



# A SECOND GAZE

INTERTEXTUALITY AND TRANSIENT MEANING  
IN ROMAN TEXTS AND OBJECTS

EDITED BY  
MATTHIAS GRAWEHR  
MARKUS KERSTEN

**Propylaeum**

SPECIALIZED INFORMATION  
SERVICE ANCIENT STUDIES



A Second Gaze

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40.000 Years of Human  
**CHALLENGES**



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# Preface

A conference held in Mainz on 13–14 November 2023 was the starting point for this book. Its title was the same as that of this collection, and so was its aim: to stimulate exchange and to conceptualize ideas that transcend the conventional boundaries of academic disciplines and traditions. The program included the presentations of 15 individual researchers and research teams from eight different countries. We are grateful that almost all of them have agreed to publish their contributions here.

The meeting was made possible by the generous financial and logistical support of the Gutenberg International Conference Center (GICC) at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. We thank its scientific advisory board for including the conference in the “Mainz Ancient Studies” conference program. In particular, we would like to thank Johannes Lipps and Christine Walde for their persisting encouragement and backing. Substantial financial support was further provided by the research area “40,000 Years of Human Challenges: Perception, Conceptualization and Coping in Premodern Societies” at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz. We extend our gratitude to its spokeswoman Heide Frielinghaus and to Bianka Nessel for including the volume into the new publication series “Created World”.

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Mainz, September 2024

Matthias Grawehr and Markus Kersten



## A Second Gaze. Transient Meanings beyond Intertextuality and Iconography

**Abstract** This introduction provides an overview of the subsequent essays, first by delineating the overarching perspective of the volume and then by examining select fundamental concepts from both literary and visual culture studies, including intertextuality and iconography. In conclusion, the concept of ‘epi-iconics’ is presented as a new means for collectively addressing how meaning is ascribed to and transferred between texts and objects. To illustrate this process, an ambiguous poem by Ausonius and equally ambiguous images are provided as a basis for analysis.

A second gaze allows us to relive, reconsider, or reinforce an impression that has already passed. As an important means of intense perception, it serves the building of memory and functions as an elementary principle of culture. Not least, it is central to the cultural practice of imitation. In this context, two fundamental moments of secondary consideration can be assumed. Before, during, and after the receptional process recipients *re-call* their previous observations<sup>1</sup>. When we find something in a picture or in a text that is familiar to us from our own environment (or from other pictures or texts), or, conversely, when we find something in our environment that we have previously only known from narratives or images, we may have the same

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1 The underlying findings of neuroscience in their historical and philosophical dimensions have been explained, e.g. in Breidbach 2000; Breidbach 2013; cf. Günther 2021. Activity in the human brain when looking at a picture does not just begin with the viewing process, but experiences and expectations are already transferred to the incoming impulses beforehand. This highlights the individuality of the viewing process, as every viewer has an individual stock of experiences against which incoming impulses are filtered and measured.

impression for a second time, though we do perceive different things, the imitated and the imitation. Similarly, when we look at a particular text or image, we may assume that we perceive the same thing as others, but inevitably we see with our own eyes and understand with our own experiences. However, such second gazes do not only occur on the part of the audience. It is a reasonable assumption that artists, for their part, *re-produce* what they have previously observed (be it visually or intellectually), albeit not necessarily in an exact or exclusive manner. Aristotle discusses the cognitive effect of repetition in his *Poetics* (1148b7–20, trans. by S. Halliwell, slightly adapted):

τό τε γὰρ μιμῆσθαι σύμφυτον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐκ παιδῶν ἐστὶ καὶ τούτῳ διαφέρουσι τῶν ἄλλων ζώων ὅτι μιμητικώτατόν ἐστι καὶ τὰς μαθήσεις ποιεῖται διὰ μιμήσεως τὰς πρώτας, καὶ τὸ χαίρειν τοῖς μιμήμασι πάντας. [...] μανθάνειν οὐ μόνον τοῖς φιλοσόφοις ἤδιστον ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ὁμοίως, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ βραχὺ κοινωνοῦσιν αὐτοῦ. διὰ γὰρ τοῦτο χαίρουσι τὰς εἰκόνας ὀρῶντες, ὅτι συμβαίνει θεωροῦντας μανθάνειν καὶ συλλογίζεσθαι τὶ ἕκαστον, οἷον ὅτι οὗτος ἐκεῖνος. ἐπεὶ ἐὰν μὴ τύχη προεωρακῶς, οὐχ ἢ μίμημα ποιήσει τὴν ἡδονὴν ἀλλὰ διὰ τὴν ἀπεργασίαν ἢ τὴν χροιάν ἢ διὰ τοιαύτην τινὰ ἄλλην αἰτίαν.

For it is an instinct of human beings, from childhood, to engage in mimesis (indeed, this distinguishes them from other animals: man is the most mimetic of all, and it is through mimesis that he develops his earliest understanding); and equally natural that everyone enjoys mimetic objects. ... The explanation of this too is that understanding gives great pleasure not only to philosophers but likewise to others too, though the latter have a smaller share in it. This is why people enjoy looking at images, because through contemplating them it comes about that they understand and infer what each element means, for instance that “this one” is “that one”. For, if one happens not to have seen the subject before, the image will not give pleasure qua mimesis but because of its execution or colour, or for some other such reason.

When we refer to the *Poetics* as a starting point of this introduction, it is not because we consider it to be the definitive account of what Greco-Roman material and textual culture is and how it should be interpreted, but because the basic temporal relationship inherent in both production and reception is formulated here so succinctly and so broadly applicably. Even if Aristotle seems to be mainly concerned with the relation between art and ‘reality’, his remarks are also true for the relation between one work and another,

that is for the rhetorical practice of *imitatio*. In art, both visual and literary, cognition is essentially recognition<sup>2</sup>. Indeed, the nature of our recognition determines whether we consider something to be art. Beyond the emphasis of aesthetic judgements, however, the second gaze can also be understood quite fundamentally as a phenomenon of cultural and social practices.

Once there is a second gaze, a certain recursiveness is likely to be induced. There might also be a third and a fourth, there might be an alternating process of contemplation, so that meaning emerges not only from one direction. It is a fascinating observation, that, when we look back and forth between – to repeat Aristotle’s terms – οὗτος (this) and ἐκεῖνος (that), the one seems to become clearer through the other. Obviously, we may see new features when focusing on the same thing for a second time. Information can be lost or changed during the blink of an eye. Paraphrasing one of Heraclitus’ doctrines (DK 22 B 12), we could posit that it is no more possible to look at one object twice than it is to step into the same river again. This illustrates the intricate dialectics of every interpretation, but also a very simple issue: Even texts and objects that serve an everyday purpose can be imbued with a deeper significance through a second gaze. If meaning is realized on the part of the recipient, it follows our gaze and may therefore be transient. The question, then, is how many will realize a certain meaning, why and for how long.

In the nexus of reception and production of meaning lies the interest of this conference volume. We ask how texts and images that encapsulate certain ideas or even histories invite reinterpretation and reutilization when they are being perceived, read or looked at. And how, upon exposure to a second gaze, their original meaning may be retained or deliberately hinted at, or conversely, how they may lose their initial significance, finding themselves within entirely different contexts, thereby adopting unforeseen and novel connotations. Even if a statue or a text is a faithful copy of another, or even if we look twice at the same thing, in every gaze new meaning is created. As Classics and Archaeology have developed concepts and a terminology to describe and understand such processes, we want to bring these perspectives, stemming from literary and visual culture, together in order to further develop a common methodological framework.

In this introduction we will first look back at some basic terminology and concepts from both literary and visual culture studies (part 1). Secondly, we will sketch out some methodological considerations that lead beyond descriptive terms like intertextuality or iconography. Here, we stress the

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2 See Schmitt 2008, 278–292 on epistemology, and Simpson 2003 on literary reference.

importance of considering the *interested gaze* as a descriptive term for the individual construction of (often transient) meaning, drawing on previous perceptions and understandings of an image or a text. And, we introduce the concept of epi-iconics to describe the layers of meaning that have accrued on images on a common cultural or individual level (part 2). Finally, by drawing on previous literary and iconographical sources, we will exemplify our methodological framework on a concrete example, the conception of a beautiful effeminate young male that transgresses boundaries of biological sex and unifies the often interchangeable mythological figures like Ganymed, Hylas, etc. in one intertextual and intervisual space. We thereby also demonstrate the importance of taking an interdisciplinary approach to grapple the ‘transmedial’ conception of this specific figure (part 3).

## 1. A glossary of terms and topics

To begin this encounter of philological and archaeological gazing let us consider a simple case: Having heard a story, an artist produces a statue in order to visualise a crucial moment of the plot. The statue itself may afford a certain reaction by calling on human instinct – a representation of a child with large eyes, for instance, may seem cute to most of us. But beyond, the statue does not convey meaning. It is one of the foundational assumptions of contemporary hermeneutics, that meaning in the deeper sense of interpretive understanding is only created by ourselves, based on what we have experienced or known. So, if the story is well known to us and if the artist somehow refers to it (e.g. by giving the statue a name), we may immediately recognize the character who is depicted. Perhaps we will grasp, empathize and understand the crucial moment better if we see it in marble or bronze instead of just hearing and imagining it. If someone copies the statue, the new copy will probably have the same meaning to most of us. However, what if someone does not copy the statue exactly, but makes a new version that only alludes to the original statue or story? Or what if there are different accounts of the story that differ in some points so that the statue can be related to slightly different variants of the same character? Archaeology and philology have long been developing methods for such cases; traditionally, we apply *Kopienforschung* and *Quellenforschung*, more recent and more complex methods rely on concepts that start with “inter-” (intertextuality, -mediality, -disciplinarity etc.).

Yet meaning is not only created through knowledge about structures and traditions, but also through certain social and discursive conditions. If we

see the statue placed in a room, where e.g. conviviality is celebrated, this will condition our reception and influence the meaning we ascribe to the statue. Similarly, the loss of the original setting will have consequences as well. Along with everything around (*παρὰ*) and about (*μετὰ*) a work, paratextuality (-pictoriality, etc.) and metatextuality (-visuality, etc.) come into play. Any artefact depends on its framing and on its praxeology. While it is neither necessary nor even possible to provide an overview of the hermeneutic concepts currently in use in our disciplines, we would like to take a closer look at those terms that we have profitably brought closer together in the discussions that preceded this volume.

### Reception, intertextuality, iconography, and the study of ekphrasis

For more than half a century, the question, how, why and for how long a certain meaning is realized was accentuated by various scholarly trends, the decisive effect of which has been a profound rethinking of *text* and *reception*<sup>3</sup>. Reception studies developed within literary theory in the late 1960s<sup>4</sup> and were brought into art history and archaeology in the 1980s and 1990s<sup>5</sup>. They aimed to understand literary texts and artworks in their time or geographical context, but they also laid the conceptual groundwork for more general historiographies of the reception of texts and images in different times or places.

In Classics, the works of Gian Biagio Conte, Gérard Genette, Richard Thomas and Stephen Hinds, though differing in detail and expression, have collectively led to a kind of consensus in terminology<sup>6</sup>. Although, after the extensive theoretical reflection from structuralism to postcolonialism (and beyond) a considerable ambiguity remains in the definition of concepts, it is apparent that the term intertextuality has proved to be unrivalled for describing the conditions of writing and reading. At least in the case of Roman culture, which was so dependent on the Greek and reflected this dependence in a conscious manner, the term has developed into a master instrument for elucidating the very nature of production and reception of text with greater comprehension than ever before. Now intertextuality is generally understood

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3 See Most 2021.

4 Jauss 1967.

5 See, e.g., Kemp 1985; Zanker 2000.

6 See Conte 1974/1986; Genette 1982; Genette 1987; Hinds 1998; Thomas 1999; On the application of these concepts, see, e.g., Schmitz 2006; Jansen 2014; Reitz – Finkmann 2019; Coffee et al. 2020.

more or less strictly as the presence of one text in another, which the reader can use for interpretation, regardless of the author's intention.

The 'presence of text' can obviously be understood very broadly; intertextuality then describes an almost unmanageable network of literary references. In the practice of Classics, however, there seems to be a preference for relational models that are less complex<sup>7</sup>. A notorious example is the still popular "hunt for parallels"<sup>8</sup>. Even if it has been topical in academic writing for some decades now to polemicize against the optimism of positivist *Quellenforschung*, scholars quite often concentrate on the features with which one text refers or alludes to another (mostly, but not necessarily written in the same language)<sup>9</sup>. This approach is both linear, in that it concerns only two elements, and exclusive, in that it concerns the same medium or even the same genre. It is a reduction that tacitly re-simplifies the idea one might have of the origin of a text. Understandably, some perceive this interpretation of intertextuality as insufficient or even meaningless<sup>10</sup>.

Dependencies manifest themselves more naturally with images than with texts. We refer to the interdependent forms of representation of the same theme as one particular iconography. The 'correct way' to study iconography in our contemporary sense was codified through seminal works by Aby Warburg and Erwin Panofsky in early-20th century Hamburg. Panofsky's interest lay in the acute description of, e.g., figures in an image, with the aim to detect different versions in the unfolding of a iconographic tradition through time, and to study and explain how each of these versions referred to earlier ones and how it can be interpreted in the context of their respective period<sup>11</sup>. In a wider approach, Aby Warburg, devoted his energy to the relations and dependencies between iconographies. Studying Renaissance paintings and the reuse of iconographies from antiquity, he became fascinated with the wide networks of relations between images. His concept of image vehicles (*Bilderfahrzeuge*) that transport ideas and images through time is particularly famous<sup>12</sup>.

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7 On the problems of an idea of intertextuality that is too narrow, see e.g. Ambühl 2015, 1–45.

8 Augoustakis 2020, 184.

9 Although, of course, the adaptation of Greek models in Roman literature has been dealt with repeatedly, the opposite direction has attracted much less scrutiny, see Gärtner 2022.

10 Marco Formisano has frequently addressed this issue, see, e.g., Formisano 2016.

11 Locus classicus is Panofsky 1939.

12 On this initiative see now Wolf et al. 2020.



Interrelations in the styles of artworks, on the other hand, have long been a fundamental interest of art historical research. More recently, in opposing the idea that style is dictated by “some imaginary ‘head office’ which decrees” it<sup>13</sup>, Alfred Gell in his ground-breaking work *Art and Agency* has conceptualized commonalities of style (as constitutive for a ‘culture’) as being exclusively created by inter-artefactual relationships, and in a recent effort to describe historical developments through material culture – objects – John Miguel Versluys has drawn extensively on this inter-artefactual concept<sup>14</sup>.

Image and text studies and the theories applied in each of them perhaps come together most fruitfully where they overlap, that is to say, where the focus is on the *reading of images* and the *viewing of texts*. The symbol of such medial and theoretical overlap is the artefact ekphrasis.

Ancient ekphrasis provides a vivid example of the multiplicity of possible gazes inherent in the process of reception. This is not only because of the ekphrastic claim to place things ‘before the eyes’ (*ὕπ’ ὄψιν*) of the reader or listener<sup>15</sup>, but also because of the obvious figurality of this claim: ekphrases also show things that cannot be seen. The literary description of an artefact or a landscape not only places things in relation to a text. Ekphrases also stress the relation of different texts, media, genres, methods, recipients, etc. When the narrator in Virgil’s *Aeneid* says of Aeneas’ prophetic shield that it is of a *non enarrabile textum* (Aen. 8, 625), he paradoxically seems to describe an object as indescribable. But indescribable for whom? On the one hand, we have to accept that we readers see less than, within the fiction, the viewer Aeneas. On the other, however, we are compensated by the fact that we with our hindsight-knowledge understand more than the latter, who looks at what he is taking on his shoulders with pleasure but ignorance. Perhaps, if we are sensitised to the metaphor of the fabric (*textum*), we even understand more than some other readers and therefore accept that a literary *text* can never be explained completely. So, the description as a whole not only describes an artefact and the conditions of viewing, but also, reflexively, the mode of describing.

In view of this, it would seem necessary to resist the attempt to simplify the poetic shield and, as it were, to recreate it by means of illustration or

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13 Gell 1998, 216, cf. the *Strukturforschung* favoured in the mid-20th cent., Wimmer 1997.

14 Gell 1998, 155–220 esp. 216; Pitts – Versluys 2021, 370.

15 Cf. Theon prog. 118.6: ἔκφρασις ἐστὶ λόγος περιηγηματικὸς ἐναργῶς ὑπ’ ὄψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον, “Ekphrasis is a way of description by which that what is to be made clear is virtually set before the eyes”.

even reconstruction. Insofar as the text presents us with the contingency and ambiguity of seeing, it cannot also show us an unambiguous shield. But where would be the point at which we could ‘see’ the ambiguousness of the image? Is it bound to the medium of text or could we translate into visual art? Another problem is the tension between natural and super-natural. If a familiar object like a *clipeus* with a diameter of approximately one metre is said to be made by a god and to be decorated with a variety of scenes (that is, with characters that are moving in time), is this already indicative of downright fictionality or impossibility? Were there really no artefacts that could have been praised for being like a divine shield? Was it impossible to imagine such precious weapons? What would it have meant to produce them?

There has been considerable debate surrounding the intricacies of description<sup>16</sup>. One general consequence is to accept, as it were, that someone sitting at a desk may only rarely look at real shields and probably only superficially so. So, from the intermedial question concerning the *description of depiction* arises an interdisciplinary one: whether, in regard to visualization, philologists are more inclined to abandon the endeavor sooner and with greater willingness than archaeologists.

## Affordance

The term affordance is used to describe the characteristic potential for interaction that a given object offers to living beings, in particular to humans. The neologism was created by James J. Gibson in the 1960s to describe a fundamental principle of human’s cognition, focusing on the direct and bodily perception of the environment<sup>17</sup>. With the material turn, the concept of affordance was not only enthusiastically received by design theorists<sup>18</sup> but it also proved a helpful tool to analyze archaeological objects and their (pictorial) design<sup>19</sup>. Elisabeth Günther has recently advocated to make the concept fruitful also to describe the potential for interpretation – *Deutungsangebot* – to a

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16 On ancient Ekphrasis, see Webb 2009. Thein 2022, 1–26 gives an overview about recent research concerning the topic.

17 Gibson 1966, 285; Gibson 1979, 127–143; cf. Fox et al. 2015.

18 Norman 1988, 9–12; Norman 1999; M. Erlhoff – T. Marshall (eds.), *Wörterbuch Design. Begriffliche Perspektiven des Design* (2008) 12–14 s. v. Affordance (T. Rosenberg); cf. Swift 2017, 5–10.

19 Knappett 2004; Knappett 2005, 45–58; Hodder 2012, 48–50; Fox et al. 2015; Keßler 2016; Swift 2017, 5–10; Dietrich 2021; Hielscher 2022, 32 f.

distinct viewer of (specifically ambiguous) images<sup>20</sup>. In a wider view – and always relating images to viewers that correspond to certain stereotypical cultural frameworks – one may think, e.g., of depictions of nude female bodies that have been designed to attract the lustful ‘male gaze’, or of grotesque bodies or scenes that have been designed to incite laughter, for example in Greek comedy and depictions thereof. In the same way, we also might speak of the affordance of texts<sup>21</sup>.

### Frames and framing, paratexts, praxeology, and parapictoriality

As reception studies were introduced after WW2 and the process of reception came more into focus, theories of framing were introduced in the 1950s as well as the 1970s<sup>22</sup>. They aimed to explain how cognitive markers can be regarded as a performative frame that impacts on the meaning of human interaction, images or texts. The concept of ‘framing’ then proved an important epistemological tool in different fields, like e.g. sociology or linguistics, and recently Elisabeth Günther initiated a series of conferences exploring this concept for archaeology<sup>23</sup>. By showing how in various ways meaning was created through reference to different contemporary ‘frames’, these initiatives highlight the subtext of images and evaluate their importance for the reconstruction of contemporary meaning. In art history, it is the concept of ‘reframing’ that has been employed since the 1990s to describe the medial processes of transcription through which artefacts originating in prior discursive conditions are de- and re-contextualised in new settings<sup>24</sup>, especially on the transcultural level<sup>25</sup>. For antiquity, this is often explicitly linked to human practice<sup>26</sup>. As representative examples, one might consider several publications on the reception of Athenian vases and the images upon them in Etruria, which reconstruct the meanings of the images and vases beyond

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20 Günther 2021, 16–18. Similarly, J.M. Versluys speaks of affordances of motifs, without further discussion, see, e.g., Pitts – Versluys 2021, 378.

21 See von Contzen 2017.

22 Ruesch – Bateson 1951; Bateson 1956; Goffman 1974.

23 Scheufele 2003; Wolf 2006; Günther – Fabricius 2021; Günther – Günther 2022; Günther – Günther 2023.

24 See e.g. Jäger 2013; Seeberg – Wittekind 2017.

25 Juneja 2015; Kern – Krüger 2019.

26 Forberg – Stockhammer 2017.

the intentions of their makers<sup>27</sup>. More case studies for the transfer and adaptation of classical imagery have been collected in two independent volumes edited by Dietrich Boschung and Ludwig Jäger in 2014 and by Johannes Lipps, Martin Dorka Moreno, and Jochen Griesbach in 2021<sup>28</sup>. Within the first of these volumes Ludwig Jäger, advocated for the use of Gérard Genettes *paratext* to describe the individual semantical and ideological setting that determined the meaning of a cultural artefact or text and that was substituted by a new paratext, when the artefact was transferred or copied into a new setting<sup>29</sup>. In taking a similar approach Adrian Stähli has recently elaborated on “Parapictoriality” to describe “the cultural discourses, psychologically and socially shaped cognitive preconditions, beholder expectations and experiences and so on”<sup>30</sup>. Indeed, also on a theoretical level, strong cases have been made recently to link the creation of meaning in art theory more directly to human practice<sup>31</sup>.

However, while the aforementioned studies successfully do provide frameworks for studying the specific context of an image, they are less interested in developing concepts that describe the changing connotations of images and objects through human action from a diachronic perspective and the accretion of additional meanings that occurs as an object moves through space or time.

## 2. Beyond intertextuality and iconography

It is a remarkable observation that the terms that have emerged from the wave triggered by the idea of intertextuality (terms such as inter-artefactual<sup>32</sup>, interfigurality<sup>33</sup>, intermediality<sup>34</sup> or intervisuality<sup>35</sup>) all seem to refer – via their prefix *inter* – to the Latin verb *interesse*, “to be between” or, more succinctly in the modern sense, regarding human agency, “to be interested in”.

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27 Isler-Kerenyi 1997; Reusser 2003; Schweizer 2003; Bentz – Reusser 2004; Puritani 2009; Bundrick 2019.

28 Boschung – Jäger 2014; Lipps et al. 2021. One could add more related case studies, like, e.g., Schreiber 2018; Reinhardt 2019; Friedrich 2023.

29 Jäger 2014.

30 Stähli 2022a, 112 (quote); Stähli 2022b.

31 Prinz 2014; cf. Stähli 2022a; Stähli 2022b.

32 Gell 1998, 216.

33 See Müller 1991.

34 See Dinter – Reitz-Joosse 2019.

35 See Capra – Floridi 2023.

Meaning, as it is created on the part of a recipient who is able to delve deeply into certain interrelated structures, depends on an *interested gaze*. Those who engage with different texts and objects simultaneously, while at the same time being entangled in their specific systems of experience and socialisation, can only make their individual interests fruitful for interpretation. The utterance of this fact may be banal, but its academic implementation is not. The observation that an absolute individuality of interpretation would be logically worthless (because it could only lead to the conclusion that everything is in the eye of the beholder) does not justify the denial of the multiplicity of perception and reproduction. Similarly, the apparent plurality within certain texts and objects cannot negate the necessity for a methodical search for the unifying. If interpretation is to render the implicit explicit, the question of the essence remains pertinent – in a manner analogous to the question of the author’s intention, which cannot be entirely disregarded as a point of scholarly interest even if it is not accessible to us.

The contributions to our volume are organized around two key questions. The first concerns the interests pursued by certain recipients in history, while the second addresses the interests that we ourselves might pursue when gazing at Roman texts and objects.

**Islème Sassi** takes Apuleius’ ekphrasis of a statue of Diana as an opportunity to examine not only the often problematic (or even dangerous) gaze of the characters within the literary fiction, but also the specific imagination and interest of the audience.

In his analysis of Roman astronomical poetry, **Matteo Rossetti** demonstrates that by focusing exclusively on the textual aspects of these poems, we fail to recognize a crucial dimension that pervades our scientific literature but was prevalent in antiquity under different conditions: namely, visualization.

**Amy Miranda’s** contribution is centered on one particular Palmyrenian portrait and on the nine archive sheets that represent this sculpture in the archive of the Danish archaeologist Harald Ingholt. Drawing on Maurice Halbwachs’ concept of collective memory and Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of practice, she describes the institution of an archive not as a mere documentary source, but as a place of embodied practice of memory making. In this particular case, we glimpse on the thoughts and ‘interested gazes’ of Ingholt and other researchers through the numerous annotations that have accrued on the archive sheets. Photographs and annotations represent a state of research that aims at telling a story about the past, but the archive in its digitized state offers visitors also the possibility to create their own readings.

**Elisa Dal Chiele** devotes herself to a classic topic of philological research, namely the selection and adaptation of literary material by Cicero. In doing

so, she follows the interested (and sometimes biased) view of one of the most learned and influential readers of antiquity into Greek poetry.

**Raphael Szeider** presents his dissertation project, in which he applies methodologies of *Kopienforschung* to the field of Ancient architecture, namely the reception of Augustan architecture by the emperor Hadrian.

**Chiara Ballestrazzi** is committed to exploring intersections between philological and archaeological inquiry through a detailed examination of ekphrastic epigrams, encompassing their genesis, significance, and applications.

**Ivan Foletti and Maria Okáčová** take a closer look at mosaics and inscriptions in churches of Rome of the 4th–7th century. The visual imagery in these churches as well as the inscriptions alluded in various ways to traditional Roman culture, even in materiality and typographical style. Their fixed position and two-dimensionality conditioned a strictly controlled reception, deeply embedded also in liturgical performance. The authors demonstrate how all these layers of references as well as their performative framing contributed to the church's decorations as multi-layered 'open works', designed to enact individual and collective contemplation.

In a similar manner, **Rolf Sporleder** interprets the serial production and installation of terracotta reliefs in Roman houses as governed by different overlaying 'parapictorial' principles: The need to offer a pleasant repetition for a peripatetic gaze, the effort to introduce minor variations and surprises for a second closer look, and finally the patron's desire to find Roman values and role models illustrated.

Repetition is also a characteristic often found in curse tablets. In his examination of this specific type of text that, unlike poetry, is not intended for public consumption but should remain concealed, **Florian Sommer** shows that the vestiges of literary awareness and inclination are also discernible within Roman *defixiones*.

**Elisabeth Günther and Sven Günther** return to the phenomenon of images that offer small deviations, in this case of the standard iconography of Imperial coinage. In their case study it is the coinage of a client king on the fringes of the Roman and Parthian empire, who issued coins that at first glance looked Roman, but which on a second gaze offered a condensed and creative new imagery and message, possibly tailored to the interests of the local audience.

**Nicole Berlin** details how patrons in Roman Sicily retained selected older decorations when renovating their houses, and thus were able to reframe these decorations, but also to proudly present them as an incongruent piece of 'flotsam', that illustrated their old and venerated family tradition.

Again concerned with mechanisms of reuse and the recomposition of spolia, **Arne Reinhardt** presents collected cases, where late Republican/early Roman terracotta plaques were reused and re-framed in later contexts. Prudently, he also reminds us of the challenges associated with pursuing a systematic and accurate approach in specific instances.

**Daniel Falkemback Ribeiro** discusses actualizing interpretation, by asking whether ancient bucolics can be subjected to an ecologically sensitive reading. Although this is obviously a specific and quite contemporary interest, it is not an anachronistic approach per se. The vulnerability of nature is not a modern insight and the supposed primacy of human written culture can, as it turns out, also be questioned with the help of ancient discourses.

**Michael Paschalis** examines a famous trope that forces a second look, namely the *recusatio*, and explores the web of provoked literary references that result from this technique in the case of Horace's Ode 4, 15.

Finally, **Markus Kersten** turns to the relationship between intertext and interstice, discussing an ambiguous verse and the requirements and possibilities of its reading, drawing attention to the viewable nature of poetry.

These case studies give a small but very good impression of the wealth of interrelated phenomena of textuality and pictoriality in ancient Rome. The urgent question now is whether these various observations can be generally described by an overarching concept with which the various literary, visual, and cultural studies can concisely communicate. Even if we cannot attempt to give a substantial answer in a conference volume, we do not want to be content with merely stating the desideratum. For the time being, therefore, we propose a term that can be applied to the phenomena presented here by focusing on the intricate imagery – in the direct or figurative sense – of literary and visual culture: *epi-iconic*.

It is the interested gaze – the practices, feelings, and even the politics associated with texts and objects and their relations – that, without altering the very things we perceive, realizes a certain meaning. In a cyclical movement, interest creates the iconic which, in turn, attracts interest. Such interest on behalf of the beholder can be described as ephemeral accretions of connotation 'on top of' (Greek *ἐπι*) the creator's intended meaning. We, e.g., all care for certain images not for their iconographic contents, but most often for our personal stories attached to them. Nonetheless, art history in general and archaeology specifically have for a long time neglected such transient meanings, tacitly dismissing them as merely anecdotal. By focusing precisely on them, our intention is to move beyond traditional approaches in archaeology and philology that concentrate either on the maker or artist, or on an audience that, through being thought of as exemplary (or rather omniscient),

must remain notoriously vague. To concentrate on the wide array of connotations that come ‘on top of’ an icon, as something that attracts attention, we describe as seeking the epi-iconic.

This term ‘epi-iconic’ is modelled on the concept of epigenetics. In the 1980s, DNA had appeared to be a stable formula that determined the phenotypical appearance of all life. However, this notion was disproved with the discovery of mechanisms such as DNA methylation. The accretions of methyl groups to DNA have since been associated with processes such as the imprinting or repression of genomes, which lead to phenotypical changes that do not alter the DNA sequence<sup>36</sup>. Working on an analogous conceptual basis, epi-iconics describes how (phenotypical) meaning in art, literature, and daily life is not only determined by the content of a text or the material affordance and iconography of an image when created (this content we compare to the DNA), but also by their wider literary or iconographic background, by their use, the actions they witness, and the sentiments expressed towards them as they are read or handled. In practice, such meanings can usually not be described on an individual level, but through generalizations and as a multitude of potential readings. We introduce epi-iconics here not as a necessarily better alternative to other established, but more narrow terms like, for example, intertextuality or framing, but because we feel that it enables us to focus more precisely on the weight of personal experiences, the cumulated interests that a viewer or reader (or a group of viewers/readers) had and entertained during perception.

How this could work in action, is demonstrated in the following case study.

### 3. Who has not heard of Hylas (or Narcissus or Cyparissus or Endymion)? On gazing at young men

*Cui non dictus Hylas?*, asks Virgil (georg. 3, 6) in order to introduce a new, unexplored theme. Indeed, the young man loved by Hercules for his beauty and abducted by nymphs is a common motif. So common, in fact, that one can critically ask oneself whether one really knows the ‘true’ story or only the superficial, decorative outline. On a more positive note, however, we could also ask whether the interest we have in Hylas (because we pity him or, in our own way, desire him) could be felt in the same way in other scenes, with other persons.

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36 Bird 2007.



The late antique author Ausonius helps to stimulate such thinking. Among his epigrams is the following (no. 107 in Green's edition):

Furitis, procaces Naiades  
 amore saeuo et irrito:  
 ephebus iste flos erit.

You race, you greedy naiads, in cruel but futile desire. This youth will  
 become a flower.

The three dimeters are presented as a kind of riddle. A mythical scene is depicted here in a nutshell. But which one? Everything is nameless: the naiads, the boy, the flower. Like a sketch, the poem still seems to be waiting to be realised. A young man is somewhere by the water, near the naiads. But he is unlikely to enter into their ambush, but instead will be transformed into a flower. The context of the text offers some help. The epigram is positioned between pieces that deal with similar topics, namely the stories of Hylas (epigram 106) and Narcissus (epigram 108). Moreover, a lengthy heading, probably not by Ausonius, is transmitted along with the poem (*Nymphis quae Hylan rapuerunt*, 'To the Nymphs that raped Hylas'). The arrangement of the epigrams is suggestive and may be authentic. The centre figure appears to be a superimposition of the two outer figures, without being identical to either of them. Hylas does not become a flower, Narcissus does not encounter the naiads.

The text examines the intertextual relationship between the two myths to which its context refers. Similarly to Hylas, who is prevented from obtaining water by nymphs that draw him into their lake, and like Narcissus, who gazes at himself while leaning over the water's edge, eventually turning into a flower, the nameless *ephebus* is young. Moreover, the presence of naiads who gaze at him suggests that he is perceived as physically attractive. The initial line, which addresses them, refers to the topic of the preceding poem. In contrast, the concluding line, which predicts the transformation, is indicative of that of the subsequent. This transition from one myth (or epigram) to the next could be described as the "contextual function" of the poem. However, the epigram is, to some extent, also evidently incongruous in context due to its metrical disparity; 106 and 108 are composed of elegiac couplets. Just as 107 runs counter to the rules of dactylically codified mythology, it not only connects the myths, it also separates them.

The fact that the young boy cannot be clearly identified as the character of a distinctive myth may seem unsatisfactory. However, as is so often the

case, it is precisely the unsatisfactory that can be regarded in a constructive manner. Some scholars have corrected the penultimate word into *fons*. There is, to be sure, no valid reason to suspect the word *flos*, which has been handed down without a doubt<sup>37</sup>. Yet, the endeavour to clarify the poem, by pointing out that Hylas becomes a spring in Valerius (which, however, is not entirely accurate<sup>38</sup>), documents the actual effect of the poem. Through its brevity, the text creates an incomplete mythological scheme that needs to be reviewed. The poet points out to the nymphs that they are mistaken about the fate of the boy, who is presumably looking into the water, he is also pointing to the ignorance of the readers, who have to guess who the boy is and what is actually happening to him. An univocal answer is impossible. For a moment, all the beautiful youths pursued by nymphs are present before the reader's eyes: Hylas, Narcissus, Hermaphrodite, Thrasymennus etc.<sup>39</sup>.

Paul Dräger identifies the boy with Hylas and comments on the deviation from the traditional myth by saying that one should not underestimate Ausonius' gift for invention<sup>40</sup>. The question of Ausonius' creativity, however, is somewhat misguided. On the one hand, authors undoubtedly have the capacity to invent anything they wish. On the other, they are of course constrained by the boundaries of tradition. In lieu of inquiring about the novel meaning coined by Ausonius, it is more illuminating to consider the interpretation that an observer of a conventional yet not explicitly delineated scene, as articulated through the text's narrative voice, might devise. In fact, the issue of coping with both unclear iconography and certain individual interests of gazing is one of the main affordances of the text. If we can imagine that 'another' Hylas, desired by the naiads, becomes a flower instead of being drowned, we may also ask ourselves, if we can, in turn, imagine that those canonical young men that were transformed into flowers according to myth – Crocus, Adonis, Hyacinthus, Narcissus, etc. – could also have been desired by naiads at a certain moment in their mythical biographies. The number of potential associations is in stark contrast with the concise nature of the epigram. The text appears to refer to a metamorphosis that never occurred, creating a juxtaposition of narratives that ultimately culminate in a disastrous end for a young man. The text or, respectively, the image evoked by the text reveals only the outline of a beautiful young man exposed to the

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37 See Kay 2001 on Auson. epigr. 107.

38 Cf. Val. Fl. 1, 218–220; 4, 25–37. However, Hylas does not become a spring, but a water deity who lives with the nymphs.

39 Cf. Ov. met. 4, 287–388; Sil. 5, 15–23.

40 See Dräger 2012 on Auson. epigr. 107.



Fig. 1: Adonis and Eros kissing. Attic Lekythos, ca. 410 BC, Antikensammlung, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, inv. F2705  
bpk/Antikensammlung, SMB/Johannes Laurentius

desiring gaze of the viewers (and readers). The nameless but seemingly well-known boy is revealed to be a multivalent ornament. The epigram can thus inspire reflection on Roman iconography.

In Greco-Roman visual culture, the iconography of the beautiful youth being watched or approached by gods or nymphs, was well established and it was used in variations for a number of different mythological figures like Hylas, Adonis, Endymion, Cyparissus, or Narcissus. It was created in the late 5th cent. BC, when artists started to depict gods from the younger generation that are related to well-being and arts, such as Apollo or Dionysus, as young men. The same appearance was chosen for demi-gods or other figures from myth such as Adonis (fig. 1). For our purpose here, in order to illustrate the numerous intervisual and intermedial connections between the individual depictions, we will just take the youths in Pompeian wall painting

into consideration. Depictions of **Hylas** are relatively rare<sup>41</sup>. He is usually shown approaching a pond, jug in hand, to fetch water, now surrounded by the nymphs who, enchanted by his beauty, try to get hold of him. Wounded **Adonis** is usually depicted seated, with spears, being tended to by Venus and Amor<sup>42</sup>. Sleeping **Endymion** lies or leans on a rock, spears in hand, as the hovering and glowing Selene timidly approaches<sup>43</sup>. The same seated or leaning position as for Endymion was also used for **Cyparissus**. In a well-known version from the House of the Vettii at Pompeii as in others, he can be identified through his spears, the stag and a tripod, Apollo or rarely a nymph is lingering in the background<sup>44</sup>. **Narcissus**, finally, is depicted most often, more than 50 times at Pompeii. He is shown in three iconographical schemes<sup>45</sup>: rarely as a standing figure (1), lying or half kneeling on the ground and leaning over the pond (2), or, as usually, in the same seated or leaning position as Adonis, Endymion, or Cyparissus (3). As they do, he also carries hunting spears. In the background a nymph, probably Echo (named only in Ovid), can make her appearance and often Amor is around. Most deciding for an identification with Narcissus is his mirror image in the pond, no matter if he is looking at it or not.

Several depictions of these mythological figures offer reflections on the reciprocal relationship between texts and images, of which we want to highlight only two:

1. The only one of these youthful beauties, who, in the older conventional version of his myth as well as iconography, did not carry hunting spears is Hylas. Starting from the Flavian period, he nevertheless became depicted with spears. Two such Pompeiian versions stem from the last decade before the AD 79 eruption. Both are closely related stucco reliefs, one from the tablinum of the Casa di Meleagro, the other from the Stabian baths<sup>46</sup>. Strikingly, Valerius Flaccus (Val Fl. 3, 552–553) was the first to give a version of the myth, where Hylas is in the entourage of Hercules and hunting, not fetching water. He expressly mentions the spears in his hand (*fessaque minantem tela manu*). In the 2nd century AD, the literal and iconographical motif became more widespread and it has been suggested that the iconography

41 Ling 1979; LIMC 5 (1991) 574–579 s. v. Hylas (J.H. Oakley).

42 LIMC 1 (1981) 222–229 s. v. Adonis (B. Servais-Soyez).

43 LIMC 3 (1986) 726–742 s. v. Endymion (H. Gabelmann).

44 LIMC 6 (1992) 165–166 s. v. Kyparissos (J.-R. Gisler).

45 LIMC 6 (1992) 703–711 s. v. Narkissos (B. Rafn); Colpo 2006; Prehn 2018.

46 Ling 1979, 780–782 nos. 8, 9; LIMC 5 (1991) 576 nos. 27, 28 s. v. Hylas (J.H. Oakley).

was inspired by Flaccus updated version of the myth<sup>47</sup>. Valerius must have composed his sole surviving work, the *Argonautica*, between ca. AD 70 and his death shortly before AD 96. The chronological relation between the Pompeiian stucco reliefs and the publication of Valerius' writing could therefore just as well have been the other way around. Hylas' iconography would then have been contaminated by the typical appearance of the other 'young beauties' first, and only subsequently turned into a new version of the myth. Whatever the exact relationship was, is not of prime importance, here. Either way, it is surmisable, that the artist was driven by his 'interested gaze', his personal knowledge of other 'hunting beauties', to the 'epi-iconical' connection of figure and spears, and this led to the creation of a new literary and pictorial motif.

2. When depicted in a lying position, Endymion has his left arm behind his neck and right arm huddled in his cloak (fig. 2). In Lucian's dialog between Venus and Selene, the latter vividly describes how the sleeping youth's posture irresistibly attracts her to tiptoe towards Endymion (Lucian, *Dialogi Deorum* 11). Given the author's education in sculpture and his versatility in painting, it is not farfetched to see this passage as inspired by the author's competent and 'interested gaze' in representations of Endymion<sup>48</sup>. Nevertheless the position was used for sleeping maenads being approached by satyrs already since ca. 500 BC<sup>49</sup>. It was petrified in the 'Sleeping Ariadne' (fig. 3), a Hellenistic statue of the 2nd cent. BC, copied fairly often in the Roman period<sup>50</sup>. The posture of the raised arm, folded behind the neck, can thus be described as a particularly alluring position, and its epi-iconical meaning was to attract and invite gaze and touch. Anyone who was attracted by such figures may have reacted on his biological instincts, but certainly also to his cultural upbringing and to having earlier looked at pictures where figures in this pose invited approach.

All these figures – Endymion, Adonis, Hylas, Cyparissus, Narcissus – can, as is clear by now, be quite easily confounded with each other<sup>51</sup>, especially if no identifying attributes are present, as often is the case with their sculptural

47 Ling 1979, 795 f.; LIMC 5 (1991) 579 s. v. Hylas (J. H. Oakley).

48 LIMC 3 (1986) 738 s. v. Endymion (H. Gabelmann)

49 See, e.g., a hydria in the Musée des antiquités de la Seine-Maritime à Rouen, inv. no. 538.3 of ca. 500 BC, or the 4th-century bell krater in the Metropolitan Museum of Arts, inv. no. 1984.323.2.

50 For the sculpture see at latest Stähli 2022b, 426–429; on appropriation processes Dorka Moreno et al. 2021, 4–9.

51 Zanker 1966, 156 f. mit Anm. 12. 13; Prehn 2018, 56–60.



Fig. 2: Selene approaching sleeping Endymion. Pompeii, Casa del Ara massima (VI 16, 15, Room F)

photography: Johannes Eber, on concession of the Ministero della Cultura – Parco Archeologico di Pompeii



Fig. 3: Sleeping Ariadne, ca. AD 150–175, Madrid, Museo del Prado, inv. E000167  
Museo del Prado Madrid/José Antonio

representations. But the artists who designed these images, in addition also borrowed from other, different figures:

1. Apollo and Torre Annunziata

The standing pose of Narcissus who figures on the cover of this volume was clearly inspired by the Apollon Sauroktonos<sup>52</sup> – a statue by the 4th-cent. Greek sculptor Praxiteles, one of the most copied statues in the repertoire of Roman sculptors – whose posture the painter at Torre Annunziata reproduced as a mirror image (fig. 4 and 5). Interestingly, the Narcissus was already related to Apollo by Ovid (met. 3, 419 *dignos Apolline crinos*)<sup>53</sup>, and one might wonder if the painter had this specific verse in mind when depicting Narcissus in this unusual stance deviating from the youth's usual iconography in a most creative way. The artist thereby reproduced an image he had repeatedly seen and by which he was presumably impressed – and, furthermore, he transported some of the layers of meaning that had accrued on his mental image (the pose related to a youthful god, maybe some verses of Ovid) into a new image and meaning. Some archaeologists, in addition, have been reminded by Narcissus' body in this painting of Hermaphroditus<sup>54</sup>.

2. In this painting from Torre Annunziata, as in several other depictions of these beauties, the body of the youth oscillates between male and female<sup>55</sup>. The seated or leaning pose used for Adonis, Endymion, Cyparissus, and Narcissus was also one of the typical postures of Venus in Pompeian painting. Their inviting homoerotic appearance, in addition, was often combined with images of Venus, compare e.g. Cyparissus and Venus on two opposite walls of room 12 of the Casa dei Capitelli colorati (VII 4, 31/51), or Adonis and Venus in the House of Apollo (VI 7, 23, tablinum). One of the most striking combinations is to be found in a cubiculum in the Casa di M. Lucretius. In a panel on the east wall, Venus is showing her body off in frontal view, and her pose is mirrored by a panel with Narcissus on the west wall, where Narcissus presents the viewer with a voluptuous backside. One wonders if the ancient viewer, when looking at the beautiful youth, did also associate characteristics of female beauty. Sometimes also for a modern viewer it is not possible to straightforwardly identify a figure's sex. In a panel painting from the inn I 14, 5 Narcissus is shown in the iconographical scheme kneeling at the pond (above no. 2), which is not known for any other figure. But due to the panel's moderate state of preservation, and the figure's curvaceous

52 Prehn 2018, 77f. 206f. cat. no. e3 with further bibliography.

53 Cf. Prehn 2018, 87f. with further references to Mart. 6, 29, 5–6 and Petron. 109, 10.

54 Zanker 1966, 166; LIMC 6 (1992) 707 no. 49 s. v. Narkissos (B. Rafn).

55 Prehn 2018, 73–76. 90–95.



Fig. 4: Apollo Sauroktonos, 4th cent. BC, Claudian copy, Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. Ma 441  
© GrandPalaisRmn (musée du Louvre)/Hervé Lewandowski

body, doubt has arisen, if it is not rather Pyramus and Thisbe or an unidentified female beauty usurping Narcissus' stance<sup>56</sup>. Furthermore, as already has been described, Endymion in Roman wall painting inherited his sleeping pose from 'Sleeping Ariadne', attested in sculpture, but also in Pompeian painting. And, in the Casa dell'Ara Massima (VI 16, 15, fig. 2) Endymion's body, in addition to his pose, appears rather effeminate, with breasts just as swelling as those of Selene, approaching him. In the Casa di Octavius Quartio,

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56 Prehn 2018, 187f. cat. no. D1; Catoni – Zuchriegel, 230f. with further bibliography.





Fig. 5: Narcissus, from Torre Annunziata, Villa of C. Sicilius, Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 9385  
photography: archivio dell'arte | pedicini fotografi MN0597, on concession of the Ministero della Cultura – Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli

from where a famous painting of Narcissus is known, a garden sculpture was found that is usually described as depicting Hermaphroditus (fig. 6), but seen on the background of other strongly effeminate depictions like the one in the Casa dell'Ara massima, and lacking clear iconographical markers, one might wonder if it was not rather meant to depict one of these effeminate youths, for example sleeping Endymion, or at least if the sculpture was not intended as being ambiguous.

On a more general level, we might then ask why these youths were depicted in such a clearly effeminate manner at all, and why male and female beauty were linked. In Roman society a discourse on homosexuality, as well as a



Fig. 6: Endymion or Hermaphroditus? Pompeii, Casa di Octavius Quartio, garden photograph: Shutterstock/Vincenzo Iozzo, on concession of the Ministero della Cultura – Parco Archeologico di Pompeii

practice of decidedly asymmetrical homoerotic relationships between boys and men certainly existed<sup>57</sup>. The young capricious and effeminate lover as the passive part in a relationship with an adult man, was extensively described by various authors<sup>58</sup>. A short profile description is given by Petronius: “ca. 16 years old, hair curly, soft, beautiful” (Petron. 97, 1: *annorum circa XVI, crispus, mollis, formosus*). Often, the descriptions of such worldly lovers and of mythological figures are interchangeable, as in two passages in Ovid and Martial. The boy Amazonicus, whom Martial presents to his readers as an object of desire in an epigram that ultimately turns out to be an epitaph, looks like Ovid’s Narcissus. He has light eyes (Ov. met. 3, 420: *geminum sua lumina sidus*, Mart. 4, 42, *lumina sideribus certent*) and beautiful hair and white skin. The intertextuality between both passages is not referential in a strict sense. Rather, it makes both boys look like any ideal image – male or female – in which the white of the skin contrasts with the red of the lips to be kissed.

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57 Cf. e.g. Obermayer 1998; Hubbard 2003; Pollini 2003.

58 Hubbard 2003, 344–442.

In the paintings, the effeminate male offered a panopticum of bodily delights to the eyes of a patron (male or female)<sup>59</sup>. And the patron's gaze may have been interested just as much in the allusion to worldly love as in mythology. Depending on personal background, preferences, and expectations, white flesh and curly hair were indices that drew their epi-iconical meaning from a range of incorporated cultural practices, from viewing and reading habits alike.

According to this perspective, what happens if an image is transferred from one context to another, from worldly love to mythology, or from one mythological figure to another? To stay within the epigenetic model, the different settings that define a specific meaning build-up accretions on iconography or literary motif. Some meanings could be suppressed, if needed, for example the spears identifying a hunter, others could be emphasized, as for example the attractiveness of an effeminate male.

But those who saw these images, who compared them and were aware of their different meanings, could also think of Hermaphroditus or Hylas, when looking at Narcissus. Only if knowledge about one or the other interpretations was lost, the image becomes that of a nameless youth again.

#### 4. Conclusion

In the passage quoted at the beginning of this introduction, Aristotle describes how the recognition of familiar elements in a painting provides pleasure to the viewer. This observation addresses fundamental mechanisms of cognition. Referencing images or literary passages to mental images that are pre-conceived (through texts, images, education, or actions) is a basic way in which meaning is generated, as well as through which creative processes unfold. At the same time, cognition is related to framing and influenced by states of being at the moment of cognition. How such referentiality – or second gazes – can work in practice is exemplified and analyzed in the contributions in this volume: poetic descriptions of celestial phenomena refer to established astronomical iconographies; photographs and annotations on archive sheets document contemporary approaches to a subject instead of being mere information storages; the use of a literary trope (like a *recusatio*) at the beginning of a poem offered the authors a possibility to enter into a differentiated dialogue with their predecessors.

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59 For Narcissus in the context of pederasty see Prehn 2018, 95–100.

A second gaze, taking an inclusive disciplinary perspective, is too rarely applied in the study of antiquity. What does this perspective on the relationality of texts and images offer to us? It helps us to move away from a too narrow study of iconographies or literary genres towards a broader understanding of how images and texts were perceived in their respective times, how they reacted to and interacted with each other, and how they provoked thought in the minds of their recipients. And of course, all kinds of other texts, images, and much more, waited in the minds of creators and perceivers to be activated. In this sense, the depictions or descriptions of mythological figures like Hylas or Narcissus could not only refer to the education and refinement of a patron or reader, but also enact a broad range of further sentiments and thoughts.

In this introduction, we suggest to define such manifold layers of meaning, as epi-iconic, as laying ‘on top of’ the specific configurations of words or coloured shapes. We are convinced that paying more attention to such epi-iconic layers of meaning will put us in a better position to demystify processes of creativity and reception in both texts and images. Searching for such wider meanings is a commitment to a comprehensive *Altertumswissenschaft* that is critical in the traditional sense and inclusive in an innovative way.

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## Drei Blicke auf das Verbotene. Die Diana-Gruppe im *Goldenen Esel* des Apuleius

**Abstract** The ekphrasis of the statues of Diana and Actaeon in the atrium of Byrrhaena, due to its length and complexity, has long been recognized as a key element in understanding the entire Golden Ass. Central to its structure is the phenomenon of the gaze: Who is looking at whom, who is being looked at by whom? As we follow the various gazes, we discover multiple layers of interpretation, not only of the Actaeon myth, but also of Lucius' fate – and an unsettling perspective on our own role as readers.

### 1. *Lapis Parius in Dianam factus*: Enargeia und Künstlichkeit

Die Göttin Diana entzieht ihren Körper nicht nur jeglicher sexuellen Interaktion, sondern sucht ihn auch kompromisslos vor männlichen Blicken zu schützen. In Apuleius' *Goldenem Esel* wird er jedoch gleich drei Blicken preisgegeben, und zwar in Form einer wertvollen Statue, die sich in einem Atrium in Thessalien befindet.

Lucius ist auf Geschäftsreise, doch die Stadt, in der er zurzeit weilt, hätte er auch privat gern besucht: Das thessalische Hypata ist berühmt für seine Bewohnerinnen. Die ganze Welt weiss, dass die begabtesten Zauberinnen in Thessalien zu finden sind<sup>1</sup>, und Lucius wünscht sich nichts sehnlicher als in den Gassen Spuren von Magie zu entdecken. Eifrig durchstöbert er jeden

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1 Vgl. Kirichenko 2008, 96: „Thus magic was probably the only thing that came into an average Roman's mind when he heard the word ‚Thessaly‘“. Einschlägig dazu Hor. epod. 5, 41–46; carm. 1, 27, 21 f.; epist. 2, 2, 208 f.; Ach. Tat. 5, 22, 2. Für weitere Stellen s. Costantini 2021, 190.

Winkel und will in Steinen, Vögeln und Bäumen verzauberte Menschen erkennen, als er unversehens Byrrhena trifft, eine Verwandte, die in Hypata lebt. Sie ist entzückt und lädt ihn spontan zu sich nach Hause ein.

Das luxuriös ausgestattete Atrium wird von einer Skulptur dominiert, die sogleich Lucius' Aufmerksamkeit fesselt. An seinem Blick, der begeistert jedes Detail des Kunstwerks abtastet, lässt er uns teilhaben, indem er uns das, was er sieht, minutiös schildert. Mit seiner Reaktion auf das reich dekorierte Atrium Byrrhenas entspricht er Lukians Forderung, dass ein gebildeter Mensch (*ὅστις μετὰ παιδείας*) einen solchen Anblick nicht stumm genieße, sondern eloquent darauf antworte<sup>2</sup>. Am Anfang des Romans *Daphnis und Chloe* gibt der Erzähler an, das Bild beim Nymphenhain habe in ihm den überwältigenden Drang (*πόθος*) geweckt<sup>3</sup>, die dargestellten Szenen nicht nur anschaulich zu beschreiben, sondern gar in Buchform zu giessen.

Die Ekphrasis ist ein stilbildendes Element des antiken Romans; die ausführliche Beschreibung eines Gegenstands dient nicht nur dazu, die Bildung und rhetorische Gewandtheit des Autors unter Beweis zu stellen, sondern hat häufig direkten Zusammenhang mit dem Narrativ, sei es, dass ein Bild die Erzählung inspiriert, sei es, dass es auf bevorstehende Ereignisse vorausweist. Damit erfüllt sie auch die Funktion einer Aktivierung der Leserin, die implizit aufgefordert wird, die Ekphrasis zu interpretieren<sup>4</sup>. Voraussetzung dafür, einer Artefaktekphrasis würdig zu sein, ist zumeist die herausragende Qualität des Kunstwerks<sup>5</sup>. Der Künstler wird wiederholt dafür gelobt, wie lebensecht ihm einzelne Elemente gelungen seien; insbesondere die Illusion von Bewegung wird hervorgehoben: *εἶπερ ἄν αὐτῶν γεγράφθαι καὶ τὰ κινήματα*, heisst es von den Eroten auf dem Europa-Gemälde bei Achilleus Tatios<sup>6</sup>.

2 Lukian. Oik. 2, vgl. *ibid.* 4: *Ἐμοὶ γοῦν δοκεῖ καὶ συνεξαίρεσθαι οἴκου πολυτελείᾳ ἢ τοῦ λέγοντος γνώμῃ καὶ πρὸς τοὺς λόγους ἐπεγείρεσθαι, καθάπερ τι καὶ ὑποβαλλούσης τῆς θέας*. Ein schönes Kunstwerk, schreibt Alain Billault, sei für den gebildeten Betrachter „comme un gant qui lui est jeté et qu'il se doit de relever sous peine de déchoir“ (Billault 1990, 158).

3 Longus prol. 2: *Πολλὰ ἄλλα καὶ πάντα ἐρωτικὰ ἰδόντα με καὶ θαυμάσαντα πόθος ἔσχεν ἀντιγράψαι τῆ γραφῆ.*

4 „In all these works we begin to see how a descriptive passage might be used to draw in its audience and ask of them an effort at interpretation“ (Bartsch 1989, 15).

5 Vgl. Longus prol. 1: *θέαμα εἶδον κάλλιστον ὧν εἶδον.*

6 „Du könntest sagen, sogar ihre Bewegungen seien gemalt worden“ (Ach. Tat. 1, 1, 13). In den Ekphrasisen der Darstellungen von Andromeda und Prometheus legt der Erzähler den Fokus auf die Emotionen, die einzelne Details, obschon gemalt, bei der Betrachterin auslösen. Das Gorgonenhaupt gruselt (*ἡ δὲ ἐστὶ*

Auch Lucius ergänzt seine Beschreibung mit einer Art Kommentar, wie wir, ständen wir mit ihm in Byrrhenas Atrium, die Skulptur wohl wahrnehmen. Wiederholt spricht er uns direkt an, wodurch der Eindruck entsteht, wir, die Leserinnen und Leser, sähen das Werk mit eigenen Augen. Und natürlich sehen wir tatsächlich Figuren, wenn auch nicht die, die Lucius sieht, sondern die, die vor unserem inneren Auge Form annehmen. Damit entsteht neben Lucius' erstem ein zweiter Blick auf das Kunstwerk, der seinen Ursprung im Text hat, aber darüber hinaus massgeblich von den individuellen Voraussetzungen wie intertextuellem Vorwissen und persönlichen Werten der lesenden Person beeinflusst wird. Gleichzeitig werden wir durch die wiederholten Apostrophen angeregt, über mögliche Entwicklungen der Erzählung zu mutmassen, auf die die Ekphrasis vorausweist.

Schon der erste Satz der Beschreibung enthält eine Vielzahl verschiedenartiger Informationen:

Ecce lapis Parius in Dianam factus tenet libratam totius loci medietatem, signum perfecte luculentum, veste reflatum, procurso vegetum, introeuntibus obvium et maiestate numinis venerabile<sup>7</sup>.

Als Erstes erfahren wir, dass die Statue aus parischem Marmor gefertigt ist, einem kostbaren und für Skulpturen idealen Material. Erst dann wird verraten, dass der Stein die Göttin Diana darstellt<sup>8</sup>. Obschon Lucius uns zu Beginn des Satzes darüber informiert, dass es sich bei dem Objekt um leblosen Marmor handelt, werden wir im Fortgang der Beschreibung dazu geführt, uns Diana in Bewegung vorzustellen. Mit forschem Schritt tritt sie uns entgegen, wobei ihr Kleid sich in einer unmerklichen Brise bauscht, und fordert Respekt vor ihrer göttlichen Macht ein. Lucius' Schilderung erfüllt dank ihrer *ἐνάργεια* die starre Statue in unserer Vorstellung mit Leben, was exakt der Funktion einer Ekphrasis entspricht, wie Theon sie fordert<sup>9</sup>. Dieses

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*φοβερὰ καὶ ἐν τοῖς χρώμασι*, 3, 7, 8), Prometheus' Pein dauert einen (*ἠλέησας ἄνως ἀλγοῦσαν τὴν γραφήν*, 3, 8, 5).

- 7 „Und dort in der genau abgewogenen Mitte des ganzen Raumes befindet sich, aus parischem Marmor gestaltet, Diana, ein vollendet prachtvolles Standbild; das Gewand gebauscht, lebendig im Schreiten, so stellt es sich den Eintretenden entgegen, verehrungswürdig durch die göttliche Majestät“ (Apul. met. 2, 4, 2, Übersetzung: Helm 1978).
- 8 Für Überlegungen, welche Statuentypen für die Dianagruppe Vorbild gewesen sein könnten, s. Taisne 2008, 185–187.
- 9 Theon Prog. 118, 6 (Spengel): *Ἐκφρασις ἐστὶ λόγος περιηγηματικὸς ἐναργῶς ὑπ' ὄψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον*. Vgl. dazu Panagiotidou 2022, 16: „As a quality of

Kunststück gelingt, weil Lucius' Worte unsere Fantasie ansteuern, wodurch vor unserem inneren Auge ein Bild entsteht, das es in der fiktiven Realität des Romans so gar nicht gibt<sup>10</sup>. Die Ekphrasis generiert also nicht nur einen zweiten Blick, sondern auch ein zweites Bild.

Das Paradoxon, dass vor unserem inneren Auge eine lebendige Göttin erscheint, obschon Lucius keinen Hehl daraus macht, dass es sich um eine Skulptur handelt, wird weiter ausgebaut, als sein Blick auf die Jagdhunde fällt, die sich um Diana scharen:

Canes utrimqueseCUS deae latera muniunt, qui canes et ipsi lapis erant;  
 hi<s> oculi minantur, aures rigent, nares hiant, ora saevium et sicunde de  
 proximo latratus ingruerit, eum putabis de faucibus lapidis exire, et in quo  
 summum specimen operae fabrilis egregius ille signifex prodidit, sublatis  
 canibus in pectus arduis pedes imi resistunt, currunt priores<sup>11</sup>.

Auch sie sind aus Stein (*et ipsi lapis erant*), doch ihre Augen blitzen, die Nasenlöcher wittern; sie reißen die Mäuler auf. Schläge in der Nachbarschaft ein Hund an, beteuert Lucius, wir glaubten, das Bellen komme aus

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ekphrasis, enargeia all but transforms listeners into viewers, and it is considered one of the most powerful tools of persuasion; the semblance of life and illusions spun by language captivate the audience, make them feel present at the events described, and ultimately emotionally involved in them“.

10 Vgl. Quint. inst. 6, 2, 29: *Quas φαντασίας Graeci vocant (...), per quas imagines rerum absentium ita repraesentantur animo, ut eas cernere oculis ac praesentes habere videamur, has quisquis bene conceperit, is erit in adfectibus potentissimus.* Vgl. ibid. 32: *Insequitur ἐνάργεια, quae a Cicerone inlustratio et evidentia nominatur, quae non tam dicere videtur quam ostendere, et adfectus non aliter, quam si rebus ipsis intersimus, sequentur.*

11 „Hunde flankieren die Göttin auf beiden Seiten, und diese Hunde waren ebenfalls aus Stein. Ihre Augen drohen, die Ohren sind gespitzt, die Nasenlöcher aufgesperrt, das Maul voller Wut, und wenn irgendwoher aus der Nähe ein Bellen dringen sollte, so möchte man glauben, es kommt aus diesen Rachen von Stein; und worin jener treffliche Bildhauer den höchsten Beweis seiner Darstellungskunst geliefert hat, die Hunde richten sich auf mit erhobener Brust, so dass nur die Hinterläufe unten aufstehen, die Vorderbeine laufen“ (Apul. met. 2, 4, 3, Übersetzung: Helm 1978). Heath 1992, 109 stellt plausible Überlegungen dazu an, weshalb die Hunde zu Diana zu gehören scheinen, obschon Actaeon im Mythos von seinen eigenen Hunden getötet wird, und schliesst: „It is also quite likely that the representation is in some sense symbolic. The dogs appear to be Diana's because they are acting (or about to act) as her agents of revenge“.

den steinernen Rachen (*de faucibus lapidis*)<sup>12</sup>. Nicht nur die wiederholte Erwähnung des Materials erinnert uns an die Künstlichkeit des Gegenstands, Lucius verweist zusätzlich auf den unbekanntem Bildhauer, der seine Kunstfertigkeit dadurch unter Beweis stellt, dass die Hinterläufe der Hunde fest im Marmor verankert sind, während ihre Vorderpfoten laufen. Gerade der Umstand, dass er unbelebtes Material so geformt hat, dass der Eindruck von Leben entsteht, verrät die aussergewöhnliche Begabung des Künstlers.

In Lucius' Schilderung wird die Suggestion von Bewegung, Klang und göttlicher Präsenz irritiert durch die nachdrückliche Betonung der Künstlichkeit: Dreimal verweist er auf das Material der Statue (*lapis*) und viermal darauf, dass sie von einem Künstler erschaffen wurde (*factus; signum*<sup>13</sup>; *opera fabrilis; signifex*)<sup>14</sup>. So baut er eine intensive Spannung zwischen tatsächlicher lebloser Materialität und vermeintlicher Lebendigkeit auf, die über das aus den Ekphraseis anderer antiker Romane gewohnte Mass hinausgeht<sup>15</sup>. Auch als er sich dem Hintergrund der Gruppe zuwendet, kontrastiert er Natur und Kunst:

Pone tergum deae saxum insurgit in speluncae modum muscis et herbis et foliis et virgulis et alicubi pampinis et arbusculis alibi de lapide florentibus. (...) sub extrema saxi margine poma et uvae faberrime politae dependent, quas ars aemula naturae veritati similes explicuit. putes ad cibum inde quaedam, cum mustulentus autumnus maturum colorem adflaverit, posse decerpi (...) <sup>16</sup>.

12 Vgl. Ach. Tat. 1, 7, wo aus den geöffneten Lippen von Europas Freundinnen gleich ein Schrei zu ertönen scheint: *μικρὸν ὑποκεχηνηῦται τὸ στόμα, ὥσπερ ἀφήσειν ὑπὸ φόβου μέλλουσαι καὶ βοῆν*.

13 *Signum* geht möglicherweise auf *secare*, „schneiden“, zurück und würde damit auf ein Handwerk verweisen. Vgl. de Vaan 2008, s. v. 563.

14 Wiederholte Erwähnung des Künstlers und seines Handwerks finden wir auch bei Achilleus Tatios: *ὁ τεχνίτης; ὁ γραφεύς; ὁ ζωγράφος, ἐγγέγραπτο; γεγράφθαι* (1, 4; 1, 5; 1, 6; 1, 7; 1, 9; 1, 12; 1, 13).

15 Winkler 1985, 168 deutet diese Spannung als Betonung von Einheit im Angesicht narrativer Fliehkräfte: „Aptly enough this very solid model of stability, of narrative that does not move, is described as appearing volatile: it is a triumph of unity, we might say, to emerge against the centrifugal forces of disunity“.

16 „Hinten im Rücken der Göttin erhebt sich ein Fels nach Art einer Grotte mit Moos, Kraut, Blättern, Zweigen und an einer Stelle mit Weinranken, an anderer mit blühenden Bäumchen aus Stein. (...) Am äussersten Rand des Felsens hängen, geschickt herausgemeisselt, Äpfel und Trauben herab, welche die der Natur naheifernde Kunst wahrheitsgetreu gestaltet hat. Man könnte meinen, es liesse sich davon etwas zum Essen abpflücken, sobald der mostreiche Herbst ihnen mit

Im Rücken der Göttin wölbt sich der Stein zur Grotte, dicht bewachsen von Pflanzen und kleinen Bäumen, an denen Blumen blühen. Obwohl Lucius keinen Zweifel daran lässt, dass all das aus Stein besteht, wäre der Leser versucht, die Weintrauben zu pflücken, sobald sie im Herbst reif würden (*putes posse decerpi*).

Die Göttin, ihre Hunde, die Grotte – sie werden uns als Oxymora präsentiert. Die Statue scheint zu schreiten, mit ihrem marmornen Gewand spielt der Wind<sup>17</sup>; die leblosen Hunde könnten jederzeit bellen; der Fels blüht, die steinernen Früchte wecken Appetit. All diese Aspekte hat der Bildhauer täuschend echt geformt (*veritati similes*); seine Kunst wetteifert mit der Natur: *ars aemula naturae*.

## 2. *Ars aemula naturae*: Irritationen

Das Talent des Bildhauers besteht nicht darin, besonders innovativ zu sein, sondern die Natur derart präzise zu imitieren, dass die Kunst kaum mehr als solche erkennbar ist; je mehr sie der Natur ähnelt, desto besser ist sie gelungen. Kunst und Natur (*νόμος καὶ φύσις*) seien nicht zwei völlig verschiedene Phänomene, schreibt Philostratos, sondern eng miteinander verwandt, glichen sich und durchdrängen einander<sup>18</sup>. Wenn er ausführt, dass ja auch die Natur die Kunst nachahme, indem sie Höhlen bilde, die Häusern ähnelten, oder Steinformationen, die aussähen wie Götterstatuen, so sagt er implizit, dass wir nicht nur mit unserer Kunst die Natur zu imitieren trachten, sondern auch in der Natur menschliche Kunst erkennen wollen<sup>19</sup>. Auf die Ekphrasis übertragen bedeutet diese Reziprozität, dass nicht nur das Leben sich in der Kunst abbildet, sondern die Kunst auch eine belastbare Aussage über das Leben macht und dass, um das Prinzip eine Ebene höher zu heben, sich unser reales Erleben in der Fiktion spiegelt und umgekehrt.

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seinem Hauch die Farbe der Reife verliehen hat (...)“ (Apul. met. 2, 4, 4f., Übersetzung: Helm 1978).

17 Vgl. Ach. Tat. 1, 12, wo der Wind mit Europas Schleier zu spielen scheint: *ὁ δὲ κόλπος τοῦ πέπλου πάντοθεν ἐτέτατο κυρτούμενος· καὶ ἦν οὗτος ἄνεμος τοῦ ζωγράφου*.

18 *ἐμοὶ δὲ νόμος καὶ φύσις οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἐναντίω φαίνεσθον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ξυγγενεστάτω καὶ ὁμοίω καὶ διήκοντε ἀλλήλοιν*· (Philostr. dial. 2).

19 *τὴν φύσιν δὲ ὁμοιοῦσθαι πολλαχοῦ τοῖς τοῦ νόμου εἶδεσι, χωρία τε γὰρ ὄχυροῦν τείχεσιν ἀσφαλεστέροις τῶν ποιηθέντων ἄντρα τε κισσηρεφῆ κατανοιγνύναι ἠδὲ οἴκων καὶ που καὶ ἄγαλμα διδόναι πέτρας συμφυῆς σατυρικόν τι ἢ Πανὶ ὅμοιον (...)*· (Philostr. dial. 2).



Indem Lucius so nachdrücklich auf das Verhältnis von Kunst und Natur verweist, evoziert er die berühmteste Vorlage für die der Statuengruppe zugrundeliegende Szene, das dritte Buch von Ovids *Metamorphosen*:

Vallis erat piceis et acuta densa cupressu, / nomine Gargaphie, succinctae  
sacra Dianae, / cuius in extremo antrum nemorale recessu / arte labo-  
raturum nulla: simulaverat artem / ingenio natura suo; nam pumice vivo / et  
levibus tofis nativum duxerat arcum<sup>20</sup>.

Ovid durchwirkt den Text ebenfalls mit Oxymora: Die Grotte ist gearbeitet – doch da war kein Künstler. Die Natur selbst ist Urheberin des Werks; sie wird zum handelnden Subjekt, das absichtsvoll die menschliche Kunst nachahmt<sup>21</sup>. Ovid attestiert ihr dabei *ingenium*, das in seiner Bedeutung als „Begabung“ gemeinhin Menschen vorbehalten ist<sup>22</sup>. Lebender Stein wölbt sich kunstvoll zum natürlichen Bogen.

Lucius erinnert uns an diesen Subtext und stellt ihn gleichzeitig auf den Kopf: In Byrrhenas Atrium finden wir das Gegenteil von Ovids Schilderung; hier gibt sich die Kunst den Anschein von Natur<sup>23</sup>. Beiden Spielarten ist gemeinsam, dass sie – ganz im Sinne des Philostratos – vermeintlich klare Grenzen überschreiten. Doch während Ovid Abstand zu den Lesenden wahrt, verunsichert Lucius uns gezielt, sodass wir uns gezwungen sehen, dem Bild, das unsere Imagination zeichnet, zu misstrauen: Bewegt sich Diana nun – oder doch nicht? Es ist unmöglich, uns ein Bild dieses Phänomens zu machen, das frei wäre von diesen Ambiguitäten.

20 „Dort war ein Tal, der geschürzten Diana heilig, mit Kiefern / dicht bewachsen und spitzen Zypressen; Gargaphië hiess es. / Mitten im Wald liegt hier eine Grotte im hintersten Winkel, / nicht ein Werk der Kunst. Doch vorgetäuscht hatte ein Kunstwerk / durch ihr Genie die Natur, denn einen gewachsenen Bogen / hatte mit lebendem Bimsstein und leichtem Tuff sie gezogen“ (Ov. met. 3, 155–160, Übersetzung: Holzberg 2017).

21 Hinds 2002, 137: „Such interplay as this between nature and art is not unique to Ovid; but it is perhaps especially marked in a poem which so frequently associates the work of the cosmic demiurge with that of poets (including the poet of the *Met.* himself), artists and other image-makers“.

22 Die Bedeutung „angeborene Art“, die durchaus auf Bestandteile der Natur bezogen wird (z. B. Äcker; Verg. georg. 2, 177), ergibt hier keinen Sinn; sonst wäre die gesamte Natur menschlicher Kunst ähnlich, und die Grotte nichts Besonderes.

23 Zum Verhältnis von Natur und Kunst vgl. Apul. apol. 14, 3: *Aut quid sibi statuae et imagines variis artibus effigiatae volunt? nisi forte quod artificio elaboratum laudabile habetur, hoc natura oblatum culpabile iudicandum est, cum sit in ea vel magis miranda et facilitas et similitudo.*

Die Formulierung *ars aemula naturae* verweist auf eine weitere Metamorphose, in deren Zentrum die Unschärfe von Kunst und Natur steht. Dem Bildhauer Pygmalion gelingt eine Statue, die so perfekt eine echte Frau nachahmt, dass er sich in sie verliebt, ja sie ist so lebensecht, dass er – obschon er sie mit seinen eigenen Händen geformt hat – bald zweifelt, ob sie nicht doch atmet und seine Berührungen spürt. Sähe der Leser sie, behauptet Ovid, würde auch er an ihrer Künstlichkeit zweifeln:

Virginis est verae facies, quam vivere credas  
et, si non obstat reverentia, velle moveri:  
ars adeo latet arte sua<sup>24</sup>.

Hier werden die Lesenden ebenfalls direkt angesprochen und aufgefordert, Pygmalions Verwirrung nachzuempfinden. Wer sich sträubt und hochmütig auf der scharfen Trennung zwischen Kunst und Natur, Erschaffenem und Entstandenem beharrt, wird alsbald eines Besseren belehrt, wenn die Statue zum Leben erwacht, wenn die Kunst zur Natur wird.

Mit diesem Mythos im Hinterkopf fühlen wir uns vor Lucius' Täuschungsmanövern gefeit: Wir wissen, dass Kunst tatsächlich in Natur übergehen kann, und wir lassen uns nicht in die Falle locken. Wir sehen davon ab, hybridisch den Protagonisten zu belächeln, der sich von einem herausragenden Kunstwerk derart beeindrucken lässt. Wir haben von Ovid gelernt und wissen, dass das geschehen kann, ja muss! Also wappnen wir uns für den Moment, in dem Diana vom Sockel steigt und die Hunde, aus den marmornen Fesseln befreit, losspringen.

Doch nichts dergleichen geschieht. Die Statue bleibt unbewegt, stattdessen schickt Byrrhena ihre Bediensteten weg und nimmt Lucius ins Gebet. Die Frau seines Gastfreundes, Pamphile, sei eine gefährliche Zauberin und stets auf der Suche nach hübschen jungen Männern. Die Objekte ihrer Begierde mache sie mit Magie gefügig, und wer sich widersetze oder ihr lästig werde, verwandle sie in Tiere oder Steine; manche habe sie umgebracht. Lucius müsse sich vor ihr in Acht nehmen, am besten gleich ausziehen, mahnt Byrrhena, denn er entspreche genau Pamphiles Beuteschema.

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24 „Sie sieht wahrhaft aus wie ein Mädchen; du könntest glauben, sie lebt und will sich bewegen und / nur die Sittsamkeit steht ihr im Wege: / So verbirgt durch die eigene Kunst sich die Kunst“ (Ov. met. 10, 250–252, Übersetzung: Holzberg 2017; leicht angepasst).

Diese Warnung könnte ihre Wirkung nicht deutlicher verfehlen: Lucius ist nachgerade begeistert von der Aussicht, Zauberei zu erleben – und sei es am eigenen Leib:

At ego curiosus alioquin, ut primum artis magicae semper optatum nomen audivi, tantum a cautela Pamphiles afui, ut etiam ultro gestirem tali magisterio me volens ampla cum mercede tradere et prorsus in ipsum barat<h>rum saltu concito praecipitare<sup>25</sup>.

Als Grund für diesen von ihm selbst diagnostizierten Leichtsinn gibt Lucius seine angeborene Neugier (*ego curiosus*) an, zu der er sich bereits zu einem früheren Zeitpunkt freimütig bekannte<sup>26</sup>.

### 3. *Curiosus optutus*: Actaeon, Lucius und Narcissus

Diese Selbstbezeichnung führt uns noch einmal zurück zur Statue, bei der wir vorhin ein Detail ausser Acht liessen. Ein Mitglied der Gruppe übersehen wir, und das war der Figur ganz recht, sucht sie sich doch selbst zu verbergen:

Inter medias frondes lapidis Actaeon simulacrum curiosum obtutum in deam <deor>sum proiectus iam in cervum ferinus et in saxo simul et in fonte loturam Dianam opperiens visitur<sup>27</sup>.

Zusätzlich zu Lucius' direktem und unserem indirekten Blick auf das Kunstwerk findet ein dritter statt: Im Gebüsch versteckt späht Actaeon durch die Blätter; er lauert darauf, dass die Göttin sich fürs Bad entkleidet. Diana sieht ihn noch nicht, trotzdem ist er entdeckt: Das passive Prädikat *visitur*, „er wird

25 „Aber ich, schon sonst neugierig, brauchte nur das immer ersehnte Wort ‚Zauberkunst‘ zu hören, und sofort war ich weit entfernt von jeder Vorsicht gegenüber Pamphile, im Gegenteil, ich sehnte mich danach, mich freiwillig einer solchen Lehre um teuren Preis zu überliefern und rasenden Sprunges ganz und gar kopfüber unmittelbar in den Abgrund zu stürzen“ (Apul. met. 2, 6, 1. Übersetzung: Helm 1978).

26 Apul. met. 1, 2, 2; 2, 1, 1.

27 „Mitten zwischen dem steinernen Laub sieht man Aktäon als Statue zugleich im Stein und im Quell, wie er neugierigen Blicks in der Richtung auf die Göttin sich vorbeugt und, schon zum Tier in Hirschgestalt sich wandelnd, Diana belauert, die baden will“ (Apul. met. 2, 4, 6. Übersetzung: Helm 1978).

gesehen“, betont die Gleichzeitigkeit der Blicke: Während Actaeon vermeintlich unsichtbar beobachtet, wird er selbst gesehen. Nicht von Diana, sondern von Lucius und damit von uns<sup>28</sup>. Bei Ovid verschiebt sich im Moment, da Actaeon die Lichtung betritt, ebenfalls die Perspektive: Wir werden nicht Zeuge seines Blicks, sondern erleben mit, wie die Nymphen ihn erblicken:

Qui simul intravit rorantia fontibus antra, / sicut erant, viso nudae sua  
pectora nymphae / percussere viro subitisque ululatus omne / inplevere  
nemus (...)<sup>29</sup>.

Nicht mehr Actaeon ist das Subjekt; er wird zum Objekt, dem der Blick der Nymphen widerfährt (*viso viro*). Dieses Ausgeliefertsein nimmt seine Bestrafung und Tötung vorweg. Im *Goldenen Esel* aber wird die zeitliche Abfolge gestaucht: Actaeon verwandelt sich zu früh; Diana ist noch gar nicht entkleidet und hat den unliebsamen Zeugen noch nicht entdeckt<sup>30</sup>. Lucius ist es, der ihn sieht, und mit ihm wir. Wie deutet Lucius, wie deuten wir Actaeons Anwesenheit? Welche Verantwortung am Geschehen übertragen wir ihm?

Ohne zu zögern, attestiert Lucius Actaeon Neugier (*curiosum optutum*) und weicht damit entscheidend von Ovid ab<sup>31</sup>. Dieser zeichnet Actaeon zwar

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28 Anders van Mal-Maeder 2001, 113: „C'est le voyeur qui, avant même d'assouvir son désir, est vu: par Diane, par Lucius et par le lecteur/spectateur auquel ce groupe sculptural est décrit“. Ich sehe keinen Hinweis darauf, dass Diana Actaeon bereits entdeckt hat, ist sie doch noch bekleidet und dem Eingang des Atriums zugewandt.

29 „Kaum hatte der die vom Quell durchrieselte Grotte betreten, / schlugen die Nymphen, nackt, wie sie waren, beim Anblick des Mannes / sich an die Brüste, erfüllten mit plötzlichem Heulen den ganzen / Wald (...)“ (Ov. met. 3, 177–180, Übersetzung: Holzberg 2017).

30 Slater 1998, 36 f. erkennt einen weiteren Blick, den von Diana auf Lucius bzw. auf uns: „So too, I would argue, Diana's gaze creates its object, creates that missing and climactic scene in the narrative – the destruction of Actaeon. And we, insofar as we identify with the first-person narrator Lucius, are on the menu. (...) Viewed from the vantage point of the Isis figures on their pillars, looking down, Lucius becomes part of the sculptural composition. Just as Isis is both Diana and these winged figures, so Lucius is both Actaeon and himself, incorporated into the narrative at its climactic moment“.

31 Wir wissen nicht, worin Lucius Actaeons Neugier zu erkennen glaubt. Ist es sein Gesichtsausdruck? Seine Körperhaltung? Aristoteles sagt, dass das, was einem Lebewesen ein seelisches Affekten widerfähre, an seinem Körper sichtbar werde und umgekehrt: *Δοκεῖ δέ μοι ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα συμπαθεῖν ἀλλήλοις· καὶ ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς ἕξις ἀλλοιουμένη συναλλοιοῖ τὴν τοῦ σώματος μορφήν, πάλιν τε ἡ τοῦ σώματος μορφή ἀλλοιουμένη συναλλοιοῖ τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἕξιν* (Aristot. phgn. 808b).

als Jäger, der über seine Umgebung verfügen zu können meint, entsprechend gedankenlos heiliges Gebiet betritt und damit Hybris begeht, doch Neugier wirft er ihm nicht vor. Absichtslos stolpert Actaeon auf die Lichtung und wird im selben Moment von den Nymphen ertappt. Lucius dagegen präsentiert ihn uns als Voyeur, der hofft, einen Blick auf den verbotenen Körper zu erhaschen. Dieser Umstand hat schwerwiegende Konsequenzen für die Beurteilung von Actaeons Schuld oder Unschuld. In Ovids Version stellt sich der Erzähler zwar auf den Standpunkt, dass ein *error* der Grund für Actaeons Verfehlung war, doch die Schuldfrage wird damit nicht geklärt; zum Schluss der Episode streiten die Götter und Göttinnen darüber, ob die Strafe gerechtfertigt gewesen sei oder nicht. Für Lucius dagegen begeht Actaeon in voller Absicht einen unverzeihlichen Frevel. Dabei wird er von den Betrachtern der ersten (Lucius) und zweiten (wir) Ebene beobachtet, und folgerichtig ist es nicht der Blick der Göttin, der die Metamorphose anstößt, sondern der Blick des sterblichen Betrachters. Wir, die auf Lucius' Wahrnehmung angewiesen sind, werden dabei zu Komplizen.

Jede kritische Leserin, die ihren Ovid gelesen hat, wird hier jedoch stutzig und sträubt sich gegen die Verstrickung in Actaeons Verurteilung. Die Situation ist doch nicht so eindeutig, wie Lucius sie darstellt<sup>32</sup>! Wie würden wir Actaeons Blick interpretieren, ständen wir vor der Statuengruppe? Würden wir in seinen Augen ebenfalls einen *curiosus optutus* erkennen? Nachdem er uns bereits mehrmals irritiert hat, beginnen wir vollends an der Verlässlichkeit des Erzählers zu zweifeln, genauer: Wir begreifen, dass er uns bloss ein subjektives Abbild dessen, was er sieht, vermittelt, vermitteln kann. Dieses Abbild enthält Unsicherheiten und Leerstellen, zu denen Stellung zu nehmen

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Stavru 2019, 146 f. verweist jedoch auf die mangelnde Exaktheit einer solchen Interpretation: „(...) physiognomy cannot yield apodeictic results, but only probable diagnoses which are sometimes fitting, other times not“.

32 van Mal-Maeder 2001, 112: „La mention du regard curieux d'Actéon met en relief cette différence dans l'interprétation du mythe et a pour effet d'éveiller l'attention du lecteur sur la signification de l'*ekphrasis* dans le récit (...)“. Allgemein zu differierenden Interpretationen von Ekphraseis im antiken Roman vgl. Bartsch 1989, 39: „Because the readers are often operating from a position of superior knowledge, they may at times understand a descriptive passage in the same way as its viewers and on other occasions see that these viewers are clearly mistaken. Yet even this vantage point, in the absence of an official interpretation, is not infallible – far from it“. Diese Ambiguität ist jeder Intervisualität inhärent, wie Capra – Floridi 2023, 6 festhalten: „Depending on the audience, an image – or, at a more general level, an archetypal image, i. e. the notion the Greeks referred to as schema – will generate a multifaceted and ever-shifting meaning“.

wir angehalten sind<sup>33</sup>. Damit wird klar, dass eine Ekphrasis nicht einfach ein Abbild der fiktiven Realität ist, sondern eine Transkription darstellt, die bereits Interpretation leistet. Sie dient keineswegs einem mechanischen Veranschaulichen, sondern bekennt sich zum „Spannungsverhältnis zwischen mimetischem Beschreiben und gleichzeitiger Subversion von Mimesis-Doktrin und Anschaulichkeitsrhetorik“<sup>34</sup>.

Lucius, der sich uns in den vorangehenden Büchern wiederholt als neugierig vorgestellt hat, scheint in Actaeon eine verwandte Seele zu erkennen, und gerade das Wiedererkennen ist ja der Schlüssel zur Beurteilung des Verhältnisses von Kunst und Natur: Wir bewundern ein Werk, weil wir darin ein real existierendes Lebewesen wiedererkennen; eine Steininformation fasziniert uns aufgrund ihrer Ähnlichkeit mit etwas von Menschen Erschaffenem<sup>35</sup>. Ehe Lucius uns auf Actaeon hinweist, beschreibt er, wie einzelne Elemente der Skulptur sich im Wasser spiegeln, das durch das Kunstwerk fließt, das offenbar Teil eines Brunnens ist. Mit ihm zusammen beugen wir uns mental vor und blicken in diesen flüssigen Spiegel. Darin entdecken wir neben den steinernen Früchten auch Actaeon (*et in saxo simul et in fonte*). Die berühmteste Figur, die sich im Wasser spiegelt, ist Narcissus, der wie Actaeon zu Ovids Thebenzyklus gehört. *Si se non noverit*, „wenn er sich nicht erkenne“, prophezeit Tiresias, werde der Junge ein hohes Alter erreichen<sup>36</sup>. Sich zu erkennen ist das alles entscheidende Moment in Narcissus' Schicksal. Als er sieht, dass das Spiegelbild er selbst ist, verlässt ihn der letzte Lebensmut. Man könnte auch argumentieren, dass die Selbsterkenntnis ihm das Leben gerettet hätte, hätte sie in dem Augenblick eingesetzt, da er sich im Wasser gespiegelt sah.

33 Vgl. Slater 1998, 44: „Viewing the sculpture, and more broadly the novel, from this standpoint allows us the possibility of identifying neither with Lucius' male voyeuristic gaze nor with the ravenously controlling gaze of Diana and ultimately Isis: rather, we can stand outside their interaction and evaluate it for ourselves“.

34 Rippl 2019, 31. Die Vorstellung, das Phänomen der Ekphrasis sei erst in der Moderne problematisiert worden, gilt es daher zu revidieren; vgl. *ibid.* 30f.: „Während Ekphrasen, wie bereits erläutert, in früheren Jahrhunderten noch weitgehend im Dienst der ‚Anschaulichkeit‘ (*enargeia*) standen und bis weit ins 20. Jahrhundert anhand von Mimesis-Modellen und Treue zum gemalten Original beurteilt wurden, setzte doch bereits in der Moderne eine Problematisierung der von antiken Rhetoren gepriesenen Beschreibungskunst und der Ekphrasis als produktive Techniken der Veranschaulichung und des ‚Vor-Augen-Stellens‘ (*evidentia; hypotyposis*) ein“.

35 Merlier-Espenel 2001, 136: „L'effet du réel dans l'art a partie liée avec le plaisir de la reconnaissance“.

36 Ov. met. 3, 348.

Lucius blickt also in den flüssigen Spiegel und sieht nicht sich, wie zu erwarten wäre, sondern Actaeon. In dessen Augen erkennt er die Neugier, die auch die seine ist, doch die Erfüllung des Gebots der Selbsterkenntnis verpasst er trotzdem. Obschon die Bestrafung des Jägers in der Skulptur angelegt ist, versteht er die Prophezeiung nicht, unterschätzt er die Gefahr, die seine eigene Neugier für ihn birgt<sup>37</sup>. Wie Narcissus begreift er nicht, dass er im Wasser tatsächlich sich selbst sieht.

Und auch die Leserin weiss noch nicht, dass Lucius Pamphile bei der Metamorphose in einen Uhu beobachten, sich später im Döschchen irren und in einen Esel verwandeln wird. Dem Erzähler wird es eben doch gelingen, uns zu überraschen: In Erinnerung an Pygmalion hatten wir die Erweckung von unbelebter Materie erwartet und waren scheinbar enttäuscht worden, nur um im Verlauf des Romans zu begreifen, dass sehr wohl eine Statue lebendig wurde – wenn auch nicht auf die Art und Weise, die uns vorschwebte. Lucius ist es, der unfreiwillig Actaeon zum Leben erweckte; er selbst wurde zum unseligen Jäger, der Verbotenes beobachtete und sich in einen Vierfüsser verwandelte. Dass es sich im Mythos um einen Hirsch und im Roman um einen Esel handelt, stört dabei nicht. Die Strafe dafür, dass Actaeon Diana erblickt, besteht, wir wissen es, grundsätzlich in der Verwandlung vom Jäger in seine Beute. In der Folge wird er von seinen eigenen Hunden zerrissen, weil diese darauf trainiert sind, Hirsche zu jagen. Er fällt damit dem System zum Opfer, das er bislang dominierte. Dasselbe Prinzip zeigt sich bei Lucius, dem reichen und sorglosen Aristokraten, der sich in das Tier verwandelt, das in der Hierarchie des menschlich-tierischen Zusammenlebens auf der untersten Stufe rangiert und entsprechend grausame Behandlung erfährt<sup>38</sup>.

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37 Merlier-Espenel 2001, 147: „Le miroir de la source a donc une fonction hydro-mantique, et on peut sans doute rapprocher cette utilisation divinatoire de l'adjectif *rimabundus*, dérivé de *rimari*, qui appartient à la langue augurale et signifie fendre le foie d'une victime afin d'en interpréter les signes“. Paschalis 2002, 139 argumentiert mit Verweis auf Winklers Terminologie, dass zwei Lucii involviert seien: Der *auctor* beschreibt die Statuengruppe zuverlässig, doch der *actor* versteht die Warnung trotzdem nicht: „The enormous pleasure Lucius-actor takes in looking at it means that he does not absorb the warning; but he cannot be held responsible and accused of 'blindness' on account of the brevity of the description or of focusing on 'detail', because this is the domain of the other Lucius, the retrospective narrator“.

38 Sassi 2024, 30–32. Für die Parallele, dass auch dem Esel Lucius wiederholt die Zerfleischung durch Hunde oder Menschen droht, s. Heath 1992, 110–113. Selbst Palaephatos' Interpretation des Actaeon-Mythos könnte eine Parallele darstellen: Im Bemühen, die unwahrscheinlichen Elemente des Mythos rational zu erklären, deutet er Actaeon als Hundennarren (*φιλοκύνητος*), der sein ganzes

„*Tua sunt cuncta, quae vides*“<sup>39</sup>, sagt Byrrhena zu ihrem Gast, als er das Kunstwerk bewundert, und bei fortschreitender Lektüre dämmert uns der Doppelsinn dieser Aussage. Die Parallele zu Actaeon scheint der unumstößliche Beleg dafür, dass Lucius’ Neugier an seinem Unglück schuld ist, wie der Isispriester im Buch 11 apodiktisch verkündet<sup>40</sup>. Versündigte er sich nicht an Isis, der Hüterin der wahren Weisheit, als er sich um Einblick in die Zauberei, eine pervertierte Form des Wissens von der Welt, bemühte<sup>41</sup>? Byrrhena, Prophetin wider Willen, scheint darauf hinzuweisen, wenn sie Lucius bei Diana beschwört, ihre Warnung ernst zu nehmen<sup>42</sup>. Isis ist die Allgöttin; die griechischen Göttinnen, unter ihnen Diana, sind Aspekte von ihr, wie Lucius

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Hab und Gut in das Rudel investierte und darüber verarmte, sodass die Leute sagten, seine Hunde hätten ihn gefressen (*δελαιος Ακταίων, ὃς ὑπὸ τῶν ιδίω κυνῶν κατεβρώθη*, Palaeph. 6). Abstrahiert stehen die Hunde für ein Interesse, um dessen Willen man die eigentlich wichtigen Dinge sträflich vernachlässigt. Auf Lucius übertragen ist das seine Gier, Zauberei zu sehen, für die er seine Sicherheit aufs Spiel setzt. Van der Paardt 2004, 29 notiert weitere Parallelen zwischen den verwandelten Protagonisten: Beide behalten ihren menschlichen Geist, beide versuchen vergeblich, zu kommunizieren, beide nennen Tiere, die sie attackieren, *famuli*.

- 39 „Betrachte alles, was du siehst, als dein eigen“ (Apul. met. 2, 5, 1, Übersetzung: Helm 1978).
- 40 (...) *lubrico virentis aetatulae ad serviles delapsus voluptates curiositatis inprospere sinistrum praemium reportasti*. – „(...) infolge der Haltlosigkeit deines jugendlichen Alters bist du in sklavische Lüste verfallen und hast für deine unglückselige Neugier einen traurigen Lohn erhalten“ (Apul. met. 11, 15, 1, Übersetzung: Helm 1978).
- 41 Schlam 1992, 50: „The witches are said to exert control over the gods, the world of nature, and the realm of the dead – a range of powers which in book 11 defines the governance of Isis. A comparison between the witches and the goddess is thus developed within the narrative. Yet the purposes for which the goddess and the witches exercise their powers are antithetical. (...) The magic of which Lucius is in pursuit is thus marked as a debased form of what is wondrous and divine“. Vgl. Sassi 2024, 379 f.
- 42 *Quibus dispulsis omnibus: „Per hanc“, inquit, „deam, o Luci carissime, ut anxie tibi metuo et ut pote pignori meo longe provisum cupio, cave tibi, sed cave fortiter a malis artibus et facinorosis illecebris Pamphiles illius, quae cum Milone isto, quem dicis hospitem, nupta est“* – „Wie alle fort sind, sagt sie: ‚Bei dieser Göttin, mein liebster Lucius, so wahr ich um dich in tausend Ängsten bin und für dich als mein eigen Liebespfand weit im voraus sorgen möchte, hüte dich, aber gründlich hüte dich vor den bösen Künsten und den ruchlosen Verlockungen der Pamphile, die mit dem Milo, den du deinen Gastfreund nennst, verheiratet ist“ (Apul. met. 2, 5, 2, Übersetzung: Helm 1978).



anlässlich ihrer Epiphanie in Cenchreae erkennt<sup>43</sup>. In dieser Lesart ist Isis Diana, die Lucius-Actaeon für seine Neugier bestraft.

Erinnern wir uns jedoch an die Irritation, die sich aus dem Vergleich von Lucius' Lesart des Mythos und Ovids Vorlage ergab, so erscheint dieser Schluss vorschnell. Die Beschreibung der Statuengruppe, die gleichsam als Miniatur, als *mise en abyme* des Romans gelten kann<sup>44</sup>, führt uns eindrücklich vor Augen, dass die Aussagen der Figuren subjektiv sind, dass ihre Interpretationen hinterfragt werden müssen und dass wir Lesenden dazu aufgerufen sind, eigenständige Positionen zu ihren Aussagen zu entwickeln. Dies ist neben den offensichtlichen Bezügen zwischen Actaeon und Lucius die zweite, subtilere und zugleich folgenreichere Botschaft der Ekphrasis. Das Postulat von Actaeons *curiosus optutus* ist eine bewusste Provokation unseres intertextuellen Wissens, das uns aus der Bequemlichkeit rüttelt, die Behauptungen der Romanfiguren unkritisch zu übernehmen. Es führt uns vor Augen, dass, obwohl unser Blick auf das Narrativ vom Erzähler beeinflusst ist, wir dennoch in der Lage sind, eine selbstverantwortliche Haltung zu Actaeons und Lucius' Schuld oder Unschuld zu entwickeln: Hat der Esel das ihm widerfahrende Leid wirklich selbst zu verantworten, ist er ein indirektes Opfer der Fortuna und direktes Opfer menschlicher Grausamkeit – oder muss sein Fall noch differenzierter betrachtet werden?

Und das Kaleidoskop öffnet sich noch weiter: Was, wenn es nicht bei drei Blicken bleibt, sondern ein vierter hinzukommt, nämlich der, der auf uns Lesende fällt? Begehen wir, schliessen wir aus der Ekphrasis nur auf die romaninterne Handlung, nicht denselben Fehler wie Lucius und verpassen die Chance zur Selbsterkenntnis? Was, wenn die Ekphrasis der Dianagruppe nicht nur eine Vorwegnahme der Romanhandlung, sondern auch unseres eigenen Verhaltens ist? Falls wir Actaeons und Lucius' Neugier geißeln – machen wir uns nicht der Heuchelei schuldig? Schliesslich sind auch wir von Neugier getrieben, wenn wir den *Goldenen Esel* aufschlagen, nach den ersten Seiten weiterlesen, gespannt verfolgen, wie Lucius Photis umgarnt, Pamphile beobachtet, sich als Esel wiederfindet, und atemlos zusehen, wie dieser wiederholt um Haaresbreite dem Tod entgeht<sup>45</sup>.

43 Apul. met. 11, 2, 2; 11, 5, 2. Für einen archäologischen Hinweis darauf, dass auch der Actaeon-Mythos mit Isis in Beziehung gesetzt worden sein mag, s. Heath 1992, 108.

44 van Mal – Maeder 2001, 99: „Pour qui veut voir dans cette *exphrasis* une mise en abyme proleptique de la métamorphose de Lucius et un avertissement contre les dangers de sa curiosité, *signum* possède aussi le sens de ‚signal‘, ‚présage‘“.

45 Zum *Goldenen Esel* als performativer Entlarvung der Lesenden s. Sassi 2024, 50–55.

Die Statuengruppe der Diana lehrt uns, dass stets ein weiterer Beobachter in den Kulissen lauert: Actaeon beobachtet Diana, Lucius beobachtet Actaeon, wir beobachten Lucius – werden auch wir beobachtet, während wir lesen, und sei es von unserem eigenen philosophischen Gewissen? Lucius lädt uns ein, uns selbst über das Wasser zu beugen (*si fontem ... pronus aspexeris*)<sup>46</sup>, und wenn wir da nur Actaeon und nicht uns selbst sehen, fallen auch wir Narcissus' Irrtum zum Opfer, denn wir, im Lesen begriffen, sind mitgemeint: Aus platonischer Sicht stellt der Roman etwas Verbotenes dar, da er uns vom Streben nach dem wahren Guten und Schönen ablenkt<sup>47</sup>. Oder weist er uns durch seine Provokationen gerade darauf hin, ist er weniger unterhaltsame Lektüre als philosophische Belehrung<sup>48</sup>? Auf diese Frage eine befriedigende Antwort zu formulieren und sich dabei selbst zu erkennen, dies ist die implizite Einladung des *Goldenen Esels* an jede Leserin, jeden Leser.

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46 *Apul. met.* 3, 4, 5.

47 Hunter 2009, 54: „Curiositas or πολυπραγμοσύνη is not just a narrative ‚driver‘ in novels: novels are the literary manifestation of these ‚vices“.

48 Ausführlich dazu Tilg 2014, 98–105.

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# Intervisualità e intertestualità nella poesia astronomica latina di età augustea

**Abstract** The article aims to test the concept of intervisuality through the analysis of several case studies drawn from a delimited corpus of texts chronologically close. The introduction provides a historical contextualization of the issue, with an analysis of ancient evidence on the relationship between text and image in the Latin reception of Aratus' *Phaenomena*. The second part is dedicated to textual analysis. The first passage, taken from the first book of Manilius' *Astronomica*, illustrates the significance of ἐνάργεια as a textual mechanism for representing visual data. The other two passages, taken from Ovid's *Fasti* and Germanicus' *Phaenomena*, can demonstrate how the mechanism of intervisuality can convey complex literary instances. Lastly, the article demonstrates how the authors of astronomical poetry from the late Augustan Age are aware of the visual potentials provided to them by the tradition of the *Phaenomena* and exploit these potentials in a tight dialogue with their models.

## 1. Introduzione

I primi 732 versi dei *Phaenomena* (la sezione propriamente astronomica del poema di Arato)<sup>1</sup>, in cui vengono passate in rassegna le costellazioni, assieme ai circoli immaginari iscritti sulla sfera (vv. 19–558), e nei quali viene trattata la sfera in movimento con le levate simultanee delle stelle (vv. 559–732), esibiscono un'impostazione in massima parte descrittiva<sup>2</sup>. La poesia astronomica

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1 Struttura e divisione del poema in Kidd 1997, 7 s.

2 Volk 2013, 105: "Aratus presents the sky as something that is there primarily to be looked at".

di Arato, da un lato, traeva spunto da uno stimolo visivo, ma dall'altro, ha fornito il destro alla creazione di nuove immagini, mi riferisco, ad esempio a tutta una serie di sussidi materiali alla lettura del poema<sup>3</sup>. I *Phaenomena* e la loro ricca tradizione romana possono essere un interessante specchio osservativo per cercare di analizzare non solo le dinamiche d'osmosi tra testo e immagine, ma anche le modalità con le quali il medium visivo viene rifunzionalizzato in poesia. In un simile scenario, si trovano, infatti, a interagire, come in un rapporto triangolato, il poema, riproduzione testuale della natura, la realtà fenomenica stessa e le sue riproduzioni.

Di tale complessità ne erano ben consapevoli anche i lettori romani, che mettono in risalto l'importanza delle fonti iconografiche proprio nella composizione del poema. A tal proposito è giusto ricordare una celebre pagina all'inizio del *De re publica* di Cicerone, nella quale Lucio Filo racconta di Sulpicio Gallo e della sua esposizione del globo di Archimede in casa di Marcello<sup>4</sup>. Nota giustamente D. Pellacani<sup>5</sup> come il passaggio ciceroniano dimostri la caratura 'iconografica' dei *Phaenomena* e come questa componente sia vitale anche nella traduzione dell'Arpinate stesso, tanto che non si può

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3 Dei *Phaenomena* non disponiamo manoscritti illustrati antichi, non si può escludere, però, la presenza di tali prodotti già in età ellenistica e romana: sul problema rimando al recente contributo di Santoni 2014. Per quanto non assimilabile all'alveo dell'astronomia poetica di Arato, rimane una notevole testimonianza di manoscritto astronomico illustrato nel papiro della cosiddetta *Ars Eudoxi* (P. Par. 1 MP<sup>3</sup> 0369), testo databile attorno al 165 a.C (per il testo vedi Blass 1887, interessante discussione in Squire 2011, 116–120). Un discorso a parte occorre per la ricca tradizione iconografica fiorita, sin dall'età carolingia, attorno al testo degli aratea latini (per questo rimando a Dolan 2017) o, in ambito bizantino, con il MS Vat. Lat. 1087, che tramanda capitoli dei catasterismi erastostenici (vd. Guidetti – Santoni 2013).

4 1, 22: *dicebat enim Gallus sphaerae illius alterius solidae atque plenae uetus esse inuentum, et eam a Thalete Milesio primum esse tornatam, post autem ab Eudoxo Cnidio, discipulo ut ferebat Platonis, eandem illam astris quae caelo inhaererent esse descriptam; cuius omnem ornatum et descriptionem sumptam ab Eudoxo multis annis post non astrologiae scientia sed poetica quadam facultate uersibus Aratum extulisse* "Gallo infatti esponeva che era antica l'invenzione di quell'altra sfera solida e compatta e che per primo l'aveva tornita Talete di Mileto e che dopo Eudosso di Cnido, che come si diceva era allievo di Platone, vi aveva disegnato sopra le stelle fisse e, inoltre, che Arato innalzò tutto quel suo splendido disegno desunto dall'opera di Eudosso non con precisione astronomica, ma con abilità poetica".

5 Pellacani 2019, 124–126. Vasta trattazione sui planisferi in Dekker 2013.

escludere che il testo possa essere addirittura letto come un' *ekphrasis*<sup>6</sup>. Lo studioso mette bene in risalto la valenza visuale dell'espressione *ornatum et descriptionem sumptam*, come se Cicerone volesse rimarcare la complessità intermediale dell'operazione del poeta di Soli<sup>7</sup>. L'Arpinate sembra dunque ammettere l'importanza mediatrice di rappresentazioni materiali nella composizione dei *Phaenomena*, questione che, tra l'altro, pone interrogativi anche sulle fonti eudossiane di Arato<sup>8</sup>.

Non sarà, quindi, un caso che gli studi abbiano evidenziato negli *Aratea* latini la tendenza degli interpreti a caricare di *pathos*, colore e movimento le statiche immagini celesti del poema greco, aggiungendo, inoltre, numerosi richiami ai miti di catasterismo. Questi tratti, che sono presenti sin dalla traduzione di Cicerone<sup>9</sup>, si possono ravvisare non solo nelle versioni poetiche, ma anche nelle più 'libere' rielaborazioni quali il primo libro (e, in parte, il quinto) degli *Astronomica* di Manilio o i *Fasti* di Ovidio<sup>10</sup>. Cicerone, in buona sostanza, ha inaugurato una via innovativa alla rielaborazione del testo greco (ma per alcuni aspetti, come abbiamo visto fondata su approcci 'tradizionali') nella quale il *medium* visuale viene potenziato e messo al centro della metafrasi. Ciò implica che la 'traduzione' e, dunque, l'adattamento dei *Phaenomena* al gusto romano si espliciti anche in un'opera di creazione e rimodulazione di immagini, in buona parte assenti nel modello greco, e che attingono a contenuti extra-testuali<sup>11</sup>. La triangolazione di cui abbiamo parlato sopra si complica ulteriormente con l'intervento, negli *aratea* latini, di dettagli pittorici che rimandano più che alle scarse figure delle costellazioni a concrete immagini terrestri.

La poesia astronomica latina, considerata alla stregua di un prodotto intermediale, ci consente di mettere alla prova nell'analisi del testo il concetto di intevisualità. Il sostantivo è un calco dell'inglese *intervisuality*,

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6 Sul tema, oltre al recente contributo di Pellacani 2019, anche Volk 2012, 216–218; Fakas 2001, 197–203.

7 Pellacani 2019, 124–125 e nota 2.

8 Per questo cfr. Guidetti 2020, 139–149.

9 Volk 2015, 269–272; Pellacani 2015, 20–22. 25–27.

10 Vedi Hübner 2005, per una rassegna delle traduzioni latine di Arato Taub 2010; Volk 2015, 260–262.

11 Pellacani 2014 ha ben analizzato nella rappresentazione del *signum* di Andromeda in Cic. Arat. fr. 31 Soubiran la possibile influenza dell'iconografia della costellazione, come emerge in alcune rappresentazioni quali l'Atlante farnese, il globo Kugel e il globo di Mainz.

termine elaborato, in primo luogo, nell'ambito dei *visual studies*<sup>12</sup>, che è stato di recente applicato anche all'analisi dei testi antichi, soprattutto greci. A partire, infatti, dalla monografia di Antonis Petrides su Menandro e la commedia nuova<sup>13</sup>, il concetto è stato applicato al Romanzo di Eliodoro<sup>14</sup>, a Luciano e all'epigramma ellenistico<sup>15</sup>. Sempre in ambito greco si segnala la recente pubblicazione, a cura di Andrea Capra e Lucia Floridi<sup>16</sup>, di un volume miscelaneo dedicato al tema: proprio questa raccolta ha potuto offrire uno *status quaestionis* e una buona casistica di *specimina* di analisi. Merito del volume è quello di aver cercato di inserire il dibattito in un adeguato quadro teorico, con l'obiettivo di giungere a una più precisa definizione del termine. I contributi qui ricordati, quindi, possono costituire una base di partenza per cercare di impiegare un approccio intervisuale allo studio della rielaborazione del testo arateo nella primissima età imperiale.

Per quanto concerne, invece, la storia del concetto, esso trova una sua prima applicazione in uno studio dello storico dell'arte medievale Michael Camille, dove, ponendo l'accento sull'individualità del soggetto percipiente, l'intervisualità viene messa sullo stesso piano funzionale dell'intertestualità. Il reimpiego di un'immagine, o di uno schema iconografico, agirebbe, secondo lo studioso, con meccanismi di allusione e rielaborazione analoghi a quelli che si possono rintracciare a livello testuale<sup>17</sup>. Un simile approccio allo studio delle componenti visuali dei testi antichi consente di non cadere nella comoda, ma riduttiva, tentazione di considerare l'immagine come una oleografica riproduzione del testo e, viceversa, il testo come una traduzione verbale di un dato visivo o materiale. L'intervisualità diviene così un processo dinamico, dove la percezione dell'immagine e la sua resa testuale sono sottoposte al filtro dei lettori e degli osservatori, del contesto sociale e del genere letterario, in un rapporto di vicendevoli scambi.

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12 Vd. a proposito Mirzoeff 2002, 3-5; utile anche la discussione teorica di Blom 2017, 9-21 in ambito cinematografico.

