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# *Sparagmos* and *Omophagia* as Representations of Cultural Inversion in Dionysian Ritual and Myth

## THERESA AINSWORTH

No single Greek god even approaches Dionysus in the horror of his epithets, which bear witness to a savagery that is absolutely without mercy… He is called the "render of men", "the eater of raw flesh", "who delights in the sword and bloodshed". We hear not only of human sacrifice in his cult, but also of the ghastly ritual in which a man is torn to pieces. Where does this put us? Surely there can be no further doubt that this puts us into death's sphere. The terrors of destruction, which make all of life tremble, belong also, as horrible desire, to the kingdom of Dionysus. The monster whose supernatural duality speaks to us from the mask has one side of his nature turned toward eternal night.[1]

The figure of Dionysus occupied an ambiguous space in the imagination of the ancient Greeks by virtue of the binaries he represented. He challenged perceptions of the reality he was created in: born twice, once of immortal parents and again of a mortal mother, he transcended both life and death, mortality and immorality. He was the great civilizer but also the destroyer of men; in bringing wine and the cultivation of the vine to the Greeks, he gifted them with one of the most important symbols of civilization, but also one of the most dangerous substances a man could overindulge in. He represented wilderness and fertility, destruction and plenty. He was changeable: benevolent and agreeable in one moment, vicious and grotesque in the next. It is no wonder that he was a god revered, respected, and feared by worshippers. The rituals of his cult reflected his status in myth as a transitional figure positioned on the threshold between societal binaries. The purpose of this paper is to explore these binaries that Dionysian myth and cult symbolized through the *sparagmos* (the tearing apart of a living creature) and the subsequent *omophagia* (eating of its raw flesh) that the Bacchic *orgia* participated in. First, the mythic and historical

representations of this two-stage practice will be discussed to assess the likelihood that it actually occurred, and whether or not the historicity of the event is necessary to warrant a continuation of the discussion. The opposition the act poses to the Promethean sacrificial paradigm will then be considered, assuming that the two-stage process of *sparagmos* and *omophagia* can be considered a "sacrifice" at all. Finally, a discussion of the anxieties the ritual elicited in defining binaries key for Greek cultural identity will be undertaken, including the raw verses the cooked, the wild verses the civilized and male verses female. The goal will be to further understand how the Dionysian *orgia* identified, challenged, and ultimately reinforced social, religious, and gender norms.[2]

The climax of Euripides' *Bacchae* and arguably one of the more gruesome moments in Athenian tragedy is when Agave, in a madness evoked as punishment by Dionysus for Thebes' neglect of worship, kills her own son in an act of *sparagmos* and implied cannibalism.[3] This was foreshadowed earlier in the play when a herald remarked that the women tore through the forest, ripping cattle apart through a feat of insanity and inhuman strength.[4] The idea that the mad procession of the Maenads included tactile, physical destruction of life provides a potent mental image for what the worship of Dionysus may have entailed. Many scholars have attempted to separate the mythological from the historical in Euripides' account of the maenadic procession, and it is useful to follow the thread of their findings. Blundell notes that various elements can likely be taken to represent historical elements

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[1] Walter Otto, *Dionysus: Myth and Cult.* (Indiana University Press: Bloomington, 1965), 113.

[2] There were many festivals and religious ceremonies dedicated to Dionysus. The rituals discussed in this work are primarily the frenzied *orgia* that is characterized by ecstatic dancing to the point of exhaustion, wilderness and interaction with wild animals, satyrs, and other symbolism representing a departure from the "civilized" bounds of society, and the *omophagia* and *sparagmos.* These are the Dionysian mysteries that are referred in this work when the "ritual" of Dionysus is referenced.

[3] Euripides, *Bacchae,* 1184: "This is a lucky catch! Come, share our feast."

[4] Euripides, *Bacchae,* 735.

of worship – their clothing in particular was likely similar. The use of *thyrsoi* and animal skins, their frenzied dancing and loud musical parade has been confidently declared a true depiction of worship.[5] Snake-handling is also attested to in the *Bacchae* and various pottery depictions, but is considered a more dubious facet. Olympias, Alexander III's mother, has often been considered the first recognizable historical Maenad and is associated with snake-handling through her worship of Sabazius (sometimes considered an alternate name for Dionysus). There is little concrete epigraphical or historical evidence, however, to truly confirm that snake-handling was a consistent element of worship.[6] Bremmer suggests that it might have been an element of archaic Maenadism, but that the mention in Euripides' *Bacchae* was probably inspired by iconographic depictions of snake-handling rather than any contemporary ritual aspect.[7] The movement of Maenads from the city centre out into the wilderness has also been attested to, and the procession undoubtedly took place outside of city limits. A stele from Magnesia commemorates three priestesses of Dionysus who were brought from Thebes (the setting of the *Bacchae*) from the line of Cadmus.[8] They set up their three troops (or *thiasi*) outside of the city limits and gave them names that invoke ideas of rural life, vegetation, and wilderness fit only for a god that inhabits the forest.[9] The ritual almost certainly occurred outside of city limits to represent the dissolution of civilization into the wild.

The frenzied ecstasy that often characterized the Dionysian *orgia* was likely not fueled by alcohol or sexual desire, but an attempt at self-expression and release from the societal pressures that women in ancient Greece were victims of through physical exertion and eventual exhaustion.[10] Diodorus Siculus gives an account of the ritualized *thiasoi* (Dionysian processions) common to several Greek cities:

> Consequently in many Greek cities every other year Bacchic bands of women gather, and it is lawful for the maidens to carry the *thyrsus* and to join in the frenzied revelry, crying out "Euai!" and honouring the god; while the matrons, forming in groups, offer sacrifices to the god and celebrate his mysteries and, in general, extol with hymns the presence of Dionysus, in this manner acting the part of the Maenads who, as history records, were of old the companions of the god.[11]

The Bacchic *thiasos* was an attempt to emulate elements of the Dionysian narrative. The Greek understanding of this form of worship was that in reenacting certain aspects of the Dionysian mythic tradition, the Maenads were commemorating the life of the god.[12] This commemorative ritual had the broad goal of acting as a means of communication with Dionysus. One of the key tales of Dionysian mythic canon that is emulated in the *Bacchae*'s climax and was believed to have been emulated in the *thiasoi* is the *sparagmos* of the infant Zagreus (Dionysus), who was torn apart by the Titans. This

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[5] Susan Blundell. *Women in Ancient Greece.* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 167.

[6] Ross Kraemer. "Ecstasy and Possession: The Attraction of Women to the Cult of Dionysus" *The Harvard Theological Review* 72 no. 1 (1979): 74.

[7] Jan Bremmer. "Greek Maenadism Reconsidered." Z*eitschrift fur Paprologie und Epigraphik* 55, (1984): 269

[8] *IMagn.* 215(a).

[9] The inscription has been mistreated and misdated over time. Henrichs dates the inscription to sometime before 207 B.C.E. For a discussion of the inscription, see: Albert Henrichs. "Greek Maenadism from Olympias to Messalina" *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 82, (1978): 126ff.

[10] Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece,* 168. In the *Bacchae,* the messenger makes an effort to explain that the Maenad's behaviour is non-sexual in nature: "All were asleep, their bodies relaxed, some resting their backs against pine foliage, others laying their heads at random on the oak leaves, modestly, not as you say drunk with the goblet and the sound of the flute, hunting out Aphrodite through the woods in solitude." Euripides, *Bacchae*, 680-685.

[11] Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History,* 4.3.3-4.

[12] Henrichs, "Greek Maenadism," 147. This can be seen throughout different rituals, especially the Eleusinian mysteries (where it is believed that women emulated Demeter's search and mourning for Persephone, as well as Persephone's seizure by Hades) and the Thesmophoria (where the ritualized swearing represents the Demeter myth further, when the only thing that would cheer her up in her state of grief was her companion Iambe making lewd jokes). For more information, see: Mara Lynn Keller, "The Eleusinian Mysteries of Demeter and Persephone: Fertility, Sexuality, and Rebirth." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 4, no. 1 (1988): 27-54; Marcel Detienne, "The Violence of Well-Born Ladies: Women in the Thesmophoria", in *The Cuisine of Sacrifice amongst the Greeks,* 129-47. (Chigago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

was at the request of Hera in her anger with Zeus, who had fathered the child with Persephone. After tearing him apart, the Titans consumed his flesh but Athena saved his heart, which Zeus then swallowed and transmitted to Semele through sexual intercourse. Their child was the "second" Dionysus.[13] The tearing apart of wild animals (and Pentheus in the *Bacchae)*, whom the Maenads previously suckled as if their own children, is believed to have represented the destruction of the infant Zagreus. The consumption of the flesh of the destroyed creature represents Zagreus' consumption by the Titans. However, where the Titans made a point to cook the child, the Maenads devoured the flesh raw as a way to further solidify their departure from civilized existence and symbolize their transformation from acceptable members of society into wild beasts. While Dionysus enjoyed sacrifices that were considered "traditional," as well as some more strange ritualistic proceedings that have symbolic meanings obscured by time, this *sparagmos* and *omophagia* was a representation of maenadic wildness, unrestraint, and the dangerous nature of the god himself.[14] But does the tearing apart of animals and subsequent consumption of their raw flesh constitute a sacrificial offering to the god? Various scholars have accepted that the two-stage ritual of *sparagmos* and *omophagia* follows a sacrificial structure. The madness and ecstasy of the Dionysian *thiasos* resembles Greek ritual procession; where the standard procession would make its way through the city to the temple of the deity, the *thiasos* moved from city centre to wilderness where Dionysus lived.[15] Just as many ritual processions ended with a sacrifice to the god and a feast, the *orgia* ended with the *sparagmos* (but instead of sacrificing with a blade, they used their bare hands) and the *omophagia* (where the meat was consumed raw instead of cooked). Scholars suggest

that this ritual is a hold-over from very early forms of sacrifice, when the process was less formalized and the line between ritual and violence, hunter and priest, was blurred and less institutionalized. The act constituted a sacrificial process while "preserving the memory of ancient tribal savagery," a time before domestication and rigid ritual formality.[16] This sensationalized descent into not only madness, but barbarism and unabashed *wildness,* underlines many issues the ancient Greeks had concerning acceptable ways of existing within a civilized society.

Surely this is just Euripides adding senseless violence to enhance the climax of his drama. Or is there evidence of this raw-eating historically? One inscription alludes to the practice in the formalized civic cult:

> Whenever the priestess performs the sacrifices for the sake of the whole city, it is not possible for anyone to throw in a victim to be eaten raw [*omophagion*] before the priestess throws one in for the sake of the whole city.[17]

This provides us with the only surviving epigraphical mention of the act. Guettel believes that it did not represent an offering to be eaten raw by the worshippers themselves, but rather an offering to be thrown into a receptacle or pit to be "eaten raw" by the god rather than burned at an altar.[18] The codification of this act, and the fact that it requires restraint on the part of the worshippers (through a formalized civic process) shows its distinction from the wild frenzy of the *Bacchae,* where the victims were torn apart and devoured uncontrollably. It seems that the historical *omophagia* was probably a mere symbolic gesture to honour the mythic narrative of Zagreus, rather than a climactic act of unrestrained barbarism. Henrich transmits this idea well:

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[13] Mark Morford and Lenardon, Robert, *Classical Mythology.* 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 223-224; Plutarch, *De E apud Delphos,* 9.5ff.

[14] Stella Georgoudi. "Sacrificing to Dionysos: Regular and Particular Rituals" in *Dionysos and Ancient Polytheisme*, ed. Renate Schlesier, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 47-60.

[15] Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece*, 168. Dionysus had very few (if any) temples in urban centres, and this suggests that the Greeks considered his "temple" to be the entirety of the wilderness.

[16] Henrichs, "Greek Maenadism," 148.

[17] Naomi Christodoulou. "Dionysian Religion: A Study of the Worship of Dionysus in Ancient Greece and Rome," master's thesis, University of Patras, 2004.

[18] Susan Guettel Cole. "Finding Dionysus" in *A Companion to Greek Religion*, ed. Daniel Ogden, (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 337.

Scholars tend to forget, or deny, that is it Dionysus, and not the maenads, who takes pleasure in this bloody diet. The Dionysus who hunts, kills, and devours his victims raw is the same Dionysus whom Alcaeus knew as raw-eater and who seems to underlie a divine figure of Greek myth known as Zagreus, "the great hunter." Despite its obscurity, the Milesian inscription hardly allows the interpretation that the *omophagios* was eaten by the priestess or other participants in the public sacrifice.[19]

In emulating the Zagreus myth the Maenads hoped to communicate with Dionysus, which Naiden considers to be the most important goal of any sacrificial act.[20] But we must remember that, while "rawness" inherently blurs the line between man and beast, there are practical reasons to stay within those bounds. Ekroth suggests that the presence of a raw offering acted to underscore the sheer power in the divinity, since the offering could be consumed by the god with ease, but by humans with deeply negative health consequences.[21] While several scholars dismiss the *omophagia* in a variety of ways (by stating that it didn't happen, that it was a minor facet of worship, or that it was just another strange form of sacrifice), it should be acknowledged that the participants of the act likely attached a deeply symbolic meaning to the two-stage ritual – "The issue is not so clear-cut, and we should in any case register the possibility that participants experienced the ritual as something more significant than just another sacrifice."[22]

Understanding where myth ends and history begins is not necessarily imperative for understanding the symbolic meaning behind the *sparagmos* and *omophagia* in Dionysian cult and how the participants may have experienced the act. As Henrichs stresses in his comprehensive work on Hellenistic Maenadism, "Not only do we lack objective criteria which would enable us to differential plausibly between poetic and cultic mimesis in the *Bacchae*, but the *Bacchae* itself, with its ritualistic interpretation of Dionysian myth, must be considered a potential source of inspiration for later maenadic cult."[23] The fact that *omophagia* and *sparagmos* were represented as an aspect of the Dionysian madness shows that it had a place in the Greek understanding of the cult, whether or not it actually occurred historically. It served an important symbolic and philosophical role that helped the Greeks understand their place in the hierarchy of gods, men, and animals, and thus reinforced their ideas on the importance of civilization and how to act within (and outside) its boundaries. In many ways, the god represents opposition – he brought wine to the Greeks, an important facet of civilized society and yet something that can easily cause destruction and madness through excessive consumption; he is represented as both young and old, born of a mortal woman and yet himself an immortal god; he represents both life and death through the Zagreus myth, where he was torn apart himself by the Titans and then reconstructed. Thus, the participation in either real or imagined *omophagia* represents these ideas of opposition inherent to the Dionysian canon. The act of raw eating provides so many disruptions of established binaries in and of itself – raw vs. cooked, wild vs. civilized, male vs. female – that, moving forward, the reality of the act becomes secondary to the understanding of what the act represented in the eyes of its participants.

The paradigm of sacrifice that was originally based in the etiological myth of the Promethean trickery of Zeus is abandoned in the Dionysian offering of raw meat.[24] The Zagreus myth provides a separate etiological foundation from which the worshippers of Dionysus drew their ritualistic format. Vernant believes that, in rejecting the Promethean sacrificial standard (which serves to remind humans of their place in the hierarchy between gods and beasts, since they are destined to

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[19] Henrichs, "Greek Maenadism," 150.

[20] Fred Naiden. *Smoke Signals for the Gods*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4.

[21] Gunnel Ekroth. "Burnt, Cooked, or Raw? Divine and Human Culinary Desires at Greek Animal Sacrifice." In *Transformations in Sacrificial Practices*. Eds. Eftychia Stavrianopoulou, Axel Michaels, and Claus Ambos (Transaction Publishers: London, 2006), 101.

[22] Barbara Goff. *Citizen Bacchae: Women's Ritual Practice in Ancient Greece* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 273.

[23] Henrichs, "Greek Maenadism," 122.

[24] Hesiod, *Theogony* 545-555; *Works and Days* 556-57.

eat the corruptible meat of mortals while the gods feast on the ethereal smoke in the heavens), the Maenads that participate in the *omophagia* also dispel the politico-religious condition that the Promethean standard reinforces.[25] In rejecting cookery in favour of the raw, they embrace barbarism over civilization and refuse their place in this carefully established hierarchy between gods and beasts. This rejection is paralleled in the Orphic belief, where vegetarianism acts as a refusal of the hierarchy as well, but polarized to the other extreme. Where Orphism takes the high road by refusing to participate in one of the most standard acts of the civic institution by insisting that the destruction of any life is "murder", Dionysian ritual sinks its followers to the low road, where beasts reign and in tearing apart their victims, the Maenads tear apart the system they are expected to participate in. The violence of the *sparagmos* and the rejection of boiling or roasting meat in the *omophagia* likens humans to animals, who routinely devour their own kind due to the absence of human virtues necessary for the functioning of society – justice, harmony, and reason. In eating raw flesh, they become undomesticated and refuse participation in the sacrifice that is so integral to the communication between gods and men – namely, the burning of meat on the altar. When taking into account the fact that one of the defining elements of the sacrifice was the feasting that took place immediately after, with the sacrificial victim (domestic, ritually acceptable animals) being shared amongst the community as the primary way in which meat was consumed, the rejection acts as a destruction of established sacrificial, culinary, and civic norms. The reversion to a bestial state represents a sort of freedom from the imposed organization of civic life. Taken alongside other elements of the Dionysian cult (the wildness of their processions, the indulgence in wine and association with the untamed natural setting of the forest and the mountain), *omophagia* represents the liberation inherent in the primal, the freedom of madness, and the destruction of norms in a way that, although subverting the traditional Promethean paradigm, are still pious through the commemoration of the Zagreus narrative.

*Sparagmos* and *omophagia* do not just represent a departure from the Promethean tradition, but highlight several anxieties that coursed through the ancient psyche. Raw-eating and using one's hands instead of tools blurred the line between butcher, cook, and hunter; this worked to magnify the violence of the ritual instead of downplaying it.[26] This decayed the importance of having civilized roles (butcher, cook, and hunter) and meshed them into one, degrading the architecture they existed within. The idea of "rawness" not only dispels the importance of cooking food to establish humans above animals, but embodies powerfully taboo and illicit concepts. It suggests cannibalism, beast-like rage, and even physical deformity.[27] [28] [29] Segal is elegant in his claim that "r*aw*, like *savage,* does not become merely a metaphor for cruelty. It retains its associations with the beast-world and with the norms of civilization that keep it at bay."[30] Even Hippocrates, in speaking of the role of doctors, states that they have freed men from eating in a bestial, savage way through the creation of a diet that replaced the raw with the cooked – not only did it civilize, but it ensured the survival of mankind.[31] In imagining a feast of raw flesh, the worshippers of

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[25] Marcel Detienne. "Culinary Practices and the Spirit of Sacrifice," in *The Cuisine of Sacrifice among the Greeks*, eds. Marcel Detienne and Jean-Pierre Vernant (Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1986), 7ff.

[26] Detienne, "Culinary Practices," 9.

[27] Herodotus, *Histories,* 3.99: "Other Indians, to the east of these, are nomads and eat raw flesh; they are called Padaei. It is said to be their custom that when anyone of their fellows, whether man or woman, is sick, a man's closest friends kill him, saying that if wasted by disease he will be lost to them as meat; though he denies that he is sick, they will not believe him, but kill and eat him."

[28] Homer, *Iliad* 22.345: "Dog, talk not to me neither of knees nor parents; would that I could be as sure of being able to cut your flesh into pieces and eat it raw, for the ill have done me, as I am that nothing shall save you from the dogs."

[29] Strabo, *Geography*, 15.1.57: "...of others (Amycteres) without nostrils, devouring everything, eaters of raw meat, short-lived, and dying before they arrive at old age; the upper part of their mouths projects far beyond the lower lip."

[30] Charles Segal. "The Raw and the cooked in Greek Literature: Structure, Values, Metaphor." *The Classical Journal* 69, no. 4 (1974): 299.

[31] Hippocrates, *On Ancient Medicine,* 3: "I am of opinion that man used the same sort of food, and that the present articles of diet had been discovered and invented only after a long lapse of time, for when they suffered much and severely from strong and brutish diet, swallowing things which were raw, unmixed, and possessing great strength, they became exposed to strong pains and diseases, and to early deaths."

Dionysus not only emulate the Zagreus myth (and, some scholars have proposed, adopt the power and fertility of the god by consuming his flesh), but also shatter their place in civilized society; they run to the mountains with him, becoming beasts themselves.[32] Their celebration outside of the *polis* reinforces this, and physically removing themselves from markers of civilization removes them ideologically. Further problematic is the type of animal the Maenads covet for their *omophagia*. The emphasis on the tearing apart of wild animals over domestic ones further acts to remove them from the state-sanctioned, acceptable Olympian cultic paradigms. In traditional rituals, wild animals were almost never offered to the gods. There are two types of animals: those reared for human consumption and use, and those hunted down for the harm they can cause. In consuming the latter, the Maenads disregard the animals that "exist with the good of man in mind."[33] The maenadic process involved a spontaneity around seizing the wild animal from the wilderness like a hunter instead of going through the slow and rigorous process of picking a "choice" domestic animal from a selection.[34] This was at odds with the idea that the only animals man should consume are those that they can control the reproduction of, to reassert their position in the hierarchy between beasts and gods. *Wild,* just like *raw,* denotes a certain measure of distance from the domestic and from the dominance of the "civilized."

As described above, this raw-eating was in "defiance of all Greek alimentary codes."[35] What was the motivation behind the refusal of long-upheld Promethean sacrificial norms? In worshipping Dionysus (both the great civilizer and the great destroyer of civility), participants subvert civic expectations and, in the same motion, reinforce them. Through their use of their own hands for tearing the animal, they show the importance of tools; in the eating of raw flesh, they show the

sophistication of the cooked; in eating wild animals, they show the benefit of domestication; in becoming beasts, Dionysus' followers reinforce the nobility of man. The hypothetical purpose of the two-stage ritual of *sparagmos* and *omophagia* was to communicate these social boundaries and provide a sense of order and unity in defining the boundaries they transgress. Janzen argues that ritual "tries to convince [participants] that one way of looking at the organization of the cosmos is superior to others, and... because the world is this way, they must act in accordance with the morality that is inherent in it."[36] While many of the Olympian sacrificial rituals enforced the traditional elements of man's place in the hierarchy between gods and beasts, "convincing" them that the hierarchy was the right way to interact with the gods, the Dionysian cult subverted that hierarchy to, in turn, show its importance. When considering this, it is helpful to remember that Greek religion was not monolithic, and that all gods were to be revered, respected, and worshipped equally. In having rituals that both reinforced and subverted the expectations of "proper" worship, participants engaged in a sort of ritualistic rhetoric that "act[ed] to persuade members of a social group to accept the society's world view."[37] As the two varieties of ritual (reinforcing vs. subverting) compete for the more "correct" interpretation of reality and morality, the temporary madness, ecstasy, and ultimate unsustainability of the Dionysian ritual must necessarily submit to the "traditional" forms of worship, because that is its design. By temporarily pushing the boundaries of society, those boundaries are themselves identified and solidified.

In giving its members a temporary release from the expectations of society, Dionysian cult also provided a sort of temporary "safety valve" or emotional outlet that the standard societal structure could not. This was especially true for the female followers of Dionysus, who lived a life of subjugation and isolation in a male-dominated Greek society. The ecstasy and deep emotion of the maenadic procession allowed women an opportunity to release pent-up hostility and grief at a societal system that otherwise forbid the freedom of

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[32] Otto, *Dionysus: Myth and Cult,* 105-106; Segal, "The Raw and the Cooked," 299.

[33] Detienne, "Culinary Practices," 8-9.

[34] For an example of the process involved in picking a domestic sacrificial animal, see: "Religious Calendar, Cos, mid-fourth century," *Greek Historical Inscriptions: 404-323 BC,* eds. P.J. Rhodes and Robin Osborne (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 292-303.

[35] Goff, *Citizen Bacchae*, 271.

[36] David Janzen. *Social Meanings of Sacrifice in the Hebrew Bible* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 19.

[37] Janzen, *Social Meanings*, 25.

expression important for a healthy psyche.[38] Much like the Thesmophoria and other women's rituals of reversal, the female participants were allowed to momentarily reject their solidified role in society. They left their homes, families, and *polis* to career in the mountains and forests, unrestrained by walls and regulations. Through their handling and consumption of raw meat, they dispelled the ideology of the civilized *polis* and marginalized themselves.[39] Through the *sparagmos* of the animals in the forest that they previously suckled, they dramatized the destruction of the home their departure caused and inverted their maternal responsibilities.[40] This is exaggerated in the *Bacchae,* were the destruction of Pentheus by his mother is "the vicarious destruction of each woman's own offspring."[41] Even the clothing they wore represented a move from the ordered civility they were supposed to inhabit – loose hair, animal skins, and bare feet all represented "typical signs of liminality" in antiquity.[42] Not only do they align themselves with the wild, but they invert the expectations of their gender by becoming hunters – Agave transmits this well when she remarks, "I have left my shuttle at the loom; I raised my sight to higher things – to hunting animals with my bear hands."[43] In stating this, she is directly saying that the exploits of men are worth more respect, clarifying the view that the ancient Greeks had of women. In being able to transgress the limitations of her gender, the Maenad temporarily opens herself up to all of the rewards that are typically only available to males. This is especially attractive for women who are unable to even access the rewards of the "ideal" woman (i.e. the success of her husband and the bearing of children, notably sons) due to any number of reasons (i.e. the inability to have children, being past childbearing years, being a widow, among other marginalized states that women can inhabit); if they are unable to fulfill this role, Kraemer suggests that they will be attracted to rituals that "specifically address the measure of woman" to restore their

sense of social adequacy.[44] By allowing women to vent their pent-up frustration and subjugation through the ritualistic *orgia,* the system gives release to the Greek women who recognize the extreme disparity between their position in society and those of the men. Through the development of the Bacchic ritual, the needs of women that resulted directly from their subjugation were spiritually addressed in an institutionalized, civic manner, with a unique female-only space carved out specifically for them to exercise their frustrations surrounding their incredibly low status.[45] In this light, raw-eating symbolized an opposition to the societal structure responsible for their position.

Much of the sensationalized imagery passed forward concerning the Maenads was undoubtedly influenced by a certain level of both male fantasy (due to the mysterious nature of what the women could be engaged in – hence the suggestion that Maenads participated in sexual acts, despite evidence showing that it was not likely) and anxious disapproval. The rejection of family, state, and gender by the female participants outwardly opposed male values of the time. But female involvement in Dionysian ritual benefited men by reinforcing systems they depended on, to ensure their hierarchical superiority over women in society.[46] In much the same way that raw-eating reinforced the dominance of cookery, the participation of women in a ritual that so completely (if temporarily) distorted their position in the social order acted to reinforce the position of men. Women were "indulged" for the duration of the ritual while they accessed the freedoms of nature through "possession" by the deity. In his anthropological account of the reinforcing elements of inversion rituals, Lewis states that in allowing females to participate in the maenadic *orgia*:

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[38] Blundell, *Women in Ancient Greece,* 168.

[39] Goff, *Citizen Bacchae*, 273.

[40] Bremmer, "Greek Maenadism Reconsidered," 275-276.

[41] Kraemer, "Ecstasy and Possession," 67.

[42] Bremmer, "Greek Maenadism Reconsidered," 276.

[43] Euripides*, Bacchae,* 1232-38.

[44] Kraemer, "Ecstasy and Possession," 74.

[45] Kraemer, "Ecstasy and Possession," 74. Classical Greek society is considered to have provided the worst conditions in western history for females at any given time.

[46] Men did participate in Dionysian festivals and rituals, including the type of *orgia* in question (as seen in the participation of Tireseius and Cadmus in the *Bacchae)* but the ritual was undoubtedly more attended by female worshippers than males in the Classical and Hellenistic periods. For a discussion on this, see: Kraemer, "Ecstasy and Possession," 69ff.

...both men and women are more or less satisfied; neither sex loses face and the official ideology of male supremacy is preserved. From this perspective, the tolerance by men of periodic, but always temporary, assaults on their authority by women appears as they have to pay to maintain their enviable position.[47]

Once the indulgence is over, the dominant members of society can comfortably reassert their position in the hierarchy because they have not allowed the ritual to progress *too far* into a state of permanence, but only far enough as to allow the women to experience a temporary release from the shackles of societal expectations. The women eventually return home to their previously held positions, and the discomfort of the inversion is accepted for a period of time because it is necessary to preserve the *status quo*.

Where does this leave us? Even if the maenadic cult did not actively career through the forest, tearing beasts apart and devouring their flesh, imagining the act provided Greeks with some uncomfortable, if necessary, reassessments of the symbolic and ideological issues inherent in their society. The purpose of this work has not been to assess whether or not *omophagia* or *sparagmos* actually occurred historically (although this was addressed), but rather to assess what it means that the Greeks *imagined* that it did. So many of the processes involved in the ritual tested the boundaries of civilization, and examined how fragile they truly were. In addressing the ritualistic consumption of raw flesh, they addressed the anxieties and binaries that were integral to the formation (and decay) of their civilized society. In rejecting the Promethean sacrificial paradigm for that of the Zagreus myth, the position of man in the hierarchy between gods and beasts was identified, questioned, and solidified. The maenadic *orgia* effectively highlighted the binaries between raw and cooked, bestial and civilized, wild and domestic that the rest of society worked so hard to distance itself from. Vital to the ritual was the freedom from subjugation that female worshippers were allowed to experience, if only for a limited period of time. This worked to further solidify the

dominance of the patriarchal society of ancient Greece. In testing the limits of civilization and (temporarily, always temporarily) stepping outside of it, the two-stage process of *sparagmos* and *omophagia* reinforced all of the elements of society that the Greeks held so dear. Dionysus rested on the precipice between binaries; so much of his narrative underlined the duality of his existence. With this in mind it only made sense that his worshippers, in both cult and literature, provided the same ambiguity and transcended the same boundaries.

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[47] Ioan Lewis. *Ecstatic Religion: An Anthropological Study of Spirit Possession and Shamanism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971). 32.

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# Clothing Regulations in the Sacred Law of Andania

## ALISSA DROOG

Why do humans wear clothing? Until the late nineteenth century, anthropologists adhered to a model based on the biblical conception of modesty – humans wear clothes because they are ashamed of their nakedness. By the mid-twentieth century, the opposite theory took its place, that humans wear clothes to enhance their appearance for "self-aggrandizement."[1] In current dress theory, it is commonly accepted that dress helps to construct community identity, and in the ancient world, was a "tool that helped ancient people understand, order and navigate their world."[2]

Since clothing was so important in the ancient world, a great deal can be learned about the worldview of ancient communities by their literature about dress. There are not many references in the ancient Greek world to religious clothing regulations,[3] but of these, the Sacred Law of Andania is certainly the longest and most detailed.[4] The inscription, dated to 91/92 BCE, regulates the mysteries which took place in a grove outside of Andania in the region of Messenia.[5] The law gives detailed instructions about how to carry out the mysteries, sacrifices, procession and a market; the whole event would have looked something like a weekend festival to us.[6] Among these various rules are sixteen lines that regulate how those involved in the rites were to dress. This paper will apply current dress theory to this regulation in the hopes of learning about what these regulations might have meant to the community for which they were prescribed.[7] The argument is twofold. First, although this regulation is unique to contemporary scholars because of its detail and length, the clothing regulations in it were not unique to Andania and reflect cultural norms in ancient Greek religious rituals at that time. Second, scholars have posited a variety of purposes for the regulation of clothing in Andania. These factors: the social control of women, to reduce competitive shows of wealth, to maintain social hierarchies, and to create a group identity though visual conformity have mostly been discussed on an individual basis. I argue that it is most probable that these factors together show the complex social construction at play in the regulation of clothing.

## Andanian Dress Regulations as Normative in the Ancient Greek World

In 2000, Liza Cleland gave a paper on the Sacred Law of Andania at the Celtic Classics Conference and argued that the inscription "cannot be considered entirely typical of Greek cultic clothing regulations.[8] Contrary to Cleland, the inscription is not held to be unique because many of the rules set out for clothing in Andania also exist in other inscriptions from across the ancient world, and the regulations that do not have comparable inscriptions instead reflect social customs. Although the Sacred Law of Andania is the longest and most detailed inscription of its kind, which makes it unique to

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[1] James Laver, *Modesty in Dress* (Boston 1969), 1 quoted in Harrianne Mills, "Greek Clothing Regulations: Sacred or Profane?" *ZPE* 55 (1984): 255.

[2] Alicia J. Batten, Carly Daniel-Hughss, and Kristi Upson-Saia (eds), *Dressing the Judeans and Christians in Antiquity,* 5.

[3] For a discussion of ancient clothing regulations, see Harrianne Mills, "Greek Clothing Regulations: Sacred or Profane?" *ZPE* 55 (1984): 255-365, Liza Cleland, "Colour in Ancient Greek Clothing: A Methodological Investigation" Dissertation (University of Edinburgh, 2002); Liza Cleland "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," paper presented at Celtic Classics Conference, Maynooth, October 2000; and Phyllis Culham, "Again, What Meaning Lies in Colour!" *ZPE* 64 (1986): 235-245.

[4] For a discussion of the Sacred Law of Andania, see Laura Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary* (Boston: De Gruyter, 2012).

[5] For the original Greek text, see Sokolowski, LSCG 65 or Gawlinski (2012). Three English translations were used for this paper, including those found in: Marvin W. Meyer (ed.), *The Ancient Mysteries: A Sourcebook* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1987), Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania,* and Culham, "Again, What Meaning Lies In Colour!".

[6] Richard Ascough, "The Sacred Law of Andania" *RELS: 821 Greek and Roman Religions*, Lecture, Queen's University, October 4, 2016.

[7] Batten, *Dressing the Judeans and Christians in Antiquity,* 7.

[8] Liza Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," presented at *Celtic Classics Conference, Maynooth,* October 2000, 8.

scholars in the contemporary world, this does not equate with it being unique or atypical in the ancient world. It is more than possible that rules like those found in Andania were often followed in religious circumstances without being written down. For this reason, scholars can find evidence of similar practices and even written regulations which reflect the complex interplay of social rules as they applied to ancient dress.

In this first argument, the sixteen lines which regulate dress in the Sacred Law of Andania will be discussed by type of clothing regulation and compared to a collection of 12 other religious clothing regulations from the ancient Greek world. Two graphics will provide background to this discussion. First, the chart (Figure 1) divides the dress regulations found in the Sacred Law of Andania by the type of initiate, and will serve as a reference point for the clothing regulations in Andania. Clothing regulations will be discussed in five categories pertaining to: colour and transparency in clothing, spending limits, types of adornment, shoes, and hair and headdresses. Second, the map and legend (Figure 2) show the location and dates for 12 other religious clothing regulations which have survived from the ancient Greek world.[9] The small genre of Greek religious clothing regulations includes inscriptions which range in date from the sixth century BCE to the third century CE, are much shorter than those found in Andania, and are often only a couple lines long and fragmented. Even though they come from across the ancient Greek world, it is notable that they reflect many of the same rules found within the Sacred Law of Andania, and thus, can be used to help demonstrate that the rules at Andania were not unique.

| Type of Initiate | Dress Regulations |
|---|---|
| 1. All initiates | – No shoes, must wear white<br>– If not sacred men or women, must wear tiaras which will be changed with laurel after mysteries |
| 2. All women | – Clothes must not be transparent<br>– Stripes/bands cannot be more than half a finger wide<br>– Cannot wear gold, rouge, or white lead make-up<br>– Hair cannot be plaited or with a band<br>– Shoes must be made of either felt or sacrificial leather |
| a. Free Women | – Linen chiton (tunic) and a himation (robe) worth less than 100 drachmai |
| b. Daughters | – *Kalasiris* (Egyptian tunic) or *sindonites* (linen tunic) and himation worth less than 2 minas |
| c. Female Slaves | – *Kalasiris* or *sindonites* and himation worth less than 50 drachmai |
| 3. Sacred Men and Women | – Must wear a white felt cap |
| a. Sacred Women | – *Kalasiris* or *upoduma* (undergarment) without decoration and himation worth less than 2 minas<br>– Curved wicker seats with white pillows or round cushion without decoration or purple |
| b. Daughters (sacred) | – *Kalasiris* and himation worth less than 100 drachmai |
| 4. Women in the Procession | |
| a. Sacred Women | – *hupodutas* (undergarment) and wool himation with stripes no more than a half a finger wide |
| b. Daughters | – *Kalasiris* and himation that is not transparent |
| 5. Women Dressed in the Manner of the Gods | – Clothing as specified by sacred men |

Figure 1: Dress Regulations in the Sacred Law of Andania (lines 13-26)[10]

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[9] The Greek religious clothing regulations consulted for this paper include: LSCGS 28, 32, 65 (Andania) and 68, LSAM 6, 14, 16, 77 and 84, and LSCGS 33 and 91. For the English translations, see Cleland, "Colour in Ancient Greek Clothing: A Methodological Investigation," Chapter 7 and Mills, Greek Clothing Regulations: Sacred or Profane?" for a translation of LSAM 16.

[10] This chart makes similar divisions between initiates as Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 114. Liza Cleland also uses a similar chart to compare an assortment of ancient regulations on clothing restrictions in "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and

- Sparta, (LSCG 28), 6th C. BCE
- Arcadia, (LSCG 32) 6th C. BCE
- Patras, (LSCGS 33), 3rd C. BCE
- Lycosura, (LSCG 68), 3rd C. BCE
- Priene, (LSAM 35), 3rd C. BCE
- **Andania (LSCG 65), 92/91 BCE**
- Cius, (LSAM 6), 1st C. CE
- Smyrna, (LSAM 84), 2nd C. CE
- Pergamum, ( LSAM 14), 3rd C. CE
- Lindos, (LSCGS 91), 3rd C. CE
- Tlos, (LSAM 77) n.d.
- Gambreion, (LSAM 16), n.d

Note: Locations on map are approximate.

Figure 2: Clothing Regulations in Ancient Greece

## Colour and Transparency in Clothing

In the Sacred Law of Andania, all of the initiates are to wear white clothing and women are not to wear transparent fabrics. Three English translations have been consulted on the clothing regulations in this text and there is some discrepancy between

them on this section.[11] Meyer's translation states that "the men who are initiated into the mysteries are to stand barefoot and wear white clothing, and the women are to wear clothes that are not transparent."[12] Whereas Meyer translates it this way, Mills translates this line as referring to "the ones completing the mysteries"[13] and Gawlinski as "those being initiated."[14] If these restrictions only apply to men as in Meyer's translation, then it is possible for the women to wear coloured clothing. This would have had a very different social connotation since coloured clothing is not as strongly associated with religious rituals. The original Greek uses a masculine plural noun to refer to the men or initiates. Since this is a masculine plural, it could refer to just men, or men and women.[15]

Two of the twelve Greek religious clothing regulations also require white clothing for religious purposes. A fragmented regulation from a goddess cult in Priene from third century BCE states that one must "Go into the pure sanctuary in white clothing" and another from Pergamum in the 3rd century CE also prescribes white clothing for ritual purposes.[16] Similarly, funerary inscriptions also regulate the colour of dress to dark clothing and sometimes white. An inscription from Gambreion from the 3rd century BCE states that men and women must wear clean, grey clothing "unless they prefer to wear white."[17] It seems to have been common practice to wear white for religious rituals and festivals and dark clothing for funerals.[18] Thus, it is most likely

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[11] See Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary,* Chapter 7; Meyer, *The Ancient Mysteries: A Sourcebook,* Chapter 3 and Mills "Greek Clothing Regulations: Sacred or Profane?", 259.

