Beyond Priesthood

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Religious Entrepreneurs and Innovators in the Roman Empire

Edited by
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Acknowledgements

Almost all the chapters included in this volume were delivered in one form or other at an international conference entitled ‘Beyond Duty: Interacting with religious professionals and appropriating tradition in the Imperial Era’ held in Erfurt at the Augustinerkloster, 14–16 January, 2015. The conference was organised as part of the research project *Lived Ancient Religion: Questioning ‘cults’ and ‘polis religion’*, directed by Jörg Rüpke and Rubina Raja at the Max Weber Center for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies (University of Erfurt), and has been generously funded by the European Research Council (Seventh Framework programme [FP7/2013], grant agreement no. 295555).

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Richard L. Gordon
Georgia Petridou
Jörg Rüpke

Bibliographical Note

Abbreviations of Greek and Latin authors, literary texts and collections (Christian inclusive, where applicable) follow those of Simon Hornblower, Anthony Spawforth, and Esther Eidinow, eds., *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, Oxford 2012^4, or sometimes, failing that, Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, Oxford 1940^9, with *Supplement* (1996) and G.W.H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, Oxford 1961, but may be expanded, if it seemed advisable, for the sake of clarity. The reader is assumed to have access to these works. Abbreviations of main epigraphic corpora follow François Bérard et al., eds., *Guide de l'épigraphiste: Bibliographie choisie des épigraphies antiques et médiévales*, Paris 2010, 19 – 20; those of papyrological corpora are taken from *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, web edition (Duke University Libraries).

Other abbreviations used in the volume are:

ANF	*The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, edited by A. Cleveland Coxe. 9 vols. New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885 – 1897. The most recent re-issue was published by Hendricks (Peabody MA 1999).
BDB	*Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, edited by Francis Brown, Samuel R. Driver and Charles A. Briggs. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1906 and often reprinted.
BK	*Bibel und Kirche* [Catholic periodical], 1. 1946–).
CGL	*Corpus Glossariorum Latinorum*. 7 vols. Leipzig: B.G. Teubner, 1888 – 1923.
CPG Suppl.	*Corpus Paroemiographorum Graecorum* (edited by Ernst L. Leutsch and F. Georg Schneidewin), *Supplementum*, edited by Kurt Latte on the basis of the 1887 ed. Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1965 and 1991.
CSEL	*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*. 101 vols. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1864 – 2012; now Berlin: de Gruyter.
LCL	*Loeb Classical Library.*
NHC	*Nag Hammadi Codices*, edited by Douglas M. Parrott et al. 8 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1985 – 1990.
NJPS	*Tanakh: The Holy Scriptures. The New JPS Translation according to the Traditional Hebrew Text*, tr. Harry Orlinsky et al. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1985.

NPNF	*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. Series 1, 14 vols., Series 2, 14 vols. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke/New York: Christian Literature Publishing Co. 1888 – 1902. The most recent re-issue was published by Hendricks (Peabody MA 1999).
OF	*Poetae epici Graeci. Testimonia et fragmenta. 2. Teil: Orphicorum et Orphicis similium testimonia et fragmenta*, 3 vols., edited by Alberto Bernabé Pajares [Teubner]. Munich: Saur, 2004 – 2007.
OLD	*Oxford Latin Dictionary*, edited by Peter G.W. Glare. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982.
PG	*Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Graeca*, edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. 165 vols. Paris: 'Imprimerie Catholique', 1857 – 1866 (also online)
PL	*Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Latina*, edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. 221 vols. Paris: 'Imprimerie Catholique', 1844 – 1845 (also online).
PWRE	*Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumwissenschaft* (neue Bearbeitung), edited by Georg Wissowa et al. Munich, also Stuttgart, 1894 – 1980.
RIC	*Roman Imperial Coinage*, edited by Harold Mattingly and Edward A. Sydenham. 10 vols. London: Spink and Sons, 1923 – 1967 and reprinting.

Editorial note

In general, we have allowed contributors to choose their own preferred forms of transliteration from Greek: some provide no indication of vowel-length, some have marked the long vowels (in different ways), others are concerned to indicate the accents. We have also not interfered with authors' habits regarding the transcription of ancient names. In view of the different disciplinary backgrounds of the contributors, we have thought it best to spell out the names of scholarly journals for ease of reference.

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Introduction

This volume is the result of our collaborative efforts to organise a conference that would address the issues of appropriation and interaction with religious professionals in the Roman Imperial Era without overinvesting in labels that are fraught with methodological problems, such as ‘priests’, ‘priestesses’, and ‘priesthood’. These terms are used here, but with caution and in full awareness of their limited applicability to a wide range of religious entrepreneurs of the Roman Empire. The three-day international conference entitled ‘Beyond Duty: Interacting with Religious Professionals and Appropriating Tradition’, which took place in Erfurt in January 2015, was intended to evoke answers to three central questions: who laid claim to special performative competence in cultic matters, how they went about acquiring it, and how they used existing schemata to anchor and legitimate their innovations in the realm of religious knowledge.

The past decade has seen a surge of scholarly interest in these religious professionals and, along with it, a number of high-quality publications. These volumes form simultaneously the point of reference and the point of departure for our volume.

- Jörg Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum. Die Mitglieder der Priesterschaften und das sakrale Funktionspersonal römischer, griechischer, orientalischer und jüdisch-christlicher Kulte in der Stadt Rom von 300 v.Chr. bis 499 n.Chr* (Franz Steiner, 2005).
- Joan Breton Connelly, *Portrait of a Priestess: Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece* (Princeton University Press, 2007).
- Beate Dignas and Kai Trampedach, eds., *Practioners of the Divine. Greek Priests and Religious Officials from Homer to Heliodorus* (Harvard University Press, 2008).
- James Richardson and Federico Santangelo, eds., *Priests and State in the Roman World* (Franz Steiner, 2011).
- Marietta Horster and Anja Klöckner, eds. *Civic Priests* (De Gruyter, 2011).
- Marietta Horster and Anja Klöckner, eds. *Cities and Priests* (De Gruyter, 2013).

Our volume, however, is substantially different due to its intercultural character and its explicit focus on appropriation and contestation of religious expertise in the Imperial Era. By contrast with the rather narrow focus upon civic priests of the volumes listed above, the papers collected here examine a wide range of religious professionals, their dynamic interaction with established religious authorities and institutions, and their contributions to religious innovation in the

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ancient Mediterranean world, from the late Hellenistic period through to Late Antiquity, from the City of Rome to mainland Greece, Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt, from Greek civic practice to ancient Judaism.

A further, but equally significant, feature of our volume is the wide range of media of transmission taken into account. Our contributors look at both old and new materials, which derive not only from literary sources but also from papyri, inscriptions, and material culture. Beyond all this, however, the volume seeks to question current categories and terminology. One of the major aims is to ask how far the established categories of 'priests' and 'priesthood' correlate with the range of religious entrepreneurship and innovation in antiquity. Our authors employ a variety of terms for the agents they have chosen to study, not simply the holders of institutionalised offices in various traditions, viz. 'priests', but religious entrepreneurs, ritual practitioners, hieratic specialists, even philosophers and poets. It is indeed the shared aim of at least partially questioning the tendency to think in the first place of institutionalised office-holders when framing our ideas of religious agency in the Roman Empire that unites our endeavour. This is our justification for adopting the rather provocative title *Beyond Priesthood: Religious Entrepreneurs and Innovators in the Roman Empire.*

All but one of the papers included in this volume (the exception is that of Emiliano Urciuoli) were delivered at the fifth Lived Ancient Religion (henceforth LAR) conference, entitled 'Beyond Duty', held in the Augustinerkloster, Erfurt in January 2015, which focused on religious practitioners and providers of specialised religious knowledge and their interaction with lay people in the Ancient Mediterranean. The working perspective of the LAR project made clear to us that insufficient attention is generally paid to the issue of how individuals and groups make claims to religious knowledge and expertise, how they support these claims, and how they implement their individual plans for recognition and success as 'religious professionals'. It was however left open to contributors to choose their own angle of approach to these rather general questions, as seemed most appropriate to their own field of research and in view of their own interests and pre-occupations. Each was encouraged to provide his or her own gloss on the deliberately open-ended notion of 'beyond duty' (which, in the final publication, has been narrowed down somewhat to the rather more definite 'beyond priesthood'). This helps to explain the undeniable diversity of the contributions in terms of chronology, geography, culture and genre. In timid acknowledgement of the grand sweep of Max Weber's reflections on religious knowledge, the varieties of religious specialism, power, religion and life-chances, religion and 'the world' ('religiöse Weltbeziehungen') in 'Religiöse Gemeinschaften',[1] it was our deliberate aim not to confine the topic to Greek and Roman 'paganism' but to include papers on Judean/Jewish practice and early Christianity, viewed as ancient religious knowledge-practices.

Nevertheless a number of shared concerns are evident. One recurring theme in several papers included in the present volume, especially those by Bremmer, Eidinow, Gasparini, Gordon, and Urciuoli, is the nature of the strategies employed by self-styled religious experts to attract support from 'clients' or followers. Implicit here are conflicts with other interests, whether of individuals or groups, and the influence such pressures had upon perceived options, strategies and even content. A second major theme is the concern to view authors as contributors in their own right to the construction of the diversification of the religious field, in organising, highlighting, criticising or commemorating versions of religious claims, institutions and ideals (Rüpke/Santangelo, Bremmer, Denzey Lewis, Gasparini, Petridou, Standhartinger, Swartz, Weissenrieder).

Another common concern is packaging. How do religious experts and groups of religious specialists construct their offers, organisationally and theologically? How do they make their claims to religious knowledge effective? What role did religious entrepreneurs play in shaping religious action and theory in the Ancient Mediterranean? How successful were they in diversifying day-to-day religious ideas and practices? Some contributors (e. g. Eidinow, Denzey Lewis, Gasparini, Luijendijk, Petridou, Standhartinger) concentrate more on issues of visibility and intensity of interaction with lay people: how often did these professionals interact with (potential) followers and how accessible were they (and to whom)?

Others (especially Raja, Rüpke/Santangelo, Vinzent) focus on the relation between religious knowledge, social status and symbolic capital in different contexts. A number of contributors (especially Bremmer, Denzey Lewis, Gordon, Petridou, Rüpke, and Weissenrieder) examine the related but thematically distinct issue of de-restriction of recognised religious expertise and wider dissemination of religious knowledge. The contributions of Luijendijk and Swartz lay special emphasis on the educational background of claimants to religious authority.

The body as locus of contestation and signification of religious power is another important theme, explored in the contributions of Klöckner, Gasparini, Raja and Weissenrieder. This group of papers targets religious officials in relation to genre, sexuality, bodily transformation and mutilation. Gasparini, moreover, takes up the issue of perceived or claimed perversion of ritual practice, as well as misappropriation of ritual space and priestly attributes by both priestly personnel and laymen.

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[1] Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Die Wirtschaft und die gesellschaftlichen Ordnungen und Mächte. Nachlaß. Teilband 2: Religiöse Gemeinschaften*, edited by Hans G. Kippenberg assisted by Petra Schilm and Jutta Niemeier. Studiensausgabe der Max Weber-Gesamtausgabe Bd. I/22–2 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 2005).

I. Innovation: Forms and Limits

In the first chapter (*Public priests and religious innovation in imperial Rome*), Federico Santangelo and Jörg Rüpke jointly address the issue of institutionalised religious knowledge at Rome and the loci of innovation. While Santangelo studies the role of the colleges (and individual priests) in the context of the re-definition of aristocratic competition in the early Principate, Rüpke focuses on public religious specialists in Rome, i.e. the members of the priestly colleges, using Dio's representation of them, written in the long Severan period, to provide a deliberately unconventional account: Dio locates innovation neither in function nor the dominance of the imperial house but in divinatory practices, architecture, and philosophy. Until the adoption of Christianity as *Reichsreligion*, we can hardly expect significant religious innovation from the socio-political elite in Rome.

The second chapter looks at more radical innovation in the Greek East as viewed through the satirical eye of Lucian. **Jan Bremmer** (*Lucian on Peregrinus and Alexander of Abonuteichos: A sceptical view of two religious entrepreneurs*) argues that, reading between the lines, these two figures provide an authentic glimpse of the plethora of new religious initiatives and possibilities in the second half of the second century CE. An analogous theme is pursued by **Nicola Denzey Lewis** in the third chapter of this section (*Lived religion among second-century Gnostic hieratic specialists*), who shows how the charges of aberrant sex and ritual impropriety against three early 'gnostic' heretics, Marcus the Magician, Marcellina, and Theodotus, belong to a specific rhetoric of defamation of innovation. Denzey Lewis shows how the LAR methodological framework can help us to read these charges differently.

Finally, **AnneMarie Luijendijk** (*On and beyond duty: Christian clergy at Oxyrhynchus*) looks at interactions between religious professionals and lay people in early Christian communities at Oxyrhynchus in Lower Egypt. So far from confirming the image of constant contestation offered by the Apologetic tradition, the correspondence between the Bishop Sotas and his fellow bishops and lay members reveals the harmonious co-existence of pagan priests and Christian religious specialists in the third century. Moreover, other contemporary epistolary evidence from the same city opens up the possibility that Christian female religious professionals may also have been active at the same period.

II. The Author as Religious Entrepreneur

This group of papers pays particular attention to authors as themselves agents of religious reformation and revisionism.

Angela Standhartinger (*Best practice. Religious reformation in Philo's representation of the therapeutae and therapeutrides*) looks at the group of men and women who are said by Philo in his *De vita contemplativa* to live an ascetic life on the shores of Lake Mareia or Mareotis near Alexandria, in a manner strikingly similar to that of a group of Egyptian priests described shortly afterwards by the Stoic author Chaeremon. In his encomium, Philo represents this Jewish group as the ultimate embodiment of true religion. The paper assumes the utopian/critical character of this account and asks whether Philo's aim was to reform Judaism alone or the very notion of 'religion' as a whole.

In the second chapter of Part II, **Annette Weissenrieder** *(A Roadmap to the Heavens: High priestly vestments and the Jerusalem Temple in Flavius Josephus*) focuses on Josephus' ecphrastic treatment of the architectural complexities and symbolism of the First and Second Temple and the vestments of the High Priests. This dense theological and cosmological account of the vestments and their socio-political significance for Second-Temple Jews forms a kind of commemorative elegy just as the Temple itself passed out of existence, implicitly establishing Josephus' text as the authoritative repository of this entire tradition.

In a section otherwise heavily dominated by Jewish topics, **Georgia Petridou** (*Contesting medical and religious expertise in the* Hieroi Logoi: *The therapeutae of Pergamum as religious and medical enterpreneurs*) explores Aelius Aristides' appropriation in the *Hieroi Logoi* of the roles and the functions of religious officials of the Asclepieion. Aristides takes over pre-established ritual schemata and models himself on the tightly-knit community of high-born *therapeutae* of Pergamum in an attempt to contest current religious and medical expertise and establish himself as a religious and medical expert.

Markus Vinzent (*Christians, the 'more obvious' representatives of the religion of Israel than the Rabbis?*) argues that second-century Hellenised 'Jewish' and 'Christian' philosophers re-conceptualised sacrifice and Temple-cult to compensate for what Guy Stroumsa has called one of the biggest challenges of the time, the cessation of regular blood-sacrifices. Starting from Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, Vinzent suggests that collective religious expertise was displaced by individual philosophers whose theme was not cult-practice but 'religion'.

Michael Swartz's chapter (*Rhetorical indications of the poet's craft in the ancient synagogue*) analyses the interaction between divinely-inspired poets and the community in Late-Antique Jewish tradition. The poets attempt to fashion themselves as charismatic religious entrepreneurs who represent the group in its communication with the divine. Swartz is interested in the question of “how ritual practitioners … sought to distinguish themselves as worthy of consideration as members of a vocation that claimed a pedigree, identity, and singular status”.

III. Filling in the Blanks

This section includes chapters that present religious innovation in the Graeco-Roman world (including Christianity as a ‘Graeco-Roman religion’) as a permanent feature of these religious systems, though one largely concealed by the paradigm of ‘polis-religion’, which naturally emphasises the standard and regular, and tends therefore to concentrate on public institutions rather than more informal types of religious leadership and knowledge-practices.

Religious specialists who operate independently of elite norms and/or on the margins of civic tolerance and control, such as itinerant prophets, healers, purifiers and other religious practitioners, are of special interest here. The first chapter, by **Esther Eidinow** (*In search of the ‘beggar-priest’*), surveys the origins and the cultural connotations of itinerant ‘beggar-priests’ from classical Greece through to the Roman Imperial era. She lays special emphasis on the suspicion and general mistrust that surrounded these individuals in the Graeco-Roman world inasmuch as they competed with the *polis* in the provision of selected *Heilsgüter.* To that extent, we can think of such specialists as ‘filling in the blanks’ left unoccupied by the dominant religious institutions and organised professionals.

In the second chapter, **Richard Gordon** (*Projects, performance and charisma: Managing small religious groups in the Roman Empire*) compares three contrasting forms of ‘small-group religion’ in the Empire, and the expectations and aims of their organisers. Gordon argues that religious ideas developed outside the traditional religious framework of the Greek and Roman worlds offered greater imaginative scope to the small religious entrepreneurs of the type he terms ‘(Weberian) mystagogues’ than indigenous ones.

The final chapter of Part III, commissioned especially for the volume, treats religious competence in early Christianity as a form of zero-sum symbolic capital (**Emiliano Urciuoli**, *Enforcing priesthood: The struggle for the monopolisation of religious goods and the construction of the Christian religious field*). Christian clergy, charismatic individuals, wealthy lay-people and providers of ‘gnosis’, deriving from wide range of different religious backgrounds, all attempted in the mid-2nd to the end of the 3rd century CE to ground their claims to religious authority through their possession of specialised knowledge. A major focus is the strategies employed by the ‘ecclesiastical party’ of the emergent bishops to denigrate religious competitors and establish the office of the bishop as the sole legitimate and effective Christian religious authority.

IV. ‘Written on the Body’

The chapters in the final section discuss the body as a focus of religious signification. One dramatic case here is that of the *castrati* in the cult of the Mater Magna. **Anja Klöckner** (*Tertium genus? Representations of religious professionals in the cults of Magna Mater/Cybele and Attis*) discusses the exoticism of the *galli* and *archigalli* as documented in iconography. Klöckner emphasises the alterity of these representations as signs of non-standard religious commitments.

Bodily purity and alterity are major themes in **Valentino Gasparini’s** contribution (*Negotiating the body: Between religious investment and narratological strategies. Paulina, Decius Mundus and the priests of Anubis*), which discusses Isiac practices of asceticism, moral virtue and bodily purity, and their role in defining the distinctive religious profile of these cults. Here too, though, such difference might lead to accusations of negative alterity, as in the famous case, whether historical or not, of Paulina and Decius Mundus under Tiberius, as narrated by Josephus.

In the final chapter, **Rubina Raja** (‘*You can leave your hat on.’ Priestly representations from Palmyra—between visual genre, religious importance and social status*) considers the significance of Palmyrene representations of high-status males dressed in priestly vestments, especially the *modius*. The argument is that such images signal an intentional difference between Palmyrene and Roman religious offices, whereas public magistracies were re-modelled in conformity with general Graeco-Roman usage.

It is our hope that the intercultural and intermedial character of the essays in the volume will be of interest not only to students of Classical studies, history of religion, and ancient history, but also to those who work in the fields of comparative theology and literature, social and cultural anthropology, and the history of ideas.

Part I: **Innovation: Forms and Limits**

Jörg Rüpke and Federico Santangelo

Public priests and religious innovation in imperial Rome*

This paper is devoted to the 'public' priesthoods of imperial Rome and their contribution to the wider patterns of religious innovation. It focuses on two key areas of interaction: between priests and the wider public in the city of Rome, through a close reading of the evidence of Cassius Dio, and between priests and emperor, especially in the first decades of the Principate. In focusing on the impact of priesthoods 'beyond duty', and looking beyond the setting of priesthoods within the elite networks of Republican Rome, it focuses on two key issues: choice and power. What degree of choice could be exercised in testing and exceeding the remit of collectively-defined prerogatives? What range of options were open, both to agents who exceeded the remit of their duty and to those affected by their actions? What powers did religious experts dispose of, which allowed or enabled them to exceed the remit of their duty? What factors prompted them to seek to modify the tasks that they were expected to perform? Any decision to exceed the remit of one's duty implied some degree of challenge to existing power arrangements or institutional frameworks.

1. Introduction

Whereas the role of religious specialists in furthering religious change during the Empire is widely acknowledged, that of the so-called 'public priests' is much less clear. Late Roman Republican thinkers acknowledged that this group – usually conceptualised as *sacerdotes* – was of great significance for the opposite of religious innovation, that is, the upholding of tradition. M. Tullius Cicero saw public priests as defending the ancestors' religious practices against individual innovations; M. Terentius Varro understood them as resisting oblivion (*neglegentia*). Al-

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* This paper is a collaborative development of the contributions that we presented at the *Beyond Duty* conference in January 2015. The Introduction and Conclusion are our shared work; Jörg Rüpke is chiefly responsible for section 2 and Federico Santangelo for section 3, but we take joint responsibility for the whole text. We should like to thank Richard Gordon for his valuable comments on a previous version.

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though Cicero's short account of religion in his dialogue *On Laws* ignores many significant issues, it does include a complete list of all the main priesthoods.[1]

The status of the religious knowledge of public priests might also be affirmed *e negativo*. In the early second century BCE, for example, the *senatus consultum* on the Bacchanalia imposed severe restrictions on their priests and similar functionaries.[2] The priesthoods of Venus Erycina and Cybele were limited to foreigners; astrologers, like other purveyors of technical knowledge, such as philosophers and rhetoricians, were occasionally banned from the city of Rome. In relation to change, however, the notion of 'religious knowledge' is thoroughly ambiguous. It may help to shore up genuinely traditional practice, but may also continue 'tradition' that turns out to be merely invented. The transformation of religious practices into knowledge is one of the most important innovations of the late Republican period.[3]

It is easy to find corroboration of the views of Cicero and Varro in other literary evidence for the Republican period. From the third century BCE onwards, the number of priestly positions was increased and their duties differentiated: important steps in that direction were the integration of plebeians in 300 BCE, the foundation of the *Epulones* in 196, and the enlargements of the colleges under Sulla, Caesar, and finally Augustus. The *decemuiri* (later *quindecimuiri*) *sacris faciundis*, who interpreted the Sibylline Books, introduced many new cults and ritual practices into Rome, as did the *pontifices* and the *haruspices*, albeit on a smaller scale. One of their major tasks and most visible activities was the identification, interpretation, and ritual treatment of the 'prodigies' that were deemed to have public relevance. Thus, a degree of change was institutionalised in the realm of publicly-financed cult, ritual practices, and the ritual infrastructure provided for the dominant political group, which we define, for the purposes of the present discussion, as the aristocracy.[4] Public priests did not need to be 'intellectuals', but from their ranks there emerged several experts who wrote treatises dealing with problems arising within their specific ritual field. Cicero became an augur roughly at the same time as he was working on *On Laws*; Varro never held a priesthood, but represented priests as bearers of knowledge, a view that was taken up and developed by authors like Valerius Maximus in the early Principate.[5]

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[1] Cic. *Leg.* 2.19–20; Varro, *Ant. Rer. Diu.* fr. 2 Cardauns. See Rüpke (2011a, 27–48).

[2] *CIL* I^2 581 = *ILS 18* = *ILLRP* 511: (10) *sacerdos nequis uir eset. magister neque uir neque mulier quisquam eset.* (11) *neue pecuniam quisquam eorum comoine*[*m h*]*abuise uelet. neue magistratum,* (12) *neve pro magistratu*[*d*], *neque uirum* [*neque mul*]*ierem qui*[*s*]*fecise uelet.*

[3] Rüpke (2012b).

[4] For an illuminating reassessment of the relevance of this concept to the study of ancient history see Fisher and van Wees (2015).

Neither during the Republic nor during the imperial period did ‘public priests’ enjoy a monopoly on religious knowledge and innovation. At least in the second or third generation, the worship of the so-called Egyptian gods, including Isis and Sarapis, was often conducted by specialists with ritual and linguistic knowledge, who could claim the range of competences described by Apuleius in *Metamorphoses* Book 11. In many cases religious professionals were probably not instrumental in the spread of practices and symbols, but soon came to be involved in organising groups and developing distinctive practices. The same is surely true for Mithras or the god of Jerusalem.

The activities of these specialists, and especially their interaction with their clients, are generally invisible to us, if they did not produce individually ‘authored’ texts (like Manetho or Appian or Suetonius). On the other hand, texts permit us to reconstruct the actual communication with the auditors (or exceptionally readers) and their responses only to a very limited extent. Other forms of interaction, of which there must have been many, have left hardly any traces. Durable testimonies of such interaction survive only in exceptional cases: to mention just two notable instances, the treatment of patients by specialists in sanctuaries of Asclepius is sometimes documented in their dedicatory inscriptions; the ‘confession inscriptions’ from Lydia were set up after a consultation with a priest about one’s sin in cases of chronic ailment. The concept of ‘religious specialists’[6] denotes individuals as different as small-time organisers of informal religious groups, prophets or seers, diviners, wonder-workers, magicians, ‘wise folk’, i.e. people who offered religious services and knowhow and might even earn their living by such means – in other words, religious entrepreneurs of one sort or another. For those individuals, ‘religion’ was not an occasional and interchangeable option or instrument,[7] but a profession (in every sense of the term), a way of life and a means of making one’s living. Given the precariousness of the divine and its representations,[8] and its problematic accessibility, such people were not in principle indispensable, but were frequently helpful and occasionally necessary. It is, however, not their theological reflection (known to us usually only if it was put into writing of some kind) in which we are interested, but their role in mediating religion, in dealing with or producing religious change, and interacting with other people and their 'lived religion'.[9]

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[5] See Rüpke (2015a).

[6] For the concept of ‘religious specialists’ see Rüpke (1996).

[7] For a definition see Rüpke (2015b).

[8] Cf. Rüpke (2010b).

The stern caveat that Albert Henrichs has issued against the use of the word 'priests' in the study of Greek religion applies, in some measure, to the study of any polytheistic religion.[10] The call for further differentiation is also relevant to the Roman context, where the complexity of cultic activity cannot be narrowed just to the *cultus publicus*. While it is important to recognise that the category of 'religious specialists' encompasses public priests, as well as other categories, the enduring presence of the priestly college remains a distinctive aspect of Roman religion. Speaking of 'priests' in Republican and Imperial Rome is a methodologically sound and historically accurate operation: they are a well-identified cluster of individuals, with clearly defined statuses. That does not amount to viewing them as a static *corps* in which new clusters of expertise have to be created and trained, and does not of course amount to denying that the situation becomes inevitably more complex when one turns to provincial contexts. There is even scope for surprising solutions: in first century CE Asia we find cities competing over the title of *neokoros*, effectively arguing for their entitlements to host and run the imperial cult as communal entities.[11]

Against this background, our interest in the contribution of such 'public priests' concentrates on the 'public' priesthoods of imperial Rome. What was their contribution to the upkeep as well as to the alteration of religious practices that were appropriated by groups and individuals in the city of Rome under the specific conditions of the Principate? What was the impact of the advent of monarchy on the standing and influence of public priesthoods, and on the role that priestly expertise played in the religious life of Rome? If we start looking 'beyond duty', beyond the setting of priesthoods within the elite networks of Republican Rome, two issues readily present themselves: namely, choice and power. What degree of choice could be exercised in looking beyond the remit of collectively defined prerogatives? What range of options were open, both to agents who exceed the remit of their duty and to those affected by their actions? Or again, what powers did agents dispose of, that allowed or enabled them to exceed the bounds of their duty? Which factors prompted them to try to modify the tasks that they were expected to perform? Conversely, any decision to go beyond the remit of one's duty implied some degree of challenge to an existing power-constellation or regime.

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[9] See Rüpke (2012a); Rüpke (2014b); Raja and Rüpke (2015a, b); Rüpke (2016).

[10] Henrichs (2008).

[11] Dmitriev (2011).

Our discussion focuses on two key areas of interaction. First, we examine interaction with the wider public during the imperial period. We then look more closely into interaction with the emperor, as it took shape during the first decades of the Principate.

2. Interaction between priests and people under the Principate

2.1. Public priests in Cassius Dio

Before we begin, a methodological clarification is in order: our first text is by a contemporary observer who has not hitherto figured prominently in the history of religion, but has been used extensively by students of imperial history, namely the Greek senator from Bithynia, Lucius Cassius Dio [Cocceianus?]. He spent large parts of the Severan period at Rome holding high office before withdrawing to his hometown, Nicea, after his second consulship in 229.[12] As an observer of religion, he is an important witness, since he began his literary activity with a work on that very topic, as he himself relates:

> I had written and published a little book about the dreams and portents which gave Severus reason to hope for the imperial power; and he, after reading the copy I sent him, wrote me a long and complimentary acknowledgment. This letter I received about nightfall, and soon after fell asleep; and in my dreams the Divine Power (*tò daimónion*) commanded me to write history.[13]

Unfortunately, much of Dio's account of the imperial period, namely Books 61 to 80 (with the exception of 78/79) from 47 CE onwards, is lost. We only glean an impression of it through the substantial summaries of two late-Byzantine excerptors, John Xiphilinos and John Zonaras (11/12th c.), who just occasionally added comments that reveal their Christian outlook.[14] Our analysis of this material will be supplemented by adducing phenomena that fell below Dio's radar, using prosopographical and anecdotal evidence.

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[12] On Dio see Millar (1964); Kolb (1972); Manuwald (1979); Bering-Staschewski (1981); Kemezis (2013, 90 – 149); Lange and Madsen (2016).

[13] Cass. Dio 72.23.1 – 2 (transl. Earnest Cary, LCL).

[14] E.g. Cass. Dio 70.2.2 on Antoninus Pius' relationship with the Christians. At 72.9.1 Xiphilinos adds an alternative account of the rain-miracle under Marcus Aurelius (in 174 CE); at 73.4.6 he adds the detail that a concubine favoured Christians.

Even the summaries betray Dio's interest in prodigies and dreams. Time and again it is they that induce emperors-to-be to undertake a certain course of action, and it is they that announce or accompany catastrophes. The course of events frequently reveals that an utterance or quotation had a second, veiled, meaning. Rise and fall, life and death, victory and defeat, driven as they are by strategies and emotions, are thus thoroughly naturalised or, on the other hands, revealed as part of a divinely directed history. In itself, this does not make religion – in the sense of human religious action – particularly important. Indeed, religion is virtually absent from Dio's famous general reflection on, and normative account of, imperial monarchy in the pair of speeches in Book 52 by Agrippa (ch. 1–13) and Maecenas (ch. 14–40), and priests do not figure at all. The topic only crops up in connection with the question of ruler worship (52.36.1–2), which Maecenas warns is not to be actively required (52.35.4–6).

> Do you not only yourself worship the Divine Power (*tò […] theîon*) everywhere and in every way in accordance with the traditions of our fathers *(katà tà pâtria),* but compel all others to honour it. Those who attempt to distort our religion with strange rites *(toùs […] xenízontás ti perì autò)* you should abhor and punish, not merely for the sake of the gods (since if a man despises these he will not pay honour to any other being), but because such men, by bringing in new deities in place of the old, persuade many to adopt foreign practices, from which spring up conspiracies […]

From the point of view of the historian of the empire and its rulers, priesthoods come into view as one of the emperor's many fields of activity, to which we now turn. According to Dio, among the privileges that were granted Caesar (Augustus) in 29 BCE was that of electing as many additional priests as he would like (51.20.3, *prohaireîsthai*). The same privilege, that of bestowing most of the priesthoods upon individuals of their choosing, was part of the general description of the monarchic power of Roman emperors as formulated in 53.17.8 (*didónai*). However, actual instances of that remain surprisingly rare.[15] It is in the same context that the emperors' membership of all priestly colleges (the supreme pontificate could, however, only be held by one of several co-reigning emperors) is given as the basis of his right to preside over all sacred matters (*pántôn […] tôn hierôn kurieúousin*). Once again, Dio never invokes this right in order to account for concrete cases.[16]

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[15] See Cass. Dio 55.9.4 (Augustus, for C. Iulius Caesar in 6 BCE); 58.7.5 (Tiberius for Sejanus; 58.8.1 (for C. Caesar Germanicus ['Caligula']) both in 31 CE. Compare Caligula's lack of restraint (59.28.5, 41 CE).

[16] Except in the case of Commodus, who loved having all his titles, including that of *pontifex maximus*, recited (73.15.5).

Dio's information allows us to observe imperial strategies of self-sacralisation at work. Thus, after the death of Lepidus in 13 BCE, Augustus not only took up the office of *pontifex maximus* (54.27.2), but also turned some private land into the 'public' space of the pontiff's official residence, thus avoiding having to move out of his *Palatium* (the future 'palace').[17] The merging of the former house of the *rex sacrorum* (which was public property) with the house of the Vestals, which was next to it in the Forum Romanum (54.27.3), links such self-sacralisation with regard to the Palatine to a wider strategy foreshadowed by an earlier incident. In 14 BCE, after a fire, the contents of the temple of Vesta were transferred to the Palatium, notably to the house of the *Flamen Dialis*, which was likewise a public space (54.24.2). Now (and this is our own reasoning and not Dio's), this priesthood had been filled only very recently after a vacancy of nearly three quarters of a century.[18] It is highly unlikely that the original building (which, as far as we know, served no other ritual function) had been kept in good repair ever since L. Cornelius Merula's death in 87 BCE. It is much more plausible to assume that Augustus put pressure on L. Cornelius Maluginensis to take up his residence on the Palatine.

Ritual behaviour offered another area of imperial self-sacralisation. To shield oneself behind a curtain, as Augustus did during the laying-out of Agrippa's corpse, was, according to Dio, no part of the ritual requirements imposed either on a *pontifex maximus* or on a censor (54.28.3–4; cf. 54.35.4, on Octavia). But Augustus' decision points to an attempt to devise a special status that might indeed require such precautions. This strategy of exceptionalism was continued: five years later, in 7 BCE, when, on the occasion of commemorative games for Agrippa, Augustus alone did not wear black clothing (55.8.5).

When we turn to consider priesthoods held by others and their religious actions, Dio only notes two further areas. The first concerns involvement in high-profile ritual action. The importance attached to one-off or repeated grand solemnities was underlined by requiring all-important priesthoods to take part in them. This was the case for the Actian Games (53.1.5), which were to be directed by pontiffs, augurs, *VIIuiri epulonum*, and *XVuiri sacris faciundis* in turn, and for the quadriennial celebration of Augustus' reign, directed by the *XVviri* in 16 BCE (54.19.8). In 14 CE all the priests processed around Augustus' pyre (56.42.2). In 31 a festival to celebrate the fall of Sejanus was inaugurated, to be conducted annually by the same four colleges and the *Sodales Augustales* (58.12.5).

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[17] Cass. Dio 54.27.3; cf. Xiph. p. 103.19–28 Dindorf for a similar emphasis in a later instance.
[18] See Rüpke (2005, 916 no. 1349 = 2008, 637 no. 1349), following Bowersock (1990, 392–393) in dating the accession to 14 BCE; this episode is narrated by Dio only among other religious events in 12 BCE (54.36.1).

‘All priests’ was not an unchanging concept. The deification of deceased emperors or other members of the imperial family demanded new ritual specialists. Dio provides many instances, starting in 14 CE with the creation of the *Sodales Augustales*, with Livia as *flaminica* (56.46.1). A *flamen* (if female, a *flaminica*) of a deified emperor (or empress) served the cult of the new deity and was integrated into the pontifical college. The *Sodales* continued to operate after the deification of Claudius under the (probably more precise) title of *Sodales Augustales Claudiales*. A new college was created only on the death of the first Flavian emperor, Vespasian (*sodales Flaviales,* later *Titiales*, later still *Sodales Hadrianales* and *sodales Antoniniani*). Dio reports the excesses of Caligula, who made members of his family and his friends priests of his own cult (59.28.5) and forced them to pay large entry fees (*summae honorariae*); some decades later, in 71 CE, Vespasian’ concubine Caenis earned money by selling the imperial favour of being appointed to offices and priesthoods (65.14.1). The emperor Claudius, on the other hand, gave an existing priesthood new ritual duties, by assigning the conduct of the worship of deified Livia in 41 CE to the Vestal Virgins (60.5.2).

These examples suggest that there was no lack of interest in such emoluments on the part of potential candidates. However, Dio also notes the reverse, a lack of candidates willing to be appointed as Vestal Virgins: such positions might have been prestigious, but they were also vulnerable to intrigue and to the accusation of being unchaste (*incestus*). He thus reports the introduction of a regulation in 5 CE that opened the priesthood even to the daughters of freedwomen (55.22.5), and does not fail to remark that no such candidates made themselves known; the resolution seems to have been merely *pro forma*.

Nowhere does Dio indicate that he thinks of such alterations and innovations as ‘history of religion’, nor does his concept of history seem to allow for such an idea. We, however, can use his observations and data for such a purpose. For Dio, public priests are not loci of innovation, nor do they warrant a free-standing account in their own right: they are discussed against the background of wider themes, such as the activities of the emperors and the historical trajectory of the elite. He might obviously have classified nominations to priesthoods and premature deaths of their holders together with the establishment and abolition of festivals, a topic he quite often touches upon.[19] But he does not.

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[19] E. g. Cass. Dio 52.30.4 – 6; 54.8.5; 55.6.5; esp. 56.46.5 and 59.6.4.

2.2. Religious innovation in Dio

But where did Dio locate religious innovation? Bearing in mind that he did not entertain a comprehensive notion of ‘religion’ comparable to our own, we might single out three areas: prophets, architecture, and philosophy.

Against the backdrop of the start of Dio’s literary career and his interest in the divine direction of history, it is no surprise to find a specific interest in prophecy. For the imperial period, the extant text describes three instances of highly visible and, to an extent, actually effective interventions by prophets. The first case is reported for 7 CE:

> And he [Augustus] made a vow with reference to the Megalensian Games, because some woman (*gunê tis*) had cut some letters on her arm and practised some sort of divination. He knew well, to be sure, that she had not been possessed by any divine power (*ouk ek theoû katéschêto*), but had done this thing deliberately; but inasmuch as the populace was terribly wrought up over both wars and the famine (which had now set in once more), he, too, affected to believe the common report and proceeded to do anything that would make the crowd cheerful, regarding such measures as necessary (55.31.2–3).

We do not learn about the contents of the prophecy, but the woman must have presented herself successfully as a medium of divine writing, possibly with reference to Cybele, since we know that other servants of that deity reported ecstatic experiences.

Another incident occurred right at the beginning of 38 CE, involving a slave whose name was still on record (59.9.3):

> On the very first day of the new year one Machaon (*Macháôn tis*), a slave, climbed upon the couch of Jupiter Capitolinus, and after uttering from there many dire prophecies, killed a little dog which he had brought in with him, and then slew himself.

Again, the prophecy is accompanied by a *Zeichenhandlung*, involving the body of an animal as well as that of the prophet himself. Given that the the situation at Rome in 7 CE was critical, we might assume that in this case too Machaon was acting in the context of similar tensions. Once again, the initiative lies with an individual from the margins of society, who attracts attention by his spectacular behaviour in a central venue. This time, however, Dio does not relate the incident to the further course of events, but presents the new emperor Gaius in positive terms.

The third instance is also part of Dio’s original text: an episode in 217 involving two diviners and concerning Caracalla (79.4.1–5):

> It seems that a seer in Africa had declared, in such a manner that it became noised abroad, that both Macrinus, the prefect, and his son, Diadumenianus, were destined to hold the imperial power; and later this seer, upon being sent to Rome, had revealed this prophecy to Flavius Maternianus, who at the time commanded the soldiers in the city, and this man had at once written a letter to Antoninus […] the message to the emperor was delayed, while the despatch to Macrinus was read by him in good season. And so Macrinus delayed no longer, fearing he would be put to death by Antoninus on this account, especially as a certain Egyptian Serapio, had told the emperor to his face a few days earlier that he would be short-lived and that Macrinus would succeed him. Serapio had at first been thrown to a lion for this, but when, as the result of his merely holding out his hand, as is reported, the animal did not touch him, he was slain; and he might have escaped even this fate – or so he declared – by invoking certain spirits (*daimónôn tinôn epiklêsei*), if he had lived one day longer.

Here Macrinus' coup is represented by Dio, who was of course himself present in Rome at this time, as the direct result of these visions and prophecies, which are taken so seriously by Caracalla that he condemns a man to death. Shortly afterwards, the Sun God Elagabalus and his oracle turn out to be the driving force behind a new attempt at the throne (79.31.1–2, Dio's original text). New or previously unknown ritual practices, surfacing in the context of visions and prophecies, prompt the interest of contemporaries and historiographers and have the power to shape history.

Surprisingly enough, architecture is yet another locus of religious innovation. Here we have to rely on a single instance, a comment made by a famous architect on Hadrian's temple of Venus and Roma, one of the largest sanctuaries ever built at Rome – a remark that ultimately led to the execution of the architect (59.4.3–4, Xiph.):

> He [Hadrian] sent him the plan of the temple of Venus and Roma by way of showing him that a great work could be accomplished without his aid, and asked Apollodorus whether the proposed structure was satisfactory. The architect in his reply stated, first, in regard to the temple, that it ought to have been built on high ground and that the earth should have been excavated beneath it, so that it might have stood out more conspicuously on the Sacred Way from its higher position, and might also have accommodated the machines in its basement, so that they could be put together unobserved and brought into the theatre without anyone's being aware of them beforehand. Secondly, in regard to the statues, he said that they had been made too tall for the height of the *cella*. "For now," he said, "if the goddesses wish to get up and go out, they will be unable to do so".

If we take Apollodorus' three comments together, they amount to the criticism that Hadrian has allowed a desire to impress through sheer monumentality to take precedence over aesthetic considerations, which are in fact closely connected to the religious value of respect for the deity.

Finally, philosophy. It is again the age of Hadrian which supplies the first indications that philosophy (or, better, philosophies) became an important field of competition. Hadrian himself is characterised right at the start of his reign by his envy of other philosophers, such as Favorinus (69.2.3). In 200 CE the empress Julia is looking for comfort in philosophy (76.15.7); the observation is repeated in stronger terms for c. 214 CE (78.18.3), when she instigates the building of a temple for Apollonius of Tyana – thus signalling the overlap of philosophy and religion. There is no parallel in Dio, although he does note the interest shown by several emperors in astrology. The importance of taking a stance towards philosophy and similar systems of knowledge is illustrated by Caracalla's hatred of Aristotelian philosophy and his persecution of Aristotelians, motivated by his veneration of Alexander, whose death he attributed to the philosopher (78.7.1–3 Xiph., reported for 211).

2.3. Further evidence for interaction of public priests

Dio's observations can be tested against other sources. The importance of visionaries and their texts and the significance of the institution of prophecy for the imperial period are beyond doubt, exemplified as they are by apocalyptic literature and visionary narratives – not only Eastern Mediterranean traditions of Sibylline Books and apocalypses, such as 4 Ezra, Enoch and the Johannine *Book of Revelations*, but similar texts produced in the city of Rome itself: we think here in the first place of the hundreds, if not thousands, of Sibylline books (screened by Augustus in 12 CE and again by Tiberius in 19 CE: see Dio 57.18.4–5), which Dio mentions in the context of the great fire of 64 CE (62.18.3). Attempts to validate prophetic claims at the risk of one's freedom, or even life, became a hallmark of the Judeo-Christian discourse from the end of the second century CE onwards.[20]

From its very beginning, religious architecture has aimed to evoke religious emotion by aesthetic means. However, a special interest in creating illusions of divine movement by technical means is attested by the treatise of Hiero of Alexandria, written around the middle of the first century CE, where he describes the use of mirrors, as well as mechanisms to cause doors and statues to move, apparently of their own will.

Finally, philosophy not only provided a model for religious confessionalisation by representing the various schools as different 'choices', that is to say, 'heresies' (*haireseîs*),[21] but can also be seen as part of a process in which religious practices, explicit world views, and ways of life coalesced to form enduring religious groups, a process characteristic of the history of religion in the imperial period.[22]

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[20] See Waldner (2017).

But, given all this, what about priests? Dio's observation of the dialectics of proliferation and centralisation can be supported by prosopographical data. The *Sodales* offer a particularly good example. Apart from the establishment of a flaminate and the incorporation of the emperor's name into the hymn of the *Salii* (*carmen saliare*), another aspect of the deification of an emperor or a member of the ruling family was the founding of a *sodalitas*, whose membership corresponded in social rank to that of the great colleges (members of the imperial family itself may even have been over-represented, contributing to a distortion of the putative power of these institutions). Membership of such a sodality was frequently combined with other priestly offices. The institution began, as we have seen, with the founding of the *sodales Augustales* on the death of Augustus in 14 CE. Unlike the case of the flaminate, the aim here was to establish a dynastic cult, as is made clear by the cult site and meeting-centre at Bovillae.[23] As a result, the cults of dead emperors belonging to a particular dynasty were merged, and after the divinisation of Claudius the *sodales Augustales* continued to operate under the (probably more precise) title of *sodales Augustales Claudiales*. The extent to which such combinations were original or secondary, that is to say established retrospectively, remains unclear. Thus for a long time the *sodales Augustales Claudiales*, the *sodales Flaviales Titiales*,[24] the *sodales Hadrianales*, and the *sodales Antoniniani* (for the deified emperors from Antoninus Pius onwards, including those of the Severan dynasty) existed side by side, even if it can be shown that many members of the newly-founded priesthood of the *Antoniniani* had already been *Sodales Hadrianales*. Many more might have been, but documentation fails.

The institution of the *Sacerdotes domus Augustae* (*Palatinae*) is even more interesting. This large and carefully structured priestly body is known primarily from an *album* that appears to date to 182 CE.[25] The *album* is headed by a group of three names, probably to be interpreted as *magistri*; the first two names also appear in the list of *decem primi* alongside. There follows a list of the *ordo*, comprising at least eighteen individuals, several of them *egregii uiri*, i. e. of equestrian rank, to which must be added – set out in the leftmost of the two columns, i. e. underneath the *magistri* – the separately-listed members (fifteen in number) of the clarissimate (*clarissimi uiri*), who are thus of senatorial rank. The physical layout, with the names in the left-hand column commencing only after the last of the *X primi* in the right-hand column, shows that the *clarissimi uiri* were not patrons standing outside the college – as the usual interpretation has it – but belonged to the *ordo*, and in the hierarchy of the group ranked below the leadership (in which they do not appear to participate) while remaining socially superior to it. A few inscriptions, probably of a later date, speak in abbreviated form of the *ordo sacerdotum* or the *sacerdotes sacrae urbis de X primis* (*CIL* VI 86 and 2137). This could indicate a development whereby the original focus on the ruler cult, concentrated on the Palatine, was re-directed towards the city and the Vesta complex, possibly also incorporating the Hadrianic *duodecimuiri sacrae urbis*.

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[21] See Rüpke (2010a).

[22] North (2003) and (2010); Rüpke (2014a).

[23] The accumulation of finds, especially succession lists, means that we dispose of many, albeit fragmentary, documents, but the names are often incomplete. The interpretation of inscriptions such as *CIL* XIV 2398 – 2399 = VI 1997, 2000 as succession lists of *sodales* in the compilation of Marcillet-Jaubert (1968, nos. 96 – 99) is not tenable: the fragmentary text does not permit either safe interpretation as a succession list or attribution in respect of co-optations or dates.

[24] See Scott (1936), with a list of personnel (79 – 80).

But how did all these priesthoods interact with the general public, apart from their appearance at public rituals, especially processions, where many people could catch sight of them, and by means of which they could act as models that individuals could use to pattern their own ritual behaviour? Our knowledge of their day-to-day business is modest.[26] Meetings of the prestigious priestly colleges could be held in the spacious villas of the senatorial order; on occasions meals were a matter of competition, and of course not subject to the restrictions imposed by the limited funds available to a college of common people, let alone of slaves. In most cases, membership numbers were restricted. Twelve (plus a few honorary seats) was a common size, and colleges would usually not exceed fifteen to twenty (as is the case with the *sodalitates*). The pontifical college was larger and something of a medley, including pontiffs, minor pontiffs, *flamines*, and Vestal Virgins, and would have comprised more than thirty people. However, in these echelons of society, many members would be absent on imperial service in administrative or military positions for much of the time.

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[25] *CIL* VI 2010. A small number of the names can be identified with people known and datable from other sources: the *consul iterum* for 176 CE (Vitrasius Pollio: Rüpke 2005, 1224 no. 2784 = 2008, 850 no. 2784) features very close to the top of the (partial) list (which is probably arranged chronologically by date of admission, as is generally the case in these lists); others include the founder of the Mithraeum of *Castra peregrinorum* (A. Caedicius Priscianus: Rüpke 2005, 835 no. 998 = 2008, 582 no. 998) and one Aelius Saoterus (Rüpke 2005, 732 no. 481 = 2008, 511 no. 481), who since Borghesi has been identified with Saoterus of Nicomedia (Cass. Dio 73.12; Hist. Alex. *Comm.* 4.5), the *cubicularius* of Commodus, who was assassinated in 183/4.

[26] The following paragraphs summarise the findings discussed at greater length in Rüpke (2011b).

One should be cautious about speaking of priests as 'religious infrastructure', as service personnel easily available to everybody. First, it would have been difficult to find them. Of course, everybody would have known that the Vestal Virgins lived in a building adjacent to the *aedes Vestae*, namely the *atrium Vestae*, including the *domus publica* of the *rex sacrorum* that was given to them by Augustus in 12 BCE,[27] when the residence of the supreme pontiff was transferred to the Palatine (Cass. Dio 54.27.3).[28] Whereas the Vestals were hardly addressed by the general public (unless you decided to deposit your will with them as a form of political insurance), in the Republican period the *pontifex maximus* T. Coruncanius even set up an 'open for consultation' sign (*consulere licet*) during the first half of the third century BCE, indicating the legal services offered by the pontiffs (*iur.* 1). They did not enjoy a monopoly of competence as advocates, but they could answer questions regarding the status of burial places and the prospective permanency of tombs. Here, a certain public demand was to be expected, even if we have no indication of how often the threat of pontifical sanctions on tombstones far away from Rome actually led to an action being brought before the Roman college. If we can speak of any priesthood being part of a permanent religious infrastructure, the pontiffs must have been it. But it must be admitted that in the case of the only known interaction documented for the imperial period in 155 CE (*ILS* 8380),[29] the person addressed himself to the emperor, despite being personally acquainted with a pontiff.

The same holds true for other public priesthoods. Even the splendid structure of the grove of Dea Dia used for the cult of the Arval Brethren, which by the third century CE included a bath,[30] did not accommodate a permanent office – and in fact there would have been no need for such a thing. However, professional services that were in frequent demand were available: *haruspices* (i.e. practitioners of Etruscan divination: the most distinguished among them were given a permanent official status in the early Principate) as well as astrologers were known to be available for consultation in the city, for example around the Circus Maximus (Cic. *div.* 1.132).

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[27] Haselberger (2008, 60).
[28] Haselberger (2008, 115).
[29] See Van Haeperen (2002, 198 – 201).
[30] Broise and Scheid (1987).

Judging by the *commentarii fratrum Arualium*, the religious activity of college members was concentrated on a few occasions in the year; in the event of absence – and, as we have already pointed out, high functionaries were frequently absent from Rome for long periods – it lapsed entirely. This made the political and social functions of such membership all the more important. The colleges that were reserved for senators offered prestigious positions, regarded as heralding or crowning a successful political career, and pursued as such.[31] Membership did not just entail the obligation to participate in a few cult activities: it was also associated with lavish meals and celebrations in members' private houses, opportunities to discuss politically sensitive subjects, personal affairs, and the like. Joining a college was associated with offering an expensive and unforgettable meal.[32] The colleges were circles of communication within the political elite, and their significance as informal venues for the establishment of consensus among senators should not be underestimated. The mechanisms of co-optation constituted a bond between old members, the senate, and the Emperor.[33] Members had the right to nominate candidates for vacant positions, and at the end of the process they were the ones who formally co-opted the persons chosen. At least for the *pontifices* and *augures*, and probably also for the *quindecimuiri sacris faciundis* and *septemuiri epulonum*, it was the Senate that implemented the election. The emperor himself could act in his function as a member of the college, naturally as the most powerful and influential member, whose recommendations could not be disregarded. But he could also be the one who influenced the Senate's decisions.

Over time, however, the emperor's direct interaction with his colleagues tapered off. Under these circumstances the enforced collegiality of the *collegia sacerdotum*, with its rotating *magister* and *promagister* posts, could be – with the exception of the pontificate – neither attractive nor helpful. After the *ludi saeculares* of 204 CE, there are no recorded instances of personal participation by the reigning emperor in the periodic meetings and ritual activity of any college, and this seems to have already been the case for long stretches of the second century. Even earlier, as shown by the *commentarii* of the Arval Brethren, communication by letter (*litterae*) may have been the normal form of participation,[34] enabling the Emperor to avoid personal interaction and the perils of being obliged to argue face to face, and replacing that with a much more asymmetrical form of communication.[35]

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[31] This applies at least from the second century onwards; see e. g. Hoffman Lewis (1955); Szemler (1972); Scheid (1975); Alföldy (1977, 106 – 107); Schumacher (1978).

