# TIRESIAS
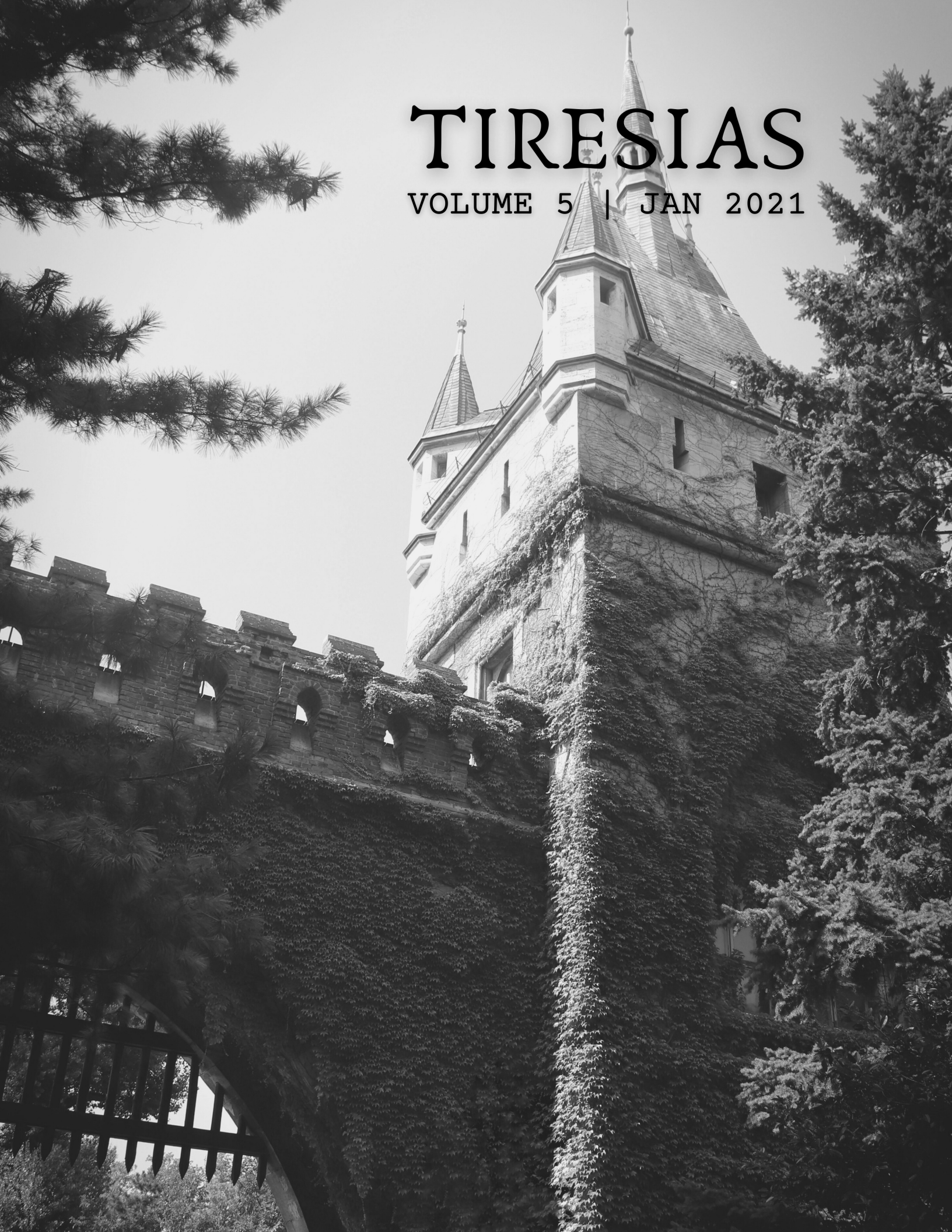
**Acknowledgements and Summary**

From the Bronze Age through the Medieval era and well beyond, Tiresias was renowned for his prophetic skill. A marginal figure who sought to bridge the divides of god and man, present and future, life and death, male and female, sightedness and blindness, he ultimately revealed the difference between knowledge and ignorance. Always in pursuit of a deeper truth, the name Tiresias became synonymous with one who seeks knowledge. In the spirit of that research, Tiresias is the name given to this student journal.

The articles within this volume will follow the rough chronology of the events which they discuss. We begin with an investigation on the business practice of prostitution in Pompeii before jumping to the descriptions of nomads found in Roman literature and beyond. This is followed by a brief look into the role birds played in religion and magic before turning to the role of Medea as a malcontent in Athens. From there we turn to the exploits of Alexander the Great, beginning with his sexuality before looking at his how his father, Phillip of Macedon influenced his quest for divinity as well as how he might have been murdered by Olympias. This section is completed with an investigation of the interpretations of the Alexander Mosaic in relation to the House of the Faun. Next, we turn to an examination of the role of Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* in mythbusting as well as Catullus' *Carmen* 63 and the reflection this had on the receding republic. As we move past the end of the Roman Republic, we come to an exploration of the Mithraic cult and their microcosmic caves as well as Seneca's *Medea* and questions of morality. As we come closer to the end of the Roman Empire, we look into how Pagan polytheism influenced Christian Canon and traditions along with an investigation into Constantine's attempts to combine Paganism with Christianity. With the end of the Roman period, we begin an analysis of Crusading doctrine and how Cluny influenced this, as well as how the first crusade was able to exploit internal weakness in the Muslim world during their war. This journal ends with an article that neatly brings us full circle by looking at modern discourse on ways of seeing Classical art as the passive or active object.

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# Pompeiian Prostitutes and a Brothel

## Brie Mayo

The archaeological evidence found in Pompeii suggests the presence of prostitution, but where their business was conducted can be contested. A concrete definition of what constitutes a "prostitute" is necessary for identifying their probable number and prevalence in Pompeii. Thomas McGinn suggests that a prostitute must conform to three criteria: have multiple sexual partners, receive payment for their services, and have an emotional indifference to their clients. [1] Roman authors, specifically Ulpian, were not as strict in their definitions of prostitution, as his definition is in reference to the Augustan marriage reforms. Ulpian mostly bases the label of promiscuity on the woman's involvement, where payment matters less, and defining emotions play no part at all. [2] It can also be assumed here that Ulpian cares more for the policing of the Roman *matrona* image rather than giving a strict definition of a general prostitute. I suggest that Pompeii had one intentional brothel where more than one prostitute worked, however that does not mean that prostitution was limited to only this place. Prostitution also existed in other locations around the city where sex work was not its main function of the building. I argue this in three ways; that Pompeii only has one house that currently fits the definition above, that the other locations where prostitution was practiced were more prevalent, and that the theory of demographic counting should be acknowledged but questioned.

It is quite difficult to identify purpose-built brothels from antiquity, but there can be a few identifiers including a bed, prevalent sexual art, and graffiti of a sexual nature. [3] In order to assess the number of brothels, one must find a suitable definition. McGinn defines a brothel as an establishment where two or more prostitutes work simultaneously in a building where this is their main function. [4] Women (and sometimes men) worked in these brothels, a place that Thomas McGinn and Mary Beard describe as having masonry beds, prevalent erotic art, and graffiti surrounding sex. [5] This definition excludes other scholars' hypothesized Pompeiian brothels which left out some of these requirements. This leaves one building, the *lupanarium,* as the sole fit for this specific definition. The *lupanarium* found in Regio VII has five rooms with masonry beds, a hallway covered in explicit depictions of sexual acts, and over one hundred examples of graffiti, many pertaining to the nature of business conducted there. It is necessary to clarify that the sheer amount of these requirements is important, not just an appearance of one or two instances. Alison Cooley outlines a few examples of graffiti found in the *lupanarium* that highlight the purpose of the room, specifically in regard to the sexual acts that allegedly took place there. [6] Her examples include a piece of graffito that uses the Latin word for "here" implying that a sexual act allegedly happened in this place. Franklin denotes the use of both Latin and Greek writing in this building, suggesting not only locals took advantage of this business. [7]

Prostitution was not just limited to one building, since this type of sex work had many impermanent locations as well. Most notably are the *cellae meretriciae* and *caupona*. The former is a term used to describe a room located off a back alley that housed a single masonry bed but was not found with much sexually explicit art or many examples of graffiti. *Caupona* references the inns and taverns which may have been a place where prostitution occurred, but it failed McGinn's requirement for a purpose-built brothel. It is also important to note that according to the Victorian tradition, if an image of sexual nature was found in a house, it was automatically classified as a place where prostitution occurred. [8] There are many instances of these buildings in Pompeii, far more than ones which resemble the *Lupanarium.*

Finally, demographic counting is a technique where the total population is used to assume the number of brothels that is reasonable for an area. This is prevalent in McGinn's work, where he uses this technique to assess the numbers previous scholars have estimated. He uses a popular estimation of Pompeii's population of around twelve thousand residents and the most extreme number of suggested brothels at 35. He compares this to Rome, which had around half of a million to one million people and only 45 suspected brothels, concluding that this high of a number in Pompeii does not make much sense. [9] The incorporation of Roman roads around Pompeii would also bring in travellers and visitors, who would use the facilities of prostitutes and would not have been counted in the demographic technique, potentially skewing the data. [10]

[1] McGinn, *The Economy of Prostitution in the Roman World: A Study of Social History & the Brothel*, 7.
[2] McGinn, 7-8.
[3] Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, 106-111.
[4] McGinn, 9.
[5] Beard, *The Fires of Vesuvius: Pompeii Lost and Found*, 237 and McGinn, 182-185.
[6] Cooley and Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook*, 111-112.
[7] Franklin, "Games and a Lupanar: Prosopography of a Neighborhood in Ancient Pompeii," 324.
[8] McGinn, 182-186.
[9] McGinn, 167-177.
[10] McGinn, 167-168.

Overall, the *Lupanarium* is the only location excavated so far that fits with McGinn's definition of what constitutes a brothel. *Cellae meretriciae* and *caupona* were more commonly used to harbour prostitutes' transactions as there were more of them in Pompeii. And lastly, demographic counting demonstrates that there were most likely fewer purpose-built brothels in Pompeii, than previously thought by scholars, in regard to the population.

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# Barbariores:
## Exploring the Monotonous Representation of Nomads and Nomadism in Roman Literature and Beyond

### Stone Chen

The onomatopoeic concept of "barbarian" (la. *Barbarus*; gr. *Βάρβαρος*) was often applied in an ostensibly impartial manner to all foreign nations in Classical contexts. Herodotus famously described the Persians as *barbaroi*, but he also labelled "all the tribes of Asia" on equal terms while implicitly recognizing the designation as based primarily on one's tongue rather than descent. [1] In Latin sources, *barbarus* could refer to Persians, Phoenicians, Phrygians, Thracians, Scythians, Parthians, Carthaginians, Gauls, Britons, Germans, Africans, and any number of "tribes which had no Greek or Roman accomplishments," as *The Greek-English Lexicon (LSJ)* puts it.[2] This uniformity of perception, however, only exists on the surface; once given further scrutiny it becomes clear that there was a visible divide between the sedentary and the nomadic, with the former receiving more detailed and nuanced literary treatments than the latter whose collective (as opposed to individual) portrayal was remarkably monotonous and often negative. The once popular trope of casting the nomadic Scythians as the 'Noble Savage' does not contradict said monotony; if anything, these paternalistic attempts at romanticizing nomadic life only reinforced existing stereotypes and must not be taken at face value. When nomadism was not outright derided, it was extracted for moralistic inspirations that often resulted in the elevation of values and the relegation of peoples. The mountainous kingdom of Bhutan has been praised and admired as the world's happiest country, yet few would give up their present way of life for a happier alternative in the Himalayas. [3] Likewise, those who self-servingly praised the Scythians likely had no interest in leaving their comfortable confines for isolated asceticism. It is the ideas as well as the values entailed in those ideas that receive the praise. This paper addresses the representation of various 'barbarian' nomads in Roman sources and beyond, from the late Republic to the doorstep of late antiquity, to highlight their distinction from other sedentary 'barbarians' and illustrate their consistently monotonous perception through analyses of classical and post-classical texts.

It should first be pointed out that the nomenclature 'barbarian' had a complicated history of transmission and adaptation between the Greeks and the Romans. For instance, pioneering Latin authors such as Plautus were receptive to identifying Latin as the barbarian tongue and Latium as the barbarian country, a designation Cato later sternly condemned. [4] The complexity of the usage of 'barbarian' must therefore be acknowledged, although it will not be a primary object of discussion in this paper in the interests of brevity.

To begin the exploration of nomadic representation, let us first consider that aforementioned list of eligible candidates for 'barbarians.' With two exceptions, the Scythians and Africans, all of them can be described as belonging to a sedentarist (or at least semi-sedentarist) society that engaged in some kind of agricultural activities. The extent of sedentarism varied, ranging from prosperous metropolises supported by intensive networks of canals and irrigation ditches to humble hillforts surrounded by a few earthen ramparts and timber gateways. It would seem counterintuitive to a modern observer to apply the term "barbarian" so indiscriminately, but many ancient authors saw no logical gap here and were able to justify their unifying narrative often through a moralizing account.

The essence of such accounts are that the level of one's material well-being and human development is irrelevant to their moral characters and that there is often a positive correlation between wealth and moral degradation. The exotic extravagance of the Persians and other Eastern kingdoms, and licentiousness of Egyptian pharaohs (e.g., Cleopatra), by the time of Augustus become common motifs in contemporary literature. Less recognized is the depiction of non-Eastern groups under comparable terms, particularly the Gauls who were frequently portrayed as gold-bearing, a common sign of luxury. Whereas the interpretation of *Aeneid* 8.675-731, in which Virgil associated the Gauls with gold and golden objects, is subject to debate, there are less dubious examples from historical treatises. Diodorus Siculus, for instance, was quick to point out the abundance of gold when treating a broadly ethnographic digression on the Gauls.

[1] Herodotus, *Histories*, 1.58ff; cf. Aeschylus, *Persians,* 255; Recognizing: Herodotus, 2.158.5: "βαρβάρους δὲ πάντας οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι καλέουσι τοὺς μὴ σφίσι ὁμογλώσσους", "The Egyptians call all men of other languages barbarians."
[2] Phrygians: Catullus, *Carmina,* 64.264; Virgil, *Aeneid,* 11.777; Persians: Cicero, *In Verrem,* 2.3.76; Curtius, *Histories of Alexander the Great,* 3.11.16; Phoenicians: Nepos, *Cimon,* 2.3; Thracians: Nepos, *Alcibiades,* 7.4; Parthians: Tacitus, *Annals,* 2.2. Carthaginians: Nepos, *Timoleon,* 1.1. Gauls: Livy, *History of Rome,* 6.42. Britons: Tacitus, *Annals,* 14.3; Germans: Tacitus, *History,* 4.29; Africans: Suetonius, *Galba,* 7; The quotation: Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. "βάρβαρος."
[3] Zurick, "Gross National Happiness and Environmental Status in Bhutan," 657; cf. popular media coverage, Hetter, "World's 10 Happiest Countries in 2016."
[4] Plautus, *Miles Gloriosus,* 2.2.58; *Asinaria*, Prologue 11; Cato: Pliny, *Natural History,* 29.14.

> Throughout Gaul there is found practically no silver, but there is gold in great quantities, which Nature provides for the inhabitants without their having to mine for it or to undergo any hardship. For the rivers, as they course through the country, having as they do sharp bends which turn this way and that and dashing against the mountains which line their banks and bearing off great pieces of them, are full of gold-dust. This is collected by those who occupy themselves in this business, and these men grind or crush the lumps which hold the dust, and after washing out with water the earthy elements in it they give the gold-dust over to be melted in the furnaces. In this manner they amass a great amount of gold, which is used for ornament not only by the women but also by the men. For around their wrists and arms they wear bracelets, around their necks heavy necklaces of solid gold, and huge rings they wear as well, and even corselets of gold. [5]

Aside from the unusual appearance of the word "gold" six times within three sentences, note also the way he introduces the excess of Gallic gold with a contrast to the scarcity, if not deprivation, of silver. This calls to mind the juxtaposition of gold and silver from Virgil who was writing roughly one generation after Diodorus. Virgil records that "This land has also streams of silver and mines of copper to show in her veins, and gold flows profusely in her rivers." [6] Virgil's *Georgics* 2.136-176 has been interpreted as belonging to a long-standing literary tradition of praising Italy, or *laudes Italiae*. In light of that quasi-patriotic framework, even the Gauls' seemingly banal display of decorative gold was relegated to an inferior position due to the perceived lack of moderation. [7] One could say, had Italy itself been blessed with "gold in great quantities," the subsequent *laudes Italiae* might be focusing on very different characteristics.

Therefore, the unifying feature of 'barbarians' in these moralizing accounts, apart from the obvious fact that they did not speak Latin or Greek, is the perceived lack of Roman virtue, especially *temperantia*. [8] With an attitude reminiscent of that of a Cynic, the Moralist would agree with Diogenes of Sinope that one does not need to possess material wealth in order to be virtuous, nor does privation guarantee a virtuous life. [9] The Great Kings of Persia and the unrefined Celtic tribesmen suffer from the same disease: excess and immoderation. Nevertheless, ancient authors were occasionally willing to look beyond such linear storytelling and find other grounds for more positive depictions, sometimes for political reason (e.g., the somewhat awkward affirmation of Cleopatra in Horace's *Odes* 1.37), sometimes for the simple fact that the authors were not oblivious to the many outstanding achievements of the Egyptians, the Persians, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians. In short, Roman sources generally exhibited a range of more nuanced and less linear views when treating the sedentary "barbarians."

Noticeably missing from the discussion so far are those who did not lead a sedentary life, those who lived in "a well-developed world of nomadic and semi-nomadic tribes." [10] What did the moralizing authors have to say about these outliers? Before a survey of accounts can be given, it is worth defining and distinguishing what is meant by "nomads." The Greek word νομάς (pl. Νομάδες) for nomad came from νομός, meaning pasture; but this etymology can be deceiving, because not all nomads are pastoral. [11] The entrenched impression of nomads as horse-riding, wagon-dwelling, prairie-roaming herdsmen fails to take into account millions of nomadic and semi-nomadic hunter-gatherers, many of whom, it should be added, still adhere to their traditional way of living. [12] Instead, here a nomad is defined as any individual belonging to non-sedentary communities, regardless of their location or means of subsistence.

For the sake of simplicity, the nomads of concern in this paper may be divided into two groups by geographical distribution: (1) the Steppe nomads of central and northern Eurasia and (2) the desert nomads of North Africa and Arabia. Both groups mainly consisted of pastoralists who practiced transhumance but there were also non-pastoral presences. In classical ethnography these groups were usually known through collective and, as we shall see, often inaccurate ethnonyms such as the Scythians, the Cimmerians, the Massagetae, the Libyans, and the Berbers. [13]

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[5] Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History,* 5.27.

[6] Virgil, *Georgics,* 2.136-176.

[7] Houghton, "Salve, Magna Parens: Virgil's Laudes Italiae in Renaissance Italy and Beyond," 180.

[8] One of the four main virtues of the ancient Romans meaning temperance and self control.

[9] Adamson, *Philosophy in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds*, 10-16.

[10] Momigliano, *Studies in Historiography*, 96.

[11] Liddel and Scott, s.v. "νομάς."

[12] That impression is reflected in *Brill's New Pauly* by Brentjes, "Nomads," which characterizes them as "wandering shepherds"; for information on modern hunter-gatherers see Burger and Fristoe, "Hunter-gatherer Populations Inform Modern Ecology," 1137-9.

[13] The etymology of the ethnonym "Berbers" is a curious one. Despite an ostensible connection to Greek βάρβαροι, as seen in Schoff, *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*, 2, 5-7, 12, 25. some have argued for a later Arabic origin, notably Ibn Khaldūn.

Among the first group of steppe nomads, the Scythians have received the most scholarly interest by far, in part due to a profusion of myths surrounding their casted role of the 'Noble Savage' and the counter-myths of the 'Ignoble Savage.' [14] The earliest advocate of the Noble Savage myth seems to be the fourth century BCE historian Ephorus; but generations before him, certain aspects of that myth were already espoused by the playwrights Aeschylus and Sophocles. [15] The myth's essence lies in glorifying the Scythians as moral exemplars of leading a virtuous, thrifty, and modest life. However, it is critical to emphasize that this myth is predicated primarily on the natural environment and physical geography of Scythia, a cold and snowy northern land with wide watercourses and seemingly boundless grasslands, rather than the nomadic lifestyle of its inhabitants. Consider, for example, Virgil's *Georgics* 3.339-83:

> Far otherwise is it where dwell the tribes of Scythia by the waters of Maeotis, where the turbid Danube tosses his yellow sands, and where Rhodope bends back, stretching up to the central pole. There they keep the herds penned up in stalls, and no blade is seen upon the plain, or leaf upon the tree; but far and wide earth lies shapeless under mounds of snow and piles of ice, rising seven cubits high. 'Tis ever winter; ever Northwest blasts, with icy breath. Then, too, never does the Sun scatter the pale mists, either when, borne on his chariot, he climbs high heaven, or when he laves his headlong car in Ocean's crimson plain. Sudden ice crusts form on the running stream, and anon the water bears on its surface iron-bound wheels – giving welcome once to ships, but now to broad wains! Everywhere brass splits, clothes freeze on the back, and with axes they cleave the liquid wine; whole lakes turn into a solid mass, and the rough icicle hardens on the unkempt beard. No less, meanwhile, does the snow fill the sky; the cattle perish, the oxen's great frames stand sheathed in frost, the deer in crowded herd are numb under the strange mass and above it scarce rise the tips of their horns. These they hunt not by unloosing hounds, or laying nets, or alarming with a scare of the crimson feather, but as their breasts vainly strain against that mountain rampart men slay them, steel in hand, cut them down bellowing piteously, and bear them home with loud shouts of joy. Themselves, in deep-dug caves, low in the earth, they live careless and at ease, rolling to the hearths heaps of logs, whole elm trees, and throwing them on the fire. Here they spend the night in play, and with barm and sour service berries joyously mimic draughts of wine. Such is the race of men lying under the Wain's seven stars in the far north, a wild race, buffeted by the Riphaean East Wind, their bodies clothed in the tawny furs of beasts.[16]

In this archetypical passage which encompasses nearly all key elements of the Noble Savage myth, we observe intimate connections between Scythia's physical environment and the Scythian virtues that Virgil deemed praiseworthy (or at least respectable). The repeated mention of climatic conditions such as "cold," "far," "snow," and "ice" is, on the one hand, a predictable component of ethnographic writing, but also an implicit recognition that these conditions are an integral part of the myth—rigid natural conditions help shape rigid human conditions, so to speak. On a related note, it is worth drawing a comparison to the tradition of environmental determinism embraced by some ancient authors, most notably Hippocrates, who proposed a theory linking one's physical appearance and ethnic traits to natural conditions of the environment in which they inhabited. [17] Here again, climate is seen as *the* determinant, and nomadism simply a result:

> There live those Scythians which are called Nomades, because they have no houses, but live in wagons. The smallest of these wagons have four wheels, but some have six; they are covered in with felt, and they are constructed in the manner of houses, some having but a single apartment, and some three; they are proof against rain, snow, and winds. The wagons are drawn by yokes of oxen, some of two and others of three, and all without horns, for they have no horns, owing to the cold. In these wagons the women live, but the men are carried about on horses, and the sheep, oxen, and horses accompany them; and they remain on any spot as long as there is provender for their cattle, and when that fails they migrate to some other place. They eat boiled meat, and drink the milk of mares, and also eat hippace, which is cheese prepared from the milk

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[14] For a survey on cultural depictions of the Scythians, see Johnson, "The Scythian: His Rise and Fall," 250-7. For specific aspects of the Noble Savage myth, see Lovejoy, Boas, Albright, and Dumont, *A Documentary History of Primitivism and Related Ideas*. For a more comprehensive treatment of the Ignoble Savage, see Meek, *Social Science and the Ignoble Savage*.

[15] Johnson, 252. cf. Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound,* 700-759; Sophocles in Athenaeus, *Deipnosophists,* 5.189.
[16] Virgil, *Georgics,* 3.339-83.
[17] Hippocrates, "On Airs, Waters, and Places," 18.

of the mare. Such is their mode of life and their customs. [18]

Despite Hippocrates preceding Virgil by nearly four centuries and writing in a completely different genre, it is not difficult to detect quite a number of parallels: the snow, the coldness, the wagon-driving oxen, the wheels, the easily perishable cattle, and so on. The "drinking the milk of mares" is another recurring motif that traced its origin back to Hesiod and would in due course be reversed by disciples of the Ignoble Savage myth.[19]

Meanwhile nomadism, as exemplified mostly through the physical image of the wagons, is rather circumstantial to the myth-building. It is portrayed as a supplementary trait of the Noble Savage because nomadism per se is not worthy of much praise. The only instance of admiration expressed explicitly towards a nomadic lifestyle is found in Horace, *Odes* 3.24 where the author states that "Scythian nomads on the Steppes, whose wagons duly drag their wand'ring homes along, live better lives…" [20] As "one of the foremost admirers of the Scythian way of life," Horace's account is somewhat unique in that it bypasses the standard fixation on natural conditions as the starting point of an ethnographic narrative and directly launches into an account of human conditions. [21] But does this break with tradition make his representation of the nomads less monotonous? One must bear in mind that *Odes* 3.24 centered around long-standing themes such as the futility of wealth and the necessity of moral education, rather than some proto-Enlightenment appeals to liberty and primitive egalitarianism. The purpose of invoking nomadic Scythians as "the good ones" was clearly to draw as sharp a contrast as possible against the moral corruptions displayed by Rome — a point also testified by his use of comparative adjectives. In that respect, Horace's praise of nomadism is not so much a praise of nomads in their own rights as a calculated provocation aimed at his audience of upper-class Roman elites. Here the Scythians are still depicted with an inescapable halo of mythic exoticism; the only major difference is that Horace was bold enough to add nomadic life to that list of praiseworthy characteristics (even if his understanding of nomadic life on the steppe was inaccurate). Consequently, *Odes* 3.24 need not be treated as an exception to the consistently monotonous representation of Steppe nomads as fearsome barbarians whose remoteness makes a convenient motif for moralizing. The passage reflected Horace's capability of making creative use of ethnographic devices but his creative scope was still limited to the Noble Savage myth.

Were there any exceptions to this typecasting? There were certainly individuals who managed to break the stereotype, notably the semi-legendary Scythian philosopher Anacharsis, who was purported to be a learned man bearing admirations for Greek religions and customs. Although the storyteller himself came to the conclusion that much of his own tale was fabricated by the Greeks. [22] Later accounts of the story had him transformed into a kind of itinerant sage, who also happened to be both half-Greek and one of Solon's best friends, eventually joining the rank of the Seven Sages. [23] At any rate, the praises and approvals bestowed upon Anacharsis, who frequently acted as ignorant foils for the enlightened sage within the same narrative, are irrelevant to the representation of the Scythians as a whole.. This is confirmed by both Herodotus and several later accounts:

(1) Now the region of the Euxine upon which Dareios was preparing to march has, apart from the Scythian race, the most ignorant nations within it of all lands: for we can neither put forward any nation of those who dwell within the region of Pontus as eminent in ability, nor do we know of any man of learning having arisen there, apart from the Scythian nation and Anacharsis. [24]

(2) Beyond these is the barbaric Scythian land which borders the land unoccupied and unknown to all the Greeks… They live with their possessions and all their intercourse displayed in common to all. And they say the wise man Anacharsis came from the most vehemently pious of the Nomadics. [25]

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[18] Hippocrates, 18.
[19] Hesiod, *Idaean Dactyls,* 1.16-75 in Evelyn-White.; Reversal of the myth: Orosius, *Seven Books of History Against the Pagans,* 1.4. "Scythicamque barbariem… et non lacte iam pecudum sed sanguinem hominum bibere."
[20] Horace, "Odes," 3.24.

[21] Johnson, 252; Ethnographical tradition: Thomas, "Lands and Peoples in Roman Poetry: The Ethnographical Tradition," 186-9.
[22] Herodotus, 4.46, 4.76-7.
[23] Diogenes Laërtius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers,* 1.101-5; Plutarch, *Banquet of the Seven Sages,* 1.
[24] Herodotus, 4.46.
[25] Pseudo-Scymnus, *Circuit of the Earth,* 820-59.

(3) The Scythians wander up and down their own country; but Anacharsis, being a wise man, extended his travels farther: for he came into Greece, and Solon admired him. [26]

These should provide ample proof that the celebration of individual members from nomad communities had little to do with breaking the monotony of their collective representation. In fact, a modern reader may rightly point out such celebration as a form of cultural appropriation.

If the Greco-Roman portrayal of northern Steppe nomads epitomized by the Scythians is monotonous, then the representation of North African desert nomads is even flatter because the nomads roaming the interior of Libya, Numidia, and Mauretania were even more alien to the Romans. The extent of such unfamiliarity was neatly captured by the historian Sallust, who had been appointed governor of the newly created province of Africa Nova when he said, "All the Moors were ruled by king Bocchus, who knew nothing of the Roman people save their name and was in turn unknown to us before that time wither in peace or in war." [27]

In stark contrast to the ambivalent attitudes most authors maintained towards the Scythians, Sallust had little positive to say about his nomadic subjects. Of particular interest are his thoughts on nomadism, devoid of their idealized sugar-coats and romanticized mystical appeal. Whereas the Scythians had received affirmative, even admiring words for wandering the wilderness, the Moors, the Gaetulians, the Numidians, the Maesullians, the Nasamones, and more than a dozen other vaguely identified tribes had no such luck, as exemplified by Sallust: [28]

(1) Africa was at first inhabited by Gaetulians and Libyans, rough and uncivilized folk, whose food was the flesh of wild animals and fodder of the ground, like cattle's. They were governed neither by institutions nor laws nor by anyone's authority; aimless drifters, they had as their stopping points whatever spot night forced upon them. [29]

(2) This scarcity of water was the more readily endured both there and in all Africa where the people live a less civilized existence far from the sea because the Numidians consumed chiefly milk and game and sought neither salt nor other stimulants of the palate. [30]

Here, instead of being an integral part of some commendable legends, the nomadic way of life is depicted as lawless and ungovernable, which is to say, not only at odds with the enduring Greco-Roman ideal of the rule of law but also posing practical difficulties for enforcing Roman control on the ground. [31] The fact that a virtually identical practice could provoke sharply dissimilar reactions is further proof that the eulogizing and mythologizing telling of the Steppe nomads has little to do with appreciating their *ethos* in its own right.

One can only speculate whether Sallust's opinion of the nomads was negatively affected by being in close proximity to them, just as Ovid's exile to Scythia disenchanted him from any romantic illusions with its inhabitants. Indeed, there were some less-disparaging accounts on desert nomads, notably in *Georgics* 3.339-48 where they appeared alongside the Scythians as models of praiseworthy barbarians, but these were the exceptions rather than the standard. Sallust's equation of nomadism with lawlessness calls to mind a more familiar pattern found in late antique nomadic ethnographic writings; compare, for instance, Ammianus Marcellinus' rather unsavory report on the Huns:

But although they have the form of men, however ugly, they are so hardy in their mode of life that they have no need of fire nor of savory food, but eat the roots of wild plants and the half-raw flesh of any kind of animal whatever, which they put between their thighs and the backs of their horses, and thus warm it a little… no one in their country ever plows a field or touches a plow-handle. They are all without fixed abode, without hearth, or law, or settled mode of life, and keep roaming from place to place, like fugitives, accompanied by the wagons in which they five; in wagons their wives weave for them their hideous garments, in wagons they cohabit with their husbands, bear children, and rear them to the age of puberty. None of their offspring, when asked, can tell you where he comes from, since he was conceived in one place, born far from

[26] Aelian, "Varia Historia", 5.7.
[27] The province was created in 46 BCE from the recently annexed Kingdom of Numidia. Sallust, *Jugurthine War,* 19.7.
[28] All were classical designations of various Berber tribes; cf. Khaldūn, *Histoire des Berbères et des dynasties musulmanes de l'Afrique septentrionale*.

[29] Sallust, *The War with Jugurtha,* 18.1-2, ed. Ramsey.
[30] Sallust, *The War with Jugurtha,* 89.7, ed. Ramsey.
[31] cf. Aristotle, *Politics,* 3.16; Cicero, *Pro Cluentio,* 53.146.

there, and brought up still farther away. [32]

One may draw two further deductions based on the similarity between this passage and Sallust's treatment of desert nomads. First, one's attitude towards nomadism seems to be shaped, if not determined, by their physical distance and psychological exposure to the nomads. [33] Secondly, one's view of the nomads also seems to be shaped by the degree of their perceived threats to contemporary political order, to say nothing of the ideological menace nomadism poses to the agricultural backbone of any agrarian societies. The Scythians were capable of being venerated as the Noble Savage partly because they posed no tangible threats to those who wrote approvingly of them. Whereas the Berbers and the Huns were not only major threats (in the case of the Huns, an existential one) to regional peace and imperial authority, but they were often quite successful in challenging and supplanting said peace and authority. The Berbers presented a constant threat to the coastal towns and cities along the African shore, and effectively took control over much of Mauretania and Libya when Roman hold over the territory began slipping away in the middle of the third century CE; while the spoils of the Huns at the expense of Roman defeats and humiliations were all too well-known.

This peculiar blend of fear, antipathy, and occasionally a pinch of admiration was not an exclusively Roman phenomenon. Two millennia before Virgil, Horace, and Sallust were expressing their respect, approval, and disgust for the nomads, sedentary dwellers of Mesopotamia had already voiced their opinion through a story, in which relatives of a young girl attempted to persuade her against marrying a wandering shepherd. "Martu … is a tent-dweller, blown here and there by wind and rain, he does not know prayer, he does not know grain … Martu knows no house or town, he is a mountain dweller, who roots for truffles like a pig … who does not bend his knees to cultivate the land, he is an eater of raw meat, he has no house in his lifetime, and is not brought to burial when he dies." [34] The account should be familiar enough that substituting "Martu" with "the Scythian" or "the Moor" would hardly strike as incongruent.

