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RITUALS AND HABITUS
IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

ELISABETH BEGEMANN, ANNA-KATHARINA RIEGER, JÖRG RÜPKE,
WOLFGANG SPICKERMANN & KATHARINA WALDNER

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MONOGRÁFICO

RITUALS AND HABITUS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD. AN INTRODUCTION

Elisabeth Begemann, Anna-Katharina Rieger, Jörg Rüpke,
Wolfgang Spickermann & Katharina Waldner.....13

ESTABLISHING SELF-WORLD RELATIONS IN SOCIO-RELIGIOUS PRACTICES. LOOKING AT ROMAN RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATION

Jörg Rüpke.....19

THE SPECTRUM OF RELIGIOUSNESS, OR WHAT MAKES AN OBJECT RELIGIOUS. HABITS, PATTERNED EVIDENCE AND RELIGIOUS MEANINGS OF IMAGE-OBJECTS IN POMPEII

Anna-Katharina Rieger.....51

CHILDREN'S SUPPLICATION IN CLASSICAL ATHENS. RELIGIOUS SKILLS, SURVIVAL AND INFERIORITY Fayah Haussker	95
THE RHYTHM OF THE GODS' VOICE. THE SUGGESTION OF DIVINE PRESENCE THROUGH PROSODY Ronald Blankenburg.....	123
HOW TO WRITE RELIGIOUS RITUAL INTO THEATRE. GÉRARD GENETTE'S <i>PALIMPSESTS</i> APPLIED IN PLAUTUS' <i>RUDENS</i> AND SIMONE WEIL'S <i>VENISE SAUVÉE</i> Blaž Ploj & Thomas Sojer	155
THE MANY MARTINS OF VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS. VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS' MARTIN-POEMS AS INSTANCES OF INDIVIDUAL APPROPRIATION AND LITERARY OFFERS OF RITUAL-LIKE EXPERIENCE Enno Friedrich & Ursula Gärtner.....	181
THE THESEAN RITUAL LANDSCAPE. APPROPRIATION, IDENTITY AND ATHENIAN COLLECTIVE MEMORIES Ben S. Cassell.....	213
RURAL RITES IN OVID'S <i>FASTI</i> Maria Hirt.....	257
MAGISCHER KRANKENHEILER UND SOHN GOTTES. DIE JESUANISCHE KRANKENHEILUNG ALS MAGISCHES RITUAL UND DAS PHÄNOMEN DER DE-RITUALISIERUNG IN DER REDAKTIONELLEN ÜBERLIEFERUNG DER EVANGELIEN Annika Krahn.....	281
THE Νόσος OF DECLARING THAT GODS DO NOT EXIST IN PLATO'S <i>LAWS</i> ISOLATED CASES OR GROUPS OF ἄθεοι? Ramón Soneira Martínez	309

VARIA

RITUALISTIC NUDITY. DRESSING AND UNDRRESSING IN OVID'S *FASTI*

Tammy Di-Giusto.....347

RECENSIONES

ANDRADE, N.J. (2018). *The Journey of Christianity to India in Late Antiquity. Networks and the Movement of Culture*

Marianna Ferrara.....377

AUDLEY-MILLER, L. AND DIGNAS, B. (EDS.) (2018). *Wandering Myths. Transcultural Uses of Myth in the Ancient World*

Fernando Wulff Alonso.....383

CHAPOT, F., GOEKEN, J. AND PFAFF-REYDELLET, M. (EDS.) (2018). *Figures mythiques et discours religieux dans l'Empire gréco-romain*

Frits G. Naerebout.....390

DANA, M. AND SAVALLI-LESTRADE, I. (EDS.) (2019). *La cité interconnectée dans le monde gréco romain*

Borja Antela Bernárdez.....396

DRIEDIGER-MURPHY, L.G. (2019). *Roman Republican Augury. Freedom and Control*

Francesco Marcattili.....400

FABBRI, L. (2019). *Mater Florum. Flora e il suo culto a Roma.*

Gemma Sena Chiesa.....406

GONZÁLEZ GONZÁLEZ, M. (2019). *Funerary Epigrams of Ancient Greece. Reflections on Literature, Society and Religion*

María Paz de Hoz García Bellido.....412

HUNT, A. AND MARLOW, H.F. (EDS.) (2019). <i>Ecology and Theology in the Ancient World. Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives</i> Dan-el Padilla Peralta.....	419
LANFRANCHI, TH. (ED.) (2018). <i>Autour de la notion de sacer</i> Fabio Cavallero.....	424
MILLER, J.F. AND STRAUSS CLAY, J. (EDS.) (2019). <i>Tracking Hermes, Pursuing Mercury</i> Arlene Allan.....	430
MORALEE, J. (2018). <i>Rome's Holy Mountain. The Capitoline Hill in Late Antiquity</i> Sara Millozzi.....	435
MOSS, C.R. (2019). <i>Divine Bodies. Resurrecting Perfection in the New Testament and Early Christianity</i> Clelia Martínez Maza.....	437
PACHOUMI, E. AND EDWARDS, M. (EDS.) (2018). <i>Praying and Contemplating in Late Antiquity. Religious and Philosophical Interactions</i> Maik Patzelt	442
PADOVANI, F. (2018). <i>Sulle tracce del dio: teonimi ed etimologia in Plutarco</i> Corinne Bonnet.....	447
PATZELT, M. (2018). <i>Über das Beten der Römer: Gebete im spätrepublikanischen und frühkaiserzeitlichen Rom als Ausdruck gelebter Religion.</i> Angela Ganter.....	452

PÉREZ LAMBÁS, F. (2018). <i>Los elementos rituales en las tragedias de Sófocles. Tipología y función a partir de los prólogos</i> PATRICK J. FINGLASS.....	457
PIAY AUGUSTO, D. (2019). <i>Prisciliano. Vida y muerte de un disidente en el amanecer del Imperio cristiano</i> José Ignacio San Vicente González de Aspuru.....	459
ROUBEKAS, N.P. (2019). <i>Theorizing “Religion” in Antiquity</i> Ramón Soneira Martínez.....	469
SANTAMARÍA, M.A. (2019). <i>The Derveni Papyrus. Unearthing Ancient Mysteries</i> Emilio Suárez de la Torre.....	482
SHANNON-HENDERSON, K.E. (2019). <i>Religion and Memory in Tacitus’ Annals</i> James McNamara.....	488
VAN LOON, H., DE NIE, G., OP DE COUL, M. AND VAN EGMOND, P. (EDS.) (2018). <i>Prayer and the Transformation of the Self in Early Christian Mystagogy</i> Anders-Christian Jacobsen.....	494
VAN OPSTALL, E.M. (2019). <i>Sacred Thresholds. The Door to the Sanctuary in Late Antiquity</i> Beatrice Caseau.....	501
VAVOURANAKIS, G., KOPANIAS, K. AND KANELLOPOULOS, C. (EDS.) (2018). <i>Popular Religion and Ritual in Prehistoric and Ancient Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean</i> Nicola Cusumano.....	506

MONOGRÁFICO
RITUALS AND HABITUS IN
THE ANCIENT WORLD

RITUALS AND HABITUS IN THE ANCIENT WORLD. AN INTRODUCTION

RITUALISATION IS THE MOST PROMINENT form of religious action in Mediterranean antiquity and beyond. In order to communicate with the divine (and thus constituting its reality and shape) certain gestures, sequences of actions and words are differentiated from ordinary, pragmatic action, ritualised and even “sacralised” – by individuals as well as smaller or larger groups. Such patterns of action are repeated or taken as a blueprint for modification and innovation. They are the field for the establishment or questioning of religious authority, they are the means to temporarily or permanently mark out spaces as special. They sacralise not only spaces, but also times and natural or artificial material things, animals and people – and are drawing on such sacralised elements to determine, and elaborate on, the status of an action.

Research on ancient rituals has taken many different directions. They have been seen as the continuation of pre-human patterns of action or inventions of cunning religious specialists. Fruitful analyses have inquired about the “meaning” of such rituals as described by and ascribed to different groups of participants or individual observers. Others have stressed the aesthetics and patterns and the non-verbal logic of such actions. They have been seen as the dramatisation of traditional narratives or prescribed norms, shared values and conceptions of time of place. Plausibly, they could be analysed as incorporating and affirming social hierarchies or as the results of the individual framing of situations.

This issue of *ARYS* will follow a very different path, combining questions of individual performance and cultural pattern, social and material constellations. Taking the instigation of recent theorising on ancient religion as “lived religion”¹ on the

1. Waldner, Gordon and Spickermann, 2016; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018; Rüpke, 2019; Gasparini *et al.*, 2020.

one hand and sociological “resonance theory”² on the other as points of departure, the volume will ask how certain rituals contribute to the formation of specific relationships of their actors to their material or social environment and to their own self or the wider horizons of the world in its entirety, whether in the form of divine symbols, a spatial world (like “nature”) or a temporal one (“history”). What are the mechanisms of the development, “teaching” or habitualising of specific relationships to one’s Self, to other people, to the material world or encompassing concepts like the divine or nature? How do the different elements of rituals – repetition and individual performance, models and preferences expressed, the reproduction of daily habits or extraordinary ways of acting – work together in such processes? What is the role of rituals in shaping the disposition of those involved, regardless of in what role they are involved – as specialist, performer, participant or “mere” observer?

Contributions have been invited from all relevant disciplines like Ancient History, Classical Philology, Archaeology and History of Religion. We are very grateful for the many proposals and submissions and the labours of the journal’s reviewers whose intensive critique helped to shape this issue and to improve its quality. Contributions were asked to engage with a specific type of ritual action, literary views of such ritualised action or material and architectural arrangements in certain cultural contexts or epochs throughout the ancient Mediterranean world. Engaging with the central research question of the volume authors needed to reflect their methodological approach and the possibilities and limitations of generalising their findings.

The volume is opened by a methodological article written by Jörg Rüpke, “Establishing Self-World Relations in Socio-Religious Practices. Looking at Roman Religious Communication”. Starting from the concepts of religion as communication and resonance, his article analyses the details and varieties of religious communication in ancient Rome. On the basis of the pragmatic relationships and cognitive associations of such rituals, the article inquires into the self-world relations that were established in such performances. Anna-Katharina Rieger’s article “The Spectrum of Religiousness, or What Makes an Object Religious. Habits, Patterned Evidence and Religious Meanings of Image-Objects in Pompeii” shares in this bottom-up methodology. Against the backdrop of the pervading presence of imagery, objects, and buildings that refer to deities, cult practices, or mythology she analyses rituals not as a well-organised set of prescribed sequences of gestures, but as “religion in the making” as reflected in and using the full breadth of material religion at Pompeii.

2. Scheuermann and Spickermann, 2016; Rosa, 2019.

With Fayah Haussker's "Children's Supplication in Classical Athens. Religious Skills, Survival and Inferiority" we move into a series of case studies focusing on ancient Greek and Athens in particular. Reconstructing children's experience as supplicants from the full range of sources allows to contextualise their specific performance within the larger range of rituals. In difference to others, however, supplication presents the children and makes them experience their inferiority rather than acquiring ritual knowledge in an ongoing process of step by step introduction to the status of adult citizens. Ronald Blankenborg moves further back in time to Archaic Greece for his "The Rhythm of the Gods' Voice. The Suggestion of Divine Presence through Prosody", studying in depth the performance of the human-divine relation.

The following article also starts, in a way, with Athenian drama, but takes an explicit comparative approach by putting the Plautinian *Rudens* and Simone Weil's *Venise Sauvée* side by side. In "How to Write Religious Ritual into Theatre. Gérard Genette's *Palimpsests* Applied in Plautus' *Rudens* and Simone Weil's *Venise Sauvée*", Latinist Blaž Ploj and theologian and literary scholar Thomas Sojer transform Gérard Genette's concept of hypertext into a tool for ritual studies and introduce the concept of "hyper-performativity". The idea of performances referring to other performances and thus producing meaning allows to look for building blocks of other rituals in the theatrical performance or guided imagination of dramatic rituals, thus intensifying the emotional and cognitive impact of the performance directly witnessed.

Literary texts and reading experiences are also at the basis of Enno Friedrich's and Ursula Gärtner's analysis of late ancient poetry in 6th cent. CE Gaul and its use of the figure of Martin of Tours in "The Many Martins of Venantius Fortunatus. Venantius Fortunatus' Martin-Poems as Instances of Individual Appropriation and Literary Offers of Ritual-Like Experience". Here, the focus is on the cross-media relation of ritual experiences in the veneration of the Saint to the different settings of 1) the original listening act to the first performance or 2) the later reading of the text in a collection of poems approached with tools from Lived Ancient Religion as well as Resonance theory.

The next pair of articles takes space even more into account. Ben S. Cassell thematises "The Thesean Ritual Landscape. Appropriation, Identity and Athenian Collective Memories". Moving back in time to 5th cent. BCE Athens, the article analyses the various forms in which the narratives about Theseus are performed and repeated in a calendar pattern throughout the year. The experiences of this narrative in contexts that construe linear as well as cyclical temporalities helps to understand the construction of Athenians memories and identities in much more nuanced form. Particular experiences of spatiality and temporality on the different tiers of ritual performance and literary mediation are the subject of Maria Hirt's analysis. "Rural Rites in Ovid's *Fasti*" show how the tension between imagined ritual performances in

an idealised rural setting and the urban experience of the metropolis produce specific effects in the political setting of Augustan Rome.

Annika Krahn adds a further facet by turning to a very different literary, namely Jewish, tradition of the Greco-Roman world and its developing accounts of ritual practices, namely the narratives of healing rituals in biblical texts. “Magischer Krankenheiler und Sohn Gottes. Die jesuanische Krankenheilung als magisches Ritual und das Phänomen der De-Ritualisierung in der redaktionellen Überlieferung der Evangelien” focuses on intertextual processes against the backdrop of ritual practices and their prominent role in shaping the figure of Christ in the biographical narratives of the gospels.

In the last contribution, Ramón Soneira Martínez turns to conceptual questions about the basis of *religious* rituals and the mindset of ritual agents in antiquity. “The Νόσος of Declaring that Gods Do Not Exist in Plato’s *Laws*. Isolated Cases or Groups of Ἄθεοι?” makes us aware that the notion of “unbelief” should not be used to construe categorial differences between contemporary and ancient ritual practices, but opens up a more nuanced view of religious agency in the classical Mediterranean world.

We are grateful to the many discussions with and inspirations by the junior and senior researchers of the joint International Graduate School “Resonant Self-World Relations in Ancient and Modern Socio-Religious Practices” of the Universities of Graz (Austria) and Erfurt (Germany) and its support by the FWF Austrian Science Fund and the DFG German Science Foundation. We are indebted to the editorial board of *ARYS* for their critical review and final acceptance of the concept as much as the final group of articles. On their behalf, Valentino Gasparini was of invaluable help during the whole process, from the call for papers to the final revisions.

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ESTABLISHING SELF-WORLD RELATIONS IN
SOCIO-RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.
LOOKING AT ROMAN RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATION*

ESTABLECIENDO RELACIONES ENTRE EL MUNDO
Y EL YO EN LAS PRÁCTICAS SOCIO-RELIGIOSAS.
UNA MIRADA HACIA LA COMUNICACIÓN RELIGIOSA ROMANA

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ABSTRACT

Starting from the notion of religion as communication and resonance, this article analyses the details and varieties of religious communication in ancient Rome. Decentring the traditional focus on “sacrifice” by admitting that *sacra facere* was far more than “sacrifice”, allows us to use the rich evidence for the many facets, pragmatic relationships and cognitive associations of such rituals for an analysis focused on the self-world relations that were established in such performances. The article

RESUMEN

Partiendo de la noción de religión como comunicación y resonancia, este artículo analiza los detalles y las variedades de la comunicación religiosa en la antigua Roma. Ampliar el foco de atención tradicional en el “sacrificio” admitiendo que *sacra facere* era mucho más que “sacrificar” nos permite utilizar la abundante documentación que atestigua las múltiples facetas, relaciones pragmáticas y asociaciones cognitivas de los rituales para analizar las relaciones entre el mundo y el yo individual que se establecen

* I should like to thank Katharina Waldner and Elisabeth Begemann, both Erfurt, for their critical reading of this article. Remaining mistakes are mine. The article has been written within the framework of the International Research School *Resonant self-world relations in ancient and modern socio-religious practices*, funded by the German Science Foundation (DFG) under GRK 2283 and co-funded by the FWF for our partners at Graz, Austria.

will model religious ritual as a triangular relationship between human agents (in active as well as passive roles), their “special” or “divine” addressees and animals or objects not just casually employed but constitutive for such communication. It will further argue that such religious practices have a specific relational quality which makes them particularly important for establishing relationships, foregrounding the reflexive, self-observing character of such “intensified” practices. Against this background, the body of this article follows the many conceptual and material associations and implications of Roman religious ritual, thus arguing for the individual and cultural malleability of ritual relations. It is construing a heuristic grid and on that basis plausibilizes the claim that self-world relations are established and habitualized in practices that are characterized by their inclusion of not unquestionably plausible addressees and hence more intensively mediatized and more self-reflexive than many other social practices.

en la ejecución de tales ceremonias. El artículo aborda el ritual religioso como una relación triangular entre los agentes humanos (tanto en papeles activos como pasivos), sus receptores “especiales” o “divinos” y los animales u objetos empleados en dicha comunicación no simplemente de manera casual, sino como elementos constitutivos de la misma. Sostiene, además, que las prácticas religiosas tienen una cualidad relacional específica que las hace particularmente importantes para establecer relaciones, poniendo en primer plano el carácter reflexivo y auto-observante de estas prácticas “intensificadas”. Con este telón de fondo, el cuerpo del estudio investiga las numerosas asociaciones e implicaciones conceptuales y materiales del ritual religioso romano, defendiendo así la maleabilidad individual y cultural de las relaciones rituales. Se construye un marco heurístico dentro del cual es posible afirmar que las relaciones entre el mundo y el yo se establecen y se vuelven habituales en prácticas que se caracterizan por incluir destinatarios no incuestionablemente plausibles y, en consecuencia, por ser más intensamente mediatizadas y más autorreflexivas que muchas otras prácticas sociales.

KEYWORDS

Habitualization; Resonance; Ritual; Roman religion; Sacrifice.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Habitualización; religión romana; resonancia; ritual; sacrificio.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Starting from the notion of religion as communication and resonance, this article analyses the details and varieties of religious communication in ancient Rome. This field goes far beyond sacrificial rituals. Animal sacrifice was an important element of ritual practices in ancient societies. Yet, the aspect of killing initiated critical discourse from antiquity onwards and has captured a disproportionate amount of interest in modern scholarship. Decentring this focus by admitting that *sacra facere* was far more than “sacrifice”, allows us to use the rich evidence for the many facets, pragmatic relationships and cognitive associations of such rituals for an analysis focused on the self-world relations that were established in such performances. Due to our evidence, the image is dominated by elaborate, elite-practiced ritual communication at the end of the Republican and early Imperial periods, but it is of course not possible to reconstruct any historical instances of performance in all details.

This article does not aim at fully mapping the different types of relationships that are established in ritual performances. When stressing the relational perspective, as provided e.g. by actor-network-theories,¹ the aim is not to register each manual, visual or instrumental touch between humans, between humans and things or humans and larger imaginative frameworks. Instead, it is the quality of the relationship and the changes brought about at both ends that are at the centre. With such a purpose in mind, the treatment here is preliminary only. By employing an approach that analyses religious action as communication, I will model religious ritual as a triangular relationship between human agents (in active as well as passive roles), their “special” or

1. On which see Latour, 2005.

“divine” addressees and animals or objects not just casually employed but constitutive for such communication. I will further argue that such religious practices have a specific relational quality which makes them particularly important for establishing relationships, foregrounding the reflexive, self-observing character of such “intensified” practices rather than any “emotional energy” and the wish to renew it, as Randall Collins argued.² I do follow the latter, however, in his micro-sociological account of the concatenation of performances, the “ritual interaction chain”, not necessarily, but potentially leading to repetition and institutionalization, that is, the establishment of “traditions” by means of habitualization (4).

Against this background, the body of this article (3) restricts itself to follow the many conceptual and material associations and implications of Roman religious ritual, thus arguing for the individual and cultural malleability of ritual relations. It is construing a heuristic grid rather than arriving at a full description of individual instances of such relationships and their character. It is on this basis that I try to plausibilize the claim that self-world relations are established and habitualized in practices that are characterized by their inclusion of not unquestionably plausible addressees and hence more intensively mediatized and more self-reflexive than many other social practices. These I call “socio-religious practices”.

2. DISSOLVING “SACRIFICE”

2.1. MODERN AND ANCIENT CONCEPTS

As I stated at the beginning, “sacrifice” is no historically useful descriptive term to start with for such an enterprise. “How do you do sacrifice?” Such a question would certainly have caused consternation on the part of an ancient Roman man or woman thus addressed. They would have explained that *sacrificium* is such a general term that nothing like a standard procedure existed. In fact, the answer would be quite similar to that of a Christian asked “How do you do religion?”. In Latin, *sacra* is the most general term for “religious rituals”, and *sacrificium* is just the – rather infrequent – nominal form of *sacra facere*, “performing rituals”. The same Roman might have asked the interviewer (as our contemporary probably would do) for clarification: What do you mean by “sacrifice”? As always in historical comparison, two strategies are in conflict. On the one hand, a narrow definition of the objects to be compared produces maps of analogies and minor differences, thus strengthening the universal applicability of the descriptive terms employed in the definition. On the other hand,

2. Collins, 2004.

tracing different contextualizations of the primary objects, its variations in shape and function in other culture opens new lines of research and weakens general terms by stressing cultural differences instead of producing concrete results.³ Neither is a priori better, but must be adapted to aims and materials.⁴

It is quite easy to produce a general account of what historians of religion denote as “animal sacrifice”. Georg Wissowa did so in his famous manual *Religion und Kultus der Römer*,⁵ John Scheid did so in his *Introduction to Roman Religion*.⁶ Whereas Scheid treats animal sacrifice as a complex ritual that might be (and usually is) enlarged by further ritual elements (vows, even games), Wissowa concentrates on it as just one, but the dominant, form of liturgical action (“*gottesdienstliche Handlungen*”) in public, i.e. a state ritual. Wissowa, as elsewhere in his handbook,⁷ tries to replicate the structure of Varro’s *Antiquitates rerum divinarum*, the most comprehensive ancient manual of Roman religion known to have existed, a masterpiece of religious practice being converted into religious knowledge and a new form of authority thus acquired by the author.⁸ But “sacrifice” is not a structural unit known in Varro’s books (and neither a term defined in the extant part of his or Festus’ etymological works):⁹

Book 1 (= Book 26 of the complete work): Introduction and plan of the work

Books 2-4: *De hominibus*, on the priesthoods:

2: *Pontifices*

3: *Augures*

4: *Quindecimviri sacris faciundis*

Books 5-7: *De locis*, on cult-sites:

5: *Sacella* (open-air cult-sites and shrines)

6: *Aedes sacrae* (temples in the narrower sense)

7: *Loca religiosa* (tombs etc.)

Books 8-10: *De temporibus*, on festivals and the religious calendar:

8: *Feriae* (festivals that “belong” to a divinity)

9: *Ludi circenses* (chariot-races)

10: *Ludi scaenici* (stage performances)

3. See e.g. Rouwhorst, 2014.

4. See Rüpke, 2018a.

5. Wissowa, 1912, pp. 412-420.

6. Scheid, 2003, pp. 79-110.

7. See Rüpke, 2003.

8. On Augustine, see Rüpke, 2009a and 2012, pp. 172-185. For different types of ancient systematizations, see e.g. Georgoudi, 2015.

9. From August., *De civ. D. VI 3* = Varro, *Ant. r. div. frg. 4* Cardauns; quoted from Rüpke, 2007b, pp. 59-60.

Books 11-13: *De sacris*, on rituals:

11: *Consecrationes*

12: *Sacra privata*

13: *Sacra publica*

Books 14-16: *De dis*, about the gods, especially the etymology of their names:

14: Gods whose names have a clear significance (*di certi*)

15: Gods whose names have no clear significance (*di incerti*)

16: Select grand deities (*di praecipui atque selecti*)

The extant fragments give no hint of the internal organization of books 11 to 13. There is no reason to suppose that the notion or the facts of *animal* sacrifice¹⁰ served as an organizing principle. The importance given to “sacrifice” in the sense of immolation, that is the killing of animals, is rather a consequence of second-order observation. Within the spectrum of Roman ritual, the ritual killing of animals and humans provoked the attention of ancient intellectuals, eliciting explanatory myths as well as philosophical criticism.¹¹ It was, however, probably the Christian theological discourse about the sacrificial nature of the death of Jesus Christ that established an early comparative interest in this type of ritual, as shown in monographs such as “*de sacrificiis*” or “*de sacris*” from the 17th cent. onwards.¹²

2.2. EXAMPLES

Even if we focus on ritual practices featuring offerings or even killing, a few examples can provide a glimpse of the variety. Compared to Greece, there are few texts that prescribe in detail how Roman rituals are to be performed. The first of my examples are taken from the Elder Cato’s *De agri cultura*, “On agriculture”, written in the first half of the 2nd cent. BCE. Hence, they refer to private cult, which historiographical sources typically ignore. Their disadvantage, however, is that they say nothing about shifts of scene, about the procession, essential to many urban and extra-urban rituals, which takes the participants to the fixed site where the central ritual acts are performed, be it the area in some permanently sacralized place, for instance in front of a temple or a sacred grove, or on a spot of profane use.

Cato does not devote a separate section of his work to the religious prescriptions, which he associates closely with the guidance on farming. The first text refers to

10. Cf. Eckhardt, 2014.

11. Stroumsa, 2005; Astell and Goodhart, 2011; Auffarth, 2012; Bremmer, 2018; Ullucci, 2012.

12. E.g. Saubert, 1659. For ancient theorizing on Roman sacrifice see Prescendi, 2007. For the ancient history of intellectual critique of animal sacrifice, Ullucci, 2012.

the *daps*, the offering of food and wine to a deity, in this case on behalf of the plough-teams (*pro bubus*):

“The offering is to be made in the following manner: offer to Jupiter Dapalis a cup of wine of any size you wish, observing the day as a holiday for the oxen, the ox-masters, and those who make the offering. In making the (food-)offering use the following *formula*: ‘Jupiter Dapalis, it is fitting that a cup of wine be offered to you in my house, among my family and dependants, as part of your sacred feast (*daps*). Therefore, do us the honour (*macte esto*) of accepting this meal (*daps*) here’. Wash your hands, then take the (cup of) wine, and say: ‘Jupiter Dapalis, do us the honour of accepting this feast (*daps*): do us the honour (of accepting this) wine that we offer you here’. You may (also) make an offering to Vesta if you wish. The food (*daps*) offered to Jupiter consists of roasted beef or mutton and an ‘urn’ of wine. Make the offering (*profanato*) in a state of ritual purity, in the fitting form (*sua contagione*). Once the ceremony has been performed, you may plant millet, panic grass, garlic, and lentils”.¹³

In practice, *profanare* means to sacrifice, to make an offering. The etymology of the word however indicates that something is actually being brought from inside a sacred place (*fanum*) to the area in front (*pro*) of it – into the “profane” world. In our case here, something is being “profaned” within a ritual context, which means it is being rendered available for human use. The 13.13 litres of wine the “urn” (half-ampora) contains can be drunk by the human participants, while Jupiter has to be content with the small cup of wine poured out for him onto the earth.¹⁴

The second example comes from the following section but one. §131 dealt with the spring ploughing, followed by the planting of millet and so on (in the last sentence of §132); §133 deals with layering and pruning fruit-trees and vines; and now we approach the harvest in autumn:

“Before harvest the sacrifice of the *porca praecidaneae* should be offered in the following manner: offer a sow as *porca praecidaneae* to Ceres before harvesting spelt, wheat, barley, beans, and rape seed; before offering the sow, address a prayer, with incense and wine, to Janus, Jupiter and Juno. Make an offering of finger-cakes (*strues*) to Janus, with these words: ‘Father Janus, in offering these cakes, I humbly beg you to be gracious and merciful to me and my children, my house and my household’. Then make an offering of cake (*fertum*) to Jupiter in these words: ‘In offering this cake, Jupiter, I humbly beg

13. Cato, *Agr.* 132 (tr. Hooper/Ash, adapted).

14. The same goes for the meat, of course; in an earlier passage Cato says, with reference to the same offering: *ubi daps profanata comestaque erit*, “when the *daps* has been offered and eaten...” (*Agr.* 50, 2).

that, pleased by this offering, you may be gracious and merciful to me and my children, my house and my household'. Then offer the wine to Janus saying: 'Father Janus, just as I prayed humbly in offering the cakes, so likewise do me the honour of accepting this wine offered to you'. And then pray to Jupiter thus: 'Jupiter, do me the honour of accepting the cake; do me the honour (likewise) of accepting the wine offered you'. Then offer up the *porca praecidaneae*. When the entrails (*exta*) have been removed, make an(other) offering of cakes (*strues*) to Janus, with a prayer as before; and an(other) offering of a cake (*fertum*) to Jupiter, with a prayer as before. In the same way, again offer wine to Janus and to Jupiter, as was previously directed for the offering of the cakes (*ob struem obmovendam*), and the consecration of the cake (*ob fertum libandum*). Afterwards offer the entrails, and wine, to Ceres".

This is a relatively complex ritual, in which various subsidiary offerings are made not to Ceres, the main addressee of this ritual communication, but to other deities. Janus is the god of auspicious beginnings (Varro, *Ling.* VI 34); Cicero's Stoic spokesman Balbus mentions that at sacrifices he was invoked first because "beginnings (and endings) are of the greatest importance" (*Nat. D.* II 67). Then comes Jupiter, the highest god in a political context (and then Juno, at any rate in the pre-ample). Similarly, an offering is made to Janus and Jupiter in Cato's description a few chapters later of the *lustratio agri*, the "muster of the land" (*Agr.* 141), which is directed primarily to Mars. In this case, where the sacrifice consists of three male animals: suckling-boar, tup-lamb and bull-calf, all still at teat and correspondingly cheap, I want to stress the rules laid down for the event that the *litatio* might fail. For if a sacrifice is to be deemed acceptable to the deity, the "noble" entrails of the freshly-slaughtered animal must on inspection be in best condition, flawless. Cato offers two possibilities in the event of the god "not being satisfied" (*si minus litabit*): if there is doubt in one or two cases, another of the same type of animal, say a piglet, can be offered (*te hoc porco piaculo*); if no positive response (*litatio*) at all is obtained, the entire ritual has to be repeated (*te hisce suovitautilibus piaculo*). Here we find ritual dramatization by appeal to the possibility of "external" disturbance: this is the function of divination, which always accompanies sacrifice.

Religious communication can also however be quite straightforward. One example of such simplicity is the direction a couple of chapters later to the farm-overseer's wife: "On the Kalends, the Ides and the Nones of each month, and at each religious festival, she is to hang a garland over the hearth, and on the same days she is to pray to the Lar of the family for plenty in the house (*pro copia*)" (*Agr.* 143, 2).

The *Equus october*, the "October horse", demonstrates the opposite end of the spectre. It was celebrated each year on 15th October, perhaps into the 4th cent. CE. The ritual began with a race, put on by the priestly colleges, between biga-teams, that is,

chariots pulled by a pair of horses. The lead (right-hand) horse of the winning pair was then killed by the *Flamen Martialis*, the priest of Mars, apparently by a lance-thrust. The head and tail of the dead horse were cut off. The tail was immediately taken to the *Regia*, the office in the Forum of the *pontifex maximus*, and the blood smeared over the sacred hearth or an altar. The head was decorated with a wreath made of bread-loaves, and then given to bands of young men, one from the *Subura*, the other from the *Sacra Via*, to fight over. The *Suburanenses* tried to nail the head to the wall of the *Regia*, the *Sacravienses* to the *turris Mamilia*, the tower of Mamilius, a prominent land-mark in the *Subura*. In other words, it was a staged scrimmage or donnybrook for youths or young adult males, in which each side had to penetrate to the heart of the other's territory in order to win.¹⁵

This ritual sequence is unique in the entire range of Roman rituals. The ancient interpretations latch onto the exceptional features. The horse's association with Mars is sometimes understood to be due to the use of the animal in warfare. Or it is killed in order to punish it, because in battle mounted soldiers can more easily run away. On the other hand, the loaves with which the horse's head is garlanded clearly belong to the realm of agriculture: by October, the harvest has long since been brought in, and the harvested grain is being turned into bread. Some indeed have it both ways, arguing that the bread recalls harvest home; but the horse warfare, and so Mars. The earliest known interpretation however was offered by the Greek historian Timaeus in the early 3rd cent. BCE. According to him, the Romans, descended from the Trojans, were taking revenge for the Trojan Horse: the annual sacrifice of a horse is to avenge the ignominy of Troy having been captured by the Greeks with the help of a "horse".¹⁶ In this case, the interpretation proceeds not by appeal to features of other Roman rituals, but to the Greek epic cycle. A Roman ritual is thus interpreted by a Greek in mythological terms familiar to him.¹⁷ M. Verrius Flaccus, the most important Roman antiquarian of the Augustan period, poured scorn on the idea; but a century later Plutarch still takes it seriously.

The examples quoted demonstrate that the sequence of animal sacrifice usually reconstructed – procession, *praefatio*, immolation, killing, extispicy, cooking, presen-

15. Festus, p. 190, 11-30 L. "*October equus*"; Paulus, *Excerpt. Festi* p. 71, 20-22 L. "*Equus*" and p. 246, 21-24 L. "*Panibus*"; Plut., *Quaest. Rom.* 97; see Rüpke, 2009b for further details.

16. Polyb., XII 4b.1 and 4c.1, with Walbank, 1967, p. 329-330.

17. There is other evidence that Timaeus was quite familiar with the Roman claim to be descended from the Trojans, which is clearly the starting-point for his explanation: Dion. Hal., I 67, 4 (Trojan pottery at *Lavinium*).

tation and meal¹⁸ – is nothing more than a model that should not be taken as a norm or generally valid description. After the procession, grand or minimal, up to the altar in a temple-area (in towns this was usual even in the case of private animal-sacrifice), water was sprinkled about to effect a symbolic cleansing. After the bloodless preliminary offerings had been made, the victim was sprinkled with *mola salsa*, sacred grain mixed with salt. The sacrificant, normally the person who is paying for the sacrifice, ran the knife along the animal's back. The butcher (*victimarius*, *cultrarius* or *popa*, which has a more general sense, "assistant at sacrifices") asked: "Agone? Shall I begin?" The answer "Age! Begin!" was the signal to start the slaughtering.¹⁹ The victim was killed, bled, turned on its back and opened up. The entrails were inspected. Then it had to be jointed, and the different parts assigned to different purposes, ending on the altar, being taken to the *mensa* in the temple or used for a banquet.

The prescriptive and interpretative texts presented or hinted at demonstrate the complexity involved in the basic triangle of socio-religious practices presented at the beginning. The living or "dead" objects employed are not just vectors or media to carry a message of gratitude, requests or declaration of piety between human religious actors and divine addressees. Instead, they involve multiple interactions and a complex web of relations established via and triggered by such objects. How could they be approached?

3. RITUALS AS RELATIONAL SOCIO-RELIGIOUS PRACTICES

There is no unmediated representation of historical actions, discourses or "things" in cultural studies. Scientific description is a distorted representation, but a conscious and explicitly reflected distortion. In the following, I opt for a relational perspective informed by the concepts of communication, ritualization, and self-reflexiveness, justifying the employment of these concepts by illustrating their ability to capture the experience and the effects of relationships.

3.1. COMMUNICATION

The perspective of communication shares the actors' declared intention to establish a relation with the divine.²⁰ Yet, the addressee is not simply given, even if plausi-

18. Documented in detail by Prescendi, 2007, pp. 31-51.

19. Ov., *Fast.* I 319-322; Varro, *Ling.* VI 12; cf. Sen., *Controv.* II 3, 19.

20. See e.g. Mylonopoulos, 2006; Rüpke, 2006; Stavrianopoulou, 2006; Rüpke, 2015. Differently: Pace, 2011.

bilized by current “knowledge” and affirmed by institutionalized traditions. The divine remains elusive and is construed as a elusive, thus restricting manipulation (above all by others). *Naming* is a task and a problem. The forms variate according to the situation. In daily speech, in oratory, or in letters the divine was frequently addressed in collective form as *di immortales* (immortal gods).²¹ Such a phrase did not do for a specific actor’s ritual. In the face of the opaqueness of the divine, at Rome traditionally conceptualized as a multitude of deities, the right one(s) for the present purpose had to be found and named as precisely as possible. But even in such a form of control, the superiority of such addressees had to be affirmed. As the addressee was not as visible or tangible in the interaction as human addressees normally were, the actor’s conception of the divine recipient had to be produced and confirmed, their qualities and personality, one of the most important features of religious ritual. The choice of place and (much less important)²² time helped to single out the addressee. As the diversity of addressees documented on inscriptions or even in the form of images within a sanctuary of a single deity attests, a prayer in front of a temple of Fortuna would plausibilize Fortuna as the addressee, but needed not be restricted to her. The examples presented above demonstrate the possibility to include further addressees by means of wording (praying), but also to leave open (and open for subsequent discussion) too narrow a specification. Burning at some temporary altar allowed for different interpretations.

Material objects could help to produce relevance and certainty²³ and thus form together with the human addressant(s) and the divine addressee(s) the third element of the aforementioned triangle. An important dimension of the relationship thus created is captured by Marcel Mauss’ concept of gift, *le don*.²⁴ This was a strategy built on social experiences between humans, in particular in unsymmetrical relationships.²⁵ Here, the object allowed close approach and even established a relationship beyond the situation in terms of expected (even if generalized) reciprocity. Whenever gifts were involved the choice of the gift was important. It had to be adequate in terms of kind, colour, quantity, or value – adequate to the situation, the request, the tradition established or the distinction sought. It must be pointed out, again, that animal

21. See the dominance of this phrase in Ciceronian letters.

22. See the mostly negative findings of Herz, 1975: in general, people did not align their addressing of gods to official festival dates.

23. On relevance in religious communication, see Rüpke, 2015; on the materiality of communication, see Rüpke, 2019b.

24. Mauss, 1925 and 2002; Schwartz, 1967; see also Auffarth, 2016; Moebius and Papilloud, 2006.

25. Cf. Crook, 2013, for further applications.

sacrifice – statistically – was not the standard form of sacrifice. Small gifts, many of them perishable, must have been the standard sacrificial objects of poor people, that formed the vast majority of ancient populations, even in non-routine situations.²⁶ We know about a wide variety of cakes that were given also by wealthy people engaging in ritual practices, and we know about a range of female religious specialists, called *sacerdotes*, “priests”, in Latin antiquity, who were not involved in animal sacrifice; however, they dropped out of the attention of early modern and modern male constructions of ancient religion.²⁷

The gift could at the same time (sometimes aggressively) define the addressee, as has been pointed out already by Mauss. At Rome, a deity given a male animal (for practical reason usually castrated) was probably male; a deity given a white animal might be associated with light (and was not just some “Olympian” deity). To ward off rust, a fungal disease that could easily ruin an entire harvest, you would sacrifice a red dog.²⁸ A connection is established between the unnamed god (identified as Robigo not in the ritual language but by commentators) and the victim through the colour (rust-)red. The deity can be further specified by the size, number and age of the animals. The following text from the *Acta* of the Arval Brothers of the year 60 CE illustrates this:

“During the same consulship L. Calpurnius Piso, son of L., magister of the college, sacrificed in the name of the Arval Brothers on the Capitol, by decree of the Senate, on the Nones of April (7th of April), in the context of the thanksgiving appointed [after the murder of Agrippina] for the well-being of Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus: an ox (*mas bos*) to Jupiter, a cow to Juno, a cow to Minerva, a cow to the Common Well-being (*Salus publica*), a cow to Providence, a bull to the emperor’s Genius, an ox to the deified Augustus.”²⁹

The list of animals killed construes correlations: Jupiter receives an ox (i.e. a castrated bull), Juno and Minerva, being goddesses, get cows, the Genius of the living Caesar is offered a bull (i.e. an uncastrated male), the deified Caesar Augustus an ox. Sacrifices of adult cattle are big news, providing up to two hundred kilograms of meat. In this text, nothing is said however about the age of the animals. The Genius

26. See Auffarth, 2008.

27. See Rüpke, 2018b, pp. 302-303, and in general Schultz, 2000; 2006; 2007 and Rives, 2013.

28. Festus, p. 358, 27-30 L.; Paulus, *Excerpt. Festi* p. 39, 13-16 L. Cf. Latte, 1960, pp. 67-68; Beard, North and Price, 1998, pp. 1-47. Dog-sacrifices: Smith, 1996.

29. *Acta Arvalia* no. 28A-C, ll. 10-14, ed. Scheid = *CIL* VI 2042 = *ILS* 230 (ignoring restorations), my translation.

of the living Caesar, Nero himself, is especially emphasized by being offered a bull. This detail shows that the other “males” (*mares boves*) are all oxen, that is castrated individuals, which are much easier to handle. We have here a rough ordering and even hierarchization of the gods through the sex of the victims, which underscores the socio-religious priority of the Genius of the reigning emperor.

The concept of gift does not cover all aspects of the relation construed via material objects. Within a communicative framework, material object might also serve as triggers of attention and meta-communicative markers, producing special attention with a wide range of tools and acoustic, visual, olfactory or emotional markers.

Communication between human participants and spectators in particular is also, now a second-order, trait of such communication with the gods. The multiple killings of animals just described were performed on the Capitoline Hill and probably highly visible. The sequence established a divine hierarchy, in which the Genius of Nero, for whose well-being – presented as an issue worthy to bother the gods about – the whole sequence of action is established. It is included in the list of gods and precedes even the deified Augustus. The killing of the uncastrated bull must have been particularly spectacular. Many socio-religious practices were prominently and intentionally visible. Secret ones (mysteries or cursing) did not play the same role at Rome as they did in Greece.³⁰ Nocturnal performances were prominent only in the ritual activities of women, for example the nocturnal prayers of women during the secular games of Augustus or the rites of Bona Dea organized by a leading magistrate’s wife.³¹ Marginalized social roles and temporal margins reinforced one other, which highlights some principles of agency and religious competence. Frequently, religious competence like political position depended on one’s social role. The *pater familias* (the head of the family) led domestic sacrifice, while the magistrate led public sacrifice, supported by noble children and public slaves.

The material and social relations established in religious communication have effects beyond the actual performance. Memories of such usages and constellations keep such relationships alive, repetition might renew them, as we will see below.³²

30. See Kippenberg and Stroumsa, 1995; cursing: Gordon, 2012 and 2015.

31. Schnegg-Köhler, 2002; Brouwer, 1989; in general, Schultz, 2006; Sterbenc Erker, 2013.

32. For a highly individualized appropriation of tradition, Gasparini, 2020.

3.2. RITUALIZATION

Like communication the concept of ritualization invites us not to start from some culturally fixed product “ritual”, but stresses the agents’ perspective:³³ How do people transform everyday action into special communicative action, into ritual, or realize that they take part in ritualized activities? Of course, repetition and stereotyping were and are the most usual strategies. But many rituals dealt with contingent, individual situations and problems and demanded different strategies to mark out the non-everyday character of the actions performed. For Roman ritual, spatial, bodily, acoustic, and temporal markers seem to have been most important, as the following examples may show.

Many rituals took place not just in any available spot. They could be conducted on land adjacent to a temple, that is, on land formally consecrated and thus transferred to a deity. The choice of location is an important part of an action, not only because of its functions as marker and boundary, but also because it makes clear whether the practice in question was one associated with a particular family, a social group or a political unit. Acting on the Capitol, for instance, was clearly about the polity as a whole or its representatives – or tried to make this very claim.³⁴

A further aspect of ritualization is the marking of the action and its setting by means of decoration of the body, that is mainly festive clothing. At Rome, this meant that the male citizen wore a *toga*, which, though traditional (cf. Verg., *Aen.* I 282; Suet., *Claud.* 15, 3), was not an every-day form of dress, being cumbersome to put on and hot in summer – Augustus repeatedly tried to persuade Romans to wear it more often (Suet., *Aug.* 40, 5). In the “Roman rite”, the *ritus patrius*, the clearest sign of participating in a ritual, for both men and women, was pulling up part of the *toga*, or in the case of women, the *stola*, to cover the head. The head was then said to be “veiled” (*caput velatum*).³⁵ One Roman interpretation of this custom is that it helped ensure that the communication was not disturbed because the celebrant could only take note of what he happened to be doing.³⁶ Thus, ritual action was clearly focused

33. See Bell, 1992.

34. For the ritual use of the Capitoline hill see Moralee, 2018.

35. E.g. Cic., *Nat. D.* II 10 ; Liv., I 18, 3; VIII 9, 5; X 7, 10. The earliest archaeological examples were found among the mid-Republican terracotta statuettes dredged up from the Tiber (Pensabene *et al.*, 1980), and in a temple at *Caere* (Mengarelli, 1935). Covered hands: Serv., *Aen.* I 292; VIII 636. Cf. too *Tab. Iguvinae* VIb, 49 (= §131 *Devoto*). Clothing more generally: Bonfante Warren, 1973; Edmondson and Keith, 2009; Várhelyi, 2015; Baird, 2016.

36. Serv., *Aen.* III 407; exceptions: Serv. auct., *Aen.* I, 288.

action. The alternative to this act of covering the head was to wear a leaf-crown.³⁷ A crown was indeed the only head-covering permitted by the rules for the *ritus graecus*, the “Greek rite”. This term did not refer to true Greek sacrificial ritual but to what the Romans understood to be Greek elements in their cults, such as the cult of Saturn, and the ritual at the altar of Hercules.³⁸ Particular dress is supplemented by particular instruments, often elaborately decorated and self-referential in their decoration, for example by depicted ritual scenes. The difference to everyday instruments might be reflected and reinforced in a special terminology in referring to such instruments, as the lexicographers, Verrius Flaccus in particular, amply illustrate. Both types of ritualization, special action and special speech mutually constitute each other and demonstrate the importance ascribed to and the observation invested into religious ritual gestures and objects in Roman culture.

Another marker is music. Musicians lead processions of many kinds. In the *ritus graecus*, hymns were sung by specialists, the *cantores graeci*, Greek singers.³⁹ The most widespread form of music at Roman rituals, however, was “flute”-music played on the double-tibia, an instrument more nearly related to the clarinet or oboe than the flute, since it was played with a reed.⁴⁰ At least in the view of the participants, the sound was meant to guard against, or drown out, other noises (Plin., *H.N.* XXVIII 11). I also subsume language under the heading of acoustic marker. Ritual speech is characterized by elaborate rhythmic language, formulaic, sometimes archaic. Thus, relations were established and habitualized not only to specific places and material objects, but also to acoustic phenomena and ways of speaking, thereby creating webs of associations between situations involving similar objects or sounds.

There were also temporal markers. Many socio-religious practices were marked by their position within local calendars which *vice versa* tried to allocate (or restrict) certain actions to particular dates. Such fixation of festival dates may take written form, but in the case of the regular *sacra publica* prior to the Principate their public announcement seems to have continued to be made orally,

37. For the evidence, see Blech, 1982.

38. Saturn: Serv., *Aen.* III 407; Dion. Hal., VI 1, 4; altar of Hercules: Serv., *Aen.* III 407; Macrobi., *Sat.* III 6, 17. See Scheid, 1995.

39. On hymns see Scheid, 2007; Hickson Hahn, 2007; for the continuum of praying and singing, Patzelt, 2018.

40. Roman ritual music: Fless and Moede, 2007; Naerebout, 2015. For the *aulos/tibia* and the *tibicines* in particular: Cic., *De or.* III 197; Pêché, 2001.

despite the availability of written calendars.⁴¹ Ritualization reaches out even to secondary or subsidiary actions. Apart from that, the timing of rituals seems to have conformed to the general Roman pattern: people began their day early in the morning, and took advantage of daylight as much as possible. Nocturnal rituals were exceptional – their problematic character can be inferred from the hour at which they were celebrated.⁴² Otherwise, it was considered important that complex rituals, festivals, should be celebrated over a specific number of days. There seems to have been a certain, though not very marked, preference for allocating celebrations to the relevant god's *feriae*, the units of time specially allocated to this deity in the calendar.

As ritualization in the forms just presented makes action special, it also renders relationships special. This affects both ends. Special, not-everyday words, instruments, tools, sounds, times, also changes the human actors. Body surface and composure are temporarily different, acoustic isolation, visual focus, separation from or association with specific others are indicators. Garments and crowns, raising hands (and voice), veiled heads, standing on a platform or facing towards a wall (with open or closed gates) made their bodies feel different.⁴³ It is interesting to note that these changes from everyday behaviour that are so clearly discernible on reliefs or other images hardly appear in the text quoted so far beyond Cato's washing of hands. It is specifics of divine names and adequate words and gifts that are formulated and proffered as religious "knowledge";⁴⁴ not individual or established ways of ritualizing comportment and the experiences of the relations thus sought and established.⁴⁵ Yet, even the choice of how to address the divine could result in very different experiences.⁴⁶

41. On the *ferialia* see Rüpke, 1995, pp. 523-533. Oral announcements by the *rex sacrorum*: Varro, *Ling.* VI 13 and 28; for the Principate: Rüpke, 1995, pp. 376-377. On Macrobius, *Sat.* I 14. 8-9.

42. For the rituals at night associated with the Secular Games, performed by Augustus himself, see Schnegg-Köhler, 2002; cf. "*Epulares*" *apud* Paulus, *Excerpt. Festi* p. 72, 13-14 L. Cf. Bravo, 1977.

43. Rieger, 2020.

44. See Rüpke, 2018, pp. 172-177 for the production of such knowledge in late republican Rome. On the concept, Matthiesen, 2005; but see also Hüsken, 2009 on "embodied knowledge".

45. For resulting differences in judgements of contemporaries, Patzelt, 2019 and 2020. See Gordon, 2020, on the concept of "requisite experiences".

46. Belayche, 2020.

3.3. REFLEXIVITY

Such relational socio-religious practices can become self-reflexive, the third perspective proposed above. Why are religious rituals specifically relevant to forge and habitualize specific self-world relations? The quality of the communicative action addressed to and experienced as being taken up by the “special” addressees is again basic. These actions claim (to very different degrees) the effectiveness of the communicative effort initiated by a human agent, while at the same time construing (to very different degrees) the agency and self-will of the addressee(s) and hence the riskiness of the course of action taken by the human principal. Both claims remain in a precarious balance. While actors frequently claim, and by inscriptions document, their effectiveness, later or more general reflections of intellectuals or outright religious specialists like theologians stress the gods’ will, some god’s grace or divine predestination.⁴⁷ One of the leading motivations on the part of these intellectuals is certainly the interest in safeguarding a monopoly of efficient access to the divine or in radically criticizing such claims.⁴⁸ Occasionally, such claims might be politically supported, as we can see in the case of some Augustan antiquarians, Verrius Flaccus for instance, educator of princes and author of the monumental calendar put up at Praeneste, the *Fasti Praenestini*.⁴⁹ Instead, Roman prophets (*vates*) were often criticized or even silenced,⁵⁰ it was difficult for them to evade political power.⁵¹

In the face of the insecurities about the divine pointed out by these discourses, appeal to tradition, mimicking previous successful practices, the employment of specialists or radical innovation and massive medial and material investment typically tried to raise success rates and the outcome of the ritual.⁵² In the perspective of the instigators and agents, the addressees were addressable, did listen, and succoured or had identifiable and removable reasons not to do so or not to do so immediately.⁵³ At Rome, a number of rituals might need repetition or new timing to be successful.⁵⁴

And yet, despite all possible intentional innovation or strategic application, ritual action as communicative interaction is beyond the full control and transparency for the human actors. In his analysis of ritual action, Dietrich Harth has

47. On the contested interpretations, Gordon, 2016.

48. See Kronenberg, 2017; Becker and Rüpke, 2019b.

49. Rüpke, 1995, pp. 114-123.

50. On the figures and evidence, see Bendlin, 2002.

51. Examples in Urciuoli, 2020.

52. Examples in Rüpke, 2018, *passim*.

53. Cf. Belayche, 2011 for a critical view of participants.

54. On the concept of *instauratio*, see Cohee, 1994.

stressed this property as a characteristic shared with all human action.⁵⁵ Given the specific difficulties of religious communication, however, phenomenologically the stress on experiencing and passivity is more intensive here. Religious ritual action is to a higher degree self-analytic, context-sensitive, and reflexive than many other types of action likewise engaged in *poiesis* of “symbolically effective design” and *practice* of successful action.⁵⁶ In other words, socio-religious practices are listening to themselves, thus changing both ends of the relation as well as the relationship itself.

At Rome, a whole range of practices called “divination”, that is, investigating the will of the gods, is relevant here. Frequently treated as a religious field of its own, often characterized by extreme technicality, such techniques frequently are concomitants of other rituals, of religious communication.⁵⁷ They include inquiring about the right time and place, checking the suitability of sacrificial victims, examining the entrails or the shape of the flames on an altar before and during burnt offerings, closely observing the bodily reactions – nodding, bleeding and the like – of statues addressed.

All of this is a form of meta-communication listening to any signs of success or failure of the ritual communication proper.⁵⁸ Every major sacrifice was accompanied by divinatory practices to find out whether the addressee thought the gift was acceptable in that specific situation. The absence of a heart in the victim did not reveal a hidden flaw in the animal chosen. Instead it constituted a sign sent by the addressee at the very moment of sacrifice. Rules about silence or good sounds, “firewalls” around temples, guardian deities at entrances of sacralized spaces, luck-boding names and colours, purity rules and special proveniences or designs of tools and materials, permanently checked and criticized time and again, accrue. Thus the divinatory practices surrounding the ritual communication were another kind of second-order communication, verifying the successful establishment of the first-order communication and stressing that the gods were sovereign with regard to human attempts to contact them.⁵⁹

The non-routine character of this divine-human exchange is neatly dramatized in the so-called *litatio*, the examination of the entrails (*exta*). This can be characterized as

55. Harth, 2006, pp. 18-19, drawing on Pierre Bourdieu.

56. For the latter two properties see Harth, 2006, p. 29.

57. Belayche and Rüpke, 2007.

58. For Roman material see Belayche *et al.*, 2005.

59. Gladigow, 1990, pp. 227-228; see also Borgeaud, 2012.

a ritual game that makes clear that there is nothing automatic or mechanical about the deity's acceptance of the offering, let alone his or her commitment to a return.⁶⁰

The object of this examination is to discover whether the outwardly perfect animal is equally in order inside. Quite generally in antiquity it was believed that the gods' acceptance or rejection of the sacrifice will be manifest in the animal's entrails. There was therefore no a priori assumption that an outwardly normal animal will be equally healthy inside. At the moment the animal is consecrated and killed, when it passes from the human world to the realm of the gods, the deity makes a statement: I accept the animal; I do not accept the animal. This reply is communicated by deformations of the *exta* due to disease or other causes; sometimes – and these were really bad signs – the heart, or the “head” of the liver, might even be clean missing.⁶¹ The sacrificant had to use his judgement here; occasionally, specialist *haruspices*, Etruscan entrail-readers, were consulted,⁶² though the principle remained the same. If the outcome is positive, the *exta* were cooked (boiled or grilled, depending on the animal) separately, and later burned for the gods.⁶³ So the parts of the animal that are closest to divinity are those in which the message is encoded – there was even an ancient etymology that derived the word *exta* from the gods, the “outstanding ones”.⁶⁴

The reading of the *exta* dramatizes the issue of the successful establishment of a relationship. The *litatio*, the announcement that the animal has been accepted by the god, does not have to take place at once. If it fails, there are two possibilities. One is to call a halt to the entire ritual, on the grounds that the moment or occasion is evidently not opportune: the deity does not want a sacrifice at this time. Alternatively, one might continue slaughtering victims until the deity accepted the sacrifice (*usque ad litationem*) or repeat the whole ritual sequence (instauration).⁶⁵ This was, or might be, an expensive business, which could therefore acquire its own expressive value. For example, the sacrificant had the opportunity of conveying how much store he set

60. Although they agree that the gods were not strictly bound by votives, Beard, North and Price, 1998, pp. 1-36 fail to see *litatio* as a ritual dramatization of this truth.

61. Cic., *Div.* I 28; heart and head of liver missing: Cic., *Div.* I 119; Paulus, *Excerpt. Festi* p. 287, 7-8 L., s.v. “*pestifera auspicia*”; Suet., *Iul.* 77.

62. Heurgon, 1953; Hano, 1986; Montero, 1991; Roncalli, 2010.

63. Separately: Liv., XLI 15, 2; cf. Paulus, *Excerpt. Festi* p. 9, 3-4 L., s.v. “*antroare*”. In the case of naval sacrifices, or to marine deities, the entrails were thrown raw, but chopped up (*cruda exta caesa*) into the sea: Liv., XXIX 27, 5; Serv., *Aen.* V 238.

64. Paulus, *Excerpt. Festi* p. 69, 9-10 L., s.v. “*exta*”: *quod ea dis prosecuntur, quae maxime extant eminentque*, “because they are cut out for the gods, who are very conspicuous and prominent” (the alternative spelling of the word *exsto*, “I stand out”, is *exto*).

65. Cohee, 1994.

by the sacrifice, demonstratively, with an audience, or by himself, or in dialogue with participating colleagues, people of his own social level. If a general was determined to go to war, he would just kill another ox, and then another...; but if he were sceptical about how keen the Senate really was to go to war, he was free to say after the first animal: “Well, I’m sorry, I would have fought your war, but the gods are against it, so we can pack up for today”. How often that happened, we do not know.⁶⁶ But it is worth repeating the crucial point, that, in a context where the other world is only apprehensible through signs, *litatio* made communication with gods visibly bidirectional. The individuality of these deities acquires sharper contours through the rejection of the idea that the votive implied an automatically positive response. Above all, they acquired a degree of unpredictability, of freedom, that gave them the right to make surprising choices. The instrumental value of material (dead or animated) objects employed for ritualization could no longer be taken for granted. Thus, the self-world relations implied became an object of reflexion, too.

Within the framework of relations in the making, this amounts to more than funny details. Culturally as much as individually, relationships to fellow humans, to the material world, and to even wider contexts beyond the present moment and location are established, activated, habitualized in those relations that are mediatized by relating to “not unquestionably plausible addressees (or speakers)”, that is to say, in socio-*religious* practices. Evidently, different ritual traditions produce here a very different range of what is to be included in such relationships. To elucidate such a wide spectrum of poles and relationships offers a very different view onto religious rituals and their position in cultural traditions, discourses, and everyday life.

4. HABITUALIZATION

The sources for Roman socio-religious practices do not allow for a micro-sociological approach to chains of ritual actions. Instead, I will briefly review the many levels of processes of institutionalizing such socio-religious practices. In difference to the importance ascribed to Vedic rituals by its practitioners to keep the world going,⁶⁷ at Rome the existence of the world and ongoing life was not dependent on human ritual activities. Nevertheless, in difference to rather anonymous concepts of fate, at Rome the gods were responsible and might be influenced, at least for the

66. See Rüpke, 2019a, p. 154.

67. See Staal, 1983; Heesterman, 1991; cf. for changing constellations, Inden, 1992; Hüsken, 2016.

more contingent (even if important!) events.⁶⁸ This need not result in a cult on a piecemeal basis. My gift commits the god, morally at any rate, to giving me in return something I value.⁶⁹ The commitment is mutual: of course, I will give thanks to the deity who has given me something by sacrificing in my turn again. There is thus a ceaseless cycle of obligation and gratitude, which the usual concentration on individual exchanges expressed by the phrase *do ut des* tends to obscure. Deities received votives, even if they did not fulfil what the votives were promised for, as the ceaseless annual vows of the priesthood of the Arval Brethren show.⁷⁰ There is a chain of actions, a reciprocity of gifts. Typically, ritual actions did not remain a one-off thing. Patterns of repetition were important for the formation of real or imagined worshipping communities, establishing horizontal relationships of different degrees of intensity between leading religious actors, marching participants or members of a standing or seated audience. This is where this survey starts.

The gods who were supposed to sustain this social order had a right to be worshipped. This legitimate claim was met by the *regular* staging of the *sacra publica* – the religious duties that the community as a whole was obliged to fulfil. It was not possible to do less; but, since this pattern of obligation had developed incrementally over the long term, it was usually unnecessary to do more.⁷¹ In certain situations, when a deity showed signs of displeasure by sending earth-quakes, hail-storms or other negative signs, the political leadership, the Senate, might well consider performing additional rituals; but usually the city was confident that it fulfilled the gods' expectations, to avoid the *ira deorum*.⁷² It would have been regarded as pure supererogation for a magistrate, say, to show himself over-zealous and sacrifice to Jupiter every other day instead of twice a month, on the principle, "the more the better". Such behaviour was not generally acceptable, and no magistrate would have gotten extra public funding. Patterns of continuous cult, of lightening, were established only during the imperial period.⁷³

In addition to this top level of "public cult", above all featuring members of the elite, often competing with one another and claiming to represent the community (while priests merely perform specialized tasks), there was a second level of religious institutions, concerned with the regional sub-units of the city. In the

68. Rüpke, 2008.

69. The classic formulation is Pernice, 1885; see also Beard, North and Price, 1998, pp. 1-34.

70. Scheid, 1990.

71. Scheid, 2001.

72. For prodigies, see Gladigow, 1979; Rosenberger, 1998 and 2005; Scardigli, 2008; Rosenberger, 2010.

73. See e.g. Bielfeldt, 2014b on lamps.

case of Rome itself, these were the Seven Hills (the festival of the *Septimontium*), the thirty *curiae* (an old form of political organization that still featured in the route taken by the procession of the *Argei* in May) and the *vici*, neighbourhoods agglomerated into sub-divisions of the city, which were themselves aggregated into the fourteen regions.⁷⁴ This list is by no means complete, since it was added to constantly as the city grew. In addition to such *sacra publica*, as some Romans systematized them, *sacra privata*, the “private cults”, were institutionalized rituals (and hence “gods”) which individuals were responsible for, such as domestic and funerary cults and the cults of the *gentes*, the extended “clans” of those who shared the same *nomen*, especially characteristic of the aristocracy. However, the typology of human agents and their duties constructed by such a terminology does not match the social groups that actually engaged and were formed by such rituals.⁷⁵ The terminology represents an harmonious social ideal, beginning with the household, continuing through the *gentes*, and on up to the public level, particular and general. It had nothing to do with the reality of divergent interests, social barriers, gender roles, physical mobility and individual isolation. A growing number of temples and the services provided by small religious entrepreneurs offered further opportunities for institutionalized ritual practices, supplemented by the ritual framework of (mostly professional) voluntary associations.⁷⁶ “Religion” here is never fixed, but in the making, establishing, habitualizing and criticizing the relationships implied.⁷⁷ Beyond changes in the use of media like inscriptions and their late ancient decrease, socio-religious practices in the form of rituals seem to have been growing in numbers, reflexivity and corporeal and emotional intensity.⁷⁸ The importance of religion is historically variable.

5. CONCLUSION

How did a Roman do sacrifice, do religion? Of course, she or he did it in many different ways, depending on the public status, the group involved, location and date. In that regard, “sacrifice” is a rather difficult term for a comparative enter-

74. *Septimontium*: Varro, *Ling.* VI 24; Festus, p. 458, 1-5 L. and p. 474, 36-p. 476, 5 L. (from Antistius Labeo); *curiae*: Festus, p. 180, 32-p. 182, 4 L.; also Varro, *Ling.* V 83, cf. V 45-54 (*Argei*); *vici*: Suet., *Aug.* 30, 1; cf. Ov., *Fast.* V 145-146.

75. Rüpke, 2007a; Rebillard, 2015, Rebillard and Rüpke, 2015b.

76. Rüpke, 1999; Bendlin, 2011; Gordon, 2016 and 2017.

77. See Albrecht *et al.*, 2018.

78. For the general phenomenon, Rüpke, 2018c.

prise. Socio-religious practices are thus frequently unduly narrowly understood in their malleability and resulting wide range of forms. Often “sacrifice” has been misused in order to formulate some general theories of rituals that depend on the unproven notion that animal sacrifice was at the very heart of ancient religion.⁷⁹ This criticism holds true, even if it proved to be the most stimulating element to think about in terms of ritual already in antiquity. In his commentary on the Roman calendar (*Libri fastorum*), one of the most complex accounts of socio-religious practices from antiquity, Ovid started to reflect on animal sacrifice already in his entry to January the 9th, the *Agonalia*, the ritual killing of an animal par excellence (I 317-456).⁸⁰

“How do you sacrifice?” A friendly-minded Roman might have offered a very simple answer, too. “I did a ritual (*sacra feci*) with ...”, would have been this answer. Marcus Ogulnius Gallus, the consul of 182 BCE, might have pointed to his sacrifice of twenty oxen (Liv., XL 2, 4), Philolaches in the contemporary Plautine comedy *Mostellaria* reflected on a sacrifice of “good silver”, that he missed to perform (v. 241). Another might have answered that he did it by “money”, even if he used corn and fruit, since (as we learn by Paulus’ excerpts of Festus’ lexicon) these things formerly constituted what today is called *pecunia* (“money”, p. 287, 14 L).

All these answers betray the wide variety of relationships to the material world that were habitualized in the triangle of humans, gods, and ritual objects, its spill over into social, human-human, relationships, and in thinking about how to successfully approach the divine addressees. It is this very relationship to the world beyond the immediately graspable world of fellow-humans and objects that is above all experienced and constituted in rituals as a specific form of socio-religious practices. Yet, the range of gestures, of sensorial stimulations and experiences, and of temporal, spatial, and especially social settings, that is, the intensive mediatization of this transcendent relationship, points to further fields of material and social self-world relations of very diverse characters. Livy and Plautus, the ancient authors just quoted, referred to sacrificial material not out of interest for ritual details, but to characterize persons. Yet, material was not only brought into ritual practices, but also taken out of it, as statuettes or flasks, *ampullae*, brought back from pilgrimages for instance, demonstrate.⁸¹ The biography of objects before and after periods of

79. See Cancik-Lindemaier, 2006b.

80. See Gladigow, 1971.

81. Hunter-Crawley, 2012.

ritual intensification⁸² created lasting memories that shaped both ends of many relationships involved in these ritual practices and the character of the relationship itself.⁸³ Material and social relationships that are instrumentalized and produced through their inclusion in or emergence from religious practices, i.e. in communication with not unquestionably plausible addressees, are changing. The ritual practices of such communication as described above were not only intensified by their necessary reflexivity. They were also deeply imbedded in the lived space and time of their agents and potentially reaching out.⁸⁴ This is a hypothesis, however, that needs further testing.

82. For the concept of religious intensification, Davies, 2008. *Biography of objects*: Gosden and Marshall, 1999; applied to ritual objects in Rüpke, 2018.

83. On memories from religious experiences, Cusumano *et al.*, 2013.

84. See e.g. Houben, 2002, p. 468 for “liturgical orders”.

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THE SPECTRUM OF RELIGIOUSNESS, OR WHAT MAKES AN OBJECT RELIGIOUS. HABITS, PATTERNED EVIDENCE AND RELIGIOUS MEANINGS OF IMAGE-OBJECTS IN POMPEII*

EL ESPECTRO DE LA RELIGIOSIDAD, O LO QUE CONVIERTE A UN OBJETO EN RELIGIOSO. HÁBITOS, FUENTES QUE SIGUEN UN PATRÓN Y SIGNIFICADOS RELIGIOSOS DE LOS OBJETOS-IMAGEN EN POMPEYA

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ABSTRACT

How do image-objects obtain a religious meaning? When can we interpret material evidence as traces of a religious ritual? These questions are central to the archaeology of religion, but often answered in favor of religion without sound criteria. Using examples from Pompeii I look into “material religion” through the lens of viewing

RESUMEN

¿Cómo adquieren los objetos-imagen un significado religioso? ¿Cuándo podemos interpretar las fuentes materiales como restos de un ritual religioso? Estas cuestiones son fundamentales para la arqueología de la religión, pero a menudo se responden en favor de lo religioso sin criterios sólidos. Utilizando ejemplos de Pompeya, exploro en

* This contribution is an attempt to study the complexity of Roman material religion and to connect it with ritual studies and social habitus with still many blurs, flaws and gaps in the present text. Nevertheless, I am convinced that the approach is promising. The arguments gained much from the substantial and enlightening remarks by the two anonymous reviewers. I could present some of the ideas about Pompeii and religion at the conference of the DVRW in Hannover, where Christa Frateantonio, Verena Fugger, and Jörg Rüpke commented on it, and in a colloquium at Graz, where David Palme, Luca Pellarin, Elisabeth Trinkl and Peter Scherrer raised helpful questions and gave advice. Elisabeth Begemann improved my idiosyncratic English. All errors and short-comers are mine.

habits and habitualized practices embedded in and shaping social and cultural *habitus* in a Roman city of the 1st cent. CE. This practice-oriented approach to religion and material culture allows for a more nuanced interpretation of when and how people in Graeco-Roman antiquity conceived of an image-object as religious and ascribed a religious meaning to it. Based on an understanding of religion as communication with supra-human agents, the notion of a “spectrum of religiousness” softens the black-and-white view on motifs and objects as either religious or profane. The distinction of a gradually varying perception of image-objects is archaeologically based on both loosely assembled evidence (e.g. the iconographical and material remains in a house) or intentionally arranged evidence (e.g. niches with altars in front of them). In the repetition of such material reflections of practices the religious character of image-objects comes to the fore.

este estudio la “religión material” a través del prisma de los hábitos de visión y de las prácticas habitualizadas que están imbricadas en, y que a su vez moldean el *habitus* social y cultural de una ciudad romana del siglo I d.C. Este enfoque de la religión y de la cultura material centrado en la práctica permite una interpretación más precisa de cuándo y cómo las personas en la Antigüedad grecorromana concebían un objeto-imagen como religioso y le adscribían un significado religioso. Basado en la idea de religión como comunicación con agentes suprahumanos, la noción de “espectro de religiosidad” suaviza la visión en blanco y negro de los motivos y de los objetos como religiosos o profanos. La distinción de una percepción gradualmente variante de los objetos-imagen esta fundamentada arqueológicamente, tanto en los materiales que aparecen reunidos de manera indirecta o casual (ej. los vestigios iconográficos y materiales de una casa), como en aquellos que fueron deliberadamente organizados (ej. nichos con altares en frente de ellos). En la repetición de estos reflejos materiales de las prácticas se aprecia el carácter religioso de los objetos-imagen.

KEYWORDS

Egyptianizing Dwarf; Material Religion; Nudity; Social Habitus; Viewing Habits.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Desnudez; enano egipciante; hábitos de visión; habitus social; religión material.

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1. OMNIPRESENT, MUTE OR INDIFFERENT. DEITIES REPRESENTING RELIGION IN POMPEII

It was a natural disaster of unprecedented measure, when the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in summer 79 CE destroyed many urban and rural settlements, killed the inhabitants that had not sought their salvation in flight, and covered buildings, fields, gardens and the entire infrastructure in the Sarno plain and along the Gulf of Naples with ashes and lava. Pliny the Younger, who allegedly had a Stoic background, describes the eruption as a moment of complete absence of the gods.¹ In order to cope not only with such dramatic situations, but also minor contingencies in their lives, people rely on (what we call) religion, which played an important role (not only) in Graeco-Roman antiquity. As an irony of fate, the moment of the absence of the gods resulting in the ancients' perception in the total extinction of Pompeii is the reason why today we can study where and how deities were active, and how Pompeians made them parts of their lives. It goes without saying that the Campanian city with its phases of archaic Samnite harbour to Roman republican colony to early Imperial city offers rich evidence of the urban grid, of architecture, religious buildings, sculpture, paintings, epigraphical documents and all kind of objects from various materials (glass, metal, terracotta, stone), from which archaeology can reconstruct the societal groups, the political and administrative organization, the infrastructure, resource provisions, economic production and exchange. In all these areas of the

1. Plin., *Ep.* VI 20, 15. See Jones, 2001. For an overview of the history of not only this catastrophe in the region of the Gulf of Naples and the Sarno plain see Meller and Dickmann, 2011.

city's life people included communication with super-human agents.² Based on material from mainly the early Principate, when the city was struck by the catastrophe, but also from the earlier phases of Republican times inquiries are possible into how people established relations to the deities in such a community and place. How did they do this in order to avert complications and crises – either personal or communal ones? What forms of religious activities did they adhere to, agree or disagree on, or participate in? And what material objects and image-objects were involved?

The backdrop to the questions about religion in Pompeii and the spectrum of religiousness that is manifest in image-objects, is the ubiquity of imagery, objects, and buildings that refer to deities, cult practices, or mythological representations (in either images or texts) where the gods often play an important role. The ubiquity results in flaws when it comes to archaeologically explain why or in how far exactly something is religious or what creates a “sacred atmosphere”³

This neglects the analysis of what characteristics of a painting, image-object or architectural space and their contexts indicate their potential religiousness,⁴ since they are often studied for the sake of the iconographical motifs and their origins, or the stylistic and chronological development. What needs to be illuminated is how exactly the religious meaning of the various pieces of evidence can be determined in archaeology, based on the question of how the individual related to these objects. This is at the core of material religion.⁵

With two case studies from Roman Pompeii, I attempt to add to a more dynamic understanding of religion in the studies of material culture from the Ancient Mediterranean.⁶ Drawing on the image-objects of statues of nude men and dwarfs

2. For a brief introduction to the history and archaeology of Pompeii see Zanker, 1995 and Dickmann, 2005. Religion in Pompeii is the topic of the monograph by Van Andringa, 2009, that analyzes the evidence for religion in the different areas of life and activities in the Vesuvian cities.

3. E.g. Bowe, 2009 and Neudecker, 2015, p. 227. See below par. 2.2. and 3.1. Despite the approaches to atmospheres created by decorative schemes in rooms or in sensory perception of cities (Haug, 2014 and 2017, referring to Böhme, 1995), more has to be done for a general understanding and use of “atmosphere” in the archaeology of religion by combining aesthetic with spatial theories and looking for the micro-strategies of individuals. For exemplary approach in modern contexts see Hasse, 2008.

4. The term “image-object” takes into account the material and iconographic aspects of two- and three-dimensional evidence, which includes the material aspect in iconographic analysis and allows for applying iconographic methods for material objects, see for a first application Rieger, 2018.

5. For situational meaning of objects see Raja and Weiss, 2015 and 2016. For general approaches on material in ancient religions or religious studies see Boivin, 2009; Insoll, 2009; Elsner, 2012; Barrett (C.E.), 2016; Bräunlein, 2016; Moser and Knust, 2017. The volume edited by Mylonopoulos, 2020 (not yet published) will also focus on the role of image-objects in religion. See nn. 8 and 9 on ritual.

6. Whitehouse, 1996; Insoll, 2004b and 2011b. See n. 5.

that are often related to religious representations or atmospheres, I argue that a look at the material evidence that considers iconographical and behavioral triggers as well as the spatial contexts of the urban fabric of Pompeii allows for distinguishing gradually different expressions of religion and religious practices.

Assemblages as non-patterned and arrangements as patterned and repeatedly found forms of evidence allow for reconstructing such practices.⁷ Repeated practices are the foundation for what can become rituals; when supra-human agents are involved these rituals become religious. In the same vein, I claim that image-objects can gain “religiousness” by being involved in such practices.

To add to an understanding of the specificity of rituals as religious practices I will set them into relation with routines and habits as well as social habitus, which I turn to at the end.⁸ This approach results in a break-up of rituals and religion as static concepts, since I relate them to repeatedly enacted habits grounded in daily-life and environments. Acknowledging ritualization⁹ of practices and gradually changing religiousness of involved image-objects, people and spaces helps overcome the binary way of interpreting them as either religious or profane.¹⁰

7. On the differentiation of assemblage and arrangement and the significance of patterns and repetitions for the reconstruction of religious practices see *infra* pp. 59-61; 74-76.

8. On the relation of habit, habitus and ritual see *infra* pp. 74-78. I draw on the recent definition of ritual by Kyriakidis, 2007, pp. 290-293 and n. 1, arguing in favour of a gradual differentiation of institutionalized practices, since not all formalized repeated activities become rituals. For the basic decipherments of rituals and ritualisation in anthropology see Bell, 1992 and Rappaport, 1999, esp. the latter with a structuralist approach. For a practice-oriented approach see Fogelin, 2007, p. 65, who describes the two ways archaeology tends to look at religious rituals (symbolism or human action), to which add the archaeological positions of Elsner, 2012; Rowan, 2012; Swenson, 2015. In German speaking academia the definition of ritual by Stollberg-Rilinger, 2013, p. 9 (“Standardisierung der äußeren Form, Wiederholung, Aufführungscharakter, Performativität und Symbolizität gekennzeichnet ist und eine elementare sozial strukturbildende Wirkung”) is influential, who stresses the performative character of rituals. However, many of the mentioned authors are interested in rituals that concern and involve larger numbers of individuals and have transformative and identity-establishing purposes (see Michaels, 2016 on the latter aspects). From the perspective of a dynamic understanding of materiality there is still more to investigate about rituals.

9. For the process and significance of ritualization see Bell, 1992, p. 74: “ritualization is a way of acting that is designed and orchestrated to distinguish and privilege what is being done in comparison to other, usually more quotidian, activities”. In this process one should integrate the option of dissolving the ritualised situation and involved agents afterwards (ephemerality).

10. On sacralization see Anttonen, 2005; Schlette and Krech, 2018. For Graeco-Roman religion see Rüpke, 2020 on ritual objects; Rieger, 2018 and 2020b on situationally limited “sacralized spaces”. Barrett (C.E.), 2019 dedicated her study of objects and contexts from Pompeii to the shifting meanings of Egyptianizing objects with a focus on identity in a cosmopolitical empire. Her claim is to dissolve the “oppositions of ‘religious’ versus ‘decorative’ imagery” in order to allow for the “multiplicity of func-

The dynamic view on religion is based in the paradigm of Lived Ancient Religion that accounts for the deviations, transformations, omissions or additions that occur in religious practices and is reflected in the material evidence. Applied to rituals, axiomatic assumptions of archaeology have to be re-thought.¹¹ Even highly repetitive, scripted, recognizable, symbolically invested practices – rituals – are subject to the appropriating, dynamic and situational capacities of the involved agents and performative moments.¹² As with the too rigid labels of religious or non-religious, rituals also can be less complex and grounded in ordinary habits. These habits, habitual knowledge and the ritualization of habits as well as their relation to social habitus are in a constant flow and bring to bear on image-objects and how agents engage with them.

Questions about the religious meaning of image-objects and spaces are not only of interest for a certain period in the particular socio-cultural and historical situation of Pompeii. A detailed analysis of the ways of how people established relations to deities in a given social and material environment can be used as a model for understanding the position of ancient Roman, or other polytheistic religions. Rituals are social institutions (and can involve many people) as well as individual practice.¹³ This entails tensions and potentials for the creation or creative adaptations of rituals, and religion as a field of social discourse and the production and employment of media.¹⁴

2. TO UNMUTE THE EVIDENCE. MATERIAL PRACTICES, RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATION AND PEOPLE

In the city of Pompeii the environment in which individuals or groups establish relations to the deities is in spatial and material regards the urban fabric of – at the moment of the destruction – a Roman-Campanian city of the 1st cent. CE. This environment impacts how human agents relate to each other, or to image-objects; it

tions, values, and significations” (pp. 16; 103; 303-312; 337) in such imagery. This builds on strands in Classics that started with studies such as Bremmer, 1998 or Elsner, 2012, esp. pp. 10-11. See recently Adrych and Dalglish, 2020 with a review on the perception and study of objects in the archaeology (of religion), while Moser and Knust, 2017 do not tackle this problem in depth.

11. Rüpke, 2011; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018. For the applications of the LAR-paradigm in archaeological material see Raja and Rüpke, 2015b; Raja and Weiss, 2016; Gasparini, 2020; Rieger, 2020b.

12. See *supra* p. 55 and nn. 8-9 on ritual and ritual theory.

13. The tension between and foundations of an individual’s behaviour (agency) and a community’s values, beliefs, and norms (structure) and vice versa is partly resolved by the Bourdieuan concept of habitus (Bourdieu, 1977 and 1979), as well as Giddens structuration theory (Giddens, 1984), further developed in practice-theoretical approaches for archaeology. See Antczak and Beaudry, 2019.

14. Meyer, 2003.

influences the ways of doing religion and affects the different social habitus.¹⁵ With a praxeological approach, archaeology opens ways to take into account considerations of everyday activities of human agents on the basis of material objects for a perspective on religion.¹⁶

2.1. MATERIAL RELIGION AND THE CONCEPTS OF RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATION, AGENCY AND RITUAL

In order to bring material evidence to bear on the reconstruction of past religious practices, I conceive of religion as a human resource that 1) ascribes agency to some “counterintuitive agent” and 2) enlarges the agency of human beings (thus enabling them to cope with various situations). To influence or get closer to the agency of these beings, 3) communication is necessary, hence religion enables and improves communication in various directions and with various addressees.¹⁷

The understanding of religion as communication of different agents enables archaeology to usefully focus on the media of such communication – image-objects, motifs and their material, inscriptions, the spatial environment – that are more or less strategically involved establishing relations to the deities.¹⁸ Communication in this context goes beyond a semiotic conception of a message send with a certain meaning to be received and understood by an addressee. This falls short of explaining the variations, complexity and transformations of historical and archaeological sources. Religious communication is inevitably historically contingent and contextually embedded as well as individually experienced. As part of a past society’s organization, religious communication also depends on individual predispositions (informed by experiences, knowledge, habits, social habitus, expectations etc.) and

15. It is not the scope of the paper to discuss these terms with all their sociological or cultural-anthropological implications and critique, but give the background to how I can operationalize them for archaeological image-objects in Pompeii and the reconstruction of religious practices; see Knapp and van Dommelen, 2008 on how habitus influences habits, however one should widen it to a mutual influence. See *infra* pp. 74-78.

16. Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina and Savigny, 2000; Reckwitz, 2012 and 2016 for focussing the attention on individuals, embodiment and practices. For applications in archaeology and history see Pauketat, 2001; Cipolla, 2014, who emphasized the embodied, spatial and material dimensions of practices.

17. See Rüpke, 2018, pp. 69-70, however I leave out the aspect of identity, Rüpke’s third category.

18. See von Hesberg, 2007 for an application of a communication theory for the analysis of archaeological material with religious meanings. Epigraphically, inscriptions on image-objects mentioning *ex voto*, *ex iussu*, or an altar, as well as sacrificial remains are the clearest clues for a highly repetitive religious communication.

leads to modifications, adaptations and variations of what could be transmitted, received or understood.¹⁹ In a semiotic perspective, the archaeological material mirrors potential addressees, receivers and messages, but in a relational perspective, it adds to the communicative frame of religious practices, and how visual and material triggers may have impacted people – apart from an intended meaning.²⁰ From the material sources, we infer communicational habits with a set of image-objects, or repeatedly conducted practices, that reflect also (social) habitus. Especially the latter is bound to or based on horizons of expectations and horizons of experiences of the individuals of a society or societal groups.²¹

Individuals and a society like the one in Pompeii tested which kind of communication with the deities was successful by their repeated but modified actions. Sometimes partial, sometimes imperfect performances and appropriations of movements, gestures, and motifs render religion and religious communication “elastic”. People performed or uttered prayers differently each time, motifs such as a Venus were painted, stamped or sculpted differently. Various strategies to negotiate and adjust rituals and habits are a continuous source for religious innovation and change.

Emphasizing the “lived” aspects of religion entails accepting the agency of objects and their situational meaning. Agency of human and non-human agents (things, people, animals, environment) describes their capacity to be or enter in relations to something or someone else. Humans can “act”, while an object can only enact agency in relation to other things, humans etc.²² Bringing agency to bear on

19. This focus on the re-shaping, re-negotiating and re-appropriating religious traditions, hence on the creativity and transformative capacities of religion, lies at the heart of the “Lived Ancient Religion” paradigm: see for applications Gasparini *et al.*, 2020 and for the approach Rüpke, 2011; Raja and Rüpke, 2015b; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, where, however, ritual does not take center stage. Habits are understood as repeated schemes of actions by members of a group (community of the Pompeians) that rely on shared values, ideas, and belief. Habitual practices are reflected in the material-archaeological pattern. See Michaels, 2016 and *infra* pp. 59-62; 74-76.

20. For visual triggers in the urban fabric of Pompeii, see Rieger (forthcoming a).

21. For religious experiences see e.g. Patzelt, 2018 for praying; studies of the variations of image-objects and their perception see Stewart, 2003; Lorenz, 2005 and 2016; Trimble and Elsner, 2006; Brain, 2018.

22. See in general on agency in archaeology Dobres and Robb, 2000; Gosden, 2005; Joyce and Lopiparo, 2005. Barrett (J.C.), 2001 emphasizes more specifically the agency in “structured material conditions”. The sociological and art historical basis for approaches to agency is Gell, 1998 based on e.g. Latour, 2005 and earlier studies from economic sociology; for agency in religious practices Alvar Ezquerro, 2018; Rieger, 2016, esp. pp. 309-310 on agency of objects in sacred contexts; Rieger (forthcoming b) for the agency of landscape playing a role in establishing religious institutions; Stewart, 2007 for agency of images. For applications to material objects in Pompeii, especially Egyptianizing material, see Barrett

the history of religion or on ritual theories means that the qualities of interactions (of objects, people, spaces) in a social environment and with agents beyond this environment (deities, ancestors, divinized natural phenomena), and the ways of possible communications become more variegated. Moreover, it leads to revealing their situationally ascribed meanings.

2.2. WHEN IS IT RELIGIOUS? ASSEMBLAGES, ARRANGEMENTS AND REPEATED PATTERNS OF MATERIAL EVIDENCE AND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF PRACTICES

The methodological instrument of archaeology to reconstruct possible agentive relations of (image-)objects lies in taking seriously the various contexts an object is embedded in. The first-hand context is its findspot (e.g. a street corner in Pompeii) and the archaeological conditions of material category and preservation (e.g. a coin with a still discernible image). They determine a first archaeological approach to the usage and meaning of objects (in the hand of the people of Pompeii in a particular period, seeing certain images). The second level of context of an image-object reveals clues to relations established by form, motif and iconography (in case of the coin, e.g. what kind of seal, what tradition in the iconography), material (what metal), spatial and social environment (from where, for whom) and usage (where did it circulate, how long, what particularities) that establish relations to others.²³ A third aspect of context I call arrangement which means the intentional association of things and motifs in spaces in differentiation to assemblage.²⁴ The latter are combinations of image-objects circulating or present in a certain space, as e.g. the paintings in a room of a certain period combined with imagery of a later time and a foundation deposit in the same house from its beginnings.²⁵ An arrangement entails material objects that show a potentially intentional relations to each other; arrangements offer clues that refer to non-present objects (a similar statue type), evoke past ones (myths that are known through many images and narratives), or

(C.E.), 2019 and Mol, 2015. For relevant criticism see recently Roskams, 2019, pp. 2-3 and 11-14; and Bräunlein, 2016 more specifically on material agency in religious studies.

23. The use of “context” differs and needs a definition from case to case. See Barrett (C.E), 2019, e.g. pp. 12-19; pp. 48-50 on contextualization: she uses “ensemble”, where I use assemblage.

24. In the anglophone archaeology it means associated finds as the outcome of a process of intentionally or non-intentionally buried objects (“*Vergesellschaftung*”), see e.g. Joyce and Pollard, 2010. See Gosden, 2005, esp. p. 194 for a broader understanding of assemblage (“cultural assemblage”) and Hamilakis and Jones, 2017, pp. 81-83 for underlining also affective relations in combinations of objects.

25. Robinson, 2002, pp. 94-98 for foundation rituals e.g. in the *Caupona* di Amarantus I 9.

direct to future ones (which is the imagined deities that are addressed for future needs). Arrangements as intentional combinations of material evidence offer a possibility for further analysis in the understanding of Schatzki's "practice-arrangement-bundles" and Reckwitz's "artefact-space-structuration".²⁶ These social theorists with a clear interest in material aspects of social relations put an emphasis on the constellations of material objects and individuals (subjects) that structure social relations and as such produce a meaningful social environment. Both the incidental and the intentional combinations (assemblage and arrangement) form the background for ascribing religious meanings to image-objects.

But when was a piece part of a religious practice? What are the archaeological criteria for singling out religion as communication? If repeated practices and habits shape religious rituals, the archaeological evidence needs to be similarly structured, appear in a repeated pattern and have a communicational character as e.g. addressed to a supranatural addressee.²⁷ The assemblage, the non-patterned evidence allows for taking seriously the less consciously perceived connections and less intentional viewing habits of paintings, jewelry or statuettes. Arrangements, i.e. repeatedly found patterns such as statuettes in a niche of the house or beads with recurring symbols are more formalized and have signs of a directed communication (over-life size imagery; exaggerated shapes, understood as apotropaic; non-functional objects such as gilded garments, miniature vessels etc.).

If ritualization is fostered by repetition (and a creative adaptation of such repetition), this is reflected by patterns – but at the same time their disruption – in find situations and in iconographic, spatial, formal, stylistic, or material expressions. Patterns, then, also reflect habits. The creativity of human agents to adapt a set of practices and habits according to changed situations is marked by changed patterns. This approach does not only incorporate the lived aspect of religion (and also ritual) but opens a perspective on the degrees of religiousness and the assumption of "light" religious meanings.²⁸

26. See Schatzki, 2002, pp. 59-122 and Reckwitz, 2012, pp. 251-252.

27. On recent discussion of the recognizability of ritual in archaeology and the role patterned deposits see Garrow, 2012 and Swenson, 2015. However, pattern does not only mean the repetition of a motif or a structured deposition, but its repeated occurrences as e.g. coins in bodies of water. The deposition question is more intensively dealt with in prehistoric archaeology. In Classical Archaeology it is a topic e.g. in the Italian research, cf. Gentili, 2005.

28. See nn. 5 and 11. The lingering of image-objects resp. their interpretation between decorative and meaningful that is not mutually exclusive pervades Barrett (C.E.), 2019.

Since these interpretations are highly dependent on the three dimensions of contexts, that is, the (image-)object's characteristics as well as the arrangements it is combined with, they are often too easily applied. This approach opens a perspective on relations between the things that are not archaeologically connected to create meaning for the users.

If we look for repeated combinations of artefacts of characteristics and features pertaining to the communication with the superhuman we can start with e.g. a type of evidence repeatedly found in Pompeii: simple niches in the houses' walls, often in kitchen areas. They may house paintings and statuettes that include snakes, fruits, various deities or ancestors; some are equipped with ledges for further deposits.²⁹ If in a marked-out place remains of small ceramic vessels and bronze objects are found in larger numbers, this accumulation points to not normal or everyday usage of these items.³⁰ And repetition over three centuries allows us to label this practice "religious" and the place one of repeated ritualized acts.³¹

Patterns and arrangements allow for an approximation to religion. I argue that it is more useful to single out "practices of communication" and to look for their appearances in various social spaces. If we start from individuals as agents who learned certain strategies of communication, copied and re-shaped them for various needs in the contexts they lived in (*familia*, the urban quarters, their peer-group), a similar set of communicative practices takes place in different social spaces: A Pompeian could present gifts to images of the gods in a kitchen area or at a temple close to the forum. Only the numbers of participants or observers varies, but not the practice and the image-object.³²

29. On *lararia* and religion of the *familia* Boyce, 1937; on the paintings Fröhlich, 1991; the religion in the houses is also central to a series of studies: Krzyszowska, 2002; Bassani, 2008; Laforge, 2009.

30. At the sanctuary of ex-Fondo Iozzino, for example, see Lippolis and Osanna, 2017; Osanna and Pellegrino, 2017.

31. Starting from practice-oriented and relational approach in the various socio-spatial contexts helps to overcome the opposition of private and public in archaeology, see Wallace-Hadrill, 1994 for starting the discussion of these modern terms applied to ancient evidence; see also Pirson, 1999 and Berry, 2016. For practice theory in history and archaeology see Cipolla, 2014. See n. 16 on Schatzki, 2002 and Reckwitz, 2012; see also Pauketat, 2001, esp. p. 80, on how practices and dispositions, traditions, ritual and change are interrelated.

32. Rüpke, 2020, p. 212 arguing against e.g. Laforge, 2009.

3. FROM NOTES TO A CHORD. FROM THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE TO PATTERNS AND A SPECTRUM OF RELIGIOUSNESS

If we need to look for repeated patterns in the material evidence to recognize religious aspects, we face the problem of the variability of the archaeological material that is systematized in material categories.³³ Patterned repetition does not stop at the limits of a material category such as statuary, paintings or coins, even though we have to take account of their own logic. It can rather be compared to similar patterns in e.g. iconography or usage.

To investigate assemblages and arrangements on the three levels of contexts I focus on two motifs of image-objects – a dwarf and a nude man – and look for their relations to viewers, users, spaces and other image-objects at the find spot, in the building complex or on the level of iconography, motif and material.³⁴ The image-objects and their motifs carry general connotations and resemblances but also contextually defined meanings that differ widely. How and where Pompeians saw such imagery or interacted with image-objects influences what they connected with those things. An image of a deity on a coin, in a wall painting or at the end of a visual axis in a building provides a series of possible impact options, starting with visibility, effects of size, color but also of recipients, frequency and intentionality of contact.

Settings and frames for communication – such as pit, niche, courtyard, various visual triggers such as dressed, naked, dark, grimace, and material networks traceable through various media and objects – allow for shifting meaning from an image of a deity to a ritualized communication with her or him.

3.1. WHAT MAKES A DWARF A RELIGIOUS FIGURE? FROM COIN IMAGERY TO AN APPRECIATED HELPING AMULET

A dwarf-like figure appears in various materials, forms and media in Pompeii: A rather well-fed short male being squats, with the knees bent to the sides. His wide-eyed face is a grimace, the mouth is open – sometimes he even sticks out the tongue. There are statuettes representing the dwarf, some looking more “Egyptian” due to the turquoise faïence; others are made from unpainted terracotta.³⁵ He appears on coins,

33. See Allison, 2004 for a comprehensive study of households and material evidence, see also the first in these area of studies: Berry, 1997.

34. Barrett (C.E.), 2019; Jashemski, 1979; Rieger (forthcoming a).

35. See Barrett (C.E.), 2019, esp. pp. 258-270 on the various glazes and their meanings. With the Egyptianizing imagery I refer for my argument to the same material. However, her main focus lies on

in wall-paintings and as beads. All show, with variations in details, a squatting person, with a belly and grimace on his face. He is often paralleled with Bes, a daemon in the Egyptian pantheon (Figs. 1 and 2).³⁶ He and his relative Pataikos³⁷ were the subject of relevant studies on Egyptianizing material in Roman society, which discusses and relativizes his “Egyptianness” embedding this phenomenon into different nets of meaning such as otherness, identities, empire, globalization – a foreign imagery adapted to Roman contexts.³⁸

An Egyptianizing element in the depiction of the dwarf should not be minimized, but it is rather restricted to the often applied turquoise color (Fig. 1a-b) or the arrangement of his image among other Egyptian deities in the Iseum in Pompeii or on *sistra* – the rattles used in the cult of Isis.³⁹ My emphasis lies rather on the fact that he appears in various media, as statuette in gardens, on the *sistra*, on coins, and as beads of jewelry worn by the Pompeians. To assign him religious meaning is motivated by the image in the temple and on the *sistra*. Yet, the question remains how far the other media impact when and how the dwarf works as a superhuman addressee.

Grimacing dwarf images are recognizable in all mentioned media and appearances. However, his iconography differs in that he does e.g. not squat, but sits on a stool in the Iseum painting on the west wall of the room adjoining the courtyard of the temple (the so-called *sacrarium*). Even though this painting of the dwarf is in a temple complex, there are no signs of rituals that relate to him. The closest relation to cultic practice is in relation to the niche in the same wall of the painting of the enthroned dwarf⁴⁰ which could count as belonging to the set of image-objects that increased the Egyptianizing aspects of the area as does the head of, assumedly, a Bes-statuettes.⁴¹ He rather plays a role in the rituals connected with Isis (and Serapis),

explaining how Roman society may have understood these images, representing a foreign part of a globalized world, including the discussion of decorative vs. meaningful. Religious aspects play a role in her ch. 6 on Isiac imagery.

36. On the names and identifications of the dwarfs see Mol, 2015; Barrett (C.E.), 2019, pp. 74-99 on the history and development of the figure of Bes.

37. Barrett (C.E.), 2019, pp. 94-99. He looks less frantic, has a bald head, does not squat.

38. Versluys, 2002; Mol, 2013 and 2015; Versluys, 2017; Barrett (C.E.), 2019.

39. Hoffmann, 1993, pp. 101-106; Moormann, 2007; see also Stannard, 2013, Fig. 1.

40. MANN, Archivio Rami, no. 00351779, incision by Giovanni Battisti Casanova, see Catalogo Generale dei Beni Culturali Codice ICCD 15 00351779 (http://www.catalogo.beniculturali.it/sigecSSU_FE/dettaglioScheda.action?keycode=ICCD3729460) retrieved 13th September 2020.

41. Fiorelli, 1860-1864, I, p. 183, year 1765, 24th December in the temple precinct of Isis, 13 cm (half life-size): “trovata una testa di uomo vecchio con baffi tutti ricci e barba stesa, (...) la quale oltre al loto

since he is represented as involved in the ritual by shaking the *sistra*.⁴² However, it is again not him being the addressee of the communication, but a medium of the communicative act – he has a lower degree of religiousness.

If we look for the earliest appearance of the squatting dwarf in Pompeii, it is most likely that he came to Pompeii via Punic coins. What did a Pompeian in the 1st cent. BCE and the 1st cent. CE see in the dwarf? Is there a religious value to this demon or semi-god on a coin? Where he appears on coins, it is only on the so-called pseudo-Ebusi (Fig. 2a-b), not Roman coins. Ebusi were introduced to Pompeii from the Punic harbors of the western Mediterranean to Campania in the 3rd and 2nd cent. BCE. An imitation was then minted in the Campanian city and some other places in the 2nd and 1st cent. BCE, being in circulation until the early Principate.⁴³

That these coins were imitated points to a certain reputation of these coins. This might be related to a habitual connection of the dwarf-image Ebusus with wealth, prosperity and luck. They still circulated – even though in diminishing amounts – at the time of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius.⁴⁴ Through the coins the image of the dwarf was ascribed a positive meaning by users and beholders, connected to financial liquidity, and having an apotropaic function due to his appearance.⁴⁵ It is an ascription and knowledge obtained from experience and habit. Any resemblance of this coin image with the Egyptianizing dwarfs is secondary to his mere association with material well-being and money in the pockets of the Pompeians. Any religious meaning of the dwarf on the coin is subdued; however, it meant something to the Pompeians because they imitated it.

If we move to another context where the dwarf appears, the connection to a religious meaning is evident and related to the positive ascriptions on the imitated dwarf. Some of the necklaces found in Pompeii contain beads representing the dwarf in combination with various other motifs of prosperity, fertility, luck, apotropaic symbols etc. (Fig. 3). One necklace was found in V 3, 11 (Fig. 3a), consisting of various beads, among them the dwarf and Egyptian deities (Harpocrates and a cat/Bastet). Another necklace with beads depicting the dwarf, Isis-Fortuna,

tiene in testa il velo in forma di cappuccio, con le code che le cadono sulle spalle, solito a portarsi dalle divinità egizie". Cf. Barrett (C.E.), 2019, p. 254.

42. For example, the *sistrum* found in VII 4, 13, De Caro, 2006, no. III.1. See Barrett (C.E.), 2019, pp. 321-322 for the *sistra* and Bes. *Sistra* are dealt with by Mol, 2015, nos. 149, 150, and 156 of the database, and were found in Casa di C. Vibius Italus (VII 2, 18) and a shop (VII 4, 13). There is another shop where three more *sistra* were attested, see Manera and Mazza, 2001, pp. 61-63, nos. 18, 19, and 21.

43. For the Ebusi, the distribution of the Pseudo-Ebusi and the chronology see Frey-Kupper and Stannard, 2010; Hobbs, 2017.

44. Arévalo *et al.*, 2013, pp. 247-248; Ribera Lacomba and Salavert Leon, 2014, pp. 195-197 and 201.

45. On the apotropaic meaning of the dwarfs Clarke, 2007.

Harpocrates, and a lotus flower probably belonged to someone living in I 10, 7.⁴⁶ Since the necklaces are personal objects that were likely to be worn on their bodies, the function of some of the beads as amulets on the level of “personal religion” can be assumed.⁴⁷ The apotropaic function and ability of the tiny image-objects playing a role in a religious setting is attested by a recent find of a set of religiously agentive objects in a box – presumably by someone offering services of soothsaying, binding spells and curses in *Regio V* (Fig. 3b).⁴⁸

There is no ritual that we can grasp, but a piece of jewellery worn around the neck or wrist, on the finger or in the ears, was touched, viewed, and in direct contact with the body of the person repeatedly. The habitual act of haptically referring to and relying on the image-objects on the body is part of an embodied knowledge about their agency. Hence, a religious meaning, not on a high “amplitude” because of the low complexity and small number of interrelated agents in this practice (an individual’s body), can be assumed for these pieces of jewellery, or the special bead with its motif. For the wearer of a necklace, the choice of the motif, a gesture of touching it, is a more religious act than anything we could reconstruct for the image of the dwarf in the religious building of the temple of Isis. Hence, the tiny dwarfs in the necklaces are more religious, if we locate them in the “spectrum of religiousness”, than his image in the temple. He is the addressee of religious communication and repeatedly arranged and intentionally integrated in the necklaces.

Recent studies on the find contexts of the dwarf statuettes reveal that most of the images were not found in houses, but in gardens and yards in Pompeii (Fig. 1c-d).⁴⁹ Thus the dwarf is rather connected to nature (even though a tamed one in the highly organized small gardens of Pompeian houses) and the paintings of nature, the fountains, and other pieces of decoration than to e.g. *lararia*. What

46. One necklace was found in a box which also contained statuettes of Harpocrates and of Venus Anadyomene, see Boyce, 1937, p. 108, no. 2; for the one from I 10 see Mol, 2015, database no. 102, and NSc 1934, pp. 278-308, esp. 301-302 (Elia). See Barrett (C.E.), 2019, pp. 321-322 for amulets in Pompeii; single finds are listed in De Caro, 2006, nos. III.88-95.

47. That people differentiated between personal accessories with image-objects of religious meaning, and those without or less show the many pieces of gold- and silversmith work from Pompeii and Herculaneum, cf. D’Ambrosio, 1997. Ascription of meaning is always possible due to individual experience and memories. But imagery such as gods, phalli, dwarfs had a society-wide accepted meaning; see on amulets Dasen, 2018; Wilburn, 2018; Gordon, 2019.

48. Found in 2019 in the Casa del Giardino (V 3), see <http://pompeiiisites.org/comunicato-stampa/la-fortuna-e-la-protezione-contro-la-malasorte-nei-monili-della-regio-v/> retrieved 6 January 2020 (retrieved 2nd January 2020).

49. This was shown by Mol, 2015, fig. 4.2 and Barrett (C.E.), 2019.

he stands for is the richness of nature and the negotiation of otherness to support establishing group belonging and identity.⁵⁰ This does not have first-hand religious significance. However, if there are turquoise statuettes, referring to Egyptian faïence, the image-object of the dwarf may have worked along imaginative alleys of these assemblages that include the faraway, strange, but fascinating, Egyptian world and religion. Or just nature and its creatures.

From these patterns – dwarfs dwell in open areas and gardens, are depicted on money or worn on the body –, we can infer a shared understanding and shared habits. The dwarf figures are ascribed values of prosperity and luck and follow the iconographic pattern of bodily exaggerations and ugliness for obtaining the opposite. The dwarf pendant worn on the body is the only case where a high degree of religiousness is manifest in a practice, since people wore it on the body. The wall-painting of the dwarf in the Egyptianizing context of the *Iseum* in Pompeii on the other hand has the least religious role, complementing the standardized atmosphere of otherness evoked in the entire complex.⁵¹ Only the statuette of Bes found in the *Iseum* might have been a dedication that people could connect with the images in their necklaces.⁵²

The dwarf was not worshipped in the sense of practices of offerings and sacrifices, neither in Pompeii nor elsewhere in Italy. His religious meaning and role in religious practices (communication with the superhuman) is not manifest in any building in the city, but rather appears in necklaces and amulets, influenced, as I argued, by his image on coins. The promise of prosperity and luck might derive from the coin imagery, whereas the apotropaic character is based on the deformation and the counter-image to human beings.⁵³ In the pieces worn on the body, the dwarf-beads combined with other amulets were an addressee in the religious communication. It is the context of usage, the patterns of his appearance, and the relations of communication (beholders, users) that unfolds the meaning of his image-object and its grades of religiousness.

50. Barrett (C.E.), 2019, pp. 337-349.

51. I do not refer to dwarfs as such – i.e. I exclude the pygmies in the Nilotic scenes, since they are active, and do not squat or sit. See Moormann, 2007, pp. 152-153.

52. Fiorelli, 1860-1864, I, pp. 190-192: 1766, 19th July.

53. In the garden contexts, he transports less the positive and protecting aspect than the otherness and its incorporation in Roman discourses, see Barrett (C.E.), 2019, pp. 331-352.

3.2. CAN THE STATUE OF A NUDE MAN BECOME DIVINE?

The opposite of the dwarf in terms of ideals of beauty are representations of a idealized nude male bodies. The motif of the nude, youthful or adult man can be found in wall paintings, as statuettes, or in life- or over-life-size statues, sometimes with a spear, a sword, a helmet or adjusted to functional applications such as a carrier of lamps or trays in Pompeian houses (Figs. 4-6).

The Romans borrowed these idealized statues, embodying male virtues, from Greek art, where the gods or semi-gods such as Ares or Herakles, or the heroes from mythological accounts were depicted in this way.⁵⁴ Nudity, labelled as “ideal” or “heroic” by art historians and archaeologists, is in Roman imagery the representation par excellence for a variety of ascribed meanings in the re-adaptations (copies, imitations, newly assembled statuary), from an admiring reference to Greek culture to beauty as a value *per se*, from conquering imagery to the symbols of recreation from the 2nd cent. BCE onwards.⁵⁵ The opposite of positive ascriptions is also possible and preserved. In the same visual scheme, the naked body can represent disgust and derision – a person and body deprived not only of clothes, but of any social status. The aptness of the nude body to work as signifier ranges from morally problematic when appearing in public, social life, to noble and morally good when appearing in statuary.⁵⁶

Examples of such nude male bodies from Pompeii can be seen in various mural paintings, as for example Theseus in the Casa di Gavius Rufus (VII 2, 16-17) or Mars in the Casa del Venere (II 3, 3) (Fig. 4a). In statuary, they were visible in the Casa del Citarista (I 4, 5-6), the Casa dell’Efebo (I 7, 11-12) (Fig. 5a) or the “*Palaestra sannitica*” (VIII 7, 29) (Fig. 6a), whereas in statuettes, often found in the *lararia*, a nude man is not very common: A statuette of Helios, wearing nothing except a radiated crown stems from the lararium in the Villa Rustica di Fondo Acunzo at Boscoreale (Fig. 5c).⁵⁷ In a painted niche in VII 9, 33, we see Mars at the side of Venus with altars

54. See Hallett, 2005 with an excellent study on nudity in Roman portrait statuary, however with helpful insights in the idealized statuary, too.

55. The view on what Roman statues are made for and what relation they have to the earlier image-objects changed from the 1970s onwards, in the last 25 years the discussion of what copies are and mean started with e.g. Elsner, 1995 and 2006; see Perry, 2005, pp. 90-96 on emulation; on the relation and re-interpretation of Greek artworks see Squire, 2012. On emulation in the context of Egyptianizing imagery see Barrett (C.E.), 2019, p. 46.

56. Another strategy is caricature and over-drawing. See also Ewald, 2008 on the pivotal role of the body and their social role in Roman society of the Imperial period, and Hölscher, 2014, pp. 679-683.

57. Boyce, 1937, p. 100, no. 500B; Kaufmann-Heinimann, 1998. Today in The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore. Inv. no. 54.2290. For an image showing more of the setting with all statuettes see NSc 1921, p. 440, fig. 11.

painted in front of them (Fig. 4b).⁵⁸ Mars has a chlamys over his left arm, a helmet on his head and a sword hanging by his side.⁵⁹

The statuettes or paintings from the *lararia* have a clear religious character in so far as the household gods were the addressees of worship in the *familia*. But what about a probable religious meaning of the image-objects of standing nude men in a classicizing stance? The many meanings that Pompeians in the 1st cent. CE ascribed to these images may also have included a religious one when we embed them into the assembled context of the urban fabric as the horizon of experiences of a Pompeian for making religious sense of the image-objects.

Because of the omnipresence of imagery depicting nude men with weapons in active poses as gladiators or calmly standing or bow-shooting as the deities Apollo (without helmet) and Mars the recognition of an image-object as religious works via the arrangement, but can be fostered by assemblages. Mars in the Casa del Venero is painted as a statue standing in a painted garden. The god is recognizable by his weapons and the combination with Venus but with no sign of a ritual attached.⁶⁰ Even though the images were not seen as communicative agents by Pompeians, the imagery directed the conception of Apollo or Mars and what potencies the nude male body transports; this is complemented by caricaturesque counter-images. They are the repeated pattern.

To pin down gradually changing religious meanings of the motif – the nude men – I link the findings in a house and a porticoed complex in Pompeii, the Casa dell’Efebo and the “*Palaestra sannitica*” (Figs. 5-6).⁶¹ The statues showing naked men can be considered regarding nuances of their meanings including religious ones.

The Casa dell’Efebo obtained its name from the bronze statue of a nude youth (*ephebos*) made in the 1st cent. CE referring to Greek Classical models (Fig. 5a). He can be reconstructed as a tray-carrier and is as such a representation of the ser-

58. The *lararium* in the Casa del Re di Prussia VII 9, 33 belongs to the third style (from 50 CE onwards).

59. Bronze statues of Apollo and Diana stood in the precinct of Apollo, north of the Forum, excavated in part, dated to the early Principate (<https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R7/7%2007%2032%20p5.htm>). Mars occurs often in paintings, see e.g. Lorenz, 2008, pp. 182-186, but in mythological scenes.

60. To ask about the religious aspect of the painted Mars may appear superfluous. Yet, understanding these differentiations allows us to sharpen methodologies for cases which are less clear and to find out more about “degrees of religiousness”.

61. For the first description see Maiuri, 1926; *NSc* 1927, pp. 3-83, esp. pp. 63-66 and fig. 9: “Basamento dell’Efebo” (Maiuri). For his relation to the Nilotic garden paintings see Barrett (C.E.), 2017.

vants in a symposium.⁶² First of all, he does not have anything to do with a warrior. However, warriors appear close to him if we accept the assumption that he stood close to the garden *triclinium*:⁶³ At its rear wall a painting of a hunt framed by red panels decorated with nude figures with helmet and spear resp. helmet and sword (Fig. 5b).⁶⁴ They stand on bases representing statues, garlands above them point to a ritual frame – at least in the imagined or imaginative area of the image.⁶⁵ Another nude warrior appears in the house in form of a statuette made from bronze (Fig. 5c). It was found in a room close to the *atrium* (Fig. 5e). To what context exactly it belonged or where it was set up, is unknown. The warrior is shown in a more active posture than the painted warrior. He seems to swing a sword with his right hand in a forward lunge with the left leg. Such statuettes are not very common in Pompeii, and depict men clearly working as gladiators. However, they are dressed and armour-clad, and more often made from terracotta than from bronze.⁶⁶ The warrior statuette was thus unlikely to be part of the bronze statuettes of a *lararium* and the cult of the *familia*. Yet, in his image-object nakedness is related to activity and bodily abilities.⁶⁷

The nakedness as part of the *convivium* continues to be depicted in the bronze statuettes of older men with deformed bodies – it seems – due to their work of carrying tablets: The older men are all naked, have grotesques body shapes, take queer positions, and gestures (Fig. 5d). We can assume an iconographical interplay in the Casa dell'Efebo between the epebe par excellence, Ganymede, who served wine to the gods, and the reverted imagery of the grotesque tray-bearers,⁶⁸ who evoked deri-

62. See Mattusch, 2017 and Bielfeldt, 2018. Maiuri, 1926 with the supports for the tray in Figs. 6-7 (here still explained as lamp-holding extensions). It is today in the MANN Inv. no. 143753. The statue of a youth found nearby in the Casa del Citarista could be also a tray- or lamp-holder in the guise of an Apollo, see Mattusch, 2017. Statuette of a naked boy in a similar posture was found I 17, 1, see Sodo, 1991, fig. 17.

63. See *supra* n. 62.

64. The Casa dell'Efebo is decorated in the fourth style (after the earthquake of 62 CE).

65. Garlands are part of religious scenes e.g. in the painting of the *Officina* di Verecundus (IX 7, 5), or the huge second style garland in the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor at Boscoreale with a cist and snake alluding to religious rituals. On altars or in the friezes of temples they reflect equipment for religious practices.

66. Cf. the Hoplomachus found in the Casa di Fabius Rufus (VII 16, 22), made from terracotta, see Jacobelli, 2003, pp. 102-103.

67. Ewald, 2008 on the increasing interest in the body in Imperial times.

68. Barrett (C.E.), 2017 interprets them as representation of “envy”, Maiuri in *NSc* 1927, p. 66 as street vendors. Playing with contradictions is also the image of the Priapus in the body of athlete from the Casa di Vettii, see <https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R6/6%2015%2001%20entrance%20p9.htm>.

sion and had an apotropaic aspect. This is a more refracted, but still a visual trigger, since the tray-bearers and the beautiful ephēbe belonged to the iconographical and functional kit of the convivium; they might have evoked a mythological narrative and instantiated discussion or reflections on the gods (Fig. 5b). The painted image of the warriors or Martes in the back of the *triclinium* belong to the realm of mythological stories, however their depiction as statues with garlands above add up to reflection of religious practice in the image.⁶⁹ These are the only faint clues hinting at a religious reading of the image-objects, not at any religious practice happening in the garden of the Casa dell' Efebo.⁷⁰ However, what is clear is that a variegated assemblage of naked statue or statuettes were circulated and visible in the house.

What, though, do the naked male bodies in this assemblage mean for or in a religious communication? What do the nude, beautiful, or in the case of the small statuettes “reversed beautiful” male bodies have to do with religion? This idealized iconography was used for the depiction of humans as well as of anthropomorphic deities. In the garden and rooms of the Casa dell' Efebo nudity is presented in its variety of meanings and connotations. It is a visual trigger par excellence of someone who is good and capable in every regard – or to show the confirming opposite. “Heroic nudity” was also “divine nudity” and a common imagery (and imaginary) for many people living within the Roman Empire.⁷¹ This was part of the viewing habits, but rarely connected to religious practices.

In an adult version, statues of naked men could also stand in public places. There is no example preserved from Pompeii, but from Herculaneum: M. Nonius Balbus, one of the most important citizens in Augustan times, appears in various statue bodies in the city; one of them shows him naked, recognizable by portrait and inscription and using the body of a Greek Classical statue.⁷² The nude body is taken as a signifier for “capability”. The dressed body transports rather “sociability”; those statue bodies that do not represent any religious act, obtain a connection with a religious meaning by the resemblance to the depictions of gods or heroes. This fluid interpretation of

69. Bielfeldt, 2018, p. 435 ascertains a religious aura of the statue remains unclear about how this is created: “What they certainly evoke, however, is the ideal context of the Greek sacred sphere”. In n. 43 she refers to “the sanctity” referring to an *arula* found with the statue in the atrium, however in “circostanze in tutto provisorie”, Maiuri, 1926, p. 337. See above n. 65 on garlands.

70. More associations of nudity are also evoked by imagery: sexual intercourse, pygmies or painted mythological scenes, as well as the panesque figures made from marble in the garden.

71. See Hallett, 2005, esp. pp. 1-19, discussing also the positions by Himmelmann and Hölscher.

72. Fejfer, 2008, pp. 218-226: nude male statue with a portrait from the early Augustan period (MANN, Inv. no. 6102). The Greek original serving as model for the ideal body of Nonius is the Diomedes by Kresilas.

the nude man between human, derisively depicted human, heroic and divine agents is rather typical for the time of the early Principate, where the divinization of the human emperor started.⁷³ In Augustan Pompeii a person of comparable position was M. Lucretius Decidianius Rufus, of whom three dedications were found belonging to the “*Palaestra sannitica*” and the Foro Triangolare.⁷⁴

The overlap of meanings between divine and human bodies had to be sorted out by those seeing a statue of a naked man. The statues showing boys were not a phenomenon singular to Pompeii, though mostly standing in houses.⁷⁵ The visual habit connects the nude male body with a particular (social) position (either a strong, athletic) or a pleasing position (as youthful companion at convivia). The assembled context with visual “anchors” in form of the image-objects of naked male bodies in the Casa dell’Efebo described above lead to a low degree of religiousness of this statue – linked to embodied values and mythological background.

The publicly displayed male bodies had a similar low degree of religiousness, so that it is again a patterned arrangement that might tell about a religious meaning. In Pompeii, the statue of a nude man, a copy of the Polykleitan Doryphoros, came to light in the excavations of a porticoed complex in Regio VIII, the so-called “*Palaestra sannitica*”, where – with certain probability – the physical strength of the young men of the community was trained (and also celebrated).⁷⁶ It is situated between the Foro Triangolare, the theatre and the temple of Isis (Fig. 6b). The first phase of the building dates to the second half of the 2nd cent. BCE. It was re-organized in Augustan or Tiberian times, and closed off on its eastern side by the enlargement of the temple of Isis in the phase after the earthquake of 62 CE.⁷⁷ The porticoed courtyard was cut off at the eastern end, and rooms were inserted on the western side, where the entrance to the *palaestra* shifted from the long wall to the Via del Tempio d’Iside to the western wall. On the southern side of the courtyard stands a tufa base with steps leading up from behind and a basement or altar made

73. Cf. the statue of the emperor Claudius in the guise of a nude spear bearer found at Herculaneum, MANN, Inv. no. 5593. On the highly experimental times of the early Principate regarding strategies of self-representation, divinization, god-like depictions form the background to what happened with the Doryphoros set up after the mid of the 1st cent. CE in the “*Palaestra sannitica*”, see below.

74. Pesando and Guidobaldi, 2018, pp. 63-64. From *Stabiae*, probably also from a peristyle complex, originates another copy of the calm standing naked man, see Pappalardo, 2002.

75. A third bronze statue of an epebe was found at the Porta Vesuvio, see Zanker, 1974, pp. 37-38.

76. See below p. 73 with n. 89 for the danger of a circular argument when labelling the building a *palaestra* and arguing for the original context of the Doryphoros.

77. Briefly on the building’s history in Pesando, 2000, pp. 159-175.

from the same material in front of it (Fig. 9c).⁷⁸ On the upper side of a tufa base, the plinth of a statue would fit the cavity of 14 cm depth (Fig. 9d-e). The statue of the man that was found here stands on his right leg, the left relaxed leg is slightly set off. In the logic of the contrapposto, the left underarm is raised to carry a spear (Fig. 6a and b). It is a copy of the so-called Doryphoros after an original by Polykleitos from around 440 BCE, that can stylistically be dated to Augustan times (Fig. 6a).⁷⁹

Even though the display of heroic statues – and in particular the copy of the Doryphoros – in the so-called “*Palaestra sannitica*”, and in particular on the pedestal there, was discussed recently by Henzel and Trümper, a final solution is still out of sight, and will be briefly discussed here.⁸⁰ That this statue of the standing nude was found in this building, can be inferred from the diaries of the excavators in the 18th cent., where it is described as excavated in the “edificio con colonne” in *Regio VIII* close to the theatre – the *palaestra*.⁸¹ Actually the notice that on “una piramide per il appoggio di una statua di marmo (...) e nella soglia vi è un piede quasi intiero, e qualche estremo di altro” suggest that the Doryphoros belonged to this base in the late phase of the *palaestra*, since the feet on the plinth turned out to match the “uomo nudo”.⁸²

The reconstruction of the location of this statue on the base with the steps leading up and the altar in front of it, lacks final confirmation. There is the problem that the hole in the base is smaller than the plinth of the statue.⁸³ However, the base was reworked in antiquity and the profiles were changed and/or repaired, as the entire arrangement of altar-base-stairs was also not part of the initial layout of the courtyard, but set up in the Augustan period, since the stairs cover the drainage of the courtyard. Also the altar in front of the base has shows of restoration; the back profiles are missing in the drawing in Overbeck and Mau from before 1884, so that the existing

78. The base as such belonged to the original plan of the courtyard because of its symmetrical position regarding the former larger dimensions, see the plan in Blanc, Eristov and Fincker, 2000, fig. 3. The stairs behind the base belong to the/a later phase.

79. Zanker, 1974, p. 8.

80. Henzel and Trümper, 2018.

81. MANN Inv. no. 6011. For the find circumstances see Fiorelli, 1860-1864, I, p. 66, 1797, 13th April: “si è trovata una statua di marmo ehe rappresenta un uomo, eon le mani rotte e le gambe mancanti.”; 3rd August: “Si è scoperta una piramide per appoggio. di una statua di marmo, e uella soglia vi è un piede quasi intiero, e qualche estremo di altro. Non si puo dire, se appartenesse alla statua che qui si ritiene”; 17th August: “Vi e terminato di evaeuare interamente il consaputo edifeio con colonne, e si sono trovate le due gambe mancanti alla statua, qotata nel rapporto dei 13 aprile corrente anno”.

82. Avagliano, 2013.

83. The cavity measures 57 x 53 cm, whereas the plinth (not rectangular) measures 55 x 66 cm.

ones are the result of a restoration.⁸⁴ The broken and renovated profiles in the back part of the base point to changes, assumedly for making the base of the Doryphoros fit in; here the plinth of the Doryphoros is larger because of the massive strut (Fig. 6a). One can assume that the statue of the Doryphoros was set up on the base in the post-earthquake phase of the *palaestra*.⁸⁵ Admittedly, the cavity in the base is prepared in a sloppy way that is known from other post-earthquake measures in the city.⁸⁶ However, the heroic nude male statue was displayed on the base with an altar in front of it, and had stairs behind him so that e.g. a wreath could be put on his head. The little weathering of the statue, which dates to Augustan times, could also be explained by the later insertion into the base after 62 CE.⁸⁷

The long argument about the nude statue of a man on a base with the possibility of being wreathed as a sign of a ritual practice,⁸⁸ serves the purpose of testifying to the iconographical motif of nakedness allowing for heroization if not divinization, though the concrete religious meaning is only granted by the communicational act of devotion and of gift-giving. Some Pompeians could have done so putting offerings on the altar.

The spectrum of religiousness of image-objects can be tracked in acknowledging the spatial and iconographical assemblage that ranges from images that could only be looked at – the hero embedded in a narrative or the god standing on a base in the paintings – and could be treated discursively – from the reversed image of the grotesque men provoking derision, to the luxury object of a tray carrier that invoked mythological figures, to the image of the hero in the *palaestra* that was involved in practices in which he was the addressee.⁸⁹ The motif of the nude male body ranges from the divine to non-divine (the warrior, hunter) appearing on quite different levels of meaning in the decoration of a wall, or as a luxurious *instrumentum domesti-*

84. Pesando, 2000, p. 156, not explaining exactly what this renovation looks like. See the image in Overbeck and Mau, 1884, after p. 151.

85. Maybe one of the dedications to M. Lucretius Decidianus (*CIL* X 851) was set up there before the Doryphoros, see *supra* p. 71 with n. 74.

86. See e.g. the preliminary building measures and work in progress on the Forum, examined by Kockel and Flecker, 2009.

87. Since the statue has stylistic traits of Augustan times, and the base seems to be prepared only after the earthquake, it was not originally made for this location. Also, the little signs of weathering of the head of the Doryphoros speak in favor of a short period in the open, spanning the ca. 15 years between the earthquake and the eruption; *contra* Henzel and Trümper, 2018.

88. See *supra* n. 66 on garlands; on wreaths in religious practices see Bergmann, 2010, pp. 5-35.

89. In the eastern parts of the Roman Empire many *gymnasia* were equipped with athletic statues, Henzel and Trümper, 2018. However, the conclusion that statues pertain also in the West to *palaestrae* is not compelling, since the authors do not consider different socio-spatial traditions in layout and use.

cum for the convivium. Yet, the iconographical trigger of a nude male body existed and was part of viewing habits, open to be also associated with religious rituals.

4. A CHORD PLAYED IN ARPEGGIO. FROM HABITS TO SOCIAL HABITUS, FROM PRACTICES TO RITUALS

What connects the two examples of the dwarf and the nude man are viewing and using habits that go beyond a recognition of the motif of “hero”, “god” or “demon”. The image-objects with which beholders and users engaged were able to trigger certain connotations and meanings, since the motifs were frequent in various media, forming assemblages or being grouped in arrangements that influenced viewing habits.

Varying assemblages could affect habits: Once the statue of the nude man stood in the “*Palaestra sannitica*”, wreathed and with an altar in front of him, he had a religious meaning that could influence the viewing habits and connected meanings. Once the Pseudo-Ebusi went out of date around the time of the earthquake and disappeared in the sinks and soil of Pompeii, the meaning of the dwarf on them could change, if he was no longer commonly visible on coins.

This approach to the image-objects, locations, and the reconstructed practices from loose assemblages to clear arrangements in Pompeii allow for further conclusions regarding religious habits, habitualization and ritualization among Pompeians. The “spectrum of religiousness” reflected in the archaeological record, habits, routines and rituals involving image-objects are the practice-oriented pendants.⁹⁰

4.1. HABITS AND MATERIAL PATTERNS AND SOCIAL HABITUS

Habits are defined as the repeated embodied behavior of individuals, established by their unquestioned everyday or periodical practices. Hence, habits are always oriented along a socio-cultural frame, in which individuals live. They form their social habitus and are vice-versa shaped by social habitus in the interplay of an individual’s disposition to react to contingencies of daily life or life in general and its societal conditions.

Habits as practices of individuals can leave traces in the material environment, its styles, materials, motifs, and patterning.⁹¹ In the religious life of Pompeians this is reflected in the evidence that e.g. people represented their household deities in form

90. See *supra* nn. 7 and 28.

91. See *supra* pp. 59-61. Bourdieu, 1977, p. 9 speaks of “the mind born of the world of objects”.

of statuettes, often set up in niches; that dwarfs appeared on coins, in beads, but also as statuettes in the gardens; that marble or bronze statues referred to Greek sculpture, but were re-appropriated and also adapted to a worshipped image-object.⁹² As analyzed in the examples, these image-objects could become religious ones by practices that are reflected by a repeated pattern in the material evidence.