[32] See Rüpke (2005, 1423 – 1433).

[33] Plin. *Epist*. 4.8.1; 10.13.

[34] According to the *Acta* of the Arval Brethren (78, ed. Scheid) of 145 CE, M. Aelius Aurelius Caesar took part in a meeting as *magister*.

2.4. *Apparitores:* mediating between the priests and the public

Communication between ordinary people and public priests must have taken another form. We have at least two indications of how such communication might be effected. The first concerns the Vestals. These priestesses already had a personal lictor in the Republican period, but for the Empire a number of *fictores*, ‘bakers’, are also attested for them. Being a *fictor* to the Vestals was an attractive task to many members of the senatorial order. Here, a realm of religious communication opened up. Rita Lizzi Testa has shown that the Vestals continued to attract donations down to the end of the fourth century, and thus prompted Gratian to pay closer attention to their fortunes and inheritances even as late as 382 CE. [36]

Moreover the existence of a range of secondary religious specialists, *apparitores* and *serui publici*, opened up possibilities of indirect interaction. We can see this most clearly in the case of the pontifical college and its *calatores*, who were proud servants, usually of libertine status, personally attached to the individual members. In 1788 a dedication by this college to Trajan, dated 101 CE, was found near the temple of Castor in the Forum, listing thirty-six names in total (*CIL* VI 2184). No doubt it had originally been attached to one of the walls of the *schola* of this college, in the immediate vicinity of the Regia: thus, it represents an official document. In 1887 C. L. Visconti found a fragmentary inscription near the temple of Bel outside the Porta Portuensis, i. e. in the vicinity of the modern Stazione Trastevere, which proved that a list of the same *calatores*, found nearby in 1860 (VI 2185), had been included in his private dedicatory inscription by one Iulius Anicetus, which is dated in the following year, 102 CE (*CIL* VI 31034 [includes VI 2185]). Anicetus announces that he was able to restore a portico of a cult-building of Sol (at his own expense) by permission of the *calatores* – (*perm*]*issu ka*[*l*]*atorum*). By chance we also know that one C. Iulius Anicetus, presumably the same man, erected a marble altar to the ‘divine Sun’ (*Soli divino*), probably *trans Tiberim*, in fulfilment of a pledge.[37] And in 1859 Visconti had found yet another inscription by C. Iulius Anicetus, again outside the Porta Portuensis (thus also *trans Tiberim*).[38] This inscription once again relates to a cult of the Sun, but is even more interesting from a Media Studies standpoint:

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[35] Rüpke should like to thank Claudia Moatti (Paris and Los Angeles) for discussion of this point.

[36] Lizzi Testa (2007); see Conti (2003) for the last Vestals. Iara (2015) extends these observations to all priesthoods (see 170 – 179 on the public ones).

C. Iulius Anicetus
ex imperio Solis
rogat nequis velit
parietes aut triclias
(5) *inscribere aut*
scariphare.

> Gaius Iulius Anicetus, on orders of the Sun, requests that nobody should write or scratch *graffiti* on the walls or couches.

The interesting point here is not that ancient graffiti artists were requested to desist in the name of the Sun God: that would be too superficial an anachronism. Much more interesting with respect to historical anthropology and to a psychological profile of Anicetus is his awareness of the effect of graffiti and inscriptions on the surfaces of buildings. For it was he who hit upon the idea of attaching a large-format list of *calatores* to the cult building *trans Tiberim* that was maintained by him. Why he asked the permission of the *calatores pontificum et flaminum* to do so we cannot tell, but part of his aim must have been to be able to put up a substantial list of names in the form of an inscription.

If no legal requirement may be invoked for the inclusion of the *calatores* in the dedication, the connection must be sought at another level. The epigraphic record may reveal a religious motivation. The patron of the *calator* Ti. Claudius Heronas, the *flamen Carmentalis* Ti. Claudius Pollio, who gave Heronas his *praenomen* and *nomen*, was also a sun-worshipper. The inscription that affords him the opportunity of representing himself epigraphically as *flamen Carmentalis* is dedicated to Sol, Luna, Apollo, and Diana – the cosmic divinities in duplicate form, as it were.[39] Such shared interests might have connected one of the *flamines* and *calatores flaminum* with Anicetus. In pragmatic terms, they could easily have come to an agreement: why should the *calatores* refuse their approval, when it would bring them inclusion in an inscription at no cost to themselves, and when in any case nobody else would ask them for such approval? Sol was an ancient deity revered in the *Circus maximus*, and so here too there was nothing for them to find objectionable.[95]

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[37] *CIL* VI 709. Cyriacus of Ancona gives no provenance, but the Venetian antiqurian Giovanni Marcanova (†1467) places it 'trans Tiberim'. The altar was later in S. Cecilia in Trastevere.

[38] *CIL* VI 52, whose provenance is roughly the same as that of the two fragments of VI 31034.

[39] *CIL* VI 3720 = 31032 = *ILS* 1418.

A dedication *permissu calatorum* is not an isolated phenomenon. *CIL* VI 40684 is addressed to Iulia Mamaea as *mater Augusti* and *mater castrorum*. This inscription was found in the vicinity of the via Aurelio Saffi in Trastevere, and is thus associated with Anicetus' sanctuary outside the Porta Portuense. The inscription must date from the latter part of the reign of Alexander Severus,[40] and thus fits precisely into the phase of the cult of the Sun marking the new orientation after the death of Elagabalus and the *sacerdos Solis Alagabalis* Iulius Balbillus (who may actually have been related to Elagabalus and his family). In view of the previous close association of the cult establishment with the ruling house and – judging by the associated honorific statues[41] – with the *Vestales maximae*, it perhaps seemed appropriate to explicitly refer to the legal character of the undertaking (possibly a building or a renovation project).

2.5. Summary: interaction and its limits

Given the exceptional nature of the instances discussed in the previous section, any generalisation would be highly problematic. Nevertheless, these uses do attest to the possibility that, at least in indirect form, public priests interacted with the people, though admittedly only in the higher echelons of society. In the end, however, such interactions did not really matter: far more important services were provided by temples and other types of religious specialists. We do not find other groups or religious entrepreneurs imitating the specific forms of priestly organisation beyond the mere use of the term *sacerdos*. Indeed, from the mid-third century CE onwards we observe the public priesthoods themselves looking for forms of personal piety and religious action, a development that went hand in hand with a growing distance between priesthoods and emperors.[42] It is to that relationship that we now turn.

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[40] According to Alföldy, in his commentary on the inscription, between 227 or 232 and 235 CE.

[41] *CIL* VI 2129 – 2130.

[42] See Rüpke (2011b) and the discussion in Cameron (2011) for details.

3. Interaction between priests and emperor

3.1. A new role for the *pontifex maximus*

A preliminary caveat is called for as we switch our focus to the heart of political interaction. Public priests in Rome were not the only group of religious specialists within the political elite. The Senate routinely debated matters of religious significance, and provided authoritative rulings on them. Moreover, its members included a number of former magistrates, who also performed important ritual duties during their tenure in office. Many senators will have therefore been in a position to make competent and effective statements on matters of religious significance. The Roman Senate was, under the Republic as well as for much of the Imperial period, a hub of religious knowledge, which was not the exclusive prerogative of the senators who also held a priesthood.[43]

The early phase of the Augustan period offers a remarkable example of this. L. Munatius Plancus' contribution to the *sacra* of the city was arguably the dedication of the temple of Saturn that he carried out in 42 BCE. However, he also played a leading role in steering the process that led to the bestowal upon Octavian of the name Augustus. 'Romulus' was also considered as a potential option.[44] Suetonius records the argument that Plancus made in favour of 'Augustus' on the Senate floor, fully expounding the highly desirable connection between that proposed name and augury.[45] Plancus spoke as a distinguished *consularis*, who had switched sides from Antony to Octavian not long before the beginning of the Civil War. He could certainly make a reasonable claim to religious expertise, but the knowledge that he offered to the debate was not of the priestly kind: he was not a member of the augural college, and the only priesthood that he is known to have held is the post of *septemuir epulonum*.[46]

Other solutions were of course possible, even in the circle of men that were closest to the *princeps*. M. Vipsanius Agrippa, for instance, made a substantial contribution to the codification of the position of Augustus in the Roman religious landscape by expressing a ruling on the layout of the Pantheon. He proposed to install a statue of Augustus within the temple; the proposal was rejected by the emperor himself, and Agrippa put forward a different option, whereby a statue of Caesar was placed in the Pantheon, and statues of himself and Augustus were placed in the vestibule.[47] Agrippa was not just personally close to the *princeps;* he was also a member of several priestly sodalities (Vell. 2.127), and had been playing a major role in the quindecemviral college since the early Twenties. Agrippa's position is a strong indication of the enduring significance of priestly offices, especially in a context where religious and ritual expertise were widely distributed across the elite. Indeed, much emphasis has been laid on the apparent attempt of the *princeps* to secure control over the main priestly colleges by promoting the recruitment of some of his close associates. Moreover, the *princeps* was usually a member of these colleges, even though his direct involvement with their work was at best occasional. The cumulation of a number of priesthoods is one of the markers of the exceptional status of the *princeps*, according to a trend that already takes shape under Caesar – who after Pharsalus was *pontifex maximus*, augur, and *XVvir s.f.* – an accumulation of key religious offices on a scale that would have been unthinkable in the Republican period.

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[43] Scheid (2005a); Santangelo (2016, 349 – 352).

[44] Todisco (2007); Berthelet (2015, 285 – 312); Wallace-Hadrill (2016).

[45] Suet. *Aug*. 7.2; cf. Vell. 2.91.1. See Wardle (2014, 103 – 108).

[46] Rüpke (2005, 1162 no. 2488 = 2008, 807 no. 2488).

It is noteworthy that Augustus decided not to alter the remit of the priesthoods, for instance by expanding the powers of the chief pontificate at the expense of other priesthoods. Broadly speaking, the priestly offices of the Republican period retained their traditional tasks and prerogatives; the *princeps* asserted his supremacy in the religious domain through his ubiquity, both in the presence of the colleges, and in their ritual activity – the prayers that were routinely made on his behalf being a prominent case in point. Moreover, the membership of a priesthood was a reliable indicator of one's proximity to the monarch. The frankest expression of this principle is to be found in a letter of Pliny the Younger, and may confidently be applied more widely to the first century CE. In replying to the letter of congratulations that his friend Arrianus Maturus had sent him after he joined the augural college, in 103/104, Pliny singles out the reasons that make that position worthwhile, and his summary is opened by the argument that earning the appreciation of such a considerate *princeps* like Trajan, 'even in the more trivial matters', is a very fine thing indeed.[48]

Such proximity was of course not immune from serious difficulties, whether real or potential. Concerns over the impact of the *princeps* on religious and ritual practice are apparent in an anecdote told by Suetonius (*Tib.* 25.8). A few weeks after his accession to power, in September 14 CE, Tiberius was alarmed by the actions of M. Scribonius Drusus Libo, and suspected that an attack on his life might come from within the pontifical college. He therefore gave instructions that the blades of the *secespitae*, the knives with which sacrifices were performed, be replaced with lead.[49] It is unclear whether the measure was taken openly and how it was received, but its implications are very clear: Tiberius has no qualms about altering a time-honoured ritual device in order to allay his own fears over his own survival, and has the power to bring about such a startling change.[50] We may contrast this behaviour with the shrewd, if ruthless handling of pontifical affairs that Augustus proved capable of: he patiently waited until the death of Lepidus, in 13 BCE, before assuming the office of *pontifex maximus* on 6 March 12 BCE, even though his former ally had been confined at Circeii for decades. He thus affirmed in the clearest possible terms the need to secure a visible degree of continuity with the Republican past – whatever political price that might entail in the short term. After taking up the priesthood, Augustus routinely (and emphatically) used the title *pontifex maximus*, but the operation that he carried out in the *Res Gestae* (10.2) is even more significant. On the one hand, he emphasised the restraint that he had shown in allowing Lepidus to retain his priesthood, while at the same time casting doubts on his entitlement to it. On the other, he stressed that his election to the chief pontificate was not just a development that brought order in the *sacra* of Rome: it gave the whole of Italy the opportunity to stress its gratitude and admiration for the *princeps*. The size of the crowd that gathered in Rome to take part in the vote was, by his account, unprecedented.[51]

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[47] Cass. Dio 53.27.3–4.

[48] Plin. *Epist*. 4.8; cf. also his letter to Trajan on his ambition to hold a priesthood in 10.13. See Gibson and Morello (2012, 89–91) for a detailed reading of 4.8 and references to Cicero and his augurate. Várhelyi (2010, 58) understands this passage differently: "it is a fine thing to follow the view of the venerable *princeps* even in smaller matters". The translation of Zehnacker and Méthy in the 2001 CUF edition seems preferable: "c'est un honneur d'obtenir l'estime d'un si digne prince, même dans des domains de faible importance".

Far from being an office that might be lightly tampered with, let alone overlooked, the highest pontificate was a central feature in the settlement devised by Augustus, and in the discourse that he developed around and about it. The domain of religious practice offers an even more complex and nuanced picture. John Scheid has drawn attention to the elaborate arrangements that the *princeps* appears to have made between 36 and 13 BCE in order to secure the viability of a number of features of Roman public religion without having to involve the absent *pontifex maximus.*[52] Imperial control over the actions of a college could be exercised in remarkably subtle forms. Cassius Dio – an intelligent observer of matters religious, as has been shown above – records the scruples that Octavian manifested when he was about to marry Livia, who was pregnant with his child, in 39 BCE. He sought advice from the pontiffs on the propriety of the timing of the envisaged marriage.[53] They purportedly looked the problem up in the records of the college and stated that there was no evidence for a prohibition. Dio then offers a sharp remark: the pontiffs would have given the same ruling even if they had been unable to find any corroborating opinion in their books. He does not even need to pursue the argument any further. The episode is sufficiently clear for him to convey an effective picture of the climate of that period. The readers are urged to draw the appropriate conclusions.[54]

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[49] On this tool see Siebert (1999, 249 – 250 no. 56). Van Haeperen (2002, 422 – 423) stresses the significance of the episode as evidence for the emperor's involvement in public sacrifices.

[50] For an instance of apparently orderly interaction between Tiberius and the pontiffs cf. Cass. Dio 57.10.1 (on the dedication of statues and shrines in honour of *Divus Augustus*), with the remarks of Van Haeperen (2002, 397) on the legal implications of that act.

[51] *RG* 10.2. See Luke (2014, 235 – 241). Cf. the reference to the *frequentia totius Italiae* preceding the census operations of 70 BCE in Cic. *Verr.* 1.18; Luke (2014, 236) evokes *Pis.* 3.

3.2. Debating religious matters

Even if we grant, with Dio, that under the Empire senatorial debate on religious problems often involved people not saying what they thought, it does not follow that such debate was regarded as worthless. The episode itself strongly suggests that the need to address religious and ritual problems in a thorough and open manner was widely felt, at least in some quarters. Tiberius' decision not to consult the Sibylline Books after the flood of the Tiber in 15 CE is singled out by Tacitus as an instance of the preference for secrecy that the despotic emperor often displays. It is remarkable to see that in that case the authoritative view of a member of the quindecemviral college, Asinius Gallus, who was in favour of consulting the Books, was effectively overruled (1.76.1). The literary and historiographical concerns of the only surviving source for this episode prevent us from saying more. Tacitus is keen to make a point about Tiberius' style of rule, and fails to mention that both Asinius Gallus and Tiberius were members of the quindecemviral college, and will have therefore been able to debate the problem not just for its political implications.

That this was indeed possible is shown by a far better-documented debate: that on the prerogatives of the *flamen Dialis* in 22 CE, when the holder of that time-honoured priesthood, Ser. Cornelius Lentulus Maluginensis (whose position in the history of his time and in the sacred landscape of the city has been discussed from a different angle above), asked to be assigned the governorship of Asia.[55] An ancient prohibition prevented the *flamen* from leaving Italy: limitations of such kind had made it so hard to find suitable candidates from the senatorial order. Maluginensis made the case for a concession before the Senate, in the presence of the emperor. He developed what appears to be, in Tacitus' summary, a carefully constructed argument, mainly based on the skilful use of antiquarian material where relevant precedents were listed. Far from denying the importance of backing up his claim with appropriate references to the past, he constructed his own account of the problem, whereby the prerogatives of the *flamen Dialis* are assimilated to those of the *flamen Martialis*, and the running of the pontifical college does not require the presence and direct involvement of the *flamen Dialis*. The argument put forward by Maluginensis is chiefly intended to address and persuade the emperor, but is made in the Senate and does not fail to prompt a lively debate. A number of senators took issue with it: Tacitus does not report their arguments in any detail, but does note that one of the speakers was Cn. Cornelius Lentulus, a member of the augural college.[56] That a debate took place at all is a symptom of a reasonably widespread interest in priestly matters within the senatorial order. The outcome was to entrust the *pontifex maximus* – i. e. the emperor – with a decision on the matter: even Maluginensis can have had no reason to object to his involvement on a matter of *ius diuinum*. Tiberius took some time to announce his ruling – other pressing matters, most notably the Silanus affair, took his attention. When he did, he based his decision not to meet Maluginensis' request with a reasonably complex argument, in which he invoked the clear rules on the circumstances in which the absence of the *flamen* was excused, some of which went back to the Augustan period. He made the decision in his priestly capacity, although the pontifical college was not consulted on the point. There were no doubt weighty political and personal considerations behind Maluginensis' intention to leave Rome and Tiberius' reluctance to let him depart. However, the choice of both parties to use a series of competing arguments on points of sacral law is not fortuitous and is not a detail that may be easily dismissed.

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[52] Scheid (2005b, 187–192).

[53] Cass. Dio. 48.44.2–3.

[54] Cf. Van Haeperen (2002, 335–336), who points out that the response given by the pontiffs is in keeping with the tradition of the *sententiae* produced by the college in a crucial respect: it provides two alternative scenarios and frames two clear prescriptions around them.

Moreover, it is not an isolated instance. Upon Maluginensis' death, in 23 CE, Tiberius took the chance to present a rather complex argument to the Senate on the status of the *flamen* and the *flaminica*, which was intended to ease some of the restrictions that had made the priesthoods so difficult to fill in the past. The problem raised by the *princeps* led to a new piece of legislation in which the position of the *flaminica* was assimilated to that of any other woman, while the status of the *flamen* was left unchanged. J. Scheid has recently stressed the ingenuity of this solution, in which a solution to the wider problem of the flaminate was devised without directly affecting the religious tasks of the priest.[57] On the other hand, it is important not to lose sight of the fundamental nature of the political game at the time. The Principate was an intrinsically autocratic regime, in which the *princeps* had the power and influence to sway the balance in his favour whenever he wished. On many occasions he could steer the decisions of a college just by setting out his views in a letter, without having to turn up in person. In other cases, he would use his status as member of a priestly body to convey messages to the wider elite. When the pontiffs decided to include Nero and Drusus in the prayers that were routinely offered for the health of the emperor, Tiberius reacted by summoning the pontiffs.[58] Instead of berating them, though, he criticised their conduct with restraint (*modice*). As Tacitus points out, Tiberius did not want to antagonise beyond necessity an audience that consisted of young members of families that were close to him or very distinguished; when he reported about the matter to the Senate, he commented on the youth and lack of experience of the members of the college.

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[55] Tac. *Ann.* 3.58 – 59, 71.

[56] Rüpke (2005, 915 no. 1344 = 2008, 637 no. 1344). For a fuller discussion of this episode see Santangelo (2016), 358 – 63.

His meeting with the pontiffs brought home two fundamental points: that he could instruct the pontifical college to revisit its earlier decisions; and that being less tactful with the members of the college than he decided to be was within the range of options available to him. At the same time, it is noteworthy that Tiberius chose to use a degree of restraint (*modus*) in his dealings with the pontiffs, and wanted to be *seen* to be doing that. As argued above, the priestly colleges, which included some of the most distinguished and influential figures in Rome, were also invaluable venues of communication and information exchange within the elite. That was all the more the case in a world where political communication might entail serious personal risks. Tacitus is very keen to depict a context in which calculated dissimulation is a major feature of political life, and that surely also applies to the debate between Tiberius and Maluginensis.[59] That does not detract in any way from the seriousness and complexity of the arguments that were deployed in these exchanges over *ius diuinum*.

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[57] Scheid (2012, 227).

[58] Tac. *Ann.* 4.17.

[59] Cf., from a different angle, the perceptive discussion in Schulz (2015).

3.3. Direct interaction

Evidence for direct interaction between emperors and the pontifical college is very sparse: we know of just four consultations between 44 BCE and the end of the Julio-Claudian period.[60] Oddly enough, the emperor for whom the relatively largest body of evidence survives is Domitian, who in his capacity as *pontifex maximus* dealt with *incestum* cases involving Vestal Virgins in 83 and 90 CE, and involved the pontifical college, at least in the implementation of the ruling that he reached. The tradition on these episodes is unreservedly hostile, and the Younger Pliny does not miss the opportunity to remark that Domitian conducted himself like a tyrant even in his dealings with the pontiffs: the aspect of his conduct that appears to be most controversial, however, is the decision to summon the pontiffs to his villa at Albanum, rather than in the official residence of the *pontifex maximus*, the Regia.[61]

The entire account of the events in connection with these trials is a narrative of priestly expertise being put into question. The interrogations carried out in 83 during the investigations initiated by Domitian were so repulsive that a member of the pontifical college who attended them was overwhelmed by shock and died – itself a comment on the wickedness of the proceedings. The most damning hint, however, is to be found in Pliny. As the Vestal Cornelia was being dragged to her execution, she pointed out that she could not be possibly be guilty of *incestum*, because the emperor who had sentenced her to death had conquered and celebrated a triumph after she had performed the required rituals.[62] That fundamental inability to grasp the illogical nature of the charge is both revealing of Domitian's priestly incompetence and of the despotic nature of his rule. Recognising the deep bias of the literary sources does not of course amount to rehabilitating Domitian. What is known about the initiatives taken by this emperor, however, strongly suggests that he tried to construct a very different account of his conduct, and that the way in which he conducted his action against the Vestals was based on a careful reflection on points of sacral law.

Much of what we know about the activity of priesthoods in the Julio-Claudian and Flavian periods derives from Tacitus, whose interest in public religion is far less strong than the quality and range of information at his disposal, of which we get occasional glimpses from what survives of his work. Once Tacitus' narrative ends, our information on the role of priestly expertise becomes very meagre indeed. As has been shown in the preceding section of this contribution, the evidence of Cassius Dio is valuable for what is reveals about religious innovation in a number of areas, but shows a consistent lack of interest in the role of priests as agents of change or creativity: they are merely acknowledged as background figures in the routine running of public religion.

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[60] Notably the consultation on Livia's pregnancy in 39 BCE (on which see above); the removal of the body of the proscribed M. Oppius from the Campus Martius (Cass. Dio 48.53.4 – 6); expiatory sacrifices on the day of the wedding between Claudius and Agrippina (Tac. *Ann.* 12.8); and the consultation on the running of the haruspical *ordo* under Claudius (on which see below). See Hoffman Lewis (1955, 17); Malloch (2013, 238).

[61] Plin. *Epist*. 4.11.6. Cf. also Suet. *Dom.* 8.4 and Cass. Dio 67.3.4.

[62] Plin. *Epist.* 4.11.7.

What survives in Tacitus is highly selective, and not immune from shortcomings. As the cases discussed so far show, the handling of religious matters is revealing of some fundamental aspects of Tiberius' character – his liking for secrecy, his skill at dissimulation, and the way in which he responded to threats (real or perceived) to his power. A similar tendency to duplicity and deviousness is apparent in Tiberius' handling of another religious controversy.[63] In 32 CE a tribune of the plebs, Ser. Nonius Quinctilianus, proposed to introduce a new book into the Sibylline corpus; he had been encouraged to promote this initiative by a member of the college, L. Caninius Gallus, and had received the endorsement of the Senate. Tiberius was not prepared to endorse that innovation. He was by then no longer in Rome and he expressed his views in a letter that Tacitus summarises at some length. The main target of his polemic was the priest who had promoted the inclusion of the text in the collection: Caninius was experienced in sacral matters and had deliberately tampered with the process by failing to consult the quindecemviral college. The emperor – who was also a *XVuir* – therefore took the opportunity to assert his role as that of the guardian of the traditional prerogatives of priestly college and as someone who based his position on a thoughtful engagement with tradition and relevant precedents.

The longevity of the religious institutions of the *res publica* is the unspoken assumption on which the debate is predicated. The consequence of Tiberius' intervention is that the matter is not closed by the Senate's endorsement. The issue is referred back to the quindecemviral college, which would eventually produce a ruling on the inclusion of the new book in the corpus. As was the case in the controversy on the issue raised by Maluginensis, the outcome is formally sound: from a procedural standpoint it was perfectly acceptable to refer the matter to a priestly body. At the same time, it is not far-fetched to argue that Tiberius could hope to have far closer control over the college than he could expect to do with the Senate. Yet, it is important not to lose sight of the potential for innovation, and of the emergence of a plausible alternative: a tribune, a member of a priestly college, and the Senate co-operate to put forward innovation on a significant ritual matter with long-term implications. Its apparent failure in 24 CE does not mean that similar efforts may not have been successful on other occasions. Speaking of an episode of religious resistance is surely excessive, but it is apparent enough that an attempt was made to establish an alternative to the agenda set by the *princeps*.[64]

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[63] Tac. *Ann.* 6.12. See Santangelo (2016), 366–69

3.4. Routinisation and discontinuity

Caninius' course of action and the ensuing controversy are at first glance surprising, because they are not paralleled anywhere in the surviving evidence. This is yet another reminder of the gaps in our information. Nowhere in the surviving literary evidence do we get a full account of how a priestly college, whether large or small, worked: the *quotidien sacerdotal* (to play on the title of the collaborative research project on municipal government in the Western provinces led by Mireille Cébeillac) is virtually beyond reach. That is why the records of a relatively minor, if prestigious, fraternity, the *Commentarii fratrum Arvalium*, are so valuable to our understanding of Roman religion in practice. The literary tradition for the early Principate is even less informative than the sources for the Republican period. Only a few instances of the work of the main priestly colleges receive a mention, and they tend to shed light on moments that reflect exceptional states of affairs. What has been termed 'routinisation' in the fulfilment of priestly duties in this period is hardly acknowledged in the literary record; the same applies to the actual functioning of the colleges. We have no way of finding out, for example, how the transmission of ritual knowledge within a college operated, and how the individual members learned to play their part in conducting a given ritual.

Speaking of routinisation does not involve overlooking the possibility of moments in which significant discontinuity intervened. A striking case in point is provided by the campaign on which Claudius embarked during his censorship to promote the re-organisation of the college of the haruspices, which he claimed had fallen into neglect, although it had in the past played a significant role in handling the expiation of a number of public prodigies. The *senatus consultum* implementing the programme set out by Claudius included instructions for the revival of the *ordo*, and entrusted the pontiffs with the task of putting these

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64 Cf. Várhelyi (2010, 53).

into effect.[65] Tacitus shows no interest in the details of the matter, and there is no reference to the unfolding of the process or the debate that accompanied it. The pontifical college follows up on the guidance offered by the Senate; it is conceivable that the pontifffs' subsequent recommendations were reported to the Senate, rather than being implemented directly.[66] The college receives another cursory mention in the following book, when Claudius instructs it – no doubt in his capacity as *pontifex maximus* – to carry out expiatory rituals after the suicide of Silanus at the grove of Diana.[67] Again, Tacitus is elusive on matters of detail: he just notes that the prospect of devising sanctions for the crime of incest was widely regarded as ludicrous (*inridentibus cunctis*). This reaction, however, does not reflect as much on the pontifical college as it does on the *princeps* who gave instructions to carry it out.[68] It is revealing of a wider issue, though: irony or sarcasm about forms of religious practice perceived as improper imply that the versions regarded appropriate were viewed as something that could be taken very seriously.[69]

Models require careful testing against their concrete applications. It is hard to avoid the impression, however, that the extant evidence conveys a highly incomplete view of the range of priestly duties and of the forms of priestly expertise that were relevant during the first century of the Principate. To be sure, the epigraphic habit conveys a considerably more detailed picture of priests and priesthoods across the Empire; conversely, achieving a full appreciation of the role that priesthoods had within the *res publica* is an increasingly difficult task. The evidence that does survive warns against the assumption that debate was sharply curtailed. As we have seen, there are instances, especially in Tacitus, of complex discussions over technical religious matters involving the Senate as a corporate body, individual senators, priests, and the emperor. As Quintilian notes, being able to debate on augural matters, oracles, and religious issues of all kinds is a crucial feature in the training of an orator of senatorial standing.[70] The relevance of *religio* abides, quite apart from the priestly duties that a senator might fulfil, and possibly quite apart from any impact that the debates in which he takes part might have.

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[65] Tac. *Ann.* 11.15.3.

[66] Malloch (2013, 238).

[67] Tac. *Ann.* 12.8.2.

[68] Cf. Davies (2004, 187).

[69] Cf. Parker (2012, 470) on sarcasm about seers in societies that rely on divination.

[70] Quint. 12.2.21: *de auguriis, responsis, religione denique omni.*

4. Conclusion

It is uncontroversial that Roman priesthoods were deeply embedded in the political domain. Under the early Principate such embeddedness became even more marked than had previously been the case. It is not helpful to view the position of Roman priesthoods and their holders in terms of resistance or irrelevance. The Principate was of course a deeply authoritarian regime, but public priesthoods retained the role of prominent and significant centres of religious knowledge and action. Engaging thoughtfully with the complexity of their lore and their significance was an important part of the craft of a capable *princeps* – both in the performance of priestly duties and beyond it. The ways in which priestly authority and expertise are deployed in such a system can shed light on the wider political climate and some of its fault lines. Reading the developments of the early Principate through the familiar categories of negligence or manipulation is equally uncalled for. The only proper critical method is close engagement with specific instances.

The evidence for the impact of priestly knowledge on political developments in this period is admittedly far from satisfactory, and worsens considerably once Tacitus' narrative breaks off. Our discussion points to an important conclusion, however. Half a century ago, in his splendid overview of the historical development of Roman religion between Republic and Principate, Carl Koch argued that "der Prinzeps es sozusagen zum ungeschriebenen Gesetz erhoben hatte, in Sachen der erhebten Religion nicht zu debattieren, sonder zu handeln: *nulla ratione reddita*".[71] The instances we have discussed make an important corrective necessary. The expectation that reasoned arguments be offered, which had been developed above all in the last century of the Republic, was still widely held in the early Principate, albeit in a political situation that had changed beyond recognition since the period in which Cicero set the debate in *De natura deorum* between Balbus, Cotta and Velleius about the tension between ancestral tradition and philosophical reflection on religious matters. With the advent of the Principate, the relevant knowledge came to be firmly vested in public priests. That was accepted by the emperor, by members of the senatorial class (who also might be active as authors), and by a wider public. This new role did not turn public priests into agents of innovation on a larger scale: neither imperial initiative nor investments into new religious practices by groups or individuals depended on priestly approval.

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[71] Koch (1960, 204). Cf. the English translation in Ando (2000, 328): 'the *princeps* had elevated to an undeclared law the principle that one should not discuss details of traditional religion, but accept them *nulla ratione reddita*'). The allusion is to Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.5.

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Jan N. Bremmer

Lucian on Peregrinus and Alexander of Abonuteichos: A sceptical view of two religious entrepreneurs*

The current literature on Alexander and Peregrinus suggests that many modern scholars simply follow Lucian's satirical depiction. The alternative is surely to try to locate these men in the context of their time and elicit the affordances available to enterprising individuals wanting to found their own cult (Alexander) or exploit the possibilities of a new religion (Peregrinus). At the same time, Lucian's account enables us to see what he, as an intelligent contemporary observer, thought remarkable about the activities of these men.

Around 180 CE, the social satirist Lucian published two treatises in which he took a sceptical and scathing look at the careers of two men, Peregrinus and Alexander of Abonuteichos, both of whom, above all Alexander, we would now call religious entrepreneurs.[1] The first managed to profit for a while from the Christians he had joined, whereas the second instituted an oracle and mystery-cult in his home-town of Abonuteichos/Ionopolis on the coast of Paphlagonia (Black Sea). When one looks at the current literature about these two figures, it is impossible to escape the impression that Lucian's satirical picture of them is often followed by modern scholars. Yet such a procedure prevents us from placing these men in their time and looking specifically for the affordances available to enterprising individuals to found their own cult (Alexander) or exploit the possibilities of a new religion (Peregrinus). At the same time, his account enables us to see what Lucian thought remarkable about the activities of these men. I would therefore claim that a closer study of these two entrepreneurs will help us to see the possibilities for religious initiatives in the middle and second half of the second century CE. We will start with Peregrinus (§ 1) proceed with some observations on Alexander (§ 2), and end with some conclusions

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* I am most grateful to Harry Maier for his thoughtful correction of my English.

[1] For the more or less contemporaneous appearance of these two treatises, see most recently Zwierlein (2010^2, 194).

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1. Peregrinus

One of the more fascinating figures in the history of Christianity and Judaism in the middle of the second century is undoubtedly the pagan philosopher Peregrinus of Parion,[2] a port situated in Mysia on the eastern entrance to the Hellespont.[3] His spectacular suicide in 165 CE led Lucian to dedicate a 'debunking' pamphlet, *De morte Peregrini*, to his career. After an introduction consisting of a few disparaging comments about Peregrinus, Lucian starts off by having another Cynic, Theagenes, praise him (4). This is of course ironic, since to a civilised Greek praise by a Cynic is itself a condemnation. After Theagenes has ended his speech in tears and is carried away by fellow Cynics (6), another speaker immediately takes the pulpit and starts with 'Democritean laughter' at Theagenes' 'Heraclitean tears' (7). The contrast between Democritus and Heraclitus was traditional by the late second century after having been introduced, probably, by Seneca's teacher Sotion and popularised by Seneca himself.[4] We do not know the exact meaning of this type of laughter but the suggestion that it was because of the stupidity of his fellow citizens is not implausible and would be fitting here.[5]

The identity of this second speaker, whose narrative occupies 24 sections (7–31), is not revealed. The void has of course been filled with various suggestions, starting with Jacob Bernays' idea that behind the anonymous figure we should see Lucian himself.[6] Modern critics, however, are more careful.[7] We simply do not know—perhaps Lucian deliberately omitted to give him a name so as to let the reader focus completely on the report instead of the reporter. At any rate, what he has to say about Peregrinus is not particularly elevating. In his youth, Peregrinus had been caught *in flagrante* 'in Armenia' (9),[8] from which perilous situation he had escaped by jumping down from a roof but not before a radish had been stuffed up his bottom, the not unusual punishment for men caught in the act of adultery (Wagenvoort 1934). In the province of Asia, he had seduced a young boy, whose poor parents he had bought off with 3000 *drachmai* to avoid prosecution (9),[9] and he had even strangled his father (10), parricide being perhaps the worst crime in Greek culture.[10] Consequently, he had to leave Parion and to wander from city to city. Since Parion had erected a statue in honour of Peregrinus,[11] it is clear that Lucian, perhaps tongue in cheek, here offers outrageous evidence about his protagonist's character in order to paint him as black as possible. Yet none of it, from a present perspective, seems remotely probable, even less so as rather similar accusations recur elsewhere in Lucian's work.[12]

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[2] For a study of Peregrinus with detailed bibliographies, see Goulet-Cazé (2012); add Deeleman (1902), which contains several useful surveys of the literature before 1900; Plooij and Koopman (1915), which is more useful than Schwartz (1951), but overlooked by all the more recent notable contributions; Betz (1990); Heusch (2007); Bremmer (2007), which I freely use, but not without updates and corrections; Nesselrath (2010, 692–693); Goulet-Cazé (2014, 195–206). I have used the text by Pilhofer *et al.* (2005). My translations follow or adapt those by A. Harmon (LCL).

[3] For all testimonia, see Frisch (1983, 47–96).

[4] For all references, see Courtney on Iuv. 10.28–30.

[5] Lutz (1954); Rütten (1992); Müller (1994); Husson (1994); Beard (2014, 92–94).

[6] Bernays (1879, 5–6).

[7] Hansen (2005, 131); Goulet (2012, 216 f).

[8] Rigsby (2004) suggests that this is a mistake, but the mention of Armenia could also mean a place far away, beyond any possibility of verification by the audience.

Directly after the enumeration of these crimes and misdemeanours, Lucian embarks on Peregrinus' Christian episode. The reader is invited to conclude that this group, in welcoming a scoundrel such as Peregrinus, must likewise be of a terrible character. Before we turn to this episode, however, I should say something about Lucian's possible sources for Peregrinus' Christian career and its chronology. Nothing is known about his immediate source, but we can at least say that he was quite well informed about early Christianity.[13] Against the traditional view,[14] more recent studies of Lucian have demonstrated that he was fairly well read in early Christian literature and almost certainly knew *The Book of Revelation*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*,[15] and, probably, the *Letters* of Ignatius in addition to one or more of the Gospels.[16] In the case of Ignatius, Otto Zwierlein has recently argued two different opinions. First, having noticed several close parallels between Lucian's *Peregrinus* and Ignatius' *Letters*, he stated that the idea of Lucian's use of the *Letters* still "im einundzwanzigsten (Jahrhundert) eine gewisse Attraktivität behält”, but, in the end, he concluded that the parallels “sich wohl besser als Reflex der zeitgenössischen Sprachidiomatik erklären”, although it is difficult to see how the *Zeigeist* could explain these verbal parallels.[17] Subsequently, in his most recent book, Zwierlein compares Lucian, *Pereg.* 41 with Ignatius, *Pol.* 7.2:

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[9] In the course of time, paederasty had become less and less acceptable, see Lucian, *Amores*, 28, *Alex*. 41; Buffière (1980, 485–490); Feichtinger (2006). For the conventional hyperbolic amount of 3000, see Schröder (1990, 424f).

[10] Bremmer (1988^2, 45–53).

[11] Athenag. *Leg*. 26.4–5.

[12] Cf. Lucian *Pseudol.* 20, 22; *Alex*. 4, 6; *Iupp. Trag*. 52.

[13] So, rightly, Jones (1986, 122): "His knowledge, however it was acquired, is on some points surprisingly exact"; similarly, Karavas (2010).

[14] Most recently still Goulet-Cazé (2014, 204).

[15] Cf. Von Möllendorff (2005, 179–194) and (2000, 427–430).

[16] For possible references to the Gospels in *Peregrinus*, perhaps not all persuasive, see König (2006); also Ramelli (2015), who interestingly compares the question by Zeus in *Icaromenippus* 24 'Εἰπέ μοι, Μένιππε,' ἔφη, 'περὶ δὲ ἐμοῦ οἱ ἄνθρωποι τίνα γνώμην ἔχουσι;' with the question by Jesus in Mark 8:27 'Τίνα με λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι;' (see also Matt. 16:13–23; Luke 9:18–22).

> Lucian: φασὶ δὲ πάσαις σχεδὸν ταῖς ἐνδόξοις πόλεσιν ἐπιστολὰς διαπέμψαι αὐτόν, διαθήκας τινὰς καὶ παραινέσεις καὶ νόμους· καί τινας ἐπὶ τούτῳ πρεσβευτὰς τῶν ἑταίρων *ἐχειροτόνησεν*, **νεκραγγέλους καὶ νερτεροδρόμους** προσαγορεύσας.
>
> Ignatius: Πρέπει, Πολύκαρπε θεομακαριστότατε, συμβούλιον ἀγαγεῖν θεοπρεπέστατον καὶ *χειροτονῆσαί* τινα, ὃν ἀγαπητὸν λίαν ἔχετε καὶ ἄοκνον, ὃς δυνήσεται **θεοδρόμος** καλεῖσθαι· τοῦτον καταξιῶσαι, ἵνα πορευθεὶς εἰς Συρίαν δοξάσῃ ὑμῶν τὴν ἄοκνον ἀγάπην εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ.

Zwierlein notes the close parallels but then concludes that Ignatius, or perhaps ‘Ignatius’, has parodied Lucian instead of the other way round.[18] This is highly improbable, as all the other passages noted by him are really close verbal parallels and, unlike Lucian, Ignatius is not known as a satirist.[19] Moreover, Lucian’s interest in Christianity is also demonstrated by the fact that recently a notice from Lucian has been discovered in an Arabic text, in which he seems to make fun of Christian glossolalia.[20] Can it be that Lucian had become acquainted with or heard of the Montanists, who started to appear shortly after 180 CE? Or was he aware of other Christian prophets? Celsus (*apud* Orig. *CCels.* 7.9), too, seems to refer to glossolalia when mentioning that wandering prophets add to their promises ‘strange, frantic, and completely unintelligible words’. In any case it is worth observing that Lucian also ascribes a kind of glossolalia to Alexander the false prophet who, “uttering, a few meaningless words like Hebrew or Phoenician, dazed the people, who did not know what he was saying save only that he everywhere brought in Apollo and Asclepius” (*Alex.* 13).

Until recently there was no firm evidence regarding the chronology of Lucian’s stay in Palestine, but the publication of new military diplomas has enabled Werner Eck plausibly to identify the “governor of Syria, a man fond of phi-

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17 Zwierlein (2010^{2}, 194–201).

18 Zwierlein (2014, 2.405–407). Better: Waldner (2006, 118).

19 See also Goulet-Cazé (2012, 226), who, like several scholars in previous centuries, recognises that Lucian had actually read Ignatius. For an interesting onomastic argument for the authenticity of Ignatius’ *Letters*, see Huttner (2015).

20 Strohmaier (2012) and (2013), but note the different translation by Pormann (2012, 10). For the very early history of Montanism, which unfortunately cannot be dated precisely, see most recently Ramelli (2005: on Montanism in *Peregrinus*); Markschies (2012); Mitchell (2013).

losophy" who released Peregrinus from prison (14), with Sergius Paullus, who was the *legatus Augusti pro praetore* of Syria in 144 CE and whose philosophical interests are well established.[21] The location of the prison is not given by Lucian, but it may well have been Caesarea Maritima, the capital of the province and the seat of the Roman governor's *praetorium*. The city was large and prosperous, and must have had a sizable Christian congregation early on, as Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 5.22) mentions its bishop Theophilus in a list of prominent church-leaders already under Commodus. A person like Peregrinus might well have expected an audience in such a city for his teachings.[22] The year 144 is very important, as it gives us a firm anchor in a sea of uncertainty. Recent studies have questioned the dating of the Gospels (Vinzent 2014), the ascription of his *Letters* to Ignatius, and the text of the *Martyrdom of Polycarp*.[23] On the other hand, *Peregrinus* now supplies us with a place (perhaps Caesarea) and a date (144 CE). So what does Lucian tell us about Christianity and Peregrinus around that time?

Let us start by noting that Peregrinus is depicted as of no fixed abode. He "roamed about, going to one country after another" (10) until he came into contact with Christians in Palestine (11). It is rather striking that Lucian uses the phrase 'the wondrous wisdom of the Christians' (11), since the name 'Christian' for Jesus-followers must have been relatively rare at the time, as the scarcity of testimonies in earlier inscriptions and papyri shows.[24] The typically Cynic habit of itinerancy may have made it easier to be taken as a Christian, as wandering prophets are still known both to the *Didache* (11.4–6 Wengst) and to Celsus (*apud* Orig. *CCels.* 7.9), although they clearly no longer exist in the time of Origen (*CCels.* 7.11).[25] A certain affinity of Cynicism with early Christianity has often been noted,[26] and this may have made the transition to Christianity easier for Peregrinus.

It is also noteworthy that Lucian does not mention anything about Jews but uses a curious terminology for the 'clergy' of these Christians. He calls them τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν καὶ γραμματεῦσιν αὐτῶν, 'their priests and scribes' (11), whereas the

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21 Eck and Pangerl (2014); Eck (2014a).

22 Levine (1975); Holum (1999); Turnheim and Ovadiah (2002); Eck (2014b, 150–162).

23 Ignatius and Polycarp: see most recently Waldner (2006, 101–104); Zwierlein (2014, vol. 2 *passim*).

24 Bremmer (2002, 105–108); add *Acta Abitiniarum* 5.7.10 and 13–18; Canart and Pintaudi (2004–05, 197 [*c.* 3]); see also Hegedus (2004); Horrell (2007); Luijendijk (2008, 38–40); Bile and Gain (2012).

25 In general, see also Bremmer (2016); see also Esther Eidinow's contribution to this volume (Chapter 10).

26 See most recently Downing (1993); Montiglio (2005, 180–203); Goulet-Cazé (2012, 228–229) and (2014).

New Testament always uses the combination οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς.[27] We do find οἱ ἱερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς τοῦ ἱεροῦ in an enumeration of Jewish offices in Flavius Josephus (*AJ* 12.142), but the closest parallel is perhaps to be found in the *Protevangelium of James*, a probably Syro-Christian treatise of the later second century that displays a clear, apparently Jewish, concern with purity.[28] It mentions ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ τοὺς ἱερεῖς καὶ τοὺς γραμματεῖς (6), but the Jewish context of these terms in the *Protevangelium* makes it hazardous to see these as a contemporary Christian parallel. In any case, is the presence of 'priests and scribes' plausible in a Christian congregation? We know that, despite the decimation of the priestly and scribal ranks after the two Jewish revolts, scribes continued to function as copyists of Torah scrolls and as teachers of children, whereas priests remained the authorities on Jewish law.[29] As the latter are well attested in some parts of Palestine as late as the third and fourth centuries, though not in Roman Caesarea,[30] the terminology probably points to one of the Christian congregations in Palestine and Syria that still clung to parts of its Jewish inheritance (Kimelman 1999).

There may be two further indications that Peregrinus had indeed joined such a group. First, Lucian mentions that his congregation had made him their *prostatês*, which is a title that occurs in several Jewish communities, but is certainly not exclusively Jewish.[31] Although early Christianity derived some of its vocabulary from the political sphere, such as *ekklêsia*, *politeuô*, *politeuma*, *leitourgia* and *chorêgia*,[32] and in many cities the *prostatai* were the highest civic magistrates in the Hellenistic period,[33] Lucian will probably have used the term here in its more general meaning of 'president, presiding officer' rather than in a political sense.[34] Secondly, Lucian's account of Peregrinus' apostasy seems to presuppose that he did indeed belong to an actual group. After he had returned to his home town Parion where he gave all his possessions to the city (14–15), Peregrinus again took to the road. Lucian does not tell us exactly where he went, but it seems reasonable to surmise that he returned to the groups that had received him earlier. Here he was once again treated generously but "after he had transgressed in some way even against them—he was seen, I think, eating some of the food that is forbidden them— they no longer accepted him" (16). The transgression suggests that Peregrinus was part of a congregation that still maintained certain dietary precepts of the Torah (Van der Horst 2012), although the precise *halakha*-rules are of course unknown. It seems clear that *Peregrinus* is a valuable, albeit usually neglected source for a certain form of Jewish Christianity in the middle of the second century. We shall shortly learn more about its actual doctrines (§ 1.3).

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[27] Matt. 2:4; 16:21; 20:18 etc.

[28] Nicklas (2014, 191–195).

[29] Trebilco (1991, 50, 210 note 45 [priests]); Hezser (1994, 467–475 [scribes], 480–489 [priests]).

[30] Grey (2011). But note that Orig. (*CCels.* 1.49–57) mentions a dispute with a rabbi.

[31] Ameling (2004, 93), overlooked by Pilhofer (2005, 61–62); Williams (2013, 127, 132).

[32] Hilhorst (1988), overlooked by Van Kooten (2012); see also Emiliano Rubens Urciuoli's contribution in this volume (Chapter 12)

[33] Fabiani (2010, 472–476 [with most recent bibliography]).

[34] For *prostatês* as a leader, see Strubbe on *I. Pessinous* 170.

Lucian clearly does not rate the 'priests and scribes' of this congregation very highly for he notes that in no time Peregrinus showed himself superior to them "for he was prophet, leader of a *thiasos*, head of a religious association, and everything, all by himself" (11).[35] P*rophêtês* here probably means the 'manager of an oracle',[36] as the other two terms also suggest the leadership of a religious institution. Although it is a *hapax*,[37] a *thiasarchês* must mean 'head of a *thiasos*'. Though *thiasos* occurs most often as a term for a Dionysiac association,[38] we hear of *thiasoi* of Jews,[39] of Heracles,[40] of the Mater Oureia (*SEG* 41.1329 A.4), of the Agathodaimôn (*SEG* 48.1120), of Hekate (*SEG* 57.779), of the Theos Hypsistos (*CIRB* 1259), of the followers of Sarapis (*SEG* 55.1463bis = *RICIS* Suppl. 2, 306/1601; *RICIS* 202/0135 and 0801; 306/0601) and of Isis (*RICIS* 204/1008) are well attested.[41] Finally, *synagôgeus* was a term used to denote the founder or chairperson of a religious or professional association (*SEG* 57.1701; Poland [1932], 1317–18). The term has a merely facultative connection with Judaism,[42] and is not used in connection with a synagogue.[43] Jones states that Lucian sees "Christianity through Greek eyes", pointing out that these terms have no place in early Christianity.[44] That is certainly true, but Lucian is not concerned here with an exact description of the structure of a Christian congregation. He evidently wants to make Peregrinus' prominent position within the Christian community clear to his readers by referring to leadership roles in religious institutions familiar to them.[45]

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[35] For some good observations, see Goulet (2012, 224–225) and (2014, 197–203).

[36] Cf. Bremmer (2001, 421–422); add the fairly rare personal name Prophetes (*SEG* 54.1144, 56.768); Busine (2006), *passim*.

[37] The related verb *thiasarcheô* seems to occur only twice: *OGIS* 529.5 = *IosPE* I^2 425.11; *IGR* III.115 = *EA* 13 (1989) 65, 10: both honorific decrees come from Pontus and Paphlagonia, cf. Le Guen and Rémy (2010, 102).

[38] Jaccottet (2003) vol. 2, *passim*, cf. index s.v.

[39] Cf. Scheid (2003), 66 n.31; add *CIRB* 1260–1261, 1277–1287, 1289; Philo, *Probus* 85 (Essenes); Goulet-Cazé (2014, 199).

[40] *IG* II^2 2345; *SEG* 51.224; Lambert (1999).

[41] Many more different *thiasoi* on Cos: *SEG* 57.776 s.v. Associations, 777–789. For its use in Christianity, see Bartelink (1979).

[42] Sokolowski (1955), no. 80.10 (*Sabbatistai*), but see also *I. Delos* 1641 b 6; *I. Perge* 294 and 321; *I. Istros* 193 (= *SEG* 1.330); *SEG* 24.1055 (Moesia), 34.695 (Tomis).

[43] Rightly stressed by Goulet-Cazé (2014, 200).

Now what aspects of these Christian communities does Lucian think it worth stressing to his readers? In the next section we will take a brief look at (1) books, (2) charity and (3) the doctrines and practices of the Christian 'new cult' (11).

1.1. Books

Lucian refers to books twice in his account. As soon as Pereginus had become the most important person in the congregation, "he interpreted and explained some of their books and even composed many" (11) and in his prison "their sacred books were read aloud" (12). Now literacy was of course not unknown to the pagan religious world. Hymns, tragedies, novels, aretalogies,[46] Orphic gold leaves, Sibylline Books, the textualisation of oracles such as Delphi, Didyma and Dodona, the *commentarii* of the Roman priestly colleges or the books by Cicero and Seneca on religion – to mention only a few of the many examples that could be cited – all attest to the importance of texts for Greek and Roman religion.[47]

Yet there was no authoritative pagan 'holy book',[48] whereas in the emergent Christian religion books were central and authoritative, as John Kloppenborg has recently argued in an illuminating article. He notes that in a number of early Christian *Acta martyrum* the future martyr appears before the Roman judge with 'books and letters of Paul, a righteous man' (*Passio Scillit.* 12), 'the book of the divine Gospels' (Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 7.15.4), or 'the holy Gospels' (*Acta Eupli* 1.1). Martyrs can even be in the possession of 'so many parchments, books, tablets, codices and pages of writings of the former Christians of unholy name' (*Mart. Agape* etc. 5, transl. Kloppenborg). This may help to explain Lucian's emphasis on the role of books in Peregrinus' performance. [49] The spread of a book culture among the early Christians was clearly facilitated by the introduction of the codex, although we can only speculate about the underlying reasons for the media revolution that caused this change.[50] In any case, it now seems clear that the early Christians not only popularised a handier format for books, but they also facilitated public reading by introducing a series of features that made that reading easier, such as wider margins, fewer letters per line and the use of spaces between words.[51]

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[44] Jones (1986, 122).