As this paper has demonstrated, the indiscriminate use of the designation "barbarian" in classical ethnography can be misleading, because Rome's treatments of sedentary foreigners and peripatetic nomads were very different. Whereas subtlety and neutrality were more frequently observed in accounts written on sedentary peoples (especially of the Near East), they became rare in reports and narratives on the nomads. Besides the obvious rationale that the Romans simply possessed more knowledge about their sedentary neighbours and were able to draw from a wider range of textual sources, the perceived alienness and exoticness of nomadic lifestyle in contrary to the values and expectations of an agricultural society also played a defining role in shaping the depiction of nomads. This combination of unfamiliarity and fear of the unknown then manifested itself in literary forms, with the contemporary state of affairs often influencing authors' attitudes. While in peacetime the nomads' remoteness from the "civilized world" made them a convenient model of romanticized moralizing, that romanticism dissipated under less peaceful circumstances. Hence the same tribe of nomads might find themselves represented in sharply contrasting terms, from austere devotees of a simplistic life to barbarous cannibals hell-bent on destroying civilizations. But the core of this alleged polarity of depictions remains the same, monotonous formula—a consistent scheme of self-serving moralism which did not see the nomads as characters deserving appreciation but as ones inviting appropriation.

While classical scholars generally have no problem accepting the Greco-Roman representations of sedentary 'barbarians' as prejudiced, the same cannot be said about the nomads. [35] To think that modern people have successfully overcome the errors made by the ancients is not only condescending, but also false if anything, the dissemination of the Darwinian theory of biological evolution and the Marxist theory of stages of social development has further reinforced the image of the nomads (especially hunter-gatherers) as 'merely better than primates' in popular imagination. It is probably time to systematically re-evaluate the *barbariores*, the more barbarian of the barbarians, in the same way that the case for Persian and Egyptian 'barbarians' have been re-examined.

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[32] Marcellinus, *History,* 31.2.3; 2.10.
[33] Johnson, 253: "It would appear that the Scythian's reputation as a Noble Savage was directly proportional to his distance from the centers of Hellenic civilization."
[34] Shaw, "Fear and Loathing: The Nomad Menace and Roman Africa," 25-46.
[35] Shaw, 27.

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**Avian Accompaniment and Feathered Fortunes:**
**Birds in Religion and Magic**

Michelle Serrano-Sandoval

The use of birds in ancient Greece and Rome varied between purposes, but birds were perceived as messengers for the gods with somewhat divine powers of their own and were therefore used in magic and religious ceremony. An examination of how birds were associated with gods and how they were used in sacrificial ritual, as well as the types of birds used in these rituals, can create insight into how ancient Greek and Roman societies used these birds as divine messengers and also how they fit into a hierarchy of religious use. In contrast, the use of birds in magical practices such as divination and the interpretation of omens reveals another side of ancient practice related to avian activities. This paper will seek to answer how the use of birds differed between magical and religious rituals in ancient Greek and Roman practices and what this may reveal about these societies' beliefs and their use of hierarchy in magic and religion. An analysis of modern archaeological data and ancient sources such as the Greek Magical Papyri and Aristophanes' *The Birds* reiterates that there were many myths and beliefs surrounding birds and that different types of birds were preferred for various rituals, magical and religious.

Ancient Greek and Roman mythology form a basis for their belief systems and since their religious practices were polytheistic, this created a wide network of gods and goddesses with various associations and epithets. Many of the Greek and Roman gods were associated with birds and were depicted using bird symbolism. One notable example is Zeus' association with the eagle in both Greek and Roman contexts, which in some cases also involved the eagle representing the sun. [1] The eagle earned the title *rex avium,* king of birds, because of its high-flying abilities and its connections with Zeus, the god of gods. [2] This status is also demonstrated in Aristophanes' play *The Birds,* when Euelpides convinces Pithetaerus that birds were once treated as royalty and says that "the strongest and clearest of proofs is that Zeus who at present is Lord of the sky stands wearing, as royalty's emblem and badge, an eagle erect on his head." [3] The play includes many other references to the relationship between birds and gods and is an example of a primary source that further suggests that birds played an important role in ancient Greek religious practices as this relationship is featured in a popular form of entertainment. The basis of the play revolves around establishing a city in the sky in order to ensure that the bird kingdom creates a buffer between Heaven and Earth, thus reinforcing the idea that birds were the gods' messengers. The eagle's high status among birds demonstrates the avian hierarchy that existed within religious practice, and the eagle would not have been a likely sacrifice when compared to roosters, chickens, and other more common livestock birds. This regal status may have come from the eagle's literal ability to soar above many other types of birds, thus creating a closer connection to the gods.

Athena's association with the owl is another example of these divine connections with birds. The owl is attributed to Pallas Athena, its glowing eyes, ability to see in the dark, and remain awake at night were the main indications of the owl's supernatural powers. [4] In one instance, it is recorded that the Athenians credited their victory over the Persians at the battle of Marathon in 490 BC to Athena flying over them in battle in the guise of an owl. [5] This symbolic representation of the owl is an example of the beliefs surrounding birds in an ancient Greek context by presenting a situation where victory was obtained by combining divine power and the bird's supernatural presence. Since the gods were prevalent in most aspects of life, it is not surprising to see how birds were present in the worship of gods and how these relationships were integrated in religious beliefs.

Much like the gods, birds were also commonplace in ancient life, and the use of birds in sacrifice and other religious ceremonies also demonstrates the previously mentioned hierarchy of birds within these practices. Birds associated with gods have been addressed, but there were also birds that were used to appease gods in ancient Greek and Roman religious rituals. Many rituals were present in both Greek and Roman contexts, and the rituals could be modified and adapted to various occasions and circumstances. [6] On a smaller scale, archaeological evidence suggests

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[1] Rowland, *Birds with Human Souls: A Guide to Bird Symbolism,* 51.
[2] Rowland, 54.
[3] Aristophanes, *The Birds,* 514-515.

[4] Rowland, 116.
[5] Rowland, 116.
[6] Ekroth, "Animal Sacrifice in Antiquity."

that the remains of burnt chicken bones found in Roman homes could be indicators that the meat was being offered to household *Lares*, which might also suggest that sacrificial killings happened on a domestic level as well. [7] These domestic sacrifices are consistent with larger scale sacrifices that occurred in public places, usually on an altar, and included the sacrificial animal being eaten after the sacrifice.[8] The fact that domestic practices were taking place with common chickens, and the lack of chicken-god associations indicates that chickens were on a lower level on this avian hierarchy than the aforementioned eagle or owl. Why is this?

One can deduce that chickens may have been ranked lower because of their inability to fly. One of the main reasons some birds were revered for their divine connections was because of their closeness to the gods, or in other words, their ability to fly. Chickens were also commonly used as food, and since a sacrifice was often eaten after it had been burned, eating a sacred bird may not have been common practice (or very practical in regard to taste) and killing a totem animal was generally avoided. [9] Interestingly, Pliny writes that ravens, although revered as companions to Apollo at Delphi, would also cause a pregnant woman to give birth through her mouth because of the belief that ravens conceived through their beaks. [10] Although this can arguably be more suited for a magical context, it still reiterates the common belief that (at least from a Roman perspective) birds held supernatural powers and had the ability to influence human behaviour in mythical ways. How birds interacted with humans in daily life can be seen as religious practice or magical rituals depending on the context. Normally the context can be reinforced by the hierarchy of birds in these practices and the bird that is appropriate for one situation may not be so for others.

One final example of the usage of birds in religious ritual are ceremonial pits containing crow and raven bones from the Iron Age and Roman Britain. First, it is important to note the duality of human relationships with ravens and crows in an ancient Roman context. Corvids, much like owls, were characterized by their intelligence, but also their ability to form close relationships with humans. [11] On the other hand, these relationships may act as companionships but may also have been driven by fear and a mistrust of the birds due to their depictions in myths. [12] With that in mind, research conducted by Serjeantson and Morris yielded interesting results when the Roman burials containing raven and crow remains on ancient Roman sites were found to be deliberate burials. [13] This raises questions about the purpose of the burials and, in this case, where the ravens and crows fit in with the bird hierarchy and what their spiritual purpose was. Admittedly, the evidence presented by this research can be interpreted in various ways.

For now, the focus will be centered on the religious possibilities that this research presents, and the uses of the burials for magic will be examined in a later paragraph. One hypothesis presented suggests that the corvids were not buried as offerings for the dead or the gods that would be met in the afterlife because ravens and crows were not food. [14] This hypothesis is consistent with the above-mentioned rituals involving chickens as sacrifices and food. Instead, the bones of corvids in this context were used to propitiate chthonic deities and prevent unfavourable outcomes because of their heavy association with underworld mythologies. [15] This implies that the role of birds as messengers for the gods extends not only to the heavens, but to the underworld as well and that this role is fulfilled even in death. The Roman burials, when interpreted through this perspective, further reveal the dual nature of crows and ravens and their relationship with humans and gods and how they connect humans and the divine.

In contrast to birds being used in religious practice, the ancient Greeks and Romans also exhibited many instances of using birds in magical rituals. On one hand, associating birds with divinity and using them as messengers was one way that humans and birds interacted in the ancient world, but interpreting these messages can arguably fall into a "magical" category. There are several areas that can be examined in the spectrum of magical practices, but emphasis will be placed on the use of birds in divination and interpreting omens based on bird behaviour and also how this relates back to the hypothetical pecking order of birds in ritual. The Greek Magical Papyri will also be examined to determine how birds were used in spells, charms, and other occult rituals in comparison to religious rites.

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[7] Ekroth.

[8] Ekroth.

[9] Serjeantson and Morris, "Ravens and Crows in Iron Age and Roman Britain," 102.

[10] Rowland, 145.

[11] Serjeantson and Morris, 99.

[12] Serjeantson and Morris, 99.

[13] Serjeantson and Morris, 99.

[14] Serjeantson and Morris, 102.

[15] Serjeantson and Morris, 102.

Ornithomancy, or divination using birds, was held in high prestige in the Classical world. [16] Once again, Aristophanes establishes the importance of bird activities in his play when the choir exclaims that "whene'er you of omen or augury speak, 'tis a bird you are always repeating; a rumour's a bird, and a sneeze is a bird… Your prophetic Apollo." [17] This line in the play reflects the ancient beliefs behind bird omens and prophecies and reiterates the fact that they were seen as reliable sources of telling what one's future would be. The art of reading bird behaviours in an ancient Greek context included reading flight paths, cries, and in some cases involved prey. [18] It is important to note that birds accompanying gods were also important in this context as well, and there is a clear hierarchy of birds, and gods in this case, that were traditionally associated with the practice of divination. This includes Zeus with the eagle, Apollo with the raven and crow, and Athena with the owl, hawk, and falcon. [19] Notably, most of the birds on this list are birds of prey, with the raven and crow being exceptions. These are most of the same birds that were mentioned in the above section on religion, however, this time their purpose is to aid in the magical realm. Roman practices were similar in that they used birds' flight patterns for divination, but there is an interesting contrast in the role of chickens in this case. As mentioned, chickens may have been sacrificed to household *Lares,* but some specially kept chickens were observed in their eating patterns in order to be used in divination. [20] Another example of the prestige held by ornithomancy would be the myth surrounding Rome's founding. More specifically, the use of bird divination in the tale of Remus and Romulus.

Livy writes that "An augural sign is said to have come first to Remus: six vultures. The augury had just been announced when double the number revealed themselves to Romulus. Each man was saluted as king by his own followers: one side based their claim on the grounds of priority of time, the other on the number of birds." [21] First, it is notable that the birds that appear to Remus and Romulus in this story are, once again, birds of prey. Why do birds of prey consistently appear to be associated with divination, and what about the two exceptions? Based on the information presented by the previous hierarchy in religious practice, birds of prey would fit into a natural hierarchy as well, with birds of prey being on top because of their ability to hunt other animals. There are many instances where birds are associated with divinity and royalty, and the bird of prey may also offer a nobler aesthetic than more common types of fowl. The birds of prey who are also able to fly higher in the sky may also have been depicted as being closer to the gods, and therefore offer more reliable insight on their divine will. As mentioned, this explains why the eagle was associated with Zeus and one can deduce that this stays consistent with other gods as well.

Looking back on the archaeological data collected on Roman burial sites, an explanation may also be offered for the ravens and crows. The religious purposes for the burials were mentioned above, but now an explanation that is consistent with the hypothesis for the bird's magical use will be examined. The birds' use as familiars in magical practice may explain the deliberate burials of ravens and crows in some Roman sites. [22] Since Apollo was heavily characterized by his prophecies, it would make sense for diviners to keep ravens as familiars and bury their remains when they passed. [23] Ravens featured heavily in myth and stories of heroes and often came in the form of a guide. A prominent example would be the tale of Alexander the Great and his encounter with ravens. Poseidippos' account details how Alexander the Great was led to three victories by consulting ravens. This demonstrates their use in divination. Likewise, ravens also fell dead at Alexander's feet upon his entrance to Babylon in 323. [24] This can be interpreted as an omen, whether good or bad is determined by the observer. In the case of Alexander the Great, the ravens were guides in his victories and their association to Apollo is consistent with their importance on the hierarchy. Apollo's prophetic connections therefore bring a symbolic meaning to the mythology surrounding ravens: they are prophetic birds commonly used in divination and omen interpretations because of this relationship with Apollo.

In contrast, birds used for magical purposes, as demonstrated in the Greek Magical Papyri, include many instances of common birds being used for practice. Often spells would call for the blood of birds being used in potions and other such paraphernalia. In one instance, in order to place a ring, one must "sacrifice an all-white goose, with no flecks [of color], and 3 roosters and 3 pigeons. Make these whole burnt offerings and burn, with the birds, all sorts of

[16] Struck, "Animals and Divination."
[17] Aristophanes, 722-723, 725.
[18] Struck.
[19] Struck.
[20] Struck.
[21] Livy, *History of Rome,* 1.6.3-1.7.3.
[22] Serjeantson and Morris, 100.
[23] Serjeantson and Morris, 100.
[24] Dillon, *Omens and Oracles: Divination in Ancient Greece*, 146-147.

incense." [25] Similar to the sacrifice presented in the religious context, the sacrifice in this case also uses common birds and requires specific birds to be used. Another spell for placing "a little ring for success and favour and victory" says to "have a live rooster with a double comb-either white or yellow; keep away from black- and after the consecration cut the rooster open and stick the [stone with its] image well into the guts of the rooster, taking care that the entrails of the animal be not broken." [26] Both instances use common sacrificial birds and are specific on the colour of the bird, as well. The avoidance of a black rooster may tie into the interpretation of bird omens and the dark colour may represent a bad omen instead of the success that the spell is attempting to conjure. Therefore, it is evident that even in magical practice a hierarchy is present, and it can be interpreted in a similar way as the religious bird hierarchy. Perhaps common birds were used because of their availability and abundance, but their presence in occult rituals reinforces that birds displayed supernatural powers and connections to divinity.

In religious contexts, we often see birds of prey being favoured as companions for gods, whereas in magic common species are used. What do the birds in religion and magic have in common? Associations with gods may have to do with the bird's physical capabilities that allow them to fly and hunt. In other words, their swift, unpredictable movements are what make them both favourable in a religious context but also as diviners and omens. By examining examples of birds in religion and magic, it becomes evident that birds display a duality within their own natures, such as in the example with the crows and ravens, but also within their equally important roles in religious and magical contexts. In a way, it seems as though beliefs surrounding birds can be interpreted as two sides of the same coin; they support each other. Ancient Greek and Roman societies valued birds as messengers for gods. This was evident in literature, myths, and other forms of traditions. However, interpreting these divine messages from birds can arguably be categorized as a form of magic. Divination, omens, and familiars all have connections to occult practices, but also to the understanding of the relationship between the divine and birds. This reveals an aspect of ancient societies where religious beliefs were closely intertwined with many aspects of life. The lines between religion and magic can be blurred in instances such as divination, but there is undoubtedly a hierarchy of bird connections with gods and how they are used in magic. The fact that birds are almost universally recognized for their associations with some form of supernatural power or being suggests that the recognition of birds' importance extends beyond ancient Greek and Roman contexts and into many other cultures.

By examining primary sources, there was a clear usage of birds in both religion and magic in ancient Greek and Roman practices. The differences between religion and magic and its avian accompaniment lies in what is described throughout this paper as a hierarchy within these rituals. Different types of birds were used for different applications depending on the context. Most notably, birds associated with gods in a religious context such as the eagle, owl, and corvids are less frequently used in sacrifice than their more common domestic counterparts. Aristophanes reinforces this high-flying status among regal birds in *The Birds* which also reinforces a message of divine association by portraying birds as divine messengers. Furthermore, ancient Roman ritual pits reveal that corvids were used in ceremonial burials that were used to propitiate chthonic deities, thus creating a duality to their nature as messengers. The role of birds in these ancient practices plays a similar role to that of the deities themselves, since the birds act as symbols for these gods, and they are consistently being called upon and sought after to deliver messages between gods and humans. Deciphering divine messages was a job for divination and often bird omens could reveal the will of gods. Birds used as familiars for gods indicate another way that the religious and occult worlds collided, since birds associated with gods would be more reliable sources of omens. On the other hand, the Greek Magical Papyri indicates that the bird of choice for strictly magical purposes was the commonly found fowl, possibly because of their prominence. Looking at ancient Greek and Roman practices involving birds reveals that they played an important role in both religion and magic and the diversity of birds was governed by a hierarchy that dictated what kind and even colour of bird was appropriate for the circumstances. They revealed a lot about individuals, including gods, kings, and the common people. Birds dominated with a supernatural presence and this made their high-flying abilities more than a simple feat of nature.

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[25] Betz et al. "PGM XII," 213-215.   [26] Betz et al., 311-315.

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# Medea:
## A Classical Malcontent of Fifth Century Athens

Elakkiya Sivakumaran

The reign of King James I in the early seventeenth century CE was defined by the King's shortcomings, such as his weakening relationships with his counsel, his failures in financial reforms, and his neglect of both the middle class and the nobility of England. As such, the citizens believed King James I was not equipped to be sovereign, especially compared to his predecessor Queen Elizabeth I, which made them feel disheartened and disenfranchised. [1] These citizens became a pivotal character in a new genre of Jacobean plays: the revenge tragedy. The people's embodiment of cynicism and pessimism was called the malcontent, a tragic anti-hero and morally ambiguous character who propagates the corrupt society through their actions and words. [2] This seventeenth century trope of the malcontent was not born in England during the Jacobean Period. In his tragedy *Medea*, Euripides reflects the political climate of fifth century Athens, mainly pertaining to their relationship with Corinth, the social reception of the Sophistic Enlightenment, and predominant Athenian values pertaining to government and culture through his own anti-hero or "classical" malcontent, Medea. He captures Athens' feelings of anger and the city's changes in political, social, and intellectual milieu with this malcontent, who is a symbol of societal hegemony in a fifth-century Greek world, that appears just as corrupt to Medea as to the Athenian audience of the time.

Euripides' play was performed in Athens at the Dionysia of 431 BCE, the same year that the Peloponnesian War began. Although scholars cannot attribute *one* reason for the start of this war, there are many possibilities that likely worked together. One of those reasons is the civil war between Corinth and Corcyra which occurred during the 430s, during which Athens sided with Corcyra instead of Corinth. As Thucydides notes, "this was the first cause of the war that Corinth had against the Athenians, viz. That they had fought against them with the Corcyraeans in time of treaty." [3] This led to increased tensions between Athens and the Peloponnesian states, such as Sparta, whom Corinth blamed for Athens' actions. [4] However, after hearing the pleas of both Corinthian and Athenian envoys, Sparta was persuaded by the former into believing that "the Athenians were open aggressors, and war must be declared at once".[5] As such, Athens was now very aware of how the Corinthians felt about them, and in turn had reason to feel hostile towards Corinth, which Euripides took advantage of in his play by setting it in that very state.

Medea represents the political climate of Athens during this time because she is a foreigner within the state who vigorously acts against it. The play begins with the nurse saying how she wishes the Argo had never sailed to Colchis, so that Medea would not have had to live in Corinth with her husband as an exile, [6] where now "their fine love's grown sick," [7] painting a rather pitiful picture of Medea's life in her new home. Medea reinforces this when she tries to persuade Creon into letting her stay in Corinth: "let me remain here, in this country. / Although i've suffered an injustice, / i'll obey the rulers and stay silent." [8] Medea clearly feels denigrated, alienated, and disadvantaged in Corinth, making her the malcontent in a corrupt state ruled by Creon. He is a synecdoche for Corinth, and Euripides uses Medea's rage against Creon (and his daughter) to depict the hostility between Athens and Corinth.

In contrast, Euripides shows Athens in a more positive light in the scene with Medea and Aegeus of Athens. When Medea asks Aegeus for help, he says to her, "I won't plot to get you out of Corinth. / If you can reach my household on your own, / you may stay there in safety." [9] Euripides positively shows Athens as a haven for Medea and a reliable ally who will not stir trouble or worsen the situation. This likely was Euripides' way of not only appeasing his Athenian audience, but also showing how in this cloudy political climate, the Athenian people believed they were a wise ally. This notion is also noted by Thucydides in the speech the Athenian envoys gave to Sparta: "if you are so ill-advised as to enter into a struggle with Athens, what sort of an antagonist she is likely to prove." [10] Euripides mimics this by using Aegeus to show that Athens is a nation which other states would want to ally with, not make an enemy out of. Medea, as the malcontent, only seeks Aegeus' help to escape punishment for her premeditated crimes. However, what turns her villainy into (anti-)heroism is that she is fighting for justice in a corrupt world. Her suppression by the patriarchy that is embodied by Jason and Creon, and subsequent decision to flee to Athens, reflects the Athenian audience's beliefs in their own political situation. They are on the "right" side of this impending war and

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[1] Best, "The reign of James I: A changing political climate," 4.
[2] Griswold, *Renaissance Revivals, 1576-1980*, 62.
[3] Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*, 1.55.2.
[4] Thucydides, 1.69.1.
[5] Thucydides, 1.79.2.

[6] Euripides, *Medea*, 15-17.
[7] Euripides, 22.
[8] Euripides, 368-370.
[9] Euripides, 862-864.
[10] Thucydides, 1.73.3.

seek to fight the suppression of Corinth who is trying to drag Sparta into the conflict. [11] Thus, Medea's choice in ally shows how Euripides' audience felt that being Athenian in and of itself was the "right" thing to be, especially while living in a corrupt Greek world where war was looming over them.

Medea's hatred towards the Corinthian nobility is also representative of the contrast in government between Athens and Corinth. Athenians of the fifth century were supportive of their government being a democracy so that citizens could partake in community decisions affecting everyone. Meanwhile, they also believed that a democracy was "better" than an oligarchy, such as Corinth. [12] Medea captures Athens' feelings of apprehension against the Corinthian oligarchy with her reaction to Jason, Creon, and the princess' unjust actions against her. Medea wants Jason and his wife "beaten down, destroyed—their whole house as well— / for these wrongs they dare inflict on me, / when i've done nothing to provoke them!" [13] Creon reinforces the injustice when he says to her, "I'm ordering you / out of Corinth. You must go into exile /… [because] I am afraid of you." [14] Tied with the princess' decision to marry an already married man, the Corinthian oligarchy is shown in a worse light when Creon exiles Medea without proper cause, something that would not have happened in democratic Athens where the citizens make the decisions, not just the rich and noble. Creon's rash behaviour and the princess' selfishness show oligarchic Corinth as an unjust and corrupt government. This reflects how Athens frowned upon oligarchic states; an attitude that continued during the Peloponnesian War, when Athens tended to ally with other democratic states and negatively associated oligarchic states with Sparta, who was also an oligarchy. [15] Markedly, in the play Athens is also shown as an oligarchy, that is ruled by Aegeus; but, this king's portrayal, as reliable and just, strongly contrasts with the portrayal of Creon. Euripides manipulates the mythological context of the play to satisfy his audience and show them that even under oligarchic rule, Athenians are better than Corinthians. Nevertheless, just with the existing tension between Athens and Corinth in 431 BCE, it would have been easy for Euripides to gain the favour of his audience by pointing out that Corinth is *not* a democracy, and showing the malcontent take down this lesser, more corrupt, form of government.

Notably, Medea's rage against the Corinthian nobility is incited by her husband leaving her for another woman, a clear violation of the sanctity of marriage, as well as Athenian social and cultural milieu. Medea alludes to this at the beginning of the play, when she laments to the chorus: "The person who was everything to me, / my own husband, has turned out to be / the worst of men." [16] She goes on to express the woes of being a wife and how death is preferable to having a dysfunctional marriage. [17] This correlates with Solon's familial laws, which were based on the cultural value of a permanent family and frowned upon adultery. [18] Thus, fifth-century Athenians, like Medea, would have valued a faithful and monogamous marriage. Moreover, Jason's dismissal of his love for his wife was also a violation of Solon's laws, as according to Plutarch, Solon "did not wish that marriage should be a matter of profit or price, but that man and wife should dwell together for the delights of love and the getting of children." [19] As such, Medea's betrayal is a personal and a public issue for the audience, and her abhorrent behaviour on the matter (i.e. Murdering Creon, his daughter, and her own sons) shows the corrupt nature of the society she is in. Her husband is corrupted by the idea of wealth and status, prompting him to marry a princess, so Medea fights this corruption with extreme retributive justice, as a malcontent is expected to do. She also enacts divine retribution for his oath breaking.

Jason, however, justifies his actions to Medea by saying that he married Creon's daughter to better the lives of their sons financially and socially. He says,

> The most important thing for us to do
> Is to live well and not in poverty…
> I wanted to… have children,
> Royal princes, with the same blood as my sons.
> That way my house has more security. [20]

His beliefs reflect a society with changing values. From 450-430 BCE, due to a feeling of uncertainty in Athens with war, invasions, and changing political ties, marriage became more of a means to gain Athenian social connections and monetary value instead of to gain external unions and land value. [21] Marriage was also a way of making alliances to

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[11] Thucydides, 1.73.1.
[12] Rhodes, "Ancient Athens: democracy and empire," 202, 211.
[13] Euripides, 192-194.
[14] Euripides, 315-316, 327.
[15] Rhodes, 211.
[16] Euripides, 260-262.

[17] Euripides, 280-281.
[18] Ehrenberg, *From Solon to Socrates.*, 57.
[19] Plutarch, "Solon," 20.4.
[20] Euripides, 664-665, 708-710.
[21] Cox, *Social and Political Ramifications*, 436.

avoid ostracization, or for one alliance to gain more power to ostracize an opponent, [22] which appears to be what Jason did once he had allied himself with the rulers of Corinth. This creates a world with conflicting beliefs concerning the sanctity of marriage, both for the characters in the play and for the audience of the time. Jason's second marriage is made more controversial because it appears opportunistic rather than incited by love as Solon encouraged. As such, Euripides placated his malcontent and perturbed audience by allowing Medea to uphold the traditional values of a monogamous marriage in fifth-century Athens. The only way Medea felt empowered in this disadvantaged world was to throw back what was thrown at her, but twice as hard. She uses the criminal means of murder to ruin Jason's immoral plan to gain political advantage because she, like him, is the product of a corrupted Corinth.

Medea is a master manipulator and as a character in a play, especially the malcontent of a tragedy, her speech is her greatest asset in expressing her beliefs and creating action (even more so than the magical abilities that helped her when she had first met Jason before the events of the play). As such, her use of rhetoric is a clear reflection of the intellectual milieu of fifth-century Athens when the Sophistic Enlightenment was taking place. This pivotal period was marked by a philosophic shift from focusing on "natural phenomena to human affairs," which stressed the power behind practicing speech. [23] Political rhetoric was essential to Athenian democracy, making Medea's persuasiveness stand more, especially compared to the Corinthian Creon who simply makes demands. Athenian social beliefs also changed in accordance with these developments as speech was now seen as questionable and ambiguous instead of reliable and straightforward. [24] A well-spoken Athenian could very well be hiding the truth or blatantly lying to you under the guise of persuasive rhetoric, making society appear more corrupt with this movement in intellectualism.

Euripides captures these sentiments within Medea who fools multiple characters into believing her lies. For example, though throughout the play she is not afraid to share her rage against Jason and his new family, something Jason is well aware of, with this single grand speech (from line 1021 to 1050) she manages to trick him into being a pawn in her master plan. For Jason, the decisive lines were when Medea says, "I recognized how foolish I had been, / how senseless it was to be so annoyed. / So now I agree with you," [25] because his main issue with her was that she disagreed with his indecent actions; now, he has nothing to complain about. He replies, "Lady, I approve of what you're saying now… / you're acting like a woman of good sense." [26] Then, Medea convinces him to let their sons give his new wife some poisoned gifts. [27] This exchange depicts how Medea essentially uses Jason to take revenge against him with only the use of her words. Interestingly, Euripides also uses Medea to show the other side of the *drachma* as she is both a user and a victim of rhetoric. Medea says that she was tricked by "the words of that Greek man," [28] pointing criticism at the Greek culture and their use of rhetoric to persuade and manipulate instead of to speak truthfully. [29] However, Medea seems to have adopted this part of Greek culture and uses it to humiliate Jason, a symbol of Corinth as well as the Sophistic Enlightenment. In this way, Medea embodies the anti-hero quality of a malcontent by using society's corruption against the corrupters themselves, a hypocritical yet effective way of carrying out her comeuppance against Jason, while criticizing the Sophistic Enlightenment.

Euripides effectively uses Medea to convey these changing hegemonies and to reflect the existing social milieu in various aspects of fifth-century Athenian life in his tragedy *Medea*. The turmoil brought on by the tension between Athens and Corinth, along with the change in culture and mentality towards rhetoric catalyzed by the Sophistic Enlightenment molded a new world for the people of Athens, who already had strong beliefs about marriage, democracy, and justice. We get to see all these aspects of Athenian life through Medea, who represents the perspective of a disenfranchised character in a corrupt world so well that she could be considered one of the first malcontents in a tragic play. Though her actions and speech were reactive of her own time, a reflection of fifth century Athens, the overarching themes of her fight against society, such as marriage and misogyny in a patriarchal world, are relatable even to contemporary audiences, making Euripides' *Medea* a rather timeless play.

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[22] Cox, 438.
[23] Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy,* 4.
[24] Guthrie, 51.
[25] Euripides, 1037-1039.

[26] Euripides, 1065, 1073.
[27] Euripides, 1132-1138.
[28] Euripides, 951.
[29] Gemin, "Medea's Four Reasons," 595.

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**Secrets of the Sheets:**
**An Exploration of Alexander the Great's Sexuality**

Moira Scully

As mysterious a figure as Alexander the Great is, the question of his sexuality is an even greater mystery. Across the thirty-three-year span of his life, both primary and secondary sources from antiquity document his diverse heterosexual and possibly homosexual partners. Despite there being a number of potential female lovers listed, multiple sources draw particular attention to Alexander and his companion, Hephaestion. Although it is anachronistic to apply modern terms of sexual identification to the ancient world, where such concepts of gay, straight, or bisexual did not exist as they do today, this article will delve into the depths of Alexander's sexuality by means of his recorded relationships. [1] Throughout this investigation into the famous Macedonian ruler's sexuality, three primary questions will attempt to be answered. Firstly, was it possible to have a societally accepted homosexual relationship in the ancient world? Secondly, what can be determined about Alexander's sexuality based on the sources that discuss the Macedonian court and his marriages? And finally, what is the likelihood that Alexander had a homoerotic relationship with his lifelong friend, Hephaestion?

To investigate the possibility of homosexual relationships in antiquity, it is useful to have an understanding of ancient Greek pederastic relationships. According to William A. Percy III, pederasty was a type of homosexual relationship that was commonly practiced across mainland Greece since the sixth century BCE, while a similar form began in Macedonia at the end of the fourth century BCE. These Greek same-sex partnerships typically consisted of an older bearded *erastes* and a younger clean-shaven *eronomos,* while Macedonian pederasty was often criticized by the Greeks for how close in age both the participants were. [2] Even though the *erastes* is identifiable in art and literature through his active role, and the *eronomos* for his more passive role, negative associations of homosexual relationships appear in contemporary oratory speeches and plays. This development is initially perplexing as the presence of pederastic relationships was well established by this point, as evidenced by the *Symposium* of Plato and writings of Xenophon, who both positively discuss the nature of these homosexual exchanges. [3] Thus the unfavourable opinions documented in oratory speeches, such as Isaeus' *On the Estate of Aristarchus,* seem to "focus on homoerotic behaviour that goes beyond socially sanctioned forms." [4] Isaeus also condemns the excessive spending of money on an *eronomos,* as these indulgences frequently distracted an *erastes* from educating his young companion. As numerous scholars, such as Kirk Ormand, have noted, sexual attraction to either gender was not considered odd in the ancient world. In fact, he believes that "the ancient Greeks (and Romans) thought it quite normal for men to want to have sex with younger men," even though Greek gender expectations dictated that "men should never desire to be penetrated." [5] Therefore, both the *erastes* and *eronomos* were expected to behave in a certain way, which conformed to their status, citizenship, and age. Through this brief analysis of homoerotic behaviours lies the answer to the first posed question: Was it possible to have a homosexual relationship in the ancient world? Based on the discussion of pederasty in a variety of ancient sources, including speeches and philosophical treatises, one can clearly see that the possibility to have some form of a relationship was present. Although the nature of these "relationships" differs drastically from modern ones, it is important to note how widespread this type of partnership was throughout the Greek world.

After establishing this cultural background, it is possible to progress on to the next question of this inquiry. What can be determined about Alexander's sexuality based on the sources that discuss the Macedonian court and his marriages? As previously mentioned, Macedonian pederastic relations differed slightly from those of the mainland Greeks. Not only were the similarities in age of an *erastes* and an *eronomos* a unique feature of Macedonian pederasty, but "the distinctively Macedonian take on sexual norms for elite males often played a critical role in the life of the court and in political events." [6] For instance, Macedonian rulers, like Alexander's father Philip II of Macedon, freely practiced polygamy as an effective tool to create political alliances through marriage. The polygamous practices as well as the royal page system instituted by Philip permitted elite males to have both male and female lovers. According to Elizabeth Carney, there are a minimum of four accounts of royal homosexual relationships, which "occurred or at least persisted into the adulthood of the [Macedonian] king." [7] Despite the political profits Philip received from his several marriages, it is noteworthy to acknowledge one's ability to have numerous wives or partners in the Macedonian royal court. Another prominent piece of information is that Macedonia seems to emerge as an area where completely

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[1] See: Ormand and Blondell, "One Hundred and Twenty-Five Years of Homosexuality," 2, for further discussion on modern conceptions of ancient sexuality.
[2] Percy, *Pederasty and Pedagogy in Archaic Greece*, 139.
[3] Shapiro, "Pederasty and the Popular Audience," 177.
[4] Shapiro, 178-79.
[5] Ormand and Blondell, 4.
[6] Carney, *Olympias: The Mother of Alexander the Great*, 26.
[7] Carney, 29.

homosexual relationships would be more readily accepted. For example, Philip is recorded in Plutarch, Aristotle, and Valerius Maximus to have engaged in a homosexual relationship with Pausanias, prior to Philip's assassination by the latter. Although the acknowledgement of this intimate relationship between Philip and Pausanias suggests Alexander would have received similar sexual freedoms during his reign, the fatal end may have discouraged Alexander from following too closely in his father's footsteps.

