consumers for the costly material. Metric epitaphs are particularly associated with marble monuments, another sign of status.

Tombstone types can also be paralleled outside Cyprus. Funerary [cippi](#) are quite common in Italy and the eastern Mediterranean, particularly in Syria and Asia Minor, but the particular shape seen in Cyprus is characteristic of the island. [Στῆλαι](#), however, are frequently encountered throughout the eastern Mediterranean in the forms seen in Cyprus, including the simple pedimented and the Atticizing varieties that precede and continue into the Roman period. Egypt has produced examples of [στῆλαι](#) similar to those from Cyprus, including the painted pictorial group. Funerary portraits found on the island are provincial interpretations of the Italian tradition, as are those in the other eastern provinces, notably Syria. Inscribed epitaphs on plaques, tomb walls, and sarcophagi appear in Italy and elsewhere. The formulae employed in epitaphs likewise are well paralleled, confirming that the island was attuned to the material culture of the east Mediterranean. The simple nominative and genitive types, as well as the [XAIPE](#) and metric varieties appear in Greek epitaphs across the eastern Mediterranean, beginning in pre-Roman times. Other formulae are more restricted in their parallels. The Latin types have their origin in Italy, following Romans as they spread through the Mediterranean. Certain formulae, the ubiquitous [XPHΣTE XAIPE](#), and the more restricted [MNHMEIΣ XAPIN](#) and ([HPΩΣ](#), find their best [comparanda](#) in Roman Asia Minor. [MNHMEIΣ XAPIN](#), in one instance associated with a motif also from Asia Minor, is concentrated around Tamassus in central Cyprus, for reasons not yet understood. The relatively rare [XPHΣTE simpliciter](#) is combined with epitaphs on Syrian funerary altars. The presence of foreign ethnics and epitaph types attests to foreigners living in the province, while the existence of Roman names indicates a degree of romanization. All of this agrees with information provided about other eastern Mediterranean provinces.

The evidence of monument type, decoration, and epitaph indicates that Cyprus belonged to the cultural [κοινέ](#) of the eastern Mediterranean. Overlying a strong core of Cypriot traditions are links with Asia Minor, Greece, Egypt, and Italy in particular. The strength of these ties varies in the different districts, perhaps drawing on earlier tendencies. Egyptian elements are particularly notable at Amathus, and perhaps at Paphos; those from Asia Minor especially in Tamassus District; Greek varieties perhaps in Arsinoe; while Italian elements are most frequent in the big cities. Egyptian influence was strongest at the beginning of the Hellenistic period, to be associated with the presence of Ptolemaic mercenaries and governing officials. Latin and Asia Minor elements are more characteristic of the Roman period, perhaps linked to commercial activities. Clearly Cyprus was far from being an isolated backwater, but should be considered a prosperous province receptive to external influences.

In addition to attesting to foreign influences and residents, epitaphs provide an interesting commentary on the society of Cyprus during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. The island was home to a comfortable population, with a large middle-class sector. The tombstones indicate that at least some of the tombs were family-owned, and commemorated women more often in the Roman period than during previous or subsequent eras. Religious statements were confined to Christian references, remaining discreet and infrequent under the Empire, and only becoming overt with the official endorsement of Christianity in the Late Roman period.

The use of tombstones and epitaphs on Cyprus diminishes during the Late Roman period as is the case across the empire.<sup>n86</sup> Among freestanding monuments, [cippi](#) and sculpture disappear, while columns and [στήλαι](#) are represented by a single example each. Plaques, blocks, and inscribed sarcophagi, however, continue in relatively constant numbers. Formulae tend to be confined to the simple nominative and genitive types, as to be expected when most epitaphs identified specific burial places. A few examples of metric epitaphs are attested, including a curse. The smaller numbers of tombstones may be a consequence of a change in rite, emphasizing the importance of the individual burial place or of a general reduction in the numbers of epitaphs empire-wide.

1 [Lattimore 1942](#), 187.

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Epitaphs and Tombstones of Hellenistic and Roman Cyprus. Danielle A. Parks. Cyprus American Archaeological Research Institute.



# Marcus Rautman, From Polytheism to Christianity in the Temples of Cyprus

1

Over his career Eugene Lane has contributed much to our understanding of the religions of the late classical world, and in particular to clarifying the evolution of Christianity within the context of the Roman empire. The complex relationships among adherents of differing belief systems, at varying times tolerant or antagonistic, have figured prominently in his courses at Missouri as well as in his research and writing. As he long ago recognized, the historical transition from classical religion to Christianity was not a uniform process but varied with myriad local factors, and can best be understood on the regional level. The island of Cyprus, which Gene visited during the Missouri expedition to Kourion in the early 1980s, provides material to explore this momentous social change in one neglected Mediterranean landscape.

Cyprus is an important witness to the early history of Christianity for many reasons. This large and geographically varied island lies near the center of the east Mediterranean, less than 100 km. from the coast of Syria and Palestine. Its status as a bone of contention among larger mainland powers dates back through classical times to late prehistory, when Mycenaean and Phoenician settlers were attracted by its location and natural resources. Acquired by the Hellenistic monarchs in the late 4th century, Cyprus passed to Roman control in 58 B.C.E. The new republican province was administered in 51-50 by Cicero during his term as proconsul of Cilicia, although he never actually resided here.<sup>1</sup> The island had always been one of the first stopping points for ships sailing west from Egypt and Palestine. The apostle Paul, accompanied by Barnabas, a native of the island, is credited with preaching in the Salamis synagogues and converting the proconsul Sergius Paulus to Christianity in Paphos. Returning to the island with John Mark Barnabas was martyred and buried near Salamis.<sup>2</sup> Cyprus was reassigned by Diocletian to a consular governor reporting to Antioch and shared in the general prosperity of the east Mediterranean region following the eastward shift of government to Constantinople. Impressed by the miraculous discovery of the tomb of Barnabas around 488, the emperor Zeno granted the island's Christian population independence under its own archbishop, a privilege that continues to the present.<sup>3</sup>

Lying beneath the surface of political narrative, the evolution of Cypriot society during the 3rd and 4th centuries C.E. has been largely overlooked by the island's historiographic traditions. Prehistory in general, and the Late Bronze Age in particular, have long been the main concern of historians and archaeologists. Students of classical Cyprus rarely deal with late antiquity, which is more commonly discussed as a prelude to the island's Byzantine and later medieval history.<sup>4</sup> To some extent this reflects the availability of written sources. Strabo (Geog. 14.6.5), Pliny (Nat.Hist. 14.74, 18.12.67-68), and other authors clearly indicate the island's agricultural and mineral wealth.<sup>5</sup> Besides passing remarks by Ammianus Marcellinus (Res Gestae 14.8.14) and John Lydus (de Mag. 2.29), the province was peripheral to the empire's political and cultural life, and could safely be overlooked by late classical authors--a tendency shared by modern

historians. The literary tradition continued by Cypriot saints' lives reflects profoundly different material and spiritual worlds.<sup>6</sup> As elsewhere in the Mediterranean, epigraphic sources dwindled during the later empire and became concentrated in provincial capitals at the expense of lesser cities. Archaeological accounts of classical Cyprus thus have tended to emphasize the major roads, cities, and sanctuaries of the high empire. Apart from floor mosaics with mythological subjects found in townhouses in the island's western parts, the great social and religious changes of the 3rd and 4th centuries are largely absent from the material record.<sup>7</sup> Recent surveys and excavations suggest that this was an especially challenging time for local residents, with years of economic recession followed by famine, drought, and a series of devastating earthquakes that included major events in 332, 343, 365, and 370. By contrast, the 5th through early 7th centuries was a period of relative stability that was marked by urban reconstruction and expanding rural settlement, in both cases accompanied by the building of numerous churches, which lasted until the Arab campaigns of the mid 600s.<sup>8</sup>

The locus classicus for investigating the transition from classical religion to Christianity has long been the Roman temple. Situated amidst the bustling civic forum or the secluded rural sanctuary, temples have served as both the essential symbol and tangible reality of the religious conversion of the later Roman empire.<sup>9</sup> The celebration of official cults in large public buildings stood in sharp contrast to the minimal needs of early Christian communities, whose earliest cult-specific places were adapted from private houses.<sup>10</sup> Between Constantine's Edict of Milan in 312 and Theodosius' legislation of the 390s, as it rose from newly won legitimacy to a position of authority, the Church addressed public needs with a number of architectural solutions, of which the most influential was the basilica. Throughout this process classical temples exerted positive and negative influences on the development of the early Church, both as standing buildings and as unavoidable features of the classical landscape. Some temples were intentionally desecrated and demolished; others were abandoned to decay or find reuse for other purposes, including Christian worship. Of course, it is important not to take these physical structures as representing the whole of traditional religion, which extended in less visible but arguably more substantial ways throughout domestic life and rural society. As monumental statements of public cult practice, temples and sanctuaries constituted only the high-end of classical polytheism, the deluxe version that in attesting the vitality of a community both reflected and influenced broader social activities.<sup>11</sup> Across the Mediterranean the shifting currents of public life met in these buildings, whose varied fates reflect local concerns and traditions, in Cyprus as elsewhere.

The task of tracing the demise of classical sanctuaries presents special challenges, which appear especially acute in dealing with Cyprus. The few written sources pose obvious difficulties. The paucity of known inscriptions from the 3rd and 4th centuries reflects the downturn in public commemoration noted throughout the late empire. Chroniclers, apologists, and hagiographers provide accounts that can appear conflicting and highly localized, and in any event pertain primarily to the coastal cities. The Theodosian Code preserves changing imperial attitudes toward classical buildings, but through edicts that were issued in response to specific problems rather than as elements of a coherent policy. Archaeological evidence is no less ambiguous. It is often difficult to determine whether the physical deterioration of a temple occurred as the result of benign neglect or destruction by accidental or deliberate means. Crosses, monograms, and similar apotropaic images frequently were inscribed on walls and floors, but other, less visible measures also were taken to deconsecrate buildings.<sup>12</sup> In many cases the subsequent quarrying of sites for spoils has effectively scattered the architectural remains. Today the physical proximity of Roman strata to modern ground level, together with frequently uneven excavation records, can pose further problems for dating and interpretation.

Traditional religion in Roman Cyprus is known to have focused on three main shrines: the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Palaepaphos in the southwest part of the island, the temple of Aphrodite at Amathus on the

south central coast, and the temple of Zeus Olympios at Salamis in the east (Fig. 1). All three sites preserve evidence of devotional practices dating back to the early Iron Age (ca. mid 11th to mid 8th centuries B.C.E.), but as cult centers they were given monumental form only under the Hellenistic rulers, who sought to solidify their control of the island in the 3rd and 2nd centuries.<sup>13</sup> The primacy of these sanctuaries by the Roman period is confirmed by Tacitus (*Ann.* 3.62-63), who says that the Senate confirmed their rights of amnesty (*asylia*) in 22 C.E. Over the next two hundred years these cults increasingly became associated with the island's identity as a Roman territory. All three sites were renewed, embellished, and granted multiple donations. Images of the Palaepaphos sanctuary and the standing figure of Zeus Olympios appear both singly and paired on coins issued by the *koinon* Kypriou from the 1st through 3rd centuries. The heavy promotion of these primary shrines, together with temples of the imperial cult at Paphos, Kourion, and elsewhere, may be seen as part of Roman efforts to unify and consolidate the island province.<sup>14</sup> Elsewhere minor cults of Greek, Phoenician, and more shadowy origin were observed in small temples and shrines, where they preserved territorial interests first established by independent Iron Age polities.

The most venerable of Cypriot shrines was the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Palaepaphos. Located on the fertile southwest coastal plain, Palaepaphos appears to have been an important religious center by the 13th century B.C.E., with the cult of a goddess becoming well established during the early Iron Age.<sup>15</sup> The late 4th century B.C.E. founding and subsequent growth of the port city of (Nea) Paphos at Ktima, about 16 km. to the west, helped it flourish in Hellenistic and Roman times. Contemporary authors describe visits by pilgrims who landed at Paphos and reached the sanctuary by a sacred processional way lined with votive shrines.<sup>16</sup> While today little survives of this famous religious center, excavations carried out in the late 19th century and again during the 1970s have pieced together its early history and appearance in Roman times. The complex seems to have combined various Near Eastern, Anatolian, and Aegean elements, some of which dated back to late prehistory. Two long halls flanking an open shrine with an aniconic cultic stone are among the features depicted on engraved gems, medallions, and coins of Hellenistic and Roman date.<sup>17</sup> Altars and votive monuments stood throughout the *temenos*. Significantly, local interest in preserving the cult's continuity seems to have privileged earlier remains, with the result that a freestanding temple was never constructed. A peristyle house built nearby in the early 1st century C.E. may have served as a residence for the priests.<sup>18</sup> Titus and Domitian dedicated an altar to Aphrodite, whose identity became increasingly associated with the imperial cult. The sanctuary received other imperial donations from the time of Augustus through at least the Severans, but apparently declined during the 3rd century.<sup>19</sup> The main halls, if still standing, must have suffered considerable damage from the earthquakes that shook Paphos in 332 and 342, and within a few years the complex seems to have been abandoned. Excavations have found traces of several suburban dwellings that grew up around the site during the late 4th and 5th centuries, but there is little evidence that the sanctuary itself was reoccupied in late antiquity.

Pilgrimage traffic to Palaepaphos naturally benefited the harbor city and Roman provincial capital of Paphos as well as its surrounding territory.<sup>20</sup> The city possessed its own shrines, of which the most important became the imperial cult. This grew out of the favor Augustus showed Paphos following an earthquake of 15 B.C.E. and Flavian support after another earthquake in 76/77 C.E. An inscription found near the site of the medieval castle known as Saranda Kolones attests a large temple in honor of Septimius Severus and Caracalla. Other temples dedicated to Aphrodite, Apollo, Artemis, and Asklepios are known to have stood within or near the city.<sup>21</sup> The cultural prestige enjoyed by these and other cults may be seen in the extensive floor mosaics found in several sprawling residences in the western part of town.<sup>22</sup> Presumably all of these buildings were damaged by the multiple earthquakes that rocked Paphos between 332 and 370, leaving much of it the ruinous field vividly described by Jerome.<sup>23</sup> The city's reconstruction was no doubt slowed by the move of the provincial governor to Salamis in the later 4th century. In his

absence the local bishops, who are attested in council lists of 324 (Cyril) and 381 (Julius), likely became increasingly prominent in urban affairs. As seen elsewhere in the late empire, the increasing power of bishops marked an important stage in the establishment of the Church.<sup>24</sup> No doubt it was under episcopal leadership that the Paphos community built a large basilica in the newer, east part of town before the end of the century. This building, the probable cathedral later known as the Chrysopolitissa, had seven aisles, measured 48-53 by 38 m. in plan, and was preceded by an atrium. Within a few years a second large church, the Limeniotissa, also stood near the harbor.<sup>25</sup> Located peripheral to the older public quarters, these two large basilicas effectively sacralized this part of Paphos and gave it a new religious identity. They formed key landmarks of the late Roman city and announced the prominence of Christianity to visitors arriving by sea.

The site of Kourion (Curium), inhabited since the late Bronze Age, stands on a high coastal ridge about 40 km. east of Paphos. Like its Hellenistic predecessor, the Roman city was organized around a hilltop public quarter overlooking a broad beach. No evidence attests the survival of earlier cults into Roman times, when the nearby sanctuary of Apollo Hylates rose to prominence. Recent excavations have identified three main building phases of the shrine, including its establishment in the Archaic period, expansion in the 3rd century B.C.E., and rebuilding during the early empire.<sup>26</sup> In its Roman form the sanctuary covered an area of about a hectare and included a sacred grove, bath, palaestra, and associated buildings. The temple of Apollo stood at the high north edge of the sanctuary. This was a small prostyle structure that apparently was built in Julio-Claudian times and reconstructed under Trajan, whose cult as Caesar was celebrated conjointly with Apollo in the divided cella of the Northwest Building. The temple stood on a platform measuring about 15 x 9 m. and looked south across the temenos. An 8 m. long ramp with steps led from the street to the porch, which was supported by four freestanding columns with Nabatean-style Corinthian capitals to a height of perhaps 7 m. Both podium and superstructure were built of local limestones, which builders employed in lieu of imported marble and other types of decorative stone. The cult does not appear to have been sustained, however, and by the 3rd or early 4th century the site was substantially abandoned.<sup>27</sup>

The main city of south central Cyprus, Amathus, lies about 25 km. farther east. The seat of an independent kingdom in the Archaic period, Amathus was home to several cults, with a Heraeum and a shrine of the "Seven within the Stelae" surviving from the Hellenistic period into the 1st century C.E. The city's principal deity, whose cult had occupied the steep and rocky acropolis since the 7th century B.C.E., became known as Aphrodite. Little is known of her sanctuary's early appearance. By the late Hellenistic period a Doric portico and a small, related structure had been added to the complex and the goddess was being celebrated jointly with Sarapis and Isis. Tacitus and other classical authors attest the importance of the shrine during the early empire.<sup>28</sup> Recent excavations on the acropolis have exposed much of the original foundations and recovered enough fragments of its superstructure to suggest the temple's original appearance. Rebuilt in the late 1st or early 2nd century C.E., the limestone structure stood on a podium whose plan measured 32 x 15 m. The temple faced south with four freestanding columns, perhaps as tall as 12 m., and Nabatean-style capitals supporting a shallow porch before an enclosed cella with a small adyton in the back.<sup>29</sup> The temple and its cult were noted by Pausanias (9.41.2-5), but by the mid 200s unrepaired damage to the front stairs suggests that the complex was no longer being fully maintained. Certainly the sanctuary stood in poor condition, if not altogether empty, by the time Tychon, bishop of Amathus ca. 380-403, is said to have struggled with the local polytheist community.<sup>30</sup> The temple was apparently later deconsecrated and reoccupied: around the middle of the 5th century the entrance was changed and the building decorated with frescoes, mosaics, and marble plaques. By this time at least three other churches were gathered around the foot of the acropolis: a cemetery chapel in which Tychon was buried, and two large basilicas along the shore. In the early 7th century the acropolis structure was dismantled and some of its spoils were built into another small basilica nearby.<sup>31</sup>

Salamis, the largest city of Roman Cyprus, lies on the island's east coast, facing Syria. Excavated tombs in the royal necropolis attest the great wealth of this early Iron Age kingdom and the city's importance to the ruling Ptolemies. Salamis continued to flourish under Roman rule, when its harbor, gymnasium, stadium, and theater were enlarged and combined with an amphitheater and bath complex in a northern public quarter. Much of this work was begun under Augustus, damaged by earthquakes in 76/77, and restored by Trajan and Hadrian.<sup>32</sup> Throughout this period the city's ceremonial focus was the sanctuary of Zeus Olympios, which stood in the southwest quarter, close to the necropolis. The cult later was joined with the imperial family, and the image of Zeus Olympios appeared prominently on Roman coins.<sup>33</sup> The temple precinct was identified in the late 19th century and received brief but incomplete archaeological scrutiny in the early 1970s. Its plan, perhaps established in the late 2nd century B.C.E. but realized somewhat later, featured a raised temple that stood at the south end of a vast porticoed court. The peripteral hexaprostyle temple was built of local limestone and apparently completed in the 1st century C.E. It stood on a high podium measuring about 28 x 22 m. in plan. The porch was supported by twelve freestanding columns, probably limestone, with marble used for the Doric-Corinthian capitals and decorative details. A stepped ramp reached from the temple to the court with its flanking Corinthian porticoes, which seem to have functioned as part of the sanctuary. The entire complex measured almost 250 m. long by 60 m. wide, and dominated both the physical plan and urban identity of Salamis.<sup>34</sup>

The later history of the complex is less clear. No doubt the temple was seriously damaged by the 4th century earthquakes. Naturally it did not share in Constantius II's campaign to restore his new provincial capital, now renamed Constantia, which focused on other public buildings. The temple probably was abandoned before or around the time Epiphanius (ca. 368-408) became bishop. No contemporary source mentions the building. The Vita of Epiphanius, which was composed in the later 5th or 6th century, refers to a temple known as Zeus Asphaleia near the necropolis, but it is not clear that this was still in service; elsewhere the text records amiable relations between polytheist and Christian groups at a time when most citizens would have been involved with urban reconstruction.<sup>35</sup> Epiphanius, for his part, likely provided the impetus for building an enormous new church to the northeast. Stretching more than 55 m. long by over 40 m. wide and perhaps preceded by an atrium, this large basilica had a narthex, five aisles, and upper galleries. Its scale and design seem to have been inspired by the recently completed cathedral of Constantinople, St. Sophia, and the Anastasis basilica in Jerusalem, and the church may well have been intended as the metropolitan cathedral. While its original dedication is uncertain, by the early 5th century the basilica was named in honor of the sainted bishop, who was buried in an attached building.<sup>36</sup> This seems to have become the new civic and religious focus of the city, and as the largest church on the island it exerted a strong influence on later Cypriot builders. The Zeus complex, meanwhile, was put to other uses. Parts of the porticoes were reconstructed and subdivided into small shops or residences.<sup>37</sup> The ramp and platform were renewed, apparently in the 5th century, and at least some of the temple walls remained standing as late as the 7th century. The suggestion that a church was installed atop the platform, while possible, rests on little evidence. Better documented is the construction of a small church over the east portico. This three-aisled building may have measured about 27 m. long by 17 m. wide, and was furnished with glass mosaics and marble revetment. The form of the sanctuary, with three projecting semicircular apses, suggests a construction date in the 5th or early 6th century.<sup>38</sup>

Other Cypriot cults seem to have been of mostly local importance. A Domitianic inscription names a high priestess of all temples of Demeter on the island, although their locations are unknown.<sup>39</sup> Hellenistic and imperial inscriptions from Kition (Citium) on the southeast coast speak of cults of Asklepios, Artemis Paralia, and Zeus Keraunios.<sup>40</sup> The largest city of northwest Cyprus, Arsinoë, is credited by Strabo with a sanctuary of Aphrodite and Zeus that continued from the Archaic period into the early empire.<sup>41</sup> Nearby Soloi, which had been inhabited since the early Iron Age, supported several temples of traditional Cypriot form, including one dedicated to Aphrodite and Isis that may have continued into Roman times. The futur

saint Auxibios lived in the city throughout the second half of the 1st century and reportedly converted to Christianity the flamen dialis of the Zeus temple near the north gate, although apparently without affecting the cult which persisted into the 2nd century.<sup>42</sup> On the north coast neither Lapithos (Lapethus) nor Kyreni (Ceryneia) seem to have hosted notable shrines apart from the imperial cult, although one or the other likely had a bishop by the end of the 4th century.<sup>43</sup> At the end of the Cape Andreas peninsula, beyond the small city of Carpasia, the sanctuary of Aphrodite Akraea mentioned by Strabo was still attested in the late 2nd century.<sup>44</sup> Rural shrines of Apollo (Opaon) Melanthios at Amargetti, north of Palaepaphos, Apollo Barbaros at Louroudjina, and Apollo Lakeutes at Pyla may have been maintained at least until the Severans.<sup>45</sup> The best known example of a surviving rural cult is the sanctuary of Zeus Labranios at Phasoula in the mountains above Amathus, where two Cypriot saints are said to have been martyred in the 4th century.<sup>46</sup>

This written and material evidence, while limited in many ways, presents a fairly consistent picture of public religion in Roman Cyprus. The textual sources mention more than 20 temples, in addition to houses of the imperial cult, that were scattered across the island. The best known cults, those of Aphrodite at Palaepaphos and Amathus, Zeus at Salamis, and Apollo at Kourion, were pre-Roman survivals that were renewed and enlarged during the 1st and early 2nd centuries C.E. The imperial cult was celebrated at the provincial altar at Palaepaphos, in a large Severan temple in Paphos, and in various ways across the island.<sup>47</sup> The number of known religious dedications dwindled during the later 2nd and 3rd centuries, leaving only a handful of temples still in service by the time of Constantine's ascension. The cult of Aphrodite was a favorite target of Christian authors like Clement of Alexandria in the late 2nd century and is mentioned by Firmicus Maternus as late as ca. 350, yet by this time neither the aging Palaepaphos sanctuary nor the Amathus temple seems to have been particularly active. Information from the countryside suggests a similar decline of rural observances, with the latest known dedications taking place at Phasoula in the late 4th century.<sup>48</sup>

The course of this cultural reorientation can be traced in the topography of individual sites. Most Roman cults occupied conspicuous urban landmarks that formed an important part of the local civic image. Each of these large and expensive buildings served a specific purpose and was maintained as long as it met community needs. In so far as can be determined, most Cypriot temples and sanctuaries were simply abandoned in late antiquity and superseded by churches built in other locations. After 1500 years of continuous use, the Palaepaphos shrine apparently lapsed around the time of the mid 4th century earthquakes, when suburban houses began to be built nearby. The center of religious life in urban Paphos, which previously had focused on the temple of Septimius Severus and Caracalla, shifted southeastward, away from the upper city and toward the waterfront, where two large churches, one the cathedral, were built in the late 4th and early 5th centuries. The Apollo Hylates sanctuary outside Kourion was abandoned by the late 3rd or early 4th century, well before the new cathedral was begun in the 420s atop a civil basilica within the walled acropolis.<sup>49</sup> At Amathus, where the dilapidated Aphrodite temple on the acropolis may have stood empty by the mid 3rd century, Christianity appeared first around the urban periphery at the late 4th century cemetery church of Ayios Tychonos; within a few years two large basilicas, one perhaps the cathedral, were raised along the shore. The Zeus temple at Salamis apparently passed out of service around the mid 300s, shortly before the great church of St. Epiphanius was built to the north. This sequence of events suggests that traditional cults lost considerable vitality during the high empire. The 4th century earthquakes abruptly confronted Cypriot cities with the task of repairing structures that no longer sufficiently suited local needs; simply put, the costs of reconstruction exceeded the interest and ability to pay for them. Even though the physical remains are admittedly sparse, it may be significant that no sign of deliberate desecration has been reported. Reoccupation was limited in scope and occurred much later. The Amathus temple, for example, may have been deconsecrated and briefly reoccupied in the 5th century, but by the end of the 6th century it had been dismantled. The Salamis

complex was adapted to other purposes before a church was built over part of one portico in the 5th or early 6th century.<sup>50</sup>

This progressive abandonment of Cypriot shrines generally agrees with the hagiographic accounts. The *Vitae* of Saints Auxibios, Heracleides, and Spyridon of Trimitos, despite their varied dates and circumstances of composition, suggest that relations among different religious communities were relatively relaxed and without the violent confrontations seen elsewhere in the 4th century. The *Vita* of Epiphanius records the bishop's contact with remnants of the polytheist community at Salamis at a time when the Zeus temple had already passed from use.<sup>51</sup> The moments of sharpest reported conflict belong to the later years of the century, when Theodosius began vigorously to promote the Church and close temples. This tension appears most vividly in the *Vita* of Tychon, which records lively clashes between the bishop and classical religionists at Amathus. Yet, the derelict condition of the Aphrodite temple at this time implies that some of these scenes may be embellishments by a later writer drawing upon incidents of intercommunal conflict on the mainland.<sup>52</sup> Similarly, the floor mosaics found in houses at Paphos, Kourion, and elsewhere can be seen to reflect an acceptance among social elites of at least the images of classical mythology.<sup>53</sup> The prevalence of such attitudes, together with the apparent scarcity of functioning temples, suggests that traditional cults offered little resistance to the spread of Christianity.

This process of religious adaptation distinguishes Cyprus from its east Mediterranean neighbors. Some of the earliest examples of temple destruction took place in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt during this period. In the 320s Constantine replaced the temple at Mamre with a church and razed the temple of Aphrodite in Jerusalem to make way for the Anastasis complex. Theodosius ordered the destruction of the Serapeion at Alexandria around 391. Crowds led by local bishops burned the Apollo temple at Daphne, outside Antioch, and the temple of Zeus at Apamea, both of which probably were replaced by churches. In Gaza bishop Porphyry incited the destruction of the city's temples, including the Marneion, in 402.<sup>54</sup> Despite these efforts participation in traditional cults is known to have continued into the 6th century along the Upper Nile and elsewhere.<sup>55</sup>

The gradual atrophy of classical sanctuaries seen in Cyprus in some respects resembles what happened in Greece, another peripheral territory of the late empire. Here most rural shrines were left behind during the late Hellenistic and early Roman periods, although some saw renewed activity in later antiquity. The largest and most prestigious surviving sanctuaries at Delphi, Olympia, and Delos were uneventfully deserted over the 4th and 5th centuries, and only much later were small churches built nearby.<sup>56</sup> The picture in the cities is similar. A few urban sanctuaries may have been deliberately desecrated in the later 4th century but these sites seem to have been avoided afterwards.<sup>57</sup> Only on rare occasion was a temple seized for immediate Christian use. Around the early 6th century the cleric Jovian replaced an existing cult center at Palaeopolis on Corfu with a basilica, and in Athens a church complex was built at the Asklepieion.<sup>58</sup> The best known instances of temple conversion took place in Athens, where churches were set up in the Parthenon, Erechtheion, and Hephaisteion toward the end of the 6th or early in the 7th century, long after their cults had lapsed. Years after passing from active use, these standing temples by their monumental presence continued to shape urban life.<sup>59</sup>

The deconsecration of Cypriot temples followed a different path. While a number of small, independent polis-cults and rural panhellenic sanctuaries survived in Greece, cults in Cyprus were based primarily in the cities. The island's successful incorporation into the framework of large Mediterranean empires, under first the Ptolemies and then the Romans, helped concentrate the island's population, economy, and religious structures at a small number of coastal settlements.<sup>60</sup> The centralization of cult at Paphos, Amathus, Kourion, and Salamis had both material and social consequences.

The most obvious result was the building of newly monumentalized sanctuaries by civic elites and external rulers. Yet unlike Greece, where monumental stone architecture had taken root by the 7th century B.C.E., Cyprus could not boast a continuous native tradition of large-scale construction. The lack of naturally-occurring marble and fine stone led builders of earlier sanctuaries to create small shrines set in open temenoi.<sup>61</sup> In the event, the construction of large trabeated buildings in Hellenistic and Roman times did not prove well suited to this seismically active environment. The columnar limestone temples at Amathus, Kourion, and Salamis required extensive repairs within a century after being set up under the early emperors. All were in need of further work by the mid 3rd century, when a broad economic contraction across the east Mediterranean left urban curiales and magistrates unable to respond in effective ways.<sup>62</sup>

The gravitation of people toward these coastal cities was of greater historical significance. Several surveys have noted an expanding rural settlement pattern during Hellenistic and early Roman times, which was followed by a general contraction during the 2nd through 4th centuries.<sup>63</sup> This picture contrasts with available evidence from Greece and may reflect the more successful integration of the island into larger political entities. In Cyprus rural settlement began to decline around the time that the temples at Kourion, Amathus, and Salamis saw their final campaigns of reconstruction. Evidence of Severan prosperity, which often is taken to represent the apogee of Roman Cyprus, is overwhelmingly urban and may have come about at the expense of the countryside. Left behind would have been the many small cults of the chora, grounded in peaks, caves, and springs across the island, which had formed the traditional base of Cypriot religion. The widespread abandonment of these rural shrines, no less than the elaboration of public cults in the cities, set the stage for profound social and religious reassessments.<sup>64</sup>

Ultimately the cultic consolidation of Roman Cyprus produced a new and cohesive episcopal structure for the island. It is unsurprising that Christianity took hold early near the three great sanctuaries mentioned by Tacitus, with both Paphos and Salamis represented by bishops at the Council of Ephesus in 324.<sup>65</sup> Its growth at Paphos, Amathus, and Salamis is clear from the activities of powerful bishops who organized their adherents, built large cathedrals, and inspired the hagiographical tradition that eventually would lead to ecclesiastical autonomy.<sup>66</sup> Twelve bishops were represented at the Council of Serdica in 343, and soon others were found at lesser settlements across the island, which became known for its rural clergy.<sup>67</sup> By the mid 5th century rural churches standing at Aphendrika, Carpasia, Lapithos, Tamassos, Trimitos, Yialousa, and elsewhere tangibly document both the expansion of rural settlement and the successful Christianization of the countryside.<sup>68</sup>

Seen in this light, the decline of classical temples in Cyprus reflects the island's history as a provincial territory dominated by external powers. By monumentalizing selected urban sanctuaries in an alien architectural language, Ptolemaic and Roman administrators placed traditional cults on a foundation that was ill-suited to the challenges of late antiquity. A weakened economy and imperial neglect during the 3rd century contributed to fundamental social realignments. Observing dramatic ideological shifts at the imperial center, town councils and magistrates chose not to maintain deteriorating sanctuaries, which were effectively closed by earthquakes during the mid 4th century. Instead, Cypriot bishops worked in the shadow of damaged temples at Paphos, Amathus, Kourion, and Salamis to resacralize urban space by building cathedrals and other large churches, often including burials, in renovated parts of their growing cities; as protector saints, Tychon and Epiphanius replaced Aphrodite and Zeus as bearers of civic—and insular—identity. Settlements and cult sites that had been left behind during the high empire were assimilated by an expanding rural population and proliferation of new churches during the 5th and 6th centuries. Policies of provincial definition, which had invested the public cults of Cyprus in its greatest cities, also laid the foundation for ecclesiastical independence in the Middle Ages.

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1 [Hill](#) 227-30; [Bagnall \(1976\)](#) 38-79; [Mitford \(1980\)](#).

2 [Acts](#) 13, 4-12; 15, 39; "Acta Barnabae," in [Bonnet](#) ed. 292-302 (presumably dating from the 5th or 6th century); [Hackett](#) 2-5; [Hill](#) 247-48; [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1381.

3 [Hackett](#) 23-26; [Hill](#) 276-78; [Chrysos 5-6](#); [Petinos](#) 139; [Falkenhausen](#) 25 n. 32.

4 [Karageorghis](#) 1969; cf. [Megaw \(1974\)](#); [Papageorghiou \(1985\)](#).

5 For other references to the island's natural resources see [Wallace and Orphanides](#); [Michaelides \(1996\)](#) 146-48.

6 Delehaye; "Sancti Barnabae Laudatio Auctore Alexandro Monacho et Sanctorum Bartholomaei" and "Barnabae Vita e Menologio Imperiali Deprompta," ed. P. Van Deun, in Van Deun and Noret eds.; [Falkenhausen 21-33](#).

7 [Michaelides \(1987\)](#) 12-45; [Kondoleon](#); Cf. [Hill 244](#); [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1295.

8 >Megaw ([1974](#), [1986](#)); [Chrysos](#) 6-14; [Papageorghiou \(1993\)](#) 34-49.

9 Among the main contributions see [Deichmann \(1939\)](#); [Frantz](#); [Spieser](#); [Hanson](#); [Vaes](#); [Saradi-Mendelovici](#); [Caillet](#); [Meier](#); [Caseau](#).

10 [Finney](#); [White](#).

11 E.g., [MacMullen](#) 32-73; [Fowden \(1998\)](#); [Caseau](#) 23-27.

12 [Meier](#); [Trombley](#) 1: 108-22; [Caseau](#) 21-22.

13 [Hill](#) 173-211; [Bagnall \(1976\)](#) 73; cf. [Alcock \(1993\)](#) 210-14. The temples at Amathus, Kourion, and Salamis were the first monumental urban temples built on the island since the Late Bronze Age; see [Wright \(1992a\)](#) 137-38, 186-88.

14 [Hill](#) 234; [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1347-55; [Mitford \(1990\)](#) 2194-2202.

15 The discovery of Chalcolithic cult images in the area suggests the continuity of religious activities in the area from much earlier prehistory ([Maier and Karageorghis](#) 46, 81-102). The association with the Hellenic Aphrodite comes much later in classical times. The name Palae(a)paphos appears around the mid 2nd century B.C.E. ([Mlynarczyk](#) 23).

16 Strabo, [Geog.](#) 14.6; [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1309-15; [Maier and Karageorghis](#) 270-82; [Mlynarczyk](#) 23-25 for sources.

17 [Vessberg and Westholm](#) 7-8; [Maier and Karageorghis](#) 84-85, 270-82; [Wright \(1992a\)](#) 185-86.

18 [Maier and Karageorghis](#) 280.

- 19 Tacitus, [Hist.](#) 2.2-4; Suetonius, [Titus](#) 5; Mitford ([1980](#)) 1313-15, ([1990](#)) 2178-83. The construction in nearby Paphos of a new Severan temple for the imperial cult likely contributed to the decline of the older sanctuary.
- 20 [Lund](#) 140-41; [Rupp](#) 249-59.
- 21 [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1312-13, 1354; [Maier and Karageorghis](#) 249-53; [Mlynarczyk](#) 142-51, cf. 218-22, 217.
- 22 I.e., the so-called (after their mosaics) houses of Orpheus and Dionysos (late 2nd/early 3rd century), the House of Theseus (3rd-5th centuries), the House of Aion (mid 4th century); see [Daszewski](#); [Michaelides \(1987\)](#) 12-45; [Kondoleon](#).
- 23 "[Ingressus ergo Paphum urbem Cypri, nobilem carminibus poetarum, quae frequenter terrae motu laps: nunc ruinam tantum vestigiis, quid olim fuerit, ostendit.](#)" "Vita Sancti Hilarionis," [PL](#) 23.29-54 at 52; [Soren and Lane](#) 181. The individual temple sites have yet to be identified on the ground.
- 24 [Hill](#) 250-51; [Fowden](#) (1978) 56-58; [Falkenhausen](#).
- 25 [Maier and Karageorghis](#) 291-95; [Papageorghiou \(1985\)](#) 305-307; [Michaelides \(1987\)](#) 33-35; [Megaw \(1988\)](#) 136-40.
- 26 [Vessberg and Westholm](#) 9-10; [Scranton](#) 3-4; Mitford ([1980](#)) 1315-17, ([1990](#)) 2183-85; [Soren ed.](#); [Buitron-Oliver ed.](#)
- 27 [Scranton](#) 71-74; [Soren ed.](#) 42, 119-218; Wright ([1992a](#)) 166-73, ([1992b](#)) 273; [Buitron-Oliver ed.](#) 16.
- 28 Mitford ([1980](#)) 1317-18, ([1990](#)) 2185-86; [Aupert and Hellmann](#) 20-21; [Hermery \(1988\)](#).
- 29 [Schmid](#); [Aupert](#) 157-60.
- 30 [Delehayes](#); [Usener](#); [Aupert and Hellmann](#) 26-32.
- 31 [Pralong](#); [Aupert](#) 161-64.
- 32 [Karageorghis \(1969\)](#) 165-96; [Michaelides \(1987\)](#) 25-28; [Wright \(1992a\)](#) 150-58.
- 33 [Chavane and Yon](#) 26-27 nos. 37-40; Mitford ([1980](#)) 1321-23, ([1990](#)) 2189-90; [Yon](#) 86-95.
- 34 [Munro and Tubbs 67-81](#), pl. VII; [Vessberg and Westholm](#) 8-9; [Argoud, Callot, Helly, and Larribeau](#) 123-41; [Callot](#) 363-66. For unresolved problems of design and date see [Wright \(1992a\)](#) 153-54.
- 35 [ἦν δὲ ναὸς ἐκεῖνος ἀρχαῖος, ὅστις ἐκαλεῖτο Διὸς Ἀσφάλεια.](#) "Vita Sancti Epiphanii," [PG](#) 41.23-116 at 89; [Chavane and Yon](#) 27 no. 40; [Yon](#) 87-88; [Rapp](#) 171-72. As also seen in Greece, the proximity of Christian burials to the temple suggests that the cult was no longer functioning; cf. [Spieser](#); [Caillet](#) 196.
- 36 [Jeffery](#) 344-49; [Delvoye](#) 313-17; [Megaw \(1974\)](#) 61-64; [Papageorghiou \(1985\)](#) 301-303. The building remains incompletely studied.
- 37 A large cistern was built against the monumental north entrance, which later was incorporated into the late Roman fortification; [Munro and Tubbs](#) 72-73, 81-91; [Callot](#) 367.

- 38 [Munro and Tubbs](#) 74, pl. VII; cf. [Callot](#) 366-67, fig. 3. The arrangement of the east end resembles a small group of churches found in northeast Cyprus (Aphendrika, Carpasia, and Yialousa), but may also reflect the influence of the great Syrian pilgrimage church at Qalat Siman.
- 39 Claudia (Rhodocleia) Appharion; [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1371.
- 40 Mitford [\(1980\)](#) 1318-20, [\(1990\)](#) 2187-89. A lost inscription mentioning Zeus Keraunios may be as late as the 2nd or 3rd century.
- 41 Strabo, [Geog.](#) 14.6.3; Mitford [\(1980\)](#) 1329, [\(1990\)](#) 2193.
- 42 Strabo, [Geog.](#) 14.6.3; "Vita Sancti Auxibii" ed. J. Noret in Van Daun and Noret eds. 137-202, presumably 4th century or later; [Gjerstad](#) 399-582; [Vessberg and Westholm](#) 2-7; Mitford [\(1980\)](#) 1327-29, [\(1990\)](#) 2192-93; [Wright \(1992a\)](#) 162-65.
- 43 [Hackett](#) 319; [Hill](#) 251; Mitford [\(1980\)](#) 1324-27, [\(1990\)](#) 2191.
- 44 Strabo, [Geog.](#) 14.6.3; Mitford [\(1980\)](#) 1324, [\(1990\)](#) 2191.
- 45 [Hill](#) 267-68; Mitford [\(1980\)](#) 1372-73, [\(1990\)](#) 2188-89; cf. [Wright \(1992b\)](#) 271-76. A fragmentary Roman lamp and coin of Arcadius and Honorius (ca. 395-408) were found at a sanctuary, perhaps dedicated to Apollo, at Potamia-Ellines near Idalion, but this shrine was little used after the Hellenistic period; see [Karageorghis \(1979\)](#). Signs of renewed activity at rural cult sites in Greece are discussed by [Alcock \(1994\)](#) 153-56.
- 46 [Aupert and Hellmann](#) 23 no. 46; cf. n. 56 for source problems. For inscriptions and votive sculptures from the site see [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1339 n. 239; [Hermay \(1992\)](#) 333-37.
- 47 Evidence of the imperial cult is summarized by [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1347-55.
- 48 Clement of Alexandria, [Protrepticus](#) 2.13.4-14.2; Firmicus Maternus, [De errore profanarum religionum](#) 10. Cf. [Maier and Karageorghis](#) 285-297; [Mitford \(1990\)](#) 2201-02; [Aupert 161](#).
- 49 [Megaw \(1974\)](#) 60-61; [Papageorghiou \(1985\)](#) 308-310.
- 50 In both cases the later church was built on the periphery of the original temenos, taking advantage of the temple's urban prominence; cf. [Gregory](#) 237.
- 51 [Delehaye](#); [Halkin](#); [Van den Ven](#) 71; [Papageorghiou \(1993\)](#) 31; [Rapp](#) 180-82; [Bakirtzis](#) 40-41.
- 52 [Fowden \(1978\)](#); [Trombley](#). John the Almsgiver, in writing his [Vita of Tychon](#), likely was influenced by Persian campaigns in the Near East while he was patriarch of Alexandria (ca. 609-15).
- 53 Mythological subjects in the houses of Aion (4th century) and Theseus (5th century) at Paphos, and in the Eustoleos complex (5th century) at Kourion have been interpreted as reflecting the tastes of either a die-hard polytheist enclave or Christian families comfortable with their classical heritage. See [Daszewski](#) 38-45; [Michaelides \(1987\)](#) 40-45; [Kondoleon](#); [Caseau](#) 35-36.
- 54 [Fowden \(1978\)](#) 53-78; [Trombley](#) 1: 207-22.
- 55 [Gregory](#) 234; [Bagnall \(1993\)](#) 251-55, 268-73; [MacMullen](#); [Fowden \(1998\)](#) 558.

56 [Spieser](#) 320; [Gregory](#) 236-37; [Alcock \(1994\)](#) 257-61.

57 [Spieser](#) 320; [Déroche](#); [Caillet](#) 196-97. The Asklepieion at Corinth and the Aphrodision at Argos seem to have been intentionally destroyed.

58 [Spieser](#) 312; [Gregory](#) 237-39; [Karivieri](#) 900-905.

59 [Deichmann \(1938/39\)](#) 127-39; [Frantz](#); [Spieser](#) 310-11; [Caillet](#) 201-202; [Meier](#) 364-70; [Caseau](#) 33-35.

60 [Hill](#) 175, 183-84; [Bagnall \(1976\)](#) 68-73; [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1314, 1371; [Mlynarczyk](#) 149-51. From the early 2nd century B.C.E. the Ptolemaic strategos was high priest of all cults on the island, a practice continued under the Romans. In the same way the Cypriot cults of Apollo, Artemis, Zeus, and other Hellenic deities had become established only through external contact in late classical and Hellenistic times; [Mitford \(1990\)](#) 2208-09.

61 [Gjerstad](#) 17-23, 487; [Wright \(1992a\)](#) 186-88, 357-60, (1992b) 274-75; [Reyes](#) 28-32, 133-36.

62 For the decline (or redirection) of imperial benefaction and private euergetism see recently [Garnsey and Whittaker](#) 330-32. For evidence of an economic downturn in the 2nd-3rd centuries see [Lund](#) 140-43.

63 [Lund](#) 140-43; [Rupp](#) 247-58. Occupation of the Paphos hinterland may have been sustained by its proximity to the provincial capital.

64 For Cypriot survey data see [Lund](#) 141-42; [Papageorghiou \(1993\)](#) 35 n. 27; cf. Alcock ([1993](#)) 33-92; ([1994](#)) 261. The effect of increasing central authority at the expense of both cities and their hinterlands is noted by [Fowden \(1998\)](#) 548-58; [Caseau](#) 24-26.

65 At Ephesus, Cyril of Paphos signed before Gelasios of Salamis and Spyridon of Trimitos ([Hill](#) 250; [Petinos](#) 132-34; cf. [Hackett](#) 243-44). The growth of Christianity at Paphos may both have attracted and been further encouraged by the presence of Hilarion, who came from Palestine to spend his last years nearby. The monastic presence on Cyprus ([Falkenhausen](#) 31) constitutes another point of contrast with contemporary Greece ([Gregory](#) 235-36).

66 [Hackett](#) 370-432; [Hill](#) 273-76; [Mouriki](#) 255-56; [Falkenhausen](#) 24-30.

67 Sozomen, [Hist. Eccl.](#) 7.19.2; [Hill](#) 248-51; [Mitford \(1980\)](#) 1375-83; [Petinos](#) 135-37. The general correspondence of episcopal sees with Iron Age poleis reflects the continuity of toponymy and topography, if not necessarily urban realities.

68 [Hill](#) 251; [Megaw \(1974\)](#); [Papageorghiou \(1993\)](#) 34-35.

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# Lynn Roller, The Anatolian Cult of Sabazios

1

In 1989 I published an article on examples of Attic vase painting which illustrate non-Greek divinities and cult rituals.<sup>1</sup> Among the pieces I discussed was an Attic red figured krater from Spina, now in Ferrara, with a scene of two seated divinities, one male and one female, both making offerings from a phiale.<sup>2</sup> The female divinity can be identified with some certainty as the Mother of the Gods, the Greek Kybele, but the male figure presents more of a puzzle. Following a suggestion of Erika Simon,<sup>3</sup> I offered an identification as Sabazios. Shortly after this article appeared in print, I received a letter from Eugene Lane telling me that I was mistaken; whoever this divinity was, it was not Sabazios. As was so often the case in matters dealing with eastern divinities in Greek and Roman cult, he was right and I was wrong. This was my first contact with Professor Lane, but it proved to be the start of a rewarding association from which I have benefitted enormously. With this in mind, I would like to offer the following comments on Sabazios, with the hope that the scholar who has contributed so much to our understanding of this divinity in ancient Mediterranean cult may find a few original points in it to stimulate his interest.

Sabazios is a deity who seems to exist on the margins of Greek and Roman cult practice, attested everywhere yet fully at home nowhere. His origins, his place in ancient Mediterranean cult practice, and his character have all been widely discussed, with little consensus achieved.<sup>4</sup> Much of the interest in Sabazios has focused on questions of syncretism between his cult with that of other deities. Some of the more far-fetched attributions of syncretism, such as the placement of Sabazios's origins in Thrace<sup>5</sup> or the erroneous connection between Sabazios and Judaism,<sup>6</sup> have largely been discredited. Modern discussions of Sabazios which place him in a Hellenic context and focus on the literary evidence from Greek and Roman sources seem more sensibly grounded, since these sources give direct information on the position of Sabazios in Greek and Roman cult. Moreover, we have references to Sabazios in the Greek world at an earlier date than in Anatolia, a fact that appears to lend greater authority to the comments of Greek authors. This approach, however, has the effect of limiting our view of the cult of Sabazios to a Greek and Roman perspective, thus separating the god from his place in Anatolian cult. As an example, Sabazios is routinely considered a Phrygian divinity, in large part because Aristophanes, who mentions the god in four of his plays, ascribes his origins to Phrygia.<sup>7</sup> Yet from an Anatolian perspective, this is a highly problematic assumption, since there is no evidence for an equivalent deity in Phrygia in the late fifth century BCE, the time when Aristophanes attests to his presence in Athens. Therefore my goal in this paper is to analyze the information from Anatolia related to the cult of Sabazios and focus on the god's place in Anatolian religious practice. From this we will see that Sabazios was very much at home in Anatolia where he was one manifestation of the principal male divinity, whom the Greeks and Romans identified as Zeus. While his cult is only rarely attested in Phrygia, it appears more frequently in other regions of western Anatolia, especially Lydia and Lycia, where the god's worship and his status in

Anatolian cult seem quite different from what is suggested by the Greek evidence. Let us review the sources on the cult of Sabazios from Anatolia and try to form an assessment of the god's place in the religious practices of his homeland. Then we can turn to the Greek view of Sabazios and evaluate it more carefully. Such an analysis will help clarify the Hellenic filter through which this deity is viewed and provide further insight into his position in both Anatolian and Greek cult.

Evidence from Anatolia on the cult of Sabazios is provided by a series of inscriptions recording dedications to the god or regulating his cult; these are supplemented by votive reliefs and statuettes depicting the god. Since the inscriptions provide a longer and more complete record of the god's cult, they will be considered first. We may start with the earliest known example, an interesting text from Sardis.<sup>8</sup> Inscribed in the first half of the second century CE, the text records a decree originally promulgated in the mid-fourth century BCE, probably during the reign of Artaxerxes II.<sup>9</sup> The decree opens with a dedication to Zeus Bardates by the Persian satrap stationed in Sardis. The body of the text is a cult regulation which explicitly forbids participation in the mysteries of the deities Sabazios, Angdistis, and Ma by the temple attendants, particularly those responsible for crowning the god and carrying the implements of fire and incense burning.<sup>10</sup> Zeus Bardates, Zeus the Law Giver in Persian, may be identified with the chief Persian male deity Ahura Mazda, and the intent of the text was apparently to keep the worship of Ahura Mazda from being contaminated by local Anatolian cults.<sup>11</sup> Thus by grouping Sabazios together with the cults of indigenous Anatolian deities, particularly Angdistis, another name for Matar, the Phrygian Mother goddess, and Ma, an Anatolian deity originally at home in Cappadocia, the text emphasizes Sabazios's Anatolian origins.