[45] This is not understood by Pilhofer (2005, 58–60, 102).

[46] See now Jördens (2013); Bremmer (2013).

[47] As is well stressed by Gordon (2012, 145–147); see also Lardinois (2011); Woolf (2012); Bremmer (2015).

[48] For the expression, see Bremmer (2010).

As for Lucian's remark about Peregrinus interpreting Christian texts, we have a more or less contemporary account for the probable place of this interpretation. Justin Martyr tells us:

> And on the day called for the sun, there is a common gathering of all who live in cities or in the country, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time allows. Next, after the reader has stopped, the president admonishes and encourages with a speech to imitate these good things (*Apol*. 67.3–4, tr. Kloppenborg).

Kloppenborg nowhere refers to Lucian, but Peregrinus was probably a 'president' of this kind, who interpreted the Scriptures in the church or congregational services. In Rome, these Scriptures, presumably, included Gospels, Letters of Paul and books of the Old Testament, and there is no reason not to suppose the same for Peregrinus' congregation. If we accept the *First Letter to Timothy* as a text of around the middle of the second century, we have another testimony for here we find the admonition 'to give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhorting, to teaching' (4.13). In fact, teaching was an important part of the emerging Christian religion and one of the main differences from traditional Graeco-Roman religion.[52]

There is no surviving evidence for Peregrinus as a Christian author. Admittedly, Pilhofer has suggested we read the title --]γρίνου ἀπολογίαι in a third-century list of books as [Περε]γρίνου ἀπολογίαι, which he interprets as *Apologies of Peregrinus*.[53] However, it is quite unclear what might have stood before the letters

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[49] Kloppenborg (2014); see also Schnelle (2015). For interesting reflections on Christian literacy, see also Stroumsa (2003), (2005), (2012) and (2014).

[50] See most recently Bremmer (2010, 348–349); Wallraff (2013, 8–25).

[51] See Hurtado (2006) and (2011); Kloppenborg (2014, 45–68).

[52] Judge (1960–61); Harl (1993, 417–431) ('Église et enseignement dans l'Orient grec au cours des premiers siècles', 1977^1); Smith (2012).

[53] Pilhofer (2005, 98–100), but add to his rather incomplete bibliography: Zereteli (1925), no. 22; *Corpus dei papiri filosofici* 1.1.1 (Florence: Olschki, 1989) no. 2; Otranto (2000), no. 15; Fuentes González (2005, 713–714); Houston (2014, 54 (most recent photo)). I am most grateful

PINOY, and none of the other recent editions suggests the same solution. It would indeed be odd if the Christians or pagans had taken the trouble to preserve an apology of an apostate.

1.2. Charity

Lucian devotes some attention to the way the Christians cared for Peregrinus when he was arrested and thrown into prison. Naturally he does not omit the chance to denigrate him by suggesting that he gained fame and money from his time in prison (12–13), but his emphasis on the details imply that Peregrinus' treatment struck him as unusual. So what does he note in particular? We know of course that prisons regularly occur in the *Acts of the Apostles:* Peter is liberated miraculously from prison by an angel (12), Paul and Silas could have escaped if they wanted to (16), the Lord visits Paul in prison (23) and Paul is put under house-arrest instead of having to stay in a dark, damp prison (28). Although the date of *Acts* is highly uncertain, these references do suggest that prisons played an important role in the life of the early Christians, which seems to presuppose a time of persecution, but that is all we can say.

Unfortunately, Lucian does not tell us why Peregrinus was arrested. However, it seems likely that it was because he was a Christian; his being called 'a new Socrates' (12) suggests a pending execution.[54] In any case, Lucian is clearly surprised at the reactions of the Christians: they first try to get him released but when that fails, they bring him food and bribe the guards so that their persons in charge even sleep together with him in prison (12). To us it may seem odd that the Roman authorities would not immediately have arrested these more prominent Christians, but we find a similar situation in the *Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas* (3.5) where Perpetua mentions that the deacons Tertius and Pomponius had bribed the guards to let her stay in the better part of the prison for a few hours,[55] and visits to imprisoned Christians by their fellow worshippers are well attested in the *Acta martyrum*.[56] However, when one looks at the way Lucian

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to Peter van Minnen for his help with this documentation. Note that Wilken in Mitteis & Wilken (1912, 183) claimed that the γ is unclear and declined Jernstedt's suggestion that the name was Nigrinus, whereas Zereteli (1925, 156–157) accepted the reference and claimed that he could see the γ but neither the preceding nor the following letters!

[54] For the name, see Harnack (1906, 17–49), criticised by Geffcken (1908); Benz (1950/1); Döring (1979, 143–161); Dassmann (1993, 39); Baumeister (2009, 22–28).

[55] For bribery of this kind, see Bremmer (1996, 48 note 45); Krause (1996, 305–308).

[56] Pavón (1999, 111–112) ('Las visitas').

uses ‘sleeping together with’ in the rest of his work, one cannot quite suppress the impression that there is a subtle hint here of sexual impropriety as well.[57]

Moreover, early in the morning one could see γρᾴδια, χήρας τινὰς καὶ παιδία ὀρφανά, “old women, some widows and even orphaned children” (12),[58] standing at the gates of the prison, presumably waiting for the guards to admit them. In contrast to the pagan world, widows and old women were important groups in the early Church,[59] and it is this contrast with his own world that must have struck our satirist as important to note down for his readers. There may even be here a subtle jibe at the name ‘new Socrates’, as Plato (*Phaed*. 59d) describes how Socrates’ friends also early in the morning (ἕωθεν) waited at the prison to keep Socrates company.[60] Lucian is also struck by the speed with which the Christians reacted to the arrest of one their number. According to him, congregations from Asia Minor actually sent people to help, defend and to comfort Peregrinus (13). One is reminded of Paul’s *Letter to the Philippians* in which he relates that he received help from the Philippians while in prison. In any case, this type of moral and material support also points to the interregional contacts of the early Christians. In those early days of the emerging Church Christians clearly felt the need to help their brothers and sisters in distress. This solidarity may also be one of the reasons for the success of the movement.

1.3. Doctrines and practices

After mentioning the books, Lucian proceeds with ‘and they revered him as a god, made use of him as a lawgiver, and set him down as a president, next after that other, to be sure, whom they still worship, the man who was crucified in Palestine’.[61] Unfortunately, the text is problematic. Our manuscripts read ἐπεγράφον τὸν μέγαν γοῦν, which Cobet emended to ἐπεγράφοντο, μετὰ γοῦν, which has been accepted in our main editions. But as Van der Horst (2012) observes, it hardly makes sense. The precise sense is thus uncertain. Yet it seems to me that Lucian here represents Peregrinus as a second Jesus. He was worshipped as a god (11), they used him as lawgiver (11) and somewhat later he calls Jesus their 'first lawgiver' (13),[62] and he is their 'president' – all apparently like Jesus, whom Lucian does not mention by name, though he knows he was crucified in Palestine. But the doctrine that strikes Lucian most is the fact that the Christians believe:

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[57] Lucian, *Alex*. 7, 41; *Dial. Meret*. 6, etc.

[58] For this type of asyndeton (A, B, and C) in Greek see Denniston (1954, 289–90) (thanks to Stefan Radt for this reference). Like Harmon (LCL), Pilhofer (2005, 23) translates as ‘alte Witwen und Waisenkinder’, and, curiously, sees these as deaconesses (62–63).

[59] For widows, see most recently Bruno Siola (1990); Krause (1994–195); Bremmer (1995); Recchia (2003, 107–136) (“Le vedove nella letteratura istituzionale dell’antico cristianesimo e nella tipologia biblica”). Old women: Bremmer (1987).

[60] As observed by Szlagor (2005, 96–97).

[61] Luc. *Peregr*. 11: καὶ ὡς θεὸν αὐτὸν ἐκεῖνοι ᾐδοῦντο καὶ νομοθέτῃ ἐχρῶντο καὶ προστάτην ἐπεγράφοντο, μετὰ γοῦν ἐκεῖνον ὃν ἔτι σέβουσι, τὸν ἄνθρωπον τὸν ἐν τῇ Παλαιστίνῃ ἀνασκολοπισθέντα.

> […] that they are going to be wholly immortal and live for all time, in consequence of which they despise death and most of them even willingly give themselves up. Furthermore, their first lawgiver persuaded them that they are all brothers of one another after they have converted once,[63] by denying the Greek gods and by worshipping that crucified sophist himself and living according to his laws.[64] Therefore they despise all things indiscriminately and consider them common property, receiving such doctrines without any definite evidence (13).[65]

We will not discuss in detail these doctrines as they are well known. It may suffice here to note that Lucian translates the belief in the resurrection of the body into his own pagan language,[66] and considers this doctrine responsible for the phenomenon of voluntary martyrdom, which baffled Greeks and Romans.[67] Just like Celsus (*apud* Orig. *CCels.* 5.14), Lucian clearly thinks the idea ridiculous. But it is interesting to note that he also observes a certain 'communism' amongst these Christians. One can only wonder if this was a reality or if Lucian had heard or read about the beginning of Christianity as related in *Acts* (2.42–47, 4.32–37). And is it by chance that we find the same idea in two other early treatises that are often seen as deriving from a Jewish-Christian milieu: the *Didache* (4.8) and the *Epistle of Barnabas* (19.18a)?

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[62] For Jesus as lawgiver, see Hvalvik (2006).

[63] For the brotherhood, see Bremmer (2006, 272–273).

[64] The term 'sophist' here is here hardly meant positively, though some have taken it as such, cf. Wyss (2014).

[65] Luc. *Peregr.* 13: πεπείκασι γὰρ αὑτοὺς οἱ κακοδαίμονες τὸ μὲν ὅλον ἀθάνατοι ἔσεσθαι καὶ βιώσεσθαι τὸν ἀεὶ χρόνον, παρ' ὃ καὶ καταφρονοῦσιν τοῦ θανάτου καὶ ἑκόντες αὑτοὺς ἐπιδιδόασιν οἱ πολλοί. ἔπειτα δὲ ὁ νομοθέτης ὁ πρῶτος ἔπεισεν αὐτοὺς ὡς ἀδελφοὶ πάντες εἶεν ἀλλήλων, ἐπειδὰν ἅπαξ παραβάντες θεοὺς μὲν τοὺς Ἑλληνικοὺς ἀπαρνήσωνται, τὸν δὲ ἀνεσκολοπισμένον ἐκεῖνον σοφιστὴν αὐτὸν προσκυνῶσιν καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ἐκείνου νόμους βιῶσιν. καταφρονοῦσιν οὖν ἁπάντων ἐξ ἴσης καὶ κοινὰ ἡγοῦνται, ἄνευ τινὸς ἀκριβοῦς πίστεως τὰ τοιαῦτα παραδεξάμενοι.

[66] For the belief in salvation and condemnation as Christian religious capital, see Bremmer (2006, 277–278). For the interest of Greek and Roman intellectuals in the resurrection, see Bowersock (1994, 99–119); Schmidt (1995). For the rise of the belief in bodily resurrection, see Bremmer (2002, 41–55).

[67] For voluntary martyrdom, see Butterweck (1995); Voisin (2005); Birley (2006); Dearn (2006); de Ste. Croix (2006, 153–200) (the chapter was composed in the 1950s, but never published; the notes have been well updated); Moss (2012).

There is no mention in *Peregrinus* of Jews nor is there an explicitly Jewish element in Lucian's account of Peregrinus' early Christian congregation. For him, the Christians in 144 CE were clearly a quite different group, even if their leader came from Palestine. Contrary to a popular trend in modern scholarship,[68] Al Baumgarten and John Barclay have recently noted that all early pagan authors, with the exception of Galen (Ramelli 2003), see the Christians as distinct from the Jews,[69] and Maren Niehoff has convincingly argued that the Jew in Celsus as quoted by Origen must have been a highly educated, probably Alexandrian, scholar who perceived Christianity as a separate religion that clearly was attractive to a number of his fellow Jews.[70] These recent studies persuasively argue that the so-called parting of the ways had taken place relatively early, although this process may have taken place in different places at different rates. In some places, this may have been very late, since the earliest Christian diatribes against the Jews only appear around 170 CE; moreover, the first one known to us, by Bishop Apollinaris of Hierapolis, could still be entitled *To the Jews*, instead of the later popular title *Against the Jews*.[71]

The 'parting of the ways' did not not necessarily mean that the practices and beliefs of some (many?) Christians were not still very Jewish. There must have been many different shades of Christianity, and the situation in heavily Jewish areas surely will have been different from areas with very few Jews. We should assume that the two religions long continued to be in some kind of dialogue, although research into Christian influence on early Judaism is still in its initial stages.[72] In the case of Peregrinus we may reasonably suppose that he was part of a congregation with several Jewish features (above), which in Palestine would not be surprising, but that is as far as we can go.

There is one more element in Lucian's account that deserves our attention. He calls Christianity a 'new *teletê*' (11).[73] Now the term *teletê* can mean anything from a ritual in general to a mystery-cult,[74] but at least in the case of Pausanias, an author more or less contemporary with Lucian, *teletê* is used almost exclusively in relation to mysteries. Although this is not the case with Lucian, he does often use the word to mean 'mysteries'.[75] Moreover, there is a clear indication that Lucian indeed saw early Christianity as a kind of mystery-cult. As I have pointed out, in addition to their material assistance, Peregrinus' group is said to have read *logoi hieroi* with him in prison (12). In Philo, *hieroi logoi* refer to the Torah and divinely inspired words or thoughts, whereas in the Church Fathers they refer to the Old and New Testament,[76] but Lucian will have meant the term here in the normal pagan usage that is, texts associated specifically with, especially, Orphic mysteries.[77] Celsus too compared Christianity to 'the other *teletai*' (Orig. *CCels.* 3.59), just as several Christians, orthodox and heterodox, had been struck by the similarity of some elements of the Christian ritual, such as baptism and the Eucharist, with those of the mysteries.[78]

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[68] See especially Segal *(*1986); Becker and Yoshiko Reed (2003); Boyarin (2004).

[69] Barclay (2013); Baumgarten (2013); note also Shaw (2015, 97), in an otherwise unpersuasive study of the Neronian persecution. Aelius Aristides (*On the Defence of the Four* 2.394) refers to "the blasphemous people of Palestine", thus making it very difficult to say whether he is referring to Christians or Jews, cf. Benko (1980, 1055 – 1115 at 1098).

[70] Niehoff (2013); see also Baumgarten (2013, 408 – 418).

[71] Huttner (2013, 244 – 253).

[72] But see Schäfer (2010).

[73] The text of this subordinate clause is less certain than we would like, cf. Schirren (2005), but his idea that *teletê* refers to the crucifixion is unpersuasive.

Obviously, more could be said about Peregrinus and Lucian's report of earlier Christianity, but this may suffice for our purpose. Let us now turn to a different entrepreneur who seems to have caught the *Zeitgeist* in a remarkable manner.

2. Alexander and the mysteries

As we saw in the introduction, the *Peregrinus* was probably written at much the same time as Lucian's pamphlet about Alexander of Abonuteichos, *Alexander or a False Seer*, perhaps the most famous religious entrepreneur of antiquity after the apostle Paul.[79] It would exceed the bounds of this contribution to discuss the whole of this treatise, of which I accept the basic historicity.[80] I will limit myself to one passage, which has not yet received a proper detailed discussion, where we can see Alexander at work in expanding his new cult by introducing new mysteries. Once again our main information comes from Lucian. He had probably visited Abonuteichos in 161 CE (Flinterman 1997), but wrote his treatise shortly after 180 CE when Alexander had already been dead for about a decade. Lucian seems amazingly well informed. He spoke to Alexander himself (55) and, presumably, to one or more of his close collaborators. It is part of Lucian's literary technique to 'zoom in' on Alexander and largely ignore his entourage, but it is clear that Alexander could not have operated his oracle and mysteries without the dedicated cooperation of a number of people. Did Lucian perhaps talk to a disgruntled follower of Alexander?[81] Or to people from the entourage of P. Mummius Sisenna Rutilianus or even M. Sedatius Severianus, after the latter's disastrous invasion of Armenia in 161 CE, allegedly on the basis of a favourable oracle by Glykon?[82]

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[74] Dunbabin (2008); Schuddeboom (2009).

[75] Lucian *Demon.* 11 and 34; *Merc.* 1; *Alex.* 38; *Pereg.* 28; *Salt.* 15; *Pseudol.* 5; *Nav.* 15.

[76] Bremmer (2010, 336–354).

[77] Henrichs (2003, 212–216); at p. 215, he notes that Lucian, *Astrol.* 10 associates γοητεία καὶ ἱερολογία with the name of Orpheus; Bremmer (2010, 331–333).

[78] Auffarth (2006); cf. Bremmer (2014, 156–161).

[79] See most recently Bordenache Battaglia (1988); Sfameni Gasparro (2002, 149–202) (combination of two articles published in 1996 and 1999); Chaniotis (2002); Pozzi (2003); Elm (2006); Gordon (2013, 155–161); Sfameni Gasparro (2013), with a list of her many studies of Alexander in the bibliography; Perea Yébenes (2013). I generally follow the text of Victor (1997) and once again use and adapt the translation by A. Harmon (LCL).

[80] I do not share the scepticism in this regard of Bendlin (2011, 226–243) (originally published in 2006, but here with an important 'Afterword (2009)'. Neither he nor others before him seem to me to have put forward convincing arguments for a purely fictional character of the treatise.

Having instituted an oracle of the snake god Glykon and spread its fame all over the Roman Empire,[83] Alexander also instituted a mystery-cult in his hometown Abonuteichos (38 – 40).[84] Lucian begins his account as follows:

> He established a mystery-cult, with the priestly offices of dadouch and hierophant,[85] which was to be held annually, always for three days in succession. On the first day, as at Athens, there was a proclamation, worded as follows: 'If any atheist or Christian or Epicurean has come to spy upon the rites, let him flee, but let those who believe in the god perform the mysteries, under the blessing of good fortune'. Then, at the very outset, there was an 'expulsion', in which he took the lead, saying: 'Out with the Christians!', and the whole multitude chanted in response, 'Out with the Epicureans!'[86]

Right at the beginning Lucian gives us the key to a better understanding of these mysteries, as the offices of dadouch and hierophant are taken from the Eleusinian mysteries.[87] Yet the duration and structure of the mysteries were different. There were no two grades as in Eleusis: Alexander obviously did not think people would make the arduous journey to Abonuteichos twice. Yet he took over from Eleusis the idea of spreading initiation over several days. As at Athens, there was an initial proclamation, but whereas in Athens the announcement was made several days before the procession to Eleusis, in Abonuteichos it took place immediately before the rite began (there seems to have been no starting procession, although the beginning will have been dramatised in some manner). Moreover, we do not hear in Athens of an ἐξέλασις, 'expulsion', but Philo's words in his *De fuga* (85), ἐλαύνετε οὖν, ἐλαύνετε, ὦ μύσται καὶ ἱεροφάνται θείων ὀργίων, τὰς μιγάδας καὶ σύγκλυδας καὶ πεφυρμένας, δυσκαθάρτους καὶ δυσεκπλύτους ψυχάς, suggest that Alexander based himself here on current mystery language.[88] Moreover, the proclamation also reminds us of the language of exorcism, where it was customary to bid harmful spirits to 'be off' (φεῦγε).[89]

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[81] The scepticism of Petsalis-Diomidis (2010, 43 – 45) goes too far.

[82] Severianus: Lucian, *Alex*. 27; *PIR*^{2} S 231 (see also Esther Eidinow's contribution in this volume (Chapter 10)).

[83] The classic study of Glykon is Robert (1980, 393 – 421). For further bibliography, see Oesterheld (2008, 129 – 136); Bendlin (2011, 233); Ogden (2013, 325 – 29).

[84] Note that Levieils (2007, 345) wrongly locates these Mysteries 'en Italie'.

[85] For the combination of *dadouchia* and *hierophantia* as constitutive for the Eleusinian Mysteries, cf. Plut. *Conv. sept. sap*. 1.4.3, 621C.

[86] Luc. *Alex*. 38: τελετήν τε γάρ τινα συνίσταται καὶ δᾳδουχίας καὶ ἱεροφαντίας, τριῶν ἑξῆς ἀεὶ τελουμένων ἡμερῶν. καὶ ἐν μὲν τῇ πρώτῃ πρόρρησις ἦν ὥσπερ Ἀθήνησι τοιαύτη· 'Εἴ τις ἄθεος ἢ Χριστιανὸς ἢ Ἐπικούρειος ἥκει κατάσκοπος τῶν ὀργίων, φευγέτω· οἱ δὲ πιστεύοντες τῷ θεῷ τελείσθωσαν τύχῃ τῇ ἀγαθῇ'. εἶτ' εὐθὺς ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐξέλασις ἐγίγνετο· καὶ ὁ μὲν ἡγεῖτο λέγων '"Ἔξω Χριστιανούς', τὸ δὲ πλῆθος ἅπαν ἐπεφθέγγετο '"Ἔξω Ἐπικουρείους'.

Rather surprisingly, in view of the fact that Christians were often accused of atheism, the *atheoi* are here a separate category.[90] But we find all three categories already earlier in the treatise. When his Glykon cult started to be criticised, Alexander invented an oracle against his critics, saying that "Pontus was full of *atheists and Christians* who had the hardihood to utter the vilest abuse of him; these he bade them drive away (ἐλαύνειν) with stones if they wanted to have the god gracious" (25). And in answer to a query about what fate had befallen Epicurus in Hades, he created the response that "he sits with leaden fetters on his feet in the mire (ἐν βορβόρῳ)", which, given the Orphic colouring of 'mire', looks like a quotation from an Orphic *katabasis*.[91] It is clear therefore that the three categories belonged to the real *bêtes noires* of Alexander.[92] As a philosophically interested person, he will have been familiar with Epicurean writings and the contemporary Epicureans in Asia Minor.[93] Was he also acquainted with Christianity? Glykon calls himself ‘a light for the mortals’ (18: φάος ἀνθρώποισιν), just as Jesus called himself ‘light of the world’ (John 8:12, 9:5, 12:46). But that similarity is hardly sufficient proof, just as Victor’s idea Alexander’s status as the grandson of a god can be compared to Jesus being the son of God, is unpersuasive. In the present state of our knowledge we can do no more than assume some familiarity without knowing to what extent Alexander had taken an interest in early Christianity.[94]

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[87] For these mysteries, see my reconstruction in Bremmer (2014, 1–20). For the offices, ibid. 5 n. 32.

[88] Riedweg (1987, 80). "So drive away, you who have been initiated into, and are hierophants of, the sacred mysteries, drive away, I say, the souls that are mixed and in a confused crowd, brought together indiscriminately from all sides, the unpurified and still polluted souls" (transl. C.D. Yonge, adapted).

[89] See the bibliography in Kotansky (1994, 163 on l.13).

[90] See the many references in Levieils (2007, 332–367).

[91] Cf. Bremmer (2003, 12–13).

[92] For a subtle reading of Lucian's picture of Epicureanism in *Alex.*, see Van Nuffelen (2011, 185–189).

[93] For them, see Marek (2010, 604–605). For Epicurus and atheism, see Whitmarsh (2015, 173–185).

On the same day, there was, it seems, a performance of a play. Lucian says only: “subsequently, there was the child-bed of Leto, the birth of Apollo, his marriage to Coronis, and the birth of Asclepius” (38). This recalls the likelihood that short plays or pantomimes about the life of Dionysos were performed at the Dionysiac mysteries.[95] It seems a reasonable guess that at Abonuteichos the *mystai* could watch a play about the coming into being of Asclepius, starting with his grandmother Leto and father Apollo; indeed, bronze tablets had been discovered in Chalcedon, which predicted that Apollo would settle with Asclepius in Abonuteichos (10, see also 13 and 14).[96] The next day there was another play, this time about ‘the epiphany of Glykon and the birth of the god’ (38).[97] On this day, and/or perhaps on the first day, dancing probably took place, which was an indispensable part of ancient mysteries as Lucian himself notes (*Salt.* 15).

The *gran finale*, though, took place on the last day: “On the third day there was the union of Podaleirios and the mother of Alexander—it was called the Day of Torches, and torches were burned” (39),[98] which, conceivably, was a kind of *drama mystikon* of the night Alexander was conceived. Given the prominence of the torches I would be inclined to assign ‘the carrying of the torches and the mystical leaps’, which are mentioned in the next chapter, on this day too.[99] Torches were important at celebrations of mysteries, since they traditionally took place at night.[100] At the Eleusinian mysteries the end of the first day was signified by the throwing of torches,[101] and Alexander may have been inspired by that part of the ritual. The ‘leaps’ suggest enthusiastic dances, and the fact that the only other use of the word σκίρτημα in Lucian refers to satyrs may suggest once again an inspiration from Dionysiac mysteries.

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[94] *Contra* Victor (1997, 50).

[95] Bremmer (2014, 106 – 107).

[96] For the *topos* of the discovery of such tablets, see the bibliography in Bremmer (2014, 88 n.31, 112 n.11).

[97] Lucian, *Alex*. 38 – 39: ἐν δὲ τῇ δευτέρᾳ Γλύκωνος ἐπιφάνεια καὶ γέννησις τοῦ θεοῦ.

[98] Lucian, *Alex*. 39: τρίτῃ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ Ποδαλειρίου ἦν καὶ τῆς μητρὸς Ἀλεξάνδρου γάμος· Δᾳδὶς δὲ ἐκαλεῖτο καὶ δᾷδες διεκαίοντο. The last sentence looks like a gloss.

[99] Lucian *Alex*. 40: ἐπὶ ταῖς δᾳδουχίαις καὶ τοῖς μυστικοῖς σκιρτήμασιν.

[100] Bremmer (2014, xii, 9 and 105).

[101] Bremmer (2014, 11).

During the dances, Alexander's "thigh was bared purposely and showed golden. No doubt gilded leather had been put about it, which gleamed in the light of the torches".[102] The golden thigh of course evokes Pythagoras,[103] an allusion that was surely recognised by Lucian's readers. He even mentions that a question about it was submitted to Glykon, who obligingly confirmed the Pythagorean connection (40). The thigh is only one of several indications of Alexander's Neo-Pythagorean sympathies.[104] We can see also in this aspect that Alexander was here exploiting a popular theme in later antiquity. But it remains surprising that he displayed the golden thigh during his mysteries. It is an excellent illustration of the *bricoliste* character of this invented ritual.

We have no idea how the sexual union between Podaleirios and Alexander's mother (her name, in classical Greek fashion,[105] is left unmentioned) was portrayed, but perhaps again in a little pantomime. During the second and final stage of the Eleusinian mysteries there was mention or portrayal of the love between the Athenian king Celeus and Demeter.[106] Moreover, there was at least a suggestion, of carnal love between the hierophant and the priestess.[107] The theme of a sexual union was certainly present in the Eleusinian mysteries, even if we do not know how it was enacted or related, and these unions may well have inspired Alexander in designing his own mysteries. In the case of Podaleirios, Asclepius' son (*Il.* 2.732, 11.833), the union helped to legitimise Alexander's medical expertise. Lucian does not greatly elaborate upon this aspect of his activities, but it clearly was important since he mentions it a number of times.[108] It is not surprising, therefore, that Alexander was rather keen on his mythological father, as he had fabricated an oracle before coming to Abonuteichos that referred to: “the divine Alexander, who shares the blood of Podaleirios” (11). In addition to the marriage of Podaleirios and Alexander’s mother,

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[102] Lucian, *Alex*. 40: γυμνωθεὶς ὁ μηρὸς αὐτοῦ ἐξεπίτηδες χρυσοῦς διεφάνη, δέρματος ὡς εἰκὸς ἐπιχρύσου περιτεθέντος καὶ πρὸς τὴν αὐγὴν τῶν λαμπάδων ἀποστίλβοντος.

[103] For all references, see Burkert (1972, 142 n. 119, 159 n. 215).

[104] Lucian, *Alex*. 4, 6, 33, cf. Goulet (1989), with older bibliography; Victor (1997, 38 – 52) (very speculative).

[105] Cf. Bremmer (1980).

[106] Schol. Aelius Arist. p. 53.15 – 16. Chaniotis (2002, 78 – 80), in an otherwise useful discussion, by a slip refers to love between Zeus and Demeter here.

[107] Asterius, *Homilies* 10.9.1 Datema, transl. Parker (2005, 356), with an illuminating commentary.

[108] Lucian, *Alex*. 22, 36, 53, 60, cf. Crosby (1923); Jones (1986, 135) (Alexander studied under a doctor from Tyana in Cappadocia, who was in turn a disciple of the famous Apollonius of Tyana); Robert (1980, 419, n. 60). In this apprenticeship lies, in Jones' view, the explanation behind Alexander's Pythagorean beliefs.

> […] there was the amour of Selene and Alexander, and the birth of Rutilianus’ wife. The torch-bearer and hierophant was our Endymion, Alexander. While he lay in full view, pretending to be asleep, there came down to him from the roof, as if from heaven, not Selene but Rutilia, a very pretty woman, married to one of the Emperor’s stewards. She was genuinely in love with Alexander and he with her; and before the eyes of her worthless husband there were kisses and embraces in public. If there had not been so many torches, there would have been even more intimate gropings.[109]

The story of the passion of Selene for Endymion, mentioned already by Sappho (199 Voigt; Epimenides F 12 Fowler), is probably of Anatolian origin.[110] There seems to be no convincing reason why Alexander should have opted for this myth, except for its popularity in Roman times, its entertainment-value and, perhaps, the chance to steal some kisses in a more or less proper manner. In any case, these little plays had no Eleusinian model and belonged to Alexander’s own inventive design.

Finally, “after a short time Alexander entered again, robed as a hierophant, amid profound silence, and said in a loud voice, over and over again, ‘Hail, Glycon!’, while following in his train came Eumolpids and a number of Kerykes from Paphlagonia, with brogans on their feet and breath reeking of garlic, who shouted in response, ‘Hail, Alexander!’ “.[111] It is clear that we now are back with Eleusinian ritual, at whose high point the hierophant also appeared displaying an ear of wheat.[112] Even the loud voice was taken over from Eleusis,[113] and the authority of Eleusis was further invoked by the appearance of the Eleusinian priestly *genê* of the Eumolpids and Kerykes. On the other hand, the words spoken in Eleusis had now been adapted to the new circumstances. Richard Gordon has well observed that the antiphonal shouts regarding the expulsion of Christians and Epicureans helped to forge a bond between Alexander and his followers (Gordon 2013, 159). We can now see that he intended to achieve the same at the end of the mysteries, where the last word heard would be 'Alexander!'

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[109] Lucian, *Alex*. 39: καὶ τελευταῖον Σελήνης καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἔρως καὶ τικτομένη τοῦ Ῥουτιλιανοῦ ἡ γυνή. ἐδᾳδούχει δὲ καὶ ἱεροφάντει ὁ Ἐνδυμίων Ἀλέξανδρος. καὶ ὁ μὲν καθεύδων δῆθεν κατέκειτο ἐν τῷ μέσῳ, κατῄει δὲ ἐπ’ αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς ὀροφῆς ὡς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἀντὶ τῆς Σελήνης Ῥουτιλία τις ὡραιοτάτη, τῶν Καίσαρος οἰκονόμων τινὸς γυνή, ὡς ἀληθῶς ἐρῶσα τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου καὶ ἀντερωμένη ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς τοῦ ὀλέθρου ἐκείνης ἀνδρὸς φιλήματά τε ἐγίγνετο ἐν τῷ μέσῳ καὶ περιπλοκαί. εἰ δὲ μὴ πολλαὶ ἦσαν αἱ δᾷδες, τάχα ἄν τι καὶ τῶν ὑπὸ κόλπου ἐπράττετο.

[110] Bremmer (2009, 305 – 306); Fowler (2000 – 2013, 2.133 – 134).

[111] Lucian, *Alex*. 39: μετὰ μικρὸν δὲ εἰσῄει πάλιν ἱεροφαντικῶς ἐσκευασμένος ἐν πολλῇ τῇ σιωπῇ, καὶ αὐτὸς μὲν ἔλεγε μεγάλῃ τῇ φωνῇ, ‘Ἰὴ Γλύκων’· ἐπεφθέγγοντο δὲ αὐτῷ ἐπακολουθοῦντες Εὐμολπίδαι δῆθεν καὶ Κήρυκές τινες Παφλαγόνες, καρβατίνας ὑποδεδεμένοι, πολλὴν τὴν σκοροδάλμην ἐρυγγάνοντες, ‘Ἰὴ Ἀλέξανδρε’.

[112] Bremmer (2014, 14).

[113] Well noted by Chaniotis (2002, 79); cf. Bremmer (2014, 15).

When we now compare the mysteries of Eleusis with the description given by Lucian, we cannot but note the absence of some salient features of the older celebration. Although he does mention fees in his account of the oracle, Lucian does not mention anything about fees in connection with the mysteries. Yet, wherever we have sufficient information, it is clear that mysteries never were free.[114] There is no mention of the light that was the climax of the Eleusinian mysteries and imitated in several other such rites.[115] Again, Lucian is happy to tell us everything he thinks we should know about the rites: the tradition of maintaining secrecy no longer holds. There are a number of other differences too. Alexander seems to have fused the offices of *dadouchos* and hierophant. We hear nothing about a promise of a good afterlife; the only 'message' of the mystery-cult seems to have been the promotion of Alexander himself. Finally, we also do not know what kind of clientele visited the mysteries. Nicole Belayche (2013) has recently drawn attention to the fact that initiation into mysteries seems increasingly to have become an elite activity in Roman times. Lucian gives us no information on this topic, but the mention of the wife of an imperial slave in the local financial administration (οἰκονόμος = *dispensator*) and Alexander's obvious social ambitions suggest that it will not have been so very different in Abonuteichos.

3. Conclusion

So what have we learned about religious entrepreneurs in the second century? The case of Peregrinus is interesting. He clearly came from a wealthy family, but joined a 'communist' Christian community without immediately divesting himself of his wealth or sharing it with his fellow Christians. He must have risen quickly to a high rank in this community because of his superior *paideia* and, presumably, his social and rhetorical skills. His 'conversion' thus enabled him to take on a new role and find an outlet for his intellectual energy and social ambition. The case shows that we need not always think of people outside the socio-political élite when looking at ancient religious entrepeneurs. Religious positions could sometimes have furnished more power than was possible in a political situation dominated by the Romans or power-sharing amongst members of the elite.

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[114] For fees in mysteries, see Bremmer (2014, xii, 138–139).

[115] Bremmer (2014, 14–15; 33; 123).

It is different with Alexander. Although Lucian suggests low origins, his good education clearly belies such an insinuation. In addition, he was enterprising and without many moral scruples (again, according to Lucian). He certainly had a good nose for what the public wanted, just like many modern religious entrepreneurs. Thus he founded an oracle and a mystery-cult. But in both cases he used current cults, in Richard Gordon's words, as sources of authority not as templates (Gordon 2013, 159 – 160). In the case of the oracle we can see a combination of oracle practices from Didyma and Klaros with the traditional snake cult of Asclepius. In the case of the mysteries he freely used the Eleusinian ones but with additional input from the Dionysiac mysteries in order to make his own mysteries more attractive and more in line with the demands of an elite influenced by Roman entertainment expectations. The overall effect must have been a strengthening of his religious position, but we can also see that Alexander used this religious capital to increase his social and, surely, economic capital. At the same time, his cults will have filled a void in the Pontic area where no important oracle or healing cult had hitherto existed. Alexander had spotted a real opportunity in the local religious market place and, as a good entrepreneur, he seized his chance. Lucian clearly did not like these men and did all he could to denigrate them. We may sympathise with him, but should always be aware that the motivations of religious innovators are often inscrutable. Sex, money and power do not exclude religious motivations and are often inextricably interwoven with them. In that respect, the ancient world was not very different from what we can still observe today.

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Nicola Denzey Lewis

Lived Religion among second-century ‘Gnostic hieratic specialists’[1]

This contribution focuses on the socio-historical details of a number of so-called ‘Gnostic hieratic specialists’ active in second-century Rome. The material derives primarily from Irenaeus’ *Adversus Haereses* (ca. 180 CE), a heresiological tractate that aims to draw boundary lines between different Christian specialists and their communities. A close reading of *Adv. Haer.* and Irenaeus’ sometimes scathing portraits of certain Gnostic hieratic specialists – particularly a Valentinian Christian known as Marcus the Magician (*Magus*) – reveals that Irenaeus himself, like many of the so-called Gnostics he scorned, formed a new class of Christian textual producer in the imperial period. The study seeks to refute Irenaeus’ claim to be an authority representing the ‘Great Church’, and highlights the diversity of practices that comprised second-century Christianity.

This essay turns to heresiological sources – primarily the writings of Irenaeus, with support from Hippolytus and Tertullian – to interrogate the charges of aberrant religio-sexual practices, gender troubles, and ritual improprieties that dogged a class of individuals I term here ‘Gnostic hieratic specialists’. How did these individuals “form and reform ritual actions and theological constructions” (to cite the Call for Papers)? Can attention to ‘lived religion’ help us to understand differently the heresiological charges against these individuals and their innovative crafting of new Christianities?

We will begin with Irenaeus of Lyons, a second-century theologian whose life and circumstances remain largely opaque.[2] Irenaeus himself does not provide modern readers with any biographical insights in his extant works; what little we know of him is drawn from Eusebius.[3] Traditionally, Irenaeus has been the subject of theological inquiry, particularly for his articulation of ‘recapitulation’; alternatively, as a significant source for information on those whom he derides,

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[1] I want to thank Jörg Rüpke, Georgia Petridou, and Richard Gordon for a wonderful and stimulating conference in January 2015 where a preliminary form of this paper was circulated.

[2] For recent biographical studies, see Minns (2010); Osborn (2001), and the excellent volume of collected essays by Parvis and Foster (2012).

[3] Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 5.4.1.

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i.e. those who possessed "falsely-called knowledge (*gnosis*)".[4] Central to all these studies has been a tacit understanding of Irenaeus as a champion of the Great Church, or rather, according to those scholars for whom such a notion at this period is anachronistic, an important voice of nascent Christian orthodoxy or proto-orthodoxy. In this essay, I resituate Irenaeus within the context of second-century Rome, unmooring him from a fictive 'Great Church' and considering him within a matrix of second-century religious 'providers' or 'specialists'.

A relatively recent strand of scholarship paves the way for resituating Irenaeus by pointing out his training in rhetoric and thus, his active participation in the intellectual life of the Second Sophistic.[5] In fact, we do Irenaeus a disservice if we consider him anything less than fully immersed in the predominant intellectual or literary preoccupations of his day, which included the composition of works ranging from scientific treatises to rank satire. It is in this vein that I am tempted to consider Irenaeus' *œuvre*. His heresiological work, *Adversus Haereses* (c. 180 CE), paints a world of chronic deceit and dissembling, coupled with a relentless spiritual ambition.[6] The scorn for religious innovation which saturates its pages it shares with other works from the Second Sophistic – surely not accidental, but an indication of how Irenaeus perceived himself as a public intellectual and social critic. There is a striking parallel, for example, between Irenaeus' *Adv. Haer.* and the *Philopseudēs* ('Lover of Lies') of his contemporary Lucian of Samosata, with its stable of dubious religious specialists: Lucian regales the reader with hilarious accounts of a Babylonian *magos* who heals with philtres and conjurations (11–15); a Syrian exorcist (16); a Pythagorean expeller of ghosts (*daimōnes*) (30–31); and an Egyptian adept of Isis who animates brooms and pestles (33 – 36).[7] Irenaeus similarly introduces us to Simon, a flamboyant Samaritan *magos* who parades his consort whom he considers the reincarnation of Helen of Troy (1.23); the profligate demon-worshipper Carpocrates, who believed that to escape the bondage of the body one had to have sexual intercourse with as many women as possible (1.25.4); and another *magos* named Marcus, a practitioner in the dark arts and beguiler of wealthy women (1.13). A keen reader also detects parallels between Irenaeus’ Marcus and another one of Lucian’s characters, Alexander of Abonuteichos, a magician (*goēs*) and oracular prophet who travels through northern Asia Minor with the financial support of wealthy women.[8] The difference between these competing profiles of Lucian and Irenaeus lies in interpretation; we read Lucian’s work as satire, but Irenaeus as anything but. In fact, *Adv. Haer.* has always constituted a compendium, encyclopaedia, manifesto, ‘handbook’ of heresies – what you will, at any rate, a usable map of second-century Christianity in all its multiplicity and absurdities.

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[4] On Irenaeus' theory of recapitulation, see Osborn (2001); Dunning (2009); Holsinger-Friesen (2009); Smith (1994). The scholarship on Irenaeus and Gnosticism is vast. The meaning of the term is highly contested. More on this topic below.

[5] See, for instance, Schoedel (1959); also Grant (1949). Note esp. Ayres (2015, 154): "One of the most striking evolutions in Christian thought and practices between the middle of the second century and the middle of the third is the rise to prominence of a Christian exegesis that is heavily dependent on the techniques of literary analysis honed within the developing disciplines of grammar and rhetoric". Steenberg (2012, 202) notes Irenaeus' familiarity with Plato, Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, Aristophanes, Menander, and the pre-Socratics: "[…] Irenaeus certainly sees the best of 'Pagan learning' as part of God's redemptive economy, useful to the Christian".

[6] The Latin and surviving Greek texts of *Adv. Haer.* are reproduced in Rousseau (1965–1982). Translations in this paper are my own or else, where noted, from the useful, if dated, English translation in the ANF series (1885).

I suggest in this essay that we should read Irenaeus differently, with the same appreciation for humour, exaggeration, and posturing that we allow for Lucian. The reason we have not done so reflects, in the main, our own theological commitments and convictions. We also must develop a keen sensitivity to Irenaeus’ own self-positioning within the competitive landscape of second-century religious options rather than assume that he was somehow able to rise above these, the omniscient eye of a sober churchman looking down from above at a fissiparous and farcical set of Christian improvisations on key theological themes. This essay presents a different Irenaeus – a participant rather than observer, deeply involved in fashioning not orthodoxy (which is the conventional reading) but perhaps a more self-serving, even independent, Christian identity. From this perspective, Irenaeus’ profile of what I call here ‘Gnostic hieratic specialists’ tells us only marginally about them, but, recursively, a good deal about Irenaeus himself.

1. On ‘Gnostic hieratic specialists’

First, though, a word on terminology. The rise of independent religious specialists in the high Roman Empire has been a recent and fruitful new area of investigation. We owe this new direction in scholarship to Jörg Rüpke and Richard Gordon, and I am indebted to them for turning our attentions away from monolithic and hence nonsensical subjects of study such as ‘second-century Christianity’ to individuals and their interactions within ‘small group religion’.[9] The term ‘specialist’ seems to me preferable to the more Bourdieusian ‘entrepreneur’, which carries with it economic overtones which these figures cannot always readily sustain.[10] The term ‘hieratic’ is more precise than ‘religious’, a term that, like ‘second-century Christianity’, is too often used thoughtlessly. I do not believe that Christianity was sufficiently developed in the second century to receive a monolithic designation; I prefer, instead, to speak of ‘Christians’ or ‘Christian groups’ without imagining meaningful networks and top-down organisation. By ‘hieratic specialist’ I mean individuals who drew from a broad set of ritual practices circulating in the second century, and who apparently considered themselves experts in the performance or knowledge of ritual practices and behaviours. The term ‘Gnostic’, however, gives me the most pause. I have argued throughout my professional career for the inaccuracy of this term.[11] I use it here because it is Irenaeus’ preferred term. The fact that he uses it is not an argument in favour of its historical appropriateness. On the contrary: it is a key to his entire interpretive project.

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[7] For more on Lucian’s profiles of independent religious specialists, see Wendt (2016, 1 – 5, 24 – 26, 139 – 142).

[8] See also Jan Bremmer’s contribution to this volume (Chapter 2, esp. 62 – 68).

If Irenaeus’ claims in *Adv. Haer.* about these Gnostic hieratic specialists are true, then each of them pushed beyond the limits of licit Christian behaviours. Some of these ritual innovators explored the interface between baptism, death, and exorcism. Others worked in the fringes of Christian practice, drawing on traditional practices of oracular utterance and dream-interpretation. Most were accused of dealing in magic. Whether or not Irenaeus and his continuators were accurate or truthful in their sketches of these specialists remains a matter of debate; nevertheless, the second century found nascent Christianity at perhaps its most audaciously experimental, and historically at its closest point to Roman, Greek, and Egyptian hieratic behaviours. Without established limits to confine them, one might argue that all these figures operated ‘beyond duty’, creating moments of religious meaning in the intersections of life, sex, and death.

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[9] For the current literature on ‘small group religion’, see Gordon’s contribution to the present volume (Chapter 11).

[10] On Bourdieu, see also the contribution to this volume by Emiliano Rubens Urciuoli (Chapter 12).

[11] There exist in the field of Gnosticism and Gnostic Studies deeply-entrenched opinions on the appropriateness of the adjective ‘Gnostic’ in antiquity. For arguments against, see Williams (1996) and King (2003). For arguments in favour, see the work of, *inter alia*, April DeConick and Birger Pearson.

In this essay, I will disrupt and subvert a conventional story – that a nascent Christian orthodoxy was ‘perverted’ by Gnostic hieratic specialists, who introduced into Christian teachings and practice a series of innovations – innovations destined to fail, if only because more orthodox Christians such as Irenaeus were successfully able to hold the line. Rather, I argue that we must rethink who, of these figures, were the true innovators and whose vision or version of what each of them considered proper Christian practice and belief was ultimately lost.

2. Sorting behaviours, not groups

Second-century Rome presented a diverse, fissiparous religious landscape of Christians – surprisingly difficult to identify as cohesive groups or communities, but easier to see as independent, itinerant individuals with followings, patrons, and sometimes confrontational or unsuccessful relationships with more settled ‘communities’ of Christian believers.[12] Thus we might start by thinking differently about the accuracy of group designations such as ‘Valentinians’ or ‘Carpocratians’. These group designations, in reality, had little true meaning. For example, both Irenaeus and Tertullian take pains to note that Valentinians all practised and believed slightly different things; indeed, Irenaeus states that Valentinians often felt free to disagree with Valentinus himself (haer. 1.11–12).[13] Given this perceived diversity, it is fair to ask to what degree Valentinians identified themselves within the group or community of ‘Valentinians’. While it is possible that such perceived diversity was an attempt to undermine a strong, emic sense of group cohesion, I will follow Irenaeus’ own lead by starting our investigations with accounts of individual innovators rather than with groups.[14]

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[12] I mean ‘communities’ here in the loosest possible sense: Christians involved in expressing their beliefs and maintaining their practices within the context of a house assembly, private commercial space, ‘school’ or household, balancing their Christian identity with a multiplicity of other social roles, of which Christian adherence might be the least stable or dominant. For a recent dismissal of the idea that Christians met solely within the domain of a house assembly, see Adams (2013). On Christian identity and the problem of assuming ‘community’, albeit for a slightly later era, see Rebillard (2009) and Rebillard (2012).

[13] Indeed, this diversity is manifest from the writings scholars conventionally label ‘Valentinian’ and their division into ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ branches (Thomassen 2006; Markschies 1997), as well as from the extant fragments of Valentinus’s writing, which bear no theological similarity to the system that Irenaeus lays out in *Adv.Haer.* 1.

[14] There is a marked shift through time to move from describing individual ‘heretics’ (as in the writings of Irenaeus) to groups, as in Hippolytus’ *Refutation of All Heresies*. Only rarely does Hippolytus refer to individual ‘heretics’, such as Colorbasus at *haer.* 4.13 or Justinus at 5.18. By the

These hieratic specialists, as Irenaeus paints them, share certain seminal similarities in their practice, if not consistently in their beliefs. The broad outlines of praxis can be defined along six specific areas of expertise:

1. Textual production and circulation, building on techniques of exegesis, allegorical readings, and harmonisation/explanation of scripture.
2. Christian ritual innovation, particularly in the area of baptism and Eucharist.
3. Prophecy and oracular utterances.
4. Practices related to healing, including miracles, spells, and exorcism.
5. Education of groups or individuals in forms of esoteric knowledge, particularly eschatology, numerology, and cosmology.
6. Social innovation that is, providing areas and opportunities for social change or growth for disadvantaged groups or classes.

Within each of these categories, Irenaeus frequently depicts individual hieratic specialists as pushing the margins of acceptable behaviour to the point of absurdity or obscenity (witness, for example, the profligate religio-sexual practices of Carpocrates at *haer.* 1.25.4). My intuition is that Irenaeus, in these character sketches, aimed not at conveying accurate historical information but rather at satire through hyperbole and outright slander, in the style of his Second Sophistic contemporaries. Nevertheless, a careful and perhaps discerning re-evaluation of these characters can separate hyperbolic description from a set of essential practices which frame them; in the case of Carpocrates, for example, a more sober framing might place him within the ambit of religious hieratic specialists who practised ritual innovations that may have involved behaving (or having his students behave) in ways that challenged the social status quo. But let us consider each one of these categories in more detail.

2.1. Textual production and circulation

This practice depended upon literacy and patronage, thus locating these Gnostic hieratic specialists within a certain social class: most probably members of subelite groups who used their literacy skills in order to reinforce their own social

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fourth century, heretics are identified in heresiological and legal material exclusively by group – Ophites, Naassenes, Borborites, Eunomians –, even groups such as the Hydroparastatae or Tascodrogitae (‘Nose pickers’) who almost certainly never existed. See *CTh* 16.5.65.2; Flower (2013, 184).

capital.[15] Some of these so-called Gnostics produced our earliest works of Christian exegesis – notably, the Valentinian scholar Heracleon’s exegesis of the Gospel of John.[16] That Irenaeus had access to much of this type of work in its written form is beyond doubt; what unfortunately remains opaque is: how. Did these Gnostic hieratic specialists have, and travel with, libraries? What facilities were there for the copying and dissemination of these documents? Under what circumstances, and in what capacity, does Irenaeus encounter ‘Gnostic’ treatises?

To take a step back from Irenaeus into the world of extant second-century Christian writings, it is clear that texts, and the production of texts, mattered. In particular, allegorical readings of scripture were common exercises that generated considerable controversy.[17] Indeed, an overarching goal of *Adv. Haer.* is an attempt to undo perceived interpretative damage wrought by those ‘Gnostics’ whom Irenaeus despises and calls “evil interpreters”, ἐξηγηταὶ κακοὶ τῶν καλῶς εἰρημένων γινόμενοι (*haer., praef.* 1), in pages after page of elaborate refutation through proof-texting and counter-exegesis.[18] The number and quality of details that Irenaeus provides on the more hieratic (viz., ritual) activities of our specialists pales in comparison with what he tells us of the textual worlds they create. In this way, both *Adv. Haer.* specifically, and heresiological literature generally, was very much part of the strenuous textual production and circulation that characterised, even dominated, one stratum of second-century Christian activity: identity and authority were brokered through a largely contentious, competitive environment of textual production, including the interpretation, and indeed the creation, of the very category ‘scripture’.[19]

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[15] The term ‘textual producers’ derives from modern work in Cultural Studies, particularly the seminal work of the French theorist Michel de Certeau (1925 – 86), who writes of the tension between readers and textual producers to contain and direct possession of a text and to control its meaning (e. g. [1984]). Thoughtful work has been done recently on textual producers in the high Empire. See, for a start, Stowers (2011, 35 – 56).

[16] For a reconstruction of the text and commentary, see Pagels (1989).

[17] On the problem of allegory for Irenaeus, see Perkins (1976, 195). More generally on the deployment of allegorical exegesis in the second century, see Struck (2004, 179).

[18] Perkins (1976); Ayres (2015, 155 ff.). More generally, see Young (1997, 49 – 76).

[19] On the formation of the concept of ‘scripture’ and ‘canon’ in Irenaeus, see Reed (2002).

2.2. Christian hieratic ritual innovations

Here, let me emphasise that ‘innovation’ may be a misleading term, since it implies crafting something new to replace or improve on something old. Rather, Christian rituals were actively in development and there appears to have been no consensus on how rites such as baptism were to be performed and what they signified.[20] On that level, at least, all Christian ritual production constituted innovation. This is an easy point to forget if we read Irenaeus without due suspicion. As Irenaeus presents them, all ‘Gnostic’ Christian rituals, like all ‘Gnostic’ exegesis, constitute perversions. For instance, he criticises followers of Valentinus for their practice of a double baptism – one of water and one of the spirit or fire (*haer.* 1.21.1). But double baptisms were not unique to Valentinians and indeed have a precedent in the gospels, which distinguish between a ‘first’ baptism in water and a second in fire or the Holy Spirit.[21] Even among followers of Valentinus, there was apparently considerable disagreement over what constituted a double baptism – it might mean a single baptism with two levels of meaning, one literal and one spiritual. It might mean a baptism with water followed by a chrismation or anointing with oil, symbolising light or fire.[22] The Valentinian *Gospel of Philip* mentions five sacraments, including baptism, chrism, and two others which may or may not have been related to baptism: *apolytrosis* and ‘Bridal Chamber’, both of which are famously elusive.[23]

The Eucharist appears also to have been celebrated in innovative ways by second-century Gnostic hieratic specialists. Irenaeus and Hippolytus both mention that Marcus ‘the Magus’ celebrated a Eucharistic rite whereby a small chalice, invested with the power of *charis*, was held up and poured into an empty larger one, causing the latter to overflow:

> Pretending to consecrate cups mixed with wine, and protracting to great length the word of invocation, [Marcus] contrives to give them a purple and reddish colour, so that Charis, who is one of those that are superior to all things, should be thought to drop her own blood into that cup through means of his invocation, and that thus those who are present should be led to rejoice to taste of that cup, in order that, by so doing, the Charis, who is set forth by this magician, may also flow into them [...] [Marcus] himself produces another cup of much larger size than that which the deluded woman has consecrated, and pouring from the

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[20] On baptism in the early centuries, see Ferguson (2009); Jensen (2011).