In contrast to Philip, the sources highlight Alexander's initial lack of sexual interest. One of the earliest records of Alexander's supposed disinterest in women is in Athenaeus, who documents Olympias bringing the *hetaira* Callixena to Alexander "for they wanted to make sure that he was not effeminate." [8] Olympias' insistence that Alexander sleep with Callixena to prove his masculinity recalls the importance of adhering gender roles. Also, both Philip and Olympias' urging for Alexander to bed a *hetaira* indicate that his disinterest in sexual activity was considered abnormal. Although no contemporary sources address this event and discuss a homosexual relationship, Alexander's sexual inactivity is worth noting. Consequently, he neither appears to participate in a homosexual relationship, as would be expected in a pseudo-pederastic society, nor to have sexual preferences in his youth.

It is not until later in his life, following his victory over the Persian king Darius III, that an abundance of accounts involving Alexander and various women surface. Among the most frequently mentioned females are the Bactrian princess Rhoxane and Darius' wife Stateira. The former is often regarded as an enchanting beauty amongst the sources. Alexander is also noted in the writings of Quintus Curtius Rufus to have refrained from bedding Rhoxane until they were lawfully married. However, apart from her striking appearance and position as the daughter of the satrap Oxyartes, limited information is provided about Rhoxane's involvement in her husband's life. Also, descriptions of Darius III's wife Stateira emphasize the importance of her beauty and prominent position. Justin records how Alexander "shed tears over [Stateria's] death and gave her a generous funeral ... Out of human compassion." [9] The commonalities in both the portrayals of Rhoxane and Stateria as well as Alexander's respectful treatment of these noblewomen illustrate the honourable qualities of the king. [10] Further, Alexander's resolute self-control and his delay in coupling with Rhoxane may suggest he remained somewhat disinterested in engaging in intimate heterosexual behaviour. One interesting observation about the women associated with Alexander arises in the descriptions of each love interest. In every single portrayal, the female is considered as an object who possesses an extremely desirable quality, whether it is her unparalleled beauty or noble rank. However, a miniscule amount of information is provided in addition to these descriptions, which prohibits these figures from being considered as individuals in their own right. As a result, Alexander's choice of heterosexual partners seems solely based on appearance and aristocracy, while any specific homosexual attractions remain elusive.

Although there are numerous stories of Alexander having carnal relations with other females, such as the Amazonian queen Thalestra or the beautiful Barsine, many of these accounts appear fictitious as they provide explanations for Alexander's declining moral values. Justin comments that Alexander's indulgence in Persian luxury and sumptuous banquets coincides with the development of his affectionate feelings for Barsine. [11] Even though it is not explicitly stated, Justin's disapproval of Alexander submitting to the luxury and lust of the East is apparent. [12] As a result, Alexander's documented heterosexual encounters are primarily concerned with highlighting the limited societal and physical benefits a woman possesses, while later accounts of Alexander's exploits appear manufactured for the purpose of moral teachings. The almost nonexistent presence of Alexander's wives and female lovers following their introduction in the sources is remarkable, considering male figures like Hephaestion continuously resurface. Perhaps this limited presence of women reflects the ordinary nature of the relationship, which ancient authors did not consider noteworthy. This provides a possible exploration into some of the inquiries posed thus far; however, we are still left with one central remaining question: the issue of Hephaestion.

Redirecting focus to the homosexual relationships recorded in the sources, one can identify a mostly favourable account of Alexander's relationships with his *hetairoi*. In particular, Alexander is documented completing religious, political, and private activities with Hephaestion above any of his other companions. The frequency with which Hephaestion is mentioned throughout ancient primary and secondary sources, along with the information these sources provide about the two men strongly suggest there was a sexual relationship. For example, in an account from Valerius Maximus, the newly captured Sisygambis performs proskynesis to Hephaestion, having mistaken him for Alexander. Instead of being insulted or punishing either party for the slight, Alexander is reported to acknowledge Hephaestion as an extension of himself. Not only is Alexander's recognition of Hephaestion and himself as a single

[8] Heckel and Yardley, *Alexander the Great: Historical Sources in Translation*, 40.
[9] Heckel and Yardley, 195.
[10] Mack, "Ambiguity and the Image of the King," 28.
[11] Heckel and Yardley, 211.
[12] Heckel and Yardley, 210.

being significant, but his decision to address the royal Persian captives with Hephaestion by his side strengthens the closeness of their relationship as Hephaestion is shown participating in political activities. Further evidence of Alexander's favouritism towards Hephaestion survives in an excerpt from Plutarch. Plutarch writes how Alexander permitted Hephaestion to read letters sent from Olympias, the contents of which were kept secret. As a result, Hephaestion became privy to private affairs in Macedonia and can arguably be seen as a member of Alexander's immediate family.

In addition to Hephaestion's involvement in political affairs, he also completed a series of religious activities with Alexander. These reports exhibit another area of influence Hephaestion held as well as how inseparable he and Alexander were. One of their most notable events appears in Aelian who says Alexander crowned the tomb of Achilles with a wreath while Hephaestion placed a wreath on Patroclus' tomb. Alexander's decision to model them after the Homeric figures of Achilles and Patroclus demonstrates the king's adoration of the hero, while heavily implying that Hephaestion "was the beloved of Alexander just as Patroclus was the beloved of Achilles." [13] Also, the sexual roles of the two bronze age heroes are reversed in Aelian's account, as Patroclus is identified as an *eronomos* while the Homeric tradition presents him as an *erastes*. This role reversal was most likely a conscious choice on the author's part as Alexander is presented in the more culturally accepted *erastes* role to ensure he fulfills his gender role. [14] Furthermore, Aelian's decision to cast Alexander in the *erastes* role was most likely intended to cater to his Greek readers, who would have an aversion to the traditional depiction of Achilles and Alexander in the *eronomos* role. Aelian is correct in assuming that a Greek audience would not comprehend that "Macedonians not only engaged in homoerotic affairs but took a passive role even after their beards were grown." [15]

Up until this point in the investigation, the sources seem to positively reference the companionship between Alexander and Hephaestion, while simultaneously complimenting the women's beauty and morally criticizing Alexander's later weakness in heterosexual relationships. [16] Interestingly, there are no other explicit references to a male lover apart from the complicated account of the eunuch, Bagoas. As a former lover of Darius III, Bagoas is a controversial figure in the accounts as not many authors could comprehend or classify the nature of their relationship. Further, there is a particular bias exercised against Bagoas as he symbolizes the most "other" aspects of the Persian world, such as effeminacy, passivity, and luxury. [17] Although Bagoas is an interesting outlier in the exploration of Alexander's sexuality, he does become another example of Alexander's moral decline.

At last, it is possible to explore the final question of this paper: What is the likelihood that Alexander had a homoerotic relationship with his lifelong friend Hephaestion? Even though there are heavy implications associated with Hephaestion, the sources generally refrain from making any conclusive statements, instead saying he was "one of the men [Alexander] loved most of all." [18] As Elizabeth Carney noted earlier in this paper, Macedonian sexuality was closely connected to political events. While Philip's use of marriage to form political alliances represents a positive blend of sexuality and politics, the various rebellions during Alexander's reign, sparked by an overzealous lover, exhibit the pitfalls of mixing romance and rule. There are numerous examples of both heterosexual and homosexual lovers involved in attempted coups and mutiny, which simultaneously reinforce the diverse sexual practices of Alexander's court and note the disastrous consequences of love. Plutarch's account of Philotas and Parmenion's execution records the romantic relationship between Philotas and Antigone, while Quintus Curtius Rufus' document of the Hermolaus conspiracy notes the passionate connection between Sostratus and Hermolaus. [19] In both accounts, a series of treasonous plots arise after the slighted individual complains of their embarrassment to their lover. The subsequent actions inevitably lead to the discovery of a treasonous plot and the assailant's inescapable execution. Similar to how Alexander was criticized for indulging in Persian luxuries during his relationship with Bagoas, the sources appear to consistently consider love as a dangerous and weakening emotion. Therefore, it is not inconceivable that Hephaestion and Alexander would have kept a romantic relationship secret in order to avoid these dire consequences.

As has been discussed throughout this paper, ancient primary and secondary sources provide numerous accounts of Alexander's sexual encounters but are often vague in determining the true nature of a homosexual relationship. Despite the large number of discrepancies among the various sources, where certain individuals are

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[13] Heckel and Yardley, 40.
[14] Percy, "Same-Sex Desire and Love in Greco-Roman Antiquity," 44.
[15] Percy, "Same-Sex Desire," 45.

[16] This is an interesting turn of events since Alexander is shown as submissive to luxury and love, while attempting to fulfill his expected gender role.
[17] Mack, 32.
[18] Heckel and Yardley, 262.
[19] Heckel and Yardley, 228 (Plutarch) & 251 (QCR).

omitted or negatively depicted, there is clearly an interest in discussing Alexander's sexual activity. Stories concerning Alexander's heterosexual encounters are mainly restricted to women who are described as beautiful and possess a high societal position. Additionally, a female's presence in Alexander's sources are consistently used to fulfill a heroic storyline or trace Alexander's moral decline. However, the frequently favourable appearances of Alexander's close companion Hephaestion in the written accounts lead many scholars to believe that there was a sexual relationship between the two warriors. Due to Hephaestion's prominent place at Alexander's side in both political and religious events as well as the accepted practice of homoerotic behaviour in the Macedonian court, it is quite likely that Alexander and Hephaestion had a sexual relationship. In the sources, however, the negative associations of acting purely out of love is a possible explanation for why a homoerotic relationship between the two would have been kept hidden. Additionally, the overwhelming implications of the pair's close companionship throughout Alexander's life in countless sources strongly suggests the existence of a sexual relationship. Unfortunately, in the absence of explicit documents, this question can only be confirmed through thorough analysis and speculation.

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# The Sins of the Father:
## Exploring Philip II's Impact on Alexander the Great's Quest for Divinity

Amanda Singh

The influence of a child's immediate family on their social and cognitive development is instrumental in determining their personality and cognitive functioning in adulthood. Consequently, Alexander III of Macedon is not exempt from his familial influences. While papers such as "Alexander's Deification" [1] suggest that Alexander's promotion of his perceived divine status had rational roots in political propaganda, an alternative analysis of Alexander's formative years, specifically focusing on the influential figures who guided Alexander's development, suggests otherwise. For example, when examining Alexander's relationship to his immediate family contextualized by Macedonian cultural norms, a pattern of resentment toward his father and his father's culture reveals itself as the foundation upon which Alexander built his self-imposed divine image. Continuing further into Alexander's reign after the death of his father Philip II, the remnants of Alexander's bitterness toward his father is highlighted as the driving force behind his self-imposed divinity. As such, the manner in which Alexander chose to reclaim his godly ancestry can be interpreted as less politically driven. Furthermore, the subsequent reactions of the Macedonians and the Greeks in response to Alexander imposing his godly identity on his kingdom further demonstrate his personal reasons for achieving divinity, while negating the idea that Alexander used divinity as a tool for propaganda. Despite Philip being hailed as the better tactician between the two, the near unanimous negative response to Alexander's claims of divinity combined with his insistence on clinging to the identity on his deathbed indicated an internalized belief in his godly status, rather than employing it as an unsuccessful attempt for political gain. [2]

When examining the relationships between Alexander, his immediate family, and other elite Macedonians, the development of Alexander's resentment toward his father and his father's culture is observed primarily in the connections between father and son. While Alexander is immortalized in history for his conquests, it is Philip that was responsible for the rise of Macedonia's power.[3] In the letter *ad Philipum* composed by Isocrates, it was revealed that Philip's achievements were considered a "glory unsurpassable and worthy of deeds [committed] in the past." [4] Furthermore, these claims do not seem to be rooted in excessive deference, as multiple sources attribute his successes to his "own excellence […] and keen sense of strategy and personality." [5] Afterward, Isocrates then went on to state that "when [Philip finally compelled] the barbarians … there would be naught left for [him] except to become a god."[6] Although Alexander's access to the letters of Isocrates is debated, resulting in a lack of confirmation in Alexander's explicit knowledge of Isocrates' godly perception of Philip, it would be reductive to ignore the influence parents have on their children. In other words, presuming that Philip's belief in his own divine status existed as a mutually exclusive entity from Alexander's notice is doubtful. Corroborating the idea that Alexander was affected by Philip's ego, Alexander demonstrated a growing resentment toward Philip's achievements, stating that: "[Philip] will forestall me in everything and he will leave no great or brilliant achievements for me." [7] As such, regardless of whether Alexander was aware that third parties equated Philip and his achievements to that of the gods, the evidence suggests that Philip's internalization of a potential divine status may have had a profound effect on Alexander's perception of himself.

Beyond his relationship with his father, Alexander also faced some level of prejudice from the Macedonian court based on his mixed heritage that served to aggravate the resentment he felt toward Philip. His claim to the Macedonian crown was often questioned due to his non-Macedonian identity as Alexander was half-Molossian on his mother Olympias' side. Additionally, Philip continued to marry other women, so Alexander's mixed heritage became a point of contention in the Macedonian court. Following Philip's marriage to Cleopatra, a Macedonian woman, the potential of a legitimate heir did not go unnoticed by the Macedonians. During Philip and Cleopatra's wedding, Attalus, uncle of Cleopatra, invited the Macedonians to pray for a legitimate successor to the Macedonian throne. [8] Predictably, Alexander was angry, and when Philip tried and failed to kill him for his insolence, Alexander countered with contempt, stating that "this is the man who is preparing to cross from Europe to Asia … he's fallen on his face crossing from one couch to another!" [9] In the eyes of Philip's court, Alexander's mixed identity was not considered Macedonian enough to justify his claim to the throne. As a result, the xenophobia Alexander experienced combined

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[1] Robinson, C. A. "Alexander's Deification," 286.
[2] Heckel and Yardley, *Alexander the Great: Historical Sources in Translation*, Just. 9.81-21.
[3] Heckel and Yardley, 19.
[4] Heckel and Yardley, Isoc. L. 3.
[5] Fredricksmeyer, "Alexander and Philip: Emulation and Resentment," 301.
[6] Heckel and Yardley, Isoc. L. 3.
[7] Heckel and Yardley, Plu. Alex. 5.4.
[8] Heckel and Yardley, Plut. Alex. 9.5.7-9.
[9] Heckel and Yardley, Plut. Alex. 9.5.10.

with his growing resentment toward his father's reign likely played a significant role in the formation of a subconscious inferiority complex that expressed itself in his quest for divinity and to be better than his father.

Alexander likely protected his self-esteem while growing up in a hostile environment by outwardly projecting a negative attitude toward Macedonian culture. Alexander was under the impression that "Greeks walking amongst the Macedonians [were] like demigods walking amongst wild animals." In childhood, Alexander's tutor was the Athenian philosopher Aristotle, "whom [Alexander] loved no less than a father," and the young Alexander had taken to describing Aristotle as the father that taught him how to live well. [10] Accordingly, it can be assumed that the impression Aristotle left on Alexander was tantamount to Philip's, and thus played a significant role in the development of Alexander's perceptions of the Greeks and his divine status. The positive perception Alexander had toward the Greeks is one he held onto for years to come, which is innocuously demonstrated by "shouting in the Macedonian tongue … during [serious crises]," indicating that strong emotion in stressful situations was enough for him to abandon the Greek language and return to this mother tongue. [11] Lastly, as Alexander's relationship with Philip became more strained over time, his relationship with Olympias is described as unerringly positive, despite her shortcomings. Olympias is recorded as an oppositional individual who often incited Alexander against Philip. [12] Furthermore, in the years Alexander and Philip spent apart, due to either Philip's campaigns or Alexander's studies with Aristotle, Olympias acted as Alexander's primary parental figure. [13] Because Olympias was known to openly combat Philip in public, it was likely that Alexander had the potential of modelling his mother's behaviours, and consequently exacerbating the tension between himself and Philip which led to Alexander's deification later in life.

Examining the roots of his family tree, Alexander traced his ancestry back to divine figures on both parents' sides. Through Olympias, Alexander traced his descent back to the hero Achilles; through Philip, Heracles. [14] Despite claiming his divine birthright on both paternal and maternal lines, Alexander's outlook toward both of his parents differs dramatically. While Alexander's imitation of Achilles seemed to be rooted in the intention of bringing honour to his name, his imitation of Heracles reflected his tense relationship with his father. Alexander's emulation of Heracles primarily rooted in the idea of "[overcoming] Heracles' exploits," as evidenced when he traversed the river Acesines through India. [15] In contrast, Alexander's emulation of Achilles was much more neutral and far more reverent when compared to Heracles. For example, at the tomb of Achilles, "some state that Alexander placed a wreath on Achilles' tomb … and that [his companion] Hephaestion placed a wreath on that of Patroclus." [16] Furthermore, rather than striving to overcome Achilles' exploits, Alexander lamented that Achilles was a "fortunate man to have Homer to herald his praises to posterity." [17] The underlying implication in the discrepancies between Alexander's attitude toward Heracles and Achilles can again be traced back to his strained relationship with Philip, which was worsened by Olympias' poor conduct. Although Alexander promoted his own self-deification by emulating both heroes, his hostile arrogance toward bettering Heracles expresses an attempt to both distance himself from and overcome Philip's image and his Macedonian heritage, while simultaneously embracing the "otherness" of Olympias' ancestry.

Combining Alexander's parental influence with Macedonian xenophobia, Alexander's might have learned his preoccupation with divine status from Philip in his father's final days. Prior to his murder, Philip had demanded to be "included in [a] procession of statues of the twelve [Olympian] gods." [18] Specifically, Philip succeeded in demanding that among the statues, a "thirteenth statue [for himself], suitable for a god" was added to the procession.[19] Shortly after Philip's display of hubris, Pausanias of Orestis murdered Philip at his procession. Despite their strained relationship, Philip was described as steadfast in his affection for Alexander, and it is likely that his death left a lasting impression on his son as he exercised his claim to the Macedonian throne and it also influenced Alexander's decision to pursue divinity to the extent that he did. [20]

As Alexander gained more control over his late father's empire, the name he made for himself was underscored by his growing desire for divinity. Alexander's desire culminated during his confrontation with the Oracle of Zeus-Ammon at Siwah. "Dissatisfied with elevation on the mortal realm, [Alexander] considered or wanted others to believe that Jupiter was his ancestor." [21] The idea that Alexander claimed divinity for political propaganda can be refuted by suggesting that Alexander's motive for visiting the shrine was to question the oracle about his birth rather

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[10] Heckel and Yardley, Plut. *Alex*. 8.4.
[11] Heckel and Yardley, Plut. *Alex*. 51.4-6.
[12] Heckel and Yardley, Plut. *Alex*. 9.5.
[13] Fredricksmeyer, 301.
[14] Heckel and Yardley, 208.
[15] Heckel and Yardley, Jus. 12.7.12-13.

[16] Heckel and Yardley, Arr. 1.12.1-2.
[17] Heckel and Yardley, Arr. 1.12.1-2; Cic. *Pro Arc*h. 24.
[18] Heckel and Yardley, Diod. 16.91-4.
[19] Heckel and Yardley, Diod. 16.92.5.
[20] Fredricksmeyer, 301.
[21] Heckel and Yardley, Quin. 4.7.8.

than to legitimize his kingship of Egypt. [22] Instead of political advancement, it appears more likely that Alexander went to the Oracle at Siwah to complete a self-fulfilling prophecy he knew he could not attain in Greece. Although previously implied, Alexander must have gone to Siwah to inquire about his divine birth, a question that Alexander knew could not be answered at a Greek oracle, where the deification of Greek rulers was not observed. [23]

The public response to Alexander's deification was almost unanimously negative. While the Egyptians held the custom of deifying their pharaohs, neither the Macedonians nor the Greeks attributed divinity to their rulers. [24] Consequently, Alexander's contemporaries were unhappy with the adoption of Zeus-Ammon as his divine father; his rejection of Philip proved to be a significant point of contention for the Macedonian population. The Macedonians "lived in the shadow of liberty more than other races, so they rejected [Alexander's] pretensions to immortality with greater obstinacy than was good for either them or their king." [25] As Alexander's resentment gave way to arrogance, many of his people accused him of having hubris and Alexander reacted aggressively in kind with disastrous consequences. For example, the lingering effects of Alexander's resentment toward Philip continued to influence his actions eight years after Philip's death. In 328 BCE, Cleitus the Black, was murdered by Alexander himself after drunkenly revealing a collective, festering hostility that had developed in response to Alexander's abandonment of his Macedonian roots and subsequent denouncement of Philip as his father in favour of the divine. [26] Prior to the altercation, Alexander "[adverted] to the deeds of Philip, claiming that [they] were neither great nor wonderful." [27] Alexander continued his minimization of his father's achievements, while simultaneously elevating his identity above the mortal plane. A similar attitude is shown through his final interaction with Philotas, a general that was accused of conspiracy and subsequently executed. [28] Before his execution, Philotas rhetorically asked his fellow Macedonians if they were keen to accept a man willing to disclaim Philip as his mortal father and demand to be believed as a god, claiming that they had "come up against an arrogance that can be tolerated neither by the gods … nor by men." [29] The idea that Alexander used his self-deification for political purposes is further weakened in the wake of the disagreeable Macedonian response. The internal dissent resulting from Alexander's rejection of Philip caused problems under his rule, which did not mix well with Alexander's reactive temperament.

As Alexander lost face with the Macedonians, the Greeks whom he idolized so much expressed similar opinions, although with less hostility and more condescension. For example, "after defeating Darius and making himself master of the Persian Empire … Alexander sent an order to the Greeks to take a vote making him divine." [30] Alexander's decree was received as "an absurd order [and he would not get what he wanted] … by asking for it from human beings." [31] Likewise, when the Athenian Demades "came forward with a motion for Alexander to be regarded as the thirteenth god, the [Athenians] could not tolerate such extreme impiety … for setting Alexander among the Olympians when he was just a mortal." [32] Moreover, Alexander's high opinion of Hellenic culture further conflicts with the idea that his deification was used as a political tool to win the Greek's favour. When considering Alexander's mixed identity, that was not wholly accepted during his father's reign, combined with the teachings of Aristotle he received in his youth, it is improbable that Alexander used his position as the son of Zeus-Ammon to gain favour with the Greeks. Alexander had an appreciation for the arts, and he most likely would have been aware of Greek attitudes toward mortals having hubris, as the consequence of hubris was commonly featured as a trope in Greek mythology. Furthermore, the collective Greek rejection of Alexander's request to be referred to as divine was not exclusive to the mainlanders. Anaxarchus, a Greek philosopher that accompanied Alexander during his reign, conveyed a similar opinion directly to Alexander in response to his deification and laughed at Alexander when he demanded to be called a god. [33] As such, the general response of the Greeks suggests that Alexander's insistence on his title as a divine figure was steeped in personal ideals rather than political objectives. Likewise, the Spartans summarize the general Greek opinion laconically, stating that "if Alexander wants to be a god, then let him be a god" with a contemptuous undercurrent designed to "expose Alexander's stupidity." [34]

The idea that Alexander used divinity as a political tool grows increasingly unlikely when we examine his final days before death. Near his death in 323 BCE, almost ten years after his visit to Siwah, Alexander gave instructions to Perdiccas to have his body transported to Hammon; [35] Alexander did not request a burial with Philip at

[22] Collins, "Alexander's Visit to Siwah: A New Analysis," 73.
[23] Demand, *A History of Ancient Greece*, 304; Fredricksmeyer, 301.
[24] Demand, 304.
[25] Heckel and Yardley, Quin. 4.5.32.
[26] Heckel and Yardley, 208.
[27] Heckel and Yardley, Arr. 4.8.1-9.4.
[28] Heckel and Yardley, 243.

[29] Heckel and Yardley, Quin. 6.11.23-25.
[30] Heckel and Yardley, Ael. *Var. Hist.* 2.19.
[31] Heckel and Yardley, Ael. *Var. Hist.* 2.19.
[32] Heckel and Yardley, Ael. *Var. Hist.* 5.12.
[33] Heckel and Yardley, Ael. *Var. Hist.* 9.37.
[34] Heckel and Yardley, Plut. *Mor.* 219e.
[35] Heckel and Yardley, Jus. 12.15.7.

the traditional resting place of the Macedonian Kings but wished to be buried with his "true" father in Libya. [36] Around the same time, he called upon Zeus to "accept him as [his] third mortal in heaven," [37] thus reinforcing his perceived divine status. While close to death, it seems that Alexander would have little reason to push for his deification, but he persisted in his belief that he was of equal status to the Olympian pantheon. In his final testament, a serious document where Alexander provided instructions regarding the inheritance of the Macedonian throne, he referred to himself as "King Alexander, son of Ammon and Olympias," [38] as one final rejection of Philip. In this context, if Alexander were using the idea of deification rationally for political gain, it is unlikely that he would hold on to a belief that ultimately held the potential to weaken the legitimacy of his line's claim to the throne. The Macedonians that collectively had disapproved of Alexander's adoption of Zeus-Ammon in life could have provided a truthful testament in usurping his line. Consequently, in terms of political decisions, Alexander would have made an uncharacteristically poor one if he were using divinity as propaganda. As such, the acceptance of Zeus-Ammon and simultaneous rejection of Philip as his father further demonstrated Alexander's personal drive in attaining divine status.

Parents tend to serve as a child's primary attachment figures and, as a result, leave lasting impressions on their child's personality development. Philip's influence on Alexander during his formative years in conjunction with the xenophobic turmoil experienced in the Macedonian court may elucidate some of the motivations behind Alexander's desire for divinity in a culture that actively disproved of such behaviours. When analyzing the events occurring before and after Alexander's visit to Siwah, Alexander's aspirations to divinity appear to be derived from a personal perception, rather than a political tool intended to manipulate his subjects. Consequently, the impression that Philip left on Alexander had lasting consequences that influence a modern scholar's understanding of Classical history.

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[36] Heckel and Yardley, Quin. 10.5.4.
[37] Heckel and Yardley, 283.
[38] Heckel and Yardley, 287.

**Examining Olympias' Means, Motivation, and Opportunity in the Murder of Philip II of Macedon**

Idrees Sulaiman

Olympias was the daughter of King Neoptolemus I of Epirus, a wife to Philip II of Macedon, and most notably, the mother of Alexander the Great. She played an active role in Alexander's upbringing and groomed him as the future king of Macedon in many ways. Ancient sources present quite a misogynistic attitude towards her because of her vigorous activity in politics that displayed her ruthlessness and ambition, but Olympias was a brilliant and formidable woman. One of the many events in her career, and perhaps the most controversial, is the murder of her husband Philip II. Rumours of her involvement in his death are met with mixed reviews, but there is no reason to argue that it was impossible for Olympias to have played a part in the scheme or for her to have orchestrated the plot herself. Olympias' primary objective in life was to make her son king in order to elevate her own status. In order to do so, she needed to make sure Alexander had no competition and that meant getting rid of his father, so no more heirs could be born. The possibility of her having something to do with Philip's death becomes more likely if one considers the nature of their marriage, Olympias' willingness to kill, and her personal quarrel with Philip after his marriage to Cleopatra Eurydice; thus, it can be said definitively that she had means, motive, and opportunity.

When looking at Olympias' possible role in Philip's murder, one must first understand how different marriage was in ancient Greece and how the marriage offered Olympias a greater social standing. The purpose and "nature of Greek marriage in general was not personal satisfaction and happiness for the bride and groom, as in our own world, but rather the production of children." [1] Royal marriages were made solely for political reasons and these "political marriages were always one of [Philips'] main weapons, and nothing could have been of greater importance to him." [2] This means that there is no real reason to suppose that Olympias ever had genuine romantic feelings for her husband and he for her, despite Plutarch's claim that the two married for love. Those who have accepted Plutarch's retelling of events where he "maintains that Philip, while still a youth, met Olympias at the Samothracian mysteries and fell in love" [3] have accepted this because "it offers an irrational explanation for something they consider an irrational act." [4] It also appears that "her relations with Philip, [which were] not very good to begin with, subsequently got worse" and it can be said that Philip's stubborn affinity for having a harem coupled with Olympias' uncompromising need to satisfy her own ideals made for a tumultuous marriage. [5] In addition, Philip practiced polygamy and Olympias was neither the first nor the last of his wives. Olympias and Alexander had no reason to view the later marriages, such as Philip's marriage to Cleopatra, as any differently from the other ones (i.e., as a means for Philip to gain more political influence), but every new marriage would no doubt inspire some insecurity for Olympias. On a superficial level, there may be no problems because any child from another wife at the time of a later marriage would be younger than Alexander; however any male children from any of Philip's other wives could potentially threaten Alexander's claim to the Macedonian throne, especially those closer in age to him. Since she only had one son and was one of many wives, Olympias had one path to the throne (or a higher political standing at least) and that was through her son Alexander. Living in a time with "high infant and childhood mortality, she must have worried constantly about his health" and having more wives increased the likelihood of Philip producing more legitimate heirs, which would diminish Olympias' own political standing should another potential son inherit the throne. [6] Removing Philip from the regency ensured that no more potential heirs could be born, and that Alexander succeeded his father to the throne. Alexander becoming king would bolster her reputation and elevate her status further. One should remember that these historical figures were human and still felt emotions. There is no concrete evidence, but polygamy likely caused jealousy and rivalry among Philip's wives, leading them to do questionable and shameful acts.

Many modern scholars argue that Olympias' involvement in her husband's murder is unlikely because such an act would not only display a shocking act of insolence, but also bring the ire of an army that was loyal to Philip. If guilty, however, Olympias would not have been so foolish as to make her role in the murder well-known; she must have used subtler methods instead of raising a sword against Philip. For example, Alexander's brother, Arrhidaeus, was rumoured to have mental difficulties, becoming disabled after Olympias tried to eliminate him as a possible rival to her son through the use of drugs. In Plutarch's account in *The Life of Alexander*, he wrote Arrhidaeus was, "later disabled by drugs given [to] him by Olympias and that this was how his mind was destroyed." [7] Although this event is doubted by many, it could also be used to prove how subtle Olympias' tactics really were because she did not use

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[1] Carney, "The Politics of Polygamy: Olympias, Alexander and the Murder of Philip," 170.
[2] Badian, "The Death of Philip II," 245.
[3] Tronson, "Satyrus the Peripatetic and the Marriages of Philip II," 123.
[4] Carney, 173-174.
[5] Fredricksmeyer, "Alexander and Philip: Emulation and Resentment," 300.
[6] Carney, 173.
[7] Plutarch, *The Life of Alexander the Great*, 77.7-8.

an overt method like picking up a sword and charging at him. She would not have risked her own welfare by attacking Arrhidaeus openly. On the surface, Philip was killed by his bodyguard, Pausanias of Orestis; however, he might not have acted with such violence if he did not receive certain assurances. As mentioned before, Olympias would not have attacked Philip in front of armed soldiers, so she needed to find a way to strike at Philip indirectly while placing herself in minimal danger. Allying herself with someone who had his own reason for revenge against Philip solved this problem. Olympias would surely have known of Philip's affairs with Pausanias and Pausanias' rape, could have used the information to her advantage. Some may argue that the time between the rape of Pausanias and the murder of Philip makes Pausanias' motive less convincing; however, this concern is not enough to dismiss Pausanias' motivation to kill Philip. Being a victim of such a crime is not something a person can forgive and forget no matter how many years pass and according to Kilpatrick the "victims of rape do not forget in a year or two; they brood; the experience tends to affect them the rest of their lives." [8] Also, according to Diodorus Siculus, there were horses waiting for him, possibly arranged by Olympias, to make his escape after the deed was done. [9] The historian Justin directly implicates Olympias in this matter, which is indeed a bold claim, but "even if she had not returned to Macedonia at the time of the murder, it would not have been impossible for Olympias to arrange matters for Pausanias from a distance" and "her subsequent career offers many examples of long-distance intrigue." [10] Those who reject Olympias' involvement in the murder of Philip because she was supposedly absent from Macedonia have a weak argument. If she was absent, then it would certainly make her plans more difficult to execute, but still possible, like the attempt to seize Harpalus, various marriage alliances for her daughter, and the problems she had with Antipater.

Olympias did not lack motivation to conspire to kill Philip, especially when one considers what Philip's marriage to Cleopatra meant for her. After Philip married Cleopatra, Arrian wrote in the Anabasis of Alexander that it "brought shame on Olympias." [11] Philip chose to marry the ward of Attalus, a soldier in service to Philip, which brought Attalus forward as a potential rival for Olympias and any offspring that would have come out of the marriage would be fully Macedonian (unlike Alexander), thus making an excellent candidate for the Macedonian throne. Surely, Attalus hoped that Cleopatra "would produce not only a future king but the next king: such an eventuality might easily have made him regent." [12] Heckel and Yardley claim that it "created political chaos at the court and played no small part in the estrangement of Philip and Alexander, and, apparently, in the conspiracy to murder the king." [13] The events that followed the wedding likely sparked great ire within Olympias because of the comment Attalus made while he was probably intoxicated at the wedding of Cleopatra and Philip. After Attalus supposedly questioned the legitimacy of Alexander, the ancient sources agree that there was quite a violent altercation and that both mother and son left because of the incident. [14] This means that Philip either did nothing to help his offended son (and by extension, his wife) or actively supported Attalus. In Justin's writings "Philip joins the quarrel with Alexander on Attalus' side and nearly kills his son." [15] No matter what Philip's actions (or lack thereof) were during the drinking party, they must have understandably enraged Olympias. Furthermore, the attendance at any royal wedding would include the most important and prominent people in Macedonia, making the incident even more humiliating for Alexander and Olympias. The fact that Philip let the man who insulted Alexander go unpunished would not be forgotten, not only by Olympias but also by the important men and women who were at the drinking party. Although Olympias may not have been there, since "royal wives and mothers, did not attend such events," [16] it does not mean she would be any less offended when the news got to her. Another point to consider would be that Cleopatra Eurydice, Attalus, and Philip had "dishonored Olympias and threatened to displace her from her position as mother to Philip's heir." [17] She might have believed they threatened her son's succession and her own political strength because "Olympias' political importance arose out of her position as the mother of Alexander, rather than as the wife of Philip." [18] Any royal woman must have been held in a higher regard during the reign of her son than during that of her husband especially if her husband had multiple wives; so, she had reason to think that she would benefit greatly from Philip's demise.