[12] Meyer, ed./trans., "The Andanian Mysteries of Messenia," 53.

[13] Mills, "Greek Clothing Regulations: Sacred or Profane?" 259.

[14] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 69.

[15] Probable translation by Dr. Richard Ascough, December 14, 2016.

[16] LSAM 35 and LSAM 14 as translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 236-237.

[17] LSAM 16 as translated by Mills, "Clothing Regulations: Sacred or Profane?" 260.

[18] Another inscription, Phil Harland, trans., "195 Regulations of a Sanctuary of the God Dionysos Bromios (II CE),"

that Gawlinski and Culham's translations are correct because the wearing of white was common in Greek religious rituals for both men and women. The concern here appears to be one of ritual purity. Other religious clothing regulations may not call for white clothing, but require clothing to be clean for ritual purity.[19] Gawlinski comments that white would have stood apart from daily clothing to mark that it was a festival.[20] If all the initiates wore the same colour, it also would have contributed to the visual conformity of the initiates, especially during the procession which had a performance-like nature to it.

Transparent clothing was restricted for women at Andania. Transparent clothing was made of silk which gave it the appearance of transparency.[21] Andrew Dalby discusses a connection between transparent fabrics and *hetairai*, a prostitute of the higher classes. In his discussion, he gives an example of a law from the city of Lepreae in which adulteresses were to wear a transparent dress for eleven days in the marketplace as punishment.[22] While transparent dress may have been worn by *hetairai*, the fabric must also have been worn by other women or else it would not be explicitly proscribed in Andania. Later in the inscription, transparent clothing is once again forbidden to the sacred daughters in the procession, but this is specified to the himation only. The himation was worn over the chiton, and perhaps transparent himations were fashionable yet still modest since they were worn over another garment. The purpose of this regulation would appear to be modesty,

although it could also be to control women's spending, as transparent fabric was quite costly.[23]

### Spending Limits for Women

The largest portion of the regulation limits the spending for different types of women for their dress. This section is also the most unique in that other religious inscriptions typically do not create limits for expenses for those of different social status. The regulation requires the female initiates to wear a specific and varying type of undergarment and a himation for an outer garment. Free women wore a linen chiton with their himation which was standard dress for all women in this period so the regulation to wear this for independent women would have reflected their normal dress practices.[24] A *kalasiris* is prescribed to daughters, female slaves, and the sacred women, and was a garment of Egyptian origin with a fringe on the bottom. *Sindonites* were an undergarment made of fine linen and would have been quite costly, and were prescribed to daughters and female slaves.[25] An *upoduma* or *hupodutas* are presumed to be similar undergarments and were prescribed to sacred women.

Women were allowed to spend different amounts on this combination of two garments depending on their status within the cult. Free women and sacred daughters were allowed to spend 100 drachmai, daughters and sacred women 2 mina, and slaves 50 drachmai. It is notable that the sacred women are allowed to spend more than the free women, while the daughters of the free women are allowed to spend more than the daughters of the sacred women which must indicate their importance to the cult.

There are two restrictions here: both to the number of garments and to the cost of these. There is evidence of other inscriptions and documents which have limited women's clothing in this way from the ancient world, although they are typically always for

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*Associations in the Greco-Roman World,* Accessed May 25, 2017, http://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/195-regulations-of-a-sanctuary-of-the-god-dionysos-bromios//, also stipulates that those wearing black clothing cannot approach the altar at a funeral. For more inscriptions related to the use of white clothing, see Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary,* 115-116.

[19] See LSAM 6 and LSCGS 91 as translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 237, 238.

[20] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary,* 117.

[21] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary,* 118.

[22] Andrew Dalby, "Levels of Concealment: The Dress of *Hetairai* and *Pornai* in Greek Texts," in *Women's Dress in the Ancient Greek World*, edited by Lloyd Llewellyn Jones (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. 2000), 115.

[23] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 118.

[24] John Breton Connelly, *Portrait of a Priestess: Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece.* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007), 86.

[25] Liza Cleland, *The Brauron Clothing Catalogues: Text, Analysis, Glossary and Translation* (England: BAR International Series, 2005), 126.

religious rituals of this kind. From the Greek world, funerary rules also restricted the number and cost of garments. LSCG 77 limits the corpse to wearing only one *stroma*, and LSCG 97A, that one could only wear three himations and spend a maximum of 300 drachmai on dress for a corpse.[26] Also, L*ex Oppia*, a Roman law from around 215 BCE, ruled that women could wear no more than three garments at a time.[27] Since the Sacred Law of Andania was inscribed fifty-five years after the Romans took control of Messenia, it is possible that this rule shows the influence of Roman ideas.[28]

The primary social concern in this section is the limiting of competition and excessive display of wealth by women. This section has also been described by some scholars as sumptuary in nature.[29] It is clear that based on the spending limits, the women involved in this rite would have been wealthy. While the purpose is to limit spending, Gawlinski has suggested that since the limits are so high, these limits also enacted to encourage spending.[30] There is no single purpose for such a rule, but it must have addressed a number of concerns. It would have kept women from using dress to enhance their social status above their actual status, which is why this has been called sumptuary, as it maintained class boundaries by creating visual distinctions between women. It also creates group identity by having women wear similar but different clothing based on their social standing.

### Adornment

A number of rules that pertain to all women restrict different types of adornment. This includes a ban from wearing rouge, white make-up, gold, and stripes that are more than half a finger wide on ones' clothes. In the ancient world, women's adornment helped to distinguish between classes, and was something that women had to balance. Women could dress up for religious festivals, but too much finery would make a woman appear to be *hetairai.* For important religious occasions such as is found in the Sacred Law of Andania, women's reputations were on the line and they would be required to dress respectably.[31]

Of the ancient Greek clothing regulations consulted, three of them included restrictions on adornment. A regulation from a Demeter cult in Patras from the third century BCE limited the weight of gold that a women could wear in the sanctuary to less than one obol and a regulation from Pergamum (cited above) banned women from participating in a religious ritual if they wore a ring or gold.[32] In Lycosura, women were not allowed the enter the sanctuary with gold unless they intended to dedicate it to the gods.[33] The rites at Andania would have been a rare opportunity for high class women to enter the public world, and thus they would want to dress for the occasion to show their status. Regulations against adornment such as stripes or gold would limit excessive displays of wealth and potentially save wealthy women from crossing the line from well-dressed to being dressed as *hetairai.* For example, the Law of Syracuse states that "a woman should not wear *khrysous* [gold jewelry] or *anthina* [flowery dress] or have clothes with purple *paryphai* [borders] unless she accepted the name of a public *hetaira*."[34] Other inscriptions exist which also draw a connection between prostitution and the wearing of purple or gold. For example, *Locri Epizephyrii* states that women cannot wear gold ornaments or garments with borders unless she is *hetaira*.[35] Secondly, Clement of Alexandria also

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[26] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 121.

[27] Phyllis Culham, "Again, What Meaning Lies in Colour!" *ZPE* 64 (1986): 238.

[28] Meyer, ed./trans., "The Andanian Mysteries of Messenia," 49.

[29] For a discussion of the Sacred Law of Andania as sumptuary control of women, see Culham, "Again, What Meaning Lies in Colour!".

[30] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 121.

[31] Dalby, "Levels of Concealment: The Dress of *Hetairai* and *Pornai* in Greek Texts," 114.

[32] LSCGS 33 and LSAM 14 as translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 246, 237.

[33] LSCG 68, translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 248.

[34] Dalby, "Levels of Concealment: The Dress of *Hetairai* and *Pornai* in Greek Texts," 113.

[35] Dalby, "Levels of Concealment: The Dress of *Hetairai* and *Pornai* in Greek Texts," 113

stated that Sparta only allowed *hetairai* to wear flower dresses and gold ornaments.[36]

Dalby asserts that laws such as the one from Syracuse about how one would be considered *hetaira* if they wore purple or gold "stated public opinion."[37] If this is true, then the Sacred Law of Andania can also be understood as reflecting public opinion about the appropriate dress for religious rituals. Thus, the dress prescribed in Andania reflected a pre-existing social structure. Although it probably was not formalized in written sources often, scholars are lucky to have the detail from Andania to learn about cultural norms and restrictions to dress that might not otherwise be as clear without this detailed description.

The regulation against stripes on one's himation more than half a finger wide is one of the most curious in the entire inscription. The term for stripes, *sameia*, can also be translated as band, border, or design which, in the Ionic chiton, was woven along the top of the garment.[38] While this regulation refers instead to the ionic himation, it is assumed that a border was sewn on the piece of cloth along the top or bottom.[39] One of the ancient Greek clothing regulations also restrict women from adding designs to their clothes. A Demeter cult from Sparta in the sixth century BCE disallows women from "weaving anything which is not prescribed by the *polianomos*" into their garments for ritual use.[40] The rule against large stripes or borders probably existed to create visual conformity among the initiates and/or limit the competition between women who would have used borders to enhance their social status visually. This rule is repeated for the sacred women who are in the procession, and it is possible that only they could wear a himation with any band at all. In the procession, this would have set the sacred women apart from the rest of the initiates as more important. In the Roman world, the colour and thickness of a stripe indicated ones' status in society.[41] Certainly, one would have required wealth to afford borders woven or dyed onto their clothing.

## Shoes

The Sacred Law of Andania banned initiates from wearing shoes, although a rule later in the inscription allows women to wear shoes if they are made of felt or sacrificial leather. Of the twelve other religious clothing regulations, four of them also restrict wearing shoes in some way. The first of these is from Lycosura in the third century BCE and restricts anyone entering the sanctuary from wearing sandals.[42] The second is from a Demeter cult in Cius from the first century CE and requires those that enter the temple to be barefoot.[43] A third from Pergamum in the third century CE requires those participating in a ritual to be barefoot and the last is from an Athene cult in Lindos from the third century CE and states that one should be "barefoot or shod in white shoes not of goatskin."[44] The preoccupation here seems to be with ritual purity, and since shoes touched the ground they would be ritually impure. Felt must have been considered appropriate for religious use as it was also used to make initiate caps for this ceremony. It would make sense to wear sacrificial leather to an event which featured sacrifices, as it would be purer than ordinary leather.[45] Undoubtedly, the restriction from wearing shoes was a common religious practice in the ancient world. The reasons often cited for these restrictions concern ritual purity and creating a look of conformity for those involved in the rites.

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[36] Dalby, "Levels of Concealment: The Dress of *Hetairai* and *Pornai* in Greek Texts," 113.

[37] Dalby, "Levels of Concealment: The Dress of *Hetairai* and *Pornai* in Greek Texts," 115.

[38] Ethel Abrahams, *Ancient Greek Dress: A New Illustrated Edition* (Chicago: Argonaut, Inc., 1964), 61.

[39] Gawlinksi, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 120.

[40] LSCG 28 as translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 243.

[41] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 119.

[42] LSCG 68, translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 237.

[43] LSAM 6, translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 237.

[44] LSAM 14 and LSCGS 91, translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 237-238.

[45] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 129.

## Hair and Headdresses

In the Sacred Law of Andania, all women were also proscribed from wearing their hair in braids or using a hair band. The restriction from wearing hair bands is comparable to gold or other adornments in its explanation. Based on other religious regulations that concern clothing in the third century CE, it was not uncommon for women to wear their hair down for ritual purposes. In Pergamum, women were banned from having "bound up hair,"[46] and Lindos banned women from wearing headdresses.[47] Yet another inscription from Lycosura regulates that one cannot enter the sanctuary "with the hair braided, or head covered."[48] The existence of other inscriptions which demand something quite similar makes it possible that this rule was not uncommon in the ancient world. This is also stated by Gawlinski who asserts that women "always bound it up [their hair] unless at festival, when it was kept long."[49] Therefore, the regulations as they pertain to all women represent cultural norms for these types of religious observances.

All initiates also had to wear some kind of headdress or hat. The sacred men and women wore white felt caps while the rest of the initiates wore a tiara until after the mysteries were concluded, at which point they were wreathed in laurel. The wearing of tiaras and laurel abounds in inscriptions as the benefactors of associations and mystery religions were often wreathed in laurel. For example, an inscription dating to the 2nd century BCE from Rhodes honours the benefactor of the association: "He was praised and crowned by the association of Pan-devotees (Paniastai) with a laurel crown, crowned for virtue with a gold crown made from ten gold pieces, crowned with a crown of white poplar, and honored for benefaction and with freedom from duties of all kinds on two occasions."[50] Unlike the

other clothing regulations discussed, there are no other comparable inscriptions which prescribe the wearing of white felt hats like those in the Sacred Law of Andania. The use of felt, like for shoes, must have had religious significance, and the colour white would have related to ritual purity; but hats were not commonly worn in ancient Greece. Gawlinski makes a tenuous connection to a woman depicted in the Villa of Mysteries who is wearing what looks to be a cap of some sort in a Dionysus ritual (Figure 3).[51] Perhaps hats of this nature were worn in religious mystery rituals, but there is not enough evidence to conclude that this specific regulation was reflective of normative religious clothing norms.



Figure 3: Woman in the Villa of Mysteries wearing a hat[52]

Overall, the clothing regulations found in the Sacred Law of Andania reflect cultural norms and expectations for dress in religious contexts for all the categories discussed. While some of the regulations are proven to be normative based on a variety of other inscriptions which stipulate similar rules, others are harder to find such as the use of white felt hats and restriction on the width of stripes. Even still, these rules reflect cultural practices that are proven to be somewhat normative in religious contexts through other documents which show these

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[46] LSAM 14, translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 237.

[47] LSCGS 91, translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 238.

[48] LSCG 68, translated by Cleland, "A Hierarchy of Women: Status, Dress and Social Construction at Andania," 248.

[49] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 127.

[50] Phil Harland, trans., "255 Dossier of Dionysodoros the Alexandrian (II BCE)," *Associations in the Greco-Roman*

*World.* http://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/255-dossier-of-dionysodoros-the-alexandrian/.

[51] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 111.

[52] Figure 3 from "Pompeii Mysteries Villa: A Gentle Flowing with Mystica Vannus." *Labryinth Designers & The Art of Fire.* Accessed May 25, 2017, https://www.labyrinthdesigners.org/alchemy-art/pompeii-mysteries-villa-a-gentle-flowing-with-mystica-vannus/

being used in religious contexts. John Connelly brings another valid point to this argument when he states that "dress codes were not universal, but locally ordained" and thus, these codes will not be the same across the ancient world but similar.[53]

It would help to draw a comparison to the modern world, inasmuch as it is possible to compare our two very different societies. If you receive a wedding invitation that is black tie, you and I both have an idea of what that entails. We might not have the exact same understanding of all the rules involved, but nobody would show up wearing ripped jeans. For the scholar looking back at these Greek religious clothing regulations, it would be like looking at a series of wedding invitations that might hint at the appropriate dress code without giving a full description of them. The Sacred Law of Andania is then like finding the one wedding invitation that gives a full description about what to wear to the wedding. The Sacred Law of Andania might be slightly more detailed or may represent some regional dress customs, but reflects a larger culture of religious dress customs which are hinted at by other regulations from the time. Hence, this inscription can be understood as a reflection of normative religious clothing regulations and not as somehow special because of its length of detail.

## Reasons for Regulating Dress

The Sacred Law of Andania is very preoccupied with limiting the displays of wealth by women and scholars have discussed a variety of purposes for this. Phyllis Culham argues that the laws are primarily sumptuary in nature and used to maintain social control over women. She asserts that "restrictions reduce women's freedom to use and display wealth, and do this to maintain social control over women; and, indeed, the religious rites themselves appear to be another means to that end."[54] Gawlinski argues the opposite and says that these laws were not sumptuary but "the goal of such clothing regulations was an outward display of

conformity which serve to create a sense of community."[55] This reflects current dress theory in which it is believed that "Dressing in conformity with one's community not only expresses already agreed-upon communal values, but also instills those very values through an embodied performance."[56] I have discussed some of the possible rationales for each type of clothing regulation, and none of them can be understood with just one explanation as clothing sent a variety of messages.

Daniel Ogden moves in this direction when he lists ten potential rationalizations for dress restrictions at Andania.[57] Among these, he includes sumptuary control, restricting competitive displays of wealth, the creation of group conformity, and maintaining social hierarchies, all of which have been discussed so far. He also includes that the regulation may have promoted female chastity and modesty, both for the sake of men and to honour the divine. He adds to this list the idea that these regulations maintain customs which would have existed both within this cult and kept the clothing regulations in line with those traditional dress standards for religious rituals in ancient Greece. Gawlinski's idea that that the regulations for women both restricted their spending but also encouraged it as the limits were set so high, should be added to this list as well.[58]

All in all, the Sacred Law of Andania is held to be a Greek cultic clothing regulation which reflected normative dress customs for religious purposes in the ancient Greek world. It is also clear that there is no one explanation for why these regulations exist, but that each individual regulation may represent a series of interconnected goals and beliefs held in the ancient world. Dress regulations such as these can be used as a window for the scholar to better understand the social world of those they study.

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[53] John Breton Connelly, *Portrait of a Priestess: Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007), 90.

[54] Culham, "Again, What Meaning Lies in Colour!" *ZPE* 64 (1986): 238.

[55] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 110.

[56] Batten, *Dressing the Judeans and Christians in Antiquity*, 8.

[57] Daniel Ogden, *Women's Dress in the Ancient Greek World*, edited by Lloyd Llewellyn Jones (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 2002), 210.

[58] Gawlinski, *The Sacred Law of Andania: A New Text with Commentary*, 121.

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# The Myth and Reality of Homeric Seafaring

## BRANDON FRANCIS

Odysseus' epic journey home from Troy has fascinated readers and Homeric scholars for centuries due to its fantastical setting, mythological creatures, and fictional technologies. Throughout the epic many recurring themes appear but predominant among them are hospitality and loyalty. Though Homer's *Odyssey* has many such themes, the sea, 'θάλασσα'and seafaring underscore the entire poem. The epic narrates Odysseus' obstacles while sailing. Ultimately, it is the unpredictability of the weather at sea which triggers his wanderings throughout the Mediterranean. Most scholars agree that dismissing everything recorded in Homer's epics as being mythology or fiction is a mistake. It is the job of a Homeric scholar to separate myth from what is rooted in actuality, and it is increasingly becoming irrefutable that historical fact can be found in both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. It must be conceded that mythical aspects are prominent; for example, the gods intervene and fight on the battlefield at Troy among mortals. Conversely, it is accepted that Homer's *Iliad* is based on an actual event that took place at Troy. If Homer has based his *Iliad* on reality, it is therefore reasonable to assert that the *Odyssey* can also proffer historical truths. This paper will argue that Homer sets seafaring as the premise for his *Odyssey* because seafaring was an integral part of Homeric society. The seafaring premise reflects the fact that Homer was drawing on two different worlds: a mythical reflection of the turbulent Late Bronze Age, and his own contemporary time, which was a period of exploration and colonization.

Seafaring is one aspect of historical reality which we can extract from Homer's poems, that can unveil a fundamental aspect of contemporary Homeric society. The problem with examining both works for historical validity, is the difficult questions which arise before one can begin to examine the depiction of seafaring presented in the Homeric epics. These are problematic issues I call the 'Big' questions. One such problematic question is whether or not the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* had been written by the same person. The first concern pertains to the author who may have been a historical figure, or may have been a myth himself.[1] Further difficulty arises with dating any epic to a specific period, because it may be that it evolved over time through oral tradition. These questions, however, are not the concern of this paper. Accepting the traditional standpoint of Homeric belief, that Homer was one man who wrote both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, this paper will show that nautical scenes in the *Odyssey* reflect an accurate Bronze Age past and provide scholarly insight into Homeric society.

Homer created a setting for his epic which reflected his own time, one relatable to his audience, as well as one which drew on a shared mythical past, all of which provided a heroic appeal. As a result, the *Odyssey* is a mix of these two different, but not unrelated, worlds. For Homer, the mythical past can be dated to what is now referred to as the Late Bronze Age (if the archaeological evidence for a Trojan war is to be believed).[2] The historian Herodotus is the earliest to date Homer: "For I believe that Hesiod and Homer were contemporaries who lived no more than 400 years before my time."[3] Herodotus' estimate places Homer around 850BC and with a little flexibility it is reasonable to place him around 750BC, where there is a general agreement among Homeric scholars.[4] Some of the seafaring experiences in Homer's *Odyssey* reflect

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[1] For an argument that Homer was not the name of a real poet but was instead made up from a variety of authors see M.L. West, "Invention of Homer," *The Classical Quarterly* 49, no.2 (1999): 364-382.

[2] Some scholars argue Heinrich Schliemann's Troy at Hisarlik is not the Troy of Homer. See Frank Kolb, "Troy VI: A Trading Center and Commercial City?" *American Journal of Archaeology* 108, no.4 (2004): 577-613. Kolb ultimately argues that archaeological evidence at Troy shows remarkable poverty and that Troy VI may not have been a city at all.

[3] Herodotus, *The Landmark Herodotus: The Histories*, ed. Robert B. Strassler, trans. Andrea L. Purvis (New York: Pantheon Books, 2007), 2.53.2. Original Greek is Ἡσίοδον γὰρ καὶ Ὅμηρον ἡλικίην τετρακοσίοισι ἔτεσι δοκέω μευ πρεσβυτέρους γενέσθαι καὶ οὐ πλέοσι. Adopted from Oxford Classical Texts.

[4] Samuel Mark, *Homeric Seafaring*, (Texas A&M University Press, 2005), 16.

practices, structures, and beliefs of both worlds; the mythical past and Homer's contemporary time.

Before examining Homer's description of ships, it is important to look at Late Bronze Age archaeology to better understand what seafaring was like in the Aegean. The archaeology for this period reveals a world extensively connected through commercial trade. The Ulu-Burun is one of the earliest shipwrecks to be found at open sea. Discovered off the coast of Turkey, it revealed a treasury of artifacts dated to the late 14th BC.[5] The discovery includes a variety of materials ranging from jewelry, pottery, ingots, and weapons of Mycenaean, Cypriot, and Near Eastern origin.[6] A 1985 study pinpointed the Ulu-Burun's trade route sailing from east to west based on a comparison of artifacts found on the vessel to those found on mainland sites.[7] The Ulu-Burun's hull had been designed to carry tons of cargo intended for trade, and based on this it can be classified as a merchant ship. It is the earliest known vessel to be constructed with mortise-and-tenon joints (Figure 1a).[8] Whether a trade vessel with a cargo hull and mortise-and-tenon joints could be the type of ship Homer was trying to depict is debatable. It is conceivable and logical that the earliest war vessels were simply merchant vessels used to transport troops.[9] However, there is literary evidence that Odysseus' vessels were not similar to the mortise-and-tenon Ulu-Burun ship, but were instead of laced construction (Figure 1b).
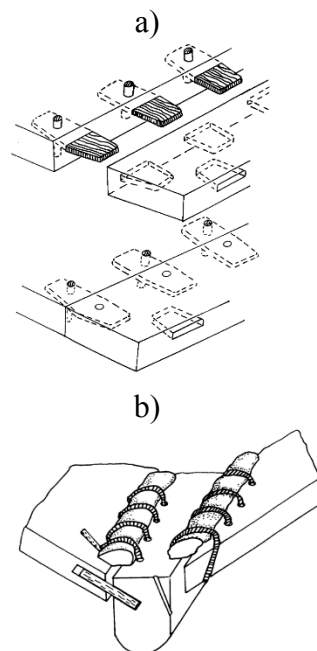


Figure 1: a) Mortise and Tenon Joint Construction Method b) Laced Construction[10]

Evidence for laced vessels can be found in both epics. In the *Iliad* Homer wrote, "καὶ δὴ δοῦρα σέσηπε νεῶν καὶ σπάρτα λέλυνται."[11] The word 'σπάρτα' from the nominative 'σπάρτον' can be translated as rope, cord, or cable;[12] all of which indicate a laced vessel. More significant is the detailed passage in the *Odyssey* of how Odysseus builds a vessel, assisted by Kalypso:

> He threw down twenty in all, and trimmed them well with his bronze ax, and planed them expertly, and trued them straight to a chalkline. Kalypso, the shinning goddess, at that time came back, bringing him an auger, and he bored through them all and pinned them together with dowels, and then with cords he lashed his raft together.[13]

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[5] Simon Hornblower, Anthony Spawforth, and Esther Eidinow, ed., *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* 3rd ed (Oxford University Press, 2012), 1360.

[6] Cemal Pulak, "The Bronze Age Shipwreck at Ulu Burun, Turkey: 1985 Campaign," *American Journal of Archaeology* 92, no.1 (1988): 1.

[7] Pulak, "The Bronze Age Shipwreck at Ulu Burun, Turkey: 1985 Campaign", 2.

[8] Mark, *Homeric Seafaring*, 30.

[9] Lionel Casson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times*, (New York: Macmillan Company, 1959): 27.

[10] Mark, Samuel. *Homeric Seafaring*. Texas A&M University Press, 2005.

[11] Hom.Il.2:135. Original Greek from, Homer, *Homeric Opera in five volumes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1920).

[12] As is translated in the LSJ.

[13] Hom.*Od*.5.244-248. For the whole boat building passage read Hom.*Od*.5.234-261.

When the tools, stages, and construction method are considered, the type of vessel Homer describes seems to be a laced one.[14] The etymology of the passage has stirred a dispute among scholars as to whether the vessel Odysseus created was a raft or an improvised boat.[15] Regardless, the craft remains of laced construction and bears no great mortise-and-tenon joint hull. Therefore, it seems unlikely that Homeric crafts are similar to 14th BC merchant vessels like the Ulu-Burun. Homeric ships have more in common with other trade vessels such as the one depicted on the tomb of Kenamon[16] (Figure 2) which shows a Phoenician vessel coming in for trade at an Egyptian harbor.[17]

Figure 2: Tomb of Kenamon Illustration. Phoenician Vessels coming into Egyptian port.[18]

The Ulu-Burun trade vessel does not only give us insight into Bronze Age shipbuilding, but it also provides an indirect link to another world -- one in which the Aegean was not solely preoccupied with trade. The Ulu-Burun, dated to 1306 BC, is almost contemporary with the infamous Amarna Letters of Egypt from the 1350s-1330s BC. The Letters describe an unpleasant seafaring world, plagued with sea rovers disrupting commerce and conducting raids. Some of the tablets record this precarious situation as it confronted Byblos, one of Egypt's commercial allies. The local princeling who ruled Byblos and nearby Smyrna wrote to the Pharaoh Akhenaten in his new capital at Amarna, begging for aid because ships blockaded his harbor and were disrupting grain supply.[19] He further details how these ships were able to capture his own ships, and had proved to be successful in hit-and-run tactics including penetrating into Syrian territory and killing the local ruler there.[20] The Amarna Letters provide a clue into the nature of the coastal world during the Late Bronze Age which Homer tried to capture in his epics. The sea rovers' ability to steal ships and disrupt commerce suggests piracy was prevalent in the Bronze Age Aegean Sea. In addition to piracy, their skill in penetrating deep in-land by sea suggests a marauding culture eerily similar to the distant Vikings. Further evidence will indicate that the depiction of Odysseus' vessel matches the practical needs of a nautical warlike culture, similar to the sea rovers described beforehand which disrupted trade in the Aegean.

An Aegean marauding culture can be seen in the art and archaeology of the Late Bronze Age. A recent examination of a pictorial shard from Ashkelon (Figure 3), [21] a 13th century BC Mycenaean product, illustrates the feet of a man standing on what appears to be a bird's head.
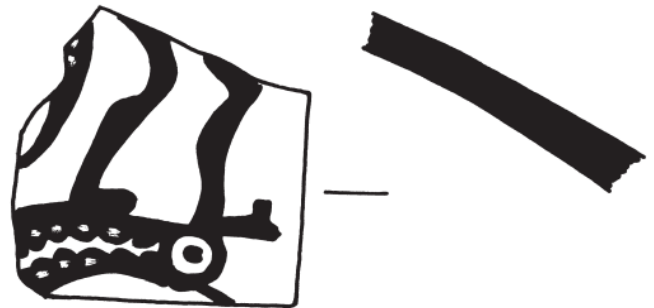
Figure 3: Ashkelon Sherd (scale 1:1).[22]

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[14] Mark, *Homeric Seafaring,* 35.

[15] Debate based on the word σχεδιη over the more common word for ship νηυσ. Some scholars have noted that σχεδιη means raft, but Mark argues that it simply means an improvised vessel.

[16] Kenamon was an official under Pharaoh Amenhotep III and was in charge of commerce in the Levant. Thus, the tomb painting depicting trade in a harbor is fitting to his position.

[17] Casson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times,* 19.

[18] Casson, Lionel. *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1959.

[19] Csson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times,* 29-30.

[20] Casson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times,* 30. The Syrian territory was called Amurri and the local leader killed was Abdi-Ashirta.

[21] Ashkelon was an important seaport on the coast of what is modern day Israel.

[22] Mountjoy, P.A. "A Bronze Age Ship from Ashkelon with Particular Reference to the Bronze Age Ship from Badegedigi

Figure 5: Kynos Krater. (Mountjoy).

The scene depicted is only part of a larger scene which shows a man standing on a bird-head ornament of a large ship.[23] The ship depicted on this shard is more elaborate in decoration than Homeric ships. Homer describes a more basic prow solidly painted such as 'darkprowed,'[24] though this does not mean bird-stemmed ships did not exist in the era which Homer is drawing on. Homer may have chosen the 'κυανόπρωρος' epithet simply because dark prows were more common than elaborate bird-shaped prows. Furthermore, a comparison with two other nautical scenes on the Bademgedigi Tepe krater (Figure 4) and the Kynos krater (Figure 5) in the same study as the Ashkelon shard, reveal a similar scene in which a warrior stands on the prow of a ship.[25]
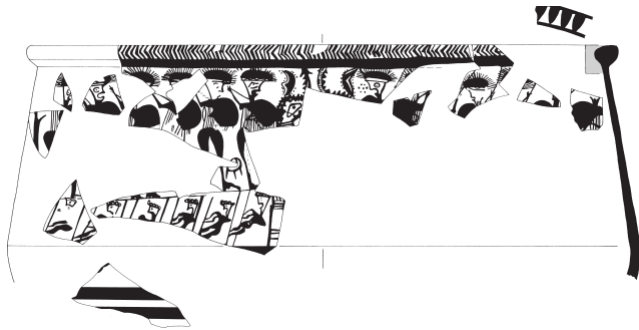

Figure 4: Bademgedigi Tepe Ships. (Mountjoy).



The examination concluded that the scenes illustrate piracy in which warriors on prows are prepared to jump onto another ship to either commandeer it or to steal its cargo.[26] Therefore, the material evidence's date, location, and interpretation all point to piracy in the Bronze Age Aegean.

Another significant piece of physical evidence of a sea-based naval culture is the naval procession on the fresco from the West House in Akrotiri (Figure 6).
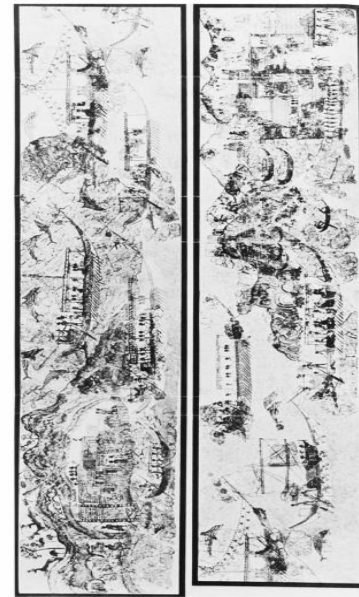

Figure 6: Naval Procession on the fresco from the West House, Akrotiri, Thera.[27]

The ships depicted are long, with either oars or paddles, an elaborate stern and prow, and a sail. A 1984 interpretation by Dr. Avner Raban, a marine archaeologist and expert of maritime civilizations, suggests that these vessels were designed to perform a dual function of commercial trade and a type of warfare.[28] The study indicates that the primary use of the ships would have been for robbery and piracy. The study points to a scene in the fresco as evidence

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Tepe." *American Journal of Archaeology* 115, no.3 (2011): 483-488.

[23] P.A. Mountjoy, "A Bronze Age Ship from Ashkelon with Particular Reference to the Bronze Age Ship from Badegedigi Tepe," *American Journal of Archaeology* 115, no.3 (2011): 483.

[24] The Greek terminology for this is κυανόπρωρος and an example can be seen at Hom.Od.9.482.

[25] Mountjoy, "A Bronze Age Ship from Ashkelon with Particular Reference to the Bronze Age Ship from Badegedigi Tepe", 484-485.

[26] Mountjoy, "A Bronze Age Ship from Ashkelon with Particular Reference to the Bronze Age Ship from Badegedigi Tepe", 487.

[27] Raban, Avner. "The Thera Ships: Another Interpretation." *American Journal of Archaeology* 88, no.1 (1984): 11-19.

[28] Avner Raban, "The Thera Ships: Another Interpretation," *American Journal of Archaeology* 88, no.1 (1984): 11.

that the troops' objective for disembarking from the ships is the flocks outside the city, and not the city itself.[29] This interpretation makes sense considering the objective of any raiding culture would be easily accessible loot, which includes livestock. Homer may not be the only one to have created stories based on this tradition. An eerily similar narrative is found in the Argo, a story about a group of men travelling overseas to get the Golden Fleece, which is likely an epithet meaning rich livestock. Resorting to marauding makes practical sense because the harsh Greek and Aegean landscape did not offer much by means of pasture and prosperity. Due to the terrain they inhabited, the Greeks could not have been self-sufficient.[30] Although the Akrotiri fresco dates to before the 1600s BC, there are similarities between Homer's ships and it has been suggested that these Minoan vessels were the prototype for the Mycenaean ships Homer was depicting.[31] This is convincing, considering the amount of contact the Mycenaeans and Minoans had. It has been argued that there has been a Mycenaean presence on Thera as early as LH 1 period.[32] Furthermore, by 1450 BC the Mycenaeans dominated the Aegean, filling the power vacuum left by the Minoans and even occupied Crete.[33] Out of the many influences the two cultures borrowed from one another, it is easy to imagine that seafaring and boatbuilding traditions were taken up by the Mycenaeans.

With the knowledge that Homer was inspired by Cretan and Minoan nautical culture, we can compare the practicality of Homeric ships for piracy and raiding. Homer commonly uses epithets to describe his ships, which provide clues to the build and function of the vessel. The first epithet is the swift,

'θοός' ship, which was likely emphasizing an attribute useful to a marauding culture. Homer emphasizes the vessel's speediness because marauders needed to be quick for overcoming other ships. Furthermore, the success of a raid depended on quickly approaching a target on land and withdrawing equally fast before an enemy could counter-attack. The hollow-ships, 'κοιλης,'[34] epithet refers to an undecked vessel. An undecked ship is practical for sea rovers who need open space on their vessel to store the spoils they steal. This is unlike the later decked trireme of the Classical period which had less space because its sole function was warfare and not the quick extraction of loot. Therefore, the Homeric undecked ship more closely resembles the 1984 interpretation of the Thera vessels, which suggests a dual-functionality of trade and piracy.[35] Lastly, the darkprowed, 'κυανόπρωρος,' epithet matches descriptions of Bronze Age ships as mentioned in relation with the Ashkelon shard. Moreover, the coloring of the prow as dark may have been intentionally used to indicate signs of hostility, furtherer imitating Minoan craft.[36]

Besides epithets, Homeric ships also resemble the means of propulsion to the vessels depicted on the Akrotiri fresco. Both rely on sails for wind power but can also be oared to navigate near the land and without wind.[37] This is extremely practical for a marauding culture considering their targets might be situated more in-land for protection away from the open sea. Additionally, Homer's epics distinguish at least, but not limited to, two different ships; the 20-oared and the 50-oared galley. Evidence for the 20-oared ship can be seen in Homer's *Iliad*: "But the son of Atreus drew a fast ship down to the water and allotted into it twenty rowers and put on board it the hecatomb for the god and Chryseis of the fair cheeks

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[29] Raban, "The Thera Ships: Another Interpretation", 18.

[30] Mark, 18. A comparison can be drawn with the Vikings of Scandinavia. Although separated by more than a millennia, the Greeks and Vikings shared a similar circumstance. The harsh landscape forced Vikings to embark upon sea voyages to raid distant lands in order to sustain themselves.

[31] Casson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times,* 41.

[32] Jacques Vanschoonwinkel, "Mycenaean Expansion," in *Greek Colonisation Volume 1: An Account of Greek Colonies and Other Settlements Overseas*, ed. Gocha R. Tsetskhladze (Leiden: Brill Press, 2006): 42.

[33] Casson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times,* 31.

[34] Example at Ody.11.508.

[35] Raban, "The Thera Ships: Another Interpretation",  11.

[36] Raban, "The Thera Ships: Another Interpretation", 16. Raban suggests that Ornamental additions and colors may have served to announce the intentions of the vessels. For example, a vessel whose aim was trade would display signs of peace. However, if it was hostile the vessel would display a foreboding sign to its enemies. It has even been argued that some vessels may have used this to their advantage by tricking other vessels into thinking they were friendly by displaying a trade sign but then attacking at the last minute.

[37] Raban, "The Thera Ships: Another Interpretation", 18.

leading her by the hand."[38] This type of ship seems similar to the ships illustrated on a relief from the Temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu, which depicts a sea battle between the Sea Peoples and the Egyptians (Figure 7).
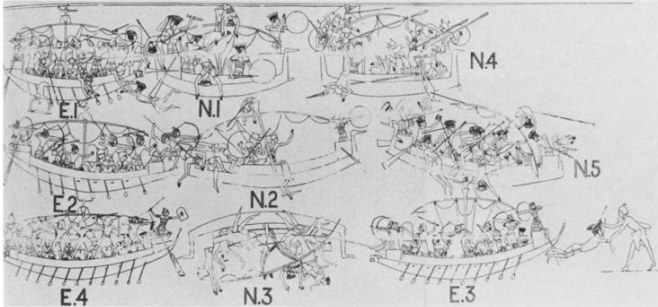


Figure 7: Battle between Egyptian Forces and the Sea Peoples from a relief in the Temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu. (Raban).

Odysseus' ship can reasonably be deduced to be a 50-oared galley by the number of men Homer describes in his company during a council on Circe's island: "I counted off all my strong-grieved companions into two divisions, and appointed a leader for each, I myself taking one, while godlike Eurylochos had the other. Promptly then we shook the lots in a brazen helmet, and the lot of great-hearted Eurylochos sprang out. He then went on his way, and with him two-and-twenty companions, weeping, and we whom left behind were mourning also."[39] Two divisions of this number equal forty-four troops. Taking into consideration the six companions which had been slayed by the Cyclopes Polyphemus, a total number of fifty troops is calculated. Odysseus' 50-oared vessel is likely to have been inspired from the 50-oared vessels depicted on the Akrotiri vessel. Therefore, Homer's description of his Mycenaean ships are likely to have been similar to those of the Minoans, which were built for speed and maneuverability.