13 Petrides 2014, vd., in particolare, 84-155.

14 Zanetto 2018.

15 Floridi 2017; Floridi 2018a; Floridi 2018b.

16 Capra - Floridi 2023.

17 Camille 1991, 151: "Just as meaning in literary texts is often generated by intertextuality, this paper deals with what we might term intervisuality – a process in which images are not the stable referents in some ideal iconographic dictionary, but are perceived by their audiences to work across and within different and even competing value-systems".



In questa prospettiva Aglae Pizzone<sup>18</sup> nota giustamente come il richiamo a *patterns* iconografici<sup>19</sup> più o meno fissi<sup>20</sup>, e stabilmente riconosciuti, operi attivamente anche all'interno della letteratura greca e romana. L'intervisualità è quindi un meccanismo allusivo che agisce al livello della memoria eidetica del lettore che è, in un certo modo, simultaneamente, anche spettatore<sup>21</sup>; ciò avviene anche senza alcun rinvio a un preciso e determinato a un referente materiale<sup>22</sup>. Possiamo dire, quindi, che l'allusione intervisuale ha a che vedere anche con i meccanismi di (ri)creazione mentale delle immagini, che vengono classificati sotto l'etichetta di *ἐνάργεια* e costituisca, perciò, un esempio di "visione di secondo grado"<sup>23</sup>. L'approccio proposto dalla studiosa, dunque, può essere utile per analizzare e comprendere meglio la trama ekphrastica della poesia aratea, con la sua complessa sovrapposizione mediatica delle figure celesti (le costellazioni come appaiono alla vista dell'osservatore) a quelle terrestri (il patrimonio iconografico dei miti di catasterismo).

Saranno, quindi, presi in esame tre casi di studio esemplari dai *Phaenomena* di Germanico, dal primo libro degli *Astronomica* di Manilio e dai *Fasti* di Ovidio: la scelta di restringere il campo di indagine a questi tre autori è mossa, in primo luogo, da una motivazione eminentemente cronologica. Le opere dei tre autori sono coeve, tanto che gli sforzi profusi dalla critica per stabilire la priorità di un testo rispetto all'altro risultano non sempre efficaci<sup>24</sup>. Al di là, quindi, delle singole e inequivocabili riprese verbali che

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18 Pizzone 2023, 17 s. e 22 s., con bibliografia.

19 Viene ripreso il concetto di *schema*, a riguardo la monografia di Catoni 2008.

20 Stimolante analisi, in chiave ovidiana, in Bergmann 2023, in part. 178 s.

21 Vd. Elsner – Squire 2016.

22 Vedi a questo proposito la differenza, operata nell'ambito dello studio degli epigrammi greci da Floridi 2018b, tra intertestualità e intermedialità. Quest'ultimo concetto per la studiosa farebbe riferimento all'interazione simultanea di due media differenti.

23 Ancora Pizzone 2023, 16 e 22 s., che propone di integrare l'intervisualità con un approccio enattivo all'*ἐνάργεια* (cfr. a riguardo Huitink 2017).

24 Per gli *Astronomica* l'unico *terminus post quem* è il 9 d. C. (in 1, 899 si fa cenno alla battaglia di Teutoburgo); gli studiosi sono divisi tra una collocazione completamente augustea (Volk 2009, 137–161, con ulteriore bibliografia), a una a cavallo tra Augusto e Tiberio (Housman 1903, lxxix–lxxii; Romano 1979), oppure a una tutta tiberiana (Neuburg 1993). Monteventi 2020, 74 s. (con ulteriore bibliografia) data il solo libro iniziale al primo decennio del I sec. d. C. Non minori problemi di datazione sono posti anche per i *Fasti* ovidiani: Fantham 1986 ritiene che una prima stesura del poema fosse stata conclusa attorno all'8 d. C. e che il poeta, durante la *relegatio* a Tomi avesse continuato a rivedere il testo, soprattutto dopo la morte di Augusto. Di diverso avviso, invece, Herbert-Brown 1994, 229–233 (che riprende

possono essere ravvisate nei nostri autori, è importante riscontrare, al fine di ricostruire tendenze comuni nell'approccio al testo dei *Phaenomena*, alcuni elementi di continuità che riflettono un gusto comune e orizzonti culturali in gran parte sovrapponibili. Si cercherà, infine, di comprendere se l'impiego di patterns iconografici nella rielaborazione del modello greco possa rispecchiarsi in un simultaneo meccanismo di riprese intertestuali, che coinvolga non solo le immagini, ma anche la tradizione poetica latina.

## 2. Unire i punti e individuare le immagini

Nel primo libro degli *Astronomica*, dopo il catalogo delle costellazioni della sfera celeste (vv. 255–455), Manilio si diffonde in un excursus teorico–metodologico, che funge da chiave di interpretazione del brano appena precedente (1, 458–465):

Tu modo corporeis similis ne quaere figuras,  
 Omnia ut aequali fulgentia membra colore  
 Deficiat nihil nec uacuum quid lumine cesset.  
 Non poterit mundus sufferre incendia tanta,  
 Omnia si plenis ardebunt sidera membris.  
 Quidquid subduxit flammis, natura pepercit

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una tesi di Syme 1979, 21–36), la quale protende per una datazione bassa del poema. Venendo, infine, a Germanico, anche per i suoi *Phaenomena* dobbiamo riscontrare simili difficoltà: Possanza 2004, 219–243 ipotizza una collocazione completamente augustea del poema (in un intervallo di tempo tra il 4 e il 14 d. C., se non tra il 4 e il 7 d. C.), anche Fantham 1986 è per una datazione alta. Secondo Stiles 2017 Ovidio nel proemio (rivisto) dei *Fasti* (1, 23–26) avrebbe deliberatamente ripreso Germ. phaen. 96–102, il poeta di Sulmona dimostrerebbe una conoscenza dell'opera del dotto princeps in Pont. 4, 8, 63–68 (testo impiegato per la datazione dei *Phaenomena* attorno al 14 d. C. da Cicu 1979). Utile, infine, ricordare la tesi di Abry 1993, 201, che colloca tanto gli *Astronomica*, quanto i *Phaenomena* tra il 12 e il 15 d. C. e ritiene reciproca la *aemulatio* tra i due autori. Stante, poi, la possibilità di una doppia redazione dei *Fasti* (cfr. Fantham 1986) il quadro risulta ancora di più complicato. Risulta, infatti, difficile comprendere se la prima redazione del testo ovidiano avesse influenzato gli altri due poemi, oppure se il testo che noi leggiamo, esito di revisione, avesse recepito degli elementi dai *Phaenomena* (e dagli *Astronomica*), forse influenzato dall'interesse del dotto *Princeps* per lo studio del cielo.

Succubitura oneri, formas distinguere<sup>25</sup> tantum  
Contenta et stellis ostendere sidera certis<sup>26</sup>.

Il poeta si rivolge direttamente al suo lettore con un imperativo negativo, come per ammonirlo di una certa difformità tra la realtà fenomenica e la rappresentazione testuale di essa appena proposta. Non tutte le parti delle costellazioni sono caratterizzate dallo stesso colore, non tutte splendono ugualmente: ci sono parti più luminose e altre meno, addirittura i corpi reali delle immagini celesti possono apparire del tutto privi di luce e, dunque, menomati fisicamente<sup>27</sup>. La giustificazione che il Nostro autore offre di questa difformità è di natura provvidenzialistica: il cielo non potrebbe soffrire il peso di tanti corpi tutti accatastati sulla sua volta, per questo motivo la *ratio* cosmica ha stabilito che il cielo ospitasse solo delle immagini stilizzate<sup>28</sup>. La presenza di *species* incomplete è, quindi, una necessità di natura che rende possibile il perpetuarsi dell'equilibrio del cosmo (*natura... succubitura oneri*). L'immagine è, quindi, richiamata soltanto dalla presenza di punti luminosi

25 Con G.P. Goold preferisco stampare la lezione *distinguere* dell'Urbinas latinus 667 (probabile congettura umanistica, indipendentemente elaborata anche dallo Scaligero). Probanti gli argomenti difensivi di Goold 1959, 109, ma soprattutto di Montanari Caldini 1993, 29–31, che si fonda su Cic. Arat. 160–161 (*nam quas sideribus claris natura poliuuit / et uario pinxit distinguens lumine formas / haec ille astrorum custos ratione notauit* “Infatti ciò che la natura ha plasmato con stelle brillanti e con varia luce ha dipinto distinguendo le forme quello il custode degli astri l'ha organizzato con un criterio”, traduzione Pellacani 2015), passo che presenta diverse somiglianze con il nostro. Stante il confronto con Cicerone risulta poco soddisfacente nel contesto maniliano la lezione *disiungere* di tutti gli altri codici, messa a testo da Housman e da Flores.

26 “Tu non cercare, però, figure simili a quelle dotate di un corpo, tali per cui tutte le membra splendano con la stessa luminosità e che non manchino di qualcosa e che qualche loro parte sbiadisca priva di luce. Il mondo non potrebbe soffrire un tanto grande incendio se tutte le costellazioni dovessero splendere della pienezza dei loro corpi. Quello che ha sottratto alle fiamme la natura destinata a soccombere al peso lo risparmia, contenta soltanto di distinguere le forme e a mostrare con stelle evidenti le figure stellari”.

27 Il passo è giustamente messo in relazione con la discussione sui segni mutili in 2, 257–264 (Manlio sostiene che la presenza di segni caratterizzati da una menomazione fisica rappresenti una forma di ‘pietà’ del cielo nei confronti dell'uomo, che, così facendo, *exemplo docet patienter damna subire* “l'universo insegna a sopportare pazientemente i difetti”). Per una contestualizzazione delle dottrine astrologiche rimando alla trattazione di Hübner 1982, 111–113 e 476–479.

28 Per un commento del passo, con debite riflessioni sui rapporti con i *Phaenomena* di Arato, rimando ancora allo studio di Montanari Caldini 1993.

che mettono in risalto (*ostendere*) alcune figure, che devono, però, essere completate mediante un processo mentale debitamente illustrato dal nostro autore (1, 466–468):

Linea designat species, atque ignibus ignes  
 Respondent; media extremis atque ultima summis  
 Creduntur: satis est si se non omnia celant<sup>29</sup>.

Come in un gioco di enigmistica occorre connettere con una linea immaginaria i fuochi delle stelle disposte in forma di costellazione, di modo che possano risultare i contorni della figura. La rappresentazione dell'immagine è un fatto mentale, dunque, esito di un processo cognitivo di induzione: il corpo della figura si inferisce dai bordi e la parte posteriore dalla superficie circoscritta dalle linee immaginarie (*media extremis atque ultima summis / creduntur*).

Il discorso consiste senza dubbio in una presa di coscienza razionalizzante della distanza tra realtà fenomenica e rappresentazione letteraria dell'oggetto costellazione, uno scarto che può essere concettualizzato nell'opposizione polare tra *natura* e *ars*. A questa differenza Manilio trova una giustificazione filosofica che consenta, da un lato di dar atto della realtà delle figure e di inserirle in un alveo provvidenzialistico, ma dall'altro di salvaguardare la realtà e la verità di tali immagini. Allora, a essere invocato nella costruzione delle immagini è il meccanismo dell'*ἐνάργεια*: la provvidenza cosmica vuole che il perfetto disegno dei *signa* avvenga per intero solo attraverso uno sforzo immaginativo. Il ricorso al dispositivo retorico dell'*ἐνάργεια* consente, quindi, di colmare il *gap* presente tra la natura e la sua rappresentazione artistica e poetica, dal momento che sta alla vista interiore integrare quanto in natura è apparentemente imperfetto e carente. Solo le facoltà immaginative del lettore, debitamente guidate dall'*eidopoiesi* del poeta, possono offrire corpo e movimento ai punti luminosi che appaiono in cielo. Unica condizione è che – di qui l'ammonimento conclusivo *satis est si se non omnia celant* – le stelle non siano completamente celate alla vista e alla conoscenza, giacché bastano solo le parti essenziali per desumere con l'immaginazione tutto il resto<sup>30</sup>.

29 “Una linea disegna la loro immagine, il dentro delle figure si inferisce dai contorni, la parte posteriore dalla superficie: è sufficiente che non siano del nascoste”.

30 Evenienza questa che, in un contesto di natura provvidenzialmente aperta alla conoscenza da parte dell'uomo, difficilmente può verificarsi. Basti ricordare come il poeta, nel complesso finale del quarto libro, rassicuri il suo lettore preoccupato

In questo *excursus* Manilio offre, quindi, una vera e propria teoria della visione, che deve essere considerata alla luce dall'invadente affastellamento di linguaggi e immagini tipica dei catasterismi aratei. La riflessione teorica del poeta, dunque, funge certamente da strumento orientativo per il lettore che, nei duecento versi precedenti si era trovato ad aver a che fare con una descrizione delle costellazioni contraddistinta da figure vivide e luminose<sup>31</sup>, colte dinamicamente nei loro movimenti<sup>32</sup>. Non mancano nemmeno nel passo dei racconti di catasterismo di diversa estensione e articolazione: mi riferisco, per esempio, alla Lira di Orfeo (1, 324–330), al Cigno, il cui *aition* rimanda al mito di Leda (1, 337–341) e, poi, alla piccola titanomachia (1, 421–432) che richiama l'origine della costellazione dell'Ara. Infine, il pannello di Cassiopea, Cefeo, Andromeda e Perseo (1, 354–360), che nella sua articolazione narrativa e nella disposizione dei personaggi sembra rimandare non tanto al modello arateo, ma agli schemi di alcuni gruppi pittorici<sup>33</sup>.

Tuttavia, quanto affermato può applicarsi anche al resto della tradizione aratea latina e, quindi, l'intenzione del poeta era quella di aggiornare

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per la difficoltà della materia didascalica 4, 869–870 *conditur en – inquit – uasto natura recessu / mortalisque fugit uisus et pectora nostra* (“Ecco – dice – la natura si nasconde in un vasto recesso, sfugge ai nostri sguardi mortali e ai nostri cuori”), affermando che la natura non si cela allo sguardo indagatore dell'uomo 4, 883–884 *iam nusquam natura latet; peruidimus omnem* (“ma mai la natura si nasconde: possiamo vedere a fondo ogni cosa”). L'uomo, afferma, Manilio possiede gli occhi della mente 4, 875 *[quid iuuat] quosque dedit natura oculos deponere mentis?* (“a cosa serve abbassare gli occhi della mente che la natura ci ha fornito?”); 906–907 *[homo] uictorque ad sidera mittit / sidereos oculos* (“l'uomo vincitore spinge i suoi occhi siderei alle stelle”), metafora che bene rappresenta le potenzialità razionali (e anche immaginative) necessarie per comprendere le operazioni geometrico-matematiche alla base del discorso astrologico. Possiamo, quindi, felicemente supporre che nel processo di interiorizzazione e formazione mentale delle immagini di 1, 466–468 fossero implicate le stesse competenze che richiede al lettore alla fine della complessa trattazione dei libri 2–4.

31 Esempio paradigmatico quello della Corona boreale (1, 319–323), a riguardo Ciano 2019, 184–187: il racconto del mito di Arianna è incapsulato, con preziosità alessandrina, in pochissimi dettagli, che rimandano a un complesso sistema di rapporti intertestuali. La Ciano evidenzia giustamente come la luminosità della costellazione, particolarmente insistita nella descrizione letteraria, non corrisponda al naturale ed effettivo bagliore dell'oggetto astronomico (la Corona si mostra come una figura alquanto scialba) e, invece, celi una discussione metapoetica.

32 La figura dell'Ofiuco effigiata nella sua eterna lotta con il Serpente (1, 330–336), oppure l'immagine sinuosa delle acque celesti dell'Eridano che si fondono con il rivolo di stelle provenienti dall'Acquario (1, 439–442).

33 A riguardo Rossetti 2022, 191–195.

scientificamente (forse non senza una vena di polemica)<sup>34</sup> i suoi modelli che basavano le loro descrizioni celesti su immagini illusorie. Centrali, inoltre, queste riflessioni per comprendere le modalità attraverso le quali la poesia astronomica latina gestiva il filtro delle rappresentazioni materiali nella comunicazione di contenuti scientifici. Le precisazioni del poeta, infatti, come ammonisce Roberta Montanari Caldini<sup>35</sup> bene s’attagliano anche al più vasto alveo delle riproduzioni plastiche impresse sui globi celesti, oppure effigiate su mappe astrali.

In conclusione, l’*excursus* maniliano consiste in una curiosa e singolare riflessione sulle potenzialità della poesia astronomica che, in un certo senso, deve trovarsi a raccogliere la sfida “mediatica” delle immagini. In filigrana a questo passo può essere letto lo scherzoso invito che si legge in un epigramma di Tessalonica<sup>36</sup>: Manilio si fa portavoce di una riaffermazione della preminenza del testo, capace di farsi garante di istanze più complesse e articolate, sotto il segno dell’*ἐνάργεια*. Il passo degli *Astronomica* può, quindi, costituire un buon punto di partenza e uno strumento di contestualizzazione degli *specimina* testuali che verranno di seguito velocemente illustrati, a partire dai *Fasti* di Ovidio.

### 3. *Fasti*

È cosa nota che il poema eziologico di Ovidio, i *Fasti*, costeggi e tocchi a più riprese temi e movenze della poesia astronomica, per quanto non possa essere

34 Celebre, nel secondo proemio, la polemica che Manilio intavola contro i poeti dei ‘catasterismi’, che limitarono la loro poesia alle favole celesti: cfr. 2, 25–38 da leggere con Volk 2009, 201–203.

35 Montanari Caldini 1993, 27 nota 36.

36 Anth. Pal. 9, 541 Θειογένης Πείσωνι τὰ τεχνήεντα κύπελλα / πέμπει· χωροῦμεν δ’ οὐρανὸν ἀμφοτέρα· / δοῖα γὰρ ἐκ σφαιρῆς τετμήμεθα, καὶ τὸ μὲν ἡμῶν / τοὺς νοτίους, τὸ δ’ ἔχει τείρεα τᾶν Βορέη. / ἀλλὰ σὺ μηκέτ’ Ἄρητον ἐπίβλεπε· δισσὰ γὰρ ἀμφοῖν / μέτρα πῶν ἄθρει πάντα τὰ φαινόμενα “Teogene invia a Pisone noi, artistiche coppe. Entrambe conteniamo il cielo, ché fummo tagliate in due parti da una sfera e una di noi ha le costellazioni australi, l’altra le boreali. Non volgere più l’occhio ad Arato ma, vuotando il contenuto d’entrambe, contempla tutti i *Fenomeni*”, traduzione M. Marzi in Conca 2009. Sulla datazione del poeta (legata al suo rapporto clientelare con Lucio Calpurnio Pisone il Pontefice 42 a. C. – 32 d. C.) e altre informazioni di natura prosopografica rimando ad Argentieri 2003, 34–38; per una lettura del testo Dufallo 2013, 89; Rossetti 2022, 48 s.

*tout court* etichettato come un poema didascalico<sup>37</sup>. Giova, infatti, ricordare come i movimenti di levata e tramonto delle stelle fungano da segnatempo sul quale si basa la struttura del calendario, che informa l'intero poema. Non stupisce, quindi, che i *lapsaque sub terras orta que signa* ("le costellazioni che tramontano e risorgono oltre i globo terrestre")<sup>38</sup> siano accostati strettamente nel proemio ai *tempora cum causis* ("le ricorrenze stabilite dal calendario e le loro cause"), quali oggetti del canto. L'argomento astronomico, che dunque contribuisce a scandire dinamicamente i tempi dell'esposizione, offre anche il destro alla narrazione di alcuni miti di catasterismo<sup>39</sup>, assecondando una sensibilità di cui si trova traccia precipua negli *aratea* latini. Gli astri, dunque, nei *Fasti* fungono da *markers* temporali, ma anche da complesso serbatoio di racconti che bene si innestano nella trama eziologica del poema.

Consideriamo allora la costellazione del Delfino (2, 79–118), che risulta essere il primo racconto stellare all'interno del poema del calendario ed è, tra l'altro, uno dei catasterismi più ampi. Le modalità di presentazione del *signum*, che compare ultimo in una breve serie di indicazioni astronomiche, sono di per sé interessanti (2, 79–82):

Quem modo caelatum stellis Delphina uidebas,  
Is fugiet uisus nocte sequente tuos,  
Seu fuit occultis felix in amoribus index,  
Lesbida cum domino seu tulit ille lyram<sup>40</sup>.

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37 Sull'elemento astronomico nei *Fasti* si veda la monografia di Gee 2000, che analizza i rapporti tra il poema eziologico e la tradizione aratea, utili osservazioni anche in Robinson 2007 e Lewis 2014. A questi si aggiungono le valide considerazioni di Schiesaro 2014, 91–94.

38 Le traduzioni dai *Fasti* di Ovidio sono di Stok 1999.

39 Su questo argomento rimando a Newlands 1995, 27–50, Calzascia 2014; interessanti osservazioni (sulla misteriosa stella *Miluus*) anche in Donninelli 2023. Gli studi hanno, inoltre, messo in evidenza la complessa interazione tra *Catasterismi* e *Phaenomena* nella formulazione di un repertorio di racconti di mitologia astrale. Vedi, a tal proposito, la fine analisi di Berti 2016, che dimostra la centralità del testo dei *Catasterismi* nella costruzione dell'immaginario astro-mitologico dei *Fasti*. Lo studioso sottolinea che il rapporto tra il poeta di Sulmona e la silloge eratostenica deve essere considerato nei termini di un rapporto intertestuale e non di un semplice prelievo di informazioni erudite o mitografiche.

40 "La notte successiva sfuggirà al tuo sguardo il Delfino, che prima vedevi con la corona di stelle. Egli fu o il felice risolutore di un amore segreto, oppure colui che portò in salvo la lira di Lesbo e il suo possessore".

Il lettore è interpellato direttamente<sup>41</sup> a riconoscere l'assenza in cielo della costellazione, il giorno successivo rispetto a quello del tramonto della Lira e del Leone (cfr. 2, 73–78), ossia il tre di febbraio. Il delfino che sfugge alla vista nelle notti di inizio febbraio non è un semplice animale marino, è *caelatum stellis*: la sua figura risulta preziosamente cesellata, come fosse incisa su di un prezioso supporto. Nell'uso del participio perfetto del verbo *caelo* (verbo per altro non estraneo al vocabolario della poesia astronomica)<sup>42</sup> interviene senza tema di dubbio il gioco di parole pseudo etimologico con il sostantivo *caelum* attestato sin dalla riflessione linguistica di Varrone<sup>43</sup>. L'impiego di siffatto termine, però, non si esaurisce al solo *pun* erudito: è lecito, infatti, scorgerne nella scelta di un termine dalla forte connotazione artistica (e materiale) un'anticipazione delle istanze metapoetiche incapsulate nella narrazione del mito del poeta Arione di Metimna che si dipanerà nei versi successivi<sup>44</sup>.

A queste ottime considerazioni dei commenti occorre aggiungere, però, una chiosa: il verbo *caelo* è in Ovidio, giustappunto, un indicatore importante e particolare: giova, a questo proposito, rammentare l'attacco della grandiosa *ekphrasis* delle porte della reggia del sole all'inizio del II libro delle *Metamorfosi*<sup>45</sup>, sulle quali appunto Mulciber cesella con finezza l'immagine del cielo. Non stupisce che tale termine ricorra per ben due volte anche nell'*armorum iudicium* del libro XIII in riferimento al fregio cosmologico dello scudo di Achille, oggetto ekphrastico per antonomasia. Aiace, infatti insinua che poco si adatti al braccio di Ulisse lo scudo sul quale è effigiato il disegno del vasto cosmo (met. 13, 110–112 *nec clipeus uasti caelatus imagine mundi / conueniet*

41 Sull'uso della seconda persona come richiamo agli appelli al lettore della poesia didascalica cfr. Robinson 2011, 111.

42 Cfr., per esempio, Manil. 1, 680 (ma anche 5, 235 con le ottime considerazioni di Hübner 2010, 132 s.), Germ. phaen. 602. Su questi passi vd. *infra*.

43 L'etimologia è riportata da Varrone ling. 5, 18 e ricondotta a Elio Stilone (fr. 7 Funaioli), spiegazione rilanciata anche da Plinio nat. 2, 18, che menziona soltanto l'*auctoritas* del Reatino (l'idea del *caelare* viene lì connessa a quella del *κόσμος* greco).

44 Vedi il commento di Robinson 2011, 108–111 (il racconto del mito di Arione ospiterebbe una riflessione sulle potenzialità della poesia).

45 2, 5–7 *materiam superabat opus; nam Mulciber illic / aequora caelarat medias cingentia terras / terrarumque orbem caelumque, quod imminet orbi* “E il lavoro aveva più pregio del metallo: il famoso Mulcibero vi aveva sbalzato l'oceano che cinge le terre centrali, il globo terrestre e sul globo altissimo il cielo”, traduzione di L. Koch in Barchiesi 2005 (si leggano questi versi con il commento di Barchiesi 2005, 235–239).



*timidae nataeque ad furta sinistrae*)<sup>46</sup>. L'eroe di Itaca ribatte al suo avversario sottolineandone la scarsa attitudine intellettuale alla comprensione delle immagini rappresentate sulla superficie dell'oggetto e, nel fare ciò, sembra velocemente riassumere il lungo arco ekphrastico di Il. 18, 483 sgg. (met. 13, 291–294 *neque enim clipei caelamina nouit, /oceanum et terras cumque alto sidera caelo / Pleiadasque Hyadasque immunemque aequoris Arcton / diuersasque urbes nitidumque Orionis ense*)<sup>47</sup>. I tre esempi qui riportati – occorre osservarlo incidentalmente – sono tutti caratterizzati da un alto gradiente cognitivo: l'immagine effigiata sul prezioso supporto sintetizza (in un solo colpo d'occhio) il *corpus* complesso delle nozioni impartite dalla poesia didascalica.

Gli esempi qui proposti confortano l'ipotesi che nella raffinata narrazione del catasterismo del Delfino Ovidio affronti la questione della riproduzione testuale dei dati visivi; penso che un ulteriore argomento a questa lettura del passo sia da ravvisarsi nel fatto che il verbo *caelo* in ambito astronomico sia impiegato per marcare oggetti astronomici particolarmente brillanti, o comunque ben evidenti in cielo. In Germanico (phaen. 601–602 *Orion umeris splendet magnaue diui / uagina et claro caelatus balteus igni*)<sup>48</sup> il participio marca le tre stelle della cintura di Orione, che è come un fregio luminoso sulla volta celeste. In Manilio (1, 679–680 *sed nitet ingenti stellatus balteus orbe / insignemque facit caelato culmine*)<sup>49</sup> *mundum*)<sup>50</sup>, invece, si riferisce allo

46 “E lo scudo istoriato con l'immagine del vasto universo, non dovrebbe andare bene per una sinistra pavida e nata per l'intrigo”, traduzione di G. Chiarini in Hardie 2015. Si legga per una contestualizzazione dei versi il commento di Hardie 2015, 232; con Rivero García 2019, 96 s., condivido le riserve circa la difesa della lezione *concretus* del codice M in luogo di *caelatus*, proposta da Hardie 1985, 16 s.

47 “Non sarebbe nemmeno in grado di capire le immagini cesellate sullo scudo – l'oceano, la terra e l'immenso cielo, le Pleiadi e le Iadi, e l'Orsa che mai tramonta e le due città e la spada splendente di Orione”, traduzione di G. Chiarini in Hardie 2015. Per una discussione testuale su questi versi ancora Rivero García 2018, 174 s.

48 “Ma dalla parte opposta Orione, che non difetta di luminosità, tutto risplenderà nelle spalle e risplenderanno il grande fodero del dio e il balteo ornato di luci brillante”. Qui come nel resto del contributo le traduzioni dai *Phaenomena* di Germanico sono di Feraco 2022.

49 *Culmine* è emendamento di Housman 1903, 61, contro *lumine* dei codici; la congettura (messa a testo da Flores) non è affatto risolutiva, lo stesso Housman negli addenda al primo libro accoglie *lato caelamine* di Breiter, congettura che viene stampata anche da G.P. Goold. Stante l'impossibilità di conservare *lumine* dalla tradizione manoscritta, al netto delle difficoltà, *culmine* sembra la congettura più economica che mantiene il tradito e ottimo *caelato* dei codici.

50 “Ma splende il balteo incastonato di stelle nell'immensità della sfera celeste e rende evidente il cosmo nella sua volta cesellata”.

zodiaco (*stellatus balteus*), che parimenti rende brillante (si noti la caratura visuale di *insignis*)<sup>51</sup> il cielo con le figurine stellari lì impresse. Quindi, degno di attenzione il fatto che nel passo ovidiano il verbo si riferisca a un oggetto astronomico di piccole dimensioni e, tra l'altro, non particolarmente luminoso, se non per quattro riconoscibilissime stelle che Arato ci dice essere disposte a due a due, l'una parallela all'altra in una forma di poligono<sup>52</sup>.

Veniamo ora all'attacco della narrazione, che è preceduta da una struttura correlativa (*seu... seu*) che dà conto delle spiegazioni multiple fornite dalla tradizione erudita circa il catasterismo del cetaceo, spiegazioni che ci sono testimoniate dal *De astronomia* di Igino (2, 17). Delle tre interpretazioni<sup>53</sup> offerte dalla tradizione Ovidio ne propone due, quella degli amori di Nettuno e Anfritrite e quella di Arione di Metimna: nel *De astronomia* la prima è attribuita alla tradizione eratostenica<sup>54</sup>, mentre la seconda a degli indefiniti *alii*<sup>55</sup>.

Indugiamo, però, ancora qualche istante sul testo di Igino che offre degli spunti interessanti per la lettura del passo ovidiano. L'erudito, infatti, tanto nella conclusione del racconto di Nettuno, tanto in quello di Arione si sofferma sulla fortuna iconografica di cui il delfino gode nelle rappresentazioni di entrambe le figure<sup>56</sup>: l'animale è attribuito del dio<sup>57</sup> ed è segno distintivo

51 ThLL 7.1.1903.67 sgg.

52 Cfr. Arat. phaen. 316–318 Δελφίς δ' οὐ μάλα πολλὸς ἐπιτρέχει Αἰγοκερῆϊ / μεσσοῦθεν ἠερόεις· τὰ δέ οἱ περὶ τέσσαρα κείται / γλήνεα, παρβολάδην δύο πὰρ δύο πεπτηῶτα (“il Delfino non molto grande si muove vicino al Capricorno, nel suo centro è poco luminoso, ma intorno, a due a due parallele, ci sono quattro stelle”), con il commento di Kidd 1997, 301 s. e Martin 1998, 284 s.

53 Simile impostazione tripartita è riscontrabile in uno scolio arateo (324, 12–17 Martin): il racconto di Nettuno e Arione corrispondono con quello di Igino, le due fonti differiscono soltanto per la seconda versione del mito.

54 In effetti il testo a nostra disposizione dei *Catasterismi* (c. 31) riferisce solo la storia di Nettuno.

55 Cfr. anche Sch. Arat. 324, 16 Martin che introduce l'*aition* mitologico con ἔνιοι.

56 Per la seconda spiegazione mitologica, ricondotta all'*aucltoritas* dei *Naxica* di Aglaostene, non viene proposto alcun riferimento iconografico. La seconda spiegazione consiste nel mito dei pirati Tirreni che rapirono Dioniso e vennero, dunque, trasformati in delfini.

57 Hyg. astr. 2, 17, 1 *Qui Neptuno simulacra faciunt, delphinum aut in manu, aut sub pede eius constituere uidemus; quod Neptuno gratissimum esse arbitrantur* (“quelli che scolpiscono le statue di Nettuno vediamo che collocano un delfino o nella sua mano, o sotto i suoi piedi, poiché pensano che questa cosa possa essere molto gradita al dio”). Così anche Eratostene cat. 31 ὅσοι δ' ἄν αὐτῷ τῷ Ποσειδῶνι χάρισασθαι θέλωσιν, ἐν τῇ χειρὶ ποιοῦσιν ἔχοντα τὸν δελφίνα τῆς εὐεργεσίας μεγίστην δόξαν αὐτῷ ἀπονέμοντες (“quanti vogliono compiacere lo stesso Poseidone, lo rappresentano mentre tiene nella mano il delfino, tributando a questo

del mitico citaredo<sup>58</sup>. In entrambi i frangenti Igino fornisce dei dettagli visuali interessanti: il dio del mare è effigiato con il *gratissimus* delfino ai suoi piedi o tra le sue mani, ad Arione, invece, è stata dedicata una statua con l'animale suo salvatore nel Tenaro, luogo quale nel fu tratto in salvo. La statua di Arione è dunque segno concreto della memoria di un evento eccezionale che offrì il destro agli *antiqui astrologi* per determinare l'astrotesia e la nomenclatura degli astri della costellazione. Il catasterismo sarebbe avvenuto, dunque, in un secondo momento e avrebbe avuto la medesima funzione commemorativa dell'immagine, aggiungendo universalità e perpetuità alla statua eretta in prossimità del Tenaro. Il motivo della statua di Arione non è certo un'invenzione di Igino, esso riposa su un'assestata tradizione letteraria che rimanda, in primo luogo, a Erodoto<sup>59</sup>, e che per il tramite dello storico di Alicarnasso era diffusa anche a Roma<sup>60</sup>. Tale tradizione è ben più precisa rispetto a Igino, rappresentando il giovane in groppa al delfino, iconica immagine del momento risolutivo e finale della storia e, per usare le parole di Frontone e Gellio, *argumentum* della vicenda.

Non è, quindi, fuori luogo pensare che Ovidio potesse avere a mente, nella costruzione di un pannello eziologico di grande portata metapoetica, l'importanza rammemorativa delle immagini, tanto celesti quanto terrestri. E non è, poi, un caso che l'intera narrazione si apra con un'apostrofe che enfatizza la grande fama di Arione, tanto in mare, quanto in terra (2, 83 *quod mare*

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animale grandissima fama di benefattore” le traduzioni dai Catasterismi sono di Santoni 2009).

58 Hyg. astr. 2, 17, 2 *Cuius memoriae causa quae ibi statua statuta est Arionis, in ea delphini simulacrum adfixum uidetur; pro qua re inter sidera ab antiquis astrologis est figuratum* “per la memoria di questo fatto si vede, su quella statua che è stata costruita per Arione, l'immagine di un delfino e per questo motivo è stato rappresentato dagli antichi astronomi tra le stelle”.

59 Hdt. 1, 23 *καὶ Ἀρίωνος ἔστι ἀνάθημα χάλκεον οὐ μέγα ἐπὶ Ταϊνάρῳ ἐπὶ δελφίνος ἐπέων ἀνθρώπος* (“e c'è una statua di Arione, non grande, sul Tenaro con un uomo in groppa a un delfino”).

60 Ricordo gli esempi più tardi di Frontone, *Arion* 242, 5–7 *Hout amico delphino Taenari saluus anniti uisitur: delphino residens homo, parua figura atque rei argumento magis quam simulacro composita* (“Sul Tenaro si vede la figura di un salvato in groppa a un amico delfino: un uomo che sta sopra un delfino, una piccola immagine effigiata più a prova che a rappresentazione esatta dell'accaduto”) e di Gellio 16, 19, 23 *eam fabulam dicere Lesbios et Corinthios, atque esse fabulae argumentum, quod simulacra duo aenea ad Taenarum uiserentur, delphinus uehens et homo insidens*. (“I Lesbi e i Corinti raccontano questa storia e pongono a testimonianza della storia che si possono vedere al Tenaro due statuite di bronzo, un delfino che lo trasporta e un uomo che vi siede sopra”).

*non nouit, quae nescit Ariona tellus*)<sup>61</sup>. Manca nella domanda del poeta un riferimento al cielo, perché sarà il racconto del catasterismo che di lì a poco si dipanerà a celebrare la gloria del mitico poeta tra gli astri.

Facciamo allora un salto alla fine dell'*excursus*, proprio al momento della risoluzione della vicenda (2, 113–118):

Inde (fide maius) tergo delphina recuruo  
 Se memorant oneri supposuisse nouo.  
 Ille, sedens citharamque tenens, pretiumque uehendi  
 Cantat et aequoreas carmine mulcet aquas.  
 Di pia facta uident: astris delphina recepit  
 Iuppiter et stellas iussit habere nouem<sup>62</sup>.

In poche battute viene raccontato l'epilogo della vicenda: l'insolita cavalcata sul delfino, il canto in segno di ringraziamento e, infine, il catasterismo intervenuto ad opera di Giove per la pietà che l'animale ha suscitato negli dèi. Come in un fermo immagine, il nostro autore si blocca sul frame appena precedente la trasformazione in stella del delfino: spicca la posizione di Arione seduto, nell'atto di suonare la lira che regge con la sua mano, particolare quest'ultimo che è assente tanto in Iginio, quanto in Erodoto (e nei testi da lui derivati).

Se si accetta la lettura di Anne-Marie Lewis<sup>63</sup>, il dettaglio della lira sarebbe coerente con l'astrotesia della costellazione: secondo la studiosa, infatti, Ovidio avrebbe compreso nelle nove stelle, come parte del Delfino, anche la Piccola lira (conosciuta anche come *Equuleus* "cavallino"); tale sarebbe lo strumento musicale menzionato ai vv. 76–77 e in 1, 315–316. Tesi interessante che, da un lato, dà conto dei dati calendariali<sup>64</sup>, ma dall'altro ammette uno scostamento (certo da notare con maggiore attenzione) rispetto

61 "Quale mare ignora il nome di Arione, quale terra non lo conosce?".

62 "Si racconta (e non è facile crederci) che un delfino incurvando la schiena accogliesse su di sé questo carico inusitato. Lui, sedutosi e presa in mano la cetra, celebra il viaggio che sta facendo e con la sua voce appaga le onde del mare. Gli dèi assisteranno a questo gesto pietoso: Giove accolse fra gli astri il Delfino e comandò che gli fossero assegnate nove stelle".

63 Lewis 2014, 419–423.

64 Cfr. Plin. nat. 18, 234 *pridie nonas Ian. Caesari delphinus matutino exoritur et postero die fidicula* ("Il giorno prima delle none di gennaio per Cesare il Delfino sorge di mattina e il giorno dopo la piccola lira").

alla tradizione eratostenico-iginiana dalla quale Ovidio in una certa misura dipende<sup>65</sup>.

Lasciando, però, da parte le lecite discussioni sulla coerenza astronomica del passo (argomento che per altro esula da questo contributo), occorre cercare di rintracciare le motivazioni letterarie che sarebbero alla base della scelta di Ovidio. Il poeta sembra intenzionato a trasporre l'immagine che ha regalato fama al suo illustre e mitico predecessore dalla dimensione prettamente materiale della rappresentazione terrestre, a quella immateriale, ma perenne, del cielo. Ovidio, quindi, opera nell'alveo delle fonti erudite facendosi raffinato interprete delle istanze evemeristiche lì propugnate e, nello stesso momento, innova sapientemente i suoi modelli offrendo un'astrotesia che nei suoi modelli non sembra trovare riscontro alcuno. In buona sostanza, l'effigie del delfino accolta tra le stelle per la pietosa intercessione di Giove non è quella di un animale qualsiasi, ma è quella immortalata da una ben determinata trafila testuale e visuale nota al nostro poeta e ai suoi attenti lettori. In aggiunta a ciò, si può anche affermare che il supporto fornito dalle immagini alla narrazione della vicenda di Arione funge da 'criterio di verità': la tradizione iconografica (vera o fittizia che sia) riporta alla realtà una storia effettivamente meravigliosa che Ovidio, invece, riconduce all'ambito dell'incredibile (v. 113 "non è facile crederci").

L'autore dei *Fasti*, con un certo concettismo, tenta di scolpire in cielo un'immagine che rappresenti in modo univoco e chiaro la vicenda di Arione e per fare ciò ricorre a un sistema ben riconoscibile di modelli. Gli studi<sup>66</sup>, infatti, non hanno esitato a osservare come la figura del poeta a dorso del delfino, con la lira tra le mani, rinvii a una coesa, anche se scarsamente attestata, tradizione figurativa: lo schema iconografico è testimoniato in ambito numismatico (fine IV–II sec. a.C.) e, successivamente nella tarda età imperiale,

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65 Le fonti (Eratost. cat. 31, Hyg. astr. 2, 16, Sch. Arat. 234, 1–3 Martin) parlano di nove stelle che rappresentano tutto il corpo del cetaceo, mentre la studiosa (Lewis 2014, 420) ritiene che al Delfino appartengano solo cinque stelle (le quattro menzionate da Arato come luminose, più una che starebbe sul retro dell'animale), mentre le restanti quattro rappresenterebbero Arione con la (piccola) lira. La vicinanza alla tradizione eratostenica è confermata dall'interpretazione numerologica che Eratostene offre circa le nove stelle (λέγεται δὲ καὶ φιλόμουσον εἶναι τὸ ζῷον διὰ τὸ ἀπὸ τῶν Μουσῶν τὸν ἀριθμὸν ἔχειν τῶν ἀστέρων "Si dice anche che è un animale amico delle Muse, perché prende dalle Muse il numero delle sue stelle") e che bene si attaglierebbe al contesto di riflessione metapoetica del passo (cfr. Robinson 2011, 135).

66 Robinson 2011, 134; Lewis 2014, 419; Ghedini – Salvo 2021, 181.

in alcuni mosaici<sup>67</sup>. Tale schema, inoltre, informano gli studi essere stato influenzato, per quanto riguarda le emissioni monetali, dal gruppo bronzeo di età classica testimoniato da Erodoto: questa cosa fa supporre che lo schema iconografico fosse più diffuso di quanto si possa comprendere in base alle testimonianze a nostra disposizione.

Stanti i paralleli proposti dagli studi, occorre sottolineare come la combinazione del *medium* visuale con quello testuale nell'ambito del racconto catasterismo sia del tutto coerente con l'impostazione del passo. In questi termini si può comprendere a pieno l'attacco dell'*excursus* e l'impiego di *caelatus*, un termine dalla fortissima connotazione materiale, che agisce da anticipatore delle spinte intervisuali che saranno chiare nell'epilogo del passo. Ovidio, infatti, ricorrendo agli strumenti del catasterismo, ben conscio delle potenziali figurative che esso veicola, s'impegna a costruire per Arione un'immagine che celebri la fama poetica del mitico predecessore e, contemporaneamente, anche la sua stessa. L'impiego di un immaginario figurale e di concreti richiami materiali, inoltre, contribuisce al discorso eziologico in atto. Discorso eziologico che deve essere letto e inquadrato in un dialogo serrato e profondo con le fonti erudite che intervengono nella costruzione del catasterismo<sup>68</sup>. In sintesi, si può supporre che il poeta avesse voluto rendere esplicita al suo lettore la figura del Delfino celeste, quale referente del mito di Arione, attraverso il richiamo a un concreto schema iconografico.

#### 4. Germanico

Sin dallo studio, per molti aspetti ancora valido, di Georg Thiele<sup>69</sup>, si è ben consapevoli dell'influsso delle immagini nella costruzione dei numerosi quadri mitologici<sup>70</sup> della versione aratea di Germanico. Gli studi, tra le fonti a disposizione del dotto *Princeps*, annoverano giustamente anche le immagini dei globi astronomici, usati come supporto materiale di eventuali sussidi eruditi. In effetti, la ricerca sulle fonti del poema si è molto arricchita attraverso il confronto puntuale con i modelli iconografici e le testimonianze a nostra disposizione di globi istoriati. Il richiamo all'universo delle arti figurative,

67 Cfr. LIMC 2 (1984) 602–603 s. v. Arion (H. A. Cahn).

68 D'altro canto, aveva già notato Berti 2016 come la tradizione eratostenica nei *Fasti* dialoghi a livello di intertesto.

69 Thiele 1898, 47 s., a cui si aggiungano le considerazioni di Le Boeuffe 1975, XXII.

70 Sull'uso dei miti di catasterismo in Germanico cfr. Possanza 2004, 169–217.

però, non si esaurisce solo all'impiego del *medium* visuale come modello alternativo e, in un certo senso, concorrente con quello testuale.

Il caso che vorrei proporre all'analisi riguarda il pannello dedicato alle costellazioni della Freccia e dell'Aquila (phaen. 315–320):

Est etiam, incertum quo cornu missa, Sagitta,  
 Quam seruat Iouis ales. habet miracula nulla,  
 Si caelum ascendit Iouis armiger. hic tamen altum<sup>71</sup>  
 Vnguibus innocuis Phrygium rapuit Ganymeden,  
 Et Telo appositus custos, quom<sup>72</sup> Iuppiter arsit  
 In puero, luit excidio quem Troia furorem<sup>73</sup>.

Le due costellazioni sono presentate in sequenza, subito dopo la descrizione del *signum* dello Scorpione; intenzione del poeta è quella di creare una coesione tematica tra due oggetti astronomici che nel modello arateo venivano semplicemente giustapposti per vicinanza (phaen. 311–315):

Ἔστι δέ τοι προτέρω βεβλημένος ἄλλος Ὀϊστός  
 αὐτὸς ἄτερ τόξου· ὁ δέ οἱ παραπέπταται Ὀρνις  
 ἄσσοτερος βορέω. Σχεδόθεν δέ οἱ ἄλλος ἄηται  
 οὐ τόσσοις μεγέθει, χαλεπός γε μὲν ἐξ ἄλως ἐλθῶν  
 νυκτὸς ἀπερχομένης· καί μιν καλέουσιν Ἀητόν<sup>74</sup>.

71 Buone considerazioni in Feraco 2022, 254 per la messa a testo della congettura *hic tamen altum* di Possanza 2004, 213 nota 53 (i manoscritti leggono il difficilmente accettabile *ardum/arduuum*).

72 Stampo la congettura del H. Grotius (accolta anche da Baehrens e Breysig), in luogo della banalizzazione *quo* della *paradosis* (chiarirò più avanti le motivazioni della scelta); per l'arcaico *quom* (= *cum*) cfr. phaen. 644. A differenza di Feraco, preferisco un segno di interpunzione più debole rispetto al punto e virgola da loro impiegato; distingo, poi, con una virgola il v. 313 dal v. 314.

73 “C'è anche la Freccia, scagliata non si sa da quale arco; la sorveglia l'uccello di Giove. Non desta alcuna meraviglia se lo scudiero di Giove ascese al cielo. Eppure questo con artigli innocui rapì portandolo in alto il frigio Ganimede, e venne posto come custode vicino al Dardo, quando Giove arse d'amore per quel fanciullo, passione che Troia pagò con la distruzione”, traduzione di Feraco 2022, modificata.

74 “C'è scoccata in avanti un'altra freccia, ma senza arco. Accanto, ma più verso nord, gli vola il Cigno e un altro, ma non della stessa grandezza, gli plana accanto, rischioso quando viene dal mare alla fine della notte: questo lo chiamano Aquila”.

A fronte di una mimesi (ai vv. 315–316) dell'*ordo uerborum* di phaen. 311–312, con il verbo essere e il nome della costellazione nelle posizioni forti del verso e con l'*enjambement* con il v. successivo, si segnalano diversi punti in cui la traduzione si discosta dal suo modello. In primo luogo, il contenuto informativo del verso + emistichio di Arato è condensato in un solo esametro, dove il patetico *incertum quo cornu missa* rafforza l'espressivamente più debole *αὐτὸς ἄτερ τόξου*. Il nome della seconda costellazione del gruppo è quindi immediatamente introdotto dalla perifrasi *Iouis ales*<sup>75</sup>, che viene poi richiamata al verso successivo dall'espressione *Iouis armiger*. Il nome della costellazione viene presentato solo in modo allusivo, obliterando nei fatti il raffinato gioco di parole *ἄηται / Ἀητόν* in chiusura di verso<sup>76</sup>.

In secondo luogo, Germanico elimina il riferimento topografico–spaziale al Cigno (v. 312 Ὀρνις), costellazione che era stata descritta in precedenza<sup>77</sup>, sopprimendo così un elemento che si frappone tra le due costellazioni. Evidentemente l'interesse del poeta si focalizza su altri aspetti inerenti alle due costellazioni e mette perciò in secondo piano la presentazione di dati astronomico–spaziali, essendo maggiormente intenzionato a costruire un quadro narrativamente coeso. Il poeta, infatti, fornisce per entrambi i *signa* un'eziologia mitologica unitaria: Freccia e Aquila sono giustapposte per il loro ruolo di attributi del padre degli dèi. Quindi il mito si sostituisce alla illustrazione della topografia celeste e funziona da strumento concettuale per associare con coerenza due figure differenti.

Il risultato di questa operazione è un pannello complesso dove si fondono diverse spinte letterarie. Prima di tutto è necessario mettere in luce che i due catasterismi sono inseriti in una struttura circolare, che assume le sembianze di un gioco di scatole cinesi. La spiegazione della vicinanza spaziale tra la Freccia e l'Aquila è il punto di partenza di arrivo del racconto del ratto di Ganimede, ma è anche mezzo attraverso il quale la *Sagitta* viene associata alla figura di Giove. La struttura circolare del passo, incorniciato dalle espressioni *quam seruat Iouis ales* (v. 315) e da *Telo*<sup>78</sup> *appositus custos* trova quindi una corrispondenza nella circolarità nelle interpretazioni eziologiche.

75 Medesima espressione impiegata da Manil. 1, 345 vd. a riguardo Rossetti 2022, 176 s. Nell'uso di *ales* in questo verso forse concorre la mediazione di Cic. Arat. 85 che usa il sostantivo come traduce di Ὀρνις come Cigno.

76 Sul gioco di parole vd. Kidd 1997, 300; il *pun* viene, invece, riprodotto da Cic. Arat. 86–87 (con la giustapposizione di *Aquila e Aquilo*).

77 Phaen. 275–280.

78 *Telum* è equivalente dal punto di vista della nomenclatura astronomica a *Sagitta* (vd. Le Boeuffe 1977, 113 e Feraco 2022, 256): apprezzabile, quindi, il tentativo di *uariatio* lessicale.



L'interazione tra testo e immagine, in questo complesso pannello, assume un ruolo sicuramente rilevante: se per l'interpretazione della figura dell'Aquila il poeta si è fondato sulla tradizione eratostenica<sup>79</sup>, lo stesso non si può dire riguardo alla costellazione della Freccia. Le fonti, infatti, individuano l'aition del catasterismo nella vendetta di Asclepio da parte di Apollo<sup>80</sup>, oppure nella vicenda di Eracle uccisore del volatile che rodeva il fegato di Prometeo<sup>81</sup>. Per questo motivo ci si può spingere a ipotizzare che l'associazione mitologica delle due costellazioni (forse una felice innovazione di Germanico) sia stata suggerita anche da un tramite figurativo<sup>82</sup>.

Numerosissime sono le fonti iconografiche, su materiali e supporti differenti<sup>83</sup>, che effigiano Giove con aquila, scettro e fulmine<sup>84</sup> come attributi della sua maestà su tutti gli altri dèi. In una vignetta presso la Casa dell'Efebo a Pompei (I 7, 10–12.19), ad esempio, sono associati l'Aquila, il fulmine, lo scettro accanto a un globo celeste, stessi elementi sono presenti, sempre in una pittura pompeiana, ora conservata presso il Museo archeologico nazionale di Napoli<sup>85</sup>, come attributi di un Giove in trono. Inoltre, non sarà fuori luogo sottolineare come questa iconografia fosse anche connessa alla rappresentazione del potere imperiale elemento che non era certo estraneo alla sensibilità dei *Phaenomena* di Germanico<sup>86</sup>. Il poeta, dunque, non solo sovrappone la *Sagitta* celeste alle armi di Giove (e all'immagine del suo scettro che effettivamente appare simile a una lancia), ma anche al fulmine. I commenti osservano giustamente, sulla scorta dei lessici<sup>87</sup>, che il termine *telum* varrebbe

79 Eratost. cat. 30, vedi anche Hyg. astr. 2, 16, 1.

80 Eratost. cat. 29.

81 Hyg. astr. 2, 15.

82 Innovazione che trova un parziale riscontro in Manil. 1, 343–345 *tum magni Iouis ales fertur in altum, / adsueta euolitans gestet ceu fulmina mundi, / digna Ioue et caelo, quod sacris instruit armis* (“allora svetta in alto l'uccello dedicato al grande Giove e volando porta in giro i consueti fulmini del Cosmo, degni di Giove e del cielo, che fornì di sacre armi.”), dove l'Aquila celeste viene rappresentata come l'armigera di Giove e associata all'attributo del fulmine. A questo luogo si aggiunga anche 5, 489 (*fulmina missa refert et caelo militat ales*) con Hübner 2010, 295 s.

83 Vd. LIMC 8 (1997) 458–461 s. v. Zeus/Iuppiter (F. Canciani).

84 Cfr. per esempio LIMC 8 (1997) 427 n. 36; 428 n. 52–55; 429 n. 74; 431 n. 99 s. v. Zeus/Iuppiter (F. Canciani).

85 Napoli, Museo archeologico nazionale, inv. 9551.

86 Su Germanico e il potere imperiale Montanari Caldini 2010. In questo contesto, inoltre, giova ricordare come in alcuni manoscritti illustrati dei *Phaenomena* di Germanico l'Augusto del proemio sia rappresentato nei termini di un Giove a cavallo di un'Aquila portatrice dei fulmini (cfr. Thiele 1898, 90 e 144 s).

87 Feraco 2022, 256 e OLD, 1991.

anche per *fulmen* e che, in questa accezione viene usato anche dallo stesso *Princeps* in una discussione di carattere meteorologico (fr. 3, 106 Feraco = 4, 106 Le Boeuffle)<sup>88</sup>. Il richiamo alla memoria visiva dei suoi lettori certamente può aver aiutato il nostro autore nella rappresentazione di un quadro astronomico nuovo e originale, dove la grandezza epica del padre degli dèi contrasta con il racconto di uno dei suoi più celebri *furta*<sup>89</sup>.

Per quanto riguarda la rappresentazione dell'Aquila come *armiger*, portatrice della saetta, il Nostro autore si era rifatto senza dubbio a una consolidata tradizione che fa capo a Virgilio<sup>90</sup>, un contesto di forte caratura visuale, in quanto *ekphrasis* della clamide donata da Enea a Cloanto<sup>91</sup>. L'*Eneide* di Virgilio non è l'unico parallelo per il nostro passo: anche le *Metamorfosi* ovidiane<sup>92</sup> possono essere state il tramite attraverso il quale la figura dell'*aquila armiger* venne connessa al racconto del rapimento di Ganimede<sup>93</sup>. Anzi, in un certo senso il *fulmen* è centrale nell'impostazione del breve racconto di Ovidio, a identificare l'animale che più di tutti è degno di effigiare la grandezza del padre degli dèi.

Cifra precipua del brano è la sinergica unione di due spunti letterari differenti. Da un lato il breve cenno di Virgilio con il dettaglio delle zampe del volatile, che in Germanico da uncinete divengono innocue per il giovane

88 Interessante aggiungere a questi luoghi anche la spiegazione razionalizzante dell'aquila in Plin. nat. 2, 146: tale volatile si ritiene (*figitur*, ma anche "si rappresenta") *armiger*, ossia, portatore di fulmini, poiché si riteneva fosse uno dei pochi animali a risultare immune al potere dei fulmini.

89 Cfr. Possanza 2004, 190 s.

90 Verg. Aen. 5, 255 *sublimem pedibus rapuit Iouis armiger uncis* ("con i suoi piedi uncinati l'armigero di Giove rapì in alto il fanciullo").

91 Sul passo e la costruzione ekphrastica vd. Fratantuono – Smith 2015, 313 s.

92 Ov. met. 10, 155–161 *Rex superum Phrygii quondam Ganymedis amore / arsit, et inuentum est aliquid, quod Iuppiter esse, / quam quod erat, mallet. nulla tamen alite uerti / dignatur, nisi quae posset sua fulmina ferre. / Nec mora, percusso mendacibus aere pennis / abripit Iliaden, qui nunc quoque pocula miscet / inuitaque Ioui nectar Iunone ministrat* ("Il re degli dèi s'innamorò una volta di Ganimede di Frigia, ed escogitò di diventare qualcosa che gli piacque di più dello stesso esser Giove. Ma non in latro uccello degnò di mutarsi se non in quello capace di portare i suoi fulmini. Detto fatto: battendo l'aria con le penne mendaci rapisce il troiano, che ancora oggi riempie le coppe e serve a Giove il nettare spiacciando a Giunone", traduzione di G. Chiarini in Reed 2013). A questo luogo si aggiungano anche 12, 560–561; 15, 386.

93 Luoghi questi che sono ben attivi anche in Germ. phaen. 688–689 *redit armiger uncis / unguibus, ante omnis gratus tibi, Iuppiter, ales* (levata dell'Aquila simultanea al tramonto del Procione) "ritorna l'uccello armigero dagli artigli adunchi, più di tutti gli altri a te gradito, o Giove".

destinato a diventare il coppiere degli dèi, nonché il fermo immagine sul frame narrativo nel quale Ganimede viene sollevato in cielo. Dall'altro lato il fluttuare tipicamente ovidiano tra la *grauitas* epica di Giove e il risvolto erotico della vicenda<sup>94</sup>, bene rappresentato dalla ripresa del perfetto *arsit* (in *positio princeps* in entrambi i poeti)<sup>95</sup>, nonché il richiamo al tema della distruzione di Troia.

Non si può escludere che anche nella rappresentazione del momento di maggior tensione del *furtum* fosse implicato, accanto a tali modelli visuali, anche un tramite visivo. Teresa Mantero<sup>96</sup> suggerisce un'ipotetica illustrazione a supporto di materiali di ascendenza erastostenica; tuttavia, il discorso è un altro e più articolato di quanto posto dalla studiosa. Germanico, in un contesto caratterizzato da una certa attenzione all'ambito figurativo, avrebbe ravvisato nell'ipotesto virgiliano la presenza di un chiaro modello iconografico<sup>97</sup>, sfidando così il suo lettore non solo nel riconoscimento dell'ipotesto, ma anche dell'immagine terrestre alla sua base. Non bisogna, infatti, sottovalutare, come già evidenziato, la pregnanza del contesto ekphrastico di Aen. 5, 255, a tal proposito non sarà inutile ricordare, assieme a Franco Bellandi, che "l'intervento dell'Aquila quale strumento del ratto sembra fortunata innovazione [...] sorta più probabilmente nell'ambito delle arti figurative che non in letteratura"<sup>98</sup>.

A questo punto occorre considerare in chiusura un'ultima questione, anticipata alla nt. 72 e che riguarda la *constitutio textus* del passo. Gli interpreti<sup>99</sup> generalmente leggono il *telum* del v. 319 alla stregua di un riferimento al dardo scoccato da amore, facendovi gravitare sopra la proposizione relativa immediatamente seguente. La proposta di lettura è suggestiva, ma forse eccessivamente capziosa nell'inserire un elemento eccentrico rispetto al contesto, di qui la chiosa di Gregor Maurach<sup>100</sup>, che ricorda il ruolo dell'*Aquila armiger*. Stanti queste osservazioni sarebbe forse più opportuno, con buona pace per il consenso dei codici, accogliere a testo la congettura *quom* di Hugo Grotius, possibile *lectio difficilior*, che bene si confà al contesto solenne del

94 Per questo punto anche Reed 2013, 202.

95 Ov. met. 156 in fine di verso; Germ. phaen. 319.

96 Mantero 1987, 114.

97 Numerosi i paralleli iconografici per la scena cfr. LIMC 4 (1988) 159 s. 167 s. s. v. Ganymedes (H. Sichtermann).

98 Enciclopedia Virgiliana 3 (1985) 634 s. v. Ganimede (F. Bellandi). La presenza in letteratura dell'aquila come agente del ratto è riscontrabile dall'età ellenistica, per esempio in Meleagro (Anth. Pal. 12, 64–65).

99 Feraco 2022, 255 s. con bibliografia.

100 Maurach 1978, 123.

brano. La proposizione temporale, connettendo la vicenda alla caduta di Troia, collocherebbe (in una chiave ovidiana) l'innamoramento di Giove per Ganimede in un passato mitico, fornendo così un'erudita precisazione cronologica al racconto del mito e contestualizzando nel tempo il catasterismo dell'Aquila<sup>101</sup>.

## 5. Conclusioni

Gli esempi qui portati mostrano, anche solo parzialmente, come l'interdipendenza tra testo e immagini si inserisca in un quadro complesso di rimandi, anche su piani di significato tra loro differenti. I passi che sono stati illustrati possono indurci a pensare che l'immaginario dei poeti astronomi non si sostanziasse soltanto di una generica consultazione di fonti iconografiche, oppure di un impiego di figure incise su un globo stellare (situazione che spesso viene invocata dagli interpreti qualora dovessero mancare palmari raffronti testuali). Il concetto di intervisualità ha quindi il pregio di descrivere la relazione strettissima, direi quasi strutturale, dei due media nei termini di un sistema di allusioni intermediali a *patterns* visuali noti e particolarmente significativi per la memoria eidetica del lettore. Un simile approccio, dunque, impedisce di cogliere i riferimenti a 'fonti iconografiche' come una palmare riproduzione di una singola e precisa opera d'arte, materialmente e concretamente individuabile.

L'*excursus* teorico-metodologico che Manilio inserisce in coda alla sua descrizione della sfera celeste è una valida introduzione per comprendere quale grado di complessità abbia raggiunto tale 'traduzione' testuale di dati visivi. Abbiamo, infatti, visto come il poeta avesse cercato di colmare il divario esistente tra la natura dei fenomeni e la loro rappresentazione artistica attraverso il ricorso alla visione interiore. Tema questo che ci riporta all'assunto teorico dal quale siamo partiti in questa discussione: il meccanismo invocato dal poeta per guidare il suo lettore nella contemplazione/lettura del cielo non può che basarsi sull'idea di una memoria visuale condivisa e su dispositivi di ricreazione delle immagini (l'*ἐνάργεια*, ad esempio).

Il caso del catasterismo di Arione, invece, ci ha potuto mostrare in che modo Ovidio, ricorrendo all'immaginario visivo dei suoi lettori, dialogasse in modo serrato con la tradizione erudita dei *Catasterismi*, ben rappresentata dal *De astronomia* di Igino. Il mito ovidiano di Arione e del Delfino è un

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101 Non sarebbe nemmeno fuori luogo pensare a un richiamo al topos di catulliana memoria dell'amore che manda in rovina re e città prima potenti (cfr. C. 51).

ottimo caso di studio per comprendere come poteva operare il meccanismo intervisuale: come abbiamo avuto modo di notare, il poeta ricrea l'immagine stellare del cetaceo, avendo a mente tanto un ben preciso schema iconografico, quanto una trafila testuale che associa la celebrazione della fama del mitico cantore alla costruzione di una statua in bronzo nel luogo che più di tutti reca memoria dell'evento prodigioso.

L'esempio da Germanico, da un punto di vista differente, consente di osservare come il ricorso a ben determinati referenti visuali si possa inserire in quel progetto di aggiornamento e riscrittura del modello greco, come per altro si può notare anche in altri punti della sua traduzione<sup>102</sup>. Centrale nella costruzione del quadro della Freccia e di Ganimede il richiamo a modelli visuali, anche in vista di una originale rielaborazione dei *Phaenomena*. Il passo di Germanico non è, però, un sistema chiuso: il rimando intervisuale non coinvolge, a senso unico un testo e un'immagine, ma può innestarsi all'interno di meccanismi allusivi a più livelli di complessità. Centrale a questo riguardo il ruolo dell'ipotesto dell'*ekphrasis* virgiliana (elemento che non è stato ancora debitamente valorizzato dalla critica): il riconoscimento del modello, in un gioco erudito raffinatissimo, si completa concretamente nell'allusione a uno schema visuale ben riconosciuto.

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102 Cfr. Le Boeuffle 1975, XV–XXIV.

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## Palmyrene Portraiture through Gazes Cast. The Practice of Collective Memory in Archaeological Archives

**Abstract** Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, archaeologists have worked diligently on preserving the art and architecture of Palmyra. A tool in these heritage preservation efforts has been the archive of Danish archaeologist, Harold Ingholt, which documents hundreds of Palmyrene funerary sculptures. This chapter outlines an approach to the Ingholt Archive that foregrounds the practice of collective memory-making. Starting from the assumption that memory is never wholly individual, but social, the paper utilizes Bourdieu's theory of practice in the gazes cast upon the Ingholt Archive as a strategy for collective memory formation. In tracing the continuity of engagement with the portraits since the ancient city's 'rediscovery', the approach places knowledge and action in a positive dialectical relationship. Such an approach centered on practice considers the forming, storing, and promoting of memory by engaging with the portraits through the archive in the present-day.

Deeply carved, her almond-shaped eyes cast their gaze back at the viewer (fig. 1). The irises, once inlaid, strengthen their penetrative effect, as do the shadows resulting from the depth of carving. The eyes sit in shallow sockets beneath heavy eyelids and thin, incised brows. She is the 'Beauty of Palmyra', a funerary portrait of an elite woman from the late 2nd cent. AD, and her gaze speaks volumes. Her eyes draw the viewer in, inviting him or her to continue looking, to search her face for clues to her story. The act of prolonged looking will allow the viewer to slowly unravel the many narrative threads contained in her expressive eyes. The viewer's gaze, then, is no less important than that of the Beauty; it works as much more than a second glance and instead is an essential tool in art historical research. The pleasure



Fig. 1: An archive sheet for PS 675.

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of viewing such ancient portraiture exceeds her physical or formal allure, as the viewer uses his or her gaze to revisit the past. Close-looking has the potential to breathe new life into a familiar sculpture through resulting re-interpretations and reutilizations. This paper seeks to excavate the narrative stratigraphies of the Beauty and her contemporaries by casting a gaze at an archive of ancient Roman sculpture. This contribution explores the portrait sculpture of ancient Palmyra, a provincial Roman city, present-day Tadmor, Syria. The province of Syria was situated along the empire's eastern frontier, as it bordered the Parthians of Mesopotamia to the east and Nabataeans of the Arabian Peninsula to the southeast. As an oasis city in the Syrian desert, Palmyra played a critical role in caravan trade with the Near East, Persian Gulf, and beyond, having outposts along the Silk Road. Palmyra presents itself as an ideal case study for a reflection on the productive work that a

second gaze offers. My exploration into the ‘intertextual’ attributes of Roman portraiture reception comes in the form of the Ingholt Archive, an annotated 20th cent.-record of excavated Palmyrene portraits. Of the rich body of artistic material that comes from Palmyra’s funerary contexts, I focus here primarily on the Beauty of Palmyra and other Palmyrene women as they are recorded in the Ingholt Archive.

In the first part of this paper, I introduce Harald Ingholt and the creation of his archive. I argue that the formation of the archive over the course of the 20th cent. and its contemporary uses is a practice of human-material engagement. My approach to the archive differs from traditional approaches that think of the archive solely as a source for studying the ancient sculptures and instead considers an alternative: the archive as art object itself. My alternative approach to the archive draws upon Bourdieu’s theory of practice. When the archive – its pictorial and written components as one – is approached in a manner that foregrounds practice, its critical role in collective memory making can emerge. I suggest that the archive is a material component in which collective memory resides and is generated, and relies upon the assumption that memory is never wholly individual, but social. The aspects of engagement with the Ingholt Archive – its original, published, and digital formats – rely upon the relationship between knowledge and action to form and reform social groups. These communities, or group identities, are expressed and shaped through tangible and visual traces. In the second part, I take the Beauty of Palmyra as one case study from the folios of the Ingholt Archive. This well-known portrait of a Palmyrene woman from the late 2nd to early 3rd cent. AD, resides in Copenhagen’s Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek and features prominently in the archive as well as in present-day scholarship on Palmyrene portraiture. I would like to explore questions of practice in the relationship between archive and sculpture, arguing that ancient Palmyrene portraiture across these two distinct media play a critical role in collective memory, consciously or unconsciously. A second gaze cast upon Palmyra, through the Ingholt Archive, I argue, is not merely engagement with simulacra or reuse of an image, but plays a critical role in an integrated Palmyrene history.

## Ingholt and the archive

The Beauty’s exotic eyes lay beneath her beaded headdress, rather distinctive features among the canon of Roman sculpture. Palmyra is, of course, exceptional as it provides the largest corpus of funerary portraiture from a

community outside the Italian peninsula. This corpus of almost 4,000 portraits has been spread around the world across 235 collections, notably the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, the Musée du Louvre in Paris, and the Arkeoloji Müzesi in Istanbul<sup>1</sup>. But Palmyrene portraiture also sets itself apart in style. The funerary portraits are unlike their Italian counterparts of the Roman imperial period, which draw heavily upon Classical and Hellenistic Greek ideals of beauty. Instead, Palmyra's strong sense of local identity, developed at the edge of the Empire, is reflected in its idiosyncratic funerary portraiture. Highly stylized, the portraits capture the likenesses of the deceased in a locally specific manner, unmistakably Palmyrene. Much has been made of these portraits in recent scholarship – the work of Rubina Raja with the Palmyra Portrait Project since December 2011 deserves mention<sup>2</sup> – and since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, the preservation of these sculptures became a priority among the cultural heritage community<sup>3</sup>. The recent publication of the Ingholt Archive allows for further investigation into the histories of these alluring objects and sparks new research questions about the sculptures and their original context as well as their afterlives<sup>4</sup>.

Widening the lens out from the Beauty's eyes, her full visage comes into focus. The cool, pale limestone is complimented by a few remaining traces of pigment: a contrasting warm golden tone is easily visible on her clothing, headdress, and jewelry. Her left hand, now broken, was raised to pull back her veil, while her right forearm is folded across her chest. Even from a distance, the Beauty's gaze has a penetrating ability. It is perhaps for this reason, in addition to her fine state of preservation, that Harald Ingholt was so captivated by her upon his discovery in 1929. The excavation of the Beauty in the late 1920s is not an isolated event. The French Mandate for Syria and the Lebanon, which was in effect from 1923–1946, saw a great amount of foreign

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1 Raja 2018; Raja 2019b. See also, Bobou et al. 2023, 47 n. 4.

2 Kropp – Raja 2014, 393. R. Raja, director, and the participants of the Palmyra Portrait Project, funded by the Carlsberg Foundation, have produced numerous publications since the project's inception in 2012. A full bibliography of the project has been published online: Palmyra Portrait Project, Project publications <[https://figshare.com/articles/dataset/Palmyra\\_Portrait\\_Project\\_full\\_bibliography\\_March\\_2021/14259707/4](https://figshare.com/articles/dataset/Palmyra_Portrait_Project_full_bibliography_March_2021/14259707/4)> (29.03.2024).

3 For example, the ALIPH foundation generously funded the “Archive Archaeology” project, directed by R. Raja, which was responsible for publishing the Ingholt Archive, in addition to other Syrian heritage projects. I was a postdoctoral fellow on the project from October 2020–October 2022, which made this research possible. See ALIPH Foundation, Our actions <<https://www.aliph-foundation.org/en/projects>> (29.03.2024) for full list of the foundation's projects.

4 Bobou et al. 2023.

archaeological interest in the region, and it was against this backdrop that Ingholt and others conducted their excavations. The mandate from the newly formed League of Nations in the aftermath of World War One partitioned the former Ottoman Empire and brought Syria, Lebanon, and parts of what is now southeast Turkey under French control. While the mandate claimed to be an arrangement different from colonialism as the region would eventually be eligible for self-governance, one cannot help but see the period as one of colonial control in Syrian history. Similar to the British control over what is now Iraq in the same historical moment, many artworks of Near Eastern origin were exported to collections in Europe and the United States, separating much archaeological material from its local context. The removal of the sculptures from Syria during the mandate is a key moment in the story of Palmyra's funerary portraiture. The archive is a materialization of the colonial period, as it documents captive sculptures that have been removed from their country of origin. Many memories are contained within the archive and many communities formed around the archive and its sculptures. With the current efforts in art historical and archaeological fields to decolonize histories and include narratives from traditionally underrepresented groups, archival research presents a unique opportunity to access the past.

Ingholt was a Danish archaeologist active during the 20th cent., completing his higher doctoral dissertation, *Studier over Palmyrensk Skulptur*,<sup>5</sup> in 1928 and participating in archaeological missions to Syria<sup>6</sup>. A life-long commitment to the archaeology of Palmyra allowed Ingholt to collect hundreds of images of Palmyrene funerary portraiture and curate them into an extensive archive, complete with his annotations. Shortly before his death in 1985, Ingholt donated this resource to the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek in Copenhagen, where the archive still resides today<sup>7</sup>. Neatly stored in a series of blue binders on the Glyptotek's shelves, the archive was studied and reorganized by Glyptotek curator Gunhild Ploug, culminating in the publication of a new catalog of Palmyrene sculpture at the Glyptotek in 1993<sup>8</sup>. In early 2023, the Ingholt Archive was published across four volumes and the folios put online, thereby providing widespread access to the resource<sup>9</sup>.

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5 Bobou et al. 2021.

6 Ingholt excavated in Palmyra in 1924, 1925, 1928, and the 1930s. He also excavated at Hama from 1930–1938. Raja – Sørensen 2015a, 26, 58; Raja – Sørensen 2015b, 26, 58; Raja 2019a; Raja et al. 2021.

7 Bobou et al. 2022.

8 Ploug 1993.

9 Bobou et al. 2023. As an open access resource: R. Raja, Ingholt Archive. Figshare. Collection <<https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.c.5509725.v1>> (29. 03. 2024).

Since the initiation of the Palmyra Portrait Project in December 2011, the variety of studies conducted on the corpus of Palmyrene sculptures has been significant<sup>10</sup>. The more recent publications on the Ingholt Archive itself have been one direction that these studies have undertaken<sup>11</sup>. Yet, within these studies the relationship between human actors, geography and culture has not been well-explored or fully articulated. I argue that geography, specifically the role of the French Mandate, and culture do play an important role in the construction of collective memory. Following what art historian of the ancient Near East Marian Feldman has suggested for Levantine ivories, I proposed that the critical link that unites these aspects of the Ingholt Archive is practice. Practice establishes a network of multidirectional exchange between human actors, geography and culture, “such that all participants in the network both exert a force and are acted upon by other forces”<sup>12</sup>. I understand this proposal as humans and objects in a potentially asymmetrical or uneven exchange of aspects of identity. As such, human actors, geography, and culture, are conceptually linked through the practice. With the process of engagement in mind, I would like to develop the Ingholt Archive as a collective memory practice.

## Memory as practice

Connecting memory concepts to archival research is the notion of practice, which I argue, is the generating of an embodied history. I argue that in the case of the Ingholt Archive, memory contributes to emerging cultural identities through a shared knowledge and experience in both the distant past and today. Meaning, that I suggest the archive is an embodied history with deep continuity, which can be best understood as a practice of social memory. In this suggestion is embedded the argument for a link between history and memory that is materialized in the Ingholt Archive. The archive gives physical, tangible shape to shared memories and histories, and it is this social aspect of memory that relies upon ideas of practice. To first establish a definition of memory, I turn to the text *On Collective Memory* by sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, particularly the text’s conclusion<sup>13</sup>. The 20th cent.-French sociologist builds upon Durkheimian notions of memory to establish

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10 See note 2 above, for a full project bibliography.

11 See, for example, Bobou et al. 2023; Miranda – Raja 2023.

12 Feldman 2012.

13 Halbwachs 1992.



the existence of a social memory. Halbwachs' theorization of memory posits that social frameworks condition individual thought and action and that there is no such thing as a universal collective memory that transcends a group composed of individuals, but that individuals – and their thoughts, emotions, and memories – develop and function socially. Social frameworks are the framework upon which groups are formed. The frameworks can be constructed by objects, as objects, such as the Ingholt Archive, are both a means and repository of memory that allow individuals and groups of individuals to relate. Finding common ground between individuals to form groups through engagement with common objects is how I understand Halbwachs' suggestion that social frameworks are essential to memory. I aim to take this a step further and argue that the archive not only connects individuals to Syria's ancient past, but also help them to shape their present and connection to other communities.

I further refine my definition of memory studies through the work of social historian Paul Connerton<sup>14</sup>. Connerton picks up Halbwachs' theories and expands upon them with a focus on performance as a primary means of building and perpetuating social memory. Social memory, he suggests, is generated and relies on performance. For Connerton, memory is only accessed through traces of the past and, as such, is reliant upon performances that are strengthened through engagement with objects<sup>15</sup>. Thus, there are both material and immaterial (performance) aspects to memory. The relationship between human actors and objects is critical to the formation and perpetuation of memory. This relationship is performed both consciously and unconsciously through what he calls inscribed and incorporated practices: inscribed practices 'store and retrieve' information external to the human body, such as in print or on computers, and is a highly self-conscious action; incorporated practices can be conveyed either intentionally or unintentionally, and are practices that are habitual such as a handshake or a smile<sup>16</sup>. These two aspects of memory, inscribed and incorporated, are not mutually exclusive and indeed have areas of overlap. It is through the theories of Halbwachs and Connerton that I conceptualize memory as highly social and variegated, ever shifting and reforming.

I find a link between archival research and memory studies in the theory of practice advanced by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and my application of his theory stresses the social dimension of practice in the process of

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14 Connerton 1989.

15 Connerton 1989, 13. 37.

16 Connerton 1989, 72f.

memory<sup>17</sup>. Bourdieu's scholarship, notably *The Logic of Practice*, provides a theoretical construct within which I suggest memory-making strategies are at work<sup>18</sup>. The strategies are unconscious and rooted in action, a bodily logic, not unlike what Connerton's inscribed and incorporated practices. With this in mind, what Bourdieu calls 'know how', I understand as embodied practices in the social world, developing one's 'feel for the game', which stems from *habitus*. *Habitus* describes the way by which human actors pre-subjectively perceive and respond to subjective social experiences and environments so that they are inculcated and internalized. A critically important aspect of the *habitus* is its relationship to a bodily logic: social structures become embodied as habits, skills, and dispositions that work in a practical way, conscious and unconscious. Utilizing Bourdieu's perspective allows me to emphasize the social dimension of the memory practices that I see at play in the Ingholt Archive. On a very basic level, the repetitive action or learned *habitus* that happens with creating or studying the archive, allows human actors to develop his or her 'feel for the game', and internalize the behavior. Analogously, I see memory as an ever-evolving practice, shifting and reshaping along with humans rather than a singular crystallized form. The archive is never 'finished' or 'complete', but will continue to grow, change, and refocus as scholars utilize the resource. The papers in this volume are considering texts and objects through a second gaze, which I suggest is active rather than passive and generates more than just another glance, but also a third, fourth and so on. The practice of visiting and revisiting the archive, of viewing and reviewing the sculptures are behaviors that generate meaning. In other words, the 'meaningfulness' of the Ingholt Archive is in doing, or the gazes cast.

Bourdieu's theory of practice and an understanding of social memory through Halbwachs and Connerton assert the critical role of objects. Collective memory as a practice suggests that the Ingholt Archive is imbued with agency. The archive as an object of study itself is not only acted upon or consumed by humans through their embodied engagement, but I argue that the archive shares in the power relations at play. Its evolutions effect human actors changing how one responds, feels, and acts. The Ingholt Archive's material form allows scholars to access the past of ancient Palmyra and of 20th cent.-western archaeology in a way that is distinct from narrative histories. As the ancient Palmyrenes graphically commemorated their deceased through portraiture, the archive commemorates the long-ago culture and the

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17 Bourdieu 1977.

18 Bourdieu 1990.

practices of archaeologists in the more recent past. The Palmyrene funerary portraits act as a material record of a society that wishes to remember, and developed a distinct local style of illustrating a belonging to that society<sup>19</sup>. The enduring nature of Palmyra's funerary reliefs, and the continuity of memory into present-day archaeology through the Ingholt Archive illustrate the foundational nature of memory to social groups and community identities. The Ingholt Archive is not merely a collection of images, but an art object with a degree of agency in the formation and perpetuation of collective memory. Bourdieu's theory of practice is essential to understanding how history can be an embodied practice, so that users of the archive internalize memory. The archive, through practice, keeps Palmyra's past alive. The shape of memories of Palmyra has grown and transformed over centuries, and these movements of Palmyrene memory continue into the present as users of the archive store and retrieve knowledge. Palmyrene culture is dynamic, suffering significant blows due to war and looting, but continues to form and reform through the practice of memory that takes place with the material archive.

### Palmyrene portraiture through gazes cast

The Beauty of Palmyra is pasted at the center of nine separate archive sheets (fig. 2). The sheets range from pale brown to yellow in tone, with annotations in various pens and pencils scribbled alongside the photographs. Ingholt wrote his notes in Danish, also listing bibliography for the portraits in French, German, and English. Vertically written in the top right corner of each sheet is the number 675, a number assigned to the portrait by Ingholt. Centered at the top of each sheet, in quotation marks, is "PS 885", a number assigned by Ploug during her reorganization. An investigation of the archive sheets related to the Beauty of Palmyra allow me to articulate how engagement with the archive is a memory practice.

It is not possible to ascertain which of the images of the Beauty Ingholt obtained first, but one image of the nine is unique (fig. 3). Rather than a photograph of the Beauty before a blank background, this small image shows her in an exterior setting upon a sandy ground. Written on the sheet at the image's bottom right corner is "Qasr Abjad", or "the white house" in Arabic, which is the name of a tomb in Palmyra's West Necropolis. As has been

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19 Assmann 2006, 7.



Fig. 2: The nine archive sheets for PS 675.  
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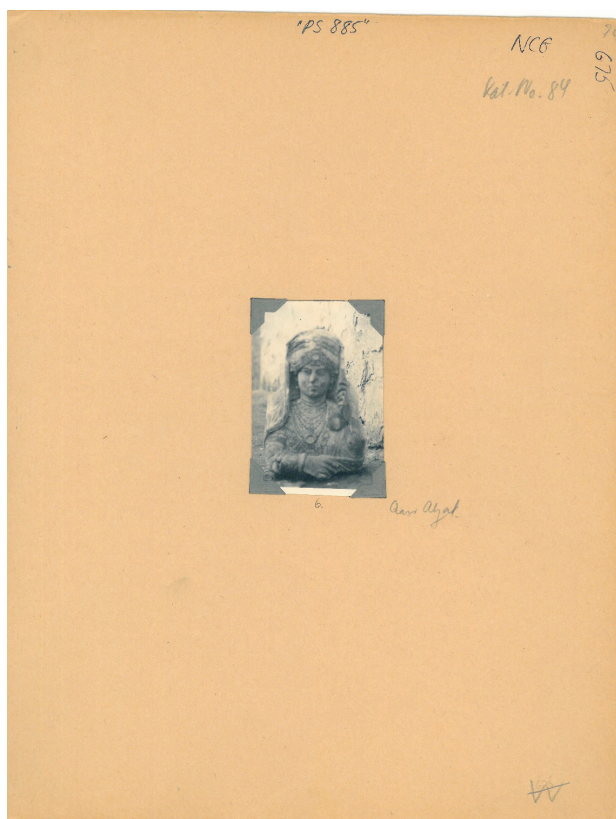


Fig. 3: An archive sheet for PS 675.

© Palmyra Portrait Project and Rubina Raja. Ingholt Archive at Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.

pointed out by Raja and others, Ingholt excavated the portrait in 1929 and Qasr Abjad is the presumed archaeological context for the portrait<sup>20</sup>.

The Beauty of Palmyra is an enigma in that we do not know who she was in life. We can surmise that she was of the local elite, based on her high degree of ornamentation and high quality of the portrait. She acquired the moniker 'Beauty of Palmyra' from Ingholt, who writes in his excavation diary that she is "the most beautiful female bust I have ever seen"<sup>21</sup>. Other than the fact that the portrait must come from the Qasr Abjad tomb in Palmyra's

<sup>20</sup> Raja et al. 2020. Cf. Raja 2015.

<sup>21</sup> Raja 2019a, 44f.

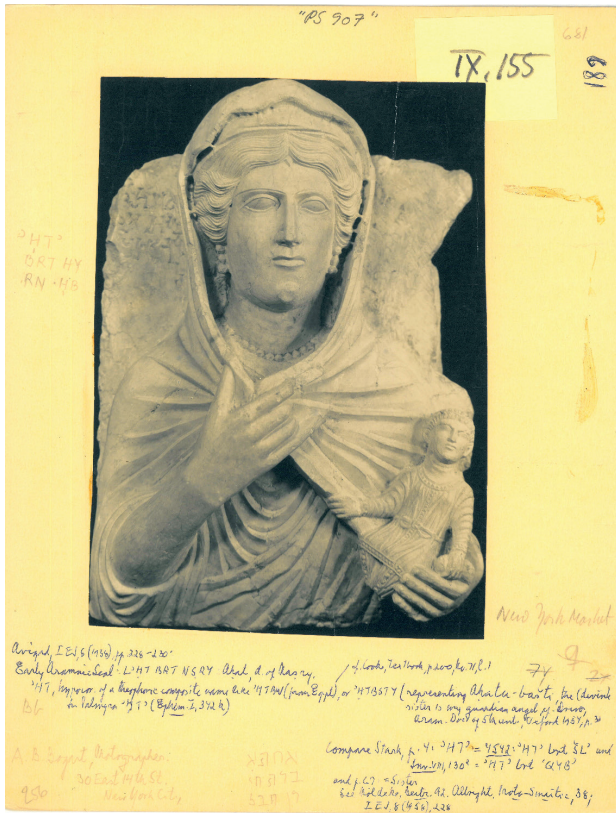


Fig. 4: An archive sheet for PS 681.  
 © Palmyra Portrait Project and Rubina Raja. Ingholt Archive at Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek.

west necropolis, we know little about the woman<sup>22</sup>. Most Palmyrene funerary portraits include inscriptions on the loculus, often appearing on either side of the subject’s head. As inscriptions increase the market value of the objects, it is not unusual to come across falsified inscriptions. There are many examples of original inscriptions and they are rather formulaic. A loculus relief, known to Ingholt as PS 681, is written in Palmyrene Aramaic to the right of the woman’s head and reads “Ahita, daughter of Hairan, alas!” (fig. 4).<sup>23</sup> We can imagine that the portrait of the Beauty once contained a similar inscription that identified her and her family through her father’s line.

22 Raja et al. 2020 and Raja 2015.

23 Bobou et al. 2022.

While not my primary example of the intertextuality at play, in PS 681, we see the relationship between text and image in Palmyrene funerary portraiture. The text is simple, “Ahita, daughter of Hairan, alas”. It appears across three distinct lines and we assume that the woman depicted is the Ahita mentioned in the inscription. This is likely so, but such an assumption illustrates the problematic tendency to view works of art through linguistic frameworks. As an art historian of the ancient world, I concede that I am biased and seek to promote understandings of works of art outside the historical legacy in which verbal and textual evidence is more highly valued. This textual supremacy that is deeply entrenched in archaeological practice has been challenged in recent times, as scholars seek to elevate the status of material evidence. Yet, we so often rely on the text to tell us what has happened. In the case of the Beauty we have no text, and as such, her identity remains a mystery. This does not mean that the sculpture does not have anything to communicate or mean. Rather, thinking along lines that separate text and image into opposing categories, or reduce images to their accompanying texts, limits understandings of the ancient engagement with such portraits. Rather there is an intertextual performance at play, one that is highly social and is critical to the development of collective memory-making.

The sculptures were created during the Roman Empire as an act of remembering the deceased. It must not be forgotten that Palmyrene portraits are of a funerary nature and despite their idealized physiognomy they are meant to represent real individuals. Thousands of such portraits were made and the tombs were visited by the family. These tombs are familial, containing generations. One could visit these tombs either below the earth or in a distinctive Palmyrene tower tomb and participate in the social act of remembering. The almost generic nature of Palmyrene funerary portraits and the formulaic inscriptions, from our modern perspective are contributions to the unique shape of Palmyrene culture. Yet, for the Palmyrenes, their culture is not exotic but familiar, indoctrinated, *habitus*. For those visiting the tombs, the repeated viewing of these objects is an internalized behavior that builds memory and community. While this memory and community building is specific to each family and each tomb, the practice of building family tombs and visiting the deceased is a larger, Palmyrene-wide practice. Here, I would like to stress the significance of engagement and entanglement of human entities with the physical world, and how approaching Palmyrene material this way promotes social identity and memory-making processes. We may not know exactly what these objects truly meant to their original audience, but their attention to details, adherence to a locally-specific style, and inscriptions lamenting the passing of the deceased were all there for the viewer

to spark memory and emotion. Moreover, I find the practice of visiting and revisiting the deceased indicative of how these portraits were meaningful. Or, the meaningfulness of the sculptures is neither singular, nor stable, but forever shifting and reforming together through human engagement. Thus they are unstable memories despite the permanence of the stone upon which the visages and inscriptions are carved. After generations the portraits are persons unknown to the living, but nevertheless critical to family identity and memory. As such, the distance of bonds, impermanence of memory, and tactivity of human remembrance all work to develop Palmyrene portraits as social and dynamic, and this echoes on in the afterlives of the sculptures.

My primary interest in the Ingholt Archive is the photographs of the portrait sculptures, and as Ingholt was also interested in the sculptures as well as their inscriptions, seems to share my bias that it is the images that drive the archive. Ingholt gathered multiple views of the same sculpture even, in the case of the Beauty, multiple of the same image. Even if Ingholt's intentions were not so, these photographs are today, also art objects in their own right. This of course raises questions of artist intentionality which are often difficult, yet nevertheless enticing to disentangle. Today the archive sheets remain an object of study and their photography evermore important to dissect. The frontal views of the Beauty against a black background with a diffused light source, yield low contrast images, softening shadows and obscuring details. The images in the archive downplay the drama of the *loculus* relief and, as black and white images, fail to capture her splendid polychromy. The photograph of the Beauty taken on a bias reveals the depth of her carving to the viewer and more details of her headdress and jewelry. This image is perhaps the last in a series of what I suggest are four historical moments in which the Beauty was photographed (fig. 2). First, the image taken shortly after the moment of excavation; second, there is the Beauty against a black background; the third shows her again against a black backdrop, but this time seated upon a white plinth; fourth and finally, is the image of the Beauty on an angle, not quite a profile view, also upon her white plinth. These moments show a continued interest in the portrait over time, and while she is unchanging, the circumstances around her continue to evolve.

Across the nine folios that document the Beauty of Palmyra, Ingholt and Ploug have written various notations. Some folios have many notes – mostly bibliographic references to the sculpture – while others are left mostly blank. Here we see the archive is a memory practice with Ingholt and Ploug returning to the folios over and over again, adding and subtracting. It is a repetitive and practical behavior, that internalizes the memory, a *habitus*. They, like





Fig. 5: An archive sheet for PS 675.

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scholars presently using the archive, are continually forming and reforming the memories attached to the folios. By adding, correcting, or updating information about the sculpture, the archive remains a work in progress, ever awaiting a fresh gaze to be cast upon it.

In these instances, like my earlier example of the inscription accompanying PS 681, we see a relationship between text and image on the folios. While we can assume that the relief and inscription were made at approximately the same historical moment, these annotations were added at any number of visits to the folios. In an example of the Beauty, we see annotations in blue pen as well as red pen, and pencil (fig. 5). With the image mounted at the center of the sheet, we see “Plate three, 4” above the image in red. At the top

of the sheet, in pen, is “PS 885” while in the top right corner we see in pen and pencil, “NCG/KAT. No. 84/PS 675.” At the image’s lower right corner, in pencil, is written “favre” or colors in Danish, documenting her polychromy. Also in pencil, directly below the image is “6a”. There are then two bibliographic references written in pen below the image: Dorothy Mackay’s 1949 article in the journal *Iraq*, titled “The Jewelry of Palmyra and Its Significance”, and Michael Grant’s book *The World of Rome* from 1960. At the very bottom of the folio is written “Qasr el”. The compact lines, and cross outs, in addition to the different writing implements indicates a revisiting of the folio and a forming, storing, and promoting of memory through engagement with the folios.

For a user of the archive like myself, the image and the text are both significant in engagement with the portrait. I understand the archive sheet as an art object in its own right, with the relationship between the text and the image perhaps considered a paratextual performance that promotes engagement. The presence of a text (in pencil, at the margin) in close proximity to another text or image has the potential to evoke memories and define a genre. Moreover, the two, the image and its accompanying text, are inseparable. The relationship between text and image is dynamic, informing each other and challenging modern assumptions of their separability and categorization. Certainly, images of the Beauty exist without text and the sculpture of the Beauty is presumably missing her original inscription, but in the instance of the archive, text and image work together to engage the viewer.

By engaging with the archive users are participating in a community through social memory. I am suggesting that social memory and shared archival engagement operate together as partners in a reciprocal relationship, rather than one existing prior to the other. The material presence of the archive provides a visual shape to shared memories, and social recollections promote the production and consumption of similar media. In this way, objects, such as the archive, both reflect and construct social frameworks.

## Palmyra through foreign eyes

Palmyra’s heyday came to an end in AD 272/3, when the Roman Emperor Aurelian sacked the city twice with his troops<sup>24</sup>. The destruction was a direct result of the Palmyrene’s bid for independence under the famed ruler

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24 Hartmann 2001; Smith 2013, 175–181.

Zenobia<sup>25</sup>. While she ruled in the stead of her underage son, Wallahbat, following the death of her husband Odeinathus, Zenobia expanded the Palmyrene territory to include Egypt and parts of Asia Minor. The sack of Palmyra likely did not destroy the city entirely as a Roman legion was installed there afterwards, but it certainly lost its centrality to the caravan trade and therefore its fame. The period between the end of the 3rd cent. and the Early Islamic period as well as the medieval period has only recently begun to attract attention through scholarly investigation<sup>26</sup>. Palmyra was ‘rediscovered’ by European travelers on several occasions, and perhaps the most famous rediscovery was by James Dawkins and Robert Wood, who came to Palmyra in 1751. A 1758 painting by Gavin Hamilton, now in the Scottish National Gallery (NG 2666), shows an idealized version of the Dawkins and Wood expedition and presents an image of Palmyra through a western gaze. This painting was also produced as a print, allowing the image to be widely circulated. The publication by Wood and Dawkins documents the ancient city’s architecture through description, drawing, and etching, thereby popularizing the site amongst Europeans and making it the focus of many travelers’ attention. Shortly after, in 1758, a famous set of drawings was produced by Louis-Francois Cassas furthering western – not to mention colonial – interests in the area. Despite this early but significant attention from Europe, Palmyra did not fully capture the imagination of the western world until the 19th cent. The late 19th cent. saw the arrival of both scholars and tourists, the latter of whom were on tours through the Holy Land. The Danish theologian and first Professor of the Study of Islam in Denmark, Johannes Elith Østrup, was one such visitor to Palmyra in the 1890s and his published writings about the journey describe vandalism to the site. According to Østrup, the conditions at Palmyra in the 1890s were not unlike today’s looting practices<sup>27</sup>.

The 20th cent. saw continued western interventions in Palmyra, but in a more systematic manner with the beginning of formalized excavations, as I mentioned earlier in this paper. Since the rise of ISIS in Syria, the systematic destruction of cultural heritage across the country, and diaspora of Syrian nations due to ongoing conflict, conversations around cultural heritage preservation have come to the forefront. The scholarly discussions around the Syrian, specifically Palmyrene, cultural heritage have developed in parallel

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25 For recent literature on Zenobia, see Hvidberg-Hansen 2002; Yon 2002/03; Sartre-Fauriat – Sartre 2014; Andrade 2018.

26 Intagliata 2018. For further references to late antique and Early Islamic Palmyra, see Gawlikowski 2009; Intagliata 2019.

27 Spencer 2022.

with the increased use of archives in archaeological practice. The Ingholt Archive has much potential to generate new scholarship as well as engage the public and establish what is at stake.

Documentation of Palmyra has been ongoing since the mid-18th cent. and the expedition of Dawkins and Wood. But since the 20th cent. and the systematic excavations in the area, there have been archaeological drawings and photographs of the rediscovered material. Ingholt's excavation diaries are rife with sketches that accompany his musings, but the Ingholt Archive relies on photography – that of Ingholt and many, many others<sup>28</sup>. The archive grew over the course of approximately 50 years – from Ingholt's 1928 dissertation to shortly before his death in 1985 – with Ingholt continuously gathering images of Palmyrene funerary sculpture from colleagues, museums, scholarly publications, and auction catalogs.

Photography, as a technology, greatly assisted archaeological excavations and has allowed images of Palmyrene funerary portraiture to circulate the world. These photographs, collected by Ingholt – who often gathered multiple images of a single sculpture like the *Beauty* –, cannot replace engagement with the physical sculptures, but, as I suggested earlier, these are more than simulacra. Simulacra, as a term is often used to describe representations, substitutes for real objects or people, or unsatisfactory imitations in material form. There is much art historical debate around the term, but I suggest that the photographs of Palmyra's material culture are real and material, not merely inferior substitutes for the original. They are certainly not the same and their differing modes of engagement are significant, but the photographs document a different time, place, and cultural context than the sculptures of the ancient past.

## Conclusion

It is through this understanding of social memory together with Bourdieu's theory of practice that I see the archive and its uses as critical for remembering Syrian histories. These second and third gazes and so on, cast upon the portraits and the archive folios is part of a larger collective memory that helps to preserve cultural heritage. I would suggest that the gazes cast upon the archive are not solely visual, rather, I see them as an eye and mind connection: an embodied practice. Viewing the archive folios is of course ocular in nature, but as the engagement with the folios draws the viewer in to

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28 Raja et al. 2021.

closely examine or lure him or her to return again and again, it becomes ingrained in the viewer and his or her imagination. In turn, this individual engagement with the archive contributes to a larger cultural imaginary that preserves Syria's heritage as the world learns more and more about these magnificent sculptures. The archive folios, following Halbwachs, are both means and repository for memory: memories of Palmyra, memories of excavation, memories of Ingholt, and so on.

It has become ever more interesting now that the archive has taken a digital form. Scanned in its entirety by the Palmyra Portrait project since 2011, Rubina Raja has uploaded the PDFs to her Figshare making them widely accessible<sup>29</sup>. Working with the digital archive is an experience distinct from touching the physical folios, but it is nevertheless engaging. The allure of the sculptures transcends the boundary of the computer screen and the benefits to cultural heritage preservation efforts are manifold. Similarly, the forthcoming publication of the entire corpus, over 4,000 sculptures, by the Palmyra Portrait Project, can aid restitution and recovery efforts as many portraits have gone missing or been destroyed by ISIS. These resources, are, at the surface, simple tools in cultural heritage efforts, but my argument today wishes to emphasize the archive as art object. The dialogue between the portraits and the archive is another layer of intertextuality, in the sense that the archive must be 'read' in the light of its allusions to and differences from the content of the portraits.

A final gaze – for the moment – cast upon the Beauty considers the afterlives of the portrait. As Syrians continue to struggle to reconstruct what has been lost over the past decade, the Beauty endures as a memory of a distant past, that has been documented in the archive, and now revisited by us in the present. Similarly, the archive, though an art object itself, is deeply entangled with the physical portraits, the same but also different as they are of a different time and different cultural context. Certainly, one can view the archive without knowledge of the portraits, especially since many of the portraits recorded in the archive are now lost. Conversely, one can view the portraits without any knowledge of the archive. Yet, the two media are linked through collective memory, each forming, reforming, storing, and promoting our collective memory of Syrian heritage.

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29 See note 8 above.

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Elisa Dal Chiele

# Quoting, Translating, Paraphrasing. Poetic 'Reuse' in Cicero's Philosophical Work

**Abstract** This paper aims to demonstrate the ways in which Cicero reuses poetic texts, with a particular focus on his *Tusculan Disputations*, Books 3 and 4. In these texts, Cicero addresses the topic of emotions, drawing on the Stoic concept of *apatheia* and contrasting it with the more moderate stance of the Peripatetics. The paper analyses three methods of incorporating poetic text into prose, namely quotation, paraphrase and translation. In certain instances, Cicero employs poetic fragments with the dual objective of refuting the opposing thesis and Romanizing the philosophical concept, thereby rendering it more accessible to his readers. Cicero makes selective use of poetic elements to facilitate the development of his argument. Conversely, he excludes or minimizes those elements that are incompatible with the Stoic ideal of the sage, such as physical symptoms of emotion. Moreover, Cicero's translations in *Tusc.* 3, 18 and 63 are distinguished by a tendency towards dramatization, universalization and an autobiographical interpretation of the Homeric text.

## Introduction

Cicero's engagement with archaic Latin poetry entails a process of selection, refunctionalisation and recontextualisation of the source text. Cicero's 'second gaze' imbues the poetic text with new and different meanings. Nevertheless, this second gaze at the archaic Latin poetry represents the initial and, in numerous instances, the sole surviving glimpse of a poetic production that has survived in fragmentary form. Cicero frequently incorporates poetic references into his prose works, a practice that was already well established in

the literary tradition prior to his era<sup>1</sup>. Similarly, this is a feature of contemporary philosophical instruction in Athens (cf. *Tusc.* 2, 26). Cicero's dialogues are replete with poetic passages, which are not only numerous but also of considerable length. In several instances, these are references to works by archaic Latin authors, particularly those of a dramatic nature. Moreover, Cicero does not exclude the quotation of Greek poets, but rather translates the Greek text into Latin or paraphrases the source material<sup>2</sup>. Cicero's "lifelong engagement with the Roman drama"<sup>3</sup> has contributed to its minimal preservation from the total shipwreck of history. However, Cicero offers a restricted perspective on archaic tragedy, as he references a meticulously selected list of authors and works (resembling the canonising process that occurred during the late Republic) and incorporates his citations into the arguments he is developing<sup>4</sup>.

The inclusion of extensive poetic passages is justified from both a thematic and an argumentative perspective. In certain instances, the quotation assumes the form of a monologue delivered by an interlocutor with whom Cicero is engaged in debate<sup>5</sup>. However, this is also justified from a rhetorical and stylistic standpoint, as the verses serve to embellish the *disputatio*<sup>6</sup>, which is intended for an audience that is cultured, though not necessarily professional. The ornaments were employed for two distinct purposes: firstly, to support the act of teaching (*docere*) and secondly, to delight the audience (*delectare*). Furthermore, the utilization of poetic devices can be justified from a cultural perspective, as it enables Cicero to evoke a collective set of images and a system of values that are shared with his audience<sup>7</sup>. The absence of references to the provenance of the quotations and their context has been attributed precisely to the fact that the passages in question were already well known to Cicero's readers<sup>8</sup>. The poetic quotations are primarily

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1 See Jocelyn 1973, 67–71.

2 For further insight into the function of translated quotations in Cicero's cultural programme, see Marciniak 2020.

3 Schierl 2015, 45.

4 Schierl 2015, 47.

5 Gamberale 1978, 919 n. 4. Indeed, Michel 1983, 445 observes that quotations from poetry are concentrated in the argumentative sections of the *Tusculan Disputations*, rather than in the dialectical or more technical passages. On the use of tragic quotations in Cicero's philosophical work, see also Auvray-Assayas 1998.

6 See Traina 1974, 65.

7 Eigler 2000 posits that the tragic quotation serves as a means of legitimizing philosophical prose. For a detailed examination of the ethical-political dimension of the quotations contained in the *Tusculanae*, see Aricò 2004.

8 Salamon 2004, 141.

drawn from archaic Latin authors who remain relevant to Cicero's contemporary context. This encompasses Ennius, Pacuvius, Accius and authors whose identities remain anonymous.

Moreover, the translation makes reference to Greek poets. Cicero's practice of citation differs from that of his predecessors in that he not only references Latin poetry but also includes quotations from Greek poetry<sup>9</sup>. Furthermore, self-quotations are incorporated: Cicero's objective is to establish a Roman canon of poetry that is parallel to the Greek one<sup>10</sup>. At the time Cicero was engaged in composing his work, ancient tragedy constituted a significant element of Roman culture, with performances continuing to take place. It is important to note that both comedy and tragedy also played an important role in rhetorical training and oratorical education<sup>11</sup>. However, the content of the quotations is more problematic, as poetry, with its "unhealthy charm"<sup>12</sup>, presents a danger: that of reason being subverted by the enchantments of verses<sup>13</sup>.

The aim of this paper is to examine Cicero's citation technique<sup>14</sup> and the function of the poetic text in his philosophical work, with a particular focus on his *Tusculan Disputations*. In this text, Cicero addresses a number of philosophical themes, including the nature of emotions and the liberation of the soul from them. He employs Stoic ethical principles as a foundation for his arguments<sup>15</sup>. The poetic quotations in Cicero's philosophical works are intended to accurately reflect the manner in which each philosophical school employs poetry in the presentation of its respective tenets<sup>16</sup>. In the corpus of Stoic writings, the use of quotations from poetry is a common device employed for the purpose of substantiating arguments. This is due to the fact that Stoics adhere to the conviction that the concepts presented in pre-philosophical myths are, to some extent, truthful accounts of the universe and nature. Furthermore, they maintain that a considerable number of

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9 Schierl 2022, 151.

10 Bishop 2019, 271.

11 Schierl 2015, 46

12 Aricò 2004, 20.

13 On these aspects, see Jocelyn 1973, 62 f.; Degl'Innocenti Pierini 2008, 44 f. On poetry and philosophy in Cicero in relation to the Platonic conception, see Čulík-Baird 2022, 80–86 with further bibliography.

14 On Cicero's quotation modalities in his *Letters*, see Behrendt 2013, esp. 33–58.

15 On the sources of 3rd and 4th Book of Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, see Pohlenz 1906.

16 Jocelyn 1973, 67–69; Bishop 2019, 269.

poets have articulated these truths<sup>17</sup>. This also extends to the field of ethics, in which the study of the emotions (πάθη) occupies a prominent position<sup>18</sup>. It can be reasonably inferred that the frequent quotations from poetry in the *Tusculan Disputations* are a consequence of Cicero's use of sources and philosophical models. Indeed, the Stoics are responsible for developing an accurate and articulate taxonomy of the passions. The depth and complexity of the Stoics' study of emotional expressions can be attributed to two key sources: direct clinical observation of the pathologies of the soul and extensive literary experience of epic and tragic poetry, which often serve as precise "clinical records" of the passions<sup>19</sup>. It was thus appropriate to approach the subject by drawing on the wealth of insights offered by poetry.

### Quoting and paraphrasing

We will commence with the emotion of anger, which plays a pivotal role. As Fillion-Lahille has observed<sup>20</sup>, Greek and Latin mythology and literature are often accounts of renowned anger. Cicero espouses the unyielding stance of the Stoics, known as *ἀπάθεια*, the complete eradication of the passions from the soul, on the grounds that they considered emotions to be an impediment to the acquisition of *sapientia*. In contrast, Aristotle and his school adopt a more lenient stance, considering anger to be a morally neutral passion<sup>21</sup>. They put forth the notion that, when effectively managed, anger can act as a catalyst for inner fortitude: *iracundiam laudant [sc. Peripatetici] cotemque fortitudinis esse dicunt* (Tusc. 4, 43)<sup>22</sup>.

Cicero presents a refutation of this idea, whereby the initial poetic quotations on anger are introduced with the specific purpose of demarcating the transitions between the anti-peripatetic argument (Tusc. 4, 48). He therefore poses the question of whether anger is an indispensable prerogative of the state of the *vir fortis*: *an vero vir fortis, nisi stomachari coepit, non potest fortis*

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17 In contrast, Epicurean philosophy eschews the use of poetry in philosophical arguments. The Academics and Peripatetics occupy a position intermediate between the two extremes represented by the Stoics and the Epicureans: Bishop 2019, 269.

18 On this topic, see e.g. Graver 2007.

19 Vegetti 1995, 54.

20 Fillion-Lahille 1984, 7.

21 On Aristotle's views on emotions see e.g. Fortenbaugh 2002.

22 Unless otherwise indicated, the text of the *Tusculan Disputations* is quoted in accordance with the edition by Pohlenz 1918.

*esse*? The Aristotelian thesis is thus partially reified by the replacement of the abstract term, *fortitudo*, with the phrase *vir fortis*, which refers to the individual who embodies this virtue, and by the choice of a verb, *stomachor*, which focuses on the physiological onset of anger. The term *stomachor* is employed to signify dyspepsia, which is a symptom of resentment and repressed indignation<sup>23</sup>. The selection of this lexeme is consistent with the prevailing tendency in this section of the work to utilize a lexicon that elucidates the adverse implications of anger. The verb *stomachor* is imbued with a comic *nuance*, resulting from the conjunction of colloquialism and technicism. This is achieved through the evocation of a low physical image through the use of a simulated medical lexicon<sup>24</sup>. The term is rarely used in Cicero's treatises and orations<sup>25</sup>, which lends particular significance to its use in this passage. Primarily, it serves to reinforce the underlying irony that pervades the anti-peripatetic polemic, effectively reducing the opponent's argument to a purely physical and physiological level. Secondly, it introduces the gladiatorial theme, thereby predisposing the reader to the comic-satirical tone of the poetic quotations that follow.

Cicero posits the notion that anger can be beneficial for a particular category of *virī fortes*, namely gladiators, by exploiting the ambiguity of the term *fortis*, which can signify both physical and moral strength. This enables him to disarm his opponents. By involving the gladiators, whose brute force is not always associated with the choleric impulse, and by citing a verse of unknown origin, probably comic, inserted into his prose<sup>26</sup>, Cicero is aware that he cannot avoid addressing the subject of gladiatorial rage (*gladiatoria iracundia*). In doing so, he would have glossed over the proverbial aggress-

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23 The association between anger and bile can be traced back to the Homeric era, preceding the Hippocratic theorisation of humours. This is demonstrated by the Homeric noun *χόλος* (Il. 1, 81; 4, 513; 9, 565), which is homeoradical to *χολή* ("bile"). As with the Latin term *bilis*, the Greek word *χολή* is used not only to refer to bile in the strict sense, but also more generally to denote the gastric juices.

24 Hoffer 2007, 89 f.

25 These terms occur 18 times in the rhetorical and philosophical treatises, 10 times in the orations and 27 times in the letters. This can be explained by the colloquialism attributed to these lexemes. For an analysis of their occurrence in Cicero's epistolary, see Hoffer 2007.