Such habits are discursively constructed and re-adapted, in a spatial and historical setting: The agents – Pompeians in the 1st cent. CE – had the experience and embodied knowledge that e.g. a dwarf in certain material appearances can have positive powers and support an individual. This meaning made only sense in Pompeii and the other cities where the coins were minted. The male bodies in their multifarious presence in image-objects carry positive values and embody literal potencies that in the Pompeian example finally qualified the statue to be an addressee of religious communication. The habit of wearing jewellery entails the possibility of wearing agentive pieces on the body – apotropaic, propitious, supporting symbols or figures. A habitual act might have been to touch or rub over it or to look at it.⁹³ These habits, practiced by individuals, represent a way of religious communication, and were part of the discursive shaping of the socio-cultural framework. Hence, the social habitus as frame for a society's and individuals' shared values is dynamic [due to the changing habits.

The Bourdieuan concept of habitus was operationalized and applied in Classical archaeology for analyzing the elites' strategies of distinction and the processes of adaption and copying by lower social strata, closely linked to semiotic interpretations of image-objects. However, what needs to be considered is a bottom-up view on habits, embodied knowledge and its relations to social habitus – from every-day practices to material habits and social habitus.⁹⁴

For asking about degrees of religiousness of image-objects, the approach combining lived ancient religion and the Bourdieuan concept of habitus widened to cultural habitus helped to go beyond statements of iconographical similarities of

92. Hölscher, 2014, on "Meaning and Art Forms" draws on Bourdieu, 1979: "if the body's postures, forms of action, and ways of behavior, in 'reality' and in art, are conceived of as expressions of social 'habits', a bridge can be built to cultural theory. For bodily 'habit' or *hexis* is clearly, in a cultural sense, a part of the general notion of the cultural 'habitus' of societies and their subgroups, developed by Pierre Bourdieu as a fundamental concept of historical sociology" (quotes at pp. 682 and 683).

93. Frankfurter, 1998, pp. 126-127.

94. Reichardt, 2013; Schreg *et al.*, 2013. The sociological approaches of Bourdieu were used in archaeology for analyzing social classes and their relations, strategies of distinction, power relations as well as acculturation and identity forming. See for example Wallace-Hadrill, 1994; Zanker, 1995; Hölscher, 2004 and *supra* n. 92.

image-objects or semiotic interpretation messages to be received. Based in the practice-oriented understanding of habits and habitus, motifs and objects are conceived of as *pas-se-partouts* for meanings; a religious meaning – as outlined above – can be assumed if communicational aspects are fulfilled in assembled or arranged and patterned material evidence.

4.3. EVALUATING PATTERNED MATERIAL EVIDENCE AS CADENCE OF RITUALIZATION

The evidence reflects a range of activities – casual ones in assemblages, intentional ones in patterned arrangements –, from which we can deduce habitual practices and routinized behavior.⁹⁵ Framed and informed by the socio-material environment from the habits and routines, ritualization can develop. Rituals are the form of repeated and symbolically invested and performed (religious) practices that keep the processes of a societal or individual equilibrium and the negotiations about it going. If we see such practices repeatedly in the material evidence a ritualization can be inferred from them. The religious rituals fulfill the role of communication embracing the social and material as well as an environment beyond the practitioner in order to cope with local, personal, or communal constraints, problems, and wishes. The more formalized habitual practices are and the more often they appear in the evidence, the more it is likely to be understood as ritual: If e.g. a statue receives gifts on an altar or words of a prayer are uttered touching a special bead, the representations and image-objects obtained a religious meaning. The gaze onto the image of a ring with the image of a dwarf, a touch of a bead representing him, or the gesture towards the niche in the atrium or kitchen to household gods, when passing by, are easily performed acts and not very complex. The involved image-objects receive their “degree of religiousness” only through the habitual knowledge and social agreement of what a religious communication looks like. Such habits are repeated, embodied, learned and taught in the frame of a social habitus of how and when to communicate with the gods. Hence, the seeds for ritualized practices for the purpose of religious communication are the discursively negotiated evaluations of common imagery embedded into a social habitus: on coins they promise prosperity, in statuettes in the *lararia* they represent the *familia*, in ambivalent combinations of bronze statuary in the houses and at convivia

95. Routine is defined as a standard procedure, more strictly fulfilled on a regular set of single actions, whereas a habit is the unconsciously pursued series of actions (and routines) done regularly and defining how a routine is conducted. Michaels, 2016 explains routine regarding engaged material objects as less formalized (e.g. washing and ablution, cooking and preparing a sacrifice with food stuff).

they blur the lines between an *instrumentum domesticum*, a work of art and agentive object, that offers the background for religious practices such as sacrifices conducted in different spatial environment.⁹⁶ If we accept this perspective on religion, ritual and the involvement of image-objects or spaces, the material evidence can be read in a non-binary way: An image is not either religious or not, an object is not either used in a ritual context or not. Rather, it can take various positions on the spectrum of religiousness depending on the human agents. They are in turn influenced by their social status, habitus and personal habits of what they conceive of as religious.

5. CONCLUSION

The attempt to reconstruct the spectrum of religiousness of image-objects focused on the entanglement of image-objects and viewing and using habits of the Pompeians in the 1st cent. CE who were interested in religious communication. It embraced a focus on practices and habits – embodied knowledge, repeated actions, learned traditions and standardized image-objects of high recognizability, in order to account for the dynamic and communicative aspects of material religion as part of social interaction.

In two examples of image-objects the way from habit and routine to a religious ritual were traced: The dwarf with Egyptian predecessors triggered habitually a connection to material wealth and well-being, since he was not only known from statuettes, but also from coins. He is a symbol in personal objects of support – amulets worn on the body. In the case of the statues representing nude male bodies, Pompeians connected the well-formed naked body with “good” – heroic, divine, strong – qualities, confirmed by bodies depicted in the reverse mode as grotesquely exaggerated and old. The habitual agreement and societal habitus of this image being “good” allowed for Pompeians setting up an altar for one of these statues, thus becoming a divine addressee where before it had no particular divine characteristics.

This approach sheds light on the often too undifferentiatedly assumed ubiquity of religion and ritual. The analysis of the material evidence offers a model of how methods and approaches in the archaeology of religion can be fanned out and enrich our understanding of Roman religious practices and to take into account the fine-tuned differences: Human agents in establishing their relations to the world around and beyond them act on the one hand upon highly recognizable features, but on the other hand upon highly variable ones. Religious communication which a Pompeian started in order to relate to the suprahuman world needed religious concepts (gods)

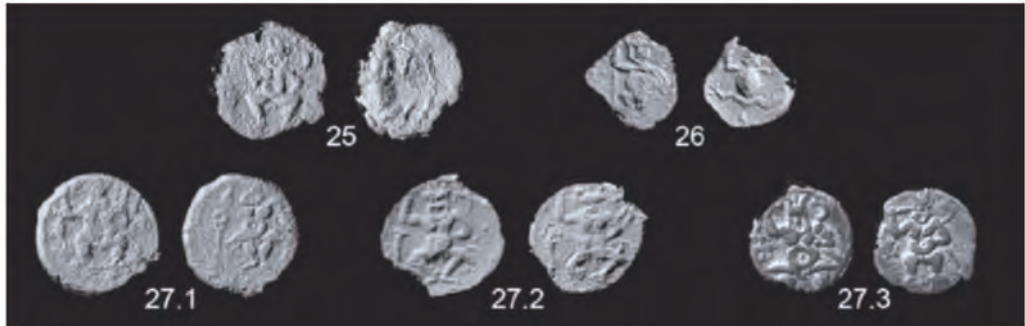
96. See *supra* pp. 57-59.

and socio-spatial practices (offerings, prayers) to engage with material image-objects. The latter are part of everyday routines and habits (bead, statue), embedded in a social habitus. Only the practices make the difference: The ritualization, repetition, framing, purpose/addressee that give the image-object a religious meaning, are dynamic processes. By viewing habits and practices, the image-objects offer by habits of seeing and practices aspirations to religious meaning. Visual triggers in the material environment around the Pompeians as well as individual experiences add up to ascriptions of religious meanings that cover the entire range from vague religious atmosphere to curses and soothsaying to public sacrifice – different levels of religiousness. The employment of image-objects in a variety of practices covers various expressions of religion, beyond just religious or non-religious, but opening an entire spectrum of religiousness. Here lies an untapped potential in the archaeological material, since a close look at the local and situational assemblages of image-objects, their functions, involvement in practices, their accessibility, visibility and availability open the perspective on religion and ritual beyond binary oppositions.

IMAGES



Fig. 1. Dwarf figures as statuettes in gardens and yards of Pompeian houses: **a.** Statuette of Bes, find spot unknown, terracotta with blue-greenish glaze, ca. 34 cm, MANN Inv. no. 22583; **b.** Statuette of Ptah-Pataikos, from *Caupona* VI I, 2, terracotta with blue-greenish glaze, ca. 48 cm, MANN Inv. no. 22607; **c.** Find spot of statuettes of squatting dwarfs in the garden triclinium of the Casa di Acceptus e Euhodia (VIII 5, 39) (https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R8/8%2005%2039_files/image019.jpg, retrieved 4 January 2020); **d.** Plan of the Casa di Acceptus e Euhodia (VIII 5, 39) (<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=084ee7adbe8440078311a48ad12e43cb&extent=1610443.8646%2C4974669.5345%2C1615030.0863%2C4976687.9498%2C102100>).



a.



b.

Fig. 2. Dwarf figures on imitations of Punic coins (Pseudo-Ebusi) with images of the dwarf, circulating between the 2nd cent. BCE to early 1st cent. CE. **a.** Pseudo-Ebusi (Stannard, 2013, fig. 11); **b.** Pseudo-Ebusus from the Casa di Ariadne from a layer dated to the 1st cent. CE (Arévalo *et al.*, 2013, fig. 11).



a.



b.

Fig. 3. Dwarf figures with contact to individuals' bodies (marked by the arrows). **a.** Necklace with apotropaic and propitious imagery of the beads (V 3, 11) (Dyer, 1875, after p. 446). **b.** Set of tiny objects with apotropaic and propitious imagery and meanings for soothsaying and divination found 2019 in the Casa del Giardino (V 3). (<http://pompeisites.org/comunicato-stampa/la-fortuna-e-la-protezione-contro-la-malasorte-nei-monili-della-regio-v/> retrieved 6 January 2020, photo: Cesare Abate/ANSA).



a.



b.



c.

Fig. 4. Nude male figures in different functions: **a.** Painted statue of Mars on a wall in the Casa della Venere (II 3, 3) (Scala, Florence/Luciano Romano); **b.** *Lararium* painting from the Casa del Re di Prussia (VII 9, 33) (Lorenz, 2008, fig. 56); **c.** Statuette of Helios, from a *lararium* (Fondo Acunzo) (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore Inv. no. 54.2290).

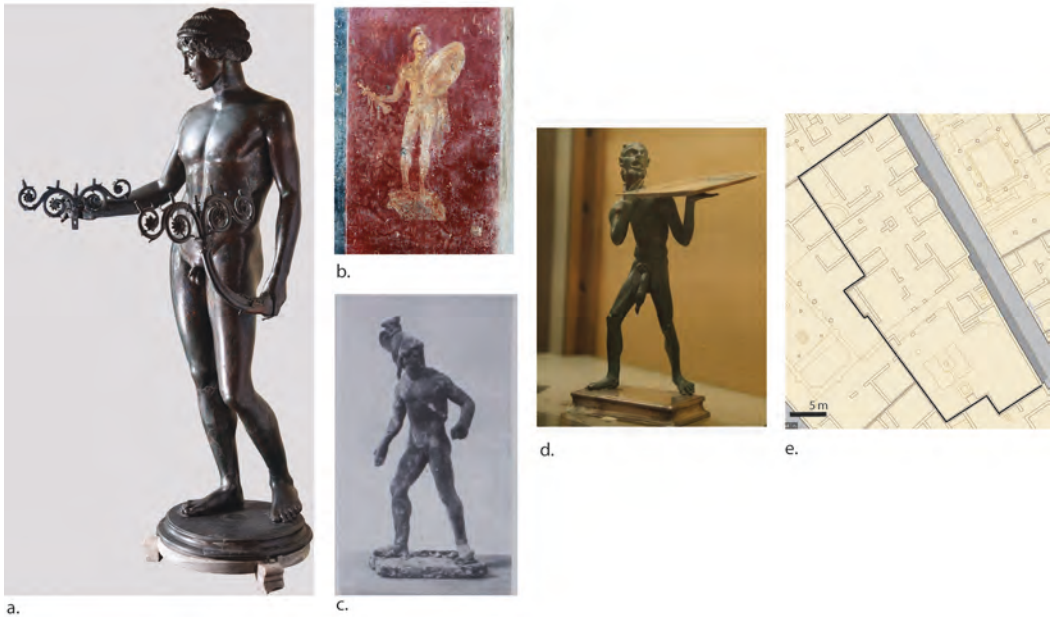


Fig. 5. Image-objects of nude men from the Casa dell'Efebo: **a.** Bronze statue of an epebe as tray-carrier (MANN Inv. no. 143753, Bielfeldt, 2018, fig. 8); **b.** Painting of a warrior on the rear wall of the garden *triclinium* (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Casa_dell%27efebo,_cortile_con_triclinio_all%27aperto,_scena_di_caccia_03_guerriero.jpg); **c.** Statuette of a warrior from the northern parts of the house (NSc 1927, p. 68, fig. 31); **d.** Statuette depicting an old, deformed man, functioning as a tray-carrier, MANN, Inv. no. 143759 (Barrett [C.E.], 2017, fig. XXX); **e.** Plan of the Casa dell'Efebo (<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=084ee7a-dbe8440078311a48ad12e43cb&extent=1610443.8646%2C4974669.5345%2C1615030.0863%2C4976687.9498%2C102100>).



Fig. 6. Image-object of a nude man from the “*Palaestra sannitica*” (VIII 7, 29): **a.** Statue of the Doryphoros, early Augustan copy of the Polykleitan statue, MANN, Inv. no. 6011 (flickr photo, James A. Glazier); **b.** Map of the complex between the theatre, temple of Isis and Foro triangolare (<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=084ee7adbe8440078311a-48ad12e43cb&extent=1610443.8646%2C4974669.5345%2C1615030.0863%2C4976687.9498%2C102100>); **c.** Base, altar and steps on the northern side of the courtyard. (https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R8/8%2007%2029_files/image047.jpg); **d.** Plinth of the Doryphoros (https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R8/8%2007%2029_files/image043.jpg); **e.** Upper side of the base (https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R8/8%2007%2029%20p2_files/image005.jpg).

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CHILDREN'S SUPPLICATION IN CLASSICAL ATHENS.
RELIGIOUS SKILLS, SURVIVAL AND INFERIORITY*

SUPPLICACIÓN DE NIÑOS EN LA ATENAS CLÁSICA.
HABILIDADES RELIGIOSAS, SUPERVIVENCIA E INFERIORIDAD

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ABSTRACT

The present paper explores children's experience as supplicants to authorities in power as a vital tool for coping with life-threatening circumstances in classical Athens. The examination of the specific characteristics of children's performance, as it is represented in literary and artistic sources, reveals the inability of minors to execute all the stages of the rite of supplication. Children's participation was demonstrated principally in the physical aspects of supplication, while they were unable to perform the verbal, argumentative element of the

RESUMEN

El presente artículo aborda la experiencia de los niños como suplicantes ante las autoridades en el poder como un mecanismo fundamental para hacer frente a las circunstancias amenazantes para la vida en la Atenas clásica. El análisis de las características concretas de la actuación de los niños, tal y como aparece representada en las fuentes literarias y artísticas, revela la incapacidad de los menores para ejecutar todas las etapas del ritual de suplicación. La participación de los niños se manifestaba principalmente en los aspectos físicos de la suplicación, mientras

* Greek authors and texts are cited according to the editions of *TLG* and abbreviations of *OCD* unless otherwise noted. Epigraphic and iconographic abbreviations follow *OCD*. Translations of the passages discussed are mine.

ritual, which generally was carried out in its prescribed form by adults who accompanied the children, and initiated and supervised the rite. The incapacity of children, as the article shows, correlates with the stereotypical inferiority and weakness that defined the stage of childhood in classical Athens. Hence, unlike other religious activities which involved minors and reflected a successful socialization process, the rite of supplication spotlights children's position as societally weak members of the community.

que estos eran incapaces de realizar el acto verbal, argumentativo del ritual, que generalmente era llevado a cabo de la forma prescrita por adultos que acompañaban a los niños e iniciaban y supervisaban el rito. Como demuestra este estudio, la insuficiencia de los pequeños guarda relación con la inferioridad y la debilidad estereotípicas que caracterizaban la infancia en la Atenas clásica. Por lo tanto, a diferencia de otras actividades religiosas que involucraban menores y reflejaban un exitoso proceso de socialización, el ritual de la suplicación destaca la posición de los niños como miembros socialmente débiles de la comunidad.

KEYWORDS

Children; Performance; Silence; Speech; Supplication; Weakness

PALABRAS CLAVE

Debilidad; discurso; niños; performance; silencio; suplicación

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1. INTRODUCTION: SOURCES, MODEL OF THE RITE AND CLASSIFICATION OF CHILDREN'S PERFORMANCE

Literary and artistic sources from the classical period testify to children's participation in the rite of supplication (*hiketeia/hikesia*), which was one of the most prominent ceremonial acts in Greek religion, as is widely documented in multifaceted sources from Homer down to late antiquity. *Hiketeia*, in the generalized, most broad, definition, was a ritualized appeal, within a religious context or connotation, for protection, help or mercy directed to divine or human authority, accompanied by distinctive wording, ritual objects and body language, and performed in situations of extreme distress. Given the observation that the practice seems not to be limited by ethnicity, social status, gender or age, sources provide evidence of children performing the act already in early infancy, in both private and public arenas.

The purpose of the present paper is to spotlight the under-explored area of children's *hiketeia* as an age group,¹ in 5th and 4th cent. BCE Athens, by analyzing children's experience as supplicants, as represented in the literary and material sources. Concurrently, by locating children's performance of the rite in a wider socio-religious, cultural and legal context, this study will demonstrate how the ritual of supplication, unlike other religious activities involving minors which primarily reflected a successful socialization process, clarifies children's stereotypical inferiority and weakness, which in contemporary classical Athenian perception were defining characteristics of the age of minority.

1. By "children", I mean individuals younger than the age of legal and social maturity in classical Athens, males younger than 17-18 (Arist., [*Ath. Pol.*] XLII, 1; cf. Ar., *Vesp.* 578) and prepubescent females, under the marriageable age of mid-teens (e.g. Pl., *Leg.* 833d2-4). Most sources do not provide fixed ages, and, at best, settle for age-group cues, see Crelier, 2008, pp. 101-110; Seifert, 2011, pp. 29-33; Beaumont, 2012, pp. 17-42; Golden, 2015, pp. 10-19.

The biggest methodological difficulty in reconstructing children's experiences of contemporary reality in ancient Greece is that the majority of the materials, textual and iconographical, were created by adult men and referred mainly to a male target audience. There are almost no historical children's voices in literary sources, and regarding ritual activity there is not one direct hint from the children themselves. Therefore, what may be extractable about the specific characteristics of the minors' *hiketeia* in sources is limited to the selection and distortion caused by the representations of ritual behavior through an adult-generated lens. For that reason, an examination must take into account children's social position and religious status as it was prescribed and viewed by adult members of the community

Sources referring to children's activity in Greek religion in the Classical period provide far more information than that found about any other aspects of minors' familial and communal experience, while the majority of documentation comes from Athens. Various materials provide glimpses of the *hiketeia* of children, although not all of them are informative to the same extent. Historiographical writings, where children *per se* were hardly of central interest,² and iconographic representations, which consist mainly of the delineation of mythological child characters, provide only occasional documentation. Likewise, the texts of comedies contain only sporadic references of a parodic nature, whereas epigraphic evidence does not mention children at all. Recurring references to children's participation in religious ritual are found especially in Attic oratory and tragedy, two genres wherein the emotional articulation of pity, *eleos* (ἔλεος), (whose connotations differ from those of modern empathy or compassion) are crucial and are closely interconnected with the child's inherent innocence.³ However, the most details and vivid representation of ritualistic performance can be drawn especially from tragedy, where child characters are at most associated with religious activities. While tragedy does not pretend to present reality as it is, it does, nevertheless, display religious practices drawn from materials well known to the contemporary audience from their own ritual reality.⁴ *Hiketeia* figures in a significant number of tragic plays, being dramatized either as a central topic of the plot

2. Golden, 1997, pp. 183-184.

3. Cf. Arist., *Rhet.* 1385b13-16 for a definition of *eleos* as "a particular pain at an seemingly destructive or painful evil occurring to a person who does not deserve it; an evil which one might expect himself or one of his close circle to suffer, and when it seems close at hand" (ἔλεος λύπη τις ἐπὶ φαινομένῳ κακῷ φθαρτικῷ ἢ λυπηρῷ τοῦ ἀναξίου τυγχάνειν, ὃ καὶ αὐτὸς προσδοκῆσειεν ἂν παθεῖν ἢ τῶν αὐτοῦ τινα, καὶ τοῦτο ὅταν πλησίον φαίνεται.); and cf. *Poet.* 1449b27-28. For *eleos* in Greek culture as emotion which is filtered by social, moral and cognitive channels, see Konstan, 2006, pp. 201-218.

4. Sourvinou-Inwood, 2003, pp. 1-14 and 201-458; 2005, p. 10.

(Aeschylus' *Supplices* and *Eumenides*, Euripides' *Heraclidae* and *Supplices*, Sophocles' *Oedipus Coloneus*) or, most commonly, employed in the key scenes of the play. Children are staged in supplication scenes in about seven of the surviving tragedies and the increased pathos provoked by their tender age and implicit vulnerability in these scenarios of despair and helplessness led quite a few researchers during the 20th cent. to argue for the close link between supplication and children's pathetic impact as a key consideration in the casting of children.⁵

The source material documents that, similarly to adult supplication, that of children was an act that was carried out in a variety of contexts, in divergent performative ways, with different goals, and included appeals to heterogeneous authorities. However, as will be shown, there are significant differences between the performance of children and of adults, which are especially expressed in the disparities in the spoken portion of the ceremony. In order to extract the salient characteristics of the performance of minors, it will be useful first to present the general outline of the rite. Naiden's in-depth study (2006), including a wide range of documented examples of *hiketeia* in classical antiquity, and which convincingly refuted Gould's (1973) previous perception of *hiketeia* as "ritualization of reciprocity", serves here, with attendant modifications and reservations, as a useful tool for identifying the rite's phases.

Defining supplication as a system that incorporates both legal and ritualistic aspects, Naiden distinguishes four main temporal phases comprising the *hiketeia*: (1) an approach to an individual or sacred object or place (referring to the suppliant's movements),⁶ and (2) a distinctive body language and wording, both signifying passivity, submissiveness and self-abasement, and employment of standardised ritual attributes (e.g. raw wool draped on branches). These elements, used in whole or in part, denoted suppliant status and ritual behavior, and their physicality contrived a concrete connection to the human or sacred object of address, such as reaching out toward an altar, tomb or dead person's body, or clasping/touching the knees or chin of an addressee, or kneeling, and sometimes stretching/extending hands to his direction.⁷ The step which follows is (3) a plea/request, generally accompanied by

5. See esp. Menu, 1992; cf. Devrient, 1904, pp. 3 and 11; Wilkins, 1993, p. 49 on 10. For pity and re-evaluation of *pathos* created by child figures on stage in suppliant scenes, referring to the contextual complexity of the scenes in which they appear, see Griffiths, 2020, pp. 223-230.

6. *Hiketeia* (ἱκετεία) / *hikesia* (ἱκέσια), as the basic Greek verbal term of the rite *hiketeuō* (ἱκετεύω), derives from a root meaning "to approach" (Frisk, 1960, s.v. "ἱκέτης" and Chantraine, 1970, s.v. "ἱκω"). For comprehensive discussion, see Létoublon, 1980.

7. For suppliant's verbal and physical behavior, see Gould, 1973, pp. 75-78, 95-100; Freyburger, 1988, pp. 503-505; Létoublon, 2011, pp. 298-302; Naiden, 2006, pp. 29-104 (with list of classical period sources

argumentation comprised of promises, threats and appeals to pity, and (4) judgment and response from the authority to whom the supplication has been addressed as to whether to accept or refuse a suppliant's request.

The disparity between the performance of minors and adults, as shall be demonstrated, is primarily evident in children's lack of initiative and lack in proficiency in the verbal element of the rite, primarily the request couched in the most persuasive of terms, which served as a necessary tool to stimulate the addressee's response, and to increase the chance for his positive judgment.⁸ These deviations, as will be demonstrated in discussion, reflect and validate the classical Athenian perception of children as incomplete individuals who are characterized by objective imperfection and weakness.

The second axis along which the study will move is that of the religious sphere. For religious practices, which enabled minors to integrate into the family (nuclear and extended) and to interact with their peer group, provided the main channel and platform for children into the life of the civic community in the Athenian *polis*, contributing to their sense of familial and communal identity. Therefore, citizen children were perpetually engaged in a variety of cultic roles, from birth until coming of age, as well as being exposed to routine ritual activities of the family and within the community environment.⁹ Their roles moved through a wide range of engagement, from passive observation to assistance, collaboration and agency.¹⁰ A review of the sources reveals a surprising degree of correlation within three clear categories of children's involvement defining their marginality/centrality in the performance of *hiketia*: 1) children as speechless assistants/observers to adults' figurative supplication in courts; 2) children as operative participants in a group; 3) a child as a single or primary suppliant.

This demarcation will allow for a more precise examination of children's ritual behavior, which will be conducted in accordance to the generic nature of the evidence and the particular contexts in which *hiketia* is located.

in *app.* 1a, pp. 302, 307-308, 315-316, 319, 335); cf. *ThesCRA* III, s.v. "hikesia" I, C-D.

8. Naiden, 2004, pp. 82-83 and 2006, esp. pp. 13-14.

9. See in particular Neils, 2003; Beaumont, 2012, pp. 64-86 and 152-186; Garland, 2013; Golden, 2015, pp. 26-28 and 35-43.

10. For pictorial representations of children as observers and assistant participants in votive reliefs from the second half of the 5th cent. onward, see e.g. Athens, National Archaeological Museum inv. no. 1532. Cf. Cohen, 2011, pp. 482-483 and fig. 28.9. For detailed discussion, see Lawton, 2007 and an exhaustive catalog in Seifert, 2011, pp. 300-336 and pls. XII-XX, figs. 26-42; cf. also Beaumont, 2012, pp. 153-160. For funeral ritual, see in particular Seifert, 2011, pp. 38-48 and Langdon, 2015; for children as main mourners, see Eur., *Alc.* 393-415 and *Supp.* 1123-1164 with Haussker, 2020, pp. 205-212 and 217-223.

2. CHILDREN IN LAW COURTS: SPEECHLESS ASSISTANTS

Entreaties in courts indeed provide an interaction between legal regulations and traditional practices of the *hiketeia*. These scenarios, particularly (but not limited) to cases where conviction might carry heavy penalties, mainly involve a verbal behavior of supplication as part of the defendant's plea,¹¹ but provide little if any information on the proper ritualistic environment, as well as gestures and objects such as boughs or an altar.¹² Hence, children's roles in the ceremony, which are often expressed through the bodily performance of the rite, as I will demonstrate in discussion of two other types, are extremely limited in courts and can be defined as only speechless support by their very presence.

The language which articulates pity, along with the presence of innocent family members on the podium, was a special and typical device of forensic entreaty, often located in epilogues, after the defendants' presentation of the case. Within this framework the practice of bringing the respondents' children to the law court to consolidate an appeal for mercy seems to have been common.¹³ Generally, the defendants point to the destructive effect of their potential conviction on their innocent kin, especially elders, women and children,¹⁴ as vividly illustrated by Aeschines, who in his final appeal to the judges' pity presents on the podium his family members divided into their age groups (II 179). Sources do not provide clear evidence as to whether children were allowed either to speak or to testify as witnesses in courts,¹⁵

11. See e.g. *Lys.*, IV 20; *Aeschin.*, II 179-180; *Dem.*, LVII 1, 70; *Isae.*, II 2. Cf. Johnston, 1999, pp. 115-118, 173 n. 50; Gould, 1973, p. 101. For critique of employing supplication before judicial authorities, as emotive manipulation that may divert judges from purely legal considerations, see *Dem.*, XXIV 50-53; Plato (*Ap.* 34c-35d) provides also ethical and religious aspects.

12. Aristophanes' *Plutus* (382-385), where children are in court accompanying their father who holds boughs (ἰκετηρίαν ἔχοντα), cannot be indicative for use of the accoutrements of the *hiketeia* in Athenian courts, since the scene of the rite is imaginative and suffers from confusion and exaggeration; the character, Blepsidemus, as Sommerstein (2001, p. 164 on 377-385) argues, demonstrates the severity of Chremylus' crime by supplicating at an altar of Zeus Agoraios (Zeus of the Agora), on the Pnyx, on which the suppliants before the Assembly used to lay boughs (*Arist.*, [*Ath. Pol.*] XLIII 6; Rhodes, 1985, p. 528); and cf. *Dem.*, XLIII 83 for metaphoric use of bough in reference to a defendant's child. For gestures of self-humiliation, such as grasping the hands of the juries before entering the courtrooms, see *Ar.*, *Vesp.* 552-556; cf. *Ps.-Xen.*, *Ath. Pol.* I 18.

13. See *Pl.*, *Ap.* 34c-d, [*Lys.*] XX 34-35; *Isoc.*, XV 321; *Andoc.*, I 148; *Aeschin.*, II 152; *Dem.*, XIX 281, 310; XXI 99, 182, 186-188; *Hyp.*, II 9, IV, 41; *Ath.*, 592e. Cf. Golden, 2015, pp. 35, 77-79; Apostolakis, 2017, pp. 138-149. For jurors' expected emotional response interconnected with considerations regarding children's future as adult members of the community, see esp. Griffiths, 2020, pp. 232-234.

14. Such as orphanage, widowhood and denial of care for older parents.

15. Golden, 2015, pp. 35 and 168, n.79.

and it is probable that they would not be afforded a full role in the Athenian legal system while under the age of majority. However, they were used to support the defendants' plea by approaching the podium and weeping, providing visual and aural effects; those effects are most vivid in the comic scene in Aristophanes' *Vespae*, where the small children of the defendant bend their heads or cower together [in fear or self-obedience] and produce sounds (568-572):

... τὰ παιδάρι' εὐθύς ἀνέλκει
 ... τῆς χειρός, ἐγὼ δ' ἀκροῶμαι,
 τὰ δὲ **συγκύψανθ' ἅμα βληχᾶται**· ... ὁ πατήρ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν
 ὥσπερ θεὸν ἀντιβολεῖ με τρέμων τῆς εὐθύνης ἀπολύσαι·
 "εἰ μὲν χαιρεῖς ἀρνὸς **φωνῆ**, παιδὸς **φωνῆν** ἐλεήσαις."

... he raises up, drags his little kids up there
 ...by the hand, and I listen
 for they are **cowering together** and **wail in chorus**,¹⁶ and their father (standing) above them (or: for their sake)
 is begging me, trembling, as if I were a god, to release him from conviction:
 "If you enjoy the **voice** of the lamb, please pity (that) child's crying **voice!**"

(The highlights here and below are mine)

Such comic evidence of a parody of the customs of Athenian courts allows for scenes in courts to be reconstructed, thus supplementing the information that oratory evidence provides. Biles and Olson (2015, pp. 263-264 on 568-569) note convincingly that Aristophanes' choice of the diminutive τὰ παιδάρι' ("his little kids"), adds a dimension of pathos and reflects the litigant's strategy. The children's young age is attested by the verb ἀνέλκει (raise up) with τῆς χειρός (by hand), which means that they are taken by the hand or lifted up so that they could be seen in front of the jury.¹⁷ Another example of the minors' tender age which prevents them from comprehending the devastating consequences of their father's conviction is attested also in Aeschines II 179: ... ταῦτ' ἐπὶ τὰ μικρὰ μὲν παιδιά καὶ τοὺς κινδύνους οὐπω συνιέντα... ("and these little children who do not yet realize the dangers"). Their vulnerability

16. For βληχᾶται meaning as "wail in chorus", see MacDowell, 1971, p. 209 on 570; cf. Aesch., *Sept.* 348-350.

17. McDowell's interpretation of ὁ πατήρ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν in 570 (1971, p. 209) as the phrase could indicate the father's protection of his children may be reasonable, although it could just indicate differences in height.

as well as their inferiority are elements of the defendant's argumentation, and these two characteristics are stressed by locating children among the weak members of Athenian society, women and elders, with whom they share the podium in assistance to the defendant (cf. Dem. XXV 84). The children probably needed instructions in order to render that assistance, such as when to approach the podium and what exactly to do when they stood there. According to Apostolakis' plausible suggestion (2017, p. 139) the middle voice ἀναβιβάζεσθαι in [Lys.] XX 34 might allude to the approach of children to the podium, which was preceded by a gesture of invitation, following, most probably, appropriate preparation. Such preparation would have been done beforehand, where the children were given instructions "by their father or the logographer, and are told how to cry and behave in order to seem pitiable", just as special instructions are given to Labes' puppies in Aristophanes' *Vespae* (976-978) in a parodic image wherein the defendant's offspring are brought to the podium and even weep not naturally but by instruction.¹⁸

In terms of the discussed articulation of the ritual in courts, it can be determined that children most probably performed mainly an approach, while it is uncertain whether they used specific gestures or employed defined postures. They most assuredly did not participate in the verbal phase. The latter was fulfilled by the defendant adult only, while the arguments which were raised in the children's presence focused on the aspect of mercy, which correlates with their assistance, as was manifested in sources by the sounds of crying.

3. OPERATIVE PARTICIPANTS IN A GROUP

The class of suppliant children as operative participants in a group is perceptible conspicuously at the public altar or shrine. For this category the evidence provides more details of minors' performance than in courts, revealing a picture of familial or communal solidarity along with the limitations of children, expressed mainly by the lack of initiative and absence from the presentation of pleas and arguments.

The communal plea for mercy or protection from a sacred figure featuring the presence of children is prominent in tragedy, in addition to its occasional appearance

18. "Where are his children? Come up here, poor creatures, and present your request in tears and pleas" (ποῦ τὰ παιδιά; / ἀναβαίνειτ', ὦ πόνηρα, καὶ κνυζούμενα / αἰτεῖτε κἀντιβόλειτε καὶ δακρύετε); and see further for instructions in Sophocles' *Ajax* and Euripides' *Andromache*.

in vase paintings and sporadic allusions in historiography.¹⁹ Four tragedies feature children's supplication in the opening scene of the play. In the prologue of Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus* (440s-420s BCE)²⁰ children are among the citizen members who, after a processional entrance,²¹ approach and sit at the steps of the altars as suppliants before Oedipus' palace (1-3, 15-17, 31-32, 59), with olive branches wreathed in wool (2-3, 143),²² begging for salvation from a plague (cf. Thuc., II 47, 4). Children, defined as "nestlings not strong enough for flight" (... οἱ μὲν οὐδέπω μακρὰν/πτέσθαι σθένοντες ... 16-17),²³ implying their young age and powerlessness, share their participation in that public ceremony with selected youths and elders (15-19).²⁴ They performed the suppliant's gesture in silence, until all the suppliants are directed to move following their successful supplication (142-143). The verbal part of the ritual was executed by an old priest, who supervised the procedure (14-57, 147-150). The case is a unique example in tragedy of mass supplication involving all the members of the community. Such a wide array of participants encompassing the entire population is mentioned in historical documents, which may indicate the actuality of group supplication in situations of extreme communal danger, and though the participation of children is not recorded specifically by the ancient historians, it may well be implied, e.g. Ephesian supplication to Artemis under Croisus' attack ca. 560 BCE (Hdt., I 26; Polyainus, *Strat.* VI 50). Another mass supplication oft-mentioned in sources was the entrenchment of thousands of Messenians in Mt. Ithome after taking advantage of the earthquake in the 460s to revolt against the Spartans (Third Messenian War). The Messenians made themselves suppliants of Zeus of Ithome (Zeus Ithomatas), together with their families, wives and children, and remained in the sanctuary for

19. In classical sources there is no evidence for children's supplication by a hearth (unlike that of adults e.g. Hom., *Od.* VII 153; Thuc., I 136, 3).

20. For dating see Finglass, 2018, pp. 1-6.

21. Seale, 2007, pp. 89 and 91, n. 1.

22. It is most probable that boughs were laid on the steps of the altars (Jebb, 1883, p. 11 on 2), and were generally supposed to be removed after the suppliants' plea had been answered positively, see e.g. Aesch., *Supp.* 506-507 and Eur., *Supp.* 32, 359-360 (cf. 258-262 for failure of supplication by leaving the boughs on the altars).

23. For the comparison between little children and nestlings, see Finglass, 2018, p. 172 on 14-17 and discussion in Haussker, 2020, pp. 208-209. For the link between the bird imaginary and rite of supplication as tragic clichéd device, see Wilkins, above, n. 5.

24. For the number of participants on stage and the possibility that children comprise the majority, see Seale, 2007, p. 92 n. 3. Finglass' suggestion that the priest is a single adult surrounded by children (2018, pp. 166-167 on 1-150) does not correlate with information in these verses; cf. Jebb, 1883, p. 15 on 18.

a relatively long time until they finally were allowed to leave safely and were offered by the Athenians the opportunity to settle and establish a new home at Naupactus.²⁵

The missing explicit documentation of children's ritual behavior in the examples above can be supplemented by dramatic representations authored by Euripides, who dramatised minors' *hiketeia* in five tragedies among nine of his surviving plays in which pre-pubescent children are included in the cast.²⁶ In three of the plays whose plots revolve around *hiketeia*, *Heraclidae*, *Supplices* and *Hercules furens*, the opening tableau is performed by minors, in the presence of other, adult, family members. I begin with an analysis of the first two, which are concerned with the Athenian *polis* and its attitude toward foreigners. Both plays represent supplication (performed at an altar, whether in a temple or before a political institution) as an institutionalized method of foreigners' application to the Athenian *demos*, a ritual which was already documented in the first half of the 5th cent. BCE,²⁷ and encompassed in the classical period various foreigners with diverse requests supplicating the Athenian people.²⁸ In *Supplices* the request is for help in recovering the bodies and securing burial for their dead, rather than seeking protection, while in *Heraclidae* the suppliants are seeking sanctuary and defense. In these two cases the foreigners' supplications succeed, and the choice to accede to the petitioners' request also perpetuates Athenian piety, *eusebeia* (εὐσέβεια) toward the gods, and compassion by defending the suffering foreigners and their children to the extent of endangering themselves in military conflict.²⁹

Strangers' *hiketeia* involving an intergenerational aspect received much attention in tragic discourse. In these scenes children appear as participants in the physical aspect of the ritual, but, where speech takes a central place, their presence is defined by silence support. In *Supplices* (produced in the late 420s BCE)³⁰ the main performers of supplication are the mothers of the seven Argive fallen commanders who technically

25. Thuc., I 101, 2 – 103, 3; Diod. Sic., XI 84, 8 and Paus., III 11, 8; IV 24, 7. For probability of living arrangements, see Sinn, 2005, p. 81.

26. *Alcestis*, *Medea*, *Andromache*, *Heraclidae*, *Hecuba*, *Supplices*, *Hercules furens*, *Troades* and *Iphigenia Aulidensis*.

27. Zelnick-Abramovitz, 1998, pp. 569-571; and see the comprehensive discussion in 562-569 for supplication as a common form of formal appeal to the Athenian *demos*, with ceremonial rules; for *hiketeia* as a customary official event in each *prytaneia* in 4th cent. BCE, see above, n. 12.

28. E.g. Ar., *Lys.* 1138-1141, *Dem.*, XXIV 12; L 5; Isoc., XIV 1, 51-52; Diod. Sic., XVII 108, 6-7; *IG II²* 218, 276, 336, 337, 502 (the repeated phrase in the decrees ἔδοξεν ἔννομα ἰκετεῦειν points to the propriety of a plea and argumentation, mainly in moral and legal aspects).

29. See e.g. Isoc., IV 58 and X 31. For Athenians' generosity toward foreigners linked to the city's imperial power and democratic ideology, see esp. Tzanetou, 2005 and 2011.

30. Collard, 1975, pp. 8-14; Toher, 2001, pp. 342-343; Morwood, 2007, pp. 26-30.

supplicate Demeter, but direct the request to Theseus through his mother Aethra who stands at the altar of Demeter at Eleusis. The chorus of the mothers surrounded her and presented their plea by approaching her knees (165) with a suppliant branch (10, 102) and using verbal expressions of *hiketeia* (42-44, 60, 63-64, 68, 130, 278-279, 284-285). The sons of the Seven, the Epigoni (Ἐπίγονοι), are located close to Argive leader Adrastus (106) who is lying on the ground near the entrance to the temple of Demeter and Kore, sharing in that way the supplication with the mothers of the fallen (20-25, 104).³¹ Children, who actually have very little role in the rite, are mentioned only once, without clarification of their exact posture, but it is clear that Theseus sees them as part of the whole suppliant group, “why they came to us with an outstretched suppliant hand” (τί γὰρ πρὸς ἡμᾶς ἦλθον ἱκεσίαι χερί;108). The boys’ silence during the rite is sharply opposed to the voice that they raised while performing their pivotal role in the ritual lament over their dead fathers in the final antiphonal lament, *kommos*, toward the end of the play (1123-1164). The stage of entreaty and argumentation, which is distributed over many verses, is shared only among the mothers of the fallen commanders and Adrastus (113-130, 174-179 and *passim*).

Heraclidae (430 BCE) presents children as foreign fugitives (416-417) who request help from the *polis*’ authorities, seeking sanctuary at an altar (1-308). In the opening tableau, Iolaus and some of the male children of Hercules sit beside him as suppliants at the altar of Zeus Agoraios, which they adorned with begging branches (70, 123-125), against the backdrop of the Temple of Zeus in Marathon, while Alcmene and the girls are inside the sanctuary. Led by aged Iolaus and Alcmene, Hercules’ small children arrived at Marathon as suppliants (93-94) after failing to receive hospitality in every other Greek city (31-34, 318). Their supplication, addressing Zeus, is actually directed to the Athenian people (e.g. 33-34, 238-239), and is centered on seeking defense from Eurystheus, who pursued them and sent his messengers to threaten them with death. Thus, Eurystheus attempted to prevent the Heraclidae from taking revenge on him in the future because of the hardships he caused their father, Hercules (468-470, 1000-1004).³²

The play casts a group of children of unspecified number and age. It is attested clearly that all the children who are present in the sacred site, the boys on stage,

31. For total number of performers on stage in the opening scene, estimated between 23 and 32, see conclusive discussion in Rehm, 1988, pp. 274-275.

32. On the revenge of the sons for their fathers, see e.g. Hdt., IV 69, 3; Arist., *Rhet.* 1376a6 and 1395a16; Kassel, 1991, pp. 47-48; Haussker, 2020, pp. 221-222. For the perception that a child is not perceived as a being *per se* in the present, but as the adult that he will be in the future, cf. e.g. Arist., *Pol.* 1260a 31-33 and a comprehensive discussion in Griffiths, 2020, pp. 139-197.

and the girls, unseen, with their grandmother in the temple, need to be cared for by adults due to their tender age and the danger in which they find themselves. Attributes and gestures indicated in the text (e.g. σμικρούς 24, ὦ τέκνα τέκνα, δεῦρο, λαμβάνεσθ' ἑμῶν πέπλων· 48-49, κόρους νεοτρεφεῖς 92-93, νηπίους ἔτι 955) signify their minority, using, inter alia, the nestling metaphor (νεοσσῶν ... πανήγυριν 239).³³ The sense of the children's weakness is intensified by the fact that they are under the supervision of older people, themselves feeble (10-11, 955; cf. 602-604),³⁴ and by the threat of violation at the hand of their pursuer, an Argive herald, who attempts to lead them away from an altar (67-72; cf. 248-249).³⁵

While children are still the central actors of the political aspect, Iolaus is the central figure who conducts the ceremony's religious portions. Within the structure of the *hiketeia*, they have performed an appeal and used body language; they approached an altar, adorned it with suppliant boughs and performed ritual gestures, most probably under Iolaus' supervision. During the argumentative phase they remained silent. Iolaus, a good friend (and nephew) of Hercules who assumes protection of the children, manages the argumentation and plea (esp. 181-231). He makes an appeal in the name of the children after addressing his supplication directly to Demophon by grasping his knees and touching his chin (226-230), while the children remain at the altar. Iolaus' verbal request points to the children's inherited noble origin and kinship (205-212), to reciprocity (esp. 215-231), and to fairness. He also recounts the children's pathetic qualities of young age and paternal orphanhood: σμικρούς δὲ τοῦ σδε καὶ πατρὸς τητωμένους ("these [here] are young and deprived of their father" 24),³⁶ although it was not the children's weakness that occasioned the acceptance of the supplication, but rather Athenian openhandedness.

33. For rhetorical-poetic figures of bird imagery here and in Euripides, see Bond, 1981, p. 81 on 71-72.

34. For noticeable correlation between begging children and old people characterizing scenes of *hiketeia* in Euripides, see esp. Menu, 1992, p. 258. For children's tragic stereotype as vulnerable individuals, see Sifakis, 1979, pp. 68-69.

35. For violence against defenseless foreigners, *hiketai* as desecration, see e.g. Hes., *Op.* 327-334; Pl., *Leg.* 729e5-730a; cf. Hdt., III 48, 2-3 (discussed below). For the rarity of physical violence between the characters on tragic stage, see Allan, 2001b, 137 on 63-68.

36. This lack of a father's social and emotional protection for his prepubescent children is a frequent motif in the sources and noticeable in depiction of childhood experience, cf. e.g. Hom., *Il.* XXII 484-505 and XXIV 732-738; Eur., *Tro.* 752-753.

The theme of the Heraclidae's supplication to the Athenian people, memorializing the Athenians' generosity and the help extended to the children of Hercules,³⁷ was expressed in iconography, and probably also by other tragic poets in addition to Euripides.³⁸ Representations from the 5th and 4th cent. BCE have been found outside Athens, in Southern Italy, which presumably relate to Euripides' play, and primarily depict the opening scene. For example, an early Lucanian *pelike*, found at Policoro (ancient Heraclea), dated to the end of 5th cent. BCE, and attributed to the Carneia Painter, features a bearded adult man, wearing a luxurious garment, standing on a low altar, holding a suppliant's bough. He is accompanied at the altar by four prepubescent children wearing wreaths on their heads, who certainly can be identified as suppliants; two grasp his clothes and two others are holding boughs. There appears to be what might be an additional, fifth, boy, situated above the adult's right shoulder, at an observation point, who points to the approaching herald.³⁹

Euripides' *Hercules furens* (416 BCE), the last tragic example of the second category, takes place in Thebes and presents in the opening tableau a children's plea to the divine to spare their lives (1-338). The suppliant children, having taken refuge, sit at the altar of Zeus the Saviour in front of Hercules' palace in Thebes (46-48, 51-54). They perform the rite together with their mother, Megara, and grandfather, Amphitrion (115-117, 229-231), who functioned as the children's *kyrios* (κύριος, master and protector) (44-46) while Hercules' return home was uncertain.

The children are threatened with death by Lycus, the usurper tyrant of Thebes, who feared that they will avenge his murder of Creon (41-43, 168-169, 547), Megara's father. As in *Heraclidae*, the children are primarily seen in terms of potential heirs, and their future is what actually puts their lives in danger and is more dominant than their natural vulnerability.

37. Iolaus acknowledging Athens being "alone in the whole inhabited expanse of Greece" as the defender of children (*Heracl.* 304); and cf. above, n. 29.

38. E.g. Aeschylus' lost play *Heraclidae* (*TrGF* 3 F73b-77 with Wright, 2018, pp. 30-32). For the possible existence of another play titled *Heraclidae* by a dramatist perhaps named Pamphilus, or a drawing attributed to Pamphilus, a painter (or Apollodorus, identification unattested) in an unidentified Athenian *stoa* [schol. Ar., *Plu.* 385 Dübner], see discussion in Sommerstein, 2001, pp. 165-166 on 385.

39. Policoro, Museo Nazionale della Siritide inv. no. 35302. Cf. Allan, 2001a, pp. 74-76, fig. 6; Taplin, 2007, p. 127, no. 37 and 281, n. 44; 2012, pp. 231-232, fig. 11.2 (minor's age seems appropriate for the pre-puberty stage [cf. esp. Crelier, 2008, pp. 106-110 and Beaumont, 2012, p. 40]); see also the Lucanian column-krater, probably also related to Euripides' *Heraclidae*, ca. 400 BCE, close to the Policoro Painter, which depicts two children with Iolaus on the altar (Berlin, Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen inv. no. 1969.6; *LIMC* IV "Herakleidae" 3; Allan, 2001a, pp. 76-78, fig. 7; Taplin, 2007, p. 129, no. 38).

Here again, the children are located with other societally weak members, women and elders. The choir also consists of elders of Thebes, who note their old age and weakness (107-110, 125-126 and *passim*). The children's youth and vulnerability are expressed by nestling imagery (νεοσσούς 72, νεοσσοίς 224; cf. 982),⁴⁰ by deprivation of a male parent (e.g. 74-77; cf. 490-496), and by their mother's and grandfather's failure to fulfill the protective familial role (e.g. 73-81 87, 326). They experience grave physical and emotional despair, having been deprived of nutrition, drink and shelter (52-53),⁴¹ finding themselves left without any help from friends (55-59), hoping only for the uncertain return of Hercules for their salvation (97). In addition they suffer from the childlike inability to correctly interpret the true situation, and expect their father to arrive every moment: "with childish confusion they interrogate me about their father" (τῷ νέῳ δ' ἐσφαλμένοι/ζητοῦσι τὸν τεκόντ'..., 75).

Referring again to the ritual structure, the children perform an approach to the altar and hold on to it. Their precise gesture used in clinging to the altar is not mentioned, unlike that of Amphytrion and Megara who are attested as sitting down at the altar (47-48).⁴² Like in *Heraclidae*, the children are in existential danger and adult protective figures who accompany them supervise the rite and complete its necessary elements. The plea provided by Amphytrion includes moral and practical elements accompanied by a threat (205-216),⁴³ referring also to children's innocence (206-207), a distinctive characteristic of children often cited in sources.⁴⁴ Since that supplication failed, there followed another request within the framework of the ritual. After Lycus threatened the children with the violation of burning them at the altar (240-246), Amphytrion and Megara plead with Lycus to allow them to prepare the children for burial, clothing them in funeral garments. The two adults make requests on behalf of the children, using the suppliant verb (320-322) and, ironically, Lycus grants *this* suppliant request. What saved them was Hercules' sudden arrival, which, ironically again, would lead to the children's death at the end of the play.

Herodotus' account of the Corcyræan boys (or youth) supplicating Artemis of Samos (Hdt., III 48, 2-4; cf. Plut., *Mor.* 859f-860c; Diog. Laert., I 95, 3-5), while not

40. For bird imagery in the play see Bond, 1981, p. 317 on 982; and cf. above, nn. 23 and 33.

41. For starvation as means to subdue suppliants, see Bato, *fr.* II 15-19 (= *FGrH* 268, F3, Ael., *fr.* 48, Suda pi.3122); and see below.

42. Although children are not mentioned as those who sit at the altar, it is clear that Amphytrion cares about all those who are with him at the altar, while children are actually the target of Lycus (Bond, 1981, pp. 73-74 on 47-48).

43. Cf. Pötscher, 1994-1995, p. 74 for the model of aggressive, demanding or threatening *hiketeia*.

44. E.g. Pl., *Symp.* 217e; discussed thoroughly in Golden, 2015, pp. 8-9.

connected to Athens, but which does refer to peer supplication, may by comparison illuminate the general limitations of minors within the framework of the ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece. When, in the beginning of the 6th cent. BCE, Periander, son of Cypselus, sent 300 Corcyrean boys, sons of the city's elite, to Alyattes of Sardis for castration, the Corinthians who were delivering the boys anchored in Samos. The Samians, once they learned of the boys' intended fate, instructed the youth to become suppliants in their sanctuary of Artemis and did not allow them to be dragged out of the temple. While the Corinthians, in response, attempted to starve the suppliants out, the Samians found an original way to sneak food into the sanctuary, thus preventing the children from starving; they declared a festival which lasted throughout the entire period of time that the boys were in the temple. During the feast, every night the dancers had to bring cakes of sesame and honey as offerings to the temple of the Goddess, thus providing nutrition for the boys. The case provides historical evidence both of enslaved children's collective supplication and that children were indeed candidates for violation against suppliants. The description of the ritual behavior is absent, but the case points sharply to adult initiative and conduct of the rite, here by the authorities of the city, who offer that which children could not initiate and execute due to their young age and socio-political status.

The final example of this type of *hiketeia* is the sole case of a sibling's supplication to a parent, which was performed on the Athenian stage. The infant Orestes supplicates on behalf of his sister Iphigenia in Euripides' *Iphigenia Aulidensis*. When her supplication to Agamemnon for her life fails, Iphigenia, in a final attempt to prevent being sacrificed, uses her infant brother Orestes to support her request (1241-1252):

ἀδελφέ, μικρὸς μὲν σύ γ' ἐπίκουρος φίλοις,
 ὅμως δὲ συνδάκρυσον, **ικέτευσον** πατρός
 τὴν σὴν ἀδελφὴν μὴ θανεῖν· αἴσθημά τοι
 κὰν **νηπίοις** γε τῶν κακῶν ἐγγίγνεται.
 ἰδοῦ, **σιωπῶν λίσσεται** σ' ὄδ', ὦ πάτερ.
 ἀλλ' αἶδεσαί με καὶ κατοίκτιρον †βίον†.
 ναί, πρὸς γενείου σ' ἀντόμεσθα δύο φίλω.
ὁ μὲν νεοσσός ἐστιν, ἡ δ' ἠϋξήμενη.

Brother, you are **small** and can give only slight aid to your dear ones,
 but weep together with me and **supplicate** our father
 that your sister will not die: for even **infants**
 have some perception of hardships.
 See, father, **he supplicates you although in silence**.
 So respect (our supplication) and take pity on my life.

We two, your blood kin, beg you by your chin,
one just a chick, the other a grown-up maiden.

Orestes, who is too young to speak, a point which in that short passage is attested three times (μικρὸς 1241, νήπιος 1244, νεοσσός 1248), is requested by his sister to join her crying and to perform a gesture of the rite by touching his father's chin/beard (1247), while his older sister, the main suppliant, provides the plea and the argumentation (1249-1252). Here we have a hint as to how little children who still lack the appropriate mental and cognitive development can have a share, even if but a small part, in the act of *hiketeia*, for they have a sense, *aisthēma* (αἴσθημα), of evil circumstances (1243-1244).

Baby Orestes is incorporated into another, different kind of supplication, as the suppliant Telephus' hostage, an incident which is documented in a few dozen pottery illustrations from the middle of the 5th cent. onward. Some of the scenes depict Orestes stretching his hands toward an adult figure (probably Agamemnon) from an altar while he is held captive by Telephus.⁴⁵ Interpreting it as a child's supplication for salvation may be inaccurate in the absence of supporting literary evidence, as it is important to note that it is a common gesture of infants to their parents and close adult figures.⁴⁶ In any case, in two different situations Orestes plays a supporting part in the *hiketeia* of the mature characters.

4. A CHILD AS A SINGLE OR PRIMARY SUPPLIANT

This type of supplication includes both a child's appeal to a parent or other threatening adult for mercy to spare his life, and to a corpse for protection. Such supplications are almost always personal and are directed to addressees with whom the child is acquainted from within the family circle. Like the previous type of *hiketeia*, the rite is performed in the presence of family members.

45. E.g. Attic red-figure calyx crater, ca. 400-375 BCE (Berlin, Antikensammlung Staatliche Museen inv. no. VI 3974); *LIMC* I "Agamemnon" 13 with Taplin, 2007, p. 206 no. 75. Cf. Themistocles' supplication to Admetus king of the Molossians, while approaching the hearth he was holding the king's only infant son in his hands (Thuc., I 136, 2 – 137, 1; cf. Plut., *Them.* XXIV 1-4; Nep., *Them.* VIII 4). For the interrelationship between the narrative of Themistocles' supplication and that of Telephus in Aeschylean and (later Euripidean) tragedy, including baby Orestes' iconographic representations, see Csapo, 1990. For supplication and hostage, see *ThesCRA* III "hikesia" I, E.

46. See Creleir, 2008, *passim*; cf. McNiven, 2007, p. 87.

The cases discussed below allow for a broader glimpse into the performance part of the ritual, and simultaneously reveal child-adult interaction in the ritual acquisition process in the actual moment as well as providing meagre evidence of child's argumentative performance, in the verbal part of the supplication. The main evidence come from tragedy, and occasionally from vase paintings.

I begin with Sophocles' *Ajax*, the first tragedy from among the extant plays to include a child character, and one of the two wherein Sophocles casts children.⁴⁷ The play presents a unique example of entreaty to a corpse for protection and a most detailed picture of a child's supplication, as well as demonstrating the acquisition of ritual skills. Eurysaces, son of Ajax and Tecmessa, the hero's captive concubine, is involved in difficulties surrounding his father's burial, following Menelaus' and Agamemnon's prohibition of the burial. Teucer, Ajax' bastard brother and Eurysaces' uncle, who now takes responsibility for the child's rearing and protection, does as Amphytrion in *Hercules furens* did, giving Eurysaces instructions for the rite, while attempting to secure a hasty burial for Ajax in a hostile environment (1183-1184). Eurysaces has to perform a leading role in guarding the corpse of his father although his tender age does not allow him to perceive the true circumstances (552-555). Thus, guided by Teucer's clear and accurate instructions,⁴⁸ the child holds onto the body of Ajax, and performs an *ex tempore hiketeia* (1171-1175):

ὦ παῖ, πρόσελθε δεῦρο, καὶ σταθεὶς πέλας
ικέτης ἔφασαι πατρός, ὅς σ' ἐγένετο.
 θάκει δὲ προστρόπαιος ἐν χερσὶν ἔχων
 κόμας ἐμὰς καὶ τῆσδε καὶ σαντοῦ τρίτου,
ικτήριον θησαυρόν. ...

Dear child, approach here and place yourself close,
 hold on your father as a **suppliant**, your father who begot you.
 Sit down as a defense seeker, holding hair both my own
 and hers and yours in your own hands,
 as a **suppliant treasure** ...

47. For preference of dating the composition to the fourth decade of 5th cent. BCE, see extensive discussion in Finglass, 2011, pp. 1-11.

48. See Stanford, 1963, p. 204 on 1171-1172.

The ritual instructions included kneeling or sitting down, holding the object of supplication and carrying strands of the hair of Ajax' close family members instead of the generally-used branches wrapped in wool.

After cursing the unburied dead against anyone who would try to drag Eurysaces from Ajax' body (1175-1179), Teucer finished his instructions (1180-1181):

ἔχ' αὐτόν, ὦ παῖ, καὶ φύλασσε, μηδέ σε
κινήσάτω τις, ἀλλὰ προσπεσῶν ἔχου,

hold on and keep it⁴⁹ and no one should move you [from the corpse], but
(if someone comes), throw yourself upon [the corpse]...

Eurysaces' extreme powerlessness to secure his father's corpse under dangerous conditions invites the protection of powerful authorities.⁵⁰ Thus the corpse which he is protecting (being backed by Ajax' sailors, Tecmessa his mother, and the curse against violation) functions in parallel as the sacred object of supplication protecting the suppliant against aggression.⁵¹

Like most of the suppliant children in dramatic representations, Eurysaces' appearance on stage is defined by silence and lack of initiative, but he functions as the main performer of the rite, while the adults who support him, Tecmessa and Ajax' sailors, are silent assistants and observers. His ritual performance is embodied in the fulfillment of the adult's instruction, and is comprised mainly of a movement of approach together with gestures and related ritual accessories, and ends with strict instruction of what to do in case of violation, as follows: approach (πρόσελθε δεῦρο), take a position (σταθεῖς), touch (ἔφαψαι), sit (θάκει), hold (ἔχων), keep (φύλασσε) and fall (προσπεσῶν ἔχου). This is the most detailed case in sources of teaching and directing a child in ritual performance. It happens in the face of a dire situation, and the acquisition of related religious knowledge is not conducted by observation and imitation, which was perceived as the natural and basic tool for learning (e.g. Pl., *Prt.*

49. I am more in agreement with Finglass (2011, p. 468), who takes πλόκον (1179) as the object of φύλασσε (1180) instead of Ajax' body as suggested by Henrichs (1993, pp. 166-167), who interprets the verb as signifying the supernatural power of the dead Ajax to protect the child, rather than to be defended by him; and see below, n. 51.

50. Some scholars' linkage of the scene with Ajax' hero-cult (among others, Burian, 1972 and Henrichs, 1993), is convincingly refuted by Currie (2012, pp. 335-336). For concluding discussion on the much discussed and debated issue of Ajax hero cult worship, see Finglass, 2011, pp. 46-51.

51. For mutual defense of the suppliant and the corpse, which is undisputable, see esp. Burian, 1972, pp. 152-154; cf. Eitrem, 1915, p. 415.

326a; *Leg.* 796c and 887d; Arist., *Poet.* 1448b6-8), but requires careful instructions. The necessity of immediately and urgently preparing a child to cope with the worst imaginable in human-divine or human-human interaction, and the inability to rely on gradually absorbed internalized ritual learning might explain the use of detailed instruction and close supervision, especially considering Eurysaces' tender age.

The child's supplication succeeds, though it does not include even a vestige of the speaking elements; this can perhaps be explained by the abnormality of the addressee and the complexity of the ritual context which incorporates several aspects of worship.⁵²

The next example is that of Molossus in Euripides' *Andromache* (produced around the mid-420s BCE),⁵³ one of only three tragic plays in which children have verbal parts on stage, and the only extant case of a child executing the spoken portion of the act of supplication before the audience.⁵⁴ The ceremony is performed after mother and child are destined to be executed according to Menelaus' and Helen's plot. Here too the child lacks paternal protection and he executes the rite following the failure of his parents to defend him; Andromache herself has been sentenced to death and Neoptolemus is absent. Molossus' weakness, fear and tender age are emphasized by Euripides' employment of the nestling metaphor (504-505), and will be expressed in Molossus' choice of wording. The initiative to plea is not the child's, but is rather a response to Andromache's guidance. In one last desperate attempt to save her son from death, Andromache urges Molossus to beg Menelaus by performing a ritual gesture of supplication, "approach to master's knees, child, supplicate him [for clemency]" (λίσσου γούνασι δεσπότη/χρίμπτων, ὦ τέκνον 529-30), after which the child left his mother's embrace and approached Menelaus. Here supplication includes an approach and the use of a distinctive gesture, in this case clasping the knees of the addressee, but these are not accompanied by ritual wording. The vocal element is very concise, in a simple form of concrete expression, without argumentation:

... ὦ φίλος / φίλος, ἄνευ θάνατόν μοι.

avert death from me, / dear one (530-531).

52. For this scene mixing three rites, death ritual, curse and supplication, see discussion in Brook, 2018, pp. 66-71.

53. Stevens, 1971, pp. 15-21; Allan, 2000, pp. 149-160.

54. Haussker, 2020, pp. 212-217.

This child's appeal on stage, a small boy approaching the knees of an ominous adult man in a position of power who intends to murder him, has a strong emotional impact on the audience, while the boy's use of the word φίλος ironically stresses both his innocence, and the common expectation of a positive response to minors' pleas, although eventually Molossus is brutally rejected by Menelaus (537-538).⁵⁵

Other examples are appeals of children to their fathers. In *Hercules furens* Hercules' son is rejected and killed by his insane father who imagines that he is killing Eurystheus' sons. The child, in horror and astonishment, tries an impromptu rite of supplication to his father, at first crouched adjacent to the altar "like a bird", and then approaching Hercules' knees trying to stretch his hand to touch his chin and neck (HF 974 and 984-989). That short supplication, which is not seen before the audience, but reported using direct speech, incorporates full completion of the components of the rite: an approach, a ritual gesture, plea and argumentation for being spared and refusal of the authority in power to the supplication:

... ὁ τλήμων γόνασι προσπεσὼν πατρὸς
καὶ πρὸς γένειον χεῖρα καὶ δέρην βαλῶν
᾿Ω φίλτατ', αὐδαῖ, μή μ' ἀποκτείνῃς, πάτερ·
σὸς εἰμι, σὸς παῖς· οὐ τὸν Εὐρυσθέως ὀλεῖς.

... the poor child, falling on his father's knees
and trying to touch his chin and neck, cried:
My dearest father, don't kill me
I'm yours, your own child, not Eurystheus' son you are killing now.

Argumentation was futile, for Hercules committed murder while temporarily insane, believing that he was murdering the children of his enemy, Eurystheus.

The child's wording, which consists of requests and arguments, is characterized by simple language, and is in effect merely an appeal not to be killed, in the absence of additional supplicatory vocabulary to accompany the gestures of the rite.

The scene of Hercules' son, supplication, attempting to reach his father's chin, is also depicted in a red-figure calyx crater dated to ca. 350-325 BCE.⁵⁶ The two scenes

55. Cf. *Med.* 862-864. The scene depicted in a Lucanian red-figure calyx-crater attributed (or closely related) to Policoro Painter, ca. 400 BCE, which shows Medea's two boys lying dead on the altar, may probably imply that an impromptu supplication rite was performed before she slayed them (Cleveland Museum of Art inv. no. 1991.1; Taplin, 2007, pp. 122-123, no. 35).

56. Madrid, Museo Arqueológico Nacional inv. no. 11094 (L.369); *LIMC* IV "Herakles" 1684; Denoyelle and Iozzo, 2009, pp. 186-187, fig. 260.

are different; in the vase painting the child is an infant carried in the hands of his father, while in the play he is old enough to speak and provide short argumentation, and his gestures are more varied. A similar episode of a child supplicating a male parent is repeated in the presentation of Dryas' death at the hand of Lycurgus. Literary sources do not provide information about Dryas's supplication, but the scene appears on pottery from the 5th and 4th cent. BCE. The gestures are varied. A portrayal on a red-figured hydria attributed to the Nausicaa Painter and dated *ca.* 460-440 BCE presents Dryas' supplication, performed while sitting on the altar and stretching his hands toward his father who is swinging an axe.⁵⁷ In another Attic red-figure hydria, dated to 425-400 BCE, Dryas is shown kneeling;⁵⁸ on an Apulian krater from the 4th cent., *ca.* 350s BCE, attributed to the Painter of Boston, which may be based on a scene of Aeschylus's *Edoni* (*TrGF* 3 F57-67), Dryas is seen kneeling and grasping the knees of his father while the latter is holding an axe.⁵⁹ Dryas' exact age, while he looks adolescent, is difficult to ascertain and his minority is implied mainly by his lack of beard in contrast to his father.⁶⁰

In conclusion to the present chapter, I would like to note that the so-called "argumentative performance" of minors occurs but twice in sources. These two children alone speak during the act of supplication, and so emphasize the silence of children in most of the other cases referred. Unlike in mourning, for example, where even young children, such as Alcestis' son, can perform a ritual lament employing all needed ritualistic (and artistic) elements (Eur., *Alc.* 393-493, 406-415; cf. *Supplices* above), in the verbal part of the ritual, in supplication rather, their wording is very concise and lacks the same complexity and rhetorical skill which can be witnessed in adults, and as such does not afford them even a slim chance to escape the rejection of the addressee.

4. CONCLUSION

The rite of supplication, appropriate in response to life-threatening dangers or equivalent threatening situations, was most probably not a routine sacral practice of Athenian citizen children in the classical period. While it is impossible to estimate how many children witnessed the sight of their fathers in figurative supplication in courts, performing

57. Krakow, Czartoryski Museum inv. no. 1225; *CVA* 14 pl.12 a-b; *LIMC* VI "Lykourgos I" 26.

58. Rome, Villa Giulia = *ARV*² 1343a = *LIMC* VI "Lykourgos I" 12.

59. Ruvo, Museo Jatta 36955 [n.i. 32]; *LIMC* VI "Lykourgos I", 14; Taplin, 2007, pp. 68-70, no. 12.

60. See specifically Beaumont, 2012, pp. 40-42.

proper rituals at altars with family and communal members was most probably a rare phenomenon. As such *hiketeia* cannot be comparable in a strict sense to other religious activities involving children, except in the wide age range of minor participants and the rite's strong connection with family ties. For it is the inherited status of children and their generational relationships which were actually the factor that occasioned the dire circumstances which lead to the necessity of performing the *hiketeia*.

However, while routine ritual activity primarily expresses success in the socialization process, a minor's performance of supplication is strongly characterized by weakness and incompetence as far as ritual requirements being properly executed. *Prima facie*, the strength of children as suppliants was meant to lie precisely in their weakness, thus strengthening their appeal. Regardless, as the examples presented herein illustrate, children's inherent fragility did not enable them to promote the success of the plea; in the argumentations which adults present on their behalf, children's vulnerability is one of the accompanying parameters for gaining mercy, though not the central one. The supplications that were accepted did not succeed because of the children's weakness, and those which failed, failed despite their weakness. Hence, since the chance for a successful outcome of the rite was dependent more on the rite's proper management and rhetoric, the role of the adults, who chiefly initiated, supervised and managed the act, as well as spoke and employed appropriate tools of persuasion while appealing to the addressee, was crucial.

The pivotal question is, why do the sources present most of the children, and not only the very young ones, as almost totally silent, limiting them to non-verbal communication with the authorities in power? The answer lies in their marginal social and legal status as well as their mental and cognitive inferiority, which prevent them from employing rational judgement and proper discernment, as often asserted in sources regarding the characteristics of the stage of childhood.⁶¹ According to Athenian contemporary perception, minors' cognitive, social, as well as moral and emotional, incompleteness deprived children of the ability to understand and assess the circumstances in which they were involved, in addition to their natural childlike psychological passivity and physical and spiritual weakness.⁶²

To conclude, the virtual exclusion of children from the spoken and argumentative aspect of *hiketeia* prevented them from performing that ritual in its entirety. Their partial participation, and the helplessness in which they are mired when the rite takes place, resulted in increasing the inherent asymmetry that exists between the

61. E.g. Soph., *Ant.* 735; Arist., *Pol.* 1260a11-14. Cf. Francis, 2006, pp. 50-52; Golden, 2015, pp. 4-6.

62. E.g. Hom., *Il.* II 289-290; Aesch., *Ag.* 71 and 81; Soph., *Phil.* 700. Cf. Francis, 2006, pp. 53-54.

petitioner and the addressee. Hence, supplication as a mechanism of acquiring and performing religious knowledge regarding the specific relationships between one's self and powerful authorities in dire situations operated less as a tool for children's socialization, rather it highlighted, if inadvertently, children's socio-political and legal marginality as weak members of the community.

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THE RHYTHM OF THE GODS' VOICE.
THE SUGGESTION OF DIVINE PRESENCE
THROUGH PROSODY*

EL RITMO DE LA VOZ DE LOS DIOS.
LA SUGERENCIA DE LA PRESENCIA DIVINA
A TRAVÉS DE LA PROSODIA

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I draw attention to the gods' pickiness in the audible flow of their utterances, a prosodic characteristic of speech that evokes the presence of the divine. Hexametric poetry itself is the

RESUMEN

Este estudio se centra en la meticulosidad de los dioses en el flujo audible de sus expresiones, una característica prosódica del habla que evoca la presencia divina. La poesía hexamétrica es en sí misma el lenguaje de la per-

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language of permanency, as evidenced by wisdom literature, funereal and dedicatory inscriptions: epic poetry is the embedded direct speech of a goddess. Outside hexametric poetry, the gods' special speech is primarily expressed through prosodic means, notably through a shift in rhythmic profile. Such a shift deliberately captures, or recalls, the well-known rhythmic profiles, phrases, and clausulae from epic and wisdom literature. Embedded in other prosodic profiles, these audibly alienating and isolated utterances both bewilder through their unexpected appearance, and reassure because of their familiarity for the listening audience. Resembling and evoking the language of permanency for embedded divine speech, quotations in hexameter lend a sense of ritual to their performance in other rhythmic environments. A performer temporarily impersonates a speaking divinity, as the audience experiences the revelation's premiere staging.

manencia, como pone de manifiesto la literatura sapiencial y las inscripciones funerarias y dedicatorias: la poesía épica es el lenguaje directo integrado de una diosa. Más allá de la poesía hexamétrica, el habla especial de los dioses es principalmente expresado mediante recursos prosódicos, especialmente a través de un cambio en el perfil rítmico. Este cambio deliberadamente captura o evoca los bien conocidos perfiles rítmicos, frases y cláusulas de la literatura épica y sapiencial. Incorporadas en otros perfiles prosódicos, estas expresiones audiblemente alienantes y aisladas desconciertan por su inesperada apariencia al mismo tiempo que apaciguan gracias a su familiaridad para la audiencia. Al asemejarse al lenguaje de la permanencia y evocarlo para el habla divina incorporada, las citas en hexámetros revisten de un sentido ritual su interpretación en otros contextos rítmicos. El ejecutante encarna temporalmente la divinidad que habla, mientras que la audiencia experimenta el estreno de la puesta en escena de la revelación.

KEYWORDS

Re-enactment; Rhythm; Ritual; Situational Flickering; Stylized Speech.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Discurso estilizado; movimiento situacional; recreación; ritmo; ritual.

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1. INTRODUCTION

From Herodotus' rendering of divine and oracular voices, audiences are familiar with the notion that the gods voice their utterances in metrical rather than in non-metrical speech.¹ In a prose text like the *Histories*, the gods' voice appears as embedded direct speech, keeping its metrically characterised prosodic shape.² Well-known examples from Herodotus' *Histories* are the Delphic prophecies to the Lydian king Croesus in I 47, 3 and 55, 2:³

οἶδα δ' ἐγὼ ψάμμου τ' ἀριθμὸν καὶ μέτρα θαλάσσης,
καὶ κωφοῦ συνήμι, καὶ οὐ φωνεῦντος ἀκούω.
ὀδμή μ' ἐς φρένας ἦλθε κραταιρίνοιο χελώνης
ἐσομένης ἐν χαλκῷ ἄμ' ἀρνείοισι κρέεσσιν,
ἧ χαλκὸς μὲν ὑπέστρωται, χαλκὸν δ' ἐπίεσται.⁴

"I know the number of sand and the sea's measure; the dumb I can understand, and I can hear without one speaking. To my mind the smell of a strong-shielded tortoise has come, being boiled in bronze together with meat of lamb; with bronze stretched underneath, it is clothed in bronze".

1. In addition to the recent interest in Greek gods' utterances and diction, cf. the international 24th Corhali Conference "Voice and language of the gods in the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the Homeric Hymns" (13-15 June 2019).

2. Alternatively, only the message is kept in indirect speech, as in Hdt., I 53, 2, τῶν δὲ μαντηῶν ἀμφοτέρων ἐς τὸ αὐτὸ αἰ γινώμει συνέδραμον, προλέγουσαι Κροίσῳ, ἣν στρατεύεται ἐπὶ Πέρσας, μεγάλην ἀρχὴν μιν καταλύσειν, "the answers of both oracular sites came down to the same thing, declaring to Croesus that he would destroy a great empire should he march against the Persians"; or Hdt., VII 178, 1, καὶ σφι ἐχρήσθη ἀνέμοισι εὐχεσθαι· μεγάλους γὰρ τούτους ἔσεσθαι τῇ Ἑλλάδι συμμάχους, "and they (the Delphians) received as an answer the advice to pray to the winds: for these would be powerful allies for Greece".

3. Primary texts from which Greek quotations have been taken are listed in the bibliography. All translations are by the author.

4. Hdt., I 47, 3.

ἀλλ' ὅταν ἡμίονος βασιλεὺς Μήδοισι γένηται,
καὶ τότε, Λυδὲ ποδαβρὲ, πολυψήφιδα παρ' Ἑρμον
φεύγειν μὴδὲ μένειν μὴδ' αἰδεῖσθαι κακός εἶναι.⁵

“However, as soon as a mule becomes king of the Medes, at that precise moment, soft-footed Lydian, flee along the pebbly Hermus, and do not hold your ground; nor feel ashamed for being a coward”.

Whether originally produced in hexameters or merely rendered as such by Herodotus, in their presentation as metrical text the words of the gods maintain a level of stylisation that wilfully deviates from the prose environment.⁶ Thus the gods' voice stands out with regard to both the content of the words (as prophetic, enigmatic, conclusive, or at least extraordinary), and the shape of the wording: the latter is rather reminiscent of gods speaking in other genres that are primarily poetry. In a prose context, like Herodotus', the metrical shape of the divine words stands out, “flickering” like a poetic emblem that draws attention to its other-worldly origin and impact. As a poetic emblem, the flickering itself recalls the poetic genres in which gods were staged speaking in metrical lines (archaic epic and wisdom literature), and the language of permanency of dedicatory and funereal inscriptions. In this article, I will argue that the occasional metrical flickering in prose contexts indicates that, starting from, and driven by the conventions of (didactic) epic, the divine voice continued to be expressed in hexameters, and was experienced as divine because of its metrical shape.⁷ In metrical contexts apart from the hexameter, as

5. Hdt., I 55, 2.

6. Maurizio, 1997, pp. 312-315. Herodotus' literary activity appears to be untouched by the propagation of rhythmic prose by Gorgias, the rules of which were later allegedly described by Hegesias; cf. Hutchinson, 2018, pp. 6-7. But cf. the prose version of an oracle in Hdt., IV 163, discussed below.

7. Cf. Maurizio, 1997, pp. 331-332: “Tellers of oracular tales were interested in how oracles were divine utterances which eluded human comprehension because of their tropic nature. That is, they were interested in the interstices of language, its capacity to hold multiple meanings that can make manifest the presence of the divine breaking in on the human world. These authoritative tale tellers created oracular narratives that emblemized their *Sitz in Leben*, which always involved human and divine interaction, the gap between human and divine intelligence, and the tragedy of the human condition that resulted, as it inevitably did, in the space where human strivings to hear and comprehend the divine on earth often failed. The community of believers, who authored the Delphic oracles as well as their narrative frames, have left us a tradition of oracular tales containing authentic oracles whose very purpose was to transcend the particularities of time, place, and circumstance in favor of establishing Apollo's presence on earth”.

well as in non-metrical contexts, hexametric flickering has an evocative effect: in performance, it evokes the human ritual and the presence of the god.

2. THE PROSODY OF THE GODS' VOICE

To gauge the impact of the gods' utterance in other contexts than the hexameter, I will start from the isolated instances of divine speech. Let us therefore first turn to oracles in an early prose work like Herodotus' *Histories*, and place them against the background of divine utterance in epic poetry, the isolated wisdom sayings, and the use of the hexameter in inscriptions.

In Herodotus' work, a number of oracular prophesies appear (in addition to I 47, 3 and I 55, 2, already cited), and almost all are more or less dactylic in shape.⁸ Whether presented as Apollo's own words, or as a human-fashioned version of the divine utterances, the persistence of their dactylic shape is remarkable. At times, it proved necessary or desirable for Herodotus to comment on the outer shape of quotations. In several cases, he explicitly introduces an oracle as ἐν ἑξαμέτρῳ τόνῳ ("in hexametric rhythm", i.e. in dactylic hexameter; Hdt., I 47, 2 and 62, 3), or as ἐν ἔπεσι ἑξαμέτροισι ("in hexametric verses"; Hdt., VII 220, 3). This latter specification may surprise the audience of the integral *Histories*: the introductory remark ("in hexametric rhythm") on the oracles in Hdt., I 47 and 62 (the first and the third in the *Histories*) apparently sufficed for a proper understanding of the prosodic format of oracles for over seven and a half books. It may equally surprise those who enjoy self-standing episodes from the *Histories*: why specify the metrical format here? Similar, seemingly random, specifications of hexametric formats are found in Hdt., V 60 and 61, 1, both dedicatory inscriptions:

ἕτερος δὲ τρίπους ἐν ἑξαμέτρῳ τόνῳ λέγει·
Σκαῖος πυγμαχέων με ἐκηβόλῳ Ἀπόλλωνι
νικήσας ἀνέθηκε τῆν περικαλλῆς ἀγαλμα.⁹

"Another tripod reads the following in hexametric rhythm:

8. Of the oracular sayings in the *Histories*, 25 (I 62, 4; 65, 3; 66, 2; 67, 4; 85.2; III 57, 4; IV 155, 3; 157, 2; 159, 3; V 92, β2-3 and ε2; VI 19, 2; 77, 2; 86, γ2; 98, 3; VII 140, 2-3; 141, 3-4; 142, 2; 148, 3; 220, 4; VIII 8, 2; 77, 1-2; 96, 2; IX 43, 2) are in hexameters. One oracle (Hdt., I 174, 5) is presented in iambic trimeter (cf. Parke, 1945 on the "warrantable suspicion" against non-hexametric oracles). In Hdt., I 91, 1-6; IV 163; VII 169, 2 the words of the Pythia are rendered in prose (De Bakker, 2007, pp. 60, n. 30 and 61-62).

9. Hdt., V 60.

Scaius the victorious boxer dedicated me to far-darting Apollo, a beautiful gift for you”.

τρίτος δὲ τρίπους λέγει καὶ οὗτος ἐν ἑξαμέτρῳ·
 Λαοδάμας τρίποδ’ αὐτὸς ἐυσκόπῳ Ἀπόλλωνι
 μουναρχέων ἀνέθηκε τεῖν περικαλλές ἄγαλμα.¹⁰

“A third tripod also reads an engraving in hexameter:
 Laodamas the king himself dedicated a tripod to far-aiming Apollo, a beautiful gift to
 you”.

Such inscriptions had been presented earlier in the *Histories* without any comments on their shape (usually in hexameter lines [Hdt., V 59, 1], or distichs [Hdt., IV 88, 1; V 77, 4; VII 228, 1; 228, 2-3]). A related, equally random, remark on format is made when a dream vision delivers a riddle in hexameters to Hipparchus:¹¹

ἡ μὲν νυν ὄψις τοῦ Ἰππάρχου ἐνυπνίου ἦν ἦδε· ἐν τῇ προτέρῃ νυκτὶ τῶν Παναθηναίων
 ἐδόκεε ὁ Ἰππάρχος ἄνδρα οἱ ἐπιστάντα μέγαν καὶ εὐειδέα αἰνίσσεσθαι τάδε τὰ ἔπεα·
 τλήθι λέων ἄτλητα παθῶν τετλήοτι θυμῷ·
 οὐδεὶς ἀνθρώπων ἀδικῶν τίσιν οὐκ ἀποτίσει.¹²

“Now the vision of Hipparchus’ dream was as follows: in the night preceding the Panathenaia festival Hipparchus had the impression that a tall and good-looking man stood by him and presented the following verses as a riddle:
 Endure, lion, with an enduring heart, victim to what cannot be endured: no wrong-doing mortal man will escape due punishment”.

Herodotus is thus sporadically careful to avoid the quotation presented from being misunderstood, that is, as anything other than the proper rendering of a divinely inspired truth. At the same time, he appears to struggle with the need to clarify what hardly needs any clarification: the god of Delphi speaks in hexameters.¹³ The more remarkable then is the single example of a prose-shaped oracle in direct speech:

10. Hdt., V 61, 1.

11. The use of ἔπεα is interpreted as a reference to hexametric verses, though not without doubt or criticism, cf. Hornblower, 2013, p. 174.

12. Hdt., V 56, 1.

13. Except for the oracle given to the Cnidians as they tried to turn their peninsula into an island in order to resist Harpagus’ advance. As they suffered from unexplainable setbacks while digging, they turned to the Pythia in Delphi, who replied ἐν τριμέτρῳ τόνῳ, “in trimeter rhythm” (i.e. in iambic trimeter; Hdt., I 174, 5). Herodotus adds ὡς αὐτοὶ Κνίδιοι λέγουσι, “as the Cnidians themselves report”, thus

ἡ δὲ Πυθίη οἱ χρά τάδε. «ἐπὶ μὲν τέσσερας Βάττους καὶ Ἀρκεσίλειωσ τέσσερας, ὀκτῶ ἀνδρῶν γενεάς, διδοῖ ὑμῖν Λοξίης βασιλεύειν Κυρήνης, πλέον μέντοι τούτου οὐδὲ πειρᾶσθαι παραινέει. σὺ μέντοι ἤσυχος εἶναι κατελθὼν ἐς τὴν σεωυτοῦ. ἦν δὲ τὴν κάμινον εὖρης πλέην ἀμφορέων, μὴ ἐξοπτήσης τοὺς ἀμφορέας ἀλλ' ἀπόπεμπε κατ' οὔρον· εἰ δὲ ἐξοπτήσεις τὴν κάμινον, μὴ ἐσέλθῃς ἐς τὴν ἀμφίρρυτον· εἰ δὲ μὴ ἀποθανεῖαι καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ ταῦρος ὁ καλλιστεύων.¹⁴

“The Pythia prophesized thus: Up to four Batusses and four Arcesilauses, eight generations of men, Apollo grants you to be kings of Cyrene, but he warns you not even to attempt more than that. You, however, should keep quiet once you have returned to your own land. If you will find the furnace full of jars, you must not heat the jars – just let them go with the wind. Should you, however, heat the furnace, then please do not enter what is surrounded by water. If you do not heed my instructions, you will die, both you and the fairest bull of all”.

Apparently, Herodotus is deviating from the traditional prosodic format required for Apollo's words, and complies with the norms of prose composition. But this is only partly true: as the reconstruction of the passage by Parke and Wormell has shown,¹⁵ “traces of hexameter can be discerned”.¹⁶ Time and again, in phrases and clausulae, hexametric patterning can be found, for example in ὀκτῶ ἀνδρῶν γενεάς (|-|-| -| -| -| -|), allowing for hiatus), ἀλλ' ἀπόπεμπε κατ' οὔρον (|-| -| -| -| -|), and καὶ αὐτὸς καὶ ταῦρος ὁ καλλιστεύων (|-|-|-|-|-| -| -| -| -|).¹⁷

suggesting that there may have been some alterations to the original rendering of the Delphic utterance. Asheri, Lloyd and Corcella, 2007, p. 196 point to the possibility of an alternative format tradition at the nearby oracular sanctuary of Didyma (Hdt., I 157, 3; cf. Parke and Wormell, 1956, p. 44, n. 73). Another mention of the iambic trimeter (Hdt., I 12, 2) is equally considered suspect (“an interpolation”, Asheri, Lloyd and Corcella, 2007, p. 84).

14. Hdt., IV 163, 2-3.

15. Parke and Wormell, 1956, p. 31, n. 70.

16. Asheri, Lloyd and Corcella, 2007, p. 691.

17. “Traces of hexameter” may also be found elsewhere in Herodotus: usually as dactylic patterning comprising of a clause that “nearly scans as a hexameter” (Grethlein, 2010, p. 162). Hornblower, 1994, p. 66 (on Hdt., VII 159), noting that Herodotus avoids hexameters in general, treats Hdt., VII 159 as an example of this Herodotean avoidance, whereas others do trace a couple of hexameters or hexameters *manqués* in the *Histories* (Grethlein, 2010, p. 162, n. 49 cites Hdt., VII 178, 2 ἐξαγγείλαντες χάριν ἄθάναντον κατέθεντο). Boedeker, 2001, p. 124 states that some hexameters in Herodotus deliberately ‘create an epic effect’ or are ‘adapted from epic or elegiac accounts of recent events’. Grethlein, 2010, pp. 161-163 argues that Syagrus’ words in Hdt., VII 159 (forming the larger part of a hexameter) “echo a specific passage from the *Iliad* and create a dense net of meanings”.

These hexametric cola have certain remarkable features in common with other oracles in Herodotus; features whose frequency makes the Pythia's verses quite different from the hexameters of early Greek epic, like Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (8th cent. BCE), and Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Work and Days* (ca. 700 BCE). Compared to the verses of the Homeric epics, Herodotus' oracles (cf. the clausula ταῦρος ὁ καλλιστεύων | - υυ| - -| - -| cited above) feature a relatively high number of spondaic verses. In the Homeric epics, the ratio of spondaic verses to non-spondaic verses is 1 : 21.8 as the spondaic fifth foot is generally avoided or amended.¹⁸ In Herodotus' metrical oracles, this ratio is 1 : 10.5. In the first book of the *Histories*, a five-line prediction contains three spondaic lines:

Ἄρκαδιὴν μ' αἰτεῖς· μέγα μ' αἰτεῖς· οὐ τοι δώσω.
πολλοὶ ἐν Ἀρκαδίῃ βαλανηφάγοι ἄνδρες ἕασιν,
οἳ σ' ἀποκωλύσουσιν. ἐγὼ δὲ τοι οὔτι μεγαίρω·
δώσω τοί Τεγέην ποσσίκροτον ὀρχήσασθαι
καὶ καλὸν πεδίον σχοίνῳ διαμετρήσασθαι.¹⁹

"You ask me for Arcadia – you ask me for a lot. I will not grant it to you. In Arcadia there are many acorn-eating men, who will surely ward you off. But I put nothing in your way: I will give you well-trodden Tegea to dance in, and a beautiful plain to measure and divide with the line".

The oracle in Hdt., VIII 96, 2 consists of a single spondaic line:

Κωλιάδες δὲ γυναῖκες ἐρετμοῖσι φρύξουσι.²⁰

"Colian women will roast barley with oars".

Another prosodic feature of the oracles also showed up in Hdt., IV 163, 2's prose rendition: the allowance for hiatus after a word-final long vowel through the impossibility of correption on the foot's thesis (cf. ὀκτῶ ἀνδρῶν γενεάς cited above). In Hdt., IV 157, 2 similar hiatus appears:

αἰ τὸ ἐμεῦ Λιβύην μηλοτρόφον οἶδας ἄμεινον,
μὴ ἐλθῶν ἐλθόντος, ἄγαν ἄγαμαι σοφίην σεῦ.

18. Van Raalte, 1986, p. 6.

19. Hdt., I 66, 2.

20. Hdt., VIII 96, 2.

“If you know sheep-nourishing Libya better than I do – without having been there, whereas I have – I totally admire your wisdom”.

Other examples may be added to show that the Herodotean oracles, despite showing “many Homerisms”,²¹ use a format that differs considerably from the model they apparently try to imitate: the dactylic poetry of ancient Greek epic, of wisdom literature, and of metrical inscriptions. In Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the gods’ voice in narrative does not stand out amidst the thousands of flawless hexameters. On the narratological level of the primary narrator, however, it does: speaking through the inspired poet Homer, the Muse is politely summoned with a hexametric proem, and she delivers her account of wrath or *nostos* in hexameters.²² The proem (by the poet) is prosodically identical to the epic narrative it introduces.²³ Thus the entire epic narrative counts as the words of the inspiring goddess.²⁴ Or at least as long as the series of stichic dactylic hexameters continues. Epic language is the language of the gods, and transcends the transience of human existence in various ways. It is the vehicle for the expression of κλέος ἄφθιτον “imperishable fame”, and continues to function as such beyond the pinnacle of Homer’s poetry and its contemporaries. In epic, the claim to fame is explicitly connected to the monumentality of epic song (e.g. *Od.* III 204; VIII 580; XXIV 197) – a

21. Hornblower and Pelling, 2017, p. 193 (on Hdt., VI 77, 2). Criticism concerning the quality of the oracles, both with regard to format and content, in Plut., *Moralia* 396d τοὺς δὲ πολλοὺς τῶν χρησμῶν ὀρῶμεν καὶ τοῖς μέτροις καὶ τοῖς ὀνόμασι πλημμελείας καὶ φαυλότητος ἀναπεπλημένους, “we observe that the majority of oracular sayings is rather lame both with regard to meter and words, and full of nonsense”: (397c) οὐ γὰρ ἔστι θεοῦ ἢ γῆρως οὐδ’ ὀ φθόγγος οὐδ’ ἢ λέξις οὐδὲ τὸ μέτρον ἀλλὰ τῆς γυναικός, “for neither the voice, nor the sound, nor the utterance, not even the meter finds its origin in the god, but in the mortal woman”.

22. Or so is her spirit, a divine presence “taking possession of an individual”, representing the “reason to associate prophecy and verse in the Archaic period” (Parke, 1981, p. 99; cf. Maslov, 2016, pp. 413-414, 428). Bierl, 2017 argues for the Homeric Hymns as epiphanies, that accomplish divine presence: “*Homeric Hymns* aim at making the gods present and alive through narration” (p. 237). He explains *HHym.* III 156-164 as not only the transfer of the undying glory and memory of the heroic past to the very presence of the Olympian god and his medium, but also as signalling eternal epiphany through the unfolding chain of performances and re-performances (pp. 258-259).

23. E.g. the poet’s invocation in *Od.* I 10 τῶν ἀμόθεν γε, θεά, θύγατερ Διός, εἰπὲ καὶ ἡμῖν, “start from wherever you like, goddess daughter of Zeus, and tell us as well”.

24. Maslov, 2016, p. 436 argues that the “prooimial Muse” is mnemonic, as opposed to the inspiring solitary Muse in *Od.* VIII 63. Liapis, 2017, p. 197 describes the relationship between poet and Muse as “ambiguous”, as “it involves both synergy between human and divine performer under the latter’s benign patronage and fierce antagonism that may result in the human performer’s incapacitation (poetic or even physical)”. Cf. Calame, 1995, p. 53; Bakker, 2008, p. 67; Richardson, 2011, pp. 16-21.

monumentality that results from the special poetic language and the specific prosodic shaping. The hexameter may well have been inherited by the Greek poets together with the notion of monumentality through poetic “imperishable fame”.²⁵

Within epic poetry, the hexameter further developed into the isolated authoritative saying, heralding (or signalling) its use, beyond epic, for the sustainability and immortalisation of deeds, doers, and monuments. Their prosodic format makes the sayings sound as divinely inspired, and the performer as the gods’ mouthpiece. Examples are found in the dactylic poetry of Homer’s alleged contemporary Hesiod, a Boeotian poet known for his “didactic” poetry.²⁶ In his *Theogony*, he describes the origin of the gods, their genealogy, and the teleological supremacy of Zeus. In *Works and Days*, he admonishes his good-for-nothing brother with a mix of exemplary rural activity in accordance with “nature’s calendar”, moralising mythical stories, and proverbial sayings. That his words, too, are meant as the language of the gods becomes famously explicit in *Theogony* 22-34; the poet claims to have encountered the Muses, and to henceforth function as their mouthpiece.²⁷ Hesiod exploits the shape of the hexameter for a combination of riddle + answer:²⁸

25. Nagy, 1974, pp. 103-116. There is no consensus, however, on the origin of the hexameter. Nagy, 1974, pp. 49-101 claims that the hexameter originally operated on an inherited principle of isosyllabism, as do the Aeolic meters. His conjectured prototype of Greek epic verse matches the syllable-count of the basic unit of Indic versification, the śloka. Kiparsky, 2018 explains the hexameter as an iambic derivation: a syncopated realisation of the quantitative iambic octosyllabic dimeter. The iambic octosyllable, “the basic Indo-European line” and functioning in dimeter distichs by a fusion process that began already in Vedic, is also deemed “the most likely vehicle of Indo-European epic verse”. In their introduction, Lidov and Becker (forthcoming) refrain from comments concerning the hexameter’s origin.

26. Koning, 2010 pointedly labeled Hesiod the “other poet” as he shares Homer’s authority (through collective memory’s “lumping”) as an archaic hexametric poet, but is generally considered the lesser poet in comparison with Homer (“splitting”) by later audiences.

27. Maslov, 2016, p. 418.

28. Danielewicz, 1996, p. 64. Cf. the riddle in Hdt., V 56, 1. Note that the 7th line of the oracle in Hdt., VI 86, γ2 ἀνδρὸς δ’ εὐόρκου γενεῖη μετόπισθεν ἀμείνων, “the race of the man who swears truly will be better hereafter”, “reproduces exactly Hesiod *WD* 285 [...] echoing a proverb” (Hornblower and Pelling, 2017, p. 207). Asheri, Lloyd and Corcella, 2007, p. 130 describe the five-verse oracle in Hdt., I 67, 4 as riddle + answer:

ἔστι τις Ἀρκαδίας Τεγέη λευρῶ ἐνὶ χώρῳ, ἔνθ’ ἀνεμοὶ πνεῖουσι δὺν κρατερῆς ὑπ’ ἀνάγκης, καὶ τύπος ἀντίτυπος, καὶ πῆμ’ ἐπὶ πῆματι κέϊται.	}	riddle
ἔνθ’ Ἀγαμεμνονίδην κατέχει φυσίζκος αἶα, τὸν σὺ κομισσάμενος Τεγέης ἐπιτάρροθος ἔσση.		answer

μη κακὰ κερδαίνειν· κακὰ κέρδεα ἴσ' ἄτησιν.²⁹

“Do not get base gain: base gain equals stupidity”.

νήπιος οὐδὲ τὸ οἶδ'· ἑκατὸν δέ τε δούρατ' ἀμάξης.³⁰

“Fool, for knowing not even this: it takes a hundred timbers to build a wagon”.

The second half of the hexameter containing the answer developed into a separate metrical phrase,³¹ the paroemiac (catalectic anapaestic dimeter), eventually singled out as the prosodic shape for wisdom sayings.³² As language of the gods, the hexameters not only present what the gods have to say, they also enable communication with the permanent beyond the human register.

Other text types copy or imitate elements from the Homeric epic when they aim for similar effect: to take a person, an event, or an object out of the human sphere of mortality and decay, and to think of him, or it, as lasting forever and imperishable. So authoritative was the format of epic language, and so successfully evoking the eternal and the permanent, that its prosodic format kept being applied to make objects and individuals outlive the moment of performance, the life of the poet, and the memory of the audience. In its capacity to make men, their great deeds, and their monuments transcend the realm of the human and the ephemeral, special poetic language evokes the superhuman and the otherworldly; its specific prosodic format is momentarily suggestive of a change of surroundings, and the presence of the immortal and imperishable. Hexametric poetry thus becomes the language of permanency, and its performance creates a sense of immutability. Hence the use of the hexameter in dedicatory and funereal inscriptions: a grave or an object that is to last much longer than the individual buried underneath it, or the man dedicating it to the gods, is inscribed in the language of the gods.³³ Reverse, the inscription itself is instrumental in mak-

“There is an Arcadian Tegea in a smooth place, where two winds blow under the force of necessity, and there is blow and blow in return, and trouble heaps upon trouble. Life-giving earth holds Agamemnon's son there; if you bring him with you, you will be master of Tegea”.

29. *Op.* 352.

30. *Op.* 456.

31. Asheri, Lloyd and Corcella, 2007, p. 128 consider the *first* hemistich of the oracle in *Hdt.*, I 66, 2 as an “independent saying”.

32. Blankenborg (forthcoming a).

33. Some 200 hexametric funereal and dedicatory inscriptions from the archaic period are extant, of which roughly 100 are presented in Friedländer, 1948 with commentary. Several of these inscriptions

ing the grave or the object last forever.³⁴ The gods' voice is also found in epigraphy: on the walls of the temple of Apollo in Delphi the sayings γνώθι σεαυτόν, "know yourself", ἐγγύη πάρα δ' ἄτη, "pledging and delusion go together", and μηδὲν ἄγαν, "nothing in excess" stood engraved.³⁵ The sayings resemble dactylic-shaped metrical phrases familiar from archaic Greek poetry. The gnome γνώθι σεαυτόν is shaped like an adonius: | - υυ| - |.³⁶ Its format is reminiscent of the dactylic clausula, as it is found in Hdt., IV 163, 2-3. There is a dactylic ring to μηδὲν ἄγαν as well: | - υυ| - |.³⁷ The third Delphian gnome ἐγγύη πάρα δ' ἄτη is equally dactylic: | - -| - υυ| - |.³⁸ The words of the gods tend to take a stylised prosodic shape when quoted in isolation. The legendary Athenian lawgiver Solon (presumably *floruit* 590 BCE) is said to have used hexameters to state his laws.³⁹ Early Greek philosophy applied the hexameter to

expand beyond the hexameter with a single word; others appear to be a mix of verse and prose.

34. The hexameter remained a conveyor of religious potency until the end of antiquity. Faraone, 2011 attributes the special power of hexametric magical incantations to their physical presence, preserved in writing. Karanika, 2011 shows that the effectiveness of a late antiquity *homeromanteion* depends on its prosodic format rather than its content.

35. According to Pausanias, *Description of Greece* X 24, 1 (cf. Plato, *Charmides* 164d-165a). Plato, *Protagoras* 343a-b attributes the sayings to the Seven Sages, whereas *Charmides* 164d-e considers them the words of the god Apollo, materialised by an anonymous scribe.

36. That is, without contraction; Pausanias, *Description of Greece* X 24, 1 quotes the contracted variant γνώθι σαυτόν.

37. Compare ἄγαν in Hdt., IV 157, 2 μη ἐλθῶν ἐλθόντος, ἄγαν ἄγαμαι σοφίην σεῦ cited above. In the hexameters of Theognis, ἄγαν is found in 219-220 μηδὲν ἄγαν ἄσχαλλε παρασσομένων πολιητέων, Κύρνε, μέσην δ' ἔρχεαι τὴν ὁδὸν ὡσπερ ἐγώ, "Don't be too vexed at the confusion of your townsmen, Cyrrnus, but stick to the middle of the road like I do", and likely in the distich 335-336 μηδὲν ἄγαν σπεύδειν, πάντων μέσ' ἄριστα· καὶ οὕτως, Κύρν', ἔξεις ἀρετὴν, ἦντε λαβεῖν χαλεπόν, "Don't be too eager, as midst is best of all; and that way you will have virtue, Cyrrnus, which is hard to come by". Late poets exclusively use ἄγαν.

38. Though identification as an anapaestic shape (i.e. acephalic paroemiac | - - | υυ - - |) may be preferable given the positioning of the first syllable of ἄτη (ἄ- < *αφα-). In epic, location of the first syllable of ἄτη on the hexametric thesis only occurs in *Iliad* XIX 88 οἱ τέ μοι εἰν ἀγορῇ φρεσὶν ἔμβαλον ἄγριον ἄτην, "who put damaging infatuation in my mind during the assembly"; cf. *Od.* XI 61 ἄσε (ἄ- < *αφα-) με δαίμονος αἴσα κακὴ καὶ ἀθέσφατος οἴνος, "a god's evil dispensation infatuated me, in addition to irresponsibly large quantities of wine".

39. Solon *fr.* 28 (Diehl) cited by Plutarch, *Solon* 3, 4:

ἔνιοι δὲ φασιν ὅτι καὶ τοὺς νόμους ἐπεχειρήσεν ἐντείνας εἰς ἔπος ἐξενεγκεῖν, καὶ διαμνημονεύουσι τὴν ἀρχὴν οὕτως ἔχουσιν:

πρῶτα μὲν εὐχόμεσθα Δίῃ Κρονίδῃ βασιλῆϊ
θεσμοῖς τοῖσδε τύχην ἀγαθὴν καὶ κύδος ὀπάσσαι.

"Some say that he took the trouble to shape his laws like epic verses and then had them published, and they quote the following opening lines:

Let us first pray to Zeus the king, son of Kronos, to grant these prescriptions success and fame".

signal that the ultimate source of the text was divine.⁴⁰ In a ritualistic sense, hexameter poetry functions as the “tribal encyclopaedia”: what is said in hexameter is said, uncomplicatedly, as a fact.⁴¹

3. THE IMPACT OF PROSODIC DEVIATION

The capacity of the hexameter to represent the divine voice becomes a feature of stylized speech outside hexametric poetry. In a non-hexametric environment, “traces of hexameter” stand out. In addition to the maxim stating that “what is said in hexameter is said as a fact”, there has always been a ring to hexameters that makes them elevated or even “sublime”.⁴² In general, there is a special ring to metrical speech: Greek ears prove to be sensitive to the heightened level of metrical speech’s stylisation when compared to the rhythmicality (inherently iambic according to Aristotle, *Rhet.* III 8, 1408b) of natural unplanned Greek speech. Such sensitivity underlies Herodotus’ special attention for the prosodic shape of the oracle in Hdt., I 174, 5 (ἐν τριμέτρῳ τόνῳ), a shape that is reminiscent of the spoken verses of Attic drama,⁴³ in a stylisation that still closely resembles common everyday speech.

To the ear, however, hexameters have nothing to do with everyday unplanned utterances. Hexametric rhythm wilfully deviates from the rhythm(s) of unplanned speech.⁴⁴ Whereas iambic rhythm (within the stylised trimeter or outside the metrical formats) evokes a steady *di-DUM di-DUM dum-DUM*, hexameter rhythm results in an awkward *DUM-diddy DUM-diddy DUM-dum*. Awkward, since it requires a level of artificiality: compared to the iambic rhythm of everyday speech (as it happens, practically a linguistic universal), hexameter rhythm features a larger number of non-prominent syllables (*diddy* equals ∪∪).⁴⁵ To the Greek ear, even a short metrically shaped phrase (either iambic, or hexametric, or other) will have heightened audience’s attention and enticed some sort of emphasis on content or delivery when read aloud.⁴⁶

40. Most, 1999, pp. 253-254.

41. Dalby, 1998, p. 202, n. 50. Cf. Olson, 2020.

42. Pseudo-Longinus: “all in Homer is sublime as it is divine”.

43. I.e. in iambic trimeter (tragedy) and trochaic tetrameter (comedy).

44. Most, 1999, p. 353: “no merely human being, unassisted, could possibly compose a string of perfect hexameters – as Aristotle pointed out (*Poetics* IV 1449a26-28) epic dactyls were quite foreign to the ordinary rhythms of vernacular speech”.

45. Blankenborg, 2017, pp. 23-27.

46. Kramarz, 2013, pp. 115-118; Hutchinson, 2018, pp. 6-11. Cf. Willi, 2010.

Sources from antiquity comment on the impact of the perceptible stylisation of speech through deviant prosody. Regularly, comments focus on stylised speech's *ethos*, a qualification of prosodic shaping that attempts to account for stylistic register.⁴⁷ Especially comprehensive are the observations by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his *De Compositione Verborum*. In the 11th chapter,⁴⁸ Dionysius comments on the impact of rhythmic deviance, especially when in performance music takes the lead instead of the rhythm of natural unplanned speech:⁴⁹

ἡ μὲν γὰρ περὶ λέξεις οὐδενὸς οὔτε ὀνόματος οὔτε ῥήματος βιάζεται τοὺς χρόνους οὐδὲ μετατίθεισιν, ἀλλ' οἷας παρείληφεν τῇ φύσει τὰς συλλαβὰς τὰς τε μακρὰς καὶ τὰς βραχεῖας, τοιαύτας φυλάττει· ἡ δὲ μουσικὴ τε καὶ ῥυθμικὴ μεταβάλλουσιν αὐτὰς μειοῦσαι καὶ παραύξουσαι, ὥστε πολλάκις εἰς τάναντία μεταχωρεῖν· οὐ γὰρ ταῖς συλλαβαῖς ἀπευθύνουσι τοὺς χρόνους, ἀλλὰ τοῖς χρόνοις τὰς συλλαβὰς.⁵⁰

“Non-metrical prose does not violate the syllable weights of any noun or verb, nor their interchangeability, but it keeps the syllables, long and short, as it received them by nature. Music and arrangement change them through shortening and lengthening: as a result they regularly pass into their opposites. They do not regulate the rhythmical weights in accordance with the syllables, but rather assimilate the syllables to the rhythmical weights.”

In chapter 17, Dionysius attributes aesthetic qualities and judgements to various rhythmical prototypes. Judging from the examples he provides, Dionysius considers rhythms, i.e. metrical feet, phrases and verses, as higher and lower, as more elevated or humbler. His main focus appears to be the preponderance of heavy syllables in a rhythmic environment: the more heavy syllables, the nobler the rhythm.⁵¹ Along similar lines, the foot-final heavy syllable (and hence the prepausal heavy syllable -, the so-called “masculine pause”) is preferred over the foot-final light syllable (and, as a

47. Biber, 1995; Blankenborg (forthcoming).

48. Roberts, 1910, pp. 120-131.

49. The prevalence of music over speech probably stems from “New Music” (Kramarz, 2013, pp. 128-135).

50. *De Comp. Verb.* 128.15-130.2 (ed. Roberts).

51. Rhythmical patterning according to the molossus (- - -), for example, is considered noble and dignified (ὕψηλός τε καὶ ἀξιοματικὸς ἐστὶ καὶ διαβεβηκῶς ἐπὶ πολὺ, “it is elevated and worthy, and it has a mighty stride”: 172.2-3 ed. Roberts), whereas phrygic (οο: οὔτε μεγαλοπρεπὴς ἐστὶν οὔτε σεμνός, “it is neither impressive nor solemn”: 168.18 ed. Roberts) or tribacchic (οοο: ταπεινός τε καὶ ἄσεμνός ἐστὶ καὶ ἀγεννής, καὶ οὐδὲν ἄν ἐξ αὐτοῦ γένοιτο γενναῖον, “it is base and lacking dignity and nobility, and nothing decent can come out of it”: 170.20-172.1 ed. Roberts) patterning is judged inferior.

consequence, the prepausal light syllable (◡/) of the “feminine” pause).⁵² Remarkably enough Dionysius passes favourable judgement with regard to the hexameter rhythm (- ◡◡), despite its inherent preponderance of light syllables (ratio heavy : light = 1:2) when realised as non-contracted.⁵³ According to Dionysius, dactylic rhythm is “noble” and “heroic”:⁵⁴

πάνυ δ' ἐστὶ σεμνὸς καὶ εἰς τὸ κάλλος τῆς ἐρμηνείας ἀξιολογώτατος, καὶ τό γε ἡρωϊκὸν μέτρον ἀπὸ τούτου κοσμεῖται ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολύ.⁵⁵

It is very impressive and more than any other capable of producing beauty of style, and the heroic rhythm receives its grandeur from this in the first place.

In comparing the sophist Hegesias' description of Alexander killing an enemy king by tying him to a chariot with Homer's account of Achilles mutilating the corpse of Hector,⁵⁶ Dionysius attributes the appropriate nobility of the latter's description “chiefly, if not entirely” (πάντων μάλιστα, καὶ εἰ μὴ μόνη) to the use of the hexameter. In doing so, he values the impact of prosodic shape over that of content; a valuation that resembles the psycholinguistic phenomenon nowadays referred to as *situational context*:⁵⁷ a specific combination of form and content that both elicits and addresses audience's expectations. Expectations are primarily guided by prosodic features, and pertain to what is being said: specific prosodic features and patterns prepare for specific anticipation and evaluation of content. The sensitivity of the ancient ear to the stylisation of speech through a metrical profile creating a rhythmical phrase suggests that metrical rhythm alone may evoke a situational context as a result of rhythmical

52. With (next to the dactyl) the exception of the bacchius (- - ◡: ἀνδρῶδες πάνυ ἐστὶ τὸ σχῆμα καὶ εἰς σεμνολογίαν ἐπιτήδειον, “the patterning is very manly and appropriate for solemn speech”: 174.17 ed. Roberts).

53. Dionysius' example of hexameter rhythm, *Od.* IX 39 Ἰλιόθεν με φέρων ἄνεμος Κικόνεσσι πέλασσε, “From Troy the wind carried me and brought me to the Cicones” is holodactylic: | - ◡ | - ◡ | - ◡ | - ◡ | - ◡ | - ◡ | -, *DUM-diddy DUM-diddy DUM-diddy DUM-diddy DUM-diddy DUM-dum*. “This is of course the very start of Odysseus' adventures as recounted by himself. He sails away from Ilium on as many dactyls as possible”: Roberts, 1910, p. 173, n. 19).

54. Blankenburg, 2017, pp. 18-20. Modern approaches regularly fall in with Dionysius' concept of “ethos”: it is not uncommon to find that spondees are described as “solemn” or dochmiacs as “reflecting emotional turmoil” (Blankenburg, 2017, p. 17).

55. *De Comp. Verb.* 172, 16-18 ed. Roberts.

56. In chapter 18 of *De Comp. Verb.* 190, 6 – 192, 12 ed. Roberts.

57. Blankenburg, 2017, with further bibliography.

deviance.⁵⁸ Dactylic hexameters suggest a “heroic” or “didactic” context, on the authority of the audience’s acquaintance with the Homeric epics and the works of Hesiod and others; dactylic lines speak of the great deeds of exemplary men and women from the distant past, as well as of the wisdom of old. As mentioned above, what is said in hexameter, is (meant to be) permanent, and coming from, or belonging to, the divine rather than the human realm. Hexameters prepare the listening audience for the evaluation of content as divinely inspired, and signalling the presence of the divine; the wisdom sayings and proverbs in hexameter shape are experienced as authoritative because of their impressive content and their specific rhythmical profile.

In other than hexametrical environments, the presence of hexameters counts as prosodic deviation: an audible indication that prepares the audience for evaluation of content as the words of a god, delivered in the format of the divine voice. The examples from early historiographic prose show that, when given the choice, the sacredness of divine words is highlighted by either dactylic or iambic metrical rigidity rather than by the inherently iambic rhythm of non-metrical speech. Even in an attempt to render an oracular utterance as embedded indirect speech (as in Hdt., IV 163, 2-3, thereby adapting the format of the oracle to the non-metrical prose environment), the hexametric “original” shines through via phrases and *clausulae*. In prose, *in casu* Herodotus’, the divine preference for metrical speech generally becomes audibly evident. Whereas in epic and drama the gods’ metrically motivated choosiness remains inconspicuous amidst those of all other, mortal actors, in prose the gods’ voice stands out, deliberately creating a specific setting and context for the listening audience. The prosodic format of the oracular utterance evokes the re-enactment of the divine answer, either through the power of memory or through the reading out loud of a materially fixed oracle.⁵⁹ Thus the prosodic format re-enacts a ritualistic setting in performance: it captures the actual moment of the rendering of the gods’ voice. The hexameters evoke the presence of the god, and momentarily turn

58. Carey, 2009, pp. 21-22 states that genre categories in archaic and classical Greece admit enough firmness “to generate a set of audience expectations”. When perceiving an orally delivered text, the aurally perceptive mind interprets the performance both through its content and through its prosodic format. Iambic trimeters are interpreted as the stylization of everyday speech; anapaests (∪∪ -) as the verbal accompaniment of rhythmic bodily movement, e.g. the marching of soldiers, tug-of-war, or even sex; cf. Blankenborg (forthcoming a).

59. Cf. Hdt., VI 98, 3:

καὶ ἐν χρησμῷ ἦν γεγραμμένον περὶ αὐτῆς ὥδε·
κινήσω καὶ Δῆλον ἀκίνητόν περ ἑοῦσαν.

“Even in the oracle it had been written down as follows with regards to Delos: ‘I will move Delos as well, though it is considered unmovable’”.

the audience into worshippers. The prosodic deviance results in situational “re-contexting”: a momentary displacement of the audience, away from the expectations up till then (in the case of Herodotus’ *Histories*, regarding informative and entertaining small-scale accounts featuring Greeks and non-Greeks), and into the solemn setting that accompanies the disclosure of an oracle. The situational context of the reading out loud, the combination of content and prosodic format of the recited utterance, addresses the listeners as the premiere audience: the words are spoken as if to the first people ever to hear them.

4. PROSODIC DEVIATION AS “SITUATIONAL FLICKERING”

Hexametric poetry is the prosodic format for epic (like the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*), didactic poetry (like Hesiod’s *Theogony*, *Works and Days*), elegiac and exhortative distiches (Mimnermus and Solon), hymns (like the Homeric Hymns), metrical funereal and dedicatory inscriptions, and early philosophy. Outside these text types, use of the rhythm *DUM-diddy DUM-diddy DUM-diddy DUM-diddy DUM-diddy DUM-dum* is restricted and scarce, a sort of exoticism.⁶⁰ As mentioned above, its audible appearance in Herodotus transposes the listeners to the original ritualistic setting of an oracle’s disclosure. In non-hexametric poetry, especially the Aeolic rhythms, hexametric sequences equally stand out as exoticisms and conscious aberrations of the metrical environment. It is of course not unthinkable that hexameters appear at the surface level of Aeolic poetry.⁶¹ As Aeolic poetry is based on the glyconic (|xx|- ∞ -|∞ -|) and the pherecratean (|xx|- ∞ -|-|), both centred around the choriamb (|- ∞ -|),⁶² the sequence - ∞ seems to present itself regularly. It is not primarily meter, however, that determines the analysis of surface structure as either rhythmically dactylic, or other. Identification of prosodic phrasing rather depends on rhythm; that is, on the recurrence of rhythmical word shapes and, more importantly, of word end. Together, recurring word shapes and recurring word end determine the rhythm of the metrical text’s surface structure.⁶³ Lines with a hexametric metrical surface structure may

60. Graff, 2005, p. 333. Cf. Gurd, 2016, p. 13 who states that acoustic awareness surfaces through material-semiotic nodes or knots in which diverse bodies and meanings cohabit one another.

61. As one explanation of the hexameter’s origin assumes a basis in isosyllabity, the defining characteristic of Aeolic meters, rather than in syllable quantity, cf. *supra* n. 25.

62. As are the hipponactean (|xx|- ∞ -|∞ -|), the hagesichorean (|x|- ∞ -|∞ -|), the aristophanean (|- ∞ -|∞ -|), the tellesilean (|x|- ∞ -|∞ -|), the dodrans (|- ∞ -|∞ -|), the reizianum (|x|- ∞ -| -|), and the adonius (|- ∞ -| -|). Cf. West, 1982.

63. Ruijgh, 1987; Blankenborg (forthcoming b), p. 39.

thus be rhythmically anapaestic when word end is frequently and recurrently in a long syllable on the foot's thesis. In dactylic metrical surface structure, anapaestic word shapes (υυ -) on prepausal positions (υυ|-/) further strengthen this so-called *metarrhythmisis*, the shift from one rhythmical direction (or *rhythmisis*) to another.⁶⁴ The shift does not alter the metrical surface structure (it remains dactylic), but stems from the varying starts and ends of words and phrases, from rising to descending, from blunt to pendant, and *vice versa*. Along similar lines, various and varying rhythmical phrases may be identified within metrical environments that are themselves identified in accordance to the repetitiveness of verse structure, couplet structure, or stanza structure. In mutually subsidiary metric-rhythmic pairs, like dactyl-anapaest and iamb-trochee, the gradual shift of rhythmical direction is known as *epiplotke*.⁶⁵ Metarrhythmisis may be exploited to highlight deviant rhythmical phrases in metrically uniform environments.⁶⁶

Dactylic rhythm may thus appear in metrically non-dactylic surface structure environments. To be experienced as such by a listening audience, the metarrhythmi-

64. The terminology *metarrhythmisis* (μεταρρύθμισις, Tz on Hes., *Op.* 42) is used in Koster, 1953 with regard to iambs. In the dactylic hexameter, metarrhythmisis may be on the level of the rhythmical word as the result of an orphaned or isolated thesis, or on the level of the phrase due to syncope of feet: Blankenborg (forthcoming b), p. 33. Heliodorus is credited for the metrical term ἐπιπλοκή "conversion", a shift from one rhythm to another through change in the sequence of syllables, or the mismatch of word end and the end of the foot or the metron (Päll, 2007, pp. 32-33). Modern terminology complements metarrhythmisis and epiplotke (Cole, 1988, p. 3: "readers familiar with modern poetry would probably speak of falling and rising versions of identical rhythmical types"); Nagy, 1974, pp. 279-301 speaks of "dovetailing" when discussing the conscious mismatch of word-end and metron-end: in his view, dovetailing keeps the rhythm moving on, with the consequence of a shift in rhythmical direction through the avoidance of the completion of one rhythmical phrase, and the acknowledgment of arriving at the completion of another.

65. Cole, 1998, and see previous footnote.

66. An example of such highlighting is the emphasis on (anapaestic) paroemiacs as the (underlined) closure of hexametric couplets in Hesiod, *Op.* 23-24 and 217-218:

οἰκόν τ' εὖ θέσθαι, ζηλοῖ δέ τε γείτονα γείτων
εἰς ἄφενος σπεύδοντ'· ἀγαθὴ δ' Ἔρις ἦδε βροτοῖσιν.

"To put the household in good order, one neighbour is jealous of another | as he hurries after wealth: this is a worthwhile competition among mortals"

κρείσσω ἐς τὰ δίκαια· δίκη δ' ὑπὲρ ὕβριος ἴσχει
ἐς τέλος ἐξελοῦσα· παθὼν δέ τε νήπιος ἔγνω·

"The better path to justice: justice controls outrage | when it comes out in the end: a fool only learns this after suffering"

See West, 1978, p. 211; Danielewicz, 1996, p. 64; Blankenborg (forthcoming a). The examples show the repetitive rising start and the blunt ending of words and phrases, both characteristic for anapaestic rhythm.

sized dactylic rhythm must extend over several feet, and preferably form a recognisable colon.⁶⁷ In prose, it does not very often do so: Herodotus' hexameters, for example, are isolated verses rather than unexpectedly surfacing rhythmical phrases. In lyric poetry, the typically solemn, heroic dactyl is not very prominent.⁶⁸ In the lyric meters, dominant units are the ionic (∪ ∪ -), the choriamb (- ∪ ∪ -), the trochee (∪ -), and the iamb (∪ -).⁶⁹ At surface level, verses are formed as metrical units are attached to a central element, often the choriamb. When a sequence of dactyls does appear, as for example in dactyl-epitrites, word end that makes the dactylic phrase stand out may give an epic ring to the lyric line. An example is Pindarus, *Ol.* VI 17 ἀμφοτέρων μάντιν τ' ἀγαθὸν καὶ δουρὶ μάρνασθαι. τὸ καὶ which appears to scan beginning with a dactylic tetrameter: |- ∪ ∪|- |- ∪ ∪|- |-|. Several features, however, seem to undercut such analysis: dactylic word end does not occur, not even at the conclusion of the tetrameter. Word end is rather on the foot's thesis (enclitic and elided τ' prevents word end), creating a colon shaped |- ∪ ∪ - - - ∪ ∪ -|. Despite the epic ring, rhythm does not make the dactyls of metrical surface structure stand out. With reference to the flickering of dactylic rhythm, a case in point may well be made, I argue, for the rhythmical realisation of the dodrans (- ∪ ∪ - : -) as an adonius (|- ∪ ∪|- -|, dactylic dimeter). In order to be perceptible, and perceived, as an adonius, phrase-final word end must meet the requirements of spondaic word end in dactylic rhythm, i.e., of the hexametric verse-

67. Hexameters appear, for example, as heroic "flickering" in lyrical cola, as do the frequent iambs and iamb-shaped words. Their frequency, however, is generally considered insufficient to make for recognisable "heroic" sequencing; cf. Segal, 1986, pp. 30-51. In his phraseology, as well as in his themes, Stesichorus appears to be closest to epic dactylic phrasing. Kelly, 2015 considers him the first lyric poet interacting so deliberately with the Homeric poems (cf. Haslam, 1974; West, 2015).

68. Golston and Riad, 2005 approach lyric meter from the proposition that the dactyl and the trochee are the basic units. From their phonological point of view, the dactyl and the trochee are treated as stress-feet though, not primarily as metrical building blocks. They explain the discrepancy between the stress-feet and the patterning of the rhythmical prominence as a willful violation of linguistic constraints (notably NOCLASH and NOLAPSE) for aesthetic purpose.

69. The denomination "dactylo-epitrite" for certain metrical phrases (usually consisting of dactylic tetrameter + anceps + iambic metron) that are prominent in Pindar and Bacchylides and frequently applied in choral lyric, suggests the use of dactyls as metrical units in lyric poetry. In antiquity, the patterning of dactyls + trochees (or anapaests + iambs) was labeled "logaoedic" and considered suggestive of the rhythm of everyday speech due to its irregularity – a scholarly practice that was extended to all Aeolic meters well into the 19th cent. In ancient discussions on the "ethics" and aesthetics (cf. D'Angour, 2015) of specific rhythms (like the "heroic") and melodies, the meters of lyric poetry are treated as both "prose-like" and "reminiscent of spoken language": in a well-known analysis of a Simonides-fragment (Lidov, 2010), Dionysius comments explicitly on the dimming of lyric meter as a result of the prose-like rhythm in performance. In the 20th cent., analysis as logaoedic gave in to attempts to analyse all Aeolic meters as consisting of four-syllable metra, like the choriamb.

final word end.⁷⁰ Examples can be found in the concluding lines of several Sapphic stanzas, for example, κωὺκ ἐθέλοισα (*fr.* 1, 24), and σύμμαχος ἔσσο (*fr.* 1, 28).

The rhythmical profile of lyric's metrical surface structure, centring around the choriamb(s), turns out to be applied only rarely for rendering the gods' utterances in direct speech.⁷¹ When considered as enactment, their poetry at best re-enacts the original performance of the poet. The written form of their poetry serves as a screenplay for re-enactment by a performer or a choir.⁷² For the choral lyrics of Attic drama the same holds true. Still, I would like to suggest an interesting example of possibly hexametric divine direct speech in lyric poetry, in Sappho, *fr.* 1. In this poem, the singing and fictional I-person implores the help of Aphrodite as she struggles with overwhelming passion and oppressive anxieties: she wishes for some respite from her suffering.⁷³ At a certain point, she remembers and quotes the words of the goddess

70. What are these requirements? First, word end needs to be phonetic word end, without any influence from the subsequent syllable. In addition, word end must be on the arsis, the non-prominent *longum* of the dactyl. Finally, the pause following the word-final syllable must allow for either additional phonetic lengthening or true silence, without the risk of disruption of rhythmic regularity. Cf. Blankenborg (forthcoming a).

71. B., III 78-84; Pi., O. VI 63-64 and VIII 42-46; P. III 40-42 and IX 20-37; N. X 80-88; I. VIII 38-48.

72. González, 2013, *Appendix*. Prins, 2019 proposes "metametrical" reading as a model for critical reflection on the complex dialectic between rhythm and meter in an attempt to answer the question "if, and how, the rhythms of Sappho's poetry can be read as if it could be heard, still".