Traditionally, Olympias is said to have committed various savage, even sadistic acts. Putting aside possible misogyny and prejudices from the ancient authors, there is widespread corroboration among modern scholars that Olympias had no problem with murder. One of the major demonstrations of Olympias' brutality was how she dealt with Philip's last wife. "Cleopatra (Philip's widow) and her baby daughter were butchered by Olympias" to secure

[8] Kilpatrick, Resick, and Veronen. "Effects of a Rape Experience: A Longitudinal Study." 108.

[9] Diodorus, *Library of History*, 16.93.3.

[10] Carney, 182.

[11] Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander*, 3.6.4-7

[12] Carney, 175.

[13] Heckel and Yardley, *Alexander the Great: Historical Sources in Translation*, 20.

[14] Carney, 170.

[15] Carney, 174.

[16] Carney, 177.

[17] Carney, 183.

[18] Mitchell, "The Women of Ruling Families in Archaic and Classical Greece," 3.

Alexander's regency. [19] She was also responsible for "the torture and murder of Philip Arrhidaeus and Adea Eurydice, and the elimination of some hundred supporters of Cassander [the son of Antipater]." [20] Those who think Olympias had something to do with the murder of Philip "whether or not they directly say so, do so in good part because of their belief in her involvement in these later crimes, both because they demonstrate Olympias' willingness to murder" and because they suggest that she was a person whose pleasure from inflicting pain on others might have led her to act against any sort of rational self-interest. [21] In other words, if Olympias was so merciless as to kill Cleopatra, a child, Arrhidaeus and his wife as well as Cassander's supporters, then it is not a stretch to claim that she played a role in the death of the man she married and arguably had no feelings for. Additionally, the murders Olympias committed resemble actions done by other members of the court and royal family since murder was often the method of choice in the pursuit of political success, such as the murder of Roxane and Heracles by Cassander or the murder of Cleopatra (the daughter of Olympias) by Antigonus. With such a history of violent ends, the murder of Philip is not that difficult to believe when killing among the royals was so common. With so much blood on her hands, it certainly shows that Olympias was mentally capable of taking a life and just how far she would have gone to destroy her opposition.

Quite a fearsome figure of ancient history, Olympias has displayed time and again that she would use murder to achieve her goals. After examining the historical events, it cannot be said with absolute certainty that Olympias played no role in her husband's assassination. Olympias certainly had the means and the motivation to have a role in this crime because killing a man would have been an easy moral decision for her to make. Although today people would call this a homicide, to Olympias it was nothing more than removing an obstacle in her path. After Philip had insulted her during his and Cleopatra's wedding by failing to defend Alexander, Olympias has the perfect reason to take the drastic but bold measure of ending his life. In one move, she eliminated the source of all of her anxieties and had the brilliance to cast suspicion on the pawns she used while her own role remained a mystery to her contemporaries. The fact that she had taken other lives during her lifetime and lived in a time defined by its bloodshed and brutality shows that orchestrating the murder of Philip would not have been difficult for Olympias.

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[19] Badian, 249.
[20] Carney, 187.
[21] Carney, 187.

**Interpretations of the Alexander Mosaic in Relation to the House of the Faun**

Brie Mayo

The House of the Faun is one of the most elaborate and expansive houses in Pompeii, taking up an entire city block. [1] It boasts two peristyles and two atria in an axial arrangement and conforms to Vitruvius' Republican House plan while also being built as a Hellenistic Samnite home. [2] The house was built early in the second century BCE over a third-century structure, but the Alexander Mosaic had not been in the exedra until the end of the second century BCE. [3] Mosaic floors like this were not typical in Pompeii because they were expensive to produce, so the sheer number of mosaics within this house and their complexity is noteworthy. [4] The style of the mosaic was common in Hellenistic Macedonian courts and some private residences. [5] Interpreting the Alexander Mosaic within the context of the House of the Faun must answer three questions: (1) whether the mosaic is an original scene or a copy of another, (2) whether Alexander and Darius are depicted in it, and (3) what the function of the mosaic was in its historical home.

The first question: Is this mosaic the original depiction of this scene or is it a copy? Most scholars agree that it is a copy of a no longer existing Greek painting from the fourth century BCE. Cooley and Cooley suggest that the use of extreme colour variation, foreshortening techniques (notably on the central horse), and particular use of shadows and light are clear indicators of painting techniques, suggesting the piece is a copy. [6] The details captured are extraordinary and are not seen elsewhere in the House of the Faun. The methods outlined above paint a picture of how unusual this mosaic is compared to a traditional mosaic. Cohen argues that this theory is an example of the diversion of Roman artistic achievements by citing an origin in earlier Greek art. [7] Considering this, it does not seem out of place that a mosaic representing Hellenism is present in a Hellenistic-styled house. There does not seem to be a mosaic similar to it elsewhere in Pompeii to compare, but the peculiarity of it seems to suggest a basis on a Greek painting.

The second question: Are Alexander and Darius from a battle during the Persian War featured in the mosaic? In 1832, Antonio Niccolini, Francesco Maria Avelino, and Bernardo Quaranta identified Alexander and Darius based on their clothing, facial features, and weaponry. [8] The grey/brown chiton worn by the Darius character has a white stripe that represents royalty, and his army is in Median dress, wearing heavily decorated clothing. [9] The difference between the two armies is in their facial features, skin tones, and facial hair. The historical context, once the identification of the two sides is confirmed, refers back to the Persian Wars. Now that the "who" is answered, why would it be inside a Pompeian home? I posit that the owner who installed these was creating a very Hellenistic-styled home and used this exedra mosaic as the centrepiece of his beliefs and affinities. The identities of the characters are uncontested, but the purpose of a scene like this is not as clear.

The third question: What is the function of the mosaic within its current and historical home? Historically, the mosaic was horizontal on the exedra floor covered in part by furniture. Cohen suggests that this placement did not allow the viewer to appreciate the piece fully because some of the detail would have been obscured. [10] I do not wholly agree with this since the function of this piece was a demonstration of wealth and thus people would not have interacted with it like they do with modern pieces of art. Berry cites the use of *opus vermiculatum* throughout and this elaborate stonework adds subtlety and precision, [11] but I do not believe its use was decorative only—it was also functional. The mosaic was transported to the Naples Museum where it currently hangs vertically under a sheet of protective glass. This display enables the viewer to see the piece in its (surviving) entirety, though not in its original context. This display method is due to the limited space that museums have and the ease of preservation that is necessary for modern museums with many visitors. A replica of the piece, however, is currently on display in its original placement in Pompeii, letting visitors view the tiles as intended: a functional floor.

Overall, the answers to these three questions are complicated to conclude, but that does not invalidate the interpretations discussed. The evidence is in favour of agreeing with the consensus that the base for this mosaic was a painting. The evidence is compelling in regard to identifying the central figures in the mosaic, and why such a mosaic would be present at all in Pompeii. In regard to the third question, the interpretations differ, with some scholars believing the mosaic is impossible to view with joy unless displayed vertically, and others, like me, who prefer the

[1] Cohen, *The Alexander Mosaic: Stories of Victory and Defeat*, 1.
[2] Cohen, 176.
[3] Cohen, 176.
[4] Cohen, 177-180.
[5] Cohen, 182-183
[6] Cooley and Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook*, 18-20.
[7] Cohen, 51.
[8] Cohen, 86.
[9] Cohen, 13.
[10] Cohen, 175.
[11] Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, 163.

original setting and location to appreciate its historical place. The evidence suggests the mosaic was an opulent piece but was overwhelmingly functional over decorative. Thus, there are many interpretations to consider of the Alexander Mosaic in the House of the Faun.

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**The King of Queens:**
**Cleopatra Berenike III and the Idea of Sole Female Rulership**

Caitlin Brast

The idea of a sole female ruler in the ancient world is often met with scorn. History courses, books, and teachers all emphasize the fact that women played a secondary role to men in the past; however, this is not entirely true. Occasionally, women held the most powerful positions available to men, such as the reigning monarch. There are some well-known examples of this phenomenon in the traditional structure such as Queen Elizabeth I and Hatshepsut, but there are also some examples of more mysterious women—a prime example is Cleopatra Berenike III, a ruler of the Ptolemaic dynasty. She was queen twice before she took the role of sole monarch for herself. Her life was not an easy one as she dealt with considerable struggles against the men in her family who were jockeying for power; she also met an untimely death at the hands of her last husband. Much like the queens that came before her, and those who followed in her footsteps, a wide variety of factors impacted the viability of her reign. These factors include the general attitude of the Ptolemies about women, a sense of unrest in Egypt at the time, a lack of other suitable candidates, and the actions of the women who came before her. Thus, the reign of Cleopatra Berenike III is an anomaly due to a confluence of factors that mark her time on the throne as something unique to her situation, and not something that was considered viable in the Hellenistic world. While a co-rule between a king and queen, even if that queen had a large degree of power, was acceptable, a woman on her own was not; it was not only frowned upon in Egypt but throughout the Mediterranean. The Romans, who were becoming a powerful force in world affairs, also seemed to disapprove of sole female leadership. Despite the difficulties Berenike's brief reign faced, it still stands out in history merely for happening. Notably, her rule was only viable at the time it happened because of extreme circumstances; just like most other female rulers throughout history, her reign tested what was acceptable to society.

Cleopatra Berenike III was born in the second last decade of the second century BCE. Her life history is unclear because it is unknown who her mother was. Both Cleopatra IV and Cleopatra Selene have been suggested as her mother but due to a vague statement in Pausanias, it is unknown who truly was her mother. [1] What is known, however, is that her father was Ptolemy IX Lathyrus. Her life was quickly thrown into turmoil as the men in the family fought for power. She would marry her uncle Ptolemy X Alexander I at the very end of the second century. Soon, she would have a child, or maybe even children by him, and who they were remains a mystery. It has been suggested she bore a daughter because Ptolemy X is said to have had a daughter at the same time that she was his wife. [2] The identity of this daughter is unknown but many suggestions have been made. In *Women in Hellenistic Egypt,* Sarah Pomeroy refers to Ptolemy XI Alexander II as Berenike's son; [3] however, this seems highly unlikely for numerous reasons. Firstly, while other sorts of incestuous marriage were acceptable, mother-son marriages seemed to have been taboo, and a marriage between parent and child may have never happened or only occurred once in the history of Ptolemaic Egypt. [4] It is also unlikely for the fact that the sources referring to Ptolemy XI as her son, all likely from the same author, may have simply been following convention when they called him her son and were not speaking to any biological relation. [5] Cleopatra Berenike III's early life was full of mystery and strife, but even more was to come.

Berenike's husband Ptolemy X soon gained control of Egypt when her father Ptolemy IX was expelled following a conflict with his brother and Cleopatra III. The Alexandrians, however, would grow unhappy with their new leader and, in turn, have him exiled. After a brief attempt to return to power, Ptolemy X left Egypt for good and died in a naval engagement shortly after. Into this vacuum of power returned Ptolemy IX who adopted the now free Cleopatra Berenike III as his co-ruler. In what capacity she was his co-ruler, is another mystery. It has been suggested that following in tradition, as co-rulers they were married; [6] but others point out that there is little evidence to prove this point because only one stele referred to the two as a married couple. [7] While father-daughter incest was not unheard of in Pharaonic Egypt, where it was practiced by rulers as famous as Akhenaten and Ramses the Great, it is important to remember that the Ptolemies were as far away from those people as a twenty-first century reader is to the Ptolemies. As mentioned earlier, parent-child incest was not something that was practiced regularly in this family. In fact, if this marriage happened, it would be the only one of its kind in the entire history of the Ptolemaic dynasty. [8]

[1] Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death: the Hellenistic Dynasties,* 94.
[2] Ogden, 96.
[3] Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt: From Alexander to Cleopatra,* 24.
[4] Ager, "The Power of Excess: Royal Incest and the Ptolemaic Dynasty," 170.
[5] Bennett, "Ptolemaic Dynasty."
[6] Ogden, 94; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras,* 175.
[7] Ogden, 113.
[8] Ager, 170.

Nevertheless, this association, be it marriage or not, did not last long. After less than a year of returning to rule, Ptolemy IX died in the last months of 81 BC. [9] Now, there was another vacuum of power, but this time there was no obvious male candidate to fill the throne. Cleopatra Berenike III would, therefore, take the throne but her reign was to be brief. She only held power for about three to four months as her reign was cut short by the return of her nephew or possible son, Ptolemy XI.[10] He had been among the court of Sulla and when he returned to Egypt, he was so unwilling to share the throne with Berenike that within three weeks he killed her. Porphyry sums up the situation thus:

> This man [Ptolemy XI Alexander II] was the son of the younger Ptolemy [X Alexander I] and the stepson of Cleopatra [Berenike], [and] having tarried in Rome, at the time when there was an absence of manpower to control Egypt, he came by invitation to Alexandria. And he married the afore-mentioned Cleopatra [Berenike]. Loath to accept the royal authority of his wife, he murdered her after 19 days. And he himself was butchered in the midst of a riot by those who were armed for the games, on account of this vile murder. [11]

This ended her reign—one that was short but nevertheless history-making as she was one of the only sole female rulers of the entire Hellenistic era.

There were many factors contributing to Berenike's memorable reign, such as the heated sibling rivalry that was prominent in the Ptolemaic family. At different points, her husband Ptolemy X and her father were exiled, and much like their predecessors Ptolemy VI and VIII, they spent a great deal of time fighting over who controlled Egypt and who was stuck with the lesser part of the empire in Cyprus or Cyrene. Throughout her life Berenike saw the crown of Egypt switch hands several times and even saw the repercussions of being an overly powerful woman in her husband Ptolemy X's execution of Cleopatra III. [12] There were power shifts happening everywhere and during Ptolemy X's reign, there was even a massive uprising in Thebes. Pomeroy suggests that at least in the second century, this unrest led to greater power for the queens. [13]

This was not the only problem in the family because the dynastic infighting led to the deaths and exiles of most of the family's members. This created an opportunity for Berenike to either make her move or be thrown into power. Cleopatra Berenike III was, with her stepson Ptolemy XI Alexander, the last of the Ptolemies descended from a royal marriage; once both were dead, the Alexandrians had to find sons of Ptolemy IX and possibly a concubine in order to continue the family line. [14] The parentage of Ptolemy XII, their successor, is a mystery and Chris Bennett suggests that he could have been a legitimate child of Cleopatra IV. [15] Whether or not he was truly legitimate, the people of Alexandria did not consider him so, which gave him the unflattering nickname of Ptolemy Nothos, or Ptolemy the Bastard. [16] Either way, it is clear the Alexandrians preferred the rule of a woman, even briefly, to Ptolemy XII or his brother; thus her reign might have been one of convenience. With no other royals to fill the throne as the main ruler, the people simply used the nearest person of royal blood for the role. Cleopatra Berenike III might have also represented the point of no return with people recognizing that the dynasty of the Ptolemies was thinning out; the Alexandrians desperately hung onto her as a vestige of the once great empire. While she had already been co-ruler twice, she had never ruled as a sole ruler—although neither had many other Ptolemies. From queen to queen regnant, there was quite a bit of change in her life. J. Whitehorne suggests that when her father took her on as co-regent, he was doing so in an attempt to legitimize his reign. [17] She was clearly popular, both as co-regent and as queen regnant, so the fact that she was made queen seems to have been a reminder of better times in the fading light. In times of great prosperity with a healthy royal family, a woman would not likely have been the people's first choice. In this difficult time, however, a queen regnant seemed more viable than letting the once great dynasty slip through their fingers.

Berenike's reign did not come completely out of the blue because the women who came before her helped pave the way for a sole reign. Ptolemaic women were quite powerful in their own right and were respected beyond their abilities to produce heirs. Unlike classical Athens, this was not a situation where a marriage occurred and the woman was sent away to the women's quarters to spin her life away, quite literally. Women in Ptolemaic Egypt might have started out by stretching their independent wings in the religious sphere but at this point, they were firmly rooted in the politics of the time. Cleopatra I acted as regent for her immature son by putting her name ahead of his on all

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[9] Bennett, "The Chronology of Bernice III," 145.

[10] Bennett, "Bernice III," 145.

[11] Toye, "Porphyry (260)," F2.11.

[12] Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens: A Study in Woman-Power in Macedonia, Seleucid Syria, and Ptolemaic Egypt,* 168.

[13] Pomeroy, 23.

[14] Whitehorne, 213.

[15] Bennett, "Ptolemaic Dynasty."

[16] Bennett, "Ptolemaic Dynasty."

[17] Whitehorne, 175.

official documentation. Although he was king, she made it well known who was pulling all the strings behind the scenes. [18] This subtle move was one of the first in a line that would gradually increase the power of the queens.

The next queen, Cleopatra II, had even more power than her mother. In the confusion of the reigns of her, her daughter (from a previous marriage), and their mutual husband Ptolemy VIII Physcon, it appears that there was a brief moment where Cleopatra II claimed to be sole sovereign, at least in the city of Alexandria, and called herself by the regnal title of Cleopatra Thea Philometor Soteira. [19] Pomeroy notes that her name appears alone in papyri at a time of civil war in 130-127 BC but is reluctant to call her a sole female ruler. [20] Instead, as noted by many authors, the role of the first sole female ruler of the Ptolemies goes to Cleopatra Berenike III. This confusion emphasizes the fact that Berenike III did not rise up to be the first female ruler out of nowhere, but instead she was following the footsteps of her powerful female ancestors. Another queen who might have ruled on her own, at least in one city, is Berenike III's fellow Ptolemaic princess in Seleucid Syria, i.e., Cleopatra Thea, who briefly ruled on her own in the city of Ptolemais. Despite being in a different empire, she again provides a reference point for the viability of sole female rule. Seleucid Syria was in even more of a political shamble than Ptolemaic Egypt and again points to the fact that women can rule. Further, if they provide even a semblance of stability and recollection of the "good old days," then the rule of women would be accepted to prevent the empire from ruination.

Despite the fact that Cleopatra Berenike III's reign held historical significance, almost no material culture remains from her rule. Even the literary sources, which were not silent about the inappropriateness of a female ruler during the time of Cleopatra VII, were relatively quiet about Berenike. Cicero remarked on her popularity and she was also mentioned briefly by a few other authors but besides this, the literary record is relatively silent. [21] One of the only acts that is known from her reign is the inauguration of the dynastic cult of the "father loving goddess." [22] Due to the lack of evidence it is hard to judge her rule. This might have simply been a result of her short reign or there might be further reasoning for the lack of evidence.

One area that is completely lacking is numismatics. No surviving coins bear the image of Cleopatra Berenike III, not even from her two reigns as a queen alongside the Ptolemies. Contrast this with the ambitious coinage of Cleopatra Thea who not only put her face ahead of her husband's on the coins she made but also had her face alone on coinage. [23] If Berenike had any idea she would be ruling on her own, it is likely she would have had the mints ready to pump out coinage to celebrate her historic reign, not try to hide this historic affair; however, the opposite could also be true. Once Rome caught wind of this woman ruling on her own, they quickly sent a man to accompany her. She could have been trying to keep her reign quiet to escape the notice of her fellow kingdoms, at least until she had established herself. More simply, she might not have had the time to manufacture new coins because she ruled for a short period and there might have been more pressing matters. While the vagaries of history may have destroyed any coins made, it seems odd that so many coins remain from so many other Ptolemaic rules but not hers. It is also notable that many of the other Ptolemaic queens did not appear on coins. While earlier queens of the dynasty occasionally appeared alongside their husbands, queens were not common numismatic symbols. It would seem, however, that the appropriate time to break the trend of women not appearing on coinage would be with a sole woman as ruler. The lack of coinage could mean many things. It might show that the queen herself did not consider her own rule a viable option until it happened. It is impossible to know exactly what Berenike thought about her own rule; but what is known is that there is a strong indication that this lack of coinage means something more than a simple oversight.

Another area of material culture which is lacking is sculpture. Due to the formulaic nature of statuary at the time, it can be hard to identify which Cleopatra each piece is, but notably only one statue is attributed to Cleopatra Berenike III. [24] While Pausanias does mention a bronze sculpture made in her image, the piece is lost to history similar to the fate of most ancient metal works. [25] The questions asked about numismatics are just as valid here. It is interesting that there are not many Greek or Egyptian style pieces of her nor are there any other works in her likeness. Was she trying to hide her rule, or did she want to celebrate it but could not? Or perhaps, maybe she did but they too were lost to the vagaries of time; or it could be that they were intentionally destroyed for some reason, maybe by followers of her vengeful final husband. Further, it is also possible that she had only made a few statues during her brief reign, thus there was much less to be destroyed. Another possibility is that there are many images of her, but they cannot be

[18] Pomeroy, 23.
[19] Macurdy, 153.
[20] Pomeroy, 24.
[21] Cicero, "About the Alexandrian King."

[22] Bennett, "Ptolemaic Dynasty."
[23] Whitehorne, plates 6 and 10.
[24] Lendering, *Cleopatra Bernice III*.
[25] Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.9.3.

identified as such due to the similarity of female Hellenistic portraiture. The most likely cause, however, is the relentless march of time which has destroyed images of countless rulers. Whatever the case may be, as it stands in the early twenty-first century, there is almost no material culture associated with Cleopatra Berenike III, exemplifying some of the mystery behind this queen.

One of the key issues in the viability of a ruler is the acceptance by her fellow heads of state. As many imposters to the throne throughout history have learned, anyone can call themselves king, but it hardly matters if no one else recognises that power. The question then must be asked of Cleopatra Berenike III: Was she recognized? The Alexandrians seemed to have loved her, as Cicero noted that she "was loved and welcomed by the people." [26] Other writers, such as Appian suggest that others, even the royal family, wanted a man for the throne and were thus not happy with a woman in sole power. [27] However, no one except the Romans seemed to take action to remedy the situation with a solution they found acceptable. The Romans sent Ptolemy XI to Egypt to aid the queen but instead he murdered her. The following riot and murder by the Alexandrians further go to show that they cared deeply about their queen. These actions show that the Romans were completely unwilling to let Berenike rule on her own. Why, though? Was it simply because she was a woman? Roman society was more restrictive of their women than the rather free upper echelons of Ptolemaic Egypt and they certainly would have thought of the whole arrangement as odd or against the way they did things. It is also possible that the Romans, who were beginning to be very interested in the goings-on of other nations, wanted more control. When they sent Ptolemy XI back to Egypt, he very well could have been going to Egypt as a Roman plant, someone sympathetic to their causes and young enough to be swayed by their encouragement. The Romans had been on the periphery of Egypt's radar, offering friendship and support to other rulers, but this was their first major interference in the affairs of the Egyptian state. The effect on the running of the country was huge, with the death of two monarchs in less than a month. Could the Romans have purposely sent Ptolemy XI to destabilize Egypt? Whether he was sent as a reaction to a woman going against the standard order, as someone who was a Roman sympathiser, or as an attempt to undermine Egypt's power, the result was the same. The cracks in Egypt's ruling family grew deeper and wider, and Egypt was destabilized further than it had been when Berenike came to the throne.

One question remains: Does all the questioning of the viability of a sole female ruler provide us with understanding about people from the ancient world? It is certainly true that the ancients viewed gender in a considerably different light than modern Western societies do. Would the people in Ptolemaic Egypt have cared that much about the gender of their ruler as long as they had someone of royal blood on the throne? Or was it a freak occurrence viewed with such disgust that it was hoped it would never happen again? Based on the reactions to some later queens, especially Cleopatra VII, it seems plausible that sole female rule was not as viable an option as it may have seemed with Cleopatra Berenike III. The Romans, who at this time were even more powerful than earlier, constantly berated her for many reasons, calling her out for the bizarre foreign customs of the exotic land of Egypt because they let a woman rule. [28] So, is it a modern feminist dream to even assume that women were ever equal enough to rule on their own? While it was certainly not the norm for women to rule, it was also probably not the most bizarre, abject horror that it could have been.

Sole female rule in the ancient world seems to mostly come about in times of great stress on the kingdom and may have been a reasonable solution to some of the problems of the time. The Ptolemaic kingdom was a mere fifty years from falling to the Romans after the death of Cleopatra VII and it was with Cleopatra Berenike III that the first omens of their eventual takeover of Egypt were heralded. This interference from Rome was important to the overall acceptance of a female ruler as Rome's opinions were beginning to be taken seriously across the ancient Mediterranean. If the Romans did not consider a female ruler a viable option, were they truly viable at all? While the Alexandrians loved her, it does not seem like Cleopatra Berenike III was expecting to be ruling on her own, judging from the lack of material evidence. She might not have been expecting her father, with whom she was co-ruling, to die so soon after reclaiming the throne, or maybe she might have assumed a man would come along and she could continue to rule with him. She most likely was not expecting her untimely death at the hands of her husband. Her reign was not completely unsupported, however, as prior female rulers who verged on securing independent power set up the possibility for her reign. Most notable of these include Cleopatra II and Cleopatra Thea, both controlling individual cities before Cleopatra Berenike III took the full leap and held the reins of a whole empire. The political instability of Egypt at the time also aided in her being seen as a viable option to the throne. Rather than letting go of the stability

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[26] Cicero, "About the King of Alexandria."
[27] Appian, *Civil Wars,* 1.102.

[28] Macurdy, 222.

offered by previous Ptolemaic rulers, the people of Alexandria hung on desperately to her in one last chance to capture some of the empire's former glory. When putting all the pieces together, the puzzle of sole female rule in the ancient world begins to make a cohesive picture. When times were tough and people were running out of options, they turned to what they knew rather than start afresh even if that meant bending the boundaries of what was previously acceptable. While not everyone would have been happy with this decision, for the brief period when this experiment in ruling occurred, things seemed to work well. This is exactly what happened with Cleopatra Berenike III, a now mostly forgotten queen who nevertheless made history.

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**Lucretius the Mythbuster:**
**A Poetic Analysis of *De Rerum Natura* 3.980-1010**

Elakkiya Sivakumaran

A common trope in medical dramas is the following scene: a patient is flatlining, the machines are beeping, nurses are rushing into the room, then a heroic doctor comes in ready to use the defibrillator and revive the patient. But this conventional scene is incorrect, a myth. Dan Koboldt explains in his book about debunking science myths that a flatlining patient cannot be revived by a defibrillator because the machine is for 'resetting' irregular heart rhythms, not for creating a heart rhythm where there was none. [1] In his poem *De Rerum Natura* Lucretius attempts to do a similar service of disproving the myths of Tantalus, Tityos, Sisyphus, and the Danaids by reinterpreting these stories of the underworld in book 3 from line 980 to 1010. He uses various literary devices to allegorize his retellings in order to show readers that death is nothing to fear. He argues that the physical tortures of the underworld are manifestations of the psychological anxieties facing mortals, which can be solved with an Epicurean lifestyle.

First, Lucretius uses the myth of Tantalus as an allegory for people's fear of religion. He sets the stage for his allegorical interpretation by using a certain version of the Tantalus myth. Rather than using the version in which the water and food Tantalus tries to get moves out of his reach, Lucretius uses the version where there is a rock above Tantalus' head that can fall on him at any moment. Using this version that is "common in Greek lyric and tragedy… [emphasizes] not the tantalizing of Tantalus but his fear." [2] Lucretius emphasizes the focus on fear by using a form of the verb *timere* ('to fear') in 980 and 983 as well as *formidine* (981) and *metus* (982), both meaning 'fear.' Tantalus fears that the rock hanging above him may fall on him if he moves, so he cannot do what he wants. Lucretius likens this fear to that of mortals regarding the gods who influence the way people behave, hence the repetition of fear-related vocabulary in these few lines. The rock is a metaphor for the gods because they were believed to live physically above mortals in the heavens, just as the rock dangles above Tantalus' head. This is depicted in the lines themselves as the line with the rock, *impendens magnum timet aere saxum* (980), is literally juxtaposed *above* the line with Tantalus standing in fear (981), reinforcing the imagery of the rock hanging above Tantalus' head. Lucretius uses the alliteration of *Tantalus* and *torpens* ('standing frozen') and their position at either end of the line to show how fear (*formidine*) is inside the petrified Tantalus just as it is inside this line between these words. The line below (982) complements the imagery as it talks about the fear of gods 'pressuring' or 'oppressing' (*urget*) mortals. The three lines together (980-82) show the psychological fear of gods pressing on Tantalus from below while the physical fear of the rock presses him from above. Lucretius uses his metaphor with the rock and religion to show how Tantalus' fear of physical punishment in the afterlife is actually a psychological fear of retribution mortals have in their material life.

Lucretius also uses this allegory of Tantalus to comment on religion which Epicureanism argues against. First, he uses *ut famast* (981) to distance himself from the myth, and to emphasize that the story was said by someone else. [3] Then, he ridicules the fear of gods by associating it with *cassa* and *inanis*, both meaning 'vain' or 'empty'. He uses the former to describe Tantalus' fear of the rock in 981, which is a metaphor for mortals' fear of the gods (*divom metus*) in 982 that he describes with *inanis*. Both West and Godwin note a pun or play on words with *casum* in line 983: as a fourth declension noun it can mean chance or fate (relating to religion), but as a perfect passive participle of *cado, cadere* it can mean fallen. [4] The former is what mortals fear, according to Lucretius, but the latter is what Tantalus fears of the rock; and Lucretius thinks both are frivolous beliefs. By simultaneously trying to disparage religion and disprove the myth of Tantalus by saying it is a manifestation of a mortal fear, Lucretius encourages his audience to poke fun at the other myths in the passage, to believe his allegorical interpretations, and most importantly to stop fearing death as the real fear exists only in life's troubles.

The next myth Lucretius references is that of Tityos and he says that it is an allegory for the pain and chaos of mortal love. He emphasizes the impossibility of the myth right from the beginning by using anaphora with *nec* in 984-5. He also uses logic to disprove the myth by saying Tityos does not have enough flesh to feed the vultures perpetually (991). His most prominent tactic to make readers disbelieve this myth, and the underworld, is by allegorizing it. He shows how Tityos being eaten by birds every day in death is an allegory for the pains that come with love in life. Lucretius draws parallels between the myth and love with metaphor. He first describes Tityos' body as *Acherunte iacentem* (984), then as in *amore iacentem* (992); the lines are connected through the repetition of

[1] Koboldt, *Putting the Science in Fiction: Expert Advice for Writing with Authenticity in Science Fiction, Fantasy, & Other Genres,* 27-28.
[2] West, *The Imagery and Poetry of Lucretius,* 98.
[3] Godwin, *Lucretius: Selections from the De Rerum Natura,* 73; Wallach, *Lucretius and the Diatribe Against the Fear of Death: De Rerum Natura III 830-1094,* 91.
[4] Godwin, 73; West, 98.

*iacentem* which helps Lucretius compare Acheron to love and suggest that Hell is a mythological metaphor for love. He reinforces the metaphor by also repeating *volucres* in 984 and 993; though this word can be translated as birds, Stallings translates the instances as 'flapping vultures' and 'flapping cupids' respectively, implying that man-eating vultures are a metaphor for flying cupids associated with love. [5] Then, he creates a dichotomy between the physical toils of Tityos and the psychological damage of love with his vocabulary. He uses words that emphasize the size of Tityos, such as *immani* ('huge'), *proiectu* ('stretched out'), and *exstet* ('extend') in line 987. [6] He also uses words that emphasize the anxiety in love, such as *dolorem* ('pain' 990) *anxius angor* ('anxious anguish' 993), and *cuppedine curae* ('craving for care' 994). The contrast in vocabulary shows how the physical nature of Tityos' punishment is a metaphor for the psychological traumas of love. The word choice, alliteration, and negative metaphors help the poet propagate his Epicurean values against love. They also show that because Tityos' punishment in Hell is really a representation of the troubles that come with love in one's mortal life, there is less reason to fear death.

The third story Lucretius uses to criticize the fear of death while spreading Epicurean values is the myth of Sisyphus. Lucretius uses this figure to show that having political ambitions is futile, just like trying to roll a rock up a hill when that rock will only fall back to the base time and time again. To aid in the imagery of Sisyphus rolling the rock, he uses enjambment by ending line 1000 with *monte* ('mountain') and beginning the next line with *saxum* ('rock'); he also begins line 1002 with *volvitur* ('rolling down'). Together these lines create a clear narrative of Sisyphus pushing the rock up a mountain (notably *monte* is in the line literally above *saxum*) and the rock rolling back down again. Lucretius, then, brings the political aspect of his allegory to life by using related vocabulary. For example, in lines 995-7 "*petere* is the stock word for standing for election; *recedere* is to demit office." [7] There is also a double meaning to *campi* in line 1002 as it refers to the plain that Sisyphus' rock rolls onto as well as the *Campus Martius* where candidates go for an election. [8] Moreover, Stallings translates *inanis* in line 998 as 'illusion' to show how even if you are elected, power is empty; and as political positions in Rome were termed, power is also temporary. [9] Lucretius emphasizes the futility of politics by using hyperbole in line 997 with *semper*, i.e., the politician 'always comes back sad and beaten'; and in 998 with *nec… umquam*, i.e., 'To seek power—an illusion after all—which is never given'. [10] With these extreme statements of 'always' and 'never' Lucretius exaggerates the hopelessness of striving for political victory as, realistically, no one would have ever been elected if the situation was as dire as he describes it. Thus, the allegory shows how Sisyphus' physical toiling in the afterlife is in actuality a representation of a psychological inanity, and so there is not so much to fear in death as there is in life.

The final allegory Lucretius uses is the myth of the Danaids which he interprets as people's dissatisfaction with life. The myth is of the Danaids constantly trying to fill up a *pertusum… vas* ('leaking pot' 1009) is a metaphor for mortals trying to feed *animi ingratam naturam* ('an ungrateful mind' 1003)—a fruitless pursuit according to Lucretius. He emphasizes the lack of satisfaction the Danaids and mortals feel by saturating this part of the poem with words related to bounty and consumption, such as *pascere* ('to feed' 1003), *bonis rebus* ('good things' 1004), *satiare* ('to nourish'), *fetus* ('fruit' 1006), *explemur* ('to fill' 1007), *fructibus* ('fruits' 1007), and *florente* ('blooming' 1008). This reinforces the imagery of the overall allegory where no number of good things for mortals and no amount of water for the Danaids can ever fulfil them. Lucretius also shows the contrast between plenty and shortage by ending line 1003 with *semper* and 1004 with *numquam*. This shows a clear parallel between the unrewarding labour of the Daniads in Tartarus and the unattainable level of satisfaction that mortals seek. Moreover, "[if] the name Tartarus derives from the Greek verb *tarasso* ('I disturb'), then this has added piquancy in that Epicurus' ideal state of contentment was ataraxia or 'lack of being disturbed' and so he can set up Tartarus as the enemy of *ataraxia*" (Godwin 75). This notion along with the contrast between the physical labour of the Danaids and the psychological anxiety associated with mortals' impossible pursuit of happiness shows how fear of the underworld takes people further away from the valued *ataraxia* in Epicureanism. These ideas in the poem also help Lucretius transmit his philosophical beliefs while encouraging readers to forego their fear of death.