26 Cic. Tusc. 4, 48 *Gladiatorium id quidem, quamquam in eis ipsis videmus saepe constantiam: "conlocuntur, congregiuntur, quaerunt aliquid, postulant", ut magis placati quam irati esse videantur*. This poetic quotation, the origin of which is uncertain, was identified by Schlenger (1857, 288) as exhibiting a trochaic rhythm (tr<sup>7</sup>). The context and metre appear to suggest a comic derivation. For further details, see Dougan – Mitchell Henry 1934, 154 and Dal Chiele 2019, 6 f.

siveness of these fighters and thus removed much of the imagery associated with these figures<sup>27</sup>. Furthermore, Cicero's personal disapproval of gladiators is evident in his references to gladiatorial combat, which portray the athletes' strength as being solely physical<sup>28</sup>. The philosophical motif is thus Romanized through the *topos* of gladiatorial rage, which is mentioned through an extensive quotation from Lucilius (fr. 153–158 Marx, Terzaghi = 155–160 Krenkel). Cicero illustrates this point by citing the speech of the renowned gladiator Pacideianus<sup>29</sup>, who lived during the time of the Gracchi brothers. Pacideianus, overcome by rage and a thirst for revenge, makes an aggressive threat towards his opponent just before he attacks him (Tusc. 4, 48):

sed in illo genere sit sane Pacideianus aliquis hoc animo, ut narrat Lucilius:  
 “Occidam illum equidem et vincam, si id quaeritis”, inquit.  
 “Verum illud credo fore: in os prius accipiam ipse  
 quam gladium in stomacho sura<sup>30</sup> ac pulmonibus sisto.  
 Odi hominem, iratus pugno, nec longius quicquam  
 nobis, quam dextrae gladium dum accommodet alter;  
 usque adeo studio atque odio illius ecferor ira”.

But suppose, if you like, there be in this class of men some Pacideianus of the spirit described by Lucilius:

“Kill him for my part I shall and shall conquer”, he says, “if you ask this. This is the programme I think: in the face I shall first be to get one, Before in his gut, his leg or lung I plunge my sword. Hate for the fellow I fell, fight in anger, and wait we no longer Than for us each to fit tight our swords to the grip of the right hand: Such is the passion of hate that I feel in my transport of anger”<sup>31</sup>.

The primary focus of Pacideianus' discourse is aggression, which is conveyed through a pervasive emphasis on anger, hatred and impetuosity. This is evidenced by the recurrence of specific lexical items that evoke these emotions,

27 Cf. e.g. Sen. ira 1, 11, 1 *gladiatores quoque ars tuetur, ira denudat*.

28 Pierini 1971, 208.

29 See Pierini 1971, 211–214.

30 In lieu of the proposed emendation *furi* (“to that thief”), which was put forth by Tischer (1887, 82) and accepted by Pohlenz (1918, 384), I would prefer *sura* (“calf”), the reading transmitted by **K**. For a more detailed discussion of this passage, see Dal Chiele 2019, 8 n. 40.

31 Translation by King 1950, 380 f. with adaptations.

including *odi, iratus, studium*<sup>32</sup>, *odium* and *ira*. The *hysteron proteron, occidam ... et vincam*, reverses the natural order of the two actions, indicating that the ferocious Pacideianus is prepared to resort to violence in order to satisfy the audience's demand (*si ... quaeritis*)<sup>33</sup>. This characterization of the *vir fortis* is expressed by words driven by anger and hatred. His strength is not derived from internal fortitude but rather from his musculature, which is displayed with a bravado that is reminiscent of a comic mask. This is based on the hatred he incites, which serves to enhance his performance in the fight and overcome the initial fear of his opponent's blows (*in os ... accipiam*)<sup>34</sup>. This then provides to Pacideianus the motivation to launch an immediate attack (*nec longius quicquam / nobis, quam dextrae gladium dum accomodet alter*).

The episode recounted by Lucilius must have been a vivid literary memory for Cicero, as evidenced by his references elsewhere to the fight between Pacideianus and Aeserninus<sup>35</sup>. In this instance, he cites it as an episode that is “almost proverbial”, or at any rate “paradigmatic” of what Cicero himself refers to as *gladiatoria iracundia*<sup>36</sup>. The emotional impulse in Lucilius' verses and the accentuation of the consequences of excessive anger (inability to self-regulate and eagerness to prevail) have prompted some scholars to propose that the episode itself may be a free reworking of a Stoic motif<sup>37</sup>.

Conversely, the Homeric hero, personified by Ajax, serves as a positive exemplar in contrast to the gladiator<sup>38</sup>. In the *Iliad* (7, 206–312), Homer pro-

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32 The term *studium* indicates here a state of impatience and the impetus to action derived from anger: see OLD, s. v., 1831.

33 Coletti Strangi (1980, 15 f.) offers an alternative interpretation of the phrase (“se è proprio questo che volete sapere”). Further information on the participation of the audience in gladiatorial combat in Mosci Sassi 1992, 59.

34 Giusta 1984, 239 proposes the emendation of the reading of *fore in os* into *furias*, asserting that it is unlikely that the furious Pacideianus would have admitted to receiving a blow to the face from his opponent in such a peaceful manner. For a more detailed discussion of the passage, see Giusta 1991, 305–307.

35 Cicero makes frequent reference to the conflict between Pacideianus and Aeserninus; for further details, see Pierini 1971, 210 esp. n. 1. On this motive see also Gaucher 2019.

36 Pierini 1971, 210.

37 This hypothesis is also consistent with the cultural context of Lucilius: Pierini 1971, 209. In this regard, Coletti Strangi 1980, 8 offers a more cautious perspective.

38 A considerable proportion of the Homeric quotations included in Cicero's work are imbued with a moral edification of the individual. Indeed, Arcidiacono (2007, 6) notes that Cicero's concept of *humanitas* has its roots in the Homeric epic and finds concrete expression in the individual personalities of the heroes. This ethical reading of Homer as a teacher of wisdom and the interpretation of heroes as personifications of the virtues (cf. Cic. Att. 7, 11, 3) can be traced back

vides a description of him in the time preceding the duel with Hector. If Cicero had employed poetic quotations to describe the gladiators, seamlessly integrating them into his prose, or, in the case of Lucilius, isolating and clearly identifying them, he now refers to the Homeric text without translating it, but paraphrasing it (Tusc. 4, 49)<sup>39</sup>:

at sine hac gladiatoria iracundia videmus progredientem apud Homerum Aiacem multa cum hilaritate, cum depugnaturus esset cum Hectore; cuius, ut arma sumpsit, ingressio laetitiam attulit sociis, terrorem autem hostibus, ut ipsum Hectorem, quem ad modum est apud Homerum, toto pectore trementem provocasse ad pugnam paeniteret.

But in Homer we find Ajax with no sign of this irascibility of the gladiator going out with great cheerfulness to fight his deadly duel with Hector; and his entry, upon taking up his arms, brought delight to friends and dread to foes, so much so that Hector himself, according to Homer's account, with his heart all aquake repented of having given the challenge to battle<sup>40</sup>.

The description of Ajax is imbued with immediacy by the construction of *videmus* with the present participle (*progredientem*), which allows the instant perception of the majestic march of the hero<sup>41</sup>, who advances smiling (*multa cum hilaritate*). This detail serves to express the inner strength and courage displayed by Ajax as he descends into the battlefield. This outward manifestation is indicative of his inner composure and equanimity. Cicero (or his source) incorporates this element from the Homeric description, omitting the disturbing details (in Homer, Ajax's smile was accompanied by a terrible grimace: Il. 7, 212) that would contradict the image of the hero's exemplary

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to the Sophistic period and was subsequently perpetuated in the philosophical tradition of the Hellenistic and later imperial ages, cf. Wehrli 1928, 69–81. On the moral interpretation of Homeric epics, see Buffière 1973, 251–256.

39 On this passage, see Arcidiacono 2007, 35–37. On the relationship between Homer and Cicero, see also Malcovati 1943, 45–55; Traina 1974, 71–82; Chinnici 2000; Zambarbieri 2001.

40 Translation by King 1950, 381.

41 The Latin construct accurately renders the idea of the hero's progressive advance, as conveyed by the imperfect and the *enjambement* in the Greek text; cf. Hom. Il. 7, 212–213 ... *νέρθε δὲ ποσσὶν / ἦϊε μακρὰ βιβάζ* (“... His feet took mightly strides”) Translations of all Homeric verses quoted are by Wilson 2023, 163.



imperturbability<sup>42</sup>. This tendency to minimize the emotional content in relation to the Homeric source text is evident throughout the entire scene, resulting in a significant reduction of the physical and physiological details that are linked to the description of emotional symptoms in the *Iliad*. For example, Homer states that upon seeing Ajax, the Trojans “shuddered and every one of them was quacking”<sup>43</sup> (v. 215). However, Cicero omits all reference to the body and replaces the symptom (the shudder) with the emotion (terror), effectively reversing the cause-and-effect relationship. A comparable approach is observable in the portrayal of Hector as *toto pectore trementem*. In the Latin text, the hero is identified as the subject of the emotional reaction, which is presented in a more generalized manner than in the Homeric text<sup>44</sup>, where the term for ‘heart’ (*θυμός*) is employed to describe a sensation of the heart jumping into the hero’s chest<sup>45</sup>. Cicero intensifies the situation to the extent that Hector appears ‘all trembling’ and expresses regret for the battle, in order to emphasize that the two heroes fight without angry hatred<sup>46</sup>.

These details illustrate the absence of irascibility in Homeric heroes engaged in combat<sup>47</sup>. The Ciceronian paraphrase of the Homeric passage thus places emphasis on those aspects that are most functional in reinforcing Ciceronian argumentation, while attenuating those that are less functional in that regard. In the reference to the calm conversation between the two heroes before the duel, we find the verb *conloquor*, the first lexeme of the poetic quotation used to describe the occasional civil exchange between gladiators (Tusc. 4, 48)<sup>48</sup>. The scene, which is only briefly outlined in the comic verse, is thus recapitulated and amplified through the figures of Hector and Ajax.

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42 Hom. Il. 7, 212 *μειδίῳν βλοσυροῖσι προσώπασι* ... (“His face was terrifying, / fixed in a grin”).

43 Translation by Wilson 2023, 163.

44 Cicero’s deliberate vagueness in the description of rage symptomatology is also evident in Tusc. 4, 52. This contrasts with the Homeric text (Il. 1, 101–303), which provides numerous indications regarding the physical manifestations and verbal expressions of rage, and with the detailed description of the detrimental physical effects of anger in Sen. ira 1, 1, 39: see Dougan – Mitchell Henry 1934, 159.

45 Hom. Il. 7, 216 *Ἐκτορί τ’ αὐτῷ θυμός ἐνὶ στήθεσσι πάτασσεν* (“and even Hector’s heart was beating fast”). Also the reference to Hector’s hesitation is more concise than in the Homeric text (cf. vv. 217–218). Jocelyn (1973, 77) remarks the “misdescription [...] of Hector’s state of mind” and traces it back to Cicero’s source.

46 Tusc. 4, 49 *Atque hi conlocuti inter se, prius quam manum consererent, leniter et quiete nihil ne in ipsa quidem pugna iracunde rabiose fecerunt*.

47 Ronconi 1973, 52.

48 The passage is quoted at n. 26.

In Cicero's passage, the figure of Ajax serves a dual function. On the one hand, it develops the idea of the lack of correlation between anger and inner strength, which is only alluded to in the comic verse. It presents itself as a positive paradigmatic figure in relation to the negative model represented by the famous Pacideianus. The mention of Ajax allows for a comprehensive overview of historical figures who were driven by their inner strength and never by anger (Tusc. 4, 49f.). However, the figure of Ajax is ambivalent. He exemplifies the ideal of inner strength, yet he also exhibits a proclivity towards madness (52 *semper Aiax fortis, fortissimus tamen in furore*). This aspect is introduced through Ennius' authority, which defined anger as the initial symptom of a pathology of the soul (*initium insaniae*)<sup>49</sup>. The theme of madness is employed once more to direct attention to the corporeal manifestation of anger<sup>50</sup>, with the objective of refuting the opposing argument. This emotion is presented as a pathological condition, characterized by observable physical and physiological symptoms. Furthermore, the depiction of rage as a form of insanity challenges the second argument proposed by the Peripatetic school, namely the thesis that rage is a beneficial emotion in combat and in all areas of public life (Tusc. 4, 43).

Instead, greater attention is devoted to the relationship between anger and combat, with the objective of demonstrating that the latter is not only inherently futile, even in the context of war, contrary to the assertions of the Peripatetics, but can also prove to be deleterious. The detrimental impact of anger is exemplified by the character of Ajax. As previously discussed, Ajax exemplifies the virtue of fortitude but is also a victim of blind rage. In accordance with the tradition established by Sophocles, this rage ultimately results in Ajax's demise (Tusc. 4, 52–53)<sup>51</sup>:

nam Aiacem quidem ira ad furorem mortemque perduxit. ... semper Aiax  
fortis, fortissimus tamen in furore; nam  
<\*\*\*> facinus fecit maximum,

49 Tusc. 4, 52 *an est quicquam similis insaniae quam ira? quam bene Ennius "initium" dixit "insaniae"*; Cicero provides a definition of *insania* in Tusc. 3, 8–9. On his distinction between *insania* and *furor* see Taldone 1993. On the concept of 'psychopathology' and its implication both in philosophical and in medical tradition, see at least Pigeaud 1981.

50 Cf. the above remark on *stomachor*.

51 The conjunction of *ira*, *furor* and *mors* is a defining feature of Ajax's experiences (cf. Sen. ira 2, 36, 5 *Aiacem in mortem egit furor, in furorem ira*). Furthermore, this concept is evident in the story of the Atrides recalled in Tusc. 4, 77: the passage is discussed below, pp. 114–116.

cum Danais inclinantibus summam rem perfecit manu.<sup>52</sup>  
 Proelium restituit insaniens: dicamus igitur utilem insaniam?

Ajax I need not quote, for him at any rate anger led on to madness and death. ... Ajax is always brave but bravest in frenzy; for  
 Glorious was the deed he wrought when Danaan ranks were falling back;  
 The common safety he secured: in fury he the fray renewed<sup>53</sup>.

It can be stated with a high degree of certainty that the verses in question were written by a Latin tragic poet (F 61 adesp. Schauer = fr. inc. inc. 64–66 Ribbeck<sup>3</sup>, Klotz = fr. 53–55 Warmington)<sup>54</sup>. Nevertheless, the metrical interpretation of the fragment is less straightforward<sup>55</sup>, as is the identification of the boundaries of the quotation<sup>56</sup>. It has been proposed that the word *nam* may be integrated into the initial verse (*nam facinus ...*). The words *proelium restituit insaniens* are considered by some interpreters (or at least the participle *insaniens*) to constitute a comment by Cicero<sup>57</sup>, whereas others regard them as part of the poetic quotation<sup>58</sup>. Cicero employs this passage to exemplify Ajax's unwavering resolve, which, despite his affliction with madness, ultimately influences the course of the battle<sup>59</sup>. The verses appear to foreshadow Ajax's mental instability, melding elements of Homeric tradition and tragedy, which represent two distinct phases in Ajax's life. It is possible that the verses cited by Cicero do not actually refer to Ajax, and that Cicero therefore misunderstood the reference. An alternative hypothesis is that the tragedy itself may provide evidence of a peripheral episode in the tradition associated with this hero, potentially derived from a suggestion by Sophocles' *Ajax*<sup>60</sup>. It is similarly conceivable, however, that the anticipation

52 I quote the fragment according to Schauer 2012, 233.

53 Translation by King 1950, 385.

54 Bentley identified the fragment as belonging to the comic genre: cf. Ribbeck 1897, 243 and 282.

55 Pohlenz 1918 interpreted the verses as trochaic, whereas Ribbeck 1897, Klotz 1953 and, most recently, Schauer 2012 regard them as iambic octonaries.

56 Cicero's technique of rendering poetic quotations indistinguishable bears resemblance to that of interpolation: see Moretti 2011, 271f.

57 Cf. Ribbeck 1897, 244; Schauer 2012, 233.

58 See the critical apparatus in Schauer 2012, 233.

59 Graver (2002, 170) posits that the passage in question alludes to the battle at the ships, as recounted by Homer (Il. 15, 674–746).

60 In Soph. Ai. 466–468, Ajax ponders whether it would be prudent to confront the Trojans in order to reclaim his lost honour. His thoughts evoke those of Hector in the moments preceding the assault on Achilles (Hom. Il. 22, 304f.): see Finglass

of Ajax's madness should be ascribed to Cicero himself (or to his source)<sup>61</sup>. The poetic text would therefore be subjected to a process of adaptation in accordance with the philosophical argument being developed. From this perspective, the words *proelium restituit insaniens*, ascribed to Cicero, serve as a crucial interpretive key for interpreting the quoted verses. The phrase *proelium restituit* can be understood as a paraphrase and compendium of the poetic text. Conversely, the term *insaniens* introduces the element of madness to the scene, which is not explicitly present in the tragic text but is fundamental to Cicero's argument. This line of reasoning employs the figure of Ajax to illustrate the futility and even the potential danger of a vehemence that has forsaken reason.

It has been demonstrated that in the symptomatology of emotions, Cicero tends to downplay the physical elements, indicating a preference for the verbal channel over other manifestations of anger. This is exemplified by the lengthy discourse of Pacideianus and is further evidenced in the concluding section of Book 4, which is devoted to the therapy of emotions<sup>62</sup>. In this instance, the intermingling of anger and madness is exemplified by the mention of the quarrel (*iurgium*)<sup>63</sup>, which presents a contrast even between two brothers (*etiam inter fratres*), namely Agamemnon and Menelaus. The blood bond between the two protagonists serves to emphasize the profound senselessness of the scene and of the emotions that animate it (Tusc. 4, 77):

Ira vero, quae quam diu perturbat animum, dubitationem insaniae non habet, cuius inpulso existit etiam inter fratres tale iurgium:

“Quis homo te exsuperavit usquam gentium impudentia?”

“Quis autem malitia te?”

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2011, 273f. Some interpreters posit that Sophocles is alluding to the deeds performed by Ajax during his delirium, referencing a tradition witnessed in the Ciceronian passage and in Philostr. *Heroicus* 35, 12 (cf. e.g. Lobeck 1866, 220). However, an alternative interpretation is also possible, namely that the episode witnessed by the two authors originated from the Sophoclean text: see Follet 2017, 92 n. 4.

61 This is, among other scholars, the position of Giusta (1991, 307), who notes the absence of any mention of *furor* in the quotation. This prompted him to suggest an intervention in the text, namely the correction *summa in re perfuruit manens*, as presented in the critical apparatus: Giusta 1984, 242.

62 This division is typical of the Stoic treatment of emotions: see Pohlenz 1906, 348–355; Tieleman 2003, 305.

63 Cf. the cursory mention of the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon in Tusc. 4, 52.

nosti, quae secuntur; alternis enim versibus intorquentur inter fratres gravissimae contumeliae, ut facile appareat Atrai filios esse, eius qui medietatur poenam in fratrem novam:

“Maior mihi moles, maius miscendumst malum,  
Qui illius acerbum cor contundam et comprimam”.

quo igitur haec erumpit moles? audi Thyestem:

“Ipsus hortatur me frater, ut meos malis miser  
Manderem natos”

eorum viscera apponit. quid est enim quo non progrediatur eodem ira, quo furor?

Next anger which so long as it disorders the soul undoubtedly implies unsoundness of mind, and starts a brawl like this even between two brothers:

A. “What man in all the world in impudence has ever you surpassed?”

M. “Who too in malice you?”

You know what follows; the bitterest taunts are hurled from brother to brother in alternate lines, so that it is easy to see they are sons of the Atrous who plots an unheard of penalty for his brother:

“More mass of misery must mingled be  
Whereby to break and wring his cruel heart”.

Which way than is this mass of crash? Hark to Thyestes:

“Twas my brother’s lips that urged me to consign my sons as food  
To their wretched father’s jaws”.

He sets their flesh before him. For in what direction will not anger go to the same lengths as madness?<sup>64</sup>

The quarrel is illustrated by a quotation of approximately a verse and a half from a stichomythia, which demonstrates the insulting and violent nature of the dialogue between the two brothers. The passage, originally attributed to Ennius’ *Iphigenia*, is now considered to be an *adespoton*<sup>65</sup>. The quotation evokes an association with two others derived from Accius’ *Atrous* (fr. 200–201 and fr. 229–230 Ribbeck<sup>3</sup> = fr. 165–166 and fr. 196–197 Warmington = fr. 31–32 and fr. 58–59 Dangel)<sup>66</sup>. The poetic verses provide a framework for

64 Translation by King 1950, 416 f.

65 It corresponds to fr. 63 in Schauer 2012: see the critical apparatus *ibid.*, 235.

66 Dangel (1995, 166; 120) interprets the first fragment as *ia*<sup>6</sup>, the second one as *tr*<sup>7</sup>.

reconstructing the essential narrative of the story of the Atreides<sup>67</sup>, emphasizing that the source of the enmity expressed in the dispute between the two brothers can be traced back to their father's blind and irrational hatred, manifested in the abhorrent act of serving his own brother, Thyestes, the flesh of his children.

The cluster represents a common strategy of quotation in Cicero's oeuvre<sup>68</sup>. In our passage, this serves to illustrate the cyclical nature of violence, which is instigated and perpetuated by anger and madness. The structure is perfectly symmetrical, opening and closing with a verse and a half and comprising two whole verses in the middle. In Book 4, Cicero avoids an exhaustive examination of the outward manifestations of anger. In this instance, however, the anger is expressed in the form of verbal aggression, characterised by the use of insulting language. Furthermore the externalisation of anger illustrated once more through the medium of words, in the speech of Pacideianus. Cicero thus demonstrates a clear preference for the verbal channel over other physiological manifestations, although this is only alluded to.

Moreover, the representation of the internal processes of the soul in speeches constitutes a topic of considerable interest within the field of rhetorical studies. These encompass a range of techniques aimed at evoking emotional responses from the audience (*movere*)<sup>69</sup>. It is worthy of note that the quotation of Accius' *Atreus* is, in fact, also a self-quotation. Cicero had previously referenced the same verses in the third book of the *De oratore* (217, 219), where he addressed the topic of *actio* and, in particular, the modulation of the voice in accordance with the emotions one seeks to convey<sup>70</sup>. Accius' *Atreus* thus serves as an exemplar of the vicious circle of violence and madness born of rage<sup>71</sup>, marking the intertextual relationship between

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67 Cf. Tusc. 1, 106. For an analysis of Accius' treatment of this myth, see: Baldarelli 2004, esp. 104–266.

68 Cicero frequently employs a cluster of poetic quotations as a mode of quotation: cf. Moretti 2011, 258f.

69 On the intricate relationship between rhetoric and passions, see e.g. Gastaldi 1995; Graver 2002, esp. 167–169 on anger; Petrone 2004; Konstan 2007; Remer 2017, esp. 34–62.

70 The relationship between the dramatic performance and that of the orator, both of which aim to engage the audience through the use of vocal and gestural language and emotional appeal, is examined by Aricò 2020, with further bibliographical references.

71 See Petrone 2002, 246; cf. Cic. de or. 3, 217 *aliud enim vocis genus iracundia sibi sumat, acutum, incitatum, crebro incidens: "Ipsus hortatur me frater ut meos malis miser / manderem natos..." ... et Atreus fere totus.* In this context, the term *Atreus* refers to both the tragedy and the character.

*De oratore* and *Tusculanae disputationes*, in the arduous endeavour to fuse ethical reflection and rhetoric<sup>72</sup>.

## Translated quotes

The poetic quotations from Greek authors translated by Cicero number approximately thirty<sup>73</sup>, which must be added to the *Aratea*, partly transmitted in direct form. In comparison to quotations from Latin authors, those translated from Greek undoubtedly offer greater potential for adaptation of the source text<sup>74</sup>, given the greater degree of flexibility and variability of translated quotes. Of particular interest are two translations of passages from the *Iliad* (Cicero's most frequently translated epic poem)<sup>75</sup>, which are cited in *Tusc.* 3, 18 and 63. They may be regarded as representing an autobiographical reinterpretation of the source texts<sup>76</sup>. The quotations in question evince a heightened emotional resonance in comparison to that of the Greek text<sup>77</sup>.

The initial example of a translated quotation is thematically aligned with the preceding cases, as it pertains to the subject of anger. In the *Tusculanae Disputationes* (3, 18), Cicero cites his translation of *Iliad* 9, 646–648, in which

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72 Indeed, Cicero endeavours to achieve a challenging reconciliation between the Peripatetic thesis of the usefulness of anger as a necessary component of *actio* and the unyielding stance of the Stoics, acknowledging the simulation of emotions by the orator: see Dal Chiele 2019, 17f. Cicero frequently incorporates poetic quotations, particularly from the domain of tragedy, into his speeches: see Moretti 2011, 255–275 (focused in *Pro Sestio* and *Pro Caelio*); Petrone 2011 and 2016.

73 These are fr. 23–48 Bl.<sup>2</sup>, which are translations from Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Aristophanes, Epicharmes, Solon. In addition, fr. 49–56 Bl.<sup>2</sup> are translations of epigrams, enigmas, oracles, *sententiae*.

74 On the adaptation (of style and content) of the translated quotation, see Costanza 1950, 173f. and Marciniak 2020, 63. With regard to the assessment of Cicero as poet, see Marciniak 2018, with a comprehensive bibliography.

75 A total of seven translations of the *Iliad* are extant (fr. 23–29 Bl.<sup>2</sup>), in comparison to two for the *Odyssey* (fr. 30–31 Bl.<sup>2</sup>). For an analysis of Cicero's predilection for the *Iliad*, see Arcidiacono 2007, 11.

76 A further example of this approach is the translation of Hom. *Il.* 5, 89–91 quoted by Gellius (15, 6, 3), so Ronconi 1973, 45f.; see also the remarks of Traina 1974, 79f. The inclination towards an autobiographical interpretation of the myth is also discernible in the epistolary genre, where poetic quotations are customarily presented in Greek: see Zambarbieri 2001, 35–46, De Caro 2006, Arcidiacono 2007, 12f.

77 Ronconi 1973, 46.

Achilles describes the rekindling of anger at the memory of the offence suffered by Agamemnon:

ἀλλά μοι οἰδάνεται κραδίη χόλω ὀππότε κείνων  
μνήσομαι ὡς μ' ἀσύρηλον ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἔρεξεν  
Ἄτρείδης, ὡς εἴ τιν' ἀτίμητον μετανάστην.

And yet my heart is swollen up with anger  
whenever I remember what he did –  
how Agamemnon, son of Atreus,  
humiliated me among the Greeks,  
and treated me like someone with no honor,  
an outcast with no place to call his home<sup>78</sup>.

Cicero offers a commentary on a Homeric passage by Dionysius of Heraclea (Tusc. 3, 18), a Stoic philosopher and student of Zeno<sup>79</sup>. It seems reasonable to posit that the passage is derived from Dionysius' treatise in two books, entitled *Περὶ ἀπαθείας*<sup>80</sup>:

Itaque non inscite Heracleotes Dionysius ad ea disputat, quae apud  
Homerum Achilles queritur hoc, ut opinor, modo:  
“Corque meum penitus turgescit tristibus iris,  
Cum decore atque omni me orbatum laude recordor”.

And so in dealing with the passage in Homer where Achilles laments to this effect, I think:

Big is the heart in my breast with a gloomy swelling of anger,  
When I remember that I have been robbed of my honour and glory,  
Dionysius of Heraclea argues not unskillfully<sup>81</sup>.

Dionysius posits that emotions constitute a form of psychic pathology, a process of inflammation within the soul. Consequently, those who are considered to possess wisdom are, by definition, excluded from this condition

78 Translation by Wilson 2023, 220.

79 The information regarding Dionysius of Heraclea derive from Diogenes Laertius, Cicero himself (cf. *SVF DE* 422–434) and Philodemus.

80 Diogenes Laertius (7, 166) provides a list of titles of Stoic works by Dionysius of Heraclea.

81 Translation by King 1950, 247.



(Tusc. 3, 19 *sapientis ... animus semper vacat vitium, numquam turgescit, numquam tumet*). Dionysius posits that the Homeric poem is an optimal vehicle for elucidating moral philosophy in a dialectical form<sup>82</sup>.

The aforementioned passage serves to illustrate the manner in which the poetic quotation was already present in Cicero's source text, which he takes care to translate. The phrase *ut opinior* can be interpreted as a translator's expression of humility<sup>83</sup>. It is less plausible to suggest that the aside imparts to the quotation the tone of an approximate and extemporaneous recollection, and that the verses were commented upon without being quoted in the source text<sup>84</sup>. The practice of offering commentary on poetic texts is a common occurrence within the tradition of Stoicism<sup>85</sup>. Furthermore, the utilization of examples drawn from Homer's works constitutes a salient aspect of the ethical reflection characteristic of the philosophical schools that emerged during the Hellenistic era. In particular, the character of Achilles represents an impetuous hero prone to anger<sup>86</sup>, which stands in contrast to the Stoic ideal of the *sapiens*<sup>87</sup>.

The Homeric passage is concerned with the renewal of Achilles' anger at the memory of the humiliation suffered by Agamemnon during the altercation between the two heroes. A direct and precise comparison between the Latin and Greek texts can be made solely with regard to the initial Latin verse; the second one draws its inspiration from Homer. Cicero's translation is notable for its elevated stylistic register, its universalization of the experience described, and its dramatization of the Greek text<sup>88</sup>. The terms *penitus* and *tristibus* are typically regarded as additions made by the translator, which serve to intensify the verse both phonically (through the use of alliteration involving the letters *t* and *r*) and semantically<sup>89</sup>. This is evident in the use of the adverb, which situates the genesis of wrath at an unspecified depth within the heart. However, this is not the case with the clause *tristibus iris*, which is,

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82 Cappelletti 1996, 90.

83 "*Hoc, ut opinior, modo* bezeichnet das Folgende als Ciceros eigene Übersetzung" (Heine 1957, 14), see Dougan – Mitchell Henry 1934, 23.

84 Cf. Chinnici 2000, 54.

85 Cappelletti 1996, 89.

86 Buffière 1973, 316. 334 f. On the Stoic interpretation of Homer, see also Long 1992.

87 As Chinnici (2000, 53) notes, the inchoative verb *turgesco* is notably reused in § 19 *sapientis ... animus ... numquam turgescit*.

88 In general, the accentuation of emotional resonance represents a pivotal feature of the Latin translation: see Traina 1974, esp. 65–68.

89 Traina 1974, 81; Chinnici 2000, 55.

in fact, an analytical rendering of *χόλος*<sup>90</sup>. In this instance, Cicero has chosen to utilize the term *ira* as a translation for the Greek word *χόλος*, which denotes anger without implying the physical reaction that is typically associated with this emotion. This reflects Cicero's tendency to eschew a direct correlation with the symptomatology of anger, as evidenced by the Homeric paraphrase in *Tusc.* 4, 49. Conversely, the adjective *tristis* is employed by Cicero to convey a more abstract and evocative representation of the chromatic note of gloom<sup>91</sup> and the quality of bitterness than is evident in the Greek text. In the context of the ancient imaginary, these elements are traditionally associated with *χόλος/bilis* and, more generally, with anger. It can thus be argued that in the context of the Ciceronian translation, the term *tristis* does not merely signify the intensity or violence of anger<sup>92</sup>, rather, it reflects an attempt to maintain the essential (albeit implicit) semantic features of the Greek noun, namely anger with its connotation of gloom and bitterness.

The inchoative verb *turgesco* accurately denotes the initial phase of the progressive transformation in Achilles' emotional state<sup>93</sup>, translating the Greek *οιδάνομαι*. This indicates the moment at which wrath resurfaces, prompted by memory<sup>94</sup>. No documented attestations of this meaning of *turgesco* have been identified prior to this. However, prior to its technical value in the psychic sphere being established, the verb must have been used especially in an agricultural context, as evidenced by its occurrences in Varro<sup>95</sup>. The second verse represents a significant departure from the original Greek text. Cicero transforms the reference to a specific, albeit contingent, episode into a more general statement, eliminating the use of proper nouns (*ἐν Ἀργείοισιν, Ἀτρεΐδης*). The subject of the sentence is no longer Agamemnon; rather, the Latin text directs attention to Achilles, who is both the subject and object of the phrase. Cicero places particular emphasis on his condition of deprivation of honour,

90 The phrase *tristis irae* has a certain afterlife in the Latin literature: see e.g. Verg. *ecl.* 2, 14 (cf. the variation *triste ... ira* in 3, 8of.); Aen. 3, 666; Hor. *carm.* 1, 16, 9; Stat. *Theb.* 12, 574; Sil. 10, 225.

91 Dougan – Mitchell Henry 1934, 23.

92 According to Chinnici 2000, 55.

93 Traglia (1950, 136 f.) identifies the inchoative and the frequentative verbs as forms that serve to intensify the expressivity of Cicero's poetic language.

94 The aorist *ἔρεξεν* serves to emphasise the exactitude of the circumstances that precipitate Achilles' emotional response: see Chinnici 2000, 53.

95 Persius will recover the technical meaning of *turgesco* in sat. 3, 8 ... *turgescit vitrea bilis*, where *bilis* indicates anger from a physiological point of view and recalls Homer's *χόλος*.

with the phrase *me orbatum* occupying a prominent position between the masculine caesura in the 3rd foot and the bucolic diaeresis.

Cicero replaces the evil suffered (*ἀσύφηλον*) with the good lost (*decore atque laude*)<sup>96</sup>. The phrase *decore atque omni laude (me orbatum)* appears to have been inspired by the term *ἀτίμητος* at v.648 (... *ὡς εἴ τιν' ἀτίμητον μετανάστην*), which is intensified by the use of a couple of terms, the presence of *omnis*, and the sense of privation, which assumes a more individual connotation. It is noteworthy, however, that the Latin version does not emphasise the concept of social exclusion to the same extent as the Greek text (647 *με vs. ἐν Ἀργείοισιν*, 648 *μετανάστην*). Conversely, the text places greater emphasis on the deprivation of values, namely *decus* and *laus*, which are closely associated with the social and political dimension<sup>97</sup>. The etymological figure (*cor ... recorder*) provides a frame for this phrase of gnomic tone, which represents an experience that is universally relatable and that Cicero himself had undergone<sup>98</sup>.

In Tusc. 3, 63, Cicero provides an extensive list of potential human responses to the loss of loved ones, which can be considered an inventory of grieving reactions<sup>99</sup>. Bellerophon, the sole male character in a line-up of natural mothers (Niobe, Hecuba) and putative mothers (Medea's nurse), is emblematic of the grief-stricken father, who seeks solitude to express his anguish<sup>100</sup>. Niobe's transformation into stone can be interpreted as a reflection of her enduring quest for solace and silence in her mourning<sup>101</sup>. In contrast, Hecuba represents the anguished scream of heartbreak, while Medea's nurse symbolises the overwhelming outpouring of grief in the face of nature's indifference<sup>102</sup>:

96 Traina 1974, 82.

97 In the source text, the idea of privation is given by ἄ- privative of *ἀτίμητος*.

98 Traina 1974, 82.

99 Chinnici 2000, 58.

100 Indeed, Scarcia (1984, 205 n.9) describes a 'Bellerophon complex', which bears resemblance to the 'Philoctetes complex': the sense of solitude resulting from a poignant personal tragedy allows Cicero's to identify himself with Bellerophon; the solitude suffered for political reasons favours his identification with Philoctetes.

101 The petrification is emblematic of Niobe's enduring, voiceless anguish. Cicero thus proffers a rationalising interpretation of the myth, which serves to illustrate the process of 'Entmythisierung' of the Niobe myth, a process that had already commenced during the Hellenistic era (cf. Philem. fr. 101 Koch); Bömer 1976, 49, Forbes Irving 1990, 146–148. On Ovid's elaboration of the myth, see Aresi 2019, esp. 147–151.

102 The theme of discourse with the natural elements is discussed in Scarcia 1984, 203 n.6.

... ex hoc evenit ut in animi doloribus alii solitudines captent, ut ait  
Homerus de Bellerophonte:

“Qui miser in campis maerens errabat Aleis  
Ipse suum cor edens, hominum vestigia vitans”.

Et Nioba fingitur lapidea propter aeternum, credo, in luctu silentium, Hecubam autem putant propter animi acerbitem quandam et rabiem fingi in canem esse conversam. sunt autem alii, quos in luctu cum ipsa solitudine loqui saepe delectat, ut illa apud Ennium nutrix:

“Cupido cepit miseram nunc me proloqui  
Caelo atque terrae Medaei miserias”.

Hence it comes that, in times when the soul is grieved, others seek out solitude, as Homer says of Bellerophon:

“In the Aleian plain he desolate wandered in sorrow,  
Eating his heart out alone, and the footsteps of men he avoided”.

And Niobe is imagined in stone to represent, I suppose, everlasting silence in sorrow, while they think that Hecuba on the other hand, by reason of a sort of fierceness and fury of soul, was imagined to have been changed into a bitch. There are, moreover, other mourners who often find delight in holding converse with solitude itself, like the well-known nurse in Ennius:

“Longing has come upon me now, poor wretch,  
To heav’n and earth to tell Medea’s woes”<sup>103</sup>.

The couplet dedicated to Bellerophon is a Ciceronian translation (fr. 24 Bl.<sup>2</sup>) of Homer, *Iliad* 6, 201f.:

ἦτοι ὃ κὰπ πεδίον τὸ Ἀλήϊον οἶος ἀλᾶτο  
ὄν θυμὸν κατέδων, πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἀλειίνων

[...] Alone and lost, he wandered  
across the Alean plain, heartsick with grief,  
avoiding any human habitation<sup>104</sup>.

Cicero’s translation marks the beginning of a series of three mythological *exempla* (Bellerophon, Niobe, Hecuba) that depict parents grappling with the

103 Translation by King 1950, 301.

104 “[...] Alone and lost, he [sc. Bellerophon] wandered / across the Alean plain, heartsick with grief, / avoiding any human habitation”, translation by Wilson 2023, 141.

loss of their children. The experiences of these figures bear resemblance to those of Demosthenes, who is referenced immediately prior<sup>105</sup>.

The Homeric text is preoccupied with Bellerophon's isolation, wandering and misanthropy, beginning with the toponym, which allows for a word play between the terms *Ἀλήϊον*, *ἀλᾶτο* and *ἀλεείνων*<sup>106</sup>. This can be regarded as a form of exile, which appears to place Bellerophon in a state of limbo between life and death<sup>107</sup>. The Homeric text does not elucidate the reasons for this. However, based on the preceding verse, which was omitted by Cicero, it has been postulated that a penalty has been incurred for an infraction. As verse 200 makes a vague reference to the divine hatred of the hero (*ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ καὶ κείνος ἀπήχθητο πᾶσι θεοῖσιν*)<sup>108</sup>, an alternative hypothesis is that Bellerophon was mourning the death of two of his three sons, a theme that is recalled in verses 203–205.

This is the interpretation that Cicero (or his source) puts forth regarding the Homeric passage, as found in the *scholia*<sup>109</sup>. In Tusc. 3, 63, Bellerophon is, in fact, remembered as an emblem of the grieving father, rather than as a character generically affected by that 'endogenous' and unfounded melancholy that has been attributed to him by tradition, from Aristotle onwards<sup>110</sup>. It seems reasonable to posit that Cicero discerned a reflection of his own experience in the narrative of the hero<sup>111</sup>. Consequently, the concept of loneliness, represented by the Greek term οἶος, is replaced by that of pain, reiterated in two synonymous and alliterative terms: *miser* and *maerens*<sup>112</sup>. The second term is emphasised by the masculine caesuras in the third and fourth feet. Furthermore, in addition to *errabat*, the words *miser* and *maerens* necessitate the utilisation of the voiced alveolar consonant (*miser*, *maerens*, *errabat*), thereby providing a compensatory element that aligns with the triple alliteration observed in the source text (*Ἀλήϊον*, *ἀλᾶτο*, *ἀλεείνων*). The

105 Demosthenes had indeed lost his daughter. Cicero refers to the criticism directed at him by Aeschines (cf. in Ctes. 77) concerning his failure to respect the period of mourning.

106 Stoevesandt 2016, 87.

107 D'Alfonso 2008, 1–5. On the connection between silence and exile, see Degl'Innocenti Pierini 2007.

108 "But then Bellerophon aroused the hatred of all the gods", translation by Wilson 2023, 141. On the suspected interpolation of vv. 200–202, see Stoevesandt 2016, 86 f.

109 Sch. Il. 6, 200–205 ed. Erbse 1971, 166; further details in Scarcia 1984, 204 n. 8.

110 Cf. e.g. Arist. Probl. 30, 1, 953 a; Giusti 1933, 42–49, Scarcia 1984, 202 f. n. 5.

111 Cicero thus identifies himself with Bellerophon, with whom he shares the experience of mourning: on the 'Bellerophon complex' see above, n. 100.

112 Traina 1974, 81.

alliterative clause *vestigia vitans* exhibits a structural resemblance to the Greek one (*ἀνθρώπων ἀλείνων*). In the second verse, the masculine caesura in the third foot separates the two perfectly symmetrical hemistichs, both of which are closed by the participle (*edens ... vitans*). The Latin *ipse*, which occupies a prominent position in the verse, has no direct equivalent in Greek. Furthermore, the pronoun, emphasised by the term *suum*, serves to reinforce the image of a man who evades the footsteps of others by consuming his own heart<sup>113</sup>.

Consequently, Bellerophon is isolated from the social dimension as a result of his grief, which renders him a “living dead”. The voluntary exile that the hero has imposed upon himself is analogous to that which Cicero enacts following the death of Tullia, which occurred a couple of months ago and is described in a letter to Atticus (12, 15), written just before *Tusculan Disputations*<sup>114</sup>:

in hac solitudine careo omnium colloquio, cumque mane me in silvam  
abstrusi densam et asperam, non exeo inde ante vesperum. secundum te  
nihil est mihi amicus solitudine. in ea mihi omnis sermo est cum litteris.  
eum tamen interpellat fletus; cui repugno quoad possum, sed adhuc pares  
non sumus.

In this lonely place I do not talk to a soul. Early in the day I hide myself in a thick, thorny wood, and don't emerge till evening. Next to yourself solitude is my best friend. When I am alone all my conversation is with books, but it is interrupted by fits of weeping, against which I struggle as best I can. But so far it is an unequal fight<sup>115</sup>.

The Alean plain is characterized by an overwhelming sense of solitude, which evokes the solitude depicted in this letter as the forest of Astura (*solitudo*), Cicero's refuge in suffering<sup>116</sup>. This is a location with a tangible existence, imbued with profound emotional and symbolic significance. The forest is depicted as a dense and intricate environment, characterised as an unwelcoming and inaccessible place (*silvam ... densam et asperam*). It is a

113 Chinnici 2000, 61.

114 On Cicero's grief over the death of his daughter, see Baltussen 2009.

115 Translation by Shackleton Bailey 1966, 89.

116 Cic. Att. 12, 13, 2 *latibulum et perfugium doloris mei*.

space of solitude, shaped by the necessity to find solace for one's pain<sup>117</sup>. Furthermore, it can be conceptualised as an expression of the primacy of nature, in which cultural norms are superseded<sup>118</sup>. Indeed, Cicero conceals himself here, as though he were an animal in its lair. The act of crying represents the primitive and instinctive aspect of emotional expression. This is in contrast to the domain of the written word, which finds expression in a context that is separate from the gaze of others. This phenomenon is distinct from the stages where tragedies are represented, which Cicero criticizes as a means of displaying pain<sup>119</sup>.

In this letter, Cicero's emotional state remains unresolved, as evidenced by his continued weeping. In this instance, he provides an exemplar of the representation of mourning through his own actions. Cicero revisits this topic a few months later in the *Tusculanae Disputationes*, representing it no longer in subjective terms but in objective terms<sup>120</sup>. Consequently, the weeping that overwhelms Cicero is diluted in the *miser* and *maerens* pair of the Homeric translation, which has been probably influenced by the scholia's interpretation of the Homeric text. If the Alean plain, in which Bellerophon wanders, can be considered to represent the liminal space between life and death, then the *silva* of Astura can be seen as a location where nature asserts its dominance over culture. This literary topography thus finds a correspondence in a place that is both real and symbolic, where an equally real and concrete pain finds expression<sup>121</sup>.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, it can be seen that the quotation does not merely serve a decorative function; rather, it marks important junctures in the argument developed and is adapted (in terms of both form and content) to the passage in

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117 In contrast to the *locus amoenus*, where isolation is a deliberate choice and typically involves the separation of a few individuals from the larger group, as observed by Petrone 1988, 7.

118 Petrone 1988, 8.

119 The passage dedicated to Bellerophon is in fact preceded by a quotation from Accius (fr. *inc.* 672 R.<sup>2</sup> = fr. *inc.* 697 Dangel, which in turn elaborates on Hom. Il. 10, 15), which focuses on Agamemnon's ostentatious display of grief and thus constitutes an antiphrastic example with regard to Bellerophon: see Chinnici 2000, 57.

120 Scarcia 1984, 202.

121 Traina 1974, 84.

which it is inserted. In the contexts previously discussed, poetic quotation is frequently employed to challenge the Peripatetic doctrines on the one hand and to reinforce Stoic ones on the other. Furthermore, as demonstrated in the analysis of the interconnection between *ira* and *fortitudo*, the poetic citation evokes a set of images that align with both the author and the audience. By challenging the notion of *gladiatoria iracundia*, Cicero effectively Romanizes a Greek philosophical motif, rendering it more accessible to his readers. In certain instances, Cicero's prose is modified to align with the poetic style of the text with which it is paired (this is exemplified, for instance, by the use of *stomachor* in Tusc. 4, 48). Conversely, in other instances, the quotation is adapted to align with the existing syntax of the prose, being incorporated into it (cf. Tusc. 4, 52 f.).

The act of quoting is inherently partial, as it entails a selection on the part of the author who is quoting, which is influenced by a number of factors, including the author's value system, cultural background, personal experience, and the objectives of his work. This is exemplified by the two translations from the *Iliad* in Tusc. 3, 18 and 63. Cicero occasionally selects from the poetic *corpus* those myths, situations, *sententiae*, scenes and characters that are most appropriate for illustrating the themes he is discussing. This can be viewed as an 'appropriation' of the source text, which is occasionally shaped by the reasoning he is conducting. This is evident in his discussion of the anticipation of Ajax's madness (4, 52 f.), in the depiction of Achilles as deprived of glory and honour (3, 18), or in Bellerophon's solitary and silent wandering (3, 63).

In the case of the translated quotation, the selection operates on a further degree, as it does not merely entail identifying the pericope to be quoted; rather, it involves the act of *vertere*, which is, in fact, a work of relative creation that frequently claims its autonomy from the original. The relationship between the translated and the source text is analogous to that of *imitatio*<sup>122</sup>. In both instances, Cicero offers an autobiographical reinterpretation of the Homeric text. His translations are distinguished by an elevation of the stylistic register, the universalization of the experience described in the quoted text, its dramatization and the minimization of the physical dimension of emotions (cf. e.g. *tristibus iris* in 3, 18, which translates *χόλω*).

In the case of the paraphrase, Cicero further elaborates the poetic text by amalgamating it with his prose. Similarly, as seen in Tusc. 4, 49, he identifies the elements of the source text that he intends to enhance and excludes

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122 Traina 1989, 93.



or minimises the others. As previously discussed, the translation presents a reduction in emotional data, namely a downplaying of physical details and emotional symptoms.

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Raphael Szeider

# Hadrian, seine Zeit und Augustus. Architektonische Bezugnahmen auf Augustus im 2. Jh. n. Chr.

**Abstract** As part of my PhD in Classical Archaeology, this paper intends to outline the research that needs to be done, in the exploring of references to Augustus that Hadrian (and the people of his time) created. Most noteworthy is the circumstance, that Hadrian's own references are just indirectly connected to those created by local elites in the provinces. Hadrian's habit of quoting Augustus has not only been recognised by the local elites, but afterwards, also used and adapted by members of this elites.

Furthermore, this paper will highlight that there are several ways of quoting Augustan 'role model buildings'. By allowing a second gaze upon briefly discussed examples of this phenomenon, this paper intends to present different strategies on how these references were used. Through shedding light upon different buildings in Rome, the eastern and western provinces, three distinct approaches to reference Augustus through building activity, will be discerned: firstly, by direct quotation of building types closely connected to Augustus; secondly, in a more indirect manner, operating through the history of the building itself; and lastly, by simply renovating buildings that have been erected by the first *princeps*.

## Einleitung

Der wohl deutlichste Hinweis darauf, dass sich Hadrian in größerem Maße als seine Vorgänger auf Augustus bezog, dürfte wohl die ab 123 n. Chr. auf seinen Münzen verwendete Vorderseitenlegende HADRIANVS AVGVSTVS sein. Sie verlieh diesem bis dahin üblicherweise abgekürzt angeführten Beinamen der römischen Kaiser – im Falle Hadrians z.B. als IMP(erator)

CAESAR TRAIAN(us) HADRIANVS AVG(ustus) – eine ganz neue Prominenz<sup>1</sup>. Mit dieser Neuerung ließ Hadrian zum einen die tradierte Form der kaiserlichen Legende mit der Aufzählung übernommener Ämter und Siegerbeinamen hinter sich, zum anderen machte er deutlich, dass er sich in direkte Verbindung allein mit dem überaus erfolgreichen Begründer des Prinzipats setzte und sich möglicherweise sogar als ‚neuer Augustus‘ verstanden wissen wollte. Dass Hadrian sich in mehrfacher Hinsicht an Augustus orientierte, ist in der Forschungsliteratur des Öfteren herausgestellt worden<sup>2</sup> und Hadrians Bauprojekte, wie etwa sein Mausoleum, wurden immer wieder mit Bauten des Augustus in Verbindung gebracht. Dennoch gibt es bisher aus archäologischer Sicht keine umfängliche Studie zu den baulichen Bezugnahmen, Referenzen und Architekturzitaten<sup>3</sup> Hadrians und seiner Zeitgenossen auf die Monumente des ersten Kaisers. Im Rahmen meiner Promotionsarbeit, deren Thematik und Grundkonzept im Folgenden kurz vorgestellt wird, soll dieses Forschungsdesiderat eingelöst werden. Der Natur der Sache geschuldet, ist dieser Beitrag mehr als Werkstattbericht, denn als abgeschlossene Forschung zu betrachten. Etwaige Fehlstellen sollen in den kommenden Jahren noch ergänzt, einige Details noch ausgeführt und gegebenenfalls korrigiert werden. Im Rahmen der Fragestellung des vorliegenden Tagungsbandes vermag der Blick auf die Wiederaufnahmen augusteischer Architekturmotive unter Hadrian zu zeigen, wie vielfältig Wiederverwendungen älteren Materials in inhaltlicher und kategorieller Hinsicht sein können.

## Grundgedanken

Ausgangspunkt der Arbeit ist der sog. Hadrianische Klassizismus mit seinen Verweisen sowohl auf die augusteische Epoche als auch auf das Klassische Griechenland<sup>4</sup>. Die Monumente, die zu diesem speziellen Charakteristikum der hadrianischen Zeit gehören, können in ihrer Rezeption augusteischer

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1 Kienast 1980, 396 und Posamentir 2017, 466 Anm. 127.

2 Z. B. Mortensen 2004, 89. 94–97 mit weiterführenden Literaturangaben.

3 Eine genaue Terminologie soll im Rahmen der Arbeit noch aufgestellt werden. Insbesondere eine Kategorisierung der Grade an wahrnehmbarer Nähe eines Baus des 2. Jhs. auf Monumente der augusteischen Zeit soll die Materialsammlung begleiten.

4 Vgl. hierfür Pelikán 1964, bes. 109 und Zanker 1974, 97–119, bes. 119, die beide mit dieser Bezeichnung auf die klassizistischen Tendenzen der hadrianischen Bildhauerei verweisen. Von der Skulptur ausgehend, lässt sich der Begriff auf weitere Kunstgattungen der Zeit übertragen.



Vorbilder differenziert betrachtet werden. Dabei lassen sich die Architekturkopien und -zitate nach einer aus der Skulpturforschung entlehnten und angepassten Terminologie kategorisieren<sup>5</sup>. Dies ermöglicht die differenzierte Erfassung der verschiedenen Formen von ‚Bezugnahmen‘ innerhalb der Architektur.

Zentral für die Frage nach der Rezeption sind die von Georg Lippold in Hinblick auf die antike Skulptur 1923 definierten Begriffe wie Kopie, Replik, Wiederholung und Typus<sup>6</sup>. Auf Basis dieses methodischen Gerüsts können so die hadrianischen Rückbezüge besser kontextualisiert werden, wodurch letztlich auch die Grundlagen für Fragen gelegt werden, z. B. ob und inwiefern Betrachtende der hadrianischen Zeit überhaupt in der Lage waren in einem Bau einen konkreten Verweis auf ein augusteisches Vorbild zu erkennen. Wie mehrfach zuvor herausgestellt worden ist, erfolgten die hadrianischen Rückbezüge auf Augustus programmatisch<sup>7</sup>. Im Kontext dieser Diskussion sind nun die Motivation und ideologischen Hintergründe dieser Bezugnahme herauszuarbeiten. Ging es Hadrian und den (lokalen) Eliten allein darum, mit Verweisen auf den ersten Kaiser Anklänge an die *aurae aetas* zu wecken, und damit allgemein und unverbindlich auf eine positiv bewertete Vergangenheit zu rekurrieren, oder wollte man die Parallelisierung der Herrscher bewusst in Stein setzen, um die Stellung eines unter Senatoren umstrittenen Kaisers zu festigen?

Die bewusste Instrumentalisierung der Erinnerung an Augustus mag für Rom einleuchten, den Ort, an dem der politische Aushandlungsprozess zwischen Kaiser, Senat und Volk normalerweise stattgefunden hätte. Der Kaiser befand sich allerdings bekanntermaßen viel auf Reisen und auch in den Provinzen finden sich unter Hadrian konkrete Rückbezüge auf Augustus und die augusteische Zeit. Es ist darum nötig, eine systematische Sammlung des archäologischen Materials anzufertigen. Die Reiserouten Hadrians bieten sich hier als Ausgangspunkt an.

Ein zentraler Aspekt für das Verständnis der Rezeption des augusteischen Formenguts (oder dessen Nicht-Nutzung) bei Monumenten und ihren Bildmotiven ist die Identifikation der für die Rezeption verantwortlichen Personen. Dabei muss der Frage nachgegangen werden, was Zeitgenossen, die nicht dem Kreis der Auftraggeber angehörten, im Umgang mit den Denk-

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5 Grundlegend dazu Lippold 1923; vgl. auch Stähli 2008 und Dorka Moreno – Griesbach – Lipps 2021. Ähnlich für die Architektur schon Goldbeck 2015; Goldbeck 2017; Goldbeck 2020; Goldbeck 2021.

6 Lippold 1923, 3–4.

7 Vgl. etwa Birley 1997, 108; Knell 2008, 49.

mälern wahrgenommen haben und was sie gegebenenfalls als Reminiszenz an Augustus verstanden haben könnten. Dabei erscheint gerade auch die geographische Verortung der Monumente zentral, da in den einzelnen Reichsteilen und in Rom selbst verschiedene Auftraggeber der Bauten und Rezipienten zu erwarten sind, die sich in ihrer Sozialisierung und im Umgang mit materieller Kultur voneinander unterscheiden. Des Weiteren ist davon auszugehen, dass sich die hadrianische Zeit durch den Umgang mit den augusteischen Monumenten eine eigene Vorstellung von ‚augusteisch‘ erst erschuf und wechselwirkend bestätigte, indem augusteische Bauten in hadrianischer Zeit wiederhergestellt und/oder auf die damalige Gegenwart hin angepasst wurden. Es findet also ein Prozess statt, den man als aktive Vergangenheits(re)konstruktion bezeichnen könnte<sup>8</sup>, und für den es lohnenswert erscheint, auch verschiedene Ansätze zu kulturellem Gedächtnis und Erinnerungskultur auszuwerten und nutzbar zu machen<sup>9</sup>.

## Rom

Wie eingangs genannt, lassen sich bereits im hadrianischen Rom Bauten finden, die entweder durch ihre baulichen oder durch inhaltlich-semantische Bezüge auf Augustus rekurrieren<sup>10</sup>.

Das Hadriansmausoleum wurde beispielsweise in seiner Form oft mit dem Mausoleum des Augustus verglichen; beide sind monumentale Vertreter desselben Bautyps, auch wenn die Diskussion um die Rekonstruktion beider Bauten nicht abgeschlossen ist<sup>11</sup>. Auf den ersten Blick betrachtet, kann das Hadriansmausoleum aufgrund seiner Bauform durchaus als Zitat des Augustusmausoleums verstanden werden, auch wenn diese These in letzter

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8 Ähnlich auch Seebacher 2020, 36–37 zur *imago* des Augustus. Wichtig hierfür auch der Begriff der Transformation, s. dazu Bergemann u. a. 2011; Böhme 2011.

9 Behrwald – Witschel 2012, bes. 14–17. Vgl. dazu unter anderem auch Assmann 1988; Assmann – Hölscher 1988; Nora 1984–1992; Nora 1998; Erll – Nünning 2008; Galinsky 2016, eine ausführliche Auswahl an Literatur thematisch speziell auf die Antike bezogen bei Leithoff 2014, 10f. Anm. 8.

10 Für die römischen Bauten hadrianischer Zeit im Allgemeinen Boatwright 1987.

11 Zum Hadriansmausoleum allgemein Knell 2008, 47–58; zuletzt Vitti 2014. Zum Augustusmausoleum s. z. B. Virgili – Carnabuci 2012. Zum Vergleich der beiden Bauten s. etwa Kienast 1980, 407f. Kienast geht dabei von einer klaren Bezugnahme aus. Vgl. auch Goldbeck 2020, 35.

Zeit kritisch hinterfragt worden ist<sup>12</sup>. In Anbetracht der Tatsache, dass das Mausoleum des Augustus mit Nerva geschlossen wurde und Hadrians Vorgänger Traian im Sockel der Traianssäule seine letzte Ruhe fand, lässt sich durchaus vermuten, dass man sich unter Hadrian bewusst am ersten und einzigen monumentalen Kaisergrab in Rom orientierte; einzelne Elemente, wie beispielsweise die in Relief gearbeiteten Stierköpfe, deuten jedenfalls in diese Richtung<sup>13</sup>.

So ist auch in augusteischer Zeit immer wieder das Motiv des Stierkopfes zu finden, welches von Konrad Kraft in Bezug auf die augusteische Münzprägung als Bildchiffre für den Sieg bei Philippi gedeutet wurde<sup>14</sup>. Wahrscheinlicher ist jedoch, dass dieses Motiv mit dem bei Sueton genannten Geburtsort des Augustus am Palatin „bei den Rindsköpfen“<sup>15</sup> in Verbindung steht. Bezeichnenderweise erfreut sich gerade dieses Bildmotiv im Baudekor hadrianischer Zeit erneut großer Beliebtheit<sup>16</sup>. Die eingehendere Untersuchung, ob es sich bei dem Hadriansmausoleum um ein klar ersichtliches Augustuszitat handelt, oder ob es sich um die Weiterführung einer durch Augustus als stilbildend etablierten Bauform handelt, ist Teil des noch umzusetzenden Dissertationsvorhabens.

Neben den Bauten mit Dekorzitaten finden sich aber auch noch weitere Beispiele, deren ideologische Aussage erst bei genauerem Verständnis des Baus – gewissermaßen erst auf den zweiten Blick – ersichtlich wird. So etwa beim Pantheon, bei dem es sich um einen durch Traian begonnenen Neubau des Vorgängerbaus handelt, der durch Agrippa, einem engen Vertrauten des Augustus, errichtet wurde<sup>17</sup>. Bemerkenswerterweise ließ Hadrian nach Fertigstellung des Baus nicht seinen eigenen Namen in der monumentalen *litterae aureae*-Inscription nennen, sondern verewigte Agrippa als alleinigen Bauherren<sup>18</sup>. Dabei spielt die Nutzung der Inschrift eine große Rolle. Mit der

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12 Zur Beschreibung der beiden Grabbauten s. die Zusammenstellung bei Seebacher 2020, 52–54. Seebacher 2020, 56, spricht sich gegen einen direkten architektonischen Verweis aus, sieht aber auf der inhaltlichen Ebene „[...] einen ideellen Augustus-Bezug [...]“.

13 Vgl. dazu Seebacher 2020, 56.

14 Kraft 1969, bes. 230 f. 234.

15 Suet. Aug. 5: *Natus est Augustus [...] regione Palati ad Capita bubula [...]*. Text: Kaster 2016; Deutsche Übersetzung: Martinet 2014, 148 f. Zu diesem Ort LTUR 1 (1993) 226 s. v. Capita Bubula (M. Torelli) und King 2010, der dieses Toponym wesentlich ideologischer ausdeutet.

16 Zur Nutzung des Motivs in hadrianischer Zeit Knell 2008, 55.

17 Für eine Übersicht zum Bau allgemein s. Knell 2008, 13–34.

18 Seebacher 2020, 63–65.

Fertigstellung dieses Gebäudes, das an einen Vorgängerbau aus der augusteischen Zeit anknüpft, konnte sich Hadrian in der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung in die Nähe des Augustus und dessen *familia* rücken. Des Weiteren zeigt die Inschrift aus vergoldeten Bronz Buchstaben – ursprünglich eine Innovation der augusteischen Zeit<sup>19</sup> – und die Nennung des Agrippa, dass Hadrian bewusst an historische Persönlichkeiten der augusteischen Zeit erinnern und somit seine eigene Person mit diesen in Verbindung bringen wollte<sup>20</sup>. Dass dieses Vorgehen ein Vorbild in den Taten des Augustus hatte und in der hadrianischen Zeit wohl wahrgenommen und mutmaßlich auch diskutiert wurde, zeigt eine Stelle des unter Hadrian schreibenden Sueton: „Deshalb setzte er [Augustus] die Gebäude eines jeden wieder instand, wobei die Inschriften erhalten blieben“<sup>21</sup>.

Beim bezugnehmenden Aspekt des Pantheons handelt es sich also um eine ganz andere Referenznahme auf Augustus als beim Mausoleum. Ohne die historischen Dimensionen des Baus und des ursprünglichen Pantheon des Agrippa zu kennen, bleiben dem Betrachter jene Rückbezüge verborgen<sup>22</sup>. Somit zeichnet sich an diesem Beispiel ab, dass die Bezüge auch auf einem hohen Verständnisniveau operieren konnten und sich eben nicht nur in der Wiederaufnahme von Baudekor und der Übernahme von bautypologischen Elementen bestehender augusteischer Monumente erschöpfen mussten.

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19 Dazu Posamentir 2017, 452; Alföldy 2018, 117–138

20 Martini 2006, 26; Seebacher 2020, 76. Was die römischen Zeitgenossen in diesem Bau hauptsächlich gesehen haben, ist eine Frage, die in diesem Rahmen nicht diskutiert werden kann. Vgl. dazu Martini 2006; Grasshoff – Heinzelmann – Wäfler 2009; Marder – Wilson Jones 2015. Zur Inschrift und deren Besonderheiten s. Boatwright 2013 mit weiterführender Literatur und Diskussion der Forschungsthese.

21 Suet. Aug. 31,5: *Itaque et opera cuiusque manentibus titulis restituit* [...]. Text: Kaster 2016; Deutsche Übersetzung: Martinet 2014, 196 f. Die ursprünglichen Bauherren der Gebäude waren laut Sueton angesehene Feldherren, deren Statuen Augustus in den Galerien auf seinem Forum aufstellen ließ und somit ideologisch auf sie zurückgriff, s. dazu auch Kienast 1980, 398 und Boatwright 2013, 22.

22 Die Platzanlage indes habe nach Martini an Caesar-, Augustus- und Nervaforum erinnert (Martini 2006, 24). Dies stellt natürlich gerade im Fall des Augustusforums eine erneute Bezugnahme her. Zudem sei an die Statuen des Augustus und des Agrippa erinnert, die sich in der Vorhalle befanden: s. Martini 2006, 26.

## Ostprovinzen

Auch abseits von Rom und den größeren Zentren des Reichs finden sich architektonische Verweise auf Augustus. Da Hadrian viel Zeit im Osten des Reiches verbracht hat, kann es nicht verwundern, dass auch dort Rückbezüge auf Augustus nachweisbar sind. So gibt es im pisidischen Antiochia in Kleinasien zwei für dieses Thema wichtige Bogenmonumente. Beim Älteren der beiden handelt es sich um das Propylon, welches den Zugang zu einem heiligen Bezirk der Stadt markiert<sup>23</sup>. Dieses dreitorige Bogenmonument wurde in augusteischer Zeit zu Ehren des Augustus errichtet. Für die hier vorgestellte Arbeit bemerkenswert ist die nahezu identische Kopie dieses Baus im westlichen Stadttor, dem sog. Hadrianstor<sup>24</sup>. Dieses wurde 129 n. Chr. geweiht und ist dem augusteischen Propylon in Gesamtkonzept und figürlicher Dekoration äußerst ähnlich. So finden sich an denselben Baugliedern vergleichbare dekorative Elemente und Motive wieder. Neben minimalen Abweichungen im Dekor besteht der Hauptunterschied zwischen den beiden Monumenten darin, dass das Hadrianstor in der Ausarbeitung weniger sorgfältig gestaltet ist und wohl auch nie komplett fertiggestellt wurde<sup>25</sup>.

Kontextuell lässt sich der Bau wohl mit einem Kaiserbesuch Hadrians – oder zumindest der Erwartung eines solchen durch die Stadtbevölkerung – in Verbindung bringen. Ein solcher Besuch kann für Antiochia in Pisidien zumindest vermutet werden, da die Stadt von Augustus als römische Kolonie neugegründet wurde und Hadrian bei einer seiner Kleinasienreisen zumindest in der Nähe gewesen sein muss. Bemerkenswert ist somit die bewusste Wiederaufnahme von Form und Dekor eines augusteischen Bogens für Hadrian, der sich selbst immer wieder in auffallender Weise an Augustus orientierte<sup>26</sup>. Hinzu kommt nun aber noch die lokale Deutungsebene des

23 Ossi 2009, 15, vgl. auch Hänlein-Schäfer 1985, 191–196.

24 Die Zuschreibung wird durch die Inschriften am Bogen gesichert. Auf der Landseite werden Hadrian und Sabina genannt, die stadtseitige Inschrift nennt den Stifter des Monuments Gaius Iulius Asper Pansinianus, Ossi 2011, 92.

25 Posamentir 2017, 465. Zum Grad der Fertigstellung Ossi 2011, 88. Zum Hadrianstor im Speziellen Ossi 2011; Ossi 2016; vgl. auch Ossi 2018, 114–123.

26 Hiermit ist auch die Frage verbunden, was als ausreichend angemessen galt, um einen Kaiser zu ehren. Es lassen sich einige kleinasiatische Bauten finden, bei denen scheinbar eine Bezugnahme gleicher Art stattgefunden haben muss. So etwa die sich ähnelnden Hadrianstore in Athen und Ephesos oder die anzunehmende Bezugnahme des Tempels für Hadrian und Sabina in Pergamon auf den dortigen – bisher noch unbekannt – Neokorietempel, der allerdings seinerseits im augusteischen Tempel im pisidischen Antiochia reflektiert wird, s. Posamentir 2017, 467 mit weiteren Literaturangaben.

Baus. Mit dem Bezug auf das augusteische Propylon verweist das Hadrianstor auch konkret auf die 150-jährige Geschichte Antiochias als römische Kolonie und auf die enge Verbindung der Einwohner zur Hauptstadt des Imperiums. Daneben hebt sich Gaius Iulius Asper Pansinianus, der Stifter des Monuments, aus der Reihe der städtischen Oberschicht durch den Bau des Bogens und seine namentliche Nennung auf der der Stadt zugewandten Seite zusätzlich hervor<sup>27</sup>.

Die hadrianische Variante des augusteischen Propylons zeigt in diesem Kontext also mindestens drei Ebenen der zeitgenössischen Wahrnehmung auf: 1. die kaiserliche Rezeption, da Hadrian den Bogen selbst hätte sehen oder zumindest von ihm hätte erfahren können. 2. Das Selbstverständnis der Stadtgemeinde, die sich in diesem Neubau ihrer eigenen Geschichte bewusst wird und/oder den Aspekt der augusteischen Vergangenheit im Hadrianstor neu verhandelt. 3. die persönliche Erhöhung des Stifters Pansinianus, der durch den Bogen eine direkte Verbindung mit dem Kaiser suggeriert und sich somit über die anderen Angehörigen der lokalen Elite – auf dem Bogen gut lesbar – erhöhen kann. Damit zeigt sich, wie divers unter Umständen architektonische Bezugnahmen auch in den Provinzen genutzt und interpretiert werden konnten. Letztlich können, je nach Standpunkt des Betrachters, alle drei genannten Aspekte der Wahrnehmung stark gemacht werden. Welcher Aspekt jedoch in welchem der drei Kontexte am prominentesten hervorgehoben wurde, hing ganz vom jeweiligen Betrachter ab.

Ähnlich verstanden werden kann der Befund des späthadrianischen Nymphäums in Sagalassos. Im Sinne der Lippold'schen Kontamination<sup>28</sup> wurden hier sowohl eine Replik des aus augusteischer Zeit stammenden Kultbilds des nahe gelegenen Apollo Clarios-Tempels, als auch Darstellungen von Musen, die auf Tänzerinnen am augusteischen Heroon auf der oberen Agora verweisen, in einem neuen Monument miteinander verbunden<sup>29</sup>. Folglich wurden auch hier Monumente aus der augusteischen Zeit als Vorbild herangezogen, um in diesem Fall ein ganz neues Monument zu kreieren. Dessen Dekor verweist dabei aber immer noch auf die Vorbilder und vernetzt das neue Monument somit mit den historischen Bauten in der Nähe und lässt es

27 Zu den Bezugnahmen Posamentir 2017, 466 f.

28 Lippold 1923, 4.

29 Zum Nymphäum Vandeput 1997, 89–95; Waelkens u. a. 2000, 553–594; Dorl-Klingenschmid 2001, 143–145; Mägele 2011, 331–334; Richard – Waelkens 2013, 85–92. – Zum Apollo-Tempel: Talloen – Waelkens 2004, 171–216; Talloen – Waelkens 2005, 217–249; Işın 2014, 116. – Zum Heroon: Mägele 2011, 333; Waelkens – Poblo-me 2011, 111.

mit diesen in Dialog treten. Die Betrachtenden wurden eingeladen, über die augusteische Vergangenheit der Stadt und die eigene Gegenwart zu reflektieren. Auch dürfte das Verhalten des Kaisers, sich auf das Vorbild des Augustus zu stützen, bekannt gewesen und beim Betrachten des neuen Monuments in Erinnerung gerufen worden sein.

## Westprovinzen

Auch für die Westprovinzen lassen sich Hinweise auf Rückbezüge auf Augustus finden. So gibt es beispielsweise in den französischen Städten Vienne und Nîmes je einen Tempel, an dem sich dies plausibel machen lässt. Die sog. Maison Carrée in Nîmes – ein Tempel, der laut Inschrift den Enkeln und Adoptivöhnen des Augustus, Gaius und Lucius Caesar, geweiht war, wurde in der frühen Kaiserzeit errichtet. Eine bisher nicht genauer spezifizierte zweite Bauphase im 2. Jh. n. Chr. ermöglicht zumindest die Überlegung, ob der Bau in hadrianischer Zeit restauriert wurde<sup>30</sup>. Obwohl sich das Aussehen dabei kaum verändert hätte, dürfte den Zeitgenossen aber die erneute Aufmerksamkeit, die dieses Monument mit Bezug zu Augustus erfuhr, nicht entgangen sein. Damit kann eine Bezugnahme in der hadrianischen Zeit auf Augustus und dessen *familia* hergestellt werden, die, wie bereits oben gezeigt, einen Vergleich im stadtrömischen Pantheon findet und damit gleichzeitig auch ein weiteres Beispiel für Vergangenheits(re)konstruktion in hadrianischer Zeit wäre.

Auch beim sog. Augustus und Dea Roma-Tempel in Vienne zeigt sich ein ähnlicher Befund. Die Inschrift weist, genauso wie der gesamte Tempel, Überarbeitungsspuren auf. Möglicherweise ist der Bau in hadrianischer oder antoninischer Zeit partiell umgearbeitet worden<sup>31</sup>. Sollte dem so gewesen sein, gäbe es auch hier Indizien die auf eine hadrianische Adaption eines bestehenden augusteischen Monuments im Stile des Pantheons hindeuten. Ziel weitergehender Untersuchungen muss nun sein, herauszufinden, welcher ideologische Hintergrund hinter den Sanierungen und Adaptionen der Tempel in Vienne und Nîmes steckt<sup>32</sup>.

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30 Zu Bau und Bauphasen Anderson 2013, 109–111 und Amy – Gros 1979, vgl. Christol – Darde 2009.

31 Zu Bau und Bauphasen Delorme 1841; Dejardins 1879; Bizot 1906; Bessiere 2011; Anderson 2013, 47. 113–116. Zur Inschrift Formigé 1924.

32 Vgl. dazu auch Buchert 2000.

Des Weiteren vermutet Anette Küpper-Böhm in ihrer Studie zu den Bögen der Gallia Narbonensis eine Bauphase traianisch-hadrianischer Zeit für die zweite Attika des Bogens von Orange<sup>33</sup>. Ob es sich bei den vorgestellten Bauten tatsächlich um Bauphasen hadrianischer Zeit handelt, gilt es noch zu eruieren.

Auch auf der iberischen Halbinsel finden sich Baukomplexe, die sich an augusteische Bauten anlehnen und, da kontrovers datiert, bei genauerer Untersuchung möglicherweise der hadrianischen Zeit zugeschrieben werden müssten. Beispielhaft sei hier auf die Rezeption des Augustusforums verwiesen, die von Vibeke Goldbeck aufgearbeitet wurde<sup>34</sup>. So ist etwa beim *Forum adiectum* in Merida, das sich in Teilen deutlich an das römische Augustusforum anlehnt, unklar, ob es über zwei Bauphasen verfügt oder nur über eine. Zudem ist nicht gesichert, in welche Zeit der Komplex konkret datiert. Lange wurde für das Forum eine Datierung in die claudische Zeit angenommen, mittlerweile gibt es aber Stimmen, die eine Einordnung mindestens in die neronische oder flavische Zeit erwägen<sup>35</sup>. Eine noch spätere Datierung scheint möglich, was eine Neubetrachtung des Materials nötig macht – insbesondere nachdem Hadrian sich auf seiner Reise durch die iberische Halbinsel möglicherweise an der augusteischen Route orientierte und Bauten des Augustus wiederherstellen ließ<sup>36</sup>. Denkbar wäre ein ähnlicher Umgang mit dem Vorbild des Augustusforums wie bei den oben vorgestellten Bögen in Kleinasien.

## Fazit

Gerade im Hinblick auf die Thematik der Bezugnahmen und Referenzen Hadrians auf die augusteische Zeit und den ersten Princeps sowie die auf verschiedene Weise bezugnehmenden Bauten, dürfte klar geworden sein, dass noch viel Arbeit zu leisten ist. Dennoch wurde auch gezeigt, dass im Umgang mit bezugnehmenden Bauten verschiedene Modi der Bezugnahme

33 Küpper-Böhm 1996, 86–109, 155 f.

34 Allgemein zur Rezeption des Augustusforums Goldbeck 2015. Für die Rezeptionen auf der iberischen Halbinsel Goldbeck 2015, 68–94.

35 Goldbeck 2015, 69–73.

36 Birley 1997, 147–149. Neben dem Forum in Merida gibt es auch noch weitere im Rahmen dieser Arbeit interessante Bauten z.B. in Italica – der Heimatstadt der Familie Hadrians – und Tarragona, s. dazu Goldbeck 2015, 84–85, 88–93. Hadrian scheint Italica als Kaiser nicht besucht zu haben, dennoch finanzierte er der Stadt ein rigoroses Bauprogramm, s. Birley 1997, 149.



erwartet werden dürfen. So wurde aufgezeigt, dass Bezugnahmen einerseits auf der Ebene der Bautypologie und des Baudekors operieren konnten. So kann argumentiert werden, dass das Hadriansmausoleum und das sog. Hadrianstor im pisidischen Antiochia aufgrund ihres Aussehens als Verweise auf Bauten aus der augusteischen Zeit verstanden werden konnten. Andererseits können die Bezugnahmen aber auch subtiler in Szene gesetzt werden. So wurde am Beispiel des Pantheons aufgezeigt, dass Betrachter sowohl über die Vorgeschichte des Baus als auch über die Baumaßnahmen Hadrians informiert sein mussten, um die Bezugnahme zu verstehen, da für sich allein genommen der Bau mit seiner Inschrift lediglich auf den Bauherren des ersten Pantheons – Agrippa – verweist. Erst mit dem nötigen Hintergrundwissen wird gleichsam auf den zweiten Blick deutlich, dass der Bau von Hadrian stammt und sich bewusst an die augusteische Zeit anlehnt.

Auf diesen Grundgedanken aufbauend kann festgehalten werden, dass bei der Erforschung architektonischer Bezugnahmen eine Vielzahl an visuellen, aber auch programmatischen Verweisen mitbedacht werden muss. Die Aufstellung eines Kataloges mit bezeichnender Architektur und eine Aufschlüsselung der Standorte und Auftraggebenden wiederum kann zu einer wesentlich detaillierteren Beantwortung der Frage nach den Ursachen und Motivationen für das augustusbegeisterte Verhalten der hadrianischen Zeit im Allgemeinen beitragen. Nicht zuletzt sollte gefragt werden, welche Motive Hadrian selbst hatte, sich derart stark als neuer Augustus zu präsentieren. Fragen, die hoffentlich in den kommenden Jahren Beantwortung finden. Auch wenn die frühe und hohe Kaiserzeit bereits seit langem Thema der altertumswissenschaftlichen Forschung ist, kann gezeigt werden, dass diese Zeiträume immer noch viel Forschungspotential bereithalten und eine wissenschaftliche Auseinandersetzung somit lohnend ist.

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Chiara Ballestrazzi

## Tra immagini e parole. Le tante vite del tempio di Apollonide di Cizico

**Abstract** According to the introductory lemma, the nineteen epigrams and their related prose lemmata included in the *Palatine Anthology*, Book 3, outline nineteen reliefs (*stylopinakia*) that decorated the otherwise unknown Cyzicene temple of Apollonis, mother of Eumenes II and Attalus II of Pergamon. Celebrating the filial devotion of Apollonis' royal children, the *stylopinakia* featured mythological and legendary *historiai*, most of them inspired by literary and (perhaps) artistic masterpieces. These models were adapted – sometimes even radically – to fit the many successive physical and semantic contexts of the *stylopinakia*, from the material temple of Apollonis to the literary “picture gallery” of the *Palatine Anthology*. This paper investigates the peculiarities of this special literary collection and discusses the possible stages of its centuries-long gestation, with a specific focus on the mutual influence of material and literary artefacts.

Il terzo libro dell'*Antologia Palatina* tramanda diciannove epigrammi anonimi preceduti ciascuno da un lemma in prosa. Secondo quanto riporta il lemma introduttivo che apre la raccolta, gli epigrammi sarebbero stati scritti a proposito delle *historiai* che decoravano gli *stylopinakia* del tempio eretto a Cizico per Apollonide, madre dei sovrani del regno di Pergamo Attalo II ed Eumene II.

Ἐν Κυζίκῳ εἰς τὸν ναὸν Ἀπολλωνίδος, τῆς μητρὸς Ἀττάλου καὶ Εὐμένους,  
ἐπιγράμματα, ἃ εἰς τὰ στυλοπινάκια ἐγγράπτο περιέχοντα ἀναγλύφους  
ἱστορίας, ὡς ὑποτέτακται.

A Cizico a proposito del tempio di Apollonide, madre di Attalo ed Eumene, epigrammi che erano stati scritti a proposito degli *stylopinakia* che contenevano storie a bassorilievo, come segue.

Le informazioni fornite nel lemma iniziale<sup>1</sup> sollevano non poche perplessità, dal significato dell'*harpax* “*στυλοπινάκιον*”<sup>2</sup> fino alla natura del rapporto tra i lemmi, gli epigrammi e la struttura alla quale si riferiscono. Peculiarità metriche, stilistiche e lessicali dimostrano infatti come gli epigrammi siano posteriori al VI secolo d.C e i lemmi al V secolo d.C.<sup>3</sup>: non ci sono elementi decisivi per attribuire i lemmi al poeta che ha composto gli epigrammi<sup>4</sup> piuttosto che a un diverso autore<sup>5</sup>. In ogni caso, almeno sette secoli sono intercorsi tra il ciclo di lemmi ed epigrammi che oggi leggiamo nell'*Antologia Palatina* e la decorazione del fantomatico edificio di cui essi delineano articolazione topografica e contenuto iconografico. Dell'esistenza a Cizico di un tempio dedicato ad Apollonide non abbiamo peraltro altre notizie<sup>6</sup>.

Le diciannove *historiai* vertono sulla *pietas erga parentes* e sull'affetto e il supporto reciproco tra figli e genitori. Il programma iconografico è dunque perfettamente in linea con il ruolo riconosciuto alla regina Apollonide dalla propaganda attalide, che faceva della *homonoiia* familiare il suo punto di forza<sup>7</sup>. Moglie e poi a lungo vedova di Attalo I<sup>8</sup> e madre di ben quattro figli maschi, due dei quali – Eumene e Attalo – destinati a salire al trono, di Apollonide fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche mettono in luce le doti di madre esemplare e la spiccata devozione religiosa<sup>9</sup>. La centralità della sua figura materna emerge anche nel programma iconografico dell'Altare di Pergamo, il monumento celebrativo per eccellenza della dinastia pergamenea. Non solo nella grandiosa Gigantomachia speciale rilevanza è data alle figure femminili

1 Sul lemma introduttivo: Ballestrazzi 2017, 138–140 con discussione delle interpretazioni precedenti.

2 Ballestrazzi 2017, 139–140.

3 Meyer 1911, 43. 63; Demoen 1988, 248.

4 Cfr. Meyer 1911, 68–70.

5 Cfr. Maltomini 2002, 31 nota 39.

6 Cfr. in particolare Sève 2014, 157–162.

7 Sulla figura di Apollonide e il suo ruolo nella propaganda attalide, in particolare Van Looy 1976; Mirón 2018 e Mirón 2021.

8 Sul matrimonio di Attalo e Apollonide nel contesto dei rapporti tra la dinastia attalide e la città di Cizico: Sève 2014, 154–157.

9 Che si rivela innanzitutto nel restauro del santuario di Demetra e Kore Thesmophoroi a Pergamo, una probabile espressione di riconoscenza da parte di Apollonide per la sua prolifica e felice maternità: Mirón 2018, 37.

(e in particolare alle divine madri che combattono a fianco dei divini figli)<sup>10</sup>, ma anche nel rilievo che illustra le avventure del leggendario capostipite della dinastia attalide, Telefo, grande importanza è riconosciuta alla madre dell'eroe, Auge, e alla sua apoteosi, che potrebbe alludere a quella della stessa regina madre Apollonide<sup>11</sup>.

Tra le varie attestazioni epigrafiche e letterarie dell'idillio familiare di Apollonide e dei suoi figli, Polibio ricorda come proprio a Cizico, in occasione di una visita nella sua città natale, Apollonide fosse stata scortata per la città e i templi dai quattro figli. Essi tenevano la madre per mano con tale affetto e devozione che i ciziceni li paragonarono ai leggendari Cleobi e Bitone, i due fratelli argivi che trainarono al posto dei buoi il carro della madre fino al santuario di Era guadagnandosi così non solo imperituri elogi per la loro *pietas erga partentes* ed *erga deos* ma anche una morte prematura (con ogni evidenza la più eccelsa benedizione che, almeno secondo gli antichi, una madre riconoscente può ottenere per i propri figli)<sup>12</sup>.

Pur accomunate dall'esaltazione del legame tra figli e genitori, le diciannove vicende narrate negli *stylopinakia* presentano un ampio ventaglio di situazioni. Protagonista può essere un unico figlio<sup>13</sup> ma più spesso la vicenda ruota attorno a una coppia di fratelli<sup>14</sup>, che intervengono nella maggior parte dei casi a favore della madre<sup>15</sup>, in un caso del padre<sup>16</sup> e in due casi di entrambi i genitori<sup>17</sup>. Ora i figli salvano i genitori da un pericolo mortale o dalla prigionia<sup>18</sup>, ora vendicano un oltraggio subito<sup>19</sup> o la morte del genitore<sup>20</sup>, ora vanno in cerca della madre per ricondurla a casa<sup>21</sup>. A parte si collocano alcuni *stylopinakia* che non riguardano soprusi, vendette e pericoli: i già richiamati Cleobi e Bitone<sup>22</sup>, Odisseo commosso di fronte all'ombra della madre Anti-

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10 Cfr. Schmidt-Dounas 1992.

11 Mirón 2021, 213 con riferimenti bibliografici.

12 Pol. 20, 20, cfr. Sève 2014, 160; Mirón 2018, 34; Mirón 2021, 213.

13 Anth. Gr. 3, 1. 2. 5. 8. 11-13. 15.

14 Anth. Gr. 3, 4. 6. 7. 9. 11. 14. 16-19.

15 Anth. Gr. 3, 2-4. 6. 7. 9. 11. 12. 14. 16. 18. 19.

16 Anth. Gr. 3, 15.

17 Anth. Gr. 3, 5. 17.

18 Anth. Gr. 3, 6. 7. 9. 10. 15-17. 19.

19 Anth. Gr. 3, 3-5. 11. 14.

20 Anth. Gr. 3, 5. 12.

21 Anth. Gr. 3, 2.

22 Anth. Gr. 3, 18.

clea<sup>23</sup>, Dioniso che scorta la madre Semele fra gli dei<sup>24</sup> ed Eracle che conduce la madre Alcmena in sposa al giudice ultramondano Radamanto<sup>25</sup>.

La maggior parte delle *historiai* ricalcano vicende consacrate o addirittura create *ex novo* da Euripide<sup>26</sup>, Sofocle<sup>27</sup> ed Eschilo<sup>28</sup> in drammi che noi conosciamo solo da frammenti e fonti indirette, e questo legame è stato il principale motivo di interesse per gli *stylopinakia* da parte degli studiosi.

Senza dubbio, oltre che della tragedia, il nostro poeta aveva una conoscenza approfondita dell'epica omerica e dei versi di Apollonio Rodio, Quinto Smirneo, Nonno di Panopoli e di molti epigrammisti dell'*Antologia Palatina*, modelli che costituiscono peraltro un *terminus post quem* per la datazione della raccolta<sup>29</sup>. L'influenza di questi testi è riscontrabile sia a livello contenutistico che a livello lessicale e stilistico. Per esempio, oggetto dell'ottavo *stylopinakion* è l'incontro tra Odisseo e Anticlea come narrato nell'*Odissea*<sup>30</sup>, mentre nel quattordicesimo epigramma, per descrivere l'uccisione del gigante Tizio da parte di Apollo, il poeta ricalca i drammatici versi di Quinto Smirneo<sup>31</sup>.

Troviamo poi altri celebri *exempla* di devozione filiale, ovvero la leggenda dei siciliani Anapi e Anfinomo<sup>32</sup> e quella dei già richiamati Cleobi e Bitone, quindi, in *pendant* con l'uccisione di Pitone, Apollo e Artemide alle prese con Tizio in difesa di Latona<sup>33</sup> e un unico racconto storico-mitologico di ambientazione romana, ovvero la vicenda di Romolo e Remo che liberano la madre dalla prigionia<sup>34</sup>. Due *stylopinakia* – il dodicesimo e il tredicesimo, di cui diremo più oltre<sup>35</sup> – non sembrano riconducibili a nessun antecedente letterario.

Quando, ove possibile, confrontiamo le *historiai* rappresentate negli *stylopinakia* con le corrispondenti vicende canonizzate da illustri opere letterarie, non solo rileviamo come sia necessaria una certa cautela nel servirsi degli

23 Anth. Gr. 3, 8.

24 Anth. Gr. 3, 1.

25 Anth. Gr. 3, 13.

26 Anth. Gr. 3, 1–3. 5. 7. 10. 15. 16.

27 Anth. Gr. 3, 1. 3. 4. 9.

28 Anth. Gr. 3, 1. 11.

29 Assieme alle peculiarità metriche e prosodiche: Meyer 1911, 5–52; Demoen 1988; Maltomini 2002, 19 nota 5.

30 Hom. Od. 11, 152–224.

31 Q. Smyrn. 3, 392–398.

32 Anth. Gr. 3, 17.

33 Rispettivamente Anth. Gr. 3, 6 e 14.

34 Anth. Gr. 3, 19.

35 *Infra*, pp. 164–166.

*stylopinakia* per ricostruire tragedie frammentarie, ma soprattutto emergono le peculiarità e gli intenti del *corpus* – e con essi anche i suoi principali motivi di interesse. Innanzitutto, è possibile che la conoscenza di perlomeno alcune tragedie attiche da parte dell'autore sia stata mediata da collezioni di *excerpta* o *hypotheseis*<sup>36</sup> e che (anche) questa conoscenza di seconda mano abbia contribuito alle più o meno palesi discrepanze che in alcuni casi registriamo rispetto a quanto di quei drammi possiamo ricostruire da altre fonti dirette e indirette. Ma, soprattutto, credo si possa serenamente affermare che le vistose “incongruenze” che si notano in svariati *stylopinakia* siano frutto di una scelta deliberata: la rielaborazione degli autorevoli modelli è infatti, come vedremo, funzionale all'unitarietà tematica e all'intento celebrativo degli *stylopinakia*. Piuttosto che bollarla come goffaggine, la disinvoltura con cui chi ha assemblato questa collezione di *historiai* approccia i mostri sacri del dramma (ma anche dell'epica – Omero – e di altri generi letterari) si configura come un'emulazione creativa, ed era forse per lui (o per loro) motivo di vanto. Lo scopo del lemmatista e/o poeta oppure di chi per primo ha ideato il ciclo di *historiai* (di questo punto di non poco conto diremo in seguito) è quello di celebrare la *pietas erga parentes* e l'affetto e il sostegno reciproco tra figli e genitori. I racconti codificati in una più o meno ricca e solida tradizione letteraria e iconografica sono quindi reinventati per esaltare il legame tra i figli e la madre (o il padre o entrambi i genitori) tramite la scelta di versioni mitologiche secondarie, l'enfaticizzazione di aspetti marginali e talvolta addirittura lo stravolgimento radicale della versione “tradizionale”.

Nelle prossime pagine discuterò alcuni aspetti di una selezione di *historiai* che ritengo particolarmente significative per mettere in luce le caratteristiche più particolari del *corpus* e illustrare le numerose difficoltà e opportunità che incontra chi sia sufficientemente coraggioso da cimentarsi nella loro esegesi. Innanzitutto però un *caveat*: sia i lemmi sia – soprattutto – gli epigrammi presentano gravi problemi a livello testuale e di interpretazione, nei quali non intendo addentrarmi in questa sede<sup>37</sup>. Queste incertezze sono in parte senz'altro traccia di una tradizione burrascosa (un lemma – il secondo – è addirittura mancante<sup>38</sup>, mentre del diciassettesimo epigramma si conser-

36 Cfr. *infra*, p. 170.

37 Il testo qui proposto è quello dell'edizione di Beckby 1964.

38 Si osservi che il secondo lemma, che nelle edizioni dell'*Antologia Palatina* è presentato – in maniera fuorviante – alla stregua degli altri lemmi introduttivi, è in realtà uno dei lemmi a margine aggiunti dal copista J (sulle differenze tra i lemmi *in textu* e quelli a margine cfr. Maltomini 2002, 19–20 con nota 6), e non può quindi essere tenuto in considerazione né per quanto riguarda la ricostruzione degli *stylopinakia* e dell'architettura del tempio né rispetto all'interpretazione del

vano solo tre parole). Il fatto che gli *stylopinakia* illustrino vicende poco note e – come vedremo – spesso appositamente rielaborate rende talvolta arduo distinguere errori di trasmissione e innovazioni d'autore. Anche la non eccelsa qualità letteraria di lemmi ed epigrammi è spesso di ostacolo a una corretta ricostruzione del testo.

Osserviamo anche come gli epigrammi si presentino disomogenei nella lunghezza – da uno a tre distici – e nella tipologia<sup>39</sup>. Anche tra i lemmi si registrano differenze, sia nella lunghezza che nella ricchezza di dettagli, e in vari casi non c'è completo accordo tra il lemma e il rispettivo epigramma<sup>40</sup>.

### Anth. Gr. 3, 3: Fenice e Alcimede

Il terzo *stylopinakion* ha come protagonista Fenice, il pedagogo di Achille, aggredito dal padre Amintore che intende accecarlo con una fiaccola, mentre la madre Alcimede si frappone fra i due cercando di far cessare il reciproco odio.

Ὅ Γ ἔχει τυφλούμενον Φοίνικα ὑπὸ πατρὸς Ἀμύντορος καὶ κωλύουσαν  
Ἀλκιμέδην τὸν οἰκεῖον ἄνδρα.

Ἀλκιμέδη ξύνευνον Ἀμύντορα παιδὸς ἐρύκει,  
Φοίνικος δ' ἐθέλει παῦσαι χόλον γενέτου,  
ὅττι περ ἤχθετο πατρὶ σαόφρονος εἵνεκα ματρός,  
παλλακίδος δούλης λέκτρα προσιεμένῳ·  
κεῖνος δ' αὖ δολίοις ψιθυρίσμασιν ἤχθετο κούρω,  
ἦγε δ' ἐς ὀφθαλμοὺς λαμπάδα παιδολέτιν.

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rapporto tra lemmi ed epigrammi, come invece si riscontra anche nella più recente bibliografia. Cfr. Ballestrazzi 2017, 149 nota 106.

39 Per un'analisi delle diverse strategie impiegate dal poeta, cfr. Scicolone 2024, 309–314.

40 Cfr. per esempio Anth. Gr. 3, 1, in cui il lemma descrive Dioniso che accompagna in cielo la madre Semele scortato da Satiri e Sileni che portano fiaccole, mentre il relativo epigramma condensa in due distici la narrazione della vicenda di Semele includendo episodi del tutto estranei rispetto alla scena dello *stylopinakion* e che ne rappresentano semmai il più ampio contesto mitologico: il “parto” mortale di Semele, la genealogia prossima della principessa tebana, la successiva punizione dell'empio Penteo da parte di Dioniso.

Il terzo ha Fenice accecato dal padre Amintore e Alcimede che ostacola il proprio marito.

Alcimede trattiene il marito Amintore dal figlio e vuole far cessare la collera di Fenice nei confronti del genitore, poiché odia a causa dell'assennata madre il padre, che fa proprio il letto di una concubina, una schiava; quello a sua volta odia a causa di ingannevoli calunnie il ragazzo, e avvicinava ai suoi occhi la fiaccola assassina del proprio figlio.

Questa sordida vicenda è narrata nell'*Iliade* da Fenice stesso, che racconta di essere stato spinto dalla madre gelosa a sedurre la concubina del padre, per poi essere scacciato da quest'ultimo una volta scoperto il misfatto<sup>41</sup>. Assente nell'*Iliade*, l'accecamento di Fenice a opera del padre furioso emerge in alcuni resoconti successivi<sup>42</sup>, mentre estranee alla versione omerica sono le calunnie della concubina<sup>43</sup>: che la seduzione della concubina da parte di Fenice non sia in realtà mai avvenuta è l'imprescindibile presupposto non solo dell'innocenza del ragazzo ma anche di quella della madre, che solo in questo caso non avrebbe alcuna responsabilità nella rovina del figlio.

Nel terzo *stylopinakion* l'offesa subita da Alcimede è il movente dell'odio di Fenice nei confronti di Amintore, mentre l'ira di quest'ultimo nei confronti del figlio si basa solo sulle calunnie della concubina: la versione dello *stylopinakion* è l'unica in cui coesistono l'offesa subita da Alcimede e le calunnie della concubina, così da mettere in luce solamente gli aspetti positivi della vicenda e presentare Fenice come un integerrimo giovane che accorre in aiuto della *σαόφρων* genitrice, esattamente come i figli lodati negli altri *stylopinakia*. Inoltre, solo nella scena proposta dallo *stylopinakion* Alcimede interviene a favore di Fenice: questo elemento può essere stato aggiunto per evidenziare il legame tra i due e alleggerire la responsabilità nella rovina del figlio che l'autorevolissimo antecedente epico attribuiva alla donna per bocca di Fenice stesso.

41 Hom. Il. 9, 447-461.

42 E.g. Men. Sam. 498-500; Lykophr. 421-423 (cfr. scholia Lykophr. *ad loc.*).

43 L'innocenza di Fenice è garantita da Apollod. 3, 13, 8 e scholia vetera Plat. leg. 931b bis.

## Anth. Gr. 3, 4: Clizio, Polimede e Cleopatra

Il quarto *stylopinakion* raffigura Clizio e il fratello Polimede che uccidono la matrigna, mentre la madre Cleopatra assiste orgogliosa.

Ὁ Δ ἔχει Πολυμήδην καὶ Κλυτίον, τοὺς υἱοὺς Φινέως τοῦ Θρακός,  
οἵτινες τὴν Φρυγίαν γυναῖκα τοῦ πατρὸς ἐφόνευσαν, ὅτι τῇ μητρὶ αὐτῶν  
Κλεοπάτρα αὐτὴν ἐπεισῆγεν.

Μητριαν Κλυτίος καὶ κλυτόνοος Πολυμήδης  
κτείνουσι Φρυγίην ματρὸς ὑπὲρ σφετέρως.  
Κλειοπάτρη δ' ἐπὶ τοῖσιν ἀγάλλεται, ἢ πρὶν ἐπεῖδεν  
τὰν Φινέως γαμετὰν δαμναμένην ὀσίως.

Il quarto ha Polimede e Clizio, i figli di Fineo il trace, che uccisero la moglie frigia del padre, poiché se la mise in casa oltre alla loro madre Cleopatra.

Clizio e il savio Polimede uccidono la matrigna frigia per la loro madre. Cleopatra è fiera di loro, lei che prima vide la moglie di Fineo giustamente punita.

Analizzando le altre versioni note della vicenda risulta evidente come il quarto *stylopinakion* reinventi la storia “tradizionale”, ovvero quella delineata in due (o forse tre) drammi di Sofocle<sup>44</sup>. Senza scendere nei dettagli delle diverse varianti<sup>45</sup>, secondo la versione prevalente i figli di Cleopatra e Fineo sarebbero vittime delle calunnie della matrigna piuttosto che vendicatori dell'onore materno. La stessa Cleopatra, che il quarto *stylopinakion* rappresenta mentre si compiace della vendetta, ha nelle altre fonti un ruolo estremamente marginale.

## Anth. Gr. 3, 5: Cresfonte e Merope

Il quinto *stylopinakion* illustra l'uccisione da parte di Cresfonte di Polifonte, colpevole di averne ucciso il padre, sovrano della Messenia, e di averne

44 Nei *Suonatori di timpano* (TrGF IV FF 636–645) e nei (o nel) *Fineo* (TrGF IV FF 704–717a).

45 In particolare Soph. Ant. 971–987; scholia vetera Soph. Ant. 981 (= TrGF IV F 645); Apollod. 3, 200; Diod. 4, 43, 3–4, 44, 7.



sposato a forza la madre Merope. Merope stessa collabora con il figlio colpendo Polifonte alla testa con un bastone.

Ὁ Ε ἔχει Κρεσφόντην ἀναιροῦντα Πολυφόντην, τοῦ πατρὸς τὸν φονέα· ἔστι δὲ καὶ Μερόπη βάρκτρον κατέχουσα καὶ συνεργουῖσα τῷ υἱῷ πρὸς τὴν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐκδημίαν.

Κρεσφόντου γενέτην πέφνες τὸ πάρος, Πολυφόντα,  
 κουριδίης ἀλόχου λέκτρα θέλων μάναι·  
 ὄψὲ δέ οἱ πάϊς ἦκε φόνῳ γενέτη προσαμύνων  
 καὶ σε κατακτείνει ματρὸς ὑπὲρ Μερόπας.  
 Τοῦνεκα καὶ δόρυ πῆξε μεταφρένω, ἄ δ' ἐπαρήγει,  
 βριθὸν κατὰ κροτάφων βάρκτρον ἐρειδομένα.

Il quinto ha Cresfonte che uccide Polifonte, l'assassino del padre: c'è anche Merope, che stringe un bastone e collabora con il figlio nella morte del marito.

Di Cresfonte in passato uccidesti il padre, Polifonte, perché bramavi violare il letto della sua legittima sposa; ma anche se tardi suo figlio è giunto a portare aiuto al genitore con una strage, e ti massacra per salvare la madre Merope. Perciò ha infisso una lancia nella schiena, e quella aiuta, colpendo alle tempie con un pesante bastone.

L'*historia* delineata nel quinto *stylopinakion* risale al *Cresfonte* di Euripide, la cui trama è parzialmente ricostruibile da frammenti e varie fonti<sup>46</sup>. L'epigramma si differenzia dal dramma euripideo quanto al movente che ha spinto Polifonte a uccidere il padre di Cresfonte. Nella tragedia il movente principale è infatti l'accesso al trono di Messenia, mentre nell'epigramma l'unica motivazione è il matrimonio forzato subito da Merope. Se nel lemma l'unica colpa esplicitamente attribuita a Polifonte è l'uccisione del padre di Cresfonte, l'epigramma dà il massimo risalto all'oltraggio subito da Merope e vendicato dal figlio, spostando in secondo piano l'assassinio del padre e non

46 TrGF V FF 448a–459. Importante per la ricostruzione della tragedia euripidea è Hyg. fab. 137. Sul *Cresfonte* si vedano anche Collard *et al.* 1995, 121–147 e Harder 1985, 3–122.

menzionando nemmeno l'uccisione dei fratelli di Cresfonte, che viene invece ricordata nel dramma di Euripide<sup>47</sup>.

### Anth. Gr. 3, 10: Eunoo, Toante e Ipsipile

Il decimo *stylopinakion* raffigura la storia di Ipsipile, sottratta dai figli Eunoo e Toante alla vendetta di Euridice che la riteneva responsabile della morte del figlioletto Archemoro, a lei affidato.

Ἐν δὲ τῷ κατὰ δύσιν πλευρῷ ἐστὶν ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ Ἰπίνακος Εὐνοοσ  
γεγλυμμένος καὶ Θόας, οὓς ἐγέννησεν Ὑψιπύλη, ἀναγνωριζόμενοι τῇ μητρὶ  
καὶ τὴν χρυσὴν δεικνύντες ἄμπελον, ὅπερ ἦν αὐτοῖς τοῦ γένους σύμβολον,  
καὶ ρυόμενοι αὐτὴν τῆς διὰ τὸν Ἀρχεμόρου θάνατον παρ' Εὐρυδίκῃ  
τιμωρίας.

Φαῖνε, Θόαν, Βάκχοιο φυτὸν τόδε· ματέρα γάρ σου  
ρύση τοῦ θανάτου, οἰκέτιν Ὑψιπύλαν·  
ἄ τὸν ἀπ' Εὐρυδίκας ἔτλη χόλον, ἦμος ἀφαυρὸν  
ὔδρος ὁ γᾶς γενέτας ὤλεσεν Ἀρχέμορον.  
Στείχε δὲ καὶ σὺ λιπῶν Ἀσωπίδος ἀφνεὸν οὔθαρ,  
γυναμένην ἄξων Λῆμνον ἐς ἠγαθέην.

Nel lato a occidente, all'inizio del decimo rilievo sono scolpiti Eunoo e Toante, che generò Ipsipile, mentre sono riconosciuti dalla madre e mostrano la vite d'oro, simbolo della loro ascendenza, e la salvano dalla vendetta di Euridice per la morte di Archemoro.

Mostra, Toante, questo germoglio di Bacco: infatti tua madre salverai dalla morte, l'ancella Ipsipile: ella ha subito l'ira di Euridice, quando un serpente d'acqua figlio della terra uccise Archemoro inerme. Va' anche tu lasciando il fertile seno dell'Asopo, per condurre la madre alla sacra Lemno.

La vicenda è stata immortalata da Euripide nella celebre *Ipsipile*<sup>48</sup>, ma rispetto all'illustre antecedente lo *stylopinakion* presenta un'importante innovazione. Nell'*Ipsipile* a intercedere a favore della protagonista è infatti l'indovino An-

47 TrGF V F 448a, 24. Cfr. anche Hyg. fab. 137: *capit consilium ut exsequatur patris et fratrum mortem*.

48 TrGF V FF 752–769.

fiarao, e la scena del riconoscimento tra madre e figli avviene solo successivamente al suo provvidenziale intervento<sup>49</sup>. L'intercessione di Anfiarao – che nelle fonti iconografiche appare emblematica delle vicende di Ipsipile a Nemea<sup>50</sup> – nello *stylopinakion* è passata sotto silenzio, ed è invece il solo riconoscimento reciproco tra Ipsipile e i figli a essere risolutivo per la salvezza della donna<sup>51</sup>. Quanto al mezzo del riconoscimento, lo *stylopinakion* è l'unica fonte superstita a descriverne le caratteristiche: una vite d'oro<sup>52</sup>.

### Anth. Gr. 3, 18: Cleobi, Bitone e Cidippe

Il diciottesimo *stylopinakion* illustra la nota leggenda di Cleobi e Bitone, che trainarono il carro della madre fino al tempio di Era argiva. Commosa, la madre pregò la dea di concedere ai figli ciò che di meglio c'è per un mortale. I due giovani si addormentarono quindi nel tempio per non svegliarsi più.

Ἐν δὲ τῷ ΙΗ Κλέοβις ἐστὶ καὶ Βίτων· τὴν ἑαυτῶν μητέρα Κυδίππην,  
 ἰερωμένην ἐν Ἄργει Ἥρας, αὐτοὶ ὑποσχόντες τοὺς ἀχένας τῷ ζυγῷ διὰ  
 τὸ βραδύναι τὸ ζεύγος τῶν βοῶν, ἱερουργῆσαι [τὴν μητέρα] ἐποίησαν·  
 καὶ ἡσθεῖσα, φασίν, ἐπὶ τούτῳ ἐκείνη ἠῤῥατο τῇ θεῷ, εἴ τί ἐστι κάλλιστον  
 ἐν ἀνθρώποις, τοῦτο τοῖς παισὶν αὐτῆς ὑπαντήσασθαι· καὶ τοῦτο αὐτῆς  
 εὐξαμένης ἐκείνοι αὐτονυκτὶ θνήσκουσιν.

49 Per una ricostruzione della tragedia cfr. Lomiento 2005. Per il ruolo di Anfiarao e dei figli di Ipsipile, cfr. in particolare Schiassi 1953 e Carrara 2014.

50 In particolare, su un cratere apulo del Pittore di Dario – da Ruvo di Puglia, 330 a. C., Napoli, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 81934, cfr. LIMC 2 (1984) 474 n. 10 s. v. Archemoros (W. Pülhorn); LIMC 4 (1988) 60 n. 1 s. v. Euneos et Thoas (G. Berger-Doer) e LIMC 5 (1990) 648 n. 15 s. v. Hypsipyle I (C. Boulotis) – la scena principale raffigura Euridice, Ipsipile e Anfiarao all'interno di un tempietto: mentre Ipsipile invoca la clemenza della regina, Anfiarao interviene a favore della principessa Lemnia. I figli di Ipsipile (della figura di Toante rimangono solo frammenti) si trovano invece al di fuori del tempietto, in una posizione secondaria. Anche sul cratere a volute di Lasimos – 340 a. C., Parigi, Musée du Louvre, inv. K 66, cfr. LIMC 2 (1984) 474 n. 9 s. v. Archemoros (W. Pülhorn) e LIMC 4 (1988) 61 n. 3 s. v. Euneos et Thoas (G. Berger-Doer) – è Anfiarao a intercedere presso Euridice, che qui regge disperata tra le braccia il cadavere martoriato del figlio, mentre Euneo e Toante si trovano dietro la regina. Sull'iconografia delle vicende di Ipsipile a Nemea: Santucci 2005.

51 Sulla questione si vedano anche Calderini 1913, 362–364 e Danese 2005, 185–189.

52 Secondo alcuni esegeti, alla vite d'oro si farebbe riferimento nell'incerto TrGF V F 765, su cui Bond 1963, 139.

Οὐ ψευδῆς ὄδε μῦθος, ἀληθείη δὲ κέκασται  
 Κυδίππης παίδων εὐσεβίης θυσίη.  
 Ἦδυχαρῆς γὰρ ἔην σκοπὸς ἀνδράσιν ὤριος οἶμος,  
 μητρὸς ἐπ' εὐσεβίῃ κλεινὸν ἔθεντο πόνον.  
 Χαίροιτ' οὖν ἱεροῖσιν ἐπ' εὐσεβίῃ, κλυτοὶ ἄνδρες,  
 καὶ τὸν ἅπ' αἰώνων μῦθον ἔχοιτε μόνοι.

Nel diciottesimo ci sono Cleobi e Bitone: dal momento che il tiro di buoi tardava, ponendo il collo sotto il giogo permisero alla madre Cidippe, sacerdotessa di Era ad Argo, di compiere un sacrificio. E quella, dicono, felice per l'accaduto, pregò la dea che toccasse ai suoi figli la cosa più bella per gli esseri umani; e dopo che ella ebbe così pregato, quelli la notte stessa morirono.