73. Steiner, 2015. Bierl, 2016, p. 350 compares *fr.* 1 to the newly discovered "Kypris Song" and observes with regard to the latter: "Instead of the mimesis of personal dissent leading to the exposition of alternative measures in a flow of thought, we have an appeal to an implied audience, probably the Sapphic Circle, to follow their leader's example. [...] The maidens of the chorus can reenact Sappho's poetic 'outcry' when in love, when desire causes her pain, reaffirming her wish to retain relief following her sharp analysis facilitated by clear self-awareness. Again performing the singing 'I' become the speech-act of being in love and suffering. To some degree, the song is equivalent to being in love, and its performer, compensating for her loss, also woos the constantly absconding erotic object. The Kypris Song might also find its *Sitz im Leben* in some festival of Aphrodite or at Messon [...]. Later reperformances will have brought the song to the symposium, changing its performance mode and its meaning. The originally choral song becomes monodic and a reflection about love and its corollaries in an educational context assumes the violent outcry of a biographic voice, of the personal Sappho in love". Power, 2020 argues for a "parachoral Sappho", whose wedding songs are "monodic, involving choruses as 'characters' represented or quoted within a solo song rather than as actual performers" (p. 108). Bowie, 2016, p. 152 suggests a "movement of Sappho's songs into a male sympotic repertoire", stating that "'public' performance took place in the restricted space of the symposium, a place both private and public. Thus the girls addressed by the singer are her fellow-entertainers". D'Alessio, 2018, p. 35 argues that "*fr.* 1 is not in fact a 'fragment', but a complete poem. Its dialogical situation does not present itself as part of, or as compatible with, a ritual, nor indeed does it have a song-performance frame. [...] No further audience is implied in the text. The notional situation of the utterance is not presented as part of a song performance (which, of course, does not imply that the poem could not be performed as a song), and the dialogue is

Aphrodite,⁷⁴ who allegedly answered her prayer for help. Aphrodite's words in direct speech (*fr.* 1, 18b-24) are suggestive of the presence of the goddess:⁷⁵

τίνα δηῖτε πείθω
 . . . σάγην ἔς σὰν φιλότατα; τίς σ', ὦ
 Ψάπφ', ἀδίκησι;
 καὶ ἰγάρ αἱ φεύγει, ταχέως διώξει,
 αἱ δὲ δῶρα μὴ δέκετ', ἀλλὰ δώσει,
 αἱ δὲ μὴ φίλει, ταχέως φιλήσει,
 κῶυκ ἐθέλοισα.

“Who must I convince with my powers this time to give in to your longing? Who, Sappho, is doing you wrong now? If she flees now, she will soon give chase; if she does not accept gifts, she will soon give in turn; if she does not feel longing, she soon will – even unwillingly”.

Lines 1, 18b-20 pose various editorial problems: the beginning of 19 is corrupt, and the remainder is disputed. Various readings have been proposed for the start of 19: metrically, the space to be filled (. . .) must result in a single long syllable. The clause of Aphrodite's second question, *fr.* 1, 20, is an instance of rhythmic realisation

not framed in formally cultic context” (but cf. Nagy, 2020). On the role played by “voice” (as the identity constructed by the text) in songs sung in religious settings, see Carey, 2017.

74. Bierl, 2016, p. 351 states that “Kypris thus functions, to some extent, like the poet's Muse. However, Aphrodite does not really inspire her according to the traditional epic concept, conveying her words through the performer's voice, rather the ‘I’, with her personal and rational analysis and her individual wish to understand the paradox of love and bemoan its effects, i.e. Sappho herself, acts out the song as compensation. Thus she is inspired by Aphrodite in a new sense: love makes Sappho produce song. As choral leader she can even make her entire choral group perform her words, and by performing these stanzas the girls, as plural ‘I’, discover the mechanism of love within themselves. In reenacting Sappho's pain and near-death experience, the girls become imbued with love and consequently more attractive and marriageable to aristocratic men”.

75. Against what seems believable: “In addition to the task of curing loneliness and bringing her friends in contact with one another, the work Sappho's poems perform is occasionally to coax the goddess Aphrodite into living presence. Now we can understand easily enough the task of working ourselves up to feelings of sexual excitement, and we can appreciate in the abstract a priestess of an extinct creed charging the air with holiness and a divine presence. Unfortunately what these poems demand is the real presence of the living goddess. But we cannot believe in Aphrodite, that she was ever *really* there” (Bagg, 1964, p. 46). Bowra, 1961, pp. 202-203 most strongly advocates that *fr.* 1 records a genuine religious experience. Page, 1965, p. 18 suggests that the arrival of the goddess was experienced through the presence of real sparrows in *fr.* 1, 10. Zellner, 2008 traces the tradition in scholarly literature to interpret *fr.* 1 as light-hearted and humorous.

that runs counter to metrical structure: in line 20, the metrical dodrans (choriamb + long syllable, - ˘ ˘ - :-) results in the dactylic-spondaic rhythm of the adonius (| - ˘ ˘ - | -, heroic rhythm's clausula, *DUM-diddy, DUM-dum*). All three requirements for the identification of dactylic-spondaic phrase end are met: phonetic word end, word end in the *longum* on the arsis, the possibility of additional lengthening and pause without the risk of rhythmic disruption.⁷⁶ Tracing the prosody of Aphrodite further back, line 19 equally ended in dactylic rhythm through skilful audible punctuation: due to the strong sentence end in an “audible” question mark, the word-final syllable of φιλότατα was phonetically lengthened in realisation, both as a result of, and allowing for, a substantial pause.⁷⁷ If I indicate the boundaries of the phonetic words using comma's, and the strong pause on the audible question mark with a semicolon in the parsed verse, the deviant parsing of the ninth syllable of line 19 becomes visible:⁷⁸

.. σᾶγην ἔς σάν φιλότατα; τίς σ', ᾗ - ˘ ˘ -, - - ˘ ˘ - -: - -.

Starting from the third syllable of line 19, a full dactylic hexameter appears, culminating in heroic rhythm's clausula, the adonius, *DUM-diddy, DUM-dum*:

-]γην ἔς σάν φιλότατα; τίς σ', ᾗ Ψά, πφ', ἔ ἀδίκησι; -, - - ˘ ˘ - -: - - -, ˘ ˘ - -:

Even Wernicke's Law is skilfully avoided: the apparent spondaic word end in the fourth dactyl is phonologically bridged (ᾗ_ Ψάπφ'). More problematic is the prepausal spondaic word end on the third foot; in hexametric poetry, this never occurs. Alternatively, lines 19-20 are experienced as metarrhythmisis, twice, to spondee + adonius:⁷⁹

76. Cf. *supra* n. 62.

77. Cf. *brevis in longo* for the prepausal syllable on the arsis (Van Raalte, 1986, p. 17), and metrical lengthening for the prepausal syllable on the thesis of the hexameter. See Blankenborg (forthcoming b), p. 33.

78. The use of comma's also shows that line 19 ends in what used to be called a *cyclic dactyl*, a long syllable in dactylic or anapaestic metrical surface structure that does not allow for word end due to phonological constraints: Rossi, 1963; Ruijgh, 1985; Blankenborg (forthcoming a); Lidov and Becker, “Introduction”, in Lidov and Becker (forthcoming). In the case of the phrase-final syllable of line 19, it is subject to phonological and syntactical proclisis and hence straddles the verse end while maintaining the dactylic rhythm that started with the line's second syllable (Devine and Stephens, 1994, p. 303).

79. Analogous to “traces of hexameter” in Herodotus' prose (cf. *supra* n. 17), apparently dactylic rhythmical phrasing in lyric poetry attracts attention as, possible, embedded indirect speech: a trace of the original hexameter format of divine direct speech. In such cases a situational flickering may be assumed, as in e.g. lines *fr.* 1, 15-16 ἦ, ῥέ ὅτι ἔδη ᾗτε πέπονθα κῶττι δη ᾗτε κ, ἄλ, η, μμ: an echo perhaps

-]γην ἔς σὰν φιλότατα; τίς σ', ὦ Ψά, πφ', ἔαδίκησι; |-, -- ∞ -- -,||- --, ∞ -- -|

The goddess is indeed speaking in the rhythm that is appropriate for the divine voice. Citing the goddess' words, the performer momentarily impersonates the divine, and makes the listening audience witness a suggested epiphany.

As in the examples of hexametric flickering in Herodotus' prose rendering of oracles, turning the listening audience into the premiere audience of divine revelation, lyric poetry sporadically preserves the traces of original, ritualistic phrasing. Future research must determine how and where other types of rhythmical flickering evoke or constitute situational contexts when embedded in non-corresponding metrical environments.

5. AN END TO PICKINESS?

The gods' pickiness with regard to the prosody of their utterances decreased over time though. Centuries after Herodotus, Plutarch notes that not even the Delphian oracles are given in verses anymore. In his *De Pythiae Oraculis* (*Moralia* 394d-409d), he has the dialogue's characters complain about this fact, allegedly already normal practice in the 4th cent. BCE.⁸⁰ Oracles' rendition in prose, it is claimed, undermines their credibility.⁸¹ Plutarch has one of the discussion's participants, Theon, explain the four reasons behind the god's apparent shift from poetry to prose:⁸² 1) there used to be prose oracles in the past as well; 2) the earlier Pythia used to be poetically more gifted and prone to take every opportunity to indulge the tendency to express herself poetically; 3) the god chose to distance himself from verse as humanity renounced it as being vague, commercially exploitable, and

of original, direct speech δηῦτε πέπονθας, "have you suffered this time?"; and δῆντε κάλησι, "you call on me again".

80. *De Pythiae Oraculis* 19, 043E Θεόπομπος οὐδενὸς ἦττον ἀνθρώπων ἐσπουδακῶς περὶ τὸ χρηστήριον, ἰσχυρῶς ἐπιτετίμηκε τοῖς μὴ νομιζουσι κατὰ τὸν τότε χρόνον ἔμμετρα τὴν Πυθίαν θεσπιζειν· εἶτα τοῦτο βουλόμενος ἀποδειξαι, παντάπασιν ὀλίγων χρησμῶν ἠὲ ὑπόρηκεν, ὡς τῶν ἄλλων καὶ τότε ἤδη καταλογάδην ἐκφερομένων, "Theopompus, who studied the oracle more diligently than any other man, sharply criticized those who did not believe that the Pythia prophesized in verses at the time (i.e., in the 4th cent. BCE); however, when he wanted to prove his point, it turned out that he could only produce a very few such oracles, obviously because the rest was already presented in prose rendering even then".

81. *De Pythiae Oraculis* 17, 402B ἄλλοι τοῦ θεοῦ μὴ εἶναι, ὅτι φαύλως ἔχουσιν, "others (presume) that they cannot be from the god, as they are poorly composed".

82. Schröder, 2010, pp. 147-148.

too pretentious stylised for everyday matters; 4) Delphi is now successful because the Pythia's simple answers cannot possibly hide ignorance.

The steady development of prose as the preferred medium for material fixation somehow diminished the gods' prosodic pickiness.⁸³ Well into the second half of the 5th cent. BCE, poetry remained the preferred form for both composition and writing down. As soon as prose as a medium took the stage,⁸⁴ it was used to convey the fruits of research, as Herodotus' *Histories* and Xenophon's work evidence. Soon, philosophy (Anaxagoras, Protagoras) turned to the more austere medium as well, quickly followed by the orators. Later generations, as late as Plutarch's Theon in *De Delphorum Oraculis* assume, or rather, confirm, that prose was the preferred medium for distributing information that needed to be clear and unidirectional rather than pleasant to the ear or beautifully composed. Aristotle's comments on prose composition as opposed to poetry appear to touch on the idea that prose renders *actual*, rather than *possible* things (*Poet.* 1451a36-b10) as well, and points to the likeness of good prose to naturally unplanned speech, giving it the capacity to persuade an audience (1404b18-21). In addition, in his *Rhetoric*, Aristotle pays attention to the formal distinction between poetry and prose. Both, he states, need to be rhythmic, as unrhythmic prose becomes "unlimited", and hence "unpleasant and unknowable" (1408b27-30). Prose rhythm in excess should be avoided, lest prose turns into meter (1408b22-23). "Speech should have rhythm" Aristotle says, "but not meter; for the latter will be a poem" (1408b30-31).⁸⁵ He therefore dismisses the dactyl, the trochee, and the iamb, as either "removed from everyday speech", "too closely associated with comic drama", and "not sufficiently dignified and moving", to settle on the paeon, as it will not strike the audience as contrived (1408b32-1409a9).⁸⁶ The use of hexameter in

83. The rise of prose is linked to broader intellectual and cultural developments under way in the classical period. In the earliest accounts of prose style (e.g. Aristotle), the criteria for what constitutes an acceptable level of poeticality in prose were unstable (Graff, 2005).

84. Pherecydes of Syros (ca. 550 BCE) is the oldest known prose author, a contemporary of semi-historical Aesop, to whom later generations attributed fables in prose. Hecataeus of Miletos, an important source for Herodotus, also used prose for his writings on history and geography (Kahn, 2003, p. 143).

85. The sophist Gorgias considers meter the only difference between poetry and prose (*Helen* 9). Gorgias' "Encomium of Helen" itself is to such an extent "near to poetry as possible without being it" (Päll, 2007, p. 143) that Aristotle (1404a) labelled his style "poetical". Dionysius compares Gorgias' prose to dithyrambs (*Pomp.* II 13, 8).

86. Graff, 2005, pp. 322-323. To us, this may come as a surprise, but analysis of Greek rhythmic prose sufficiently shows that rhythmic clausulae are regularly (resolved) forms of the cretic (as are the first and fourth paeon). In prose, a high density of paeons and cretic dimeters as clausulae calls for heightened attention in the listening audience. As a qualifier of situational context, density of paeon or cretic prose rhythm characterises narrative. Cf. Hutchinson, 2018, pp. 6-9 and 25.

an otherwise “prose” environment, like everyday speech, is a deliberate “divergence from the colloquial register” (1449a26-27).

Plutarch's *De Pythiae Oraculis* also underlines that there is, or that there should be, a relation between the voice of the god on the one hand, and the religiously characterised situation on the other. Plutarch's antagonist Theon states that “not even the meter finds its origin in the god”, pointing out that many aspects of the production of oracles (the sound, the wording, the prosodic shaping, the interpretation, the material fixation in writing) are the work of humans, only somehow “inspired” by the divine. In earlier times, when people were more used to poetical, stylised speech, and more susceptible to the message thus conveyed, it was not surprising, he claims, that the god of Delphi chose to speak poetically as well – it was merely a matter of catering to taste and habit. Since taste and habits, including religious ones, change over time, the gods' voice had to change with it in order to remain authoritative and sufficiently relevant. A modern no-nonsense political and social environment, in other words, required a no-nonsense communication with the divine.

To his fellow participants in the discussion, Theon's theorising appropriately explains the shift from poetry to prose. To us, however, Herodotus' rendering of divine words as poetry points to an experience of oracles that goes beyond taste and habits. Plutarch's Theon hints at such an alternative dimension when he mentions the threat to oracles' veracity and credibility in passing. But even this aspect is secondary to audience's and society's predominant taste in his view. The waning of the special prosodic properties of the divine voice over time was the result of broader cultural developments that changed the listening audience's perception of metrical language, as rhythm in performance shifted from natural to musical rhythm, and gradually diminished the ritualistic importance of performance.⁸⁷

6. CONCLUSION

In describing the difference between poetry and prose, scholars in antiquity allow for characteristics that these two, seemingly mutually exclusive, categories of texts share rather than divide among them. Both text types are expected to be rhythmical, and meter is not exclusively the domain of poetry. Both types are also supposed to be ornate and authoritative, and conveying reliable information is not restricted to prose. The denomination “poetry” or “prose” appears to depend on a “more of this,

87. Following Aristotle, later literary critics did not consider performance as belonging to the exegetical practice (Schironi, 2020).

less of that” rather than on an “only this”. When asked for the defining aspect of prose, sources from antiquity mention the “absence of the verse format”. Meter, however, may still appear in a prose environment, be it merely to conclude clauses, sentences and phrase (functioning as “audible punctuation”), or to emphasise the structure of the thought. Its occurrence in prose hardly ever exceeds the dimetron; otherwise, as Aristotle reminds us, “it would be poetry”.

Longer citations in metrical format are singled out as poetic quotations in the prose environment. As such they maintain the metrical format of the source quoted from. In Herodotus, one of the first Greek prose authors, single-verse and multi-verse quotations from the Delphic oracle are introduced as citations; sometimes their metrical format is commented on.

In literature that is performed, or read out loud, reading a poetic quotation in a prose environment is not without aesthetic and situational consequences. As the performer re-enacts the first performance of the metrical utterance, so the listening audience re-enacts the witnessing of the original performance. When Herodotus carefully quotes the metrical text of the oracle, the performer speaks with a voice like the god’s. For a moment, he impersonates the god, just as his listeners impersonate the original worshippers.

Apparently, the gods preferably speak in dactylic verses, the language of permanency used for what is thought to last forever: epic, funereal and dedicatory inscriptions, wisdom sayings, and legislation literature. They continue to do so when poetry as a means of utterance gradually makes way for prose in a number of genres and text types, notably historiography, philosophy, and oratory. It is one thing to observe the gods’ pickiness in their choice of format, but quite another to consider the impact of this format. Due to the recognisable, deviant rhythmic profile of the gods’ voice, the highly idiosyncratic combination of format and content, the audience is temporarily transposed to another context, another situation in performance. The situational context evoked by the poetic quotation is that of ritual and solemnity. For a moment, the listening audience *is* the premiere audience of the original rendering of the divine utterance. In archaic poetry, where similar formatting can only be detected through the rhythmical phrasing of the metrical surface structure, the divine voice still flickers sporadically. And once more it transfers the listening audience from the secular surroundings into the realm of the divine and the religious ritual re-enacted. Not limitlessly though: the rise of prose, its supposed correlation with veracity, and the diminishing ritualistic importance of performance cause the divine voice to wane from the 4th cent. BCE onwards.

The identification of the divine voice in the rhythmical phrasing of metrical patterning in early Greek prose and archaic lyric is merely one instance of the impact

that metrical rhythm may pertain in contexts where other, or non-metrical, rhythms are predominant. In this article, I dealt with rhythm's impact in terms of situational context, the specific combination of text format and content that evokes a temporary sensation of displacement in the listener. Rhythm's impact, both the metrical and non-metrical, will doubtlessly be much wider and much more various and multifarious. It will be worthwhile to further explore the impact of the many different rhythmical realisations of metrical and non-metrical surface structures, and observe the auditory and aesthetic consequences of *epiploke* and *metarrhythmisis*, perceptible shifts in the rhythmical profile. We only need to make the text speak.

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HOW TO WRITE RELIGIOUS RITUAL INTO THEATRE.
GÉRARD GENETTE'S *PALIMPSESTS* APPLIED IN PLAUTUS'
RUDENS AND SIMONE WEIL'S *VENISE SAUVÉE*

CÓMO RELATAR EL RITUAL RELIGIOSO EN EL TEATRO.
EL *PALIMPSESTOS* DE GÉRARD GENETTE APLICADO EN EL
RUDENS DE PLAUTO Y EN LA *VENISE SAUVÉE* DE SIMONE WEIL

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ABSTRACT

In theatre, actors often perform religious rituals on stage. In this article, we argue that in some cases, like in Plautus and Simone Weil, religious rituals are not just imitated but the specific performative structure of the ritual enhances the affective charge of the theatre play. To illustrate this technique we apply Gérard Genette's theory of hypertextuality to develop a new concept of hyper-performativity. Consequently, we analyze Plautus' *Rudens* and Simone Weil's *Venise sauvée* to portray their hyper-performative techniques, in antiquity as well as in late modernity, how to write religious rituals into theatre.

RESUMEN

En el teatro, los actores a menudo realizan rituales religiosos en el escenario. En este estudio defendemos que en algunos casos, como en Plauto y en Simone Weil, los rituales religiosos no son sólo imitados, sino que la estructura performativa específica del ritual realiza la carga afectiva de la obra teatral. Para ilustrar esta técnica, aplicamos la teoría de la hipertextualidad de Gérard Genette en el desarrollo de un nuevo concepto de hiper-performatividad. Por consiguiente, analizamos el *Rudens* de Plauto y la *Venise sauvée* de Simone Weil con el fin de mostrar sus técnicas hiper-performativas para escribir rituales religiosos en el teatro, tanto en la Antigüedad como en la Modernidad tardía.

KEYWORDS

Antiquity and Late Modernity; Hyper-Performance; Performative Techniques; Plautus; Religious Ritual; Simone Weil; Theatre

PALABRAS CLAVE

Antigüedad y Modernidad tardía; hiper-performatividad; Plauto; ritual religioso; Simone Weil; teatro; técnicas performativas

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1. INTRODUCTION

Coming from different disciplines, classical philology and philosophy of religion, we share a focus on theatre plays that feature significant affinities to religious rituals. It is essential for our research to specify this relationship between the performances and latently inscribed religious rituals as accurately as possible, without alienating the particular properties of either theatre or religious rituals. Thus, in this paper we aim to address ritually inflected meaning in the theatrical work, e.g. by means of irritation, reversal, transformation, and deception as well as transposition and recomposition. As an instrument to describe the rituals' inscription onto the stage, we apply Gérard Genette's concept of hypertextuality. Based on Genette and exemplified by the manifold performative structures found in our case studies we introduce the concept of "hyper-performativity". In the first part, we discuss the theoretical foundations of hyper-performativity and illustrate how Genette's literary instrument can be translated into the performative framework of theatre. In the second part, we apply the concept to our case studies, investigating and describing how Plautus as well as Simone Weil write religious rituals onto their stages, both in Ancient Rome and 20th cent. Paris.

2. THE ARCHITECTURE OF HYPER-PERFORMATIVITY

To become sensitive to the aesthetic sophistication of writing religious rituals onto the stage we have to highlight a genealogy of performative structures. To provide a beneficial framework that delineates the architecture of multiple levels and modes of mimetic practices and techniques such as transposing, transforming, reversing, and recomposing, we refer to Gérard Genette's discussion of *palimpsests*.¹ Here, hypertextuality consists of transformation and imitation, i.e. of shifting style, moods and material into a new context.² Following Genette, hypertextuality implies that the succeeding text cannot exist without its predecessor. As a unique feature among all the other forms of intertextuality, hypertextuality constitutes a strong genealogical dependency. By applying and "translating" Genette's intertextual theory into the context of performances, we argue that one can access the original, hidden hyper-performances of the religious model scheme via the visible hyper-performances, i.e. the performative structures of the play, as they become "fractally" present on stage by an affective charge directed towards the audience. Yet, this affectivity can be marked and described by deconstructing and reimagining the play's performative structures. The application of Genette's concept allows us to trace underlying model schemata of the latent religious rituals in question, which had been transposed or even "broken up" into ritual fractals and altered in manifold ways.

Here, the expression "model schemata" serves as reference point and indicates that in the specific theatrical contexts of our case studies the embedded religious rituals reappear on several different levels and modes of mimesis. To define these model schemata of religious rituals we apply three criteria: Firstly, it is important to highlight that we define religious rituals as culturally constructed structures that function on the basis of symbolic communication. Secondly, rituals are sequenced and ordered gestures, acts, and words performed at particular times in particular places by particular people with their bodies, which make the rituals contextually dependable and definable. Thirdly, religious rituals are affectively highly charged and have definable as well as expected effects on participants and spectators, in so far as they refer to shared cultural codes by performers and audience. In perspective of these criteria, we have labelled this threefold substance of religious rituals as model schemata that are mimetically reapplied on stage. Here, we argue that because of its threefold (symbolic, structured, affective) substance the religious rituals written into theatre sustain at least a necessary minimum of affective recognition of the original

1. Genette, 1992, pp. 1-8.

2. Schmitz, 2008, pp. 80-83.

context, even if only fractally present on stage. For this concept of model schemata, we prefer the mathematical metaphor of a “fractal” to the literary term of a “fragment” because a fractal is a self-similar subset that exhibits recognizable patterns at different levels whereas a fragment is a part broken off that does not necessarily maintain recognition and thus loses its performative effectivity of the original setting. While fragments have a shard-like quality and need abstract, cognitive reconstruction due to often randomly scattering, fractals cultivate the affective and aesthetic charge of the model schemata and invoke the audience with an original religious orientation. With such properties model schemata are sizable, reproducible and recombinable as fractals and can be submitted to keen recontextualizations on stage. By inscribing model schemata of religious rituals into theatre, dramaturgs like Plautus and Simone Weil, in antiquity as well as in late modernity, aim to produce an affective plurality of alienation, even outside of its original context, deviating in manifold ways, opening up new affective and aesthetic spaces.

We argue that Plautus and Simone Weil draw on practices and techniques similar to Burkhard Gladigow’s concept of ritual sequencing; however, we do not conceive theatre as another religious ritual with rearranged ritual sequences. We define religious rituals and theatre as two distinct forms of cultural performances. Here, theatre only shares common model schemata with religious rituals. For us, it is important that Gladigow attributes to rituals the possibility of splitting up existing model schemata by the method of ritual sequencing.³ Within a model schema of the original ritual, sequences are arranged as assemblages of meaningful acts that, as Gladigow puts it, can be individually subjected to practices and techniques of rearrangement, fragmentation, composition, disposition, and transposition. He defines the smallest definable and delimitable set as ritual element that can be rearranged within ritual sequences that furthermore emerge in complex rituals. Therefore, theater is not another complex ritual but a different form of cultural performance that makes use of the recognizable patterns at different levels, especially if only fractally present on stage as hyper-performance. Here, Gladigow’s research comes in handy to describe hyper-performance as cultural technique of translating elementary performative structures from the realm of religious rituals to the realm of theatre without mixing both distinct forms of cultural performances.

When successful, the transposed rituals or ritual fractals reassume their model schemata and allow subtle affective echoes of the model’s original effects within the new framework of theatre. It is crucial to consider that performers and audience are

3. Gladigow, 2004, pp. 59-63.

permanently co-constructing this multi-level architecture of hyper-performativity together.⁴ As Wolfgang Iser has outlined in his interactivist reader-response theory on a textual level,⁵ also recontextualized performative fractals necessarily produce non-logocentric, superficially invisible but somehow sensible implications or gaps. After all, apart from the reapplication of the emerged model schemata the original religious ritual itself remains absent. These gaps are filled only by the continuous negotiation of the shared agencies of the performance, the recipient's cultural reference system and the cultural substance or repertoire of the play.⁶ Because of this precarious interdependency, especially on the affective level, hyper-performances can never be completely engineerable. Thus, the performative structures may vary from each performance to the next. However, via certain textual and performative steering mechanisms the playwright can nonetheless influence or even dominate this precarious interdependency between performers and audience, channeling the affective process of recontextualization and performative sequencing of the model schemata by the audience, for example via irritation and delusion. However, the risk of constant failure or provoking an unforeseen unwanted effect remains.

As a next step, we will apply the concept of hyper-performativity to analyze the transposition and transformation of model schemata in Plautus' *Rudens* and Simone Weil's *Venise sauvée*.

3. PLAUTUS

Plautus' comedies portray highly stereotyped urban family life, turning the traditional Roman values upside down, as Erich Segal has demonstrated.⁷ The theatrical entanglements always resolve in a happy ending, while the prologue often predicts the struggles, conflicts and threats of the stock-type protagonists. With such playfulness, the characteristic saturnalian order that predominates in Plautus' plays achieves its objective. It is noteworthy that even though Plautus based his dramatic productions on models of the Greek New Comedy and his plays remain Greek in their setting, their entanglement with distinctive Roman features appealed to the tastes of the Roman audience. The model schemata of religious rituals that we find written onto the Plautine stage were a constitutive part of daily life and consti-

4. Slater, 2000, pp. 2-3.

5. Iser, 1994, pp. 301-314.

6. Dablé, 2014, pp. 31-60.

7. Segal, 1987, pp. 1-14.

tuted an important field of reference for the audience in Rome. Comedies were performed at religious festivals honoring gods (*ludi*), which were organized by public officials and provided a specific festive setting for the stage plays. Consequently, a particular religious as well as political dimension was certainly discernible to the audience during the performances, alongside the entertainment dimension. Existing cultural contacts in the Mediterranean, especially Greek and Roman, are evident in the cultural production of the period. The interdependencies of the expanding Roman society, the intertwining of literary and theatrical traditions as well as the current political and religious discourses are also reflected in religious rituals, which Plautus creatively transposed into his comedies.⁸

The first case study shows, how hyper-performances pertinent to hypo-performances of religious rituals basically originating from different cultural contexts blend into a comically effective performative structure, playing with stereotypical comical attributions to the Greek and Roman sphere, which Plautus uses frequently throughout his plays.⁹ The scene in focus from his play *Rudens* (Plaut., *Rud.* 253b-891) displays an extraordinary density of hyper-performances which can be traced back to the Greek version of the ritual of supplication, *hikesia* (as performed in this play, the ritual was not familiar to the Romans from their daily life, but known to them probably mostly from the Greek theatrical and epic literary productions), and to the Roman sacrifice to Vulcan. In the following passages, we examine both model schemata in the light of hyper-performativity.

The plot of Plautus' comedy *Rudens* takes place on a beach somewhere near the ancient city of Cyrene. A temple dedicated to Venus and an altar in front of it as part of the scenery provide a religious horizon of meaning during the play. As the play's prologue tells, the audience is going to watch a typical love story between the young sex slave Palaestra and the adolescent Plesidippus. The latter purchases Palaestra the day before, but her procurer Labrax takes the money and his sex slaves and runs off. However, their ship is wrecked and the slaves manage to escape. When the second slave Ampelisca notices that the procurer survives, the two women both seek asylum in the temple of the goddess Venus. As the procurer enters the temple and violates it, the two women flee out of the temple in desperation and seek refuge at the stage altar. As their prosecutor follows them out of the temple and reaches the altar, he threatens to burn them. Here, he personifies the imagined fire he is about to get to execute his threats as the god of destructive fire Vulcan. This allows the audience to associate

8. Jeppesen, 2015 and 2020.

9. Segal, 1987, pp. 34-38.

the threat of burning the women with the sacrifice to Vulcan, transforming the two supplicants to Venus into sacrificial animals for Vulcan. Daemones, an old man living next door, intervenes, and orders his slave to beat up Labrax with clubs, saving the women. Plesidippus then drags the procurer to court. Finally, a recognition scene reveals Palaestra to be Daemones' daughter and an Athenian citizen. Palaestra marries Plesidippus and the play culminates in a celebration.

The dramatic rules pertinent to the generic structure of *Rudens* allow us to characterize the passage in question as a scene involving a crucial turning point in the dramaturgy of the play. Synthesizing the findings of Hanson and Segal,¹⁰ we claim that the play is premised on multiple antitheses of personal dispositions and values which lay the fundamentals for the basic themes of the play and influence the development of the plot decisively. These antitheses are evident already in the exposition of the prologue and manifested in the characterization of the main figures. Arcturus, the divine speaker of the prologue, who dictates the moral substructure of the play, explicates in epigrammatic manner the model assessment of deeds of men. This amounts to a fundamental opposition of *fraus*, *scelus*, *parricidium* and *periurium* in order to achieve *lucrum* on the one hand and *pietas* and *fides* that guarantee a conclusive *amor* on the other hand. Palaestra (and her relationship with Plesidippus) stands for the latter while Labrax incorporates the former. The basic opposition of *amor* and *lucrum* is solved according to Hanson's concept of "deservingness".¹¹ In the moralistic *Rudens*, gods reward virtuous behavior: *pietas* as moral conduct towards parents and gods and *fides* in the sense of paying vows and keeping oaths.¹² Labrax, a typical procurer, who embodies the exaggerated mercantilist aspect of the *mores maiorum* as he clings to ruthlessly pursuing business, represents a "blocking character" to the festive atmosphere and must therefore be removed from stage,¹³ while the wellbeing of the pious courtesan Palaestra has to be secured by all means, as she will be (re-)united with her lover (as well as her parents) at the end of the play, laying ground for the expected happy ending.

The hyper-performance of the *hikesia* with regard to seeking refuge with Venus constitutes the frame of the scene in question (Plaut., *Rud.* 253b-891). The action on stage is evolving around the central question whether the fugitives are going to get

10. Hanson, 1959, pp. 85-97; Segal, 1987, pp. 79-98.

11. Hanson, 1959, pp. 85-88; Segal, 1987, pp. 95-96.

12. Hanson, 1959, pp. 89-97.

13. Segal, 1987, p. 74.

hurt or spared, whether love or lucre is going to prevail, and whether the expected festive ending of the play will be obstructed by intrusion of disturbing elements.

In the source material, the ritual of *hikesia* is performed either towards another person or towards a deity to prevent harm. The aim is the establishment of a special relationship between the supplicant and the expected protector. When possible, this relationship is enacted by physical contact and is often accompanied by a plea or a prayer. If the protector is a person, the supplicant touches or embraces chin, arms, knees, feet or hands of the person. Kissing the hand occurs as well. The same goes for a statue of a deity. Other gestures are bowing low, extending hands, displaying branches, often entwined with wool, wearing mourning or shabby clothes and sometimes rending them. To perform the ritual in a temple, the suppliant touches either the central object or the most external point of the building. The fleeing to altars is also well documented.¹⁴

In the enactment of the supplication ritual, there are considerable differences between Greece and Rome. Seeking refuge in Roman shrines is so rarely reported that it is considered insignificant by researchers. Rather, it was common practice in Rome to approach a magistrate. The legendary *asylum* of Romulus, which was part of the Roman foundation narrative (cf. Liv., I 8, 5), had no religious character and should hence be regarded as a Hellenizing element.¹⁵

The supplication ritual represents a topos deeply rooted in the Greek theatre and literary tradition. In this way, the nuances were certainly known to the Romans (at least to the more sophisticated among them). It is also noteworthy that in the time of Plautus the first Roman decrees of *asylum* were issued for Greek cities and sanctuaries in Asia and Achaia.¹⁶ The hyper-performances in the play *Rudens* might as well reflect this political state of affairs.

Consequently, for the Roman audience, the unusual image of slaves, at any rate with little prospect of actually receiving protection, who were seeking refuge in a temple and an altar in order to escape from their master, must have been something typically Greek.¹⁷ Therefore, in the context of comedy it was perhaps simply considered as funny (cf. Plaut., *Most.* 1094-1143).

In the *Rudens*, Plautus doubles the original ritual he had found in the Greek source material by making the women seek refuge twice, inside and outside the

14. Derlien, 2003, pp. 46-47; Naiden, 2006, pp. 43-62.

15. Naiden, 2006, pp. 250-256.

16. Derlien, 2003, p. 127.

17. Naiden, 2006, pp. 375-377.

temple.¹⁸ By doubling the ritual, he aims at a multiplication of its comic potential, causing ridiculous confusion even within the plot amongst his stage characters. With this, Plautus achieves a threefold objective. Firstly, he doubles the dramaturgical possibilities to play with the performative frame of the *hikesia*. Secondly, he allows Labrax to live up to his reputation as lawbreaker and spoilsport twice.¹⁹ Thirdly, he doubles the dramatic suspense of the scene, making the audience shiver twice while fearing the abrupt collapse of the comedy.

In this context of a doubled refuge seeking by the two women, we find two hyper-performative structures inserted which stage Plesidippus' slave Trachalio as parodying the supplication motif. After Trachalio exits the temple seeking help, he himself becomes a supplicant addressing Daemones to protect the women in the temple. Here, Trachalio's exaggerated gestures and inflated words proposed the audience to think in terms of tragedy. Daemones, sensing the irritating shift of the generic framework from comedy to tragedy, interprets Trachalio's supplication as unwanted disturbance (Plaut., *Rud.* 629) and turns the formalized structure of supplication into a threat against the supplicant as such a threat is more suitable for comedy (634-637). When Trachalio is surprised that his supplication did not work, even though he performed it correctly (639), Daemones alludes to the common perception that comedy demands a threat to punish the slave (640). Nevertheless, Trachalio reveals to Daemones what has happened in the temple and persuades the old man to aid the persecuted women. This is the second time the audience hears the report of the events in the temple, adding the cruelties of Labrax. This furious description of Labrax's character has become one of the most prominent characterizations of this stock type (649-653). Here, we encounter a paradox of suspense manifested in the ambiguity between the expected outcome of the comedy and the malice of Labrax. The asylum should guarantee safety for the fugitives, however as the audience learns from the reports from inside the temple that the procurer is not hesitant to commit sacrilege. The spectators witness how a haven of safety is being violated, albeit belonging to the realm of a goddess. Besides that, Trachalio's explication of Labrax's attack against the priestess in the sacred framework of the shrine of Venus reinforces the negative image of Labrax.

Similarly, Trachalio refers to the generic conventions in the next scene, after the two fugitives escape from the temple to the altar and speak in exaggerated tragic style. Trachalio wonders what this kind of language is about and encourages the persecuted

18. Lefèvre, 2006, pp. 39-41.

19. Lefèvre, 2006, p. 51.

women to be “in good spirits” (679) as it is proper for comedy. As they persist in desolation, he simply directs them to the stage altar and when Palaestra does not see how their new refuge could be safer than the old one inside the sanctuary, he boldly orders them to just sit down on the altar and promises to protect them with Venus’ assistance, relying on the conventionality of the hyper-performance of supplication (687-693). After that, Palaestra speaks a prayer as suppliant to Venus again not withholding from the tragic tone alien to comedy, whereupon Trachalio asks the goddess for forgiveness for them questioning her capacity to protect them. He concludes with a vulgar pun (playing with the double meaning of *concha* which stands for clam as well as figuratively for female genitalia) referring to the birth of Venus from a seashell and reducing the two suppliant women to the female genital organ (704-705) as if he did not want the audience to forget that they are witnessing a comic play. In the same manner, Daemones’ order to flee to the altar, not seeing that the women are already there, ridicules the old man’s inability to follow the quick rhythm of the ambiguous scene (706-707).

While the *hikesia* is doubled in its complete model scheme, Plautus breaks the sacrifice to Vulcan in several ritual fractals and conceals them within new performative structures. In order to apprehend those opaque ritual fractals written into theatre we have to consider the spectator’s horizon of expectation. In the historical context of Plautus, the *Vulcanalia* were celebrated on August, 23rd at the Forum in Rome.²⁰ According to Varro (Varro, *Ling.* VI 20), on this day people would throw animals into the fire to satisfy the deity, so that they themselves would not fall victim to the destructive power of fire. Sextus Pompeius Festus (cf. Lindsay 1913: 274-276) mentions that live fish, caught by the fishermen of the river Tiber, were sacrificed to Vulcan for the lives of men in a holocaustic rite on the holiday of *ludi piscatorii* or the fishermen’s games, celebrated annually in June.²¹ Moreover, a poem from late antiquity attributed to Paulinus of Nola reports that on the day of the *Vulcanalia* garments were hung outdoors and exposed to the sun.²² At the altar, Labrax makes his threat explicit when he threatens to fetch Vulcan, whom he praises as Venus’ enemy (Plaut., *Rud.* 761). Thereby he parallels a familiar mythological story to the plot of the play. He is alluding to the infidelity of Venus, who betrayed Vulcan, her husband, with Mars. This happens as soon as Labrax realizes that his attempts to violate the protection of Venus are not effective and says that he will fetch her jealous husband to

20. Dumezil, 1996, pp. 321.

21. Rose, 1933, p. 58.

22. Boin, 2013, p. 212.

assist him. Thus, the audience could witness symbolically on stage the mythological matrimonial dispute regarding the fugitives simultaneously. During Plautus' lifetime, Venus was already venerated not only as the goddess of love but also as the mother of Aeneas, the mythological ancestor of the Romans. The popularity of the legend in Plautus' era is attested e.g. in the *Miles gloriosus* (1265; 1413; 1421), where the Roman divine ancestral heritage is being parodied.²³ Besides, fish were the animals of Venus, because they saved her and Cupid during the war with the Titans, thus earning their place in the sky (cf. *Ov., Fast.* II 448-472). The Roman audience hereby finds itself involved in a conflict on a mythological level, which also addresses its historical conceptions and with them the question of its identity.

After Labrax has invoked Vulcan, he also makes an actual physical threat: he is about to light a big fire (Plaut., *Rud.* 767) and he declares that he intends to burn the women alive (768). His threat to the supplicants and the threat to Venus, who watches over the plot of the play, with destructive fire of Vulcan is implicitly also directed against the spectators, since plays at the time of Plautus were performed in temporary wooden constructions,²⁴ where the audience could also fall victim to the fire. The realism of the scene increases the suspense and transgresses the generic limits of comedy. Apart from the fire which the audience plausibly assumes to be brought to the stage, further ritual fractals were subtly written into the performative sequence, allowing the audience to co-construct the allusive framework of the sacrifice to Vulcan as part of the play. In this context, it is reasonable to assume that hung vestments were part of the stage set. At the end of the second act, Daemones' house slave Sceparnio offers Labrax's accomplice Charmides to dry his wet clothes and to lend him a coat. Although Charmides refuses because he fears that Sceparnio only wants to steal his robe, a piece of clothing must have been on stage (573-583). Whether fish were sacrificed to the god of fire during Plautus' time is not explicitly documented. However, the fact that the fugitive women who were to be thrown into fire wore completely wet clothes as they came out of the sea seems to fit well into this context. The fishermen's choir performing in the second act may also add to the confirmation of such allusions. Furthermore, after Palaestra has spoken her last prayer to Venus (694-701) the women fall silent and remain mute until the end of the third act (891), when they are finally brought from the altar into Daemones' house. This may be seen as an element of depersonification and victimization of the supplicants, allusively turning them into sacrificial animals. The motif of people appearing to have become animals

23. Hanson, 1959, pp. 51-52.

24. Marshall, 2006, pp. 31-48.

is frequent in this scene. At the beginning of the third act, Daemones is meditating on a dream with animals that he cannot understand or interpret: A monkey wants to kidnap two swallows from their nest and cannot reach them. It asks Daemones for a ladder, which he refuses to give, because he doesn't want the swallows to get harmed. Thereupon the monkey becomes angry and aggressive and now threatens him with violence, too. But he can handle it and put it in chains. Through his narrative he opens up the deictic space of dreams, in which a new metaphorical scene takes place. In this regard, we can read the dream as a projection of the stage events, which will soon unfold on stage. Later, Daemones deciphers the metaphors and identifies the uncivilized Labrax with the monkey and the swallows with the women on the altar, whereby it cannot go unnoticed that the word standing for swallow (*hirundo*), also meant flying fish. In addition, the asylum scene ends with Charmides' remark about people turning into animals and another comparison of Labrax with a pigeon captured (598-610; 771-773; 886-889).

We may conclude that in *Rudens* the *hikesia* and the *asylia* resulting from it is through allusions and threats from Labrax in danger of being turned into its direct opposite: a human sacrifice (which the Romans claimed to reject in their ritual practice,²⁵ with few exceptions under extreme circumstances reported in Liv., XXII 55-57). This threat of human sacrifice can be read as a sudden intrusion of unfestive barbarity, as Segal puts it,²⁶ which has to be prevented by all means. The Roman way of dealing with slaves, which was more dehumanizing than in Greece,²⁷ lends even more potential to these events on stage, confronting the audience with a Roman-characterized realism. Labrax's instrumental relationship to his sex slaves is common practice, but in the specific context of Plautus' theatre it can be seen as an outrageous violation of the festive spirit of the play. Even though the audience already knows from the prologue that Palaestra is not a slave at all, but an Athenian citizen who was abducted as a child, and the generic conventions promise a happy outcome, the suspense climaxes in the unexpected transformation, which is part of the hyper-performative sequence.

Approaching ritual written into theatre by Plautus with hyper-performativity inspired by Genette highlights the playfulness of the Roman author while dealing with performative structures derived from hypo-performances of religious model schemata. By creatively including these hyper-performances, Plautus in his play *Rudens* multiplies the levels of the plot, expanding the relevance of stage events from the

25. Schultz, 2010.

26. Segal, 1987, p. 36.

27. Segal, 1987, pp. 102-103.

human sphere to the divine sphere. Additionally, he refers to concepts of history and concerns of collective identity. By doing so, he does not only use the rituals performed on stage “as a kind of catalyst for stage action, without necessitating any physical intervention of the deities on stage”, as Boris Dunsch has noted.²⁸ He also increases and multiplies the comical potential of the scene by directly addressing the audience’s religious, cultural, intellectual, historical, affective, and identical sensitivity. In his article about the practices of adaptation with regard to Roman comedy, Mario Telò remarks, that “When a play announces itself a deliberate remake of a prior work, the process of cultural adaptation is programmatically disclosed and converted into a subject of theatrical discourse. This is especially true in the case of the *comediae palliatae* (“comedies in Greek dress”) of the archaic Roman dramatists, which present themselves as revisitations of works originally conceived in and for a different cultural context”.²⁹ In Plautus’ theatre, the (re-)negotiation of hyper-performances of religious rituals on stage not only offers effective outbursts of comic action, but also gives us an insight into the mechanisms behind the creative clash of different social, cultural and historical circumstances that shape Plautus’ vibrant religious and ritual discourse.

At this point, we are making a temporal shift, passing on from the stages of republican Rome and turning towards our second case study during World War 2: Simone Weil’s *Venise sauvée*. Although Plautus was an important source for Weil’s socio-political philosophy and Weil even mentions Plautus in *Venise sauvée* regarding the conditions of slavery in antiquity,³⁰ all attempts to trace a possible influence of Plautus on Simone Weil leave us with vague speculations. Nonetheless, Plautus’ and Weil’s performances share the application of hyper-performative practices of ritually inflected meaning in their theatrical work.

4. SIMONE WEIL

Venise sauvée [Venice Saved] is an unfinished tragedy fragment by the Jewish philosopher Simone Weil (1909-1943), written between 1940 and 1943. Throughout the play, we can trace a melange of hyper-performative structures and gestures that, on the one hand, have all the hallmarks of ancient Greek tragedy,³¹ and, on the other

28. Dunsch, 2014, p. 647.

29. Telò, 2019, p. 47.

30. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 93.

31. Brueck, 1995, p. 75.

hand, feature contemporary lived religion, notably from the Roman Catholic liturgy in France and the Black spiritual heritage in New York. Weil's theatre is "a laboratory of life where practicing a work on oneself, in order to understand it [life] in its various levels" takes place.³² Her approach to theatre differs significantly from that of her time, as the latter rarely evinced "transcendent orientation" whereas Weil establishes a theatrical style that demands religious and particularly liturgical literacy. Her theatre theory was of a distinctive "supernaturalist" and "redemptive nature",³³ reminiscent of Nietzsche's interpretation of the cultic origins of tragedy in antiquity. However, Weil does not simply refer to liturgical elements or imitates them as religiously charged parts of her play. She rather cultivates the affective potential of Christian worship to perform distinct multi-temporal realms simultaneously on stage, however, outside their original religious frames in a world without God. These religiously voided, supernaturalist hyper-performances, albeit rooted in the model schemata of religious hypo-performances, aim at a late modern audience that lost its capability of perceiving that what transcends dimensions of time and space, a strategy Simone Weil shares with her theatrical coeval Antonin Artaud (1896-1948) who fostered a similar metaphysical transformation of culture.³⁴

Venise sauvée tells a new version of Abbé Saint-Réal's early modern historical novel *Conjuration des espagnols contre Venise en 1618*. The fictitious plot is about the brutal conquest of Venice by collaborators and the betrayal of the betrayals by their commander, which finally saves the doomed city. The entire play circulates around the question of how to make sense of the double-betrayal, a question on whose answer Simone Weil disagreed with the three existing prequels. Weil was attracted to use this plot to speak to the horrors of the war, the conquest of Paris, and the paradox of necessary violence in order to furnish a lost idea of redemption and hope.

Thus, the composition of the play is closely interwoven with Weil's biographical and historical context. Weil's personal experiences of being a refugee and the trauma of exile wrote themselves into the surviving fragment. Yet, we can witness her writing also oscillating towards as well as away from two prominent dramaturgical constituents: contemporary European theatre of the 1940s and its affinity for ancient Greek tragedy as well as romantic theatre and its bizarre reenactment by Nazi theatre. Weil's tragedy relates to her left-wing contemporaries Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, and to a certain extent to Berthold Brecht, who all three restaged

32. Campo, 2019, p. 179.

33. Brueck, 1995, pp. 57-58.

34. Rey, 2003, p. 19.

ancient Greek tragedy to symbolically encode their critique of fascism in a time when artistic criticism had become deadly. Disapproving of the existing solutions to the double-betrayal, Weil decided to restage the material again after the English version *Venice Preserv'd* (1682) by Thomas Otway and its German adaption *Das gerettete Venedig* (1904) by Hugo von Hofmannsthal.³⁵ The two already existing theatrical performances of Saint-Réal's novelistic material offended the French philosopher due to their lack of understanding that the doomed city had not been saved by inner-worldly mechanisms. By imitating her prequels' genre of historical drama Simone Weil broke with contemporary French theatre culture and went head-to-head with the ideological weaponization of historical drama by Goebbel's newly installed and very successful German theatre culture.³⁶

For Weil, the affective bodily performance takes priority over intellectual aspects to return to a sense of wonder that she considered necessary for transcendent orientation. For her, as for her coeval Artaud, theatre was the most suitable medium to lend a body to the bodies in need of relationships.³⁷ Here, Weilian *catharsis* is a way to transform and embody our relationship to the world: "It is [according to Weil] exactly the work of theatre to negate the perspective in time and space, and it is thanks to this peculiar attribute that it is able to make a breach to eternity [...] Religion is based on belief, just like theatre, and both use metaphor to actualize this belief, which in both cases has spiritual meaning".³⁸ Our bodily condition and its potency of speaking in gestures without words are the primary hermeneutic tools that allow us to see the all too familiar from a new angle. It makes us sensitive to the co-creation by performers and audience of one shared empathic body of theatre, sensing the beheld bodies on stage in one's own body as individual spectator. In this way, Weil writes that "the world is a text with several meanings, and we pass from one meaning to another by a process of work. It must be work in which the body constantly bears a part [...] the relationship between 'I' and the world [...] I am he who sees this cube from a certain point of view, but also he who sees it from a certain other point of view (from which I do not see it). I am he who reads sensations according to one law, and also he who reads them according to some other law".³⁹

35. Otway, 2012.

36. Sojer, 2019, pp. 25-26.

37. Schulze, 2020, p. 11.

38. Campo, 2019, p. 194.

39. Weil, 1956, p. 23.

Unsatisfied with the conventional tools of contemporary theatre, Weil applied Christian liturgies on stage as ritualized and existentially participative *catharsis* of the corporeal relationship between “I” and the world. This epistemic re-entanglement of theatre and religion allows the dramaturge to make audible a “beauty of ritual. The Mass. The Mass is unable to touch the intelligence, for the intelligence doesn’t grasp the significance of what is there taking place. It is something of perfect beauty, and of a sensible form of beauty, for rituals and signs are sensible things. It is beautiful after the style of a work of art”.⁴⁰ Thomas Nevin argues that it is not the case that religion is added to theatre in Weil but her supernaturalist enterprise needs theatre to speak Religion in a non-religious world, as it is “the most public of arts to portray the passage of the Holy Spirit through a single soul and the consequent preservation of a community”.⁴¹ In *Venise sauvée*, the theatrical dimension is its supernaturalist dimension and a new way to do a kind of performative philosophy of religion. This feature places Weil’s tragedy very close to the tradition of passion plays, although it does not suit the conventional framework of passion plays due to the ambiguous deviations and occasionally obscure contradictions. In *Venise sauvée*, the role of the victim-protagonist, first, the doomed city, switches with the offender while the former victim, Venice, is going to kill the person who intended to destroy it but finally managed to save it.

Similar to the psychological movement within traditional passion plays, Weil performs a rapid collective acceleration of violent rage towards each victim-protagonist. This ends in total stagnation of all escalations by symbolically fixing the protagonist on the cross of stalled time. In her stage directions, Weil reminds her actors “it is supernatural to stop time. It is then that eternity enters into time”.⁴² To express the internal psychological state that exists in such a stalled time, when “eternity enters into time”, Weil applies performative fractals deriving from the Catholic liturgy and the Harlem spirituals as model schemata. In the metrically composed verses she strives onomatopoeically for a “maximum flavor” in both its lingual composition as well as its non-logocentric performative affectivity to all human bodies present on stage as well as in the audience, allowing them to witness the temporal amalgamation of different time moods into an excess of stalled time.⁴³ The suffering of full stop in the protagonist’s persona aims to unmask a history of blind contagion with violent

40. Weil, 1956, p. 335.

41. Nevin, 2000, p. 167.

42. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 53.

43. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 57.

acceleration, or as Weil puts it, in the stage directions, “a human milieu of which we are no more conscious than the air we breathe”.⁴⁴

In three acts, *Venise sauvée* presents a series of events that last, as Weil puts it, “a little more than 24 hours”.⁴⁵ Weil changed the original fictitious narrative by Abbé Saint-Réal written in 1674.⁴⁶ The plot introduces the audience to St. Mark’s Square in Venice at the break of dawn, the day before the feast of Pentecost. Saint-Réal set the plot in the framework of the *Festa della Sensa* [Feast of Ascension] while Weil does not mention the feast at all but only highlights a specific detail of the feast, the *Sposalizio del Mare* [Marriage of the Sea], a ceremony with a strong religious character that in turn is not mentioned in Saint-Réal.⁴⁷ The *Sposalizio del Mare* consists of a colorful ship procession in the lagoon of Venice that originally dates back to an early medieval ritual with placatory and expiatory elements. In the 12th cent., out of gratitude, the pope gave the doge his papal episcopal ring to be cast into the sea during the ship procession, quasi-sacramentally marrying Venice to the sea, and ordered it to be repeated annually.⁴⁸ The 12th cent. anthology *Allegoriae in universam sacram scripturam* uses a pictorial language similar to the *Sposalizio*: The eroticized flooding of a holy city by the Holy Spirit: *flumen est spiritus sanctus ut in psalmis fluminis impetus laetificat civitatem Dei*.⁴⁹ Weil applied this symbolic entanglement of placatory and expiatory rituals with nuptial gestures to elaborate on the city’s geographical topography, choosing the flooded city as a spiritual metaphor of lost and regained redemption. Accordingly, she rescheduled the *Sposalizio* from its traditional time on Ascension Day, a feast with placatory and expiatory liturgical literacy, to the feast of Pentecost, the feast of the fiery penetration by the Holy Spirit and the birth of the Church as Christ’s eternal bride.

The first act of *Venise sauvée* starts with early morning’s darkness and introduces the protagonist Jaffier, a French naval captain in the Venetian fleet who prepares renegade troops for the brutal conquest of the city on behalf of the Spanish Crown.⁵⁰ The initial scenes reflect the Old Testament in the context of exile and violence and culminate with a dystopian vision of a devastated city.⁵¹ Following her anti-Jewish

44. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 52.

45. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 58.

46. Saint-Réal, 1988.

47. Saint-Réal, 1988, p. 110.

48. Borghero, 1994, p. 104.

49. Migne, 1852, p. 933.

50. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, pp. 59-65.

51. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, pp. 52 and 61.

resentments, Weil instructs her actors to recite a new version of Psalm 110, altered by Weil: “This city will lie prostrate at our feet and we shall be the masters”.⁵²

The second act thematizes the relation between reality and gaze.⁵³ In a shared dystopian vision the two conspirators, Jaffier and the Spanish-French ambassador Renaud, look upon an imagined Venice on the day after tomorrow, subjugated and enslaved, while Renaud recognizes in Jaffier the city’s “future god”.⁵⁴ For this scene, Weil directs her actors to “make them [the conspirators] as sympathetic as possible. The spectator is to desire the success of the enterprise. Until Renaud’s speech, which should have the same effect on the spectator as it has on Jaffier”.⁵⁵ What is the effect on Jaffier and what are Weil’s corresponding effective steering mechanisms of affective mimesis targeting the audience? Weil has outlined that all collaborators are blinded by a collective, furious zeal of destroying Venice while “only Jaffier has not been carried away by this zeal, even for a moment. He is immobile at all times”.⁵⁶ We have to interpret this immobility not only as the fact that Jaffier does not move bodily on stage but that he does not participate in the psychological acceleration of time shared by everyone else on stage. He remains in-between the multiplicity of temporal rhythms. For the individual spectator to imitate Jaffier and to realize these psychological states of mind, to remain in-between the multiplicity of time, that not all people exist in the same now, in a performative way, Weil incorporates the temporal patterns of the model schemata, as we will see in more detail. In the center of the second act, the daughter of the Secretary of the Ten, Venice’s leading political institution, appears as the vulnerable “incarnation of the city”.⁵⁷ Jaffier is fixed by Violetta’s “innocence [...] infinitely precious” and is aware of the immanent violence waiting for her, unmasking the girl’s ignorant joy as “a precarious happiness, fragile”.⁵⁸ Jaffier looks at Violetta, who is also accelerated, however, not by violence but false hope for tomorrow’s *Sposalizio* as the first erotic event as young woman: “I feel I’m going to fall in love. I also feel I love the entire universe”.⁵⁹ He sees her, and reality looks back at him. Weil projects Violetta’s minacious future, still unknown to her, with the story of a prostitute who was “born to the noblest local family” on a Greek island ruled by

52. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 65.

53. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, pp. 66-88.

54. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 73.

55. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 50.

56. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 54.

57. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 52.

58. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 54.

59. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 80.

Venice.⁶⁰ The prostitute joined Jaffier's conspiracy to avenge her humiliations by Venetian men. However, the disarming encounter between Jaffier and Violetta reveals to Jaffier a Venice that is a fragile and grievable reality "made by God".⁶¹ Here, Weil tells her actors that in a "mysterious way", inaccessible for language, the vulnerability of Violetta woke up a "resonance of pain" within the body of the violently dreaming Jaffier and "reality enters into him [...] as soon as Jaffier realizes that Venice exists".⁶² Consequently, Jaffier feels pity for Venice and explicates the city's grievability. This alludes to Christ in the Gospel of Matthew who felt pity for Jerusalem only a few days before he was crucified there (Mt 23:37).

Here, it is important to highlight that Jaffier recognized the final eulogized sweetness of the city, later revealed by Violetta's hymn at the end of the third act, already before the final Paschal-Pentacostal morning of the play, namely at this very point when he sees the vulnerable incarnation of Violetta amidst his, apart from Violetta, dystopian vision. Via an ambiguity between dream and reality, dystopian future and a harmonious but blind present, *Venise sauvée* repeatedly confronts the audience with different flavors of time and its temporal visualizations. Weil instructs her actors for the second act that "mention should be made of the time (noon), the course of the sun and the light".⁶³ Here, it is noteworthy that in *Venise sauvée* light, especially sun light signifies a particular important visualization of temporality. The audience encounters repeatedly the impossibility to naturally "suspend the flow of time" by the impossibility to stop the movement of the sun.

The third act unfolds the bloody execution of the conspiracy members and portrays a muted Jaffier, who suffers the fate of being both saviour and traitor, Jesus and Judas in only one vulnerable body, fixed onto the stage, exposed to everyone.⁶⁴ Overwhelmed by the absurdity of his fate, Jaffier realizes that he is losing the garment of his flesh (cf. Sirach 14:17). With the loss of his carnality, that is, when his biological body stops being visible as tactile, vulnerable flesh, also his ethical status as human ceases. Consequently, he perceives himself paradoxical as a kind of fleshless animal that has lost the status of grievable life, like Jesus who is imagined as an ungrievable lamb.⁶⁵

60. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 77.

61. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 82.

62. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, pp. 52-53.

63. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 67.

64. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, pp. 89-113.

65. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, pp. 102-103.

Unable to execute his power and destroy the city after seeing Violetta, Jaffier had revealed his mission to the Council of Ten, in exchange for their promise to spare his soldiers. Jaffier's lament remains unrecognized by everyone on the stage and is only audible for the audience. This absurd situation culminates in Jaffier screaming "It is finished" from John 19:28 when Jesus dies on the cross.⁶⁶ Afterwards, paralleling the fate of Judas, the high council of Venice sends Jaffier money to honor his betrayal of his fellow conspirators, mixing up the moral duality as well as the all too familiar chronology in the New Testament Passion narratives. Jaffier then drops the money and runs towards a last group of his soldiers into the hail of bullets. Although his death is likely, it remains ambiguous what happens to Jaffier. He becomes the gap. Finally, Violetta appears on stage and recites a hymn about the smiling day ignorant of the just performed nocturnal slaughter. As a performative steering mechanism, we can identify Jaffier's smiling before his final exit as identical with the imaginary smiling of the feast day in the Violetta's hymn. After all, the only smile visible on stage to the audience is that of Jaffier who now is absent as well as present as gap.

The majority of Venetians will not find out about Jaffier's act of redemption. In Venice, the conspiracy remains a secret and the people continue to ignore their precarious state. However, for the audience the participated storyline debunks the idea of linear progress towards an always-brighter future and reveals suspensions and the in-between of different temporal structures. On the content level, these suspensions unite the two fundamental Freudian drives *Eros* and *Thanatos*: Pentecost is not simply Pentecost, it has merged with Pascha, culminating in an erotized Pentacostal-Easter morning with the sea marrying the city yet simultaneously and ambiguously climaxing in a lethal eternal Good Friday with no dawn, no city, and no wedding.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the transformation of temporal structures does not only happen on the content level of the plot but also takes place on a non-logocentric performative level. Weil interweaves a variety of the model scheme's performative structures as hypo-performative fractals into the hyper-performance of her play, precisely because these "liturgical palimpsests" allow Weil to break up, rewrite and turn upside down the audience's perceptions of time. In the following section, we paradigmatically highlight the liturgical literacy of the absent rituals as well as their application as performative fractals in *Venise sauvée*.

In the following, three temporal structures of hypo-performative model schemata are distinguished. The first temporal level is diachronic and refers to the plot's

66. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 108.

67. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 113.

told time of “little more than 24 hours” that meets with the actual little more than 24-hour-structure of Catholic paschal rites as celebrated in the monastic communities Weil had regularly lived in.⁶⁸ *Venise sauvée* starts with the first act in early morning darkness on the day before Pentecost. Analogously during the first of two Paschal nights, after Holy Thursday, in early morning darkness on Good Friday the monks commemorate Jesus’ blood sweating at the Garden of Gethsemane. As Venice’s Good Friday progresses in the second act, the theatrical gaze on the doomed city of Venice corresponds with the liturgical gaze on Jesus as vulnerable suffering man. After trading Venice for Jaffier as the victim-protagonist of the play, the third act portrays the total abandonment of Jaffier, deprived of his humanity, as well as Jaffier’s transformation into the “sweetest day” by the gesture of the last smile. This again corresponds with the liturgical contemplation of Christ’s total abandonment in hell and the ambiguous empty grave as the ultimate gap in the Easter Vigil as the “day of God” in the morning of Holy Saturday. Violetta’s hymn of the “sweetest day” at the very end alludes to the Easter hymn *Hic est dies verus Dei* that builds on Psalm 118:24 identifying Christ as the day of God: “This truly is the day of God; his holy light shines bright today, when by his sacred blood, once shed, he washed the shame of men away”.

On a second synchronic time level, the actual duration of the play corresponds to the celebration and faithful’s participation in a Sacrifice of the Mass, the ritual representation of the death and resurrection of Christ. While the play represents the chronology of the Sacrifice of the Mass, it demontages and transposes its two-fold dualist structure (liturgy of the word and liturgy of the sacrifice) according to a tripartite (trinitarian) division of setup, confrontation, and climax, often found in ancient Greek tragedy. The first act evokes Weil’s anti-Jewish interpretation of the Hebrew history of salvation and the Hebrew proclamation of imagined eschatological victory. In the second act, different movements of vision imagine an incarnation (Violetta) as well as the eschatological dystopia (destroyed Venice) corresponding to the Mass’ “unbloody sacrifice of the body and blood of Christ”. Finally, the third act echoes motifs (flesh, darkness, unrecognizability) during digesting the delicacies of the Eucharistic feast⁶⁹ with reciting the prologue in John at the end of every Sacrifice of the Mass.

The third temporal level, a kairological suspension of time, corresponds with spirituals Weil had encountered in the black Baptist church in Harlem, New York. Back then, Weil remembered a *kairos*, an infinitely dense point of time, when the

68. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 58.

69. The idea of the delicacies of the feast in Weil’s writings we owe to Gwendolen Durpé.

minister and the congregation suddenly explode into dances much like the “Charleston”. Time stopped, and everyone cried and sang, and were ultimately chanting “They crucified my Lord!”⁷⁰ In the stage directions Weil directs her actors that “the power of simple repetition, as found in Spirituals. Repetition until your nerves begin to suffer. This is to be used in Venice. In the sense of those condemned to death. And in the insults to Jaffier”.⁷¹ While emphatically experiencing the muteness and immobility of Jaffier, this third time level allows the audience to enter into the gap Iser refers to as necessary for an interactivist reader-response. The resultant co-creation by performers and audience of ritually inflected meaning consequently suspends both the imagined diachronic time of the plot as well as the lived synchronic time of performers and audience within the theatre building by an immersive repetition of the ultimate now. Weil’s demontage and decontextualization of the rituals’ model schemata and their respective temporal structures grant the audience a new form of mental agency of co-constructing multifold simultaneous “affective temporalities”, entering the space of the in-between. Here, the temporal *catharsis* of Weil’s tragedy needs both the performative and content level.

On the performative level, *Venise sauvée* conveys that not all people exist in the same now, opening up an awareness of something beyond the conventional order of time. On the content level, the tragedy’s plot tells a story that gives the audience a narrative model how to deal with a multiplicity of disturbing temporal experiences.⁷² While Simone Weil uses material from the 17th cent. by Abbé Saint-Réal, her contemporary audience would have soon deciphered the manifold allusions and recognized Hitler attacking Paris behind the fictitious plot. Here, *Venise sauvée* performs a *catharsis* of time, and thus perception of violent acceleration in war times, via the particular effective steering mechanisms, disclosing tensions in the relationship between the various rituals’ temporal structures and its languages in different poetic rhythms. Finally, the audience might not only listen to underlying liturgical echoes as a fractally present hypo-performance in *Venise sauvée*. We could go one step further to even identify Weil’s personal traumatic experiences anonymously present and audible as another hypo-performance in the hyper-performances of the play. Here, aided by religiously voided, supernaturalist hyper-performances, the play attempts to turn around this direction from existential experiences (trauma of the playwright) to the stage (theatre), in order to allow *Venise sauvée* to serve as hypo-performance

70. Weil, 2006, p. 188.

71. Panizza and Wilson, 2019, p. 55.

72. Nicastro, 2019, pp. 86-87.

(theatre) to the real-world hyper-performance (WW2) acted out by isolated individuals against totalitarian collectives.

5. CONCLUSION

Hyper-performativity establishes a double relationality. On the one hand, hyper-performativity sheds light on the specific correlation between hypo- and hyper-performance, namely how the implementation and transformation of performative structures and their ritually inflected meaning are processed affectively on stage. On the other hand, hyper-performance (in which the above-mentioned correlation is implied) also characterizes how the audience engages with the performative structure on stage and thus directs its response. As we have seen, the distinct affective charges in the respective theatre plays foster the participation of the audience in different ways: In the scene in *Rudens*, Plautus refers both to a Greek ritual (*hikesia*), as well as to well-known Roman rituals (sacrifice to Vulcan) on a collective referential level of contemporary Roman society. In *Venise sauvée*, Simone Weil rewrites the model schemata in which the individual's decisions are decisive and refers within a framework of multiple affective temporalities to the freedom of being an individual during a time of co-ordination. In both cases, the concept of hyper-performativity allows us to describe the nature of the particular interdependences of the plays and the model schemata. This interdependency seems to surpass common theatrical practices and techniques and reveals a kind of vertical agency present in both plays: In *Rudens*, through the intertwining of ritual and theatre, the antique audience can witness in a playful manner the divine patronage and help of Venus and is reminded of the destructive power of Vulcan. At the same time, the spectators are made aware of their exposure to the disputes and the moods of the gods. In *Venise sauvée*, the religiously voided, supernaturalist hyper-performances open up towards an awareness of something beyond the conventional order of time, the multiplicity of the now for every individual, and expose the latent agency of something that can never be engineerable, namely the in-between of time.

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THE MANY MARTINS OF VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS.
VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS' MARTIN-POEMS AS INSTANCES
OF INDIVIDUAL APPROPRIATION AND LITERARY OFFERS
OF RITUAL-LIKE EXPERIENCE

LOS MUCHOS MARTINES DE VENANCIO FORTUNATO.
LOS POEMAS DE MARTÍN DE VENANCIO FORTUNATO COMO EJEMPLOS
DE APROPIACIÓN INDIVIDUAL Y OFERTAS LITERARIAS DE UNA
EXPERIENCIA SIMILAR AL RITUAL

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ABSTRACT

The aims of this article are (1) to show the variety of characterizations of Saint Martin in the poetic texts by Venantius Fortunatus, mainly his *Carmina*, (2) to explain this variety from the historical contexts of different poems, and (3) to describe the effect that it might have had on the readers of the collection of poems in the interplay between literature and ritual. Saint Martin is characterized in a wide array of ways in Fortunatus' occasional poems, which does not provide a congruent picture of the saint, but seems to serve the needs

RESUMEN

Los objetivos de este artículo son (1) demostrar la variedad de caracterizaciones de San Martín en los textos poéticos de Venancio Fortunato, principalmente en sus *Carmina*, (2) explicar esta variedad a partir de los contextos históricos de los diferentes poemas y (3) describir el efecto que tal diversidad puede haber ejercido en los lectores de la colección poética con respecto a la interacción entre la literatura y el ritual. San Martín es caracterizado de maneras muy diversas en los poemas ocasionales de Fortunatus, lo que

of particular audiences, who are presented with a version of Saint Martin tailor-made for them. The readers of the *Carmina* as a unified collection of many such poems are forced to reconcile the different characterizations with each other and with their own expectations about the saint. As they do so, they can have an experience similar to the social experience of members of a congregation in the cult of Saint Martin.

no genera una imagen coherente del santo, pero parece atender las necesidades de públicos específicos, a quien se les presentan versiones de San Martín hechas a medida. Los lectores de los *Carmina* como una colección unificada de muchos poemas se ven obligados a conciliar las diferentes caracterizaciones entre sí y con sus expectativas sobre el santo. Al hacerlo, viven una experiencia similar a la experiencia social de los miembros de una congregación perteneciente al culto de San Martín.

KEYWORDS

Aesthetics of Reception; *Carmina*; Cult of the Saints; Individual Appropriation; Resonance; Saint Martin; Venantius Fortunatus.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Apropiación individual; *Carmina*; culto de los santos; estética de la recepción; resonancia; San Martín; Venancio Fortunato.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Venantius Fortunatus (*ca.* 530 – *ca.* 600 CE), poet of occasional *carmina* and one hagiographical epic, and composer of at least seven saints' lives in prose and possibly other theological works,¹ has produced many poetic texts on the life of Saint Martin, among which his *opus magnum* of more than 2000 verses but also poems as short as his supposed inscription for the *secretarium* of the saint in Tours, which comprises only 24 verses.² The quick glimpse of the saint in the poem and his sparkling portrait in the epos naturally differ, but not only due to their different lengths. Astonishingly, Fortunatus' 37 different poetic characterizations of the saint³ are far from providing a congruent picture of Martin. Rather, they are forming a varied kaleidoscope of aspects, attributes and associations, some of which are easily relatable to the traditional image of the saint, starting from the *vita* and dialogues of Sulpicius Severus, some hardly at all. While the fact that Martin can have very different appearances in Fortunatus' poems is an obvious truth, we will strive to discover which socio-religious dynamics might have led to the different depictions of the same saint finding entry

1. See Ehlen, 2011, pp. 12-36 for an introduction to the poet's life and times (German) with the remarks of Roberts, 2012, p. 756; see also: Reydellet, 2002, pp. VII-XXVIII (French) and Roberts, 2017, pp. VII-XX (English); an entire monograph on the poet as a historical figure: George, 1992. See also Meyer, 1901, pp. 6-30; Koebner, 1915, pp. 10-119; Godman, 1987, pp. 1-37.

2. On Saint Martin in *Carm.* and *Mart.* see Vielberg, 2006, pp. 98-107; Roberts, 2009, pp. 187-243 with a focus on compositional technique. For Saint Martin in Fortunatus and other authors see Vielberg, 2006; Labarre, 1998 and 2019.

3. *Mart.*; *Carm.* praef. 6; I 2; 4-7; 16; II 13; III 1-3; 6-7; V 1-4; 9; 11; 14; VI 5; VIII 1; 3; 11-12; 15; 20; X 6-7; 10-12a; 14; 17; 19; App. 19; App. 21. All of these are given as in the editions of Quesnel, 2002, and Reydellet, 2002; 2003; 2004, throughout the paper.

into the poetic imagination of one poet, and how this wide array of the saint's appearances is shaping the experience of Fortunatus' readers.

In this paper, we are therefore first going to look at different appearances of Martin as an example for individual appropriation in the Lived Ancient Religion approach,⁴ if the poems are read as expressions of their historical context. This shall be scrutinized in a particularly noteworthy example of flux in different depictions of the same episode from Saint Martin's life in Fortunatus' poetic oeuvre (chapter 2). In a second step, we are going to look at the poems from the perspective of the *Carmina* as a published collection. In this case the experience of the collection's readership is much different from that of the "original"⁵ addressees, as they are offered not only one but many appropriations of the saint at the same time. While we will catalogue the many different Martins of Venantius Fortunatus, we are going to grasp this experience with recourse to Wolfgang Iser's Aesthetics of Reception (chapter 3).⁶ One particularity of Fortunatus' Martin poems is that they are strongly intertwined with the religious sphere of the cult of the saint. This, and the dialogic nature of the reader-text interrelation we will have discovered in the preceding step, opens the Martin-poems in the *Carmina* collection to a new religious reading with the help of Hartmut Rosa's concept Resonance.⁷ The Martin *Carmina* as a whole, we are arguing, are potentially recreating the socio-religious experience of members of a congregation in the cult of Saint Martin (chapter 4).

First of all, in order to add some meat to the theoretical bones of our endeavor, a particularly prominent example of the saint's varying appearances shall begin our round of inspections of the many Martins of Venantius Fortunatus.

4. Rüpke and Degelmann, 2015; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018.

5. Certainty on whether or not the "original" versions were any different from the published versions, which we have, is of course ultimately unavailable to us; for the same problem in Cicero's letters, see Steel, 2005, pp. 43-47; in letter collections in general see Wulfram, 2008, pp. 23-36 and Müller, 2018b, p. 9. We think it is highly unlikely that Fortunatus would have invented the kind of poems we find in his collection from scratch (i.e. without an "original" occasion related to each poem). For all we know, the *Carmina* were collected and circulated, possibly in different stages, mainly by the author himself (George, 1998b; Wood, 2018, pp. 52 and 58) or, concerning some of the later books, by somebody else from the poet's personal archive relatively soon after his death; for an overview, see also Reydellet, 2002, pp. LXVIII-LXXI and Roberts, 2017, pp. VIII and XIX, n. 2. Anyway, the readers of the collection would take the texts and their addressees, many of which but not all are known also from other sources, to be authentic; for a perspective on the *Carmina* with a focus on prosopography see George, 1995; Roberts, 2009, pp. 244-319; and Pucci, 2010.

6. Iser, 1984.

7. Rosa, 2016.

2. THREE VERSIONS OF THE MIRACULOUS GEM-COVERING OF SAINT MARTIN'S ARMS (*MART. IV 305-330; CARM. I 5; X 10*) AS A HISTORICAL EXAMPLE FOR INDIVIDUAL RELIGIOUS APPROPRIATION

One episode from the life of Saint Martin stands out, as it appears quite differently in three different texts of Venantius Fortunatus. This example can therefore, and maybe best of all, shed light on Fortunatus' characterization of the saint in his different accounts. In all versions of the life of Martin, also those of other writers,⁸ the saint's hands or arms are reported to have been covered by radiant gem stones during a church service. The testimony of this story is ascribed to Arborius, a magistrate of Tours. In his epic performance, Fortunatus expands Arborius' vision into a prime example of Jewelled Style.⁹ The miracle is not only enlarged, but the connec-

8. Sulp. Sev., *Dial.* III 10, 6; Paul. Petr., *Mart.* V 695-708.

9. Ven. Fort., *Mart.* IV 305-330: *Nobile quin etiam ex praefecto Arborius effert / signum quod vidit se teste fidelis in urbe. / Inmaculata deo cum dona inponeret arae / et pater attonitus ceremonia diva sacraret / munera vel Christi benediceret ore sacerdos / inposita altari rata corporis atque cruoris, / emicuit subito manus alma decore superbo, / nobilium vario lapidum splendore coruscans. / Undique visa rotae spargens radiatile lumen, / brachia purpureis vibrantia fulgura gemmis, / lumen et ad solis radians lux fulva metallis. / Credula quo potius fierent miracula rerum, / vir simul ipse potens se tunc Arborius inquit / gemmarum gravium crepitantem audisse fragorem. / Sic geminante fide iusti pia dextera fulsit / inque loco manicae micuit translata zmaragdus. / O Martine decens, lapidum velamine compta, / quam nova palla tibi cuius textura coruscans, / trama topazos erat rutilans et stamen iaspis / et tunicae insignes currunt pro vellere gemmae! / Quae manus artificis cataclizica fila rotavit? / Quis fuit hic opifex ubi lana hyacinthina currit? / Quis potuit rigidas torquere ad licia gemmas? / Haec venerando magis poterunt quam fando referri. / Quid secreta petis nec in abdita luminis intrans? / Est homo, quod stupeas ubi nectit gratia telas.* "Yes, also Arborius reports from the time of his prefecture a noble sign, which he truly saw with his own eyes in the city. When the inspired bishop laid down immaculate offerings for God on the altar and celebrated the holy solemn rite and blessed as a priest in his words of Christ that were laid on the altar, as is agreed His body and His blood, suddenly his caring hand shone forth with superb adornment, as it sparkled with the varying splendour of valuable gemstones. On all sides it was seen scattering radiant light like in a circle, flashes that set his lower arms in vibrant motion from the purple gems, and a golden light was seen radiating in its quality similar to the light of the sun from the minerals. To make these miracles of all things more credible, the same powerful man Arborius says that he has at the same time heard the cracking noise from the heavy gemstones. Thus, by twofold witness, the pious hand of the just man was shining and in place of the sleeve twinkled a transformed emerald. O righteous Martin, adorned with a cover of gemstones, what kind of a new cloak do you have, whose texture is shining bright, whose weft was a red topaz and whose warp a jasper, and instead of wool marvellous gems produce the tunic! What kind of an artist's hand spun the encrusted strings? Who was this artist? Where does crocus coloured wool come from? Who could turn the hardy gemstones into strings for weaving? These things could rather be told through venerating bewilderment than through speech. Why do you strive for secrets,

tion between the vision and the miracle story that stands on the preceding position, which is strong in the versions of Sulpicius Severus and Paulinus of Périgueux,¹⁰ is severed. The miracle's position in its context is thereby strengthened.¹¹ Otherwise, Fortunatus' first depiction of the miracle stays true to the facts given by Sulpicius Severus and again by Paulinus of Périgueux.

This constancy is changed on two occasions when one looks at the depictions of the same miracle in Fortunatus' *Carmina*. The story is retold in Fortunatus' poem for the *secretarium* of St. Martin in the vicinity of Tours Cathedral.¹² Here, the story of the miraculous gem-covering is brought in close relation with another story about the saint (*Carm.* I 5, 7-20):

*Hic se nudato tunica vestivit egenum
dum tegit algentem, plus calet ipse fide.
Tum vili tunica vestitur et ipse sacerdos
processitque inopi tegmine summus honor.
Qui tamen altaris sacra dum mysteria tractat,
signando calicem, signa beata dedit.
Namque viri sacro de vertice flamma refulsit
ignis et innocui surgit ad astra globus
ac brevibus manicis, fieret ne iniuria dextrae,
texerunt gemmae qua caro nuda fuit:
brachia nobilium lapidum fulgore coruscant
inque loco tunicae pulchra zmaragdus erat.
Quam bene mercatur qui dum vestivit egenum,
Tegmine pro tunicae brachia gemma tegit.*

“Here, having stripped himself of it, he clothed a poor man with his tunic:¹³ while he clothed one man freezing, he is becoming warmer by his faith. Then he got dressed

when you cannot enter in the mysteries of light? Man, there is much for you to wonder at, where grace is weaving textures”. Cf. Roberts, 2010.

10. Sulp. Sev., *Dial.* III 10, 5; Paul. Petr., *Mart.* V 695-698; for introductions and notes to the two texts see Petschenig, 1888; Fontaine and Dupré, 2006; Labarre, 2016.

11. Labarre, 1998, p. 106.

12. For the location see Sulp. Sev., *Dial.* II, 1, 2; cf. Pietri, 1983, pp. 363 and 825.

13. Like in the earlier versions, *nudato* does not need to be understood as “completely undressed” but rather together with *tunica* in the ablative, which refers *apokoinou* as well to *vestivit*, as “stripped of his tunic” (but still dressed with his cloak). Nevertheless, the idea of Martin being undressed (*nudato*), and therefore cold, appears to be more drastic here than in Sulpicius' dialogues, where it is explicitly mitigated by the explanation that the diacon on seeing him did not understand that Martin was not properly dressed, because he was still covered with his cloak: Sulp. Sev., *Dial.* II 1, 7.

in a cheap tunic, and he a bishop, and goes on, the highest honour, in a vile garment. Nonetheless, as he handles the holy sacraments of the altar, when drawing a cross at the chalice, he himself gave forth miraculous signs. Because from the top of the holy man's head a flame started, and a globe of unharmed fire rose to the stars, and, to make sure that no injustice would be done to his hand, gems covered for his short sleeves where his flesh was bare: his arms shone with the glow of valuable gemstones, and in the place of his tunic there was a beautiful emerald. How well did he barter whom, when he clothed a poor man, a gemstone covers his arms instead of the garment of his tunic!"

The miracle of the gem-covering is combined with the story of Martin's generosity towards a poor man at the cathedral in Tours and the miraculous appearance of a globe of fire from the saint's head during the following church service (Sulp. Sev., *Dial.* II 1, 1 – II 2, 2). The combination of the two stories in this poem is remarkable, as it shifts the weight of the story from the altruistic stance of the saint, which is recognized by God but left unrewarded, towards the glorious reward already in this world. This can best be grasped in the closing distich of the episode (19-20), which contrasts the garment Martin gives away with the one he is given by God, and calls the whole procedure "a good deal" (*quam bene mercatur*).

Another *carmen* shows this shift as clearly: Fortunatus' poem on the oratory of Artanne, in the region of Tours,¹⁴ gives, in a list of saints who can be venerated in the place, a short version of, again, the miracle of the gem-covering in relation to the clothing of the pauper (*Carm.* X 10, 15-20):

*Martinusque sacer, retinet quem Gallicus orbis,
cuius Christum operit dimidiata clamis,
se tunica spolians nudum qui vestit egenum,
unde datae sibi sunt alba topazus onyx,
quae meruere aliqui hoc in corpore cernere sancti,
gemmarumque sonus quod patefecit opus.*

"And the holy Martin, whom the Gallic country holds, whose halved cloak covers the Christ, who, robbing himself of his tunic, clothed a poor man, for which reason he was given pearl, topaz and onyx, which some have deserved the privilege to see in the very body of the saint, and which fact the sound of the gems has revealed".

14. Cf. Pietri, 1983, p. 826 for the location.

Here, the miraculous gem-covering has replaced the miracle of the fiery globe entirely. The effect is the same: Martin's charitable deed is paid back immediately with "pearl, topaz and onyx". How can the remarkable changes of the renditions of the same episode of Saint Martin's life between Fortunatus' epic and his poems be explained? Fortunatus' rendition of the episode in his epic is more similar to the versions by Paulinus of Périgueux and Sulpicius Severus. Even though Fortunatus expands the episode and cuts its logical dependency on the preceding episode, the basic elements and, importantly, the order and the borders of the different episodes stay unchanged. It is unquestionably an interest of the epic text to be recognizably a descendant of the tradition of Sulpicius Severus' saint's life.

For the poems on the saint's *secretarium* in Tours and his place of worship in Artanne in the vicinity of Tours, other considerations come into play. Most visibly in the second poem, Martin is given a stronger miracle with a local focus on Tours. The different episodes the poem merges into one provide each a different aspect that is meaningful for the context: the episode of Martin's gift of his tunic to the poor man can be placed in all versions clearly in the surroundings of the cathedral of Tours.¹⁵ It is otherwise a prime example of Martin's charitable virtue, highly reminiscent of the most emblematic story about the saint – the dividing of his cloak in Amiens. The comparison between the two episodes is made explicit in the rendition of the episode in Fortunatus' epic, where the clothing of the pauper in Tours is given as a heightening of the dividing of the cloak in Amiens, as the earlier deed of Amiens had the saint retain half of his garment while in Tours he gave it up completely to the poor man.¹⁶ While the charitable deed of Tours appears to be more virtuous in comparison to the charitable deed of Amiens, connecting the story with Arborius' vision of the gemstones heightens the idea of divine retribution already in this world: the saint, who gives away his tunic, is given a better tunic by God. Even though divine recognition for the saint's deed is already present in the earlier version of the story in the miracle of the fiery globe, the identity of the object given and the object received makes the idea of divine intervention on behalf of the virtuous human being particularly visible.

The changes in the same story in the two *carmina* in comparison to the epos and the tradition of Sulpicius Severus' saint's life have the following effect: they strengthen

15. Sulp. Sev., *Dial.* II 1; Paul. Petr., *Mart.* IV 21-95; Ven. Fort., *Mart.* III 24-73.

16. *Mart.* III 65-68: *Tegmine pro nudi cupiens procedere nudus / nec partiris opem sed totum cedis egen- ti, / haec tua sola putans, petitus si nulla negasses, / ut magis esses inops, inopi dum cuncta dedisses.* "As you wish to go undressed for the clothing of an undressed man, you do not share your wealth but give it entirely to the one in need, as you only believe this to be your share, if, when asked you do not refuse anything, so that you will rather be helpless, when you give everything to a helpless man".

the aspect of the divine reward in the world in a saint's legend that was formerly mainly concerned with altruistic behaviour for its own sake, although recognized by God and the community. These changes are applied to a story that is, already in the epos and the tradition of the *vita*, (1) unquestionably connected to the location of Tours, (2) constructed as a heightening of the saint's most emblematic story, the dividing of his cloak in Amiens. The *Carmina*-version of the story is therefore particularly well adapted to serve the needs of the clergy of Tours, for whose wishes the poems, possibly inscriptions, for the *secretarium* of Tours and the oratory of Artanne, were tailored.¹⁷ They show Martin as a successful negotiator with God, rather than a mere idealist, whose virtuous deeds are generously rewarded. The connection to Tours and its surroundings is particularly strong. Readers of the two *carmina* are encouraged to find in Martin a powerful entity which provides heavenly interventions in this world and in Tours the logical place, where to address this entity.

The two different characterizations of the saint in the epic and the two *carmina* show how the poet caters for different needs depending on the context of his work. The epic poem needs to be in tune with the traditional rendering of the story to please well-read audiences. The occasional poems connected to places can deal with the story more freely, but show the events in a way that strengthens the position of the local commissioners of the poems. The phenomenon here observed is a poignant example of individual religious appropriation, as defined in the Lived Ancient Religion approach.¹⁸ While undoubtedly referring to shared knowledge and a generally shared narrative about Saint Martin, Venantius Fortunatus is taking the freedom to adapt his rendition of the episode to the needs of his respective addressees. In this case, and as we will see in the following chapter, Fortunatus is using the mechanics of individual religious appropriation to cater, as far as we can see, not so much for his own but for the particular individual or group religious needs of others.

This chapter has given a poignant historical example for individual religious appropriation in Fortunatus' Martin-poems as source material for the interests of the clergy of Tours in the characterization of the saint. In the next chapter, we are shifting

17. On the interplay of religious literature and politics in the Francia see Brennan, 1997; Labarre (forthcoming); on the connection of the family of Gregory of Tours with the cult of the saint see Wood, 2002. On Fortunatus as a political poet in his time see George, 1998a, pp. 227-228. Artanne (modern Artannes-sur-Indre), 20 km away from Tours, clearly is a different place from Tours; the highlighting of a miracle of Saint Martin with a strong local connection to Tours also in Artanne points to the successful exportation of the idea of the special connection between the saint and his city to the surrounding areas by the clergy of Tours.

18. Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, pp. 570 and 573.

our perspective to the literary sphere. Having said this, nearly all of the examples that follow, if considered through the eyes of a historian, would work just as well as further historical examples of individual religious appropriation, which shall not prevent us from using them quite differently.

3. THE MANY MARTINS OF VENANTIUS FORTUNATUS. A LITERARY PERSPECTIVE AND A CATALOGUE

In the preceding chapter, two of Fortunatus' poetic descriptions of Saint Martin have been analyzed with a focus on the perspectives of the supposed historical addressees of the poems. The *Carmina* where these, and all the following poems, stem from, have, at least for the greater part, been published as a collection by Venantius Fortunatus during his lifetime.¹⁹ Although Fortunatus probably collected, arranged and published poems he had sent to specific addressees before,²⁰ the reading experience of a reading audience of a collection of poems is quite different from that of the (explicit) addressee of a single occasional poem on an occasion. Focusing on the poetic characterizations of Saint Martin in the poems, it can be stated that a specific addressee, such as the clergymen of Tours, who supposedly commissioned the *carmina* treated in the last chapter, would find in "their" poems characterizations that were tailored to their individual needs or preferences. A general audience does not share in this privilege. Much more than that, they are confronted with a wide variety of saint's depictions tailor-made for somebody else, which are not only not congenial to them but also incongruous one to the other.

Before we delve deeper into the implications of this text-reader situation, we are going to prove the mixed nature of the different characterizations of Saint Martin and provide a catalogue of representative examples, starting from the ones least conspicuous, working towards the most particular ones.²¹

19. See *supra* n. 4.

20. See *supra* n. 4.

21. This catalogue of characterizations of Saint Martin in the *Carmina* does not claim to be a systematic overview over characterizations of the saint or saints in general or the sources for these characterizations; for such see for example Saxer, 1986; van Uytvanghe, 1987 and 1998. It also does not provide a detailed analysis of the cultural implications of the different views on Saint Martin in the 6th cent., but only wants to show the variety of characterizations in the *Carmina*; the order of the categories is therefore not meant to be understood as an evaluation of attributes of Saint Martin in general but only internal to the *Carmina* from "merely conventional and very common" to "rather singular and specific to a particular occasion".

3.1. MARTIN AS A PROVIDER OF DIVINE GOODWILL

Martin's least noteworthy appearances seem to be instances when Martin is referred to most generally as a provider of divine goodwill or direct intervention.²² This is the case for example in *Carm.* V 11, where Martin, together with the Holy Cross, is called upon for having provided the poet with a safe journey from Tours to Poitiers, even though the road was frozen over.²³ The choice of the Holy Cross and the saint is connected with the two places, Martin being the former bishop of Tours, and Poitiers famously holding Gaul's only relic of the Holy Cross. This leads to a second category of Martin's appearances in Fortunatus' poetic oeuvre.

3.2. MARTIN AS A LOCAL PATRON

Often the saint simply represents his former episcopal see, the city of Tours, the region of Touraine or Gaul as a whole. Examples for this use of the saint in the *Carmina* are among the most numerous.²⁴ Of these, Martin's mention in Fortunatus' poem to Bishop Martin of Braga can be given as fittingly as any other. In a list of regions and their respective saints, meant to position the contemporary Martin among the other regional patrons as a newly found patron for Iberian Gallaecia, Martin of Tours stands as patron for Gaul.²⁵ Similarly, in Fortunatus' poem for the *adventus* of Gregory, the accession to the episcopal see in Tours by the Auvergnese is described as a gift by Julian of Brioude, a famous Auvergnese saint, to Saint Martin.²⁶ While the first two categories border on mere figures of speech with little or no content value attached to them, the following offer deeper insight in the way Martin is used to create meaning in Fortunatus' poetry.

22. The power of saints might be a more independent force in the eyes of their late antique/early medieval followers than would appear to later Christians, see Brown, 2015, pp. 107-113.

23. *Carm.* V 11, 7-8: *Sed crucis auxilio, Martini operante patrono, / perveni ad matres salvus, opime pater.* "But with the help of the cross and with the efficacy of our patron Martin / I have arrived safe at our mothers', my caring father". Similar examples are *Carm.* praef. 6; App. 19, 3-4; App. 21, 13-14.

24. *Carm.* praef. 6; III 3; 6-7; V 2-3; 14; VI 5; VIII 3; 11; 15; X 14; 17; App. 21.

25. *Carm.* V 2, 15-16: *Ne morer adcelerans, Martini Gallia prisci / excellente fide luminis arma capit.* "I am speeding things up, so I do not cause delay: Gaul, by the outstanding faith of the earlier Martin, takes on the arms of light". Other than this poem proposes, Martin's patronage for all of Gaul seems to have been contested by other saints' cults, some of them dearer to the ruling Merovingians. Postulating Martin as a patron of all of Gaul in the 6th cent. CE likely follows a particular agenda of the clergy of Tours. Cf. van Dam, 1993, pp. 24-27.

26. *Carm.* V 3, 11-12: *Martino proprium mittit Iulianus alumnum / et fratri praebet quod sibi dulce fuit.* "Julian sends his own foster child to Martin and presents to his brother, what was dear to himself".

3.3. MARTIN AS AN IMAGE OF THE IDEAL BISHOP

The bishop-saint is often presented as an ideal image for a bishop, most of the time for a bishop of Tours.²⁷ This third category of course overlaps with the second in its connection to the place. The range in the quality of the connections between the addressees and the exemplary bishop vary widely, though. Many poems give Martin as an example for other bishops in a stereotypical fashion. In this way, one of the laudatory poem-letters to bishop Eufronius of Tours, Gregory's predecessor, assures the bishop that he has been put in charge of his see by Martin due to his general fitness to follow in the saint's footsteps.²⁸ Other poems, however, put emphasis on particular aspects of Martin's episcopate to address living bishops in particular circumstances: In Fortunatus' poem to Bishop Gregory for the case of the abbess Leuovera during the nuns' revolt of 589,²⁹ Gregory is expressly asked to maintain order in the monastery of Sainte-Croix to match the example of Saint Martin (*Carm.* VIII 12, 5-8):

*Tu tamen, alme pater, pietatis amore labora
ut sacer antistes, culmina cuius habes,
unde repraesentes Martinum in tempore sacrum,
cursibus atque fide dando salutis opem.*

"You, though, caring father, work hard out of your love for piety like the holy bishop, whose high office you are holding, so that you will bring Martin, the man holy in eternal time, back into being by giving the help of your goodness through your haste and your belief".

The logic of the passage lies in the assumption that Bishop Saint Martin, out of his practical-mindedness maybe, if he had still been in charge, would have helped the abbess of Sainte-Croix swiftly. Gregory, if he wants to match Martin as archbishop of his diocese, needs to act as swiftly. The comparison with the saint here aims at a very particular set of traits, practical-mindedness and swiftness, both of which are none of the characteristics the saint is usually acclaimed for. The traits are, though, the ones Fortunatus wants to evoke in his addressee.

27. *Carm.* I 16; III 1-3; 6; V 1-2; 4; 9; 14; VIII 12; 15; 20; X 11-12a. See Ehlen, 2011, pp. 66-87 for an exemplary interpretation of *Carm.* V 1.

28. *Carm.* III 3, 23-24: *Martinus meritis hac vos in sede locavit / dignus eras heres, qui sua iussa colis.* "Martin has put you in your place due to your merits; you were a worthy heir, as you honor his orders".

29. Cf. Greg. Tur., *Franc.* IX 39; X 15-16.

Another example for a particular use of Saint Martin in relation to his episcopate can be found in Fortunatus' *abecedarium* to Bishop Leontius of Bordeaux. Leontius had been threatened with an attempt by one of his presbyters to overturn his episcopate.³⁰ The poem in favor of the bishop in charge stresses the incompatibility of a bishop's honors and the ambition to acquire them.³¹ This statement is underlined by a list of known Church Fathers and bishops, among them Saint Martin, who did not actively pursue their episcopate (*Carm.* I 16, 37-40):

*Karus sacerdos ordinem
Hilarius non ambiit,
Martinus illud effugit,
Gregorius vix sustulit.*

"Our dear Bishop Hilarius did not ask for this rank, Martin fled it, Gregory hardly suffered it".

Martin fits in this list as he is reported to have accepted his episcopate only under pressure from the mob of Tours and having resisted the honor for quite a while also afterwards.³² Hilarius and Martin clearly make the list, as they are the most famous saint-bishops of Gaul.³³ Gregory of Nazianzus is famous for his speech on his episcopate, in which he defends himself for having run away from the burden of church leadership as he at first hadn't deemed himself capable of bearing it.³⁴ The Cappadocian of the 4th cent. is a natural example for the poem's case, as his speech on his episcopate prominently defined the virtues of the ideal bishop and used "resistance to the election out of humility", a *topos* in the narrated lives of bishops.³⁵ However, the poem chooses one particular aspect of Martin's life, which is otherwise not attested in the *Carmina*, to strengthen the case of its addressee Leontius and delegitimize the rebellious presbyter.

30. *Carm.* I 16, 5-16.

31. *Carm.* I 16, 33-36: *Ineptus est quis ipse se / praeferre vult ecclesiae. / Nam rem sacratam sumere / electio divina sit!* "Unfit is he who wants to put himself at the head of the church. Because the taking on of sacred offices shall happen by divine choice!"

32. Sulp. Sev., *Mart.* IX.

33. Unquestionably, they are also the ones closest to the later bishop of Poitiers and client of Gregory of Tours.

34. Greg. Naz., *Or.* II.

35. The earliest example we are aware of is Pontius' life of St. Cyprian, *Pont., Cyp.* V.

3.4. MARTIN AS AN EXAMPLE FOR GENEROSITY

While humble resistance to the episcopal office appears only once in Fortunatus' different characterizations of the saint, other narratives figure more prominently. The fourth category shows Martin as an example for generosity, usually connected with the emblematic story of the division of the cloak.³⁶ Also, this most typical representation of the saint comes in various shades, three of which shall be presented here. In a quite unremarkable sense, which is reminiscent of the general uses of the saint in the first two categories, Martin can stand as a point of reference for all acts of generosity. In a letter of thanksgiving to his patron Gregory, Fortunatus employs the saint to compare Gregory's generosity towards him with that of the saint (*Carm.* VIII 20, 1-2):

*Munifici reparans Martini gesta, Gregori,
textit ut ille habitu nos alis ipse cibo.*

“Renewing the deeds of charitable Martin, o Gregory, like he covered somebody with his garment, you nourish me with food.”

The poet feels nourished by his patron because he has been awarded a piece of land from Gregory's domain (*agellum*), which shall in the future guarantee the poet's well-being. The tertium comparationis in this case is the act of giving and the charitable intention of the giver. The things given and the station of the receivers differ to a great extent, as Martin gives his own clothes to a poor man, while Gregory gives a piece of land to a fellow member of the clerical elite, the poet. Still, the poet manages to adapt the diverging facts into one narrative of charitable giving.³⁷

In another example, Martin's kind of charity is mirrored more closely by the addressee of the poem. Count Sigoald is praised for his successful project of organized almsgiving to the poor for the sake of young King Childebert II. A first discourse explains the logic of Martin's generosity without naming the saint.³⁸ Having proven

36. *Carm.* I 2; 7; II 13; III 1; VIII 20; X 10; 17; App. 19.

37. *Carm.* 8, 20, 5-8: *Ut clamidem ille prius, sic tu partiris agellum, / ille tegendo potens tuque fovendo decens, / ille inopem antiquum relevans, tu, care, novellum: / fit dives merito paupere quisque suo.* “As he earlier his cloak, so you divide your land, while he, helpful as he covers, and you, decent as you nourish, while he relieved a helpless man in old times, you, my friend, the same just now: both become rich by the merit of their poor man”.

38. *Carm.* X 17, 1-20; specially: 11-14: *Divitibus plus praestat egens quam dives egenti: / dat moritura cibi, sumit opima Dei, / dans terrae nummum missurus ad astra talentum, / ex modicis granis surgat ut alta seges.* “The poor gives more to the rich than the rich to the poor: he gives ephemeral goods of nour-

himself a follower of the saint in the truest sense by his charitable acts, Sigoald is now coming to Tours to pray and thereby bring the favor of the saint to his king.³⁹

Yet one last instance of Martin as an example for charity gives the most creative employment of the charitable saint so far. The poem in honor of the basilica dedicated to the saint by Basilius and Baudegunde shows Martin's overflowing generosity put in relation to the overflowing river that graciously gave way for the church of the saint.⁴⁰ We therefore find Martin's exemplary generosity applied in more conventional but also more creative ways, but seemingly always adaptable to the particular goals of each specific poem.

3.5. MARTIN AS HEALER

Another area of expertise of the saint are his healing powers. Like his generosity, this attribute of the saint is used in very different contexts. All of them seem to have relatively little to do with contexts of healing. The seemingly most fitting depiction of the saint as healer is given in Fortunatus' poem about the basilica dedicated to the saint by Bishop Leontius, where a local healing cult or a biographical reference to the *euergetes* may have played together with Martin's mention. The saint is shown as capable of healing leprosy but apparently as an example for his miracle working in general.⁴¹ Similarly, Martin's healing powers are given as an example of the saint's power, this

ishment, he receives the riches of God, as he spends a coin on the Earth, to send a heavenly talent to the stars, to the effect that from few seeds a high crop will grow".

39. *Carm.* X 17, 27-30: *Hinc ad Martini venerandi limina pergens / auxilium domini dum rogat ipse sui / et dum illuc moderans rex pro regione laborat, / ut precibus sanctus hunc iuuet, illud agit.* "As he goes on from there to the doorstep of venerable Martin and while he asks himself for the help of his master, so that the saint will help the king with his prayers, while at the same time the king is working elsewhere in his moderate way for the good of the empire, [the saint] does just this".

40. *Carm.* I 7, 3-4, 9-10: *Pulchra per angustos ut surgeret aula meatus, / etsi mons vetuit, praebuit unda locum. / [...] Sic, Martine, tuus honor amplius ubique meretur / ut loca nulla negent, quo tibi festa sonent.* "So that a beautiful church can rise in a narrow valley, even if the mountain forbid, the flood offered the space. [...] In this way, Martin, your full honour is everywhere deserved, so that no places refuse you, that your holidays sound forth".

41. *Carm.* I 6, 7-10: *Martini meritis et nomine fulta coruscant, / quem certum est terris signa dedisse poli. / Qui leprae maculas medicata per oscula purgans / pacis ab amplexu morbida bella tulit.* "[The church] glows brightly built in the merits and name of Martin, of whom is known for sure that he gave signs of heaven on earth. He, who drives away the blemishes of leprosy by means of healing kisses, won deadly battles with peaceful embrace".

time *post mortem*, in the poem to Bishop Gregory on the freeing of a young girl.⁴² Here, the reference is given only in the description of the place where the young girl came from and gives an example of the saint's charity, now to be emulated by the current bishop of Tours.⁴³

Interestingly, Martin's healing powers are also used as a personal reference to the poet in the *Carmina*. In the epilogue of Fortunatus' *Vita Martini*, the poet informs his recipients that he has originally come to Tours to redeem a vow he had once made to Saint Martin, as a young man still in Italy, for the healing of his eyes.⁴⁴ The reference in the *carmen* for the freeing of a young girl, where Saint Martin is presented as one who can restore eyesight, is thus also a reference to the same healing event in Fortunatus' (public) life, showing the helpfulness of the saint most credibly in the words of one who knows from his own experience. The significance of this implicit use of the poet's public persona can best be grasped with the toolset of Wolfgang Iser's *Aesthetics of Reception*: The poem (*Carm.* X 12a) does not state *expressis verbis* what we have just inferred. The inferring on any informed reader's part, though, is as surely inscribed in the text, as the information about the saint's reliability as a healer of blind people is a strong argument for the freeing of the girl only if brought forward by one who is himself a living proof of this reliability.⁴⁵ The text is using information that it does not provide to create meaning in cooperation with the reader, who is invited to fill the blank spots – *Leerstellen* – of the text.⁴⁶ In *Carm.* X 12a, Bishop Gregory is

42. For the importance of healing and exorcism as proofs of a saint's power in the cult of the saints in general, see Brown, 2015, pp. 106-128.

43. *Carm.* V 14, 1-8: *Cum graderer festinus iter, pater alme Gregori, / qua praecessoris sunt pia signa tui, – / quod fertur convulsa iacens radicitus arbor / Martini ante preces exiluisse comis; / quae fidei merito nunc stat spargendo medellas, / corpora multa medens, cortice nuda manens – / fletibus huc lugent genitor genetrisque puellam / voce implendo auras et lacrimando genas.* "As I am walking hastily on the way, my caring father Gregory, where the sacred signs of your predecessor are – because they say that a tree that was turned over from its root and lying about, had, in the face of Martin's prayer, sprung back up with its foliage; this same [tree] stands now, thanks to the merit of faith, to share out medecin, as it heals many bodies staying behind with its bark peeled off –, a father and mother mourn their daughter with sighs in this very place, filling the air with their wailing and wetting their cheeks with tears".

44. *Mart.* IV 686-687.

45. The order of publication of *Mart.* and *Carm.* X cannot be determined with certainty. It appears likely, though, that the epic poem could have been published already in the 570s (Quesnel, 2002, pp. XV-XVII), *Carm.* X not earlier than the 590s (George, 1998b, p. 36).

46. Cf. Iser, 1984, pp. 79 and 286.

appealed to to work the same wonder as the saint and cure the eyesight of the girl's father by taking steps towards her freedom and thereby stopping him from crying.⁴⁷

Logically related to the theme of healing is the resurrection of the dead.⁴⁸ Although this is, like the theme of healing, well attested in the saint's life,⁴⁹ it features only twice in the characterizations of Martin in the *Carmina*. This is especially noteworthy because resurrections are not a common capacity of saints, but rather a size of miracle reserved for Christ only. If Martin is said to perform resurrections, this would clearly distinguish him from other saints as a particularly effective *imitator Christi* (see *infra* 3.6.). Consequently, the *carmen* to Martin of Braga names this ability of the saint as an example of Martin's greatness that raises the expectations also towards the homonymous bishop.⁵⁰ The other example⁵¹ shall be treated below under the heading of Martin's depiction as a close follower of Christ (see *infra* 3.6.). The relative paucity of wonders of resurrection in the characterizations of Saint Martin by the *Carmina* in spite of their potential to lift Martin above other saints attests to the uneven distribution of characteristics taken from the lives into the poems. Martin is not characterized as in the saint's life, but according to the needs of the poems.

3.6. MARTIN MODELLED ON CHRIST

A sixth group of poems shows Martin as the possessor of virtues that are otherwise only ascribed to Christ.⁵² Although *imitatio Christi* is a common frame for saints' descriptions, these poems show Martin in an unusual way that exceeds the expres-

47. *Carm.* X 12a, 5-10: *Hic igitur gerulus genitam flens impie demptam, / captivam subolem tempore pacis habens, / Martinique pii successor honore, Gregori, / qui pater es populi, hanc, rogo, redde patri. / Iugiter ille sacris meritis inluminat orbos: / orbato hanc patri redde videndo diem.* "This letter bearer, therefore, cries for his daughter, who has been wrongly condemned. As you have his captive child in the eternity of your peace, Gregory, successor in honor of pious Martin, you who are a father to your people, give her back, I beg you, to her father. Time and time again he has enlightened people robbed of their sight by his sacred gifts. Give this father who is robbed of his child back, that he can see his daylight".

48. van Dam, 1993, pp. 109-114 shows the relationship between the resurrection of all humans in their flesh at judgement day and saintly miracles of healing as preparatory cleansings/preservations of the bodies for this day (cf. Moss, 2011). He does not mention the individual miracles of resurrection of Saint Martin, but it is easy to extend his argument about healings also to these resurrections as a kind of healing.

49. Sulp. Sev., *Mart.* VII 2.

50. *Carm.* V 1, 10.

51. *Carm.* X 11.

52. *Carm.* I 6-7; V 1; X 7; 11.

sions of worship that have been addressed under the earlier categories. The Christ-like characterization of the saint seems to come with particular reasons to have him characterized this way. In two poems Martin is presented in ways that are strongly reminiscent of Christ at Easter: In the poem for the *convivium* with the royal tax collectors at Tours, Christ and the saint are brought together by the convergence of the time of Christ, Easter, and the place of the saint, an unspecified “hall of heavenly Martin” around Tours, and, respectively, the table of the saint.⁵³ Time and place work together to make the unquestionable importance of Christ and the possibly contested importance of the saint merge into one. In the context of the meeting with the tax collectors this must have been important as Martin’s special status was usually given as reason for the exemption of Tours from royal taxes.⁵⁴ It is therefore, as we hinted at above (3.5.), also no coincidence that Martin is depicted as one who can resurrect the dead just after a passage saying the same about Christ.⁵⁵

An even further adaptation of Christ-specific attributes to Saint Martin is found in Fortunatus’ poem for Saint Martin’s Day for Brunichild and Childebert II. The coming of the saint with the morning light is modelled on Christ’s coming on Easter Sunday.⁵⁶ Even more conspicuous is the depiction of Martin’s omnipresence as an immaterial heavenly being crucified on the world (*Carm.* X 7, 9-10):

*Hunc Oriens, Occasus habet, hunc Africa et Arctus:
Martini decus est quo loca mundus habet;*

“East and West are his stations, South and North: the glow of Martin is everywhere where there are places in the world”

53. *Carm.* X 11, 7-12 and 31-32: *Ecce dies, in quo Christus surrexit ab imo / [...] Additur hic aliud, quod Martini aula beati / emicat haec ubi nunc prandia festa fluunt [...]. [...] quos invitavit Martini mensa beati, / sumite gaudentes quod dat amore dies.* “See the day, when Christ resurrected from the depth [...]. Here another thing is added: This hall of heavenly Martin shines brightly, where now the festive supper is brought on [...] you, whom the table of heavenly Martin invites, take up with joy what this day provides out of love”. For suggestions for the exact place compare Reydellet, 2004, p. 88 and Pietri, 1983, pp. 424-425.

54. Greg. Tur., *Franc.* IX 30.

55. *Carm.* X 11, 7-16: [...] *et revomunt multos Tartara fracta viros* (10) / [...] *qui pie restituit defuncta cadavera vitae* (15) / [...]. “[...] and the overpowered hell spews out many men [...] he [*scil.* Martin] who has brought lifeless corpses back to life [...]”.

56. *Carm.* X 7, 3-4: *ecce supervenit venerandi in saecula civis / Martini meritis luce perenne dies.* “See, the day of Martin, venerable citizen in eternity due to his deeds, comes upon us with perennial light”. Similar depictions of light in the context of the coming of Easter morning see *Carm.* III 9, 5-8, 39-42, 61-66, 75-76.

The description of Martin's omnipresence in the world forms a cross with the beam going from East (*Oriens*) to West (*Occasus*) and the trunk from South (*Africa*) to North (*Arctus*). The beam is an axis from O to O, the trunk an axis from A to A, reminding of Christ's famous "I am the Alpha and the Omega,"⁵⁷ which is often depicted with the cross.⁵⁸

The poem shows Martin on Martin's Day conspicuously similar to Christ on Easter Sunday morning. The assimilation of the saint to Christ is happening in both poems in a similar context. Both poems address the Merovingian kings and queens of Austrasia, Tours' far-away rulers, or their representatives.⁵⁹ In as much as Martin's special patronage over all of Gaul was a contested fact and therefore a particular project of the clergy of Tours,⁶⁰ it could be deemed useful to depict the saint as particularly close to Christ when addressing the kings.

3.7. MARTIN'S MERIT

The seventh light from which the saint is made to shine on the contexts of the *Carmina* is Martin's merit. *Meritum Martini* is a recurring phrase in Fortunatus' Martin poems,⁶¹ not only for the alliteration but also for the concept of Martin's superior virtue. Again, this theme is taken up both stereotypically but also with creative renovation. In the short poem in honor of Gregory's anniversary in his office as bishop for example, the poet uses the *meritum Martini* to strengthen the bishop in his duties towards his flock⁶² – do it like Martin did of old! Here, the poem is using Martin's merits in a context that is most conducive to a traditional reading of the saint's merit: Martin was a good bishop, therefore, by imitation of Martin's hard work, Gregory can be a good bishop as well.

57. Apc., XXII 13: *ego A et Ω primus et novissimus principium et finis*.

58. It is noteworthy that the o-words come before the a-words in the text in an apparent reversal of the quote; possibly the recipients are meant to identify the presence of alpha and omega with the cross only after they have identified and imagined the cross. Such an interest in the shift of levels of meaning (here: from the level of the text to the level of the geometrical shape) is reminiscent of the intexts in Fortunatus' figure poems.

59. *Carm.* X 7, 61 and 67; 11, 25.

60. van Dam, 1993, pp. 24-27.

61. *Carm.* I 4, 2; III 2, 5; V 4, 1; X 19, 19.

62. *Carm.* V 4, 1-2: *Martini meritis per tempora longa, Gregori, / Turonicum foveas pastor in urbe gregem*. "With the help of Martin's merits, Gregory, you shall take care of the flock of Tours as shepherd for a long time!"

The other example takes Martin's merits to a quite different context and therefore must narrow its *tertium comparationis* to a much narrower breadth: in his gratulatory letter-poem to Galactorius for his recently acquired countship, the poet argues with the merit of the count and compares him, quite specifically in the nature of his merit, to Saint Martin (*Carm.* X 19, 1-2; 17-20):

*Venisti tandem ad quod debebaris, amice,
ante comes merito, quam datus esset honor. [...]
Hoc et in ecclesia Christo tribuente refertur:
de exorcista aliquo pontificalis honor.
Egregius merito Martinus testis habetur,
qui fuit ante sacer, quam sacra iura daret.*

“You have finally arrived at the rank that was owed to you, my friend, you, who was count by merit, before he had been given the honor. [...] This can also be said when it comes to the church, with Christ sharing out the offices: from an anybody exorcist on to the honor of a bishop! Martin, noble because of his merit, can be taken as a witness for this, who was a holy man, before he laid down the sacred oaths”.

Martin and Galactorius are similar only in that they had both already been worthy of the office they are holding before they were given it. The *meritum Martini* usually applied as a certain set of virtues of a bishop is here applied freely to serve the needs of the praise of the count.

The list of examples, apart from being an interesting account of the versatility of Saint Martin in Fortunatus' poetry, can show two things: (1) the variety of different characterizations of the saint the recipients of the collection are confronted with, but also (2) that in many instances the meaning of the texts is not restricted to what the text says *expressis verbis*. We have hinted at this phenomenon in the example of *Carm.* X 12a, where the topic of the healing of the eyes guides the reader to take account of the personal involvement of the poet (see *supra* 3.5). Another example would be the discourse about richness and generosity in *Carm.* I 7 applied to Saint Martin and applied to the stream that generously gave way for the saint's church to be built; the reader has to add information about Saint Martin and the nature of his richness, which is not *expressis verbis* in the poem, to make the poem meaningful (see *supra* 3.4). By far the best example to see the interplay of text and reader at work is the last poem in our catalogue, *Carm.* X 19, the praise of Count Galactorius.

Again Wolfgang Iser's Aesthetics of Reception can help to understand the complicated operation this poem makes in its different readers' minds: in the first twelve verses, Galactorius is praised as a statesman and military commander, both for feats he has already accomplished, the offices of *defensor*, judge and count, and the title of duke he can still hope for.⁶³ The initial statement of the poem, that Galactorius was one who had been worthy of the countship already before he got it (vv. 1-2), is put to practice on the office of duke: five entire verses (out of twelve dealing with his *cursus honorum*) are dedicated to the imagination of what Galactorius will achieve when he will be duke. This imagination of Galactorius as duke is entirely given in consecutive clauses, depending on *debet et ipse potens* – “[The king] must do this, as it is in his power, so that...”. The countship that this poem celebrates is shown as just another step in a succession of ranks and titles the unfolding of which is shown to be from the beginning set in motion by the king, serves entirely for the good of the nation, and seems to be already fixed. The text, in what Wolfgang Iser calls *Kontingenz* (“contingency”),⁶⁴ works against the judgement of the implicit reader: Galactorius is shown as a man who is hastening from one title of honor to the next, so that the achievement he has just made is shown to serve only as a step to the next. The laudatory poem of his countship actually focuses on his imaginary merits as duke. In as much as the readers are guided to see in the poem's praise a reflection of the view of the one praised, he must appear as a careerist for whom every position only matters as a step to the next, who is never in the now and only in the potentials. Yet, the poem says *expressis verbis* that exactly this hustle through offices is service to king, country and community in the best sense. This contingency reaches its peak when Saint Martin is introduced. Saint and count are made equal in their *meritum*, an act of particular

63. *Carm X 19, 1-12: Venisti tandem ad quod debebaris, amice, / ante comes merito quam datus esset honor. / Burdegalensis eras et, cum defensor, amator: / dignus habebaris haec duo digna regens. / Iudicio regis valuisti crescere iudex, / fama que quod meruit regia lingua dedit. / Debet et ipse potens, ut adhuc bene crescere possis, / praestet ut arma ducis, qui tibi restat apex, / ut patriae fines sapiens tuearis et urbes, / adquiras ut ei qui dat opima tibi, / Cantaber ut timeat, Vasco vagus arma pavescat / atque Pyrenaeae deserat Alpīs opem.* “You have finally arrived at the rank that was owed to you, my friend, you, who was count by merit, before he had been given the honour. When you were *defensor* of Bordeaux you were at the same time its lover: you were deemed worthy, as you ruled in these two honorable duties. By the judgement of the king you have been found strong enough to grow to the office of judge, and what you had earned in the opinion of the people the kingly tongue has given you. Also he must, as he has the power to do it, so that you can advance unto your momentary station, so that he can give you the arms of a duke, he who alone remains as your better, so that you wisely protect the confines of the fatherland and its cities, so that you acquire for him, who gives you glorious spoils, that the Cantabrian fears the arms of war, that the Basque shudders at the thought of them and deserts his refuge in the Pyrenees”.

64. Iser, 1984, p. 109.

creativity as has been stated above. Otherwise, the difference between the ambitious count and the saint, who could only be brought to accept the office of bishop by force, would appear unbridgeable. In bringing the two together, the poem rather than answering them, opens up questions that would appear relevant to Galactorius and the elites of the Francia in general: To what extent is Galactorius' career a contribution to the common good? To what extent is it based on his relationship with God? The poem, through the creative use of Saint Martin, opens up a discourse on elite roles and the applicability of the saint as model in its readers' minds.

The recipients of the *Carmina*-collection,⁶⁵ in contrast to the experience of the "original" addressees, are not encountering characterizations of Saint Martin tailor-made for them, but a multitude of Martins fitted to the needs of other individuals. At the same time, the structures inviting readers to follow avenues of understanding that differ from the evaluations expressed in the poems seem to be also inscribed in the texts. As we are going to argue in our last chapter, this dialogic relationship of text and readers is given a particular edge because of the religious content of the poems.

4. THE RITUAL CONTEXT OF FORTUNATUS' MARTIN POEMS AND THE COLLECTION OF POEMS AS A SOCIO-RELIGIOUS PRACTICE GROUND

The occasional poems of Venantius Fortunatus stand in a particular continuum and tension to certain ritual practices that shall be quickly hinted at in the beginning of this chapter. A few introductory remarks from the point of view of ritual theory might give a framework to this.⁶⁶ For Roy Rappaport there is a distinctive difference

65. This readership is certainly far from being a homogenous group, especially as Merovingian, Carolingian, also modern readers, could be imagined. The thoughts that are expressed in the final chapter (see 4.) work from the assumption that the readers are culturally similar enough to the "original" addressees to accept them as peers in the cult of Saint Martin. Such readers are close enough to the implicit readers (Iser, 1984, pp. 55-66 and 257-66) of the *Carmina*-collection, whom this paper tries to construct; implicit readers are a model that might not have had an exact historical counterpart at any time. We think it is likely, though, that some of the readers we can grasp through the manuscripts and the deduced earlier existence of the collection since Fortunatus' life time (see *supra* n. 4) are similar enough to these model readers for the model to be interesting; it is neither possible nor intended by the methods of this paper to prove the existence of a particular group of historical readers. For the reception of the *Carmina* through the Middle Ages see also Roberts (2009, pp. 325-329). For the various concepts of readers see Willand, 2014.

66. Rappaport, 1999.

between what is said during a ritual and the ritual itself, so that for him ritual and myth are not one and the same.⁶⁷ When looking at Fortunatus' Martin poems from the angle of ritual theory, we have to say clearly what the ritual is that these texts stand in relation to and what this relation is.

The cult of Saint Martin is one of many saints' cults in late antique Gaul, whose importance varies at different times from only local to encompassing all of Gaul.⁶⁸ In the yearly circle of these cults, special focus lies on the saints' feast days, *dies natales*, usually the day a saint left his earthly existence behind to start a new life in heaven. In the case of Saint Martin, eventually, two days share the honor to be celebrated in the saint's name, his *dies natalis* on 11 November and 4 July, when the saint was said to have ascended the episcopal throne and, in the age of Perpetuus, Saint Martin's new church had been inaugurated in Tours.⁶⁹ On these days, pilgrims would come to the saint's shrine or church and *cenae* and *convivia* would be held in the saint's honor as we know for example from Prudentius and Paulinus of Nola.⁷⁰ For these occasions, saints' lives were publicly read, as can be learned from a sermon of Saint Augustine following such a reading.⁷¹ These saint's lives would tell the life story of the saint, usually in a fashion typical of the genre.⁷² Neither the occasional poems by Venantius Fortunatus nor his hagiographical epos are such readings, but they are nonetheless highly dependent on the ritual readings on saints' days in their culture.⁷³

The occasional poems that thematize the saint fall into various categories, most of them being letters, one of them being destined for an inscription, some for convivial contexts. Although they obviously vary, they all add to the same discourse about the saint as well as the ritual readings at the saint's days. Apart from that, they could also be assigned to ritual practices that are again dependent on the main ritual of the saint's days. Roy Rappaport, referring to a conference paper by Roger Abrahams, points out a continuum of rather informal ritual practices to "elaborate rituals", with the most spontaneous ones being as subtle as ritualized greetings and the most formalized as fixed as religious ceremonies.⁷⁴ The different categories of Fortunatus' oc-

67. Rappaport, 1999, pp. 38 and 50.

68. Farmer, 1991; van Dam, 1993; Labarre, 2012b; Maurey, 2014.

69. Farmer, 1991, pp. 22-24; van Dam, 1993, p. 19;

70. Prud., *Perist.* XII; Paul. Nol., *Carm.* XIV 44-85; XX 63-300; XXVII 543-595. Cf. Kirsch, 2004, I/1, p. 21.

71. August., *Serm.* 280. Cf. Berschin, 1986, pp. 102-105.

72. Berschin, 1986, pp. 16-32.

73. For a close analysis of the relationship between his *vitae* and Fortunatus' occasional poetry, see Labarre, 2012a.

74. Rappaport, 1999, pp. 34-36.

casional poems could be seen as ritual texts belonging to those lower orders of rather informal ritual practices such as aristocratic letter exchange, individual visits to holy places, or *convivia*. As much as this is true,⁷⁵ with regard to Saint Martin's appearances in the poems, their being part of the context of the main saint's day ritual shall alone be relevant for us.⁷⁶

Although Roy Rappaport distinguishes between rituals and similar but different performances,⁷⁷ in all that matters for us, talking about Saint Martin, be it in letters, inscriptions, *convivia*, or during a reading in church on the saint's day, has to start from the same foundations and feeds into the same discourse about the saint, obviously to different people, depending on who is or is not present or addressed. Rappaport's argument of distinguishing strongly between rituals and ritual-like social practices is laid out exemplarily in his comparison of ancient Greek cult practices and ancient Greek drama.⁷⁸ The difference between the two is seen by him in the fact that (1) audiences in theatres do not take part in the action but only watch while members of a congregation in a cult practice do take part; (2) actors in theatres only act while performers in a ritual perform "in earnest".⁷⁹ The same difference on the level of participation could be assumed for Fortunatus' occasional Martin poems, if we compare them to the truly ritualized readings of saints' lives in the saint's day ritual, as long as we look at them in their historical, occasional setting (see 2.). Quite to the contrary, for the readers of Fortunatus', the bishop's, collection of poems, the different ways Martin is presented to different explicit addressees becomes a collection of examples, each an offer to identify with the respective addressee and to connect to the saint in the light of one particular situation. The nature of the poems as visibly addressed and their number and the variations between them force the readers of the collection to engage much more critically

75. With a similar approach by Catherine Bell Michael Roberts identifies Fortunatus' poems as "second-level rituals or rituals in words": Bell, 1992, p. 41; Roberts, 2009, p. 322, n. 6.

76. The expressed aim of Rappaport's work seems to be to close the term "ritual" to too broadly interpreted applications, Abraham's continuum of lower order "rituals", or at least to make clear that his interest is restricted to the most obvious kinds of ritual. We concur with Rappaport in this aim, as any definition of ritual that already includes most practices is a useless category.

77. Rappaport, 1999, pp. 39-43.

78. Rappaport, 1999, pp. 39-43.

79. We are not necessarily agreeing with Rappaport's characterization of Greek drama; we are interested in Rappaport's model as a model of ritual in general, not whether or not it is really applicable to his examples.

with every single poem. With this in mind, the concept of “religious communication”, as applied by Jörg Rüpke, can provide valuable insights into the poems.⁸⁰

Religious communication includes not only the religious practitioners and the divine being(s) they communicate with, but also the religious public, who will always judge the success and appropriateness of any religious action.⁸¹ In the case of Fortunatus’ Martin poems, the different roles belonging to this model are not obvious to ascribe to. Martin, Christ or God surely stand on the side of the divine being. Sender and public are more difficult to determine. To start from the original occasion before the collection, Fortunatus would qualify as the sender of messages about and of course also to the saint, Christ or God. The explicit addressee of the poem would then stand in the place of the religious public. This makes sense for the poet, as is shown in the main part of this paper, who is adapting his communication to and about the saint to be fitting to the situation of his explicit addressees. In the case of the collection, the text functions as an offer to different readers to engage with it. Stressing the role of the reader, as we have shown in the last chapter, the Aesthetics of Reception can help to explain how these offers might be detected in the texts. On the one hand, the “*Erwartungshorizont*” (horizon of expectation) of Hans Robert Jauß⁸² might provide a frame, on the other hand, the concept of the implicit reader by Wolfgang Iser⁸³ can show how the role of the reader is inscribed in the text and how the informed reader has to fill the gaps left open to gain the full meaning. Venantius’ readers are potentially brought into the position of an accomplice observer to the poet’s religious communication. They are at the same time, though, also in the position to judge the appropriateness of the poet as religious communicator: at least in one of the examples we have provided, the praise of Count Galactorius, the reader is led by the text to question the appropriateness of the communication (see 3.7). But it works also the other way around: if the reader is a religious practitioner in the cult of the saint himself and reacts to what he is reading, the religious communication of the poet, a rather prestigious one, puts the sense of religious appropriateness, the reader’s relationship to the saint, to a crucial test. The poet, of course not the historical poet but the poetic I of the poem,

80. Rüpke, 2016, pp. 121-138. Rüpke uses pagan examples; Fortunatus’ ancient Christian setting is not, as far as Lived Ancient Religion is concerned, fundamentally different.

81. Rüpke, 2016, pp. 124-128; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, pp. 574-575, stressing the medial, communicative and locative dimensions of narrations.