As with *ut famast* in the first allegory, Lucretius uses *memorant* (1009) here in the last one to indicate that the myth was told by someone else and he is merely reporting it. [11] This also creates a symmetry in the passage as a whole and reminds readers of the distance between Lucretius and religion/mythology. Notably, the poet also uses *nobis* in line 1005 and the first-person plural ending in *explemur* (1007) to associate himself with other mortals, who are also his readers. He uses an instance of *nobis* in each allegory (cf. Lines 979, 992, and 995). The contrast between

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[5] Lucretius, *The Nature of Things*, 102.
[6] Godwin, 73.
[7] West, 100.
[8] West, 102.

[9] Lucretius, 102.
[10] Lucretius, 102.
[11] Wallach, 91.

'they' and 'we' creates a clear dichotomy between those who suffer in reality and those who believe in myths (an Us versus Them scenario) to encourage the audience to pick a side—where the 'correct' answer is implied with the pronoun usage for readers to want to be a mortal and Epicurean like Lucretius. This tactic along with the allegory of the Danaids, compounded with the three others, insists upon readers that there is nothing to fear in death and life is, in fact, the realm with hurdles to overcome; and they *can* be overcome if you follow an Epicurean lifestyle.

Lucretius allegorizes the myth of Tantalus to disparage religion, the myth of Tityos to shun love, the myth of Sisyphus to discourage political ambition, and the myth of the Danaids to spotlight people's dissatisfaction with life. Notably, the four areas of life Lucretius focuses on in the passage are attacked elsewhere in the poem (cf. Religion in 1.62-79; love at the end of book 4; ambition in 2.12, 3.62, and especially 5.1120-35; and dissatisfaction in 3.936 and 6.17-21). [12] His interpretations show that the fear humans have of the physical punishments they may face in the afterlife are actually misplaced psychological fears and anxieties from their mortal life. The contrast between physical and psychological fears is reflected consistently in the passage with Lucretius' versatility in poetic devices. The passage is a way to simultaneously address the human fear of death and to promote other Epicurean values, which aligns well with the purpose of his entire poem and is well placed in the end of his third book, the halfway point of the whole poem.

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[12] Gale, *Myth and Poetry in Lucretius*, 38.

**Accepting an Alternative Attis:**
**Catullus' Creation of the Character in *Carmen* 63 and its Reflection of Roman Reservations Towards a Receding Republic**

Zoen Snyder

The numerous poems of Gaius Valerius Catullus have been a focus of study for many years for their powerful and emotionally evocative language. Each poem is packed with linguistic and thematic subtleties that can only be revealed through many close readings. His longer poems are especially laden with figurative meaning. *Carmen* 63 is one of these long poems. It details the adventure of Attis and their interactions with the cult of Cybele and is often thought to be a retelling of the myth for a Roman audience. This paper will examine Catullus' use of the myth of Attis and Cybele by exploring why his account differs so much from the other versions of this myth, why Attis is the main focus, and the underlying themes of alienation and uncertainty that are presented through Catullus' interaction with a declining political system.

There are a variety of differing accounts that detail the myth of Attis and Cybele which could have influenced Catullus' poem. It is necessary to examine these earlier versions of the myth in order to determine which aspects Catullus is trying to emphasize in *carmen 63*. The oldest description is from Timotheus, who was writing around 300 BCE. [1] In this telling, transmitted through Arnobius, the Phrygian goddess Cybele begets the androgynous Agdistis after a failed rape by Zeus. Dionysus castrates Agdistis, whose blood grows a pomegranate that impregnates the daughter of a local king. She gives birth to Attis who is loved by Cybele and Agdistis. When Attis is engaged to another king's daughter, Cybele and Agdistis show up and drive everyone to madness which causes Attis' self-castration and death. After much mourning from Cybele and Agdistis, Zeus agrees to preserve Attis' body. [2] Hermesianax of Colophon dates to around the same time and transmits a kind of censored version through Pausanias that omits Agdistis, as well as the castration aspect, replacing it with the notion that 'Attes' was born a eunuch, though Attis does still die at the end. [3] Diodorus Siculus' version was based on the account of Dionysius Scytobrachion, and also has no mention of Agdistis or castration, just Attis' death. [4] Ovid's *Fasti* has a description of the myth as well, but he was writing after Catullus, so his version would not have influenced Catullus. Finally, Pausanias also reports on this myth, and while he wrote long after Catullus, his rendition is significant since he claims to have gotten it from local people, not previous writers. [5] As well, he only mentions Agdistis, which was the local Pessinuntine name for Cybele, according to Strabo. [6] Its striking similarity to Timotheus' version attests to the longevity of the myth. The general progression of events that occurs in all the myths begins with Agdistis and/or Cybele loving Attis, then Attis' betrayal, the god causing madness, punishment (usually in the form of castration), then death and bodily preservation. But Catullus' poem does not follow this pattern. The castration happens in the first five lines of the poem. [7] It is still caused by madness, but this madness fades away, leaving Attis to regret the voyage and self-castration. [8] Attis' lamentation is seen as a betrayal by Cybele who sends a lion to scare Attis into submission. [9] Some of the biggest differences here other than the order of events is that Attis is leading a group of initiates who become eunuchs, which is not found in the other versions. [10] As well, Attis does not die in the end, which is an important part of the cult rites. Lastly, Attis is depicted as a Greek youth, not a Phrygian, as indicated by the lamentation speech which references a specifically Greek way of life. [11] While myths often have multiple versions and can vary wildly depending on the author, the other myths of Attis are relatively consistent which means that Catullus' Attis is likely not *the* Attis of legend, but simply *an* Attis; a Greek youth who shares the name 'Attis'.

That Attis comes from Greece specifically could partly be hinted by the name 'Attis'. This name, when aspirated as 'Atthis', means 'woman from Attica', which is the area around Athens. [12] The oldest identified instance of Attis in Greece is a stele from the Piraeus, the port of Athens, from the late fourth century BCE, which indicates that Athens had been a site for the worship the cult of Cybele for a long time. [13] As well, Hermesianax, Pausanias and a few other authors use the name 'Attes', which was the Phrygian version of the name, while 'Attis' is a Greek version.

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[1] Bremmer, "Attis: A Greek God in Anatolian Pessinous and Catullan Rome," 542.

[2] Arnobius, *The Seven Books of Arnobius Adversus Gentes,* 5.5-8.

[3] Pausanias, *Description of Greece,* 7.17.9.

[4] Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, 3.58-59.

[5] Pausanias, 7.17.10.

[6] Strabo, *Geography,* 12.5.3.

[7] Catullus, *Carmina*, 63.5.

[8] Catullus, (madness) 63.4, (fades away) 63.38, 44, and (regret and self-castration) 63.44-49, 73.

[9] Catullus, 63.76-91.

[10] Catullus, 63.11-38.

[11] Catullus, 63.1, 50-72.

[12] Harrison, "Altering Attis: Ethnicity, Gender and Genre in Catullus 63," 522; Nauta, "Catullus 63 in a Roman Context," 600.

[13] Bremmer, 540; Harrison, 522.

[14] The fact that Catullus specifically chose to use the Greek version of the name not only suggests that Attis is from Greece, but also hints at Attis' castration that turned them into a *mulier* because of the connection to the feminine name 'Atthis'.[15] Attis' Greek identity in this poem, in combination with the other differences it has with the mythological tradition, shows that Catullus 63 is not telling the myth of Cybele and Attis, but the fictional narrative of a character named 'Attis'. Fordyce notes that the Attis in poem 63 "bears no resemblance to the Attis of myth and ritual", to which Bremmer agrees. [16] Additionally, 'Attis' was considered a title within the cult and Polybius refers to a priest of Cybele called 'Attis', as well as one named 'Battacus', another common title for the *galli* as part of a 'double priesthood'. [17] This indicates that Attis was likely just a *gallus* of Cybele and may have been called 'Attis' because of their role as leader of the other initiates in the poem. This is significant since it means that Catullus is not simply retelling the myth for a Roman audience but using 'Attis' as a character who engages with the cult of Cybele in order to express his own feelings and the feelings of his contemporaries toward the tumultuous time in which they live.

Attis is simply a young Greek who got caught up in Cybele's cult, and not the Phrygian youth from the myths, but since this poem was for a Roman audience, it raises the question of why Attis is not Roman. If the goal was to add an exoticizing element, making Attis Phrygian would have accomplished that. The cult as a whole had its origins in Phrygia, but the figure of Attis may not have. The cult of Cybele likely arose before 900 BCE in Asia Minor and developed out of similar cults such as the one to Atargatis, who also had eunuch priests, or *galli*, as well as lions and a mural crown. [18] But the oldest evidence of Cybele does not give any indication of the existence of Attis. [19] In fact, there is no archaeological or literary evidence of a cult to Attis before the fourth century BCE and before the emergence of Greek epigraphy and literature on the cult. [20] Specifically, Attis does not appear in Phrygian material, only in Greek material that mentions Phrygia. [21] Similarly, in Lydia, which borders Phrygia, a cult to Attis is not found until the third century CE. [22] Even in the second century CE, Attis is not well known in Phrygia, and in the account by Pausanias, he says that much of the information about Attis is kept secret. [23] Lightfoot calls Attis a 'western invention', and Showerman substantiates this claim with the statement that due to the lack of evidence for Attis in the East, and the scarce occurrence of Attis in Greek literature, the only conclusion is that 'no such widespread worship of Attis could have existed in Asia Minor prior to the third century BCE', especially compared to its later popularity in the Roman Empire. [24] So, part of the reason Catullus' Attis is Greek could very well have been because the Romans saw Attis as more of a Greek figure than a Phrygian one. It could even be a representation of how the myth of Attis migrated from Greece to become part of the cult in Phrygia just as the character of Attis does the same.

This opens the questions of why the mythological Attis was created and what their significance to the cult was. The invention of Attis likely began with Timotheus, who was employed by Ptolemy I to make Serapis appealing to the Alexandrian population, and the fact that the earliest Greek account of the myth of Attis is from Timotheus hints that he may have written it to make the cult of Cybele more palatable. [25] The eunuchs associated with the cult were the main reason it was not appealing to western sensibilities. [26] Many poems in the Hellenistic serve an aetiological function, so it is likely that this myth was created as an aetion to explain why the *galli* castrate themselves, and Lightfoot even calls Attis 'a divine prototype for the *galli*'. [27] The fact that the mythological tradition differs regarding the reason Attis was castrated supports this, since it suggests that the purpose of castration element was not important in the original cult, only to the Greeks. Attis also took on a similar role to Adonis, due to Cybele's association with Aphrodite in Greece, and there was a festival for Attis at the Piraeus that had much in common with the Adonia, serving to make Attis, and therefore the *galli*, seem more familiar to the Greeks. [28] As well, 'Attes' could have simply been the title of Cybele's eunuchs in Phrygia which Timotheus used for his mythological figure because it was similar to the Greek name.

Attis' Greek origin is significant since the importation of Cybele's cult into Rome from Pessinus in 204 BCE, did not include the worship of Attis. The accounts that detail Cybele's arrival give no indication of the presence of

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[14] Bremmer, 547, 553-554.
[15] Catullus, 63.63.
[16] Fordyce, *Catullus: A Commentary*, 261; Bremmer, 566.
[17] Showerman, "Was Attis at Rome Under the Republic?" 56; Polybius, *Histories,* 21.37.5; Bremmer, 554.
[18] For cult of Cybele see Showerman, 51; for cult of Atargatis see Lightfoot, "Sacred Eunuchism in the Cult of the Syrian Goddess," 71-73.
[19] Showerman, 51.
[20] Lancellotti, *Attis Between Myth and History: King, Priest and God,* 34; Showerman, 51-52; Lightfoot, 72-73.

[21] Lightfoot, 80.
[22] Bremmer, 539.
[23] Harder, "Catullus 63: A 'Hellenistic Poem'?" 577; Showerman, 54; Pausanias, 7.17.9.
[24] Lightfoot, 80; Showerman, 52.
[25] Bremmer, 543.
[26] Bremmer, 549.
[27] Harder, 579; Lightfoot, 80.
[28] Showerman, 52-53.

Attis. [29] In fact, the first mention of Attis in Roman literature is in Catullus 63. [30] This is odd since Pergamon aided the transport of the cult to Rome, according to Varro. [31] This is supported by the use of Greek for the cult hymns and roles like the *dendrophori*, as well as the style of the votives found in Rome, and the reference to Mount Ida, so it would make sense for Attis to have been introduced to Rome through Pergamon as well. [32] But the introduction of the *Mater Magna Idaea*, as she was called in Rome, was strictly controlled by the state, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus declares that some aspects of the rites of Cybele were cut from the cult upon its arrival in Rome. [33] Attis may have been one of them. Even in Catullus' own time, he is the only writer who mentions Attis directly. His contemporary Lucretius wrote a detailed passage about the rites of the cult but left Attis out entirely. [34] This may be because Lucretius was noting the cult practices, which Attis was not part of in Rome, while Catullus was writing a narrative. Many of the other contemporary writers who talk about the rites of Cybele, such as Varro, Cicero, Caecilius and Laberius, also make no mention of Attis. [35] Ovid later presents a version of the myth of Attis, and he along with Catullus are the only two Roman authors who include the name 'Attis' in their works until the reign of Claudius, though Ovid's account mostly refers to Attis as a mythological figure and does not indicate his role in the religious rites. [36] This indicates that the existence of Attis was known in Rome, but his worship was not established until the Imperial period as well as that Catullus' Roman audience would not have had a strong association of a figure called 'Attis' with the cult of Cybele.

Since Attis was an obscure figure in the Republic, Catullus was likely influenced to write poem 63 while stationed in Bithynia, since by then the worship of Attis would have been practised in the area alongside the worship of Cybele. This could have also given him the notion of 'Attis' as a title for the leader of the other *galli*, and the local people may have seen Attis as Greek as well. The Greeks viewed Attis as Phrygian, but the Romans and Phrygians likely viewed Attis as a Greek. So, this Greek identity also serves to demonstrate a contrast between the East and the West in poem 63. [37] Furthermore, Catullus' poem takes place around the area where he was staying in the Troad instead of the traditional setting of Pessinus, as evidenced by the mention of Mount Ida, which was located in that area, as well as Attis' voyage over the sea and the later lament on the shore, that could not have occurred in the inland location of Pessinus. [38] So, the identification of Attis as a Greek instead of a Roman could simply attest to the popularity of the cult in Greece compared to in Rome, where no mention is made of Attis prior to this poem, and support the East-West polarity that is an important aspect of the work.

In order to determine why this Attis is the main focus of Catullus 63, it is first necessary to examine how Attis is functioning in the poem. The youth is depicted as a liminal figure in this work. This can be explored through the cultural anthropological theory of liminality, which deals with rites of passage, as described by Arnold van Gennep. Rites of passage play a key role in ritual ceremonies in order to mark transitions within society. [39] There are three kinds of rites of passage and many ceremonies involve all three: separation/preliminal rites, transition/liminal rites, and reincorporation/postliminal rites. [40] An important part of transitional ceremonies is that they require physical movement over a threshold of some kind, in Catullus 63, this takes the form of the sea which joins Attis' past and future lives. [41] It also marks the first stage of Attis' transition since it separates Attis from their original society. [42] The next phase is the liminal one where the initiate takes on new 'ambiguous characteristics' and forms a temporary community with the other initiates. [43] This is seen in the poem with Attis' castration and alignment with the other *galli*, as Attis is the leader of the other initiates and gives a rousing speech. [44] However, Attis does not undertake the final step that would complete the rite of passage and return the initiate to a stable role. [45] This is where Attis' Greek identity becomes more important, since this progression mirrors the rituals of Greek youths becoming men. They would be brought outside of the city to symbolize a 'separation from their former identity' and would adopt a transitional state where they would cross-dress in order to reject it, then finally they would re-enter society as citizen men. [46] This was a precarious time in the youth's life since sources often portray *ephebes* as 'sexually ambiguous' and

[29] Vermaseren, *Cybele and Attis: The Myth and the Cult*, 96.
[30] Bremmer, 558; Ellis, *A Commentary on Catullus*, 258; Showerman, 46.
[31] Varro, *On the Latin Language,* 6.15
[32] Bremmer, 557-558.
[33] Vermaseren, 96; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *The Roman Antiquaries,* 2.19
[34] Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura,* 2.600-659.
[35] Bremmer, 558.
[36] Showerman, 55.
[37] Harrison, 532.
[38] Nauta, 600.

[39] Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 3.
[40] Van Gennep, 11.
[41] Van Gennep, 191-192; Catullus, 63.1, 16, 48; De Villiers, "Liminality and Catullus's Attis," 157; Kroon, "The Effect of the Echo: A Text Linguistic Approach to Catullus *Carmen* 63," 642-643.
[42] De Villers, 165.
[43] Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 94-97.
[44] De Villers, 165; Attis as leader see Catullus, 63.16, 34; Attis' speech Catullus, 63.11-26.
[45] Turner, 94.
[46] Robson, "Bestiality and Bestial Rape in Greek Myth," 69-70.

vulnerable to remaining in the passive role. [47] But Attis rejects marriage and the active role of a man with the act of castration and is compared to a heifer avoiding the burden of the yoke, wishing instead to remain in the role of a desirable *eromenos*, which is another uniquely Greek aspect to Attis. [48] This is one aspect that Attis has in common with the mythological tradition: Attis' castration always comes right before a transitional marker into adulthood, such as marriage. Attis is stuck in between identities since they cannot go back to their old life, but also cannot accept their new role as a feminine slave of Cybele. [49] Therefore, they must remain a liminal figure plagued with the instability that accompanies a lack of identity.

Attis is characterized as secluded from society and forced to remain that way and this is intentional as it reflects Catullus' own feelings in a number of ways. Although the poem presents the story of Attis, it is more of a 'theme-centred text' than a narrative-focused one. [50] Despite Catullus' typical emotional openness in his poetry, not every theme is so obvious. One that is relatively clear is the alignment of Attis with Catullus, and Cybele with Catullus' lover Lesbia in a kind of autobiographical allegory. [51] The similarities here are that the dominating Lesbia has control over Catullus because of his fierce love for her, and also later his regret over loving her, much like Attis regrets the castration that was caused by Cybele's influence. [52] In Cybele, the powerfully alluring and emasculating aspects of Lesbia are brought together from poems 51 and 11. [53] However, the extremes of dedication in poem 63 may be too strong for this comparison since Catullus never directly compares his relationship to slavery. [54] In fact, many of his love poems may have a different meaning since they contain a great deal of political language where more-appropriate words could have been used to express love. Specifically, words such as *fides, foedus, officium, pietas,* and *amicitia*, which are typically used for discussing political alliances, not love poetry. [55] The political climate is also reflected in poem 63, where Catullus uses Attis to embody the 'social anxiety caused by a stringent reduction in political autonomy'. [56] This poem is about Roman identity and how it is being reshaped in response to being threatened by the instability of the late Republic due to civil wars and political corruption. Catullus is echoing the disenfranchisement of his peers through the instrument of Attis. Attis as a Greek youth functions to portray a Greco-Roman 'everyman' who represents the insecurity that could befall anyone at any moment. [57] This 'social alienation' and the feeling of a 'loss of elite male social identity' was a product of the socio-political power structure of the declining Republic. [58] Catullus was part of the class of young men who had been prepared their whole lives for a certain life that was now in danger, and they explored these feelings through sympathizing with figures from myths and stories who experienced similar sentiments of dejection and uncertainty. Attis fits this literary role since their emasculation, inability to return home, or to accept their new bleak life, and the immediate fear toward Cybele's lion mirrors the political castration, social estrangement, unexpected loss of status and viable future, and even the imminent sense of danger felt in Rome. As well, Attis' rejection of adult male citizen life could reflect a dismissal of the failing civic system. [59] This notion of Attis as embodying the fear of Catullus and his contemporaries is especially noticeable in the last lines of the poem where Catullus, after imagining what it would be like to be in Attis' position, decides that he does not want that fate and asks the goddess to keep her madness far from him. [60]

The political turmoil of the time was not the only concern Catullus reflected in this poem through Attis. His brother's untimely death deeply affected him, and his grief comes out in this poem through Attis' laments. Catullus returned to his childhood home in Verona after his brother died and was unable to compose poems out of intense despair. [61] He uses Attis to explore his grief, since like Attis, he is separated from his family, specifically his brother, by water. His brother was buried in the Troad where he died so the very same sea that Attis traversed to get to Phrygia is the one that separates Catullus from his brother. His choice to locate the poem in the Troad rather than Pessinus is significant. As well, he is also separated from his brother by the river Lethe in Hades, as he laments in poem 65. [62] Catullus would have been in the area of the Troad for military service as well as to visit his brother's grave and could have been inspired by the cult, bringing back many aspects that he incorporated into his Attis as a way to process his complex feelings surrounding his brother's death. The plea to the goddess at the end of the poem is significant here as well since it reflects Catullus' fears that his *domus* is at risk. In his poems about his brother, he states that he feels

[47] Skinner, "*Ego Mulier:* The construction of Male Sexuality in Catullus," 136.
[48] Catullus, 63.33; Skinner, 137.
[49] De Villiers, 165.
[50] Kroon, 636.
[51] Nauta, 598.
[52] De Villiers, 170; Catullus, 63.45–46, 73.
[53] De Villiers, 171.
[54] Nauta, 598.
[55] Skinner, 143.
[56] Skinner, 140.
[57] De Villiers, 166.
[58] Skinner, 131–142.
[59] Skinner, 142.
[60] Catullus, 63.92–93.
[61] De Villiers, 168–169.
[62] Catullus, 63.5-6; De Villiers, 171.

his 'whole household has been lost' and 'buried with his brother'. [63] This does not refer to his physical home, but rather to his family line, since there is no indication that Catullus had any children, especially considering he died young. [64] He seems to feel guilty and as though he has failed his lineage and conceptualizes himself as castrated in a sense. This brings up ideas of *pietas* since he essentially turned his back on his familial duties by having an affair with a married woman instead of starting his own family, so he projects this guilt and insecurity about it through Attis. The fact that he had already given up hope for this family line as soon as his brother died shows a similar rejection of the social expectations of marriage and family. So not only does Catullus express his anxieties about his current political status in this poem, but also his worries about the future of his house, since in these ways he is just like Attis.

The last of Catullus' feelings that is reflected in poem 63 is that like Attis, he is also a foreigner missing his home. Catullus was born in Verona, which was in the Transpadane area of Cisalpine Gaul, so he did not have Roman citizenship and came to Rome as a '*domi nobilis*'. [65] His poem reveals how he conceptualized home and belonging through Attis. He found his success in Rome and considered it his home, to the extent that he felt out of place on his return to Verona since his very identity as a poet was hampered because he left all his reference material in Rome. [66] This is part of the reason he was not able to compose poems, despite the requests from his Roman friends, while in Verona. His connection to Rome, now his true home, is severed while in Verona due to his inability to produce poems, which demonstrates the importance of making Attis Greek. As a Phrygian, the same sense of being disconnected from his home, and therefore his identity, could not be adequately portrayed. Creating a character of Attis allowed Catullus more flexibility and freedom in writing this poem compared with using an already-established mythological figure, and better allowed him to reflect on himself. As well, the notion that his home was buried with his brother could also represent Catullus relinquishing his original home now that the one thing that tied him to it, his brother, is gone, and accepting his fate as the end of his line, just as Attis accepts their new life in Phrygia. It is in this way that Catullus uses poem 63 to process complicated emotions.

This examination of Catullus' use of Attis in his poem investigated the differences between his work and the mythological tradition, the character of Attis as a Greek, the absence of Attis at Rome in the Republic, and what Catullus was trying to express through Attis. His use of the cult at a time when a great deal of interest was being directed at it reflects many of the anxieties he and his fellow Romans had about the unstable political climate, and the use of an alternate Attis allowed him to be more flexible in the themes he portrayed in *carmen* 63.

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[63] Stevens, *Silence in Catullus*, 238; Catullus, 68b.22, 94; De Villiers, 169.

[64] Fordyce, ix.

[65] De Villiers, 167–168.

[66] De Villiers, 168.

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# The Sun, the Moon, and the Zodiacal Stars:
## The Microcosmic Caves of the Mithraic Cult

Mackenzie Pritchard

Beginning in pre-Zoroastrian Persia, the divinity Mithras had always been associated with the Sun. The Roman cult version of Mithras, although based on what the Romans believed was Eastern Persian practice, was completely Roman by design. [1] In Mithraic cult practices and iconography, there are parallels between Mithras and Sol Invictus, the "Unconquered Sun" and god above all others, and there is a prominent connection between the Mithræum and the cosmos in general. [2] Mithras was a mythical being embedded in a cult that surrounded itself with iconography representing the zodiac and the seven planets. The worshipers of Mithras also prayed to the Sun; whose foundation story is embedded with additional zodiacal references. The worship of a cult associated with the cosmos was odd for the time since the Roman Empire had been actively trying to ban the practice of astrology every few decades. [3] The original mythology associated with Mithras influenced the Roman cult Mithræum's cosmological design. The caves in which the cult worship of Mithras took place acted as microcosmic versions of the universe, complete with zodiacal and planetary iconography, where Mithras became an equivalent to the sun god.

Mithras originated in Persia as the god Mithra, who began the creation of the material world. The myth, which gained traction in the Roman Empire in the first century CE, begins with the sun god sending a raven to Mithra with a message. This message instructed Mithra to sacrifice a white bull. Although this pained Mithra, he completed his task and killed the bull. In the aftermath, the bull transformed into the Moon and the cloak Mithra had been wearing became the star filled sky. [4] Through this sacrifice, the "holy seed" of the bull created living creatures, including the scorpion who immediately presented itself as evil on earth, and the bull's sacred blood fertilized the earth. The bull, as the Moon, began its cycles through the sky which created seasons and time. [5]

Throughout the ancient world, the sun god was represented by many different names and worshiped in many different forms. Each culture had their own variation of the sun god, including personifications of dawn and dusk, and each god had their own attributes. As a god of light and creation, Mithras could have easily been assimilated with the sun god, even though the original Persian legend has Mithra as a subordinate. The myth that made its way to Rome included the feast that Mithras shared with the sun god, Sol, after the sacrifice of the bull. [6] This inclusion of a separate sun god creates an inconsistency between sources because others have referred to Mithras as the sun god. Astrology originated in Babylonia where Šamaš, the Babylonian sun god, was not the creator; instead, Sin, the moon god, was the father deity. [7] This is in direct opposition to the order of the universe's creation according to the myth of Mithras, where the Sun brings forth the Moon. To add another level of incoherence to the astrological connections, Šamaš is sometimes related to Taurus instead of Sin. Taurus is often associated with the image of the Bull, which is intensively tied to the Moon in Mithra's mythology as well as when discussing the zodiacal signs. [8]

The cult of Mithras that was widely practiced in the Roman Empire shared some of the aspects of the Eastern myths; however, the worship was completely a Roman invention. [9] One version of a foundational account claims that Cilician pirates captured by Pompey were responsible for the introduction of Mithras to Rome. The cult quickly spread among the male middle class and military before the emperors of the time approved and encouraged the worship. [10] The Roman version was built on the understanding of Platonic philosophies, which placed cult practices in caves. [11] The cave held significant meaning in association with Plato and helped preserve the imagery that links this cult with the zodiac. At the centre of each cave of worship, called a Mithræum, was a depiction of the Mithras Tauroctony, either painted or carved on the far wall or as a three-dimensional statue situated at the head of the grade. The Tauroctony, or bull slaying, was sometimes encompassed in an arc of zodiacal signs symbolizing the heavens, while also drawing parallels with other aspects of the iconography from the Mithras myth. [12]

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[1] Mathisen, *Ancient Roman Civilization: History and Sources 753BCE to 640 CE*, 323.

[2] Sol Invictus and Mithras both emerged as Roman deities around the same time, with Mithras appearing in text less than a century before. Merkelbach, "Mithraism"; Grout, "Sol Invictus and Christmas."

[3] Ripat, "Expelling Misconceptions: Astrologers at Rome".

[4] The reluctance of Mithras to kill the bull is potentially in relation to an Indian source where he was asked to sacrifice a god who took the form of a bull or Moon, according to Merkelbach.

[5] The whole paragraph references Merkelbach.

[6] Beck, "The Mithras Cult as Association," 4.

[7] Reiner, *Astral Magic in Babylonia,* 8.

[8] Reiner, 78.

[9] Mathisen, 323.

[10] The last two sentences use information from Nye, "The Romanesque Signs of the Zodiac," 56.

[11] Merkelbach.

[12] The last two sentences use information from Nye, 57.

**Figure 1.** Mithras is seen holding the knife of Aries and wearing the cloak which becomes the night sky. Among the other characters portrayed are the scorpion, attacking the Bull's genitals, and the raven perched on the cloak instead of on the ear of corn, sprouting from the bull's tail where it is otherwise seen. This depiction also includes the lion, Leo, which can also represent the Sun, and the twins Cautes and Cautopates which are comparative to the sign of Gemini. The zodiac signs form an arc above the tauroctony. The scene at the top of the carving shows Mithras climbing aboard the sun god's chariot after the sacrifice. [13]

The connections between the cult of Mithras and the signs of the zodiac appear frequently and with consistency throughout the many iconographic examples that survive from the Roman Mithraic cult. The most frequent and obvious iconographic example is the bull, which in the myth represents the Moon but also has a home as the second sign of the zodiac. The bull represents the sign of Taurus, an earth sign and the exaltation house of the Moon. [14] In Mithraic mythology, after the bull is sacrificed, part of it—possibly the bull's soul based on the significance that the soul and salvation play in this myth—transforms into the Moon, the tail is often depicted as turning into wheat, and the blood and seed fertilize the living things of the earth. [15] Both the Moon and the element of earth come to fruition in the Mithraic creation story and have an essential connection to Taurus as a zodiacal sign.

In opposition to the bull of the Mithraic lore is Mithras. The mythology portrays Mithras as an assistant of the sun god, a line that gets blurred early when Mithras begins to be worshiped in conjunction with Sol and Helios. [16] The *Mithras Liturgy* includes many references to the use of gold and the importance of the Sun's rays in particular, which solidifies the links with solar iconography. [17] The fire sign Aries, the first sign of the zodiac, represented by a ram, also has association to the sun. [18] Aries is the exaltation house of the Sun as well as the domicile for Mars, the Roman name of the Greek god Ares. Mars / Ares, is most well known for being the god of war and lesser known for being a god of agriculture. According to Porphyry, the knife that Mithras used to kill the bull was the knife of the zodiac sign Aries. The importance of a planet's domicile house is shown by Mars' influence on violence, which is portrayed through its house Aries in the slaughter of an animal. [19] The more positive aspect of Mars, his association with agriculture, appears in the myth as the earth was fertilized by the blood produced from the bull's wound and produced harvest.

As the god of war, Ares had great influence on the participation of the zodiacal sign Aries in the cult of Mithras. Mithræa can be found in the furthest corners of the Roman Empire at its height due to the cult's popularity among soldiers. [20] Mithras was not only worshiped as a god of light, time, and judicial practice as he had been in Persia, but the Romans also attributed their own values to such a highly praised god, including war and leadership. Mithras was praised as a war god by the soldiers of Rome, even though the myth explains that Mithras was hesitant to kill the bull. This association with war is attributed to Mithras' association with Aries, Mars, and the Sun. Since Aries' exaltation benefits the Sun and his house benefits Mars, this allows for the culmination of such traits to appear in descriptions of Mithras who sits next to Aries in most Mithræa. [21] The connection is also drawn in the cult practices; one of the seven grades of the Mithraic hierarchy is attributed to the soldier and it resides under the protection of the planet Mars. [22]

The signs of Taurus and Aries are placed in opposition to each other because of their associations, even though they are seated side by side in most depictions of the zodiac. Taurus strengthens the Moon and Venus, while

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[13] Nye, Plate xxiv.

[14] Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos,* I.19, n.31, and III.11.

[15] Merkelbach.

[16] Betz, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells,* 48; Beck, "Ritual, Myth, Doctrine, and Initiation in the Mysteries of Mithras: New Evidence from a Cult Vessel," 161.

[17] Betz, 48-54.

[18] Ptolemy, I.19 and III.11.

[19] Beck, "Cosmic Models: Some Uses of Hellenistic Science in Roman Religion," 106.

[20] Ulansey, "Locations of the Mithraic monuments in the Roman Empire," 5.

[21] Beck, "Ritual, Myth, Doctrine, and Initiation," 161.

[22] Beck, "The Mithras Cult as Association," 9.

Aries' power aids the Sun and Mars. Although the arcs of the zodiac differ from cult to cult, it is worth mentioning that in some cases the actual order of the stars in the sky are abandoned in favour of the symbolism of the zodiac. [23] While most of the Mithræa that depict Sol and Luna above Mithras have Sol on the left and Luna on the right to reflect the state of the sky in relation to the solstices, some Mithræa have the luminaries reversed and the images of Taurus and Aries lunging towards their respective exaltations. [24] This abnormality shows how important the link between the zodiacal signs of Aries and Taurus was, at least in some cases, to the mythology of the Roman cult worship of Mithras.

The aspects of the zodiac that are represented in the iconography of Mithras are numerous and blatant. Besides the Bull representing Taurus and the knife representing Aries, Gemini and Scorpio are both frequently pictured. Gemini sits between Taurus and Cancer on the ecliptic, representing duality. Within Mithraic art there appears a set of twins, Cautes and Cautopates, who also represent duality. The twins in Mithraic art are usually found on either side of Mithras, one pointing their torch towards the sky and the other towards the ground. [25] These torches represent the duality of the human soul as well as of the Sun, to both rise and set. [26] The Scorpion appears in most Mithraic Tauroctonies, but it is depicted as the evil which was brought about at the creation of the world. [27] Just as in the sky, Scorpio and Taurus are represented as oppositions in Mithraic art. Scorpio is depicted as attacking the genitals of the bull, from which the seed of creation spilled. As a zodiacal sign, Scorpio is the nocturnal house of Mars and represents the fall of the Moon's power; it is associated with the genitals. [28] The depletion of the power of the Moon while in Scorpio along with its alliance with the god of war places the sign and the animal on the side of Mithras.