The text suggests other issues as well. The Sardis text presents Sabazios as a distinct entity, separate from Zeus Bardates. The goal of the decree may have been to distinguish a major Anatolian male deity from the main Persian male deity, and thereby keep the Iranian identity of Zeus Bardates intact. This will have further implications as we review subsequent evidence on Sabazios, since, as we will see, the god's name normally appears as an epithet of Zeus. Could the Persian governor of Sardis have been concerned to keep Zeus Bardates from being assimilated by the local people with an Anatolian counterpart, a male deity who might also be identified with Zeus?<sup>12</sup>

This suggestion is supported by another inscription from Sardis that provides evidence of the worship of Sabazios there. The text is a dedication by a priest of Sabazios named Menophilos, of the tribe of Eumeneis, to king Eumenes, and it seems likely that this refers to Eumenes II of Pergamon, 197-159 BCE.<sup>13</sup> The name of the god is spelled Sauazios, a form that we will meet in other Anatolian texts, and on which may well reflect the local pronunciation of the name. On the stone, a gap of uncertain dimensions before the word Sauazios exists, and it has been plausibly suggested that this should be restored as Zeus Sa<b>azios. If this is correct, it will be the earliest evidence for the identification of Sabazios with Zeus, an identification which was prominent in Pergamon and was to become virtually standard in later Sabazios texts.

The identification of Sabazios with Zeus is made explicit by the fuller documentation on the cult of Sabazios in Pergamon.<sup>14</sup> Two letters by Attalos III, both written in October 135 BCE, report that the cult of Zeus Sabazios was brought to Pergamon in 188 BCE, by Stratonike, wife of Attalos II and mother of Attalos III.<sup>15</sup> Stratonike was originally from Cappadocia; assuming that she brought the deity with her from her homeland, this strengthens the argument for Sabazios's Anatolian roots by placing him in another region altogether. The principal official of the cult of Zeus Sabazios was a member of the royal family, Athenaios, a cousin of Attalos III, who was further honored with the priesthood of Dionysos Kathegemon, another cult of importance to the royal family.<sup>16</sup> Because of the royal patronage, the cult of Zeus Sabazios enjoyed high standing in Pergamon. In 135 BCE, the god's cult was placed on the acropolis of Pergamon

in the temple of the city's most important deity, Athena Nikephoros, and he was addressed as the most honored deity, the deity who stood by the city in times of danger.<sup>17</sup> He was honored with sacrifices and processions and mysteries conducted for him on behalf of the city, [πρὸ πόλεως](#).<sup>18</sup> Zeus Sabazios was only one form of Zeus, distinct from the Zeus worshipped at the Pergamon Altar, yet was clearly an important presence in the city. Sabazios was the recipient of private cult in Pergamon also, as is evident from a small inscribed votive column dedicated to the god by Philotera, a private citizen.<sup>19</sup> The god's status seems to have been most closely related to the patronage of the Attalid dynasty, however, and thus the end of the dynasty, , only two years after the letters were written, marks the end of our information about Sabazios in Pergamon.

Only slightly later than the documents from Pergamon is a text from Tlos, in Lycia, in which the name Sabazios appears alone, not as an epithet of an Olympian deity.<sup>20</sup> Dating to the end of the second century BCE, the text records honors to an individual (whose name is not preserved) for his benefactions to the people of the city and to the race of Lycians, in military, civic, and political duties. One of these was his service as priest for life of Sabazios [πρὸ πόλεως](#) on behalf of the city. This language, noted above in the letter of Attalos III of Pergamon, defines the priesthood as a civic office and the deity as an official god of the city.<sup>21</sup> The text from Tlos makes clear that the Sabazios cult in Anatolia was not limited to circumstances specific to the royal family of Pergamon, but could function as a cult of a [πόλις](#) as well. Nor was it limited to the highly Hellenized parts of western Anatolia, but was also a presence in more remote areas such as Lycia.

I have treated the Anatolian testimonia on Sabazios from the fourth through second centuries BCE in some detail because these texts introduce the god to us and give a picture of his rituals and social status. During the Roman era, dedications to Sabazios, ranging in date from the late first through early third centuries CE become more abundant; yet at the same time they fall into predictable patterns and so can be treated more briefly. In the majority of the examples the god is addressed as Zeus Sabazios.<sup>22</sup> The name of the deity appears in variant spellings, the most common of which is Saouazios, implying that regional pronunciation often used a soft semi-vowel, like the English w, for the internal b.<sup>23</sup> The majority of Sabazios inscriptions were found in western Anatolia, in Bithynia, Ionia, Lydia, and Lycia.<sup>24</sup> Despite Aristophanes' comment that Sabazios was a Phrygian, evidence for the god's cult in Phrygia is much rarer; to date only two texts are known from Phrygia,<sup>25</sup> although a well preserved statuette of the god, found in Çavdarlı, near Afyon, discussed below, adds further evidence to the god's presence in this region.<sup>26</sup>

Dedications to Sabazios exhibit the range of subjects typical of religious dedications from the Roman era in Asia Minor. The majority record dedications in fulfillment of a vow to the god.<sup>27</sup> Rarely is the reason for the vow specified, although one touching case records a vow from a freedman who prays for the safety of his father, presumably still a slave.<sup>28</sup> One vow is offered for good crops by the inhabitants of a village who dwell on sacred land, presumably a temple estate of the god.<sup>29</sup> A few are confessions of wrongdoing and atonement, usually confessions from individuals who stole or damaged property belonging to the god.<sup>30</sup> There are also records of new sanctuaries dedicated to Sabazios. Texts from Maionia in Lydia and Sakcilar in Bithynia report the establishment of private sanctuaries, while in a text from Koloe (modern Kula), the whole village joins in the establishment of a shrine of Zeus Sabazios; the event was commemorated by an elaborate relief depicting the worshippers processing to the altar of the god.<sup>31</sup> One is a funerary stele, set up by followers of the god, the Sabaziastai, for a woman, Euboula.<sup>32</sup> In some dedications Sabazios is honored jointly with other aspects of Zeus. A certain Ploution, from Philadelphia, dedicates a statue of Zeus Sabazios to Zeus Koryphaios, while another individual in Phrygian Epiktetos makes a joint dedication to Zeus Bronton and Sabazios.<sup>33</sup> Occasionally there are indications that the god could be an important presence in a given community. An example is furnished by an inscription on a

large base of the third century CE from an imperial estate in Ormeleis, in Lycia.<sup>34</sup> The text, inscribed by the participants in the god's mysteries, attests both to the prestige and to financial support of the cult in this region. But overall we are left with the general impression that Sabazios played only a minor part in the religious life of Anatolia. The number of texts is fairly small, fewer than thirty, and forms only a small part of the corpus of religious inscriptions from Anatolia during the first three centuries of the Roman era.

Let us place Sabazios within the overall picture of local cults in Anatolia. His origins and his place in the Anatolian pantheon remain problematic. Despite the attribution of a Phrygian origin in Greek sources, Sabazios is most at home in western Anatolia. The centers of his worship are fairly diffused, with the strongest presence in Lydia and Lycia. Testimonia to his cult are, however, widely enough distributed to show that the cult was not limited to one specific area, indicating that the god was more than a purely regional presence. The background of his cult is also problematic. We have no mention of him in Anatolia before the mid-fourth century BCE, nor is there any visual image of him before the early Roman period. Before the fourth century BCE, the most conspicuous feature of Anatolian cult was the Mother Goddess, originally a Phrygian deity but one whose cult spread widely, particularly in western Anatolia.<sup>35</sup> In the third century BCE and later, however, male divinities had come to dominate the Anatolian pantheon. Of these, the most prominent is Zeus, worshipped with various epithets and in various guises.<sup>36</sup> In fact, Zeus appears in so many regional versions and with so many different epithets that it seems likely that we see, not the Greek Zeus, but rather the principal male divinity in Anatolian cult practice whom the Greeks would have equated with Zeus.<sup>37</sup> Just as Matar, the Mother, the principal female divinity in Anatolian cult practice, was addressed with a large number of topographical and descriptive epithets, so was the major Anatolian male deity.<sup>38</sup> These epithets are so variable and numerous that it is not fully clear to what extent these male deities, the forms of Zeus in the various regional cults, were considered to be the same figure, or whether we are seeing a large number of local cult figures, between whom only minimal connections would have existed in the minds of their worshippers. As we have seen, Sabazios is often identified with Zeus, and the theonym Sabazios was used as an epithet of Zeus in the majority of the texts. Could Sabazios then be the Greek perception of the principal male Anatolian cult figure, one aspect of this Anatolian god whom the Greeks would later identify with Zeus?

Visual representations of the god support this hypothesis by providing strong links to the Greek Zeus. There are several sculptural images of Sabazios from Anatolia, all of the first and second centuries CE. Four of the inscribed dedications to Sabazios are surmounted by a relief depicting the god, and one statuette of him, found near Afyon, is known. One stele, from Balat, in Bithynia, shows a mature bearded male seated on a throne, wearing a long gown and a headdress; he holds a phiale in his right hand and a spear in his left.<sup>39</sup> The piece is now lost, however, and only imprecise older drawings of it survive, making an analysis of the visual iconography tentative at best. Clearer information can be derived from reliefs on three stelai from Lydia, from Maionia, Koloe, and Philadelphia.<sup>40</sup> On each piece the god is depicted as a mature bearded male, standing and pouring a libation from a phiale. On two pieces he pours the libation onto a small altar, and on the third into a krater with a tree behind it. In each example the god is shown wearing the costume of a typical Greek male, a long robe drawn into a roll around his waist and pulled up over his left shoulder. On the stele from Maionia the god wears a distinctive headdress, a cap with a pointed tip, traditionally labeled Phrygian (although as we shall see below, this label is incorrect).<sup>41</sup> On this work also a snake appears above the altar. Apart from this example of cap and snake, none of the reliefs has attributes that identify the god specifically as Sabazios.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, apart from the cap, the general form and costume of the mature bearded male are quite similar to Greek representations of Zeus, further suggesting the connection of Sabazios with Zeus.

The statuette of the god from Afyon represents a different visual tradition.<sup>43</sup> The piece depicts a mature male figure, standing with the weight on the left leg and the right leg bent and raised as if striding forward

as he steps onto a ram's head. Both arms are outstretched, the right lowered and the left raised. Unfortunately both hands are missing, and so we cannot tell if the right hand was depicted with the tradition three-finger gesture of blessing characteristic of Sabazios votive hands.<sup>44</sup> The costume is distinctive: the god wears a belted knee-length tunic with leggings and soft boots which reach to his ankles; he also wears a high cap with a point tipping forward and ear flaps, the conventional Phrygian cap. This representation of the deity follows the standard Sabazios iconography known from numerous reliefs and statuettes of Sabazios and from figurines attached to votive hands of the god, all of which, apart from this piece, come from the western Roman Empire.<sup>45</sup> This costume might strike Greek and Roman eyes as Anatolian, but it has no parallels among the visual representations of the god from any region of Anatolia. It is instead a Greek creation, originally based on an Achaemenian prototype. It first appears in Greek vase painting during the first half of the fifth century BCE in depictions of Achaemenian Persian figures, who are shown with a very similar belted tunic, leggings, soft boots, and pointed cap with ear flaps. The use of the costume was also extended to represent a variety of mythological figures believed by the Greeks to be of Eastern origin, such as the Amazons and the Trojan Paris.<sup>46</sup> A comparison with Greek representations of Attis is particularly telling, since Attis, a deity to whom the Greeks imputed Phrygian origin, wears a costume that is virtually identical.<sup>47</sup> Here the same costume has become part of the regular iconography of Sabazios, in which this so-called Phrygian costume is worn by a mature male with a full beard. The image is that of an Oriental Zeus, in which the Greek body and face of the god are clothed in Eastern dress. The first application of this costume to Sabazios probably did not take place in Anatolia, but in the western Empire, perhaps in Rome itself, from where it spread widely throughout the western Empire.<sup>48</sup> It seems likely that this iconographic type was imported into Anatolia during the early Roman period, a suggestion reinforced by the fact that the other Anatolian votive reliefs depicting the god do not follow this type.

In the case of Attis, not only the costume, but indeed the god himself can be shown to be a creation of Greek iconography and cult practice, first apparent in the fourth century BCE.<sup>49</sup> Sabazios, however, is unlikely to have been a creation of Greek cult, as Attis was, despite the fact that pictorial representations of him were created under strong Greek influence. The evidence for his presence in Anatolia and his position as a deity of honor there is too widespread to deny his Anatolian roots. The text from Sardis sets him firmly in the company of other gods, Angdistis and Ma, of clear Anatolian origin. Thus one may wonder why representations of Sabazios drew on a visual scheme originally based on a Greek model. Why was an Anatolian image of the deity not adopted, as was done in the case of the Phrygian Matar Kubeliya, who became the Greek Meter? The answer seems to be that there was no Anatolian visual prototype of Sabazios to draw on because the god had never been represented in Anatolian art. When the cult of Sabazios spread to the west, a visual iconography was created for the god based on the widely disseminated schema used to represent another deity associated with Anatolia, Attis.

These observations give us some tools with which to address the questions posed at the beginning of this essay about the origins of Sabazios and the specifically Anatolian character of his worship. Both his name in Anatolia, Zeus Sabazios, and his physical appearance indicate that Sabazios was one aspect of the principal male divinity in Anatolian cult whom the Greeks identified as Zeus, so abundantly attested within the Hellenistic and Roman periods in Anatolia. Given this situation, one may wonder at the lack of evidence for Sabazios before the fourth century BCE. There is no cult image of any mature male figure, or indeed of any male figure at all, in central or western Anatolia that might be identified as Sabazios. Nor does his name appear in any Paleo-Phrygian text.<sup>50</sup> One might claim that Sabazios did exist in indigenous Anatolian cult practice but that no visible evidence survives of him, but this seems unlikely when one contrasts Sabazios's absence from texts and cult monuments with the abundant testimonia, both written and visual, for the principal Phrygian divinity Matar, the Mother. Indeed, the Phrygian Mother's absolute prominence in Phrygian cult and her lack of a consort are among her most distinguishing features. The dearth of iconographic representations of Sabazios in Anatolia is particularly puzzling, and we may

wonder if the high status of the Anatolian male deity, the prototype of Zeus Sabazios, led to a prohibition against visual depictions of this deity. This would explain the discrepancy between the infrequency of evidence for the cult of an important male divinity in Anatolia before the Hellenistic period, and the regular appearance of such a deity during the Hellenistic and Roman eras. These many Zeus figures were addressed with a plethora of local epithets in different regions of Anatolia, and the name Sabazios may originally have been one such regional or descriptive epithet of this Anatolian Zeus. The texts from Philadelphia and Phrygia Epiktetos which record joint dedications to Zeus Sabazios and another aspect of Zeus further suggest that Sabazios was one of many Zeus figures.<sup>51</sup> We cannot be sure of the chronological progression of the early Sabazios cult, but the references to Sabazios in Greek literature some two generations before the Sardis text strongly suggest that his cult was a factor in Anatolian religious life before the earliest Anatolian texts in the Greek language make his presence visible to the modern viewer.

The texts from Anatolia also provide us with some insight about the rites celebrated for Sabazios and his status in Anatolian cult. One type of ritual celebrated for Sabazios was mystery cult. The texts from Sardis, Pergamon, and Ormeleis all refer to the mysteries for Sabazios, and imply that his worship was limited to initiates. The god was also worshipped in civic rites open to the whole community. Texts from Pergamon and Tlos attribute a high status to the god and state that the cult of Sabazios was important to the πόλις. Emphasis was placed on sacrifices and processions in addition to mystery rites. Civic cult is also implied by the foundation of a sanctuary for Sabazios by a village community.<sup>52</sup> Yet the numerous private vows, dedications, comments on personal cult foundations and a private association of Sabaziastai suggest the power of the god to influence private individual cult as well. The wide appeal of his cult is also implied by the Sardis text; otherwise the Persian governor would not have needed to prohibit the worship of Sabazios to those engaged in Persian cult practice. Throughout we see a deity who was integrated into many facets of Anatolian religious life, public and private. Nowhere is there any hint of ecstatic cult ritual, no illustrations of tympana, nor any signs of connection with rituals celebrated for Dionysos. In all these aspects the cult of Sabazios in Anatolia is fairly typical of the broad range of activities found in many Anatolian cults of the Hellenistic and early Roman period.

Several of these conclusions might seem surprising, since they contrast sharply with the standard Greek and Roman picture of Sabazios. In Greek and Roman sources, Sabazios was often connected with Dionysos and his cult was noted primarily for its ecstatic rites, viewed as typical of foreign deities. Therefore let us turn now to a consideration of the Greek view of Sabazios and examine the factors that shaped the Greek view of the god.

A key factor of Sabazios's place in Greek cult was his non-Greek origin.<sup>53</sup> In most modern literature, discussions of non-Greek deities rest on the assumption that the character of the foreign deity and the rites held for him/her in the Greek world replicated the cult practices of the deity's homeland. Greek reactions to foreign deities, however, mask a complicated situation, and the variable status of Anatolian deities in Greek cult well illustrates this. Some Anatolian deities whom we meet through Greek sources were the Hellenic counterparts of deities worshipped within their country of origin, while others were substantially altered by Greek cult practice and bore little relationship to an equivalent figure in their supposed ethnic homeland. An example of the former is the Greek Mother of the Gods, or Kybele. In ascribing a Phrygian origin to her, the Greeks' assumptions were correct. A clear line of transmission and development can be followed from the Phrygian Matar Kubeliya to the Greek Meter Theon, the Mother of the Gods.<sup>54</sup> On the other hand, the deity Attis, known to the Greeks as the consort of the Mother of the Gods, was also widely considered to be a Phrygian god, but here the Greeks' attribution of origin appears to be wrong. No deity equivalent to Attis can be found in Phrygian cult monuments and inscriptions from central Anatolia never use the word Attis as a theonym until the Hellenistic when the deity appears as an import from Greece.<sup>55</sup> Our task will be to understand where Sabazios fits into this spectrum: which Greek comments about his

cult record genuine information, and which reflect the alterations experienced by the Sabazios cult in the Greek world.

One point of confusion, the question of the god's origins, can be addressed fairly easily. Sabazios was regularly called a Phrygian by the Greeks, despite the fact that his cult was most abundantly attested in Lydia and Lycia and only rarely in Phrygia. Comment on Sabazios's origin can be found in the earliest Greek source on the god, the comedies of Aristophanes, where Sabazios is identified as a Phrygian god in a fragment from the *Horae*, an attribution reinforced by a scholiast on a passage in the *Birds*.<sup>56</sup> It is unlikely, however, that Aristophanes was recording precise ethnic information about Anatolian cult practices. Rather, his intent was to suggest the god's Eastern origin and, perhaps, his low social status, at a time when labeling someone a Phrygian was tantamount to calling that individual a slave.<sup>57</sup> Other comments by fifth century Athenian authors indicate that to contemporary Athenians, little distinction existed between Anatolian ethnic groups such as Lydians and Phrygians.<sup>58</sup> Because of the significant presence of Phrygians in the slave population of Athens, they would be the dominant Anatolian group that Athenians came into contact with and so all Anatolian figures would likely be called Phrygian.

The rites celebrated for Sabazios offer another key to his status in the Greek world. Since Sabazios was a deity of non-Greek origin, we would expect his worship to differ from rites for the established deities of a Greek *πόλις*, which emphasized publicly conducted sacrifices and shared meals. The limited information we have about the rites for Sabazios in Greece, pertaining almost entirely to Attica, reinforces this expectation. Aristophanes implies that Sabazios's rites emphasized ecstatic ritual designed to facilitate direct communication with the deity, either through the use of a trance-like state (*Wasps* 9-10) or through an emotionally agitated state induced by cries and drumming on the tympanum (*Lysistrata* 387-388). In this, the rites of Sabazios were similar to those held for other deities of non-Greek origin, including Adoni and Meter, the Mother of the gods.<sup>59</sup> The primary social function of ecstatic rites was not to promote communal bonds, as was the case in a *πόλις* cult, but to encourage individual religious expression. As a result the individualistic tendencies of such an ecstatic cult could have a divisive effect, which may be one reason why they were looked on with disfavor.

Ecstatic rites, however, were not limited to foreign deities, but were also characteristic of some Greek divinities, most notably Dionysos.<sup>60</sup> This circumstance may lie behind the frequent association of Sabazios with Dionysos, one which is stated explicitly in several Greek and Roman literary sources although never attested in any document concerning the cult of Sabazios from Anatolia.<sup>61</sup> There is no reason to assume that the cult of Sabazios had any connection with Dionysos. No Dionysiac epithets were ever applied to Sabazios, and the god's visual image, as has been discussed above, draws heavily on Greek images of Zeus, but shows no affinity to images of Dionysos. The equation between the two seems to arise from the common use of mystery cult and ecstatic rites, rather than from any commonality of cult identity.

These factors should be kept in mind as we assess one of the most problematical passages concerning the Sabazios cult in Greece, *Demosthenes, On the Crown* 259-260. In it Demosthenes attacks his opponent Aischines by accusing Aischines' mother of participating in ecstatic rites involving processions, wearing special crowns, handling snakes, and the use of the cry *εὐοῖ Σαβοῖ*. The language of Demosthenes, while vivid and compelling, may not be a literal description of the rites of Sabazios, since Demosthenes is clearly exaggerating for rhetorical effect.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, the god's name is not directly mentioned in this passage, and the exact meaning of the cry *εὐοῖ Σαβοῖ* is unclear. It seems likely, however, that these words preserve a ritual cry for Sabazios, since they are coupled with another ritual cry, *ὑῆς ἄττης*, which may be the earliest reference to another deity of supposed Anatolian origin, Attis.<sup>63</sup> It is likely that because of his Anatolian origins, Sabazios was coupled in Greek minds with Attis. Demosthenes' comments confirm the image found in the Aristophanic comedies, that Sabazios's cult in Athens had a distinctively

exotic quality that kept it on the fringes of Athenian religious practice.<sup>64</sup> They do not, however, justify the conclusion that Sabazios was connected with Dionysos.

There is, moreover, a strong sense of low social status attached to the cult of Sabazios in Demosthenes' description, and this contempt is further suggested by Cicero, who cites a (now lost) comedy of Aristophanes in which Sabazios and certain other foreign gods were put on trial and expelled from the city.<sup>65</sup> Such scorn seems to be present in the comments of Theophrastos also; he mocks one of his characters, the Late Learner, who gussies himself up for the festival of Sabazios, while the Superstitious Man calls on Sabazios's name whenever he sees a snake.<sup>66</sup> We cannot discard the information from Greek authors about the Sabazios cult altogether, for there seems to be some knowledge of Anatolian cult practice in the use of the snake, which appears in the passages of both Demosthenes and Theophrastos and in several Anatolian votive reliefs dedicated to the god.<sup>67</sup> The common thread in the information gained from Greek authors, though, is that Sabazios's foreign origin and the unusual character of his rites resulted in a marginal position for the god in Greek religious practice. This surely accounts for the distorted reaction in ancient literary sources to Sabazios, since it is based on the Greek experience with his cult and not on the god's character and status in his Anatolian homeland.

Thus we can see that Sabazios's place in Greek religious practice was quite different from his position in Anatolia. The cult of Sabazios spread to the Greek world, presumably through Anatolian immigrants, including slaves, since Anatolians are well attested in the Greek slave population, particularly in Athens. The date when the cult first appeared in Greece is uncertain, but must be during or earlier than the mid-fifth century BCE, since by the 420's Sabazios was a well enough known figure in Athens that Aristophanes could use him as the butt of jokes which the local audience would be expected to understand. The supercilious quality of the observations by Aristophanes, Demosthenes, and others implies a lack of social respectability among the god's followers, and this was enhanced by the use of ecstatic, emotionally charged ritual, presented as typical of foreign ritual. Yet the cult of Sabazios clearly struck a chord with many individuals in the Greek world, for we find it attested in several centers on the Greek mainland and the Aegean islands.<sup>68</sup> As a non-Greek deity, Sabazios's cult would have been outside the regular cult associations of a [πόλις](#), and so we would expect to see some special organizations established to regulate his cult, as was done for the cults of other non-Greek divinities. This we do see, both in the Piraeus, an inscription recording the names of the [ἑρανόσται](#) of Sabazios,<sup>69</sup> and in Rhodes, a text recording honors to an individual, Ariston of Syracuse, for his services to the [κοίνον](#) of the Sabaziastai.<sup>70</sup>

Taken together, the sources give us some insight into the identity of Sabazios and his place in Anatolian and Greek cult. In Sabazios we see one of the earliest manifestations of the principal male deity in Anatolian cult, later identified by the Greeks and Hellenized Anatolians with Zeus and worshipped under a large number of epithets. The name Sabazios may be one regional epithet of the Anatolian Zeus, or an epithet indicating a particular area of concern to the divinity or his worshippers. What we cannot tell is why people turned to the cult of Sabazios and what attracted worshippers to him.<sup>71</sup> His presence in mystery and ecstatic rites suggests that his cult must have filled some real personal need to his worshippers, and this suggestion is further supported by the wide distribution of the Hellenized definition of Sabazios throughout the Roman Empire. The great majority of Sabazios dedications, both texts and images, come from areas far from his Anatolian homeland, attesting to the power of this cult and its ability to transcend cultural boundaries. Because of his identity with Zeus, Sabazios became a figure in Orphic cult as well, attested in several of the Orphic hymns as the Zeus figure who was responsible for the birth of Dionysos.<sup>72</sup> In sum, the cult of Sabazios illustrates how a local cult that started with only a small regional following came to influence areas far beyond its original setting. It furnishes one small part in the larger picture of the impact of the native peoples of Anatolia on areas outside their homeland.

## Abbreviations

ARV2 = J. Beazley, Attic Red-Figure Vase Painters, 2nd ed. (Oxford 1963).

CCIS I = M. J. Vermaseren, Corpus Cultus Iovis Sabazii vol. I. Études Préliminaires aux Religions Orientales dans l'Empire Romain 100 (Leiden 1983).

CCIS II = E. Lane, Corpus Cultus Iovis Sabazii vol. II. Études Préliminaires aux Religions Orientales dans l'Empire Romain 100 (Leiden 1985).

CCIS III = E. Lane, Corpus Cultus Iovis Sabazii vol. III. Études Préliminaires aux Religions Orientales dans l'Empire Romain 100 (Leiden 1989).

FGrHist = F. Jacoby, Fragmente der griechischen Historiker (Leiden 1926-58).

PCG = Kassel, R. and C. Austin. edd., Poetae Comici Graecae (Berlin 1983--).

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1 [Roller 1989](#).

2 Ferrara, Museum no. T 128, [ARV2 1052, 25](#). The identity of the two divinities on the vase has been much discussed, and no generally agreed upon identification of the male divinity has yet been reached. For further discussions of the vase, see [Naumann 1983, 171-175](#); [Bérard et al. 1989, 24-29](#); [Matheson 1995, 278-79](#) (who assigns the vase to the Curti Painter). I have amended my own earlier opinion, see [Roller 1999, 151-155](#).

3 [Simon 1953, 79-87](#).

4 No one can address the topic of the cult of Sabazios without acknowledging the enormous debt owed to Eugene Lane, whose numerous publications on this subject, particularly [CCIS II](#) and [III](#), correct many errors of earlier scholars and form the basis of any future study. Some earlier works such as [Eisele 1909-1915](#) and [Schaefer 1920](#), remain useful as compilations of ancient written sources on Sabazios; earlier attempts at synthesis, including [Picard 1961](#), [Fellman 1981](#), and [Johnson 1972-1987](#), have been superseded by Lane's work.

5 Sabazios as a Thracian deity, [Picard 1961](#); [Johnson 1972-87, 1506-07](#). As Eugene Lane points out, there is no evidence for the cult of Sabazios in Thrace before the first century BCE (see [CCIS III, 1, 40](#)). The evidence discussed by [Fol 1998](#), concerning the connection of Sabazios and Orphism, with its presumed Thracian connections, is a product of the highly Hellenized cult of Sabazios known from Asia Minor in the second century CE (see below, n. 72); it does not prove the existence of a Sabazios cult in Thrace before this time.

6 On this, see [Lane 1979](#); [Johnson 1972-87, 1602-03](#).

7 *Wasps* 9-10, *Birds* 876, *Lysistrata* 387-390, *Horae, frag.* 566 ([PCG 296](#)); in the *Horae* fragment, Sabazios is called a Phrygian deity.

8 [Robert 1975](#) publishes the text with extensive commentary. See also [Sokolowski 1979](#) for some corrections on Robert's translation and commentary.

9 [Robert 1975, 310](#). While it seems likely that the text is a faithful copy of the original fourth century BCI document, some of the language may well have been altered to suit second century CE understanding. Note the comments of [Robert 1975, 313](#), on the lack of iota subscript in the dative, typical of the second century CE. Robert also suggests that the last sentence, in which an individual named Dorates is specifically forbidden to take part in the mysteries, may be a later addition to the text.

10 [Sokolowski 1979, 68](#).

11 [Robert 1975, 314-317, 325](#).

12 On the evidence for Zeus in Sardis, see [Hanfmann 1983, 228-229](#); Hanfmann distinguishes at least three other Zeus figures.

13 [Johnson 1968](#); [CCIS II, 30](#). On the variant spelling of the god's name, see the examples listed below, n. 23.

14 On the cult of Sabazios in Pergamon, see [Welles 1934, 264-273](#); [Ohlemutz 1940, 269-272](#); [Allen 1971 8-9](#); [Allen 1983, 130-131, 174-175](#).

15 [Welles 1934, 267](#), letter 67 = [CCIS II, 27](#). See [Welles, 264-273](#), for a discussion of three texts, letters 64-67, which give information on the cult of Zeus Sabazios in Pergamon and his priest Athenaios. On the chronology of Stratonike, see [Allen 1983, 203](#).

16 [Welles 1934, 264-269](#), letters 65 and 66; [Allen 1983, 130-131](#).

17 [Τιμωτατήν](#), [Welles 1934, 266](#), letter 66 line 9; [ἐμ πολλοῖς κινδύνοις παραστάτην](#), [Welles 1934, 266](#) letter 67 lines 7-8.

18 [Welles 1934, 267](#), translates this phrase as "before the city", apparently meaning rites held in front of the city gates. The occurrence of the same phrase in an inscription from Tlos, [CCIS II, no. 44a](#), discussed below, shows, however, that the term refers not to the place where Sabazios's rituals were held but to his status as an official city god.

19 [CCIS II, no. 26](#).

20 [CCIS II, no. 44a](#).

21 [J. and L. Robert 1983, 171-75](#); [CCIS II, 21](#), commentary on no. 44a.

22 [CCIS II](#), nos. 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 29, 30 (Zeus is restored), 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 45, nineteen of Lane's twenty-eight Sabazios inscriptions. To the list in [CCIS II, nos. 21-45](#), should be added two additional texts published by [Frei 1988](#), nos. 9N and 10N. 10N is dedicated to Zeus Sabazios, while 9N is dedicated [Διὶ Βροντῶντι κὲ Σαουαδίω](#); assuming that the theonym Zeus is to be taken with both epithets (see [Frei, 23](#)), this would make a total of twenty-one out of thirty Sabazios dedications.

23 [CCIS II](#), nos. 24 and 25, from Bithynia; nos. 30 and 42, from Lydia; nos. 43 and 44, from Lycia; [Frei 1988](#), nos. 9N and 10N, from Phrygia Epiktetos. On variant spellings of the name, see [Johnson 1972-87, 1585](#).

24 In Bithynia, [CCIS II, nos. 21-25](#); Ionia, nos. 28-29; Lydia, nos. 30, 32-42; Lycia, nos. 43-44.

25 [Frei 1988](#), nos. 9N and 10N.

26 [Drew-Bear and Naour 1990](#), 1947 n. 131. For the statuette, see [Asgari et al. 1983, 125](#), no. B 3461; [CCIS II, no. 77](#).

27 My data on the Sabazios dedications are drawn almost entirely from the inscriptions published by Eugene Lane, [CCIS II, 9-22](#), nos. 21-45. To his list should be added two new inscriptions published by [Frei 1988](#), above n. 25. For vows to the god, see [CCIS II](#), nos. 21, 23, 24, 25, 29, 32, 35, 37, 37a, 37b, 38, 42; [Frei](#), 9N and 10N.

28 [CCIS II, no. 32](#).

29 [Frei 1988, 22-23](#), no. 10N.

30 [CCIS II](#), no. 33, "I cut down the trees of the god's sacred grove"; no. 34, "the god found me lacking", this from a sacred slave; no. 36, "[unknown] caused Trophimos, sacred slave of Meter Hipta and Zeus Sabazios, to be dragged off"; no. 40, "I took the sacred doves of the gods" (also a dedication to Zeus Sabazios and Meter Hipta), for a discussion of this last inscription, see [Buckler 1914-1916, 169-172](#).

31 [CCIS II, no. 22](#), from Sakcilar; no. 39, from Maionia; no. 41, from Koloe; see also [Robert 1948, 111-113](#) and [Lane 1975, 105-108](#).

32 [CCIS II, 28](#).

33 [CCIS II](#), no. 42, Philadelphia text; [Frei 1988, 19](#), no. 9N. On the latter, see above, n. 22.

34 [CCIS II, 43](#); cf. [Mitchell 1993, I, 240](#).

35 For the evidence on the cult of Meter, the Mother Goddess, in Lydia and Ionia, see [Roller 1999, 126-132](#).

36 [Mitchell 1993](#), II, 22-24.

37 [Hanfmann 1983](#), 228, suggests that the Lydian Zeus may have been a descendant of the older Hittite weather and storm god, a hypothesis that may well be valid for Zeus in other areas of Anatolia as well.

38 Note the many different Zeus cults, signified by different epithets, discussed by [Drew-Bear and Naour 1990](#) and [Mitchell 1993](#), II, 22-24.

39 [CCIS II](#), no. 25.

40 Stele from Maionia, [CCIS II](#), 39; from Koloe, [CCIS II](#), 41; and from Philadelphia, [CCIS II](#), 42. One additional relief of Sabazios, [CCIS II](#), no. 45, depicts the god on horseback, riding towards a small altar with a krater at its base; behind the altar is a tree with an eagle on one branch holding a snake in its mouth. The god is depicted as a mature male figure who holds a group of lightning bolts in one hand. Both the appearance and the attribute held by the figure are standard markers of Zeus, leading further credence to

Sabazios' identification with Zeus, but the Anatolian provenience of the piece is not secure, so it is not included in this discussion.

41 The term "Phrygian cap" appears in Roman literature of the first century CE and later; see Vergil, *Aeneid* 4.215, 9.616, and *Juvenal* 6.516. On the origin of the cap and the reasons for its attribution to Phrygia, see [Roller 1994, 249-250](#).

42 For a discussion of the various attributes of Sabazios, see [CCIS III, 23-37](#).

43 [Asgari et al. 1983, 125, no. B 346](#); [CCIS II, no. 77](#). The piece was reportedly found in a sanctuary, but not in controlled archaeological excavation. It has not yet been fully published.

44 The Sabazios votive hands have been collected in [CCIS I](#).

45 The costume and pose of the god can be seen in reliefs and statuettes from Italy ([CCIS II](#), nos. 80-82 from Rome; no. 83, from Volsinii illustrates a bust of the god wearing the "Phrygian" cap, Spain ([CCIS II](#) no. 85), Gaul ([CCIS II](#), no. 86), Dalmatia ([CCIS II](#), no. 87), Moesia ([CCIS II](#), no. 78), and Pannonia ([CCIS II](#), no. 88). Figurines and busts of Sabazios with the same costume and pose also appear on numerous bronze hands dedicated to the divinity, from Italy ([CCIS I](#), no. 8, 10, 12-15, 19, 27, 29), Sicily ([CCIS I](#), nos. 20-25), Sardinia ([CCIS I](#), nos. 33, 36, 37), Spain ([CCIS I](#), no. 39), Gaul ([CCIS I](#), no. 43), Helvetia ([CCIS I](#), no. 47), Germany ([CCIS I](#), no. 50), and several others of unknown provenience ([CCIS I](#), nos. 65, 68, 71, 79, 80, 83, 86, 87, 92).

46 On the history of the costume and its use in Greek art, see [Miller 1997, 171](#), and [Roller 1994, 249-251](#), with earlier bibliography.

47 For the application of this costume to Attis, see [Roller 1994, 251-253](#).

48 For examples, see [note 45](#). This discussion of the creation and dissemination of the Sabazios visual iconography is inevitably tentative, since few of the Sabazios figurines can be securely dated and many do not have a secure provenience.

49 [Roller 1994](#).

50 One possible occurrence may be a Paleo-Phrygian text from Midas City, which preserves the word Sabas carved into one of the rock faces of the upper citadel, [Brixhe and Lejeune 1984, no. M-08](#). The reading of the word is quite uncertain, however, and the five letters seem to form the end of a longer text; thus it is unclear if this is a distinct name or part of an unrelated word.

51 [Keil and Premerstein 1911, 94](#), no. 2; [CCIS II, no. 41](#); [Frei 1988, 19-23](#), no. 9N. See above, notes 22, 33.

52 [CCIS II](#), no. 41, from Koloe.

53 I am using the word "foreign" here in the sense of non-Greek. The remarks of [Parker 1996, 152-198](#), on foreign cults in Athenian religious practice offer a valuable overview on the variable status of foreign divinities in Athens.

54 See the discussion in [Roller 1999, 121-141](#).

55 On the origin of Attis, see [Roller 1994](#).

56 The citations of Sabazios in Aristophanes' comedies are given above, n. 7. Sabazios as a Phrygian, *Horae, frag. 566* ([PCG 296](#));  $\Sigma$  *Aristophanes, Birds* 874.

57 On the frequency of Phrygian slaves in Athens, see *Hermippos, Phormophoroi, line 18* ([PCG frag. 63](#)); *Aristophanes, Wasps* 433, *Lysistrata* 1211, *Frogs* 1345; *Euripides, Alcestis* 675; cf. *Strabo* 7.3.12. In general, see [Long 1986, 108-110](#) and [Bäbler 1998, 156-163](#).

58 According to *Pindar, Ol. 1.24*, Pelops was a Lydian, while Herodotos, 7.11.4, called him a Phrygian. See also *Euripides, Alcestis* 675, a Lydian or Phrygian slave mentioned as equivalents; and *Timotheus, Persians* 115-150, a Phrygian slave who comes from Sardis, near Mt. Tmolos (both in Lydia).

59 Aristophanes, in *Lysistrata* 387-388, mentions rites for Adonis and Sabazios together, strongly implying that to contemporary Athenians, the two seemed much the same. On ecstatic rites in the cults of non-Greek divinities, see [Versnel 1990, 102-130](#), esp. 114-118 on Sabazios.

60 As attested most vividly in *Euripides, Bacchae, lines 64-168*.

61 On the conflation of rites for Dionysos and Sabazios, see *Aristophanes, \Sigma Birds* 873,  $\Sigma$  *Wasps* 9; Alexander Polyhistor, [FGrHist 273 F 103](#); *Diodoros* 4.4; *Cicero, De Natura Deorum* 3.23; *Strabo* 10.3.15 Harpocration, s. v.  $\Sigma$ αβοί; *Soudas*, s. v.  $\Sigma$ αβάζιος; *Etymologicum Magnum*, s. v.  $\Sigma$ αβάζιος. Sabazios is considered the equivalent of Dionysos by some modern scholars as well, e.g. [Nilsson 1955, 566](#); [Versnel 1990, 114](#).

62 As Eugene Lane has correctly pointed out, [CCIS II, 52](#), testimonium D1; [CCIS III, 2-3](#).

63 See the comments in [Roller 1994, 255](#) on the cry  $\acute{\upsilon}\tilde{\eta}\varsigma \acute{\alpha}\tau\tau\eta\varsigma$  in the same passage, and its relationship to the pseudo-Anatolian deity Attis.

64 [Parker 1996, 159](#).

65 *Cicero, De Legibus* 2.37; on this passage, see [Parker 1996, 158 n. 20](#).

66 *Theophrastos, Characters* 27.8, *the Late Learner*; 16.4, *the Superstitious Man*.

67 A snake can be seen on the relief from Balat, [CCIS II](#), no. 25; from Maionia, [CCIS II](#), no. 39; and from Koloe, [CCIS II](#), no. 41. The snake also appears on a number of the Sabazios hands (although none from Anatolia), see [CCIS III, 23](#).

68 The evidence is collected in [CCIS I, no. 5](#), and [CCIS II](#), nos. 46-55.

69 IG ii2 1325 = [CCIS II](#), no. 51.

70 [Kontorini 1983, 71-79](#) = [CCIS II](#), no. 46.

71 For a discussion of this issue, see Lane's comments in [CCIS III, 39-48](#).

72 [Quandt 1973, 35](#), Hymn 48; see [West 1983, 96-97, 106-107](#)

The Anatolian Cult of Sabazios. Lynn Roller. . 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# Robert J. Rowland, Jr., In Search of the Roman Frontier in Sardinia

1

I. In the present state of our knowledge, which is admittedly not very secure, there are in Sardinia as elsewhere (Greece and Iberia, for example) no sites with anything resembling massive fortifications before the Copper Age.<sup>n1</sup> Besides being unfashionable to speak of invaders ([Chapman et al. 1984: 2.274](#)), there is very little evidence to support an invasion hypothesis: the Bell Beaker Culture does make its first appearance in Sardinia at this time ([Ferrarese Ceruti 1981: lv-lxv](#)),<sup>n2</sup> but its traces are too few and too scattered to account for the widespread appearance of defensive architecture; rather, we must think of internal pressures generated by a growing population and by an increase in accumulated wealth which required protection ([Rowland 1991: 87-117](#)). This is not the place to trace the evolution from the late fourth millennium of the native cultures which, by the late third millennium, have become recognizable as the nuragic culture, so called from the large stone towers (nuraghi), which are the single most characteristic feature of Sardinian prehistory ([Lilliu 1962](#)) and of the actual Sardinian landscape.

Before the end of the second millennium (ca. 15th-13th century), a number of these structures had evolved into true castle fortresses, undoubtedly the centers of chiefdoms, and this evolutionary process continued through the Iron Age: not enough firm chronological indicators exist as yet to allow us in each case to disentangle the architectural history of each structure; but, our present purposes render that defect irrelevant. By the time of the Carthaginians and then of the Romans, these multi-towered (or "polylobate" nuraghi) had arrived at their fully developed complexity, indicators of surplus labor at the disposal of the chiefs and accumulators of surplus capital. Contacts with the outside world may have served as a stimulator to the acceleration of the evolutionary process; this is not yet clear. We now know of contacts with the Mycenaean world ([Ferrarese Ceruti 1981a: 605-612](#); [Harding 1984: 252-255](#) and [passim](#); [Jones and Day 1987: 257-269](#); [Ugas 1996](#)) which, so far as we can tell at present, remained relatively slight; but in at least two sites, the evidence for these contacts seems to be associated with a very early use of iron ([Rowland 1985: 17-20](#); [Lo Schiavo 1989: 83, n. \\*, 89](#)). Hard on the Mycenaean contacts followed contact with early Phoenicians, perhaps with both the Levant and with Cyprus, perhaps at first with Cyprus alone ([Ridgway 1979-80: 54-58](#); [Barreca 1982: 57-61](#); [Bernardini 1993: 29-67](#)). There is some clear evidence of late second millennium trade relationships between Phoenicians and Sardinians, including Cypriote or Cypriote-derived bronze objects: a joint U.S.-Israeli-Italian underwater team spent part of 1984 looking for direct traces of Phoenician shipping in Sardinian waters ([Barreca et al. 1986](#)). By the ninth century, the Phoenicians had established commercial entrepôts in several coastal sites, but there is no evidence for their having engaged in widespread territorial expansion into the interior before about the seventh century, expansion which was followed around the turn of the sixth and fifth centuries by a very determined and energetic Carthaginian expansion on a number of fronts ([Moscati et al. 1997](#)).

At several sites not far from the coast, such as Monte Sirai in the southwest only 5 km. inland, we have Phoenician colonial outposts; it would be excessive to speak of a Phoenician frontier system. Monte Sirai itself was burned, presumably by natives on the counterattack around 550 BC, but was soon rebuilt and strengthened; it would be out of place here to trace in detail what little we know of the subsequent Carthaginian advance; suffice it to say that by the middle of the fifth century they developed a coherent frontier system and an interior line of defense. As I have previously noted ([Rowland 1982: 20-39](#)), this system segregated the mountainous interior from the coastal exterior, and controlled the principal lines of communication between the two worlds, the largely but not exclusively pastoral world of the interior, roughly east of the line, from the agricultural and maritime world of the exterior to the west and south. The forts of this system served as centers of control and as points of contact between the two civilizations, the urban civilization of the Carthaginians and the village and tribal-center world of the nuragic folk. From this system we can immediately recognize one principal difference between the Carthaginian control of Sardinia and the Romans' modality of control, namely, the organization of space: without denying that Carthaginian imperialism was brutal and sanguinary, it at least had a limit; the Romans' compulsion to subdue and organize everything, to control all by domination, stands in sharp contrast with the Carthaginians' recognition of limits and their ability and willingness to conduct warfare by other means.

The history of the Romans' first involvement with Sardinia, that is, the cooperative resistance to Romans by Carthaginians and natives joined together, along with the Carthaginians' success in provoking resistance during the first generation of the latter's conquest, speaks eloquently of the mutual advantages deriving from conquest Punic style.

II. Early on in the first Punic war, the Romans came to realize the strategic importance of Sardinia: Zonaras (8.10) records that in the winter of 263/2, the Carthaginians conveyed most of their army to Sardinia with the idea of attacking (presumably Italy) from that island; and a couple of years later L. Scipio (cos. 259) invaded the northeastern corner of the island, around Olbia ([MRR](#) 1.206), which is only bit more than 100 nautical miles from Ostia. Our sources also speak of naval battles, and it is easy to imagine that the Carthaginians' strategy for conducting the war included harassing Roman shipping if not actually invading Latium itself. In 258, Sulpicius was active in the southwestern part of Sardinia and is said to have "overrun" the country before being defeated by Hanno (Zonar. 8.12). Two years later, Sardinia was one of the prizes demanded by Atilius Regulus (Dio, frg. 43.22-23, not accepted by all scholars) when he arrogantly and prematurely presented the Carthaginians with a series of conditions by which they could end the war, acknowledging Rome's supremacy; Carthage disagreed with Regulus' view of affairs and, with the assistance of Xanthippus, regained a level of equality. At this point, Sardinia disappears from accounts of the war, nor was it included in the truce terms of 241. In addition to its strategic value, Sardinia offered mineral wealth (especially in the forms of argentiferous lead, copper and iron), salt beds, and considerable agricultural potential, some of which at least had already been actualized by the Carthaginians. Whatever the reasons for the Romans' not laying claim to Sardinia in 241, they were able quickly to add it to their still nascent overseas empire by seizing it while the attention of Carthage was distracted by the mercenary revolt, simultaneously, as Polybius says (3.9), greatly aggrieving the Carthaginians and laying the foundation for the long-protracted conquest of the entire island. The meager evidence we possess for the history of the wars of conquest in the remainder of the third and through the second century confirms that the Carthaginians had long ago been accurate in their judgement that conquest of the entire island was not worth the price.

There is nothing to be gained in this paper from cataloguing a list of names of proconsuls, propraeors and [triumphatores](#). But some points of particular concern need recalling. The consul of 238, Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, with a fleet and troops took possession, probably in 237, of Sardinia "without combat," that is, he most likely established control over the Punic cities of the littoral. As would often happen on the frontiers of empire, a change of overlords provoked rebellion, not without the encouragement of Carthage

(Zonar. 8.18). The consul of 231, M. Pomponius ([MRR](#) 1.225f.), we are told, was unable to find many of the inhabitants who, as he learned, had slipped into "caves of the forest, difficult to locate, so he summoned keen-scented dogs from Italy, and with their aid discovered the trail of both men and cattle and cut off many such parties." This is the first clear indication we have that the wars had by now moved into the mountains -- assuming that the forests were in the mountains (which is the same thing as saying that this was the first penetration by the Romans into the interior: we simply cannot tell). We likewise cannot know which mountains or forests, nor can we be certain that the caves were actual caves or if they were in fact nuraghi: at least from the time of the [Prometheus Bound](#), savage barbarians can be found dwelling in caves whatever their actual habitations. During this same early phase, in the north, C. Papirius Maso (Zonar. 8.18) drove the Corsi from the plains, perhaps around Tempio or at least in the hinterland of Olbia if these really are Sardinian Corsi, not Corsicans -- scholarly opinion is divided. Wherever, and Sardinia does make much more sense for these operations than Corsica does ([Dyson 1985: 249](#)),<sup>n3</sup> the Romans were repeatedly ambushed when they attempted to pursue the Corsi into the mountains, and a limited success was achieved only with great difficulty: Papirius was in the event denied a triumph by the senate. We know that the revolt of Hampsicoras in 215 early in the second Punic war focused around Cornus on the central west coast and the Campidano (Mastino 1979: 33-36). It is also clear that the natives of the interior (whom Livy [23.40.3] calls [Sardi pelliti](#), "skin-wearing Sardinians"), with whom the Carthaginian had had, as we have seen, a centuries-long symbiotic relationship, joined the old invaders in resisting the new ones.

Alas, we have no early Roman field camps, forts or other material evidence to allow precise interpretation of the earliest phases of the conquest -- how one envies British archaeologists who can argue endlessly about Agricola's route to Scotland and such! One type of evidence might cast some light or at least some insight into these earliest operations: i.e., the find-spots of the earliest, pre-denarii coins found in a certain profusion around the island ([Rowland 1985a: 4.99-117](#)). For the next phase, Michael Crawford's precise redating of denarii allows us to hypothesize one direction of Roman penetration into the interior ([Crawford 1969](#)). The discoveries of Crawford number 38 (217-215 ) at Bolotana, in the mountains northeast of Cornus, a hoard of denarii closing with nearly mint-condition coins of 195 at Burgos, a few km. from Bolotana, and an example of Crawford number 133 (194-190) at Paulilatino, almost due east of Cornus, suggest that this region was one of the foci of Roman penetration into the interior after the revolt of Hampsicoras had been quashed. Excavations by teams from Pennsylvania State University under the direction first of Joseph Michels then of Gary S. Webster at several nuraghi in the territory of Borore might provide some confirmation, for these nuraghi were unused from the end of the Punic period to about 80 BC ([Michels and Webster 1987](#)).