[21] See Denzey Lewis (2013).

[22] Again, the literature on ‘Gnostic’ ritual in general and Valentinian baptism in particular is substantial. For a start, see Denzey (2009); Sévrin (1982); Pagels (1972).

[23] *GosPhil NHC* II 3, 67, 27–30. Studies of rituals in the *Gospel of Philip* include DeConick, (2001); Meeks (1974).

> smaller one consecrated by the woman into that which has been brought forward by himself […] he then appears a worker of wonders when the large cup is seen to have been filled out of the small one, so as even to overflow by what has been obtained from it
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> *haer.* 1.13.7, tr. Roberts and Rambaut [ANF 1]; cf. Hippol. *haer.* 6.35.

In the version recounted by Irenaeus, and later, Hippolytus, this story contains several interesting elements, and I will return to it presently. For now, however, we may count it as a ritual innovation which resembles a Eucharist, but which involves not direct associations with the body and blood of Christ, but instead the descent of the female hypostasis Charis which consecrates the cup(s) by giving those who drink from it the ability to prophesy.

2.3. Prophecy and oracular utterances

Marcus 'the Magus', whose skills according to Irenaeus included the ability to prophesy through his own spirit familiar (*haer.* 1.13.3), had the power to make prophets of others as well; in Book 1, Irenaeus recounts a story of how Marcus convinced wealthy women to follow him by giving them the power and authority to prophesy. Flattering them at a feast, Marcus would offer verbal encouragement: "Behold Charis has descended upon thee", Irenaeus has Marcus say to these women, "Open thy mouth and prophesy!" The woman in question, blushing, is at once embarrassed and flattered: "I have never at any time prophesied", she protests, "nor do I know how to prophesy!"

> […] then engaging, for the second time, in certain invocations, so as to astound his deluded victim, [Marcus] says to her, "Open thy mouth, speak whatsoever occurs to thee, and thou shalt prophesy". She then, vainly puffed up and elated by these words, and greatly excited in soul by the expectation that it is herself who is to prophesy, her heart beating violently [from emotion], reaches the requisite pitch of audacity, and idly as well as impudently utters some nonsense as it happens to occur to her, such as might be expected from one heated by an empty spirit. […] Henceforth she reckons herself a prophetess, and expresses her thanks to Marcus.
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> *haer.* 1.13.3, tr. ANF.

It is worth noting here the connection between women and prophecy, clearly a hotly contested topic in the first centuries of Christianity. We see it most clearly in the case of Montanism, but prophecy was evidently practised by other women and/or became part of the allure of specific (male) hieratic specialists. Irenaeus clearly links Marcus's legitimising acts – in effect, giving hieratic agency to women – with his attractiveness and popularity. In return for this gift of spiritual charisma, the women support Marcus financially or – what Irenaeus finds more appalling – provide for him sexually (1.13.3). How far this represents an actual historical situation is an issue to which I return later.

2.4. Miracles, healings, exorcisms, and other acts of ritual power (i.e. 'magic')

Another form of hieratic ritual behaviour within Christian circles but one never considered sacramental, the performance of exorcisms and miracles – particularly miraculous healing, as in the gospel narratives – had found audiences and practitioners since the earliest decades of the Christian movement. However, unlike baptism and Eucharist which were the specialities of Irenaeus' 'heretics', healing miracles and the expulsion of demons constituted 'equal opportunity' religious rites, disconnected from one particular religious group. Clearly, Irenaeus uses the verb *thaumaturgein* to refer to some Gnostic hieratic specialists, though always as a second-order category. Thus Marcus, "an adept in magical impostures", is considered a miracle-worker by his followers (1.13.1), while the followers of Simon and Carpocrates, "who are said to perform miracles" (*qui […] uirtutes operari dicuntur*) (2.31.2; cf. 1.13; 1.23), cannot in fact do so:[24]

> For they can neither confer sight on the blind, nor hearing on the deaf, nor chase away all sorts of demons—[none, indeed,] except those that are sent into others by themselves, if they can even do so much as this. Nor can they furnish effective remedies for those external accidents which may occur
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> *haer.* 2.31.2; cf. 2.32.3, tr. ANF.

Techniques of exorcism and exorcistic healing perdured in Christian antiquity. As David Frankfurter notes, life in antiquity involved a "perpetual negotiation with a range of ancestral and landscape spirits". [25] Exorcism appeared to have been a particular lay specialisation, continuing under the radar of ecclesiastical sanctions.[26] Irenaeus intimates that these lay specialists worked for a fee, unlike those within the church who very frequently (*saepissime*) healed people without fee or reward (*haer.* 2.31.3). Given that Irenaeus recognised the power of exorcism and healing for building group adherence – that is, healing was a powerful tool for 'conversion' into Christian circles – it is hardly surprising that he was both troubled by, and likely downplayed, the miraculous acts of Gnostic hieratic specialists.

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[24] See Kelhoffer (1999).

[25] See Frankfurter (2010, 42).

[26] On exorcism in Christian circles, see MacMullen (1984, 21–29); for what I consider examples of Christian exorcistic spells (in Coptic and Greek), see *PGM* IV 86–87, 1227–1264; XXXVI 275–280; *Suppl. Mag* 84. All however are considerably later than the second century.

One further comment about magic is, however, in order here. Gnostic hieratic specialists are consistently said to be practitioners of magic – most frequently, of love spells or erotic magic – with their own demon familiars. The followers of Simon Magus, for example, “practise magical arts, casting spells and charms, exorcisms and incantations. They call themselves *Paredri* (‘familiars’) and *Oneiropompi* (‘dream-senders’)” (*haer.* 1.23.4). These innovators also practised dream-interpretation or advocated the practice of incubation to obtain dreams (1.23.4; cf. the followers of Carpocrates at 1.25.3). Both erotic magic and incubation practices were widespread in the second century, making me disinclined to consider Irenaeus and other heresiologists as merely resorting to slander. The issue for Christians, apparently, was the involvement of demons, thus constructing both incubation and magic as ‘demonic arts’ theoretically antithetical to Christian practice, although evidently widely performed.[27]

2.5. Education/paedagogy

Not all intellectual activity involved the production and circulation of text. The social setting for textual production is frequently understood to have been relatively loose study-circles or ‘schools’.[28] However, Einar Thomassen has recently urged us to consider the misleading associations of words such as ‘circle’ or ‘school’.[29] Consequently, I propose here a different model that better reflects our second-century sources, particularly *Adv. Haer.*, according to which religious specialist ‘tutors’ travelled from place to place (both between cities and within individual cities) and were hired privately to work one-to-one with a client.[30]

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[27] A new class of books consider the social role(s) of magicians from a perspective useful to those of us who do ‘lived religion’; see, *inter alia*, Dickie (2001); Frankfurter (2002). For Christian magic, see Meyer and Smith (1999).

[28] The term is Irenaeus’ own, but we may interpret this more literally than he. It may be, too, that he deliberately favoured ‘school’ over *ekklesia*. On whether it is proper to think of the Valentinians as a ‘school’, see the seminal essay of Markschies (1997).

[29] Thomassen is nuancing his work represented in, for instance, Thomassen (2006) into a bolder dismissal of the very idea of Valentinianism as a ‘school’: see Thomassen (forthcoming).

[30] Although Irenaeus provides scant biographical details, it is clear that many second-century ‘Gnostic’ hieratic specialists traveled. Valentinus hailed from Alexandria and taught in Rome; Marcion moved from Pontus to Rome; Cerdo, a student of Simon in Samaria, likewise travelled to Rome to teach (*haer.* 1.27.1). Marcellina too led a group in Rome, although it was not her native

This model – rather than the elusive ‘house church’ – seems to have characterised many Christian intellectual exchanges, particularly those whose adherents were primarily upwardly-aspiring freedmen, as many ‘Gnostics’ appear to have been.

The best evidence for the importance of the teacher-disciple model among second-century Christians remains Ptolemy’s *Letter to Flora*, a rare example of what must have been a fairly common epistolary exchange.[31] Most of our other later extant epistles are either pseudepigraphic (e. g., *Letter of Peter to Philip*) or, like 1 Clement or the letters of Polycarp, were sent to communities.[32] Ptolemy, a Valentinian Christian, indicates that he has previously met with Flora and will meet with her again; in the meantime, his letter to her addresses theological questions which she has posed. There is no indication that Flora is part of a school, so the relationship seems to be that of a private instructor to a private student.

I suspect more work remains to be done in fleshing out the nature of teacher-disciple relationships in the high Empire among members of the freedman class. These relationships may have been enduring: according to Tertullian, complete Valentinian instruction could last as long as five years, and involved rigorous self-discipline (*Adv. Valent.* 1). He adds that those who received private instruction were bound by a duty of silence not to disclose the contents of these teachings to non-initiates (ibid.). Similarly, in a rare sketch of an individual Gnostic hieratic specialist, named Justinus, Hippolytus notes that Justinus “rejected the scriptures” but reinforced his instruction with mysterious books of ‘Greek fables’, insisting that his followers swear oaths of secrecy (*Haer.* 5.18).

What was the content of such teachings? It seems to me, at least, that they were not primarily exegetical, and that they provided different forms of esoteric information. I am struck, for instance, by the tremendous amount of numerological material in both *Adv. Haer.* and Hippolytus’s *Refutatio*. For whatever reason, numerology appeared to have been in vogue in that century, matched only, perhaps, by an interest in astrological and cosmological information. Given the em-

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city (1.25.6). Marcus taught in the Rhône Valley (1.13.7), but presumably learned his trade in Rome.

[31] Ptolemy, *Letter to Flora* [ap. Epiph. *haer.* 33.3 – 7]. The critical edition is Quispel (1966).

[32] Another example from Nag Hammadi would be the *Treatise on the Resurrection* (*NHC* I, 4), a second-century (?) letter from an unnamed teacher to an otherwise unknown private student, Rheginos, on the nature of the resurrection. It begins with noting that many are anxious to learn material such as the letter-writer is about to disclose; at the end of the letter, the letter-writer suggests that Rheginos not be “jealous of anyone of your number who is able to help” with further insights.

phasis on the 'secret' nature of this material, it is possible that much of this instruction was oral rather than textual.

It is likely that, despite the persistent use of the term 'mysteries' to refer to the content of oral teachings from itinerant specialists to their disciples, the chief paedagogical model they employed little resembled 'mystery religions' but rather, private instruction within a household. It may well be that this sort of private instruction – associated with the upper classes, whose households employed tutors and *paedagogi* to educate their children – brought significant social capital for members of a socially aspiring freedman class, much in the same way that employing a nanny or private tutor today carries with it a sort of bourgeois prestige. Indeed, this 'private education' model, by which a teacher promises powerful, secret information to be disclosed, may have been particularly attractive to women, who are consistently identified as the main audience for Gnostic hieratic specialists.

2.6. Social innovation

One area at which so-called heretics excelled was in upsetting the status-quo, particularly when it came to overturning social conventions regarding the place of disenfranchised people.[33] Tertullian wonders at the egalitarianism of Valentinian communities: *pariter adeunt, pariter audiunt, pariter orant; etiam ethnici si superuenerint*, "they all have access equally, they all listen equally, they all pray equally – even pagans if they happen to come" (*De praescr. haer.* 41.2). He also inveighs against their loose ecclesiastical hierarchy: *Itaque alius hodie episcopus, cras alius; hodie diaconus qui cras lector; hodie presbyter qui cras laicus. Nam et laicis sacerdotalia munera iniungunt*, "Today one man is bishop and tomorrow another; the person who is a deacon today, tomorrow is a reader; the one who is a priest is a layman tomorrow. For even on the laity they impose the functions of priesthood" (41.8). In Marcus' community, similarly, those who might speak, or prophesy, at a banquet were selected by drawing lots (Iren. *haer.* 1.13.4).

Just as pagans or lay-people might be selected as hierophants, women, too, might serve as bishops among Valentinians – something that Tertullian clearly found abhorrent (*De praescr. haer.* 41.5). I will have more to say presently about the 'gender troubles' arising from women's active participation.

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[33] The point was made long ago by Pagels (1979a), particularly in relation to women. Since then, the role of women in so-called Gnostic communities has received its share of scholarly attention, though the focus is more often on doctrinal issues rather than social formation. See King (1988); D'Angelo and Kraemer (1999).

These categories are not discrete – for example, those considered to be practising magic (and there are many in Irenaeus' text) were presumably engaging in both textual production (the writing of spells or curses) and, for example, ritual innovation. We might also note that one other second-century freelancer who does not fall under the unsteady rubric 'Gnostic', namely Marcion (*haer.* 1.27), was equally engaged in activities that fall into these categories. Indeed, Marcion's chief blasphemy, according to Irenaeus, was that he mutilated the scriptures, not merely through erroneous interpretation, but through altering extant Christian authoritative writings (namely the Gospel of Luke and the letters of Paul) to suit his own understanding of Christian doctrine. As such, Marcion provides a key example of a textual producer whose main specialisation as a freelancer was literary rather than hieratic.

Within the pages of *Adv. Haer.*, the most frequently-encountered dimension of second-century Gnostic hieratic specialists is – at least in contemporary literature – not their ritual or hierophantic activities, but their status as private tutors and textual producers. Much of our information on other named individuals in the source material – Basilides (1.24), Saturnilus (1.24), Cerdo (1.27), Menander (1.23.5), Cerinthus (1.26.1), and Colorbasus (1.12), not to be exhaustive – concerns what they *taught*, rather than what they *did* as ritual practitioners. Irenaeus also neglects to tell us, in all these cases, where these individuals came from and whom they taught. It might be, then, that the dominant model of second-century specialist or freelancer was primarily that of an itinerant scholar whose chief social role was to move around conducting private study courses in various types of textually-based knowledge.[34] Alternatively, Irenaeus' scant biographical details of the men and women he profiles – and in particular, his omission of information as to their hieratic activities and skills – mean that, although most of these specialists exercised a more robust set of skills including a bundle of ritual techniques, such as compounding love-philtres, performing baptisms or exorcisms, what really bothered Irenaeus was not their hieratic activities but their prolific textual production and dissemination of knowledge. It bothered him, I suspect, *because he was one of them*. In other words, I suggest that Irenaeus wrote *Adv. Haer.* not from the perspective of a member of the Church writ large (which did not yet exist), but from the perspective of another private entrepreneurial textual producer. *Adv. Haer.*, seen in this light, is combative and antagonistic *pro domo:* Irenaeus piles up heaps of material he claims to find utterly false and erroneous because he is competing in a market-place. His success, even his livelihood, in all likelihood depended on displaying his counter-knowledge, his expertise in techniques of exegesis and allegorical interpretation (or, as may be, their folly), his exposure of what he clearly saw as so much hot air. He did this, I would urge, not truly on behalf of the Church, but on his own.

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[34] On the challenges faced by itinerant religious specialists in Rome, see Esther Eidinow's contribution to this volume (Chapter 10).

Since Irenaeus has been so consistently perceived as an agent of the Great Church, some will have difficulties with this last claim. In order to reinforce my argument and place it on a broader footing, I now turn briefly to a case-study of the only figure concerning whom Irenaeus does provide some additional information relevant to the theme of 'lived religion', namely Marcus the '*Magus*'.

3. Marcus, a 'Gnostic hieratic specialist'

Irenaeus' portrait of Marcus and the Marcosians is the most substantial of all his heresiological portraits in *Adv. Haer.*, comprising a large proportion of Book 1 (*haer.* 1.13 – 22). Typically, it is Marcus' teachings – from cosmology to numerology – that most infuriate Irenaeus; he takes pains to refute them or to depict them as plainly ridiculous (1.14 – 16). Marcus' work as a scriptural exegete receives extensive attention (1.18 – 19). In the present context, however, it is significant that Irenaeus portrays Marcus above all as a hieratic specialist, celebrating a false and ridiculous Eucharist with his overflowing magic cups (1.13). Irenaeus is also incensed by Marcus's erotic attraction: he accuses him of making love potions (1.13), and there can be little doubt that Marcus's willingness to perform an Eucharist with women partners, as well as his enabling of women prophetesses, commanded not just women's loyalty but their amorous attachment.

One story about Marcus is of particular interest here. A deacon from Asia Minor invited Marcus to stay in his house. His beautiful wife promptly fell in love with Marcus and actually abandoned her husband to travel with him, apparently for some period of time. Irenaeus is of the opinion that Marcus must have employed erotic magic to win the woman over, a ploy which he claims was typical of Marcus's *modus operandi*. Irenaeus reports that it took some work to bring back the wife over to the true Church of God (his expression), after which she devoted the rest of her sorry life "weeping and lamenting over the defilement which she received from this magician" (*haer.* 1.13.5).

There is much to say about this vignette. Let us start with the story as it stands. It is easy to see how Marcus's techniques attracted women adherents: he imparted them a rare agency and voice, which must have been a tremendously powerful incentive to join him and build a movement. As for the charge that it was through erotic magic that Marcus actually wielded his influence, relatively recent work in the sociology of magic suggests that women used the idea of erotic magic as a sort of cover for their sexual promiscuity, or even just falling in love with someone who was not their husband.[35] The claim 'I was enchanted' acts to protect the honour of the adulterous woman, particularly in a case like this, where the woman returns and is compelled to do public (?) penance for her actions. Magic acts here to reduce or displace the active agency of the woman, as in the famous 'the devil made me do it' defence.[36]

There is however reason to be suspicious of Irenaeus' narrative, which gives the impression of a cautionary tale with little basis in fact, lacking as it does all mention of specific names and places. One thinks immediately of *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, in which the betrothed heroine is lured away from her home and her impending marriage to follow Paul. Paul, for his part, is thrown out of Iconium by a host of angry men, who accuse the apostle of bewitching their women. To me at least, the parallel between 'Paul, the itinerant teacher who lures away women by magic' (even though the women insist that they are drawn to his teachings of their own volition) and 'Marcus, the itinerant teacher who lures away women by magic' (even though the women protest that their reasons for joining them have to do with the agency and voice that Marcus gives them) is simply too good to be true.[37]

4. New and old Paulinism(s): Rethinking hieratic innovation among Christian specialists

Irenaeus' characterisation of Marcus and its relation to stereotyped narratives of women's agency in early Christian circles, including Paul in the *Acts of Paul and*

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[35] The argument, in a slightly different form (that erotic magic was directed by young men at young women guarded within their households) was first proposed by Winkler (1990): women in love were "considerably more watched and guarded and disciplined than their brothers, and presumably had less access to male experts with their books and the money for hiring them". The theory was accepted by Graf (1998) and further nuanced by Dickie (2000).

[36] The phrase first appears in the English vernacular, at least in print, in Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* (1952) – an excellent example of women's agency being reduced by resort to the excuse of external compulsion.

[37] It is perhaps not entirely coincidental that Tertullian claims that the author of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* was a deacon from Asia Minor caught red-handed producing the legend, out of love for Paul (*De Bapt*. 17.5). The *terminus ante quem* for the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* is ±190 CE, thus around the probable date of the composition of *Adv. Haer.*

Thecla, reminds us of something fairly obvious that we have been neglecting: that in the second century, we have evidence for an active and protracted ‘battle for Paul’.[38] If we keep this in mind, we might read Irenaeus’ accounts of Valentinian teachers – particularly Marcus – with a slightly different eye: even in Irenaeus’ highly negative characterisation, Marcus appears to be a standard, even faithful, continuator of Paul.

Let us consider the social situation in *1 Corinthians*, i.e. mid-first-century CE Corinth. From that letter, we learn something of the community of Christ devotees there.[39] It is of mixed social status, with ‘haves’ and ‘have nots’ uncomfortably sharing fellowship together. One issue that arises is whether or not a Christian can eat meat sacrificed to idols, something Paul does not actively ban (*1Cor* 8), although Irenaeus uses the practice as a way of condemning ‘heretics’, including all Valentinians (*haer.* 1.6.3; cf. 1.24.5 on the followers of Basilides and Saturnilus eating meat sacrificed to idols; 1.26.3 on the Nicolaitans doing the same; 1.28.2 on the Carpocratians). The community shares meals (*1Cor* 11:17–33) (cf. Marcus’s feasts, Iren. *haer.* 1.13.4) and, more to the point, engages in prophecy – something which apparently involved women, albeit somewhat controversially. Paul, though striving to put prophetic women in their place, does not completely exclude women from the practice (*1Cor* 11; 14).

Paul’s letters had not yet reached the status of ‘scripture’ by the time that Irenaeus was writing a century later, but it is clear that Irenaeus knows of them. He cites *1* and *2 Corinthians* in *Adv. Haer.*, along with *Galatians*, *1* and *2 Thessalonians*, *Ephesians*, *Philippians*, *Colossians*, and the Pastoral Epistles.[40] Although he never grants too much authority to the man he simply calls ‘the apostle’, at times Irenaeus quotes from him at length to refute Valentinian doctrines, focusing particularly on *1Cor* 15:50, “flesh cannot inherit the kingdom”.

At this point, we may pause and ask why Irenaeus is so focused on Marcus. I detect here a major battle over Paul – not so much Paul’s letters as Pauline communal and ritual practice. In short, every element of Marcus’s ritual activity, as Irenaeus describes them, has precedent in the ritual and social lives of Pauline Corinthians. This is not to say that there was a direct line of continuity between Paul’s Corinthian Christ-followers and those of Marcus, but that Marcus most likely considered himself to be acting perfectly in keeping with Paul’s teachings and community-formation. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that Valentinians traced their spiritual or apostolic lineage back to Theudas, who was a disciple of Paul (Clem. Al. *Strom.* 7.17; cf. *Letter to Flora* 1). If it is the case that Marcus saw himself as a Pauline Christian and strove to educate and consecrate others into Pauline Christianity, we might need to re-consider whether it is accurate to call him, or other Valentinians, 'Gnostic hieratic innovators' or 'entrepreneurs'. They advocated a form of Christian 'lived religion' that was already a century old.

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[38] The theory that Paul became, in the second century, the *apostolus haereticorum* was first proposed around the turn of the twentieth century by e.g. Adolf von Harnack (1964 [1909], 382–386) but has since been discredited (Lindemann 1979; Dassmann 1979; White 2011).

[39] The best study remains Meeks (2003).

[40] *1Cor* in *Adv. Haer* (1:3); *2Cor* in *Adv. Haer* (3:7); *Gal* (3:22); *Ephes* (5:2); *Phil* (4:18); *Col* (1:3) *1Thess* (5:6); *2Thess* (5:25). On Irenaeus’ use of the Pastoral Epistles, see White (2011).

5. Rethinking Irenaeus

To conclude, I suggest that we turn an old paradigm on its head: rather than perceiving Marcus as the 'heretic' who took liberties with Paul, we might consider Irenaeus as the true innovator here. That would be ironic indeed, given that Irenaeus is widely acknowledged as the first member of a nascent orthodoxy to mention an early form of the doctrine of apostolic succession at Rome (*haer.* 3.3.3). Yet no one, to my knowledge, has ventured to ask where Irenaeus fits in this model of apostolic succession, or why it was truly important to him.[41] He was not himself a Roman, and did not hold any ecclesiastical office in Rome. There is no indication that he had any direct connection with Roman Christians. According to Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 5.5), he was a 'auditor' of Polycarp from Smyrna, but Irenaeus himself – perhaps tellingly – does not lay out his own pedigree anywhere in *Adv. Haer.*[42] Were such a pedigree important, one can be sure that he would have told us. Eusebius also tells us that Irenaeus was despatched to Rome in 177 CE with a letter for the bishop, Eleuterus, on the suffering of the Christians at Lugdunum in Gallia Lugdunensis under Marcus Aurelius, but then, when the Christians were martyred, he returned to become bishop in place of Pothinus, who had been killed in the massacre (*Hist. eccl.* 5.4.1). If so, as

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[41] Steenberg (2012) does note in passing that Irenaeus conveyed apostolic *teaching* rather than apostolic *succession*, as is usually presumed. In other words, Irenaeus faithfully transmitted the theology he had learned from Polycarp. Steenberg however also believes that the reason why Irenaeus' theology was rarely espoused and transmitted in 'orthodox' or Catholic tradition is that its proponents already agreed with him and thus had no reason to cite him by name. However, I see no compelling reason to imagine that Irenaeus' theology represented the dominant understanding of 'the' Christian faith in the scond century. Steenberg rightly accepts that the 'Great Church' did not yet exist in Irenaeus' day, yet he consistently uses the term 'perversions' to characterise those forms of Christian practice that Irenaeus denounces.

[42] At *haer.* 3.3.4 he notes, in his discussion of apostolic succession, only that he saw Polycarp when he himself was young, not that he studied under him.

Steenberg notes (2012, 202), he must have been in Rome at the same time as Justin. Although Steenberg sees Justin's influence in Irenaeus' writing, it is curious that Irenaeus does not mention him as one of the great 'guiding lights' of apostolic teaching. If Irenaeus were not the only representative of a True Doctrine in Rome, one gets no sense of this from *Adv. Haer.*, only of Irenaeus' overriding contempt for Gnostic hieratic specialists across the Empire, from Simon in Samaria to Marcus' followers, who had, so he reports, penetrated the Rhône valley by the middle of the second century (*haer.* 1.13.7).

But there is evidence that Irenaeus, perhaps like Marcus, saw himself as a true continuator of Paul. The very title of *Adversus Haereses*, Ἔλεγχος καὶ ἀνατροπὴ τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως, (the *Refutation and Overthrow of What is Falsely Called Knowledge*), invokes *1Tim* 6:20, τῆς ψευδωνύμου γνώσεως, and Irenaeus invokes Pauline terminology throughout the tractate.[43] Yet membership of a Pauline community was not a pre-requisite for citing Paul. And even if he were a member of such a group, it was certainly not identical with a supposed 'Great Church' in whose name he wrote. Irenaeus himself participated in Christian theological disputes and knowledge-production as a textual producer rather than as a bishop (whatever that meant in the second century) or as someone concerned with the direction and oversight of a community of Christians.[44] Could it be, then, that we have consistently overstated his pastoral role, while insisting upon seeing him as a dominant and driving voice of a 'Great Church'?[45]

It is perhaps instructive that, for all the value that we place on *Adv. Haer.* today, it is one of only two of Irenaeus' works to have survived antiquity, nor is it well-attested.[46] In antiquity, at any rate, Irenaeus' legacy was modest:

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[43] The title is missing from our Greek manuscript of *Adv. Haer.*, but is given by Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.* 5.7.1). As Benjamin White has pointed out, this is the sole attestation in extant second-century literature of the phrase used in *1Tim* 6:20; the next known occurrence is Clem. Alex. *Strom*. 2.11; 3.18 – but only as a direct citation of *1Tim* 6:20 (White 2011, 126). On Pauline citations in *Adv. Haer.*, see Dassman (1979, 296–7); Norris (1990); Balás (1992).

[44] Parvis (2012b) observes that Irenaeus understood 'bishop' (*episkopos*) at this time as "above all a teacher, a publicly accredited witness to the teaching of the apostles". I find his explanation both helpful and a tinge apologetic: "It is easy for us to misunderstand that and to read him as if he were speaking of authority and some kind of juridical power. He is not" (Parvis 2012b, 14). It seems to me that his authority as 'bishop' is something asserted much later by Eusebius rather than a claim by Irenaeus himself.

[45] I love Paul Parvis' wry comment concerning Irenaeus' rhetorical style: "There was a Baptist friend of the family who used to write in the margin of his sermon notes, 'Weak point. Shout like hell'. Does Irenaeus ever do that?" (Parvis 2012a, 198).

[46] Foster and Parvis (2012, xi). We have no complete Greek manuscripts. An extensive fragment of a papyrus roll from Oxyrhynchus (*POxy* 405), dated c. 200 CE, contains portions of Book

> [T]here is no great or obvious Irenaean history in the decades and generations following his death. The man whose theological expression is taken today by many as a kind of landmark of the second century, who is described, rightly, as "one of the most important theologians in the period before the Council of Nicaea", is not remembered, not discussed, by his peers and successors – at least, not in theological terms […].[47]

As Steenberg notes, Irenaeus' lasting utility was not as a theologian, or as a representative of some True Doctrine, but as a polemicist.[48] His work of exclusion and his gift for satire served perfectly the needs of a developing orthodoxy.

6. Conclusion

I have endeavoured here to ask what type of 'lived religious experience' individuals such as Marcus offered their clients. In particular, I have asked two questions of the material: a) what exactly counted as 'innovation' in the entrepreneurial environment of the high Empire? And b) in a context evidently obsessed with issues of continuity, succession, and legitimacy, how did these Gnostic hieratic specialists establish their authority? On the basis of their own talents? Or did Irenaeus substitute their claims to apostolic connections with a false genealogy of heresy, tracing them back to the 'arch-heretic' Simon Magus?

At one level, we may say, Irenaeus' success has lain in convincing generations of Church historians that in the second century there was already one True Church that was nevertheless imperilled by the attacks of 'heretics' – the people I term 'Gnostic hieratic specialists'. But if this picture is false, what conclusions are we to draw? If there was indeed as yet no 'Great Church', there cannot have been a system in place that provided secure authority for theological claims. If, as everyone agrees, the genealogy from Simon Magus is a fabrication, these hieratic specialists must truly have been self-authorising. Conversely, we need to ask who, then, was authorising Irenaeus? My suggestion here is that Ire-

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3.9.2 – 3, which suggests that *Adv. Haer.* made its way to Egypt shortly after its composition, most likely during Irenaeus' own lifetime. There is also a fourth-century papyrus now in Jena that contains the Greek text of Bk 5.3.2 – 13.1. Books 4 and 5 are also extant in Armenian, along with fragments of other parts of the work. Beyond its (extensive) use by Hippolytus and Epiphanius (who merely plagiarise it, without crediting Irenaeus or drawing explicitly on his authority), it does not have a robust *Nachleben* until the modern era. See Gamble (1995, 80 – 81); Foster and Parvis (2012a). Parvis (2012a) provides a fascinating account of the creation of modern critical editions of Irenaeus and the ecclesiological wranglings that lie behind them.

[47] Steenberg (2012, 199).

[48] Steenberg (2012, 199).

naeus was on the margins of merely inchoate systems of ecclesiastical transmission (which he himself never articulates in this work). He built his own authority upon the very techniques he works so hard to expose and condemn: deploying proof-texts and exegesis, philosophical argument, radical polemic, down-right fabrications. In other words, Irenaeus plunged whole-heartedly into a battle of the books.[49] We can only imagine what Marcus ‘the Magus’ might have thought of all this – assuming that Irenaeus was important in his world at all. Though Irenaeus depicts him as a dangerous innovator, it is by no means impossible that Marcus clove to the Pauline form of Christian worship. If there was a religious innovator here, it was Irenaeus himself, with his page after page of words, spilling out into the broad, open landscape of late second-century Rome.

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[49] Even if we were inclined to grant Irenaeus his succession of apostolic teaching going back to Polycarp and (traditionally and problematically) the Gospel of John, we may remember that Valentinus, Irenaeus’ chief opponent in *Adv. Haer.*, traced his own lineage through Theudas and back to Paul. Many could, and did, play the apostolic succession-game, and Irenaeus had no more claim to authenticity through Polycarp than Valentinus did at this point in the development of Christianity.

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AnneMarie Luijendijk

On and beyond duty: Christian clergy at Oxyrhynchus (c. 250 – 400)*

This paper presents a case-study of Christian clergy in the middle-Egyptian city of Oxyrhynchus in the transitional period from mid-third to late fourth century, based on literary and documentary (papyrological) sources. Whereas in literary texts members of the clergy, mainly bishops, usually appear in connection with heresiological disputes, documentary papyri frequently show them 'beyond duty', for example engaged in business or travel. The papyri widen our historical understanding by preserving data on lower-ranking religious specialists, such as presbyters, readers, nuns and monks, who would otherwise remain quite unknown. They also provide evidence for the extension of the Christian order into the agrarian hinterland of the city.

Egyptian, Greek and Roman cults had enjoyed a long history in the Egyptian city of Oxyrhynchus.[1] In the mid-third century CE, Greek-speaking magistrates offered sacrifices in the Sebasteum or Hadrianeum, while linen-clad, bald-shaven Egyptian priests hung garlands around statues of Egyptian deities in the Thoëreum and the Serapeum. But that was about to change. Christian clergy appear in papyrus documents from Oxyrhynchus at latest from the third quarter of the third century onwards; a contract dated 8 December 339 contains the last mention of a pagan priest in a papyrus from Oxyrhynchus (*PSI* III 215). By that time, several of the former temples had been transformed into Christian churches.[2] This paper examines the evidence for Christian religious practitioners in the mid-

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[1] See Whitehorne (1995).

[2] For instance, *PMert*. 1.41 ('Orders for payment', dated 15 October 406 [= Trismegistus 21307]), 11 – 12: "to my lord father Peter, priest of the holy church of the Caesareum …". See also Luijendijk (2008, 19 – 20); Papaconstantinou (1996a) and (2001).

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dle Egyptian city of Oxyrhynchus in the transitional period from 250 through to the end of the fourth century mainly on the basis of papyrus documents.

Arguably the best-documented city in classical and late antiquity through the tens of thousands of papyrus fragments found in its ancient garbage-heaps, Oxyrhynchus forms an excellent place to conduct a case-study.[3] The documents accidentally preserved on its rubbish-heaps give fascinating yet fragmentary glimpses of life in an important provincial city, providing both an everyday perspective and evidence from outside the major (and well-documented) centres in the empire such as Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Rome. The documentary papyri found at Oxyrhynchus constitute invaluable material as they allow us to meet the ancient Oxyrhynchites at their daily tasks in workplaces, homes, streets, temples and churches.[4] What makes papyrus documents so valuable and relevant (yet also so complex) is that they show us different and complementary sides of the activities of individual religious practitioners than what we can glean from literary texts only. The nature of papyrological evidence even makes it easier to observe these ritual experts 'beyond duty', especially in activities relating to business and travel.[5] Compared to the literary sources, they preserve many more clergy by name and profession than previously known. In addition to evidence for Christianity and Christian clergy in the city, multiple papyri provide glimpses of the spread of Christianity in the surrounding villages in the Egyptian countryside.[6] Were it not for the papyri, we would think Christianity was better represented in the Delta than in the Nile valley. Moreover, the papyrological documentation stretches back to a significantly earlier time than the literary sources.

The paper also emphasises methodological insights. Ecclesiastical writers spill much ink on inner church conflicts and heresiological disputes in this period. But however large the tears such doctrinal disputes created in the intellectual and social fabric of community, they leave few, if any, traces in documentary papyri. Indeed, the genre of sources determines the boundaries of our historical knowledge. In the documents we observe parts of the activities of clergy that are less apparent in our literary sources. But since papyri only document activities that require writing, aspects of the duties of clergy that do not involve writing (for instance, pastoral care), remain almost invisible in the papyrological record.[7]

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[3] See the collection of Christian sources by Blumell and Wayment (2015).

[4] This section is inspired by Robert Orsi's description of lived religion (1997, 7). The sociologist Meredith McGuire (2008, 5) draws attention to the "complexities of individuals' religious practices, experiences, and expressions". See also Raja and Rüpke (2015).

[5] The scholarly concept of 'lived religion' helps to contextualise the mundane papyrus documents. Orsi (1997, 7) notes: "Religion is best approached […] by meeting men and women at this daily task, in all the spaces of their experience".

[6] In compiling his checklist of bishops in Late Roman and Byzantine Egypt (325 – c. 750 CE), Worp was struck by the geographical differences between the literary sources and the papyri, with the former concentrated in the Delta, and the latter in Middle and Upper Egypt (1994, 317.)

In only a few instances do the papyrus documents offer a glimpse of what rituals or religious practices these experts are actually performing. But this is not true only of papyri; ancient writers also provide little information on ritual practices. As Susan Guettel Cole has pointed out: “The details of ritual practice were not a concern to historians or even to poets; we know only the barest outline of the rituals actually performed. We can tell from the epigraphical record, however, that practice was shaped by discussion, details were decided by legislative procedures, and disputes were subjected to the scrutiny of experts appointed to oversee public ritual”.[8] The absence of descriptions of ritual in our ancient sources is thus shared among different genres and has both to do with the fact that ritual does not necessarily require writing and also with the nature of ritual.[9]

1. Compiling a catalogue of Christian clergy

No single document from Oxyrhynchus lists the entire staff of a church in the city at a given moment.[10] The data I provide here have been assembled from both literary sources and papyrological documents for the period from the mid-third through to the end of the fourth century. In collecting this evidence, one faces problems with sources that make it at times difficult to decide whether a given individual is a member of the clergy.[11] A generous count yielded well over thirty different Christian clerics, including monastics, for Oxyrhynchus in this period. In several cases, however, the hagiographical character of the literary sources renders them unreliable for this type of historical research. So the longer list includes several figures of dubious historicity, such as a Miletius, Oxyrhynchite bishop during the Great Persecution, mentioned in the *Acta Sancto-*

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[7] Schmelz (2002, 2).

[8] Cole, (2008, 57).

[9] See esp. Bell (2009).

[10] Later documents from Oxyrhynchus, such as *POxy.* 11.1357 and 67.4617, contain lists of churches or their inventory (see Blumell and Wayment [2015]). Several scholars have compiled lists of bishops that include those from the city, e. g. Timm (1984); Fedalto (1988, vol. 2); Worp (1994); Papaconstantinou (1996b); Benaissa (2007); Blumell (2014).

[11] On this problem, see Papaconstantinou (1996, 177).

rum,[12] and an anonymous Oxyrhynchite presbyter from the *Apophthegmata Patrum*.[13] On a stricter count, I consider 29 persons in all as more or less historical, namely: at least eleven bishops,[14] four presbyters, at least four nuns,[15] perhaps five monks, four readers, and one deacon. Before I turn to the different groups of clergy in more detail, let me offer some general comments on this list of Oxyrhynchite clergy.

2. Bias in favour of bishops

The most striking observation from this compilation of Oxyrhynchite clergy is that throughout the period under scrutiny we encounter a preponderance of bishops but few presbyters, deacons, readers, and monastics. Although on the street these lower clergy far outnumbered bishops, they seldom appear in the sources, whether literary or documentary.[16] Indeed, eleven of the 29 Oxyrhynchite clergy on the shortlist, are bishops,[17] of whom ten are known by name:

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12 For the text and translation, see Blumell and Wayment (2015, 615–23, no. 163). Under August 27, the *Acta Sanctorum*, a hagiographical collection, commemorates thirteen persons from Oxyrhynchus, among them three presbyters and a bishop called Miletius, who were martyred during the persecution under Diocletian and Maximianus. This text claims that a presbyter named Julianus handed over the martyrs' relics, which were then venerated at Oxyrhynchus. Blumell and Wayment (ibid. 614) are inclined to accept this account: "leaving aside some of the miraculous aspects of the martyrdom [the text] otherwise presents a fairly plausible scenario". But there are good reasons seriously to doubt its historicity: although papyrological finds feature over thirty martyr shrines at that city (e. g. *POxy.* 1.141, *POxy.* 11.1357, *POxy.* 67.4618, 4619, 4622, and Papaconstantinou (2001, 288: "31 ou 32 lieux de culte"), cf. Delehaye (1924, 535–536, also 83–99), there are no papyrological references to any of these thirteen martyrs. Delehaye concluded that several places claimed these martyrs and indeed that the group is not Egyptian at all (Delehaye 1923, 64–66, referring to the *Acts of Marcellus* and *Acts of Meletius*). He describes this section as "une Passion fabuleuse de S. Mélèce et ses compagnons" (ibid. 88). Schmidt (1901, 44 f) too expresses doubts about the historicity of these acts.

13 For the text, see Blumell and Wayment (2015, 666–667, no. 171).

14 I say 'at least' because *POxy.* 6.903.15 (4th cent.) refers to an oath sworn in the presence of 'the bishops' in the plural, so we must add an unknown number of individuals (see Blumell and Wayment (2015, 446–450 (no. 125).

15 If "Didyme and the sisters" (*POxy.* 14.1774 and *SB* 8.9746) are counted, then the number rises by at least three (namely Didyme and at least two sisters) to seven.

16 See Hübner (2005, 13), on the tendency in scholarship to focus on bishops. Her book extends the focus to the lower clergy. In 1993, Wipszycka pointed out that the minor orders of clergy were understudied and that the relevant evidence for Egypt had never been fully examined (1993, 181–182.) Her own work addresses this lack; cf. also Schmelz (2002).

Sotas (ordained by Maximus of Alexandria, who was in office 264 – 282)[18]
Alypius (ordained by Theonas of Alexandria, who was in office 282-ca. 300)[19]
Pelagius (c. 325 – 347, Melitian/Arian?)[20]
Theodorus (347 – 57, orthodox; 357 – 61, Arian; 371 – 83/4, orthodox)[21]
Dionysius (early 350-s)[22]
Apollonius (357 – 81, Melitian/Arian)[23]
Heracleidas (c. 357 – 61, orthodox)[24]

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[17] On the special structure of the Egyptian church, with bishops directly under the Alexandrian patriarch without metropolites, see Wipszycka (1996, 158 – 161). This church structure gave Egyptian bishops a certain measure of freedom to conduct their own affairs. By the same token, as Wipszycka (1993, 160) notes, despite a large number of documents, we lack information about the pastoral and financial activities of the clergy. Church canons that provide that information for other regions are lacking for Egypt, because the Egyptian clergy only rarely came together for synods.

[18] On a number of occasions, Blumell has incorrectly claimed that Sotas was ordained under Theonas of Alexandria (in office 282 – 300), see Blumell (2012a, 114), Blumell and Wayment (2015, 479, no. 133) and Blumell (2014, 84 n. 2). Alessandro Bausi writes: “according to the evidence we are studying, Sotas (*Soṭā* in the Ethiopic text, §18.4.5 in our numbering system) was ordained for Oxyrhynchus during the episcopate of Maximus” (pers. comm., June 6, 2016). Alberto Camplani has also made the same point to me, attaching an image of the manuscript with the transcription: *‘per ’Akserenkes, Soṭā* (pers. comm., October 9, 2012). I thank them both for their help in this matter.

[19] Alessandro Bausi brought Alypius to my attention: “Theonas appointed Alypios (*ʾAleṗis* in Ethiopic, §21.8.10) for Oxyrhynchus” (pers. comm. 1 June 6, 2016). I suspect that *SB* 14.11666 (*PMed*. inv. 65; see Daris, 1978, 41 – 42) is a papyrological reference to this bishop. It is a letter addressed to a certain Alypius, requesting him to “undertake a visit with your son Antiochus to the church” (παράβαλε τῷ υἱῷ σου Ἀντιόχῳ εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν).

[20] Athanasius refers to an Oxyrhynchite bishop named Pelagius in 325 CE (Πελάγιος ἐν Ὀξυρύγχῳ). In 335, he participated in the Council of Tyre: Athanasius, *Apologia contra Arianos* 71.6.12 (ed. Opitz 2 p. 159). See also Papaconstantinou (1996); Timm (2007, 285); Worp (1994, 303); Luijendijk (2008, 102); Blumell and Wayment (2015, 514 – 515).

[21] Chronology from Benaissa (2007, 200). See also Papaconstantinou (1996, 173). Theodorus is mentioned in *POxy*. 34.2729, Athanasius, *Ep.fest*. 19.10 (347 CE), and Marcellinus and Faustinus, *Libellus Precum*, see also p. 109 below.

[22] Gonis (2006). See also Benaissa (2007, 200): “unknown affiliation; father and predecessor of Apollonius?” Featured in *POxy*. 22.2344, perhaps in *PHarr*. 1.94 and *PMich*. 18.767, see Blumell and Wayment (2015, 434, no. 119). On the use of the phrase ‘catholic church’ in *POxy*. 22.2344, see Wipszycka (1996, 172 – 173).

[23] Mentioned in *PHarr*. 1.94, 2.12 – 13 (“ship of Apollonius, son of Dionysus bishop”), Epiphanius, *Pan*. 73, for the Council of Seleucia held in 359, and Marcellinus and Faustinus, *Libellus Precum* 100 – 101. Blumell and Wayment (2015, 434, no. 119) also suggest *PCtYBR* inv. 4623.3, “bishop of the catholic church”. See Timm (1984, 285); Worp (1994, 303); Papaconstantinou (1996b, 171); Benaissa (2007, 200); Blumell and Wayment (2015).

[24] Mentioned in Marcellinus and Faustinus, *Libellus precum*, 94 – 100, see below. Papaconstantinou (1996b, 172).

Dorotheus (attended Council of Constantinople in 381)[25]
Hierakion (c. 394–5)[26]
Apphous (ca. 399–402).[27]

Why are these bishops so visible whereas the lower clergy remain almost invisible? For one thing, their work as bishops brought with it certain written interactions that left traces (such as letters of recommendation). On the other hand, these men, for all we know, came from more affluent milieux in which business activities demanded attention to correspondence. It is a common bias of the papyrological record (and for that matter of the entire historical record) that wealthier people appear more frequently in written sources, because the possession of property necessitates activities that involve writing.[28] Nevertheless, the papyri do at least offer glimpses of those of lower status, including other ranks within the clergy.

Several Oxyrhynchite bishops appear exclusively in literary sources and not (or not yet) in the papyrological record, such as Pelagius, Hierakion, and Apphous,[29] while others, such as Dionysius, appear only in the papyrological record. In many cases, bishops turn up in both literary and documentary sources (Sotas, Theodorus, Apollonius, and perhaps also Alypius and Dorotheus). The presence of Oxyrhynchite bishops in literary sources becomes more interesting when compared to lower clergy, who do not show up at all in the literary sources.[30] Here the papyri contribute significantly to our historical understanding by

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25 On the episcopate of Dorotheus, see Blumell (2016). In addition to the Birmingham fragment (*PBirmingham* inv. 317), he cites the patristic evidence of the council attendance and possibly *PLond*. 6.1927.

26 *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto*, mss. see again Blumell (2016), referring to Chitty (1962, 174). As Papaconstantinou notes, Festugière did not include the name of the Oxyrhynchite bishop in his edition. In his review of this edition (Chitty 1962), Chitty referred to *Sinaiticus* 432 and *Bodleian Cromwell* 18, fol. 26v. Papaconstantinou (1996b) concludes that this makes sense, because several papyri (from the 6th cent. on) attest to a church of Abba Hierakion, presumably founded by the bishop: *PMert* 3.124.4 (520); *PSI* 8.953.11 (568); *POxy* 18.2206.4 (6th cent.); *POxy* 24.2419.3 (6th cent.); *PSI* 7.791.8.13.20 (6th cent.); *POxy* 7.1053.23 (end 6th/early 7th cent.); *PLond* 5.1762.4 (6th or 7th cent.). See also Cain 2016, 130.

27 Sources: Sahidic hagiography; *Life of Paul of Tamma*, *Apophthegmata patrum*. Ordained by Theophilus of Alexandria (in office 384–412). Worp (1994, 304); Papaconstantinou (1996b, 173). See also Blumell and Wayment (2015, 638–663, nos. 167–169).

28 See Bagnall (1995, 14–15); and (1996, 5).

29 Unless Apphous is the recipient of *PKöln* 4.200, a letter from Theon, see below.

30 Besides bishops, three presbyters appear in the *Acta Sanctorum* (but, again, the episode does not belong to Oxyrhynchus) and one anonymous Oxyrhynchite presbyter is mentioned in the *Apophthegmata Patrum*.

widening the lens and preserving everyday data on non-elite or lower-ranking members of society.

3. Papas Sotas, the earliest known Bishop of Oxyrhynchus

Christians first appear in the documentary record for Oxyrhynchus in the mid-third century.[31] The earliest known Christian cleric there is *papas Sotas*, bishop of the growing Christian congregation in the city during the third quarter of the third century. A dossier of six papyrus letters and a reference in a bishop-list preserved in Ethiopic translation show Sotas at work.[32] He is thus the best-documented figure of all those discussed here, yet this is not so much an indication of historical importance compared to other bishops as of the vagaries of survival in the rubbish-dumps.

Nevertheless, Sotas is not a totally insignificant historical figure. He occupied the episcopal see in a major Egyptian city and his presence indicates that the Oxyrhynchite church at this time was large enough to have a bishop. Moreover, for this period, between the Decian and the Great Persecution, the so-called Little Peace, we have very little evidence of church leaders and their activities. The humble dossier on Sotas thus fills a gap. Furthermore, whereas what survives of the work of other bishops is heavily theological, we find Sotas engaged in everyday activities that his colleagues were no doubt also involved in but do not appear in literary sources.

A glance at the lists of Oxyrhynchite and Egyptian bishops shows the significance of the early date of Sotas, for otherwise the earliest known bishop of Oxyrhynchus is Pelagius in 325. Indeed, this latter is the earliest date entered by Klaas Worp in his recent checklist of Egyptian bishops because he knew of no earlier evidence.[33] The papyrological data for Sotas in Oxyrhynchus thus fill an important lacuna, attesting to the activities of Christian officials roughly half a century earlier than had been suspected. The letters from and to Sotas show the Oxyrhynchite bishop engaged in networking with colleagues in other places, teaching, fund-raising for the church, and perhaps also in copying scripture. One letter places Sotas at Antioch, perhaps to participate in the synod about Paul of Samosata. If so, this reveals an involvement in doctrinal disputes. But Sotas is mentioned in this letter not in relation to the synod (which is not mentioned in the letter) but because the sender had asked him to bring back a substantial amount of money. Here we encounter the bishop involved in matters beyond his regular church duty.

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[31] 'Petosorapis, son of Horus, Christian' seems to be the earliest reference to a member of the Christian clergy from Oxyrhynchus in a securely dated and provenanced text (*POxy.* 42.3035, 28 February 256). See Luijendijk (2008, 177 – 184).

[32] *PSI* 9.1041, Sotas to Paul; *PSI* 3.208, Sotas to Peter; *POxy.* 36.2785, presbyters of Heracleopolis to *papas* Sotas; *POxy.* 12.1492, Sotas to Demetrianus; *SB* 12.10772, Sarapammon to his mother and Didyme. Possibly: *PAlex*. 29. A recently discovered Ethiopic manuscript that preserves a translation of a Greek list of bishops (the *Historia Episcopatus Alexandriae*) mentions Sotas as one of the bishops ordained under the Alexandrian bishop Maximus (in office 264 – 282). See Bausi and Camplani (2013, esp. 247).

The various letters of recommendation written to and sent by this provincial bishop give us a glimpse of a larger Christian network, not just among the big names of history, but also among those whose names, were it not for accidental preservation and discovery in an ancient garbage heap, would have been lost to us. The question is how to contextualise and interpret this network. Viewed against the broad changes of the religious landscape in this period, the emphasis on networking in Sotas' dossier turns out to be significant in a larger perspective. Jan Bremmer has observed that, in contrast to Christian clergy, pagan priests lacked a trans-local network. In the long term, he argues, this contributed to the demise of their cults.[34] According to Sozomen's *Church History*, the Emperor Julian appreciated the Christian custom of letters of recommendation that provided an international network of hospitality and sought to introduce it also among pagans.[35] According to Brent Nongbri, however, Christian networking practices can be more fruitfully compared to civic networking, just as Roman officials kept up their connections through their correspondence, which of course included letters of recommendation. This fits also with Christian self-understanding, where titles for Christian officials (*episkopos, presbyteros,* and the self-designation as an *ekklesia*, are terms derived from world of government.[36] The papyri indicate that Christians profitably adopted practices from civic administration rather than from the world of cult-officials. But papyri only preserve certain kinds of information, as the next case illustrates.

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[33] Worp (2014, 283) reasoned: "This span of time has been suggested by the fact that there is little chance that a Greek papyrus from Egypt written before 325 CE would mention a Christian bishop (in general, there is not much information about bishops in the Egyptian χώρα before the Council of Nicaea)". In view of the lack of material for the earlier period, Georg Schmelz began his examination of the papyrological evidence for Christian clergy in Egypt only with the fourth-century material (Schmelz 2002). He knew just one document datable to the years 225–275 and six of the period 275–325 (2, 15).