Also represented in the art is the sun god and his chariot, which are usually positioned above the head of Mithras, clearly depicting the Sun and Mithras as separate beings even though they were worshipped as one. The appearance of the Sun has more to do with representing the layout of the macrocosm and the mythology of the cult than with the zodiacal signs. Nevertheless, it is still relevant to the orientation of the cave and the similarities between Mithras and Sol. Many of the Mithræa also include depictions of a dog, a snake, and a raven because they all appear in the mythology. Each of these animals represents a star or constellation, which leaves the identity of the cosmic version of Mithras open for interpretation. It has been suggested that he may represent Orion, Perseus, or a Sun proxy, the latter of which corresponds with the penultimate grade of initiation, the Sun-Runner or *Heliodromus*. [29] Half of the grades represent different roles that men play throughout their lives, such as soldier, bridegroom, and father. The other half of the grades represent iconography of the tauroctony; these are the *Corax,* the raven, *Leo* the lion, and *Perses* the Persian, represented by the Phrygian cap that Mithras wears. Each of the grades was represented by one of the planets and once a grade had passed through every level, it reached the fixed stars of Mithras' cloak. [30]

Mithraic caves were created with every aspect of the myth, cult initiations, and the cosmos in mind. On either side of the isle, or grade, were stone benches engraved with the signs of the zodiac and the planets. The grade represented a different planetary order than used by most astrologers. Within the cave, the grade represented the planets which were ordered for their hierarchy in the universe, in reference to the Platonic influence on the cult. [31] The physical orientation of the cave does not correspond to the orientation of the aspects within it because the cave was supposed to be located in the cosmos, not on Earth. [32] Keeping this in mind, within the cave at Ostia, the southern signs were on the right-hand side of Mithras and the northern on his left. This places Mithras as the Sun or "as creator and master of genesis" on the equator at the vernal equinox, which began the rule of Aries at the time, although now the equinox falls at the end of Pisces. [33] Spring begins and light flourishes during the vernal equinox making it the perfect seat for Mithras to occupy as he represents light and creation as the season of spring does.

The solstices also appear in Mithraic iconography. Besides the obvious Mithras and the Bull, Cautes and Cautopates are usually present with their torches. The twins do not always represent the solstices in terms of location within the cave. For example, in Ostia they guard the entrance to the cave while Cancer and Capricorn, the signs of the solstices, are in the centre. [34] With his torch raised, Cautes is located next to the southern signs in which Capricorn is located as the sign of the winter solstice. The torch does not represent the Sun's position in the sky since the orientation of the cave's aspects would not allow for more suns beyond Mithras and the Sun-Runner in the chariot behind him; instead, it represents the rising of the souls from genesis into apogenesis through the warm winds as the

[23] Amendola, "Mithras and the Zodiac," 31.
[24] Amendola, 31.
[25] Amendola, 30.
[26] Beck, "Ritual, Myth, Doctrine, and Initiation," 165.
[27] Merkelbach.
[28] Last few sentences use information from Ptolemy, I.19 and III.12.
[29] Amendola, 30; Beck, "The Mithras Cult as Association," 9.
[30] The last three sentences use information from Merkelbach.
[31] Tester, *A History of Western Astrology*, 106.
[32] Beck, "Ritual, Myth, Doctrine, and Initiation," 162.
[33] Beck, "Cosmic Models," 115; Beck, "Ritual, Myth, Doctrine, and Initiation," 161.
[34] Beck, "Ritual, Myth, Doctrine, and Initiation," 161.

days begin to lengthen. The opposite is true of Cautopates in Cancer during the summer solstice. Cautopates points his torch towards the ground to represent the souls descending into genesis and the warmth of the Sun becoming weaker. [35] As a representation of the Sun, within his cult Mithras must have depictions of every aspect of the Sun, in terms of mythical associations as well as zodiacal and cosmic. The twins Cautes and Cautopates provide the symbolic representation of the solstices in the Mithræa.

The zodiacal iconography associated with the myth and cult worship of Mithras lends itself well to the conclusion that the caves act as a microcosm where Mithras is worshiped as the sun god and creator. Meanwhile, outside the cave in the macrocosm, Mithras is simply a foot soldier of the sun god. There is a clear connection between astrology and the Roman cult of Mithras. Mithras sat under his arc of zodiacal signs and his grade of planets after aiding the sun god in the creation of the mortal world—a world which outside the caves belonged solely to the Sun.

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[35] Beck, "Ritual, Myth, Doctrine, and Initiation," 165.

**Seneca's Medea as an Exploration of Morality in Impossible Circumstances**

Amanda Singh

Silver Age Latin literature is hallmarked by thematically darker subjects compared to the works produced during Augustus' Golden Age. A traditional man at the core, Augustus perceived himself as the "restorer of the Republic" and influenced a theoretical *romanitas* renaissance, so to speak. Consequently, much of Golden Age Latin literature is held together by conservative Roman ideals, moral virtue, and the modesty of women. The Empire, however, after Augustus' death is wrought with volatility and despotic emperors, and without Augustus to dictate what authors were permitted to write about, the literature produced in the Silver Age is underscored by an uncertain reality. For example, while Seneca the Younger's rendition of Euripides' *Medea* follows the Greek author's plot identically with regards to the overarching themes, the depictions of the characters differ radically. Seneca's portrayal of Medea, Jason, and the Chorus is strikingly more complex than their previous incarnations. In his version, Seneca writes Medea in a less sympathetic light, and Jason with more compassion in comparison to their Greek predecessors. Likewise, Seneca's Chorus is much more objective and distant than Euripides' Chorus, who openly support Medea up until she decides to murder her children. By implementing such changes, Seneca complicates his audience's ability to take sides, begging the question of whether the consequences of Medea's actions justify her wrath and the betrayal she experienced. In contrast, Euripides' *Medea* explores the tenants of female anger through a reversal of Classical Athenian gender roles, where the moral justification presented is easily polarized in comparison to the grey morality of Seneca's *Medea* underscored by the backdrop of Nero's despotic reign.

The core tenets of Medea's character are rooted in her identity as a foreign sorceress with an inconsolable rage, both of which are preserved in each version of the play. However, the characterization of Medea in Seneca's work is far more vindictive and ruthless than she appears in her original incarnation. For example, Euripides begins *Medea* by highlighting her humanity: he paints her as an undeniably sympathetic character. Medea enters the play by stating that "she cannot stand this pain" and wishes for death in the wake of Jason's betrayal when he decides to take a new bride in Corinth. Consequently, Euripides' Medea immediately evokes sympathy from his audience. In contrast, when Seneca introduces Medea, she immediately opens with a cry to "gods that better suit her" and invokes "kingdoms that hate the gods of heaven." [1] She then goes on to lash out at Jason, essentially wishing him a fate worse than death in response to his actions. [2] In the original play, Medea is a woman scorned, wounded by her husband's betrayal after sacrificing everything for him. Euripides allows Medea to indulge in her feelings, eliciting sympathy from the audience in response to a grieving woman in a deeply human manner. In Seneca's play, however, Medea's anger is immediately portrayed much more fiercely and her invocation of "masters of melancholy" and Proserpine herself distances Medea from the humanity instilled in her Greek incarnation. [3] While the original Medea grieved extensively before embracing her anger, Seneca's Medea jumps into her rage whole-heartedly, emphasizing the unstable aspects of her personality.

In addition to the nature of Medea's emotional state at the beginning of each version of the play, both authors write Medea with varying degrees of agency. Notably, the original Medea, despite the active role she takes in avenging herself, is not afforded much agency in the grand scheme of the play. For example, the audience's first exposure to Medea's predicament is through the interaction of the Tutor and the Nurse. When the Tutor asks if "[Medea] has stopped weeping," the Nurse emphatically responds by stating that "her suffering has only just begun," then says that Medea is to be exiled at Creon's request. [4] In Euripides' play, Medea does not get to tell the audience her own story, and subsequent opinions are formed prior to Medea delivering her first lines. Here, Euripides primes his audience to elicit sympathy for Medea before she steps foot on stage and delivers her first lines. In contrast, Seneca's Medea not only embraces her anger within the first few lines, but she is shown actively arguing with the same Nurse, who reflects a traditional stoic opinion when she urges Medea to "hide [her] grievances in secret bitterness… with a patient, quiet endurance and a mellow heart." [5] Furthermore, the Nurse believes that Medea should merely accept her fate and quietly move on, citing that "nothing [of her wealth has] survived. [6] Immediately, Medea retaliates, stating that "[she] still survives" and forcefully equates herself to "the sea, the earth, sword, flame, the gods and thunder." [7] Unlike Euripides' Medea, whose plight is communicated by others to the audience on her behalf, Seneca's Medea dominates the stage, taking an active role in her behaviour as well as in her narration. Moreover, in response to Medea's active role and immediate embrace of her rage to the point of hubris, Seneca's audience becomes less likely to view Medea as a victim and more likely to hold her responsible for her own actions; whereas Euripides portrays Medea as

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[1] Seneca, "Medea," 9.
[2] Seneca, 19.
[3] Seneca, 12.
[4] Euripides, "Medea," 58-69.

[5] Seneca, 151.
[6] Seneca, 164-167.
[7] Seneca, 168.

a victim of circumstance and a cruel fate. While both incarnations experienced a betrayal that stands magnified against the sacrifices they made, Seneca's Medea is perceived as much more capricious, questioning whether her quest for revenge can be perceived as avenging herself or if she is merely lashing out. Euripides' Medea passes through the stages of grief, coming into her anger as a natural sequence of events as the circumstances of her exile are elucidated. In contrast, Seneca's Medea begins angry and ends angry, resulting in an impression of a woman who makes decisions rashly and lacks control.

Despite the differences in agency that each author affords Medea, both characters harness their anger differently with varying levels of control, unveiling a unique angle of Medea's murderous traits in both versions. For instance, Medea in her original incarnation is portrayed much more duplicitously than Seneca's Medea, whose anger is much more reactive than cold. In the original version, Medea manipulates those around her to achieve her goal. After indulging in her grief, Euripides' Medea immediately begins to plot her revenge. Following her confrontation with Jason, when her anger begins to truly manifest, Medea seizes the opportunity to paint herself as a victim of infidelity to the king of Athens, Aegeus. Here, Medea manipulates Aegeus' want for an heir and begs him to "accept her as a supplicant in his home," promising to "end his childlessness." While Medea succeeds in forcing Aegeus' hand, she goes even further in coercing him to swear an oath to the gods, promising "never to cast [her] out of [his] own country" and that "if some enemy of [hers] asks [to take her off for punishment], he [will not] agree while [he is] still alive." [8] Afterwards, Medea reveals to the Chorus her plan to murder Jason's new bride and their children as a slight against him, and openly admits to securing Athens as a refuge when her goal is complete. Her devastation having transformed into wrath, Euripides unveils a cunning, vindictive aspect of Medea's personality. Her ability to premeditate such a heinous plot to avenge her honour further calls into question her identity as a woman in an oppressive, patriarchal society where Athenian women were not allowed to participate in public and political affairs.

In contrast, Seneca deviates away from Euripides' original theme as he focuses less on the exploration of gender roles and more on Medea's agency contextualized by the nature of her anger and its consequences. While her previous incarnation is able to regain control of her own autonomy through a cunning mind, Seneca instead aggravates Medea's anger, making her appear unhinged. Her previous incarnation is able to rein in her feelings long enough to solidify an escape plan after she enacted her revenge, thus indicating to the audience that Medea is able to exert some level of control over her emotional self. In Seneca's *Medea*, Aegeus does not exist; Medea does not demonstrate any foresight in preparing for the aftermath of the slaughter. Instead, Seneca demonstrates Medea as lacking foresight, focusing only on the present: the audience sees her convincing Creon to allow her to stay one more day to say goodbye to the children that will not be joining her in exile. [9] Creon, aware of Medea's history, correctly accuses her of "[wanting] time to plot," but the audience is never made privy to the extent of Medea's strategic prowess first demonstrated by Euripides. While the original Medea was able to secure a safehold prior to taking vengeance, Seneca's Medea employs a much more active, but impulsive decision once she has committed her crimes. At the climax of the play, when Medea finally murders her children and confronts Jason with their corpses, Medea, in a shockingly cruel display of violence, throws the bodies of the children down from the chariot toward Jason. [10] In contrast, Euripides' Medea kept the bodies of her children with her on the chariot, claiming her one last right as a mother to bury them with her own hands and simultaneously denying Jason the funerary rights of his children. [11] In light of the atrocity she committed and the extensive premeditation that went into it, Euripides' Medea clings to the vestiges of her humanity by mourning her sons as a mother. In contrast, Seneca's Medea first relinquished her rights to motherhood when she took the opportunity to slaughter them to wound Jason, and symbolically discarded that identity when she, allowing her anger to consume her completely and strip away at her humanity, threw her sons down at Jason from her chariot.

In both versions of the play, while Medea's anger razes the lives of the Corinthian elite, Jason is forced to deal with the collateral damage. In Euripides' version, however, Jason's characterization elicits a much less sympathetic response from the audience. Euripides' Jason is selfish to his core, openly admitting that he does not blame Medea for her feelings because "[it is] quite natural for the female sex to get angry when their husbands set up secret schemes for […] secret marriages." [12] Here, Jason openly confesses that he was planning to leave Medea, and Euripides offers no further insight into his motives. On the other hand, in Seneca's play the circumstances surrounding Jason's marriage to Creusa are different. Instead of Jason having willingly abandoned his wife, he states that "if [he] wanted to be faithful to [Medea]—she had earned it—[he] would have to forfeit [his] life," implying that Creon was arranging a marriage between his daughter and Jason against his will. [13] It then becomes apparent that Jason is trying

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[8] Euripides, 748-752.
[9] Seneca, 290.
[10] Seneca, 1020.

[11] Euripides, 1064.
[12] Euripides, 1066-1069.
[13] Seneca, 434.

to make the best of a bad situation with regards to the fate handed to him. Rather than actively fight against his fate like Medea does in every version of the play, Jason attempts to work within the confines of his situation, citing that he was trying to protect his wife from execution by convincing Creon to instead exile her. [14] Furthermore, Jason also admits that he was simultaneously attempting to protect his children from Medea herself, remembering that she was capable of "[killing] her parents" and was concerned for their safety in the breakdown of their marriage. [15] In light of these changes, Seneca appears to reflect aspects of the original Medea as a victim of circumstance on Jason and presents him as a foil for the Roman Medea. Here, Jason represents an adherence to the tenets of stoic philosophy, whereas Medea, in reference to her unquenchable rage, contradicts these tenets at every turn. Seneca further expounds this foil when Medea implores Jason to "run with [her]," seemingly offering Jason one more chance before cementing her murderous plot. [16] When Jason confides that he fears retribution if he runs away, he is intimidated at Medea's promise to "destroy [all their enemies]," and, in a decision that subsequently seals the fate of his children, ultimately chooses to follow the destiny that the gods have in store for him. [17]

The final and perhaps most significant change Seneca makes in his version of *Medea* is the portrayal of the Chorus. While Jason and Medea are ultimately presented as autonomous characters with their own motives and varying levels of agency, the Chorus acts as a proxy for the audience and provides the author an opportunity to influence his readers in their decision making. In the original *Medea*, Euripides makes it clear that he wants his audience to sympathize with Medea despite their pre-existing notions about the role of women and foreigners, especially when combined with his sympathetic portrayal of her in spite of her ability to premeditate murder. Furthermore, Euripides' Chorus is also more involved with the action occurring throughout the play than they are in Seneca's version. For example, Euripides' Chorus often speaks directly to the main characters, going as far as to implore the Nurse to "bring [Medea outside] the house" so they have the chance to "show good will to a lady whom [they] like." [18] Here, Euripides' Chorus takes on the tangible role of an independent character, engaging with the characters and reflecting to the audience how they should be perceiving the actions before them. While the first portion of Euripides' *Medea* features a highly understanding Chorus that goes so far as to tell Jason that "[he] is in the wrong abandoning his wife," the second portion features the Chorus' transition to horror as they discover Medea's plot. When Medea "shared her plans with [the Chorus]," they "urged [her] not to [murder her children]." [19] Here, Euripides demonstrates that the primary theme of his play is to highlight the status of women in fifth-century Athens by having the Chorus engage Medea in discourse, asking if she can "stand to kill [her] own children... [because] as a woman, it will devastate [her]." [20] By manipulating the Chorus as an active figure in *Medea,* Euripides guides his audience into following the goal of his play, leaving little else to be interpreted at face value.

In contrast, Seneca's Chorus leans more toward objectivity and outright opposes the core components of Medea's identity at times, thus painting her in a predominantly negative light while juxtaposed against her wrath and valid feelings of betrayal. While Euripides' Chorus is sympathetic toward Medea, Seneca's Chorus coldly emphasizes that Jason and Medea's marriage was ill-fated from the start, suggesting that Jason was a "lucky man" to have been "torn away from [his] barbarian marriage" and that he should let Medea, a woman that disgraced her family by marrying a stranger and running away from her homeland, "disappear into the silent shadows." [21] Despite the antagonistic view toward Medea, Seneca's Chorus is still mostly objective and fails to interact with the characters directly, instead employing complicated metaphors after significant events to convey the themes of the play to an audience from an impersonal vantage point. While Euripides makes it clear that he wants his audience to feel compassionate toward Medea and anger toward Jason, Seneca's Chorus refuses to take an invested stance, forcing the audience to come to their own conclusions rather than simply reiterate Seneca's. Unlike Euripides, Seneca is not challenging his audience's preconceived biases toward foreigners or women; Seneca is asking his audience to think about the role that anger plays on an individual level within a society that cannot be controlled.

Ultimately, Seneca's Medea succumbs whole-heartedly to her anger, going against the tenets of stoicism, but ends up securing her role as a powerful voice that refuses to be silenced in the presence of perceived injustice. In contrast, Jason does not fight back; he works within the confines of his fate, agreeing, albeit under duress, to marry Creon's daughter and rejecting Medea's pleas for him to join her, when she likely would have been able to manipulate the best outcome of the situation for Jason as she had done in the past. Of course, this conclusion begs the following question: what was Seneca's intent with his adaptation of *Medea?* Seneca's Medea is not portrayed in a way that

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[14] Seneca, 490.
[15] Seneca, 440.
[16] Seneca, 525.
[17] Seneca, 528.

[18] Euripides, 179.
[19] Euripides, 965.
[20] Euripides, 969.
[21] Seneca, 105-115.

makes her immediately sympathetic to the audience, and Jason adopting the original Medea's plight as a victim of circumstance affords him more sympathy than his previous incarnation. These changes, in addition to a distant Chorus, forces the audience to decide which character is morally virtuous when both, arguably, have committed crimes against each other. While Medea murdered her children and Creusa in response to Jason's infidelity, it is important to note that Jason had no evidence to doubt Medea's ability to protect them, and, in the grand scheme, failed her first. Rather than inciting discourse about the roles of women in society, it is likely that Seneca was trying to reassess the idea of fatality during Nero's empire. Essentially, Seneca is asking his audience what should or could be done in the face of a despotic emperor. Is it better for the average citizen to keep their head down or is there a moral obligation to fight back against injustice? Is that moral obligation worth pursuing when the power imbalance is not in favour of disadvantaged citizens? Regardless of the answer, Jason's choice to keep his head down and follow his fate ultimately ended in his destruction, whereas Medea, who angrily fought against every object thrown against her at every turn, came out on top, but did so at an unimaginably high cost.

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**Pagan Polytheism Hidden in the Christian Canon:**
**The Surprising Origins of Christian Traditions**

Mackenzie Pritchard

Christianity rose to power during antiquity and quickly gained popularity among residents of Rome and the surrounding areas. Although strongly opposed by Roman authorities during its fruition, Christianity ultimately triumphed in the late Roman Empire and later in the rest of the Western world. The struggle for religious authority in the imperial capital and its surrounding powerful cities was one of many factors which made the Roman Empire weak and vulnerable to the Germanic attacks which would later prove to be the deciding factor in the downfall of Rome. Even though there was strife between Christianity and the ancient pagan religions of Rome and Greece, Christianity did its best to incorporate as many pagan aspects into its practices as possible in order to gain the support of those still set in their pagan ways. Constantine adopting Christianity as the state religion opened the gates for the Christian Church to start the conversion of Rome. The resistance felt by the people influenced the early Catholics to incorporate pagan rituals and feast days into their own calendars. They also adopted pagan infrastructure, both physical and spiritual, as well as the ever-powerful Mother Goddess figure. Christianity, although influential in its own right, owes a large amount of its success to its pagan predecessors. The success of Christianity into the medieval and modern periods was built upon the roots of ancient paganism, which, in turn, saw continuity through its practices and ideologies being forced to amalgamate with Christianity.

In modern Christianity, the emphasis for being a pious member of the church relies on a person's beliefs and internal connection with God. In antiquity, pagan worshipers proved their piety through their actions in rituals for the gods who would protect them in life and death. Although, Christianity focuses more on the spiritual and internal aspects of religion, there are still plenty of Christian festivals accompanied by their own unique ritual practices. The Christian churches were not the first to claim state holidays for their festival celebrations. In fact, the Romans had a very important religious calendar that the entire empire followed on certain days of the year, as well as a more localized version which differed between cities.

The largest Christian holiday still celebrated throughout the Western world is Christmas, although not as religiously centered as it once was; "the true meaning of Christmas" is to celebrate the birth of Jesus. This idea has floated around for centuries, but nothing about the ritual or the festival's acts originated in Christianity. Aspects of traditional Christmas activities and worshipping practices can be found in a variety of pagan mystery cults from both Roman and Greek festivals. The older of the two festivals that appears to have similarities to modern Christmas practices in the English-speaking West is the Diasia, celebrated in Athens to worship Zeus Meilichios. Although this festival was described as being grim due to the nature of Zeus Meilichios, part of the festival practice is said to include a family meal followed by the giving of toys to children. [1] These are both activities that the typical Western Christmas would include. Meanwhile in Rome, the tradition of the Christmas tree was used, not to celebrate the birth of Jesus but the life of Cybele. Although her cult had closer connections to another Christian festival (which will be mentioned later), Cybele and her lover Attis have their place in the Western Christmas tradition as well. The symbol used to represent Attis during the mystery cult rituals is a pine tree. [2] For the Romans, this pine was equivalent to Attis; however, this did not stop them from decorating the tree in a ritualistic way, after which they would become intoxicated and dance around the tree. [3] Not all families in modern times participate in this part of Christmas, but this does demonstrate that the Christmas tree, as it is now referred to, is the centre of a happy celebration where people disassociate from the material world and become more celestial or closer to God.

Along with the aforementioned celebrations of Diasia and Attis, the Roman festival of the Saturnalia is also similar to Western Christmas. The Saturnalia, known to be a celebration associated with the winter solstice and merriness, was celebrated for many days around the solstice and invited the inversion of social normalities into the festival. [4] Besides occurring during a similar time of year as Christmas, the Saturnalia, along with the Germanic pagan celebrations of Yule, all incorporate pine trees or boughs. [5] It is clear that early Christians, unable to stop the celebrations that generations of pagans had partaken in, simply adopted the festival as their own by changing the meaning of the pine and converting the celebration of the Sun, during the Saturnalia, into the celebration of the Son. [6]

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[1] Oxford University Press, "Diasia."
[2] Oxford University Press, "Cybele."
[3] Atrell, "Cybele".
[4] Oxford University Press, "Saturnus, Saturnalia."

[5] Layser, "From Pagans to Presidents - The Christmas Tree Tradition," 168.
[6] Hillerbrand, "Christmas."

The continuation of the inverted reality can be seen in the Middle Ages as the members of guilds and society performed plays, such as the *corpus Christi* which told the story of the cycle based on the Bible; notably, this play was performed during their celebration of Easter instead of Christmas. [7] In the Early Modern Period, this was recognized by some as incorporating too much paganism into a Christian day, but this anger did not last as Nativity plays are still performed annually at many churches during Christmas time and the Passion of Christ is performed during Lent. [8]

The pagan cult that shows the most influence on Christian religious festivals is that of Cybele and Attis, which was briefly mentioned above. Even though the symbol of the pine tree representing Attis is synonymous with Christmas, the rest of the festival mirrors the story behind another one of Christianity's oldest and most important celebrations: Easter. A lot of mystery cults in ancient Rome followed a similar pattern of death and resurrection and Attis' story was retold annually between March 15-27. The festival would begin on the 15th when participating members commenced a fast that would last nine days. Seven days later, on the 22nd, was the funeral procession of the felled tree which symbolized Attis' dead body, followed by a day of mourning which incorporated the use of ash during the "ostentatious lamentation" of the mourners. Two days later, on the Day of Blood, the tree would be buried, and the non-Christianized portion of this ritual would occur, i.e., self-flagellation and self-castration. The following day matches up with the Christian Easter Sunday because the Day of Joy or *Hilaria* was a celebration of the resurrection of Attis in the form of spring as later he was deified as a vegetation god. Finally, Easter Monday falls on the day of rest for participants in Cybele's mystery cult. Although the layout of Cybele and Attis' story does not quite line up with the Easter story of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, the similarities are undeniable.

Despite there being no direct links between the Roman cult practice and Christianity's version of Easter, the Anglo-Saxon's pagan fertility goddess Eastre or Eostre clearly has an etymological connection to the modern holiday. Eastre was also worshiped as the goddess who brought renewal and springtime, and she was the Anglo-Saxon's mother goddess. [9] Eastre herself had many parallels that associated her with both Christian practices and the Roman worship of Cybele and Attis. As a major goddess, Eastre was often depicted with rabbits to represent spring and with eggs for her association with fertility of both earth and man. [10] Her basic description of celestial association overlaps with both Cybele and Attis in different respects. Eastre and Cybele both represent mother goddesses, or the Magna Mater, and Eastre and Attis are both deities of spring and rebirth. The fact that the story of modern Easter is intrinsically not a Christian invention is only enhanced when one expands their view to include not only pagan beliefs from Rome and Greece, but also those associated with other cultures who had a large impact on the formation of Christianity. [11]

Not only did the early Christians incorporate pagan festivals into their own doctrine, but they also observed the pre-existing structure of the Roman religion and adopted some aspects of that into Christianity as well. Shortly before the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, Christians started to use what were previously Roman temples as Catholic churches or they would build their churches on the ruins of these temples. This occurred not only in Rome and the surrounding area but also as far as Egypt where Christianity had begun to spread by this time. [12] During all the destruction that occurred in Rome and its territories after the eventual collapse of power in the fifth century, the adoption of the magnificent temples by the now imposing Christians preserved them for future generations to marvel. A good example of this preservation is the temple of Hephaestus at Athens that was ridded of its pagan iconography and turned into a church in the seventh century. Although this could have been a necessary act in order for the Christians to continue their expansion after the large-scale devastation of Rome and its resources, it was also likely a way to ensure that the remaining pagans converted without much of a fight.

The Pomerium that surrounded Rome was also incorporated into the physical structure of the early Catholic Church. During the time of paganism, the Pomerium was a sacred boundary which excluded spiritual pollution caused by death, meaning that all burials took place outside of this boundary. After the collapse of pagan power, Christian rulers began to build new churches outside of the Pomerium, specifically on the graves of martyred Christians. These were numerous and allowed for the churches to be considered consecrated as they were near the holy relics. This, however, would have only been the case if the martyrs had been buried and not cremated, a practice common at the time for pagans and one that Christianity shunned in favour of the Jewish inhumation. [13] Although this is not

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[7] Kowaleski, "Order of the Pageants of the Corpus Christi Plays in York, 1415," 296-299.

[8] Nothaft, "From Sukkot to Saturnalia: The Attack on Christmas in Sixteenth-Century Chronological Scholarship," 521.

[9] The previous few sentences use information from Swift, "Why don't we use the 'P' word?" 5.

[10] Day, "Alice: The Oldest Story in the World," 244.

[11] In the Latin speaking West *Pascha,* from Passover, is the root word for what translates to Easter for English speakers.

[12] Hanson, "The Transformation of Pagan Temples into Churches in the Early Christian Centuries," 259.

[13] Bazaraite and Heitor. "Comparative study of Christian and Pagan burial constructions/pagoniskuju ir krikscioniskuju laidojimo konstrukciju lyginamoji studija," 316.

necessarily a borrowing of pagan infrastructure, Christians did work around the skeletal remains of Rome and its pagan laws regarding where burials could be done; however, this law was not followed after the end of the sixth century when burials begin appearing within the historic Pomerium.

On the spiritual side of pagan infrastructure, the early Christians borrowed as much as they could, twisting the names and intricate details of paganism to serve their God's ideal, such as the title of Pontifex Maximus. The Pontifex Maximus, according to T.C. Gilmour, could not have existed in the Catholic Church before the fourth century because the Caesars still held the title. The Bishop of Rome did not have full control of this specific title until later, a tradition that is still continued into the modern era. [14] This adoption was not as subtle or smooth as many other amalgamations the early Christians made. In this case, the Bishop of Rome, later referred to as the Pope, took the title of Pontifex Maximus from the political ruler of Rome and became head of the Catholic Church. The Pontifex Maximus, or supreme priest, still exists in title and occupation in the Catholic Church, demonstrating how the men closest to God today are not so different from the men who were closest to the gods in ancient Rome.

Unlike the blatant appropriation of the title Pontifex Maximus, the pagan afterlife was adopted into Christian doctrine well enough to avoid immediate connection to paganism. There are, however, still some obvious parallels between pagan Elysium and Hades and the Christian notions of Heaven and Hell. The pagans had their version of Heaven as well, being where the gods lived, a place almost inaccessible by the general public, unlike the Christian version which is the ideal destination for the soul to reconnect with the creator. Pagan Elysium, described in vast physical detail by Virgil, is based on the same idea as Christian Heaven, i.e., a place where the pious members of society can spend their days in bliss after death. The Elysian Mysteries, unlike other cult practices, offered its most spiritually clean initiates access to these peaceful fields after death, the same way that Christianity offers eternity in Heaven to those who do not sin or to those who confess to their wrongdoings. Furthermore, Hell and Hades also have similarities when taking into account that, according to Virgil, both are meant to punish those in death for their crimes in life. Again, Hades is much more fleshed out physically than Hell, but the effect on those who believe in a final destination would be the same—aim for eternal blessedness and avoid an eternity of pain.

Finally, the Mother Mary, a very important Christian figure, has not only Roman and Greek counterparts but also Etruscan, Anglo-Saxon, and Egyptian ones, to name a few. The figure of Magna Mater, or the Great Mother Goddess, is the oldest known divinity worshiped anywhere in the world. Some of the oldest art depicts what archeologists have named after Venus, the most notable being the Venus of Willendorf, because the small statue is that of a woman. [15] Mary, the virgin mother of Jesus, has always existed in other forms; for example, Cybele was the Roman version, and she was brought into Rome from the Phrygians who occupied Turkey. The most well-known ancient version of Mary is Isis, the mother goddess of Egypt, who was also worshiped in the Roman Empire. The story of Lucius has the eponym character pray to Isis confessing his sins in order to be healed, a ritual that also involved holy water from the Nile River in order to be completed properly. These two aspects of confession and holy water in the ancient worship of Isis were amalgamated into the Catholic Church's practice for becoming pious and being a proper Christian. [16] Mary is the most recognizable of the Mother Goddesses simply because of how widespread Christianity became. However, just because something is known to be Christian today does not mean that it has always been Christian. All the mixing which occurred with other religions during the early days of Christianity and the international contact that was made during the more violent history of the Christian church created a melting pot religion.

Although there is plenty of denial on the topic of Christianity, it clearly has roots in the paganism of ancient Rome, ancient Greece, and the surrounding areas. As Christianity spread, it consumed bits and pieces of the pagan religions that rendered it acceptable to those who had become accustomed to their pagan rituals and beliefs. This included reimagining aspects of pagan celebrations such as the Diasia, Saturnalia, and Yule, and repurposing the festivals associated with major figures such as Eastre in the British Isles, Attis and Cybele in Rome, and Zeus Meilichios in Greece. The repurposing of pagan temples into Christian churches and temporary compliance with previous burial practices helped establish Christianity in Europe. By amalgamating some festivals and infrastructure from Roman religion into itself and by simply changing names and titles of the gods or places, Christianity was able to gain favour with those who continued to worship in pagan centres. The popularity of Christianity only continued to grow after the adaptations of paganism, but suppression of paganism by the Church during the Middle Ages caused the pagan roots of Christianity to be forgotten for centuries. Western society is now at a place where truth in history

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[14] Gilmour, " Pontifex Maximus," 402.
[15] Watts, "Anatomically Modern Humans."

[16] Nicholson, "From pre-Christian Goddesses of light to saints of light."

is more important than maintaining Christianity as the "Holy Grail" of religions and worship. The world, however, has not come far enough from its conservative past to accept the less Christian explanation of history without a social or political fight breaking out over the issue.

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## Constantine:
## Creator of Pagan Christianity

Jordan Tardif

Scholarly research has investigated whether Constantine was Pagan or Christian through how he portrayed himself in images, the legislature he passed, and the speeches he made. Arguably, Constantine was both Christian and Pagan because although he considered himself to be a Christian and the people around him considered him one as well, he was not a Christian as we understand today. Constantine seemed to have seen parallels between traditional religions and Christianity; thus he tried to combine the two together in his own imperial religion. [1] We see this in a few references, especially noting a panegyric speech which attributed a victory of Constantine to Apollo; [2] this speech has striking similarities to the dream which Constantine propagated later about a vision of the Chi-Rho in the sky. [3] Along with this speech, there are similarities between how Constantine describes Sol Invictus and Christ. [4] I find it reasonable to posit that Constantine took the same approach with Christianity and tried to alter it to accommodate his own beliefs.

One of the greatest legacies of Constantine was his conversion to Christianity, but he patronized the traditional gods well into 310 CE, at which time a panegyric speech was made in the city of Trier by an anonymous person. In this speech the speaker told a tale of how "Fortune herself so ordered this…For you saw, I believe, O Constantine, your Apollo, accompanied by Victory…and recognized yourself in the likeness of him to whom the divine songs of the bards had prophesied that rule over the whole world was due." [5] This speech outlines how Constantine saw a traditional god, one that had already been adopted into the cult of Sol Invictus, and how he saw himself in this god. While Constantine did not specify his acceptance of this speech, and this panegyric gives no information directly from Constantine, it does show that the writer assumed Constantine would approve of a speech that recognized his relationship with the traditional Gods. Two years later, Constantine told a similar story about a vision from God, of which there were two accounts. The commonly known one from Lactantius describes how in a dream Constantine was instructed to mark the soldiers' shields with a slanted 'X' with the head bent around as a sign of the Christian God. The other description comes from Eusebius, where Constantine saw a vision of the cross in the sky with the words "in this sign conquer" written beside it. Not only did he, and his entire army see this, but he questioned it, resulting in Christ appearing to him and telling him to use the sign to protect himself and his troops. Only after the second vision did Constantine mark his soldiers' shields. [6] The main problem with these accounts is the difference in timing. According to Lactantius Constantine had his dream on the evening before battle; however, according to Eusebius he had his dream before the campaign even began.