In the early 170's Livy (41.6.5-7) tell us, "the Ilienses with the support of the Balari had invaded the pacified part of the province, nor could resistance be mounted with the army weakened and to a great extent carried off by disease." From this derives a long series of wars between the Romans and those tribes; indeed, both Diodorus (5.15.6) and Livy (40.34.13) affirm that they were still unpacified in the late first century, Livy by using the present tense -- which, from the context, is clearly not the historical present. We have no real information about the locations of those tribes: it is not very helpful to be told that they lived in the mountains, as Pausanias (10.17.9) and Strabo (5.2.7) tell us -- but a recently discovered boundary marker from the territory of Berchidda records Balari scarcely a dozen km. into the mountains from the later Roman fort at Castro-Oschiri (which we will consider shortly). The inscription simultaneously locates the tribe, suggests an approximate date for the establishment of the fort or a predecessor, and provides a reason for its location, namely, the protection of the road to Ozieri, Chilivani, Mores, Ploaghe, and beyond -- all prime agricultural territory. A coin hoard published by Taramelli in 1918 also came from the territory of Berchidda, from the region Sa Contrizzola, 2 km. west of the modern village; when re-examined in the light of Crawford's dates for the denarii, this hoard is extremely informative ([Rowland 1990-91: 301-310](#); cf. [Gasparini 1992: 579-589](#)): the coins were found in a nuragic

pot and consist of an almost unbroken series of denarii from 178 to 82 BC. The most economical hypothesis is that this zone was the home of the Balari, rather than that it was a reservation into which they were herded by the Romans; the Ilienses, then, can be located to the south, in the Marghine and Goceano mountains, i.e., to the north and east of the focus of penetration spreading inland from around Cornus.

Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, father of the Gracchi, fought the Ilienses in 177-6 (triumphing on 23 February 175, though this did not prevent his return to Sardinia in 163-2) as the first consular commander since the early days of the second Punic war ([MRR 1.398](#)). In addition to bringing back his army "safe, sound, and full of booty" and dedicating a famous depiction of the island in the temple of Mater Matuta, he reported that more than 80,000 had been killed or captured. In separate passages, Livy (41.12.5; 17.2) records 12,000 and 15,000 killed, which could mean, if there is any validity at all to the figures, that perhaps more than 53,000 were sold into captivity. It is usually believed, or at least appears to be believed by historians, that these captives were shipped to Rome or Italy to be sold; it seems to be much more likely that some, if not the vast majority of them, were sold in Sardinia itself;<sup>n4</sup> other victorious commanders, although perhaps less spectacularly, will have also acquired captives who were transformed into slaves. That is, Rome's victories substantially, but not entirely, depopulated the island's mountain fastnesses and provided the workforce which radically altered the Sardinian landscape, transforming the island into one of the three [subsidia frumentaria](#) of the Roman state ([Rowland 1988: 243-247](#)). The figure of 80,000 is astonishing; besides representing what Dyson ([1985: 256-257](#)) calls "an impressive military feat," it represents about 1/4 of the 1728 population of the entire island and about 1/8th of the 1881 population.<sup>n5</sup> There continued to be wars in the second century -- C. Gracchus returned to Rome from campaigning in Sardinia to stand for the tribunate of 123, and M. Caecilius Metellus triumphed in 111, the last triumph celebrated over Sardinia. As Dyson rather wryly remarks ([1985: 259](#)), "the Romans seem to have accepted that there would always be some turbulence in Sardinia and that minor actions of frontier pacification hardly deserved triumphal honors."

One form of such pacification is described by Strabo (5.2.7), who could have been writing about any and all periods between the arrival of the Romans and his own day: "the mountain tribes live in caves and if they possess any sowable land, they do not sow it conscientiously, but rather plunder the lands of those who do cultivate, whether in their own neighborhood, or by sailing against those in the harbor.... The generals who are sent are sufficient for some of them, but inadequate against others, and since it does not pay to maintain an army continually in plague-ridden regions, the only recourse is to plan certain stratagems. And so, keeping close watch over some one of the barbarian tribes, who hold festivals for several days after a raid, they attack them at that time and capture many."<sup>n6</sup> Diodorus Siculus (5.15.6) and Varro ([RR 1.16.2](#)) both mention Sardinian banditry ([latrocinium](#)), which could just as well mean guerilla warfare or resistance to romanization, and Varro emphasizes the deleterious effects on agriculture: "it is not worthwhile to cultivate many fertile fields on account of the banditry caused by people dwelling nearby as is the case in Sardinia with certain ones near Oelies" (perhaps modern Dolia or, following Cichorius' emendation, Usellus).<sup>n7</sup> By AD 6, the situation had become so bad that Augustus was forced to take over the governance of Sardinia ([Meloni 1990: 139-141](#)): not only were the natives harassing the plains, but they were also practicing piracy in the Tyrrhenian Sea, even posing a threat to Pisa.<sup>n8</sup> In AD 19 Tiberius sent 4000 persons suspected of practicing Jewish or Egyptian rites to put down brigandage -- a famous (or infamous) passage, [coercendis illic latrociniiis et, si ob gravitatem caeli interissent, vile damnum](#) (Tac. [Ann.](#) 2.85.5). Dyson is, I believe, absolutely correct in seeing these exiles not as conscripted soldiers, but as forced settlers in exposed farms and villages of the frontier zone ([Dyson 1985: 261](#)). A very, very slight archaeological confirmation of this hypothesis might be found first in the discovery more than a century ago of a gold ring with a Hebrew inscription, in the territory of Macomer, and more recently, finds at Sa Idda Eccia-Isili: a lamp with a menorah, and a tombstone reading [---]o [Iudaeus / vix\(it\) an\(n\)is VIII](#) ([RRS 59](#); [Corda 1992-93: 479-486](#)).<sup>n9</sup>

III. Now it is precisely in the age of Augustus that our search for the Roman frontier in Sardinia can move to a new level. To the extent that denarii and aurei arrived in Sardinia as pay for troops, the large number of those coins minted during the reign of Augustus and found in Sardinia indicate an increase in military pay, hence of soldiers, and therefore of military activity during his reign ([Rowland 1978: 87-112](#)). There are more gold and silver coins from the reign of Augustus than from any other reign through that of Heraclius: the Augustan peace and concomitant prosperity no doubt account for some of these coins, as does the length of his reign. On the other hand, there are more Augustan gold and silver coins than there are from the period from Trajan to Severus Alexander -- a century and a third! There is a sharp increase in coins minted under Vespasian, possibly indicating a rise in military activity during his reign, perhaps to be connected with the Civil Wars,<sup>n10</sup> and there is a quantum leap in the later third century, through the reign of Diocletian. And it is precisely in 227 that we can clearly see a change in the career patterns of the governors of the island as [viri militares](#) replaced the essentially civilian governors of prior years. Apparently, in the latter part of the reign of Severus Alexander, Sardinia was as disturbed by unrest and uprisings as was much of the rest of the Roman world, unrest which, on the island, was obviously not directly caused by barbarian pressures or incursions. The number and pattern of the coin hoards deposited between 235 and 284, and not recovered, clearly demonstrate that this unrest continued throughout the period of anarchy, and we can postulate serious efforts to restore tranquility under Gallienus, Claudius II, and Probus. There are four fourth century coin hoards, all in the interior: at Perdasdefogu, Orgosolo, Siddi and Nurallao, which suggest continued or renewed unrest in these areas; the one at Orgosolo, which close with coins of Julian, is particularly interesting, for the site appears to have been a religious center which could have served as a focus for rebellion: it was destroyed at about the time the hoard closed.

For the imperial period, there is a useful body of epigraphical material, which can carry us a long way forward in our search for the Roman frontier ([Rowland 1978a: 166-172](#)). The earliest such inscription is the epitaph found at Praeneste of a prefect of the first cohort of Corsi and of the [civitates](#) of Barbaria in Sardinia ([CIL 14.2954 = ILS 2684; Zucca 1987: 349-373; Mastino 1992: 23-44; Mastino 1993: 457-536](#)); the date is early imperial, not far removed in time from that of the dedication made at Fordongianus by [civitates Barbariae](#) ([Sotgiu 1961a: 188](#)), most likely during the reign of Tiberius, perhaps precisely in AD 19 ([Corda 1999: 149](#)). Fordongianus is strategically located on the Tirso river: it was the seat of the military commander of Sardinia during the Byzantine period, when it was renamed Chrysopolis ([Boscolo 1978: 34](#)). Numerous remains were visible in the sixteenth century, and bits and pieces of the Roman city, including part of the aqueduct and of an amphitheater have been reported in modern times. The major monument remaining is the baths, but there is nothing to indicate that Fordongianus played any military role in the high empire, i.e., after about the Julio-Claudian period: its name from the second century, [Forum](#) Traiani, suggests that it did not ([RRS 46-47; Dyson and Rowland 1992: 207-209; Dyson and Rowland 1998: 313-328](#)). A secure date for the recently discovered altar and temple (26 x 20 m.) dedicated to Juppiter on Monti Onnariu-Bidoni, some 20 km. upstream from Fordongianus, would be a useful indicator of the chronology of the process of pacification ([Zucca 1998: 1205-1211](#)).<sup>n11</sup> Inscriptions recording Sardinian cohorts in and around Cagliari tell us nothing about military affairs, and the ones from Grugua<sup>n12</sup> suggest that soldiers were used as guards in the mines here as elsewhere in the Roman world.



Map of the Frontier

But now our quest for the Roman frontier can begin in earnest. In the territory of Oschiri, overlooking the modern Lago di Coghinias and the valley of the Riu Mannu di Ozieri and the broad plains to the west, stand the remains of the Roman fort still known as Castro ([RRS 36, 92-93; Le Bohec 1990: 66-67; AE 1994, 795 \[from Ruggeri 1994: 193-196\], Manconi 1995: 32-33](#)) -- the nearby medieval church is dedicated to N. Signora di Castro. The magnificent panoramic view of the underlying terrain and the protection to the plain afforded by this strategically located fort present extremely well the Romans' conception of the functionality of a military site. And what a magnificent site it must have been in the last

century and in the early decades of the present one! Remains of buildings, aqueducts, lead pipes, numerous incised stones, tombs (many containing glass objects), carnelians and jaspers, and mosaics are all found in the literature, but the actual site has only a few miserable traces of the fort and its defenders. Three inscriptions record that Castro was the base of cohorts of Sardinians and of Aquitanians early in the first century AD; a fourth found at Tula some 7 km. away records a signifer of a cohort of Ligurians which was probably also based at Castro. Some of the pottery found at the site, particularly African Red Slip ware, demonstrates that it was occupied through the imperial period; but whether or not it was always a military site or only sporadically such cannot at present be divined.

We know from Itineraries that Tempio, ancient Gemellae, was the site of a [mansio](#) and undoubtedly had a garrison; it provides an inscription of a soldier in an unnamed unit, and may have had a long history as a military site. At any rate, we know of pre-denarii coins found in the territory, which may derive from campaigns against the Corsi ([RRS 133-134](#); [Le Bohec 1990: 68-69](#)). Through the empire, however, I would think of the garrison here more as a police [caserna](#) than a full-fledged fort, at least in the absence of any hard archaeological evidence to the contrary. Such establishments would serve not only to maintain peace and order but also to socialize the indigenes of the vicinity. Cassius Dio (56.18.2) beautifully summarizes the process: "The barbarians were adapting themselves to the Roman world. They were setting up markets and peaceful meetings, although they had not forgotten their ancestral habits, their tribal customs, their independent life, and the freedom that came from weapons. However, as long as they learned these different habits gradually and under some sort of supervision, they did not find it difficult to change their life, and they were becoming different without realizing it." Just west of Gallura, local tradition and speculation would locate a Roman camp or camps on the plateaus of M. Franco and M. Sein a short distance from the town of Martis, either one of which would be an ideal location, mirroring Castro Oschiri 26 km. away.<sup>[n13](#)</sup>

Further in the interior, an inscription of another Aquitanian auxiliary soldier has been found in the territory between Bitti, Buddusò, and Osidda, in a place called Campu Sa Pattada ([RRS 21](#); [Rowland 1978a: 169](#); [Le Bohec 1990: 73](#), noting the absence of a wall). It is located along a stretch of the Roman road and has an excellent view of the terrain to the north. None of the fairly extensive remains extant in the last century were visible in the summer of 1985, and there is no telling how long after the first century this remained a garrison. It, too, should be counted more as a police than an army base -- a rather fine distinction when dealing with a Roman imperial province, but I use the distinction to imply normal, everyday control of a largely acquiescent populace, as opposed to an impressive display of military might to overwhelm still or potentially rebellious indigenes.

Well into the interior, almost precisely in the center of the island, from the terrain of the modern village of Austis -- Augustis in medieval documents --, came another military inscription, of a horn player serving in a cohort of Lusitanians; three other tombstones from the same site (named Perda Litterada) record children, one of whom was named Castricius, surely derived from [castrum](#) ([CIL 10. 7885](#)). A nineteenth century scholar tells us that the area was covered with the remains of ancient structures and materials; very little of what is available in the literature can be dated ([RRS 15-16](#); [Rowland 1978a: 169](#); [Rowland 1994-95: 355-357](#); [Le Bohec 1990: 72](#) [skeptical]). The inscriptions are all first century, and the only coins attested are a Republican denarius, two Augustan bronzes, and a bronze of Drusus. Austis may have had a long period of occupancy, and it may have been a military base for centuries; however, all that we can affirm with confidence is that it served as a military station during the reign of Augustus and for a period afterwards -- and it may have served a policing function along the new road across the interior of the island.<sup>[n14](#)</sup>

Between Austis and Fordongianus was found the tombstone of a certain M. Valerius Germanus, a soldier for either twenty or twenty-six [stipendia](#); it was one of a group of five stones all of persons named Valeriu

or Valeria ([RRS 24](#); [Rowland 1978a: 170](#)). The findspot of these inscriptions, now under water, was near the bridge over the Tirso by which the interior road running past Austis was connected with the main north-south highway between Cagliari and Porto Torres. This may have been the location of a settlement of veterans who were given land in exchange for sharing in the protection of the lower Tirso valley; there are no other remains recorded from the site, so we have no possibility of estimating its extent or date. The inscriptions are probably from the first century AD and are very unlikely to be later than the early part of the third century.

Dyson ([1985: 261-262](#); cf. [Pancierera 1992: 325-340](#)) points to a military diploma found at Anela as "evidence of continued need for settlers to defend frontier regions even in the first century AD; the soldiers were legionaries retired from the First Adiutrix, and the inscription dates from the reign of Galba. The site, called Charchinargiu, in 1873 showed extensive traces of Roman habitations ([RRS 13](#)), and may well have been such as Dyson interprets it. On the other hand, First Adiutrix was formed of sailors, and a large number of known sailors came from Sardinia ([Sotgiu 1961: 78-97](#); [Le Bohec 1990: 46, 86, 120](#); [Mastino 1993: 489-491](#); [Nonnis 2001](#)). This diploma and others like it found in the interior of Sardinia may well be evidence of retired veterans returning home after their terms of service. Another diploma was found inside a nuraghe just to the east of Sorabile-Fonni (below), where an extensive Roman site was excavated in 1879 and 1881.<sup>n15</sup> There was a number of buildings, one of which was 51 meters long; a bath (about 42 x 60 m.); mosaic floors; gold, silver, and bronze objects; and, discovered fifty years later, an inscription, a dedication to Silvanus by C. Ulpius Severus, Procurator Augusti and Praefectus Provinciae Sardiniae (Sotgiu 1961a: 221). Coins of the first century undoubtedly provide the *terminus post quem* for the fort -- for this was clearly more than a police station -- and republican coins, one from 146 BC, elsewhere in the zone might indicate earlier military activity in this region well into the interior. Alas, there is nothing in the original excavation report, subsequent discovery, or autopsy in the summer of 1985 to allow even a wild guess about the fate of Sorabile in the late Empire. Both Meloni<sup>n16</sup> and Sotgiu<sup>n17</sup> date the governorship of this Ulpius to the early second century; however, a certain M. Ulpius Victor was Procurator Augusti and Praefectus Provinciae Sardiniae under Philip around 244,<sup>n18</sup> which strikes me as a much more satisfactory timeframe for our dedicator. He presumably visited the fort when he made the dedication so it was surely still functioning sometime in the mid-third century: the diploma found at the nuraghe Dronnoro about 1 km. east of Sorabile dates to 214-217 ([Notizie degli Scavi 1882, 440-441](#); [CIL 10.8325](#)). Future epigraphical discoveries might allow us to fit into this picture the Cohors I Nurritanorum, which surely originated in Sardinia though it is recorded only on inscriptions from North Africa (one a diploma of AD 107) and from Umbria ([Benseddik 1982: 59](#); [Mastino 1984: 46, with n. 103](#)) a boundary marker from Orotelli records a people abbreviated NURR, which has been supplented as Nurr (enses?) but should now with greater likelihood be read as Nurr(itani) ([Meloni 1990: 315](#)).

Which brings us finally to Nuragus, where Germanus Nepotis filius, a soldier who had served for seven years, was buried by his mother Fausta ([CIL 10.8323](#)). The cemetery which included this burial yielded coins ranging from the reign of Claudius to that of Hadrian ([RRS 74-76](#)), and the presence of his mother scarcely suggests major military activity. We can envision the same sort of garrison protection here, with serving soldiers, that Dyson postulated for Anela and that we saw for Gemellae and Campu Sa Pattada. Pliny ([NH 3.7.85](#)) and Ptolemy (3.3.6) call the inhabitants of this place Valentini, leading editors of Ptolemy to correct Valeria to Valentia in his list of interior cities ([Forbiger 1848: 3.826](#)); the zone will have been around the church of S. Maria 'e Alenza (i.e., S. Maria di Valenzia), which still preserves the name. If the people are Valentini in Pliny, settlement must have been at least an Augustan foundation: Valence in Narbonensis was established by Caesar or by Augustus. One would rather like to think of Valenzia in Spain, founded by Junius Brutus in 138 BC.<sup>n19</sup> Excavations in 1872 and 1874 provided only imperial material, with bronze coins of Augustus, Vespasian, Gordian and Philip ([RRS 74-76, 146-147](#)); but, on a visit to the site in the summer of 1986, in an area which had been excavated to lay irrigation pipes, Stephen Dyson and I saw some pottery of the Sullan period which supports an earlier rather than a

later foundation date. About 1 km. or so away, a nuragic structure included third century coins, beginning with one of Alexander Severus and including six of Tetricus. And just down the hill to the south, a small nuragic well was repaved in the Roman period, with the new pavement covering a coin of Claudius Gothicus ([RRS 74-76](#); [Le Bohec 1990: 69-70](#)). In all, a very slender thread, but it does look very much like there was a certain amount of activity here during the third century. The territory around Valenzia -- including the nuragic sites of Forraxi Nioi and S. Millanu and the church of S. Elia (with an adjacent Roman cemetery of the imperial period with numerous burials in crouched position [[Notizie degli Scavi 1882, 306-308](#)]) will repay detailed examination, not only because of its potential for understanding the military history of the region.

There are other sites, too, where an optimist might find traces of third century activity; but, like so much else we must remain for the present rather vague. Surgical implements found at Perda Floris-Lanusei and around Oliena ([RRS 57, 88](#)) are suggestive of a military presence, but lack both context and date.<sup>n20</sup> Speaking of a grave at S. Andrea Frius, Dyson ([1985: 262](#)) says that the "tomb can be dated to the late second century... a man was buried with his weapons. It seems that even during the height of the Pax Romana frontiersmen in Sardinia lived, died, and were buried with their weapons at their sides." The grave goods (actually, of two men) are dated by coins, one of Trajan, the other of Antoninus Pius -- both pierced with a large hole therefore, perhaps, jewelry of a later age, viz., the third century, or even later.<sup>n21</sup> The material consisted of a 26 cm. long iron knife, two iron lance heads, a small iron axe head, a bronze bell with an iron clapper, a large fibula with geometric designs in relief, what must be an armlet ("un grosso anellone") of bronze, and some other objects (including a bit of silver). This suggests a late imperial or even Byzantine site such as we know from other finds S. Andrea Frius to have been ([Salvi 1989: 465-474](#); [Rowland 1985b](#); [Rowland 1992: 154-158](#)).

The nuragic sacred area of S. Vittoria di Serri appears to have been used as a garrison post in the late empire: Roman structures and a street are perhaps to be associated with inhumations dated by coins of Gordian III, Aurelian, and Constantius ([RRS 124](#)); this site too seems to have been the site of a Byzantine garrison.<sup>n22</sup> Not far away, at Is Murdegus-Nurri ([RRS 77-78](#)), a deposit of votive figurines similar to one from Linna Pertunta-S. Andrea Frius can also be dated to the reign of Gordian. Coins in the S. Andrea Frius deposit continue to the reign of Constantine, and a seventh century fibula and pitcher, both of bronze, also came from Linna Pertunta ([RRS 106](#)); possibly (as we have by now come to expect) the place was a Byzantine military outpost ([Spanu 1998: 169](#)). Both votive deposits could perhaps be due to military presences.

Not far from Nurri stands another site that had some Byzantine troops, Biora,<sup>n23</sup> where an inscription was set up in honor of the Numen Deus Hercules by a group called the Martenses ([CIL 10.7858](#); cf. [Meloni 1990: 309, 332, 400](#)), who must be connected with the military. It is a strategically located site, 26 hectare in extent, along an important roadway, and might have had a long military occupation, or it might have had sporadic military occupation over a long time -- we simply cannot tell in the present state of the evidence. A garrison at Biora would make sense either before the time of the one at Valenzia or coeval with it, either in the second century BC or around the time of Augustus. Both sites would provide ample protection to the Trexenta, which the Romans made rich in grain. About 20 km. to the interior from both Biora and Valenzia, at Seulo, was found a diploma of a Sardinian ex-sailor ([CIL 16.127](#)). Was he there on garrison duty or in retirement? About another 20 km. into the interior, in the territory of Tonara, there is a region described by Taramelli ([1911: 384-386](#)) as being "sparso di abitati romani." That archaeologist called one of those structures a villa "di qualche signore di età romana" -- a military station, which would yield materials similar to those of a villa, seems much more likely when one considers the locale and terrain (935 m. ASL). Part of still another military diploma was found within about 10 km. from Tonara, a Sorgono ([RRS 130](#)). An amulet of Zeus Serapis found at Sorgono along with a statuette of Isis found about 25 km. away at Asuni ([Rowland 1976: 170](#)) are most likely evidence for a Roman military or veteran

presence in these locales so far from the coast. Austis is about 10 km. from both Sorgono and Tonara. About 20 km. or a bit less from Valenzia, Usellus, and Fordongianus is the somewhat enigmatic fortress known as Castello di Medusa-Samugheo, clearly a military site in the first and sixth centuries AD, but we haven't a clue about its history in the interval.<sup>n24</sup> The distance from Tonara to Sorabile-Fonni is about another 20 km. along the road; from there it is a bit more than 20 km. to Nuoro, then another 20-odd km. to Bitti, thence nearly 40 km. to Castro, but only about 20 km. to the environs of Ozieri (rich in Roman fine wares [RRS 94-96]) and from Ozieri about another 20 km. to the fort. Here at last is an outline of a frontier system: a few garrisons as anchors with police stations at more or less regular intervals about every 20 km. -- some of them purely hypothetical deduced from perhaps inadequate evidence.

Alas, there is far too much that we cannot tell at present -- and won't be able to without more extensive exploration and excavation combined with detailed, accurate and timely reports. It is a great pity that, more than a century after the military base at Fonni was excavated, at a time when we still await reports of excavations at Castro-Oschiri, it is still premature to suggest more than the outlines of a coherent defensive system in the Sardinian interior, and to do even that on what amounts to not much more than educated guesswork. We can feel fairly confident about our deductions for the Augustan and early imperial ages, and we can be reasonably certain that there was an increase in military activity in the third century and later, with the establishment of small military posts, some of which can in fact be identified. During much of the Pax Romana, Sardinia seems to have been relatively peaceful -- and neither archaeological nor epigraphical evidence exists as yet to suggest the contrary.

There is one well-known piece of evidence which might serve to confirm the picture just sketched ([Rowland 1985a: 110](#)). A bronze tablet (CIL 10.7852; ILS 5947), called the Esterzili tablet from its findspot, recording events of the last portion of Nero's reign, presents to us a people called the Gallilenses "frequently resisting and not obedient to the decree," who are warned, not for the first time, to be quiet and leave the estates of the Patulcenses and to hand over free ([vacua](#)) possession to the later; they are further warned not to persevere any longer in their stubbornness lest the authors of the sedition be dealt with severely. Subsequently, the Gallilenses, scarcely acting like the crude, savage bandits portrayed in modern discussions of the text ([Mastino 1993a](#)),<sup>n25</sup> appealed the government's order, saying that they would deliver a tablet pertaining to the matter from the emperor's record office ([tabula ad eam rem pertinens ex tabulario principis](#)), and they later asked for further delay of the execution of the order to depart, asking forgiveness that the table had not yet been delivered. No further delays were granted. If they had not departed by a fixed date from the boundaries of the Patulcenses (now called Campani), which they had seized by violence, they would pay the penalty for their long stubbornness ([longa contumacia](#)). These events are generally interpreted as an incursion into the agricultural zone settled by Campanian colonists; this zone was possibly around Dolianova (perhaps the [unemended] region Oelies mentioned by Varro as being harassed by bandits) and the perpetrators would have been unruly barbaricini from Gerrei, slightly to the northeast. Clearly, however, they are squatters, not invaders. The area where the inscription was found is in the fertile high plain of the Flumendosa, and it was discovered by a farmer while plowing ([Spano 1867: 1-52](#); [Angius 6.407-408](#)). Conflicts between shepherds and farmers are admittedly a well-attested recurring phenomenon in Sardinian history ([Le Lannou 1979: 125-136](#); [Day 1987: 269-290](#)):<sup>n26</sup> reducing or eliminating such conflicts was presumably one of the primary functions of the Roman military/police in the Sardinian interior. But such troublesome shepherds pass on fairly quickly and do not, like the Gallilenses, settle down for a long time in someone's fields and, presumably, farm them. And what sort of vagabond brigands claim that they can produce a document from the imperial archives, even if in the end they cannot carry through? Or have Lares (CIL 10.8063.1)? And, finally, if there was a numerous Roman military presence in the 60's AD in the region -- hardly a day's march from Biora or Valenzia -- why didn't the army simply march out, evict the squatters, and deal with them appropriately?

\* An earlier version of this paper was read as the Henry Rowell Memorial Lecture at the Johns Hopkins University in November 1985; I am delighted to have the opportunity now to present a revised and updated version in homage to my old friend, former colleague and office-mate, Gene Lane.

### **Key to Frontier Map**

- Anela
- Asuni
- Austis
- Berchidda
- Bidoni
- Bitti
- Bolotana
- Borore
- Buddusò
- Burgos
- Cagliari
- Chilivani
- Cornus
- Dolia
- Esterzili
- Fonni
- Fordongianus
- Grugua
- Isili
- Lanusei
- Lasplassas
- Macomer
- Martis
- Monte Sirai
- Mores
- Nuoro
- Nuragus
- Nurallao
- Nurri
- Olbia
- Oliena
- Orgosolo
- Orotelli
- Oschiri
- Osidda
- Ozieri
- Ploaghe
- Paulilatino
- Perdasdefogu
- Porto Torres
- S. Andrea Frius
- Samugheo
- Serri
- Seulo

- Sididi
- Sorgono
- Tempio
- Tonara
- Tula
- Uselis

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1 For the pre-nuragic period, see [Lilliu 1988: 21-270](#); [Webster 1996: 44-84](#); [Contu 1997: 41-406](#). For the Copper Age, see, among many others, [Phillips 1980: 182-189](#). For Iberia, see [Fernández Castro 1995: 3-50](#).

2 Interpretation of the Beaker phenomenon in Sardinia still has "a long way to go" to achieve parity with scholarship elsewhere: cf. L. Salanova, "A long way to go...: The Bell Beaker Chronology in France," M. Benz and S. Van Willigen (eds.), *Some New Approaches to the Bell Beakers 'Phenomenon'*, BAR International Series, 690, Oxford, 1998, 1-13, esp. 3.

3 It is one of Dyson's great merits that he pays full attention to the Sardinian evidence; although we may disagree on points of detail, we are generally in full agreement on the overall picture. For studies of the frontier which overlook Sardinia, see C. R. Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study* (Baltimore and London, 1994); H. Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1996); D. Williams, *The Reach of Rome: A History of the Roman Imperial Frontier, 1st 5th Centuries AD* (New York, 1996).

4 I owe this observation to E. Badian, to whom I remain grateful for numerous kindnesses.

5 G. Pardi, *La Sardegna e la sua popolazione attraverso I secoli* (Cagliari, 1925). [Meloni 1990: 78](#) thinks that the number 80,000 is "senza dubbio eccessivo."

6 The destruction layer found at the sacred well of S. Vittoria-Serri probably provides an example of such a raid and one could well join Taramelli in imagining that a monument to Victory had been erected above the southwest-facing cliff, where the church of S. Vittoria stands today ([Notizie degli Scavi](#) 1922, 324-325).

7 C. Cichorius, "Historische Studien zu Varro," *Römischen Studien* (Leipzig, 1922), 205. For Usellus, see [Usai and Zucca 1981-85: 303-345](#); [Dyson and Rowland 1991: 145-170](#); [Dyson and Rowland 1992: 290-](#)

[211](#); [Tore and Del Vais 1994: 1055-1065](#). Olbia has gained favor in recent years as emendation for Oelies (e.g., [Bonello and Mastino 1994: 164-165](#); [Sanciu 1998: 790](#)).

8 C. Ampolo, "I rapporti commerciali," [Magna Grecia Convegno](#) 33 (1984), 228-229, suggests that Strabo (5.2.7) has seriously garbled his source and that the terminus post quem non for this activity is at least 238 BC, while C. Bellieni ([La Sardegna e I Sardi nella civiltà del mondo antico](#), vol. 1, Cagliari, 1928, 22), believing that Sardinians were not sailors, said that the pirates were "probably Corsicans of Ligurian stock" with their pirates' nests in Gallura.

9 See further, A. M. Corda, "Note di epigrafia dal territorio di Isili," [Quaderni di epigrafia](#) 2 (1995), 33-36. A. M. Corda, "Considerazioni sulle epigrafi giudaiche latine della Sardegna romana," [SMSR](#) 18 (1995), 283-285, 297-298; [AE](#) 1994, 792. G. Marasco links the Tiberian exile to the approximately contemporaneous shortage of grain in Egypt (Tacitus, [Ann.](#) 2.59.1; Suetonius, [Tib.](#) 52.2) and the revolt of Tacfarinas in N. Africa, which might mean that the farming task was more important than the soldiering (G. Marasco, "Tiberio e l'esilio degli Ebrei in Sardegna nel 19 d. C.," [L'Africa Romana](#) 8 [1991], 649-659 esp. 657-659).

10 Vespasian returned Sardinia to the emperor's portion of the empire: [CIL](#) 10.8023-8024; G. Alföldy, [Studi sull'epigrafia augustea e tiberiana di Roma](#) (Rome, 1992), 131-137. This may have simply been no more than a matter of balancing the number of imperial and senatorial provinces after he had put Greece once again under senatorial administration ([Meloni 1990: 145-146](#)).

11 A recently published tombstone of a certain M. Aur. Val. also came from Bidoni ([AE](#) 1994, 798), and a temple to Jupiter, perhaps located atop the hill which was later to host the Castle of Marmilla-Lasplassas, was dedicated at an uncertain time by the [pagus](#) of the Uniretani (A. Pintori, "Un tempio sotto il castello," [L'Unione Sarda](#) 8 February 2000).

12 [CIL](#) 10.7537, 8321; [Zucca 1984: 237-240](#); [Le Bohec 1992: 255-264](#). The texts of the Theodosian Code which Le Bohec invokes (pp. 256-257) must aim to prevent Sardinia's being a place of refuge for runaway miners and have nothing to do with gold mines in Sardinia.

13 N. Migaledu Mundula, [L'Anglona nelle sue tradizioni storiche e artistiche](#) (Clusone, 1979), 15, 23, 26. La Marmora and Spano in the nineteenth century identified Roman ruins and tombs on the M. Franco ([RRS](#) 61), but their identification as a camp has yet to be demonstrated. Troops in the area might account for the inscription praying for the health, safety, return and victory of the emperor Maximinus found in the region Sa Balza, about 2 km. SW of M. Franco ([Sotgiu 1988: 646, B 161](#)).

14 A milestone from near Fordongianus ([EE](#) 8.742 = [ILS](#) 105) shows that at least part of the road existed in AD 13/14.

15 [RRS](#) 45-46. [Zucca 1987: 368](#) published from the Archivio dello Stato a barely legible site plan. [Le Bohec 1990: 70](#) expresses doubts about the military nature of the site, doubts which are not shared by [Meloni 1990: 306-307, 511](#).

16 [Meloni 1990: 306](#) ("probabilmente sotto Traiano"). In the first edition (1975: 255) he added "meno probabilmente sotto Commodo."

17 [Sotgiu 1961a: 144-145 \(nr. 221\)](#): "l'iscrizione è stata posta o sotto Traiano ... o dopo Commodo. È preferibile, tra i due periodi, il primo per il [ductus](#) dei primi decenni del II sec." In his original publication of the inscription ([Notizie degli scavi](#) 1929, 319-323), Taramelli argued for an early second century date: "A questo tempo ci conduce la grafia dell'iscrizione, che per quanto non presenti caratteri regolarissimi,

pure ha vari elementi caratteristici dell'età di Traiano, meglio ancora che di quella di Adriano. È ben vero che nell'ambiente provinciale dell'isola, come nell'epigrafia Africana ed Iberica le norme della grafia non hanno la rigidità delle epigrafi dell'Urbe; ma nella nostra lapide, consacrata dal maggior magistrato dell'isola con la menzione di tale sua carica, dovette essere rispettata la forma ufficiale quasi di una dedica che aveva senza dubbio una grande significazione politica." [Gasperini 1991: 574-577](#), suggesting that the inscription is dedicated to Diana as well as to Silvanus, observes that "la paleografia del testo, assai curata non offre da parte sua seri indizi utilizzabili per una più precisa definizione della cronologia." [Zucca 1992 919](#) says "forse negli ultimi due decenni del II sec. d. C."

18 [ILS 5526, 5870](#). He is number 326 (pp. 2.842-842) in H.-G. Pflaum's magisterial work, [Les procurateurs équestres sous le Haut-Empire romain](#) (Paris, 1960-1961). Other Ulpii are Ulpianus Victor I (nr. 159, pp. 1.385-386: mid-2d century), Ulpianus Serenianus (nr. 191 bis, pp. 1.520-522: late 2d century), Ulpianus Victor II (nr. 257, pp. 2.691-694: early 3d century), Ulpianus Julianus (nr. 288, pp. 2.750-752: early 3d century), and Ulpianus Gaianus (nr. 346a, pp. 2.899-901: mid-3d century).

19 [Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites 1976: 952-953](#); [Pais 1923: 324-326](#). On the basis of the material reported by [Zucca 1987: 365, n. 58](#), its foundation would appear to be approximately coeval with that of Usellus.

20 An oculist's cachet from Ulassai ([RRS 144](#)) is probably also to be related to the presence of troops.

21 [RRS 106-107](#). Cf. [Amante Simoni 1986: 107, n. 36](#); [Amante Simoni 1990: 239-240](#) (a necropolis dating to the period AD 525-680 containing "necklace-coins" from as early as AD 69).

22 Taramelli, [Monumenti Antichi 1915/16, 388-389, 393](#); G. Lilliu, "Sopravvivenze nuragiche in età romana," [L'Africa Romana 7](#) (1990), 440; P. B. Serra, "Ceramiche d'uso e prodotti dell'industria artistica minore del Sinis," [La ceramica racconta la storia. Atti del 2o convegno di studi. La ceramica nel Sinis dal neolitico ai giorni nostri](#), Oristano-Cabras, 25-26 ottobre 1996 (Cagliari, 1998), 342, with notes 100-109 on pp. 366-367; [Spanu 1998: 181-183](#).

23 [RRS 20](#); [Ortu 1990: 323-324](#). [Le Bohec 1990: 71](#) calls Biora "un très hypothétique centre militaire."

24 The evidence for Castello di Medusa has been collected and analyzed by [Perra: 1990-91: 331-377](#), with excellent photographs on Tavv. I-X. See also [Cavallo 1981: 67-75](#). [Le Bohec 1990: 70](#) dismisses the place as being medieval, which requires him to dismiss also the inscription of M. Iulius Potitus, a soldier in I Cohors Sardorum ([Zucca 1986: 63-67](#)), as being false ([Le Bohec 1990: 111-112, 33-35, 61-62](#)). Zucca connects the inscription with others in the region to suggest a minor line of military settlements on the right bank of the Riu Imbessu-Flumini Mannu-Riu Massari, subsidiary to Forum Traiani in the first century.

25 Cf. A. M. Colavitti, "Per una storia dell'economia della Sardegna romana: grano ed organizzazione del territorio. Spunti per una ricerca," [L'Africa Romana 11](#) (1996), 644-652: "un gruppo itinerante per necessità determinate da conflitti con altre comunità oppure scarsità di colture foraggiere e quindi, indirettamente, poca estensione nei loro territori di terre coltivate."

26 For an uncommonly nuanced view, see J. Day, "Banditisme social et Société pastorale en Sardaigne," [Les Marginaux et les Exclus dans l'Histoire](#) (Paris, 1979), 178-213.

In Search of the Roman Frontier in Sardinia. Robert J. Rowland, Jr. Loyola University New Orleans. 2001  
A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# Francesca Santoro L'hoir, Unfriendly Persuasion: Seduction and Magic in Tacitus' *Annales*

1

Throughout the *Annales*, Tacitus is preoccupied with women's aggressive and inappropriate pursuit of power. To portray this phenomenon he couples the adjective *muliebris* with the noun *impotentia*, which connotes a power that has careened out of control.<sup>n1</sup> The expression links Livia thematically with the younger Agrippina. Moreover, it exemplifies women's transgression of the boundaries of propriety, as Tacitus indicates in a pivotal polemic in book three, modeled on Livy's debate over the repeal of the *Lex Oppia*, a law passed during the Second Punic War, which curbed both female extravagance and mobility.<sup>n</sup> Both Livy and Tacitus raise the horrific vision of women's intrusion into the business of the forum and the army. Livy, through the *persona* of Cato the Elder, cites women's *impotentes naturae* (34.2.13), which will cause them to intrude into the business of the forum. Tacitus, through the character of A. Severus Caecina raises the specter of women's *impotentes iussus*, should they be allowed to accompany their husbands to the provinces (*Ann.* 3.33).<sup>n3</sup> Both Livy and Tacitus insinuate that a woman, who has abandoned the female precincts of the *domus* and has intruded into the male preserves of the forum and army--usurping male authority in the process, will also appropriate the powers of eloquence and persuasion, the traditionally masculine rhetorical arts.<sup>n4</sup>

The historical portrayals of intrusive females imply their ability to manipulate language--a talent that always portends disaster. Dangerous female speech is a *topos* of long standing that is expressed in various genres, including epic and tragedy. Homer, for instance, implies the baneful effects of female speech in his portrayals of the enchantresses, Calypso and Circe, both of whom are attributed with beautiful singing voices as they move to and fro at their looms (5.61-62; 10.254). Their voices--like their golden shuttles--are part of their arsenal of enchantment, and Homer makes it evident that Circe's powers of human speech are especially to be feared (*δεινὴ θεὸς αὐδήεσσα* [136]). A woman's ability to use language effectively--and therefore dangerously--is also fundamental to Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, a drama of *logos*, which explores the "transgressive power" of speech and "manipulative persuasion," with which Clytemnestra brings about Agamemnon's death.<sup>n5</sup>

As Tacitus does in the *Annales*, Aeschylus identifies female eloquence with a transgression of boundaries *πιθανὸς ἄγαν ὁ θῆλυς ὄρος ἐπινέμεται ταχύπορος* (*Ag.* 485). The playwright, moreover, associates Clytemnestra's appropriation of power and public discourse with *κράτος*, a word connoting legitimate male authority,<sup>n6</sup> just as Tacitus links the similar appropriation of his arrogant women with *imperium* and *auctoritas*.<sup>n7</sup> Like the *Oresteia*, Tacitus' *Annales* is a drama of *logos* in which female usurpers--not only Roman but also foreign--manipulate language with various degrees of success.

Before considering the Julio-Claudian women, let us scrutinize Tacitus' portrayal of Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni tribe, who demonstrates all the qualities of [impotentia](#), and serves as a horrible [exemplum](#) of the attribute, even though Tacitus never overtly applies the term to her. By contrast with the idealized Roman virtues of female restraint, one can deduce that the unleashing of female power is a foreign attribute. Boudicca's portrayal therefore serves thematic purposes so that the reader might make the appropriate comparisons with Tacitus' overweening female Julio-Claudians. Boudicca is clearly a woman who has transgressed both the confining boundaries of her [domus](#) and those of female propriety. Moreover, she has overstepped the gender barrier by appropriating the arts of male eloquence, as evocations of Livy's tribunician rhetoric in Tacitus' portrayal demonstrate.

Boudicca's portrayal is grounded both in historiographical as well as forensic tradition, since it draws mimetically not only upon the vocabulary of Livy but also upon the political invective of Cicero. Setting forth familiar themes in her diatribe, Tacitus equates female usurpation of power with loss of liberty. The expressions "[Libertatem amissam...](#)" "[pudicitiam ulcisci](#)," "[virginitatem impollutam](#)" and "[iustae vindictae](#)" are thematically apt, since they pertain to the rhetoric of political rape; they echo Livy 3.45.11, in which the tribune Icilius, avenger of Verginia's violated [pudicitia](#) vows: "[me vindicantem sponsam in libertatem vita citius deseret quam fides](#)."<sup>n8</sup>

The Queen's diatribe, in which she presents herself as the [ultrix](#) of her daughters' violated [pudicitia](#), illustrates her transgression of gender roles. Vengeance on behalf of a female was traditionally a male obligation, as Icilius' words indicate. Furthermore, the tribunician rhetoric of her speech, in which she specifically identifies herself not as a queen but as [una e vulgo](#), citing lost [libertas](#), categorizes her exhortations as utter demagogy.<sup>n9</sup> In Cicero's day, Boudicca's words would be termed [popularis](#), a negatively charged political term, which the orator hurled at unfriendly tribunes in order to link their promises with meretricious deceit.<sup>n10</sup> Tacitus' portrayal of Boudicca presents her transgression of gender roles as a violation of military, forensic, and political boundaries, a theme that Tacitus has already emphasized in his pivotal senatorial debate in book three. Moreover, the tribunician rhetoric in which Boudicca's usurpation of male prerogatives is portrayed indicates that her promises to her tribesmen are as demagogic as they are deceitful.

The British Queen's rhetorical skills, which demonstrate her awareness of the "relationship between language and power," are a weapon, which the Julio-Claudian emperors wield to impose slavery on their subjects.<sup>n11</sup> Her mastery of [sententiae](#) illustrates this proposition. Tacitus, furthermore, emphasizes the enormity of Boudicca's words, by crediting her with an epigrammatic utterance, the chiasmus of which illustrates her transgression of social, moral, and even rhetorical limits. Her exhortation, [id mulieri destinatum: viverent viri et servirent](#), depicts her crossover of the lines of gender, her point being "follow me, a mere woman, or as brave warriors submit to the Roman yoke and live in servitude!"<sup>n12</sup> The reversal of images, in which a woman leads and warriors follow, further reveals Boudicca's promises to be empty demagogy; her tribesmen's true servitude derives from their toleration of a female usurper of male power. Moreover, her sententious pronouncement seems to represent a concrete illustration of Tiberius' words, "[o homines ad servitum paratos!](#)" -- "sententious rhetoric," which allows the emperor to "deprive others of their freedom."<sup>n13</sup> Where the mastery of rhetoric is sinister enough in Tiberius, who, like an oracle, utters [obscura verba](#) (1.11.2),<sup>n14</sup> when it is exhibited in women such as Boudicca or the younger Agrippina, whose words are perfectly clear in connotation, it is deadly.

Tacitus seems to measure the respective failure and success in the aspirations of the two Agrippinas by their ability to manipulate speech. The mother, [semper atrox](#) and [pervicax irae](#), who--Sinclair notes--is incapable of "defending herself with political tact,"<sup>n15</sup> can only utter passionate recriminations.<sup>n16</sup> The daughter, however, who may be [atrox odii](#) (11.22.1), fierce hatred being a characteristic inherited from her

mother,<sup>n17</sup> nevertheless has learned to control her passions, as Tacitus' words, [nihil domi impudicum, nisi dominationem expediret](#) (12.7.3), illustrate.<sup>n18</sup> As long as her self-discipline lasts, she maintains her masculine power, but as soon as that power begins to decline, she shrieks wildly, "like a woman."<sup>n19</sup> Her frenetic outbursts demonstrate her to be her mother's daughter.

The younger Agrippina's apparent mastery of rhetoric is a manifestation of her power. She has perpetuated the "Caesarian" tradition, by penning voluminous commentaries (4.53.2), analyzing both her life and the fortunes of her family. Even when her own fortunes are rapidly waning though, Tacitus depicts her as rising to the occasion with an oration in her own defense, which displays rhetorical flourishes of balance, antithesis and paradox as well as emotional appeal. Agrippina's speech has been faulted for the feminine nature of its subject.<sup>n20</sup> The very female qualities of her discourse, however, render her words so perilous: Agrippina's articulate persuasion turns the tables on Burrus and his henchmen, who have come to arrest her. Tacitus, in fact, remarks that she moved her listeners to such an extent that she not only eluded the trap set for her, but also brought retribution down on the heads of her [delatores](#) (13.21). Even when Agrippina's star is setting, her eloquence--evident in her final tragic utterance when confronted by her murderers<sup>n21</sup>--demonstrates the baneful possibilities of language in the female usurper.

Throughout the [Annales](#), Tacitus concerns himself with female persuasion, which he depicts in terms of baneful seductive magic. Consideration of the connotative range of group of words, employed recurrently, demonstrates the historian's ongoing preoccupation with the theme. Used repeatedly of usurpers, both female and, by way of gender reversal, male, this thematic vocabulary includes the verbs [devincire](#)<sup>n22</sup> and [vincire](#), "to fetter" or "bind"; [pellicere](#), "to seduce" or "entice"; the nouns [doli](#) and [artes](#), "traps" and "contrivances"; and [blandimenta](#) and [blanditiae](#), "blandishments", or "cajoling words".<sup>n23</sup> All are related thematically.

Tacitus' usage can be compared to that of Cicero, who seems to employ many of them analogously. The orator, furthermore, seems to have borrowed the device from the poetics of tragedy.<sup>n24</sup> This combination of words pertains to the vocabulary of binding, or [δήσις](#),<sup>n25</sup> which, in the [Poetics](#), Aristotle associates with tragic complications of plot (18.1). In a tragic frame of reference, "language, when used rightly, can have direct and binding effect."<sup>n26</sup> The proposition is evident in the [Annales](#), the plot of which is built largely on the convoluted and tragic machinations of its principal female characters. Although [devincire](#), [doli](#), and [artes](#) have been recognized to be weapons used by Tacitus' female protagonists to control their men emotionally,<sup>n27</sup> the connotations of the words are far more sinister. A study of this vocabulary, both within the [Annales](#) and within the works of other Roman authors is revealing. It demonstrates that Tacitus has constructed his language to depict the undue influence exerted over the Julio-Claudian emperors by their women,<sup>n28</sup> not only in terms of "feminine wiles,"<sup>n29</sup> but also in words connoting baneful persuasion, seduction, magic and murder. By using the language of magic,<sup>n30</sup> Tacitus portrays an especially insidious form of [dominatio](#), insinuating that within the [domus Caesarum](#), the Julio-Claudian emperors were held fast under a female control that was as unnatural and inevitable as it was inextricable.

The words [vincire](#) and [blandimenta](#) play a central role in Tacitus' narrative. [Vincire](#) ranges in connotation from a literal binding, as in the ligature of an animal, to that of the imposition of emotional bonds.<sup>n31</sup> [Devincire](#) holds similar nuances, plus an aspect of utter subjugation, as will be demonstrated. Ciceronian usage is instructive, for the orator employs [devincire](#) to characterize unequal obligations, whether between patron and client or gods and men.<sup>n32</sup> For instance, in referring to nations not yet bound to Rome by [firma pace](#), Cicero uses the participle [devincta](#) to signify an enforced covenant ([Prov. Cons.](#) 19). Although Ciceronian usage is not gender-specific, it nevertheless illustrates the connotations of enforced servitude in

[devincire](#), which Tacitus employs in his portrayals of female usurpers, whose ability to control the language represents a secret weapon in their appropriation of male power.

In the *Annales*, Tacitus uses [devincire](#) in a manner similar to Cicero. On the surface, the connotations of the word, as Tacitus applies them to Numa's legal arrangements, are ambiguous. Closer inspection, however, demonstrates them to be pejorative. For instance, in a digression on primitive man, untouched by crime or punishment, Tacitus remarks that Numa bound the people with religion and divine law ([dein Numa religionibus et divino iure populum devinxit](#) [3.26.4]).<sup>n33</sup> The juxtaposition of [devinxit](#) with [divino iure](#) and [religionibus](#) suggests a subtle means of control that transcends mere legal constraints. As Tacitus employs it, [devincire](#) implies that Numa's hold over the people is accomplished by extraordinary means, which are not immediately discernible.

Tacitus implies that this initial act of binding did not benefit the Roman people, informing his readers that Numa initiated a process by which Rome became progressively immoral despite its abundance of laws ([et corruptissima re publica plurimae leges](#) [3.27.3]).<sup>n34</sup> Furthermore, the king's original act of binding culminates in Augustus' moral legislation, an act that Tacitus' vocabulary depicts as oppressive in terms of enchainment (3.28.3):<sup>n35</sup> [Acriora ex eo vincla, inditi custodes et lege Papia Poppaea praemiis inducti ut, si a privilegiis parentum cessaretur, velut parens omnium populus vacantia teneret](#). Tacitus' representation of the law in a metaphor of shackles and constraints is said to demonstrate a rhetorical subversion of official Augustan ideology.<sup>n36</sup>

Tacitus' employment of the word [parens](#) in this passage is significant, not merely because it is "cynical" (which it is),<sup>n37</sup> but because an analogy can be drawn between the chains imposed by the parent-state, and the family ties used by Augustus as a means to consolidate his control over the people ([subsidia dominationi](#) [1.3.1]). Just as the relationship between parent and child is founded on invisible emotional bonds, so is that between ruler and ruled. As Tacitus' narrative indicates, Augustus' family ties represent an escalating source of oppression, which eventually destroys both household and State.

Tacitus elaborates on the metaphor of legal shackles, when, granting Tiberius unaccustomed credit, he remarks that the emperor allowed the Senate to loosen its tangle of legal knots (3.28.4):

[Et terror omnibus intentabatur, ni Tiberius statuendo remedio quinque consularium, quinque e praetoribus, totidem e cetero senatu sorte duxisset, apud quos exsoluti plerique legis nexus modicum in praesens levamentum fuere.](#)

And consternation kept increasing for everyone, except that Tiberius, deciding on a solution, selected five ex-consuls, five ex-praetors, and the same numbers from the rest of the Senate by lot, among whom there was immediate mitigation, after many knots of the law had been untied.