[34] Bremmer (2008, 161); Bremmer (2012, 231).

[35] *Hist. eccl.* 5.16.3 (transl. Hartranft, *Socrates, Sozomenos*, 338).

[36] Nongbri (2012). I thank Nongbri for his email on the topic dated to March 21, 2016.

4. Clergy and a Church crisis

It is a truism that the genre of the surviving sources determines the boundaries of our historical knowledge. A crisis in the Oxyrhynchite church in the middle of the fourth century (ca. 357–361) forms a case in point. The situation can be reconstructed from a Latin petition, the *Libellus precum*, submitted around the year 383 to the emperors Valentinian, Theodosius and Arcadius by two Luciferian priests, Marcellinus and Faustinus.[37] Apparently, a group of Christians at Oxyrhynchus had withdrawn from communion in protest against their bishop Theodorus, who had been re-ordained by George, the Arian patriarch of Alexandria. It seems that eventually no less than three bishops were competing against one another: Theodorus, Heracleidas and Apollonius. According to the *Libellus precum*, Theodorus and his supporters (“a multitude of clerics”) went far beyond duty and actually demolished Heracleidas’ church building.[38] This conflict must have had considerable repercussions among the Christian population of Oxyrhynchus.

But so far no papyrological documentation so much as mentions this crisis.[39] Indeed, all we have is a purely incidental reference to bishop Theodorus’ boat. In contrast to the documentation from Sotas, this is not a document that Theodorus dictated (or wrote with his own hand); he is mentioned in passing as the ship’s owner (*POxy*. 34.2729).[40] Ships were expensive: Roger Bagnall concluded that boat owners belonged among “the municipal aristocracy, high-ranking imperial officials, and the upper clergy, the major holders of all forms of wealth and power in society”.[41] So, if we have nothing on the crisis of church government, we do have a document that locates a bishop among the upper classes of society. It is a recurring theme in this research that clergy frequently appear in business documentation, which thus reveals different aspects of their work and sources of income.[42] This is also what we shall see in the next section on presbyters.

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[37] Faustinus and Marcellinus, *Supplique aux empereurs*, 198 – 211 (ch. 93 – 101). Latin text and English transl.: Blumell and Wayment (2015, 624 – 631, no. 164).

[38] Transl. Blumell and Wayment (2015, 627): “that infamous twice [ordained] bishop [Theodorus] [...] sent a multitude of clerics to the church of the blessed catholic bishop Heracleidas. Overthrowing it, he demolished the walls on all sides so that he destroyed the altar of God with axes. Nevertheless, the people of a different part of the upright and unblemished faith from the city still sustained the bishop [i.e. Heracleidas]”. See also Blumell (2012a, 151–153).

[39] See also Blumell (2012a, 283).

[40] See Blumell and Wayment (2015, 543 – 550, no. 146) and literature cited there.

[41] Bagnall (1996, 36 – 37). Gonis 2003, 165 concludes that the ship owners in fourth-century Oxyrhynchus consisted mostly of “the municipal elite and the imperial officialdom” (rather

5. Presbyters

If most evidence about the Oxyrhynchite clergy relates to bishops, what do the papyri reveal about the activities and duties of other members of the clergy? In the entire Oxyrhynchite documentation for this 150-year period, we find only four presbyters. Three of them are known by name: Leon, Heracles, and Ammon. I discuss them here individually since each document reveals a different aspect of the duties of presbyters. (So far no female presbyters are documented for Oxyrhynchus,[43] but this of course does not necessarily mean that there were none. All we can say is that we do not see them in these sources.[44])

A fourth-century presbyter named *Leon*[45] is known from a letter of recommendation (*POxy.* 8.1162).[46] It is noteworthy that not only bishops, such as Sotas, engaged in this form of Christian networking but also presbyters. Leon did not address particular individuals as Sotas did, but writes more generally to "the presbyters and deacons who share the local service, beloved brothers in the Lord". Instead of the standard greeting in papyrus letters, χαίρειν, 'greetings' (lit.: [says] 'hallo'), this letter reads χαρᾷ χα[ί]ρειν, "greetings with joy", an allusion to John 3:29.[47] The biblical allusion reveals familiarity with scripture, as is fitting for a Christian presbyter. Yet a modern edition cannot express the joy that jumps from the page as the writer penned these two words in large letters, almost twice the size of the letters in the body of the text. This letter, with its exu-

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than clergy). See also *POxy.* 34.2729 and comments by Blumell and Wayment (2015, 543 – 50 no. 146).

[42] On this topic, Eck (1980); Schmelz (2002, chapter VI). This practice led to criticism, see Dockter (2013, 106 – 111, § 3.6: 'Säkulare Dienste und Nebenerwerb').

[43] For evidence for *presbyterai* elsewhere, see Eisen (1996, 112 – 137).

[44] On the (in)visibility of women, see Johnson-DeBaufre (2010).

[45] In *POxy.* 8.1162 Leon terms himself *presbyteros*, 'elder'. A letter of recommendation from bishop Sotas, *PSI* 9.1041, mentions a catechumen named Leon. It cannot be decided whether this is the same man at an earlier stage of his life, because the name is fairly common.

[46] Perhaps also from an acephalous letter, POxy. 56.3857, whose phraseology is similar, cf. Blumell and Wayment (2015, 559 – 563, no. 149).

[47] In this letter, Paul frequently exhorts the Philippians to 'rejoice', e.g.: 1:18; 2:17 – 18; 3:1; 4:4, 4:10.

berant penmanship, is a good example of the kind of document that reveals Christian clergy on duty.

A presbyter named *Heracles* is mentioned four times in a list of people (*POxy.* 63.4372, 341–399 CE).[48] The document is significant for the social status of the presbyter, but does not reveal any activities, ritual or secular. Heracles supposedly owned a plot of land on which he paid taxes or received rent (the exact function of the document remains unclear).[49] The papyrus lists a series of personal names, followed by a marker of identity, most often a profession, and then indicates amounts of grain. Some of the other professions mentioned are smith, vinedresser, tenant farmer, and overseer (φροντιστής).[50] Age, provenance, alias, or a patronym are the personal identification markers given. This indicates that Heracles was recognised as a presbyter in his community. He appears among craftsmen and farmers, that is, among the middle and lower classes of society. In terms of the amounts mentioned in this list, Heracles falls roughly in the middle, delivering more than the vinedressers and less than the smith. Christian clergy commonly followed other callings, and for the great majority ritual duties were not their main sources of income.[51] So, though he was a presbyter, Heracles' main source of livelihood was some kind of labour, probably farming.[52] But presbyter was considered the more honourable occupation.

A mid-fourth century account of cargo (*PHarr.* 1.94) features, besides Apollonius, son of Bishop Dionysius, a certain *Ammon*, presbyter.[53] Just like Theodorus the bishop and Heracles the presbyter, Ammon combines his ecclesial duties with business activities. Here again, the ecclesiastical title is used for identification and as an honorific title. Besides being presbyter, Ammon is ναυκληροκυβερνήτης, ship's captain.[54] If he also owned the ship, he may have been relatively well-off, albeit not as wealthy as bishop Theodorus, for he still worked on board himself.

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[48] *POxy.* 63.4372.4, 27, 44, 52. The editor, John Rea, favoured a relatively early date for this papyrus, suggesting, on the grounds of its inventory number, that it may be part of the Archive of Papnouthis and Dorotheos (see *POxy.* 48.3398 [= Trismegistos TM 33711], dated between 330–385). The document is not listed by Blumell and Wayment (2015).

[49] According to Rea, the amounts are either "taxes or rents in grain" but the document is too fragmentary to be certain (*POxy.* 63.4373, ad loc.).

[50] *POxy.* 63.4372 i.19, iii.64.

[51] For Egypt, see Schmelz (2002, 203–254); for Asia Minor, Hübner (2005, 103–112, 121–158, 213–228). Canon 19 of the Council of Elvira, Spain (held in 306), assumes that clergy conduct business. For examples of clerical abuse of secular jobs, see Dockter (2013, 106–111). In her epigraphic study of Asia Minor, Hübner found that many of the Christian clergy (below the level of bishop) continued to pursue their previous livelihoods so that their everyday lives stayed much the same after their ordination. She also noted that hagiographical texts take for granted that lower clergy keep their weekly jobs and serve in church on Sundays. "[...] bei ihrem Übertritt in den Klerus änderte sich ihr alltägliches Leben offenbar nur wenig" (2005, 111).

[52] Schmelz (2002, 326).

[53] πλ(οῖον) Ἄμμωνος πρεσβυτέρου ναυκληροκυβερ(νήτου) λ(ίτρα) α, (οὐγκίαι) γ, γρ(άμματα) ιδ: *PHarr.* 1.94 ('Account of freights') = *PMich.* 20.181–182 no. 3. See also Gonis (2003, 164). It can be debated whether Ammon is a presbyter or just the elder of siblings; with Bagnall (1996, 36 n. 150), I take him to be a presbyter.

The fourth presbyter, whose name is lost, served as "*presbyter of the catholic [church]*" in Paneuei, a village in the Western toparchy of the Oxyrhynchite nome while a certain Flavius Macrobius was senator, c.360 – 380.[55] The case is intriguing: Two brothers, Aurelius Orsentius and Aurelius Panaclius, accused the presbyter of stealing their property after they had either fled or been exiled.[56] Whereas in other cases in this period people begin to approach clergy to settle disputes,[57] in this case a complaint is filed against a presbyter. A plausible scenario is that the brothers had received pardon so that they could return from exile. As Daniel Washburn observes, from the 360s onward, emperors grant *indulgentiae* to show their magnanimity and create goodwill among the population around Lent and Easter.[58] The brothers may refer to this when they preface their sentence with the phrase: "because of your honourable and good administration". If so, the brothers would have expected the restitution of their property on their return, as specified in the law.[59] Since this document offers only the perspective of the plaintiffs, it remains unclear whether the presbyter was acting properly or not. Is this a case where the religious expert has abused his power, as the petition claims?[60] Or had he merely confiscated their possessions on the church's behalf after the brothers had left?[61] Church canons and other texts document numerous cases of theft by clergy, especially alienation of church goods, such as liturgical vessels and other church property.[62] On the other hand, the brothers may have entrusted their property to the presbyter during their enforced absence. An analogous case is known from a Coptic papyrus, in which a family entrusts its property to a presbyter while a family member was away.[63] In this case, however, they took the precaution of documenting the transaction.

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[54] The term occurs in six papyri of fourth-century date, all but one of them from Hermopolis.

[55] *PWash.* 1.20; 2.7 – 8. See also Blumell and Wayment (2015, 450 – 452, no. 126) and literature mentioned there. According to Wipszycka (1996, 172 – 173), in this and other cases, the epithet 'catholic' indicates that the Christian congregation placed under the care of the bishop forms part of the universal church (see also p. 116 below).

[56] The situation is unclear. The meaning of the Greek term φυγή ranges from 'flight in battle, [...] escape, avoidance' to 'banishment, exile' (*LSJ* s.v.), so we cannot tell whether the brothers fled or were exiled. Blumell and Wayment (2015, 452 n.6) provide illustrations of the word's semantic range in papyri. Washburn (2012, 3) notes: "when an ancient Greek source comments that individuals went into φυγή, in the absence of other information, we would have little way of knowing whether such persons went into a foreign land by their own decision or official decree. The ancient author's underlying conviction seems to be that both those formally sentenced and those whom we would now call 'refugees' shared in the experience of *exsilium* or φυγή." See also ibid. 29, on confusion in the papyri over legal particulars. Roman law distinguished between *deportatio* and *relegatio*, and defined the conditions under which these forms of punishment might involve confiscation of property (ibid. 17 – 18). As a punishment, "banishment [...] carried an elaborate mix of chastisement, humiliation, propaganda, and spectacle. But through it all, banishment was primarily a punishment that used relocation to cut social ties" (ibid. 35).

[57] Bishops: *POxy.* 6.903, and presbyters: *POxy.* 50.3581 (fifth cent.). On women's interactions with clergy in both these texts, see Mathieson (2014, 150 – 152).

[58] Washburn (2012, 150).

6. Deacon of the Church

One deacon appears in documentation relating to Oxyrhynchus for this period: "*Apphous, deacon of the church*".[64] The tax document in which he occurs mentions him under the village of Mermertha (*POxy.* 55.3787, c.313 – 320).[65] The same document also lists a reader (see p. 115 below). Papyrological evidence shows that "deacons were active and prominent figures in village affairs".[66] The village of Mermertha seems to have had one church at this time. This is the earliest documented case of a Christian cleric paying the urban capitation tax, an imperial tax, presumably on income from outside activities.[67] Constantius II attempted to grant tax exemption for all clergy although this seems not to have been fully implemented.[68]

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[59] *CTh* 9.43.1.3 (14 Sept. 321): "The pardon [...] shall be as effective for restitution as the sentence was for correction. As the very name of deportation itself involves the forfeiture of everything, so shall the pardon permitting return involve the recovery of property and rank, in a word, everything that was forfeited" (transl. Pharr, Davidson, and Pharr [2001, 264], cf. Washburn (2012, 147; 203 n.13). Elsewhere (p. 148) he comments that the very existence of this ruling "indicates that, in the early fourth century, massive confusion surrounded the topic".

[60] Cf. Bagnall (1996, 224): "The power acquired by the pastoral office has always been susceptible to abuse, and by the time two generations of official recognition had gone by, priests were undoubtedly well enough entrenched in villages to be significant factors in local matters".

[61] Washburn (2012, 41) notes that "over the course of the fourth and fifth centuries, the institutional church became incorporated into virtually every element of the process [of banishment]".

[62] Dockter (2013, 111 – 119). On pp.119 – 129), he documents a series of church canons against legacy-hunting by clergy.

[63] *BKU* III 400, on which see MacCoull (1989, 499).

[64] The specification 'of the church' makes clear that Apphous is a Christian deacon and not a servant. The dearth of Oxyrhynchite deacons may not result from lack of evidence but have a biblical background, namely the limitation to seven in *Acts* 6:1 – 6. The city of Rome in the mid-third century was served by seven deacons (and many other clergy): Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 6.43.11 (*Letter of bishop Cornelius*). The synod of Neocaesarea in 314 (canon 15) appealed to that passage in recommending that even large cities should have only seven deacons. See also Hübner (2005, 51 with n. 200).

If little is known about male deacons from Oxyrhynchus, there is even less information about female deacons. Indeed, some scholars have actually doubted that there were any deaconesses in Egypt.[69] On the other hand, they occur frequently in the epigraphical evidence from Asia Minor, where, as Hübner notes, many had inscriptions set up in their own name.[70] The difference in genre (papyrus documents versus epitaphs) explains the discrepancy in this respect.

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[65] On the date, see Bagnall (1991, 294 – 296): the date *ante quem* is provided by the abolition of the urban capitation tax in the year 320. It is unclear whether the village is Mermertha or Thosbis: I interpret it as Mermertha, see Luijendijk (2008, 183 – 184 n. 121). This is the same village from which Petosorapis 'the Christian' hailed (*POxy.* 42.3035): see n. 31 above.

[66] Judge (1977, 73).

[67] Bagnall (1991, 294 – 296). Gilles Bransbourg has kindly sent me the following information (pers. comm. March 3, 2016): "The amount he settles – 2400 dr. – stands consistent with the full annual tax so he obviously does not enjoy any form of exemption from this tax. At that time, wheat costs about 3000 dr per *artaba*. So we are dealing with a relatively minor tax, worth about 1/10th of a *solidus*. Until Constantius II, no edict provides any form of tax exemption or privilege in relation to the main land tax. So it seems this *capitatio* was treated as the land tax on that respect, and not assimilated to the *munera* from which Italian clerics had been freed by Constantine as early as possibly 313 or 320 (*CTh*. 16.2.2). Another possibility is that Licinius was not as generous as Constantine, or (finally) that this tax never had the privilege of being exempted since it disappeared in c. 320, which is more or less the date of the first secure dating of cleric exemptions – and it would show clerics did not benefit from anything between 313 and 320."

[68] For the laws, see *CTh* 16.2.14.4 (256 CE), see also *CJ* 1.3.1 (343 CE) and *CTh* 16.2.19 (353 CE). See Elliott (1978).

[69] Wipszycka (1993, 189 – 190) doubted the presence of deaconesses in Egypt. Ugo Zanetti (1990), on the other hand, has shown that they are indeed attested there, albeit sparsely and in rather late sources. For what it is worth, Karras asserts bluntly: "The evidence for ordained female deacons in the early Christian period […] is clear and unambiguous" (2004, 273).

[70] Hübner (2005, 45 – 50; 111 – 112) found 32 epigraphic attestations of female deacons. Fourteen of these women bore the title διάκονος, nine others διακόνισσα. In eight inscriptions, the word is abbreviated. See also Eisen (1996, 154 – 192).

7. Readers

For this period, the Oxyrhynchus papyri yield four readers. The earliest is *Aurelius Ammonius, son of Copreus*, reader of the former church of the village Chysis (*POxy.* 33.2673, 304 CE).[71] At the time the document was drawn up, his church no longer existed as a result of the imperial measures against Christians during the so-called Great Persecution. The document states that he is illiterate, which is of course common enough albeit somewhat unexpected for a reader.[72] He may have pretended to be illiterate as a form of subtle resistance or have been truly illiterate but capable of memorising scriptural passages.[73]

The second reader, *Besarion*, also worked in the countryside; he is listed as reader under the village of Tampetei, in the same tax document as the deacon Apphous from Mermertha (*POxy.* 55.3787, c.313 – 320). Just like Apphous and the presbyter Heracles, he held a day job besides his ecclesial position.

The third reader, *Morus*, hails from Oxyrhynchus City, but we cannot be sure whether he was a general 'reader' or a church lector.[74] He appears in two documents of 323 CE, a contract and the related oath, with two other professionals, Timotheus, a copper smith, and Euporion, a dealer in fine linen. He does not sign his own name to the oath, in this case not because he was illiterate but because his eyes were in a poor state (*POxy.* 41.2993.11 – 12).[75] The three agree to water a persea tree, which had "recently by order of higher authority been planted near [our dwellings] on the public avenue" (*POxy.* 41.2969.11 – 14).[76] A note at the end states that these houses belonged to Morus (οἰκόπεδα Μώρου ἀνα[γνώσ]τ[ου: 2993.13; 2969 frg.2, l.23). Shelton suggests that this may indicate that he

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[71] He probably also appears in a business document of 318 (*POxy.* 45.3257), see Luijendijk (2010, 587).

[72] The document has generated much scholarly discussion, see Blumell and Wayment (2015, 411 – 421 no. 114).

[73] See Luijendijk (2008, 191 – 210) and Choat and Yuen-Collingridge (2009).

[74] The editor, J. C. Shelton, pointed out that an ἀναγνώστης "may be either a pagan who earns his living by reading or a Christian lector" (*POxy.* 41.2969 ad loc.). See also *LSJ* s.v. ἀναγνώστης: 'reader, slave trained to read' or 'church lector'. Blumell and Wayment (2015, 417) consider a "Christian context [...] unlikely" in this case. But non-Christian readers are exceedingly rare and when they do occur, their function is obscure (*POxy.* 44.3463.18, application for the ephebate, 58 CE). In the third and fourth centuries, Christian readers become more common and I therefore consider it most likely that Morus was a church lector.

[75] Eye disease was "probably rampant in antiquity" (Retief, Stulting, and Cilliers 2008, 697).

[76] The words 'our dwellings' are unfortunately missing on the papyrus, but, in view of the mention of Morus' οἰκόπεδα at thend of each document, extremely plausible.

"had means to replace the tree if necessary".[77] Morus thus appears to have been a man of some standing, probably well situated in the middle class. This fits with his (former) ability to read.[78]

The name of the fourth person, a "*reader of the catholic church*" is lost. We know only that in or after 377 he purchased part of a house from a woman called Serena, who, in turn, had bought it from a monk (whose name is also missing).[79] As Ewa Wipszycka has shown, the epithet 'catholic' in Egyptian papyri can signify either (1) the universal church or a particular local congregation, (2) the self-presumed Orthodox Church versus a so-considered heretical sect, or (3) the most important church among several in a locality.[80] Again, the papyrus shows glimpses of the social and economic status of the clergy – in this case, through the purchase of real estate – but not of their theological allegiances.

8. Monastics

The lack of female Christian leaders in Oxyrhynchite sources changes drastically by the end of the fourth century, when, according to the author of the *Historia monachorum*, the city housed twenty thousand nuns and ten thousand monks. These numbers are of course greatly exaggerated.[81] *Didyme* and 'the sisters' have some claim to be the first known female monastics appearing in the Oxyrhynchite documentary record (*POxy.* 14.1774 and *SB* 8.9746, c. 340).[82] Their business correspondence involves a large network. Four (other) nuns appear in papyri from Oxyrhynchus.

A property division lists a woman identified as '*Annis* monastic' as the owner of a house on a public street (*PSI* 6.698, 25 January 392).[83] This nun belongs to the propertied class and resides in a respectable neighborhood (one of her neighbours is a man of high military rank).

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[77] Shelton ap. *POxy.* 41.2969, 55, note to l. 23.

[78] A comparable figure of roughly the same period is Leonides, a flax merchant and owner of a papyrus containing the beginning of the Epistle to the Romans, see Luijendijk (2010).

[79] *SB* 14.12021, after March 377), ed. princ. de Kat Eliassen (1977, 106 – 111). See also Blumell and Wayment (2015, 438 – 440, no. 121).

[80] Wipszycka (1996, 167 – 168).

[81] The entire population can hardly have reached such figures (on the hyperbolic character of the passage, see e. g. Cain 2016, 187 – 188). Among recent estimates, note Fichman (1971, 116 and 120): 30,000 and for the late Roman period 15,000 – 20,000 inhabitants; Rathbone (1990, 120 – 121): 20,000 – 25,000; Coles (2009, 8): more than 30,000.

[82] See Luijendijk (2015), cf. Wipszycka (2002; 2009). Albarran (2011, 227) likewise concludes that "the group of women led by Didyme probably formed an ascetic community".

[83] On the legal background of monastics owning property, see Albarrán Martínez (2011, 136 – 137).

Two other female monastics, *Aurelia Theodora* and *Aurelia Tauris, daughters of Silvanus, [...] apotactic nuns*, also house-owners, appear in a lease contract (*POxy.* 44.3203, June – July 400). They rent out parts of their residence to a Jewish family, probably to provide for their own livelihood. Annis, Theodora and Tauris have all renounced marriage, but not their property.[84] Moreover the biological sisters Theodora and Tauris have not renounced their (entire) family either. The same is true of the following case, the nun *Athonis*.

Along with several other members of the family, Athonis receives greetings from her brother Philoxenus in a letter he sent home (*POxy.* 56.3862.19, 4th/5th cent.). Although she is identified as a μοναχή (nun), it appears from the letter that she lives with her parents and another sibling. Literary texts specify that such domestic virgins must lead a modest lifestyle of fasting and studying scripture and also that family members not abuse them as servants.[85] Thus although, if we may believe the literary sources, all these women attempted to stay out of public view, they appear in documents such as a lease and a family letter, or even doing business. In private correspondence and in official documents, family members and outsiders identified them as ascetics instead of (or in addition to) their patronymic, thereby recognising and respecting the choice these women had made.[86]

The earliest mention of a male monastic in a papyrus from Oxyrhynchus is dated 373 – 374 CE (*POxy.* 46.3311). A certain *apotaktikos* named *Ammonius*, deceased at the time of writing, is mentioned in a petition about an inheritance dispute initiated by two illiterate women, Cyrilla and Martha. Ammonius had received an inheritance from his nephew Gemellus, the women's cousin.[87] According to the women's petition, "Ammonius neither drew up a will nor designated heirs, and lived his life to the end as a monk [...]". On Ammonius' death, a certain Ammon seized his property and possessions even though he was neither his son nor did he have the right to own land. The sisters request the *logistês* to compel Ammon to transfer Gemellus' property to them. Again, it is not in connection with religion that we hear of Ammonius, but because he owned property. And, quite by the way, the document confirms that apotactic monks did not have to renounce their property.[88]

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[84] Rémondon compares such nuns with the noble ladies from the east who corresponded with Jerome. He adds: "Il faut, pour vivre ainsi, en avoir les moyens" (1972, 260).

[85] Riedel and Crum (1904, 62); Luijendijk 2015, 62 – 63.

[86] See also Luijendijk (2015, 64).

[87] This might even be the Gemellus of *POxy.* 48.3397 verso, whom I list here as a possible monk (see p. 120 below).

The second monk, *Philoxenus*, appears in a list of payments written on a bovine scapula: “by Philoxenus, monk, 229 *myriads* of *denarii*”.[89] He is probably named after a popular Oxyrhynchite saint, whose shrine and cult are widely attested in the city.[90]

The third monk, an *anonymous*, is known from the real-estate transaction that also featured the reader of the Catholic Church (*SB* 14.12021, after 377, see p. 118 above).[91] The contract states that the monk, with his brother, had been the previous owner of the house. Once again, therefore, a monk turns up in a property transaction. It is not stated when the monk sold his share. Did he derive his income from renting out the house, as did the apotactic sisters Theodora and Tauris? Or did he sell it on becoming a monk, donating the revenue to the poor?

A damaged word in an account on the verso of a letter from Papnuthis to Dorotheus (*POxy.* 48.3397.9, 330 – 385 CE) may hide a fourth monk, *Gemellus*. The entry reads: π(αρὰ) Γέμελλος σ̣υ̣[μμ]αχος (δηναρίων) (μυριάδες) ρν, ‘from Gemellus, assistant, 150 *myriads* of *denarii*’. As the editor suggests, μ̣[ον]αχός (l. μοναχοῦ), ‘monk’ is a possible reconstruction.[92]

There is finally, at the very end of our period, a slightly more palpable figure, *Theon*, who is portrayed by the *Historia Monachorum in Aegypto* as a tight-lipped holy man, trilingual in Greek, Latin and Coptic, who daily received visitors in search for healing at his small cell.[93] Lincoln Blumell has argued that he is also attested by three bilingual Greek-Latin papyri.[94] Two of this Theon’s letters are addressed to a certain Pascentius, the third to a man named Apphous. (It is possible that he is to be identified with Apphous, bishop of Oxyrhynchus at around the same time, but this cannot be proven.[95]) In addition to being multilingual and composing his letters in Latin and Greek, as a true holy man Theon intercedes on behalf of an old woman and her son, appealing to *Job* 36:19 (*POxy.* 18.2193). In the other letter to Pascentius, he quotes *Sirach* 12:2 (*POxy.* 18.2194); in the letter to Apphous, *Gen.* 48:16a (*PKöln* 4.200). In addition, both letters to Pascentius open with a quotation in Latin from a martyr act, the *Acta Apollonii.*[96] Thus, of all the members of the Christian clergy reviewed here, Theon is the one who in his correspondence is most on duty as a holy man, quoting a range of scriptural texts, interceding for the poor and encouraging others (the letters, of course, are not a test of his alleged taciturnity).

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[88] See Wipszycka (2009, 311 – 313). She concludes: “the documents show *apotaktikoi* that [*sic*] possess immovables, money, and participate in economic life in the sense that they make decisions concerning their material good, and they are not detached from their families” (p. 313).

[89] *SB* 20.15199.6: δι(ὰ) Φιλόξινος μονωχὸς (i. e. Φιλοξένου μοναχοῦ) (δηναρίων) (μυριάδες) σκθ (350 – 399 CE). See Gallazzi and Sijpesteijn (1992, 161 – 162); also Judge (1977); Choat (2007) and Choat (2002); Blumell and Wayment (2015, 452 – 453, no. 127).

[90] On the cult, see Papaconstantinou (2001, 203 – 204). This text features two apparently different Philoxenoi, one the son of Horion, the other a monk. The popularity of the saint is also reflected in later onomastic practices. As Blumell (2012a, 266) notes, it becomes “the second most popular name in fifth and sixth century [Christian, *AML*] letters”.

[91] We know only his father’s name, Dionysius, and the first two letters of his mother’s name: (l.4: μο]νάζοντος ἀμφοτέρων Διον̣υ̣σίου μ̣ητρὸς Δη[-ca.?-]). The document also mentions a reader (see n.79 above).

[92] See also Choat (2002, 9).

[93] Blumell and Wayment (2015, 589); Cain 2016, 151, 197, 240.

[94] *POxy.* 18.2193 – 94; *PKöln* 4.200, cf. Blumell (2008); Blumell (2012b, 212 – 217); Blumell (2012a). See also Blumell and Wayment (2015, 585 – 596, nrs. 156 – 158). These letters were originally assigned to the 5th/6th cent.

9. On and beyond duty

This paper has presented glimpses of Christian officials ‘on duty’ in Oxyrhynchus: bishop Sotas and presbyter Leon each writing letters of recommendation, and Theon, the holy man, appealing to scripture to help the poor. This is as close as the papyrological evidence comes to pastoral work. Viewed against the both tedious and fascinating heresiological and christological debates of the period, most Christian clergy examined here appeared in contexts that have nothing or only very little to do with theology. Individuals appear in connection with a legal dispute and an accusation of theft, but there are no explicit traces of church conflicts or Christian diversity in the papyri, although these did rage at the time, even in Oxyrhynchus itself. As I have noted, even explicit references to the ‘catholic’ church are not necessarily indications of a perceived theological difference with another group. And Theodorus, the bishop who we know was involved in a major ecclesiastical crisis, is mentioned in a papyrus only in passing as owner of a boat: for what gets documented in papyri are not the minutiae of theological dispute but quotidian interactions. It is characteristic of papyrological evidence that it confronts us with everyday issues that for whatever reason require to be put into writing, just as it is the literary sources that are prone to preserve theological conflicts.

In the papyri we encountered clergy for the most part engaged in activities beyond their ecclesial duties. Bishops, presbyters, readers, deacons and monastics appear in business documents, clearly identified with their clerical titles. As ship-captains and farmers, their daily lives differed little from those of their fellow workers. In this sense, the clerical position was an honorary one, beyond the regular duty of providing for their families. When we encounter in papyrus documents bishops or presbyters going beyond duty, it is when they are active in the mundane world ‘beyond’ the sacred. We know that Bishop Sotas travelled abroad, presumably on some work-related mission (although there is no mention whatever of this) only because he was asked to carry back home a significant sum of money. Others turn up serendipitously in tax-registers and business-documents.

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[95] See also Blumell (2012b, 217).

[96] See Blumell (2012a); Blumell and Wayment (2015, 590).

No doubt these persons became bishops, priest or monastics for religious motives. In addition to and independent of their social background, members of the clerus gained financial and social benefits by entering the calling: it released them from certain taxes and expensive obligatory services (*munera*) and it commanded them respect in their community. Yet despite this blend of religious and social-economic motives none of these individuals, not even Bishop Sotas, drew attention explicitly to their clerical titles. We know of them almost entirely thanks to the value for the administration of such social or status identifiers.

Not all clerical ranks and positions mentioned in literary sources appear in papyri (at least not in our period). Compared to other sources, the evidence for Oxyrhynchus lacks references to deaconesses, acolytes, doorkeepers, exorcists and widows.[97] The explanation for this absence is probably that their inferior social status meant they had less to do with the bureaucracy. Apart from several nuns, we know of no female clergy at Oxyrhynchus. This is especially striking by comparison with the epigraphic evidence for Asia Minor or Rome. Their non-appearance is thus surely due to the bias of our sources.[98] The same bias means that we know nothing about Christian clergy in the *chôra* outside the city itself.

Presbyter Heracles receives rent or pays taxes in grain; another presbyter is accused of theft, presbyter Ammon is a ship’s captain, the nuns Theodora and Tauris rent out rooms. In engaging in worldly matters in addition to sacred ones, these Christian clerics resembled the magistrates that held Greek and Roman priesthoods – with the important difference that many Greek and Roman priests actually paid in one way or another for the honour accorded them. Prior to 250, public officials at Oxyrhynchus regularly style themselves priests of Graeco-Roman deities because of the prestige traditionally associated with these offices. Over the period 250 and 350 CE, this practice becomes increasingly rare; by the mid fourth century, we find administrative documents routinely referring to members of the Christian clergy by their several titles. A sea change has occurred in less than one hundred years.

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[97] There are five references to widows as a group in papyri from Oxyrhynchus from a later period. All record donations of wine.

[98] See n.82 above.

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Part II: **The Author as Religious Entrepreneur**

Angela Standhartinger

Best practice. Religious reformation in Philo’s representation of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides*

In *De vitae contemplativa,* the Jewish philosopher Philo of Alexandria portrays a group called *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides,* living an ascetic life of study, fasting and religious celebration on the shores of Lake Mareotis outside of the city of Alexandria. His description strikingly resembles a group of Egyptian priests represented by his younger contemporary, the Stoic philosopher Chaeremon. This article focuses not so much on the reconstruction of the priestly group of the historical *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* but rather on Philo, their historian and ethnographer, as a religious innovator. The first section places the writing in its literary context. The second presents a close reading of Philo’s representation of Therapeutic *eusebeia* in comparison to similar representations of Egyptian priestly groups from the first century CE. The third section demonstrates that Philo characterises the group as practitioners of a most eminent and ancient religious practice and thereby as a source of original and untouched truth. According to him, the group, with its methods of allegorical interpretation, also provides the most original philosophical interpretations of wisdom preserved in religious practices and writings. The final question raised is why in this text Philo hides not only the ethnic-religious identity of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* but also his own Jewish identity behind a Greek narrative persona.

In *De vita contemplativa* the Jewish theologian Philo of Alexandria (d. after 40 CE) depicts a community of philosophers, male and female, who live outside Alexandria on Lake Mareotis. Philo calls the group *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides.*[1] In the first part of the work, he describes their settlement, their ascetic life, their allegorical studies, and their community meeting on the seventh day. The second part presents a detailed description of their festal banquet, during which, among other things, they dramatise the Exodus from Egypt.

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[1] *Contempl.* 1–2.

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Most scholars are convinced of the real historical existence of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides*,[2] because on the one hand the location of their settlement, on Lake Mareotis, was so close to Alexandria that readers of Philo's work would have found it easy to test his statements for themselves.[3] In the introductory section of *De vita contemplativa*, Philo refers to his work on the Essenes.[4] In contrast to this exclusively male society, the participation of women among the *Therapeutae* is striking.[5] Joan Taylor makes use of this observation for her historical reconstruction of the society at Lake Mareotis.[6]

Nevertheless, the evidential basis for historical *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* is extremely limited. Philo is our sole witness to their existence. It is also troublesome that he does not explain how he gained his information.[7] He notes no relationship of his own to the group, despite the fact that elsewhere he speaks approvingly of periods spent in solitude.[8] It is true that we can observe some differences between the ideals presented in *De vita contemplativa* and those in Philo's other writings, such as the praise of unmarried women (*Contempl.* 68), the ascetic diet of bread and water, and the rejection of slavery, otherwise known only from his writings on the Essenes.[9] Still, as became clear in the extensive discussion at the end of the nineteenth century over the authenticity of the work, *De vita contemplativa* is marked from beginning to end by the theology Philo presents throughout his extensive œuvre – including an overwhelming number of repetitive formulae.[10]

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[2] The exceptions are Engberg-Pedersen (1999) and Ross S. Kraemer (2011, 57–115).

[3] Cf. Daumas and Miquel (1963, 39–46); Taylor and Davies (1998, 10–14); Taylor (2003, 74–104). For an alternative location at the Temple of Serapis in Canopus see Moss (1999, 58–76).

[4] *Contempl.* 1; cf. *Prob.* 75–91; *Hypoth.* 11.1–18. The Essenes had been also described by Pliny, *HN* 5.73; Josephus, *BJ* 2.119–127 and *AJ* 18.18–22. For a comparison of the Essenes with the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides*, see Schürer (1979, 591–597); Hayward (2000, 944–945). The identification of the Essenes with the Yahad group in the sectarian writings of Qumran is currently disputed.

[5] Cf. *Hypoth.* 11.14. Elsewhere Philo seeks to limit the sphere of Jewish women to the house (*Spec.* 3.169; *Flacc.* 89), except on religious festivals (*Spec.* 3.171). Cf. Sly (1990). For the complexity of Philo's picture of women cf. also Harrison (1995); Mackie (2014).

[6] Taylor (2003, 173–347; 2001; 2004).

[7] Hay (1992, 673; 1998, 167–168).

[8] *Spec.* 3.1–2. However, Philo is critical of a life in isolation when he reflects in *Leg.* 2.85 on his own experience and, in *Migr.* 89–93, in reference to those who interpret Jewish customs solely in allegorical terms. Taylor (2003, 142–153), seeks to identify the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* with the radical allegorists of *Migr.* 89–93.

[9] Cf. the same ideal among the Essenes in *Prob.* 79. Hay (1992, 673–676; 1998, 168–173).

[10] See the very full demonstrations by Conybeare (1895, 25–153), and Wendland (1896, 720–731). For the debates on the authenticity of Philo's work in the 19th century, see Al-Suadi (2010).

For this very reason I do not intend to base my reflections here on the assumption of historical *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* but rather to focus on Philo the religious individual. What is the most fitting literary context for such an account of a group of worshippers of God? What might have been Philo’s wider aim in describing an ascetic group such as this, together with details of its religious rituals? To that end, I first discuss the issue of genre and then show how Philo inscribes the group on Lake Mareotis in Egypt within contemporary ethnographic discourse. In the third and final section, I return to the old question of the relation between the *Therapeutae*/*Therapeutrides* and regular Jewish practice in Philo’s day.

1. The genre of De vita contemplativa

The *De vita contemplativa* has been ascribed to a variety of different genres. It has carried the title Περὶ βίου θεωρητικοῦ (*On the Contemplative Life*) at latest from the time of Eusebius of Caesarea.[11] But it is not a description of the exceptional life and moral character of an individual, like Philo’s *De vita Mosis,* but of a collective way of life.[12] In the light of his analysis of the work’s elaborate rhetorical form, with its pointed contrasts between Therapeutic and pagan lifestyles, Manuel Alexandre has called it a “rhetorical encomium” and an “epideictic discourse”, which seeks to praise the ideal of the “eloquent philosopher”, by contrast to sophistic pagan practice, with the aim of countering the loss of Jewish identity.[13] But Philo has nothing to say about the relationship of the Mareotic group to the Jews of Alexandria, and he never thematises anxiety about Jewish identity. For Troels Engberg-Pedersen, on the other hand, its general form is that of a moral-philosophical treatment that, in the wake of Aristotle, describes a life dedicated to theory and vision as the way that promises the greatest happiness.[14] The goal of Therapeutic life is *eudaimonia*.[15] But he believes that it is best viewed as a fictional narrative, an “utopian fantasy done for a serious purpose”, closely related to Plato’s myth of Atlantis and Iambulus’s utopian account of the Island of the Sun.[16] Philo, he thinks, is setting up an ideal Jewish society as a counter to, and negation of, all others, so that the *De vita contemplativa* should be understood as a generalised cultural critique.[17] Picking up this observation, Mary Ann Beavis has undertaken a detailed comparison of Philo’s sketch and Iambulus’s utopian ‘novel’: both describe the location and the climate, the simplicity of food and clothing, social organisation, marriage and family, symposium culture, and the absence of slavery. But Philo’s description differs from Iambulus in locating his group in a specific place, the neighbourhood of Lake Mareotis in the Nile Delta, and in avoiding any hint of anything marvellous or paradoxical.[18]

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[11] Cf. Euseb. *Eccl. theol.* 2.18.7. The title apparently refers to *Contempl*. 1 and 58: οἳ τὸν θεωρητικὸν ἠσπάσαντο βίον: “(our people) who embrace the contemplative life”.

[12] Stadter (2013, 1117), defines biography as an “account of the kind of life led by a historical person that also evaluates the subject’s character, goals, and achievements”.

[13] Alexandre (2001, 319, see also 329 – 330): “It aimed not only to defend Moses against pagan detractors and Jewish infidels, but also to persuade, convince and move into action those Jews who were losing the essence of their faith and being identified with the pagan system of the day in a slow process of domesticating or reconfiguring their own Jewish identity”. For a definition of the genre as that of *encomium* see also Hay (2003, 333).

[14] Engberg-Pedersen (1999, 41), with reference to Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1.5 and 10.6 – 7.

[15] Cf. *Contempl*. 11; 90, and Runia (1997).

In drawing this conclusion, Beavis was inadvertently reviving an idea of Hans Lewy, who already in the 1920s had appreciated the ethnographic context of the work,[19] though his ideas were subsequently more or less completely forgotten.[20] The first century CE could look back to a long tradition, going back at least to Herodotus, if not his Ionian predecessors, of describing foreign peoples and their religious rituals and customs.[21] Of course, historians and geographers depended for their ethnographic descriptions not so much on their own observation and research as on earlier writers, whose work they sometimes criticised.[22] They were concerned not with empirical fieldwork in the modern sense but rather with describing foreign peoples living in distant and remote corners of the world in the form of digressions embedded in broader historical narratives.[23] In this discourse, the manners and customs of foreign ("barbarian") peoples were by no means uniformly condemned but might rather be praised for their supposedly 'untouched', or 'unspoiled' way of life, and its concomitant religious knowledge.[24] From the third century BCE onward, indeed, with the expansion of the Greek world thanks to Alexander's conquests, indigenous authors who knew Greek, such as the Egyptian priest Manetho of Heliopolis (fl. 280 BCE), were able to participate in such discussions.[25] In the following section I show that Philo's depiction of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* adopts many of the conventions, themes and tropes of a historian writing about foreign people.

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[16] Engberg-Pedersen (1999, 43 – 47), with reference to Pl. *Ti.* 19 – 26, and Diod. Sic. 2.55 – 60.

[17] But he locates his ideal state in a familiar place and in the present time so that it may not be discredited as myth or fantasy, cf. Engberg-Pedersen (1999, 46 – 47).

[18] For Beavis, Philo’s account “is a utopian construction of a real (ἀλήθεαν) community” (2004, 41); cf. eadem (2006, 58 – 68, at 68); Gilchrest (2013, 102 – 104).

[19] Cf. Lewy 1929, 31 n. 4: “Philo […] with his tractate on the ‘theoretical form of life’ enters the discussion among Greek ethnographic popular philosophers, who sought the incarnation of their utopias of state and religious philosophy among the barbarian races. The Greeks found the union of sophisticated spirits and a philosophical *bios* especially in the priestly castes of the barbarians, among which, since Theophrastus [ap. Porph. *Abst.* 2.26 = frg. 584 A Fortenbaugh], the Jews were also reckoned. Now Philo contrasts the Jewish sect of the *Therapeutae* with the Egyptian priests, the Persian magi, the Babylonian Chaldeans, the Indian Brahmins and gymnosophists, the Celtic druids, etc., and combines all the characteristics that were praised in his depiction of the theoretical *bios* of the Therapeutae (cf. *Prob.* 72 – 74). Thus in his competitive work Philo is dependent on the *topos* of Greek ethnography” (my tr.). Bauer (1924, 408 – 409 and 416 – 417) had already made a similar point.

[20] See the extremely brief reference (without mention of Lewy) by Sterling (1994, 688). Merrills (2004, 226 – 229), beginning from a quotation from Hom. *Il.* 13.5 – 6 in *Contempl.* 17, discovers parallels between the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* and Herodotus’s Scythians, the gymnosophists in the Alexander novel, and Tacitus’s peaceful Germanic tribes.

[21] See, for example, the first four books of Herodotus, with the commentaries in Asheri et al. (2007); and esp. the extensive description of Egypt in Bk. 2 (bsed on Lloyd 1975 – 1988) and of Scythia in Bk. 4 (based on Hartog 1988). The most convenient treatment of his Ionian predecessors, esp. Hecataeus and Hellanicus, is still Pearson (1939). Diodorus provides another, even

2. Philo's representation of Therapeutic *eusebeia*

At the beginning of his work Philo presents himself as a scholarly historian. He does not intend to introduce anything of his own, "to improve upon the facts as is constantly done by poets and historians (ποιηταὶ καὶ λογογράφοι) through lack of excellence in the lives and practice which they record".[26] He thus takes up the approach of Thucydides, who claims that his *History* of the Peloponnesian War(s) is founded solely on good evidence: "Assuredly they [his proofs] will not be disturbed either by the lays of a poet (ποιητής) displaying the exaggeration of

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more comprehensive, description of Egypt (1.10 – 98). On the history of ancient ethnography see Trüdinger (1918); Müller (1997); Rawson (1985, 250 – 266); Dench (2007).

[22] Parker (2008, 113 – 116).

[23] The term 'ethnography' is a modern neo-Greek term and was coined only in 1834 (Dench 2007, 494). Whether digressions on foreign peoples and their habits, gods, lifestyle, etc. in ancient historiographical and geographical writings constitute a literary genre of their own, has been much debated in recent years. See Almagor and Skinner (2013).

[24] Cf. Dörrie (1972); Diehle (1994); Gruen (2011).

[25] Manetho's *Aegyptiaka* (*FGrH* 609 F1 – 28) is known only from the extensive quotations by Josephus and Christian authors. See Hornung (2012); Dillery (1999; 2013). It is possible also that Chaeremon offers us such an 'auto-ethnography' (see p. 138 – 142 below), but it is certainly true of Josephus' *Antiquities* and *Against Apion*. Philo, *Prob.* 72 – 91 is also part of this tradition. For the influence of foreign peoples on Roman ethnography see Woolf (2011).

[26] *Contempl.* 1. All translations of *Contempl.* are taken from Colson (1941, 112 – 169).

his craft, or by the compositions of the chroniclers (λογογράφοι) that are attractive at truth's expense" (tr. R. Crawley).[27] In the same vein, Philo desires to hold simply (ἀτεχνῶς) to the truth, for the "magnitude of virtue shown by these men" must not remain untold.[28]

The fundamental purpose (προαίρησις) envisioned by 'the philosophers' is clear from their very title.[29] They are called *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* (θεραπευταὶ καὶ θεραπευτρίδες) "either because they profess an art of healing […] which cures not only bodies but souls as well", as the latter are beset by still worse ills, namely those that produce such things as lust, desire, sorrow, fear, greed, and injustice. Or else they were called *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* "because nature and the sacred laws have schooled them to worship the Self-existent who is better than the good, purer than the One and more primordial than the Monad".[30] Etymologies of names are part of the standard repertoire in ancient accounts of foreign peoples.[31] Whether the group called itself *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides*, and whether Philo's etymologies correspond to their own view of themselves, is a question that must remain open.[32] Θεραπευτής ('worshipper'/'servitor') is a word that could be used for adherents of many deities.[33] As is often observed, the first explanation is a summary of Stoic ethics.[34] In the second we hear of a designation of God that Philo also uses elsewhere.[35] But it is scarcely recognisable as something formed by Judaism. Thus Plutarch can say of Apollo:

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[27] Thuc. 1.21.1. Plutarch also criticises the unsubstantiated myths and errors of poets and historians (*De Is. et Os.* 20 [358F]).

[28] The depiction of τὸ μέγεθος τῆς τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἀρετῆς is among the foremost duties ancient historians assigned themselves, the *locus classicus* being Hdt. 1.1, with Asheri (2007, 8–9 and 73). Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for example, thought that "Rome from the very beginning, immediately after its founding, produced infinite examples of virtue in men whose superiors, whether for piety or for justice or for life-long self-control or for warlike valour, no city, either Greek or barbarian, has ever produced" (*Ant. Rom.* 1.5.3.3, tr. E. Cary).

[29] Philo uses προαίρησις (purpose/purposiveness; *Cont.* 2; 17; 29; 33; 67; 79) to describe philosophical principles and attitudes toward life. For the concept, note Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1114a10–11.

[30] *Contempl.* 2.

[31] Cf. Bauer (1924, 401); Ganter (2014, 229–230); Woolf (2011, 23–24; 54 etc.). Philo derives the name 'Essenes' from ὁσιότης (sanctity), "because they have shown themselves especially devout in the service of God, not by offering sacrifices of animals, but by resolving to sanctify their minds" (*Prob.* 75; cf. *Hypoth.* 11.1).

[32] For this view, see Taylor (2003, 54–73).

[33] For θεραπευταί as worshippers in Plato, note e.g. *Phdr.* 252c4–5 (Ares)*; Leg.* 5, 740bc (θεῶν); the word is regularly used for worshippers of Isis und Serapis but also in relation to Asclepius, Mên and the Syrian Gods. For the term *therapeutês* in the epigraphic record, see the contribution of Georgia Petridou in this volume (Chapter 7). Philo can also say of proselytes that they are θεραπευταὶ τοῦ ὄντως ὄντος, 'worshippers of the Truly Existent' (*Spec.* 1.309), "rendering to Him […] the supplication and service which are His right", and that the Levites are τὸ θεραπευτικὸν γένος, 'the ministering race': *Fug.* 42; cf. *Contempl.* 11 and 21. See also Bergmeier

> In fact the Deity is not Many. […] But Being must have Unity, even as Unity must have Being. […] Wherefore the first of the god’s names is excellently adapted to him, and so are the second and third as well. He is Apollo, that is to say, denying the Many and abjuring multiplicity; he is Ieïos, as being One and One alone; and Phoebus, as is well known, is a name that the men of old used to give to everything pure and undefiled. […] Unity is simple and pure (tr. F.C. Babbitt).[36]

When Philo calls God ‘the One’ (τὸ ὄν), ‘purer than the One’ (ἑνὸς εἰλικρινέστερον), and ‘more primordial than the Monad’ (μονάδος ἀρχεγονώτερον), he is thus echoing a Platonic idea that later Platonists, such as Plutarch, could also use for what we ordinarily think of as polytheistic gods, in this case Delphic Apollo.

Philo continues his portrayal of Therapeutic piety (εὐσέβεια) by comparing it favourably to other forms of divine worship,[37] running through the identification of the four elements, fire, water, earth, and air, with gods (which he claims is a Sophistic invention),[38] astrolatry, the myths of the unbridled passions of the “blessed and divine natures” of the demi-gods (6), the worship of divine statues, and finally – the lowest level of all – the Egyptian worship of animals. This list of false ideas about God also appears elsewhere in Philo’s works.[39] It does not rest

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(2002, 47–48). The feminine form θεραπευτρίς seems to be Philo’s own invention; he also uses it in *Somn*. 1.332 and 2.273 to refer to the soul and in *Post*. 184 in reference to thought (διάνοια), but no such usage independent of Philo has yet been demonstrated.

[34] Cf. Schönfeld (1962, 221).

[35] By contrast with *Exod*. 3:14 (ὁ ὢν), Philo translates the Tetragrammaton as τὸ ὂν. According to *Prob*. 43 “the legislator of the Jews […] speaks of him who was possessed by love of the divine and worshipped the Self-existent only (τὸ ὂν μόνον θεραπεύοντα), as having passed from a man into a god”. Cf. *Praem* 40; *Spec* 4.192. Philo introduces a definition similar to that in *Cont*. 2: “For this which is better than the good, more venerable than the monad, purer than the unit (ἐκεῖνο μὲν γάρ, ὃ καὶ ἀγαθοῦ κρεῖττον καὶ μονάδος πρεσβύτερον καὶ ἑνὸς εἰλικρινέστερον) cannot be discerned by anyone else; to God alone is it permitted to apprehend God”.

[36] Plut. *E Delph*. 393b-c: οὐ γὰρ πολλὰ τὸ θεῖόν ἐστιν […] ἀλλ’ ἓν εἶναι δεῖ τὸ ὄν, ὥσπερ ὂν τὸ ἕν. […] ὅθεν εὖ καὶ τὸ πρῶτον ἔχει τῷ θεῷ τῶν ὀνομάτων καὶ τὸ δεύτερον καὶ τὸ τρίτον. Ἀπόλλων μὲν γὰρ οἷον ἀρνούμενος τὰ πολλὰ καὶ τὸ πλῆθος ἀποφάσκων ἐστίν, Ἰήιος δ’ ὡς εἷς καὶ μόνος· Φοῖβον δὲ δήπου τὸ καθαρὸν καὶ ἁγνὸν […] τὸ δ’ ἓν εἰλικρινὲς καὶ καθαρόν.

[37] *Contempl*. 3–9. On Philo’s use of the technique of σύγκρισις see Martin (2003).

[38] Interestingly, Philo praises the same identification in *Prov*. 2.41 as an interpretation of Homeric poetry.

[39] Cf. *Decal*. 52–81, in the explanation of the first commandment; however, cf. *Prov*. 2.41.

solely on the tradition of Jewish polemic against false gods,[40] but also on Platonic and Stoic thought, especially as regards the identification of the elements and heavenly bodies with gods and goddesses.[41] A number of Classical authors, from Diodorus Siculus to Plutarch, claim that the Egyptians likewise identified the heavenly bodies as gods.[42] As for the end of the list, polemical writing against Egyptian worship of animals was common at least from the time of Herodotus.[43] Authors such as Diodorus Siculus and Plutarch, who had at least some regard for the wisdom hidden in Egyptian myths and rituals, make extended attempts at this point to find rationalist, symbolic, and allegorical explanations.[44] The negative list thus not only emphasises the author's learning but also elevates the piety of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* as the highest and most superior form.