Non menzognero è questo racconto, ma eccelle in verità il sacrificio di devozione dei figli di Cidippe. Uno scopo dolcemente gioioso era infatti per i giovani il viaggio tempestivo, si addossarono una gloriosa fatica per devozione verso la madre. Dunque godete di sacrifici per la devozione, celebri eroi, e abbiate fama per sempre voi soli!

Sia il lemma (*φασίν*) che l'epigramma (*μῦθος*) esplicitano come archetipo del diciottesimo *stylopinakion* una tradizione letteraria piuttosto che iconografica, in grado di garantire ai due eroici giovani – così si conclude l'epigramma – la gloria imperitura che meritano per il loro esemplare gesto di εὐσεβίη. La leggenda dei due giovani argivi gode infatti di una poderosa tradizione letteraria. I numerosissimi autori che narrano dell'invidiabile sorte di Cleobi e Bitone si rifanno con poche varianti al racconto di Erodoto, che presenta l'aneddoto come dimostrazione che la cosa migliore per un essere umano è una morte serena nel fiore dell'età e della gloria<sup>53</sup>. Nel diciottesimo epigramma invece questa storia è presentata esclusivamente come esempio di εὐσεβίη filiale mentre rimane in secondo piano il tema della “bella morte”, al quale sono improntate le altre fonti di derivazione erodotea, compreso il lemma. I Cleobi e Bitone dell'epigramma si avvicinano piuttosto ad Anapi e Anfinomo, protagonisti dello *stylopinakion* immediatamente precedente<sup>54</sup>, che salvarono i genitori durante un'eruzione dell'Etna portandoli in braccio.

53 Hdt. 1, 31.

54 Anth. Gr. 3, 17.

## Anth. Gr. 3, 19: Remo, Romolo e Servilia

Il diciannovesimo *stylopinakion* si distingue per il suo tema prettamente romano. Si tratta della leggenda di Romolo, Remo e della loro madre, che qui – e solo qui – ha nome Servilia.

Ἐν δὲ τῷ ἸΘ Ῥῆμος καὶ Ῥωμύλος ἐκ τῆς Ἀμολίου κολάσεως ῥύομενοι  
τὴν μητέρα, Σερβήλειαν ὀνόματι· ταύτην γὰρ ὁ Ἄρης φθείρας ἐξ αὐτῆς  
ἐγέννησεν, καὶ ἐκτεθέντας αὐτοὺς λύκαινα ἔθρεψεν. Ἄνδρωθέντες οὖν τὴν  
μητέρα τῶν δεσμῶν ἔλυσαν, Ῥώμην δὲ κτίσαντες Νομήτορι τὴν βασιλείαν  
ἀπεκατέστησαν.

Τόνδε σὺ μὲν παίδων κρύφιον γόνον Ἄρει τίκτεις  
Ῥῆμόν τε ξυνηὶ καὶ Ῥωμύλον λεχέων,  
θῆρ δὲ λύκαιν' ἄνδρωσεν ὑπὸ σπήλυγγι τιθηνός,  
οἳ σε δυσηκέστων ἤρπασαν ἐκ καμάτων.

Nel diciannovesimo Remo e Romolo che sottraggono la madre, di nome Servilia, alla punizione di Amulio; infatti Ares dopo averle usato violenza ebbe figli da lei e quelli, dopo che erano stati abbandonati, li crebbe una lupa. Quando dunque raggiunsero la maturità liberarono la madre dai ceppi, e fondando Roma restituirono la regalità a Numitore.

Tu in segreto generi ad Ares questa discendenza di figli, Remo e Romolo, in un unico parto, e una belva, una lupa, facendo loro da nutrice li crebbe in una grotta: costoro ti strapparono a sofferenze difficili da guarire.

La narrazione del diciannovesimo *stylopinakion* ricalca quella tradizionale<sup>55</sup> solo fino all'abbandono dei gemelli. Quanto alla sorte della madre, in alcune versioni della vicenda ella viene uccisa e in altre imprigionata<sup>56</sup>, ma in nessun caso si fa riferimento alla sua liberazione da parte dei figli, che secondo il lemma avviene grazie all'uccisione di Amulio. Anche in questo caso, è molto probabile che la liberazione della madre da parte dei figli sia un'innovazione introdotta al fine di celebrare la *pietas erga parentes*.

Possiamo anche osservare come non ci sia alcun riferimento al celebre episodio dell'uccisione di Remo da parte di Romolo, che coincide con la fondazione della città di Roma: certo un fratricidio sarebbe stato piuttosto fuori

55 Per esempio Liv. 1, 3.

56 Dion. Hal. ant. 1, 79, 2, per esempio, riporta entrambe le versioni.

luogo nella celebrazione della concordia familiare promossa dal ciclo ciziceno di *historiai*.

Particolarmente interessanti sono poi il dodicesimo e il tredicesimo *stylopinakion*, che ci svelano alcuni ulteriori retroscena di questa peculiare raccolta.

### Anth. Gr. 3, 13: Eracle e Alcmena

Nel tredicesimo *stylopinakion* Eracle, al momento di essere assunto fra gli dei, conduce la madre nei Campi Elisi e la affida al giudice dell'Oltretomba Radamanto perché ne diventi la legittima sposa.

Ὁ δὲ Π <ἔχει> Ἡρακλέα ἄγοντα τὴν μητέρα αὐτοῦ Ἀλκμήνην εἰς τὸ Ἠλύσιον πεδίον, συνοικίζοντα αὐτὴν Ῥαδαμάνθυϊ, αὐτὸν δὲ εἰς θεοὺς δῆθεν ἐγκρινόμενον.

Ἀλκίδαο ὁ θρασὺς Ῥαδαμάνθυϊ ματέρα τάνδε  
Ἀλκμήναν ὄσιον πρὸς λέχος ἐξέδοτο.

Il tredicesimo ha Eracle che conduce sua madre Alcmena nei Campi Elisi, per darla in moglie a Radamanto, e lui stesso da allora è ammesso fra gli dei.

L'Alcide coraggioso diede a Radamanto costei, la madre Alcmena, in legittima unione.

L'episodio del matrimonio di Alcmena e Radamanto è noto da poche fonti che non prevedono alcun coinvolgimento di Eracle<sup>57</sup>. Inoltre il matrimonio non si celebra nell'aldilà se non nel racconto di Ferecide<sup>58</sup>, in cui è però Ermes e non Eracle a scortare Alcmena dal nuovo sposo. Sospetto che, nel caso del tredicesimo *stylopinakion*, piuttosto che letteraria la fonte d'ispirazione sia stata iconografica, e credo anche che questa fonte d'ispirazione fosse pertinente a una vicenda completamente aliena, ovvero il ritorno di Alceste dal regno dei morti grazie all'intervento di Eracle, un episodio dalla notevole e duratura fortuna letteraria e iconografica reso celebre dall'*Alceste*

57 In particolare Pherek. FGrH 3 F 84; Apollod. 2, 4, 11; 3, 6-7; Plut. Lysander 28, 4-5; Tzet. scholia Lykophr. 5obis.

58 Pherek. FGrH 3 F 84.

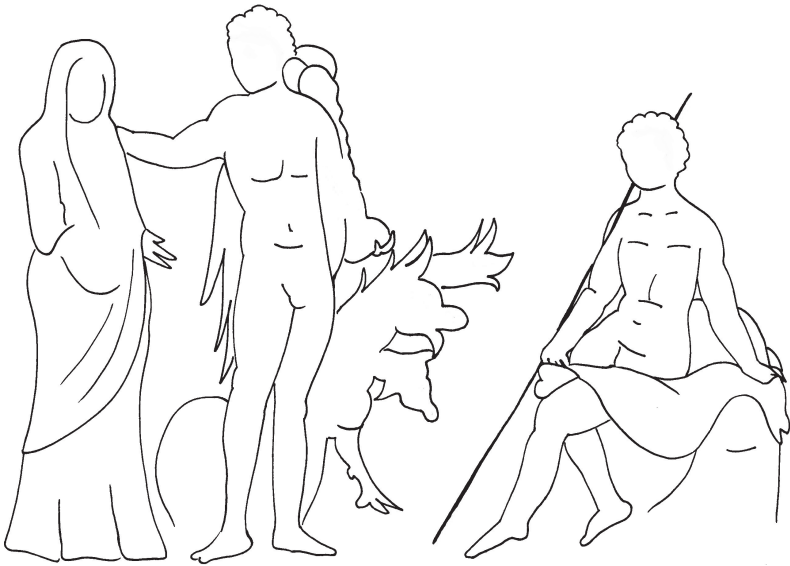


Fig. 1: Eracle conduce Alceste da Admeto alla presenza di Cerbero. Da un affresco del cubiculum N dell'Ipogeo di via Dino Compagni, Roma, IV secolo d. C. C. Ballestrazzi

di Euripide<sup>59</sup> e prediletto specialmente in contesti funerari<sup>60</sup>. L'iconografia dell'episodio prevede infatti che Eracle scorti Alceste da Admeto, a volte in presenza di Cerbero, spesso conducendola per il polso – la tipica presa nella quale convergono simbologia nuziale e funeraria<sup>61</sup> – o addirittura cingendole le spalle in un gesto di protezione, incoraggiamento e affetto (Fig. 1) che potrebbe ben suggerire l'atteggiamento di un figlio nei confronti della madre. È dunque plausibile che chi ha ideato il tredicesimo *stylopinakion* abbia più o meno consapevolmente preso a modello questa fortunata iconografia – che niente ha a che vedere con la *pietas* filiale ma che vede protagonista Eracle in un contesto infero dalle coloriture nuziali – per illustrare una vicenda mitologica apparentemente secondaria ma perfettamente sovrapponibile dal punto di vista iconografico come quella delle nozze di Alcmena e Radamanto nei Campi Elisi per intercessione dell'eroe.

59 Eur. Alc. 1008–1158.

60 Cfr. per le varie possibilità LIMC 1 (1981) 533–544 s. v. Alkestis (M. Schmidt). Si veda anche la corposa disamina delle raffigurazioni delle vicende di Alceste nell'arte romana proposta da Muczniak 1999, 25–79.

61 Rehm 1994, 35–40.

## Anth. Gr. 3, 12: Issione e Megara

Il dodicesimo *stylopinakion* è di particolare rilevanza per ricostruire la genesi del *corpus* (e dimostrarne ancora una volta la problematicità). Esso illustra assai succintamente l'uccisione da parte di Issione di Forbante e Polimelo, colpevoli di aver ucciso a loro volta Megara, madre di Issione, poiché si era rifiutata di sposare uno di loro.

Ἐν τῷ ΒΒ Ἴξιων Φόρβαντα καὶ Πολύμηλον ἀναιρῶν διὰ τὸν εἰς τὴν μητέρα τὴν ἰδίαν Μεγάραν γεγεννημένον φόνον· μηδ' ὀπότερον γὰρ αὐτῶν προελομένη γῆμαι, ἀγανακτήσαντες ἐπὶ τοῦτο ἐφόνευσαν.

Φόρβαν καὶ Πολύμηλον ὄδ' Ἴξιων βάλε γαίῃ,  
ποινὰν τᾶς ἰδίας ματρὸς ἀμυνόμενος.

Nel dodicesimo Issione che uccide Forbante e Polimelo, a causa della precedente uccisione della propria madre Megara: infatti, dal momento che ella non aveva acconsentito a sposare nessuno dei due, adirati per questo la uccisero.

Costui, Issione, gettò a terra Forbante e Polimelo, facendo loro scontare la pena per la propria madre.

Quella delineata nel dodicesimo *stylopinakion* è una vicenda del tutto sconosciuta, così come l'identità dei personaggi coinvolti: se la trama appena abbozzata nel lemma e nell'epigramma può essere accostata a quella di altri *stylopinakia* che celebrano la vendetta compiuta dai figli su chi ha maltrattato, imprigionato o ucciso un genitore<sup>62</sup>, i nomi dei quattro protagonisti del dodicesimo *stylopinakion* rimandano a figure della mitologia classica che non hanno alcun rapporto fra loro. Sono convinta che la situazione appena abbozzata nello *stylopinakion* sia stata creata *ex novo* per essere inclusa nella collezione di *historiai* che esaltano il legame tra madri e figli: un indizio in questo senso lo troviamo in un verso dell'*Iliade* (14, 490), dove “*υἱὸν Φόρβαντος πολυμήλου*” si riferisce all'eroe troiano Ilioneo e al padre Forbante, “ricco di greggi”. Sospetto fortemente che proprio da qui siano derivati i nomi dei due antagonisti di Issione, Forbante e Polimelo.

62 Anth. Gr. 3, 4. 5. 7. 9. 11. 14. 19.



## I due templi di Apollonide

Nella decodifica di questo peculiarissimo *corpus* ci troviamo a confrontarci non con uno ma con due templi. Il primo è quello che – secondo il lemma introduttivo – è stato edificato a Cizico per la regina madre Apollonide supponiamo poco dopo la sua morte, quindi attorno alla metà del II secolo a. C.<sup>63</sup>. Secondo il lemma, questo tempio era decorato da *stylopinakia* che raffiguravano delle *historiai*, descritte nei testi seguenti. Il secondo tempio è invece quello letterario, evocato dalla raccolta di lemmi ed epigrammi che leggiamo nell’*Antologia Palatina*. I lemmi, con le loro indicazioni sulla distribuzione degli *stylopinakia* secondo i punti cardinali, sembrano guidarci per mano nella visita del tempio, e gli epigrammi creano l’illusione di essere davvero davanti all’opera d’arte, invitandoci a interagire con essa e aggiungendo elementi che permettono di decodificare e fruire pienamente dell’immagine<sup>64</sup>. Dobbiamo però resistere alla tentazione di ritenere il terzo libro dell’*Antologia Palatina* una descrizione pedissequa e completamente attendibile del tempio di Apollonide e degli *stylopinakia* che lo impreziosivano.

Innanzitutto, nonostante l’apparente precisione delle indicazioni fornite nei lemmi, se proviamo a ricostruire l’edificio concreto partendo da quello letterario ci scontriamo con insormontabili difficoltà relative alla struttura del tempio e al suo apparato decorativo. L’unicità e la straordinarietà del *corpus* e dell’edificio (all’apparenza) così accuratamente descritto nonché il prestigio della fonte – l’*Antologia Palatina* – e dei personaggi storici coinvolti ha suscitato un vivace e duraturo entusiasmo esegetico. Le incertezze relative alle caratteristiche dei misteriosi *stylopinakia*<sup>65</sup> e all’articolazione del tempio di Apollonide<sup>66</sup> sembrano resistere strenuamente a ogni approccio storico,

63 Per le varie ipotesi avanzate dagli studiosi sull’anno della morte di Apollonide cfr. Ballestrazzi 2017, 129 nota 11.

64 Scicolone 2024, 308–315.

65 Quanto ai diciannove *stylopinakia*, sia che facessero parte della decorazione permanente del tempio sia che costituissero un allestimento più o meno effimero (Ballestrazzi 2017, 151s.), pur con alcune problematicità la terminologia impiegata nei lemmi ci indirizza verso immagini di dimensioni piuttosto ridotte e realizzate a rilievo piuttosto che solamente dipinte (Ballestrazzi 2017, 140–142).

66 Per quanto riguarda la distribuzione degli *stylopinakia* rispetto all’architettura del tempio, il loro numero dispari e la loro articolazione secondo i punti cardinali (1–6 a est, 7–9 a nord, 10–15 a ovest, 16–19 a sud *κατὰ δὲ τὰς θύρας τοῦ ναοῦ προσιώντων*) evidenzia le problematicità della relazione biunivoca tra colonna della peristasi e *stylopinakion* presupposta dalla maggior parte delle proposte (che si tratti di *pinakia* applicati al fusto delle colonne o scolpiti su un lato della loro base o in alternativa di vere e proprie *columnae caelatae*), tanto che alcuni esegeti

antiquario, filologico e archeologico tanto da giustificare seri dubbi sull'effettiva attendibilità delle indicazioni contenute nei lemmi.

In aggiunta alle gravi difficoltà nella ricostruzione del tempio e degli *stylopinakia* (1), ci sono elementi che potrebbero perfino spingerci a dubitare dell'esistenza del tempio ciziceno e a liquidare il gruppo di lemmi ed epigrammi come un esercizio retorico sul tema della *pietas erga parentes* senza alcun fondamento nella realtà materiale<sup>67</sup>. Innanzitutto, l'assenza di qualunque ulteriore notizia riguardo al tempio di Apollonide, di cui peraltro non sono state finora identificate tracce archeologiche (2). Quindi, ovviamente, la datazione molto bassa del *corpus* (3) e infine la goffaggine con cui sembrano costruite e abbinare alcune scene degli *stylopinakia* – anche al di là della scarsa qualità letteraria di lemmi ed epigrammi –, una caratteristica decisamente poco consona a un ciclo decorativo ideato in epoca ellenistica sicuramente con il benessere della casa regnante (4): pensiamo in particolare al tredicesimo e soprattutto al dodicesimo *stylopinakion*.

D'altro canto, possiamo agilmente raggranellare non meno argomenti a favore dell'effettiva esistenza di un tempio per Apollonide a Cizico la cui decorazione – attraverso una catena di passaggi oltremodo oscuri che proveremo a ipotizzare nella parte conclusiva di questo contributo – ha ispirato i lemmi e gli epigrammi che leggiamo ancora oggi. Innanzitutto, contiamo numerose attestazioni di onori e culti decretati per la regina Apollonide, e dunque la dedicazione di un tempio nella sua città natale sarebbe assolutamente plausibile se non probabile, anche in considerazione della centralità della regina nella politica “familiare” degli Attalidi di cui si è detto in precedenza (1). Come è stato a più riprese rilevato, la scelta delle *historiai* presenta interessanti punti di contatto con l'agiografia di Apollonide e con la narrativa della propaganda politica e culturale attalide (2): abbiamo visto che – se

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hanno proposto che di uno *stylopinakion* si sia persa traccia o che tra i diciannove descritti in Anth. Gr. 3 se ne annidi uno spurio. Altre ipotesi ricostruiscono gli *stylopinakia* tra le colonne della peristasi o distribuiti all'interno della cella del tempio oppure in parte – dal primo al quindicesimo – all'interno della cella e in parte – dal sedicesimo al diciannovesimo – in corrispondenza delle porte del *naos* (ho discusso quest'ultima possibilità in Ballestrazzi 2017, 149–152). Per un'analisi dei vantaggi e delle difficoltà insiti nelle principali proposte si rimanda a Ballestrazzi 2017, 144–151 e Papini 2020, 71 s., dove si troveranno anche gli opportuni riferimenti bibliografici.

67 I dubbi sull'effettiva consistenza materiale delle opere descritte hanno profondamente caratterizzato la ricezione di un'altra “collezione” letteraria, ovvero la celebre galleria napoletana di dipinti evocata nelle *Imagines* di Filostrato Maggiore. Sulla questione: Abbondanza 2008, 11 s.

vogliamo prestare fede a Polibio – a Cleobi e Bitone, protagonisti del diciottesimo *stylopinakion*, sono stati direttamente paragonati dai Ciziceni stessi i quattro premurosi figli di Apollonide, mentre l'eroe dinastico Telefo e la madre Auge, effigiati nel secondo *stylopinakion*, sono grandiosamente celebrati nei rilievi dell'Altare di Pergamo. Si tratta di suggestioni di peso, anche se forse i legami delle *historiai* con le vicende e le aspirazioni degli Attalidi e le corrispondenze (concettuali ma anche "spaziali") tra le diverse vicende non sono così sofisticate e tortuose come alcuni esegeti hanno suggerito<sup>68</sup>. Se Apollonide fu una figura importantissima per la propaganda attalide e per la città di Cizico, che tramite il matrimonio della sua illustre cittadina vide esaltato il suo rilievo politico e il suo rapporto con la casa regnante di Pergamo, è però piuttosto improbabile che questo personaggio tutto sommato secondario suscitasse ancora vivo interesse secoli dopo l'estinzione della dinastia attalide e la fine del regno di Pergamo (133 a. C.) tanto da ispirare *ex novo* una così complessa, articolata e dettagliata costruzione letteraria (3).

La complessità del rompicapo ciziceno risulta ben evidente per il fatto che possiamo far valere alcuni argomenti sia contro che a favore dell'effettiva esistenza di un tempio per Apollonide a Cizico. Le peculiarità della struttura e degli *stylopinakia* che ci creano tante difficoltà nell'immaginare un edificio reale possono infatti anche valere come ulteriore indizio dell'esistenza del tempio: sarebbe certo piuttosto bizzarro che l'autore di un tardo esercizio retorico avesse potuto immaginare e creare dal nulla con le parole un'architettura e un apparato decorativo così originali e privi di paralleli, descrivendoli peraltro in maniera tanto precisa (seppur difficoltosa) specialmente per quanto riguarda la collocazione degli *stylopinakia* (4). La peculiare collezione di *historiai* di diverso genere e prestigio (dalle tragedie agli episodi dell'epica, dalle leggende alla mitologia), la maggior parte delle quali non sembrano nemmeno aver goduto di alcuna codificazione iconografica, potrebbe essere liquidata come un'edificante accozzaglia di *exempla* di *pietas erga parentes* faticosamente raffazzonata nell'ambito di un tardo esercizio retorico e non esente da goffaggini come il dodicesimo *stylopinakion*. D'altro canto, la silloge annovera trame tratte da testi che potevano non essere facilmente accessibili nel V–VI secolo d. C. e vicende mitologiche secondarie che testimoniano una profonda e vasta cultura letteraria e iconografica. Come si può osservare dalle succinte analisi della selezione di *stylopinakia* che ho in

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68 In particolare Pairault Massa 1981/82. Sui legami tra le *historiai* e la dinastia attalide e sulle possibili corrispondenze tematiche tra gli *stylopinakia*, esaltate anche dalla loro posizione nel tempio, cfr. anche Stupperich 1990, 106–109; Massa Pairault 2007 e Papini 2020, 73 s.

precedenza proposto, l'elaborazione finalizzata all'esaltazione dell'armonia madre-figli delle trame codificate dalla tradizione si rivela talvolta piuttosto raffinata (non facciamoci ingannare dalla qualità letteraria di lemmi ed epigrammi) e in vari casi presuppone una certa abilità oltre a una conoscenza approfondita dei testi. Che sia quella di Cratete di Mallo<sup>69</sup> o meno, la mente che sta dietro alla silloge di *historiai* è probabilmente da ricercare nel *milieu* culturale pergameneo (5)<sup>70</sup>.

## I tanti sguardi sul tempio di Apollonide

Anche da queste poche osservazioni che ho avanzato senza alcuna pretesa di esaustività si può indovinare la complessa trama di successive sopravvivenze, reinterpretazioni e manipolazioni il cui frutto estremo leggiamo negli apparentemente insipidi lemmi ed epigrammi del terzo libro dell'*Antologia Palatina*. La prima fase coincise con l'allestimento del ciclo di *historiai* effigiate sugli *stylopinakia* del tempio a mio parere effettivamente eretto attorno alla metà del II secolo a. C. per onorare Apollonide di Cizico<sup>71</sup>. Questo allestimento già richiese una poderosa impresa di raccolta, selezione e spesso profonda reinterpretazione di vicende e trame già codificate in importanti opere letterarie e talvolta artistiche. Che l'ideatore del ciclo di *historiai* si sia ispirato direttamente a tali opere o si sia servito (esclusivamente o in aggiunta) di compendi<sup>72</sup> e/o raccolte di *exempla* edificanti<sup>73</sup> non possiamo saperlo, mentre spero di aver ben evidenziato come egli abbia spesso profondamente reinventato e rielaborato la tradizione per venire incontro ai suoi specifici intenti celebrativi. In questa prima fase, vicende di tradizione non esclusivamente ma marcatamente letteraria sono state rielaborate in una collezione di immagini. Se certo le *historiai* cizicene erano primariamente effigi (apparentemente a rilievo) e sicuramente né i lemmi né gli epigrammi che

69 Come ritiene Pairault Massa 1981/82.

70 Sève 2014, 159 e Papini 2020, 75.

71 Cfr. Ballestrazzi 2017, 130 nota 22 per le varie ipotesi avanzate quanto alla tipologia di culto celebrato nel tempio di Apollonide.

72 Qualcosa di simile ai "Tales from Euripides", una raccolta di riassunti dei drammi di Euripide composti probabilmente nel I secolo a. C. (Zuntz 1955, 134-139). Calderini 1913, 349 non esclude la possibilità che l'indubbiamente colto autore potesse conoscere alcune tragedie nella loro interezza.

73 Meyer 1911, 73-76 immagina un testo simile alle *Fabulae* di Igino o ai *Factorum et dictorum memorabilium libri IX* di Valerio Massimo.

leggiamo nell'*Antologia Palatina* le accompagnavano<sup>74</sup>, può darsi però che la comprensione delle scene raffigurate fosse facilitata dalla presenza di didascalie o perlomeno di iscrizioni con i nomi dei personaggi, come quelle che riscontriamo nei rilievi dell'Altare di Pergamo<sup>75</sup>. Si tratta infatti perlopiù di vicende prettamente letterarie per le quali in molti casi non è attestata alcuna fortuna iconografica e che potevano risultare di difficile se non impossibile lettura senza il supporto di qualche informazione scritta. Per esempio, erano forse solo i nomi dei personaggi a permettere di identificare e distinguere i ben tre *stylopinakia* che effigiavano due fratelli nell'atto di liberare la madre imprigionata<sup>76</sup>, ed era forse la presenza di una didascalia o perlomeno di iscrizioni con i nomi dei personaggi a consentire che un'iconografia fortunatissima come quella di Eracle che scorta Alceste da Admeto potesse essere riletta come il matrimonio ultraterreno di Alcmena e Radamanto per intercessione del figlio della nubenda. Iscrizioni sui rilievi possono essere all'origine di varianti onomastiche come quella del nome Servilia per la madre di Romolo e Remo<sup>77</sup> o per l'identificazione di Megapente nell'aggressore di Bellerofonte disarcionato da Pegaso nella piana di Alea<sup>78</sup>, episodio di cui non abbiamo altre attestazioni<sup>79</sup>.

Ben più ostico risulta ricostruire cosa sia successo in quegli (almeno) sette secoli intercorsi tra la morte di Apollonide e la stesura di lemmi ed epigrammi e indovinare attraverso quali passaggi l'edificio concreto abbia dato origine all'edificio fatto di parole che leggiamo oggi nell'*Antologia Palatina*. Tra un manufatto risalente al II secolo a.C. e un prodotto letterario databile al V–VI secolo d.C. (o anche oltre) ci risulta difficile immaginare una diretta derivazione, e le numerose difficoltà che abbiamo rilevato sono una chiara conferma di discontinuità. La possibilità che i lemmi (ed eventualmente gli epigrammi) siano il frutto diretto di un'autopsia del tempio e delle sue *historiai* appare infatti piuttosto remota: possiamo infatti dubitare che all'epoca della composizione di lemmi (ed epigrammi?) il tempio fosse ancora intatto con tutto il suo apparato decorativo, miracolosamente sopravvissuto alle vicissitudini storiche, sociali e naturali di una città per la quale nel V–VI secolo i sovrani pergamenei dovevano essere solo un lontano

74 Pace da ultimi Van der Meer 1977/78; Pairault Massa 1981/82 e Goldhill 2020, 32–34 (che contempla però anche ipotesi alternative).

75 Froning 1981, 47; Maltomini 2002, 31 s. nota 39; Papini 2020, 75.

76 Anth. Gr. 3, 9 (Pelìa, Neleo e Tiro); 3, 16 (Eolo, Beoto e Melanippe); 19 (Romolo, Remo e Servilia).

77 Anth. Gr. 3, 19.

78 Anth. Gr. 3, 15.

79 Maltomini 2002, 31 s. nota 39.

ricordo. Questo per di più senza che nel corso di quegli (almeno) sette secoli nessuno – per quel che sappiamo – ne abbia dato notizia a parte l'autore del lemma introduttivo.

Nel laborioso passaggio tra l'edificio concreto e quello evocato nel terzo libro dell'*Antologia Palatina* potremmo postulare l'intermediazione di una descrizione del tempio e degli *stylopinakia*<sup>80</sup>, che poteva essere accompagnata da illustrazioni<sup>81</sup>. Da questa descrizione potrebbero essere stati elaborati in un primo momento soltanto i lemmi, mentre gli epigrammi sarebbero stati composti solo in seguito<sup>82</sup>, dopo un intervallo di tempo più o meno lungo, intesi come rielaborazioni poetiche e piuttosto libere delle scene degli *stylopinakia*. Oppure, lemmi ed epigrammi potrebbero essere stati approntati nello stesso momento (e quindi verosimilmente ma non necessariamente dallo stesso autore) sulla base di una più antica descrizione (letteraria e/o per immagini) degli *stylopinakia* di Cizico. Lemmi ed epigrammi non dovrebbero essere intesi come pedissequi descrizioni degli *stylopinakia* ma come due diverse trasfigurazioni letterarie del tempio di Apollonide, strettamente collegate e complementari ma non sovrapponibili. Da lì è iniziata la vita autonoma della raccolta di lemmi ed epigrammi poi confluiti nel terzo libro dell'*Antologia Palatina*, a seguito di una trasmissione piuttosto travagliata di cui percepiamo le tracce nelle numerose difficoltà del testo e nella caduta di un lemma e di un epigramma. I lemmi e gli epigrammi sanciscono anche l'esistenza autonoma del tempio letterario, che con quello originario mantiene importanti ma non sempre stringenti e chiari legami.

Nella lunga e macchinosa gestazione del secondo tempio, così come nella messa a punto del ciclo celebrativo del tempio originario, di “secondi sguardi” se ne sono succeduti più d'uno, levati da diversi contesti socio-culturali e guidati da una pluralità di intenzioni che non sempre riusciamo a ricostruire nei dettagli: prima lo sguardo di un erudito incaricato di approntare un florilegio di *exempla* su commissione della classe dirigente di Cizico e/o della casa regnante pergamenea, quindi quelli dei numerosi visitatori del tempio, tra cui quello di chi – forse – per primo ha dato una forma letteraria a ciò che ancora aveva davanti agli occhi e/o ne ha tratto una collezione di

80 Boissonade *apud* Waltz 1928, 88 s.

81 Brilliant 1984, 36 immagina che l'ispirazione degli *stylopinakia* possa essere individuata, oltre che nella cultura letteraria pergamenea, anche in un'edizione illustrata delle tragedie di Euripide. Cfr. anche Van der Meer 1977/78, 68.

82 *Contra* Goldhill 2020, 33 s., che ritiene che i lemmi siano in ogni caso successivi agli epigrammi (che questi ultimi fossero o meno effettivamente iscritti nel tempio).

immagini. Assieme a questo sconosciuto periegeta, nel corso dei secoli uno o più scrittori hanno trasformato il tempio di pietra, ormai in rovina e dimenticato, nel tempio di parole, l'unico su cui si potevano ora posare gli sguardi dei lettori-visitatori (e qui ci siamo anche noi) che, accompagnati dai lemmi, passeggiano ancora oggi per un tempio che non esiste più se non sulla carta.

Chi ha ideato originariamente il ciclo di *stylopinakia* a metà del II secolo a.C. ha attinto a piene mani alla letteratura e forse anche al patrimonio iconografico del passato, ma ci sono sicuramente state ulteriori ispirazioni letterarie e forse anche iconografiche successive: come si è rilevato, negli epigrammi si contano infatti numerose riprese di testi ben posteriori all'età ellenistica (come i *Posthomerica* di Quinto Smirneo<sup>83</sup>) e anche l'artefice (o gli artefici) del tempio letterario può aver tratto qualche ispirazione da raccolte che condensavano edificanti *exempla* del passato o riassumevano testi di celebri autori come i drammi di Euripide<sup>84</sup>. Dietro agli epigrammi del terzo libro dell'*Antologia Palatina* possiamo immaginare un autore sicuramente colto, che può vantare una buona familiarità con le opere di autori antichi e recenti non però eguagliata dalla sua dimestichezza con l'arte del fare poesia: goffaggini, ripetizioni e soluzioni stilistiche infelici sembrano infatti indirizzarci verso un poeta dilettante, e una certa difficoltà si riscontra anche nella prosa dei lemmi, siano o meno da attribuire al medesimo autore.

Non possiamo escludere che nella più o meno graduale messa a punto del tempio letterario alcuni *stylopinakia* siano stati eliminati, aggiunti o sostituiti *suo Marte* dall'autore o dagli autori di lemmi ed epigrammi oppure da chi ha compilato la fonte che ha ispirato i lemmi ed eventualmente anche gli epigrammi: pensiamo al dodicesimo *stylopinakion*, che sembra essere stato inventato *ex nihilo* sulla base di una maldestra reminiscenza omerica piuttosto che ideato da un raffinato e colto erudito della Pergamo ellenistica. Anche la principale difficoltà puntualmente lamentata dagli intrepidi che si sono cimentati nella ricostruzione del *naos* ciziceno, ovvero l'inconsueto numero degli *stylopinakia*, potrebbe essere conseguenza di tali rimaneggiamenti e risultare dall'aggiunta o dalla scomparsa di uno *stylopinakion*<sup>85</sup>.

83 Cfr. in particolare la ripresa quasi letterale di Anth. Gr. 3, 14, *supra*, p. 154.

84 Cfr. *supra*, note 72 e 73.

85 Cfr. *supra*, nota 66. Lo *stylopinakion* poteva non essere più visibile all'epoca della stesura del testo contenente la descrizione delle *historiai* cizicene (Maltomini 2002, 27), oppure la descrizione dell'*historia* in esso effigiata poteva essere andata perduta nel corso della travagliata trasmissione del testo. In ogni caso, l'articolazione del giro del *naos* proposto nei lemmi è stata elaborata in modo tale da non permettere di confermare tale possibilità né tantomeno indovinare la posizione dell'eventuale *stylopinakion* omesso. Anche il problematico *hapax*

La trasfigurazione dell'edificio concreto nell'edificio letterario passa anche dalla creazione di un vero e proprio "tour" del *naos* di Apollonide guidato dalla voce dei lemmi, che permette di restituire nell'illusione letteraria la consistenza materiale dell'edificio originario. Dopo che le immagini e l'architettura sono state trasformate in parole, quelle medesime parole permettono al lettore di diventare nuovamente "spettatore", suscitando una forte componente dinamica e interattiva nell'ambito dell'esperienza di lettura. Oltre al "movimento" lungo i quattro lati del tempio, sia i lemmi che gli epigrammi aprono ulteriori e diverse dimensioni: anche se a tratti un po' ripetitivi e rudimentali, i lemmi e gli epigrammi più che descriverle guidano la fruizione delle "immagini" effigiate negli *stylopinakia*<sup>86</sup> e indirizzano l'emozionalità e il giudizio morale del lettore/spettatore, oltre a fornire un retroscena narrativo a volte forse indispensabile, considerata la radicale rielaborazione della vulgata proposta da alcune *historiai*.

Seppure forse non si tratti del prodotto letterario più esteticamente apparante tramandatoci dall'antichità classica, il terzo libro dell'*Antologia Palatina* è un documento assolutamente unico nel panorama greco e romano. Nonostante le tante difficoltà – o forse proprio a motivo delle tante difficoltà – merita di essere indagato come prodotto a sé e non solo saccheggiato per ricostruire le tragedie perdute di Euripide o Sofocle. Sicuramente, i lemmi e gli epigrammi sono una preziosa testimonianza di come la letteratura, la mitologia e l'iconografia del passato possano continuare a essere una materia vitale, duttile e fruttuosa, che può essere plasmata e reinterpretata in tanti modi diversi per venire incontro a nuove esigenze espressive. Le tante e diverse vite del tempio di Apollonide dimostrano inoltre fino a che punto parola e immagine possano essere ambiti fluidi e reciprocamente influenzabili: il peculiare gruppo di lemmi ed epigrammi necessita dunque di un'analisi mirata e approfondita, che tenga imprescindibilmente conto dei tanti aspetti coinvolti. Solo un'indagine che affronti nello stesso tempo il versante letterario, mitografico e iconografico, assieme alle questioni più propriamente filologiche e stilistiche permetterà di ricostruire il contesto (o meglio, i successivi contesti) culturali in cui è maturato il testo che oggi leggiamo nell'*Antologia Palatina*, risultato di diverse stratificazioni e rielaborazioni che

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"*στυλοπινάκιον*" potrebbe essere stato ideato e introdotto dal redattore dei lemmi, che così descriveva una tipologia di decorazione di cui non aveva conoscenza diretta (Ballestrazzi 2017, 142).

86 Si veda Scicolone 2024, 309–314. Cfr. anche Maltomini 2002, 30–32 per le peculiarità formali e di contenuto di Anth. Gr. 3 rispetto ai testi efrastici tardoantichi e bizantini dedicati a opere d'arte a noi noti.



se correttamente indagate tanto possono dirci sul modo antico di vedere, percepire e interagire con le opere d'arte e la letteratura del passato.

Ben consapevole di aver suscitato domande piuttosto che fornito risposte, in questo contributo ho voluto mostrare la complessità di questo stravagante marchingegno materiale e letterario che è il tempio di Apollonide di Cizico e illustrare le sfide in cui un eventuale (e benemerito) paladino del terzo libro dell'*Antologia Palatina* dovrà cimentarsi per ricostruire le modalità, i tempi e gli intenti delle successive rielaborazioni di testi e immagini di cui esso è l'estremo, sconclusionato e indubbiamente affascinante frutto.

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# AVREA CONCISIS SVRGIT PICTVRA METALLIS. An Epistemological and Methodological Approximation of Early Christian Multimedia Visuality

**Abstract** One of the key instruments in the process of the Christianization of the Roman Empire was the visual arts. Shining images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, and other biblical figures, martyr saints, and bishops, produced in mosaic and located at prominent places in early Christian churches, were frequently accompanied by impressive monumental inscriptions. Based on selected case studies from late antique Rome (4th–7th cent.), this interdisciplinary paper aims to delineate a path to a comprehensive understanding of such multimedia aesthetics, based on the multi-layered and synergic relationship between text-as-image and image-proper with an implicit bearing on the Word made flesh rhetoric (Jo. 1, 1–14). Combining theoretical perspectives from art history and classical philology, we wish to reveal how these visual schemes containing classical echoes in both form and content may convey different meanings depending on the cognitive background of those who are looking.

## Introduction

While naturally indebted to Graeco-Roman heritage, especially (but not exclusively) in terms of formal, technical, and rhetorical means, early Christian culture generated revolutionary concepts. It marked, among other things, the triumph of two-dimensional conceptual (and shining) images, produced in mosaic and replacing three-dimensional mimetic and polychromed sculptures of the ‘pagan’ temples, which were accompanied by impressive monumental golden inscriptions in Latin hexameters or elegiac couplets. The multimedia aesthetics of the visual schemes preserved in the late antique

churches of Rome – such as those in the apses of Santa Pudenziana (401–417), Santi Cosma e Damiano (526–530), Sant’Agnese fuori le mura (625–638), and the San Venanzio Chapel in the Lateran Baptistery (640–642), which will be examined in this article – thus represent a true turning point in the history of the visual arts. Despite their classical resonances, these text–image compositions were obviously produced and aimed to be perceived in a newly established epistemological framework with new discursive and hermeneutic implications.

To illustrate this cultural transformation, the Latin hexameter from the title of the paper – *aurea concisis surgit pictura metallis* – can serve as a sort of cognitive test. When decontextualized, the verse could well be recognized (by both contemporary recipients and modern readers versed in classical Latin) as a piece of promising (ekphrastic) classical poetry. The initial *aurea* has a very strong allusive force, evoking both Virgil’s and Ovid’s descriptions of the Golden Age<sup>1</sup>, which – together with the alliterative pattern of the verse and its roughly chiasmic structure – gives it a recognizable flavour of classical rhetoric. Nevertheless, the hexameter represents the opening verse of a 12-line monumental golden inscription accompanying a virtually shining mosaic image of an early Christian virgin-martyr and titular saint in the apse of Sant’Agnese fuori le mura, a church dating back to the first half of the seventh century (Pope Honorius I: 625–638). This visual scheme (fig. 1) is just one among a relatively decent number of similar multimedia ‘spectacles’ preserved (not only) in the apses of late antique churches and produced in Rome between the fourth and seventh centuries (with a significant resurgence in the first half of the ninth century, during the ‘Carolingian’ period, a moment of strong revival of early Christian visual and literary themes)<sup>2</sup>.

This shared piece of research aims to approach this ‘revolutionary’ early Christian phenomenon from several complementary methodological perspectives, combining insights from art history and classical philology as well as literary and performance studies. While a comprehensive treatment of the entire corpus of extant/reconstructed visual schemes under consideration

1 Verg. ecl. 4, 9: *desinet ac toto surget gens aurea mundo*; Ov. met. 1, 89: *aurea prima sata est aetas, quae uindice nullo*.

2 The apse mosaics and accompanying inscriptions produced in Rome between the sixth and ninth centuries were included in a single survey by Erik Thunø (2015). The creation of such a distinct ‘group’ was justified on the basis of compositional and epigraphic similarities. However, we are convinced that this approach, while very interesting, does not properly account for the exceptional creativity and diversity of the ‘late antique’ moment (see further below, esp. note 49; cf. also Foletti – Okáčová 2022, with a further bibliography).



Fig. 1: Apse of Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, Rome, 625–638  
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with their idiosyncratic features is far beyond the scope of this paper, our aim is to delineate a path to a thorough understanding of the respective text–image interactions and the ‘mystery’ of their Christianizing power. A brief introduction of selected case studies, all situated within the Aurelian Walls of Rome and dating to the period between 401 and 642, will be followed by a survey of relevant theoretical tools for their study, naturally leading to epistemological considerations, including questions of rupture vs. continuity. Finally (but also throughout), this inquiry will be framed within a cognitive perspective, with due attention paid to the socially, historically, and culturally determined aspects of the reception of these artefacts.

### Monumental mosaic images with inscriptions in late antique Rome (401–642)

The following examples of early Christian visual schemes were chosen to illustrate the visual-verbal dialectics marking the corpus of (not only) apsidal mosaics surviving or known to have existed in the late antique churches of Rome.

## Santa Pudenziana (401–417)

The Basilica of Santa Pudenziana was commissioned by two local presbyters during the pontificate of Pope Innocent I (401–417)<sup>3</sup>. Despite major restorations over the centuries<sup>4</sup>, it contains the oldest preserved decoration of a Christian apse with Christ seated as a teacher among the Apostles (fig. 2). This visual scheme, known already from funerary paintings, is not in itself surprising. Of special interest is the background of the composition: Christ with long hair and a long beard – an exceptional representation for the early fifth century – surrounded by the Apostles is shown in front of a heavenly city, in all probability Jerusalem, while the sky is occupied by the four living creatures commemorating the apocalyptic theme and located around a central cross. This is, in fact, a significant detail since it was Innocent I who introduced the Book of the Apocalypse to the canonical books of the Church of Rome<sup>5</sup>. The entire composition thus appears to be a true epiphany; God-*logos* debates with his followers in a clearly eschatological context.

The structure of the apsidal image – with Christ clothed in gold and seated amid a semicircle of Apostles – clearly refers to the ritual that must have taken place in the sacred space below, where the bishop and presbyters were seated on and around a similar throne. The parallel between heaven and earth must thus have been obvious. Since the 1930s, scholars have examined the models of this composition<sup>6</sup>. Today, there seems to be a consensus that it commemorates imperial images, representations of pagan deities, and also images of ancient philosophers. Contemporary recipients with an adequate cognitive background were thus visually encouraged to perceive the Christian God as encompassing the virtues of all deities, Socrates-like philosophers, and, not least, Roman emperors<sup>7</sup>.

The visual scheme under consideration was originally accompanied by a monumental inscription at the bottom of the mosaic, surviving in the transcription of sixteenth-century Augustinian and historian Onofrio Panvinio (Vat. Lat. 6780, 63v.–64). This dedicatory inscription was allegedly still visible prior to the 1588 restoration when the “mosaic was drastically trimmed

3 See mainly the last synthetic studies by Andaloro 2006b, 114–124; Angelelli 2010; Braconi 2016; Foletti 2017a, 11–29; and Foletti – Okáčová 2022, esp. 36–38, with a further bibliography.

4 See Tiberia 2003; Braconi 2013, 61–99; and Braconi 2016.

5 Matthiae 1967, 57f.

6 Grabar 1936; Mathews 1993.

7 Andaloro 2006b, 114–124; Foletti 2017a, 11–29.



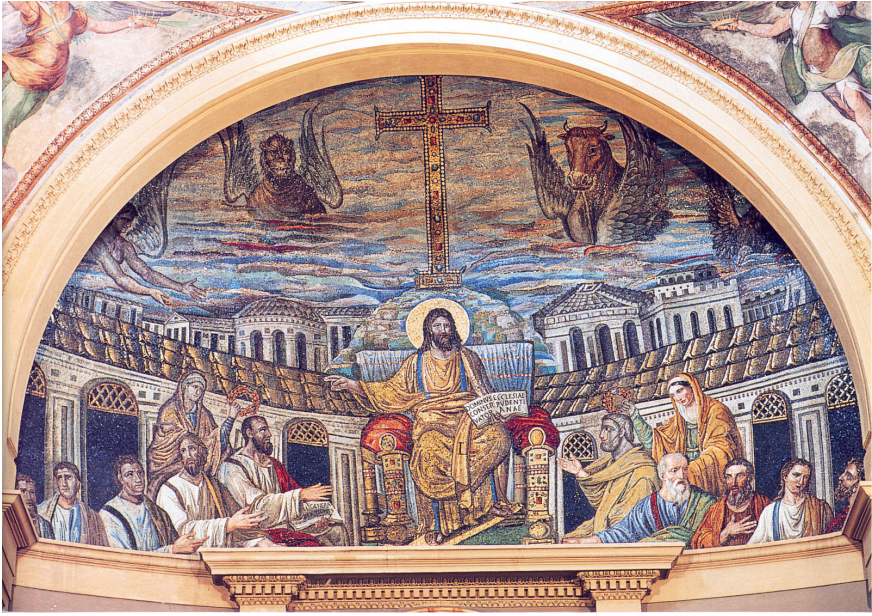


Fig. 2: Apse of Santa Pudenziana, Rome, 401–417  
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on all sides”<sup>8</sup>, and it gives the credit for decorating the church to Presbyter Leopardus:

sal[uo] Innocen[tio episcopo Ili]cio Maximo et [...] pre[sby]teris Le[opardus  
presb[yster] sumptu proprio [...] [marm]oribus et p[i]ct[uris] decorauit<sup>9</sup>.

When Innocent [Innocent I, Pope 401–417] was bishop [of Rome] and Ili-  
cius, Maximus and ... were presbyters, Leopardus the Presbyter made these  
decorations of marble and of pictures<sup>10</sup>.

8 Mathews 1993, 98.

9 Reconstruction after de Rossi 1899, comment to pl. 10; regarding the recordings of Panvinio and the lost inscription, see also Braconi 2016, esp. 247, who claims that only the inscription’s first part can be reconstructed with greater plausibility, suggesting the following: sal[vo] Innocen[tio episcopo Ili]cio Maximo et [Leopardo] pre[sby]teris [...].

10 Translation taken from Oakeshott 1967, 65. Unless specified otherwise, the translations of the Latin quotes were produced by the authors of the present paper.

A relatively unique feature of the visual composition consists of the following two inscriptions that form integral parts of the apsidal image (fig. 2). One of them is located on the book in the hands of Christ and refers explicitly to the Lord's protective power over the church:

dominus conseruator ecclesiae Pudentianae.

Lord, the Saviour of the Pudenziana Church.

The other is written in the codex held by the Apostle Paul and refers to a specific part of the Book of Genesis:

liber generationis I.X.

The Book of Genesis I.X.

Together, these epigraphs provide a general framework for the interpretation of the visual composition, clearly linking the heavenly and the terrestrial Church, which will become a dominant feature in later mosaics, where the figures of individual martyrs, popes, and bishops are quite regularly portrayed next to the central image of Christ. In the physical space, this unifying visual rhetoric is reflected in the vertical axis connecting the apsidal conch with the altar and the relics of martyrs in the church crypt<sup>11</sup>.

### Santa Sabina (422–432)

The Basilica of Santa Sabina on the Aventine Hill was built during the pontificate of Pope Celestine I (422–432)<sup>12</sup>. This very ambitious project was one of the first presbyterial foundations of this size. The basilica hall was originally decorated with mosaics in the apse – now unfortunately lost, but probably still commemorated by the sixteenth-century apsidal decoration – and perhaps also by a narrative cycle in mosaic and exceptional *opus sectile*. The narthex was also richly decorated, still preserving fragments of false *opus sectile*

11 Cf. Thunø 2015, 4 *et passim*.

12 Regarding this monument, see most recently Gianandrea 2015, 139–152; and Gianandrea et al. 2016, with a further bibliography.



Fig. 3: Mosaic on the entrance wall of Santa Sabina, Rome, 421–431  
Robert Couzin, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

and, most prominently, the basilica's famous wooden door<sup>13</sup>. The mosaic preserved on the counter-façade (fig. 3) represents the personifications of both parts of the universal Church: the *ecclesia ex gentibus* and the *ecclesia ex circumcisione*<sup>14</sup>. Originally, the decorations included the Apostles Peter and Paul (each associated with one of the *ecclesiae*) and figures of the four living creatures. In an eschatological context, the counter-façade was thus meant to celebrate the unity of the universal Church<sup>15</sup>.

The monumental dedicatory inscription (CLE 312) in golden letters is this time located not in the apse but on the entrance wall, between the two personified figures of the Church. It commemorates the founder of the basilica, Presbyter Peter, in a way that is reminiscent of late antique imperial panegyrics. The epigraph mentions Peter's origin outside of Rome and praises his Christian upbringing and conduct, which predestine him for future salvation:

culmen apostolicum cum Caelestinus haberet  
primus et in toto fulgeret episcopus orbe,  
haec quae miraris fundavit presbyter urbis  
Illyrica de gente Petrus, uir nomine tanto  
dignus, ab exortu Christi nutritus in aula,  
pauperib<us> locuples, sibi pauper, qui bona uitae  
praesentis fugiens meruit sperare futuram.

13 See Foletti – Gianandrea 2015; Foletti – Kravčíková 2019, 24–45; and Foletti 2021a, 19–35, with a further bibliography.

14 Leardi 2006, 293–297.

15 Ciampini 1690–1699.

When Celestinus held the highest apostolic throne and shone forth gloriously as the foremost bishop of the whole world, a presbyter of the city, Illyrian by birth, named Peter and worthy of that great name, established this building at which you look in wonder.

From his earliest years he was brought up in the hall of Christ – rich to the poor, poor to himself, one who shunned the good things of life on earth and deserved to hope for the life to come<sup>16</sup>.

### Santa Maria Maggiore (432–440)

This basilica, one of the earliest built to celebrate the Virgin Mary, was completed and decorated under Pope Sixtus III (432–440)<sup>17</sup>. It is one of the most ambitious projects of the papal curia during the fifth century. As Krautheimer has already shown, the idea of ‘occupying’ the Esquiline Hill with a basilica with such dimensions must be read in the context of the Lateran, an episcopal seat, that was far too distant from the city center of Rome<sup>18</sup>. With the new construction, the bishop therefore wanted to move closer to the inhabited areas. The decorations, completed under Sixtus III, as confirmed by the monumental inscription on the triumphal arch (fig. 4: *Xystus episcopus plebi dei* [ILCV 975]), and covering the entire nave with stories from the Old Testament and the apsidal arch with scenes from Christ’s infancy, represent one of the largest preserved mosaic cycles with a late antique origin. Traditionally, the Old Testament story is interpreted as a metaphor for the Christianization of the Urbs, while the apsidal arch is read in relation to the Council of Ephesus, where the divine nature of Christ was fully established<sup>19</sup>.

Again, a probably monumental golden inscription (ILCV 976), documented by early modern sources, was present on the counter-façade; composed of four elegiac couplets, it celebrates the Virgin Mary as the Theotokos and her significance for the cult of the martyrs:

16 Translation taken from Parlbay 2014, 151.

17 Regarding this richly studied monument, see, e.g., the summary studies of the past two decades with preceding bibliographies: Saxer 2001; Menna 2006, 306–346; Foletti 2022, 135–152.

18 Krautheimer 1980, 54–58.

19 Regarding the narrative cycle, see, e.g., Menna 2006, 306–346; and Foletti 2022, 135–152; regarding the decoration of the arch, see Wilpert 1931, 197–213; Bisconti 2000, 12–23; and Foletti 2017c, 41–62.



Fig. 4: Triumphal arch in Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, 432–440  
Robert Couzin, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons

uirgo Maria, tibi Xystus noua tecta dicaui  
 digna salutifero munera uentre tuo.  
 tu genetrix ignara uiri, te denique feta  
 uisceribus saluis edita nostra salus.  
 ecce tui testes uteri sibi praemia portant  
 sub pedibusque iacet passio cuique sua:  
 ferrum flamma ferae fluiuis saeuumque uenenum.  
 tot tamen has mortes una corona manet.

Virgin Mary, to you I, Sixtus, dedicated this new abode:  
 a fitting offering to your womb, the bearer of salvation.  
 You, o Mother, knowing no man  
 yet bearing fruit, brought from your chaste womb our Saviour.  
 Behold, the witnesses of your fruitfulness bring you wreaths,  
 at each one's feet lie the instruments of their passion:  
 sword and fire and water, wild beasts and bitter poison.  
 Yet one crown awaits all these deaths<sup>20</sup>.

<sup>20</sup> Translation taken from Liverani 2016, 187.

## Santi Cosma e Damiano (526–530)

This church was the first built on the Forum Romanum at the behest of Pope Felix IV (526–530)<sup>21</sup>. Its large hall – originally part of an ancient building – was adapted, especially with the addition of an apse, for Christian worship. The original decorations are preserved on the apsidal arch depicting the Twenty-Four Elders, who – together with the four living creatures and angels – worship the Lamb of God seated on a throne. The apsidal image (fig. 5) is dominated by the central figure of Christ descending from the clouds towards the spectators. Peter and Paul, depicted on either side of Christ, introduce to him Cosmas and Damian, the two martyr saints to whom the basilica was consecrated and whose relics had arrived at Rome at the end of the fifth century<sup>22</sup>. As demonstrated by Ursula Nilgen and Ivan Foletti, the choice of images must be understood in the broader context of the Roman liturgy; indeed, the images were meant to reflect the ritual practice, as documented in the *Ordines Romani* (1, 46) and in texts related to the stationary liturgy of the city of Rome<sup>23</sup>.

The monumental golden inscription (ILCV 1784) running along the lower rim of the apsidal conch is one of the first surviving early Christian epigraphs that thematize the shining glory of the surrounding visual scheme. Apart from that, it mentions the martyrs in whose honour the church was built and the commissioner of the building (these features, as we will see, became standardized in similar contexts):

aula dei claris radiat speciosa metallis,  
 in qua plus fidei lux pretiosa micat.  
 martyribus medicis populo spes certa salutis  
 uenit et ex sacro creuit honore locus.  
 optulit hoc domino Felix antistite dignum  
 munus, ut aetheria uiuat in arce poli.

With bright and precious stones splendidly shines the temple of God,  
 in which the precious light of faith flashes even more radiantly.

21 Tiberia 1998; Davis-Weyer 1999, 743–753; Wisskirchen 1999, 169–183; Osborne 2008, 173–181; De Giorgio 2023, 187–199.

22 Cf. the passage devoted to the life of Pope Symmachus (498–514) in the *Liber Pontificalis* (53, 9): *item ad sanctam Mariam oratorium sanctorum Cosmae et Damiani a fundamento construxit.*

23 Nilgen 2000, 75–89; Foletti 2017b, 161–179.



Fig. 5: Apse of Santi Cosma e Damiano, Rome, 526–530  
© Center for Early Medieval Studies

From the martyr-physicians unshakeable hope of being healed has come to  
the people,  
and the place has grown out of sacred honor.  
Felix has offered to the Lord this gift, worthy of a bishop,  
that he may live in the highest heights of heaven<sup>24</sup>.

### Sant’Agnese fuori le mura (625–638)

The Basilica of Sant’Agnese was rebuilt by Honorius I (625–638)<sup>25</sup>. The original church, completed before the middle of the fourth century, had probably collapsed even before Honorius’ work began; it was too large (and ambitious) to survive the end of the Western Roman Empire<sup>26</sup>. In the new church, miraculously composed of spoliated material, the central figure on

24 Translation by Thunø 2015, 15 and 209, with modifications.

25 Krautheimer 1937, 14–38; Frutaz 1976; Ballardini 2018, 253–279; Trout 2019, 1–26; Ferrà 2020; Foletti – Lešák 2021, 35–46; Foletti – Lešák 2023, 75–96.

26 Magnani Cianetti – Pavolini 2004.



Fig. 6: Detail of the face of Saint Agnes, Apse of Sant'Agnese fuori le mura, Rome, 625–638

© Domenico Ventura

the golden background in the apse is that of Saint Agnes, depicted not as an adolescent girl, which the saint must have been at the time of her death, but as an adult woman dressed in courtly attire (fig. 6). The gold and gems covering her head and body are certainly intended to indicate that what we see is not the body of a child female martyr on Earth, but that of a saint in paradise; it is an image of Christian apotheosis, with the divine hand reaching down with the crown of martyrdom from the apex of the vault<sup>27</sup>.

The inscription (ILCV 1769A) along the lower margin of the apsidal conch is one of the longest that has survived to these days. It consists of six elegiac couplets divided into three panels and possibly composed by the conceptor of the church – Pope Honorius I<sup>28</sup>. A great deal of emphasis is placed upon the shining glory of the visual scheme, to which the entire first two quatrains are dedicated and which is advertised using various images known from classical poetry (esp. Aurora, Iris, and a peacock). The last quatrain unsurpris-

<sup>27</sup> Foletti – Lešák 2023, 75–96.

<sup>28</sup> See, e.g., Foletti – Lešák 2021, 35–46. Regarding the seven preserved Honorian inscriptions consisting altogether of seventy-six lines of verse, see recently Trout 2021, 161–170.



ingly commemorates Pope Honorius who holds a model of the church in his hands and whose shining countenance is mentioned along with his glory:

aurea concisis surgit pictura metallis  
 et complexa simul clauditur ipsa dies.  
 fontibus e niueis credas, Aurora, subire  
 correptas nubes roribus arua rigans.

uel qualem inter sidera lucem proferet irim  
 purpureusque pauo ipse colore nitens.  
 qui potuit noctis uel lucis reddere finem,  
 martyrum e bustis hinc reppulit ille chaos.

sursum uersa nutu quod cunctis cernitur uno,  
 praesul Honorius haec uota dicata dedit.  
 uestibus et factis signantur illius ora.  
 lucet et aspectu lucida corda gerens.

Golden rises an image out of cut precious stones  
 and the daylight is at once embraced and confined.  
 You would suppose Aurora was rising above from snow-white springs,  
 moistening the fields with dew as the clouds are swept away.

Or it is such a light that Iris brings forth among the stars  
 and a purple peacock, itself sparkling with color.  
 He who was able to fix the limits of day and night,  
 that one has driven Chaos away from the tombs of martyrs.

Turning upwards, everyone at first glance discerns  
 these consecrated gifts Bishop Honorius has given.  
 His image is marked out by his clothing and his deed,  
 he shines forth also in countenance, bearing a glorious heart<sup>29</sup>.

Apart from this text, there was originally another two-line inscription (ILCV 1769) along the upper margin of the apsidal arch, which was also most probably commissioned by Honorius. Analogously to the last quatrain of the lower

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29 Translation follows Trout 2019, 15, with some modifications. Regarding the metrical idiosyncrasies of this poem, possibly composed by Honorius I himself, see Trout 2020, esp. 157; cf. Trout 2019, 24, note 73; and Trout 2021, 169.

inscription, it indirectly compared the shining glory of the church with that of Agnes' merits, thus establishing an associative link between the outer (material) representation and the inner glorious presence:

uirginis aula micat uariis decorata metallis,  
sed plus namque nitet meritis fulgentior amplis.

The virgin's temple glitters, adorned with various precious stones,  
but it shines even more brightly with generous merits<sup>30</sup>.

### San Venanzio Chapel (640–642)

The San Venanzio Chapel, attached to the Lateran Baptistery, was built to celebrate the Dalmatian saints whose relics were imported to Rome by the patron Pope John IV (640–642), himself a native of the region<sup>31</sup>. In the apse and on the triumphal arch, images of the saints whose relics are deposited in the basilica are displayed on a golden background (fig. 7). At the center of the apse composition is, however, an unexpected image: the praying Virgin, located between the Apostles Peter and Paul and below a bust of Christ hovering between two angels. While the whole can be read as a synthetic image of the Ascension, the bust of Christ – heavily restored but still visible – refers back to what must have been, at least from the mid-fifth century, the decoration of the papal Basilica of St John Lateran<sup>32</sup>. In other words, the visual scheme recalls both the foreign saints who had just 'arrived' in Rome and the tradition of the Urbs.

The inscription (ILCV 1786A), preserved again along the lower margin of the apsidal image, is quite similar to those surviving in Santi Cosma e Damiano and Sant'Agnese. It commemorates the martyr saints, Pope John IV as the conceptor of the church, and the sparkling light of the visual scheme:

martyribus  $\bar{\chi}$ ri domini pia uota Iohannes  
reddidit antistes sanctificante deo,  
ac sacri fontis simili fulgente metallo  
prouidus antistes nunc copulauit opus.

30 Translation modified from Thunø 2015, 26 and 210.

31 Marin 2009, 209–215; Giesser 2014, 116–125.

32 Regarding the apse at St John Lateran, see, e.g., Lauer 1911; Buddensieg 1959, 157–185; Christe 1970, 197–206; and Foletti 2017d, 139–159.



Fig. 7: Apse of San Venanzio Chapel, Rome, 640–642  
© akg-images/Andrea Jemolo

quo quisquis gradiens et  $\bar{\chi}\rho\mu$  pronus adorans  
effusasque preces mittat ad aethra sua<s>.

John, consecrated bishop by God,  
has paid his pious vows to the martyrs of Christ the Lord,  
and, using precious stone that gleams like that of the holy font,  
he has now, with foresight, added this work  
so that everyone who steps in and, prostrate, adores Christ  
may send the prayers he has poured forth to heaven<sup>33</sup>.

As shown, despite considerable diversity in the visual schemes under examination, we can observe a certain tendency towards their standardization from the sixth century onward. While Christ remains the dominant figure in the respective apsidal images (with, of course, the exception of Sant' Agnese), the accompanying inscriptions typically share an emphasis on the shining glory of the surrounding imagery together with a commemoration of the titular saints and the founder of that particular sacred place.

<sup>33</sup> Translation modified from Thunø 2015, 24 and 211.

## Early Christian multimedia spectacularity: Methodological framing

Having presented an overview of selected text–image interactions in the late antique churches of Rome, we would like to address the question of how these multimedia ‘spectacles’ can be comprehensively understood using the theoretical frameworks of modern disciplines.

### Images in context

It is vital to bear in mind that the respective visual schemes functioned more or less independently, reacting to the needs of contemporary local Christian communities. In general, they were, nevertheless, aimed at two very different types of audiences: the *plebs Romana*, by then becoming – in the rhetoric of Sixtus III – the *plebs Dei*<sup>34</sup>, and the cultured aristocracy educated according to classical standards. For the former group, the images had to represent clearly recognizable and understandable concepts. The image in Santa Pudenziana was, for example, first of all to be perceived as a manifestation of the authority of the Christian God. The very face of Christ, however, at the same time probably evoked the presence of the ‘pagan’ (Graeco-Egyptian) god Serapis. This iconographic choice should perhaps be understood in the context of the ‘conversion’ of the cult of Serapis of Alexandria into a church in the early years of the fifth century when this ancient deity came to prophesy the victory of Christ<sup>35</sup>.

The composition of the apse in Santi Cosma e Damiano was, on the other hand, a splendid example of how devotional innovations could be ‘explained’ and ‘integrated’ in Rome through the use of spectacular images. As already mentioned, the relics of the two martyr physicians were brought to Rome from the East at the end of the fifth century. Before their transfer to the church on the forum, they had been stored in a chapel at Santa Maria Maggiore<sup>36</sup>. The visual strategy aiming to integrate the ‘newcomers’ into the life of the city is brilliant: the crux of the composition is a very precise reference to what was most likely one of the official images of the Church of Rome, the visual scheme at the original apse of Old Saint Peter’s made at the end

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34 Regarding this transformation, see, e.g., the still seminal text by Brown 1982, 123–145.

35 Foletti 2017a, 11–29; Foletti – Okáčová 2022, 36–38.

36 Cf. note 22.

of the fourth century, under Pope Damasus I<sup>37</sup>. This assumption is indirectly confirmed by epigraphic evidence, namely parallels between the use of a distinct and standardized (Philocalian) script commissioned by Damasus I for the so-called *Epigrammata Damasiana* and the employment of a similarly unified epigraphic format in early Christian apsidal decorations (see further below). In the apse of Old Saint Peter's, Christ was depicted standing amidst the apostle princes, surrounded by splendid palm trees with a phoenix, a symbol of immortality, seated on one of them<sup>38</sup>. To this 'traditional' core, Felix IV had the two 'new' saints added, presented by Peter and Paul to Christ (but actually to the *plebs Dei*) at the center. The iconography thus served as a practical tool to promote and legalize a new cult in Rome, a city that had always been very conservative<sup>39</sup>. A traditional visual scheme was reemployed with variation to indicate that the new had a clear bearing on the old. It is therefore not surprising that at San Venanzio, about a century later, exactly the same strategy was adopted: the Dalmatian saints are depicted around the bust of Christ surrounded by angels, which must have been understood as a clear reference to the apsidal image of St John Lateran.

Other images were, nevertheless, much less straightforward and required reasonable knowledge of the Christian doctrine. For instance, the visual composition on the triumphal arch of Santa Maria Maggiore is to be interpreted as sophisticated theological argumentation about the divine nature of Christ<sup>40</sup>. Similarly, a comprehensive understanding of the mosaic in Sant'Agnese required thorough knowledge of the contemplative techniques of Christian prayer, contemporary episcopal preaching practices in Rome, and the specific readings of the stational liturgy in the city<sup>41</sup>. In these cases, images became instruments of 'esoteric' communication and thus implicitly of social stratification. It is similar for the inscriptions accompanying the respective images; for illiterates, they were simply integral parts of the images and signs of authority, with their visual appeal consisting in their spatial and material composition of golden letters on a dark blue background.

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37 Regarding the original decoration of Old Saint Peter's, see Buddensieg 1959, 157–185; Romana Moretti 2006, 87–90; Foletti – Quadri 2013a, 475–492; and Christe 2020, 235–245.

38 Regarding the standing Christ composition, see, e.g., Spieser 2004; Foletti – Quadri 2013b, 12–33; and Foletti – Meinecke 2021, 116–135.

39 See, e.g., Andaloro – Romano 2000, 7–9.

40 Wilpert 1931, 197–213; Bisconti 2000, 12–23; Menna 2006, 306–346; Foletti 2017c, 41–62.

41 Foletti – Lešák 2023, 75–96.

For those who could read, however, another layer of meaning – ontologically and hermeneutically linked to the surrounding imagery – opened up.

### Textual and visual networks

To understand the visual-textual dialectics of the apsidal compositions, it seems further crucial to examine the extant epigraphic material as part of complex textual networks. Of particular relevance in this context is the notion of transtextuality introduced by Gérard Genette in his 1982 book *Palimpsests*<sup>42</sup>. This overarching concept, proposed as an alternative to the concept of intertextuality, as first introduced by Julia Kristeva and Mikhail Bakhtin in the 1960s<sup>43</sup>, subsumes all possible types of relationships among texts. For the present inquiry, we shall consider mainly three of them, namely the permeable categories of paratextuality, metatextuality, and, of course, intertextuality.

The epigraphs under examination obviously perform the function of paratexts in that they are placed – as a sort of visual frame – ‘next to’ (either above or below) the respective images. At the same time, they have a clear metatextual significance – they comment in an ekphrastic way on the surrounding visual imagery; see, for example, the incipit in Santi Cosma e Damiano – *aula dei claris radiat speciosa metallis* (ILCV 1784) – or a strikingly similar incipit in Sant’Agnese – *aurea concisis surgit pictura metallis* (ILCV 1769A)<sup>44</sup>. These monumental inscriptions thus require being read metatextually – or rather metavisually. They obviously refer to the shining mosaic decorations of the apses, but – given the fact that they are themselves composed of glittering golden letters on a dark blue background – they also have a self-referential function, which attributes to them some sort of tautological significance; the shining image is thus both advertised and materialized with the shining golden script (so what you read in the text is what the script is actually doing)<sup>45</sup>. In this sense, the materiality of the script becomes meaningful in its own right and the inscriptions should be read as ‘speaking images’, in other

42 For an English translation, see Genette 1997, esp. 1–5.

43 For a critical overview of this development, see, e.g., Plett 1991, 3–29.

44 For further examples, including the typical (ekphrastic) register employed, see below pp. 198 f.

45 Regarding self-referentiality, tautology, and meta-discursivity as features linking late antique literary production, namely the visual poetry of Optatian (4th cent.), and (post)modern conceptual forms of art, see Hernández Lobato 2017, 463–472.

words pieces of ‘exposed writing’<sup>46</sup>. The emphasis on the material aspect of the script, in turn, de-automatizes its referential function and highlights the mediating role of language, namely its function to communicate extra-linguistic reality. These observations can thus be quite easily linked to structuralist and post-structuralist concerns with the working principles of language and the generation of meaning, which is a line of interpretation that has already been adopted for late antique literary discourse with a particular focus on experimental forms of writing<sup>47</sup>.

Since, as already mentioned, texts in general do not exist in a vacuum but rather within textual networks, we shall also look at the potential of the epigraphs to refer to other texts, in other words at intertextual relationships. First of all, it should be noted that, based on iconological analysis and epigraphic evidence, the corpus of early Christian church mosaics produced in Rome between the sixth and ninth centuries has been identified by Erik Thunø as a distinct group with common characteristic features<sup>48</sup>. However questionable this perspective is – mainly due to a large number of idiosyncratic features within the group –, the apsidal inscription in Santi Cosma e Damiano from the sixth century indeed resembles several of the later mosaic epigraphs, especially that in Sant’Agnese dating to the seventh century and those in the three churches commissioned by Pope Paschal I in the ninth century, namely Santa Prassede, Santa Cecilia in Trastevere, and Santa Maria in Domnica<sup>49</sup>. Comparing the respective inscriptions, we reveal significant semantic and even lexical parallels; these are marked with underlining and

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46 This concept goes back to the twentieth-century scholar Armando Petrucci, who examined various forms of public writing – in particular inscriptions – as not only texts but also material artefacts with significant social resonances; see esp. Petrucci 1993 and 1995.

47 Regarding the interface between postmodern theory and late antique literature, see esp. Hernández Lobato 2018, 51–70; cf. the partial insights on (post)structuralist readings of the late antique visual poetry of Optatian in Okáčová 2006, 44–47; Okáčová 2007, 64–66; and Okáčová 2023, esp. 450 and 463.

48 Thunø 2015.

49 The major weakness in Thunø’s reasoning lies in the fact that he does not sufficiently take into account that, as already mentioned, the apsidal composition in Santi Cosma e Damiano is in all likelihood an echo of an earlier visual scheme of great authority, namely that of Old Saint Peter’s. Unfortunately, the text that originally accompanied the Vatican image has not survived, but precisely because of a considerable diffusion of common *topoi* including places such as Sant’Agnese, where there are absolutely no visual parallels with the apsidal image in the church of Santi Cosma e Damiano commissioned by Felix IV, we are inclined to assume that the roots of the Roman tradition of apsidal epigraphs go

bold, respectively, and appear especially in the opening (and so particularly semantically charged) lines:

**aula dei claris radiat speciosa metallis,**

in qua **plus** fidei **lux pretiosa micat**

(Santi Cosma e Damiano; Pope Felix IV: 526–530, ILCV 1784, 1f.; lower rim of the apse);

**uirginis aula micat uariis decorata metallis,**

sed **plus** namque **nitet** meritis **fulgentior** amplis

(Saint'Agnese fuori le mura; Pope Honorius I: 625–638, ILCV 1769, 1f.; now lost inscription, upper rim of the apse);

aurea **concisis** surgit pictura **metallis**

et complexa simul clauditur ipsa dies

(Saint'Agnese fuori le mura; Pope Honorius I: 625–638, ILCV 1769A, 1f.; lower rim of the apse);

**emicat aula** pia **uariis decorata metallis**

(Santa Prassede; Pope Paschal I: 817–824, ICUR 2, 1: 353. 438, 1; lower rim of the apse);

haec **domus** ampla **micat uariis fabricata metallis**

(Santa Cecilia in Trastevere; Pope Paschal I: 817–824, ICUR 2, 1: 151. 156. 444, 1; lower rim of the apse);

ista **domus** pridem fuerat confracta ruinis

nunc **rutilat** iugiter **uariis decorata metallis**

(Santa Maria in Domnica; Pope Paschal I: 817–824, de Rossi 1899, pl. 23, 1–2; lower rim of the apse).

Depending on the cognitive perspective adopted, these parallels can be interpreted simply and neutrally as a cluster of *topoi* or as intertextual clues, which would, of course, prioritize the model artefact, or as 'conceptual *spolia*'<sup>50</sup>,

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back to Old Saint Peter's in the late fourth century. For further epigraphic evidence in favour of this hypothesis, see pp. 195 and 202. Cf. also note 2.

50 This concept was first introduced by Serena Romano in Andaloro – Romano 2000, esp. 115.



which would again bestow greater significance on the model artefact and at the same time create negative connotations for its ‘imitations’<sup>51</sup>.

In any case, what stands out as a constant and both textually and visually significant motif is the golden splendour and shining glory of the apsidal images (*claris radiat metallis, lux pretiosa micat, micat/emicat/rutilat uariis decorata/fabricata metallis*)<sup>52</sup>. In the Christian context, this conceptual light metaphor has, of course, far-reaching spiritual and theological significance. The omnipresent notions of light – advertised by both the actual wording of the epigraphs and the technique used (a combination of golden and dark blue *tesserae*) – served as (material) manifestations of divine presence and revelation, eternity, divine knowledge and wisdom, the grace of God, and, not least, divine order. These notions are then intrinsically and conceptually contrasted with darkness, chaos<sup>53</sup>, ignorance, sin, evil, and despair. In other words, the symbolism of light as a thoroughly positive and precious quality is here both communicated and materialized through the splendour, brilliance, and preciousness of the medium of communication itself, whether that is a shining mosaic image or a monumental golden inscription. In cognitive terms, it is, of course, essential that this representation of divine and iconic presence is physically located above the viewer and high in the church space<sup>54</sup>, which brings us back to the spiritual axis running from the apse vault to the altar and finally below to the tombs of the martyrs.

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51 Cf. Thunø 2015, 4 f. *et passim*, who suggested viewing the corpus of early Christian mosaics of Rome from the sixth to ninth centuries as a sort of synchronically existing continuum, which corresponds to his reading of the respective visual concepts as emphasizing simultaneous continuity between the heavenly and the terrestrial Church.

52 While Thunø 2015, 15, 18, 50, and 133, seemed to have been convinced that the noun *metallum* refers directly to the mosaic and pointed at the inaccuracy of this denomination (Thunø 2011, esp. 286), we believe that the noun is used metonymically to account for the shining quality of the vitreous mosaics deriving from metal- or mineral-like substances obtained from the earth (whether gold, silver, or cobalt) and used for coloring individual mosaic *tesserae*.

53 Cf., e.g., the inscription in Sant’Agnese (ILCV 1769A, 7f.): *qui potuit noctis uel lucis reddere finem, / martyrum e bustis hinc reppulit ille chaos*; and the one in the Basilica of San Lorenzo fuori le mura (Pope Pelagius II: 579–590, ILCV 1770, 1–6): *demouit dominus tenebras ut luce creata, / his quondam latebris sic modo fulgor inest. / angustos aditus uenerabile corpus habebat / huc, ubi nunc populum largior aula capit. / eruta planities patuit sub monte reciso / estque remota graui mole ruina minax.*

54 Cf. Stockwell 2020, 79, and 124 and 126 (in the context of conceptual metaphors).

The intertextual links revealed so far, which establish a sort of conceptual network of divine spaces with similar (contemplative and performative) functions, are seemingly in an epistemological clash with the recognizable classical flavour of several of the respective epigraphs. Perhaps the most distinct overtones of classical poetry can be identified in the surviving apsidal inscription in Sant'Agnese (ILCV 1769A). Almost every line can ring a bell in the minds of connoisseurs of classical poetry, meaning those who went through rhetorical training in contemporary grammar schools, where the best classical authors were still widely used (again, the semantic and lexical parallels are indicated by underlining and bold, respectively):

**aurea** concisis **surgit** pictura metallis  
et complexa simul clauditur ipsa **dies**.  
fontibus e niueis credas, **Aurora**, subire  
correptas nubes roribus arua rigans.

Cf. **aurea** prima sata est aetas, quae uindice nullo (Ov. met. 1, 89);  
desinet ac toto **surgit** gens **aurea** mundo (Verg. ecl. 4, 9);  
postera iamque **dies** primo **surgebat** Eoo  
umentemque **Aurora** polo **dimouerat umbram** (Verg. Aen. 3, 588 f.).

uel qualem inter **sidera** lucem proferet irim  
purpureusque pauo ipse colore nitens.  
qui potuit noctis uel lucis reddere finem,  
martyrum e bustis hinc reppulit ille **chaos**.

Cf. prima fuit rerum confusa sine ordine moles,  
unaque erat facies **sidera**, terra, fretum;  
mox caelum inpositum terris, humus aequore cinctast,  
inque suas partes cessit inane **chaos** (Ov. ars 2, 467–470).

sursum uersa nutu quod cunctis cernitur uno,  
praesul Honorius haec uota dicata dedit.  
uestibus et factis **signantur** illius **ora**.  
lucet et aspectu lucida corda gerens.

Cf. adgnosunt atque **ora** sono discordia **signant** (Verg. Aen. 2, 423);  
**ora** puer prima **signans** intonsa iuuenta (Verg. Aen. 9, 181).

The listed passages in Virgil's and Ovid's mythological, bucolic, heroic, and even love poetry include, among others, a description of the Golden Age in both authors (met. 1, 89 and ecl. 4, 9), the creation of the world as a 'stage' for the cultivation of love (ars 2, 467–470), the siege of Troy (Aen. 2, 423), and a description of the youthful beauty of Euryalus (Aen. 9, 181), one of the Trojan warriors who is eventually caught by the Greeks and dies at a young age. Even though these images are linked to a significantly different cultural prism, they – we argue – both amplify, reinforce, and even, in a sense, authorize the Christian imagery, typically through a more or less convincing analogy (cf. esp. the allusions to the Golden Age or a youthful death evoking the fate of Saint Agnes). The reason these ornamental or 'jeweled' allusions<sup>55</sup> sometimes feel bewildering or even inappropriate in a Christian context to modern scholars<sup>56</sup> seems to derive from their cognitive perspective developed through training based on binary thinking and contrastive dichotomies<sup>57</sup>. However, since "knowledge structures are dynamic and experientially developing"<sup>58</sup>, it can well be argued that the presence of 'pagan' elements in early Christian churches may have been felt as something absolutely natural and even reassuring (pointing to the continuity of cultural development rather than the contrary) for contemporary recipients. The classical simply formed an organic part of their cognitive (syncretic) background encompassing both the 'pagan' cultural heritage of the past and contemporary Christian doctrine. In other words, given the markedly conservative cultural traditions of late antique Rome, the references to classical

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55 While being somewhat reluctant to adopt the slightly self-contradictory term "nonreferential allusion", as proposed by Pelttari 2014, esp. 131–137, to characterize late antique allusions as opposed to those present in classical Latin poetry, we shall acknowledge that the mosaic-like allusions to classical poetry in the apsidal inscription in Saint'Agnes do not seem to directly engage with the respective hypotexts and that the meaning of the hypertext is thus not dependent upon confrontation of the original and the new semantic contexts. Regarding the Virgilian and Ovidian flavor of the epigraph, see also Trout 2019, 15; Trout 2020, 158–159; and Trout 2021, 164.

56 See esp. Trout 2019, 14–17.

57 The seeds of this development can probably be found already in the mind–body dualism, most famously defended by René Descartes in the first half of the seventeenth century. A similarly dualistic line of thought has been endorsed and promoted by structuralism, flourishing in the first half of the twentieth century, which saw binary opposition as a fundamental working principle of all language and thought.

58 Stockwell 2020, 106; cf. 173 (in the context of the cognitive concept of text-worlds).

poetry in the respective inscriptions can be interpreted first and foremost as evidence of the traditional dimension of the decorative project. Indeed, as early as the fourth century, there are multiple examples of artefacts where elements that would appear as opposites in post-Cartesian rhetoric coexist peacefully, constituting one of the key features of the syncretic cultural identity of contemporary Rome. Looking within contemporary literature, we should definitely take into account such phenomena as the entire tradition of Christological readings of Virgil's *Eclogue* 4 and the late antique production (4th–6th cent.) of patchwork texts known as centos, fashioned out of quotes taken from Homer or Virgil and relating biblical stories from the Old and New Testaments.

Actually, it is not only the wording but also the standardized epigraphic form of the inscriptions that bears classical traits. The epigraphic material appears to be reminiscent of what has become known as Philocalian script, named after Furius Dionysius Filocalus, a Roman scribe and the official stone engraver of Pope Damasus I (366–384) who created a distinct script for the so-called *Epigrammata Damasiana*, inscriptions on the square marble tablets placed at the tombs of early Christian martyrs in suburban cemeteries (fig. 8) and containing – similarly as the monumental inscriptions in the apses of early Christian churches in Rome – allusions to both Virgil and Ovid<sup>59</sup>. And this Philocalian script, a sort of trademark of Damasus, while extensively copied by contemporary and later engravers, was itself reminiscent of classical imperial inscriptions such as those on the triumphal arches of Rome (fig. 9)<sup>60</sup>.

Finally, the visual schemes are, as already mentioned, also full of references to the visual tradition of the Urbs. An eloquent example is the aforementioned mosaic in Santa Pudenziana, which combines features of the imperial, philosophical, and divine representation models<sup>61</sup>. In Santa Maria Maggiore, the very structure of the apsidal arch recalls the triumphal arches of the fourth century, while the empty throne dominating the composition is a visual echo of a very ancient tradition, known throughout the Mediterranean, which in classical Rome adorned no less significant a monument than the pediment of the Temple of Magna Mater<sup>62</sup>. The angels in Santa Maria Maggiore are reminiscent of ancient Nike and the standing Christ in Santi

59 Regarding Damasus' epigraphic poetry, see most recently Trout 2015.

60 See Thunø 2015, esp. 172–181; cf. Trout 2015, 47–52.

61 Grabar 1936; Mathews 1993; Foletti 2017a, 11–29.

62 Bloch 1951, 14; EAA Suppl. 1 (1994) 320 f. s. v. Ara Pietatis Augustae (E. La Rocca); Foletti 2017c, 41–62.



Fig. 8: Damasian epigram on Saint Agnes, replaced by Pope Honorius I (625–638) from her tomb in the catacomb on the Via Nomentana to the newly built church *ad corpus*, Rome, 366–384  
 Broutille, CCo, via Wikimedia Commons

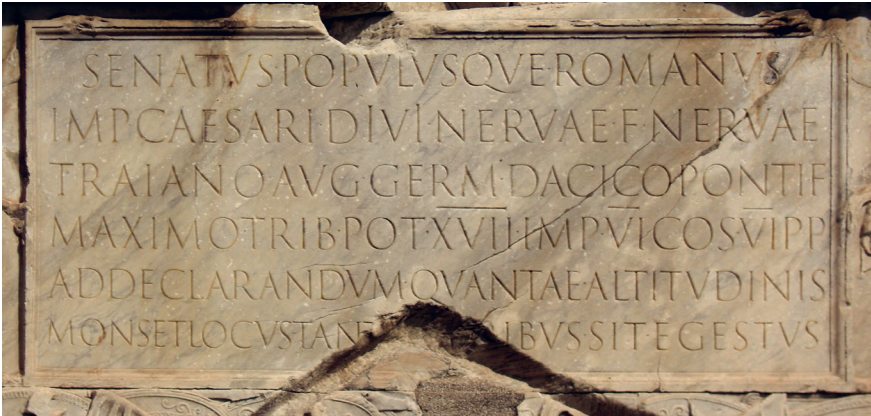


Fig. 9: Trajan's column, base with inscription, Rome, 113  
 Photo by Matthias Grawehr

Cosma e Damiano seems to be a 'copy' of the statuettes of the god Serapis<sup>63</sup>. Moreover, Saint Agnes in the seventh-century church dedicated to her memory and the Virgin Mary from the fifth-century Santa Maria Maggiore are dressed in the same way – as Roman patricians from earlier centuries<sup>64</sup>. In terms of visual rhetoric, no doubt thus remains that the respective images represent the Christian tradition while simultaneously bearing well-known visual elements of pre-Constantine Rome.

63 L'Orange 1982, 152–156; Foletti – Meinecke 2021, 116–135.

64 Kondakov 2014, 141–144; Lidova 2015, 60–81.

## Visual narrativity

Yet another modern methodological tool that may bring more comprehensive understanding of the visual schemes of late antique churches in Rome is narrative theory. While pictorial or visual narrativity is an established concept, the narrative potential of pictures, especially of single images, is, of course, considerably limited<sup>65</sup>. The narrativity of the apsidal visual schemes relies especially on intermedial references, specifically on the capacity of the mosaic images to refer mainly to the Holy Scripture and/or the accounts of individual martyrs' stories. What helps the beholder to 'read' the images are both the accompanying inscriptions, which frequently identify individual characters involved and their roles/social status, and the textual clues included in the images themselves, such as the reference to a specific part of the Book of Genesis in Santa Pudenziana. In addition, the visual schemes make extensive use of various 'symbols' that can express causal relationships and also notions of temporal sequence. A pregnant example can be seen in the apsidal mosaic in Sant'Agnese. Not only is the titular saint explicitly (epigraphically) identified in the mosaic but the entire story of her martyrdom is elliptically recounted through images of a sword and fire, symbols of her suffering, around her feet and the heavenly sign above her head at the apex of the vault. This vertical axis with Saint Agnes at the center provides a general narrative frame for the entire scene; her death for her Christian faith makes her an intercessor or intermediary between heaven and earth.

## Performative context

In terms of the pragmatic function of the artefacts under consideration, the concept of performativity seems to provide an adequate methodological framework. For our purpose, this interdisciplinary concept, introduced around the 1960s, will be used in its broader (i.e. not strictly theatrical) sense as an approach to understand cultural dynamics and social interactions<sup>66</sup>. It

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65 See, e.g., Wolf 2008, 431–435. Richer material for a narratological analysis is, for obvious reasons, provided by series of images, such as those constituting monumental narrative cycles decorating the naves of early Christian churches and containing scenes from the Old and New Testaments, frequently accompanied by 'explanatory' epigraphs in verse. These text–image interactions are beyond the scope of the present paper, but they can well be examined along the methodological lines proposed here.

66 Cf., e.g., Bell 1998, 205–224.

can thus help us to understand how the visual schemes were conceived as performative acts, meaning acts of communication with their recipients. We have already mentioned the multimedia spectacularity of the apsidal images, which were clearly designed to capture viewers' attention and engage them in contemplating the composition as a whole<sup>67</sup>. Apart from that, the entire setting is, of course, intrinsically linked to liturgical performances of different kinds (see further below). Not least, performative traits can also be found in the monumental inscriptions themselves. They not only advertise their shining material presence and (self-)referential function but occasionally also invite the viewer to reflect on these: see, for example, the appeal to recipients' cognitive capacities in Sant'Agnese with a potential perlocutionary effect<sup>68</sup>: *fontibus e niueis credas, Aurora, subire and sursum uersa nutu quod cunctis cernitur uno* (ILCV 1769A, 3, 9); in addition, the epigraph in San Venanzio has a clear reference to devotional performative practices: *quo quisquis gradiens et X̄pm pronus adorans / effusasque preces mittat ad aethra sua<s>* (ILCV 1786A, 5–6). The epigraphic corpus also includes other expressions that thematize the performative purpose of the respective visual schemes and/or an appeal to viewers' involvement, typically with the use of dynamic and sensory vocabulary signifying the stunning visual effects of the shining mosaics (for example the action verb *surgit* and verbal forms such as *radiat*, *(e)micat*, and *rutilat*). In this sense, viewers are confronted with some form of “self-referential” or “decorative performativity”<sup>69</sup>, which amounts to a multimedia – and within liturgical practices even multi-sensory – spectacle. In short, what is advertised is simultaneously being done by the script, which gives rise to a shining (textual) image.

It is indeed the performative perspective that has over the past three decades gained ground for the study of the space and images of (not only) the late antique churches of Rome<sup>70</sup>. The performative potential of the respec-

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67 In this respect, the performative approach obviously overlaps with the reception aesthetics that originated in the late 1960s with the work of Hans-Robert Jauss and shifted attention to the reader as the focal point of literary criticism.

68 In speech act theory, as introduced by J.L. Austin in his famous *How to Do Things with Words* (1955), a perlocutionary act refers to the effect of an utterance on the listener.

69 Sládek 2010, esp. 53 f.

70 The performative dimension of sacred spaces in Rome has been widely examined especially after the seminal research of de Blaauw 1994, who authored numerous studies on the topic; see, e.g., de Blaauw 2001; de Blaauw 2011, 30–43; and de Blaauw 2020, 255–277. An excellent synthesis of this research line is provided, e.g., by Bock et al. 2000; Piva 2012; and Scirocco – de Blaauw 2023. Not least, de

tive visual schemes that has thus been revealed is considerable. In Santa Pudenziana, for example, liturgical services were probably conceived so as to legitimize episcopal authority. The bishop presented himself as an earthly reflection of the representation of Christ in the apse; seated together with his presbyters in the apse, he appeared as a ‘performative image’ of Christ<sup>71</sup>. In Santa Maria Maggiore, it was the empty throne of God, depicted on the apsidal arch, that in all probability referred to the performative actions that took place at the papal throne located directly below when the bishop was absent<sup>72</sup>. In fact, we know from contemporary sources, although from outside of Rome, that in the absence of the bishop, Christological attributes, such as a book of Scripture or the cross, were placed on his throne<sup>73</sup>. With these attributes, the throne became a ‘performative installation’ that made Christ himself present at the liturgical ceremony. At the same time, however, the apsidal image conferred Christological dignity on the one who sat upon the earthly throne, namely the bishop of Rome. In Santi Cosma e Damiano, the apsidal visual scheme seems to react directly to the liturgical chants – the apocalyptic vision depicted on the arch represents the moment when the Twenty-Four Elders together with the four living creatures intone the *Sanctus*, a liturgical chant present in the tradition of Rome since the end of the fifth century<sup>74</sup>. Moreover, from the *Ordines Romani* (1, 46), we know that during the pontifical liturgy the bishop of Rome was preceded by seven deacons carrying an equal number of candelabra that were placed on either side of the altar. The ritual (performative) situation thus faithfully mirrored what is described in the Book of the Apocalypse and represented on the apsidal arch, namely seven candlesticks next to the throne of the Lord. The lamb on the throne – a throne without a backrest and thus very similar to a splendid altar – could then be understood as an echo of the Eucharistic liturgy itself. The presence of angels beside the throne was most probably meant to recall the bishop’s Eucharistic prayer inviting the angels of heaven to descend to earth to collect the offerings on the altar and bring them to the eternal altar

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Blaauw 2017, 15–28, offers a substantial synthetic reflection on the urban nature of the Roman liturgy.

71 Regarding the concept of performative images, see, e.g., Pentcheva 2006, 631–655; regarding humans becoming performative images themselves, see, e.g., Ivanovici 2019, 128–147.

72 Foletti 2017c, 41–62; Foletti 2021b, 13–32.

73 See, e.g., Tchalenko 1990; and Janeras 2005, 117–137.

74 Nilgen 2000, 75–89; Foletti 2017b, 161–179.



of God<sup>75</sup>. Christ, depicted as if dynamically descending from the apse, may then have seemed to respond to an invocation from the crowd of believers gathered in the church. The latter invited him to join them for the Eucharistic act and, in the image, Christ responded by descending among his *plebs*. Finally, in Sant’Agnese, the sacred space with its decorations in marble and other precious materials and the apsidal image seem to respond to the readings sung *in situ* during the pontifical liturgy in the church<sup>76</sup>: the chanted text of the gospels and the homilies allowed the spectators to clearly interpret the transcendental features of the saint while simultaneously placing the shining image in a performative context. In sum, the images displayed in the late antique churches of Rome seem to have been born in strong synergy with respective liturgical rites and their significant performative potential was thus probably recognized by all those involved.

## Conclusion: Epistemological considerations

Having looked at the surviving visual schemes from a variety of complementary perspectives, we would like to take a closer look at the epistemological framework within which these artefacts were originally created and perceived. While the respective visual compositions, ‘activated’ by regular liturgical performances, appear clearly rooted in earlier Roman traditions, they simultaneously exhibit significant originality. The medium of wall mosaic existed in previous centuries, but it had never had such prominence in sacred spaces. The choice of this particular medium is perfectly understandable in

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75 Cf. *supplices te rogamus, omnipotens deus, iube haec perferri per manus angeli tui in sublime altare tuum in conspectu diuinae maiestatis tuae, ut quotquot ex hac altaris participatione sacrosanctum filii tui corpus et sanguinem sumpserimus, omni benedictione caelesti et gratia repleamur. per Christum dominum nostrum* (quoted according to Chavasse 1997, XVII, 1252, 34; emphasis added).

76 Of special interest in this regard are two homilies pronounced in Sant’Agnese by Gregory the Great, thanks to which we know that in 591, on January 21 and 28, two feasts celebrating the martyrdom and earthly birth of Saint Agnes, respectively, took place in the church. The pope commented on the parables of the hidden treasure, the pearl, and the net from the Gospel of Matthew (13, 44–52) and the parable of the ten virgins from the same gospel (25, 1–13): see Morin 1911, 300; and Deshusses 1971, 121–123. 615f. Foletti – Lešák 2023, 75–96, have shown how these two readings, which must have been linked to the site even in the years of Honorius I, perfectly reflect both the situation of the basilica buried like treasure in the surrounding landscape and the idea of Agnes white and shining like a pearl.

terms of confessional practices; images as objects of idolatry were strictly forbidden in the Old Testament and partly in the New Testament (Ex 20, 4–6; Apg 17, 16–34)<sup>77</sup>. Gradually, however, the prohibition became less strict, being limited mainly to three-dimensional images, which best embodied the Graeco-Roman idolatry from which Christians wanted to distinguish themselves<sup>78</sup>. Consequently, two-dimensional mosaic images gradually dominated early Christian spaces, and this development was not by chance: mosaics were, in fact, a medium capable of reflecting light in an absolutely unique way; each *tessera* was oriented slightly differently and this created the illusion of an *imago* animated by an inner light<sup>79</sup>. Given all the light rhetoric in Christian sacred texts – Christ defines himself as the “light of the world” (Jo. 8, 12) –, such a choice seems perfectly logical<sup>80</sup>. Moreover, the vitreous mosaic allowed, when properly illuminated, for a revolutionary experience; the two physical dimensions of an image were literally ‘augmented’ by light. Using current (and thus anachronistic but still relevant) terminology, the illuminated mosaic image amounted to true ‘augmented reality’<sup>81</sup>.

The use of two-dimensional images had, however, yet another advantage. Such images allowed the conceptor to ‘control’ the viewer’s point of view. Whereas a statue of Jupiter could easily be seen from all possible angles, a two-dimensional image, for obvious reasons much less mimetic than a three-dimensional statue, allowed only one point of view, the one chosen by its conceptor. This aspect likely also had an impact in terms of bestowing an even more authoritative status on ‘official’ images. Thus, while at first dictated by theological issues, the mass use of two-dimensional shining devotional images, typically produced in mosaic, meant a real media revolution<sup>82</sup>.

Still, as we have demonstrated, the late antique visual arts well show that the opposing notions of continuity and rupture are deficient concepts for describing the contemporary cultural climate, in which, in a way, everything changed but still remained the same. The interweaving of tradition and innovation obviously led to a profound cultural transformation, but, at the same time, the authoritative identity of Rome was in no way undermined. In other words, even though Christianity penetrated all spheres of cultural production

77 Andaloro 2000, 31–67; Andaloro 2006a, 37–52.

78 An excellent synthesis of this development is provided by Bordino 2020, 22–87.

79 Kessler 2004, 19–42; Bolgia 2013, 217–228; Foletti – Frantová 2021.

80 The question of the role of light in the late antique world has been much debated in recent years, not least in relation to the writings of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite; see esp. Dell’Acqua – Mainoldi 2020.

81 Bolgia 2013, 217–228; Foletti – Frantová 2021.

82 Foletti – Frantová 2021.

with a rapid transformative power, the outcome was very far from a complete rupture with past cultural tradition. On the contrary, various aspects of Christian art, whether formal and technical, rhetorical, or stylistic features, reveal syncretic and organic continuity with classical tradition<sup>83</sup>.

The general movement away from the mimetic towards more conceptual forms of art is in line with the tendencies underway in contemporary literature, which, in general, became more self-referential (metatextual) and ambiguous than before. Across all this artistic production, we can feel a heightened awareness of the materiality of the medium of communication (be it a visual language or text) and a general appeal to the recipients to contemplate rather than merely consume the artefacts, frequently conceived as multi-layered “open works”<sup>84</sup>. It did, of course, very much depend on who was perceiving the artefact because this fact determined which knowledge structures came into play. We should therefore, of course, not forget that the majority of contemporary visitors to early Christian churches were illiterate. For these people but also in general, the images were much more readily understandable and engaging than the accompanying inscriptions, which were, in turn, probably perceived as a more authoritative, perhaps even more valuable, means of communication<sup>85</sup>. On a basic level, it was the very presence of a shining script – as a visual artefact and organic part of the entire shining visual scheme – that mattered and that served as a material manifestation of Christ as the Word made flesh and the light shining in the darkness, as we read in John (1, 1–14). The late antique apsidal visual schemes thus constitute unique material for understanding the ways in which text and image functioned as a symbiotic means of ‘activating’ pre-modern spectators’ spiritual contemplation. For contemporary believers, these multimedia ‘spectacles’ facilitated, especially during various liturgical services, an encounter with the divine, enhancing both collective (liturgical) and individual contemplative experiences.

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83 An incredible amount of ink has been spent on the question of the transition between the ‘ancient’ and the ‘medieval’ worlds. Recently, the authors of this paper have attempted to address the issue in an interdisciplinary way, including a decent summary of previous scholarship on the issue: Foletti – Okáčová – Palladino 2022.

84 This concept was introduced by Umberto Eco in his 1962 book *Opera aperta*; for its application to late antique poetry, see esp. Peltari 2014.

85 Cf. Thunø 2015, 186 f.

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*Rolf Sporleder*

## Invitation to Look Twice. Mythological Images on Campana Reliefs

**Abstract** While Greek architectural decoration such as the Parthenon frieze or temple pediments have always been carefully studied and their elaborate meanings analyzed, modern scholars have often not considered Roman architectural terracottas – the so-called Campana reliefs – to be art. These terracottas were made and used in series, and each one is not a unique piece. They functioned according to specific rules, shaped by the habits and expectations of artists, commissioners and viewers. Their repetition was a strategy to attract the viewer’s attention, otherwise their meaning would go unnoticed. The combination and repetition of plaques reworked familiar mythological motifs, and made the images more legible. In some cases, narrative scenes ‘hide’ behind the repeated compositions which becomes understandable only when having a second gaze. These strategies are most evident in the analysis of mythological images, which usually have a strong connection to the patrons who commissioned them to decorate their homes or public buildings.

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I would like to thank Matthias Grawehr and Markus Kersten for the organization of and invitation to the conference and the possibility to publish this article. For most of the literature on Campana reliefs is in German or Italian, I summarize some ideas that I conducted during for my dissertation written in German at Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin until September 2022. The work is funded by the Einstein Stiftung Berlin (Einstein Foundation Berlin) – Einstein Center Chronoi, and I was a member of the Berlin Graduate School of Ancient Studies. I am grateful for the help of my advisers Susanne Muth, Lorenz Winkler-Horaček, and Katharina Lorenz. I am also grateful to the Berlin Antikensammlung, most of all to Martin Maischberger, who supports my project in various respects, such as the permission to reproduce images of the objects in Berlin. I also thank the American Academy in Rome, namely Valentina Follo, and the Louvre in Paris (via their database) for providing images for this article. I thank Max Peers from Brown

The Campana reliefs have suffered from considerable neglect both in modern research and from the start in antiquity. As will become apparent, they deserve a second, closer examination not only with regard to their mythological images, but in their entirety as a type. Contrary to what might be expected, such an examination reveals unusual and surprising images.

The term “Campana relief” is completely modern and subsumes the category of Roman architectural terracotta reliefs<sup>1</sup>. They borrow their name from the Italian collector and scholar Giovanni Pietro Campana (1808–1880) who, in 1842, issued the first richly illustrated monograph dealing mainly with the pieces in his own collection, now located at the Louvre in Paris<sup>2</sup>.

The reliefs offer a stunning and surprising variety of subjects, motifs, and compositions: heroes such as Hercules and Theseus, deities such as Dionysus or Athena, satyrs and maenads, idyllic Nilotic landscapes or heraldically flanked sacred objects. After Campana’s publication, a monumental attempt to categorize the images was undertaken by Hermann von Rohden and Hermann Winnefeld in 1911<sup>3</sup>, resulting in the publication of a series of monographs concerning the different types<sup>4</sup> and collections housing examples<sup>5</sup>.

The geographic scope of the area in which the reliefs have been recovered spans from Latium to Etruria, from Italy to Greece and Spain<sup>6</sup>, with examples associated primarily with villas, but also with sanctuaries and other public buildings<sup>7</sup>. The reliefs seem to appear around 50 BC and disappear a century later around 50 AD, but some reliefs may have been used or reused later. In fact, we have located most of our examples as fragments in secondary locations (levelling layers, walls, floors etc.) – not a single relief comes from its primary context *in situ*. There are some cases in which more or less intact reliefs are found in clusters containing the same image types, most of all in

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1 Reinhardt 2024b.

2 Campana 1842; recently on the Campana collection: Gaultier et al. 2018.

3 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911.

4 Borbein 1968; Rauch 1999; Möller-Titel 2019.

5 Mielsch 1971; Perry 1997; Tortorella 2008; Siebert 2011; Pensabene – Roghi 2013; Lejsgaard Christensen – Bøggild Johannsen 2015.

6 The most recent conference volumes on Campana reliefs are Angle – Germano 2007; Reinhardt 2024a.

7 Rizzo 1976–77; Tortorella 2007; Bøggild Johannsen 2008; Bøggild Johannsen 2010; Tortorella 2019.

peristyles. As the find contexts suggest, the reliefs were repeatedly placed on walls or roof edges of houses and temples<sup>8</sup>.

This placement creates an urgent problem for the images on the reliefs: How to attract the viewers' attention and invite them to take a closer look? They may be architectural reliefs, but they have a high potential to be more than mere decoration: by this I mean proper *decorum*, appropriate for its context. The large variety of different images all serve the representation of the Roman upper class within their homes and in public spaces, such as sanctuaries and other public buildings. Thus, the reliefs are in communication with their context or the people who view them, by embodying abstract concepts such as values, distinguishing features, or atmospheres.

Campana reliefs may be considered background noise, an embellishment that successfully attracts the gaze – with its layout and imaging or through the choice of topics and motifs. Therefore, I argue that these reliefs were understood in part as architectural decoration when they were created; despite some modern scholars wondering if one should consider the ancient viewer – or even if one can do so<sup>9</sup>.

## Prejudices and contradictions concerning form...

When archaeologists have dealt with Campana reliefs so far, they usually considered them as cheap mass-products of low artistic value for the lower classes. Even in the 1960s, Erika Simon identified them as representative of the “average taste of their era”<sup>10</sup>. In fact, Campana reliefs are usually classified as mere copies of ‘proper’ art in other media:

What the wealthy builder ordered in marble, large in size, his budget-minded counterpart could purchase in terracotta (the so-called Campana reliefs) for setting as friezes in houses of wood and plaster<sup>11</sup>.

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8 Borbein 1968, 14 f.; Bøggild Johannsen 2008, 26; Siebert 2011, 25; Tortorella 2018, 203. Examples of reconstructions: Salvadori – Giroto 2015, 171f. figs. 8.9; Mar – Pensabene 2015, 33 fig. 2.

9 See for example Schmidt 1969, 152; Giuliani 2003, 284 who both refuse the possibility to investigate either the potential that images had on viewers or what the producer had in mind when creating the image.

10 E. Simon in Helbig – Speier 1963, 603: “Durchschnittsgeschmack ihres Zeitalters”. Borbein 1968, esp. 33. 103 shares the same attitude.

11 Vermeule 1977, 12 (quote); Tortorella 1981, 63.

While terracotta as a material was (and usually still is) considered inferior to marble, terracotta images still aroused some attention. In order to find ancient illustrations of myths known from our written sources, scholars have often published some of the Campana reliefs with special and unique depictions.

A good example is this relief (fig. 1): An elderly, bearded man leans forward and offers a bowl to a seated young man. A woman stands behind them. What we can see here is a representation of the Athenian king Aegeus standing in front of his son Theseus when returning to Athens. He had not been raised by his father in Athens, but by his mother in Troizen, where he found some signs of his destiny that had been hidden by Aegeus beneath a rock. What is important in this moment is that Aegeus does not yet know and recognize his son while Medea, who had been a guest at Aegeus' court, immediately understands that Theseus might be a threat to her position. She convinces Aegeus to poison the stranger – this is the crucial moment



Fig. 1: A unique scene in ancient art: Aegeus tries to poison his son Theseus when he returns to Athens. Medea, who is responsible for this attempt, stands behind the king. Berlin, Antikensammlung TC 5890.

Berlin, Antikensammlung of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Foto: Johannes Kramer



that we see on the relief<sup>12</sup>. What we do not see is the happy ending when Aegeus recognizes his son (or rather the sword he had hidden for him) just a moment before it would have been too late. Surprisingly, we can find this scene depicted in this manner only on Campana reliefs. It neither appeared in earlier Greek art, nor was it adopted in later Roman art. For this reason, the scene was already the focus of scholarly attention in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and only the discovery of this relief together with reliefs depicting other labors of Theseus proved this interpretation (see p. 232)<sup>13</sup>. Until that time, the scene was too unique to understand.

Adolf Borbein undertook a major investigation of Campana reliefs in the course of his dissertation that was published in 1968. He mainly dealt with images that were designed after Greek models and can mainly be traced back to neo-Attic art. His premise is that the people who designed the reliefs are craftsmen rather than artists. He considers their products as copies of previous art that the coroplasts did not always fully understand. Thus, Borbein believes that the reliefs show the true nature of Roman art, which he describes as simple and of a decorative character<sup>14</sup>. For example, he points out the symmetry that is a basic composition of the images on Campana reliefs and that can be seen in many examples. On the one hand, the image itself can be symmetrical as satyrs harvesting and pressing wine show. The image is not precisely symmetrical, but the composition is mirrored on the central axis<sup>15</sup>. On the other hand, the images of two plaques can be arranged symmetrically as two Nikes<sup>16</sup> or chariots that face each other on the different reliefs (fig. 7, p. 237).

Another group displays general symmetry but with different figures, for example Apollo and Hercules struggling for the tripod<sup>17</sup>. Hercules tries to steal the tripod from Delphi in which the Pythia sits and offers her oracles (fig. 2).

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12 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 100–102; Strazzulla 1999, 566–572; Möller-Titel 2019, 221–246.

13 E.g. Campana 1842, pl. 68; another relief (now Berlin, Antikensammlung, see note 42) was discussed in 1862 at the Instituto di Corrispondeza Archeologica (the processor of the German Archaeological Institute) in Rome: Brunn 1862, 287\*; BDI 1862, 8.

14 Borbein 1968, esp. 103. 175 f.

15 Harvesting wine ('Weinlese'): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 60–65; Rauch 1999, 101–105. cat. nos. 456–628. pls. 14, 2–16, 2. – Pressing wine ('Kelterung'): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 65–69; Rauch 1999, 106–113. cat. nos. 629–811 pls. 17, 1–19, 2.

16 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 82–89; Borbein 1968, 43–115.

17 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 19. 266 pl. 54; Borbein 1968, 176–177; Möller-Titel 2019, 20–45.



Fig. 2: Apollo and Herakles fight over the tripod. From the Campana Collection, Louvre Cp 4180/S 784  
Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, pl. 54, 1

This case is particularly interesting, for the image on Campana reliefs contrasts the well-established image type in Greek art. From the Archaic period on, Hercules is usually shown carrying the tripod on his shoulder, running to one side while fighting Apollo, who remains behind him. Apollo usually seems inferior as he chases after Hercules<sup>18</sup>. This mode of presentation is also seen in the so-called neo-Attic art, which is more or less contemporary to our terracotta reliefs<sup>19</sup>. Borbein understands this as a subordination of the subject, the narration, to overall criteria of layout and composition. He understands this as a decorative character of the images on Campana reliefs. Therefore, the content of the image is reduced<sup>20</sup>.