Literary evidence for piracy and marauding in the Aegean Bronze Age is found in the introduction of Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Thucydides' interest in ancient seafaring practices is not surprising since he is concerned with the rise and fall of naval empires or 'thalassocracies', including

the Athenian naval empire of his own day. Therefore, he chronologically starts his work with what he claims to have been the first thalassocracy of the Aegean, the Minoans under Minos.[40] Minos is credited by Thucydides for doing his best to put down piracy, which he indicates was a common and not dishonorable thing:

> For in early times the Hellenes and the barbarians of the coast and islands, as communication by sea became more common, were tempted to turn pirates, under the conduct of their most powerful men; the motives being to serve their own greed and to support the needy. They would fall upon a town unprotected by walls, and consisting of a mere collection of villages, and would plunder it; indeed, this came to be the main source of their livelihood, no disgrace being yet attached to such an achievement, but even some glory. An illustration of this is furnished by the honor with which some of the inhabitants of the continent still regard a successful marauder, and by the question we find the old poets everywhere representing the people as asking of voyagers—'Are they pirates?'—as if those who are asked the question would have no idea of disclaiming the imputation, or their interrogators of reproaching them for it. The same pillaging prevailed also on land.[41]

Thucydides is writing a literary account of the past which echoes the ancient seafaring culture Homer was drawing from for his epics. Thucydides further attributes the next great naval empire to Agamemnon, and seems to insinuate that the Trojan War was a prolonged raid of the Chersonese until the fall of Troy.[42] Thucydides' literary testimony is

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[38] Homer, *Iliad,* The Iliad of Homer, intro and trans, Richmond Lattimore. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961. 1:8-1.
[39] Hom.*Od.*10.203-209.

[40] Thuc.1.4

[41] Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War, ed. Robert B. Strassler, trans. Richard Crawley (New York: Simon Schuster, 1998),.1.5.

[42] Thuc.1.11. It can be argued that a prolonged ten-year raid is contrary to the idea of the easy and lucrative typical snatch and grab marauding. However, another comparison to the distant Viking culture reveals a similar scenario. The combined Norse invasion of England from 865 to 878AD had the intent of

important evidence that suggests there was a recognized mythical past: that of piracy and marauding among Classical Greeks.

The most important evidence for the reality of Bronze Age Aegean seafaring must come from Homer himself, and this is most clear in the *Odyssey*. After Odysseus returned to Ithaka twenty years later, looking aged and ragged, he received hospitality from a local swineherd. Intent on keeping his identity concealed, Odysseus recounted a false tale of his life when asked by the swineherd. He claimed he was a sea raider from Crete, had served in the Trojan War, and had led an unsuccessful raid against Egypt:

> On the fifth day we reached the abundant stream Aigyptos, and I stayed my oarswept ships inside the Aigyptos River. Then I urged my eager companions to stay where they were, there close to the fleet, and to guard the ships, and was urgent with them to send look-outs to the watching places; but they, following their own impulse, and giving way to marauding violence, suddenly began plundering the Egyptians' beautiful fields, and carried off the women and innocent children, and killed men, and soon the outcry came to the city.[43]

Although the tale Odysseus gives as his cover story is a lie, it is nonetheless based on something of real historic value. Odysseus is successful in making the swineherd believe his story. To have done so, Odysseus must have told him a story which was believable or commonplace enough to be believed. As the scholar Lionel Casson puts it, "Odysseus deliberately chose to tell something the listener would nod knowingly at, something so everyday that

his suspicions would never be aroused."[44] Odysseus' tale is what I would call the 'Authentic Lie,' a false story based on the realities of ancient seafaring. Therefore, Homer does give evidence that piracy and marauding existed in the mythical past he was trying to depict.

Two further examples from the *Odyssey* support the argument that Homer's epic was based on the nautical culture of the mythical past. After Odysseus and his crew departed Troy they conducted a raid against the Kikonians in Northern Thrace: "From Ilion the wind took me and drove me ashore at Ismaros by the Kikonians. I sacked their city and killed their people, and out of their city taking wives and many possessions we shared them out, so none might go cheated of his proper portion."[45] Additionally, Menelaus told Telemachos of all the places he raided on the way home from Troy: "Much did I suffer and wandered much before bringing all this [the treasures he looted] home in my ships when I came back in the eighth year. I wandered to Cyprus and Phoenicia, to the Egyptians, I reached the Aithiopians, Eremboi, Sidonians, and Libya where the rams grow their horns quickly."[46] Therefore, Homer is actively drawing on the reality of piracy and marauding in the Bronze Age for the setting of his epics.

Piracy was no doubt still present in Homer's own day, but it was not the dominant way of life anymore. Homer was able to evoke this mythical past by drawing on the crucial reality that defined the Late Bronze Age, which had been passed down orally through generations to Homer's own time in the mid-8th century BC. It would be a similar comparison for us today in creating fantasies based on Medieval times with lords and ladies and castles. Besides the Late Bronze Age, the *Odyssey* can further tell us about Homer's own day and the historical realities directly relevant to his time. For this, it is necessary to examine what was going on in the Aegean world in the Archaic 8th century BC.

Homer lived in a time that had recently recovered from a crisis commonly known as the Late Bronze Age Collapse. Theories for this collapse vary from

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conquering, which was a drastic change from their traditional small, short-lived, hit-and-run tactic raids. The Norse kingdoms assembled together in order to participate in a prolonged invasion of England, deviating from their traditional marauding practices just as the Greek kingdoms did against Anatolia.

[43] Homer, *The Odyssey*, The Odyssey of Homer, intro and trans, Richmond Lattimore (Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2007): Hom.Od.14.257-265. Further Translations from this work will be referenced by Classical abbreviation of original author.

[44] Casson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times,* 44.

[45] Hom.*Od*.9.40-42.

[46] Hom.*Od*.4.81-85.

migrations, violent external forces, economic disruption, natural disasters, disease, and climatic change.[47] This collapse has been popular among scholars and has published recent works such as Eric H. Cline's *1177BC: The Year Civilization Collapsed*. Cline examines among other things whether the notorious Sea Peoples, similar to Homeric marauders, were responsible for the collapse. Ultimately, Cline's view is that these Sea Peoples may have been as much the victims of this turbulent period as the oppressors.[48] Regardless, Homer lived during a time in which piracy and marauders like the Sea Peoples were on the wane and prosperous commercial trade was recovering. Moreover, if Homer lived around the mid-8th century BC, then he belonged to an age of exploration, new geographical knowledge, and enrichment.[49] Homer belonged to the period of Great Colonization in which the Aegean and seafaring were prominent. These historical realities of his own day, besides his mythical past, were also incorporated in his epics.

Colonization in the Archaic period witnessed organized overseas expeditions by city-states to new lands over the Mediterranean and Black sea. Two of the earliest colonies founded were Al-Mina in Syria and Cumae in the Bay of Naples, dating to the first half of the eighth century.[50] The most desired location was Italy and Sicily, which were bombarded with new colonies by the end of the eighth century, such as Syracuse in 734 BC and Tarentum in 706 BC.[51] Contact and trade between the Italian peninsula and environs with the Aegean world was no doubt an exciting and definable moment for this period. Archaeology has even

unearthed the earliest inscription in the Greek alphabet on a local vase from Italy dating to around 770 BC.[52] Many colonialists were sailing to these unfamiliar and promising lands for different reasons. Some were sent against their will as a practical way for the city-state to exile undesirables — much like the settlement of modern Australia -- a response to overpopulation of the mother city-state.[53] However, the more likely scenario is that people went on their own free will for the chance of prosperity. Surely the motivation for many was the desire for this unclaimed land, more fertile and desirable over the harsh landscape that is Greece.[54] For Homer the colonization frenzy of the mid 8th century BC was the perfect inspiration for the *Odyssey*; a tale based on overseas travels to distant and unfamiliar lands relevant to the realities of his own day. Some, as Lionel Casson puts it, probably traveled to these distant lands just for sheer adventure, and further states that it is no wonder why the Greeks made the *Odyssey* one of their national epics, since the Greeks were wanderers at heart.[55]

Homer did more than pick a topic relevant and popular due to the realities of exploration and colonization in his own time. He more than likely created his stories and locations based off stories which he was told. Homer, a bard believed to have lived in Smyrna,[56] could not have asked for a better location to be a recipient for these stories. Ancient Smyrna was prime real estate for commerce and was part of a rich trade route between Anatolia and the Aegean from the second half of the eighth century onwards.[57] It is easy to imagine that locations such as that, without the modern newspaper, were

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[47] A. Bernard Knapp and Sturt W. Manning, "Crisis in Context: The End of the Late Bronze Age in the Eastern Mediterranean," *American Journal of Archaeology* 120, no.1 (2016): 99.

[48] Eric H. Cline, *1177BC: The Year Civilization Collapsed* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014): 138. Pressures such as climate change may have forced these peoples to marauding out of necessity.

[49] Gocha Tsetskhladze, "Introduction: Revisiting Ancient Greek Colonization," in *Greek Colonisation Volume 1: An Account of Greek Colonies and Other Settlements Overseas*, ed. Gocha R. Tsetskhladze (Leiden: Brill Press, 2006): lxii.

[50] Mary E. White, "Greek Colonization," *The Journal of Economic History* 21, no.4 (1961): 445.

[51] Tsetskhladze, "Introduction: Revisiting Ancient Greek Colonization.", lxiii.

[52] Tsetskhladze, "Introduction: Revisiting Ancient Greek Colonization.", lxiv.

[53] Jonathan M. Hall, *A History of the Archaic Greek World Ca. 1200-479BC,* 3rd ed (Wiley-Blackwell: Blackwell Publishing, 2014): 121.

[54] Hall, *A History of the Archaic Greek World Ca. 1200-479BCE* , 120.

[55] Casson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times,* 73-74.

[56] Mark, *Homeric Seafaring,* 176. Many scholars such as Mark believe Homer lived for a time in ancient Smyrna based on Homer's accurate descriptions of Lydia and specifically the mountains behind Smyrna.

[57] J.M. Cook, "Old Smyrna, 1948-1951," *The Annual British School at Athens* 53/54 (1958/59): 14.

hotspots for news, stories, and rumors coming from all types of foreigners. Because people were colonizing new lands far to the west and into the Black Sea, and trade was becoming increasingly commonplace, stories of these new lands would have been commonplace as well. Therefore, Homer most likely based the wanderings of Odysseus on the accounts of other seafarers and traders coming into the port town of Smyrna.[58] Tales of Odysseus coming into contact with the native inhabitants of distant lands such as the lotus-eaters may be based off of perceptions and tales told by traders. There is no doubt that Greek colonists came into contact with native inhabitants during their expeditions, which may have seemed strange and barbarian to them in their beliefs and practices. Moreover, contact may have been welcomed by the inhabitants or they may have resisted. Besides the stories, Homer's location at Smyrna could also explain his intimate knowledge of ships and seafaring. Homer's detailed boat building passage could be based off his own observations at the dockyard.[59]

It is conceivable that Homer existed during the time of great colonization because it explains his conception of geography. Many scholars have attempted to track Odysseus' wanderings on a map and have come up with theories locating him around the Mediterranean, the Black Sea, the West coast of Africa, and even Cuba.[60] The trouble arises from Homer's vague accounts of geography while Odysseus is at sea. For example, Homer loses his readers geographically when a north wind blows Odysseus' ship off course after rounding Cape Maleia for nine days and nine nights to the land of the Lotus-Eaters.[61] Moreover, it is hard to distinguish what places are real and which are a product of the bard's imagination, which was likely Homer's intention. Appropriate with the colonial mood of his day, the farther Odysseus went, the more unfamiliar, strange, and exotic things got. This would have been similar to stories that seafarers might have shared in harbor towns like Smyrna. It is even reasonable to suggest that an invented location

in Homer was inspired from many real ones. For example, Homer's Charybdis and its perils were drawn on seafarers' experiences sailing through the Straits of Messina between Italy and Sicily and through the Dardanelles leading into the Black Sea.[62] Homer's primary audience as a bard might have been traders coming into port for the night, and they would have appreciated Odysseus' seafaring troubles like those through Charybdis, because they could relate from their own experiences. Altogether, it makes Odysseus' wandering at sea very attractive for entertainment.

In conclusion, Homer's epics and the *Odyssey* in particular reveal much about ancient seafaring. Homer draws on both his own mythical past and nautical culture of his own day to create his masterpieces. Late Bronze Age art and archaeology such as the Ulu-Burun shipwreck, the Armana Letters, the Ashkelon shard, and the Akrotiri fresco propose evidence for an Aegean world dominated by a marauding nautical culture. The oar swept vessels Homer illustrates seem to coincide less with the merchant ships like the Ulu-Burun and more with the swift and long dual functionality of Minoan vessels. Thucydides' testimony of ancient piracy combined with Odysseus' authentic lie further support this reality of the Late Bronze Age. Besides drawing on the realities of his own past, the theme of the *Odyssey* also reveals much about Homer's own contemporary time. Odysseus' wanderings is relevant to the colonization and exploration movement that dominated the mid-8th century BC. It is likely that though some of the people and places in the *Odyssey* are fiction, they were nonetheless conceived by Homer based on real stories seafarers were gossiping about in port towns like Smyrna. Therefore, by closely examining the seafaring subject matter of Homer's epics, a means of extracting the reality from the myth is possible.

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[59] Casson, *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times*, 39.

[60] Mark, *Homeric Seafaring,* 162-163.

[61] Hom.*Od*.9.79-86

[62] Mark, *Homeric Seafaring,* 165.

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# Herodotus the Scientist

## NICHOLAS GILL

Herodotus himself explains that he created the *Histories* "so that neither the things done by human beings become extinct in time."[1] However, his work is not only filled with the exploits of humans; it instead has a very broad scope, and includes many different subjects such as foreign peoples and their customs, as well as exotic lands and the fascinating animals which dwell there. Indeed, Redfield compares the curiosity of Herodotus to that of a tourist: "The greater the difference, the more the journey is worth the trip and the more worth collecting are the images, memories, and souvenirs that the tourist takes home with him."[2] These are what Herodotus describes as θώματα ("wonders"), and his explanations for these wonders demonstrate his connection with the Ionian natural philosophical tradition.[3]

Herodotus' work has particularly strong ties with the disciplines of geography and medicine. Though the Pre-Socratics discuss numerous topics, it is possible to pick out some traces of their work and influence in Herodotus. One such example is Herodotus' interest in geography, perhaps best demonstrated in the episode concerning the map of Aristagoras.[4] Herodotus frequently inserts geographical digressions into his narrative (there are six digressions of this type in Book I alone),[5] and after discussing the map he attacks it because—as Branscome states—"Map-makers are in a sense Herodotus' rivals as investigators in the field of geography. Just as ancient historians so often engage in polemic against their historiographic predecessors and rivals, the inquirer Herodotus here polemicizes against his geographical 'rivals.'"[6] The map gives him the opportunity to criticize Aristagoras and demonstrate his own geographical knowledge.[7]

Herodotus' medical digressions also demonstrate his participation to the Ionic scientific tradition.[8] Several Hippocratic texts (such as *On Tradition in Medicine*) date to the decade of Herodotus' work,[9] and Hippocrates himself lived in Cos.[10] More interesting are the instances in which Herodotus mentions a medical concept that is also examined in a Hippocratic text, such as the Scythian "female disease," which appears in both the *Histories* and *Airs, Waters, Places*.[11] Each of these texts refers to the Scythians as ἐνάρεας, which may be translated as "lacking manhood," or "impotent"—and they are later called ἀνδρόγυνοι,[12] which the LSJ defines as "man-women," "hermaphrodites," or "weak effeminate people."

The famous "sacred disease" also appears in both the *Histories* and the Hippocratic Corpus. In this passage, however, Herodotus' own analysis is present—and it matches that of the author of *On the Sacred Disease*:

> Thus was Cambyses mad against his own kindred, whether because of the Apis bull, or because of some other of the many calamities which tend to fall upon men; for they say that Cambyses suffered by heredity from a terrible disease, the disease which some call "sacred." For it is not likely that the mind should remain healthy when the body is suffering from illness.[13]

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[1] Hdt. 1.1. All translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

[2] James Redfield, "Herodotus the Tourist." *Classical Philology* 80.2 (1985), 100.

[3] Indeed, Thomas devotes an entire chapter to this concept. See Thomas 1999, 135-67.

[4] Hdt. 5.49-54. For a comprehensive discussion on this episode, see Branscome 2010.

[5] See Hdt. 1.72; 142; 149; 151; 178-84; and 202-3.

[6] Branscome, David. 2010. "Herodotus and the Map of Aristagoras." *Classical Antiquity* 29 (2010), 9.

[7] Hdt. 5.52-4.

[8] Some of the topics he includes are the variance of sperm color (3.101.1), the incidentals of surgery (6.134.2-136.3; 7.181.2; 9.22, 37.2-4, 72.2), and the names of the most prestigious schools in Greek medicine (3.131.3).

[9] See Lateiner 1986, n. 4 for the dating of this Hippocratic text.

[10] That is not to say that Hippocrates is the author of this particular text; the issues of authorship in the Hippocratic Corpus are well known. Nevertheless, the Hippocratic school on the island of Cos was near Halicarnassus.

[11] Hdt. 1.105; Hippoc. *Aer.* 22.

[12] Hdt. 4.67.

[13] Hdt. 3.33. Trans. Rosalind Thomas.

Not only does Herodotus point out the likelihood of a connection in the illness of the mind with the body, but he also draws attention to the hereditary nature of the "sacred disease." Cambyses suffered from the disease "by heredity." Inheritance is a major argument against the divine nature of the disease for the author of *On the Sacred Disease*, who states, "It begins like other diseases, from the family."[14] Since the disease comes from the family, he argues, how can it come from a god? Those who claim that the disease is sacred are therefore sacrilegious because no disease more sacred than any other; he argues that all diseases are equally divine and natural.[15]

Herodotus' interest in medicine does not, however, extend only to the Greek medical tradition; Book I includes a digression about Babylonian practitioners, and Book II contains one concerning Egyptian practitioners, as well as a lengthy discussion on embalmment.[16] Herodotus also mentions the practice of cautery, which is used by Libyan nomadic peoples;[17] he may have a special interest in cauterization because it is used as an ultimatum of medicine in Hippocratic Corpus—and especially in *Aphorisms*: "What drugs will not cure, the knife will; what the knife will not cure, the cautery will; what the cautery will not cure must be considered incurable."[18]

Libyans are also the healthiest people in the world in the *Histories*, *On the Sacred Disease*, and *Airs, Waters, Places*. Moreover, they are the healthiest because they use cauterization to prevent phlegm from descending from their head:

> For the Libyan nomads have the following custom, though whether they all do this I cannot say with certainty, but a great number of them do. When their children reach the age of four, they singe the veins on their heads with an oily tuft of sheep's wool, though some of them sear the veins of the temples instead. They do this to prevent them from suffering for the rest of their lives from phlegm flowing out of their heads, and they claim that this is why they are so healthy. Indeed, it is true that the Libyans are the healthiest of all peoples known to us, but whether it is because of this practice I cannot say with certainty; but surely they are the most healthy.[19]

Although Herodotus himself is unsure whether the Libyan practice of cauterization is responsible for their status as the healthiest of all men, he is sure that these nomads are in fact the healthiest of all men. Their healthy status is also a repeated observance in the context of Hippocratic medicine; the author of *On the Sacred Disease* uses the health of the Libyans to discredit the practitioners who believe that eating goats causes sickness: "I suppose none of the inhabitants of the interior of Libya can possibly be healthy seeing that they sleep on goat skins and eat goat meat."[20] The use of this example by a Hippocratic author suggests that the health of the Libyans is a well-known fact; he invokes this example to ridicule the physicians he attacks in his treatise.

Herodotus says the Libyans claim that phlegm is the cause for their illness. This may be an early instance of the four humors of Greek medicine (blood, yellow bile, black bile, and phlegm). Though these humors are not present in every Hippocratic treatise, they are one of the recurring characteristics of Hippocratic medicine.[21] Thomson suggests that Herodotus' mention of phlegm here is therefore

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[14] Hippoc. *Morb. sacr*. 2.

[15] Ibid: "I believe that this disease is not in the least more divine than any other but has the same nature as other diseases and a similar cause." Trans. J. Chadwick and W. N. Mann.

[16] See Hdt. 1.197 for the passage on Babylonian medicine. The prospect of bringing the sick into the marketplace is interesting—Babylonian medicine traditionally had two practitioners, the *mašmaššu* and the *asû*. The former functioned as a priest and an exorcist, whereas the latter was a travelling salesperson who set up shop in the marketplace. See Gellar 2010, 50-51. The passage on Egyptian medicine appears at Hdt. 2.84, and the passage on Egyptian embalment (mummification) immediately follows (2.85-90). According to Herodotus, the Egyptians are the only people with specified doctors. He also mentions several Egyptian health promoting habits (2.77.2-5), and remarks that Greek physicians are better than Egyptian physicians (3.129-130.3).

[17] Hdt. 4.187.2.

[18] Hippoc. *Aph*. 7.87. Trans. J. Chadwick and W. N. Mann. Other occurrences of cauterization in *Aphorisms* are found at 6.27, 60, and 7.44. The practice is also present in Hippoc. *Aer*. 11, 20.

[19] Hdt. 4.187.2-3. Trans. Andrea L. Purvis.

[20] Hippoc. *Morb. sacr*. 2. Trans. J. Chadwick and W. N. Mann.

[21] Hippoc. *VM*. 4 explicitly describes the four humors: blood, phlegm, yellow bile, and black bile.

indicative of his knowledge of Hippocratic medicines:

> Herodotus is at least using the technical vocabulary of the Hippocratics and accepting their preoccupations with the adverse effects of mucus[22] in the head . . . *On the Sacred Disease*, for instance, sees phlegm flowing from the brain as a main cause of epilepsy. [*Airs, Waters, Places*] talks about cities "exposed to hot winds" causing mucus in the head, and later deals with "phlegm descending from the brain because of moistness of (phlegmatic) constitutions. Later in [*Airs, Waters, Places*] in fact, we find the Scythians attributed with a similar practice of cauterization because of the moistness of their constitution. So Herodotus' remarks about the Libyans express the type of preoccupation with phlegm that is to be found in early medical writing—and also a solution, cauterization, that is attributed in another work, [*Airs, Waters, Places*], to the Scythians.[23]

The parallels of this passage with works in the Hippocratic Corpus clearly show Herodotus' knowledge of the Ionic medical tradition. Herodotus describes a people both he and the Hippocratics agree are extremely healthy (the Libyans) because they cure themselves of a Hippocratic ailment (phlegm in the head) caused by the area in which they live (the subject of the treatise *Airs, Waters, Places*) with a typical Hippocratic treatment (cauterization).

With all of the scientific aspects included in the *Histories*, it is plausible to assume that Herodotus thought of himself as a part of the Ionic scientific tradition, and perhaps had his own reputation as a natural philosopher. Herodotus, like the Ionian natural philosophers, covers a wide range of subject matter;[24] his preferred fields are evident in the

*Histories* through his many scholastic digressions, such as those on geography and medicine.

Ethnology and zoology are two other closely related fields that interest Herodotus. The *Histories* include many ethnographical digressions—especially those of exotic peoples.[25] One must not forget that Herodotus writes for a Greek audience, and he highlights monstrous peoples, strange customs, and foreign architecture precisely because they are different from what is found in Greece, and therefore interesting to both him and his audience. When he discusses these foreign peoples and places, Herodotus often launches into a discussion of the foreign fauna as well—and the more exotic the wildlife/animal life is, the more detail and time he devotes to it. Smith states that there are "804 total entries signifying fauna of some type [in the *Histories*, and that] no other ancient history of any people or war includes this many zoological references."[26] The *Histories* had an enormous influence on later works of zoology, and was "cited the most in zoological contexts before the works of Aristotle."[27]

Later authors repeat many of Herodotus' zoological observations;[28] even Aristotle, his harshest critic, repeats many of his observations. Herodotus was not likely entirely original in his work; his sources simply do not survive. Hecataeus was one of his major sources, especially for Egyptian history and fauna, and Herodotus' descriptions of both the crocodile and the phoenix are supposed to have come from him. Herodotus' most immediate zoological antecedent was Ctesias, who wrote a guidebook to India.[29] This work contained an account of Indian fauna, and repeated several of Herodotus' concepts—such as the larger size of animals in India compared to other parts of the world.[30] Ctesias cites specific examples of larger

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[22] Thomas uses "mucus" as a synonym for 'phlegm,' but the two may not be exactly the same.

[23] Thomas, Rosalind. 1999. *Herodotus in Context: Ethnography, Science, and the Art of Persuasion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 36. The citations for theses passages, in order, are Hippoc. *Morb. sacr*. 6; *Aer*. 3; 10; 20.

[24] Thales, supposedly believed that the principle element was water (Lloyd 1974, 18), but seems to have been also actively

involved in engineering (Hdt. 1.75), and, perhaps most famously, astronomy (Hdt. 1.74).

[25] See page 9 and following below.

[26] Smith 1992, 32-33.

[27] Ibid., 6.

[28] See Smith 1992, 149-202 for a thorough treatment of this topic.

[29] This work is lost, but an epitome of it is preserved by Photius in the 9th century. See Bigwood 1989.

[30] Hdt. 3.106.2.

animals in his account; a notable example is a giant worm that drags other animals into the Indus River to devour them.[31]

Despite the fact that Aristotle was a critic of Herodotus, he included many of Herodotus' observations in his own works[32]—including unexpected ones, such as the flying serpents of Arabia.[33] When Aristotle agrees with Herodotus' observation—as is the case with the flying serpents—he does not name his source, but the opposite occurs if Aristotle disagrees with Herodotus: "Fishermen tell the silly oft-repeated story about the conception of the fish, which we find in Herodotus the fable teller as well, how fish conceive by swallowing the milt; they do not perceive that this is impossible."[34] Aristotle harshly criticizes Herodotus here;[35] here he is a μυθολόγος, a "fable teller," which sharply contrasts with his purpose of ἱστορία, "historical narrative" or "inquiry."

After Aristotle, ancient authors treat Herodotus with more respect—Pliny, for example, follows Herodotus' observations unless they contrast with Aristotle. Pliny notes that a Herodotean story about lion reproduction is common knowledge in his time.[36] He states that "I see that most people that the lioness gave birth to a cub since her womb was lacerated by its sharp claws. Aristotle tells a different version, and since I think he ought to have first say in these matters I intend to follow him for the most part . . ."[37] Aristotle, unsurprisingly, was the foremost biologist of antiquity—but Smith argues that Pliny suggests that Herodotus is a close second:

But where Aristotle is silent, however, Pliny feels free to repeat even the most outlandish tales from Herodotus . . . [but] it is noteworthy that Pliny refers to the destruction of the lioness' womb as a popular notion because this shows that despite Aristotle's efforts the anecdote of Herodotus is still alive and thriving in Pliny's time.[38]

Herodotus' work therefore had both value and longevity in zoological circles. Pliny suggests that it was more widely read than the zoological works of Aristotle. This is likely due to the diverse content of the *Histories*: its inclusion of both academic subjects and fascinating stories encouraged its readability in antiquity, and caused it to be more readable than Aristotle's purely scholastic zoological texts.

That is not to say that Herodotus does not deal with zoology in an academic manner. As was previously noted, zoology is one of his subjects of interest. He uses his other research interests (geography, ethnology, and medicine)[39] to supplement his research into zoology. Herodotus uses these other disciplines as tools to sort the natural world into a readily relatable format for his audience; he presents the animals in his *Histories* as reflections of the peoples, places, or environments of the same geographic area. This trend becomes more extreme and distorted as he moves from the Ionian center to the fringes of the known world.

Herodotus' descriptions of the lands that are geographically close to Greece, specifically the Ionian coast and Lydia, the peoples, cultures, and faunas are very plausible.[40] Likewise, Herodotus' account of Persia is also not extraordinary, because

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[31] Phot. *Bibl*. 72.49a.

[32] Such as the crocodile (Hdt. 2.68.1-5; Arist. *Hist. an*. 492b24; 502b35-503a4; 503a8-14; 558a17-25; 612a20-23), and the hippopotamus (Hdt. 2.72; Arist. *Hist an*. 302a9-15).

[33] Hdt. 2.75-6; 3.107-9; Aris. *Hist. an*. 490a6-490a12.

[34] Arist. *Gen. an*. 756b5-16. Trans. Stephan Michael Smith.

[35] Smith writes, "Herodotus does not present his material—at least his material on the spawning of fish—as a folk tale or fable; he believes it himself and asserts its truth, thus drawing harsh criticism from Aristotle . . . Herodotus is therefore considered by Aristotle to be . . . dangerous . . . because he pretends to be writing facts and not mere 'stories.'" Smith 1992, 163.

[36] Hdt. 3.108.

[37] Plin. *HN*. 8.43. Trans. Stephen Michael Smith.

[38] Smith, Stephen Michael. 1992. "Herodotus' Use of Animals: A Literary, Ethnographic, and Zoological Study." Doctoral Thesis, The Ohio State University, 187.

[39] This is not a comprehensive list; rather, it is comprised of the major fields that he uses to analyze foreign fauna.

[40] Herodotus himself is from Halicarnassus—modern Bodrum in Turkey. Therefore, he would be more familiar with the fauna and history of that area. Likewise, since he is writing for a Greek audience, and needs to sustain his credibility, he seems to reserve his more fantastic tales of man-eaters (e.g. 4.106) and feathered serpents (2.75-6; 3.109) for more distant locales, such as Scythia and Arabia respectively.

he is quite familiar with Persian lands and customs.[41] Herodotus' descriptions of Egypt are more exotic and schematic. When Herodotus speaks about India, Arabia, Scythia, and Libya, he has fantastic observations: India is home to giant gold digging ants,[42] Arabia to the aforementioned frankincense-guarding flying serpents,[43] Scythia to werewolves,[44] and Libya to the Lotus Eaters of Homer's *Odyssey*.[45]

The *Histories* has four main zoological digressions: Book II includes a discussion of the fauna of Egypt;[46] Book III contains an overview of India and Arabia;[47] Book IV contains two digressions: the first is on Scythia,[48] and the second on Libya.[49] In addition to these major discussions, Book I also contains several scattered digressions on different faunas centered on the Ionian coast. I begin my examination with Greek, Persia, and Lydia in Book I, and move outwards to Egypt, before I end at the frontiers with India, Arabia, Scythia, and Libya.

The fauna of Greece receives hardly any attention from Herodotus. In general, however, the Greeks are often associated with fish or other sea creatures[50] because of their sea power, which stands in contrast with Persian land power:

> As soon as the Lydians had been conquered by the Persians, the Ionians and Aeolians sent messengers to Cyrus at Sardis to convey their wish to be subject to him on the same terms on which they had formerly been subject to Croesus. Cyrus heard their proposal and responded by telling them a story. There was a flute player, he said, who saw some fish in the sea and played his flute to them, thinking they would come out onto the land. But when his expectation proved to be mistaken, he took a fishing net, caught a great number of fish in it, and pulled them out of the sea. Then, watching the fish writhe and quiver on the ground, he said to them, "Stop dancing for me now, since you refused to come out and dance before, even when I played my flute for you." Cyrus told this story to the Ionians and Aeolians because they had refused to obey the messengers he had sent to them asking them to rebel, so since he had completed the Lydian affair without their help, he was quite angry that they should now be ready and willing to obey him.[51]

Herodotus explicitly implies that the Ionians are represented as the fish in this passage, and that Cyrus told them this story to demonstrate their behaviour to him. The Ionians did not revolt from Kroesus when Cyrus asked them to, just as the fish did not dance. When, however, Kroesus was conquered, the Ionians went to Cyrus and began to cooperate with him—again, like the fish, which began to dance once they were dragged ashore. This passage also highlights the land power of the Persians; the piper represents Cyrus himself, and he conquers the Greek sea power with land power by dragging them onto the land with his net.

Persian land power is represented through a variety of animals, and most notably the horse. Smith states that "the horse is used a symbol not only of Persian military power but of their land power in particular. The antithesis between Persian land power and Greek sea power was obvious to Herodotus and consequently we need not search for further symbolism which emphasizes this opposition."[52] As he says, the horse is most often associated with the Persians, and demonstrates their land power—but there are other instances where it performs the exact opposite. For example, Cyrus fears the cavalry of Kroesus because the Lydians are known for their excellent horsemanship.[53] This

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[41] Wiesehöfer, Josef. 2009. "Greeks and Persians." In *A Companion to Archaic Greece*, edited by Kurt A. Raaflaub and Hans van Wees, 162-185. Malden: Blackwell, 167-8.

[42] Hdt. 3.102-5.

[43] Hdt. 2.75-6; 3.107-9.

[44] Hdt. 4.105.

[45] Hdt. 4.177-8; *Od*. 9.82-104.

[46] Hdt. 2.66-76.

[47] Hdt. 3.98-114.

[48] Hdt. 4.17-36.

[49] Hdt. 4.168-99.

[50] Arian's dolphin (Hdt. 1.23-4) is a curious instance here. The animal seems to be associated with Greece and/or Italy, but its benevolent nature contrasts that of the Corinthians. Perhaps the episode only functions to describe Arian's bravery, and the dolphin is therefore a *deus ex machina*.

[51] Hdt. 1.141.1-4. Trans. Andrea L. Purvis.

[52] Smith . "Herodotus' Use of Animals: A Literary, Ethnographic, and Zoological Study.", 124.

[53] Hdt. 1.80.

episode, however, comes immediately after an omen in which horses represented the invading Persians and snakes represent the Lydians.[54] The issue is that the horse is an extremely common work animal in ancient Greece; therefore, it may be used to symbolize many different cultures.[55]

The animals of Lydia function to describe the similarities between the Greeks and the Lydians. As previously noted, the Lydians are described as snakes:

> As Croesus was attending to all this, the area before the city gate suddenly swarmed with snakes, and at their appearance, the horses ceased grazing in the pastures and converged instead on this place and began to eat the snakes. When Croesus saw this, he considered it a portent, as in fact it was. At once he sent sacred delegates to the Board of Telmessian Seers' who, when they arrived, learned from the Telmessians the portent's significance, but they did not succeed in delivering the message to Croesus. For before they sailed back to Sardis, Croesus was captured. In any case, the Telmessians' interpretation was that a foreign army should be expected to arrive in Croesus' country and to conquer the native inhabitants, since the snake is an offspring of the earth and the horse is a warlike immigrant from a foreign land.[56]

Much like the indigenous inhabitants of Athens, the Lydians are described as autochthones through their representation as serpents.[57] Herodotus himself notes

that Lydus founded Lydia, and his dynasty ruled for five hundred and one years before Gyges usurped the throne—who caused the dynasty to switch instead to the Mermnadae.[58] Despite the change of the ruling family, the Lydians were indigenous to the land; Herodotus therefore represents the Lydians as snakes because of the findings of his inquiry. The Lydians have a deep relationship with the land because of their extended time in it, and Herodotus demonstrates this relationship to his audience by describing the Lydians as serpents.

The Milesian boar is the other notable example of Lydian wildlife.[59] This animal is not fantastic, except for its size and strength; and it is an animal that the Greeks would commonly have encountered. Hunting was an important aspect of Greek education[60]—and the boar was the most formidable opponent.[61] I believe that the boar represents the hardiness of the Lydian people because the Lydians have not yet become soft, as they will under the rule of Cyrus.[62] Herodotus states that "at this time there was no tribe in Asia that was either stronger or braver than the Lydian tribe."[63] The Lydians, therefore, are very strong and brave, much like the boar. There are striking similarities when this is compared with a passage in *Airs, Waters, Places*:

> When a race lives in a rough mountainous country, at a high elevation, and well-watered where great differences of climate accompany the various seasons, there the people will be of large physique, well accustomed to hardihood

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[54] Hdt. 1.78.

[55] Horses, for example, also represent the Scythians.

[56] Hdt. 1.78. Trans Andrea L. Purvis.

[57] Serpents are a symbol of autochthony for the Greeks because of their close relationship with the earth. Erechtheus, the mythical founder of Athens, is depicted as a snake-man to demonstrate his autochthony. Serpent iconography is also present in the archaeological evidence of Lydia, as Collins describes: "Two snakes frame the figure of Kybebe on a temple model from Sardis. The object bears decoration on the back; the top panels with mythological scenes showing a sacred tree protected in turn by birds of prey and lions (note that the name of the ruling dynasty of Lydia derived from *mermnos* "hawk"). The city goddess stands in the threshold of her sanctuary, holding a lion and framed by a pair of snakes. The snake is given special prominence at Sardis, and was symbolic perhaps

of the fertility of the earth and immortality . . . Herodotus describes an omen that preceded the fall of Sardis to the Persians . . . the Telmessian prophets interpreted the snakes . . . as representing the people of Sardis, while the horses symbolized their foreign attackers. If this symbolism can be extended to Lydian art, then the model temple, with its snakes symbolizing the people of Sardis and its birds of prey and lions symbolizing the royal house, would have served to reinforce the relationship between the Lydians and their patroness." Collins 2002, 333.

[58] Hdt. 1.7.

[59] Hdt. 1.36-43.

[60] Education plays a large role in Xenophon's treatise on hunting. See Xen. *Cyn.*

[61] Odysseus himself received a scar during a boar hunt. *Od*. 19.386-466.

[62] Hdt. 1.155-6

[63] Hdt. 1.79.

and bravery, and with no small degree of fierceness and wildness in their character.[64]

Though this passage describes Europe and not Lydia, there are some clear similarities. The Greeks themselves believe that they are a product of their environment—and this relationship extends to the wildlife.[65] The boar is a hardy and fierce animal, so they were hunted for prestige as well as the pot. Perhaps the Lydians are not as hardy as the Greeks, but this passage suggests that they are the most like the Greeks—and therefore that Herodotus' Greek audience is able to identify with the Lydians. There are suggestions of Lydian Hellenization in Herodotus, including their purification,[66] oaths,[67] and the manner in which Kroesus prays to Greek gods,[68] but the animals of Lydia also reinforce the similarities of both the Greeks and the Lydians.

While Herodotus stresses the similarities of the Greeks and the Lydians, he does the opposite to Egypt. He instead presents Egypt as the opposite of other peoples,[69] and Egyptians as the most religious of all peoples.[70] Due to their religious fervor, the Egyptians have more sacred animals than other peoples,[71] and they treat animals with much more care.[72] As a consequence of this, the penalty for those that kill sacred animals is extremely harsh.[73] These two observations—the Egyptians are opposite of all people, and the most religious—are reflected in Herodotus' description of Egyptian fauna.