The dream stories were also recorded at two different times. Lactantius wrote close to the time of the event in 314-315 CE while Eusebius' account did not get published until after the emperor's death in 337 CE, although it is claimed his account came from the emperor in 325 CE. [7] One should, however, take into account that it was not uncommon for emperors to make up dreams or divine events about the time leading up to a battle, after it had already happened, to make the battle's win seem destined and favoured by the gods or to show that the gods were upset with them and that was why they lost, or before battle to improve morale. [8] This was a well-entrenched part of Roman politics and usually revolved around the traditional gods. Although it was not uncommon for cult beliefs to be combined to form new cults, this may be the first example of Constantine mixing the Christian faith into those of paganism. Constantine, by this time, may have begun to recognize the similarities between the cult of Sol Invictus and Christianity. As such, Constantine was trying to bring the Christian God into the cult of Sol Invictus as well; sought to accomplish this by altering a story that would have usually referred to Apollo and instead making it refer to Christ.

We do see many similarities between Sol Invictus and Christ. Sol Invictus, being the sun unconquered, had a lot of referencing and symbolism in different kinds of light. These images included the sun and the stars, especially the six-pointed star which can be found on the tomb of Constantine. Christianity uses similar symbols when it talks of Christ and God. Christ is said to be the light of the world, born under the new star, removing the darkness of sin from the world, and so on. Constantine seemed to have seen the similarities in the two cults' symbols and began combining them together in at least his own mind and understanding. [9] We can look especially at the star of Sol Invictus. The six-

[1] Smith, "'My Lord's Native Land': Mapping the Christian Holy Land,".
[2] Gwynn, *Christianity in the Later Roman Empire*.
[3] Harris, "Constantine's Dream," 489.
[4] Eusebius, "The Oration to The Saints,".
[5] Gwynn, 28.
[6] Gwynn, 30-31.
[7] Gwynn,
[8] Harris, 491-493
[9] Coskun, "Persecution of Christians – Constantine Short."

pointed star is the image of a star undergoing a diffraction spike. These diffraction spikes are caused when a light source passes through or around something which causes the wavelengths of the light to change. Diffraction spikes can be seen when looking at stars as the light passes the suture lines in the eye's lens. The stars will appear to have lines of light coming from the origin. [10]

With this, we see a common image with Christianity as the star under which Jesus was born is depicted in a similar fashion. It is said that a new star was born, making it brighter than the others, and that the three wise men were able to follow it to the baby Jesus. This star is, however, often depicted with diffraction spikes, showing lines of light coming out of the origin point of the star, usually ranging from four to eight spikes. These diffraction spikes were not uncommon in medieval art, so it is not a stretch to assume this depiction of the new star would have existed in the time of Constantine as well. These things combine to not only show that the two cults had similar images of a diffracted star, [11] but also that the symbol Constantine saw of a cross with a bent cross section at the top, what we now refer to as the Chi-Ro symbol, may have actually been either a newly formed star or the sun diffracting. While it is relatively unlikely the event actually happened, it is worth noting that these two images of Sol Invictus and Christianity are very similar.

While Constantine was combining these two religions he would have come into a problem. Jesus was not a violent god and was definitely not a warrior god. We see that Constantine dealt with this by embracing the Old Testament much more than the New Testament, combining portions of the Jewish religion into his new imperial religion as well. [12] This is because the Old Testament's God is much closer to a warrior god, demanding the strict adherence to rules, which if broken were punishable by death, and furthermore he did not seem to oppose acts of violence. We see Constantine's understanding of Christianity quite clearly in a writing by Eusebius, which described the battle of the Milvian Bridge as follows

> In the time of Moses himself and the ancient God-beloved race of the Hebrews, 'Pharaoh's chariots and his army He cast into the sea; his picked officers were sunk in the Red Sea. The floods covered them' [Exodus 15.4-5]. In just the same way, Maxentius also with his soldiers and bodyguards went down into the depths like a stone' [Exodus 15.5] when he fled before the power of God which was with Constantine. [13]

This clearly demonstrates how well the Old Testament fit into Constantine's newly forming religion, one where he could rule and kill by divine provenance. [14]

Despite the apparent problem with Jesus' message, Constantine still seemed to have wanted to incorporate him into the new imperial cult. It was common at the time to trace a noble's ancestry back to the gods, and the emperors often claimed that they were descended from, if not the living embodiment of, a god. In this respect Constantine seemed to have sought the same thing. This is especially evident with the building of the Church of the Holy Apostles. In the basilica we see fourteen pillars. Twelve for each of the apostles, and one each for Constantine and Jesus. Constantine's son buried him as the thirteenth apostle, however it is arguable that Constantine's understanding of Christianity and combination of it with the traditional faiths had led him to desire to be seen as the second son of God or another Christ. Originally Constantine and his family paid respect to Apollo. Constantine describes God as an "Unconquerable ally" [15] in his oration to the saints, using the same terminology as the sun god, whose cult was literally the sun unconquered, to further show his association of the two. In his imagery on coins and sculptures, Constantine also showed himself decorated in the signs of Sol Invictus, to whom Apollo was a closely related figure. Following the previous emperors Constantine may have sought to claim power by divine will or divine relation, originally wanting to be seen as friends with Apollo and the son of Jupiter (after whom his statue was modeled). But with the incorporation of Christianity into the cult of Sol Invictus Constantine may have seen Apollo and Christ as similar figures, if not incarnations of the same person, and thus wanted to be seen as related to Christ instead. [16]

Constantine's conversion to Christianity cannot be denied, with his baptism occurring at the end of his life; however, his understanding of Christianity is widely debateable. From panegyrics describing his provenance under the sun god to his own speeches that mirrored Apollo and Christ and the close connection between the imagery of the

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[10] Minutehysics, "Why Are Stars Star-Shaped?"
[11] Coskun.
[12] Smith, 3.
[13] Eusebius.
[14] Coskun.
[15] Eusebius.
[16] Coskun.

two cults, it is possible Constantine was not a Christian as we understand today. Instead, he lived under his own religion, one in which Christ was a warrior god, closer to the God of the old testament, and one in which Constantine himself could be considered a second son of God, another Christ.

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# Cluniac Ideology in Crusading Doctrine

Jordan Tardif

In 1095 Pope Urban II made a speech at the council of Clermont. This speech was the call for crusade, its content outlined all the theology the crusaders were to follow. These crusaders were fighting to recover land taken from the Christians by the Muslims. The Pope deemed that the travel to the holy land was to be considered a pilgrimage and participation would give the crusaders salvation for their souls. [1] These ideas were not, however, original to the crusading movement, they came out of the reform ideology propagated mainly by the Cluniac Church. The church in Cluny saw many problems with their surroundings and sought to fix them. This paper will show that while the combination of these ideas was new, the ideas individually were not. The church of Cluny was a powerful force within the church by the time of the crusades, with several abbots being elected to the See of Rome. The Cluniac abbots and Popes laid the groundwork for the ideas of Pilgrimage, the churches involvement in military actions, as well as reforms and theology that would create the notion of a holy war.

The church in Cluny was placed under the direct protection of the pope in Rome by Duke William, while Berno, its abbot, began ecclesiastic reforms in 910 CE. [2] The reforms of Cluny swept through the Benedictine monasteries and spread the ideologies throughout the Western European Christian world. [3] These reforms focused mainly on liturgical reform, and soon became the basis for most monastic houses across Europe. [4] Due to their popular piety the Cluny abbey began receiving donations from various nobles, giving the monastery vast amounts of land, making the abbot of Cluny very powerful. [5] That power came from something new that Cluny Abbey put into practice: sister houses. The main abbey would remain located at Cluny, and instead of simply having other abbeys that follow the same rule but govern themselves (usually resulting in much less religious piety than the original) the other Cluniac abbeys would be made into priories, governed by the original abbey in Cluny. The abbot at Cluny was also able to choose his own successor, making sure that his intentions would be kept and that (generally) simony would not play a role in the selection process. [6] All these things coupled with the original donation by Duke William made the abbey at Cluny only answerable to the Pope himself and gave the abbey a large amount of power in the West. [7] The result of all these things was "a 'vast spiritual empire'" in the west, controlled by Cluny. [8] This creation of the notion of a spiritual empire was reflected in how Pope Urban II, previously a Cluniac monk, [9] saw the world and how these views were reflected in his call for crusade when he refers to the holy land and urges the officials at Clermont to "Persuade all people of whatever rank…to carry aid promptly to those Christians [in the East] and to destroy that vile race [the Muslims] from the lands." [10] It is clear by this speech that he perceives the land in the Middle East to be very holy, a general understanding by this time, but beyond this believes that due to its holiness it belongs to the Christians, not the emperor, of the east. The Pope believes it belongs to the Christians because he sees it as part of the Holy or Spiritual Empire of the Church. As such he calls for what is essentially a spiritual cleansing of the land.

Furthermore, there is evidence that the Cluniac Church heavily supported pilgrimage. [11] The abbey of Cluny itself was one such place to which people would make this religious journey, along with Jerusalem, Compostela, Rome, and a few other important Christian locations. Aside from supporting pilgrimage, the abbey of Cluny, also supported the western French knights who crossed the border into Spain and played their part in the Reconquista (which was also considered a kind of pilgrimage). [12] No solid evidence has been found to tell why the abbey had such fervent support of pilgrimage, however, Piers Paul Read does claim that "The most important expression of the renewed spirituality in the eleventh century-which originated in Cluny- was the penitential pilgrimage." [13] It is unclear if instituting pilgrimage as an act of penance was solely a Cluniac construction due to the evidence of pilgrimage being undertaken dating as early as the Roman empire. These early pilgrimages were seen as a spiritual journey but may not have been explicitly penitential in nature. Regardless, there can be no question that the idea of the pilgrimage was a central part of the Christian ideology at the time of the crusades and that it was a central tenant in the crusading doctrine is indisputable. By the time of the crusades pilgrimage was primarily to gain forgiveness of sins in order to receive reward in heaven for the hardship undergone while on pilgrimage. Urban II's speech strongly suggests that the crusade would also be considered an act of penance. One account of the crusading ideology outlines that "whoever

[1] Bongars, "Gesta Dei per Francos," 513-517.
[2] Read, *The Templars,* 59.
[3] Haag, *The Tragedy of the Templars,* 93.
[4] Peters, *Europe and the Middle Ages,* 239.
[5] Peters, 239.
[6] Peters, 240.
[7] Haag, 93.

[8] Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain, 1000-1300,* 36.
[9] Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading*, 17.
[10] Krey, T*he First Crusade: The Accounts of Eyewitnesses and Participants*, 33-36; and Bongars, 513-517.
[11] Haag, 94.
[12] Haag, 94.
[13] Read, 69.

wishes to save his soul should not hesitate…great is your reward in heaven." [14] Furthermore Urban II outlines that "all who dies by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins." [15] These two things coming from two different sources both outline that the reward for participating in the crusade was the forgiveness of sins, and equal to the reward of a pilgrimage.

The Cluniac popes and their military reforms made up the final portion of crusading doctrine. There was a long tradition of the popes from Cluny being involved in the military matters of the West. Pope Alexander II gave his blessing to the Reconquista and declared that those who fell in battle there would also receive remission for their sins.[16] While this is well known, many people do not seem to note that Pope Alexander II was in fact a Cluniac monk prior to becoming pope. [17]

Furthermore, during the period from 1040 onward it was common to prohibit feuding on specific days, eventually leading to the removal of the feudal system. [18] The Cluniac reformers had been large propagators of this process, and to keep the Peace of God, the Church became involved in organizing and directing military campaigns. These campaigns were considered holy because they were sanctioned by the Pope. [19] This practice was used especially after the Islamic nation had invaded Europe and established territories in Sicily, taking control over the alpine passes.[20] The Arabian people in the alps at one point ambushed the Abbot of Cluny when he was passing through the alps in 972, sparking a gradual increase in counter attacks which eventually drove the Arabians out of their conquered lands.[21] This incident created a precedent for the Islamic people to be enemies of the Church, thus warranting a holy war.

It is also of note that Urban II is a Cluniac pope. He began his career in the Church as Odo of Lagery. Eventually he became a monk at Cluny and was shortly called to Rome to assist the Pope, later becoming the pope himself under the name Urban II. [22] Throughout his time in Rome he was clearly still attached to his previous monastery. When he set out to France, eventually leading to Clermont, he did not say he was going for a council; instead he claimed to be travelling to various branches of Cluny and its supporters. [23] All this travel was to culminate in a visit to the abbey of Cluny itself where he then blessed the altar of the abbey. [24] After this point he made his way to the council at Clermont. Due to all this travelling it is thought that he may have been going around assessing the support he could gain from the French in favour of the first crusade, and only after knowing this did he call for the council. [25] The travelling also points to his remaining connection with the abbey, and it is reflected in his speech at Clermont where he touches on almost all the points that Cluny brought into reform. [26] His speech began with the damning of simony, a description of damnation for those who attack the church, its building or its officials, along with the rest of the Peace of God, which had been heavily propagated by the Cluny monastery. Furthermore, his speech reflects the ideas of past Cluniac popes, like Alexander II and the all-important idea of pilgrimage.

Cluny's creation of the idea of a spiritual empire of the Western Church, the heavy support of the pilgrimage, along with the Church's involvement in military exploits of the Middle Ages was coupled with the idea of penance being achievable through military service, by Urban II. These ideas resulted in the doctrine that Urban II, a previously Cluniac monk, put forward to validate the crusades. Urban II did not create a new awe-inspiring ideology; he simply synthesized and built on the ideology that had been indoctrinated into him during his time as a monk of Cluny.

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[14] Krey, 28-30.
[15] Bongars, 513-517.
[16] Haag, 94.
[17] Haag, 94.
[18] Mayer, *The Crusades,* 16.
[19] Mayer, 16.
[20] Mayer, 3.
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[22] Read, 67.
[23] Haag, 93.
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**The First Crusade:**
**Exploiting the Weakness of the Islamic World**

Peter del Rosso

The Crusades delivered stunning blows to the Islamic world, beginning with Urban II's charismatic address at Clermont in 1095, which called on all eligible Christians to "carry aid promptly to those Christians and to destroy that vile race [Islam] from the lands of our friends." [1] The urge to re-take Palestine sparked two centuries of conflict between the East and West, ultimately culminating in the loss of Christian holdings in Palestine with the fall of Acre in 1291. This study will examine the various political factors which weakened the Islamic world, beginning with a look at the circumstances surrounding the First Crusade (1095-1099), which includes regional and religious divides present in the Middle East during the late 11th and early 12th centuries.

The First Crusade was instigated by the Council of Clermont in 1095 and although the declaration was only directed to the men who were usually called upon in times of war throughout Europe, [2] it attracted hordes of interested parties including non-combatants and clerics seeking military protection. [3] It must be noted that this campaign took on a religious guise, largely directed and sanctioned by the papacy. Monarchs, such as the kings of England and France, and even the Holy Roman Emperor, Henry IV, were at odds with the Church [4] and thus with the local barons of Europe, led their armed forces into Palestine, giving the name of the campaign 'The Princes' Crusade.' These western forces "crashed into northern Syria [in] 1097," took Antioch in June 1098, and reached Jerusalem on June 7, 1099, ultimately taking the latter on the fifteenth of the month. [5] The success of this church-sanctioned campaign could hardly be accredited to the military might or overall cohesion of the Western forces. The siege of Antioch exemplifies the division inherent in the armies of the First Crusade. Such as when Bohemond [6] made secret treaties with both Firuz,[7] an Armenian who opened the gates, and Ahmad ibn-Marwan, the Muslim commander of the city who surrendered the citadel to Bohemond, despite Raymond of Toulouse's best efforts to capture it first. [8] The papal legate, Adhemar of Le-Puy, could be titularly called the '*rector et pastor*' but the title mainly existed in an ecclesiastical sense, and he was actually regarded as merely a prince among many. [9] Thus, while Western military techniques and religious zeal played a part in their success, internal political weaknesses in the Islamic world was what brought on the crushing defeat between 1096 and 1099.

One of the chief political struggles prior to the First Crusade was the division of the Fatimid army of Egypt into three competing groups—the Berbers, the Sudanese, and the Turks—which spiraled into a civil war. Although the Fatimid government brought all the factions under control by 1077, the seventeen years it took to do so limited Egyptian presence in Palestine, which led to internal fighting and "no governor could maintain himself between the rival factions." [10] The reduced Fatimid presence is manifest in both the governors of Tripoli and Tyre breaking away from Egyptian control to become independent in 1070. [11] This ultimately led to the Fatimids under Badr and his son al-Afdal Shahanshah creating a new external policy which limited military action to the recovering of "naval bases at Acre, Tyre, and other ports (1089), and to maintain[ing] a defensive bridgehead in Palestine." [12] Furthermore, during the final approach of the Crusaders toward Jerusalem, the Fatimid government sought to ally against the Seljuks, [13] and they were willing to allow an external force into Palestine to settle an internal rivalry. This unorthodox cooperation can further be understood if one takes into account the implications of the Battle of Manzikert (1071), where the possibility of a Fatimid-Byzantine alliance against the flank of Alp Arslan was destroyed. [14]

Another political weakness of the Islamic world at the time of the First Crusade was the division of loyalty between the supporters of the Abbasid Caliphate and the Fatimid Caliphate, and although this was not the primary source of tension, it contributed to the division of Syria into "a network of independent principalities." [15] This division allowed for a spirit of competition between local lords and made having a united front against the Western forces a difficult task.[16] Perhaps attached to the rivalry of the Caliphates was the division of the Islamic faith into two sects,

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[1] Bongars, "Gesta Dei per Francos," 517.

[2] Setton, *A History of the Crusades: The First Hundred Years*, 253.

[3] Tyerman, *The World of the Crusades*, 77.

[4] Philips, *Holy Warriors*, 11.

[5] Tyerman, *God's War*, 59-60.

[6] Bohemond was the prince of Taranto and one of the princes partaking in the first crusade. He was named the prince of Antioch from 1098-1111. Cf. Hill and Hill, "Bohemond I."

[7] Setton, 316.

[8] Setton, 323.

[9] Kostick, "The Leadership of the First Crusade," 244-245.

[10] Setton, 93. See also Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam: Conscience and History In a World Civilization*, 28.

[11] Setton, 94.

[12] Setton, 95.

[13] Setton, 95; Philips, 15.

[14] Runciman, *The First Crusade and the Foundation of the Kingdom of Jerusalem*, 53.

[15] Setton, 97.

[16] Setton, 97. For the political fragmentation of Syria under the

the Sunni, who controlled Asia Minor, and the Shi'a, who controlled Egypt. These two rivals were "prepared to ally with the crusaders against one another," [17] rather than form a united front against the Crusaders. Indeed, it must be noted that at the siege of 'Arqah in 1098, the Fatimid Caliphate was ready to ally with the Crusaders, contingent upon their abstaining from advancing further into Palestine, in order to crush the Sunnis. [18] Although this offer was rejected, it portrays the vehement aggression between the Sunni and Shi'a Caliphates, and the internal struggles which ruptured any possible cohesion.

Sources from Muslim scholars, such as Ibn-al-Athir who wrote on the First Crusade as well as the initial retaliatory attacks, support the view of the competition inherent between the Fatimid Caliphate and Baghdad, claiming "the Fatimids of Egypt were afraid when they saw the Seljuqids extending their empire through Syria as far as Gaza … They therefore [were] sent to invite the Franks to invade Syria and so protect Egypt from the [Sunni] Muslims." [19] This does much to affirm the rift which was so destructive between the Sunni and Shi'a communities of the Middle East which made cooperation against the invaders nearly impossible. Another passage from al-Athir which reveals the split loyalties between various Islamic groups depicts the army of Qawam ad-Daula Kerbuqa, which arrived before the walls of Antioch just days after it had been taken by the Christian Crusaders on June 3, 1098. In the passage, Kerbuqa alienated his troops "by his pride and ill-treatments of them," causing a plot to "betray him and desert him in the heat of battle." [20] Which is what eventually transpired: While the Crusaders marched out of Antioch in seven divisions to engage Kerbuqa's army, the Dukak of Damascus drew off his men, having "heard news of an Egyptian advance into Palestine." [21] Thus, the divide between the rival Caliphates once again affected the Islamic world's capability to join forces against the West, missing the opportunity to defeat the weakened and desperate Christian forces. This defeat had several implications for the counter-crusade movement; the ruining of the prestige of Kerbuqa meant that Muslim resistance had to be organized under regional rulers who were either too jealous of each other to cooperate, such as the Selchukid princes Ridvan of Aleppo and Dukak of Damascus, or too concerned by the Egyptian advances into Palestine. [22] Local Palestinian emirs, being more concerned with personal interests, such as their willingness to offer aid to any enemy of the Turks, including the European, played no great part in cooperative resistance against the Crusaders. [23] It is worth noting that alongside the rivalry between the Fatimid and Abbasid Caliphates, the Seljuk Empire was also internally fractured among the various princes; Nicaea was taken quickly in 1097 due to the Sultan Arslan's absence while he was in conflict with the Danishmend princes over Melitene. [24] In a similar manner, the disunity of the Seljuks was manifest in the weeks before the siege of Antioch (October 21, 1097– June 2, 1098), when Yaghi-Siyan's calls for assistance were ignored by Ridwan of Aleppo due to a conflict between the two in 1096. [25]

Another setback which the Islamic world suffered in the years immediately prior to the arrival of the Crusaders in 1097 was "a catastrophic period of upheaval [which took place] during the mid-1090's when caliphs and viziers died with alarming regularity." [26] This, compounded with the death of Sultan Malik-Shah I, led to a power vacuum which enabled the Crusaders to avoid any conflict with major opposing powers and to only have to contest with feeble local lords. [27] The Caliph of Baghdad seemed to have paid little attention to these incursions, perceiving them as "another raid from Byzantium, rather than a war of conquest and settlement." [28]

Perhaps the most important political development which weakened the Islamic world was the apparent indifference that the major powers had toward the Christian arrival in Palestine. Due to Byzantine treaties in the decades prior to 1096, the Christian and Islamic worlds had adapted fairly well to each other's presence. This harmonious assimilation included shared military cooperation under both Muslim and Greek generals, trade deals between the caliphates and Byzantium, and large migrations of Armenian Christians into Islamic lands without much friction. [29] Thus, when the Crusader force entered northern Syria, it was met with indifference from the local Muslim lords, who had become quite used to a Christian presence in Palestine; even the fall of Edessa, Antioch, and Jerusalem "did no more than restore the *status quo ante*," as it now provided a buffer for the Abbasids against Egypt. [30]

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various emirs see Hodgson, 264.

[17] Philips, 15.

[18] Setton, 329.

[19] Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, 4.

[20] Gabrieli, 4.

[21] Setton, 323.

[22] Setton, 327.

[23] Setton, 327.

[24] Runciman, 145.

[25] Runciman, 176-77. It is worth noting that the main reason

Kerbuqua moved to relieve the city of Antioch from the Crusaders' siege was to instal himself in it, at which point he would have surrounded the territories of Ridwan of Aleppo and would have been in a position to make himself overlord. See Runciman, 179.

[26] Philips, 15.

[27] Philips, 15.

[28] Philips, 15.

[29] Setton, 97.

[30] Setton, 97.

The success of the First Crusade can largely be attributed to the discord between the Muslim caliphates and lords, which is manifest in the poetry of Abul-Muzaffar al-Abiwardi in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, where he shamed the Islamic community for allowing such a transgression against their Syrian brethren. [31] The changed Fatimid external policy regarding Palestine and Asia Minor, a result of the Fatimid civil war in the years leading up to 1097, enabled the Crusaders to avoid conflict with a unified external force, thus being "favoured by the unusual disunion of the Syrian amirs [sic]." [32] The Shi'a-Sunni conflict between the Fatimid and Baghdad Caliphates reduced the chance of a unified front against the incoming Crusade. This is manifest at Antioch in June 1098; and the effects bled into the next year, when neither Ridvan of Aleppo nor Dukak of Damascus were willing to cooperate to repel the invasion, ultimately culminating in the loss of Jerusalem for the Islamic world. The deaths of leaders on both sides of the Shi'a-Sunni conflict, beginning in 1094, combined with the seemingly indifferent mindset of the Muslims regarding the Crusaders, exacerbated the weaknesses in the Islamic defences. These defects laid the groundwork for a network of independent emirs "only nominally under the primacy of a Seljukid prince whose effective power was limited to Aleppo." [33] These political instabilities allowed the Crusaders to retake Jerusalem and establish the 'Crusader States,' which would persist until the Islamic world unified and began the *Jihad*. [34]

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[31] Gabrieli, 12. Abul-Muzaffar al-Abiwardi: "How can the eye sleep between the lids at a time of disasters that would waken any sleeper? While your Syrian brothers can only sleep on the backs of their chargers, or in vultures' bellies! Must the foreigners feed on our ignominy, while you trail behind you the train of a pleasant life, like men whose world is at peace?...This is war, and the infidel's sword is naked in his hand, ready to be sheathed again in men's necks and skulls…I see my people slow to raise the lance against the enemy."

[32] Hodgson, 265.

[33] Hodgson, 264.

[34] In this instance *Jihad* is to be understood by the Western definition of 'holy war'.

**Passive Subject/Active Object:**
**Re-Examining the Accustomed Discourse on the Ways of Seeing**

Matthew Coleman

Within the field of classical art history there has been a movement to re-examine the dominant-centre of viewing pleasure relative to the traditionally marginalized groups who are defined by it. Whereas work from the 1970s and onwards uses labels like, 'hard,' 'soft,' 'active,' 'passive,' 'male,' and 'female,' as polar opposites and means for classifying bodies, behaviours, and iconographies, modern academia has at the very least attempted to nuance those facile classifications. The natural proclivity for scholars to draw lines around their findings and to outline in accessible, accepted terminology their unique discoveries is understandable. But the future of art history and visual theory, as Ridgway puts it, should cast aside "the self-fulfilling task of classification and dating that in its subjectivity and inaccuracy has given the discipline its dubious reputation." The focus should rather be on a concerted "effort to place the object [of analysis] in its proper cultural context, so that it may serve as a true indicator of its time." [1] This call to action is especially applicable to discussions on the ways of seeing. The stance of this paper is that in order to represent an object's true cultural context, the analysis of how that object is seen by an onlooker must be more complex than the binaries outlined above. As such, the discourse to follow will outline modern (feminist) visual theory, its history and application, as well as ways in which ancient art theoretically and materially aligns with and/or disrupts it.

Classical art historians who study later periods, like the Hellenistic age, or archaeologists who study prehistoric cultures (i.e., traditionally marginalized periods) have necessarily tended toward theoretical approaches because the material they study contradicts the dominant, typically male, elitist ideologies accepted and befitting the approach of letting "the objects speak for themselves:" [2] for example, those objects which are typically found in 5th century Atheno-centric contexts or the age of the Roman Republic. The influence then of French structuralists and their consequent post-structuralist counterparts of the 1970s and 1980s used semiotic and psychoanalytic theories to reinterpret the male-established canon of 'Great Art' and, following the Women's Movement, to challenge popular exponents of clearly male-interest-aligned works like Kenneth Clark's *The Nude: A Study in Ideal Form* (1956). [3]

For Clark, 'the Nude,' which exclusively meant the *female* nude, was a form of visual pleasure designed for, and to be revered because of, its relationship with male taste. Clark believed that the female nude was popular and widely accepted because it chose to do away with the disappointing realities of the female form and focussed, in a classical way, on the ideals of its beauty. He delights in the difference he reads between the confidence of 'the Nude' and discomfort of 'the Naked.' [4] Whereas the natural 'Naked' female form was a sight of which to be embarrassed, its 'Nude' counterpart, as styled by male aesthetic taste, was a proud revolution in artistic beauty—and one of the Classical period's greatest contributions to art. [5] The reaction to this explicit reverence of male taste and its products after the Women's Movement resulted in some of the most influential discussions of visual theory to date.

John Berger's *The Ways of Seeing* (1972)—which offers a relatively long 154-page book and 4-part television mini-series on the ways in which people look at things—aligned itself with a feminist perspective and was of the first modern works to gender the viewing experience on both sides of the subject/object divide. Berger analysed works of art from Renaissance oil paintings to contemporary Madison Ave. Street-advertisements and outlined the criteria by which the female body had become positioned as the passive object of active male viewing pleasure. His "trans-historical approach, which ignores socio-historical context, medium and mode of production" has since been criticized heavily, both in Classical art history and film study. However, his discussion of the nuance of female viewership and his critique of male art production was revolutionary. [6] Existing in the male-dominant culture which Clark outlined, Berger notes how the female viewer is made to watch herself. The woman, in art and reality, is aware that she is being watched and so splits her psyche into two distinct parts: the female-object who is aware of herself being watched, and the male-subject who is forced to watch herself. As for his critique of the male producer of art, Berger addresses Hans Melming directly saying, "you painted a naked woman because you enjoyed looking at her, you put a mirror in her hand and you called the painting *Vanity* (Fig. 1), thus morally condemning the woman whose nakedness you had depicted for your own pleasure." [7] The moral-criticism, gendered viewing binaries, and attack on the traditional hypocrisy of male-produced art led into the exceedingly influential argument by Laura Mulvey, who picks up on the

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[1] Ridgway, "Review article: The study of Classical sculpture at the end of the 20th century," 769.
[2] Ridgway, 769.
[3] Brown, "'Ways of Seeing' Women in Antiquity: An introduction to feminism in classical archaeology and ancient art history," 14.
[4] Clark, *The Nude: A Study of Ideal Art*, 3.
[5] Clark, 3.
[6] Barrow, *Gender, Identity and the Body in Greek and Roman Sculpture*, 7.
[7] Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, 51.

idea that the real function of *Vanity* "was to make the woman connive in treating herself as, first and foremost, a sight."[8]

Laura Mulvey's *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema* (1975), which presents the British social commentator and film theorist's theory of the Male and Female Gaze, for the past four decades has effectively framed the accustomed discourse on how individual subjects view objects of pleasure in academically accessible, gender-binary terms. The tight theoretical approach, as well as her explicit feminist methodologies and identity, distinguished Mulvey's argument from Berger's. Her goal in writing was to "use psychoanalysis to discover where and how the fascination of [viewing] is reinforced by pre-existing patterns of fascination already at work within the individual subject and the social formations that have molded him." [9] That is, to understand the innate socio-behavioural tendencies which govern the surveyor in a viewing experience. As well, she emphasizes the importance of understanding historical tendencies and attitudes as necessary in the pursuit of holistic contemporary thought. [10] Like Berger, Mulvey believed that when *women* are viewing objects of pleasure they necessarily take on the male role, "thus entering into a cross-gender experience." [11] Relatively recent scholarship within Mulvey's own field of film studies has demonstrated that her theoretical approach is imprecise (a point which she conceded within her 1989 introduction) and self-serving (a point which she concedes within her 1975 article). [12] What she calls the 'determining male gaze' might more suitably represent the Lacanian 'eye' or what feminist film theory calls the 'look.' [13] Mulvey's theory lacks in the "beauty [of] its exact rendering" the nuance which accompanies either of the other two 'views.' [14] There is no room for negotiation within the confines of Mulvey's familiar paradigm—Active/Male Subject, Passive/Female Object.

It would be unfair to suggest that Mulvey's theory is meant to apply perfectly to ancient art (e.g., *this* analysis) as she was focussed on pleasure derived in the typical 20th century viewing experience at the movies, and so direct translation into our field is not as simple as many classical art historians might like. But, the emphasis Mulvey places on historical precedent for contemporary viewing practice has lent itself to universal application and the wide adoption of her method in classical art history, making this essay also in line with her designs. It is with and against her paradigms that I set this discussion.

To round out the retrospective, the theory which appears to represent the model for contemporary feminist visual theory moving forward is the recently reinvigorated approach from Stuart Hall. In his *Encoding / Decoding* (1980), Hall outlines the three nuanced ways individuals may choose to read objects of visual pleasure. The first is a 'dominant-hegemonic' reading, wherein the audience accepts the intended meaning of the dominant-hegemonic artist whether or not they are represented. The second, a 'negotiated' reading recognizes the intended meaning but modifies the object of interpretation to extract some positive aspect for outsiders from the message. Lastly, the third is an 'oppositional' reading which is the choice of a marginalized viewer to recognize their place as without the object being looked at and to reject the intended meaning altogether. [15] All of these approaches recognize established social strata, power relationships, and issues of gender within a multi-cultural and diachronic framework, while allowing for both calculated and emotional readings. I would argue that this approach allows for complicated *human* (i.e., grey) viewing. This approach is unique in its application of degendered perspectives and its willingness for the subject to choose how they appreciate any given object—either sympathetically, empathetically, or not at all.

In the last twenty years of the 20th century, only one major collaboration between classical-Mediterranean archaeologists and feminist art historians was published. [16] Spearheaded by Norma Broude and Mary Garrard, the influential work *Feminism in Art History: Questioning the Litany* (1982) summarized the work done in visual theory since the time of Berger and Mulvey and led the way forward for contemporary work done by Barrow, Brown, Cohen, Reilly, Salomon, Stewart, Kampen, Osborne and D'Ambra, among others. [17] Yet it is still a tendency among these scholars to use Mulvey's model as their starting point and to work from there. In this way, I believe it is important to address the binaries outlined in Mulvey's work and to understand why in and of themselves they are so appealing, as

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[8] Berger, 51.
[9] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 833.
[10] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 833.
[11] Barrow, 6.
[12] Mulvey describes how she wrote the piece "polemically and without regard for context or nuances of argument," and then saw it take on "a life of its own" Mulvey, *Visual and other pleasures*, xiii; Mulvey describes how "there is an obvious interest in this analysis for feminists, a beauty in its exact rendering of the

frustration experienced under the phallocentric order, Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 834.
[13] Barrow, 7.
[14] Silverman, "The Look," 163-193.
[15] Hall, "Encoding/Decoding," 128-138.
[16] Brown, 20.
[17] See Broude and Garrard *Feminism And Art History: Questioning The Litany*; See Barrow for a summary of scholars working in this field.

well as where and when nuance may be fleshed out in their application. Here it is right to summarize Mulvey's argument and its general reception.