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18 See for example: Berlin, *Antikensammlung F 2159*; Knauer 1965, esp. 12–18; W.-D. Heilmeyer in: Schwarzmaier et al. 2012, 98–100 cat. no. 49. – Further examples: Brinkmann 2003; Möller-Titel 2019, 33.

19 Fuchs 1959, 126–127; Borbein 1968, 176 f.; Ritter 1995, 130; Ambroggi 2012.

20 Borbein 1968, 176–178; Borbein 1976, 506; Sporleder 2017, 66–69; Möller-Titel 2019, 32–34.

Of course, these observations are not false, but surely framed poorly. We will have a closer look at that after focusing on the most dramatic shift that the modern reception of Campana reliefs underwent.

### ... and function

In 1968, – so Borbein did not know about them yet – the most elaborate Campana reliefs were found on the Palatine Hill in Rome. These are probably the most iconic Campana reliefs. Their size and preservation, paired with the vivid color, makes them wonderful masterpieces. Dozens of these reliefs were found, so we can be sure about their repeated installation within a context.

They were immediately attributed to the sanctuary of Apollo that Octavian began constructing after the battle of Actium<sup>21</sup>. Therefore, modern scholars understood them as a representation of Octavian's/Augustus' ideology and imagery. The struggle for the tripod was thus understood as a metaphor for the latest civil war. Apollo should represent Octavian, his favorite god, while Hercules stands for Mark Antony, who considered the son of Zeus his own ancestor. At that time, scholars thought that the reason why the image on Campana reliefs looks quite different from archaic or neo-Attic images was not a compositional simplification, as Borbein stated, but explained in terms of content: It was considered inappropriate to show Apollo *id est* Octavian chasing after Mark Antony<sup>22</sup>. In keeping with this, the representation of Perseus and Athena with the head of Medusa was understood as Octavian killing Cleopatra<sup>23</sup>, while the other images with flanked sacred objects were understood as proofs of Augustus' *pietas* and his promise of an *aurea aetas*.

Even if doubts about these theories within the context of the sanctuary might be valid, discussions about it are unnecessary. For ten years now, the

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21 Carettoni 1971/72, 123f. 137f.; Carettoni 1973, 75; Zanker 1983, 34f.; Kellum 1985, 169; Schneider 1986, 61. 69. 72. 96; Simon 1986, 128f.; Carettoni 1988, 267f.; Lefèvre 1989, 20; Strazzulla 1990, passim; Strazzulla 1991, 242–244; Reeder 1995, 35–42; Ritter 1995, 129–131; Tomei 1997, 49; Strazzulla 1999, 559f. 589; Simon 2009, 75f.; Zanker 2009, 94f. 246f.; Gasparri – Tomei 2014, 150–167; Hölscher 2016, 62; Newby 2016, 54–56; Möller-Titel 2019, esp. 7–9. 21–24. 42–45. 304–307 cat. no. 1–9.

22 Zanker 1983, 34f.; Kellum 1985, 170f.; Schneider 1986, 61. 69. 72. 96; Lefèvre 1989, 20; Strazzulla 1990, 17f.; Strazzulla 1991, 242; Ritter 1995, 131f.; Möller-Titel 2019, esp. 42–45.

23 Kellum 1985, 172; Lefèvre 1989, 20f.; Strazzulla 1990, 34–38; Strazzulla 1991, 242.

reliefs have not been attributed to the temple of Apollo anymore, but rather to a late Republican *domus* underneath, as updated stratigraphic research by Carandini and Bruno has proved. Consequently, the images cannot be related to the battle of Actium, for they had been made when the battle had not yet taken place<sup>24</sup>. Unfortunately, the old interpretation now can be found in any compendium, and some scholars even try to argue against stratigraphy<sup>25</sup>.

## New methods of image studies: Different agents

The traditional methods for understanding the images on Campana reliefs come to an impasse. Therefore, I wish to apply some new ideas. My approach towards the reliefs is influenced by recent studies concerning images within their contexts, such as mosaics, wall paintings, or architectural sculpture<sup>26</sup>. What I find most helpful for understanding the images is a model in which three agents have influence on the images: the producers, who follow distinct artistic traditions; the clients, who want the images to suit their demands; and the viewers, who in the end see, receive and understand all this. I was most inspired by Dominik Maschek's approach to analyzing marble slabs with tendrils and the reciprocal influences the different agents have on it<sup>27</sup>.

These three groups influence each other, because the images are adjusted either to the mode of viewing in different contexts, to the meaning, or to the artistic tradition.

Distributing the questions and opinions on Campana reliefs according to this model, we notice that they only touch the role of the producers and clients: so I will use this model modified as following (fig. 3).

In my brief summary, some contradictions become apparent. On the one hand, Campana reliefs are valued as having low artistic quality, on the other hand, as depicting unique scenes. On the one hand, they display the average taste, on the other hand, the imperial imagery. It is easy to hide all these contradictions when only discussing a small selection of reliefs. Suitable examples are found for every opinion.

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24 Carandini – Bruno 2008, XII–XIII. 37. 45; La Rocca 2008, 230f.; Coarelli 2012, 365–367; Mar – Pensabene 2015, 34–37; Pensabene 2017, 118f.; Sporleder 2017, 28–30.

25 Hallett 2018, 181–185.

26 For example: Muth 1998; Lorenz 2008; Haug 2020.

27 Maschek 2010, 80–87.

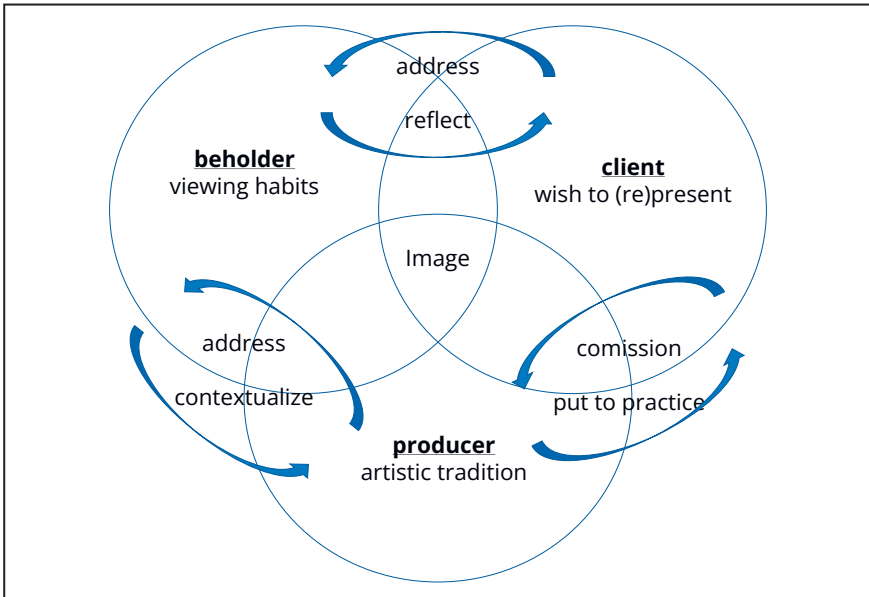


Fig. 3: Scheme of the interaction between clients, producers and beholders  
R. Sporleder

So, my aim is to give, above all, a general overview, dispel any contradictions, and most importantly, focus on the influence of the viewer. How were reliefs perceived and received, and how was this taken into account when creating the images?

### Production and contexts: Serial friezes in villas and sanctuaries

Trying to answer these questions, we are confronted with a severe problem: Campana reliefs have never been found *in situ* in their primary context so far – at roof edges or walls. Both ways of fixing and arranging them are possible and seem to have been common practice<sup>28</sup>. What is clear, however, is that the plaques were arranged in friezes in which one or more images were repeated. So far, scholars have usually considered the reliefs as single pieces of art – what will change if we consider the reliefs as part of a repeated

28 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 46<sup>\*</sup>; Borbein 1968, 14–17; Bøggild Johannsen 2008, 26; Känel 2010, 267 f. fig. 9; Siebert 2011, 24 f.; Tortorella 2018, 198 f. fig. 1; 203 f.; Känel 2024.



Fig. 4: Satyrs harvesting and pressing grapes. Reliefs from the villa of C. Voconius Pollio. Rome, Palazzo Colonna. Carinci et al. 1990, 74 fig. 11

frieze? This question is crucial, for friezes are the context in which the ancient beholder saw, received, and perceived them.

For the most part, Roman villas – aside from sanctuaries – give evidence that supports this assumption. The reliefs found in the peristyle of a Villa in Marino located within the Alban Hills near Rome<sup>29</sup> depict (among other scenes) satyrs harvesting and pressing wine (fig. 4)<sup>30</sup>. Usually, their repetition is explained with their mold-made production: for a room – presumably the peristyle –, two matrices are needed from which the dozens of reliefs derive. Again, we can trace the prejudice that terracotta products should be cheap. If the patron would have spent more money, there would be a greater variety of images. Or even better: marble reliefs (see p. 221)! The common modern idea is that this was done to keep decoration simple and cheap within a context. Some scholars even consider mass production as possible to meet economical requirements.

What we can actually understand from this kind of economical production is that the same image types appear in more than one context. Harvesting and pressing grapes for wine are among the most preferred images. But as I analyzed different find spots and reliefs in museum collections, I noticed that

29 Rizzo 1976–77, 7; Neudecker 1988, 168; Aglietti – Rose 2008, 83–87; Aglietti 2012, 144.

30 Four reliefs of harvesting wine ('Weinlese'), one of them Rome, MNR 4375 and three Rome, Palazzo Colonna: Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 14\*.17\*. 30\*. 41\*. 52\*. 61 fig. 116; Rizzo 1976–77, 12 no. 3 with note 34a; Carinci et al. 1990, 74–75 nos. 11a. 11c. 92 no. 36b; Rauch 1999, cat. nos. 467. 469–471; Bøggild Johannsen 2008, 24. – Eight reliefs of pressing wine ('Kelterung'); five of them Rome, Palazzo Colonna and three said to be sold to America (probably USA): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 14\*.17\*. 30\*. 41\*. 52\*. 66 fig. 130; Rizzo 1976–77, 12 no. 4 with note 35a; Carinci et al. 1990, 74 f. nos. 11b. 11d; 92 nos. 36a. 36c–d; Rauch 1999, cat. nos. 654–661; Bøggild Johannsen 2008, 24.

there are no reliefs from the same mold in different contexts. Minor but crucial details are usually altered which leads to the conclusion that the molds were newly made after a common example that may be physical or idealized. The reliefs themselves prove that they were not mechanically reproduced. Differences are noticeable, for example, in the depictions of a striding satyr from the Villa at Marino and the Palatine whose cloak is designed differently, and the distances between the figure and the edge of the plaque vary<sup>31</sup>.

In other words: for each building project new matrices were made. We can see that they are so similar that they were probably made at the same workshop. But they do not derive from a mechanical and ‘thoughtless’ reproduction – as Borbein calls it<sup>32</sup>. The major differences between the reliefs cannot be explained within such a mechanical process: apparently, the molds are more than overworked. In contrast to the general assumption, I am convinced that the reliefs were not mass-produced, but serially produced. The potential to lower costs that modern economists might argue for was not the goal. Besides, their contexts, luxurious Roman villas and representative sanctuaries, would not have been fitting for these low-cost associations.

### Images in repetition: In search of the viewer

Hence, we have to find other explanations for their repetition than a desire to save money. What if repetition was actually considered something positive?

In order to do so, we have to change our perspective from the producers to the viewers. It is they who are confronted with this repetition – so what kind of friezes did they see? Reconstructing the viewer is laborious and time-consuming. This is due to the actions of the Romans themselves, for they ‘reused’ Campana reliefs once they ran out of fashion. If they were used, for example, as drain covers, at least the plaques are preserved, but usually they were smashed to pieces and used as levelling and building material.

Imagining the reliefs as friezes is difficult because it does not meet our expectations – mostly, this is due to modern collectors and museum curators.

31 Rome, MNR 11110: Rizzo 1976–77, 13 fig. 7; Rauch 1999, cat. no. 761. From the same mold (and thus from Marino) are two fragments in Dresden, Skulpturensammlung ZV 761.110 and ZV 761.111: Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 67 fig. 134; Rauch 1999, cat. nos. 753f.

32 Borbein 1968, 33: “Die einzelnen Typen wurden in der Regel in ihrer Grundform nur einmal geprägt und dann je nach Bedarf reproduziert. [...] da man stets dieselben Typen gedankenlos und mechanisch wiederholt, läßt die Sorgfalt in der Ausführung der Details nach.”

If ten reliefs were found in a construction site in modern Rome, they are probably on display in ten museums today<sup>33</sup>. Modern scholars were not interested in replicas and duplicates<sup>34</sup>. They treated the images as single pieces of art, and this affects how we usually think about the tradition from which certain motifs derive, or the story to which the images are related. We think about the buildings on which the images were displayed, and the function they had – but not about what their repetition does to the images.

How does one reconstruct friezes that are separated today? This is sometimes possible because of their so-called “Werkgruppe” – a term Marion Rauch introduced in her dissertation in 1999, and that may be translated as ‘work group’ or ‘factory group’<sup>35</sup>. We can attribute reliefs to the same work group if they have the same measurements and – most importantly – the same ornamental strips. At the upper and sometimes lower edge, there are a large variety of rows of palmettes, egg-and-darts, ram head, gorgoneia etc., so the material can be divided into smaller and larger groups. We can be sure that this approach is correct because there are find spots such as the villa at Marino (fig. 4) or the Palatine Hill where exact ‘copies’ that come from the same mold have been found.

This method had not yet been undertaken systematically. Since 1911, when Hermann von Rohden und Hermann Winnefeld published their substantial catalogue of images on Campana reliefs, an order according to the

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33 An impressive example are the reliefs with palaestra (‘Hallen der Palästra’) that were found in 1902 in the horti Sualustiani in Rome, see Sporleder in preparation; Sporleder 2024: previous lists (none of them complete): Hartwig 1903, 16; Hartwig 1904, 209; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 145. 147–149 fig. 274. pls. 82. 83; Ritter 1995, 217f. with note 698; Perry 1997, 43; Reinhardt 2016, 251 with note 55. – A complete set was acquired by Edward Perry Warren, now in Boston, Museum of Fine Arts: *typus Winner*: Boston, MFA 03.882 <<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/181414>> (05/09/2024): Hartwig 1903, 16 fig. 11; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 148f. fig. 274; Bendinelli 1956, 563–567 fig. 2; Bacchetta 2006, 102. pl. III 1. – *Typus Hermes*: Boston, MFA 03.885 <<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/181408>> (05/09/2024): Hartwig 1903, pl. III; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 147; Bendinelli 1956, 563–567 fig. 3; Vermeule 1967, 179–181 fig. 5; Herrmann – Kondoleon 2004, 141f. (with figure). 183 cat. no. 96. – *Typus Herakles*: Boston, MFA 03.883 <<https://collections.mfa.org/objects/181410>> (05/09/2024): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 145; Chase 1950, 166 fig. 225 right; Bendinelli 1956, 563–567. fig. 2; Vermeule 1967, 180. 182 fig. 7; Chase et al. 1972, 234f. 273 fig. 276b; Vermeule 1977, 29. 40 no. 5. fig. 19; Herrmann – Kondoleon 2004, 140 (with figure). 142. 183 cat. no. 97; Herrmann 2016, 12 fig. 11.

34 Sporleder in preparation, esp. on the Sermoneta collection that was acquired in 1842.

35 Rauch 1999, 119. 124–134; previously: Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 31\*–42\*; Borbein 1968, 32f.



images' content was common: namely the mythological sphere, the real world, and decorative images<sup>36</sup>. Unfortunately, this division does not exactly match the friezes themselves. Broadly speaking, we usually find similar compositions within friezes, an aesthetic category, in other words, while similarities with regard to content were not determinative, they can often be found.

## New categories according to the images' compositions

In the following section, I point out some new categories, and find new explanations for the intention behind certain friezes.

One distinct group is composed of compositions with three or more figures. These images usually appear in pairs of counterparts with a strong connection in terms of content and topic, so we might assume they were designed together (even if sometimes used isolated from each other). For example, there are Dionysian rituals and scenes (fig. 5)<sup>37</sup>. Furthermore, two images of races at the circus can be understood as complementary because they show winning a race and an accident, in other words good luck and bad luck, success and failure<sup>38</sup>. Aside from these rather generic scenes, some images are inspired by the Odyssey, namely the return of Odysseus whose feet are washed by his nurse while Penelope is sitting in grief on a chair<sup>39</sup>. As described later (see p. 244), these two images together offer more of an interpretation and meaning than mere complementary elements of a story – they offer a link to the patron and matron in whose house they might have been displayed.

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36 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, IX–X.

37 Dionysian initiation ('Bacchische Weihe'): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 56–58; He-dinger 1987, 73 f. 84; Rauch 1999, 94–97. cat. nos. 404–448. – Adornment of a herm ('Hermenschmückung'): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 50–52; Rauch 1999, 90–94. cat. nos. 367–403. – Dionysian sacrifice ('Bacchisches Opfer'): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 54–56; Rauch 1999, 86–90. cat. nos. 315–366. – Unveiling of the phallus ('Ent-hüllung des Phallos'): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 52–54; Rauch 1999, 83–86. cat. nos. 265–314.

38 Horse race with quadriga ('Wettfahrt von Viergespann'): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 136 f.; Tortorella 1981, 74 with note 79; Perry 1997, 46; Braitto 2016, 467–470; Grosser 2021, 27–29. 183–185 cat. nos. Cp1–Cp14. – Race accident ('Unfall beim Wagenrennen'): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 137 f. 281 f. pl. 84; Tortorella 1981, 75 with note 87; Braitto 2016, 471–473; Grosser 2021, 27–29. 185–187 cat. nos. Cp15–Cp23.

39 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 109–111; Stilp 2005.



Fig. 5: Unveiling of the Phallus. Paris, Louvre Cp 4052.

© 2009 Musée du Louvre/Anne Chauvet

<<https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/cl010288174>> (05/09/2024)

Compositions with two figures in movement can largely be summarized as representations of heroes in combat, such as Theseus, Hercules or Jason, or Greeks in combat with Amazons. The main subject is *virtus* and strength in different constellations. For both Hercules and Theseus, a cycle of three images has been attested: Hercules fighting the Nemean Lion, the Hydra or the Bull<sup>40</sup>; and Theseus fighting Skiron, arriving at Athens, and saying goodbye to Ariadne<sup>41</sup>. Nevertheless, other constellations and arrangements are possible, so that these images are unlikely to have been designed to only appear

40 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 93–96; Borbein 1968, 161–175; Ritter 1995, 166–168. pl. 11, 4; Möller-Titel 2019, 49–69.

41 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 99–104; Strazzulla 1999, 566–576; Möller-Titel 2019, 206–265. – Reliefs of all three types were found near San Giovanni dei Fiorentini in Rome: Rutgers 1863, 459. Three of the reliefs were acquired by Heinrich Brunn for the Berlin museums, Antikensammlung TC 5888–TC 5890. Ariadne (TC 5888, in Russia since WW II): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 103. 293. pl. 110, 1; Möller-Titel 2019, cat. no. 208. – Skiron (TC 5889): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 100. 293. pl. 110, 2; Möller-Titel 2019, cat. no. 156. – Aegeus (TC 5890): Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 101. 293; Möller-Titel 2019, cat. no. 173



Fig. 6 a–f: Reliefs from Cosa. Different scenes such as Apollo and Hercules with the tripod, Apollo and winged Nike, Perseus with Athena and Gorgoneion, Dionysus with different satyrs, maenads etc. American Academy in Rome, Photographic Archive (AAR\_COSA\_1951\_23, \_25, \_31, \_33, \_36 and AAR\_COSAIII\_CPL\_23)

together with specific other scenes. Theseus was also shown fighting the Bull<sup>42</sup>, or connected with a mysterious image called the bird oracle<sup>43</sup>. I would call this potential to arrange the images within a set, or variety of different likely images as a ‘type case’ (“Setzkasten”).

This is also true for compositions with two figures statically placed next to each other. An exemplary context for such images is the temple of the arx in Cosa in Etruria that was renovated under Augustus<sup>44</sup>. The plaques show gods, heroes and the Dionysian thiasus. We already saw how Apollo’s and Hercules’ struggle over the tripod was transformed from neo-Attic art, and the same happens to Perseus, Athena and the head of Medusa (fig. 6). There is no movement, the figures seem static, and even Perseus fails to avoid the gaze of the still-dangerous Gorgon as he does in other depictions<sup>45</sup>. While we can relate these two images to narrative myths, the other images are more or less random constellations of maenads, satyrs and Dionysus himself. There is hardly any story to tell about them – and so the whole context, the frieze, gives modern scholars quite a headache when trying to identify a program behind all these different images<sup>46</sup>. We have mythological characters whom we can clearly identify, but the narration is limited to them facing and meeting each other. Yet the content is mixed: heroic *negotium* does not seem to match with Dionysian *otium*.

This assumption is not only supported by the images themselves, but also by the find contexts. As listed in table 1, there is no standardized grouping of images. Sometimes, Apollo is connected with Perseus, sometimes with Dionysus. Just like in a ‘type case’, the repertoire holds different opportunities that are flexible.

How to interpret a frieze like this? First of all, the single image becomes part of a bigger picture. The vertical figures structure the horizontal line of the frieze; their differences offer some rhythm to this rather homogenous appearance from the first glance. On second glance though, the differences between the figures become more apparent, as with the case of the identification of Apollo and Hercules fighting among other figures, as they appear at the frieze from the Palatine hill. All in all, these two groups do not consist

42 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 104; Möller-Titel 2019, 188–205.

43 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 20 f.; Möller-Titel 2019, 231. cat. nos. 199–201.

44 Brown et al. 1960, 296–300; Borbein 1968, 19 with note 65; Rizzo 1976–77, 51–55; Strazzulla 1991, 245; Ritter 1995, 163 f.; Sporleder 2017, 39–42; Möller-Titel 2019, 28 f. 44.

45 See for example a metope from Selinunt, Palermo, Museo Nazionale Archeologico: Giuliani 1979, 15–22 cat. no. C1.

46 Ritter 1995, 163 f.; Möller-Titel 2019, 44.

Tab. 1: Chart with the different motifs from left to right and the find spots from top to bottom

	Athena and Perseus with the Gorgoneion	Apollo and Hercules at the Tripod	Woman striding aside from a Baitylos	Kitharode reliefs	Dionysus leaning on a Satyr and Maenad	Dionysus and Satyr with Amphora	Silen and Eros and Maenad	Dionysus Child in a swing	Bearded Dionysus and Maenad
Palatine	x	x	x						
Cosa	x	x		x		x	x		x
Gabii <sup>1</sup>	x				x				
Lavinium <sup>2</sup>	x				x	x			
Cumae <sup>3</sup>					x	x	x		
Ansedonia <sup>4</sup>				x		x			
Bassano del Grappa <sup>5</sup>				x					x
Rome, Columbarium in Villa Wolkonsky <sup>6</sup>					x				
Rome, between Porta Salaria and Pinciana <sup>7</sup>					x		x		
Scrofano near Veji <sup>8</sup>					x	x	x	x	

<sup>1</sup> Aubet 1980, 111–115; Dupré 1982, 154–158. pl. VI; Strazzulla 1993, 303–305; <sup>2</sup> Fenelli – Jaia 2007; <sup>3</sup> Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 13\*; Gabrici 1913; Pellino 2006, 9–17 cat. no. I.1–9; Nuzzo 2008; <sup>4</sup> Rendini 1995, 26 f. figs. 8, 9; Rauch 1999, cat. no. 76; <sup>5</sup> Strazzulla 1987, 94–98. 301–317; Rauch 1999, 119. cat. no. 129; <sup>6</sup> Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 15\*. 46\*; Rizzo 1976–77, 35 f.; <sup>7</sup> Seroux d'Agincourt 1814, 19–21. pl. VII 2. 3; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 39. 42; Borbein 1968, 35. pl. 4.3; Rizzo 1976–77, 36. 82 note 217; Micheli 1985–86, 223. 286 f. cat. nos. III 29a–b. figs. 78. 79; Rauch 1999, cat. nos. 105. 196; <sup>8</sup> de Caylus 1762, 200 f. pl. 1; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 37\*. 47\*.

of images that are similar in terms of content, but in terms of motifs and compositions. The mixture of both groups at the Palatine proves that the mythological story is not the primary focus of the images<sup>47</sup>. The intention was rather to create a seemingly homogenous frieze in that some images hold a deeper content that the viewer can discover.

All in all, in changing our perspective, we learn that the struggle over the tripod is not brought into a symmetrical composition because the artists could not do any better, but because it offers a surprise for the beholders. What other researchers would consider a helpless attempt to subordinate the narrative under a certain ‘decorative’ strategy, I consider as a good mode of playing with the viewers’ expectation – who would have expected such a scene in the frieze? This hidden story encourages the beholders to take a second look.

This is also true for the group of symmetrical compositions that include peopled scrolls, winged genii, composite creatures, cupids, garlands, flanked sacred objects, sphinxes, gorgoneia, people dressed in non-Greek manner etc. Rohden and Winnefeld list all these different images as ‘decorative’<sup>48</sup>. Their compositional simplicity is contrasted by the huge variety of motifs, objects and styles – for we find archaistic, classical or even Egyptian styles in this group alone. They are usually considered a main characteristic of all Campana reliefs, but in fact are limited to this group – just like tendrils that are absent in all other compositional groups. This huge variety of images overwhelms the beholder, and thus attracts and stimulates their attention.

Even though there are some more groups<sup>49</sup>, this brief selection demonstrates that there is always a different approach towards the balance between variation and repetition concerning content, motifs, and styles within the different friezes.

## Simplicity and second layers of meaning

As I suggested, this is due to the role of the ancient viewer. To my mind, the manner of viewing the reliefs has always been considered in the design of the images. In general, architectural sculpture was to be seen *en passant*,

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47 Compare Strazzulla 1990, 20 f.; Möller-Titel 2019, 32–34, 44 f. who deny that overall stylistic criteria are the primary reason for choosing certain compositions for any depiction of a myth.

48 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 161–238.

49 Sporleder 2023.

by a peripatetic beholder<sup>50</sup>. This bypassing perception leads to two characteristics: On the one hand, compositions are clear and open, so you can understand them at first glance. On the other hand, however, the images sometimes bear a second layer in terms of content, so you are invited to look twice – just as the hidden struggle between Apollo und Hercules in the midst of rather generic scenes.

How to simplify an image: The scene called ‘unveiling of the phallus’ offers a good example for an open layout: the ithyphallic satyr on the left is the reason why Aidos, the personification of modesty on the right, cannot bear him and seeks refuge (fig. 5; see note 37). But if we compare the scene with representations in other media, we notice that usually Aidos turns away from something laying in the basket or cloth that the kneeling figure next to her unveils<sup>51</sup>. This detail suits images that you would take under scrutiny, like a ring, but not an image on Campana reliefs. In order to clarify the situation, the artist decided to add the satyr<sup>52</sup>. On a gem stone, a different satyr is depicted who has nothing to do with Aidos’ flight – he carries a basket that underlines the Dionysian atmosphere rather than adding anything that would be helpful for understanding the image.

Yet there is also deceptive clarity. Returning to these two chariots, they apparently depict a horse race (fig. 7)<sup>53</sup>. Taking a closer look, however, you may recognize the apobats, sportsmen or warriors, jumping out of the car during the race – just as shown also on the Parthenon frieze. Taking an even closer look, you will recognize the woman in one of the cars. Therefore, this image resembles abduction scenes that are quite common. The bearded warrior is accompanied by a man – this constellation of abduction and sport does not seem to be taken from real life.

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50 Stähli 2022, 116 f.; similar: Haug 2020, 424–427; Tortorella 2018, 216. On the relation between ornament and figure: Haug 2020, 415–422; Hölscher 2018, esp. 39. 42.

51 Paris, BNF *camée.63* <<http://medaillesetantiques.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/c33gb1csc5>> (05/09/2024): Rauch 1999, 85 with note 619e; Turcan 2003, 132 f. no. 43a. fig. 99.

52 Compare Rauch 1999, 85 f. who considers the adding of the satyr a helpless attempt to put an image that was designed for a squarish image onto a rectangular relief plaque.

53 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 117–120; Borbein 1968, 137–141. See for example the reliefs in New York, MET 26.30.31 <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/252498>> (05/09/2024) and 26.30.32 <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/252499>> (05/09/2024); Richter 1926, 283 f. figs. 3, 4; Borbein 1968, 137 f. pl. 23, 1. 2; Zanker 2020, 123–126 cat. no. 40.



Fig. 7a–b: Race between Pelops (left) and Oenomaus (right). New York, Metropolitan Museum. Fletcher Fund, 1926. 26.60.31 and 26.60.32  
 Museum <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/252498>> and  
 <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/252499>> (05/09/2024)

It must be a myth, and only the race between Pelops and Oenomaus for the hand of his daughter Hippodamia seems the appropriate interpretation of this scene<sup>54</sup>. Pelops bribed the driver Myrtilus who manipulated Oenomaus' car so that he died. Again, the dramatic end is not illustrated in the image, and the beholder has to know it by heart.

The subject as such is not uncommon, but its depiction is unique. Usually, artists like to focus on the brutal end of the race – Oenomaus' car crash on Etruscan urns<sup>55</sup>. Ancient written sources like Apollonius' description of Jason's cloak also focus on this aspect:

And therein were fashioned two chariots, racing, and the one in front Pelops was guiding, as he shook the reins, and with him was Hippodameia at his side, and in pursuit Myrtilus urged his steeds, and with him Oenomaus had grasped his couchèd spear, but fell as the axle swerved and broke in the nave, while he was eager to pierce the back of Pelops<sup>56</sup>.

Again, within the images on Campana reliefs, there is no tension at first glance. Only the second gaze reveals the myth behind the image. All in all, these images are a good example of an image that seems clear at first glance,

54 Kekulé von Stradonitz 1905, esp. 6–8. 18; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 120; Borbein 1968, 128–131.

55 Berlin, Antikensammlung Sk 1275 <[arachne.dainst.org/entity/1188426](http://arachne.dainst.org/entity/1188426)> (05/09/2024); Hoffer 2010, 63 f. fig. 5.8.

56 Apoll. Rhod. I, 752–758. Translated by R. C. Seaton



but a second gaze offers a more complex content. This possibility is neither hazardous nor a thoughtless subordination of the content under the symmetrical composition. On the contrary, the artist succeeds at creating a multi layered image. To my mind, it is crucial that the image also works just at first glance: then it is just a random horse race, the chariots are repeated constantly, and focusing on just one image seems difficult.

Only the display of both scenes allows an interpretation as Pelops and Oenomaus. The images alone might be labeled as apobats or an abduction. Thus, it is not surprising that the car with Oenomaus and Myrtilos was also interpreted as another couple, namely Paris and Helen<sup>57</sup>. In any case, uncovering the layers of meaning is just an invitation to look twice. The producers did not primarily seek to display a certain myth with all its facets.

### For the viewer: Invitation to look twice

In more general terms, these images are at the border between narrative and descriptive images, as described by Luca Giuliani<sup>58</sup>. The ‘problem’ is that we can unveil a specific myth with hardly any narrative elements – though these are the core of Giuliani’s mythological images<sup>59</sup>. Borbein concludes:

The Greek type loses its primary context/meaning connection and is subordinated to a Roman schema of composition; in favor of the principle of symmetrical accordance (as in our case) the image relinquishes its logical consistency. The abstract idea becomes the link of artistic unity, not anymore the content of the myth<sup>60</sup>.

On the one hand, I can agree that the composition is apparent at first glance (primarily) and that there is an overall link between the images, but on the other hand, I have to disagree that the narrative is unnecessary. I would like to frame it differently: The coroplasts did not try to illustrate a specific myth,

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57 Refuse this interpretation: Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 120.

58 Giuliani 2003, 54–56. 229.

59 Giuliani 2003, 284 f.

60 Borbein 1968, 142: “[D]er griechische Typus wird aus seinem ursprünglichen Sinnzusammenhang gelöst und einem römischen Kompositionsschema untergeordnet; zugunsten des Prinzips der symmetrischen Entsprechung wird (wie in unserem Falle) auf die logische Folgerichtigkeit der Darstellung verzichtet. Es ist eine abstrakte Idee, die die künstlerische Einheit schafft, nicht mehr der konkrete Inhalt des Mythos.”



Fig. 8: Theseus and Ariadne. Formerly Berlin, Antikensammlung TC 5888, since WW II in Russia.  
Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, pl. 110, 1

but they wanted to attract the viewers' attention by hiding a myth under a symmetrical composition. This is the crucial shift between the 'Greek models' and the Roman images on Campana reliefs. Ultimately, I disagree with Borbein's idea that this subordination and decorative character is the essence of Roman imagery. It is a specific characteristic of Campana reliefs.

I would consider the images that we have already seen from Cosa as counterparts for Pelops and Oenomaus. Although we can easily identify the mythological characters, there is hardly any story to tell about them. The hidden allusions to narrative scenes such as the tripod between Hercules and Apollo, or the gorgoneion between Perseus and Athena spice up the variety so that beholders are again invited to look twice. Again, this attitude forbids over-interpreting the images and their meaning.

Similarly inviting are the images depicting Theseus. While Hercules' duties are clear, Theseus is not only depicted slaying enemies. Yet they are stereotypical: a young hero stands in front of a whipping woman while his ship is ready for departure (fig. 8); a young hero kills a bearded and uncivilized enemy (fig. 9); a young hero sits on a throne and someone kneels before



Fig. 9: Theseus and Skiron. Berlin, Antikensammlung TC 5889.  
 Berlin, Antikensammlung of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. Photo: Johannes  
 Kramer

him. Only when taking a closer look do these images gain some precision, because they are unusual illustrations of their subjects. We might call this an alienation.

The depiction of Theseus' return to Athens and Aegeus' attempt to kill him is unique (fig. 1). It resembles the well-established iconography for Priam begging Achilles for Hector's corpse, as one of the contemporary Hoby cups shows<sup>61</sup>. It is a clear allusion, but the roles are inverted: the old man (Aegeus) is not begging, but trying to kill the young man (Theseus) here. Only when having a second look, will you understand that this common iconography has been altered, and enjoy the satisfaction of uncovering the image's meaning.

Though Theseus' farewell to Ariadne on the island Naxos is well known, again, here it is shown in an unusual manner. Usually, she is asleep while

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61 Copenhagen, DNM 10/20 <<https://samlinger.natmus.dk/DO/asset/4541>> (05/09/2024); Künzl 1988, 569–571 cat. no.397; Strazzulla 1999, 571f.; Möller-Titel 2019, 235–237.

Theseus leaves<sup>62</sup>. Showing Ariadne awake links Theseus' departure with Ariadne's grief. Theseus seems to hesitate. There are hardly any other images with Theseus stopping in thought – this highlights that he is torn between his personal luck and his responsibilities. Theseus is a male role model who chooses *negotium* in Roman terms<sup>63</sup>. But Ariadne, crying but awake, also seems to accept her destiny: she can restrain her feelings.

Therefore, on the one hand, the image is altered and attracts attention; on the other hand, the scene is generalized. For the iconography is not clear anymore, it could be any young hero deciding to leave behind his love and fulfill his god-given duties. It might also be Jason and Medea or Aeneas and Dido.

It becomes apparent that the images on Campana reliefs may illustrate Roman exempla by allusions to myths. We can see another such comparison in the written sources, in Apollonius' *Argonautica*, for example, in which Jason tries to convince Medea to follow him to Athens when referring to Theseus and Ariadne<sup>64</sup>. The Cretan princess also followed a stranger-hero whom she had helped. Of course, Jason does not mention that Ariadne was left at Naxos. What is interesting for us, however, is that for Apollonius, this comparison was so important that he gets into trouble with the relative dating of ancient myths: for Jason cannot know about Theseus and Ariadne yet – Theseus is a younger generation<sup>65</sup>. Apparently, the author wanted to offer an impressive comparison for Medea's story to his readers. Although the image on our Campana relief seems clear, it enables multiple references.

Returning to the cycle of three images, we must bear in mind that they do not stand alone but repeatedly. This circumstance is usually explained with their low production costs. But I would say it also attracts attention – imagine a whole frieze within our room. Wherever you look, you will see the reliefs. You cannot ignore them. They are omnipresent.

## By the producers: Repetition and meaning

Moreover, their constant repetition influences the images. The mythological images especially differ from representations of the same subjects in other

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62 Strazzulla 1999, 575 f. See for example a sarcophagus in New York, MET 90.12a, b <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/245585>> (05/09/2024).

63 Lorenz 2008, 98.

64 Apoll. Rhod. 3, 997–1001.

65 Dräger 2019, 504 f.



Fig. 10: Daedalus working on the wing for Icarus. Location unknown, found at Lake Nemi.

Ucelli 1950, 146 fig. 150

media because ‘fruitful moments’ are not shown. Theseus is still with Ariadne, he is still fighting against Skiron, and he is being offered the poisonous drink.

This phenomenon is not limited to Theseus. We notice the same concerning Daedalus and Icarus (fig. 10)<sup>66</sup>. While Icarus’ death is a common subject on wall paintings<sup>67</sup>, Campana reliefs do not allude to his tragic end. Daedalos is depicted working on the wings for his son, and Icarus is standing next to him waiting for his father to adjust the wings.

We might consider this as an invitation to look and consider his end on our own. But there is another reason: If Icarus died on one relief, it would be senseless to depict him dying again two plaques further down from this image. Campana reliefs seem to be unable to show completed actions. Their

66 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 113f.

67 Lorenz 2008, 241f.

tense is the progressive tense for the images repeat themselves continuously, and nothing arranges their order. It is unclear what image to look at first. So mythological images that demand narratives need to find new modes of presentation such as those that we have just discovered. The plot is subordinate to the rules of the medium Campana relief.

Comparing the image of Daedalus and Icarus in the workshop on Campana reliefs with *oscilla*, the situation in the workshop is the same, but there is a wider distance between the figures<sup>68</sup>. This seems appropriate to its context and parapictoriality (a term Adrian Stähli coins<sup>69</sup>), and thus in accordance with the viewers' behavior and expectations. The image is easier to understand at first glance. Until now, the producers had been considered lousy and thoughtless artisans. The opposite is true: they create images without forgetting those who will view them.

### For the commissioner: Roman exempla

Of course, these images do not attract attention for their own sake, but on behalf of the clients who have different intentions. In the case of the images showing Theseus, the merits they refer to are Theseus' strength when fighting Skiron; Theseus' sense of duty and selflessness when abandoning Ariadne; and finally, his superior descent that becomes apparent when recognized by his father. These mythological images function as exempla that the beholders associate with the family exhibiting them at home<sup>70</sup>.

Consequently, some images are modified in order to serve as true exempla. A wonderful example are Odysseus and Penelope who already are perfect role models for a fearless patron and a faithful and confident *matrona*. Yet the image is enriched by symbols that stress these aspects, such as the hound with Odysseus or the *kalathos* underneath Penelope's *klismos*. Though they are narrative objects within the story of Odysseus and Penelope – the dog

68 Bacchetta 2006, 263f; with examples from Persaro (Castelli-Baldassini collection): 505 cat. no. T 278. pl. 13, 4; and Pompeji (Casa della Fortuna, Naples, MANN 120325): 566 cat. no. R 34. pl. 52, 2. – Comparable marble reliefs: Rome, Villa Albani 164; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 113f.; Neudecker in: Bol 1992, 125–127 cat. no. 296. pl. 84; Froning 1981, 166 with note 48 notes that the wings are probably restored wrong – Icarus was likely not to wear them on his bag yet.

69 Stähli 2022.

70 Compare Strazzulla 1982–83, 484–486; Pensabene – Gallochio 2017, 171; D'Alessio 2017, 349; Pensabene 2017, 122; Möller-Titel 2019, 301.

recognizes Odysseus, and Penelope creates a garment for his father-in-law – they most of all are gender specific attributes<sup>71</sup>.

In the Roman house, the image of Korybantes dancing around the infant Zeus (the Korybantes try to drown out the baby’s yelling so that Kronos cannot find him)<sup>72</sup> – in the Roman house, this image becomes an allusion to Roman birth rites. On the one hand, three men would knock on the threshold in order to expel evil demons<sup>73</sup>; on the other hand, the baby is put on the floor and picked up by the parents, probably the father, in order to performatively show that the baby is a legitimate descendant<sup>74</sup>. The image combines these two actions. Yet it is also possible that such images were shown in a sanctuary, and in this case, it refers to sacred practices such as dances<sup>75</sup>. Thus the context determines the image’s interpretation.

The topic is also displayed on other media such as candelabrum bases, coins or mirrors and thus holds an important place within the representation of the Roman upper class<sup>76</sup>. These images serve not only as a self-assurance of the Roman elite, but they also exhibit the elite’s merits to beholders.

## Conclusion

As we have seen, many aspects of Campana reliefs cannot be explained with one reason alone, but they are rooted in the interplay of producers, clients and beholders framing their parapictoriality. Campana reliefs prove to be a highly sophisticated genre – something rather unexpected, considering the broad neglect that modern scholars regard them with. They can be placed alongside many other objects that Romans decorated in late republican and early imperial time.

Nevertheless, the mythological images are unique. Unlike wall paintings, the images on Campana reliefs are not to be taken under close scrutiny by ancient beholders. There are no other mythological images that are presented to the beholders to be seen *en passant*. For example, mythological images on

71 Parisi Presicce 1996, 391; Stilp 2005, 371f.; Siebert 2011, 42.

72 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 8f.; Borbein 1968, 143–157.

73 Köves-Zulauf 1990, 1–11 refers to Varro ant. rer. div. 14 fr. 111.

74 Köves-Zulauf 1990, 1–11.

75 Habetzeder 2012, 31.

76 Habetzeder 2012, 29–33. See for example Grassinger 1991, 115–118. For example Paris, Louvre MA 442 <<https://collections.louvre.fr/en/ark:/53355/clo1o278007>> (05/09/2024); Grassinger 1991, 183–185 cat. no. 25 with fig. 16–21; Touchette 1995, 15f. 37–39. 44. 82 no. 49. pls. 33a–d; Habetzeder 2012, 24 fig. 20. 42 no. 1.

Roman wall paintings are much more highlighted first by their location in rooms where people spend a longer amount of time, perhaps while seated, and secondly by their placement in the center of a wall<sup>77</sup>. Despite the rather out of the way location of the reliefs, this disadvantage leads to a strong desire to attract the viewer's gaze.

In the end, we can dissolve the prejudices and contradictions that could not be resolved by previous research: The reliefs served the Roman elite as a mode of representation, and not the lower classes or the emperor himself. They only *appear* to be clear and easy, but attract the viewers' attention by unexpected hidden narratives, unusual iconography or connotations that depend on the reliefs' context. We have seen that some myths are hidden behind what appears to be a normal horse race, while other myths that seem familiar on first glance, turn out on closer inspection to be far more complex.

All in all, Campana reliefs are highly undervalued, and turn out to be highly sophisticated carriers of meaning in terms of their images, compositions, and meanings.

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77 Haug 2020, esp. 444–447. 545. Stähli 2022, 117 expects a “‘locked’ or ‘fixed’ gaze” for these images.



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Florian Sommer

## Theonomastik und Intertextualität in lateinischen Fluchtafeln

**Abstract** Magical language heavily relies on intertextual techniques to create new texts. This holds true for ancient curse tablets (*defixiones*) as well, even though as material objects they usually were meant to remain hidden from any kind of second gaze. Linguistically, however, curse tablets can be shown to be embedded in the intertextual frame of their genre. The present contribution aims at elucidating the complex interaction of *defixiones* with other texts in a twofold manner, focusing on theonyms, the appearance of which can be considered one of the hallmarks of the genre. First, it is shown how theonyms contribute to establishing the textual profile of curse tablets, thus creating intertextual ties between single texts via their common genre. Second, an in-depth analysis of a *defixio* from *Cambodunum* (Kempten) examines the relation of *defixiones* with material from literature and poetry and provides evidence for dependency of this text on literary sources.

### Ein zweiter Blick auf Fluchtafeln

Die antiken Fluchtafeln (*Defixiones*) sind als Objekte dem zweiten Blick in der Regel nicht zugänglich<sup>1</sup>. In ihrem Zweck angelegt ist die notwendige Verborgenheit. Von einer zur öffentlichen Zurschaustellung bestimmten Untergruppe dieser Texte abgesehen, wurden die mit Flüchen gegen unliebsame Gegner und Übeltäter beschrifteten Bleitafelchen an Orten wie Gräbern oder Quellen deponiert und damit den Augen Dritter entzogen. Mitunter wurde

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1 Für einen Überblick über die antiken magischen Praktiken und die Fluchtafeln vgl. Bailliot 2010 und Martin 2010. Die Texte sind unter ihrem kommunikativen Aspekt und ihrer sprachlichen Form untersucht und dargestellt bei Kropp 2008b.

der Schriftr ager und damit auch der Text sogar willentlich zerst ort, wobei diese Zerst rung Teil des Rituals war, innerhalb dessen die Texte den verbalen Akt darstellten, wie der selbstreferentielle Verweis auf die rituelle Zerst rung durch Feuerbehandlung und die Hinf lligkeit des Schriftr agers Blei auf einer Fluchtafel aus Mainz zeigen: *Sic illorum membra liquescant, quomodo hoc plumbum liquescit* „So m gen ihre Glieder sich verfl ssigen, wie dieses Blei sich verfl ssigt“. Eine Wiederverwendung war damit ausgeschlossen. Intertextuell gesehen kann man von kommunikativen Sackgassen sprechen.

Eine materielle Umnutzung scheint nur in Ausnahmef llen vorgekommen zu sein. Eine Defixio aus Augusta Emerita (dfx 2.3.1/1 = SDRW 120) eignete sich daf r durch das Material des Inschriftentr gers<sup>2</sup>: Anders als sonst handelt es sich hier n mlich um eine Marmortafel, die zur genannten Untergruppe der  ffentlich ausgestellten Fluchtexte geh rt haben wird. Die Wiederverwendung war in diesem konkreten Fall jedoch denkbar praktisch-profaner Natur: An einer Wand befestigt wurde die Tafel zum Wetzen von Messern verwendet<sup>3</sup>. Damit wurde sie auf ihre Gegenst ndlichkeit reduziert, ohne dass semiotische Faktoren bei der Neunutzung ber cksichtigt wurden. Intertextualit t kann also nicht als heuristische Kategorie zur Anwendung gebracht werden. Auf der anderen Seite geh ren Zitat und Wiederverwendung in neuem Kontext in der Antike zu den pr gnanten Merkmalen magischer Sprache, wie vor allem die Nutzung homerischer Verse und in geringerem Ma e derjenigen Vergils in Spr chen und Beschw rungen zeigt<sup>4</sup>. Zudem zeichnen sich die Fluchtafeln durch einen stark schematischen Textcharakter aus, weisen also eine ausgepr gte Musterhaftigkeit aus<sup>5</sup>. Das hei t, dass einer konkreten Instanzierung dieser Textsorte stets Merkmale eignen, die sie nicht nur als Vertreter der Gattung erkennbar machen, sondern  ber das

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2 Die antiken Fluchtafeln werden im Folgenden in der Regel unter der Nummer von S nchez Natal as 2022 (abgek rzt SDRW) und Kropp 2008a (abgek rzt dfx), sowie vereinzelt nach Audollent 1904 (abgek rzt DT) zitiert. F r die Mainzer Fluchtafeln gilt zudem die Referenznummer von Bl nsdorf 2012 (abgek rzt DTM).

3 S nchez Natal as 2022, 201.

4 Zur Bedeutung Homers in diesem Kontext siehe Collins 2008. F r Vergil ist dieses Ph nomen zwar weniger deutlich dokumentiert, aber zumindest der Vers Aen. 4, 129 (= 11, 1) wurde f r einen medizinischen Spruch reappropriert (Heim 1892, 502. 519f.). Angesichts der sp teren Legendenbildung um den Dichter (vgl. C ard 1978) ist dieser Befund auff llig.

5 Zum Begriff der Musterhaftigkeit von Texten vgl. Hausendorf und Kesselheim 2008, 171–185.

zugrundeliegende Muster stets auch mit anderen Defixiones in Beziehung stehen. Diese beiden Typen von Beziehungen sollen im Folgenden Gegenstand einer linguistischen Untersuchung lateinischer Fluchtafeln sein<sup>6</sup>. Die Analyse beschränkt sich auf ein für diese Beziehungen besonders wichtiges sprachliches Objekt: die Götternamen. Einerseits besitzen Namen generell inhärent ein beachtliches intertextuelles Potential, da mit ihnen Texte und Textwelten aufgerufen werden können, andererseits gehört das Theonym zu den prägnantesten und konstantesten – wenn auch nicht obligatorischen – Merkmalen der Textsorte Defixio, wodurch diese Namensklasse sich als Untersuchungsgegenstand vorrangig anbietet.

## Die Onomastik der Fluchtafeln

Die Fluchtafel kommt – von einigen Sonderfällen abgesehen – nicht ohne onomastische Elemente aus, was sich bereits aus der Diachronie der Textsorte ablesen lässt: Ihre embryonale Form besteht allein aus einem Namen. Dies ist stets der Name des Opfers, mithin ein Anthroponym. Ohne die Namensnennung droht der Fluch sein Opfer zu verfehlen und ins Leere zu laufen. Der Personennamen ist somit der pragmatische Anker der magischen Handlung, der den Zauber kanalisiert und das Ziel in der Menge möglicher Opfer identifiziert. Als knappster sprachlicher Ausdruck der Verfluchung macht sich der Zauber die linguistische Funktion des Eigennamens zunutze, die in der direkten Monoreferenz ohne Rekurs auf semantische Merkmale besteht. Ist der Name bekannt, so findet der Fluch sein Ziel kraft dieser unzweideutigen Identifizierung, sodass zusätzliche Informationen eigentlich redundant sind<sup>7</sup>. An der Grenze von Namen und appellativischer Identifizierung steht die Angabe der Verwandtschaftsverhältnisse. Hier wird zwar mit lexikalischem Material gearbeitet wie im Typus „X, Sohn des Y“, aber die Verwandtschaftsbezeichnungen liefern kaum zusätzliche semantische Merkmale, sondern sind allein relational, indem sie die Kindschaft konstatieren und sich über die Nennung des Vaters oder der Mutter eher gängigen

6 Eine Orientierung über das sprachwissenschaftliche Verständnis von Intertextualität vermitteln Fix 2000, Hausendorf und Kesselheim 2008, 197–201, sowie Adamzik 2016, 322–349.

7 Aus diesem Grund stellen die Fluchtafeln, die ein dem Flucher unbekanntes Opfer ins Visier nehmen, auch einen Sondertypus dar, der nicht ursprünglich sein kann, sondern eine Ausweitung der Geltungszone dieser magischen Operation darstellen.

Benennungskonventionen fügen als aus der Situation zusätzliche Hinweise zur eindeutigen Identifizierung beisteuern. Dass der Genannte Sohn oder Tochter ist, liefe in einer anderen als relationalen Auffassung schließlich auf eine Banalität hinaus und die Unterscheidung zwischen diesen beiden Optionen ist bereits durch den am Namen erkenntlichen Sexus gefallen. Das Wichtigste ist hier wieder ein Name, nämlich der des Elternteils. Eine rein onomastische Ausdrucksweise liegt dennoch nicht notwendigerweise vor. Denn wenn die Angabe des Vaters in schematischer Form durchaus als onomastische Ausdrucksweise, die den soziolinguistischen Usancen entspricht, gelten kann, so kann dies von der nicht selten zu beobachtenden Angabe der Filiation zur Mutter nicht gesagt werden. Die Ausdrucksweise tendiert hier zudem zum sententiellen Ausdruck, indem die relativische Formulierung mit *quem peperit/ὃν ἔτεκεν X* verwendet wird, die vor allem in den Fluchtafeln aus Nordafrika anzutreffen ist. Es dürfte kein Zufall sein, dass hier das Gebären explizit gemacht wird, denn so ist über die namentliche Nennung der Mutter das Opfer im Hinblick auf eine biologische Tatsache und nicht nur wie beim Vater gemäß sozialer und juristischer Gepflogenheiten onomastisch doppelt determiniert<sup>8</sup>. Als zusätzliche Absicherung können außerdem weitere Angaben, insbesondere zum Beruf des Betroffenen, gemacht werden. Streng genommen fällt eine derartige Erweiterung jedoch hinter die ursprüngliche Form zurück, die sich allein auf die Macht des Namens verlässt, sofern hier nicht zwischen verschiedenen Personen gleichen Namens unterschieden werden soll oder derartige Angaben andere Funktionen im Text erfüllen<sup>9</sup>. In den Fluchtafeln aus der Sphäre des Zirkus

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- 8 In der Forschung wurde die Nennung der Mutter viel beachtet, vgl. Kropp 2008b, 171–172 mit Literatur. Curbera 1999 sieht darin die Umfunktionierung einer ursprünglich ägyptischen Praxis zu Zwecken des Zaubers unter Rückgriff auf die Idee einer „magischen Inversion“. Von Šmiejová Kellová 2017 wurde die Hypothese vorgebracht, die matrilineare Identifizierung korreliere mit dem Aufkommen bzw. der Verbreitung der Verehrung von Muttergottheiten, jedoch ohne dies irgendwie mit Belegen zu untermauern. Der Befund des Magna-Mater-Heiligtums in Mainz widerspricht dieser Idee jedenfalls deutlich, denn in den hier deponierten Fluchtafeln ist die Angabe der Mutter gerade nicht anzutreffen. Der Vater des Verfluchten wird in DTM 21 angegeben: *Trutmo Florus, Clitmonis filius* (zu den Namen siehe Blänsdorf 2012, 155). DTM 6, 6–7 ist mit *Placida et Sacra, filia eius* natürlich kein Gegenbeispiel, da sowohl Mutter als auch Tochter Ziel des Fluchs sind.
- 9 Dennoch ist es im Vergleich zu anderen Textsorten beachtlich, wie wenig die Fluchtafeln auf semantisch fundierte Strategien der Identifizierung setzen und das Ziel nicht beschreiben. Auf Papyrus überlieferte privatrechtliche Dokumente hingegen geben oft physische Charakteristika der Vertragspartner an.

und der Gladiatorenspiele bilden diese Berufsangaben auch isotopische Ketten innerhalb des Gesamttextes und binden den Namensträger in diese ein, sind also als Verknüpfungshinweise aufzufassen. In anderen Fällen sind textimmanent keine Motivierungen festzustellen.

Aus dieser Skizze zur Funktion des Personennamens wird deutlich, dass gegenüber den Anthroponymen den Theonymen in den Fluchtafeln eine in doppeltem Sinne sekundäre Rolle zukommt. Anders als diese sind sie pragmatisch nicht unabdingbar und somit kein obligatorischer, textsortenkonstituierender Bestandteil der Fluchtafel. Aus historischer Perspektive treten sie erst in einem späteren Stadium der Entwicklung des Genres hinzu. Götter wirken in diesen Texten als Garanten der Effizienz des Fluches, sei es, dass sie aktiv an dessen Ausführung beteiligt werden, sei es, dass sie zwar um Begünstigung angegangen werden, ihre Unterstützung aber passiv bleibt. Ausgehend von dieser fundamentalen Rolle der göttlichen Mächte innerhalb der Textsorte kann innerhalb des Einzeltextes ein recht komplexes Verhältnis zwischen Flucher und Gott – bisweilen unter Hinzuziehung des Verfluchten – ausgehandelt werden. In mancher Hinsicht erinnert dieses Verhältnis an das des Gebets.

Bei der Integration des Empfängers in die Konstellation des Verfluchungstextes und somit der Nennung der Theonyme sind zwei grundsätzliche Strategien möglich. Zum einen in der direkten Hinwendung zur jeweiligen Gottheit, die den vokativischen Ausdruck nach sich zieht, und zum anderen in der Nennung des Theonyms in dem durch die jeweilige syntaktische Konstruktion geforderten Kasus, die meist eine im weiteren Sinne direktionale Relation kodiert. Von Amina Kropp wird die zweite Strategie offensichtlich als Verlagerung des Kommunikationsverhältnisses verstanden<sup>10</sup>, die den Zweck einer „Status- und Distanzmarkierung“ gegenüber der Gottheit verfolge und somit als Höflichkeitsverfahren zu werten wäre. Eine solche Interpretation muss jedoch mit dem Vorbehalt konfrontiert werden, dass die lateinische Sprache zumindest in der Anrede nur bedingt von Konstruktionen in der dritten Person Gebrauch macht<sup>11</sup>, weshalb in an sich weniger direkten Kommunikationssituationen wie im vorliegenden Fall derartige Verfahren noch weniger zu erwarten sind. Es liegt näher, dass diese doppelte Ausdrucksweise eine Parallele zur Gebets- und Hymnendiktion darstellt, die sich bekanntlich in der Dualität von „Du-Stil“ und „Er-Stil“ ausprägt<sup>12</sup>, denn die Fluchtafeln bedienen sich auch sonst beim formalen Inventar dieser Textsorten wie der

10 Kropp 2008b, 149.

11 Vgl. Svennung 1958, 19.

12 Norden 1923, 143–166.

Relativsatzkonstruktion bei insbesondere textinitialer Namensnennung, z. B. *Βαχαχυχ ...*, *qui es in Aegypto magnus daemon* „Βαχαχυχ, der du in Ägypten ein großer Dämon bist“ (dfx 11.1.1/25).

Ungeachtet der nur fakultativen Verwendung stellen die Theonyme auch für die Fluchtafel einen wichtigen Signalfaktor für ihre Bestimmung als Textsorte dar, wie bereits ihre prominente Stellung in den jeweiligen Texten nahelegt.

## Intertextualität

Die intertextuelle Ressource der Götternamen wird in den Fluchtafeln unterschiedlich ausgeschöpft. Quantitativ dominierend ist die im vorhergehenden Abschnitt angesprochene intertextuelle Erzeugung von Textsortenhaftigkeit, die sich auf zwei unterschiedlichen Ebenen abspielt. Zum einen auf der erwähnten abstrakten, insofern bereits der Mustercharakter der Erwähnung dazu beiträgt, der Fluchtafel ihre typische Form zu verleihen. Das Merkmal Theonym gehört zu dieser Textsorte wie auch die *defigo*- bzw. *καταδῶ*-Formel und auch nichtsprachliche Aspekte wie das Bleitäfelchen als Schriftträger. Je nachdem, wie der Adressant bzw. Verfasser – was es unter Umständen zu unterscheiden gilt – den Fluch konstruiert, werden Gottheiten dabei ange-redet oder erwähnt. Neben den aus dieser Alternative resultierenden fundamentalen Unterschieden hinsichtlich der kommunikativen Situation und der pragmatischen Einordnung des Textes bleibt das Auftreten des Theonyms als gemeinsamer Nenner, der die Musterhaftigkeit des Textes stärkt und damit die Zuweisung zur fraglichen Textsorte erleichtert. Es ist also die Onomas-tik an sich, die hierfür herangezogen wird, und nicht die jeweils dieser zu-grundeliegende kommunikative Funktion, die den Ausschlag gibt. Die Mus-terhaftigkeit der Namensnennung zeigt auf besondere Weise die Struktur von Beispiel 1<sup>13</sup>:

(1) Bona san(c)ta nomen pia nomen ... defigo | [Ro]danum ...

Gute heilige Namen, fromme Namen, ... ich binde Rodanus ...  
(Trier, 4.-5. Jh. n. Chr. [dfx 4.1.3/15 = SDRW 189, 1–2])

13 Vgl. Kropp 2008b, 56.



Diese Fluchtafel verrät gleichsam unfreiwillig ihre Intertextualität. Offensichtlich geht sie auf eine Vorlage zurück, die dem Anwender bei der Anrufung des Gottes – genauer: der Göttin, denn die bezeichnenden Adjektiva *bona*, *sancta* und *pia* sind Feminina (immer vorausgesetzt, man geht nicht von einer „magischen Inversion“ in grammatischen Fragen aus) – eine gewisse Wahlfreiheit überließ<sup>14</sup>, was von diesem, der die Vorlage für die Verfertigung der eigenen Fluchtafel abschrieb, aber nicht bemerkt wurde, so dass im so produzierten Derivatstext der Platzhalter *nomen* relikthhaft stehen blieb<sup>15</sup>.

Auf der Ebene der konkreten Ausprägung greift wieder das intertextuelle Potential des einzelnen Theonyms. Als Sonderfall davon sind Kopien zu nennen, wo also nicht nur über ein Theonym und eventuell weitere Signale Bezug hergestellt werden kann, sondern das Theonym Teil eines Textes ist, der als ganzer durch seine Identität mit anderen auf diese über eine Vorlage verweist. Dies ist der Fall der sogenannten Johns-Hopkins-Defixiones<sup>16</sup>, einer Gruppe von fünf stark beschädigten Fluchtafeln, die bis auf die zu verfluchenden Personen gleich gewesen sein müssen. Die Zusammengehörigkeit kommt auch in der Anrufung der gleichen Göttin (Proserpina) und einer spezifischen Phraseologie in der Wahl der Epitheta zum Ausdruck<sup>17</sup>.

Zwischen der Ebene der abstrakten Struktur und der der konkreten Nennung eines jeweiligen Namens kann die Auswahl der Theonyme angesiedelt

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14 Dieser Sachverhalt lädt zu Spekulationen über die Rolle des Anwenders und seiner Religiosität sowie die Verbreitung von Kenntnissen der Textsorte Fluchtafel ein. Einerseits lässt sich der Befund als möglicher Indikator für jeweils besondere Beziehungen der Flucher zu einzelnen Gottheiten oder Präferenzen lesen, andererseits kann er dahingehend verstanden werden, dass der Verfasser der Vorlage dem Endanwender die nötige Kompetenz bei der Selektion der Gottheit zutraute, d. h. Bewusstheit über die generell in Frage kommenden Götter und eventuell eine an den Spezifikationen der jeweiligen Anwendung ausgerichtete konkrete Wahl. Da später im Text von Diana die Rede ist, mag die Wahlmöglichkeit auf Beinamen dieser Göttin beschränkt gewesen sein.

15 Neben der Inkompetenz, den Vorlagencharakter des Prätexts hinsichtlich der Anrufung als solchen zu erkennen, käme auch Gleichgültigkeit gegenüber einer etwaigen korrekten Anrufung in Frage, denn der Prätext wird auch für die Nennung des Opfers eine referentielle Leerstelle gelassen haben und diese wurde in der Fluchtafel mit dem Namen des Ziels (*Rodanum*) adäquat gefüllt. Aber dadurch ist ein Versagen beim korrekten Übertragen im ersten Fall noch nicht ausgeschlossen. Dem Personennamen als unfehlbarem Indikator der Zielperson kommt wie oben dargelegt eine primäre Bedeutung für die korrekte Verfluchung zu, sodass diese Prominenz eine fehlerhafte Auslassung erschwert, wenn nicht verunmöglichlicht.

16 Zu diesen vgl. Sherwood Fox 1912.

17 Zu dieser siehe Ehmig 2015.

werden. Sowohl im Griechischen als auch im Lateinischen wird keinesfalls auf das gesamte theonomastische Reservoir zurückgegriffen<sup>18</sup>, sondern tendenziell werden nur bestimmte Götter genannt und angerufen<sup>19</sup>.

Bereits in einer der ältesten Verfluchungsszenen der antiken Literatur (Hom. Il. 9, 453–457) werden *Ζεύς τε καταχθόνιος καὶ ἐπαινή Περσεφόνη* (Il. 9, 457) erwähnt, wobei der erste theonymische Ausdruck hier für Hades steht. Es handelt sich mithin um die chthonischen Gottheiten par excellence, die aus dem Repertoire der antiken Fluchtradition nicht mehr verschwinden werden. Natürlich ist der Fluch an dieser Stelle ein rein mündlicher und entsprechend noch ohne Defixio samt damit verbundener Fachsprache (das verwendete Verbum ist *κατηράτο*). Auch die Erinyen werden explizit als Angerufene genannt: *στυγερὰς δ' ἐπέκλετ' Ἐρινύς* (Il. 9, 454). Doch im Gegensatz zu Hades und Persephone erfüllen die Erinyen hier eine an die Motivation dieses konkreten Fluchszenarios gebundene Funktion: Der Sohn hat auf Betreiben der Mutter mit dem Keksweib des Vaters geschlafen und dadurch an diesem und seinem Haus gefrevelt. Die Erinyen ahnden insbesondere Vergehen gegen die Heiligkeit von Haus und Familie, weshalb sie für die fluchende Herbeirufung in diesem Fall prädestiniert sind<sup>20</sup>. Aus der Stelle lässt sich also nicht ableiten, dass die Erinyen ursprünglich zur Kernbesetzung innerhalb der Fluchgötter gehörten und später aus dieser weitgehend verdrängt wurden (s. u.), denn das weitgehende Fehlen der Göttinnen in der späteren Tradition und insbesondere in den Fluchtafeln lässt sich durch ihren klar definierten Aufgabenbereich erklären: Verfluchungen von Verwandten oder andere Flüche in familiären Angelegenheiten sind alles andere als der Regelfall in den Defixiones. Auch in der allgemeineren Funktion gehören die Erinyen nicht zu den Göttern, deren Rolle innerhalb des Spektrums der Fluchtafel sich aus dieser ergeben würde. Sie sind Wächterinnen des institutionalisierten Fluches bei Überschreitung sozialer Grenznormen und als solche nur bedingt geeignet für die Beziehung in der Fluchtafel. Diese Analyse folgt der gängigen Auffassung, dass mit *Ἐρινύς* in I 454 die Göttinnen gemeint sind. Dagegen hat Sebastian Zerhoch für mehrere Belege in der frühen Dichtung eine ausschließliche Lesung des Substantivs

18 Für die oskischen Fluchtafeln ist die Materiallage wie so oft nicht ideal, wenn es um die Feststellung genereller Tendenzen geht (vgl. den onomastischen Index bei Murano 2013, 219–222, die allein *Keri* als gesichertes Theonym führt und drei weitere Einträge mit einem Fragezeichen versieht).

19 Anders Scheid 2017, 105.

20 Vgl. Griffin 1995, 129.

als Abstraktum vorgeschlagen<sup>21</sup>, wodurch sich die Frage nach der Rolle der Göttinnen für diese Homerstelle erübrigen würde. Allerdings gibt es Gründe, die man gegen diese Auffassung anführen kann. Die Behauptung, *κέλομαι* werde in der epischen Sprache nicht zur Bezeichnung der Anrufung einer Gottheit im Gebet verwendet, muss von Zerhoch gleich selbst auf menschliche Gebete eingeschränkt werden, denn in Hom. h. 2, 20–21 wird *κέλομαι* sehr wohl bei der Schilderung einer vergleichbaren Situation verwendet, nur dass es Persephone ist, die Zeus anruft<sup>22</sup>. Eine derartig feine semantische Differenzierung wirkt bereits auf den ersten Blick ausgesprochen gesucht und wird auch durch die spätere Literatur nicht bestätigt, in der die Tragödie das fragliche Verbum durchaus mit menschlichen Subjekten zeigt<sup>23</sup>.

Neben den chthonischen Göttern werden auch die Toten angerufen. Der gemeinsame Nenner ist mit dem Bezug zur Unterwelt offensichtlich. Linguistisch kommt es hingegen zu einer klaren Trennung der beiden Strategien, indem im ersten Fall onomastische Elemente eingesetzt werden, im zweiten hingegen Appellativa<sup>24</sup>.

Die namentliche Nennung von Göttern trägt also in zweierlei Hinsicht zur Herstellung von Musterhaftigkeit eines Textes bei, indem sie erstens eine charakteristische, wenn auch optionale Strategie der Ausformulierung eines Fluches ist, und indem zweitens die jeweilige Wahl des angerufenen oder auch nur genannten Gottes einen Beitrag für die Erkennbarkeit der Textsorte leisten kann, indem sie auf einen bestimmten Kreis von vorwiegend chthonischen Göttern beschränkt ist. Doch ist zu letzterem Punkt zu beachten, dass diese Vogelperspektive das breite Spektrum der lokalen Variation nicht einfängt. Das Ausmaß dieser Variation ist derart beträchtlich, dass sie die

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21 So Zerhoch 2015, was der Auffassung von Alfred Heubeck (1986) entgegengesetzt ist, der für alle archaischen Belege eine animat-agentivische Auffassung vertritt. Dort wo Heubeck von „Appellativum“ spricht, meint er nicht den Fluch als Abstraktum, sondern versteht *ἐρινύς* als eine Gattungsbezeichnung. Da das Substantiv aber auch Gruppenname sein kann, kommt man für diese Stufe der Diachronie gänzlich ohne das Appellativum aus.

22 *ιάχησε δ' ἄρ' ὄρθια φωνῆ | κεκλόμενη πατέρα Κρονίδην ὕπατον καὶ ἄριστον*. „Laut schrie sie auf und rief Vater Zeus, den höchsten und besten an“.

23 Der Chor singt bei Aischyl. Suppl. 40–41: *νῦν δ' ἐπικεκλωμένα Δῖον πόρτιν* „Nun Zeus' Kalb anrufend“; 590–591: *τίν' ἄν θεῶν ἐνδικωτέροισιν | κεκλοίμαν εὐλόγως ἐπ' ἔργοις*; „Welcher Gott gibt uns durch das, was er getan hat, mehr einen Anspruch, daß wir ihn mit Gebühr anrufen?“ (Wecklein 1902, 78); Soph. Oid. T. *πρώτᾳ σε κεκλόμενος, θύγατερ Διός* „Zuerst dich anrufend, Tochter des Zeus“.

24 Für einen Überblick über die Rolle der Toten in der antiken Magie, insbesondere in römischer Perspektive vgl. Jobbé-Duval 2000, 109–118.

Bedeutung des typischen Charakters der Gottheiten und mythischen Wesenheiten relativiert<sup>25</sup>.

Auch wenn man die quantitative Verzerrung der Beleglage, die durch die Dominanz von einzelnen Kultanlagen wie den Heiligtümern in Bath, Uley und Mainz in der archäologischen Dokumentation entsteht, in Rechnung stellt, bleiben Geographie und Lokalität ein Faktor, der die Bedeutung des einzelnen Theonyms als Signal generischer Intertextualität und als Kennzeichen von Textsortenzugehörigkeit in einem gewissen Grad reduziert, selbst wenn daneben eine großflächig gestreute Einzelpraxis mit einem höheren Grad an Homogenität gestanden haben mag. Doch leugnen lässt sich die Relevanz der typischen Merkmale des Theonyms nicht, denn demgegenüber stehen auffällige Absenzen bestimmter anderer Gottheiten.

Die textsortenkonstituierende und musterhafte Wirkung der Nennung von Götternamen ist fakultativ. Diese Fakultativität ergibt sich bereits aus der Geschichte der Textsorte, an deren Anfang der bloße Name des Opfers stand, wird aber darüber hinaus durch einen Blick auf geschlossene Überlieferungskontexte deutlich, in denen die direkte Vergleichbarkeit der Einzeltexte gewährleistet ist. Die Götternamen *Mater Magna* und *Atthis*, die hier (vgl. Tabelle 1) primär der Anrufung dienen, konkurrieren hier mit appellativer Referenz (d. h. *deus* und *dea*) oder der Anrede mittels pronominaler Formen. Diese beiden letzteren Strategien sind ebenso effizient, da der korrekte Bezug durch die Situativität der Texte gewährleistet wird, die durch den Rahmen des Rituals im Tempel gegeben ist. Der genaue Ablauf des Rituals und sein Ort im Heiligtum ist allerdings nicht bekannt. Detailliertere Kenntnis der Umstände wäre insbesondere im Hinblick auf die nicht monoreferenten sprachlichen Mittel interessant, da es situativ ausgeschlossen gewesen sein muss, dass Pronomina und *dea* auf Isis bezogen werden konnten, die offensichtlich mit der Fluchpraxis nichts zu schaffen hatte, aber doch auch im gleichen Heiligtum als Gottheit präsent war. Das Theonym ist jedenfalls als Element eines übergreifenden Systems von Anreden zu verstehen, das aber nicht zwingend in Anwendung gebracht werden muss, denn ein beträchtlicher Teil der Mainzer Fluchtafeln kommt ohne jegliche Anrede oder Verweise auf die Gottheiten aus. Man vergleiche die in Tabelle 1 dargestellte Verteilung im Heiligtum von Isis und *Mater Magna* in Mainz:

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25 Man vergleiche die tabellarische Übersicht für die römischen Westprovinzen bei Sánchez Natalías 2022, 516, auf die sich die folgenden Angaben beziehen, soweit nicht anders angegeben.

Tabelle 1: Götteranrede und Nennung in den Mainzer Fluchtafeln (nach Blänsdorf 2012)

Mater Magna	Att(h)is	„Du“/„Ihr“	<i>dii/deae</i>	keine
5	3	7	2	13

In einem Genre, das gemeinhin als standardfern gilt und sicherlich den Gebrauchstexten zuzurechnen ist, wird spezielle Intertextualität, wie sie insbesondere durch Anspielung und Zitat zum Ausdruck kommt, auf einen ersten Blick nicht unter die zu erwartenden Textualitätssignale zu rechnen sein. Es wurde jedoch bereits bemerkt, dass derartige Intertextualität auch in Fluchtafeln auftreten kann. Eine attische Defixio aus dem 2. bis 4. Jh. v. Chr. (DT 108) zeigt in der Phraseologie klar erkennbare Anleihen beim homerischen Epos – *μέγα κῦδος, Τάρταρον ἀερόεντα, δεσμοῖς ἀργαλείοις* –, die aus der sonst typischen Formulierungsweise des Fluchtextes hervorstechen und dadurch konkret auf ein literarisches Vorbild hinweisen.<sup>26</sup>

Im Lateinischen ist es die große Fluchtafel von der Via Ostiensis<sup>27</sup>, bei der die Forschung intertextuelles Potential festgestellt hat. Für die im vorliegenden Rahmen behandelte Problematik ist dieses Zeugnis besonders einschlägig, da es sich bei den fraglichen Intertextualitätshinweisen um die Namen mythischer Wesen und Gottheiten handelt. Diese werden zunächst zu Beginn des Textes in Listenform angerufen und kommen dann der Reihe nach im Text zwecks körperlicher und geistiger Schädigung der Verfluchten zum Einsatz:

(2) Dite Pater, Proserpina Dia, Canes Orcini, Ustores inferi, | Ossufragae, Larvae, Furiae, Maniae, Aves nocturnae, | Aves Harpyiae, Ortygiae, Virga, Ximaera, Geryones, | Siredonas, Circe, Gegantes, Spinx, vos precatur et | petit, rogat vos, numina deum inferum, qui | suprascripti estis.

Dispater, göttliche Proserpina, Hunde des Orcus, unterweltliche Brenner, Knochenbrecher, Larven, Furien, Manien, nächtliche Vögel, Ortygiae, Virga, Chimaira, Geryonen, Siredonen, Kirke, Giganten, Sphinx, euch bittet und fragt euch, Numina der unterweltlichen Götter, die ihr hier obenstehend aufgeführt seid.

(Rom, Via Ostiensis, 1. Jh. n. Chr. [SDRW 48, 1–6])

26 Zerhoch 2015, 315.

27 Vgl. Bevilacqua 2006–2007.

Diese Anrufung durchbricht bzw. übersteigt in zweierlei Hinsicht das Textmuster der Fluchtafel: Der Verfasser griff zum einen zwar textsortenkonform auf die Strategie der initialen Namensnennung der Gottheit zurück, aber durch die schiere Menge an Theonymen und Namen hebt sich der Text auch vom zugrunde liegenden Muster ab<sup>28</sup>. Diese Menge von 18 Namen ist so groß, dass sie durch den die Anrufung abschließenden Relativsatz *qui suprascripti estis* noch einmal subsummiert und eingegrenzt werden muss<sup>29</sup>. Zum zweiten geht der Text – aufgrund der Menge des rekrutierten infernalischen Personals zwangsläufig – über das in den Fluchtafeln sonst vertretene Pantheon bzw. Pandämonium hinaus, indem er in dieser Textsorte nicht oder nur selten auftretende mythische Figuren nennt. Wäre es bei einzelnen dieser Figuren noch im Bereich des zumindest bedingt Plausiblen, sie für Gestalten aus der Volksreligion zu erklären, so weist die Liste in ihrer Gesamtheit doch in eine andere Richtung. Einen konkreten Prätext hat man in der Beschreibung des Eingangs zur Unterwelt im sechsten Buch von Vergils Aeneis gesehen<sup>30</sup>, die in den Versen 285–289 ebenfalls eine Ansammlung von bedrohlichen Gestalten zeigt<sup>31</sup>. Die tatsächliche Überschneidung zwischen den beiden Gruppen ist nicht besonders groß und beschränkt sich auf Chimaera, Geryones (der bei Vergil ungenannt bleibt, aber durch die Beschreibung *forma tricornis umbrae* identifizierbar ist) und die Harpyien. Die Lokalisierung Geryons in der Unterwelt scheint geläufig gewesen zu sein, wie sich aus dem Vergleich mit Horaz *carm.* 2, 14, 8 schließen lässt. Die Harpyien sind zwar ihrerseits seit der Odyssee mit der Sphäre des Todes verbunden, da sie die Töchter des Pandareos fortraffen (*Od.* 20, 77–78), aber eigentliche Hadesbewohner sind sie nicht, wie daran ersichtlich ist, dass sie ihre Opfer bei den Erinyen,

28 Die Textsorte Fluchtafel ist ansonsten durchaus listenaffin, vor allem in meristischer Form, nutzt aber die Auflistung gerade nicht bei der Anrufung und Nennung von Göttern, was umso auffälliger ist, als diese Strategie in den magischen Papyri und somit einer anderen magischen Textsorte zu beobachten ist (vgl. Gordon 1999, 248–249). In SDRW 48 begegnet der für Fluchtafeln typische Listenmerismus von Körperteilen mit mäßig ausgeprägtem Umfang.

29 Dieser Relativsatz ist seinerseits wieder eine aus der Tradition der Textsorte Fluchtafel aufgegriffene Strategie, die mit neuer Funktion aktualisiert wird. Dient der ursprünglich aus dem Gebet stammende „Relativstil“ (Norden 1923) sonst der weiteren Charakterisierung der angerufenen Gottheit und ihrer Verherrlichung durch Explizierung ihrer Charakteristika, so liefert in diesem Text der Relativsatz keine zusätzlichen Informationen, die über ihn hinauswiesen, sondern der Text konstatiert gleichsam selbstreferentiell die Zusammenfassung der genannten göttlich-mythischen Wesenheiten als Liste.

30 Bevilacqua 2010, 79–80.

31 Vgl. hierzu Norden 1927, 214–216.

die wohl in der Unterwelt zu denken sind, geradezu abliefern<sup>32</sup>. Eine direkte Abhängigkeit der Fluchtafel von Vergil müsste darum nicht zwingend angenommen werden; das Auftreten der Harpyien in der Liste könnte auch über die Assoziation mit den übrigen geflügelten Dämonen erklärt werden. Die Chimaera als Wesen der Unterwelt ist hingegen erklärungsbedürftig. Aus der Liste der Fluchtafel lässt sie sich nicht erklären. Bei Vergil fällt auf, dass die Gestalten der Unterwelt sich durch physische Monstrosität auszeichnen, und insbesondere Mischwesen unter ihnen vertreten sind (Kentauren, Skyllen, Harpyien), sodass auch die Chimaera hier ihren Platz finden kann<sup>33</sup>. Die kumulative Evidenz spricht also durchaus dafür, dass Vergils Text als Quelle für die Erstellung der Liste herangezogen wurde bzw. das Epos dem Verfasser präsent war.

In Anbetracht der klaren Anzeichen von Bezugnahme auf literarische Prätexte in der Fluchtafel von der Via Ostiensis bleibt zu klären, ob es sich bei dieser um einen Sonderfall handelt, oder ob sich weitere Fälle für eine derart markante Heranziehung literarischer Prätexte zur Textgestaltung von Defixiones antreffen lassen, es also um eine verbreitete Vertextungsstrategie der Defixiones geht. Schließlich handelt es sich bei der fraglichen Fluchtafel auch in Hinsicht auf die strukturelle Durchgestaltung und Ausarbeitung sowie den Gesamtumfang nicht um einen Durchschnittsvertreter dieser Textsorte. Doch wie bereits bemerkt, ist das Phänomen der Einarbeitung von Material aus literarischen Quellen auch in anderen Fluchtafeln bemerkt worden, wenn auch in einem deutlich bescheidenerem Maßstab (s. o. zu DT 108). Im Folgenden soll aus dieser Perspektive eine weitere Fluchtafel untersucht werden, die sich von der soeben besprochenen dadurch unterscheidet, dass sie von der Textlänge her etwa im Mittelfeld des Corpus liegt und dass sie außerdem nicht aus Rom, sondern aus der Peripherie des Reiches stammt, wie so viele andere Defixiones auch. Es handelt sich um dfx 7.2/1 = SDRW 522 aus Kempten, die auf das 1. bis 2. Jh. n. Chr. datiert wird:

(3) Mutae Tacitae ut mutus sit | Quartus agitatus erret ut mus | fugiens aut  
avis adversus basyliscum | ut · e[i]us os mutu(m) sit Mutae | Mutae [d]irae

32 Eine solche Affinität zum Hades konnte allerdings schnell dazu führen, dass die Harpyien selbst in der Unterwelt landeten, so bei Pherekydes von Syros fr. 83 Schibli, wo sie zu Wächtern des Tartaros geworden sind.

33 Massenzio 1984, 766 vermutet für Vergil eine Versetzung der Chimaera über die Analogie einer lokalen Marginalität von Lykien bzw. Karien und Hades, was aber sehr konstruiert und abstrakt wirkt.

sint Mutae | · Tacitae sint Mutae [Qu]a[rt]us ut insaniat | | ut Eriniis rutus sit  
et | Quartus Orco ut Mutae | Tacitae ut Mut[ae s]int | ad portas aureas

Mutae Tacitae! Quartus soll stumm sein, er soll gehetzt umherirren wie eine fliehende Maus oder ein Vogel angesichts des Basilisken. Sein Mund soll stumm sein, o Mutae! Die Mutae sollen dirae sein, die Mutae sollen tacitae sein. Mutae! Quartus soll wahnsinnig werden. Quartus soll zu den Erinyen verstoßen sein (?) und zum Orkus. Die Mutae sollen tacitae sein, sie sollen mutae sein bei den goldenen Toren.

Die Frage nach möglichen intertextuellen Bezügen dieser Fluchtafel aus Rätien ist keineswegs neu, sondern zieht sich wie ein roter Faden durch die umfangreiche Sekundärliteratur, die dem Text zuteilgeworden ist, obwohl diese Frage meist nicht explizit als solche gestellt wird, und der Begriff für die Anfänge in jedem Fall *avant la lettre* zu verwenden wäre. Die Bezüge wurden weniger in der Sprache als in der dahinterliegenden Religionsgeschichte, d. h. nicht der Ebene des Textes, sondern der Welt der Sachen gesucht. Angestoßen wurden diese Kontextualisierungsbemühungen durch die prominente Nennung der in den bisher entdeckten Fluchtafeln abwesenden Göttin (Muta) Tacita, für welche ein Passus in Ovids *Fasti* die ergiebigste Quelle an Informationen darstellt (Ov. fast. 2, 571–584):

(4) ecce anus in mediis residens annosa puellis  
sacra facit Tacitae – vix tamen ipsa tacet –  
et digitis tria tura tribus sub limine ponit,  
qua brevis occultum mus sibi fecit iter;  
tunc cantata ligat cum fusco licia plumbo  
et septem nigras versat in ore fabas,  
quodque pice adstrinxit, quod acu transfixit aena,  
obsutum maenae torret in igne caput,  
vina quoque instillat, vini quodcumque relictum est,  
aut ipsa aut comites, plus tamen ipsa, bibit.  
.hostiles linguas inimicaque vinximus ora  
dicit discedens ebriaque exit anus. –  
protinus a nobis, quae sit dea Muta, requires:  
disce, per antiquos quae mihi nota senes.  
Iuppiter indomito Iuturnae captus amore  
multa tulit tanto non patienda deo.



Sieh, eine alte Frau sitzt inmitten von Mädchen und vollzieht ein Ritual für Tacita, aber selber schweigt sie kaum; und sie legt mit den Fingern drei Körner Weihrauch unter die Schwelle, wo sich eine Maus ihren verborgenen Weg gebahnt hat. Dann bindet sie verzauberte Fäden mit bleichem Blei und kaut in ihrem Munde sieben schwarze Bohnen. Und sie bestreicht den Kopf eines kleinen Fisches mit Pech, durchlöchert ihn mit einer Bronzenadel, näht ihn zu und brät ihn im Feuer. Auch Wein träufelt sie darauf, und was vom Wein übrigbleibt, trinkt entweder sie selbst oder die Mädchen; sie selbst allerdings trinkt den größeren Teil. „Böse Zungen und die Münder der Feinde haben wir gefesselt“, spricht die alte Frau beim Weggehen, und sie wankt betrunken fort. Nun wirst Du von mir wissen wollen, wer die *dea Muta* sei. Vernimm, was mir durch Greise aus vergangener Zeit bekannt ist: Iuppiter, ergriffen von ungezähmter Liebe zu Iuturna, musste manchen Schmerz ertragen, den ein großer Gott nicht tragen sollte.

(eigene Übersetzung unter Heranziehung derjenigen von Bömer)

Weitere Belege für diese Göttin bieten aus der Literatur der wohl von Ovid abhängige Laktanz (inst. 1, 20, 35)<sup>34</sup> und im Griechischen Plutarch, der die Göttin *Τάκιτα* erwähnt (Numa 8, 11). Beziehungen der Fluchtafel zu Laktanz sind durch die relative Chronologie der Texte ausgeschlossen, im Falle von Plutarch unwahrscheinlich<sup>35</sup>.

Der Tenor der bisherigen Forschung zur Beziehung zwischen den beiden Texten wurde bereits von R. Egger vorgegeben: „Der Magier von Cambodunum hat nicht von Ovid gelernt, sondern sein Wissen stammt aus der Volksreligion, wie das des Dichters bzw. seiner Vorgänger“<sup>36</sup>. In diesem Zusammenhang wurde auch auf eine weitere Fluchtafel verwiesen, in der man den Namen der Göttin als *Tagita* las. Eine beschriebene Bleitafel aus Siscia (heute Sisak), die aus dem 2. bis 3. Jh. n. Chr. stammt, zeichnet sich grundsätzlich durch eine gewisse Widerspenstigkeit gegenüber einer einfachen Lesung aus, die sich aus einer Mischung vulgärlateinischer Formen und orthographischen

34 *Quis cum audiat dem mutam tenere risum queat? Hanc esse dicunt ex qua sint Lares nati et ipsam Laram nominant vel Larundam. Quid praestare colenti potest quae loqui non potest?*

35 Die Darstellung der Einführung des Kultes der Tacita im Rahmen pythagorisierender Strömungen ist mit Ovid schwer in Einklang zu bringen (vgl. den Kommentar Manfredini und Piccirilli 1980, 305). Aber eine etymologische Ausdeutung bzw. Übersetzung des Namens begegnet auch hier.

36 Egger 1963, 250. Vgl. auch die trockenere, aber ebenso entschiedene Formulierung von Chapot und Laurot (2001, 350): „Ce document confirme l’existence d’une déesse Muta, qu’on connaissait jusqu’alors seulement grâce à Ovide“.

Schwierigkeiten ergibt. Die fragliche Partie lautet in der Erstedition, welche zum einen die soeben angesprochenen Probleme gut sichtbar macht, und zum anderen den Anstoß zur hier zu behandelnden religionswissenschaftlichen Fragestellung gegeben haben wird, folgendermaßen<sup>37</sup>:

(5) illor us mutu o fac | G. Domtius Ssecundo et. Lucius La(r)c(i)o Giba |  
 m(u)ta tagita ... | iloru  
 (AIJ 557 = dfx 8.1./1 = SDRW 529, 15–16)

Die Buchstabenfolge *m(u)ta tagita* wurde von Francisco Marco Simón und Isabel Rodà de Llanza, gefolgt von Guillermo Alvar Nuño als Name der fraglichen Göttin, d. h. *Muta Tacita* verstanden<sup>38</sup>. Die Schreibung des Theonyms mit <g> statt <c> für /k/ wird bei Francisco Marco Simón und Isabel Rodà de Llanza nicht thematisiert. Guillermo Alvar Nuño spricht diese hingegen ausdrücklich als graphische Kennzeichnung der Sonorisierung des stimmlosen Verschlusslautes an<sup>39</sup>. Dieser Lautwandel wäre auch überhaupt erst die Voraussetzung, von der die Annahme einer Nennung der fraglichen Göttin in der Fluchtafel auszugehen hat. Die einzige Alternative wäre ein rein orthographischer Lapsus, der aber nicht in die Fehlertypologie dieses Textes passt, die durch tatsächliche Tendenzen der gesprochenen Sprache zur fraglichen Zeit geprägt ist<sup>40</sup>. Doch gerade dieses essenzielle lautliche Detail stellt der Identifikation der Buchstabenfolge der pannonischen Fluchtafel mit dem Namen der Göttin ein beträchtliches Hindernis entgegen. Die Sonorisierung intervokalischer Verschlusslaute, wie sie sich in der Westromania durchgesetzt hat, wäre prinzipiell möglich, aber schon aus geographischer

37 Neben den Editionen der Textcorpora dfx und SDRW bieten Marco Simón – Rodà de Llanza 2008 und Barta 2019 den Text nach Autopsie, erstere auch eine Fotografie der Defixio. Der Text von Barta 2019 steht allerdings im Widerspruch zur Erklärung von Barta (2015, 110), der fragliche Abschnitt des Textteils sei heute unleserlich.

38 Vgl. Marco Simón (2010) und Marco Simón – Rodà de Llanza (2008), Alvar Nuño (2020). Es ist allerdings darauf hinzuweisen, dass *Muta Tacita* als appositionelle Fügung bei Ovid nicht belegt ist, und auch die Kemptener Fluchtafel zeigt diese nicht im Singular. *Muta Tacita* wäre also streng genommen ein singulärer Beleg dieser einen Fluchtafel, was zwar ein Detail ist, das aber als solches nicht unerwähnt bleiben sollte.

39 Alvar Nuño 2020, 160.

40 Man vergleiche Marco Simón – Rodà de Llanza 2008, 111 für eine Auflistung einiger dieser Merkmale.

Perspektive unerwartet<sup>41</sup>. Hinsichtlich der vulgärlateinischen Merkmale des epigraphischen Typs wäre sie zwar ebenfalls nicht außergewöhnlich, aber zumindest auffällig, denn dieser Lautwandel ist auf Fluchtafeln selten dokumentiert und zudem geolinguistisch konzentriert in Übereinstimmung mit der soeben genannten romanischen Entwicklung<sup>42</sup>. Nicht zuletzt zeigt die Fluchtafel ungeachtet der sonstigen standardfernen sprachlichen und orthographischen Merkmale keinen weiteren Fall einer Sonorisierung von /k/, sondern schreibt konsequent <c> (z. B. *Lvcivs* in Zeile zwei oder *faceri* in Zeile zehn). Als einziges potentiell Gegenbeispiel könnte man *giba* in Zeile 15 für *Cyba(lenses)* anführen, wie verschiedentlich vorgeschlagen<sup>43</sup>. Doch die Lesung muss epigraphisch als umstritten gelten, denn Francisco Marco Simón und Isabel Rodà de Llanza lesen *cvba* und auch SDRW gibt das Wort nicht mit <g> wieder<sup>44</sup>. Linguistisch gesehen handelte es sich ebenfalls nicht um einen im eigentlichen Sinne einschlägigen Beleg, da der Velar hier im Wortanlaut stünde. Der stimmhafte Verschlusslaut von *tagita* muss also als etymologisch sprachwirklich gelten. Vor diesem Hintergrund muss die Deutung des Textes mit einer Zeichenfolge arbeiten, die den Namen der Göttin ausschließt. Unabhängig von der hier geführten phonologischen Argumentation hat Markus Scholz eine solche Alternativdeutung vorgelegt<sup>45</sup>. Eine Anrufung der Göttin Tacita wird von ihm abgelehnt, weil sich der Verfasser der Fluchtafel an den Flussgott Savus wendet, und ein Wechsel der angerufenen Gottheit inmitten des Textes ungewöhnlich wäre. Stattdessen wird der Text als *mutat(a) agita bona il(l)orum* verstanden: „Betreibe, dass deren Güter verdorben werden!“ Diese Lesung hat den weiteren Vorteil, dass sie das auf die fragliche Stelle folgende Wortmaterial syntaktisch integrieren und somit sinnvoll deuten kann<sup>46</sup>. Der vermeintliche Beleg für den Namen der Göttin auf der pannonischen Fluchtafel ist also aus dem Dossier zu streichen und es lassen sich zwischen dieser und dem Text aus Kempten keine Beziehungen herstellen. Mithin stellt SDRW 529 auch kein Indiz dafür dar, dass die Göttin in der sublitterarischen Textsorte der Defixio eine Rolle spielte, die sich aus einer

41 „Der ganze romanische Balkan, sowie Mittel- und Süditalien kennen diese Sonorisierung nicht“ (Wartburg 1950, 32).

42 Siehe Kropp 2008b, 260.

43 So gelesen von AIJ 557, dfx 8.1./1 und Barta (2019, 572).

44 Marco Simón – Rodà de Llanza 2008.

45 Scholz 2011, 308–309. 315.

46 Die ältere Lesung durch Vetter (1958 bzw. 1960), der noch dfx 8.1./1, folgt, ließe ebenfalls keine Identifizierung des Theonyms zu, muss aber als epigraphisch überholt gelten

entsprechenden Relevanz im Kontext über die lateinischen Gebiete des Imperiums verbreiteter magischer Praktiken herleitete.

Ein weiteres Mal wurde das Theonym noch in SDRW 533, 9 (*muta et tacita*) ausgemacht. Doch nichts deutet hier auf onomastischen Status hin, der vielmehr erst aus dem Vergleich mit dem soeben behandelten Text hergeleitet wurde, sondern die Tatsache, dass die beiden Adjektive koordiniert erscheinen, widerspricht dem sogar. Auch wenn hier die syntaktische Eingliederung schwerfällt, so dürfte es sich vielmehr um eine Parallele zu der Fügung der beiden Adjektive *mutus* und *tacitus*, wie sie auch in SDRW 131 aus Celti (Peñaflor in Spanien) begegnet<sup>47</sup> (vgl. Stylow 2012) und auch für SDRW 534 vermutet werden darf, handeln. Im direkten Kontext erscheint kein Bezugswort: *muta et tacita | cuomodo manes muti et ta-| citi sum seic cui tibi ant-| epistulan atferent mut[i] | et taciti sin<t>* „muta et tacita wie die Manen stumm und schweigsam sind, so sollen die, welche Dir einen Gegenbrief bringen, stumm und schweigsam sein“. Allerdings werden die Gegner in Zeile zwei über *ea nomina* identifiziert, weshalb es im Bereich des Möglichen scheint, hier den elliptischen Ausdruck eines Wunsches zu sehen: die Namen der Verfluchten sollen stumm und schweigsam sein<sup>48</sup>. Das präsupponierte Bezugsnomen *nomina* muss dabei nicht einmal als *pars pro toto* für die Namensträger stehen, denn in SDWR 532, 6–7 erscheint *nomen* gerade mit *lingua* zusammen und tritt agentivisch auf: *Deceballi lingua et nomen ne pos-|sit adversus Oceanum facere*. Dass *nomina* stumm und schweigsam sein sollen, erscheint angesichts dieser Vergleichsstelle weniger abwegig, als es zunächst den Anschein haben könnte. Als grammatischer Kongruenzpartner wäre allenfalls noch die zu Beginn der Fluchtafel angerufene Göttin Heracura eine Option, doch fehlt hierfür die pragmatische Motivierung<sup>49</sup>. In dieser Fluchtafel wird es sich bei *muta et tacita* (sowie analog SDRW 131 und SDRW 534) also um eine Doppelformel handeln, wie sie in den Defixiones häufig zu beobachten sind: Man vergleiche z. B. dfx 1.4.4/3 = SDRW 2 aus Rom: *nec loqui nec sermonare potest*, das eine semantisch-pragmatisch gleichwertige Funktion besitzt.

Damit wird der Vergleich der Kemptener Fluchtafel mit der Passage in Ovids *Fasti* wieder auf sich selbst zurückgeworfen. Jeder Versuch der Klä-

47 Vgl. Stylow 2012.

48 Zum Typ der Wunschsätze in den Defixiones siehe Kropp 2008b, 152–153, wo explizit auch ein verbloses Beispiel verzeichnet ist. Für Verfluchung des Namens in Fluchtafeln siehe die Beispiele bei Bounegru – Németh 2013, 241.

49 Németh 2016 sieht *muta et tacita* als Apposition zu *manes* ohne sich über diese Auffassung genauer zu erklären.

zung der Frage, ob die Kemptener Fluchtafel mit der Nennung der Göttin von Ovid abhängig ist, oder ob Ovids Darstellung des Rituals in den *Fasti* aus einer Tradition schöpft, die in der fraglichen *Defixio* einen verwandten Vertreter hat, also ein Produkt der in diesem Fall von Ovid vorausgesetzten Textwelt ist – natürlich ohne dass damit das beschriebene Ritual darin einen direkten Reflex gefunden hätte –, muss also von diesen beiden Texten selbst ausgehen, vor allem dem der Fluchtafel.

Der Text der Fluchtafel ist zunächst durch eine repetitive Nutzung des Wortformenmaterials *mutae* (7mal) und *tacitae* (3mal) charakterisiert. Was zunächst wie monotone Wiederholung wirkt, lebt aber nicht nur von dem beschwörenden Gestus, der solcher Wiederholung eignet, sondern zeichnet sich auch durch ein Schillern zwischen anrufender Namensnennung und etymologischer Aktivierung der semantisch vollwertigen Adjektive der Namensbestandteile mit unterschiedlicher und teils nicht eindeutiger Syntax aus. Darüber hinaus wurde beobachtet, dass die *Defixio* bewusst schrift- und sprachmagische Praktiken zum Einsatz bringt. Einerseits begegnet das Anagramm *mutus* : *ut mus*<sup>50</sup>, andererseits findet sich mit *mutus* : *rutus* eine assoziative Assonanz<sup>51</sup>. Beide Strategien fokussieren auf das Adjektiv *mutus*, das den Fluchzweck der Tafel – der Gegner soll stumm sein – lexikalisch zum Ausdruck bringt. Als Echo auf *mutus* kann auch *rutus* gelten<sup>52</sup>. Quasi-indexikalische Verstärkung des zentralen Adjektiv des Textes bewirkt auch das als Anagramm lesbare *ut mus*<sup>53</sup>. Daneben greift der Text auf weitere aus der Tradition der *Defixiones* stammende Techniken zurück: *basylicum* ist doppelt verfremdet, einmal durch retrograden Schriftlauf, einmal durch das pseudo-gräzisierung Graphem ⟨y⟩. Mit all diesen Merkmalen gibt sich der Text aus Kempten als exemplarischer, bewusst komponierter Vertreter seiner Textsorte zu erkennen.

Auch einfache Fluchtafeln lassen oft eine rhetorische Schulung und ein entsprechendes Bildungsniveau des Verfassers durchscheinen<sup>54</sup>. Es handelt sich bei der Textsorte mitnichten um eine textuelle Parallelwelt, die von der literarisch-rhetorischen Tradition hermetisch abgeschottet gewesen wäre, auch wenn das Gros der *Defixiones* mit ihren simplen Strukturen, orthographischen Fehlern und Abweichungen vom sprachlichen Standard diesen Anschein zunächst durchaus aufkommen lassen kann. Die Fluchtafel aus

50 Vgl. Bettini 2006.

51 Vgl. Tupet 1976, 413.

52 So Tupet 1976, 413.

53 Siehe Tupet 1976, 413 und Bettini 2006, 165.

54 Vgl. Stylow 2012, 150–151 für ein Beispiel.

Kempton stellt aber auch vor diesem Hintergrund einen Sonderfall dar und ist in dieser Hinsicht der oben angesprochenen Defixio von der Via Ostiensis vergleichbar, denn die Dichte literarischer Parallelstellen, die sich zu diesem Text neben Ovid finden lassen, ist gerade in Anbetracht seiner Kürze beachtlich, und diese können potentiell dazu dienen, auch die Frage nach dem Verhältnis zu der Passage in den *Fasti* zu klären. Zunächst ist der Basilisk zu nennen. Das sagenumwobene Schlangwesen integriert sich aufgrund seiner magischen Kräfte in die Figuren- und Bilderwelt der Fluchtafel als Textsorte. Jedoch ist seine Nennung ein Spezifikum, das bisher ohne Parallele im Korpus der Defixiones ist (so Rudolf Egger)<sup>55</sup> und somit auch nicht als Textsortensignal gelten kann (anders als z.B. *Orco*). Die Erwähnungen des Wesens begegnen hauptsächlich in der zoologischen und weiteren naturkundlichen Literatur, die sich dem Verzeichnen von Merkwürdigkeiten widmet. In der Kemptener Fluchtafel wird der Basilisk aber nicht nur erwähnt, sondern erscheint in einer für die Verfluchung herangezogenen spezifischen Vergleichssituation: Quartus soll fliehen wie ein Vogel vor dem Basilisken. In dem genannten literarischen Makrogenre findet sich das Gegenüber von Vogel und Basilisk bei Solinus:

(6) denique extinguit herbas, necat arbores, ipsas corrumpit auras, ita ut in aëre nulla alitum inpune transvolet infectum spiritu pestilenti.

Zuletzt lässt er das Gras verwelken, tötet die Bäume ab und verdirbt die Lüfte selbst, so dass kein Vogel ohne Schaden vorbeifliegen kann in der Luft, die vom Pesthauch durchdrungen ist. (eigene Übersetzung)  
(Sol. 27, 51)

Zwar ist hier nicht von einer Fluchtbewegung die Rede, aber eine solche kann aus der dargestellten Eigenschaft des Basilisken entwickelt werden.

Selbst wenn der Verfasser der Fluchtafel sich nicht auf einen konkreten Text bezog, der dann auch von Solinus verarbeitet wurde<sup>56</sup>, so weist der Basilisk doch klar auf die Textsorte der naturkundlichen Literatur. In Anbetracht der Beleglage ist es schwer vorstellbar, dass der Verfasser der Fluchtafel für die fragliche Vorstellung auf eine volkstümliche Überlieferung zurückgriff. Und dass der Basilisk zum Repertoire bedrohlicher Gestalten in der Tradition

55 Egger 1963, 252.

56 Eine direkte Abhängigkeit von Solinus wird durch die relative Chronologie ausgeschlossen.

der Defixiones gehörte, kann bei seinem sonstigen Fehlen in dieser Textsorte mit einiger Sicherheit ausgeschlossen werden.

In eine vergleichbare Richtung, diesmal aber auf das historische Epos, weisen die „goldenen Tore“, auf deren literarische Bezüge bereits Rudolf Egger hingewiesen hat<sup>57</sup>. Eine derartige architektonische Ausstattung der Unterwelt fällt durch ihre konnotative Bedeutung ins Auge, denn an einem Ort der Finsternis erzeugt das Hochwertmetall und sein strahlender Glanz zunächst eine gewisse semantische Dissonanz, unabhängig davon, ob das Adjektiv nun das tatsächliche Material bezeichnet oder ein übertragenes Charakteristikum des Zugangs zur Unterwelt anzeigen soll. Eine bedingt vergleichbare Eigenschaft weisen jedoch bereits die von Hesiod *theog.* 811 genannten Tore (*πύλαι*) in der Unterwelt, die „funkelnd“ (*μαρμαραεαί*) genannt werden. Das Bindeglied zwischen diesem Lexem in der hesiodeischen Passage und dem Funkeln des Goldes stellt Homer *Il.* 13, 22 dar, wo der Palast des Poseidon entsprechend geschildert wird (*δῶματα χρύσεια [...] μαρμαιρόντα*). Die durch *μαρμαίρω* ausgedrückten Lichtreflexe evozieren aber nicht notwendigerweise dieses spezifische Metall, da es auch von Rüstungen und nicht-metallischen Dingen gebraucht werden kann (vgl. *LfgrE* s. v.). Die goldenen Unterweltstore der Kemptener Fluchtafel lassen sich also nicht auf allgemein gängige Vorstellungen zurückführen, auch wenn Ähnliches in der griechischen Epik angetroffen werden kann. Eine direkte Entsprechung bietet jedoch das Lateinische mit Silius Italicus, der im 13. Buch seiner *Punica* eine Beschreibung der Unterwelt mit mehreren Toren gibt. Von dem letzten heißt es:

(7) extrema [d. h. porta] hinc auro fulgens iam lucis honorem  
sentit et admoto splendet ceu sidere lunae.

Das von dort aus äußerste Tor genießt glänzend von Gold schon die Ehre des Lichts und scheint, als wäre das Gestirn des Mondes nahe. (eigene Übersetzung)  
(*Sil.* 13, 556 f.)

Der Glanz dieses Tors erhält aus dem Kontext der Stelle seine Motivierung: Das zehnte Hadestor stellt eine Klimax der Lichtintensität gegenüber dem neunten dar, was durch seine Nähe zur Lichtwelt expliziert wird<sup>58</sup>. Es ist gerade diese kontextuelle Bedeutsamkeit bei Silius, die seine *Punica* als Prätext

57 Egger 1963, 253.

58 Vgl. Reitz 1982, 64.

für die Fluchtafel wahrscheinlich machen, denn weder sind goldene Hades-tore eine weit verbreitete Vorstellung, noch wird der Verfasser der Fluchtafel sie ad hoc konzipiert haben. Er kann vielmehr auf vorhandene Unterweltsbeschreibungen zurückgegriffen haben, um seinem Text zusätzlich Relief zu verleihen und ihn mythologisch auszustaffieren. Direkt funktional belastet wird das Motiv in der Fluchtafel nicht.

Ist dieses Element für den Textzusammenhang peripher zu werten<sup>59</sup>, so setzt die Nennung der Erinyen nicht nur onomastisch einen Fokus, sondern ist Kernbestandteil des ausgesprochenen Fluches, denn zu ihnen und *Orcus* soll das Fluchopfer *Quartus* fahren. Die Erinyen sind mitnichten mythologisches Versatzstück, das allein dazu diente, eine beliebige mächtige und bedrohliche Gottheit zur Verstärkung des Flucheffekts aufzubieten, sondern sind integrativer Bestandteil des Fluches, wie die textlinguistische Analyse zeigt. Die Erinyen bilden als die Göttinnen, die ihr Opfer mit Wahnsinn schlagen, mit mehreren vorangehenden Lexemen aus diesem semantischen Feld eine Isotopienkette, die als „Wiederholung auf der Inhaltsebene“ (Kirsten Adamzik)<sup>60</sup> wesentlich zur Erzeugung von Kohärenz des Textes beiträgt<sup>61</sup>. Diese semantische Assoziation der einschlägigen Lexeme wird durch entsprechende Konkordanzen in der lateinischen Literatur gesichert. Das *agitatus* der Fluchtafel wird von Vergil, *Aen.* 4, 470 von Orestes gesagt, der vor den Erinyen auf der Flucht ist (*fugit* in Vers 473)<sup>62</sup>. Das Verbum *insaniat* findet eine Entsprechung innerhalb seiner Wortfamilie bei Ovid: *insanaque regnat Erinys* (*met.* 11, 14). Nicht eigentlich dem Wortfeld ‚Wahnsinn‘ zuzuschlagen, aber sinnverwandt und in jedem Fall mit den Erinyen in Beziehung stehend ist auch die Wortform *dirae* zu werten, die im Lateinischen nicht nur adjektivisch, sondern bekanntlich auch als onomastisches Äquivalent zu *Erinyes* in Gebrauch war. Dass diese Kookkurrenz im Text zudem nicht zufällig zu Stande kam, wird dadurch nahegelegt, dass das Adjektiv im Korpus der *Defixiones* keineswegs

59 Anders Egger (1963, 253), der den goldenen Toren implizit zentrale Bedeutsamkeit für den Fluch zuweist, wenn er schreibt: „für den verfluchten *Quartus* gibt es keinen Eintritt ins Elysium.“ Eine solche Vorstellung wäre für die Ideenwelt der Fluchtafeln aber ausgesprochen außergewöhnlich und läge jenseits des traditionellen Inventars der angefluchten Schädigungen.

60 Adamzik 2016, 273.

61 Zum Konzept der Isotopie siehe Heinemann 2000, sowie Hausendorf und Kesselheim 2008, 130–132 für eine exemplarische Textanalyse.

62 Dass die Erinyen bei Vergil nicht namentlich genannt werden, ist irrelevant, da der Bezug auf das griechische Vorbild evident ist. Gleiches gilt dafür, dass *matrem* das syntaktische Objekt zu *fugit* bildet, denn es handelt sich um eine Metonymie, die durch die Attribute zusätzlich als solche kenntlich gemacht ist.



typisch ist. Diese Einbindung der Erinyen in das Kohärenzgeflecht des Textes unterstreicht, dass der Fluch der Defixio neben dem Verstummen auch den Wahnsinn des ins Visier genommenen Gegners bezweckt. Die Rekursionsbeziehungen im Text sind jedoch hinsichtlich dieser beiden Fluchzwecke unterschiedlicher Natur, die so eine unterschiedliche Gewichtung erkennen lassen. Das Verstummen steht im Vordergrund, und seine Relevanz wird durch repetierenden Einsatz des Adjektivs *mutus* sowohl als Prädikat (Quartus, sein Mund, die Göttinnen), als auch als Teil des Namens der Göttinnen betont. Die Wiederholung ist also nicht nur inhaltlich, sondern auch formal. Formseitig werden durch Reim und Anagramm weitere Strategien der rekursiven Verdichtung angewendet, die das den Fluch tragende Adjektiv aufgreifen. Der Wahnsinn hingegen bleibt unterhalb der Formschwelle auf der Ebene des Inhalts. Textuell nebensächlich wird er dadurch nicht, wie nicht zuletzt auch die Nennung der Erinyen selbst zeigt.