The Nile crocodile is one such animal that displays these uniquely Egyptian characteristics. Herodotus devotes a lengthy section to his description of the crocodile:

> The nature of the crocodile is such that it eats nothing during the four winter months. It has

four feet and lives both on dry land and in the water. Although it lays and hatches its eggs on land and generally spends the greater part of the day on dry ground, it stays in the river all night, since the water is warmer than the open air and the dew. Of all mortal creatures we know, this one grows from the smallest to the largest size, for its egg is not much larger than that of a goose, and the size of its newly hatched off-spring is proportional to the egg, yet it grows to a length of twenty-five feet or more. It has the eyes of a pig, enormous teeth, and tusks proportional to its body. And it alone of all animals has no tongue. Nor does it move its lower jaw, but it is the only animal that brings its upper jaw down to meet its lower jaw. It has strong claws and an impenetrable hide on its back. In water it is blind, but in the open air extremely sharp-sighted. Whenever it spends time in the water, the inside of its mouth fills up completely with leeches. And although other birds and animals avoid it, the plover lives at peace with it, since the crocodile receives benefits from it. When the crocodile emerges from the water onto land and opens its jaws (and as a rule, it faces the west as it does this), the plover enters its mouth and devours the leeches, while the crocodile, seeming to enjoy this service, does no harm at all to the plover.[74]

Though the crocodile is a fierce predator, Herodotus depicts the crocodile's amicable relationship with the plover to reduce its violent image. This bird puts itself at the mercy of the crocodile and emerges unscathed because of the cooperation of the two animals. The ethnological view of Herodotus is evident here; since the Egyptians are the most religious of all peoples, they have many sacrosanct animals and thus abstain from killing them.[75] Herodotus sees the crocodile demonstrate that same relationship to other animals through its interactions with the plover, and presents this paradigm to his

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[64] Hippoc. *Aer*. 23. Trans. J. Chadwick and W. N. Mann.

[65] See the discussion of India at pages 15-1dians below.

[66] Hdt. 1.35.

[67] Hdt. 1.74. They do, however, also lick the blood of each other.

[68] Hdt. 1.44.

[69] Hdt. 2.35.

[70] Hdt. 2.67.

[71] Hdt. 2.65.

[72] Hdt. 2.66.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Hdt. 2.68. Trans. Andrea L. Purvis.

[75] The crocodile is not completely peaceful; Herodotus mentions that there is a special mummification procedure for people who are dragged into the Nile by a crocodile or drown in the Nile (Hdt. 2.90).

audience as a means to underline this aspect of Egyptian culture.

The crocodile also faces west whenever it comes out of the water; this could be an extension of the opposite motif of Egypt. Greek temples are supposed to face east—and since Egypt is opposite land, Egyptian temples should face west. Therefore, these crocodiles might be further reinforcing both the Egyptian status as the opposite and most religious of other peoples.[76]

The phoenix is the clearest example of Herodotus' ethnological and medical interests combining with his zoological research. He was fascinated by the process of mummification, and includes a detailed (and rather accurate) account of the process of mummification in the *Histories*.[77] A. Lloyd notes, "[Herodotus'] lengthy discussion of mummification has merit on technological aspects, though it is not infallible, but misses completely its religious dimension."[78] It is strange that Herodotus, who considers the Egyptians the most religious of all men, does not notice the religious aspect of mummification for the Egyptians. Nevertheless, the phoenix—a bird legendary to the Egyptians, but from Arabia[79]—mirrors the Egyptian process of mummifying members of its family:

> But there is another sacred bird called the phoenix. I myself have not seen it, except in paintings, for it rarely visits Egypt; indeed, the people of Heliopolis say that it comes only once every 500 years. They claim that a phoenix visits them when its father has died. The paintings, if they are accurate, depict a bird in shape and size very much like an eagle, with both golden and red feathers. They also say, though it seems incredible to me, that when the phoenix sets out from Arabia toward the sanctuary of Helios, it carries the corpse of its own father plastered up in myrrh and buries it there in the sanctuary. Thus it transports its father, but in order to do that, it first shapes some myrrh into an egg as heavy as it can carry. It then attempts to fly with it and keeps adjusting the size of the egg until its weight is just right. Then the phoenix hollows out the egg and places the body of its father inside it. It fills in the gap thus created with additional myrrh, so that when its father is laid within, the egg weighs the same as before. At least that is what they claim about this bird.[80]

The technical and cultural aspects of mummification are virtually the same for the phoenix and the Egyptians. Each embalms their deceased family members, preserves their bodies with spices (especially myrrh), and stores them in a container before moving them to a religious center. Herodotus' fascination with Egyptian medicine is present in this passage—and the achievements of these embalmers enhance his claim that Greek physicians are superior to Egyptian ones.[81] Although embalmers are not necessarily physicians, the juxtaposition of Herodotus' section on Egyptian medicine with that of embalming clearly demonstrates that he considers the subjects related at the very least.[82] Ethnographically, Herodotus is reporting the culture of the Egyptians and how it differs from the Greeks; medically, he is describing the prowess of Egyptian embalmers, and indirectly indicating the competence of their physicians; zoologically, Herodotus is again synthesizing Egyptian cultural elements into his depiction of their fauna.[83]

In contrast to Egypt, Herodotus does not seem very informed about Indian or Arabian culture. He often resorts to generalizations in his descriptions of them, which follow a schematic formula of various

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[76] If this is the case the Egyptians are so religious that even their animals are religious. This thought is not without support; see the discussion of the phoenix below.

[77] Hdt. 2.86-90.

[78] Lloyd, G. E. R. 1974. *Early Greek Science: Thales to Aristotle*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 738-9.

[79] Athough the bird is technically from Arabia, I believe that it should be taken in the context as Egyptian here, both because of the striking resemblance of its behavior to the Egyptian custom of mummification, and because it is mentioned first in its relationship to Egypt. Herodotus therefore chose to describe the bird with the Egyptians to allow audiences to invite this comparison. Further evidence of this is that the phoenix does not otherwise feature in the *Histories* when the wildlife of Arabia is discussed.

[80] Hdt. 2.73. Trans. Andrea L. Purvis.

[81] Hdt. 3.132.

[82] Egyptian physicians are located at Hdt. 2.84; burial customs and mummification are at Hdt. 2.85-90.

[83] Whether this he does this intentionally or not is another question.

degrees of barbarism in accordance with the Greek view: some eat raw fish, others eat raw meat; one tribe kills whoever is sick, another tribe never kills any living things.[84] The animals of these regions, however, are described in respect to their relationship with the resources of the lands. India is a country that is defined by its gold in the *Histories*; it is first mentioned as the twentieth satrapy of Persia, and it pays the largest tax (in gold dust) because of its high population.[85] The most notable animal of India—the giant ant—is associated with gold:

> Now in this desert of sand live huge ants, smaller than dogs but larger than foxes. Some of these ants were captured and brought to the Persian court. The ants in India make their dwellings underground by mounding up the sand, just as ants do in Hellas, and they also look very much the same. But here the mounded sand contains gold, so the Indians set out to collect this sand . . . carrying sacks with them, which they fill with sand swiftly so that they can begin their ride back again as quickly as possible. They do this, the Persians say, because the ants smell the men immediately, and once their presence is detected, they will pursue them. They also say that these ants can move faster than anything, so that if the Indians did not get a head start on their return journey while the ants were still rallying for the chase, none of them would ever arrive home safely.[86]

The ants here are of an enormous size due to the fact that all animals are larger in India.[87] Herodotus incorporates this curious fact into his work from the Ionic medical tradition. In *Airs, Waters, Places*, the author states, "Everything grows much bigger and finer in Asia, and the nature of the land is tamer, while the character of the inhabitants is milder and less passionate."[88] This does not quite match up with Herodotus' description of Asia; the ants are certainly

larger than elsewhere, but they are certainly not tame. The author of *Airs, Waters, Places*, however, is generalizing Asia as a whole. India—as Herodotus states—is the furthest east of inhabited Asia.[89]

But why should the extremes of the world be any different? As an answer, Redfield suggests that "we place the fabulous beyond the edges of the known world . . . not only because they are beyond our knowledge, but because as we move towards the edges, we encounter more extreme conditions and therefore atypical forms, both natural and cultural."[90] Fantastic creatures lurk around edges of map: "HERE THERE BE DRAGONS" the ancient cartographers warn. Monsters hide at the edge of human knowledge in the 21st century; this was not different while Herodotus was composing his work.

Arabia also sits on the edge of Herodotus' world, and is similar to India in several ways. Arabia also contains giant animals,[91] and, like India, is defined by its natural resources. The majority of Herodotus' literature on Arabia is involved in the collection of spices which (again like India) the native fauna guards. Flying serpents guard the frankincense;[92] winged bat-like creatures guard cassia near a lake;[93] inaccessible mountains guard cinnamon stalks, but giant birds use it in their nests. The Arabians are only able to get cinnamon by luring the birds from their nests with flesh, and gathering the cinnamon that falls off them.[94] Finally ladanon is found on the beards of goats,[95] and "the whole country itself exhales a more than earthly fragrance."[96] Arabia is defined by its chief export—the whole country smells of perfume and spice—and as a result Herodotus sees associations between the wildlife and the export.

The majority of the final ethnographic sections in the *Histories* are not as concerned with foreign fauna as the others; instead, they focus on the many

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[84] Hdt. 3.98-100

[85] Hdt. 3.95.

[86] Hdt. 3.102.2-3, 105.1 Trans. Andrea L. Purvis.

[87] Hdt. 3.106.

[88] Hippoc. *Aer*. 12. Trans. J. Chadwick and W. N. Mann.

[89] Hdt. 3.106.

[90] Redfield, "Herodotus the Tourist", 110.

[91] See the giant cinnamon-guarding birds below; note also the two kinds of sheep: one with an extremely long tail, the other with an extremely broad one. Hdt. 113.

[92] Hdt. 3.107-9.

[93] Hdt. 3.110-1.

[94] Hdt. 3.111.

[95] Hdt. 3.112.

[96] Hdt. 3.113. Trans. Aubrey de Sélincourt.

different peoples that live in both Scythia and Libya. The animals that are described in these regions, however, correspond to their environment. Scythia, a mountainous region, has goat-footed men who can climb otherwise inaccessible cliffs.[97] Libya—which is extremely dry—has a special type of non-drinking donkey.[98] Both countries, therefore, contain animals that reflect Herodotus' geographical beliefs. The Libyan donkey specifically corresponds with Hippocratic medicine as well; Libya is a hot and dry country, and this donkey reflects its environment by not having to drink water.

At the periphery of these two areas, however, Herodotus' sources run out, and as a result the barriers between humans and animals break down. Libya especially contains terrible beasts:

> The eastern region of Libya where the nomads live is low-lying, sandy, flat land up to the Triton River, but west of this point, the land inhabited by the Libyan plowmen is very hilly, wooded, and teeming with wild beasts. In fact, this is where the giant serpents and the lions live, and also the elephants, bears, asps, donkeys with horns, the dog-headed creatures and the headless beasts which have eyes on their chest—at least according to what the Libyans say—in addition to the wild men and women, and many other creatures which are not just fabulous inventions.[99]

Animals no longer reflect people in the extremes of these places; instead, the animals are a physical part of the person—Libya has dog-headed men, and Scythia has werewolves. Smith notes that the wasteland at the extreme edges of the world itself comes alive with animalistic imagery: "The land far north of Scythia is said to be impassable due to falling feathers, and . . . the country beyond the Danube to the north . . . is infested with bees that make further progress impossible."[100] At this point Herodotus no longer has any other sources he can turn to aside from word of mouth—even his

geographical knowledge ends. Therefore, these places are the most savage on the map: either they are so desolate that nothing can survive there, or extremely hostile animals inhabit them.

The relationship between Herodotus and the Ionian scientific tradition has much depth. Herodotus incorporates many scholastic fields into his *Histories*, such as history (his original contribution), geography, medicine, and zoology. He has extremely strong ties to the Hippocratic medical tradition. In regard to zoology, he seems to have defined the field, and made judgments about it through his knowledge of other subjects. However, as he moves further away from Ionia, his judgments become more and more distorted, due to the lack of knowledge of these remote areas. As a result, he synthesizes his findings for his audience in a manner that is easy to understand—animals are reflections of peoples, places, or environments of the same geographic area. This gives his audience a general overview of the world in a memorable and plausible manner. In this study, Herodotus is shown to be a much more careful and systematic scholar than he usually merits—and I have become convinced that the gap between Herodotus and the Pre-Socratic philosophers is not a large one.

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[97] Hdt. 4.25.

[98] Hdt. 4.192.

[99] Hdt. 4.191.3-4. Trans. Andrea L. Purvis.

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# Ambrose and the Aftermath of the Battle of Adrianople

**KRISTEN JONES**

Historically, writers have had mixed reactions to the loss at Adrianople by the Romans in A.D. 376 – these reactions have ranged from apathy, all the way to declaring it an act of divine intervention. Regardless, it was an undisputed catalyst for change in the Roman Empire. Through analysis of the writings of St. Ambrose of Milan in particular, it is apparent that the aftermath of the Battle of Adrianople provided Ambrose with the means to exploit the disaster and further his own personal gain. A particular passage in Book II of his *De Fide* provides the basis of most modern arguments on the implications of the events following this loss. McLynn (1994) believes that in the passage Ambrose refers to the competing nature of Gratian alone, while Lenski (1997) later asserts that Ambrose compares Valens with Gratian. That is to say, correctly understanding the passage in the way that Lenski does, reveals Ambrose's self-serving behavior, as opposed to his altruism. Ambrose needed Gratian's support to further his own Christian political and social agenda and thus would have ensured that he did nothing to fall out of the Gratian's favor, such as by portraying him in an unappealing light. Ambrose uses the death of Valens as a medium for promoting his own Christian beliefs by labeling Valens' death an act of divine intervention. Moreover, the interpretation of Ambrose's passage is used to date the entirety of his work, *De Fide,* and the misattribution of the emperor that he is referring to leads to a misunderstanding of the evidence surrounding the date of his work. The primary source of this battle, Ammianus Marcellinus, is the only author to provide a detailed description of events. However, he glosses over the importance of the consequences of the battle's loss. Themistus of Greece went as far as to say that the Goths were "worse for the Romans than Hannibal".[1] While these non-Christian writers provided a foundational description of the events following the battle, it is the contemporary Christian writers who allow their personal religious beliefs to impact their perceptions of the events.

Ambrose, along with other contemporary Christian authors, was more concerned with interpreting the events during and after the battle of Adrianople as a Christian allegory than as a catalyst for historical change. Ambrose blamed the loss on the Arians and drew a link between the invasions of Illyricum and Thrace as punishment for Arianism in those regions.[2] Writing in Milan only one month after the battle, Ambrose described the events at Adrianople as a devastation and referenced the shared desperation of the people in the surrounding regions.[3] Both before and after the battle of Adrianople, there was widespread destruction in the Balkans where there was no Christian center of power. This acted as evidence toward Ambrose's declaration that Arian beliefs resulted in the ruin of its followers.[4] Ambrose believed that it was Orthodox Christian practices that protected Italy from invasion.[5] However, Ambrose did not address that, in the years following the battle of Adrianople, the Goths proceeded to move into Italy. This furthers the theory that he only stressed the importance of certain events to advance his own political and religious agenda. At the funerary speech for his brother, Ambrose referred to the battle of Adrianople and noted that his brother was fortunate to not have to witness "the destruction of the entire globe, the end of the world."[6] Ambrose's preference towards Gratian and malevolence towards the emperor Valens can be seen throughout his work.

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[1] Themistus, Orations, 34.22: Referring to the Battle of Cannae in 216 BC during the Second Punic War against Carthage.

[2] N. McLynn. *Ambrose of Milan. Church and Court in a Christian Capital.* Berkley: University of California Press, 1994, 101-102.

[3] Noel E. Lenski. "Initium Mali Romano Imperio: Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople" *Transactions of the American Philological Association* vol.127 (1997), 153.

[4] Lenski, "Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople", 136-137.

[5] McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan, Church and Court in a Christian Capitol,* 104.

[6] Ambrose, *De Excessu Fratris,* 1.30; Translated by Lenski, "Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople", 136.

During the years of Gratian's reign, Ambrose's favor of Gratian played a pivotal role in Ambrose's rise in social status and respect within the empire. In book II of Ambrose's *De Fide,* he writes a remarkable passage regarding the implications of the battle and the character of the current emperor:

"But enough already, omnipotent god, have we absolved the deaths of confessors, the exiles of priests and the sin of such great impiety with our destruction and our blood. It is sufficiently clear that those who violated the faith cannot be safe…here is not some faithless region, but that Italy which is accustomed to sending confessors…here the mind of the emperor (*Valens or Gratian*) is not unstable but his (*Gratian*) faith is firm." (Ambrose, *De Fide,* 2.141-142)

Two scholars, Lenski (1997) and McLynn (1994) hold opposing views on who Ambrose is alluding to in the final line of this passage. Differing interpretations of this passage impact the way contemporary scholars view the aftermath of the battle. Moreover, their subsequent interpretation affects how numerous events following the battle can be analysed.

On one side of the debate, McLynn declares that Ambrose is referring to the competing natures of Gratian alone. McLynn declares that Valens is irrelevant in the comparison between Italy and the Danube because, given the date that McLynn attributes to the *De Fide*, Valens would have been dead for over a year.[7] McLynn interprets the passage (*De Fide* 2.141-142) as a comparison between Gratian's ability to freely practice his Christian religion in Italy versus his vulnerability in Illyricum to Arian heretics.[8] McLynn argues that writings directly referencing Valens' Arianism act to describe it as one of the causes for his downfall, as any criticism of Valens' Arianism does not appear until the end of the Valentinian Dynasty.[9] Furthermore, had contemporary authors been in the practice of

writing against Valens at the time, Jerome would not have chosen to omit Valens' Arianism in connection with the Gothic invasion in the final entry of his *Chronicle*.[10] Furthermore, McLynn asserts that in proclaiming the nature of Italy to be above that of Illyricum, Ambrose attempted to promote the status of Italy within the empire during a time of great confusion. Both McLynn and Lenski agree that Ambrose went to great trouble to ensure that his writings were interpreted in the way that he intended, and thus he was promoting his own agenda and his Christian beliefs.

In a more recent work, Lenski argues that given the nature in which the "emperor" is described in the passage (*De Fide* 2.141-142), it must be Valens. Lenski correctly concludes that Ambrose was comparing Valens to his co-emperor Gratian, whom Ambrose was known to favor. Ambrose's references to "exiling priests" and "murdering confessors" must have been allusions to Valens, who was accused of committing these acts in the year following Adrianople.[11] While McLynn argues that contemporary authors were not in the habit of speaking out against Valens, he does not take into account the writings of Gregory of Nazianzus. Gregory of Nazianzus showed no reluctance in writing about his opposition to Valens' persecutions of the Christians in Nicene in the years leading up to the battle.[12] The fact that Gratian was known to speak with animosity towards his co-emperor Valens further supports the assumption that Ambrose's description of an emperor with an unstable mind is indeed in reference to Valens. Furthermore, many modern scholars agree with Lenski's conclusion that the passage of Ambrose is referring to Valens, and not Gratian as McLynn believes.[13]

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[7] McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan, Chruch and Court in a Christian Capitol,* 104.

[8] McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan, Chruch and Court in a Christian Capitol,* 105.

[9] Valentinian Dynasty survived from 364-392.

[10] Jerome, *Chronicle,* 378.15.C: "Lamentable war in Thrace, in which the Roman legions, lacking the protection of horse, were surrounded by the Goths and slaughtered to extinction: the emperor Valens himself when wounded by an arrow, fled and because of the severe pain often almost fell from his horse, was carried off to a certain farm cottage, and after being pursued there by the barbarians and the house set on fire, he did not even obtain burial."

[11] Lenski, "Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople", 152.

[12] Gregory of Nazianzus, *Orations,* 33.4; Lenski, "Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople", 152.

[13] See Palanque, *Saint Ambrose et l'Empire Roman.*

By interpreting the passage to refer only to Gratian, the lengths to which he sought power within the empire and his determination to forge a relationship between the church and the emperor are not revealed.[14] To read it this way would be erroneous, as Ambrose would never write anything that was unsupportive or detrimental to Gratian, as Ambrose needed Gratian's support in order to rise in the ranks. Thus Ambrose must have been referring to Valens and not Gratian when writing of the "emperor" in his passage *(De Fide* 2.141 - 142*)*. If not, he risked Gratian's displeasure and potential punishment, for it was Gratian himself who commissioned Ambrose to compose his *De Fide* series of works.[15] Furthermore, in attributing Gratian's faith to be 'firm', Ambrose stressed his support of Gratian and his Christian practices. Ambrose, however, showed no hesitancy in attacking Valens for his Arian beliefs. This acted to further the assumption that Gratian and his uncle Valens were in conflict, as Gratian allowed Ambrose's work to be released. The animosity that existed between Gratian and Valens is clear to modern scholars today, especially evidenced through the religious divide that Ambrose exploited.[16] Additionally, during the days leading up to the battle of Adrianople, Valens decided not to wait for Gratian to arrive with reinforcements and instead moved in on the Goths to preserve the victory for himself alone, further exemplifying a rift between Valens and Gratian.[17] Ambrose's rise through the ranks at the side of Gratian can be exemplified through his Christian allegory and negative interpretation of events. For example, his references to the battle of Adrianople in his work *De Fide* appear to favor his own agenda.

In March of A.D. 380, Gratian returned to Milan. At this time Ambrose began to present himself as the spiritual advisor for Gratian and the imperial court.[18] Although Christianity was already commonly practiced at the time, the court now began to outwardly acknowledge its Christian views with the support of Ambrose under Gratian.[19] Ambrose's selfish nature began to emerge when, for example, he declared in Book I of *De Fide* that, "You prepare for victory, championing the faith, concerning which you requested from me a booklet."[20] Ambrose was using his writings and resulting social power to promote Gratian and the apparent benefits Gratian received through being a "good Christian." Meanwhile, he attacked Valens, who was known for his Arian practices and thus scorned by the Christian community. As Gratian rose to sole emperor during the period after Valens' death at Adrianople and before Theodosius was named co-emperor, the infusion of Christianity within his court was clear. This was supported through Ambrose's proclamation that, in return for doctrinal obedience, they would receive military victory. Ambrose promoted Christianity within Italy throughout his career, and used his position within the imperial court of Gratian to further his biased interpretations of events. Ambrose associated himself with other Christian writers throughout Italy to ensure that his opinions were widely spread throughout the empire.[21]

Both Christian and pagan authors interpreted the death of Valens to achieve their own religious goals. While there is no true record of what happened to Valens and his body, modern scholars continue to use the vague references of authors contemporary

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*Contribution a l'Histiore des Rapports de l'Eglise et se l'Etat a la Fin du Quatrieme Siecle*, 1933; Nautin, "Les Premieres Relations d'Ambroise Avec l'Emperor Gratien", 1974; and Gottlieb, *Ambrosius von Mailand und Kaiser Gratian,* 1973: Note that Palanque and Nautin are French sources, and Gottlied is German therefore I was not able to read them but they were cited in McLynn, Lenski, and Barnes as corresponding scholars. McLynn acknowledges these sources but argues that they did not take into account contemporaries such as Jerome.

[14] David Rohrbacker. *Historians of Late Antiquity.* Taylor and Francis, 2002, 274.

[15] Barnes, Timothy D. "Ambrose and Gratian" *Antiquité Tardive* vol.7.1 (2000), 165.

[16] Lenski Noel E. "The Disaster at Adrianople" in *Failure of Empire*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002, 366.

[17] Ammianus 30.12.7; See also Burns, "The Battle of Adrianople: A Reconsideration"; Austin "Ammianus' Account of the Adrianople Campaigne: Some Strategic Observations"; Lenski, "The Disaster at Adrianople" for details on the events of the battle of Adrianople.

[18] McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan. Church and Court in a Christian Capitol*, 103.

[19] McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan. Church and Court in a Christian Capitol,* 103.

[20] Ambrose, *De Fide*, 1.3.

[21] Lizzi, R. "Ambrose's Contemporaries and the Christianization of Northern Italy" *The Journal of Roman Studies* vol.80 (1990), 160.

with Valens' death to draw conclusions about what happened to the emperor. In understanding whether Ambrose was referring to Valens in his *De Fide* passage (2.141-142), the way in which Ambrose attributes Valens' death to be divine intervention becomes apparent.[22] Ambrose, however, was not the only author to imply that divine intervention was the cause of his death. Ambrose used the word "absolved" in reference to Valens and stated that "those who violated the faith cannot be safe..." As such, Ambrose appeared to be using the death of Valens and the events leading up to his death as a way to warn subsequent successors of the divine punishment accorded to those that did not support Christian beliefs.

Writers from the period of Valens' death report two differing versions of the event, both of which appear in the early writings directly following the battle. The first story was that he died on the battlefield and simply disappeared, and the second that he was carried to a nearby peasant's cottage, which was soon after burned to the ground by Goths. At the end of Book 31 Ammianus reported both accounts, neglecting to portray an opinion on which he took to be the truth.[23] Libanius, on the other hand, supported the story that he disappeared from the battlefield,[24] while John Chrysostom and Jerome both supported the story of Valens being in a nearby cottage when it burned to the ground.[25] John Chrysostom reported Valens' death by fire to the people of Constantinople after the battle, and used it to support his Christian belief that Valens' death was an act of divine intervention. Even Themistius alluded to fire as an image of the battle of Adrianople, but did not go as far to say that it was the cause of Valens' death.[26] It is abundantly clear that the story of Valens' death by fire was preferred by contemporary authors, and that both the Christian and pagan writers portrayed Valens' death as

punishment for his wrongdoings. In the eyes of Ambrose and supporting Christian authors, he was being punished for his opposition to Christian practices. For the pagans, his death occurred because of his misdoings as emperor and his poor military planning at the battle of Adrianople. In Book II of *De Fide*, Ambrose concludes that the battle of Adrianople and the resulting death of Valens had been predicted by Ezechiel in biblical scripture.[27] Through this reference and the reference in his Book II passage (*De Fide*, 2-141-142), Ambrose invokes Christian allegory in order to help himself gain favor with the emperor.

The major implications of Ambrose's passage depend on the debate surrounding the date of his work, *De Fide* Book II. Modern scholars date Ambrose's work differently depending on which emperor they believe Ambrose is referencing (*De Fide* 2.141-142; discussed above). As such, scholars such as Lenski and Palanque agree that it was Valens who was being referred to and thus date *De Fide* to the year A.D. 378.[28] McLynn, however, believes that the work dates to A.D. 380, after Gratian had rose to emperor. There are, however, historical events that Ambrose alludes to that can be precisely identified, such as the battle of Adrianople. If it was written in A.D. 380, then we have to assume that Ambrose chose to omit important

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[22] Barnes, "Ambrose and Gratian", 171; Lenski, "Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople, 151.

[23] Ammianus, 31.13.12-17.

[24] Libanius *Orations,* 24.4-5: written in 379.

[25] John Chrysostem, *Ad Viduam Iuniorem,* 5, Translation by Lenski, "Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople", 153; Jerome, *Chronicle,* 378.15C.

[26] Lenski, "Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople", 153.

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[27] Ambrose, *De Fide*, 1.137: "For Ezechiel already prophesized in that time both our future destruction and the wars of the Goths."; See also Rufinius *Historia Ecclesiastica* 2.13 "that battle was the beginning of evil for the Roman Empire then and thereafter."; Jerome *Epithet* 60.16 "My mind shudders to come to the ruins of our age. For twenty years and more, Roman blood has been spilt every day between Constantinople and the Julian Alps… The Roman world is collapsing and yet we do not bend our haughty necks."; Ambrose talks of apocalyptic prophesies years later in reference to Luke 21.9 ("but when you should hear battles and the rumor of battles") in *Expositio Evangelii Secundum Lucam* 10.10: "None are witnesses to the heavenly words more than we, whom the end of the world has found. Indeed, how great the battles and what rumors of battles have we heard! The Huns rose against the Alans, the Alans against the Goths, and the Goths against the Taifals and Sarmatians, and the exile of the Goths made us even in Illyricum exiles from our fatherland and there is not yet an end… Therefore, since we are at the end of creation, certain sicknesses of the world must go before us." See Lenski, 157-59, for more on Ambrose and his apocalyptic references.

[28] Lenski, "Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople", 152.

information, such as Gratian's success against the Goths. There is, however, no viable explanation as to why Ambrose would want to omit this information, and instead the opposite is true. Ambrose would want to include the information about Valens (as an antagonist to Gratian) because Ambrose was seeking Gratian's favor. Additionally, if it had been written in A.D. 380, Gratian would have already achieved his success against the Goths and Ambrose certainly would not have omitted this, since he was seeking social and political power for himself through flattery of the emperor. McLynn argues that Ambrose would have presented the document to Gratian upon his return to Milan in A.D. 380, but does not account for why, if Ambrose was negatively referring to Gratian's competing nature in the *De Fide* (2.141-142) passage, Gratian allowed the writing to be released. McLynn goes too far in saying that Gratian might not have read the document at all before accepting it.[29] The ability to accurately date the writings of ancient authors, such as Ambrose, is imperative to accurately interpreting what the authors are trying to say and the subtext under which they are writing. The assumption that Ambrose was indeed referring to Valens in his *De Fide* (2.141-142) passage allows scholars to correctly date the work to A.D. 378 and thus exemplify the ways in which Ambrose used his writings to further his own religious and political ambitions.[30]

Modern scholars not only debate the differing interpretations of the battle of Adrianople, but also how the interpretations of these authors affected the way that contemporaries viewed the impact of the battle. Moreover, the contemporary opinions of the role of Valens in the disastrous loss played a significant role in how citizens understood not only the loss, but the emperor's ability to rule. The underlying motives of St. Ambrose of Milan caused him to overlook the importance of the battle within the larger structure of the Roman empire, instead using the disaster only to further his own motives. Given that Ambrose required Gratian's support, it is unlikely that he was referring to Gratian in his *De Fide* (2.141-142) passage but rather to Valens, as Lenski argues. While McLynn supports the claim that it was a comparison of Gratian's ability to comfortably practice his religious beliefs in Italy versus Illyricum, the undertones within the passage seem to allude to Ambrose's dislike of the emperor in question. The controversy surrounding the death of Valens provided Ambrose with a means to push a narrative that supported his attack of pagan rule within Italy. Moreover, incorrect interpretations of the passage lead to a misunderstanding amongst modern scholars regarding the date that Ambrose's *De Fide* work was published. It was commonplace for ancient authors to use their writing to create subtexts supporting their personal, political, and religious agendas, and St. Ambrose of Milan is an exceptional example of this practice.

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[29] McLynn, *Ambrose of Milan. Church and Court in a Christian Capitol,* 103.

[30] Barnes noted that while Gottlieb, *Ambrosius von Mailand und Kaiser Gratian,* correctly interpreted the *De Fide* passage as being about Valens, he incorrectly dated the work to 379-380 AD, from which it is likely that McLynn adapted his belief of the date being A.D. 380. Palanque, *S. Ambroise et l'Empire Romain. Contribution a l'Histoire des Rapports de l'Eglise et de l'Etat a la Fin du Quatrieme Siecle*, Nautin, "Les Premieres Relations d'Ambroise aven l'Empereur Gratien. Le *De Fide*", Lenski, "Contemporary Reactions to the Battle of Adrianople", all correctly date the work to 378 AD.

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# *Laeti*: A Revaluation

## JOHN STEVEN MOONEY

Settlements of 'barbarian' tribes by the Roman Empire had long been an established tradition by the fourth century A.D. Because of the need for labour – both agricultural workers and soldiers -- a strong institutional method had been established to exploit foreign peoples for the purposes of the Roman state. Scholars have long followed De Ste. Croix's interpretation of migrants into the Roman Empire.[1] In an attempt to understand the methods employed and the outcomes of late Empire settlements, many different perspectives have been offered.

These statuses could range from slaves or the similarly understood *coloni* (i.e., tenant farmers tied to a rich landowner's estate or imperial lands), as the Sarmatians were deemed by Constantine after they entered as supplicants.[2] This method was one of the most common for the Roman government and most agreeable, as it gave them unlimited reign in the placement and number of peoples for each region, as well as augmenting any destitute areas with new, hereditary labour. It is critical to understand that these people were *humiliores*, the less privileged of later Roman society as well as *deditcii* (conquered people) – a truly deplorable lot.[3]

A widely different method of entry had been granted as Theodosius did after the Goths fought a prolonged war with Roman authorities. They were given the status of *foedorati*, in which they operated as short term mercenaries within the traditional Roman army structure, paid in wages and had access to special benefits.[4] Scholars such as Liebeschuetz believe that the battle of Adrianople (378) radically altered previous arrangements that had been in place for settlement policy as well as broader notions of 'barbarization.'[5] The argument for this concept of the *foedorati* is largely accurate, yet the value of such a treaty (for such people as the Goths) requires reappraisal – much like the *laeti* are undergoing such scrutiny. Placements in regions of Thrace and Macedonia left them largely exposed to the ever-increasing incursion from hostile tribes; their transience in imperial politicking and the brevity of service amounted to a difficult situation for these people. These insights add to the understandable maneuvering by characters such as Alaric, to create a more permanent, stable position for the Goths.[6]

The *laeti* offer a 'middle-ground' of sorts in which both parties (Non-Roman peoples and the Roman government) could gain a favourable position. I seek to look between the grand exploitation narrative that De Ste. Croix offered as well as the 'threat of barbarization' that these settlers are perceived as instituting by scholars, beginning with Gibbon and recently argued by Ward-Perkins. Looking at the evidence, with a deeper focus on the agency of *laeti (*rather than the Roman perspective), could provide a useful and richer understanding of what position they held in broader Roman society.

The fundamental features of the *laeti* need to be addressed to first understand the exact status of these people. Elements of the *laetic* settlements such the as overall 'quality of life,' agency (self-determination), social status and access to resources will be examined. These are important to contrast

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[1] De Ste. Corix, G. E. M. *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World from the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests*, (London: Duckworth, 1983) Appendix Three. This work is consistently cited in other recent works such as Hugh Elton's 'Warfare in Roman Europe: AD 350 – 425' (1996) and provides an important reference point and compilation of migrant groups settling the Roman Empire. However, the over-ideological message of exploitation of these people needs to be acknowledged when utilizing these sources – Something I have failed to see.

[2] *Excerpta Valesiana* 6.32.

[3] MacMullen, Ramsay, and American Council of Learned Societies. *Enemies of the Roman Order: Treason, Unrest, and Alienation in the Empire,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), 198.

[4] Liebeschuetz, J. H. W. G, and American Council of Learned Societies. *Barbarians and Bishops: Army, church, and State in the Age of Arcadius and Chrysostom*, (Oxford; New York: Clarendon Press, 1990), 28.

[5] Ibid 29.

[6] Rousseau, Philip. "Visigothic Migration and Settlement, 376-418: Some Excluded Hypotheses," *Historia: Zeitschrift fur Alte Geschichte, Bd. 41, H.3,* (Franz Steiner Verlag: 1992), 356. Perhaps this new 'social-economic' model of the Gothic position could give us better understanding of their decision making beyond the elites seeking social standing and honours (though this still is an important factor).

with those of other groups in similar positions: barbarians entering the Roman Empire for military service. As will later be addressed and argued, the position of the these *laeti* were quite favourable to both parties (those receiving this status and the Roman government), and appears to be a successful method of settlement that was eventually eroded by the expedients of Adrianople. Primarily, this procedure will be conducted from a 'bottom-up' approach by focusing on the consequences for the barbarian immigrant groups, since many other discussions favour a view from the perspective of the Roman Empire and the consequences of this policy.[7] Social statuses, economic position, self-determination, social mobility and geography will be explored within this paper to re-address the *laeti*. I will argue that the nature of the *laeti* was both favourable to the people within this legal status but also for the Roman Empire as soldier-farmers.

In context with other ancient Mediterranean civilizations such as the Hellenistic kingdoms and their settlement practices of culturally/ethnically different soldiers, Roman practices did not appear to be radically different. Further investigation of both the Seleucid kingdoms and the Herodian Era in Judea show settlements of ethnic colonists that were granted land for their services within the king's army, or as frontier farmer soldiers. It is important to frame these Roman settlements in comparison with the Hellenistic policies, as they help set a precedent for extending our knowledge of Roman *laeti* settlements. When writing of the settlements by Herod during the reign of Augustus, Cohen Getzel mentions the settlement of *Trachonitis* that not only had "[t]he native population in the vicinity … actively hostile and already had destroyed a previous settlement," but also, "the land allotments that were being offered to the settlers were hardly the best."[8] This places the settlers in a difficult situation, explaining why they were often granted tax exemption to induce settlers and to offset the many negative aspects of these military colonies. They were closely administered by a favourite of king

Herod, much like the Seleucid policy of *Katoikoi* and personal friends of Seleucid kings overseeing operations – similar in circumstance to the *praepositus* which served as the supervisor of the *laeti*. Though just a brief mention, the Hellenistic situation of military colonies provides solid comparative evidence for the *laeti* beyond other Roman settlement systems.

So, who were the *laeti?* The first use of *laeti* comes from one of the *Panegyrici Latini*. Praising Constantius Chlorus and the Tetrarchy, the author writes that "the *laeti*, restored by right of *postliminium*, and the Franks, admitted to our laws, have cultivated the empty fields of the Avrii and the Treveri."[9] These *laeti* need to be distinguished against other forms of settlement mentioned earlier, as the Franks are *receptus in leges* and more prestigious than the *coloni*. I believe that *receptus in leges* does not necessarily mean entering the standard tax base as certain scholars believe,[10] but rather pertains to social 'legal position', and how they are subject to Roman law rather than an ethnic law (such was the case for Jews and Egyptians in Roman Alexandria). I will support this later with the argument that they indeed did not pay taxes.

At this early juncture, the position of the *laeti* (meaning 'happy' or lucky') was likely not entirely 'barbarian' as certain authors are led to believe.[11] Nor was the name a joke or a play on words.[12] Rather as my argument reaches its conclusion the evidence will show that the name has a more literal interpretation. Eventually, as the fourth century progressed, the need for agricultural manpower and soldiers created a drastically different form of *laeti*. *Laeti* were farmers obligated to cultivate the land that was given to them, usually *agri desteri*, and beholden to serve in the army when called upon. For "*laeti* were potential soldiers, always liable to be called up [and] … [t]he status of a *laetus* was permanent and hereditary."[13] The terms of service for these *laeti* will be mentioned again later.

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[7] MacMullen, Ramsey. "Barbarian Enclaves in the Northern Roman Empire", *L'antiquite Classique*, Tom 32, fasc. 2, 560.

[8] Cohen, Getzel M. "The Hellenistic Military Colony: A Herodian Example," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 103:1972, 90.

[9] *Panegyric of Constantine* VIII.xxi.2.

10 Elton, Hugh. *Warfare in Roman Europe, AD 350-425*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 128-154

[11] Rasmey, "Barbarian Enclaves", 555.

[12] Halsall, Guy. *Barbarian migrations and the Roman West, 376-568*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 152.

[13] Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops*, 12.