82. Jauß, 1970. This can be complemented by the concept of “wide reading”, cf. e.g. Baßler, 2005.

83. Iser, 1979 and 1984. For the use of the concept in the context of religious texts compare Rüpke, 2015; for the narrative strategies to direct emotions compare for example Hillebrandt, 2011.

therefore, becomes a representative of the religious public to gauge the individual religious feeling of the reader. This makes clear how the (re-)reading of Fortunatus' Martin poems can stand in place of the public reading during the ritual for the religious reader, as far as the social experience is concerned.

This social quality of the collection of poems deserves closer consideration. The conceptualizations of the social, next to the object-related and the abstract-spiritual having its share in the working of a ritual, as expressed in Hartmut Rosa's theory of Resonance, can provide a framework here.⁸⁴ The experienced social quality of the different poems lies not only between the readers and the poetic/epistolary I but also between the readers and the explicit addressees of the poems. The different depictions of the saint in connection with the explicit addressees are (1) inviting the readers to agree or disagree with certain characterizations but (2) are also showing the attributes of the saint in a social context. What is fitting for one addressee need not be fitting for another. This can be both experienced through identification with the one or the other position but also in a view from above. This interaction with the different poems can therefore inspire disagreement but also empathy in the readers. Hartmut Rosa has described especially this dynamic of disagreement and empathy – he speaks of forgiveness (“*Verzeihung*”) – in the context of friendship, which he calls “[a] resonant wire to the social world out there” (“*Resonanzdr[aht] zur Sozialwelt da draußen*”).⁸⁵ The possibility for a “resonant wire” (“*Resonanzdraht*”) between the readers and the explicit addressees, who are of course not friends of the readers in any sense, is provided by the extraordinary and effectively unreal experience of “reading somebody else’s letter”.

This social experience plays together with a second factor: the undoubtedly religious nature of the argument. As has been shown especially for the poem to count Galactorius (see 3.7.), the implicit readers are driven by the compositional tactics of the poem to question the explicit stance of the poetic I on the applicability of Saint Martin to Galactorius' situation. The ensuing conflict between the recipients and the poetic I and the assumed interest of the explicit addressee Galactorius, which we have tried to grasp with Wolfgang Iser's concept of contingency, is endowed with particular urgency because of the religious nature of the argument. What we have here revisited for the example of the poem to Galactorius can be similarly applied to other poems. What Martin is and is not, is never a light matter! The experience of the readers has thus, in the terms of Hartmut Rosa, potential for

84. Rosa, 2016, pp. 73-75, 331-514.

85. Rosa, 2016, pp. 358-362. The English translation is taken from James C. Wagner, Rosa, 2019, p. 213.

resonance also because it gives the readers an occasion to feel their strong evaluations (*Starke Wertungen*) questioned or affirmed.⁸⁶ The readers who feel touched or shaken by the explicit or implicit statements about Saint Martin are experiencing themselves as religious actors.

Religious and social experiences are two lines of experiences that congregants in a ritual would also have.⁸⁷ The religious and social experience of reading the Martin *carmina* makes the reading of the *Carmina* to their reading audiences, with the *carmina* as a mimetic device that invites the reader to immerse themselves in it, into an approximation of the experience of the congregation of Martin believers in the rituals of the cult of the saint. The reading of the Martin *carmina* is ritual-like from the aspect of the individual experience of every reader in comparison to the experience of every individual congregant.

5. CONCLUSION

The various characterizations of the saint throughout the *Carmina* show how the poet caters to different needs depending on the context of his work. The epic poem needs to be in tune with the traditional rendering of the story to please well-read audiences. The occasional poems connected to places can deal with the story more freely, but show the events in a way that strengthens the position of the local commissioners of the poems. The observations that have been made on the different descriptions of Martin all through the *Carmina* and in the case of the miraculous gem-covering are, first of all, poignant examples of individual religious appropriation. Fortunatus uses the mechanics of religious individualism to cater for the particular situations his addressees are in.

From a literary approach to the *Carmina* as a published collection destined to be read as a whole, new insights could be gained into the experience of its readers. Behind the historical readings of the individual Martin *carmina* in their supposed historical context lies a scheme of reading oriented to the readers of the Martin texts in the collection.⁸⁸ The many different texts recreate a socio-religious context between the I, the explicit addressees, the readers and the saint, within which the readers can immerse themselves into an experience very similar to that of a congregant in the Cult of Saint Martin. The Martin *carmina* are therefore literary offers of ritual-like experience.

86. Rosa, 2016, pp. 188, 225-235.

87. Hartmut Rosa names these experiences as two (of three) axes that play a role in resonant self-world relationships: diagonal (social) and vertical (religious): Rosa, 2016, pp. 73-75.

88. See *supra* n. 46 for a brief discussion of the different readers.

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THE THESEAN RITUAL LANDSCAPE.
APPROPRIATION, IDENTITY AND
ATHENIAN COLLECTIVE MEMORIES

EL PAISAJE RITUAL DE TESEO.
APROPIACIÓN, IDENTIDAD Y
MEMORIA COLECTIVA ATENIENSE

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ABSTRACT

A key aspect of Theseus's exponential growth in popularity between the 6th-4th cent. BCE, was an increased association with various festivals and their ritualized acts. Most prominently, it was the episode of the Cretan adventure that informed these rites. In their claimed, and emphasized, Thesean

RESUMEN

Un aspecto clave del crecimiento exponencial de la popularidad de Teseo entre los siglos VI y IV a.C. fue su creciente asociación con varios festivales y actos ritualizados. Fue especialmente el episodio de la aventura cretense el que dio forma a estos ritos. En sus reivindicadas y enfatizadas

aetiologies, these festivals are revealed as vital mechanisms by which the cultural collective memory of the hero was generated. Moving beyond simply approaching ritual as an expressive mnemonic object, this paper considers the contingent and re-constructive methods by which this collective memory was produced. Moreover, by examining the embodied experience of recalling Theseus, we are provided much firmer ground in commenting on their formative force on various Athenian identities.

etiologías teseicas, estos festivales se revelan como mecanismos esenciales mediante los cuales se generaba la memoria cultural colectiva del héroe. Más allá de abordar simplemente el ritual como un objeto de expresión mnemónica, este artículo analiza los métodos contingentes y reconstructivos mediante los que se produce la memoria colectiva. Además, al examinar la experiencia corporeizada del recuerdo de Teseo, podemos valorar sobre un terreno mucho más firme su potencia creadora de diversas identidades atenienses.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Collective Memory; Embodied Cognition; Identity; Mnemotopography; Theseus.

KEYWORDS

Cognición corporal; identidad; memoria colectiva; mnemotopografía; Teseo.

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1. INTRODUCTION

From the 6th cent. BCE the figure of Theseus underwent an overt expansion in his narratological schema, visual depiction and presence within the socio-cultural/religious landscape of Attica.¹ A vital aspect of this latter phenomenon manifested in the appropriative emphasis and evocation of Thesean origins within various ritual contexts. The aim of this paper is to examine how those rites associated with the Cretan expedition, through claiming a Thesean aetiology and aspects of their physical execution, provided arenas in which collective memories essential to differing socialized identities were generated. In order to appreciate their formative force these rites, and the role of Theseus within them, will not be considered as monolithically inherited and experienced media, but rather as situationally contingent manifestations; structured by and structuring exterior socio-cultural realities of the 6th-5th cent. BCE.² Fundamentally, I aim to better illustrate how these rituals acted to cultivate a collective cultural memory of Theseus within their participants, employing the criteria established by Maurice Halbwachs and since refined by Jan Assmann.³ This form of social memory relates to the origins of the group as based around distinct personages, places and episodes, requiring collective evocation and spatial orientation, such as via mnemotopography.⁴ As will be seen, the commemorative recollection of Theseus did not act abstractly within these rituals, but in conjunction with specific spaces and episodes.

1. Brommer, 1982, pp. 35-50; Calame, 1996, pp. 143-162; Neils, 1995, p. 17; Walker, 1995, pp. 20 and 35; Van den Hoff, 2010, pp. 177-179.

2. Rüpke, 2018a, pp. 11-15.

3. Assmann, 2012, pp. 21-45.

4. Connerton, 1989, p. 44; Halbwachs, 1992, p. 200.

I also aim to sensitize this examination by considering the manner in which the embodied experience and mimesis central to many of these rites could contribute to aged, gendered and civic identities.⁵ This requires a consideration of the cognitive impact of a given rite, to which the religious modes theory of Harvey Whitehouse provides a helpful basis. Here “doctrinal” rituals, regular and low in sensory/emotive arousal, are argued as producing semantic memory and wider group identification, while irregular and dysphoric “imagistic” rites aid in smaller group fusion via shared episodic memories.⁶ However I shall not rigidly apply Whitehouse’s definitions, but rather follow recent discussions on their applicability to ancient Greek religion by highlighting aspects that align either with the two modes, or indeed “cognitively optimal” and intuitive religious action.⁷ In applying the theoretical frameworks of cultural memory studies and cognitive approaches to religion in tandem, we are provided with a fuller understanding and a new point of departure in analysing the mechanics and formative force of these rituals. Indeed rather than simply approach them as “institutional mnemonic objects”, we are afforded a clearer illustration of the socialized, and interactive, generation of collective memory within their participating groups.⁸

1. THE CRETAN ADVENTURE, ELABORATION OF THESEAN MYTH, AND PLUTARCH’S *LIFE OF THESEUS*

As noted above, the central narratological focus of the rites discussed below was that of Theseus’ journey to and return from Crete, which alongside his abduction of Helen and battle with the Lapiths against the Centaurs, belonged to the earliest development of Thesean myth.⁹ The earliest textual mention of this episode is found in Homer who mentions Ariadne being killed by Artemis on Dia,¹⁰ yet debates on this passage being a later 6th cent. interpolation still continue.¹¹ Nevertheless Hesiod illustrates its being current during the late 8th cent. at least, noting an alternative fate

5. Connerton, 1989, pp. 72-73.

6. Whitehouse, 2002, pp. 296-303; Whitehouse and Lanman, 2014, p. 674.

7. Larson, 2016, p. 193.

8. Beim, 2010, pp. 1-23.

9. Shapiro, 1991, p. 123; Neils, 1994, p. 942; Walker, 1995, pp. 15-20.

10. *Od.* XI 321-325.

11. Walker, 1995, p. 16.

for Ariadne who married Dionysus.¹² Sappho certainly composed on the expedition during the 7th-early 6th cent., as did Simonides during the latter 6th cent.¹³

Thus by the 6th cent. BCE the Cretan adventure is firmly illustrated as an established episode within both epic and lyric compositions. It is from this period that we may discern the hero's emerging popularity in Athens itself.¹⁴ The famous Françoise Vase (ca. 570 BCE) provides our first Attic depiction of the episode, illustrating the arrival of Theseus at Crete with the sacrificial youths and maidens and being welcomed by Ariadne.¹⁵ From the middle of the century, newer episodes involving the taming of the Marathon Bull and the rape of Antiope first appear in ceramic and sculptural art. The so-called Saronic Cycle, the civilizing journey of the youthful Theseus from Troezen, also emerged after ca. 515.¹⁶ It is also in the last quarter of the 6th cent. that an epic, epics/comedies, the *Theseis* are generally agreed to have been composed, while not directly mentioned until the 4th cent. by Aristotle.¹⁷ The exact focus of this work, as well as its very existence, are still issues of debate and reciting them here does not serve our current purpose.¹⁸ It is also unhelpful to attribute the promotion and elaboration of Theseus within Athens to any specific political personality, instead noting as far as possible contextual manifestations throughout the 6th-4th cent. BCE.¹⁹ This includes the intersecting notions of Theseus' synoecism of Attica. Both Valdés Guía and Luce indicate this as emerging within the Solonian period, and his initiation of proto-democracy which naturally flourished after the reforms of Kleisthenes in 508 BCE.²⁰ Contextually significant aspects of the appropriative emphasis of Theseus will be discussed below, noting here that collective memory always proceeds in a re-constructive relationship to the present; a process vividly evident in Athens across the 6th-4th cent. BCE.²¹

Admittedly our primary source for commenting on these rituals is comparatively late, coming in Plutarch's *Life of Theseus*, which was likely composed towards the end of the authors' life in 120 CE.²² As a work, the *Theseus* displays various levels

12. *Theog.* 947-949.

13. Sapph., fr. 206; Simon., fr. 54 = Plut., *Thes.* 17, 6.

14. Bernabé Pajares, 1992, pp. 97-118; Walker, 1995, p. 46.

15. Hedreen, 2011, pp. 491-493.

16. Neils, 1987, pp. 32-37; Shapiro, 1991, pp. 134-136.

17. *Poet.* 1451a 19-21. Cf. Cingano, 2017, pp. 9-16.

18. Neils, 1987, p. 144; Bernabé Pajares, 1992.

19. Kron, 1976, p. 224; Calame, 1996, pp. 416-417; Walker, 1995, p. 47.

20. Kearns, 1989, p. 119; Luce, 1998, pp. 19-30; Goušchin, 1999; Valdés Guía, 2009, pp. 11-30.

21. Shapiro, 2012, p. 160; Cusumano, 2013, pp. 17-19.

22. Frost, 1984, p. 70.

of both typological and referential intertextuality, and his descriptions of Thesean ritual must be considered in relation to this. Most prominently the *Life of Theseus* naturally interacts with its moralized pairing with Romulus by Plutarch, wherein the foundational quality of both these figures is emphasized.²³ A primary aspect to this dual characterization is the initiation of religious festivals, that while coming in a fairly compartmentalized description in the *Life of Romulus* (21-22) are more sporadic in relation to Theseus. This certainly operates within the balancing parallelism which Plutarch constructs in this pairing, yet in contrast to *Romulus*, and indeed the other *Lives*, the *Theseus* is indicated as being a product of specific research. Beginning the *Theseus*, Plutarch falsely indicates that he will purify mythic elements out of his narrative (ἐκκαθαίρομενον λόγῳ τὸ μυθῶδες ὑπακοῦσαι καὶ λαβεῖν ἱστορίας ὄψιν, 1.3), nevertheless admitting them under scrutiny. In this way Plutarch frames his biography of Theseus outside of the historical inquiry of Polybius, instead adopting a form of historiographic archaeology that is applying scrutiny to “mythic” aspects.²⁴ This intertextual nod towards the historical methods of Polybius in fact establishes Plutarch’s divergent biographical focus, as engaged in the historiographic *archaiologia* of Diodorus and Dionysus.²⁵

It is here that the validity of Plutarch’s *Life of Theseus* as a source for commentary on 5th-4th cent. BCE ritual becomes apparent, as it included the direct citation of works and authors from those periods. Indeed the *Theseus* shows very little interaction with the rest of Plutarch’s corpus, instead adopting an expressly intertextual quality by frequently referencing the works of the Atthidographers and his own eye witnesses.²⁶ As a collection of authors, the so-called Atthidographers were focused on etymology, cult and various aetiological origins, employing both oral tradition and research into topography and physical remains; representing a social knowledge and communal memory of the past.²⁷ Not only does Plutarch employ these sources when describing the rituals under discussion here, but indeed adopts an antiquarian timbre himself, resting as we shall see below on oral accounts and his own observation. Thus as a source, while chronologically divorced from the periods under discussion here, the *Life of Theseus* provides a valuable framework for analysing the contingent and operational aspects of Thesean ritual in the Classical era. With these aspects of the

23. Larmour, 1988, p. 362.

24. Cooper, 2007, p. 212.

25. Cooper, 2007, p. 222.

26. Cooper, 2007, p. 228; Brenk, 2017, p. 121.

27. Harding, 2008, pp. 2-12.

intertextual quality of Plutarch's *Theseus* in mind we will now examine the formative, mnemonic, potential of these "Thesean" rites.

2. THE *OSCHOPHORIA*. RECALLED LANDSCAPES AND EMBODIED REMEMBERING

The festival of the *Oschophoria* was celebrated on the 7th of Pyanopsion (October/November), and is widely recognized as relating to autumn sowing and the vintage.²⁸ Its structure of action, as described by Plutarch, consisted of a procession from an undisclosed shrine of Dionysus in Athens to the temple of Athena Skiras at the port of Phaleron where feasting and games took place.²⁹ That this framework existed in the Classical era is attested in the well-known 4th cent. BCE stele first discussed by Ferguson,³⁰ in which the *genos* Salaminioi are revealed as selecting the important roles of *oschophori* and *deipnophoroi* from their own number.³¹ However the appropriate emphasis on the Thesean origins of this festival are indicated as beginning within the Archaic period.

Several elements of the *Oschophoria*, which will be detailed below, have led to the festival being identified as overtly Dionysian during the Archaic period up until the start of the 6th cent. BCE.³² Indeed the festival even as it manifested in the later Archaic and Classical periods, has been suggested as containing distinct aspects of Bronze Age vegetation cults.³³ Valdés Guía has produced a detailed argument in underling how the rites of the *Oschophoria* had a long history by the date of the Salaminian decree and that it, like other festivals, underwent changes especially at the time of the conquest of Salamis in the early 6th cent.³⁴ The details of this "conquest" and the role of the *genos* Salaminioi in the cult of Athena Skiras are still issues of debate. For some the Salaminioi along with the cult were imported during the late 6th cent.,³⁵ or emigrated to Attica during the Dark Ages,³⁶ or indeed had no rela-

28. Parker, 2005, p. 477; Larson, 2016, p. 214.

29. Pitz, 2011, p. 153.

30. SEG 21.

31. Ferguson, 1938, p. 6.

32. Valdés Guía, 2002, pp. 187-203; Parker, 2005, pp. 213-217; for an alternative view see Scullion, 2007, pp. 196-201.

33. Simon, 1996, p. 21.

34. Valdés Guía, 2002, pp. 195-200.

35. Walker, 1995, pp. 50 and 99.

36. Osborne, 1994, pp. 154-160.

tionship with the island at all.³⁷ A more convincing position is that taken by Lambert and Valdés Guía, who see the *genos* Salaminioi as being based within Athens/Attica during the Archaic period with close ties to the island.³⁸ They posit that the Solonian conflict with Megara and invasion of the island at the start of the century initiated the adaptation of the *Oschophoria*. Valdés Guía argues that this caused the “urbanization” of the cult at the centre of the *Oschophoria*, with the Salamis-Athens centric Athena Skiras replacing Aphrodite/Ariadne.³⁹ It is also likely that up until the late 6th cent., and possible establishment of a cleruchy by Kleisthenes, the island changed hands more than once. However by the end of the century the island was certainly being settled by Athenians,⁴⁰ while several black-figure vases depicting Athena in conversation with Dionysus from this period may depict the *Oschophoria*.⁴¹ Thus while identified with the earliest Dionysian/Aphrodisian form of the *Oschophoria*, Theseus’ overt prominence in this festival throughout the Classical era is indicated as beginning in the 6th cent.⁴² Indeed if the adjustment of the festival to include Athena Skiras was aimed at incorporating Salamis more fully into Attica, Thesean connections to the island would naturally be promoted, on which more below. Moreover while Dionysian elements are certainly present in Plutarch’s description of the *Oschophoria*, these are given specific Thesean aetiologies, while in the 4th cent. Salaminian stele Dionysus does not appear in conjunction with the festival, or indeed at all.⁴³ This certainly indicates, if not a complete elision of the god, an appropriative emphasis on existing Thesean elements in line with the introduction of Athena Skiras during the 6th cent. BCE.

In describing the *Oschophoria* Plutarch openly states his use of “the history” of the Atthidographer Demon (ταῦτα μὲν οὖν καὶ Δήμων ἱστόρηκεν),⁴⁴ indicating its overt evocation of Theseus as being present in 5th cent. BCE. Plutarch also openly refers to oral tradition (οὐ γὰρ ἀπάσας αὐτὸν, “for it is said”),⁴⁵ while the familiarity of the descriptions suggest his having witnessed it himself.⁴⁶ The commemoration of Thesean aetiologies within the *Oschophoria*, present its composite rites as focusing

37. Taylor, 1997.

38. Lambert, 1997, pp. 96-106; Valdés Guía, 2002, p. 127; 2005, p. 59.

39. Valdés Guía, 2002, pp. 200-201.

40. *IG* I³ 1.

41. Pitz, 2011, p. 160.

42. Valdés Guía, 2002, p. 187.

43. Ferguson, 1938, pp. 5-8.

44. *Thes.* 23, 3.

45. *Thes.* 23, 2.

46. Frost, 1984, p. 67.

on the re-enactive mimesis of his departure, return from Crete and foundation of the festival, within a holistic temporal framework. The procession itself would have acted to reiterate and spatially evoke the collective memory of these events through its physical mimesis. Mnemotopography is essential in cultivating cultural memory; allowing shared pasts to be anchored and evidenced most especially via collective pilgrimage.⁴⁷ In effect, the Oschophoric procession enabled the recollection of the Cretan adventure through the act of re-performing Theseus' original movement through the landscape towards the port. Moreover, the constituent elements of the ritual demonstrate the facilitation of an embodied remembering that would have aided in the construction of aged, gendered, *genos* and civic identities.

A notable feature of the procession was its being led by two *epheboi*, the *oschophori* as recorded on the 4th cent. BCE stele, who adopted female attire and carried "vine branches" (τοὺς ὄσχοὺς φέροντες).⁴⁸ This has been cited as a glaring example of the Dionysian flavour of the *Oschophoria*, on which more briefly. Yet in Plutarch it is firmly correlated into the orbit of the Cretan expedition; replication of the subterfuge of Theseus who disguised two youths as maidens and upon returning "headed a procession" with them in this dress (αὐτόν τε πομπεῦσαι καὶ τοὺς νεανίσκους οὕτως ἀμπεχομένους ὡς νῦν ἀπέχονται).⁴⁹ The prominent position of vine branches during the processions, as well as its departure from a shrine of Dionysus, again suggest an older cultic focus of the *Oschophoria*. Plutarch however provides Thesean origins for this feature noting, along with Apollodorus,⁵⁰ it honouring the union of Ariadne and Dionysus. He also notes that it may simply be due to the fact that the Thesean expedition returned to Phaleron "at the time of the vintage". In any regard, the presence of vine branches is ascribed specifically to Theseus' return from Crete by Plutarch's 5th cent. source, Demon:

φέρουσι δὲ Διονύσῳ καὶ Ἀριάδνῃ χαριζόμενοι διὰ τὸν μῦθον,
ἢ μᾶλλον ὅτι συγκομιζομένης ὀπώρας ἐπανήλθον.⁵¹

In claiming a distinct Thesean origin for this specific facet of the ritual, the *Oschophoria* provided its general participants with a material reminder of the origin of the festival. For collective cultural memory to formulate within groups such material signalling is

47. Assmann, 2012, p. 44.

48. *Thes.* 23, 3.

49. *Thes.* 23, 3.

50. *Epit.* 1, 9.

51. *FGrHist* 327, 6 = Plut., *Thes.* 23, 3.

essential, whether via reproduction or relics ascribed to specific episodes from the past.⁵² In this instance, we may suggest that the vine branches would have provided a visual testament to the foundation of the festival by Theseus for general attendees.

We gain a clearer understanding of how this collectively mnemonic communication could aid in the formulation of identity, if we consider the *epheboi* who carried the branches. As well as operationally evoking the journey to and return from Crete to the procession's participants, the dress of the youths entailed the active adoption of a character from this narrative.⁵³ Plutarch relates how Theseus taught the original youths to "imitate maidens in their speech, dress and gait" (διδάξαντα φωνὴν καὶ σχῆμα καὶ βάλισιν ὡς ἐνι μάλιστα παρθένους),⁵⁴ suggesting that as well as dress, the *oschophoroi* may have adopted a stylized form of movement also. This re-performance of Theseus' initial ruse and successful parade back to Athens, would clearly evoke the recollection of the Thesean origins of the festival. Such perceptions of direct continuation from the past into the present via ritualized forms is essential to collective memory.⁵⁵ Yet as individuals, the elision of the self through the wearing of female clothing and adoption of proto-typical characters, would have provided a distinct avenue for the formation of socialized identities.⁵⁶ Essentially this form of embodied narration would formulate the semantic memory of the *Oschophoria's* foundation in those participating youths; incorporating an episode from the wider collective past into their experience of the festival.⁵⁷ Moreover the episodic recollection of this experience can be suggested as enabling the "fusion" of the *oschophoroi* into a maturing age group. Indeed while Whitehouse suggests this manner of group cohesion as only coming about via dysphoric trauma, this has been criticized, with ecstatic, sensorially limited, or rites concerned with maturation having been noted as also enabling strong episodic memories. In the case of the *Oschophoria*, female dress would have both signalled and aided in forming the maturing identity of those participating young men.⁵⁸

The description of female dress being adopted by the *oschophoroi* is singular to Plutarch's quoting of Demon:

52. Alcock, 2002, p. 28; Jones, 2007, p. 12; Hewer and Roberts, 2012, p. 176.

53. Böhr, 2007, p. 70.

54. *Thest.* 23, 2.

55. Assmann, 2012, pp. 41-44.

56. Brown, 2013, pp. 58-60.

57. Connerton, 1989, p. 88.

58. Schjødt *et al.*, 2013, pp. 39-43; G. Downey in Whitehouse and Lanman, 2014, p. 684.

καὶ διδάξαντα φωνὴν καὶ σχῆμα καὶ βάδισιν ὡς ἔνι μάλιστα παρθένους ὁμοιοῦσθαι... αὐτὸν τε πομπεῦσαι καὶ τοὺς νεανίσκους οὕτως ἀμπεχομένους ὡς νῦν ἀμπέχονται τοὺς ὄσχοὺς φέροντες.⁵⁹

Other Atthidographers such as Philochorus neglect to record it.⁶⁰ However transvestism played a vital role in the transitional points of various Greek heroes including Odysseus and Heracles.⁶¹ In Plutarch's description of Theseus training the youths, we may also detect a more contemporaneous interaction with Statius' *Achilleid* of the 1st cent. CE. Here the transvestism of a youthful Achilles as achieved by his mother Thetis, is also brought about initially by the wearing of female dress and then by teaching him "how to walk and move and how to speak with modesty" (*et picturato cohibens vestigia limbo incessum motumque docet fandique pudorem*).⁶² This may indicate Plutarch as operating within current literary templates, and we may tentatively suggest an intertextual reference here, but only insofar as it aligns with an already established aspect of Thesean myth.

Indeed the value of Plutarch's description of the *Oschophoria* is its presentation of a framework in line with other Greek rituals of male maturation, which were very often Dionysian in nature.⁶³ This has often been claimed as indicating both the Dionysian register of the *Oschophoria*, even within the Classical era, as well as its being an entirely initiatory rite.⁶⁴ While I do not mean to overtly argue against this position, I have already highlighted the diminished role of Dionysus in the ritual's aetiology and execution whilst also being aligned with Pitz, who views the maturation of youths as just one aspect of the *Oschophoria*.⁶⁵ Particular modes of ritual dress can act as the material media by which new identities are ascribed and communicated, and in the instance of the *Oschophoria* the donning of female garb distinctly indicates its Thesean framework as allowing for the formulation of the youths' wider socialization as maturing male citizens.⁶⁶ This was framed by the re-collective mimesis embodied in the dress and vine branches of the *oschophoroi*; where the semantic-cultural mem-

59. *FGrHist* 327, 6 = Plut., *Thes.* 23, 2-3.

60. *FGrHist* 328, 183. Cf. Harding, 2008, p. 62.

61. *Od.* V 333-462. Cf. Bolich, 2007, pp. 29-41.

62. *Achilleid.* I 330-333.

63. Leitao, 1995, pp. 131-137; Miller, 1999, p. 153; Jameson, 2014, pp. 62-63; Guardia, 2017, pp. 99-108.

64. Deubner, 1932, p. 143; Simon, 1983, p. 90; Walker, 1995, p. 100.

65. Pitz, 2011, p. 151.

66. Leitao, 1999, pp. 247-248; Lee, 2015, p. 204.

ory of Theseus' foundation of the festival would have intersected with the episodic memory of re-enacting it. This certainly represents "religion in the making", where the annual recollection would be appropriated by differing actors.⁶⁷

Another instance of direct embodied mimesis, this time as enacted by general participants, also directly commemorated points from within the *Oschophoria's* claimed Thesean aetiology. Upon arriving at the shrine of Athena Skiras at the port of Phaleron, and during the pouring of libations, Plutarch describes that those present produced a distinctive cry of "Eleleu! Iou! Iou!" (ἐπιφωνεῖν δὲ ἐν ταῖς σπονδαῖς, Ἐλελεῦ, Ἰού, Ἰού, τοὺς παρόντας).⁶⁸ This prescribed exclamation has again been argued as indicating the *Oschophoria's* originally overt Dionysian character, with the apparent shift from joyous to mourning registers a recognizable feature of vegetation/fertility rites.⁶⁹ However Plutarch describes these distinct calls as deliberately re-enacting the cries of joy at Theseus' return, and sorrow at the death of King Aegeus who had leapt from the Akropolis thinking his son dead. The suicide of Aegeus as presented by Plutarch is in line with Apollodorus,⁷⁰ while also illustrating the possible appropriation of what was previously a recognized Dionysian aspect into the Thesean framework of the *Oschophoria*. Building his description on oral tradition (λέγουσιν, "they say")⁷¹ if not a direct citation of any, at least surviving, works of the Attidographers, Plutarch provides an illustration of a re-performance of cultural memory. Commemorative re-performance of specific events are essential in generating the collective memory of a given cultural group's notion of a shared past, which are in turn essential to wider identity structures.⁷² The proscribed repetition of this distinct cry, perceived as originating in the Thesean age, indicates the form of ritualized re-performance that provides temporal depth and perceived connection with the past.⁷³ This act would have indicated the competence and membership of the individual within the remembering group, where the direct referencing of a specific moment of the Athenian collective past was achieved via mimesis and within the landscape (the port of Phaleron) of its inception. Moreover, as with the *oschophoroi*, those that performed the cry may be said to adopt characters from this Thesean episode; the Athenians that welcomed him home. Again the suspension of the self,

67. Rüpke, 2018a, pp. 108-115.

68. *Thes.* 22, 3.

69. Simon, 1983, p. 91; Calame, 1996, p. 335; Parker, 2005, p. 215.

70. *Epit.* I 10.

71. *Thes.* 23, 3.

72. Assmann, 2012, pp. 38-39.

73. Connerton, 1989, p. 59.

albeit briefly, would have allowed for the reinforcement of notions of a shared, and sacralised, history.⁷⁴

A similar process of adopting figures drawn from the Thesean origins of the *Oschophoria* are again evident in designated female *deipnophoroi* (δειπνοφόροι, “meal-bearers”),⁷⁵ elected by, and from, the *genos* Salaminoi. They carried the food-stuffs within the procession to Phaleron and are described as sharing in the sacrifice at the shrine of Athena Skiras by Plutarch.⁷⁶ This sacrifice likely included one directly for Theseus, who in the 4th cent. BCE received a pig from the *genos*.⁷⁷ Again, Plutarch’s description is cited as deriving from Demon (ταῦτα μὲν οὖν καὶ Δήμων ἰστόρηκεν),⁷⁸ however this aetiology is also presented by another Atti-dographer, Philochorus.⁷⁹ The *deipnophoroi* are thus concretely attested throughout the 5th-4th cent. BCE with associated Thesean origins. The women themselves were likely chosen from the well-born, thus perfunctorily displaying their status, while adopting the role of “meal-bearers” suggests a form of public recollection that enables being socially situated via religious competence and narration.⁸⁰ Moreover, the *deipnophoroi* would have acted to communicate the collective past to the participating group by specifically evoking the mothers of the youths and maidens that were to be sacrificed to the Minotaur (ἀπομιμούμεναι τὰς μητέρας ἐκείνων τῶν λαχόντων).⁸¹ This is described as a deliberate “imitation” (ἀπομιμούμεναι), which not only indicates the *deipnophoroi* as specific mnemonic roles, but also forms of embodied memory that would have reinforced the sexed and civic identity of the performers. Again we may discern a ritualized elision of the self that enables the formation of socially situated identities.⁸² Certainly by adopting the role of prototypical mothers, the *deipnophoroi* would have demonstrated a display of *the* idealized gendered behavior for Athenian women.⁸³

Such performative action can be understood here as endowing a religious agency, where the *deipnophoroi* performed the communication of collective memory to other participants in their adoption of distinct characters. This was emphasized in

74. Rüpke, 2018b, p. 25.

75. *Thes.* 23, 3.

76. Ferguson, 1938, p. 6.

77. Ferguson, 1938, p. 8.

78. *FGrHist* 327, 6 = *Thes.* 23, 3.

79. *FGrHist* 328, 183. Cf. Harding, 2008, p. 62.

80. Parke, 1986, pp. 80-81; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 570.

81. *Thes.* 23, 3.

82. Waldner, 2000, pp. 103-112.

83. Pomeroy, 1975, pp. 65-68.

the “mothers” telling stories at “the festival”, most likely after the sacrifice at Phaleron and the initiation of feasting, which was again conceived as a repetition of the Thesean episode (καὶ μῦθοι λέγονται διὰ τὸ κάκεινας εὐθυμίας ἔνεκα καὶ παρηγορίας μύθους διεξιέναι τοῖς παισὶ).⁸⁴ Indeed Plutarch’s description of the *deipnophoroi* directly acting in “imitation” (ἀπομιμούμεναι) of the “mothers” (μητέρας) clearly indicates a generation of the collective memory of Theseus within the *Oschophoria*. In performing as the “mothers”, those chosen women would have engaged in a recollection that provided an avenue by which their civic identity as Athenian women was both embodied and displayed.⁸⁵ Naturally the spatial arena of Phaleron would have supported this; intersecting re-performance with the landscape of its initiation.

The *Oschophoria* would have generated the collective memory of the Cretan adventure via various points of direct mimesis, adoption of Thesean roles, and spatial evocation. In the instance of the *oschophoroi* and *deipnophoroi*, we are provided an insight into how such mnemonic practice could cultivate socialized and religious identities.⁸⁶ By replicating the Thesean origins of the festival itself, for at least these two groups the *Oschophoria* provided a form of embodied recollection that would have enabled the formative expression of their aged and sexed identities within a wider civic/religious context. While not conforming precisely to Whitehouse’s “imagistic” mode, if we consider the experience of the *Oschophoria* from the perspective of the *oschophoroi* and *deipnophoroi*, we can see how in constructively communicating the collective memory of Theseus these participants were afforded the forms of episodic memory required for group fusion.⁸⁷ Indeed while the *Oschophoria* certainly aligns with general aspects of the “doctrinal” mode, being centrally supervised and routinized in action, as an annual festival it is not high-frequency. However in both the distinct performances of Thesean characters and replication of the festival’s origin, such as through the procession and cry, we can certainly see how the *Oschophoria* would have produced and relied on semantic memory. In recalling this episode from the collective past the wider civic and cultural identity of the festivals participants would have been reinforced.⁸⁸ As Larson has underlined, uniformly assigning any Greek ritual to either imagistic or doctrinal modes is unhelpful, and indeed tends to lean towards the “natural” cognitively optimal/intuitive position.⁸⁹ However we

84. *Thes.* 23, 3.

85. Assmann, 2010, p. 100.

86. Rüpke, 2018b, p. 26.

87. Manier and Hirst, 2010, pp. 255-257.

88. Whitehouse and Lanman, 2014, p. 679.

89. Larson, 2016, pp. 193-195.

are granted a better understanding of the formative aspects of the *Oschophoria* by considering the differing forms of memory generated through the experience of doctrinal and imagistic aspects.

3. THE *PYANOPSIA*: THESEUS' RETURN FROM CRETE AND RITES OF MATURATION

The day immediately following that of the *Oschophoria*, the 7th of Pyanopsion, was held the *Pyanopsia*, and again recalled Theseus leaving Attica and returning from Crete. While firmly Apolline in nature, not least due to the date of the 7th which was sacred to the god in the Athenian religious calendar, this festival claims an overt Thesean aetiology in its description by Plutarch.⁹⁰ This has been argued as being a product of both Salaminian religious interests at Phaleron from the 6th cent. BCE, and indeed the general popularity of Theseus throughout the 5th cent. BCE.⁹¹ Nevertheless, how far Theseus was simply “grafted on” or found an appropriative emphasis within the *Pyanopsia* from the 6th cent., is difficult to establish.⁹² In any regard, the Apolline framework is itself given a Thesean origin in Plutarch; after burying Aegeus, Theseus “gave thanks to Apollo on the seventh day of the month” having returned safely from Crete (θάψας δὲ τὸν πατέρα, τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τὴν εὐχὴν ἀπεδίδου τῇ ἑβδόμῃ τοῦ Πυανεσιῶνος μηνὸς ἱσταμένου).⁹³ In fact, as a god concerned with political life and the maturation of youths into adult citizens, Theseus, as the quintessential *epebos* and citizen, is repeatedly tied to Apollo Delphinios in Athenian tradition.⁹⁴ Importantly in relation to our focus on collective memory, Plutarch notes another aetiology (on which more below) in his description of the ritual, concluding however that the Thesean origin is the more popular (οἱ δὲ πλείονες ὡς προείρηται).⁹⁵

The first aspect of the festival described as stemming directly from Theseus was that of a communal feast as based around a distinct meal of boiled beans, which in fact supplies its *aition*.⁹⁶ The “custom” of this meal is attributed to Theseus, blending the last of the provisions of the returning youths into “one pot” before arriving at Phaleron:

90. Mikalson, 1975, pp. 69-70; Parker, 2005, p. 480.

91. Parker, 1997, p. 315.

92. Larson, 2016, p. 215.

93. *Thes.* 22, 4.

94. Graf, 2009, pp. 209-211.

95. *Thes.* 22, 5.

96. Parke, 1986, p. 75.

ἡ μὲν οὖν ἔψησις τῶν ὀσπρίων λέγεται γίνεσθαι διὰ τὸ
σωθέντας αὐτοὺς εἰς ταῦτ' οὐκ ἀμείβειν τὰ περιόντα τῶν σιτίων καὶ
μίαν χύτραν κοινήν ἐψήσαντας συνεστιαθῆναι καὶ συγκαταφαγεῖν ἀλλήλοις.⁹⁷

Further, the so-called *eiresione* (εἰρεσιώνη), a branch of olive wood covered in wool and fruits and carried by *epheboi* during the festival, mimicked the one such as “Theseus used at the time of his supplication” [to Apollo] (ἐκφέρουσι κλάδον ἐλαίας ἐρίῳ μὲν ἀνεστεμμένον, ὡσπερ τότε τὴν ἰκετηρίαν, παντοδαπῶν δὲ ἀνάπλεων καταργμάτων).⁹⁸ The carrying of these branches was also accompanied by a song:

εἰρεσιώνη σῦκα φέρει καὶ πίονας ἄρτους
καὶ μέλι ἐν κοτύλῃ καὶ ἔλαιον ἀποψήσασθαι
καὶ κύλικ' εὐζωρον, ὡς ἂν μεθύουσα καθεύδῃ.⁹⁹

“Eiresione for us brings figs and bread of the richest, brings us honey in pots and oil to rub off from the body, Strong wine too in a beaker, that one may go to bed mellow”

These aspects of the ritual again belie their origin as a vintage festival of an Apolline order, where the fruits of the harvest accompany a meal of unremarkable ingredients to signal the transition into a period of abundance.¹⁰⁰

Thus Apollo is the recognized focus of the *Pyanopsia*, but his worship is conducted via a specific commemoration of Theseus’ original supplication to the god before sailing to Crete, and his victorious return. As with the *Oschophoria* we again have an asynchronous Thesean narrative within a ritual whole, yet the manner in which these two points related to each other operated sequentially; *eiresione* boughs/supplication, moving towards the feasting/return of the hero. The boughs, as with those held by the *oschophori*, would have provided general attendants with a material reminder of Theseus’ Cretan journey, and while it is uncertain as to whom consumed the proscribed meal of beans, this would have allowed for an embodied engagement with this collective memory.

In relation to those *epheboi* who carried the *eiresione*, the *Pyanopsia* is again illustrated as an arena in which differing forms of collective memory could inform their identity as maturing citizens. Parker suggests that we envisage the *Pyanopsia*

97. *Thes.* 22, 4.

98. *Thes.* 22, 5.

99. *Thes.* 22, 5.

100. Parke, 1986, p. 76.

as a diffuse festival, with some depositing their branches in the Temple of Apollo Delphinios in Athens while others carried out similar acts across Attica.¹⁰¹ This is certainly suggested in a 4th cent. BCE sacrificial calendar from Elusis, which while fragmentary notes the provision of a *pannychis* “all night revel” by a “priestesses from Eleusis” on the 7th of Pyanopsion.¹⁰² Indeed the alternative aetiology of the festival noted by Plutarch also suggests the centrality of *epheboi* within the festival: “some writers say these rites are in memory of the Heracleidae” (καίτοι ταῦτά τινες ἐπὶ τοῖς Ἡρακλείδαις γίνεσθαι λέγουσιν).¹⁰³ As is necessary for the cultivation of collective cultural memory, the *Pyanopsia* (at least for those *epheboi* who deposited their branches in the Temple of Apollo Delphinios) spatially anchored the past into the landscape.¹⁰⁴ The mnemotopography associated with this temple also recalled the arrival of Theseus to Athens from Troizen, including the quasi-museological display of the place he spilled Medea’s cup of poison.¹⁰⁵ The temple thus displayed physical traces of the arrival of the proto-typical *ephebos* into the city of Athens and her citizenry.¹⁰⁶ In context of the *Pyanopsia*, this space would only reinforce the image of Theseus the Athenian *ephebos* and citizen *par excellence*.¹⁰⁷ This intersection between commemorative mimesis and mnemotopography would naturally communicate the cultural memory at the core of the festival to general participants, while inscribing it in the *epheboi* via embodied experience.

Again while not containing any dysphoric elements, the *Pyanopsia* can be understood as enabling forms of episodic memory that would cause a fusion amongst participating *epheboi*. Not only do we again see the elision of the self and replication of Theseus’ actions, but the likely annual exclusivity of the roles would make it a non-repeated religious experience.¹⁰⁸ Moreover if the “all night revel” was common place, this suggests the form of arena in which the depletion of sensory accuracy enables the formation of cohesive episodic memory.¹⁰⁹ As such, the *Pyanopsia*’s commemoration of Theseus’ Cretan adventure afforded the young men of Attica with the means by which to learn/display semantic memory essential to their civic and cultural identity,

101. Parker, 2005, p. 480.

102. IG II² 1363, ll. 15-20.

103. *Thes.* 22, 5.

104. Alcock, 2002, pp. 28-30.

105. Paus, I 19, 1. Cf. Greco *et al.*, 2011, pp. 469-474.

106. Hölscher, 2018, p. 118.

107. Shapiro, 1992, p. 44.

108. Whitehouse, 2002, p. 307.

109. Schjødt, 2019, p. 369.

while its embodied experience could enable the fusion of the maturing *epheboi* as a conceptual group. In essence, the *Pyanopsia* illustrates the mnemonic processes which “renders persons, objects and events meaningful by setting them into temporal, spatial and social frames”.¹¹⁰

Similar processes are evident in the foot race that either accompanied this ritual or the *Oschophoria*. Plutarch does not mention this race, but it does occur in the 2nd-3rd cent. CE description by Athenaeus who is in turn quoting the 1st cent. BCE grammarian Aristodemus of Nysa. While providing an incorrect date (the 3rd), this has been identified with the *Pyanopsia*.¹¹¹ As with Oschophoric procession, the race is described as being run from a shrine of Dionysus in Athens to that of Athena Skiras at Phaleron (τρέχουσι δ’ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ τοῦ Διονύσου μέχρι τοῦ τῆς Σκιράδος Ἀθηνᾶς)¹¹² with the runners again carrying seasonal “branches of fruit” (τρέχειν δ’ αὐτοὺς ἔχοντας ἀμπέλου κλάδον κατάκαρπον τὸν καλούμενον ὤσχον).¹¹³ Deubner however noted that the race course is here likely confused with that of the procession.¹¹⁴

The winner was rewarded with a special cup, a *pentaplous*, in which were mixed wine, honey, oil, and cheese (οἶνον ἔχει καὶ μέλι καὶ τυρὸν καὶ ἀλφίτων καὶ ἐλαίου βραχὺ)¹¹⁵ before feasting with the other runners (καὶ ὁ νικήσας λαμβάνει κύλικα τὴν λεγομένην πενταπλόαν καὶ κωμάζει μετὰ χοροῦ).¹¹⁶ Acquisition of a special drink and foodstuffs for the *epheboi*, certainly aligns with Plutarch’s description of the *eiresinoe* carriers, and indeed the feast mentioned in this context by Aristodemus may also be the prescribed meal of beans. While no specific Theban aetiology is attached to the foot race in our surviving sources, its course may have included the mnemotopographically charged arena of Phaleron, especially if the meal of beans was eaten at its conclusion. Indeed if this meal was perceived as replicating that originally made by Theseus upon his return, then the port would have been its natural setting. Moreover Robertson’s argument that the runners were conceptually equated with the youths that left for Crete, is given credence in Plutarch’s description of the *Pyanopsia* where the *epheboi* mimic other aspects of Cretan adventure.¹¹⁷ As with the ritualized transvestism in the *Oschophoria*, the

110. Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 583.

111. *FGrHist* 383, 9. Cf. Robertson, 1992, p. 124.

112. Ath., XI 92.

113. Ath., XI 92. See also Kadletz, 1980, p. 370.

114. Deubner, 1932, p. 145.

115. Ath., XI 92.

116. Ath., XI 92.

117. Robertson, 1992, pp. 124-126.

display of athletic prowess also indicates an act of public maturation as framed by the collective evocation of the ritual's Thesean origins.¹¹⁸

While our evidence relating to the *Pyanopsia* is not as full as that regarding the *Oschophoria*, with the foot race still often assigned to the latter, it does illustrate several features essential to generating collective cultural memory. Not only did several points in the festival claim a direct continuation and mimesis of Thesean action, but by doing so in the Temple of Apollo Delphinios, and possibly Phaleron, the spatial evocation inherently required of cultural memory was enabled.¹¹⁹ Participation in the *Pyanopsia* most certainly provided a context by which forms of semantic memory and civic identity could be formulated as based around the memory figure of Theseus. Moreover, the constituent experience of the festival from those *epheboi* who carried the *eiresione*, took part in *pannychis* or foot race, or even in collective singing and feasting, indicates sensory and emotive parameters that would aid in formulating episodic memory. In re-enacting the Thesean past, social competence was both expressed and embodied. By at least the 5th cent. BCE, the prominent evocation of Theseus during the *Pyanopsia* would have generated the collective memory of the Cretan adventure in association with its mnemotopography and embodied mimesis of its foundation.¹²⁰

4. THE *KYBERNESIA*. HERO WORSHIP AND THE LOCALIZATION OF SALAMINIAN MEMORY

While we have seen how the evocation of Thesean aetiologies aided in producing forms of collective memory conducive to both wider and smaller identity groups, it is also apparent on the level of the *genos*. Most prominently this was the grouping of the *genos* Salaminoi, whose religious duties are attested on the 4th cent. stele mentioned above.¹²¹ As we have seen, this *genos* was responsible for the organization of the *Oschophoria*, selecting *oschophori* and *deipnophoroi* as well as sacrificing to Theseus and maintaining the cult of Athena Skiras.¹²²

However the localization of Salaminoi identity was more prominently reinforced within the commemorative recollection that framed the *Kybernesia*, celebrated on

118. Golden, 2004, p. 104.

119. Assmann, 2010, pp. 109-111.

120. Jones, 2007, pp. 44-45; Assmann, 2012, p. 34.

121. *SEG* 21; Ferguson, 1938.

122. Mikalson, 1975, p. 51; Parker, 2005, p. 475.

the 8th of Boedromion (September/November). The port of Phaleron was once again the focus of this ritual while its aition, the sea “pilot’s festival” (τὰ Κυβερνήσιά),¹²³ illustrates its nautical tone. Plutarch’s brief description of this rite is done so in expressed reference to the Atthidographer Philochorus, stating that Theseus received his look-out man and pilot for the voyage to Crete from the king of the island of Salamis, Skiros:

φιλόχορος δὲ παρὰ Σκίρου φησὶν ἐκ Σαλαμῖνος τὸν
Θησέα λαβεῖν κυβερνήτην μὲν Ναυσίθοον, πρωρέα δὲ Φαίακα.¹²⁴

These sailor-men, namely Nausithoös and Phaiax, were directly commemorated within the *Kybernesia*. As well as employing Philochorus, Plutarch notes how this episode is evidenced in the landscape by their tombs which “Theseus built at Phaleron near the temple of Skiras” (μαρτυρεῖ δὲ τούτοις ἡρῶα Ναυσιθόου καὶ Φαίακος εἰσαμένου Θησέως Φαληροῖ πρὸς τῷ τοῦ Σκίρου ἱερῷ),¹²⁵ and which provided the physical focal point of the rite. 4th cent. Salaminian religious duties illustrates required sacrifices to these two heroes as well as Poseidon and another hero, Teukros, on which more briefly. Interestingly Plutarch notes an alternative pilot for the ship as mentioned by Simonides, yet supports his own use of Philochorus by underlining the wider consensus that the *Kybernesia* commemorated Nausithoös and Phaiax (καὶ τὴν ἑορτὴν τὰ Κυβερνήσιά φασιν ἐκείνοις τελεῖσθαι).¹²⁶ This broadly illustrates the means by which culturally available “memory schemata” operate in conjunction with “institutional objects”, such as memorials, in the selective generation of collective memory.¹²⁷

In particular, the names of these heroes belie the older, pre-Thesean, form of the *Kybernesia*. Indeed they are reflective of the sailors *par excellence* of the heroic age, the Phaiakians, as present in Homer. Within the figure of Nausithoös we may have a familial connection with the divine focus of the rite, Poseidon Hippodromios, if he is indeed that named by Homer as son of the god.¹²⁸ It is perhaps unwise to claim that Theseus had no part in earlier manifestations of the *Kybernesia*, however the appro-

123. *Thes.* 17, 6.

124. *FGrHist* 328, 111 = *Thes.* 17, 6.

125. *Thes.* 17, 6.

126. *Thes.* 17, 6.

127. Beim, 2010, p. 18.

128. *Od.* VII 55-57. Cf. Kearns, 1989, p. 39; Larson, 2016, p. 214. See also Jacoby’s comments, *FGrHist* IIIB Suppl. I 347, n. 9.

priation of Nausithoös and Phaiax as Salaminians and the centrality of the hero in its aetiology, indicates a deliberate “shaping of tradition” by the *genos* Salaminioi from the 6th cent. BCE.¹²⁹ This can again be assigned to the emphasis on the connections between the island and the *genos* in the wake of the conflict with Megara, the invasion of Solon and its eventual annexation by at least the end of the century.¹³⁰ Moreover, where Nausithoös may have been celebrated as the son of Poseidon in the *Kybernesia*, it was surely Theseus that came to be emphasized in this role, especially as the ritual related to the Cretan adventure. In the wake of the Athenian victory at Salamis, and her own emergence as a naval power within the Delian League, Poseidon enjoyed a considerable renaissance in the visual and religious landscapes of the city.¹³¹ In this context, where Theseus had been previously described as the son of King Aegeus, the hero came to be increasingly depicted as the son of Poseidon. Bacchylides dithyramb 17 provides our most vivid demonstration of this association in which the young Theseus is challenged by Minos on the journey to Crete to prove his divine paternity by descending into the ocean. Indeed the victorious sea journey to Crete, as well as the concept of Theseus as Poseidon’s son, naturally proved popular in context of Athenian naval ambition and supremacy.¹³² In any regard, for participants who took part in the Classical era, the understanding of Theseus as a son of Poseidon would have been part of the cognitive schemata which would have informed the collective remembering central to the *Kybernesia*.¹³³

The inclusion of Theseus into a festival structure that honored particular heroes and Poseidon, is certainly in keeping with his escalating popularity from the 6th cent. BCE. As the *Kybernesia* illustrates, this included Theseus being worshipped alongside his divine father every 8th day on the month.¹³⁴ However the particular nature of the festival also indicates how the likely deliberate inclusion/emphasis of a Thesean aetiology, would have aided in constructing a localizing collective memory for the *genos* Salaminioi. Nevertheless, the 4th cent. BCE stele detailing the cult responsibilities of the Salaminioi demonstrates that within the *Kybernesia*, while still responsible for providing sacrificial victims to the god and heroes, the *genos* did not officiate the entire festival.¹³⁵ Indeed it is likely that due to the

129. Parker, 1997, p. 315.

130. Walker, 1995, p. 51; Valdés Guía, 2002, pp. 175-185.

131. Neils, 2000, pp. 189-191.

132. Shapiro, 1992, p. 37; Mills, 1997, pp. 34-40.

133. Beim, 2010, p. 9.

134. Mikalson, 1975, p. 51.

135. Ferguson, 1938, pp. 8 and 27.

principle divine focus being Poseidon, the *genos* Phoinikes, who held his priesthood at Phaleron, organized the festival.¹³⁶ Yet the mnemotopography and ritual consumed during the *Kybernesia* reiterated a form of collective remembrance that allows for localized identities and “place bonding” to be cultivated.¹³⁷ This is something indicated by the presence of the hero Teukros in the ritualized honouring of the *Kybernesia*.¹³⁸ This figure represents a Salaminian hero derived from the island and utterly divorced from Phaeacian and Thesean associations. Again, the promotion of Nausithoös and Phaiax as being Salaminian, and acting within the Thesean framework, most likely rested with the *genos*. As we have seen, the narrative of Philochorus recognizes the pair as deriving from the Island of Salamis itself, while their hero cult is established inside Attica by Theseus on his return from Crete.¹³⁹

In claiming a Thesean origin, the *Kybernesia* reflects the ideological and functional incorporation of Salamis into the politico-religious landscape of Attica during the 6th cent. BCE. Debates regarding this “conquest” have been discussed above, but what is important to note here is the manner in which for members of the *genos* Salaminioi, the *Kybernesia* afforded the positioning of identity into time and space.¹⁴⁰ The Salaminian connection to the Cretan adventure represented by Nausithoös and Phaiax, including their memorials being established in Attica proper by Theseus, would have provided a culturally shared collective memory that reinforced their own group identity.

As well as the tombs, the port of Phaleron is illustrated as containing various mnemotopes relating to the Cretan adventure, Theseus, and Salamis. Plutarch describes how the tombs were built “near the temple of Skiros” (πρὸς τῷ τοῦ Σκίρου ἱερῷ),¹⁴¹ the king of Salamis who gifted the sea-men. Moreover while the cult of Athena Skiras is indicated as manifesting in Phaleron during the Archaic period, there was certainly a temple to the same goddess on Salamis itself.¹⁴² Indeed Strabo suggests that this was located on Cape Skiradion,¹⁴³ the place at which Plutarch describes Solon’s invasion of the island beginning.¹⁴⁴ Strabo also states that Skiras was

136. Kearns, 1989, p. 120; Parker, 1997, p. 317.

137. Scannell and Gifford, 2009, pp. 1-5.

138. Ferguson, 1938.

139. *FGrHist* 328, 111 = *Thes.* 17, 6.

140. Assmann, 2012, p. 38.

141. *Thes.* 17, 6.

142. Hdt., VIII 94. Cf. Papachatzis, 1989, p. 179.

143. Strabo, IX 1, 9.

144. Plut., *Sol.* 9.

itself the older title of the island of Salamis,¹⁴⁵ suggesting both the installation, and deliberate association with Salamis, of the cult of Athena Skiras at Phaleron began in the 6th cent. BCE.¹⁴⁶ I shall not dwell on the interpretive difficulties relating to the differing manifestations of Skiros, the execution of the cult of Athena Skiras on Salamis, or indeed possible relation to the festival of the Skira, but rather underline how the apparent relationship between Attica and Salamis was evident in the mnemotopography of Phaleron.¹⁴⁷ This was also the case for the Cretan adventure and Theseus. The, albeit late, description of the Temple of Athena Skiras by Pausanias in the 2nd cent. CE, notes altars to gods, the eponymous Phaleros and “the children of Theseus” (καὶ παίδων τῶν Θησέως).¹⁴⁸ Indeed Phaleros and Akamas, the son of Theseus, were held to have colonized Cyprus.¹⁴⁹ Androgeos, son of Minos, also had an altar there, which is identified by Pausanias through employing local antiquarian knowledge:

ἔστι δὲ καὶ Ἀνδρόγεω βωμὸς τοῦ Μίνω, καλεῖται δὲ Ἡρώος· Ἀνδρόγεω δὲ ὄντα ἴσασι οἷς ἔστιν ἐπιμελὲς τὰ ἐγγώρια σαφέστερον ἄλλων ἐπίστασθαι¹⁵⁰

For the identity of the *genos* Salaminoi, association with the island of Salamis was stressed via association with the sea, while claiming close relation with Theseus emphasized their being situated in Attica.¹⁵¹ Within the ritual commemoration of the *Kybernesia*, the explicit focus on tombs of Nausithoös and Phaiax would have provided the material evidence by which such associations could be prominently communicated within a state festival. Essentially, the appropriative emphasis on the Thesean origins of the tombs and their ritualized veneration would act to spatially and temporally cement their localized identity in relation to both the island and Attica. As physical mnemotopes, these memorials provided the material media essential for the generation of wider cultural collective memory, evoking foundational acts, figures and landscapes, while also referencing the specific group past of the *genos* Salaminoi.¹⁵² Indeed while not officiating, the *genos* would have their group past

145. Strabo, IX 1, 9.

146. Taylor, 1995, pp. 290-291; Parker, 2005, p. 215.

147. Kearns, 1989, p. 198; Häland, 2012, pp. 265-266; Hölscher, 2018, p. 118.

148. Paus., I 1, 4.

149. Valdés Guía, 2005, pp. 62-65.

150. Paus., I 1, 4.

151. Kearns, 1989, p. 40.

152. Jones, 2007, p. 23; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 572.

reiterated back to them and general participants, with the island's role in the Cretan adventure being the very cause of the *Kybernesia*.

The performative and physical arenas of the *Kybernesia* are illustrated, in their evocation of Thesean origin, as providing the form of ritualized communication essential to cultural memory.¹⁵³ Within a context of ever growing popularity for the hero, the annualized interaction between officiates, the *genos* Salaminioi, and general participants, would have allowed for the structuring of differing identity forms via this commemorative act.¹⁵⁴ In essence, the *Kybernesia* composed of a group recollection that would inform the production of semantic and broader civic-cultural identity, whilst also allowing for the reiteration of a *genos* specific past and group memory.¹⁵⁵ The appropriation of Theseus, indicates how the generation of collective memory relies on the contingent interaction between institutional media, such as a festival or memorial, and the socially disseminated understanding of the past.¹⁵⁶ This included spatially situating the memory of Theseus' return from Crete in the material index provided by the tombs.¹⁵⁷ How the world is appropriated indicates the means by which individuals and groups avoid alienation and instead stimulate resonance with wider socio-cultural frames, and within the *Kybernesia* this was performed dualistically.¹⁵⁸ While the Athenian state had ideologically and literally come to incorporate the island of Salamis into itself, so those members of the *genos* Salaminioi in Attica are illustrated as appropriating the memory of the pan-Athenian hero as a means by which to orientate themselves.¹⁵⁹

5. THE *DELIA*. THESEAN MIMESIS AND IONIAN IDENTITY

Within the latter half of the 5th cent. BCE, the strategically important island of Delos also hosted a re-emphasis on the memory figure of Theseus within the Pan-Ionian festival of the *Delia*.¹⁶⁰ This annual/quadrennial celebration was cited as being founded by Theseus, with the island a recognized destination on the return voyage back

153. Calame, 2009, p. 25; Assmann, 2012, p. 41.

154. Rüpke, 2018a, p. 14.

155. Manier and Hirst, 2010, p. 258.

156. Beim, 2010, pp. 5-10.

157. Jones, 2007, pp. 12-15.

158. Rosa, 2019, pp. 124-126.

159. Kearns, 1989, p. 120.

160. Connor, 1970, pp. 143-48; Walker, 1995, pp. 13 and 43; Kowalzig, 2007, p. 91; Shapiro, 2019, pp. 215-218.

from Crete. Athenian participation at the *Delia*, which took place on the 6th-7th of Thargelion (May/June), comprised of a *theoria* of a chorus of *korai* and *epheboi*, a ritual ambassador and athletes. While recognized as Pan-Ionian, in the context of the island's "purification" and restoration of the *Delia* under Athens in 426 BCE, the overt evocation of the memory of Theseus central to this festival is illustrated as emphasizing an Atheno-centric identity.¹⁶¹

Indeed this was not the first Athenian purification of the island, as Peisistratus had removed all burials visible from the sanctuary of Delian Apollo to which he likely added the monumental *porinos naos*, during the 540s BCE.¹⁶² This has been recognized as a move from tyrannic Athens to formulate an Ionian identity with the city at its conceptual core; something which found a functional reality when the treasury of the Delian League was moved to Athens in 454 BCE.¹⁶³ The sanctuary came under increasing Athenian control through the rest of the century including the establishment of an Athenian-only board of amphictyons, and the purification of 427/426 BCE prohibiting burial, dying and giving birth on the island.¹⁶⁴ It is in this context that we can view the purposeful emphasis on Thesean origins within a renewed *Delia*; signalling Athenian control of the island whilst making manifest an Atheno-centric Ionian identity.¹⁶⁵ This reformed festival naturally provided a more attractive outlet for Athenian self-expression during the Peloponnesian War, than did the great Pan-Hellenic Games.¹⁶⁶

Thucydides describes how at the time of Athenian re-institution the *Delia* had in fact fallen from renown, with a larger quadrennial version now also established:

ἦν δέ ποτε καὶ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλη ζύνοδος ἐς τὴν Δῆλον τῶν
Ἰώνων τε καὶ περικτιόνων νησιωτῶν.¹⁶⁷

He also directly quotes the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* in order to illustrate the older version of the festival:

ἀλλ' ὅτε Δήλω, Φοῖβε, μάλιστα γέ θυμὸν ἐτέρφθης,

161. Parker, 2005, p. 81.

162. Hdt., I 62, 2; Thuc., III 104, 1-2.

163. Constantakopoulou, 2007, pp. 65-67.

164. Thuc., I 8, 1; III 104; Diod., XII 58, 6.

165. Schachter, 1999, pp. 172-174; Constantakopoulou, 2007, p. 73.

166. Parker, 1997, p. 150.

167. Thuc., III 104.

ἔνθα τοι ἔλκεχίτωνες Ἴάονες ἠγερέθονται
 σὺν σφοῖσιν τεκέεσσι γυναιξί τε σὴν ἐς ἀγυίαν:
 ἔνθα σε πυγμαχίη τε καὶ ὄρχηστύϊ καὶ ἀοιδῆ
 μνησάμενοι τέρπουσιν, ὅταν καθέσωσιν ἀγῶνα.¹⁶⁸

“Here the Ionians gather (...) walking the path of your precinct...delight your heart with boxing, dancing and singing. Every time they hold these games it is you they remember.”

Amongst the new additions, Thucydides also notes how the Athenians included a horse race (καὶ ἵπποδρομίας, ὃ πρότερον οὐκ ἦν).¹⁶⁹ Interestingly neither Thucydides, nor his earlier source (7th-6th cent. BCE)¹⁷⁰ mention the Thesean aetiology for the *Delia*, and we may suggest this element of the festival as finding especial emphasis in the “new” Athenian manifestation.¹⁷¹ Arguments positing a Pan-Ionian origin for Theseus, especially by Herter,¹⁷² have been convincingly negated, and we should view his evocation during this reformed *Delia* in relation to his wider representation of Athenian superiority.¹⁷³ This is not to suggest that the recollection of Theseus in any way suppressed the cultivation of Ionian identity, but rather aided in doing so via the prism of an Athen-centric memory figure. Where narratives of autochthonic origin had framed conceptions of the Athenian collective past from the late 6th cent., notions of Ionian identity are discernible after the Greco-Persian War and establishment of the Delian League.¹⁷⁴ Again, the ritualized commemoration of Thesean foundational acts that framed the *Delia* are thus indicated as operating in a context of a wider aesthetic celebration of Ionian identity, whilst also emphasizing Athenian superiority.¹⁷⁵ This is certainly the picture presented by Plutarch who describes Nicias leading a chorus “in lavish splendour” (καὶ τὸν χορὸν ἄγων κεκοσμημένον πολυτελῶς καὶ ἄδοντα διὰ τῆς γεφύρας ἀπεβίβαζε)¹⁷⁶ at the festival. Here he bestowed funding for sacred banquets for the Delians, while dedicating a bronze palm-tree which was itself

168. *Homeric Hymn of Apollo* 145-148.

169. Thuc., III 104.

170. Burkert, 1979, pp. 53-60.

171. Chankowski, 2008, pp. 50-74.

172. Herter, 1936, p. 225; 1939, p. 245.

173. Walker, 1995, pp. 12-13.

174. Connor, 1993, pp. 201-206; Hall, 1997, pp. 51-56.

175. Parker, 1997, pp. 150-151.

176. *Nic.* 3, 5.

a recognized mnemotope of the island (καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο τῇ στήλῃ ἐνέγραψεν, ἦν ὡσπερ φύλακα τῆς δωρεᾶς ἐν Δήλῳ κατέλιπεν).¹⁷⁷

Let us now examine the constituent aspects of the festival illustrated as providing the means by which collective memory is constructed, and how the experience of recalling Theseus would inform differing identities.

Plutarch describes the aetiology of the *Delia* as originating when Theseus, returning from Crete, put in at Delos and sacrificed to Apollo while also dedicating a statue of Aphrodite Ariadne had given him “in his temple”:

ἐκ δὲ τῆς Κρήτης ἀποπλέων εἰς Δήλον κατέσχε: καὶ τῷ θεῷ θύσας
καὶ ἀναθεὶς τὸ ἀφροδίσιον ὃ παρὰ τῆς Ἀριάδνης ἔλαβεν.¹⁷⁸

Key elements of the festival, choral singing, athletic contests, the prize of the palm leaf, and distinctive *geranos* “Crane” were also founded by Theseus:

ποιῆσαι δὲ καὶ ἀγῶνά φασιν αὐτὸν ἐν Δήλῳ, καὶ τοῖς νικῶσι
τότε πρῶτον ὑπ’ ἐκείνου φοίνικα δοθῆναι.¹⁷⁹

This episode was certainly prevalent during the 5th cent. BCE at least, as evidenced by Pherekydes, who notes that the *theoria* sent by Athens was also initiated by Theseus in honor of Apollo and Artemis.¹⁸⁰ Indeed it is suggested that the members of the chorus sent to the *Delia* were conceived as a re-collective mimesis of the youths and maidens from the Cretan adventure.¹⁸¹ Plato relates the *theoria* sent to the *Delia* as stemming from a Thesean origin, with it representing the fulfilment of the vows to Apollo for his and the youths safe return:

τῷ οὖν Ἀπόλλωνι ἠῤῥξαντο ὡς λέγεται τότε, εἰ σωθεῖεν,
ἐκάστου ἔτους θεωρίαν ἀπάξειν εἰς Δήλον.¹⁸²

177. *Nic.* 3, 6. Cf. Marks, 2016, pp. 161-164.

178. *Thes.* 21, 1.

179. *Thes.* 21, 2.

180. *FGrHist* 3, 149; Simon, 1996, p. 12.

181. Larson, 2016, p. 214.

182. Pl., *Phaedo* 58b.

Aristotle also describes the chorus sent to Delos as unmarried “youths” (ἡθέους), a term specifically used to describe the Thesean *epheboi* elsewhere,¹⁸³ also mentioning that the chorus members and procession leader were picked together:

καθίστησι δὲ καὶ εἰς Δῆλον χορηγούς καὶ ἀρχιθέωρον
τῷ τριακοντορίῳ τῷ τοὺς ἡθέους ἄγοντι.¹⁸⁴

Bacchylides describes the “twice Seven Youths” as ἡθέους throughout Ode 17, and while designed to be sung by Keans, it suggests the Thesean register of the *Delia* in the 5th cent. BCE.¹⁸⁵ Both Plato and Aristotle also illustrate the fact that the *theoria* delegation journeyed to the festival in a ship understood as being the very one employed during the Cretan expedition:

ἔστι τὸ πλοῖον, ὡς φασιν Ἀθηναῖοι, ἐν ᾧ Θησεύς ποτε εἰς
Κρήτην τοὺς ‘δὶς ἑπτὰ’ ἐκείνους ᾤχετο.¹⁸⁶

τριακοντορίῳ τῷ τοὺς ἡθέους ἄγοντι.¹⁸⁷

Plutarch also describes this “thirty-oared ship”, stating that it was preserved until the late 4th cent. BCE (τὸ δὲ πλοῖον ἐν ᾧ μετὰ τῶν ἡιθέων ἐπλευσε καὶ πάλιν ἐσώθη, τὴν τριακόντορον, ἄχρι τῶν Δημητρίου τοῦ Φαληρέως χρόνων διεφύλαττον οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι).¹⁸⁸

Thus in journeying from Athens to the *Delia*, those members that made up the *theoria* performed a continuation of Theseus’ proto-typical sacrifice and foundation of athletic contests. The choruses are suggested as being envisioned as directly mimicking the youths and maidens, while the entire crew was literally framed by the material evidence of the Cretan voyage. Commemorative ceremonies naturally aid in the formulation of collective memory via the “depictive representation of past events”.¹⁸⁹ Indeed the *theoria* dualistically honored the foundation of the *Delia* by Theseus, while also adopting characters drawn from this episode. While for older members of the *theoria*, such as ambassadors and chorus leaders, journeying to Delos would have reinforced the semantic memory of this episode in the Athenian past,

183. Parker, 2005, p. 81.

184. A., *Ath.Pol.* 56, 3.

185. Mills, 1997, p. 39.

186. Pl., *Phaedo* 58a.

187. A., *Ath.Pol.* 56, 3.

188. *Thes.* 23, 1.

189. Connerton, 1989, p. 72.

for younger members it would have afforded a potent means by which this collective memory was generated bodily.¹⁹⁰ The ship itself would have provided an immersive experience of a material testament to Theseus' Cretan adventure, something that would have reinforced the adoption of Thesean characters by the chorus.¹⁹¹

The most vital mnemonic act of the *Delia* rested in the performance of the so-called "Crane" dance that Theseus and the twice seven youths initiated. While Plutarch does not expressly link this dance to the *Delia*, Callimachus presents this association in the 3rd cent. BCE. For his description of the dance however, Plutarch does employ the testimony of the 4th-3rd cent. BCE philosopher Dicaearchus of Messana:

ἔλαβεν, ἐχόρευσε μετὰ τῶν ἡϊθέων χορείαν ἣν ἔτι νῦν ἐπιτελεῖν
 Δηλίουσι λέγουσι, μίμημα τῶν ἐν τῷ Λαβυρίνθῳ περιόδων
 καὶ διεξόδων, ἐν τινὶ ῥυθμῷ παραλλάξεις καὶ ἀνελίξεις ἔχοντι γιγνομένην.¹⁹²

"he danced with his youths a dance which they say is still performed by the Delians, being an imitation of the circling passages in the Labyrinth, and consisting of certain rhythmic involutions and evolutions"

Simon has suggested that as ritualized dance was often perceived as direct mimesis in Greek antiquity, the *geranos* "Crane" (τῆς χορείας ὑπὸ Δηλίων γέρανος)¹⁹³ was understood as a direct continuation of the Thesean original.¹⁹⁴ In his Hymn to Delos, Callimachus describes the dance as an effectually embodied commemoration of its Thesean initiation:

αἱ δὲ ποδι πλήσσουσι χορίτιδες ἀσφαλές οὐδας.
 δὴ τότε καὶ στεφάνοισι βαρύνεται ἱρὸν ἄγαλμα
 Κύπριδος ἀρχαίης ἀρήκοον, ἣν ποτε Θησεὺς
 εἶσατο σὺν παιδεσσιν, ὅτε Κρήτηθεν ἀνέπλει.¹⁹⁵

Here the "girls of the choir beat with their feet the secure ground" dancing around the "holy image... of archaic Cypris that Theseus set up with the youths". Moreover the dance is again recognized as imitating the winding nature of the Labyrinth;

190. Connerton, 1989, pp. 45 and 72.

191. Jones, 2007, p. 44; Assmann, 2012, p. 39; Hamilakis, 2014, p. 168.

192. *Thes.* 21, 1-2. Trans. Perrin, 1914.

193. *Thes.* 21, 2.

194. Simon, 1996, p. 11; Nagy, 2013, p. 227.

195. *Hymn to Delos* 305-310.

καὶ γναμπτὸν ἔδος σκολιοῦ λαβυρίνθου,
 πότνια, σὸν περὶ βωμὸν ἐγειρομένου κιθαρισμοῦ
 κύκλιον ὠρχήσαντο, χοροῦ δ' ἠγήσατο Θησεύς.¹⁹⁶

“After fleeing the maze they danced...in a circle...and Theseus led the choir”.

The dance is likely to have been performed by Delians even within the context of the Athenian re-organization, however if the choir sent by Athens was promoted as mimicking the youths of the Cretan adventure, then we can imagine that it was they who accompanied it.¹⁹⁷ Callimachus illustrates that the dance had as its material focal point the statue of Aphrodite, held to have been dedicated by Theseus. Moreover Plutarch describes the dance as encircling the famous “Keraton”, an altar to Apollo constructed entirely of bull horns:

ἐχόρευσε δὲ περὶ τὸν Κερατῶνα βωμὸν,
 ἐκ κέρατων συνηρμοσμένον εὐωνύμων ἀπάντων.¹⁹⁸

This altar is also mentioned by Callimachus in the *Hymn to Apollo*, where it is constructed by Artemis (60-64) and was in fact a primary mnemotope in the Delian landscape throughout antiquity, gaining association with Homer as well as Theseus.¹⁹⁹ As a medium by which the collective memory of Theseus was generated and communicated to participants of the Delia, the “Crane” dance evoked its Thesean origins through embodied mimesis, material cultural and the narration of the Labyrinth episode.²⁰⁰ Ceremonial dance acts as a key method by which collective pasts are re-experienced by cultural groups, in effect signalling continuity with that past, something which has been shown as equally formative on the identity of participants and audience alike.²⁰¹ For Athenian members of the chorus and audience, the “Crane” dance would have provided the forms of spatial evocation and perceptions of continuity essential to collective cultural memory. While perhaps not performing the dance the overt focus on Theseus, who had by the late 5th cent. come to represent

196. *Hymn to Delos* 310-314.

197. Kowalzig, 2007, pp. 56-59.

198. *Thes.* 21, 2.

199. Marks, 2016, pp. 164-167.

200. Connerton, 1989, p. 44; Halbwachs, 1992, p. 84.

201. Buckland, 2001, pp. 1-16.

Athens itself, would have underlined an Athens-centric cultural memory as a core element to a Pan-Ionian festival.²⁰² Indeed for the other attendees, this recollection of Theseus would have operated in the discernible Thesean flavor of the reorganized Delia that stressed the centrality and superiority of Athens in relation to her allies.²⁰³

For those that performed the dance and accompanied it with choral singing, this evocation of Theseus and the twice-seven youths demonstrates forms of embodied experience vital to episodic memory and group fusion.²⁰⁴ While not overtly ecstatic, the dance as described by both Plutarch and Callimachus is emphasized in being a winding and shifting performance, conducted in relation to the “beat” as established by the choir’s singing and stamping feet. Again, whether this chorus was made up of those dancing or others in attendance, is difficult to establish. However, this form of collective singing would have aided in stimulating both relational identities amongst the singers, and collective identities between chorus/dancers and audience.²⁰⁵ While energetic dancing and group singing was a common feature within Greek ritual, its ability to create episodic memory was here supported by its likely being performed at night. Inscriptions detailing accessories for the chorus from the 3rd cent. BCE, make repeated reference to torches, wicks, lamps and olive oil required for burning them: ἔλαιον καὶ ἐλλύχνια τοῖς φανοῖς.²⁰⁶ Sensory deprivation during ritual experience, such as darkness, has been shown to allow its episodic recollection to be framed by collective narratives shared after the event.²⁰⁷ The notion that the dance was both intricate and completed in the dark is also supported by the mention of ropes (ῥυμοὶ) which may have guided the dancers/chorus.²⁰⁸

As with rites discussed above, while not adhering to the dysphoric framework posited by Whitehouse, the carnivalesque experience of dancing and singing at night would have afforded the “fusion” of participants.²⁰⁹ The re-enactment of the Thesean “Crane” dance did so within the mnemotopographic, and materially evidenced, landscape of the original. By evoking a distinct figure, episode and space it undoubtedly illustrates its acting as a medium for the generation of collective cultural memory.²¹⁰

202. Chankowski, 2008, pp. 109-118.

203. Parker, 1997, pp. 150-151.

204. Volgsten and Pripp, 2016, pp. 144-164.

205. Rutherford, 2004, pp. 82-90; Pearce, 2017, pp. 196-198.

206. *ID* 316, ll. 75-80.

207. Schjødt *et al.*, 2013, p. 45; Schjødt, 2019, pp. 367-368.

208. Arnold, 1933, p. 455.

209. Wertsch and Roediger, 2008, p. 323; Downey, 2014, p. 684; Larson, 2016, p. 192.

210. Halbwachs, 1992, p. 200; Assmann, 2012, pp. 38-43.

The embodied experience of re-performing this “memory” is also suggested as enabling forms of episodic memory required of group fusion. Adoption of Thesean characters by the dancers/chorus, the apparently complex and winding nature of the dance, group singing and its taking place in near darkness, all indicate embodied, mnemonic, experiences. If the dance was performed by a choir of Delians, then this experience may have supported notions of Athens-centrism. However it may have also reinforced the localized identification and smaller group cohesion of the performers who, while enacting an episode emphasized as Athenian, did so through their own display of religious competence.²¹¹ Naturally if the Athenian choir took part, the experience would have allowed for a more engrossing adoption of the twice-seven youths with whom they were clearly identified in the context of the *Delia*.

While the dance firmly demonstrates elements of an “imagistic” ritual experience, the *Delia* was a calendrically regular, and especially in the context of the Athenian renewal, centrally organized festival. While again not aligning completely with the “doctrinal” religious mode, we gain a better understanding of the *Delia*’s ability to generate, or at least express, an Athens-centric identity by considering overlapping elements. As noted above, Bacchylides suggests that Theseus was indeed a prevalent aspect of the *Delia* even before its re-organization, and semantic memory would naturally formulate in a ritual context which vividly underlined its foundation by the hero. Yet in the context of overt Athenian control, we may discern the form of directorial authority by which fixed interpretations are communicated to the group.²¹² While still celebrated as a Pan-Ionian festival, the generation of semantic memories regarding Theseus at the *Delia* during this period would have thus been framed by a retrojection of Athenian influence and supremacy into the island’s foundational past. How much this enabled an identification with Athens from other participants, including the Delians who were themselves expelled from the island for a year in 422 BCE,²¹³ is elusive. Indeed within the 4th cent. BCE, the recollection of Theseus within the *Delia* did so in a context of expressed resistance to Athenian control of the sanctuary.²¹⁴ For those Athenians established on the island and the visiting *theoria* however, the commemoration of Theseus would have undoubtedly functioned to reinforce wider civic/cultural identifications.²¹⁵ The festival’s celebrated Thesean foundation – from its dancing, athletic and choral contests, the statue of Aphrodite and

211. Kowalzig, 2007, p. 82; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, pp. 576-577.

212. Assmann, 2012, p. 41; Whitehouse and Lanman, 2014, p. 680.

213. Thuc., V 1.

214. Constantakopoulou, 2016, pp.125-138.

215. Manier and Hirst, 2010, p. 258.

the Athenian delegation enacting a fulfilment of the hero's oath to Apollo – suggests the display of a cultural memory that would have aided in orientating the relationship between the city-state and her Ionian allies within the Delian League.

The recollection of Theseus in the *Delia* of the latter 5th cent. BCE, is demonstrated as providing a legitimization of the wider religio-political authority of Athens in relation to her Ionian allies. For differing participants, the memory of the hero would have been contingent on exterior socio-political developments in Athens, the Delian League and the island of Delos itself. Episodic memories forged during the “Crane” dance likely formulated a cohesive bonding between those that performed it, while the over-arching emphasis on Theseus iterated the semantic/cultural memory conducive to group identifications. Essentially the festival provided an arena in which differing social relationships could be cultivated and re-enforced through collective memory of Theseus.²¹⁶

In Athens the absence of the *theoria* initiated a strict maintenance of city-wide purity including the cessation of executions, most famously that of Socrates in 399 BCE.²¹⁷ This restriction indicates the liminal quality of “ritual time” as standing apart from the everyday; where the abstract temporality of the Thesean past framed the experience of time in the day-to-day workings of the city.²¹⁸ As the delegation would have engaged with a visceral recollection of the Thesean voyage back from Crete, so the city of Athens itself re-awaited the return of “Theseus” to Phaleron in the form of his ship and the representational youths who had honored the oath sworn by the hero to Apollo.

6. CONCLUSION: THE PROCESSION TO THE *DELPHINION* AND THE THESEAN RITUAL LANDSCAPE

The claimed and emphasized Thesean aetiologies within the rituals discussed above, are indicated as providing the required material media, mnemotopic evocation and embodied experiences by which the collective cultural memory is generated.²¹⁹ Rather than representing a petrified canon, the Cretan adventure manifested contextually within these festivals in conjunction with wider socio-cultural developments and requirements. Indeed we have seen how by engaging with this collective memory,

216. Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 583.

217. Xen., *Mem.* IV 8, 2.

218. Bradley, 1998, p. 85.

219. Assmann, 2012, pp. 38-41.

differing forms of group identity were provided arenas in which to be cultivated, expressed and imposed.

To conclude this examination the little recorded rite dated to the 6th of Mounichion (April/May) will be considered next to these phenomena. This ritual was formed of a procession of young women to the Temple of Apollo Delphinios near to the Akropolis, who carried olive branches crowned with wool as with the *epeheboi* during the *Pyanopsia*.²²⁰ Plutarch is here again our primary source, and while no Atthidographer is cited, the description of the ritual is consistent with the author's wider historiographic *archaiologia*.²²¹ As noted above, the Temple of Apollo Delphinios was heavily associated with the hero. In first arriving at Athens it is here that Theseus is identified by Aegeus,²²² while Pausanias describes how being taken for a young woman by the temple's builders, he threw a pair of oxen over its roof in a show of masculine virility (Θησεύς δὲ ἄλλο μὲν αὐτοῖς ἐδήλωσεν οὐδέν, ἀπολύσας δὲ ὡς λέγεται τῆς ἀμάξης τοὺς βοῦς, ἢ σφισι παρῆν, τὸν ὄροφον ἀνέρριψεν ἐς ὑψηλότερον ἢ τῷ ναῷ τὴν στέγην ἐποιοῦντο).²²³ The date of the 6th of Mounichion was recognized as that on which Theseus supplicated Apollo at his temple and then departed for Crete, from which the procession is recognized as emerging.²²⁴ While little can be gleaned from these details, we are still able to posit on how the procession acted to cultivate collective memory and inform participant's identities.

1) *Appropriative emphasis*. As with the other rituals above, the procession to the *Delphinion* is indicated as manifesting situationally, with its Thesean aetiology likely emerging from the 6th cent. BCE. While an evidently Apolline rite, the date of the 6th in fact points to it being originally related to Artemis who was also worshipped in the *Delphinion*.²²⁵ Indeed Simon has underlined Artemis as having a prominent position in the earliest versions of the Cretan adventure, and the procession may echo this older relationship.²²⁶ Nevertheless, the rite as recorded by Plutarch has Apollo as its divine focus, and Theseus' supplication to the god as its cited origin. While admittedly elusive, the apparent elision of Artemis in favor of Apollo suggests an adjustment in line with prevalent conceptions of Theseus' relationship with these gods.

220. Deubner, 1932, p. 201; Calame, 1996, p. 143.

221. Frost, 1984, p. 67.

222. *Thes.* 12, 3.

223. Paus., I 19, 1.

224. *Thes.* 18, 1.

225. Mikalson, 1975, p. 140.

226. Simon, 1996, pp. 12-15.

2) *Maturation and social identity*. An older Artemisian form for this procession is perhaps evidenced in the sole participation of young women, for whom Artemis oversaw female maturation rituals in various contexts and guises.²²⁷ This does not mean that Theseus as a memory figure would have been previously absent, but rather Apollo was not the likely divine focus. In any regard, the Thesean aetiology that framed this rite provided an authoritative precursor to what would have been a display of the young women's socio-religious competence. We may again detect elements of embodied mimesis; replicating Theseus' own oath to Apollo while perhaps dualistically evoking the maidens bound for Crete. Such facets of ritualized experience have been illustrated above as allowing for fused bonding, while the replication of a prototypical act would have supported wider identity forms via the commemoration of a shared past for performers and general participants alike.²²⁸

3) *Mnemetopography*. The procession as a physical act, would have aided in spatially anchoring the memory of Theseus into the landscape by replicating the movement of his own religiously charged journey to the Temple of Apollo. Collective memory relies on its being positioned into space, and the ritual journey carried out by the young women would have both embedded and evoked the cultural remembrance of this episode from the Athenian heroic past.²²⁹ Athens and its surrounding landscapes housed various Thesean mnemetopes, however it was through acts such as the procession to the *Delphinion* that they would be able to formulate collective memory.²³⁰

4) *Materiality*. The boughs carried by those in the procession, again as in the *Pyanopsia*, directly referenced those supposedly dedicated by Theseus in the temple. This may again indicate the appropriation of a directly Thesean origin for a pre-existing aspect of the procession. Religious communication "requires materiality"²³¹ and is vital in the formulation of collective memory.²³² While obviously not as potent as the tombs at Phaleron or the Thesean ship, the branches would have communicated the memory of the Thesean origins of the procession to its members and audience.

227. Lee, 2015, pp. 200-203.

228. Connerton, 1989, p. 82.

229. Assmann, 2012, p. 42.

230. Alcock, 2002, pp. 28-32; Hölscher, 2018, pp. 118-121.

231. Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 570.

232. Jones, 2007, p. 42.

5) *Religious “modes”*. While little is gleaned from Plutarch’s description of the procession, we may reasonably suggest that the experience of the *korai* would have enabled episodic memory. While not dysphoric in any sense, themes of maturation and character adoption during the rite indicate potential frameworks for fused identity. Likewise, as an organized state ritual that would have been administered by religious authorities, the procession generally aligns with the “doctrinal” mode. However, as with all the rites discussed above, neither of these definitions fit neatly with this ritual, and we should perhaps approach it as cognitively intuitive overall.²³³ Nevertheless by noting “imagistic” and “doctrinal” elements, we gain a clearer picture of how differing forms of collective memory were likely generated and their potential to inform differing identities.

6) *Cultural remembering*. Cultural memory deals with the shared origins, heroic figures and important landscapes of groups. It requires communication through mimesis, mnemotopography and various material reminders in the form of ritualized acts.²³⁴ The procession would have clearly operated as a medium by which the Athenian collective memory of Theseus was generated and expressed; re-performing his original supplication within its established mnemotopography.

By considering the contingent nature and experience of ritual, we are provided with firmer ground in commenting on its formative properties. In this paper I have aimed to consider these issues in relation to the mechanics by which collective memory was generated, not simply expressed. For those rites that claimed Thesean origin, we have seen how the hero was subject to situational emphasis in relation to wider socio-political and religious realities. Collective memory is ever a product of the present, and the manner in which the Cretan adventure was commemorated indicates how the past is selectively emphasized to “serve contemporary goals”.²³⁵ Through a direct examination of the media by which the collective memory of Theseus was itself generated, we have seen how these rituals acted to spatially anchor the hero into the landscape through re-enactment, and often in conjunction with either material evidences or reminders. While never attempting to conform these rituals to rigid definitions of “doctrinal” or “imagistic” religious modes, these frameworks have been helpful in considering how episodic and semantic memory was formulated therein. In the

233. Larson, 2016, p. 192.

234. Wertsch and Roediger, 2008, p. 324; Assmann, 2010; pp. 110-111.

235. Pantel, 2013, p. 433.

cases of direct mimesis, adoption of Thesean characters and sensory elision we have seen the potential for bonding between participating groups via embodied cognition. Likewise, the routinized commemoration of Theseus through re-performance, material evidencing and mnemotopography allowed for the display of maturing, sexed, *genos* and civic identity. Indeed, as the central hero and representative of Athens from the 6th cent. BCE, the notion that any collective recollection of Theseus contributed to a wider Athenian group identification is uncontroversial. However, by shifting focus towards the mechanics by which this was produced we have gained a fuller picture of the contingent quality and experience of the collective memory of Theseus.

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RURAL RITES IN OVID'S *FASTI*

RITUALES RURALES EN LOS *FASTI* DE OVIDIO

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the presentation of rural festivals in Ovid's *Fasti* using the concept of lived ancient religion and especially the idea of individual appropriation of religious norms, actions and beliefs. As a literary work, the *Fasti* draw on material from other Augustan poets and appropriate it to the composition of the work and especially to the context of the Roman festival calendar. In the case of the rural festivals that are presented in the *Fasti*, this appropriation can be seen for example in the treatment of the importance of peace for rural life. In

RESUMEN

Este estudio analiza la presentación de los festivales rurales en los *Fasti* de Ovidio aplicando el concepto de "lived ancient religion", especialmente la idea de apropiación individual de normas, acciones y creencias religiosas. Como obra literaria, los *Fasti* se inspiran en material de otros poetas augusteos y se apropian de él en favor de la composición literaria, particularmente dentro del contexto del calendario religioso romano. En el caso de los festivales rurales presentados en los *Fasti*, esta apropiación se observa, por ejemplo, en el tratamiento de la importancia

the *Fasti*, the idealized rural scenes are not an object of the speaker's desire as they are for example in Tibullus' elegies. Instead, the described peace is identified as the *Pax Augusta* and the speaker utters thanks to the emperor who makes it possible that the celebrating rustics can enjoy this peace. Thus, the rural festivals are connected to urban politics and to the urban festival calendar. In the *Fasti*, the rural and urban festival communities do not exist isolated from each other as they share the same conditions (the *Pax Augusta*) and emotions (joy and gratitude) and thus form an emotional community.

de la paz para la vida rural. En los *Fasti*, las escenas rurales idealizadas no son objeto de deseo por parte del narrador, al contrario de lo que sucede, por ejemplo, en las elegías de Tibulo. En su lugar, la paz descrita es identificada con la *Pax Augusta* y el autor expresa su gratitud hacia el emperador que hace posible que los campesinos participantes en los festivales puedan disfrutar de dicha paz. De esta manera, los festivales rurales se relacionan con las políticas urbanas y con el calendario festivo urbano. En los *Fasti*, las comunidades rurales y urbanas que celebran los festivales no están aisladas una de la otra, puesto que comparten las mismas circunstancias (la *Pax Augusta*) y las mismas emociones (alegría y gratitud) y forman así una comunidad emocional.

KEYWORDS

Emotional Communities; Lived Ancient Religion; Ovid's *Fasti*; *Pax Augusta*; Rural Festivals.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Comunidades emocionales; "Lived Ancient Religion"; *Fasti* de Ovidio; *Pax Augusta*; festivales rurales.

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IN HIS BOOK "ON ROMAN RELIGION", Jörg Rüpke explains the concept of *Lived Ancient Religion*, a term that has been inspired by Meredith McGuire, as "a framework within which we can address the whole range of religious practices and conceptions, not as sets of fixed rules or beliefs, but as a permanently changing field of individual actions, inceptive traditions, monumental examples, and incoherent assumptions".¹ The concept focuses on the individual appropriation of religion, that is on the reproduction, selection and transformation of different traditions, norms and options that are available to an individual or a group of people. Meredith McGuire has studied this process with regard to contemporary religion.² In her study, she found that the people she had interviewed did not accept a set of beliefs as recommended by the religious institution they belonged to (e.g. the Catholic Church) uncritically, but that they assessed individually which beliefs and actions they accepted and performed, regarded as less important or rejected. They also accepted beliefs from other religious systems and integrated them into their own personal lived religion.³

With regard to antiquity, it is not always easy to discern cases of lived religion or individual appropriation of norms and traditions. This is partly due to the limited amount of source material, but also to the nature of the sources. Official documents and literary texts are often studied as reflecting the "official" belief system and ritual actions, while deviant accounts of religious behavior are classified as "popular" re-

1. Rüpke, 2016, p. 5.

2. McGuire, 2008.

3. For discussions of individual vs. official religion and individual appropriation of official beliefs in antiquity cf. e.g. Beard, 1987; Feeney, 1998; Scheid, 2013.

ligion.⁴ In contrast to this view, Rüpke has shown convincingly that literary works and official documents can be valuable sources for the study of lived ancient religion. They do not only contribute to the framework of legitimate religious options (e.g. beliefs, rites and concepts of the supernatural) that can be appropriated by individuals, but they also reflect the creation of this framework in social interaction and the negotiation of the concepts and options that are accepted.⁵

In this paper, the focus will be on a literary work about the Roman festival calendar, Ovid's *Fasti*.⁶ In this work, Ovid describes Roman festivals from January to June. In most cases, the emphasis is on aitiologies and myths regarding the respective festivals, but also on the venerated gods with their typical attributes and properties. However, there are also passages in which the performance of certain rites and the celebration of the festivals themselves are described in more or less detail. It is these sections that are mainly studied in this paper.⁷

At this point, it is important to stress the *Fasti*'s status as a literary work. The discussed rituals and festivals have been selected by the author and are described by the speaker of the work, who presents himself as Ovid.⁸ In some cases, there are parallel sources that confirm certain aspects of Ovid's presentation, but for many festivals that are discussed in the *Fasti*, no or only few (and in most cases far less detailed) accounts from antiquity have survived. Therefore, it is not the aim of this paper to reconstruct the real religious experience of participants at the presented festivals. Especially for the rural rites that are considered in detail in this paper, it is unlikely

4. Cf. Rüpke, 2016, pp. 1-3 for a summary of these perspectives in research on ancient religion.

5. Rüpke, 2016 discusses several examples for these practices. With regard to Ovid's *Fasti*, he stresses the importance of the connected reader for our understanding of the religious concepts of the Roman elite at the time (pp. 80-96). Another example are the inscribed or painted festival calendars of Augustan and Tiberian time. Rüpke argues that these calendars did not possess a prescriptive function but rather attest the self-definition of the individual or community who built and read them as Roman and loyal to Augustus (pp. 114-120).

6. In this paper, the title *Fasti* is used in accordance with common practice. However, Rüpke, 1994, pp. 125-129 has shown convincingly that Ovid's *Fasti* were written as a commentary on the homonymous inscriptional calendars and that therefore the title *libri Fastorum* would be more precise.

7. For a more extensive treatment of the presentation of contemporary festivals in Ovid's *Fasti* cf. Hirt (forthcoming).

8. The differentiation between a speaker or narrator and an author of a literary work has its roots in narratological approaches to literature and is now widely accepted. For the application of the concept to ancient literature in general and especially to Ovid's *Fasti* cf. e.g. Newlands, 1995, pp. 51-52; North, 1995, pp. 140-142 (with specific regard to Ovid's descriptions of festivals); Holzberg, 2006. For the self-presentation of the *Fasti*'s speaker as "Ovid" cf. most explicitly *Fast.* V 377-378 (in an address to Flora: *floreat ut toto carmen Nasonis in aevo, / sparge, precor, donis pectora nostra tuis*).

that they were ever performed in the described way by the rural population or that they were as strictly separated from urban cults as ancient literary works suggest.⁹ Instead, the respective passages show the influence of a literary tradition of describing idealized rural festivals that is especially prominent in Augustan times, as will be discussed below. Accordingly, the focus of this paper is on the imagined ceremonies as described in the *Fasti* and on their individuality in comparison to other accounts. The depictions of rural rites in the *Fasti* continue the literary tradition of Augustan time and especially of elegy, but they also modify it by selecting, rearranging and transforming certain elements to create a unique presentation of imagined rural piety in adaptation to the political situation in Rome.

A few preliminary remarks on the common idealization of rural life and piety are necessary, especially in the texts of Augustan times. Based on these remarks, one aspect of this idealization will be singled out and discussed in Ovid's rustic festivals, namely the importance of the community of the celebrants and the formation of emotional communities. There is often a focus on the emotional tone of a certain festival or a group of festivals in Ovid's *Fasti*. In the third section, the emotional tones of the rural festivals will be studied further. It will be shown that Ovid develops and transforms the emotions of his rustics in comparison to earlier elegy and explicitly includes contemporary political concepts like the *Pax Augusta*. Finally, attention will be drawn to the fact that Ovid's rural communities in the *Fasti* are not completely isolated from urban Rome, but are connected to the urban festivals and the urban emotional communities.

1. IDEALIZATION OF COUNTRY LIFE IN AUGUSTAN LITERATURE

In idealized presentations of rural life in Augustan literature,¹⁰ the countryside is often understood as a distinct space remote from and not connected to city life. Country life forms a contrast to life in Rome, as can be seen already in Varro's *De Re Rustica* (III 1, 1:

9. This is discussed in detail by North, 1995; cf. also Feeney, 1998, pp. 133-136 and Fantham, 2009, p. 5.

10. Due to the complexity of the different sentiments about rural life in Latin literature, only idealizing depictions of the countryside can be considered in this paper. The relevant ideas and passages were selected in view of the discussed festivals in Ovid's *Fasti*. The description of rural festivals in Augustan literature is deeply connected to the idealization of rural life, as simple piety is an important part of this idealization (see below). However, when it comes to the presentation of archaic rural peoples aside from festival descriptions, negative connotations of ancient rusticity can be found in the *Fasti*. Those passages draw on a tradition that connects *rusticitas* with a lack of urban elegance and education; cf. e.g. North, 1995, pp. 136-137 and Labate, 2010a, pp. 44-45 for examples. The contrast between the depiction of

Cum duae vitae traditae sint hominum, rustica et urbana, quidni, Pinni, dubium non est, quin hae non solum loco discretae sint, sed etiam tempore diversam originem habeant? Antiquior enim multo rustica, quod fuit tempus, cum rura colerent homines neque urbem haberent). The difference between urban and rural life is often perceived to consist in the simplicity of rural life, where people are supposed to be content with what they have, even if it is not much, while the city with her riches might lead to a life in luxury and greed. These negative sentiments about life in the city are expressed for example by Horatius, who claims at the end of ode III 1 (vv. 45-48) that he preferred his rural estate in the Sabine valley over the luxury and envy of the city.¹¹

In idealizing depictions, the rural population is often credited with high moral values, authentic piety and a peaceful communal life.¹² Evans draws attention to the fact that idealized descriptions reflect the desires of the societies that produce them.¹³ The Golden Age descriptions and idealized rural scenes of Augustan time serve as a surface onto which desires or ideals of the urban Roman society can be projected.¹⁴ Evans' observation that the ancient accounts do not agree completely regarding the objects of this desire is especially relevant for the present discussion. Rather, idealized narratives are open to individual appropriation: "The Golden Age and its associated soft primitivism are complex ideas, capable of bearing ominous meanings and open to appropriation".¹⁵

contemporary rural festivals and the archaic population of Rome in the *Fasti* has been studied in detail by Merli, 2018 and Labate, 2010a.

11. *Cur invidendis postibus et novo / sublime ritu moliar atrium? / cur valle permutem Sabina / divitias operosiores?* For further examples, cf. e.g. Verg., *Georg.* II 458-474 and Eigler, 2002, pp. 288-289.

12. This sentiment can be seen already in Cato, *Agr.* praef. 2: *Et virum bonum quom laudabant, ita laudabant: bonum agricolam bonumque colonum; amplissime laudari existimabatur qui ita laudabatur.* Cf. also e.g. Sacchi, 2002, pp. 241-247 and Eigler, 2002, pp. 292-293; discussion of Tib., II 5, 23-30.

13. Evans, 2003, pp. 285-287. Cf. for this idea with specific regard to ancient texts e.g. Kaster, 2005, p. 4: "Now, we can be pretty certain that these stories tell us less about some Edenic reality in the Roman past than they do about the values and yearnings of the story-tellers as they faced their grubby present".

14. Evans, 2003, pp. 299-304.

15. Evans, 2003, p. 299. It has to be noted that the Golden Age narrative and depictions of the earliest forms of agriculture are not completely identical, although both settings serve as models for an idealized rural life. There are generally two modes of looking at the development from primitive times to the modern age. The narrative of the different ages as it is represented e.g. by Hesiod in his works and days (vv. 109-200) is often called the "descending" or "pessimistic" view of the development of cultural techniques because in this theory, humans developed from a paradisiac Golden Age to the present over several stages of deterioration, especially with regard to the invention of weapons and increasing violence. In Hesiod, this model is not connected to agriculture, but the people of the Golden Age are said to live without any technological effort from the fruit that the earth produces without any toil (Hes., *Erg.* 117-118). Accordingly, Ovid introduces agriculture in his account of the ages in the Silver Age, as

The Augustan elegists sometimes explicitly express such a desire for a simple, carefree life in the country. Thus, for example Tibullus imagines himself as a rustic in elegy I 1, 7-10 after he has expressed his rejection of warfare: *ipse seram teneras maturo tempore vites / rusticus et facili grandia poma manu: / nec spes destituat, sed frugum semper acervos / praebeat et pleno pinguis musta lacu*. The use of the subjunctive shows that these verses do not reflect a real situation, but a wish. The emphasis on a rich harvest is typical for idealized descriptions of country life in which there is no room for hunger and similar hardship.¹⁶

As can be seen from the quoted text from Varro, country life is not only seen as spatially separated from the city, but also as temporally different from an urban lifestyle in Augustan time. Rural life is imagined as the life of the ancestors, of a time in which the *mos maiorum* was intact, and it is assumed to be the only place where traditions of a simpler and better time have survived.¹⁷ Thus, for example Virgil discusses in *Georgics* II 458-474 that *Iustitia* had left her last traces in the country when she left earth (cf. e.g. vv. 473-474: *extrema per illos [scil. agricolos] / Iustitia excedens terris vestigia fecit*). In Augustan time, this narrative of an ideal rustic past that degenerated over time is modified in a crucial point: Augustus strives to restore the Golden Age or rather to introduce a new Golden Age, for example through the propagation of the *Pax Augusta* and through the restoration of ancient cults. Augustus constructs Rome's future as a reflection of a desired past. This connection of an idealized future

a reaction to the fact that the earth did not produce unlimited amounts of food without being worked anymore (Ov., *Met.* 114-125). On the other hand, the invention of agriculture can be seen as an improvement of the diet of primitive humans. In this view, Ceres typically replaces the acorn as the food of the primitive age with grain; cf. e.g. Verg., *Georg.* I 7-8. However, the two models are not as separate as it would seem at first glance. Already in Aratus, agriculture is part of the Golden Age (cf. Arat., 112-114). For the blending of the two models in Virgil's *Georgics* and Ovid's *Metamorphoses* cf. also Johnston, 1980, esp. pp. 41-89 and Labate, 2010b, pp. 138-152 respectively. In the *Fasti*, the invention of iron has two different aspects: On the one hand, it allows the invention of the plow and thus of agriculture, which is seen in a thoroughly positive light, but on the other hand, it also leads to the invention of weapons and war. The two sentiments are both expressed in the aretalogy of Ceres in *Fast.* IV 401-406: *prima Ceres homine ad meliora alimenta vocato / mutavit glandes utiliore cibo. / Illa iugo tauros collum praeberere coegit: / tum primum soles eruta vidit humus. / Aes erat in pretio, Chalybeia massa latebat: / eheu, perpetuo debuit illa tegi*. For the connection of peace and agriculture in the *Fasti* see below.

16. This is not in conflict with the wish for *paupertas* in Tib., I 1, 5. That the idealized farmer in literature and especially the speaker in elegy is *pauper* does not mean that he is suffering from poverty, but that he does not possess enough to be rich. The wish for a simple life in the country thus includes the wish for a good harvest, whereas profit is not important for the speaker.

17. Cf. Feeney, 1998, p. 133: "In many Roman authors this nostalgia for a lost religious simplicity and authenticity is located in the past; it may also be located off to the side in the present, when it is often displaced into the country".

with the past can be seen already in Virgil's fourth eclogue.¹⁸ The iconography of the time uses the same narrative, as can be seen for example in the depiction of a rural Golden Age on the *Ara Pacis*.¹⁹

In the following section, Ovid's presentation of rural festivals will be discussed against this background. A festival in the *Fasti* is considered as "rural" in this paper if it is set in the countryside. This does not imply that the festival was really celebrated by the rural population. In most cases, we do not have enough information about the rites to discern if and to what extent they were confined to the countryside.

2. EMOTIONAL COMMUNITIES IN THE *FASTI*'S RURAL FESTIVALS

In Ovid's *Fasti*, four contemporary festivals are presented as idealized rural scenes: The *Feriae Sementivae* (I 657-703), the *Terminalia* (II 639-684), the *Cerialia* (IV 393-416) and the *Parilia* (IV 721-782). The idealization of rustic life in these descriptions consists of several elements that can also be found in other Augustan accounts of rural rites, for example the preference of simple gifts to the gods over expensive and pompous sacrifice, the worship of old and partly aniconic deities and the importance of peace for a happy life. In this section, the focus will be on the presentation of the celebrants as peaceful and harmonious communities who perform the necessary rites together.

According to Chaniotis, it is a key function of rituals to create "emotional communities".²⁰ With this term he describes "a community of people who were expected to feel the same emotions (hope, fear, anger, affection, pride, etc.) in the worship of a deity. Such communities were founded on shared emotional experience".²¹ It will be argued that Ovid constructs the participants in his rural festivals as emotional communities who show a close connection both amongst each other and to the worshipped deities. The participants are also deeply connected to the Roman empire and the *Pax Augusta*, an aspect which will be discussed in the next section.

18. Cf. e.g. vv. 6-10: *iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna, / iam nova progenies caelo demittitur alto. / tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum / desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo, / casta fave Lucina: tuus iam regnat Apollo*; for Virgil's adaptation of the Golden Age myth cf. Johnston, 1980 and for the construction of the future as the return of an idealized past in Augustan time cf. Eigler, 1996 and 2002.

19. Cf. e.g. L'Orange, 1973b; Castriota, 1995, pp. 124-169; Evans, 2003, pp. 301-302; Zanker, 2009, pp. 177-188.

20. Chaniotis, 2011a.

21. Chaniotis, 2011b, p. 265.

2.1. THE *TERMINALIA* (*FAST. II 639-684*)

The *Terminalia* were a festival for the boundary stone, *Terminus*, which was worshipped as a god. The festival confirmed existing boundaries, for example between two fields, and preserved them through this yearly confirmation. Other sources also locate the cult of boundary stones mainly in the countryside, compare for example Festus: *Termino sacra faciebant, quod in eius tutela fines agrorum esse putabant. Denique Numa Pompilius statuit eum qui terminum exarasset, et ipsum et boves sacrum esse.*²² However, the cult was not exclusively rural, since a *Terminus*-stone was also worshipped in the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol in Rome.²³

Ovid describes the *Terminalia* in *Fast. II 639-684*. The entry begins with the date of the festival (February 23rd, vv. 639-640) and an invocation of its god (vv. 641-644).²⁴ Already in this invocation, the emphasis is on the fact that the *Terminalia* have to be celebrated jointly by two neighbors (vv. 643-644): *te duo diversa domini de parte coronant, / binaque serta tibi binaque liba ferunt*. The border that is symbolized by the worshipped boundary stone has to be confirmed and accepted by both sides in order for the ritual to be successful. It is thus impossible to celebrate the *Terminalia* alone.

The description of the celebration begins after the invocation of the god in v. II 645. Vv. 645-654 describe the preparations for the sacrifice that are conducted by the whole family:

<i>ara fit: huc ignem curto fert rustica testo</i>	645
<i>sumptum de tepidis ipsa colona focis.</i>	
<i>ligna senex minuit concisaque construit arte,</i>	
<i>et solida ramos figere pugnat humo;</i>	
<i>tum sicco primas inritat cortice flammas;</i>	
<i>stat puer et manibus lata canistra tenet.</i>	650
<i>inde ubi ter fruges medios immisit in ignes,</i>	
<i>porrigit incisos filia parva favos.</i>	
<i>vina tenent alii: libantur singula flammis;</i>	
<i>spectant, et linguis candida turba favet.</i>	
<i>spargitur et caeso communis Terminus agno,</i>	655
<i>nec queritur lactans cum sibi porca datur.</i>	
<i>conveniunt celebrantque dapes vicinia simplex</i>	
<i>et cantant laudes, Termine sancte, tuas</i>	

22. Festus p. 505 Lindsay.

23. The story that this stone already existed before the construction of the temple and remained on the Capitol when it was built is attested in Liv., I 55 and Ov., *Fast. II 667-672*.

24. The date is confirmed by the inscriptional calendars (cf. Degraffi, 1963, p. 414).

The farmer's wife brings fire from the hearth of the farm while an old man is stacking wood for the sacrificial fire. Next, there are some preliminary bloodless sacrifices: A boy burns some fruit and a little girl pours honey into the flames.²⁵ "Others" (*alii*, v. 653) add wine. They are probably the neighbors who join the described family in v. 654 to form a *candida turba*, the community who celebrates together.²⁶

In these verses, Ovid constructs an ideal family who prepares the festival together and without quarrel. The family members are not named, but consist of typical persons in most families: There is a man, a woman and two children.²⁷ There are similar family scenes in Tibullus' work, and there they are also connected to rural life in general and especially to rural festivals. In elegy II 5, Tibullus imagines a prosperous year for the rustics who have just received a favorable omen. In this context, he describes a rural family at a festival (vv. 91-94): *et fetus matrona dabit, natusque parenti / oscula compressis auribus eripiet, / nec taedebit avum parvo ad-vigilare nepoti / balbaque cum puero dicere verba senem*. In elegy I 10, 23-24, in a passage on the speaker's longing for a simple past, there is, as in Ovid's text, a little girl who sacrifices honey: *atque aliquis voti compos liba ipse ferebat / postque comes purum filia parva favum*. The presentation of a happy family at a festival can thus be traced back to Tibullus, where it is deeply connected to the longing for a simple but carefree rural life. In contrast to this, the peaceful celebration of the *Terminalia* is presented as a contemporary reality in the *Fasti*.²⁸

The community of the celebrants is further emphasized in *Fast.* II 655-658. The topic of these verses is the animal sacrifice and the following sacrificial meal that is shared by the whole neighborhood. V. 655 contains the expression *communis terminus*: The neighbors share a common border, but they also join in the worship of the same god. This expression is surrounded by the theme of small, but pious gifts that are dear to rural gods (vv. 655-656): *Terminus* should be honored with a lamb, but he is content with a piglet, too.²⁹ Both motives, the community of the rural neigh-

25. The two children are probably the farmer's son and daughter. The *senex* may be the farmer himself or his father, i.e. the children's grandfather. For the discussion, cf. Miller, 1991, p. 120 with n. 37 and Robinson, 2011, p. 417. The exact relationship of the family members is irrelevant for this paper. The passage clearly focuses on an idealized family in this scene. For parallels (especially in Tibullus) see below.

26. The adjective *candida* underlines the festive mood of the celebration, as white was the common color for festivals; cf. n. 45.

27. On the identity of these persons, see n. 18.

28. See below for the presentation of other festivals as a contemporary reality in Ovid, esp. n. 38. Cf. also Merli, 2018, p. 412, n. 18 for further parallels for family scenes in Augustan poetry.

29. This motif is more explicitly expressed in the entry on the *Cerialia* (*Fast.* IV 412): *parva bonae Cereri, sint modo casta, placent*. Cf. Labate, 2010b, p. 186 for a more detailed discussion of the modesty

borhood and the people's simple but honest character, are combined in v. 657: *conveniunt celebrantque dapes vicinia simplex*. The community is united in the joyful and peaceful celebration of the god. The farmer's family and neighbors have developed into an "emotional community" for the duration of the festival.

2.2. THE *FERIAE SEMENTIVAE* (*FAST. I 657-704*)

The *Feriae Sementivae* are described by Ovid in *Fast.* I 657-704. They were a movable agricultural festival and took place in winter.³⁰ Ovid's presentation of the festival mainly consists of exhortations to celebrate and to cease all labor on the festive day:

state coronati plenum ad praesepe, iuveni:
cum tepido vestrum vere redibit opus.
rusticus emeritum palo suspendat aratrum: 665
omne reformidat frigore volnus humus.
vilice, da requiem terrae semente peracta;
da requiem, terram qui coluere, viris.
pagus agat festum: pagum lustrate, coloni,
et date paganis annua liba focus. 670
placentur frugum matres, Tellusque Ceresque,
farre suo gravidae visceribusque suis:
officium commune Ceres et Terra tuentur;
haec praebet causam frugibus, illa locum.

These exhortations are directed to the rural population and do not contain detailed prescriptions for rites or other actions, but rather develop the "emotional tone" of the festival as a holy day that should be celebrated with joy and respect.³¹ The addresses to the celebrants vary and consist of several denominations for the rustics. The farmers are called *rusticus* (v. 665) and *coloni* (v. 669). Moreover, the speaker differentiates between the manager of the farm (*vilicus*; v. 667) and the farm workers (*viri*; v. 668). Vv. 669-670 conclude with an address to the whole village (*pagus*). This variation creates the impression of a certain unity of the different people in this pas-

of the described farmers at the *Terminalia*.

30. The purpose of the festival, the usual time for its celebration and its connection to the winter sowing are disputed. For the opinion that it took place shortly after the winter sowing in December, cf. e.g. Delatte, 1936, pp. 387-388 and Miller, 1991, p. 171, n. 16; for the dating of the festival into January cf. e.g. Bayet, 1950, pp. 174-176 and Le Bonniec, 1958, p. 58.

31. The term "emotional tone" is taken from Rüpke, 2016, pp. 90-92, who gives several examples, including the *Feriae Sementivae*.

sage. The addresses vary, but they denote similar occupations that are all in the sphere of farming. The different farmers and workers of vv. 665-668 all seem to be part of the *pagus* in vv. 669-670. In this distich, the emphasis is on the *pagus* as a community and no individuals are singled out.³² Thus, the description shifts from the denomination of single persons or smaller groups to an overview of the whole celebrating community. The celebrants act together and worship the same goddesses, Ceres and Tellus, who have a common task as well: *officium commune Ceres et Terra tuentur* (v. 673).

The emphasis on the community of celebrants in the description of the *Feriae Sementivae* is thus similar to the construction of an emotional community of the *Terminalia* section, but it adds another aspect: Not only humans are part of the community of the *Feriae Sementivae*, but also animals and even the land are addressed directly. The prescriptions open with a direction to the bulls not to work on the festive day (v. I 663). The first imperative to a human follows in v. 667 (*vilice*). Thus, the bulls, like their human masters, are presented as important participants of the festival. They seem to prepare for the festival and to enjoy the festive atmosphere together with the humans. It is even implied that the land has feelings, too: It backs away from the plough as if it were injured by agricultural work (*reformidat [...] volnus*, v. 666). In addition, it needs rest like a human being and through the parallel construction of vv. 667-668, this need is equated to the farm workers' need for rest. Even the plough is attributed with the adjective *emeritum* (v. 665) which could imply that it has "earned" its rest by its good work in the previous season.³³ Thus, humans, animals, and the land unite in Ovid's presentation of the *Feriae Sementivae* to form a community that celebrates the festival in idealized harmony.

The emotional community of the rustics, their animals and the land is especially remarkable in comparison to the closely related festival scene in Tib., II 1 (esp. vv. 1-8).³⁴ In Tib., II 1, the celebrating farmers also celebrate the festival together, as is evident already in the first distich: *quisquis ades, faveas: fruges lustramus et agros, / ritus ut a prisco traditus exstat avo*. However, there are two relevant differences for the present discussion: First, Tibullus' speaker is part of the festival community (note the use of the first person e.g. in the quoted distich).³⁵ Moreover, he introduces personal emotions at several points in the elegy that are not shared by the celebrating far-

32. Note also the repetition of different forms of *pagus* in this distich.

33. Cf. Green, 2004a, p. 308.

34. For a comparison of the two passages cf. especially Miller, 1991, pp. 110-118 and Merli, 2018, pp. 410-415.

35. That Ovid's speaker is not part of the festival community is expressed in *Fast.*, I 695, where he prays for the rustics, not with them (*haec ego pro vobis, haec vos optate coloni*).

mers.³⁶ Second, there are no imperatives addressed to the farm animals: Instead, the animals and the plough are presented as objects of the humans' actions.³⁷ Thus, Ovid adapts Tibullus' text to his calendar poem, reducing the importance of the speaker and extending the community of the participants.

3. PEACE AND THE *PAX AUGUSTA* IN THE *FASTI*'S RURAL FESTIVALS

Peace is a central component of idealized rural scenes, not only in Ovid. The absence of war is often connected to the prosperity of agricultural work since farmers do not have to leave their land as soldiers when there is peace.³⁸ Peace is also a characteristic of the Golden Age: In that time, humans did not know any metals and accordingly they could not produce any weapons.³⁹ This idea is also expressed in the *Fasti*, for example in the aretology of Ceres (*Fast.* IV 393-406) in the entry regarding the *Cerialia*. The speaker proclaims the following sentences about the mythical pre-cultural age he is talking about (*Fast.* IV 405-406): *aes erat in pretio, Chalybeia massa latebat: / eheu, perpetuo debuit illa tegi!* He wishes that iron (expressed as *Chalybeia massa*) had never been discovered and connects this wish to the importance of peace for Ceres and her festival. Immediately after the quoted verses, he continues with instructions for the festival of Ceres (IV 407-408: *pace Ceres laeta est; et vos orate, coloni, / perpetuam pacem pacificumque deum*). Thus, the speaker does not continue to describe the horrors of weapons but turns to the importance of peace for agriculture instead.⁴⁰ The joy about peace is the dominant emotion in Ovid's description of Ceres' festival. The addressed farmers shall pray for peace and for Augustus who is called "the lea-

36. This is especially clear in two cases: First, there is an invocation of Messalla, for whom the rustics shall pray in vv. 31-36, but who shall especially help the speaker (v. 35: *huc ades aspiroque mihi*). Second, amatory motives are introduced at the end of the elegy (vv. 67-90). At this point, there is a separation between the emotions of the speaker who fears Amor's power (esp. v. 70: *ei mihi, quam doctas nunc habet ille [scil. Cupido] manus!*) and the celebrating rustics (esp. v. 83: *vos celebrem cantate deum*). Discussions of Tib., II 1 are numerous, cf. e.g. Pöstgens, 1940; Pascal, 1988; Bremmer, 1993.

37. Cf. e.g. Tib., II 1, 5-7 (*Luce sacra requiescat humus, requiescat arator / et grave suspenso vomere cesset opus. / Solvite vincla iugis [...]*).

38. This connection can be seen for example in Virgil's *Georgics* (II 459-460: *quibus [agricolis] ipsa procul discordibus armis / fundit humo facilem victum iustissima tellus*) and in Tib., I 10.

39. Cf. e.g. Ov., *Met.* I 94-102; Arat., 105-132; Verg., *Aen.* VIII 324-327.

40. It is noteworthy that the *Cerialia* are presented as a celebration of farmers, *coloni*, in *Fast.*, IV 407. Although the *Cerialia* as a festival for Ceres and the growth of the grain were rural in origin, in Ovid's time they were celebrated with games in Rome that lasted several days (April 12th-19th). Cf. Degraasi, 1963, pp. 439 for a summary of the inscriptional attestations of these *ludi* and Le Bonniec, 1958, pp. 108-140 for a detailed account of the festival with a focus on its rural origins.

der who brings peace" (*pacificus dux*). By connecting the mythical peace before the invention of weapons to the peace that is celebrated at the *Cerialia*, the Golden Age is connected to the *Pax Augusta*. Augustus is hailed for the restoration of peace which is not a mythical ideal anymore, but a contemporary reality not only for the city of Rome, but also for the farmers who celebrate the *Cerialia*.⁴¹

Ovid thus constructs the *Cerialia* as a festival that shows the influence of the emperor on a countryside that is deeply connected to the city of Rome and that relies on Augustus and the *Pax Augusta* to flourish. This is a significant difference between Ovid's presentation and the rural scenes in other Augustan poets that are mainly objects of the speaker's desire.⁴² In those other poems, rural life serves as an imagined alternative to the riches and worries of city life. The country is presented as a place out of time and space and exists largely isolated from any cities or other local points of reference.⁴³ Only in rare cases is the idealized country connected to or even dependent on the city. An example can be found in Virgil's first eclogue, where Augustus guarantees Tityrus's peaceful life on his own piece of land. Here, the farmers' dependency on urban political decisions is expressed in even stronger terms than in Ovid's *Fasti* and is not confined to praising the positive effects of the *Pax Augusta*: In contrast to Tityrus, Meliboeus has to bear the negative consequences of his dependency on urban politics as he is driven off his land.

The speaker of the descriptions of rural festivals in the *Fasti* does not focus on his own desire for peace, nor does he present the described agricultural communities as part of a long lost Golden Age. Instead, the celebrating rustics form emotional communities that feel the joy about an existing peace that is a result of Augustus' reign and thus a reality for both the rustics and the speaker. The descri-

41. It has to be noted that there are no other sources that connect the *Cerialia* with the *Pax Augusta*. Ovid constructs the festival as rural and celebrating Augustan Peace in spite of the urban character of the festival in his own time. However, *Pax* and *Ceres* are frequently connected in Augustan time because peace is seen as a prerequisite for the prosperity of agriculture (cf. e.g. L'Orange, 1973b, pp. 267-271; Spaeth, 1996, pp. 67-69 and pp. 125-151 for the possible identification of the central figure on the *Ara Pacis* with *Ceres*; Castriota, 1995, pp. 70-73 on the affinities of the central figure on the *Ara Pacis* with *Ceres* while preferring to identify the depicted goddess with *Pax*).

42. See above on the *Terminalia* and cf. also Laage, 1956, especially pp. 169-173, who does not distinguish between the speaker and the author of a text. Laage remarks that Ovid's amatory elegy does not show the same desire for peace as earlier works e.g. by Tibullus, Virgil and Horace but seems to regard peace as a contemporary reality instead. See also n. 38.

43. Cf. in general Evans, 2003, pp. 292-300 and for discussions of single authors e.g. Leach, 1980, pp. 61-69 on Tibullus, pp. 56-57 on landscape paintings and Feeney, 1998, pp. 121-123 on Tibullus. North, 1995, demonstrates that the isolation of specifically "rural" religion is a literary fiction.

bed communities are not isolated and timeless, but located in Augustan time and they celebrate festivals of the contemporary Roman calendar. It is noteworthy that the shift in the description of peace from an object of desire to an idealized contemporary reality coincides with the different generations of Augustan poets: In contrast to the works of Tibullus, Propertius and Virgil, Ovid composed the *Fasti* decades after the civil war had ended.

The idea that peace is not confined to the Golden Age, but a defining characteristic of Augustus' reign is made explicit in an appendix to the entry regarding the *Feriae Sementivae* (*Fast.*, I 697-704).⁴⁴ As in the section on the *Cerialia*, this passage connects peace and agriculture, but it does not idealize the past or rejoice about its restoration. On the contrary, *Fast.* I 697-704 begins with the following words: *bella diu tenuere viros: erat aptior ensis / vomere* (vv. 697-698). The past is here defined as shaken by war. However, this state has been overcome by the *domus Augusta* (vv. 701-702; Germanicus is addressed): *gratia dis domuique tuae: religata catenis / iam pridem vestro sub pede bella iacent*. In this section, the present does not repeat a lost ideal state, but it exclusively improves the past that is presented as characterized by warfare. The emotional tone of the passage reflects this construction of the *Pax Augusta*: The speaker expresses joy about the peace that the farmers are enjoying, but also gratefulness towards the emperor (*gratia*, v. 701). Thus, urban politics intrude into rural life in this passage, too. What is more, the presentation of the scene gives the impression that the idealized life of the rustics as well as the rural celebration of the *Feriae Sementivae* (*Fast.* I 657-696) are only possible because of the protecting influence of Rome and its emperor. The *Pax Augusta* is presented as a *conditio sine qua non* for the celebration of the festival. Accordingly, an explicit expression of the importance of peace for agriculture in which the goddesses *Pax* and *Ceres* are connected closes the passage (vv. 703-704): *sub iuga bos veniat, sub terras semen aratas: / Pax Cererem nutrit, Pacis alumna Ceres*.⁴⁵

44. See above for a detailed account of the presentation of this festival's celebrating community.

45. Merli, 2018, p. 415 draws attention to Tib., I 10, where a similar sentiment can be found, especially in vv. 45-52 and in vv. 67-68. While vv. 45-52 describe the importance of peace for agriculture in a general way, the last distich expresses a desire for peace: *at nobis, Pax alma, veni spicamque teneto, / perfluat et pomis candidus ante sinus*. That *Pax* is not imagined to be present yet is also apparent from a verse earlier in the poem where the speaker mourns that he has to go to war (v. 13: *nunc ad bella trahor*; note the *nunc* that refers to the speaker's own time in contrast to the past that was described before). The expression of a desire for peace is absent in Ovid's account of the *Pax Augusta* that is portrayed as a contemporary reality.

4. THE CONNECTION OF RURAL AND URBAN EMOTIONAL COMMUNITIES IN THE *FASTI*

4.1 THE *PAX AUGUSTA* IN THE DESCRIPTION OF URBAN FESTIVALS

The *Pax Augusta* is not only relevant to the rural population in the *Fasti*, but also to the urban community and is discussed by Ovid on the occasion of urban festivals, too. In this context, the importance and success of the *Pax Augusta* are not so much expressed by direct rejoicing about peace as by statements about the size of the empire and the superiority of Rome over her enemies. Peace is here not defined as the absence of war, but as security in an empire that shows power and strength, also through military conquests. This is especially true for the presentation of the *natalis* of the *Ara Pacis* itself (*Fast.* I 709-722). The description begins with a hymn to *Pax* who is – already in the opening invocation – addressed as “*Pax of Actium*” (*Fast.* I 711-712: *frondibus Actiacis comptos redimita capillos, / Pax, ades [...]*). She is further asked to warrant the security of the Roman empire by ensuring its size as well as the respect, but also the fear of all peoples.⁴⁶ The *Pax Augusta* that is celebrated on the *natalis* of her altar is thus defined as peace and security within a strong empire that has the power to subdue all enemies.