Seit dem Beginn der griechischen Überlieferung sind die Erinyen Teil des griechischen und dann römischen Gesamtpantheons. Ihr Fehlen im Korpus der lateinischen Fluchtafeln wird dadurch umso auffälliger. Umgekehrt gilt Gleiches für ihre Präsenz in der Kemptener Defixio<sup>63</sup>. Angesichts der starken Indikatoren für die Nutzung literarischer Quellen bei der Gestaltung des Textes der Defixio kann es also als wahrscheinlich gelten, dass auch die Erinyen von dort bezogen wurden. Anders als der Basilisk und insbesondere die goldenen Tore der Unterwelt erscheinen die Erinyen in der lateinischen (und griechischen) Literatur allerdings mit einer Frequenz, die ein individuelles Vorbild zunächst wenig plausibel macht, sodass man diesen Fall vorerst als Bezug auf eine vorgefundene (aber textsortenfremde) Textwelt klassifizieren kann. Dennoch stellt sich die Frage, was den Verfasser der Fluchtafel dazu verleitete, die *Mutae Tacitae* mit den Erinyen zu verbinden. Zwar ließen sich die beiden jeweils den zwei gesonderten Fluchzwecken zuordnen, aber in Anbetracht der vielfältigen intertextuellen Beziehungen von dfx 7.2/1 = SDRW 522 wäre ein zusätzlicher Anstoß aus diesem Bereich nicht unerwartet. Weder bei Ovid noch bei den späteren Autoren, die den Namen Tacita erwähnen, wird die Göttin in irgendeiner Weise mit den Erinyen in Verbindung gebracht. Eine recht lose Form der Nähe ist allerdings bereits durch den Umstand gegeben, dass Erinyen bzw. Furien den übrigen weiblichen Schreckgestalten mit Unterwelt affiliation so ähnlich waren, dass sie mit diesen überlappten und mit ihnen identifiziert werden konnten. Doch dieser Mechanismus darf auf

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63 Das heißt, dass in dfx und SDWR die Fluchtafel aus Kempten der einzige Beleg ist. Angesichts der bereits vorliegenden Textmenge werden allfällige Neufunde also das Gesamtbild voraussichtlich nur in engen Grenzen relativieren.

das vorliegende Verhältnis nicht übertragen werden. Ovids Tacita kann zwar als Unterweltsgottheit angesehen werden, allerdings besitzt sie überhaupt keine monströse Physiognomie, sondern bleibt im Gegenteil auch in der Unterwelt eine Nymphe. Über einen gewissen Umweg lassen sich Erinyen und Tacita dennoch in eine intertextuelle Beziehung setzen. Ovids aitiologische Erzählung (*fast.* 2, 583–616) zur „stummen Göttin“ verortet diese im mythologischen Radius der Nymphe Iuturna. Als Iuppiter dieser nachstellen will, verrät ihr die Nymphe Lara bzw. Lala sein Vorhaben und benachrichtigt zudem Iuno darüber, worauf der Göttervater ihr die Zunge herausreißt und sie in die Unterwelt hinabführen lässt. Ohne dies ausdrücklich zu machen, gibt Ovid zu verstehen, dass Lara Tacita sei. Iuturna ist in der lateinischen Literatur keine häufig in Erscheinung tretende Figur, spielt aber in der *Aeneis* eine wichtige Rolle, da sie es ist, die ihrem Bruder Turnus in der finalen Schlacht schützend zur Seite steht. In einem entscheidenden Moment derselben schickt Iuppiter die Diren, um sie zum Ablassen zu bewegen (*Aen.* 12, 844–848). Damit bildete die Figur sozusagen einen Scharnierpunkt, über den die Tacita mit den Erinyen in Verbindung gesetzt werden kann. Die Kenntnis der *Aeneis* darf bei einem ansonsten literarisch gebildeten Verfasser, wie der „Magier von Cambodunum“ (Rudolf Egger) es war, vorausgesetzt werden. Bei der Ausgestaltung seines Fluches kann also der Rückgriff auf Ovid über die Erwähnung der Iuturna eine lose Assoziation mit der entsprechenden Passage bei Vergil und den Erinyen ausgelöst haben. Bei der Allgegenwart der Göttinnen in der lateinischen Literatur ist diese Brücke allerdings keine notwendige Annahme, um ihre Heranziehung in der Fluchtafel zu erklären. Über die Erinyen lässt sich jedoch noch ein anderes Problem angehen: der Plural der Gottheit in der Fluchtafel gegenüber dem Singular bei Ovid<sup>64</sup>. Die Forschung hat hier mit zwei Lösungsansätzen operiert. Der eine verweist auf die mitunter zu beobachtende fakultative Pluralität römischer – vornehmlich weiblicher – Gottheiten<sup>65</sup>. Der andere geht von einer Vervielfachung *einer* Göttin nach keltischem Muster aus, denn im keltischen Bereich war bekanntlich die weibliche Göttergruppe in Form der Matronenverehrung besonders verankert. Prinzipiell wäre keltisches Substrat insofern möglich, als der Name der Siedlung keltisch ist<sup>66</sup>. Daraus folgt aber nicht notwendigerweise die kultische Verehrung pluralischer Formationen weiblicher Gottheiten. Der Matronenkult, für den dies typisch wäre, scheint in Kempten nicht doku-

64 Da Plutarch nicht von Ovid abhängig sein muss, kann *Τάκιτα* in *Numa* 8, 11 als zusätzlicher Beleg für den Singular gelten.

65 Egger 1963, 253.

66 Vgl. Anreiter – Roeder 2007, 110.

mentiert. Mit den Erinyen bietet sich nun eine dritte Möglichkeit an: Die pluralischen Mutae Tacitae können vom Verfasser der Fluchtafel ad hoc nach dem Vorbild Erinys – Erinyes kreiert worden sein. Dies hat den Vorteil, auf der Textebene zu bleiben und nicht ein nur sporadisch und meist entlegen auftretendes Phänomen wie das der Iunones im Plural bemühen zu müssen, sondern eine in der Literatur gut bezeugte Ambiguität der Anzahl als Muster bestimmen zu können<sup>67</sup>.

Wie diese Ausführungen zeigen, ist die Kemptener Fluchtafel durchdrungen von Bezügen zu diversen literarischen Prätexten, insbesondere zur epischen Dichtung, die dem Text einen ausgesprochen elaborierten Charakter verleihen, ohne dass er dadurch seine genrespezifische Musterhaftigkeit einbüßte, die sich aus der Textsortentradition der Defixiones speist. Abschließend bleibt zu klären, ob vor diesem Hintergrund die zweigliedrige Namensform der Göttin sinnvoll explikatorisch gedeutet werden kann. Nachdem die Ovid-Forschung zwar Tacita als überkommenes Theonym anerkannt hat, die *dea muta* aber als onomastische Erfindung des Dichters angesehen hat<sup>68</sup>,

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67 Diese Annäherung der einen Gottheiten an die anderen eröffnet eine weitere Perspektive: Angesichts der Tendenz sekundäre Unterweltgottheiten miteinander zu identifizieren, lässt sich fragen, ob eine solche Identifizierung nicht auch in der Fluchtafel am Werke gewesen sein könnte, *Eriniis* und *Mutae Tacitae* also referenzidentisch wären. Für diese Verschmelzung kann auf *dirae* verwiesen werden, das an dieser Stelle kontextambig ist. Es wäre durchaus nicht gegen jede Plausibilität, das Adjektiv als Namen bzw. Namensbestandteil zu lesen und zu übersetzen: „Die Mutae Dirae sollen stumm sein“. Damit würde auch die bereits an sich bemerkenswerte Verwendung von *dirae* (s. o.) erklärt werden können. Dem wäre jedoch auf der anderen Seite entgegenzuhalten, dass diese Identifizierung wenig explizit signalisiert würde. Außerdem fällt auf, dass die *Mutae Tacitae* ausschließlich im Nominativ-Vokativ auftreten, *Eriniis* jedoch parallel zu *Orco* zu verstehen ist.

68 Siehe Bömer 1957, 30. Dass es sich hierbei aber überhaupt um einen Namen handelt, ist zudem eine Hypothese und keineswegs gesichert. Die Nullannahme sollte vielmehr sein, dass bei dieser Nominalgruppe eine definite Beschreibung vorliegt, die den Namen Tacita mit einem Quasi-Synonym etymologisch ausdeutet. *Dea muta* muss an sich ebensowenig ein Name sein, wie *falcifer* ... *deus* „sicheltragender Gott“ (fast. 1, 234) ein Zweitname Saturns ist. Dubourdieu (2003, 274) weist darauf hin, dass Ovid *deus/dea* nie als Attribut zu Theonymen verwendet, was absolut jedoch nur für eigentliche Götternamen gelten dürfte. In Fällen aus dem Graubereich der Theonomastik, wo die Gottheit einen Namen trägt, der zugleich auch Appellativum ist, kann das Lexem für Gott durchaus Verwendung finden um die Ambiguität aufzuheben. Die Nacht als Gottheit wird fast. 1, 455 *deae Nocti* genannt, wobei ein *nocte* direkt vorangeht. Der Unterschied zum zur Debatte stehenden Fall ist jedoch, dass es sich um ein Substantiv handelt. Ein reines Adjektiv

führte die Entdeckung der Göttin auf der Fluchtafel ganz im Sinne der unabhängigen Validierung der Passage in den Fasten dazu, dass *Muta* als fester Bestandteil des Namens bzw. als ein Doppelname gewertet wurde<sup>69</sup>. Wie aber seitdem die Fluchtafeln aus dem hispanischen Celti und SDRW 533 aus Pannonien gezeigt haben (s. o.)<sup>70</sup>, ist die Kookkurrenz von *mutus* und *tacitus* nicht auf die onomastische Verwendung beschränkt. Die geographische Streuung spricht dafür, dass die Doppelung dieser Adjektive ihrer Seltenheit im Textkorpus ungeachtet Bestandteil des Ausdrucksinventariums der Textsorte war. Der Magier aus Kempten könnte also die formularische Zusammenstellung der Adjektive *mutus* und *tacitus* aus dem Fundus der gängigen sprachmagischen Praktiken, mit denen er offensichtlich bestens vertraut war, übernommen und sie mit dem Ovid entnommenen Material kombiniert haben. Auf diese Weise verhalf er seiner Göttin zu ihrem Doppelnamen, bestehend aus ursprünglichem Theonym und ehemaligem Attribut. Das Lexem, das den Fluchinhalt des Verstummens zum Ausdruck bringt, ist in dieser Fluchtafel aber nur *mutus*, was sich daraus erklärt, dass der Verfasser sich an Ovid hält, der *Tacita* als den eigentlichen Namen der Göttin verwendet, *muta* aber offensichtlich als Attribut von *dea*. Auch Laktanz setzt das Klassennomen, sodass eine adjektivische Lesart möglich ist. Dieses nicht-onomastische Verständnis der *dea muta* wird auch bei Laktanz den Vorzug verdienen, da die folgenden Götter, die keinen adjektivischen Namen tragen (*Caca*, *Cunina*, *Stercutus*, *Tutinus*) ohne den Zusatz *deus/dea* genannt werden. Alles deutet also daraufhin, dass *Muta* weder ein eigenständiger Name der Göttin noch ein ursprünglicher Bestandteil dieses Namens war.

## Zusammenfassung

Die obige Analyse der lateinischen Fluchtafeln unter dem Aspekt der Textsorte und die anschließende Detailstudie der Fluchtafel dfx 7.2/1 = SDRW 522 aus Kempten im Vergleich mit literarischen Texten haben die eingangs postulierte Relevanz von Theonymen als intertextuelle Elemente belegen können. Zudem ließ sich zeigen, dass umgekehrt die Aufmerksamkeit für die Intertextualität eines jeden Texts zur adäquaten Deutung des Auftretens

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als Basis eines Theonyms wäre überhaupt auffällig, da diese Bildungen nicht die Regel sind. Auch *Tacita* war ursprünglich wohl Nomen agentis, wie der Vergleich mit anderen Theonymen auf *-ta* zeigt (vgl. von Blumenthal 1941, 325–327).

69 Egger 1963, 253 sowie Marco Simón 2010, 105.

70 Zu ersterer vgl. Stylow 2012.

von Götternamen in den Defixiones einen wichtigen Beitrag leisten kann. Als weiteres Resultat zeigte die Studie, wie das Textsortenmerkmal Theonym als abstrahiertes Muster bei der Ausgestaltung eines gegebenen Textes intertextuelle Kanäle eröffnet, über die aus textsortenfremden Quellen weiteres Material bezogen werden kann, sodass sich die Grenze zwischen literarischen und Sachtexten mit praktischer Gebrauchsabsicht als durchlässig erweist.

Die Kemptener Fluchtafel ist demnach nicht als selbstständiges Zeugnis zu werten, das für Ovids *Fasti* eine unabhängige religionswissenschaftliche Validierung liefern könnte, sondern muss hinsichtlich ihres Umgangs mit theonomastischem Material selbst als Kreuzung verschiedener Texttraditionen gelten. Dass diese Einbindung von Figuren aus der literarischen Mythologie durchaus auch ihrerseits als Textsortenmerkmal der Defixio betrachtet werden kann, zeigt sich daran, dass diese Einkreuzung nicht isoliert ist, sondern auch in anderen Fällen dokumentiert ist, und somit zu den Vertextungsstrategien gehörte, die dem Verfasser der Defixiones offenstanden. Anders als die Nennung oder Anrufung einer großen Unterweltsgottheit oder der des Heiligtums, in dem das Ritual vollzogen wurde, wie Mater Magna in Mainz oder Anna Perenna in Rom, erforderte sie auch einen entsprechenden literarischen Bildungshorizont, über den nach Ausweis der sprachlichen Gestaltung vieler Defixiones nicht alle Verfasser verfügten.

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Elisabeth Günther – Sven Günther

## Roman only at First Glance? The Adaptation of Imperial Iconography in the Coin Types of Mannos Philorhomaïos

**Abstract** Two rare silver drachms – one of them not yet included in the standard catalogue *Roman Provincial Coinage* (RPC) – which were presumably minted in the so-called client kingdom of Osrhoene around the year AD 165, are in the focus of this paper. At first sight, they closely resemble the iconography of Roman imperial coins with portraits of the imperial family and personifications, while the Greek legend – which names a king calling himself Mannos Philorhomaïos as the minting authority – hints at a local setting. A number of silver coin types belong to the same series, for which we provide an up-to-date list.

An in-depth analysis of the iconography of these types reveals further deviations from the Roman imperial coinage, especially when compared with the so-called *hyper nikēs*-types, presumably from same period and area, nevertheless suggesting links between both outputs.

We will discuss the extent to which these exceptional pieces provide us with information regarding the production and reception of Roman-style coinage in Mesopotamian Osrhoene, their possible historical context (being produced during the military campaign led by the Roman emperor Lucius Verus against the Parthian Empire) and their semantic frameworks at both first glance and second gaze.

Two silver drachms<sup>1</sup> illustrated in figs. 1 and 2 provide us with exceptional insights into the production and reception of Roman imperial silver coinage

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1 Both coins have been published by one of the authors of this paper, Sven Günther, in 2021 (S. Günther 2021). We will expand the thoughts presented there regarding



Fig. 1: Silver drachm of king Mannos with Lucius Verus on obverse and Providentia on reverse, not yet in RPC. 19mm, 3.59g, 7h. Obv.: ΑΥΤ(οκρατωρ) Κ(αισαρ) Μ(αρκος) ΑΥΡΗ(λιος) ΟΥΗΡΟC CΕΒΑ(στος). Rev.: ΒΑCΙΛΕΥC ΜΑΝΝΟC ΦΙΛΟΡ(ωμαιος).

Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 14 (12. 12. 2020), lot 1161. <https://www.coinarchives.com/a/openlink.php?l=1759359|4035|1161|7d42d9e4b776032343fa4c76d9981fdd>.

at one of the ‘edges’ of the Roman Empire<sup>2</sup>. More precisely, an area which was affected by the ongoing conflicts between the Roman Empire and Parthian Empire. These coins are therefore worth a close examination, in an attempt to reconstruct how they would have been viewed by their ancient audience(s) and to ascertain what information these coins may offer to modern scholars.

On the obverse of the drachm in fig. 1, we see a portrait of a bearded man in profile to the right, as it is common on Roman coins. Indeed, it is the head of a Roman emperor, strongly resembling the Antonines – in particular Lucius Verus – as indicated by the hooked nose and tense expression. The Greek legend reads ΑΥΤ(οκρατωρ) Κ(αισαρ) Μ(αρκος) ΑΥΡΗ(λιος) ΟΥΗΡΟC CΕΒΑ(στος), interestingly mixing the name of emperor Lucius Verus with the *praenomen* of his elder co-emperor Marcus Aurelius<sup>3</sup>. On the reverse,

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the issues by Mannos Philorhomaioi and the so-called *hyper nikēs*-types here, using the Second Gaze concept as well as frames and framing theory.

- 2 In recent years, research has gradually shifted to the more remote areas of the Mediterranean world, including the eastern kingdoms and empires, as well as their edges. See, e.g., Ruffing 2020 on the economic exchange.
- 3 It must, nonetheless, be Lucius Verus, since the titulature of Marcus Aurelius usually ends with ΑΥΡΗ(λιος) ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟC CΕΒΑ(στος) after the *praenomen*, not with ΑΥΡΗ(λιος) ΟΥΗΡΟC CΕΒΑ(στος). Cf. S. Günther 2021, 5f. Such deviation is furthermore only known from a Moesian inscription and, interestingly, a coin type minted in Carrhae, nearby Edessa. See S. Günther 2021, 5f.



Fig. 2: Silver drachm of king Mannos with Lucilla on obverse and Luno/Ceres (?) on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 6488. 18mm, 2.89g, 6h. Obv.: ΛΟΥΚΙΛΙΑ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΗ. Rev.: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΜΑΝΝΟC ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜΑΙΟC. Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, 18312249, 1900 Imhoof-Blumer. <https://ikmk.smb.museum/object?id=18312249>. Photo: B. Weisser. CC BY SA 4.0.

a female figure dressed in a long tunic and a cloak is standing to the left, holding a globe in her right hand and cornucopia in her left arm. She closely follows the depiction of Providentia on the imperial coin types, something which will be discussed in more detail below<sup>4</sup>. The Greek legend is, however, highly unusual, for both imperial and provincial coinage: naming a king, Mannos Philorhomaioi, ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΜΑΝΝΟC ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜΑΙΟC, as the minting authority. This Mannos is very likely to be identified with Ma'nu VIII, king of Oshroene, who likely ruled from AD 165/166–177<sup>5</sup>. Upon closer examination, the coin reveals itself to not actually be Roman and is instead closely modelled after the imperial coinage. There is thus a huge gap between this distinct 'Roman' design and the local aes coins minted by the Oshroenian king Ma'nu, which show a rather abstract portrait with tiara on the obverse and a legend in the Syriac Estrangelo naming him with affiliation on the reverse<sup>6</sup>. Interestingly, the portrait of Ma'nu on some of these aes coin types seems to adapt the hairstyle of the young and beardless Marcus Aurelius,

4 Cf. RIC III M. Aurelius no. 491. For the coin and comparisons, see S. Günther 2021, 5, tab.

5 See S. Günther 2021, 1f. with the discussion. For the complex chronology of the Oshroene kings, see Luther 1999, 197.

6 S. Günther 2021, 2f. There, see also the illustrations of the Roman coinage on p. 11f. (figs. 1–4).

which might be considered as a further argument for the identification of the king Mannos on the silver coins with Ma'nu (VIII)<sup>7</sup>.

The second coin is devoted to Lucilla (AD 149–181), as the legend reads *ΑΟΥΚΙΑΑΑ ΑΕΒΑΧΘΗ* (Lucilla Augusta) (fig. 2). Annia Aurelia Galeria Lucilla was the daughter of Marcus Aurelius and wife of co-emperor Lucius Verus (reg. AD 161–169). She was married to him probably in either AD 163 or 164 in Ephesus and thus received the Augusta-title in the very same year<sup>8</sup>. At this time, Verus was leading the Roman campaign in Parthia, and after his victory he celebrated a triumph in October AD 166<sup>9</sup>. It is thus not impossible that Lucilla, similar to her mother Faustina II, accompanied her husband during this campaign<sup>10</sup>. The portrait shows Lucilla's bust to the right. She wears a tunic with a cloak, and her hair is styled in quite a complex fashion: it is divided by a thin braid, which is indicated by a row of dots, into two compartments. In the lower part, three scale-like waves run from forehead to neck. In the upper part, the hair is braided into sections which run parallel to the dividing braid and remind one of a melon-like pattern. A chignon is placed deep in the neck and is made up of three braided layers. A curl escapes the chignon, and a second loose strand of hair is visible on her cheek. Interestingly, this coiffure is not part of Lucilla's official portraits<sup>11</sup>, which are found in four different styles on imperial coinage<sup>12</sup>. Only one of them includes a

7 See Hill 1922, p. c and S. Günther 2021, 2f. with n.9. However, the depictions of Ma'nu vary, and on some types Wa'el, probably his predecessor and supported by the Parthian king (as he is depicted on the obverse of an aes issue: Hill 1922, 91 no. 1) has an Antoninian look, too; cf. Hill 1922, 91 no. 2 and 92 no. 3, pl. XIII, 7f.

8 The sources do not inform us about the exact year, see PIR<sup>2</sup> A 707 and the discussion in Barnes 1967, 72. According to the *Historia Augusta* and Cassius Dio, the wedding took place during the Parthian War (HA Verus 7.7; HA Marcus 9.4). A dedication to Iuno Lucina (CIL VI 360) set up in September AD 166 is taken as evidence that their first child was born in this year (PIR<sup>2</sup> A 707), however, the inscription allows not to deduce the number of children (one or more). For the discussion on the number of children and their year of birth, see also Fittschen 1982, 72–75.

9 Kienast 2017, 138.

10 For her presence in military campaigns and the title *mater castrorum*, see Speidel 2012.

11 Wegner 1939, 75f.

12 For the four styles, see also Wegner 1939, 75f. pl. 64 (with two sub-types): (1) rather loose, wavy hair that ends up in a higher chignon made of braids, e.g., RIC III Marcus Aurelius no. 755; (2) four thick, contorted or braided strands of hair, running parallel from forehead to neck and gather in a deep chignon, e.g., RIC III Marcus Aurelius no. 756, according to the legend *LVCILLAE AVG(ustae) ANTONINI AVG(usti) F(iliae)* that occurs with this hairstyle, this ought to be the

thin braid running from the top of the head to the neck like is shown on the Mannos-coin, but in the official portrait the scale-like waves are placed above the braid, not beneath, and the upper hair runs in loose waves, not in distinct melon-like braided sections<sup>13</sup>. The hairstyle chosen for the Osrhoene coin is, instead, very close to an official coiffure of Faustina II, wife of Marcus Aurelius (see the discussion below), only deviating in the depiction of the upper part which consists of soft wavy hair rather than melon-like braids (fig. 11). This is exactly the portrait type employed to represent Faustina II on the Mannos-coins (RPC IV/3 online no. 6487; fig. 5)<sup>14</sup>.

The reverse bears the legend *BACIAEYC MANNOC ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜΑ(ΙΟΥ)*, similar to our first Mannos coin described above. A veiled female figure with long tunic and cloak stands to the left, holding a patera in her right hand and a scepter with two small spheres or balls on top in her left hand. She is usually identified with Ceres/Demeter<sup>15</sup>, however, the corn-ears – which are her typical attribute – are missing. The figure thus probably rather represents some not clearly defined deity or personification. We will come back to this point later.

Both coin types appear, at first glance, to be Roman. However, when examined more closely, the Osrhoenian king Mannos appears as the minting authority, not the Roman emperor. Accordingly, although the coins are modelled surprisingly close after the coinage of the (central) imperial mint – and

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earliest style: Wegner 1939, 75; (3) a thin braided or contorted band runs from forehead to neck, above scale-like waves of hair, and on top loose waves running down to a rather high chignon with fishbone-like structure, e.g., RIC III Marcus Aurelius no. 765; (4) a thin braided or contorted braided band runs from forehead to neck, above are several layers of braided hair, e.g., RIC III Marcus Aurelius no. 773. K. Fittschen divided the portraits into three types with different variants, merging type (3) and (4) as described above (Fittschen 1982, 69–81 with pl. 6).

13 Type (3) in n. 12. See also Wegner 1939, 75 with drawing and pl. 64 d and l; and see Fittschen 1982 (type 3), 70 f., dating this type to after AD 166: Fittschen 1982, 81. The dating relies on the proposed birth of a third child of Lucilla (Fittschen 1982, 74 f.), which is, however, rather speculative.

14 Type 8 according to K. Fittschen, dated by him to AD 162: Fittschen 1982, 42 f. with pl. 5, 9–11. For this type, see also Niederhuber 2022, 20, who rather sees type 8 as a development of type 7 which, he believes, was invented for the accession of M. Aurelius, not the birth of the twins Commodus and Antoninus; the dating, however, remains the same as proposed by K. Fittschen (cf. Niederhuber 2022, 48). Interestingly, type 8 is, with type 7, among the most numerous portraits in marble (Niederhuber 2022, 48) and is one of the three types used on Alexandrian coins (Niederhuber 2022, 12). See also Beckmann 2021, 61.

15 In the following, we will only use the Latin names of the respective deities for the readers' convenience.

present a fundamental deviation from local aes coins – one notices a number of ‘inaccuracies’. These ‘inaccuracies’ seen in another light, demonstrate adaptations made to ‘Roman’ coins for a non-Roman context. This includes the overall composition which follows the Roman model closely, but names Mannos on the reverse instead of the emperor or any reference to the depicted personification. Furthermore, in the case of the first drachm discussed here, it includes a strange mixture of the imperial titles of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus; overall, the use of Greek instead of Latin legends (for the whole series of these Mannos coins); and, on the second drachm, the employment of the slightly altered hairstyle of Faustina II for Lucilla. Thus, both coins offer their audience a ‘Second Gaze’, a second layer of reading which complements the first, seemingly Roman, one. They carry the potential to be read according to different frameworks which are dependent on the experiences and expectations of the people using these coins. As such they ‘frame’ their users, emphasizing both Roman and (though to a lesser degree) non-Roman elements, to create different layers or ‘gazes’<sup>16</sup>. This addresses the question not only of the purpose of this coinage, but also of the possible audience(s), which must be understood in the respective contexts in which these coins were minted.

## Context I: The coin types of Mannos Philorhomaïos

Up to now, 11 coin types with the legend *BACIΛEYC MANNOC ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜΑΙ(ΟΣ)*<sup>17</sup> have been published<sup>18</sup>, including one type which is not (yet) included in the RPC/PC online.<sup>19</sup> All of them are silver drachms, with a die

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16 The term “frames” means mental structures that organize human knowledge and thus perception and reception processes, according to frame theories. As defined in the seminal paper by Robert Entman, “Framing essentially involves *selection* and *salience*. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.” (Entman 1993, 52). For the application of frame theories and framing to ancient sources, see E. Günther 2021; E. Günther – S. Günther 2022; E. Günther – S. Günther 2023.

17 Slightly varying the abbreviation; the omicron in “Philorhomaïos” is sometimes missing, e.g., on RPC IV/3 online no. 6493 which presents Mannos’ name in four lines (fig. 3).

18 Hill 1922, 92 f.

19 For a table including all currently known types, see S. Günther 2021, 3f. When the paper was published, two types were not included in RPC (S. Günther 2021,

axis of predominantly 6 o'clock which indicates that they were produced by the same mint<sup>20</sup>. Design and style with an edgy, woodcarving-like appearance and a border of dots framing the obverse and reverse are common features. Only one type is related to Marcus Aurelius, one to Faustina II, three to Lucius Verus and six to Lucilla. This abundance of coin types related to Lucilla is very interesting, considering the fact that in the imperial coinage, the types for Lucilla are rather limited<sup>21</sup>.

Normally, the reverses show a deity or personification; the exception being a drachm with Lucius Verus on the obverse and the legend *BACIAE/YC MANN/OC ΦΙΑΟΠ/ΩΜΑΙ(ο)C* in four lines on the reverse (RPC IV/3 online no. 6493; fig. 3)<sup>22</sup>. Two types present a military topic: the type with Marcus Aurelius on the obverse has a helmeted Mars with spear and shield on the reverse (fig. 4) (RPC IV/3 online no. 6486)<sup>23</sup>; one of the Lucilla-types shows a Victoria with wreath (?) and palm branch (RPC IV/3 online no. 9619)<sup>24</sup>. Both figures exist in the imperial coinage as well, as we will discuss below ("Context II: The Roman imperial types").

The remaining types all show a female deity or personification on the reverse. The type with Faustina II on the obverse (RPC IV/3 online no. 6487) features Iuno, showing the goddess standing to the left with long tunic and veil, holding a scepter in her left hand, a patera in her right, and with a

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5 with tab.); the type with Salus on reverse is now RPC online no. 17203. The unknown location of the mint, which is usually the feature to order and to search for provincial coinage, has in some cases prevented these coins to be perceived as a homogeneous group, at least in the current state of the RPC online database. Additionally, the Mannos Philorhomaioi-coins kept in public collections and museums have not yet gained much interest and are to date seldomly found in RPC online or other numismatic databases. Thus, one has to a certain degree rely on the data available from the auction market. We hope that this and further research stimulates interest in coinages from the 'edges' of the Roman Empire.

20 S. Günther 2021, n. 15. A comprehensive study of the die axis and weight is still ought to be done.

21 The RIC online lists 92 types in gold, silver and aes, including the following topics on the reverses: Concordia (11), Diana Lucifera (4), Fecunditas (9), Hilartitas (5), Iuno (3, aes only), Iuno Lucina (5), Iuno Regina (4), Laetitia (1), Pietas (7), Pudicitia (6), Salus (3), Venus (18), Venus Victrix (2), Venus Genetrix (2, sestertii), Vesta (5), Vota Publica (3), Ceres (2), Mater Magna (2, sestertii).

22 = Hill 1922, p. xcvi with pl. L no. 8.

23 = Hill 1922, p. 92 no. 5.

24 Not included in Hill 1922. One specimen is published in Fox 2007, 12 with fig. 4, one recently appeared on the market: CNG, auction 126 (28. 05. 2024), lot no. 506: <https://www.coinarchives.com/a/lotviewer.php?LotID=2382103&AucID=5854&Lot=506&Val=5ee1fb1bc4da8f92ed10d51af195c54f> (31. 05. 2024).



Fig. 3: Silver drachm of king Mannos with Lucius Verus on obverse and name of Mannos on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 6493. 19mm, 3.3g, 6h. Obv.: Α(υτοκρατωρ) Κ(αισαρ) Λ(ουκιος) ΑΥΡ(ηλιος) ΟΥΗΡΟΣ Σ(εβαστος). Rev.: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΜΑΝΝ|ΟΣ ΦΙΛΟΡ|ΩΜΑΙ(ο)Σ.  
Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, 18312234. <https://ikmk.smb.museum/object?id=18312234>. Photo: B. Weisser. CC BY SA 4.0.



Fig. 4: Silver drachm of king Mannos with Marcus Aurelius on obverse and Mars on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 6486. 18 mm, 3.52g, 6h. Obv.: ΑΥΤ(οκρατωρ) Κ(αισαρ) Μ(αρκος) ΑΥΡΗ(λιος) ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟΣ Σ(εβαστος). Rev.: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΜΑΝΝΟΣ ΦΙΛΩ(ρωμαιος).  
British Museum online collection, 692523001. TC,p230.1.MAMan. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/image/692523001>. CC BY SA 4.0. © The Trustees of the British Museum.





Fig. 5: Silver drachm of king Mannos with Faustina II on obverse and Luno on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 6487. 16 mm, 2.17g, 6h. Obv.: ΦΑΥΣΤΙΝΑ ΚΕΒΑΧΘΗ. Rev.: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΜΑΝΝΟC ΦΙΛΟΡ(ωμαιοc).

British Museum online collection, 692524001. TC,p230.1.FauMan. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/image/692524001>. CC BY SA 4.0. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

peacock to her left (fig. 5): matching the common type of Roman imperial coinage for Faustina II and other empresses<sup>25</sup>. Ceres is identified by corn-ears on the reverse of two types with Lucilla on the obverse, one figure standing (RPC IV/3 online no. 8629, fig. 6), one seated on a throne (RPC IV/3 online no. 6489).<sup>26</sup>

The identification of two further deities is also unproblematic: Providentia and Salus. Providentia, holding a globe in her right hand and cornucopia in her left, adorns one of the three types with Lucius Verus on the obverse and has been described above<sup>27</sup> (fig. 1). Salus with cornucopia and patera seated on a throne with a rising snake to the left appears on a coin type with Lucilla; this type has recently been added to the PRC online (IV/3 no. 17203)<sup>28</sup>.

25 = Hill 1922, 92 no. 6. Imperial types: e.g., RIC III M. Aurelius no. 695; see also the discussion below.

26 = Hill 1922, 93 no. 9.

27 S. Günther 2021, 5 with fig. 5: Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 14 (12. 12. 2020), lot no. 1161.

28 S. Günther 2021, 5 with fig. 6: CNG electronic auction 169 (25. 07. 2007), lot no. 134; a second exemplar is said to be in private possession by RPC online: <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coin/437693> (with ill.). Since it deviates in style, hairstyle of Lucilla and frame (no border of dots), as well as has a much higher weight (4.04g) and different die axis (3 o'clock), the authenticity is very doubtful in the eyes of the authors.



Fig. 6: Silver drachm of king Mannos with Lucilla on obverse and Ceres on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 8629. 16 mm, 1.99 g (!), 6 h. ΛΟΥΚΙΑΝ[Α CEBA[CTH]. Rev.: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥC ΜΑΝΝ[ΟC ΦΙΛ]ΟΡΩ(μαιοc). British Museum online collection, 692528001. G.1161. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/image/692528001>. CC BY SA 4.0. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Two types with Lucilla on the obverse, however, do raise more questions. RPC IV/3 online no. 8628 has a female deity on the reverse, usually identified with Iuno (fig. 7). The goddess is standing to the left, wearing a long tunic with a cloak and a diadem on her head, holding a patera in her right hand and a scepter in her left. Unlike the Iuno who is minted on the reverse of the Faustina-type, this Iuno is neither veiled nor is her cloak draped over her shoulder. Furthermore, Iuno's usual attribute, the peacock, is missing, thus the deity of this type (RPC IV/3 online no. 8628) lacks a clear and unequivocal identification. The deity shown on the reverse of RPC IV/3 online no. 6488, also with Lucilla on the obverse, may be Ceres – if one identifies the long staff in her left hand with a torch (fig. 2). However, neither a flame nor the single sections of the torch are visible, as is usually the case in the imperial coinage<sup>29</sup>, and the corn-ears – as shown on RPC IV/3 online nos. 8629 (fig. 6) and 6489 – are missing. It is indeed possible that the staff was actually intended to depict a scepter with two spheres or balls on top – like in the case of Iuno's scepter on RPC IV/3 online no. 6487 (fig. 5) – but was cut with less precision. Regrettably, neither of the types showing Ceres with corn-ears help us in this case, since in those depictions the goddess too holds the same slim staff-like object, which might also be either a torch or a scepter.

<sup>29</sup> See, e.g., RIC III Marcus Aurelius no. 668 (denarius minted for Faustina II) or no. 1619 (as minted for Faustina II).



Fig. 7: Silver drachm of king Mannonos with Lucilla on obverse and Iuno (?) on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 8628. 17mm, 3.03g, 1h. Obv.: ΛΟΥΚΙΜΑ CEBACTH. Rev.: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥC ΜΑΝΝΟC ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜΑ(ΙΟC).  
British Museum online collection, 692525001. 1853,0512.134. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/image/692525001>. CC BY SA 4.0. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

A second specimen of RPC IV/3 online no. 6488 listed on the RPC website was auctioned off by the Classical Numismatic Group in 2001<sup>30</sup>. The figure, however, clearly deviates from the deity shown on the specimen from the one in Berlin illustrated in fig. 2. It wears a long dress with an overfall and a cloak which veils the head and runs over the shoulders, just like in the case of the goddess Iuno on RPC IV/3 online no. 6487 with Faustina II on the obverse. Her staff is clearly a slim scepter, not a torch. The peacock is, however, missing. Among the six specimens of RPC IV/3 online no. 6488, two distinct groups exist. Group 1 includes the coin in Berlin (fig. 2) and two pieces which were sold at auction; group 2 includes the coin sold by CNG in 2001 and also two pieces which have been auctioned off elsewhere (fig. 8). Group 2, although initially presenting as a variant of group 1, may actually represent a new coin type entirely; since the goddess of group 2 holds a scepter and not a torch, this might account also for the goddess of group 1.

A close look at the single specimen reveals that all reverses of group 1 derive from the same die; the same applies to group 2. The legend of group 1 reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥC ΜΑΝΝΟC ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜΑ(ΙΟC). The patera of the goddess is placed precisely at the lower edge of the epsilon, the top of the scepter/torch (?) nearly touches the omicron of Mannonos – which is cut in the same manner splitting the letter into an inner and outer circle – and the lower end of the scepter/torch (?) overlaps with the left foot (cf. fig. 2). The legend

30 Cf. <https://www.coinarchives.com/a/openlink.php?l=2639|6|916|c90e274d55309db944076afb3ff9c391> (30.04.2024).



Fig. 8: Silver drachm of king Mannos with Lucilla on obverse and Iuno (?) on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 6488. 17.64mm, 2.99g, 12h. Obv.: ΛΟΥΚΙΑΑ CEBACTH. Rev.: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥC ΜΑΝΝΟC ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜΑΙ(ο)C. Astarte S.A. web auction 2 (09.12.2023), lot no. 241. <https://www.coinarchives.com/a/openlink.php?l=2321982|5667|241|6cdac1f643a1d28c254b4bcdeff617ce>.

of group 2 reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥC ΜΑΝΝΟC ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜΑΙ(ο)C. The patera points to the upsilon, the top of the scepter touches the sigma of Mannos and the lower end touches the sigma of Philorhomaioi (cf. fig. 8). Even more curious is the fact that the very same reverse die was also used for the third type which features Lucius Verus on the obverse (RPC online no. 10745, fig. 9)<sup>31</sup>.

Given the low number of types and currently known specimens, the high number of die links stands out. Further investigation into this issue requires a thorough study of all specimens published; although this is yet to be done the tendency is clear. In addition to the die links of the reverses especially with regard to the Lucilla-types and the cross-link between Lucilla and Verus, one can observe that not only do all of the Lucilla obverses present the same portrait type, but that all are derived from the very same die. This becomes clear through an examination of the placement of the legend in relation to the portrait, the differing size of the letters (small omicron in ΛΟΥΚΙΑΑ, small sigma at the beginning of CEBACTH) and the broken right stroke of the second lambda of Lucilla's name (cf. figs. 2, 7 and 8)<sup>32</sup>. Moreover, as far we can tell in the current state of research and due to the state of preservation of the respective specimens, die links likely exist between the obverses of

31 The RPC online interprets the goddess to be “veiled Ceres/Demeter or Iuno/Hera (?) standing”: <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/4/10745> (30. 04. 2024).

32 Exception: <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coin/437693> (31. 05. 2024), in private possession, in our view doubtful, see n. 28.



Fig. 9: Silver drachm of king Mannos with Lucius Verus on obverse and Iuno (?) on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 10745. 17mm, 3.15g, 12h. Obv.: *A(υτοκρατωρ) Κ(αισαρ) Λ(υκιος) ΑΥΡ(ηλιος) ΟΥΗΡΟΣ C(εβαστος)*. Rev.: *BACIΛEYΣ ΜΑΝΝΟC ΦΙΛΟΡΩΜΑΙ(ο)C*.

Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, 18312242, 1873 Fox. <https://ikmk.smb.museum/object?id=18312242>. Photo: B. Weisser. CC BY SA 4.0.

coins with portraits of Marcus Aurelius<sup>33</sup> and Lucius Verus<sup>34</sup>. The type with Faustina II on the obverse is the only specimen known to the authors, hence no further links could be detected.

## Context II: The Roman imperial types

In the previous section, it has been emphasized that the coins minted in the name of king Mannos Philorhomaioi are modelled closely after the Roman imperial coinage. Indeed, for all types – except for RPC IV/3 online no. 6493 with a legend naming king Mannos in four lines – a comparable RIC type exists<sup>35</sup>. However, while some coins are iconographically very close to the imperial coinage, others deviate. In the following, we will have a closer look at the similarities regarding the iconography of the figures on the reverses.

<sup>33</sup> It is possible that the two specimens listed under RPC IV/3 online no. 6486 in Berlin and London have the same obverse die, but the one in Berlin is too worn out (at least judging from the photo) to establish certainty.

<sup>34</sup> With paludamentum: RIC IV/3 online no. 10745 and 6493 (both probably made from the same die); without paludamentum: Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 14 (12.12.2020), lot no. 1161, see S. Günther 2021, 5.

<sup>35</sup> See S. Günther 2021, 3–5 in the right column of the tab.



Fig. 10: Silver denarius of Lucius Verus with Providentia on reverse = RIC III Marcus Aurelius no. 491, AD 162–163. 18mm, 3,36g, 11h. Obv.: *IMP(erator) L(ucius) VERVS AVG(ustus)*. Rev.: *PROV(identia) - DEOR(um) TRIB(unicia) POT(estate) III CO(n)S(ul) II.* Bochum, Kunstsammlungen der Ruhr-Universität, ID513. <https://mk-bochum.ikmk.net/object?id=ID513>. Photo: R. Dylka. CC 1.0.

The drachm showing Lucius Verus on the obverse and Providentia on the reverse (fig. 1) is obviously modelled directly after denarii minted in Rome. RIC III M. Aurelius no. 491, a silver denarius, seems to have served as a direct model (fig. 10), matching in all details including (but not limited to) the figure's clothing and hairstyle; only the shape of the cornucopia varies slightly. According to Verus' titles, this type was minted in AD 163<sup>36</sup>, however, denarii and aurei with the very same iconography with Marcus Aurelius on the obverse run from approximately AD 161 to 164<sup>37</sup>, and those with Lucius Verus from AD 161 to 163<sup>38</sup>. The type was thus quite common in Roman imperial coinage.

Equally analogous in composition to the imperial coinage is the drachm with Faustina II on the obverse and Iuno on the reverse (RPC IV/3 online no. 6487, fig. 5); for instance, the Faustina II-Iuno drachm is closely comparable to a silver denarius minted for Faustina II in Rome (fig. 11). The goddess

36 3<sup>rd</sup> *tribunicia potestas*, which Verus held from AD 10. 12. 162–9. 12. 163. See Kienast 2017, 136.

37 Aurei: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 19–21; denarii: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 22–25. 47–52. 66–73. 95–97; quinarii: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 57; aes: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 812–816. 833. One sestertius-type dates, however, much later, AD 171–172: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1045.

38 Aurei: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 460–462. 490 f. 497; denarii: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 463–465. 482–485; quinarii: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 467. 468. 490. 497; aes: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 1303–1306.



Fig. 11: Silver denarius of Marcus Aurelius with Faustina II on obverse and Iuno on reverse = RIC III Marcus Aurelius no. 688, AD 161–175. 17.5 mm, 3.76g, 11h. Obv.: *FAVSTINA AVGVSTA*. Rev.: *IVNO*. American Numismatic Society 1911.23.344. <https://numismatics.org/collection/1911.23.344>. Public Domain.

wears a long dress with overfall, while a veil covers her head and shoulders. She stands to the left, holding a scepter in her left hand and a patera in her right hand. To her left, a peacock is added as her typical attribute (an attribute which is missing on the Mannos Philorhomaios-types with Lucilla on obverse). The only deviation are two spherical balls added to Iuno's scepter on the Mannos-type, all other details perfectly coincide. In the imperial coinage, the standing Iuno with peacock – in the schema described – appears on several types minted for Faustina II<sup>39</sup> and Lucilla<sup>40</sup>; it is even employed for one as-type of Lucius Verus<sup>41</sup>. It complements coins showing enthroned Iuno with the very same attributes<sup>42</sup>.

The Mannos-types with military topic are modelled closely to the imperial coinage as well. Images of Victoria flying to the left (not standing on globe, as is also a common motif<sup>43</sup>), holding a wreath and palm-branch are numerous in gold, silver and aes coins among the types devoted to Lucius Verus, mostly

39 Denarii: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 688 (“Iuno”). 694–696 (“Iunoni reginae”); aureus: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 691 (“Iunoni lucinae”, without peacock!); aes: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 1645–1647 (“Iuno”). 1648 (“Iunoni reginae”). 1651f. (“Iunoni reginae”).

40 Denarii: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 772 (“Iuno regina”); aes: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 1744f. (“Iuno”). 1750–1752 (“Iuno regina”).

41 RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1496 (“Iuno”) (without ill.).

42 For Lucilla: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 770. 1746f.

43 E.g., RIC III M. Aurelius no. 520 (denarius dating to AD 164).

dating to AD 167<sup>44</sup> – also one denarius and one quinarius-type<sup>45</sup> dating to AD 164 and 165, respectively. Mars standing to the right, holding a spear and shield (RPC IV/3 online no. 6486, fig. 4) was also minted for Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus in the imperial coinage from AD 164/165 onwards<sup>46</sup>.

Ceres standing to the left, holding corn-ears in her right hand and a scepter or long torch in her left, as displayed on PRC IV/3 online no. 8629 (fig. 6, with Lucilla on obverse), can be found in the very same scheme in the imperial mint; however, during Marcus Aurelius' reign only one denarius-type and one as-type for Faustina II carry this scheme<sup>47</sup>. On the Roman coins, she holds a torch (the different sections of the torch and its flames are always visible), while the staff on the Mannos-type shows no sections; the top of the specimen kept in the British Museum is unfortunately lost since the coin is partly broken, thus it cannot be decided whether a flame was depicted or not (fig. 6)<sup>48</sup>. The Mannos-type with Ceres seated to the left, holding corn-ears and a long torch with visible flames (RPC IV/3 online no. 6489 with Lucilla on obverse), can also be compared with a few imperial coin-types; however, they were only minted for Faustina II, and in all cases Ceres sits on a cista instead of on a throne<sup>49</sup>.

Salus, sitting on a throne to the left while feeding a snake coiled around an altar with a patera (PRC IV/3 online no. 17203, Lucilla on obverse), is also present in the imperial Roman coinage. Several types in gold, silver and aes

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44 Denarii: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 574 f.; golden quinar: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 569; quinarii: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 570. 579; aurei: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 572 f. Referring to his 7<sup>th</sup> *tribunicia potestas*, which he held from AD 10. 12. 166–09. 12. 167, see Kienast 2017, 136.

45 RIC III M. Aurelius no. 521. Referring to his 4<sup>th</sup> *tribunicia potestas*, which he held from AD 10. 12. 163–09. 12. 164, see Kienast 2017, 136; quinarius: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 538, 5<sup>th</sup> *tribunicia potestas*, which he held from AD 10. 12. 164–09. 12. 165.

46 Marcus Aurelius: denarii: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 91–93 (referring to M. Aurelius' 18<sup>th</sup> *tribunicia potestas*, which he held from AD 10. 12. 163–9. 12. 164, see Kienast 2017, 132). 119–120 (same time period). 121–124 (referring to M. Aurelius' 19<sup>th</sup> *tribunicia potestas*, which he held from AD 10. 12. 164–9. 12. 165, see Kienast 2017, 132).

47 Denarius: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 668; as: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1619. The same figure appears on coins minted for Faustina I under Antoninus Pius: denarii: RIC III Antoninus Pius nos. 360a and d; aureus: RIC III Antoninus Pius no. 378a; aes (sestertius): RIC III Antoninus Pius no. 1128.

48 Photo available online: <https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/4/8629> (31. 05. 2024).

49 Denarius: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 669; aes: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1620–1624, among them with long torch or scepter only nos. 1621 and 1622. Same schema used for Faustina I: denarius: RIC III Antoninus Pius no. 379; aes: RIC III Antoninus Pius nos. 1169 f.



were minted for Faustina II<sup>50</sup>, and one denarius-type as well as one as-type for Lucilla<sup>51</sup>. Among the coins struck for Lucius Verus, one as-type with this iconography of Salus exists, dating to AD 162<sup>52</sup>. Interestingly, in the Roman imperial coinage, Salus never holds a cornucopia, while this attribute is added to the Mannos-type. As far as the state of preservation and quality of photos available allow to say, the shape of the cornucopia of Salus<sup>53</sup> and Providentia (fig. 1) are very close: a horn with wide opening in which several layers of spheres, representing the fruits, are depicted.

It has been suggested above that RPC IV/3 online no. 6488 with Lucilla on obverse falls into two groups (equaling two reverse dies): one with an unveiled goddess holding patera and scepter or long torch and wearing a cloak over a long tunic (“Ceres (?)”, group 1); the other with a goddess holding patera and scepter with her cloak draped on her shoulders (group 2, including the reverse of RPC IV/3 online no. 10745 with Verus on obverse). While Ceres does not appear without corn-ears in the imperial coinage (see above) – thus the identification could be questioned – the deity as shown in type 2 simply equals the representations of Iuno with patera, scepter and peacock, however leaving the peacock as an attribute aside. Such an iconography exists in the imperial coinage for Faustina II, however, only in one aureus-type<sup>54</sup>. The figure is named “Iuno Lucina” in the legend. Since it seems unlikely that the Mannos Philorhomaïos-drachm was modelled after a rare aureus-type for Faustina II, it is worth taking a further look at deities with patera and scepter on Roman imperial coins. Indeed, such a figure was employed to represent a number of personifications and deities, due to its rather undefined attributes, allowing for a certain level of polyvalency. According to the respective legends, this standing figure could represent Pietas<sup>55</sup>, Fecunditas<sup>56</sup> or Clementia<sup>57</sup>.

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50 Denarii: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 713f.; aurei: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 716f.; aes: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 1667–1671.

51 Denarius: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 782; aes (as): RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1760.

52 RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1324 (referring to his 2<sup>nd</sup> *tribunicia potestas* which he held from AD 10.12.161–09.12.162, see Kienast 2017, 136). Cf. also RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1498 (sestertius minted for Lucius Verus after his death). One denarius-type was struck for Marcus Aurelius, but later in AD 170–171: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 235.

53 S. Günther 2021, 13 fig. 6.

54 RIC III M. Aurelius no. 691 (without ill.).

55 Denarius RIC III M. Aurelius no. 380 (M. Aurelius, AD 177); aes: RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 1212. 1223 (M. Aurelius, AD 176/177).

56 RIC III M. Aurelius no. 768 (denarius for Lucilla, without ill.).

57 RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 1158–1161 (sestertii).

Summing up the observations made by iconographic analysis, one comes to the following conclusions: (1) The Mannos Philorhomaioi-types are surprisingly close to the motifs used in Roman imperial coinage and only deviate in minor details, mostly the attributes of the deities shown on reverse, and the hairstyle of Lucilla – an exception to this being RPC IV/3 online no. 6493 (L. Verus) with the legend *BACIAE/YC MANN/OC ΦΙΑΟΠ/ΩΜΑΙ(Ο)C* in four lines on the reverse (fig. 3). It is interesting to note that this type emphasizes a strong link between Mannos Philorhomaioi and Lucius Verus. (2) The coin types with Lucilla on the obverse exceed the other coin types – both in the number of types and also in the number of known specimens. Lucilla's hairstyle is a variation of Faustina II's official portrait, and all types share the same obverse die. The model employed for the Mannos-type with Faustina on the obverse – which was also present in the imperial coinage probably from AD 162 onwards – was Faustina II's 8<sup>th</sup> portrait type. (3) The iconography of some types is exactly the same as that which appears in Roman coinage, including the type with Marcus Aurelius on the obverse (Mars on reverse, RPC IV/3 online no. 6486), Faustina II on the obverse (Iuno with peacock, RPC IV/3 online no. 6487), and Lucilla on the obverse (Victoria on reverse, RPC IV/3 online no. 9619; Ceres with corn-ears standing, RPC IV/3 online no. 8629<sup>58</sup>). Others deviate in terms of attributes: Providentia and Salus have cornucopia added (L. Verus on obverse, not yet in PRC<sup>59</sup>; Lucilla on obverse, RPC IV/3 online no. 17203); Ceres sits on a throne instead of on a cista (Lucilla on obverse, RPC IV/3 online no. 6489). (4) The types with Lucilla on obverse include a deity with patera and scepter which is usually identified with Iuno, but is rather unspecific. This also includes type RPC IV/3 online no. 6488, which should be divided into two groups. The goddess of group 1 is often thought to hold a long torch and thus to possibly be Ceres. However, since Ceres does not appear without corn-ears in Roman imperial coinage, the figure should rather be addressed as an unidentifiable deity with patera and scepter, this also appears in group 2 and RPC IV/3 online no. 8628. The staff of the deity in group 1 might have been cut imprecisely – since all types share the same reverse die this cannot be decided. The goddess of group 2 was combined also with the portrait of Lucius Verus on the obverse (also same reverse die). (5) The number of die links is stunning, given the small number of specimens. (6) As far as dating is possible, the imperial coins taken

58 Although one has to note that the staff in the left hand is damaged on the only known example in the British Museum, as stated above and illustrated in fig. 6.

59 Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 14 (12.12.2020), lot no. 1161, see S. Günther 2021, 5.

as models were mostly circulating around AD 163–165. The coins with the reverses with Mars and Victoria, especially, point the dating more towards AD 165. Although one must be cautious about postulating too confident a dating, since both motifs were already present under Antoninus Pius<sup>60</sup>, this fits the assumption that Mannos Philorhomaïos is to be identified with Ma'nu VIII and that he became Roman-installed king of Oshroene from around AD 165 onwards.

This all points to the fact that the Mannos Philorhomaïos-types were indeed designed to look Roman at first glance – to frame their audience in such a way – but not to just reproduce the Roman imperial coinage with a little local taste. Rather at second gaze, they seem to follow an original concept with regard to both legend and imagery. This assumption is confirmed once one compares the iconography of the reverses linked with Lucilla on the obverse and the spectrum of coins minted for Lucilla by the imperial mint. In the imperial coinage, Lucilla appears with the following deities: Ceres (2 types in aes<sup>61</sup>, one with a seated Ceres is very different from RPC IV/3 online no. 6489), Concordia (11 types), Diana Lucifera (4 types), Fecunditas (9 types), Hilaritas (5 types), Iuno (12 types, including Iuno Lucina and Iuno Regina), Laetitia (1 type), Magna Mater (2 types), Pietas (7 types), Pudicitia (6 types), Salus (3 types), Venus (22 types, including Venus Victrix and Venus Genetrix) and Vesta (5 types)<sup>62</sup>. This choice of deities is rather typical for the wife of an emperor during the later 2<sup>nd</sup> and early 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD, especially Concordia – the embodiment of harmonious marriage – and Venus, Fecunditas, Hilaritas, Pietas and Pudicitia which would ascribe the ideal qualities of the imperial family to the respective woman on the obverse. The Mannos Philorhomaïos-types, in contrast, display quite a different spectrum. Iuno, as the second frequent goddess linked to Lucilla in the Roman coinage, appears without the peacock – instead being transformed into a multipurpose deity. Victoria (RPC IV/3 online no. 9619) is usually not combined with Lucilla's portrait; however, she appears on provincial coins for Lucilla and Faustina II<sup>63</sup>.

The question remains why the portrait type used for Lucilla does not align with her official hairstyle, in particular as the die cutter(s) seem to have been so well informed about the contemporary Roman imperial coinage.

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60 Cf., e.g., RIC II Antoninus Pius no. 113A (aureus) and 609 (denarius).

61 Seated: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1728 (sestertius); standing: RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1729 (as).

62 Cf. also n. 22.

63 S. Günther 2021, 4 with references.

Furthermore, they modified Faustina II's 8<sup>th</sup> portrait type in a unique way. It appears that the die cutter(s) created a new type which did not connect to the Roman imperial coinage, using instead Faustina II on the Mannos Philorhomaios-coins as a point of reference. While it might not have been obvious for the audience that Lucilla's hairstyle was a deviation from her official portrait, at least those seeing the portraits of Faustina II and Lucilla jointly in this group of coins would be framed to understand them as closely belonging together, Lucilla being something like a younger version of Faustina II, which might also be reflected in Lucilla's calmer facial expression. The name and title of both empresses are indeed parallelized and even placed accordingly with each other, with the *CEBACTH* starting at the forehead, with a small sigma at the beginning of the word.

If one compares the portraits of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus, as displayed on the Mannos Philorhomaios-types, they are also modelled extremely close after each other; in respect to hairstyle and beard (with single strands loosening from the mass of hair) as well as to their facial features.

This impression of a finely tuned system of visual and textual references is confirmed by the reverses chosen. Mars, arguably the most important god with relation to the Parthian war, adorns the coin with Marcus on the obverse; Iuno, as the highest goddess, depicted on the coin with Faustina II. The figure of Iuno without peacock, leaving space for polyvalency, was used for Lucilla. The higher number of types and the combination of Victoria on the reverse of RPC IV/3 online no. 9619 – a goddess significantly important in the military context and somehow corresponding to Mars – indicates that Lucilla is not presented to be less important than her sister-in-law. The fact that Lucius Verus does not stand behind his brother and co-emperor Marcus Aurelius, is made clear by the coin type with Mannos' name in four lines on the reverse (RPC IV/3 online no. 6493). The reverse deities combined with Verus and Lucilla (Ceres, Iuno (?), Providentia, Salus) easily fit into the imperial scope of the Mannos Philorhomaios-coins.

### Context III: The *hyper nikēs*-types

Given the fact that there is strong evidence but no definite proof to identify Mannos Philorhomaios with Ma'nu VIII and the location of the mint remains uncertain, a comparison of both coinages on a local level is problematic. Nevertheless, there is a group of coins which bears strikingly similar design features; namely, the so-called *hyper nikēs*-coins – said to be minted



Fig. 12: Silver drachm, *hyper nikēs*-type with Marcus Aurelius on obverse and Mars on reverse. Not yet in RPC. 16.5 mm, 2.6 g, 6 h (?). Obv.: ΑΥΤ(οκρατωρ) Κ(αισαρ) Μ(αρκος) ΑΥΡ(ηλιος) ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟΣ. Rev.: ΥΠΕΡ ΝΙΚΗΣ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ. Pecunem | Numismatik Naumann (formerly Gitbud & Naumann), Gitbud & Naumann Auction 6 (04. 08. 2013), lot. No. 303. <https://www.coinarchives.com/a/openlink.php?l=592306|1066|303|9980f64c8127a57a55471d1e1a5ab464>.

in Carrhae, or at least in Mesopotamia<sup>64</sup>. This group consists of silver coins (aes coins of that type appear only later for Commodus) with either the legend ΥΠΕΡ ΝΙΚΗΣ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ or ΥΠΕΡ ΝΙΚΗΣ ΤΩΝ ΚΥΡΙΩΝ *vel sim.* on the reverse<sup>65</sup>, and either Marcus Aurelius, Faustina II, Lucius Verus or Lucilla on the obverse. The range of reverse types is broader compared with the Mannos Philorhomaioi-types<sup>66</sup>, including a reverse type which is modelled after the depiction of defeated Armenia on the reverse of the coins minted for Lucius Verus in and after AD 163<sup>67</sup>. A number of types are iconographically very close to the Mannos Philorhomaioi-coins, although showing some deviations. The type with Marcus Aurelius on the obverse and Mars on the reverse (RPC IV/3 online no. 6486; fig. 4), which was also common in the imperial coinage, has an equivalent amongst the *hyper nikēs*-types<sup>68</sup> (fig. 12).

The same is to be said regarding the type with Iuno holding scepter and patera next to a peacock on the reverse and Faustina II on the obverse (RPC

64 See S. Günther 2021, 6–11, with n. 16. For the types, see Hill 1922, p. xcviif. and p. 137–139, and in RPC online (“uncertain mint in Mesopotamia”).

65 See Hill 1922, p. xcix.

66 For a list of the known types, see S. Günther 2021, 7–9.

67 Hill 1922, p. xcix, p. 137 no. 2 with pl. XIX, 6. Modelled after, e.g., RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 498–506.

68 Not yet included in the RPC. Pecunem | Numismatik Naumann, Gitbud & Naumann auction 6 (04. 08. 2013), lot. no. 303, not yet in RPC (M. Aurelius): fig. 12.



Fig. 13: Silver drachm, *hyper nikēs*-type with Lucilla on obverse and Ceres on reverse, not yet in RPC. 18mm, 3.03g, 6h. Obv.: ΛΟΥΚΙΜΑ CEBACTH. Rev: ΥΠΕΡ ΝΙΚΗΣ ΤΩΝ ΚΥΠΙΩΝ.

Auctiones GmbH, eAuction 50 (11.09.2016), lot no. 136. <https://www.coinarchives.com/a/openlink.php?l=1710690|3876|136|279f2d62ff02066e15f65515a48579d3>.

IV/3 online no. 6487)<sup>69</sup>. Iuno without peacock and without veil – as shown on RPC IV/3 online no. 8628 and 6488 (group 2) with Lucilla on obverse, and 10745 with L. Verus on obverse (figs. 7–9) – which exists in the RIC only in one aureus-type (see discussion above), is present on three *hyper nikēs*-types: RPC IV/3 online nos. 8030 (M. Aurelius on obverse), 6499 (Faustina II on obverse) and 10707 (Lucilla on obverse). A Ceres with patera and long torch neither exists in RIC nor in *hyper nikēs*-types, which re-affirms the assumption that the goddess on the reverse of RPC IV/3 online no. 6488 group 1 (Lucilla on obverse, fig. 2) should likely not be identified as Ceres. While a seated Ceres is missing among the *hyper nikēs*-types, a standing Ceres with corn-ears is combined each with Lucius Verus, Marcus Aurelius and Lucilla on the obverse<sup>70</sup>. The reverse iconography is strikingly similar to the Mannos Philorhomaïos-types (cf. fig. 13).

The cornucopia, which were added to the Mannos Philorhomaïos-coins in contrast to the imperial types, are also present on the *hyper nikēs*-types

69 Not yet included in the RPC. CNG, electronic auction 322 (12.03.2014), lot no. 483; CNG electronic auction 444 (15.05.2019), wrongly attributed to Mannos (Faustina II).

70 RPC IV/3 online no. 6501 (L. Verus, with altar added on the left); Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 14 (12.12.2020) lot no. 1158 (M. Aurelius), see S. Günther 2021, 8 n. 44; Auctiones GmbH, eAuction 50 (11.09.2016), lot no. 136 (Lucilla), see S. Günther 2021, 9 n. 56.



Fig. 14: Silver drachm, *hyper nikēs*-type with Faustina II on obverse and Providentia on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 10749. 17 mm, 2.75 g, 6 h. Obv.: ΦΑ[ΥCΤΙΝΑΝ?] [C]EΒΑCΤΗΝ. Rev.: ΥΠΕΡ ΝΙΚΗC Ρ-ΩΜΑΙΩΝ.  
Münzkabinett der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, 18312525, 1900 Imhoof-Blumer. <https://ikmk.smb.museum/object?id=18312525>. Photo: B. Weisser. CC BY SA 4.0.

with Providentia<sup>71</sup> (fig. 14) and Salus; however, the horn-of-plenty of Salus is standing on the ground (with Faustina II, not Lucilla on the obverse)<sup>72</sup>.

Besides an enthroned Salus, a standing Salus feeding the snake is also to be found among the *hyper nikēs*-types<sup>73</sup>, while this type does not exist amongst the Mannos Philorhomaioi-coins – or at least it is currently not known to have existed in the production of the Mannos Philorhomaioi-coins. A type with flying Victoria is possibly related to the *hyper nikēs*-reverses, however, standing on a globe (as it is common in the Roman imperial coinage)<sup>74</sup> and facing right instead to the left<sup>75</sup>. A reverse similar to the four lines legend on the obverse of RPC IV/3 online no. 6493 is not known for the *hyper nikēs*-types.

Similar to the result in the previous section, the Mannos Philorhomaioi-types are surprisingly similar in design to the *hyper nikēs*-types. This gives more weight to the assumption that both groups were minted in relative geographical proximity and that the Roman imperial coinage was a model for both groups. However, there are clear differences. The die axis of

71 RPC IV/3 online nos. 9577 (M. Aurelius); 10747 (M. Aurelius); 8028 (M. Aurelius); 6496 (M. Aurelius); 10749 (Faustina II); 11634 (Faustina II); 6498 (Faustina II); 8036 (Lucilla); Numismatik Lanz, auction 106 (27.11.2001) lot no. 478 (Faustina II), see S. Günther 2021, 8 n. 50; CNG electronic auction 322 (12.03.2014) lot no. 484, see S. Günther 2021, 8 n. 54 (L. Verus).

72 RPC IV/3 online no. 10754 (Faustina II).

73 RPC IV/3 online no. 9919 and 10753.

74 See n. 43.

75 RPC IV/3 online no. 6494 (M. Aurelius). The reverse legend is *H ΝΕΙΚΗ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ*.

the *hyper nikēs*-coins is generally set at 12 o'clock, while the one of the Mannos-coins is usually set at 6 o'clock. This suggests that they were not minted in the same workshop, or at least not in the same production chain<sup>76</sup>. Furthermore, the Mannos Philorhomaioi-coins are very homogeneous in style; their woodcarving-like strokes are particular and differ from the style of the *hyper nikēs*-coins which are closer to Roman imperial coinage; comparing the types with Mars on the reverse may illustrate this clear difference (fig. 4 vs. fig. 12). In addition, the extraordinary number of die links between the Mannos Philorhomaioi-types are missing among the *hyper nikēs*-types.

Let us take a further look at the spectrum of reverses in combination with Lucilla in the *hyper nikēs*-coinage. They are (1) standing Venus with apple and sceptre<sup>77</sup> (fig. 15); (2) standing Iuno (?) with patera and scepter<sup>78</sup>; (3) Providentia with globe and cornucopia<sup>79</sup> (fig. 14); (4) standing Venus with apple, lifting her clothes;<sup>80</sup> and (5) standing Ceres with corn-ears and scepter<sup>81</sup> (fig. 13). In accordance with the Roman coins, Venus is the prevalent goddess chosen. The coiffeurs of Lucilla are not part of Lucilla's official portraiture – as in the case of the Mannos Philorhomaioi-types – but instead follow Faustina II. While some are close to Faustina II's first type<sup>82</sup>, others align with her 8<sup>th</sup> type<sup>83</sup>, which is also a parallel to the Mannos Philorhomaioi-coins<sup>84</sup>.

76 S. Günther 2021, 9.

77 RPC IV/3 online no. 6502, see S. Günther 2021, 8 n. 40.

78 RPC IV/3 online no. 10707, see S. Günther 2021, 8 n. 41.

79 RPC IV/3 online no. 8036, see S. Günther 2021, 8 n. 42.

80 Not yet in RPC: Leu Numismatik AG, web auction 14 (12. 12. 2020), lot no. 1162, see S. Günther 2021, 9 n. 55.

81 Not yet in RPC: Auciones GmbH, eAuktion 50 (11.109.2016), lot no. 136, see S. Günther 2021, 9 n. 56.

82 RIC IV/3 online nos. 6502 (fig. 14) and 17214.

83 But without variation like it is the case on the Mannos Philorhomaioi-coins (melon-like structure on top); cf. RIC IV/3 online nos. 10707 and, probably, 8036 (very worn out); and the specimen referred to in ns. 81 and 82. For Faustina's first type, see Fittschen 1982, 44–48, who dates it to AD 149 (see Fittschen 1982, 43). For the 8<sup>th</sup> type, see n. 14.

84 The hairstyles of Faustina II on the *hyper nikēs*-types are the following: (1) rather loose wavy hair running from top to neck in parallel lines, low knot (cf. RPC online no. 10719), resembling the 5<sup>th</sup> type of Faustina II as defined by K. Fittschen (Fittschen 1982, 40f., dating it to AD 162: Fittschen 1982, 43); cf. Niederhuber 2022, 48: 153/154, p. 36: very close to Lucilla's second type. (2) bundles of wavy hair running from top to neck in parallel lines (cf. RPC online no. 10753), resembling the 7<sup>th</sup> type of Faustina II as defined by K. Fittschen (Fittschen 1982, 42f., dating it to AD 161, since it is linked, as also in the *hyper nikēs*-types (RPC online no. 3498)





Fig. 15: Silver drachm, *hyper nikēs*-type with Lucilla on obverse and Venus on reverse = RPC IV/3 online no. 6502. 18 mm, 3.51 g, 6 h. Obv.: ΛΟΥΚΙΛΛΑ ΣΕΒΑΣΤΗ. Rev: [ΥΠΕΡ] ΝΙΚΗΣ ΡΩΜΑΙΩΝ.

British Museum online collection, 692539001. G.2425. <https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/image/692539001>. CC BY SA 4.0. © The Trustees of the British Museum.

Due to the higher number of reverse types, it seems that although the Mannos Philorhomaïos-types are linked to the *hyper nikēs*-types, they were created as an independent, closed group with special emphasis on Lucius Verus and Lucilla. It has even been suggested that it is possible that they were designed to celebrate the wedding of Verus and Lucilla in Ephesus<sup>85</sup>. However, the date of this event is unclear. It might have taken place in AD 163 or 164 (see introduction with n. 8). The same chronological uncertainty applies to the period in which the Mannos Philorhomaïos-types were minted. If we assume that the workshop adopted the current reverse types in the imperial Roman coinage, we might come to a period between AD 163–165 (most likely AD 165), which fits to the assumed chronology of Mannos Philorhomaïos/Ma’nu VIII. A connection to the (successful) end of the Parthian war and Lucius Verus’ triumph (AD 165/166), however, is also possible. What is striking with regard to the iconography of the Mannos Philorhomaïos-coins for Lucilla – especially in comparison to the Roman imperial coinage and the *hyper nikēs*-types – is that motifs usually linked to marriage are missing,

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with the birth of the imperial twins. This dating is also confirmed by Niederhuber 2022, 48, who, however, links it with Marcus Aurelius’ accession.

85 This was the hypothesis of the oral presentation “The Antonine Denarii from Mesopotamia” by Edward Dandrow (University of California) in section “S 49. Rome 15. Finds and Circulation 2” at the XVI International Numismatic Congress 2022 in Warsaw, see: <https://indico3.conference4me.psn.pl/event/6/contributions/516/> (30.04.2024).

particularly Concordia, but also Venus and Fecunditas. The polyvalency of some figures may have allowed them to fit into varying occasions. It is therefore likely that the Mannos Philorhomaïos-coins did not only honor the imperial family – especially Lucius Verus and Lucilla being ‘present’ in that region at that time – but also, economic needs being prevalent, is connected to the presence of Roman troops in Mesopotamia<sup>86</sup>.

## Conclusion

The Mannos Philorhomaïos-types form a distinct group, standing out due to their homogeneous design and carving style, establishing a system of subtly balanced visual and textual elements. Only the portraits of the imperial family – Marcus Aurelius, Faustina II, Lucius Verus and Lucilla – are present, and on the reverse a limited number of deities. One type for Lucius Verus with the title of Mannos Philorhomaïos on the reverse stands out and emphasizes the importance of Verus. Lucilla is also in focus since a relatively high number of types bear her portrait on the obverse (6 out of 11) and more specimens for these than for any other type are known to date. It seems likely, therefore, that the coins were produced in relation to the Parthian war since Osrhoene – provided that Mannos Philorhomaïos is identical with Ma’nu VIII – was affected by the conflict of these two powerful empires on its borders.

The reason for Mannos Philorhomaïos minting these distinct coins is unclear and cannot be verified. A hint, however, may lie in the surprisingly high number of die links. It may be an indicator of a high production rate within a short time span. This might have taken place, as the comparison with the reverse types with Roman imperial types suggests, between AD 163–165 – while AD 165 seems more likely to the authors, an even later date cannot be excluded.

A possible explanation for the production of this distinct coinage output is the need of Mannos Philorhomaïos, having been probably installed by the Romans as Osrhoenian king, to pay Roman troops with silver, produced in a local mint; a connection to the marriage of Lucius Verus and Lucilla cannot be denied, although the iconography (especially the selection of personifications) does not fully fit such an occasion. Notably, however, neither explanation is mutually exclusive. Whether the die cutter(s) were trained by the Romans (e.g., being delegated by the Roman army), or whether they used

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86 S. Günther 2021, 10.

coins in circulation as models or possibly pattern books, cannot be answered. This we understand as the ‘First Gaze’, i.e. the adaptation of the framework of Roman imperial coins, likely addressing the soldiers as a (primary?) Roman audience.

At the same time, whoever composed the Mannos Philorhomaïos-types, did not wish or need to fully follow the Roman model, as minor deviations in the portrait types and the attributes of the reverse deities indicate. These deviations from the imperial coinage should therefore, not be understood as mistakes or misunderstandings of the respective types, but as their own creations – aligning with the practice we find on the *hyper nikēs*-types and in the Roman provincial coinage in general<sup>87</sup>.

Thus, a ‘Second Gaze’ from a local – or non-Roman – perspective on the coins is intended, framing a respective audience. Such an audience could be local clients of the kind, e.g. a local elite or even non-Roman troops – here we can only speculate.

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87 Cf. RPC IV/4 online no. 3096; Howgego 2023, 446 f. no. 3096 with pl. 233, an aes coin minted in Alexandria with Lucilla on obverse, dating to AD 167/168. The reverse shows a standing figure holding corn-ears, closely following the iconography of Ceres as discussed above. The cornucopia is, however, added as additional attribute, held in her left arm. The legend refers, nonetheless, to *ΕΥΘΗΝΙΑ* (Fecunditas). The unusual high degree of adaption of Roman imperial coin imagery in the provincial coinage of Egypt is discussed by Chris Howgego in the printed version of RPC IV/4: Howgego 2023, 104–112. Overall, the connections between the imperial mint in Rome, the provincial mint in Egypt and the mints used during the Parthian campaign awaits further investigation.

## Appendix: Comparison of reverse iconography between the Mannos Philorhomaios, RIC and *hyper nikēs*-types

Reverse iconography	Mannos-type	RIC-type	<i>hyper nikēs</i> -type
Mars with helmet standing to the right, holding spear and shield	RPC IV/3 online no. 6486 (M. Aurelius on obverse)	e. g., RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 91 –93. 119 –124 (denarii for M. Aurelius; also minted for L. Verus)	not yet in RPC; Pecunem   Numismatik Naumann, Gitbud & Naumann auction 6 (04. 08. 2013), lot. no. 303
Veiled Iuno with scepter and patera, peacock	RPC IV/3 online no. 6487 (Faustina II on obverse)	e. g., RIC III M. Aurelius no. 688. 694–696 (for Faustina II)	not yet in RPC; CNG, electronic auction 322 (12. 03. 2014) lot no. 483; CNG electronic auction 444 (15. 05. 2019), wrongly attributed to Mannos (Faustina II)
Iuno with scepter and patera; without peacock	RPC IV/3 online no. 8628 (Lucilla on obverse); RPC online no. 6488 group 2 (Lucilla on obverse); 10745 (L. Verus on obverse)	RIC III M. Aurelius no. 691 (" <i>Iunoni lucinae</i> ", aureus for Faustina II)	RPC IV/3 online no. 8030 (M. Aurelius); 6499 (Faustina II); 10707 (Lucilla)
Ceres (?) with patera and long torch (?)	RPC IV/3 online no. 6488 group 1 (Lucilla on obverse)	–	–
Ceres standing with corn-ears and scepter (?)	RPC IV/3 online no. 8629 (Lucilla on obverse)	RIC III M. Aurelius no. 668 (denarius for M. Aurelius); RIC III M. Aurelius no. 1619 (as for Faustina II)	RPC IV/3 online no. 6501 (L. Verus, altar added to the left)
Ceres seated with corn-ears and scepter	RPC IV/3 online no. 6489 (Lucilla on obverse)	RIC III M. Aurelius no. 669 (denarius for Faustina II) Ceres seated on cista	–
Victoria with wreath and palm-branch to left	RPC IV/3 online no. 9619 (Lucilla on obverse)	RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 520 f.	RPC IV/3 online no. 6494 (M. Aurelius; standing on globe and flying to the right)

Reverse iconography	Mannos-type	RIC-type	<i>hyper nikēs</i> -type
Providentia standing with cornucopia and globe	Leu Numismatik AG, Web auction 14 (12. 12. 2020), lot no. 1161 (L. Verus on obverse)	e. g., RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 22–25 (L. Verus)	RPC IV/3 online nos. 9577. 10747. 8028. 6496 (M. Aurelius); 10749. 1163. 6498 (Faustina II); 8036 (Lucilla)
Salus seated, feeding snake with patera in right hand, scepter in left hand	PRC IV/3 online no. 17203 (with Lucilla on obverse) cornucopia in left arm	e. g., RIC III M. Aurelius nos. 713 f. (denarii for Faustina II); e. g. RIC III M. Aurelius no. 782 (denarius for Lucilla) no cornucopia	RPC IV/3 online no. 10754 (Faustina II) cornucopia standing on ground

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Nicole Berlin

## Reconstructing the Renovation of House B at Tyndaris

**Abstract** By the reign of Emperor Augustus (27 BC–14 AD) the houses of Sicily, Rome’s first province, had witnessed centuries of Punic, Hellenistic, and Roman cultural exchange. As the needs of their owners changed, these residences underwent multiple renovations including alterations to their architecture, frescoes, and mosaics. Homeowners actively selected which decorative elements to keep, discard, or add to the domestic ensemble. What was the effect, on owner and visitor alike, of moving through these renovated spaces? And, more importantly, how did such decisions allow Sicilian residents to shape their identity within a culturally heterogeneous population? In this article I focus on the 1st cent. AD, when Sicily became culturally integrated into the Roman Empire and numerous houses throughout the island were renovated to include decorative elements *en vogue* on the Italian mainland. I examine the renovation of House B at Tyndaris, which is emblematic of this cultural shift in Sicily. House B features both a Hellenistic-style polychrome mosaic from the house’s first phase in the 2nd cent. BC, as well as Roman or Italic black and white pavements installed in the mid-1st cent. AD. I argue that the juxtaposition of Hellenistic and Roman-style elements within Sicilian houses was a deliberate and desired phenomenon, one that allowed Sicilian residents to self-consciously communicate their multicultural heritage through the décor of their houses.

### Introduction

Around 50 AD the owner of House B at Tyndaris, a city on Sicily’s northeast coast, renovated their house. Black and white geometric mosaics, already *en vogue* on the Italian mainland, replaced mortar floors in every room but one – a reception space, known as room 7, decorated with an intricate polychrome mosaic from the house’s Hellenistic phase. Why did House B’s owner leave

room 7's mosaic intact while altering the rest of the residence's pavements to reflect current trends? To begin, we can consider how ancient buildings served as a physical link between the past and present for those who moved through them. Such spaces allow us to analyze the connection between architecture, history, and lived experience. House B, as just one example, was continually occupied from the 2nd cent. BC through the 4th cent. AD. So, more broadly, we can ask how did a viewer's perception of the space changed over time?

In 21 BC, only a few decades before House B's renovation, the Roman Emperor Augustus designated Tyndaris a Roman *colonia* (colony). Tyndaris' new colonial status resulted in a flurry of imperial patronage and building, an influx of Roman colonists, and a direct link to the capital city of Rome. Often it is difficult to trace the impact of overarching, political changes at a smaller scale. But, given the timing of House B's renovation, we can consider the two events in tandem. In this article, I explore both the 'how' and the 'why' of House B's renovation, with a particular focus on the preserved mosaic in room 7. I suggest that the renovation, and the ways it encouraged a "second gaze," highlighted and framed the antiquity of room 7's pavement. In other words, anyone moving through House B experienced multiple phases of its history. The simultaneity of the Hellenistic past and the Roman present within House B allowed the owner to evoke Tyndaris' local history while at the same time advertising their position within the Roman provincial elite. By reconstructing the process of renovation at House B, we can better understand the local, Sicilian responses to Roman hegemony at Tyndaris.

## Tyndaris' history and urban plan

Tyndaris began as a Greek city but developed a close political relationship with Rome early on. By the Augustan era, it was one of the most prosperous Roman outposts in Sicily. Dionysius I of Syracuse founded Tyndaris (modern-day Tindari) in 396 BC as a colony for Messinian exiles who had been driven from Greece after the close of the Peloponnesian War<sup>1</sup>. In the 3rd cent. BC, Rome began to assert its presence in the Mediterranean, especially on Sicily. Although Tyndaris originally sided with Carthage against Rome during the First Punic War (264–241 BC), by 255 Roman forces had conquered the city<sup>2</sup>.

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1 Diod. 16, 69, 3.

2 Diod. 23, 18, 5. For more on the Battle of Tyndaris (257 BC) see Pol. 1, 25, 1.



In Cicero's orations against the Sicilian governor Verres, Tyndaris is singled out amongst the island's cities as "the most noble". Cicero comments on its "loyalty to, and alliance with, the Roman people"<sup>3</sup>. The city's status is further reflected in Emperor Augustus' first visit to Sicily in 21 BC, during which he made Tyndaris one of only six official Roman colonies on the island. With this new role, the city functioned as a colony where Rome settled military veterans. Tyndaris' colonial city name during the Roman period appears on a 2nd-cent. inscription as *Colonia Augusta Tyndaritanorum*<sup>4</sup>. Cicero's accounts, and the colonization of Tyndaris, imply a sustained, continued dialogue with Rome.

Tyndaris is laid out according to a Hippodamian rectangular grid. Wide main streets that run east to west (*decumani*) are crossed by narrow side streets that run north to south (*cardines*). Archaeologists have excavated only two major public monuments. The first is a theater complex, located in the southwestern part of the Tyndaris. Most likely, the theater was constructed at the beginning of the 3rd cent. BC<sup>5</sup>. Centuries later, the blocky *proskenion* was replaced with a more elaborate *scaenae frons*<sup>6</sup>. The second large public building at Tyndaris is the so-called Basilica, a massive stone building that takes the shape of a central covered hall, flanked by two passageways on either side, and spanned by nine massive arches. The function of the Basilica remains unclear, though Wilson suggests it is an amalgamation of a covered market, like that in the Forum of Trajan, and a grand propylon monumentalizing the entrance of Tyndaris' forum<sup>7</sup>. Other than the theater and Basilica, the best-preserved part of the city is Insula IV, a mostly-residential city block where House B is located.

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3 Cic. Verr. 2, 4, 84.

4 For the earliest inscriptions using Tyndaris' full colonial name, see CIL X 7474 and CIL X 7475. See also Fasolo 2013, 72–74.

5 This date is based on archaeological material and fill found within the lower foundations of the theater, including a late-4th cent. *lebes gameikos* fragment. See Bernabò Brea 1964–65, 99–144. U. Spigo, in his 2005 archaeological guide to the site, upholds this date (33).

6 U. Spigo and R. Leone 2008, 109 suggest the alteration to the theater occurred during the Flavian or Neronian period while R. Wilson believes it occurred in the late-second to early-3rd cent. AD (Wilson 1990b, 60). The updating of Hellenistic-era theaters in the Roman imperial period occurred throughout the Hellenistic East, especially at Athens and Corinth in the mid-1st cent. AD, see Welch 1999, 125–146.

7 Wilson 1990b, 55.

Insula IV, Tyndaris' only fully-excavated city block, was constructed on a series of four terraces that lead towards the Tyrrhenian Sea. It first took shape in the fourth or early-3rd cent. BC and was composed of eight to ten small lots. The entire block was re-organized in the 2nd cent. BC into four distinct lots. By the Roman imperial period, Insula IV was a multi-use city block comprised of a series of shops, a bath complex, and houses, including House B.

## The renovation of House B

House B was constructed in the late-2nd or early-1st cent. BC and underwent a major renovation in the mid-1st cent. AD (fig. 1). This means the house had two distinct phases – the 2nd cent. BC until the mid-1st cent. AD renovation, then the 1st cent. AD through the fourth cent. AD, when an earthquake destroyed much of Tyndaris. Archaeologists found a coin dating to 41 AD, from the reign of Emperor Claudius, below the courtyard's shallow pool (*impluvium*). Therefore, the renovation of House B likely occurred between 40 and 60 AD<sup>8</sup>.

During the renovation, the entrance of House B moved from *cardo d* to *cardo e*, which means the entire circulatory pattern though the space reversed between the first and second phases. In addition, the owner replaced most of the floor pavements from the first phase with black and white mosaics, a style that was popular on the Italian mainland. However, the Hellenistic pavement of room 7 remained intact, although its doorway was shifted during the renovation. The black and white mosaics of House B find parallels in the mid-1st century houses of Pompeii, further supporting the proposed renovation date<sup>9</sup>.

A 'walk' through House B after the 1st cent. AD renovation sets the stage for our analysis. During the Roman period, or second phase, a visitor to House B would have entered from *cardo e* into a narrow, square shaped entry room or vestibule (8). After turning a full ninety degrees to the north, one enters into the courtyard or peristyle. At the center of this space there was a rectangular garden with a pool (*impluvium*) surrounded by four columns on each side, which are no longer extant. The entirety of House B's peristyle is now covered over for the sake of preservation. All twelve columns

8 Von Boeselager 1983, 85.

9 Von Boeselager 1983, 85; Wilson 1990b, 122; Spigo 2005, 46.

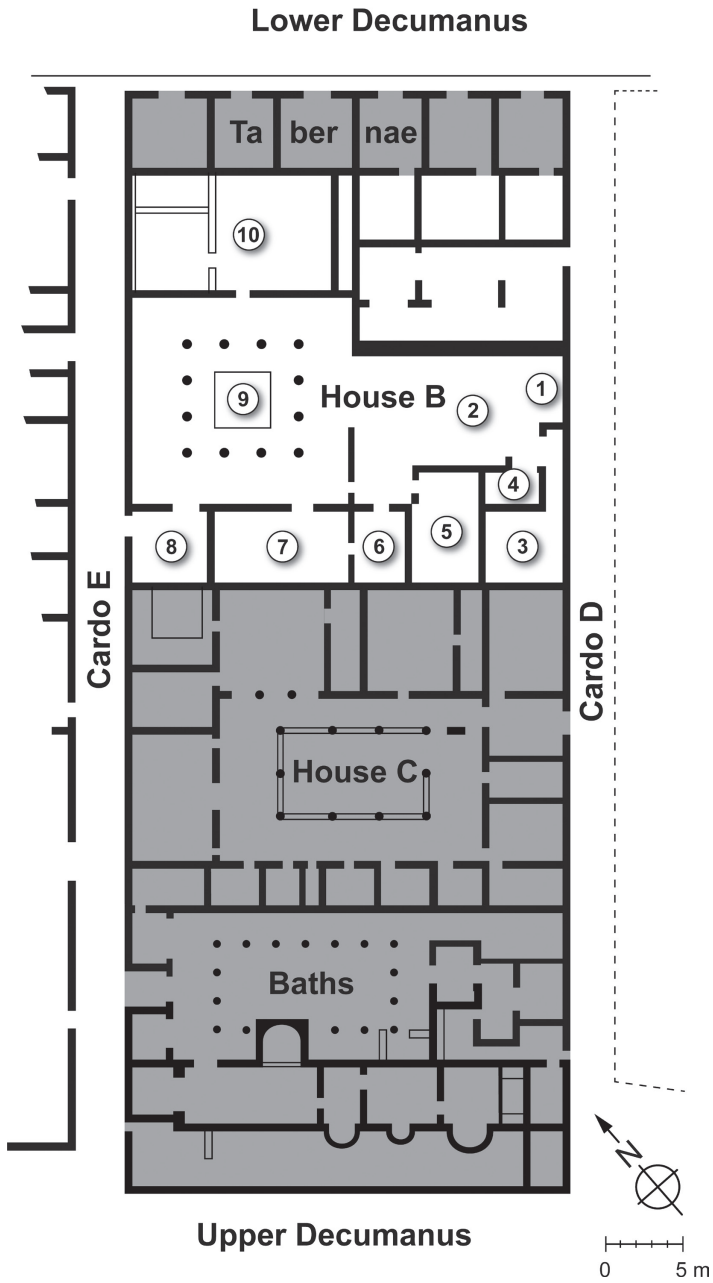


Fig. 1: Plan of Insula IV at Tyndaris  
M. Grawehr after L. Bernabò Brea – M. Cavalier, *Scavi in Sicilia*, BdA 1965, 206 fig. 19



Fig. 2: Room 7 at House B  
Photography N. Berlin

were composed of brick covered in stucco and, perhaps, brightly colored paint<sup>10</sup>. The courtyard is paved with an entirely white mosaic floor, with the exception of black guilloche bands that frame the inner and outer borders. From the courtyard one enters into a large, square room on House B's north side (10) that likely served as a reception space, given its large size and panoramic view of the Tyrrhenian Sea<sup>11</sup>. Room 7, an oblong reception space also accessible from the courtyard, retains its Hellenistic-style polychrome mosaic from the first building phase (fig. 2). From room 7 one can enter directly into room 6, whose function is unknown, or back into the courtyard (9).

10 Brick columns covered in stucco and painted with bright colors such as yellow and red were popular throughout Pompeii. See, for example, the Corinthian *oecus* and peristyle at the Casa del Meleagro or House of Meleager (VI 9, 2).

11 The northern sector of the house collapsed after its final occupation making this side of the house difficult to interpret. However, if we compare room 10 to room 3 in House C we can postulate that it was a reception space situated to take advantage of the view over the sea.

Leading from the courtyard (9) and into the large reception space (2) is a rectangular ‘carpet’ mosaic made up of a grid pattern of black bands that form white diamonds at their intersection. A similarly shaped rectangular ‘carpet’ decorates the southern border of the room, this one composed of black chevrons. The central portion of room 2 is framed by a series of motifs, including a thick band of scrolling acanthus and a band of shields or *peltae*, that surround another geometric ‘carpet’ of hourglass shapes. Like the courtyard, the mosaics in room two are now covered to preserve them. From the central circulation space of room 2 the visitor had access to four rooms of varying shapes (3–6). Room 5, possibly a dining room, is unusually long and narrow. It is decorated with a black goat in profile on white ground tesserae (figs. 3 and 4). The other rooms in this part of the house are badly preserved. Even though room 4 still has its white ground mosaic floor, the central, square decorative element is now lost. The original entrance to the house (1) was blocked with stone in the second building phase leaving no way to access *cardo d* from this side of the house. To exit, the visitor would have to go back the way they entered through the vestibule (8).

## The framework of renovation

Renovation serves as a conceptual framework for analyzing the changes made to ancient houses, including their architecture and décor<sup>12</sup>. In this context, I define renovation as the process of actively selecting which decorative elements to keep or add to one’s domestic ensemble. I use the term “renovate” as opposed to rebuild, redecorate, or transform because it implies a sense of continuity between old and new. It also allows us to think diachronically about continually occupied spaces such as the houses of Roman-era Sicily. The primary benefit of this approach, however, is that it restores the human element to the architectural evidence. By placing an emphasis on the architecture itself we can access both the “how” and “why” of changes made to a house over time. This framework foregrounds the decisions that various

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12 For more on renovation as it applies to other contexts, especially public and monumental architecture see Yg – Swetnam-Burland 2018 and, for a review of the work, see Berlin 2019a. A number of recent studies use renovation as a specific methodological framework, see Ehrhardt 2012; Yasin 2015; Berlin 2019b. Renovation also plays an important role in Petersen 2006 and McAlpine 2006. For the parallel phenomenon of conservation, especially as it relates to public monuments and political competition in the city of Rome, see Aylward 2014.



Fig. 3: Room 5 at House B  
Photography N. Berlin



Fig. 4: Detail of Room 5 at House B  
Photography N. Berlin

homeowners made over the course of a building's life as opposed to simply documenting periodization or phases.

The central feature of House B's renovation is the owner's decision to preserve the Hellenistic-style mosaic in room 7, which stands in stark contrast to the black and white mosaics that the owner installed around 50 AD. Room 7 serves as evidence that renovating a house in the Roman period did not necessarily mean a complete overhaul of the décor, but that specific decisions were often made on a room-by-room basis<sup>13</sup>. The preservation of decorative elements from an earlier phase could be for pragmatic reasons, historical significance, or both. In the case of domestic art and architecture, 'antique' mosaics or frescoes often became works of art in their own right. They served as heirlooms to be passed down from an earlier age, which gain value simply from having existed and survived over a long period of time<sup>14</sup>.

As we have established, the mosaic in room 7 dates from House B's first phase of occupation during the Hellenistic period, whereas those in the rest of the house dates to circa 50 AD. Would a viewer have realized the pavement from room 7 was older, and thereby 'historic'? If so, did this change their perception of the space, and how? In the next two sections I argue that the Hellenistic-era mosaic in room 7 served as the focal point of the domestic ensemble after the 50 AD renovation.

The renovation of House B encouraged the viewer to take a 'second gaze' at room 7's antique mosaic in two specific ways. First, the Hellenistic-style pavement demands a very different mode of viewer engagement than the Roman-style mosaics from the second phase. Second, the renovation shifted room 7's doorway so that its original threshold mosaic no longer aligned with the room's entrance. This signaled to a viewer that the room's architecture had been altered but the floor had not. These two ways of marking room 7's antiquity, direct comparison and the physical changes to the house, lent authority to the space, and House B as a whole, through a connection to Tyndaris' past.

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13 The preservation of room 7's mosaic is parallel to a phenomenon described by A.M. Yasin as 'singularization,' when an older part of a site or building is preserved so that it might be put on display, Yasin 2015, 122.

14 For more on how an artwork, household décor, etc. gained value with age see Powers 2011; McAlpine 2016; Haug 2020.

## Viewing ‘through’ the floor: Room 7’s mosaic

Upon entering House B after the 50 AD renovation, a viewer likely noticed the stark contrast between room 7’s Hellenistic-style mosaic and the Roman-style black and white mosaics throughout the rest of the residence, prompting a reconsideration or ‘second gaze’ of the older pavement. This contrast stems from the way each mosaic style engages the viewer. The pavement in room 7 uses *trompe l’oeil* and illusionism to create a three-dimensional composition while the black and white mosaics treat the floor as one solid surface, thereby highlighting its horizontality<sup>15</sup>. A comparison between the pavement in room 7 and a black and white mosaic from room 5 in House B illustrates this key difference.

Illusionistic mosaics, like that found in room 7, originated in the late-3rd cent. BC out of the black and white pebble mosaics that characterize sites such as Eretria and Olynthos<sup>16</sup>. They have been excavated throughout the eastern and western Mediterranean, from Asia Minor, Israel, Egypt, and even Southern Italy<sup>17</sup>. Sicily was an early adopter of tessellated mosaics. The House of Ganymede at Morgantina is one of the earliest examples of a tessellated mosaic in the Mediterranean (fig. 5). Its three-dimensional border reveals a major stylistic change that occurred at the end of the 3rd cent. BC – the floor, previously decorated as a uniform, flat surface, became a canvas for illusionistic scenes that encourage the viewer to see ‘through’ the floor<sup>18</sup>. Figural compositions, such as the Alexander Mosaic in the House of the Faun at Pompeii, are the most well-known examples of this style. Artists applied the same principles to geometric patterns, like those in room 7, to create illusionistic compositions. These mosaics, which I am calling ‘Hellenistic-style’, share a number of general characteristics including the use of small, polychrome tesserae to create delicate shading and, thereby, three-dimensional effects. Because these pavements were so intricate, they were labor intensive and extremely expensive.

Other than the cost, another downfall of this mosaic type is their limited flexibility. Hellenistic-style figural mosaics often appeared as a finely-tessellated panel at the center of a floor composition (*emblema*). Based on evidence

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15 See Clarke 1979; Swift 2009, 60–137.

16 Dunbabin 1999, 21f. For more on early pebble mosaics see Franks 2018.

17 As Martin 2017, 53, argues, tessellated mosaics from the Hellenistic period are often called ‘Greek’ even though they were a pan-Mediterranean development that varied from place to place and emerged thanks to cross-cultural exchanges.

18 Dunbabin 1999, 22, see also Tsakirgis 1989, 395–416; Bell 2011, 105–123.





Fig. 5: House of Ganymede at Morgantina  
Photography N. Berlin

from Delos and Pompeii, patrons most valued still life and marine scenes<sup>19</sup>. These Hellenistic panels have only one ideal vantage point, that is, there is only one place in the room from which the visitor could view the mosaic's image right side up. From anywhere else, such compositions would be upside-down or side-ways, much like a painting that has been hung with the wrong orientation. Because of their expense and limited flexibility, homeowners often reserved such mosaics for public spaces. As Ruth Westgate notes, most Hellenistic compositions consist of one or more geometric or vegetal decorative borders that surround a central field, which could be either left blank or filled with a figural panel<sup>20</sup>. In both cases the decorative borders separated a room's periphery, where couches for reclining could be placed, from the rest of the space.

<sup>19</sup> Westgate 2000, 263–267.

<sup>20</sup> Westgate 2000, 256.

To return to room 7's mosaic, we can consider how the viewer would have interacted with its two distinct sections. First, the floor is decorated with an intricate threshold rosette mosaic, which originally marked the entryway to the space before the doorway was shifted during the renovation. Hellenistic artists conceived of threshold mosaics independently from the rest of the floor. They are characterized by numerous complex geometric borders<sup>21</sup>. House B's threshold mosaic is composed of a rosette encircled by five different framing devices<sup>22</sup>. Black and white tesserae shade the petals of the central rosette, giving it a three dimensional or illusionistic effect, which would have been enhanced as a viewer crossed the threshold into the room.

The second part of room 7's mosaic, the wave band, is nearly unparalleled in the Mediterranean. One fragmentary example can be found at Rabat on Malta, but otherwise wave bands usually appear alongside figural compositions<sup>23</sup>. Here, as with the rosette, black and white tesserae create nuanced light and shadow. Three thick, black rows of tesserae visually separate the colorful band from the otherwise white-ground floor. Because of this delicate shading, the wave band becomes three dimensional and appears to oscillate as one moves across the floor. As Katherine Dunbabin notes, such designs "reveal the fascination felt by the Hellenistic arts for illusionistic effects [... that] are deliberately contrasted with the flat surface décor"<sup>24</sup>. Overall the Hellenistic-style mosaic in room 7 required that a viewer suspend their conception of the floor as flat while the illusionistic, geometric mosaic shifted and moved below their feet.

The rest of House B is decorated with Roman-style black and white mosaics. Black and white mosaics first appeared on the Italian mainland around 20 BC and from there spread throughout the Roman Empire. The change from Hellenistic to Roman-style mosaics, and their differing modes of viewer engagement, is paralleled in Roman wall painting. The architectural, or 'illusionistic' Second Style of wall painting, which often features trompe l'oeil compositions, dominated the 1st cent. BC. By the end of the century, the austere and elegant Third Style, which treats the wall as a flat surface, became

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21 Dunbabin 1999, 32.

22 The House of the Masks at Delos has three nearly identical examples of illusionistic rosettes – one in room E, where it is a threshold mosaic and two in room I, where they are part of the room's central composition, see Bruneau – Nicolaou 1972, 240 no. 214; 256 no. 217.

23 Von Boeselager 1983, 45. For the Rabat mosaic, see von Boeselager 1983, pl. 8 figs. 14 and 15.

24 Dunbabin 1999, 32.

more popular<sup>25</sup>. This suggests that by the end of the 1st cent. BC there was a fundamental transformation in the way Romans were conceptualizing space, which impacted the entire decorative ensemble of private residences.

The most pragmatic explanation for this shift is that black and white pavements were more economical than the Hellenistic polychrome compositions in terms of both material and labor<sup>26</sup>. The flexibility of the later, Roman-era black and white figural mosaics meant that the compositions could be adapted to their architectural space, instead of restricted to a square or rectangular panel like the figural panels of the Hellenistic period. As John Clarke notes, black and white figural scenes “...clearly show an approach to figural composition that takes into consideration both architectural setting and spectator movement”<sup>27</sup>.

Mosaic workshops began to experiment with this more flexible style<sup>28</sup>. The majority of black and white compositions from the 1st cent. AD are geometric – figural scenes remained rare until the 2nd cent. AD. By the mid-2nd cent. AD figural mosaics reached their peak as exemplified by the elaborate, 360-degree figural compositions at Ostia<sup>29</sup>. One exception is a group of mosaics at Pompeii dating to the second half of the 1st cent. AD that depict animals formed with black outlines on a white tessellated floor. Without a ground line to anchor the scene, a viewer’s sense of the depicted space was ambiguous, lending a flatness to the floor overall. Most of these examples are found in the *fauces*, or the narrow corridor that led from the main entryway in the *atrium* of a house. Such passageways were a place of entrance and transition from the public world outside to the private world inside<sup>30</sup>. One of the best-preserved examples is from the Casa del Poeta Tragico or House of the Tragic Poet (Pompeii VI 8, 5) where a growling dog stands ready to pounce on anyone who should walk into the door with the warning “CAVE

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25 Clarke 1991, 61.

26 Dunbabin 1999, 56.

27 Clarke 1979, 20.

28 Generally, tesserae within black and white mosaics range from .5 to 1 cm in width, as opposed to those in earlier Hellenistic compositions, which were significantly smaller and often made of expensive colored marble.

29 For more on the mosaics of Ostia see Becatti 1961.

30 The narrow *fauces* in Roman houses created an almost ‘tunnel-vision’ effect through which the spectator could look through and into the *atrium* (and perhaps the peristyle, if the house was axially aligned). Clarke 1991, 4, describes this viewing effect.

CANEM” or “BEWARE OF DOG”. This image was clearly meant to intimidate or, at the very least, give pause to anyone entering the house<sup>31</sup>.

Let us turn to a black and white figural composition within House B to consider this mosaic style within a Sicilian context. Room 5, which is located directly next to room 7, is a long, broad room (figs. 3 and 4). One must enter and turn to view the entire space. The floor in room 5 is composed of white tesserae with the exception of a thick black band that encircles the periphery, and divides the entryway from the rest of the room. At the northeastern end of room 5, just inside the main doorway, is the figure of a goat outlined with black tesserae and shown running to the left. A parallel example from Pompeii comes from the House of L. Caecilius Iucundus (V 1, 26)<sup>32</sup>. Here, a recumbent dog is waiting to greet a viewer entering through the doorway and into the *fauces* (fig. 6). This figure and ours at Tyndaris share a number of features – both are rendered in outline and, more importantly, are placed on a white mosaic floor with no indication of ground line or background. Nor is there any attempt to render either figure in three dimensions with shading, as we see in the example at the House of the Tragic Poet. Because the dog from the House of L. Caecilius Iucundus is depicted on a horizontal plane, as opposed to a vertical one, it appears less as a free-floating figure and more like an actual animal taking up space. In moving through the *fauces* of the House of L. Caecilius Iucundus, one has the desire to step around, or over, the dog even though it is not real. The white ground upon which it is placed thus enhances the reality of the animal’s presence but without the illusionistic effects seen in Hellenistic mosaics like that in room 7.

The goat in room 5, unlike the dog in the *fauces* at Pompeii, is not conceived of as sitting still, but is shown running to the left. It adds a feeling of frenetic movement to the entryway. This effect is heightened by the goat’s alignment perpendicular to the doorway. The goat, running from right to left, moves in the opposite direction of a viewer who was walking through the doorway. The lack of detail on the rest of the floor, which is all white tesserae, serves to highlight the goat as the room’s focal point. Conceivably,

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31 The fact that a dog appears at both the House of the Tragic Poet and the House of Caecilius Iucundus suggests that it may be apotropaic in nature. About the dog in the House of Caecilius Iucundus J. Clarke says, “The attempt to hold the incoming spectator’s full attention is epitomized in the frontally represented eye, an isolated detail whose topical overtones (i.e. the Argus-like watchdog) take on added, perhaps apotropaic, significance [...]”, Clarke 1979, 11.

32 Petersen 2006, 273, agrees with J. Clarke’s reading of the dog mosaic (see above) but adds that the dog was there out of ‘necessity’ to ward off evil from a house that had experienced much good fortune.



Fig. 6: Recumbent Dog, House of Caecilius Iucundus at Pompeii (V 1, 26)  
 Argo Navis, CC BY-SA 4.0, CC BY-SA 4.0, via Wikimedia Commons, on concession of  
 the Ministero della Cultura – Parco Archeologico di Pompeii

the goat was meant to address or confront those entering room 5, as well as serve as a topic of discussion for those using the space for dining. For those sitting on couches arranged in the back half of room 5, the goat would have been right side up. Even from this vantage point at the back of the space, the goat still seems to be escaping from the room and may have provided a humorous point of departure for dinner conversation<sup>33</sup>.

To sum up, engagement is a key part of understanding how an ancient viewer may have interacted with the ‘Hellenistic-style’ versus ‘Roman-style’ mosaics in House B, as they were radically different. Artists used delicate

33 Goats during this period are written about mostly in terms of breeding and farming by authors such as Varro and Columella. However, one feature of their personality that is often mentioned is their destructive appetite, for which reason Pliny says they are not sacrificed to Minerva (nat. 8, 70). Ovid, on the other hand, writes that goats are often sacrificed to Bacchus because they destroy his vines (fast. 1, 350). Goats were also associated with fertility and the festival of *lupercalia*, when women were gently hit with goatskin strips to ensure their ability to give birth (also discussed in Ov. fast. 5, 100–105).

shading to enhance the three-dimensionality of a ‘Hellenistic-style’ mosaic, whether it be figural or geometric, as we see in room 7 of House B. Not only did the central rosette of the threshold mosaic encourage one to view ‘through’ the floor, but the wave band seems to oscillate as one moves through the space. ‘Roman-style’ mosaics, composed of black and white tesserae, are inherently more flexible in their adaptability to a wide variety of spaces. The specific group of figural mosaics discussed here, and exemplified by the goat in room 5, reinforce the ‘flatness’ of the floor. The artist used black tesserae to outline the goat on an otherwise white-ground pavement. These characteristics only highlight the figure’s lack of three-dimensionality. Essentially, what you see is what you get. Even a viewer not familiar with mosaic trends in the Mediterranean likely perceived the contrast between the illusionistic mosaic in room 7 and the ‘Roman-style’ mosaics throughout the rest of the house, prompting a reconsideration of the older floor. As I discuss in the next section, the owner more overtly emphasized the antiquity of room 7, encouraging a ‘second gaze’, through the room’s renovated architecture.

### History made perceptible: Architectural alterations

This architectural changes made to House B during the renovation not only re-structured how a viewer moved through the space, but also re-conceptualized how they would view the ‘Hellenistic-style’ mosaic in room 7. In phase two, the doorway of room 7 moved east. As a result, the entrance no longer aligned with the rosette threshold mosaic (fig. 7). The asymmetry between the new doorway and older mosaic indicated that the room’s architecture had changed over time. As noted above, during the 1st cent. AD renovation the entrance of House B moved from *cardo d*, on the east side of the house, to *cardo e*, on the west side. Until the mid-1st cent.-renovation, House B presented an axial arrangement. The entrance (1) aligned with both the main reception space (2) and the courtyard (9). Consequently, one had an unobstructed sightline from the entrance on *cardo d* through to the back of the house. Once the entrance moved to *cardo e* after the renovation, the doorway opened into a small, confined vestibule. Given that the new entrance was not on axis with the *atrium*, the view of those walking by House B would have been limited to the small vestibule. For those permitted into House B, the vestibule served as an additional transition space before reaching the columned courtyard.

As a result of House B’s new entrance on *cardo e*, the columned courtyard became the main circulation point for the entire house. Room 7, which before

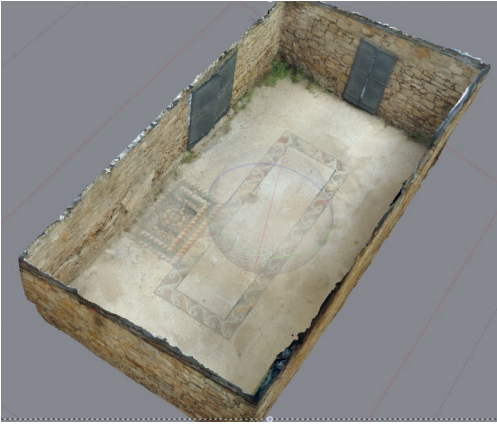


Fig. 7: 3-D model of House B  
Created by N. Berlin

the renovation had been at the back of the house, became one of the first spaces a visitor could access. To account for this change in room 7's position, the owner moved its doorway off-center. This provided shelter from wandering eyes for those dining or banqueting within room 7, and perhaps heightened a visitor's desire to see what was occurring, or displayed, within the space. Only guests invited into room 7 could see the antique pavement on display. The new entrance of House B, its vestibule, and the new doorway position of room 7 all suggest a desire to more closely monitor, and control, sightlines and movement within the residence. In other words, the owner intentionally preserved the mosaic while re-structuring and controlling the viewer's gaze, which further emphasized the architectural shifts during phase two.

How did the movement room 7's doorway impact one's ability to view the antique mosaic? Archaeological evidence confirms that the Hellenistic-style mosaic remained visible in the Roman period, after House B's renovation. We can imagine that the ideal viewer in room 7 would be someone who could recognize the antiquity of room 7's floor due to its illusionistic, painterly quality<sup>34</sup>. Even for those who may not recognize room 7's pavement as an antique, the asymmetry between the threshold mosaic and doorway immediately alerted a viewer that the space had been renovated.