However, for now, suffice to say that military obligation was not necessarily exploitative in context of the later Roman Empire and that of the wider Mediterranean world. Furthermore, these *laetic* groups concluded their treaties directly with the Emperor and as such were subject to a *praepositus*.[14] this is important because it allowed close ties with powerful patronage as well as connections with other high officials. The ability to access powerful patronage cannot be understated, as these "*praefecti laetorum*" answered directly to the *magister militum* and thus the Emperor – therefore the *laeti* had a strong ability for social mobility.[15]

A good place to start the discussion of the prospects that the *laeti* were given after concluding a treaty is the location where they were settled. As in comparison with certain Hellenistic settlements and especially those of the *foedorati,* the *laeti* were, per literary and archaeological analysis, settled in quite favourable regions. The *Notitia Dignitatum* gives only one region to interpret – the Diocese of Gaul. Based on this, a few conclusions can be drawn, though we should be hesitant to apply them in a wider context. As the table (1.0 – At the Bottom) shows, these locations are not exceptionally focused on the frontier (along the Rhine) but are rather insulated from marauding attacks. The geographical location is highly revealing. During this period, as one ancient author writes, "[T]he State was lying grievously afflicted, or I should say, rendered lifeless, by innumerable ills, and barbarian peoples had flowed over Roman territory like a kind of flood."[16] Though likely an exaggeration by the author, the fact that increasingly defensive works were being constructed and territories were under stress meant that the position of *laeti* (more central in Gaul) was very secure.[17]

Other literary sources offer another dimension to the positive prospects that the *laetic* settlements had. One such prospect was the increase in prosperity of the region through cultivation. One author included in the *Panegyrici Latini* writes:

> What shall I say, moreover, about those nations from the interior of Francia, now torn away no longer just from their original homeland and from the farthest shores of the barbarian world, so that, having been settled in the deserted regions of Gaul, they both promoted the peace of the Roman Empire by cultivating the soil and Roman arms by swelling the levy.[18]

Likely farmed for generations, this land is left distraught due to previous ills and is now under the industry of these *laetic* settlers. Later in the narrative (5th century), we find examples of the devastation brought by foreign invasion which likely caused almost irreversible damage.[19] By their very lament, the sources show how prosperous these regions were. A quote from Prosper of Aquitaine mentions, "Where are the riches of the wrath with which we were pleased to delight our spirits in days gone by? A man who used to till his fields with one hundred ploughs now strives in vain to obtain a pair to oxen."[20] Clearly, the ability to exploit and cultivate these fields was quite high, allowing these *laetic* settlers to be in an advantageous position compared to many other regions of the later Empire – until the later fifth century and the resulting anarchy.

Although the late Roman Empire was certainly less productive than the periods of the 1st and 2nd century, we should be cautious to make too many assumptions as Jones did. He wrote, "It is generally agreed that there was decline in agriculture … whether general exhaustion of the soil, shortage of agricultural manpower, or as contemporaries believed, partly from barbarian invasions and depredations but predominantly over-taxation."[21] The case for the *laeti* can be made against each one

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[14] Ibid 12.

[15] Elton, Hugh. *Warfare in Roman Europe, AD 350-425*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 131.

[16] *Panegyrici Latini* 2.3.2.

[17] See Zozimus' *Historia Nova* 3.3 for a more succinct description of the issues faced by the *Praetorian Prefecture of Gaul* during the reign of Julian.

[18] *Panegyrici Latini* 6.6.2.

[19] *Sidonius Apollinaris* III.i.3-5. Here Sidonius writes of the devastation of Clermont-Ferrand – the very place that a *laetic* settlement was positioned!

[20] *Patrologia Latina*, LI. 14-30.

[21] Jones, A.H.M. *Later Roman Empire 284-602: A Social, Economic, and Administrative Survey*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1973), 812.

of these points. As for soil exhaustion, *laeti* were settled primarily on *agri deserti* which, lying fallow before their settlement, was likely reinvigorated. As shown through the sources, the territories of Gaul still seemed productive until the late fifth century and thus the 'exhaustion of the soil' argument can be put aside. In addition, as Rosenstein shows, having a missing (serving in the military) family member generally helps agricultural subsistence;[22] These were the exact circumstances of the *laeti*, as their obligation to send one family member to the army may have helped overall agricultural production. The burden of taxation is not applicable to the *laeti* (although in a broader sense military service was a sort of tax), since by this period veterans were exempt from the general tax dated to the reign of Constantine.[23] Since all *laeti* were soldiers, and thus eventually veterans, these communities were almost entirely exempt from traditional taxation methods (though new families were not). Therefore, based on this evidence the *laeti* seem to have been excluded from the general distress that other farmers, landowners, and peasants were facing. However, the archaeological record needs further expansion for a clearer picture.

Now I would like to turn to the obligations the *laeti* had. The focus will be on their hereditary status of serving as soldiers. Though this seems oppressive, it does not seem exceptional compared to other settlement statuses. An excellent starting point is to mention that the *laeti* were serving in either the *scholae* or at the very least among the *comitatenses* – both positions of relative privilege in the Roman army structure.[24] These soldiers, serving under their Germanic chief, would have access to the court and emperor.[25] The social position of these soldiers should not be understated, as not only are they not paying taxes, but rarely did they face opposition which could completely threaten them. [26] In other words, Adrianople was one of the only battles in which these regiments were defeated outside of civil war. In comparison, the status of a soldier serving during the Roman Republic was likely more difficult, with higher casualty rates.[27]

The next point of discussion, and the most ideologically motivated (interpreting the past to present a political narrative), is the matter of 'ethnic' cohesion of the *laetic* settlements. Regarding the overall prospects of the settlement system, the traditional interpretation has been largely negative. Ramsey McMullen writes that "from such alien enclaves must certainly have radiated cultural forces long undiminished; into such enclaves Roman manners could penetrate only with difficulty. Surely some traces of them must remain for the archaeologist."[28] The way McMullen writes appears ideologically driven. However, this view is a natural conclusion (in my opinion) when reading source material and having a sympathetic view of Roman position.

The philosopher and cultural critic Slavoj Zizeck warns us of this dangerous projection unto the past that McMullen's previous quote implies. Zizeck writes that these views can "sustain the contemporary vision of the need to defend the secular and civilized West against the barbarian Third World onslaught, and warns against harbouring any illusions about their peaceful integration."[29] Zizek explicitly mentions Ward-Perkins in his reading of Roman history and thus this reading is still prominent today. However, we can begin to analyze the nature of the *laetic* settlements in their cultural impact through archaeology and sociology.

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[22] Rosenstein, Nathan. "War and the Life Cycles of Families: Three Models." *Rome at War: Farms, Families, and Death in the Middle Republic,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Caroline Press, 2004), 63 – 106. I acknowledge that this study is used for the 'Middle Republic' but the comparative evidence utilized by Rosenstein still, I believe, provides an excellent new interpretation of the position *laeti* may have had with a missing family member i.e. the patriarch serving in the military.

[23] *CTh* 7.10.3.

[24] *Ammianus Marcellinus* 20.9.13. *Laeti* are presumed here to be severing personally under the emperor Julian and are offered as a bargain to Constantius II.

[25] Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops*, 23.

[26] Nicasie, Marinus, *Twilight of Empire: The Roman Army from the Reign of Diocletian until the Battle of Adrianople,* (Amsterdam: Brill Academic Publishers, 1998), 93.

[27] Rosenstein, *Rome at War,* 63-106.

[28] Ramsey, *Barbarian Enclaves* 555.

[29] Žižek, Slavoj. *Living in the End Times*, (London: Verso, 2011), 9.

Looking at the historical record, especially that of Ammianus Marcellinus, we see the distinct loyalty and fighting spirit of the Germans serving in the Roman army. For example, the tribal groups that entered Roman territory and settled were now considered Roman and could not access the social-networks from the other side of the Rhine or Danube. The story of Mallobaudes, who was killed during a usurpation of power, sheds light on the reliance that the settlers had on Rome. The 'Frankish' generals "fought very harshly against the Alamanni and Goths, and not least against their own tribal brothers. But this was not the reason the path Mallobaudes had taken was closed to them; rather, as consuls and members of the pagan-and Christian-upper class they had cut themselves off completely from their roots."[30] Furthermore, this notion of isolation from their tribesmen outside Roman territory extends to non-elites as well. A good point by Jones supports this: "Ammianus, an experienced officer, never so much as hints that German troops were not reliable."[31] The importance of these Germanic soldiers in the defences of the Empire is again being appreciated, as scholarship distances itself from the 'decline' narrative. *laetic* communities were tied almost directly to the Emperor, and were surrounded by different cultural groups (isolated) and therefore were largely loyal fighters (The earlier Hellenistic example of *Trachonitis*).

The nature of the archaeology needs to be discussed. Beyond McMullen's faults lies a quality analysis of the material evidence for Germanic 'ethnic cohesion' within settlements of the *laeti*. His argument mentions six main points of divergence from typical Roman burials from this period. In the regions where *laeti* settlements were found, there are burials that are not associated with cities or villas; a large spectrum of wealth within burials; articles of personal adornment (Germanic influence); orientation of the graves themselves; "pottery typical of free Germans; and a plethora of weapons and variety."[32] These are fairly convincing

archaeological arguments for the maintenance of an ethnic identity different from the surrounding peoples. How long this remained distinct, or rather those around them became more similar, is difficult to ascertain. We must remember, however, that this interpretation is rooted in German nation building with the "*Reihengraberzivilisation*" as well as the fact that the Romans were the net-cultural exporter and shaped German social structure and material culture.[33]

McMullen's conclusion that "a cultural superiority sufficient to Romanize whole provinces in Caesar's day clearly declined in the third and fourth centuries,"[34] should be met with skepticism due to the evidence presented by Halsall. Additionally, the duality of identity is important to remember during this time (though this is always applicable). The evidence from the earlier Empire of epigraphy and papyri show the adaptable identities and bilingualism.[35] The traditional perspectives, and its subsequent argument of cultural enclaves is augmented by the law in the *Codex Theodosius* in which 'inter-marriage' is prohibited. Dating from 368, it mentions, "No provincial, of whatever rank or class he may be, shall marry a barbarian wife, nor shall a provincial woman be united with any foreigner."[36] The *Laeti* are considered provincials and not foreigners, as they are *receptus in legus* and thus this law is not applied to them. Furthermore, the application of this law cannot truly be known and elite mandates like this are often ignored.

As for their obligation to the army, these *laeti* soldiers did not likely fight in 'ethnic groups', but were rather under the same conscription regulations and methods all general recruits participated in as designated by the law:

> Therefore, if any laetus, German, Sarmatian, vagrant or son of a veteran, or any person of any group [*corpus*] whatever who is subject to

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[30] Wolfram, Herwig. *The Roman Empire and Its Germanic Peoples*. Berkeley, (Calif: University of California Press, 1999), 66.

[31] Jones, *Later Roman Empire,* 621.

[32] Ramsey, *Barbarian Enclaves* 558.

[33] Halsall, Guy. *Barbarian migrations and the Roman West, 376-568*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 156-157.

[34] Ramsey, *Barbarian Enclaves* 558.

[35] Alston, Richard. "The Ties that Bind: Soldiers and Societies," *The Roman Army as a Community* (Portsmouth: Journal of Archaeology: 1999), 175-195.

[36] *Codex Theodosius* 3.14.1.

the draft and who ought to be enlisted in Our most excellent legions should obtain a testimonial letter conferring the rank of honorary imperial bodyguard or any high rank whatsoever, or if he should obtain those testimonial letters that are sometimes granted on the authority of the counts, he shall be given training in the recruit camps, so that he may not hide away.[37]

The *laeti* are subject to levy much like these other groups of people, and were not independent groups fighting under their own ethnic commanders. The Imperial army maintained its long tradition of not only integrating ethnic groups through this method (although perhaps a new 'frontier culture' was being created, rather than a wholly Roman army), but also the army structure was left intact. Furthermore, the nature of the privileged position that these *laeti* were recruited into reflected the high social standing of this legal and social group in the Roman world.

Another perspective of the 'ethnic enclave' debate that has not yet been discussed is a sociological one. This perspective uses modern patterns of ethnic communities to draw comparisons for understanding the reasoning behind formation of these *laeti* settlements. This specific settlement practice was sought after and continuously granted by the Roman state to gain agricultural labour and army recruits. A new perspective offers support of the 'ethnic enclave' debate and why these communities were desirable. These communities appear to be important to recent immigrants/migrants in the contemporary European Union, as the benefits include networks for employment and services for 'co-ethnics.'[38] Although this particular study was conducted in Sweden and primarily focused on economic motives, other studies can provide support as well. For example, studies from Spain and Germany show that these 'ethnic communities' provide and strengthen ethnic cohesion – however at the cost of integration.[39] This comparison is limited in its capability, I

acknowledge, but it serves to strengthen the archaeological evidence as well as support the overall structure of this paper – *laetic* settlements were something to for migrants to both desire and actively seek.

Since these ethnic communities are desirable for the groups being settled, we need an understanding of why these might be granted by the government. There are two apparent reasons why the status of *laeti* may have been given to Germanic peoples when the tendency, as mentioned earlier, was to attempt to exploit migrants as harshly as possible.[40] Elton's perspective that the status of *laeti* is like that of *dediticii* does not offer a strong argument against the *laetic* autonomy and privilege. Rather it is better to conceptualize them outside the title of *dediticii*, as Elton mentions that "recruits were also levied from barbarian prisoners of war settled within the Empire. The sources use several words for these settlers, *laeti*, *gentiles*, *dediticii*, and *tributarii*."[41] Instead, the *laeti* should be considered people who were granted a treaty and thus were able to negotiate with the Roman government and gain favourable legal positions. The Roman government would not grant the *laetic* settlement without reason, and therefore an alternate explanation needs to be provided.

The counter argument that the Roman government had to grant increasingly beneficial status (to non-Roman settlers) due to an overwhelming number is unfounded as well. Whittaker estimated that "immigrants could have augmented the population of the Roman Empire, often calculated at about 60 million, by 0.5 percent in each generation."[42] This is not an overwhelming number, especially considering that the *laeti* first appear in the beginning of the fourth century. Rather,

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[37] *Codex Theodosius* 7.10.12.

[38] Andersson, L. and Hammarstedt, M. "Ethnic Enclaves, Networks and Self-Employment Among Middle Eastern Immigrants in Sweden," *International Migration* 53 (2015), 11.

[39] Valenzuela-Garcia, H. et al "On Heterogeneous and

Homogeneous Networks in a Multilayerd Reality: Clashing Interestts in the Ethnic Enclave of Loret de Mar," *Societtes* 4 (2014) 85-104. As well as: Danzer, A. M. and Yaman, F. "Do Ethnic Enclaves Impede Immigrants' Integration? Evidence from a Quasi-Experimental Social-interaction Approach," *Review of International Economics* 21 (2013): 311–325.

[40] De Ste. Corix, G. E. M. *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World from the Archaic Age to the Arab Conquests*, (London: Duckworth, 1983) Appendix Three.

[41] Elton, Hugh. *Warfare in Roman Europe, AD 350-425*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 129.

[42] Whittaker, C.R. *Rome and its Frontiers: The Dynamics of Empire*, (London: Routledge, 2004) 202.

these groups are likely being actively sought after, as this period of stability brought a massive increase in troop numbers due to Diocletian's reformations (nearly doubling the army).[43] Therefore, it seems that space was created for negotiation. This allowed immigrant Germans to have say in their legal position.

Germanic elites were entering the Empire during this period (the fourth century) to serve in the military, as the example of the Frankish king Mallobaudes demonstrates. These people and their retinues needed a status that was more generous than *coloni*. Another area of scholarship that we can turn to argues that Germanic tribes entered the Roman Empire peacefully in certain circumstances. This is entirely agreed upon. As such, Liebeschuetz writes that "in view of the social structure of Germanic tribes it is likely that chieftains would be followed in the imperial army by considerable numbers of followers. German officers and perhaps German soldiers too had very good prospects of promotion, especially if they entered guard units (*scholae*) and became personally known to the emperor, and indeed to court-society as a whole."[44] The Germanic chiefs were likely negotiating status with the emperor or his court and in terms of settlements – rather than being settled with no representation. When writing about Julian, Libanius mentions that many 'barbarians' "asked permission to migrate and form part of his empire, judging it better to dwell beneath his sway than in their own country. They asked for land, and they got it."[45] The text implies a voluntary agreement and one which serves the tribal group a better position than their pervious one.

When the Roman Empire began collapsing, the privilege that the *laeti* had through their connections in the army allowed them to provide for themselves. During the fifth century, the overall central authority lost its power in regions such as Gaul and the 'barbarian' groups took advantage of this. A law dating from 399 shows the system beginning to crack:

> Since persons of many nations seek the felicity of the Romans and have betaken themselves to

Our Empire, and since laetic lands must be furnished them, no person shall obtain any of these lands except in accordance with Our special annotation. Since some men have either seized more land than they obtained from Us, or by the collusion of the chief Decurion or of the municipal defender…[46]

Clearly, the ability for self-determination is not lost on the *laetic* people as their obligations to the Roman Empire are frayed. It is difficult to reconcile this passage with the previous one regarding their loyalty, though they are not exceptional by conducting such subversion. Rather, they are one of the symptoms that radically altered the Roman Empire.

Overall, the legal and social status of *laeti* was a stable method of settling soldiers who fought for the Roman Empire in the fourth century. The importance they had in defending the territories of the Empire and their close connections to patronage helped allow them to play a key role in society without eroding the larger social order that a position like *foedorati* may have. Furthermore, comparisons of settlements outside of the Roman Empire allow stronger contextualization and assessment of the *laeti* as a stable policy that was mutually beneficial to the government and the *laeti* themselves. Comparisons such as this allow us to distance ourselves from the idea *Völkerwanderung* and its baggage (consistently treating German settlements as separate, and unique). For example: Roman soldiers elsewhere in the Empire had dual identities, but German settlements are still seen in their own specific category. The *laetic* settlement was a long-term orientated policy that the Roman government employed for settling soldiers, and therefore we can ask ourselves: why did they slowly disappear? This perhaps is for another paper, as I am not wholly convinced it was the Battle of Adrianople (378), but rather economic and social factors.

Table 1.0 – Tribal Names of *laeti*, their Modern City Name, and the Ancient Province

- *Laetorum* Teutons, Chartres, Lugdunensis II

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[43] Jones, *Later Roman Empire,* 57.

[44] Liebeschuetz, *Barbarians and Bishops*, 23.

[45] Libanius 18.75.

[46] *Codex Theodosius* 13.11.13.

- *Laetorum* Batavi and *gentilium* Suevi, Bayeux and Coutances, Lugdunensis II
- *Laetorum gentilium* Suevi, Le Mans, Lugdunensis III
- *Laetorum* Franks, Rennes, Lugdunensis III
- *Laetorum* Lingones, *diversa disersorum*, Belgica I
- *Laetorum* ??? (Astores), Carignan, Belgica I
- *Laetorum* Nervii, Fammars, Belgica II
- *Laetorum* Batavi, Arras, Belgica II
- *Laetorum* Batvai, Condren and Noyon, Belgica II
- *Latetorum gentilium* Suevi, Reims and Senlis, Belgica II
- *Laetorum* Tungri, Tongres, Germania II
- *Laetorum gentilium* Suevi, Clermont-Ferrand, Aquitania I

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# The Eastern Military Policy of the Constantinian Dynasty

RYLAND PATTERSON

This paper will examine the military policy of the Roman emperors Constantine, Constantius II, and Julian on the empire's eastern frontier. It will begin with the assertion that the Roman emperors were capable of formulating military policy, and indeed that it was necessary for them to do so, due to logistic constraints facing the empire. It will then outline the situation that faced the Roman East at the beginning of the fourth century, after the rise of the Sasanid Persian dynasty and the struggle that culminated in the treaty of 299, which gave the Romans control over northern Mesopotamia. Afterwards, it will turn to an examination of the military policies of the three emperors of the Constantinian dynasty who were directly involved in the administration and defense of the eastern provinces, namely, Constantine I, Constantius II, and Julian. It will argue that Constantine's military policy was the strategy of aggressive defense[1] that he had used elsewhere in the empire, and that only his death prevented him from carrying out this policy in the East upon resumption of hostilities with Persia. Constantine's son Constantius was forced to abandon this policy of aggressive defense due to a lack of resources caused by the division of the empire. When Julian became the sole emperor of Rome, he immediately adopted a more aggressive stance towards Persia, invading the empire and penetrating deep into enemy territory. Therefore, it is clear that during the reign of the Constantinian dynasty, Rome's military policy in the East was one of aggression whenever possible.

## Were Roman Emperors Capable of Formulating Military Policy?

Since the 1976 publication of Edward Luttwak's *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, there has been heated debate amongst scholars over whether Rome's political, military, and economic dispositions were directed by a 'grand strategy.'[2] It is not my intention to enter this debate on the scale of the entire Roman empire, which would require first defining what exactly is meant by 'grand strategy,' and then explaining how that relates to 'strategy' or 'policy' in the sense of the military and diplomatic maneuvering that is described in the ancient sources. The purpose of this paper is narrower: to examine the military policies of a Roman imperial dynasty in a defined geographical area. That the Romans themselves saw their eastern provinces as a distinct unit is made evident by the many times throughout Roman history when a single man was given wide-ranging powers over the eastern territories during a time of crisis, as well as by the organization of the East under a single diocese in late antiquity.[3] I would therefore argue that whatever the reality of an empire-wide 'grand' strategy, Rome's rulers certainly viewed the East as being in need of an over-arching directing strategy in the face of the threat from the organized state across the Euphrates.

The Romans were certainly capable of planning and carrying out a military strategy to ensure the security of their empire. Indeed, this was necessary—the logistics of moving troops and supplies across the empire would have required a great deal of planning and organization, as they do in modern times.[4] The Romans collected and made use of strategic intelligence on areas both inside and outside their borders.[5] They made use of military maps (attested in ancient sources, though no examples survive), and their campaigns often featured complex maneuvers of separate columns coordinated over large distances.[6] In addition, the

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[1] I am indebted to Roger Blockley (1992) for this term.

[2] See Ferrill (1991), Wheeler (1993), and Nicasie (1998) for proponents of the existence of a 'grand strategy'; Isaac (1990),

Whittaker (1994), and Mattern (1999) for those skeptical.

[3] David Kennedy, "The Roman army in the East," in *The Roman Army in the East*, ed. David L. Kennedy (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Cushing-Malloy Inc., 1996), 9.

[4] Martinus Johannes Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire: The Roman Army from the Reign of Diocletian until the Battle of Adrianople* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1998), 145.

[5] Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire*, 179; Arther Ferrill, *Roman Imperial Grand Strategy* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1991), 56-57.

[6] A.L. Wheeler, "Methodological Limits and the Mirage of

ancient sources often speak of emperors planning and making decisions in consultation with their advisors.[7] To use an example from the period covered in this paper, Constantius summoned his *magister militum per orientem* to discuss the question of how many troops were available for his eastern campaign, which suggests that detailed information on troop numbers was available, and that Roman emperors took this into account while planning their campaigns.[8] In 360, Constantius decided to focus his efforts on finishing the war with the Persians before marching to confront the usurper Julian, which indicates that emperors thought strategically about where and how best to use their military resources, instead of just responding to crises in an *ad hoc* fashion.[9] One scholar has pointed out the absurdity of taking for granted Diocletian's ability to implement massive bureaucratic reforms in the sphere of civil administration, but then casting doubt on the Roman emperors' ability to exert a similar influence when it came to military policy.[10] It is clear that Roman emperors could formulate a military policy, give commands as to how resources were to be allocated to fulfil that policy, and be confident that those commands would be carried out by the military and bureaucratic apparatus. It will therefore be enough for my purposes to acknowledge that Roman emperors had the ability to plan and organize the allocation of military and other resources in a manner that can be described as 'strategy' or 'policy', even if the ancient authors did not use such explicit modern terms to describe this activity.

### The Situation in the Roman East During the Fourth Century

Over the course of the second century, the Romans fought several wars with Arsacid Parthia, the reigning power on the Iranian plateau. Though the Parthians had enjoyed several initial successes in their first military contacts with Rome, the Parthian state was inherently vulnerable to internal fragmentation due to the great degree of autonomy enjoyed by its component kingdoms. This prevented them from fully being able to mobilize the resources of the Iranian plateau for their conflicts with Rome, a situation which led to a series of eventual defeats, with the Romans capturing the Parthians' Mesopotamian capital Ctesiphon on three separate occasions over the course of the second century.[11] This, accompanied by dynastic infighting, led to the weakening of the Arsacid dynasty and their replacement in the early third century by the Persian Sasanid dynasty, which was much more centralized and ambitious than its predecessor.[12] The appearance on their eastern frontier of a centralized state with a level of political and military sophistication comparable to their own would pose the most serious threat to Rome's security in late antiquity. The increased need for military manpower on the eastern frontier proved disruptive to Rome's other frontiers as well, as the East could not be reinforced from the Rhine or Danube in a single campaigning season, meaning that any reinforcement from those frontiers would come at the cost of their own security.[13] Therefore, the Roman emperors needed a distinct military policy to ensure the security of the eastern region of their empire, which was unique in that it faced a more sophisticated enemy and was relatively isolated compared to the Rhine and Danube frontiers.

During the third century, the Romans suffered many reverses in their wars with their new Sasanid foes, including the sack of Antioch and the capture of a Roman emperor. It was only after a decisive victory over the Persian king Narseh in 298 that Galerius and Diocletian could negotiate a lasting treaty on favourable terms. The treaty of 299 extended the border of Roman Mesopotamia eastwards to Lake Van, and confirmed Roman suzerainty over the strategically important Caucasian kingdoms of Armenia and Iberia, which served to

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Roman Strategy: Part II." in *The Journal of Military History 57, no. 2* (1993), 236-37.

[7] Ferrill, *Roman Imperial Grand Strategy*, 39-42.

[8] Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire*, 155.

[9] Hugh Elton, "Warfare and the Military," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, ed. Noel Lenski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 341.

[10] Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire*, 173.

[11] Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire from the First Century A.D. to the Third* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 150.

[12] Luttwak, *Grand Strategy*, 150-51.

[13] Luttwak, *Grand Strategy*, 152.

protect Roman-controlled territory better while threatening that of Persia.[14] The control of northern Mesopotamia and Armenia would allow Rome to confine conflict with Persia to this limited area, protecting the rich provinces in Syria and Asia Minor which had been invaded earlier in the century.[15] Thus, it was only in the East that Rome emerged from the third century with an enhanced strategic position brought about by territorial gain.[16] Though there is evidence of some fighting between the Romans and Persians during the reigns of Maximin Daia and Licinius, the situation on eastern frontier had remained essentially the same when Constantine defeated Licinius and took control of the Roman East in 324.[17]

Despite statements of classical historians that the Persians had designs on Roman territory as far as the Strymon, where their Achaemenid forebears had ruled, and the professed universalist rule of Sasanid kings (who were titled *shahanshah eran ud aneran*)[18] modern scholars have suggested that Persian territorial aims were in fact much more modest in scope.[19] In the eyes of these skeptics, it is unclear whether the Persians wished to drive the Romans out of their eastern provinces entirely, or just out of the territories won by Galerius and Diocletian in 298.[20] That the latter may have been the case during the reign of Shapur in the fourth century is attested by the contents of a letter supposedly sent to Constantius in 357 or 358 and reproduced in Latin by Ammianus, in which the Persian king, although claiming that he was entitled to all territory as far as the Strymon, magnanimously demanded only the return of Armenia and Mesopotamia (in a later passage, however, Ammianus states that Shapur wished to rule the

entire East).[21] It is true that after the territorial concessions of Jovian in 363, the Romans and Persians did not fight another major war until the sixth century, and the borders remained stable, without exchange of territory.[22] After that time, whenever the Persians did occupy a Roman city, they tended to use it as a bargaining chip in subsequent negotiations rather than attempting to annex it permanently to their empire.[23] However, this peaceful acceptance of the *status quo* may have been due to necessity, arising from the threat that both empires were facing from powerful steppe confederations on their northern frontiers, rather than from satisfaction on the part of either empire (both of which had pretensions to universal rule) with the current state of the borders in Mesopotamia and Armenia. It is worth noting that when conditions were favourable in the seventh century, a Sasanid Persian king proved both willing and capable of invading and occupying the whole of the Roman East. Whatever their greater war aims for the lands to their west, it is clear that during the fourth century, the Persians could not rest content with the threatening Roman presence in Mesopotamia and the Caucasus, and for that reason they were always the initial aggressor in their wars with Rome.[24]

## Constantine: Aggressive Defense

Constantine's military policy was one of aggressive defense, in which he took the initiative and went on the offensive against the enemy whenever possible. Evidence for this policy of aggressive defense can be seen in Constantine's organization of the military. In an oft-cited passage, slavishly parroted by modern historians until recent times, the ancient historian Zosimus blames Constantine for denuding the frontiers of defenders

[14] R.C. Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy: Formation and Conduct from Diocletian to Anastasius* (Leeds: Francis Cairns, 1992), 6.

[15] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 7.

[16] Luttwak, *Grand Strategy*, 154.

[17] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 7.

[18] "King of Kings of Iran and non-Iran"

[19] A.D. Lee, *Information and Frontiers: Roman Foreign Relations in Late Antiquity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 22-23.

[20] C.R. Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire: A Social and Economic Study* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 140.

[21] Amm. Marc. 17.5.5-7; 18.6.19

[22] R.M. Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy from Julian to Theodosius* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 66-67.

[23] Geoffrey Greatrex, "Roman Frontiers and Foreign Policy in the East," in *Aspects of the Roman East: Papers in Honour of Professor Fergus Millar FBA*, eds. Richard Alston and Samuel N.C. Lieu (Sydney:Brepols, 2007), 123.

[24] Seager, "Perceptions of Eastern Frontier Policy in Ammianus, Libanius, and Julian (337–363)." In *The Classical Quarterly 47, no. 01* (1997) 253-53.

to create a mobile field army.[25] Leaving aside Zosimus' clear anti-Constantinian bias, which may have led him to criticize Constantine's policies unfairly, modern scholarship has determined that the formation of the mobile field army (*comitatenses*) was a gradual process that began in the third century with units of troops temporarily detached from border service and added to the emperor's *comitatus*, or retinue.[26] These units grew in importance during the civil wars of the third century, when it was crucial for an emperor to have a nearby body of troops under his direct command. Thus, the formation of the *comitatenses*, though perhaps formalised by Constantine, was a direct outgrowth of the wars of succession.[27] In addition, analysis of the *Notitia Dignitatum* indicates that fifty to sixty percent of all Roman military manpower remained on the frontiers until the end of the fourth century, invalidating Zosimus' claim that Constantine stripped the frontiers of the greater part of their defenders.[28] It has also become increasingly clear that the frontier troops (*limitanei* and *ripenses*) were far from a low-quality peasant militia in the fourth century.[29] This is attested to by the fact that such frontier units were regularly upgraded to *pseudo-comitatenses*, indicating that they were used as more than passive defenders of the frontier fortifications.[30] Most historians give credence to John Lydus' claim that Constantine doubled the size of the Roman army.[31] Whether this figure is true, it is clear that there was a substantial increase in military manpower during the early fourth century, which means that there was little or no absolute decline in manpower on the frontiers—and indeed, that the mobile field armies were greatly augmented in size and offensive capability in absolute terms.[32] There

was also a great deal of construction of defensive fortifications in the East, from the Tetrarchic period into the time of the Constantinians.[33] However, these constructions are mainly concentrated in the south of the region on the desert frontier, indicating that they were intended to defend against Arab raiders from the desert.[34] The defenses of northern Mesopotamia in late antiquity never relied on a continuous line of fortifications along the border.[35] All this suggests that Constantine and his successors intended to maintain a more offensive military policy to defend this region of the empire.

Constantine's organization of the army's command structure also suggests that offensive tactics were to play a major part in his eastern military policy. The local defense forces of the frontier provinces were under the command of a *dux* or *comes*, who often also saw to civil matters in the province.[36] To command his newly augmented field armies, however, Constantine established the purely military positions of the *magistri peditum* and *equitum*. By the middle of the fourth century, the eastern legions had also become more flexible with the institution of detached elite units of infantry and cavalry under their own officers.[37] This increased flexibility would likely have improved the combat effectiveness of the Roman army in the East, where warfare was oftentimes conducted with mobile units, being characterized by cavalry skirmishes and rare cavalry battles.[38] The very foundation site of Constantinople is also likely a reflection of Constantine's strategic priorities.[39] From the city on the Bosphorus the emperor, his sons, or his *magistri militum* could reach the troubled Danube and eastern frontiers more quickly with reinforcements. All this points to an army that was suited for a proactive policy of offensive action on the frontiers, and indicates that Constantine did not intend to remain in

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[25] Zos. 2.54-55

[26] Elton, "Warfare and the Military," 326.

[27] C.R. Whittaker, "Where are the Frontiers Now?" in *The Roman Army in the East*, edited by David L. Kennedy (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Cushing-Malloy Inc., 1996), 38.

[28] Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 206-07.

[29] C.R. Whittaker, *Rome and Its Frontiers: The Dynamics of Empire* (London: Routledge, 2004), 46.

[30] Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 207.

[31] Lydus, *De mens.* 1.27

[32] Michael Whitby, "Emperors and Armies," in A*pproaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Late Empire*, eds. Simon Swain and Mark Edwards (New York: Oxford

University Press, 2004), 159; Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 207.

[33] Elton, "Warfare and the Military," 340.

[34] Kennedy, "The Roman army in the East," 13.

[35] Lee, *Information and Frontiers*, 54.

[36] Ferrill, *Roman Imperial Grand* Strategy, 50.

[37] Elton, "Warfare and the Military," 327.

[38] Luttwak, *Grand Strategy*, 151.

[39] Lee, *Information and Frontiers*, 3.

a defensive posture behind Rome's border fortifications forever.

Constantine's defensive strategy was to answer any attacks on Roman territory or interests with a counterstrike into enemy territory.[40] Constantine maintained an aggressive posture on the Danube frontier, building bridges across the river and installing forts on the north bank.[41] When the Goths came into conflict with Rome's Sarmatian allies, Constantine sent an army across the Danube to rout them, and then made a treaty with the Gothic king that was favourable to Rome's interests in the region.[42] It is notable that Constantine did not annex any territory directly, which speaks to the essentially defensive nature of this policy of counter invasion. Although Constantine's policy of aggressive defense can be seen most clearly in his actions on the Danube frontier, the preparations he was making for a war with Persia before his death indicate that he intended to use a similar strategy in the East. Upon his assumption of control of the eastern provinces in 324, having just fought a civil war, and with the Danube border still unsettled, Constantine was in no position to attempt an immediate invasion of Persian territory.[43] Therefore, he accepted friendly diplomatic overtures from Shapur, and the situation on the frontier remained stable until the death of the Roman client king of Armenia in 330.

The death of the Roman-aligned Arsacid king of Armenia, Tiridates III, was the beginning of several years of turmoil, during which the Persians interfered in Caucasian politics and raided into Armenia and Roman Mesopotamia.[44] It was at this point that Constantine began to make preparations for war, sending his son Constantius to strengthen the defenses of the East and placing his nephew Hannibalianus on the throne of strategically vital Armenia, bestowing upon him the title *rex regum et ponticarum gentium*.[45] The use of the title *rex regum*, Latin equivalent of the Persian *shahanshah*, might indicate that Constantine's goal was the overthrow of the Sasanids and their replacement by

a branch of his own dynasty.[46] Libanius' anticipation of the Romanisation of Persia that would have resulted from Julian's conquest proves that the Romans were still capable of conceptualising such a bold move as the conquest or reduction to vassalage of Persia, which had not been attempted since Trajan two centuries before.[47] Writing centuries later, John Lydus states that Constantine dreamed of conquering Persia as Alexander had.[48] However, I believe that this theory of intended conquest is unlikely; Constantine seems not to have desired to annex new territories for the empire in his other foreign wars, which often took him or his subordinates into enemy territory. For instance, Constantine had not followed Trajan's footsteps in annexing vast swathes of territory beyond the Danube after his victory over the Goths there, nor is it likely that he would have endeavoured to repeat the (ultimately failed) attempt of the *optimus princeps* in annexing the entirety of Mesopotamia. It is more probable that Constantine was simply preparing for an aggressive defense against the Persians by attempting to attach the strategically valuable Armenian kingdom more firmly to the Roman Empire, and that he had no territorial ambitions beyond this crucial frontier region, which, although subordinating it to a member his own dynasty, he neglected to annex to the empire directly.

One scholar has pointed out that the Persians, unlike the tribal peoples of the Rhine and Danube frontier, were unlikely to have been sufficiently cowed by short-term punitive raids, nor did the Persian warrior aristocracy see service to Rome as more desirable than life in their own territory under their own king.[49] Therefore, even if he had no intention of annexing large amounts of their territory, Constantine had to prepare a more substantial invasion of the Persian Empire as a show of force. Constantine had used Christianity as a tool to claim power and influence beyond Rome's

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[40] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 9.

[41] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 8.

[42] Jord. *Get.* 112 and 145

[43] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 10.

[44] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 12.

[45] "King of Kings and of the Pontic peoples"

[46] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 12; Robert M. Frakes, "The Dynasty of Constantine Down to 363," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, ed. Noel Lenski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 95.

[47] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 12; Lib. *Or.* 18.282

[48] Lydus, *De mag. 3.34*

[49] Errington, *Roman Imperial Policy*, 68.

frontiers before, inserting religious clauses in treaties made with the Goths and Sarmatians. One of his objectives might therefore have been to secure freedom of worship and proselytization for Christian inhabitants of the Persian Empire, as Constantine viewed himself the protector of Christians everywhere.[50] It is possible that he wished to repeat the successes of emperors in the second and third centuries by capturing Ctesiphon, the Sasanid capital. None of these emperors had attempted to annex southern Mesopotamia permanently (except for Trajan, who soon reneged and established a Parthian client king in Ctesiphon), so it is unlikely that the savvy and experienced Constantine would have attempted this clearly impractical feat. Despite this, to achieve security of the East against an entity as powerful as Sasanid Persia, Constantine had to plan an impressive show of force to cow them into submission. It is unknown whether he would have been successful in achieving a lasting settlement, as he died in 337 on his way to the East.

## Constantius II: Facing Limitations

Constantius' military policy had fewer resources for an aggressive defense than that of his father, since Constantius faced constraints that Constantine had not. Constantius had been in the East since 335, when, as Caesar, he had held overall command to defend against the Persians.[51] After the death of Constantine in 337, the empire was divided among his three sons. This naturally entailed a division of the military forces of the empire, reducing Constantius' share of the large field armies that had been under Constantine's control, meaning that any reinforcement from outside his sphere of control would require the cooperation of his brothers.[52] However, the three Augusti were rivals and did not trust one another, so, far from receiving reinforcements, Constantius' military manpower was further drained, as he had to ensure the security of his internal borders.[53] Therefore, Constantine's plan for a large-scale invasion of the Persian Empire was abandoned. In support of the idea that Constantius

was probably forced to make this decision due to an inadequacy of military resources, as opposed to any voluntary change in policy, it is worth noting that between the death of Constantine and the reign of Tiberius II only Julian would attempt a full-scale invasion of the Persian Empire, and he was one of the few emperors reigning during that period with the undivided resources of the Roman Empire at his command.[54]

Despite the restriction in resources with which he could fight offensive wars, it seems that Constantius was determined to continue his father's policy of aggressive defense in the East as well as he could. First, since the full-scale invasion of Persian Mesopotamia had been cancelled, it was necessary to organise the eastern frontier to support a more limited policy of military aggression. The assassination of the *rex regum* Hannibalianus, whom the new emperor viewed as a threat to his own position, meant that Constantius was forced to abandon the policy of directly controlling Armenia through a member of the Constantinian dynasty.[55] Instead, he reverted to the next-best policy, which had been in place since the treaty of 299, installing a friendly Arsacid king to rule Armenia as a Roman client state. Constantius continued to strengthen the fortifications around the eastern frontier cities, which he had improved while still Caesar. However, complete reliance on this defensive network would have placed the military initiative entirely in the hands of the Persians, and Constantius seems to have been unwilling to allow that.[56]

Constantius augmented his Eastern field army insofar as was possible, recruiting Gothic auxiliaries and strengthening the heavy cavalry units known as *cataphractarii*.[57] He also courted Arab tribes in the Syrian Desert to ensure the security of that frontier, and Roman Christian missionaries were active in southern Arabia, serving as a counter to Persian influence there.[58] From 344-47, it seems that a war of attrition was fought between the Romans and the Persians, mainly on the Roman side of the frontier. With his Danubian frontier to worry about along

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[50] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 11-12.