The sustained use of vocabulary and imagery of binding and enchainment complements Tacitus' use of [devincire](#) with its nuances of "behind-the-scenes" control.<sup>n38</sup> Cicero implies a similar subtle control, clustering [devincire](#) with [delenire](#), as well as [specie](#), [regnare](#) and [servitium](#) in a vituperative passage which insinuates that Caesar has abused his power by binding the people to him emotionally by means of specious largesse (*Phil.* 2.116):

[multos annos regnare meditatus magno labore, magnis periculis, quod cogitaret, effecerat; muneribus, monimentis, congiariis, epulis, multitudinem imperitam delenierat; suos praemiis, adversarios clementiae specie devinxerat. quid multa? attulerat iam liberae civitati partim metu, partim patientia consuetudinem serviendi.](#)

After Caesar had thought about reigning for many years, with hard work and great dangers, he finally achieved his aims. With gifts, public buildings, handouts and banquets, he had softened up the crowd, which was unused to such things. He had bound his enemies to him with rewards and a show of compassion. What else? He had already brought the propensity for slavery to a free society, partly through fear, and partly through perseverance.

Cicero's account of Caesar's settlement after the Civil Wars is remarkably akin to Tacitus' description of Augustus' arrangement after the Battle of Actium (Ann. 1.2.1-2):

... posito triumviri nomine, consulem se ferens et ad tuendam plebem tribunicio iure contentum, ubi militem donis, populum annona, cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit, insurgere paulatim, munia senatus, magistratum, legum in se trahere, nullo adversante cum ferocissimi per acies aut proscriptione cecidissent, ceteri nobilium, quanto quis servitio promptior, opibus et honoribus extollerentur ac novis rebus aucti, tuta et praesentia quam vetera et periculosa mallent.

When his title of triumvir had been set aside, declaring himself consul, Augustus maintained that he was satisfied with the tribunician power for the purpose of protecting the plebs. At which point, he seduced the army with gifts, the people with cheap grain, and all of them with the enticement of a tranquil existence. Gradually he ascended in power, and drew the obligations of the Senate, of the magistrates, of the laws to himself, with no objection, since the most courageous had been cut down either in battle or in proscription. The rest of the nobiles--how eager each of them was for enslavement--were elevated to wealth and high office, and where they had profited in insurrection, they now preferred immediate security to old risks.

The vocabulary of the two passages may be different--Tacitus, for instance, substitutes pellexit for Cicero's devinxerat--but their conceptual basis is the same. Delenire, devincire and pellicere belong to the same category of words that connote both a subtle and even magical control. In addition, the results of this dominion are the same, as far as the people are concerned: as Caesar's seductive gifts accustom them to slavery, so Augustus' beguiling largess acclimatizes them to a similar servitude. Moreover, Cicero's vocabulary--regnare, delenierat, specie, devinxerat, and serviendi--is also Tacitus' vocabulary, even though the historian employs it in a manner that is anything but Ciceronian. Tacitus, nevertheless, uses each of these words thematically throughout the Annales.<sup>n39</sup> In elucidating Augustus' post-war settlement on Senate and people, Tacitus seems to be emulating Cicero's unflattering portrayal of Caesar's similar arrangements.

In echoing Cicero's words, Tacitus portrays deceitful and artful persuasion, resulting in regnum and servitude, as a Julian family characteristic. Goodyear notes that cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit (1.2.1) connotes "a deceptive and beguiling attraction."<sup>n40</sup> Similarly in se trahere insinuates a paranormal magnetism. Tacitus implies that like a conjurer, Augustus has performed his seductive magic not only on the people but also on the Senate who, in consequence, became especially eager to be bound to him in servitude (servitio promptior [1.2.1]).

This proposition becomes evident by chapter three of book one, in which Augustus, now an old man, has had his seductive weapons of persuasion turned against him by his own wife (senem Augustum devinxerat [1.3.4]). Tacitus employs devinxerat and servitium (the results of implied regnum), as he introduces Livia and the domus Caesarum to his reading public (1.3; 1.4). This entire vocabulary is recurrent in relation to the female members of the imperial family. Once again Tacitus seems to reflect tragic tradition, which portrays language as the salient means of female appropriation of power.<sup>n41</sup>

The passage also reflects the rhetorical tradition of Cicero, who similarly employs [devincire](#) with [dominatio](#), in context with kingly authority ([regum dominatione devinctis](#) [[Brut.](#) 12.45]). Tacitus utilizes virtually the same vocabulary, as he introduces [devincire](#) in connection with the ruling [domus](#) (1.3.3), which he presents as a bastion of [dominatio](#) (1.3.1). The connotations of [devincire](#), furthermore, are especially ominous when Tacitus employs the verb in near combination with [dolus](#) and [artes](#) in relation to Livia, Augustus, and the imperial succession, as it suggests control by beguiling persuasion.

Incantation as a means of binding was a metaphor of Greek tragedy. The Erinyes, it will be recalled, try to bind Orestes with a spell of song and words in Aeschylus' [Eumenides](#) (307-376), and in [Agamemnon](#), the poet expresses Clytemnestra's power to bind her victims not only literally but also figuratively with nets of persuasive words.<sup>n42</sup> Tacitus' introduction of Livia as a murderous schemer and guardian of the [domus](#) seems to be an intentional evocation of the tragedy, [Agamemnon](#). As surely as Clytemnestra bound and incapacitated Agamemnon with literal nets, so Livia figuratively enmeshes Augustus--already incapacitated by old age--with baneful persuasion, just as she has smothered her step-family in invisible webs of intrigue.<sup>n43</sup> By implying that Livia's influence over her sons and husband was paranormal, Tacitus has conducted his readers into the realm of dark magic, a theme that will be replayed throughout the narrative.

Livia's [persona](#) as poisoner of her husband--never stated, but insinuated--is embodied in the term, [noverca](#)--a word connoting poisoning and magic.<sup>n44</sup> The wicked stepmother, who introduces new children into the family to the detriment of the legitimate heirs, was a familiar figure in both Greek and Roman rhetoric and tragedy.<sup>n45</sup> She represents a Senecan fixation in his tragedies, in which [noverca](#) is employed 40 times.<sup>n46</sup> Although Watson maintains that stepmother-poisoners in declamation were not accused of magic,<sup>n47</sup> Roman law indicates that such specific accusations would have been unnecessary. According to Sulla's [Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficiis](#), which was still on the books in Justinian's day, poisoning was linked directly with [susurri](#), or whispered magical spells (Just. [Inst.](#)4.118.5).<sup>n48</sup> [Devincire](#), juxtaposed with [noverca](#), [doli](#), and [artes](#), connotes similar ideas.

Moreover, a first-century passage from the [Minor Declamations](#) attributed to Quintilian sets [devincire](#) into the lexicon of both sorcery and poisoning. It is especially relevant to Tacitus, as it concerns a murderous stepmother, who resorts to enchantment as a preliminary to poisoning. Alluding to the [devincta mens](#) (the beguiled mind) of the victim of a [noverca](#)-witch-poisoner, "[devincta](#)" insinuates that the woman used a binding spell before administering her lethal potion (246.11).<sup>n49</sup> The concepts of poisoning, magic, and evil female persuasion overlap.<sup>n50</sup> Therefore, Tacitus' readers, who were familiar with rhetorical tradition, would have taken his point easily. The baneful power-hungry wife of Rome's legitimate but ineffectual ruler very likely perpetrated his demise (and those of the other male rivals to her son) not only by poisoning him but also by first subverting his will with magic.

Tacitus implies similar evil female persuasion in his portrayal of the younger Agrippina, who seduces Claudius with alluring charms ([pellicit](#) ... [inlecebris](#)) (12.3.1). Like Livia, Agrippina applies [doli](#) before poisoning her uncle-consort, who, like Augustus, is portrayed as being in his dotage (12.66-67). The verb, [pellicere](#), related to [paelex](#) and derived from [perlacio](#), connotes deceptive enticement, cajoling words, seduction, and therefore sexual magic.<sup>n51</sup> Similarly, the noun, [inlecebra](#),<sup>n52</sup> in addition to its meaning of enticement and bait, connotes magic through incantation.<sup>n53</sup> The connective thread between persuasive words, seduction, magic and binding was appreciated fully by Dio Cassius, who portrays Agrippina's seduction as follows (62.11.3):

[ὥσπερ γὰρ οὐχ ἱκανὸν ὄν ἐς μυθολογίαν ὅτι θεῖον τὸν Κλαύδιον ἐς ῥωπα αὐτῆς ταῖς τε γοητείαις ταῖς τε ἀκολασίαις καὶ τῶν βλεμμάτων καὶ τῶν φιλημάτων ὑπηγάγετο, ἐπεχείρησε καὶ τὸν Νέρωνα ὁμοίως καταδουλώσασθαι](#)

As if it were not sufficient as far as her reputation was concerned that she brought her uncle Claudius under her love spell with bewitching glances and titillating nibbles, she even endeavored to enslave the mind of Nero in a similar manner.

Tacitus' words similarly imply that Agrippina has bound her gullible and aged uncle fast under her spell with an insidious persuasion and sexual magic, which seduce him into committing what would normally be unthinkable: an incestuous marriage to his brother's daughter. The implications are even more sinister as applied to Nero, for Agrippina's tactics insinuate an even more abominable incestuous relationship with her son.

Again, Ciceronian examples are instructive. The orator portrays deception with words as a salient quality of [pellucere](#), particularly when the victims of the seduction are perceived to be impressionable, as are young boys and women. For example, Cicero, in a passage that relies on allusions to tragic poetry, employs both [pellexit](#) and [deleniri](#) to portray Sasia's unnatural seduction of her son-in-law, Melinus (who later is murdered) in terms of beguiling words. The orator, furthermore, plants the idea of magical incantations and witchcraft--themes that he subsequently develops for the benefit of his jurors: [Animum adulescentis, nondum consilio ac ratione firmatum, pellexit iis omnibus rebus, quibus illa aetas capi ac deleniri potest](#) (Clu. 13). In *Pro Flacco*, Cicero implies a similar unnatural seduction, using [pellexit](#) in relation to the prosecutor, Decianus, who uses persuasive words to bind the loyalty of his mother-in-law. Since the woman displays little judgment, according to the orator, she will therefore have no will to resist the insidious prosecutor's powers of suggestive persuasion ([Mulierem imbecilli consilii pellexit ad se](#) [Flacc. 30]).<sup>n54</sup> [Pellexit](#) furthermore insinuates that if Decianus has used specious persuasion on his mother-in-law, he will not hesitate to use it on the jury.

In Greek tragedy, a woman's ability to manipulate language is equated with her capacity to transgress the boundaries of accepted female comportment.<sup>n55</sup> In the *Annales* Tacitus implies as much of Livia and Agrippina, whose literal binding of their households ([domum ... saepserat Livia](#) [1.5.4]; [cunctos aditus ... clauserat](#) [Agrippina] [12.68.3]) is mirrored thematically by the figurative binding of their husbands with seductive persuasion ([devinxerat/pellicit](#)), which they employ in their uncompromising bids for power. Moreover, Tacitus' juxtaposition of [doli](#) and [artes](#) is consistent with his portrayal of [duces feminae](#), women whom he has depicted as meddling in military affairs.<sup>n56</sup>

Both [doli](#) and [artes](#) hold military connotations and imply trickery as well as verbal deceit.<sup>n57</sup> In using them Tacitus insinuates that Livia and Agrippina have planned and executed their campaigns to advance their sons in the imperial succession by employing the stratagems of generals. Tacitus substantiates this suggestion in his portrayal of their militaristic enclosure of the household after the murders of their husbands; therefore, their baneful persuasion and seductively binding spells, embodied respectively in [devincire](#) and [pellucere](#), have been applied with the cold premeditation of female generals. Both women, whose portrayals imply a crossing the threshold of the [domus](#)--and the prescribed boundaries of female comportment--deploy deadly magic as their chosen stratagems of [dominatio](#).

[Dominatio](#) is essentially the ultimate form of binding magic. Tacitus uses the word repeatedly to portray the control exercised by the Julio-Claudian emperors or by persons close to them, who aspire to power, such as their women or advisers. For instance, Tacitus employs [dominatio](#), [devincire](#), [pellucere](#), and [vincire](#)--in the context of the [domus Caesarum](#)--to portray Sejanus' hold over Tiberius as an extra-normal phenomenon. In using vocabulary that he has previously employed of Livia, Tacitus is endowing the

interloping minister, who has transgressed the boundary of the [domus](#) in reverse, with the female characteristics that are befitting a denizen of the sinister Julio-Claudian household.

Like Livia, Sejanus is a master of [doli](#) (4.3.1) and [artes](#) (including poisoning) with a goal of [dominatio](#) (4.1.1), and like Livia, he exerts an evil influence over yet another old man. Once again Tacitus juxtaposes: [devincire](#) with [artes](#) at 4.1.2, in an episode in which Sejanus has "bound Tiberius fast" with artful stratagems--[variis artibus devinxit](#).<sup>n58</sup> Unlike Livia, however, Sejanus is eventually caught in his own snares: [isdem artibus victus est](#).<sup>n59</sup>

Tacitus portrays Sejanus' sinister hold over Livilla similarly with innuendo of adultery, poisoning, and their attendant implications of sorcery ([Ann.](#) 4.3.3). For instance, Tacitus suggests a magical transformation of Livilla's appearance, by juxtaposing imagery of seduction ([adulterio pellexit](#)) with vocabulary of change ([convertere](#)) when Sejanus turns to Livilla for help in his murderous scheme. Even though Tacitus uses [convertere](#) intransitively, as in "to enlist the aid of,"<sup>n60</sup> the word nevertheless holds connotations of "turning around" or "reversing the natural direction of something or the inclination of someone."<sup>n61</sup> Tacitus' words might suggest that the evil counselor has bound Livilla to him by means of a mesmeric fascination ([Ann.](#) 4.3.3).

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... [igitur cuncta temptanti promptissimum visum ad uxorem eius Liviam convertere, quae soror Germanici, formae initio aetatis indecorae, mox pulchritudine praecellebat. hanc ut amore incensus adulterio pellexit, et postquam primi flagitii potitus est \(neque femina amissa pudicitia alia abnuerit\), ad coniugii spem, consortium regni et necem mariti impulit.](#)

Therefore, all things considered, it seemed most expedient to turn to Drusus' wife, Livilla, Germanicus' sister, who as a girl had been an ugly duckling, but lately had become a swan. As if he were inflamed with love, he seduced her into adultery. After he had mastered the first iniquity--for a well-born lady, when her purity has been abandoned, will not decline other things--he egged her on with the hope of marriage and a joint venture in monarchy, to the murder of her husband.

[Vincire](#), of which [devincire](#) is a compound, can connote a sexual binding; and Tacitus repeatedly uses it in terms of the usurpation of power. Sejanus thus captivates the eunuch, Lygdus, the sex-slave, whom he has enlisted with Livilla in the plot to poison Drusus: [spadonis animum stupro vinxisse](#) (4.10.2). "[Animum ... vinxisse](#)" implies a binding spell. [Vincire](#) holds similar overtones later, when, in an attempt to secure his own power, the counselor Macro induces his wife to use seduction and deception to bind the young Gaius Caesar to her sexually: [impuleratque ... uxorem suam Enniam imitando amorem juvenem inlicere pactoque matrimonii vincire ... dum dominationis apisceretur](#) (6.45.3). Yet again Tacitus employs [pellicere](#), [inlicere](#) and [vincire](#) with their connotative variations as the magical and seductive weapons of [dominatio](#).

Each emperor is bound fast by a fatal attraction. Claudius, for instance, [uxori devinctum](#),<sup>n63</sup> is held in Messalina's thrall (11.28.2)--so much so that Narcissus worries that the mere sight of her will soften the emperor's heart (11.37.2). Similarly, Agrippina speculates that the entire Praetorian Guard may be still bound to the memory of the late Empress ([devinctos](#) [12.42.1])--an insinuation, perhaps, that their

collective fascination with Messalina, portrayed as a nymphomaniac, may have been on a more than casual level.

Tacitus casts [devincire](#) in a similar light in book 13, in which the word is used twice in a passage that clusters imagery of sexual enchainment and enchantment: Poppaea, the [vinculum](#)--or sexual link--between Nero and Otho, is bound--[devinctam](#)--to Otho, as Nero is bound--[devinctum](#)--to Acte. In the same passage the beautiful Poppaea plies Nero with [blandimenta](#) and [artes](#), here the stratagems of calculated seduction.<sup>n64</sup> Similarly, Agrippina the Younger unleashes [blandimenta](#) and [artes](#) on her son, Nero, as she attempts to seduce him in a frantic attempt to bolster her waning power (13.13.2; 14.2.1).

Like the Greek [Θελκτήρια](#), [blandimenta](#), or persuasive words, insinuate binding by means of sexual magic.<sup>n65</sup> Beguiling words have had a long and undeviating place in epic poetry and tragedy. Calypso, for instance, used them; Circe would have, had she not been thwarted, to seduce and enchant Odysseus,<sup>n66</sup> and in Euripides' [Hippolytus](#), Phaedra uses the [Θελκτήρια](#) of her words and sexuality as a [φάρμακον](#).<sup>n67</sup> As a female characteristic, blandishments represent a particularly insidious form of treachery, and [Θελκτήρια](#) are a dangerous weapon of Aeschylus' Clytemnestra of which Electra and Orestes must beware.<sup>n68</sup>

Similar concepts are evident in Roman thought. For instance, in Roman comedy, [blandimenta](#) represent the honeyed words of the [meretrix](#), used on an impressionable boy (Plaut. [Ba.](#) 50). Intended to entice and entrap, they are likened to [viscus merus](#), a gooey substance used to lure and to ensnare birds. As with the verb, [pellicere](#), [blandimenta](#) seduce individuals or even an entire populace into unacceptable actions that they would normally shun. Such ideas are apparent in oratory, as when the word is featured in Cicero's invective against tribunes of the plebs ([Comm. Pet.](#) 41), who use blandishments to defraud the people with meretricious deceit ([Har. Resp.](#) 42; [Clu.](#) 79).<sup>n69</sup>

Adolescents, like the populace, are especially prone to the primrose promises of [blandimenta](#) or [blanditiae](#) according to Cicero ([Cael.](#) 41; [Clu.](#) 36). In the [Annales](#), Tacitus insinuates similar notions. Again linking [blandimenta](#) with the verb, [devincire](#), he observes that Nero's aunt, Domitia Lepida, whom he portrays as eminently dissolute, habitually bound the prince's adolescent mind with cajoling enticements accompanied by lavish presents: [nam Lepida blandimentis ac largitionibus juvenilem animum devinciebat](#) (12.64.3).<sup>n70</sup>

In Livian historiography, blandishments are portrayed as empty rhetoric, as when the Romans use [blanditiae](#) on the Sabine women to excuse and palliate gang rape, or when the Senate pacifies the plebs with [blandimenta](#) to allay their fears so they will not betray the city to Lars Porsenna (2.9.6). Furthermore, in [Ab Urbe Condita](#), [blandimenta](#) and [blanditiae](#) are both womanish and foreign devices of deception. Livy employs the adjective, [muliebris](#), to modify both nouns (14.4.4; 27.15.11).<sup>n71</sup> The wife of the barbarian king, Nabis, for instance, fleeces the local women of their gold [blandiendo](#) ... [ac minando](#) (32.40.11). Blandishments also signify bad female advice, as when Damarata, the tyrant Hiero's daughter, with interminable [muliebribus blanditiis](#), persuades her nonagenarian, and it is implied, senile husband, Adranadorus, to resist the Romans at all costs (24.4.4).<sup>n72</sup> In a similar manner, Livy credits the Tarantine commander of the guard's betrayal of his city to bad judgment due to the [blanditiis muliebribus](#) of his double-dealing [muliercula](#) (27.15.11).<sup>n73</sup> As far as Livy is concerned, [blanditiae](#) are emblematic of a baneful female persuasion that often signifies betrayal and always betokens disaster.

Tacitean historiography relies on similar notions of betrayal and insidious persuasion. In the [Annales](#), furthermore, such attributes are a prelude to murder. For example, Tacitus combines [blandimenta](#) with imagery of binding, when he depicts Nero as using mellifluous words and kisses to lull his mother into a deceptive sense of security before murdering her (14.4.4):

[Ibi blandimentum sublevavit metum](#): [comiter excepta superque ipsum collocata](#). [Iam pluribus sermonibus, modo familiaritate iuvenili Nero et rursus adductus, quasi seria consociaret, tracto in longum convictu, prosequitur abeuntem, artius oculis et pectori haerens, sive explenda simulatione, seu periturae matris supremus aspectus quamvis ferum animum retinebat.](#)

Then a honeyed word alleviated her fear. She was received affably and placed on the couch above the emperor himself. And Nero dragged the party out for a long time with many conversations--at one moment with youthful intimacy, and at another frowning as if he were communicating something serious. As she was leaving, he followed her, holding her with his eyes and clasping her firmly to his breast, either to put the finishing touches on his hypocrisy--or else the final gaze on his mother, who was going to her death, checked even his cold-blooded heart.

Nero's [sermones](#) assuage his mother's fears. They also play into her feminine [credulitas](#) ([facili feminarum credulitate ad gaudia](#) [14.4.1]),<sup>n74</sup> causing her to believe the best of her perfidious son, even though she knows that he has already booby-trapped her boat. As Betensky notes, Nero has mastered [blandimenta](#), the female techniques of control, employed by his mother.<sup>n75</sup> By insinuating that the emperor has performed seductive magic on Agrippina, Tacitus is portraying him as behaving not only tyrannically, but also in an effeminate, incestuous and therefore un-Roman manner.

Tacitus implies an analogously motivated deceit when, before springing his trap, Nero seduces Seneca into a sense of false confidence with deceptive embraces. In a metaphorical sense, the Emperor's embraces render his specious words into a binding spell (14.56.3): [His adicit complexum et oscula, factus natura et consuetudine exercitus velare odium fallacibus blanditiis.](#)<sup>n76</sup> Nero's false [blanditiae](#) follow a set piece of empty rhetoric in which the Emperor matches eloquence with Seneca (14.53-54). Tacitus therefore implies that Nero has employed the delusive eloquence typified by the rhetorical tribune as well as the illusory promises exemplified by the rhetorical [meretrix](#).

Both episodes, accompanied by embraces and kisses, insinuate seductive magic. Since they are based upon deception, they are, moreover, theatrical, and Tacitus' use of [exercitus](#)--the participle of [exerceo](#)--suggests that Nero's reprehensible feigning has been rigorously rehearsed. Both passages, which illustrate the empty rhetorization that exemplifies the reign of Nero,<sup>n77</sup> represent rhetoric used as baneful persuasion; and since Tacitus uses gender reversal in his portrayal of Nero,<sup>n78</sup> that persuasion may be regarded as essentially female, according to Roman thought.

There are notable semantic parallels in Roman literature. The combination of [blandimenta](#) or [blanditiae](#) with the verb [devincire](#) connotes persuasion through sorcery in such diverse genres as Augustan poetry, forensic oratory, and Roman tragedy. Thus Aeneas, bound by love ([devinctus amore](#) [Verg. [Aen.](#) 8.394]), is transfixed under Dido's spell ([blandis vocibus](#) [1.670]). Seneca's words, [ebrietate devinctus](#)--paralyzed by drunkenness--hold similar connotations ([Ep.](#) 83.16).

Seneca's usage is reflected in forensic oratory: the words, [blandimentis](#) ... [captus](#) and [devinctus](#)--captivated and bewitched by cajolery--are uttered by Apuleius in his own defense when he is on trial for magic ([Apo](#) 98). Apuleius furthermore uses [devincire](#) in context of [veneficium](#)--the preparing of poisons or magical spells. Tacitus furnishes a similar context in his portrayals of Livia and Sejanus.

In Roman tragedy, submission of will is indicated when [devincire](#) signifies the capturing of wild beasts in Seneca's, [Hercules Otaeus](#) (53). Tacitus' Julio-Claudians are similarly captivated. [Devincire](#), furthermore, connotes the suppression of better instincts, as when Seneca's Clytemnestra, who rails about female

treachery, a stepmother's poisons and Medea's passions in her prelude to murder, cries out that her shame ([pudor](#)) has been bound fast ([devinctus](#) [Ag. 137-38]). In Tacitus' portrayal, Livia's sense of moral compunctions seems to have been similarly constrained.

The connection between magical binding, poisonous drugs and baneful persuasion was thoroughly ingrained in the Roman mind, particularly through oratory. Such associations, however, have precedents in Greek rhetoric, as Segal has demonstrated in his study of Gorgias' [Encomium on Helen](#). In this treatise, rhetoric itself is presented as a [φάρμακον](#) (the Greek equivalent of [venenum](#)), a potent drug that persistently relied on the language of magic ([θελκτήρια](#), [γοητεία](#), and [μαγεία](#)) to hold the listener spellbound. Segal, furthermore, demonstrates that magical arts and drugs were forms of baneful persuasion, which could be used for evil ends.<sup>n79</sup>

Evil persuasion and magic pertain similarly to Greek tragedy, in which "honey-sweet speech" is applied with [πείθω](#) in order to bewitch.<sup>n80</sup> Magic, in fact, is regarded as the outcome of persuasion.<sup>n81</sup> Aeschylus, in particular, is absorbed with the magic of language and speech.<sup>n82</sup> His preoccupation is particularly evident in [Agamemnon](#), a drama in which baneful Persuasion is personified as the inexorable offspring of Ruin,<sup>n83</sup> a tragedy whose plot is dependent upon the evil employment of persuasive speech by a woman adept in [δόλοι](#). Verbal magic is equally evident in the [Libation Bearers](#), in which Electra uses the vocabulary of magic to characterize the menacing power of her mother's persuasive words ([θέλγεται](#) [Chc 420]). Tacitus' portrayals of Livia, Sejanus, Agrippina, and Nero, which employ diction related to magic and binding, seem to insinuate similar circumstances: [devincire](#), as Tacitus uses it, is rhetorically analogous to the Greek, [θέλγειν](#), to bind by enchantment; [doli](#), to [δόλοι](#); and [artes](#) to [μηχάναι](#) or [τέχναι](#). Furthermore, as [venena](#) are comparable to [φάρμακα](#), so [blandimenta](#) are rhetorically allied to [θελκτήρια](#), the instruments of baneful persuasion and seduction. In both epic and tragedy, these are depicted as female weapons. In the former, they constitute the sexual magic of enchantresses, who persistently apply their persuasive pharmacopoeia towards the suppression of man's nobler instincts: patriotic and familial duty. In the latter, they are embodied in the malevolent persuasion of women, who cross the boundary of their thresholds, and whose command of speech is equally detrimental to [οἶκος](#) and [πόλις](#). Such ideas are fundamental to the [Annales](#), as Tacitus indicates in the first ten chapters of book one, in which he counterbalances [necessitudo rei publicae](#) and [pietas erga parentem](#) with his vocabulary of [dominatio](#). Central to [dominatio](#) is evil female persuasion and the language of magic--concepts that are repeated throughout his historical narrative.

Magic, seduction, and baneful persuasion, as practiced among the Julio-Claudians, represent a particularly insidious abuse of power, since in most cases the victims are portrayed as aged (e.g., Augustus; Tiberius, Claudius), unsuspecting (Postumus), or caught in a tragic net from which there is no escape (e.g., Germanicus, both Agrippinas; Seneca). Although the nuances of enchantment might be lost on modern readers of the [Annales](#), to Tacitus' lectors, educated in Roman rhetoric and steeped in Greek literary tradition with their concepts of binding magic, they would, very likely, have been self-evident.

Tragic rhetoric personifies persuasion as twins, one good, and the other evil.<sup>n84</sup> The good twin, associated with [nomos](#), has a civilizing effect on the [polis](#), whereas the evil twin, identified with [dolos](#), brings about the State's subversion and ruin through the seductive magic of deceptive words.<sup>n85</sup> As we have seen, Tacitus reflects the latter concept in his representations of the Julio-Claudian men and women as chronic purveyors of persuasive deceit, as well as practitioners of [doli](#) and dispensers of poison. In combining imagery suggestive of poison, magic and baneful persuasion with that of the tragic theatre--itself emblematic of pretense--Tacitus performs his own seductive magic on his readers. Using his subliminal thematic vocabulary, he persuades them of the inherent evil of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, whose downfall he considers tragic, necessary, and inevitable.

1 F.E. Santoro L'hoir, "Tacitus and Women's Usurpation of Power," CW 88 (1994) 5-25. All English renditions of Tacitus are by the author. My thanks to A.J. Woodman for his suggestions. I wish to dedicate this paper to Gene: a scholar, a gentleman, an inspiration! Gratias tibi ago, optime magister.

2 Santoro L'hoir, "Usurpation" (above, [note 1](#)) 12-17. See also, J. Ginsburg, "[In maiores certamina](#): Past and Present in Tacitus' Annales," in T.J. Luce and A.J. Woodman (edd.), Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition (Princeton 1993) 86-103.

3 [Vix foro se et contione abstineant?](#) (Livy, 34.3.7); [pervicacibus magis et impotentibus ... iussis](#) (Ann. 3.33.4).

4 Euripides, for instance, seems to associate Medea's fearsome powers of persuasion with her exit from the house, within which she can only weep and wail in traditional female fashion.

5 S. Goldhill, Reading Greek Tragedy (Cambridge 1986) 4.

6 L. McClure, Spoken Like a Woman: Speech and Gender in Athenian Drama (Princeton 1999) 73-74.

7 Santoro L'hoir. "Usurpation," (above, [note 1](#)) 5-12.

8 Rape for Livy is a violation of civil rights; repetitive clusters of related words depict the act: e.g., Icilius' epithet ([viro acri](#), 3.44.3) as he demands Verginia's freedom ([libertatem ... vindicias](#) [3.44.5]; [vindicias ... libertatem](#) [3.44.12]), echoes Livy's previous portrayal of Brutus as avenger of Lucretia's violation at 2.1.8 [non acrior vindex libertatis fuerat](#), and at 2.4.7: [tam acer ultor violatae pudicitiae](#). In response to Jugurtha's rape of a Roman colony, Sallust's tribune Memmius, also [vir acer](#), employs similar rhetoric, urging the people [ad vindicandum](#) (BJ 27.2). See Santoro L'hoir, "Heroic Epithets and Recurrent Themes in Ab Urbe Condita," TAPA 120 (1990) 221-24.

9 Tacitus' opinions of the [vulgus](#) are invariably negative. In the Annales, the mob, often portrayed as a spectator at theatrical performances, is bloodthirsty and fickle, and can be easily bribed. See E. Keitel, "Foedum Spectaculum and Related Motifs in Tacitus Historiae II-III," RhM 135 (1992) 342-351, on Vitellius and his relations with the mob.

10 On [popularis](#): R. Seager, "Cicero and the Word Popularis," CQ n.s., 22 (1972) 328-38.

11 P. Sinclair, Tacitus the Sententious Historian: a Sociology of Rhetoric in Annales 1-6 (University Park 1995) 147-48.

12 G. Webster, Boudica: The British Revolt against Rome, A.D. 60 (London 1978) 13, considers Tacitus' words so epigrammatic that they are almost untranslatable. F.E. Santoro L'hoir, The Rhetoric of Gender Terms: 'Man', 'Woman', and the Portrayal of Character in Latin Prose (Leiden, 1992) 131-32, cites the unequal status between [mulier](#) and [vir](#) in this passage. J.N. Adams, "Latin Words for 'Woman' and 'Wife'" Glotta 50 (1972) 249, notes the proprietary relationship between a [vir](#) and his [mulier](#) when the words are used colloquially to signify husband and wife. S.G. Daitz, "Tacitus' Technique of Character Portrayal," AJP 81 (1960) 36, observes that Tacitus uses "verbal antithesis to achieve emphasis." McClure (above, [note 6](#)) 75, identifies the "shifting between gendered discourses" as a "type of code-switching" that permit women in tragedy to "gain the upper hand" over men.

13 Sinclair (above, [note 11](#)) 149.

14 Sinclair (above, [note 11](#)) 81-83. On Tiberius' opacity of thought and speech: W.M. Bloomer, Latinity and Literary Society at Rome (Philadelphia 1997) 154-195.

- 15 (4.52.2; 4.53.1) Sinclair (above, [note 11](#)) 64.
- 16 Ann. 4.53-54. On the masculine qualities of [atrox](#) as applied to Agrippina, see M. Kaplan, "Agrippina semper atrox," in Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History, Coll. Latomus 164 (1974) 412.
- 17 R.H. Martin and A.J. Woodman, Tacitus, Annals, Book IV (Cambridge 1989) 216.
- 18 L.W. Rutland, "Women as Makers of Kings in Tacitus' Annals," CW 72 (1978) 23.
- 19 E. Paratore, "La figura di Agrippina minore in Tacito," Maia 5 (1952) 25.
- 20 Paratore (above, [note 19](#)) 72-73.
- 21 Her words, "[Ventrem feri!](#)" recall those of Seneca's Jocasta. J. Hind, "The Death of Agrippina and the Finale of the 'Oedipus' of Seneca", Journal of the Australasian Universities' Modern Language Association No. 8 (1972) 204-11.
- 22 Martin and Woodman (above, [note 17](#)) 82, observe that Tacitus uses [devincire](#) only in the Annales, and always metaphorically.
- 23 P.A. Watson, Ancient Stepmothers, Myth, Misogyny and Reality (Leiden 1995) 180, notes the skillful manipulation of his vocabulary--specifically [dolus novercae](#), [obscurae](#) [...] [artes](#), and [devincio](#) [1.3.3-4]--with which Tacitus evokes the "image of the sinister [noverca venefica](#)."
- 24 Cicero employs allusions to Greek tragedy (Eur. Hipp. 417-18) in his invective against Sassia, the mother of Cluentius (Clu. 15) and Clodia (Cael. 60): F. Santoro L'hoir, "The Adulteress Poisoner in Cicero and Tacitus," in Rome and her Monuments: Essays on the City and Literature of Rome in Honor of Katherine A. Geffcken, ed. S.K. Dickison and J.P. Hallett (Wauconda 2000) 482-484. See R.G. Austin, ed., Cicero Pro M. Caelio Rufo Oratio (Oxford 1933; 3rd ed. 1960; repr. 1990) 121, n. 27.
- 25 H. Furneaux, P. Cornelii Taciti Annalium ab Excessu Divi Augusti Libri: The Annals of Tacitus, (Oxford 1896) v. 1, 66, s.v. Metaphors.
- 26 Goldhill (above, [note 5](#)) 4.
- 27 Rutland (above, [note 18](#)) 17; see Watson (above, [note 23](#)) 180.
- 28 And Sejanus and Nero, by way of role reversal.
- 29 Rutland (above, [note 18](#)) 17.
- 30 Such language is a preoccupation of tragedy. M. Heath, The Poetics of Greek Tragedy (Stanford 1987) 9-10.
- 31 OLD, s.v. [vincio](#).
- 32 For various significations, OLD, s.v. [divincio](#); also A. Forcellini, Lexicon Totius Latinitatis (Patavia 1940) s.v., [devincio](#).
- 33 A.J. Woodman and R.H. Martin, The Annals of Tacitus, Book 3 (Cambridge 1996) 246, remark that [devinxit](#) connects assonantly with [divino iure](#) and etymologically with [religionibus](#).
- 34 Woodman and Martin (above, [note 33](#)) 253, note that the problem was the great number of laws.

35 "From that point the chains were more uncompromising. Guards were posted and seduced by rewards from the Lex Papia Poppaea so that if someone was remiss in the obligations of parenting, the nation, as the parent of all, took up the slack."

36 Woodman and Martin (above, [note 33](#)) 259.

37 Woodman and Martin (above, [note 33](#)) 259.

38 Woodman and Martin (above, [note 33](#)) 246, observe that the combination of [devincire](#) and [religio](#) is strictly Ciceronian.

39 A. Gerber and A. Greef, Lexicon Taciteum (Hildesheim, 1962) s.v., [regnare](#), [delenierat](#), [specie](#), [devinxerat](#), and [serviendi](#).

40 F.R.D. Goodyear, The Annals of Tacitus (Cambridge 1971) 104; see P. Ceaușescu, "L'image d'Auguste chez Tacite," Klio 56 (1974) 191.

41 Goldhill (above, [note 5](#)) 33-56.

42 Goldhill (above, [note 5](#)) 4; 28.

43 Livia nevertheless seems to be silenced effectively after Sallustius Crispus demands that she not reveal the secrets of the [domus](#) (1.6); from then on, her machinations seem to be confined within her household walls, behind the scenes, as it were.

44 Watson (above, [note 23](#)) 177-80. On [noverca](#), see I. Opelt, Die lateinischen Schimpfwörter und verwandten sprachlichen Erscheinungen; eine Typologie (Heidelberg 1965) 201.

45 Watson (above, [note 23](#)) 92-101; 109-13, discusses the [noverca](#) respectively in declamation and tragedy. See L.A. Sussman, The Declamations of Calpurnius Flaccus (Leiden 1994) 207. Opelt (above, [note 44](#)) 201; S.F. Bonner, Roman Declamation in the Late Republic and Early Empire (Liverpool 1949) 35.

46 Lucius Annaeus Seneca Tragoediae Index Verborum: Rélèves Lexicaux et Grammaticaux, J. Denooz, ed. (Hildesheim 1980) s.v. [noverca](#).

47 Watson (above, [note 23](#)) 95.

48 C. Pharr, "The Interdiction of Magic in Roman Law," TAPA 63 (1932) 269-95. On the connection between magic and poisoning, E. Massoneau, La Magie dans l'Antiquité Romaine (Paris 1934) 159-63.

49 Watson (above, [note 23](#)) 95, who cites this [controversia](#) on p. 97, fails to see the implications of magic.

50 Santoro L'hoir, "Poisoner" (above, [note 24](#)) 467-507.

51 OLD, s.v. [pellicere](#), [paelex](#), [perlacio](#).

52 Apuleius uses it in connection with interdictions on magic by the Twelve Tables (Apol. 47): [Magia ista ... iam inde antiquitus duodecem tabulis propter incredundas frugum illecebras](#). Rutland (above, [note 18](#)) 16; 17, numbers [muliebres inlecebrae](#) among female "schemes and traps," along with [blandimenta](#) and [artes](#).

- 53 A. Forcellini, Lexicon Totius Latinitatis (Patavia 1940) s.v. [illecebra](#).
- 54 The word may also hint at an incestuous relationship, as between [noverca](#) and stepson.
- 55 Goldhill (above, [note 5](#)) 128.
- 56 Santoro L'hoir, "Usurpation" (above, [note 1](#)) 5-25.
- 57 E.L. Wheeler, Stratagems and the Vocabulary of Military Trickery (Leiden 1988) 58-59.
- 58 D.C.A. Shotter, ed., Tacitus Annals 4 (Westminster 1989) 45, translates [mos Tiberium variis artibus devinxit](#) as "with a great deal of cunning he insinuated himself into the favor of Tiberius."
- 59 J. Jackson, tr., Tacitus: The Annals IV-XII (Cambridge Mass. 1972) 3, in the LCL, comes closer to the sense of magical binding with his translation: "by his multifarious arts, he bound Tiberius fast."
- 60 Martin and Woodman (above, [note 17](#)) 92.
- 61 OLD, s.v. [converto](#).
- 62 Martin and Woodman (above, [note 17](#)) 92, immune to magic overtones, render [convertere](#) a very prosaic: "to resort to a specified source of help."
- 63 Rutland (above, [note 18](#)) 17, notes that Tacitus uses [devincire](#) in relation to Claudius, and Nero, who is bound by Acte, and his aunt, Lepida.
- 64 F.I. Zeitlin, "Playing the Other: Theater, Theatricality, and the Feminine in Greek Drama" Representations 11 (1985) 76, notes that in tragedy, [δόλοι](#) and [μηχάναι](#) (the equivalent of [doli](#) and [artes](#)) are traditional women's weapons.
- 65 B. Goff, The Noose of Words (Cambridge 1990) 50, equates [λόγοι θελκτήριαε](#) with "love-magic." See R.G.A. Buxton, Persuasion in Greek Tragedy: a Study in Peitho (Cambridge 1982) 51.
- 66 [αἰεὶ δὲ μαλακοῖσι καὶ αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισι θέλγει, ὅπως Ἰθάκης ἐπιλήσεται](#) ... (Hom. Od. 1.56-57). [ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὡς θέλξαι σε δυνήσεται](#) (Od. 10.291).
- 67 Goff (above, [note 65](#)) 49.
- 68 Electra is aware of Clytemnestra's powers of persuasion: [πάρεστι σαίνειν, τὰ δ' οὔτι θέλγεται](#) (Cho. 420); and Clytemnestra invites the strangers into her [δόμος](#) to partake of warm baths and beds, the [πόνων θελκτήρια](#) (Cho. 670). These are the enticements of the house.
- 69 On blandishments as an attribute of populares tribunes, see Seager (above, [note 10](#)) 335-36. See also Santoro L'hoir, "Rhetoric" (above, [note 12](#)) 21.
- 70 Rutland (above, [note 18](#)) 17.
- 71 Santoro L'hoir, "Rhetoric" (above, [note 12](#)) 83.
- 72 Santoro L'hoir, "Rhetoric" (above, [note 12](#)) 89.
- 73 Santoro L'hoir, "Rhetoric" (above, [note 12](#)) 88.

74 This seems to be another allusion to Aeschylus (Ag. 485-86): πιθανὸς ὁ θῆλυς ὄρος ἐπινέμεται ταχύπορος (Too easily persuaded, a woman's mind is a boundary that is quickly and easily encroached.).

75 A. Betensky, "Neronian style, Tacitean Content: the Use of Ambiguous Confrontations in the Annals," Latomus 37 (1978) 428, n. 17.

76 "To these words, he added an embrace and kisses, for Nero was designed by nature and trained by habit to mask his hatred with deceptive charms." Betensky (above, [note 75](#)) 425, notes the ambiguity of the kiss

77 V. Rudich, Dissidence and Literature under Nero: the Price of Rhetorization (London 1997) 4-7.

78 As Tacitus masculinizes his mother in her general's (12.56.3), so he effeminizes her son in his actor's garb in a spectacle that Tacitus characterizes as haud virilis (15.1.1).

79 C.P. Segal, "Gorgias and the Psychology of the Logos," HSCP 66 (1966) 115-116; 125.

80 Segal (above, [note 79](#)) 115-116; 125.

81 Buxton (above, [note 65](#)) 108, cites as "the effect produced by ."

82 Buxton (above, [note 65](#)) 64; 74, cites the Suppliants, 448 ( γένοιτο μύθου μύθος ἄν θελκτήριος, and notes δόλοι to be especially a woman's weapon in tragedy.

83 Goldhill (above, [note 5](#)) 16; Buxton (above, [note 65](#)) 105-6.

84 Buxton (above, [note 65](#)) 67-114.

85 Buxton (above, [note 65](#)) 65. See Segal (above, [note 79](#)) 115-16.

Unfriendly Persuasion: Seduction and Magic in Tacitus' Annales. Francesca Santoro L'hoir. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# Charles Saylor, Turning Again in Tibullus 1.5

1

*Tibullus 1.5* has been much studied to date. Perhaps one of the best known studies treats the elegy as an example of [Tibullus'](#) style, a smooth surface with an underlying texture of cross referencing and emotional stresses. <sup>n1</sup> Scholars have seen in the elegy, or based interpretation of it upon: 1) the [παρακλαυσίθυρον](#) in general, or 2) a specially developed form of the [κῶμος](#), or 3) a statement of pessimism vs. guarded optimism with a remarkable, "oracular" close, or 4) a skillfully developed interplay of the idea of capture and slavery. <sup>n2</sup> Magic has been seen as a key component of the poem. <sup>n3</sup> It has been proposed that the top of 3-4 is the main figure that governs the changing array of scenes from beginning to end because the top with its turning is emblematic of change. <sup>n4</sup> Whatever has been seen as the main idea or image of the elegy scholars have also given considerable attention to the structure, and identified, although with various refinements, a set of approximately seven units of thought, or scenes, in the composition of the elegy. <sup>n5</sup>

The aim of this essay is to look again at the next to last of these topics, the elegy's expression of turning motion descriptive of change, in particular the change or vicissitude of love as a focus for [Tibullus](#). For many commentators have observed that there is much change or turning around of things for the lover, and that this change pervades the poem. One noted that the poem has to do with the extension of the general rule of change in life to love in particular, another remarked on the turning around of many words and situations through the elegy, another pointed out the change of the role of slave between [Delia](#) and [Tibullus](#), another the multiple transformation of [Tibullus'](#) self-image, and yet another saw change as the whirl in which [Tibullus](#) is caught up because he is under [Delia's](#) spell and unable to control his destiny. <sup>n6</sup>

Given so much change, it might be expected that the poem would have images or expressions of turning, change, or transformation running through the whole of it. Hornsby remarked that the image of the top in 3-4 became emblematic of other matters and thus moved throughout the poem without additional images. <sup>n7</sup> Yet it has not been pointed out how this might be so with images. Study of the elegy in this regard is at the point where, while images of the kind have been noted here and there, there is no complete account of images of turning in the elegy.

Thus my first intention in this essay is to bring together the independent notices. When these are brought together, I think it will be clear that the elegy has an expression of turning in five of its commonly accepted seven units. In addition to this, however, I think that there are expressions of turning that have not yet been noted in the remaining two units of the elegy. When these are taken into account, all seven units show conspicuous expressions of the kind described. Furthermore, I think it can be observed that all the expressions not only repeat and carry forward the elegy's main idea of turning in a general impressionistic way, but do so by expressing the particular turning or change or transformation of the unit

in which they stand. Finally, it is to be noted that the last image provides a fitting conclusion to the rest because of its particular character in its unit.

To consider first the images that have been observed, the most commonly noted of these are the images that open and close the elegy, the top at the beginning (3-4) and the wheel at the end (70). Ball in his summary of scholarship on the poem listed a number of scholars who had noted that these two images were parallel in that they contain turning.<sup>n8</sup> On one level of meaning the top introduces the turning motion of fortune in love in general, its vicissitude, that will be illustrated in many changes throughout the elegy. At the same time, the particular turn of the top for [Tibullus](#) in 1-8 (the first of the commonly marked units is negative, his immediate bad fortune, the pain of unrequited love, that is the subject of the unit. The wheel at the end of the poem answers with its motion the turning of the top at the beginning as a final expression of love's vicissitude in general for the whole elegy, but the wheel also conveys the particular turn of fortune for the last unit of the poem, 67-76. For Putnam observed about 73-75 that the restless motion of the lover who passes and repasses [Delia](#)'s door might be intended as a repetition of the motion of love's wheel, but with a particular significance: the passing and returning imply love's fickleness as well as fortune's changeability,<sup>n9</sup> and this is the particular kind of fortune's motion that is important in the unit. Or, the motion of the lover particularizes for the unit the motion of the wheel. Now this turn of love's fortune is even for [Tibullus](#) in the sense that the wheel seen through the passing and repassing of the rival expresses the bad turn of fortune for the rival who possesses [Delia](#) now but who will be displaced with the next change of fortune certain to occur.<sup>n10</sup>

Commentators have not pointed out the significance of this evenness of fortune's turn. For the evenness is something that does not appear in the elegy until this point, and it provides the concluding perspective of change in the poem. The particular motion of the top at the beginning was negative for [Tibullus](#), while (as will be pointed out) the particular turns of fortune through the elegy are varied, both good and bad. The even turn of fortune at the end is a view of fortune taken by an educated or experienced [Tibullus](#), experienced by means of the various turns in particular units throughout the elegy. Or, all the turns between the top and the wheel represent an abbreviated life of varied fortune for [Tibullus](#), the experience of many turns. At the end, the accumulated experience of turns enables [Tibullus](#) to look at the motion of fortune as even, indiscriminate: his rivals are winners and losers no less than himself. The elegy culminates in this perspective which is philosophical, not happy but wider and wiser than at the beginning.<sup>n11</sup> Hence the importance of the particular turn of fortune in the last unit.

Thus there are two expressions of turning in two units, beginning and ending, with a refinement or particularization for the second of these in the movement of the passing and returning lover. There are two more commonly marked units in 1.5 which have been observed independently to contain images of turning, and the images function like those noted above. The units, 9-18 and 47-58, are alike in having to do with magic. The first describes the purification which [Tibullus](#) performed in order to cure [Delia](#) when she was ill (the cure which resulted for him in some rival's winning of a recovered [Delia](#)), [ipseque te circum lustravi sulphure puro](#) (11). The second describes the ghosts that fly around the haunted [lena](#), [hanc volitent animae circum sua fata querentes / semper](#) (51-52). Wimmel pointed out that these descriptions contained two circular movements, or two magic circles, one to cure [Delia](#), the other to curse her [lena](#), and their interrelationship as such provided a main correspondence in the elegy. Wimmel noted that there was also an interrelationship between the two magic circles and the circle made by the top of 3-4, for as the top was an image of changing fortune for the lover, that fortune was expressed by the two circles of the magic episodes.<sup>n12</sup>

Or, the two circular movements extend the movement of the top by expressing the particular fortune of [Tibullus](#) in the particular units where the images occur. The first turn, in the lustration, conveys a bad turn of fortune for [Tibullus](#) because, while the turn brings about [Delia](#)'s cure, it leads to another lover's winning

of the affection of the recovered [Delia](#). The second turn, in the movement of ghosts around the [lena](#), expresses a good turn of fortune for [Tibullus](#) whose curse on the [lena](#) is carried out by the ghosts. These two expressions of turning bring the total to four.

A fifth expression of turning occurs in a fifth commonly marked unit of the poem, 37-46, which has a central position in the elegy and dwells on [Tibullus](#)' suffering without [Delia](#). The suffering is described in terms of [Delia](#)'s power to bewitch [Tibullus](#) so that he cannot console himself with wine or another lover. The way [Tibullus](#) describes this is to say that his grief turned all his wine to tears, using [verterat](#) (38) for "turned." Putnam remarked on [verterat](#) that turning is a frequent motif in the poem beginning with the turning top of 3-4.<sup>n13</sup> Yet certainly [verterat](#) may be taken to express in an allusive way the particular turn in [Tibullus](#)' fortune, a bad turn marked by frustration in both drink and love, in this particular unit. In this way, [verterat](#) extends with a particular turn the revolving of fortune expressed by the top at the beginning of the elegy.