The prayer to *Pax* in *Fast.* I 709-718 has been subject to much discussion because of its focus on military conquests which is unusual in comparable Greek eulogies of Peace.⁴⁷ It has even been interpreted as a sign of an alleged subversiveness in the speaker’s praise of Augustus and his *Pax*, especially by Steven Green.⁴⁸ However, it has to be noted that in antiquity, peace was not necessarily understood as the complete absence of war. The *Pax Augusta* was celebrated as the absence of civil war or other violent conflicts within the empire, especially after the time of the civil war. It could also include the notion of Roman strength and military power that kept foreign enemies at bay.⁴⁹ Thus, depictions of military success and peaceful scenes of abundance coexisted even in official imagery. Evans cites the *Ara Pacis*, with her representations of a rural Golden Age, as an example for the official coexistence and combination of the two concepts: “[...] the altar was originally situated in close proximity

46. Cf. especially vv. 717-718: *horreat Aeneadas et primus et ultimus orbis: / siqua parum Romam terra timebat, amet.*

47. Cf. Green, 2004a, p. 322.

48. Cf. esp. Green, 2004b, pp. 234-236.

49. Both aspects are mentioned by Laage, 1956, pp. 169-173, who discusses them in different authors’ concepts of peace. Cf. also Hardwick, 2000, pp. 338-344; Schmitzer, 2004, pp. 15-16; Zanker, 2009, p. 179.

to monuments celebrating Augustan victory (the obelisk) and the imperial dynasty (Augustus's mausoleum)⁵⁰. It is thus impossible to attribute the contradictions that are inherent in the concept of the *Pax Augusta* solely to Ovid.

4.2 THE PEOPLE OF ROME AS AN EMOTIONAL COMMUNITY. THE KALENDS OF JANUARY (*FAST. I 63-88*)

Praise of the size of the empire is already mentioned in the first description of a festival in the *Fasti*, the New Year's festival on the Kalends of January (*Fast. I 63-88*). In the introduction to this entry, the speaker invokes Janus and asks him to aid the Roman people and its rulers. The *domus Augusta* is praised especially for the peace and security it brought (*I 67-68: dexter ades ducibus, quorum segura labore / otia terra ferax, otia pontus habet*). The idea that Rome surpasses all other countries is taken up at the very end of the entry. There, the speaker imagines what the assembled festival community might look like from Jupiter's perspective (*I 85-86: Iuppiter arce sua totum cum spectet in orbem, / nil nisi Romanum quod tueatur habet*). The urban festival community is presented as a unity in this distich and described as *Romanum*.⁵¹ But the visual impression is also important for the recognition of this unity (*spectet, tueatur*). Already in vv. 79-80, the festival community had been defined as a visually perceivable unit of people that are all clad in white: *vestibus intactis Tarpeias itur in arces, / et populus festo concolor ipse suo est*. The white color moreover expresses the festive mood of the celebrants,⁵² an emotion that is stressed also by other means in the passage, especially in its beginning (vv. 71-74):

*prospera lux oritur: linguis animisque favete;
nunc dicenda bona sunt bona verba die.
lite vacent aures, insanaque protinus absint
iurgia: differ opus, livida turba, tuum.*

50. Evans, 2003, pp. 301-302. The coexistence of the celebration of peace and military success can even be seen in the imagery of the *Ara Pacis* itself: Schmitzer, 2004, pp. 15-16 points to the representation of Roma who is sitting on conquered weapons; cf. also Merli, 2018, pp. 415-416 for a discussion of the visual elements on the monument that Ovid refers to in the *Fasti*. For the depiction of an agricultural Golden Age on the *Ara Pacis*, cf. n. 15.

51. Cf. also Labate, 2010b, pp. 158-159.

52. White was the usual color to be worn at a festival. For the interpretation that it expressed the festive mood of the celebrants, cf. Radke, 1936, pp. 63-64.

These verses consist of excited exclamations by the speaker who describes the appropriate emotional tone of the festival. The New Year's festival is a day of new beginnings and therefore supposed to be particularly happy. The speaking of *bona verba* and the absence of quarrels are good omens on a day which is called *laeta* in v. 87.⁵³ Thus, the festival community is not only marked as a unity by its visual appearance, but also by its joyous mood in its celebration of Rome's power and stability. Like the rural population in the rural festivals, the people of Rome forms an emotional community in the celebration of the New Year. In the following section, it will be shown that the two communities are not strictly separated in the *Fasti*, but that they share points of contact in their celebration of the same festivals that are part of the Roman calendar.

4.3 THE *TERMINALIA* REVISITED. URBAN AND RURAL COMMUNITIES IN A SINGLE FESTIVAL

The rural community that celebrates Ovid's *Terminalia* has been discussed above, but the entry is also special for another reason: The passage on the *Terminalia* combines mention of a rural and an urban festival community within the same festival. The rustics that are described in the first part of the entry sing a hymn in the course of the celebration (*Fast.* II 659-678). However, this hymn leaves the concerns of a rural community as it proceeds and turns to the story of *Terminus* on the Capitol who could not be moved when the temple for *Iuppiter Optimus Maximus* was built.⁵⁴ This story is not about rural boundary markers any more, but about the central *Terminus*-stone that is venerated in the state cult. After the hymn, the speaker leaves the rustic setting and describes a sacrifice at the sixth milestone outside of Rome that was probably part of the state cult (*Fast.* II 679-682).⁵⁵ It is noteworthy that none of these stones, neither the one on the Capitol nor the milestone at which the sacrifice is performed, are boundary stones in the sense that they mark a frontier. In Ovid's time, the borders of the Roman empire are significantly larger and cannot be found inside

53. For the importance of good omens on New Year's Day (in general and especially in Ovid's presentation) cf. e.g. Müller, 1909, pp. 473-481 and Miller, 1991, p. 59.

54. *Fast.* II 667-670: *quid, nova cum fierent Capitolia? nempe deorum / cuncta Iovi cessit turba locumque dedit; / Terminus, ut veteres memorant, inventus in aede / restitit et magno cum Iove templa tenet.* Cf. also Liv., I 55 for this story.

55. The sixth milestone might symbolize the ancient boundary of Rome (Barchiesi, 1997, pp. 432-433). Its exact location is unknown. Ovid mentions the *via Laurentina* which is not known from other sources. Cf. e.g. Bömer, 1958, II, p. 129 and Robinson, 2011, p. 433.

or around the city of Rome anymore. It is not *Terminus'* task anymore to ensure that the boundaries of the empire remain unchanged, but to guarantee the size and the stability of the Roman empire. This idea is expressed explicitly in the closing distich of the entry on the *Terminalia* (*Fast.* II 683-684): *gentibus est aliis tellus data limite certo: / Romanae spatium est Urbis et orbis idem.*

At this point, Robinson argues that some readers might regard the verses on the *Terminalia* as subversive.⁵⁶ There might be a potential conflict between a festival that is supposed to ensure that borders do not shift and the idea of an empire that constantly expands its borders by military conquest. However, Barchiesi has shown convincingly that pride in the size of the empire does not have to come into conflict with the respect for *Terminus*: Both emotions result from the perceived continuity and stability of the empire.⁵⁷ Moreover, the two concepts were also linked in official iconography, as Pollini shows for two series of *denarii* which can be dated to the years shortly before the beginning of Augustus' reign.⁵⁸ Both series show Octavian's head on top of a *Terminus*-stone and one of them shows him sitting with a *victoriola* in his hand on the reverse.⁵⁹

In the entry on the *Terminalia*, rural and urban festival communities merge at the end. The confined rural ritual from the beginning of the entry is transferred to the state cult and expanded to include the whole *imperium Romanum*. The urban celebration that is centered on Rome's power might seem far away from the simple rural ritual that confirms the boundaries between two fields at first glance, but Ovid constructs both celebrations as interrelated and even dependent on each other: *Terminus* is presented as an originally rural god who has been included into the urban cult, but without the preservation of the empire's borders by the state – with Rome as its center –, the idealized world of the farmers would be threatened by war. Both festival communities are united through a common emotion, joy about peace and about the

56. Robinson, 2011, pp. 413 and 430-431. See above for similar discussions regarding Ovid's presentation of the *Ara Pacis*.

57. Barchiesi, 1997, pp. 215-216.

58. Pollini, 1990, pp. 348-349. Pollini, 1990, p. 348 dates the coins to the years 29-27 BCE; Zanker, 2009, p. 64 assumes that they were minted before 31 BCE.

59. Pollini cites several historians who identify the god to whom the emperor's head is attached as *Terminus*, *Veiovis-Terminus* or *Iuppiter-Terminus*; cf. e.g. Albert, 1981, pp. 147-149 and Bömer, 1958, II, p. 130 for the interpretation as *Iuppiter-Terminus*. An image of both *denarii* can be found in Kraft, 1969, tab. 1, 9-10; cf. also his interpretation of the god as *Iuppiter-Terminus* on pp. 207-210. Pollini, 1990, p. 349 gives the following interpretation of the coins: "The *Terminus* form, which served as a boundary marker, most likely commemorates here Octavian's divine mandate to increase the boundaries of empire. This task he accomplished through his victories [...]"

possibility to lead a safe and carefree life in an empire that ensures their safety. Thus, they form an emotional community.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The concept of lived ancient religion acknowledges that Roman religion was not a set of strictly defined rites and beliefs, but that it rather offered a framework with different options and possibilities that could be individually appropriated to different contexts and situations. This did not only happen in practiced cult, but also in literary texts with religious topics. The literary discourse shows variation between the different authors and the appropriation of common themes and scenes to individual contexts and works. This discourse about (real or imagined) religious practices has been studied in the case of the presentation of rural rites in Ovid's *Fasti*.

As in other Augustan poets, rural scenes in the *Fasti* tend to be idealized descriptions of imagined rustic piety. It has been stressed that the farmers celebrate as peaceful festival communities that are attributed with the same emotions and thus represent emotional communities. In the case of the *Terminalia*, Ovid chooses an idealized family scene, whereas in the case of the *Feriae Sementivae* he constructs a community which is shared by humans, animals and even the land.

The importance of peace for the prosperity of agricultural life is a common topic in Augustan literature. However, Ovid transforms and adapts this motif in a unique way. In the *Fasti*, the presented rural festival communities are not remote from the city in both time and space, but are connected to Rome and enjoy the *Pax Augusta*, not a long lost peace of a Golden Age. Ovid thus blends the idealized peace of the Golden Age discourse with the contemporary *Pax Augusta*. The *Cerialia* have been shown to construct the *Pax Augusta* as a restoration of the Golden Age, while the *Feriae Sementivae* celebrate the contemporary peace as a progress compared to the wars of former times.

Moreover, the rural festivals and their emotional communities are closely connected to the festivals and the community of Rome in the *Fasti*. The urban population celebrates the *Pax Augusta*, too, but this is not expressed through the peaceful harmony of an agricultural age but through the joy about Rome's size and stability. The empire's power and the security it guarantees through its military strength are important features of this form of the *Pax Augusta*.

As for the example of the *Terminalia*, it has been argued that those urban emotional communities and concepts of peace do not stay unconnected to the scenes of rural piety that are presented in the case of the rural festivals. In contrast to other poems in which rural vignettes remain largely isolated from Rome and are not loca-

ted spatially nor temporally, the *Fasti*'s rural festivals are connected both to Roman places and people (as e.g. the inclusion of *Terminus* on the Capitol in the rural *Terminalia* or the veneration of Augustus by farmers at the *Cerialia* show) and especially to Roman time: They are not only dated repeatedly to the reign of Augustus, but they also form an integral part of the Roman festival calendar. Rural and urban communities follow the same calendar, they worship the same emperor and they both profit from the *Pax Augusta*. In the entry on the *Terminalia*, the two festival communities are especially close to and dependent on each other, as the rural and the urban rites merge and the celebrants form one emotional community.

With the decision to write a poem about the Roman festival calendar, Ovid has created a unique work: Every entry is integrated into the series of festivals given by the calendar, not only regarding the sequence, but also with respect to topic and presentation. Consequently, Ovid has adapted the accounts of his rural festivals to this challenge and has created scenes of rural piety that retain their typical rural atmosphere while they are at the same time deeply connected to and integrated into the framework of the (urban) festival calendar. They are as unique as the work itself.

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MAGISCHER KRANKENHEILER UND SOHN GOTTES.
DIE JESUANISCHE KRANKENHEILUNG ALS MAGISCHES
RITUAL UND DAS PHÄNOMEN DER DE-RITUALISIERUNG IN
DER REDAKTIONELLEN ÜBERLIEFERUNG DER EVANGELIEN
MAGICAL HEALER AND THE SON OF GOD. JESUS' HEALINGS AS A
MAGIC RITUAL AND THE PHENOMENON OF DE-RITUALIZATION IN THE
EDITORIAL TRANSMISSION OF THE GOSPELS

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ÜBERSICHT

Jesus war ein charismatischer Wunder-
täter. Dies ist allgemein bekannt. Dass Jesus
seine Krankenheilungen unter Zuhilfenah-
me magischer Rituale vollzog – dieses Phä-
nomen wird in der Bibelwissenschaft bislang
vernachlässigt. Das liegt mitunter daran,
dass Magie im christlichen Kontext mit du-
biosen rituellen Praktiken assoziiert wird,
die den göttlichen Willen menschlich-ma-
gisch beeinflussen.

Eine solche Einschätzung der Magie ent-
spricht unter Berücksichtigung der antiken
Quellen jedoch keinen objektivierbaren Kri-

ABSTRACT

While the depiction of Jesus as a char-
ismatic healer is widely known, his use of
magical rituals in connection with those
healings is a neglected topic in New Testa-
ment exegesis. This may be due to the fact,
that in the Christian context magic was
soon associated with dubious ritual prac-
tices trying to manipulate God's will. The
sources, however, offer no objective criteria
on the basis of which one could reliably dis-
tinguish between charismatic and magical
rituals. Instead, the perception of an act as
(evil or illegitimate) magic vs. a (good and

terien, sondern ist allein Ergebnis kultureller Identitätsarbeit, indem das „fremde“ magisch-rituelle Handeln als illegitime Magie abgewertet wird, wohingegen die „eigenen“ magisch-rituellen Handlungen göttlich autorisiertes Wirken verdeutlichen.

Weil die rituell magischen Krankenheilungen Jesu demzufolge für nicht-christusgläubige Außenstehende mit illegitimen magischen Handlungen verwechselbar waren, trug die redaktionelle De-Ritualisierung der Evangelien dazu bei, unmissverständlich deutlich zu machen, dass Jesus Christus der einzig geborene Sohn Gottes ist.

desired) charismatic healing depended entirely on the perspective: While magical rituals performed by Jesus are characterized as charismatic acts because they derived their power from the right authority, similar rituals executed by “others” are devaluated as illegitimate forms of magic. Consequently, one can observe a process of de-ritualization within the synoptic tradition which served to free Jesus from the obscure attribution of being a magician (outsider’s point of view) and to establish him as the Messiah and the only-born Son of God (insider’s point of view).

SCHLÜSSELWÖRTER

De-Ritualisierung; Jesus Christus; Krankenheilungen; Magie; Redaktionsgeschichte; Ritual

KEYWORDS

De-Ritualization; Editorial criticism; Healings; Jesus Christ; Magic; Ritual

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DIE IDEE DER ERFORSCHUNG FRÜHCHRISTLICHER Rituale hat in der Bibelwissenschaft bereits eine längere Tradition. Vor dem Hintergrund eines historisch-vergleichenden Ansatzes Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts entstanden Studien, die das Neue Testament mit dem kultischen, liturgischen oder rituellen Kontext der griechisch-römischen Mysterienkulte oder des antiken Judentums in Verbindung brachte.¹ Diese Forschungsrichtung ist besser bekannt als *Religionsgeschichtliche Schule* und muss sich zumindest aus heutiger Perspektive („Theologie nach Ausschwitz“) die Kritik gefallen lassen, stets die Darstellung des christlichen Supersessionismus zu intendieren.

Diese Beurteilung der Religionsgeschichtlichen Schule sorgte dafür, dass nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg die Ritualforschung zugunsten sozialgeschichtlicher oder sozialwissenschaftlicher Untersuchungen vernachlässigt wurde bzw. in diesen aufging.² In den folgenden Jahren trat die Ritualforschung besonders dann an prominente Stelle, wenn das Ritual selbst in den Fokus der bibelwissenschaftlichen Forschung rückte, wie beispielsweise die Taufe.³ In dem handbuchartigen Werk, *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism*, wird deutlich, inwiefern Ritualforschung die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft bereichern kann, auch wenn sich zugegebenermaßen nur drei Beiträge in dem voluminösen Band des ritualwissenschaftlichen Ansatzes bedienen (u.a. von Strecker und Klostergaard Petersen). Somit kann DeMaris auch 2015 noch eine notorische Abwertung der Ritualforschung seitens der modernen Bibelwissenschaft feststellen, die in Protestantismus und Aufklärung fest verankert ist.⁴ Demzufolge ist eine stetige metakommunikative De-Ritualisierung des Protestantismus zur Kenntnis zu nehmen: „Namentlich der Protestantismus hat im Laufe seiner Geschichte

1. DeMarris, 2015, S. 31-42.

2. Stegemann und Stegemann, 1997.

3. Hellholm *et al.*, 2011.

4. DeMaris, 2015, S. 31.

stets den Glauben und die innere Gesinnung gegenüber dem Ritual und dem äußeren Ausdruck bevorzugt⁵. Parallel zur Gegenüberstellung von Glaube und Ritual wird bis heute zwischen „Gebet“ und „magischem Spruch“ unterschieden, auch wenn beispielsweise Kremer wenigstens die Möglichkeit fließender Übergänge von einem zum anderen Begriff attestiert.⁶ Diese strenge Kategorisierung führt mit Blick auf die rituell-magischen Elemente der jesuanischen Wundergeschichten in der Bibelwissenschaft zu einer exegetischen Kurz-Sicht: Das Alleinstellungsmerkmal der Krankenheilung des historischen Jesu⁷ sei vor allem die deutliche Reduzierung ritueller Elemente unter Hervorhebung seiner charismatischen Fähigkeiten.⁸

In dem vorliegenden Beitrag soll zunächst die objektiv-vergleichbare Kategorisierung von Gebet vs. magischem Spruch in Frage gestellt werden, um auch die Gegenüberstellung von magischen und charismatischen Heilungen zu problematisieren. Infolgedessen können magisch-rituelle Krankenheilungen auch dem historischen Jesus zugerechnet werden, im Rahmen dieser Jesus der magische Ritualaktant ist, der über eine besondere Gottesbeziehung verfügt und dessen Ritual das Heilshandeln Gottes verdeutlicht, indem es Versöhnung ermöglicht und Identität stiftet. Am Ende des Aufsatzes wird die sukzessive De-Ritualisierung der magisch-rituellen Krankenheilungen in der Überlieferung der Evangelien betrachtet. Die Minimierung der magisch-rituellen Elemente brach nicht nur dem von DeMaris beschriebenen Phänomen Bahn, sondern schärfte auch das Profil Jesu als einzig geborenen Sohn Gottes.

1. GEBET VS. MAGIE

Die von DeMaris aufgezeigte Gegenüberstellung von Glaube und Ritual im Protestantismus und die davon abgeleitete trennscharfe Unterscheidung von Religion und Magie bzw. Gebet und magischem Spruch ist „empirisch nicht haltbar“.⁹ In manchen Urteilen der Forschung ist zwar in der Unterscheidung das Gebet dadurch bestimmt, dass sich der Mensch der Gottheit unterordnet, an die er sich mit seinen Bitten wendet. Die Erfüllung der Bitten allerdings ist allein der Gottheit vorbehalten. Magie sei im Gegensatz dazu der Versuch, durch rituelle Handlungen mit Zuhilfenahme von Beschwörungsformeln auf die Gottheit einzuwirken und damit letztlich selbst die Erfüllung der eigenen Anliegen durchzusetzen. Dass die Unterscheidung von Magie

5. DeMaris, 2015, S. 40.

6. Kremer, 2016, S. 193.

7. Zum Begriff vgl. Wolter, 2019, S. 22.

8. Theißen, 2010, S. 49.

9. Heimbrock, 1994, S. 46.

oder Beschwörung und Gebet des Weiteren mit der Vorstellung einer Kulturentwicklung korrespondiere – also von einer primitiven Kultur zu einer Hochkultur, wie dies beispielsweise Ende des 19. / Anfang des 20. Jahrhunderts der schottische Anthropologe James Frazer behauptete – ,¹⁰ entspricht natürlich nicht dem wissenschaftlichen Status Quo. Überhaupt ist der antiken Welt die idealtypische Trennung von Gebet und Magie/Beschwörung fremd und aus heutiger Perspektive anachronistisch: „Die theoretischen Definitionen von Religion oder Magie haben nur einen geringen praktischen Wert, weil in der Wirklichkeit kultischen Vollzuges sich unsere *Begriffe* nie voll mit dem tatsächlichen Geschehen zur Deckung bringen lassen“.¹¹ Dass außerdem in dem Fall des tatsächlichen Geschehens von Krankenheilungen oder der Abwehr von Bösem ritualisierte Handlungen maßgeblich waren, die im Zusammenhang mit magischen Sprüchen bzw. Gebeten vollzogen wurden, zeigen vier Beispiele aus einem Zeitraum von 2400 (!) Jahren:

Die einzige uns vollständig erhaltene Buchrolle Altägyptens aus dem 16. Jahrhundert v. Chr., das Leipziger Papyrus Ebers, zeugt von einem Rezept,¹² in dem das exsikierte Auge eines Schweines, echter Bleiglanz, Ocker und „Selbstentstandenes“ von Honig fein zermahlen werden sollen, um dies in das Ohr eines Mannes zu gießen, der von einer Augenkrankheit genesen soll. Dazu soll ein Zauberspruch zweimal wiederholt werden, um die „vortreffliche“ Wirkung zu gewährleisten bzw. überhaupt erst in Gang zu setzen.

Die babylonische Ritualanweisung RA 50 bzw. Or. 34 aus der *namburbi*-Reihe hat eine apotropäische Funktion. Das Unheil, das sich durch die Mißgeburt eines Tieres oder eines Menschen angekündigt hat, soll abgewehrt werden. Diese Ritualbeschreibung kann in eine Rede- und Handlungsanweisung untergliedert werden, wobei die Beschwörungstexte bzw. Gebete vom Patienten zu sprechen sind und die Verantwortung für die Ritualhandlung fast ausschließlich beim Magier oder Ritualbeauftragten liegt.¹³ In dem Beschwörungsgebet wird der babylonische Gott Šamaš folgendermaßen angerufen: „Richter des Himmels und der Erde, Herr des Rechts und der Gerechtigkeit, der recht lenkt, was oben und unten ist, Šamaš, den Toten zu beleben, den Gebundenen zu lösen, liegt in deinen Händen. Šamaš, ich bin zu dir gekommen, Šamaš, ich habe dich aufgesucht, Šamaš, ich habe mich an dich gewandt, von dem Bösen dieser Mißgeburt errette mich! Es möge mich nicht erreichen, das

10. Frazer, 2009 (1922).

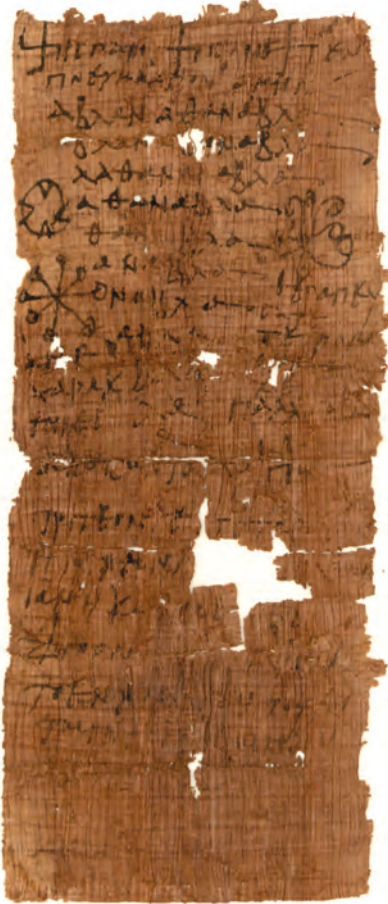
11. Gerstenberger, 1980, S. 76, vgl. Ricks, 1995.

12. *Eb.* 356.

13. Gerstenberger, 1980, S. 88.

Böse davon möge sich entfernen aus meinem Leibe! Täglich will ich zu dir beten, wer mich sieht, möge in Ewigkeit dir huldigen“.¹⁴ Dieses Gebet lässt sich Gerstenberger zufolge sogar in Hymnus, Angebot, Bitte und Lobpreis untergliedern und ist untrennbarer Teil des magischen Rituals.¹⁵

Aus dem 4./5. Jahrhundert n. Chr. stammt die Quelle P. Köln inv. 10266:



[Swastika] Ein Vater [Swastika] Ein Sohn [Swastika] Ein heiliger Geist. Amen.

Ablanathanalba (in Schwindeschrift).

[Heilige Zeichen]

Heile Tiron, den Palladia geboren hat, von allem Zittern, alle drei Tage, alle vier Tage oder jeden anderen Tag oder täglich...

Einer Swastika sprach man apotropäische Bedeutung zu und der Terminus *Ablanathanalba* ist das am häufigsten gebrauchte magische Palindrom,¹⁶ wobei es in Hinblick auf seine Bedeutung noch keine überzeugende Erklärung gibt.¹⁷ Unter Berücksichtigung der mit dem Palindrom hier zwanglos verbundenen trinitarischen Anbetung von Vater, Sohn und heiligem Geist ist daher festzuhalten, dass die antiken Quellen eine kategorische Unterscheidung von Gebet und Magie nicht erlauben.

Ein Beispiel aus dem frühen Mittelalter bezeugt ebenfalls die Einheit von Magie/magischem Spruch und Gebet. So ist der Wurmsegen (*Pro Nessia*), ein oberdeutscher Spruch der Tegernseer Handschrift aus dem 9. Jahrhun-

14. RA 50, übernommen von Gerstenberger, 1980, S. 94-96.

15. Gerstenberger, 1980, S. 96-111.

16. Vgl. PGM III.

17. Vgl. P.Köln 851 (6. Jhd. n. Chr.).

dert, aufgliedert in eine magische Handlung, respektive einer magischen Beschwörung, der ein dreimaliges Vaterunser folgt:¹⁸

Gang uz, Nesso, mit niun nessinchilnon
uz fonna marge in deo adra, vonna den adrun in daz fleisk,
fonna demu fleiske in daz fel, fonna demo velle in diz tulli.
Ter *pater noster*

Wurm, krieche heraus, mit neun Würmchen,
aus dem Mark in die Adern, aus den Adern in das Fleisch,
aus dem Fleisch in die Haut,
aus der Haut auf diesen Pfeil.
Dreimal *Vaterunser*.

Das magische Ritual dient m. E. nicht nur der formellen Unterstützung des Vaterunsers als dem christlichen Hauptgebet,¹⁹ sondern vielmehr ist das Gebet hier genuiner Teil des magischen Rituals und unabdingbar für die Wirksamkeit der initiierten, imperativisch formulierten Beschwörung. Es wirkt wie dieses nicht automatisch (*ex opere operato*), sondern ist in seiner Wirkung auf göttliche Hilfe angewiesen. Das Gebet ist somit fest in einen magischen Ritualvollzug eingebunden bzw. geht in ihm auf, und mehr noch, es verhält sich in seiner lateinischen Fassung im Wurmsegen fast wie ein Zauber, der den Fortlauf der Heilung initiiert.²⁰

Ist eine strenge Dichotomie zwischen Magie und Gebet im Ritualgeschehen vor dem Hintergrund der gezeigten Beispiele unmöglich,²¹ so gilt dies ebenfalls für Texte aus dem Alten und dem Neuen Testament.²² In diesen biblischen magisch-rituellen Heilungsgeschichten können Magie und Religion/Gebet von einem neutralen Beobachter nicht unterschieden werden. Der Versuch einer solchen Differenzierung führe Busch zufolge sogar in eine exegetische Aporie.²³

Dennoch versucht beispielsweise Gerd Theißen eine solche Differenzierung, indem er in Bezug auf die jesuanischen Wundergeschichten von charismatischen Wundern spricht, die sich ihm zufolge deutlich von den magischen Wundern unterscheiden. Die charismatischen Wunder setzen seiner Meinung nach eine perso-

18. Koch, 1997, S. 42-43.

19. Vgl. Tert., *De orat.* I 4: Das Vaterunser wird als *breviarium totius Evangelii* beschrieben.

20. Vgl. *Eb.* 356.

21. Vgl. *PapyCol* XVII 1+2.

22. Z.B. 1 Kön 17,17-27; 2 Kön 20,1-7; Tob 11,7-15; Joh 9,1-7; Apg 5,15; 19,12; Jak 5,14-15.

23. Busch, 2006, S. 14-15.

nale Beziehung zwischen Wundertäter und Hilfesuchenden voraus. Diese Art von Wunder seien ohne „Glauben“ oder Vertrauen nicht möglich.²⁴ Magische Wunder hingegen benötigen Theißen zufolge keine personale Begegnung zwischen den beiden Protagonisten. Oft geschehen sie somit ohne Wissen und Willen desjenigen, an dem das Wunder vollzogen wird. Darüber hinaus stellt Theißen die magischen und die charismatischen Wunder einander folgendermaßen gegenüber: Die magischen Wunder dienen unabhängig des Gemeinwohls lediglich individuellen Zwecken und oft seien sie auch gegen das Wohlergehen der Gemeinschaft gerichtet. Ferner werden sie durch ritualisierte Praktiken (Beschwörungen, festgelegte Zauberformeln, magische Mittel) vollzogen. Sie sollen *ex opere operato* wirksam sein. Im Gegensatz dazu ermöglichen allein die charismatischen Wunder Gemeinschaft und geschehen auf Grundlage der Autorität einzelner Wundertäter und mit einem Minimum an ritualisierten Praktiken.²⁵ Die charismatischen Wunder Jesu lassen sich zudem eschatologisch deuten, da der Wundercharismatiker Jesus als Heilscharismatiker beschrieben wird, der das Ende der alten und den Beginn einer neuen Welt ankündigt.²⁶

Dass die zwei Kategorien der magischen und charismatischen Wunder nicht mehr als eine „idealtypische Vereinfachung“ sind, führt Theißen selbst an und führt ferner aus, dass es „sozialer Konvention [unterliege], wo die Grenzen zwischen magischen und charismatischen Wundern gezogen werden. Da diese Grenze umstritten ist, wirkt sich hier in der Tat die Definitionsmacht der Gesellschaft aus: Charismatische Wundertäter können als Magier angegriffen, Magier als charismatische Wundertäter anerkannt werden. So wurde Jesus von seiner Umwelt teils als prophetischer Wundertäter bewundert, teils als Verbündeter des Teufels angegriffen.“²⁷ Dennoch – und das ist die Schwachstelle in der Zuteilung Theißens – attestiert er mit der idealtypischen Unterscheidung einen scheinbar fundamentalen und objektivierbaren Unterschied zwischen magischen und charismatischen Wundern. Die Zuteilung der Verwendungshäufigkeit ritualisierter Praktiken beispielsweise (ein Maximum an Ritualen bei magischen Wundern; ein Minimum an Ritualen bei charismatischen Wundern) ist allein vor dem Hintergrund der metakommunikativen De-Ritualisierung des Protestantismus,²⁸ nicht aber auf Grundlage der neutestamentlichen Texte zu verstehen. Ferner verdeutlicht allein eine kleine Auswahl an neutestamentlichen Perikopen die Schwierigkeit der o.g. idealtypischen Unterscheidung zwischen ma-

24. Vgl. Mk 6,5-6.

25. Theißen und Merz, 2011, S. 277.

26. Theißen und Merz, 2011, S. 279.

27. Theißen und Merz, 2011, S. 277.

28. S.o.; DeMaris, 2015.

gischen und charismatischen Wundern: Mt 8,5-13 par Lk 7,1-10 berichtet von der Heilung eines Knechts in Kafarnaum durch Jesus. Der Hauptmann und somit Vorgesetzte des Knechts ist es, der Jesus um dieses Wunder bittet. Die Heilung geschieht demnach mit großer Wahrscheinlichkeit ohne Wissen desjenigen, der geheilt werden soll.²⁹ In Mk 11,12-14 par Mt 21,18-19 wird ein Feigenbaum von Jesus verflucht, ewig unfruchtbar zu sein und noch deutlicher gegen das Wohl eines Menschen gerichtet, ist die Blendung eines Magiers durch Paulus, wie sie in Apg 13,8-11 berichtet wird. Auf Grundlage der Quellen, die von diesem miraculösen Wirken berichten,³⁰ ist es in diesem Zusammenhang unwahrscheinlich, dass sowohl umfassende Normen als auch ein theoretisch-terminologisches Konzept von Magie vorlagen, die eine stringente Abgrenzung von Magie zur Religion im frühchristlichen Kontext erlauben (Becker stellt dies für den rabbinischen Kontext heraus).³¹ Otto schlägt auf der Basis seiner weitreichenderen Untersuchungen sogar vor, „auf einen substantiellen Magiebegriff im Wissenschaftsdiskurs“ zu verzichten.³² Insgesamt scheint demzufolge eine Unterscheidung – sei sie auch noch so idealtypisch – zwischen magischen und charismatischen Wundern wenig tragfähig zu sein.³³ Mit Bezug auf Weber, der miraculöses Wirken als einen integralen Bestandteil charismatischer Wundertätigkeit versteht,³⁴ muss der Versuch einer Gegenüberstellung von magischen und charismatischen Wundern abgelehnt werden.

Diese Ablehnung einer genaueren inhaltlichen Differenzierung zwischen Magie und Charisma innerhalb der Heilungswunder ist allerdings nicht gleichzusetzen mit Unkenntnis von „Magie“ im frühen Christentum – im Gegenteil. Allein die Simon Magus-Episode in Apg 8,9-24 zeigt, dass ein μάγος und die Tätigkeit μαγεύειν durchaus bekannt waren.³⁵ Jedoch war offenbar der Standpunkt des Betrachters entscheidend dafür, ob ein rituell-magisches Handeln akzeptiert (Binnenperspektive) oder jemand als μάγος abgewertet oder diffamiert wurde (Außenperspektive).³⁶ Unter Berücksichtigung der Begriffe der Selbst- und der Fremdzuschreibung als Aspekte kul-

29. Vgl. ebenso den Exorzismus in Mk 7,24-30 par Mt 15,21-28 und die Auferweckung des Lazarus' in Joh 11,43-44.

30. MkEv, LkEv, MtEv.

31. Becker, 2002, S. 92.

32. Otto, 2009, S. 640.

33. S.o., Heimbrock, 1994, S. 46.

34. Weber, 1982, S. 481.

35. Vgl. Apg 8,9.

36. Vgl. Apg 13,6; explizit von dieser ntl negativen Wertung ausgenommen sind nur die μάγοι, die in Mt 2, 1-12 in Zusammenhang mit der jesuanischen Kindheitsgeschichte Erwähnung finden; vgl. Tatianus, *Ad Gr.* 1.

tureller Identitätsarbeit³⁷ – selbstredend unter Annahme eines dialektischen Zusammenspiels des Einen mit dem Anderen –³⁸ kann als ein erstes Ergebnis der folgenden Untersuchung Folgendes angenommen werden.

Magie wurde – in der *Fremdzuschreibung* – als nicht-autorisiertes Ritual angesehen, das in Opposition zu dem vom eigenen Gott autorisierten miraculösen Wirken stand (*Selbstzuschreibung*). Ob etwas als Magie (ab-)gewertet wurde, lag also hauptsächlich im Auge des Betrachters, auch wenn es sich um ein und dasselbe miraculöse Wirken handelte. In Bezug auf die jesuanischen Krankenheilungen bedeutete dies, dass die Deutungshoheit der frühchristlichen Gemeinden – im Rahmen der Selbst- und der Fremdzuschreibung – entschied, was nun jeweils *magia licita* oder *magia illicita* war.³⁹ Allein die Autorität Gottes legitimierte die magisch-rituellen Handlungen. Jesus ist demzufolge aus der Perspektive des „erinnerten Jesus Christus“ heraus⁴⁰ in der Selbstzuschreibung ein autorisierter Ritualspezialist, dessen magisch-rituelle Handlungen seine Rolle als legitimen Repräsentanten Gottes bzw. Messias verdeutlichen und diese von den mehr oder weniger beteiligten Ohren- und Augenzeugen nicht nur bestätigt, sondern auch als äußerst sinnhaft erlebt werden.

2. KRANKENHEILUNG ALS MAGISCHES RITUAL

„Das Repertoire der Strukturen magischer Rituale ist begrenzt, und im hohen Maße interkulturell vergleichbar. [...] Zum Ritual gehören eine Vorbereitungsphase (fast immer mit Beachtung asketischer Regeln), eine sich oft zeitlich länger erstreckende Durchführungsphase, die in eine erstrebte Wirkung mündet, und im Falle einer Beschwörung eine förmliche Entlassung des Numens. Wie für die [sic!] meisten Riten sind Anfang und Ende des Ritus meist klar gekennzeichnet. Zum Ritual gehören Worte, Handlungen (Opfer), Gegenstände (die oft im Ritual selbst hergestellt werden), besonderen Zeiten und Orten, spezifische Vorbereitungen sowie allgemeine Rahmenbedingungen. Äußerste Minimierungen sind bestimmte Gesten und Zaubersprüche“.⁴¹

Schreibt man nun diese Struktur magischer Rituale in ein Aktantengerüst ein, so ergibt sich auf der einen Seite ein Handlungssouverän (Ritualaktant/*agent*),

37. Brubaker und Cooper, 2000, S. 15.

38. Reed, 2018, S. 407.

39. Vgl. Frankfurter, 2002, S. 439 oder – vor dem Hintergrund der alttestamentliche Sozialgeschichte – Schmitt, 2017, S. 186.

40. Zu dem Begriff vgl. Wolter, 2019, S. 26.

41. Frenschkowski, 2016, S. 101.

der von einem Adressanten (göttliche Macht) gesendet wurde und positiv auf einen Adressaten (*patient*) mit Hilfe der rituell durchgeführten Heilung einwirkt – bei einem Schadenszauber könnte man von einer negativen Einwirkung sprechen (*action*).⁴² Des Weiteren lassen sich in vielen jesuanischen Krankenheilungsepisoden noch mehr oder weniger unbeteiligte Beobachter finden, deren Aufgabe es ist, den Sachverhalt der Heilung und somit die „Objektivität des wahren Geschehens“ zu bezeugen⁴³ und diese somit als sinnstiftend zu erleben.⁴⁴

Dies artikuliert sich in der Ritualtheorie von Mary Douglas folgendermaßen: Die handelnden Personen in ihrer Beziehung unter- und zueinander drücken sich ihr zufolge mit Hilfe codierter Sprachformen aus, die diese Art der Beziehungen vermitteln und verstärken, d.h. die Rollen der im Ritual involvierten Personen schärfen. In Anlehnung an Basil Bernstein behauptet die Sozialanthropologin, dass dieser Code der Sprachformen mit dem Code der Ritualform korrespondiere und ein Ritual somit eine verdichtete, kohärente Form der Kommunikation darstelle.⁴⁵ Die allgemeine Theorie der rituellen Kompetenz⁴⁶ erweitert das Aktantengerüst und den sprachlichen Ritualcode um die unterschiedliche Wirksamkeit der „kulturell postulierte[n] übernatürliche[n] Handlungsträger“ (*Culturally Postulated Superhuman Agents = CPS-Agents*) in verschiedenen Teilen des Rituals⁴⁷, wodurch sich Theißen zufolge unterschiedliche Typen religiöser Rituale erkennen lassen.⁴⁷

Ferner sind Rituale und Magie Teil eines Konzepts von dynamischer Reinheit.⁴⁸ Die Befreiung von einem unreinen Geist und die Heilung einer Krankheit vermitteln eine Gruppenidentität, indem sie die bestehende Sozialstruktur wiederherstellen und festigen.⁴⁹ Krankenheilungen bzw. Dämonenaustreibungen enthalten demzufolge ein identitätsstiftendes Moment. Vor diesem Hintergrund bezeichnet Kahl die Heilungen durch Jesus als „all inclusive salvation of God“, die immer wieder gemeinschaftsstiftend seien (Kahl nennt es „communal reintegration“) und die Beziehung zu Gott bestätigen.⁵⁰ Michael Pietsch drückt dies im Zusammenhang mit seiner Untersuchung zu Magie und Ritual in den Elisaerzählungen folgendermaßen aus: „Im per-

42. Ebner und Heiningen, 2015.

43. Vgl. Mk 7,37 s.u.

44. Vgl. Mk 2,12.

45. Douglas, 1974.

46. McCauley und Lawson, 2002.

47. Theißen, 2017, S. 119.

48. Douglas, 2013.

49. Douglas, 2013.

50. Kahl, 2013, S. 349.

formativen Akt des Ritualgeschehens wird das ordnungsstiftende, heilende Handeln der Götter symbolisch realisiert. Der Beschwörer handelt somit nicht in eigener Vollmacht, sondern als legitimer Repräsentant der Gottheit. Magische Rituale zielen im staatlichen Bereich auf die Sicherung der politischen Ordnung, die in der Person des Königs repräsentiert wird; im familiären Raum dienen sie vorrangig der Abwehr individueller Bedrohungen (z.B. durch Krankheit oder soziale Desintegration). Soziale Antagonismen werden rituell bearbeitet und das gestörte Ordnungsgefüge wiederhergestellt.⁵¹ Auch die Fähigkeiten Jesu, die in seinem miraculösen Wirken offenbar werden, lassen sich in dieses Argumentationsmuster einfügen. Das magisch-rituelle Handeln Jesu ist maßgeblich für die Wiederherstellung der heilvollen Schöpfungsordnung, sodass „Versöhnung zwischen den Menschen“ ermöglicht wird.⁵²

Beispielhalber soll an dieser Stelle die Perikope Mk 7,31-37 angeführt werden, in der die Heilung eines Taubstummten beschrieben wird und die als eines von vielen magischen Ritualen der jesuanischen Heilungen gedeutet werden kann:

31 Und als er wieder fortging aus dem Gebiet von Tyrus, kam er durch Sidon an das Galiläische Meer, mitten in das Gebiet der Zehn Städte. 32 Und sie brachten zu ihm einen, der taub und stumm (κωφὸν καὶ μογιάλον) war, und baten ihn, dass er die Hand auf ihn lege (ἐπιθῆ αὐτῶ τὴν χεῖρα). 33 Und er nahm ihn aus der Menge beiseite (ἀπολαβόμενος αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου) und legte ihm die Finger in die Ohren (ἰδίαν ἔβαλεν τοὺς δακτύλους αὐτοῦ) und berührte seine Zunge mit Speichel (πτύσας ἦψατο τῆς γλώσσης αὐτοῦ) 34 und sah auf zum Himmel (ἀναβλέψας εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν) und seufzte (ἐστενάξεν) und sprach zu ihm: Hefata! (εφφαθα), das heißt: Tu dich auf (διανοίχθητι)! 35 Und (sofort) [εὐθέως] taten sich seine Ohren auf (ἠνοίγησαν αὐτοῦ αἱ ἀκοαί) und die Fessel seiner Zunge löste sich (ἐλύθη ὁ δεσμὸς τῆς γλώσσης αὐτοῦ), und er redete richtig (ἐλάλει ὀρθῶς). 36 Und er befahl (διεστείλατο) ihnen, sie sollten's niemandem sagen (μηδενὶ λέγωσιν). Je mehr er's aber verbot, desto mehr breiteten sie es aus. 37 Und sie wunderten sich über die Maßen (ὕπερπερισσῶς ἐξεπλήσσοντο) und sprachen: Er hat alles wohl gemacht; die Tauben macht er hörend und die Sprachlosen redend (τοὺς κωφοὺς ποιεῖ ἀκούειν καὶ [τοὺς] ἀλάλους λαλεῖν).

Diese Episode aus dem MkEv zeigt, dass wir im Neuen Testament vergeblich nach Ritualanweisungen nach Art der babylonischen Beschwörungszereemonien suchen.⁵³ Im Gegensatz zur Professionalisierung des Berufsstandes der Beschwörungspriester bzw. Magier inkl. spezieller Fachliteratur in Babylon, wie beispielsweise der

51. Pietsch, 2017, S. 345; vgl. Reventlow, 2007; Uro, 2016.

52. Theißen, 2017, S. 128.

53. Vgl. RA 50.

mašmašu- und *ašipu*-Priesterklasse, die ihre Magie wie ein Handwerk gelernt haben, begegnet uns in den Evangelien nur ein Minimum an magisch-rituellen Elementen. „Nevertheless, they are visible and repetitive acts, whose performance is believed to have a physical impact on human beings“.⁵⁴ Trotz der knappen Darstellung des Heilungsritus wird deutlich, dass sich das Wirken Jesu auf die zu heilende Person konzentriert und somit vor dem Hintergrund der Ausführungen von Mary Douglas von einer Beseitigung der sozialen Antagonismen gesprochen werden kann.⁵⁵ Das durchgeführte magische Ritual überwindet dem Konzept der dynamischen Reinheit gemäß das gestörte Sozialgefüge, das in der misslichen Lage des Adressaten deutlich sichtbar wird. Es verdeutlicht zudem die Rettungsmacht Gottes und wirkt somit identitätsstiftend. In der Gestalt Jesu verkörpert sich dieses Rettungshandeln Gottes in der Durchführung und der Ergebnissicherung des magischen Rituals.

Das bereits genannte Rettungshandeln Gottes wird im Rahmen der ritualisierten Krankenheilung vor allem durch eine ansteckende, sich übertragende Kraftwirkung gewährleistet, die in Mk 7,32 durch das Auflegen der Hände verdeutlicht wird (ἐπιθῆ αὐτῶ τὴν χεῖρα). Überhaupt passieren viele jesuanische Heilungen, indem der Kranke berührt wird.⁵⁶ Das Auflegen der Hände kann als ansteckendes miraculöses Wirken gewertet werden. Des Weiteren wird von einer (medizinisch wirksamen?) Paste berichtet, die aus *Salvia* und Erde gemacht ist;⁵⁷ Das Spucken bzw. der Speichel besitzt eine apotropäische Bedeutung und wird auch unter Berücksichtigung von Mk 8,23 und vor dem Hintergrund des miraculösen Handelns des Vespasian mit Hilfe des Auftragens von Speichel, wie in Tacitus' *Historien* IV 81 und in Suetons *De vita caesarum* (*Titus Flavius Vespasianus*) 7, seinen festen Bestandteil in einem (Blinden-) Heilungsritual gehabt haben. Mk 7,35 berichtet davon, dass die Spucke die Kette der Zunge löst (ἐλύθη ὁ δεσμὸς τῆς γλώσσης αὐτοῦ). Abgesehen davon, dass dem Speichel in der Antike als besonderer Körpersaft eine apotropäische Wirkung nachgesagt wurde, konnte der Speichel eines anderen Menschen auch Ekel hervorrufen und das Ausspucken verdeutlichte die Verachtung oder Verfluchung eines anderen.⁵⁸ „Die in der Magie (auch der christlichen) wichtige Ekelevokation bzw. Tabuverletzung dient dabei der Willenssteigerung, genauer gesagt dem energischen Verlassen des ‚Normalen‘, der Überwindung der ‚natürlichen‘ Reaktionen durch reinen Willen [...]“.⁵⁹ Mi-

54. Theißen, 2018, S. 449.

55. Douglas, 2013.

56. U.a. Mk 5,30; 6,56.

57. Mk 7,33; 8,23; vgl. Johannes 9,6-7.

58. Vgl. RGG⁴, s.v. „Speichel“.

59. Frenschkowski, 2016, S. 170.

rakulöses Wirken ist zudem häufig gekennzeichnet durch die Nennung von Epitheta und eine dem Zauber immanente Hast bzw. Ungeduld: „Jetzt, jetzt, schnell, schnell“ findet als übliche Abschlussformel häufig in den *Papyri Graecae Magicae* Verwendung.⁶⁰ Diese Beobachtung machte bereits der Kirchenvater Origines.⁶¹ Im Vergleich mit den von Eile zeugenden Formeln in den *PGM* kann auch das „sofort“ in Mk 7,35 unter Bezugnahmen von u.a. Mk 1,43; 2,12 und 5,42 als eine formelhafte Wendung angesehen werden.⁶² Des Weiteren findet sich in den *PGM* sehr häufig eine Aufforderung zur Geheimhaltung der Riten als mystifizierende Steigerung von „Privatheit“ und „Bedeutung“.⁶³ Auffallend ist, dass viele jesuanische Heilungsepisoden ebenfalls mit einem Geheimhaltungsgebot abschließen.⁶⁴ In Mk 7,33 wird beschrieben, dass die Heilung abseits der Menschenmenge stattfindet (ἀπολαβόμενος αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τοῦ ὄχλου). Diese Heilungen im privaten Rahmen, quasi unter vier Augen, wirken, als ob Jesus seine magischen Praktiken zu verstecken versucht.⁶⁵ Auch im außerbiblichen Kontext wird eine ritualisierte Zauberhandlung „außerhalb“, sprich im kultfreien Raum der Natur, meist einfach zu Hause, häufig aber auch im Schlafzimmer vollzogen.⁶⁶ Ein weiteres ritualisiertes Element einer Heilung ist das magische Wort⁶⁷ oder das Flüstern bzw. das flüsternde Gebet gen Himmel gerichtet.⁶⁸ In unserem Beispiel Mk 7,34 ist nicht nur der mit Seufzen unterstützte Blick in den Himmel Teil des magischen Rituals, sondern auch das fremdwirkende aramäische „Hefata“ in Vers 34 dient ähnlich wie das *pater noster* im Wurmsegen aus dem 9. Jahrhundert als Zauberwort⁶⁹ und könnte als *Rhesis barbarike* gelten.

Zusammenfassend lassen sich mit Blick auf die antiken, außerbiblichen Quellen bestimmte Merkmale eines magischen Krankenheilungsrituals finden, die auch für das miraculöse Wirken Jesu bestimmend sind: Die Heilungen finden im privaten Rahmen statt. Die Kranken werden berührt, häufig durch das Auflegen der Hände. Es wird eine Paste verabreicht, gemacht aus *Salvia* und Erde. Speichel wird verwendet. Ein wichtiges Element ist das magische Wort (*Rhesis barbarike*) und der Blick in

60. Vgl. u.a. *PGM* XXXV 19; Kotansky, Amulets Nr. 52 in: *PapyCol* XVII 4; VII 117.

61. Origines *Exhortatio ad martyrium* 46.

62. Vgl. das εὐθέως in *PGM* I 284.

63. *PGM* I 41; 130; 192; IV 851-857; 1251; 1874; XIII 23; vgl. Plin., *N.H.* XXX 9 u.a.

64. Mk 7,36: „Und er gebot ihnen, sie sollten's niemandem sagen“, unter Berücksichtigung von u.a. 1,44; 3,9.12; 5,43.

65. Vgl. Mk 5,40; 7,33; 8,23; vgl. Apg 9,40.

66. Ap., *Met.* IV 20-21; Ps.-Clement., *Hom.* II 26.

67. „*Rhesis barbarike*“, vgl. *PGM* IV 147; vgl. Plin., *N.H.* XXX 9; vgl. ebenso Lucian., *Philops.* 9; TSal 7.

68. Uro, 2016; Bremmer, 2017.

69. Vgl. Mk 5,41.

den Himmel. In Bezug auf die Wirkung ist Eile geboten („jetzt, schnell, sogleich“). Es gibt ein Geheimhaltungsgebot, das befolgt werden muss.

3. DE-RITUALISIERUNG – MINIMIERUNG DER RITUELLEN ELEMENTE

Auch wenn streckenweise die vorschriftliche Herkunft der Heilungen Jesu im ca. 70 n. Chr. entstandene Markusevangelium zu erkennen ist, so hat das Jesusbild bereits in der darauffolgenden urchristlichen Überlieferung eine Erweiterung und eine Umbildung erfahren, sodass eine weitere Minimierung der magisch-rituellen Elemente deutlich wird. Bereits das zwischen 80 und 90 n. Chr. entstandene Matthäusevangelium drängt magisch-rituelle Elemente redaktionell zurück. So fehlen beispielsweise die markinischen Heilungsgeschichten, in denen der Speichel zum Tragen kommt.⁷⁰ Darüber hinaus werden weitere magische Konnotationen vermieden. Als Beispiel kann eine Krankenheilung angeführt werden, die wahrscheinlich erst im „Nachhinein zu[r] Auferweckung[...] von Toten ausgestaltet“ wurde.⁷¹ Es handelt sich um die „Auferweckung der Tochter des Jäirus“ in Mk 5,35-43 parr. Mt 9,23-26, Lk 8,49-56.

70. Mk 7-31-37; 8,22-26.

71. Wolter, 2019, S. 133.

Markus 5,35-43

35 Während er noch redete, kommen sie von dem Haus des Synagogenvorstehers und sagen: Deine Tochter ist gestorben, was bemüht du den Lehrer noch?

36 Jesus aber überhörte das Wort, das geredet wurde, und spricht zu dem Synagogenvorsteher: **Fürchte dich nicht; glaube nur** (μη φοβοῦ, μόνον πίστευε)!

37 Und er **erlaubte niemand, ihn zu begleiten** (οὐκ ἀφῆκεν οὐδένα μετ' αὐτοῦ συνακολουθῆσαι), außer Petrus und Jakobus und Johannes, dem Bruder des Jakobus.

38 Und sie kommen in das Haus des Synagogenvorstehers, und er sieht ein Getümmel und Weinende und laut Heulende.

39 Und er geht hinein und sagt zu ihnen: Was lärmt und weint ihr? Das Kind ist nicht gestorben, sondern es schläft (τὸ παιδίον οὐκ ἀπέθανεν ἀλλὰ καθεύδει).

40 Und sie lachten ihn aus. Als er aber **alle hinausgetrieben** (ἐκβαλὼν) hatte, nimmt er den Vater des Kindes und die Mutter und die, die bei ihm waren, mit und geht hinein, wo das Kind war. 41 Und er **ergriff die Hand des Kindes** und **spricht zu ihm** (κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ παιδίου λέγει αὐτῇ): **Talita kum** (ταλιθα κουμ)! **Das ist übersetzt: Mädchen, ich sage dir, steh auf** (ὃ ἐστὶν μεθερμηνευόμενον· τὸ κοράσιον, σοὶ λέγω, ἔγειρε)!

42 Und **sogleich** (εὐθύς) **stand das Mädchen auf und ging umher** (ἀνέστη τὸ κοράσιον καὶ περιεπάτει); es war nämlich zwölf Jahre alt. Und sie erstaunten (sogleich) mit großem Erstaunen.

43 Und er **gebote ihnen dringend, dass niemand dies erfahren solle** (διεστείλατο αὐτοῖς πολλὰ ἴνα μηδεὶς γνοῖ τοῦτο), und er sagte, man solle ihr zu essen geben.

Matthäus 9,23-26

23 Und als Jesus in das Haus des Vorstehers kam und die Pfeifer und die lärmende Volksmenge sah,

24 **sprach er: Geht fort** (ἀναχωρεῖτε)!

Denn das Mädchen ist nicht gestorben, sondern es schläft.

Und sie lachten ihn aus.

25 Als aber die Volksmenge **hinausgetrieben** war,

ging er hinein und **ergriff sie bei der Hand**; und **das Mädchen stand auf** (ὅτε δὲ ἐξεβλήθη ὁ ὄχλος εἰσελθὼν ἐκράτησεν τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς, καὶ ἠγέρθη τὸ κοράσιον).

26 Und die Kunde hiervon ging hinaus in jene ganze Gegend.

Lukas 8,49-56

49 Während er noch redete, kommt einer von dem Haus des Synagogenvorstehers und sagt zu ihm: Deine Tochter ist gestorben. Bemühe den Lehrer nicht!

50 Als aber Jesus es hörte, antwortete er ihm: **Fürchte dich nicht, glaube nur** (μη φοβοῦ, μόνον πίστευσον)! Und sie wird gerettet werden.

51 Als er aber in das Haus kam, **erlaubte er niemand hineinzugehen** (οὐκ ἀφῆκεν εἰσελθεῖν) außer Petrus und Johannes und Jakobus und dem Vater des Kindes und der Mutter.

52 Alle aber weinten und beklagten sie.

Er aber sprach: Weint nicht!

Denn sie ist nicht gestorben, sondern sie schläft.

53 Und sie lachten ihn aus, da sie wussten, dass sie gestorben war.

54 **Er aber ergriff ihre Hand und rief** (αὐτὸς δὲ κρατήσας τῆς χειρὸς αὐτῆς ἐφώνησεν)

und sprach: Kind, steh auf (ἡ παῖς, ἔγειρε)!

55 Und ihr Geist kehrte zurück, und **sogleich stand sie auf**;

und er befahl, ihr zu essen zu geben (ἀνέστη παραχρῆμα καὶ διέταξεν αὐτῇ δοθῆναι φαγεῖν).

56 Und ihre Eltern gerieten außer sich; **er aber gebote ihnen, niemand zu sagen, was geschehen war** (ὁ δὲ παρήγγειλεν αὐτοῖς μηδενὶ εἰπεῖν τὸ γεγονός).

Diese Erzählung lässt besonders im MkEv Züge eines Rituals erkennen, an dem als Akteure der Adressat/*patient* (in diesem Fall die Tote) sowie ein Ritualaktant/*agent* (Jesus) beteiligt sind. Darüber hinaus wird ein Synagogenvorsteher genannt, der den Gottesmann beauftragt. Das Ritual findet bei dem Kranken (hier: der Toten) zu Hause statt. Wesentlich ist, dass Jesus in Mk 5,40 die Heilung (Erweckung) in einem privaten Rahmen stattfinden lässt, ein quasi-magisches Wort spricht und die Tote berührt. Zugleich wird ein Geheimhaltungsgebot ausgesprochen, dass die Eltern befolgen sollen,⁷² die zugleich Ohren- und Augenzeugen der magisch-rituellen Heilung sind. Ferner lässt sich die im Zauber typische Ungeduld finden.⁷³ Dass das Mädchen wieder lebt, erkennt man an ihrem Umhergehen.⁷⁴ Eine Art der öffentlichen Wirkung ist gegeben, indem die Eltern „ἐξέστησαν [εὐθὺς] ἐκστάσει μεγάλη“⁷⁵ und ihrer Tochter zu essen geben sollen.⁷⁶ Gerade letzteres ist immanenter Teil des Heilungsprozesses, denn eine Krankheit sowie der Tod isolieren aus der menschlichen Gemeinschaft. Zur Heilung gehört hingegen, dass eine Wiederaufnahme in die Gemeinschaft stattfinden kann.⁷⁷

Wenn Markus in 5,41 die gr. Übersetzung neben das aramäische „Zauberwort“, „*Talita kum*“, stellt und somit die magisch klingende Fremdartigkeit dieser Wörter zumindest zulässt, so lässt der Evangelist Matthäus die wörtliche Rede komplett weg und berichtet nur von der körperlichen Berührung.⁷⁸ Lukas übernimmt allein die griechische Übersetzung, „Kind, steh auf!“⁷⁹ Diese Art der De-Ritualisierung ist auf die Redaktion der Evangelisten zurückzuführen. Das Zurücktreten der ausführlicheren Beschreibung von Krankenheilungen zeigt: Der magisch-rituelle Aspekt des Wunderwirkens Jesu hat auch die Christen in Verlegenheit gebracht. Das apokryphe ThEv aus dem 2. Jhd. n. Chr. beispielsweise weiß von überhaupt keinen Heilungswundern Jesu zu berichten. Die apokryphen ActAp (2./3. Jhd. n. Chr.) nennen zwar viele miraculöse Heilungsgeschichten. Diese sind allerdings – wie der Name schon sagt – allesamt auf die Apostel Jesu beschränkt und vor dem Hintergrund hagiographischer Literatur zu verstehen. Vor dem Hintergrund der Selbst- und der Fremd-

72. Mk 5,43.

73. „εὐθὺς“, Mk 5,42 vgl. Mk 7,35.

74. Mk 5,42.

75. Mk 5,42.

76. Mk 5,43.

77. Douglas, 2013.

78. Mt 9,25.

79. Lk 8,54.

zuschreibung kann allerdings auch in den ActAp zwischen *magia licita* oder *magia illicita* unterschieden werden.⁸⁰

Beim Apostel Paulus als Verfasser der ältesten uns heute noch erhaltenen Schriften des Neuen Testaments fehlen des Weiteren direkte Hinweise auf die Heilungswunder Jesu, abgesehen davon, dass er in 2 Kor 12,8 berichtet, den Herrn von eigener Krankheit gequält selbst dreimal angerufen zu haben (im Kontext wird deutlich, dass es in 2 Kor 12,7-9 um die Bitte des kranken Paulus geht, den Satansengel abzurufen). Dass die jesuanischen Wunder bei ihm überhaupt keine Erwähnung finden, liegt daran, dass die Grundlage seines Glaubens die Begegnung mit dem auferstandenen Christus war. Von hier aus begründet er seine Theologie. Das heißt allerdings nicht, dass er keine Wunder Jesu kannte und/oder er einen wunderfreien Jesusglauben vertrat. Der Apostel kennt das Charisma der Heilung sehr wohl⁸¹ und behauptet selbst, Zeichen, Wunder und Machttaten in Korinth gewirkt zu haben.⁸²

Die Tendenz der synoptischen Evangelien der De-Ritualisierung kann demzufolge sachlogisch mit dem *Sitz im Leben* der Evangelien begründet werden: Es zeigt die apologetische Färbung der Evangelien. Beurteilt man die Evangelien in Analogie zu alttestamentlichen Propheten-Biographien (Jer, DtJes),⁸³ antiken Biographien wie der *Alexander-Vita* des Plutarchs oder dem Alexanderroman, so wird deutlich, dass die Evangelisten den Gottessohn Jesu Christi vor dem Vorwurf zwielichtiger Magie (als *Fremdzuschreibung*) zu schützen versuchen und aus diesem Grund die magisch-rituellen Elemente reduzieren.⁸⁴ Sind die magischen Rituale dadurch gekennzeichnet, dass sowohl die wirkmächtige Handlung als auch das wirkmächtige Wort zusammengedacht werden müssen, so verlagert sich in der urchristlichen Tradition der Schwerpunkt auf das wirkmächtige Wort. Besonders deutlich zeigt sich dies im MtEv, in dem Jesus vor allem als Messias des Wortes vorgestellt wird. Als Sohn Gottes, der Auferstandene, der Erhöhte und Herr über alle dämonischen Mächte⁸⁵ wird Jesus zudem im Rahmen der Überlieferung von dem *Vor-Urteil* eines unseriösen Magiers befreit und der Glaube wird in den Mittelpunkt gerückt. Vergleichbar mit der Aussage Jesajas in Jes 7,9, „Glaubt ihr nicht, dann bleibt ihr nicht“, konzentrieren sich die jesuanischen Krankenheilungen auf die Wirkmächtigkeit des Glaubens.

80. Bremmer, 2017; vgl. Reimer, 2002.

81. 1 Kor 12,9.

82. 2 Kor 12,12.

83. Vgl. Heil, 2009, S. 89.

84. Uro, 2016.

85. Mt 28,18; Phil 2,6-11.

Ohne Analogie in den antiken Quellen ist der Zuspruch, „Dein Glaube hat Dir geholfen!“⁸⁶ Berger führt derlei Aussagen über den Glauben auf eine Teilhabe an Gottes Kraft zurück und ordnet diese der „technischen Missionssprache“ zu.⁸⁷

Auch das nach der Zerstörung des zweiten Tempels ab 70 n. Chr. sich entwickelnde rabbinische Judentum verfährt ähnlich, denn auch dort werden Beschreibungen magisch-ritueller Praktiken zurückgedrängt. Durch Anwendung magischer Techniken (z.B. das Zeichnen eines Kreises) vollbringt Choni im 1. Jhd. v. Chr. beispielsweise ein Regenwunder. Die Brisanz der magischen Handlung von Choni, der auch Kreiszieher genannt wurde, wird mit der Erfüllung von Hab 2,1 als Schriftbeweis im Talmud entschärft.⁸⁸ Dieser zunehmende Rabbinisierungsprozess befreite Choni von Vorwürfen der Magie und integrierte den Kreiszieher in die Rechtgläubigkeit. „Aus dem umstrittenen Magier ist ein anerkannter Rabbi geworden.“⁸⁹

Ein weiterer Wundertäter in der Umwelt Jesu ist Chanina ben Dosa.⁹⁰ Er lebte in der Mitte des 1. Jhd. n. Chr. in selbst gewählter Besitzlosigkeit und wurde als Sohn Gottes angesehen. Im Talmud sind seine Wunder erzählerisch entfaltet und es wird berichtet, dass es Chanina möglich war, die Lebenschancen schwer erkrankter Menschen hervorzusagen, die um Heilung baten und Gott anflehten. Auch wird über die Heilung des Sohnes Gamaliels berichtet.⁹¹ Im Talmud wird allerdings deutlich gemacht, dass Gott als Adressant durch seinen Handlungssouverän (Chanina) die Wunder bewirkt. Ben Dosas Wunderkraft wird auf seine intensive Gottesbeziehung zurückgeführt und die (typologischen) Verweise auf die großen Wunderpropheten des Alten Testaments (Elia/Elisa) verfolgen die Absicht, ihn in ebendieser Traditionslinie zu verorten, sodass er keinesfalls als windiger Magier wahrgenommen werden kann.

Ein letzter Vergleich birgt eine interessante Parallele zur Verfluchung des Feigenbaumes durch Jesus (Mk 11,12-25). In einer Erzählung des Talmuds (bTaan 24a) bespricht ein Sohn Rabbis Joses einen Feigenbaum in direkter Anrede, damit die armen Arbeiter von den Früchten des Baumes essen können. Diese magische Handlung wird als illegitime Belästigung des Schöpfers beurteilt und endet in der Verfluchung des Sohnes, auch wenn dieser es nur gut gemeint hat.

86. Vgl. u.a. Mk 5,34.36; 9,23.

87. Berger, 1995, S. 387 und 631.

88. mTaan 3,8 / bTaan 23a.

89. Kollmann, 2002, S. 45.

90. bBer 34b / jBer 5,5 / bBer 34b.

91. Vgl. Mk 5,35-43.

Die Magie sollte entschieden von dem Bereich der rechtmäßigen Religion im rabbinischen Judentum ausgeklammert werden, damit die Macht Gottes nicht in Frage gestellt werden kann. Jesus Christus als Sohn Gottes verdeutlicht diese Macht in urchristlicher Tradition. „(The) experience of divine empowerment (coupled with a special sense of a close relationship with God) prompted Jesus to reinterpret, combine and transform [...] traditions. He then understood his individual acts of healing and exorcism as prophetic signs, not only of the imminence of the Kingdom of God, but of its nature“.⁹²

Vor dem Hintergrund des Gesagten wird nochmals deutlich, dass die Unterscheidung von unautorisierter Magie und autorisiertem magischen Ritual im Zusammenhang mit Identifikations- und Abgrenzungsprozessen (*Selbst-* und *Fremdzuschreibung*) Bestand hat. „[S]owohl im Ausgrenzungs- als auch im Aufwertungsdiskurs war der Magiebegriff [...] weniger durch die Indikation semantischer Bedeutung, als vielmehr durch Funktionen der Aus- und Eingrenzung, der Ab- und Aufwertung eigener und fremder Identität(en) in einem hochkomplexen, interreligiösen Diskursfeld gekennzeichnet. Entscheidend ist: diese Strategien – Bewertung; Abgrenzung; Identitätsstiftung – stellen Funktionalisierungen von Sprache dar, die in religiösen Diskursen eine gewichtige Rolle spielen mögen, im religionswissenschaftlichen Diskurs aber (idealerweise) vernachlässigt, wenn nicht ganz ausgeblendet werden sollten“.⁹³ Die Verwendung des Magie-Begriffs ist ein polemisch-identitätsstiftendes Sprachspiel und im Rahmen der frühchristlichen Gemeinden als Fremdzuschreibung „a set of beliefs and practices that deviated sharply from the norms of the dominant social group, and was thus considered antisocial, illegal, or unacceptable“.⁹⁴ Kurz und bündig gesagt: „[M]agic‘ [...] is quintessentially the activity of the ‚outsider‘ in the Bible“.⁹⁵

Dtn 18,9-14 stellt eine Liste an Handlungen heraus, die als Magie bzw. Zauberei disqualifiziert werden und infolgedessen ein Gegenüber von autorisiertem und nicht autorisiertem magischen Wirken markieren. Bereits in der Rezeption dieses Textes in der Qumran-Literatur in 11Q19 wird deutlich, dass es um die Bestimmung einer kultischen Konformität geht, die es einzuhalten gilt.⁹⁶ Auch die Weisheit Salo-

92. Eve, 2002, S. 381.

93. Otto, 2009, S. 641.

94. Ricks, 1995, S. 131. Vgl. aus außerchristlicher Perspektive Plin., *N.H.* XXX 15; Ap., *De Magia, passim*; Lucian., *Philops.* IX 16.

95. Ricks, 1995, S. 132.

96. Paganini, 2017.

mos postuliert einen Gegensatz von Magie bzw. Zauberei und Glaube. Magie sei ein „abscheuliches Verbrechen“.⁹⁷ Und auch im Neuen Testament finden sich derartige Spuren von Magiepolemik,⁹⁸ die ebenfalls in der frühchristlichen Didache (ca. 100 n. Chr.) ihren Niederschlag finden: u.a. Magie (μαγεία), Götzendienste und Giftmischereien sind den Bereichen des Fehlverhaltens zugeordnet: Ἡ δὲ τοῦ θανάτου ὁδὸς ἐστὶν αὕτη. πρῶτον πάντων πονηρὰ ἐστὶ καὶ κατάρως μισθὴ (Did 5,1).⁹⁹

4. WAR JESUS EIN MAGIER?

Zweifellos war der historische Jesus ein Heiler und ein Exorzist, der die Naturgesetze durchbrach.¹⁰⁰ Ob Jesus allerdings ein Magier genannt werden kann oder nicht, ist m. E. mit Blick auf die Evangelien allein eine Sache des Standpunktes und es kommt darauf an, ob die Unterscheidung, die man vornehmen möchte, aus der Binnenperspektive (*Selbstzuschreibung*) heraus getroffen oder als Fremdzuschreibung durchgeführt wird.¹⁰¹ Diese Art der Differenzierung macht deutlich, dass beispielsweise in frühjüdischer Deutung entweder die Macht Gottes oder z.B. bei ägyptischen Magiern eine nicht autorisierte Macht am Werk war.¹⁰² Die frühchristliche Rechtfertigung der Fähigkeiten Jesu orientiert sich an diesem Argumentationsmuster und so sahen die christusgläubigen Gemeinden Jesus als legitimen Repräsentanten Gottes, respektive Sohn Gottes. „Jews and pagans, on the other hand, who viewed the Christians as the ‚outsiders‘, viewed Jesus‘ miraculous acts as either fraudulent or demon-inspired, but in either case ‚magical‘“.¹⁰³ Spätere antichristliche Polemiken schildern,¹⁰⁴ dass Jesus ein Volksverführer und ein Zauberer gewesen sei.¹⁰⁵ In der rabbinischen Literatur berichtet bSanh. 43a von dem Zauberer Jesu, der das Volk Israel verführt habe. Auch in der antichristlichen Polemik der sagengeschichtlichen *Toledot Jeschu* wird Jesus als Zauberer und Volksverführer beschrieben, der die Magie in Ägypten gelernt habe. Unsicherheiten bestehen in

97. SapSal 12,4, vgl. 18,13.

98. Vgl. Apg 8,9; 13,6; 16,16-18; 18,23; 19,19; Gal 5,20.

99. Vgl. in diesem Zusammenhang auch Mastrocinque, 2005, S. 216.

100. Vgl. Joseph., *AJ* XVIII 64, 4, gr. Παράδοξα. Cf. Theißen und Merz, 2011; Theißen, 2018.

101. Ricks, 1995.

102. Vgl. Joseph., *BJ* VII 180, 5. Cf. Eve, 2002; Swartz, 2018.

103. Ricks, 1995, S. 142.

104. Z.B. die des Celsus vgl. Origen, *C. Cels.* I 29; II 32, 49; VIII 39, 41.

105. Vgl. Justin, *Apol.* XXX 1.

der Bestimmung der Entstehungszeit der Sagensammlung. So wird vermutet, dass Fragmente der Toledot Jeschu bereits im 3.-5. Jhd. entstanden sind.¹⁰⁶

Dass allerdings bereits dem irdischen Jesu Magie und Zauberei nachgesagt wurden, zeigt das MkEv:

Die Schriftgelehrten (οἱ γραμματεῖς) aber, die von Jerusalem herabgekommen waren, sprachen: Er hat den Beelzebul, und: Er treibt die bösen Geister aus durch ihren Obersten (ὅτι Βεελζεβούλ ἔχει καὶ ὅτι ἐν τῷ ἄρχοντι τῶν δαιμονίων ἐκβάλλει τὰ δαιμόνια) (Mk 3,22).

Die Gegner Jesu zweifeln nicht daran, „dass er Dämonen austreibt, sondern werfen ihm lediglich vor, dass er sich dabei die Hilfe einer stärkeren dämonischen Macht zunutze macht“.¹⁰⁷ Jesus wird des Gebrauches dämonischer Mächte verdächtigt und somit implizit der Magie.¹⁰⁸ Den o.g. Untersuchungen gemäß gelten die Schriftgelehrten als Außenstehende bzw. Gegner, denen das Wirken Jesu unbekannt, wenn nicht sogar ungeheuerlich war. Auch die Verse in Mk 6,14-15 und 8,27-28 verdeutlichen, dass die Unbekanntheit Jesu einer alte Traditionsstufe entspricht.

Und Jesus und seine Jünger gingen hinaus in die Dörfer von Cäsarea Philippi. Und auf dem Weg fragte er seine Jünger und sprach zu ihnen: Was sagen die Menschen, wer ich bin? (τίνα με λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι;) Sie aber antworteten ihm und sagten: Johannes der Täufer; und andere: Elia; andere aber: einer der Propheten (Ἰωάννην τὸν βαπτιστὴν, καὶ ἄλλοι Ἠλίαν, ἄλλοι δὲ ὅτι εἷς τῶν προφητῶν) (Mk 8,27-28).

Seine Widersacher sagen, er sei besessen¹⁰⁹ oder als im Bund mit dem Teufel stehend.¹¹⁰ Zudem passt der Versuch, ihn als *Elia redivivus* zu deuten, nicht in das nachösterliche Bild von ihm, denn aus christlicher Perspektive ist nicht Jesus, sondern Johannes der Täufer der *Elia redivivus*.¹¹¹ Es gibt daher keinen Grund zu zweifeln, dass auch Nicht-Anhänger von seinen magisch-rituellen Wundern irritiert oder zumindest beeindruckt waren, die für sie in einer Fremdzuschreibung als Magie gedeutet wurden, deren wirkmächtige Instanz wiederum unbekannt oder illegitim war. Insgesamt kann also zum einen festgestellt werden, dass die Überlieferung der Hei-

106. Meerson und Schäfer, 2014.

107. Wolter, 2019, S. 131.

108. Ricks, 1995, S. 140.

109. Mk 3,20-22 parr.

110. Vgl. Lk 11,14-23.

111. Mk 9,13; Mt 11,14.

lungen nicht auf seine Anhänger und auf die Christusglaubenden beschränkt war. Zum anderen ist festzuhalten, dass Jesus aus frühchristlicher Perspektive (*Selbstzuschreibung*) kein Magier war,¹¹² seine Heilungen aber für Gegner und Außenstehende mit negativ konnotierter Magie und Verführungszauber¹¹³ aus dem Machtbereich der Dämonen in Verbindung gebracht wurden (*Fremdzuschreibung*). Auch den Evangelisten fiel diese Verwechselbarkeit auf und so lässt Mk Jesus auf die Anschuldigung in 3,22 im Sinne der De-Ritualisierung allein sachliche Gründe anführen, die den Vorwurf widerlegen: Die Einheit des Machtbereiches des höchsten Dämons bzw. des Teufels würde zerbrechen, wenn sich seine Angehörigen selbst bekämpfen würden.¹¹⁴ Ein gegen sich selbst kämpfender Teufel ist reine Makulatur. Im Endeffekt besitzt Jesus also nicht nur die Vollmacht Gottes als Legitimationsgrundlage seiner Handlungen, sondern auch die besseren Argumente;¹¹⁵ interessante Abgrenzungsmöglichkeiten ergeben sich in diesem Zusammenhang z.B. mit den apokryphen Evangelien und den apokryphen Apostelakten.¹¹⁶

5. FAZIT

Wenn Samson Eitrem 1966 behauptet, dass Jesus lediglich in Momenten der spirituellen Schwachheit von Techniken der magischen Volksmedizin Gebrauch gemacht habe,¹¹⁷ oder Morton Smith 1978 darüber hinausgehend versucht, Jesus in vollem Umfang als Magier darzustellen,¹¹⁸ „dessen religionsgeschichtlicher Rahmen weniger durch das zeitgenössische Judentum als vielmehr durch die antiken Wandermagier beschreibbar ist“,¹¹⁹ dann unterläuft den beiden der Fehler, in Bezug auf den Magiebegriff nicht zwischen Selbstzuschreibung und Fremdzuschreibung zu unterscheiden und infolgedessen eine anachronistische Sicht zu postulieren. Jesus war selbstredend kein Magier und er war es zweifelsohne doch. Entscheidend ist allein die Perspektive, von der aus man darüber urteilt. Objektivere Kriterien, die eine Differenzierung zwischen magischen und nicht-magischen bzw. charismatischen Wundern ermöglichen, sind anachronistisch und führen zwangsläufig in eine Aphasie. In der Selbstzuschreibung wird die Rolle Jesu durch die magisch-ritualisierten Krankenheilungen als au-

112. Vgl. Mk 1,22.

113. Vgl. Apg 13,6.

114. Wolter, 2019, S. 144.

115. Vgl. Mt 4.

116. Reimer, 2002; Bremmer, 2017.

117. Eitrem, 1966.

118. Smith, 1978.

119. Busch, 2006, S. 98.

torisierter Mittler geschärft, dessen spezielle Gottesbeziehung sichtbar und erlebbar wird. Das jesuanische Handeln erzeugt für die (glaubenden) Beobachter Sinn und wirkt identitätsstiftend, indem es eine Notsituation überwindet, Versöhnung ermöglicht und somit die heilvolle Schöpfungsordnung wiederherstellt. „Wenn Jesus den Menschen Heilung bringt, bringt er ihnen das Heil Gottes. Wenn Jesus Menschen heilt, schenkt er ihnen, was nur Gott schenken kann“.¹²⁰

Die Wiederherstellung der Schöpfungsordnung ist in diesem Zusammenhang ein Bestandteil der Installation der Gottesherrschaft. Jesus selbst ist es auch, der seine durch ihn und durch den Glauben der Adressaten gewirkten Wunder als Gleichnishandlung für den Anbruch des Gottesreiches versteht.¹²¹ Es ist demnach allein der Ritualaktant Jesus, „durch den die Königsherrschaft Gottes zu den Menschen kommt, und [...] der die eschatologische Hoffnung erfüllt die sich bisher in exklusiver Weise auf Gott richtete“.¹²² Mit der Redaktion der Evangelisten und der Reduktion der magisch-rituellen Elemente tritt diese Rolle Jesu aus nachösterlicher Perspektive immer deutlicher hervor. Die Evangelien profilieren das Jesusbild, indem sie eine Jesus-Biographie aus einer konsequent nachösterlichen Glaubensperspektive heraus formulieren und demzufolge die theologische Absicht vertreten, die Vollmacht und den Auftrag Gottes der Botschaft Jesu zugrunde zu legen. Die Evangelien sind also keine Erzählungen über Jesu allein, sondern auch ein theologisches Statement.¹²³ In diesem Zusammenhang findet auch im Rahmen der synoptischen Tradition eine konsequente Abgrenzung zur Magie als Fremdzuschreibung statt: Insbesondere das MtEv und das LkEv versuchen, die dubiosen magisch-ritualisierten Elemente zu minimieren, um Jesu vom Vorwurf der halbseidenen Magie zu befreien.¹²⁴ Die De-Ritualisierung ist das Ergebnis eines solchen Differenzierungsprozesses. Jesus Christus gewinnt als „erinnerter Jesus“ mit dem nachösterlichen Titel ‚Sohn Gottes‘ und mit Minimierung der magisch-rituellen Elemente deutlich an Kontur. In unmissverständlicher Deutlichkeit macht die Redaktionsgeschichte klar: Der magische Krankenheiler ist der Sohn Gottes.

120. Wolter, 2019, S. 148.

121. Lk 11,20; Mt 12,28.

122. Wolter, 2019, S. 121.

123. Heil, 2009, S. 93.

124. Vgl. Mk 3,22 parr.

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THE Νόσος OF DECLARING THAT GODS DO
NOT EXIST IN PLATO'S *LAWS*.
ISOLATED CASES OR GROUPS OF ἄθεοι?

LA νόσος DE DECLARAR QUE LOS DIOS
NO EXISTEN EN LAS *LEYES* DE PLATÓN.
¿CASOS AISLADOS O GRUPOS DE ἄθεοι?

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ABSTRACT

Denying the existence of God or gods is a common modern phenomenon in different places and religious contexts. This paper explores the possibility of its applicability in antiquity. The last decades have witnessed considerable growth in the study of atheism in antiquity. Analysis of atheistic positions

RESUMEN

La negación de la existencia de Dios o de los dioses es un fenómeno moderno presente en diferentes lugares y contextos religiosos. En las últimas décadas, hemos podido observar como el estudio del ateísmo en la antigüedad ha crecido enormemente ampliando los límites históricos de las posiciones irreligi-

in ancient societies, especially in Classical Athens, has foregrounded new development in the study of unbelief. The term “unbelief” has been defined as a broad category to study the diverse irreligious positions not merely as the opposite of religion but as part of the religious field. This conceptualisation allows us to understand religion and unbelief as two intermingled phenomena. In recent studies on Plato’s *Laws*, scholars have identified atheistic groups within Athenian society. This paper aims to apply recent analytical frameworks on religious “individuation” in ancient religions to understand the role of unbelief in religious individualisation in Athens during the last decades of the 5th cent. and the first half of the 4th cent. BCE.

giosas. Los trabajos sobre las ideas ateas en las sociedades pretéritas, especialmente en la Atenas clásica, han consolidado el estudio de la increencia como fenómeno histórico. El término “increencia” ha sido definido como una categoría amplia para estudiar las posiciones irreligiosas no únicamente como opuestas a la religión sino como parte del campo religioso. Esta conceptualización del término permite entender la religión y la increencia como dos fenómenos entremezclados. Estudios recientes sobre las *Leyes* de Platón han propuesto la existencia de grupos de ateos en la Atenas clásica. Debido al incremento en el interés del estudio del ateísmo en la sociedad ateniense, el presente trabajo propone la aplicación de los estudios teóricos sobre la “individuación” religiosa en las religiones antiguas con el fin de analizar el papel de la increencia en los procesos de individualización religiosa en Atenas durante la segunda mitad del siglo V y las primeras décadas del siglo IV a.C.

KEYWORDS

Atheism; *Laws*; Self-World Relation; Plato; Unbelief.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Ateísmo; increencia; *Leyes*; Platón; relación yo-mundo.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The study of “atheism” has become a central debate within the field of religious studies. The analysis of the diverse forms of criticising the idea of the gods or divinities has produced important research in the last several decades. One of the reasons for the development of new studies about the doubt or the denial of the existence of deities is the complexity of atheistic positions. Recent studies have attempted to classify atheistic ideas by employing different subcategories. Examples of that sort include the distinction between broad and narrow atheism;¹ negative and positive atheism;² pilgrim and tourist atheism;³ and global and local atheism,⁴ among several others.⁵ This huge variety of atheistic positions and subcategories that appear to be far from clear has generated a desire for a new analytic category, which would allow for a deep understanding of the different behaviours and philosophical arguments involved in criticising religious ideas and practices.

The term “unbelief” is one of the most recent proposals.⁶ Unbelief is not conceptualised as the opposite of religious belief since such opposition would not embrace the complexity of the term. The concept must be comprehended as a category

1. Rowe, 1979.

2. Martin, 1990, pp. 463-464; 2007, pp. 1-3.

3. Hashemi, 2016.

4. Diller, 2016.

5. On the historical and philosophical uses of the term “atheism”, see Bullivant, 2013, pp. 11-21 and Alexander, 2020.

6. Conrad, 2018.

that includes different irreligious positions. For instance, atheism, agnosticism, de-conversion, blasphemy or heterodoxy are amongst the irreligious positions from which the concept can be understood. These thoughts and behaviours can be religious, non-religious or, even, anti-religious depending on the historical and religious context in which they are developed. The broad analytical scope of the term allows us to fully comprehend a plethora of atheistic positions as part of religious ideas such as “religious atheism” (also known as “spiritualities without God”)⁷ or “atheistic religions”⁸. Unbelief as an “umbrella term” allows for broader “conceptual flexibility”⁹ and does not predetermine the religious background of the targeted individual or group. Lastly, unbelief must be historically contextualised. If terms such as “belief”, “religion”, “faith”, or “God” have a specific historical development,¹⁰ all the behaviours and arguments concerning the critique of religious ideas or practices depend on the historical context in which they develop. Therefore, being an atheist in Britain during the 19th cent.¹¹ is highly different from being an atheist in Baghdad during the 9th cent..¹²

The term “unbelief” has been applied in the study of modern phenomena related to the theory of secularism and non-religious positions, especially in sociology. In *A Secular Age* (2007), Charles Taylor uses unbelief not as the opposite of religious beliefs, but as a category used to understand how people developed their own “ways of living” depending on their religious beliefs or lack thereof. In other words, the analysis of unbelief as an open-ended and lived condition rather than a closed system of ideas in order to understand the “lived experience” of the individuals involved.¹³ The openness of “unbelief” has been recently proven in the field surveys. The research programme *Understanding Unbelief* at the University of Kent goes into the lived experience of unbelievers in different religious contexts. The results obtained show not only the variety of atheisms but also the strong connections between the

7. Billington, 2002; Schellenberg, 2017; Heehs, 2018.

8. Martin, 2007, pp. 221-229.

9. Conrad, 2018, p. 1.

10. There is massive literature about the methodologies and definitions of the different religious elements. However, I would like to highlight the problematics mentioned in Asad, 1993; Fitzgerald, 2000; McCutcheon, 2003; Díez de Velasco Abellán, 2005; Jensen, 2014; Nongbri, 2015; Stausberg and Engler, 2017. Concerning the notion of “religion” in antiquity, see Barton and Boyarin, 2016, pp. 1-10 and Roubekas, 2019.

11. Rectenwald, 2016.

12. Stroumsa, 1999.

13. Taylor, 2007, pp. 4-20.

religious sphere and the irreligious positions.¹⁴ Both believers and unbelievers design a connection with the world, a self-world relation, that differs in how each person emphasises the “religious sphere” of their lived experience.¹⁵ The diverse relation of the individuals to the religious sphere must be comprehended as a dialectic between unbelief and religious beliefs. The “religious field” (*champ religieux*)¹⁶ is shaped in relation not only to the institution that holds “religious capital”, but also to transgressive movements such as “heresies” or “intellectual criticism”. Therefore, the “habitus” of believers and unbelievers is formed by the gradual tensions between religious ideas and the criticism of them.

At this point, the next questions are mandatory: Are these conceptualisations of unbelief and the methodology of studying atheism useful to analyse atheistic positions in antiquity? Did this relation between unbelief and religious ideas exist in the ancient world? To answer these questions, this paper proposes to apply the term “unbelief” to comprehend the development of “atheism” in Classical Athens.¹⁷ Recent studies from different scholars have shown the existence of atheistic positions in antiquity.¹⁸ However, this paper is not only focused on examining the atheistic positions in Classical Athens but also on reflecting on the socio-political ramifications of these arguments from the perspective of a “methodological individualism”.¹⁹ Moreover, the idea is to include the critique of traditional religious ideas (*de-traditionalisation*)²⁰ in the formation of worldviews and the relations of individuals to the world. Looking at ancient socio-religious practices through the prism of “Lived Religion”²¹ allows us to see religion and unbelief as two sides of the same coin, two intermingled phenomena.

The aim of this paper is thus to apply the aforementioned theoretical framework on Classical Athens, and to reflect on the possible existence of groups of ἄθεοι then. Recent scholarly work on the topic of ancient atheism has focused on Plato's *Laws* in their assessment of how popular analysis of atheistic ideas really was in the Athenian

14. I would like to point out here one of the last publications of the programme *Understanding Unbelief: Atheists and agnostics around the world* (Bullivant et al., 2019).

15. Rosa, 2016.

16. Bourdieu, 1971.

17. About the applicability of “atheism” as a historical concept, see Soneira Martínez, 2018a, pp. 34-35 and Roubekas, 2014.

18. Bremmer, 2007; Whitmarsh, 2015. Here we can add other works such as Fahr, 1969; Drachmann, 1977; Winiarczyk, 1976; 1984; 1990; 1992a-b; 1994; 2016; Zeppi, 1988a-b; 1989a-c; Grau Guijarro, 2010; Bénatouil et al., 2018; Gourinat, 2019.

19. Rüpke, 2014, p. 11.

20. Rüpke, 2013, p. 9; Bremmer, 2020b, p. 67.

21. Rüpke, 2011; 2014; Lichterman et al., 2017; Albrecht et al., 2018; Gasparini et al., 2020.

society.²² These authors have defined these ideas as subversive and persecuted during the last years of the 5th cent. BCE. However, if we consider atheistic ideas as part of the religious individualisation rather than the opposite to religion as the modern notion of atheism does, the critique of the traditional image of the gods in Classical Athens appears as an embodied phenomenon in the development of Greek religiosity.

In order to elaborate on this argument, the article is divided into three parts. The first part deals with Plato's *Laws* and philosophical ideas about divinity in this dialogue. The second part focuses on the possible application of these ideas within Classical Athenian society. To conclude, the third part of the paper poses the following question: Were these atheistic positions described by Plato defended only by isolated individuals or were there "groups of ἄθεοι" in Classical Athens?²³

2. LAWS, TRADITION AND RELIGION

The *Laws*, Plato's last and longest work, is one of the most controversial texts.²⁴ The dialogue deals with the political vision of an ideal constitution. The main idea is that power lies in the law. The authority of the law is reinforced by tradition, specifically, the religious tradition.²⁵ Religion and politics are interconnected, showing the central role of religious customs, especially in education, ethics and art. The laws that regulate the religious behaviour are the backbone of the whole legislation of the city.²⁶ Due to the importance of religion in the organisation of the *polis*, there is a need for a concrete idea of divinity. The laws of the city guide every citizen to embrace this idea. The elaboration of a legislative corpus based on a particular religious worldview is developed mainly in the tenth book of the *Laws*. In this part of the work, Plato

22. Sedley, 2013; Whitmarsh, 2017.

23. Plato uses the term ἄθεοι in *Laws*, 885b and 967b.

24. There are several publications concerning this dialogue, see among others Bobonich, 1991; 2010; Clark, 2003; Zuckert, 2004; Schofield, 2006; Pangle (L.S.), 2009; Recco and Sanday, 2012; Moore, 2016. It is interesting to look at the similarities and divergences between the *Republic* and the *Laws* and how the *kallipolis* described in both dialogues differ from each other. On that purpose, see Laks, 1990; Barceló and Hernández de la Fuente, 2014, p. 288. The differences between both works were the reasons why the last dialogue of Plato was considered spurious during the first decades of the 20th cent. (Isnardi Parente, 1974).

25. Some authors have considered the *Laws* as the model of a "theocratic" society. See Burkert, 2011, p. 493.

26. There are several works since the mid-twentieth century about this connection between religion and law in the latest dialogue of Plato. Some of them are Reverdin, 1945; Goldschmidt, 1949; Pangle (T.L.), 1980; Fine, 1999; Kraut, 2010; Van Riel, 2013.

describes the “impious” (ἀσεβής) crimes related to the religious sphere emphasising the misconducts against the gods provoked by a false “notion” (δόξα) of the divinities. It is here that Plato exposes these wrong ideas about the gods as a threat to the society that must be punished, among them, the atheistic worldview. The distinction between those who describe or think about the gods in the wrong way and those who deny the gods' existence because they do not believe in them is summarised in a specific passage of this book. In 888a-d, Plato lays emphasis on the distinction between correct and incorrect ideas of the divine:

“My child, you are still young, and time as it advances will cause you to reverse many of the opinions you now hold: so wait till then before pronouncing judgment on matters of most grave importance; and of these the gravest of all – though at present you regard it as naught – is the question of holding a right view about the gods and so living well, or the opposite. Now in the first place, I should be saying what is irrefutably true if I pointed out to you this signal fact, that neither you by yourself nor yet your friends are the first and foremost to adopt this opinion about the gods; rather is it true that people who suffer from this disease are always springing up, in greater or lesser numbers. But I, who have met with many of these people, would declare this to you, that not a single man who from his youth has adopted this opinion, that the gods have no existence, has ever yet continued till old age constant in the same view; but the other two false notions about the gods do remain – not, indeed, with many, but still with some, – the notion, namely, that the gods exist, but pay no heed to human affairs, and the other notion that they do pay heed, but are easily won over by prayers and offerings. For a doctrine about them that is to prove the truest you can possibly form you will, if you take my advice, wait, considering the while whether the truth stands thus or otherwise, and making enquiries not only from all other men, but especially from the lawgiver; and in the meantime do not dare to be guilty of any impiety in respect of the gods. For it must be the endeavour of him who is legislating for you both now and hereafter to instruct you in the truth of these matters.”²⁷

27. “ὦ παῖ, νέος εἶ, προῖων δέ σε ὁ χρόνος ποιήσει πολλὰ ὧν νῦν δοξάζεις μεταβαλόντα ἐπὶ τὰναντία τίθεσθαι: περίμεινον οὖν εἰς τότε κριτῆς περὶ τῶν μεγίστων γίνεσθαι, μέγιστον δέ, ὃ νῦν οὐδὲν ἡγήσῃ σὺ, τὸ περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς ὀρθῶς διανοηθέντα ζῆν καλῶς ἢ μὴ. πρῶτον δὲ περὶ αὐτῶν ἔν τι μέγα σοι μνηῶν οὐκ ἂν ποτε φανεῖν ψευδῆς, τὸ τοιονδε. οὐ σὺ μόνος οὐδὲ οἱ σοι φίλοι πρῶτοι καὶ πρῶτον ταύτην δόξαν περὶ θεῶν ἔσχετε, γίνονται δὲ αἰεὶ πλείους ἢ ἐλάττους ταύτην τὴν νόσον ἔχοντες: τότε τοῖνυν σοι, παραγεγονῶς αὐτῶν πολλοῖσι, φράζοιμι ἄν, τὸ μηδένα πώποτε λαβόντα ἐκ νέου ταύτην τὴν δόξαν περὶ θεῶν, ὡς οὐκ εἰσίν, διατελέσαι πρὸς γῆρας μείναντα ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ διανοήσει, τὰ δύο μέντοι πάθη περὶ θεοὺς μείναι, πολλοῖσι μὲν οὐ, μείναι δὲ οὖν τισιν, τὸ τοὺς θεοὺς εἶναι μὲν, φροντίζειν δὲ οὐδὲν τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων, καὶ τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο, ὡς φροντίζουσι μὲν, εὐπαραμύθητοι δ' εἰσὶν θύμασιν καὶ εὐχαῖς. τὸ δὲ σαφὲς ἂν γενόμενόν σοι περὶ αὐτῶν κατὰ δύναμιν δόγμα, ἂν ἐμοὶ πείθῃ, περιμενεῖς, ἀνασκοπῶν εἴτε οὕτως εἴτε ἄλλως ἔχει, πυνθανόμενος παρὰ τε τῶν ἄλλων καὶ δὴ καὶ μάλιστα καὶ παρὰ τοῦ νομοθέτου:

The three main notions about the gods that constitute the atheistic worldview are condemned by Plato. The denial of the existence of the gods is compared to a “disease” (νόσος) related to young people. A special link is drawn between a specific social group, the young people, and their atheistic opinions about the gods. The passage, thus, showcases the potential political and social implications of this sort for the Classical Athenian society. Sedley has proposed the term “underground” to understand the atheistic ideas developed in Athens during the second half of the 5th cent. BCE.²⁸ Was then this atheistic view of the world socially more relevant than has been claimed before?

In order to answer this question, we need to analyse first how Plato establishes in the *Laws* the differentiation between the right and the false opinion about the gods. The misunderstanding of the world by these false ideas concerning the gods is according to Plato three types of ἄθεοι: a) those who do not believe in the existence of the gods; b) those who believe in the gods but think the gods are not interested in human beings; and c) those who believe in the gods but think that the gods can be bribed. It is necessary to analyse the Platonic distinction between the correct and the false notion of the gods in order to understand the three philosophical ideas about the gods ascribed by Plato to the ἄθεοι.

3. THE “FALSE NOTION OF THE GODS” IN *LAWS*

The first issue we need to approach is how Plato defines the correct notion of the gods in front of the false one represented by the three atheistic positions. In *Laws*, Plato explains the characteristics of the divinity and its relationship with the traditional gods. As observed in 888a-d, there is a correct view of the gods connected to the right way to live in a society stressing the connection between religious ideas and ethics. The right view of the gods is based on the traditional Platonic elements of goodness, beauty and justice. Morality and religion are, thus, intrinsically connected; being just implies correct religious behaviour (885b). However, to be good and just, one must follow a correct vision of the gods whose central element is that they exist and that they are good being part of a particular cosmology (885d). Therefore, if the gods’

ἐν δὲ δὴ τούτῳ τῷ χρόνῳ μὴ τολμήσης περὶ θεοῦ μηδὲν ἀσεβῆσαι. πειρατέον γὰρ τῷ τοὺς νόμους σοὶ τιθέντι νῦν καὶ εἰς αὐθις διδάσκειν περὶ αὐτῶν τούτων ὡς ἔχει”. Cf. Burnet, 1903 (transl. Bury, 1967).

28. Sedley, 2013.

existence is denied, it is not possible to lead a morally correct life. This philosophical argument explains the connection between being atheist and being immoral.²⁹

However, the most crucial element to understand how the Athenian philosopher conceives the gods is the idea of the “soul” (ψυχή). Although the definition of the soul in the *Laws* shows some similarities with previous works,³⁰ there are some differences. The important element on the concept of soul in the last and longest Platonic dialogue lies in its nature. The soul is described as a divine part of every living being that explains movement and change in the world. Everything that moves by itself has an eternal and immortal soul (894a-896e). If every being with movement has a soul, the gods have souls as well. As Van Riel states, Plato conceives the gods as “immortal living beings, constituted as a combination of body and soul, which will never be dissolved”. Only the Demiurge, the creator, can destroy that combination.³¹ This dualism of soul and body is essential to comprehend the worldview established by Plato. He defends the existence of the gods using the notions described in the conceptualisation of the soul which is highly influenced by Pythagorean and Orphic ideas about the afterlife.³² The soul cannot be seen, but it can be thought of since it is intelligible. The philosopher uses this argument to criticise the false view of the world by those who deny the existence of the gods. Plato explains his argument with an example. Everyone can see the celestial body of the sun. Nevertheless, they cannot see what causes it to move, its soul, just as we cannot appreciate by our senses the soul of the person who dies (898d). Therefore, the perception of the gods is similar to the perception of the soul; we can only see the changes produced by them, how they affect the world and the individuals. This correlation between the gods and the souls leads the philosopher to claim that “everything is full of gods”.³³ Denying the existence of the gods, as the first type of atheist does, is according to Plato a misunderstanding of the cosmic order, a “false” worldview.

29. Van Riel, 2013, pp. 14-19.

30. See especially Pl., *Phdr.* 245c-246a and Pl., *Tim.* 34c-35a.

31. The nature of the gods and their creation by the Demiurge is explained in Pl., *Tim.* 41a-b. For further explanations, see Van Riel, 2013, 47.

32. Casadesús Bordoy, 2001; Barceló and Hernández de la Fuente, 2014, pp. 298-299.

33. Pl., *Leg.* 899b. This idea of the world full of gods is attributed to Thales by Aristotle (*de An.* I 5, 411a). The fact that Plato cites Thales determines the influence of the Presocratics' natural philosophy on the Platonic worldview. On the other hand, this sentence relates to the idea that the divinity is the “measure of all the things” (Pl., *Leg.* 716c). It is interesting to consider the relation of this sentence with the opposed idea attributed to Protagoras (*DK* 80, B1: “A person is the measure of all things – of things that are, that they are, and of things that are not, that they are not”).

On the other hand, a second important idea in the Platonic notion of the gods in *Laws* lies in the distinction between mortal living beings (humans) and immortal living beings (gods) according to their soul. The soul of the gods is perfect rather than corrupted. The explanation of this idea lies in the *Phaedrus*. While the mortal living beings own a corrupted soul due to their fall from heaven, the gods have a perfect and immaculate soul because they are still up there; they still have their “wings” (πετρά).³⁴ In *Laws* (900c-d), this idea goes further since the philosopher elaborates more the analysis of the gods’ ethical behaviour. If they are perfect, they cannot be evil. The gods cannot rape, kill or steal as the traditional poets claim, but they take care of the human affairs following the divine principles of goodness, beauty and justice. The Athenian philosopher establishes with this argument the right notion of the gods. Plato uses this idea to criticise the second type of ἄθεοι – those who believe that the gods do not care about human affairs – and the third one – those who believe in the existence of the gods but think they can be bribed. Both arguments attribute to the gods human behaviours based on laziness, idleness or cowardice (901e).

These two arguments about the soul are the main ideas applied by Plato to refute the false idea of the gods. The philosopher explains in *Laws* that the three atheistic ideas follow two false conceptualisations of the divinities. The first is the idea of the gods described by the theologians, those who describe the genealogy of the gods and the traditional myths. Although these poets are ancient, their claims are not true (886c) since they are describing the gods with wrong behaviours. This idea confronts the ethical problem of the gods. If the gods are perfect and their actions are good and just, the divinities cannot behave as described in the traditional theology. They cannot kill or fight each other. Therefore, according to Plato, the traditional idea of the gods described by the poets is a wrong notion of the divinities.

The second false conceptualisation of the gods is the one defended by the natural philosophers, who are “modern” (νέος) and “wise” (σοφός). Plato states that they deny the divine nature of the heavenly bodies claiming that they are “simply earth and stone” (886d). Plato describes a cosmological theory based on a lack of divine intervention. These natural philosophers define the origin of elements in the world using two concepts: “nature” (φύσις) and “chance/fortune” (τύχη). They assert that the primary elements of fire, water, earth, and air have their origin in nature and by “chance/fortune” (τύχη) they join each other to create the natural world. This process of creation is not caused by a “deity” (θεός), by an “intelligence” (νοῦς) or by “craft” (τέχνη). Everything is a consequence of nature and chance.

34. Pl., *Phdr.* 246b-247c.

On the other hand, this cosmology defines human activities as natural and fictive crafts. Among the first, we can find medicine, gymnastics, farming and some political ideas. However, legislation is a fictive craft on which the idea of justice and the idea of gods depend. In other words, the idea of gods, as the laws, are made by humans, and they are entirely fictive.³⁵ Therefore, as Plato says, this kind of individual thinks that gods are different in each place (889e).

The ideas ascribed by Plato to the natural philosophers have a clear reminiscence in Socrates and his defence in the trial when he refuses to be confused with Anaxagoras.³⁶ Anaxagoras, like Democritus and other philosophers of that period, defended a materialistic point of view of the cosmos that seems to collide head-on with the Platonic worldview, especially concerning the idea of divinity.³⁷ Reading these thinkers, one could claim that there is a clear allusion in the *Laws* to specific philosophical ideas about the world developing in Athens at the end of the 5th cent. and the first decades of the 4th cent. BCE. Sedley has argued that these philosophical ideas described by Plato were the elements of an “atheist theory”.³⁸ Unlike previous works on the atheistic ideas in the *Laws*, Sedley refuses to observe in Plato's argumentation an “eclectic pastiche” of contemporary ideas to the philosopher.³⁹ Traditionally, the “atheist theory” that we can read in *Laws* has been described as a combination of diverse philosophical ideas brought together by Plato to refuse all the ideas at once.⁴⁰ However, Sedley prefers to analyse it as a “coherent, lucid, philosophically sophisticated, and in places original” atheistic theory of the world's origin that was developed in Athens during the second half of the 5th cent.. The author defends this conclusion by looking at some sources dated in Classical Athens like the *Sisyphus* fragment⁴¹ and the influence of this text in authors like Aristotle.⁴² For Sedley, this fragment is one example of the literary corpus of atheistic arguments that we can observe in the Athenian society of this period.

Nevertheless, a question remains. Why is there no direct mention in *Laws* to these individuals who defended an atheistic worldview? The author claims that the

35. For an analysis of this theory in *Laws*, see Sedley, 2013.

36. Pl., *Ap.* 26d. Regarding Anaxagoras' statement about the heavenly bodies, see *D.L.* II 8.

37. *D.L.* II 8; *DK* 68, A75.

38. Sedley, 2013.

39. Sedley, 2013, p. 334.

40. Kahn, 1997, p. 254.

41. *DK* 88, B25. Concerning the analysis of the atheistic ideas in this fragment, see Soneira Martínez, 2018b. There is massive literature about this text. Some of the most important studies are Sutton, 1981; Davies, 1989; Santoro, 1994; 1997; Kahn, 1997; Whitmarsh, 2014.

42. Sedley, 2013, pp. 338-339.

lack of evidence of groups or names is explained by a process of “anonymity”.⁴³ He states that this absence of names is due to the negative connotation that the atheistic opinion had in Athens at the end of the 5th cent. BCE emphasising the trials related to “impiety” (ἀσέβεια).⁴⁴ His conclusion is based on the existence of the decree of Diopieithes in 430 BCE to prove the persecution for impiety of thinkers that defended atheistic positions.⁴⁵ These prosecutions were the reason why the atheist positions were “underground”. The atheist individuals organised themselves in “private spaces” like the κακοδαμονισταί (Bad Luck Clubs) to avoid being put on trial. These organisations were private clubs in which gods and laws could have been criticised with a strong relation to violence.⁴⁶ However, the historicity of the decree and some of the trials concerning impiety have been highly questioned.⁴⁷ Were these atheistic ideas pursued in Athens during the 5th and the 4th cent. BCE? What was the social relevance of these “false notions of the gods” in Classical Athens? Although this question is very difficult to answer, it is interesting to observe the relations between the atheistic ideas in *Laws* and other Classical Athenian sources.

4. ATHEISTIC IDEAS WITHIN CLASSICAL ATHENIAN SOCIETY

In order to discuss the possible existence of “groups of atheists”, we need to examine how ideas about the “false opinion of the gods” resonated with other authors of the second half of the 5th and the first half of the 4th cent. in Athens. As we have seen, Plato

43. Sedley, 2013, pp. 335-337.

44. The notion of impiety is traditionally related to the Greek word ἀσέβεια. However, there were other terms regarding transgression of religious norms like ἀδικία (Bowden, 2015, pp. 327-328; Whitmarsh, 2015, p. 116), ἀνομία (Filonik, 2013, p. 14), ἀνόσιον (Delli Pizzi, 2011, p. 61), ἀτιμία (Leão, 2004, p. 224; Bowden, 2015, p. 330), ἱεροσυλία (Cohen, 1988, p. 697; Filonik, 2013, p. 83; Bowden, 2015, p. 328), μίαισμα (Naiden, 2016, p. 71), or ὕβρις (Osborne, 2010, p. 227) and ἄθεος among others. Concerning the term ἀσέβεια and its significance in Greek society, see Cohen, 1988 and Bowden, 2015.

45. The decree of Diopieithes is only mentioned during the late 1st and early 2nd cent. CE by Plutarch (*Per.* 32.2): “And Diopieithes brought in a bill providing for the public impeachment of such as did not believe in gods, or who taught doctrines regarding the heavens, directing suspicion against Pericles by means of Anaxagoras”.

46. Sedley, 2013, p. 336 cites Lysias (*ap.* Athenaeus XII 76, 15-29) to prove the link between these groups and violent behaviours.

47. Some authors like Rubel, 2014, p. 35 and Whitmarsh, 2017, p. 53 defend its historicity. They claim that Plutarch’s style and language are similar to the official decrees of the mid-5th cent. BCE in Athens. On the other hand, Filonik, 2013, p. 33 asserts that the historicity of the decree must be denied. Concerning the historical analysis of the trials related to ἀσέβεια, see Derenne, 1930; Momigliano, 1971; Marasco, 1976; Leão, 2004; Baslez, 2007; Delli Pizzi, 2011; Filonik, 2013; 2016.

states that the natural theory of the world and the traditional description of the gods are two of the main arguments behind the ideas defended by the ἄθεοι. As Sedley has rightly pointed out, we can observe in the Classical Athenian sources some of the ideas that may have influenced the atheistic worldview described in *Laws*. However, it seems more fruitful to analyse the first “false notion of the gods”, the one based on the traditional image of the divinities.

The critique of the traditional idea of the gods allows us to observe the whole range of the atheistic opinions in Classical Athens. During the last decades of the 5th cent., a “rationalisation” of the ideas about the divine developed, concerning, *inter alia*, the comprehension of the gods. The sophistic ideas about human beings, coupled with a proto-scientific worldview, led to a critique of the traditional view of the gods.⁴⁸ The ideas concerning the ethical behaviour in the polis were projected onto the behaviour of the gods. The historical events during this historical period, notably the Plague and the consequences of the Peloponnesian War, influenced considerably the individual's relationship with the world and their perception of “being-in-the-world” (*In-die-Welt-Gestelltsein*).⁴⁹ In other words, the relation between the gods and human beings became a crucial element in the formation of “self-world relations”. As we can read in Thucydides about the Plague, “it was settled that present enjoyment (...) was both honourable and useful” for the people.⁵⁰ Not even the fear of gods or the law of humans stopped them. The communication with the gods through the ritual practices became secondary since people died, even when they performed rituals and worshipped the gods.⁵¹ With this evidence from Thucydides, we can affirm that the relationship between the gods and the mortals changed, became “silent” or even “repulsive”. Death, as a consequence of the Plague and the war, increased a collective reflection on the justice of the gods and how they treated mortals, which we can observe in the Athenian sources of this period.⁵² This modification did not cause a lack of religiosity. On the contrary, the reaction to this modification in the relationship

48. There are several publications concerning the “rationalisation” of the myths in Classical Athens especially related to the study of the Sophists. See, for instance, Romilly, 2002; Durán López, 2011; Mogyoródi, 2019. However, the questioning of the idea of the gods started before the Classical period. Presocratic philosophers such as Xenophanes or Heraclitus are examples of this first step of reflecting on the gods. As we will observe, the influence of these authors is evident in the Athenian intellectual *milieux* including the Socratic circle and Plato in particular, on this, see Brancacci, 1985-1986, p. 224.

49. Rosa, 2016.

50. Th., II 53, 3.

51. Th., II 53, 4.

52. For a description of the historical events during this period and their impact in Athenian society, see Rubel, 2014.

between the gods and the Athenians covered a broad spectrum from the discussion of the gods' nature to the introduction of new divinities such as Asclepius or Bendis.⁵³

This kind of reflections can be observed in the Platonic dialogues, too. Plato depicts Socrates as an individual who is critical of the traditional view of the gods and of some elements of the myths. This attitude can be observed in the discussion between Socrates and Euthyphro in the eponymous dialogue. When the latter asked Socrates about the difference between the pious and the impious, Euthyphro compared his father to Cronus.⁵⁴ Euthyphro was put on trial for accusing his own father, an act deemed to be impious (ἀσέβεια).⁵⁵ However, he defends himself by saying that even the gods behave like this. Some people believe (νομίζοντες) in the mutilation and imprisonment of Cronus by his son Zeus, the most just and best of the gods.⁵⁶ Socrates reacts to this statement by questioning the veracity of the myth and relating this doubt of the traditional mythology as the main cause of Meletus' accusation.⁵⁷ The philosopher cannot avoid asking Euthyphro if he really believes in these narratives of the poets that describe the struggles between the gods (σὺ ὡς ἡγή ταῦτα οὕτως γεγονέναι);⁵⁸

There is a similar scene in the dialogue between Phaedrus and Socrates.⁵⁹ After finding an ideal place for the conversation, Phaedrus asks Socrates if it is the same place where the wind Boreas abducted Orithyia. Socrates denies it, saying that the location is different, a few stadiums from where they are located. At this point, Phaedrus asks Socrates if he believes in the veracity of this myth (229c: ὦ Σώκρατες, σὺ τοῦτο τὸ μυθολόγημα πειθῆ ἀληθὲς εἶναι;). The philosopher answers: "If I disbelieved, as the wise men do, I should not be extraordinary" (ἀλλ' εἰ ἀπιστοίην, ὥσπερ οἱ σοφοί, οὐκ ἂν ἄτοπος εἶην). Then, the philosopher gives a rational interpretation of the myth. However, Socrates also criticises this rational explanation as he calls it a "rustic sort" (ἄγροικος) of wisdom. For Socrates, this is a waste of time, since the main thing is to "know oneself", as the Delphic inscription states, a feat he has not

53. Rubel, 2014, pp. 99-110.

54. Pl., *Euthphr.* 5d-6a.

55. It is interesting how the notion of "impiety" is connected to a "filial piety" in Classical Athens. Different thinkers describe this relation between impiety and the respect for parents. See, for instance, Aristotle (VV. 1251a), Plato (*Lg.* 854e; *R.* 615c) or Xenophon (*Hunt.* 13.15-17). There are also some references in the tragedies, for example in Aeschylus (*Eum.* 270).

56. Pl., *Euthphr.* 5e-6a.

57. Pl., *Euthphr.* 6a.

58. Pl., *Euthphr.* 6b.

59. Pl., *Phdr.* 229b-230a.

yet achieved. So, on the one hand, the philosopher normalises the rationalisation of the myth (“as the wise men do”); while, on the other hand, he is indifferent to such a process of rationalisation, since he finds it too simple. The correct idea of the world is beyond the simple rationalisation of mythology.

This reflection of the traditional mythology and especially the image of the gods described by the poets are discussed even more in the *Republic*. The discussion about the behaviour of the gods is framed in a debate between the just and the unjust in the second book. After the discussion between Socrates and Glaucon, Adeimantus completes his brother's argument by adding the different relationships that unjust and just individuals have with the gods. In other words, a problem of theodicy arises: how does divine retribution occur depending on the type of ethical behaviour of the human being? Adeimantus quotes some passages of Homer, Hesiod and Musaeus to explain the retribution from the gods.⁶⁰ Plato's brother uses these passages to prove how these poets praise the unjust and negatively value the just, especially when they talk about the gods and their relationship with human beings. He points out how the traditional poets describe the possibility of people persuading the gods.⁶¹ This argument seems quite close to the third notion of the ἄθεοι that we find in *Laws*: those who believe in the gods but think that they can be bribed. After the discourse of both brothers of Plato, Socrates concludes with one of the most famous arguments of the *Republic*, the censorship of the “greater myths” (μεγάλοι μῦθοι), those stories narrated by traditional poets such as Homer and Hesiod (377c-e). Interestingly, Socrates includes in these “greater myths” the same myth discussed in the *Euthyphro*, the conflict between Cronus and his son Zeus. Nevertheless, we are still in Plato's point of view. The question remains unanswered: did this criticism of traditional mythology resonate with the citizens of Classical Athenian society or was it restricted to Plato's thoughts?

To answer this question, it is necessary to analyse some of the reflections that we find in other sources. In Greek dramatic texts from the Classical period, we can observe some of the ideas that question the traditional image of the gods. In different plays, especially in tragedies, there is a reflection on the relation between the gods and human beings close to the debate on justice that we have seen in *Republic*. There are some examples of characters questioning the nature of the gods through their behaviour and actions. The divine action is a common topic in Euripides' tragedies since the gods are responsible for the misfortunes that befall the protagonists of the

60. Pl., *R.* 363a-e.

61. Pl., *R.* 364c-365a.

drama.⁶² One example of that is the *Heracles* whose performance took place in Athens between 423 and 420 BCE.⁶³ In this tragedy, the action of the gods is questioned throughout the play. One example can be observed when Amphitryon reproaches Zeus for his behaviour.⁶⁴ Amphitryon asks the divinity if the god is “ignorant” or “naturally unjust” (ἀμαθής τις εἶ θεός, ἢ δίκαιος οὐκ ἔφους). The character of Amphitryon describes a relationship with the gods through suffering (1180), which explains the questioning of the cult of Hera and the act of worshipping her: “who would pray to such a goddess?” (1255-1310). The question that lies at the bottom of this criticism is why the gods make people suffer. However, the most interesting part of the text lies in the last conversation between Theseus and Heracles (1314-1357). Theseus tries to explain to Zeus’ son that the cause of the gods’ behaviour is chance/fortune (τύχη), which neither humans nor gods can escape, “if what poets sing is true” (ἄοιδῶν εἶπερ οὐ ψευδεῖς λόγοι). Theseus equates the gods’ wrong behaviour with the marital relations between them. Hercules replies to Theseus that he does not believe (νομίζω) in those stories that the poets tell about the gods. According to his vision of the divinities, the gods have no desires. However, he is convinced by the idea that his misfortunes are due to chance/fortune, “I must be fortune’s (τύχη) slave” (1357).

The same reflections appear in the play *Iphigenia in Tauris* performed in Athens between 414 and 412 BCE.⁶⁵ Iphigenia blames Artemis using ideas similar to the ones we have observed in the *Heracles*. In this case, Agamemnon’s daughter claims that “it is not possible that Leto, the wife of Zeus, gave birth to such folly (ἀμαθία)” (Eur., *IT*. 380-391).⁶⁶ Iphigenia continues her reasoning by criticising the human sacrifices made by the people of Tauris. In her speech, she defines the myth of Tantalus and his son as a story that cannot be believed (ἄπιστος).⁶⁷ For her, the act of the gods eating Tantalus’ child is not possible since she believes that “no divinity is evil” (οὐδένα γὰρ οἶμαι δαιμόνων εἶναι κακόν). Again, there is an ethical reproach to the traditional idea of the gods and their behaviour, a topic that

62. We can observe the role of the gods in the misfortunes of the characters in different Euripides’ tragedies (*Andr.* 1204; *Alc.* 295-298; *Cyc.* 283-312; *Heracl.* 989-995; *Med.* 1282-1289; *Tr.* 1042-1043; *Her.* 1180 among others).

63. Calvo Martínez, 1985, p. 75.

64. Eur., *Her.* 339-347.

65. Calvo Martínez, 1985, p. 341.

66. We can observe here the same term used by Amphitryon in the *Heracles* to address Zeus: ἀμαθία.

67. The meaning of the word ἄπιστος as unbelievable is interesting here. The relation between ἄπιστος and the difficulties to believe some myths can be found in the paradoxography (Pajón Leyra, 2011). For example, in the work of Palaephatus (*Περὶ ἀπίστων*). Although some scholars date the life of this author in the second half of the 4th cent. BCE, the issue remains unclear (Torres Guerra, 2009, p. 13).

we have already observed in the Platonic dialogues. In the Euripidean tragedies, we can ascertain the development of some reflections on the relation between the gods and human beings based on human ignorance of the gods' wills. Doubting the intentionality of the gods as well as their acts is the *Leitmotiv* of many tragedies, not only in Euripides but also in previous tragedians like Sophocles and Aeschylus.⁶⁸ As Lefkowitz states,⁶⁹ if the gods were understood as benefactors and protectors of human beings, there would be no reason to write tragedies. Human ignorance of the motivation for the gods' behaviour and how this affects mortals is a question intrinsic to the religiosity developed in the Greek drama. This idea configures a "self-world relation" based on a specific worldview in which the communication with the gods and the relation between gods and human beings are its core.

Similar ideas occur in comedy. In Aristophanes' plays, the same ideas on the relationship between gods and mortals can be observed. A good example can be found in the conversation between the slaves Nicias and Demosthenes in *Knights*⁷⁰ performed in the Lenaia during the archonship of Stratocles in 424 BCE.⁷¹ Nicias knows that the gods exist because they hate him. The proof of their existence is the "evil" behaviour of the gods against the slave. The audience should have easily understood this idea. The response of the gods was not always good and pleasant. Mortals worshipped them but did not always get a response in return, or not always a good one. The gods received but they did not give in return, as we can read in the *Assembly of Women* performed after the Peloponnesian War.⁷² Looking at the statues of the gods, one of the men reflects on this idea of retribution. The statues always have their hands turned palm up to receive, but never the other way around.⁷³

As we can observe, the critique of the traditional image of the gods was part of the shared reflections in Athenian society, not only in the intellectual and "private spaces" but also in public events like the theatre. Furthermore, the questioning of the traditional gods can be found in other sources during the Classical period in Athens like Herodotus or Isocrates.⁷⁴ During the last decades of the 5th and the first

68. Lefkowitz, 2016, p. xiii.

69. Lefkowitz, 2016, p. 201.

70. Ar., *Eq.* 30-35.

71. Gil Fernández, 1995, p. 199.

72. Macía Aparicio, 2007, p. 319.

73. Ar., *Ec.* 777-783.

74. Her., II 53; Isoc., XI 40. The same ideas are found in the Hippocratic texts. In *De morbo sacro*, the "author" criticises those who explain epilepsy as a disease caused by a god rather than natural (and divine) elements such as the sun or the winds. There is, therefore, two different but compatible ideas of the divine. As Jouanna, 2012, p. 109 points out, the "author" of *De morbo sacro* "as a doctor, believes in

decades of the 4th cent., there was an increase in the criticism of the mythological tradition that must be understood as part of the religiosity of the Athenian society. This process of reflecting on the behaviour of the gods that can be designated as a “meta-ethical reduction”⁷⁵ was not born in this historical context since it can be observed in previous authors, too.⁷⁶ Nonetheless, the increase of these reflections in Classical Athens does not mean that the Athenians, or some of them, lost belief in the gods in the modern sense of the term. The modern notion of “religion” and its application in Greek society leads to a misunderstanding of the criticism of some religious aspects such as the image of the gods.

In order to contextualise the reflections on the behaviour of the gods, it is necessary, on the one hand, to eliminate the modern connotations not only of the term “religion” but also of “atheism” as a contrary phenomenon. As Bremmer claims in a recent publication,⁷⁷ we need to avoid a “high-intensity” content of the term “belief” associated with a modern and Christian notion that we cannot find in Greek sources.⁷⁸ However, this consideration does not deny the religious ideas behind rituals and cults.⁷⁹ In the case of ancient Greece and especially the Athenian context, we can observe a plurality of religious ideas and beliefs concerning the gods and the communication with them due to the “open belief system” characteristic of Greek religiosity. Hence, the critics of the traditional image of the gods must be understood as part of a plurality of religious ideas in which there was a “spectrum running from unbelief or indifference about the gods to atheism”.⁸⁰ Unbelief, thus, can be understood as part of the religiosity within Athenian society. The modern notion of atheism as a phenomenon outside of the religious sphere – or opposite to it – cannot be applied in Ancient Greece, nor can a romanticised view of it as a subversive phenomenon.⁸¹

one single order of causality for all diseases, whatever they are, an order that is both divine and natural; as a citizen, he participates in the traditional cult of the sanctuaries, even though he questions some ritual practices that do not correspond to the pure idea he has of divinity”. This conjunction of different worldviews can be observed in some Athenian intellectuals during the Classical period, Plato included.

75. Benitez, 2016, p. 306.

76. Apart from the tragedians such as Aeschylus and Sophocles, we can observe the critique of traditional religious elements in Xenophanes (*DK* 21, B11; B12; B15; B16), Heraclitus (*DK* 22, B5) or Solon (Fr. 29 West; cf. Burkert, 2011, pp. 371 and 497).

77. Bremmer, 2020b, p. 58.

78. Regarding the notion of “belief/believe”, its Christian bias, and its application in the Ancient World, see Harrison, 2001; Parker, 2011, pp. 31-34; Versnel, 2011, pp. 539-559; Bontempi, 2013; Davies, 2019.

79. Harrison, 2015, p. 27.

80. Bremmer, 2020b, p. 58.

81. We can observe this point of view in, among others, Thrower, 1980; Gaskin, 1989; Puente Ojea, 1997; Minois, 1999.

Due to the lack of an organised group of religious experts and sacred texts, the polis of Athens allowed the developments of individualised views of the world, including those that denied the traditional nature of the gods, or even their existence. The Athenians selected or rejected different religious ideas present in the wide range of Greek religiosity.⁸² On the other hand, the selection and rejection of religious ideas were limited by the diverse notions of “impiety”.⁸³ These terms were used to restrict the transgressions of the religious norms. Nevertheless, these notions were flexible, and their definitions and applications changed during Athenian history.⁸⁴

Considering the “Lived Ancient Religion” (LAR) approach,⁸⁵ we can look at the “individual’s usage” of the religious elements in this period. The LAR framework establishes a selection (“appropriation”) of different religious practices and ideas by the individuals that constituted everyday religiosity. Applying this “methodological individualism” to Classical Athens, the development of unbelief can be understood as part of a process of “individuation” in which the subjects adopt the religious tradition as part of their religiosity.⁸⁶ Precisely, Kindt reintroduces the concept of “personal religion” to understand the huge diversity of ideas and practices developed in Ancient Greek “religion”.⁸⁷ For this author, “the category of ‘personal religion’ helps us to consider philosophical views both by themselves and in interaction with mainstream Greek religion”.⁸⁸ Therefore, both Plato’s worldview and the “atheist theory” based on the critique of religious tradition and the “new” natural philosophy were part of a regular discussion in the individual construction of the Athenian religiosity.⁸⁹

In the Classical period, especially in the aftermath of the Plague and the Peloponnesian War, an increase of “de-traditionalisation” was developed.⁹⁰ This process must be understood as part of a religious “individuation”. As Rüpke states,

82. The flexibility of religious ideas characteristic of an “open belief system” can be observed in the formation of identities during the Classical period in Athens. See Cardete del Olmo, 2017.

83. See *supra* n. 44.

84. Bremmer, 2020a, p. 1025.

85. On this approach see Rüpke, 2011 and 2014; Lichterman *et al.*, 2017; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018; Gasparini *et al.*, 2020.

86. The concept of “individuation” and its application in Ancient religions is defined by Rüpke, 2013, pp. 3-38.

87. Kindt, 2015. For the application of the concept “personal religion” in Ancient Greece, see already Festugière, 1954.

88. Kindt, 2015, p. 40.

89. It is also interesting to look at the participation in the mystery cults as an important element embodied in the formation of individual religiosity in Ancient Greece. Concerning this issue, see Waldner, 2013.

90. Rüpke, 2013, p. 9; Bremmer, 2020b, p. 67.

“the clash of rationality and spirituality is not an invention of postmodernity”.⁹¹ “Employing rationality”⁹² is, therefore, one important element in the rejection and appropriation of religious traditions. With all these ideas in mind, we can look back at the central question of this paper. Were there groups of atheists in Athens or just isolated cases? Is it possible to think in an “atheism underground” defended by some associations during Classical Athens?