[51] Julian. *Or.* 1.

[52] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 13.

[53] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 14.

[54] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 176.

[55] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 13.

[56] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 14.

[57] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 14; c.f. Julian. *Or.* 1.

[58] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 15.

with his internal borders in the Balkans and North Africa, Constantius was likely wary of committing what mobile forces he did have available in the East, and potentially suffering irreplaceable casualties in engagements beyond Rome's borders. In 348, however, he engaged the Persians in a pitched battle outside of Singara, which ended when the Persians withdrew and broke off the siege of the city. Both Constantius and Shapur were present at this battle, which could explain why Constantius felt that his presence was necessary at this key fortress in Mesopotamia's defensive network. Constantius did not follow up this victory with an invasion of Persian territory, however, suggesting that he still felt it necessary to maintain a more conservative approach in his eastern military policy.

In 350, the usurper Magnentius overthrew Constantius' brother Constans. This left the western half of the empire outside the control of the Constantinian dynasty, a situation which Constantius apparently saw as an unacceptable threat to his reign. Thus, he was forced to break off from his war with the Persians and march west to confront Magnentius. The military policy in the East therefore shifted from active defense to passive reliance on the fortifications of the fortress cities of northern Mesopotamia.[59] Fortunately for the Romans, Shapur was diverted by the threat of the Chionites on his northeastern border, and the Persians were no longer able to assault the Roman East with anything more than low-intensity raiding, which was easily contained by the Roman defense system in place.[60] Constantius defeated Magnentius in 353, having both taken and inflicted heavy casualties in battle.[61] This left Constantius as the sole Augustus of the Roman Empire, now responsible for the defense of all frontiers with a seriously weakened army. For the remainder of the decade Constantius remained based at Mediolanum, settling the situation in the West. Unable to contend with every threat to the empire himself, he elevated his cousin Julian to Caesar in 355 and put him in charge of the Rhine frontier. In 358, however, Shapur sent an embassy demanding the return of the territories lost in 299, and upon Constantius' refusal,

he invaded the Roman East. A partial collapse of the Romans' eastern defensive system followed, with the Persians taking the key fortress cities of Amida, Singara, and Bezabde. These were three of the four cities which were crucial to the defense of the East.[62] With the situation therefore critical, Constantius decided to return to confront Shapur directly, marching east in 360.

Constantius' defensive policy in the East had led to disillusionment in Syria and Mesopotamia, which were now subject to regular Persian raiding.[63] Aside from the unrest and probable economic disruption this caused, this was dangerous to Constantius personally, since a lack of decisive victories over foreign enemies made him more vulnerable to competition from charismatic military leaders.[64] Perhaps it was for this reason that when Julian was proclaimed Augustus in 360, Constantius, likely mindful of the devastating casualties the Roman army had suffered during the war with Magnentius, chose not to march west to confront him—to have marched west again at this point could have resulted in the loss of the entire Roman East to the Persians or to usurpation from a disaffected eastern population and army. His first order of business seems to have been to restore the defensive system of Roman Mesopotamia, as he spent the autumn 361 unsuccessfully laying siege to Bezabde. He retreated to regroup at Antioch in the winter, where he recruited more soldiers and courted the loyalty of the kings of Armenia and Iberia. According to Ammianus, Constantius was eager to confront Shapur directly the following year.[65] He probably wished to repeat his successful policy of direct confrontation with the king in pitched battle, as he had outside Singara in 348. In any case, the Persians did not renew their offensive into Roman territory, and Constantius was able to turn his army westward to confront Julian. The confrontation never happened, however, as Constantius died in *en route*

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[59] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 16.

[60] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy,* 16.

[61] Zonar. 13.8.17

[62] Nicasie, *Twilight of Empire*, 134-35.

[63] Elizabeth K. Fowden, "Constantine and the Peoples of the Eastern Frontier," in The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine, ed. Noel Lenski (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 393.

[64] Jill Harries, *Imperial Rome AD 284 to 363: The New Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 216.

[65] Amm. Marc. 21.7.6-7

in Cilicia, supposedly naming Julian, the last male member of the Constantinian dynasty, as his heir in his will.

## Julian: Return to the Offensive

Having gained control of the entire Roman Empire in 361, Julian faced none of the constraints that had plagued Constantius when the latter had begun his reign. Thanks to Julian's efforts in Gaul, the Rhine frontier had been pacified, and he was popular with the soldiers. He was the last surviving member of the Constantinian dynasty, and Constantius had legitimized his claim to the throne by naming him heir in his will (or so the official story went). Constantius had also apparently succeeded in rebuilding the Roman field army after the devastating losses during the civil war with Magnentius. Julian was therefore free from the issues of limited military manpower, troubled frontiers in his rear, and the potential of usurpation, at least at this early point in his reign.

Julian's domestic policies represented a radical departure from those of his predecessors, but he was faced with the same challenge of an aggressive Persia in the East, and he chose to respond in the same way—direct confrontation whenever possible. The motivation for Julian's invasion of Persia remains muddled by the rhetoric that surrounded it, hearkening back as it did to the conquerors of old, and steeped in Rome's traditional ideology of universal empire.[66] Ammianus states that Julian's motivations for war were revenge for the past misdeeds of Persians and a desire for glory.[67] As Caesar in Gaul, Julian had enjoyed great success in taking offensive against the Germanic tribes across the Rhine. His war aims, however, were probably more limited in scope than conquest of the entire Persian Empire; he likely wished to regain initiative in the East by forcing the Persians on the defensive.[68] A military victory over Shapur would presumably enable Julian to strong-arm the chastened Persian king into accepting the *status quo* of 299. Libanius states that Julian intended to place a

fugitive Sasanid prince named Hormizd on the throne, which would presumably guarantee the safety of the eastern frontier for many years to come.[69] There is also evidence to suggest that Julian may have had other motives for the invasion of Persia, which would contribute not only to the security of the eastern frontier, but to the stability of his reign as a whole. Libanius says that the emperor rejected an offer of peace negotiations from Shapur, saying that the Persian king deserved to be punished.[70] This indicates that Julian was eager to confront Shapur in the field. A clear victory over the Persians in their own territory would be a propaganda coup, shoring up Julian's prestige at home and leaving him in an enhanced position to pursue his domestic and religious policies. It is therefore likely that Julian's aims in invading Persia were to conduct an aggressive defense of the Roman East by invading Persian Mesopotamia and seizing the capital of Ctesiphon, while at the same time gaining military glory and increasing his popularity in the (increasingly Christian) East.

Whatever his specific war aims, Julian's invasion of Persia turned out to be a debacle that would cost Rome most of the territory it had won in 299, along with the life of the emperor himself. The campaign was a strategic failure, as Shapur refused to confront Julian in pitched battle on his way to Ctesiphon, and the emperor was not able to take the well-defended Persian capital.[71] This meant that Julian did not have the propaganda victory of defeating the Persian king in pitched battle or humiliating him by seizing his capital. Without possession of the Persian capital, Julian was also unable to install Hormizd as a viable rival to Shapur for the Persian throne. As he withdrew his army up the Tigris, apparently hoping to appear to threaten Iran proper and thereby coax Shapur into pitched battle, Julian was instead confronted with scorched-earth tactics and harassment of his column.[72] Having received a wound during one such engagement, he died while the Roman army was still in enemy territory, leaving his successor Jovian to sign a treaty that undid most

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[66] Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy*, 24-25; c.f. Amm. Marc. 21.8.3; 24.3.9; 24.4.27; and 25.4.15

[67] Amm. Marc. 22.12.1-2

[68] Lee, *Information and Frontiers*, 24.

[69] Lib. *Ep.* 1402

[70] Lib. *Or.* 12.76-77

[71] Arther Ferrill, *The Fall of the Roman Empire: The Military Explanation* (New York, NY: Thames and Hudson, 1986), 54.

[72] Ferrill, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, 54.

of the territorial gains in 299 in return for safe passage. Thus, Julian's aggressive defense of Rome's eastern territories ended in total disaster, with the Romans forced to bargain away their strategic gains in Mesopotamia and Armenia just to leave Persia unscathed.

## Conclusion

Whenever possible, the military policy maintained by the emperors of the Constantinian dynasty in the East was one of aggression. Despite this aggressive stance, the aim of this policy seems not to have been the annexation of territory, but to safeguard the territorial gains of 299, and therefore the security of the entire Roman East against Persian attempts at reconquest. Constantine's dealings with barbarian tribes on the Danube indicate that he favoured a policy of aggressive counterstrike followed by negotiation after a military victory, and there is no reason to think that he did not intend to repeat this pattern with the Persians. When Constantine first came to power in the East, he was unable to wage war against Persia immediately, but before long he was planning a full-scale invasion in response to continued Persian raids into Mesopotamia and interference in Armenia. His son Constantius was forced to adopt a more defensive military policy from necessity, as initially he did not have the resources of the entire empire at his command. However, he still sought to confront the Persians in pitched battle when possible instead of relying solely on the fortified cities of northern Mesopotamia. His successor Julian—controlling the resources of the entire empire, and having benefitted from Constantius' efforts at reconstructing the Roman army—wasted little time before mounting a large-scale invasion of the Persian Empire. It is difficult to ascertain Julian's precise war aims in this invasion, but it is likely that he wished to seize the Persian capital of Ctesiphon and defeat Shapur in pitched battle, which would ensure the security of the eastern frontier while also benefiting Julian on the domestic front. A pattern therefore emerges of the emperors of the Constantinian dynasty seeking to take the fight to the Persians wherever possible, instead of relying solely on defensive fortifications to preserve the security of their eastern provinces.

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# From Pigs to Pleonexia: An Examination of Justice in Plato's Republic

## HEATHER POECHMAN

## Introduction

Despite Thrasymachus' acquiescence, Glaucon and Adeimantus declared Socrates' account of the nature of justice insufficient and wished to renew the debate with him in Book II. Both Glaucon and Adeimantus desire an account of justice that will prove it an intrinsically valuable virtue. Without this, they argue, justice will be "…pursued for the rewards and popularity which come from a good reputation" (358a) thus making justice extrinsically valuable and its virtuous status vulnerable. Socrates places justice "…in the finest class…that which is to be welcomed both for itself and for its consequences by any man who is so blessed with happiness" (358a). Glaucon warns Socrates this is not a popular opinion, and so he will need to provide an account of justice that proves its intrinsic value. Although Glaucon and Adeimantus do not themselves believe that justice is only valuable extrinsically, they provide a compelling argument for the life of the unjust man over the life of the just man.

Socrates recognizes that he is faced with the enormous task of creating an account of the nature and origin of justice. To aid in this endeavor he employs the use of a metaphor, using the creation of political justice in the city as a map for his structure of human justice in the soul. If he succeeds, Socrates will have proved the intrinsic nature of justice by incorporating it into the very structure of society. Socrates' introduction of the healthy city creates a problem with his analysis. For the city metaphor to be valid the city must be a complete city. The healthy city is presented as fully formed; however, it is later expanded upon through the creation of the feverish city. My essay offers an examination of these problems and provides an investigation of Plato's conception of the healthy city to further understand his theory about the nature of justice.

## Justice as an Extrinsic Value

Glaucon and Adeimantus set the stage for Socrates' task by creating an argument in favour of justice as an extrinsically valuable virtue. Glaucon explains the popular opinion of human nature at the time, "They say that to do wrong is naturally good, to be wronged is bad, but the suffering of injury so far exceeds in badness the good of inflicting it that when men have…had a taste of both…decide it is profitable to come to an agreement with each other" (359a). This view of human nature paints a portrait of man as a selfish beast, one that seeks to obtain only the best for himself without concern for the consequences caused to others. However, when men are wronged by actions motivated by the same selfishness in others, their awareness of their own suffering forces them to come to an agreement with others to ensure the harm they experience can be subject to retribution. This is what is known as justice, and it is a result of the laws created by men to limit their potential harm from others (359b). Glaucon explains that this is a contract made begrudgingly because of a lack of power, "The just then is a mean between two extremes…the man who has power, the real man, would not make a compact with anyone not to inflict injury or suffer it" (359b-c).

To further explain the role of power in decisions regarding justice, Glaucon uses the myth of the Ring of Gyges (359d-360b). The story is of a shepherd, an ordinary man who stumbles upon a chasm caused by an earthquake where he comes to find a golden ring and takes it for himself. Upon wearing the ring he discovers its magical powers to make the wearer invisible. This newfound power eventually causes him to commit adultery with the king's wife, murder the king with her help, and take control of the kingdom. Glaucon argues that this myth demonstrates what is seen as the true nature of humans when given power. He claims that "…if there were two such rings, one worn by the just man, the other by the unjust, no one, as these people think, would be so incorruptible that he would stay on the path of justice" (360b). Without extrinsic

punishment, it is argued that the path for justice is not valued more than the path to injustice. Worse, the path to injustice without punishment seems laden with extrinsic rewards, making a just life even less desirable.

Further compounding this issue, Glaucon believes the choice between the lives of the just man and the unjust man can only be correctly judged if they are pitted against each other (360e). To the unjust man's life, Glaucon makes him the most unjust: acting cleverly to ensure that his wrongdoings are never discovered while also giving him the highest reputation that would be afforded to a just man in society (360e-361b). To the just man's life, Glaucon makes him the most just: simple and humble, yet he is stripped of everything that justice would reward and is instead punished as one would be for having the greatest reputation for injustice (361c-d). These two men are unwavering in their unjust/just lives so that each is the epitome of these extremes. From this, Glaucon asks of Socrates "…let them be judged as to which of the two is the happier" (361d) to which Socrates replies, "…what a mighty scouring you have given those two characters, as if they were statues in a competition" (361e).[1] Adeimantus interrupts with another important qualifier for Socrates' account of justice. Adeimantus is concerned with the relationship between justice and the gods, arguing that when fathers speak to their sons about the importance of acting justly, "They add popularity granted by the gods, and mention abundant blessings which, they say, gods grant to the pious" (363a). Even if unjust, Adeimantus argues punishment by the gods can be escaped through persuasion, thus receiving absolution for sins in the afterlife and all the benefits of earthly injustice (366a).[2]

Glaucon and Adeimantus have given Socrates a list of stipulations for his account of justice to consider it a satisfactory answer. One, he must show that justice is intrinsically valuable; two, he must explain how the intrinsic rewards of justice are more valuable than the extrinsic rewards; and three, he must prove that a just life is a happy life. To do this, Socrates will employ the use of political justice in the city as an analogy for human justice within the soul, hoping to arrive at a definition of justice through its place in the structure of a city.

### The City and The Soul

Although Socrates' analogy of the city and the soul continues for the remaining eight books of the *Republic*, what is most relevant to our discussion is Socrates' introduction of the healthy city in Book II. Socrates argues that this method of searching for justice in the city will be easier to grasp than justice in the soul, "…let us first investigate what justice is in the cities, and afterwards let us look for it in the individual, observing the similarities to the larger in the smaller (369a)."[3] Glaucon and Adeimantus agree to this, so Socrates begins his observation of the birth of a city. Socrates must create a fully formed city for his analogy to be valid as he is hoping to find a definition of justice not by examining the virtue itself per se, but by examining how it forms the structure of a city. Without the city, there is no justice, thus affirming its intrinsic nature.

Socrates sets about his task of creating his first city from 369c-371e, beginning with the necessary goods to sustain human life and ending with a model of societal bliss. Within this city's borders are farmers, craftsmen, merchants, markets, their own currency, and even a marine for import and export. The citizens are divided by specialization in labour, living simple, healthy, and pleasant lives in blissful relation to one another. Socrates expresses a desire to further examine justice within this city structure however Glaucon objects to this model of life, arguing that Socrates is fattening his citizens like

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[1] It is interesting to note here that these two lives are seen as in competition with each other. It is unclear what exactly is being judged, if both lives are the personification of injustice and justice. Perhaps it is the two interpretations of human nature, their steadfastness to their ideals, or the extrinsic rewards of society pitted against the intrinsic rewards of justice (in the afterlife?).

[2] It is important to note that Adeimantus did not exclude eternal rewards strictly speaking, but only that we cannot manipulate reputation in heaven if the afterlife exists. However this does still leave unanswered if paradise can be considered a reward/consequence through Glaucon's stipulations.

[3] While it could be argued that the analogy for political justice in the city as a substitute for human justice in the soul is actually comparing two very different models whose relation to one another is not obvious, we will say for the sake of the argument that Plato's analogy is valid.

pigs and refers to this city model as such (372e). In response to Glaucon's objections, Socrates reluctantly remarks "Very well…We should examine not only the birth of a city, but of a luxurious city. This may not be a bad idea, for in examining such a one we might very well see how justice and injustice grows in the city" (372e). The luxurious city is an extension of the healthy city; an imagined version where the citizens are given more than what is necessary for a good life. With these luxuries, the citizens become gluttonous and the city becomes fevered from greed. The following section will examine in further depth the accounts of both types of cities as well as further investigate Socrates' claims about human nature and justice.

## The Healthy City Problem

In founding the first imagined city, Socrates begins with a very different view of human nature than was provided earlier. Socrates remarks to Adeimantus, "I think a city comes to be…because not one of us is self-sufficient, but needs many things" (369c) to which Adeimantus agrees. It is from this very statement forward that Socrates begins to construct a view of humans in their natural state very different from the one provided by Glaucon and Adeimantus. As we saw earlier, the account of popular opinion provided by Glaucon and Adeimantus portrayed man as a selfish creature whose interactions with others required a contract of law and justice that would restrain their selfish nature in favour of social order. Contrary to this view, Socrates is suggesting that man is not self-sufficient as his citizens lack the greed necessary for this. Glaucon and Adeimantus suggested that the selfish nature was overridden due to a lack of power and a fear of retribution; however, Socrates appears to disagree. Socrates says, "…people make use of one another for various purposes. They gather many associates and helpers to live in one place, and to this settlement we give the name of city" (369c). By referring to others as associates and helpers, Socrates is creating a social order based on interdependency (and, it seems, a rather comradely one). He later refers to this association with others as "…the very purpose for which we established the city" (371b) and it is because of these interactions

citizens are able to enjoy the resources available to them in city life.

Having completed his basic sketch of a city, Socrates asks Adeimantus whether there is justice within it and where it might be found (371e). Adeimantus replies "I do not notice them…unless it is in the relations of these very people to one another" (372a). Adeimantus pointing out justice as a relationship should be noted as Socrates agrees with him (372a). This view of justice as a relationship to others in a social group fits with the view Glaucon and Adeimantus provided earlier of justice as a contract, and it fits with our knowledge of the city as a structural relationship. However, this form of justice in the healthy city, contrary to popular opinion at the time, is not retributive. Rather, justice in this relationship between citizens in the healthy city appears to be everyone fulfilling their task well so that society can function properly through sharing. Everyone in this city has a purpose and their jobs are given based on their respective strengths, be it intellectual strength (371d) or physical strength (371e).[4] Socrates argues that it is better for citizens to restrict themselves to one craft so that they may be the best at it, rather than spread their talents among many crafts (370b). By restricting themselves to excelling at one craft, each of the citizens depends on one another to provide for them in the areas where they are lacking. It is imperative that all citizens do their job so that all other citizens (including themselves) will succeed, so this model of interdependency creates a model of society and justice based on sharing and fulfilling one's duty.

Socrates wished to further analyse his creation of a healthy city and its relationship with justice, had Glaucon not interrupted him. After questioning Adeimantus whether they had sufficiently created a model of society for justice to live within, Socrates says "…we must look into it and not grow weary. First, let us see what kind of life our citizens will lead when they have thus been provided for" (372a). The healthy city appears be completed if they are able to examine justice within its borders. The healthy city provides a life without excess or selfishness as Socrates describes their life "…they

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[4] Where a person who fits both or neither of those categories is not addressed in the healthy city.

will hymn the gods and enjoy each other, bearing no more children than their means allow, cautious to avoid poverty and war…they will live at peace and in good health, and when they die at a ripe age they will bequeath a similar life to their offspring" (372d). The citizens appear to want for nothing, content with their lives of moderation and comradeship. This lifestyle appears to be what Socrates might consider an ideal life, as he states "…the true city is that which we described" (373a). However, Glaucon saw this model of a healthy city as fit only for pigs, teasing Socrates by saying "If they are not to be miserable they should recline on proper couches and dine at a table, with the cooked foods and delicacies which people have nowadays" (372e). Socrates has introduced his healthy city as a completed model to examine justice as he stated that it could be found within his city if they looked further into it. However, this disagreement between Socrates and Glaucon lead to the expansion of the healthy city into a city with a fever. Next, we will examine how this fevered city creates a problem with our understanding of the healthy city as completed model.

## The Feverish City Problem

Socrates reluctantly concedes to Glaucon's wishes to move on in their discussion, but this reluctance speaks volumes about the two cities. Socrates remarked that his city was "…like a healthy individual", referring to their forthcoming examination of a luxurious city as "…the feverish city" (373a). The words Socrates chooses to use when referring to these types of cities indicate his preferred political state. A healthy city is presented as the ideal political state, while the feverish city appears to have something infectious within its borders. In this case, it would appear that the fever within the city is its greed or excess. Socrates outlines the rapid expansion of the feverish city, stating "The healthy community is no longer adequate, but it must be swollen in bulk and filled with a multitude of things which are no longer necessities" (373c). These excesses come in the form of material goods, but also in professions that Socrates deems unnecessary (particularly the arts), and property expansion to accommodate this swollen, fevered city (373b-373e).

War becomes inevitable because of the necessity of territorial annexation for this greedy feverish city, and with it comes a new category of people in society. Socrates comments on how this annexation of land will affect his city's population, explaining "…we shall need a city larger not by a little, in fact larger by a whole army" (374a). By including an army, Socrates has now introduced a new category of people into his society. While the healthy society was divided into two groups based on physical or intellectual strength, Socrates has introduced the guardians as a third class within the feverish city. This has a large impact on his theory as he goes on to outline the education and specific natures of these guardians, often referring to their natures to be bred like pedigree puppies (375a, 375e). Earlier when we examined the healthy city there was no place for overlapping natures and it appeared that human nature within the healthy city had no need for the third class of talents. However, in the case of the feverish city, the new guardian class requires the combination these opposing qualities. These guardians are described as "…a lover of wisdom, high-spirited, swift and strong by nature" (376c). Socrates recognizes the paradox he has placed himself in after he claimed that these natures were opposing to one another (375d) thus justifying the separation of classes in the healthy city, "The combination [of qualities] seems impossible, so it follows that a good guardian cannot exist" (375d). However, to remedy this problem in the feverish city he claims that such a combination of character qualities is in existence "…by nature in the pedigree dog" and concludes that the search for the nature of the guardian is not against nature (375e), thus allowing his guardian class to have such a distinct nature in the feverish city. This very distinct difference in human natures between the healthy and feverish cities creates a philosophical problem as we will examine in the next section.

## A Philosophical Mistake

If we are to interpret the healthy city as fully grown, Socrates has inadvertently given his readers an interpretation of justice that is very different from the definition of justice he reaches at the conclusion of the *Republic*. If the healthy city is fully grown, the feverish city must be deformed in

some way if their city's healthiness is the end goal. Yet Socrates presents the feverish city as an expansion of the healthy city, leading us to wonder if the healthy city was truly fully formed, or if the feverish city is meant to be a different city entirely. Unfortunately, neither of those two options solves the philosophical problem Socrates is faced with. Socrates' definition of a feverish city set the stage for the examinations of justice through a city model for the rest of the *Republic* and already we can see how starkly different the two societies are. These differences are expanded upon in later books but for our argument's purposes we have focused only on the differences in Book II.

The role of combined strengths and the guardians creates a paradox between Socrates' two models of justice within society. Socrates makes the combination of physical and intellectual strengths only possible in the feverish city because of the need for war.[5] It would appear that the combined nature of the guardians is their function and they are considered better than the other categories as this difference in nature makes them fit to rule (as is seen in the later books of the *Republic*). The introduction of the army into the feverish city signifies a lack of security as well as greed amongst its citizens, who are now in need of a ruling force as a protector. These guardians serve to reinforce the perception of human nature as inherently selfish as citizens are in need of protection from the ramifications of their own avarice. Yet the healthy city has no need for guardians. Each citizen acts as their own guardian, working in harmony with each other and sharing their wealth, never living off more than they need. The healthy city provides a view of human nature contrary to one another. As such justice, within these two city models, appears very different. Each of these cities had divided labour in the same way, intellectually and physically, but with the introduction of luxuries a change in human nature seems to arise. Not only does this luxury lead to selfishness, it creates an entirely new group of citizens: the guardians. The guardians are set to rule above the ordinary citizens, creating a hierarchy

within the feverish city that did not exist in the healthy city model. If we are to interpret the feverish city as an expansion of the healthy city, the change in perception of human nature does not follow without examination. Additionally, if the nature of the guardians is perceived as natural, then it is not obvious why the combination of intellectual and physical strengths within the healthy city is not permitted. These two accounts of human nature create a problem for Socrates' analysis if we are to agree that the feverish city can be seen as an extension of the healthy city and examine justice through its structure.

Additionally, Socrates' healthy city falls within the confines of justice set by Glaucon and Adeimantus at the beginning of Book II. His abandonment of the healthy city to pursue the fevered city does appear odd, especially given these circumstances. Socrates produced a model of a city where justice originated from a need for comradeship as no citizen was self-sufficient, each citizen acted as their own guardian and policed their own behaviour without fear of extrinsic punishment, the citizens were not greedy and so did not pursue injustice or its rewards (whether earthly or divine), and each lived a very happy life. Having met Glaucon and Adeimantus' demands, the reason Glaucon objected to this view of society seems a strange reason to abandon it entirely. At the very least, it creates a problem for Socrates as he very easily provided an account of justice without much analysis, proving his complex *Republic*-building to be a bizarre experiment that is easily countered by his own words.

## Conclusion

In his efforts to create a model of a city that would allow him to arrive at a definition of justice as intrinsically valuable, Socrates accidentally introduces to his readers the healthy city: a completed city whose model of justice vastly differs from the model of the city he claims to be an expansion of it—the feverish city. His choice to abandon examining the healthy city for the very different feverish city seems an odd choice. Given that he had met the demands set forth by Glaucon and Adeimantus with his healthy city, and his different accounts of human nature, it might have

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[5] It is not clear why this combination of natures is only suited to the guardians, however this theme of each individual having specific strengths best suited to them continues throughout the book.

better served his argument if he had chosen only one of the societies to examine without mentioning the possibility of the other. At best, Socrates' choice is an acknowledgement that such answers of justice are not so easily reached as society is far more complex than a group of comrades living peacefully together. At worst, it is a philosophical mistake that counteracts his account of justice within his *Republic* society. The statements each model of a city makes about human nature must not go unnoticed as it affects how the intrinsic nature of justice is perceived in the end. While there are no clear answers to be found here as to why Plato saw fit to have Socrates abandon the model of a healthy city (but not before declaring it the true city) it is important that we have examined how the perception of human nature affects his argument of justice existing intrinsically within a city's structure in his *Republic*.

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# The Evolution of Ophidian Imagery: From Positive to Pejorative Symbolism

## RACHEL BAITZ

One of the most commonly found symbols in religions, spanning countries, periods, and deities, is the serpent. Ophidian symbols exist in countless religions, often associated with knowledge and the binaries of life. Through an examination focused on a few examples of serpent imagery found in the ancient cult of Asclepius, texts taken from the Jewish and Christian bibles, and other ancient sources, one can see how the serpent became the ultimate symbol for medicine and healing, despite the changing connotations of the snake. The snake lends itself to various symbolic interpretations due to its physiological traits; however, these same traits can be manipulated into opposing understandings, suiting one interpretation over another. Such interpretations have changed over thousands of years, evolving from positive to negative impressions, which have lasted until modernity.

Snakes have unique and immediately recognizable physical attributes that separate them from other reptiles. Snakes lack limbs, they do not blink, and they shed their withered skin. Their prey is often larger than they are and is swallowed completely whole, and many are venomous. They live in bushes, and create tunnels underground. Serpents are undeniably powerful creatures. As a result of many of these traits, religions have long associated certain skills, meanings, and abilities with snakes. In various religious tales, snakes are represented as knowledgeable creatures, such as in relation to Asclepius, or in Genesis 3, where a serpent provides information that is both correct and previously unknown to humans. This trait of knowledge may have been derived from their physical appearances and abilities. It has been believed "that serpents had learned the medicinal powers of plants and herbs from their habitat among bushes,"[1] and due to their tunnels in the ground, ancient cultures thought snakes knew how to visit the Underworld and return to the world of the living.[2] Living hidden by plants and burrowing underground also gave snakes a quality of elusiveness, appearing swift and slippery. This trait can have both positive and negative connotations, since they can appear and disappear with little noise or warning.[3] Furthermore, snakes were thought to be immortal, as they shed their old, aged skin, and appear reborn and youthful again; the ultimate visual triumph of self-renewal over death.[4] Immortal or not, snakes were believed to have omniscient qualities since they do not blink, which provided further support for the belief that they were knowledgeable. This reputation for keen vision was thought to be an indication of caution and wisdom—a serpent's vision coupled with an absence of sleep endowed them with extreme powers of vigilance.[5] Knowledge is one trait associated with serpents repeatedly, as is that of protection. Due to their watchfulness, serpents were thought to be desirable in attempting to protect one's home. Their prey often included mice and other rodents, protecting gardens and allowing food to grow undisturbed.[6] The removal of vermin from the vicinity of homes and food sources also cut down on disease. "From great temples to simple households, the presence of a snake was thought to provide protection from misfortune throughout ancient Greece."[7] This removal of mice (and therefore disease) ultimately allowed for longer and healthier human lives; an example of the binary of life and death that is so often associated with serpents. There are numerous examples similar to this, in which serpents both represent life and death in one being. For example, snakes are venomous, and a single bite can lead to a rapid and painful death. However, that same venom can be used for its healing properties, such as acting

[1] Gerald D. Hart, *Asclepius: The God of Medicine*, (London, The Royal Society of Medicine Press, 2000), 41.

[2] James H. Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent: How a Universal Symbol Became Christianized*, (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2010), 49.

[3] Ibid., 317.

[4] Stavros A. Antinou, "The Rod and the Serpent: History's Ultimate Healing Symbol," *World Journal of Surgery* 35, no. 1(2011): 221.

[5] Hart, *Asclepius: The God of Medicine*, 41.

[6] Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent*, 53.

[7] Antinou, "The Rod, 218." This is seen even in the Greek origins of the words: house + guard = snake.

as an anticoagulant in ancient medicine. Since serpents were associated with many symbolic meanings, archaeological realia often show other animals represented alongside a snake in order to emphasize certain characteristics of the snake over others. A snake pictured beside a scorpion was meant to emphasize the bite of the serpent, as well as the chthonic symbolism as a source of death; a bull emphasized the serpent's power, protection, and divinity; and a dove "added to the serpent's ability to symbolize a transcendence from the earth, an ascension into the heavens where Wisdom [seemed] to dwell, and perhaps the source of new and rejuvenated life."[8] It can be assumed that the addition of these animals was to minimize negative associations with the serpent, and infer a more positive image of their relationship with humans. As a result of these traits, snakes have a history of revolting, amazing, and piquing the interest of humanity over millennia. As a result of the duality of these contrasting feelings, there are various myths that represent the multifaceted relationship between the two species.

Many of the above-listed traits of snakes are useful or related to healing. Knowledge pertaining to the medicinal powers of plants and how to escape the Underworld would certainly be useful to an ancient healer. A snake casting off old age would be comparable to a physician banishing disease to safeguard health and youth.[9] Furthermore, the serpent's qualities of watchfulness and attentiveness would be of undeniable use for a healer or physician in diagnosing and treating symptoms. Of course, the ultimate healer is associated with a snake: Asclepius, the ancient Greek god of medicine. In the most common origin myth of the healer, Asclepius was born to Apollo and Coronis. Coronis was killed by one of Apollo's arrows while she was pregnant with Asclepius, because the god found out that she was unfaithful to him. Apollo saved his son from her dying body and gave him to the centaur Chiron, who raised Asclepius as a foster parent. While under Chiron's tutelage, Asclepius tended to the serpents on Mount Pelion, who taught him their secret knowledge of herbs in exchange. Asclepius became skilled in medicine, pharmacology, and surgery, and eventually his skill became such that he was able to raise the dead and save those destined for the Underworld. This angered Hades and, because of this, Zeus struck Asclepius with a thunderbolt and killed him. Supposedly, Asclepius continued to heal, treating patients in their dreams and at the healing temples or Asclepeions.[10] Asclepius was recognizable to his followers by the Staff of Asclepius, a stick with a serpent coiled around it. The snake ultimately became a symbol for healing, in part due to its previously mentioned associations of protection, attentiveness, and knowledge. Further than just his origin myth and the Rod of Asclepius, one sees the healer and serpents together in many situations. For example, Pausanias writes that "the image of Asclepius [at Epidaurus] is, in size, half as big as the Olympian Zeus at Athens, and is made of ivory and gold… The god is sitting on a seat grasping a staff, the other hand is holding above the head of a serpent; there is also the figure of a dog lying by his side."[11] In a sanctuary devoted to Amynos, Asclepios, and Dexion, the features of the building itself remind one of the relationship between the healer and serpents. The sanctuary found in Athens had a well which may be related to the healing functions of the building, a marble table decorated with snakes, and several dedications to Asclepius and representations of healed body parts.[12]

The same traits that associated snakes with a godly healer such as Asclepius also associated them with other religious tales. Serpents were a positive symbol in most world cultures, and just as snakes were appreciated in Greek and Roman periods, the snake was admired in times of the Old Testament and in early Judaism as well. One of the most famous serpent stories is found in the Book of Genesis: the story of Adam and Eve. The original sin is one of the most important religious tales in Judaism and Christianity, as it shows humanity's fall

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[8] Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent*, 117.

[9] Ludwig Edelstein, *Asclepius: Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies*, (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 336.

[10] Hart, *Asclepius: The God of Medicine*, 7-10.

[11] Edelstein, *Asclepius: Collection*, 345.

[12] Harland, Philip and Richard S. Ascough, "Building: Sanctuary of Amynos – Amyneion (IV BCE) Athens – Attica," in *Associations in the Greco-Roman World* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2013), November 25, 2016. Accessed December 06, 2016.

from grace and the introductions of sin, pain, suffering, and death.[13] The serpent presents the woman with the truth, which she chooses to act upon. The snake does not trick Eve—the text suggests that she willingly eats the fruit without the snake pushing her towards it physically or verbally.[14] The snake is represented as a wise being that technically assists in the acquisition of knowledge, which is an act considered to be noble in both Jewish and Christian literature.[15] It can be assumed that the serpent was not frightening or alarming in appearance, because Eve engages in conversation with it despite the fact that the creature is unfamiliar to her.[16] Though the snake in this story is now synonymous with evil and known for its cruel behaviour, this understanding was only introduced later. Pejorative interpretation of snakes in the New Testament comes from commentators, not from the original text.[17] Another example of a snake being associated with its previous connotations is found in Numbers 21: 4-9. While wandering the desert, the newly freed people began to question God for taking them to such a terrible place without even water. For questioning his decision, God sent fiery serpents upon them and many were dying from the venomous, painful bites. In order to heal them, God instructed Moses to fashion a copper snake and raise it for all to see on a stick (for those who look upon it would be saved). This healing image is familiar: a serpent coiled around a stick seems rather similar to the Rod of Asclepius. However, the important quality of the snake in this narrative is that the serpent both has the power to kill and to save, a binary that was often associated with ophidian images.

The myth of Asclepius was well known and defined him as the ultimate healing deity, and, as a result, Asclepeions were built and the cult of Asclepius became widespread. He lasted among the longest of all the Greek and Roman gods. In fact, "other cults (even if still respected) had lost much of their former hold over the imagination and hearts of men, whereas his was still being celebrated."[18] As a result of this lasting cult, Asclepius likely contributed to the snake's reputation as a positive symbol within Greek and Roman societies, along with influences from neighbouring religions in the Near East.[19] Influences of Asclepius were pervasive in many aspects of the ancient society, including government. The first deified emperor was supposedly born by a snake and was a son of Apollo, connecting the healing deity and the emperor through their common lineage.[20] Asclepius was portrayed on many coins from the 5th century BC to the 4th century AD, showing that his presence was commonplace in society for a very long time.[21] Along with being featured on coins, "the legend's adoption into everyday life is reflected by the depiction of Asclepius, in the form of a snake, on a bronze coin dedicated to an unwell Caesar by the citizens of the isle of Mytilene, wishing him a speedy recovery."[22] Asclepius was as much a part of everyday life in Ancient Greece and Rome as a coin was. His devotees were widespread and numerous, and some were as legendary as the healer himself.[23]

However, Christianity was still being shaped and growing at the height of the Asclepian cult, whose "bewitching serpent symbolism were a threat to Christian theologians and church leaders."[24] Early gospel presented Jesus as physician, as a healer of disease, which "made him resemble Asclepius, the god of medicine, more than any other pagan divinity,"[25] and as a result, comparisons began to be drawn between the two. Both had divine fathers, both were healers who had the ability to revive the dead, and both died as mortal beings to later be resurrected.[26] Both healing deities were referred to as "The Saviour", but by definition, there could be only one. Christian writers attempted to discount Asclepius' abilities, as seen in Athanasius' *On the*

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[13] Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent*, 272.

[14] Ibid., 316-7.

[15] Ibid., 308.

[16] Ibid., 319-20.

[17] Ibid., 353.

[18] Edelstein, *Asclepius: Collection*, 133.

[19] Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent*, 160.

[20] Ibid., 373-4.

[21] Hart, *Asclepius: The God of Medicine*, 12.

[22] Antinou, "The Rod," 218.

[23] Edelstein, *Asclepius: Collection*, 251. Alexander the Great was one notable devotee of Asclepius, among others.

[24] Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent*, 369.

[25] Edelstein, *Asclepius: Collection*, 133.

[26] Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent*, 371.