The two remaining units are those for which no image or expression of turning has been noted. The first of these, 19-36, is [Tibullus](#)' happy vision of himself with [Delia](#) on the land. The second, 59-66, is his description of the benefits [Delia](#) can expect from a faithful lover. In both cases there is no image like a wheel, but in both there is a dramatic change of fortune which matches the motion of change expressed by the turning of the top in 3-4. First, in 19-26 there is a conspicuous turn in [Tibullus](#)' fortune as a lover, and it comes about with elevation of [Delia](#) to ruler of the house while [Tibullus](#) is made nothing, [nihil](#), in 29-30. The turn is dramatic and paradoxical because it elevates [Tibullus](#) to happiness as lover even as it reduces him to a nobody as a member of the farm. Then in 59-66 [Tibullus](#) argues the value of the man with modes means but constant love for a mistress. Thus the catalogue of benefits in 61-66. But in spite of this, and in spite of the curses on the [lena](#) who helps the rich lover, the rich lover prevails, and this is the general rule of love's vicissitude stated in 60, [donis vincitur omnis amor](#). There are winners and losers, a full turn of fortune in love, because of gifts. It is not merely a general rule of love's vicissitude, it is also the description of the turn of love's fortune in which [Tibullus](#) finds himself now: [donis vincitur omnis amor](#) expresses the particular turn of its unit, 59-66. The changes of 30 and 60, that is, are like the expressions of fortune's turn in the other instances. Thus, all seven units of the elegy are marked by images or expression which extend the movement of the top by describing the particular turn in each respective unit.

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1 J. P. Elder, "Tibullus: Tersus atque Elegans," in *Critical Essays in Roman Literature: Elegy and Lyric*, ed. by J. P. Sullivan (Cambridge 1962) 95-103. The text used is F. W. Lenz, *Albii Tibulli Aliorumque Carminum Libri Tres*, 2nd ed. (Leiden 1964).

2 [παρακλαυσίθυρον](#), F. O. Copley, *Exclusus Amator. A Study in Latin Love Poetry* (Madison 1956) 107-108. See also R. J. Ball, *Tibullus the Elegist: A Critical Survey* (Gottingen 1983) 89. [κῶμος](#), F. Cairns *Tibullus: A Hellenistic Poet at Rome* (Cambridge 1979) 168-171. Pessimism vs. optimism, H. Musarillo, S.J., "Furtivus Amor: The Structure of Tibullus 1.5." *TAPA* 101 (1970) 395, 398. Capture and slavery, D. F. Bright, *Haec Mihi Fingebam: Tibullus in his World* (Leiden 1978) 153-166.

3 Magic, W. Wimmel, "Zur Rolle magischer Themen in Tibulls *Elegia* 1,5," *WJA* 13 (1987) 231-248; A. Stramaglia, "Mezzane, maghe e divinita in Tibullo 1,5,49-56," *AFLB* 30 (1987) 155-175.

4 Top as the main figure, R. Hornsby, *Reading Latin Poetry* (Norman 1967) 96. Cf. Musarillo, (above, [note 2](#)) 388 note 2.

5 The generally accepted units are 1-8, 9-18, 19-36, 37-46, 47-58, 59-68, 69-76. For the units, see Ball 1983 (above, [note 2](#)) 81; 87-88, after D. M. Kriel, "Structural Parallels in Tibullus 1.5," *Akroterion* 22 (1977) 1-9, who points out the ring composition of the units; C. C. Rohrer, "Tibullus: A Structural Analysis of the Elegies of the First Book," diss. Yale, 1974, 159-164; Cairns (above, [note 2](#)) 213 (cf. R. J. Ball, "Recent Structural Studies in Tibullus," *The Augustan Age* 9 (1989) 4-5); Musarillo (above, [note 2](#)) 397. I use throughout my essay these units and the main ideas that have been identified in each.

6 Rule of change, M. C. J. Putnam *Tibullus: A Commentary* (Norman 1973) 99; words and situations, Elder (above, [note 1](#)) 101; role of slave, Bright (above, [note 2](#)) 156-166; self-image, Musarillo (above, [note 2](#)) 388, 398; in a whirl under [Delia](#)'s spell, Kriel (above, [note 5](#)) 5.

7 Hornsby (above, [note 4](#)) 96.

8 Ball 1983 (above, [note 2](#)) 89 and n.23.

9 Putnam (above, [note 6](#)) 107.

10 For this understanding of the situation with rival lovers at the end, see Ball 1983 (above, [note 2](#)) 88 and the commentators cited in n.21. For another view, Musarillo (above, [note 2](#)) 396-397.

11 I think that Musarillo (above, [note 2](#)) 398 comes closest to describing rightly the final perspective, although he does not treat the perspective as a culmination with respect to the preceding turns in the elegy as explained here.

12 Wimmel (above, [note 3](#)) 237, 244.

13 Putnam (above, [note 6](#)) 99-100, 104, 107.

Turning Again in Tibullus 1.5. Charles Saylor. University of Missouri-Columbia. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# Philip A. Stadter, *Paidagogia pros to theion: Plutarch's Numa*

1

Although an important source for early Roman religion, Plutarch's Life of Numa is difficult to understand as a biography. Numa reigned for 43 years, but Plutarch does not tie the religious and social legislation with which the king is credited to specific events, presenting it rather as an undifferentiated list of enactments. Numa's life before he took the throne is summarized in a paragraph, and we learn only briefly of his family before reading of his death (3.6-4.2, 21). Plutarch states early on that Numa cannot have been a student of Pythagoras, but then notes so many similarities to Pythagorean teaching throughout the Life that Flacelière identified this as a Leitmotiv.<sup>n1</sup>

It is even less clear what a contemporary audience might have expected to learn from Numa. The picture of Roman religion is highly selective, the etymologies willful and often contrary to mainstream Roman thinking. The Life celebrates peace and tranquillity at a time when the emperor, Trajan, was the most active Roman military commander since Julius Caesar. Was this a special time to give attention to the pontifices, the Vestals, the Salii, the Fetiales? These incongruities encourage a new look at the text. Examination of the questions of chronology, etymology, religion, and Numa's role as priest-king will lead to a clearer understanding of Plutarch's purpose.

Plutarch sets Numa's life, as he does that of Lycurgus, the legislator-king of Sparta with whom he is paired, in the semi-legendary past. Both Lives begin with chronological uncertainty. Plutarch's dates for the Spartan legislator vary between ca. 925-900 and ca. 776, the time of the founding of the Olympic games (cf. Lyc. 1, 23, 29). He notes a similar discrepancy with regard to Numa, since some authors dated him to the time of Pythagoras (not specified by Plutarch, but he was active ca. 530-510), others some five generations earlier, that is, to his standard position in the Roman king list, ca. 715-673 B.C. (Num. 1). In Lycurgus' case, the uncertainty allowed the biographer to connect the Spartan king with the establishment of the Olympic games and the Olympic peace (Lyc. 1); in Numa's case the Roman is coupled with Pythagoras against all chronological probability. The variants warn the reader not to expect a purely historical account. The double notice, that Clodius in his book on chronology argued that the records of Rome before the Gallic sack were invented and that Hippias composed his list of Olympic victors much later than the reign of Numa, places the account of Numa's life and legislation in a historical no-man's land, beyond the reach of verifiable history.<sup>n2</sup> Numa, like Lycurgus, will be the subject of an idealized, abstract account, focusing on his legislation: "what we have received which is worthy of note" (Num. 1.7).<sup>n3</sup>

In both cases, the chronological problem also permits Plutarch to introduce a major theme: the issue of peace in Lycurgus, the teaching of Pythagoras in Numa. The treatment in Numa also suggests two possibl

ties between the legislation of Lycurgus and Numa. The Roman may have met the Olympic victor Pythagoras of Sparta, and learned from him, on a possible visit to Italy, the customs of the Spartans.<sup>n4</sup> Moreover, Numa was a Sabine, and the Sabines claimed to be colonists of the Spartans.<sup>n5</sup> Although many writers denied any influence of Greek education ([Ελληνική παιδείσις](#)) on Numa and asserted his independence in acquiring virtue (1.3), Plutarch seems determined to find it--but at this point leaves indeterminate what that influence is.

Who then is this legendary figure, Numa? After a brief notice of his father and family--remarking the divine coincidence that he was born on the very day Rome was founded<sup>n6</sup>--Plutarch describes the future king (3.6-4.2). His character was by nature disposed toward every sort of virtue, and he further tamed it ([ἐξημέρωσε](#)) by training, hardships, and philosophy. Plutarch imagines a sort of self-discipline which removed not only commonly recognized faults ([πάθη τῆς ψυχῆς](#)), but even those which are praised among the barbarians, such as force and acquisitiveness, since he considered "true courage to be the containment of desires within himself by reason" (3.7).<sup>n7</sup> He renounced luxury and extravagance and acted as an honest judge and adviser. His free time was devoted neither to pleasure nor business, but to the service ([θεραπεία](#)) of the gods and contemplation ([θεωρία](#)) of their nature and power. After his wife's death, he left the city to live in the country and wander by himself, spending his time in the groves of the gods, in sacred meadows, and in desert places (4.1).<sup>n8</sup> These bucolic intervals, Plutarch deduces, gave rise to the popular belief that he had a special relation with the nymph Egeria.

Rationalizing this story, Plutarch imagines an extraordinary vision of Numa as a contemplative, distant from human companionship, communing with the gods in solitude. The picture recalls Euripides' Hippolytus, who hunted in the woods and fields with Artemis and manifested the same distance from normal human affairs. However, Plutarch's Numa shows a more abstract bent, with his focus on [θεραπεία](#) and [θεωρία](#). This conception of Numa does not derive from Dionysius of Halicarnassus, whom Plutarch used often in this life,<sup>n9</sup> and is not found in Livy or Cicero, our other major sources for Numa: Plutarch seems to construct this picture on his own.<sup>n10</sup> He imagines a kind of hermit--ascetic, self-disciplined, and constantly considering the gods. His conversations with the Muses (not only Egeria) suggest a knowledge of Greek culture.<sup>n11</sup> The portrait contrasts sharply with that of Lycurgus, a man enmeshed in politics and canny in dealing with the difficult situation after the birth of the young heir to the throne ([Lyc.](#) 3). Rather than contemplating the divine, Lycurgus in his travels to Crete, Asia Minor, and Egypt looks for means to handle the political situation in Sparta. On his return, he is ready to attempt a political coup. The god at Delphi supports him for his justice, not his practice of piety ([Lyc.](#) 4-5).

Far from down-playing the supposed relation with Egeria, Plutarch makes it the springboard of a digression on stories of divine love affairs for humans, such as those of Atthis, Rodoites, and Endymion.<sup>n12</sup> The basis for such stories is the fact that the gods are loving of humans ([φιλόανθρωπος](#)) and delights in the company of men who are pious and moderate (4.4); it is reasonable for the gods to feel toward a man affection ([φιλία](#)) and a love ([ἔρως](#)) which cares for character and virtue ([ἦθος καὶ ἀρετή](#), 4.7). The fabulous stories point to an underlying truth, and Plutarch finds it credible that the gods also have contact ([ὁμιλία](#)) with men engaged in ruling kingdoms or ordering cities, to give them instruction and advice (4.11). The motif of divine care reappears at other points in the life: the [ancile](#) fallen from heaven comes "for the safety of the city," 13.3;<sup>n13</sup> Egeria provides an abundance for Numa's table, 15.2-3;<sup>n14</sup> Jupiter is favorable, 15.10.

Numa is a "holy man," one who had a private relation with the gods which gave him a special wisdom. Like other such men, he is in some ways an outsider. First, the tradition made him a resident of Cures, and not a citizen of Rome. Second, Plutarch makes him a kind of hermit. Unlike the holy men of Plutarch's day and later, such as Apollonius of Tyana, he was not especially a wonder-worker or magician: the tales of

Egeria's banquet, the trapping of Faunus and Picus, and the dialogue with Jupiter (13, 15) although traditional do not fit Plutarch's characterization. But like those men, he used his fabled contact with the divine to awe and sway the people. Numa, as an outsider to the community gifted with special authority, was able to act as mediator to the social and political problems which erupted after the disappearance--perhaps by assassination--of Romulus.<sup>n15</sup> The fathers attempted to calm the Romans with religious awe by decreeing that Romulus was a god. But the city needed more, and this led them to appeal to Numa, someone outside the normal structure of the city and noted for his virtue (ἀρετή, 3.5). His fame derived from his disciplined regime and reputation for close contact with the divine, in the person of Egeria. The delegation of Romans to Numa resembles other occasions in classical tradition when the outstanding justice of an individual led people to look to him for arbitration and judgment.<sup>n16</sup> The divine aspect of Numa's authority, on the other hand, points forward to cases such as the Syrian holy men described by Brown, who were frequently invited to resolve disputes. Like these men, it was important for Numa to continue to maintain his external authority, founded on his special relation to the divine, even while ruling in the city for forty-three years.<sup>n17</sup>

On becoming king, Numa at once initiated a comprehensive religious reform to quiet the city's incipient strife and its compulsively aggressive relations with its neighbors. These reforms--here Plutarch accepts Roman tradition--unified citizens of diverse origins and classes and gave them a common focus and, in the rituals, opportunities for common action. As Plutarch explains in c. 8, Numa employs religious ritual to lead this "feverish" city away from war and dispose it toward peace, but through means appealing especially to the senses.<sup>n18</sup> He made use of the gods' help: through frequent sacrifices and processions and dances which he himself led and established, rituals possessing a delightful attraction in their solemnity and a humane pleasure, he swayed the people and softened their spirited and war-loving nature (8.3). On occasion he also used other methods, appealing more to superstition than to reason: Sometimes he enslaved their minds and made them docile through superstition, reporting from god some frightening thing--strange visions of spirits and angry voices (8.4). This flamboyant appeal to the drama--one might even say charlatantry--of religion is at the heart of the parallel between Numa and Pythagoras.

Pythagoras, the prototypical sage and "holy man" of ancient Greece, according to tradition had established himself at Croton in southern Italy, introduced radical legislation, then governed the city with his followers.<sup>n19</sup> Pythagoras' philosophy gave a leading role to divinity, according to Plutarch, but also used impressive external signs, such as his tame eagle, and his golden thigh, and other "marvelous devices and actions". The impression could be summed up in the verses of Timon of Phlius, quoted by Plutarch: “

Pythagoras, who inclines to the fame of a wizard,  
Hunting after men, expert in high-sounding discourse. (8.9)

” Numa's "drama," Plutarch explains, was his supposed love of and intercourse with the nymph Egeria and his meetings with the Muses. The most important parallel brought out by Plutarch in chapter 8, devoted to the similarities of Numa and Pythagoras, is their blending of religion and politics in government and legislation. In both cases the ruler-sage employed deception to awe the people and make them docile.<sup>n20</sup>

Plutarch remarks in The E at Delphi that in his early years he was much taken with Pythagorean number lore and his teacher Ammonius considered number "not the least part of philosophy" (387F). Neo-Pythagoreanism flourished in his lifetime, and seems to have been a significant trend in contemporary Platonism. Several Pythagorean acquaintances appear in his works.<sup>n21</sup> In Plutarch's works it seems to show itself as a special fascination with music and numerology.<sup>n22</sup> His fascination with the importance of harmony in the universe, in the city, and in the individual human soul, surely is related to these early Pythagorean interests. In Numa, as in Lycurgus, this concern is directed toward how the legislators introduce concord into their states.

Despite the emphasis on Pythagoras in this life, the fundamental approach is still Platonic.<sup>n23</sup> The debate on the occasion of Numa's acceptance of the kingship reveals this clearly.

In Dionysius of Halicarnassus, when the Roman ambassadors come to Cures to invite Numa to become king, he deliberates a while, then accepts (Ant. Rom. 2.60,1). Plutarch enlarges this notice with two speeches in direct discourse, in which Numa first gives reasons for rejecting the nomination, and then his father and Marcius give reasons for accepting (5-6). This mini-debate on the role of the philosopher in politics echoes some of the arguments found in Dionysius, but focuses on the contrast of the contemplative and active life. Why, Numa argues, should he exchange the quiet life of leisurely discussion he leads for the trouble of governing an unruly state, or his love of peace and his conversation with pious and friendly country folk for the Roman habit of war? If he were king, he would be ridiculous, honoring the gods and justice and trying to teach the Romans to hate violence and war (5.4-8). Although Numa's situation appears quite un-Socratic, his words recall the famous description of the sage's confusion in the political arena (cf. Rep. 7, 516C-517E, Gorg. 486A-C, 522B). His father's reply to these objections is the same as that of Socrates, the Platonic call for the philosopher to return into the cave. For a man like Numa, ruling is a service to the god, because it actively employs his unusual justice and gives him an opportunity for great and noble deeds. "The god does not permit your justice to lie useless," the father argues. The philosopher must act in the world, which is his proper arena of expression. Among the deeds which he can accomplish are divine cults (θεραπεία θεῶν) and taming men to be pious (πρὸς εὐσέβειαν ἀνθρώπων ἡμερώσεις, 6.2).<sup>n24</sup>

This argument is very close to Plutarch's own interests as philosopher and teacher. The aim behind the Parallel Lives is the philosopher's goal of leading men to better their lives. They address the role of the statesman and frequently consider the position of philosophers and advisers in politics. In two lives he considers more particularly the philosopher as statesman: Solon and Numa.<sup>n25</sup> But Solon is an adviser, one who is willing to draft a law code, but refuses to take the tyrannical power offered him (Sol. 14), whereas Numa accepts the kingship and shapes the state to his ways. The great accomplishment of Numa is peace and a right relationship for Rome with the gods. Numa for Plutarch represents the philosopher become king envisioned by Plato, but one made in a special mold, quite different from Lycurgus or other exemplary leaders.

Almost the whole of Numa's program of legislation concerns the worship of the gods and management of ritual. Although Numa's justice is often mentioned,<sup>n26</sup> it is his reverence for the gods which lies at the center of his personality. Unique among our sources, Plutarch records that Numa was pontifex maximus (9.1), responsible for the proper conduct of every aspect of Roman public and private religion. For Plutarch, Numa is both king and chief priest, that is, interpreter, spokesman, and hierophant (ἐξηγητοῦ καὶ προφήτου, μᾶλλον δ' ἱεροφάντου τάξιν, 9.8). Since our other sources say that Numa appointed one of the patres, Numa Marcius, son of Marcius, as pontifex,<sup>n27</sup> this variant apparently represents a conscious decision on Plutarch's part.<sup>n28</sup> No other king is recorded as being pontifex maximus. Numa thus represents an ancient exemplar for the role of the princeps as leader of Roman religion.

During the Republic, the pontifex maximus was leader of the college of pontifices and the expert on "problems of sacred law and procedure within their province--such matters as the games, sacrifices and vows, the sacra connected with Vesta and the Vestals, tombs and burial law, the inheritance of sacred obligations."<sup>n29</sup> They were also responsible for the calendar, which gave Julius Caesar, who held the office, the authority for his calendar reform. Once Augustus became pontifex maximus in 12 B.C., he made it "the keystone of the religious system."<sup>n30</sup> After him every emperor held the office. Two centuries later, Dio Cassius could write of the emperors, "from the fact that they are enrolled in all the priesthoods

and moreover can grant most of the priesthoods to others, and that one of them, even if two or three emperors are ruling jointly, is [pontifex maximus](#), they control all sacred and religious matters" (53.17.8).

By making Numa both king and [pontifex maximus](#), secular and religious leader, Plutarch made him more similar to the princeps of his own day. One clear allusion reveals that Plutarch had the contemporary world clearly in mind as he composed this life. When discussing the names of the months, he writes: "The fifth month is named for Caesar, who defeated Pompey; the sixth is named August from the second to rule, called Sebastos (Augustus). Domitian gave his own names to the next in order, though not for long, since they took their own names back after he was assassinated and are called seventh and eighth" (19.7). The first two Caesars were honored by having months named after them. Domitian attempted to double the honor for himself, but his violent death ([ἐκείνου σφαγέντος](#)) revealed how little support there was for this tribute. The other named months, except February, honored gods: to give a man this honor put him in an exalted class of benefactors to the state. Domitian asserted but did not earn this privilege, and the restoration of the original names marked the negative judgment on his rule. Domitian attempted to equal both Julius Caesar and Augustus, but failed in both cases.<sup>n31</sup>

The vivid account of the punishment prescribed for a Vestal accused of sexual activity in [Numa](#) 10.8-13 also recalls an incident from Domitian's reign. The [pontifex maximus](#), as Plutarch records, had a special relation to the Vestals and special responsibility for them, both to help and punish. This relationship was given special form by Augustus, who soon after becoming [pontifex](#) dedicated an image and shrine to Vest in his own house on the Palatine, making his own house a kind of annex to the temple of Vesta.<sup>n32</sup> Of the later emperors Domitian chose to take the role of guardian of the Vestals especially seriously. On one occasion he had three Vestals executed for sexual laxity. Not long after, however, another Vestal, Cornelia, was accused of the same sacrilege, and Domitian exacted the ancient and crueler penalty of burial alive described by Plutarch, as Pliny the Younger informs us in an indignant letter ([Ep.](#) 4.11, see also [Suet. Dom.](#) 8.4). Plutarch may well have drawn the elements of his description from an earlier writer source, such as Dionysius [Ant. Rom.](#) 2.67.3-4, rather than from direct observation or contemporary accounts. But Domitian's action--and Pliny's response-- shows that this power of the [pontifex maximus](#) was very present to contemporary Romans.

This contemporary context may explain why Plutarch offers a unique and significant interpretation of the term [pontifex](#).<sup>n33</sup> He rejects out of hand the standard interpretation, found in Varro, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, and Servius, that it means bridge-builder,<sup>n34</sup> calling it "especially ridiculous". In its place he accepts an etymology derived from [potens](#), explaining that the pontifices "serve the gods, who are powerful and lords of all."<sup>n35</sup> This etymology asserts the preeminence of the gods, the notion which lies at the heart of Plutarch's interpretation of Numa's life.

His suggestions for the etymology of the [ancilia](#) are similar. Although he notes the possible derivation of [ancile](#) from Greek [ἄγκυλα](#) or [ἀγκῶν](#), referring to their shape, he suggests as well others which indicate the nature of the shield, sent by the gods as a sign of relief from the plague besetting the city: [ἀνέκαθεν φορᾶ](#) (fallen from above), [ἄκεσις τῶν νοσοῦντων](#) (healing of the sick), [τῶν αὐχμῶν λύσις](#) (relief from drought), or [ἀνάσχεσις τῶν δεινῶν](#), (relief from calamities), comparing it with the appearance of the Dioscuri at Athens, which gave them the title Anakes (13.9-10).<sup>n36</sup> These etymologies suggest what the gods' connection with Numa reveals, that the gods are [φιλόανθρωποι](#), loving men and exercising care over them.

Other etymologies mark the peacekeeping mission of the Fetiales,<sup>n37</sup> the leaping dance of the Salii in honor of the gods (13.7), and Numa's fabled dialogue with Jupiter, by which he shifted the god's temper from angry to propitious (15.10). Plutarch often will follow Varronian etymologies, but feels free to

employ his own when they support his interpretation of Numa's contribution to Rome.<sup>n38</sup> The many month-names derived from the names of the gods indicate the city's divine patronage.<sup>n39</sup> Numa's two new months mark two points of his ideology. The etymology of February characterizes it as the month of purification (19.8). Ritual purity is a continuing theme in this life, which is the explanation for the extended discussion of the Vestal fire or the full treatment of Numa's dialogue with Zeus.<sup>n40</sup>

Numa's shift of the beginning of the year from March, dedicated to Mars, to January, dedicated to Janus, embodies in the calendar his preference for peace over war. As Plutarch explains, Janus was more than a god of beginnings: in tradition, as or king, he was a god of the city and of common action ([ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΚΟΙΝΩΝΙΚΟΣ](#)), and changed the life of men from the bestial and savage to civilization (19.10)--that is he tamed men to live in a community, and is properly a god of peace. Numa's calendar reform put Janus at the head of the year; his "taming" of the Romans' souls meant that the temple of Janus was closed and peace a hand for the whole forty years of his reign: "so completely did he eradicate from every side whatever pertained to war" (20.1-3).

The praise of Numa for keeping the temple of Janus closed throughout his reign leads into a rhetorical [αὔξεισις](#) of his accomplishments and a paean to the peace he inspired (20.4-12). Powerful imagery expresses the effect of Numa on other cities: "like a breeze or healing breath . . . a longing flowed into all of peace, and cultivating the land, and raising children in tranquillity, and honoring the gods . . . as if flowing from the spring of Numa's wisdom, goodness and justice flowed out to everyone and the calm around him flowed forth" (20.4-5).<sup>n41</sup> Numa's taming of himself and idyllic life in communion with nature (3.7, 4.1) has now spread to Rome and its neighbors. This evocation of a paradise on earth is supported by two quotations from Bacchylides, singing of the shield covered with spider webs, and rust on the spear and sword. The peace throughout Italy is echoed by a peace within the city: no civil war or faction or revolution, no hostility toward, or envy of the king. Numa is protected by fear of the gods, or respect for virtue, or divine fortune, so that his pure life becomes an exemplar and testimony of Plato's statement that only the combination of royal power with a philosophical mind could bring surcease of troubles for men. A second Platonic quote conveys the formal [μακαρισμός](#) or blessing: "He (the truly self-controlled person) is blessed, and blessed as well are those who hear the words coming from the mouth of such a man."<sup>n42</sup> Plutarch then paraphrases the quote and applies it--in a highly rhetorical and complex sentence--directly to Numa. The Romans imitate his virtue and "put themselves in step with his blameless and blessed life, full of affection and concord toward themselves, expressed with justice and moderation."<sup>n43</sup>

Plutarch's Numa emerges as one type of ideal [princeps](#), the ruler whose virtue becomes an example to his subjects and the font of peace and prosperity to the nation. As ruler-priest, [βασιλεύς](#) and [ἀρχιερεύς](#), he assures the right relation with the gods on which Rome's prosperity is founded. Plutarch's parallel between Numa and the [princeps](#) may extend further. Numa was himself pious, but according to Plutarch he also used exterior pomp and posturing in the manner of Pythagoras. Plutarch seems to find this show acceptable as a means of domesticating an unruly populace. Here perhaps we glimpse Plutarch's attitude toward the imperial cult: a necessary performance needed to awe the populace into accepting the rule of the virtuous [princeps](#), a contemporary kind of Pythagorean wizardry.<sup>n44</sup>

The allusions to Domitian indicate a negative type, a ruler who does not understand his proper role. We should no doubt read an allusion to Domitian's assassination in this same passage, where Plutarch notes that under Numa there was neither faction nor revolution.<sup>n45</sup> The references point forward as well, for Trajan, in whose reign the [Parallel Lives](#) were composed, succeeded to the throne only shortly after Domitian's assassination, following the brief reign of Nerva. It is not fanciful to see a parallel with Numa, who became king after Romulus' disappearance and possible assassination, and a troubled interregnum (2.1-3.5). Trajan was adopted by Nerva while outside the city (he was serving on the frontiers, perhaps in

Germany) to calm tensions. After a brief visit to Rome, he returned to the frontier, and then when Nerva died had to act quickly (though more physically) to end rebellion and quiet neighboring peoples. When he entered Rome as emperor, to joyous acclamation,<sup>n46</sup> in him lay the empire's hopes for peace.

Numa and Lycurgus present two different ideal rulers and the societies they create. Lycurgus is born to the royal house, an insider who surrenders the throne only to regain power in a coup; Numa is an outsider, not even a Roman, recruited for the kingship because of his outstanding virtue. Lycurgus' constitution is based on a careful balance of political roles between king, council of elders, and assembly; the establishment of common mess; the rejection of a money economy; and perhaps most important, a rigid and demanding educational system, designed to perpetuate the values of his new society. Numa's reform is a "pedagogy toward the divine" ([παιδαγωγία πρὸς τὸ θεῖον](#), 15.1), but it also is more personal, depending on his own charismatic role as holy man and go-between with the gods. His innovations establish an institutionalized relationship with the gods and give peace to the Romans, but do not guarantee the continuing virtue of the society as a whole. Rome grew and prospered through war, but Plutarch refuses to say that this course was preferable to one based on virtue.<sup>n47</sup>

As the initial questioning of chronology indicated, Plutarch's Numa is an ideal, not a historical ruler. The philosopher accepts neither Numa's discipleship of Pythagoras nor the fabulous story of his meetings with Egeria as fact. He looks beyond these stories and beyond the religious regulations of Numa to imagine their underlying premises. The [Life of Numa](#) argues that the gods are favorable to mankind, [φιλόανθρωποι](#), and love all that is virtuous in man, that a proper attention to the gods is a sign of virtue and is rightly associated with justice, and that a ruler who possesses this virtue inspires the people to follow his example and is a source of peace, both internal and external. Finally, it was not important for Plutarch whether Numa learned from Pythagoras or not: the significant fact was that his virtue could be seen as embodying the principles of Greek, and especially Platonic, philosophy. Plutarch's utopian vision invited his contemporaries, including the emperor, [pontifex maximus](#) as well as [imperator](#), to learn these principles from the example of Numa.

1 R. Flacelière, [Plutarque Vies I](#) (Paris 1964) 176, followed by Piccirilli, in M. Manfredini and L. Piccirilli, [Le Vite di Licurgo e di Numa](#), third ed. (Milano 1985) XXX. There are references to Pythagoras in cc. 1, 8, 11, 14, and 22. These two works provide commentaries and introductions to the life. See also Plutarch's account of Numa in [The Fortune of Rome](#) 321B-E, which emphasizes the support that Fortune gave to Numa.

2 [Num.](#) 1.2, 6. Cf. A. Momigliano, [CAH VII2](#), pt. 2 (1989), p. 90: "We must admit that we do not yet know how the Roman tradition about the monarchic period took shape. This is why we cannot be sure about anything the tradition tells us of the first three successors of Romulus."

3 [Num.](#) 1.7. These chronological vagaries are offset by two precise calendar dates early in the life: the exact day of Romulus' death, "Rome had been inhabited and Romulus ruling for thirty-seven years. On the fifth of Quintilis, now called the Caprotine nones, [Romulus sacrificed and disappeared]" (2.1); and Numa's birthdate, April 21, the very day on which Romulus founded Rome (3.6). These days give no indication of the era of these events, however, Plutarch had an interest in dates: cf. his excursus at [Rom.](#) 1: and note his lost work [On days](#) (Lamprias catalogue 150).

4 The Spartan Pythagoras' travel to Italy is apparently Plutarch's own inference, since Dion. Hal. [Ant. Rom.](#) 2.58.3, a major source for this life and the only other author to mention this man, says nothing of it.

5 It is not clear at [Numa](#) 1.4 whether Plutarch himself believes that Spartan practices were mixed in with Roman or this is the opinion of a source. He does not come back to the issue in [Numa](#).

6 Num. 3.6: certainly not only on the same day (April 21, the [Parilia](#)) but in the same year.

7 The reference to courage ([ἀνδρεία](#)) alludes to Lycurgus, in which the encouragement of this virtue was prominent: cf. Lyc. 21.3, 28.1, and Comp. Lyc. Num. 2.1.

8 Plutarch gives an interesting parallel in The Disappearance of Oracles, 421A-422C. There Cleombrotus of Sparta, well-travelled though perhaps somewhat credulous, reports that he met near the Persian Gulf a hermit who spent most of the year "with roving nymphs and spirits," and only once a year met with men and would give prophecies. Cleombrotus reported that in addition to speaking many languages, he had extraordinary knowledge, including the true story of Apollo and the slaying of Python. Later however, the narrator Lamprias charges that the man was a fraud, and simply a Greek learned in Greek traditions. Here as with Numa, the man's isolation implies contact with superhuman spirits and confers authority.

9 Dionysius says practically nothing of Numa himself, beyond that he had a reputation for wisdom ([σοφία](#) Ant. Rom. 2.58.3) and was pious and just ([θεοσεβής](#), [δικαίος](#), 2.60.4).

10 The narratives are Dionysius Ant. Rom. 2. 57-76, Livy 1.18-21, and Cicero De rep. 2.13 (25)-15 (29). Something distantly similar is found in Ovid, Met. 15.5-6: Numa "[animo maiora capaci conceptit et quae sit rerum natura requirit.](#)"

11 This connection is common in Plutarch: see P. Stadter, "Drinking, Table Talk, and Plutarch's Contemporaries," in Plutarco, Dioniso, y el Vino. Actas del VI Simposio español sobre Plutarco. Cadiz, 14-16 de Mayo de 1998. J. G. Montes Cala, M. Sánchez Ortiz de Landaluce, R. J. Gallé Cejudo, eds. (Madrid, Ediciones clásicas, 1999) 481-90.

12 Num. 4. Ovid, Amores 2.17.15-18 takes a more humorous view of such alliances.

13 The point is reinforced by Plutarch's etymologies, 13.10: see below.

14 Flacelière ad loc. rightly complains that Plutarch's abbreviation of the story as found in Dionysius makes it almost incomprehensible. Plutarch's version, however, emphasizes the magical quality of the event, which is his point here.

15 In a fundamental article, P. Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," JRS 6 (1971) 80-101, notes the important political and social role of the holy man in late antiquity, especially in Syria. As with Numa, their special connection with the divine (in their case through extreme acts of penance) creates a perceived power, which allows them to act with authority in turbulent times. It seems important that Numa, like these holy men, was perceived as an outsider to the community, and so above it quarrels.

16 See e.g. Hdt. 1.96-98, on the future king of Media, Deioces.

17 Cf. the case of Ephrem at Edessa, cited by Brown, (above, [note 15](#)) 92, who even after twenty active years in the city "insisted that he should be buried in the stranger's plot." In Plutarch's account, Numa continues to refer his reforms to the advice of Egiria and the Muses.

18 Num. 8.2-3. Plutarch alludes to Plato's description of the "feverish" city (Rep. 2, 372e, Laws 3, 691e).

19 Porphyry, Vita Pyth. 18, FVS 14,8a.

20 Other parallels also influence him, which he lists here and elsewhere: 8.11, Pythagorean silence, ; 8.12-14, prohibition of images; 11.1, fire at the center of the universe; 14.4-5, insistence on attention in

addressing the gods; 14.6-7, unusual regulations; 22.3-4, and refusal to pass on mystic teaching in writing. See also the indications cited by other authors which he reports at 8.16-20. We might add that Pythagoras was venerated as more than a man (FVS 14,7, Aristotle fr. 191, 192 Rose) and the importance of purification in his tenets (see Plutarch's etymology of February, Numa 19.8). Lycurgus was hailed as "more a god than a man" and had Delphic sanction (5.4), but he does not blend religion and legislation as do Numa and Pythagoras.

21 See J. Dillon, The Middle Platonists (London 1977) 341-383, J. Hershbell, "Plutarch's Pythagorean Friends," CB 60 (1984) 73-79. One of them, Lucius, was a student of the distinguished Pythagorean Platonist Moderatus of Gades. See Table Talk 8.7-8 (727B-728E). On Moderatus, see Dillon 1977, 344-51. In the account of the party, Lucius emerges as strict in his dietary rules and firmly convinced that Pythagoras was an Etruscan, because of the relation he saw between Pythagorean and Etruscan. Plutarch was familiar with people making unhistorical associations with Pythagoras on the basis of parallels. Hershbell, 1984, 74-75, argues that he is the same as the Lucius of The Face in the Moon.

22 Seen, for example, in his treatment of ethics in Moral Virtue, in speaking of the relation of soul to body in Socrates' Daemon, and in physics in his interest in the Indefinite Dyad. See Dillon, (above, [note 21](#)) 196, 222, 229.

23 See most recently J. Bons and L. de Blois, "Platonic Philosophy and Isocratean Virtues in Plutarch's Numa," AncSoc 23 (1992) 159-88, studying the many passages influenced by Plato and Isocrates.

24 Service to the god: ὕπηρεσίαν γε θεοῦ τὸ βασιλεύειν, 6.2; see Plato Apol. 30A, Laws 715C, Plut. An Old Man in Politics 780D. The philosopher must enter the world: Rep. 7, 519C-520D. The notion of the the god, the ruler or other educators "taming" the people is also Platonic: see Protag. 326 B, Gorg. 516B, Rep. 442A, 591B, and Laws 709B, 766A.

25 The heroes in the lives parallels to these, Publicola and Lycurgus, are not properly philosophers, though Lycurgus' wisdom leads him to create a republic superior to those of the philosophers (Lyc. 31). Brutus and Cato Uticensis, also subjects of lives, are imbued with philosophy, but not philosophers.

26 Num. 6.2, 20.4, 22.9. Other passages describe how he makes the Romans more just, the true test of the ruler: 12.7-8, 16.2, 20.5, 20.11.

27 Cf. Cic. Rep. 2.14.26, Livy 1.20.5.

28 Though it may also be an error, confusing the two men named Numa.

29 J. A. North, CAH VII2, pt. 2 (1989), p. 587. See in general on the pontifices North 585-87, G. Wissowa, Religion und Kultus der Römer2 (Munich 1912) 501-23; for an interpretation of Roman priesthood, including the pontifices, see M. Beard, "Priesthood in the Roman Republic," in M. Beard and J. North, Pagan Priests: Religion and Power in the Ancient World (Ithaca NY 1990) 18-48, esp. 34-48; on the emperor as priest, F. Millar, The Emperor in the Roman World (31 BC- AD 337) (Ithaca NY 1977) 355-61, R. Gordon, "The Veil of Power: Emperors, Sacrificers, and Benefactors," in Pagan Priests, 201-21.

30 S. R. F. Price, CAH X2 (1996), 827. Price gives a concise account of Augustus' reshaping of the office pp. 825-27.

31 This allusion is not part of a history of the months' names: Plutarch does not mention, e.g., Nero's change of April to Neroneus (Suet. Nero 55).

32 See Price CAH X2 (1996), 825, citing Inscriptiones Italicae xiii.2, p. 452.

33 Like Romulus, Numa gives many etymologies or translations of words tied to Roman institutions: Celeres (7.8), flamen (7.9, with two other words close to Greek, laena and camillus), Tacita (8.11), Fetiales (12.5), Salii (13.7), ancilia (13.9-10), Hilicium (15.10), Fides and Terminus (16.1) and the names of the months (19.4-11).

34 Varro De Lingua Latina 5.83, Dion. Hal. Ant. Rom. 2.73.1, 3.45.2, Servius Dan. to Aen. 2.166.

35 Numa 9.2. Varro, L.L. 5.83 reports an etymology from potens, though the exact interpretation is not stated: "Pontufices, ut Scaevola Quintus pontufex maximus dicebat, a posse et facere, ut potifices. Ego a ponte arbitror..." Plutarch also offers an alternate etymology, still based on potens, with the sense that the priests were to do all in their power, but not worry if some greater force blocked them. Nevertheless, he goes on to explain this "false" derivation in several sentences on the wooden bridge at Rome, built by Marcius two generations later. In this life the frequent etymologies most often are tied to the role of the gods.

36 Plutarch offers three equally stretched etymologies for ἄνακες at Thes. 33.2-3.

37 Plutarch explains the name as guardians of peace, εἰρηνοφύλακες, and seems to connect the name with φημί, speak, with the notion that disputes were resolved by word, not violence, 12.5. This is different from Varro, L.L. 5.96, who derives the word from fides.

38 On the complex question of Plutarch's use of Varro, see E. Valgiglio, "Varrone in Plutarco," in Atti del Congresso Internazionale di Studi Varroniani, Rieti, Settembre 1974 (Rieti 1976) II, 571-95, who thinks Plutarch used other works of Varro, not L.L., but also used sources such as Juba, who did read L.L.

39 Num. 19.3-5. For this reason Plutarch prefers to derive April from Aphrodite, May from Maia, and June from Juno rather than from respectively, aperio, maiores, and iuniores with Varro L.L. 6.33, though he alludes to these derivations.

40 See 9.10, 12 (the Vestal fire); 14.4; 15.7-8, 10 (Zeus and the piamen for lightning); 16.2; 19.8; 20.8. For the explanation of February, see Varro, L.L. 6.13.

41 The passage also employs hyperbaton (20.4: ὁ Ῥωμαίων ... δῆνος, 20.11: πρὸς τὸν ... βίον, 20.12: ὁ ... δυνάμενος) and polysyndeton of καί, 20.4, 20.5, of οὔτε, 20.7, and of εἶτε, 20.8.

42 Μακάριος μὲν γὰρ αὐτός, μακάριοι δ' οἱ συνήκοοι τῶν ἐκ τοῦ σωφρονοῦντος στόματος ἰόντων λόγων (20.10, cf. Plat. Laws 711e).

43 Numa 20.11-12. Bons and de Blois, (above, note 23) 180-83, have acutely pointed out how this sentence, and the whole life, combine the Platonic idea of the philosophic ruler with Isocrates' notion (found also in Xenophon) of the ruler as model for his subjects.

44 See Timon's words on Pythagoras, who "inclines toward the fame of a wizard, hunting after men" (8.9) On Plutarch's uncritical attitude toward the imperial cult, see G. W. Bowersock, "Greek Intellectuals and the Imperial Cult in the Second Century A.D.," in Le Culte des Souverains dans l'Empire Romain, Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique 19 (Vandoeuvres-Genève 1973) 179-212, correcting Kenneth Scott, "Plutarch and the Ruler Cult" TAPA 60 (1929) 117-35.

45 Numa 20.7. He may think as well of earlier years of turmoil, especially 69 A.D.

46 Described in adulatory rhetoric by Pliny, Panegyricus 22.

47 Comp. Lyc. Num. 4.13, "What, someone will say, did not Rome advance for the best with its warlike ways? The question is one demanding a long answer for men who consider 'better' to reside in wealth, luxury, and rule rather than security, mildness, and a just independence (σωτηρία, πρώτης, ἢ μετὰ δικαιοσύνης ἀταρκεία)."

Paidagogia pros to theion: Plutarch's Numa. Philip A. Stadter. University of North Carolina. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# Farland Hart Stanley Jr., Flavius Josephus and the Archaeological Evidence for Caesarea Maritima

1

Those who share an interest in the exploration of the world of antiquity know how common it is to make interpretations on the basis of extremely small amounts of information which, in turn, may have been derived from a very small number of sources. This puts a significant burden on the reliability and accuracy of our principal sources, the literary record and archaeology. Sometimes these two sources present a view of antiquity that can be quite at odds with each other. It is, therefore, assuring to an interpretation when we find compatibility between these two windows to the past.

One occasion of close agreement arises between the archaeological data from Caesarea Maritima and the account given about that harbor-city by 1st century AD author Flavius Josephus. The city achieved fame in its early history due to its association with Herod the Great, its early Christian record, and its relationship with Rome. Importantly, as Josephus recorded information about these associations, he also preserved a description of the city that was located along the coast of Israel about 40 miles north of Tel Aviv. Although Josephus' account of the city covers only the period through the end of the 1st century AD, the history of the city was lengthy. During its long history it experienced occupation by multiple successive cultures before its abandonment in the middle to late 13th century. Here, however, our consideration of the city is restricted to the beginning era of its existence: from the end of the 1st century BC up to the time of Josephus at the end of the 1st century AD.

If scholars seem to pay great attention to what Josephus records about Caesarea, much of this is because his literary works are our single best source for the history of the city during the Herodian period up to the end at the 1st century AD.<sup>n1</sup> Thus, we are deeply indebted to the description that Josephus has recorded about Caesarea in his works.<sup>n2</sup> Because Josephus is such a critical source for the history of Judea, scholars have consequently heavily evaluated his works. The result has been the production of an extensive bibliography.<sup>n3</sup> This bibliography reveals how scholars have received Josephus with a mixture of praise and censure. He is clearly praised for preserving significant and important information about ancient Judea. He has not escaped criticism, however, for his method of narrating certain historical and political events. A few examples serve as an illustration. In recent times Isaiah Press has praised Josephus for his description of the geography of Palestine.<sup>n4</sup> The praise continues with Magen Broshi<sup>n5</sup> who notes that there is substantial accuracy and precision in Josephus when comparisons are made with archaeological data. However, observations by others question numerous views offered by Josephus and he is criticized for his descriptions of Judea. In agreement with Press and Broshi, Zeev Safrai praises Josephus for the accuracy of some of his reporting, but also notes that Josephus could make errors in describing the land of Judea.<sup>n6</sup> On the other hand, Louis H. Feldman remarks that in spite of the access that Josephus had to well known and precise Roman military records, he made some glaring errors in recording distances and

measurements.<sup>n7</sup> He adds that even though Josephus had been a military general of a country that he claimed to know well (i.e. his homeland of Judea), "there is a mixture of accuracy and inconsistency" in his writings. Feldman concludes that by the time Josephus had completed his description of the three most important archaeological sites in Israel, Caesarea, Jerusalem, and Masada, he had " . . .emerged with a good, though hardly a perfect, score."<sup>n8</sup>

What we will note below, as we consider Josephus' account of Caesarea, is that despite the criticisms that have been leveled against him, his description of the city illustrates significant harmony with what archaeological excavations have recovered about the city's urban appearance. In the past Josephus' description was accepted with limited credence and attention. However, as a result of extensive excavations during recent years, an abundance of archaeological evidence has been recovered at Caesarea that confirms Josephus' description of the city as an important harbor-city in Judea.<sup>n9</sup> Thus, for example, our view of the city's role as a link in the trading network along the eastern Mediterranean has changed. Most scholars now recognize the fact that the harbor of Caesarea " . . . did not maintain its nautical prominence continuously."<sup>n10</sup> However, they also acknowledge, as ceramic and archaeological evidence suggests, that even into the 9th and 11th centuries there continued to be considerable activity in Caesarea under Islamic occupation.<sup>n11</sup> Evidence suggests that during this latter period of the city a wealthy class survived,<sup>n12</sup> as well as a robust regional trade.<sup>n13</sup> After the Moslem conquests had taken place it appears that in Caesarea there was not a cataclysmic failure of agriculture production but rather a period of 'progressive decline',<sup>n14</sup> until its final collapse.<sup>n15</sup>

More to our interest, during the first century of its existence, there is now archaeological evidence that the city's trading activities were much stronger than previously believed, not only in local and regional trade but also in long distance commerce. In this regard, the ceramic evidence from the 1st century indicates greatly increased trading activities in contrast to the trading experiences of its predecessor in the area, the town of Straton's Tower.<sup>n16</sup> Pottery from this century shows that through its harbor passed goods from Portugal, Spain, central Italy, the Aegean area, North Africa, central Palestine and the Negev, supporting the view that Caesarea was an important transshipment point throughout the Mediterranean area.<sup>n17</sup>

While medieval sources demonstrate that a certain prosperity and beauty of the city survived into the 13th century,<sup>n18</sup> the abandonment, destruction, and decay of Caesarea inevitably arrived. Gradually, in the centuries that followed its final abandonment and destruction, the architectural features that defined the city disappeared under the onslaught of time, nature, and human exploitation.

Now, as archaeologists have returned over the last few decades to investigate the remains of the city, their primary guide is Josephus. As a Jewish priest, military officer and historian, Josephus preserved descriptions of the city and much helpful information about historical episodes that the city experienced in its connection with Jewish history. He wrote some eighty years after the time of Herod the Great who, as the king of Judea, had given the orders to construct the harbor of Sebastos and the city of Caesarea and saw the completion of the city somewhere between 13 and 10 BC. By the time the construction was completed, and certainly by the time that Josephus wrote, Caesarea was an imposing city. Josephus was clearly impressed with the city and on several occasions he noted the city's size, beauty and magnificence. His praise of the city's architectural features included, at the minimum, its huge harbor, its theater and amphitheater, its sophisticated sewer system, its great temple to Augustus and Rome, and its other urban structures.<sup>n19</sup>

Today, it is true, the greater part of the visible architectural structures of Caesarea belong mostly to historical times subsequent to that of Josephus. In the eras after Josephus, the Byzantine, Islamic and Crusader cultures often expressed their strong presence in the city by constructing their own buildings

directly over previous structures. However, through the efforts of marine archaeologists working in the depths of the harbor area and from the efforts of terrestrial archeologists, a growing number of cultural artifacts and architectural features are being exposed which belong to the Herodian and early Roman city that Josephus describes. These discoveries testify to a limited but important 'inventory' of architectural and urban features, some of which were recorded by Josephus. While not all of the structures of the Herodian city specifically described by Josephus have been precisely located, previous discoveries seem to portend that even more revelations are forthcoming which will continue the confirmation of Josephus' description of the city.

Importantly, past archaeological discoveries support an increasing confidence in Josephus' description of Caesarea and testify that he was indeed quite familiar with the architectural appearance of the city. As our principal literary source, scholars have long recognized the 'archaeological survey' that Josephus made about Caesarea as worthy of attention. Now, as archaeological discoveries increasingly agree with Josephus' account of the city, there has been an enhanced awareness to even the smallest reference that Josephus has made about the urban appearance of the city.

In general terms, which are more fully commented on below, the principal details of the city described by Josephus relate to the foundation and elaboration of a city that was constructed by Herod on the site of a pre-existing coastal town called Straton's Tower. When Caesarea was completed, it had harbors (havens), temples, arches, streets, several palaces, a theater and amphitheater, and other unnamed public buildings.<sup>n20</sup> Until recent times, nearly the only thing we had as true testament for the existence of the city was his description. For centuries the physical evidence for Caesarea was almost totally hidden from view beneath the coastal sands or the waves of the Mediterranean. Now, however, archaeology has made very important progress toward revealing the city.

Josephus relates that the city came into being and immediately became important because of the ambitions of Herod.<sup>n21</sup> Herod had observed that along the coast there was an older and 'much decayed' Hellenistic town of Straton's Tower. As he considered the town, he came to the conclusion that the older town was situated in an important position. Straton's Tower had been built perhaps as far back as the 3rd century but despite its dilapidated condition, Herod recognized that it was in a strategic geographical and geological location. Certainly, one factor in this awareness was that just off shore, along much of the shoreline where the city was located, there were geological outcroppings or 'reefs' that offered important initial protection from the ill effects of storms at sea.<sup>n22</sup> Although the geological outcroppings in the sea would not be situated precisely where he would establish the harbor of his town, Josephus emphasizes Herod's appreciation that the old town of Straton's Tower occupied a most favorable position between Joppa and Dora.<sup>n23</sup> Furthermore, the geographical location of the site as a whole that was now held by Herod was a geographical outlet of the cross-country roads.

After Herod had evaluated the location of Straton's Tower and its potential benefits and advantages, he made the decision to build a new city in the location and approached its construction with a dedicated fervor. Indeed, Josephus relates that Herod was most "liberal" and "magnanimous" in the disposal of his wealth in building the city and that he constructed the city in a "glorious manner" with a harbor that literally "over came nature."<sup>n24</sup> The city, as Josephus describes it, was built all of fine quality white building stone and was to serve as a "fortress for the whole nation." However, in order to complete the city, Josephus relates that Herod imported building materials. Now, marine archaeologists have discovered materials within the harbor, including timber and concrete made of pozzolana sand, which have Italian origins and confirm that Herod imported building materials to construct his city. As further elaborated below, upon the completion of the city Herod dedicated it to Rome and Caesar Augustus in order to demonstrate his deep appreciation to his two powerful patrons.<sup>n25</sup>

There seems little doubt today that Herod was very generous with his expenditures on the new city. This is dramatically illustrated in what was the true focus of the city, its great harbor. We also know that he approached constructing the city in a rational and resolute fashion because, as any good 'city-builder,' Josephus relates that Herod had a master plan.<sup>n26</sup> That a plan did exist has become evident through the gradual exposure of the regular orthogonal design of the city. Over the years numerous sections of streets have been discovered that allow a restoration of the plan of a city that was built on an [insulae](#) (city-block) pattern. The organization of the city clearly suggests that a master 'blue-print' plan had been utilized. Although most of the Herodian city lies beneath later Byzantine and Crusader Period buildings, these later buildings and streets appear to faithfully follow the plan of the original 'grid-like' pattern of the Herodian city. With each successive year, the regular 'grid-like' pattern of the city's streets and the [insulae](#) become more clearly defined. By example, the course of the principal north-south street ( ), as suggested by Josephus, has been successfully determined, along with the course of several east-west streets ( ).