5. GROUPS OF ἄθεοι?

Considering Greek religiosity as “lived religion” allows us to observe differently the study of atheistic groups in Classical Athenian society. Returning to the *Laws*, the sentence in 888a-d, “neither you by yourself nor yet your friends are the first and foremost to adopt this opinion about the gods”, allows us to think that the atheistic ideas were widespread in Athenian society. Moreover, the sentence continues claiming that this “disease” (νόσος) is always “springing up” with an increased number of people who deny the existence of the gods.⁹³ On the other hand, Plato attributes this opinion to young people alone, by saying that “not a single man who from his youth has adopted this opinion, that the gods have no existence, has ever yet continued till old age constant in the same view”.⁹⁴

All these elements have led some authors to theorise about the possible existence of “atheistic groups”. We have already seen one example of that à *propos* of the chapter “The atheist underground” written by Sedley.⁹⁵ This publication opened a debate on the possibility of atheist groups in Classical Athens which was continued by Whitmarsh.⁹⁶ Whitmarsh points out the lack of evidence enabling us to observe the existence of atheist groups in the sources: no “spaces”, no “names”, no “philosophical schools”, no people called themselves as ἄθεος can be found in Athens at the end of the 5th cent.. However, he agrees with Sedley that the main reason for the “anonymity” were the persecutions of the atheistic worldviews during this period. According to

91. Rüpke, 2013, p. 23.

92. Rüpke, 2013, p. 23.

93. This argument relates to the idea mentioned in Pl., *Leg.* 908d. People can be “converted” by those who defended atheistic ideas.

94. It is interesting how this connection between youth and atheistic ideas is established in other sources apart from Plato. For instance, Aeschylus (*Eu.* 149-154), Aristophanes (*Nu.* 927; *Pax.* 39-80; *Ra.* 1069-1073), Euripides (*Hipp.* 91-120; *Supp.* 195-238) or Xenophon (*Hunt.* 13.15-17). Regarding this issue, see Bremmer, 2020b.

95. Sedley, 2013.

96. Whitmarsh, 2017.

Whitmarsh,⁹⁷ it would not be until the end of the 4th cent. BCE when we can observe a “positive” view of atheism in the school of Theodorus of Cyrene. Consequently, the conclusion to be drawn is that “the word *atheos* was not consistently adopted as an in-group label, but it was nevertheless the best available term when one was needed” – as we can observe in Plato's *Laws*.

The main problem of these conclusions lies in how they analyse the critique of religious elements within the religious context of Classical Athens. As we have observed, the critique of the traditional image of the gods and the introduction of new notions like τύχη to understand the world was a process well integrated in Athenian religiosity. That is the reason why we can find in the sources meetings where the ideas of natural philosophers and sophists were discussed. We can find one example of this in the *Protagoras* (314a-318). In this Platonic dialogue, Socrates goes to the house of Callias to join a meeting with the “agnostic” Protagoras⁹⁸ and other philosophers as Hippias, Critias, Alcibiades, and Prodicus.⁹⁹ In these intellectual/philosophical circles, different personalities during the last decades of the 5th cent. in Athens met and discussed natural philosophy, the right of the laws, or religious elements. These philosophical meetings have parallels in other works of that time. One of them is in the expression used by Aristophanes at the end of the *Clouds*.¹⁰⁰ Here, Strepsiades burns “the house of the prating fellows” (τὴν οἰκίαν τῶν ἀδολεσχῶν)¹⁰¹ where Socrates and his disciples are discussing. Aristophanes does not mock only Socrates; he does the same with Callias in other plays such as the *Frogs* (428-432) or the *Birds* (281-285). Aristophanes' mockery of Euripides is also well known. In the *Frogs* (885-894), the comic playwright depicted the tragedian praying to different gods, his “own private ones”. Euripides starts his prayer by mentioning no traditional god, but the “air” (αἰθήρ). On the other hand, Euripides is accused of persuading the audience that there are no gods in the *Thesmophoriazusae* (448-455).

97. Whitmarsh, 2017, p. 58.

98. Although the term “agnostic” is a modern invention developed by Thomas Huxley in the second half of the 19th cent. (Hyman, 2007, pp. 30-31), with no equivalent in the Greek context, the famous statement of Protagoras (“As to the gods, I have no means of knowing either that they exist or that they do not exist”; *D.L.* IX 51) has been analysed as an agnostic position. On this issue, see Plácido Suárez, 1988; Lenfant, 2002; Barrionuevo, 2017; Corradi, 2018. In any regard, the *aporia* claimed by Protagoras can be defined as part of the unbelief developed in Classical Athens.

99. Socrates declares himself a disciple of Prodicus several times (*Pl.*, *Chrm.* 163d; *Cra.* 384b; *Men.* 96d; *Prt.* 341a).

100. *Ar.*, *Nu.* 1484-1485.

101. Transl. Hickie, 1853.

Therefore, we can claim correctly that questioning the gods in Classical Athens was more common than one might think. As we have observed in drama, the reflections on the gods' ethical behaviour were widespread and the audience shared a common reaction to the impossibility of knowing the gods' wills. Natural philosophy was present as well in the drama. As Lefkowitz claimed, Euripides showed "the kinds of theorizing that members of his audience had heard about, whether from the sophists themselves, or from references to them in comedy".¹⁰²

Concerning the idea that some individuals, especially the wealthy, were organised in groups is plausible but not clear in the sources.¹⁰³ It is true, as Osborne claims, that the "strongly corporate nature" of Athenian society shows the usual way in which people in Athens could meet to discuss philosophy or laws.¹⁰⁴ We can observe some examples of these political groups in different sources of that period. In Thucydides, some organisations and clubs are described as, for example, the *συνωμοσία*.¹⁰⁵ Even in the *Republic*, Plato describes the same phenomenon in the response from his brother, Adeimantus, to Socrates.¹⁰⁶ In Demosthenes (54.20), this is seen with the "club of Ithyphalli (ἰθύφαλλοι)" related to violent sexual practices and rapes. Hence, there were groups in Athens organised for different reasons like cults or political activity, although some of them "have left no record on stone".¹⁰⁷ However, it is less plausible that the reasons for the lack of evidence about this organisation of atheistic groups are due to a prosecution of these atheistic positions as Sedley and Whitmarsh argue.

There are several publications on the trials of "impiety" which condemned the atheistic ideas in Classical Athens. One of them is a recent publication written by Filonik.¹⁰⁸ In this article, the author reviews the sources in which trials of *ἀσέβεια* are mentioned. Regarding the trials that took place during the last decades of the 5th and the first decades of the 4th cent. BCE, Filonik states that only the prosecutions about *ἀσέβεια* in 415 BCE due to the profanation of the mysteries and the mutilation of the herms seem to be historically plausible.¹⁰⁹ Therefore, the trials of Aesch-

102. Lefkowitz, 2016, p. 21.

103. There is a considerable body of literature on the Athenian *hetair(e)iai* and political clubs. See Calhoun, 1913; Sartori, 1957; Connor, 1971; Pecorella Longo, 1971; McGlew, 1999; Jones, 1999, pp. 221-267; Ismard, 2010; Caciagli, 2018.

104. Osborne, 2010, pp. 31-32.

105. In LSJ *συνωμοσία* is defined as a "body of men leagued by oath, political union or club".

106. Pl., *R.* 365d-e.

107. Osborne, 2010, p. 49.

108. Filonik, 2013.

109. Filonik, 2013, pp. 82-83. Regarding the judicial process on the mutilation of the herms and the profanation of Eleusinian Mysteries in 415 BCE, see Murray, 1990; Furley, 1996; Graf, 2000; Leão, 2004;

ylus, Anaxagoras, Aspasia, Euripides, Pericles, Pheidias, Prodicus, or Protagoras, among others were an invention of later sources. The misunderstanding of these trials could be the consequence of an image taken from Socrates' trial in which Meletus accused the philosopher of corrupting the young people and not believing in the gods of the polis but in other divinities (δαίμονια).¹¹⁰ Indeed, in Socrates' defence, we can find two elements that reinforce the idea of the development of unbelief within Classical Athenian society.

On the one hand, as Filonik points out, Socrates defends himself not by denying his criticism of the traditional gods of the polis but by claiming that he is accused of something that is not true.¹¹¹ How is it possible that he does not believe in the gods if he believes in the δαίμονια and the god (ὁ θεός)? Without going into the reasons behind Socrates' trial,¹¹² we observe in his defence the development of Socrates' "personal religion".¹¹³ As we have seen in the Platonic dialogues, Socrates does not believe in the traditional image of the gods described by the poets and chooses different elements of Greek "religion" to establish his own religiosity.¹¹⁴ This process of religious "individuation" implies a "de-traditionalisation", a rejection of some aspects of religious tradition. The unbelief of Socrates is, therefore, part of the formation of the philosopher's religion. On the other hand, a second idea allows us to observe that unbelief and the ideas of natural philosophers were widespread in Athenian society. In the passage 26d-e of the *Apology*, we can read how Socrates defends his position before Meletus by affirming that young people in the Athenian Agora could buy the texts with atheistic ideas related to natural philosophers such as Anaxagoras for a drachma.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the argument that these atheistic ideas related to a natural philosophy were persecuted at the beginning of the 4th cent. loses plausibility. As

Gagné, 2009; Rubel, 2014, pp. 74-98; Bowden, 2015, pp. 331-332.

110. Pl., *Ap.* 24b-c. The same accusation of not believing in the gods of the polis is in Xenophon (οὐκ ἐνόμιζεν οὐς ἢ πόλις νομίζει θεούς, X., *Mem.* I 1, 1; 5; 20).

111. Filonik, 2013, p. 54.

112. For a detailed approach on Socrates' trial, see Ferguson, 1913; Bodéüs, 1989; Connor, 1991; Burnyeat, 1997; Brickhouse and Smith, 1989; 2002; 2004; Colaiaco, 2001; Donnay, 2002; Ralkowski, 2013.

113. The religiosity developed by Socrates has been discussed by a great number of authors in literature. See among others McPherran, 1996; 1997; 2011; Smith and Woodruff, 2000; Bussanich, 2013; Jakubiec, 2017.

114. It is interesting to observe how Socrates' beliefs in the immortality of the soul were also difficult to believe. See Pl., *Phd.* 70a-d.

115. Pl., *Ap.* 26d-e. The "standard wage" in Athens at the end of the 5th cent. was one drachma per day (Silver, 2006, p. 257).

Bremmer claims, the books of Protagoras and Prodicus should not have circulated with more difficulty than the tragedies written by Aeschylus or Sophocles.¹¹⁶

6. CONCLUSIONS

As we have observed, the atheistic arguments exposed by Plato in the *Laws* were common in Classical Athens. When the philosopher enumerates such ideas, he is describing the intellectual context of Athens during his lifetime. Indeed, Plato enumerates all those who defend the ideas of the ἄθεοι, including diviners, magic jugglers, tyrants,¹¹⁷ demagogues,¹¹⁸ generals, people that practice mystic rites of their own and sophists (908d), thus showing that the unbelief in the traditional image of the gods was socially widespread. This does not mean that these “atheists” were not religious, or that they were against “religion”. In the case of the natural philosophers, they understood the world in a way contrary to Platonic cosmology. In the *Laws*, Plato wants to refute this worldview in his description of the *kallipolis*.

In the same way that Socrates proposes censoring the poets in the *Republic*, the Athenian Stranger establishes a whole legislative system that condemns and punishes people who defend this false notion of the gods in a fictional polis.¹¹⁹ Both opinions concerning the divinities, the one developed by the traditional poets and the one reflected in the new ideas of the natural philosophers, lead to a misunderstanding of the gods. For Plato, the gods exist, they cannot be bribed, and they do care about human beings even though the traditional “theology” depicts them wrongly. Nevertheless, this critique of the traditional idea of the gods was not only Plato’s opinion since we have already seen in Euripides and Aristophanes how the characters in their plays reflect on the nature of the gods and their ethical behaviour. These reflections were shared in public events. The intellectuals like Protagoras, Critias, or Prodicus discussed in their meetings the same ideas that were discussed in the theatre as well as in the Agora or, as Bremmer highlights, in the gymnasium where young rich people met.¹²⁰ These thinkers understood the divine, religion and the idea of gods as el-

116. Bremmer, 2018, p. 377.

117. After the government of the Peisistratids, especially after Hippias, a negative view of tyranny had prevailed, as we can observe in Herodotus (Hdt., V 92) and Thucydides (Th., I 17). From that moment on, this concept comes to mean a violent, unjust, and unreasonable way to rule that must be avoided. For more details, see Barceló and Hernández de la Fuente, 2014, pp. 234-235 and Plácido Suarez, 1989.

118. Regarding the demagogues in Athens, see Rhodes, 2016.

119. Pl., *Leg.* 908b-e.

120. Bremmer, 2020b, p. 56.

ements invented by human beings from a relativistic political theory but not outside of the Greek religious frame. Unbelief was thus a common phenomenon in Classical Athens as part of the everyday discussions about the world, the gods, and human beings.

Therefore, it is necessary to avoid the Platonic term of ἄθεοι when we analyse unbelief in Classical Athens since it reflects the subjective worldview of Plato. His ideas were also part of a “de-traditionalisation” of Greek religiosity. In this process, the philosopher rejects some elements of the traditional theology proposing a different worldview in which a divine soul rules the cosmic order. If we apply Plato’s concept of ἄθεοι to Athenian society, we make the mistake of considering the traditional theology of the epic poets as “atheism” since, for the philosopher, their reasoning leads to the three atheistic positions cited in the *Laws*. A different term that does not constrain Greek “religion” is therefore needed. The modern notion of “atheism” projects onto Athenian society a distorted view of the role of religious criticism in Greek religion. Atheistic ideas were not subversive or contrary to Greek “religion”. They were part of it. This argument explains why “unbelief” seems a better term to use in the Greek context. The concept of unbelief allows us to observe precisely how religious criticism can be part of the religious frame due to its broad spectrum, ranging from doubt to strong “modern” atheism.¹²¹ If we understand the phenomenon of religion as “lived”, not only in contemporary but also in ancient times, we can observe how unbelief is part of the development of an individualised religiosity of the subjects. Doubting religious elements, especially the nature of God or the gods and their ethical behaviour, is part of religious individualisation.

Moreover, if we look at other religious contexts, we can see how accounts of doubt become part of the religious discourses. The “arrows of the Almighty” and the questioning of God’s justice in the Book of Job or the dialogue that Krishna maintains with Arjuna in the fourth book of the Bhagavad Gita show us that unbelief can be introduced (and refuted) in such narratives to reinforce religiosity.¹²² Problems such as theodicy or doubting the nature of the gods are the starting point for generating religious stories that reinforce the belief system. Individuals use these tales or myths to choose or reject the religious elements that most resonate with their interests and desires in a process of “individuation”. The notion of unbelief, therefore, helps us comprehend how the worldviews are formed and how they modify the way individuals perceive “being-in-the-world” and their relation to their world

121. Conrad, 2018.

122. Job 6:4; BG IV:40-42.

(“self-world relations”). The way to behave and think is influenced by a specific idea of the world developed by the subject. The rejection of religious ideas, like the nature of the gods, shapes a “personal religion” that implies a “personal connection” with the world. In the case of Classical Athenian society, atheistic ideas were part of the elaboration of individual religiosities showing once again that unbelief and religion are intermingled. From a modern point of view, unbelief seems incompatible with the religious framework. However, when we open the category, it allows us to understand the different religious contexts in which the proper notion of religion differs from the modern one. Greek “religion” must be understood as “lived”, dynamic, and, most importantly, very distant from our modern notion of “religion”. Indeed, this differentiation can be observed in how unbelief and the atheistic worldviews developed in Classical Athens in relation to the religious field.

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VARIA

RITUALISTIC NUDITY. DRESSING
AND UNDESSING IN OVID'S *FASTI*
DESNUDEZ RITUAL. VESTIRSE Y DESVESTIRSE
EN LOS *FASTI* DE OVIDIO

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ABSTRACT

Ovid's *Fasti* is a work of significance in defining the relationship between religious identity and clothing. This article examines the interplay between dressing and the divine and considers the key role that dressing, undressing, and nakedness plays in the worship of certain deities in the *Fasti*. Clothing and nudity are intimately linked to the changing nature of the socio-political landscape in the worship of these deities. Contemporary rites in 1st cent. Rome relate

RESUMEN

Los *Fasti* de Ovidio son una obra de gran importancia para analizar la relación existente entre la identidad religiosa y la vestimenta. Este artículo examina la interacción entre el vestir y lo divino y aborda el papel clave que desempeña la vestimenta, el desvestirse, y la desnudez en el culto de ciertas deidades en los *Fasti*. La ropa y la desnudez están íntimamente ligadas a la naturaleza cambiante del panorama sociopolítico en el culto de estas divinidades. Los rituales con-

to fertility, blur social boundaries, and recall ancient preliterate peoples prior to cultivation, providing historical continuity of cultic practices.

temporáneos en la Roma del primer siglo se relacionan con la fertilidad, difuminan los límites sociales y recuerdan a los antiguos pueblos preliterarios anteriores a la agricultura, proporcionando continuidad histórica a las prácticas culturales.

KEYWORDS

Clothing; *Fasti*; Fertility; Nudity; Ovid.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Desnudez; *Fasti*; fertilidad; Ovidio; vestimenta.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ovid's calendar of Roman religious festivals abounds with images of processional devotees wearing spotless garments, accompanied by worshippers *en masse* either clothed in a specific colour or appearing naked. This ritualistic nudity in its association with fertility provides a connection across three important spring festivals in Ovid's *Fasti*: the *Lupercalia*, the *Veneralia* and the *Floralia*. Nudity is a powerful social equaliser and reinforces the identifiable link of these celebrations to ancient religious rites at the time of the foundation of Roman civilisation, during an age when clothing was a clear marker of status under Augustus' *lex Iulia*. At the very beginning of spring in mid-February, it is men who are naked in the streets and whom seem to possess the power of fertility, related back in ritualistic form to the very foundations of ancient Latium. Outside the context of the baths or a ritual setting, this nudity is viewed with complete disdain. Ovid's multi-aetiological explanation for why the *Luperci* run naked includes a striking account of undressing, cross-dressing, and dressing for divine reception in association with the Roman deities Bacchus and Faunus. By April 1, the women are naked, cleansing themselves and then praying for the power of attractiveness as a prelude to fertility. Venus *Verticordia*'s devotees remove golden jewellery from her statue, wash and "re clothe" the goddess before undressing and washing themselves. Naked women offer Fortuna *Virilis* incense at the baths in the hope that the goddess conceals their physical imperfections from the gaze of men. Types of clothing were usually indicative of female status and morality in Latin literature rather than in legislation. Ovid depicts the role of Roman women in ritual in a way that challenges limitations imposed upon them due to their social status. A final example of ritualistic nudity culminates in the full-flowered celebration of spring by women on stage. The multi-coloured robes of the plebeian *Ludi Florales* are a powerful identifier in the ritualistic aspect of expression of devotion in a communal and so-

cial sense through dress and even undress, since prostitutes performed there, and the audience demanded the actresses strip. This multi-layered multi-sensory experience of dressing and undressing of deities and devotees sets the scene for ritualised nudity, which I will argue provides a link between these key fertility festivals. I will evaluate each of these episodes in Ovid's *Fasti* to determine its treatment of nudity and the action of dressing and undressing, considering religious connotations and socio-political implications. The *fasti* were used to construct and reflect on the changing nature of Roman identity through their celebrations. We see a transition from naked men with penetrative powers of fertility over likely partially naked women, to naked women bathing whilst avoiding the gaze of men then transforming themselves into objects of desire and a final climax of sexually charged female nudity on stage. Strong connections have previously been made between the rites of Venus *Verticordia*, *Fortuna Virilis*, and the *Floralia*, on the basis of public nudity and its contexts, but I expostulate that we can extend this to include the *Lupercalia*.¹ The sole example of ritualistic nudity of men in the *Fasti*, strengthened by the celebration of fertility provides connections between the *Lupercalia*, the *Veneralia*, and the *Floralia*.

2. LUPERCALIA

In the *Lupercalia* ritual and its association with Romulus and Remus, the link between ritualistic nudity and fertility in the context of religious identity is interwoven with the origins of Rome. Augustus saw the *lex Iulia* as a way of reconnecting with Rome's ancestral practices.² Festival and legislation serve as a link between the past and the future here as in they do in the *lex Iulia* and the Secular games.³ The great emphasis on nudity challenges the Augustan drive for moral order based on social distinction established by the clothing Romans wear and so questions the socio-political order of the Augustan moral code. Augustus even established the genital "hip-mantle" as his definitive heroic uniform in his own statuary, moving away from a totally nude depiction.⁴ When Augustus threw off his toga and exposed his chest, this was viewed as a desperate act of begging.⁵ Augustus' legislation and insistence on the toga is par-

1. Pasco-Pranger, 2019, pp. 217-249.

2. *Res Gestae* VIII 5.

3. Milnor, 2007, pp. 10-11.

4. Wallace-Hadrill, 2008, p. 54.

5. Suet., *Aug.* 52.

ticularly worth considering when reading the following passage and noting Ovid's insistence on nudity:⁶

*cur igitur currant, et cur (sic currere mos est)
nuda ferant posita corpora veste, rogas?
ipse deus velox discurrere gaudet in altis
montibus et subitas concipit ipse fugas;
ipse deus nudus nudos iubet ire ministros,
nec satis ad cursus commoda vestis erat.*⁷

“Why then do they run, you ask? And why (is it their custom to run in this way) with clothes taken off, they bare their bodies naked? The god himself enjoys running swiftly in the high mountains, and to take up sudden flight. The god himself, naked, bids his ministers to go naked; and clothes are not suitable enough for running”.

There is an overwhelmingly positive consideration of public nudity, emphasised by *gaudet* and the unencumbered nature of the running, and perhaps well-considered by Ovid against the backdrop of Augustus' moral code (285). The first explanation given for the naked running in this initial aetiology is simply that *nec satis ad cursus commoda vestis erat*, yet there are salient features which emerge upon further examination (288). The *Luperci* are naked in keeping with the rustic nature of the deity Faunus here, deeply embedded in a high mountainous domain. The sudden flight and the running itself are suggestive of Bacchic revelry among the mountains, perhaps even a literary memory of Rome's idealised bucolic origins, a vaguely sentimental and nostalgic yearning for simpler times. The nudity of the *Lupercalia* also provides a link to the cultic historicity of the festival and so nudity in an accepted context, but its force is nonetheless identifiable. The *Lupercalia*, with its many aetiologies, seems to me to sit very well with Beard's reasoning in her study of the *Parilia*; that it is this very nature of such festivals to reinvent or reinterpret themselves which not only ensures their longevity and relevance but their contribution to creating a picture of Romanness via their links with a combination of real and imagined Roman history.⁸ The lengthy explanation of the four varied aetiologies is structurally interesting if we view the entire episode as a narrative arc driven by the necessity of the nakedness of the devotees. At almost symmetrical

6. Suet., *Aug.* 40, 5.

7. Ov., *Fast.* II 283-288 (all translations are my own, unless otherwise indicated).

8. Beard, 1987, p. 7.

points we have the god in control, bidding *ipse deus nudus nudos iubet ire ministros* and summoning them naked *et nudos ad sua sacra vocat* (287, 358). At the climatic point of the whole episode around line 344 we see the god come unstuck, fooled by the exchange of clothing, the object of a comedic farce. Although comical, clothing here has a negative consequence for the god and leaves a lasting impression which has a profound effect on the ritual of the *Lupercalia*.

The link between religious identity and nudity takes centre stage since much of Ovid's discussion of this religious celebration is an explanation of why the *Luperci* run naked. That they are naked is clear immediately in the introduction to the first aetiology, an indication of what will be a major focus throughout:

*Tertia post Idus nudos aurora Lupercos
aspicit, et Fauni sacra bicornis eunt.
dicite, Pierides, sacrorum quae sit origo,
attigerint Lati as unde petita domos.*⁹

“The third dawn after the Ides sees the naked *Luperci*, And the rites of two-horned Faunus take place. Tell me, *Pierides*, what is the origin of the rites, and from where were they brought to reach the homes of *Latium*?”

Ovid gives prominence and legitimacy to the rites of Faunus enacted by the naked *Luperci*, priests of the festival, with his invocation of the Muse *dicite, Pierides, sacrorum quae sit origo* (269). Hallet rightly suggests that public nudity outside of the baths was unthinkable and the punishment and humiliation to which condemned criminals were relegated, but he then goes on to argue that *nudus* did not mean completely naked.¹⁰ The examples Hallet cites for *nudus* to mean including some type of undergarment in general are not in the context of ritual and he himself acknowledges that sources include the *Luperci* either naked or girt with a loin cloth. Ovid emphasises nudity in the four aetiologies he provides for the *Lupercalia* and it is not until May that the loin cloths are mentioned. Interestingly, here it is also out of the context of the actual celebration day in his calendar that the emphasis is on purification rather than fertility:

*et matri et vati paret Nonacrius heros
inque peregrina constitit hospes humo,
sacraque multa quidem sed Fauni prima bicornis*

9. Ov., *Fast.* II 267-270.

10. Hallet, 2005, p. 61.

*has docuit gentes alipedisque dei.
semicaper, coleris cinctutis, Faune, Lupercis,
cum lustrant celebres vellera secta vias.*¹¹

“The Nonacrian hero obeys her as both mother and prophet, and stood firm the alien soil’s guest. He taught to these clans many sacred rites indeed, but the first were of two-horned Faunus and the wing-footed god. Half-goat Faunus, the Luperci in their loin-cloths worship you when with their cut hide strips purify the crowded streets”.

Dionysus of Halicarnassus cites Aelius Tubero as stating that youths ran around the village naked but for their loins girt with the skin of the victims just sacrificed as a traditional purification of the villagers.¹² Although Michels argues that the *Lupercalia* was originally a purification rite, he concedes that the fertility aspect over time became the focus, and acknowledges that ancient and modern authors do see the fertility aspect as central over purification.¹³ Ovid resolves the issue of purification versus fertility by having the women only as recipients of the flagellation. Fertility is the focus here which is further emphasised by the realisation of its effectiveness when the Sabine women have become mothers, and together with their offspring the “remedy for the divided state” stopped opposing forces with the outstretched arms of their grandchildren.¹⁴ The very fact that Ovid offers alternatives in such detail has been seen as the poet undermining his intent to honour the emperor.¹⁵ The poet uses the rare word *cinctuti* to describe the attire of the Luperci, meaning “wearing the *cinctus*”.¹⁶ Prior to Augustus’ revival,¹⁷ the *Luperci* were naked and even though Ovid concedes the wearing of the loin-cloths eventually, earlier in the *Fasti* his repeated use of the word *nudus* could suggest a mocking of the emperor’s moral programme. Ovid includes the ancient rite of the *Lupercalia* in the *Fasti* but seems reluctant to whole-heartedly embrace the restraint and censure of this new moral age. What may have been an ancient pastoral rite was adapted for the city and became an exciting public occasion at which large crowds gathered.¹⁸ So, our series of festivals in which

11. Ov., *Fast.* V 97-102.

12. Dion. Hal., *ARI* 80, 1.

13. Michels, 1953, pp. 36-47.

14. Ov., *Fast.* III 203-204 and III 217-223. Cf. Takács, 2008, loc. 1081.

15. Newlands, 2006, p. 359.

16. Ov., *Fast.* V 101.

17. Suet., *Aug.* 31.

18. Scullard, 1981, p. 78.

nudity and fertility feature, begins with this popular celebration and ends later with the *Floralia*, not only popular, but explicitly plebeian.

Ovid employs Arcadian imagery in the initial aetiology of the *Lupercalia*, re-writing the mythology for a Roman context and further connecting the contemporary practice to its ancient and pastoral origins:

*ante Iovem genitum terras habuisse feruntur
Arcades, et luna gens prior illa fuit.
vita feris similis, nullos agitata per usus:
artis adhuc expers et rude volgus erat.
pro domibus frondes norant, pro frugibus herbas,
nectar erat palmis hausta duabus aqua.
nullus anhelabat sub adunco vomere taurus,
nulla sub imperio terra colentis erat:
nullus adhuc erat usus equi, se quisque ferebat:
ibat ovis lana corpus amicta sua.
sub Iove durabant et corpora nuda gerebant
docta graves imbres et tolerare Notos.
nunc quoque detecti referunt monumenta vetusti
moris et antiquas testificantur opes.¹⁹*

“They say the Arcadians held the earth before Jupiter was born: that race existed before the moon. Life was like that of wild beasts, driven by no custom. The people were as yet devoid of practical skills, and primitive. They knew leafy boughs for houses, herbs for crops. Nectar was water drawn up with two palms. No bull panted under curved ploughshare; no land was under control of cultivation. As yet there was no use of the horse; everyone carried themselves, the sheep walked with its body clothed with its own wool. They hardened under Jove and bore their naked bodies, taught to endure heavy rains and south winds. Unclothed now too, they convey a memorial of the old way, and testify to the resources of ancient times”.

Ritualistic and charter elements also emerge in the aetiology with its evocation of a much earlier socio-cultural context, in remembrance of the ancient Arcadian worship of Pan, a god Evander brought with him. Zanker argues that Augustus employed visual imagery focussing on the fertility of the bucolic landscape and appropriated Greek mythological imagery in his cultural renewal as symbols of Augustan abundance.²⁰ This reminiscence of ancient naked preliterate primitive people prior to cul-

19. Ov., *Fast.* II 289-302.

20. Zanker, 1998, pp. 173-174.

tivation, even before the birth of Jupiter, without skills and custom, an idealised one and evocative of the Saturnian Golden Age, further emphasises clothing as a marker of civilisation which is removed in the worship of such a deity. Despite the later wearing of goatskin loincloths in Book 5, the persistence of nudity here was surely conspicuous to Romans if not forcible to the modern reader. Life without custom is viewed as primitive, *vita feris similis*, so cultivation and clothing are clearly linked with later civilisation, yet not necessarily things to be desired given Faunus' experience of them here (291). The prospect of remembering ancient practices, resources and times is important since peoples necessarily need to acknowledge and celebrate their past and its traditions to reaffirm their identity, and for Ovid, nudity is an integral part of this memory.

Nudity is a requirement of the ritual runners in Ovid's second aetiology, the *Luperci*, because an exchange of clothing fooled the god, Faunus. Nudity is the solution, clothes must be removed, calling to mind the removal of clothes in the *lavatio* rituals of the *Veneralia* and the nudity of the *Floralia*. In the Faunus-Omphale episode, the rustic deity abandons his natural and unrefined world of the *montana numina* in favour of refined, well-dressed civilisation:

*sed cur praecipue fugiat velamina Faunus,
trahitur antiqui fabula plena ioci.
forte comes dominae iuvenis Tiryntius ibat:
vidit ab excelso Faunus utrumque iugo.
vidit et incaluit, 'montana' que 'numina', dixit
'nil mihi vobiscum est: hic meus ardor erit'.
ibat odoratis humeros perfusa capillis
Maeonis aurato conspicienda sinu:
aurea pellebant tepidos umbracula soles,
quae tamen Herculeae sustinere manus,
iam Bacchi nemus et Tmoli vineta tenebat,
Hesperos et fusco roscidus ibat equo.
antra subit tofis laqueata et pumice vivo;
garrulus in primo limine rivus erat.
dumque parant epulas potandaque vina ministri,
cultibus Alciden instruit illa suis.
dat tenuis tunicas Gaetulo murice tinctas,
dat teretem zonam, qua m odo cincta fuit.
ventre minor zona est; tunicarum vincla relaxat,
ut posset magnas exeruisse manus,
fregerat armillas non illa ad brachia factas,
scindebant magni vincula parva pedes.*

*ipsa capit clavamque gravem spoliūque leonis
conditaque in pharetra tela minora sua.
sic epulis functi sic dant sua corpora somno,
et positis iuxta secubere toris;
causa, repertori vitis quia sacra parabant,
quae facerent pure, cum foret orta dies.²¹*

“But why Faunus especially shuns clothes, handed down is a story complete with an ancient joke. By chance, the Tiryinthian youth was walking accompanying his mistress. Faunus saw the pair both all the way from high. He saw them and became hot. ‘Mountain deities’, he said, ‘you are nothing to me. This is my flame’. The Maeonian walked, her scented hair streamed her shoulders, with golden bosom to gaze upon. A golden parasol banished the warm sunbeams; and yet, held up by the hands of Hercules. Just now she reached the grove of Bacchus and Timolus’ vineyards, and dewy Hesperus rode his dusky horse. She enters a cave panelled with tufa and living pumice, a babbling brook right at the beginning of the threshold. While servants prepare the banquet and the wine to drink, she furnished Alcides with her own clothing. She hands over the delicate tunics dyed with Gaetulian purple; she hands over her smooth girdle which just measured round her own waist. The girdle is too small for his belly; he loosened the fastenings of the tunics, so that he is able to thrust out his great hands, he had shattered the bracelets not made for those arms, his great feet split the little sandal-straps. She herself takes the heavy club and lion spoil and stored the smaller shafts in their quiver. In this way they enjoy the feast, in this way they give their bodies to sleep. And they lay apart, on beds placed near together. The reason, because they were preparing rites for the vine’s inventor, they would perform them pure, when the day had arisen”.

In preparation for the Bacchic rites, rites of a god himself seen as a transgressor, we see Hercules too as a transgressor of behaviour and of realms.²² Note the undressing and redressing motif, with which I will draw thematic connections to the later Venus *Verticordia* and *Fortuna Virilis*. In the exchange of clothes, Omphale has not only confused genders, but much like the women of the *Veneralia*, also removed the markers of her status. Faunus was as confused by clothing and adornment as markers of class and status as Roman men were by women in the street, making this episode is a fitting prelude to the aetiology of the later celebration, the *Floralia*. A sensory landscape prefaces the climax and ritual consequence of the failed rape, Faunus’ heat of sexual anticipation, Omphales’ perfumed hair, her gilded bosom and the accessory of the golden parasol held by Hercules, a visual metaphor for his role as the queen’s

21. Ov., *Fast.* II 303-330.

22. Näsström, 2003, p. 140.

slave.²³ Ovid describes the clothing of the devotees of Bacchus here in great detail, recalling when Faunus first sets sights on them, during their exchange of attire and then when Faunus gropes around feeling for Omphale in the dark:

*ut tetigit fulvi saetis hirsuta leonis
velleri, pertimuit sustinuitque manum
attonitusque metu rediit, ut saepe viator
turbatus viso rettulit angue pedem,
inde tori, qui iunctus erat, velamina tangit
mollia, mendaci decipiturque nota.*²⁴

“As he touched the tawny lion pelt bristly with hairs, he was greatly frightened and checked his hand. And terrified, he recoiled in fear, as a traveller often bears back agitated when he sees a snake afoot. Then he touches the soft clothing of the bed which was adjoining, and is deceived by the lying impression”.

The delicate nature of Omphale's couch drapery, *mollia* to the touch, the bracelets and sandals broken by Hercules' pure physicality itself evinces a form of ineffective bondage. For her, it is the weight of the accessory of the club and the indelicate texture of the lion's skin. The animal skin is *hirsuta* and so deceives the god who is likewise fooled by the soft coverings of Hercules' couch. The exchange of clothes and the juxtaposition of the rough with the soft here heightens the sensory impact of this scene for both the devotees of Bacchus and the deity. Fantham suggests that this episode derives from mime and I would like to take this one step further and argue that the act of undressing and dressing here possesses both comical and salacious elements in common with the theatrical striptease at the *Floralia*.²⁵ Deceptive clothing heightens comic value in this episode, which then accounts for the required nudity in the rites of the god:

*veste deus lusus fallentes lumina vestes
non amat et nudos ad sua sacra vocat.*²⁶

“The god fooled by clothing, does not like clothes which deceive the eyes, and to his own rites he summons them naked”.

23. Littlewood, 1975, p. 1065.

24. Ov., *Fast.* II 339-344.

25. Fantham, 2002, p. 219.

26. Ov., *Fast.* II 357-358.

The lasciviousness of this aetiology ensures the nudity of the *Luperci* will not be forgotten.²⁷ Ultimately, we see that the removal and exchange of clothing has prevented the rape, and male dominance does not overpower the feminine in this act of failed forced reproduction. This allows us to identify connections to other episodes in the *Fasti* where undressing, dressing and nakedness form a key element in the ritualistic celebration of a deity during spring when fertility is an important focus. The use of setting and preparatory rites in the celebration of Bacchus is intimately connected to several aspects of the rites of Faunus. If we view the rites of Bacchus and the expected cathartic relief as a prelude to the total abandonment of clothing of devotees in honour of Venus *Verticordia* and then *Fortuna Virilis*, we can acknowledge the emergence of a pattern of setting and worship of deities fulfilling a social function by providing oppressed women with licensed and reasonably controlled outlets for frustration. Most Roman women were under the guardianship of men for their entire lives and were discriminated against, particularly under the *lex Iulia de adulteriis*.²⁸ A woman must be divorced and prosecuted, whereas a man only would be if caught with another man's wife. References in the work of Roman poets have been taken to infer that convicted adulteresses were required to wear the toga of prostitutes.²⁹ The *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*, aimed at keeping marriage within and between the classes, also contained women in a physical sense. Clothing and identity provide an important link in relationship between devotees and deities. Omphale's social class is made clear in the further description of her clothing and accoutrements, delicate tunics of Gaetulian purple and bracelets. The "delicate tunics" (*tenuis tunicas*, 319) may hint at the controversial see-through Coan silk, worn by both matrons and prostitutes.³⁰ Since clothing was ideally a reflection of a woman's rank, status and morality, the fashion for Coan silk among matrons confused sartorial, moral and social boundaries.³¹ Ovid's choice here is suggestive of a further blurring of not only the boundaries based on clothing as a marker of status, but morals, since the wearing of such thin garments likened a woman to a prostitute who might wear them, or even appear naked. This is somewhat ironic, given the setting calls for abstinence, but ultimately appropriate considering Faunus' intentions. Despite the Arcadian nature of the Omphale-Hercules-Faunus scene, inferences can still be made

27. Newlands, 1995, p. 60.

28. Gardner, 1986, pp. 15-18 and 252-255.

29. Mart., II 39 and X 52; Iuv., II 68; Hor., *Serm.* I 2, 63; Cic., *Phil.* II 44; Mart., VI 64, 4; Tib., III 16, 3.

30. Hor., *Sat.* I 2, 101-102; Prop., I 2, 2; II 1, 5-6; IV 2, 23; Sen., *Helv.* XVI 4; *Ben.* VII 9, 5.

31. Olson, 2002, p. 398.

about the bracelets of adornment. Ovid, who warned against excessive adornment, includes jewellery in this episode, and we will consider such adornment further when discussing the *Veneralia*.³² Berg argues that impressive gold jewellery was morally restricted according to the *nobilitas* of the wearer and that worn by a senatorial woman would indicate *dignitas*, but by a freedwoman, reprehensible *luxuria*.³³ Matrons were actually not only attracted to the wearing of Coan silk, but also jewellery, despite the negative moral implications and blurring of social status lines associated with such adornment. Women could choose to wear colours such as purple and gold and were free to do so, expressing some form of agency through dress.³⁴ In the worship of the goddess, however, the jewellery becomes sacred and does not possess the negative connotations it has in some works of Ovid and those of Seneca. In the queen, we have a case for sartorial confusion, not limited to the cross-dressing, but in the delicate tunics and the gold bracelets, both of which are removed.

Ovid's third aetiology for the nudity during the rites of Faunus on this day includes an invocation to Juno for fertility and gentle birth for the Italian matrons. Romulus has carried off the Sabine women, but does not possess the procreative power to ensure offspring and continuation of the race, so he must turn to the mighty female goddess Juno. Female intervention is required to secure fertility and continuity of the Roman race from its very beginnings.

*monte sub Esquilio multis incaeduis annis
Iunonis magnae nomine lucus erat.
huc ubi venerunt, pariter nuptaeque virique
suppliciter posito procubuere genu,
cum subito motae tremuere cacumina silvae
et dea per lucos mira locuta suos:
'Italidas matres' inquit 'sacer hircus inito'.
obstipuit dubio territa turba sono.
augur erat (nomen longis intercidit annis,
nuper ab Etrusca venerat exul humo),
ille caprum mactat, iussae sua terga puellae
pellibus exsectis percutienda dabant,
luna resumebat decimo nova cornua motu,
virque pater subito nuptaque mater erat.
gratia Lucinae! dedit haec tibi nomina lucus,*

32. Ov., *Ars am.* III 129-132.

33. Berg, 2002, p. 47.

34. Harlow, 2012b, p. 38.

*aut quia principium tu, dea, lucis habes,
parce, precor, gravidis, facilis Lucina, puellis
maturumque utero molliter aufer onus.*³⁵

“Beneath the Esquiline mount there was a sacred grove, uncut in many years, named for mighty Juno. When they had come to this place, brides and husbands alike suppliantly fell down on bended knee: when suddenly the forest shook and treetops trembled, and the goddess spoke wonders through her own sacred grove: ‘Italian matrons’ she said ‘let the sacred goat enter.’ The terrified crowd was numbed by the dubious utterance. There was an augur (whose name had been lost by the long years) recently an exile come from Etruscan soil. That man sacrifices a he-goat. As ordered, the girls offered their backs to be struck through and through by strips from its hide. In her tenth motion the moon was taking up new horns, the husband was suddenly a father, and the bride a mother. Thanks to Lucina! The grove gave this name to you, or because you, goddess, have the beginning of the light. Kind Lucina, have mercy upon, I pray, pregnant girls, and gently remove the ripe burden from the womb”.

This passage introduces strips cut from the sacrificial goat to be used as whips. The force here suggests that women were whipped to the point of skin breaking, allowing the he-goat to “enter” (445-446).³⁶ In addition to strengthening the link between ritualistic nudity and fertility, is also suggestive of the women’s backs being naked or exposed in some way to receive the whip and its potency, a fuller or more literal adherence to the words of the goddess. Plutarch extrapolates this to accessories with which the Luperci run the streets to the same effect. The historian highlights the fertility aspect of this festival when he states that “noble youths and of the magistrates” ran through the city striking “women of rank” with “shaggy thongs” hoping for pregnancy and easy delivery if already pregnant.³⁷ Plutarch is writing much later when it seems the girl loins were entrenched in the festival, which also only included women of high status. Emphasis is on the victim to be adopted as part of the dress of the devotees and even used as an accessory in the ritual aspect of the flagellation. Augustus’ moral programme was designed to contain women, in connection with its aim to raise the birth-rate, since during the civil war period, a whole class of male nobility was lost while the majority of its women survived.³⁸ Not only has Ovid taken care to include all the aetiologies, but he has chosen this festival in which to em-

35. Ov., *Fast.* II 435-452.

36. Wiseman, 1995, p. 14.

37. Plut., *Vit. Caes.* 61, 1-4.

38. Holleman, 1973, p. 260; Syme, 1952, p. 414.

phasise public nudity of men, despite the implications of the Augustan reformation, which included laws designed to ensure legitimate offspring in response to the devastating effects of the civil war on the population. The marriage and adultery laws, in reality, adversely affected women disproportionately, and in Ovid's use of female nudity throughout the *Fasti* we can see a release from those restrictions in a ritual setting, beginning here with their exposed backs. When considered with Plutarch's description following the *Lupercalia*, of Caesar denying the golden crown from atop a golden throne on the rostra, we understand a politically motivated attempt to appropriate an ancient fertility festival associated with the foundation of Rome. The continuity of the Roman race is ensured via the accoutrement of the whips, in which Faunus and the Luperci play an important part.

In the fourth and final aetiology, Ovid gives the Roman *causa* for the nudity of the *Luperci* emphasis by placing it in a central panel when we view the *Lupercalia* description in its entirety (2.267-474). Augustus restored the rites of the *Lupercalia* and Ovid "stresses the continuity of ritual practice within a framework of social change".³⁹ The emphasis on nudity then is explicably bound with Ovid's contribution to reflecting on the identity of Romanness during a time when Augustus is making drastic changes⁴⁰ which might require an approach with greater propriety. Yet, Ovid's patriotic intentions are undeniable:

*adde peregrinis causas, mea Musa, Latinas,
inque suo noster pulvere currat equus,
cornipedi Fauno caesa de more capella
venit ad exiguas turba vocata dapes,
dumque sacerdotes veribus transuta salignis
exta parant, medias sole tenente vias,
Romulus et frater pastoralisque iuventus
solibus et campo corpora nuda dabant;
caestibus et iaculis et misso pondere saxi
brachia per lusus experienda dabant:
pastor ab excelso "per devia rura iuencos,
Romule, praedones, et Reme", dixit "agunt".
longum erat armari: diversis exit uterque
partibus; occursu praeda recepta Remi.
ut rediit, veribus stridentia detrahit exta
atque ait "haec certe non nisi victor edet".*

39. Harries, 1991, p. 164.

40. Feeney, 2006, p. 471.

*dicta facit Fabiique simul, venit inritus illuc
Romulus et mensas ossaque nuda videt;
risit et indoluit Fabios potuisse Remumque
vincere, Quintilios non potuisse suos.
fama manet facti: posito velamine currunt,
et memorem famam, quod bene cessit, habet.*⁴¹

“Add Latin causes to the foreign, my Muse, and let my horse run in its own dust. To horn-footed Faunus, according to custom, a she-goat had been slaughtered and a crowd came, summoned to the meagre feast. While the priests prepare the entrails, pierced through on spits of willow-wood, the sun held mid-way. Romulus and his brother and the young shepherds were offering their naked bodies to the sunlit field. With loaded strips of hide and javelins and with the weight of thrown stones, their arms they gave to the test through sport. A shepherd shouted all the way from high, ‘Romulus! Remus!’ he said. ‘Robbers are driving the young bullocks out of the way of the fields.’ It would take too long to arm. Each of them go forth, divided in different directions; Remus runs into them, and the plunder is recovered. When returned, he takes down the hissing entrails from the spits and says: ‘None but the victor shall eat these for certain.’ He does as he said, and the Fabii do too. Romulus comes there with nothing and sees the bare tables and bones. He laughed, and was grieved the Fabii and Remus had been able to win, and his own Quintilii had not been able. The report of the deed remains: they run without clothes, because it resulted well it has enduring fame”.

The poet elevates this *aiton* when he evokes his Muse for the second time *adde peregrinis causas, mea Musa, Latinas* (359). The god Faunus is honoured in a way truly worthy of respect in the context of Roman history.⁴² Furthermore, Ovid also explains the origins of the two colleges of the *Luperci*, the *Quinctiales* and the *Fabiani*, created to commemorate the companions of Romulus and Remus, the *Quintilii* and the *Fabii* (377-378). Ovid highlights the contribution of these ancient, yet still contemporarily important families, to the Roman memory.⁴³ In doing so, ensuring the importance of nudity at this fertility ritual receives attention as an instrumental feature. In the face of the Augustan moral code, Ovid appears determined to keep the *Luperci* naked, and through this aspect, maintains the continuity of this ancient ritual practice and its contribution to Romanness not only in his time, but in the future.

41. Ov., *Fast.* II 359-380.

42. Parker, 1993, p. 206.

43. Fabre-Serris, 2013, pp. 89-90.

3. *VENERALIA*

Ovid blurs the social status of women participating in the *Veneralia* by inviting them in an ambiguous manner, one quite open to an interpretation which includes all classes, and then also by ensuring they are naked for both rituals. There is no mention of chaste Sulpicia or the transgressions of the Vestal Virgins, Ovid's Venus rather, is introduced with rich associations to fertility of all, the bringer of life. Champeaux argues that these rites have at their core the objective of coitus and I further contend that fertility is the essential end of such engagement, towards which the festival is actually directed.⁴⁴ Despite the lack of extant evidence about legislation on women's dress, even within the *lex Iulia de adulteriis*, women guilty of adultery supposedly wore the toga, the traditional dress of prostitutes, rather than the matronly *stola*. Moral legislation on marriage and adultery lay at the core of the emperor's programme of social control and emphasised definition and maintenance of status and distinctions, encouraging status-appropriate behaviour.⁴⁵ Augustan clothing was an important marker of status and virtue for women by which they would be identified as matrons, young wives, prostitutes and so on, in many of these festivals.⁴⁶ Just as the toga was for men, the *stola* was the mark of married female Roman citizens.⁴⁷ If not legislated, it was still a public sign of status which is interpreted as a form of social division and control. This is further notable when, in some of the rituals, Romans are required to abandon their clothing and appear naked, stripped of easy social identification. Nudity challenges the social hierarchy. Ovid "undermines the dress code of the Augustan legislation ... whereas cults of traditional Roman religion tended to reinforce social hierarchies."⁴⁸ We see this in Ovid's depiction of the cult of Venus *Verticordia*, which includes the participation of women of varied status together in the one rite:

*rite deam colitis, Latiae matresque nurusque
et vos, quis vittae longaue vestis abest.
aurea marmoreo redimicula demite collo,
demite divitias: tota lavanda dea est.
aurea siccato redimicula reddite collo:
nunc alii flores, nunc nova danda rosa est.*

44. Champeaux, 1982, pp. 378-395.

45. McGinn, 2008, pp. 1 and 3.

46. Ov., *Ars am.* III 483: *vittae honore*; *Rem. am.* 386; Val. Max., V 2, 1.

47. Edmondson, 2008b, p. 24.

48. Ziogas, 2014, pp. 735, 741.

*vos quoque sub viridi myrto iubet ipsa lavari:
causaque, cur iubeat (discite!), certa subest
litore siccabat rorantes nuda capillos:
viderunt satyri, turba proterva, deam.
sensit et opposita textit sua corpora myrto:
tuta fuit factio vosque referre iubet.*⁴⁹

“Duly worship the goddess, Latin matrons and brides, and you who leave off the fillets and long gown. Take off from her marble neck the golden necklaces, take off her wealth; the goddess is washed whole. Return the golden necklaces to her dried neck, now other flowers, now a new rose is given. The goddess herself orders you too to be washed, under green myrtle, the reason why she orders, (Learn it!), is certain. She was naked drying her dripping hair on the shore. Satyrs saw, a wanton band, the goddess. She realised and covered her body by placing myrtle against it. By doing this she was safe, and she orders you repeat it”

In honour of Venus *Verticordia*, goddess and then worshippers are naked in a *lavatio* ritual. So far, it has been the men naked but here we witness a ritual where the female devotees appear naked. Clothed “matrons” *matres*, “young brides” *nurus* and “who leave off the fillets and long robe” *quis vittae longaque vestis abest* (other women) of Latium, remove the deity’s accessories of jewellery and flowers, wash her statue, redress the goddess and then they undress to wash themselves. The *longa vestis* is identified with the *stola* of the matron, who was in a legitimate marriage and expected to be modest and faithful.⁵⁰ Ovid’s inclusion of women who do not wear the fillets (or headbands) and the *stola* is ambiguous and open for inclusion of even more women than may be first anticipated. It might include matrons who choose not to wear them, poor women who do not, or even women unlikely to wear them due to their professions, such as those working in various situations, not solely limited to prostitution. Ovid summons these women, often identified by their dress, and seemingly includes all women in a rite which then demands nudity, and strips them of easy social identification. The inclusive approach is interesting given Ovid’s own prescriptive approach to female clothing and adornment.⁵¹ Removal of clothing in the *Fasti* negates the sartorial confusion which seemed an anxiety of Roman men. The action of undressing and redressing the statue of Venus *Verticordia* and then her devotees also recalls the Hercules and Omphale episode. Ovid emphasises the ornaments of

49. Ov., *Fast.* IV 133-144.

50. Ov., *Ars am.* I 31-32; Mart., I 35.

51. Ov., *Ars am.* III.

the goddess, as he did for Queen Omphale the devotee. The association with wealth, acknowledged earlier in the description of the queen, is clear in the interaction with the iconography in the more socially inclusive Venus *Verticordia*, where the goddess' wealth, represented by her golden necklaces, is removed. The accessory of jewellery in both examples, and especially in the ritualisation of it in the Venus *Verticordia*, serves as an identifier of wealth in the devotee Omphale, and reverence in the deity. Elegance, which includes clothing and adornment, and cleanliness, were signs of the upper classes.⁵² Nudity, devoid of clothing and ornamentation becomes a temporary social equaliser for women, eliminating visual markers of status.

Nudity ensures that markers of status and class are removed as well as any sartorial confusion associated with clothing and adornment. Women who wore clothing not fitting their status, confused the boundaries that the *lex Iulia* was attempting to exert on the Roman population.⁵³ Olson argues that clothing for women in ancient Rome may have been largely prescriptive and so it was not always easy to identify social and moral status using vestimentary indicators.⁵⁴ There is usually a clear affirmation of both social status and identity in the dress of devotees, but in the worship of Venus, we can make a case for women of all social groups.⁵⁵ Nudity was a more dangerous condition for Roman women than it was for their male counterparts. In the context of Roman "public nudity" in the baths for women, the myrtle reminds us that when naked, matrons are no longer afforded the level of protection offered by their sartorial markers. The protective covering of the myrtle, a reminder of Venus' evasion from the satyrs, signals a positive consideration of the episode since the initial threat of rape is extinguished. For Roman women, confined and restricted by expectations of marriage, including pressure to produce offspring, and legal punishment for adultery, in conjunction with Roman distaste of public nudity, ritualistic nudity had the potential to be quite liberating. Venus, surprisingly, encourages chastity, suggestive of an association of nudity with purity after the ritual cleansing of the goddess, which is then juxtaposed with a cosmetic desire to appear attractive to men in the celebration of *Fortuna Virilis*:

*discite nunc, quare Fortunae tura Virili
detis eo, calida qui locus umet aqua.
accipit ille locus posito velamine cunctas*

52. Olson, 2008, pp. 25-26.

53. Dixon, 2014, p. 301.

54. Olson, 2006, pp. 181-182.

55. Fantham, 1998, pp. 116-117.

*et vitium nudi corporis omne videt;
ut tegat hoc celetque viros, Fortuna Virilis
praestat et hoc parvo ture rogata facit.*⁵⁶

“Now you learn why you give incense to Fortuna Virilis there in that place which is wet with warm water. That place receives all women without their clothes and sees every flaw of the naked body. Where Fortuna Virilis covers this and conceals it from men, and she does this ready to help when asked with a little incense”.

“All women” (*cunctas*) are naked in the worship of Fortuna Virilis in the hope that the goddess conceals the blemishes on their naked bodies from men, which is both interesting and somewhat ironic (148). We might infer from the use of *cunctas* that this too is a socially inclusive celebration for women of varied status. The consideration of nakedness is ultimately positive since although the women may have blemishes, the goddess will conceal them. Beauty and adornment could be considered symbols of fertility and virtue in association with Venus and nude portraits of Roman matrons.⁵⁷ Nakedness of female devotees is seen as instrumentally crucial in the worship of both Venus *Verticordia* and Fortuna *Virilis*. Even the use of incense, in the case of Fortuna *Virilis*, is suggestive of concealment if one considers its smoke. This idea can be further extrapolated to draw a connection between the use of green myrtle for concealment of the body and the incense performing the same function. In the *Lupercalia*, the *Luperci* are instruments of fertility, and in the *Veneralia*, it is the women themselves who are given control through the conduit of feminine goddesses, cleansing themselves as a prelude to fertile activities. In the *Floralia*, Ovid realises his vision of religious ritual where women of all classes have been included, from the *Lupercalia* to this festival, women have played an important role, contra restrictions imposed by Augustan ideology.

4. FLORALIA

In this final example of ritualistic nudity, Ovid affords the involvement of prostitutes in the extremely popular and already inclusive celebration of the plebeian chorused *Floralia*. Ovid introduces Flora in a similar fashion to the way he introduced Venus, as a goddess with powerful procreative abilities. Flora was not simply a goddess of

56. Ov., *Fast.* IV 145-150.

57. D'Ambra, 1996, pp. 219-220.

flowers, but of agriculture and fertility.⁵⁸ Pasco-Pranger posits that there is a suggested connection between nudity and fertility here, given Flora's name and the positioning of the festival during spring.⁵⁹ In fact, the festival was in response to failing fields, gardens, olives and crops, securing Flora's position as an important goddess of fertility.⁶⁰ In Republican times, Cicero saw the *Floralia* as most ancient and amongst those festivals at the very heart of Roman identity, an opportunity for the goddesses' benevolence to be cast upon the *populus* and the plebs.⁶¹ The *Floralia* would have been a ritual of integration and social cohesion and one over which the Senate would have been keen to exert influence.⁶² Flora's *ludi* were funded by the plebeian *aediles*, the *Publicii*, who collected fines from the rich grazing their cattle on public land.⁶³ Prostitutes and people of the lower classes were given less opportunity to celebrate at festivals than the upper classes, but more licence at those such as the *Floralia*. Ovid's choice to include prostitutes is striking furthermore due to the lack of mention of *meretrices* by Verrius Flaccus in the *Fasti Praeneste*,⁶⁴ strongly argued to be Augustan propaganda.⁶⁵ The focus on the *Praeneste* on fertility of grain and agricultural aspects does support that the connection between the festival and fertility was already well-established, and extrapolating the fertility of the crops and all vegetation to the fertility of women is integral to the very nature of the celebration of spring. Juvenal hints that Roman wives fought as gladiators and according to Valerius Maximus it was custom at theatrical performances for the audience to demand actresses remove their clothes at least by the late Republic.⁶⁶ On a famous occasion in 55 BCE, the presence of Marcus Cato in the audience inhibited the usual calls for the striptease. When he realised, he left the theatre and the show went on. This nakedness could be viewed as "a light-hearted patriotic showpiece" of a mime play re-enactment of the Cloelia story, who swam across the river to escape when she asked for permission to bathe in the river without the prying eyes of the guards.⁶⁷ Such mimes encouraged further blurring of sartorial lines, but in a controlled environment, since the actresses would have been dressed as characters which often included matrons and Cloelia herself

58. Ov., *Fast.* V 255-256 and 261-274.

59. Pasco-Pranger, 2019, p. 231.

60. Ov., *Fast.* V 315-330.

61. Cic., *Verr.* II 5, 36.

62. Clavel-Lévêque, 1986.

63. Ov., *Fast.* V 279-294.

64. *Fasti Praenestini: CIL* I 2, 24.

65. Wallace-Hadrill, 1987, p. 221.

66. Iuven., VI 249-250; Val. Max., II 10, 8. Cf. Sen., *Ep.* 97, 8; Mart., I 35, 8-9.

67. Wiseman, 2008, p. 182. Cf. Dion. Hal., V 33, 1; Plut., *Pub.* 19, 1.

would hardly have been dressed as a prostitute. Earlier we acknowledged the fertility aspect of the Lupercalia in ensuring the continuation of the Roman people, and in the *Floralia*, we can extrapolate the budding of the flowers to plants whose produce fed them⁶⁸:

*scaena levis decet hanc: non est, mihi credite, non est
illa coturnatas inter habenda deas.
turba quidem cur hos celebret meretricia ludos,
non ex difficili causa petita subest.
non est de tetricis, non est de magna professis,
vult sua plebeio sacra patere choro,
et monet aetatis specie, dum floreat, uti;
contemni spinam, cum cecidere rosae.
cur tamen, ut dantur vestes Cerialibus albae,
sic haec est cultu versicolore decens?
an quia maturis albescit messis aristis,
et color et species floribus omnis inest?
annuit, et motis flores cecidere capillis,
accidere in mensas ut rosa missa solet.*⁶⁹

“A light stage is suitable for this goddess. She is not, believe me she is not, to be held among the goddesses in tragic boots. Indeed, why a troupe of prostitutes filled these games, the reason behind this is not difficult to find. She is not from the gloomy, she is not from those who declare public great things. She wants her own rites to be open to a plebeian chorus, and she advises a view to make sense of life, while it blooms. ‘The thorn,’ she says, ‘is despised once the roses have fallen.’ Why is it, though, that white robes are given at the Cerialia, so this goddess is fitting in multicoloured clothing? Is it because the harvest whitens when the ears are ripe, and in flowers there is every colour and show? She nodded, and the movement of her hair caused the flowers to fall, just as the thrown rose is accustomed to fall on the tables”.

Ovid makes clear the nature of the celebrations earlier in the *Fasti* “the stage has the manner of freer jest” (*scaena ioci morem liberioris habet*).⁷⁰ This festival is different in that it is plebeian and one in which prostitutes play a most visible role, as performers. Colourful clothing is a powerful identifier, one which goes beyond the simple aetiology that “in flowers there is every colour and show” (*color et species floribus*

68. Palmer, 2006, p. 59.

69. Ov., *Fast.* V 347-360.

70. Ov., *Fast.* IV 946.

omnis inest).⁷¹ The dress here suits the “greater licentiousness” (*lascivia maior*) and “light-hearted” (*iocosis*) nature of the revellers who celebrate this festival.⁷² Ovid may have been a poet particularly concerned with issues of sexuality and desire,⁷³ but I do not think this was his sole reason for giving *meretrices* prominence in the *Fasti*. Ovid gives prostitutes a prominent role in such a popular and public festival which not only includes, but really elevates them in a cultic sense. These women are included in the Roman religious ritual calendar of events and in such a visible way. Perhaps due to its oftentimes perceived risqué reputation, the importance of this spring festival, particularly its contribution to fertility, seems to have been not given the attention deserved in modern scholarship, but this was not always the case in antiquity. The consideration of nudity at this festival is positive, despite the air of disapproval due to its licentiousness, blurring of social distinctions between matrons and prostitutes and the often-highlighted feature of the involvement of prostitutes. The ritualisation of nudity in the *Floralia* has the same effect for prostitutes as undressing does for other classes of women in the spring festivals already discussed. It invites the audience to see only the nakedness and removes markers of identification. Even if we concede that Ovid does not explicitly refer to nudity, the social status lines are blurred likely more than visually seen on the streets, since much is made of the necessity of colourful clothing as intrinsic to Flora’s festival in his explanation. Martial supports this conclusion by suggesting that prostitutes adopted the clothing of matrons: “who clothes the *Floralia* and grants the modesty of the *stola* to prostitutes?” (*quis Floralia vestit et stolatum permittit meretricibus pudorem?*).⁷⁴ Ovid provides us with a view of religious ritual involvement, one which involves women and men of every class and status, and so one which is more realistic in its reflection of society; everyone contributes to the continuation of the Roman state and identity. This passage also offers which might appear at first glance a cursory aetiology for the wearing of white dress at the *Cerialia*, however, juxtaposition with the *Floralia* elevates the multi-coloured festival, associates it with fertility and demonstrates the full force of *plebeian*-centric celebration. Do we acknowledge this as a response to the anxiety-producing tensions of the Roman socio-political reality?⁷⁵ The *lex Iulia* prescribed what Romans wore, whom they married, and restricted sexual freedom, which served to emphasise social status and restrict movement between the ranks. Ovid has chosen to include women

71. Ov., *Fast.* V 358.

72. Ov., *Fast.* V 331 and 183.

73. Strong, 2016, p. 194.

74. Mart., I 35, 8-9.

75. Cels-Saint-Hilaire, 1977, p. 274.

nude as a comment on this reality, challenging the marking of women's status on the basis of clothing and he has done so on the public stage in an extremely popular festival. It was in this ritual context that Romans were invited to view the nudity of prostitutes and these women themselves as positive in their contribution to the religious celebration of a goddess concerned with agricultural and human fertility. These women are given access and ensured participation and any ambiguity related to their identification, status and involvement, which may have been present in the previous two festivals, has well and truly been removed. In the *Floralia* then, Ovid ensures that all women finally have been able to share in religious cultic activities, a form of social equalisation, and it has been in the context of nudity and fertility during important spring festivals.

5. CONCLUSION

Ritualistic nudity and its implications for women and their fertility provides a link between spring festivals the *Lupercalia*, the *Veneralia*, and the *Floralia*. Ovid's inclusive *Fasti* serves as a calendar which has a clear focus on public nudity in these three festivals where women participate in religious rites in the Augustan age. Religious festivals were occasions for Romans to gather in community groups as devotees in honour of their deities. Ovid provides aetiologies for ancient rites and reshapes them to appeal to his Roman audience in an authentic way, providing historical continuity for these cults which may not always be necessarily in line with Augustan sensibilities. I have considered these examples and argued that there is a link between religious rites intimately connected with nudity and fertility which challenges constructed notions of social identity. We have seen an increasingly accepting and inclusive involvement of women as we have progressed through these festivals, and it has been based on nudity and fertility. Emphasis on nudity of devotees is gender specific to either male or female at these ritual celebrations. In Ovid's description of the *Lupercalia*, nudity, clothing, and cross-dressing are prominent features in the multi-aetiological explanation for why the *Luperci* run naked in honour of Faunus, with an overwhelmingly disproportionate emphasis on the nudity of the *Luperci*. While public nudity was shocking, Ovid has made the most of the ritualistic context to emphasise its contribution to fertility in festivals where women have sanctioned roles. The "flagellator priests" are at least half, if not fully naked, as might be, in part, the women proffering their backs. The emphasis is clearly on the fertility of the women, matrons, and girls, who need to be impregnated by the men. Undressing, redressing, and nudity are key in the *lavatio* rituals in honour of female deities Venus and *Fortuna* during the *Veneralia*. Nudity removes visual markers of women's social class, matrons, brides and

those who leave off the fillets and long robes in the former and likely all women in the latter. Women wash and screen themselves and then pray for attractiveness, so we see more agency in their role in fertility. Colourful clothing and nudity are clear markers of the accessibility of the *Floralia* with its prostitute striptease and plebeian chorus, where women seem to have taken charge by flaunting their naked sexuality in a public forum. In a post-civil war world, Augustus' *lex Iulia* was designed to reinforce Roman civic identity, and clothing was one of the ways in which it attempted to accomplish this goal. Its punishment for adultery, and of those unmarried, and its rewarding of those bearing children, marks the importance of fertility. Ovid's emphasis on nudity at the three major festivals I have discussed invites an increasingly egalitarian approach, since visual markers of clothing as status are removed, allowing women of varied status participation. These ritualistic celebrations afforded opportunity for the reaffirmation of social community, the challenging of social hierarchal assumptions of women based on clothing and ultimately, the tracing back of Roman identity from the earliest of times by providing historical continuity of ancient cultic practices.

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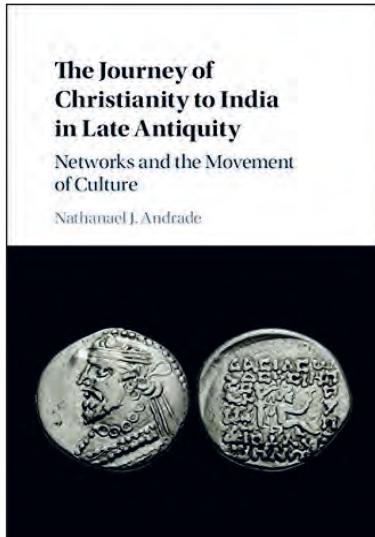
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RECENSIONES

THE JOURNEY OF CHRISTIANITY TO INDIA



ANDRADE, NATHANAEL J. (2018). *The Journey of Christianity to India in Late Antiquity. Networks and the Movement of Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 312 pp., 64,46€ [ISBN 978-1-1082-9695-3].

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“HOW DID CHRISTIANITY MAKE ITS REMARKABLE VOYAGE from the Roman Mediterranean to the Indian subcontinent?”. This question represents the core of the book by Nathanael J. Andrade, associate professor in the Department of History at State University of New York, Binghamton. Andrade immediately answers in the subtitle of the book: “Networks and the Movement of Culture”. Indeed, Andrade’s volume, *The Journey of Christianity to India in Late Antiquity*, deals with networks, commercial roots, connections, circulation of people, objects, and ideas. All these interesting themes introduce the reader to the thematic of *how* the religious history of South Asia was *connected* to that of the Mediterranean in late Antiquity through the Christian narratives about the apostle “Judas Thomas”. Andrade’s methodological choice of using

the double name “Judas Thomas” provides the reader with the first clues about his methodological approach to the issue under study, by giving equal attention to the Syriac and Greek versions of the so-called *Acts of Thomas*. At the same time, a methodological perspective that focuses on connections allows the author to show how late antique economy opened the way to the eastward travel of Christianity and how the movements of cultures followed suit.

Readers will find in this book an original study of the global history of Christianity in late Antiquity that privileges the vital role of Greek sources of the so-called “Thomasine” literature over the Syriac tradition due of their connecting function. The main hypothesis behind this is that “the surviving Greek versions often preserve readings close to the original composition (whatever its language) than the surviving Syriac tradition” (p. 29). Such a premise recurs in the first part (chap. 1. “The *Acts of Thomas* and Its Impact”, pp. 27-66), in Andrade’s discussion of the arguments about the origin of the composition of the so-called *Acts of Thomas*, available in the Greek and Syriac languages. Although Andrade brings new evidence to the discussion (such as the Greek Syriac terms for “silver” – through the Middle Persian and the Hebrew languages – in the episode of the purchase of Judas Thomas, and the words to name general Siphor), it remains hard to prove the textual primacy of one version of the *Acts of Thomas* over another. Andrade questions the provenance of the *Acts of Thomas* outside the Roman Near East and illustrates the complexity of the cultural milieu in which this text had originated before reaching the final version known to modern scholars. In his reconstruction, Andrade outlines a cosmopolite and intellectual milieu between Upper Mesopotamia and the Persian Gulf, which does not necessarily overlap with India, thus disputing the Thomasine narratives claim that India is the location of Thomas’ overseas ministry and martyrdom.

Interestingly, Andrade calls attention to the Manichaeic and Zoroastrian “resonances” and attempts to reconstruct both the cultural network through which Christian narratives moved in order to account for Judas Thomas’ preaching in Parthia and North India. He also endeavours to locate commercial routes and key transit points, involving the different names for ports, cities, and islands in the Greek, Syriac, Latin, and Arabic sources, in order to reconstruct the travel from Jerusalem to India (the “south land”) through the Persian Gulf in the 2nd and 3rd cent. CE. More specifically, Andrade suggests the possibility that the episode of Judas Thomas’ sea travel from Jerusalem to India might have unravelled along the lines of “a nautical voyage from the Persian Gulf to Bahrein or Kharg and then the subcontinent” (p. 50). Andrade considers this factor to hold that the *Acts of Thomas* contain pre-existing materials and have limited historical value. As a historian of religions, however, the present reviewer considers such an idea to be crucial in the attempt to illustrate

the cultural network Andrade intends to reconstruct. Indeed, Andrade's efforts to show the impact of the Parthian and Indian trajectories of *Acts of Thomas* (pp. 50-54) provide a relevant research direction which would allow us to rethink the beliefs and textual practices of late antique Christians about the West, Central and South Asia.

The second part of the book, titled "Christianity, Networks, and the Red Sea," focuses on the "Early Christianity and Its Many Indias" (chap. 2, pp. 69-93) and on "The Roman Egyptian Network, the Red Sea, and the Indian Ocean" (chap. 3, pp. 94-136). Although economics provides the framework to reconstruct the connections and the routes for circulation between the Roman Egyptian network and the Red Sea, Andrade does not consider trade as the driving force for Christian preachers. Indeed, he does not seem interested in describing the economic network between the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean. Instead, Andrade tries to understand how geographical knowledge and the use of commercial routes and financial practices may have contributed to the late antique knowledge about India and the Indians among the Christian authors. Such a perspective allows the reader to visualise the key position of Arabia and Ethiopia (and their inhabitants) in the movement of Christians from Roman Egypt to the Indian mainland. As Andrade illustrates, the conflation of India and Ethiopia in the geographical knowledge of the times, together with the loss of a direct connection between Roman Egypt and the territories of the Indian Ocean in the 4th cent. CE, are two crucial factors in establishing the reliability of the information. In some cases, the late antique authors' misunderstanding is evident to us. "Romans increasingly used the term "Indian" for any population whose merchants were involved in trade" (p. 74). Most of Indians who are mentioned in 4th-cent. CE Christian sources were probably either Ethiopians or Arabians. In the best-case scenario, they could have been either the inhabitants of the island of Taprobane, which is generally taken to be ancient Ceylon, or possibly also Socotra or, it should be added, Sumatra¹. Andrade supports his research on sources from the 4th-6th cent. CE, such as a wide range of Christian authors (Rufinus, Socrates, Sozomen, Philostorgius, Jerome), but also on the Latin *Exposition of the Entire World*, the Greek *Itinerary from Eden*, and the *Letter Regarding the People of India and the Brahmins*. He finds evidence that the narratives about the diffusion of Christianity in India are often based on a mislocation: "India" was a literary misnomer for South Arabia or Nubian or Aksumite Ethiopia.

What about the stories about Pantaenus and Bartholomew in India? Andrade is clear on this point: many stories about the diffusion of Christianity in India might have been occurred elsewhere, outside India. However, such sources still

1. Cf. Paris, 1951.

have historical value about how the “Western Christians” imagined the “Eastern Christians” and through which commercial lines the former arrived at latter. From the point of view of this reviewer, the above-delineated perspective represents the most original contribution of the book and deserves close attention. Andrade deals with it in Chapter 3, where he traces the movement of Christianity from Red Sea Egypt to “India” as it was imagined before 500 CE. In an article published in 1958, Paolo Daffinà (unfortunately, a bibliographical reference missing in this book)² noticed that eastward expansion of Christianity was partly due to the lack of significant obstacles and partly to the efficient organisation of the roads of the Parthian empire. Although the Roman empire had no rival in the organisation, the Parthian empire and the Indo-Parthian states favoured the flourishing of caravan cities and commercial and cultural trades. Here, through the networks stretching from Alexandria to the Indian Ocean, the Greek language played a significant role in the intellectual milieu, being familiar to kings, artists, and diplomacy. Moreover, several Jewish colonies settled along the way, playing a crucial role in Roman trade. Andrade brings new insights to previous scholarship on Roman trade with his discussion of the “circulation society” involved in the distribution and the key transit points between Alexandria, the Red Sea ports, and the Indian Ocean, that is “merchants and residents from various empires and realms of India” (p. 101).

The bibliography for archaeological evidence is extensive, but Andrade’s arguments are mainly based on the most recent works by the archaeologists and historians Steven Sidebotham and Raoul McLaughlin, who have widely investigated the economic importance of Rome’s distant trade. Andrade tries to involve in his research the role of *yavanas* – as this term appears in Sanskrit and Prakrit inscriptions – in the commercial network. Without an adequate Indological bibliography, however, it is a subject difficult to deal. Andrade refers to a selection of palaeographical examples from Buddhist milieu, but he does not find enough data to distinguish the Greek *Yavanas* from the foreign *Yavanas*. Probably, the studies by Klaus Karttunen, Johannes Bronkhorst, and Giovanni Verardi on Indo-Greeks and their relationship with Buddhism would have strengthened Andrade’s claims. His volume is relevant, however, in its attempt to outline the “circulation society” in the *many Indias* involved in the commercial networks from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean during the first three centuries CE. This is especially true when the connections between the Roman Egyptian network and South Asian trades had increasingly become indirect, with the consequence that the term “Indian” acquired an increased polysemy.

2. Daffinà, 1958.

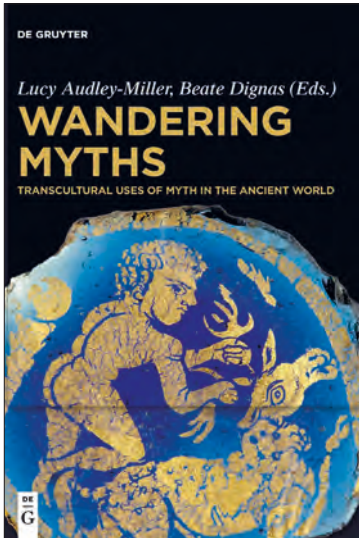
The third part of the book returns to Christianity but focuses on the Persian side of the socio-economic network in order to reassess the movement of Christianity. Andrade illustrates the impact of the Christian literature on standard scholarship about the arrival of Christianity in the eastern countries. He takes into account the unreliability of data about the presence of Christian communities in central Asia before 350 CE (chap. 4. “The Movement of Christianity into Sasanian Persia: Perspectives and Sources”, pp. 139-163), while casting light on the intermediary actors between the Western Christians and the Parthian and Sasanian territories (chap. 5. “Social Connectivity between the Roman Levant, Persian Gulf, and Central Asia”, pp. 164-206). The last chapter, “The Late Antique Impact of the *Acts of Thomas* and Christian Communities in India” (pp. 207-232), returns to the opening question about how the Christianity travelled to India in the first four centuries CE. Data about the Christian communities settled in India are historically provable after 500 CE under the activity of Sasanian merchants. Therefore, according to Andrade, the narratives (both oral and written) about the apostle Thomas circulated after the establishment of the Church of the East. In this chapter, Andrade provides relevant scholarship to understand the diffusion of Christianity in India before 500 CE and to rethink the development from Late Antique to early modern time. Andrade’s effort to cast light on the intermediaries (Sasanian Persians) who were “responsible for transporting knowledge of their [Indian Christians] existence to Christian of Mediterranean” deserves attention (p. 213).

To conclude, Andrade’s volume, *The Journey of Christianity to India in Late Antiquity*, provides a precious perspective for the reconstruction of the arrival of Christianity in India at the beginning of common era. It provides a reference framework for Indologists, historians of religions, and historians of Christianity who are interested in the cultural milieu through which Christian narratives about the apostle Thomas started to circulate from Arabia to India and from South Asia to the Mediterranean. It also offers an original investigation about the socio-economic network which favoured such a circulation. For this purpose, Andrade’s sources range from Greek, Latin, and Syriac to Middle Persian texts, with some incursions into Sanskrit, Prakrit, Arabic, Pahlavi, and Hebrew. Readers will find in this book two highly appreciated appendixes which provide the beginning of Syriac *Acts of Thomas* (ed. Wright) and of that of Greek version (ed. Bonnet). An extensive bibliography closes the volume, providing an update selection of distinguished scholarship.

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WANDERING MYTHS



AUDLEY-MILLER, LUCY and DIGNAS, BEATE (eds.) (2018). *Wandering Myths: Transcultural Uses of Myth in the Ancient World*. Berlin-Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH. 481 pp., 127,71€ [ISBN 978-3-1104-1685-5].

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EL LIBRO RESEÑADO ES EL FRUTO DE TRES TALLERES Y UN CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL en Oxford en 2014 alrededor de un tema fascinante: cómo los mitos se desplazan, viajan y son reutilizados, una perspectiva consistente con las líneas historiográficas dominantes que constatan la extrema permeabilidad de las sociedades antiguas mediterráneas y Próximo Orientales. Los mitos son un gran testigo de esto y lo que se hace con ellos permite entender mucho de los mismos mitos y de las sociedades que los adoptan por las formas en las que lo hacen.

Se entenderá que los catorce trabajos que forman su núcleo, producto de cuatro eventos distintos, no sean valiosos porque juntos aporten una búsqueda de aproximaciones comunes o, al menos, de una metodología o perspectivas participadas, sino por su variedad en una dirección de trabajo que, además, es una buena dirección. Cualquier

estudioso o estudiante avanzado que esté interesado en particular en los caminos de los mitos griegos encontrará aquí una excelente ocasión para enriquecer perspectivas en muy diferentes direcciones.

El prefacio de las editoras es claro y se agradecen las referencias bibliográficas a las perspectivas que acompañan o abonan las búsquedas de perspectivas interculturales de los mitos. Como es frecuente, se pueden echar de menos referencias más hondas, por ejemplo, en lo referente a la revalorización de la parte romana de los préstamos, a las tradiciones culturales clasicistas que negaban creatividad a Roma y la valoraban en la medida en que adaptaban componentes griegos. O se podría apuntar que el tema de que los mitos son lo que son no porque vengan de unos orígenes prístinos sino por su, digamos, capacidad de adaptación, es importante, pero era parte ya del debate alrededor de Vernant y Vidal-Naquet hace casi medio siglo. Hay también en la introducción, como corresponde, una breve presentación de las aportaciones que siguen.

Uno sus aspectos más resaltables se encuentra en su final, en la p. XXII, cuando se afirma, tras este resumen de los aportes del libro: “The above overview of the volume should leave no doubt that the contributions in all three sections of the book critically address and respond to Robin Lane Fox’s challenges in an equally challenging way. This is not, then, a book seeking to make bold statements about definitive origins, versions or clearly discernible developments of myths. Rather, our aim is to explore *how* stories ‘wandered’ and were subject to ongoing redefinition”. El que las editoras dediquen previamente algo más de una página a plantear, y sobre todo, a puntualizar y a rebatir, la “Introducción” de Lane Fox lleva a la razonable pregunta del sentido de una *introducción* que ellas mismas sitúan como paradigma de aquello de lo que el libro se aleja.

Sea como fuere, la “Introducción” de Lane Fox abunda en lo planteado en su libro de 1988 (traducido en 2009, *Héroes viajeros: los griegos y sus mitos*. Barcelona: Crítica), en el que seguía lo que Tom Stinton había bautizado como el método “histórico-geográfico”: los mitos se transmiten persona a persona y por contacto: viajeros, artistas, autores de mosaicos con sus libros de modelos, espectadores... y el papel en ellos de lo que llama Lane Stinton “creative misunderstanding”. Destaca el rol de conquistas, sexo y misioneros, con ejemplos como Alejandro Magno creyendo encontrar evidencias del paso de Heracles en rasgos de pueblos de la India. Su ejemplo fundamental, con todo, son quienes habían sido objeto de su libro, los eubeos, que recogerían componentes neo-hititas en la zona del Monte Hazzi, cercana a Al Mina, alrededor de la primera mitad del s. VIII a.C. y los trasladarían por sus fundaciones mediterráneas hasta Italia y Sicilia. Dejando a un lado que aceptar este tipo de componentes no presenta ningún problema siempre que se justifique debidamente y no se convierta en el único camino de interpretación, no siempre la argumentación es cuidada. Defender que el nombre de una heroína de una saga en circasiano en el

Cáucaso llamada Amezan reflejaría la forma indígena de la que los griegos derivarían la palabra “amazona” con el argumento de que a mediados del XIX, cuando se recoge, no había señales de influencia occidental o clásica (p. XXXVIII) significa ignorar en exceso la historia del Cáucaso. Como señalan las editoras tampoco es fácil de entender el tránsito en las páginas finales a los mitos de los troyanos en el contexto de los *nostoi*, esto es, el tránsito de hablar de viajeros concretos a mitos que hablan de viajes.

Es más útil el “Epílogo” de Robert Parker, que presenta de manera eficaz los textos, sin casi valoraciones, y hace dos observaciones útiles, una evidente, que los artículos pueden dividirse entre mitos que van a Grecia y mitos que salen de Grecia, y otra que debiera serlo: que la expansión de los mitos griegos deriva de su poder narrativo y de su enorme prestigio, un capital cultural que se difunde de múltiples maneras, una herencia compartida. Desde esta perspectiva, es difícil, podríamos añadir, llamar viajero ya a un mito en un sarcófago o mosaico del s. III en zonas que llevan mil años de presencia de cultura griega o quinientos de elaboraciones escritas griegas.

La primera parte del libro se dedica a tres trabajos bajo la rúbrica *Part I: Changing Cultural and Mythical Landscapes in Anatolia*. Son tres textos muy diferentes y no se puede menos que simpatizar con las dificultades de las editoras a la hora de organizar un material tan heterogéneo, incluso por encima del estupor de que el tercero de los trabajos se dedique centralmente a Arcadia y Chipre. Rutherford plantea un tema obligado y ya con muchos años de exploración: los paralelos entre los mitos de realeza y sucesión divina en Hesíodo y “El Canto de Kumarbi”, encontrado en archivos hititas, pero muy conectado a historias hurritas, y las versiones del mito de Tifón, en particular las no hesiódicas, y otros mitos hititas. El interesante papel de la presencia en los mismos archivos de alrededor de veinte textos narrativos sobre divinidades que incluyen diversas importaciones nos sitúa ante la necesidad de entender que es imprescindible considerar el cruce en el mundo hitita no solo de los consabidos materiales babilonios, sino hurritas y luvtas, además de sirio-palestinos y quizás micénicos. La esquina noreste del Mediterráneo se muestra como un fértil lugar de intercambios desde el Bronce Final y hay que pensar en todo el conjunto de tradiciones en juego entonces, además de en las continuaciones y reelaboraciones en el I milenio a.C. que van a parar a Hesíodo y el mundo heleno en general y en la complejidad de caminos y transmisores, que puede incluir vías anatólicas directas, además de las tradicionales de Chipre y Creta, y tanto en el primer como en el segundo milenio.

El trabajo de Catherine M. Draycott se dedica al Sarcófago de Polyxena y la tumba de Kizilbel, dos piezas halladas en Asia Menor y del tránsito entre los siglos VI y V a.C., es decir, en pleno mundo Aqueménida, las dos con representaciones mitológicas

helenas nada usuales, una de ellas un sarcófago con magníficos relieves otra una tumba con pinturas en un estado, por lo demás, poco halagüeño. Las cuestiones tratadas se suceden y con mucha consistencia más allá de la clásica tarea de interpretar qué temas se representan: el significado que pueden haber tenido en ese contexto sepulcral y local, por ejemplo, desde la proyección de emociones de pérdida, o didácticas, a las imágenes que buscan proyectar quienes las encargan, incluyendo “estrategias de distinción”, o el problema de qué papel cabe darles a las dos piezas para interpretar la historia del Asia Menor aqueménida. Los dos son muestras del enriquecimiento de elites en ese mundo en dos lugares alejados entre sí – la zona del Granicos y el Norte de Licia respectivamente – y con una presencia helena también muy diferente, pero en un contexto altamente interconectado. Los dos son fascinantes por razones propias. Qué hacen temas de muertes de princesas y lo que parece ser una boda en la tumba de un varón – según los huesos – y a qué identidad étnica se vincula el primero o el lugar del segundo en un espacio muy desconocido y en el que sorprende el uso del mito griego de manera tan masiva en sus pinturas parietales.

Tanja S. Scheer presenta un caso más clásico, la historia de la fundación por el arcadio Agapenor de Paphos en Chipre en su *nostos* tras Troya. Sostiene que Ptolomeo de Megalópolis, gobernador ptolemaida de la isla a comienzos del siglo II a.C., literato y con raíces en Arcadia, tuvo que ver con la intensa renovación de este mito, que encontraría correspondencia también con su renovación en la arcadia Tegea. Es uno de los ejemplos en el libro de que sí hay artículos en los que sugieren “definitive origins, versions or clearly discernible developments of myths”.

La segunda parte se abre con el artículo de Nancy T. de Grummond que presenta posibles precedentes del personaje de Mezencio en la *Eneida* a partir, sobre todo de un espejo etrusco de ca. 300 a.C. La propuesta de la autora de leer Mezencio es del todo arriesgada (p. 112) y nada excepto que parece un rey lo une al personaje representado. Por otra parte, tampoco nada en la imagen que parece representar a Aquiles vistiéndose lo asimila a Mezencio, lo que la autora sabe, pero contra-argumenta señalando el aspecto más fascinante de su artículo: la constatación de la existencia de muchas representaciones mitológicas etruscas, y de Praeneste, con imágenes y nombres de personajes que no cuadran, como Helena siendo parte de los tres personajes femeninos entre los que elige Alejandro, o Hércules aparentemente como matador del Minotauro. También cree ver un componente profético. A continuación, señala que hay un individuo real denominado Laucie Mezencio en una vasija del s. VII a.C. (en p. 120 de comienzos del VI), quizás de Caere, que puede apuntar a la existencia de una familia aristocrática o real con algún tipo de vinculación con la historia del rey Mezencio. Añade la existencia de una tumba en Roma de la segunda mitad del s. I a.C. en la que aparece Mezencio y quizás Ascanio, lo que vincula a versiones alter-

nativas de Livio y Dionisio de Halicarnaso sobre Mezencio. Esta lectura le permite añadir un espacio más en lo que denomina “narrative stratigraphies” (p. 116), “a kind of stratigraphical chart” (p. 119), “stratigraphical model” (p. 12) que no es fácil de entender y que la autora en todo caso asimila de una manera no menos arriesgada a un modelo que construye para el tema de Cacu (Cacus en Virgilio) con menos espacio en el texto, pero quizás no con menos “bold statements”.

Siguen dos análisis vinculando Italia y Grecia. Luca Giuliani, parte de la gran importancia de los componentes teatrales en las imágenes de vasijas apulias que trabajó Oliver Taplin a comienzos de los 1990s, quien sostiene que sin la presencia de representaciones de tragedias áticas en el siglo IV a.C. no se entienden. Giuliani cree más en el papel independiente de los textos. Y sostiene que la teatralidad de algunas escenas no implica teatro, sino formas teatrales convertidas en convenciones pictóricas, motivos estándar para contar historias. Contrasta representaciones cómicas, con signos de auténtica teatralidad, y trágicas, que pueden contener elementos de origen teatral, sin que impliquen representaciones teatrales.

Katharina Lorenz se plantea las claves de la yuxtaposición de mitos griegos en las pinturas parietales pompeyanas, un viejo tema que desarrolla tratando de vislumbrar cambios en sus usos durante las diferentes fases de la pintura pompeyana. Ofrece una perspectiva convincente de cuándo aparece esta nueva práctica narrativa que hace recaer sobre el espectador la tarea de una exégesis más compleja a partir de generar una nueva forma de relato. Y se pregunta también por su posible crecimiento a partir de la tradición etrusca o del helenismo itálico o su novedad.

Los dos trabajos de Barbara E. Borg, y de B.C. Ewald sobre sarcófagos romanos y áticos, centrados en los siglos II-III ofrecen dos perspectivas igualmente interesantes. Yo destacaría del primero su reflexión metodológica e historiográfica. Es en los años 90 cuando se empieza a plantear el problema de la utilidad de este tipo de obras no para reconstruir obras griegas perdidas, sino, en la línea de entender el significado para los espectadores de las obras de arte, para analizar qué componentes de ellos hablaban de valores romanos y el proceso de lo que podríamos llamar, jugando con el célebre libro sobre la romanización de Atenas, la romanización del arte griego. Tan interesante como esto es su referencia a las proyecciones de modelos extraídos de la retórica, como “alegoría”, usado generalmente con un alto nivel de impropiedad. La plasticidad de los mitos y los *exempla* que se proyectan con ellos centra un estudio donde se muestra el papel de los *exempla maeroris*, el dolor de la muerte, de los *exempla mortalitatis* y el triunfo en el siglo III de los *exempla virtutis* a identificar con la persona difunta, con el consiguiente cambio y reducción de temáticas. El trabajo de Edwards aborda, tras una sólida introducción a los sarcófagos áticos, la selección de mitos en ellos que, defiende, apunta a la conversión de la tumba en un *heroon*, a la

heroización del difunto. Realiza también una rigurosa comparación sistemática entre los sarcófagos romanos y los áticos, definiendo dos “mitoesferas” diferentes.

Si es de lamentar la falta de una auténtica reflexión colectiva en el libro, también lo es que no haya ni siquiera en un caso tan claro, ni un amago de reflexión conjunta. Además, temas como los problemas de interpretación de los programas expuestos en el frecuentísimo caso de ausencia de huesos o de inscripciones que permitan saber de género, edad o identidades colectivas, también aparecen, como es lógico, en el trabajo de Draycott y una reflexión conjunta tampoco hubiera estado nada mal.

La abigarrada tercera parte comienza con un trabajo de Martin West que hubiera cuadrado muy bien al lado del de Rutherford, entre otras cosas para mostrar su contraste. West no sólo propone para las conexiones entre Gilgamesh y Homero un camino directo, sino que lo reconstruye: ni más ni menos que un poema, por supuesto, perdido, dedicado a Heracles. Así que genera tres columnas, una con las fuentes asirio-babilónicas, otra en medio con el poema de Heracles que imagina y una tercera con sus reflejos homéricos. West admite en su final la fragilidad de su intento. Es imaginativo y sin duda, un ejemplo más de que la de Lane Fox no es la única propuesta osada y unidireccional del libro.

Los trabajos de Pitches y Serida juegan con las relaciones entre mitos egipcios y griegos, cada uno desde un lado del juego. Pitcher muestra la muy griega y muy interesada lectura de los mitos de Osiris que lleva adelante Diodoro Sículo en su historia universal, un aspecto fascinante que es difícil que no recuerde, en su respectivo terreno, lo que significa el fenómeno de la creación de los cultos místéricos, empezando por el de Isis, y que hay que entender en claves de radicales reutilizaciones. En este caso, Pitcher muestra la vinculación de sus usos al comienzo de la obra con el proyecto y las perspectivas historiográficas de un Diodoro nada polibiano. Rana Sérída apunta en sentido contrario. El ciclo de Inaros es un conjunto egipcio de historias fascinante en proceso de publicación que sitúan su argumento, la historia del guerrero Inaros, en época de la invasión asiria de Egipto, s. VII a.C, pero que se escriben a lo largo de los siglos posteriores, tienen un gran papel en el mundo egipcio bajo el poder griego y romano y aparecen en la famosa biblioteca del templo de Tebtunis del s. II. Es fascinante que sean tan distintos de la literatura egipcia tradicional. La autora defiende no ya una influencia directa de temas homéricos, sino el uso sistemático de éstos como modelos, aportando técnicas literarias, estrategias narrativas, fórmulas y otros componentes. El mito griego serviría aquí para que los sacerdotes construyeran en su propia lengua historias y memorias de resistencia que, curiosamente, sirven frente a griegos y romanos. A la espera de la publicación definitiva de los textos, el trabajo es una ventana abierta a un tema fascinante. Lo es también, a mi juicio, porque lecturas negativas de, por ejemplo, Heródoto hablando de la creencia en la

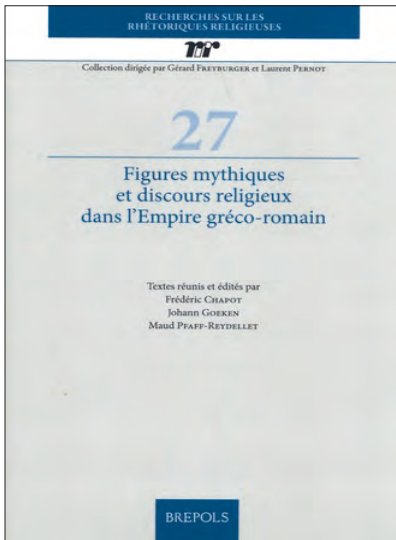
transmigración en Egipto han sido puestas en duda con argumentos que no tienen en cuenta ni la complejidad de la historia egipcia en el I milenio a.C. ni las complejas respuestas espirituales e ideológicas a las que pueden dar lugar.

El texto de Rachel Wood se plantea el problema de seis representaciones escultóricas de Heracles en Irán, empezando con una de época seleúcida, finalizando con una del primer rey sasánida, y centrándose en particular en representaciones partas y de la Elymáida. Advierte la autora con razón de los peligros en la conocida asociación con Vahrām-Verethragna, de la necesidad de estudios específicos caso por caso, del riesgo de la sobre-interpretación, de la necesidad de estar seguro de que representaciones que podemos identificar llevan anexos componentes de la figura mítica en cuestión y de las lecturas distintas de piezas de unas culturas en otras. Llama la atención la carencia de la bibliografía básica sobre las representaciones de Heracles en el mundo grecorromano – de los artículos del *LIMC* en adelante – y de los abundantes estudios de otras zonas del continente euroasiático por el que se extiende efectivamente la popularidad del héroe y que permitirían un marco comparativo y teórico más amplio.

Por último, el trabajo de Katherine Dunbabin se centra en el Levante grecoparlante entre los siglos II-V/VI y siguen los usos de Aquiles. Sobre la base del papel esencial de lo homérico en la cultura de la época, enfoca su trabajo en qué tipo de temas se eligen dentro de la amplitud de su repertorio mítico. Es un trabajo en el mejor sentido de la palabra, tradicional, riguroso, con referencias a todos los ámbitos de la cultura – pantomima, retórica, literatura panegírica y epigramática, otras artes... –, lleno de preguntas, pero también de respuestas. Historias conocidas en las que todos – artistas, patronos, público – esperaban la sorpresa y la originalidad en el enfoque de su presentación, muchas de ellas vinculadas a personajes femeninos – Tetis, Briseida, Deidamía, Pentésilea, Polixena –, otras a los componentes trágicos de su vida y de su muerte.

Un buen final para un libro con componentes tan interesantes que es imposible no lamentar la falta de una auténtica confluencia en el debate.

FIGURES MYTHIQUES ET DISCOURS RELIGIEUX



CHAPOT, FRÉDÉRIC, GOEKEN, JOHANN and PFAFF-REYDELLET, MAUD (eds.) (2018). *Figures mythiques et discours religieux dans l'Empire gréco-romain*. Recherches sur les rhétoriques religieuses 27. Turnhout: Brepols. 293 pp., 80,00€ [ISBN 978-2-5035-8079-1].

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THE TWO CENTRAL CONCEPTS WHICH MAKE UP the title of this collection of conference proceedings, *figures mythiques* and *discours religieux*, are rather ambiguous, so we need first of all some elucidation about the subject matter of this volume. What discourse about what figures? What specific questions tie the individual papers together? The *figures mythiques* are mythical beings (including divinities), whether historical or not (one might note that for the ancients themselves this distinction did not exist: to them all were historical), who have come to function as *figures exemplaires*, exemplary figures (*exempla, paradeigmata*) – indeed, it seems to me that both adjectives, *mythique* and *exemplaire*, should have been in the title. The reason given by the editors for using mythical instead of exemplary (p. 14) does not address the possibility of using both. The editors stress that what is on offer here is not a complete typol-

ogy of exemplary mythical beings – which of course could hardly be expected from inherently fragmented conference proceedings – but a starting point aiming to show the large variety of phenomena that come under this heading of exemplary beings. One could add that the phenomena themselves show variety as well, because they are shapeshifters: the contents and meaning of these *exempla* are constantly changing. The *discours religieux* of the title is religious discourse in its widest sense, embracing both *discours religieux* in a narrower sense (hymns, prayers, and so on) and *discours sur les religions* (the meta level of philosophical and exegetical texts, and the like). The discourse analyzed here is limited to the imperial period but embraces Christian authors (1st to 5th cent. CE; in fact, 6th cent. and beyond).

The volume consists of an introduction and 17 papers, ranging from 7 to 19 pages in length, distributed evenly across five sections. It is based on a colloquium held November 20-21, 2014, in Strasbourg. 2014 also seems the cut-off data for the final redaction of most papers by their authors: there are a mere three references to literature published after 2014 (out of the 400 titles in the consolidated bibliography at the end). Consequently, references to important titles are lacking, such as Newby, Z. (2016). *Greek Myths in Roman Art and Culture: Imagery, Values and Identity in Italy, 50 BC–AD 250*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Aygon, J.-P., Noacco, C. and Bonnet, C. (eds.) (2016). *La mythologie de l'Antiquité à la modernité: Appropriation-Adaptation-Détournement*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes; Zucker, A., Fabre-Serris, J., Tilliette, J.-Y. and Besson, G. (eds.) (2016). *Lire les mythes. Formes, usages et visées des pratiques mythographiques de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance*. Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion; Petitfils, J. (2016). *Mos Christianorum. The Moral Discourse of Exemplarity and the Jewish and Christian Language of Leadership*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck; and Vitale, M. (2017). *Das Imperium in Wort und Bild. Römische Darstellungsformen beherrschter Gebiete in Inschriftenmonumenten, Münzprägungen und Literatur*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner (esp. relevant for the paper of Marco Fucecchi, cf. below). Too late by any account were Roller, M.B. (2018). *Models from the Past in Roman Culture. A World of Exempla*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; and Pierzak, D. (2018). References to Historical Figures as a Means of Persuasion in Ancient Rhetoric. A Research Methodology Applicable to Cicero. *Scripta Classica*, 15, pp. 13-35. But both are warmly recommended. Whether these and other titles would have been included even if there had been a systematic attempt to include references to publications up to (and including?) 2017, is another matter, to which we will return below.

Conference proceedings are often a very mixed bag and whatever structure there is, is obviously an afterthought, with individual papers more or less forcibly fitted into some thematic arrangement. Now here we have got an edited volume of

which the structure seems well-thought out. The five sections make sense. In addition to the rather short general introduction, each of the five sections has a helpful introduction by the three editors. But after reading the papers, the division in sections and the distribution of the papers across them, does not appear to be so compelling after all. What is, however, most convenient is that within the sections every paper has clearly marked paragraphs (except the one by Merckel) and that most end with an explicit conclusion. Also, the accessibility of the volume is guaranteed by the presence of three indices: an *index locorum*, an index of proper names and an extremely useful index of concepts.

Part 1 deals with the construing of exemplary figures: “la fabrique d’une mémoire”, whether based in some historical occurrence and subsequently “mythified”, or the product of an allegorical process, or both. Anthony Andurand and Corinne Bonnet address the presence of Plato, as *theios Platon* in banquet literature, from Plutarch to Athenaeus; Gérard Freyburger takes a closer look at M. Attilius Regulus, the self-sacrificing hero of the 1st Punic War, and concludes that his strength as an *exemplum* derives from his essential historicity; Cécile Merckel discusses exemplary figures in Seneca with an interesting tension between the Stoic philosopher and the playwright. Part 2 is about the exemplary figure as a *porteur*, an intermediary, between the divine and the mundane. Catherine Notter and Igor Yakoubovitch take as their subject Hercules in the Flavian period: this ambiguous individual, between man and god, becomes ever more a model for the emperor; Mina Tasseva Bencheva looks at Pythagoras and Orpheus as *exempla* of wisdom and religious authority: as authors of *hieroi logoi* they are seen as mirroring those involved in religious discourse, even when they are Jews or Christians; Benoît Mounier analyses how Hieronymus of Sidon sets up Old Testament prophets as positive exemplars against Plato as a negative one. Part 3 is about context: exemplary figures derive their meaning from their place within a network of such figures. Anne-Catherine Baudoin concludes that Pontius Pilate is not compared to heroes or rulers of old but to contemporary ones. In the process, he shifts from negative to positive *exemplum*. Giovanna Laterza looks at the place of king Numa in the catalogue of heroes in *Aeneid* Book 6, and Maud Pfaff-Reydellet shows how the context within which Numa figures, in this case Ovid, contributes to the creation of the *exemplum* and makes Numa into an intermediary between Romans and the gods. Sylvia Estienne studies the (in)famous excursus added to Servius’ commentary on the *Aeneid* about the *septem pignora quae imperium Romanum tenent*, the “pledges” – guarantors – of Roman rule, such as the *palladium* en the *ancille* – a subject rather wider than exemplary beings, despite her partial focus on the ashes of Orestes. Part 4 is about *plasticité*, the mutability and adaptability of exemplary figures. This explains

their effectiveness: their malleability enables them to be used in completely different contexts. Marco Fucecchi discusses Claudian, especially his *Bellum Gildonicum* (carm. 15) and concludes that the divine personifications function as intermediaries between the divine emperor and the old Olympian gods; Céline Urlacher-Becht analyses the story of Hercules and Antaeus in the work of Ennodius of Padua (early 6th cent.). As a member of Roman nobility and a Christian, Ennodius seeks to give voice to both these sides of his personality and produces two different versions of same story. Christiane Helene Voigt studies the reception of Alexander the Great in early Arab sources, including the Quran (6th-7th cent.). Part 5 is about the persistence of pagan exemplary figures into Christian days. Régis Courtray, in one of the best papers, discusses Jerome and pagan literary learning: should it be banished or put to Christian use? Even if he sometimes seems to argue for the opposite, he makes much use of mythology, *fabula poetarum* as he calls it. He can use, and wants to use, the *fabula* because he turns them into testimonies for the Christian faith. Francesco Massa, much at home here in his specific field of expertise, speaks of Dionysus as possibly rivaling Christ in the 4th-cent. polemical exchanges; Christians and pagans use the same material, but the Christians arrive at a diabolical Dionysus – and win the day because of political support; Michele Cutino discusses Ambrose and the uses he makes of mythological figures, concluding that mythology forms an essential and constitutive element of Ambrose's writings; Frédéric Chapot deals with the creation of new *exempla*, i.e. the virginal heroine as one of the most potent categories of martyrdom, and how this leads to a re-evaluation of past models.

Even from these very short notices, which do not enough credit to the individual papers, it will be obvious that the division into sections does not really work. Many if not most papers deal with *construction* (section 1) and *plasticité* (section 4) – indeed, these very words appear in several papers. It seems to be in the nature of an *exemplum* to be shaped and reshaped in a continuous process; if the process stops, the *exemplum* will soon cease to be an *exemplum*: it needs to be relevant to the public that it is aimed at. In fact, *construction* and *plasticité* seem to be more or less the same thing. Intermediaries we find in sections 2 and 4 and are implicit in several papers. Christians make an appearance in four out of five sections, not just section 5. This is not to say that I would know how to better arrange these papers, maybe a simple chronological order would be adequate, or should we try some typology of exemplary figures after all? Some authors seem to consider history and myth as exclusive categories: in the presence of a possible historical nucleus they argue that the figure they study is only “partly mythical”. Mythical, largely mythical, somewhat mythical, historical... one might ask: does it matter? Does it make a difference as far

as the functioning as an *exemplum* is concerned? Maybe this question itself could be used to structure a series of enquiries into such *exempla*.

Considering the recurring notion of “making memories” in these papers (see “la fabrique d’une mémoire”, already quoted above) I find it strange that all reference to studies of memory (invented tradition, *lieux de mémoires*, and so on) is lacking. E.g., Galinsky, K. (ed.) (2016). *Memory in Ancient Rome and Early Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, and two previous volume on memory edited by the same, are quite relevant. A reason for this omission might be that a lot of recent literature on memory is in English. When we look at the bibliography of the volume under review, Anglo-Saxon scholarly output is much underrepresented. This is not a complaint against francophone scholars who do not read English. It is rather a sign of the times, a sign that I find disconcerting: on the one hand there is an opening up to the outside world with English as the *lingua franca* (which leaves non-native speakers of English on the back foot), but on the other hand, quite paradoxically, I also see a withdrawal into closed language communities; I see students that do not have command of the major European languages – except English, although often overconfident about their command of that language; I see libraries (in the Netherlands) devoid of any recent literature in either German or the romance languages. Overall, I find that the present often compares rather negatively to the internationally oriented scholarly communities of the 20th cent.

Interesting as the individual papers are, the one obviously more than the other, my most important point of critique would be that discourse here is so very much intellectual discourse, the ideas of mythographers, apologists, of those who made discourse their profession. The title might be considered misleading because in this day and age “discourse” could be expected to be conceived of wider than as “learned speculation”, and to include so-called lived religion: religious practice, which of course has its own discourse. With our exemplary figures we can think of epigraphic evidence for the divinity of and cult for such beings. Of course, one should never criticize a book for not doing what you would have liked it to do. But the introduction did make the distinction between *discours religieux*, in a narrow sense, and *discours sur religion*. The first made hardly any appearance at all: no hymns, no prayers, not a single inscription or papyrus referenced. Might there be a companion volume planned? Or are the many volumes on prayer and hymns in the series *Recherches sur les Rhétoriques Religieuses* (RRR) to be considered as such? Looking at those volumes and at the way the RRR series is advertised, one might be forgiven for expecting a wide perspective: the series is about “language used to communicate with and about the supernatural and one’s relationship with the supernatural” in order “to open new avenues for research”, “ouvrir des voies nou-

velles”. Of course, there is nothing wrong with studying Ovid, Seneca, Jerome and Ambrose. But I sincerely think it is preferable to look at different aspects of ancient society, the “ordinary” and the “meta” level, together, in order to take into account the other 99 percent.

LA CITÉ INTERCONNECTÉE



DANA, MADALINA ET SAVALLI-LESTRADE, IVANA (EDS.) (2019). *La cité interconnectée dans le monde gréco-romain*. Scripta Antiqua 118. Bordeaux: Ausonius Éditions. 340 pp., 25,00€ [ISBN 978-2-3561-3242-0].

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LA TRADICIÓN FRANCESA HA GENERADO A LO LARGO DE los últimos dos siglos una amplia producción científica sobre el mundo helenístico, fruto en gran medida de los destacados trabajos arqueológicos que desde el ámbito francófono se han ido publicando para dotar de informaciones, datos, herramientas interpretativas y propuestas explicativas los análisis históricos sobre el contexto de una Hélade en transformación. La especial atención de muchos de estos trabajos al impacto de la aparición de Roma como potencia y de su camino hacia la hegemonía mediterránea ha recibido, por otra parte, quizás una mayor atención que otros muchos aspectos del siempre rico y fértil campo de los estudios sobre el mundo helenístico, complejo en sí mis-

mo por su naturaleza multicultural y multifocal. Como resultado de esta tradición, y también al hilo de otras publicaciones corales resultado de reuniones, congresos y proyectos, han ido apareciendo en la última década nuevos volúmenes que compilan miradas diversas sobre aspectos complejos del mundo griego entre Alejandro y Cleopatra, o incluso más concretamente entre la destrucción de Corinto y la batalla de Accio. En ello, la colección de publicaciones del Instituto Ausonius merece un lugar de reconocimiento destacado.

Si bien la tradición anglosajona sobre la Antigüedad suele tender a la concreción, quizás a raíz de su carácter a menudo escéptico y enraizado en la observación estricta de las evidencias, la tradición francesa ha sabido ampliar considerablemente los marcos desde los que interrogar la Antigüedad, y en el caso concreto del mundo helenístico, suele proponer contextos desde los que la percepción y la reflexión parten de puntos de vista que surgen de ideas o preocupaciones contemporáneas. Así sucede, por ejemplo, en el caso concreto que ahora nos ocupa, donde la temática de la interconectividad urbana y las redes locales, y de la globalización e interacción de comunidades en la Grecia de época helenística. Como resultado de un coloquio organizado en junio de 2016 dentro del programa *Diktyнна. Réseaux civiques et dynamiques institutionnelles, sociales et culturelles dans le monde grec de l'époque classique à l'époque impériale*, las editoras Madalina Dana y Ivana Savallilestrade presentan una colección de estudios en los que podemos apreciar, de una parte, la riquísima bibliografía francesa sobre el periodo, la preeminencia tácita de Delos como eje de estudio en muchos de los trabajos franceses sobre la época, y la enorme amplitud de perspectivas que ofrece un tema que tiene, en efecto, un bien articulado trasfondo teórico, como queda bien expuesto en la introducción que firman las editoras al inicio del libro (pp. 9-21), así como también en los capítulos de la primera parte, donde nombres de la talla de Christel Müller (“Les réseaux des cités grecques: archéologie d’un concept”, pp. 25-42) y Konstantinos Vlassopoulos (“Historicising the Closed City”, pp. 43-57) esbozan interesantes revisiones con ideas propias de las que el lector se siente inevitablemente invitado a una sensible observación de las ideas propias y ajenas sobre el sentido mismo de la idea de comunidades, redes locales y globales, o la ciudad griega como entidad.

Una segunda parte de libro se centra en los aspectos regionales de la interconectividad, a través de trabajos sobre ciudadanía y redes de *Politeia* (William Mack, “Beyond Potential Citizenship. A Network Approach to Understanding Grants of *Politeia*”, pp. 61-82), honores (Christy Constantakopoulou, “Networks of Honour in Third-Century Delos”, pp. 83-98) y redes locales (“Les cités héliénistiques de Chypre: noeuds des réseaux locaux et supra-locaux”, pp. 135-148), así como a aspectos de la estructura institucional (Nicolas Kyriakidis, “Entre temps et espace, la culture

institutionnelle de la cité des Delphiens (IV^e-I^{er} s. a.C.)”, pp. 99-112) y las formas de estipulación de alianzas y tratados (Anna Magnetto, “Modelli di negoziazione e di conclusione dei trattati in época classica ed ellenistica”, pp. 149-162), incluyendo también aspectos de la observación de intercambios socioeconómicos y culturales mediante la numismática (Antony Hostein, “Les réseaux de cités en Asie Mineure durant les années 240-250 p.C.: L’apport des monnayages provinciaux”, pp. 113-134).

La tercera parte, dedicada al ámbito religioso y agonístico, quizás la que resulta más íntegramente monográfica dentro del volumen, mantiene la amplitud cronológica y geográfica propia del volumen, con trabajos como el magnífico capítulo de Ian Rutherford (“Towards a Typology of Sanctuary Networks: The Case of Roman Claros”, pp. 165-182) o el de Julietta Steinhauer (“Across Gender, Status, Origin. Religious Associations and Networks in the Sanctuaries of Late Hellenistic Delos”, pp. 223-237) que se suman a las muy interesantes aportaciones de los reputados investigadores Esther Eidinow (“Sarapis at Alexandria: The Creation and Destruction of a Religious ‘Public’”, pp. 183-204) y Nikolaos Papazarkadas (“Festival Networks in Late Hellenistic Boeotia. From Kinship to Political Rejuvenation”, pp. 205-222). Si bien el punto de partida en estos trabajos es el del estudio de caso concretos, la vasta geografía y variedad cronológica de éstos muestran una radiografía religiosa de la naturaleza asociativa de las relaciones públicas e interurbanas/internacionales en los espacios y contextos de culto de la cultura griega desde Alejandro.

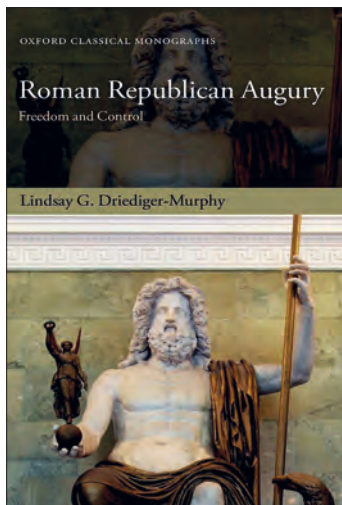
La cuarta parte, titulada *Représentation sociales et mobilités*, menos concreta y por ello también más dilatada en los aspectos que pretende abarcar, observa a los individuos (Christophe Chandezon, “L’individu en réseau: les *Oneirokiritika* d’Artemidore comme source sur les modes d’inscription en société”, pp. 241-272), en especial aquellos miembros de las élites locales (Nino Luraghi, “Kallias of Spetthos Between Two Worlds”, pp. 273-286), en sus relaciones con redes (Karine Karila-Cohen, “La valeur du lien: relations extérieurs et capital social des notables athéniens de la basse époque hellénistique”, pp. 287-306) y su interconectividad en tanto que grupo socioeconómico y cultural (Mathias Haake, “Philosophy and the ‘Mediterranean Wide Web’: Connecting Elites and Connections in the Upper Classes of the Graeco-Roman World Between the Late Archaic Period and Late Antiquity”, pp. 307-326, un excepcional ejercicio de estudio desde una perspectiva cronológica de larga duración; Adrian Robu, “La participation des *Rhōmaioi* à la vie civique et religieuse des cités grecques (II^e-I^e siècles a.C.): continuités et adaptations institutionnelles”, pp. 327-338).

Cierra el volumen el genial Kostas Buraselis (“A Big ‘Small Greek World’. Across and Beyond Civic Microcosms”, pp. 339-340) mediante una síntesis que aglutina la premisa de base del libro, donde observaciones micro y macro se entrelazan dándose

la mano con la relación entre global y local, subrayando los complejos pero inherentes elementos propios de cualquier cultura en interacción consigo misma y con la alteridad, autodefiniendo su identidad por medio de la oposición y el diálogo, algo sobre lo que la época helenística es, ciertamente, un privilegiado campo de estudio.

La colección de trabajos reunida agrupa, como hemos señalado, un conjunto de nombres de primer orden en sus respectivos campos, con presencia de diversas lenguas (lo que implica, tácitamente, también diferentes percepciones teóricas y metodológicas), una enorme amplitud geográfica y cronológica que en ocasiones excede la definición tradicional del helenismo, e invita a quien lee a pensar y repensar, y a observar el mundo, sea antiguo o el de nuestros días, con ojo crítico, pero también amable, y rico en discernimientos y conclusiones abiertas. Una herramienta de peso más que viene a reforzar un campo, como es el del mundo helenístico, tan necesitado, por su vasta complejidad, de recursos y miradas detalladas.

ROMAN REPUBLICAN AUGURY



DRIEDIGER-MURPHY, LINDSAY GAYLE (2019). *Roman Republican Augury. Freedom and Control*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 304 pp., 66,56€ [ISBN 978-0-1988-3443-4].

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NON SI PUÒ CHE ACCOGLIERE CON SODDISFAZIONE LA pubblicazione di un volume dedicato alle pratiche augurali romane in età repubblicana, esito di rielaborazione e di integrazione della DPhil thesis (2007-2011) di L.G. Driediger-Murphy. Tema complesso e di notevole interesse, che l'A. affronta in un tempo giudicato favorevole "to re-evaluate how we think about augury" (p. 9) e con una solida conoscenza delle dinamiche storiche, delle fonti letterarie e della bibliografia pregressa sull'argomento. Bibliografia nella quale spiccano i contributi ormai "classici" di I.M.J. Valetton.¹ P. Catalano,² J. Linderski,³ Y. Berthelet⁴ ma che comprende anche, tra i molti,

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1. Valetton, 1889; 1890; 1891.
 2. Catalano, 1960.
 3. Linderski, 1986.
 4. Berthelet, 2015.

alcuni autorevoli saggi sulla religione romana di J. Rüpke,⁵ J. Scheid,⁶ R. Turcan.⁷ La riflessione dell'A. sull'*augurium*, infatti, diventa necessariamente un'analisi più ampia dei rapporti tra la società repubblicana nelle sue componenti e le divinità; soprattutto della relazione tra quella società e "la divinità", l'*omnipotens* Iuppiter, definito in avvio dall'A. come "the source of one of the most important forms of public, state-mandated divination at Rome" (p. 1). E infatti molte delle riflessioni di L.G. Driediger-Murphy non potranno essere ignorate da quanti, in futuro, si occuperanno del *divumque hominumque pater rex*. L'estesa introduzione al volume (pp. 1-50) definisce subito metodologia e finalità dell'indagine, anticipando parte delle conclusioni. Non si tratta, come l'A. precisa, di fornire "a comprehensive account of Roman augury", ma di verificare alcune affermazioni acquisite da tempo sulla disciplina augurale "in order to offer a new perspective on Roman augury" (p. 23). E forse sta proprio in tale approccio uno dei limiti della ricerca: non aver ripercorso cioè, anche solo in sintesi, la nascita e lo sviluppo dell'*augurium*; non averne contestualizzato gli esiti repubblicani a partire dall'arcaismo e nel più ampio ambito italico, ma aver indirizzato la prospettiva di lavoro sulla base di *Guiding Principles* ben determinati (pp. 24-50) che guardano poco alle origini dell'istituto, all'Etruria, all'Italia tutta. Così, se l'A. valendosi di un criterio comparativo confronta le pratiche augurali romane con la divinazione del mondo greco o di aree quali la Mesopotamia, l'Estremo Oriente antico o l'Africa contemporanea (pp. 9-22), dimentica di considerare l'apporto essenziale e costante della *Etrusca disciplina* quale emerge dagli stessi autori latini e dalle testimonianze archeologiche. Testimonianze, quelle archeologiche, di cui leggendo il volume si avverte in alcuni passaggi la mancanza (e il supporto nell'argomentazione), e ancora ignote ad una ricerca ottocentesca su *ius augurum* e divinazione già centrata sull'esame delle sole fonti scritte. Opportuno, ad esempio, sarebbe stato un riferimento agli *auguracula* di Roma o ai *templa* augurali noti della Penisola (Este, Lavello, Banzi, ecc.),⁸ così come certamente proficua sarebbe risultata la lettura critica di alcuni passi delle Tavole Iguvine. Una lettura che avrebbe contribuito ad inquadrare il fenomeno nella giusta dimensione panitalica.

Si accennava ai principi che guidano questa ricerca. Principi che, negli intenti dell'A., devono superare la visione funzionalista di una pratica augurale piegata alle

5. Rüpke, 2005; 2006; 2007.

6. Scheid, 1985a; 1987-1989; 2003.

7. Turcan, 2000.

8. Sintesi in Torelli, 2005. Nel testo non trovo riscontro di alcuni contributi presenti nella bibliografia finale che trattano proprio degli *auguracula* di Roma e del *templum* di Bantia: Torelli, 1966; Magdelain, 1969; Coarelli, 1981; Coarelli, 1993.

logiche della conservazione e del controllo delle strutture politiche e delle gerarchie sociali acquisite o, in altre parole, “the currently dominant picture of augury as a method of human control over the gods” (p. 22). Una visione che, tuttavia, una parte della dottrina più recente ha già posto in discussione, come del resto riconosce la stessa A. citando tra gli altri ancora J. Scheid⁹ o C.B. Champion,¹⁰ M. Beard, J. North, S. Price¹¹ (p. 20 e nota 77; p. 42, nota 160; pp. 48-50; pp. 163-164), F. Santangelo¹² (pp. 19-20, 165), T.P. Wiseman¹³ (pp. 164-165). La prospettiva viene quindi parzialmente rovesciata, e la Driediger-Murphy nei tre capitoli che costituiscono il fulcro del suo lavoro (pp. 51-201), grazie soprattutto ad una lettura attenta delle fonti letterarie, pone al centro del dibattito la funzione attiva della divinità nei processi augurali, le percezioni e le emozioni umane in occasione dei riti, il ruolo delle classi subalterne.¹⁴ Una scelta che, orientata dalla polarità *Freedom and Control* (dichiarata nel sottotitolo del volume), rende certamente più ampie ed esaurienti le nostre conoscenze sull’*augurium* pervenendo a conclusioni in parte nuove. Tra gli argomenti approfonditi dall’A. nel I capitolo (“Do As I Say, Not As I Do? Report versus Reality in Augury”, pp. 51-126) troviamo gli *auguria* del *caput humanum* capitolino e della quadriga miracolosa di Veio in Plinio, i *vitia*, il *silentium*, il rituale del *tripudium*, la funzione dei *pullarii*, gli auspici della battaglia di Aquilonia (293 a.C.), che conducono L.G. Driediger-Murphy a verificare come l’*augurium* non fosse la semplice affermazione di un favore divino garantito a priori ma, come si argomenta, “...Republican augural theory accorded Jupiter the space and the freedom to send expressions of his own will, whether favourable or unfavourable, convenient or inconvenient for human beings. And it bound humans to respect that will. On this reading, Republican augury can indeed be considered a dialogue between the human and the divine” (pp. 125-126).

Questo dialogo tra umano e divino continua ad essere indagato anche nel II capitolo (“Convenience or Conversation? Why ‘Watching the Sky’ Was More than Wishful Thinking”, pp. 127-160), dove le principali questioni trattate risultano la procedura del *servare de caelo*, l’*obnuntiatio*, la vicenda del 59 a.C. con protagonista M.

9. Scheid, 1985b; 2011.

10. Champion, 2017.

11. North, 1986; Beard, North, Price, 1998.

12. Santangelo, 2013.

13. Wiseman, 2004; 2008.

14. Si consideri, ad esempio, quanto scritto nell’introduzione a p. 22: “Like their social inferiors, elite Romans felt awe in the presence of the gods, fear at signs of their anger, respect for their wisdom, need for their counsel”.

Calpurnius Bibulus, cui l'A. riserva un'appendice alla fine del capitolo (pp. 158-160). Anche in relazione al *servare de caelo* la Driediger-Murphy ribadisce come il rapporto tra le autorità romane e Iuppiter fosse imprevedibile, senza schemi precostituiti e conclusioni scontate, e si oppone al moderno assunto che fosse solo l'annuncio di un segno sfavorevole a condizionare lo svolgimento delle attività pubbliche: "My proposal is that the process of sky-watching itself was technically sufficient to prohibit public business, not de facto, but *de jure*" (p. 130). Questa seconda parte del volume si conclude con una serie di domande cui si promette di dare risposta nel capitolo successivo, nelle cui pagine – come l'A. preannuncia – "we need to know how Romans used augury in practice, not just in theory" (p. 157).

Il III capitolo ("Out of Control? The Effects of Augury on Roman Public Life", pp. 161-201) si apre con una nuova introduzione metodologica. Oltre a discutere ancora "many modern treatments of Roman augury (as, indeed, of Roman divination in general)" (pp. 161-165), si riflette sul concetto di "manipolazione". L'A. tratta quindi il rito dell'*augurium salutis* e ricorda alcuni casi di incoerenza tra segni divinatori e aspettative umane per concludere che "every use of augury left some Roman politicians delighted and others disappointed" (p. 193), che "living with augury was not as comfortable for the Roman politician or commander" (p. 200), e ribadire come "the augural thread was not controlled by any one individual interest or group, and was as unpredictable and refractory as it was convenient and enabling" (p. 201).

Il volume si chiude con poche pagine di riepilogo (pp. 203-207), che presentano le conclusioni della L.G. Driediger-Murphy sull'*augurium* nella prospettiva più ampia della religione romana. E non è un caso se nelle ultime pagine di questo apprezzabile saggio, dove si cerca una sintesi finale tra umano e divino, tra teoria e pratica, tra *freedom and control*, l'A. arrivi a considerare il concetto di "fede": "Roman religion had an experiential component; but in this respect it also had faith". Una fede che, come si precisa, non indica una stato interiore, e neppure un orientamento salvifico, ma denota "the acceptance of propositions about the gods which could not be proved by evidence" (p. 206, nota 14). L'ultimo auspicio, per così dire, è della stessa A., che si augura di aver aperto con le sue riflessioni una nuova prospettiva di studio: "Our evidence for Republican augury, in practice and in theory, reveals the weight wielded by that nod and the strength of the power the gods were thought to hold over Roman life. No scholar nowadays would deny that Rome was governed by rituals, but now it is time to go further. It is time to give Jupiter his proper place in augury. And it is to put the gods back into our understanding of Roman religion" (p. 207). I segni sembrano favorevoli.

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MATER FLORUM



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IL BEL VOLUME DI LORENZO FABBRI *MATER FLORUM, Flora e il suo culto a Roma*, Firenze, Leo S. Olski editore, MMXIX, rappresenta l'ottimo risultato di una borsa di studio post-dottorale e proviene dalla sorvegliata scuola di Giampiera Arrigoni, che, da tempo, elabora avanzatissime ricerche sul rapporto mito e botanica, riflettendo su Dei e piante in Grecia e Roma.¹ Il tema (una sorta di genere a se stante) è oggi al centro del dibattito scientifico e l'elaborazione di uno studio sistematico ed approfondito su di una figura divina, già dal nome strettamente legata al mondo agrario, al rinascere delle stagioni e alla cultura dei giardini, è di grande interesse.

Già dall'Introduzione Lorenzo Fabbri (l'A.) illustra l'ampiezza del suo piano di ricerca, che, partendo dalla amplissima raccolta e discussione delle fonti letterarie,

1. Arrigoni, 2018.

le mette a confronto con quelle visive e iconografiche, anche esse esaminate con attenzione e sensibilità. L'impianto metodologico è sempre rigoroso, attento alla realtà della documentazione e spesso molto originale e innovativo. La ricchezza delle citazioni permette all'A. continui rimandi e discussioni, IL volume ha un accuratissimo, apparato bibliografico².