*Incarnation of the World*: "Asclepius was deified among them, because he practiced medicine and found out herbs for bodies that were sick; not forming them himself out of the earth."[27] In an attempt to combat the popularity of the Asclepian cult and its imagery, early Christians tried to change the perception of ophidian imagery. The imagery of Christ on the cross assumes the figure of a snake; the "New Testament told that a healing Messiah rose on the Cross to cure mankind's ills, 'just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.'"[28] Clearly there is a connection being drawn between the healing action of Moses and the healings of Jesus, and the author was trying to remove the power of the snake from the narrative, to reassign that power to Jesus. In the first centuries AD, the symbolic substance of the serpent is redefined to be associated with the use of its poison or theriac in pharmacology.[29] The serpent became mostly associated with medicinal uses, and what had once been a positive and powerful image quickly became ambiguous and confused. As a result, around the fourth century AD, the symbol was either neutral or seen in a negative light. Some say that this was due to confusion caused by diverse meanings for the same symbol, which led many to brush it off entirely. Others claim that it is because of the growing influence and prevalence of the church, and its attempt to vilify the serpent in the face of previous religious cults, such as that of Asclepius.[30] Writers and commentators of the New Testament were making references that defined the serpent as evil, such as Paul's use of snake imagery to denote liars,[31] and in Revelation, where an "ancient serpent" is clarified to be the Devil and Satan, creating an obvious connection between evil and serpents. Followers of Christianity would have looked back upon Genesis 3 and seen the serpent from a new, hateful perspective, convinced that it pushed Eve toward the forbidden fruit and ultimately caused death, pain, and sin to be brought upon the world to come.

The attempts to remove Asclepius and the serpent from the minds of Greeks and Romans was primarily intended to convince people to join the Christian movement. By taking an already familiar image such as the serpent and manipulating its meaning for their benefit, the process of convincing citizens to join Christ groups would have been simpler. Not only were familiar images shifted toward a Christian understanding, but the language used in the Greek New Testament was manipulated as well. There were 41 nouns in Greek to denote various snakes, 5 of which are used in the Greek New Testament.[32] By using language already associated with religion and healing in the minds of the Greek masses, it likely worked as a transitional technique to welcome converts to the new religion. However, those who considered joining Christian groups were met with issues involving the differences between the two healers. These differences were not simply about how, where, or who they healed, but ultimately revealed the differences in status and place in society between the two groups. As we have already seen, Asclepeions were a large part of the cult of Asclepius. Sick and unwell people travelled to these locations from all over, hoping to meet the healing god himself in a dream and be saved. One of the most important Asclepeions was in Epidaurus, mythologically linked to the birthplace of Asclepius. The necessary factor to Asclepius' healings was a geographical location of the temple. An example proving the importance of the temple as the healing site is the story of Aratas:

> Aratas suffered from dropsy [edema] and her mother slept on her behalf in the abaton [of an Asclepeion]. She dreamt that the god performed an operation on her daughter. He cut off her head, turned her upside down, and in this way drained some fluid matter from her body. Thereafter he fitted the head back on to the neck. When the mother returned home, she found her daughter in good health. She had the exact same dream.[33]

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[27] Athanasius' *On the Incarnation of the World*, 49.2, as cited by Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent*, 370.

[28] Antinou, "The Rod," 219.

[29] Ibid., 220.

[30] Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent*, 417.

[31] Ibid., 354.

[32] Ibid., 352-3.

[33] Johannes Wolmarans, "Asclepius Of Epidaurus And Jesus of

Clearly, one could send a representative of the patient in order to be healed, because the temple itself was important to the actual healing. On the other hand, Jesus' healings were "localised socially, resting with Jesus and his official representatives."[34] The importance of the social aspect of healing rather than a location was likely a result of the fact that early Christians did not have access to sanctuaries. Examples such as Acts 21:27-30 inform modern readers that the early Christian followers were rejected from Jewish temples and synagogues, forcing Christians to couple the healing presence of God to the person of Jesus and to his official representatives. The movement itself became the new place of God, localising the healing socially rather than geographically, or tying it to a specific healing place.[35] Furthermore, Asclepius healed those who had faith and were pure of mind, as seen in the story of the curing of Cleimenes. It is said that "the god [Asclepius] said that he would not cure the cowardly, but only those full of hope (euelpides)."[36] Contrastingly, Jesus healed all, not just those who he deemed worthy or who believed in him.[37] In Ancient Greek society, a new god who would communicate with sinners and heal them was not a type of god citizens were comfortable with; as a result, people were reluctant and clung to Asclepius.[38] To be told that Christ forgives all sinners would have been an abhorrent concept to the elite in Greek society, who believed that those entering the temples of Asclepius had to be pure in thought and deed.[39] Perhaps this reluctance towards Jesus is what led early Christian writers to attempt to transition the snake into a pejorative image, and to replace the serpent on the staff with Jesus on the cross. Another point of contrast between the healing deities is that of payment. Asclepius expected that "when the suppliant returned home, and became fully cured, he was supposed to send money to the temple."[40] More than just stories and examples of payments, votives,

and offerings to Asclepius, the myth of his death exemplifies that he not only expected payment, he became greedy. Greek heroes and gods often had human emotions and faults, and their hubris would lead to hamartia. As described by Pindar, "For money's sake [Asclepius] dared to heal those who were doomed to die,"[41] which led Zeus to slay him with his thunderbolt, for his actions verged on the territories of Hades and mortality. Jesus, by comparison, gave his disciples the ability to heal people and exorcise demons, yet in Matthew 10:7 he specifically forbids his disciples to accept money for their services and connects the preaching of the gospel to these healings.[42] Rather than paying in money, those healed by Jesus would hopefully see the power of this new god and become a follower, paying in faith. In other words, "The cure [became] the means [by] which people joined the movement."[43] Though the healing deities had comparable curing abilities and had parallel origin myths, these differences in process and patients had incredible weight in the minds of the contemporary Greek citizen. To join a movement that existed on the outskirts of society, but did not require travel or money to be healed may have seemed appealing, but to associate with a god who healed the lowest of society was less than attractive. Therefore, it is clear why the attempts to redefine the snake was necessary for Christ groups to gain momentum and followers; the Asclepian cult was a powerful and successful group that had followers far across the land.

Eventually, the Christian groups succeeded in diminishing the appeal of Asclepius and the snakes associated with him. Though the snake on a rod as a symbol of healing nearly disappeared after the establishment of Christianity and the fall of Paganism, coins of Asclepius continued to circulate all those years.[44] As a result, "The snake continued to serve as a healing symbol between the 6th century BC until the Renaissance, as documented by contemporary iconography and manuscripts."[45] The iconography of the Renaissance still "underscores

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Nazareth," (1996), 5.

[34] Ibid., 7.

[35] Ibid., 6.

[36] Ibid., 5.

[37] Edelstein, *Asclepius: Collection*, 134.

[38] Ibid., 135.

[39] Hart, *Asclepius: The God of Medicine*, 187.

[40] Wolmarans, "Asclepius Of Epidaurus," 5.

[41] Edelstein, *Asclepius: Collection*, 23.

[42] Wolmarans, "Asclepius Of Epidaurus," 6.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Hart, *Asclepius: The God of Medicine*, 44-5.

[45] Antinou, "The Rod," 217-8.

the significance of the snake's poison in contemporary pharmacopoeia and medicine,"[46] but it was clear that the snake was no longer associated with the Greek healing deity. The serpent's importance had been limited to the benefits and uses of venom in healing, with "the symbol representing the provider of antidotes to snake poison—reportedly one of the most desirable ''cure-alls'' of the 16th century."[47] The symbolic substance of the serpent was clearly redefined and limited to the use of its poison (theriac) in pharmacology, with unchallengeable evidence that the theriac was considered the contemporary panacea until the Renaissance.[48] Eventually, a symbol similar to Moses' bronze serpent reappeared during the Renaissance, and the Asclepian symbol returned to physicians.[49] However, the Asclepian symbol was no longer understood in relation to the Greek healing deity, and it appears that the ophidian image was mistaken for the caduceus, which features entwined double snake imagery. The Renaissance is the first period in which one sees the incorrectly used emblem in relation to the healing arts. Some, like authors of "The Rod and the Serpent: History's Ultimate Healing Symbol," believe that this double ophidian emblem emphasized double symbolism of the image. As described earlier, the serpent was often associated with binary meanings, such as representing both life and death, being both good and harmful, and responsible for both disease and cure.[50] Because of this, some believe that the mistaken emblem has validity and legitimacy in its place within the medical field. Hermes, messenger of the gods and guide of the dead to the underworld, originally used the caduceus; another part of Hermes' responsibilities was guiding sleeping souls back to life with his wand. Some believe that because Hermes guides souls to the underworld and back, the caduceus relates to the promise of returning from the brink of death and the underworld, whether that mean awakening from sleep, or surviving sickness which would have led to death.[51] However, as the corrupted emblem became associated with the medical field, it was often used interchangeably with the Rod of Asclepius. The reasons underlying the caduceus' uses as a medical symbol in the Renaissance are unknown still today, and "it has since been adopted, somewhat incorrectly, by medical organizations worldwide over the past 150 years."[52] Not all medical organizations make this error: in the coat of arms of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada, the Staff of Asclepius is central to the emblem. Though the coat of arms of the Royal Society of Medicine features a serpent coiled around a cross, the imagery of the snake is still present. The snake's depiction no longer has positive or negative meanings in relation to medicine; it simply embodies the field in a single symbol. The Staff of Asclepius has been related to medicine for nearly four millennia, proving that, as it stands, the snake will likely exist as a medical symbol for years to come.[53] To quote "The Rod and the Serpent: History's Ultimate Healing Symbol," "The healing symbol of the snake is as ancient as the medical art itself… The snake has always represented polar opposites—illness and therapy, sin and redemption, death and rejuvenation. This duality, and its unpredictable nature, serves as the perfect embodiment of the imponderable factors of the medical art: even if a therapy is applied, the outcome often remains uncertain."[54]

The image of the snake in relation to healing is appropriate and valid, as proven through historical, mythological, and traditional retrospection of the snake's symbolism.[55] The Hippocratic oath used to begin by calling upon Asclepius and other healing gods to witness that one keeps the oath to the best of their ability and judgement.[56] Though Asclepius is no longer a part of the oath, the Hippocratic oath is named for a supposed descendant of his, further substantiating his and the associated snake's place in modern medicine.

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[46] Ibid., 220.

[47] Antinou, "The Rod," 217-8.

[48] Ibid., 220.

[49] Hart, *Asclepius: The God of Medicine*, 44-5.

[50] Antinou, "The Rod," 220.

[51] Ibid.

[52] Ibid., 221.

[53] Hart, *Asclepius: The God of Medicine*, 239.

[54] Antinou, "The Rod," 221.

[55] Ibid., 217.

[56] Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent*, 166.

Today, the image of the snake still holds the negative meaning assigned to it by Christianity in antiquity. Though today it is known that Christian groups succeeded and grew exponentially to become the world's largest religion, their success in redefining and manipulating images and language goes nearly unrecognized by comparison. The positive understandings of the serpent, originating from associations to Asclepius and other religious figures, are long forgotten. Even the medical field does not look positively towards the serpent; it is a historical image, regarded with neutrality and respect. The ever-pervasive pejorative nature of the serpent symbol is assumed and expected in modernity, to the extent that humanity assumes fear of serpents is innate (though it is learned), and the snake emoji is used in the comments of celebrities' social media pages in order to insult and slander—a meaning that is immediately understood today due to the Christian writers of antiquity.

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# The Donatist Controversy: A Movement of Nationalist and Social Protest

## VINCENT LEGAULT

The Donatists were a branch of Christianity that resulted from a schism in Roman Africa from the Catholic Church. The Donatist controversy occurred in the early 4th century after Diocletian's Edict of Persecution. Members of the clergy were accused of being *Lapsi* and *Traditores*, and several religious Councils and even persecutions were used to eliminate the Donatists. This paper will attempt to shed some light on the motivations of this movement. To start, we will explore the issues surrounding our written sources for the time and follow up with a short description of what caused the Donatist controversy. We shall then continue to explain why Donatism as a movement, although it contained religious elements, was part of a nationalist and social protest. We shall do so by demonstrating the various aspects of the movement that are predominantly nationalist or social features rather than religious ones, thus resulting in a movement of nationalist and social protest.

Let us begin with a quick word on our primary sources on Donatism. Optatus and St. Augustine are both very important contemporary sources for the Donatist controversy. Optatus of Milevis was from a small town in Numidia and possibly wrote during the reign of Valens.[1] St. Augustine was the Bishop of Hippo in Numidia until his death in 430. Optatus is especially important when describing the events of the Circumcellion rising of AD 340-347. It is worth remembering though that both these authors were hostile to the Donatist position.[2] Very few writings of the Donatists themselves survive, save for a few inscriptions and stories. The martyr stories that do survive help shed light on the Donatist mindset in the way they used propaganda, telling us how they saw themselves and valorised their martyrs.[3]

Historians must therefore be cautious when using these sources, keeping a critical mind and perhaps even being skeptical at times of what they read. With this word of caution, let us proceed to a short description of the controversy itself.

The Donatist controversy began when Mensurius, the bishop of Carthage, died in 311, and was replaced by his deacon Caecilian. Caecilian was accused by the Donatists of having mistreated Christians, as the so-called "Acts of the Abitinian Martyrs" describe how Mensurius and Caecilian had prevented the Donatist prisoners from receiving food from those willing to feed them.[4] In addition to this, Caecilian was ordained by Felix of Abthungi, a man who was accused of giving away holy scriptures during the persecutions of Diocletian which earned him the name *traditor*, along with anyone else who did the same or who was ordained by someone who had given away holy scriptures. Since *traditores* or those ordained by them could not give sacraments, they could not be priests or bishops or ordain others. That is why when Caecilian became bishop of Carthage, a man named Mensurius protested against this decision. Unfortunately for him, he died shortly after, and Donatus (we get the name for the movement from him) took Mensurius' place and went to synods in Rome in 313 and in Arles in 314 to contest the decision. Constantine was present in 314 and vouched for the Catholic Caecilian, where Catholics supported the Roman emperor. Donatists brought new charges in 315 against Caecilian, but this lead to a persecution from 317 to 321.[5] The struggle continued, and yet another persecution by Macarian ensued in 347-348.[6] This short description outlines key events resulting in the schism, and the late persecutions testify as to how long this conflict raged on. We will now see how this religious schism was in fact mainly a movement of nationalist and social protest rather than a religious movement.

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[1] Optatus, Optatus: Against the Donatists, trans. and ed. by Mark Edwards (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1997), XVI-XVII.

[2] W.H.C. Frend, *The Donatist Church; a movement of protest in Roman North Africa* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 60-75.

[3] Maureen A. Tilley, trans., *Donatist Martyr Stories; The Church in Conflict in Roman North Africa* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996), xi-xvii.

[4] Tilley, *Donatist Martyr Stories*, 45-46.

[5] David S. Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay AD 180-394* (London: Routledge, 2004), 402-410.

[6] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 169-192.

Support for the Donatist party laid largely with the lower classes. This lower class was very large and it grew with the heavy taxation imposed on the province of Africa. Farmers were becoming weary of all these taxes, especially when they changed from a monetary tax to taxation in form of *annona*. Taxation in form of *annona* was tax in kind, effectively taking away large parts of the harvest of farmers. This heavy taxation destroyed the African middle class, creating a greater economic divide between classes whilst also creating a larger lower class. In fact, Constantine praises tax collectors for their work in Africa in 313, but that same year is when the Donatist controversy broke out.[7]

Additional Donatist support was not only limited to the province of Africa. Large support also came from the less Romanized areas such as Numidia.[8] Furthermore, most Donatists were Punic or Berber speaking. Some had varying levels of knowledge of the Latin language, but some only knew the local dialect of their region.[9] Needless to say, local elites could speak Latin and would most likely have done business with even higher officials, such as the bishop or proconsul of Carthage, in Latin. The economic divide between lower and upper classes and their struggle seems to suggest the Donatist controversy may have been a social movement. However, this tendency to have Donatist supporters speaking local dialects, such as Punic or Berber, suggests a nationalist movement. Both these interpretations have their charm and merit, and I will support that they are equally correct and that the Donatist controversy seems to be both a movement of nationalist and social protest.

Another feature of the Donatist movement that could be seen as nationalist protest is recorded in Optatus. Optatus gives us Donatus' letter to the emperor in response to the decision of the Roman emperor, who favored a Catholic bishop in Carthage over a Donatist one. In his letter, Donatus advocated for the separation of Church and State, questioning

the role of kings or emperors with Christian dealings.[10] This episode recorded in Optatus' work written against Donatists, shows that the Donatists wanted to have an African church, separate from the rest of the Roman Empire. Caecilian and his bishops and religious followers were favoured in Africa over Donatism or other forms of Christianity because they were closely linked to the emperor himself, especially after Constantine asserted his domination in the West in 312 and throughout the Empire in 324.[11] As we have seen previously, the Roman emperor Constantine was not above intervening in religious matters in favour of those Christians who supported him. The Donatist fixation on having an independent African Church, underlying nationalist desires, may have occurred after the continuous refusal by synods to have a Donatist bishop in Carthage. For an independent African Church within the Roman empire would mean that it would be controlled by Africans, and not any other outsider. We now turn to another Donatist fixation that may imply nationalist and social protest, that of martyrdom.

The Second Donatist fixation of martyrdom is well documented by the several Donatist martyr stories. Each of these follow the same pattern of an individual (such as Cyprian and Saint Felix Bishop) or a group of individuals (such as the Abitinian Martyrs). These Acts recount the ways in which these individuals refused to hand over scripture of change their ideology in the face of authorities such as centurions or even proconsuls. The Donatists, due to their refusal to cooperate by any means, were then executed. This fixation of martyrdom is demonstrated by the compilation by the 7 cases collected by Maureen A. Tilley.[12] Perhaps the most zealous of the Donatists following this trend of martyrdom were the Circumcellion. In his description of them, Optatus tells us the Circumcellion were dangerous to all and prevented creditors from collecting their dues.[13] These were groups composed of the poorest members of society, some of them even slaves. They opposed authority

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[7] Frend, *The Donatist Church*, 60-75.

[8] W.H.C. Frend, "Heresy and Schism as Social and National Movements" (Studies in Church History Vol. 9, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 37-56.

[9] A.H.M. Jones, *Were Ancient Heresies National or Social Movements in Disguise*?, Ed. P.A. Brunt (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974), 308-329.

[10] Optatus, i. 22.

[11] Jones, *Were Ancient Heresies National of Social Movements in Disguise?,* 308-329.

[12] Tilley, *Donatist Martyr Stories*.

[13] Optatus, iii. 4.

figures such as creditors and rich landowners with violence. It must, however, be remembered that tenants did not have some sort of workers' union to protect their rights or protect them from extortion, as was often the case for the province of Africa, which was heavily taxed. Therefore, the Circumcellion were Donatists that formed together and defended tenants from the extortion of creditors. The Circumcellion were also a refuge for most people, as the word implies that people dwelt near churches for food and shelter.[14] What Optatus saw as free violence and dangerous behaviour from their part, might simply have been an alternative defense against the extortion of creditors that tenants were happy to have. For some, it may in fact have been the only source of protection imaginable. In its defense of tenants, the Donatist Circumcellion appears to be another act of social protest in Roman Africa and Numidia.

Despite Donatism's Christian foundation, it may be that some spiritual aspects of it lay in local traditions rather than Christian ones. Martyrs are obviously praised in the Christian world even today, but that is not the goal of every follower. St. Augustine, who wrote against Donatists and other forms of Christianity he considered to be heresies, also wrote his *Confessions* in an apologetic style which would become favoured by the Catholic Church. So, while the Catholics favoured the apologetic view, the Donatists preferred that of martyrdom. This fundamental religious divide between the two may actually have its roots in pagan practices of the region. After all, nowhere else in the Roman Empire at the time do we see Circumcellion groups emerge other than in Africa and Numidia, and nowhere else is there such a strong desire and obsession with martyrdom and martyrs. Such train of thought leads to the logical conclusion that elements of Donatism came from local pagan practices.[15] It is thus possible to see the Donatists' use of martyrdom, taking its roots from local tradition, as not only a religious aspect but also as a nationalist aspect to the movement.

In conclusion, the religious roots of the Donatist cannot be overlooked as they are at the heart of the schism, starting in 311 at the death of Mensurius and the election of a new Catholic bishop of Carthage rather than Donatus. What was initially a religious movement, quickly became something more. Donatism was fueled by both nationalist and social protest by their eventual desire to have an independent African Church, by having their base support coming from the poor native population, by their obsession of martyrdom coming from local pagan traditions, and finally by the Circumcellion that offered protection against the extortion of creditors as well as food and shelter for the poor. Although Donatism started as a religious movement and kept this façade, underneath it was a movement of nationalist and social protest in Roman Africa and Numidia. Finally, for a few expanding thoughts: it would be interesting to see how many parallels one can draw between the Donatist Circumcellion and the modern day terror organization ISIS. As both of these have a religious façade and a similar overzealous overtone with a similar war cry invoking God and desire to become martyrs. However, one does get the feeling that with enough research on the most prominent motivation of the Donatist Circumcellion, one could better understand the motivations behind ISIS' followers.

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[14] Jones, *Were Ancient Heresies National of Social Movements in Disguise?,* 308-329.

[15] Jones, *Were Ancient Heresies National of Social Movements in Disguise?,* 308-329.

# Demosthenes on Aeschines: The Pitfalls of Acting

## DANA LOWRY

Aeschines and Demosthenes are well known in antiquity for their lengthy rivalry documented in speeches performed in the law courts and the assembly, colored with insults directed at each other's private and public lives. Demosthenes' *On The Crown* is the defense that ended Aeschines' career in Athens, and thus the enmity between these two skilled orators. *On the Crown* is of particular interest because of Demosthenes' use of a single notion of abuse. Demosthenes consistently demeans Aeschines' abilities on stage and asserts that his superficial character is a result of his acting career. Although serving in the dramatic arts seems to have been an acceptable (and certainly not devalued) contribution to society, Demosthenes uses this profession to undermine Aeschines in the political sphere.[1] The goal of this paper is to explore the various instances that Demosthenes criticizes Aeschines because of his acting career in *On the Crown,* and then to discuss the possible reasoning behind these insults.

Demosthenes maligns Aeschines' career as an actor to defend himself in three ways. First, Demosthenes uses the term τριταγωνιστὴν ( "third-rate actor") throughout the speech to imply Aeschines' inferior acting skills. Then, he portrays Aeschines as a hireling and disposed to taking bribes because of his litany of fee-for-service careers. Lastly, Demosthenes points out that Aeschines' training in role-playing has not equipped him with the skills necessary to express substantial thoughts, but only with skills required to convey mindless mimicry.

The first question to be considered concerns the actual reputation of actors in Greece in the 4th century B.C. Demosthenes' insults are very specific to Aeschines since he does not demean any of the other actors mentioned in his speech. At the beginning of his oration he mentions Aristodemus in a neutral tone, and later on he insults Aeschines for being the τριταγωνιστὴν to Simylus and Socrates.[2]

The latter insult demonstrates Demosthenes' evasion of insulting all actors and sole focus on the negative aspects of Aeschines' acting career. Demosthenes is careful to avoid denigrating the theatre and the morality of actors as a whole, as Athenians appreciated the theatre and its actors deeply.[3] Greek drama started out as a religious activity that celebrated the gods and as acting continued into the 4th century B.C., it maintained its association with religious ritual. This association garnered sanctity and immunity for actors among the Athenian people and enriched their reputation. As the theatre developed and drama spread outside of Attica, actors amassed international experience that steered them towards political prestige. Prominent actors were frequently employed as ambassadors and negotiators in foreign affairs, especially regarding Macedonian matters.[4] Demosthenes, a well-known enemy of Philip and his son Alexander, may have had a bias against actors because of their frequent interaction with these Macedonian kings. Thus, Demosthenes more likely took the skills acquired as an actor out of context to misrepresent Aeschines' political intentions, rather than to feed into any negative concepts of the theatre that existed at the time.

Demosthenes maintains the image of Aeschines as a poor actor by frequently using the term τριταγωνιστὴν, which translates as "third-rate actor." Despite the negative connotation Demosthenes gives this term, it remains unclear whether the title pertains to the ability of the actor or simply as a designation of the number of actors in the play. It is possible τριταγωνιστὴν is used to refer to the actor that is hired by the protagonist, the first and superior actor of the performance. The protagonist was the only figure eligible to deal with the archon, to be paid by the state, or to collect prize money.[5]

[1] Peter D. Arnott, *Public and Performance in the Greek Theatre* (London: Routledge, 1989), 52-53.

[2] Demosthenes, *De Corona*, 21; 262.

[3] Pat Easterling, "Actors and Voices: reading between the lines in Aeschines and Demosthenes," ed. Simon Goldhill and Robin Osborne, *Performance Culture and Athenian Democracy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 160-161.

[4] Eric Csapo and William J. Slater, *The Context of Ancient Drama* (United States of America: The University of Michigan Press, 1995), 223.

[5] Csapo and Slater, *The Context of Ancient Drama*, 223.

Therefore, the τριταγωνιστὴν would be looked down upon in the acting community as the actor only required to fill the smallest and least favorable parts of the play.[6] The term rarely appears outside of Demosthenes' speeches in which he uses it to demean Aeschines, despite the fact that these accusations are almost certainly incorrect.[7]

It is clear τριταγωνιστὴν is one of Demosthenes' favorite terms of abuse, as he uses it five times throughout his defense.[8] However Demosthenes also attacks the quality of Aeschines' acting through a more subtle allusion to stage location:

> But now, Aeschines, how would you have me describe your part, and how mine, that day? Shall I call myself, as you would call me by way of abuse and disparagement, Battalus? And you, no ordinary hero even, but a real stage-hero, Cresphontes or Creon, or - the character which you cruelly murdered at Collytus - Oenomaus? Then I, Battalus of Paeania, proved myself of more value to my country in that crisis than Oenomaus of Cothocidae. In fact you were of no service on any occasion, while I played the part which became a good citizen throughout.[9]

Here, Demosthenes lists important roles that Aeschines has allegedly played and ends with Oenomaus at Collytus. The use of the terms κακῶς ἐπέτριψας emphasizes the inferiority of Aeschines' performance. Demosthenes asserts that the location of *Sophocles'* Oenamous was Collytus, which was in rural Dyonisia. Plays performed outside of Dyonisia

were of little significance in comparison to those performed at Dyonisia itself.[10] Furthermore, the comparison Demosthenes makes between Βάτταλον (his childhood nickname), and Cresphontes, Creon and Oenomaus, emphasizes Aeschines' lack of skills. Demosthenes wants to demonstrate Aeschines' inferiority even to a ridiculed version of Demosthenes himself.[11]

Demosthenes does not want to simply assault Aeschines' acting abilities in his defense. He wants to describe Aeschines' acting career as a gateway towards deceit and betrayal. Demosthenes likes to illustrate Aeschines as selling his services as an actor. In this way, Demosthenes can assert that Aeschines is willing to do, act, or say anything if it means personal gain. He first makes this subtle point at the very beginning of his speech when speaking of Philocrates: "And the person who took the matter up and moved the motion, and sold his services for the purpose, along with Aeschines, was Philocrates of Hagnus--your partner, Aeschines…"[12] Later on in the speech Demosthenes makes his point very clear when he ridicules Aeschines for touring with two significant actors of the time.

> And when at length you escaped from this condition also, after yourself doing all that you impute to others, you in no way--Heaven knows!--disgraced your previous record by the life which you subsequently lived; for you hired yourself out to the actors Simylus and Socrates--the Roarers, they were nicknamed -- and played as a third-rate actor, collecting figs and bunches of grapes and olives, like a fruiterer gathering from other peoples' farms, and getting more out of this than out of the dramatic competitions in which you were competing for your lives; for there was war without truce or herald between yourselves and the spectators; and the many wounds you

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[6] Sir James Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, ed. John Gould and D.M. Lewis (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 132-135.

[7] J.F Dobson, *The Greek Orators* (London: Ares Publishers Inc., 1918), 163-198. Although Demosthenes frequently condemns Aeschines for his 'poor' acting skills, history holds that Aeschines was not all that bad. He had a very impressive voice with which he used in oratory with natural skill. Even if his acting career was less than marvelous, the acting skills he applied to oratory made him a worthy opponent for Demosthenes.

[8] Dem. *De Cor*. 129, 209, 262, 265, 267.

[9] Demothenes. *De Corona*. 180. Translated by Sir Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge, 1912.

[10] Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, ed. Harvey Unis (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 211-212.

[11] Ibid., 211. Βάτταλον is the nickname that Demosthenes' nurse called him when he had a speech impediment.

[12] Dem. *De Cor*. 21. Trans. Sir Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge (emphasis added).

received from them make it natural for you to jeer at the cowardice of those who have had no such experiences. [13]

This is an important passage in Demosthenes' speech because the imagery gives a vivid caricature for the audience. Aeschines is described as dependent on Simylus and Socrates for a living when Demosthenes uses the phrase: μισθώσας σαυτὸν, and especially when Demosthenes assumes he profits more from the fruit thrown his way than from the fee he charges for acting. Since a displeased audience only threw fruit at the stage, this passage illustrates Aeschines' poor acting skills as well as the dependence he holds on others to survive. Demosthenes uses a particular and exaggerated vocabulary to describe this interaction between Aeschines and his spectators. He uses the metaphor of a war to demean any previous campaigns Aeschines accomplished successfully[14]. The "primitive comic mime" used to describe Aeschines as a "fruiterer gathering from other peoples' farms" was important to mark Aeschines as a poor actor in skill and in wealth.[15] The comedy in this imagery could have been a tactic used by Demosthenes to unite himself with his audience, and against Aeschines, in malicious laughter.[16]

Demosthenes paints Aeschines as a natural born hireling – an actor that is used to attaining a reward in return for service. Indeed, immediately before he assaults Aeschines for hiring himself out to the actors, he criticizes his similar employment as a clerk. If Demosthenes can convince his audience that Aeschines is shamelessly willing to work as a clerk, be pelted with fruit, and perform the third-rate role, he is able to translate this image to Aeschines' relationships with the Macedonian rulers. Demosthenes accuses Aeschines of taking bribes from Philip and Alexander to promote the peace

between Athens and Macedonia.[17] By using the term μισθαρνίαν to address Aeschines' acting career and the relationship between Aeschines and these Macedonian rulers, Demosthenes links Aeschines' political intentions with treacherous personal gain.

In one passage of his speech, Demosthenes contrasts his experiences with those of Aeschines to highlight his separation from hired work and Aeschines' undeniable connection to these services: "You taught letters; I attended school. You conducted initiations; I was initiated. You were a clerk; I a member of the Assembly: you, a third-rate actor, I a spectator of the play. You used to be driven from the stage, while I hissed."[18] Here, Demosthenes tries to liken himself to the audience, who for the majority would have taken a more similar role to Demosthenes in these analogies. He uses ἐγραμμάτευες (to be a clerk) and ἐτριταγωνίστεις (to be a third-rate actor), to distance Aeschines from the public and subordinate his employment.

To strengthen his argument, Demosthenes also paints Aeschines as a man with an aptitude for theatre and performance but lacking in any substance. According to Demosthenes, Aeschines is simply a "malignant mouther of verses" without the ability to substantiate any claims. Demosthenes gives a colorful image when he mocks the prosecution Aeschines gave before the audience.[19]

For if the accuser were Aeacus or Rhadamanthus or Minos instead of a scandal-monger, an old hand in the marketplace, a pestilent clerk, I do not believe that he would have spoken thus, or produced such a stock of ponderous phrases, crying aloud, as if he were acting a tragedy, 'O Earth and Sun and Virtue,' and the like; or again, invoking 'Wit and Culture, by which things noble and base are discerned apart'--for, of course, you heard him speaking in this way. [20]

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[13] Dem. *De Cor.* 262. Trans. Sir Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge.

[14] Andreas Serafim, "Making the Audience: Ekphrasis and Rhetorical Strategy in Demosthenes 18 and 19," *Classical Quarterly* 65, no. 1 (2015): 95-108.

[15] Ibid.

[16] Ibid. Laughter was often used in Greek texts to invoke negative emotions of shame, pain and harm on its target.

[17] Dem. *De Cor.* 49, 50, 52.

[18] Dem. *De Cor.* 265. Trans. Sir Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge.

[19] Ibid. 139.

[20] Dem. *De Cor.* 127. Trans. Sir Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge.

Demosthenes works hard to portray Aeschines as an actor and not a political figure. He quotes the final lines of Aeschines' speech and he may have even mimicked Aeschines' delivery.[21] Demosthenes wants to convince the audience that although Aeschines holds oratory skill, he does not possess knowledge useful for the public.[22] The vivid imagery employed here by Demosthenes (ὥσπερ ἐν τραγῳδίᾳ βοῶντα) persuades the audience that Aeschines is a performer before he is a politician.

Demosthenes quotes Aeschines again immediately before he has the clerk read a list of his own public accomplishments.[23] These mock quotations are meant to demean Aeschines' contributions to society, and draw attention to the contrast between Demosthenes' great public accomplishments and Aeschines' mediocre theatrical performances. The use of verb ἐλυμαίνου (to ruin) to describe Aeschines' delivery of verse serves as a metaphor to the negligent advice Aeschines has presented to the public in the past.

Demosthenes wants the audience to imagine Aeschines as a fake – a faux-politician without any honorable intention. In an outburst, he goes as far to compare Aeschines to a fox and call him dishonest and a "counterfeit orator".

> A villainous thing, men of Athens, is the dishonest accuser always-- villainous, and in every way malignant and fault-finding! Aye, and this miserable creature is a fox by nature, that has never done anything honest or gentlemanly--a very tragical ape, a clodhopping Oenomaus, a counterfeit orator![24]

In another scene of vivid imagery, Demosthenes paints Aeschines as an untrustworthy man with no right to be in the political sphere. Demosthenes is clever in his metaphors; if Aeschines is an ape of an actor, he is therefore also a "counterfeit orator". The ancients often used monkeys and apes in comic settings because they seemed to directly mimic

humans. Primates were often associated with imitation and deceptive persuasion.[25] By comparing Aeschines to an ape in the theatre, Demosthenes describes him as a fraudulent caricature. Demosthenes consistently associates acting with powerful skills that are not to be trusted. Aeschines' ability to take on roles blurs the line between fiction and reality. Demosthenes wants to caution the audience not be taken in by Aeschines' performance. Aeschines is trained to take on roles and may imitate a good orator, but Demosthenes asserts that Aeschines contains little thought below the surface.[26]

Nearing the end of his speech, Demosthenes makes the final connection between the wage-earning nature of acting and the imitation skills learned in the theatre: "On what occasions, then, do your spirit and your brilliancy show themselves? When something must be done to injure your fellow countrymen – then your voice is most glorious, your memory most perfect; then you are a prince of actors, a Theocrines on the tragic stage!"[27] Demosthenes asserts that Aeschines only turns on his theatrical skills when the circumstances suit him best. This logic leads the audience to the conclusion that Aeschines performs orations only when he could potentially profit from winning a court case or advising the Assembly. Demosthenes successfully connects the emotional and superficial skills of an actor with the words of a shallow and untrustworthy politician.[28]

Although Demosthenes has consistently drawn upon Aeschines' career as an actor in the past, *On the Crown* is especially decorated with insults concerning the quality of his acting. It is interesting to note the timeline between this speech and the rise and fall of Aeschines' acting career. Historians believe that Demosthenes laid insult to Aeschines and his acting career unjustly. If, however, this were true, why would Demosthenes emerge without begin

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[21] Demosthenes, *On the Crown*, ed. Harvey Unis, 184.

[22] See: footnote 8.

[23] Dem. *De Cor*. 267.

[24] Dem. *De Cor.* 242. Trans. Sir Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge.

[25] Mary Beard, *Laughter in Ancient Rome*, (California: University of California Press, 2014), 161.

[26] Nancy Baker Worman, "Insult and Oral Excess in the Disputes between Aeschines and Demosthenes," *American Journal of Philology* 125, no. 1 (2004): 1-25.

[27] Dem. *De Cor*. 313. Trans. Sir Arthur Wallace Pickard-Cambridge.

[28] Nancy Baker Worman, "Insult and Oral Excess in the Disputes between Aeschines and Demosthenes." 1-25.

accused of lying? *On the Crown* was presented in 330 B.C., when Aeschines had long retired from his career in theatre and so his talent would no longer be clear in his peers' memories. His father would have most certainly passed away, so would his mother and father's friends. Furthermore, Demosthenes was last to speak, and so Aeschines did not have a chance to rebuke these comments, nor could he have anticipated them in his prosecution. As a result of these two timelines, Demosthenes was in a perfect position to exaggerate his claims and form an image of Aeschines that would win him the argument.[29]

This article has sought to bring further meaning to the insults suffered by Aeschines in Demosthenes' *On the Crown*. Demosthenes misrepresents Aeschines' career as an actor in an attempt to falsify his political intentions. He chooses his vocabulary carefully to both animate and denigrate all that Aeschines has accomplished. Demosthenes draws a line between a clever and powerful performance and "being a leader of integrity."[30] He uses the term τριταγωνιστὴν to successfully connect a poor acting career with an inclination to sell his physical talents. The willingness to sell his services and the ability to put on a great performance sets Aeschines up as the perfect villain for Demosthenes. While this paper elucidates a singular version of Aeschines that Demosthenes creates, in his other works Demosthenes might use meticulously chosen language to portray an entirely different form of Aeschines. This paper has established a framework to dissect some of Demosthenes' additional orations and discover differing characterizations of his rival Aeschines. In a modern perspective, the rivalry between Demosthenes and Aeschines might provide for an interesting case study in the psychology of persuasion, focusing on concepts such as confirmation bias.

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[29] Alfred P. Dorjhan, "Some Remarks on Aeschines' Career as an Actor," *The Classical Journal*, 25, no. 3 (1929) 223-229.

[30] Nancy Baker Worman, "Insult and Oral Excess in the Disputes between Aeschines and Demosthenes." 1-25.

# Ring Structure and Self-Coherence: A Lacanian Reading of Carmen 8 as a Dramatic Monologue

## YIJIA XU

Catullus' Carmen 8 is a performative poem, in which Catullus' poetic self exhorts his traumatized self to endure the loss of Lesbia. As the speaker reacts to his unchecked emotions in an almost stream-of-consciousness way, the reading experience of the poem highly relies on its temporal flow. Distinctly oral, the psychic uncovering and emotional intensity of the poem are suggestive of dramatic monologue, "A definitive Victorian poetic form"(Pearsall)[1], initiated by Alfred Tennyson[2] and Robert Browning[3].

This paper will perform a close reading on Carmen 8 through the lens of certain generic insights of dramatic monologue. Furthermore, this paper will propose an interface in this poem between the inherent self-expressiveness of dramatic monologue and Jacques Lacan's theory of the three orders in the psyche. Recent studies have extensively applied contemporary theories to Catullan poetry, Lacanian psychology being a representative trend. Less attention has been given to the theoretical implications of the structure of Carmen 8 on a linguistic dimension, especially when the poem has received significant yet divergent structural analyses in regard with the speaker's ambiguous rhetorical purpose and attainment[4]. This paper, correspondingly, will explore the connections between the ring structures, self-reiteration, and the Lacanaian self in the poem through a formalist reading.