Mulvey begins her article arguing that it is "the way film," or in this case antique art, "reflects, reveals, and even plays on the straight, socially established interpretation of sexual difference which controls images, erotic ways of looking, and spectacle." [18] A statement which is undeniable. Ancient Greeks lived in a patriarchal society and its artistic products, along with the ways in which they were viewed, were either unconsciously or consciously patriarchal.[19] Mulvey goes on to write that Woman then stands in patriarchal culture as signifier for the male other, "bound by a symbolic order in which Man can live out his phantasies and obsessions through linguistic command by imposing them on the silent image of woman still tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning." [20] These two points echo philosophical discussions of sexual difference as in Aristotle (Arist. *On Generation*, 6). Further, they establish the position that the viewing man recognizes the othered woman who is his opposite because she is without penis, and     has the hierarchy-lent freedom to create meaning from a viewing experience and to bounce that meaning off the female form unchanged by its interaction. A late 80s artist, Barbara Kruger, offered a challenge to Mulvey's position with her photomontage *Untitled (Your Gaze Hits The Side Of My Face)* (1981-1983). The artist's inclusion of a classicizing female face, which represents the immovable, speechless figure of Woman in classical sculpture, "unexpectedly returns the gaze with speech… [and] disrupts the image's conventional meaning" (Fig. 2).[21] An ancient challenge of a similar kind is the poem by Praxiteles himself, set at the bottom of his *Eros* at Thespiae, which reads:

(1)  Praxiteles – *AP* 16.204

> Πραξιτέλης ὃν ἔπασχε διηκρίβςσεν Ἔρωτα
>        ἐξ ἰδίης ἕλκων ἀρχετυπτον κραδίης,
> Φρύνῃ μισθὸν ἐμεῖο διδοὺς ἐμέ. Φίλτρα δὲ τίκτω
>        Οὐκέτι τοξεύων. ἀλλ᾽ἀτενιζόμενος.

> Praxiteles perfectly portrayed that Love he suffered,
>        Taking the model from his own heart,
> Giving me to Phryne in payment for myself. But I give birth
>        To passion no longer by shooting arrows, but by darting glances.

The Ἔρωτα which Praxiteles describes is a figure armed in ambush. As the viewer approaches the beautiful figure, it is easy to imagine their eyes wandering all over the boy's exposed body. The viewer might have assumed his form was available for their pleasure. But when they arrived at the foot of the statue and read the inscription at the base, they would have realized his art was Praxiteles' Trojan Horse: "I give birth to passion no longer by shooting arrows, but *by darting glances*" (τίκτω οὐκέτι τοξεύων. ἀλλ᾽ἀτενιζόμενος. – AP 16.204) The quick shift in power dynamic would no doubt have caused the viewer distress as they realized all the while, when they looked at Eros, Eros was looking at them.

Mulvey then asserts that "in a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female." [22] She says, "the determining male gaze projects its phantasy onto the female figure which is styled accordingly," to Clark's same point above. Mulvey goes on to write that, "in their traditional exhibitionist role women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*." [23] What Mulvey is saying is that the woman or female body in art functions as both the erotic object for the characters within a particular narrative—in statuary this might include implied narrative or physical placement within a statue group—and as erotic object for the spectator within the temple or garden, on the street, or wherever the piece is displayed—a role which Mulvey denies the male body is able to play. She chalks this observation up to "an active/passive heterosexual division of labour" and man's reluctance to "gaze at his exhibitionist like." [24]

[18] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 833.
[19] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 833; Stewart, *Art, Desire, and the Body in Ancient Greece*, 15.
[20] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 834.

[21] Kruger, *Untitled (Your Gaze Hits The Side Of My Face)*; Barrow, 6.
[22] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 837.
[23] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 837.
[24] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 838.

Applying Mulvey's view to antiquity, we see the traditional classical art historical perspective: Antique Greece was a patriarchy and so their statues and the experience of viewing them was inherently patriarchal. Women, as the decided other, were always objectified and vehicles for male-constructed meaning. The Male gaze was determinant and had complete power over the female object. The female gaze involved introspection, extrospection, and an understanding that she was both on display and being watched. [25] That is, as John Berger concurs, a woman watches the man watching her. The female body is therefore made passive. Finally, the male body cannot be looked at as a sexual object.

Let us take a look at Mulvey's first point. Art, "reflects, reveals, and even plays on the straight, socially established interpretation of sexual difference which controls images, erotic ways of looking and spectacle." [26] If, for instance, we examine the rape of Europa by Zeus (Fig. 3), a celebrated story given countless renditions in art and literature, the obviously phallocentric narrative is given as Zeus is seen as the symbol of hypermasculinity in disguise as a bull. His large testicles hang below his strong central form as he runs off with Europa in tow, who holds on delicately to his phallic horn complete with tuft of pubic-looking hair at the base. Europa is depicted with a passive smile, as she's ripped from her home, her friends, her life, and brought to a new land by way of rape as metaphor for marriage. This scene reinforces the heterosexual relationship of man and wife, the generative quality of marriage, the activity of the male form, and the passivity of its female counterpart. In the viewing experience of the man, the determining male gaze would very well note Europa's position as an erotic object for Zeus and he would understand the analogy within his own culture. This understanding is demonstrated in the strongly violent overtones of ancient Greek marriage rituals, especially in classical Sparta where "marriage was arranged as a sort of mock rape." [27] Mulvey is certainly correct here in terms of the ways in which the straight, socially accepted gender roles play out in much of antique art.

Next, Mulvey asserts that Woman stands in Patriarchal culture as signifier for the male Other and is tied to her place as bearer of meaning, not maker of meaning. The Archaic period provides pointed examples of this. The male body represented in the *Anavysos Kouros* (Fig. 4) is marked by his dominant posture; he has a free split stance, chest out, shoulders back, and hard, naturalistic muscle features. The body needs nothing but itself to convey meaning. The young man is an athlete, full of vitality, whose body belongs in, and whose inscription confirms, a place in the military. [28] His sharp calves, cut abdominals, and exaggerated obliques demonstrate the potential energy and innate activity of the male form, while accentuating his penis which is central and fully exposed. [29] Ten years his senior, the female form of the *Phrasikleia Kore* (Fig. 4) bears all of her meaning in the form of secondary, male-imposed symbols. Immediately noticeable, of course, is that the woman is dressed rather than naked. She is a virginal figure, whose body is made and maintained to be modest, in line with the contemporary patriarchal standard. She wears sandals, a peplos, bracelets, a belt, a necklace, and a crown. Her inscription, unlike the Anavysos Kouros, reads a position of relativity rather than independence: "Marker of Phrasikleia. I shall forever be called *Kore*, allotted this name from the gods in place of marriage." *Kore*, a term which here means either daughter or bride, refers to her death before marriage and her new role as bride of Hades in the afterlife. The artist has downplayed her secondary sex characteristics implying the girl's adolescence at the time of death. [30] Carving small breasts, a wide waist, and narrow hips the artist belittles her femininity and highlights her lack of penis by its position under her dress. All of the female body's meaning is derived therefore from her deviation from the male body and her place in a society dominated by men and male players. She was a daughter, who died before marriage to a man, but her modest role will be redeemed when in death she becomes the bride of Hades. Again, Mulvey's observations are confirmed as male ideals are styled onto their artistic products. In fact, most of what Mulvey proposes of the role of men and women in the viewing experience holds water in Ancient Greece so far. But what happens when a statue like the *Aphrodite of Knidos* (Fig. 5) is introduced?

"In their traditional exhibitionist role," Mulvey writes, "women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*." [31] Male visitors to the temple at Knidos wherein the *Knidia* was displayed certainly enjoyed the viewing experience because of her explicit sensuality, and what it meant to them about the "power and benefits of sex." [32] This female body stands over six-feet tall and was formed in complete nudity for the first time in Greek history. Her

[25] For discussion on this sentiment in antiquity see Alciphron *Letters* 4.1 translation as in Granholm "Letter from Phyrne to Praxiteles."

[26] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 833.

[27] Rubarth, "Competing Constructions of Masculinity in Ancient Greece," 28.

[28] Pedley, *Greek Art and Archaeology*, 175.

[29] Pedley, 175.

[30] Stieber, *The Poetics of Appearance in the Attic Korai*, 173.

[31] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 837.

[32] Havelock, *The Aphrodite of Knidos and Her Successors: A Historical Review of the Female Nude in Greek Art*, 141.

proportions are elegant, her long body is depicted as soft and yielding, her eyes melt and focus 'off-screen,' to speak in Mulvey's terms, as her slightly parted lips form a smile. Her gesture, known as the *pudica* pose, is at once modest and erotically stimulating. [33] In keeping with Mulvey's assertions about the female form as depicted in art, scholars point to this very pose as connoting her Mulvian *to-be-looked-at-ness*. As Havelock writes, "the gesture of the right hand of the Aphrodite of Knidos is undeniably riveting. Because it conceals, it forces the spectator to imagine what is behind it and to recognize its importance." [34] The shining quality of the marble which received light from all around her circular rotunda would have sparkled and further entranced her spectators. So great was the statue's alignment with the ideals of masculine desire that men projected the fantasy of their male gaze on her potently enough to create in her animation. They began to crave, real, intimate interaction with her female form; and so, people who came to visit her were given to establishing erotic relationships with the statue. [35]

The traditional reading, and certainly Mulvey's, precludes the opportunity for the female form to participate in the viewing experience, to impose her will on the Male viewer. It would appear at first that this opinion aligns with the popular antique attitude. Take exactly this line of Lucian where the viewer of the *Knidia* is said to have 'complete liberty to glut his passion' ("ὥσθ᾽ ὅλην τοῦ πάθους ἔχειν ἐξουσίαν κορεσθῆναι" - Ps.Luc. *Erot.* 17). Or the story recounted in Xenophon in which Socrates and some companions go to visit a courtesan named Theodote whose "beauty was beyond description" and to whom many artists came to paint. In the passage Socrates asks, "my friends, ought we to be more grateful to Theodote for showing us her beauty, or she to us for looking at it? Does the obligation rest with her, if she profits more by showing it, or with us, if we profit more by looking?" Following a little debate the philosopher starts up again, "well now, she already has our praise to her credit, and when we spread the news, she will profit yet more; whereas we already long to touch *what we have seen*, and we shall go away excited and shall miss her when we are gone. *The natural consequence is that we become her adorers, she the adored*." To this, the male-written Theodote speaks her lines, "then, if that is so, of course I ought to be grateful to you for looking" (Xen. *Mem.* 3.11.1-3). These passages were conceived of by men in a patriarchal world, who were subscribing to agreed-upon patriarchal power dynamics.

Aside from the interaction being at the very least apocryphal and at the very most misconstrued on behalf of the males, I suggest that some agency from Theodote can be read in it. The accustomed discourse on patriarchal power relationships is understood by both parties and both benefit by opting to agree with them. Socrates and his troop may continue to ogle, while the sex worker and veritable supermodel panders to the expectations of her current and potential employers who, if she dared to disagree, might have caused considerable trouble. While it is not to be suggested that this response or social climate is a true benefit to Theodote day-to-day; obviously it is not. But, in the viewing experience she has the agency to play to her current conditions while taking from the experience all that *she* can too— not just the men. Can the same be said for a statue like the *Knidia*? That is, can the *Knidia* play an active role in her own viewing experience?

The open, 360-degree viewing area which surrounded the *Knidia* would seem to give the male viewer the upper-hand in this arena. But let us take Stewart's (a man's) reconstruction of viewing the statue: As one (male) person enters the temple and sees the *Knidia* frontally, he is met with the female form, naked, and in the process of covering up. As Havelock noted above, the viewer is immediately drawn down her arm to her hand which covers her genitalia. When he rips his eyes away from what is most titillating to his gaze, he arrives at her face which is turned to the right slightly. Stewart marks the frustration one might feel to notice that a second, imagined surveyor, has already provoked the statue's glance and her smile in *his* direction. So, the pose, while entrancing and connoting Mulvey's trademark *to-be-looked-at-ness*, forces the spectator into a "triangular relationship of voyeuristic complicity and erotic rivalry."[36] If the first spectator sees the protective gesture of her right hand and presumes it is in response to his rival, but her hand only really block his own view—and not so well—its half-heartedness would prompt him to go to the right and join his rival, following the turn of the *Knidia*'s head, so that what has been blocked from his gaze may be revealed to him too and consumed. [37]

But Aphrodite, the goddess in literature, was known for smiting those who enjoyed the spectacle of her naked body without consent, unless "she herself initiated the encounter." [38] Berger believes a woman's presence expresses her own attitude to herself and defines what can and cannot be done to her. Her presence is manifest "in her gestures, " he says, in her "voice, opinions, expressions, clothes, [and] chosen surroundings," like the nakedness, happiness,

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[33] Havelock, 141; Stewart, 99.
[34] Havelock, 36.
[35] Scobie and Taylor, "Perversions Ancient and Modern: I. Agalmatophilia, the Statue Syndrome." 49.

[36] Stewart, 103.
[37] Stewart, 103.
[38] Stewart, 6.

and circular rotunda of the Knidia; "indeed there is nothing she can do which does not contribute to her presence." The presence is so intrinsic to her person he says, "that men tend to think of it as an almost physical emanation, a kind of heat or smell or aura" that draws them in. [39] If the *Knidia*'s gesture may be read as Berger would have it, might it have been made as an invitation for the male rivals to satisfy the passions of their eyes? To do to her what she is implying by her chosen condition? The discomfort modern commentators, like myself, feel taking this interpretation would invite them to say no. But the *Knidia* was styled by a man in ancient Greece as a product of (un)conscious patriarchal ideals, so to deny this interpretation's possibility seems too generous. However, Praxiteles, the *Knidia*'s sculptor, was an *avant-garde* artist. As Stewart believes, "[he] was the first western sculptor to get beyond the supposition that the (male) spectator necessarily plays active subject to the female body's passive object," and so by Praxiteles' construction, the body of the *Knidia* in and of itself challenges the Mulvian paradigm. The answer to 'how?' comes in the discussion to follow.

Stories of agalmatophilia all have a similar structure. First, the subject sees the statue; he falls in love; then he locks himself away with it; assaults it; and tries to leave behind some trace of the encounter; then, upon discovery of the affront he (yes, the offender was always a male) has committed against the god (no, the deity was not always female) is forcibly embarrassed, harassed, killed, or made to commit suicide. [40] A smiting fit for the crime.

R.R.R. Smith observes, "It was a basic principle of Greek art that it record [ed] all the visible essentials of the human body. The smooth, un-parted genital surface of the Aphrodite is a rare and presumably highly significant departure from this principle … [as] accurate female genitals on statues, we can only surmise, might have been deemed too immodest, or have been felt unconsciously to be too sexually aggressive [to be depicted]." [41] From this, the laws of Freudian phallocentrism, as outlined in Mulvey's essay, dictate that a man must impose his penis on anything or anybody without and the *Aphrodite of Knidos* is decidedly without.

In viewing the *Knidia* as an active object in the viewing experience and understanding the typical behaviour of the goddess when objectified against her will, one might read her lack of penis as the next step in the smiting process. As the fetishist or paraphiliac is prompted by her form to maneuver against and jockey past a rival (i.e., to become the passive subject), he finally moves to impose his penis on the statue he is so frustrated by, still feeling in charge. The protective gesture that he assumes to be a provocative invitation to explore the *Knidia*'s body more closely is deemed all part of the chase, as was typical of ancient Greek sexual politics, and with each obstacle—the gesture, the sideways look, and the sexual rival—both his frustration and anticipation grows. He after all is the man with the power to take what he wants from his passive/female object. Unfortunately, when all of his obstacles are overcome, he reaches his goal and is met with the cold and unyielding flat of the *Knidia*'s stone mons.

Forced to engage with her object body on her terms and being rewarded with no receptacle for his masculinity, the male viewer is rendered impotent. This was the exact frustration outlined in Athenaeus who speaks of a young man that fell in love with a statue on Samos but whose passion was put to an end when he found that he could make no impression on the 'most cold and unimpressible stone' (ψυχρότητα καὶ τὸ ἀντίτυπον τοῦ λίθου – Ath. 13.605f). The typical Mulvian rules are flipped on their head; the female form holds the power, and the male viewer is moved by her and rendered impotent. I argue that the resulting paradigm shift looks like: Active/Female object, Passive/Male subject.

Stewart supplements his interpretation of the Active/Female body with the modern example of Dora Maar's 1934 photograph of Assia, the French supermodel (Fig. 6). Through the use of light and shadow, Maar is able to present the idea that Assia controls her viewing, by maneuvering her body to hide both her groin and her face from onlookers, while bogarting her silhouette which is projected on the wall for her eyes only. An ancient analogue might be the *Aphrodite, Pan, and Eros* group (Fig. 7) held currently in the National Archaeological Museum, at Athens. Dateable to 100 BCE, around 100 years after the first stories of agalmatophilia began to circulate and around 200 years after the *Knidia* was sculpted, the "*Slipper-Slapper*" group, mockingly reproduces the gesture of the *Knidia*. Note the *pudica* pose and the position of her legs when compared to this Roman copy of the *Knidia* in the Capitoline type (Fig. 8). The main difference in construction is the inclusion of the flying Eros (or the embodiment of physical lust) and the hyper-sexual Pan figure. In this group, Pan represents the Mulvian male-protagonist through whom male viewers project their gaze onto the female object. [42] But the details in this depiction demonstrate its message. There is real torsion and tension in the arm and back muscles of Pan as he struggles in vain to pull her body towards himself. However, Aphrodite's arm in protest is wrought with no tension at all. Her right arm, and in fact every part of her body except

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[39] Berger, 45.
[40] O'Bryhim, "The Economics of Agalmatophilia," 423.

[41] Smith, *Hellenistic Sculpture: A Handbook*, 83.
[42] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 838.

for her left arm, is designed to call back the calm, soft composition of the *Knidia*. While the slipper-bearing left arm rails against the power of the male viewer and physically, actively, *actually* upsets the idea that male-gazers and those men who interfere with statues in ancient Greece have the ability to take all that they want from the viewing experience even *if* the statue was designed by men at first to connote *to-be-looked-at-ness*. Whereas "authors writing on nude classical sculptures … have tended to ignore completely the gender relations implied by the body language, or to point out their titillating aspects without considering in any depth the social construction of modesty for women and voyeurism for men," Aphrodite in this group clearly upsets gendered expectations of passive/female body language relative to her male counterpart. Her chin is raised, her shoulders are rolled back, and she is ready to strike. It is, as such, the opinion of this author that ancient Greek artists and viewers had an understanding that the female form was not simply, nor necessarily always had to be, a passive object to be looked at and glutted. Indeed, the form had agency even when wrought in unmoving stone.

Mulvey's assertion that "the male body cannot bear the burden of sexual objectification," and by that logic no man might occupy the role of passive object, is unfit for antiquity as well. [43] I will point out that I by no means argue that males receive(d) the same objectification in quality and quantity as their female counterparts, but Mulvey precludes the possibility, and I only wish to write what is observable in antiquity—and in the words of Herring, "the *Barberini Faun* is simply a sexy beast." [44] While occupying the male body, the *Barberini Faun* (Fig. 9) reclines on the rough surface of a rock, padded by a lion skin. He rests his undeniably attractive form, as his arms and legs splay away and around his tight muscled torso and lead the viewer's eyes directly to his fully formed penis and pubic hair.[45] Likely only a piece of a larger *symplegma*, which included another satyr and a nymph or maenad, here the male sleeper is the objectified focus of erotic attention. [46] The *Faun* is a man on display with every last ounce of *to-be-looked-at-ness* wrought into the stone. With his right arm thrown above his head and his neck crooked to his left in sleep, he is identified iconographically along with sleeping Maenads, Ariadne, and other similar female figures. But while this iconography for women often connotes sexual availability, for male sleepers like Polyphemos and Alkyoneos of the Archaic and Classical Periods, the pose usually indicates a martial vulnerability rather than a sexual one. So, the *Barberini Faun* is most closely associated, in terms of the male form, with the Silenus on the *Derveni Krater* of the 4th century (Fig. 10). Both of the satyrs' sleep lacks the martial context of their male analogues and, rather inherently, as part of the part-beast /part-person persona their sleep represents a context of sex, ecstasy, and lovemaking.

For commentators who are unwilling to attribute passivity to the male body, like Dyer who says, "even in an apparently relaxed, supine pose, the [male-]model tightens and tautens his body so that the muscles are emphasised, hence drawing attention to the body's potential for action," the *Barberini Faun*'s reading becomes overly complex. [47] While, indeed, the *Barberini* Faun is sculpted with great potential energy, he maintains his passivity. Contrary to most other satyrs, fauns, and similar beasts who represent aggressive male sexuality, highlighted by their enlarged, ithyphallic penises, the *Faun's* taut body anticipates a hard penis and is betrayed by being composed in want of his (literal) potency. Per mcnally's reading, the *Faun* is in a dream state and depicted as going through some lucid turmoil. Since his mind is elsewhere dealing with internal conflict, all that is left of the *Barberini Faun*, in the garden, temple, or the Museum with 360-degree viewing angles where he is displayed currently, is his body. Take the difference of tone in the photographs of Jamie Dornan (who is reclined but awake) and Justin Bieber (who appears asleep) as modern examples (Figs. 11 and 12). The artist further sculpted the *Faun*'s body with, and yet downplayed, its beastly qualities (a tail, pointed ears, snub nose, etc.) Precisely so that it may be read as human but understood as animalistic; so, male viewers could excuse themselves from "gazing at their exhibitionist like" while ogling the male form nevertheless. Those who come across the *Faun*, then, are given free rein to glut their passions on his yielding, yet undeniably male, body. His passive-male form would have had no problem being understood by men, given contemporary pederastic institutions and appreciation for the benefits of homosexual relationships. Not to mention that women would indubitably have come across this statue as well, adhering to the same heterosexual active viewing as in the Eos abduction motif looked at in Lefkowitz' 2002 study of the depiction of active female sexuality and rape on pots. [48] Surely, Mulvey's qualification that male objects must subscribe "to the principles of the ruling ideology and the physical structures that back it up" allows for this interpretation. [49]

The *Barberini Faun* was a product of the Hellenistic period which placed more of an emphasis on male sexual objectification than the Archaic and Classical periods before it. If we take for instance the hero Jason of Apollonius'

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[43] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 838.
[44] Herring, "Sexy Beast: The Barberini Faun as an Object of Desire," 32.
[45] Herring, 37.

[46] Barrow, 10.
[47] Dyer, "Don't look now: the male pin-up," 66.
[48] Lefkowitz, "'Predatory' Goddesses," 325-344.
[49] Mulvey, *Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema*, 838.

*Argonautika* (c. third century BCE), this concept becomes clear. In Apollonius' reinterpretation of the standard epic genre, Jason is "not only handsome, a common characteristic of heroes since the Homeric epics, but also sexually alluring." [50] Medea's love for him is sparked upon first sight of the man and still further Hypsipyle, the Queen of Lemnos, blushes when she lays eyes on him (Apoll. *Arg*. 1.791). His sexual attraction is so potent that it is able to make Medea follow him on his adventure without regard for personal consequence. [51] When Jason is set to meet Medea and persuade her to his cause, it is not by force as Achilles or by skill as Odysseus that he wins her over but by beautification. [52] Like Aphrodite in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, and as is the trope of the *toilette scene* for women from the Classical period into modernity, Jason is made-up and beautified by Hera to meet his suitor (Apoll. *Arg*. 3.456-457). When Medea, impressed by his appearance, agrees to accompany him and the two retrieve the golden fleece, the reversal of the Mulvian paradigm is made explicit as Jason is compared to a little girl delighting in fine clothing (Apoll. *Arg*. 4.167-173). Medea, Jason's counterpart, is also often described as crossing typical gender limitations. [53] Kampakoglou notes that in the *Argonautika*, "Gaze is used primarily to articulate female desire, and the expression of this desire delineates the heroic role of male agents in the *Argonautica* … Apollonius is barely concerned with Jason's perception of Hypsipyle or Medea; the male gaze never registers the female presence." [54] The resulting paradigm shift in the *Faun* and *Argonautika* is Active/Female subject, Passive/Male object.

While this paper has outlined some attitudes and examples wherein the Mulvian paradigm of Active/Male Viewer and Passive/Female Object does not fit, it has shown that in antiquity the possibility of Active/Female object, Passive/Male viewer, and Passive/Male object, and even Active/Female viewer were all available and acted upon. Certainly, most examples in antiquity align with the ideals of patriarchy like the image of *Europa and the Bull*, the *Anavysos Kouros*, and the *Phrasikleia Kore*; the *Knidia*, the *Slipper-Slapper* group, and the *Barberini Faun* exemplify instances of difference and such attitudes are also represented in the literature. While accessible, gender binary classification is important in understanding the roles of men and women in the viewing process, the ways of seeing in antiquity were more complex than the binaries set up in the 1970s and accepted for nearly fifty years since then. The paradigm set out by Mulvey was often disrupted in antiquity and the result is a need for a more nuanced methodology to approach the viewing of art. The role of viewer and viewed were filled by complex socio-behavioural tendencies that must be more nuanced than the likes of Berger or Mulvey have set out, as exemplified in the work done by scholars who focus on periods which are marginalized by 5th-century Athens and Republican Rome. Hölscher notes that "modern psychology of perception underlines and investigates the aspects of activity in human viewing," while, "it is also an activity of culture, of culturally stamped behaviour, embedded in specific cultural practices. Different societies develop and adopt specific modes of viewing." [55] Simply, those people in the Classical period looked at objects in a vastly different way than modern subjects do.

In the viewing experience, those with the ability to look upon an object of pleasure create reciprocal contact with that object and call for reaction. [56] It is clear that the paradigms and strict limitations of Mulvey's "polemical" theory which was put forward "without regard for context or [the] nuances of argument," in her own words, may not be applied without the "inaccuracy" and "subjectivity" cautioned of in Ridgway's condemnation of current art historical practice. [57] It is the opinion of this author that motion away from gendered, binary classification of the viewing experience is necessary for proper analysis of the viewing experience as appropriate for antiquity's culture, people, and artistic products. Further, the adoption of choice-based, empathetic methodologies such as that outlined in Hall (1980) of 'dominant,' 'negotiated,' and 'oppositional' readings might more readily bring scholars to such an analysis. But there is still a great deal of work that must be done in this respect.

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[50] Herring, 59.
[51] Herring, 59.
[52] Kampakoglou, "Gazing at heroes in Apollonius' Argonautika," 130.
[53] See Durham "Medea: Hero or Heroine?" for a feminist reading of Medea's gender transgressions.

[54] Kampakoglou, 130.
[55] Hölscher, *Visual Power in Ancient Greece and Rome: Between Art and Social Reality*, iii.
[56] Hölscher, iv.
[57] Ridgway, 769.

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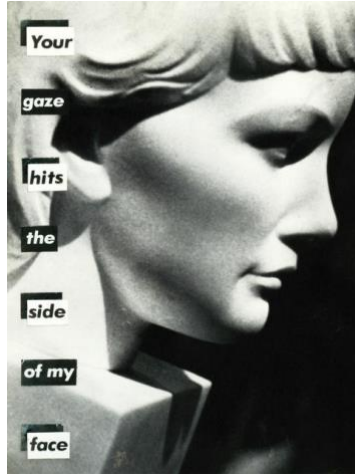
Figures



**Figure 1.** Memling, "Vanity."



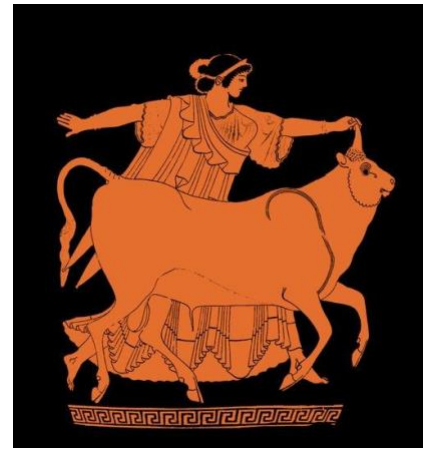**Figure 2.** Kruger, "Untitled (Your Gaze Hits the Side of My Face)."



**Figure 3.** Unknown, "Europa and the Bull of Zeus."



**Figure 4.** Left: Zucker, "Anavysos Kouros."; Right: Braverman, "Phrasikleia Kore."



**Figure 5.** Praxiteles, "Aphrodite of Knidos."

**Figure 6.** Maar, "Assia."



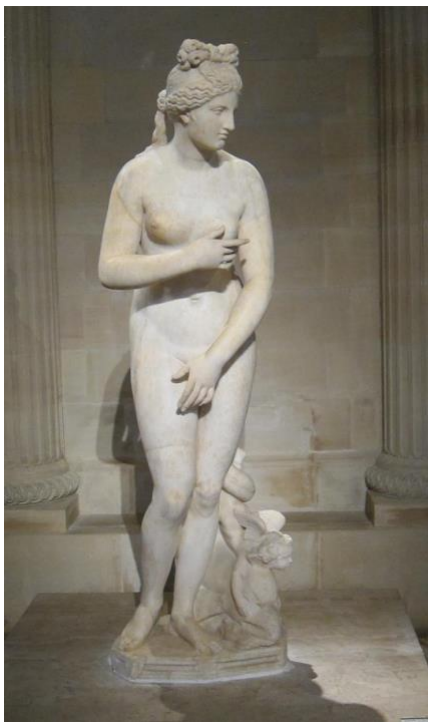**Figure 7.** Randolph College, Aphrodite, Pan, and Eros or the 'Slipper-Slapper' group in "Ancient Plastic."



**Figure 8.** Unknown, "Capitoline Knidia/Venus."



**Figure 9.** Bärwinkel, "The Barberini Faun."

**Figure 30.** Silenus on the top-left of Unknown, "Derveni Krater."



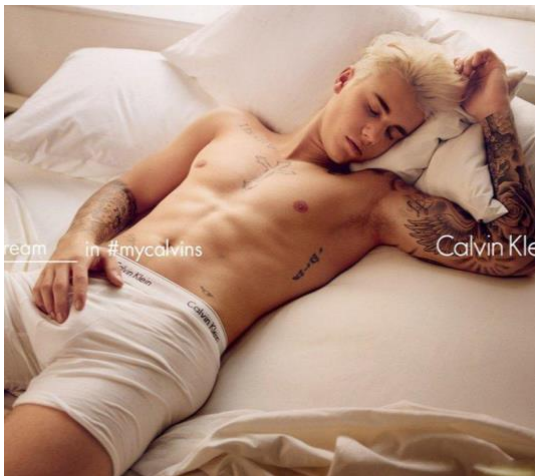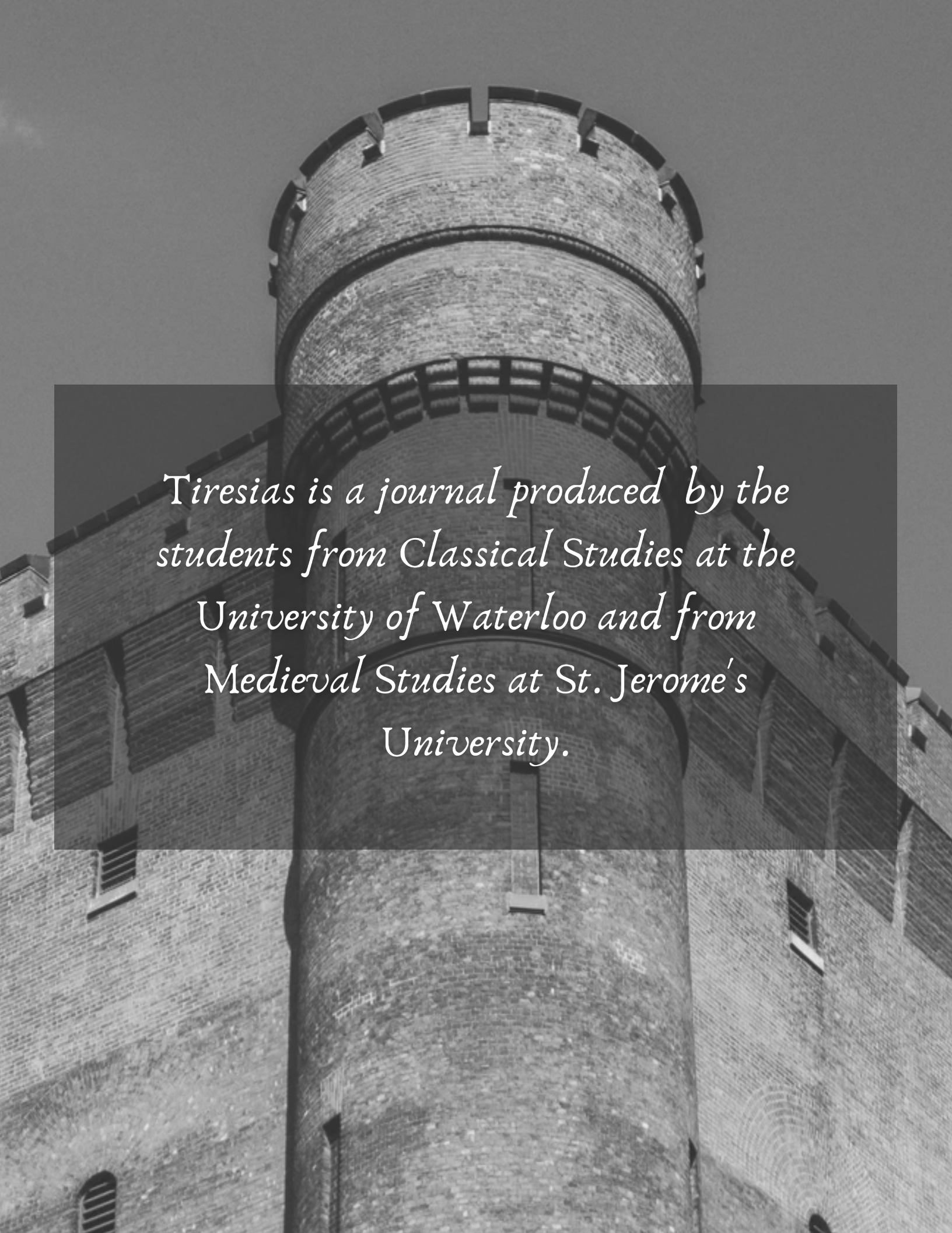**Figure 12.** Jamie Dornan in Mcguire, "Calvin Klein."



**Figure 11.** Justin Bieber in Mcguire, "Calvin Klein."

*Tiresias is a journal produced by the students from Classical Studies at the University of Waterloo and from Medieval Studies at St. Jerome's University.*