Some of the streets are either Herodian or are a construction over the original Herodian streets. The exposure of the streets is important because it confirms Josephus' statement that streets were built at equal distances from one another and ran through the city down to the shore and to the harbor.<sup>n27</sup>



Decumanus 2 to the W. Photo by Farland Stanley

The description of the city's streets and their orientation toward the shoreline and the harbor draws attention to Josephus' description of the city's huge circular harbor ( ). Clearly, the magnificence of the harbor partly resided in its huge size and design. In fact, and as mentioned above, Josephus says that the harbor was so large and formidable that it literally 'overcame nature' as it extended westward into the Mediterranean Sea. This truly seems to have been the case because the foundations for the breakwater, which Josephus calls the ('first breaker of the waves'), encircles an area some fifty acres in size and served as a safe haven for vessels travelling along the coast. The outer harbor extends from the shoreline and the now silted-up inner harbor, for some 300 meters to the west, before turning to the north for about 500 meters more where the entrance to the harbor was located.<sup>n28</sup>

The harbor is, in actuality, three interconnecting harbors. The outer harbor, which today lies hidden beneath the waves, along with the intermediate and inner harbor, combined to form the principal landing area of the city. In addition, three and perhaps even a total of four subsidiary anchorages are now known to have lain along the coast adjacent and just to the north and south of the inner and outer harbors.<sup>n29</sup> The inner harbor was situated between a prominent hill on the shore, atop which was located the principal great temple of the city, and the larger outer harbor that extended westward out into the Mediterranean. The basin of the inner harbor is now silted up. However, although it is not mentioned in Josephus, archaeologists have now discovered that the inner harbor had been so well designed that there once was a flushing channel that served as a mechanism by which sea water passed through the harbor and prevented it from being silted.<sup>n30</sup>

Josephus describes the inner and outer harbor complex as larger than the famed harbor of Athens, the Piraeus. It was so huge and magnificent that Herod had even drawn a distinction between the legal and administrative positions of the harbor and the city that, in effect, seems to have set them apart as two separate entities.<sup>n31</sup> This is evident in his reference that the city itself was called Caesarea and was dedicated by Herod to the province of Judea. At the same time, the harbor was called Sebaste and was dedicated to the sailors.<sup>n32</sup>

The vastness of the outer harbor was first revealed by an underwater exploration in 1960 known as the Link Expedition.<sup>n33</sup> Since then, marine archaeologists have continued to demonstrate that Josephus was quite correct in his description of the expanse of the harbor. With the one exception of inaccurately

recording the depth of the foundations for the harbor, marine archaeologists have proven that Josephus' description of the immensity of the harbor is accurate. Accurate, too, is the report that Herod had embellished the grandeur of the harbor with enhancements in the form of other architectural features that accented its appearance as well as added to the functionality of the harbor. Josephus relates that the foundations of the outer harbor, the main mole, were at least two hundred feet wide, before which was a subsidiary breakwater () that served the purpose of helping to break the powerful force of the waves. As described by Raban, the "...was confined as a segmented line of subsidiary breakwater, relatively narrow and not much above the sea level. Being some 20-30 m outside the spinal wall of the mole it would cause breakage of the surge..."<sup>n34</sup> Approximately one hundred feet of the inner side of the mole were utilized as the foundation that supported a number of structures that were important to the functionality of the harbor. Atop the mole, running along its spine, was an apparent sea wall that lined the outer circle of the harbor. Other structures atop the inner section of the foundations were vaulted chambers that served the dual purpose of storage for trading goods in transit and dwellings for visiting mariners.



Reconstruction of harbor by Avner Raban

Josephus adds that the width of this foundation also allowed for a promenade around the quay of the harbor for those who wanted to take a pleasant walk.<sup>n35</sup> In sum, marine archaeologists have now demonstrated that Josephus' description of the harbor is very accurate. Their investigation of the foundations of the outer harbor have revealed that the construction techniques used in building the foundations are remarkably close to what Josephus described.<sup>n36</sup>

One of the more interesting questions about the harbor concerns discussions about a lighthouse (fire tower). A lighthouse is not attested by Josephus, however some archaeologists believe that somewhere there might have been a lighthouse that accented the appearance and functional aspect of the harbor. Despite the lack of attestation, however, its presence would have been important as a place where fire and smoke could be seen for miles at sea as a beacon to the location of the harbor for incoming mariners. Discussions on its location include the supposition that a fire tower could be somewhere at or near the entrance to the outer harbor.<sup>n37</sup> In this regard Josephus mentions that situated near the entrance of the outer harbor were a total of six statues which stood on either side of the north entrance to the harbor and which rested on underwater foundations. Marine archaeologists have now located the foundations for the towers that supported the statues.<sup>n38</sup> Josephus recounts that the most beautiful tower was called Drusium, after Drusus the son-in-law of Augustus who prematurely died at a young age. The Drusium was so prominent in the city that some conjecture has been presented that this tower, which Josephus describes as the tallest tower at the harbor, may have been associated with a light tower.<sup>n39</sup>

In conversations with Professor Raban, the suggestion arose about another possible location for a light tower. Although difficult to excavate, there is one small area of the southeast side of the foundations of the outer harbor underlying the location of the present day 'Citadel Restaurant,' which may warrant excavations for a possible location of the light tower. Wherever a light tower may have been located exactly, the evidence for the presence of statues seems clear and that they served as both a decorative motif as well as a visible political statement of the closeness that existed between the city and Rome and Augustus.

There are other features relating to the harbor that are not attested in Josephus, but whose importance permits further brief digression. Among these are several newly discovered features, but one of the most important is that, perhaps from the end of the first century the outer harbor fell victim to an underlying geological fault that extended north/south just off the shoreline. This fault caused the outer harbor to sink gradually beneath the waves.<sup>n40</sup> As a result, over time the superstructure as well as the substructure foundations subsided beneath the waves, allowing a silting process eventually to fill the inner harbor and cause the harbor to succumb to the destructive force of the sea. The existence of the outer harbor is today

visible from the air as a dark outline beneath the waves that mark the tumbled and wave-worn remains of the harbor. The huge size of the submerged foundations testifies to the powerful resistance that the offered to the force of the sea and to the support that it gave to the complex of vaulted chambers and promenade that once lined the harbor.

Also not attested by Josephus are two large staircases in the vicinity of the harbor whose discovery added to confirming the urban centrality of Caesarea's great temple, which will be discussed below. As terrestrial archaeologists began to explore the juncture of the inner harbor with the shoreline, the first of two great staircases was exposed in 1990 through 1995. This was an immense 'grand staircase,' sometimes referred to as the 'western' staircase.

The discovery of a second 'southern' staircase followed a little later in 1993-1995.

The 'western staircase' was a structure that led from the quay of the now land-locked inner harbor up to the top of a fifty-foot high artificially constructed prominence named by archaeologists as the temple platform. Atop this prominence, and overlooking the harbor and the city, was located the huge temple that Herod dedicated to his patrons Rome and Augustus. Although Josephus does not refer to the 'western staircase,' it held a particular importance in the city because it was positioned precisely in a location that served as the principal approach to the temple from the harbor. It would be appropriate, therefore, for all individuals arriving into the city by way of the harbor to visit the temple by using the staircase.



'Western staircase' to the SE. Mooring stone at far left. Photo by Farland Stanley

As the grand 'western staircase' was excavated, it was found not to date to the Herodian era but to the fifth century and the Byzantine period. However, this later staircase rested immediately over a lower structure that has been shown to be the original quay of Herod's harbor. Today, an original mooring stone remains intact in the quay.<sup>n41</sup> The large structure that comprises the Byzantine 'western staircase' abuts the front or western facade of the temple platform. Most of the facade of the temple platform has not been excavated and thus presents some uncertainty about the design of the actual Herodian staircase that served as an approach up to the great temple. However, without doubt, the Herodian 'staircase' is under the later one. Future excavations will be required to confirm its exact design.

In 1993 and 1994, a second staircase of almost equal size to the 'western staircase' was excavated on the southern side of the Temple Platform. This staircase turned out to be in line with the principal north-south street of the city (cardo) and the center of the southern side of the Herodian temple foundations.<sup>n42</sup> This 'southern' staircase demonstrates several construction phases that match the several occupational periods of the city



'Southern staircase' early in excavations looking to the NW. Photo by Farland Stanley

. However, the lowest phase reveals that it was originally constructed in the Herodian era. The importance of this staircase is that its alignment with the principal north/south street of the city allowed expeditious and easy access to the Temple Platform from the southern part of the city to the temple. Both staircases serve as important connection points with two of the principal arteries of the city and emphasize the centrality of the temple platform within the city.

Returning now to features of the city that are attested by Josephus, we note his use of the plural to refer to temples within the city. Below we will discuss the largest temple found at Caesarea, but his plural reference to temples raises the suspicion that lesser religious structures existed in the city. In fact, a rich assortment of sculptural fragments of varied Greek deities increases the suspicion that there were other smaller religious structures in the city. However, the numerous statues and fragments of statues found within the city should not necessarily

assume a temple for each deity for, as discussed below, despite the religious piety that religious statuary elicited, they were also used for decorative purposes.<sup>n43</sup>

Among the evidence for other smaller religious structures is that which points to religious structures utilized for the imperial cult. The discovery of the famous 'Pontius Pilate stone' clearly testifies to the presence somewhere in the city of a small religious building, called a Tiberium. Although the Tiberium is not attested in Josephus, this stone carries an inscription that specifically mentions that Pilate built a structure called a Tiberium. Pilate, whose reputation is well known as one of the early governors of the province of Judea and for his association with the crucifixion of Jesus, dedicated the small religious structure to the 'genius' of the emperor Tiberius. Literary references also exist for another and later religious structure called a Hadrianum. Although this structure belongs to a time later than what we are considering here, and although its exact location is not known, an immense statue of the emperor Hadrian has been found which suggests that a Hadrianum did exist.<sup>n44</sup>

The literary references to these imperial cult structures suggest that we might well assume that other similar structures existed in the city that were dedicated to other Roman emperors. In fact, in addition to the adoration of the emperor, we need to keep in mind the presence of a large number of additional sculptural and architectural pieces that have been found in the city. Their presence is witness that many different Greek and Roman deities were welcomed in the city.<sup>n45</sup> Doubtless, in time there will be archaeological evidence for other smaller temples or religious structures in which the representations of at least some of the more important Greek deities were housed. However, it seems more likely that the majority of the religious statues were displayed along streets within the city. How many statues and temples were displayed at this time? We cannot know for certain. However, a hint that there may have been many is reflected in Josephus' comments about an uprising that took place in the city among the Jews and Syrians during the procuratorship of Felix. The implication is that the number of Greek statues and temples had reached a sufficient number to reflect an increased Greek character of the city that was unacceptable to the Jewish population and contributed to inciting the Jews to rebellion.<sup>n46</sup>

There is, however, one very large religious structure that is clearly attested by Josephus that emphasizes the close relationship between Caesarea and Rome. This was the temple which Josephus described as built by Herod and dedicated to Rome and Augustus, which both emphasizes the close relationship between Caesarea and Rome and the power of the imperial cult. In recent years excavations have included it among the dramatic discoveries made at Caesarea.<sup>n47</sup> It was discovered, as Josephus had indicated, in a commanding position in the center of the city overlooking the harbor from atop a high elevation, which is the area designated by archaeologists as the temple platform. Beginning in 1900, and continuing through the 2000 season, archaeologists have exposed much of the foundations for the temple.

These discoveries, and those of column fragments and other architectural fragments, now permit a proposed reconstruction of a large hexastyle temple whose superstructure is estimated to be almost 21 meters in height. The deeply laid foundations, which measure approximately 5 meters in width, define the plan of a temple that was 28.6 meters in overall width and 46.4 meters in length.<sup>n48</sup> These measurements outline a temple that was clearly one of the largest Roman temples that was built in the Mediterranean world. Unfortunately, almost all indications of the temple's superstructure were robbed in antiquity for use by succeeding cultures. Nevertheless, the survival of the huge foundations and various tantalizing fragments of the temple testify to the temple's grandeur.



Foundations of Herod's temple. Photo by Farland Stanley

It was once believed that the temple was made entirely of marble because of Josephus' reference that the city 'gleamed'.<sup>n49</sup> It is now known that the builders of the city utilized local sandstone called kurkar as the

principal building material not only for the city, but for the temple as well. Because marble is not indigenous to Israel, in antiquity the importation of sufficient amounts of marble to build the temple, or the city, would have been beyond the wealth of even King Herod. Still, we are confronted with Josephus' comment about the 'gleaming' appearance of the temple.

The first to fully address the construction materials of the temple was Lisa Kahn. Although Josephus specifies that the building material was marble, she proposed other materials and methods that could account for the shining aspect of the temple. She notes that other religious structures Herod constructed in Judea were made of local stones, which included limestone. Among the numerous architectural fragments found on site, Kahn drew attention to several carved fragments of kurkar that probably belonged to the temple.<sup>n50</sup> These fragments were 'worked' kurkar stones whose shapes suggested that they belonged to the frieze of the temple. On some of the frieze stones were preserved a design motif called dentiles which still retained, on some of their interior spaces, a coating of white plaster.<sup>n51</sup> Here was the first indication that the 'gleaming' appearance of the temple, as well as other buildings in the city, could be accounted for by a coating of white plaster or stucco. In 1999 and 2000, archaeologists excavating on the temple platform made important discoveries to confirm this suggestion.

In the excavation seasons of 1999 and 2000 archaeologists found several large thin and curved fragments of white stucco while excavating in trenches on the temple platform adjacent to the southern side of the foundations of the temple. Previously, large sections of column drums made of kurkar had been discovered which revealed that the diameter of each of the temple's columns was over two meters. The size and curvature of the stucco fragments disclosed that they had indeed served as a stucco coating that encircled the outside of the columns.



Stucco and flutes. Photo by Farland Stanley

On the outside of the stucco were preserved the design of flutes which were intended to imitate the fluting of a marble column.<sup>n52</sup>

The grandeur of the temple was not only apparent from the outside, but also on its interior. Josephus describes two colossal statues that were housed within the temple; one that represented Augustus and the other that represented Rome. He relates that these two statues were made of gold and that they were comparable in size to the Zeus at Olympia and the Hera of Argos, two famed statues that were fashioned earlier in the fifth century BC by the Greek sculptors Phidias and Polycleitus.<sup>n53</sup> No remains of these statues have survived, however one coin from the city illustrates what may be depictions of the two colossal statues of Augustus and Rome that were within the temple.<sup>n54</sup>



Fragment of stucco with flutes. Photo by Farland Stanley

Josephus relates that Herod also added to the grandeur of the city when he ordered that a magnificent palace be built for himself. This palace has now been discovered and excavated on a promontory to the south of the harbor and adjacent to the city's theater.<sup>n55</sup> The palace was extensive in size and elaborate in construction. Its extant ruins clearly indicate that it added significantly to the splendor of the city and helped to distinguish the city as one of the most impressive in the Mediterranean world.

Another impressive structural survivor from the Herodian period is the theater, which Josephus mentioned situated adjacent to the southeast side of the palace area. It was excavated by a team of Italian archaeologists in the 1950s, and has been restored for modern usage.<sup>n56</sup> Also adjacent to the palace, and extending to the north from the palace along the shoreline toward the southern side of the inner harbor, is a newly discovered colossal hippodrome.<sup>n57</sup> The seaside hippodrome, which will be discussed below, is the

second hippodrome discovered at Caesarea. The first, which lies about one-half mile to east of the city, has been known for some time, but until 2000 only limited exploration of the site has taken place.

There are, as we have seen above, descriptions made by Josephus for a number of structures in Caesarea that range from subterranean conduits () and sewers () to the city's great temple, and the harbor.<sup>n58</sup> We have also noted that there are structures found in the city that are not mentioned by Josephus. In this regard we should also add the discoveries for the remains of storage complexes () in Area CC and LL, which while mostly dating to the post Herodian period do have, in at least one instance, limited evidence for the Herodian period.

The first complex is a series of very well preserved storage vaults which were found in Area C in a part of the city located to the south of the temple platform and the Crusader fortifications which surround the city



Frontal view of two restored horrea in Area C. Photo by Farland Stanley

In all, this complex consists of four large Roman storage vaults () which date to the post Herodian period.<sup>n59</sup> Initially, this complex of storage vaults was entirely covered by sand, which added to the dramatic discovery of Vault I by Robert Bull in 1973 and 1974.<sup>n60</sup>

Excavations and analysis of ceramics found in vault I show that at the end of the 1st century this vault was converted into a Mithraeum, a religious building used for the worship of the god Mithras. The vault apparently continued to be utilized for this purpose through the mid- to late third century.<sup>n61</sup>



Roman Mithraeum. Photo by Farland Stanley



General view of Area LL looking to SW. Photo by Farland Stanley

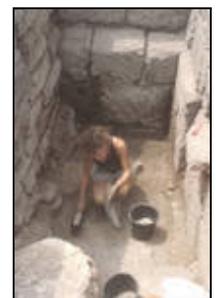
In Area LL, a second complex of storage facilities has been found adjacent to the north side of the inner harbor just off the shoreline. Most of what is currently visible relates to a complex of Byzantine warehouses and storage bins. However, as indicated by deep foundations, these Byzantine warehouses and bins were constructed directly over the foundations of structures that appear to date to the Herodian period. Because of the alignment of the walls of the later Byzantine warehouse atop the Herodian foundations, the excavators suggest that the earlier foundations supported a Herodian warehouse.<sup>n62</sup>

. In conversations with Professor Raban it was suggested that the earlier foundations may be ship sheds because of their nearness to the sea. However, the continuity of usage for storage facilities in this location would appear to have a bearing on understanding the level of usage that carried over to the harbor during the early Byzantine period.



Walls of Byzantine warehouse in Area LL1. Note wall to the right resting on Herodian

Although there is a lack of full or specific description, Josephus also mentions that Caesarea had public buildings. These buildings must include his specific reference to a theater and amphitheater. Some of these buildings were most likely the sites for the games that he described as celebrated in honor of the emperor Augustus.<sup>n63</sup> While Josephus seems correct about the usage of the theater, until recently there was confusion over his reference to an 'amphitheater' that he said was located near the theater.<sup>n64</sup> For years the site of an amphitheater has been located to the northeast of the temple platform



Wall of Islamic storage bin (to the left) resting against Herodian foundations in Area LL.5. Photo by Farland Stanley

foundations. area, and an 'eastern' hippodrome has been located on the eastern outskirts of the city. Photo by Farland Stanley The amphitheater to the northeast has not been excavated and its date of construction is not known. The 'eastern' hippodrome, however, which is just now being excavated, apparently dates to a time that follows Josephus. At first, scholars thought that Josephus had confused the location of the amphitheater and that he had mistakenly placed it south of the temple platform area and near the theater. Alternatively, others thought that the erroneous location was due to a scribal error. Now, however, a second huge public structure has been recently excavated to the south of the temple platform area in the very location where Josephus said that the structure existed near the theater. The structure that was discovered is a unique building that was constructed along the shoreline between the southern side of the temple platform and the north side of the promontory on which the palace of King Herod was built. Its location perfectly fits Josephus' description as a building that could hold a large crowd of people and had a view over the sea.

The structure is rectangular and extends north/south along the shoreline, with a curved southern end and an elevated seating area along its eastern side. At the north end of the structure are located the [carceres](#) or starting gates for the chariot races that were held in the structure. The internal measurements of this structure are 265 meters north/south and 50.35 m east/west. The excavators have shown that in its first phase of usage the building was clearly a hippodrome. This could very well be the structure where some of the games and horse races took place that Josephus mentions were sponsored by Herod in honor of Augustus.<sup>n65</sup> On the other hand, Josephus refers to the structure as an 'amphitheater' and not a hippodrome.<sup>n66</sup> To this may be added one very brief comment by Josephus where he specifically refers to "the great stadium" in Caesarea. Unfortunately, he does not give any indication at all of its location.<sup>n67</sup>

Yosef Porath believes that Josephus' reference to a stadium at Caesarea is probably a reference to the structure that Josephus also calls an "amphitheater," which he said was near the theater and palace of Herod.<sup>n68</sup> The confusion in his description of the structure as a stadium and an amphitheater has now been solved by archaeology. The answer is that the structure, which is a stadium or hippodrome, at some later time in its history, had its length truncated at a point 130 m from the southern end. At this location, a narrow curving wall was built that crossed from the west lateral wall to the east lateral wall. This modification effectively turned the southern one half of the structure into an amphitheater. Thus, to describe its later usage, its excavator Yosef Porath discusses this whole structure as a 'multiple-purpose building,' while John H. Humphrey refers to it as a 'Hippo-Stadium.'<sup>n69</sup>

Josephus mentions that the city also included other large and impressive structures, including marketplaces, and 'sumptuous palaces' with most elegant interiors.<sup>n70</sup> At the present time, it is believed that one marketplace may lie just to the north of the temple platform. Excavations have not taken place there, however, to confirm this supposition. The sumptuous palaces, described as possessing 'elegant interiors,' likely include the palace of Herod and may also refer to large nearby villas that have not yet been discovered.

One final structure that is not mentioned in Josephus' description of Caesarea is a city wall. Today large sections of an immense wall, with its large northern entrance and towers, still exist as evidence for a wall that once encircled the city. Despite excavations and study of these structures, scholarly debate continues with no clear resolution as to the date of the wall.<sup>n71</sup>

With the close of this evaluation of Josephus' description of Caesarea, one deduction becomes apparent. Josephus was remarkably accurate. The precision in the conformity between recent archaeological discoveries and Josephus' description of Caesarea demonstrates the attentiveness that he gave to recording what he observed and what he learned from sources that he probably had at hand when he wrote. What makes his description even more impressive relates to the chronological gap between the time when Herod

built Caesarea and the time of Josephus. During this interim Caesarea had undergone almost a century of embellishment and change. However, whatever the methods of investigation that Josephus used in addition to his power of observation, he was able to divorce himself from the Caesarea of his day and evaluate the city as it was originally fashioned. In doing so, he reported his description in a manner that strongly endorsed Herod as a Jew and a King to whom Josephus carefully ascribed no feature of the city unless the association was clear.

When this evaluation of Josephus began, attention was drawn to the burden that is placed on the reliability and accuracy of our principal sources, the literary record and archaeology. Here, after making a comparison between the description of Caesarea by Josephus and recent archaeological discoveries, we have one of those happy moments when compatibility is demonstrated between our two primary records of antiquity. For a historian who has sometimes been maligned for his descriptions and reports of historical events and places, the description that Josephus gave of Caesarea is remarkably verified by archaeology. Therefore, as it relates to his description of Caesarea, for the accuracy of his report he deserves to receive credit as a historian.

Josephus' Description of Caesarea (translations by J. P. Oleson and the author, see [note 2](#), below)

#### Jewish War I. 408-414

(408) He [Herod] noticed a settlement on the coast - it was called Straton's Tower () - which, although much decayed, because of its favorable location was capable of benefiting from his generosity. He rebuilt the whole city in white marble (), and decorated it with the most splendid palaces, revealing here in particular his natural magnificence.

(409) For the whole coastline between Dor and Joppa, midway between which the city lies, happened to lack a harbour, so that every ship coasting along Phoenicia towards Egypt had to ride out southwest headwinds riding at anchor in the open sea. Even when this wind blows gently, such great waves are stirred up against the reefs that the backwash of the surge makes the sea wild far off shore.

(410) But the King, through a great outlay of money and sustained by his ambition, conquered nature and built a harbour () larger than the Piraeus, encompassing deep-water subsidiary anchorages within it ().

(411) Although the location was generally unfavourable, he contended with the difficulties so well that the strength of the construction () could not be overcome by the sea, and its beauty seemed finished off without impediment. Having calculated the relative size of the harbour () as we have stated, he let down stone blocks () into the sea to a depth of 20 fathoms (ca. 37 m). Most of them were 50 feet long, 9 high, and 10 wide (15.25x2.7x3.05 m), some even larger.

(412) When the submarine foundation () was finished, he then laid out the mole () above sea level, 200 feet across (61.0 m). Of this, a 100-foot portion was built out to break the force of the waves, and consequently was called the breakwater (). The rest supported the stone wall (teichos) that encircled the harbour. At intervals along it were great towers (), the tallest and most magnificent of which was named Drusion, after the stepson of Caesar.

(413) There were numerous vaulted chambers () for the reception () of those entering the harbour, and the whole curving structure in front of them was a wide promenade for those who disembarked. The entrance channel () faced north, for in this region the north wind always brings the clearest skies. At the harbour entrance () there were colossal statues, three on their side, set up on columns. A massively-built tower () supported the columns on the port side of boats entering the harbour: those on the starboard side were supported by two upright blocks of stone yoked together () higher than the tower on the other side.

(414) There were buildings right next to the harbour also built of white marble, and the passageways of the city ran straight towards it, laid out at equal intervals. On a hill directly opposite the harbour entrance channel () stood the temple of Caesar [i.e. Roma and Augustus], set apart by its scale and beauty. In it there was a colossal statue of Caesar, not inferior to the Zeus at Olympia on which it was modeled, and one of the Goddess Roma just like that of Hera at Argos. He dedicated the city to the province, the harbour to the men who sailed in these waters, and the honour of the foundation to Caesarea: he consequently named it Caesarea ()

#### Jewish Antiquities 15.331-341

(331) Noticing a place on the coast-line very suitable for the foundation of a city - formerly called Straton's Tower - he undertook a magnificent project () and built the whole city not any old way but with structures of white marble, adorning it as well with very costly palaces and civic buildings.

(332) But the greatest project and that which required the most effort was a harbour protected from the waves (), equal to the Piraeus in size, with quays () and secondary anchorages () inside. The remarkable thing about the construction was that he did not have any local supplies suitable for so great a project, but it was brought to completion with materials imported at enormous expense.

(333) Now this city is situated in Phoenicia, on the coasting route down to Egypt, halfway between Dor and Joppa. These are two little towns directly on the coastline, poor mooring places (), since they lie open to the southwest wind, which constantly sweeps sand up from the sea bottom on to the shore and thus does not offer a smooth landing (). Most of the time merchants must ride unsteadily at anchor off shore.

(334) To correct this drawback in the topography, he laid out a circular harbour () on a scale sufficient to allow large fleets to lie at anchor close to shore, and let down enormous blocks of stone () to a depth of 20 fathoms (ca. 37 m). Most were 50 feet long, not less than 18 feet wide, and 9 feet high (15.25x5.49 x 2.7 m.).

(335) The structure () which he threw up as a barrier against the sea was 200 feet wide. Half of this opposed the breaking waves, warding off the surge breaking there on all sides. Consequently, it was called a breakwater (). [J. P. Oleson, the translator of these passages, notes the two different spellings, and . In my text I use only ].

(336) The rest comprised a stone wall () set at intervals with towers (), the tallest of which, quite a beautiful thing, was called Drusus - taking its name from Drusus, the stepson of Caesar who died young.

(337) A series of vaulted chambers () was built into it for the reception () of sailors, and in front of them a wide, curving quay () encircled the whole harbour, very pleasant for those who wished to stroll around. The entrance () or mouth () was built towards the north, for this wind brings the clearest skies.

(338) The foundations () of the whole encircling wall on the port side of those sailing into the harbour was a tower () built up on a broad base to withstand the water firmly, while on the starboard side were two great stone blocks (), taller than the tower on the opposite side, upright and yoked together ().

(339) A continuous line of buildings finished off with highly polished stone formed a circle around the harbour, and in their midst was a low hill carrying a temple of Caesar visible from afar to those sailing towards the harbour. It contained images of both the Goddess Roman and of Caesar. The city itself is called Caesarea () and is very beautiful both for its materials and its finish.

(340) But the underground conduits () and sewers () received no less attention than the structures built above them. Some of the drains led into the harbour and into the sea at regular intervals, and one

transverse branch connected all, so that rainwater and the waste water of the inhabitants was all carried off easily together. And whenever the sea was driven in from off shore, it would flow through the network and purge the whole city of its filth.

(341) In the city he (Herod) built a theater ( ) out of stone ( ) to the south, and behind the harbor an amphitheater ( ), that had the capacity to hold a great number of men and was situated suitable for a view to the sea. The city was completed in twelve years, and during this time the king did not fail in continuing the work and paying the necessary bills.

1 I wish to express my appreciation to Professor Avner Raban from the University of Haifa for his invaluable advice, guidance and help in preparing this paper. On Josephus as a best source for Caesarea: Tessa Rajak, Josephus: The Historian and His Society. (Duckworth, London 1983) 1.

2 The works of Josephus include the Bellum Judaicum, Antiquitates Judaicae, his Vita, and Contra Apionem. Those most pertinent to this study are the Bellum Judaicum and the Antiquitates Judaicae, designated respectively as BJ and AntJ. At the end of this paper appear the two principal sections of these works that describe the city of Caesarea. The translations for these sections are those of J. P. Oleson in Avner Raban, "Sebastos, the Royal Harbor of Herod at Caesarea Maritima: 20 Years of Underwater Research", in G. Volpe (ed.), Archeologia Subacquea come Opera l'Archeologo Storie delle Acque. Edizioni All'insegna del Giglio (Firenze 1998) 217-273. Oleson's translations appear on pp. 266-269 and are based on the Greek text in the Loeb editions of Thackeray (1927) 192-196 for the Bellum Judaicum and Marcus and Wikgren (1963) 1581-64 for the Antiquitates Judaicae (341). To these translations I have added my own for Antiquitates Judaicae 341.

3 Louis H. Feldman. Josephus: A Supplementary Bibliography. (New York 1986).

4 Isaiah Press, Eretz Israel: A Topographical-Historical Encyclopaedia of Palestine. 4 vols. [English] 1946-1955.

5 Magen Broshi. "The Credibility of Josephus," Journal of Jewish Studies, 33 (1982): 379-384.

6 Zeev Safrai, "The Description of Eretz-Israel in Josephus' Works," [Hebrew] in Collected Papers: Josephus Flavius: Historian of Eretz-Israel in the Hellenistic-Roman Period, Uriel Rappaport, ed. (Jerusalem 1982) 91-115. By example, Safrai criticizes Josephus' description of Judea in BJ 3.506-520.

7 Louis H. Feldman, "A Selective Critical Bibliography of Josephus," in Josephus, the Bible and History, Wayne State University Press (Detroit 1989), 435-6.

8 Feldman (above, [note 7](#)) 436. Feldman points out that this agrees with the concluding views of Eric M. Meyers, "The Cultural Setting of Galilee: The Case of Regionalism and Early Judaism." Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt 2.19.1 (1979) 686-702.

9 Josephus' general description of the harbor may have some points of argument, but the accuracy was first noted by Avner Raban, "Josephus and the Herodian Harbour of Caesarea" [Hebrew], in Collected Papers (above, [note 6](#)) 1-5. The principal archaeological efforts within the last three decades have been through the Joint Expedition to Caesarea Maritima (JECM), the Caesarea Ancient Harbor Project (CAHEP), the Combined Caesarea Expeditions (CCE), and the Israeli Antiquities Authority (IAA). For a helpful history of the archaeological excavations at Caesarea, see Robert Lindley Vann, "Early Travelers and the First Archaeologists," Caesarea Papers: Straton's Tower, Herod's Harbour, and Roman and Byzantine Caesarea ed. Robert Lindley Vann, JRA, Supplementary Series number 5, [designated as Caesarea Papers] (Ann Arbor, MI 1992) 275-290. See also K.G. Holum "Introduction: History and Archaeology," Caesarea

Maritima: A Retrospective after Two Millennia. Eds. Avner Raban and Kenneth G. Holum, [designated as Retrospective] (E.J. Brill 1996) 359-377, xxvii-xliv. In the same volume see R.R. Stieglitz, "Stratonos Pyrgos - Migdal (ar - Sebastos)," Retrospective, 593-608. For the palace of Herod, see Ehud Netzer, "The Promontory Palace," 193-207, Kathryn Louise Gleason "Ruler and Spectacle: The Promontory Palace," 208-227, and Barbara Burrell "Palace to Praetorium: The Romanization of Caesarea," 228-250.

10 Yossi Mart and Ilana Perecman, "Caesarea: Unique Evidence for Faulting Patterns and Sea Level Fluctuations in the Late Holocene," Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 9 and note 21.

11 Moshe Sharon, "Arabic Inscriptions from Caesarea Maritima: A Publication of the Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum Palaestinae", Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 401-440. See especially 401.

12 Sharon (above, [note 11](#)) Inscription no. 9, 429-30.

13 Yael D. Arnon, "The Islamic and Crusader Pottery (Area I, 1993-94)". In K.G. Holum, A. Raban, and J. Patrich, eds. Caesarea Papers 2: Herod's Temple, The Provincial Governor's Praetorium and Granaries, The Later Harbor, A Gold Coin Hoard, and Other Studies. JRA, Supplementary Series Number 35, 1999, [designated as Caesarea Papers 2] 225-229.

14 E. Ashtor, A Social and Economic History of the Near East in the Middle Ages. (London 1976) 55. See Kevin Green, The Archaeology of the Roman Economy. (University of California Press, 1986) 140.

15 Adrian J. Boas, Crusader Archaeology: The Material Culture of the Latin East. (Routledge 2000) 12, 47, 99.

16 Ceramic evidence demonstrates that the trading activity of Straton's Tower was restricted to the local Palestine area. J. P. Oleson, M. A. Fitzgerald, A.N. Sherwood, and S. E. Sidebotham, The Finds and the Ship. Vol. 2 of The Harbours of Caesarea Maritima: Results of the Caesarea Ancient Harbour Excavation Project 1980-1985, ed. J. P. Oleson, BAR Int. Ser. 594 (Oxford 1994) 20-21; 143-144. Oleson, "Artifactual Evidence for the History of the Harbors" 369-370 and cf. L.I. Levine, Roman Caesarea: An Archaeological Topographical Study, Quedem: Monographs of the Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University, no. 2, (Jerusalem 1975) 52-53, 56 n. 115.

17 Jeffery A. Blakely, Caesarea Maritima: The Pottery and Dating of Vault I. (Lewiston, NY 1987) 39-42 149-150. See especially appendix IV "Petrological and Heavy Mineral Analysis of Selected Amphora Fragments," 227-248. Analysis of the content of the varied ceramic shipping vessels reveals that among the items shipped were wine, oil, [defructum](#), [garum](#) and [muria](#).

18 While its appearance and size would vary over the centuries, varied evidence illustrates that its vitality as a city survived even until the middle of the thirteenth century. In fact, as late as the tenth century, the geographer Muqaddas (AD 947-990) wrote of the bounty and richness of the city and reported that no other city was more beautiful along the eastern coast of the Mediterranean. Muqaddasî, Ahsan al-Taqâsîm fî Ma'rifat al-Aqâlîm, ed. M. J. De Goeje (Leiden 1906) 174.

19 BJ 1.411 on "beauty and ornament."

20 Lee I. Levine, Caesarea Under Roman Rule (Leiden 1975). For a brief history of Straton's Tower and its relation to Phoenician through Hellenistic history, see 5-14. On the other public buildings, see AntJ 15.331.

21 Robert L. Hohlfelder, "The Changing Fortunes of Caesarea's Harbours in the Roman Period," Caesarea Papers (above, [note 9](#)) 76-77. Kenneth G. Holum, Robert L. Hohlfelder, Robert J. Bull, and Avner Raban, King Herod's Dream: Caesarea on the Sea. (New York 1988) 73.

22 Mart and Perecman, Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)). On the 'much decayed city,' see BJ 1.408.

23 BJ 1.408.

24 BJ 1.410.

25 On the importation of building materials: AntJ 15.332 and Raban (above, [note 2](#)) 233. John Peter Oleson and Graham Branton, "The technology of King Herod's harbour," Caesarea Papers: Straton's Tower, Herod's Harbour, and Roman and Byzantine Caesarea. Ed. by Robert Lindley Vann, JRA Supplement no. five (1992), 56ff. On the dedication of the city: AntJ 15.293; BJ 1.414.

26 AntJ 15.331.

27 On the alignment of streets: BJ 1. 414. On the 'conduits' and 'sewers': AntJ 15.340.

28 On the size of the harbor, see Mart and Perecman (above, [note 9](#)) 9 ff. On the inner harbor see Avner Raban, "Sebastos, the Royal Harbor at Caesarea Maritima: A Short-lived Giant," International Journal of Nautical Archaeology 21 (1992) 111-124. For a discussion that the outer harbor began to subside toward the end of the first century, see Raban (above, [note 2](#)) 221ff.

29 On the existence of subsidiary harbors, see Robert L. Hohlfelder, "The Changing Fortunes of Caesarea's Harbours in the Roman Period." Caesarea Papers (above, [note 21](#)) 75.

30 John Peter Oleson and Graham Branton, "The Technology of King Herod's Harbour," in Caesarea Papers (above, [note 9](#)) 55. Avner Raban, Eduard G. Reinhardt, Matthew McGrath, and Nina Hodge. "The Underwater Excavations, 1993-94," Caesarea Papers 2 (above, [note 13](#)) 153-168. Ron Toueg, "History of the Inner Harbor in Caesarea," C.M.S. News: University of Haifa Center for Maritime Studies. Report No 24-25 December 1998, 16-19. The archaeological evidence for the flushing channel consists of the remnants of a sluice or channel along the southern side of the breakwater close to the shoreline where it acted as a de-silting system. The system worked by utilizing the force of either wave action or the slight northward current of the sea that ran along the shore.

31 Dan Barag, "The Legal and Administrative Status of the Port of Sebastos during the Early Roman Period," Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 609-614. See especially 613.

32 AntJ 17.87; BJ 1.414.

33 For a general history of marine archaeology at Caesarea, including the Link Expedition to Israel in 1960, see Robert L. Hohlfelder, "The First Three Decades of Marine Explorations" in Caesarea Papers (above, [note 9](#)) 291-294.

34 BJ 1.411; on the and depth of the water, see Raban (above, [note 2](#)) 239.

35 BJ 1.411-13; AntJ 15.334-338.

36 Oleson and Branton, "The Technology of King Herod's Harbour," Caesarea Papers (above, [note 9](#)) 49-67. Raban (above, [note 2](#)) 227ff.

37 Robert L. Hohlfelder, "Caesarea's Master Harbor Builders: Lessons Learned, Lessons Applied?" Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 85-86. Joseph Patrich, "Urban Space in Caesarea Maritima, Israel," in Urban Centers and Rural Contexts in Late Antiquity. Thomas S. Burns and John W. Eadie, eds. (Michigan State University Press 2001) 77-110. See 84 and note 40.

38 Hohlfelder, Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 85 ff.

39 On the statues: AntJ 15.334-338; BJ 1.411-13. On a relationship between the Drusion and a light tower see Raban (above, [note 2](#)) 233 and Patrich (above, [note 37](#)) 84.

40 For a helpful summary of the varied early structures found at Caesarea see Patrich (above, [note 37](#)) passim. On the subsidence of the harbor, see Avner Raban, (ed.), Harbour Archaeology, Proceedings of the First International Workshop on Ancient Mediterranean Harbours, Caesarea Maritima, 24-28-.6.83, BAR International Series 257 (Oxford 1985) 74-89. Raban (above, [note 2](#)) 219, 221ff. Ron Toueg, "History of the Inner Harbor in Caesarea," C.M.S. News: University of Haifa Center for Maritime Studies Report No. 24-25 December 1998, 16-19. Mart and Perecman, Retrospective (above, [note 10](#)).

41 Farland H. Stanley Jr. "Area I/8," 40-42, in Avner Raban, Kenneth G. Holum, Jeffrey A. Blakely, The Combined Caesarea Expeditions: Field Report of the 1992 Season, Part I, University of Haifa, the Recanti Center for Maritime Studies, Pub. No. 4, 1993.

42 Farland H. Stanley Jr. "The South Flank of the Temple Platform (Area Z2, 1993-95 excavations)," in Caesarea Papers 2 (above, [note 13](#)) 35-40.

43 Patrich (above, [note 37](#)) 77-110, 88. Rivka Gersht. "Representations of Deities and the Cults of Caesarea." in Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 305-324.

44 Rivka Gersht, "Roman Statuary Used in Byzantine Caesarea", Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 391; K.G. Holum, "Hadrian and Caesarea: an episode in the Romanization of Palestine," Ancient World 23.1 (1992) 51-61.

45 For the cults, see Rivka Gersht, "Representations of Deities and the Cults of Caesarea," in Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 305-24. R. Gersht "Roman Copies Discovered in the Land of Israel," in R. R. Katzoff (ed.), Classical Studies in Honor of David Sohlberg (Ramat Gan 1966) 434-41.

46 BJ 2.266.

47 Lisa C. Kahn, "King Herod's Temple of Roma and Augustus at Caesarea Maritima," Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 130-145.

48 Holum, "The Temple Platform: Progress Report on the Excavations," Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 17-26.

49 BJ 5.223.

50 Kahn, Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 131. As early as 1990, Kahn discussed with Kenneth Holum (co-director of the excavations) the possibility that kurkar was the principal building material of the temple and not marble.

51 Kahn, Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 141.

52 Avner Raban and Kenneth Holum. "The Combined Caesarea Expeditions, 1999 Field Season," C.M.S. News, University of Haifa Center for Maritime Studies, Report No. 26 December 1999, 11. A field report of the discoveries at Caesarea as of 2000, including the white stucco, is forthcoming. Kenneth G. Holum, Jennifer A. Stabler, and Farland H. Stanley, Jr. "Areas TP and LL in the 2000 Excavation Season," JRA (Forthcoming). The report is currently available on the official Caesarea Expeditions web page on the internet (<http://digcaesarea.org/Documents/2000FieldReport.htm>).

53 BJ 3.408-15.

54 The coin (see BMC Palestine, p. 238, no.23) is of Agrippa I and dates to AD 43/44. On the reverse of the coin is a depiction of the front of the temple and what may be the statues of Augustus and Roma.

55 Ehud Netzer, "The Promontory Palace," Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 193-207; Kathryn Louise Gleason, "Ruler and Spectacle: The Promontory Palace," Retrospective, 208-227. Patrich (above, [note 37](#)) 92.

56 A. Frova, "Excavating the Theatre of Caesarea Maritima-and the Goddess Whom Paul Hated," Illustrated London News (1964) 524-526.

57 Yosef Porath, "Herod's 'Amphitheatre' at Caesarea: a multipurpose entertainment building", The Roma and Byzantine Near East: Some Recent Archaeological Research, JRA, Supp. Ser. No. fourteen, 15-27; John H. Humphrey, "Amphitheatrical Hippo-Stadia," Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 120-129. Patrich (above, [note 37](#)) 92.

58 For the conduits and sewers: AntJ 15.340; for the temple see above notes 47 through 52; for the harbor see above notes 28 through 37.

59 Joseph Patrich, "Warehouses and Granaries in Caesarea Maritima," Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 146-176.

60 See Robert Bull and J.A. Blakely, Ch. 2, "Stratigraphy" in Caesarea Maritima, the Pottery and Dating of Vault I: Horreum, Mithraeum, and Late Usage, The Joint Expedition to Caesarea Maritima: Excavation Reports. (Lewiston, NY 1987) 25-38.

61 Bull and Blakely (above, [note 60](#)) 99-100. The specific numismatic evidence is small but a number of Roman colonial bronzes from Caesarea are included. One of the coins to which Blakely draws attention is from the first-second century AD and is smoothly worn. A second coin portrays Nero (AD 67/68), and a third portrays Elgabalus (AD 218-222).

62 Excavations of this area have taken place between 1997-2000. For a discussion of the Herodian foundation walls in LL 1, see "Combined Caesarea Expeditions: Areas TP and LL in the 2000 Excavation Season," above, [note 52](#). In the field report walls 1402 and 1411 in LL1 were found to be Herodian in date. Byzantine warehouse walls 1266 and 1217 were built on the Herodian foundations. It is the conclusion of the 2000 field report that the lower foundations were Herodian and that they had supported a Herodian warehouse. Previous excavations took place in 1975, 1976 and 1979. Lee I. Levine, Ehud Netzer. Excavations at Caesarea: 1975, 1976, 1979 - Final Report, Quedem: Monographs of the Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 21 (Jerusalem 1986).

63 BJ 1.415; AntJ 16.136-138; AntJ 15.331.

64 AntJ 15.341.

65 AntJ 16.137.

66 AntJ 15.341.

67 AntJ 18.57; BJ 2.9.3.

68 Porath (above, [note 57](#)) 25, note 17.

69 Porath (above, [note 57](#)) 15-27; John H. Humphrey, Retrospective (above, [note 9](#)) 120-129.

70 BJ 1.408.

71 There are several arguments pro and con for a Herodian date for the walls. See the arguments in Caesarea Papers (above, [note 9](#)) in the following articles: Avner Raban, "In Search of Straton's Tower," Caesarea Papers, 7-22; Duane W. Roller, "Straton's Tower: Some Additional Thoughts" Caesarea Papers, 23-25; Jeffrey A. Blakeley, "Stratigraphy and the North Fortification Wall of Herod's Caesarea," Caesarea Papers, 26-41; T.W. Hillard, "A Mid-1st c. B.C. Date for the Walls of Straton's Tower?" 42-48. See also: Avner Raban, "The City Walls of Straton's Tower: Some New Archaeological Data," Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, 268 (1987) 71-88.

Flavius Josephus and the Archaeological Evidence for Caesarea Maritima. Farland Hart Stanley Jr. The University of Oklahoma. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# James Terry, The Baths of Trajan Decius -- or of Philip the Arab?

section:

[section intro](#)

intro

In a recent publication Laetitia La Follette collected the evidence for the Baths of Trajan Decius, an important but little-known imperial monument of the mid-3rd c. in Rome.<sup>n1</sup> Bringing together the ancient literary and epigraphic sources, a 16th-c. sketch plan, and the results of her archaeological survey on the Aventine, La Follette "recovered" this complex, establishing its topographical position and orientation, part of its plan, and some details of its decorative program. Despite its undoubted usefulness, this study is flawed in one respect. La Follette believes that Decius built his baths on the Aventine ex novo<sup>n2</sup> but it is far more likely that he completed a bath complex begun by his predecessor, Philippus Arabs.

1 [La Follette \(1994\)](#).

2 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 79.

The Baths of Trajan Decius -- or of Philip the Arab?. James Terry. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# James Terry, The Baths of Trajan Decius -- or of Philip the Arab?

1

## The Literary Evidence

The [Notitia urbis Romae](#), a catalogue of buildings in Rome compiled or updated in the mid-4th c., provides crucial information about the location of Decius' baths: “[REGIO XIII ADVENTINUS continet: Armilustrium. Templum Dianae et Minervae. Nymfae III. Thermas Suranas et Decianas.](#)”<sup>n3</sup>

The compiler lists the [thermae Decianae](#) as one of two major baths in the Aventine region. The other, the [thermae Suranae](#) is a well-attested complex dating to the reign of Trajan.<sup>n4</sup>

A second reference to the Baths of Decius comes from the [Chronica urbis Romae](#). This document lists the Roman emperors up to the death of Licinius (324 C.E.), , with brief notices of the events of their reigns and their building activities in Rome.<sup>n5</sup> “[Decius imper. annum unum m. XI d. XVIII. cong. ded. X CCL. hoc imp. thermae Commodianae dedicatae sunt.](#)”

”<sup>n6</sup> “Decius reigned for one year, eleven months, eighteen days. He distributed largess in the amount of 250 denarii. While he was reigning the baths of Commodus were dedicated.”<sup>n7</sup>

Here the text is corrupt because a copyist erroneously repeated a sentence. Just a few lines earlier the phrase [hoc imp. thermae Commodianae dedicatae sunt](#) appears in its proper place, under the reign of Commodus.<sup>n8</sup> As Theodore Mommsen noted, in the later passage we expect [thermae Decianae](#) rather than [thermae Commodianae](#).<sup>n9</sup> We may accept Mommsen's emendation with confidence.

Eutropius' [Breviarium](#), composed about 370 C.E.,<sup>n10</sup> offers a slightly fuller summary of Decius' reign and less confused account of his building activity at Rome: “[post hos Decius, e Pannonia inferiore Budaliae natus, imperium sumpsit. Bellum civile, quod in Gallia motum fuerat, oppressit; filium suum Caesarem fecit. Romae lavacrum aedificavit.](#)”<sup>n11</sup>

“After these [the Philippi] Decius, born in Budalia in Lower Pannonia, assumed power. He suppressed a civil war which had arisen in Gaul. He elevated his son to the rank of Caesar. He built a bath at Rome.  
”

*Eutr. Brev. 9. 4*

Finally, in the 6th c., we have the following report in Cassiodorus' *Chronica*: “[Decius lavacra publica aedificavit, quae suo nomine appellari iussit.](#)”<sup>n12</sup>

“Decius built a public bath, which he ordered to be named after himself.  
”

*Cass. Chron. 956*

The wording of this account suggests that there was something unusual about the situation. Cassiodorus records several other imperial building projects, but nowhere else does he use similar language.<sup>n13</sup> The fact that the emperor had to order ( [iubere](#)) the baths to be named after himself implies that there was some question as to who deserved the credit. Cassiodorus culled most of his information on public buildings from Jerome's *Chronicle* but here he used another source.<sup>n14</sup> That source may have spelled out more completely the unusual circumstances surrounding the completion and dedication of the baths.

1 [Nordh, ed. \(1949\)](#). For discussion of the date, see [Chastagnol](#) 183-84 (arguing for a date between 337 and 357).

2 The [thermae Suranae](#) are attested in literary sources (*Cass. Dio. 68. 15. 3*, *Aur. Vict. Caes. 13. 8*), on an inscription recording a repair under Gordian III ([Paribeni](#) 141-42), and on the marble plan of Rome ([Carettoni et al.](#) 79, 205, pl. 23). See also [Platner-Ashby](#) 532-33; [Richardson](#) 395-96; M. Andreussi, s. v. "Aventinus Mons" in [Steinby](#) 150.