The false ideas about God on the part of "these (others)" (οὗτοι) – presumably referring both to the last-mentioned *ethnos*, i.e. the Egyptian temple-tradition, but also to all the practices listed – "infect with their folly not only their own compatriots (ὁμόφυλοι) but the peoples in their neighbourhood (πλησιάζοντες)". As a result, their (spiritual) vision is defective.[45] The case of the 'race' of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* is altogether different, for they are not only schooled in true vision but are "carried away by a heaven-sent passion of love, remain rapt and possessed like bacchanals or corybants until they see the object of their yearning".[46]

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[40] *Wis* 14 speaks of the worship of stars and idols. For further parallels cf. Wendland (1896, 706–708).

[41] It is found also in Plato (*Crat.* 404b-c) and the Stoics (Zeno ap. Diog. Laert. *VP* 7.147) and was systematically collected by Cornutus, *Theol. graec.* [Busch-Zangenberg] 3.1 (Hera, air); 4 and 22.2 (Poseidon, water); 19.2 (Hephaistos, ueful fire); 28.2 (Demeter and Hestia, earth), in the first century CE.

[42] Diod. Sic. 1.12; Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 32 (363d), cf. also Diog. Laert. *VP* 1.10. Chaeremon of Alexandria, *frg.* 5 (van der Horst): "For Chaeremon and the others do not believe in anything prior to the visible worlds, stating that the basic principles are the gods of the Egyptians and that there are no other gods than the so-called planets, and those stars which fill up the zodiac, and all those that rise near them, and the sections relating to the decans, and the horoscopes, and the so-called mighty rulers", cf. *frg.dub.* 17 van der Horst (all translations of Chaeremon here are taken from van der Horst 1984). There is a critique of Academic ideas in Cic. *Nat. D.* 3.61–74.

[43] Hdt. 2.65–79; Juv. *Sat.* 15.1–8, and frequently elsewhere. For the Greek view of animal worship, including some ambivalences in Philo's own writing (cf. *Mos.* 1.23), see Smelik and Hemelrijk (1984).

[44] Diod. Sic. 1.83–90; Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 70–76, 379d–382a; see esp. Richter (2001).

[45] "They have lost the use of the most vital of the senses, sight" (*Cont.* 10).

[46] *Cont.* 11. Apart from Plato's myth of the cave (*Rep.* 514a–518b), this is probably an allusion to *Ion* 533e–534a: "For all the good epic poets utter all those fine poems not from art, but as in-

Taking leave early from ordinary life on earth, they have no property, children, family, or friends (13). They are thus nobler than the philosophers Anaxagoras and Democritus, so revered by the Greeks, for they allowed their property to fall to pasture in order to be able to devote themselves entirely to study, but as a result they plunged their children into poverty.[47] Such anecdotes could be turned to use in different ways.[48] Philo chooses to claim that the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* are acting in accord with the Hippocratic principle, "life is short but art is long",[49] and for that reason are akin to Homer's mythical Mysians, who "drink the milk of mares […] the most righteous men".[50] The identity of this people was the subject of endless speculation in geographical and historical works, for example by Xanthus, Ephorus, Poseidonius, Nicolaus of Damascus and Strabo. Most authors inclined to identify them with Thracians or inhabitants of Asia, particularly nomadic Scythians, who were supposed to "excel all men in justice"[51] inasmuch as they were ignorant of money.[52] Here Philo adds a pointed general remark to the effect that injustice is caused by the desire for gain whereas justice is the result of equality.[53] The Therapeutic indifference to possessions is analogous to that of distant foreign peoples, among whom one may still find an ideal, peaceful way of life free of property and greed.

After the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* had relinquished their property and left their families and homelands (αἱ πατρίδες, 18), they settled in a rural

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spired and possessed, and the good lyric poets likewise; just as the Corybantian worshippers do not dance when in their senses, so the lyric poets do not indite those fine songs in their senses, but when they have started on the melody and rhythm they begin to be frantic, and it is under possession—as the bacchants are possessed, and not in their senses, when they draw honey and milk from the rivers—that the soul of the lyric poets does the same thing, by their own report" (tr. W. R. M. Lamb), cf. also *Phaedr.* 353a. Philo makes frequent use of the image of ascent to the divine; cf. *Conf.* 97; *Praem.* 41–43; *Prob. 5.*

[47] *Cont*. 14–16.

[48] Cf. Plut. *Per.* 16, where he declares Anaxagoras' behaviour appropriate for a philosopher but not for a statesman. Cicero cites the example of Anaximander in support of the thesis that through philosophy one can escape all the demands of life (*Tusc.* 5.49 [115]). But Democritus is cited as an example of absentmindedness, cf. also Hor. *Epist*. 1.12.12–13; Sen. *Prov.* 6. Philo uses the same examples in *Prov.* 2.12–13.

[49] Hippoc. *Aph.* 1.1.

[50] Hom. *Il.* 13.5–6, tr. Murray.

[51] So Xanthus (*FGrH* 765 F 15) *ap.* Strab. *Geogr.* 12.7.3 (572C); Ephorus (*FGrH* 70 F 42) *ap.* Strabo, *Geogr.* 7.3.9 (302C–303C); Poseidonius (F 277a Edelstein and Kidd) *ap.* Strabo, *Geogr.* 7.3.2–7 (295C-301C); Nicolaus of Damascus: *FGrH* 90 F 104.

[52] Δικαιοσύνῃ πάντων διαφέρειν, Ephorus (*FGrH* 70 F 42) Strabo, *Geogr.* 7.3.9 (303C); refusal to engage in trade, Strabo, *Geogr.* 7.3.7 (300C).

[53] *Cont*. 17. The basic idea appears to have been widely held, cf. Lucian, *Cal.* 8.

area outside the city,[54] and indeed, as Philo says, “not from any acquired habit of misanthropic bitterness but because they know how unprofitable and mischievous are associations with persons of dissimilar character” (20). Anti-Jewish stereotypes echo in the allusion to ‘misanthropy’, but they are transferred from ethical to philosophical discourse.[55] Indeed Philo goes on explicitly to deny that the group has any specific ethnic identity:

> This race (τὸ γένος) exists in many places in the inhabited world, for the perfect goodness must needs be shared both by Greeks and the world outside Greece, but it abounds in Egypt in each of the nomes as they are called, and especially around Alexandria. But the best of these votaries journey from every side to settle in a certain very suitable place which they regard as their fatherland. The place is situated above the Mareotic Lake.[56]

After what has been said about Egyptian animal worship, this privileging of Egypt is striking. But, as will soon become clear, it was by no means unusual in the first century CE.[57] Beyond that, it is worth noting what Philo has thus far *not* said, namely, that these could be *Jewish* women and men. Instead, he speculates about a ‘race’ that dwells among all peoples. The remote place near Alexandria, where the best of this ‘race’ of worshippers live, Philo continues, is located

> […] on a somewhat low-lying hill very happily placed both because of its security and the pleasantly tempered air. The safety is secured by the farm buildings and villages roundabout and the pleasantness of the air by the continuous breezes which arise both from the lake which debouches into the sea and from the open sea hard by. For the sea breezes are light, the lake breezes close and the two combining together produce a most healthy condition of climate.[58]

Ancient geography and ethnography from the time of Herodotus onwards assumed a close connection between geographical situation and a people’s character and *mores*.[59] An ideal situation and well-tempered climate are found not only in utopias such as Iambulus's Islands of the Sun or the land of the Hyperboreans,[60] but are also said to characterise Italy, and especially Rome, which is praised for being neither too hot nor too cold, its pleasant winds and its perfect location between the seas.[61]

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[54] *Cont*. 18 – 20.

[55] For misanthropy see Joseph. *Ap*. 2.291 (14); Tac. *Hist*. 5.5.1; *Ann*. 15.44.1. The concept certainly need not refer to Jews; cf. Plin. *HN* 7.80; Sen. *Tranq*. 15.1. But the prejudice is ancient. According to an anecdote quoted by both Diodorus Siculus and Josephus, Antiochus III was advised to destroy Jerusalem and the Jewish people, “for they only of all people hated to mix with any other nations, and treated them all as enemies” (μόνους γὰρ ἁπάντων ἐθνῶν ἀκοινωνήτους εἶναι τῆς πρὸς ἄλλο ἔθνος ἐπιμιξίας): Diod. Sic. 34/35.1 tr. F. R. Walton; cf. Joseph. *AJ* 13.245.

[56] *Cont*. 21 – 22.

[57] Beyond a long tradition of criticising Egyptian religion and culture (cf Richter 2001; Hartog 2002), at least some Romans appear to have been especially impressed by Egyptian culture, cf. Davies (2011), Gruen (2011, 76 – 114).

[58] *Cont*. 22 – 23.

After this, Philo describes the settlement (24), the religious lives of individuals (25–29), the gathering on the seventh day in the common sanctuary (30–33), and finally the group's abstemious way of life (33–39). The houses are not built too close to one another "since living at close quarters is troublesome and displeasing to people who are seeking to satisfy their desire for solitude", but not too far apart either, because of the "sense of fellowship which they cherish" (24). Each contains a holy place (οἴκημα ἱερόν) dedicated solely to "the mysteries of a holy life" (τὰ τοῦ σεμνοῦ βίου μυστήρια τελοῦνται). In what follows it appears that this holy room is a place for studying laws, oracles, and psalms, "and anything else which fosters and perfects knowledge and piety" (25). Their days are given over to religious practice (ἄσκησις, 28); they pray at sunrise and sunset (27). At night they dream and sometimes even give utterance to "the glorious verities of their holy philosophy" (26), while they spend the day in allegorical studies (29) and in composing songs in different metres and to different melodies (30). Every seventh day they gather for a plain instruction, given by the eldest among them (31), that impresses itself on the soul all the more because of its simplicity. Women are seated within hearing distance behind a wall, so that "the modesty becoming to the female sex is preserved" (33).[62] "They lay self-control (ἐγκράτεια) to be as it were the foundation of their soul and on it build the other virtues" (34). They eat only in the evening, some of them indeed only every third day, or even less frequently. Only on the seventh day does everyone eat, though "only common bread with salt for a relish flavoured further by the daintier (οἱ ἁβροδίαιτοι) with hyssop" (37). Their houses and clothing are simple (38–

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[59] Hdt. 2.35; more systematically in Hippoc. *Aer.*; Strabo, *Geogr.* 2.3.7 (102C–103C), on the other hand, was critical of the idea, cf. Vasaly (1993, 141–145).

[60] Iambulus ap. Diod. Sic. 2.56.7: "The climate is most temperate, we are told, considering that they live at the equator, and they suffer neither from heat nor from cold" (εὐκρατότατον δ' εἶναι τὸν ἀέρα παρ' αὐτοῖς, ὡς ἂν κατὰ τὸν ἰσημερινὸν οἰκοῦντας, καὶ μήθ' ὑπὸ καύματος μήθ' ὑπὸ ψύχους ἐνοχλουμένους); cf. too the land of the Hyperboreans in Diod. Sic. 2.47.1 and islands beyond the Pillars of Hercules (ibid. 5.19). See Winston (1981, 317 n. 4); and Beavis (2004, 35).

[61] Dion. Hal. *AR* 1.37.5; Strab. *Georg.* 6.4.1, 286C; Plin. *HN* 3.41; 37.201; Varro, *Rust.* 1.2.4, and frequently elsewhere. Strabo also notes the favourable location of Alexandria (17.1.7 [792C–793C]).

[62] The lecture room thus described, similar to a synagogue, is the sole example in antiquity of a segregation of the sexes in a synagogue; differently, e.g., *Luke* 13:10–17. Cf. Brooten (1982, 133–134).

39) and serve merely as protection from “the fiery heat of the sun and the icy cold of the air” (24; cf. 38).

All these are ideals of simplicity (εὐτελεία) and modesty (ἀτυφία) based on Stoic ideals.[63] As has long been recognised, Philo’s account is closely related to the description of Egyptian priests by Chaeremon of Alexandria (ca. 10–80 CE).[64] The younger contemporary of Philo,[65] Chaeremon, was known in Rome as a strict ascetic and was probably among Nero’s philosophical tutors.[66] It is frequently suggested that Chaeremon came from Egypt, in particular Alexandria.[67] The fragment preserved by Porphyry in *De abstinentia* 4.6–8 begins with the words:

> Chaeremon the Stoic tells in his exposé about the Egyptian priests, who, he says, were considered also as philosophers among the Egyptians, that they chose the temples as the place to philosophise.[68]

Chaeremon’s Egyptian priests are really philosophers who lead a retired, ascetic life devoted to contemplation of the divine, thus representing an example of morality worthy of imitation. They seem, indeed, to be a reflection of Philo’s Egyptian *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides*, who because of their “ardour for the study of wisdom”[69] led a retired, ascetic, and pious life[70] in contemplation of nature and their sacred scriptures.[71] Chaeremon’s description goes on to reveal further commonalities. During the periods of purification the Egyptian priests separate “from their families and fellows”.[72] Some abstain from wine;[73] during these periods of sanctification they eat no bread, and at other times eat it only with hyssop.[74] They mark the passage of time in cycles of seven,[75] sleep on beds of palm leaves,[76] worship the (divine) sun several times a day,[77] spend their nights observing the stars,[78] and devote the remaining hours to the study of arithmetic, geometry and philology.[79] At some points the practices are so similar that mutual influence between the two writings has been proposed, for example, when Philo describes the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* as sitting "in order […] in proper attitude," with appropriate attire, "with their hands inside the robe", as the eldest of them lectures "with visage and voice alike quiet".[80] Compare Chaeremon:

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[63] Cf. Xen. *Mem.* 1.3.5–6; Musonius, *Oratio* 18 A; 18B; 19; Sen. *Ep.* 8.5, etc. See Wendland (1895, 8–33).

[64] Chaeremon, *frg.* 10 van der Horst. The link was first noted by Wendland (1895, 755). For the dating see Frede (1989, 2079); Schneider (2013, 1424).

[65] The title is given by Joseph. *C. Ap.* 1.288, according to whom the work also contains a distorted picture of Israel’s history in Egypt. That the fragments belong together was suggested by Schwyzer (1932, 15); van der Horst (1984, ix); Frede (1989, 2081); Ramelli (2008, 1299–1308).

[66] Chaeremon’s asceticism is ridiculed by Martial 11.56. The *Suda* (van der Horst *T.* 3) calls him a teacher of Nero, and elsewhere (*T.* 4) the head of a rhetorical school in Alexandria.

[67] Cf. *T.* 5 van der Horst; Frede (1989, 2067–68), and elsewhere.

[68] Chaeremon, *frg.* 10.6 van der Horst (= *FGrH* 618 F 6). All translations are taken from van der Horst’s edition.

[69] See *Cont.* 16: αἱ πρὸς φιλοσοφίαν ὁρμαί; cf. *Cont.* 2; 27–28; 34; 67; 69; 74; 80; 89.

[70] Cf. ἐρημία, *Cont.* 20; ἐγκράτεια, *Cont.* 34; εὐσέβεια, *Cont.* 2; 55; 88.

[71] *Cont.* 1; 29; 58; 64; 57; 78–79; 90.

[72] Chaeremon, *frg.* 10.6 van der Horst, cf. *Cont.* 18; 30.

[73] Chaeremon, *frg.* 10.6 van der Horst, cf. *Cont.* 40; 73–74, with reference to a law for priests.

> They [the Egyptian priests] were always seen near the gods, or rather their statues, either carrying or preceding them in a procession or setting them up with order and dignity (μετὰ κόσμου καὶ σεμνότητος). And each of these acts was not empty gesture, but an indication of some allegorical truth (ἔνδειξις φυσικοῦ λόγου). Their gravity was also apparent from their behaviour. For their way of walking was disciplined (εὔτακτος), and they took care to have a quiet look (βλέμμα καθεστηκός) […] They always kept their hands within their dress.[81]

However, even though it is possible that Philo and Chaeremon were personally acquainted, a literary connection can neither be excluded nor demonstrated.[82]

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[74] Chaeremon, *frg*. 10.6 van der Horst, cf. *Cont*. 37; 73; and see 81, on the table of show bread in the Temple.

[75] Chaeremon, *frg*. 10.7 van der Horst, cf. *Cont*. 36; 65.

[76] Chaeremon, *frg*. 10.7 van der Horst, cf. *Cont*. 69.

[77] Chaeremon, *frg*. 10.8 van der Horst, cf. *Cont*. 89.

[78] Chaeremon, *frg*. 10.8 van der Horst, cf. *Cont*. 66.

[79] Chaeremon, *frg*. 10.8 van der Horst, cf. the textual studies of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides*, *Cont*. 28; 75.

[80] *Cont*. 30: καθ' ἡλικίαν ἑξῆς καθέζονται μετὰ τοῦ πρέποντος σχήματος, εἴσω τὰς χεῖρας ἔχοντες; 31: καθεστῶτι μὲν τῷ βλέμματι. Cf. also 66: μετὰ τῆς ἀνωτάτω σεμνότητος.

[81] Chaeremon, *fragm*. 10.6 van der Horst: Ἐφαίνοντο δὲ ἀεὶ θεῶν ἢ ἀγαλμάτων ἐγγύς, ἤτοι φέροντες ἢ προηγούμενοι καὶ τάσσοντες μετὰ κόσμου τε καὶ σεμνότητος ὧν ἕκαστον οὐ τῦφος ἦν, ἀλλά τινος ἔνδειξις φυσικοῦ λόγου. Τὸ δὲ σεμνὸν κἀκ τοῦ καταστήματος ἑωρᾶτο. Πορεία τε γὰρ ἦν εὔτακτος καὶ βλέμμα καθεστηκὸς ἐπετηδεύετο, ὡς ὅτε βουληθεῖεν μὴ σκαρδαμύττειν· γέλως δὲ σπάνιος, εἰ δέ που γένοιτο, μέχρι μειδιάσεως· ἀεὶ δὲ ἐντὸς τοῦ σχήματος χεῖρες.

[82] A Chaeremon, son of Leonidas, is referred to in a rescript of the emperor Claudius as an emissary from Alexandria (*T.* 5 van der Horst). Philo was the leader of the Jewish delegation (*Legat.*). Early twentieth-century scholars discussed the question of a literary dependence, yet did not agree on who was inspired by whom, cf. Wendland (1896, 755–756); Schwyzer (1932, 81). Van der Horst suggests "a literary genre well-known in the Hellenistic period: the idealised description of priestly castes or religious fraternities of barbarian peoples" (1984, 56). While the idea of a direct acquaintance between the older Philo and the younger Chaeremon must remain speculative, we should note that the latter's account of Jewish history (*frg.* 1 van der Horst) is highly critical of the Jewish people. Cf. Frede (1989, 2027).

The relationship between Philo's and Chaeremon's praise of Egyptian worshippers of God lies at a deeper level. What links them is an increasing interest, from the first century BCE onward, on the part of authors shaped by Stoicism and Platonism, in the customs, myths, and rituals of the 'wise (barbarian) nations', Egypt among them.[83] Plato's association of the Atlantis myth with Solon began the trend.[84] If Chaeremon really came from Egypt his writing may represent an "autoethnography"[85]; in any case it is "an attempt to integrate genuinely Egyptian ideas, concepts of Stoic philosophy, and astrological interest, and to identify astrology, ethics, and asceticism as basic elements of the pristine 'philosophy' of the Egyptians".[86]

At any rate, Chaeremon was not alone in his interest in Egyptian priests and their rituals.[87] Diodorus Siculus begins his Greek history of the world with Egyptian teachings about the gods because the Egyptians "were the first to introduce the worship of the gods".[88] His first book concludes with a statement that all the great figures of antiquity, from Orpheus and Homer to Solon and Plato, had been influenced by Egyptian wisdom.[89] Plutarch, in *De Iside et Osiride*, portrays his platonising interpretation of the myths and rituals of the Isis religion as a search for truth.[90] He also notes the fasting of the priests, for example their abstention from salt[91] and wine,[92] as well as other dietary rules, and praises their efforts at "studying, learning, and teaching religious matters".[93] Plutarch also grounds the ascetic practices of the female and male priests by saying that abstinence from food as well as preservation of virtue is necessary in order to attain to knowledge of the divine and to abide with it, or with her (Isis).[94]

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[83] Boys-Stones (2001, 44–60) shows that Chaeremon stands in a long Stoic tradition of isolating 'original' philosophical material from the traditions – here the Egyptian religious practices that have preserved it. Van Nuffelen shows that Post-Hellenistic philosophy on the whole sees "religion as created by wise ancients and is thus supposed to contain philosophical knowledge" (2011, 4).

[84] *Tim.* 21e-25d; cf. *Critias* 113d.

[85] Dench defines autoethnography as "the process whereby African and South American people [today] constructed accounts of themselves through engagement with European ethnographical traditions that depicted them as 'other peoples'" (2007, 493–494).

[86] Schneider (2013, 1424). See also Frede (1989, 2069): "With this reference to Egyptian wisdom, which seems at least, in Chaeremon's eyes, to have better preserved ancient truths than did the Greek tradition, the Stoic Chaeremon shows himself to be, both formally and in many respects as to content, a precursor of certain tendencies we usually associate or even identify with later Platonism, for example Numenius or Celsus, Porphyry or Iamblichus".

[87] Cf. Frede (1989, 2103 and *passim*).

[88] Diod. Sic. 1.6, prefacing his extensive descriptions of myths and rituals (1.11–26; 83–90). Seneca seems also to have shown an interest in Egypt, as the fragment *De situ et sacris Aegyptiorum* shows; cf. Frede (1989, 2076).

[89] Diod. Sic. 1.96–98.

[90] Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 2 (351e).

Chaeremon's view that in Egypt "[t]he true philosophising was found among the prophets, and priests who had charge of the sacred vestments, the sacred scribes, and also the astrologers"[95] was, as is now familiar, due to the idea that certain peoples, even among the barbarians, had access to truth in its original purity, a truth that had been lost in the course of history because of the general decline in virtue. Seneca traced this thesis to Poseidonius.[96] Chaeremon and Plutarch agree that this truth can be regained through a 'symbolic' (i. e. allegorical) interpretation of the myths of the gods and priestly rituals.[97] Chaeremon in particular claims that such methods were invented by the Egyptian priests.[98]

Chaeremon's praise of the model and ascetic way of life of the Egyptian priests also served to hold up a mirror to the (supposed) current decline in virtue.[99] Philo takes up this feature especially in his third extended comparison, in which he caricatures Greek symposium culture. Drinking wine leads at best to 'slavish taste' (45), and at worst to enmity and wild fist-fights.[100] Men "attack and bite each other and gnaw off noses, ears, fingers and some other parts of the body, so that they make good the story of the comrades of Odysseus and the Cyclops by eating ‘gobbets’ of men, as the poet says”.[101] The revellers show themselves enemies to their families and homeland, and even to themselves. The reflection here of Stoic moral discourse, comedy, and satire is unmistakable.[102] Consequently, such things as the luxurious decorations of the dining rooms, well-upholstered ivory couches, purple coverlets, expensive dishes and drinkware, erotically-dressed slaves, artistic confections, and exotic foods are branded as ‘Italian luxuries’ beloved of Greeks and barbarians.[103]

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[91] Ibid. 5 (352f); 32 (363e), cf. *Quaest. conviv.* 5.10.1–2 (684f-685a); on the importance of salt in ordinary circumstances, see e. g. ibid. 4.4.3 (668e). Philo emphasises that the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* by contrast eat bread with salt: *Cont*. 37; 73; 81.

[92] Plutarch, *De Is. et Os*. 6 (353b).

[93] Ibid.: φιλοσοφοῦντες καὶ μανθάνοντες καὶ διδάσκοντες τὰ θεῖα διατελοῦσιν.

[94] Ibid. 2 (351e).

[95] Chaeremon, *frg*. 10.8 van der Horst.

[96] Sen. *Ep*. 90.3–6, with Frede (1989, 2088–2092). Cf. Plut. *frag*. 157.1 Sandbach; Cornutus, *Theol. graec*. 17.1 p. 96 Busch-Zangenberg; Aelian, *Var. hist*. 2.31.

[97] Frede (1989, 2086–2092). Cf. Ramelli (2008, 1301–4); Plut. *De Is. et Os*. 76 (382c–d).

[98] Cf. Chaeremon, *T.* 9 van der Horst; also *T.* 12 van der Horst: "Chaeremon says the Egyptians were the first to teach – since they wanted to teach the great and lofty things to the uninitiated by means of allegories and myths – Athena is, mythically spoken, a goddess". *Frag.* 2 van der Horst: "Egyptian wisdom is to say all things symbolically". Plutarch makes a sharper distinction between the 'obscure and clearer symbols' (*De Is. et Os*. 67–68 [377e–378b]).

[99] This, too, was one of the standards of ancient ethnography. Thus the Spartans know that discord ceases when greed and luxury (πλεονεξία καὶ τρυφή) are eliminated (Strab. *Geogr.* 10.4.16 [480C]); the Indians are happy "because of their simplicity and moderation" (διὰ τὴν ἁπλότητα καὶ τὴν εὐτέλεια; Strabo, *Geogr.* 15.1.53 [709C].

[100] *Cont*. 40–47.

Finally, Philo also criticises literary depictions of symposia. It is true that Xenophon and Plato described the two symposia in which Socrates participated, “surmising that they would serve posterity as models of the happily conducted banquet. Yet even these if compared with those of our people who embrace the contemplative life will appear as matters for derision” (57–58). It is true that there were pleasures at both, but only human ones. In Xenophon’s account musicians, dancers, and actors appear, and the subject of discussion at the Platonic banquet is love, heterosexual and homoerotic.[104] “But […] the story of these well-known banquets is full of such follies and they stand self-convicted in the eyes of any who do not regard conventional opinions” (64), despite the common notion that they are successful undertakings.

The Therapeutic symposium naturally presents an entirely different picture.[105] The people gather for prayer on the fiftieth day, clothed in white, with the utmost dignity (μετὰ τῆς ἀνωτάτω σεμνότητος), lifting their hands and eyes to heaven, because “they have been trained to fix their gaze on things worthy of contemplation” (66). Men and women recline together, yet the female members keep their chastity voluntarily and in that respect are superior to those Greek priestesses who are compelled to virginity (68). Hostile to the pleasures of the body, the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* recline on hard benches "served by free younger members in modest clothing".[106] The meal again consists only of bread, salt, and "as a luxury", hyssop.[107]

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[101] *Cont*. 40. Biting off noses, ears, etc. is regarded by Plutarch as a dreadful barbarism; cf. Plut. *Cons. Apoll.* 113b. For the Cyclops as cannibalistic barbarians see, e.g., Ov. *Met*. 14.174–196, cf. Tietz (2013, 245).

[102] Cf. Wendland (1885, 8–33); Bernhardt (2003, 203–206); Niehoff (2010, 98–112); Tietz (2013, 323–353). There is, of course, a consensus between Greek and Roman moral discourses. Philo himself makes reference to comedy (*Cont*. 43). For tussles at symposia see e.g. Lucian, *Symp*. 43–47.

[103] *Cont*. 48–56. The same topics are encountered frequently elsewhere: cf. Muson. 18a–b; 19a–b Hense. For slaves as marks of luxury see Sen. *Ep*. 95.24. There is also a critique of male homoeroticism in Muson. 12. Cf. also Bernhardt (2003, 199–203; 214–217).

[104] *Cont*. 57–64. There are other indications of criticism of these two literary symposia, for example the extended praise of Homer’s banquet scenes in contrast to those of Plato, Xenophon, und Epicurus in Athen. *Deipn*. 5.1–20 (85a–193c), esp. 5.8 (180a–b); 5.13 (187f-188d); cf. too Plut. *De Pyth. or.* 15, 401c.

[105] See the description in Wendland (1896, 704–705).

Most strikingly, the banqueters also abstain from shared sympotic conversation.[108] Instead, the president gives a lecture, discussing questions from sacred scripture and using the allegorical method (75).[109] The others listen silently, and only at the end of the president's discourse are they allowed to applaud (77–79). Finally, the president sings an original hymn to God or "an old one by the poets of an earlier day" (80). From the context, one supposes that the hymn must be a biblical psalm, yet the detailed list of genres and modes that follows points to Greek cult and drama (80).[110]

The banquet of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides*, which up to this point has little in common with the wine-fuelled joy and excitement of ancient symposium culture,[111] nevertheless culminates, like other symposia, in 'honourable drunkenness'[112] and Bacchic enthusiasm[113] – and indeed, given the mention of a 'sacred vigil' (παννυχίς), may even have lubricious features.[114] Here Israel's

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[106] *Cont*. 72. Cf. the high-girdled transparent garments of the luxury slaves at other banquets (*Cont*. 51).

[107] *Cont*. 73; cf. 37.

[108] Niehoff (2010, 112–116) attributes the hierarchical and monological character of the meals of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* to Roman tastes. But Roman authors of the imperial period also speak of the convivial character of the meal, something not suited to monologues. Cf. Egelhaaf-Gaiser (2012, 97).

[109] His lecture style follows the rhetorical ideal of the unadorned character of an instruction that "proceeds in a leisurely manner; he lingers over it and spins it out with repetitions, thus permanently imprinting the thoughts in the souls of the hearers" (*Cont*. 76).

[110] Jeffery (2003, 167): "Philo's five genres seem to have been listed hierarchically, from the relatively mundane iambic trimeter, through the grand processional *prosodion* and even more dignified *paraspondeion*, finally arriving, as it were, 'next to the altar' with a *parabomion*. The whole then culminated in the stanzas of choric song and dance. If they were actually performed in this sequence, the effect would have been one of growing solemnity, with a graduated increase in complexity". Philo is well known for his reflections on musical theory. Feldman (1996, 504–528); Ferguson (2003, 391–426); Oertelt (2007, 51–62).

[111] But cf. *Cont*. 40, where Philo promises to write about "the cheerfulness of their convivial meals".

[112] *Cont*. 89: μεθυσθέντες [...] τὴν καλὴν ταύτην μέθην. For this notion, which picks up Philo's concept of 'sober drunkenness' and its relationship to the Platonic idea of 'divine drunkenness', see Lewy (1929, 1–8).

[113] Philo explicitly compares the experience with that of *bacchantes* when he says that, "having drunk as in the Bacchic rites of the unmixed wine of God's love" (85), both women and men are equally possessed by God (ἐνθουσιῶντές τε ἄνδρες ὁμοῦ καὶ γυναῖκες, 87).

[114] Cf. Eur. *Bacch*. 882; Athen. *Deipn*. 6.55 (250a); 14.6 (647c); 15.7 (668d).

Exodus from Egypt is acted out dramatically. Men and women, each conducted by a choral leader, sing stationary songs (*stasimon*), strophes and antistrophes, and ultimately form a mixed choir. In this manner, they celebrate the Crossing of the Red Sea:

> (They become) a copy (μίμημα) of the choir set up of old beside the Red Sea in honour of the wonders there wrought. For at the command of God the sea became a source of salvation to one party and of perdition to the other. As it broke in twain and withdrew under the violence of the forces which swept it back there rose on either side, opposite to each other, the semblance of solid walls, while the space thus opened between them broadened into a highway smooth and dry throughout on which the people marched under guidance right on until they reached the higher ground on the opposite mainland. But when the sea came rushing in with the returning tide, and from either side passed over the ground where dry land had appeared, the pursuing enemy were submerged and perished.[115]

Thus, as Philo goes on to say, the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* represent (ἀπεικονίζειν) the choir with Moses and Miriam at the Red Sea.[116] It is thus cultic theatre, part of the cultic mythos – the decisive moment in Israel's history with God, staged, and thus imitated, through drama.[117] By implication, Philo's readers constitute the audience.

Philo describes the choirs at the Red Sea and the leadership of Miriam and Moses in similar terms elsewhere.[118] The mixing of the two choirs seems to reflect an exegetical tradition attested in *Wisdom* 10:20.[119] In the whole we have an actual re-poeticising of the Exodus event as classical drama, with fragments of an apocryphal song of Miriam.[120] This is thus a narrative of a religious celebration rendered plausible for some Jewish communities in antiquity. The Exodus event is presented as the highest form of religious experience.[121]

At the same time, however, the terms in which Philo invokes Israel's Exodus from Egypt are strikingly detached. The miracle at the Red Sea is either a "source of salvation" or a "[source] of perdition". The Egyptians are not mentioned. The people depart from an unnamed land and are led safely, in very general terms, on "a highway smooth and dry" to higher ground, while their enemies are destroyed. The event could scarcely be described in more neutral terms. Moreover, the gesture that concludes the feast, the adoration of the rising sun, can be shown to be part of many other religions.[122] Finally, Philo praises those who so completely devote themselves to contemplation of nature (θεωρία φύσεως) as “citizens of Heaven and the world” (οὐρανοῦ μὲν καὶ κόσμου πολῖται). They are set beside the “Father and Maker of all” (πατρὶ καὶ ποιητῇ τῶν ὅλων γνησίως συσταθέντες) because they have sought the highest degree of virtue (καλοκἀγαθία) and happiness (εὐδαιμονία).[123] This combination of Stoic and Platonic ideals raises the question of who the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* actually were for Philo.

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[115] *Cont*. 85–86.

[116] *Cont*. 88.

[117] See Nielsen (2002); Gasparini (2013).

[118] *Mos*. 1.180; 2.256; *Agr*. 80–82 (citing *Exod*. 15.20–21).

[119] Cf. Enns (1995).

[120] Ezekiel the Tragedian, quoted in Euseb. *Praep. Evang*. 9, 28–29 and Clem. Al. *Strom*. 1.23. From 4Q365 6a ii + 6c 1–7 (reworked Pentateuch C) we learn of a song of Miriam with an invitation to the women to join in: see Crawford (2003, 36–37).

[121] For Philo's interpretation of the Exodus story elsewhere in his writings, see Bloch 2015.

3. Therapeutic allegoresis and the religious and political identity of Philo’s Therapeutae and Therapeutrides

Given the author, the reader inclines at once to infer that the group of *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* must be Jews. That Jewish ritual surpasses other forms of worship of God is part of the tradition of Jewish polemic against idols.[124] Worship of “the Self-existent who is better than the good, purer than the one and more primordial than the Monad” (*Cont*. 2) is the sole form appropriate to the tradition of Jewish monotheism. The people gather on the seventh day, that is, on the Sabbath (*Cont*. 30). The identification of the feast on the day after seven times seven (*Cont*. 75), on the other hand, is disputed, though it does recall the preference for the number seven in the book of *Jubilees*. The instruction at the festal gatherings recalls Philo’s description of synagogue worship in *De specialibus legibus* and *De vita Mosis*. [125] On the other hand, Philo seems determined to keep his description of the ‘Therapeutic sect’ as general as possible. The words *Hebraioi* or *Ioudaioi* do not appear in *De vita contemplativa*.[126] Nor is there any reference at all to male circumcision and the other *halakah*, even though the meal of water, bread, salt, and hyssop certainly is kosher. Philo presents us with a group of people who live in temple-like houses by a lakeside just south of Alexandria in Egypt, abstain from wine like sacrificing priests (84), share food in reverence to a holy table enshrined in the vestibule of an unnamed temple (81), and have ecstatic experiences like bacchanals or corybants (12; 85). Only in the last third of the text does Philo mention that the members of the group “have dedicated their own life and themselves to knowledge and the contemplation of the verities of nature, following the truly sacred instructions of the prophet Moses” (64). The only other undoubted reference to Jewish identity is the identification of the choral leaders at the performance of the Exodus as Moses and Miriam (87).

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[122] *Cont*. 89. The practice is also described in *Flacc*. 121–122 as a joyful celebration after the arrest of Flaccus. For the Essenes, see Joseph. *BJ* 2.128–129, but cf. Pl. *Symp*. 220d, and further examples in Mason (2008, 105–106 n. 804).

[123] *Cont*. 90. On this mixture of Stoic and Platonic ideas see Bergmeier (2002, 67–68).

[124] *Cont*. 3–9.

[125] Here, as there, people come together on the seventh day in schools (*Spec*. 2.62) or “places of prayer” (*Mos*. 2.216) to listen quietly in good order (*Spec*. 2.62: ἐν κόσμῳ καθέζονται σὺν ἡσυχίᾳ; *Cont*. 30–31: καθ’ ἡλικίαν ἑξῆς καθέζονται […] καθ’ ἡσυχίαν δὲ οἱ ἄλλοι πάντες ἀκροῶνται; cf. *Cont*. 75; *Hypoth*. 7.13) to the lecture by “one of special experience” (*Spec*. 2.62; *Cont*. 31: ἐμπειρότατος; cf. *Hypoth*. 7.13) who instructs them, with the aid of “the philosophy of their fathers” (*Cont*. 28; *Mos*. 2.216: τὴν πάτριον φιλοσοφίαν) in “the study of truths of nature” (*Mos*. 2.216: ἐπι-

Thus the ethnic identity of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* remains deliberately vague. This community of philosophers and priests, with its studies of the “laws and oracles delivered through the mouth of prophets, and psalms and anything else which fosters and perfects knowledge and piety”,[127] proves itself the equal of the Egyptian priests and their religious knowledge and practice, so highly acclaimed by Diodorus, Cornutus, Chaeremon, and Plutarch.[128] As we have seen, Chaeremon claimed that the allegorical method used to discover the deeper truth behind these myths and rituals was developed by the Egyptian priests themselves.[129] That of the *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* is likewise very ancient. It comes from the books of the ancients and “founders of their way of thinking (οἳ τῆς αἱρέσεως ἀρχηγέται), who left many memorials of the form used (καθάπερ τισὶν ἀρχετύποις) in allegorical interpretation and these they take as a kind of archetype and imitate the method in which this principle is carried out” (29). Moreover the content of their scriptures goes beyond the etymological methods used by Cornutus and Chaeremon and points to the highest idea of reality:

> The exposition of the sacred scriptures treats the inner meaning conveyed in allegory (δι’ ὑπονοιῶν ἐν ἀλληγορίαις). For to these people, the whole law book seems to resemble a living creature with the literal ordinance for its body and for its soul the invisible mind

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στήμη καὶ θεωρία τῶν περὶ φύσιν; *Cont*. 64: ἐπιστήμη καὶ θεωρία τῶν τῆς φύσεως πραγμάτων) and all virtues (*Mos*. 2.216; *Spec*. 2.62; *Cont*. 90).

[126] Cf. Birnbaum (1996, 119–120).

[127] *Cont*. 25.

[128] See p. 140–141 above. Matusova (2010, 1–51) suggests that the account is based on (Egyptian and) Orphic methods of interpretation of sacred texts, such as the Derveni Papyrus.

[129] See n. 98 above.

> laid up in its wording. [130] It is in this mind especially that the rational soul (ἡ λογικὴ ψυχή) begins to contemplate the things akin to itself (τὰ οἰκεῖα θεωρεῖν) and looking through the words as through a mirror (ὥσπερ διὰ κατόπτρου) beholds the marvelous beauties of the concepts, unfolds and removes the symbolic coverings and brings forth the thoughts and sets them bare to the light of day for those who need but a little reminding (ὑπόμνησις) to enable them to discern the inward and hidden through the outward and visible.[131]

Therapeutic allegoresis is thus the (by this time perfectly conventional) path to the Platonic ideas.[132] It helps one rise above the visible world, remember original Being, and so behold original Beauty. Plutarch, in very similar fashion, regards the garments of Isis and Osiris as the culmination of his platonising interpretation of the cult of Isis. He interprets the white garment of Osiris, donned only once, as a symbol for the thought of the pure and holy Intelligibility, for “the apperception of the conceptual, the pure, and the simple, shining through the soul like a flash of lightning, affords an opportunity to touch and see it but once” (tr. Babbitt).[133]

> For this reason Plato and Aristotle call this part of philosophy the epoptic (ἐποπτικόν) or mystic part, inasmuch as those who have passed beyond these conjectural and confused matters of all sorts by means of Reason proceed by leaps and bounds to the primary, simple, and immaterial principle; and when they have somehow attained contact with the pure truth abiding about it, they think that they have the whole of philosophy completely, as it were within their grasp (tr. Babbitt).[134]

Therefore when the Egyptian priests “conceal the truth and call Osiris the leader and king of the dead”, it is clear to the Platonist that this can mean nothing other than that the immaculate and non-substantial Godhead is the leader and king of souls released from their bodies, who adhere to him and behold the “unutterable and indescribable beauty”.[135]

Philo’s *Therapeutae* and *Therapeutrides* and Plutarch share the fundamental Platonic conviction that the goal of human understanding is to behold the highest Idea and Beauty. Both make use of allegorical interpretations of religious traditions to identify a path to that goal. Yet while for Plutarch philosophy is the prerequisite for truthful worship and the avoidance of superstition as well as the true interpretation of religious symbols and rites,[136] Philo declares his Egyptian God-worshippers to be the originators of allegory as a path to philosophical understanding.[137] Philo's Egyptian priests are both at once: practitioners of a most eminent and ancient religious practice and thereby a source of original and untouched truth *and* its best and most experienced interpreters.

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[130] The image comes from Pl. *Phdr.* 246c. Cf. also Philo, *QG* 3.3.

[131] *Cont*. 78. For the idea of recall cf. Pl., *Meno* 81a; Philo, *Praem*. 9.

[132] Philo is the first witness to Platonist allegories, yet sees himself as one among many others, cf. Lamberton 1986, 44–54.

[133] Plut., *De Is.et Os*. 77 (382c–d).

[134] Ibid. 77 (382d–e).

[135] Ibid. 78 (382e–383a). There is discussion about whether Plutarch is egyptianising platonic thought (Brenk 1999) or platonising Egyptian myths and rituals (Richter 2001; Nuffelen 2011, 48–71).

4. Conclusion

In *De vita contemplativa* Philo presents the ethnography of an ideal group of people who are philosophers. The 'Therapeutic race' exists among all the peoples of the world, but the best of them are to be found in Egypt, more precisely at Lake Mareotis south of Alexandria. Their name refers to their abilities in the most important arts of healing. The temperate climate in which they live; their pious, simple and ascetic lifestyle; and their religious festivals surpass the ideals of the time. Therefore, the group resembles the 'mare-milk drinking Mysians', the 'most righteous of men' and thus the ideal barbarians on the fringes of the inhabited world. Their allegorical interpretations of scripture and hymns show them to be true philosophers. Through their piety, they surpass others' ideas about God.

Philo's account contains nearly all the heads that belong to the genre of ethnographic description.[138] As often, the focus is on religious and cultural usages. But what is lacking in Philo, apart from a few hints such as the mention of books by the founders of the school (29), is any information about the origins and history of the 'race'. Hence he obscures the link between Therapeutic *eusebeia* and their religious tradition, namely Judaism.

As in many other ethnographies, an essential impetus is the criticism of social conditions in the writer's own reference-group. In Philo's case, it involves a critique of Greek and Egyptian ideas about God, the way Greek philosophers dealt with the issue of property, and the symposium as practised in Philo's own time and even as represented in the paradigmatic Classical versions. However, Philo keeps not only his own Jewish identity but also that of the Egyptian

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136 Nuffelen (2011, 60).

137 On closer inspection, however, "the founders of their way of thinking" (29) turn out as biblical figures and authors while the allegorical method was used by others Jewish philosophers as well, not at least Philo himself. See Niehoff (2011, 165–168) has shown.

138 Müller (1972, 113–14); Parker (2008).

'sect' entirely in the background. It is true that he employs the first person singular pronoun eleven times – remarkable in such a short text[139] – but this narrative I is primarily a communicative device: it gives internal indicators, introduces clarifications, and anticipates possible ridicule and lack of understanding of a wine-free symposium.[140] But nearly half of these self-referential statements locate the narrator *within* Graeco-Roman culture.[141] In other words, the narrative I here is not Jewish but Greek. The emic ethnographic gaze of a Jewish author upon a Jewish group thereby turns into an etic description.

But why does Philo hide his Jewish identity and present his authorial voice as a Greek one? There are no doubt many possible answers to this question. One is that the fictitious authorial voice helps initially to hide and only gradually reveal the true religious identity of the group and to construct Judaism as a religious practice comparable to that of Egyptian priests. Moreover, with Philo's etic description of Therapeutic *eusebeia,* he is able to represent the religious life led by the *Therapeutae* as the universal ideal for all of humankind and especially for Greek culture. Hence he also underscores the use of ancient ethnography to criticise an indigenous – here Greek – decline in morals. However, his ascetic religious group on Lake Mareotis, itself just the most exemplary of many analogous forms, remains an exceptional phenomenon, separated from the world and incorporating the highest philosophical ideals. Here is a group that exists beyond the world, in the vicinity of the Father and Creator. And 'beyond the world' means that membership can be gained only through personal imitation of its goal of happiness through perfect virtue.

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[139] Cf. Hay (2003, 345–346).

[140] *Cont*. 73. Philo shows his intentions clearly, supporting what has just been said, in *Cont.* 10; for internal indicators see *Cont*. 40; 64; 75, and for reference to a text on the Essenes see *Cont.* 1.

[141] Like the Greeks, he admires Anaximander and Democritus (14); he knows Homer's Mysians who drink mare's milk (17); he agrees with Plato's statement that cicadas live on air (35); he invokes his bad experiences at contemporary Greek banquets (46); and he maintains a polite reserve in his description of mythological poeticising in Plato's *Symposium* (63).

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A roadmap to heaven: High-priestly vestments and the Jerusalem Temple in Flavius Josephus

In this chapter, I examine the architecture of the Jerusalem temple and of priestly vestments as loci of religious innovation, which were embedded in Josephus' complex political and religious agenda. I also offer an exploration of Josephus' ekphrastic treatment of the architectural complexities of the First and Second Temple and the vestments of the priests and high priests. As I maintain, not only do the priestly and high priestly vestments represent the Jewish cult of purity, and reflect the order of the cosmos to summon the presence of God as creator of heaven and earth, but they are also of great political significance.

"When the Romans entered on the government [of Judea], they took possession of the vestments of the high priest, and […] the captain of the guard lights a lamp there every day".[1] This is the description given by the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus[2] of the special vestments worn by the high priests when they enter the Holy of Holies once a year, on the Day of Atonement. The high priesthood was the most important institution of Judaism with regard to religious life and governmental powers. Since the Hasmonean John Hyrcanos I (134–104 BCE), the high priest's vestments had been laid up at the tower on the north side of the temple.[3] Seven days before the festival the vestments were delivered to the priests and after having purified the vestments, the high priests made use of them. The tower was rebuilt by Herod, who named the tower 'Antonia' in honour of his friend Marcus Antonius, and the garments were kept there during his reign, as well as that of his son Archelaos until Judea came under the direct control of the Roman administration (4BCE-6CE; *AJ* 18.93).

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[1] Joseph. *AJ* 18:93; some scholars assume that these vestments were also used at Pessach, Schavuot and Sukkot. I have used the version of the Greek text of Josephus established by Thackeray, Marcus, Wikgren, and Feldman in the Loeb Classical Library (1927–1965), which is essentially that of Niese's ed. minor (1888–1895).

[2] Josephus never himself mentions that his *gentilicium* was Flavius; it is found only in later Christian authors. The name change can first be found in the *Codex Parisinus* 1425 (see Clem. Al. *Strom.* 1.147.2). For further information, see Schürer (1973).

[3] Joseph. *AJ* 15.403; 18.91–92.

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The Romans housed the vestments in a stone-chamber under the seal of the priests (οἴκῳ λίθοις οἰκοδομηθέντι ὑπὸ σφραγῖδι τῶν ἱερέων).[4] Stone was considered a particularly pure building material in Judaism (*mKel.* 5.11; 10.41 etc.), a fact which – according to Josephus – seems to have been known to the Romans. By explaining that the captain of the guard lights a lamp in front of the vestments, Josephus indicates that the guard now takes over the daily lighting of the Menorah of the Temple which had been the duty of the priests and high priests (*Exod.* 27:21; 30:8; *Lev.* 24:3–784; *2Chron.* 13:11; Gussmann, 2008); as a result, the guard pays homage to God as represented by the garment. One thing is clear: the high priestly vestments represent a cultic power in a manner that goes beyond mere symbolic meaning.

As an aristocratic chief priest himself, Josephus describes the office of the high priest and its holders from personal experience.[5] As such, he was interested in the proceedings of the cults and the Temple, yet his work shows familiarity with Roman concerns. Neither aspect should surprise us. This multifaceted writer served as a Jewish general, a client of the Flavian emperors, and an apologist of the Jewish people. Josephus' literary use of high priestly vestments reflects his own involvement in the Jewish cultic world and in the Roman political world.

Josephus proves to be a unique witness to a Jewish priesthood of the Jerusalem temple[6] that has at the time of his writings already become powerless and without a specific function. The cultic and ritual purity laws, the calendar of religious holidays and the temple offerings could no longer be properly fulfilled, because the Jewish temple in Jerusalem had been destroyed as a symbol of unity and purity and as the representation of God's presence. For Josephus it is clear that God's presence had left the temple (*BJ* 6.299). However, Josephus describes the priesthood and the temple in the present tense, in other words as if the temple were still being used as a Jewish temple and the priesthood were still being exercised. Not only do the temple and (high) priestly vestments represent the Jewish cult of purity and reflect the order of the cosmos, but they are also of political significance. He makes this clear in both works by using the rhetorical technique of ekphrasis,[7] "a description that places the subject before the eyes”. His aim however is different in each case. In *Bellum Judaicum BJ* he emphasises the dividing walls and the different court-yards, and in doing so makes use of Greco-Roman technical terms, apparently with the aim of protecting the sanctuary from strangers. In *Antiquitates AJ* on the other hand his detailed description of the tabernacle and the temple of Solomon focuses on the architecture and the vestments, apparently with the aim of idealising the past and protecting God’s indwelling in the sanctuary. However, in referring to Solomon’s temple prayer, Josephus suggests the possibility of God’s presence in heaven instead of the temple. By analysing his terminology, we find that he presents various aspects of the exotic elements in different ways. In describing the high priests’ vestments, for example, he transliterates Aramaic terms which are mainly *hapax legomena*; in describing the holy and the profane and the inside of the temple, like the altars and the Menorah, which are not mentioned in the Septuagint (and the New Testament writings), he uses vocabulary known to us partly from the *leges sacrae*; and, in describing the building of the temple, he introduces Greek and Roman architectural terminology. A further point should also be noted: these details are found almost exclusively in *Antiquitates* (*AJ*) and rather seldom in the earlier *Bellum Judaicum* (*BJ*). Nevertheless, the overall conception of the high priestly vestments in *AJ* and *BJ* is the same: the vestments symbolise the universe and the heavenly world in order to summon the presence of God as the creator of heaven and earth. It is the minute description of materials and colours that acts as the vehicle of the symbolic reference: The priests’ vestments and the temple signal the presence of God.

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[4] Schwartz (2006, 347), suggests that this is a transliteration. Gussmann (2008, 396).

[5] His father was a priest of the 'line' of Jehoiarib and his mother was a descendant of the Hasmonean high priests and kings who had ruled Jerusalem until the time of Herod.

[6] Grave and synagogue inscriptions from the time after 70 CE give the impression of a priesthood in diaspora that is no longer based on a priestly lineage, but on a solid understanding of the Torah; see Levine (2005, 523–525).

[7] For the application of the term *ekphrasis* to this aspect of Josephus' work see also Gussmann, (2008). However, it is not clear how he defines the term.

1. Ekphrasis: ‘Placing the subject before the eyes’[8]

“*Ekphrasis* is a descriptive speech”, claims Theon in his mid- to late-first century CE *Progymnasmata*, “which vividly (ἐναργῶς) brings the subject shown before the eyes".[9] By this he means the rhetorical method of description "of persons and events and places and times"[10] whereby one creates images with words.[11] Nicolaos of Myra (fifth century CE) is explicit about this:[12] "Descriptiveness is considered a particular feature of ekphrasis since it is this characteristic which most clearly distinguishes ekphrastic writing from mere repeating; the latter namely contains only a mere description of the object, whereas the former tries to make the listeners / readers into spectators".[13]

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[8] On ekphrasis, Elsner (1995, 125–155); Pollitt (1974); see also Stewart (1993, 130–174); and Métraux (1995), who identifies a correlation between medical success with regard to bodily function and artistic development, especially in sculpture. The ancient term ἔκφρασις (Lat. *descriptio*) covered descriptions of persons, things, situations, or places. Webb (2009); Webb (1997, 112–127), are especially helpful sources with regard to different descriptions; see also Egelhaaf (1997, 942–950).