Up until this point I have analyzed how the renovation of House B served to highlight room 7 and its historic, Hellenistic-style pavement. This brings

34 For more on the 'model viewer' see Valladares 2005, 206–242.

us back to the process of ‘singularization’ as defined by Ann Marie Yasin<sup>35</sup>, or ‘preservation’ as defined in this article. Lauren Petersen’s study of the House of L. Caecilius Iucundus at Pompeii describes an example of ‘singularization’ within a domestic context. In terms of the goals of the homeowner, it is analogous to House B’s renovation. Iucundus commissioned Third Style paintings for his residence’s *tablinum* instead of the more contemporary, and on trend, Fourth Style. He thereby created what Petersen describes as a ‘period room’, or a room decorated to evoke a ‘bygone era’<sup>36</sup>. This allowed Iucundus to “position himself publicly as a Roman with a past and to imbue his household with a sense of history and continuity”<sup>37</sup>. In this case, an older style of wall painting allowed Iucundus to fabricate a past for his house. The Third Style frescoes thereby historicized and authenticated the house, as well as the owner<sup>38</sup>. The House of L. Caecilius Iucundus demonstrates how the process of ‘singularization’ might play out in a domestic context of the early Imperial period. However, this example from Pompeii differs from that of House B in two fundamental ways. First, at House B there was no need to commission décor that evoked the past because it was already present within the house itself. In House B we have the renovation strategy of ‘preservation’ since an older part of the house was left intact, not created anew. Given Tyndaris’ long history, as well as that of Sicily more generally, a building’s long life was part of its inherited value. Second, the ‘antique’ decorative feature is a mosaic and not a wall painting, which profoundly changes how a viewer interacted with it, and consequently, the past.

With these two points in mind, I would suggest that the embodied, mobile viewer is fundamental to understanding room 7’s mosaic. As we have discussed, the threshold mosaic from the Hellenistic period no longer aligned with the room’s altered doorway. This means the threshold mosaic was not visible from the new doorway, but only from within the room itself, which dramatically shifted the viewer’s gaze between the first and second phases. Once inside room 7, the displaced threshold mosaic suggested that the floor was preserved from an earlier phase. Thus, to experience the full impact of the room a viewer needed permission to enter the space and actually walk upon the pavement. This made it implicit that a viewer would physically engage with House B’s centuries-long history. The Hellenistic-style mosaic

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35 Yasin 2015, 122–125.

36 Petersen 2006, 182.

37 Petersen 2006, 182.

38 For more on this phenomenon see McAlpine 2016 as well as Ehrhardt 2012.



in room 7 made its history perceptible to anyone who walked through the space.

## Tyndaris, Sicily, and the Roman Empire

At first glance, the mosaics of House B at Tyndaris seem to represent two separate phases of the city's history – its Hellenistic past (dating between the 2nd and 1st cent. BC) and the period during which it thrived as a Roman colony (1st cent. AD onwards). The vastly different colors, styles, and modes of viewer engagement between the polychrome mosaic in room 7 and those throughout the rest of the house are a testament to the dramatic change in Tyndaris' status when it became a *colonia* or colony in 21 BC. By preserving room 7's mosaic, House B's owner was able to harken back to a culturally rich Hellenistic past. This, at least, is the picture that emerges when we only consider House B in relation to the two '-isms' that tend to dominate the study of the ancient Mediterranean – 'Hellenism' and 'Romanism'<sup>39</sup>. While these concepts do have a place in considering broad political and ideological developments over wide periods of time or geography, they do not leave much room for a local perspective<sup>40</sup>.

If we instead consider House B's décor from a local, Sicilian point of view then room 7's mosaic becomes a point of continuity between the Hellenistic and Roman phases of the house, as opposed to a marker of drastic change or alteration. In its original context, room 7's mosaic served as a luxurious example of décor that allowed the owner of House B to participate in Sicily's emergence as a thriving Hellenistic center in the Mediterranean. In its later, Roman-era context, the mosaic took on a second layer of meaning. Elsewhere, such as on the Italian mainland, homeowners had to 'import' Hellenistic culture in the form of mosaics, wall painting, and architecture to participate in the philhellenism that dominated Roman elite culture<sup>41</sup>. For the owner of House B, however, the mosaic of room 7 served as an authentic, local, and pre-existing example of Sicily's rich Hellenistic period. This, along with the newer black and white mosaics throughout the house, allowed the 1st cent. AD owner to engage with the ideals of Roman elite culture in two ways – through claims to the Hellenistic past as well as knowledge of what was fashionable on the Italian mainland.

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39 Perkins 2007.

40 Campagna 2011, 162.

41 Wallace-Hadrill 2010, 361.

What significance did room 7's mosaic have when it was originally laid, namely the 2nd and 1st centuries BC? It is well established that much of Sicily in the Hellenistic period fell within the sphere of influence of its cultural 'capital', Syracuse. Both Agathocles (317–289 BC) and Hieron II (270–215 BC) ruled eastern Sicily as a Hellenistic kingdom, much like those at Pergamon or Alexandria. The Sicilian tyrants established Syracuse as the island's epicenter for literary, artistic, and scholarly developments. By the 3rd cent. BC the elites of Sicily were part of a Mediterranean-wide Hellenistic culture that "was more cosmopolitan, more culturally and socially complex" than any period before<sup>42</sup>. The influence of Hellenism spread quickly from eastern Sicily to settlements elsewhere on the island<sup>43</sup>. This phenomenon is most visible in the houses of northern Sicily, in cities like Tyndaris, where owners decorated their residences with luxurious architecture, frescoes, and mosaics<sup>44</sup>. In discussing the mosaics of Hellenistic Sicily, Dela von Boeselager notes that while they do tend to have similarities with other cities such as Delos and Pergamon, there was significant local innovation in regards to this particular art form<sup>45</sup>. We can see this in room 7 at House B, whose rosette threshold mosaic finds direct parallels with the House of the Masks at Delos. The pavement thus served as an outward example of the owner's familiarity with the Hellenistic *koine* circulating in the Mediterranean, but one that was decidedly Sicilian in nature.

Beyond room 7 we have very little Hellenistic-era context for House B. However, the incorporation of room 7's mosaic into the Roman-era residence is perceptible even today. Of course, this change in context and the re-structuring of the viewer's gaze resulted in a parallel shift in the potential meaning or significance of the pavement. This means our inquiry into why the owner of House B chose to preserve room 7's pavement is also a consideration of the re-use and re-interpretation of the past during the 1st cent. AD-renovation. Sue Alcock describes a similar phenomenon in Augustus' re-ordering of the Athenian *agora* by updating older monuments or adding new ones of his own creation. This re-interpretation of the authentic, local Greek past within a Roman context was particularly successful because the Hellenic

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42 Smith 1991, 7.

43 Campagna 2011, 178.

44 Campagna 2011, 167. Soluntum, Palermo, Halesa, and Monte Iato are examples of cities where this is happening.

45 Von Boeselager 1983, 80.

past served as cultural capital within elite spheres of Roman culture<sup>46</sup>. The newly re-ordered monuments, set within the context of the Athenian *agora*, created a “visible amalgam of past and present” where “the Hellenic past and imperial present were co-mingled”<sup>47</sup>.

Spaces like the Athenian *agora* or House B appealed to a wide spectrum of viewers who recognized distinct cultural elements depending on their own background. At House B, the ‘use’ of the local past authenticated the house and its owner, and emphasized continuity between the Hellenistic and Roman periods. Unlike on the Italian mainland where an idealized Greek or Hellenistic past had to be imported, on Sicily it was indigenous. At House B, the owner in the Roman period was able to draw upon the already-existing Hellenistic past of both the residence and the city to his own benefit.

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46 Alcock 1996, 42. A. Wallace-Hadrill discusses this phenomenon on a larger scale, arguing that the Augustan period was a key point in the dissemination of Eastern Mediterranean or Greek culture, describing the process as “that in which the wealth, skill, and people of the eastern Mediterranean are first drawn into Rome on a global scale, to be re-circulated not only westwards but also back eastwards” (Wallace-Hadrill 2010, 361). Essentially by the Augustan period Greek culture became a commodity for the wealthy throughout the Mediterranean, and a way to signal one’s participation in elite dialogues and exchanges.

47 Alcock 1996, 58.

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Arne Reinhardt

## Das Verschönerungsangebot: Wiederverwendete ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ zwischen Pragmatismus und Bilderliebe

**Abstract** When, in the late Republican era, a rich imagery entered the terracotta decorations of lavish Roman buildings, these so-called Campana reliefs were intended to form continuous friezes on entablatures as well as to frame the edges of roofs. However, already by the time of Octavian (at least), decorated architectural terracottas underwent various changes in terms of function, which have triggered little scholarly interest so far. Mostly, the ancient reuse aimed at a pragmatic recycling of plaques and sherds as building materials for new constructions and hence is not surprising. Nevertheless, ‘Campana reliefs’ were also given a new life as single images in interiors of tombs and houses, which attest for the predilection for images as a precious form of decoration even in rather ordinary contexts. This article provides a systematic overview of the ancient reuses of ‘Campana plaques’ and, in its three case studies, points to the hermeneutic problem to distinguish between the repurposing of new items and ‘second-hand’ reuses of older material in Antiquity.

In der späten Republik und frühen Kaiserzeit erfreute sich reliefierter Architekturdekor aus Terrakotta einer besonderen Beliebtheit bei prestigeträchtigen Bauprojekten. Insbesondere in Mittelitalien aber auch an vielen anderen Orten des römischen Reichs schmückten figürlich dekorierte und bunt bemalte Tonfriese Gebälke und Dachränder<sup>1</sup>. Diese Ausstattungssequenzen

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1 Dies steht in guter mittelitalischer Tradition, die jedoch in der ersten Hälfte bzw. dem mittleren 1. Jh. v. Chr. in den so genannten Campana-Reliefs transformiert wurde. Als Einführung in die Gattung mag Reinhardt 2024 dienen neben den weiteren Beiträgen des Heidelberger Tagungsbandes.

basieren auf der Serienfertigung gleichartiger Platten, deren Dekor am Bau sowohl repetitiv wiederholt als auch durch eigens hergestellte Gegenstücke gezielt variiert wurde<sup>2</sup>. Neben Platten, die zum Schutz der hölzernen Dachkonstruktion an die Gebälke genagelt wurden (sog. Verkleidungsplatten), finden sich Simen, die als Dachkrempe frei abstanden; diese wurden entweder in einem Stück mit dem Dachziegel gearbeitet oder als Stecksimen erst am Bau mit dem Dachrand verbunden. Die horizontalen und besonders die schrägen Dachränder konnten ferner durch sogenannte durchbrochene Krönungen zusätzlich bereichert werden (Abb. 1).

Wie auch die Stirnziegel, so werden diese in der Forschung ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ genannten Terrakottaelemente bei Ausgrabungen kaum je in ihren ursprünglichen Positionen am Bau angetroffen. Dies hängt einerseits mit den sehr schlechten Erhaltungsbedingungen zusammen, die allgemein für aufgehende Architektur und speziell für hölzerne Dachkonstruktionen zu konstatieren sind. Andererseits sind die Gründe in antiken Zerstörungen und Umbauten zu suchen: ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ stammen häufig aus sekundären Kontexten, meist – aber nicht immer – sind dies Situationen pragmatischen Materialrecyclings. Der Umstand ihrer antiken Wiederverwendung scheint so selbstverständlich, dass er noch nicht übergreifend untersucht wurde<sup>3</sup>.

Wenn man das Wandern von Bildern oder Texten aus ihrem Entstehungszusammenhang thematisiert und ihr Fortleben in sekundären Kontexten als den ‚zweiten Blick‘ der antiken Akteure auffasst, welche ‚epikonischen‘ Perspektiven bieten dann die Architekturterrakotten? Welche

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2 Zu Anbringung, Variation und Produktion s. Reinhardt 2024, 6f. 9f. Anm. 30–32; 12–19 mit Anm. 44; 31 mit Anm. 106; Tortorella 2024; Känel 2024; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 23\*–47\*.

3 Der vorliegende Aufsatz präzisiert Gedanken, die ich in Reinhardt 2024, 12–19, 25–27, 32f. skizziert habe, ohne dort die drei Fallbeispiele (*fullonica* des Mustius, Haus unter S. Cecilia und Hypogaeum des Numitorius Hilarus) ausführlich besprechen zu können. Ich danke Matthias Grawehr und Markus Kersten für die Möglichkeit, dies an dieser Stelle nachzuholen und meinen Gedankengang gleichzeitig zu systematisieren, sowie Anne Kolb und Rudolf Känel für wichtige Hinweise. Dank für die Gewährung von Reproerlaubnissen und Bilddateien gebühren Giulia Ciccarello (American Academy in Rome), Piero Crescenzi (Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra), Daria Lanzuolo (DAI Rom) und Giuseppe Scarpati (Parco Archeologico di Pompei). Auch zu anderen Aspekten des antiken Umgangs mit Architekturterrakotten existieren bis dato meist nur vereinzelte Beiträge: s. Donderer 1993, 94–97. 110. 125–134 zur sakralen Deponierung von Architekturterrakotten; Previato 2021 zur Wiederverwendung von Dachziegeln; zur Instandhaltung bzw. Neudekoration von Architekturterrakotten in Pompeji s. Bauch 2023 sowie Merone 1993/94, 58f. Abb. 1; Rohden 1880, 9–12.



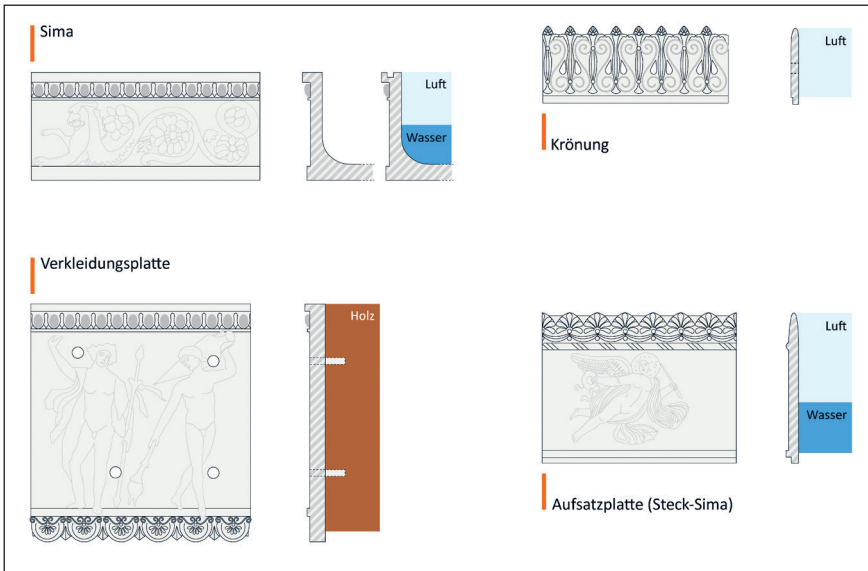


Abb. 1: ‚Campana-Reliefs‘: Schema der vier Plattenformen mit Angabe ihrer Kernfunktionen als Schmuck des Gebälks bzw. des Dachrands.

Foto: A. Reinhardt/J. Süss, Mediacultura.

neuen Einbettungen lassen sich gegenüber ihrer eigentlichen Aufgabe des Gebälk- und Dachschmucks feststellen, sowohl in funktionaler und syntaktischer Hinsicht als auch mit Bezug auf ihren Bildschmuck und neuen Nutzerkreis? Mit J.J. Gibsons Idee der Affordanz im Hintergrund<sup>4</sup> werde ich im Folgenden zunächst auf die Materialität der reliefierten Architekturterrakotten als Voraussetzung für ihre Wiederverwendbarkeit eingehen. Zweitens sollen anhand ihrer jeweiligen physischen Einbettung die massgeblichen sekundären Verwendungsarten dieser Bildträger zwischen ‚Pragmatismus und Bilderliebe‘ benannt werden, wobei ich mich für diesen Überblick vorwiegend auf die Stadt Rom und ihr Umland bis in die Spätantike beziehe. Detaillierte Beobachtungen zur Wanderung der Architekturterrakotten und ‚zweiten Blicken‘ auf diese Bildträger wird die Analyse dreier aussagekräftiger Fallbeispiele der frühen und mittleren Kaiserzeit erbringen, die erste Aussagen zur *longue durée* der ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ in der römischen Kulturgeschichte und den Konventionen ihrer Wiederverwendung zulassen. Hierbei zeigt sich die Notwendigkeit, zukünftig methodisch genauer zwischen

4 S. etwa Knappett 2004, insbes. 44 f.; Günther 2021, 16–18 sowie die Einleitung *A Second Gaze* in diesem Band.

zeitversetzten Wiederverwendungen und der Möglichkeit einer fakultativen Umnutzung zu unterscheiden, bei denen ein Objekt zu seiner Entstehungszeit eine von der Typentradition abweichende Nutzung erfuhr (Methodische Schlussbemerkung).

## Materialität und Affordanzen

Die grosse Festigkeit des Materials darf zweifelsohne als zentrale Voraussetzung für die Verwendung von Architekturschmuck aus gebranntem Ton am Dachrand und in der hölzernen Gebälkzone gelten. Wie auch die Dachziegel selbst mussten die schmückenden Reliefplatten den Widrigkeiten des Wetters standhalten. Die hohe Beständigkeit der Terrakotta ermöglichte zudem alle sekundären Nutzungsarten in der Antike und noch eine gute Erhaltung dieser Stücke 2000 Jahre später. Bei aller Stabilität sind ‚Campana-Platten‘ zumeist recht dünn (ca. 2–5 cm), besitzen häufig eine Breite von ca. 45 cm, können aber bei den Verkleidungsplatten auch Abmessungen von bis zu 75 × 60 cm erreichen<sup>5</sup>. Eine weitere Grundvoraussetzung liegt in der Bildsamkeit des Materials im ungebrannten Zustand. Sie ermöglichte, dass selbst kleinteilige Dekore in flachem Relief mittels Formen gut auf die Rohlinge übertragen und ganze Serien gleichartiger oder variiertes Platten erstellt werden konnten. Zur Haltbarkeit der plattenartigen Architekturterrakotten an sich gesellt sich so die Haltbarkeit seines Bildschmucks. Diese besitzt nur eine partielle Einschränkung: Die reiche Anwendung verschiedenster Pigmente, die neuerdings in naturwissenschaftlichen Untersuchungen nachgewiesen werden<sup>6</sup>, verdeutlicht, dass den antiken Akteuren die Terrakottafarbe des Ausgangsmaterials für repräsentative Aufgaben nicht genügte. Die dekorierten Vorderseiten der Reliefs trugen eine meist grelle Farbenpracht, die nur bisweilen aus eingebrannten Erdfarben bestand, häufig beinhaltete sie andere Pigmente im Kaltauftrag, wie etwa Ägyptisch-Blau, Bleiweiss oder Krapplack; diese ursprüngliche Farbigkeit ist heute nur in Ausnahmefällen gut erhalten<sup>7</sup>.

5 Beispiele bei Reinhardt 2024, 26 Anm. 85; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 26\*. Simen, die in einem Stück mit dem Traufziegel gearbeitet sind, sind zumeist noch breiter, sie messen etwa 30 × 90 cm: vgl. etwa D’Angelo 2024, 192 oder Gatti 1902, 162.

6 Zuletzt Brøns u. a. 2024 sowie Vak u. a. 2024 mit Verweisen auf vorangegangene Untersuchungen.

7 Vgl. die Erkenntnisse von Brøns u. a. 2024 sowie Vak u. a. 2024 und allg. Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 27\*; Reinhardt 2022, 134 f. Diese für die Gattung ehemals typische

In Einklang mit den positiven physischen Eigenschaften der ‚Campana-Reliefs‘, also insbesondere ihrer Haltbarkeit und Stabilität, ihrem handlichen Format und rechteckigem Zuschnitt sowie dem Umstand des Dekors ihrer Vorderseiten, boten die Architekturterrakotten zahlreiche Handlungsoptionen für Verwendungen ausserhalb<sup>8</sup> der Dachränder und Gebälke, für die sie der typologischen Tradition gemäss hergestellt worden sind.

## Pragmatisches Recyclen

Ihrer Festigkeit und Widerstandsfähigkeit gemäss wurden römische Architekturterrakotten wie andere Materialien auch ganz selbstverständlich als Baumaterial wiederverwendet. Dies umfasst einerseits die Nutzung von Bruchstücken als Zuschlag im Mauerwerk, andererseits eine Verwendung zerbrochener Platten als Mauerziegel, ähnlich wie dies bei Dachziegeln beobachtet werden kann. Aus Rom stammen zahlreiche Nachweise für diese gängige Praktik: Als Zuschlag im Mauerwerk dienten ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ etwa in der Basilica Aemilia oder an der Meta Sudans<sup>9</sup>. Einige der bekanntesten und grössten Vertreter überhaupt, die mit ihrer Entstehungszeit zwischen 42 und 36 v. Chr. zudem einen wichtigen chronologischen Orientierungspunkt für die Gattung leisten, stammen aus Verschlussmauern in der sog. *casa interrotta* Octavians auf dem Palatin<sup>10</sup>.

Ganze Platten oder solche mit leichter Beschädigung fanden etwa auch als Abdeckungen einen praktischen Nutzen. Dies beinhaltete Kanäle wie etwa auf dem Forum von Cumae<sup>11</sup>, aber auch unterschiedliche Grablegen, die

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Farbigkeit ist heute meist dann gut erhalten, wenn die Stücke aus antiken Wiederverwendungen stammen, wie etwa die bekannten Platten vom Palatin.

8 In diesem Sinne blickt der vorliegende Aufsatz nicht auf die Wiederverwendung von Architekturterrakotten in ihrer primären Funktion, also als alte Elemente an neuen/erneuerten Dachrändern oder Gebälken; dass dies häufig praktiziert worden sein muss (vgl. Donderer 1993, 99 Anm. 27), geht aus Materiallagern in Hauskontexten hervor, vgl. dazu unten Anm. 56.

9 Caravale 1996 (Meta Sudans); Reinhardt 2016, 236 Anm. 14 (Basilica Aemilia). Für weitere Fälle s. etwa Coarelli 1981, 20 f. Taf. 8, 5, 6 (Largo Argentina); D’Alessio 2017, 346 f. (Aedes Larum). Auch eine fragmentierte Aufsatzplatte aus Pompeji (Haagsma u. a. 1993/94), die sich nur knapp über Bodenniveau unter den Putzschichten in einem Haus am *vicolo di Tesmo* in Pompeji (IX 7,19) befand, gehört zu dieser Gruppe des pragmatischen Materialrecyclings. Des Weiteren wären Aufschüttungen zu nennen, s. etwa Känel 2024, 99 f.

10 Gallochio 2021, 49–51; Pensabene 2017, 45, 53, 56–64, 126 f.

11 Capaldi 2009, 178 fig. 8; allgemein: Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 14\*.

häufig aus aneinander gestellten Tonplatten und Dachziegeln bestanden. Im Suburbium Roms findet man bei Kinderbestattungen häufig grosse Simen, deren L-förmiger Querschnitt der Aufgabe des Einbettens beziehungsweise Abdeckens entgegenkam<sup>12</sup>. Die Bilder der Fronten waren dabei bei der Grablegung präsent, teils aufrecht, teils kopfstehend, wurden dann aber mit der Bestattung den Blicken entzogen.

Auch in den römischen Katakomben nutzte man neben anderen älteren Baumaterialien reliefierte Architekturterrakotten für die Abdeckung von Grablegen. Die Stabilität, das regelmässig rechteckige Format der Platten und teils auch die Abmessungen dürften die Aufgabe des Verschliessens der *loculus*-Nische allgemein begünstigt haben<sup>13</sup>. Anscheinend war die Wiederverwendung tönerner Architekturreliefs in spätantiker und frühchristlicher Zeit eine gängige Praxis in den Katakomben – allerdings ist heute nur eine verschwindend geringe Zahl an Beispielen dokumentiert. Unter den nur sieben Befunden, die Maria Paola Del Moro 1991 auflisten konnte, finden sich ganz unterschiedliche Bildthemen: eine Sima mit Götterprotomen, eine Platte mit ‚Bes zwischen Sphingen‘, Panther zuseiten eines Kantharos sowie eine Aufsatzplatte mit ‚Bockopfer‘<sup>14</sup>. Es scheint dabei, als hätte zumeist der Reliefdekor

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12 D’Angelo 2024, 200f. mit Abb. 7, a, b und Verweisen auf weitere Befunde. S. auch Tortorella 2024, 39f. mit Anm. 11, 12 sowie allg. Aglietti 2021 (dort S. 162f. Anm. 14 zur Datierung) und Borbein 1968, 18f. mit Anm. 63; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 15\* f. 46\*; Rizzo 1905, 206. Dem hinzuzufügen wäre das pragmatische Recyclen von Tonreliefs als Bodenplatten im Hypogaeum des Numitorius Hilarus, s. unten Anm. 37.

13 Sonst liessen sich die Terrakotten auch zuschneiden, wie eine Aufsatzplatte aus der Katakombe des Heiligen Hippolytos, bei der die abstehende Palmetten-Bekrönung coupirt wurde: Del Moro 1991, 9, 11.

14 Nicht für alle Beispiele, die Del Moro 1991, 12 Anm. 11 auflistet, sind Informationen zur Reliefdarstellung vorhanden. Eine Platte mit ‚Bes zwischen Sphingen‘ stammt aus der Katakombe des Pretestato an der Via Appia (Galleria A 17 terminale Nord, 4. Jh. n. Chr.: Dolzani 1975), ein Sima-Eckstück mit Götterbüsten und Palmetten, die noch Spuren der alten Bemalung bewahrt, wurde in der Katakombe der Villa Doria Pamphilj angetroffen (Regione IV, D1: Nestori 1959, 36f. Abb. 23, 24) und aus den Katakomben des Hlg. Hippolytos an der Via Tiburtina stammt eine Aufsatzplatte mit ‚Bockopfer‘ (antike Position unklar: Del Moro 1991). Aus der Domitilla-Katakombe an der Via Ardeatina stammt eine Sima mit Darstellung zweier Panther um einen Kantharos nebst Herstellerstempel (vgl. hier Abb. 2; die antike Position scheint nicht gesichert – freundliche Auskunft von N. Zimmermann, Rom); drei Bruchstücke stammen aus der Katakombe *ad Vicesimum* an der Via Flaminia (Fiochi Nicolai 1982, 488f. Abb. 8, a, b). Vgl. allg. Nuzzo 2000, 172 mit Anm. 105; Tortorella 2024, 39f. mit Anm. 11, 12.



Abb. 2: Rom, Domitilla-Katakomben: Eine gestempelte Terrakotta-Sima als Verschluss einer Grablege.

Foto: Per concessione Archivio PCAS/Fotothek des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Rom, Negativ-Nr. D-DAI-ROM-69.2242 (Hutzel).

aufrechtstehend nach aussen gezeigt<sup>15</sup> (Abb. 2). Offensichtlich tolerierte man die paganen Bilder im neuen Kontext der christlichen Bestattung und zog den figürlichen Reliefschmuck den glatten Rückseiten der Platten vor. In dem dichten Nebeneinander von Bestattungen in den unterirdischen Nekropolen erfüllten einzelne Architekturterrakotten also nicht nur die pragmatische Aufgabe der Abdeckung, sondern auch eine schmückende Funktion als Einzelbilder – nicht selten mehrere Jahrhunderte nach ihrer Herstellung und in gänzlich anderer Mission als der ursprünglich intendierten Nutzung an

15 Del Moro 1991, 11–13 mit Anm. 11. Nicht rekonstruierbar ist die Position der Platte aus der Katakombe des Hlg. Hippolytos mit dem Bockopfer, ähnlich ist die Lage in der Domitilla-Katakombe und der Katakombe *ad Vicesimum*. In der Katakombe Calepodio an der Via Aurelia zeigte der florale Dekor einer Platte nach innen (galleria A 26: Nestori 1985, 250f. Abb. 17); aufgrund des sehr plastischen Dekors handelt es sich hier nicht um ein ‚Campana-Relief‘ o. Ä., sondern allem Anschein nach eher um ein Stück Baukeramik, wie es ähnlich an den Sichtziegelbauten Roms auftritt – vgl. etwa Reinhardt 2022, 143 Abb. 5.

Gebälk und Dachrand. Die Frage nach möglichen Um- oder Neudeutungen der Bilder in diesem Zusammenhang muss hier offenbleiben. Aber auch so erweist die Wiederverwendung der Reliefs in diesen Fällen eine allgemeine Wertschätzung von figürlichen Bildern als einer hohen Form von Dekoration und dies im positiven Wortsinn: Bildschmuck ‚pretiosisiert‘ Objekte und Ausstattungen<sup>16</sup>. Auf die Wirk- beziehungsweise Handlungsmacht (*agency*) der Reliefbilder bezogen, darf in diesem Sinne also neben dem inhaltlichen Deutungsangebot der Bilder von einem formalen Verschönerungsangebot gesprochen werden, welches im Affordanz-Spektrum dieser Architekturterrakotten grundsätzlich eingeschlossen ist<sup>17</sup>.

## Dekorative Wiederverwendungen

Auch ausserhalb der Katakomben existieren Beispiele für Adaptionen von architektonischen Reliefplatten in dekorativer Absicht. Die Befunde, die für die frühe und mittlere römische Kaiserzeit in Italien vorliegen, sind sehr heterogen: Beispielsweise dienten in Luni Bruchstücke reliefierter Simen und Antefixe als Beeteinfassung, während in Pisa Verschlussmauern entdeckt wurden, an deren Fuss Simen mit figürlichen Wasserspeiern sitzen<sup>18</sup>; an Hausfassaden in Pompeji finden sich neben einzelnen dekorativen Feldern figürliche Elemente aus Marmor oder Terrakotta, darunter auch Architekturterrakotten<sup>19</sup>.

16 Hölscher 2018, 37–39. Für eine positive Lesart von *decor*/Dekoration s. die Beiträge in Dietrich – Squire 2018.

17 Zu *agency* und dem Deutungsangebot von Bildern vgl. Günther 2021, 17 mit Verweisen. Da ‚schön‘ als subjektive Kategorie unscharf und erklärungsbedürftig ist, sei hier kurz klargestellt, dass mit ‚Verschönerungsangebot‘ die Möglichkeit zur formal-ästhetischen Anreicherung im Sinne Hölschers Pretiosisierung gemeint ist. Zur ‚Wirkmacht‘ von Bildern s. Boschung 2017, insbes. 90f.

18 Zu Luni s. Uboldi 1996, 10 (Phase 3, wohl um 50/70 n. Chr.), zu Pisa (via Capponi) Fabiano – Rizzitelli 2019, 331 Abb. 3. In Pompeji, Haus VI, 17, 42 wurden 1983 grosse Terrakottaplatten mit plastischem Relief angetroffen, die teils vergraben, teils in die Garten-Wand eingemauert waren (Donderer 1993, 94 Anm. 4 mit Verweisen).

19 Vgl. allg. Iorio 2006. Taylor Lauritsen verdanke ich den Hinweis auf die Casa di Severus, VIII 2, 29 (das eingemauerte Köpfchen ist wohl ein Wasserspeier: <<https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R8/8%2002%2029%20p1.htm>> [13.03.2024]) oder den eingemauerten Stirnziegel an der Fassade der Casa del Granduca (VII 4, 55/56: <<https://pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R7/7%2004%2055.htm>> [13.03.2024]).



Abb. 3: Pompeji, VI 15, 3: Eine wiederverwendete Verkleidungsplatte spätrepublikanischer Zeit in der Walkerei des Mustius, Raum o.

Foto: Su concessione del Ministero della Cultura – Parco Archeologico di Pompei/ Photo courtesy of American Academy in Rome, Photographic Archive. Warsher collection no. 394.

Ebenfalls aus Pompeji stammt das gegenwärtig wohl aufschlussreichste Beispiel einer Wiederverwendung von Verkleidungsplatten in einem Innenraum. Die kleine Walkerei des Mustius (VI 15, 3) neben dem Haus der Vettier besteht nur aus einem Hof und einem angrenzenden Raum; sie scheint in der letzten Phase der Stadt nicht mehr in Betrieb gewesen zu sein<sup>20</sup>. In Raum o nördlich des Hofes wurde eine einfache Wandgestaltung in *cocciopesto* angetroffen, deren Malerei auf der Nordseite nur noch vage erkennbar war; ehemals zeigte sie wohl Figuren um einen Altar und Bäume. An zwei Stellen dieser Nordwand (Abb. 3) und an einer Stelle im Westen fanden die Ausgräber Terrakottaplaten im Wandputz, die etwas über der Kopfhöhe der antiken

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20 Zu diesem Bau (ergraben 1895–1897): Sogliano 1897, 20f.; Mau 1898, 8–11; PPM V (1994) 578f. s. v. VI 15, 3 Fullonica di Mustius (V. Sampaolo); Flohr 2007, 133f. Abb. 3–6; Flohr 2013, 22f. 192–194 Abb. 72 Plan 17. M. Flohr geht von einer Nutzung als *fullonica* auch in der letzten Phase aus.

Betrachter mit Eisennägeln an der Wand befestigt waren. Es handelt sich um drei identische Verkleidungsplatten, die eine *biga* mit Victoria zeigen. Die Reliefs waren überstuckiert und bemalt, wobei die Farbgebung leicht variierte (blaues bzw. grünes Gewand der Nike)<sup>21</sup>. Nicht nur die Stiftlöcher oder der ausgreifende Ornamentabschluss unten zeigen die Wiederverwendung an; stilistisch-typologische Indizien weisen auf eine Entstehung der Verkleidungsplatten in der Zeit der Späten Republik hin, unter Umständen noch am Ende des 2. Jhs. v. Chr.<sup>22</sup>. Es erscheint also klar, dass die drei Platten, die aus derselben Matrize stammen, ursprünglich eine andere Funktion erfüllten, vermutlich schmückten sie in einem Atriumhaus das hölzerne Gebälk des *compluvium* zusammen mit weiteren Stücken<sup>23</sup>. Tatsächlich erbrachten Nachuntersuchungen in der *fullonica* zu Beginn der 2000er Jahre, dass andere Exemplare augenscheinlich derselben Serie im Nachbarraum *n* als Bodenplatten verlegt worden waren (mit der dekorierten Seite nach unten)<sup>24</sup>. Die genaue Anzahl ist nicht explizit gemacht, aus Plan und Beschreibung von Miko Flohr gehen circa neun Stücke hervor. Allem Anschein nach wurde somit in der Walkerei des Mustius eine ältere Ausstattungssequenz im Umfang etwa drei Metern Gesamtlänge als Spolien wiederverwendet, teilweise zum Schmuck des Raumes *o*, der als Triclinium oder Wohnraum gedient haben mag, teilweise als haltbarer Plattenbelag vor den Walkbecken im offenen Arbeitsbereich *n*.

Die *fullonica* des Mustius zeigt somit die gesamte Bandbreite des Wiederverwendens zwischen ‚Pragmatismus und Bilderliebe‘ auf. Bei der dekorati-

21 Die detaillierteste Beschreibung findet sich bei Mau 1898, 9 f.; summarischer sind Sogliano 1897, 21 und PPM V (1994) 578 f. s. v. VI 15, 3 Fullonica di Mustius (V. Sampaolo). Das Relief der Westwand ist heute verloren: Flohr 2007, 133 Anm. 23.

22 Indizien sind der obere Abschluss, der zackige untere Rand sowie die Darstellung selbst: Känel 2011, 78 f. Abb. 6 vgl. Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 187 Anm. 1; Kosmopoulos 2021, 642 Abb. 8.

23 Zum Terrakottaschmuck republikanischer Häuser in Mittelitalien jüngst Känel 2024; Bruder 2022, 411–425. Die rekonstruierbare Länge der wohl insgesamt elf Platten à 29 × 29 cm aus der Walkerei entspräche etwa der Hälfte der *compluvium*-Verkleidung von Haus I.2 in Fregellae, wenn man dieses als möglichen Vergleich heranziehen möchte (s. Känel 2024, 98 Abb. 6, a oder Bauch 2023, 99 Anm. 33 für die Casa del Fauno, Atrium 1). Atriumhäuser befinden sich auch in Regio VI in unmittelbarer Nachbarschaft der *fullonica* des Mustius.

24 Dieses Plattenpflaster befindet sich im Westen vor den eingebauten Becken und besteht teils aus kleineren Terrakottaplatten, teils aus den besagten Verkleidungsplatten: Flohr 2007, 133 f. mit Abb. 3, 5 Plan 2 und Anm. 24 (die Platten wurden im Herbst 2006 entfernt, sichtbar blieben danach die Abdrücke des Reliefs und Stiftlöcher in der Mörtelbettung des Bodens).



ven Nutzung wanderte der fortlaufende Gebälkschmuck von der Nahtstelle zwischen dem Aussen und Innen eines römischen Hauses in das Interieur von Raum *o* und wurde dort vereinzelt. Die Anbringung der drei Platten mit Abstand zueinander erinnert im weiteren Sinne an das Konzept des Einzelbildes (*pinax*), wie es die gemalten Wanddekorationen ab dem Zweiten Stil aufweisen<sup>25</sup>. Die farbliche Abstufung der Gewänder, die August Mau beschreibt, deutet eine gewisse *variatio* an, die jedoch mangels naturwissenschaftlicher Untersuchungen nicht sicher auf diese Phase der Wiederverwendung zu beziehen ist, auch wenn eine Neukolorierung der Platten in diesem Zusammenhang prinzipiell einleuchten würde<sup>26</sup>.

Die nächsten beiden Fallbeispiele, die eine schmückende Verwendung von Aufsatzplatten in Innenräumen belegen, stammen aus Rom. In Trastevere, unter S. Cecilia, wurde im frühen 2. Jh. n. Chr. eine mehrstöckige *insula* über einer republikanischen *domus* errichtet<sup>27</sup>. In der so genannten Wand 14 des Neubaus finden sich zwei schmale Fenster und eine trapezförmige Nische, die etwa in zwei Metern Höhe gegenüber dem heutigen Bodenniveau ansetzt. Der Bilddekor weist diese Nische als Hausaltar (*lararium*) aus: Im Zentrum befindet sich ein Tuffrelief, das eine stehende Minerva mit Helm, Lanze und Schild neben einem Altar zeigt. Dieses flankieren seitlich zwei formgleiche Terrakottaplatten mit Darstellung des ‚Bacchischen Opfers‘: Von links nähert sich ein ithyphallischer Pan mit Doppelflöte, rechts vor ihm steht eine Mänade mit Tympanon und Thyrsos vor einem niedrigen Altar, auf dem eine weitere weibliche Figur ein Opfer (wohl Früchte) niederlegt<sup>28</sup>. Obwohl hier zwei identische Reliefplatten einander gegenüberstehen, stellt sich in

25 Eine allgemeine Analogie scheint zudem in der gestalterischen Dreiteilung der Nordwand zu bestehen, die Sogliano 1897, 21 andeutet. Zu den Dekorkonzepten in den Wandmalereien des zweiten und dritten Stils in Pompeji s. Haug 2020, 300–313. 437–447. Zum Verhältnis Terrakottabild und Wandgestaltung s. ferner Tortorella 2018, 204–217.

26 Mau 1898, 9 spricht von „in mit Stuck überzogenem und rot bemaltem Relief“. Somit scheint es, als wäre das Terrakotta-Material der Reliefbilder im Kontext der Wandgestaltung nicht ersichtlich gewesen (der heutige Zustand der Walkerei lässt keine Überprüfung mehr zu). Ein vollständiges Kaschieren des tönernen Materials muss auch für viele Architekturterrakotten in primärer Funktion charakteristisch gewesen sein, bleibt aber heute schwer nachzuvollziehen (s. Reinhardt 2022, 136 Anm. 23 mit Hinweis auf die Villa A in Oplontis).

27 Allgemein zur Fundstätte: LTUR I (1993), 206 f. s. v. S. Caecilia, titulus (N. Parmegiani – A. Pronti); LTUR II (1995) 71 f. s. v. domus: Caecilii (N. Parmegiani); Parmigiani – Pronti 2003; La Bella u. a. 2007. Speziell zur Larariumsnische s. Gatti 1900, 13 f.; Bøggild Johannsen 2008, 29 f. Abb. 6.

28 Zum Bildschema: Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 54–56; Rauch 1999, 86–90.



Abb. 4: Rom, Trastevere: Die Larariumsnische der Insula unter S. Cecilia aus der hohen Kaiserzeit.

Foto: Lalupa, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons.

der trapezförmigen Nische kein gleichförmiger Gesamteindruck ein. Dies liegt einerseits an der parataktischen, also asymmetrischen Bildkomposition des ‚Bacchischen Opfers‘; andererseits verdeckt das Minervarelief bei der linken Terrakottaplatte einen Teil der opfernden Figur, bei der rechten Platte weite Partien des Pan<sup>29</sup> (Abb. 4). In dieser Konstellation liegt der Fokus bei der linken Platte nun auf den zwei Figuren, die zum Altar ziehen, der zudem eng mit dem Altar des Minervareliefs korrespondiert; auf der rechten Platte erscheint die Darstellung als Zweifigurenkomposition, die in sich geschlossen um einen Altar gruppiert ist. Zusammen genommen mit der hohen Positionierung der Nische<sup>30</sup> ist davon auszugehen, dass den antiken Betrachtern die Szenerie nur in groben Zügen einsehbar gewesen sein wird, ikonogra-

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29 Massangaben finden sich bei Gatti 1900, 13; Detailfotos bei Parmigiani – Pronti 2004, 49 f. Abb. 22–24.

30 Eine Larariumsnische, die mit 3 m weit über den Köpfen der Betrachter positioniert war, findet sich etwa in der Küche der Casa del Fauno in Pompeji: Giacobello

phische Details wie die Bocksfüße des Pan oder der Thyrsos dürften aus regulärer Perspektive nicht sichtbar gewesen sein. Der speziell bacchische Charakter der beiden ‚Campana-Reliefs‘, der so typisch für die gesamte Gattung ist, tritt zugunsten einer allgemein sakralen Atmosphäre zurück, die das zentrale Motiv der Minerva am Altar und die Funktion als Altarnische für die Götter des Hauses als ‚ornamentaler Grundton‘ begleitet<sup>31</sup>.

Wurde der Befund aus S. Cecilia anfangs als ein Hinweis auf eine Entstehung der Platten im 2. Jh. n. Chr. gewertet, sprach man jüngst von einer Wiederverwendung älteren Materials<sup>32</sup>. Diese zweite Option scheint in Anbetracht des zeitlichen Abstandes zwischen der Blütezeit der Gattung in den Jahrzehnten um die Millenniumswende und dem Bau des Hauses auf den ersten Blick wahrscheinlicher<sup>33</sup>. Dennoch bleibt sie eine allgemeine Erwägung, mit der nichts Sicheres zur Feindatierung der beiden Reliefs ausgesagt wird: Ohne das Vorhandensein von Wasserspeiern können die Aufsatzplatten nicht als intendierte Stecksimen plausibel gemacht werden, und als matrizengefertigte Serienstücke könnten die Platten nicht überzeugend empirisch-stilistisch datiert werden<sup>34</sup>. In dieser Situation würden nur zusätzliche Informationen helfen, die aus dem Befund selbst gewonnen werden – sofern dies möglich ist. Bei der Walkerei des Mustius haben wir gesehen, wie die Entdeckung weiterer Platten derselben Serie im Bodenbelag des angrenzenden Raumes die These der Wiederverwendung zusätzlich untermauert. Im Fall des *lararium* aus Trastevere (wie bei vielen anderen Beispielen in der älteren Literatur) fehlen solche Hinweise und auch hinsichtlich möglicher Farbspuren, die unter Umständen eine antike Erneuerung anzeigen könnten,

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2008, 177f. Nr.59 (vgl. dort S.234. Nr.A6 für die Bemalung des Larariums im Atrium der Casa del Menandro mit Minerva und Genius).

31 Bøggild Johannsen 2008, 29f. Zu den bacchischen Themen: Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 30–82; Rauch 1999, 8–144.

32 Von einer hadrianischen Datierung sprechen Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 56 und Rauch 1999, 88 (die dies in Anm.646 relativiert), während Parmigiani – Pronti 2004, 37 und La Bella u.a. 2007, 14 von einer Wiederverwendung ausgehen (ebenso Bøggild Johannsen 2008, 29), die möglicherweise aus Materialien des republikanischen Hauses am gleichen Ort erfolgte.

33 In der Literatur findet sich kein Hinweis, ob die Nische möglicherweise nachträglich in Wand 14 eingebracht wurde und die Entstehungszeit des Neubaus unter Umständen einen *terminus ante quem* für das *lararium* bedeuten könnte. Zur Blütezeit der ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ in und um die augusteische Zeit s. Reinhardt 2024, 9 Anm. 28; 13 Anm. 48 mit Verweisen.

34 Etwa über die Aspekte Plattengröße und Stil: Vgl. diesbezüglich meine Kritik des Datierungsmodells von Borbein 1968 in Reinhardt 2016, 257–260; Bauch 2023, 98 Anm. 30.

scheint nichts bekannt zu sein. Ob wir es bei dem Nischendekor im Haus unter S. Cecilia mit einer zeitgenössischen Umnutzung neuer Reliefs oder mit einer nachträglichen Wiederverwendung älteren Dachschrüms zu tun haben, muss offenbleiben.

Mit der Ausweitung der Polychromieforschung auf die Dachterrakotten mag zukünftig eine neue Perspektive überprüfbar werden, nämlich die Frage, ob erhaltene Farbspuren auf mehrere Fassungen hinweisen, die mit antiken Instandsetzungsmassnahmen oder Wiederverwendungen erklärbar sein könnten<sup>35</sup>. Ein günstiger Ausgangspunkt für eine solche naturwissenschaftliche Überprüfung ist bei einer Aufsatzplatte gegeben, die aus dem Hypogaeum des Numitorius Hilarus an der Via Salaria im Norden Roms stammt. Der unterirdische Raum mit Nischen für Urnenbestattungen wurde möglicherweise noch in frühaugusteischer Zeit errichtet (mit Nutzung bis in das 2. Jh. n. Chr.), die Inschriften der Seitenwände ordnen ihn der Klasse der *liberti* beziehungsweise *servi publici* zu<sup>36</sup>. Der Boden des Vorraums war mit Terrakottaplaten und verschiedenen Tonreliefs belegt, so dass auch hier ein Fall pragmatischen Recyclens unmittelbar benachbart ist<sup>37</sup>. An zentraler Stelle in der Grabkammer, gegenüber dem Zugang befand sich eine eingebaute Aedicula aus Tuff-, Terrakotta- und Marmorelementen und an deren Sockel eine Aufsatzplatte (Abb. 5). Allem Anschein nach der einzige Bildschmuck, der aus diesem Grabbau überliefert ist, wurde das Relief aufgrund seiner seltenen Theaterszene und der reichen Polychromie bekannt<sup>38</sup>. Dargestellt ist eine Situation nach der Eroberung Trojas, als die Griechen wegen einer Windstille nicht absegeln können: Die Götter verlangen die Opferung des kleinen Astyanax und Odysseus entreisst diesen seiner Mutter Andromache. Wie genau die Darstellung auf den Bestatteten im Sockel der Aedicula oder den Personenkreis der Grabstätte zu beziehen ist, bleibt offen; das Bildthema könnte wohl allgemein als Analogie zu dem bekannten Motiv

35 Dies scheint bislang noch nicht festgestellt worden zu sein, vgl. Brøns u. a. 2024, 279 f.; Vak u. a. 2024, 247 (beide Studien weisen jedoch Farbauffrischungen des 19. Jhs. nach).

36 Zu Bau und Gräberfeld: Gatti 1905, 13–18 Abb. 1. 2; Rizzo 1905, 203–206 Abb. 46. 47; Hesberg 1998, 14 f.; Cupitò 2007, 104 f. No. UC 10.349. Zu den überlieferten Inschriften s. auch Torelli 1973/74.

37 Nur erwähnt von Gatti 1905, 14 f., der ein Tonrelief mit Palmette und Volute sowie ein Relief mit Nil-Szene explizit macht. Offen bleibt, wie die Zeitstellung des Terrakotta-Bodens gegenüber der langen Nutzungsdauer des Grabes einzuordnen ist.

38 Rom, Palazzo Massimo alle Terme Inv. 34355; Rizzo 1905; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 143 f. 280 Taf. 81; Helbig 1913, 210 f. Nr. 1481.

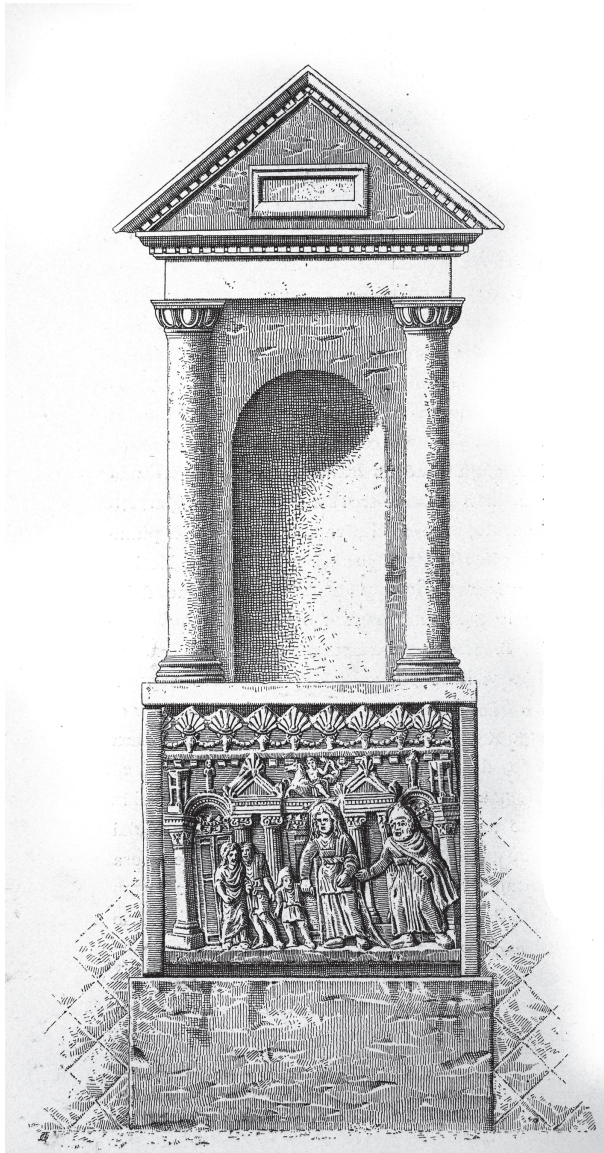


Abb. 5: Rom, ehemals Nekropole vor der Porta Salaria: Zeichnerische Wiedergabe der zentralen Aedikula im Hypogaeum des P. Numitorius Hilarus.  
Foto: Reproduktion nach Rizzo 1905, 204 Fig. 46.

des jähen Todes verstanden werden, wie es in Grabmalereien und später auf Sarkophagen anklingt, aber Genaueres lässt sich nicht plausibel machen<sup>39</sup>.

Hermann von Rohden und Hermann Winnefeld vermuteten, dass sich die Platte vor dem Brand verzogen habe und daraufhin diese Verwendung als Einzelbild gefunden habe<sup>40</sup>. Demgegenüber beschrieb Giulio Emanuele Rizzo in der Erstpublikation, dass das Relief zwei unterschiedliche Phasen der Bemalung aufweise<sup>41</sup>. Sollte diese Einschätzung zutreffen, könnte diese Neufassung entweder aus Anlass einer Wiederverwendung im Grabbau erfolgt sein, nachdem das Relief aus einem ersten Zusammenhang entfernt worden war, oder sie wäre möglicherweise Ausdruck der langen Nutzungszeit im Grab und würde eine spätere Renovierung des Innenraums bezeugen. Vielleicht kann in der Zukunft eine minutiöse naturwissenschaftliche Farb-analyse Rizzos Autopsie überprüfen und mit einer Untersuchung der erhaltenen Aedikula-Elemente verbinden. Gegenwärtig ist nicht klar zwischen einer späteren Wiederverwendung der Aufsatzplatte oder ihrer primären Umnutzung als Sockelschmuck der Aedikula zu entscheiden.

## Von der geschlossenen Ausstattungssequenz zum offenen ‚Ready-made‘: Vorläufiges Resümee

Die betrachteten Beispiele zeigen, wie im Laufe der römischen Kulturgeschichte architektonische Tonreliefs, die ursprünglich meterlange repetitiv-variierte Friese an Gebälken oder Dachrändern bildeten, in neue Zusam-

39 Rizzo 1905, 206 und allgemein Newby 2016, 228–319. Wohl aufgrund des vorwiegenden Interesses an Malerei-, Mosaik- und Stuckdekorationen fand dieser Befund keinen Eingang in Feraudi-Gruénais 2001, vgl. 75–77. 247f. (aus ihrem Korpus gehen keine direkten Vergleiche für das Bildthema hervor; vgl. aber S. 155–157 zur sozialen Zusammensetzung der dort behandelten Gräber). Abgesehen von der massgeblichen Perspektive der dargestellten Figuren und ihrer Handlung bleibt im vorliegenden Fall noch auf die Analogie hinzuweisen, die zwischen der Aedikula-Architektur im Hintergrund der Scene und der gebauten Aedikula des Grabbaus selbst besteht: Hier wiederholen sich die nobilitierenden Architekturmotive der Säule und des Giebels auf engem Raum.

40 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 280 vgl. 14\* zur Datierung.

41 Rizzo 1905, 207: „Per quanto riguarda i colori [...], mi hanno indotto a ritenere che il rilievo fu dipinto due volte, in tempi diversi. I due strati sovrapposti sono evidenti in più punti; nè l’inferiore può dirsi ‚preparazione‘ dell’altro, opponendosi a ciò ragioni di tecnica, anche per la scelta degli stessi colori. [...] Nella porta a sinistra, p. es., la stratificazione dei vari colori è visibilissima; [...]“. Auch Helbig 1913, 210 Nr. 1481 spricht von einer „Erneuerung der Bemalung“.

menhänge ‚wanderten‘, dabei entweder pragmatisch recycelt oder unter Berücksichtigung des Bildschmucks neu verwendet wurden. In beiden Fällen setzten die beteiligten Akteure unterschiedliche, aber konventionelle<sup>42</sup> Möglichkeiten um, die im Einklang mit den Affordanzen dieser eigentlich fas-sadenbezogenen Terrakottaplatten stehen, insbesondere ihrer Stabilität und Haltbarkeit, dem kompakten Plattenformat sowie teilweise mit Bezug auf die detaillierte Bildgestaltung. Bei solchen dekorativen Wiederverwendungen gelangten die tönernen Reliefbilder gleichsam als ‚dekorative Ready-mades‘ in Innenräume (Abb. 2–5), wo sie – nun tendenziell vereinzelt und niedriger angebracht – neue Möglichkeiten der Betrachtung boten<sup>43</sup>. Sicherlich brachte man dabei dem Inhalt der verfügbaren Reliefbilder<sup>44</sup> eine gewisse Offenheit entgegen. Wenn im Haus unter S. Cecilia zwei bacchische Opferszenen die Minerva am Altar rahmen, während in der *fullonica* des Mustius Viktorien auf Biga mit einer Altarszene vergesellschaftet wurden, sollte wohl weder ein gezieltes Auswählen von Bildthemen zu einem bestimmten inhaltlichen Zweck noch ein formalistischer Zugang ausgeschlossen werden, der vordergründig das allgemeine ‚Verschönerungsangebot‘ von Bildern schätzt<sup>45</sup>. Insgesamt aber ist die Frage nach der Konstanz oder Transformation des Bildinhalts bei der gegenwärtigen Befundlage kaum untersuchbar. Dafür tritt zusammen mit dem Aspekt der syntaktischen Einbettung der teils viel älteren Reliefplatten in ihren neuen Dekorationskontexten eine gewisse Offenheit nicht nur hinsichtlich der ursprünglichen Funktion, sondern auch der sozio-

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42 Zur konventionellen Einbettung von Affordanzen vgl. Knappett 2004, 46–49; Günther 2021, 16 f.

43 Vgl. Reinhardt 2024, 28–33.

44 Bei gegenwärtiger, allerdings sehr kleiner, Befundlage entsteht der Eindruck, dass die antiken Akteure bei dekorativen Wiederverwendungen von ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ in erster Linie an Reliefbildern mit figürlichen Darstellungen sowie an unversehrten Platten interessiert waren. – Fragmente finden sich selten (s. die Beeteinfassung in Luni sowie manche ‚formelle‘ in Pompeji; die Bruchstücke sind jedoch zumeist als Bildelemente vollständig, wie etwa eine Wasserspeierprotome, die am Haus des Severus/VIII 2, 29 ohne die zugehörige Sima prangt. Rein oder vorwiegend florale Dekorationen, wie sie insbesondere die Plattenform der sog. Krönungen bieten, sind in den hier untersuchten Beispielen nicht vertreten.

45 In beiden Fällen (zur ‚Pretiosisierung‘ vgl. oben Anm.16) stellt sich natürlich die Frage der hermeneutischen Überprüfbarkeit dieser Möglichkeiten bzw. der Verortung der Befunde zwischen diesen Polen, die leichter fallen würden, wenn weitere Bilder in den entsprechenden Kontexten erhalten wären, aus denen sich möglicherweise der intendierte ‚Deutungsrahmen‘ erkennen liesse. In jedem Fall wird man folgern dürfen, dass der vorgegebene Bildschmuck im jeweiligen Fall als ‚passend‘ im Sinne des *decorum* verstanden worden sein wird.

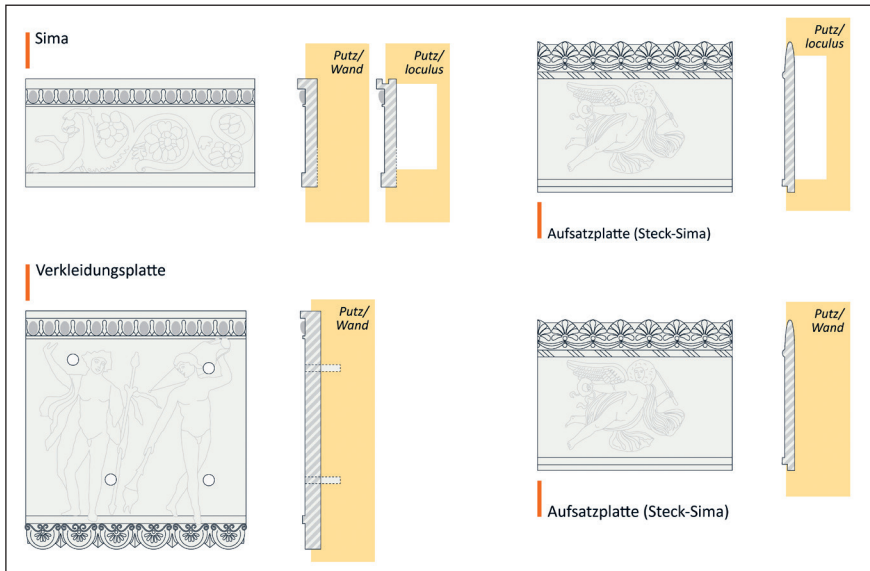


Abb. 6: ‚Campana-Reliefs‘: Die vier Plattenformen bezogen auf die hier diskutierten Fälle dekorativer Wiederverwendungen von Sima-, Verkleidungs- und Aufsatzplatte.

Foto: A. Reinhardt/J. Süss, Mediacultura.

kulturellen Zuordnung hervor. Aussagekräftig ist, dass die hier behandelten Fälle aus einfachen Ausstattungen stammen, die sicherlich mit den unteren sozialen Schichten zu verbinden sind<sup>46</sup>. In dieser mikrohistorischen Adaption einzelner Architekturreliefs für einfache Innendekore liegt eine interessante Ergänzung unseres Blicks auf die Geschichte der Bilder in der römischen Kultur vor, denn traditionell überwiegen Forschungen zu primären Zusammenhängen, die die Intentionen ihrer (häufig elitären) Urheber mit dem ausgeführten Bildschmuck rekonstruieren, beziehungsweise allgemein die Bildgenese vom Standpunkt der römischen Übernahme griechischer Vorbilder untersuchen<sup>47</sup>. In der dekorativen Verwendung einzelner ‚Campana-Reliefs‘

46 So auch Reinhardt 2024, 13f. Zur Schichtung der kaiserzeitlichen Gesellschaft allgemein Alföldy 2011, 138–150. 179–209. Speziell zu den unteren Schichten im archäologischen Befund beziehungsweise zu einer ökonomischen Verortung der ‚römischen Mittelklasse‘ s. Clarke 2003, 4–9; Mayer 2012, 2–21; beide Studien besprechen zahlreiche Beispiele aus Rom und Pompeji.

47 Vgl. Maschek 2010, 80–87. Zu den *ornamenta urbis* s. Bravi 2012, allgemein zu ‚griechischen‘ Bildern in Rom Newby 2016. Hinzu kommt das Thema der Wiederverwendung älterer Bilder als Spolien (wie etwa am Konstantinsbogen in Rom).



in Innenräumen liegt demgegenüber ein Zeugnis für die prestigeträchtige Wirkung der ‚Bilderexplosion‘ vor, die in spätrepublikanischer Zeit zahlreiche Materialgruppen erfasste<sup>48</sup>, und die materiell wie ideell innerhalb der römischen Gesellschaft weit ausstrahlte.

## Methodische Schlussbemerkung

Als im Zuge der positivistischen Wissenschaft in der zweiten Hälfte des 19. Jhs. auch den sogenannten Campana-Reliefs ein eigenes Korpuswerk gewidmet wurde, war die Ordnung des überkommenen Materials nach Fundorten, Plattenformen, Bildtypen und Epochen sowie seine (Bild-)Dokumentation das dringlichste Anliegen<sup>49</sup>. Impliziter Leitstern dabei war das Verstehen dieser Gattung in ihrer Ursprünglichkeit, die primäre(en) Funktion(en) und das originale Aussehen standen im Vordergrund. Erst in den letzten Jahrzehnten etablierte sich eine breitere kulturgeschichtliche Lesart, die gleichberechtigt nach Wandlungs- und Rezeptionsprozessen in der *longue durée* sowie der Materialität und Objektgeschichte fragt<sup>50</sup>. Um wirksam werden zu können, benötigt dieser Ansatz entsprechend detaillierte Befunddokumentationen, die gerade für die quantitativ überwiegenden Altfunde nicht zur Verfügung stehen. Macht dies die Frage nach der antiken Wiederverwendung von Architekturterrakotten zu einem ‚verlorenen Thema‘? – Ich denke nicht, aber um den bestehenden Unsicherheiten zu begegnen und breiteres Vergleichsmaterial zu gewinnen, wäre eine breiter angelegte Untersuchung weiterer Befunde vonnöten.

Möchte man die mikro- und makrohistorischen Implikationen der Architekturterrakotten in abweichender Nutzung weiter untersuchen, bedarf es zukünftig auch einer systematischen Annahme des methodischen Reflexionspotentials, das das neue Thema der Wiederverwendung der Architekturterrakotten in ihrer *longue durée* mit sich bringt. Wie die Aufsatzplatten im *lararium* unter S. Cecilia oder das Relief aus dem Hypogaeum des Numitorius Hilarus zeigen, ist ihre Einordnung als antike Wiederverwendung

48 Hierzu jüngst Flecker 2022, 385–388 mit Verweis auf die These von A. Wallace-Hadrill.

49 Ab 1878: Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, S. v; Rohden 1880, S. v–vii (R. Kekulé). Vgl. auch Reinhardt 2024, 5 f.; Sporleder 2024, 352 f.

50 Zur kulturalanthropologischen Ausrichtung der Klassischen Archäologie vgl. etwa die aktuellen Konzepte von ‚Materialität‘ (Karagianni et al. 2015) oder ‚Objektbiographie‘ s. die Beiträge in Boschung u. a. 2015. Zu ‚Affordanz‘ und ‚agency‘ s. oben Anm. 17.

nicht gänzlich zu sichern. Theoretisch kann nicht ausgeschlossen werden, dass wir es in beiden Fällen mit einer fakultativen Umnutzung zu tun haben, also einer Verwendung abseits der typologischen Tradition, wie dies die Forschung schon länger für die ‚multifunktionalen‘ Aufsatzplatten annimmt<sup>51</sup>. Dies würde bedeuten, dass irgendwann in ihrem Produktionszeitraum die primäre Verwendung der reliefierten Architekturterrakotten als Wandschmuck in Innenräumen neu zu der traditionellen Nutzung an Gebälk und Dachrand hinzugekommen wäre (welche aber weiterhin die formale Gestaltung der Reliefs mit teils ausgreifenden Rändern sowie Stiftlöchern oder einer Befestigungsnut bestimmte<sup>52</sup>). Avancierte dies zur gängigen Konvention, das ‚Verschönerungsangebot‘ der Architekturelief nach Belieben für Innenräume fruchtbar zu machen, so dass derartige Tonreliefs gleichberechtigt neben gemalte oder stuckierte Bilder traten<sup>53</sup>? Oder handelt es sich nicht vielmehr überwiegend um Belege für die alltägliche Praxis der kostengünstigen Wiederverwendung älteren Materials, vielleicht als populäres Begleitphänomen parallel zum Bilderluxus an den Bauten der Eliten oder auch infolge eines Geschmackswandels<sup>54</sup> in der Dekoration von Gebälken und Dachrändern zwischen der frühen und mittleren Kaiserzeit?

Vielleicht können weitere Untersuchungen innerhalb der bestehenden engen Grenzen, die typologischen und mikrohistorischen Einordnungen gegeben sind, zukünftig neue Belege für diese beiden Möglichkeiten der konventionellen Einbindung des ‚Verschönerungsangebots‘ beibringen, das die aufwändig gestalteten Reliefseiten der römischen Architekturterrakotten in ihrer *longue durée* für unterschiedliche Rezipientenkreise bereithalten<sup>55</sup>.

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51 Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 44\*. 46\* f.; Borbein 1968, 16; Tortorella 2018, insbes. 203–205. 207f. Zahlreiche Forschende folgten der Idee von ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ als Einzelbilder im Inneren, etwa Rauch 1999, 4. Zur gegenteiligen Deutungsperspektive der Aufsatzplatten als sog. Stecksimen s. Känel 2024 und Reinhardt 2024, 14 f.

52 Sollten die Tonreliefs eigens als Wandschmuck hergestellt worden sein, überrascht eigentlich das Beibehalten dieser typologischen Merkmale (Reinhardt 2024, 15 Anm. 59); die Nut bei den Aufsatzplatten suchten manche Forscher denn auch mit einer konkreten Funktion im neuen Zusammenhang zu erklären, vgl. Borbein 1968, 16; Calderone 1975, 66 f. Abb. 2.

53 Vgl. Tortorella 2018 sowie Calderone 1975, 65–67 Abb. 1. 2 eine reguläre Verwendung der Aufsatzplatten in der Frieszone zwischen Türsturz und -verdachung erwägt.

54 ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ als zeitlich beschränkte Modeerscheinung: Strazzulla 2007, 155.

55 Diese Perspektive weist über die Antike hinaus in die Neuzeit, in der derartige Fundstücke regelmässig als ‚Wandbilder‘ in Sammlungen und privaten Interieurs

Nähere Einsichten in diese Perspektiven der römischen Bildpraktik werden sich nur dann erzielen lassen, wenn mehr alte und vor allem neue Befunde entsprechend umsichtig untersucht werden können. Vom Standpunkt der Wiederverwendung aus betrachtet, erscheint die Annahme der älteren Forschung jedenfalls zu positivistisch, allgemeinen von Fundumständen im Haus oder aus alten Berichten sicher auf eine primäre Nutzung von ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ als Wandschmuck in Innenräumen schliessen zu können<sup>56</sup>. Wenn etwa 1876 ein Set von Terrakottaplatten „fra le ruine dell’edifizio“ im sog. Haus des Avidius Quietus auf dem Esquilin in Rom angetroffen wurde, deutet dies keinesfalls eindeutig auf eine Verwendung von ‚Campana-Reliefs‘ als Wandschmuck in Innenräumen hin, wie sie Hermann von Rohden und Hermann Winnefeld „wenigstens für die Spätzeit [als] sicher“ annahmen<sup>57</sup>. Denkt man an die *fullonica* des Mustius, könnte es sich bei den sieben Verkleidungsplatten im Kontext des flavischen Hauses prinzipiell ebenso um einen Fall von späterer Wiederverwendung handeln. Letztlich wäre es aber genauso möglich, dass man 1876 auf ein temporäres Materiallager von tönernem Bauschmuck gestossen war, ohne dies als solches zu erkennen. Derartige antike Deponierungen sind vor allem von marmornen Ausstattung- und Architekturelementen bekannt, lassen sich aber auch für Architekturterrakotten nachweisen<sup>58</sup>. In diesem Fall wären die tönernen Reliefs etwa aus Anlass einer Renovierung abgenommen und zwischengelagert worden, ohne dann wie geplant eingesetzt zu werden – gleichsam eine

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präsentiert wurden, s. etwa Borbein 1968, 19 Anm. 60; Reinhardt 2024, 31–33 Abb. 10; Sporleder 2024, 354 f. 358 (zur Vereinzelung von Serien im späten 19. Jh.), die eine auffällige Parallele zu der Idee der fakultativen Umnutzung als schmückende Wandbilder darstellt.

56 Vgl. Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 47\*; Borbein 1968, 18 f. mit Anm. 59. 61. 63 gefolgt etwa von Tortorella 2018, 204 f.

57 Reinhardt 2024, 14 Anm. 57. Vgl. Visconti 1877, 74; Rohden – Winnefeld 1911, 18\* („Gewiss hat dieser Fries ursprünglich das Badezimmer geziert.“). 46\* f. 292 Taf. 108. Auch Rauch 1999, 113 f. 125 199 f. Nr. 816–821 mit Anm. 840. 915 datiert die Verkleidungsplatten flavisch wie das Haus des Avidius Quietus.

58 Gemeint sind ‚reversible‘ Deponierungen von Terrakotta-Elementen, etwa aus Anlass eines Umbaus (vgl. dagegen Donderer 1993: ‚irreversible‘, da kultische Deponierung), die dann in der Antike nicht mehr gehoben wurden/werden konnten. Bekannt ist etwa die anzunehmende Zwischenlagerung von Architekturterrakotten in der Casa del Fauno in Pompeji (Bauch 2023, 91 Anm. 3; 99 Anm. 33. 34 mit Verweisen); aber sowohl in Pompeji (Haus II 9, 2) als auch in Fregellae (Haus I, 6) liegen weitere Belege vor – ich danke vielmals R. Känel für seine Hinweise auf seinen Beitrag zu den Wohnhäusern in Fregellae (Känel [im Druck]) sowie auf Esposito 2023, 169 f. Abb. 12.

„Situation Null“, an die sich für die antiken Akteure ein breites Spektrum neuer Verwendungsmöglichkeiten knüpfte.

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## **Carving More Trees. Memory and Environment in Virgil and Calpurnius Siculus**

**Abstract** Although the ancient pastoral setting is often considered harmonious, this view can be challenged by examining poems in which trees are used by shepherds for writing (Verg. ecl. 5, Calp. ecl. 1 and 3). Usually seen as metapoetic elements, these carvings can be considered products of a poetic memory and, at the same time, examples of a violent relationship established by humans with their environment. In order to understand these aspects, I analyze the occurrences of inscribed trees in Virgil and in Calpurnius Siculus as representations of a continuous transformation of cultural memory through the exploitation of natural elements. Within this perspective, my purpose is to read Roman pastoral poems as texts with a reciprocal construction of a discourse, thus avoiding Virgil as a primary source of meaning.

The environment has always been a major topic in studies of Roman bucolic poetry. Nonetheless, some natural features in these poems have not been thoroughly examined from an intertextual point of view with attention to cultural memory and environmental humanities. Taking these fields into account can establish new perceptions of Virgil and Calpurnius Siculus, especially in poems in which the act of carving trees is relevant. Usually read

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as a metapoetic feature, this act can also be the basis for different views on environment and memory in these two poets' works.

A famous example of tree carving is found in Virgil's Eclogue 5, a poem which begins with an elder Menalcas inviting a younger Mopsus to play the flute among hazels and elm trees while he sings<sup>1</sup>. In response, the latter takes a humble stance and gladly accepts the invitation, suggesting another place for their activity, a cave, instead of "the uncertain shadows" (*incertas umbras*) of trees<sup>2</sup>. Menalcas states that only Amyntas is better than Mopsus, who answers that "that one" (*idem*), i.e. Amyntas, aims to beat Phoebus in the art of singing<sup>3</sup>. Finally, the elder peasant asks Mopsus to continue and speculates on the subject of the verses of his fellow shepherd. It is an abrupt change in Menalcas's plans: after putting forward the idea of singing while Mopsus plays the flute, he implies that the young shepherd could take the lead in his place<sup>4</sup>. Nonetheless, Mopsus, responding to Menalcas's encouragement, decides to put a song of his own to the test:

Immo haec, in uiridi nuper quae cortice fagi  
carmina descripsi et modulans alterna notauī,  
experiar. tu deinde iubeto certet Amyntas.<sup>5</sup>

Indeed these songs, which I just now wrote out  
on verdant bark of beech and marked in measuring shifts  
I'm going to try out: you then bid that Amyntas challenge<sup>6</sup>.

Firstly, what is important here is that Mopsus decides to read out a 25-verse song that he had written down in the bark of a tree, something unprecedented in the ancient bucolic tradition. Although there are other mentions of carving in the *Bucolics*, only this poem names the carved tree species and presents the inscribed song. The tree is a beech with "verdant bark" which reveals, with the adverb *nuper*, how recent is Mopsus's creation. The adverb contrasts with *iampridem*, used by the elder Menalcas in verse 55 to set the moment of creation of the poem he will sing to Mopsus<sup>7</sup>. The fact that

1 Verg. ecl. 5, 1–3.

2 Verg. ecl. 5, 4–7.

3 Verg. ecl. 5, 8–9.

4 Verg. ecl. 5, 10–12.

5 Verg. ecl. 5, 13–15.

6 Translated by Van Sickle 2011, 92.

7 Lee 1977, 65.

the young shepherd has not yet recited his creation may be the reason he declares that he is going to “try it out”<sup>8</sup>. Mopsus’s song is presented as something unusual, an experiment so innovative in pastoral that he had to write it down<sup>9</sup>. What stands out as new, therefore, is not only the song’s content, but also the act of writing it down. In addition, scholars usually pay attention to the fact that the tree chosen for the inscription is a bucolic element *par excellence*<sup>10</sup>, a species considered wild and very resistant in Antiquity<sup>11</sup>, and the paradigmatic tree of the *Bucolics*<sup>12</sup>. Thus, Mopsus’s creation could at the same time metapoetically represent a new poet, Virgil, and an innovation in ancient pastoral landscape.

There are other consequences of writing such a long poem on beech bark: from a contemporary botanical point of view, it could kill the tree<sup>13</sup>. However, would a poet like Virgil have had this in mind? Would shepherds have been aware of that? Before proceeding, it is necessary to consider two factors: the first one is that Virgil probably knew about this danger, given the extensive study of trees done by ancient Greeks and Romans up to that time. Theophrastus, for example, describes ways of violently damaging a tree and points out the possibility of killing trees due to extensive perforation<sup>14</sup>, an effect that is probably expected from carving a 25-line song. Furthermore, since Virgil’s vocabulary for trees and other plants is similar to texts like Cato’s *De agri cultura*, especially in the *Georgics* but also in the *Bucolics*<sup>15</sup>, it is likely the poet was familiar with arboriculture technical terms like other Greek and Roman authors of his time<sup>16</sup>. Despite these elements, it could be asked, why he would let his Mopsus write on a tree if he knew this action could put an end to it? Regarding this matter, Servius gives an answer by posing a question: *ubi enim debuit magis rusticus scribere?* (“where else would a peasant write?”)<sup>17</sup>. His comment has been interpreted as an assertion that Mopsus could only use a tree as a medium for writing due to the absence of alternative materials in the rural environment. However, a different interpretation is that the beech is the sole option for a shepherd due to the

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8 Von Albrecht 2007, 25.

9 Putnam 1970, 169.

10 Lipka 2001, 168.

11 Theophr. h. plant. 3, 10, 1.

12 Verg. ecl. 1, 1, georg. 4, 566.

13 For a detailed explanation, see Buckler – Hay 2018, 43.

14 Theophr. c. plant. 5, 16.

15 Lipka 2001, 167.

16 Henkel 2009, 156.

17 Serv. ecl. 5, 13 Thilo I.

conventions of the bucolic genre. At this moment, it is worth noting that Pliny the Elder states that country people used to write messages to each other on beech bark or use it for ritual purposes, killing the tree as a result<sup>18</sup>. It is not clear if the bark is removed from the tree in these situations<sup>19</sup>, a doubt that could be applied to the Virgilian setting too. This practice is a possible option in Eclogue 5, since Pliny also mentions how trees were often destroyed due to the removal of their bark<sup>20</sup>. Thus, some peasants might not have seen any problem in using this tree species at will, without considering the effects of their use on the trees' health. Virgil's shepherds could have the same attitude towards a beech, even if recent scholars find it a "barbarism" and thus unlikely to be true<sup>21</sup>, a modern assumption based on current concerns about the environment. There is a possibility that Mopsus would not think about the consequences of his action, because he does what other peasants would usually do to a tree.

Another important factor is the content of the poem that is written on the beech. It deals with the subject of Daphnis's death, an event responsible for putting all activities in the country on hold, making even animals weep because of his departure<sup>22</sup>, which highlights his double nature as god and human<sup>23</sup>. Analyzing this poem, scholars have mostly focused on the association of Daphnis with Julius Caesar<sup>24</sup>. Besides the possibility of this allegory, Daphnis is also considered "archetypal for bucolic song"<sup>25</sup>, since he is an authority on many matters of a shepherd's life, a possible reason for being chosen as a subject by Mopsus. While presenting himself as a contender to Amyntas, the young shepherd chooses such an important symbol of poetry in order to stand as the bearer of his legacy and, consequently, become more like Daphnis. He also offers in his poem a sample of his abilities to Menalcas, someone already respected for his talent. Additionally, the "lament for Daphnis", apparently composed in response to a previous song by Menalcas, is an attempt to secure immortality for the poetic tradition of this shepherds' community by marking the surface of a tree<sup>26</sup>. Alternatively, the consequence of his action is that, just like its honored figure, the song's medium of memory,

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18 Plin. nat. 16, 14.

19 For a footnote on this matter, see Rackham 1945, 410.

20 Plin. nat. 17, 234–238.

21 Coleman 1977, 157.

22 Verg. ecl. 5, 20–29.

23 Buisel 2024, 129–130.

24 Lee 1977, 62; Cucchiarelli 2017, 282.

25 Davis 1987, 80.

26 Papaioannou 2006, 5.

the beech, could die due to the extensive carving<sup>27</sup>, creating the need for another way to preserve the text. Poetry, thus, expresses how death continues to reign in everyday life, even when the shepherds try to avoid it, and it continues lurking the countryside in other passages of the *Bucolics*. At the end of his lament, Mopsus states that they must make a tomb for Daphnis and add two verses created by their idol over it<sup>28</sup>. Possibly aware of the impermanence of his writing, the young shepherd suggests that his master's words, the words that Mopsus as a pupil has allegedly carved in wood, should be preserved in stone. Therefore, instead of a tree whose shadow is so appropriate for a *locus amoenus*, the shepherds would, surprisingly, find a tombstone.

With this in mind, it is possible to reflect on two more aspects related to the tree species that Virgil chose for his Eclogue 5. The first one is the common reading of *fagus* as a new version of the Theocritean φηγός, an oak. Some scholars see *fagus* as a play on words with φηγός<sup>29</sup>, because of their similar pronunciation, and even argue that it is impossible to read the Latin word merely as “beech”, because it could also mean “oak”<sup>30</sup>. Others consider *fagus* a mere mistake by Virgil, who could have incorrectly understood the meaning of φηγός in Theocritus<sup>31</sup>. The possibility of reading it just as “oak” due to an affiliation to Hellenistic love poetry was postulated too<sup>32</sup>, although it depends on a reading that does not take wordplay into account in these poems<sup>33</sup>. Nevertheless, linguists have concluded that both the Latin and the Greek words come from different stages of development of the Proto-Indo-European \*b<sup>h</sup>āgō-, having a primary meaning in common applied to divergent species in each context<sup>34</sup>. Despite this distinction, there is still a possibility of reading *fagus* in a double way, both as a tree equivalent to the one in Theocritus and as a different tree, which is, to a certain extent, also possible apart from the wordplay ambiguity as a metapoetic feature<sup>35</sup>. It is important to remember that this transient meaning of *fagus* is based on the fact that intertextuality is a procedure of “absorbing and transforming another

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27 Buckler – Hay 2018, 43.

28 Verg. ecl. 5, 43–44.

29 Williams 1968, 318f.; O’Hara 1996, 63.

30 Chandler 2010, 88f.

31 Williams 1968, 318.

32 Lipka 2002, 137; Cucchiarelli 2017, 290; Paraskeviotis 2020, 39f.

33 Kenney 1983, 50.

34 Lane 1967, 211; Blažek 2002, 209.

35 Henkel 2009, 35f.

text”, turning the literary discourse into a “mosaic of quotations”<sup>36</sup>. That is, a reading process in which “meaning is realized at the point of reception”<sup>37</sup>, dependent on the reader’s perspective. It is for this reason that the ambiguity generated by the contrast between *fagus* and φηγός is so productive among Virgilian scholars. However, it should be noted that, during the reading process, it is necessary to deal with other possible ways of understanding a poem, thus avoiding the elimination of some of them to make it easier. Thinking of more connections established in Virgil’s Eclogue 5, the relation of *fagus* to *quercus* should be considered, which certainly means “oak” and occurs in the *Bucolics* too. Some oaks destroyed by lightning are mentioned because of a prophecy alluded in Eclogue 1: *de caelo tactas memini praedicere quercus*<sup>38</sup> (“I see that often oaks foretold / by bolts from heaven struck”)<sup>39</sup>. Just like the presence of the verb *memini* is relevant because it makes us imagine a past for the poem’s narrative, it is also important that *quercus* could represent Theocritus’ φηγός. Thus, this remembrance would be of both the prophecy and Theocritean poetry, creating a double meaning for *fagus* as continuity and rupture at the same time. Significantly, in this tree, not in a *quercus*, Mopsus writes his poem. The opposition created in the pastoral world between the remembered but eliminated oak and the beech displayed as a new shelter is already noticeable at the beginning of Eclogue 1<sup>40</sup>: *tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi*<sup>41</sup> (“you – lying back beneath a broad beech lid”)<sup>42</sup>. Here the beech represents a new pastoral ideal, without, however, excluding the reminiscence of a Greek one. It is also worth mentioning the description of old broken beeches in Eclogue 9: *veteres, iam fracta cacumina, fagos*<sup>43</sup> (“beeches – old at last, tops broken”)<sup>44</sup>. Taking the textualization<sup>45</sup> of the Virgilian book as an intertextual reading guideline, it is possible to notice that a continuity is first established by the transition from oak to beech and then from beech to a future tree whose species is still unknown.

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36 Kristeva 1969, 146.

37 Fowler 1997, 24.

38 Verg. ecl. 1, 17.

39 Translated by Van Sickle 2011, 77.

40 Saunders 2008, 85.

41 Verg. ecl. 1, 1.

42 Translated by Van Sickle 2011, 76.

43 Verg. ecl. 9, 9

44 Translated by Van Sickle 2011, 107.

45 According to Greimas – Courtés 1982, 341, textualization “is the set of procedures (making up textual syntax) the end product of which is a discursive continuum”.



The second matter which should draw attention is the material consequences of Mopsus's writing on the tree besides its death. A common hypothesis for his decision to write on wood is that it would be an "aid to memory"<sup>46</sup>. It could be stated that this action is an appropriation of a natural element by a human. The beech is now dominated by humans because it is now part of pastoral culture, a medium of memory. It is used as a tool for human purposes at the expense of its own survival. The effects of Mopsus's action permeate Virgilian poetry. The beech has become a tame and useful tree<sup>47</sup>, not wild and resistant as Theophrastus described it, and suffers changes throughout the *Bucolics*. In addition, the *Georgics* turn it into working material, but at the same time, a symbol of pastoral poetry through intertextual reading<sup>48</sup> and reference to the poet's past activities<sup>49</sup>. From this point of view, in the *Bucolics* the beech is a species that serves the shepherds, while others are still untamed. In fact, it is working material in the hands of the poet Mopsus. In a way, Virgil's depiction of trees reflects the tendency among Romans, e.g. Cato, Varro, Pliny the Elder and Columella, to describe natural elements mainly through their human usage. Theophrastus also dedicated large portions of his work to these uses, but his descriptions also emphasize how people can endanger trees. For example, after defining the beech in detail<sup>50</sup>, he highlights limitations for both cutting and removing its bark<sup>51</sup>. Nevertheless, despite some possible exceptions, most of these authors reveal a prevailing extractivist thinking towards the environment.

The effects of carving on the health of ancient pastoral trees have not been a subject for many scholars, even those close to the environmental humanities<sup>52</sup>. A possible reason for this is a common reading of the *Bucolics* which assumes the environment as a stable reality in Virgil<sup>53</sup>, as a poetic space where harmony reigns<sup>54</sup>. Because of this, the act of carving trees in Virgil is usually understood only as a metaphor to writing<sup>55</sup>. In a way, this conclusion is based on the fact that it is impossible to distinguish the tree from its use as a writing material in the Virgilian pastoral world due to the

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46 Clausen 1994, 157.

47 Armstrong 2019, 197.

48 Armstrong 2009, 43–45.

49 Verg. georg. 4, 566.

50 Theophr. h. plant. 3, 10, 1.

51 Theophr. h. plant. 5, 12.

52 For example, Jones 2011 and Armstrong 2019.

53 Newlands 1987, 221; von Albrecht 2007, 40.

54 Poggioli 1975, 20.

55 Henkel 2009, 44–45.

fact that the term *cortex* defines both a part of a tree and the human products made of it. It is important to remember that the *Bucolics* is a book from a genre being established in the Roman literary culture, a genre that was written in books despite its “evocation of a naive performative tradition in its past”<sup>56</sup>. The need to document poetry through writing is a premise represented in Eclogue 5.

Memory is an important issue in pastoral poetry. Virgil’s time is often considered a transitional period in which keeping events in mind becomes an issue in literature<sup>57</sup> and is seen as a reason to write poems, a motivation that blends social memory into poetic memory<sup>58</sup>. Shepherds often forget things and try to remember them in the *Bucolics*. Remembering implies that the thing remembered is not completely lost. An answer to instability and failure of memory is writing, a way to establish a connection with the past<sup>59</sup> and to create material conditions necessary for a lasting *fama*, for one’s immortality as a writer<sup>60</sup>. Certainly, Mopsus had the stability of writing in mind when he carved his newly-composed poem on a tree. However, the tree could potentially die, making his medium of memory disappear. Even if its bark were not removed, an action which would speed up the tree’s death<sup>61</sup>, it would deteriorate over time if not properly treated. From this point of view, writing could not help to prevent the inevitable loss of memory, as opposed to Horace’s idea of the permanence of poetry<sup>62</sup>. Thus, instead of remembrances, the danger of silence lurks around the pastoral landscape<sup>63</sup>, and the only solution to avoid it is to keep creating memory.

Violently carving a tree as Mopsus does could be seen as an expression of “the inevitability of decay”<sup>64</sup>, but also an example of how ancient Romans dealt with the environment, through its continuous exploitation. Opposed to that, there is the shepherds’ cultural memory, especially their poetic memory, which is collectively transmitted and repurposed, with vestigial components of other artistic expressions being incorporated into their creations. Vestiges imply recollection, a way of perpetuating fragments of a long gone

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56 Breed 2006, 335.

57 Meban 2009, 102 f., Hulsenboom 2013, 18.

58 Papaioannou 2006, 4–5.

59 Meban 2009, 119.

60 Assmann 1999, 181 f.

61 Buckler – Hay 2018, 42 f.

62 Hor. *carm.* 3, 30.

63 Meban 2009, 112.

64 Buckler – Hay 2018, 43.

past<sup>65</sup>. Perhaps, what Mopsus did with his lament is related to this: an effort to create ways to preserve vestiges of the shepherds' culture and partially avoid its demise. If the inevitable decay of memory is considered, the young shepherd might not rely so much on *fama*, being so dependent on oral tradition, to preserve his song. Instead, Mopsus tries to make his work last longer through writing. Similarly, the permanence of Daphnis's epitaph, apparently composed by himself, cannot rely on their heirs and must be set in stone.

The struggle against an eternal silence echoes in Calpurnius Siculus's Eclogue 1. In this text, two shepherds, Corydon and Ornytus, discuss where they can take shelter from the sun to sing, and decide to enter a cave<sup>66</sup>. Once they arrive there, Ornytus notices something odd:

O. Et iam captatae pariter successimus umbrae,  
sed quaenam sacra descripta est pagina fago,  
quam modo nescio quis properanti falce notauit?  
aspicis ut uirides etiam nunc littera rimas  
seruet et arenti nondum se laxet hiatu?  
C. Ornyte, fer propius tua lumina: tu potes alto  
cortice descriptos citius percurrere uersus<sup>67</sup>

O. Now we have both come beneath the shade we sought. But what legend is this inscribed upon the hallowed beech, which someone of late has scored with hasty knife? Do you notice how the sheet still preserve the fresh greenness of their cutting and do not as yet gape with sapless slit?  
C. Ornytus, look closer. You can more quickly scan the lines inscribed on the bark high up<sup>68</sup>.

Before these lines, the beech is mentioned right after *pineae silua* ("pine forest")<sup>69</sup>, which is a possible reference to *πίτυς* ("pine")<sup>70</sup>, a tree very relevant for the understanding of Theocritus' Idyll 1. The Virgilian tree, *fagus*, is the tree chosen to be carved by Faunus, inhabitant of the cave the shepherds have decided to enter. Not only is the tree species given of the inscription, but it is also described as "sacred" (*sacra*) to Ornytus. Additionally, it should

65 Assmann 1999, 211.

66 Calp. ecl. 1, 8–12.

67 Calp. ecl. 1, 19–25.

68 Translated by Duff – Duff 1934, 221 and adapted.

69 Calp. ecl. 1, 9–11.

70 Davis 1987, 39; Beron 2020, 23.

not be forgotten that “sheet” (*pagina*) is a rare poetic word that means the material (the tree itself), its use, and its content at the same time<sup>71</sup>. Regardless of the date of his poetry<sup>72</sup>, Calpurnius Siculus wrote it at a time in which writing was already deeply consolidated in Rome and, of course, in the pastoral poetic memory. A novelty in Virgil here is common practice. Ornytus is not surprised by seeing something written in a tree. He is amazed because it is sacred and he does not know who (*nescio quis*) carved (*notauit*) it so quickly with a knife or scythe (*properanti falce*). He notices that the letters still have green grooves (*uirides rimas*) that have not dried out yet. After this, Corydon asks him to check the verses (*uersus*) cut into the bark (*cortice*).

There are a few important elements here. The first is that, like Mopsus’s poem in Virgil’s Eclogue 5, the *sacra pagina* is quite recent. However, it is a novelty inscribed in a pastoral element that is not new: the beech. Unlike Mopsus’s poem, the author of the song found here is still unknown. The act of writing on a tree is referred to by the same verb used in Virgil: here it is *notauit*, there it is *notauit*<sup>73</sup>. The difference between the two forms draws attention to another point: in Virgil, Mopsus has carved something, but in Calpurnius Siculus someone who does not participate in the shepherds’ dialogue has written it. Some readers feel frustrated due to the lack of an amoebean exchange, or a poem written by the shepherds in the poem. This absence may work as an indication of the participation of someone outside the shepherds’ dialogue, like Faunus, or – on another diegetic level – the presence of a poet who came earlier, such as Virgil<sup>74</sup>. Despite there being no specific reference to him, there is indeed recognition of a character from the past.

Virgil’s Eclogue 5 sheds light on this passage and vice versa. This two-way movement happens because the relationship between two texts covers the comprehension of both of them<sup>75</sup>. As a consequence, both poems are reevaluated together on the same level, making their meaning always transient and multiple. When dealing with intertextuality, there is no need to separate the reader from the philologist, since the latter must be still a kind of reader, a reader with a historical, social and cultural background who

71 Beron 2021, 165.

72 There is still no consensus regarding the date of composition of Calpurnius Siculus’ work. Although most scholars agree with a Neronian dating (e.g. Mayer 2006, Karakasis 2016), some argue for other options (e.g. Baldwin 1955, Horsfall 1996). For an updated summary of this debate, see Beron 2021, 30–40.

73 Verg. ecl. 5, 14.

74 Slater 1994, 73.

75 Barchiesi 1997, 211.

incorporates the aesthetic perspective of the text and participates in the construction of its meaning through other texts as well<sup>76</sup>. In order to deal with the complexity of an artistic work through intertextuality, it is necessary to envision other possible ways of understanding it in a literary system, ways that perhaps do not immediately come to mind. Evidently, this complexity is only available if the reader assumes a “certain level of trust” in the poet’s skill<sup>77</sup>. Thus, it is important to work with the premise that Calpurnius Siculus, despite all the negative criticism his poetry has received, stands a chance in this game which he plays aware of the implications of referencing earlier poets in his work. With this in mind, it is worth examining the shepherds’ comments on the carving:

O. non pastor, non haec triuiali more uiator,  
 sed deus ipse canit: nihil armentale resultat,  
 nec montana sacros distinguunt iubila uersus.  
 C. mira refers; sed rumpe moras oculoque sequaci  
 quamprimum nobis diuinum perlege carmen<sup>78</sup>.

O. These be no verses in wayside style by shepherd or by traveller: ’tis a very god who sings. No ring here of cattle-stall; nor do alpine yodellings make refrains for the sacred lay.

C. You tell of miracles! Away with dallying; and at once with eager eye read me through the inspired poem<sup>79</sup>.

Ornytus describes the poem which he quickly reads and declares that no shepherd (*pastor*) and no passer-by (*uiator*) has written it, because this is a song by a god (*deus*) whose name is Faunus, information given a little later in the poem. According to Ornytus, the poem does not say anything about country life (*nihil armentale*). Here there are at least two major differences to Virgil’s Eclogue 5: while Daphnis was a godlike shepherd who sang about the country and did not leave anything written behind, Faunus is indeed a divine entity who has chosen to carve on a beech a song on matters not related to the rural area. A consequence of this action is that, unlike Mopsus, neither Ornytus nor Corydon would be able to write anything down and tell everyone that they are the bearers of Faunus’s legacy. Their only possible reaction

76 Edmunds 2001, 43.

77 Barchiesi 1997, 221.

78 Calp. ecl. 1, 28–32.

79 Translated by Duff – Duff 1934, 221.

now is to be amazed. Therefore, Corydon answers Ornytus by claiming that he tells him wonders (*mira refers*) and urges the shepherd to read the divine poem (*diuinum perlege carmen*), which is very long: it has 55 verses, 10 more than Mopsus's lament and much more than the two-line Daphnis epitaph.

Some scholars consider such a large inscription unlikely in Virgil and even more "absurd" in the context of Calpurnius Siculus' Eclogue 1<sup>80</sup>. Contemporary botany, however, demonstrates that carving a poem of that size on a tree is possible<sup>81</sup>. Yet, it is worth noting the different lengths of Faunus's and Mopsus's songs. Additionally, there is a difference in the definition of the latter, a divine poem inscribed on a beech, even though a prophetic characteristic was actually related to the oak (*quercus*) in Virgil's Eclogue 5, as mentioned before, and in the *Georgics*<sup>82</sup>. Perhaps Calpurnius Siculus refers to the ambiguity of *fagus* in Virgil. Nevertheless, what is most relevant here is the effect of the absence of pastoral matters in a song that is actually a panegyric. The dialogue before it creates a contrast between pastoral and panegyric that can be seen throughout the book<sup>83</sup>. The song carved on the tree and selected to be preserved in a medium of memory establishes a relation to the bucolic tradition and to the panegyric at the same time, unlike the "lament for Daphnis", and clearly refers to a knowledge shared by the community. That is why the shepherds decide to show the divine song to "Augustan ears" (*augustas aures*) at the end of the poem. For this reason, it is possible to state that there is evidence of social memory both in Virgil and in Calpurnius Siculus, especially in the so-called political Eclogues (Eclogues 1, 4 and 7)<sup>84</sup>.

Bucolic space can be seen as a kind of literary garden, with its own vegetal and animal features, and "an inner-outer division"<sup>85</sup>, like a *hortus* surrounded by an imaginary fence. Similarly, the Roman garden, although shaped by other natural forces, is created by human motivation in a specific place and is cultivated in order to last as long as its caretakers want it to last as a "powerful setting in which societies embed beliefs, myths and fictions"<sup>86</sup>. In the bucolic garden, memory is controlled mainly by the shepherds, who decide which natural element, for example, a tree, will become a feature to preserve beliefs, myths and fictions. Despite the action of carving a long song

80 Coleman 1977, 157; Fey-Wickert 2002, 181.

81 Buckler – Hay 2018, 45.

82 Verg. georg. 2, 16.

83 Paschalis 2016, 303.

84 As opposed to Hulsenboom 2013, 26.

85 Jones 2011, 17f.

86 Austen 2023, 4.

on a beech tree, poetry survives through writing in the worlds of Virgil and Calpurnius Siculus. Even though their material support would deteriorate with time, the songs are perpetuated in cultural memory, creating a need to deal with them altogether. Calpurnius Siculus's relationship with Virgil becomes more complex when considering another tree carving in Eclogue 3. In this poem, two shepherds called Lycidas and Iollas discuss ways of attracting Phyllis, Lycidas's object of passion:

**L.** iam dudum meditor, quo Phyllida carmine placem.

forsitan audito poterit mitescere cantu;  
et solet ilia meas ad sidera ferre Camenas.

**I.** dic age; nam cerasi tua cortice uerba notabo  
et decisa feram rutilanti carmina libro<sup>87</sup>.

**L.** Long have I been pondering with what song I am to pacify Phyllis.  
Mayhap, when she hears my lay, she can be softened: and it is her way to  
laud my poetry to the stars.

**I.** Come, speak – for I will carve your words upon the bark of the cherry-  
tree and then cut away the lines on the red rind and take them to her<sup>88</sup>.

The first difference here is that this time the carving is not ready. Lycidas has been thinking about a song to please his love, Phyllis, and he refers to the poem he will sing as something that could calm her down. Iollas encourages him to sing and states that he will carve his words upon the bark of a cherry tree. Not on the bark of a beech or an oak, but on a cherry tree, a tree that does not appear in the early ancient bucolic tradition. Besides the species chosen for the carving, there is another important feature: the verb in Eclogue 1 and in Virgil's Eclogue 5 is used here too, but in a different tense, the future indicative, and in the first-person singular (*notabo*). Calpurnius Siculus presents here a character who wants to do something new in ancient pastoral tradition: writing on a cherry tree. Aware of the unstoppable transformation and loss of memory, Iollas intends to preserve his fellow shepherd's song on wood, a different kind of wood from a tree that, much like the beech, was known among Romans for its wide-reaching shadow<sup>89</sup>. Additionally, he chooses this writing material for the song right after Lycidas states that his *Camena*, a metonym for his poems, may reach the stars, an image often

87 Calp. ecl. 3, 40–44.

88 Translated by Duff – Duff 1934, 239.

89 Plin. nat. 17, 17.

associated with success in Latin poetry since the Augustan period<sup>90</sup> and also present in Virgil's Eclogue 5, referring to Daphnis's legacy<sup>91</sup>.

This passage demonstrates a violent attitude of the shepherds towards the environment: Iollas plans to remove the bark from the tree where he will inscribe the poem, an action that, of course, may kill the cherry tree. In addition to the aforementioned remarks on endangering trees (and in line with current botanical knowledge)<sup>92</sup>, Theophrastus explicitly underscores the perilous nature of bark removal for the species in question, since the removal of a large piece of its bark would threaten the cherry tree's health<sup>93</sup>, a problem that can be avoided if only its surface is detached<sup>94</sup>. However, he and Pliny the Elder describe how popular this species was as a material for writing on, due to its easily removable bark<sup>95</sup> and its similarity to layers of a papyrus<sup>96</sup>. Perhaps for this reason Iollas offers the option of carving on this tree and extracting its surface, even though this action harms it. Due to the elegiac background of Eclogue 3, the act of writing down someone's message and taking it to his beloved is not surprising either, since it was a common practice in Roman elegy<sup>97</sup>. This kind of generic interaction is also explored in Virgil's Eclogue 10, in which Gallus wants to cut his loved ones into tender trees (*tenerisque meos incidere Amores / arboribus*)<sup>98</sup>. His erotic poems are not referred to by a common word like *carmina* or *uersus*, nor by a poetic word like *Camenae*, because they are a specific kind of poem, maybe different from others in the countryside. The intention is bringing to the bucolic space love matters treated in the same way as poets in an urban context do, even though suffering comes as a result of this decision<sup>99</sup>. As a positive parallel to Gallus's attitude in Virgil, Calpurnius Siculus does not avoid any elegiac content in his poems and develops it throughout his book, always dealing with it in a different way<sup>100</sup>. Gallus's "tender trees" have been understood as delicate saplings<sup>101</sup>, an aspect constantly associated with the Callimachean

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90 Fey-Wickert 2002, 180.

91 Verg. ecl. 5, 51.

92 Buckler – Hay 2018, 49.

93 Theophr. c. plant. 3, 18, 3.

94 Theophr. h. plant. 4, 15, 1

95 Theophr. h. plant. 3, 13, 1–2.

96 Plin. nat. 16, 55.

97 Karakasis 2016, 135 f.; Baraz 2023, 242.

98 Verg. ecl. 10, 53–54.

99 Fonseca Junior 2020, 10.

100 Baraz 2023, 237.

101 Coleman 1977, 290.



action of carving love poems on trees<sup>102</sup>. However, reading them together with the Calpurnian Eclogue 3, they can be considered a new kind of tree in the bucolic landscape, whose species does not yet have a name. The option given by Calpurnius Siculus as a development of Gallus's introduction of elegy into the pastoral world is the cherry tree.

Moreover, Iollas's suggestion can be seen as an indication of how written poetry at that time was a common response to the need of preserving cultural memory, a desire still innovative in the Augustan context<sup>103</sup>. Using cherry bark, as indicated by Pliny, was a popular method. Nevertheless, Iollas takes a step further when he states the possibility of carving a whole poem on the cherry tree and then detaching the bark. Therefore, it seems as if a tree's life is endangered in order to document human culture just like Mopsus might have done in Virgil's Eclogue 5. Evidently, characters in ancient poetry did not have a modern environmental consciousness. It is important to see the absence of this kind of perception as an expression of the ancient Romans' relationship towards the environment and consider its "cultural ecological implications"<sup>104</sup>. Both shepherds have the same view as Pliny, who describes trees as material sources for human usage<sup>105</sup>: people should not care for the livelihood of a vegetal being, because human culture must live at its expense.

In line 44 of the selected passage, *rutilanti libro* is noteworthy, with a participle that defines the "bark" or "book" by the color of cherry tree wood. Its bark is not verdant like beech bark is, a difference that reflects on the intertextual dynamics of Roman pastoral. Firstly, it is important to remember that the poem will be written on bark (*cortice*) and, after being removed, taken as a book (*libro*)<sup>106</sup>. Once again, shepherds are carving songs on trees, reading them and eventually creating books by themselves<sup>107</sup>. The process of creating and preserving their culture continues, becoming even more complex through the variety of media of memory. According to the common interpretation of Calpurnius Siculus as a poet who is so anxious of Virgilian influence that he decides to extinguish bucolic poetry, the addition of the cherry tree to the landscape is considered a replacement of the beech and, metaphorically, of the ancient pastoral world<sup>108</sup>. However, the situation is

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102 Clausen 1994, 307; Paraskeviotis 2020, 469 f.

103 Cucchiarelli 2017, 290 f.

104 Schliephake 2020, 28.

105 Plin. nat. 12, 2.

106 Vinchesi 1991, 268.

107 Baraz 2023, 243.

108 Buckler – Hay 2018, 54.

not that simple. The first evidence for this is the fact that, in the Calpurnian Eclogue 4, Amyntas praises an unnamed divinity who has brought peace to the mountains and allowed him to inscribe songs “in a verdant book” or “bark” (*uiridante libro*)<sup>109</sup>. Of course, the tree in question cannot be a cherry due to the color of its bark. Additionally, this specific color, green, invites the reader to establish a connection to the Virgilian *fagus*, as it was possible in Eclogue 1<sup>110</sup>. The cherry tree is just an additional element that could be a realistic yet imperialistic representation of the introduction of this species in Italy by the Romans at that time<sup>111</sup>. Its color could also be an allusion to the color of a papyrus<sup>112</sup>, an aspect that, of course, highlights the consolidated role of writing in post-Augustan poetry. It may also reiterate how the cherry tree is not a totally new element in the bucolic landscape: since it is a well-established writing material, it is not “new” and “tender” anymore, as opposed to the trees craved by Gallus in Virgil’s Eclogue 10. It is a tree species that, just like the beech, was tamed and has also become a part of human culture.

Even though beech trees were considered “old” with “top broken” in Virgil’s Eclogue 9, they still live in the poetic memory, preserved in the bucolic poems as a motif. By introducing the cherry tree as a new medium of memory, Calpurnius Siculus assumes that the Virgilian *fagus* represents a writing material of the past that persists, but which might die through its carving and, metaphorically, because it was already used as working material by a previous poet. As an alternative (not a substitute), the Calpurnian *cerasus* is introduced into the pastoral world and is then brutally appropriated by the shepherds. Just like other media of memory, its fate is to perish, thus creating yet another stratum of poetic memory. However, in the meantime, it still has a purpose: to become a book and transmit the shepherds’ poetic memory as long as possible. Since loss of culture and loss of biodiversity usually coincide in history<sup>113</sup>, it comes as no surprise that the dynamics of documenting memory in Roman pastoral suffers from the same struggle as the extensively carved trees. In reality, according to the notion of storied ecology, even modern challenges in the transmission of ancient cultural memory are indeed examples of this struggle<sup>114</sup>.

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109 Calp. ecl. 4, 127–130.

110 Schröder 1991, 192; Slater 1994, 78.

111 Fey-Wickert 2002, 182.

112 Korzeniewski 1971, 93; Vinchesi 1991, 268; Baraz 2023, 243.

113 Emmett – Nye 2017, 11.

114 Schliephake 2020, 11.

In their own garden of beliefs, myths, and fictions, Virgil and Calpurnius Siculus recreate the problems and solutions of preserving culture in a scenario and a landscape that is not harmonic at all. For this reason, ancient pastoral is still a challenge for the environmental humanities and all studies of natural elements in these poems, even though many scholars do not agree<sup>115</sup>. Despite the fact that modern media of memory, unlike the shepherds', tend to preserve culture for a long time, memory is not completely and simultaneously available to everyone. In an intertextual approach, the act of reading all strata of memory depends on how the reader takes part in the process. When dealing with environment and memory in ancient pastoral, it is important to not favor one poem over another and establish it as the source of a primary meaning. The contemporary perspective of any text in history is "affected by traces of the source texts even though the latter are modern constructions"<sup>116</sup>, since they were edited after Antiquity. Finally, these traces are recollected by readers in the process of reading throughout cultural memory.

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115 Gifford 2017, 159 f.

116 Fowler 1997, 26.

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Michael Paschalis

## Horatian *recusatio* in the Shadow of Virgil

**Abstract** The trope of *recusatio* by its very nature invites readers to take a second look not only at intergeneric but also at a wide range of intertextual relations involving both Greek and Latin literature. After examining definitions and functions of *recusatio* the paper discusses the last instance of Horatian lyric *recusatio*, *Odes* 4, 15, the *sphragis* of the collection. Crucial interrelated issues are the distinction between epic poetry and lyric encomium as well as the evolution of the lyric poet's task from *Odes* 1, 6, Horace's programmatic lyric *recusatio*. The paper argues that the shadow of Virgil looms large over *Odes* 4, 15, but not in the broad sense of much discussed Virgilian reminiscences in the poem and the fourth book of Horace's *Odes*. It specifically contends that *Odes* 4, 15 sums up the Virgilian Progression, from the *Eclogues* to the *Georgics*, and eventually to the *Aeneid*, and furthermore explores Horace's innovative reuse of *Eclogue* 6 in shaping the structure of his last lyric poem.

### 1. Introduction

#### i. Definitions and functions of *recusatio*

According to the conventional definition, the Latin literary trope of *recusatio* in its fully developed, Augustan form consists in refusal by a pastoral, lyric, elegiac, satiric poet or writer of verse epistles to compose an epic requested by the *princeps*, a person of his circle or the poet's patron. The epic in question would be expected to provide an encomiastic narrative of the military exploits of the addressee; but the pastoral, lyric, elegiac, satiric poet or writer of verse epistles would reject the idea, because he professes to abhor warfare or because he does not feel capable of doing it or because the topic is grand

or because an epic would be too long for his taste or for a combination of some of these reasons; he would opt instead for his own ‘slender genre’, one that is brief and especially unwarlike and of private character<sup>1</sup>.