3 [Mommsen, ed. \(1892\)](#) 141-48. The *Chron. urb. Rom.* was appended to the compilation of the Chronographer of 354, probably at the time the latter was assembled or not long thereafter. In Mommsen's opinion, the *Chron. urb. Rom.* and the two other documents added to the *Chron a. 354* appear close in time and place to the main collection: “[id tam apte explent et tempore locoque tam prope ad id accedunt, ut non magis pro alienis haberi debeant](#)” (*ibid.*, 37). Henri Stern divides the materials on the *Chron a. 354* into pagan and Christian components, but concludes that “*Cette différence considérable entre les deux parties de l'ouvrage n'empêche que l'appartenance de toutes deux à une seule et même édition soit évidente.*” ([Stern](#) 9).

4 [Mommsen, ed. \(1892\)](#) 147, lines 34-35.

5 The abbreviation must be completed as [hoc imp\(erante\)](#), not [hoc imp\(eratore\)](#) as in [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 83, app. I, no. 3. Compare in the same text: [hoc imp. mula hominem comedit](#) (!) ([Mommsen, ed. \[1892\]](#) 147, lines 30-31).

6 *Chron. urb. Rom.*, [Mommsen, ed. \(1892\)](#) 147, lines 6-7. Commodus' bath complex has never been located. See [Platner-Ashby](#) 525; [Richardson](#) 390. According to the *Notitia urbis Romae* ([Nordh, ed.](#) 73) it was in [regio I](#), so identification with the Baths of Decius in [regio XIII](#) is out of the question.

7 [Mommsen \(1892\)](#) 147, n. to line 34. The passage thus emended would follow the formula used for the other accounts of imperial baths in the same text: [Thermae Severianae dedicatae sunt](#) ([ibid.](#) line 11); [thermae Antonianae dedicatae sunt](#) ([ibid.](#) line 14); [thermae Alexandrinae dedicatae sunt](#) ([ibid.](#) line 24).

8 The [Breviarum](#) includes events through the death of Jovian, (364 C.E.). For the date of composition, see [Syme \(1973\)](#) 310.

9 [Lavacrum](#) is a late term. It seems to refer to public baths on a scale less monumental than [thermae](#). However, other possible uses of the term have been noted. See [Yegül](#) 491 and [Nielsen](#) I, 3, 139.

10 Cass. [Chron.](#) 956. [Mommsen, ed. \(1894\)](#) 147. In this section a scribal error caused the consul list to fall out of synchronization with Cassiodorus' historical notes. As a result, the construction of the baths is placed in the year of Gallus and Volusian, who did not assume the consulship until after Decius' death (252 C.E.). However, it is clear that Cassiodorus does not mean to imply that the baths were completed posthumously, since his account of the deaths of Decius and Herrenius Etruscus his account of the construction of the baths.

11 When describing the erection of public buildings, Cassiodorus leans heavily on two predictable verbal formulas, one active, one passive: [Titus amphitheatrum Romae aedificavit](#) (712); [Antoninus Romae thermas sui nominis aedificavit](#) (900); [Aurelianus templum soli aedificavit](#) (990); [templum Romae et Veneris factum est](#) (789); [thermae Commodianae Romae factae sunt](#) (857); [thermae Severianae . . . factae et Septizodium instructum est](#) (879).

12 Jerome does not mention the building of a bath under either Philip or Decius. On Cassiodorus' sources see [Mommsen \(1894\)](#) 111-13 and his marginal notes [ibid.](#) 120-61. Also, [O'Donnell](#) 37-38.

The Baths of Trajan Decius -- or of Philip the Arab?. James Terry. 2001. A Festschrift in Honor of Eugene N. Lane. Cathy Callaway. Stoa Consortium. 2001.



# James Terry, The Baths of Trajan Decius -- or of Philip the Arab?

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## The epigraphic evidence

Only one known inscription unquestionably refers to the baths of Decius. It is a bronze slave collar found at Tolentino, some 150 km northeast of Rome, near the Via Flaminia.<sup>n15</sup> “

[FUGITI](#)  
[BUS SO REVO](#)  
[CA ME IN ABEN](#)  
[TINO IN DOMU](#)  
[POTITI · VC](#)  
[AD DECIA](#)  
[NAS](#)

”

“I am a runaway. Return me to the house of Potitus, [vir clarissimus](#), on the Aventine near the [Baths] of Decius.”

*CIL XV, 7181*

Although it offers moving testimony about one individual's quest for freedom, this inscription adds only a little to our stock of information about the Baths of Decius. An aristocratic [domus](#) was situated nearby. This may have been in the second half of the 4th c., if we assume that the owner, Potitus, was the same individual as the [vicarius urbis](#) of 379/80.<sup>n16</sup>

La Follette discusses eleven other inscriptions in connection with the Baths of Decius.<sup>n17</sup> One of these, [CIL VI, 1165](#), bears no plausible connection to the baths, as the author herself points out.<sup>n18</sup> Of the remaining ten, two are dated to the urban prefecture of Caecina Decius Aginatus Albinus (414-15 C.E.).<sup>n19</sup>

[SALVIS · AC FLORENTIBVS · DD NN · HONORIO · ET · THEODOS\[io\]](#)  
[PERPETVIS · SEMPER · AVGG · CAECINA DECIVS ACINATIVS](#)  
[ALBINVS · V · C · PRAEF · VRBI · VICE SACRA IVDICANS](#)

CELLAM TEPIDARIAM · INCLINATO · OMNI PARIETE LABENT[em]  
DE · QVA CELLARVM RVINA PENDEBAT ERECTORVM · A FV[n]  
DAMENTIS · ARCVVM DUPLICI MVNITIONE FULCIVIT  
D · N · M · Q · EORUM

*CIL VI, 1659*

SALVIS · DD · NN  
HONORIO · ET · THEODOSIO  
PP · FF · SEMP · AVGG ·  
CAECINA DECIVS  
ACINATIVS · ALBINVS  
V · C · PRAEF · VRBI  
FACTO A SE ADIECIT  
ORNATVI

*CIL VI, 1703*

Both inscriptions commemorate building repairs. The first, which mentions a [cella tepidaria](#), undoubtedly refers to a bath. *CIL VI, 1659* was found in the Cavalletti vineyard on the Aventine; *CIL VI, 1703* "between the Tiber and the Aventine." So the two inscriptions are likely to have come from one of the two bath complexes on the Aventine, the [thermae Decianae](#) or the [thermae Suranae](#). In each case the reported findspot fits better with the presumed location of the [thermae Suranae](#), but the stones may have been moved from their original positions, so this is not decisive.<sup>n20</sup> Lanciani speculated that there may have been a connection between the 3rd-c. emperor Decius and his 5th-c. namesake, a member of the distinguished family of the Ceionii Rufii.<sup>n21</sup> It is possible that a 5th-c. nobleman adopted the name Decius and claimed a family connection (surely fictitious) with the 3rd-c. emperor.<sup>n22</sup> But it is equally or perhaps even more likely that the name was meant to invoke the prestige of the heroic Republican Decii. In any case, the name cannot be used as evidence that these inscriptions came from the Baths of Decius without circular reasoning. Moreover, we need not have recourse to Lanciani's hypothesis to provide Caecina Decius Aginatus Albinus with a motive for improving baths on the Aventine. An inscribed lead pipe found near the church of S. Alessio suggests that Albinus' family owned property on the western edge of the hill.<sup>n23</sup> What could be more natural for a Roman nobleman than to finance repairs to public baths near his own town house, where his munificence would not only increase his prestige but could also be enjoyed directly by his family and retainers?

Another inscription is unpublished. La Follette saw it immured in the Cortile Torlonia on the Aventine. The stone, as presented by La Follette, reads:

dd. nn.  
thermas dec[  
vicini par[  
solo strat[  
et porticu[

<sup>n24</sup>

La Follette claims that it "refers clearly to the Baths of Decius,"<sup>n25</sup> but this is not strictly speaking correct. Supplementing line 2 as [thermas dec\[ianas\]](#) is a strong possibility, suggested by the current location of the stone. But a form of the verb [decorare](#) is also a possible reading of the fragmentary word at the end of

line 2 (compare the inscription from the Maritime Baths at Ostia: CIL XIV, 137). All we know for certain is that the stone records repairs or additions to a bath--either the Decian Baths or, possibly, the Baths of Sura--executed during a period of joint imperial rule.

Seven statue bases with inscriptions dating from the 4th through the 6th centuries were also found on the Aventine.<sup>n26</sup> These suggest that in this period the Baths of Decius may have housed a series of honorary portrait statues, though again it is possible that some or all of these bases came originally from the [thermae Suranae](#).

1 CIL XV, 7181. [Silveri Gentiloni](#) 220. [De Rossi and Gatti](#) 293-96.

2 PLRE I, 221 (Potitus 1).

3 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 15-22 and appendix 1, 83-85.

4 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 16, 83 (no. 7).

5 PLRE II, 50-51 (Albinus 7).

6 For two possible locations of the [thermae Suranae](#)--about 100 m north of the [thermae Decianae](#) or perhaps even closer--see [Venditelli](#) 163-66 and [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 11, frontispiece. The Cavalletti vineyard was on the NE slope of the Aventine, thus closer to the [thermae Suranae](#) than to the [thermae Decianae](#). See G. B. Nolli's 18th-c. plan reproduced in [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 40, fig. 6. The [thermae Suranae](#) were closer to the Tiber; the [thermae Decianae](#) closer to the SE slope of the hill.

7 [Lanciani \(1897\)](#) 542.

8 Caecina Decius Albinus, the urban prefect of 402, (PLRE I, 36 [Albinus 10]) was the first member of his family known to have borne the name Decius. His son, Caecina Decius Aginatus Albinus, was the urban prefect of 414, (PLRE II, 50-51 [Albinus 7] and 53 [Albinus 10]). For the stemma of the Ceionii Rufii see PLRE I, 1138, no. 13. The sudden extinction of the imperial family in the 3rd c. makes it extremely unlikely that Albinus could have been an actual descendant of the emperor Decius, though perhaps he could have claimed some kind of relationship through a collateral or female line.

9 The pipe (CIL XV, 7420) is inscribed with the name Caecina Decius Maximus Basilius, [v\(irum\) i\(n\)lustrem](#). Probably the grandson of Caecina Decius Aginatus Albinus, he was consul in 480. See PLRE II, 217 (Basilius 12) and the stemma, *ibid.* 1324, no. 26.

10 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 83, no. 6, fig. 1.

11 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 21.

12 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) app. 1, nos. 8-11, 13, 14, 17, (= CIL VI, 1167, 1159, 1160, 1672, 1651, 1192, 1671)

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# James Terry, The Baths of Trajan Decius -- or of Philip the Arab?

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## Palladio's sketch plan

Another important source of information about the Baths of Decius is a freehand plan sketched by the Renaissance architect Andrea Palladio (1508-80), probably on the occasion of his last trip to Rome in 1554.<sup>n27</sup> The bath complex was in ruins when Palladio saw it but the plan and dimensions of the structure were at least partly discernible. Palladio's sketch plan shows two symmetrical ranges of rooms. Rooms E, E', F and F' (following La Follette's labelling) open through column screens onto the SW façade. D, D', C, and C' are rectangular rooms roofed with cross vaults. Room B is also shown as cross-vaulted, while its counterpart B' appears to carry a barrel vault, perhaps the result of a later rebuilding. The two large rooms A and A' were square on the exterior, circular inside, and presumably domed. These were probably cold bathing rooms.<sup>n28</sup> Each was provided with four semi-circular niches which may have held basins or small plunge baths. The measurements recorded in Palladio's hand on the sketch indicate that the width of the preserved portion of the SW façade was slightly more than 70 m and the length from the SW façade to the NE walls of rooms A and A' was about 44 m.<sup>n29</sup>



Fig. 1. Palladio's sketch plan of the Baths of Decius on the Aventine (1554?). RIBA fol. XV/11v.

1 The plan is preserved in the Royal Institute of British Architects in London, catalogued as RIBA XV/11v. For the date see [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 33-34 and [La Follette \(1993\)](#) 196-98.

2 Identical rotundas are found in the unheated area of the baths of Trajan: [Nielsen I](#), 55.

3 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 34-36.

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## La Follette's survey

In the 1980s La Follette surveyed the ancient remains on the privately-owned site of the [casale](#) and [tinello](#) Torlonia, near the Piazza del Tempio di Diana.<sup>n30</sup> The most impressive standing element documented by La Follette is the NW [exedra](#) of room E (fig. 2, "1") where the ancient wall is preserved to a height approximately 6.60 m above the modern floor. La Follette's survey also mapped several walls preserved at the basement level, including the NE and SE walls of room E, most of the walls of room D, the NW wall of room F, part of the wall dividing rooms F and F3 and part of the wall dividing rooms C and C4. In addition La Follette's survey documented two huge brick arches immured in the SW wall of the [casale](#) Torlonia (fig. 2, "2") and a short stretch of the foundation for the SW wall of room E' (fig. 2, "3"). Most importantly, La Follette's survey fixed the topographical position and orientation of the baths and generally confirmed the reliability of Palladio's sketch and the accuracy of his measurements.

1 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 43-65.

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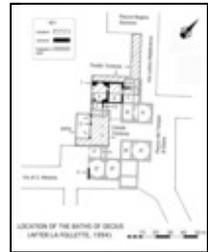


Fig. 2. Extant remains of the Baths of Decius superimposed on the Palladio plan and modern buildings and streets. After [La Follette \(1994\)](#)



# James Terry, The Baths of Trajan Decius -- or of Philip the Arab?

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## Interpretation

A flaw in La Follette's analysis is her assumption that the rooms sketched by Palladio define the full extent of the central block of the baths. This assumption is entirely unwarranted. Palladio's field sketch does not claim to present a complete ground plan of the complex in the way that a restored plan prepared for publication would.<sup>n31</sup> Palladio's sketch shows us the parts of the ruins that he could see and measure but not what was absent, invisible or inaccessible because of stone-robbing, overbuilding or collapse.

The two surviving 3rd-c. imperial baths in Rome, the Baths of Caracalla (fig. 3) and the Baths of Diocletian (fig. 4), define the type. Their plans are essentially similar: compact rectangular blocks containing symmetrically arranged rooms with recognizable forms and functions: [apodyteria](#) (dressing rooms), [natationes](#) (swimming pools), [basilicae](#) [thermarum](#) (exercise or meeting halls), [frigidaria](#) (cold rooms), [tepidaria](#) (warm rooms) and [caldaria](#) (hot rooms).

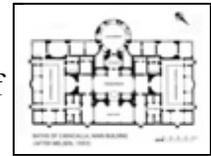


Fig. 3. Plan of the Baths of Caracalla, Rome (211/2 - 216 C.E.). After [Nielsen \(1993\)](#).

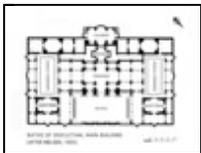


Fig. 4. Plan of the Baths of Diocletian, Rome (298 - 305/6 C.E.). After [Nielsen \(1993\)](#).

Palladio's plan tells us almost nothing about the central halls of the Baths of Decius, but we may reconstruct their outlines based on La Follette's discoveries and comparison with the other 3rd-c. imperial baths. In order to take advantage of passive solar heating, the caldarium of the Baths of Decius undoubtedly projected from the center of the SW façade, exactly as in the other imperial baths of the period. This placement is confirmed by a feature noted by La Follette: underground corridors, clearly part of the heating system for the [caldarium](#), extend under the patio of the [casale](#) Torlonia. (fig. 2) The [tepidarium](#), a smaller, transitional space, was situated between rooms F and F'. It was separated from the [caldarium](#) by the two huge brick arches noted by La Follette and separated from the [frigidarium](#) by the parallel arches indicated on Palladio's plan. This room was presumably heated by a hypocaust ([hypocaustum](#)), exposed during renovations in the NE portion of the [casale](#), and the [tubi](#) (terra cotta wall flues), preserved in the lower level bathroom on the SE side of the same structure.<sup>n32</sup> The [frigidarium](#), always the most impressive room in an imperial bath, must have occupied the entire space between the SE walls of D, B and A and the NW

walls of D', B' and A'. All of these central spaces were apparently inaccessible to Palladio, probably because the collapse of the large vaults had filled them with rubble.<sup>n33</sup>

It is unlikely that the patron of the Baths of Decius would have omitted the other essential elements of an imperial bath, although these features were not recorded by Palladio. The [basilicae thermanum](#), rectangular halls surrounded by porticos, were probably placed symmetrically to the NW and SE of the portion of the ruins documented by Palladio. The large, rectangular [natatio](#) would presumably have been situated NE of the [frigidarium](#) and we would expect [apodyteria](#) to have flanked the [natatio](#) to the NW and SE.

1 Palladio sketched the Baths of Decius as part of his projected book on Roman baths, a project he never completed. He may not have continued work on the Baths of Decius beyond this initial freehand sketch, as no more finished version survives. Palladio may have been discouraged by the nature of the surviving remains and decided not to attempt to produce a complete restored plan. For Palladio's working methods, see [La Follette \(1993\)](#) 189-90.

2 Corridors under presumed location of projecting [caldarium](#): [La Follette \(1993\)](#) 55-56 and color fig. 20. Extant brick arches: [ibid.](#) 57-63, figs. 4, 10, 17, 18. Hypocaust and [tubi](#): [ibid.](#) 55 n.160, 56 n.163.

3 [La Follette \(1993\)](#) 37-38.

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## The reign of Decius

Pioneering articles by Arthur Stein<sup>n34</sup> and F. S. Salisbury and Harold Mattingly<sup>n35</sup> used the evidence of papyri, inscriptions, and coins to establish the chronology of Decius' reign.<sup>n36</sup> Decius defeated Philip in a battle fought at Verona between the end of August and the beginning of October, 249.<sup>n37</sup> After his return to Rome and recognition by the Senate, the new emperor turned his attention to three priorities. First, Decius began an extensive campaign of road and bridge repairs, no doubt designed as much to keep his army occupied as to improve the military transportation and communications system.<sup>n38</sup> Numerous milestones and inscriptions--from Spain, the Balkans, Palestine, Galatia, Britain, and Africa--record the renewal of roads and bridges under Decius in 249 and 250.<sup>n39</sup>

A second priority for the new emperor was a program of religious renewal. Decius required all inhabitants of the empire to sacrifice to the traditional gods of the Roman state.<sup>n40</sup> In the Christian sources this policy is presented as a persecution directed at the faithful.<sup>n41</sup> However, as Hans Pohlsander observed, Decius' religious program may be understood as a positive attempt to reverse the troubles besetting the empire by reinvigorating Roman paganism and leading the masses back to the traditional Roman cults.<sup>n42</sup> Decius' religious program was underway by the third week of January, 250.<sup>n43</sup> The emperor himself may have presided at the trial of the Christian recusant Celerinus before Easter in the same year.<sup>n44</sup>

Decius next turned his attention to the military situation, responding to internal threats from usurpers and external threats from the Goths and the Carpi on the Danube frontier. Our best guide here is the pagan historian Sextus Aurelius Victor, who provides a clear sequence of events. According to Victor, Decius first dispatched his son, Herennius Etruscus, to the frontier provinces.<sup>n45</sup> This was apparently soon after Herennius' elevation to the rank of Caesar in the spring of 250.<sup>n46</sup> Decius himself remained behind in Rome for an undetermined period, during which time he received the head of the usurper Jotapian.<sup>n47</sup> At the same time Decius received an alarming report that another usurper, T. Julius Priscus, had allied himself with the Goths and was pillaging Thrace.<sup>n48</sup> In response to this threat Decius left Rome immediately: Qua causa, Decio quam potuit maturime Roma digresso.<sup>n49</sup>

The thorny problems surrounding the campaigns of 250 and 251 do not concern us here.<sup>n50</sup> For our purposes it is important only to note that the Decii never returned to Rome. After some initial successes,<sup>n5</sup> the military situation deteriorated rapidly in the spring of 251. Decius and Herennius may have attempted to intercept the Goths as they withdrew with booty from the sack of Philippopolis (Plovdiv, Bulgaria), but the Roman army was cut off at Abrittus (Hisarlaka, near Razgrad).<sup>n52</sup> Decius and Herennius were killed. The news of their deaths reached Rome between June 9 and June 24 of 251.<sup>n53</sup>

1 [Stein \(1923\)](#).

2 [Salisbury and Mattingly \(1924\)](#).

3 More recent studies have done little to alter the armature erected by these scholars in the 1920s. The most radical change proposed is that of [Schwartz \(1977\)](#). Based on a conjectural emendation of the [Chron. a. 354](#), he placed the death of Decius in March of 251, ([Schwartz](#) 172-73). Clarke's arguments against this view are convincing. [Clarke \(1980\)](#) 114-116.

4 The sources are almost unanimous in agreeing that Philippus Arabs died in the battle. His son, Philip II, either died at Verona with his father or shortly thereafter at Rome. Slobodan Dusanic has proposed a short period of sole rule by Philip II in the fall of 249, , and even a period of joint rule by Philip II and Decius ([Dusanic](#) 427-39). However, Hans Pohlsander's arguments against this interpretation seem decisive ([Pohlsander \[1982\]](#) 216-22). The considerable issue of Alexandrian coinage from the seventh year of Philip must have been minted after the last day of the Egyptian year, , August 28, 249 ([Stein](#) 40). In [Pap. Harris](#) 80. 39-40 Philip is considered to be alive and ruling on September 22, ([Rea](#) 19). Thus, even allowing a full month for the news to reach Egypt, the Battle of Verona can hardly have occurred before the third week of August. Decius was acknowledged as Augustus in Rome by October 16, , as a dated rescript ([Cod. Just.](#) 10. 16. 3) attests. Salisbury and Mattingly propose a probable date for the Battle of Verona in the latter half of September, allowing time for Decius to march to Rome and be recognized before October 16, ([Salisbury and Mattingly](#) 3-4). Lorient, who attempts to reconcile the papyrus and coin evidence with the reign length given in the [Chron. a. 354](#), believes that Philip's death should not be placed later than September 11, ([Lorient](#) 791).

5 [Salisbury and Mattingly](#) 4-8.

6 E. g., [CIL](#) II, 4809, 4812, 4813, 4823, 4833, 4835; [CIL](#) III, 3723, 4645, 4651, 10641, 12515, 14155, 1418440; [CIL](#) VII, 1163, 1171, 1174, 1180; [CIL](#) VIII, 10313, 10314, 10318, 10360, 10457. K. Wittig in [RE](#) 15, s. v. "Messius," col. 1276. [Salisbury and Mattingly](#) 5-7. The absence of the name of Herennius Caesar suggests that these date to 249 or the first half of 250. Salisbury and Mattingly argue that Herennius was created Caesar "soon after the end of August 250" ([Salisbury and Mattingly](#) 12). However, according to [Cod. Just.](#) 5. 12. 9 there was already a Decius Caesar (certainly Herennius, not his younger brother, Hostilian) on June 8, 250, . Herennius, then, was probably elevated in preparation for the summer campaign of 250, rather than afterwards. For possible confirmation in the papyri, see [Rea](#) 20-21.

7 Though we lack the text of this edict, its provisions can be inferred from the [libelli](#), documents issued to individuals as records of their compliance with the law. See [Knipfing](#) 345-90.

8 E. g., Eusebius [Hist. eccl.](#) 6. 39-42; Orosius [Hist. ad. pag.](#) 7. 21. 1; Lactantius [De mort. pers.](#) 4; Prosper Tiro [Epit. chron.](#) 843; Syncellus [Eccl. chron.](#) 684-704; Zonaras [Ann.](#) 12. 20.

9 [Pohlsander \(1986\)](#) 1826-42. See also [Lietzmann](#) 521, [Babcock](#) 147-58, [Marelli](#) 52-56; [Clarke \(1969\)](#) 63-76.

10 Pope Fabian, recognized by church historians as among the first martyrs of the Decian persecution, died on the 19th or 20th of January, 250. Cyprian Ep. 9, [Clarke, ed. \(1984-89\)](#) I, 70-71, 24, 132 n.119, 221-22 n.4. Chron. a. 354, [Mommsen, ed. \(1892\)](#) 71, 75. Lib. pont., [Duchesne, ed.](#), I, 148-49. Eusebius Hist. eccl. 6. 39.

11 Cyprian Ep. 39, [Clarke, ed. \(1984-89\)](#) II, 54-57, 188-89 n.8.

12 Caes. 29. 1.

13 Caes. 29. 1. [Filius Etruscum nomine Caesarem facit; statimque, eo in Illyrios praemisso](#). On Herennius' elevation, see [n.39](#) above.

14 PIR IV, 114 ("I" no. 48). RIC 4. 3, 66, 105. According to Aurelius Victor, Jotapian's head was sent to Rome by the soldiers "as is the custom." Caes. 29. 2. Isid. Iun. Chron. epit. 305a ([Mommsen, ed. \[1894\]](#) 463) places Jotapian's revolt in Galatia. Silvius Polemius puts him in Cappadocia: Laterculus I. 38 ([Mommsen, ed. \[1892\]](#) 521). Eutrop. Brev. hist. mentions civil war in Gallia, probably a garbled reference to Jotapian's usurpation in Galatia. The scarcity of his coins suggests that Jotapian did not remain in power long. Zosimus (Hist. nov. 1. 20. 2) and Silvius Polemius (loc. cit.) put his defeat in the reign of Philip. These reports may be reconciled with Aurelius Victor if, as DuFraigne suggested, Jotapian was defeated in Philip's lifetime but not captured and executed until Decius came to power ([DuFraigne](#) 151-52, n.5). It is unlikely that Jotapian survived long into Decius' reign, perhaps not later than the spring of 250.

15 On Priscus: Silv. Polem. Laterculus I. 40; Jord. Get. 18. 103; PIR IV, 254 ("I" no. 489); [Walser](#) 5-6.

16 Caes. 29. 3.

17 For a review of the literature, see [Scardigli](#) 225-38.

18 An inscription from Carlsburg styles Decius '[RESTITUTOR DACIARUM](#)' (CIL III, 1176; cf. CIL II, 4957, 4958, 4949). Decius' [antoninus](#) with reverse type [VICTORIA GERMANICA](#) may celebrate a victory over the Goths in 251, as Mattingly suggests: RIC 4.3, 113, 125 (no. 43), pl. 10 (no. 20).

19 On the site of Decius' final battle, see [Ivanov](#) 48-53.

20 An inscription from Rome dated June 9, still lists the Decii as (CIL VI, 31129) but in another dated June 24, they are already [divi](#) (CIL VI, 3743=31130=36760). The evidence of Orac. Sibyl. 13. 89-102 also puts Decius' death in June: [Olmstead](#) 399-400. The first Egyptian document of Decius' successor, Trebonianus Gallus, is an [ὄστιρακον](#) from Thebes dated August 13, ([Rea](#) 19).

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# James Terry, The Baths of Trajan Decius -- or of Philip the Arab?

7

## Could Decius have built the baths?

Why did Decius delay his departure for the frontier in the spring of 250? Aurelius Victor is clear on this point.

[Romae aliquantum moratur, moenium gratia, quae instituit, dedicandorum.](#)

[n54](#)

[Decius] remained for some time at Rome in order to dedicate a public building which he built.[n55](#)

Because our sources document only one public building dedicated by Decius at Rome, it is virtually certain that Victor is referring to the imperial [thermae](#) on the Aventine.[n56](#) La Follette asserts that Victor here "clearly refers to new construction begun by Decius."[n57](#) However, the text is not explicit on this point

Is it possible that Decius planned, built, and dedicated an imperial bath complex in less than one year, between his arrival in Rome in the autumn of 249 and his departure in the summer of 250? The Baths of Caracalla were begun in 211 or early 212 and dedicated in 216, although the construction of the surrounding porticoes probably dragged on until the reign of Severus Alexander.[n58](#) The Baths of Diocletian took between seven and eight years to complete, from 298 to 305 or 306.[n59](#) To judge from the size of the rooms recorded by Palladio, Decius' baths must have been significantly smaller than either of these--perhaps less than one-quarter the floor area of the gigantic Baths of Diocletian. Still, it is wrong to assume that construction time is simply a function of floor area. Architectural planning, site procurement and clearance, and the production and transport of building materials are subject to their own timetables, independent of the dimensions of the final product.

Of course, the most important factors affecting construction speed are the financial and manpower resources available for a given project. Though our evidence for imperial finances in the mid-3rd c. is incomplete, there is good reason to believe that Decius was short of cash throughout his reign. We can identify several extraordinary expenditures which must have drained the imperial treasury in the period

before 250. First, there was the huge ransom, (reportedly 500,000 denarii) paid by Philip to the Persian Shahpuhr at the conclusion of the disastrous eastern expedition in 244.<sup>n60</sup> Zosimus reports that Philip also gave an especially generous [donativum](#) to the troops to grease his way to the throne.<sup>n61</sup> This was followed by a [congiarium](#) of 350 denarii for each household on the dole in Rome.<sup>n62</sup> Next there was the celebration of the millennium of the Roman state which took place in 248. The lavish festivities surrounding this event, which featured the deaths of "innumerable" wild animals and three days and nights of theatrical presentations, must have been hugely expensive.<sup>n63</sup> On Decius' accession in 249 a hefty donative was surely demanded by the Danubian troops who raised him to power. Decius also distributed the customary largess to the [plebs](#), but this was reduced, significantly, to only 250 [denarii](#) per household.<sup>n64</sup>

On top of all this we must take into account the costs of civil war. Philip had to deal with Jotapian in the East,<sup>n65</sup> Marinus Pacatianus in Upper Moesia,<sup>n66</sup> and finally Decius himself. Decius faced the revolts of Priscus in Thrace<sup>n67</sup> and Julius Valens Licinianus.<sup>n68</sup> Disastrously expensive to wage, the virtually continuous civil conflicts during the reigns of Philip and Decius also meant that tax revenues from the provinces occupied by usurpers were unavailable to the government in Rome. The income side of the imperial ledger was probably also affected by an agrarian crisis in Egypt, the result of the failure of the annual Nile flood.<sup>n69</sup> The cumulative effect of all of these factors must have left the imperial treasury severely depleted during Decius' brief reign.

In La Follette's view, Decius' baths need not have been finished at the time of dedication, in 250, since "the dedication of a building could occur at almost any time during its construction."<sup>n70</sup> She bases this opinion on the evidence of the Baths of Caracalla, which, according to the [Historia Augusta](#), were dedicated before completion:

... [et lavacrum quidem Antoninus Caracallus dedicaverunt et lavando et populum admittendo, sed porticus defuerant, quae postea ab hoc subditicio Antonino exstructae sunt, ab Alexandro perfectae.](#)

... and in fact, Antoninus Caracalla dedicated the bath, and bathed in it and opened it to the public, but the portico was left unbuilt. This was added later by this counterfeit Antoninus [Elagabalus], and finished by Alexander.<sup>n71</sup>

It is clear from this passage that the central block of Caracalla's baths must have been substantially complete when the emperor dedicated it, opened it to the public, and . We cannot take this as evidence that dedication ceremonies were regularly performed over half-finished construction sites.

La Follette suggests that part of the impetus behind the bath project was Decius' desire to emulate his predecessor and namesake, Trajan.<sup>n72</sup> Certainly, an astute politician like Decius would not have been blind to the propaganda value of new public building in the capital. But Decius had other priorities: his campaign of religious revival, his transportation infrastructure program, and the defense of the empire against threats from usurpers and barbarians. The absence of evidence for other public construction projects during Decius' principate suggests that building was not high on his list of priorities. To summarize, Decius had neither the time, nor the resources, nor the inclination to begin a major public building project in Rome. However, if he had inherited a bath complex that was partly or nearly complete, it would have been natural for him to finish it and take credit.

1 [Caes.](#) 29. 1.

2 Here [moenia](#) certainly denotes a public building or buildings, not city walls. As Bryan Ward-Perkins notes, this was the normal meaning of the word in Late Antiquity, as distinct from [muri](#) (city walls or

fortifications). [Ward-Perkins](#) 46 n. 39. [Instituo](#) here means to build or cause to be built, cf. Verg. [Aen.](#) 6.71 ([templum](#)) and Pliny [NH](#) 35.2.10 ([bibliothecas](#)).

3 In addition to the [thermae](#), two other projects have been attributed to Decius, neither one convincingly: (1) A fragment of an inscribed epistyle ([CIL](#) VI, 1099), reportedly found in the foundations of a building between the Circus Flaminius and the Capitoline Hill, led some 19th-c. topographers to propose a "[porticus Decii](#)" in [regio](#) IX: [Jordan](#) I, pt. 3, 555; [Lanciani \(1893-1901\)](#) 21, pl. 2; [Platner-Ashby](#) 421. This idea can be traced to a highly conjectural editorial supplement to the inscription. (2) According to Isidorus [Chron.](#) ad a. mundi VCCCCXLIX ([Mommesen, ed. \[1894\]](#) 463) and Jerome [Chron.](#) ad Olymp. CCLVII ([Helm, ed.](#) 218) the Flavian Amphitheater suffered damage in a fire during Decius' reign. Platner and Ashby opined that the amphitheater was "presumably restored by Decius" ([Platner-Ashby](#) 6), but this is not actually stated in the sources. Decius may never have ordered repairs, especially if the fire occurred when he was away from Rome on campaign. Even if we assume that Decius initiated repairs promptly, this should be understood as an emergency measure necessary to ensure the continued presentation of games, rather a planned program of renovation.

4 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 15.

5 The beginning of the project is dated by brick stamps with Geta's name ([Platner-Ashby](#) 520). Dedication Jerome [Chron.](#) ad. Olymp. CCXLVIII ([Helm, ed.](#) 213). The portico: SHA, [Elag.](#) 17. 8-9; SHA, [Alex.](#) 25.

6. That the portico was completed after Caracalla's reign is implied by the absence of brick stamps (the practice of stamping bricks went out of use between the reigns of Caracalla and Diocletian). [Bloch](#) 1, 303.

6 [Platner-Ashby](#) 527.

7 [Olmstead](#) 255-56. The figure is from the Kaaba inscription of Shahpuhr, of which Olmstead translates an excerpt on p. 255.

8 Zos. [Hist. nov.](#) 1.19.1. The anonymous encomium to Philip the Arab also refers to "limitless donatives": Pseudo-Aristides [Orat.](#) XXXV, 30, [Keil, ed. \(1898\)](#) 261. Commentary: [Swift](#) 288.

9 [Chron. urb. Rom.](#), [Mommesen, ed. \(1892\)](#) 147, l. 32.

10 SHA, [Gord.](#) 33.1: "[elephanti triginta et duo . . . alces decem, tigres decem, leones mansueti sexaginta, leopardi mansueti triginta, belbi, id est hyaenae, decem, gladiatorum fiscalium paria mille, hippopotami sex, rhinoceros unus, argoleontes decem, camelopardali decem, onagri viginti, equi feri quadraginta, et cetera huius modi animalium innumera et diversa; quae omnia Philippus ludis saecularibus vel dedit vel occidit.](#)" Jerome [Chron.](#) ad. Olymp. 256 ([Helm, ed.](#) 217): "[Ob quam sollemnitatem innumerabiles bestiae in circo magno interfectae ludique in campo Martio theatrales tribus diebus ac noctibus populo pervigilante celebrati.](#)" Cf. Eutr. [Brev. hist.](#) 9.3; Cass. [Chron.](#) 949; Aur. Vict. [Caes.](#) 28.1. The impressive number of variety of animals slaughtered also is reflected in the coinage of Philip's dynasty: [RIC](#) 4.3, 62, 70, nos. 12-14, 17-23, pl. 6; [Robertson](#) 216, 218, nos. 31-33, 44-45, 47-48, pls. 67-68 and pp. 228-230, nos. 10-13, 27, pls. 72-73. See also [Gagé](#) 412-17.

11 [Chron. urb. Rom.](#), ([Mommesen, ed. \[1892\]](#) 147, l. 34).

12 See [n.47](#) above.

13 Zos. [Hist. nov.](#) 1.20-21. For the coins of Pacatian: [RIC](#) 4. 3, 65, 105-106; [Robertson](#) 237, nos. 1-2; [Mowat](#) 193-204.

14 See [n.48](#) above.

15 PIR 285-86 ("I" no. 610). Aur. Vict. Caes. 29.3. Sily. Polem. Laterculus([Mommsen, ed. \[1894\]](#) 521, l. 40).

16 This is suggested by the evidence of the Egyptian papyri: [Bianchi](#) 188.

17 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 15 n.33.

18 SHA, Elag. 17. 8-9.

19 [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 13-14, 79.

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8

## A hint from Pirro Ligorio

The antiquarian and artist Pirro Ligorio (c. 1513-1583) has left us a tantalizing reference that may cast some light on the shady circumstances surrounding the completion of the Baths of Decius. In his Libro . . . delle antichità di Roma (1553) Pirro wrote:

. . . [ma Spartiano dice che Decio Traiano Imperatore restaurà le Terme di Agrippa senza far menzione, che egli ne edificasse de nuove, le quali se pur egli avesse edificate. . .](#)

. . . but Spartianus says that the emperor Trajan Decius restored the Baths of Agrippa without mentioning that he had not built them from the ground up, as if he [Decius] had really built them himself . . . [n73](#)

This text is problematic in several ways. The source to whom Pirro refers is "Aelius Spartianus," one of the pseudonyms used by the author of the Historia Augusta, a collection of biographies of Roman emperors composed in the late 4th c. [n74](#) The text of the Historia Augusta has come down to us incomplete: there is a [lacuna](#) from the reign of Philip until the end of the reign of Valerian, that is, from about 244 to 260. This [lacuna](#) is due to a physical loss in transmission; the original text undoubtedly contained the biographies of the missing emperors, including that of Decius. [n75](#) The Historia Augusta biographies are a mixed bag, some providing authentic information that can be confirmed from other sources, others consisting mostly of fiction. The lost biography of Decius was probably one of the more reliable sort if, as Timothy Barnes has argued, the author's primary source for the period was the 3rd-c. Greek historian P. Herennius Dexippus. [n76](#)

In the surviving portion of the Historia Augusta the accounts of the reigns from the Philippi to Claudius Gothicus are credited not to "Aelius Spartianus" but to another pseudonym, "Trebellius Pollio." [n77](#) This apparent contradiction is not especially troubling because in distributing the biographies among his six fictitious "authors," the real author of the Historia Augusta routinely mixed up his attributions. [n78](#) If Pirro saw a copy of the now-lost biography of Decius, it may well have been attributed in the text to "Aelius Spartianus." Alternatively, if Pirro's Decius text was unattributed, he may have assumed that "Spartianus"

was the author, because elsewhere "Spartianus" announces that he plans to write biographies of all the emperors and caesars.<sup>n79</sup>

At first glance the anecdote Pirro attributes to "Spartianus" makes no sense at all. Built in the late 1st c. B.C.E. by Augustus' son-in-law, the [thermae Agrippae](#) was Rome's first public bath, one of the best-known buildings in the city.<sup>n80</sup> If Decius had claimed to have built the Baths of Agrippa, it would have earned him only derision. However, we should consider the possibility that the original notice in the *Historia Augusta* referred not to the [thermae Agrippae](#) but to the [thermae Philippicae](#). Since the "Baths of Philip" were unknown, a medieval copyist may have emended [Philippicae](#) to the more familiar [Agrippae](#). Or it may have been Pirro himself, a scholar who took great delight in correcting the errors of others, who made the change. If Pirro were convinced that the correct reading was [thermae Agrippae](#), it would have been logical for him to translate a verb such as [perficere](#) as Italian [ristaurare](#). After all, in Decius' time the Baths of Agrippa had been for hundreds of years, but they would certainly have been in need of repair.

1 [Libro di m. Pyrrho Ligorio . . . delle antichità di Roma](#) fol. 49v-50r. Quoted in [La Follette \(1994\)](#) 86.

2 On the problem of the date and authorship of the *Historia Augusta*, see the summary of the arguments in [Syme \(1971\)](#) and [Syme \(1973\)](#). The consensus of contemporary scholars supports the thesis of single authorship and late 4th-c. date first put forward by Dessau.

3 [Syme \(1971\)](#) 199-203.

4 [Barnes](#) 109-11. A fragment of Dexippus' history of the reign of Decius is preserved in Michael Synkellos' chronicle: [FGrHist](#) IIA, 452-80 (no. 100).

5 SHA, [Aur.](#) 2. 1.

6 "Julius Capitolinus" states that he has written the life of Pescennius Niger, but in the text of that biography it is attributed to "Aelius Spartianus" (SHA, [Clod. Albin.](#) 1. 4). "Aelius Lampridius" says he wrote the life of Macrinus (SHA, [Diad.](#) 6. 1) but in the text it is credited to "Julius Capitolinus."

7 SHA, [Ael.](#) 1. 7.

8 The Baths were endowed and willed to the Roman people for their free use after Agrippa's death. Cass. Dio 54.29.4. They were restored by Hadrian (SHA, [Hadr.](#) 19. 10).

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9

## Conclusion

The unfinished bath complex that Decius inherited was most likely begun by his predecessor, Philip the Arab. Though Philip has not previously been thought of as a builder, he had the opportunity in his five-year principate to plan and undertake municipal projects.<sup>n81</sup> The highlight of Philip's reign, was the secular celebration of 248. Could Philip have planned new imperial baths in conjunction with that event? It is certainly tempting to imagine that in April, 248, as Philip officiated at the magnificent games in the Circus Maximus, he could have drawn the crowd's attention to another example of his munificence, a new imperial bath complex rising just to the south on the Aventine.

Of course, Philip never saw his project completed. Construction was temporarily interrupted by the sudden death of the Augustus and the extinction of his dynasty. The Philippi suffered [damnatio memoriae](#) under the new regime, as attested by numerous inscriptions on which their names were erased.<sup>n82</sup> As a successful usurper, Decius had an interest not only in promoting his own dynastic name, but also in expunging that of his predecessor. So after completing Philip's bath complex, the new emperor would naturally have dedicated it in his own name. We can cite one close parallel for this strategy, from the beginning of the next century. The great basilica begun by Maxentius beside the Via Sacra was left unfinished after his defeat and death in the civil war, of 312. Construction was resumed by Constantine, and after its completion, the building was dedicated in Constantine's name:

[Adhuc cuncta opera, quae magnifice construxerat, Urbis fanum atque basilicam, Flavii meritis patres sacravere.](#)

<sup>n83</sup>

Furthermore, all of the monuments which he [Maxentius] had proudly built--the temple of the City and the Basilica--the Senate dedicated in honor of Flavius.

*Aur. Vict. Caes. 40.*

Large-scale architectural patronage was a rarity during the period of the "soldier-emperors." From the end of the Severan dynasty to the establishment of the first tetrarchy only two emperors, Gordian III and

Aurelian, are known to have changed the cityscape of Rome to any significant extent.<sup>n84</sup> To this short list we should perhaps now add the name of Philip--restoring to him the credit as a municipal benefactor that was denied to him by Trajan Decius.

1 One construction project in Rome is solidly attributed to Philip: Aurelius Victor records that he erected a public reservoir [trans Tiberim](#) ([Caes.](#) 28. 1).

2 [CIL](#) III, 2706, 3161, 8269, 10436; [CIL](#) VI, 793 (= [CIL](#) XIV, 2258); [CIL](#) VIII, 814; [ILS](#) I, 508.

3 [Aur. Vict. Caes.](#) 40. 26. The is Hadrian's Temple of Venus and Rome, restored by Maxentius after a fire in 307.

4 For the younger Gordian's building activities see [Platner-Ashby](#), s. v. "Amphitheatrum Flavium," "Castr Praetoria," "Porticus Gordiani," and "Thermae Suranae." For Aurelian, [ibid.](#) s. v. "Castra (Urbana)," "Mur Aureliani," "Sol, Templum" and [CAH](#) XII, 308.

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# Barbara P. Wallach, "Murderers of the Dead" in Antiphon 1

1

The anonymous speaker of Antiphon 1 is prosecuting his stepmother for the murder of his father. Yet, in his [prooemium](#) and <sup>n1</sup>, he exerts more effort to discredit his stepmother's defenders (i.e., his half-brothers: [ἀδελφοῖς ὀμοπατρίοις](#) 1.1) than to attack the defendant. He even makes the surprising allegation that his half-brothers are "murderers of the dead man" ([τοῦ...τεθνεῶτος φονεῖς](#) 1.4), even though, according to the prosecutor's own admission, his father died as a result of potion acquired by the stepmother but administered by an unwitting slave woman (1.14-20).<sup>n2</sup> The phrase "murderers of the dead man" is paradoxical, for how can someone become the murderer of a man who is already dead at the hands of someone else? Even if we use the translation "murderers of the victim," some sense of paradox remains to catch our attention.<sup>n3</sup> Why does Antiphon have the prosecutor include such an allegation? Would it surprise Athenian jurors, or is it merely a topos or a feature of Antiphon's style? To the contrary, as an examination of some of the prosecutor's options and tactics will show, this accusation reveals a crucial element of his strategy.

Before beginning that examination, I should like to stress that we have only the prosecutor's version of characters and events, which can be at least two degrees removed from reality. In other words, the speaker's ethos is a product of the speechwriter's art and, necessarily selective, is fictional to some extent.<sup>n4</sup> The jury would have seen and heard a prosecution designed to garner sympathy and so win the prosecutor's case. The degree of this persona's affinity to the actual speaker might have been clearer in oral performance but cannot be determined now on the basis of the text. The case, in turn, comes to the audience through the mediation of this artificial construct, without the benefit of support beyond the prosecutor's account. We only "know" what the prosecutor tells us, especially since he produces no witnesses.<sup>n5</sup> This limitation in our knowledge applies both to the modern reader and to the Athenian jurors. As T. A. Schmitz, for instance, warns us, "the only elements of the speeches that the jurors could immediately perceive as referential were mentions of people and things present in the law court. All other parts of the text merely claimed to be referential, a claim that could, due to the nature of the Athenian lawsuits, not be checked against external evidence: all trials were "she says, he says" cases, as we would call it today."<sup>n6</sup> When I discuss options and tactics, I shall be considering the thinking and attitudes behind the speaker's efforts and try to fill in some gaps in his presentation of the case and the "[dramatis personae](#)." Like a typical rhetorician, I shall be relying on probabilities, and my scenario, like the prosecutor's case, will be interpretative. My concern is with perceptions, not with innocence or guilt.

Antiphon 1 is unique among extant Attic forensic orations in that it involves the prosecution of a woman for murder and features half-brothers as in a homicide case, acting as prosecutor and defense counsel respectively. This seems the type of case that might have been settled privately to avoid the embarrassment

of a trial. As it is, the prosecutor is careful to place the onus for the proceedings on his half-brothers.<sup>n7</sup> He claims that those who should be avengers of the dead man and the prosecutor's helpers have compelled their brother to undergo this trial.<sup>n8</sup> Notably, the speaker does not elaborate here on how they have so compelled him, but his use of the singular substantive participle (Τῷ δὲ ἔπεξιόντι) paralleling his reference to the victim (Τῷ μὲν τεθνεῶτι) emphasizes that he is the only one taking action on behalf of his father.<sup>n9</sup>

The potential for odium against someone taking his relatives to court did not escape at least one early theorist. Discussing the kinds of prejudices that may arise in a forensic case, Anaximenes (Rh.A1. 1442a10, ed. M. Fuhrman, Leipzig 1966) states that prejudices associated with one's actions will occur if one is engaged in (πραγματεύσῃται) a case against kinsmen, "guest friends", or personal (ιδίου) friends. Especially relevant to the "lonely" prosecutor of Antiphon 1 is Anaximenes' comment (1442b12) that a younger man may deflect prejudice from himself by claiming a dearth (ἀπορία) of older friends who could argue the case on his behalf. Here, of course, the speaker complains of a dearth of helpful brothers.

The prosecutor's rationale for alleging compulsion does become clearer in the (1.5-13), where he depicts his as hindering the search for the truth. He insinuates that the defendant's chief spokesman is guilty of impiety ( ) for supporting his criminal mother instead of avenging his father<sup>n10</sup> and complains about his opponents' refusal of the torture challenge ( ).<sup>n11</sup> Hence, the audience may deduce that frustration with his brother's intransigence and outrage at a perceived skewing of filial priorities have forced the prosecutor to take formal legal action. At least, the speaker could hope that the jurors would make that deduction and so turn their displeasure against his brothers.

This tactic of criticizing priorities is hazardous. The speaker has introduced himself as young and inexperienced in the courts and has declared his in the face of a dilemma forcing him to choose between disobeying his father's last command and taking his closest relatives to court.<sup>n12</sup> Since he refers to himself as a at the time of his father's death (1.30), the prosecutor apparently was then no older than fourteen. He would be between eighteen and twenty years old by the "dramatic date" of this trial.<sup>n13</sup> Even with his youth as a factor, however, the prosecutor cannot take the jury's sympathy for granted.<sup>n14</sup> Although they could empathize with his lone pursuit of vengeance (see Christ, [note 8](#), 35-6), individual jurors might be skeptical and wary about being manipulated. They might even doubt that a would have been given so much responsibility by his father. Moreover, his plea of a "family-imposed" dilemma could benefit his opponents. If we accept the transmitted "facts of the case," the speaker's brothers have their own dilemma. To join in prosecuting their father's murderer, they would have to go to court against a close relative, i.e., their own mother. In fact, since he is her (see below and [note 15](#)), could the eldest son really have been expected to prosecute his mother, when he was the person who should represent her? The jury might believe that the could have avoided his problem by settling out of court, but, in countering the prosecutor's allegations about the , the defense could argue that they tried to do so. At any rate, sons who faced a dilemma in trying to defend their mother and their should be able to prevent their young sibling from garnering all of the jurors' good will.