Mi soffermerò qui per necessità solo su alcune delle molte problematiche affrontate che poi l'A. riprende nelle conclusioni critiche che chiudono il volume.

L'opera è divisa in tre parti.

Nella prima sezione, ampia e articolata, La dea Flora: sfere di competenza e caratteristiche, l'A. esamina la figura della dea Flora nel suo evolversi lungo un ampio spazio cronologico, dalle più antiche manifestazioni del suo culto avvenute a Roma, secondo le fonti, fra IV e III secolo a. C. per giungere fino alla piena età imperiale con la ricostruzione del tempio della dea a Roma presso il Circo Massimo. Si evidenziano così il suo aspetto più antico di divinità agraria (come ci dicono Varrone e i trattati di agronomia) e la sua progressiva trasformazione in una figura divina che presiede al delicato momento della fioritura, ai fiori ed ai giardini fioriti.

Interessanti le riflessioni (*Una dea romana o sabina*) sul problema sulla origine di Flora e del suo culto forse formatosi non direttamente a Roma ma attraverso una mediazione sabina (la "sabinità" della Flora "agraria" e del suo culto). Si tratta di una importante manifestazione dell'ancora oggi non del tutto chiarito rapporto storico fra i due popoli in età regia, ma anche forse un riferimento alla consuetudine romana della appropriazione delle divinità dei popoli inglobati o vinti. Il carattere italico della divinità sarà in qualche modo sempre presente nell'immagine della dea.

Un tema fondamentale, esplorato attraverso un sempre attento esame delle fonti e della critica moderna, è quello sul graduale passaggio della dea da divinità agraria a divinità legata specificatamente ai fiori, alla dolcezza della primavera, alle corone floreali (e anche a quel curioso "cogliere fiori", che accomuna Flora ad altre divine fanciulle come Kore). L'A. si affida in particolare alla guida sapiente e immaginifica di Ovidio che, nel celebre passo dei *Fasti* (*Fasti* V 275-376), immagina la dea Flora che descrive se stessa. Flora appare celebrata da Ovidio come dea dei fiori, della giovinezza, della grazia femminile, di cui i fiori sono l'incantevole simbolo. È questo l'aspetto che diventa preminente in età imperiale e tardoantica.

2. Aggiungerei, solo per completezza, ad es.: Baumann, 2007; Gieseke, 2014; Sena Chiesa e Giacobello, 2016; Scheer, 2019.

Va ricordato che Ovidio accompagna l'indagine di Lorenzo Fabbri per tutto il libro e rimane la sua fonte principale, sempre attentamente richiamata.

La ovidiana assimilazione di Flora con Cloris e il mito, a sfondo amoroso, di Cloris e Zefiro raccontato dal poeta, appare una deliziosa invenzione che ebbe poi uno straordinario successo nella mitologia umanistica e rinascimentale.

Sempre Ovidio ci racconta lo straordinario mito della nascita di Marte provocato dall'intervento di Flora. La dea aiuta, toccandola con un fiore, Giunone, che vuol vendicarsi di Giove avendo un figlio, Marte, senza l'intervento del marito. Si tratta di una storia mitica che, credo correttamente, l'A. considera una invenzione del poeta, invenzione certamente utile per dare all'*excursus* su Flora un senso più civile celebrando il suo legame con il dio protettore di Roma. Del resto, ad inserire Flora nel destino di Roma, si aggiunge il rapporto fra Flora e il nome sacrale di Roma.

Ma anche la ricchissima raccolta delle altre fonti ci pone davanti a testimonianze molto curiose e interessanti: cito solo l'inaspettata osservazione di Vitruvio (I 2, 5) che a Flora (come a Venere, Proserpina e alle ninfe delle fonti, tutte divinità dall'aspetto delicato (*propter teneritatem*), si addicono templi nello stile corinzio, snello e decorato da motivi vegetali.

Molti sono peraltro, (come viene osservato da Fabbri) gli aspetti ancora oscuri di una divinità mutevole nei suoi aspetti e sostanzialmente poco conosciuta. Enigmatico appare, ad esempio, il rapporto di Flora con Cerere (come documenta già la osca Tavola di Agnone datata al III secolo a.C., ed ora al British Museum).

Nella seconda sezione Il culto di Flora, l'A affronta, con il consueto ampio bagaglio bibliografico e di documentazione storica, una articolata indagine sulle diverse fasi della diffusione del culto di Flora a Roma e nel mondo italico e delle feste a lei dedicate. Esse erano competenza del *flamen floralis*, un sacerdote "misterioso" come lo chiama l'A., uno dei dodici flamini minori plebei, ciò che appare conseguente con il carattere plebeo dell'originario aspetto agrario delle dea. I *Floralia* / *Ludi florales* erano celebrati fra aprile e maggio già ad iniziare dalla fondazione fra IV e III secolo, quando le celebrazioni vennero allestite utilizzando il risarcimento per una abusiva occupazione di pascoli pubblici (e in questa curiosa notizia è evidente la originaria preminenza del carattere agrario della dea come l'A. sottolinea più volte). Le feste consistevano in giochi e vivaci rappresentazioni teatrali e terminavano con *venationes* di animali pacifici, capre e lepri.

Ancora una volta le notizie più puntuali ci vengono (come sottolinea ancora l'A.) dal già citato *excursus* di Ovidio che, con un suggestivo espediente poetico, fa parlare direttamente la dea. Il passo è analizzato attentamente nei suoi vari momenti; le ragioni che portarono all'istituzione della festa (*Fasti* V 275-294) il desiderio della dea di ricevere onori dai mortali, l'istituzione della festa per placare Flora offesa dalla mancanza

di culto a Roma (*Fasti* V 295-330), ed infine quello (*Fasti* V 331-354) che descrive lo svolgersi dei *Floralia*, i suoi giochi teatrali, l'aspetto giocoso dell'evento (...*lascivia maior.../ in ludis liberiorque iocus* (vv. 331-332), la partecipazione delle prostitute, le vesti policrome, le fiaccole notturne, ed infine le *venationes* di animali inoffensivi.

La terza sezione, L'iconografia di Flora è di grande interesse sia per l'archeologo che per lo storico dell'arte antica e post-antica.

Colpisce innanzi tutto la sostanziale scarsità di documentazioni figurate antiche che si riportino con certezza a Flora. È un dato curioso se si pensa alla piacevolezza di una dea positiva, beneaugurante come Flora, una figura divina forse minore, ma certamente molto popolare e tra le più ricche di spunti figurativi. Lo dimostra la descrizione, così squisitamente pittorica, che le dedica Ovidio. Molte avrebbero potuto essere le possibilità di invenzioni scultoree e pittoriche piacevoli specialmente nell'ambito di quella produzione artistica decorativa ed eclettica che caratterizza i primi due secoli dell'età imperiale. Ma non è così, almeno fra quanto è giunto fino noi.

Cosa ci resta, dunque? Riportano probabilmente a Flora (ma non sicuramente, come ci ricorda l'A.), due monete vicine cronologicamente (metà del I sec. a.C.). Entrambe recano due belle teste femminili ornate di corone vegetali, chiaramente opera di raffinati incisori monetieri di gusto neoattico di età tardorepubblicana. La prima porta l'iscrizione *floral primus* celebrante un *flamen floralis primus* appartenente alla famiglia dei *Servilii*, la seconda, più enigmatica, è legata al monetiere *Caius Clodius Vestalis*. Entrambe sono oggi al centro di un ampio dibattito in cui si inserisce l'A.

Ancor più curiosa è la desolante mancanza di opere statuarie sicuramente riferibili a Flora. Nelle fonti giunte fino a noi, l'unico cenno è quello di Plinio che segnala una Flora opera di Prassitele poi a Roma negli *Horti Serviliani*, parte di un gruppo con Demetra e Trittolemo, (*N.H.* XXXVI 23: *Romae Praxitelis opera sunt Flora, Trittolemus, Ceres in hortis Servilianis*). L'attribuzione è molto dubbia (come giustamente nota l'A.) specialmente per la sostituzione, nella trilogia divina, di Kore con Flora. Sono dee di solito rappresentate con attributi, rispettivamente le e fiaccole ed i fiori, non facilmente confondibili fra loro (ma non è sempre così certo).

Non poche incertezze caratterizzano anche le due famose statue oggi conosciute con il nome di Flora. La loro complessa storia critica e la successione dei restauri sono esaminate nel volume con la necessaria prudenza e molto attentamente.

La bella "Flora Capitolina", celeberrima opera che Napoleone portò al Louvre e che fu tra le opere poi restituite alle collezioni capitoline, fu rinvenuta, come è noto, negli scavi settecenteschi di Villa Adriana, Venne acquisita nelle collezioni papali dove venne restaurata nelle mani, nel mazzetto di fiori e nella corona e cioè nei particolari che poi le valsero il nome di Flora. È opera di un ottimo scultore eclettico del

neoclassicismo adrianeo, forse ispirata da un originale greco di IV secolo, ma il suo riferimento a Flora è davvero molto incerto.

La deliziosa “Flora Farnese,” rinvenuta nel XVI secolo a Roma, è un’opera di II secolo d.C. forse ispirata, per il virtuosistico rendimento della veste trasparente, alle creazioni greche callimachee di fine V secolo a.C. Anch’essa, già nota dal ‘500, venne profondamente restaurata, con la testa non pertinente e la mano con i fiori più volte ricostruita. È dunque, per molta parte, un tipico prodotto della cultura antiquaria e collezionistica postclassica ed il suo legame con la divinità romana dei fiori molto tenue.

Lo stesso vale anche per il notissimo frammento di affresco pompeiano, che gode oggi di uno straordinario successo mediatico, la cd. “Raccogliitrice di fiori” dalla villa di Arianna a Stabia della metà del I secolo d.C. La figurina certamente rappresenta molto bene l’aspetto sereno e lieto di una Flora nell’atto di raccogliere fiori per farne forse corone come le compete. Ma penso anch’io che si tratti in realtà di una figurina generica che faceva parte di un ciclo di graziose rappresentazioni femminili schizzate con vivacità decorativa all’interno delle pitture parietali di III stile. Solo in età moderna molte vennero forzatamente riferite a divinità o ad eroine del mito.

Di fronte ad una presenza così evanescente di Flora nell’arte figurativa romana, vi è la straordinaria quantità di riferimenti a Flora ed al suo trionfo come dea della primavera nell’arte figurativa dal XV al XIX secolo. Ciò ad iniziare, come ricorda l’A., dalla Primavera di Botticelli ispirata alla storia ovidiana di Cloris e Zefiro amatissima nel Rinascimento (*tutto lascivo, drieto a Flora, / Zefiro vola e la verde erba infiora* Poliziano, Stanze, I, 69). Così Flora subisce l’ennesima trasformazione da plebea dea agraria a raffinato e aristocratico simbolo di giovinezza e bellezza.

L’A. si sofferma nell’ultima sezione (Flora nell’iconografia moderna) in particolare su due raffigurazioni del così detto “Trionfo di Flora”, dipinte da Poussin nella prima metà del XVII secolo, cercando di identificare i personaggi della composizione così teatralmente concepita in un ampio sfondo bucolico, soffermandosi in particolare sul personaggio maschile armato (Aiace o più probabilmente Marte). Ai due dipinti si aggiunge l’opera di G.B. Tiepolo, di un secolo dopo, di gusto rococò ed in cui solo le statue classicheggianti (che potrebbero, secondo una giusta osservazione dell’A., riferirsi al giardino del destinatario del quadro), richiamano l’antico. Nel dipinto ottocentesco di Waterhouse con Flora e gli Zefiri, il tema ovidiano che ispirò Botticelli, è ancora una volta riletto nell’immaginario gusto preraffaellita.

In conclusione, un ampio lavoro critico, particolarmente utile perché esplora una delle divinità più sfuggenti del pantheon romano-italico. Lorenzo Fabbri offre al lettore un testo compatto in cui è ben visibile un impegno metodologico attento contemporaneamente ai fenomeni, religiosi, storici e sociali ed alla documentazione figurata. Particolarmente interessante appare il continuo riferimento al paesaggio re-

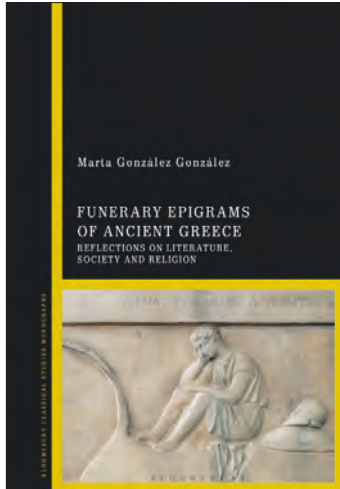
ligioso romano nel suo procedere storico con una attenzione specifica al rapporto fra struttura religiosa e la società che la produce.

I risultati di questo impegnativo lavoro saranno credo importanti per gli sviluppi di una disciplina, la storia delle religioni, che sperimenta oggi innovative vie di ricerca.

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FUNERARY EPIGRAMS OF ANCIENT GREECE



GONZÁLEZ GONZÁLEZ, MARTA (2019). *Funerary Epigrams of Ancient Greece: Reflections on Literature, Society and Religion*. London: Bloomsbury. 224 pp., 74,31€ [ISBN 978-1-3500-6242-9].

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SI BIEN EL TEMA DE ESTE LIBRO DE MARTA GONZÁLEZ no es a primera vista novedoso, su tratamiento es poco convencional, y su carácter ensayístico unido a una particular forma de aunar literatura e historia hacen que epigramas y temas funerarios epigráficos hace tiempo ya bien conocidos cobren luz nueva y, sobre todo, vida nueva, a pesar de la contradicción que ambos conceptos suponen respecto al tema tratado. El libro tiene en sí mismo un gran componente de ensayo literario y a la vez aporta nuevos enfoques y nuevas ideas sobre muchos aspectos y, sobre todo, mucho sobre lo que reflexionar. Es un libro donde cada epitafio aparece integrado en su contexto social e histórico, urbanístico y con ello visual; es sometido a un análisis artístico literario-iconográfico, y comentado dentro de la tradición literaria con una dedicación especialmente fructífera a la semántica. Aspectos conocidos de la epigra-

fía funeraria como el encomiástico, la presencia de ideales aristocráticos, metáforas y otros recursos literarios adquieren, mediante análisis concretos y comparación con paralelos epigráficos, literarios e iconográficos, nuevo relieve sobre todo por sus variantes frente al convencionalismo y monotonía que se les suele adjudicar. Aunque hace referencia en varias ocasiones a epitafios de otros lugares, se centra en los de la Atenas arcaica y clásica, siguiendo un orden en primer lugar cronológico y en segundo lugar temático, aunque a veces este principio pueda alterarse levemente por razones prácticas de contenido. Los temas elegidos responden en parte a aquello en lo que los epitafios son especialmente locuaces, pero también a temas actuales en la investigación, como la representación de la mujer o la amistad, y otros atemporales, como la religión. A su vez, los temas de las dos partes cronológicas están condicionados por el hábito epigráfico y las características sociales de cada una de las etapas. Los epitafios arcaicos, como el resto de la epigrafía de esta época, son escuetos en su información y por tanto poco aportan en relación con los personajes implicados en todo el proceso funerario, excepto sobre los valores aristocráticos masculinos y las etapas vitales de hombres y mujeres, sobre todo si se ponen los textos en relación con la iconografía de las estatuas y estelas, y con la literatura arcaica, épica y lírica. Los de época clásica, mucho más elocuentes, permiten un análisis temático con diversos enfoques. El libro presenta una combinación de un tema único central, con subtemas seleccionados que muestran la evolución del epigrama funerario entre los ss. VI y IV a.C., y a la vez un conjunto de comentarios independientes específicos, centrados ya sea en símbolos, tópicos, cuestiones terminológicas u otro tipo de aspectos; avanza en un continuo apartarse del camino para regresar luego, sin que el rodeo suponga un retraso, sino más bien un enriquecimiento.

Entre los *excursus* más largos creo que pueden destacarse dos cuya dedicación aquí puede sorprender al lector por tratarse de dos cuestiones muy discutidas en los estudios de literatura griega, y cuyo nuevo análisis requeriría una dedicación mucho más profunda. Uno es el origen de la elegía y su diferencia respecto a la trenodia; el otro la naturaleza de las relaciones femeninas que subyacen en la poesía de Safo. Su interés en este libro radica en que son un buen ejemplo de cómo la epigrafía aporta nuevas perspectivas y datos para abordar los temas literarios, y viceversa. Respecto a la primera cuestión, la autora utiliza los testimonios epigráficos como complemento de la lírica arcaica y, en menor medida, la tragedia, para volver sobre el origen de la elegía en cantos de lamento, aducido con frecuencia en la investigación, y llega a la conclusión de que no hay pruebas que confirmen tal origen. A diferencia de otras discusiones en este libro, esta resulta un poco confusa, y los argumentos no tan convincentes como en otros casos. La autora presenta datos y pasajes que apoyan la teoría de E. Bowie en contra del origen trenódico, pero algunos no resultan conclu-

yentes, y también podrían presentarse otros, literarios y epigráficos, que matizarían la argumentación o que incluso ayudarían a interpretar el interés epigráfico en el tema también de otra forma, apoyando por ejemplo la argumentación de Gregory Nagy en su artículo “Ancient Greek elegy”, en K. Weisman (ed.) (2010). *The Oxford Handbook of the Elegy* (pp. 13-45). Oxford: Oxford University Press, donde aduce buenos argumentos para el origen trenódico valiéndose de paralelos en otras culturas, concretamente la armenia, y también de interpretaciones en este sentido en textos homéricos, líricos y de tragedia. Mucho más convincente y, de hecho, muy acertada, me parece la discusión sobre la naturaleza de las relaciones femeninas en la poesía de Safo, donde, siguiendo ideas más generales de Susan Sonntag, la autora previene contra sobreinterpretaciones de la poesía sáfica, y utiliza buenos paralelos literarios y epigráficos para la expresión de la amistad, y los valores que ésta conlleva, entre mujeres.

Las dos grandes partes correspondientes a los dos períodos cronológicos están precedidas de un capítulo dedicado al paisaje funerario, que, aunque no pretende aportar novedades, nos permite colocar los epitafios en sus lugares de exposición y en el contexto de todo el proceso funerario, y nos hace ver la importancia que este contexto tenía para dar la información deseada a los observadores antiguos, y por tanto para la correcta interpretación moderna de los textos. Aspectos centrales de este contexto son el paso del elemento funerario anicónico al icónico y de las estatuas funerarias a las estelas, la diferencia entre los vasos funerarios que acompañan los epitafios de los hombres y los que se usan para las mujeres, cómo las estelas clásicas representan las distintas etapas civiles de la vida, y cómo los testimonios funerarios reflejan cambios en la legislación de este aspecto de la vida, de forma que por ejemplo el descenso de producción de estelas hacia el 500 a.C. refleja el monopolio estatal de los funerales públicos, y el gran resurgir hacia el 440 a.C., hasta finales del s. IV, la actividad de los numerosos escultores y artesanos que aplicaban también en estelas funerarias el arte desarrollado en la reconstrucción de la Acrópolis.

Los capítulos segundo y tercero, dedicados a la época arcaica, tienen como aspectos centrales y comunes la relación con la épica y la elegía literarias (y es aquí donde se inserta el largo *excursus* sobre los orígenes de la elegía ya mencionado), producto de una incorporación consciente de esa tradición, y el reflejo de los valores aristocráticos que traslucen. Precisamente uno de los cambios que se producen a lo largo de esta época es la democratización de esos valores aristocráticos. Destaca en este capítulo un elemento que se recoge también en otros lugares del libro: el hecho de que los epigramas funerarios no se escriben para cantar en la ceremonia fúnebre, sino para el futuro, como refleja el *πότε* que hace referencia a ese pasado que han de conocer los lectores del futuro, y que consiste en los valores aristocráticos, el *kleos* y la *arete* del muerto. Es ésta una característica de los epitafios que, aunque no citado por la autora, puede verse

ya en la *Iliada*, en un pasaje que se ha considerado reflejo de un epitafio real: «De un hombre muerto hace tiempo es este túmulo, al que entonces sobresaliendo por su valor mató el esclarecido Héctor», así dirá alguien alguna vez y mi gloria nunca perecerá (*Il.* VII 89-90), donde el epitafio está orientado al futuro, inmortalizando la gloria del muerto y, en este caso también (o, sobre todo) la del causante de esa muerte valerosa. El capítulo tercero se centra en epitafios concretos que demuestran esos valores, y, con un tratamiento especial y largo comentario iconográfico, en el de la joven Phrasikleia, muerta antes de casarse, el del joven guerrero Kroisos, y el de la llamada estela de los alcmeónidas, todos ellos acompañados de representación del muerto, en forma de estatuas en los dos primeros casos y en una estela en el tercero. La caracterización de estos difuntos responde a la importancia de las etapas de la vida, y es un antecedente del tratamiento que la autora va a dedicar al tema de la mujer y al del guerrero muerto en combate en los epitafios de época clásica.

En el siguiente capítulo la autora entra en la época clásica y con ella en epitafios más largos y ricos temáticamente. Con el título “como privar el año de su primavera”, frase usada por Pericles en su famoso discurso para referirse a los caídos en la guerra, el capítulo cuarto se centra en dos temas frecuentes en los epitafios a partir de época clásica: el de la joven muerta antes de casarse (a pesar de que el prototipo de esta muerte no se establece hasta época helenística), y el de los *aoroi*, o muertos prematuros. Analizando como ejemplo del primer tema la estela de Pausimache, en la que se muestra a la joven con un espejo, la autora hace un largo *excursus* sobre la iconografía del espejo en las estelas áticas clásicas como elemento simbólico (se echa de menos fotografía, que habría sido de gran utilidad para seguir su comentario). De las diferentes interpretaciones que se han dado a este objeto y sus distintas presentaciones, analiza su posible valor como representación de la separación entre el cuerpo y el alma en el momento de la muerte, idea que cuenta con muy pocos testimonios en los epigramas clásicos y en las estelas, aunque sí en los *lekythoi*, y que no encaja bien con el carácter claramente terrenal y de mirada al pasado de los epitafios griegos de época clásica; y el valor como símbolo de rito de pasaje y sexualidad de la mujer. Aduciendo paralelos de otros lugares del mundo griego, destaca este último valor simbólico del espejo en la estela de Pausimache, de la que por el contexto se deduce que ha muerto antes de casarse, aunque no se diga explícitamente. Otros epitafios que tienen algún paralelismo con este conducen a comentarios de otros términos e ideas funerarias, como por ejemplo los términos ἦβη, ὄλετο y μονογενής, que aparecen en un epigrama de Sínope; uno de los primeros testimonios del término ἄωρος; el verbo καταλείβω, muy raro en inscripciones y que aparece en una inscripción del s. IV con el sentido atestiguado en tragedia: “deshacerse en lágrimas”; o la discusión de expresiones funerarias que hacen referencia a φῶς (luz), y del verbo λεύσσειν en el

sentido de “mirar algo luminoso”, en consonancia con el adjetivo λευκός, brillante, y relacionado con la mirada de tumbas/muertos brillantes por su gloria (*kleos*). El capítulo quinto está dedicado a la expresión de amistad en los epigramas funerarios, especialmente a aquellos dedicados a mujeres por mujeres, excepcionales todavía en época clásica. Una discusión inicial del significado y uso de los términos φιλότης, ἑταῖρα y πιστή dan pie a la interpretación del epitafio dedicado por Euthylla a su amiga Biote considerando, en oposición a otras interpretaciones, el término *hetaira* en su sentido antiguo noble y homérico, y a un *excursus* sobre las relaciones femeninas en la poesía de Safo con paralelos epigráficos y mención de otras expresiones de amistad femenina como las de la poetisa Erinna en el s. IV a.C. En relación con el tema de la amistad la autora comenta el epitafio de Menestheus, del s. VI a.C., el término raro φιλημοσύνη y la relación entre *eromenos* y *erastes* a raíz de la iconografía, en este caso sí erótica, de la estela. El capítulo sexto vuelve sobre el tema femenino, recogiendo varias de las ideas expuestas anteriormente y añadiendo otras a la luz de nuevos epitafios. El tema en este caso es el de la relación entre esposos. Aparte de la constatación de que pocos epitafios están dedicados a sus mujeres por hombres antes del s. V, la autora dedica especial atención a los términos y expresiones que, cada vez con más frecuencia alaban a las difuntas, a pesar de la imagen de la esposa que presenta Pericles en su discurso a los caídos en la guerra. Haciendo de nuevo un uso muy productivo de la lírica arcaica, González comenta un epitafio de Quíos, y especialmente algunos términos como χρεστή y el antropónimo de la difunta, Μελίτη, en relación con el poema de Semónides contra las mujeres y con el apoyo de Aristóteles, y con apoyo también de la propia estela, cuya iconografía responde a los códigos de un buen matrimonio. Especial dedicación en este capítulo recibe el término εὐσέβεια, raro en epigrafía funeraria, pero importante en relación con la mujer, y que la autora va a retomar en el último capítulo.

En distintos lugares del libro la autora hace referencia al hecho de que en los epitafios de época arcaica y clásica no se menciona la causa de la muerte. El capítulo séptimo está dedicado a las dos excepciones a esta regla (que en realidad son tres): la muerte por parto y la muerte en el mar (y la muerte del soldado). En la búsqueda de fuentes literarias que apoyen esta norma no escrita, la autora discute un pasaje de lectura problemática de la *Vida de Licurgo* de Plutarco, llegando a la conclusión, con apoyo de testimonios epigráficos, de que, aparte de la muerte en la guerra, no es el parto, como se ha querido leer, la segunda causa de muerte que Licurgo permitía mencionar en los epitafios, sino la causa de muerte de las *hierai* (un tipo particular de personal cultural, al parecer en relación con el culto de Ártemis). A pesar de este largo *excursus* para rebatir la mención de muerte por parto en el pasaje de Licurgo, la autora presenta varios epitafios donde sí se menciona esta causa. El hápax κυμότοκος

(producto de las olas) referido a los dolores del parto en uno de ellos lo interpreta como posible expresión de la relación entre la muerte por parto y la del naufragio, y da paso al análisis de epitafios a muertos en el mar y de cenotafios de época arcaica y clásica. El libro acaba con un capítulo dedicado al aspecto religioso y poniendo de relieve, con un grupo muy particular de epitafios, el cambio de creencias que se está produciendo en el s. IV a.C. sobre el alma y el más allá. El término *eusebeia*, que había sido objeto de comentario en el capítulo sexto, donde ya aparecía como expresión de alabanza a la mujer, es retomado aquí como virtud que se premia con la acogida en los aposentos de Perséfone, diosa que empieza a aparecer en los epitafios áticos también en el s. IV, y especialmente en epitafios de mujeres. Una comparación con las laminillas órficas pone de relevancia varios paralelos tanto ideológicos como terminológicos entre éstas y epitafios en los que el *thalamos* de Perséfone es el premio por *eusebeia*, abriendo la posibilidad de que algunos de estos textos estén dedicados a iniciados en los misterios de la diosa. El capítulo termina con una referencia al soporte epigráfico de los epigramas funerarios, la piedra, a modo más de epílogo literario que de estudio propiamente dicho, haciendo una comparación con pasajes de Homero, Píndaro o Eurípides en los que se relaciona la muerte con la mirada de Medusa y la conversión en piedra, y a la vez en los que esa “muerte de piedra” va acompañada de lamentos o gemidos. A las oposiciones propias de los monumentos funerarios ya aparecidas en el libro: luz y oscuridad, sonido y silencio, se añade aquí la de lágrimas y piedra para designar la oposición entre vida y muerte.

El libro ofrece una introducción donde la autora hace aclaraciones importantes metodológicas, por ejemplo, sobre las traducciones de términos sueltos, como *arete*, o las traducciones de los epitafios que presenta. El lector puede no estar de acuerdo con la interpretación que en algunos casos traslucen esas traducciones: por ejemplo, en la traducción del epitafio de Pausimache (p. 58), el infinitivo ὄπᾶν del cuarto verso depende de ἔλιπες en el segundo, y está coordinado con el ἔχειν, que depende del mismo verbo, por lo que creo que una traducción más apropiada sería “has dejado tras de ti para tus padres que tengan dolor... y, para quienes pasan por aquí, que vean un monumento de tu *arete* y *sophrosyne*”; o en la traducción de la inscripción CEG 611 (p. 61), la última línea creo que es una oración copulativa con el verbo elidido: “es (χθὼν ἦδε) la memoria inmortal de tu sensatez”, y no explicación del término *arete* que la precede, como parece indicar la autora mediante los dos puntos. A pesar de posibles pequeños desacuerdos, las traducciones reflejan en general una interpretación claramente explicada y convincente. Se echan de menos más figuras que reflejen los comentarios iconográficos, sobre todo en algunos epitafios especialmente tratados en este aspecto; y se habría agradecido que las notas estuvieran a pie de página y

no al final del libro. Las concordancias epigráficas finales y el índice de palabras clave son de gran utilidad.

A pesar de que los temas tratados en este libro son la mayor parte bien conocidos en los estudios de epigrafía funeraria, por ser recurrentes, reciben aquí nuevos enfoques, nuevas formas de aproximación, nuevos y datos y nuevas interpretaciones de aspectos muy concretos, a veces terminológicos, que suponen un avance en la comprensión de los textos analizados y en el estudio general de la epigrafía funeraria. El libro en su conjunto es un claro ejemplo de cómo los textos epigráficos y literarios se complementan, y cómo la interpretación de unos se enriquece y perfecciona gracias a los otros mediante un análisis filológico en el sentido más amplio del término, y de la necesidad de acompañar el análisis textual con el iconográfico en los monumentos figurados.

ECOLOGY AND THEOLOGY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD



HUNT, ALISA and MARLOW, HILARY F. (eds.) (2019). *Ecology and Theology in the Ancient World. Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives*. London: Bloomsbury Academic. 216 pp., 100,97€ [ISBN 978-1-3500-0406-1].

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“HOW THE RESOURCEFULNESS OF DEADLY LUXURY HAS INCREASED”, grumbled Seneca the Younger in the *Natural Questions* (III 18, 3, tr. Hine) – a sentiment likely to resonate with students and critics of the Anthropocene’s enveloping global crisis of unchecked consumerism and rampant environmental devastation. Brought together under the careful editorial eye of Ailsa Hunt and Hilary Marlow, the ten chapters of *Ecology and Theology in the Ancient World. Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives* put ancient Mediterranean texts into conversation with the 21st cent. climate crisis. Faithful to the ecological sensibility that threads through the various contributions, the volume as a whole is sensibly proportioned; each essay serves just enough food to satisfy the reader’s appetite.

The justification for the volume’s pairing of ecology and theology as orientating concepts is laid out clearly and well in the editors’ introduction. Although some read-

ers might lift an eyebrow at the claim that “inhabitants of the ancient world ... understood, in a way that we have forgotten, where their food came from and recognized the importance of the agrarian cycles of planting and harvesting” (p. 2; for more on the presumed *we* of the volume see below), the introduction’s call to cross-disciplinary exchange and its commitment to sturdy definitions are energizing. For the editors, the absence of any consistent recognition of anthropogenic environmental change in ancient authors – a consequence of the fact that “there was no ancient environmental crisis on which to reflect” – does not void their texts of relevance to contemporary debates; if anything, these texts “could be just the kind of catalyst needed to prompt modern audiences” to radical transformation (p. 7). As one argument for the volume’s cross-join of biblical and Greco-Roman texts, Hunt and Marlow locate in the differing arcs of their respective modern receptions an appealing opportunity: “Classicists and philosophers will likely always have to argue harder for the contemporary relevance of the texts they study to our environmental crisis than do biblical scholars and theologians speaking to pre-existing communities of readers of these ancient texts, who are keen to apply them to their own lived situation. [...] [But] those scholars who work on classical texts ... could usefully harness some of that urgency and energy, which stems from a confessional engagement with the texts, to further debate about a crisis in which we are all implicated...” (p. 9).

The volume’s ten chapters answer the editorial summons by canvassing a range of biblical and Greco-Roman texts for greater insight into ancient paradigms of ecology and/as theology. After an opening chapter that works political theory into a comparative discussion of Hebrew and Greco-Roman texts (disclosure: its author, Melissa Lane, is my colleague at Princeton) and an arresting ecocritical study of the *Sibylline Oracles* (Helen Van Noorden), the next four chapters wax philosophically: comparison of James Lovelock’s Gaia hypothesis with Empedoclean and Platonic models of cosmic self-sufficiency (David Sedley); the question of whether and with what benefits Stoic virtue ethics can be leveraged for contemporary environmental ethics (Christoph Jedan, Julia Wildberger); and the reception and renegotiation of ancient philosophical and religious texts in modern and postmodern responses to environmental change (Robin Attfield). Of the final four chapters, two prioritize the Hebrew Bible, the first with an eye on human concern with and fear for the sea (Rebecca Watson) and the second with an eye on warfare’s ecological toll as a theme in ancient and modern poetry (Hilary Marlow). The remaining two chapters execute, respectively, a detailed appraisal of the *Oresteia*’s Erinyes as bellwethers of disruption to the cosmic order (Emmanuela Bakola); and a point-by-point takedown of the ascription of pagan animism to Greeks and Romans in modern scholarship on ancient Mediterranean religion (Ailsa Hunt).

In its scope and depth, the collection will nourish and embolden ecologically minded students of antiquity. Lane's recovery of "the submerged role of politics" in texts ostensibly concerned with divine and human agency in nature rewards multiple readings, and Jedan's assessment of the "prospects of drawing inspiration from Stoicism for an environmental virtue ethics" should find a home in conversations among scholar-activists looking to ancient Greco-Roman philosophy as a renewable resource. These and several other chapters make for boon-companions to a fellow 2019 publication: *Antiquities Beyond Humanism* (eds. Emanuela Bianchi, Sara Brill, and Brooke Holmes), whose regard for the cosmological architectures of ancient biopolitics has multiple points of contact with Hunt and Marlow's volume. It would be a gratifying exercise to press further Sedley's attention to self-sufficiency by taking up James Porter's account of the hyper-object in *ABH*, especially since both scholars make productive use of Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*. But of all of the chapters in Hunt and Marlowe, I found myself most stirred by Watson's suggestive meditation on the figure of Leviathan in Job 40.25-41.26 [41.1-34], a text that celebrates "this awesome creature as part of God's paradoxical and incomprehensible world" (p. 97). From this and other passages that center the sea and sea creatures, Watson spins a convincing and timely case for "the Old Testament sense of human finitude before creation" as "one that urgently needs to be recaptured" (p. 100). Even though *Moby-Dick* towers in the shadows here, my mind kept wandering to the thalassic encounters of those 21st-century migrants for whom ecology's confrontation with theology is lashed to the racial violence of the Global North. The poet Abdel Wahab Yousif's prophecy of his own death – "You'll die at sea" – is fulfilled time and again in the same seas that the mythic Leviathan once haunted.¹

The seeming heterogeneity of the volume's individual chapters is underpinned by a set of unifying concerns. Many of the authors respond to and move against Lynn White Jr.'s lecture "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis" (*Science* 1967), a foundational text for Euro-American environmental ethics and philosophy. Meanwhile, in the Stoic-infused chapters, a few philosophical texts come in for repeat visits, such as the excerpt from Chrysippus' *On Ends* that is preserved at Diogenes Laertius VII 87-88 (compare pp. 58-59 and p. 82). But seeing as most of the essays read as standalone submissions, it is not easy to tell how much pollination took place after the conference at which the seeds for this volume were first planted; cross-references

1. For the poet Abdel Wahab Yousif (Latinos), see <https://arablit.org/2020/08/27/trading-misery-for-death-the-tragic-death-of-a-sudanese-poet/>.

among the essays are few in number. All the same, the essays do for the most part complement each other well.

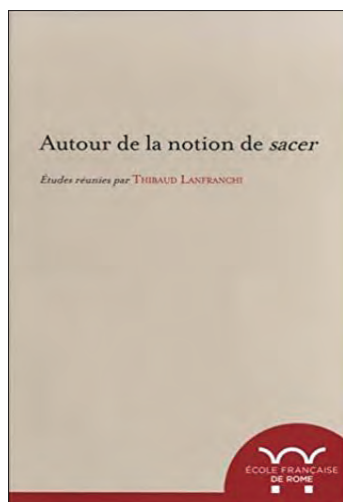
No volume could do full justice to ecology's play with theology in the ancient Mediterranean. That the Stoics are such rock stars is hardly a surprise, but it is startling to see the environmental ethics of Epicureanism receiving only a brief mention (on p. 78; for a sense of the possibilities here see Hutchins, R. (2017). Interspecies Ethics and Collaborative Survival in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura*. In Schliephake, C. (ed.) (2017). *Ecocriticism, Ecology, and the Cultures of Antiquity*. Lanham: Lexington Books). Oddly for a collection that is so attentive to theology, little space is set aside for theology's materialization in cult, and for the thinking-through of theology through the lived rhythms of ritual. And the volume's pronounced emphasis on texts closes the door to any meaningful engagement with material culture. One result is that debates about the Anthropocene now under way in classical archaeology and ancient history (see e.g. Kearns, C. [2017]. Mediterranean Archaeology and Environmental Histories in the Spotlight of the Anthropocene. *History Compass*, 15, e12371) do not register in these pages. Another consequence is that classical art historians for whom questions of material form and mediality offer points of entry into ancient ecological thinking (I am thinking of Platt, V. [2017]. Ecology, Ethics, and Aesthetics in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History*. *Journal of the Clark Art Institute*, 17, pp. 219-242) might not find much of a foothold here.

Yet perhaps the most regrettable omission from the volume concerns race and race theory: the contributions do not enter into dialogue with work on the coupling of ecological and racial thinking in antiquity (as modeled in e.g. Futo Kennedy, R. and Jones-Lewis, M. [eds.] [2016]. *The Routledge Handbook of Identity and the Environment in the Classical Medieval Worlds*. London: Routledge) or on the racial and race-making underpinnings of global climate change's fast and slow violences (most recently: Yusoff, K. [2018]. *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press). The concept of the Anthropocene is controversial, and not only for the reasons flagged by the editors (p. 153 n. 1): Black and Indigenous scholars have mounted forceful criticisms of its value as an explanatory tool on the grounds that European settler-colonialism and the trans-Atlantic slave trade have driven and kept many communities on the ecological brink for centuries. Hence the call of Kyle Whyte (Potawatomi) and others to "decolonize the Anthropocene" ([2017]. Indigenous Climate Change Studies. *English Language Notes*, 55.1, pp. 153-162), a term more indexical of "Euro-Western theories of resilience" in which "the climate acts as a blank commons" than of Indigenous ecological thinking (Todd, Z. [2016]. An Indigenous Feminist's Take on the Ontological Turn. *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 29.1, pp. 4-22). Related to this constraint on the book's theoretical range

was another head-scratcher: throughout the volume, not one of the essays entertains the possibility that ancient worlds existed outside of the biblical and Greco-Roman Mediterranean; or that there could be eco-theological practices for inhabiting within and entering into responsible relationships with the environment that derive their force from destabilizing the fixation of the white-supremacist Enlightenment and post-Enlightenment order with the quarrel between “ancient” and “modern.”

But it would be invidious to carp for much longer about this volume’s deficits when I found myself so replenished by its essays. I join the editors in hoping that the volume spurs a much wider-ranging and inclusive conversation among knowledge practitioners within and outside of the academy about the histories of ecology’s braiding with theology – and especially about those interpretive approaches, mostly sidelined to date in the work of classicists, that invite us to practice more strenuously an eco-theological ethic of care.

AUTOUR DE LA NOTION DE SACER



LANFRANCHI, THIBAUD (ed.).
(2018). *Autour de la notion de sacer*.
Rome: École française de Rome.
300 pp., 43,06€ [ISBN 978-2-7283-
1288-7].

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AUTOUR DE LA NOTION DE SACER È UNA PREGEVOLE RACCOLTA DI saggi frutto di una giornata di studi svoltasi nell'aprile 2014 all'École française de Rome. L'iniziativa, promossa da Thibaud Lanfranchi, era inserita all'interno del progetto di ricerca *Italia Picta* (2012-2016), per lo studio dei rapporti tra Roma e i popoli dell'Italia antica durante il periodo della conquista (VI-III sec. a.C.). Tali relazioni sono state analizzate non soltanto dal punto di vista romano, ma anche dal punto di vista dei popoli "vicini" al fine di comprendere come le conquiste territoriali dell'*Urbe* siano state utilizzate per l'acquisizione di esperienze successivamente reinvestite nell'amministrazione dell'Italia. Si tratta di un tema fondamentale per la comprensione dell'espansionismo romano e delle sue origini poiché è proprio nei secoli in questione che Roma elaborò e concepì alcuni dei più importanti strumenti politico-amministrativi che successivamente le permisero di organizzare il suo dominio sul resto della penisola italiana,

delle Province e dell'Impero Mediterraneo. Il volume ha dunque innanzitutto il pregio di affrontare aspetti fondamentali per la storia del Mediterraneo antico, partendo inoltre da una premessa metodologica fondamentale: non è più possibile, come accaduto in passato, affrontare tematiche relative al mondo classico senza impiegare un approccio multidisciplinare. Per questo motivo la giornata di studi, all'origine del volume, ha previsto otto interventi di linguisti, archeologi, antichisti, romanisti e storici. Ricerche come quella intorno al significato di *sacer* devono dunque essere affrontate da diversi orizzonti e i processi emergenti dalle diverse serie documentali possono essere confrontati al fine di ricostruire una storia che, nel caso specifico, è quella del significato di un termine il quale, come giustamente sottolineato da A. Bertrand (p. 241), gli antichi hanno sempre cercato di ridefinire nel tempo, anche in relazione ad altra terminologia giuridico-sacrale appartenente alla stessa sfera semantica. E l'esperienza giuridica romana è certamente, sotto questo punto di vista, quella che attesta in maniera più chiara questa mutabilità permettendo anche di riflettere sulle insidie di una visione statica del mondo antico e delle sue Istituzioni. Come è noto, infatti, il materiale utile a un tentativo di definizione della nozione di sacro nella cultura latina è quello più abbondante ed è riconducibile in particolar modo all'esperienza giuridica romana. È per questo motivo che, muovendosi in tale ambito, si possono tentare operazioni di definizione più raffinate rispetto a quelle che è possibile elaborare per altri contesti culturali la cui tradizione letteraria e giuridica è andata irrimediabilmente perduta. Non stupisce pertanto che la romanistica si sia confrontata, in particolar modo tra diciannovesimo e ventesimo secolo, non soltanto con il problema relativo al significato giuridico di *sacer*, ma anche con quello del rapporto che questa particolare "qualità" – attribuibile a *loca, res, etc.* (v. *infra*) – intratteneva con altri termini utilizzati in ambito giuridico-sacrale, fra tutti *sanctus* (di questo si occupa il contributo di Elena Tassi Scandone, "*Sacer e sanctus: quali rapporti?*", pp. 131-170). I diversi studi, tuttavia, date le difficoltà nell'armonizzare le differenti definizioni date dai giuristi antichi, hanno spesso ammesso una generale incoerenza sia tra le fonti a nostra disposizione sia all'interno dell'opera di uno stesso autore. Esemplificative in questo senso sono le conclusioni di Ferdinando Bona ([1987]. Alla ricerca del *De verborum, quae ad ius civile pertinent, significatione* di Elio Gallo. 1. La struttura dell'opera. *BIDR*, 90, pp. 119-168) in merito al noto passo di E. Gallo riportato in Fest. 348 L., considerato dall'illustre studioso troppo contraddittorio per non intravedere un intervento di V. Flacco che ne avrebbe minato la genuinità originaria lasciando nel testo cesure e aporie dovute alle diverse impostazioni delle opere dei due autori (divisa per *genera* quella di E. Gallo, ordinata alfabeticamente quella di V. Flacco). Si è così giunti, in alcuni casi, a considerare come del tutto inattendibili le testimonianze degli antichi in materia di *res sanctae* rinunciando per questo a

ricostruire i rapporti tra alcuni istituti appartenenti al *ius divinum* (v. in particolare Fantetti, E. [1956]. L'inquadramento classico delle *res sanctae*. *Labeo*, 2, p. 94). Simili conclusioni, tuttavia, potrebbero dipendere da un "approccio di tipo dogmatico e perciò stesso essenzialmente statico" delle ricerche (p. 169) ed è per questo che risulta necessario applicare una prospettiva dinamica (ossia diacronica e non sincronica) allo studio dei singoli istituti giuridici, e in particolar modo per quelli che "affondano le radici nel diritto della Roma monarchica o, addirittura, nei *mores* delle comunità preciviche" (p. 168). Diventa in questo modo possibile tentare definirne le trasformazioni da essi subite nel corso dei secoli e comprenderne, laddove possibile, le cause.

Un'operazione, questa, aggiunto, resa possibile dal riconoscimento di una stratificazione che non può più essere – come spesso accaduto – ignorata, dal momento che riposa sulla tendenza antica di mantenere attivi, seppur sclerotizzandoli, istituti ormai superati "grazie alla straordinaria capacità della giurisprudenza romana di elaborare soluzioni innovative per rispondere alle esigenze... di una società in continua evoluzione" (caso emblematico, in questo senso, è quello del mantenimento di alcune funzioni dei *comitia curiata* nonostante la creazione della più recente assemblea centuriata). D'altra parte, non è cosa sconosciuta che la gestualità e la ritualità permisero la conservazione di formule e pratiche per così lungo tempo che, a partire da un certo momento, esse non furono più neppure comprese (pur preservandone comunque la trasmissione).

Di questo rinnovato metodo è un chiaro esempio anche lo studio di Roberto Fiori sulla condizione di *homo sacer* nel mondo romano (pp. 171-228), tema da sempre al centro del dibattito scientifico e ricco delle più diverse interpretazioni. Le quali, tuttavia, sembrano perdere la loro ragion d'essere proprio nel momento in cui si ammette che "il presupposto fondamentale (delle precedenti interpretazioni) è... una concezione unitaria del *sacrum* che identifica il regime degli *homines sacri* e delle *res sacrae*, sul presupposto che 'sacer è ciò che appartiene al dio'... *Tuttavia* ci si accorge del fatto che una simile concezione unitaria non può essere ammessa". Ora, al di là delle varie conclusioni alle quali si potrebbe giungere, importa sottolineare in particolar modo un preciso aspetto del metodo impiegato dall'A. Anche in questo caso, infatti, un'attenta rivalutazione di tutte le fonti a disposizione in chiave diacronica e non in una visione "codicistica", figlia della dottrina ottocentesca, ha permesso a R. Fiori – che certamente ha il merito di aver lavorato di bulino di bulino su diversi brani (e.g. il notissimo Fest. 442 e 424 L.) – di giungere non soltanto alla ricostruzione di un importante Istituto del mondo romano arcaico, ma anche alla comprensione della posizione assunta da un individuo colpito dalla *sacratio* nei confronti della comunità di appartenenza. E per converso, proprio il lavoro di scavo nelle fonti ha permesso di scardinare la visione di una *sacratio* il cui valore sarebbe variato nel V secolo a.C.

in seguito ai giuramenti collettivi prestati dai romani “in occasione della cacciata dei Tarquini e della secessione plebea del 494 a.C.”. Una prospettiva diacronica di studio dunque che, contraddicendo in sostanza ipotesi che prevedevano una variabilità nel tempo di un Istituto, conferma la bontà del metodo impiegato.

Le fonti, dunque, di qualsiasi tipo esse siano, possono e devono essere indagate anche stratigraficamente, così come, d'altronde, già nel 1959 auspicava Pietro de Francisci: “la ricostruzione delle istituzioni primitive esige un lavoro di scavo: e, quando sia ben condotto...si può sempre sperare di poter recare qualche nuovo contributo alla conoscenza della preistoria o della protostoria delle istituzioni” (*Primordia Civitatis*). Proprio un attento lavoro di scavo è stato compiuto con questo volume che permette di superare alcune delle apparenti contraddizioni spesso indicate nella storia degli studi come indizi di falsificazioni, incomprensioni e incoerenze. Tale sguardo diacronico e *per differentiam* è certamente, al di là delle differenti tematiche affrontate, un importante contributo di questa raccolta di studi che ha anche il merito di proporre alcune motivazioni che sarebbero alla base delle singole “trasformazioni” semantiche. Un esempio su tutti è quello, forse il più significativo, che vede, probabilmente in età giustiniana e in conseguenza di un cambiamento avvenuto nell'epoca classica, le *res sanctae* passare dalla categoria giuridica normata dal *ius divinum* a quella delle *res publicae iuris*: un ottimo esempio di come la metodologia di scavo stratigrafico nelle fonti antiche possa condurre a un “nuovo contributo alla conoscenza” della storia tanto dei valori semantici impiegati dagli antichi, quanto del più ampio sistema nel quale essi erano inseriti.

Il volume, grazie ai diversi contributi, assolve esattamente a questi compiti dando nuovo stimolo alle ricerche inerenti alla categoria delle cose sacre e delle loro definizioni che spesso si rincorrono su una medesima radice cambiando però di significato e mettendo così in guardia, come ben sottolineato da A. Bertrand, da comparazioni semplicistiche che spesso conducono a traduzioni affrettate e, ancor peggio, errate. Per questo, i contributi di Valentina Belfiore sulla nozione di *sacer* in etrusco (pp. 40-60), di Emmanuel Dupraz sulla corrispondenza dello stesso termine sulle tavole eugubine (pp. 62-92) e di Giovanna Rocca su *sacer* nelle iscrizioni umbre (pp. 93-114), sono la dimostrazione non soltanto dell'importanza della ricostruzione di processi ricavabili da serie documentali provenienti da diversi ambiti geografici ma, come giustamente ammesso da Danièle Dehouve nel suo interessante studio “Sacer et Sacré. Notion emic et catégorie anthropologique” (pp. 16-37), anche e soprattutto, della loro “comparazione” al fine di chiarire sfumature semantiche che altrimenti resterebbero nell'ombra oppure verrebbero archiviate nella categoria dell’“impossibile da comprendere” o, peggio ancora, del tutto fraintese. Emblematiche in questo senso sono le parole di A. Bertrand su parte dello studio di Dupraz sui termini impiegati in

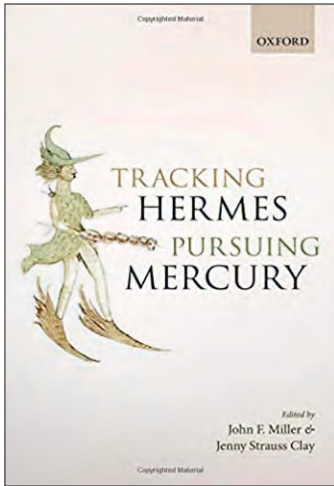
umbro: “Si on a pu traduire l’adjectif substantivé sakref par «porcelets», sur la base des rares attestations de *sacris* en latin, plusieurs contextes d’emploi invitent à prolonger la réflexion pour faire ressortir la richesse des traits sémantiques de l’adjectif”.

Uno dei pericoli nell’affrontare temi che dipendono, per ovvie ragioni, dall’analisi delle fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche è sottovalutare un aspetto fondamentale ossia quello legato agli spazi che queste descrivono. Il rischio è infatti quello di elaborare lodevoli e articolate costruzioni teoriche di Istituti o categorie antiche che mancano però di riscontro nei resti provenienti dallo stesso mondo che le ha elaborate e trasmesse. Nel volume in questione, tuttavia, il contributo di Olivier de Cazanove mostra come anche questo importante aspetto sia stato considerato. L’A. infatti, partendo – giustamente – dal valore semantico del termine *sakaraklùm* (attestato sul cippo abelano), tenta di definire quale e di che tipo fosse lo spazio definito da uno dei cippi che evidentemente dovevano circondare un tempio o un santuario (“Le sacré en Partage. Sakaralùm, temple ou sanctuarie sur le cippe d’Abella?”, pp. 113-130). Anche in questo caso, quindi, la comparazione di serie documentarie diverse dimostra ancora una volta tutto il suo potenziale euristico. Partendo da Partendo da quest’ultima osservazione si potrebbe ammettere che poteva forse essere approfondita la questione dello spazio sacro romano. Ma ciò dipende certamente dal fatto che le moderne strategie editoriali non lasciano più grandi spazi di manovra e i volumi devono pur essere chiusi in un numero contingentato di pagine. Nel caso de *Autour de la notion de sacer*, tuttavia, ciò è bastato non soltanto ad affrontare diverse questioni che negli anni si erano gordianamente annodate ma anche a suggerire spunti di ricerca che potranno chiarire le numerose zone d’ombra che ancora avvolgono diverse tematiche inerenti alla nozione di *sacer*.

Per concludere: si tratta di un volume assai complesso e articolato che, per ricchezza dei contenuti e dei punti di vista, offre numerose e interessanti occasioni di riflessione e discussione. Per darne conto in maniera adeguata occorrerebbe ben altro spazio di quello concesso a questa breve considerazione. Io ho voluto sottolineare in particolare un aspetto tra i tanti possibili: il valore aggiunto rappresentato da un metodo che predilige l’analisi diacronica di tutte le fonti per ricostruire la storia di Istituti e valori semantici, in questo caso specifico legati a una particolare condizione giuridico-sacrale. In primo luogo ciò è naturale per un archeologo come me, abituato a conoscere il mondo antico ricostruendo per prima cosa il divenire di oggetti, stratificazioni e strutture, paesaggi. Ma c’è di più. Tale approccio consente infatti di raggiungere due obiettivi fondamentali per una visione realmente interdisciplinare. Da un punto di vista più generale, le diverse discipline/filologie – in questo caso storia del diritto, filologia e archeologia – creano serie di informazioni e teorie impiegando un metodo analogo, che possiamo definire stratigrafico. Esse pertanto consentono

di comparare efficacemente processi ricostruiti in modo autonomo e in base a serie di documenti diversi. Tutto ciò non può che arricchire il dibattito scientifico, troppo spesso condizionato da eccessivi specialismi. Infatti, operando in questo modo, emerge la capacità di tradurre materie specifiche in sistemi di conoscenze riconducibili alla ricerca storica e condivisibili, anche se scaturiti da diversi “punti di accesso” al complesso dei dati/documenti. Inoltre, da un punto di vista più specifico, la possibilità di ricostruire Istituti e valori semantici nel loro divenire storico rivela, non senza buone dosi di stupore e voluttà generate dalla vividezza dei risultati ottenuti, quanto indietro nel tempo possano risalire e con quale grado di persistenza siano state conservate le antiche istituzioni giuridico-sacrali. Il suolo di Roma ha rivelato una storia molto più articolata e antica di quanto si credesse fino a non molti anni fa, e lo ha fatto perché quella terra è stata scavata stratigraficamente. Allo stesso modo, le fonti scritte e le memorie che esse conservano rivelano una “profondità storica” e una “storia” raggiungibile soltanto a patto di sottoporle a un analogo “lavoro di scavo”.

TRACKING HERMES, PURSUING MERCURY



MILLER, JOHN F. and STRAUSS CLAY, JENNY (eds.) (2019). *Tracking Hermes, Pursuing Mercury*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 416 pp., 90,17€ [ISBN 978-0-1987-7734-2].

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THIS TWENTY-CHAPTER VOLUME HAS BEEN COMPILED from the papers presented at an interdisciplinary symposium held at the University of Virginia, USA in 2014 to discuss Hermes/Mercury in both his ancient and modern contexts. Its contents are divided into nine thematic sections and preceded by an introduction crafted by the editors. It also includes a four-page list of the figures discussed in various chapters, an eight-page list of abbreviations, a 13-page *Index Locorum* and a six-page general index.

As might be expected, the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* receives the most attention in the literary studies of the contributors, but these are complimented by individual chapters focused primarily on epic or comedy. Similarly, with Roman Mercury, Horace's *Ode* and its relationship with Alcaeus' early Hermes Hymn draw the attention of several contributors as does Virgil's *Aeneid*. Visual evidence of the god is the focus of six chapters, ranging from inscriptions and votives to pottery, reliefs and statuary.

More specifically, Part 1 contains three chapters dedicated to the study of Hermes' relations with three key members of his family: his mother, his son, and his father. The first, by A. Shapiro, considers the significance of the appearance of Maia in the company of her son, depicted on five vases dating from 570 to 500 BCE. Shapiro notes that by being depicted in the company of her Olympian son, Maia's standing amongst her fellow divinities is elevated. Continuing the visual study of Hermes, C.M. Lafferière examines Athenian reliefs of the god in company with both his son (Pan) and the Nymphs in an effort to discern what she refers to as their "visual theology" (33). In the process she offers a well-structured case to explain the Attic associations of Hermes and Pan with the Nymphs through reference to the *Homeric Hymn to Pan*. This first section concludes with an insightful study by J. Larson in which she examines the similarities between the activities undertaken by Hermes and Herakles prior to their acceptance by Zeus into his Olympian family. This analysis allows her to put forward the hypothesis that an earlier, but now lost, poem – possibly a *Homeric Hymn to Herakles* – may have served as the model for our extant *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*. In particular Larson draws attention to parallel activities in which each figure engaged in their individual quest for inclusion: each had to demonstrate his own particular usefulness to the chief god by engaging their elder brother, Apollo, in a contest and each was credited with establishing a cult of the twelve gods.

The following five sections each contain two chapters; Part 2 is focused on Hermes as "trickster". J.S. Clay's contribution rehearses the similarities between Hermes and Odysseus, exemplified in their shared epithet, *πολύτροπος*, as they emerge from Homeric epic, especially the *Odyssey*. In this she adds some new details to earlier observations on their shared features. Moving into a different poetic genre, A. Capra and C. Nobili make a convincing case for crediting Hermes with the invention of iambus, a poetic form especially at home in sympotic settings. With this established, they go on to show why Hermes can be seen as a particularly appropriate patron of both genre and setting. In the process they offer an informed discussion of Hipponax's engagement with his patron god in his own iambic poetry.

A natural transition from the tricky and humorous aspects of Hermes and iambus occurs as the focus for the third section moves to the Comic. S. Beta explores the possibility that a handful of comic fragments contain evidence of "speaking herms" and the likely significance of such a figure on the comic stage. While a plausible case is made, it did not strike this reader as wholly convincing. Similarly, although E.K. Moodie's presentation of Hermes/Mercury as patron deity of comedy has merit, to argue that this god "understands" comic conventions is to neglect the fact that, as characters in a play, their words are scripted by the playwright. Moreover, while com-

edy's lowly representation of Hermes/Mercury is generally accepted, the non-scripted evidence to which Moodie appeals in support of her thesis is rather strained (p. 116).

The Erotic aspects of the god become the focus in Part 4 in a section that also marks the beginning of a shift from Greek Hermes to Roman Mercury. In the first chapter J. Farrell's contribution offers a survey of all of the sexual attractions and "hook-ups" with which the god is involved in extant Greek and Roman literature up to and including the late *The Marriage of Mercury and Philology* by Martianus Capella. What Farrell draws to our attention is the fact that, unlike his father, or brother, Apollo, Hermes himself is seldom represented as sexually active. In contrast the sexually aggressive inferences that can be drawn from the ithyphallic Herm, Hermes more often serves as an aid or facilitator to the other gods' affairs with mortal and semi-divine females, than he does an active partner in sexual encounters of his own. This is not say that there are no tales of him, sometimes violently, raping a female who catches his eye, as is the case with Lara in Ovid (*Fast.* II 617-638); rather it is to note that there are far fewer of such instances in the extant literature than there are for other male gods. M.C. Myers' chapter deals with Ovid's engagement with "the Hermes hymn tradition" specifically in his version of the contest between Cupid and Apollo in the *Metamorphoses*. After discussing the similarities between Hermes and Cupid to be found in *Amores* I 1, Myers' presents two short comparative studies involving the Cupid and Apollo incident and an earlier Greek text (Alcaeus' Hermes Hymn) and the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*. There follows a third comparison of *Fasti* V and *Met.* I-II in an examination of the god's relationship with the mischievous god of love, Cupid. Although the study contains a number of fresh observations, it attempts to cover too much ground in its thirteen pages of discussion.

In Part 5 the focus shifts from the god's eroticism to his role a mediator. Here the Latin texts are fully to the fore, first with S.J. Harrison's consideration of Mercury and the mercurial in Horace, which, as the title indicates, reveals the closeness of the poet's self-identification with both the erotic and (despite the noticeable absence of mercantile Mercury in the *Odes*) the commercial Mercury and his offspring's Faunus' mythic-poetic persona. His discussion is complimented by S. Casali's study of Mercury as an intertextual figure in Vergil. Based on his analysis of the three appearance of Mercury in the poet's *Aeneid*, in which the god performs his Homeric role as boundary-crossing messenger of the Olympians, Casali sees a parallel between the god's boundary-crossing ability and intertextuality. He then proceeds to examine

Virgil's engagement with Homer's and Apollonius' Hermes, revealing just how familiar Virgil was with his Greek forerunners' representation of the god.¹

Staying with Roman Mercury, the two chapters in Part 6 focus on the Roman god's close association with trade. D.E. MacRae directs his reader's attention to the images of Mercury found in the Pompeian ruins often at or near the entrances to local shops in order to reveal just how closely retail enterprises associated financial success with the favour of the god. In particular, his observations that the placement of the god's image at shop door served to encourage the god to prosper the shop owner seems a reasonable conclusion to be drawn from the evidence discussed. Retaining a particularly Roman focus, T. Biggs' contribution considers the importance of Mercury to Rome and to maritime warfare, as inferred by comments made by Horace (C. II 7, 13-16), Polybius (*Histories* XXIX 27, 6-8) and the earlier (now lost) epic poem by Naevius concerning the Punic Wars. He reveals how Mercury's epic persona at the time of the First Punic War was quite plausibly far less mercantile and far more militaristic than it came to be by the early 2nd cent. BCE. The argument, though speculative, is well-made and likely to spur further studies. Given its merits, it is unfortunate that Biggs does not appear to have been familiar with Blakely's work or her contribution to the volume nor with Buchet and de Souza's edited volume dealing with the ancient world and the sea.

In Part 7 the focus shifts to the god's place in the religious life of the Greeks and Romans, in which each of the three chapters return to the focus to Hermes. H. Collard's discussion considers what the depiction of herms on vases was meant to signify and reaches a two-fold conclusion: such depictions serve to remind the viewer of Hermes' standing as the divine mediator as well as functioning as an iconic sign of the possibility of ritual interaction between the human and the divine. The second study by J. Wallensten, which considers the votive dedications to Hermes and their dedicators, contains much of interest and is clearly part of a significantly larger study. It is unfortunate that more space was not allotted to fuller discussions of the evidence given that, although the fourteen-page list containing the dedicator, receiving gods, location of find and production date is impressive, and certainly does reveal the extent in time and space of Hermes' worship, it is only of limited use to the non-specialist reader. Rounding out the discussion of Hermes in religion and cult is S. Blakely's excellent study of the god's worship on Samothrace in relation to Kyllene, ithyphallicism and seafaring.

1. Some errors in alphabetic ordering occur in Casali's bibliography.

From the island of Samothrace, attention turns to the land of Egypt and the influences of Hermes and Thoth on each other in Part 8. L.M. Bortolani provides the first of the two studies presented here by directing our attention to a particular “Hymn to Hermes” found in three versions within the Greek magical papyri (*PGM*) and in doing so she tackles a fraught issue of the relationship of Thoth to Hermes in Egypt. A. Vergados sets forth an insightful analysis and decidedly plausible explanation for the celebratory occasion at which the fragmentary *POxy XVII 2034 To the Fig* was performed.

The volume concludes with two broader views of the god in which one will encounter several instances of untranslated Greek (and some Latin). In the first, N. Reggiani presents a series of instances drawn from Hermes’ Homeric Hymn which she interprets as indicative of the god’s concerns with “justice and proportional distribution”.² The final chapter is that of H. Versnel’s, in which he traces the rise in Hermes’ divine standing and increasing esteem amongst his worshippers along three different paths: by becoming a deity to whom mortals confessed misbehaviour and from whom they sought forgiveness and restoration; through an increased interest in communication with the underworld; and, simply as one benefiting from a general trend of exaggeration in praise hymns for the gods.

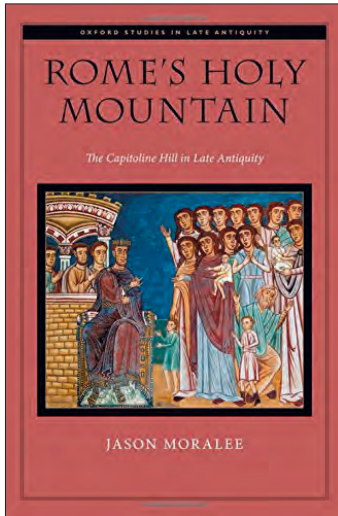
If there is cause for critique, it would include the following: 1) some chapters are more accessible than others for the reader who lacks one or both of the ancient languages, insofar as not all quotations from ancient texts are provided with a translation; 2) somewhat overlooked as a source are the appearances and discussions of Hermes in several of Plato’s dialogues and the later philosophers; and 3) on only a few occasions do authors make reference to relevant material contained in the studies of their fellow authors’ contributions.³ Even if presenters lacked access to each other’s discussions, the editors might have added the cross references as footnotes and sought the contributors’ approval at the pre-proof stage.

Despite these concerns, each of the chapters has something to offer the reader interested in seeing Hermes/Mercury through a different lens. It is certainly a volume that should be part of every library’s collection and would prove a worthwhile investment for those with a particular interest in this deity, whether in his Greek or Roman form.

2. Unfortunately, the case made is not a new one, as the relationship between Hermes, justice and proportional distribution first appeared in a 2004 Exeter PhD and subsequently in a 2018 volume in Routledge’s *Gods and Heroes* series.

3. Versnel’s chapter contains one of the very few cross-references to another argument in this collection.

ROME'S HOLY MOUNTAIN



MORALEE, JASON (2018). *Rome's Holy Mountain. The Capitoline Hill in Late Antiquity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 304 pp., 55,61€ [ISBN 978-0-1904-9227-4].

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QUESTO LIBRO, DEDICATO AD UNO DEI PIÙ CELEBRI E STUDIATI luoghi romani, è la dimostrazione che anche i monumenti e i luoghi più noti possono continuare ad offrire occasioni per la ricerca storica. Una ricerca, in questo caso, che, seppur senza nuove scoperte o interpretazioni, ha il merito di mostrare con sguardo perspicace la memoria di un luogo.

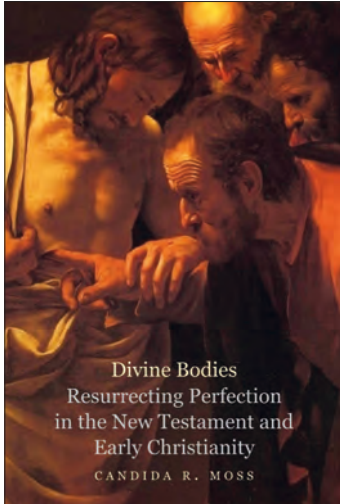
Il lavoro di Moralee si articola in due sezioni: *Realtà vissute* e *Realtà sognate*, che ci mostrano la capacità di saper guardare e documentare un luogo tanto come palcoscenico storico, quanto come rievocazione di aneddoti e leggende.

Avendo ben presenti tanto le ricerche archeologiche, che hanno portato, soprattutto nelle ultime decine di anni, a meglio definire le trasformazioni fisiche della collina capitolina tra la tarda antichità e il medioevo, quanto il corpus di fonti antiche disponibili, l'opera passa in rassegna, nella sua prima parte, quello che effettivamente e senza particolari mediazioni si mostrava agli occhi di un qualsiasi cittadino che si trovasse a camminare per le strade attorno al colle: gli edifici, le statue, i rituali e altro.

Al contrario, la seconda parte è la trasposizione di una realtà tutta mediata dal credo cristiano, una realtà che giustifica con la debolezza degli dèi la decadenza del luogo e che vede nell'errore pagano il motivo della rovina. E così, mentre la Roma dei martiri cresce e quella dei demoni muore, l'aneddotica diviene sempre più spesso interpretata in chiave polemica dagli autori cristiani che, convinti di portare acqua al proprio mulino, non si rendono conto, al contrario, di offrire all'impuro colle il servizio di preservarne tradizioni che altrimenti sarebbero andate perdute. Emblematico in tal senso è il caso dell'anonimo *Carmen contra Paganos*, che nello stigmatizzare alcuni tra i simboli più caratteristici della cultura pagana inevitabilmente ce ne ricorda allo stesso tempo la grandiosa potenza immaginifica.

Le pagine di Moralee non compongono un manuale sul Campidoglio ma hanno il merito di presentarci il contesto studiato non come un luogo immobile, qualcosa da guardare e documentare, bensì come un'entità che muta e continua a vivere mentre lo si osserva. Con un'elasticità non comune, l'autore ci dimostra che, anche se la legislazione chiude i templi e li trasforma in chiese, anche se i toponimi si caricano di altri significati, nulla del Campidoglio si perde nei secoli: le antiche tradizioni permangono e continuano a vivere anche se in modi differenti.

DIVINE BODIES



MOSS, CANDIDA R. (2019). *Divine Bodies. Resurrecting Perfection in the New Testament and Early Christianity*. New Haven – London: Yale University Press. 208 pp., 38,38€ [ISBN 978-0-3001-7976-7].

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A SIMPLE VISTA, LA MONOGRAFÍA DE CÁNDIDA MOSS podría considerarse un trabajo más, dedicado a las creencias en torno a la resurrección del cuerpo en el cristianismo primitivo (siglos I al III), un elemento esencial en la construcción de la identidad cristiana que sirvió para crear y delimitar fronteras doctrinales, y definir la ortodoxia. Sin embargo, esta obra posee unas cualidades por las que despunta en el repertorio bibliográfico sobre la materia. En primer lugar, por su tratamiento del tema, porque lejos de mantener la perspectiva tradicional orientada a los aspectos doctrinales y teológicos y a las ideas en torno a la supervivencia del alma, dedica su atención al cuerpo resucitado, su papel en la construcción de la identidad cristiana y a las respuestas dadas por los autores cristianos a las preguntas formuladas por los fieles desde el periodo evangélico: ¿Qué momento de la vida se elige como modelo para el cuerpo resucitado? ¿Qué partes del cuerpo se mantienen en el cielo? ¿Qué

forma tomarían estos cuerpos celestiales? ¿Serían distintos y de qué manera a los existentes en la vida terrenal?

Cándida Moss analiza estas respuestas a partir de una lectura de textos evangélicos heterodoxa, explorando interpretaciones novedosas que permiten obtener una reconstrucción más rica y compleja sobre el cuerpo resucitado. Su propuesta se hace eco del *embodiment*, una de las principales corrientes antropológicas a partir de la década de los noventa cuya aplicación ha obtenido resultados muy interesantes en el análisis religioso, aunque ha sido poco aplicada en el estudio del cristianismo.

Se trata de un estudio no muy extenso en el que el aparato crítico ocupa una extensión considerable (60 páginas) lo que delata una labor de documentación prolija y variada. La faceta más científica del debate expuesto en el texto queda recogida en las notas dispuestas a final de libro para facilitar al lector no especializado un recorrido ameno (pp. 125-184). Los especialistas, en cualquier caso, pueden comprobar la profundidad científica de los argumentos esgrimidos y la profusión de fuentes documentales manejadas si accede a ese cuerpo de notas y al elenco bibliográfico dispuestos al final del volumen.

El examen propuesto parte de una lectura alternativa de los textos evangélicos que esgrime como prueba, en una argumentación destinada a anular los efectos derivados de la influencia de San Pablo. Según explica la autora en la introducción (pp. 1-21), los escritos paulinos que hablan de un cuerpo glorificado han sido interpretados como testimonio de que todo cuerpo resucitado se consideraba un cuerpo pleno y, por lo tanto, embellecido, libre de cualquier defecto, imperfección o carencia que hubiera padecido en la vida terrenal. Su hipótesis parte de la confrontación de estos escritos con otros pasajes del Nuevo Testamento para los que propone una relectura innovadora. En torno a estos pasajes, articula cada uno de los cuatro capítulos que componen la monografía y sirven de pretexto para proponer una reflexión más extensa sobre el significado de “cuerpo perfecto” en el contexto de la resurrección.

Y así, el capítulo 1 “Identity” (pp. 22-40), se centra en un tema sorprendentemente poco investigado en los tratamientos académicos: las marcas que muestra el cuerpo del Jesús resucitado en las manos y en los costados. Moss inicia su análisis con dos pasajes que pretendían demostrar que Jesús resucitado no era un fantasma: el célebre pasaje del evangelio de san Juan (Jn. 20.24,27) que narra el reencuentro entre Jesús resucitado y Tomás, así como el pasaje lucano, en el que Jesús muestra sus “manos y pies” a los discípulos (Lc. 24.39-40).

Tradicionalmente, se han considerado esas marcas las heridas abiertas consecuencia de la crucifixión que permitirían reconocer sin ningún atisbo de duda que el cuerpo en el que Tomás hunde su mano es el mismo que el del Jesús crucificado. Moss aboga por precisar el significado del término empleado para designar estas marcas (*typoi*) y

propone que deberían traducirse no como heridas abiertas, tal y como tradicionalmente se propone, sino como cicatrices. El significado de elegir esta última designación es radicalmente distinto y mucho más profundo. La función de la cicatriz en el relato es doble. Por un lado, permite comprobar, de manera más fehaciente que una herida, que el cuerpo que se somete a la prueba es real, vivo, y no un fantasma, y lo hace de un modo mucho más seguro que las heridas porque las cicatrices son el resultado del proceso de curación del cuerpo y, por lo tanto, garantizan su existencia corporal real con posterioridad a la herida infligida. En segundo lugar, más que las heridas recientes, son las cicatrices las que en el mundo antiguo servirían como marcas de identificación (p. 31): por ejemplo, las cicatrices de la batalla podrían indicar valor y las cicatrices del látigo, la esclavitud. Al leer las “marcas” de Jesús dentro de este contexto, Moss sugiere que Juan sentó un precedente para la resurrección, puesto que las anomalías e imperfecciones corporales no quedaban borradas sino transfiguradas (p. 38) y su existencia era necesaria para distinguir a un individuo de otro. Además, el objetivo de las marcas no era mostrar que el cuerpo resucitado de Jesús era físico, sino más bien demostrar su identidad (pp. 38-39), es decir, que el mismo Jesús que murió fue el que resucitó, y que su cuerpo había comenzado el proceso de curación posterior a la crucifixión. Se resalta de este modo la realidad de la resurrección pues los estigmas corporales permanecen, aunque su cicatrización evidencia el paso del tiempo. Además, en la medida en que el propio Jesús conserva una vez resucitado sus marcas, cualquier cuerpo resucitado también conservaría las huellas físicas que individualizaban a cada devoto.

Tras demostrar que, tras la resurrección, las imperfecciones del cuerpo se pueden transfigurar sin quedar borradas, en el segundo capítulo, “Integrity” (pp. 41-65), Moss plantea, en términos en absoluto habituales en la investigación, lo que significa la plenitud y perfección del cuerpo, una vez alcanzado el reino de los cielos, y expone una propuesta completamente distinta a la que ha sido asumida en la exégesis teológica posterior. El objetivo de Moss en este capítulo es demostrar que los cuerpos transfigurados y glorificados tras la resurrección no tienen que responder a los cánones de lo que se considera estéticamente bello tanto en la sociedad contemporánea a los evangelios como en la actual. Ahí reside también la radicalidad del mensaje cristiano. Moss propone para ello una nueva interpretación del pasaje de Marcos (Mc. 9, 42-48) en el que Jesús advierte que la amputación y la ceguera son preferibles a pecar (“Y si tu ojo te fuere ocasión de caer, sácalo; mejor te es entrar en el reino de Dios con un ojo, que teniendo dos ojos ser echado al infierno”). Tradicionalmente, se ha considerado este versículo bien de manera metafórica bien como una referencia a la eficacia del castigo corporal. Moss, sin embargo, propone una lectura alternativa que constituye toda una crítica al análisis habitual, sostenido, por un lado, en la casuística penal del mundo antiguo en el que se constata este tipo de condena (vid. p. ej. Deut.

25.11-12) y, por otro, en la percepción contemporánea sobre la amputación terapéutica considerada una alternativa excepcional aplicada en casos extremos. La autora muestra su rechazo a esa función punitiva de la amputación para la que apenas existen referencias contemporáneas al texto joánico. Además, a partir de ejemplos extraídos del contexto cultural del periodo, como textos médicos y referencias extraídas del ámbito militar, defiende respectivamente su carácter terapéutico (por ejemplo, para preservar la vida, ante el avance de la gangrena) y heroico, pues la pérdida de algún miembro era una exhibición física del valor mostrado en el combate (pp. 49-52).

Esto conduce a una situación de cierta paradoja en la que el cuerpo sano y en plenitud de facultades de un pecador iría al infierno y, sin embargo, el destino de aquellos fieles puros, aun con miembros amputados, irían al cielo. Marcos subvierte así los cánones de belleza y dota a la deformidad de un significado nuevo con un sentido escatológico pues la exhibición física del arrepentimiento es preferible al cuerpo hermoso del impío. Así se explica también que el cuerpo de Jesús resucitado no se muestre incólume, y que, en la otra vida, manifieste los defectos, convertidos a ojos del cristiano en algo hermoso. Las amputaciones y defectos físicos pasan a ser huellas de la virtud, signos del dolor soportado para asegurar la salvación. La desfiguración adquiere entonces una connotación positiva y en el reino de los cielos no sería sanada. En consecuencia, los cuerpos transfigurados podían desafiar la belleza esperada en la vida ultramundana y el cielo estar poblado de resucitados desfigurados.

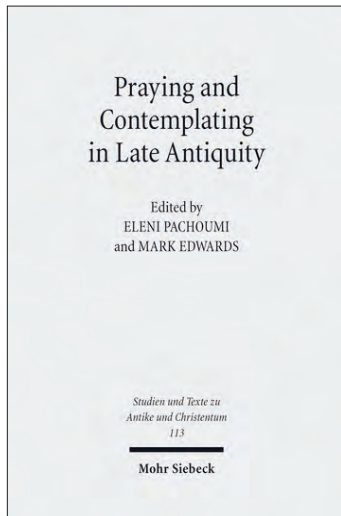
En el capítulo 3 “Functionality” (pp. 66-88), Moss aborda cuestiones relativas a la preservación de funciones del cuerpo resucitado, convertida en tema de debate entre los primeros intelectuales cristianos que se esforzaron por explicar la resurrección de partes del cuerpo sin función escatológica aparente (es decir aquellos involucrados en la procreación, digestión o defecación). De nuevo, inicia su digresión con un pasaje evangélico (Mc. 12.9-23) y en concreto el versículo 25 (“porque cuando resuciten de los muertos, ni se casarán ni se darán en casamiento, sino serán como los ángeles que están en los cielos”). A partir de este fragmento, la autora examina las respuestas formuladas por los padres de la Iglesia en los siglos II y III relacionadas, sobre todo, pero no solo, con la función reproductora, inútil en la vida celestial. El dilema nacía de la necesidad de hacer compatible tres ideas contradictorias: por un lado, la idea de que actividades como el sexo, la maternidad o el consumo de alimentos eran incompatibles con el reino celestial, por otro, que los cuerpos resucitados serían íntegros, completos y enteros, tal y como eran los cuerpos terrestres, incluidos los órganos reproductores, digestivos, etc., incluso cuando estos ya no fueran necesarios; y, por último, la tradición aristotélica según la cual el cuerpo, como un todo, pero también en cada una de sus partes, existía con un *telos* y que, por lo tanto, sería absurdo que los cuerpos resucitados poseyeran

cuerpos terrestres completos puesto que habría partes sin ninguna finalidad en el reino de los cielos. El debate intelectual estaba servido y se propusieron soluciones distintas. Así, Tertuliano esgrime que su función sería puramente estética (en palabras de Tertuliano, ese sería uno de los motivos de la preservación de los dientes en el más allá, además de para controlar la lengua). El mismo Tertuliano también defiende la necesidad de preservar los genitales para resaltar aún más la castidad de aquellos devotos que mantienen sus funciones reproductoras activas.

El cuarto capítulo “Aesthetics” (pp. 89-113) se centra en la estética del cuerpo resucitado con particular atención por el papel que cumple la vestimenta (pp. 95-109). Se trae a colación un pasaje del Apocalipsis (Ap. 6.11) que habla de las túnicas blancas que portan los resucitados. Moss explora la correlación entre la blancura de estos ropajes y la virtud y belleza que simbolizan, pero trasciende una vez más del habitual significado religioso asignado a estas vestimentas para vincularlo al habitual papel que desempeñaba en la sociedad como marcador de estatus. En efecto, las túnicas blancas hacían visible la riqueza porque solo el individuo de elevada condición social podía mantener sus túnicas blancas con un color inmaculado, libre de suciedad. No obstante, esa vida ultramundana expresada con una indumentaria blanca ahora accesible a todos los fieles, también a los miembros menos favorecidos, no supone una eliminación de las jerarquías, sino que, al contrario, quedan reforzadas (p. 108), aunque ahora su función es distinguir a los devotos que alcanzan el reino celestial frente a los infieles que quedan identificados como marginados sociales, no solo por su apariencia sino también por su olor que revelaba su enfermedad y la nociva presencia del demonio.

Para finalizar, Moss resume, en una breve conclusión (pp. 114-121), los temas generales de la monografía y vuelve a incidir en la trascendencia de un análisis del cuerpo como un concepto condicionado culturalmente y, por lo tanto, no solo modelado por las creencias cristianas sino también por los discursos ofrecidos por el entorno social, filosófico etc., en el que vivieron los exégetas evangélicos. Quizás, la obra carece de un análisis equiparable de los textos paulinos, presentados simplemente como caballo de batalla, o de la realidad social de los evangelistas. En todos ellos, habría que suponer la misma riqueza, complejidad e influencia de la cultura contemporánea que las defendidas para la literatura exegética analizada y precisarían de un tratamiento de una profundidad similar.

PRAYING AND CONTEMPLATING IN LATE ANTIQUITY



PACHOUMI, ELENI and EDWARDS, MARK (eds.) (2018). *Praying and Contemplating in Late Antiquity Religious and Philosophical Interactions, Studies and Texts in Antiquity and Christianity* 113. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck. 229 pp., 79,00€ [ISBN 978-3-1615-6119-1].

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PRAYER IS A DIFFICULT TOPIC TO DEAL WITH. As an essential element in most world religions, much ink has been spilt in attempts to define prayer, its phenomenological and lexical forms, and its various meanings, contents, and contexts. Embodiment, materiality, rhetoric, and emotion are just some of the wide range of crucial aspects involved in prayer in this regard. Of all the varied phases of the ancient world, it is late antiquity that provides us with the richest resources for considering this topic, offering up a cornucopia of treatises, discourses, and practices of prayer that shed light on all these aspects. This depth of reflection inspired a number of new approaches to prayer and to related methods for seeking the divine, such as dreams, oracles, divination, healing, and contemplation.¹

1. Krueger and Bitton-Ashkelony, 2017.

The present volume, edited by Eleni Pachoumi and Mark Edwards, contributes to the study and understanding of these various aspects of prayer. The editors have assembled twelve renowned specialists in the field and together they provide both a valuable overview of the topic and fresh insights into the relationship between the human and the divine, as expressed, achieved, and conceptualised through dreams and contemplation between the 3rd and the 7th cent.. Above all, this volume contributes to the recent development in research which aims to scrutinise the interaction between religious and philosophical thought and practices.² To this end, the contributions include new approaches to philosophy (Dillon, Finnamore, Wildish, Hankey), studies based on literary criticism (Kotzé, Trzcionkowski), studies on discourse and the history of thought (Trzcionkowski, Bosman, Dickie), and, as is suggested by the key term *interaction*, studies on the syncretistic developments that took place in late antiquity (Finamore, Neil, Pachoumi, Edwards, Hilton, and, again, Trzcionkowski).

The volume's reflection on new approaches to philosophy has a strong start with John Dillon's discussion of prayer and contemplation in the Neoplatonic tradition (ch. 1). While most scholars are inspired by and acquire their innovative frames from fields that are close to classics or from religious and cultural studies, Dillon takes a distinctively unique approach, consulting Sufi prayer traditions in order to shed new light on the Neoplatonic approach to prayer, which he identifies as "techniques of transcendental meditation". In crossing boundaries of time and space and revealing transcultural techniques of prayer and experience, Dillon shows that the comparative study of philosophy is able to complement recent large-scale comparative studies of prayer based on cognitive science and neuroscience.

The same holds true for approaches to the efficacy of theurgic prayer language (Mark Wildish, ch. 4) and the conceptual design of the experience of contemplation (Wayne Hankey, ch. 5). Wildish treats the efficacy of prayer as something that is independent from the form and content of language but intrinsic to the activity (*energeia*) of language itself, an approach that strongly recalls concepts of performativity. Hankey's approach, by contrast, is notable in its resemblance to aesthetic approaches to religion and religious philosophy. This can be seen in his observation that poetic meters in Boethius' *Consolatio* are deployed in order to drive mind and body together in prayer towards contemplation, helping the soul to rise to the level of intellect, which is true happiness, freedom, and power. Another link to practice, persuasion and emotion is offered by Annemaré Kotzé's chapter on Augustine's *Confessiones* (ch. 9). Kotzé deploys post-structural narratology to show that the

2. Timotin, 2017.

narrator manipulates his address to God in order to reach out to his different audiences. In doing so she identifies two essential, and for most parts understudied, aspects of prayer that have only very recently been brought to the fore by scholars. These are the rhetoric of prayer in terms of the orator-audience relationship and the elicitation of emotions in the act of prayer.

Turning now to the approaches to syncretism in the volume, here we find a picture that is far more complicated than a mere putting together of pieces. Instead, the chapters collected here show how various philosophical and religious traditions merge together to create unique philosophical standpoints. Iamblichus, for example, seems to have located himself as contributing to a long philosophical debate about dream visions in order to better understand and conceptualise divination in dreams and divine interactions, thereby gaining a better grasp of the nature of divine union. As John F. Finamore (ch. 3) illustrates in his examination of this long discourse, Iamblichus in fact provides a comprehensive explanation of how dreams operate and how they are to be interpreted by bringing together an expanding range of philosophical, religious, and also medical explanations of the phenomenon. Similarly, as Bronwen Neil (ch. 8) points out, the church father Origen was no mere adaptor of Platonist thought. As Neil's close examination of the vocabulary of contemplation (*theoria*) and dream visions (*phantasia*) shows, Origen merged Jewish and Christian prophecy with Neoplatonic mystical ecstasy, thereby providing a uniquely Christian explanation for visions encountered in dreams.

In addition to its bringing together of philosophical, medical, and Christian concepts of prayer, dream visions, and contemplation, the volume also makes a strong point about the interactions of magico-religious and philosophical thought, and indeed the syncretisms between them. This syncretism is to be found in the principles of theurgic unions, as expressed in the philosophical treaties of Proclus, Iamblichus, and Plotinus, and in how far these principles resemble those found in magical papyri (Eleni Pachoumi, ch. 2). Again, these syncretisms are no mere collages of ideas and practices but combinations that evolve into something new and unique. As Mark Edwards (ch. 7) points out in the case of Christian magic, exorcisms or any Christian spell may well have been appropriated primarily from existing magical spells and discourses. Nevertheless, they draw on unique Christian ideas of humility and deference, invoking only God and Jesus, or at least using Jesus' name and authority to affect the result at which they aim.

Other approaches resemble a notion of syncretism that is better known under the name of Lévi-Strauss' concept of *bricolage*, which has often been helpful to scholars who have sought to elude the structuralist top-down approaches in the study religion. One such example is found in Lech Trzcionkowski's chapter (11), which reveals

the *Hieroi Logoi in 24 Rhapsodies* not as essentially or coherently Orphic but, rather, as a result of an eclectic enterprise that seeks to compete with the powerful Christian anthropogony. Similarly, individual agents also appropriated Christian dogmata and creeds in a syncretic, *bricolant* way, as John Hilton's study of the Emperor Julian's public and private prayers makes us aware (ch. 6). Whilst Julian unveils himself in his letters as being very conscious of the responsibility of the emperor to maintain the proper relationship between mankind and the gods, his personal prayers seem to have been motivated by rather Christian convictions, for they were directed towards achieving self-restoration and salvation.

The final main theme of this volume is the illustration of the power of discourse in the history of religion. Just like Lech Trzcionkowski's examination of the *Hieroi Logoi*, Philip Bosman's study on the Christian contestation of oracular practices (ch. 12) and Matthew W. Dickie's approach to the meaning of the experience of a mystic initiation (ch. 10) make us aware that we are confronted by multiple forms of experiences and contemplation as well as by multiple discursive structures built around them. Whereas Bosman traces the hostile attitudes of the Christian apologists back to pagan oracle criticism and Platonist apology for oracular practice, Dickie sheds light on the impact that the Platonist philosophy had on popular ideas about the purpose of initiation in mystic cults. As he points out, it was individual Platonists who were priests and other officials of these cults and who re-interpreted this ritual action in accordance to their Platonic philosophy, thereby offering the other participants and their audience a new perspective on their actions.

Ultimately, this volume gathers together compelling philosophical, historical, and literary-critical approaches to prayer and contemplation, and, indeed, to the processes and meanings of contemplation. In doing so, the volume provides a better understanding of the relationship between the human and the divine, as expressed, achieved, and conceptualised through dreams and contemplation. Not necessarily as a whole, but certainly in its pieces, the volume ties in with current debates about the interaction between religion, theurgy, magic, and philosophy as seen through the lens of discursive formation and lived practice. The chapters collected here make us aware that their traditions and concepts do not float around by themselves. Rather, what exist are the individuals behind these traditions, operating and thinking, indeed forming and nuancing them, if we frame the matter in terms of the notions of discourse and bricolage. Not the least of its virtues is that this volume reminds us that these individuals did not merely fabricate knowledge about contemplation and prayer. On the contrary, they performed and thereby experienced their prayers as contemplation. Taken as a whole, this volume therefore provides a good foundation for a stronger interaction with further fields of social and cultural sciences.

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SULLE TRACCE DEL DIO



PADOVANI, FRANCESCO (2018). *Sulle tracce del dio. Teonimi ed etimologia in Plutarco*. Sankt Augustin: Academia Verlag. 281 pp., 28,80€ [ISBN: 978-3-8966-5737-4].

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L'OUVRAGE DE F. PADOVANI, DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE PISE, est à la fois érudit, agréable à lire et passionnant. L'œuvre tentaculaire de Plutarque lui fournit la matière pour une remarquable exploration des noms divins à travers les étymologies. Comme le titre l'indique, pour reprendre une expression de Carlo Ginzburg, c'est le paradigme indiciaire qui est mis à l'honneur, à savoir suivre les « traces » des dieux, ou du dieu si on adopte un point de vue philosophique platonicien, en prenant au sérieux les efforts des Anciens pour comprendre les dieux à travers leurs noms. Les sources antiques, et notamment Plutarque, offrent en effet un précieux accès à l'imposant travail de décodage des données onomastiques divines accompli par les Anciens. Sur la base d'indices et de manière expérimentale, ils n'ont eu de cesse de décrypter ce que les noms véhiculent en termes de connaissance du monde divin, par définition d'accès difficile, voire impossible. Les étymologies qui en résultent peuvent parfois sembler

farfelues, mais elles sont autant de fragments de connaissance qui éclairent les représentations des Anciens touchant au divin ; les étudier permet, je cite Ginzburg, de « sortir des impasses de l'opposition entre rationalisme et irrationalisme » (« Signes, Traces, Pistes. Racines d'un paradigme de l'indice », *Le Débat*, 1980/6, pp. 3-44).

Pour analyser les pratiques étymologiques portant sur les noms divins, l'Auteur mobilise une pluralité de disciplines : la philologie et la linguistique, la philosophie, l'histoire des religions et des pratiques sociales, l'histoire culturelle enfin, en particulier celle de l'époque de Plutarque, ce que Paul Veyne appelle l'« Empire gréco-romain », à la croisée de divers héritages et à l'origine de la « Seconde Sophistique ». On ne saurait trop souligner l'ampleur et l'intérêt des développements que contient chaque chapitre qui, en partant de Plutarque, fournit matière à réflexion sur une pluralité de sujets que l'A. maîtrise remarquablement. En effet, une des qualités majeures de ce livre est la capacité de son Auteur à cerner clairement les enjeux qui émergent des textes et à déployer une analyse fine, approfondie et convaincante qui donne à voir une science et une maturité intellectuelle peu communes chez un chercheur relativement jeune et assurément prometteur.

L'ouvrage est structuré en trois parties d'inégale longueur. La première (*Ety-mologia Graeca* ; pp. 27-42), sert à familiariser les lecteurs avec les manières grecques de pratiquer l'étymologie et, plus spécifiquement, avec le *Cratyle* de Platon qui constitue une référence incontournable en la matière, notamment pour Plutarque et le médio-platonisme, mais aussi au-delà (le néo-platonisme). L'Auteur met d'emblée en évidence la conviction largement partagée par les Anciens que les noms donnés aux dieux ne sont pas des étiquettes aléatoires, mais des « indices » linguistiques et sémantiques donnant accès à une certaine connaissance de leur nature et fonctions.

La seconde partie (*Al centro del mondo, Plutarco e gli dèi greci* ; pp. 43-145) traite de la manière dont Plutarque développe des étymologies concernant les dieux grecs et étrangers, en s'appuyant à la fois sur les cadres de pensée platoniciens et stoïciens. Si les étymologies humaines doivent être prises au sérieux, donc analysées, mises en circulation, partagées (par Plutarque et ses contemporains), c'est que le *logos* humain, qui formule les noms et les étymologies, qui les adapte aux circonstances et aux lieux, est un reflet imparfait, mais néanmoins valide du *nous* divin. La pluralité des noms, la polyonymie, n'invalide donc pas leur portée : chaque nom, chaque étymologie recèle une parcelle de vérité sur les dieux qu'il revient au philosophe d'interpréter.

Dans cette section, l'Auteur propose une utile typologie des pratiques étymologiques de Plutarque, avant de passer en revue plusieurs dossiers de théonymes grecs : Hadès, Héra, Aphrodite, les Dioscures, Thourios comme appellation d'Apollon, Satyros, Hestia, Les Muses et le binôme Apollon – Dionysos. A travers une analyse minutieuse des étymologies de Plutarque et des autres – car pour caractériser la démarche

du Chéronéen, il faut nécessairement élargir le terrain d'enquête –, on comprend la richesse et la variété des apports de l'étymologie. L'A. les qualifie d'anthropologiques, allégoriques, historiques, étimologiques, anecdotiques, rhétoriques, scientifiques, philosophiques, théologiques et se montre très habile à en démonter les ressorts, en mobilisant d'innombrables passages des *Vies* et des *Moralia*, et en prêtant grande attention à leur contextualisation et à leur réception auprès de tel ou tel public.

Dans la troisième partie (*Mondi paralleli. I Greci e le altre culture* ; pp. 147-231), l'attention se déplace vers les noms des dieux étrangers : Zeus de Carie, dieu des Juifs, Isis et autres théonymes égyptiens, dieux romains (Junon, Liber, Carmenta, Rumina, etc.). On sait l'intérêt que porte Plutarque aux autres cultures qu'il aborde cependant au sein d'un cadre hiérarchique, donc hellénocentré et moins œcuménique qu'il n'y paraît de prime abord (p. 234). C'est pourquoi un enjeu majeur de cette partie est le processus dit d'*interpretatio* qui établit une passerelle entre des noms issus de langues différentes. La question qui se pose dès lors à Plutarque est la validité de la langue grecque pour en explorer le sens et la portée cachée. Pour prendre un exemple, est-il légitime de penser que le nom d'Osiris s'éclaire par le recours à une étymologie grecque, à savoir les adjectifs *hosios* ou *hieros*, qui ferait du dieu la puissance divine « sacrée » par excellence. Dans le *De Iside et Osiride*, Plutarque répond par l'affirmative et suggère un scénario migratoire en vertu duquel la langue, la culture, donc les théonymes grecs se seraient répandus partout, notamment en Égypte. Les décoder au moyen d'outils étymologiques grecs permet en quelque sorte de pratiquer une « archéologie » onomastique qui donne accès aux strates profondes de l'histoire et de la connaissance des dieux étrangers.

En ce qui concerne les dieux romains, Plutarque adopte une position sensiblement différente. Même si la prééminence de la *paideia* grecque dans tout l'Empire est considérée comme une donnée de fait, il n'empêche que l'entourage de Plutarque – que l'on songe par exemple à la figure protectrice de Quintus Sosius Sénécion dans les *Propos de Table* – est sensible à la tutelle politique romaine. C'est sans doute la raison pour laquelle, tout en proposant des étymologies grecques pour les théonymes romains, dans les *Vies Parallèles* (surtout celles de Romulus et de Numa qui éclairent les origines de la religion romaine) et dans les *Questions romaines*, Plutarque flatte aussi ses interlocuteurs romains en soulignant les valeurs proprement romaines (le *mos maiorum*) que véhiculent les étymologies et étimologies. Il s'efforce simultanément de mettre en avant la compatibilité, la comparabilité des dieux romains et grecs, entre appropriation et dialogue.

Cette trop brève présentation ne rend pas justice à un livre d'une grande densité. Il est ponctué de très utiles conclusions intermédiaires et encadré par une introduction et une conclusion générale tout à fait réussies. L'A. y souligne, parmi tant d'autres

observations stimulantes, l'intérêt marqué de Plutarque pour les mystères (p. 18). Je le cite : « il linguaggio dei misteri fornisce a Plutarco una struttura riconoscibile di sostegno alla sua indagine, che prende le mosse dalle tracce 'visibili' del dio e conduce alla sua natura ineffabile ». D'ailleurs, les dieux dont Plutarque affectionne les mythes sont fréquemment des dieux mystérieux, comme Dionysos, Déméter ou Hermès (p. 235). La richesse des noms divins comme clé d'accès aux conceptions ou représentations des Anciens sur le monde divin se trouve, tout au long du livre, confirmée. « Conclusion provisoire », selon la belle expression d'Usener (rappelée p. 19), « capsule de réalité » (p. 34) ou trace, voire lieu d'une relation, le nom s'inscrit dans une dimension historique, dans une négociation sémantique constante entre pluralité et unité, entre ici et là. A cet égard, Plutarque est évidemment un témoin privilégié qui a trouvé en Francesco Padovani un herméneute de très haut niveau. On peut se demander s'il ne surévalue pas (p. 27) l'angoisse croissante (selon ses termes) que le nom susciterait chez les Grecs ; on décèle certes des interrogations, de la curiosité, des scrupules, le souci pragmatique de trouver les bons mots pour les bons interlocuteurs, mais l'angoisse me semble un terme quelque peu excessif. Lire Aristophane permet, par exemple, de voir qu'on pouvait aussi rire des noms divins, les soumettre à des plaisanteries ou distorsions amusantes (Platon affirme du reste que les dieux sont *philopaismones*, « amateurs de plaisanteries », *Cratyle* 606c, cité p. 31, n. 22), en dépit de l'importance du registre de l'*orthotès*, cher à Platon et aux platoniciens. Ce qui fascine dans les polythéismes anciens, c'est l'intersection entre la nécessité d'un usage correct et la possibilité d'un usage pluriel ; voilà un défi cognitif, celui de la « vérité plurielle », (p. 31) qui continue d'interpeler les spécialistes des religions anciennes.

L'enquête onomastique à partir des *ichnè tou theou*, expression utilisée à deux reprises par Plutarque (voir p. 43), s'avère très riche en enseignements et en pistes. Les étymologies sont avant tout des recherches de sens et leur multiplicité, loin de constituer un obstacle, représente une ressource (p. 94), en dépit du fait que, souvent, elles tendent à souligner l'unicité du divin, comme lorsque le nom d'Apollon est expliqué comme *alpha* privatif suivi de *ta polla*, c'est-à-dire « celui qui n'est pas plusieurs ». Le livre de F. Padovani regorge de passages lumineux, intrigants, fascinants sur lesquels il se penche avec acuité. A la très riche bibliographie qui clôture le volume, on ajoutera la monographie de Gabriella Pironti, *Entre ciel et guerre. Figures d'Aphrodite en Grèce ancienne*, Liège 2007, qui traite des implications des étymologies d'Aphrodite par l'*aphros*. Pour les divinités romaines dites mineures, comme Rumina, les travaux de Francesca Prescendi sont certainement à consulter, dont un travail sous presse « Réflexions sur le polythéisme romain au prisme d'une petite divinité : Rumina, la déesse de la mamelle allaitante », dans Y. Berthelet et

F. Van Haeperen (éds.), *Dieux de Rome et du monde romain en réseaux : identités, modes et champs d'action*. Bordeaux : Ausonius, à paraître. Enfin, nul doute que les travaux menés par le projet ERC Advanced Grant « Mapping Ancient Polytheisms. Cult Epithets as an Interface between Religious Systems and Human Agency », que j'ai le plaisir de diriger à Toulouse (<https://map-polytheisms.huma-num.fr/>), viendront enrichir les belles perspectives ouvertes par cette remarquable monographie, au demeurant pourvu d'un index d'une grande utilité.

ÜBER DAS BETEN DER RÖMER



PATZELT, MAIK (2018). *Über das Beten der Römer: Gebete im spätrepublikanischen und frühkaiserzeitlichen Rom als Ausdruck gelebter Religion*. Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten 73. Berlin: De Gruyter. 343 pp., 99,95€ [ISBN 978-3-1105-7764-8].

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DAS BETEN DER RÖMER IM SPÄTREPUBLICANISCHEN und frühkaiserzeitlichen Rom gehörte entgegen früherer Vorstellungen keineswegs verbindlichen sakralen Vorschriften, sondern war so vielfältig wie situativ und kreativ, ein Ausdruck gelebter Religion, lautet die Kernthese von Maik Patzelts (P.) Dissertation, die am Max-Weber-Kolleg der Universität Erfurt im Rahmen des ERC-Projekts *Lived Ancient Religion. Questioning „Cults“ and „Polis Religion“* entstand. „Keine Vorstellung eines sachgerechten und verbindlichen Ritualismus wird diese Untersuchung anleiten, sondern die soziologisch fundierte Unterstellung, der zufolge jegliches (religiöses) Handeln aus dem Moment hervorgeht, in dem es vollzogen wird“ (S. 2), lautet ein programmatischer Schlüsselsatz. P. füllt ihn in der „1. Einleitung“ (S. 1-17) sowie im Kapitel „2. Theoretische und methodische Diskussion: Die gelebte Religion als Einheit von Handeln und Erfahren“ (S. 18-45) mit Inhalt, indem er sich zunächst forschungsgeschichtlich

gegenüber Vorstellungen von römischer Religion als „Staatsreligion“ oder „Polis-Religion“ bzw. *civic religion* abgrenzt. Statt Orthopraxie und Formalismus, statt verbindlicher, altüberkommener Gebetsformulare habe das kreative Potential des Gebets als Aufführungspraxis dominiert, statt emotionslos-routinemäßiger Kultausübung seien Gebete der Römer als affizierende Improvisationsakte mit vielfältigen Möglichkeiten, Erfahrungen von göttlicher Nähe zu evozieren, zu verstehen. Beten heißt Kommunizieren, und zwar sowohl mit einer Gottheit als auch in einem sozialen Umfeld (S. 21-25), definiert P. Entsprechend gilt Ritualisierung hier als kreative Praxis, die von der Kompetenz des Betenden abhängt.

Ritualisierung sei strategisches Agieren (S. 27), in dem Verfremdungseffekte das Besondere markieren – sowohl im Sinne neu erfundener Traditionen, die im Gewand des Archaischen daherkommen (S. 30), als auch im Sinne eines rhythmisierend-emotionalisierenden Körpereinsatzes. In dieser Weise verfremdetes Gebaren, so eine von P. zugrunde gelegte anthropologische Grunderkenntnis, stimuliere, Ritualisierung erzeuge und bereite damit den Boden für religiöse Erfahrungen, darunter die Erfahrung göttlicher Präsenz. Schon dieser theoretische Vorspann macht sehr deutlich, wie P. mit althergebrachten Dichotomien zwischen orthopraktischer römischer Staatsreligion und erfahrungsgesättigten, individuelle Bedürfnisse befriedigenden Mysterienreligionen konsequent bricht.

Methodisch kombiniert er eine Handlungs- und Ritualisierungstheorie mit einer Theorie emotional-religiösen Erfahrens. Im Einklang mit der derzeitigen Akteur-orientierung steht der Betende als handelndes Subjekt im Vordergrund. So soll „individuelle(s) Vermögen, sich (rituell) zu verhalten“ und „individuelles Vermögen, das Rituelle zu erfahren“ (S. 8) miteinander in Beziehung gesetzt werden. P. verschreibt sich einem phänomenologischen Zugriff und grenzt sich damit gegen normativ-formalistische Ansätze früherer Forschergenerationen ab. Dabei unterscheidet er zwischen der Situation des Handelns und Erfahrens sowie dem literarischen Diskurs, der im Gebet offensichtliche Verfremdungsstrategien mal als archaisch, mal als obszön-unrömisch klassifiziert und damit moralisiert.

Letzteres kommt insbesondere im Kapitel „3. Varianz statt Devianz: Der antike Gebetsdiskurs“ (S. 46-71) zum Tragen. Wertende Zuschreibungen wie *superstitio* oder *furor* deutet P. als Diskursbegriffe und Topoi, mit denen einzelne Autoren ihre normativen Vorstellungen von Gebetspraxis artikuliert hätten. Umgekehrt heißt dies für P.s Interpretation, dass die Devianzdiskurse über Aberglauben und unrömische Kulte keinen Einblick in normativ-orthopraktische Vorschriften geben, sondern vielmehr, wenn man von den Wertungen der einzelnen Autoren abstrahiert, eine große Varianz an Gebetsoptionen offenbaren. Denn die Kritik der Elite entzündete sich in

erster Linie an individuell gestalteter Gebetspraxis, die dem Wunsch zuwiderlief, als Magistrat und Priester die Emotionen der Masse beim Beten zu lenken.

Im Kapitel „4. Das Beten nach Gebrauchsanweisung? Zu den, Gebetsformularen“ (S. 72-91)

brandmarkt P. römische Gebetsbücher, anhand derer Priester nach altüberkommenen Formeln Gebete exerziert hätten, als Erfindung der modernen Forschung. Anstelle von autoritativ-staatlich geregelter Gebetstypologie spricht P. von situationsbezogenen Gebetstexten, die rhetorisch geschulte Priester mit der Absicht formulierten, ekstatische Gebetsinszenierungen zu befördern. Die Priester seien also „mehr als rhetorisch innovative Verfasser und weniger als ambitionslose Bewahrer von Gebetstexten“ (S. 91) anzusehen.

Kapitel „5. Das Beten im Spannungsfeld aristokratischer Verkörperung“ (S. 92-124) konzentriert sich auf die Aufführungskompetenz von rhetorisch geschulten Aristokraten, die es verstanden, Gebete als erfahrungsgesättigtes und erfahrungsstimulierendes Handeln zu praktizieren. Dabei spielte wie bei jedem rhetorischen Auftritt nicht nur das gesprochene Wort, sondern auch der Körper des betenden Aristokraten eine entscheidende Rolle. Gemäß der individuellen Aufführungskompetenz wirkten die Priestermagistrate über ihre durch Musik unterstützte Stimme, über Gesten wie das Verhüllen des Hauptes und das Erheben der Hände sowie über ihre Mimik situationsbezogen charismatisch auf das darüber ins Gebet hineingezogene Publikum ein. Diese These wird im Kapitel „6. Ein Gebetsversagen im Spiegel aristokratischer Verkörperung“ (S. 125-144) insofern untermauert, als hier am Beispiel des *Clodius furens* das Gegenbild vom männlichen, kontrollierten und alles kontrollierenden Priestermagistraten gezeichnet wird.

Insbesondere in Zeiten allgemeiner Bedrohung spielten kollektive Gebete eine wichtige Rolle. P. zeigt im Kapitel „7. Die *supplicationes* als Gebetsspektakel“ (S. 145-159) auf, wie es einerseits den aufführungsversierten leitenden Magistraten gelang, große Gruppen im gemeinsamen Gebet zu affizieren, und wie andererseits Ritualisierung im gemeinsamen Gebet, das über kollektiven Rausch zu Erfahrungen göttlicher Präsenz führen konnte, geradezu eingefordert wurde.

In Kapitel „8. *Favete linguis*: Das Einstimmen auf eine besondere Erfahrung“ (S. 160-177) widmet sich P. dem in römischen Gebeten auftauchenden Imperativ *Favete linguis*, den er nicht mehr als Aufforderung zu ehrfurchtvollem Schweigen, sondern im Sinne erwartungsvoll-ergriffenen Staunens als Einstimmung in die nahe Präsenzerfahrung einer Gottheit deutet.

Als Steigerung dazu sind Praktiken wie wilde Tänze und Glossolalien anzusehen, die Ekstase erzeugen konnten. In den literarischen Quellen werden sie oft als Bessenseheit verbrämt und mit Stigmata der Verweiblichung sowie unrömischen Ver-

haltens behaftet („9. Tanzen und Heulen: Beten bis zur Besessenheit“ [S. 178-213]). P. betont erneut, wie sehr diese wertenden Zuschreibungen an genderbezogenen und ethnischen Diskursen hingen und wie entscheidend die Aufführungskompetenz der jeweiligen Priester war, damit ihre Gebetsinszenierungen Anklang fanden. Entsprechend wurden Gebetspraktiken von Saliern und Arvalen auf der einen sowie Galli und Bacchantinnen auf der anderen Seite ganz unterschiedlich bewertet.

Einen Schwerpunkt auf individuelle Gebetspraxis legt das Kapitel „10. Die *salutationes* bei den Göttern: Mit kreativem Handeln zur göttlichen Nähe“ (S. 214-237), in dem es um die Vielfalt individueller Gebete mit dem Zweck geht, göttliche Präsenzerfahrung in Analogie zu profanen *salutatio*-Akten zu erwirken.

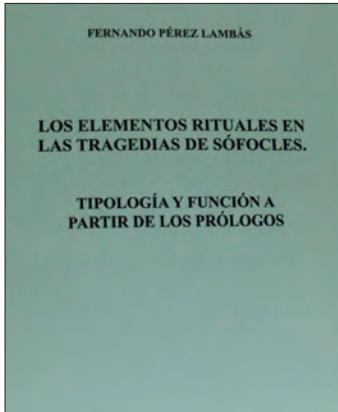
Das letzte Kapitel, „11. Religiöse Erfahrung und fingierte Tradition: Die *devotio*“ (S. 238-259), vertritt die These, dass die Selbstkonsekration von Feldherrn in historisch prekären Schlachtsituationen eine *invented tradition* sei, die in ihrer literarischen Verarbeitung durch Livius erneut aufzeige, dass weniger festgezurrite Traditionen religiöses Handeln vorschrieben, als dass vermeintliche Traditionen kreativ über religiöse Praxis bzw. im Religionsdiskurs geschaffen wurden.

„Wie hältst du’s mit der Religion?“ Diese Frage beantwortet die Monographie klar und deutlich. Überzeugend widerlegt P. die alte Vorstellung von festen Gebetsformeln, die Gebetspraxis determiniert und rituelles Verhalten orthopraktisch diktiert hätten. Stattdessen wird die Freiheit individueller Performanz betont, Aufführungspraxis und Aufführungskompetenz stehen im Mittelpunkt. Allerdings sollte man den Bogen nicht überspannen. Genauso wie Devianzdiskurse und Moralisierung nur vor dem Hintergrund eines Normengefüges entstehen, von dem man sich abgrenzt, erfolgt Gebetspraxis bei aller individueller Ausgestaltung vor dem Hintergrund sprachlicher und gestischer Codes, die sich in der Gruppe der Betenden etabliert haben. Ansonsten wären individuelle Akzente und Abgrenzungen vom Erwartbaren unmöglich. Diese Codes sind freilich keine gar schriftlich fixierten Formulare, sondern *mores*, die nicht sehr alt sein müssen, aber doch als etablierte Kommunikationsmuster verbaler und nonverbaler Verständigung zu bezeichnen sind. Man mag auch von *emotional communities* sprechen, wie P. selbst es tut (S. 9; 105; 163). Jedes neue Gebet, jede Aufführung webt sich in das kulturelle Gefüge vorausgegangener Gebete und Aufführungen ein, und vor diesem kulturellen Horizont interpretieren die Mitbetenden das Praktizierte. Was genau sie dabei erleben, können wir im Letzten nicht wissen. Hier implementiert P. anthropologische Einsichten über das Beten aus anderen kulturellen und epochalen Kontexten auf römische Gebetspraxis. So vorsichtig er in seinen Aussagen über Devianzdiskurse ist, so weit geht er mit der Aussage, die verschiedenen Gebetspraktiken hätten individuelle Erfahrungen göttlicher Nähe bezweckt. Hier schleicht sich über die Phänomenologie ein Essentialismus ein, dem

in der Behandlung von Diskursen eine radikale Absage erteilt wird. Was betende Individuen im Letzten erfahren, wissen wir nicht. Als Historiker greifen wir normative Vorstellungen und die Ausdrucksebene, das, was sein soll, und das, was inszeniert wird. Und das ist schon sehr viel.

P. ist es gelungen, auf der Höhe der derzeitigen Forschungsdiskussionen eine grundsätzlich neue, sehr gut strukturierte Monographie über das Beten der Römer zu verfassen, die überzeugend mit überholten orthopraktischen Vorstellungen von römischer Religion bricht und stattdessen die Vielfalt der Optionen religiöser Praxis betont, welche als gelebte Religion immer neu inszeniert und erfahren wurde. „Wie hältst du’s mit dem Diskurs?“ Antworten auf die erkenntnistheoretische Gretchenfrage, wie man religiöse Erfahrung jenseits von Diskursen fassen kann, muss jeder immer wieder neu suchen. P.s Ansatz, von moralisierenden Zuschreibungen zu abstrahieren, um darüber Gebetspraxis phänomenologisch zu fassen, überzeugt. Der Schritt von der Gebetspraxis zur religiösen Erfahrung beim Beten hängt jedoch an anthropologische Zuschreibungen, die nicht mit der Erfahrung historischer Individuen korrelieren müssen. Das liegt in der Natur des Gegenstands. P. hat in seiner hervorragenden Studie ein großes Diskussionsfeld neu eröffnet, an dem sich noch viele Geister abarbeiten werden.

LOS ELEMENTOS RITUALES EN LAS TRAGEDIAS DE SÓFOCLES



PÉREZ LAMBÁS, FERNANDO (2018). *Los elementos rituales en las tragedias de Sófocles. Tipología y función a partir de los prólogos*. Classical and Byzantine monographs 93. Turnhout: Adolf M. Hakkert. 444 pp., 80,00€ [ISBN 978-9-0256-1332-7].

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THE BOOK UNDER REVIEW, A REVISED DISSERTATION originally submitted to the University of Valencia, aims to discuss certain aspects of Sophoclean tragedy in relation to ritual, with a particular focus on the prologues and the impact that they have on the plays that follow.

After preliminary material, the book contains an opening chapter on methodological considerations, followed by a chapter on each of the seven surviving plays in roughly chronological order: *Ajax*, *Trachiniae*, *Antigone*, *Oedipus the King*, *Electra*, *Philoctetes*, and *Oedipus at Colonus*. A very short conclusion is followed by a detailed bibliography and two indexes: of Greek, and of cited passages. The latter is too extensive, and seems to include virtually every citation, whether important or not, when a more focused approach would have better assisted the reader; we also miss an index of subjects.

The opening chapter focuses first on Sophoclean prologues, then on the meaning of ritual and the previous application of that category in classical scholarship. The chapter on *Ajax* begins by looking at the evidence for hero cult of Ajax, before examining the staging of the prologue, the relationship between the goddess Athena and the two human characters Odysseus and Ajax, the symbolic importance of Ajax's sword, and the use of sacrificial language. *Trachiniae* is discussed principally with reference to the oracles, nuptial rites, and the significance of Zeus for the play. For *Antigone*, unwritten laws, issues of burial, funerary lament, and 'marriage to death' are highlighted as themes. With *Oedipus the King*, there is a focus on supplication, miasma, and oracles. The chapter on *Electra* analyses the presentation of the dramatic space and its divinities, Apollo's oracle and the consequent plan of deceit, and the funerary offerings. In the chapter on *Philoctetes* sacral spaces, ephebic initiation rites, the bad smell of Philoctetes' foot, and Lemnian fire are all examined. Finally, *Oedipus at Colonus* is examined with reference to the reception of the hero, sacred spaces, and the oracle and divine signs.

Throughout the chapters Pérez Lambás shows how ideas prominent in the prologue continue to be of importance throughout the tragedy that follows. This focus on prologues would have been more illuminating if Sophocles' prologues had been analysed alongside other tragic prologues, as well as prologues from comedy, epic, lyric, and other genres. What, if anything, is distinctive about how Sophocles handles the openings of his works? The organisation of the book, with a separate chapter on each of the plays that survives complete, makes it harder to ask that kind of interesting question, or to identify common threads across Sophocles' dramas and indeed Greek tragedy as a whole. It also involves simply ignoring the considerable evidence for Sophoclean tragedy that survives in fragmentary form.

A further problem is that the promised focus on ritual elements is blurred. As the summary above indicates, some of the topics discussed are clearly related to ritual; but others are not, and it is not clear why they are to be found in a book dedicated to this topic. As a consequence, Pérez Lambás's monograph falls short of the standard set by Adriana Brook's *Tragic Rites. Narrative and Ritual in Sophoclean Drama*, published in the same year as his by The University of Wisconsin Press, and reviewed by me at *AJP*, 140, 2019, pp. 369-373. Brook's analyses remain focused on ritual activity, and are informed by an understanding of the literature on that topic both within the discipline of Classics and beyond; Pérez Lambás's book, by contrast, is better viewed as a general introduction to the seven surviving plays, which highlights key themes in each, some of which are relevant to ritual activity, and pays particular attention to how Sophocles begins each individual drama. Recharacterised in that way, the book is a success, and will provide readers with a helpful overview of the subject.

PRISCILIANO



PIAY AUGUSTO, DIEGO (2019). *Prisciliano. Vida y muerte de un disidente en el amanecer del Imperio cristiano*. Colección piedras angulares. Gijón: Ediciones Trea. 152 pp., 19,00€ [ISBN 978-8-4177-6712-9].

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LA FIGURA DE PRISCILIANO SIGUE ESTANDO DE ACTUALIDAD. Aunque los estudios seminales sobre el obispo hispano vieron la luz a finales del siglo XIX, nuevas aproximaciones a su trayectoria, escritos y seguidores siguen apareciendo de una manera ininterrumpida aportando un mayor conocimiento acerca de su papel en la historia del cristianismo. Hay que destacar el libro de Henry Chadwick que marcó un antes y un después en el estudio de la figura del teólogo hispano.¹ Estos recientes análisis sobre su figura y movimiento son fruto del interés que despiertan sus textos. En ellos proponía, como otros líderes religiosos de su época, una vuelta a las fuentes del cris-

1. Chadwick, 1976.

tianismo a través de un riguroso ascetismo, lo que chocó con el creciente dogmatismo de su época y con la jerarquía religiosa de la segunda mitad del siglo IV.

Prisciliano fue ejecutado en el año 385 en Tréveris. Su muerte a manos del poder secular supuso, además, el primer caso en el que un asunto religioso cristiano terminaba en la condena a muerte del disidente y abría una nueva vía que ha tenido un largo recorrido. Este acontecimiento provocó una fuerte conmoción en el seno de la Iglesia. Algunos de sus miembros se percataron de que la intromisión laica en las discusiones teológicas cristianas era muy peligrosa y que la unión entre la jerarquía religiosa y el poder civil abocaba a una nueva etapa en la que el dogmatismo religioso podía hacer frente a la desavenencia religiosa mediante el uso de la fuerza del Estado.

Diego Piay Augusto ya analizó en su tesis doctoral, editada en Roma en el 2018,² la figura y la obra de Prisciliano, así como las circunstancias de su muerte, la existencia de su sepulcro y la perduración del movimiento priscilianista en la Gallaecia de la tardoantigüedad (s. IV-VII). En este libro, Piay se ha aproximado a la figura de Prisciliano con la intención de reconstruir su trayectoria a partir de la época en que comenzó su etapa formativa. Aunque debido a las lagunas informativas que tenemos sobre los primeros años del teólogo hispano algunas de sus sugerentes proposiciones serán objeto de debate, este es sin duda uno de los objetivos buscados por el autor a la hora de abordar el tema.

Piay ha partido en su introducción (“Introducción: la antigüedad tardía”, pp. 17-28) de una descripción sobre la época en que vivió Prisciliano, el ambiente en el que transcurría la vida de las élites hispanas de su tiempo, a la que pertenecía Prisciliano según Sulpicio Severo (*Cron.* II 46), la situación del cristianismo y la evolución política de la segunda mitad del siglo IV, hasta que comenzaron los primeros conflictos entre Prisciliano y algunos obispos hispanos.

Le sigue un apartado que lleva el título “La llamada del Nazareno (350-379)” (pp. 29-44), en el que Piay analiza el lugar de procedencia de Prisciliano, la extensión de la provincia de Gallaecia en la segunda mitad del siglo IV y una aproximación arqueológica a las villas tardorromanas que salpicaban el ámbito hispano y a las ciudades de la Gallaecia, mostrando en este último apartado el conocimiento del autor sobre el tema como arqueólogo experimentado en las villas bajoimperiales.

Del escrito de Sulpicio Severo (*Cron.* II 46) se puede deducir que su origen debía estar vinculado a la zona de la Bética o de la Lusitania, ya que las primeras manifestaciones de las corrientes priscilianistas alarmaron a Higinio, el obispo de Córdoba, que se apresuró a dar información al obispo de Emérita Augusta, Hidacio. Sin em-

2. Piay, 2018.

bargo, el texto de Sulpicio Severo no es muy preciso y ha dado origen a diferentes interpretaciones. El autor aboga por un posible origen galaico, apoyándose para ello en una crónica de Próspero de Aquitania.

En la obra se hace una aproximación a la educación del joven Prisciliano, basándose en el modelo que siguieron Agustín y Paulino de Nola, fundamentado en la lectura de los clásicos grecorromanos, el cultivo de la retórica y la elocución, más que en el modelo cristiano propuesto por Juan Crisóstomo. Aunque se desconoce dónde realizó Prisciliano su etapa de aprendizaje, Piay propone, siguiendo a Escribano Paño,³ que pudo completar sus estudios en Burdeos, urbe que en aquella época gozaba de un amplio prestigio. Prisciliano guardó siempre una estrecha relación con esta ciudad y el autor propone que la misma se pudo cimentar durante esta etapa de formación, postulando que pudo coincidir con Símaco y aboga por la existencia de una cierta amistad. Aunque sugerente, se trata de una conjetura. La presencia de un Prisciliano entre los destinatarios de una de las epístolas de Símaco (posterior al año 374) podía abogar por la misma. Sin embargo, de la carta de Símaco cabe deducir que el Prisciliano citado era pagano, ya que Símaco pedía el favor de los dioses para su interlocutor, cuando podemos pensar que ya en aquella época Prisciliano pertenecía a la comunidad cristiana.

Ciertamente el conocimiento de Prisciliano de los clásicos hace pensar que debió seguir los pasos formativos que realizaban los jóvenes de las élites occidentales pertenecientes a las aristocracias occidentales de las que forman parte Prisciliano y su entorno de amistades, con desplazamientos a los centros en los que impartían docencia prestigiosos retores que preparaban a sus discípulos para los posteriores desempeños en los puestos de la alta administración. Durante el siglo IV Burdeos gozó de una gran fama y era una ciudad a la que acudían los jóvenes que querían seguir afianzando sus conocimientos, tal y como Agustín se había dirigido a Milán. Indudablemente su conocimiento de los autores latinos indica que Prisciliano era un erudito en la materia, pero es poco probable que se hubiese incluido en su educación a los autores griegos. Presumiblemente, en las escuelas occidentales la enseñanza del griego debía haber perdido su importancia y los escritores hispanos, incluido Prisciliano, mostraron tener un escaso conocimiento de la lengua griega, tal y como ocurre también en el africano Agustín.

Para el autor, es probable que Prisciliano, como muchos de sus contemporáneos, se aficionase durante su periodo formativo a la astrología y a las artes mágicas, aunque Sulpicio Severo (*Cron.* II 46) con el fin de denostarlo recoge el rumor de que

3. Escribano Paño, 1998.

ya las practicaba desde su adolescencia. Durante esta misma etapa bordelesa pudo comenzar su relación con el cristianismo. Su elocuencia y sus dotes como escritor a la hora de exponer sus ideas pronto le hicieron un sitio en la comunidad cristiana. Además, debió ayudar sin duda su origen. Es probable que su vinculación con las élites hispanas contribuyese a proporcionarle un hueco dentro de la comunidad cristiana peninsular y atraer sobre su figura a una serie de partidarios que apoyaron su interés en dedicarse a las tareas pastorales, de lo que se hicieron eco autores como Sulpicio Severo. Parte de los escritos de Prisciliano que se consideraban perdidos fueron descubiertos por Georg Schepss en Würzburg en 1885 y editados con el título *Priscilliani quae supersunt*.⁴ Dio a conocer once obras originales del obispo abulense que han sido la clave para profundizar en el pensamiento del teólogo hispano y que permitieron a Babut (1909) emprender un análisis de la obra de Prisciliano.⁵ Los estudiosos que se han ocupado de ellos no han encontrado grandes diferencias con las corrientes ortodoxas de su época y ya desde Grossen⁶ se ha considerado que su línea de pensamiento no había caído en la herejía. Quizás Prisciliano haya concedido una mayor importancia al ascetismo, una cierta tendencia a reunirse en grupos aislados y separándose de la influencia de la jerarquía episcopal – con ciertos paralelismos con el monaquismo oriental – y una mayor preeminencia del papel de las mujeres en las comunidades cristianas

El siguiente apartado lleva el título de “Un elocuente cristiano accede al episcopado (380-381)” (pp. 45-60). Las prédicas de Prisciliano pronto tuvieron eco y en torno a su persona se articuló un influyente grupo que despertó las sospechas de algunos de los obispos hispanos. La inclusión de mujeres entre sus seguidores y algunas de sus ideas, especialmente las prácticas de ascetismo o las lecturas de algunos textos apócrifos, no fueron bien vistas y se le acusó de introducir ideas maniqueas. Con el fin de revisar las opiniones del teólogo Prisciliano se convocó un Sínodo en la ciudad de Caesaraugusta en el que se reunieron una docena de obispos hispanos y aquitanos para analizar las enseñanzas del predicador laico. Los cánones de Zaragoza han proporcionado información de las doctrinas de Prisciliano y aunque no se condenaron expresamente, con el fin de no romper los vínculos con él, sí que hay una serie de normas o preceptos que parecen redactados contra los priscilianistas, aunque sin nombrarlos directamente. El Sínodo de Zaragoza no resolvió los problemas, sino que se avivaron y algunos obispos comenzaron a represaliar a aquellos cristianos que ellos

4. Schepss, 1889.

5. Babut, 1909.

6. Grossen, 1976.

consideraban que era priscilianistas. Dos obispos priscilianistas, Instancio y Salviano, nombraron a Prisciliano obispo de Ávila en el año 381. El siguiente paso de Prisciliano y sus partidarios fue acusar al obispo de Emérita, Idacio, por su conducta religiosa y se dirigieron a esa ciudad. Su llegada fue considerada como una provocación por los partidarios de Idacio, que golpearon al prelado abulense y a sus acompañantes, lo que estos transmitieron a otros obispos y el asunto pasó al poder civil. No se sabe cuáles fueron las razones por las que efectuó esta operación contra Idacio. Es posible que Prisciliano aspirara a ocupar la sede de Idacio, Emérita, en ese momento la capital de la diócesis de Hispania, y que Prisciliano contara con partidarios en la misma o incluso que su lugar de origen estuviera vinculado a Lusitania.