In 1991 Gregson Davis re-defined *recusatio* as ‘generic disavowal’. He proposed a radical revision of the standard understanding of *recusatio* by inserting it in the rhetorical ‘mode of assimilation’, a device by which the speaker disingenuously seeks to *include* material and styles that he ostensibly *precludes*. Davis specifically argued that “an ancillary objective of many proclaimed ‘refusals’ is not to *exclude*, but, paradoxically, the opposite, to *include* generically disparate material while protesting vigorously against it”<sup>2</sup>. His argument added a valuable aspect to our conception of *recusatio*, one that the reader is obliged to take into consideration when approaching this trope. My only objection would be that he probably overstated the dimension of ‘assimilation’, in the sense that this notion should not ultimately lead to the elimination of any distinction between the *genus tenue* and *genus grande*. I think that Stephen Harrison offered a more balanced approach in this respect. He called this metageneric process ‘generic enrichment’, whereby the minor genre is ‘enriched’ (even if ironically) by features of the grand genre<sup>3</sup>.

The conventional definition of *recusatio* and its modifications given above are complementary and testify to the variety and subtlety of its meaning and function without exhausting the subject. It will become clear below that the trope of *recusatio*, no matter how it is understood, invites readers by its very nature to take a second look not only at intergeneric but also at a wide range of intertextual relations involving both Greek and Latin literature. Before

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- 1 The basic account of *recusatio* in the poetry of the Augustan Age, with an appendix on Persius and Statius, remains Wimmel 1960; see further White 1993. For the Flavian Age see Nauta 2006. The term *recusatio* was introduced in 1900 by the German philologist Hans Lucas; on its further history see Nauta 2006, 21–22. Lucas defined *recusatio* as follows: “Die der Recusatio zu Grunde liegende Idee ist der Ausdruck grosser Bescheidenheit, das Eingeständnis der Unzulänglichkeit des dichterischen Vermögens. Wenn eine höher stehende Persönlichkeit, namentlich eine solche von Urteil, den Wunsch ausspricht, ein bestimmtes Gedicht zu erhalten, so antwortet der Poet: ‘Was du verlangst, bin ich ausser stande zu leisten’. Da er aber doch etwas giebt, so kann man, wenn man will, weiter den Gedanken substituieren: ‘Nimm aber dafür hier, was in meinen Kräften stand.’” (Lucas 1900, 321).
  - 2 Davis 1991, 28. ‘Generic disavowal’ is a much broader term housing strategies which are not as a rule associated with *recusatio*.
  - 3 Harrison 2007. The political interpretation of *recusatio* proposed by Freudenburg 2014 lies outside the scope of the present study.



I proceed, I would like to make four points clarifying my own view on the subject of *recusatio*:

**a. Definition by generic contrast.** In principle the poet uses the refusal to write epic as a *contrasting device* for defining his own domain. This would be a kind of ‘definition by the direct opposite’, and specifically of ‘definition by generic contrast’. As a matter of fact, this was the function of the trope in its original, Callimachean form (*Aetia* prologue 1, 1, 1–6), whatever name one may choose to give it:

Often the Telchines mutter against me, against my poetry,  
 who, ignorant of the Muse, were not born as her friend,  
*because I did not complete one single continuous song*  
 (on the glory of?) *kings ... in many thousand lines*  
*or on ... heroes*, but turn around words a little in my mind  
 like a child, although the decades of my years are not few<sup>4</sup>.

When transferred to Rome, the trope was adapted to the Augustan cultural context, assuming the form best known from lines 3–8 of Virgil’s 6th *Eclogue*, the earliest surviving clear instance of *recusatio*:

cum canerem reges et proelia, Cynthus aurem  
 uellit et admonuit: ‘pastorem, Tityre, pinguis  
 pascere oportet ouis, deductum dicere carmen.’  
 nunc ego (namque super tibi erunt qui dicere laudes,  
 Vare, tuas cupiant et tristia condere bella)  
 agrestem tenui meditabor harundine Musam:

When I was singing of kings and battles, Cynthus  
 plucked my ear and admonished me. “Tityrus,  
 a shepherd should pasture fat sheep but a slender song.”  
 Now will I (for there will be those, Varus, who long  
 to sing your praises and celebrate your grim wars)  
 practice songs of a country Muse with delicate reed<sup>5</sup>.

4 Translation by Harder 2012, 115–116.

5 Text by Mynors 1972; translation by Fowler 1997. In Callimachus’ *Aetia* prologue the Lykian Apollo had instructed the poet, while still a child, to prefer ‘slender’ poetic forms (*Μοῦσαν λεπταλέην*): Kall. fr. 1, 1, 23–24: “... poet, feed the sacrificial animal so that it becomes as fat / as possible, but, my dear fellow, keep the Muse

In Alexandria a poem about ‘kings and heroes’ would probably have been a long mythological epic in the Homeric tradition. Virgil replaced ‘kings and heroes’ with ‘kings and battles’ and the mythological with a historical epic. Apollo stops Tityrus [Virgil] from writing an epos that would praise the military exploits of Alfenus Varus<sup>6</sup>; obeying the god he politely refuses to do so, expressing distaste for the grim bellicose theme (*tristia bella*); and announces that he will instead pursue his own pastoral program that is prominently mythological: the song of Silenus, an investigation into the origins of the bucolic landscape and a construction of bucolic mythology.

**b. Callimachean poetics in Rome.** Alan Cameron pointed out that “in its original form the *Aetia* prologue is not in itself a *recusatio* at all”.<sup>7</sup> He went on to list four major differences between the Virgilian ‘imitation’ and the Callimachean ‘model’: (a) Apollo addresses the poet after he had begun writing about *reges et proelia* while in Callimachus the poet “is just sitting there with an empty tablet on his knees”; (b) Virgil replaced ‘kings and heroes’ with ‘kings and wars’ and mentions *tristia bella*; (c) unlike Callimachus, Virgil directly addresses the author of the deeds he is refusing to celebrate, thus complicating his refusal and creating a need for delicacy and tact rather than polemic; and (d) while declining to write a particular epic, Virgil does not denounce epic in and for itself (there is no more than a hint in Virgil of Callimachus’ polemic) nor does he extol the virtues of his own alternative. Cameron added that “The *recusationes* of the other Augustans go further still, often implying or even proclaiming the superiority of epic to their own humble efforts”.

Based on these observations Cameron went on to question the Callimachean inspiration of the Virgilian *recusatio*: “Why then adapt so much of the *Aetia* prologue and yet drop what no reader can fail to identify as its central feature?”, he argued. He therefore proceeded to suggest that the basic form of *recusatio* is post-Callimachean, quoting passages from the bucolic

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slender” (Harder 2012, 112). In rendering Callimachus’ *Μοῦσα λεπταλή*, Virgil used analogous Latin expressions: *deductum carmen* and *tenui harundine*.

6 On the identification with Alfenus Varus and the implications of the reference to him see Cucchiarelli 2023, 298 f. His military activities are not otherwise known.

7 On Cameron’s views presented here and in the following sentences see Cameron 1995, 454–487.

poet Bion of Smyrna, fr. 9, 8–11<sup>8</sup> and *Anacreontea* 23<sup>9</sup>. He offered no evidence, however, that these presumed precedents had influenced the Augustan *recusatio* and hence his theory met with limited approval

Cameron failed to recognize and take into consideration an obvious aspect of the question, the transformation which Callimachean poetics underwent in Roman poetry. In 1975 David Ross, commenting on the Callimachean *recusatio* at the end of Horace's *Odes* 3, 3, had criticized scholars who took it “at face value” believing that “Horace excuses himself for his intrusion into subjects not appropriate to his chosen genre”. Ross proceeded to correct as follows the dominant understanding of *recusatio*:

But the primary purpose of the *recusatio* was very different – a positive statement, not a negative (and basically rather empty) excuse: the poet, when first turning to themes that appear to violate Callimachean poetics, must make it clear that he does so still in the tradition and with the voice of that summary exemplar. [...].

And proceeded to outline the evolution of *recusatio* in Rome:

Each generation of Latin poets, from Catullus and the neoterics on through Virgil and Gallus, through (the later) Virgil and Horace, through Ovid, and on even through the Silver poets until Statius, was to create a different image of Callimachus according to the needs of their own verse, an image which often has little resemblance to the original<sup>10</sup>.

Ross' argument applies not only to *recusatio* but in general to the Roman fortunes of Callimachean poetics. Let me add in this respect a most striking example, Lucretius' *De rerum natura*. In *DRN* 4, 1–5 the poet claims absolute novelty in Callimachean terms for themes and pursuits – the grand subject-matter (*magnis doceo de rebus*), the passionate dedication to the task, and the ambitious mission of his teaching aiming at the liberation of man's mind from religion – which however are prominently non-Callimachean<sup>11</sup>.

8 Bion fr. 9, 8–11 Reed: “ἦν μὲν γὰρ βροτὸν ἄλλον ἢ ἀθανάτων τινὰ μέλλω, / βαμβαίνει μοι γλῶσσα καὶ ὡς πάρος οὐκέτ' αἶδει· / ἦν δ' αὖτ' ἐς τὸν Ἔρωτα καὶ ἐς Λυκίδα τι μελίσδω, / καὶ τόκα μοι χαίροισα διὰ στόματος ῥέει ᾧδά.”

9 *Anacreontea* 23 West: “Θέλω λέγειν Ἀτρείδας, / θέλω δὲ Κάδμον ἄδειν / ὁ βάρβιτος δὲ χορδαῖς / ἔρωτα μόνον ἤχει. [...] / χαίροιτε λοιπὸν ἡμῖν, / ἦρωες· ἡ λύρη γάρ / μόνους ἔρωτας ἄδει.”

10 Ross 1975, 142–143.

11 Paschalis 2024, 13–16.

**c. Lyric poetry and grand themes.** Though in the *recusationes* lyric poetry was defined in contrast to epic, it did not exclude grand themes of all kinds, provided they kept within an accepted length. This had been the case at least since Pindar's *epinicians*. In Hellenistic poetry Theocritus' 'slender' *Idylls* are not incompatible, for instance, with the encomium of Ptolemy Philadelphus (*Idyll* 17). This is true also of Latin lyric poetry, which not infrequently accommodates historical and political poems and encomia of the ruler.

**d. The importance of Latin intertexts.** Comparison with and contrast to the Callimachean model has put the focus of *recusatio* on Greek intertexts, sometimes distracting attention from Latin ones. The evolution of *recusatio* in Latin poetry, however, seems to have been conditioned more by Latin precedents, both intertextual and intratextual (poems written by the same poet) than by the Callimachean archetype. In several cases the latter does not affect the context at all, and the reader has to be reminded of its existence. Latin precedents may influence not only formal aspects of *recusatio* but also generic, programmatic, thematic, and ideological aspects. In substance, therefore, Latin intertexts turn out to be far more important than Hellenistic ones.

## ii. Roman historical epic and Roman history

As noted above, starting with Virgil's *Eclogue* 6 the epic requested of the poet is historical. This feature calls for a brief survey of historical epic in Rome<sup>12</sup> and some clarifications. Roman Republican epic, typical specimens of which are Gnaeus Naevius' *Bellum Poenicum* on the First Punic War and Quintus Ennius' *Annales* on the Second Punic War, remained historical throughout. It kept pace with Rome's external wars and used mythical and legendary material to bridge contemporary events with the claimed Trojan origins and the early years of Rome, in a linear, chronological fashion. Despite significant developments in the Late Republic – such as the translation of Apollonius' *Argonautica* by Varro of Atax and the appearance of the Neoteric mythological *epyllion* as well as Lucretius' philosophical-didactic *De rerum natura* – historical epic continued its course into the Augustan Age, with such works

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12 On Roman historical epic see Häußler 1976; Goldberg 1995; on both mythological and historical epic see Burck 1979; Boyle 1993; von Albrecht 1999; on minor epic poets of the Augustan Age see Rocca 1989.

as *Bellum Siculum* by Cornelius Severus, the anonymous *Carmen de bello Actiaco*, and others.

Precisely in the Augustan Age the composition of the *Aeneid* brought about a major change in the form of Roman epic. In Virgil's epic the mythical origins of Rome (the story of Trojan Aeneas) became the main narrative. Roman history was incorporated in it mainly in the form of narratives and descriptions inserted in the mythical plot (Jupiter's prophecy in book 1; the parade of heroes in book 6; the *ekphrasis* of Aeneas' shield in book 8) as well as through subtle allusions to historical characters and events embedded in the mythical text, which would have been meaningful to Virgil's learned audience and readers. The paradigm shift enabled the poet on the one hand to exploit the flexibility and inexhaustible potential of mythological narrative and its intertexts (especially Homer and Apollonius) and on the other hand to blend history with myth in a vital way, considering that Trojan Aeneas was regarded as the founding father of Rome as well as the ancestor of the ruling *gens Iulia*.

Historical epic did not, however, disappear from the scene during the writing and after the appearance of the *Aeneid*. In addition to the composition of historical epics like the ones mentioned above, historical epic led a latent life in the form of unfulfilled expectations resulting from 'requested and rejected verse', to modify the title of Peter White's book 'Promised Verse'<sup>13</sup>. There are three notable paradoxes here: first, discussion about epic in the Augustan Age concerns not so much what is being written but the epic that will not be written; second, the poets who bring up the subject of writing epic are those who refuse to write it; and third, references to epic do not concern the 'modern', mixed type introduced by the *Aeneid* but the traditional historical (or mythological) epic.

Refusal to write a historical epic should not, however, cause us to overlook the constant presence in Roman literature of its subject matter, Roman history. Horace did not yield to the requests of writing a historical epic but engagement with Roman history is nonetheless a prominent feature of his lyric poetry. This is true both of historical themes inserted in poems treating private topics as well as of poems entirely devoted to historical events and characters. This is something to be taken into consideration when passing judgment on poems praising Octavian-Augustus. Horace was not an Alexandrian but a Roman citizen, one who possessed and displayed a national historical consciousness and a sense of collective identity that were not in principle shaped with an eye to the principate and imperial favor and did not

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13 White 1993.

exist for the sole purpose of serving it. Roman historical consciousness pervades classical Latin literature and from this viewpoint the ‘typical Romans’ of the Augustan Age are Virgil and Horace, not the elegists who resisted (or pretended to resist) the intrusion of history into their private sphere. Let me give two examples from Latin literature, one concerning prose (historiography) and another poetry, both relevant to what I will argue below.

**a. Roman decline.** In order to appreciate properly Augustan reforms and Augustan literature which promote the ‘return’ to Rome’s idealized past in what constitutes a cyclical historical course, it is necessary to take into consideration the concept of ‘decline’. This schematized view of Roman history haunted the Roman mind from the period of the Republic to the end of the Early Empire, whether it was the political and moral disintegration of the Roman society (Republic) or the loss of the Republic and the concomitant *libertas* (Empire). Charles Fornara has classically summarized this obsessive thinking in the field of Roman historiography with reference to Roman historians:

We observe, therefore, a tradition of historical writing lasting for more than two hundred years, whose uniform theme is treated by individuals involved with, and suffering from, the very conditions they attempt to describe and analyse<sup>14</sup>.

**b. History in Virgil’s *Eclogues*.** Virgil’s refusal to write a historical epic on Alfenus Varus’ exploits does not mean that the perspective of the *Eclogues* is ahistorical. On the contrary, the invasion of history into the field of bucolic poetry occupies a programmatic position in the collection. Specifically, *Eclogue* 1 alludes to the land confiscations near Cremona and Mantua in 40 BC, during which many farmers were displaced to make way for veteran soldiers. In this *Eclogue* Tityrus loses his farm but retrieves it by taking a trip to Rome and obtaining the favor of a godlike ruler. Dispossessed Meliboeus goes into exile as his land has passed into the hands of a *barbarus* and *impius miles* who will from now on enjoy its crops and fruits. Thus, Virgil’s bucolic world, as opposed to Theocritus’, is disrupted by outside forces at the very moment of its institution. One aspect of Virgil’s achievement in *Eclogue* 1, which proved to be the most influential, lies precisely in the fact that he invested in the

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14 Fornara 1983, 68. On the question of moral and political decline in Rome see for instance Earl 1967; Lintott 1972; Koestermann 1973; Levick 1982; and see further Heldmann 1982 on the decline of rhetoric.

conflict of opposite fortunes and dissenting pastoral voices inspired by recent Roman historical events.

### iii. The fourth book of Horace's *Odes*

According to the commonly accepted date, the fourth book of Horace's *Odes* was published in 13 BC<sup>15</sup>. Suetonius tells us that the work was commissioned by Augustus himself who also ordered the composition of the *Carmen Saeculare* and the poems celebrating the victories of his stepsons Tiberius and Drusus<sup>16</sup>. In *Odes* 4 Horace addresses the *princeps* directly on more than one occasion and the book comes much closer to panegyric than *Odes* 1–3 that had appeared ten years earlier. Six poems out of fifteen (4. 2. 4–6. 14. 15) concern, directly or indirectly, Augustus and his house.

I have chosen to discuss the last instance of Horatian lyric *recusatio*, *Odes* 4, 15, the *sphragis* of the collection. Crucial interrelated issues are the distinction between epic poetry and lyric encomium outlined above as well as the evolution of the lyric poet's task from *Odes* 1, 6, Horace's programmatic lyric *recusatio*. I will argue that the shadow of Virgil looms large over *Odes* 4, 15, but not in the broad sense of much discussed Virgilian reminiscences in the poem and the fourth book of Horace's *Odes*. I will specifically contend that *Odes* 4, 15 sums up the Virgilian Progression, from the *Eclogues* to the *Georgics*, and eventually to the *Aeneid*, and will furthermore explore Horace's innovative reuse of *Eclogue* 6 in shaping the structure of his last lyric poem.

## 2. Horace, *Odes* 4, 15 and Virgil, *Eclogues* 6

### i. The Virgilian frame of *Odes* 4, 15

In *Odes* 4, 15 Apollo stops the lyric poet from narrating [Augustus'] military campaigns (1–4):

15 See Fedeli 2008, 13–16 and Thomas 2011, 21–22 in detail; cf. also Putnam 1986, 23; Johnson 2004, XIII.

16 Suetonius, *Vita Horati*, 55: *Scripta quidem eius usque adeo probavit mansuraque perpetuo opinatus est, ut non modo Saeculare carmen componendum iniunxerit sed et Vindelicam victoriam Tiberii Drusique, privignorum suorum, eumque coegerit propter hoc tribus Carminum libris ex longo intervallo quartum addere.*

Phoebus volentem proelia me loqui  
 victas et urbis increpuit lyra,  
     ne parva Tyrrhenum per aequor  
     vela darem.

When I wanted to sing of battles and the conquest of cities, Phoebus banged on the lyre, to prevent me from setting sail in my tiny craft across the Etruscan Sea<sup>17</sup>.

Apollo's injunction to the poet not to sing of 'battles and conquered cities' recalls the god's analogous command in Virgil's 6th *Eclogue*<sup>18</sup>. The overall structure of the present *recusatio*, which in addition is not found in none of Horace's earlier *Odes*<sup>19</sup>, reinforces the initial impression. Its format is brief, compact, and analogous to Virgil's. In *Eclogue* 6 Virgil was singing of *reges et proelia*; Horace wanted to sing of *proelia* [...] *victas et urbis*, both poems alluding to Roman historical epics. Also, in both cases Apollo intervenes and issues a warning to the poet by making a particular disapproving gesture (*aurem vellit; increpuit lyra*<sup>20</sup>). In Horace the god commands the poet not to write an epic using a metaphor contrasting 'small' to 'wide', analogous to the Virgilian contrast between 'slender' and 'fat'.

Regardless of any other influences, the *thrust* of the last Horatian lyric *recusatio* points back to the prototype of Augustan *recusatio*, Virgil's 6th *Eclogue*<sup>21</sup>. By adopting the path-breaking bucolic *recusatio* model intro-

17 The text and translation of Horace's *Odes* is by Rudd 2004.

18 For well-informed introductions to the present *recusatio* see Wimmel 1960, 271–276; Fedeli 2008, 604–609; Thomas 2011, 360–363.

19 Cf. Johnson 2004, 205: "This is Horace's most precise reference to the Callimachean *dictum* and its advocacy of the compressed poetic style. Nowhere else in Horatian poetry does Apollo intervene and tell the poet to change his song".

20 Fedeli 2008, 609 corrects as follows those who construe *lyra* not with *increpuit* but with *loqui* (in the sense of *lyrico carmine*, following Ps-Acro; see Thomas 2011, 362 f.): "Orazio, dunque, per un chiaro intento di *brevitas* ha condensato in un'unica immagine due azioni ('*lyra prius tacta, increpuit. docta brevitate pro 'obiurgavit', 'admonuit me', ne'*)".

21 Scholars are divided concerning Virgilian and Propertian influence on the present *recusatio*. Johnson 2004, 205 f. discusses only Virgilian influence. Wimmel 1960 ascribes the main influence to Virgil (272: "Eingang der letzten Ode ist eine Apoll-Warner-Szene im Sinn von Ecl. 6") and assigns to Propertius only the water metaphor. Fedeli 2008, 67 detects Virgilian influence only in *proelia* [...] *victas et urbis* and assigns the principal influence to Propertius ("a Properzio [rinvia] sia la reazione di Apollo con la lira [...] sia il ricorso alla metafora della navigazione"),



duced by his friend Virgil some twenty-five years before, Horace intended to impress upon his learned audience and readers the idea that he is *Virgil's successor* as a lyric poet. In so doing he logically expected them to spot his own innovations, originality in emulation being the goal of all poetic imitation. I will next proceed to argue that the comparative reading of *Odes* 4, 15 and *Eclogue* 6 has wider implications for the interpretation of the former.

Horace's learned audience and readers would have known that the Virgilian Apollo had not only commanded the poet to avoid "kings and battles" but had also instructed him "to sing a 'slender' song" (*deductum dicere carmen*). They would have seen that in Horace's version there is no explicit divine direction concerning a "slender" genre: Apollo only reminds the poet of his limited skills (*parva [...] vela*) vis-à-vis the grandness of epic (*Tyrrhenum per aequor*)<sup>22</sup>. Most importantly, while in *Eclogue* 6 Virgil announces his pastoral program immediately after Apollo's command (6, 8 *agrestem tenui meditabor harundine musam*), Horace defers the announcement of his own lyric program until the end of the poem. In the concluding stanzas of *Odes* 4, 15 he replaces Virgil's private lyric voice with a public, communal and patriotic voice singing of Roman heroes, the mythical origins of Rome and (implicitly) the house of Augustus:

nosque et profestis lucibus et sacris  
inter iocosi munera Liberi  
cum prole matronisque nostris,  
rite deos prius apprecati,

virtute functos more patrum duces  
Lydis remixto carmine tibiis  
Troiamque et Anchisen et almae  
progeniem Veneris canemus.

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following Putnam 1986, 265–271 (266: "it is the influence of Propertius that is most strongly felt in the opening lines of *Ode* 15). As regards the water metaphor, Thomas detects the combined influence of Verg. *georg.* 2, 41–45 and Prop. 3, 3, 23f.; but Syndikus 1973, 2, 403 correctly observes that "Die Schiffs- und Meeresmetapher der nächsten Verse für Dichter und Dichtung war geläufig", beginning, quite significantly, with Pind. N. 5, 51.

22 Cf. Putnam 1986, 270: "What follows in ode 15 is one of the most brilliant ellipses in this highly elliptical poet. The reader, schooled in poetic tradition from Callimachus to Propertius, expects an epiphany of the reproving god".

As for ourselves, on working days and holidays, surrounded by the merry God of Freedom's gifts, along with our wives and children, we shall first offer due prayers to the gods; then in song accompanied by Lydian pipes we shall sing in our fathers' fashion of leaders who lived their lives like true men, of Troy and Anchises and the offspring of kindly Venus.

*Odes* 4, 15 is concluded with an image 'recreating' the real or invented *carmina convivalia*<sup>23</sup> and marking a 'return' to the legendary collective celebration of the deeds of famous men: men gathered in symposia together with their wives and children, the poet among them, will sing (*canemus*) of Troy, Anchises (Aeneas' father) and the son of Venus (Aeneas). Rome's Trojan origins and Augustus, the most glorious descendant of the *gens Iulia*, had recently been celebrated by Virgil in his *Aeneid*. As commonly noted, only four years before Horace himself in the *Carmen Saeculare* had designated Augustus as *clarus Anchisae Venerisque sanguis* (50). No ancient, learned audience and readers would have missed the allusion to Virgil's *Aeneid* in both cases.

Thus, the communal song of *Odes* 4, 15 could be viewed as a *lyric distillation* of Virgil's epic<sup>24</sup>. Contrary to Virgil, however, whose epic encompasses, in the form of embedded narratives and descriptions, the entire course of Roman history, Horace identifies Roman history vaguely with Roman heroes (*virtute [...] functos viros*) and its mythical Trojan origins solely with the offspring of Venus and Anchises, Aeneas and his descendant Augustus. Virgil had inserted the encomia of great Romans to be born in the mythical texture of the narrative (book 6); Horace seems to have re-read the *Aeneid* in the tradition of Republican epic. What I mean is that he lists in a linear fashion, though in reverse chronological order, first events of Roman history (*virtute functos [...] duces*) and then the Trojan origins of Rome. Of course, a

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23 As reported by Cicero (*Tusc.* 4, 3), the elder Cato in his *Origines* had recorded the custom of ancient times to celebrate the deeds of famous men in song at banquets: "*in Originibus dixit Cato morem apud maiores hunc epularum fuisse, ut deinceps qui accubarent canerent ad tibiam [1, 3 ad tibicinem] clarorum virorum laudes atque virtutes*"; also, *Cic. Brut.* 75; for further sources and discussion on the syntax and meaning of *more patrum* see Fedeli 208, 627f. Putnam 1986, 272 notes: "we have no evidence save the nostalgia of later writers that such *carmina* existed".

24 Cf. Fedeli 2008, 628: "Orazio sembra qui delineare con pochi tratti quello che è l'argomento dell'*Eneide*, con un probabile atto di omaggio conclusivo nei riguardi di Virgilio, anche se egli non prevede poesia epica, ma piuttosto poesia simposiaca di tipo dei *carmina convivalia*, in cui Augusto dovrà occupare un ruolo centrale".

single stanza cannot give a clear and accurate idea of Horace's conception as regards the structural relationship of Roman history to Trojan myth. The allusion to the *carmina convivalia*, however, takes us back to the beginnings of Roman literature and early Republican epic. In Ennius' *Annals* Rome's Trojan origins preceded the historical narrative in a linear fashion. Alternatively, ancient, learned audience and readers may have thought of Naevius' *Bellum Poenicum* where, according to a view first proposed by Strzelecki in 1935, the mythological and the historical narrative may have occurred in reverse chronological order<sup>25</sup>.

Thus, *Odes* 4, 15 is framed by pivotal Virgilian intertexts, the *Eclogues* and the *Aeneid*, while between them we have a probable allusion to the *Georgics*: *tua, Caesar, aetas fruges et agris rettulit uberes* ("Your age, Caesar, has brought back rich harvests to the fields", 4–5). Quite significantly from a literary viewpoint, the line concerning the restoration of agricultural productivity occurs *immediately after* the allusion to the *Eclogues* and opens the catalogue of the blessings of the *aetas Augusta*. This pattern seems to evoke the Virgilian Progression. It furthermore implies a favorable reception by Horace of Virgil's generic palinode, writing the epic which he had rejected in *Eclogue* 6. Horace 'responded' by the lyric transformation of the Virgilian program.

Horace never succumbed to the pressure exerted on him to write an epos. He persisted in this course to the end of his literary career, when he composed the final *recusatio* of his entire work. He said it clearly and unequivocally in *Epistles* 2, 1, which is addressed to Augustus, was probably composed only a few months after the publication of *Odes* 4<sup>26</sup>, and points back to the last Ode of this collection. Towards the end of the *Epistle*, Horace apologizes that his powers do not match his yearning to chronicle Augustus' achievements (*res gestas*)<sup>27</sup>. He argues that this has already been done in a manner worthy of the *princeps* by his friends Virgil and Varius, while he can only write "talks [*sermones*] that creep on the ground". I quote lines 245–259:

at neque dedecorant tua de se iudicia atque  
munera, quae multa dantis cum laude tulerunt,  
dilecti tibi Vergilius Variusque poetae;

25 Strzelecki 1935, 7–8.

26 According to Rudd 1989, 1 "in the early part of 12 BC".

27 Cf. White 1993, 133: "Thanks to a fragment of correspondence quoted by Suetonius, however, we know that Augustus asked not for an epic but for a letter in verse. The case is worth remembering when inferences are teased from other refusal poems".

nec magis expressi vultus per aenea signa,  
 quam per vatis opus mores animique virorum  
 clarorum apparent. nec sermones ego mallet  
 repentes per humum quam res componere gestas,  
 terrarumque situs et flumina dicere, et arces  
 montibus impositas, et barbara regna, tuisque  
 auspiciis totum confecta duella per orbem,  
 claustraque custodem pacis cohibentia Ianum,  
 et formidatam Parthis te principe Romam,  
 si quantum cuperem possem quoque. sed neque parvum  
 carmen maiestas recipit tua, nec meus audet  
 rem temptare pudor quam vires ferre recesent.

But Virgil and Varius, those poets whom you love, discredit not your judgement of them nor the gifts which, to the giver's great renown, they have received; and features are seen with no more truth, when moulded in statues of bronze, than are the manners and minds of famous heroes, when set forth in the poet's work. And for myself, I should not prefer my "chats," that crawl along the ground to the story of great exploits, the tale of distant lands and rivers, of forts on mountain tops, of barbaric realms, of the ending of wars under your auspices throughout the world, of bars that close on Janus, guardian of peace, and of that Rome who under your sway has become a terror to Parthians – if only I had power equal to my longing; but neither does your majesty admit of a lowly strain, nor does my modesty dare to essay a task beyond my strength to bear<sup>28</sup>.

Virgil and Varius make an extremely interesting pair, in the first place because it is them who started Horace on his career (sat. 1, 6: *Vergilius, post hunc Varius, dixere quid essem*)<sup>29</sup>. The mention of Virgil obviously refers to the *Aeneid* as an epic celebrating Augustus' achievements and points back to the last stanza of *Odes* 4, 15; the mention of Varius picks up Horace's first lyric *recusatio* (*Odes* 1, 6), where he is recommended as the ideal epic poet to write of Agrippa's exploits<sup>30</sup>. Finally, *parvum carmen* looks back to Horace's last lyric *recusatio*, to the *parva vela* of his boat when Apollo stopped him from spreading them in the Tyrrhenian Sea, as well as to the Matine bee simile in the first *recusatio* of his last book of *Odes* (4, 2, 31–32 *operosa parvus / carmina fingo*).

28 Text and translation by Rudd 1989.

29 See Rudd 1989, 116 with further comments on this passage.

30 On which see 2.iv below.

Commenting on the meaning of *canemus*, which he aptly relates to the Virgilian *cano* at the beginning of the *Aeneid*, Richard Thomas has argued that “Horace’s prospective *Aeneid* with its choral anti-lyric ensemble [...] will never come together, as his promise of song is followed by silence, the ultimate *recusatio*”<sup>31</sup>. Others note the intriguing character of the silence that follows the last poem of Horace’s last lyric collection<sup>32</sup>. I argued above that what we have in the last stanza is a lyric distillation of Virgil’s epic. The *recusatio* of *Epistles* 2, 1 discussed above clarifies that Horace did not intend to write another *Aeneid* or re-write the *Aeneid* in a lyric form. Therefore, what *Odes* 4, 15 may imply is that his own individual task as a lyric poet had been concluded and it was now up to the collective voice of Rome to supply the lyrics of the communal song by elaborating on his interpretative outline of the *Aeneid*<sup>33</sup> in conjunction with the preceding encomium of Augustus<sup>34</sup>.

## ii. *Reges et proelia*: of epic poetry and lyric encomium

In *Eclogue* 6 Cynthian Apollo had prevented Virgil from singing of ‘kings and battles’ with reference to Alfenus Varus’ martial exploits and the poet had heeded the divine warning, expressed distaste for the bellicose theme, and announced that he will instead pursue his own pastoral program. In *Odes* 4, 15 the domain of epic is represented by ‘battles and conquered cities’, the analogue of Virgil’s ‘kings and heroes’. Like Virgil, Horace heeds the divine warning but, differently from Virgil, he postpones the announcement of his own lyric program to the closure of the Ode. Immediately after the *recusatio* he catalogues instead the blessings of the *aetas Augusta* (4–24):

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31 Thomas 2011, 374.

32 Cf. Oliensis 1998, 153: “Perhaps the silence that follows *Odes* 4.15 marks the poet’s disappearance from, rather than into, the choral plural of *canemus*. And yet there is something magnificent and sublimely seductive in the swelling of this final communal voice”. Tarrant 2020, 182 observes: “We should note, though, that as Horace is subsumed into the communal voice, Augustus is also subsumed into the line of Venus’s descendants. By the end both Horace and Augustus as individuals have disappeared”. See also Lowrie 1997, 347–349. The interpretation proposed by Zarecki 2010 that the subjects of *canemus* are Horace and ‘resuscitated’ Virgil is implausible.

33 Cf. his reading of the *Aeneid* in *Epistles* 2, 1 mentioned above.

34 Cf. Breed 2005, 251: “Rather the poem refuses the prospect of a Horatian *Aeneid* because, it seems, there is no need for another poetic epitome of the meaning of age when the *Aeneid* exists as a kind of communal hymn of the *populus Romanus* to Augustus’ successes”.

In lines 4–16 Augustus is said to have restored abundance to the fields (an allusion to the agrarian reforms that served war veterans); to have retaken the captured standards (an allusion to the recovery of the standards from the Parthians lost by Crassus in 53 BC and in later instances, a major theme of imperial propaganda); to have closed the Gates of the temple of Janus (which had been done three times in Horace’s life time); and to have brought back the ‘old-fashioned arts’ (an allusion to Augustus’ moral reforms), thanks to which Rome managed to expand from Latium to Italy and later to world rule. In lines 17–24 Augustus is portrayed as the ruler who guarantees civil tranquility (regarding the end of civil wars) and external pacification (several Roman victories over enemies in eastern and central Europe are listed).

There is widespread criticism against Horace that, by avoiding the theme of warfare, which is distasteful to pastoral, lyric and elegiac poets alike, the poet gives the impression of remaining faithful to his conventional task as a lyric poet, while in fact he is keeping up appearances; because the benefits of peace were in fact achieved by force of arms, were variously associated with war and were anyway guaranteed by force of arms<sup>35</sup>. It has furthermore been considered ironic that Apollo’s opening command to Horace not to write of ‘battles and conquered cities’ comes after the poet has extolled, in the immediately preceding ode, the military victories of his stepson Tiberius, the elder son of Livia, over the tribes of the Raetian Alps, while Augustus is praised for concluding the campaign and for being the defense of Rome and Italy and the undisputed ruler of the world. *Odes* 4, 14 is a companion piece to 4, 4 which praises Drusus, the younger son of Livia, for his victory over the Raeti and the Vindelici, while his stepfather Augustus is also praised as having trained him to victory.

The major criticism is that in *Odes* 4 Horace redefined lyric as emperor celebration and implies that this development somehow adulterated his lyric voice<sup>36</sup>. According to these views, in *Odes* 4, 15 and in other poems of the same collection the domain of epic and the domain of lyric are essentially identified and thus Horace would have treated subjects that Apollo in the opening *recusatio* had commanded him to avoid<sup>37</sup>.

35 See for instance Johnson 2004, 209 f.; Heyworth 2016, 259.

36 A systematic exposition can be found in Lowrie 1997, 317–352.

37 Cf. e.g. Putnam 1986, 270: “Horace’s imaginative leap over this anticipated denial is unparalleled. What is more remarkable still, however, is that the subject matter before and after the ellipsis, as we turn from *recusatio* to encomium, remains the same: Augustus and his time”; and 271: “From the opening *recusatio* we would not expect to find, in the vista of future song with which the ode ends, either *duces* or what seems another *Aeneid*, spanning from Troy to Aeneas-Augustus”.

Paolo Fedeli has wisely rejected the supposed contradiction between the opening *recusatio* and the subsequent encomium of Augustus, where Horace enumerates the blessings of his rule, by making the following obvious but often disregarded distinction:

Il programma oraziano diviene chiaro se si considera il carne precedente: la poesia lirica, infatti, può celebrare gli eroi vittoriosi – proprio come aveva fatto Pindaro nei suoi epinici e come ha fatto Orazio stesso nel IV libro – ma non può cantare battaglie e conquiste di città, perché è compito della poesia epica<sup>38</sup>.

The truth of the matter is that Horace himself in *Odes* 4 portrays the encomia of Rome's victorious generals as the analogue of Pindar's victorious athletes<sup>39</sup>. Specifically, in *Odes* 4, 3 the poet ascribes to the Muse Melpomene his poetic inspiration and the honors which he enjoys as the lyric poet of Rome. The opening stanzas clearly and unequivocally equate Pindar's victorious athletes with Rome's victorious generals:

Quem tu, Melpomene, semel  
nascentem placido lumine videris,  
illum non labor Isthmius  
clarabit pugilem, non equus impiger  
curru ducet Achaico  
victorem, neque res bellica Deliis  
ornatum foliis ducem,  
quod regum tumidas contuderit minas,  
ostendet Capitolio:  
sed quae Tibur aquae fertile praefluunt  
et spissae nemorum comae  
fingent Aeolio carmine nobilem.

The man whom you, Melpomene, have once looked on with kindly eyes at the hour of his birth will not win glory as a boxer through his exertions at the Isthmus; no spirited horse will carry him to victory in an Achaean chariot; nor will a military career parade him before the Capitol, a general

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38 Fedeli 2008, 608.

39 On Horace's *Odes* of 'Pindaric' mode (a term sometimes used very loosely) see for instance Wimmel 1965; Miller 1998; Günther 1999; Hardie 2003; d'Angour 2012; Fitzgerald 2023.

decorated with Delian bays, for crushing the swelling threats of princes. But the waters that flow past fertile Tibur, and the thick foliage of the woods, will shape him for fame in Aeolian song.

It is true that in *Odes* 4, 3 Horace subordinates the Pindaric praise of athletes and warriors to his Aeolic song associating the latter with the *locus amoenus* of Tibur (Tivoli), in a fashion analogous to the portrayal of his task as a lyric poet in the previous Ode in contrast to the Pindaric lyric mode. The Ode following immediately after 4, 3, however, does the exact opposite: it adopts the Pindaric encomiastic mode in praising the military exploits of Drusus, the stepson of Augustus, as well as Augustus himself for having trained him to greatness. The contrast between the poet's private and public voice in *Odes* 4 is not infrequently characterized by inconsistencies. To the best of my knowledge, no theory or structural pattern has managed to reconcile them in a definitive way<sup>40</sup>. One thing is certain: the book cannot have been conceived from the start as a unified collection of *Odes*.

It is also true, however, that Horace's martial *Odes* do not describe 'battles' and 'conquered cities', but praise either victories or victory celebrations (triumphs), and thus they *remain faithful* to the character of Pindar's *epinicians*. In addition, the poet dwells on the blessings of Augustan peace, both in 4, 15 and earlier in 4, 5, 17–40<sup>41</sup>. The *recusatio* of *Odes* 4, 2 is crucial for my argument. Horace does not consider himself capable of narrating Augustus' prospective victory over the Sygambri and asks instead Iullus Antonius to compose what, according to Stephen Harrison, would have been an epic poem<sup>42</sup> on the subject. What matters here is that *Horace's own reception* of Augustus' military exploits is a lengthy lyric account of his triumph and the joyful celebrations anticipating his return (33–60). I quote the first three stanzas (33–44):

concines maiore poeta plectro  
 Caesarem, quandoque trahet feroces  
 per sacrum clivum merita decorus  
 fronde Sygambros,

40 Most scholars adopt the triadic structure of *Odes* 4 (after Fraenkel 1957, 426); Detmer 1983, 484–516 proposed a ring structure with numeric structures to match.

41 In the latter case the poem begins by describing the yearning of *patria* for Augustus' return (from Spain and Gaul), because it is his own safety that guarantees the safety of Rome from foreign foes.

42 Harrison 1995.



quo nihil maius meliusve terris  
 fata donavere bonique divi  
 nec dabunt, quamvis redeant in aurum  
 tempora priscum.

concines laetosque dies et Urbis  
 publicum ludum super impetrato  
 fortis Augusti reditu forumque  
 litibus orbum.

You, a poet of larger quill, will celebrate Caesar when, decorated with a well-earned wreath of bay, he drags the fierce Sygambri up the Sacred Hill. The Fates and the gods in their goodness have given nothing greater or better than him to the world, nor will they do so even if the ages return to their original gold. You will celebrate the days of joy, the capital's public holiday, and the Forum bereft of lawsuits in honour of the valiant Augustus' return which has been granted to our prayers.

A final point concerns the character of Horace's encomium of the *aetas Augusta* in 4, 15, 4–24. The pressure exerted on Horace to treat this subject did not come solely from the *princeps* but reflected also his own Roman historical consciousness discussed above. It would be simplistic to view the current encomium as reflecting exclusively imperial propaganda<sup>43</sup>. More than half of the topics dealt with in it<sup>44</sup> pursue ideological issues raised during the period of the Republic, which Horace himself had treated in earlier lyric compositions and especially in the 'Roman *Odes*'. One of them regards the national 'virtues' that led to the rise of Rome as a great power; their loss led to Roman decline until Augustan reforms restored them (*Odes* 4, 15, 9–16).

et ordinem  
 rectum evaganti frena licentiae  
 iniecit emovitque culpas  
 et veteres revocavit artis,

43 Cf. Johnson 2004, 201: "Horace's panegyric narrative harmonizes with Augustus's account of his accomplishments so completely that it reads like an advance outline of Augustus's *Res Gestae*, [...]."

44 Besides looking back to Virgilian epic themes, on which see Putnam 1986, 273–280.

per quas Latinum nomen et Italiae  
 crevere vires, famaue et imperi  
 porrecta maiestas ad ortus  
 solis ab Hesperia cubili.

it has put a bridle on license which was straying beyond the proper limits, removed sin, and revived the ancient arts by which the name of Latium, the power of Italy, and the prestige and majesty of the Empire were extended from the sun's western bed to his rising.

These lines presuppose knowledge of Livy's Preface to *Ab urbe condita* and specifically of *Praef.* 9:

ad illa mihi pro se quisque acriter intendat animum, quae uita, qui mores fuerint, per quos uiros quibusque artibus domi militiaeque et partum et auctum imperium sit;

I invite the reader's attention to the much more serious consideration of the kind of lives our ancestors lived, of who were the men, and what the means both in politics and war by which Rome's power was first acquired and subsequently expanded<sup>45</sup>.

Livy echoes here Sallust's survey of Roman history in *The Catilinarian Conspiracy* (6–13), where he had focused on the factors that brought about the rise and decline of Rome. This pattern was deeply rooted in Republican thought but the date of the beginning of decline was hotly debated. An emblematic quotation as regards the Republican background to Augustus' reforms would be Ennius' line quoted by Cicero in rep. 5, 1: *moribus antiquis res stat Romana uirisque*.

Also, it should not go unnoticed that Sallust, in the *War with Jugurtha* (41, 1, 1–5, 1), prominently associates the outbreak of civil wars in Rome with moral decline (following the destruction of Carthage), while Horace dedicates a whole stanza to praise Augustus for guaranteeing civil tranquility by preventing the return of civic madness and violence (17–20):

custode rerum Caesare non furor  
 civilis aut vis exiget otium,

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45 Text by Ogilvie 1974; translation by de Sélincourt 2002.

non ira, quae procudit ensis  
et miseris inimicat urbes.

With Caesar in charge of affairs, peace will not be driven out by civic madness or violence, or by the anger that beats out swords and makes cities wretched by turning them against one another.<sup>46</sup>

### iii. On the mythical origins of the bucolic landscape and the mythical origins of Rome

Another question is how Horace's lyric program announced in the closure of the poem ties in with the preceding five-stanza encomium which catalogues the blessings of the *aetas Augusta*. The collective song that 'recreates' the *carmina convivalia* and marks a 'return' to the legendary collective celebration of the deeds of famous men pursues further into the mythical Trojan past the idealized image of early Rome underlying Augustan policies and reforms (*rettulit, restituit, revocavit*)<sup>47</sup>. The function of *nosque* introducing the public singing in the last two stanzas is precisely this, to place the communal song in the perspective of the previous encomium. In other words, it portrays the song as an aetiological response to the encomium, in the sense that the Trojan origins of Rome eventually led to the Augustan rule that created the present peace and prosperity<sup>48</sup>. Horace's learned audience and readers would have thought of Virgil's *Aeneid*, the difference being that here the poet progresses backwards, from Augustus' achievements to the Trojan origins of Rome, while in the *Aeneid* it is the mythical narrative which forecasts the glory of Venus' descendants through Aeneas and his son Iulus-Ascanius.

Horatian emulation of *Eclogue* 6 would not be improbable here, in the sense that the collective song in the closure of *Odes* 4, 15 that represents Horace's lyric program and Silenus' song in *Eclogue* 6 that represents Virgil's

46 See Paschalis 1980; and further Jal 1963; Earl 1966; and the literature on Roman decline cited in note 14 above,

47 Fraenkel 1957, 450: "The accumulation of *re-* compounds points to a fundamental ideology underlying the regime of Augustus".

48 Cf. Fedeli 2008, 629: "[...] è impensabile che nel verso conclusivo del libro e di un carme che intende celebrare l'*aetas* di Augusto il poeta non inviti il lettore a scorgere nella *Veneris progenies* la *gens Iulia* che da Venere proclamava di discendere e, in particolare, Augusto stesso, che nel *Carmen saeculare* aveva definito *clarus Anchisae Venerisque sanguis* (v. 50)".

pastoral program share an investigation *into the origins* of present conditions. In *Eclogue 6* Virgil deals with the origins of the bucolic landscape that constitutes the essential background to the *Eclogues* and constructs a sort of bucolic mythology. The concluding lines of the scientific section of Silenus' cosmogony narrate the emergence of forests as well as of animals which are represented as roaming (*errent*) over mountains (39 f.). Forests, mountains and wandering animals are elements of the bucolic landscape and feature in several of the myths included in the song of Silenus. The alders, into which Phaethon's sisters are transformed (62 f.), complement the initial creation of vegetation. *silvae* in the *Eclogues* functions as a metonymy for 'bucolic poetry' (1, 2: *silvestrem ...Musam*; 4, 3: *si canimus silvas*). In *Eclogue 6* itself *silvas habitare* (2) is a metaphor for 'writing bucolic poetry' (this is the only other occurrence of the word in this poem); and wild animals, forests, and mountains make up the ecstatic audience of the songs of Silenus, Apollo and Orpheus (25–30)<sup>49</sup>.

iv. The prologue (*Odes 1, 6*) and the epilogue (*Odes 4, 15*)  
of Horatian lyric *recusatio*

*Odes 4, 15* begins with the Apollonian injunction to the poet not to write an epic celebrating the emperor's victorious wars and continues with an encomium of his peaceful accomplishments. By contrast, in *Odes 1, 6* the lyric poet had assumed himself the role of (Callimachean) Apollo politely declining to sing of the military and naval exploits of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, Octavian-Augustus' greatest general and admiral; he recommends instead Lucius Varius Rufus, a leading epic and tragic poet of the time, who is said to have written a panegyric of Augustus but is best known for his lost tragedy *Thyestes*. Horace insists instead on pursuing his own lyric program which is outlined in the last stanza.

Scriberis Vario fortis et hostium  
victor Maeonii carminis alite,  
quam rem cumque ferox navibus aut equis  
miles te duce gesserit:

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49 See further Paschalis 2001.

nos, Agrippa, neque haec dicere nec gravem      5  
 Pelidae stomachum cedere nescii  
 nec cursus duplicis per mare Ulixei  
     nec saevam Pelopis domum

conamur, tenues grandia, dum pudor  
 imbellisque lyrae Musa potens vetat  
 laudes egregii Caesaris et tuas  
     culpa deterere ingeni.

quis Martem tunica tectum adamantina  
 digne scripserit aut pulvere Troico  
 nigrum Merionen aut ope Palladis  
     Tydiden superis parem?

nos convivia, nos proelia virginum  
 sectis in iuvenes unguibus acrium  
 cantamus, vacui sive quid urimur  
     non praeter solitum leves.

Varius, a bird of Maeonian song, will write of you as a brave man who has conquered our enemies, recording all the feats that your fierce troops have performed on shipboard or horseback under your command. I do not attempt to recount such things, Agrippa, any more than the deadly rancor of Peleus' son who was incapable of giving way, or the wily Ulysses and his journeys over the sea, or the inhuman house of Pelops; such themes are too grand for one of slender powers. Diffidence, and the Muse who controls the unwarlike lyre, forbid me to diminish the exploits of glorious Caesar and yourself by my inadequate talent. Who could write worthily of Mars clad in his adamantine breastplate, or Meriones black with the dust of Troy, or the son of Tydeus who, with Pallas' aid, was the equal of the gods? What I sing of is drinking bouts and the battles waged by fierce girls using their sharpened nails against young men; whether fancy-free or smouldering with desire, I am, as ever, a lightweight.

Horace excludes as topics of his lyric poetry not only the military exploits of Agrippa but also a heroic epos along the line of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and even tragedy (probably introduced for the sake of Varius). Both epic and tragedy are grand genres, but no mythological epic (or tragedy) has been requested of Horace. What the poet implies by referring especially to the

Homeric epics and outlining Iliadic scenes is that “only a grand poem on an epic scale could match the grand exploits of the addressee”<sup>50</sup>; the archetypal epic poem would, of course, be Homer and the right person to compose such an epos is Varius, a modern poet possessing Homeric poetic skills (“the bird of the Maeonian song”, as he is referred to).

By reinforcing the domain of epic and adding another grand equivalent (tragedy) Horace intended also to enhance the generic contrast with his own lyric program, which he restricts to private themes, symposia and lovemaking. This is not a full catalogue, since it leaves out other private themes as well as his civic and political poems, including the encomia of Octavian (like *Odes* 1, 12 and 1, 37, the victory at Actium – to limit myself to *Odes* 1). Horace’s choice was no doubt deliberate, as eloquently shown in the last stanza. There he describes lovemaking in terms of warfare between girls and boys (*proelia virginum / sectis in iuvenes unguibus acrium*). As commonly noted, this kind of ‘battles’ constitutes in fact a complete reversal of warfare in the requested historical epic about Agrippa’s military deeds and in Homer’s *Iliad*. It is a reversal intended to define lyric in pointed contrast to epic.

In *Odes* 4, 15 the *convivia* of *Odes* 1, 6 as a topic of Horace’s private lyric poetry are replaced by the recreation of the *carmina convivalia*, public and collective sympotic celebrations of the deeds of famous men, here with special reference to the Trojan origins of Rome and the house of Augustus, both ultimately inspired by Virgil’s *Aeneid*. The allusion to the latter substitutes for Homer’s epics in *Odes* 1, 6, marking a prominent shift from the Greek to the Roman epic archetype. A concomitant aspect of this shift is that the *Aeneid* stands in direct antithesis to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*: the latter treated the Trojan war and its aftermath from a Greek viewpoint while the former approached the same war from a Roman, national and dynastic, point.

Horace’s learned audience and readers would have noticed the contrast with *Odes* 1, 6, but we cannot tell how they would have interpreted it. Considering that in the *recusatio* of 1, 6 the poet had provided a restricted image of his lyric domain, leaving out civic and political aspects of it, for the purpose of enhancing the conventional antithesis between epic and ‘slender’ genres, some may have detected in the *sphragis* of *Odes* 4, 15 and of the entire book 4, a palinode retracting the earlier narrow portrayal of his lyric poetry in the programmatic *recusatio* of *Odes* 1, 6. Others may have seen in it a statement regarding the new direction his lyric poetry had taken since the publication of *Odes* 1–3, that he now foregrounded his achievement of expanding the boundaries of lyric. In either case they would have recognized the Virgilian

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50 Davis 1991, 36.

inspiration and would have probably read the last stanza as a celebration of the recently published *Aeneid* and a tribute to Virgil, something which Horace himself will explicitly do a few months later (*Epistles* 2, 1, 245–247).

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Markus Kersten

## Sinn im Zwischenraum. Über zwei Arten des zweiten Blicks und die Wirkung des Schriftbilds bei Vergil

**Abstract** This case study examines two forms of secondary gazing that can be applied to Verg. georg. 1, 118–121, one of which is proposed to be paradigmatically connected to loud reading, the other to silent reading. Both depend on a certain ambiguity in the poem and may result in a revised interpretation of the passage. However, when considered together, they facilitate an actual re-viewing of the didactic text as an object that not only transmits meaning but also reflects its affordance, which is to be read repeatedly. The study demonstrates, that the passage in question is shaped not only by its poetic content and linguistic form, but also by its distinctive written visuality.

Die *Georgica*, Vergils um 29 v. Chr. veröffentlichtes Lehrgedicht über den Landbau, stehen im Zentrum der römischen Literatur. Bald nach ihrem Erscheinen waren sie Gemeingut, sie wurden in den Schulen behandelt und darum im Lauf der Zeit für das Lehrpersonal kommentiert. Vor allem aber wurden sie in der Dichtung der nachfolgenden Epochen intensiv rezipiert. Dass dieser Text immer wieder neu gelesen wurde (und noch immer wird), liegt an der Bedeutung des bäuerlichen Lebens als Sinnbild der Kultur, aber auch an der tiefen Ambiguität des Werks. Ein Beispiel hierfür sind die Verse 1, 118–121, durch die ein erster wichtiger Wendepunkt des Werks eingeleitet wird<sup>1</sup>. Nach einem hoffnungsvollen, an Augustus als Beschützer der Bauern gerichteten Vorspruch und einigen Ausführungen über die landwirtschaftliche Tätigkeit im Allgemeinen und den Getreideanbau im Besonderen erklärt der Dichter plötzlich, dass Vögel und Unkräuter alle Arbeit

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1 Dazu Klingner 1963, 32.

zunichtemachen können. Die Stelle ist bemerkenswert schwer zu übersetzen. Obwohl im Ganzen unstrittig ist, was sie besagt, gibt es bei den Einzelheiten erhebliche Differenzen in der Interpretation. Diese haben zum einen mit Vergils ideologisch umstrittener ‚Theodizee‘ der Arbeit zu tun<sup>2</sup>, zum andern mit der undeutlichen Struktur des Texts. Aufgrund dieser Umstände ist es möglich und auch nötig, die Passage wiederholt zu betrachten. Dies soll im Folgenden zum Anlass genommen werden, zwei Formen des zweiten Blicks zu unterscheiden, die bei schriftlichen Texten zur Anwendung kommen können. Diese Unterscheidung kann nämlich zu einem fundierten Verständnis von Textualität bzw. Schriftlichkeit beitragen, zu einer Anschauung, die nicht nur ergründet, was ein Text bedeutet oder wie er gemacht ist, sondern auch welchen Angebotscharakter er als Objekt hat. Gemäß diesem Verständnis handelt die vorliegende Passage nicht nur von der Mühe, sondern erweist sich auch selbst als mühevoll zu handhaben – mit dem übergreifenden Effekt, dass die Auseinandersetzung mit den *Georgica* wie der Landbau selbst als eine nie endende Arbeit erscheint.

Die beiden Formen des zweiten Blicks, die hier behandelt werden sollen („zweite Lektüre“ wäre nicht ganz treffend, denn es geht nicht nur ums Lesen), unterscheiden sich, grob gesprochen, in medialer Hinsicht. Man könnte die eine als mittelbare und die andere als unmittelbare bezeichnen. Die mittelbare besteht darin, ein Werk im Licht einer bestimmten Erläuterung bzw. mit Rücksicht auf andere Werke *auf eine andere Weise* zu betrachten. Dies ist bezüglich unserer Stelle dadurch angelegt, dass im Kommentar des Servius und dessen später aus anderen Quellen erweiterten Ausgabe, dem *Servius Auctus*, verschiedene Auffassungen vom *labor* dokumentiert sind<sup>3</sup>. Sicher gegeben ist dieses Potenzial der intertextuell informierten Andersdeutung, seitdem in der jüngeren Forschung zwei verschiedene Lesarten des vergilischen Gesamtwerks – die offen-zuversichtliche und die

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2 Zu dem Begriff und seiner Geschichte: Campbell 1982. Was es mit der Bedeutung des *labor* in den *Georgica* (und im Gesamtwerk Vergils) auf sich hat, ist ein zentraler Gegenstand der Forschung und hat sich dementsprechend breit im Schrifttum vor allem des 20. Jahrhunderts niedergeschlagen. Einen Forschungsüberblick bieten Jenkyns 1993 und Baier 2012.

3 Zu dem intrikaten Verhältnis zwischen Servius und Servius Auctus in Hinsicht auf die *Georgica* siehe Cadili 2008; Stok – Ramires 2022. Das Ergebnis von Poletti 2023, dass, vereinfacht gesagt, im Fall der *Aeneis* Servius kühler kommentiere, der Auctus hingegen etwas empathischer, scheint sich für den hier betrachteten Ausschnitt der *Georgica* zu bestätigen. Dies bedarf aber noch einer Überprüfung, die hier nicht geleistet werden kann.

verdeckt-skeptische – ausformuliert und gegeneinander in Stellung gebracht wurden<sup>4</sup>.

Die andre, unmittelbare, Form des zweiten Blicks besteht hingegen darin, ein Werk *unmöglich nur auf eine Weise* zu betrachten. Diese Unmöglichkeit ergibt sich an unserer Stelle dadurch, dass die Syntax des geschriebenen Texts nicht eindeutig erklärt werden kann und sich im Prozess des Lesens überraschend zu ändern scheint.

Diese beiden Arten des Anderssehens lassen sich als Phänomene der Ambiguität begreifen; das heißt zum einen, dass sie womöglich von einigen Lesern nicht erkannt (oder nicht zugegeben) werden, und zum andern, dass sie sich, wie am vorliegenden Beispiel noch deutlich werden wird, gegenseitig zu verstärken oder auch abzuschwächen vermögen. Sie können darum zwar nicht unabhängig voneinander konzeptualisiert werden, aber immerhin lassen sie sich paradigmatisch mit einer bestimmten Arten der Textvermittlung verbinden. Der mittelbare zweite Blick steht vor allem in Verbindung mit dem lauten, auf Verständlichkeit zielenden Vortrag, der eine gewisse Interpretation darbietet und – sei es mit Unterstützung eines nebenbei vorgelesenen Kommentars oder ohne<sup>5</sup> – derart an andre Texte, Motive, Zusammenhänge etc. erinnert, dass es lohnend scheint, dieser Ähnlichkeit später nachzugehen. Der unmittelbare zweite Blick ereignet sich dagegen eher in der stillen und privaten Lektüre, die den Text als ganzen im Blick hat und, etwa im Moment des stolpernden Lesens, zwei inkohärente Wahrnehmungen gleichzeitig machen kann<sup>6</sup>. Diese Unterscheidung mag etwas künstlich wirken (wie ja auch die Vorstellung eines ‚zweiten Blicks‘ selbst etwas künstlich ist)<sup>7</sup>, aber sie hilft, den Umgang mit literarischer Ambiguität systematischer

4 Die Schlagworte „Optimismus“ und „Pessimismus“, dazu v. a. Cramer 1998, haben mehr geschadet als genützt, siehe von Albrecht 2006, 95.

5 Das parallele Lesen mit Kommentar ist nur im lauten (und wechselseitigen) Vortrag zu realisieren, dazu Most 2021, 36 f.

6 Zu dieser Metaphorik und ihrer lesetechnischen Implikation: Heilmann 2021, 228 mit Dion. Hal. comp. 25; zur Reflexion des Stolpermotivs in der antiken Paratextualität siehe Kersten (im Erscheinen). Der moderne Ausdruck der garden-path-sentences, dazu Altmann 2013, beruht auch noch auf dem Motiv des Stolperns.

7 Die meisten intertextuellen Phänomene dürften zwar auf einem mittelbaren zweiten Blick beruhen, weil nicht zwei Texte gleichzeitig und gleichermaßen lesbar sein können (eine tatsächliche Kopräsenz zweier Texte ist in der Natur seltener als in der literarischen Theorie). Dennoch gibt es Gegenbeispiele. Bei Marginalien ist eine intertextuelle Lektüre bisweilen recht unmittelbar möglich. Auch das Erinnern, sozusagen das Mitlesen eines Texts vor dem inneren Auge, dürfte einen ähnlichen Effekt haben. Das widerlegt aber m. E. nicht die hier vorgenommene

zu beschreiben. Was nämlich im Vergleich dieser beiden Formen des zweiten Blicks und ihrer lesetechnischen Folgen an Kontur gewinnt, ist die Schriftbildlichkeit als Randbedingung jeder Lektüre. Dieses Phänomen lohnt es etwas eingehender zu bedenken, ehe die *Georgica*-Verse selbst zur Sprache kommen können.

Schriftbildlichkeit, also die allem Geschriebenen inhärente visuelle Anmutung, ist, abgesehen von Figurengedichten und Graffiti, für die Antike bislang kaum untersucht worden<sup>8</sup>. Diese Bevorzugung des Gehalts vor der Gestalt hat vor allem zwei prominente, aber nicht besonders gute Gründe. Der erste liegt in der Vorstellung, dass geschriebene Worte ausschließlich dazu dienen, gesprochene zu fixieren<sup>9</sup>. Aber selbst für die antike Literatur mit ihren starken Reminiszenzen an die Kultur der Mündlichkeit ist die Vorstellung einer weitgehenden Heteronomie des Geschriebenen, wie Jan Heilman in einer großen Studie gezeigt hat, kaum sinnvoll<sup>10</sup>. Der zweite Grund ist die Instabilität der Schriftform. Da ein Text in verschiedenen Stilen und Formaten sowie auf verschiedenen Materialien reproduziert werden kann, scheint es nicht lohnend, darauf zu achten, wie das Geschriebene *aussieht*. Aber nicht alle schriftbildlichen Phänomene sind instabil.

Eine sehr beständige Texteigenschaft ist die Zwischenräumlichkeit der Buchstabenschrift<sup>11</sup>. Zwischen zwei direkt aufeinanderfolgenden Zeichen

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Schematisierung; und wenn doch, so wird damit jede Schematisierung widerlegt, weil dann zu konzedieren ist, dass Intertextualität im weitesten Sinne nicht mehr kategorisierbar ist.

- 8 Allgemein zur Figurendichtung Luz 2010; speziell zu Optatian Squire – Wienand 2017. Zur Visualität von Graffiti Lohmann 2018, 285 zur graphischen Überarbeitung bzw. Ausarbeitung der Inschrift *svm max(imvs?)* (CIL IV 9008): „[hier wurde die Aussage] mittels der Zeichnung eines Kopfs im Profil veranschaulicht. Dass der Text, nicht das Bild am Anfang stand, lässt sich aus der merkwürdigen Gesichtsförmigkeit ableiten: Die Nase ist an den Buchstaben ‚S‘ angepasst, nicht umgekehrt“.
- 9 Zu dieser Ansicht siehe Busch 2002 mit Zeugnissen der antiken Grammatik.
- 10 Siehe Heilmann 2021, 95–310, der mit der Annahme einer durchaus etablierten Kultur des stillen Lesens weiter geht als Busch 2002. Dieser hatte nach einer Revision der teils polemisch zugespitzten Forschungspositionen zum Thema zwar einen harten Gegensatz zwischen lautem und leisen Lesen in der Antike abgelehnt, ersteres jedoch als die weithin gültige Normalform der Rezeption aufgefasst – allerdings ohne die soziologischen Dimensionen antiker Lesekultur zu bedenken, mit denen Johnson 2000 zu einer differenzierten Betrachtung der Frage nach lautem und leisen Lesen gelangt war.
- 11 Ohne Beschränkung der Allgemeingültigkeit mag man an die unverbundenen normierten Buchstaben einer Kapitalschrift denken (auch Kursivschriften sind zwischenräumlich). Zur Schriftbildlichkeit sowie zur Zwischenräumlichkeit siehe

dieser Art kann kein drittes stehen, anders als bei gemalten Bildern, deren gewissermaßen aus unendlich vielen Punkten bestehende Linien stetig erscheinen. Die Lücken, die zwischen den disjunkten Einheiten eines geschriebenen Texts bestehen (und die nicht identisch mit dem Spatium sind), können bei keiner Reproduktion, wie sehr sie die Erscheinung des Geschriebenen auch ändert, geschlossen werden. Gleichgültig also, ob ein Text in *scriptio continua* geschrieben ist – das heißt fortlaufend, ohne Wortzwischenräume, wie es in Rom durch griechischen Einfluss ab dem zweiten Jahrhundert unserer Zeit üblich wurde<sup>12</sup> – oder eben, wie wir es gewohnt sind, in *scriptio discontinua*, es wird stets ein Zwischenraum zwischen zwei einzelnen Zeichen liegen. Diese Zwischenräume müssen nicht alle gleich groß sein oder jedenfalls nicht gleich groß gedacht und vokalisiert werden. Sie sind für die Leser offensichtlich skalierbar, um Anfänge und Enden von Silben, Worten, Versen, Sinneinheiten etc. zu markieren. Wer beim Kopieren eines Texts zusätzliche explikative Zeichen wie Vortragsbezeichnungen, syntaktische oder textkritische Symbole, Zeilentrenner, Spatien, etc. einfügt oder entfernt<sup>13</sup>, dehnt oder schmälert einzelne Zwischenräume dauerhaft<sup>14</sup>. Formatierung dieser Art kann die Lesbarkeit des Texts in bestimmter Hinsicht, das heißt für ein gewisses Publikum verbessern und den Fluss bestimmter Informationen beschleunigen<sup>15</sup>.

Jede Ein-Fügung verändert aber die Fugen und damit das Schriftbild. Man blickt danach anders auf den Text, und vielleicht versteht man ihn auch anders. Ein einfaches Beispiel hierfür sind handschriftliche Korrekturen, die zwischen die Zeilen gesetzt sind und damit eine richtige Lektüre zwar ermöglichen, eine geschmeidige aber fürs erste verhindern. Es zeigt sich, dass der Zwischenraum einen sehr ähnlichen Rang bzw. eine ähnliche Originalität wie die Zeichen des Texts hat. Ihm kommt ein unverzichtbarer Anteil an der Anmutung und der Vermittlung des sprachlichen Kunstwerks zu. Insbesondere hat der Zwischenraum einen eigenen symbolischen Wert.

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Krämer u. a. 2012, 16 f., zur Buchschrift und ihren soziologischen Implikationen: Johnson 2010, 17.

12 Dazu Winsbury 2009, 35.

13 Ein instruktives Beispiel für zeitgenössische Ergänzungen findet sich in der paläographischen Überlieferung des *Bellum Actiacum*, siehe Seider 1978, 4: Paragraphoi, Schrägstriche an Zeilenenden, Apices für lange Silben; im Allgemeinen dazu Winsbury 2009, 40–44.

14 Zur Paratextualität solcher Zeichen siehe Most 2021, 35.

15 Zu den verschiedenen und namentlich den elitären Lesegemeinschaften und Lesepraktiken der antiken Welt siehe Johnson 2000; Johnson 2010, bes. 17–31.

Er erinnert daran, dass ein geschriebener Text nicht nur aus Zeichen bestehen kann, ebenso wie ein gesprochener nicht nur aus Worten besteht.

All dies zeigt sich naturgemäß nicht nur an den vorliegenden vier Versen der *Georgica*; aber hier zeigt es sich besonders eindrücklich und besonders ernsthaft. Denn bei dem *labor*, um den es an der Stelle geht, dominiert der Sachinhalt. Die Schriftbildlichkeit der vorliegenden Passage kann nicht zunächst als artistischer Selbstzweck oder als ein Ornament zur Reflexion und Ironisierung des Kunstwerks fungieren. Sie illustriert nicht das ‚Inszenieren‘ des Autors (das in den *Georgica* durchaus zur Sprache kommt), sondern das Eigentliche des Werks, die vielgestaltige, nicht restlos verständliche und nicht vollends zu lehrende Landwirtschaft.

\*

Als in den *Georgica* zum ersten Mal vom *labor* die Rede war (georg. 1, 79), stand daneben das Adjektiv *facilis*. Die Arbeit, hieß es, sei leicht, wenn die Felder im Wechsel bebaut und bisweilen abgebrannt würden. Nun, rund vierzig Verse später, zieht zum ersten Mal etwas Dunkles auf. Der Text, der zunächst unübersetzt bleiben soll, lautet (1, 118–121, ohne Kommata):

Nec tamen haec cum sint hominumque boumque labores  
uersando terram experti nihil improbus anser  
Strymoniaeque grues et amaris intiba fibris                    120  
officiunt aut umbra nocet.

Servius findet die Wortfolge offenbar kompliziert. Vielleicht, weil der Rhythmus des Verses (nach dem *sint* in der ersten Zeile folgt eine Zäsur), anders als gewöhnlich, die Folge der Gedanken nicht sogleich offenbart. Jedenfalls verkürzt der Kommentator den Text, um ihn zu erklären, und paraphrasiert dann das Ausgelassene wie folgt (Serv. georg. 1, 118)<sup>16</sup>:

ordo est ‚nec tamen nihil *improbus anser Strymoniaeque grues et amaris intiba fibris* officiant *aut umbra nocet*. et hoc dicit: licet haec omnia, quae dixi, arando sint experti et hominum et boum labores, tamen sunt adhuc aliqua quae obsunt, nisi provideris, ut aues absint et umbra arborum.

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16 Der Konvention gemäß ist der Text des Servius'schen Kommentars aufrecht, das Hinzugefügte im Servius Auctus kursiv gesetzt.



Ordnung: ‚Keineswegs aber nicht sind störend *die schlimme Gans und die Kraniche vom Strymon und die Zichorie mit ihren bitteren Fasern, oder es schadet der Schatten.*‘ Und er sagt dies: Auch wenn alles das, was ich sagte, die Arbeiten der Menschen und Rinder beim Pflügen erreicht haben, so werden doch noch immer einige Dinge stören, wenn du nicht achtgibst, dass die *Vögel fernbleiben und der Schatten der Bäume.*

Dem sind fast alle, die sich zur Stelle äußerten, gefolgt<sup>17</sup>. Üblicherweise werden also die Worte *haec ... experti* als ein durchgehender konzessiver Satz aufgefasst und mit Kommata oder gar Klammern abgetrennt<sup>18</sup>. Die Erklärung, das Demonstrativ *haec* als direktes Objekt zu dem entfernt stehenden *experiri* zu verstehen, ist zweifellos hilfreich. Sie ist aber nicht die einzig mögliche. Genauer besehen, ist sie sogar eine ziemlich schwache.

Worauf *haec* bzw. das *omnia quae dixi* des Kommentars genau verweist, ist nämlich unklar. Der vorangehende Abschnitt (100–117) handelt von den wiederkehrenden Grundaufgaben der Feldbaus: winters säen, sommers wässern. Der Dichter stellt dementsprechend die rekusatorische Frage *quid dicam* (104), um dann abkürzend die Vorkehrungen zu nennen, die verhindern sollen, dass die zarten Halme vertrocknen oder beim Zuleiten von Wasser umknicken. Gustav Meyer, der die Stelle im TLL s. v. *experior* anführt (und zwar in Verbindung mit den exemplarischen Objekten *damna, pericula, labores*), denkt bei *haec* an die Gefahren, die beim falschen Bewässern erlitten werden<sup>19</sup>. Das ist nicht recht überzeugend, denn von Gefahren ist im Text keine Rede. Von der Bedeutung des Demonstrativs ist jedoch die der *labores experti* abhängig. Wenn *haec* selbst eher eine Arbeit meint<sup>20</sup>, lässt sich nicht pleonastisch übersetzen, dass Arbeit Arbeit erleidet<sup>21</sup>. Als Ausweg bleibt dann nur, *haec* allgemein als den Umstand zu begreifen, dass die Voraussetzungen für gedeihliches Wachstum geschaffen werden. Dann heißt *experiri*, vielleicht eigentümlich schwach, ‚versuchen‘ oder gar ‚erreichen‘. Richard Jenkyns übersetzt: „However, though the toil of men and oxen has wrought out this in turning the earth ...“, Friedrich Klingner ist zurückhaltender und nimmt eine Litotes zu Hilfe: „daß trotzdem, wenn die Mühen von

17 Eine Ausnahme ist Laves 1881, der *nec tamen haec* mit *officiunt* verbinden will.

18 Mynors 1969; Conte 2013.

19 Meyer 1943, 1681.1: *varia per umores damna*.

20 Cramer 1998, 21.

21 Heyne 1830 und Erren 2003 nehmen zwar zu Recht die Menschen und Rinder selbst als eigentliches, periphrastisches Subjekt, aber können damit den Text nicht erklären.

Menschen und Zugochsen nichts von alledem im Hin-und-her-wenden der Erde unversucht gelassen haben ...“<sup>22</sup>.

Überwiegt nun also im Moment, bevor die Vögel das Feld heimsuchen, die Hoffnung auf das Vorbereitete oder die Erschöpfung nach dem bereits Erlebten? Sofern Erlebnisse individuell sind, gibt das Gedicht auf diese Frage keine Antwort. (Ein kollektives Erlebnis, wenn auch auf einer andern Ebene, ist allerdings das, was Vergils Publikums höchstwahrscheinlich gelesen hat; und an diesem Erwartungshorizont dürfte sich das durch Lukrez vermittelte negative Bild der Mühsal abzeichnen<sup>23</sup>.)

Das Spektrum der Interpretation der Verse 118/119 ist also, was die Auffassung der Protasis anlangt, verhältnismäßig weit. Nicht von ungefähr offenbaren sich auch hier die beiden weltanschaulichen Pole, die die Deutung der *Georgica* bestimmen. Es ist möglich, den Text, gestützt auf Querbezüge und gewisse interpretatorische Überzeugungen, auf je andre Weise zu betrachten. Wie entscheidet man sich, wenn man sich entscheiden muss?

Der servianische Kommentar ist hier keine Hilfe. Wenn wir ihn mitsamt seiner Kolometrie beseite lassen und stattdessen den Text ohne die in sein Schriftbild eingefügten Kommata – erneut – betrachten, fällt uns aber vielleicht auf, dass der Satz sich zunächst mit *haec* als Subjekt zu entfalten scheint (wobei wiederum alle eben genannten Aufgaben bezeichnet wären). Die *labores* könnten dann ein inkongruentes Prädikatsnomen sein<sup>24</sup>, auf welches folgend man in der nächsten Zeile die Apodosis erwarten könnte: *Nicht aber, obwohl dies die Mühsal von Mensch und Rind ist ...* In dieser Erwartung wäre der konditionale Gedanke mit dem Zeilenende abgeschlossen<sup>25</sup>. Das Demonstrativ braucht dann, weil es mit der Arbeit gleichgesetzt ist, nicht näher definiert und als Objekt einer gewissen Handlung bestimmt zu werden.

22 Jenkyns 1998, 335; Klingner 1963, 32. Ähnlich Holzberg 2016, 121: „Doch obwohl mühseliges Schaffen der Menschen und Rinder / all das versucht hat durch Pflügen ...“, man vergleiche demgegenüber Götte – Götte 1970, 91: „aber wie sehr auch der Mensch mit den Rindern am Pfluge sich abmüht, / rastlos das Feld zu bestellen ...“ und Barchiesi 1980: „Eppure, dopo tanta fatica di uomini e di buoi nel volutare e rivoltare la terra, ecco ...“.

23 Dazu Catto 1986; Baier 2012.

24 Vergleichbar dürften sein: Verg. Aen. 3, 173 (*nec sopor illud erat*), Tib. 2, 3, 31 (*fabula ille est*), Ov. her. 12, 89 (*et quota pars haec sunt?*), Ov. rem. 138 (*haec sunt iucundi causa cibusque mali*). Zum Phänomen der fehlenden Kongruenz siehe Leumann u. a. 1972, 442.

25 In der Tat zitiert Servius Auctus die Stelle in dieser Weise als Monostichon, cf. Aen. 2, 306. Der Vers ist auch schon entsprechend übersetzt worden, siehe etwa Miles 1980, 79: „Nonetheless, despite the toil of man and beast, skilled in turning the earth ...“.

Der Vers, der offenbar nicht nur auf eine Weise verstanden werden kann, erscheint mit nominativischem *haec* sentimentaler und weniger explikativ.

Der Eindruck kann erhärtet werden, und zwar durch einen mittelbaren zweiten Blick auf die Intertextualität der Stelle. Die in der Forschung diskutierten ‚Vorbilder‘ der Stelle bekräftigen mit ihrem Rhythmus die Erwartung eines starken Einschnitts am Versende<sup>26</sup>.

ἔνθα μὲν οὔτε βοῶν οὔτ' ἀνδρῶν φαίνεται ἔργα.  
(Hom. Od. 10, 98)

Dort sah man nicht die Arbeit der Rinder und Menschen.

ἔργα βοῶν δ' ἀπόλοιτο καὶ ἡμιόνων ταλαεργῶν.  
(Hes. op. 46)

Unnötig wäre die Arbeit der Rinder und mühenduldenden Halbesel.

ἐς δ' ἄλλα πορφυρέην μεγάλην στενάχουσι ρέουσαι  
ἐξ ὀρέων ἐπικάρ, μινύθει δέ τε ἔργ' ἀνθρώπων.  
(Hom. Il. 16, 391)

Hin zum purpurnen Meer fließen sie, laut stöhnend  
von den Bergen herab, vernichtet wird die Arbeit der Menschen.

Die Feierlichkeit des altepischen Ausdrucks wirkt in Vergils *hominumque boumque labores* nach. Wirkt auch die gewohnte Pause am Versende? Welchen Effekt kann oder muss die in der nächsten Zeile folgende Phrase *uersando terram experti* für das Satzgefüge haben? Mit andern Worten: Das Objekt von *experiri*, dessen sich Servius so sicher ist, bedarf der näheren Überprüfung – und ebenso, wie sich zeigen wird, das Subjekt.

26 Vergil selbst gebraucht in Aen. 2, 283–285 eine ganz ähnliche Kolonstruktur. Hier stehen die *hominumque urbisque labores* als ein Adverbial am Zeilenende, wiederum eingefügt in einen übergeordneten Satz; auch in Aen. 2, 306, wo die Formel leicht abgewandelt und in Colum. 10, 330, wo sie wörtlich aufgegriffen wird, ist Enjambement vermieden, bei Auson. Mos. 459 allerdings nicht. Bei Lukrez enden zahlreiche Verse emphatisch mit einer Form von *labor*; siehe etwa Lucr. 5, 213–217, die von Macr. Sat. 6, 2, 29 als Vorbild unserer Stelle angeführt werden.

Innerhalb der *Georgica* finden sich zwei Stellen, in denen das Verb *experiri* und das Substantiv *labor* transitiv verbunden sind. Von den Bienen heißt es, sie seien vorausschauend (georg. 4, 156 f.):

uenturaeque hiemis memores aestate laborem  
 experiuntur et in medium quaesita reponunt.

Eingedenk des kommenden Winters, nehmen sie im Sommer die Mühen auf sich und lagern in ihrer Mitte, was sie gesammelt.

Und wenn es über die Nymphe Lycorias heißt, sie habe bereits Mühen der Niederkunft erfahren, so darf man diese Erfahrung für schmerzhaft halten (georg. 4, 340)<sup>27</sup>:

altera tum primos Lucinae experta labores.

Die andre hatte die ersten Mühen der Geburtsgöttin erfahren.

Ovid gebraucht eine ähnlich strukturierte Wendung, und zwar in einem Zusammenhang, der unserer Stelle sehr nahekommt (Ov. met. 1, 414)<sup>28</sup>:

inde genus durum sumus experiensque laborum.

Daher stammen wir, ein hartes Geschlecht, erfahren in der Arbeit.

Dies legt nahe, das Partizip *experti* durchaus passivisch und als nachgestellte Erläuterung aufzufassen:

Nec tamen, haec cum sint hominumque boumque labores,  
 uersando terram experti, nihil improbus anser  
 Strymoniaeque grues et amaris intiba fibris                      120  
 officiunt aut umbra nocet.

Keineswegs aber, wenn dies auch sind die Mühen der Menschen und Rinder, Erfahren im Wenden der Erde, werden die schlimme Gans

27 Der von Thomas 1988 *ad loc.* sicher zu Recht unterstellte Referenzcharakter der Stelle ist uns in seiner Bedeutung nicht mehr zugänglich.

28 Das Hendyadyoin *labor et experientia*, das Columella verwendet (1, 1; 10, 338 f.), scheint auf dieselbe gedankliche Struktur zu deuten.

Und die Kraniche vom Strymon und mit bitteren Fasern die Zichorie  
Nicht im Weg sein. Oder der Schatten schadet.

Die Übersetzung ist bewusst mehrdeutig gehalten. Denn die Vereinzelnung des Verses 118 hat nicht nur die Wirkung, die Mühen von Mensch und Vieh zu charakterisieren, sondern sie lässt auch die von Gans und Kranich verursachten Schäden stärker hervortreten; *uersando terram experti* sind ja auch sie, nur eben auf andre Weise. Durch Ausreißen von Saaten und Pflanzen, durch Zertreten, Verdichten und Bekoten des Bodens schädigen die Tiere den Acker; unerwünschte Pflanzen wie die Zichorie machen die Ernte mühsam und unergiebig. Dabei sorgen die Pflanzen und Tiere für ihren Lebensunterhalt wie auch die Menschen es tun. Das vermenschlichende Adjektiv *improbus* stellt sie uns zwar als eine andre, feindliche, aber eben doch ethisch ansprechbare und darum bemitleidenswerte Partei vor. Die Feinde pflügen die Erde nicht, sie verwüsten sie, werfen alles um. Diese Bedeutung kann *uersare* zweifellos haben<sup>29</sup>. Das Partizip *experti* wirkt damit wie ein Scharnier zwischen der Arbeit der Menschen und den Angriffen der Tiere. Diese Dynamik (auch wenn sie eher die Semantik als die Syntax betrifft) zeigt sich, sobald die Satzzeichen verschwinden, an die wir uns seit Aldus Manutius gewöhnt haben, die aber die Antike nicht in vergleichbarem Ausmaß hatte<sup>30</sup>. Je zwei einzelne Zeichen des Texts sind eindeutig bestimmt. Was sie als Zeichen besagen, ist, wenn wir so wollen, diskret benennbar. Das, was im nicht schließbaren Raum zwischen ihnen geschehen kann, allerdings nicht<sup>31</sup>.

Die hier diskutierte Interpretation, die das Partizip *experti* in der Schwebelage lässt, ohne direktes Objekt und mit fluidem Subjekt, ist insofern exaltiert, als sie an die Schriftform gebunden ist, das heißt an die stille, zwischen Worten und Versen relativ frei hin- und herschauende Lektüre, die in der Antike vor allem bezüglich der Dichtung als die ungewöhnlichere Form der Rezeption gelten muss. Servius legt dagegen eine normative, schulmäßige, vor allem vorlesbare Kolometrie vor. Wer den Text dementsprechend hört, kann ihn zwar ebenfalls überdenken und zu einem späteren Zeitpunkt anders interpretieren (sowie anders rezitieren). Aber diese Art der Revision dürfte um

29 Vgl. Verg. ecl. 9, 5: *Fors omnia uersat*.

30 Siehe Johnson 2010, 22–25; Heilmann 2021, 237. Für die *Georgica* werden seit längerem einige strittige, wenngleich nicht drastische Fälle diskutiert, cf. Verg. georg. 2, 65; 4, 78. Dazu Thomas 1988, I. 33f. sowie die jeweiligen Kommentierungen.

31 Ähnliches gilt für den Rand neben dem Text. Er ist (wohl vor allem) Symbol für den großen Wert des materiellen Buchs und des in ihm enthaltenen Texts. Er ist aber auch eine Einladung, beschriftet zu werden.

einiges langsamer verlaufen. Zudem dürfte sie in ihren einzelnen Realisierungen zu jeweils größerer Eindeutigkeit führen<sup>32</sup>.

Erst nach diesem Vergleich zwischen aktivem stillen Lesen und passivem Hören kann ein wesentlicher Zweck des Lehrgedichts vollends gewürdigt werden, nämlich wiederholt (vor-)gelesen und gewissermaßen angewendet zu werden. Das Vorlesen, die *lectio*, impliziert die Herausforderung des individuellen Betonens<sup>33</sup>. Jede Vokalisierung (um nicht zu sagen: jede Performanz) unserer Stelle ist neu vor diese Herausforderung gestellt und kann ihr darum von einem zum andern Mal anders begegnen, je nachdem, zu welchem Blickwinkel man jeweils tendiert oder in der Lage ist. Verstanden als Bemerkung, dass die Mühen der Landarbeit im Prozess des Pflügens unablässig erlebt werden, während auch die Schädlinge unablässig wiederkehren, steigert das nachgestellte Partizip *experti* das Pathos, indem es den Schrecken vergrößert: Obwohl schon große Anstrengungen unternommen werden, ist noch immer nichts gewonnen, weil zuletzt der *anser improbus*, die Kraniche, das Unkraut und der Schatten dräuen.

All das hat einen Effekt für das Werkganze. Was genau gegen die Schädlinge zu tun ist, sagt der Lehrdichter nämlich an unserer Stelle noch nicht, sondern erst in georg. 1, 155–159: Vögel vergrämen, Bäume beschneiden, Unkraut ausreißen. Dass er nicht gleich eine Lösung präsentiert, bewirkt einstweilen ein Gefühl des Ausgeliefertseins. Die Vögel suchen, scheint es, unvorbereitete Bauern im Moment der Erschöpfung heim. Das oben angesprochene Problem der Stimmung wird hiermit akzentuiert: Die *labores* sind von der Art, dass man sie nicht im Vorbeigehen verrichtet, nicht lächelnd, sozusagen, im sublimen Gefühl soeben eintretender Selbstverwirklichung. Die unmittelbar folgende Bemerkung über das göttliche Kulturprojekt, ‚Vater Jupiter selbst wollte es so‘ (121 f.), kann dann nicht nur von ihrem Ende her gedacht werden; es geht immer wieder neu auch um ihren Beginn. Die Arbeit erscheint bei Vergil oft als Übel, wie im Servius Auctus bemerkt ist<sup>34</sup>.

So verstanden, bereitet die nachgestellte Qualifikation *uersando terram experti*, die sowohl die Intensität der vorangegangenen Mühen als das Aus-

32 Siehe hierzu die Argumentation bei Busch 2002, 20.

33 Zur *lectio* und der dafür notwendigen Fähigkeiten siehe Quint. inst. 1, 8. Quintilian stellt, ganz im Sinne der antiken Grammatik, auf die Richtigkeit des Leservorgangs ab, betont aber den Unterschied zwischen eigener Lektüre und dem Lesen als Vorlesen lassen (inst. 10, 16–20). Zu dem dafür notwendigen Üben, der *praelectio* (Quint. inst. 1, 8, 13), und dessen soziokultureller Bedeutung siehe Winsbury 2009, 44. Zur individuellen Verantwortung der Leser für die Interpretation siehe Johnson 2010, 25.

34 Serv. auct. georg. 2, 168: *laborem pro malo solet ponere*.



Interpretation erhalten, die das Gewalttätige des menschlichen *labor improbus* herausstellt; bezüglich georg. 1, 197–199 heißt es dort:

sic enim Donatus sensit, dicens: nisi uiolentia fiat naturae, omnia in deterius cadunt. *et hoc est, quod ait ‚labor omnia uicit improbus‘.*

So hat Donat die Stelle verstanden; er erklärt: Wenn der Natur keine Gewalt geschieht, wendet alles sich zum Schlechteren. *Und aus diesem Grund heißt es: „Die Mühe besiegte alles, die schlimme.“*

Der arbeitende Mensch greift, wenn er mehr leisten muss, als er seiner Kultur nach zu können meint, zur Gewalt. Ob diese durch irgendeinen Zweck geheiligt werde, ist die sich natürlich ergebende Frage. Hierauf eine eindeutige – sozusagen: prosaische – Antwort des Texts zu erhoffen, hieße aber das Gedicht zu überfordern.

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Voraussetzung von Zwischenräumlichkeit ist der zweidimensionale Raum, in dem der Text sich befindet und sich in die Länge und die Breite ausdehnt. In der Tat hält unsere Passage auch abseits der üblichen Leserichtung ein paar Ambivalenzen bereit. Schauen wir auf den Textblock der Verse und ihrer drei Vorgänger, und zwar in der Form, wie er sich wahrscheinlich in einigen frühen Manuskripten des Werks dargestellt hat,<sup>38</sup> nämlich in Kapitalschrift ohne grammatische Interpunktion, dafür mit Hochpunkten anstelle von Spatien:

PRAESERTIM·INCERTIS·SI·MENSIBVS·AMNIS·ABVNDANS  
 EXIT·ET·OBDVCTO·LATE·TENET·OMNIA·LIMO  
 VNDE·CAVAE·TEPIDO·SVDANT·VMORE·LACVNAE  
 NEC·TAMEN·HAEC·CVM·SINT·HOMINVMQVE·BOVMQVE·LABORES  
 VERSANDO·TERRAM·EXPERTI·NIHIL·IMPROBVS·ANSER  
 STRYMONIAEQVE·GRVES·ET·AMARIS·INTIBA·FIBRIS  
 OFFICIVNT·AVT·VMBRA·NOCET·PATER·IPSE·COLENDI

Am unruhigen rechten Rand kommt die horizontale Varianz des Texts zur Wirkung; auffällig ist hier besonders der Vers 118; er ist, verglichen mit sei-

38 Zur Ästhetik des Textblocks siehe auch Winsbury 2009, 36 f., zur Materialität römischer Bücher zusammenfassend Heilmann 2021, 215–269.



nem unmittelbaren Kontext, besonders lang. Das Wort *labores* sticht aus dem Textkörper heraus, seine Position am Versende ist weitaus sichtbarer als die Mittelstellung von *expert*. Dass die Zeile hier ein deutliches Ende hat – an das sie, möchte man sagen, nach dem langen Weg mühevoll gelangt –, scheint zudem der Anfang von 119 zu illustrieren; im *uersando* steckt ja das Wort für Zeilenumbruch<sup>39</sup>.

All dies suggeriert, dass der gedankliche und emotionale Schwerpunkt der Passage auf der Arbeit und nicht auf ihrem Ergebnis liegt. Im sogenannten Vergilius Romanus, einem spätantiken Kodex, der den Text in etwa so präsentiert, wie er oben abgedruckt ist, lässt sich dies gut beobachten<sup>40</sup>. Das Wort beherrscht den Rand wie eine Marginalie. Vom Leser mit dieser Funktion betraut, kann es sogar seine Bedeutung ändern. Liest man es als Solitär neben dem Text, wird es zu einer prägnanten Mahnung: *labores*, ‚du sollst arbeiten‘<sup>41</sup>.

Die *Mühe* ist ein buchstäblich unübersehbarer Aspekt des Gedichts. Einem etwas genaueren Blick offenbart sich allerdings auch, dass die Zeile im Vergilius Romanus Abkürzungen enthält und dass am Schluss die Buchstaben kleiner und enger werden, so als müsse ein vorzeitiger Umbruch um jeden Preis vermieden werden<sup>42</sup>.

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39 Für die Beobachtung danke ich Markus Stachon. Metapoetik zu erkennen, ist, wie sich hieran noch einmal exemplarisch zeigt, oft eine Sache des mittelbaren zweiten Blicks. Im Zusammenhang unserer Stelle kann der *amnis abundans*, den es einzudämmen gilt, an die hellenistische Poetik der *Georgica* erinnern – ohne dass diese Poetik hier unmittelbar etwas zum Verständnis des konkret ausgeführten Gedankens etwas beiträgt.

40 Ms Vat. Lat. 3867. Das Manuskript ist leicht einzusehen ([https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.lat.3867](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3867)), es bedarf daher nicht des Abdrucks.

41 Hierbei handelt es selbstverständlich nicht um eine Gesetzmäßigkeit, sondern um ein Potenzial. Eine ähnlich fruchtbare Zeilengestalt ergibt sich aber in georg. 2, 398 (39r) mit dem Adverb *quotannis*, das für die bäuerliche Tätigkeit exemplarisch ist. Dieses ist hier im Ganzen kleiner geschrieben und erhält dadurch die Anmutung einer interesseleitenden Marginalie. Ein besonders kurioser Fall ist georg. 3, 95 (48v). Hier steht wegen der Länge des Verses die Wortgruppe *segnior aetas* verkleinert am äußersten Rand der Seite. Die Phrase separat zu betrachten (als Signal für die Sterblichkeit aller Lebewesen), fällt leicht, weil sie als Nominativ leicht vereinzelt werden kann. Tatsächlich ist dieser Nominativ aber ausschließlich im Romanus belegt; alle anderen Zeugen bieten *segnior annis*. Der Romanus bietet allerdings auch Beispiele, wo die Überlänge der Zeile vor allem als graphisches Problem des Schreibers erkennbar ist, während für die Deutung des Texts nichts gewonnen wird (etwa ecl. 6, 55; Ms Vat. Lat. 3867, 15v).

42 Ms Vat. Lat. 3867, 22r. Die Abkürzung des enklitischen *-que* ist keine Selbstverständlichkeit, siehe zum Beispiel die aus dem ersten Jahrhundert stammenden Papyri Qasr Ibrim 78–3–11/1 (Gallus), und Herc. 817 (*Bellum Actiacum*).

NEC·TAMEN·HAEC·CVM·SINT·HOMINVM·Q:BOVM·Q: LABORES

Die Frage, ob der Vers eher zur Dihärese neigt, also zur Zäsur am Wort- und Zeilenende, oder zum Enjambement, scheint hier graphisch zugunsten der ersten Option beantwortet. Aber ganz so einfach ist es nicht. Zum einen ist der vorzeitige Umbruch wohl eher ein Phänomen des Kodex und insofern anachronistisch (die Spalten der Schriftrolle sind zumeist nicht durch einen physischen Rand begrenzt)<sup>43</sup>. Zum andern kann ein Umbruch, immerhin eine massive Störung des Textblocks, wohl auch den Weg des Auges zum nächsten Versanfang komplizieren und erst recht eine Pause erzwingen. Die symbolische Wirkung der vorliegenden Manuskriptzeile ist nicht eindeutig genug, um hier einen soliden Hinweis zu geben. Der Text zeigt lediglich exemplarisch seine Geschriebenheit und stellt von dorthier gleichsam eine Gegenfrage: Wie wäre die präferierte Art der Lektüre in einer andern Abschrift zu fixieren?

In vertikaler Richtung lädt naturgemäß der linke, gerade verlaufende Rand des Texts zur Betrachtung; er ist der bevorzugte Ort für Akrosticha. In unserem Text stehen von Vers 116 bis 120 die Buchstaben E, V, N, V, S und O am Zeilenanfang. Dass in senkrechter Reihe echte Worte gelesen werden können, ist selten; hier sind es gleich mehrere, teils überlappend: *EVNVS*, *VNVS*, *VSO*. Sollen wir diese Buchstaben lesen oder – wie es die Regel ist – überlesen? Und wenn ja, welches Wort sollen wir bedenken?

Die Forschung der letzten Jahre hat zahlreiche Akrosticha in Texten der römischen Dichtung gefunden<sup>44</sup>. Dass nicht alle von ihnen besonders aussagekräftig oder sprachlich eindeutig sind, hat die intuitiv einleuchtende, aber theoretisch schwer fassbare Frage nach dem Zufall solcher Strukturen eher befördert als zum Schweigen gebracht. Offen oder verdeckt schwebt über den Funden die Diskussion, ob solche Akrosticha ‚wahrscheinlich‘ sind, das heißt, ob der Autor uns hier eine versteckte Botschaft übermitteln wollte. Solchermaßen nach einem Inhalt zu fragen, ist, historisch-kritisch gesehen, unerlässlich. Aber diese Fragen sind aus unseren Quellen kaum beantwortbar. Zwei nützliche Erwägungen lassen sich demgegenüber aus der Schriftbildlichkeit der Texte ableiten:

43 Dazu Most 2021, 32.

44 Allein zu Vergil siehe Fowler 1983; Grishin 2008; Somerville 2010; Casteletti 2012; Danielewicz 2013; Adkin 2016; Katz 2016; Kronenberg 2017; Hejduk 2018; Danielewicz 2019; Robinson 2019a; Robinson 2019b; Hosle 2020.

1. Akrosticha sind leicht lesbar, sobald ihre Trägerverse ununterbrochen untereinanderstehen. Ihre Lesbarkeit wird noch weiter erleichtert, wenn, wie in einigen mittelalterlichen Handschriften, alle zeilenersten Buchstaben farblich und/oder mit Spatium abgehoben sind.
2. Akrosticha lassen sich in einem geschriebenen Text nicht unterbinden. Sie sind emergent, und sobald sie einmal als Wörter gelesen werden, sind sie da.

Als Phänomene des Textuellen unterliegen akrostichische Worte den Gesetzen der Intertextualität. Sie können untersucht und mit Hilfe anderer Strukturen ihrerseits einem mittelbaren zweiten Blick unterzogen werden. Im Prozess der Rezeption können sie also Bedeutung erlangen, ohne von vornherein Bedeutung zu tragen. Als gewissermaßen sekundäre Texteigenschaften provozieren sie vor allem die Frage nach ihrem Effekt oder, anders gesagt, nach ihrer Affordanz für die Leser, die mit ihrem Trägertext umgehen. Akrosticha sind sonach nicht Kryptogramme in dem Sinn, dass sie von jemandem absichtlich verborgen wurden, sondern in dem, dass sie nicht für alle von links nach rechts schauenden Leser sofort offensichtlich sind und einem Publikum, das nur hört, verborgen bleiben.

In unserem Fall mag man daran denken, dass *Eunus* der Name eines bekannten aufständischen Sklaven ist<sup>45</sup>. Er taugt zum Vehikel für die Frage, wer eigentlich die Arbeiten auf dem Feld leistet. Eine Fokussierung auf die Bedeutung des griechischen Worts – *εὐνοῦς*, wohlgesinnt – mag hingegen eine Haltung gegenüber der Arbeit und vielleicht sogar ihren Gegnern illustrieren<sup>46</sup>. Beschränkt man sich auf das Numeral *unus*, wird man vielleicht aufmerksam werden auf den Vers georg. 4, 184 und die Ebenen seiner Bedeutung<sup>47</sup>:

Omnibus una quies operum, labor omnibus unus.

Alle haben dieselbe Ruhe nach der Arbeit, alle dieselbe Mühe.

Das kurze Partizip *uso* schließlich kann an den Umstand erinnern, dass Gewohnheit, *usus*, die nötigen Künste hervorbringt (georg. 1, 133); es fügt sich glatt anstelle der von Servius gegenüber dem Servius Auctus ausgelassenen

45 Vgl. Flor. 2, 7.

46 Vgl. Verg. georg. 1, 197: *uidi lecta diu et multo spectata labore*.

47 Zu diesem Vers und seiner inhaltlichen Beziehung zu unserer Passage siehe Thomas 1988 *ad loc.*

Versteile ein (*nec tamen uso nihil efficiunt ...*) und kann besagen, dass auch dem, der sich vermeintlich an alles gewöhnt hat, noch ein Schaden zuteilwerden kann.

Nichts davon ist zwingend zum Verständnis der Passage. Mehr noch: Es ist sogar nur schwer vorstellbar, Vergil hätte gerade hier unsere Augen auf den Rand lenken wollen. Aber trotzdem sind die Beobachtungen bereichernd. Das, was sich ereignet, wenn man eines dieser Akrosticha als Wort liest, ist zwar keine substanzielle Einsicht, aber dafür eine Bestätigung des schriftbildlich orientierten Vorgehens, in den Tiefen des Gedichts nach Sinn zu suchen. Solche Sinnsuche ist in verschiedenster Form verbreitet, etwa in der Allegorese. Die Akrosticha, die sich hier am Rand abzeichnen, besagen weniger für sich selbst etwas als für das Phänomen der Räumlichkeit geschriebener Texte, mit dem man rechnen kann oder gar muss. Und so ergibt sich auch hier für alle, die nach Eindeutigkeit fragen, eine grundsätzliche Gegenfrage des Texts: Was geschieht in dem Fall, dass ein Akrostichon tatsächlich zwingend erscheint? Kann man etwas anderes mit ihm tun als es still mitzulesen? Lässt sich die individuelle Lektüre, die sich jenseits der gleichsam ‚oralen‘ Aufführungspraxis vollzieht, als Akt der Subversion begreifen?

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Ein Gedicht wirkt durch Inhalt und Form. Dies ist eine Selbstverständlichkeit auch für antike Dichtung. Dass hingegen die Schrift, durch die der Text in einem zweidimensionalen Raum fixiert ist, einen konstitutiven Teil des poetischen Kunstwerks ausmachen sollte, das dürfte schon weniger selbstverständlich sein. Zu übermächtig ist dafür die Analogie zwischen geschriebenem und gesprochenem Wort; zu handlich das ordnende Interpungieren von Texten. Die hier betrachtete Stelle ist allerdings ein Beispiel dafür, wie durch die Nichtbeachtung des Schriftbilds – konkret durch kolometrische Diskretisierung und Normierung der Leserichtung – die Gestalt des Werks verarmen kann. An ihr wird, unabhängig von allen inhaltlichen Details, das hermeneutische Prinzip deutlich, dass das Ganze mehr ist als die Summe seiner Teile. Ein geschriebenes Gedicht wirkt nicht nur durch seine Worte und seinen Rhythmus, sondern auch durch sein Schriftbild.

Die *Georgica* wurden, wie Sueton bemerkt, vor Augustus mündlich vorgetragen<sup>48</sup>. Aus diesem Bericht, der doch einiges Unglaubliche an sich hat, lässt sich zwar wenig über die Umstände einer möglichen Premierensung

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48 Vgl. Suet. Verg. 27f.

erkennen<sup>49</sup>, aber eine Einsicht in die Medialität dieses Texts lässt sich gewinnen. Unter der wahrscheinlichen Annahme, dass das Gedicht zum Zeitpunkt des angeblichen Vortrags bereits schriftlich konserviert war und kurz darauf in Kopien verbreitet wurde, kann Suetons kaiserzeitliches Publikum hinsichtlich der *Georgica* die beiden gegensätzlichen Formen von Lektüre, die laute öffentliche und die leise private, zusammendenken und vergleichen. Hierbei wird deutlich, dass die Rezitation die Grenzen der stillen Lektüre markiert (und umgekehrt)<sup>50</sup>. Diese Erkenntnis ist in der biographisch-exegetischen Tradition, aus der Sueton schöpft, bereits Gemeingut (Suet. Verg. 29):

Seneca tradidit Iulium Montanum poetam solitum dicere inuolaturum se Vergilio quaedam, si et uocem posset et os et hypocrisin; eosdem enim uersus ipso pronuntiante bene sonare, sine illo inanes esse mutosque.

Seneca berichtet, der Dichter Iulius Montanus habe gesagt, dass er dem Vergil gern etwas entwenden wolle, wenn er auch seine Stimme, sein Gesicht und seine Gestaltungsfähigkeit haben könnte. Dieselben Verse klängen nämlich schön, wenn Vergil sie lese. Ohne ihn hingegen seien sie leer und stumm.

Der kurze Bericht bestätigt die Beobachtung, derzufolge jeder einzelne Vortrag eines Texts sich von jedem möglichen andern unterscheiden wird und dass Rhapsoden für gewöhnlich mehr aus einem Text machen können als ungeübte Vorleser. Vor allem bezeugt er das Phänomen der *auctoritas*, wenn er erklärt, ohne Vergils Stimme, Mimik und Gestik blieben die Verse ‚leer‘ und ‚stumm‘. Die Metaphorik setzt den misslungenen Vortrag und die stille, nicht vokalisierende Lektüre ins Verhältnis. Was die Authentizität der Autorstimme bewirkt, betrifft also kaum die Gedankentiefe und Allusivität des Gedichts oder das Decorum und die Anschaulichkeit der Sprache. All das mag zwar bei schlecht gelesenen Versen undeutlich werden, bleibt aber der stillen Lektüre zugänglich, vielleicht sogar in besonderem Maße. Das ‚Sprechen des Texts‘, so wie Montanus es versteht, dürfte also eher den interpretierenden Vortrag meinen, der zwar so eindeutig ist, dass nicht – wie in

49 Dazu Stachon 2021, 169 f.

50 Erren 2003, 4, bemerkt, dass sich „das Gedicht auch wie ein Brief oder eine Rede bei dem Vortrag [verbraucht], der für den niedergeschriebenen Text die einzig gültige Realisierung bleibt.“ Dies ist in dieser Restriktivität zwar offensichtlich falsch, hilft aber eine rezeptionstheoretische Matrix zu erstellen, die verschiedenen Realisierungen verschiedene Eigenschaften zuweist.

der Schriftform – die Zeichen teilweise widersprüchlich nebeneinander stehen, der aber dennoch Zwischentöne enthält, die mehr sagen als die reinen Worte. Über das Motiv des literarischen Diebstahls ist Montanus' Ausspruch mit dem Vergil unterstellten und ebenfalls bei Sueton überlieferten Diktum verbunden, wonach man leichter dem Herkules seine Keule als Homer seine Verse entwenden könne<sup>51</sup>. Der entscheidende Unterschied zwischen beiden Bemerkungen betrifft die Synchronie bzw. Diachronie der Rezeption. Während Montanus die Performanz betont, die für alle Zeitgenossen, die den Text bereits kennen, eine andre, je nachdem bessere oder schlechtere Erfahrung bereiten kann, stellt Vergil zeitunabhängig auf prominentes Textmaterial ab, das leicht und buchstäblich schlagartig wiederzuerkennen ist. Man mag sich denken: gleichsam im ersten Augenblick der Lektüre.

Die wichtigste Implikation der Montanus-Anekdote besteht sonach nicht in der Bewunderung des poetischen Genius, sondern darin, die Unzugänglichkeit des authentischen Vortrags zu bekunden<sup>52</sup>. Gleichsam als Illustration folgt auf das Zeugnis des Montanus der Bericht, dass Vergil bei der Erstausführung der *Georgica* vor Augustus die Stimme versagt habe. Maecenas musste übernehmen<sup>53</sup>. Wie mag er der Aufgabe nachgekommen sein? Waren die Verse aus seinem Mund auch stumm? Und was sagt die Notiz über das kaiserzeitliche Publikum, an das sie gerichtet war und das den Dichter selbst schon nicht mehr hören konnte? Drängt ein Text, den ohnehin niemand richtig vorlesen kann, zum stillen, kontemplativen Anblick? Es spricht vieles dafür.

Unstrittig ist jedenfalls, dass diejenigen, die ein Gedicht mit eigenen Augen lesen, mehr sehen, als sie ‚leer und stumm‘ aussprechen könnten<sup>54</sup>, denn die Räumlichkeit des Schriftbilds, also die Zeichen, die angegeben sind,

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51 Vgl. Suet. Verg. 46.

52 Dass im Text unklar bleibt, welcher Seneca, der Ältere oder Jüngere, diese Anekdote überliefert haben soll, illustriert das Problem. Während ersterer selbst einen Vortrag Vergils hätte hören und Montanus' Eindruck hätte überprüfen können, gehört letzterer bereits zu den Nachgeborenen, denen die ‚Wahrheit‘ nicht mehr zugänglich ist.

53 Vgl. Suet. Verg. 28.

54 Das Maß der Ambiguität, die bei Vergil erwartet werden darf, ist angesichts der jüngeren Forschung wohl nicht hoch genug einzuschätzen. Aus Gründen der Beschränkung muss ein knapper Hinweis auf folgende berühmte Stelle genügen, ecl. 4, 62f.: *incipit, parue puer, qui non risere parentes / nec deus hunc mensa dea nec dignata cubili est* [qui Quint. : cui PR, parentes codd. : parenti Schrader]. Hier eröffnet die Rückkehr zu der bei Quintilian überlieferten und ihrer Latinität wegen lange abgelehnten Variante eine beträchtliche Doppeldeutigkeit, denn damit scheinen auch die Eltern zu lachen; erst das *hunc* (im Gegensatz zu *mater*)

und die Lücken zwischen ihnen, bewirkt einen graphischen Sinnüberschuss. Dieser entbindet zwar niemanden von einer Entscheidung, welche Betonung, welcher Gesichtsausdruck etc. im singulären Moment des interpretierenden Vortrags gewählt werden soll. Aber die schriftlich garantierte Wiederholbarkeit der Lektüre mildert die Singularität jeder Rezitation ab.

Was folgt? Die Entscheidung für eine längere Pause nach dem Wort *labores* in georg. 1, 118 (und eine nicht ganz so lange nach *experti* in 119) mag vielleicht bedenkenswert sein. Vor allem mag sie aber veranschaulichen, dass die Schriftbildlichkeit ein integraler Teil der *Georgica* und überhaupt jeder schriftlichen Literatur ist. Die Überlegung, wie wir jeweils persönlich einen notorisch reduziertes und bisweilen ambivalentes Schriftbild verlebendigen und vereindeutigen, ist ein spezifisch literarisches Erlebnis, ebenso wie der umgekehrte Versuch, einen bestimmten Vortrag möglichst genau schrift(bild)lich zu transkribieren. Beide Modi der Rezeption haben ihre Schwächen und sind darum aufeinander angewiesen. Der Sinn eines mehreren Blicken zugänglichen Gedichts lässt sich weder in der stillen, für jede Art von Strukturen sensiblen Lektüre noch mit einer auktorialen oder kongenialen Rezitation voll erfassen. Es liegt immer auch noch etwas dazwischen.

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