The question of whether the descriptions are to be traced back to ancient art-works must remain open and is, as far as the ancient authors are concerned, not important.[14] However, it is mainly in this narrow sense of a description of an existing image or building that ekphrasis has been taken up in New Testament exegesis.[15] In my view, however, ekphrasis needs to be seen in a more complex setting of cultural ideas about vision. The rhetorical objective of ekphrasis was not to imitate or represent the world of the viewer but rather to produce a *viewing subject* who is thereby induced to question his or her ordinary assumptions about the world. Ekphrastic descriptions by Cebes, Lucian, or Philostratus seem to share a common conception, formulated as follows by Pseudo-Hermogenes: "The virtues of ekphrasis are above all clarity and vividness; for the expression should almost bring about sight through the sense of hearing. One should also make the style like the subject matter: if the subject is flowery, let the style be so too; if the subject is harsh the language should be likewise".[16] There are differing ideas about the theory that the ear can become a seeing organ. Nevertheless, the following characteristics, which are weighted differently by various authors, can be located on a continuum.

The most central aspect is *enargeia*, which one can translate into English as 'vividness', 'the process of appearing before someone's eyes', or 'the ability to put something in perspective'. Enargeia is not a neutral rhetorical category but is often interpreted as emotive, especially by Quintilian.[17] However, 'readerly visuality' was not seen as an optional personal response. Those who responded in ways deemed inadequate were classified as morally deficient, slow, and incapable. Ekphrasis is a quality of speech that makes something inwardly present that was formerly absent. As Quintilian writes: "From such impressions arises that *enargeia* […] which makes us seem not so much to narrate as to exhibit the actual scene, while our emotions will be no less actively stirred than if we were present at the actual occurrence".[18] It is important to emphasise the remote conditional here: *as if we were present*. So, it is a matter of the illusion of making things vivid in language.[19] Quintilian[20] uses ekphrasis interchangeably with φαντασία, because it is not a matter of conveying facts but of seeing absent pictures with our eyes, of being "in their presence".[21] This context can be psychological, political, or religious. Longinus even describes his listeners as enslaved, δουλοῦται, and astonished, ἐκπλήσσειν, by objective representation, and arguments.[22] This is central for the use of θαῦμα ("wonder") and θαυμάζειν ("to wonder", "to be perplexed"), which appear in most texts classified as ekphrastic. Indeed, θαυμάζειν is also an important term in *BJ* and *AJ* with regard to the beauty and significance of the temple and the vestments.[23] At first sight it may seem to be just a matter of emphasising the beauty, prophetic effect and ritual meaning of the temple and the priestly vestments. However, the use of the word-field θαῦμα in the context of the verbs of seeing and understanding may allow a further interpretation: the perception of the visibility of the invisible.

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[9] Theon, *Progymn.* p. 24 Rabe; tr. Webb. In the imperial period, *ekphrasis* was classed among the *progymnasmata*; see Zimmermann (1999, 61 – 79 at 61 – 62); Elsner (2002, 1 – 18); see also Graf (1995, 113 – 155 at 144).

[10] Theon, *Prog.*, p. 24 Rabe, tr. Webb.

[11] For what follows see also Weissenrieder (2014, 215 – 239).

[12] Philostratus *Imag.* 2.31 (transl. LCL).

[13] Nicolaos, *Progymnasmata* 68 – 69 Felten; his ideas were favourably received and deepened by Pliny and others, see Graf (1995, 148 – 149); also Stegemann (1936, 424 – 457, at 438 – 439); Elsner (2002, 1 – 18).

[14] See Borg (2004; 25 – 57); Borg (2005, 33–53).

[15] An example of this narrow use is Gussmann (2008).

[16] Hermog. *Prog.* 22 and 23 Rabe.

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[17] Webb (1997, 112–127).

[18] Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.32; at 8.3.61–62 he offers a distinction between *evidentia (enargeia)* and *perspicuitas.*

[19] Goldhill (2007, 1–19, at 3).

[20] "What the Greeks call *phantasia*, it is through these that images of absent things are represented to the mind in such a way that we seem to see them with our eyes and to be in their presence. Whoever has mastery of them will have the most powerful effect on the emotions *in adfectibus.* Some people say that this type of man who can imagine in himself things, words, and deeds well and in accordance with truth is *euphantasiotatos*—most skilled in summoning up *phantasia*" (Quint. *Inst.* 6.2.29–30, transl. Webb).

[21] Quintilian *Institutiones* 6.2.30 (transl. Webb); the Ciceronian Latin for ekphrasis is illustratio or evidentia (*De officiis* I, 30.107; 32.115).

[22] Longinus approaches this aspect of living speech in his *Peri hypsous* 15.9: "When, then, is the effect of rhetorical visualisation? There is much it can do to bring urgency and passion into our words; but it is when it is closely involved with factual arguments that as well as persuading the listener, it enslaves him", transl. Goldhill.

[23] For *thaumazein* in connection with the temple and the vestments e.g. *AJ* 8.83; 129; 15.311; *BJ* 5.65; 179; *thauma* 15.95; *AJ* 3.216; *thaumastos BJ* 5.212; *AJ* 3.135; *AJ* 8.97, 130.

Enargeia is closely connected with seeing. Numerous examples of this have to do with the question of how and what one sees: they show the subject as he or she would see/picture her- or himself. So it is clear that the ekphrastic literature is integrated into the ancient discourse of seeing, which orients itself around physiological and psychological concepts such as cognition and comprehension. In the end, ekphrasis is employed to educate the reader and the listener as seeing subjects.[24] It is worth noting at this point that seeing (ἴδειν) is mentioned quite often.[25] This is especially important in *BJ* as the reader walks with Josephus the priest across the various thresholds – the curtains and the gates to the court – and sees before his or her eyes the holy of holies in the Jerusalem temple. In *AJ* the precise and detailed description of the tabernacle and the architecture of the temple of Solomon, the construction of the Holy of Holies as the place of indwelling of God, is made clear.

2. From the city-wall to the temple-curtain: a guided city-tour embedded in a war report in *BJ*

The Second temple and its destruction are widely discussed in the books of *BJ* (written ca. 79 – 81 CE). In addition to describing the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, Josephus reports extensively on the architecture of the temple. He emphasises the construction of the temple, the functions of the priests, and the priestly garments as he makes clear in the prologue, where he even uses the formula “neither adding nor omitting anything”.[26]

Josephus provides the description of Jerusalem and the Jerusalem temple in the form of a ‘tour guide’ at *BJ* 5.184 – 247). The context is noteworthy because the guide is embedded in the description of the revolt and the Roman war, and is thus a kind of regressive moment in the narrative. At various points, he provides information about the tent sanctuary for God (*AJ* 3.100–189), the temple of Solomon (*AJ* 8.61–110) and the second temple of Herod (*AJ* 15.380–425 and *BJ* 5.184–247), the religious services, the high priests, their sacrifices and prayers as well as the role of the high priests' regalia.[27] However, before describing the city and the Temple in detail, Josephus metaphorically embeds Judea, Jerusalem and the Temple in concentric circles of holiness. He begins with the location of Judea, which borders a city known as Anuathu Borcaeus on its northern side and an Arabic city called Iardan on its southern side;[28] the eastern boundary is a natural one, namely the Jordan, and the western boundary is defined as Jaffa. Right in the middle (μεσαιτάτη) of this delineated space is Jerusalem (and especially the Temple).[29] Here, too, the basis is the revolt against the Romans.[30] Josephus thus presents a cosmography that is based on concentric circles surrounding the Holy of Holies.[31] In doing so, he draws on cosmographic concepts that are also found in the *Book of Jubilees*, where Mount Zion is called the "navel of the world" (*Jub.* 8:19; see also *Jdg.* 9:37; *Ezk.* 38:12).[32] With regard to Judea, he uses the term ὀμφαλός, which was amongst others associated with the famous sacred site of Delphi.[33] Thus it is not surprising that Josephus assumes this association to be generally known (τινές […] ἐκάλεσαν).

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[24] Elsner (1995, 33); see also Bartsch (1989, 14 – 40). It is a misconception to think that all ekphraseis aimed at reproducing the world of the audience. On the contrary, study of the so-called Tabula points in a very different direction, as Elsner demonstrates: “The goal of the art in the Tabula is not to imitate the viewers’ world at all, but rather to initiate viewers out of their ordinary assumptions into a new exegetic reality, a truth that brings salvation”.

[25] *BJ* 5.58; 124*; AJ* 3.81, 81, 102, 137, 146, 155; 8.84, 99, 118; 15.380.

[26] *BJ* 1.26. See for the importance of the formula: Inowlocki (2005, 3 – 26); Unnik (1978, 26 – 40); Feldman (1998, 539 – 543). Similar wordings are already used in *Deut.* 4:2; 12:32; 13:1^{LXX}; *Koh.* 3:14^{LXX}; *Sir.* 18:6; 42:21; *Aristeas* 311.

The treatise *Contra Apionem* refers to the vestments of high priests only briefly and will largely be ignored in my discussion. See the excellent book by Gerber (1997).

With his companion, a foreigner (*BJ* 5.223 τοῖς […] ἀφικνουμένοις *ξένοις* πόρρωθεν), he slowly approaches the temple and its various courts and partitions (the partition between Jews and non-Jews[34] in *BJ* 5.193; between Israelites and priests; and between pure and impure Israelites in *BJ* 5.226–227). Josephus begins with the first courtyard (ὁ πρῶτος περίβολος *BJ* 5.190–192), the outer, or gentiles’, courtyard.[35] This was open to non-Jews as well as Jews and Josephus succumbs to its beauty, describing the extraordinary beauty of the columns and the royal Stoa at the southern end of the temple complex. The terms that Josephus uses can also be found in Pausanias’ *Periegesis*, as Ehrenkrook has convincingly shown,[36] so one might assume that Josephus wanted to compare it to the beauty of polytheistic temples. However, this is not at all the case, as the following excerpt demonstrates: “The costliness of the material, its beautiful craftsmanship and harmonious combination created an unforgettable sight, and yet neither the painter’s brush nor the sculptor’s chisel had decorated the work from the outside”.[37] Although Josephus praises the royal Stoa in glowing terms, it is clear that he is emphasising the absence of painting (ζωγραφία) and sculpture (γλυφίς), contrasting it with the natural beauty of the material (φυσικὴ πολυτέλεια) and the simple panels (κεδρίνοις δὲ φατνώμασιν ὠρόφωντο: *BJ* 5.190–191). The fact that this description of the simple decorations is truly unusual can be seen from a comparison with *AJ* 15.416, where various materials are emphasised (αἱ δ’ ὀροφαὶ ξύλοις ἐξήσκηντο γλυφαῖς πολυτρόποις σχημάτων ἰδέαις), like Greek and Roman architectural elements (Corinthian columns: *AJ* 15.414). In his tourist guide, Josephus thus first insists that the Jerusalem temple is just as beautiful as the Greek temples and then goes on to emphasise that this is due particularly to its aniconic construction style.[38]

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[27] See Schimanowski (2011, 319–320).

[28] Avi-Yonah (1966, 155–156).

[29] See Joseph. *BJ* 3.52: τινές οὐκ ἀσκόπως ὀμφαλὸν τὸ ἄστυ τῆς χώρας ἐκάλεσαν.

[30] See Shahar (2004) and Landau (2006, 246); see also Goodman (2007), who assumes a hypothetical visitor to Jerusalem and Rome.

[31] Numerous studies subscribe to Josephus' view of the archaeology of Herod's temple, which cannot be discussed in more detail here; still of importance are the extensive explanations by Busink (1970, 2.1062–1251); Roller (1998); Lichtenberger (1999); Jaap (2000); Richardson (2004, 253–307).

[32] In addition, it can be shown that rabbinical literature in particular focuses at length on this concentric concept, as seen, for instance, in the Mishnah treatise of Kelim, which includes ten different levels of holiness for Jerusalem, starting with the country of Israel, Israel's city walls, the city of Jerusalem, the temple mount and the various courtyards.

[33] See e.g. Price (1999, 56).

[34] See also *AJ* 15.11.5; *BJ* 5.2; 6.2.4; *BJ* 5.226 f.; Clermont-Ganneau (1881, 132–33); Fry (1975, 20); see also *OGIS* II 598, 294–295; *CIG* II 1400, 328–330. Sklar (2005, 15–20); Nihan (2007, 59–68).

The second courtyard, τὸ δεύτερον ἱερόν, is separated from the first by a warning notice and a dividing wall using the term τρυφάκτος.[39] This dividing wall receives astonishingly little discussion in ancient literature. It is primarily Josephus who refers to the dividing wall in his description of the sanctuary. However, Josephus is not the only one to mention this wall: one sign, a well-preserved block made of limestone, was found on the north side of the Jerusalem temple courtyard.[40] A fragment of another sign, a spoil, was discovered in a graveyard near St. Stephen’s Gate, also known as the Lion’s Gate.[41] While the second sign is not as well preserved, the texts are broadly the same, excepting a few minor differences.[42] The text reads: “No alien (μηθένα ἀλλογενῆ) may enter [the area] within the balustrade (ἐντὸς τοῦ […] τρυφάκτου) and the enclosure (καὶ περιβόλου) around the temple. Whoever is caught, on himself shall be put blame for the death which will ensue (ἑαουτῷ αἴτος ἔσται διὰ τὸ ἐξακολουθειν θάνατον)”.[43] By using the term τρυφάκτος as well, Josephus is protecting the purity of the sanctuary. He also uses several terms for non-Jews who are not permitted to enter the sanctuary: ἀλλοεθνήν (*AJ* 15.417), μηείς (*BJ* 6.125), *alienigenae* (*Ap.* 2.108), and ἀλλόφυλος (*BJ* 5.194).[44] It is also noteworthy that Josephus lexically distinguishes the stranger ξενός from the alien ἀλλογενής who is not permitted to enter the temple.

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[35] Ben-Dov (1985, 132) argued that this outer courtyard is not part of the temple. Against this idea: Ehrenkrook (2011, 132).

[36] For instance θεωρίαν ἀξιόλογον at *BJ* 5.191; cf. Ehrenkrook (2011, 105).

[37] *BJ* 5.191, transl. Feldman.

[38] Ehrenkrook (2011, 132).

[39] He was using the term τρυφάκτος as well as the older form δρυφάκτος; see the following paragraph on these terms.

[40] Clermont-Ganneau (1881, 132–133), cf. Fry (1975, 20); note also *OGIS* II 598, 294–295; *CIG* II 1400 ll. 328–330.

[41] Iliffe (1936, 1–3). A ‘spoil’ is a displaced find without a significant context.

The term δρυφάκτος/τρυφάκτος, ‘partition’, is first found in Aristophanes,[45] and later in inscriptions, most of which associate it with one of two contexts, courtrooms and temples.[46] The term, often in the plural, is used to describe a barrier or dividing wall in public buildings, especially those that (also) served as council-chambers.[47] The word is used for a barrier made of wood in a longish inscription from Delos.[48] Herodian of Alexandria uses the term δρυφάκτος in his abridged *Reliquiae* with the same sense.[49] The priest Josephus, but not the stranger, can pass this barrier and so gain access to the inner courtyard, the ἐνδόν αὐλή, which only ritually pure Jewish men may enter (*BJ* 5.227; not mentioned in *AJ*) and to the women’s courtyard, γυναικωνῖτις (*BJ* 5.199; 204; not mentioned in *AJ*) likewise called an ‘inner courtyard’, ἐντὸς περίβολος (*AJ* 15.418; not mentioned in *BJ*), which ritually pure Jewish women from Judea and the diaspora may enter.

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[42] The Latin version mentioned in Joseph. *BJ* 5.194 has not been found to date.

[43] Cf. the further discussion in Adna (1999, 31). He and others have argued convincingly that these signs would have been put up at the end of the first construction phase, in other words 12/11 or 10/9 BCE. This seems plausible if the signs are indeed an addition by Herod.

[44] Gussmann (2008, 351) points out that Josephus did not use ἀλλογενής because -γένος contained a “genealogical connotation”.

[45] *IG* I^3.64.14 ἄνευ δρυφάκτου τὴν δίκην μέλλεις καλεῖν, ὃ πρῶτον ἡμῖν τῶν ἱερῶν ἐφαίνετο, cf. Pl. *Euthyd.* 277e2f.

[46] See Thdt. *Qu.in Ex.*60, who is familiar with the term for the tabernacle: δρυφάκτῳ […] ἡ σκηνὴ προσεώκει.

[47] This particularly applies to the references in Aristophanes and the Alexandrian grammarian Aelius Herodianus.

[48] ἔκ τε τῆς περιλειπομένης ξυλικῆς ὕλ[ης τὸν δρ]ύφακτον καὶ αὐτὸν κα[τ]ηριμ[μ]ένον καὶ [τόν τε] ναὸν τᾶς Τύχης καὶ τὸ ἀ[ρχαῖο]ν Καισ[ά]ρειον [κ]ατασ[κ]ευάσας [π]α[ρα]δώσειν […]: *IG* XII.3.326.25.

[49] See Herodianus ed. Lehrs (1848) II 494.16, though this work contains much suppositious material.

The stranger seems not to be a conqueror but, rather, an admirer of the temple. The narrative perspective changes from outside the temple where the stranger could join the priest (“we have already observed”; “this part was open to our view”: *BJ* 5.208 – 209; “before you come to the tower”), to the steps where Josephus entered into the sanctuary (“they went up”; “that nation”/“our nation”; “those priests”).[50] He describes the subdivision of the temple area into temple courts,[51] forecourts and the temple building proper, capturing the space’s contours in exact detail (see 3.1 and 3.2).[52] Finally, the high priest is mentioned, because he alone can enter the Holy of Holies.[53] Access to the Holy of Holies initiates viewers into a new reality: They see that in some respects, God, the Temple, and the high priest form, in an accord between heaven and earth, the guide of the Jewish people.

3. (In-)sights in the past as prototype for the present in *AJ*

The history of the priestly vestments is described in *AJ*, written around 94 CE, as a synthesis of the history of the temple and the high priests: the main parts, 1 – 10 and 11 – 20, refer to the construction and destruction of the Temples: the temple of Solomon in 586 BCE and the second temple in 70 CE. In each case, the history of the temple is followed by a prosopography of high priests (*AJ* 10.151 – 153; 20.224 – 251).[54] In this context it is worth noting that Josephus writes in his introduction that he will present τὴν παρ’ ἡμῖν *ἀρχαιολογίαν* καὶ διάταξιν τοῦ πολιτεύματος ἐκ τῶν Ἑβραϊκῶν (*AJ* 1.5).[55] We can read the frequent reference to the Jewish πολιτεία as echoing the laws of the true lawmaker (νομοθέτης), whom Josephus believes to be Moses and who stands in contrast to the lawmaker who refers to mythologies (*AJ* 1.15: καθαρὸν τὸν […] λόγον τῆς παρ᾽ ἄλλοις ἀσχήμονος μυθολογίας).

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[50] *BJ* 5.226 περιέστεφε δὲ τόν τε ναὸν καὶ τὸν βωμὸν εὔλιθόν τι καὶ χαρίεν γείσιον ὅσον πηχυαῖον ὕψος, ὃ διεῖργεν ἐξωτέρω τὸν δῆμον ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερέων; *BJ* 5.211 outside – inside perspective ἔξωθεν – ἔνδον; outside: *BJ* 5.222 ἀπέπαλλεν αὐγὴν; *BJ* 5.223: χιόνος πλήρει κατεφαίνετο; pure – impure.

[51] See for the tent *AJ* 3.100 ff.

[52] In his building report Josephus gives the dimensions of the temple as 60 cubits (c.30 m.) by 20 cubits (10 m.), with a height of 30 cubits (c.15 m.); *AJ* 8.64 mentions 60 cubits; the figures differ in LXX as well).

[53] *BJ* 5.219 ἔκειτο δὲ οὐδὲν ὅλως ἐν αὐτῷ, ἄβατον δὲ καὶ ἄχραντον καὶ ἀθέατον ἦν πᾶσιν, ἁγίου δὲ ἅγιον ἐκαλεῖτο.

[54] See Thoma (1989, 196 – 216, here 202 ff.); Gussmann (2008, 275 ff.) (without reference to Thoma); Gäckle (2014, 247).

[55] Numerous scholars have tried to interpret the introduction to *AJ* in light of the historiography of a historian like Dionysius of Halicarnassus, e.g. Sterling (1992, 285 f.); see critically Rajak (2001, 253).

Josephus mentions three terms for the priest's regalia: στολή, ἐσθής, and ἔνδυμα.[56] In general, στολή means military equipment, habit and especially traditional regalia. In a more narrow sense, the word has the connotation 'upper garment' or 'robe', a long flowing white garment in which a priest or hierophant enters a temple, be it a mystery cult or the sanctuary of Artemis. Josephus uses the term for the majority of the priestly or high priestly vestments (42 times); if he wants to refer to a specific part of the garment, he uses the term with the adjective 'priestly' vestment (ἡ ἱερατικὴ στολή)[57] or the genitive construction 'the vestment of (the) priests' (ἱερέων στολή)[58] and similarly for the high-priestly vestment (*AJ* 4.83: τὴν ἀρχιερατικὴν στολήν; 18.90, 93: τὴν στολὴν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως; 3.211: γὰρ Ἀαρὼν καὶ τὴν στολὴν τὴν ἱεράν; *AJ* 19.314: ἐνδὺς στολισμὸν ἱερόν).[59] He rarely uses the term for the splendid gowns or royal robes.[60] In *BJ* Josephus does not use this term. Instead, we find here the ἐσθής or ἔνδυμα, neither of which has a specific connotation, though in the Septuagint ἐσθής is often used to refer to beautiful clothing.[61] Aside from priestly garments, these terms can also refer to workaday clothes. Only in *AJ* does Josephus differentiate between holy and profane garments.

Rank in the hierarchy of the Jewish temple staff was indicated by the regalia. Josephus calls an active priest "the one wearing the priestly vestment". A high priest wore the normal priestly vestment and other representative garments mentioned above. However, clothing also symbolizes Jewish customs in another way, as an example shows: When one of the religious orders in Jerusalem, the Levites, lobbied to be allowed to wear a new article of dress, namely the white priestly stola instead of their unbleached *byssos*, they were upsetting, at any rate in Josephus' view, the traditional rules so important for proper order in Jewish society:[62] "All this was contrary to the ancestral laws", Josephus says, "and such transgression was bound to make us liable to punishment".[63]

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[56] For the following, see Wilckens (1964, 687–690); Edwards (2001, 153–159) and Gussmann (2008).

[57] *AJ* 3.107; 279; 6.359; 8.93; 9.223; 15.390, 403, 405.

[58] *AJ* 3.158, 180; 11.327.

[59] Wilckens (1964, 687–690).

[60] He can use the term in the singular and plural, even if it was only one garment: *AJ* 3.151, 158, 205, 206, 208, 279; 8.94; 11.80, 331, 335; 12.117; 15.407.408; 18.91, 92, 95; 20.216.

[61] *BJ* 1.437; 4.156, 324; 5.228: τὴν ἱερὰν ἐσθῆτα; 1.26: τὰς ἐσθῆτας τῶν ἱερέων καὶ τοῦ ἀρχιερέως; 4.164: τὴν ἀρχιερατικὴν ἐσθῆτα. 6.389; 5.231, 232: ἔνδυμα στρογγύλον θυσανωτόν. See Muraoka (2009, 293).

3.1. The vestments of priests and high priests

A careful analysis of the terminology that Josephus uses to describe vestments reveals various forms and mechanisms for specifically emphasising 'unusual' or even 'exotic' elements in the text. Josephus does not shy away from introducing new loan words in his description of the priestly and highly priestly vestments. In his description of these garments in *AJ* 3.151–187, Josephus uses Aramaic and Hebrew terms that were obscure and unfamiliar, at least in Rome, and he even changes the term from Greek to transcriptions of Aramaic terms, e. g. for priests from the Greek ἱερεύς to χαναναίας כהניא (Hebr. כהנים) and for high priests from Greek ἀρχιερεύς to ἀραβάχην רבא כהנא (Hebr. גדול כהן).[64] The priests spoke Aramaic, and since the second century BCE Aramaic was most likely their written language; however, it was not known to the Romans, who most scholars think would have been Josephus' target audience. But it would be quite mistaken to think that Josephus chose to transliterate from Aramaic into Greek in order to intensify the exotic flavour of the text – Hebrew would have been quite exotic enough for a Roman reader. Rather what Josephus seeks to do is to set up Aramaic as a priestly language, implying that its use dates back to the time of the tent of the tabernacle. In other words, he is deliberately shifting Aramaic out of the everyday world and representing it to outsiders as a priestly language in use ever since the days of the tent of the by representing it as a priestly language, establishing the era of the tent of the tabernacle as an ideal time.

(1) After the rites of purification, priests and high priests put on their μαναχάσην, from the Hebrew מכנסי-בד (*Exod.* 28:42),[65] a kind of underwear συνακτήρ (literally: 'that which draws together')[66] which occurs in Greek only here, even though Josephus is well aware of other Greek terms used in the LXX.[67] Over these drawers priests and high priests wear a "linen garment of double texture"

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[62] Haran (1985, 175–188); Jenson (1992).

[63] *AJ* 20.218.

[64] For the following Aramaic terms see already Rengstorf (1979); Hayward (2002); Swartz (2012, 33–54).

[65] See Rengstorf (1979). See also Gussmann (2008) who mentions in some footnotes the Aramaic reference.

[66] Rengstorf (1979, Vol. 4, 351).

[67] See e. g. *Exod.* 36:3, 5^{LXX}; *Exod.* $28{:}42^{\text{LXX}}$.

(*AJ* 3.153), which is called χεθομένη, a transliteration from the Aramaic כתונא (*Exod.* 28:40).[68] According to Feldman, this term may be related to the Greek word χιτών, a tunic, but in this case reaching to the ankles. This tunic is worn by both priests and high priests alike.[69] The next item is the girdle as βαΐθ from the Hebrew אבנט (*Exod.* 28:4, 39). Josephus mentions that this girdle is embroidered with scarlet, purple, blue-purple (also known as hyacinth) and fine linen and the fabric seems “like the skin of a serpent” and has “flowers [...] woven into it” (*AJ* 3.155).[70] Josephus uses the term μασσαβάνης from the Aramaic term משבצת (literally ‘checker work’ [Rengstorf], i.e. multi-coloured fabric; *Exod.* 28:4, 39 speaks of כתנת תשבץ, ‘checkered tunic’ instead).[71] Again, this term does not appear elsewhere in ancient literature (*AJ* 3.156).

(2) The high priests put a second tunic “made of hyacinth”[72] and interwoven with gold which is called μεείρ from the Hebrew מעיל, robe (*Exod.* 28:31), which is

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[68] In his description of the garments Josephus is following a long tradition; see Hayward (2002) which is one of the foundational books for Josephus’s use of vestments; see also Gussmann (2008, 384 f.) without any reference to Hayward.

[69] Josephus reflects notions found in another, slightly older, Jewish source. In *Wisdom of Solomon* 18:20 – 25 we find a *relecture* of Qorah‘s rebellion and of the plague which followed (*Num.* 16:1 – 50), the latter relieved by Aaron’s timely appearance “between the living and the dead” (*Num.* 16:48) to offer an incense sacrifice. Aaron is dressed in his priestly garments when he performs this act of atonement: “For upon his robe which reached down his feet the whole universe was depicted, and the glories of the fathers were upon the engraving on the four rows of stones, and your majesty was represented on the diadem on his head. From these the destroyer withdrew; these he feared, for merely the experience of anger was enough” (*Wis.* 18:24 – 25). The description here moves from the body-covering through the ephod to the head. The vestments are conceived as liturgical weapons, like the “prayer and propitiation by incense” (18:21). Aristeas likewise describes the vestments of the high priest Eleazer from foot to head: “We were greatly astonished, when we saw Eleazar in the worship, both as regards the mode of his dress, and the majesty of his appearance, which he wore, a tunic and the precious stones upon it. There were golden bells upon his ankle length robe, giving forth a peculiar kind of music sound, and on both sides of these there were pomegranates with variegated flowers of a marvelous color. He was girded with a girdle of excellence beauty, woven in the most beautiful colors. On his breast he wore the oracle of God, as it is called, in which are set twelve stones, of different kinds, inlaid in gold, containing the names of the leaders of the tribes, according to their original order, each one flashing forth in an indescribable way its own particular color. On his head he wore a so-called tiara, and upon this in the middle of his forehead an inimitable mitre, the royal crown full of glory with the name of God inscribed in sacred letters on a plate of gold [...]”. (*Aristeas* 96 – 98; transl. Hayward). See further Hayward (2002).

[70] The Babylonian Jews call it ἐμία, referring to the fact that the same equivalence in Aramaic is found in Jerome *Ep.* 64 (*CSEL* 54.598, 16 – 18).

[71] See Feldman (2004, 273); see also Rengstorf (1979, Vol.3, 57), who defines it as “priestly vestment (interwoven with gold, embroidered with gold)”.

[72] Joseph. *AJ* 159, tr. Feldman.

a *hapax legomenon* in ancient literature (*AJ* 3.159; cf. Rengstorf). At the bottom is a fringe containing small precious-metal bells and balls recalling pomegranates: "Golden bells and pomegranates hang side by side from the fringes, the bells of thunder, the pomegranates of lightning".[73] Here Josephus may be associating thunder and lightning with God's presence, God's voice redeeming Israel at the Exodus and in this sense a divine revelation as described in *Isa.* 30:30; *Ps. 1*8:13.14; *Job* 37:4. With these adornments, the high priests' second tunic assured worshippers of God's presence with Israel in the past, present and future. In *AJ* 3.184 Josephus also speaks of gold that is woven into the vestment of the high priests. The term αὐγή can denote the 'light of the sun's rays', and the verb αὐγέω means to shine or glitter. Josephus allegorises the gold too, as a token "of the sunlight, which is available to all" (*AJ* 3.184). In the same sense, the golden crown on the head of the high priest glints in the light "in which God most delights" (*AJ* 3.187). Josephus attaches great importance to the glitter of the priestly ornaments:[74]

The radiance or 'sheen' is a reprise of the shining cloud that in former times appeared to aid Israel in times of need (*Exod.* 34:5; 40:34; *Num.* 10:34 f.). Further, he emphasises in the context of Solomon's temple that "heaven, although concealed, is not closed" (*BJ* 5.208). This introduces a further point, the cosmological significance of this entire complex, architecture, furnishings and priestly vestments. Josephus leaves no doubt about the cosmic significance of the garments, the curtains, the high priests, vestments and the cultic architecture.[75]

(3) This is especially true if one considers a third item, called in Hebrew אפד, ephod (*Exod.* 28:6), in the Septuagint and Greek literature ἐπωμίς, and in Josephus ἐφώδης (*AJ* 3.162, 163, 164, 170). In Greek literature, the term refers to a part of a woman's tunic fastened at the shoulder with a brooch.[76] In relation to the high priest's vestment, it seems to have been a sort of short embroidered cape covering the shoulders, with a gap at mid-breast. This gap was filled by an item Josephus calls ἐσσήν (*AJ* 3.163, 166, 170, 171, 185, 216, 217, 218), in Hebrew חשׁן ('oracle'; *Exod.* 28:15), LXX λογεῖον, which may connote a 'speaking-place' or an 'oracle' (*AJ* 3.163).[77] The oracle is reflected in the two shining sardonyxes, one at each shoulder, upon which the names of the sons of Jacob were engraved (*AJ* 3.166). According to Feldman, the rabbinic tradition (*Yoma* 73b) thought they carried the names Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and possibly also the term

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[73] Joseph. *BJ* 5.231, tr. Feldman.

[74] Joseph. *AJ* 3.215, transl. Feldman.

[75] For further details, see Hayward (2002).

[76] Feldman (2004, 275).

[77] Feldman (2004, 275 n. 428) refers here to the function of Urim and Thummim.

for tribes, שׁבטים.[78] Josephus emphasises the Hebrew characters, which he, in connection with the engraving in the crown, can call “holy characters” (*AJ* 3.178). These sardonyxes have oracular properties showing the divine presence and the will of God in worship. Putting these points together we should, therefore, conclude that this is a cultic oracle.

God is also reflected in the twelve precious stones on the breastplate of the *ephod*. If these precious stones gleam, they predict a victory. To that extent, the breastplate and the sardonyx stones can be called a ‘war oracle’. Josephus elsewhere recounts that the high priest John Hyrcanus I (134–104 BCE) – while offering incense alone in the Temple – heard a (divine) voice declaring “that his sons had just defeated Antiochus”.[79] And, at *AJ* 13.282, he reports that Hyrcanus experienced a vision while asleep (φανέντα κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους αὐτῷ τὸν θεόν). God revealed (δείξαντος) to him that his son Alexander Jannai would succeed him (*AJ* 13.322). These war oracles ended with the death of John Hyrcanus I, to whom, as the last Hasmonean, Josephus ascribed divinatory skill “because God was displeased with the transgression of the law” (*AJ* 3.217; transl. Feldman). The power of the nation is understood in the context of the nation’s apostasy of the law and this is symbolised in the vestment of the high priest, specifically in the precious stones.

The high priest also wears a hyacinth-coloured cap “without a cone-shaped top” which is called μασναεφθῆς Hebrew מצנפת (*Exod.* 28:4, 39). In *Exod.* 28 the term refers to the head covering, the mitre, of a high priest.[80] Josephus goes on to describe another form of much more formal head-gear, the mitre of the high priest, which is a three-tiered golden crown with swathes of blue embroidery:

> Furthermore, the head-dress appears to me to symbolize heaven, being blue; else it would have not have borne upon it the name of God, blazoned upon the crown – a crown, moreover, of gold by reason of that sheen in which the Deity most delights.[81]

At *BJ* 5.235, Josephus mentions that there was another golden crown “whereon were embossed the sacred letters [of God]: to wit, four vowels”[82] (φωνήεντα τέσσαρα). *Exod.* 28:36; 36:37$^{\text{LXX}}$ speaks of “holy for God”. Holy does not refer to the name of God but to the characters: *BJ* 5.235 τὰ ἱερὰ γράμματα and *AJ* 3.178 ἱεροῖς γράμμασι τοῦ θεοῦ.[83] Josephus does not count this cap and the golden crown as a third vestment because it belongs to God (Gussmann, 2008). The sacred characters of God's name are represented through the high priestly vestments and golden crown to the Jewish people.

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[78] See Feldman (2004, 276). For the Christian reception history see Orig. *In Psalmos* 2.

[79] Joseph *AJ* 13.282–283; transl. Marcus.

[80] Josephus also reverses the order of *Exod.* 28:2–39: whereas the Bible text begins with the garments of Aaron, and ends with a brief description of the ordinary priest, Josephus describes the vestments of the priests in detail. This may be reflected in Josephus’ self-understanding as ordinary priest; see Robertson (1991, 181).

[81] Joseph. *AJ* 3.187 f.; transl. Thackeray.

[82] Transl. Thackeray.

I have mentioned above that Josephus emphasises the exotic element in *AJ:* he takes these terms neither from the Hebrew Bible nor from its translation into Greek, but transliterates them from Aramaic, the language of the priests and high priests in the temple in Jerusalem. The climax is reached in his description of the high priest's complicated headgear. Josephus reports several critical situations in which the vestments of the priests and the high priests convey the purity and holiness of the Jewish temple and communicate the will of God: when Alexander the Great (332 BCE) was standing before Jerusalem, the high priest Jaddus ordered the gates of the city to be opened and sent the people and the priests, wearing white garments and white robes respectively, toward Alexander in submission (*AJ* 11.317–347). In his full finery, the high priest Jaddus encounters Alexander outside the Holy of Holies, in fact completely outside the realm of the temple. Alexander kneels before the high priest and pays his respects to God, whose name is engraved on the golden plate of the turban's headband (*AJ* 11.331–333).[84] Josephus thus leaves no doubt about the significance of the high priestly vestments, which are not only of special beauty but also of prophetic significance.[85] The vestments have their own language which lies beyond the spoken language and heightens its symbolic character. One could almost say: the clothes want to be seen.

Naturally, this conclusion feeds the expectation that the innermost aspects of the cult will also be found in transliterations of Aramaic and Hebrew terms. However, this expectation is not fulfilled.

3.2. The purity of the priests

The semantic field of holy-profane, pure-impure is central for Josephus in general, but especially in his discussion of the priests and high priests (ἁγνεύω, ἁγνίζω, ἁγνεία [ritually pure; see *BJ* 1.26, 229; 5.194]; ἱερός-ἱερόν [something that belongs to the divine sphere: *AJ* 3.258]; καθαρεύω, καθαρίζω, καθάριος [ritually clean]; βέβηλος [profane]; μιαρός [unclean]). The frequency of the occurrence of the word-field ἱερός -ἱερόν, which occurs some 600 times, is especially striking. Though the term is avoided by the Septuagint, it is favoured by Josephus to express the idea that something belongs to the divine sphere.[86] Schrenk has pointed out that the term is used by Josephus only in the context of non-Jewish and Jewish priests (and high priests) but never for the nation of Israel as a whole. On the other hand, he notes that, in addition to synagogues (*BJ* 7.44) and the Jerusalem temple (*BJ* 4.163; 281; 6.104; *AJ* 8.107), the word is used of the temple of Apollo at Gaza (*BJ* 2.81; *AJ* 13.264) and the temple of Capitoline Jupiter (*BJ* 4.661; *AJ* 14.36; 19.4), a ἱερόν. Josephus uses also the word-field καθαρεύω, καθαρίζω, and καθάριος, in Jewish and non-Jewish religious contexts, for the purity of a thing. The word-field of ἁγνεύω, ἁγνίζω, ἁγνεία and ἁγνός is unusual because it is largely absent in the Septuagint (קדש 'holy' otherwise in the translation ἅγιος). A trend can be identified here which has also been found in Greek *leges sacrae*. Chaniotis, Bremmer and others have argued that, at least in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, if not occasionally earlier, we find a tendency to extend the notion of impurity to the mind, such that "Reinheit des Körpers meint, rein zu denken".[87] With regard to external purity, Josephus understands the word field ἁγνεύω, ἁγνίζω, ἁγνεία and ἁγνός in terms of ritual cleanness beyond what one could verbalise and see.[88] He takes for granted that the purity of priests must far exceed that of all other Israelites: Τῶν δ' ἱερέων καὶ διπλασίονα τὴν ἁγνείαν ἐποίησε (*AJ* 3.276).

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[83] See Gussmann (2008, 382).

[84] See Hayward (2002); Thoma (1989, 202); Gussmann (2008).

[85] Especially clear with regard to Hyrcanos I; see *Ant.* 13.300; 13.282–283; 13.322).

Besides cleansing with cold water,[89] which is connected with priestly prayers (*AJ* 18.19), a priest is expected to perform a cleansing offering (*AJ* 1.341 f.; 3.261–273; with blood: 2.312). Josephus goes beyond Leviticus (*Lev.* 21:14; *Ezk.* 44:21 [abstinence only when entering the temple]), in demanding that priests should stay away from taverns and prostitutes and requiring abstinence from wine as well (*AJ* 3.276).[90] A central aspect of priestly holiness is that a priest or high priest should be without any physical defect, as the repetition of the root ἀφελεῖς [...] ἀφέλειαν in *AJ* 3.278 indicates. And it seems natural for Josephus that the wife of a priest and his family should be of 'pure origin' (*AJ* 11.153; 11.307 the wife of a priest cannot be a proselyte). However, ritual purification involves not just the body but also the mind, an ideal that finds particular expression in prayers (especially for the Essenes: *AJ* 18.19; *BJ* 2.128 – 131, 138). On this point Josephus goes beyond the Septuagint requirements. The purity laws focus on the cleansing of the body, whereas Josephus formulates additional rules with regard to the pollution of the soul. The immortal soul lives in the body as in a prison and can hope for freedom only at the death of the physical body (*Ap.* 2.203).[91]

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[86] Schrenk (1938, 221–284).

[87] See esp. Chaniotis (1997, 142–179); Chaniotis (2012, 123–139); Bremmer (2002, 106–108); Günther (2012, 245–260).

[88] *AJ* 8.97: θαυμαστὸν δὲ καὶ λόγου παντὸς ἀπέφηνε μεῖζον, ὡς δὲ εἰπεῖν καὶ τῆς ὄψεως.

[89] *AJ* 3.152: ὅταν δὲ προσίῃ ταῖς ἱερουργίαις ὁ ἱερεὺς ἡγνευκὼς ἣν ὁ νόμος ἁγνείαν προαγορεύει, πρῶτον μὲν περιτίθεται τὸν μαναχάσην λεγόμενον; 3.205.

[90] Gussman (2008, 370 ff.).

In my view, the choice of the word-fields ἁγνεύω, ἁγνίζω, ἁγνεία and ἱερός -ἱερόν, which were particularly important in the *leges sacrae* of polytheistic temples but rarely used in the Septuagint, should be interpreted as a deliberate appropriation of theological concepts of holiness from the Greek context. By offering a certain amount of additional exegesis, Josephus tries to makes clear that this is an attempt to add moral integrity (of heart, of soul) to the traditional purity requirements.

3.3. The Temple

In several places, Josephus analyzes the 'tent set up for God' (*AJ* 3.100 – 189), the temple of Solomon (*AJ* 8.61 – 110), the second temple (of Herod) (*AJ* 15.380 – 425 and *BJ* 5.184 – 247)[92] and the worship that took place there, centering around the role of the high priest. Josephus treats all of these as essential preconditions for individual acts of sacrifice and prayer.[93] Most telling in this regard is the fact that the foundational narratives describing the high priests' vestments occur in the account of the tent in the desert (*AJ* 3.100 – 189) and in the city tour with the stranger before the destruction of the Temple (*BJ* 5.184 – 247). The important question for Josephus is how the Israelites live and what they have to do so that YHWH can "dwell in their midst" (*Exod.* 25:8; 29:45 – 46). Together with cultic and moral laws, the sanctuary is most crucial in this regard, as it is built to be YHWH's dwelling place. For Josephus the ideal dwelling place is, no doubt, the temple in Jerusalem. However, the notion of a portable sanctuary, which comes up again and again, also reflects the belief that the geographical position of the sanctuary is not of supreme importance. If the divine is to dwell in a sanctuary built by human hands, this sanctuary must be holy. Of particular importance to Josephus (*AJ* 8) is Solomon's prayer in *3Kings* 8$^{\mathrm{LXX}}$: Just like

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[91] See for a possible Platonic background Schrenk (1938).

[92] The differences between *AJ* and *BJ* with regard to the measurements are significant, but this is not my focus here.

[93] See Schimanowski (2011, 319 – 320).

Solomon, he initially links God's presence to the temple (*3Kings* 8:14 – 21$^{\text{LXX}}$) and in the further course of the text locates this presence in heaven (*3Kings* 8:22, 30, 38 – 39, 44 – 45$^{\text{LXX}}$); as in *3Kings* 8$^{\text{LXX}}$, he refers to the fact that prayers are heard in heaven. With this, Josephus documents an idea about the place where God resides, relocating it from the Temple to heaven.[94] Thus Josephus addresses the possibility of encountering God in heaven after the destruction of the temple.

In contrast to the case in *BJ*, spatial boundaries in *AJ* are not important in an absolute sense, as he avoids mentioning several dividing walls in the Temple courtyard. Fundamental here is the notion that, in the form of his *kābôd*, God 'inhabits' the sanctuary (שָׁכַן *Exod*. 25:8; *AJ* 8.102). Josephus accepts that different areas of the sanctuary have different degrees of holiness and makes a point of describing the passages between them. Detailed reference is also made to the materials and the colours, which reflect these degrees of holiness.

The description of the Temple starts with the vestibule, which protects the entrance-doors (*3Kings* 6:3), and is really just an extension of the long walls of the cella.[95] Josephus uses the standard Greek term πρόναος or πρόδομος for it.[96] After describing the outward appearance of the Temple buildings and the courtyards, Josephus explains how the main cella is divided into two parts, the so called דְּבִיר (*debîr*), the Holy of Holies or the 'inner house' (*3Kings* 6:27; 7:50).[97] In his accounts, especially in *AJ* 8, Josephus does not explicitly mention a prohibition against entry. Nevertheless, there is clear evidence for a separation between the Holy of Holies, the main cella, the 'outside' porch and courtyard. At *AJ* 8.71–72 he uses a term for this separation otherwise rarely found in ancient literature, μέσος τοῖχος, lit. 'middle wall'. Along with heterogeneous materials and decorations,[98] it marks the Temple cella as the core of the cult area. The middle wall signals explicitly an actual borderline. Besides, the door is at the same time a means of access to the room and therefore a gradual borderline as well as an actual one. This may be the reason why there is a further boundary-marker in addition to the doors, which is described as follows: "In front of the doors hung brightly coloured curtains made, not only of hyacinth, purple and scarlet, but also of the most luminous and softest linen". Josephus refers to the καταπέτα-

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94 On the subject, see Schmid (2006, 117).

95 Hellmann (1996, 237 – 247; Hellmann (1992, 346 – 347). For the following see: Weissenrieder (2016, 216).

96 Hebrew אוּלָם (*'ûlam*), Greek τὸ αιλαμ κατὰ πρόσωπον τοῦ ναοῦ. The Greek term in the Septuagint τὸ αιλαμ is indeed unusual. See e. g. Vitruv. *Arch*. 4.4.1; *IG* IV 1484; 1487; XII, 2. 11; IX 3073; *CIG* 2754; *IMylasa* 502; *CID* II 62IA. *AJ* 8.65; see also e. g. *IG* IV 203

97 This is referred to in the Septuagint as δαβιρ.

98 See further: Weissenrieder (2016, 217).

σμα, the curtain ten times (*BJ* 5.212; 219; 232; 6.390; 7.161; *AJ* 8.75; 8.90; 12.250; 14.107). He follows *Exod* 27:16 in distinguishing between an outer curtain, which divides the *adyton* from the porch (*BJ* 2.212–214), and an inner one, which divides the adyton from the Holy of Holies (*BJ* 5.219; *AJ* 8.90; cf. *Exod.* 26:31–37; 37:3; *Lev.* 16:2$^{\mathrm{LXX}}$).[99] This embroidered curtain is interpreted by Josephus as representing the four elements.[100]

The passage carries on to claim that features of the curtain, except for the zodiacal signs, figured the 'mysteries'.[101] This comparison between fabrics and the elements of nature is based on two allegorising strategies: in three cases the symbolic associations of the individual colours ('hyacinth' = air, purple (dye) = sea, scarlet = fire) and in two, appeal to their derivation (flax grows on the earth; the murex that provides purple dye is a shell-fish).[102]

As mentioned above, behind this curtain and the middle wall is the Holy of Holies. The Hebrew term is מִשְׁכָּן, *mishkan* (*Exod.* 25:9; 26:1ff.; 40:34–35), the model of a tent or tabernacle, which is translated in the Septuagint as σκηνή. This portable temple, the Tent, is connected with the story that Israel received its ritual laws on Mount Sinai on the way to the Promised Land. In principle the portable temple symbolises that it is Israel that is considered by God as an ideal dwelling place.

According to Josephus, the cult in the temple and the high priest reach mysteriously into the realm of God: "In no other city shall there be either an altar or a temple, for God is one and the stock of the Hebrews one".[103] The triad of God, temple, and high priest is related to Josephus' thinking in analogies and correlations. The term Josephus uses for thinking in analogies is most often ἀποσημαίνω, which means to 'signify' or 'is an allegory of' (esp. *AJ* 3.181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 292, 293). This recognition is preceded by a vision. Josephus uses the word frequently for divine manifestations; these manifestations relate to the unseen world and to wonder (θαῦμα). God's very essence can be indicated only by negative attributes: Moses "represented him as single and uncreated and immutable through all eternity, more beautiful than any mortal form, known to us by his power, but as to what he is like in essence, unknown".[104] Josephus alludes here to three aspects of the divine referring to the criteria of temporality, beauty, and knowledge. The first aspect (καὶ ἀγένητον καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἀίδιον χρόνον ἀναλλοίωτον) refers to the Jewish understanding that God is not created and is eternal in relation to created matter and time.[105] The Greek term ἀναλλοίωτος is used here and in Philo *Somn.* 1.188, with reference to the unseen world.[106] The second aspect (πάσης ἰδέας θνητῆς) refers to the Jewish aniconic tradition, which is again reflected in the Holy of Holies. The third aspect is God's (unknowable) essence (οὐσία; see also *AJ* 10.278; 20.268). It is thus that God "directs the universe" (ἡγεμόνα τῶν ὅλων) and the high priest is the "head of the whole body of priests".[107] Tacitus notes, that Judeans *mente sola unumque numen intellegunt*; those who represent God's human form are said to be impious. Their God, he says, is *summum [...] et aeternum neque imitabile neque interiturum* (*Hist.* 5.5.4). Therefore, foundation and ground point beyond themselves to the cosmos (πρὸς ὄγκον κόσμου τε χάριν καὶ μεγαλουργίας ἐπενοεῖτο). Josephus' claims here are based on the notion that the high priest's vestments are a microcosm of the cosmos as a whole.[108] I have already referred to his claim that the high priests, wearing the sacred vestments (τὴν ἱερὰν ἐσθῆτα περικείμενοι), lead "ceremonies of cosmic significance" (καὶ τῆς κοσμικῆς θρησκείας).[109] The assassination in the city-centre of the high priest Ananos, the son of Ananos/ Hannas (Hp 24), in the year 66/67 CE was, thus, in Josephus' view, the beginning of a cosmic collapse: the fall of Jerusalem begins with the death of the high priest:

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[99] Καταπέτασμα is also mentioned in connection with the Tent in *Exod.* 37:5.16; *Num.* 3:26$^{\mathrm{LXX}}$; and *Aristeas* 86. Sometimes Josephus uses the plural form καταπετάσματα which refers to both curtains (*BJ* 5.232; 6.389; *AJ* 8.75; 12.250; 14.107).

[100] *BJ* 5.212–214.

[101] Cf. *BJ* 5.214: κατεγέγραπτο δ᾽ ὁ πέπλος ἅπασαν τὴν οὐράνιον θεωρίαν πλὴν ζῳδίων.

[102] See also Gussmann (2008, 387).

[103] Joseph. *AJ* 4.201, tr. Feldmann.

[104] *Ap.* 2.167, tr. Barclay (2007, 263f.).

> So they who but lately had worn the sacred vestments, led those ceremonies of cosmic significance and been reverenced by visitors to the city from every quarter of the earth, were now seen cast out naked, to be devoured by dogs and beasts of prey. Virtue herself, I think, groaned for these men's fate, bewailing such utter defeat at the hands of vice (*BJ* 4.324–325).[110]

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[105] See Hayward (2002), ad loc; see also Barclay (2007, n. 640), who refers to the *Shema* (*Deut.* 6:4) and Diod. 1.94.2.

[106] Barclay (2007, n. 652) claims that the term is used only by Philo and Josephus and probably therefore has an Alexandrian origin. However, a number of earlier passages speak against this assumption, e.g. Arist. *Met.* 12.7, 1073a10; Diog. Laert. 4.17 (Polemon).

[107] On Josephus' notion of theocracy, see *Ap.* 2.185, tr. Barclay (2007, n. 209).

[108] This has been an important issue in recent scholarship, see e.g. Swartz (2012, 33–54), who refers to the rabbinic sources on the vestments.

[109] *BJ* 4.324.

[110] Transl. Thackeray.

The fate of Jerusalem marks the end of the priestly topography, in which the sacred mingles with the profane. The high priest cast out naked figures the end of the salvation-narrative he embodied when dressed in his vestments. The phrase τῆς κοσμικῆς θρησκείας suggests that in Josephus' view the worship was offered on behalf of the cosmos itself. The representation of creation and of the twelve tribes of Israel on the ceremonial garment is no longer possible. The cosmos is falling apart. This understanding is confirmed by Josephus' account of Jesus, son of Thebuti, who handed over to the Romans (παραδιδόναι) two lights, tables, golden vessels, the curtains and the garments of the high priest that were stored in the Temple treasury (*BJ* 6.387–389). At this point Josephus omits all mention of the cosmological significance of the vestments. All these items were necessary for the maintenance of the cult, but without the priests and the Temple they have lost their meaning. Thus it is only logical that, following the destruction of the Temple, the terms used to qualify the purity and holiness of the vestments are missing in *BJ*[111]

4. Conclusion

The writings of Flavius Josephus are considered an important witness of the last decades of the Jewish priesthood and the temple in Jerusalem. He devotes particular attention to details of the architecture of the Jewish temple in Jerusalem and the priestly vestments, which represented holiness and purity and which mediated an encounter with God, facilitated prayer and effected atonement. Josephus's goal is to provide as precise a description as possible of the temple in Jerusalem and its priests, whose powerful actions are also demonstrated by their purity and vestments. During a guided city-tour through Jerusalem to the temple and Holy of Holies in *BJ*, Flavius Josephus, himself a priest, expounds the aniconic character of Jewish religion both to Jewish and to non-Jewish readers able to read Greek, and by idealising the temple of Solomon in *AJ*, its structure of the inner sanctuary, its walls and curtains, and the tent of the tabernacle, Josephus describes God's indwelling and presence in the inner temple.