El capítulo que lleva el título “El viaje a Roma (381-383)” (pp. 61-80) está dedicado a los años en que, como consecuencia de las maniobras de sus enemigos religiosos, perdieron sus sedes y comenzaron un periodo de gran actividad que culminó en la recuperación de las mismas. En el 381 Idacio hizo una llamada a la corte de Graciano y consiguió que los obispos priscilianistas, que son calificados por Sulpicio Severo (*Cron.* II 47) de gnósticos, fueran desposeídos de sus sedes y que no pudiesen residir a menos de 100 millas de sus antiguas ciudades. Con el fin de ser reestablecidos en las mismas, Prisciliano y otros obispos correligionarios emprendieron un viaje hacia Roma, con el objetivo de conseguir el apoyo del papa Dámaso, de origen hispano.

Piay hace una reconstrucción del itinerario de Prisciliano y sus partidarios, trayectoria que el autor conoce bien y que ya había abordado en un artículo anterior.⁷ Desde Hispania se dirigieron a Aquitania y concretamente a Burdeos, donde contaban con el apoyo de mujeres de familias notables, como Eucracia, viuda del retor Atio Tiro Delfidio, y su hija Prócula, que se incorporaron al cortejo de Prisciliano. En su desplazamiento pasaron por diferentes ciudades galorromanas, iban acompañados de una comitiva en la que figuraban sus esposas y otras mujeres y realizaban prédicas en las que exponían su visión religiosa, según Sulpicio Severo (*Cron.* II 47). El autor propone que transitaron por Arles y que se dirigieron a Roma tomando la vía que cruzaba Milán, pero que no fueron recibidos por Ambrosio, el obispo milanés, por lo que de nuevo emprendieron su camino hacia Roma, donde tampoco fueron acogidos por el papa Dámaso, que se negó a recibirlos. En vista de ello, se reunieron con Macedonio, el *magister officiorum* de Graciano, y obtuvieron un rescripto anulatorio que les permitía recobrar sus sedes episcopales. Según Sulpicio (*Cron.* II 48-49), la nueva orden fue conseguida mediante el soborno, lo cual era una práctica habitual en una administración en la que la corrupción era

7. Piay, 2014.

una lacra dominante. De vuelta a Ávila, Prisciliano atacó a Itacio con el apoyo del gobernador de la Lusitania, Volvencio, e Itacio huyó refugiándose en la Galia. El apoyo de Macedonio a los priscilianistas empeoró la situación de Itacio, que se refugió en Tréveris acogido por su obispo, Brito (Sulpicio Severo, *Cron.* II 49).

En el apartado dedicado a “La espada al servicio de la Iglesia. Los juicios de Tréveris (385)” (pp. 81-96), Piay aborda un asunto capital en la historia de la Iglesia y que supuso un antes y un después en los debates religiosos. La usurpación del hispano Magno Máximo y la consiguiente muerte de Graciano supusieron un cambio político y también tuvo consecuencias en el conflicto religioso. Itacio se apresuró a comunicar al nuevo emperador su versión de los hechos. Según Sulpicio Severo (*Cron.* II 44), lanzó a oídos del emperador súplicas llenas de mala voluntad y acusaciones contra Prisciliano y sus partidarios. Este convocó un sínodo en Burdeos donde se emplazó a los obispos de ambas partes. El ambiente era hostil para los priscilianistas. Una partidaria de Prisciliano fue muerta por la multitud. La existencia de tumultos por causas religiosas era habitual en la zona oriental del Imperio, también se habían producido en Roma, recientemente con la elección del papa Dámaso, e igualmente en las ciudades africanas. El suceso de Burdeos, como el anterior de Mérida, indica que también en las ciudades occidentales estos asuntos provocaban graves alteraciones del orden público y enfrentamientos entre los distintos partidarios que podían terminar en sucesos sangrientos. Dado que las víctimas pertenecían a las élites locales, es posible que los conflictos religiosos se mezclasen también con los sociales, provocando que una parte de la jerarquía religiosa utilizase la ira de las masas contra un sector disidente de estas élites.

Prisciliano, que acudió al Sínodo, fue acusado de maniqueísmo y herejía, imputaciones habituales en las disputas entre líderes cristianos (el propio Jerónimo tuvo que hacer frente a denuncias similares) y apeló al emperador Magno Máximo. Los obispos aceptaron la petición y trasladaron el conflicto al poder civil. Sulpicio Severo (*Cron.* II 49) critica esta decisión por parte de los obispos, ya que, según el biógrafo de Martín de Tours, debían haber emitido un juicio o, si se consideraban incapaces de formularlo, dejar el puesto del tribunal a otros obispos.

Todos los encausados fueron trasladados a la ciudad de Tréveris donde se celebró el juicio. Se produjeron discrepancias entre los obispos ortodoxos con respecto a las acusaciones contra los priscilianistas. Itacio e Itacio encabezaron las denuncias, mientras que Martín de Tours no estaba de acuerdo en la intromisión del poder civil en asuntos religiosos. Todo ello se puede leer en Sulpicio Severo (*Cron.* II 50), a quien los acusadores le desagradaban tanto como los acusados y afirma que Itacio no estaba tocado por la santidad, sino por la temeridad y la sensualidad. Le califica de miserable, ya que este incluso acusó de herejía al propio Martín de Tours. Los encau-

sados fueron sometidos a torturas con el fin de lograr su confesión. Durante la época bajoimperial, la utilización de la tortura se había convertido en una práctica habitual para la obtención de confesiones. Estaban excluidos de ella los *honestiores*, entre los que debían estar los obispos como Prisciliano y sus amigos. El hecho de que se aplicase la tortura a este grupo indica que fueron excluidos de la exención de los tormentos. Pudiera ser por su estatus social o bien porque debido a su “delito” les afectaba una legislación especial que permitía la aplicación de esta. La inclusión de acusaciones de magia pudiera ser el motivo que permitió a los funcionarios nombrados por la administración imperial la práctica de los suplicios.

Una vez obtenidas sus confesiones culpatorias fueron condenados a muerte. Junto con Prisciliano fueron ejecutados Felicísimo, Armenio, Latroniano Eucrocia, Asarbo, Aurelio, Juliano. Otros sufrieron el exilio. Ciertamente, la condena y ejecución de Prisciliano y sus partidarios provocó fuertes protestas de Ambrosio y el Papa Siricio, entre otros, ya que suponía un grave precedente que una disputa teológica de carácter interno pudiera ser castigada como un delito capital, pasándose de la condena de excomunión que imponían los tribunales teológicos a las penas de los tribunales seculares.

Piay no descarta que las causas por las que se les impusieron las condenas estuvieran motivadas porque los procesados pertenecían a familias con ricas posesiones y sus propiedades fueron confiscadas en un momento en que la necesidad económica era importante para el nuevo emperador. Una hipótesis sugerente y que, en parte, puede explicar las sentencias a la pena capital, ya que llevaba aparejada la incautación de las pertenencias de los reos.

En el capítulo “Un mártir para Gallaecia (385-400)” (pp. 97-112), Piay aborda las consecuencias de la ejecución de los priscilianistas y la expansión inicial de sus ideas. Las fuentes (Jerónimo, Pedro de Natalibus) mencionan que junto a Prisciliano fue ejecutado el poeta Latroniano o Latrocinino. Pedro de Natalibus asignaba a Prisciliano el título de mártir. A raíz de su muerte, sus ideas se propagaron por Gallaecia y, según Sulpicio Severo (*Cron.* II 51), su cuerpo fue repatriado a Hispania y sus funerales celebrados con gran pompa. Los ejecutados recibieron la consideración de mártires entre los priscilianistas y, para ellos, se consideró el juramento por Prisciliano como el más alto ejercicio de religiosidad.

Las ideas de Prisciliano tuvieron éxito y provocaron tumultos en Burdeos, de donde procedía el hermano de Paulino de Nola, que fue asesinado posiblemente por sus ideas priscilianistas. El mismo Paulino tuvo que huir de Aquitania. Magno Máximo había dado orden de perseguir a los priscilianistas, lo que provocó la intervención de Martín de Tours que, según Sulpicio Severo, logró parar las persecuciones. En cuanto a los principales acusadores de Prisciliano, también tuvieron problemas. Ita-

cio fue condenado y expulsado de su sede de Faro (Portugal) e Idacio dimitió como obispo de Mérida, aunque posteriormente trató de recuperar de nuevo el cargo.

Magno Máximo fue derrotado por Teodosio y ejecutado, por lo que la presión sobre los priscilianistas disminuyó. Aunque había algún obispo priscilianista en la Galia, las difusiones de sus ideas se circunscribieron a la zona de Gallaecia. Sería durante este tiempo cuando se efectuaría el traslado de los restos de Prisciliano a Gallaecia. Piay propone que Prisciliano pudo haber estado enterrado en Trier, en las capillas de San Martín y San Paulino, ubicadas extramuros al norte de la *Porta Nigra*. Es difícil de creer que unos condenados por causas religiosas pudiesen ser sepultados en preclaros lugares religiosos de la ciudad en la que habían sido ajusticiados siendo, además, una capital imperial. Según Idacio, después de la ejecución de Prisciliano sus ideas invadieron Gallaecia. La provincia de Gallaecia debió acoger el cuerpo de Prisciliano al ser trasladado a Hispania. Propone el autor que Astorga recibiría los cuerpos de los priscilianistas ejecutados y que San Dictino construyó un monasterio en ese periodo que pudo haber contenido los restos de Prisciliano, algo que Piay (2010) había ya planteado en un artículo. También se ha postulado la presencia de los restos de Prisciliano en otros lugares como Santa Eulalia de Bóveda en Lugo, Quiroga, Ávila, Santiago de Compostela⁸.

En una carta de Alfonso III al obispo Panosindo del monasterio de San Juan de Coba se menciona que la sepultura del apóstol Santiago se ubicaría cerca del puerto de *Bisria* y del monte *Illicinus*. Para el autor, estos términos estarían conectados con el nombre *Priscilianus*, algo sugerente aunque cuestionable. Y a continuación aduce que la llegada de Santiago había suprimido simbólicamente la implantación local del nombre de Prisciliano, lo que es probable, ya que la poderosa carga alegórica que representaba Santiago debió asimilar tradiciones anteriores.

El último apartado que lleva el título “Tiempos dramáticos y peligrosos: 400” (pp. 113-118) está dedicado a la perduración de las ideas priscilianistas en Gallaecia, a la que el autor ha prestado una especial atención. En un concilio celebrado en Toledo en el año 400 se reunieron los obispos hispanos con la intención de poner fin a las doctrinas de los priscilianistas. La mayor parte de los obispos galaicos renunciaron a sus anteriores convicciones, excepto cuatro de estos obispos que junto a sus clérigos proclamaron a Prisciliano católico, santo y mártir.

Las ideas de Prisciliano se mantuvieron al menos hasta finales del siglo VII, ya que en una epístola que Braulio, obispo de Zaragoza, envió a Fructuoso, obispo de

8. Piay, 2016.

Braga, se menciona que las ideas de Prisciliano habían estado vigentes en la región hasta hacía poco tiempo.

Es probable que las ideas priscilianistas perduraran en zonas apartadas y de difícil acceso. Es posible que el establecimiento de pueblos bárbaros en estas zonas facilitase la continuación de la corriente priscilianista en los confines de la Gallaecia, al quedar fuera del control imperial y tener las nuevas autoridades suevas un menor interés en oponerse a las discrepancias de los colectivos cristianos. Habría sido también una época favorable para que se hubiese producido el traslado de los restos de Prisciliano. Lo más factible habría sido hacerlo por vía marítima desde Trier a las costas de Gallaecia.

El libro de Piay es una nueva aproximación a la figura de Prisciliano y que complementa desde nuevas perspectivas los estudios que desde el siglo XX se han realizado sobre este personaje⁹ y su obra.¹⁰

En definitiva, el debate sobre la figura del obispo abulense sigue vivo y con nuevas aportaciones por parte de la historiografía hispana, en la línea de renovación de estos estudios que supuso en 1983 la obra de Juliana Cabrera,¹¹ continuados por Escribano Paño¹² y a la que podemos añadir la biografía sobre Prisciliano de Terán Fierro,¹³ El libro de Piay Augusto es una nueva muestra de que el tema sigue suscitando el interés de los autores y de que estos estudios aportan una nueva visión que enriquece nuestro conocimiento sobre la figura y el entorno de Prisciliano. Es una aproximación valiente, en la que no elude aspectos de difícil constatación, pero que no por ello deben ser dejados de lado por los investigadores. El autor aborda temas muy complejos relacionados con la vida y obra de Prisciliano. Las fuentes no nos aportan toda la información precisa que sería deseable, lo que se suple con los recursos propios de todo buen investigador.

9. Chao Rego, 1999; Pereira, 2002; Olivares Guillen, 2004; Fernández Conde, 2007; Sánchez 2009; Núñez García, 2012.

10. Crespo Losada, 2017.

11. Cabrera, 1983.

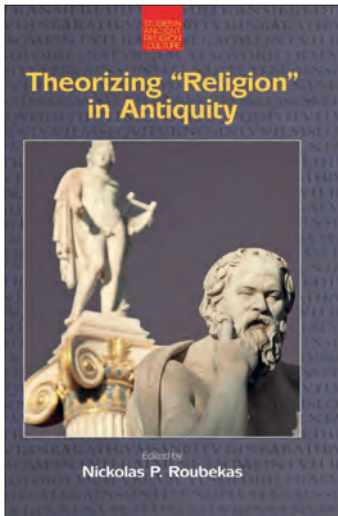
12. Escribano Paño, 1988.

13. Terán Fierro, 1985.

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THEORIZING “RELIGION” IN ANTIQUITY



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EN RARAS OCASIONES NOS ENCONTRAMOS CON publicaciones que nos invitan a la crítica y a ser criticados. Desde las primeras páginas del libro el editor de esta obra colectiva nos ofrece perder el miedo por la crítica académica apostando por una aproximación científica interdisciplinar al hecho religioso. En el mismo prefacio, Nickolas P. Roubekas desgrana los objetivos que esta obra busca cumplir no sin antes exponer los motivos por los cuales se realiza esta publicación. La razón principal es la manera en la que el fenómeno de la religiosidad se estudia en la antigüedad dependiendo de la disciplina académica desde la cual se analiza la religión. Desde el ámbito del estudio de las religiones (*Religious Studies*), hay una mayor tendencia a discutir la categoría “religión” y su aplicabilidad en distintos contextos históricos y culturales. Por otro lado, en los Estudios Clásicos y la Historia Antigua este tipo de categorías no suelen teorizarse desarrollándose un uso consensuado de la terminología. Así, nos encon-

tramos con distintos volúmenes y publicaciones con títulos como “religión griega”, “religión romana”, etc. La pregunta que nos asalta es la siguiente: ¿a qué se refieren estas obras con “religión”? Desde el estudio de las religiones se ha afirmado que la categoría “religión” es un término moderno con una gran influencia del cristianismo europeo lo que dificulta utilizar dicha categoría como concepto de primer orden en la Antigüedad. El término “religión” es ajeno a las culturas antiguas.

Por ello, el editor propone una conversación entre ambas disciplinas. Un estudio de las fuentes antiguas para conocer el fenómeno religioso en las etapas preteritas continuando con la teorización de las categorías analíticas que se desarrolla en la Historia de las Religiones. Se trata, por tanto, de unificar la teoría crítica y la labor teórica de los estudios sobre la religión con las disciplinas clásicas como la Filología o la Historia Antigua con el fin de repensar la religiosidad en la antigüedad. Para llevar a cabo dicha labor, es necesario entender este proceso como una actividad interdisciplinar, inclusiva y plural. Una dialéctica heterogénea de diferentes perspectivas que derive en una mejor aproximación a la complejidad del fenómeno religioso en las culturas históricas “premodernas”.

Con el objetivo de mostrar los primeros resultados de dicha aproximación, la obra colectiva se estructura en veinte capítulos. El primer capítulo y el último de ellos corresponden respectivamente a la introducción del libro y a su epílogo. El resto de la obra se divide en cinco partes. La primera se dedica a la aproximación metodológica y teórica del fenómeno religioso. La segunda se centra en la Grecia Antigua mientras que la tercera combina estudios del periodo romano con elementos del Próximo Oriente Antiguo. La cuarta sección de la obra se enfoca en un contexto monoteísta combinando elementos del judaísmo y del cristianismo primitivo. Finalmente, la quinta parte de la obra desarrolla temas estrechamente relacionados con el estudio de las religiones como estudios de género o las ciencias cognitivas cuya aplicabilidad en períodos pretéritos han concluido en interesantes resultados.

En la introducción de la obra bajo el título “The Present and Future of Ancient Religion”, Brent Nongbri presenta las principales ideas de los autores que componen esta obra colectiva. Tras enumerar brevemente la complejidad de la categoría “religión”, describe la diversidad de las contribuciones del libro proponiendo una estructura alternativa a la que actualmente posee la obra. Con ello, busca reivindicar esta publicación como ejemplo de la diversidad de posturas que existen a la hora de analizar el término “religión”. La división que realiza Nongbri se basa en un primer grupo de colaboraciones que no se centran en discutir las categorías, sino que apuestan por una definición de estas y, por tanto, tras afirmar la posibilidad de su aplicación describen un hecho histórico concreto. Un segundo grupo corresponde a aquellos capítulos que tienen como principal objetivo discutir meto-

dológicamente las categorías a analizar. Para este autor, ambos grupos dialogan de manera indirecta proponiendo posturas que se discuten en la propia obra colectiva. El ejemplo de dicha conversación se aprecia, según Nongbri, en el cuarto capítulo. El autor concluye evidenciando la división enumerada por Roubekas en el prefacio entre aquellos que estudian la categoría “religión” y aquellos que estudian el fenómeno de la religión en la Antigüedad.

En cuanto a la primera parte, se compone de las contribuciones de Steve Mason, Jason P. Davies y Kevin Schilbrack. El segundo capítulo del libro escrito por Mason apuesta por el estudio de las categorías desde un punto de vista lingüístico. La idea principal es discernir entre las categorías de primer orden, aquellas que eran utilizadas por los antiguos, y las categorías de segundo orden, aquellas que los estudiosos aplicamos para estudiar un contexto histórico específico. Mediante ejemplos del contexto grecolatino como el “patronazgo” romano, este autor nos invita a investigar la mentalidad y el discurso de las sociedades pretéritas teniendo en cuenta la elasticidad de las categorías analíticas, la influencia intercultural mediante el discurso compartido (*shared discourse*) en el contexto mediterráneo, y la capacidad de comunicación del lenguaje que genera una serie de valores compartidos, especialmente, por los sujetos que pertenecían a la élite. Con dichos elementos en mente, Mason nos ofrece un análisis de la categoría “religión” en una segunda parte del capítulo. Centrándose en diferentes aspectos de las religiosidades griega y romana, el autor reafirma la posición que la religión tenía en los contextos antiguos. No era necesario tener un vocabulario que diferenciara la esfera religiosa con otros ámbitos de la vida político-social. A diferencia de nuestros días en que la religión es una “esfera de actividad voluntaria”, en la Antigüedad no existía tal noción del hecho religioso. En el último párrafo de su contribución, Mason señala la influencia del cristianismo en la genealogía del término “religión” destacando el periodo de la Ilustración como etapa histórica en la cual se desarrolló la moderna visión de la categoría “religión”.

En el tercer capítulo de esta obra colectiva, Davies discute uno de los debates más fructíferos en el estudio de las religiones antiguas: el concepto de creencia y el acto de creer. Desde una perspectiva de las ciencias cognitivas, Davies apuesta por repensar la noción de creencia en la Antigüedad. Tras resumir brevemente el debate generado en la historiografía por el uso del término “creer/creencia” para estudiar las religiones antiguas, el autor propone revisar el trabajo de Versnel¹ debido a las dudas que este le generan. Ambos autores coinciden en que, tradicionalmente, aquellos autores que han rechazado el uso de la categoría “creencia” se encontraban influen-

1. Versnel, 2011.

ciados por el contexto cristiano, una religión basada en la creencia (ortodoxia) y no tanto en la práctica como las religiones de los antiguos. Sin embargo, Davies amplía dicha crítica afirmando que el uso del término “creencia” se debe a una prominente perspectiva centrada en las creencias que en ocasiones fuerza la comprensión de maneras de pensar y comportarse ajenas a la Antigüedad. El autor apuesta por un acercamiento interdisciplinario desde las ciencias cognitivas con el fin de identificar la complejidad del acto de creer. Davies concluye su contribución con tres ideas. La primera consiste en proponer un cambio de términos. El concepto “creencia”, como demuestra a lo largo del capítulo, posee una connotación compleja, por ello, el autor se pregunta si no simplificaría el estudio hablar de “ideas” o “pensamientos” en lugar de “creencias”. Un segundo argumento se basa en los significados que conlleva el término “creer” a nivel cognitivo pues dificultan el uso del término. Finalmente, el último argumento de Davies se centra en la necesidad de definir exactamente a qué nos referimos con creencia cuando queremos estudiar el pensamiento religioso de un contexto histórico concreto, especialmente en un ambiente interdisciplinario. Con todo ello, el autor busca avivar el debate sobre el uso de la terminología relativa a las creencias cuando analizamos las religiones antiguas.

Finaliza la primera parte de esta obra colectiva con el cuarto capítulo escrito por Kevin Schilbrack. A diferencia de los autores anteriores, Schilbrack apuesta por unificar el debate teórico con el propositivo. No solo se trata de repensar y poner en tela de juicio categorías, sino también alcanzar la definición de estas con el fin de continuar la labor investigadora. Para ello, el autor se centra en la categoría “religión”. Tras considerar la genealogía del término, así como los trabajos deconstructivistas que han estudiado el concepto “religión”, el capítulo se centra en demostrar que, a pesar de las características modernas del término, esto no implica que su estudio en la antigüedad sea anacrónico. El autor propone una defensa de las llamadas posturas “realistas” que defienden la existencia del fenómeno religioso, aunque no existiese el vocabulario de primer orden para definirlo. Aunque el término “religión” es ajeno a las culturas antiguas, esto no quiere decir que no existieran prácticas y pensamientos que podemos calificar como religiosos. Así, contrario a las posturas de McCutcheon sobre la “religión”,² Schilbrack apuesta por un “realismo crítico” que tenga en cuenta los significados asociados a las categorías modernas pero que, a su vez, utilice dichas categorías como herramientas analíticas para estudiar el fenómeno religioso en las sociedades antiguas. Se trata por tanto de saber diferenciar el contenido de las categorías cuando definimos fenómenos modernos y antiguos. Siguiendo el ejemplo del

2. McCutcheon, 2010.

propio autor para concluir el capítulo, uno inventa la “política” como categoría, pero no la política como fenómeno, pues siempre está y ha estado presente.

La segunda parte de esta obra colectiva la conforman las contribuciones de Donald Wiebe, Emese Mogyoródi y Nickolas P. Roubekas. En el quinto capítulo, Wiebe introduce el estudio del fenómeno religioso desde la perspectiva de la filosofía presocrática. En su aportación, el autor se interesa por los argumentos filosóficos llevados a cabo por los primeros filósofos griegos para entender el mundo que les rodea desde una perspectiva racional. Para Wiebe, las ideas desarrolladas por el pensamiento jonio establecen un “episodio crítico” en el desarrollo del pensamiento humano dedicado al estudio de la religión. Tras realizar un repaso historiográfico del estudio de los filósofos presocráticos, concluye que estos primeros filósofos, especialmente aquellos naturales de Mileto desarrollaron un nuevo modo de pensamiento racional alejado de los elementos de la tradición mitológica como una nueva forma de entender el mundo y los fenómenos de este, incluida la religión. Según Wiebe, esta nueva forma de pensamiento “transicional” se verá reflejada en la historia del pensamiento griego pues será la piedra fundacional de lo que actualmente definimos como ciencia. El autor reconoce que esta ciencia primaria no está alejada del pensamiento religioso, sin embargo, el pensamiento jonio es una “revolución” intelectual que asienta las bases del desencantamiento del mundo.

En el sexto capítulo, Mogyoródi continúa investigando el desarrollo del pensamiento griego y la crítica a la religión centrándose en el término “impiedad” (*asebeia*). Partiendo de una comprensión “ortopráctica” de la religión griega, la autora se centra en los eventos acaecidos en Atenas durante las últimas décadas del siglo V a.e.c. Mogyoródi conecta el pensamiento presocrático con el desarrollo de la filosofía en época clásica, aunque señalando un cambio perceptible en cómo los pensadores del último tercio del s. V teorizaron sobre la divinidad en relación con los primeros intentos de dicha labor por los filósofos presocráticos. Con el fin de observar estas diferencias, Mogyoródi analiza los textos de Protágoras y de Pródico finalizando el capítulo con unas reflexiones sobre el fragmento del *Sísifo* como vestigios de una incipiente teorización de la religión y su origen social. Finalmente, la autora concluye reafirmando las diferencias en la forma de teorizar la religión entre los filósofos presocráticos y los filósofos de época clásica. Mientras que los primeros se centran en los elementos naturales del mundo, los segundos, influenciados por esa incipiente reflexión sobre el mundo natural, amplían la discusión hacia las leyes (*nomoi*). Esa discusión sobre las relaciones sociales entre los seres humanos se extiende a la relación entre los seres humanos y las divinidades dando lugar a las reflexiones ateas que encontramos en época clásica.

La segunda parte del libro finaliza con el capítulo séptimo escrito por Roubekas. Con su aportación, se concluye la sección de la obra dedicada a la religión griega centrándose en la obra de Heródoto. En este capítulo, el autor analiza la obra del historiador clásico como fuente para comprender la labor teórica que desarrollaron los antiguos para describir el fenómeno religioso. Para ello compara la labor del historiador clásico con teóricos modernos del hecho religioso como Freud o Durkheim. Tras analizar la posibilidad de aplicar el término “religión” en la Antigüedad, el autor propone el estudio de varios fragmentos de *Historias* con el fin de indagar en la teoría herodotea sobre las divinidades. Uno de los primeros elementos que destaca el autor es el error al afirmar posiciones ateas o increyentes en la obra de Heródoto. Roubekas establece tres elementos imprescindibles para acercarnos a dicha teoría sobre los dioses en la obra del historiador natural de Halicarnaso. El primero es la caracterización que la historiografía ha generado de Heródoto como autor “difusionista”. El segundo está relacionado con las teorías etimológicas sobre el origen de los dioses planteadas por el autor griego. Finalmente, el tercer elemento se centra en el papel de los héroes en el pensamiento herodoteo. En una segunda parte del capítulo, Roubekas parte de lo discutido en la obra de Heródoto para ampliar el estudio de las teorías sobre la religión desarrolladas en el mundo griego. Para ello, pone en relación *Historias* con el contexto intelectual de la época analizando las posibles influencias intelectuales que se encuentran en ella. El autor concluye su aportación señalando dos ideas fundamentales que podemos extraer de la obra de Heródoto. La primera es que el historiador trató de demostrar una religiosidad común en las culturas de su entorno, mientras que, por otro lado, estas aportaciones constituyeron un ejercicio de autoidentificación comunitaria.

La tercera parte del libro se compone de las aportaciones de Alan Lenzi, Rita Lucarelli, Panayotis Pachis y Spencer E. Cole. En el capítulo octavo, Lenzi introduce la discusión sobre la categoría de religión y la teorización de este fenómeno en el contexto de la antigua Mesopotamia. Uno de los primeros elementos que destaca el autor es la inexistencia del término “religión” en la lengua acadia. Por ello, Lenzi apuesta por hablar de “discurso ritual” para estudiar aquellos textos escritos por los estudiosos mesopotámicos (*ummânū*) que tratan temas relacionados con la comunicación entre los seres humanos y las divinidades. Con el fin de analizar dichos vestigios mesopotámicos, el autor destaca la estrecha relación que existe entre la historia de la ciencia y la historia de las religiones, especialmente cuando se estudian sociedades antiguas pues comparten mayoritariamente las mismas fuentes, los mismos textos. Centrándose en el contexto mesopotámico, Lenzi enumera los diferentes conceptos acadios que constituyen el “discurso ritual” concluyendo que

las teorías sobre las prácticas e ideas religiosas en los textos acadios eran un reflejo de las estructuras sociales y políticas.

El noveno capítulo nos trae de la mano de Lucarelli un análisis de la magia en el Antiguo Egipto. En su aportación, Lucarelli se enfoca en el debate de la definición de magia desde una perspectiva emic, en este caso, en el contexto egipcio. Como ocurría en el capítulo anterior, no existe un término egipcio para referirse a la religión, pero sí ocurre para la magia (Heka-*ḥkꜣ(w)*), tanto práctica como teórica. Este término se utiliza para hablar sobre rituales religiosos demostrando que desde una perspectiva emic no existía diferencia entre lo que hoy llamamos religión y magia. Lucarelli estudia los vestigios de la magia egipcia utilizando una moderna clasificación según la función de la práctica mágica (defensiva, funeraria, curativa y transformativa). Como el propio autor señala, esta clasificación es moderna ya que en el Antiguo Egipto estas prácticas mágicas no tenían dicha diferenciación, su gran mayoría se asocian con el término “protección” (*sꜣw*). Tras analizar diferentes ejemplos de la práctica mágica egipcia, Lucarelli concluye proponiendo esta aproximación comparativa hacia la magia egipcia como un posible método aplicable a otros aspectos de la religiosidad como la demonología.

En el décimo capítulo, Pachis continúa en el contexto egipcio pero esta vez durante el periodo helenístico. Este autor propone estudiar la descripción que realiza Diodoro Sículo sobre la vida religiosa egipcia en el primer libro de su *Bibliotheca Historica*. Para ello, Pachis se centra en la influencia del evemerismo en el desarrollo de las monarquías helenísticas observable en las ideas de autores como el propio Diodoro. El autor destaca la conexión de las teorías sobre el origen de la sociedad desarrolladas en época clásica con la manera de describir la actividad civilizatoria por los autores helenísticos. Esta idea destaca en como el propio Diodoro establece el origen de la agricultura en el mundo egipcio relacionando al héroe mítico griego encargado de dicha labor, Triptolemo, con los gobernantes ptolemaicos. Acompañando a esta relación, destaca la asociación que Diodoro establece entre Osiris y Dioniso e Isis y Deméter que, sin embargo, difiere de aquella realizada en etapas anteriores por Heródoto. Una asociación estrechamente conectada con los ritos místicos. Pachis concluye el capítulo señalando la “actividad ideológica” observable detrás de los discursos de Diodoro basados en una narración mitológica específica que descarta ciertos elementos históricos.

La tercera parte del libro finaliza con el undécimo capítulo escrito por Cole. En su contribución, Cole trata la relación entre la metáfora y el fenómeno religioso en el contexto de la religión romana. Para ello, Cole inicia el capítulo con una introducción a los acercamientos teóricos modernos sobre metáfora. Lo que resulta interesante para este autor es la relación entre dicha figura literaria y la represen-

tación de la experiencia cotidiana que en ella se esconde. La metáfora sirve para conocer los elementos que componen el día a día de una cultura específica. A través de un análisis de la historiografía de la religión moderna, Cole enfatiza el papel de la metáfora en el discurso romano. Con esta idea en mente, el autor analiza diferentes textos de los dos grandes pensadores romanos sobre el fenómeno religioso: Cicerón y Varrón. Una de las metáforas que destaca Cole en su estudio es la divinización de los seres humanos. Para este autor, Cicerón introduce este proceso de divinización como consecuencia del culto imperial pues la divinización de personajes influyentes en la vida pública no tenía apenas presencia en la etapa republicana. Para este autor, el término griego *apoteosis* aparece por primera vez en el contexto romano en las epístolas ciceronianas. El capítulo concluye enfatizando el papel de la metáfora en los cambios producidos en las ideas religiosas relacionadas con la muerte y el más allá durante los primeros años del Imperio. Las transformaciones de dichas ideas se reflejan en los cambios discursivos de la República tardía en los que la metáfora ejerce un papel esencial.

La cuarta sección del libro se resuelve con las contribuciones de Michael L. Satlow, Sarah Imhoff, Nickolas P. Roubekas y Sarah E. Rollens. En el capítulo duodécimo, Satlow nos propone un acercamiento al contexto judío, concretamente a la obra del pensador Filón de Alejandría. Para ello, el autor propone aplicar el “modelo politético” defendido por Jonathan Z. Smith para el estudio de las religiones.³ Tras realizar una genealogía del término judaísmo (*ioudaismos*) en el mundo antiguo, Satlow se enfrenta al problema que vertebra esta obra: la definición de las categorías de primer y segundo orden, en este caso en el contexto judío. Una vez el autor ha establecido las líneas teóricas de su acercamiento metodológico, se introduce en la obra de Filón. En este estudio de la obra del pensador judío, Satlow se centra en tres elementos descritos en los textos del alejandrino. El primero de ellos se refiere a la distinción de diferentes comunidades judías que Filón establece en sus textos. En segundo lugar, la manera en que el filósofo lidia con los textos de la tradición judía para finalmente centrarse en las prácticas socio-religiosas que se describen en los textos del alejandrino. Satlow concluye su aportación invitando a reflexionar las categorías utilizadas tradicionalmente en el estudio de las religiones, específicamente la categoría “judaísmo helenístico” cuyo mayor representante es Filón de Alejandría.

Imhoff continúa reflexionando sobre el judaísmo en el capítulo decimotercero. En su aportación la autora se centra en temas de identidad adscritas al contexto judío. Para ello, Imhoff realiza un ejercicio teórico para definir ciertos conceptos y

3. Smith, 1982.

categorías relacionadas con los procesos identitarios judíos, tanto en la modernidad como en los contextos antiguos. Uno de los términos más discutidos por Imhoff es “judeidad” (*Jewishness*). La autora apuesta por acercarnos al pasado antiguo no dando por sentado un significativo esencialmente religioso cuando se describen grupos o sujetos judíos en la Antigüedad. Con el fin de apreciar esta idea, la autora realiza una aproximación a las principales fuentes judías en el mundo antiguo. Uno de los elementos que destaca es la gran pluralidad cultural que existe en dicho contexto desembocando en una diversidad de formas de desarrollar la identidad judía. Imhoff destaca tres elementos en el análisis de las fuentes antiguas. El primero es la inexistencia de un término equivalente a nuestro “judaísmo” en los autores antiguos. En segundo lugar, recalca el papel secundario de los rabinos en el contexto grecolatino. El tercer y último elemento es la hibridación cultural entre los grupos judíos y el resto de las comunidades vecinas. Tras analizar los textos de Filón de Alejandría o Flavio Josefo entre otros, Imhoff concluye el capítulo reafirmando las categorías analíticas (“religión”, “identidad” o “nación”) como herramientas que nos permiten profundizar en fenómenos transhistóricos complejos como la “judeidad”.

En el capítulo decimocuarto, Roubekas realiza una segunda aportación a esta obra centrándose en la figura de Tertuliano y, por tanto, en el contexto del primer cristianismo. El autor se centra en la obra *De Spectaculis* del apologista africano como ejemplo para identificar dos elementos esenciales en el estudio del cristianismo primitivo. El primero es la creación y reforzamiento de identidades mediante la relación de espacios con elementos religiosos. Relacionado con esta idea, el segundo elemento hace referencia a las consecuencias ideológicas que desarrolla la clasificación de dichos espacios. Así, analizando los espacios lúdicos descritos por Tertuliano puede apreciarse una resignificación espacial cuya transformación está relacionada con los cambios en las ideas y creencias religiosas paganas/romanas hacia unas cristianas. Como apunta Roubekas, la labor del apologista es explicar a los nuevos cristianos la manera correcta de relacionarse con los elementos culturales romanos. El autor concluye el capítulo recalcando la versatilidad que el fenómeno religioso puede llegar a adquirir, especialmente en la formación de identidades, tal y como podemos observar en la obra y en el tiempo de Tertuliano.

La cuarta parte de esta obra finaliza con la aportación de Rollens en el decimoquinto capítulo. Continuando el análisis sobre el cristianismo primitivo del capítulo anterior, Rollens se centra en las llamadas “primeras comunidades cristianas”. La tesis principal de esta autora es la naturaleza anacrónica que el término “comunidad” posee cuando nos referimos a los primeros grupos cristianos. Como Rollens deja claro en la primera página de su contribución, su objetivo no es negar la existencia de formaciones colectivas asociadas por su interés compartido en la figura de Jesús, sino

en el “legado intelectual” de dichas identidades compartidas. Con el fin de realizar tal labor, la autora analiza diferentes teorías sociológicas sobre los procesos identitarios tanto a nivel subjetivo como a nivel comunitario. Tras analizar estas aproximaciones a los trabajos que conciernen la identidad cultural, Rollens realiza una genealogía del término “comunidad” señalando la influencia del nacionalismo alemán, el romanticismo y la teología protestante en su construcción. Bajo estos tres elementos se formó la idea moderna de “comunidad”. Con el fin de observar estas reflexiones en las fuentes del cristianismo primitivo, la autora concluye el capítulo analizando las cartas paulinas como un ejemplo histórico de formación identitaria. En lugar de hablar de comunidad, Rollens propone analizar esta formación de identidades relacionadas con la figura de Jesús en términos de un “discurso común” utilizado por grupos sociales concretos.

La quinta y última sección del libro la componen las aportaciones de Leonardo Ambasciano, Justin K. H. Tse, James Crossley e Irene Salvo. En el capítulo decimosexto, Ambasciano nos propone una reflexión de las categorías discutidas en la obra desde las ciencias cognitivas. Tras exponer las razones por las cuales las ciencias cognitivas suelen estar infrarrepresentadas en el estudio de las religiones, especialmente en las antiguas, el autor señala la labor que el estudio neuropsicológico ha aportado en la deconstrucción de la propia categoría “religión”. A pesar de las limitaciones de la “teoría de la mente”, Ambasciano apuesta por un acercamiento al fenómeno religioso desde dicha perspectiva mencionando los resultados que ha dado hasta ahora su aplicación, por ejemplo, en el estudio de las violaciones intuitivas de los *prodigia* romanos. El objetivo de esta perspectiva es por tanto conocer lo que se conoce como la “historia profunda” o “neurohistoria”: el aparato cognitivo que lleva a los sujetos a desarrollar una religiosidad concreta. El autor aplica esta propuesta de estudio en el análisis de las creencias y prácticas religiosas descritas en la historiografía romana. Ambasciano concluye su aportación destacando los resultados que nos puede ofrecer acercarnos a la historia de las religiones desde teorías cognitivas y evolutivas.

En el capítulo decimoséptimo, Tse señala el papel de la geografía cultural en el estudio de las religiones. Su principal argumento es estudiar la obra de Mircea Eliade destacando la influencia que la geografía cultural tuvo en el estudio del origen de ciertas ideas o prácticas religiosas. El autor defiende, por tanto, la geografía cultural, la disciplina que teoriza sobre las prácticas humanas en su relación espacial, como elemento fundacional del estudio moderno de las religiones. Su acercamiento “crítico” a Eliade le lleva a contraponer las tesis de este con las de Smith entendiendo las diferencias entre ambos autores sobre la religión como una dialéctica y no como posiciones antitéticas. En esa zona común entre ambos pensadores se encuentra la geografía cultural influenciada por las teorías sociológicas de Durkheim. En una se-

gunda parte del capítulo, Tse se centra en las aproximaciones fenomenológicas de Eliade comparándolas con los acercamientos fenomenológicos en los estudios geográficos. Finalmente, el autor concluye su contribución invitando a los estudiosos de las religiones y a los geógrafos culturales a seguir trabajando conjuntamente.

En el capítulo decimoctavo, Crossley discute la exégesis textual en el ámbito de los estudios bíblicos. Una de las primeras preguntas a la que quiere contestar el autor es a qué nos referimos cuando hablamos de un “texto”; cómo definimos y particularizamos una fuente textual. Desde el estudio de la Biblia, podemos observar la diversidad que existe a la hora de estudiar las fuentes textuales. Las dificultades que emergen de dicha pluralidad no solo afectan a la naturaleza del texto (autoría, audiencia, intencionalidad...), sino también a las diferentes interpretaciones que se hacen de la pieza textual, las cuales están igualmente sujetas a un contexto histórico y cultural concreto. Con todo ello en mente, Crossley analiza las maneras en que la Biblia ha sido interpretada desde distintas ideologías modernas. Una primera aproximación se centra en la lectura de la Biblia durante la Ilustración cuyo resultado fue el entendimiento de la Biblia como guía espiritual, una manera de interpretar el texto religioso cada vez más influenciado por elementos seculares. El autor continúa su estudio analizando la exégesis bíblica durante el largo siglo XX destacando la influencia del antisemitismo y la visión de lo judío durante las primeras décadas del siglo pasado. El autor destaca un cambio ideológico en los años 60 debido al desarrollo de un multiculturalismo liberal. Crossley finaliza su estudio destacando las lecturas de la Biblia como refuerzo de las ideas liberales de las democracias europeas (*Liberal Bible*), mientras que, por otro lado, destacan las lecturas anticapitalistas representadas por la Teología de la Liberación (*Radical Bible*). El autor concluye señalando el papel que el contexto ideológico tiene en el estudio de los textos antiguos.

En el penúltimo capítulo, Salvo analiza los estudios de las religiones antiguas desde una perspectiva de género. Para ello, la autora divide el capítulo en dos partes. En la primera de ellas, se discute la definición de la categoría “género”. En una segunda parte del capítulo, Salvo proyecta las teorías de género en el contexto de las religiones antiguas, concretamente en la religiosidad griega. En cuanto al primer objetivo de su aportación, Salvo dibuja una genealogía de la categoría analítica de género marcada por su etnocentrismo. Por ello, la autora apuesta por teorías de género amplias que incluyan perspectivas de género multiculturales con el fin de utilizarlas en el estudio de las religiones pretéritas. Uno de los elementos que destaca Salvo es la maleabilidad de la categoría “género” especialmente cuando estudiamos casos de transgenerismos relacionados con prácticas religiosas. Tras mencionar distintos trabajos sobre religiones antiguas desde una perspectiva de género, Salvo aplica la teorización de género en la sociedad de la Antigua Grecia. Una de las conclusiones

a las que llega Salvo tras analizar diferentes prácticas rituales griegas se basa en la comparación de las teorías sobre la performatividad de género de Judith Butler con el desarrollo de las identidades de género en el contexto griego. Salvo concluye el capítulo realizando una analogía de las dificultades metodológicas que encontramos en las categorías “religión” y “género” cuando se aplican en distintos contextos históricos. Sin embargo, ella defiende un uso de dichos conceptos de segundo orden para analizar las evidencias de los contextos religiosos antiguos.

La obra finaliza con un epílogo a cargo de Luther H. Martin bajo el título “The Jabberwocky Dilemma: Take Religion for Example”. A modo de conclusión de la obra, Martin analiza algunas de las conclusiones observables en las diferentes contribuciones que forman este libro. Previo a ello, el autor amplía el debate de las categorías no solo preguntándose a qué nos referimos con religión, sino también con “antigüedad” o “modernidad”. No parece haber una definición clara de ambos conceptos, ni siquiera en esta obra. Martin estructura el epílogo en tres grandes partes. La primera se dedica a la discusión sobre la categoría “religión” destacando ejemplos que se encuentran en los capítulos de esta publicación, pero también analizando las discusiones sobre dicha categoría que encontramos en diferentes autores desde diversas disciplinas. Una segunda parte del epílogo se centra en el estudio del fenómeno religioso en la antigüedad. Para el autor, este hecho sustenta el objetivo de la obra cuya importancia se refleja en el propio título del libro. La labor de teorizar es para este autor un proceso de creación de hipótesis y presupuestos que deben ser reafirmados mediante el análisis de los datos empíricos con el fin de verificar su validez. Así, tras analizar dicha labor en las contribuciones de la obra, Martin observa la aplicación de dicho proceso en los casos históricos propuestos en la obra por los diferentes autores. Para el autor, los ejemplos ofrecidos en esta publicación pueden enmarcarse en tres grandes temas: la filosofía presocrática, la teoría ritual, y las cuestiones de identidad. A pesar de la naturaleza crítica del epílogo hacia las contribuciones que conforman la obra, Martin concluye señalando la importancia de las ediciones de este tipo. El autor destaca la labor apreciable en la obra de unificar una gran pluralidad de perspectivas para estudiar un fenómeno complejo como es la religión en un periodo histórico alejado de nuestro contexto. Publicaciones de esta naturaleza, afirma el autor, avivan el estudio teórico y metodológico no solo de la religiosidad en etapas pretéritas, sino también en la contemporaneidad.

Como hemos podido observar hasta ahora, el primer elemento a destacar es la pluralidad y diversidad de propuestas, perspectivas y contextos históricos que podemos apreciar a lo largo de la obra. A ello hay que añadir la confluencia que se produce entre la teorización de categorías relacionadas con el fenómeno religioso con las labores históricas que analizan las fuentes antiguas. Ambas perspectivas se muestran como partes

de un mismo trabajo dotando de interesantes resultados a las investigaciones dedicadas al estudio de las religiones en la antigüedad. A pesar de esta pluralidad, es innegable que el contexto griego tiene un papel primordial a lo largo de la obra. Este hecho no solo es observable en la dedicación exclusiva a la historia de la religión griega de la segunda sección del libro, sino también por el uso de ejemplos del mundo griego que se observan incluso en aquellos capítulos que se centran en aspectos más teóricos. Las contribuciones de Davies o Salvo son precisamente ejemplos de ello.

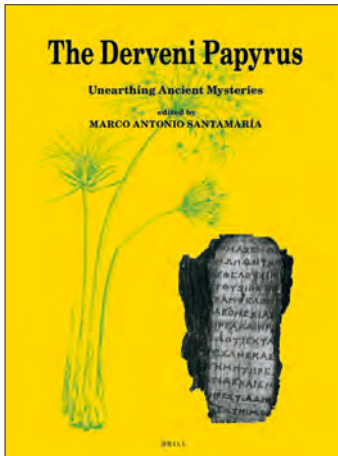
Por otra parte, la naturaleza holística de la obra y su carácter interdisciplinar nos ofrecen una aproximación al fenómeno religioso en la antigüedad de una gran calidad académica. La discusión de las categorías analíticas como “religión”, “magia”, “ritual” o “creencia” generan un aporte metodológico imprescindible al análisis de las prácticas socio-religiosas cuyos resultados se proyectan en las sociedades históricas. Esta dialéctica entre las categorías modernas y el estudio de elementos históricos dotan a esta publicación de un carácter difícil de encontrar en otras obras colectivas que estudian la religiosidad en el mundo antiguo. Además, la obra estudia igualmente la manera en la que los antiguos teorizaban sobre la religiosidad de su época. Desde una perspectiva emic, distintos autores nos ofrecen como el fenómeno religioso era descrito, estudiado o incluso criticado en diferentes contextos históricos. La teorización sobre la “religión” es, por tanto, tan antigua como el propio hecho religioso.

Con todo ello podemos concluir que la publicación es altamente recomendable para aquellas personas que buscan profundizar en el complejo estudio de la “religión”, especialmente para aquellos investigadores cuyos trabajos se centran en las religiosidades del mundo antiguo.

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THE DERVENI PAPYRUS



SANTAMARÍA, MARCO ANTONIO (ed.) (2019). *The Derveni Papyrus. Unearthing Ancient Mysteries*. Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava, 36. Leiden-Boston: Brill. viii, 173 pp., 116,00€ [ISBN 978-9-0043-8484-2].

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LOS HALLAZGOS DE DOCUMENTOS EN PAPIRO y otros soportes, así como las sucesivas ediciones de estos textos, han enriquecido enormemente, sobre todo desde la mitad del siglo XX, nuestro conocimiento de algunos autores griegos (como ha sucedido, por ejemplo, con Estesícoro, Arquíloco, Simónides o Safo) y, en algunos casos, han dado a conocer textos no literarios de enorme interés que han desencadenado, con razón, una fructífera actividad editorial y hermenéutica por la gran novedad que suponían para nuestro conocimiento de la literatura, la religión y el pensamiento griegos. Entre ellos ocupa un lugar justificadamente destacado el documento conocido como Papiro de Derveni (por el lugar del hallazgo), un sorprendente ejemplo de comentario alegórico (término que uso de modo amplio) que, además, se hace sobre un poema atribuido a Orfeo, lo que abre una dimensión adicional de gran importancia. De modo que desde hace varios decenios, no tanto desde su descubrimiento en 1962

como, sobre todo, desde la primera edición (no autorizada) en 1982 en *ZPE*, este papiro puede considerarse el texto griego más estudiado y (re)editado. Un preciso resumen de las ediciones y contribuciones más destacadas se encuentra en la *Introducción* al presente volumen a cargo de su editor, Marco Antonio Santamaría, quien resume con igual precisión las contribuciones al mismo (pp. 1-3). Debe alabarse asimismo lo acertado de la organización interna del volumen.

Cuando ya tanto se ha escrito sobre el Papiro de Derveni ¿era procedente embarcarse en un volumen como el presente? La respuesta es afirmativa, desde el momento en que el objetivo de este es reunir una serie de estudios sobre aspectos muy concretos de la investigación sobre dicho documento, con una distribución y agrupamiento bien calibrado de las contribuciones (diez en total, repartidas entre cinco partes). Expongo ahora la distribución y contenido de estas.

La primera parte se dedica a *Conservación y restauración*. Roger T. Macfarlane y Gianluca del Mastro (cap. 1, “Problems Pertaining to the Restoration, Conservation, and Reproduction of the Derveni Papyrus”, pp. 7-15) abordan el tema de la restauración de papiros carbonizados (con referencia a los de Bubastos, Tmuis, Tebtunis, Petras y Herculano), detallan los pasos que se han ido dando en el Museo de Tesalónica para la conservación del papiro desde su hallazgo en 1962 hasta la declaración del mismo como Patrimonio mundial en 2015, y los avances conseguidos para revertir los efectos de la carbonización mediante la utilización de técnicas de radiación de infrarrojos y, además, se indica la secuencia de fotografías obtenidas y sus características. Se hace asimismo un detallado informe sobre el estado actual de conservación (en todos los aspectos, desde el estado del soporte de cartón hasta la reorganización seguida en la colocación de los fragmentos) y se añaden importantes recomendaciones para una conservación óptima del papiro.

La parte segunda se centra en la *Reconstrucción e interpretación de las seis primeras columnas*. Valeria Piano (cap. 2, “Some Textual Issues on Column III [ed. Piano]”, pp. 19-29) analiza con detalle los problemas editoriales de la columna III a partir de su propia edición de esta. Tras revisar otras ediciones y estudios de las problemáticas primeras columnas del papiro, la autora presenta su propia estructura de la columna III, una edición de las líneas 4-9 (con una fotografía, aparato crítico y observaciones), observaciones de detalle sobre las líneas 4-5, con justificación de su lectura y conclusiones sobre el contenido de dicha parte. De especial relevancia (a partir del texto editado) es la propuesta de que el autor del papiro presenta a las Erinias como defensoras de un orden cósmico, sometidas a una divinidad superior (*Dike*) y encargadas de castigar a los culpables, en el marco de un pensamiento emparentado con concepciones presocráticas. Por su parte, la delicada cuestión de la relación ideológica entre el autor del papiro y el primer estoicismo es abordada por

Carlos Megino Rodríguez (cap. 3, “Daimons in the Derveni Papyrus and in Early Stoicism”, pp. 30-44), quien observa que los démones están estrechamente relacionados con las Erinias, de modo que ambos pueden considerarse equivalentes (ya que los démones pueden transformarse, a través del ritual místico, en entidades benéficas). El autor propone que las referencias a démones (en realidad almas de los muertos) y Erinias se enmarcan en un contexto ritual oracular y propiciatorio, en el que los démones-Erinias deben ser aplacados por el *magos*. La consideración de algunas opiniones de Crisipo y otros estoicos sobre los démones y sus funciones llevan al autor a concluir que, si bien está claro que el autor no es un estoico, sí puede afirmarse que su universo filosófico “está sustancialmente relacionado con autores como Heráclito, Demócrito y Anaxágoras” (p. 43) cuya ideología puede calificarse no sólo de presocrática, sino también de pre-estoica.

La tercera parte se dedica al *Poema órfico* comentado por el autor del papiro. Esta parte se inicia con el estudio de Marco Antonio Santamaría (cap. 4, “The Orphic Poem of the Derveni Papyrus and Hesiod’s *Theogony*”, pp. 47-64), en el que se analizan en detalle las posibles conexiones detectables en las siguientes partes: proemio, versos programáticos, profecía de la Noche, la asunción del poder por Zeus, la sucesión Urano-Crono-Zeus, el engullimiento de Metis-Protógono, la figura del Protógono, la formación de los dioses y de los ríos, la figura del Zeus, el nacimiento de Afrodita, Selene, el deseo de Zeus de unirse a su madre y Zeus como rey supremo y padre del universo. La siguiente contribución corresponde a Chiara Ferella (cap. 5, “Ζεὺς μόνος and Parmenides’ *What-is*”, pp. 65-74), quien defiende que la forma en que se describe la adquisición del poder por Zeus implica una concepción monística de esta teogonía órfica: es decir, Zeus – μόνος estaría en la base de la concepción del ser como μονογενής, que es uno y todo y fuera del cual no hay nada, como en el ser de Parménides.

La cuarta parte versa sobre *La interpretación del poema: exégesis y cosmogonía* y su primer capítulo corresponde a un amplio estudio de Radcliffe G. Edmonds III (cap. 6, “Misleading and Unclear to the Many: Allegory in the Derveni Papyrus and the Orphic *Theogony of Hieronymus*”, pp. 77-99) cuyo argumento central es que el comentario del texto órfico del papiro es obra de lo que el autor denomina un “religious practitioner” deseoso de ganarse una clientela, de modo que sus interpretaciones alegóricas no serían más que un recurso mercantil en un contexto competitivo. Por esta razón, señala Edmonds, el comentarista hace toda una demostración de esa capacidad de interpretación, un auténtico *tour de force* exegético para conseguir sus fines. En ese conjunto de elaboración hermenéutica se incluyen sus disquisiciones alegóricas y etimológicas (o pseudo-etimológicas), sin que todo ello implique ninguna ideología coetánea (de hecho, Edmonds rechaza la hipótesis estoica). Ese uso que

he llamado “mercantil” de la alegoría es precisamente lo que le diferencia de otras interpretaciones de las doctrinas órficas que se encuentran en la *Teogonía* de Jerónimo, en las que, en cualquier caso, Edmonds no ve tampoco pensamiento estoico, sino proximidad con las tendencias alegóricas de pensadores de la época de Eurípides. En resumen, la tendencia comercial del autor del papiro contrastaría con la naturaleza de las otras corrientes alegóricas que implican una “exposición sistemática de una cosmogonía poética” (p. 97). Por su parte, Sofia Ranzato (cap. 7, “The Sage Speaks in Riddles: Notes on Col. VII of the Derveni Papyrus”, pp. 100-107) indica su intención de matizar la opinión de que el intérprete del poema órfico del papiro puede alinearse con autores como Teágenes de Regio y Metrodoro de Lámpsaco, por su intención de defender el prestigio de los antiguos poetas (frente a las críticas de autores como Jenófanes y Heráclito) dando un giro alegórico a la interpretación de la forma en que, por ejemplo, Homero, presentaba determinadas conductas de los dioses. Por ello, propone que algunos autores arcaicos optaron por recurrir a modos de expresión susceptibles de ser incluidos en la interpretación alegórica de Homero y Orfeo, sobre la base de que “el sabio habla en enigmas”. Tal sería el caso de Parménides y Empédocles, a los que habría que añadir el autor del poema órfico comentado en el papiro, de modo que, en este caso, su comentarista estaría haciendo un alarde de habilidad interpretativa superior a la de otros oficiantes de ritos.¹ A este capítulo sigue el elaborado por Alberto Bernabé (cap. 8, “The Commentary of the Derveni Papyrus: Pre-Socratic Cosmogonies at Work”, pp. 108-125). A pesar del título, el contenido no versa solamente sobre la posición del comentario del poema órfico en el marco del pensamiento presocrático, sino que es una reconstrucción en paralelo del orden narrativo del poema y de la estructuración que el comentarista hace de la sucesión teogónica (lo que, desde luego, permite un balance comparativo con otras cosmogonías). Para ello Bernabé procede al establecimiento de la secuencia cronológica que implica el poema y de las fases cosmogónicas que el comentarista del papiro establece: la Noche como entidad primordial, reino de Urano y surgimiento del éter, generación de Crono (sobre la etimología κρούων Νοῦς), acción protectora de la Noche, el consejo de Crono para conseguir un cosmos estable, la ingestión del falo de Urano por Zeus, preñez de Zeus (papel clave de νοῦς-ἄήρ), himno a Zeus (como principio y fin), eyaculación de Afrodita por Zeus, creación de las diosas (en realidad, varios nombres para una sola), Zeus engendra a Océano y Aqueloo y Zeus engendra la luna y las estrellas. En resumen, el resultado es una cosmogonía en cuatro fases (Noche,

1. Quizá debería haberse precisado algo más este perfil del autor del comentario en el marco social y cultural coetáneo.

Urano, Crono, Zeus; no parece que haya mención de Fanes), en las que Bernabé aprecia tanto elementos de contacto con otras cosmogonías como notables diferencias. Un dato que considero importante es el perfil que se obtiene del comentarista: un intelectual, con conocimiento de corrientes de pensamiento, filosóficas y científicas, que con un método hermenéutico adecuado a su tiempo trata de reconstruir el mensaje profundo del texto órfico, visto como una cosmogonía que va de un comienzo caótico a una ordenación que garantiza la supervivencia del mundo.

La quinta parte se dedica a las Últimas columnas del papiro. Ana Isabel Jiménez San Cristóbal (cap. 9, “Rites and Officiants in Col. XX of the Derveni Papyrus”, pp. 129-142) procede a un exhaustivo análisis de la columna XX y llega a la conclusión de que no se trata de ninguna digresión, sino que está perfectamente en consonancia con el resto de acciones e interpretaciones que encontramos en el papiro. Para ello coteja cada una de las líneas del texto con las posibles referencias internas y, a la vez, con opiniones de otros autores antiguos (en especial Plutarco) sobre los rituales y sus oficiantes, para poder entender el porqué de la crítica que el comentarista del poema dirige tanto a oficiantes como iniciados. Asimismo, la autora indaga en la actitud que presenta frente a otros expertos profesionales y, además, propone una convincente solución para la coherencia entre lo que se dice en esta columna y los relatos y ritos del resto del papiro (con especial referencia al mito de Dioniso y su perspectiva ritual). El último capítulo corresponde a Marisa Tortorelli Ghidini (cap. 10, “Aphrodite Urania and Uranus Euphronides in the Derveni Papyrus: A Semantic Genealogy”, pp. 143-149) quien, a partir de las columnas XXI y XIV del papiro obtiene un definido perfil de la Afrodita del texto órfico y su comentario, concebida (mediante recursos etimológicos) como un nombre alternativo al de otras deidades femeninas (*Peitho* o Harmonía) que en realidad son el mismo Zeus (entendido como *voũç*) y, asimismo, a partir del epíteto Urania, relacionada con Urano Eufiónida, es decir, Urano hijo de Eufrone (la Noche) y cuya función es establecer límites (*oũpoi*) garantizando una unión entre elementos afines pero, a la vez, respetando los límites (frente a una unión caótica). Es decir, una vez más, dentro de la recurrencia al particular uso de la etimología por parte del comentarista.

Aunque cada una de las contribuciones reseñadas van seguidas de la bibliografía citada en cada una de ellas, se ha añadido al final un completa bibliografía sobre el papiro de Derveni correspondiente a los años 1997-2018,² pp. 151-157, a la que siguen los diversos *Indices* (pp. 158-174): *Locorum, Nominum et Rerum Notabiliorum* y *Verborum Graecorum*.

2. Como continuación de la de Funghi, 1997.

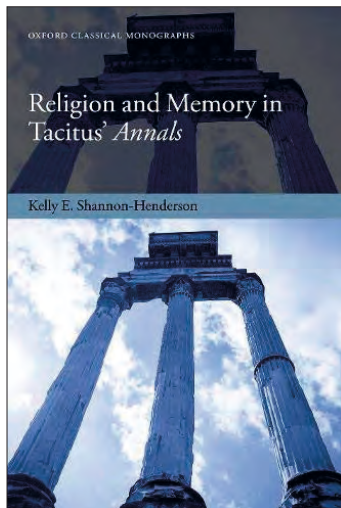
La importancia del volumen radica tanto en lo que se plantea en cada contribución como en las cuestiones que éstas suscitan en el contexto de la investigación sobre el papiro y, además, sobre la religión, el pensamiento, los mitos, los cultos místéricos, la naturaleza de los practicantes, etc. Es evidente que se trata de un documento que, empezando por las dificultades textuales, plantea problemas que admiten soluciones variadas y lógicamente discordantes. Los autores han tenido buen cuidado en acompañar sus observaciones con una rigurosa bibliografía que, con frecuencia, pone de manifiesto la pluralidad de acercamientos posibles, pero todas las contribuciones tienen un gran rigor científico y gran claridad expositiva. En general, sus argumentos son convincentes y, aunque no era tarea fácil, se han evitado grandes discrepancias (quizá en mi exposición se hayan apreciado ya alguna). No es para menos al versar sobre un texto que, simplemente con una ligera modificación textual, puede abrir una interpretación distinta de las precedentes.

A las cualidades de contenido deben añadirse las formales: es una edición en un formato poco usual (pasta dura, dimensiones de 30 x 22 en papel cuché y a dos columnas) con una impresión muy cuidada y debo decir que impecable en cuanto a erratas.

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RELIGION AND MEMORY IN TACITUS' *ANNALS*



SHANNON-HENDERSON,
KELLY E. (2019). *Religion and
Memory in Tacitus' Annals*. Oxford:
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THIS BOOK IS ONE OF A NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS THAT have sought in recent times, as the author puts it, to take Roman religion seriously and to accord greater importance to religious ritual in understanding the workings of Roman society.¹ Shannon-Henderson makes a good case for the need to reassess the role of religion in Tacitus' *Annals*, citing examples of well-established interpretive traditions of reducing religious events to rhetorical devices rather than according them a major role in the epistemological framework of the historian. The integrated readings of Tacitus' accounts

1. Notably: Davies, 2004; Griffin, 2009; Hunt, 2016.

of religious material make for a compelling perspective. Alongside the consular historian, Shannon-Henderson offers readers Tacitus the *quindecimvir*.²

The main strength of the study is its consistent demonstration of the importance of religion in Tacitus' historical analysis in the *Annales*. While the introduction offers a sound case for using "cultic memory" as a basis for investigating the role of religion in Tacitus' record of the past, the study actually offers more than this, providing a basis for re-evaluating the nature of the *Annals* as a whole and giving religion greater prominence, and offers insights into the workings of the gods, of *fortuna*, *fatum* and *fors*. In this, it will be of service both to new readers of Tacitus and to specialists who will find in this study new emphases and new connections. Shannon-Henderson certainly leaves the reader in no doubt that attention to religion is important for understanding many of the other major narrative threads in the *Annals*, and the book will be an essential point of reference for future studies of the *Annals* in this regard.

One of the most compelling arguments of chapter one, "Tiberius the Autocrat", somewhat belies the chapter's title. Shannon-Henderson offers a convincing reading of episodes early in the reign of Tiberius in which the emperor's subjects appeal to him in a manner reminiscent of worship; these she connects with Tiberius' ambiguous interpretations of proper behaviour in regard to the divine Augustus, showing that the very presence of a deified emperor in Roman religious culture created pressures and raised questions that neither Tiberius nor his subjects knew how to handle in accordance with existing religious tradition. Tiberius' ambiguity thus appears not only as deviousness that aims at entrapping his subjects but also as bafflement in the face of intractable religious questions. Shannon-Henderson makes a strong case for reading the problems of Tiberius' principate not only as the product of Tiberius' autocratic style but also as the product of a system that nobody knew how to control. Shannon-Henderson thereby avoids overdetermined interpretation of the notoriously slippery exchanges between Tiberius and his subjects.

In chapter two: "Germanicus as Religious Interpreter", Shannon-Henderson challenges some aspects of the view that Germanicus represents a set of values rendered outdated by the world of the principate, as advanced influentially by Pelling.³ The argument made here is that Germanicus repeatedly fails to show himself adept at the kind of religious interpretation that would improve Rome's relationship with the gods. A particularly convincing piece of analysis is when Shannon-Henderson

2. See, in particular, Tac., *Ann.* XI 11, 1, when Tacitus refers to his membership of the priestly college of the *quindecimviri*.

3. Pelling, 1993.

outlines a kind of causation that aligns the will of the gods, the actions of individuals and fate, but which Germanicus is unable to interpret accurately (see in particular pp. 112-113). The implications of the similarity between this model of causation and the narrative techniques of, for instance, Virgilian epic, are not developed at length, but Shannon-Henderson's perceptive discussion of Germanicus' attempts to interpret his experience in terms of fate, fortune and the will of the gods ought to be considered by scholars working on the relationships between historical and epic narrative, especially in light of the arguments for epic influence on the *Histories* made by Timothy Joseph.⁴ Shannon-Henderson is particularly strong in the discussion of the range of meanings of *fortuna* (first introduced at p. 21). In chapter 2 she makes perceptive remarks on slippage in the ways Tacitus uses the word *fortuna*, which variously signifies, on the one hand, fortune as a supernatural force and, on the other, the status of imperial leadership – here, as in the analysis of double causation and the deforming effects of Augustus' deification on subsequent religious practice, there is a convincing integration of political analysis with religious thought.

The account of divine wrath in “*Annals* 4” chapter offers a convincing argument for reading the gods' anger as more than a rhetorical device, and at pp. 170-171 Shannon-Henderson's analysis focuses on key questions of the relationship between *deum ira* and the whole structure of the principate. In chapter five, “Fate, Astrology, and the End of Life”, Shannon-Henderson offers analysis of the relationship between traditional religion and astrology and shows how a system of divination disconnected from traditional public religion leads to foreboding without the prospect of expiatory ritual.

The Claudian books (chapter six, “Claudius and the Failure of Tradition”) are characterised as the narrative of a failed attempt at recovering decaying traditions. This analysis casts an intriguing light on the Neronian books of the *Annals*, where Shannon-Henderson explores the increasing prominence of prodigies in the Neronian books of the *Annals*, and notes the continuation of haruspicy, revived under Claudius. Even when old practices are resumed, it appears that the latter years of the Julio-Claudian dynasty show Roman traditional religion in a worse state than under Tiberius. Returning to astrology in chapter seven (“Nero: A Narrative in Prodigies”) the author offers another convincing integration of political and religious analysis. Discussing Agrippina's foreknowledge of her death at Nero's orders, gained through astrological consultation, Shannon-Henderson notes that knowledge of the future serves only to implicate even Agrippina in the religious pollution (pp.298-9). Agrippina's readiness to accept the murder provided Nero become emperor (as expressed

4. Joseph, 2012.

in the *sententia* “Let him kill me so long as he rules”, *occidat... dum imperet*, *Ann.* XIV 9, 3) shows that she is indifferent to the moral implications for Rome when their emperor is a parricide. The main strength of the chapter on Nero’s reign is the demonstration of the religious aspects of worsening tyranny: the analysis of the narrative as a spiral involving both repetition and intensification of systemic corruption applies a model most famously put forward by John Henderson famous article.⁵ Henderson is not cited here, and it is noteworthy that the book’s focus on literary techniques is detailed in some respects, but not in others. The lion’s share of the discussion of narrative dynamics is concerned with techniques such as verbal intertexts and intratexts, implicit parallels between episodes and suggestive juxtaposition; by contrast, rhetoric and authorial self-positioning play less of a role. For instance, it is stated that Tacitus is “a historian who relies heavily on his priestly persona” (p. 136), but there is relatively little discussion of how this persona is cultivated. That may, however, simply be to say that the author has put forward a compelling case, yet to be explored, for enquiring into the religious dimension of the text’s rhetoric, and this reviewer has certainly been convinced that the case for appraising the *Annals* anew in this way is strong.

The point is well made, in assessing Cossutianus Capito’s prosecution of Thrasea Paetus (*Ann.* XVI 28, discussed at pp. 343-344), that the *delator*’s rhetoric is very striking, as he feels emboldened to impugn Paetus not only for what he does but even for what he believes. The author’s argument that this is a sign, not of religious norms, but of the extremes of Neronian *delatio*, seems solid.

In one particular respect, the relationship between religion and wider social history calls for further exploration, and that is in relation to class distinctions in public religious practice. The role of class is briefly acknowledged in specific instances, but little is said about the aristocratic slant of much of the source material, for instance when it is stated in a footnote that “Irrational interpretations of natural phenomena are often characteristic of lower-class groups” (p. 29, n. 17), the perspective offered is clearly that of an elite, and the implications of the tendentious source material merit further reflection. There is relatively little attention to the inherently aristocratic nature of the priesthood and the alignment of certain types of interpretive authority with social class. On p. 288, in discussion of *Ann.* XIII 17, 1, there is some attention to the different roles of the senate (traditional, but now failed guardians of public cult) and the people (readier to interpret events in terms of the will of the gods, but traditionally excluded from authority in public religious functions), but Tacitus’ generally

5. Henderson, 1989. Also revised in Henderson, 1998, pp. 257-300.

disparaging references to the *vulgus* (the word used at this point in the text) could have been discussed further. On particular points, the author's observations raise fascinating questions. For instance, the observations on the association of astrology with non-elites (p. 227 and n. 53) strikingly contrasts with the clear vogue for astrological prediction amongst the imperial family and certain members of the upper echelons of Roman society. The conclusion "astrology... is perhaps not the best use of time for a member of the Imperial family" seems to leave open further enquiry into what the devotion to astrology meant in different social contexts.

The style of writing is accessible and does not rely on jargon to get its points across. The author succeeds in clearly explaining a wide range of ideas in a way that will be accessible to readers in a range of different fields. Especially in the early chapters, however, a somewhat distracting feature is the prolific use of the word "problematic". It is central to the arguments of the book that traditional religious practices are in decay during the Julio-Claudian period. The argument is made cogently and explored from a variety of perspectives. Nevertheless, the word "problematic" appears somewhat overused, with the consequence that it tends to conflate the portrayal of problems of many different kinds. Furthermore, it is sometimes unclear what the word means, for example on p. 139: "[G]iven the hostility of the historical tradition to Claudius, the reader is likely to have assumed that [Claudius] would be ineffective, problematic, and destructive to Rome in Tacitus' portrayal as well". Often it needs to be made clearer whose standards are being applied in deeming a practice to be problematic, for instance in the remark that the legions have a "propensity to be taken in by problematic religious ideas" (p. 171). The question sometimes arises what "unproblematic" behaviour would look like. Narratives of human attempts to understand fate and the will of the gods are seldom "problem free", and a wider range of descriptions, along with clearer signalling of point of view, would help in some of the passages in which "problematic" interpretations and behaviour are discussed.

A note on a couple of factual slips: at p. 78, n. 37, *Germania* XL 3 is cited, with reference to two commentaries, as witness to the *templum* of the Germanic goddess Tanfana, when in fact this passage describes only the sanctuary of Nerthus. Tanfana is known only from *Ann.* I 51, 1. In discussion of the last extant chapter of the *Annals* (XVI 35) at p. 347, discussion turns on Thræsea Paetus' addressing his son. In fact, Paetus had no son; the three people present are Demetrius the cynic philosopher, Helvidius Priscus (married to Paetus' daughter Fannia) and a quaestor sent by Nero to order Paetus' death. Following the words *propius vocato quaestore* (XVI 35, 1) it seems that Paetus is addressing his last extant speech to the quaestor.

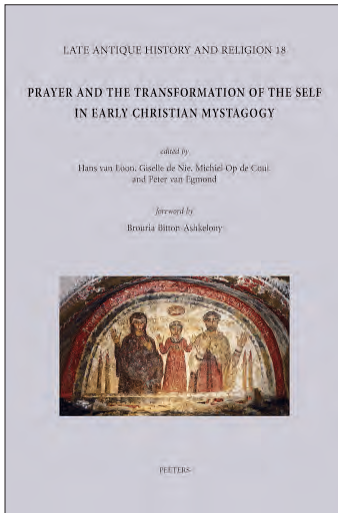
This book has succeeded in enriching the picture of what "Tacitean" historiography encompasses, and ensures that in future, readers of Tacitus' works will certainly

need to give serious consideration to Tacitus the *quindecimvir*. This is a major new assessment of Tacitus' work that should be given serious consideration by anyone working on the *Annales*, and which signals the wider value of reappraising the role of religion in Roman historiography.

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PRAYER AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SELF



VAN LOON, HANS, DE NIE, GISELLE, OP DE COUL, MICHEL, and VAN EGMOND, PETER (eds.) (2018). *Prayer and the Transformation of the Self in Early Christian Mystagogy*, Late Antique History and Religion, 18. Leuven: Peeters. 482 pp., 123,63€ [ISBN 978-9-0429-3611-9].

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PRAYER AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SELF IN EARLY CHRISTIAN MYSTAGOGY is a collection of articles of which most originally was presented at the *Second International Congress of the Netherlands Centre for Patristic Research* held in Utrecht in August 2014. Mystagogy has been a central topic at this centre for a longer period. The volume can thus be considered the fruits of an extensive research cooperation under the direction of Paul van Geest.

The volume is massive as it includes 21 articles, a foreword by Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony from Hebrew University, and indices of biblical references, names and writings, modern authors, and subjects. The volume is well-edited and has a beautiful dust jacket and an inviting lay-out. The contributions to the volume are divided into the following sections: foreword, introduction to the theme, beginnings, Eastern Fathers, Western Fathers, comparisons, and reception.

The foreword, as mentioned, is written by Brouria Bitton-Ashkelony from Hebrew University who is a leading scholar on the topic of prayer in Late Antique Christianity. Bitton-Ashkelony calls her contribution “Discerning *Mystagogia* and *Pedagogia*” and adds the title of the volume as subtitle. Connecting “*mystagogia*” and “*pedagogia*” she identifies mystagogy as a pedagogical process that is driven by prayer aiming at the transformation of the self. She develops this identification of mystagogy by quoting Hans van Loon’s definition “Mystagogy is regarded as a guided process of transformation, in which believers acquire an inner balance by a certain order of life, in that they become more receptive to God’s being and operation. Without losing touch with everyday life and the community of faith” (p. XII). Further, she includes Cathrine Bell’s performance theory to explain the transformative perspective of mystagogy: “In combining prayer, mystagogy and self-transformation, many of the ideas and practices discussed here appear in light of Cathrine Bell’s performance theory, according to which ritual is understood as ‘a set of activities that does not simply express cultural values or enact symbolic scripts, but actually effects changes in people’s perceptions and interpretations’” (p. XIII). Having explained these important definitions, she briefly presents the history of research on the topic and explains how the present volume challenges and advances the state of the art. The second part of Bitton-Ashkelony’s foreword presents the content of the individual contributions in the volume.

The second part of the volume called “introduction” includes two contributions: “*In oratione forma est desideriorum. The Transformation of the Self and the Practice of Prayer in Early Christian Mystagogy*” by Paul van Geest and Giselle de Nie, and “From Sacrificial Reciprocity to Mystagogy: Communal and Individual Initiation through Prayer” by Gerard Rouwhorst. Paul van Geest and Giselle de Nie’s article opens with important definitions of mystagogy as they have been developed by Paul van Geest and the centre he is leading. The article explains how early Christian prayers differs from Graeco-Roman and Jewish prayer because the aim of Christian prayers is to invoke and support a transformation process of the individual and to initiate the individual into the Christian community: “In the Early Church, the mystagogue’s objective was first and foremost to initiate a process intended to effect an existential transformation through rituals, the explanations of stories and images from biblical traditions, and catechesis. Furthermore, personal development in early Christian mystagogy went hand in hand with the introduction of the initiate into the community, and his or her taking on of a new identity, either in the group of beginners or in the group of advanced students” (pp. 5-6). The authors claim that the sermons and treatises of Late Antique Christian theologians should be considered first and foremost as mystagogical texts aiming at this initiation and transformation

of Christians, and not as doctrinal texts. The second part of van Geest and Nie's article is a second presentation of all the individual articles in the volume. This is a bit redundant of Bitton-Ashkelony's article. Gerard Rouwhorst writes about prayer in Greek and Roman religions and in biblical and post-biblical Judaism. Prayers in Greek and Roman religions are according to Rouwhorst defined by reciprocity: the prayers are 'given' to the gods in the hope that the praying persons will receive from the gods what they are praying for. Prayer in biblical Judaism is characterized by their connection to the sacrificial cult and thus by their institutionalization. This institutionalization of prayers was continued and strengthened in post-biblical Judaism which had the consequence that prayers tended to have a fixed structure and content. The institutionalizing of prayers was continued in Christianity, but Christianity also developed new forms of prayers which can best be characterized as "mystagogical" meaning that they were sometimes removed from the institutional settings aiming at transformation of the self of the individual Christian. Rouwhorst explores this development during the first centuries CE. Rouwhorst's article is thus very informative and a most helpful background for understanding the following articles that mainly focus on individual authors' understanding of prayer and mystagogy.

These first three contributions define very important definitions of prayer and mystagogy. They are the most valuable part of the volume because they advance the topic theoretically, present convincing definitions, and give an overall impression of the theme. Most of the following articles are also good and well-written, but they mostly present individual cases of prayer and mystagogy. More importantly they do not all relate to or discuss the definitions and theories presented in the first three contributions. In the following I will present all these articles and comment on them briefly.

PART 1: BEGINNINGS

Henk Bakker ("So on Earth': Liturgy from Heaven") presents the Book of Revelation read as a mystagogical text through which John as the mystagogue reveals the mysteries about the end of time to his readers. The article thus represents a more traditional understanding of "mysteries" as divine secrets to be revealed by seers through texts. The article interesting as it is in itself does not add much to the overall theme of the book where mystagogy is explained as related to prayer and initiation into the Christian community. This differs from when Benno Zuiddam ("Scripture as Initiator, Standard, and Prototype of Prayer in Clement of Rome's First Letter to the Corinthians") interprets Clement of Rome's First Letter to the Corinthians as an instruction in how to use prayer in relation to the reading of Scripture. According to Zuiddam Clement of Rome understands prayer as answers to the reading of Scripture

and thus as part of a mystagogical instruction in how to live as a Christian. Peter-Ben Smit (“Prayer and Participation in the Eucharist in the Work of Ignatius of Antioch”) writes in the opening paragraph of his article that “The Eucharist is obviously a liturgy of prayer, and, as an ongoing practice of communion, it aims at the performance of being Church, that is, of being in communion with God and with each other through being in Christ” (p. 81). This leads him to argue that the Eucharist is an “embodied prayer” and a “performance of identity”. The Eucharist as Ignatius understands it can thus be understood as a mystagogical process initiating the members of the community into their new identity as Christians. The article thus presents a fine example of how the editors’ definitions of prayer and mystagogy is used actively in the concrete interpretation.

PART 2: EASTERN FATHERS

The second part of the volume opens with Marcel Poorthuis article “Origen on Parables and Prayer: Tensions between the Esoteric and the Universal”. The article asks whether Origen’s idea of parables as secret codes, which can only be broken by a few already initiated, militates against the idea that mystagogy is a process of initiation of the uninitiated into the mysteries of the faith (p. 97). Poorthuis’ conclusion is that there is no contradiction in Origen at this point. According to Origen, the parables hide the truth for those unable to understand it but reveals it to those who are at a spiritual level that allows them to understand the truth. Thus, the parables are useful at all stages of the mystagogical process. The author finds a similar understanding of parables in Rabbinic literature.

Michel van Parys OSB (“Remembering God: Basil the Great’s Mystagogy of Prayer”) explains Basil’s understanding of mystagogical prayer employing four approaches to the theme: prayer without ceasing, prayer of the Psalms, remembering God and a description of Basil’s own attitude towards prayer. He reaches the conclusion that according to Basil “remembering God” is the main aimsof praying. Nienke Vos (“Gregory of Nyssa as a Mystagogue: Macrina’s Final Prayer in Context”) provides a fine example of how fruitful it can be to interpret a text, which usually is seen as belonging to a well-established genre, from a new perspective. In this case, Gregory of Nyssa’s *Life of Macrina* is normally interpreted as a hagiographical text – which it obviously is, but Nienke Vos interprets it as a mystagogical text. This means that the author focusses on the different forms of prayer in the text and their function. The text contains liturgical prayers, personal prayer, and prayer connected to healing. The text ends with a prayer, which Gregory puts into the mouth of Macrina. Through this prayer, Gregory teaches his audience how to pray and how to participate in the

mystagogical process which transforms body and soul. Macrina's life and death becomes an example of this process. Joseph Lucas ("Descending to Ascend: Prayer as Initiation into Divine Judgement in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*") takes the readers of the volume into the world of early Christian asceticism and its use of prayer. His idea is that the humiliation and self-condemnation of the ascetics was their way of preparing for the judgement. They descended in order to ascend. Prayer combined with the reading of Scripture was their way into this process. Henk van Vreeswijk ("John Chrysostom on Prayer, Song, Music, and Dance") shows that prayer and songs according to John Chrysostom were an integrated part of the mystagogical process, but that he at the same time excluded the use of music and dance. This seems to be the main argument of this article. Nathan Witkamp ("In the Posture of One Who Prays': The *Orans* Position in Theodore of Mopsuestia's Baptismal Rite") explores the involvement of the body in prayer and mystagogy especially as it is presented by Theodore of Mopsuestia. Reading Theodore's baptismal homilies he shows that the baptizant probably stood in the *orans* position during large parts of the baptismal ritual. The mystagogical aim of this was to teach the initiand that he through baptism was initiated into a community which relied on God's mercy and therefore the initiand had to learn the attitude of prayer and humility. This is a good example of how mystagogy is an embodied process. Hans van Loon's article ("Prayer and Fasting in Cyril of Alexandria's Festal Letters") reads Cyril of Alexandria's festal letters as mystagogical texts asking what they tell us about Cyril's view on prayer and fasting. Cyril does not seem to be a strict ascetic, but he recommends a light fasting abstaining from superfluous and excessive eating and drinking. This fast should be combined with prayer and thanksgiving for the salvation in Christ. Again, this article presents new insights in a specific corpus of text reading them through the lens of mystagogy.

PART 3: WESTERN FATHERS

Metha Hokke ("The Concluding Prayers in Ambrose's *De institutione virginis* and *Exhortatio virginitatis*") analyses these two texts as sources for understanding Ambrose's considerations about virginity. Prayer plays a role in the texts, but Hokke does not manage to relate Ambrose's texts directly to the theme of this volume. Paul van Geest ["*Ergo sic time Dominum, ut speres in misericordia eius*' (En. in ps. 146.20): Augustine on the Relationship between the Fear of God and Personal Prayer"] asks whether Augustine finds a relation between the fear of God and prayer. At the basis of reading of the *Confessions*, *Epistula 130*, and *Enarrationes in Psalmos* he reaches the conclusion that Augustine considers the fear of God to be that which encourages the Christians to enter the first stage of the mystagogical process. Subsequently

Augustine downplays the role of fear and combines it with hope which becomes the leading motive in the mystagogical process. Paula Rose (“*Spiritui requies adquirenda est: Augustine and the Prayer for the Deceased*”) also writes about Augustine’s use and understanding of prayer. Her point of departure is Augustine’s attitude towards the prayer for the deceased. Paulinus of Nola asked Augustine about his view on the tradition of burying the dead close to the saints (*ad sanctos*). This leads Augustine to reflect on the most appropriate attitude towards the deceased. His considerations lead him to prefer a more spiritual care for the deceased through prayer instead of the traditional burials *ad sanctos* and celebrations at the graves. The author of this contribution sees this as a “mystagogical turn” from outward rituals to inward spiritual contemplation of the fate of the deceased (p. 278). This conclusion is most likely correct, but it seems to go against another trend in the volume to emphasize the “embodied” nature of the mystagogical process. Laela Zwollo’s article (“Prayer, Desire, and the Image of God: Augustine’s Longing for God in His ‘Prayer to the Holy Trinity’”) is the third article on Augustine. Augustine is certainly important for the Western tradition, but in this volume, he almost seems to be *the* Western tradition. Zwollo analyses Augustine’s “Prayer to the Trinity” at the end of *De trinitate*. In this treatise Augustine understands human beings as the image of the Trinity. In his prayer Augustine asks God to improve the image of the Trinity within him. Augustine thus shows that even in his maybe most speculative theological treatise he is considering himself as being included in a mystagogical process that step by step leads him towards God.

PART 4: COMPARISONS

Andrew Louth (“The Lord’s Prayer as Mystagogy from Origen to Maximus”) compares Origen’s, Gregory of Nyssa’s and Maximus Confessor’s interpretations of the Lord’s Prayer as mystagogical practice. He shows that the role and interpretation of the Lord’s Prayer changed according to changes in catechetical practice provoked by the shifting political and social status of Christianity. Willemien Otten (“West and East: Prayer and Cosmos in Augustine and Maximus Confessor”) compares Augustine and Maximus Confessor in order to see if their cosmology includes a mystagogical potential. The idea seems to be that a Platonic theologically loaded cosmology could provide a pathway for a mystagogical process towards the divine. Otten finds that even if Augustine represents a shift from cosmology to Christology both his and Maximus’ theology provides mystagogical potential. Michael Bakker (“The Mystagogical Psychology of the Greek Fathers and Prayer: A Diachronic Study”) provides a very technical but at the same time highly interesting analysis of which “part” of human beings that is active in praying: is it the heart or is it the nous? Bakker compares

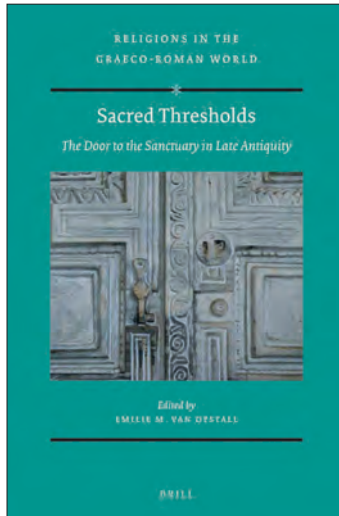
authors from the entire Greek Patristic tradition from the first to the twentieth century – thus using the Greek’s definition of “patristics”. The three papers in part four of the volume is thus quite different having only the comparative element in common.

PART 5: RECEPTION

The volume concludes with two articles placed under the heading “reception” of which Giselle de Nie’s paper “Prayer Images as Transformers in Gregory of Tours: Desert and Relic Cult Traditions” is the first. De Nie begins by asking the question how people can pray to an invisible God. She continues by showing how the monastic tradition most often handled this situation by creating mental images while praying. Only in the Evagrian tradition such mental images were excluded. Later on in the Western tradition as evidenced by Gregory of Tours monks began to pray to saints and to the relics of them. The prayer images thus changed character and became more and more physical. From the reviewer’s point of view this enlightening article should have been placed in section three on the Western Fathers. This would of course have left Mary Carruther’s article “‘The Desert’, Sensory Delight, and Prayer in the Augustinian Renewal of the Twelfth Century” alone in the reception section. However, Carruther’s article could easily have been put in the Western Fathers section as well, since it deals with how the Latin rhetorical tradition, which Augustine’s writings are used as illustrations of, is received in the 12th cent. Augustinian revival in Western monasticism. The author convincingly shows how this rhetorical tradition is central to prayer praxis in Augustin as well as in the 12th cent. Western monasticism.

This volume is a rich collection of articles that all discusses mystagogy and prayer in one way or another. The volume sets new standards and a new agenda for studying prayer and mystagogy in Early Christianity. One of the strengths of the volume is that it combines articles that provide theoretical considerations about its theme, gives an overview over the source material and the historical developments of the theme with contributions that provide detailed analysis of specific authors and texts. In most cases these specialized articles relate to the theme and the general considerations. In a few cases, this is not clearly the case. However, this is the nature of collected volumes stemming from conferences and it does not in any way disturb the overall impression of the volume being solid, coherent, and well-edited.

SACRED THRESHOLDS



VAN OPSTALL, EMILIE M. (ed.) (2018). *Sacred Thresholds. The Door to the Sanctuary in Late Antiquity*. Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, 185. Leiden and Boston: Brill. 376 pp., 252,00€ [ISBN 978-9-0043-6859-0].

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THIS BOOK PUBLISHES THE PAPERS GIVEN AT A CONFERENCE ORGANIZED in 2015 by S. de Blaauw and Emilie Van Opstall at the Vrije University in Amsterdam, which gathered specialists from different fields: archaeology, history, art history, theology, Classics and Byzantine studies. The book is however edited by Emilie M. Van Opstall. All of the articles are written in English, but their authors come from different scholarly cultures and countries: Italy, Holland, France, Hungary, Finland, Great Britain. They were at the time of publication at different stages in their career from postdoctoral positions to emeriti. Most of them are classicists, some are art historians or historians. The book contains 50 figures: color and b/w photographs and floor plans to help readers visualize space or details. The volume is carefully edited, and the editor connects the different articles in footnotes. Each article has a separate bibliography.

The book is focused on doors and all of the articles but one study thresholds as a place of transition and focus on liminality. The subtitle of the book limits the topic to a period in time and a type of doors: *The door to the sanctuary in Late Antiquity*. This is slightly misleading: some of the articles cover another period of time. The chronological span of the book extends from the 7th cent. BCE to the 8th cent. CE. Sanctuary is used either in a “broad sense for a pagan sacred place of cult, as well as in the narrow sense for the Christian inner sanctuary” (p. 3). Most of the articles deal with Christian buildings and Late antique or early Byzantine sources, but one is concerned by Neoplatonic philosophers and two by ancient Greek buildings. Geographically the book is mostly centered on the Eastern Mediterranean, but two articles deal with Rome and one studies Nola and Merovingian Gaul.

The introduction by E. Van Opstall details the theoretical frame which centers on the notion of liminality and calls on the “spatial turn” in the Humanities and the field of emotions and cognitive psychology. She then explains how the book is organized in four sections of different sizes: 1) experiencing sacred thresholds, 2) Symbolism and Allegory of Sanctuary doors, 3) messages in stone and 4) the presence of the divine.

The first section has the following articles:

1. Emilie M. van Opstall, On the Threshold: Paul the Silentiary’s *Ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia*.
2. Juliette Day, Entering the Baptistry: Spatial, Identity and Salvific Transitions in Fourth- and Fifth-Century Baptismal Liturgies.
3. Christian Boudignon, From Taboo to Icon: The Entrance to and the Exit from the Church in the First Three Greek Liturgical Commentaries (ca 500-730 CE).
4. Ildikó Csepregi, *Bonus Intro, Melior Exi!* ‘Inside’ and ‘Outside’ at Greek Incubation Sanctuaries.

The second section, Symbolism and Allegory of Sanctuary doors, has three articles:

5. Lucia M. Tissi, Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and *Adyta* in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers.
6. Sible L. de Blaauw, The Paradise of Saint Peter’s.
7. Roald Dijkstra, Imagining the Entrance to the Afterlife: Peter as the Gatekeeper of Heaven in Early Christianity.

The third section, “messages in stone”, deals with inscriptions around doors, has also three articles:

8. Evelien J. J. Roels, *The Queen of Inscriptions Contextualised: The Presence of Civic Inscriptions in the *pronaos* of Ancient Temples in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor (Fourth Century BCE-Second Century CE)*.
9. Gianfranco Agosti, *Verses De Limine and In Limine: Displaying Greek *paideia* at the Entrance of Early Christian Churches*.
10. Gaëlle Herbert de la Portbarré-Viard, *The Door to the Sanctuary from Paulinus of Nola to Gregory of Tours: Enduring Characteristics and Evolutions from the Theodosian to the Merovingian Period*.

The last section, “the presence of the divine”, has two:

11. Christina G. Williamson, *Filters of Light: Greek Temple Doors as Portals of Epiphany*.
12. Brooke Shilling, *The Other Door to the Sanctuary: The Apse and Divine Entry in the Early Byzantine Church*.

In the first article, E. Van Opstall studies Paul the silentary description of the Hagia Sophia, which takes the visitor on a virtual sensory tour of the 6th cent. cathedral. The article pays special attention to the different doors, some of which are no longer visible. The article is presented as a case study on the different functions of doors and a study of continuities with the pagan past.

In her article, “Entering the Baptistery: Spatial, Identity and Salvific Transitions in Fourth- and Fifth-Century Baptismal Liturgies”, Juliette Day studies baptismal liturgies at Milan and Jerusalem, revealed by liturgical commentaries: Ambrose of Milan, *De Sacramentis* and *De Mysteriis* and Cyril of Jerusalem *Mystagogical catecheses*. The author is aware of the discussion around the authenticity and dates of these treatises. She grants both treatises to Ambrose and dates them to the 390s, but grants the catecheses to John, bishop of Jerusalem after Cyril. There is no consensus on either attribution. Here again as in the first article, the emphasis is on experiencing the building and the rite taking place within, pointing to the different layout of the entrance door: one baptistery stands alone, the other is located within the cathedral complex. The role of the door in opening a new identity to the catechumens is emphasized in both cases. The mystagogical catecheses explain the experience afterwards and ask the newly baptized to rememorate their feelings. These were emotionally charged rituals.

Christian Boudignon starts with a citation of Ambrose of Milan but his focus is on Byzantine liturgical commentaries by Pseudo-Dionysius, Maximus the Confessor and Germanus of Constantinople. With this article, the book enters into the world of medieval Byzantine liturgy with its two entrances, the first one with the clergy and the second with the holy gifts, after the exit of catechumens, energumens and

penitents. The article is centered on the circulation of clerics and lay people and the different symbolic significance of their passing through doors. The article shows that although still mentioned, the dismissal of catechumens is no longer relevant in the 8th cent. and the main event is now the Great entrance, that is the procession with the holy gifts through the doors of the church and into the sanctuary.

With Ildikó Csepregi's article, *Bonus Intro, Melior Exi!* "Inside" and "Outside" at Greek Incubation Sanctuaries, we travel through time from Antiquity to Late antiquity. The article focuses on the ritual of incubation, which implies sleeping inside a healing sanctuary. The article presents how much the Christian incubation rituals owes to its Greek predecessor. Two case studies are studied: incubation at the Epidaurus temple of Asclepius and a visit to the church of saint Artemios in Constantinople, and other healing sanctuaries known to us by "thaumata", miracle stories. Doors give access to healing and the article focuses on how they are used to regulate entrance by visitors and exclude some (women in one instance).

The second section of the book deals with the symbolic meaning of doors.

With Lucia M. Tissi's article, *Sanctuary Doors, Vestibules and Adyta* in the Works of Neoplatonic Philosophers, we leave the world of Christian buildings to go back to temples. The article focuses on the intellectual and spiritual experience involved in passing through the doors of sanctuaries. The authors studied Neoplatonic philosophers who lived during Late antiquity. They use spaces and doors to describe the self-transformation process. Doors of knowledge have an initiatory significance; they allow the soul to travel away from ignorance into the *adyton* of the Good.

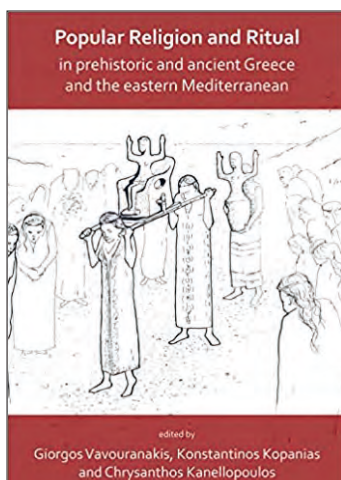
The two following articles lead us to Rome around the atrium of Saint Peter's church for Sible L. de Blaauw's article and around the figure of Peter keeper of keys for Roald Dijkstra's article. Both articles are in the section on symbolic meaning, because they both deal with entering into Paradise: physically for the church atrium was called the "Paradise" in the *Liber pontificalis ecclesiae romanae*, and imaginatively for Peter was depicted as gatekeeper to Paradise.

Part three gathers articles studying inscriptions around doorways. They are organized chronologically, one deals with a large selection of different civic inscriptions located in the pronaos of Asia Minor Hellenistic and Roman temples, from the 4th cent. BCE to the 2nd cent. CE, another with 4th and 5th cent. CE metrical inscriptions of Greek classicizing poetry or verses of psalms present on lintels, thresholds and mosaic floors of churches in Constantinople and Jerash, and the last article leads us to explore the symbolic role of church doors as a transition between human space and divine residence at Nola in the time of Paulinus, and to the more troubled and violent world of Gregory of Tours, where doors of sanctuaries could be forced.

The last section of the book, entitled “Divine presence” is the less convincing for the theme of the book. The first article of this section at least studies temple doors. We go back to ancient Greece in that article which focuses on door as “jewels of temple architecture” and objects of prestige, fit for cult images within the walls of the temple. Their opening created an epiphany of the divine in rituals. Although the article is very well written and convincing, it lacks some conceptual link with Late Antiquity and what became of such rituals. The use of curtains could have been invoked, or the presence of icons on iconostasis facing the doors of later Byzantine churches. The last article, by Brooke Shilling, although entitled “the other door to the sanctuary” is about apses in early Byzantine churches. It comments on different choices of images for the apse: Christ floating above the Eucharist celebrated on the altar or the Virgin Mary. With examples taken from churches in Cyprus, the article argues that the presence of the Theotokos in apses should be connected to liturgical poetry describing her as the ladder, the bridge, the gate of salvation, the “door of hallowed mystery”.

As usual with collected essays, it is very difficult to keep one thematic line and explore it in different regions or religious cultures. The selection reflects the limits of a conference. For a book on Late antiquity expanding into the 7th-8th cent. and mainly centered on the Eastern part of the Mediterranean, one would wish to have an article on the door of the Dome of the Rock or the Mosque in Damascus. The link between antiquity and the Byzantine period is very clearly spelled out in the article on incubation practices, less so in the other articles starting in the Antique world. These reservations aside, this is an extremely interesting collection of essays that can appeal to art historians, philologists and scholars in religious studies. It fulfills its promise to consider doors and thresholds from different points of view, revealing one important aspect in the dynamics of sacred spaces from ancient Greek temples to early Byzantine churches.

POPULAR RELIGION AND RITUAL



VAVOURANAKIS, GIORGOS, KOPANIAS, KONSTANTINOS, and KANELLOPOULOS, CHRYSANTHOS (eds.) (2018). *Popular Religion and Ritual in Prehistoric and Ancient Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean*. Oxford: Archaeopress. 188 pp., 38,40€ [ISBN 978-1-7896-9045-3].

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NON VI È DUBBIO CHE PER GLI STUDIOSI L'INDAGINE sui rituali religiosi associa alla capacità di suscitare il più grande interesse quella (non meno determinante) di provocare – direi inevitabilmente – una riflessione metodologica a tutto campo e la ridefinizione del set “domande/risposte” che finisce per mettere in gioco problemi di portata molto più ampia dei singoli casi studio. Come giustamente riconosce Giorgos Vavouranakis nella premessa del volume (*Popular religion and ritual: introductory notes*, vii-xiii), di cui è uno dei tre curatori, con K. Kopanias e Ch. Kanellopoulos, non è mancata nel passato e anche in studi recenti una certa disinvoltura nell'attribuire (o nel negare) un significato culturale a testimonianze la cui funzione non sarebbe altrimenti chiara. È noto a tutti il ruolo di *passe-partout* interpretativo sovente attribuito al fattore “religioso” (qualunque cosa si voglia intendere con questa parola). Da qui la difficoltà di procedere nell'analisi dei documenti categorizzati sotto la rubrica del “re-

ligioso” e del “rituale”: lo studio del “religioso” chiede difatti agli archeologi “to reach into the deep structural levels of past cultures and understand some of the principles that underlie their mechanics” (p. vii). Ma questo può rivelarsi un obiettivo difficile, soprattutto nel passaggio dallo studio del contesto archeologico all’interpretazione della macchina simbolica che dà senso alla documentazione: è quello che l’approccio di Colin Renfrew ha provato a focalizzare relativamente agli indicatori archeologici dell’attività culturale (già a partire da *The Archaeology of Cult. The Sanctuary at Phylakopi*, London 1985). Insomma, la grande questione su cui l’indagine archeologica (ma non solo) deve riflettere riguarda appunto l’identificazione corretta della dimensione ideologica e dei suoi epifenomeni sociali e psicologici. *Vaste programme*, è il caso di dire. Se in parte si può apprezzare la qualità attuale della ricerca dedicata alle grandi strutture santuariali e ai rapporti tra i rituali e le forme di legittimazione del potere, manca ancora una riflessione altrettanto marcata sulle credenze praticate nei rituali da grandi gruppi in genere appartenenti alle classi più basse. Questa la ragione principale che ha portato alla pubblicazione di un volume ampiamente articolato, con l’obiettivo di contribuire all’analisi di quello che è senz’altro l’aspetto più precario ma al tempo stesso più cruciale, ossia la dimensione esperienziale dei culti e delle credenze (la *religion vécue*). Il *fil rouge* che attraversa i contributi qui raccolti condividono l’idea di base, che risale alla sociologia di H. Hubert e M. Mauss, che religione e rituale hanno a che fare con l’*ethos* collettivo e con i valori che regolano il funzionamento della società, grazie al loro meccanismo di “performative stability”.

Il piano dell’opera presenta un’articolazione spaziale e temporale omogenea e coerente. I primi sei contributi sono dedicati a Creta minoica e alla prima fase del secondo millennio. Apre lo stesso Giorgos Vavouranakis (*Ritual, multitude and social structure in Minoan Crete*, pp. 1-10), che si concentra sul rituale funerario a Creta all’inizio del secondo millennio a.C., all’epoca della fondazione dei primi palazzi: l’A. sostiene la tesi di una diffusione di riti popolari in tutta l’isola, indizio di una tendenza allo sviluppo sociale orizzontale, cui si contrapporrebbe la reazione elitaria che si manifesterebbe invece nei centri palaziali. A partire dallo studio di materiali ceramici funerari dell’area di Festo, Ilaria Caloi (*What relationship with the First palace of Phaistos? The funerary complexes of Kamilari and Ayia Triada in the Protopalatial period*, pp. 11-18) mette alla prova l’ipotesi di Vavouranakis: questi segni di attività rituale nei cimiteri in questo periodo potrebbero essere letti come ritualità popolare in opposizione alla nascita del palazzo a Festo. Come nota tuttavia l’A., l’adozione di set cerimoniali come quelli usati a Festo potrebbe segnalare “a social strategy of imitation and emulation of ritual performances based on drink consumption” (p. 16), a riprova del processo d’integrazione di questa comunità nell’ambito del sistema palaziale di Festo.

Per quanto riguarda i santuari montani diffusi a Creta e studiati nelle celebri ricerche ancora oggi fondamentali di M.P. Nilsson, Matthew Haysom (*Mass and elite in Minoan peak sanctuaries*, pp. 19-28) si propone di sfumare le due posizioni dominanti su questa tipologia santuariale: come espressione di culti popolari o, viceversa, manifestazioni privilegiate del ruolo dominante delle élites. L'elemento guida nella sua analisi si basa sulla constatazione della distanza dai palazzi e la loro definizione come spazi aperti al confronto e alla mediazione ("forums of competition") tra élite e gruppi esterni al palazzo: giustamente l'A. osserva che la competizione è "a form of dialogue" (p. 25), ciò che consente di superare le dicotomie tradizionali e avvicinarsi forse più alle effettive dinamiche all'opera.

Focalizza l'attenzione sulle c.d. "inverted cups" Santo Privitera (*Inverting vases in Bronze Age Crete: Where? When? Why?* pp. 29-37). Piuttosto che cercare una spiegazione unica, Privitera sottolinea la diffusione di questa tipologia ceramica dallo spazio funerario a quello domestico, suggerendo la connessione di queste coppe con i rituali rivolti agli antenati della casa, in grado di ribadire e rafforzare i legami intergenerazionali. Si tratta verosimilmente di "rituals centred upon food manipulation and/or drinking ceremonies, which were aimed at commemorating the dead as ancestors". Tuttavia, l'insieme delle testimonianze segnala la tendenza a slittare dallo spazio strettamente domestico verso un ambito sempre più chiaramente comunitario. Il concetto di comunità può in effetti, anche a mio avviso, aiutare a leggere in termini più ampi la tensione tra "popolare" ed "élite", come sembra chiaro anche nelle pagine di Lefteris Platon (*A Minoan "chytros"? Unexpected archaeological evidence for the possible pre-historic origin of an ancient Greek ceremonial practice*, pp. 39-46). Si tratta della scoperta di una grande pentola per la cottura di cereali a Zakros, dotata di una forma che mostra elementi del tripode e del kernos: si tratterebbe di una "pentola rituale" che Platon legge come un antenato cretese degli *Anthesteria*, la notissima festa dionisiaca di inizio anno ben documentata ad Atene (e nel mondo ionico), dove l'ultimo giorno della festa prendeva appunto il nome di *Chytroi*, "Pentole", in ricordo dei cereali lessati in questi recipienti d'argilla dopo il diluvio (*panspermia*). Il ritrovamento nell'area di altri frammenti riconducibili alla stessa tipologia d'uso, nonché i frammenti di recipiente per il vino, sembrano rafforzare la proposta interpretativa: se corretta, sembra possibile sostenere il carattere popolare e non palaziale del rituale legato al *chytros* in questione, in linea con il carattere di una festa connessa alla purificazione simbolica e all'invocazione della fertilità della terra. In dialogo con l'analisi di Platon, si veda d'altronde anche il contributo di Yannis Chairatakis (*infra*), che in un'altra isola, Salamina, traccia possibili legami tra la pratica defissoria e l'uso dei *chytroi* nelle feste *Anthesteria*. Ma ci troviamo già nel IV secolo, all'altro estremo dell'arco temporale presente nel volume.

Ultimo contributo di questa ricca sezione minoica è quello di Annette Højen Sørensen, Walter L. Friedrich e Kirsten Molly Søholm (*Metamorphoses and hybridity in the wall-paintings at Akrotiri, Thera*, pp. 47-54): gli autori presentano una lettura alternativa dei celebri dipinti murali trovati ad Akrotiri, sull'isola di Tera: piuttosto che manifestazioni di arte ed emanazione dell'ideologia dell'élite palaziale, gli autori sostengono che la tematica iconografica si ispira ai principi del mutamento e dell'ibridismo, per esempio i motivi a spirale, le scene legate al passaggio ciclico del tempo e quelle che associa la figura umana alle piante e gli animali. Il fatto che gli atti rituali siano illustrati negli affreschi può collegarsi alla rappresentazione di un evento annuale ripetuto ogni anno. Il principio di fondo che sembra ispirare le immagini sembra quello metamorfico del rinnovamento, che in periodi successivi e meglio documentati caratterizza appunto feste e riti.

Segue la sezione che si occupa della seconda metà del II millennio e guarda alla società palaziale micenea. Hélène Whittaker (*Approaches to popular religion in Late Bronze Age Greece*, pp. 55-61) pone in discussione l'approccio alla religione micenea, basato su una dicotomia tra pratiche d'élite di ispirazione minoica e pratiche popolari che invece rinviano al contesto elladico locale. La disamina della documentazione disponibile suggerisce alla studiosa di distinguere tra "formal and informal rites". I primi erano cerimonie ufficiali, a cui partecipavano grandi gruppi di persone sia di élite che non di élite. I secondi sarebbero stati riservati alla sfera del privato o della famiglia e legati alle attività domestiche o alle usanze funerarie. Resta la problematicità di individuare un livello chiaramente associabile alla categoria di "popular religion", anche se Whittaker sottolinea opportunamente che lo scavo archeologico può creare sotto questo aspetto una sorta di distorsione interpretativa, dal momento che sono le élite ad esprimere i materiali più durevoli e significativi, proprio per la loro capacità economica. Al contrario i gruppi non dominanti e quindi meno dotati di risorse hanno fatto ricorso a oggetti meno "permanenti" ("relative impermanence") e con ciò hanno determinato una minore visibilità futura. In accordo con la proposta di H. Whittaker, Nagia Polychronakou Sgouritsa (*The Mycenaean figurines revisited*, pp. 63-71) si concentra sulle figurine micenee provenienti da vari siti dell'Attica, di Egina e di Ceo. Pur partendo dalla considerazione che "our understanding of the use and significance of Mycenaean figurines remains elusive", l'A. ritiene che, ad esempio, i materiali a figura tripla, ritrovati principalmente nelle tombe e in certi casi in sepolture di bambini, possono essere spiegate come rappresentazione di figure divine collettive, come le Parche, le Grazie e le Ore, anche se resta aperta la questione del loro carattere popolare, o meglio resta prudente ipotizzare che negli stessi materiali possano coabitare in entrambe le dimensioni ufficiale e popolare.

Il contributo di Eleni Salavoura (*Mount Lykaion (Arkadia) and Mount Oros (Aegina): two cases of Late Bronze Age sacred "high places"*, pp. 73-83) si concentra sulle tracce santuariali in due zone montane, *Lykaion* in Arcadia e *Oros* in Egina, e riprende l'argomento dei santuari montani già trattato per l'area minoica da Matthew Haysom (*supra*). Ma a differenza di quell'area, i santuari montani micenei attendono ancora di essere studiati sistematicamente: è poco chiaro, ad esempio, se le attività rituali che vi avevano luogo rafforzavano i legami con un'autorità centralizzata, oltre a soddisfare le esigenze di comunità più locali. Inoltre, sembra opportuno rilevare i fenomeni di continuità che vedono manifestazioni di culto (rituali collegati al consumo di cibo e bevande) negli stessi luoghi anche in età successiva e fino a poco tempo fa ("A kind of local feast, with on-site food consumption takes place still today on Lykaion, as well as on Oros"). Per queste ragioni l'A. sostiene (80) che tali luoghi di culto, come quelli di *Oros* e *Lykaion*, possono essere considerati "a more spontaneous and pure expression of popular religion", probabilmente finalizzata al controllo della natura e del clima, e che in generale sarebbe meglio scorgere nella loro attività un ruolo complementare a quello dei centri di potere.

La transizione alla prima età del ferro è esaminata nel contributo di Theodore C. Eliopoulos (*The "Minoan Goddess with Upraised Arms" today*, pp. 85-95): la sua indagine si basa anche sulla comparazione con certe pratiche religiose popolari cristiane (le litanie), e vede nelle cosiddette "dee minoiche con le braccia alzate" di questo periodo la versione 'popolare' di precedenti pratiche rituali proprie dei palazzi della tarda età del bronzo. In questa direzione si orienta lo studioso sulla base dei nuovi dati di scavo: questo tipo di reperti sarebbe stato al centro dell'organizzazione dei santuari cretesi nelle Dark Ages. La constatazione che questi oggetti abbiano proliferato negli insediamenti periferici proprio nel momento della caduta dell'amministrazione centrale palaziale sembra richiedere "a sociological explanation". Anche se occorre essere cauti riguardo ad una loro interpretazione in termini di "popular religious elements", si deve però osservare il concreto sviluppo religioso nel XII secolo a.C., che forse può essere considerato il precursore della struttura della religione greca del periodo storico.

I santuari ciprioti di età arcaica studiati da Anastasia Leriou (*Re-positioning "rural" sanctuaries within the Cypro-Archaic societies: some considerations*, pp. 97-104) mostrano, a giudizio della stessa studiosa, un'omogeneità delle pratiche rituali che non permette di distinguere tra gruppi sociali elitari e non elitari, anche se questa valutazione richiede una migliore conoscenza delle attività rituali che si svolgevano all'interno di queste aree di culto. Il dato importante è una continuità rituale a partire dalla tarda età del bronzo, che avrebbe prodotto una identità culturale condivisa, a dispetto della frammentazione politica che, com'è noto, l'isola: questa situazione avreb-

be poi alimentato la resistenza culturale alle successive occupazioni di Cipro da parte degli Assiri, degli Egiziani e dei Persiani. Sul piano poi della riflessione metodologica, l'A. evidenzia quanto sia difficile affermare la netta distinzione tra "the so-called 'official' religious beliefs and cultural practices and their popular/folk counterparts" (102): anche secondo me, non può che far sempre bene alla ricerca ricordare che si tratta di una distinzione "tecnica" (*etic*) e non certo *emic*.

A chiusura di questa sezione dedicata all'area del Mediterraneo orientale, Valia Papanastasopoulou (*Popular religion in ancient Judah during the 8th and 7th centuries BC. The case of the female pillar figurines*, pp. 105-111) si occupa del culto della dea Asherah e delle "female pillar figurines" legate alla fertilità e forse alla protezione dei neonati, diffuse tra VIII e VII secolo a.C. nel regno di Giuda. La lettura di questa tipologia rituale consente alla studiosa di osservare all'opera una forma di resistenza al monoteismo ufficiale dello stato monarchico di Giuda, che può forse leggersi in termini di contrapposizione élite/popolo. Anche se non si trovano nella Bibbia riferimenti negativi alle "female pillar figurines", tuttavia è corretto supporre che non siano state accettate dallo Yahwismo ufficiale, e che erano usate solo dai gruppi sociali che eseguivano riti della "popular religion". Nel periodo post-esilico, questi oggetti risultano completamente assenti: si tratta di un'indicazione interessante a riprova dei drammatici cambiamenti religiosi e sociali determinati dall'esilio e dal ritorno in Palestina e dell'eliminazione di elementi idolatrici, come le immagini e le statuette, ormai incompatibili con una forma pura di monoteismo.

I temi dei rimanenti sei contributi riguardano l'antica Grecia. Apre quest'ultima sezione Electra Apostola (*Representations of the demon-god Bes in Rhodes and Samos during the 7th and 6th centuries BC and their influence on popular religious beliefs: Bes and the "fat-bellied demons"*, pp. 113-124), che prende in considerazione le rappresentazioni di Bes, un "demon god" orientale, presente nel Dodecanneso, specialmente a Rodi e Samo. Secondo l'A. la diffusione avrebbe avuto origine da Rodi: le statuette di Bes devono la loro fortuna ai poteri magici del dio, tanto che Bes sembra essere stato ampiamente adottato nelle pratiche rituali popolari, innanzitutto per il suo ruolo apotropaico e la capacità di proteggere le madri e i loro bambini. Sotto questo aspetto, la loro presenza in tombe di madri e bambini le associa alla sfera della fertilità piuttosto che a quella della morte. Non c'è allora da stupirsi dell'impatto di Bes sulle "popular religious beliefs" e della sua capacità di introdurre elementi di novità sulle credenze apotropaiche e sugli aspetti courotrofici, incorporati infine nel "local subtext of popular religious ideology" (p. 122).

Due contributi in particolare riguardano il ricco repertorio di incantesimi e maledizioni proveniente da Atene e dintorni. Jessica L. Lamont and Georgia Boundou-raki (*Of curses and cults: public and private ritual in Classical Xypete*, pp. 125-135)

procedono all'esame di una serie di tavolette di maledizione ritrovate ad Atene, sotto la moderna via *Piraios*, un'area che probabilmente apparteneva all'antico demo di *Xypete*, da localizzare a sud-est dell'antica Atene, tra il santuario di Eracle al Pireo e il Falero. La loro analisi dei riti di legatura e maledizione consente di illuminare da un'angolazione particolare il mondo del culto privato e quindi popolare e di altre attività rituali, che coesistevano accanto alle cerimonie ufficiali della città-stato: ne emerge la natura di "dynamic ritual processes" di questi riti di legatura e degli *speech acts* che li completavano rendendoli attivi. Va sottolineato, a mio avviso, che proprio le tavolette defissorie sono un'occasione privilegiata per ribadire la difficoltà di distinguere in modo netto tra culto popolare e culto ufficiale e pubblico, come emerge dallo studio delle defissioni *iudiciariae* e da quelle poche testimonianze di uso politico della *defixio* (per esempio, quella ritrovata nella necropoli infantile del Ceramico e che ha per destinatario "Andocide ermocopida" ([.]νδοκδης ἐρμκο[πιδης], su cui rinvio a F. Costabile, in *Minima epigraphica et papyrologica* VII/VIII, 9/10, 2004/2005). Restano valide le osservazioni delle due studiose sul carattere "impuro" di queste pratiche che "set this rite apart from those found in the realm of civic religion" (p. 134). Il contesto domestico è in effetti più chiaro a Salamina, come sembra mostrare una coppa iscritta di Salamina, risalente al IV secolo a.C., qui studiata da Yiannis Chairetakis (*Cursing rituals as part of household cult: a fourth century BC inscribed bowl from Salamis*, pp. 137-142), e già ricordata *supra* a proposito del contributo di L. Platon (*A Minoan "chytros"? ...*). L'analisi dei resti dell'iscrizione suggerisce che questo oggetto era stato utilizzato per legare una famiglia ed era stato probabilmente collocato, in modo strategicamente funzionale, in un pozzo domestico a questo scopo. Anche Chairetakis collega questa coppa alle pratiche popolari di culto domestico nella più ampia area ateniese in età classica.

Maria G. Spathi (*Representations of masked figures: a comparative study and an interpretative approach to their cult-use and meaning*, pp. 143-155) e Socrates Koursoumis (*Detecting the cult of a border sanctuary on the Messenian slopes of Mount Taygetos*, pp. 157-164) concentrano l'attenzione su terrecotte trovate nelle grotte. M. Spathi esamina un gruppo di figurine per lo più maschili, e alcune femminili, con maschere sileniche, umane e animali provenienti da una grotta di Lechova, nell'area di Corinto, datate al periodo classico. I paralleli provenienti da altri siti suggeriscono che queste statuette sono state impiegate in riti di iniziazione associati a fasi di età e probabilmente alla trasformazione dei giovani in cittadini adulti. Il rituale può aver incluso musica e danze. La studiosa conclude che le esibizioni cerimoniali erano offerte ad un vasto pubblico ed costituivano quindi aspetti importanti della vita sociale. Vorrei osservare però che in genere questi rituali, tanto più in aree ad organizzazione poleica di età classica, erano regolamentate dalle

istituzioni politiche e difficilmente si può parlare di religiosità popolare, se non nel senso più ampio di cerimonia a partecipazione collettiva.

Dal canto suo Socrate Koursoumis esamina un gruppo di diciassette terrecotte classiche ed ellenistiche che raffigurano donne e che provengono da una grotta a Demiova, sul versante messenico del monte Taigeto: la localizzazione suggerisce che “the cult was rural and popular”; la loro cronologia si estende dall’inizio del V secolo fino al III secolo a.C. Le terrecotte sembrano rinviare ad attività di culto extraurbane in onore di una divinità femminile, forse *Orthia*, la dea protettrice di Sparta e protettrice della natura, in grado di assicurare la nascita dei figli e il loro nutrimento, oppure di una divinità diversa ma influenzata da *Orthia*.

Chiude il volume Panos Valavanis (*Popular religion and the beginnings of the Olympic Games*, pp. 165-168), che si concentra sulle cerimonie religiose nella tradizione cristiana ortodossa greca finalizzate a contrastare le antiche Olimpiadi e le attività atletiche, incluso il nuoto, la corsa e persino il lancio del peso, il lancio di pietre e la lotta. L’A. ritiene che i giochi erano considerati modi di analizzare la volontà divina attraverso il successo in prove agonistiche: la gagliardia mostrata dal vincitore era infatti ritenuto un segnale divino e questo spiega l’ostilità cristiana. Sotto questo aspetto, almeno alle sue origini, i giochi panellenici possono essere considerati in una linea di continuità con le manifestazioni di religiosità popolare miranti a ottenere il favore divino per influenzare la natura a favore delle attività agricole e pastorali. In altre parole, le gare andrebbero considerate in primo luogo un’attività rituale, mirante al controllo della fertilità: non è un caso – sottolinea Valavanis – che le corse a piedi si svolgessero in diverse altre feste caratterizzate dalla dimensione della fertilità. Alla base del suo ragionamento, in linea con il quadro generale di questo volume, è che anche i rituali in santuari estremamente complessi, come quelli panellenici, hanno avuto almeno all’inizio il carattere di “simple expressions of popular faith and primeval religious rituals” (p. 165). Per l’A. le credenze popolari e le pratiche cultuali di età precedente continuerebbero ad esistere, “flowing like a rivulet next to the big river” e che tale sopravvivenza si spiega “because they are so powerful, being inextricably bound to people’s basic need to seek refuge in God for the protection of their life and wellbeing” (p. 167). Mi pare però opportuno sottolineare, quando si fa riferimento a un concetto così sfuggente e ambiguo come quello di “sopravvivenza”, che non ci sono “sopravvivenze” intese come residui oggettivi, perché ogni elemento culturale assume sempre una nuova funzione nel nuovo contesto d’uso. È bene perciò parlare di rielaborazioni e adeguamenti ad un nuovo sistema e a nuovi rapporti sociali, cioè a nuove forme di esistenza: tutto ciò avviene attraverso un processo inesauribile di “ri-traduzione” dei sistemi simbolici e dei codici mediante cui essi agiscono.

Uno sguardo d'insieme al volume permette di notare senz'altro alcuni elementi interessanti. In primo luogo, la partecipazione di così tanti specialisti a questo volume, pur consentendo di esaminare singoli temi ad un livello approfondito, non pretende tuttavia di raggiungere una posizione necessariamente o forzatamente unitaria sulla categoria di 'religione popolare' e sui rituali: sicuramente un bene. Ma questo non vuol dire che non emergano alcuni fili comuni che rappresentano forse l'esito più interessante di questo volume. Nel complesso, pur senza rinunciare al suo uso, gli autori qui riuniti riescono a mettere in luce, pur con differenti sensibilità, i limiti e forse anche le "trappole" della categoria di "religione popolare". Al tempo stesso, è raggiunta un'unità metodologica più ampia attraverso uno sguardo complesso e articolato sulla categoria del "popolare" applicata al rituale religioso, che consente di ribadire e precisare meglio la funzione sociale di queste pratiche: cioè una migliore "social connectivity" e la promozione di una coesione sociale su larga scala. Un altro aspetto che emerge, almeno in alcuni contributi, è la "coabitazione" tra livelli diversi del culto, che consente di valutare meglio e in modo più storicamente sfumato l'interazione tra livelli alti e bassi, un aspetto che si intreccia a sua volta con la dialettica "continuità/discontinuità", alla base di ogni processo storico.

Resta appunto da vedere in che modo sia possibile procedere in modo metodologicamente corretto al riconoscimento dell'elemento religioso nella documentazione archeologica, soprattutto in società non letterate. Sulla falsariga di quanto già osservato da Renfrew, le cerimonie a carattere collettive sembrano avere una visibilità maggiore della religiosità domestica, ma l'invito alla cautela deve restare determinante, come mi sembra emergere chiaramente dalla lettura dei contributi. Si può infine, credo, osservare che più la documentazione si va facendo complessa (nonché fondata sulla disponibilità di testimonianze scritte), maggiore è la difficoltà di riconoscere autonomia concettuale alla categoria di "popular religion", ma anche questo d'altra parte emerge in più punti dei testi qui riuniti. Ai suoi autori, e agli organizzatori, va l'apprezzamento per il contributo offerto, la cui utilità è indubbia per gli studiosi anche al di là dei settori specialistici, nonché per la cura con cui i testi sono presentati al lettore.

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ARYS 19 - 2021



ANCIENT RELIGION
IN RURAL SETTLEMENTS

RITUALS AND HABITUS IN THE
ANCIENT WORLD. AN INTRODUCTION
Elisabeth Begemann, Anna-Katharina
Rieger, Jörg Rüpke, Wolfgang Spicker-
mann & Katharina Waldner

ESTABLISHING SELF-WORLD
RELATIONS IN SOCIO-RELIGIOUS
PRACTICES. LOOKING AT ROMAN
RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATION
Jörg Rüpke

THE SPECTRUM OF RELIGIOUSNESS,
OR WHAT MAKES AN OBJECT
RELIGIOUS. HABITS, PATTERNED
EVIDENCE AND RELIGIOUS
MEANINGS OF IMAGE-OBJECTS IN
POMPEII
Anna-Katharina Rieger

CHILDREN'S SUPPLICATION
IN CLASSICAL ATHENS.
RELIGIOUS SKILLS, SURVIVAL
AND INFERIORITY
Fayah Haussker

THE RHYTHM OF THE GODS' VOICE.
THE SUGGESTION OF DIVINE
PRESENCE THROUGH PROSODY
Ronald Blankenborg

HOW TO WRITE RELIGIOUS
RITUAL INTO THEATRE.
GÉRARD GENETTE'S *PALIMPSESTS*
APPLIED IN PLAUTUS' *RUDENS*
AND SIMONE WEIL'S *VENISE SAUVÉE*
Blaž Ploj & Thomas Sojer

THE MANY MARTINS OF VENANTIUS
FORTUNATUS. VENANTIUS
FORTUNATUS' MARTIN-POEMS AS
INSTANCES OF INDIVIDUAL
APPROPRIATION AND LITERARY
OFFERS OF RITUAL-LIKE EXPERIENCE
Enno Friedrich & Ursula Gärtner.

THE THESEAN RITUAL LANDSCAPE.
APPROPRIATION, IDENTITY
AND ATHENIAN COLLECTIVE
MEMORIES
Ben S. Cassell

RURAL RITES IN OVID'S *FASTI*
Maria Hirt

MAGISCHER KRANKENHEILER UND
SOHN GOTTES. DIE JESUANISCHE
KRANKENHEILUNG ALS MAGISCHES
RITUAL UND DAS PHÄNOMEN DER
DE-RITUALISIERUNG IN DER
REDAKTIONELLEN ÜBERLIEFERUNG
DER EVANGELIEN
Annika Krahn

THE Νόσος OF DECLARING THAT
GODS DO NOT EXIST IN PLATO'S *LAWS*.
ISOLATED CASES OR GROUPS OF ἄθεοι?
Ramón Soneira Martínez

VARIA
RITUALISTIC NUDITY. DRESSING AND
UNDRESSING IN OVID'S *FASTI*
Tammy Di-Giusto