A strong sense of self-splitting permeates the poem, which begins with an impactful plea (1-2). *Miser Catulle*, the second person vocative self-address, forcefully defines the division between the speaking "I"'s objective consciousness and his emotional self[5]. Rendering Catullus at an in-between position between two voices, Greene argues that this fragmentation of self corresponds with "the discontinuity of past and present, then and now"(79), as the past tense predominates lines 3-8, followed by the present tense in line 9. While Greene persuasively indexes the present to "resolution"(79), the past to "romantic nostalgia"(79), I would further propose to view the past (3-8) as a specific form of oneness.

Away from the judicious (*ducas*) indirect statement that first mentions Catullus' past, *quod vides perisse perditum ducas* (2), Catullus' narration immediately leaps into the more vivid indicative[6], *Fulsere quondam candidi tibi soles* (3). The addition of *tibi* immediately personalizes the Catullus' memories. The following temporal clause, *cum ventitabas quo puella ducebat* (4), more importantly, shares the identical metre pattern with line 3:

$$- - U - | - - U - | U\ U\ - U$$
$$- - U - | - - U - | U\ U\ - U$$

As the formal coherence proceeds, the transition from *tibi* (which refers to Catullus alone) in line 3 to

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[1] According to Pearsall, the defining components of dramatic monologue are "a speaker who is indicated not to be the poet; an auditor, specified or implied; and a particularized situation or setting". In the following passages, this paper will treat the implied auditors as two internally revealing figures: Catullus himself and the absent Lesbia.

[2] See Markley for an introduction of Tennyson's great admiration for and indebtedness to Catullus.

[3] In "Obdura. A Dramatic Monologue," Rebert compares Carmen 8 with Browning's "Prospice," noting their thematic and stylistic similarities, "In the case of each there is the short impulsive phrase, the persistent repetition of the same dramatic gesture, the spontaneous outburst of a mind that apparently has too many thoughts that are clamouring to be expressed. In the case of each a struggle is to be encountered"(291).

[4] See Schmiel for an introduction of different structural interpretations of Carmen 8 with an emphasis on the ring compositions.

[5] See Swanson and Greene for their discussions about *miser catulle* as an attempt for self-detachment and so a means for the speaker to objectify his trauma.

[6] See Greene for an analysis of the first two perceptual verbs in the poem, *ducas* and *vides*.

the two implied subjects in line 4, the addressed Catullus and *puella*, renders a mellifluous explication of Catullus' happiness as well as his idealized self, Lesbia being an organic part of Catullus. Moreover, line 7 and line 8 reverse the process of splitting, reunifying the lovers into the entity *tibi* (8). Line 7 echoes line 4 by the similar juxtaposition of the addressed Catullus and *puella* (*volebas* versus *ventitabas*; *nolebat* versus *ducebat*), and line 8 is virtually a repetition of line 3, simply replacing *quondam* (3) with *vere* (8). As line 8 concludes the section about Catullus' amorous memories in the poem, it also completes a coherent ring structure of Catullus' self-portrayal (3-8). The speaker indicates Catullus' inseparableness with Lesbia through not only the manipulation of juxtapositions, but also the impenetrability of this poetic circularity.

That *quondam* (3), Greene suggests, changes into *vere* (8) "signals the change in the speaker's mind from distanced reflection on the past to a complete absorption in it"(80). I would propose a parallel of this transformation that *vere* adds a sense of permanence and fixity to the speaker's construction of self-unity. In addition, to take a look at line 5 and 6 which are the centre of the ring structure (3-8), *amata* (5), the only direct indicator of Catullus' attachment to Lesbia, is notably the only participle. This word enhances the sense of permanent emotional bond, and hence the sense of permanent self in that it is tenseless in comparison with the finite verbs in the sentence and, nevertheless, conveys a fixity because of its perfect aspect.

In his "Why Difference Matters: Catullus and Contemporary Theory," Miller introduces Jacques Lacan's theory of the three orders in the psyche: the Imaginary, the Symbolic, and the Real, "In brief, the Imaginary is the way in which we picture ourselves to ourselves. The Symbolic is the realm of rule-based codes and languages. It is inherently social. The Real is that which lies beyond the scope of the other two" (429). Therefore, lines 3-8 would be an adequate example of the static, coherent self-image the Imaginary illustrates, "a totality and autonomy it [the subject ("I")] can never attain"(*The Norton Anthology of Theory and Criticism* 1281).

The unattainability of Catullus' idealized past manifests dramatically in his self-struggle,

characterized by the imperatives[7] permeating the poem. The initial self-exhortations (*desinas, ducas*) interrupted by lines 3-8 resume as the poem progresses, drawing an abrupt line between the past and the present. With *nunc iam* initiating line 9, a series of imperatives (*noli sectare; vive; perfer*) leads to *obdura* climatically positioned at the end of line 11. Schmiel suggests that "*vale puella* is surrounded by *obdura* and *obdurat*, that is, there is both lexical and thematic responsion"(164). Rebert, on the other hand, emphasizes the centrality of the word *obdura* in the poem:

> Even the meter appears to be traceable to *obdura*. And the word itself, in turn, takes on the character of the idea or concept it represents; for the physiological difficulty experienced in pronouncing *du* after *ob* and the labored movement of the consecutive long syllables give a peculiar appropriateness to a word that has to do with conscious, labored effort in the face of trying circumstances (288).

Building on Schmiel and Rebert's arguments, I would argue that the speaker creates a new, stoic self-image through the ring structure of lines 11-12. If lines 3-8 feature Catullus' eternal emotional bond with Lesbia, lines 11-12 feature Catullus' self-sufficient endurance (*obdura*) as a result of his factual separation (*vale puella*) from Lesbia. Additionally, the transition between the two Imaginaries (9-11) concurs with the full disclosure of Lesbia's departure, along the flow of the speaker's conflicting inner speeches, which is typical of dramatic monologue. And more revealing in terms of Carmen 8's generic characteristics is the speaker's resemblance to some notable dramatic monologists[8].

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[7] See Greene, Rebert and Schmiel for discussions of the importance of imperatives in the poem.

[8] See Pearsall for an analysis of the protagonists in some representative dramatic monologues, especially "Jenny," in which the male speaker, remarkably similar to Catullus, performs an inner speech to an absent female auditor (a sleeping prostitute). Pearsall points out that her "wavering unconsciousness prevents various modes of

In "The Dramatic Monologue," Pearsall notes that the desire of self-fulfillment characterizes this genre, "The majority of dramatic monologists are […] only searchers after some transformation, whether spiritual, professional, or personal"(73). Her argument sheds light on the correspondence between the dramatic monologist's discursive efforts for self-transformation and the subject "I"'s efforts to attain the specular "I" through the Symbolic. This energy in Carmen 8 precisely unfolds itself through lines 9-11. Moreover, the speaker's poetic attempt to move from the old Imaginary to the new Imaginary is not only structural, but also syntactical and metrical. Greene mentions, "[…] the imperative tone in the poem is reinforced by Catullus' uncharacteristic deviation from his usual practice of enjambment. This lack of enjambment produces a hard rhythm and keeps to the speaker's trying to whip himself into shape"(79). Correspondingly, I would argue, the combination of the stressed long penultimate and the short ultimate (trochee) at the end of each line features the speaker's forceful attempt to finish his picture of a coherent self (Rebert's analysis of *obdura* epitomizes this metrical arrangement). In this way, the beginning of each line implies a failed attempt.

However, is Catullus' self-transformation or self-completion eventually successful[9]? Based on the

idea of the Symbolic, I would argue that since the speaking "I" still addresses himself in the second person at the end of the poem (*At tu, Catulle, destinatus obdura,* 19), it is apparent that he still experiences an unwanted self-fragmentation. However, I would also argue that the poem suggests more than a circular emotional dilemma. In comparison with the stable and elaborate composition of Lines 3-8, Lines 11-12 seem too short-lived despite the conscious forces of the aforementioned imperatives. They accumulate from line 9 toward line 12 and then disappear on the spot. With the climatic *obdura* unnoticeably unarmed into the indicative *obdurat,* the focus of the poem already shifted onto Lesbia, for whom, instead of himself, the speaker dedicates increasing attention onward. Lines 12-18 is the most energetic part of the poem:

> *Vale puella, iam Catullus obdurat,*
> *nec te requiret nec rogabit invitam.*
> *At tu dolebis, cum rogaberis nulla.*
> *Scelesta, uae te, quae tibi manet uita?*
> *Quis nunc te adibit? cui videberis bella?*
> *Quem nunc amabis? Cuius esse diceris?*
> *Quem basiabis? Cui labella mordebis?*

After an angry address to Lesbia, the speaker revengefully imagines a similar self-incompleteness on Lesbia's part (*quae tibi manet uita?*). This outburst occupies seven lines, in contrast with the previous ring structures, and renders the part of Catullus' imagination a unique progression in the poem. The transition from *Quis nunc te adibit* to *Cui labella mordebis*, as the speaker's imagination goes into detail about his irreplaceability in their relationship, renders a fluid alliteration of *q* in contrast with the laborious pronunciation of *obdura*. This overtly smooth forwardness of lines 16-18, portrays an almost infinitely approximating rhetorical attempt of intimacy with Lesbia that characterizes the speaker's former ideal self.

The speaker's leaping out from his self-absorption in the irrevocability of the past, and crying out towards the absent Lesbia suggests a poetic transgression of time and reality. As Pearsall points out, the dramatic monologue often presents

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interaction, but it functions nevertheless to provide a climate for the potent performance of her patron's thoughts. Her discursive absence, amid his silent prolixity, leads to the attainment for the monologist of a pointed goal" (74); and "The Castaway," in which the speaker Eulalie, looking back at her past, "is well aware of her own self-division" and represents "her various past and potential selves"(77). Pearsall concludes, "With her [Eulalie] monologue, she can cast away and yet rescue an identity straining against itself"(77).

[9] See Schmiel 164, for his summary of the critical views about Catullus' emotional outcome in Carmen 8, "Catullus protests too much, as most critics agree, while Swanson, Akbar Khan and Gugel represent the minority view. The intimacies of 15-18, even though they are imagined not to be happening, have evidently broken the poet's resolve — notice the progression from looking pretty and lip-nibbling — and the poet needs a booster-

shot of determination at line 19, which is related to line 1 by ring composition".

abnormal mental states, "A theme of transgression, or unwholesomeness, seems to have been characteristic of the genre from its inception"(73). Correspondingly, I would argue that the illusory vividness of lines 12-18, instead of the irregular repetition of the abstract, realistic *obdura(t)* (11, 12, 19)*,* is the centre of the poem. For a brief moment, the speaker no longer represses his traumatized self, who disappears, but becomes whole in his imagined communion with Lesbia, attaining his specular "I". Carmen 8 presents many layers of self-searching. On the one hand, the coherent ring structures within the poem either refuse the speaker's entrance (3-8) into the Imaginary or bar the speaker (11-12; 12-19; 11-19) from an emotional liberation. On the other hand, the speaker constructs his perfect self through these ring structures. On the other hand, his breaking (12-18) of these ring structures enables him to approach his ideal self.

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# The Temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius: Building a Picture from a Million Pieces

## ALEXANDRA ZMIJOWSKYJ

Although the pantheon of Greek and Roman gods is well known in modern society, scholars still debate about many other aspects of Roman religion, especially when it comes to "imported cults". The term "imported cults" broadly includes the worship of Eastern deities like Mithras and Magna Mater as well as Egyptian divinities such as Isis and Sarapis. The focus of this paper will be on evidence of the worship of Isis and Sarapis in Imperial Rome, with emphasis on the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius. (Figure 1) While the evidence of the temple on the whole is fragmentary, individual pieces of the puzzle will be studied for information that can give more insight into the worship of Isis and Sarapis, Imperial patronage, and the place of the deities in society.
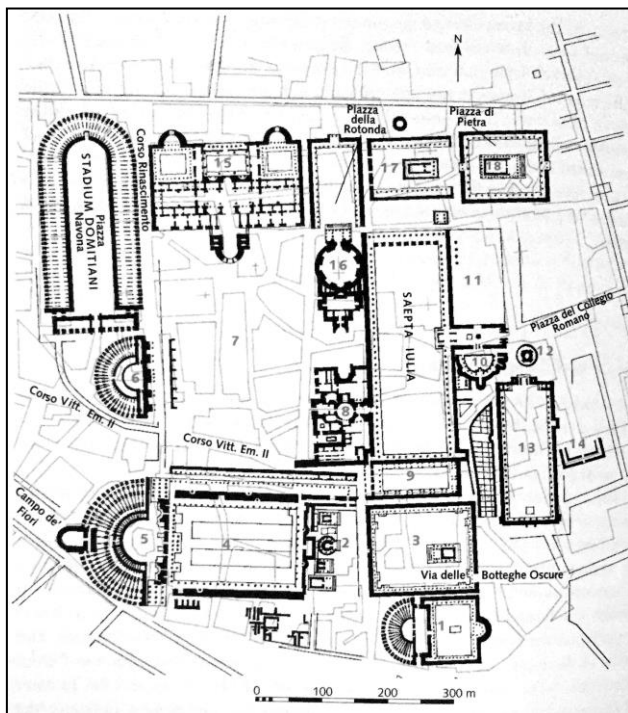


Figure 1: Map of the Campus Martius, with Temple of Isis and Sarapis labeled "10" and "11."[1]

Isis is one of the main goddesses associated with Ancient Egyptian religion and throughout time she has been associated with fertility,[2] magic, medicine, and wisdom.[3] After the Macedonians conquered Egypt under Alexander the Great and the Ptolemies, the traditional pantheon of gods continued to be worshiped, and in the newly built town of Alexandria, the *Museum*, a center of ancient learning additionally served as home to the worship of both Isis and Sarapis.[4] Scholars have suggested that the worship of Sarapis was not as ancient as that of Isis, and that Ptolemaic theologians created Sarapis as a hybrid god, incorporating many of the traits of Osiris, Zeus, and Apollo as well as sharing a number of traits with Isis herself, as a means to unify citizens of differing religions in Hellenistic Egypt.[5] In Ptolemaic Egypt Sarapis, rather than Osiris, was widely regarded to be the consort of Isis.[6] While the justification or dismissal of this hypothesis will not be further discussed in this paper, it is an interesting explanation as to why Sarapis, and not Osiris, often shares his name with Isis on temples and sanctuaries outside of Egypt.

Although Egyptian cults were popular in Rome, it does not mean they were always welcome. An account by Varro (which only survives in Terullian's *Ad Nationes*) described that altars to Isis and Sarapis (amongst other Egyptian gods) on the Capitoline Hill were torn down by the order of the Senate in 58 BCE only to be rebuilt after widespread public outcry. (Tertullian, *Ad Nationes,* 1.10.155)[7] Cassius Dio believed that the decree by the Senate, to destroy all privately constructed temples to Isis and

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[1] Filippo Coarelli, *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide, Updated Edition,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 276.

[2] R.E. Witt, *Isis in the Graeco-Roman World,* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), 20.

[3] Witt, *Isis in the Graec-Roman World,* 22.

[4] Ibid, 49.

[5] Ibid, 54-55.

[6] Sarolta A. Takács, "Divine and Human Feet: Records of Pilgrims Honouring Isis", Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity: Seeing the Gods, ed. Jaś Elsner & Ian Rutherford (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 356.

[7] Sarolta A. Takács, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World,* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 57.

Sarapis at the end of 51 BCE, was a bad omen that set off a chain of ill-fated events in 52 BCE (including the death of Crassus). (Dio Cass. *Roman History,* 40.47)[8] With a track record of this kind, it is surprising that in 43 BCE the Second Triumvirate voted in favour of building a temple to Isis and Sarapis. (D.C. *Hist.* 47.16) Although many are tempted to ascribe this vote to build the temple to Mark Antony's relationship with Cleopatra and his affinity for Egypt, this is most likely not the case as the literary sources above attest to the presence of the cult in Rome long before Antony began to romance Cleopatra.[9] There is no further record of where the temple to be constructed by the Triumvirs was located or if the project ever came to fruition.

Attitudes towards the worship of Isis and Sarapis changed once again after Octavian's victory in the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. In a 28 BCE edict, Octavian banned the worship of Isis and Sarapis within the *pomerium*, but also provided funds for sanctuaries to both deities to be rebuilt outside the sacred boundary of Rome. (D.C. *Hist.* 53.2.4)[10] After a few years, shrines to the "exiled" Egyptian gods once again began to pop up around Rome, prompting Agrippa to re-issue and revise Augustus' earlier edict to ban Egyptian cults within (approximately) a mile of Rome. (D.C. *Hist.* 54.6.6.)[11] Despite these restrictions on Egyptian religion, Augustus proudly displayed the spoils of his victories in Egypt throughout Rome.[12] The actions of Augustus', taken together with what is known about the parading of *spolia* through the city of Rome after a triumph, demonstrate the message of Rome's supremacy over other cultures and the defining of what traditions and elements were Roman and which were not.

Although the exact provenance of the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius is unknown, a case has been built to attribute the building of the original temple to the reign of Caligula. For many years, scholars have interpreted passages in Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews* describing Caligula as wearing women's clothes while celebrating Egyptian mysteries. (Flavius Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, 19.30)[13] The justification for this attribution is as follows: every year a festival to "commemorate" the death and "resurrection" of Isis' husband/brother Osiris. (Lucan, *Civil Wars,* 8.831)[14] In his book, *Caligula: The Abuse of Power,* Anthony Barrett purports that in the years 40-43 CE the date of this festival aligned in both the Roman and Egyptian calendars.[15] If Caligula really was involved in the cults of Isis and Sarapis, the coinciding dates of the *Iseae* festival may have been considered an opportune time to construct a temple dedicated to the Egyptian deities. However, even Barrett himself states that this theory is built on little more than conjecture and that the temple construction could just as easily be attributed to Claudius.[16]

The first concrete evidence for a specific phase of the Temple of Isis and Sarapis being built is from the reign of Domitian. The attitude of the Flavian Emperors towards Egyptian cults was very different from that of the first Julio-Claudians. Vespasian, the first of the Flavian Emperors, was known to have a strong connection with Isis and Sarapis, even having cured a blind man as well as a man with a crippled hand through the intervention of Sarapis. (D.C. *Hist.* 65.8)[17] Sarolta Takács reasons that rather than the Emperor having superhuman abilities, this tale was fabricated in order to make Vespasian a more legitimate heir to Horus in Egypt (whom the pharaohs believed they (the pharaohs) were the earthly embodiment of and who was the son of the magic-power imbued Isis) and an obvious candidate to become the next Emperor.[18] Fact or fiction, Vespasian remained grateful to the Egyptian deities and even spent the night before his triumph in 69 AD with his son Titus in the Temple of Isis and Sarapis on the Campus Martius.[19] Additionally,

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[8] Takács, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World,* 64.

[9] Ibid, 69.

[10] Takács, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World,* 75.

[11] Ibid, 77.

[12] Molly Swetnam-Burland, *Egypt in Italy: Visions of Egypt in Roman Imperial Culture,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 74-75.

[13] Anthony A. Barrett, *Caligula: The Abuse of Power,* (London: Routledge, 2015), 292.

[14] Barrett, *Caligula,* 292.

[15] Ibid, 292-293.

[16] Barrett, Ibid, 293.

[17] Brian W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian,* (London: Routledge, 1992), 101.

[18] Takács, *Isis and Sarapis in the Roman World,* 96-97.

[19] Brian W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian,* 100.

during the reign of the Flavian Emperors, Sarapis started to become affiliated with the ruling class of Romans, as he had been with the Ptolemies in Egypt.[20] After a fire destroyed a part of the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in 80 AD, Domitian restored it to the state recorded on the *Forma Urbis Romae.* (Eutropius, *Abridgment of Roman History,* 7.23) Although the scale of the restorations carried out by Domitian is not known, he was pleased enough with his work to have a coin issued with an image of the temple on it.[21]

The exact location of the Temple of Isis and Sarapis is described in a number of literary sources and a representation of a portion is visible on the Severan marble plan of the city. The temple was also known as the Temple of *Isis Campensis,* directly named in relation to its location in the Campus Martius. (Aupleius, *Metamorphoses*, 11.26)[22] In the 6th book of Juvenal's *The Satires*, he described a woman sprinkling water around the Temple of Isis in the Campus Martius beside the "Campus polling-booths," or the *Saepta Julia.* (Juvenal, *Satires*, 6.527-9)[23] Frontinus also records the arcades of the Aqua Virgo ending in front of the "Voting Porticoes" on the Campus Martius. (Frontinus, *Aqueducts*, 1.22)[24] Putting these two literary pieces together we can turn to the *Forma Urbis Romae* to see what pieces of the structure may have looked like. (Figure 2) Four pieces of the marble plan have been identified as depicting the Temple of Isis and Sarapis: three depicting a long rectangular building with the word "SER[A]PAEV[M]" written across it, and a fourth depicting a semi-circular building with columns running along the inner edge.
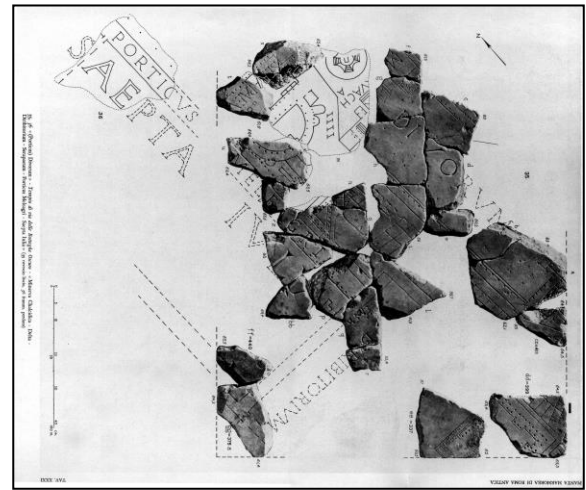


Figure 2: Reconstruction of the Forma Urbis Romae Map depicting the area containing and surrounding the Temple of Isis and Sarapis on the Campus Martius.[25]

Scholars have thus identified the rectangular building as the Temple of Sarapis and the semi-circular building as the Temple of Isis. The arc of the semi-circular Temple of Isis resembles the apse of a Renaissance church, with smaller semi-circular rooms radiating off the main passage resembling the small chapels seen in churches of the 16th century. These niches could have held any number of statues depicting deities, animals, or individuals as seen in typical Roman sculpture gardens. In Simon Price's chapter entitled 'Religions of Rome' in *Ancient Rome: Archaeology of the Eternal City*, a diagram is presented labeling these radiating "chapels" (for lack of a better term) as Anubis Harpocates, Isis, and Sarapis.[26] The diagram does not indicate whether or not these spaces would have simply held a statue of the deity or if these rooms contained shrines to each deity respectively. (Figure 3)

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[20] Peter Aicher, *Rome Alive: A Source-Guide to the Ancient City, Volume 1,* (Wauconda, Illinois: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 2004), 237.

[21] Brian W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian,* 100.

[22] Peter Aicher, *Rome Alive, 238.*

[23] Ibid.

[24] Filippo Coarelli, *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide, Updated Edition,* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 289.

[25] Digital Image. Standford Digital Forma Urbis Romae Project. Accessed March 20, 2017. http://formaurbis.stanford.edu/plate.php?plateindex=30.

[26] Simon Price, "Religions of Rome," in *Ancient Rome: The Archaeology of the Eternal City,* Jon Coulston and Hazel Dodge, eds., (Oxford: Orxford University School of Archaeology, 2000), 297.
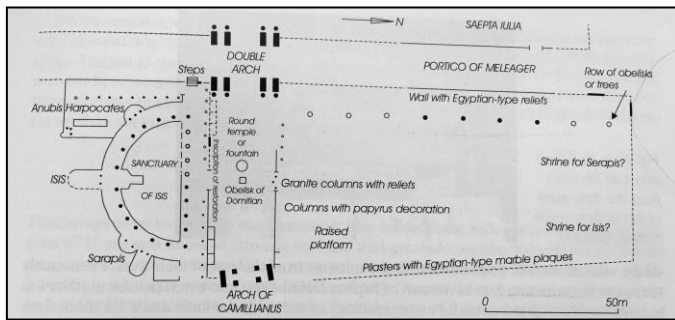
Figure 3: Diagram of the Temple of Isis and Sarapis.[27]

The problem faced by Price as illustrated in this diagram is that excavations around the area have been scarce, with Price himself going as far as saying "[no] sanctuary of Isis in Italy has been properly excavated and published," only reconstructed from partial finds at best.[28] Price's statement has become obsolete since the time of publication, with a number of works being published on the Temple of Isis at Pompeii in the past decade and a half.[29] However, a comprehensive excavation of the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius has not, and most likely will not ever occur. The area southeast of the Pantheon, where the temple once was, was built over long ago, and a large-scale excavation would require the demolition of a number of residences and businesses. Although a modern excavation in search of the structure is unlikely, records of excavations throughout history have uncovered numerous pieces of sculpture and architecture that can give further insight into what the complex may have once looked like.

One of the most important sources in the study of the topography of Rome is Rodolfo Lanciani. His work on the archaeology and topography of the city is the best evidence scholars have from the period of Italy's Unification and before the rise of Mussolini. Although the reconstructed plan of the Temple of Isis and Sarapis on Lanciani's map of Rome is

largely imagination,[30] it is a great source for excavations from 1374 – 1833 near the area that lead to the discovery of what remains of the temple we do have.[31] (Figure 4) Therefore, the following section will be largely based on Lanciani's accounts.
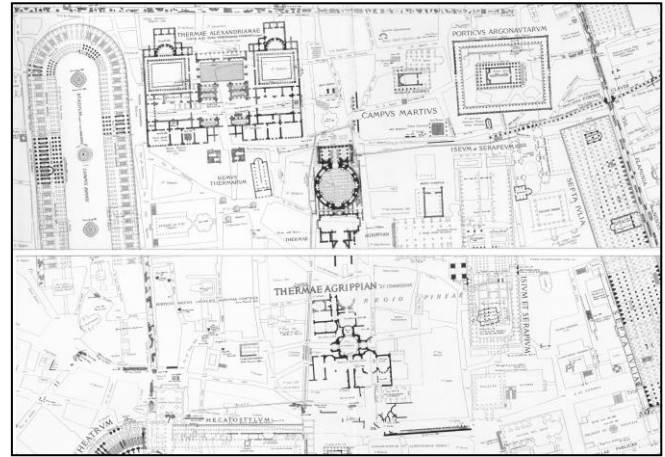


Figure 4: Map of Rome created by Rodolfo Lanciani. The Temple of Isis and Sarapis has been included to the right of the Pantheon, but to the left of the Septa Iulia. This placement is contradictory to the placement given by most scholars (Fig. 1) and the plan does not appear to include the semi-circular section of the building seen on the marble plan (Fig. 2).[32]

Lanciani's account of the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius begins with a description of the complex: it contained pyramidal towers with a gateway flanked by obelisks on either side of the sacred road that lead to the temples, which itself was lined with Egyptian sculpture.[33] Domitian had built a peristyle around the area that resembled the wall from the *Forum Transitorium,* with the temples themselves having a double cella and having been constructed brick by brick in the Egyptian style from a temple that once stood in Egypt.[34] The first of the discoveries from this area was made in 1374 when the obelisk that currently sits in the Piazza della Rotunda in front of the

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[27] Simon Price, "Religions of Rome," in *Ancient Rome: The Archaeology of the Eternal City,* Jon Coulston and Hazel Dodge, eds., (Oxford: Orxford University School of Archaeology, 2000), 297.

[28] Simon Price, "Religions of Rome," 298.

[29] Eric M. Moormann, "The Temple of Isis at Pompeii," in *Nile into Tiber: Egypt in the Roman World*, Laurent Bricault et. al. eds., (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 137-154 and Molly Swetnam-Burland, *Egypt in Italy: Visions of Egypt in Roman Imperial Culture,* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), to name a few.

[30] Rodolfo Lanciani, *Forma Urbis Romae.* (Rome: Quasar, 1901), plate XV.

[31] Rodolfo Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome,* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1897), 500.

[32] Digital Image. Erenow. Accessed April 5, 2017. http://erenow.com/ancient/the-pantheon-from-antiquity-to-the-present/1.html.

[33] Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome,* 500.

[34] Ibid

Pantheon (Figure 5) was excavated under the apse of the church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva.[35]



Figure 5: Obelisk from the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in its modern location in the Piazza Rotunda.[36]

Along with this obelisk, Lanciani alludes to a second obelisk being found at the same time and hypothesizes its location to be at the Villa Mattei.[37] In 1435, excavations carried out under Pope Eugenius IV uncovered four statues of lions: two at the time in the collection of the Vatican and the other two that were in the Capitoline Museum.[38] In addition to a "colossal reclining figure of a River God" that was reportedly found in the area of the Temple of the Isis and Sarapis in 1440, two reclining statues commonly referred to as the personifications of the Tiber (Louvre) and of the Nile (Vatican), are said by Lanciani to have been found in the area of the temple during the rule of Pope Leo X.[39] Furthermore, Lanciani records that a reclining statue personifying the Ocean was found in 1556.[40] The prominence of water imagery in the worship of Isis and Sarapis will be discussed further later. Excavations by owners of the houses in the area where the temple once stood in 1858 and 1859 continued to unearth various objects including a green granite Sphinx, a portrait of the Egyptian

Queen Hatshepsut, numerous capitals and a column with reliefs depicting the procession of followers of Isis.[41] Lanciani concludes his discussion of the findings from the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in an account of his own request to excavate in the area in 1883, which resulted in the uncovering of numerous other objects including a black basalt Sphinx, an obelisk of Ramses the Great, a red granite crocodile and a second column with relief carvings.[42]

In addition to the objects mentioned by Lanciani there are a number of other objects associated with the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius that lent names to the modern day streets of Rome overlaying the area once inhabited by the temple. (Figure 6)
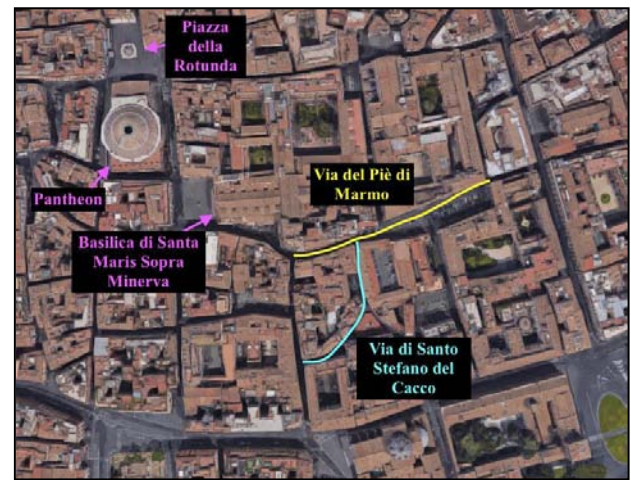


Figure 6: Map of modern Rome where the Temple of Isis and Sarapis would have stood. Streets, monuments and buildings mentioned are labeled.[43]

A statue of what was thought to be a baboon, but has since also been hypothesized to be the god Anubis, was found in the area where a church now stands. Both the church, Santo Stefano del Cacco, and the street it is located on, Via di Santo Stefano del Cacco, take their name from this statue, with cacco being a shortened version of the general term for monkey, macacco. (Figure 7)[44]

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[35] Ibid

[36] Digital Image. Taken by author, March 2013.

[37] Ibid

[38] Ibid.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, 501.

[41] Ibid, 501-502.

[42] Ibid 502.

[43] Digital Image. Google Maps. Accessed March 22, 2017. https://www.google.ca/maps/@41.8977425,12.4792008,452m/data=!3m1!1e3.

[44] Peter Aicher, *Rome Alive,* 238.

Figure 7: The "Cacco" statue that gave the name to the street and church near where it was found.[45]

On the corner of the Via di Santo Stefano del Cacco and the Via del Piè di Marmo is another piece of sculpture that gives its name to the latter street: a large marble foot. (Figure 8)[46]



Figure 8: "Piè di Marmo." The remains of a statue from the Temple of Isis and Sarpis.[47]

Although some scholars have interpreted this foot as being the only remains of a colossal cult statue of Sarapis,[48] there is the possibility that this foot is a symbol rather than a representation of Isis or Sarapis. One way in which Sarapis was commonly represented throughout the Roman Empire was as "the Foot of Sarapis" wherein a bust of Sarapis was depicted atop an oversized foot.[49] If the giant marble foot in Rome was also topped with a bust of Sarapis it would still be considered a cult statue, just in a different form than a full body portrait. Feet and footprints are associated with Isis as well, however, the evidence for this is more commonly in the form of carvings, paintings, and mosaics of feet and shoes to either record the location in which a deity appeared to the faithful,[50] or to record a worshipper's visit.[51] A right foot specifically was also considered a symbol of good fortune since the word for right in Latin, *dexter,* also translates to "fortunate," a notion that also leads to the negative connotation of being left handed ("left" in Latin, *sinestra,* can also be translated to "unlucky"). Unfortunately, the validity of this angle cannot be confirmed since the "piè di marmo" is a left foot, and thus far all examples of "the Foot of Sarapis" encountered in research for this paper have been right feet. Whether this giant marble foot was part of a statue personifying Sarapis or merely the base of a "Foot of Sarapis" did not matter to those who named the modern road; all that mattered was that there was a giant foot in their way, shaping how the area could be developed. However, a giant foot would not have marked the spot of the temple when construction began. With this in mind, the question of "why here?" will finally be addressed.

In 7 BC, Augustus divided the city of Rome into fourteen regions as part of his reform of the city's administration. The Temple of Isis and Sarapis that is the focus of this paper is in Regio IX, Circus Flaminius. However, Regio III was named Isis et Sarapis. At first this fact appears confusing. Why would a temple to Isis and Sarapis be built outside of the region named after them? It must be remembered that these names were given to these areas were static and did not change along with the buildings added to them. Even though Lanciani purports that the name *Isis et Sarapis* was given to Regio III after

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[45] Digital Image. Musei Vaticani. Accessed March 21, 2017. http://www.museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani/en/collezioni/musei/museo-gregoriano-egizio/sala-iv--l_egitto-e-roma/il--cacco-.html.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Digtial Image. Flicker (Ardil Foto). Accessed March 21, 2017. https://www.flickr.com/photos/ardil/3094198279.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Sterling Dow and Frieda S. Upson, "The Foot of Sarapis", The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Jan. – Mar., 1944): 58.

[50] Katherine M. D. Dunbabin, "*Ipsa deae vestigia…* Footprints Divine and Human on Graeco-Roman Monuments," *Journal of Roman Archaeology*, vol. 3 (1990): 88.

[51] Sarolta A. Takács, "Divine and Human Feet: Records of Pilgrims Honouring Isis," 359.

the reign of Augustus,[52] this area no doubt had this name before the temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius was built. In the maps at the beginning of their *Religions of Rome* book, Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, twelve locations were identified as being associated with Isis, Serapis, or both. (Figure 9)[53]
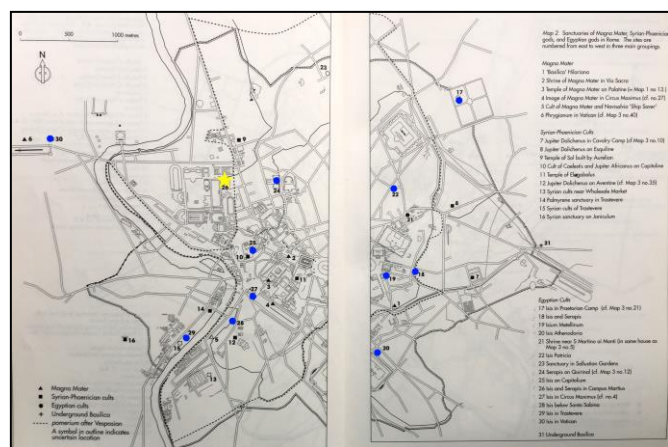


Figure 9: Map of Rome with locations of Egyptian cult's marked (Temple of Isis and Sarapis is indicated with a yellow star and all other Egyptian sites marked with blue dots for clarity).[54]

No elaboration is given on the majority of the sites listed, but the location of the *Isium Metellinum* corresponds with Regio III. Even less is known about this temple in comparison to the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius. In Richardson's *New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome* he suggests that the remains of a small shrine decorated in the Egyptian style discovered in 1635 near the church of SS. Pietro e Marcellino is the most likely building to be the Isium Metellinum of the ones to have been excavated.[55] He continues to say that not much is known about the shrine in

general or why it became so associated with the area to share a name with it.[56]

When examining the map in Beard, North, and Price it can be noted that the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius is located a fair distance from other temples to the same gods. The lack of a temple to Isis and/ or Sarapis on the Campus Martius would be an easy explanation as to why its eventual location was chosen. However, there is another, less obvious reason for choosing to build in the Campus Martius as it is one of the areas of Rome most prone to flooding.[57] As mentioned in a previous paragraph a number of statues personifying bodies of water have been associated with the Temple of Isis and Sarapis in the Campus Martius, including both a statue of the Nile and of the Tiber. The prevalence of water imagery in an Egyptian cult is not surprising as the Nile was the heart of Egyptian civilization and the reason civilization was able to flourish in the middle of the desert in the first place. In Egypt, the flooding of the Nile provided a perfect symbol of the power of Isis as it represented rebirth, and by extension fertility, a trait inseparable from the goddess.[58] It is interesting to compare the Egyptian peoples reverence of the Nile floods with the constant headaches the floods of the Tiber brought to Romans. However, an area that is prone to flooding would make a good location for the main temple to an Egyptian fertility goddess in Rome. Ironically this would make the Temple of Isis and Sarapis on the Campus Martius one of the few buildings in Rome that welcomed the waters of the Tiber.

It is unlikely that scholars will ever know everything there is to know about the Temple of Isis and Sarapis on the Campus Martius. However, by putting the few pieces that are known together, a picture begins to emerge: a large Egyptian style complex of two temples adorned with statues of personifications of bodies of water, obelisks, and other pieces of statuary rising out of the Campus Martius. The space would have been inhabited by devotees to the deities worshipping and non-

[52] Lanciani, *The Ruins and Excavations of Ancient Rome*, 358.

[53] Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, *Religions of Rome, Volume I: A History,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xviii-xix.

[54] Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, *Religions of Rome, Volume I: A History,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), xviii-xix.

[55] L. Richardson Jr., *A New Topographical Dictionary of Ancient Rome,* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 212.

[56] L. Richardson Jr., *A New Topographical Dictionary*, 213.

[57] Gregory S. Aldrete, *Floods of the Tiber in Ancient Rome*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2007), 33.

58 Robert A. Wild, *Water in the Cultic Worship of Isis and Sarapis,* (Leiden: Brill, 1981): 28.

affiliated Romans walking through the complex going about their daily business. When the city was hit with heavy rain, the followers of Isis would be among the few in the city who welcomed the overflowing waters of the Tiber. This scene was looked out upon by the large personification of Sarapis, be it as a full body representation or as "the Foot of Sarapis," a god aligned with rulers in two different cultures, serving as a bridge between the Nile and the Tiber.

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