Further, although we know little about them and see them only through his eyes, the prosecutor's siblings may all be older than he and, in comparison to him, have established reputations. The eldest at least has to be old enough to act as for his mother and to justify the speech's emphasis on the youth and themes, an emphasis which would be ludicrous if his stepmother's defender were near the speaker's own age and equally inexperienced.<sup>n15</sup> Set against this older brother, the prosecutor, as a young man and a , risks appearing too strident or even petulant in his attacks.<sup>n16</sup> His plea of inexperience should win him some latitude. His opponent could offset that plea, however, by implying that the younger man's naiveté has led him to go to trial unnecessarily and by showing that experience, established status, and proven value to the

community make the older brother a better judge of the situation. Of course, the economic and social status of the older brother is difficult to determine solely on the basis of the speech, which only lets us glimpse the family home (1.14) and refers to the father's planned trip to Naxos (1.16), probably indicative of a business venture.<sup>n17</sup> The possibility that an attempt to win a settlement or a portion of an inheritance is at the root of this case (see [note 8](#)) is another, but still hypothetical, sign of the family's wealth. Still, I am not assuming that the older sibling necessarily has had the time or the wealth to attain distinction. He should, however, be able to cite some participation in the affairs of the (in his deme at least), or introduce evidence that he has been a law-abiding citizen who troubles no one.<sup>n18</sup>

Since the speaker cannot allude to his own career (being too young to have one), he might bring up his father's character, accomplishments, or benefactions with a view to contrasting the worth of the victim with that of the murderer. As it is, he neither mentions any of these nor cites his father's name or pedigree. We should perhaps avoid the hazards of an argument from silence, and not make too much of these omissions. The victim's identity at least would be clear to all.<sup>n19</sup> Further, in the sections defending his father (and attempting to remove prejudice against father and son), the defendant in Antiphon 5 also fails to give a parental name or pedigree but does include information about his father's position and career relevant to his own defense ([5.74-80](#)). The speaker in Antiphon 1, on the other hand, has a different agenda, as he tries to create and exploit prejudice against his mother's defenders. Hence, his stress is on the oaths and the . He may also feel constrained by limitations of time and prefer to highlight himself as his father's avenger and "confidant" ([1.30](#)). Moreover, emphasis on their father's status might benefit the legitimate sons more than a who may not want to call too much attention to his own social or economic position.<sup>n20</sup> The speaker, thus, has sufficient reasons to avoid a lengthy discussion of his father's merits.<sup>n2</sup>

If the plea of youth will not be quite enough, clearly the prosecutor has to find a dramatic way to turn the case against his opponents from the outset. He could begin with a direct attack against his stepmother and immediately denigrate her character by mentioning her name in court, letting his failure to respect her anonymity imply that she is not a respectable woman.<sup>n22</sup> Unless supported by credible testimony, however, such an approach can be annoying rather than beneficial, especially given the probable status of the prosecutor and his mother, to whom he never even refers.<sup>n23</sup> The defendant has not given him much ammunition to use in diminishing her respectability. Apparently legally married to the prosecutor's father and the mother of at least two legitimate sons, she seems to have been a respectable matron (albeit now an accused criminal). The prosecutor neither makes allegations of sexual misconduct against her nor challenges the legitimacy of her sons. He may depict his siblings as less than loyal to their father, but he does not dispute their paternity. There is no hint that the defendant has been anything other than a faithful wife. Her alleged use of the "love potion," connected to a feeling that her husband was wronging her and to a desire to restore his affection for her (see 1.15), while extreme, is still within the confines of her marriage. Her discontent apparently has sexual roots, but she is no adulteress. Her husband would have been within his rights as a respectable Athenian male if he had engaged in sexual relations with his slaves or hetairai or taken a concubine. Yet, if the jury felt that he had been too open about his extramarital activity or shamed her, they could find his wife a sympathetic character.<sup>n24</sup>

Furthermore, although he attacks his brothers for siding with their mother, the speaker makes nothing of the absence of a other than the defendant's son to present her case. His stepmother presumably has no current husband and may lack an older male agnate willing or able to act on her behalf. Rumors (or direct knowledge) of a tendency to resort to a love potion could have damaged her chances for a new marriage or led her male relatives to shy away from helping her now, although clearing her of the charges would seem to be in the best interest of her . Most likely, however, she has simply preferred to have her son (or sons; see [note 7](#) and [note 15](#)) defend her, and her choice cannot be assumed to cast doubt on her reputation.<sup>n25</sup>

In general, the prosecutor seems better served if he avoids naming a woman whose identity as a defendant (whether by her name or by some periphrasis) would already be clear to the jury from the indictment. The notoriety produced by the charge is sufficient to discomfit his opponents. Her indictment would have led to speculation about her "[ἐν τοῖς ἄρσεσι](#)" who knew or knew of her family (and among those men's womenfolk as well) and so have damaged her reputation, whether deservedly or not.<sup>n26</sup> Having diminished her to that degree already, the prosecutor can afford to observe due etiquette at the trial. In addition, if he is to maintain his persona as a young man troubled by the need to take relatives to court, he must show at least a modicum of respect for the woman who is the mother of his brothers. To avoid giving his opponents an inducement to attack his mother and the jury an impression of offensive impertinence, he needs to stay away from direct insult. The stepmother will get her due later when he calls her Klytaimnestra, thereby succinctly (and hyperbolically) summoning up for his male audience the frightening images associated with that name (1.17).<sup>n27</sup> Moreover, his use of this sobriquet lets him identify his stepmother in a telling fashion without openly exceeding the bounds of propriety.<sup>n28</sup> He has attacked her by giving her a name that suits her offense but has retained "deniability" behind a rhetorical ploy. Bandyng her real name about would seem a pale insult next to this one word characterization. Further, her "identification" with the legendary queen elevates the defendant to the level of a dangerous woman who has devised and carried out a plot beyond the range of the typical Athenian female (or so male Athenians should hope).<sup>n29</sup>

In spite of this "Klytaimnestra's" central position as the defendant, her persona remains almost as hidden as her real name. Other participants take center stage and overshadow her. For example, at 1.3, the speaker asks the jury to exact vengeance both for their laws and for the victim, if he proves that the mother of his brothers killed their father through planning and from malice aforethought ([ἐξ ἐπιβουλήs καὶ προβουλήs](#))<sup>n30</sup> and had previously been caught several times contriving his death. This section functions as a statement of the charge and establishes the stepmother as the defendant. The focus of the speech immediately turns, however, from the alleged murderess to the prosecutor's isolation and his kinsmen's abrogation of their duty (1.4). Maintaining that focus, the speaker taxes the defense with its refusal to hand over their slaves for a ([1.6-13](#)). The prosecutor argues that these slaves know of a former attempt detected and prevented by his father ([1.9](#)), and that the jury should construe his opponents' refusal to cooperate as indicative of their knowledge of guilt ([1.11-13](#)).<sup>n31</sup> At this point, the integrity of the defendant's is under attack. Since she is the person whose conduct is the object of the and the alleged "cover-up" by her son(s), however, the stepmother cannot be ignored in the . Yet, her role in this section is a passive one.

In a sense, she has been relegated to the "women's quarters" while the men conduct business, but she never completely disappears from consideration. Her portrayal in the speech as a whole is stereotypical in citing her evil intentions and culpability ([1.3](#), [1.8-8](#), [1.17](#), [1.20](#)), lack of restraint ([1.22](#)), violation of the laws ([1.24](#)), lack of pity for the victim ([1.25-7](#)), and failure to respect gods, heroes, or human beings ([1.27](#)). All of these traits are topoi generic enough to fit, *mutatis mutandis*, any defendant, male or female, whether on trial for a violent act or under attack in some other litigation.<sup>n32</sup> Personalization of each topos is minimal. None is obviously "feminized", i.e., adapted beyond the facts of the case for use against a female defendant.<sup>n33</sup> In other words, the stepmother does not, e.g., lack restraint or fail to respect the gods specifically because she is a woman. She can be said to share these characteristics with many male defendants.

Not surprisingly, it is "in" the women's quarters that she briefly escapes from genderless topoi and where the *narratio* gives her more definition. Sections 14-16 tell of the friendship and plotting between the stepmother and the concubine who is to be her alleged dupe. We can assume that meetings between the two would have occurred in the women's quarters of the victim's home and so would not have been

witnessed by the prosecutor.<sup>n34</sup> Men's image of women as creatures conspiring together over matters involving sexual relations can be the stuff of comedy (see *Lysistrata*) and would seem to reflect a topos concerning women's natures. Here that imagined conspiracy is sinister, and there are prejudicial nuances in this deceptively simple passage. The prosecutor states that his father's house had an upper room in which his father's friend Philoneos would occasionally stay (1.14). Apparently, Philoneos had brought his concubine with him, since the stepmother befriended her (1.14-5: [ταύτην οὖν πυθομένη ἢ μήτηρ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἐποίησατο φίλην](#)).<sup>n35</sup> The contrast between the masculine and feminine friendships is quickly apparent in the rest of the *narratio*. Philoneos and prosecutor's father are social equals, accustomed to enjoying each other's company and hospitality (see [1.4](#) and [16-18](#)). Their relationship is straightforward and firmly rooted in the masculine world of business ventures, dining (with a concubine present), and libations. The defendant, on the other hand, has befriended a slave, her social inferior. Why would a citizen stoop to such a friendship? Did she lack female relatives or respectable female acquaintances? The speech neither explores these possibilities nor is precise about when the friendship began.<sup>n36</sup>

What is important for the speaker is not precision but the impression that reaches the jury. Wondering why a woman of the defendant's status would make a slave her friend, they might see her action as compassionate, thinking that she pitied a woman who was about to be sold to a brothel. The course of the narrative, however, guides them to perceive a darker side and conclude that this unequal "friendship" resulted when the defendant saw a chance to acquire a tool to carry out her scheme. Hence, discovering that Philoneos was about to send his concubine to a brothel, the stepmother saw an opportunity to alleviate her own situation and summoned ([1.15: μεταπέμπεται](#)) her useful inferior.<sup>n37</sup> Their friendship was not real and not at all like the masculine one of her husband and Philoneos. Instead of hospitality, the stepmother offered a dangerous scheme and lured a desperate woman into joining it. The slave woman was to help both herself and the stepmother by administering the potion that the stepmother would procure. Perhaps most disturbing to male Athenians, the defendant not only hatched this plot against her own husband; she also tampered with someone else's slave to carry it out. This latter point should have solidified a negative impression of the stepmother's character and of her motive for "friendship."

After the concise but vivid account of her scheming, the defendant fades from the *narratio*. She receives mention only briefly as the person (the Klytaimnestra) whose instructions the concubine follows in deciding when to administer the potion ([1.17](#)) and then, at the narrative's conclusion, as the guilty originator of the plot ([1.20](#)). Both of those allusions keep her in the picture as the force setting events in motion. Otherwise, from [1.16-20](#) the *narratio* focuses on the stepmother's victims, i.e., the two men and the concubine.<sup>n38</sup> The effect is almost like a "diptych," with one side a scene of two women in conversation and the other a corresponding image of men drinking and dining. The two sides are unequal, however, and the differences in the treatment are striking. The description of the female conspiracy is essentially a narrowly focused snapshot of two people on one occasion with most of the background "cropped out." Even though their status and connections with their respective males are clear, the participants in the reported conversation remain abstract. The stepmother's claim that she is being wronged should be an indication that she is angry, but she does not show any emotion. Instead, as reported by a prosecutor who is trying to prove that she acted with malice aforethought, her remarks seem coldly methodical and rational. In his account, she knows what she is doing, and her emotional state does not intrude to excuse her actions.

The other side of the "diptych" ([16-20](#)) contrasts markedly with first. In place of anonymous women conspiring at an indefinite time is a meeting between two male friends who have taken advantage of an opportunity to socialize with no ulterior motives. The prosecutor's father is about to sail to Naxos. Since he himself is going to Peiraeus to perform rites for Zeus Ktesios, Philoneos escorts his friend as far as that port and combines sacrificing and entertaining ([16-18](#)).<sup>n39</sup> Depicting them at Philoneos' home, the narrator

stresses the normalcy and propriety of the men's activities. Both men seem to be well-to-do gentlemen.<sup>n40</sup> They do what they are supposed to do on such an occasion; yet, they unwittingly bring about their own deaths. With the assistance of the concubine, who has come along for that purpose, Philoneos performs the sacrifice appropriately (17: [οἶον εἰκός](#); see Gagarin, [note 1](#), 115). He and his guest dine and are ready to make libations and put frankincense on the altar, as is proper ([οἶον εἰκός](#)). Far from being redundant, the prosecutor's identification of his father at this point as "the one who is about to sail and is dining with his comrade" and of Philoneos as "the one who performed the sacrifice and is entertaining" (18) makes what follows more shocking. In the midst of a setting commonplace among Athenian men, after making prayer: that, contrary to normal expectations, will not be fulfilled (19), the two men take up the wine poisoned by the concubine and quaff their last drink. With no warning, they have become the victims of female treachery.

The has not only complied with the suggestions of the stepmother (17-18) and administered the alleged love potion. She has also shown unexpected initiative and given a larger dose to her master. The prosecutor conjectures that she hoped that a greater measure would make Philoneos love her more (19). Deceived by the stepmother (19: [ἔξαπατωμένη](#)), however, the concubine becomes her third victim, but not an innocent one (20: [ἡ μὲν διακονήσασα ἔχει τὰ ἐπίχειρα ὧν ἀξία ἦν](#)). She may have acted in ignorance of the dangerous nature of the potion, but she had agreed to an "assault" on her own master and then carried it out. Further, she compounded her crime by recklessly going beyond her instructions. Her suffering may underscore the duplicity of the stepmother who employed her to take all of the risks. In attempting to use more than her share of the potion on her master, however, she reveals her own dishonest side. To the extent that she could, the slave woman was as willing to deceive the stepmother as the stepmother was to trick her. The originator of the plot would not be at hand to see how the potion was administered. With no supervision, the concubine was free to put her own interests first. Those interests, of course, turned out to be ephemeral. Hence, the tool has been executed (20), but the manipulator, still in the background, has remained unpunished until this trial. Neither, in the prosecutor's view, deserves sympathy or leniency.<sup>n41</sup> They assumed roles unsuitable for their genders or stations. As a result, the slave who tried to control her master's emotions and change her fate has paid the appropriate penalty. The wife who risked and ultimately caused the loss of her husband's life in pursuit of her own aims should likewise suffer the consequences. If the prosecutor has delivered his [narratio](#) well,<sup>n42</sup> the all male jury should have no sympathy for these women next to whose actions any wrong done by the male victims would seem mere peccadilloes. The causes would be irrelevant in comparison with the effects.

The wife whose conduct is starkly different from that of her unsuspecting husband is, of course, the person whom the prosecutor's brothers are defending at the expense of their father ([21-2](#)) and against their brothers ([23-7](#)). Employing a subtle tactic throughout his oration, the speaker distances himself from this woman and attaches her firmly to his brothers. In the [prooemium](#) ([1.1](#)) and elsewhere in the speech (e.g., [1.3](#); [1.6](#); [1.9](#); [1.14](#)), she is the "mother of his brothers" ([μητρὶ ἀδελφῶν](#)) or of his brother ([ἡ μήτηρ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ](#)) or his opponents' mother ([τὴν τούτων μητέρα](#)). Notably, when he refers to her as Klytaimnestra, he adds "the mother of this man" ([τῆς τούτου μητρός](#)).<sup>n43</sup> His only reference to her as his stepmother comes in the [narratio](#) at [1.19](#). There, he asserts that the concubine who administered the "love potion" did not realize that she had been tricked by his stepmother ([ὑπὸ τῆς μητροῦς τῆς ἐμῆς](#)) until already in the midst of the evil deed (i.e., one man had died immediately, and the other had become very ill). Equally chary about her relationship with his father, he waits until section 26 to use the term husband ([τὸν ἑαυτῆς ἄνδρα](#)) and does so where the impact is crucial, i.e., in a context stressing that she who failed to have pity on that husband does not deserve pity herself. For an allegedly inexperienced young man, the prosecutor (thanks to his logographer) is sophisticated in coloring his diction. By so shading his remarks, from the [prooemium](#) on, he diminishes the stepmother's status in the family and her connection with his father.<sup>n44</sup> At the same time, by often mentioning the victim as his father, not as the stepmother's husband, the speaker enhances his relationship to the murdered man at the expense of the defendant. The prosecutor sti

wants to tie his brothers to his father, however, the better to stress their lack of piety. Hence, he refers to them as his [ὄμοπάτριοι](#) and repeatedly uses "our father" to designate the dead man.<sup>n45</sup> Section 6 is especially telling, for its combination of "our father" and "his mother" ([ὡς εὖ οἶδεν ὅτι γ \) οὐκ ἀπέκτεινεν ἡ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ τὸν πατέρα τὸν ἡμέτερον](#)) obviously illustrates both the techniques of connecting and distancing that I have been discussing here.<sup>n46</sup>

Connections feature as a major element in the strategy of this speech, which seems to have all of its male participants enmeshed in dilemmas involving kinship obligations (see above). The prosecutor does not concede that his brothers have a dilemma, however. According to his professed code, their duty should be clear; they must focus their efforts on punishing their father's murderer, no matter who that person may be. If they ally themselves with that murderer, as they have in defending her, then they share her guilt. Hence, their brother will go on the attack throughout the speech and try to turn them into defendants, albeit unindicted ones.<sup>n47</sup> We have already seen how the prosecutor exploits their refusal of the torture challenge to imply complicity (see above and [1.13](#)) on their part. In his scenario, his brothers must know or at least suspect that their mother is guilty. The prosecutor introduces his argument by wondering how his brother can say that she did not kill their father ([1.6](#)), when that brother has refused the test that could prove her innocence. At [1.8](#), he increases the stakes by asking how his opponent will have sworn to certainty about what happened without checking the facts through a . Reprising and strengthening this point, at [1.28](#) he marvels at the reckless thinking<sup>n48</sup> that has led his brother<sup>n49</sup> to swear to certain knowledge that his mother has done none of the things alleged against her ([1.28](#): [τὸ διομόσασθαι ὑπὲρ τῆς μητρὸς εὖ εἰδέναι μὴ πεπιοικῦσαν ταῦτα](#)). Not being present at any of the events, his brother could not possibly know what happened.<sup>n50</sup> The progression from claiming knowledge to attesting to it under oath has a clear purpose in the speaker's strategy. If, conscious of her guilt, he has sworn to his mother's innocence, the defense counsel has at least knowingly sworn a false oath, not to mention perjured himself. In addition, he is guilty of impiety against his father for supporting the defendant (see [note 10](#) above). He is neither a fit advocate nor trustworthy witness. Against this forswearing brother stands the , who while still a boy was the son his father trusted to be a witness and eventual advocate for him ([1.29-30](#)).

With this final section ([28-31](#)) which sets up an antithesis between the two brothers, the speaker has come full circle from the contrast between himself and his opponents that he established in his [prooemium](#). As is now clear, his strategy has been to denigrate his brothers and elevate himself at their expense not just in the [prooemium](#), where rhetorical doctrine advocates creating prejudice against one's opponent and good will for oneself, but throughout the speech. A major tactic in his efforts has been to use their relationship with their mother to incriminate his opponents by association. It is this tactic that the prosecutor chooses as an effective weapon to begin his speech and that explains his use of the phrase "murderers of the dead" ([1.4](#); see above). Eager to press his case at their expense, the supposedly hesitant goes on the offensive immediately. At [1.2](#), he alludes to his father's command to prosecute the murderers ([τοῖς αὐτοῦ φονεῦσι](#)) and then claims that, as he and the indictment say, his brothers are his opponents at law and murderers ( [αὐτοὶ γὰρ οὗτοι καθεστᾶσιν ἀντίδικοι καὶ φονεῖς, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ ἡ γραφή λέγει](#) ). Only the stepmother is officially on trial, and so both the plural "murderers" and the reference to the indictment are striking. While could be a generalizing plural,<sup>n51</sup> and are not, for they refer directly to the defendant's sons. The identity of his opponents now clear, the prosecutor is not content with simply calling them murderers. Instead, he continues the attack in similar vein. Concluding his introduction with an emotional antithesis, he alludes to himself as the bereft son who is trying to avenge his father and is so isolated that he must call on the jury to act as his kinsmen should ([1.3-4](#)). Those who ought to be his helpers and avengers of the dead man are the prosecutor's and murderers of the dead man. In other words, even though they did not commit the actual deed, his brothers, as his , are murderers. In shunning their obligation to their father and allying themselves even after the fact with the perpetrator, they share responsibility for the

crime. We might say that they, like the concubine, have become tools for the defendant. The , on the other hand, true to his father and not connected with his relatives' crime, is driven to seek refuge with the jury.

The need for sympathy from the jury is an obvious reason for the prosecutor to follow this tactic of guilt by association, but why has he been so vehement? Why does he exert as much (if not more) effort in discrediting his brothers as he does in attacking the defendant? Why has he made denigrating his brothers and elevating himself the strategy of his speech? The answer lies in the role of gender in Athenian court procedure. As Lin Foxhall has noted ([note 22](#), 137), "lawcourts were one of a number of arenas in which males competed with each other, often on behalf of their households (to whom this arena might not be directly accessible)." <sup>n52</sup> Women could appear as defendants in limited cases and, although they could not be witnesses, could swear evidentiary oaths. <sup>n53</sup> The male , however, were the ones who counted, the ones who competed for the honor of victory, no matter who the defendant was. They were the ones who swore the and were capable of winning over a jury. In essence, just as in the theater, men played all of the roles, with the obvious exception of the defendant. <sup>n54</sup> Is that exception so obvious, however? After all, a woman's would have spoken for her and so "taken on" her role. Could he take on her guilt as well? I would assume that that would not normally be the case, but the prosecutor in Antiphon 1 has come close to making a do so. Hence, the labels his brothers "murderers of the dead" and strives throughout to make defendants of the men who are his real .

1 See M. Gagarin, ed., *Antiphon, The Speeches* (Cambridge, 1997) 109, on the use of a "preliminary argument" before the narrative here and in *Antiphon 5.8-19*. All citations of Antiphon in this paper will refer to Gagarin's text. I am grateful to the Research Board of the University of Missouri for the grant and research leave that have assisted me in completing the present study. This paper is dedicated with affection and admiration to Eugene Numa Lane, my colleague at the University of Missouri for more than twenty years, and is a token of my gratitude for his encouragement and interest in my work on rhetoric and oratory. I hope that the philological aspects of the present study will intrigue him and that he will not be too surprised by the unexpectedly "feminist" turn to my rhetoric.

2 This slave woman was the of Philoneos, a close friend of the prosecutor's father. On her servile status, see Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 115 and 117; J.H. Thiel, "De Antiphontis Oratione Prima," *Mnemosyne* 55 (1927) 325; A. Bargazzi, ed., *Antifonte Prima Orazione* (Firenze, 1955) 87-88; ; E. Heitsch, *Antiphon aus Rhamnus* (Abh., Akad. der Wiss.und Lit. , geistes-und sozialwiss. Kl., Nr. 3, Mainz, 1984) 22-3 and notes 47 and 53. As the prosecutor reports in his narrative, this concubine gave the potion to both his father and Philoneos. The father lived for twenty more days, but Philoneos, who had been given a larger dose, succumbed immediately.

3 This phrase apparently occurs here and in Antiphon's Third Tetralogy ([4.3.1: αὐτὸς μὲν τοῦ τεθνηκότος οὐ φήσει φονεὺς εἶναι](#)) and not elsewhere in extant Attic oratory. I shall not be considering the vexing questions of the authorship of the Tetralogies and their relationship to the rest of Antiphon's work, but E. Carawan's recent arguments, in *Rhetoric and the Law of Draco* (Oxford, 1998) 172-215, deserve serious consideration. For opposing views and literature, cf. most recently S. Usher, *Greek Oratory, Tradition and Originality* (Oxford, 1999) 355-9.

4 The hints of an Orestes persona (made explicit in [1.17](#) in the reference to the stepmother as Klytaimnestra) increase the likelihood of fictionalization here, as Antiphon exploits a mythological paradigm. On the Orestes theme, see Thiel (1927 above, [note 2](#)) 322; Bargazzi (above, [note 2](#)) 15 and 90; B. Due, *Antiphon, A Study in Argumentation* (Copenhagen, 1980) 20; and E. Hall, "Lawcourt Dramas: The Power of Performance in Greek Forensic Oratory," *BICS* 40 (1995) 55, who cites the "sly allusion" to Klytaimnestra that "suggests that the speaker is Orestes, offering the woman up to the jurors of Athens." Hall's discussion of drama and oratory assumes that (50) "although a skilled speech-writer like Lysias

would presumably develop his characterisation of a particular litigant in a manner designed to emphasise the client's 'real' personality if it were attractive, all the figures presented to the Athenian courts were 'fictive' characters invented by the speech-writers." Her work "treats the speeches as one side of a performed dramatic dialogue where the words of another speech-writer for the presentation of the opponent's case are usually lost to us forever." The degree of collaboration between speech-writer and client is still controversial. See especially, K.J. Dover, Lysias and the Corpus Lysiacum (Berkeley, 1968) 148-73; I. Worthington, "Greek Oratory, Revision of Speeches and the Problem of Historical Reliability," C & M 42 (1991) 55-74, "Once More, the Client/Logographos Relationship," CQ 43 (1993) 67-72, and "History and Oratorical Exploitation," Persuasion: Greek Rhetoric in Action, ed. I. Worthington (N.Y., 1994) 115.

5 J.H. Thiel's two-part study "De Antiphontis Oratione Prima," Mnemosyne 55 (1927) 321-34 and Mnemosyne 56 (1928) 81-92 is an antidote to uncritical acceptance of the prosecutor's account. See K.J. Dover, "The Chronology of Antiphon's Speeches," CQ 44 (1950) 53, who sees the prosecutor's case as "excessively weak, resting as it does upon unsupported hearsay evidence." Carawan's perceptive analysis of strengths, weaknesses, and issues (Carawan (above, [note 3](#)) 218-42) somewhat "rehabilitates" the speaker's case.

6 T. A. Schmitz, "Plausibility in the Greek Orators," AJP 121 (2000) 55. To emphasize the oral and rather ephemeral nature of most cases (as compared with those, such as Antiphon 1, for which we have an oration preserved), I would prefer to Schmitz's .

7 Since the prosecutor has no other known siblings, I shall generally refer to these half-brothers as his brothers or his siblings. Fully cognizant that the terminology is not exactly compatible with Athenian practice, I shall occasionally refer to the brother conducting the defense as the defense counsel. My allusions to the "sons" of the stepmother presuppose the existence of the defense counsel and at least one legitimate full brother who would be listed among the prosecutor's opponents (and, hence, among the defendant's supporters) and played at least some role in the defense of his mother. An interesting later example of brother vs. brother opposition is the [prooemium](#) of Dem. 40 (Mantitheus against Boeotus II 1-5), a private suit over the dowry of Mantitheus' mother. In that case, the plaintiff is attacking two men who, on the basis of claims by their mother Plangon, have had to be recognized as his brothers, products of an extramarital liaison between his father and Plangon. Obviously, the situation is reversed in Antiphon 1, where the plaintiff is a (see note 16 below). It is ironic that the father's avenger in Antiphon 1 is the , not the legitimate sons, but the prosecutor can at least imply that he is the only one acting as a legitimate son ought to. See [Dem. 40.46-8](#) and Usher (above, [note 3](#)) 261, for Mantitheus's remarks on the behavior of a true son, and Apollodorus' attack against his brother Pasicles in [Dem. 45.83-4](#), expressing doubts about Pasicles' parentage.

8 Acknowledging fate as a additional cause, the prosecutor says (1.2): [ἡ γὰρ τύχη καὶ αὐτοὶ οὗτοι ἠνάγκασαν ἐμοὶ πρὸς τούτους αὐτοὺς τὸν ἀγῶνα καταστήναι, οὗς εἰκὸς ἦν τῷ μὲν τεθνεῶτι τιμωρὸς γενέσθαι, τῷ δὲ ἐπεξιόντι βοηθός](#). On the possibilities of a settlement, see Carawan (above, [note 3](#)) 221-2 and 227-9. In The Litigious Athenian (Baltimore, 1998) 168-73, listing numerous examples, M. Christ cites social pressure against suits brought by relatives against relatives. See also V. Hunter, Policing Athens, Social Control in the Attic Lawsuits, 420-320 B.C. (Princeton, 1994) 48-55 and Due (above, [note 4](#)) 16 and 22.

9 On Antiphon's use of the participle as a substantive, see the examples in C. Cucuel, Essai sur la langue e le style de l'orateur Antiphon (Paris, 1886) 117-20. Here the parallelism, strengthened by and , separates out the prosecuting son and ties him to his father.

10 See 1.5, where the prosecutor must be referring to the brother who is speaking on behalf of the defendant. In view of the allegations in the [prooemium](#), however, more than one brother would seem to be risking the "taint" of impiety. Concerning the positions of the prosecutor and the defense counsel, Due (above, [note 4](#)) 17, notes that in sections 5-13, "the speaker turns to his brother and criticizes his understanding of the notion of . To him it apparently only implies a command not to betray his mother, while the speaker finds it much more impious to deprive their dead father of the revenge due him." The insistence on the priority of revenge for a father as opposed to loyalty toward a mother is consonant with the Orestes/Klytaimnestra theme that underlies the speech. Is the prosecutor implying that he could have brought a against his brother (or brothers) but has chosen instead to prosecute his stepmother? On the in general and its application, see Carawan (above, [note 3](#)) 152-3; R. Osborne, "Law in Action in Classical Athens," *JHS* 105 (1985) 51-2 and 55-9; S. Todd, *The Shape of Athenian Law* (Oxford, 1993) 106 and 307-315. Carawan (229) points out that, if he secures a conviction of his stepmother, the prosecutor might then take his brothers to court again, this time charging them with impiety for "knowingly harbouring their father's killer."

11 Literature on the torture challenge is extensive, especially with regard to the likelihood of its actual acceptance. I shall not deal with that question here but instead refer the reader to the following sources which I have found most useful: G. Thur, *Beweisführung vor den Schwurgerichtshöfen Athens: die Proklesis zur Basanos* (Sitz. Akad. der Wiss. Wien, phil.-hist. Kl. 317.7, 1977) and "Reply to D. C. Mirhady: Torture and Rhetoric in Athens," *JHS* 116 (1996) 132-4; S. Todd, "The Purpose of Evidence in Athenian Courts," *Nomos, Essays in Athenian Law, Politics, and Society*, ed. P. Cartledge, P. Millett, and S. Todd (Cambridge, 1990) 19-39, esp. 27-36, and Todd (above, [note 10](#)) 96 and note 22; Hunter (1994 above, [note 8](#)) 89-95 and 133-4; M. Gagarin, "The Torture of Slaves in Athenian Law," *CP* 91 (1996) 1-18; and D. C. Mirhady, "Torture and Rhetoric in Athens," *JHS* 116 (1996) 121-31, and "The Athenian Rationale for Torture," *Law and Social Status in Classical Athens*, ed. V. Hunter and J. Edmondson (Oxford, 2000) 53-74.

12 (1.1): [νέος μὲν καὶ ἄπειρος δικῶν ἔγωγε ἔτι, δεινῶς δὲ καὶ ἀπόρως ἔχει μοι περὶ τοῦ πράγματος...](#) Although emphasized by the paronomasia of and here, the pose of is a commonplace. On the commonplace, see Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 107; Usher (above, [note 3](#)) 28. For other examples of the commonplace, see Bargazzi (above, [note 2](#)) 73, and Due (above, [note 4](#)) 11 and 27, n. 3.

13 See Gagarin (1997) above, [note 1](#)) 106-7 and 121.

14 As Usher (above, [note 3](#)) 28, observes, given the difficulties of the case, "Antiphon had to use literary and rhetorical means to create the required prejudice against the defense." See Wilamowitz, "Die erste Rede des Antiphon," *Hermes* 22 (1887) 199.

15 See Carawan (above, [note 3](#)) 220. If he is handling something as important as this case, this son must be his mother's only or principal . On , see also [note 25](#) below. There is no clear evidence for the relative age or number of any other siblings. See [note 7](#) above.

16 Carawan (above, [note 3](#)) 220 observes that "the manuscript hypothesis assumes that the plaintiff is a legitimate son of the victim by a previous marriage; but commentators have reached a virtual consensus that the plaintiff is in fact a later offspring, probably a freeborn son of the victim by a concubine, possibly non-Athenian." See Thiel (1927 above, [note 2](#)) 322-3; Heitsch (above, [note 2](#)) 22 and notes 44 and 45. Representing a minority view, D. Ogden, *Greek Bastardy in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods* (Oxford 1996) 191, argues in favor of the prosecutor's legitimacy. While I agree with Carawan and Heitsch () that she possibly was a non-Athenian, I do not find the linguistic evidence for the status of the prosecutor's mother convincing. Commenting on that evidence, Dover (1950 above, [note 5](#)) 51, n.2, agrees that the young man must be illegitimate. Dover adds, however, "we do not know that his mother was non-

Athenian, and, even so, why should he use his mother's pronunciation rather than his father's?" If the stepmother really did intend to have a love potion and not poison administered to her husband, the liaison with the prosecutor's mother is a likely proximate cause. See [note 23](#) below. We might wonder, however, why the defendant waited so long before taking this action (if we assume on the basis of the prosecutor's likely age that the liaison began about thirteen or fourteen years earlier). Was she unusually patient or did she make earlier attempts or is she actually innocent of the charges?

17 See Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 115. The prosecutor does use part of the narration ([1.14-20](#)) to elicit sympathy for his father and the stepmother's other victims. See below at [note 37ff.](#)

18 Such claims are likely in view of the frequent citations of "good citizenship" that occur so often in Attic oratory. [Antiphon 2.2.12](#) could serve as a "check list" for someone who wanted to illustrate behavior appropriate for a citizen. See, for example, [Lysias 12.3-4](#) (no law suits) and [7.30-33](#) (munificent public service); [Isaeus 4.27-28](#) (army service; various contributions; law-abiding lives); [Isaeus 7.36](#) (); [Dem. 21.13-4](#) (assumption of ) and [153-63](#) (comparison of service of Demosthenes and Meidias); [Dem. 50.2-3](#) and [57-66](#) (trierarch). Too much emphasis on service could provoke envy and hostility. See Christ (above, [note 8](#)) 41-2; J. Ober, *Mass and Elite in Democratic Athens* (Princeton, 1989) 199-230; [Lysias 7.32](#). A reputation for minding one's own business also could be an asset, as L. B. Carter, *The Quiet Athenian* (Oxford, 1986) has shown. See especially Carter, 108-9 on the in *Lysias* 19 (notably 19.18 and 19.55). The Choregos in Antiphon 6 perhaps had reason to regret his public service, although, for obvious reasons, he stresses his meticulous fulfillment of his duties (*6.11-14*). On the wealth and status of typical "disputants," Hunter (1994 above, [note 8](#)) 52, comments: "on the whole, there seems no reason to quarrel with the view that most disputants are members of the propertied class or even the elite. On the other hand, in their midst appear a whole series of individuals who might be better described as poor relatives." If he did not share in his father's estate, the in Antiphon 1 might be trying to use this trial to get back into the "propertied class." Of course, he has had sufficient means to hire Antiphon as his speechwriter. See Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 114.

19 As we shall see below (see at [note 22 ff.](#)), the defendant also goes unnamed in the speech. Even though her identity presumably would have been clear to the audience, the omission of her name has connotations different from the omission of that of the victim.

20 Concerning the position of a , see especially, C. Patterson, "Those Athenian Bastards," *ClAnt* 9 (1990) 40-73; R. Sealey, "On Lawful Concubinage in Athens," *ClAnt* 3 (1984) 111-33, and *Women and the Law in Classical Greece* (Chapel Hill 1990) 15-16 and 112-3; Todd (1993 above, [note 10](#)) 178-9 and 211; Ogden (above, [note 15](#)) 151-163 and 189-212; C.A. Cox, *Household Interests, Property, Marriage Strategies, and Family Dynamics in Ancient Athens* (Princeton, 1998) 170-3.

21 As we shall see below (at [note 37 ff.](#)), the prosecutor will use the (1.14-20) in part to contrast the behavior of his father and his stepmother and to elicit sympathy for the victims of the crime.

22 Except for allegedly less than respectable women (at least, those as presented by litigants on the opposite side), most women in extant speeches are anonymous. See D. M. Schaps, "The Women Least Mentioned: Etiquette and Women's Names," *CQ* 27 (1977) 323-30 and Todd (1993 above, [note 10](#)) 201. Noteworthy examples letting us see both sides are [Dem. 36.8](#) and [36.30-32](#) (For Phormio) where the defense avoids naming Phormio's wife, who happens to be the mother of Apollodorus, the plaintiff, and Dem. 45 (*Against Stephanus*), where the same Apollodorus avoids mentioning the name of his mother, in spite of his hints that her conduct has been less than stellar (see sections 3-4 and 83-4). At [Dem. 45.74](#), however, Apollodorus skirts the proprieties a bit and lets his mother's name "slip" into public notice when he quotes a clause from his father's will that mentions her by name (Archippe). See Dem. 40, where the plaintiff frequently mentions Plangon by name (see sections 2, 8-11, 20, 27, etc.), since it is in his interest

to challenge her respectability and, by implication, that of his alleged half-brothers. On Plangon's status, see especially Hunter (1994 above, [note 8](#)) 29-30, 32-3, 42, and 114. Using Archippe's case as one instance, L. Foxhall, "The Law and the Lady: Women and Legal Proceedings in Classical Athens," Greek Law in its Political Setting, Justifications Not Justice, ed. L. Foxhall and D. E. Lewis (Oxford 1996) 141, observes that "women who are not on trial can also be subject to brutal accusations from their legal opponents or those of their menfolk."

23 See [note 16](#) above. Mantitheus in Dem. 40 cites his own mother (carefully unnamed, see Schaps above [note 22](#), 324-26) as a proper wife and mother, especially as compared with Plangon. Is the prosecutor in Antiphon 1 able to make similar claims about his mother? His failure to mention her in this case may reflect deference to propriety. Another likely scenario, however, is that her status as his father's concubine makes her son vulnerable and could diminish his stature before the jury in comparison with his siblings. Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 114-5 has noted that the prosecutor is careful to identify the guilty concubine as Philoneos', "suggesting that the speaker is concerned that the jurors might think of the other, his mother." At any rate, it makes sense for her son to avoid mentioning her. Except for giving birth to him, his mother has no apparent connection to the case beyond her liaison (of uncertain time and duration) with his father. The prosecutor cannot stress this liaison as his stepmother's motive for murder without violating his mother's privacy and perhaps making the jury wonder whether there is a jealous woman involved on his side of the case as well.

24 Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 114 comments that, while the prosecutor needs to show that the defendant wanted revenge, "...if he gives details about the wrong she suffered, he will make it easier for the defense to portray her as the victim of a cruel husband. So we are not told what wrong was done her, though we may guess that one factor was probably her husband's mistress or concubine (the speaker's mother...)." Linked to his consideration for his wife and mother ([αἰσχυρόμενος τήν τε γυναῖκα καὶ τὴν μητέρα τὴν αὐτοῦ πρεσβυτέραν τε οὔσαν καὶ ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ δαιτωμένην](#)), Lysias' housing of his hetaira with a friend, not at his own home ([\[Dem.\] 59. 21-2](#)), seems to illustrate the proper "etiquette" for balancing a wife and mistress. Did the speaker of Antiphon 1 live as a at his father's home rather than with his mother or her family? If so, his presence as a (and reminder of her husband's concubine) could have been an additional irritant for the stepmother. His reference to the upper room in "our house" and his alleged attendance on his dying father are the only clues to his living arrangements and are insufficient for a conclusion.

25 Citing the law in [Dem. 46.18](#) "indicating those relatives who were legally entitled to give a woman's hand in marriage (by )" and so to be , Hunter (1994 above, [note 8](#)) 16-17 notes that "the list includes her father, followed by her homopatric brother, and then her paternal grandfather: her closest agnates." These were not a woman's only possible , however. See Hunter (1994 above, [note 8](#)) 18-19; Todd (1993 above, [note 10](#)) 209-210; and L. Foxhall (1996 above, [note 22](#)) 150.

26 See Pericles' famous admonition to women, as presented by Thucydides ([2.45.2](#)), which Schaps (above [note 22](#)) 323, uses as a starting point in his discussion of the propriety of naming women in court.

27 In their editions of Antiphon, F. Blass (Leipzig, 1892), L. Gernet (Paris, 1954), and A. Bargazzi (Firenze, 1955) use the spelling [Κλυταιμνήστρας](#), while Gagarin's text has [Κλυταιμήστρας](#). On this question of orthography, see P. Marquardt, "Clytemnestra: A Felicitous Spelling in the Odyssey," Arethusa 25 (1992) 241-54.

28 See [note 22](#) above on the indirect method used by Apollodorus in Dem. 45, a method considerably less dramatic than the one here. It is interesting to note that Orestes does not mention his mother by name in his "defense" speech at the end of Aeschylus' Choephoroi and that no one in the trial scene at Athens in the Eumenides names Klytaimnestra. Are Orestes and the deities involved also "following the rules"? The

omission of Agamemnon's name as well might indicate that the victim and murderess were too obvious to need naming. Yet, merely mentioning his name in public would not insult Agamemnon. At any rate, it is ironic that here in Antiphon 1 the prosecutor "disgraces" Klytaimnestra by invoking her name with malicious symbolism instead of naming his stepmother.

29 I am looking ahead a bit here to Aristotle (*Po.* 1454a23-4: [ὄλλ](#)) [οὐχ ἀρμόττον γυναικὶ τὸ ἀνδρείαν ἢ δεινὴν εἶναι](#) ), but I assume that the philosopher's remarks reflect a fairly common attitude. See Hall (above, [note 4](#)) 49-50 on this passage from the *Poetics*, to which she adds *Rhet.* 1.1356a 1-13 and 3.1408a 25-31.

30 Translating this as "planned and premeditated," Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 108 comments that "the first term is common in this sense, the second occurs only here and in 1.5 in classical Greek."

31 As Due (above, [note 4](#)) 12-3, has observed, the prosecutor is slow to reveal that the purpose of the is to provide evidence not about the murder but only about former attempts. After section 9 reveals this purpose, "in the rest of the passage the argumentation is carried on as if it concerned the actual murder." Discussing the torture challenge, Carawan (above, [note 3](#)) 237 argues that information sought in questioning of the slaves "goes directly to the issue of , that she knew or should reasonably have anticipated the lethal consequences." Although in the *prooemium* he stressed the multiplicity of attempts (1.3: [καὶ μὴ ἅπαξ ἀλλὰ πολλαίκις](#)), in the the speaker seems to refer to only one other attempt (1.9: *kai; provteron ktl.* ). See Bargazzi (above, [note 2](#)) 76 and 82-3, and Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 108. This latter scenario would seem more likely, and we should consider 1.3 as "oratorical license" to exaggerate. On the other hand, the plural in 1.9, even if a case of a generalizing plural, could give one pause.

32 See, for instance, the following examples of these topoi, used by prosecutors or defense: a.) culpability/evil intentions: [Antiphon 2.1.5-7](#); [Antiphon 4.1.6](#); [Antiphon 4.3.4-6](#); [Lysias 1. 15-7](#); [Lysias 4.8-11](#); [Dem. 54.22-5](#); [Dem. 21.41-3](#), [74](#); b.) lack of restraint: [Antiphon 2.1.7-8](#); [Lysias 3.5-9](#); [Dem. 21.17](#), [41](#), [66](#), [79](#); [*Dem.*] 2554-8; c.) violation of the laws: [Lysias 1.26](#) and [31-36](#); [Dem. 21.2](#), [20-1](#); d.) lack of pity: [Dem. 21.95-7](#); [*Dem.*] [25.83-4](#); e.) lack of respect for gods, etc.: [Dem. 54.39](#); [*Dem.*] [59.107](#) and [117](#); [Dem. 21.33-5](#), [51](#), [104-5](#). While their underlying framework is similar to that of corresponding topoi in Antiphon 1, each of these examples, with the possible exception of those from Antiphon 2 and 4 , is far more developed. The assumption that these and similar topoi were developed with male defendants in mind seems reasonable. Still, the forms are general enough to be applicable to practically any human defendant, male or female, Greek or foreigner.

33 The prosecutor's version of the case requires that the defendant be identified as a woman who has succeeded in causing the death of her husband after previous attempts. The basic framework of each topos is not affected by this version or by the defendant's gender. In fact, the topoi are so sketchy that they barel go beyond their abstract form.

34 His use of [ὡς οἶμαι](#) (1.6) makes this obvious, no matter what the arrangements were at his father's home. Certainly, the stepmother would not have spoken openly of her plan in front of her stepson. He is either using his imagination or at best has drawn some information from the confession of the . As is the case with his rest of the speech, the prosecutor brings forward no witnesses or depositions to substantiate his claims. He presumably wants his audience to assume that his scenario rests on a confession extracted by torture. On that confession, however, see Thiel (1927 above, [note 2](#)) 325-33.

35 Given the limited excursions outside the home available for a woman of the stepmother's apparent status, there is little likelihood that the stepmother would have sought out or associated with the concubine elsewhere. Gernet (above, [note 27](#)) deletes [πυθομένη](#), commenting (42) that "[scholium videtur pro αἰσθομένη sq. versus](#)." Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)), however, retains [πυθομένη](#), arguing (114) that it

"designates a general perception of events," while [αἰσθομένη](#) designates "an understanding of the injustice involved."

36 The aorist [ἐποίησατο](#) need not imply a continuing relationship but also does not utterly preclude one. The narrative seems to imply that the friendship began when the stepmother found out Philoneos' intentions, but this is not necessarily the case.

37 The syntax reinforces the distinction between the two women. Discussing Bargazzi's observations (above, [note 2](#), 21 and 88-9) on the clarity of the narrative, Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 115, comments that "the stepmother is the subject of all of the verbs of speaking and main verbs in indirect discourse until [ὑπέσχετο](#), while she is either an object of verbs or the subject of subordinate verbs. This reinforces the impression that the stepmother is the primary agent, the her subordinate." I would maintain that it also reinforces the difference in status between the two.

38 Gernet (above, [note 27](#)) 42 has aptly compared this section to a typical messenger's speech in tragedy. See Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 114.

39 The rites for Zeus Ktesios would have taken place in Philoneos' home. See Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 115.

40 In 1.14, the speaker describes Philoneos as a "gentleman" ( [καλός τε καὶ ἀγαθός καὶ φίλος τῷ ἡμετέρῳ πατρὶ](#)). See Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 114, who observes that "both men appear to be fairly prosperous."

41 As presented by the speaker, the concubine, in danger of relegation to a brothel, has more reason to act than the stepmother does. The prosecutor is almost dismissive in noting that the defendant claimed that he husband was wronging her. His presentation reflects his aim in the [narratio](#) is to create sympathy for the male victims and to avoid giving any details that could mitigate his stepmother's guilt. See [note 24](#) above.

42 See Hall (above, [note 4](#)) 46-49 on delivery in drama and oratory. While one might assume that delivery is more important at the beginning and conclusions of speeches, the [narratio](#) offers special opportunities. For example, Hall, 54, has observed that a litigant could use his narrative "to do things forbidden by the conventions of the court, such as recount speeches by people who could not be witnesses themselves." Moreover, "female utterances are often delivered in direct speech to great effect, although women could not normally be used as witnesses." The speaker in Antiphon 1 does not substitute direct speech for female testimony. His skilful recounting of both the conversation in the women's quarters and the [pallake's](#) deliberations at the scene of the murder, however, allow him to use the women as witnesses indirectly. Since the prosecutor does not (and probably cannot) produce corroborating witnesses or the concubine's actual confession, his delivery must add verity to the narrative. Unfortunately, we have no way of determining whether the prosecutor's skill at delivery matched the verbal talents of his logographer.

43 I agree with Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 116, that these words are not "an intrusive gloss" but instead are typical of the prosecutor who "tends to spell out such details." In this case, the detail is important as a reminder that the defense counsel has chosen the "wrong" side.

44 The prosecutor has to tread carefully with this topic. He cannot distance his stepmother so far from his father that he eliminates the horror (not to mention the fear) jurors should feel at the thought of a wife compassing the death of her husband.

45 See [1.3](#): [τοῦ ἡμετέρου πατρός](#); [1.9](#): [τῷ πατρὶ τῷ ἡμετέρῳ](#); also [1.14](#), [1.15](#), [1.19](#), [1.20](#), and [1.24](#).

46 We may contrast [Dem. 40.1](#) where Mantitheus refers to his father Mantias as "my father" ([τὸν πατέρα μου](#)), not as "our father", thereby not so subtly indicating that he does not acknowledge the parentage of his brothers. This verbal emphasis on himself as the only true son is a carry-over from [Dem. 39](#), but the level of hostility seems to have increased. Compared to [Dem. 40](#), moreover, [Dem. 39](#) is relatively civil. At least in [Dem. 39](#), with the exception of one reference to his brother Boiotos as "the son of Plangon" ([39.0](#)) Mantitheus "politely" refers to his opponents' mother as their mother or as the daughter of Pampilus (e.g., [39.2](#)). At any rate, Demosthenes' rhetorical exploitation of possessives and/or epithets would seem to offer support for the relevance of Antiphon's usage here.

47 Despite 1.2: [αὐτοὶ γὰρ οὗτοι καθεστᾶσιν ἀντίδικοι καὶ φονεῖς, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ ἡ γραφὴ λέγει](#). The case itself was a [δίκη φόνου](#), not a [γράφη](#). On the distinction, see, e.g., Todd (1993 above, [note 10](#)) 98-112. Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 108 comments that for this case "the accusation entered with the was evidently written". We know that they are his, but did the prosecutor actually name his brothers as murderers in his written accusation? We would be mistaken to think so. The stronger assumption is that the speaker is aware of the shock value of leaving a quick, even if inexact, impression that his brothers have somehow officially been linked to their mother as accused murderers (see Schmitz at [note 6](#) above). As, the eldest son would bear the brunt of his opponent's accusations, but I see no reason to exclude the other brother(s) completely. For example, if he (or they) were actively assisting the in the defense, they might have taken the along with him and so have been liable to their opponent's censure. On the, see D. M. MacDowell, [The Law in Classical Athens](#) (Ithaca, 1978) 119, and [Athenian Homicide Law in the Age of the Orators](#) (Manchester, 1963) 90-100. See also Todd (1993 above, [note 10](#)) 96 n.21 and 273; R. J. Bonner and G. Smith, [The Administration of Justice from Homer to Aristotle](#) (Chicago, 1930; reprinted NY, 1970) II. 165-173 and 222.

48 Noting the hendiadys of [τόλμης](#) and [διανοίας](#), Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 120 translates the two as "audacious thinking." I prefer "reckless" because it seems better to reflect the pejorative sense of the Greek.

49 At this juncture, would the speaker have allowed a bit of scorn to creep into his voice as he mentioned his brother? Needing his connection with them to maintain the pathos of his dilemma, the would not want to disavow his brother(s), but he can still do his best to denigrate them.

50 I am paraphrasing freely the more general [πῶς γὰρ ἄν τις εὖ εἰδείη οἷς μὴ παρεγένετο αὐτός](#);

51 For example, the prosecutor refers to his half-brothers as opponents but then in the attacks only one brother. See [note 7](#) and [note 10](#) above and Gagarin (1997 above, [note 1](#)) 107: "one brother presumably presented the entire defense, but the orators use the singular ([1.5](#) etc.) or plural almost indiscriminately in referring to the opposing side." The plural [φονεῦσι](#) is intentionally vague at this point. If he actually did refer to murderers (see [1.29-30](#)), the victim might have meant his wife and the concubine.

52 See Hall (above, [note 4](#)) 57 on the courts as "an arena for competitive social performances." R. Osborne, "Religion, Imperial Politics, and the Offering of Freedom to Slaves," in Hunter and Edmondson (2000 above, [note 11](#)) 80, comments that "court cases are about the redistribution of honour; to be allowed to compete there is to be allowed to acquire honour, indeed to acquire differential honour."

53 On women in court, see Neaera in [[Dem.](#)] [59](#); Foxhall (1996 above, [note 22](#)) 141; Todd (1993 above, [note 10](#)) 208. Concerning women as witnesses and the evidentiary oath, see Osborne (2000 above, [note 52](#)) 80; Foxhall (1996) 143-4; and Todd (1990 above, [note 11](#)) 27-8 and (1993 above, [note 10](#)) 96 and 208.

54 See Hall (above, [note 4](#)) and [note 42](#) above.

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