My interest here has been to emphasise the complexity of his linguistic strategy of ekphrasis in these two texts. This discussion of Josephus' sacred terminology has endeavoured to demonstrate its complexity. This complexity reflects the historical reality: by transliterating Aramaic terms Josephus emphasizes the distinctiveness of Jewish religion and its priests. By using word-fields in Greek denoting purity, he draws on the language of the Greek *leges sacrae*, which increasingly focuses on moral purity after the beginning of the first century BCE. And by applying Graeco-Roman technical terms to the temple of Solomon, he relates the Jerusalem temple to the sacred architecture of his time. Thus, although he also emphasizes the exoticism and uniqueness of Jewish religion, Josephus demonstrates a similarity to Graeco-Roman religion. *AJ* suggests different dimensions of strangeness according to the different cultural backgrounds of its readership. By dint of allegorical interpretation, the office of the high priest is represented as reproducing the order of the cosmos as well as connoting the Jewish people in worship and sacrifice. At the same time, the sacred characters of the name of God are represented to the Jewish people and Roman political leaders in the high priestly vestments and especially the golden crown. High priests are therefore more than "perfect coat-stands", to use a phrase of Utzschneider.[112] As far as Josephus is concerned, in wearing the high priestly vestments they embody the architecture of the Temple and render the divine world visible for Jewish people and Roman rulers.

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[111] See Gussmann (2008, 400).

However, he seems not to be interested in rebuilding the Jerusalem temple or in the ideal community of the priesthood. Instead, in *AJ* 8 he uses the Solomonic temple dedication prayer as evidence of the possibility of encountering God outside the Temple and beyond the actions of the priests; this prayer shifts God's residence to heaven. The reference to God in heaven is not intended to create distance from God per se, but rather allows contact to be made beyond institutional cultic contexts through purity laws. Josephus is a priest in that he cultivates the transcendence of God as well as divine condescension (*Kondeszendenz*), namely the presence and visibility of God in the Jerusalem temple and the temple priesthood, as remembered history in the context of historiography.

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[112] See Utzschneider (1988, 172), who ends his chapter with the remark: "Mit den Kleidern wird das Amt gemacht".

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Georgia Petridou

Contesting religious and medical expertise: The *therapeutai* of Pergamum as religious and medical entrepreneurs[1]

The paper focuses on the θεραπευταί of Imperial Pergamum, the religious entrepreneurs who operated within the complex of the healing sanctuary of Asclepius and who are usually seen as an innocuous cultic formation of elite patients. By contrast, this chapter argues that this group was one of the most dynamic, prolific groups of religious and to an extent medical experts. Examining this particular group of religious entrepreneurs has wider implications for both the history of medicine and the history of religion in the Imperial Era. Claims to a direct line of communication with Asclepius were made by both physicians and patients: the physicians craved divine legitimation of their methods, while the elite patients defied the need for expert intermediaries between god and knowledge and reclaimed ownership of their bodies.

The general introduction to this volume has stressed that our aim is to move away from civic priesthoods and religious offices in order to examine a wider range of religious specialists and their dynamic interplay with established religious authorities and institutions.[2] To this end, this paper focuses on the θεραπευταί of Imperial Pergamum, the religious entrepreneurs who operated within the complex of the healing sanctuary of Asclepius and who are usually seen as an innocuous cultic formation of elite patients. My argument here is that the religious group of the *therapeutai* of Pergamum was one of the most dynamic and prolific groups of religious experts of the Imperial period.

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[1] This study was conducted under the auspices of the ERC-funded project *Lived Ancient Religion: Questioning 'cults' and 'polis religion'*, directed by Jörg Rüpke and Rubina Raja at the Max Weber Center for Advanced Cultural and Social Studies, University of Erfurt (Seventh Framework programme [FP7/2013], grant agreement no. 295555). I am grateful to my co-editors, Richard Gordon and Jörg Rüpke, for all their pertinent comments and corrections. I am indebted to Philip van der Eijk, Manfred Horstmanshoff, Matteo Martelli, Alexia Petsalis-Diomidis, Antoine Pietrobelli and Peter Singer for reading a first draft of this paper and suggesting numerous valuable additions and corrections. All remaining faults are my own. The epigraphic section of this paper is further developed in my forthcoming monograph, *The Mysian Patient: Medicine and Mysteries in Aelius Aristides' Hieroi Logoi*.

[2] On the semantic field encompassed by the term 'religious specialists', see Rüpke (1996).

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I am particularly interested in the group's distinct religious practices and behaviours: the ways in which they related to other religious and medical professionals in the temple, how they contested the established monopolies of power (religious, medical and political), and how they dealt with the agonistic tendencies that evidently developed within the group. To remain truthful to the principles of *Lived Ancient Religion* (henceforth LAR), our innovative take on the study of religion in the Roman Empire which lays emphasis on the individual and the situational,[3] I look at this group closely through the eyes and the experiences of two individuals who proudly proclaimed their alliance to it, namely Galen, the celebrated physician, and Aristides, the conspicuous patient.

My analysis builds partly on recent scholarly work on how elite peer-groups influenced the experience of illness and therapy in the first and second centuries CE, and partly on fruitful applications of social-network theory to the classical world.[4] These studies have already underlined the integral role of networks and voluntary associations in creating meaning and self-identity for their members. This paper, however, lays more emphasis on the competitiveness of these groups with existing power-structures (political and religious alike), rather than their congruence.

The first section provides a brief account of the term *therapeutes* in the works of Aristides and Galen, and of its pivotal role in each author's self-representation and self-identity. The second part discusses the cultic realities behind this religious group as attested by inscriptions from the Pergamene Asclepieion. The third and final part of the paper returns to the literary sources and explores how these cultic realities are recast in Aristides' *Hieroi Logoi* (henceforth *HL*), and how they form an integral part of Aristides' self-representation as the leading light of the group.

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[3] For more information on the conceptual framework of LAR, see Rüpke (2011) and Raja and Rüpke (2015).

[4] Elite peer groups and illness experience: Petsalis-Diomidis (2010, 221–238) and Várhelyi (2010, 78–90); social-network theory and Greek religion: Eidinow (2011); Aristides' networks: Remus (2006).

1. Aristides and Galen as *therapeutai*

The term θεραπευτής belongs to one of these grey areas of expertise where the religious and the medical collide.[5] It may denote 'worshipper', 'servant of the god' and 'medical attendant'.[6] More significantly, the same term lies at the heart of Aristides' self-fashioning, as we may judge from his oneiric encounter with the emperor Marcus Aurelius included in the first book of the *HL* (*Or.* 47.23):

> On the sixth day, I dreamed that along with my teacher Alexander I approached the emperor, who sat upon a platform. When Alexander, since he was an old friend and acquaintance, first saluted him and was in turn saluted by him and his entourage, I approached. And when I saluted and stood there, the emperor wondered why I too had not come forward and kissed him (ὡς οὐ καὶ αὐτὸς προσελθὼν φιλήσαιμι). And I said that I was a *therapeutes* (a 'steadfast servant') of Asclepius. For I was content to say that much about myself (κἀγὼ εἶπον ὅτι ὁ θεραπευτὴς εἴην ὁ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ· τοσοῦτον γάρ μοι ἤρκεσεν εἰπεῖν περὶ ἐμαυτοῦ). "Therefore, in addition to other things", I said, "the god has instructed me not to kiss in this fashion (καὶ τοῦτο ὁ θεός μοι παρήγγειλε μὴ φιλεῖν οὑτωσί)". And he replied. "This suffices (καὶ ὃς, ἀρκεῖ, ἔφη)". And I remained silent. And he said, "Indeed, Asclepius is better than all to serve (καὶ ὃς ἔφη, καὶ μὴν θεραπεύειν γε παντὸς κρείττων ὁ Ἀσκληπιός)".[7]

The young Aristides studied Classical Greek literature under the guidance of one of the most famous tutors of his time, Alexander of Cotyaeion, who also happened to be tutoring the young Caesars, Marcus and Lucius Verus. It is this beloved and much-revered figure who accompanies Aristides to his oneiric meeting with the adult emperor Marcus. However, while Alexander complies with the protocol of offering a form of *proskynesis* to the emperor, his pupil refuses to follow his teacher's example on the grounds that he is a *therapeutes* of Asclepius, and may therefore prostrate himself only to the god himself.[8] I have intentionally left the term *proskynesis* untranslated, since its semantic content—especially whether the gesture implied kneeling or not—has been, and to an extent still is, a matter of debate.[9] It is clear, however, that for the Greeks the gesture belongs to the realm of divine honours (θείαι τιμαί), and was often associated with humans who were treated as the living embodiment of the divine.[10] The emperor appears not to mind. He grants Aristides' request with a comment that implies that not only did he fully understand the religious and cultural implications of the term *therapeutes* but that he may have had been intimately familiar with the religious enterprise of *therapeuein* Asclepius.

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[5] On other areas or professional expertise that oscillate between medicine and religion or magic, such as dreams, *katharsis* ('purgation') and *pharmakon* ('drug, medical portion, poison'), see Gordon (1995) and (1999); and Israelowich (2012, 92–101).

[6] E. g.: 'worshipper', 'servant of the god': Plat. *Phdr.* 252c, *Leg.*740c, *IG* XI.4.1226 (Delos, 2nd BCE); 'medical attendant': Plat., *Gorg.* 517e, *Resp.* 369d and 341c. Cf. also Hesych. ι 96.1, <Ἰατρός>· θεραπευτής. ἢ ἐφαπτίς, ἢ ἥρως Ἀθήνησιν ἀρχαῖος. καὶ ὁ Ἀπόλλων; σ 702.1, <σιοκόρος>· νεωκόρος. θεοκόρος, θεραπευτὴς θεῶν; cf. also Gal. *Methodus medendi* 3.1 Johnston and Horsley (10.159 K.): ὁ τοίνυν ἐξευρεῖν δυνάμενος ὑφ' ὧντινων ἔσται τὸ δηλούμενον ἐκ τῆς πρώτης ἐνδείξεως, οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τῶν νοσημάτων θεραπευτής. It is also a term favoured by early Jewish communities of Egypt as documented (or invented, depending on one's view) by Philo of Alexandria. On the community of the *therapeutai* in Philo, *De vita contemplativa*, see Taylor and Philip (1998), Deutsch (2006), and Angela Standhartinger's contribution in this volume.

[7] All translations, unless otherwise noted, are mine. In quoting Aristides' text, I have used Keil's edition.

The hypothesis seems to be further buttressed by yet another tête-à-tête scene, this time between the eminent philosopher-emperor and a contemporary man of letters, the renowned Pergamene physician and philosopher Galen.[11] In the second book of his *De libris propriis* (2.19 – 19 = *Scripta Minora* 2, p. 99,9 – 11 Mueller), Galen recounts how his *patrios theos Asklepios* dissuaded him from accepting Marcus Aurelius' invitation to join his military campaign against the Marcomanni; and how he vowed to serve the god as his *therapeutes* after Asclepius had cured him of a life-threatening abscess:[12]

> As soon as I arrived in Aquileia, the plague attacked us as never before. Whereupon the emperors hastily departed for Rome together with a small force of men; but the majority of us barely survived for a long period, since people died not only because of the plague but also because it was the middle of winter. Since Lucius [Verus] had departed from the world of the living whilst *en route* to Rome, Antoninus [i. e. Marcus Aurelius] brought his body there and performed the customary deification, and after that busied himself with

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[8] Beloved teacher: Aristides seems to have been extremely fond of his teacher, if we are to judge from the funeral oration he wrote in his honour (*Or.* 33.6 – 7 K. with Humbel [1994, 28 – 2]). From Lucian (*Nigr.* 21) we learn that it was common at Rome in the middle of the second century for eminent individuals to receive a form of *proskynesis*. More on this topic in Jones (1972).

[9] See Bowden (2013) for a comprehensive account of the sources that seem to attest to *proskynesis* involving prostration.

[10] As Bowden points out, the term may also refer to the allegedly obsequious behaviour of Persians towards figures of authority. Cf. Rhodes (1989, ad *Ath. Pol.* 14.4): "προσκυνεῖν was an act of homage paid by Persians to their human superiors (e. g. Hdt. 1.134.1) but by the Greeks only to the gods; the original meaning of the Greek word is 'to blow a kiss', and this is the essential part of the act, but it might on occasions be accompanied by physical abasement". On *proskynēsis* as related to the realm of divine *timai*, see Arrian, *Anab.* 4.12.3 – 4; Plut., *Alex.* 54 = Chares of Mitylene, *Histories of Alexander*, *FGrH* 125, fr. 14 with Lane Fox (1973, 300 – 301, 536 – 537) and van Straten (1974). See also Pleket (1981, 295) and Petridou (2015, 77, 152, 174).

[11] On Galen in Pergamum, see van der Eijk (2011).

[12] In all likelihood, the same illness that he describes in *De bonis malisque sucis* 1.16 – 20 Helmreich [CMG V 4,2] = 6.756 – 757 K.

> his campaign against the Germans, making every effort to take me with him. But he was persuaded to allow me to remain, on hearing that Asclepius, the god of our forefathers, advised against it (πεισθεὶς δ’ ἀφεῖναι λέγοντος ἀκούσας τἀναντία κελεύειν τὸν ‖ πάτριον θεὸν Ἀσκληπιόν), once I revealed that I had been his *therapeutes* (οὗ καὶ θεραπευτὴν ἀπέφαινον ἐμαυτόν) ever since he saved me from the fatal disposition of an abcess. He [viz. the emperor] performed *proskynesis* to the god and commanded me to wait for his own return (προσκυνήσας τὸν θεὸν καὶ περιμεῖναί με τὴν ἐπάνοδον αὐτοῦ κελεύσας), for he was confident that he would end the war quickly. He then set off to war having left behind his son Commodus, who at that time was still only a small child, and instructed his carers to try to keep him healthy, but, if he ever fell ill, to call me in to treat him (καλεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν θεραπείαν ἐμέ).

In his World’s Classics version, Peter Singer translates τὸν πάτριον θεὸν Ἀσκληπιόν here as “his personal patron god Asclepius”, implying that Marcus Aurelius was himself a devotee of Asclepius. To my mind, however, the syntactical structure *ho patrios theos* (echoed in his recently discovered *De propriis placitis*, on which see below) is an unequivocal reference to Galen’s Pergamene origins and his close links to the Pergamene Asclepieion. Nonetheless, Singer may be right in seeing an intentional ambiguity, implying that Galen and Marcus shared common cultic interests and religious expertise.[13] However that may be, it seems clear that in referring to Asclepius as his *patrios theos* Galen is laying claim to shared religious expertise and experience, thus paving the way for his major claim, namely his status as *therapeutes* of the god. Marcus’ reaction to this revelation is to offer *proskynesis* to the god and allow the Pergamene physician to disobey his orders and remain behind.

It will be noted that Galen offers no explanation of what it entailed to be a *therapeutes* of the god. The implication is that there was no need for such explanation since both the emperor and his physician shared the same linguistic tropes, the same ‘speech norms’, that is syntactical structures that members of a group were expected to hear and use frequently.[14] Aristides uses the same expression ‘*therapeutes* of the god Asclepius’ to describe his devotional relationship with Asclepius in his oneiric meeting with Marcus Aurelius. In that case, as we saw, Marcus endorsed Aristides’ defiance of court etiquette by declaring that it was indeed better to serve (*therapeuein*) Asclepius than anyone else. This group of *therapeutai* seems to have developed what the sociologists Nina Eliasoph and Paul Lichterman have termed a ‘group style’ with its distinct ‘group boundaries’ (i.e. assumptions about the group’s relationship with each other and with the healing god), 'group bonds' (i.e. assumptions about members' mutual responsibilities in the course of their meetings, formal and less formal), and, finally, 'speech norms'.[15] During their sojourn in the Asclepieion, the *therapeutai* of Pergamum were bound together by co-residence and ritual interaction as well as by the focus on their bodies as the *locus* of divine communication.[16]

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[13] This is also consistent with Galen’s constant effort to present himself as a close friend of Marcus Aurelius. Cf., e.g. *Praen.* 14.660 K.

[14] Eliasoph and Lichterman (2003, 739).

We may thus infer that Marcus shared the same cultural references and spoke the same ritual language with both Aristides and Galen, since he seems fully aware of the privileges and obligations entailed by the cultic role of Asclepian *therapeutes*. Yet historians of ancient medicine have often strongly resisted the idea that Galen, the positivist physician, might be a member of the same religious group as Aristides, the pliable patient; or, if they had been, they would surely have had quite different reactions to and functions within it. In 1981 Fridolf Kudlien, for instance, protested vehemently against such an idea, despite recognising that in the Imperial period there were physicians who were reported to have served in the Pergamene Asclepieion as ἱερεῖς or ζάκοροι:

> True, he called himself once a θεραπευτὴς Ἀσκληπιοῦ. But one should be cautious not to misinterpret this as, I think, Habicht has done who concluded from this testimony alone, that Galen had occasionally "to fulfil religious duties that required his presence". This would mean that Galen had an official function in the cult of Asclepius—an assumption for which there is, to my knowledge, no other foundation whatever. [...] even if a group of θεραπευταί formed an organisation which was naturally in some way connected with the cult, this does not at all mean that its members [...] were officials, i.e. post-holders in the cult".[17]

The truth is that, although Galen mentions his title as a *therapeutes* of Asclepius once (in *De libris propriis* 2 as discussed above), in his *De curandi ratione per venae sectionem* (4.23 = 11.314–315 K.) he gives us another snapshot of his involvement with this intimate network of religious and medical entrepreneurs, the *therapeutai* in Pergamum:[18]

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[15] Eliasoph and Lichterman (2003, 739).

[16] Cf. also Festugière (1954, 86–87).

[17] Kudlien (1981, 120).

[18] On this passage and more generally on Galen's traditional devotion to Asclepius, see Kudlien (1981); von Staden (2003); Brabant (2006); Frede (2010); Pietrobelli (2013), Brockmann (2013), Tieleman (2013), and Horstmanshoff (forthcoming). In his *Subfiguratio Empirica*, ch. 10, 78 Deichgräber, Galen reports on a patient's successful healing in the Pergamene Asclepieion: the patient was given specific, albeit extraordinary, dietary advice in his dream encounters with Asclepius (a drug made from snakes); Galen treated this oneiric diagnosis as verification for his own inkling and prescribed the same drug, which cured the patient from epilepsy. On the significance

> Now I shall explain where from I took my cue to cut the artery (ἐπὶ τὸ διαιρεῖν ἀρτηρίας). Having been instigated by dreams, two of which came to me clearly (δυοῖν ἐναργῶς μοι γενομένων), I reached for the artery between the forefinger and the thumb of my right hand and allowed it to run until the blood would stop on its own, for this is what the dream ordered me to do (κελεύσαντος οὕτω τοῦ ὀνείρατος). Not quite a whole litre (of blood) came out. And the chronic pain stopped immediately (παραχρῆμα δ' ἐπαύσατο χρόνιον ἄλγημα) especially in that place which was pressed quite hard, where the diaphragm meets the liver. For this happened to me when I was young. Even another *therapeutes* of the god in Pergamum (θεραπευτὴς δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Περγάμῳ) was released from the chronic pain on his side (χρονίου πλευρᾶς ἀλγήματος) by means of severing the artery (ἀπηλλάγη δι' ἀρτηριοτομίας) by the thumb; he also came to this conclusion by himself after having being prompted by a dream (ἐξ ὀνείρατος ἐπὶ τοῦτο ἐλθὼν καὶ αὐτός).

The passage is part of a long sequence of episodes that aim at self-promotion, by glorifying Galen's expert knowledge in venesection. While other doctors have injured and some even killed their patients by their sheer ignorance, Galen has mastered the art of venesection to the extent that he employed it to cure his own chronic pain. Oberhelman wonders where Galen's dream might have taken place, but the answer is in the text: it clearly took place when the physician was in Pergamum as a *therapeutes*, as an erudite and privileged patient who sought Asclepius' help when faced with chronic pain.[19] Where else could Galen has become intimately familiar with the details of the divinely-ordained dream that urged yet another *therapeutes* of Asclepius to cure his chronic pain on his side by enduring an arteriotomy? It is interesting to see here that other fellow *therapeutes* of the god has also no need of expert dream interpretation. He deciphers the dream by himself and proceeds with the recommended course of action.

Moreover, one could hardly miss the emphasis on the *enargeia* of these two dreams, that is, the clarity that renders other expert advice superfluous and at the same time guarantees their divine origin.[20] Most historians of medicine inter-

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of dream diagnosis in ancient medical practice, see Oberhelman (1983) and (1993); and Pearcy (2013). On medical dreams in Galen, see Hulskamp (2013, 55–68), who offers an excellent discussion of Galen's *De Dignotione ex Insomniis* (*On Diagnosis from Dreams*).

[19] Oberhelman (1983, 38, n. 16). On Asclepius specialising on treatment of chronic pain, see King (1999) and van Schaik (2015).

[20] On *enargeia* and *enargēs* as technical terms related to divine epiphanies, see Zanker (1981, 297–311), Koch-Piettre (1999, 11–21), Otto (2009), Chaniotis (2013, 174–177), and Petridou (2015, 3 and 98). Plett (2012) provides a comprehensive analysis of the semantic development of the term from Classical antiquity to early-modern times. In a passage (4.2 = 8.227 K.) from his treatise *De Locis Affectis* (*On the Affected Parts*), Galen refers to vivid dreams as symptoms of phrenitis. On

pret Galen's emphasis on the fact that he also came to the same conclusion by himself (i.e. independently of the divine message) as a reluctance to rely wholly on traditional means of treatment such as healing-divination. However, as seen also in the case of Galen's fellow *therapeutes*, this revisionistic attitude towards established forms of authority was not restricted to Galen. In fact, it was very common among the members of the religious group of the Pergamene *therapeutai*, and it is not by mere chance that Pergamum gets special mention here.

More importantly, Galen's role as a devotee of his ancestral god Asclepius seems to have been as significant for construing his self-identity as a Pergamene physician as it had been for Aristides. In the second chapter of the recently-discovered Greek manuscript of *De propriis placitis*, expertly edited by Véronique Boudon-Millot and Antoine Pietrobelli in 2005, Galen returns to his cure by Asclepius, the god, as he emphasises, to whom he offered cultic honours in Pergamum despite being ignorant of his *ousia:*

> ὁ δὲ παρ᾽ ἐμοὶ τιμώμενος ἐν Περγάμῳ θεὸς ἐπ᾽ ἄλλων τε πολλῶν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ δύναμίν τε καὶ πρόνοιαν ἐνεδείξατο ἐμέ τε θεραπεύσας ποτέ. κατὰ θάλατταν δὲ Διοσκούρων ἔχω πεῖραν οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ βλάπτεσθαί τι νομίζω τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀγνοοῦντας τὴν οὐσίαν τῶν θεῶν· τιμᾶν δ᾽ αὐτοὺς ἔγνωκα νόμῳ παλαιῷ ἑπόμενος Σωκράτους πείθεσθαι συμβουλεύοντος τοῖς τοῦ Πυθ(ίου) προστάγμασιν·[21]
>
> And the god in Pergamum whom I honour has demonstrated his power and providence again and again, including on one occasion by healing me. But, although I have experienced the protection of the Dioscuri at sea, I still think that people are ignorant of the substance of the gods. I have learned to honour them according to ancient tradition, following Socrates' advice to obey the injunctions of the Pythian oracle.

Galen intended *On my own opinions* to be an authentication device, a kind of philosophical testament to protect his medical treatises and philological commentaries from future forgeries.[22] It is significant that he chooses here to stress his bond to Asclepius by introducing the god as ὁ δὲ παρ᾽ ἐμοὶ τιμώμενος ἐν Περ-

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medical dreams as diagnostic tool in Galen, see his *Commentary on the Hippocratic "Prorrhetics"* 1.5 = 16.525 K.

[21] *De propriis placitis* 2 Boudon-Millot & Pietrobelli. The *Thessalonicensis Vlatadon* 14 mss is the only Greek text we have of this particular Galenic work, which until its discovery by A. Pietrobelli, was preserved only in Latin, Arabic and Hebrew translations, all lacunate, which gave us a distorted view of the work's theological premises (Pietrobelli [2013]). Cf. also Nutton (1987) and Strohmaier (2012).

[22] Nutton (1987); cf. his 1999 edition (*CMG* V 3.2) of all the surviving manuscripts except for the Vlatadon text (see previous note).

γάμῳ θεὸς, which recalls the phrase *ho patrios theos* of the *De libris propriis*, thus alluding to Galen's cultic identity as *therapeutes* in Pergamum.

On the other hand, Kudlien correctly noted that *therapeutes* does not denote a priestly role, certainly not a traditionally defined one. Yet it may still be comparable (albeit not identical) to *hiereus* or *neōkoros*.[23] There certainly were individuals in the Pergamene temple who professed both expert medical and religious knowledge, and indeed served the god's clientèle in both roles: Asclepiacus, a close friend of Aristides, who is stated to have been both a *neōkoros* and an *iatros*, is a fine example of such a dual qualification.[24] Galen however did not belong to that category. Even though he was, like Aristides, a *therapeutes* of Pergamum, and just as keen to flag his membership in the group both in describing his interview with the emperor and in some of his major medical treatises, his relationship with Asclepius was undoubtedly very different from Aristides'. Neither a δημιουργός nor a θεῖα ἀρχή feature in the latter's theological universe, for instance, although at times it appears that his conception of Asclepius is not entirely free from Platonic influence.[25] As Antoine Pietrobelli has convincingly argued, Galen seems to have found the perfect balance between paying homage to pre-existing religious schemata and practising an innovative and sophisticated type of agnosticism.[26] If that is so, the question must be: what did Aristides, Galen and possibly Marcus Aurelius have in common,[27] and how did the religious group of the Pergamene *therapeutai* cater to such diverse religious outlooks and expectations?

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[23] Cf. Aristid. *Or.* 48.47 (where the *therapeutai* and the *neōkoroi* appear as two separate groups): οἵ τε γὰρ νεωκόροι ἐν τούτῳ ὄντες ἡλικίας καὶ πάντες οἱ περὶ τὸν θεὸν θεραπευταὶ καὶ τάξεις ἔχοντες ὡμολόγουν ἀεὶ δή ποτε μηδένα πω τῶν πάντων συνειδέναι τοσαῦτα τμηθέντα κτλ. See further section 3 below.

[24] Doctor: *Or.* 49.25; temple warden (*neōkoros*): *Or.* 47.47–49, 49.14 and 49.22.

[25] Strohmaier (1965) employed the concept of 'Gebildetenreligion', i. e. religious behaviour typical of *pepaideumenoi*, in order to make sense of Galen's individualised response to traditional religious schemata. Kudlien (1981, 127) was rightly critical, pointing to the diversity in religious behaviour and writings of famous *literati* of the first and second centuries CE, such as Cicero, Rufus, Soranus, Aristides and Thessalus. *Or.* 50.55–56, where Aristides converses with the Platonist philosopher Pyrallianus, who was also counted amongst his intimate circle of friends and intellectual companions (*herairos*), is one important passage in the *HL* that betrays Neoplatonic influence, cf. Remus (1996, 151). More on Pyrallianus in Boys-Stones, G. *Index of 'Middle' Platonists.*

[26] Pietrobelli (2013) is by far the most informative discussion of Galen's intricate theological and philosophical views. Horstmanshoff (forthcoming) examines his religious attitudes as a case of cognitive dissonance.

[27] There is admittedly no explicit reference to Marcus Aurelius' membership of the cultic association of the *therapeutai*, but, as explained above, this does not preclude the possibility that the emperor was aware of the deeper meaning conveyed by the term *therapeutes* of an intense personal relationship with the god, especially in view of the frequency with which Marcus refers in

2. The *therapeutai* of Asclepius at Pergamum in the epigraphic record

Back in 1980 Salvatore Nicosia cast serious doubt on the notion that the *therapeutai* might have been a formally distinct religious group (what in German is conveyed by the term *Kultverein*).[28] In his view, the term *therapeutes* in our context simply designated a 'worshipper' of Asclepius. Shortly afterwards, however, scholars such as Lee Pearcy (1988) maintained that the term was used to describe those who enjoyed a special relationship with the god, that these worshippers indeed grouped together to form 'a cult organisation' of sorts, and that Aristides was a member of this group.[29] Pearcy linked this group of worshippers with the amply-attested group of *therapeutai* who honoured Sarapis, and recalled the close identification between Sarapis and Asclepius in Aristides' conception.[30] Whatever one thinks of Aristides' or Galen's self-representation as *therapeutai*, one cannot deny the fact that this group of worshippers was actively and enduringly present in the sanctuary. This is proved beyond doubt by a number of inscriptions from the Asclepieion published by Christian Habicht, in which the *therapeutai* honour Asclepius and related healing deities (e.g. Coronis in *AvP* VIII 3, 122), priests (*AvP* VIII 3, 152) and also fellow worshippers (*AvP* VIII 3, 28, 71, 79, and 140).

Dominique Brabant recently offered a close reading of some of the literary evidence discussed so far, and argued that the *therapeutai* at Pergamum were

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his *Meditations* and his correspondence with Fronto both to dreams and to Asclepius. See e.g. *Medit.* 1.17.9 (where he thanks Asclepius for remedies prescribed in dreams); Fronto *Ep.* 1.2 (1 Hout; 1.80 Haines) and 5.13 (74 Hout; 1.200 Haines), where we find detailed references to his dietary regime and a keen interest in Fronto's therapy. See further Bowersock (1969, 71–75); Perkins (1992, 267–272); Brabant (2006, 67) and Várhelyi (2010, 88–89). Predictably enough, some (e.g. Whitehorne [1977]) have accused him of hypochondria.

[28] On the terminology used to describe this kind of religious group, see the introduction in Kloppenborg and Wilson (1996) and Steinhauer (2014, 16–18).

[29] Pearcy (1988, 377).

[30] On *therapeutai* in the cult of Sarapis, see, for instance *IvP* 338 with Sokolowski (1973, 412) = *RICIS* 301/1203. The inscription is a dedication by a certain Titus T[-- of Apharos and is dated by a reference to the *grammateus* (the secretary) of the *therapeutai* in the Roman Imperial period. Fränkel, followed by Bricault, hesitantly proposed Sarapis as the name of the deity honoured, while allowing that the *therapeutai* may have been worshippers of Asclepius.

not really seeking social recognition and distinction but longed rather for the close proximity to the divine that membership of this exclusive group of Asclepian devotees could offer.[31] This view builds on Festugière's definition of personal religion as 'closeness to God' and concludes that this was precisely what the devotees gained from their close association with the divine healer.[32] In my view, although Brabant's analysis rightly emphasizes this intense and personal relationship with Asclepius, it verges on being 'over-realistic'.[33] I can happily envisage Galen, Aristides and the other members of the socio-political and intellectual elite who frequented the Pergamene temple-complex bound together in an intricate nexus of intimate relationships with the divine, but it seems inadequate to view the case wholly in terms of their emotional need for closeness with the god.[34] What Asclepius provided to all those well-to-do gentlemen was legitimation, divine sanction for their chosen courses of action and, above all, a justification for bypassing the intermediaries and claiming to access knowledge straight from the divine source.

One major factor in this group-cohesion must have been the performance of ritual duties. A second-century CE *lex sacra* (*IvP* III 161 A) is of particular interest here, since it stipulates the ritual protocol the incubants had to follow prior to entering an incubation-chamber (ἐγκοιμητήριον).[35] The document clearly differentiates between two groups of prospective incubants, the ones who were visiting the temple complex for the first time and a second group of returning incubants who were resuming their theoric journeys to seek further consultations on the same matter. The first group had to offer expensive blood sacrifices and pay the fee prior to being directed to the larger incubatory chamber; while the second group of returning *theōroi* made modest sacrificial offerings and was directed to a much smaller and intimate incubation chamber (ll.15–17).[36] It is this second group of devotees, who in ll.23–29 are called *therapeuontes* and are instructed to follow the god's priest and perform the rites of περιθύειν. The original editor, Michael Wörrle, suggested that *perithyein* denotes a sacrifice offered *peri*, i.e.

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[31] Brabant (2006, esp. 63–64) with Versnel (2011, 138 n.421), who is right in thinking that the one does not exclude the other.

[32] A fruitful reassessment of the concept 'personal religion' can be found in Kindt (2015).

[33] I have borrowed this term from Petsalis-Diomidis (2010), who applies it to scholars who read Aristides' *HL* too literally.

[34] Equally, I disagree with Cox Miller's conception of Aristides as an emotionally needy individual on a quest for 'warmth' from Asclepius.

[35] *IvP* III 161 A. For a recent English translation, see Petsalis-Diomidis (2010, 224–225).

[36] With Sokolowski (1973, 408). Cf. also Petsalis-Diomidis (2010, 227–230), who ingeniously connects the ritual journey of the *theōroi* as stipulated in the *lex sacra* with the sacred landscape of the Pergamene sanctuary. More on this below.

‘around’, the altars. Sokolowski, however, pointed out that the prepositional prefix *peri-* may simply be used as an intensifier, as in the case of Plutarch’s superstitious man, who when ill (*lypoumenos*) sits around his house and feels compelled to spend his time continually sacrificing (*perithyomenos*) and repeatedly wiping himself (*perimattomenos*).[37] Christian Habicht remarks that the cult title *perithytēs* (which derives from the same verb) occurs in three other inscriptions from the Pergamene Asclepieion, in each case with reference to eminent *theōroi*, such as Claudius Pardalas (*AvP* VIII 3, 140), P. Afranius Favianus (*AvP* VIII 3, 79) and Juventianus Alexander of Nicomedia (*AvP* VIII 3, 152), who must have had some prominent role in cultic performances as did the *prothytēs* in the cult of the emperors. Significantly, in all three cases the title of *perithytēs* is paired with that of *therapeutes*. In the case of the famous orator Pardalas, in particular, whose cultic activities in Pergamum are attested by a further five inscriptions (*MAMA* IX 19, 18, 20, 21, and Kolbe, *Att. Mitt*. 1092, 133, n. 160),[38] these inscriptions reveal that Pardalas held an impressive array of cultic offices, including *hiereus* of Zeus and *archiereus* of Asia (Asiarch). Pardalas’ membership of the group of the Pergamene *therapeutai* is confirmed by Aristides’ repeated references to their long-lasting friendship (e.g. *Or.* 50.27; 87). Moroever, as Klaus-Dietrich Fischer has shown, Pardalas was also an acquaintance of Galen.[39] The closer we look, the clearer this image of the tightly-knit group of the *therapeutai* becomes. It also becomes more obvious that this group was operating on a higher level than the rest of the *theōroi*.

Let us now return to our *lex sacra* (*IvP* III 161 A). Although the interpretation of the *therapōntes* of l.25 as referring to the well-known group of *therapeutai* is not quite certain, it seems plausible to assume that the inscription does refer to the group's ritual duties and privileges of a less costly consultation. Those consulting the god for the first time have to pay a higher fee and are directed to a large incubation chamber, while the recurrent and/or frequent incubants pay less and are directed to a smaller and perhaps more exclusive chamber. "Although the exact reasons for the distinction in the cost of incubation are elusive, the document makes it clear that the differentiation of worshippers is primarily envisaged in terms of the different routes taken in the sanctuary", Petsalis-Diomidis rightly suggests.[40] A probable parallel to our *lex sacra* from Pergamum is to be found in an inscription from Epidaurus, where the *therapeutai* of the Epidaurian Asclepieion (the term is admittedly an emendation by Sokolowski) are said to *perithyein*, i.e. perform regular sacrifices, and enter the shrine by a different entrance.[41]

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[37] *De sup.* 7, 168d (II pp.474 – 475 LCL): ἂν δ’ ἄριστα πράττῃ καὶ συνῇ πράῳ δεισιδαιμονίᾳ, περιθειούμενος οἴκοι κάθηται καὶ περιματτόμενος, αἱ δὲ γρᾶες ‘καθάπερ παττάλῳ’ φησὶν ὁ Βίων ‘ὅ τι ἂν τύχωσιν αὐτῷ περιάπτουσι φέρουσαι καὶ περιαρτῶσι’, “But if he is very fortunate, and but mildly yoked with superstition, he sits in his house, subjecting himself to fumigation, and smearing himself with mud, and the old crones, as Bion says, “bring whatever chance directs and hang and fasten it on him as on a peg” Transl. Babbit. Περιθειούμενος is Hercher’s emendation of περιθυόμενος, which Sokolowski would retain. This understanding of *perithyō* as ‘sacrificing regularly’ or ‘sacrificing repeatedly’ is further supported by John Chrysostom’s commentary on *Galatians* and by an inscription from Astypalaia (W. Peek, *IvDorischen Inseln*, 48 – 49, no. 100), where three men are described as *perithyontes* in honour of *theos Asklepios.*

[38] Puech, nos. 192 – 197.

[39] Fischer (2009). Pardalas is mentioned in one of Galen’s pharmacological treatises partially preserved in the Latin codex Cassinensis 69 (p. 261a – 475b), and features prominently in the Latin version of *De theriaca ad Pisonem* preserved elsewhere in the same codex, no. 25, p. 281a – 283a, where he is described as “magnus ille Pardalas”. Nutton (as quoted by Fischer) suggests that he may also have featured prominently in the *De antidotis*.

3. The *therapeutai* of Asclepius at Pergamum in the *Hieroi Logoi*

By themselves, however, the epigraphical sources do not give us much detail, so historians of medicine and religion need Aristides' works in order to glimpse the *therapeutai* group in action. Notwithstanding the various methodological problems involved in combining sources from different literary genres and media, this section discusses three extracts from the *HL*, which illuminate the group's internal dynamic, the agonistic tendencies among its members and the group's interaction with other religious professionals at Pergamum.

Of these professionals, the two νεωκόροι ('temple-wardens, sacristans') at the Pergamene Asclepieion appear to have been actively involved in the therapeutic procedures of the incubants, at least of the well-off ones, and even, if we are to judge from the *HL*, occasionally formed close and congenial relationships with the patients. During Aristides' lengthy residence in the sanctuary, we hear of two such temple-wardens, Philadelphus and Asclepiacus. Aristides appears to have been on good, even friendly, terms with both men.

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[40] Petsalis-Diomidis (2010, 228 – 229): "The *Lex Sacra* in effect offered two alternative journeys through the sanctuary, one leading to 'the incubation chamber' and the other to 'the small incubation chamber'. Although the identification of these buildings is not absolutely certain, they probably refer to the incubation chamber in the basement of the southern portico … and the old incubation complex in the middle of the courtyard by the temple of *Asklepios Sotēr* respectively".

[41] *IG* IV^2 1, 742 C25 – 29 with Sokolowski *LSCG* no. 25.

The first passage (*Or.* 48.46 – 49) comes from the beginning of Aristides' extended incubancy at the Asclepieion of Pergamum (summer of 145 CE) and is of great interest not only in providing a close-up view of the *therapeutai* in action but also in revealing details of the competitive atmosphere within the group of long-term or frequent visitors.[42] The text warrants full quotation:

> 46 I had catarrhs and difficulty with my palate, and everything was full of hoar-frost and heat, and the suffering around my stomach was at its peak, and I was confined to the house during the summer season. 47 And these things happened in Pergamum, in the house of the temple warden Asclepiacus (καὶ ἐγίγνετο ταῦτα ἐν Περγάμῳ ἐν τῷ τοῦ νεωκόρου τοῦ Ἀσκληπιακοῦ). First he commanded that I have blood drawn from my elbow, and he added, as I remember, "a hundred and twenty liters". This was to show that there would be need of quite a few phlebotomies, but that became manifestly clear from events that happened later on. For the temple wardens, being of a certain age, and all those who were *therapeutai* of the God and those who were of a certain rank (had a certain position), confessed that they knew of no-one else so far who had been cut so much, except Ischyron,[43] and that his case was among the most incredible ones, but even so that mine surpassed it, without the other strange things which were added to the phlebotomies (οἵ τε γὰρ νεωκόροι ἐν τούτῳ ὄντες ἡλικίας καὶ πάντες οἱ περὶ τὸν θεὸν θεραπευταὶ καὶ τάξεις ἔχοντες ὡμολόγουν ἀεὶ δή ποτε μηδένα πω τῶν πάντων συνειδέναι τοσαῦτα τμηθέντα, πλήν γε Ἰσχύρωνος, εἶναι δ' ἐν τοῖς παραδόξοτατον τό γ' ἐκείνου, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὣς ὑπερβάλλειν τὸ καθ' ἡμᾶς ἄνευ τῶν ἄλλων παραδόξων, ἃ προσῆν ταῖς φλεβοτομίαις), as for example happened almost immediately afterwards. 48 For one, I guess, or two days later, he commanded me to draw blood from my forehead. And he commanded also the same to one of the Roman senators, who was consulting him very often,[44] and indicated (lit. 'he made signs') that the same had been ordered for Aristides. His name was Sedatus, most noble among the men, who recounted these things to me in person (Σηδᾶτος ὄνομα αὐτῷ, βέλτιστος ἀνδρῶν, ὃς ἐμοὶ ταῦτα αὐτὸς διηγεῖτο). In the middle of the phlebotomies ('blood-letting'), he ordered me to bathe in the river Caicus. And it was necessary to walk there and bathe after having cast away flocks of wool. 49 He said that I would see a horse

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[42] Moreover Aristides uses the intimacy with Asclepiacus implied by the invitation to stay indefinitely at the latter's residence to convey his own privileged status within the group.

[43] Ἰσχύρωνος] εἰ̔σ χείρωνοσ D (Laurentianus XL no. 7 of the XII cent., vol. 2 p. xii) The proper name is Keil's emendation. The original meaning may have been that the other patient who underwent as many phlebotomies as Aristides, or perhaps even more, never recovered but died. Lord Byron, suffering from malaria, died after having had 5lbs and a few ounces of blood let between 16th and 18th April 1824; a grown man has about 10lbs of blood. A litra was reckoned to have been ca. 0,27 litres. I thank Richard Gordon for this piece of information.

[44] Παρεδρεύω means here to 'frequent', 'to attend frequently', i.e. θυμέλαις: *IG* V.1, 734 (Sparta); γυμνασίοις ib. XIV 1728.6; π. ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις ἐν ὅπλοις: II^2 1028.35; ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ SIG 695.27 (*IMagn.* 195a dated c.100 CE). Cf. also *Or.* 48.9: the ex-consul Salvius "happened to be frequenting the god". On the affinity of the terms see Sokolowski (1973, 411).

> bathing and the temple warden Asclepiacus standing on the bank. Thus he predicted and thus it happened. 49 While I bathed, the temple warden was present and while standing on the bank he saw me (ὄψεσθαι δὲ καὶ ἵππον λούμενον καὶ τὸν νεωκόρον ἑστῶτα ἐπὶ τῆς ὄχθης τὸν Ἀσκληπιακόν. ταῦτα προείρητο καὶ ταῦτα ἐγίγνετο. ἔτι μὲν προσιὼν τῷ ποταμῷ τὸν ἵππον ὁρῶ λούμενον. λουμένου δέ μου παρῆν ὁ νεωκόρος καὶ ἑστὼς ἐπὶ τῆς ὄχθης ἑώρα). The relief and the relaxation that came afterwards is very easy indeed for a God to understand, but for a man to grasp or to write about is very hard.

Methods of bloodletting were widely known in Graeco-Roman medicine and were used for the cure of numerous disorders (ranging from ophthalmic diseases, vertigo, and chronic headache to gangrene and epilepsy), caused by what they believe to have been an excess of humours in the body.[45] The successful application of these techniques required advanced medical skill and experience, as Galen tells us in *De curandi ratione per venae sectionem* 23 (11, 312–315 K). In the same work, Galen reports cases in which patients died after severing the artery that underlies the inner vein in the inner part of the elbow (presumably where Aristides himself was cut), because the bandage used to stop the bleeding was infected, thus leading to gangrene. Other patients died during operations for aneurysm.[46] Bloodlettings within the temple must have made a compelling spectacle, especially since Aristides remembers surgical procedures as a thing of the past.[47] Quite apart from their value as spectacles, phlebotomies were regarded as

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45 In the surviving corpus of Galenic works, three treatises are devoted to exploring the uses and abuses of bloodletting: *De venae sectione adversus Erasistratum* (11.147–186 K.); *De venae sectione adversus Erasistrateos Romae degentes* (11.187–249 K.); *De curandi ratione per venae sectionem* (11.250–316 K.). More on the art of bloodletting in Galen in Brain (1986), where a translation of the three works can also be found. Although Galen has us believe that bloodletting was as common amongst the Hippocratic doctors as it was in his day, this was not true. As King (2004, 64–65) has argued, in the Hippocratic Corpus bloodletting as a medical practice is quite limited (mentioned around 70 times) and mainly performed on male patients, the implication being that women bled naturally via their monthly menstruation. For a brief historical exposition of venesection as a medical practice, see Niki Papavramidou, N., Thomaidis, V, Fiska, A. (2009).

46 In *De cur. rat. per venae sect.* 16 (11.298 K.), Galen informs us that there were three different ways to perform a phlebotomy in the inner part of the elbow, internal, external and medial, each corresponding to disorders in different parts of the human anatomy.

47 Cf. *Or.* 50. 64 Keil with Behr *ad loc:* [...] ταύτῃ μοι ἐδόκει ὁ ἱερεὺς ὁ τοῦ Ἀσκληπιοῦ οὗτος ὁ ἔτι νῦν ὢν, καὶ ὁ τούτου πάππος, ἐφ’ οὗ τὰ πολλὰ καὶ μεγάλα ὡς ἐπυνθανόμεθα ἐχειρούργησεν ὁ θεὸς, καὶ ἔστι δὴ ἐνδοξότατος τῶν μέχρι τούτου. “[...] on that day appeared to me the priest of Asclepius, the is now the priest of the god and his grandfather, in whose time, as we learn, the god performed many and great surgical procedures, and who is even in nowadays very famous [...]” The priesthood of Asclepius was an extremely prestigious office, held by a descendant of the Asclepiad family for life. See *IPergamon* no. 251; Aristid., *Or.* 30.13–15, 25, 27 Keil.

life-changing and life-saving events, as the dedicatory inscription set up by Julius Meidias attests (fig. 2).[48]

Going back to our text, one is immediately struck by the absence of *oneirocritai* (dream- interpreters)[49] and medical experts (who administers the bloodletting?) and by the exclusive focus upon two patients, Aristides himself and the consular M. Sedatus Severianus.[50] Even if Asclepiacus claimed for himself some medical expertise, he still seems to fade into the background emerging only to focalise the locations of the phlebotomies, oneiric and real, namely a domestic setting and the river bank. All eyes are upon Aristides' heroic feat of being drained of nearly sixty 60 lbs. of blood, that is six times the total amount of blood in a grown man – he carefully neglects to mention a time-period – and then hastening to comply with the divinely-ordained baths, blind to the exhaustion any ordinary human being would have suffered at this stage. This is very much a self-service medical business which requires no professional expertise. The suggestion is that nothing more is required than the skills of Aristides and his friend Sedatus in interpreting dreams and their knowledge of bloodletting procedures. The narrative stress is laid not on the dreams of the two *therapeutai* but on Aristides' hermeneutics and the intimate relationship between the two elite patients, whose friendship seems to have been endorsed by Asclepius himself. Why else would the divine healer share intimate details about one patient's course of medical action with the other? Asclepius orders Sedatus to undergo a phlebotomy and adds he has prescribed the same treatment for Aristides. So much for the famous patient-physician confidentiality.

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[48] *AvP* VIII 3 (1969) 141 Kat. No. 139. Taf. 41. The inscription reads: Ἰούλιος Μειδί[ας] / φλεβοτομηθεὶς / ὑπὸ τοῦ μυὸς / κατὰ ἐπιταγὴν ἀνέθηκ[ε]. On the often enthusiastic belief on the part of laymen in the merits of phlebotomy well into the nineteenth century, see e.g. Porter and Porter (1989, 170).

[49] On the cardinal role of specialists in dream interpretation (*oneirocritai*) in healing incubation, see Renberg (2015).

[50] On M. Sedatius Severianus, *cos. suff.* 153, see Várhelyi (2010, 83–84). Perhaps he is the same Roman consul who allegedly (if we believe Lucian *Alex.* 27) consulted the oracle of Neos Asclepios-Glykon before invading Armenia in 161 (accepted by Bremmer in his contributionto this volume). Plutarch's essay *How the young should listen to poetry* (*Mor.* 14D, 15 A), is also addressed to M. Sedatus or M. Sedatius, who has a son called Cleander. The identification of the two individuals (first proposed by Bowersock) has been a matter of debate. Behr (1993, 1157 n. 69) rejected Bowersock's idea, though he did retain 'Sedatius' and, following Keune in *RE* 2 A (1921) 1017–18 and Groag ibid.1007 lines 31–38, identified Aristides' friend as Sedatius Theophilus, of praetorian rank (the Greek *strategos* can mean *propraetor* as well as proconsul). Cf. also Halfmann (1979, 86–87), who argues that Bowersock's identification is impossible.

But then again, as the next extract for the *HL* (Or. 50.14 – 18) suggests, these patients seem to have been quite keen themselves on exchanging personal information and discussing their physical ailments and the curatives Asclepius proposed to them. In chapter 16, we read that the discussion was based on the similarity of these patients' ailments: καὶ γάρ πως ἔστιν ἃ καὶ παραπλήσια ἐκάμνομεν. Unless, we take this similarity as a reference to the duration of their ailments (i. e. they were all chronic illnesses), it is hard to imagine a community of patients with similar health problems. It is far more likely that what Aristides has in mind are the similar circumstances under which these individuals consulted the god. More to the point, in modern sociological terms, this 'convergence' of symptoms is a product of the discourse they are familiar with. This is, in other words, a good example of what Eliasoph and Lichterman called 'speech norms'.

This extract relates to a conversation that took place in the first year of Aristides' incubancy at Pergamum. The interlocutors are three of the most famous *therapeutai* of the temple (τῶν γνωριμωτέρων θεραπευτῶν), himself, M. Sedatius Severianus and Q. Tullius Maximus, a fellow-incubant and future suffect-consul. Both of these individuals appear to contribute actively in Aristides' transformation from a panting patient to a powerful orator.[51] Both of them adopt an extremely hands-on approach when it comes to the interpretation of Aristides' difficulty in performing basic respiratory functions and his divine prescription, which centres on scripting and publicly performing an oration:

> While I remained at Pergamum because of divine summons and my supplication, I received from the god a command and exhortation not to abandon rhetoric. (15) It is impossible to say since it happened many years ago which dream came first, or which was the nature of each of these dreams in detail. But those which occurred at the very beginning were exhortatory dreams. "It befits you to speak in the manner of Socrates, Demosthenes and Thucydides. And I was shown one of the distinguished orators who are older than I, in order that I would be especially moved to speak. And the god commanded me to go to the Temple Stoa, which is at the Theatre, and to offer to him the very first fruits of these improvised and competitive orations (καὶ τό γε σφόδρα πρῶτον ἀπάρξασθαί με ἐκέλευεν ἑαυτῷ προσελθόντα εἴς τὴν στοὰν τοῦ ἱεροῦ τὴν πρὸς τῷ θεάτρῳ τῶν αὐτοσχεδίων δὴ τούτων λόγων καὶ ἀγωνιστικῶν·). And so it happened. (16) There was a very magnificent spectacle in the amphitheatre, a bull-hunt, I think, or some such thing. Everyone at the temple had rushed down there, and the whole city was agog. We had been left alone in the Temple, two of the more distinguished worshippers, I and a Nicaean, a man of praetorian rank, called

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[51] This passage seems also to have been central in fashioning Aristides' group-identity. He cross-references this passage in his *An Address Regarding Asclepius* (*Or.* 42.8 Keil). I revisit this and other 'literary and rhetorical remedies' in a forthcoming article in *Mètis*. See Petridou (2017).

> Sedatus, but originally Theophilus. We were sitting in the temple of Hygieia, where the statue of Telesphorus is, and we were asking one another, as we were accustomed, whether the god had prescribed anything new (καταλελείμμεθα δὲ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ τῶν γνωριμωτέρων θεραπευτῶν δύο, ἐγώ τε καὶ Νικαεὺς, ἀνὴρ τῶν ἐστρατηγηκότων Ῥωμαίοις, Σηδᾶτος ὄνομα, τὸ δ’ ἀρχαῖον Θεόφιλος. καθήμεθα οὖν ἐν Ὑγιείας, οὗ ὁ Τελεσφόρος, καὶ διεπυνθανόμεθα ἀλλήλων ὥσπερ εἰώθειμεν εἴ τι καινότερον εἴη παρηγγελκὼς ὁ θεός). For in a way certain of our diseases were also similar (καὶ γάρ πως ἔστιν ἃ καὶ παραπλήσια ἐκάμνομεν). (17) I said that I did not know what I should do, because what was prescribed to me was something as impossible as flying: a rhetorical exercise, when I could not breathe, and [this exercise was to be accomplish] there—I mean the Stoa—and I recounted the dream to him. And when he heard it, he said, “What will you do, and how do you feel about it?” “What else”, I said “shall do whatever I can? Arrange on my clothes, stand so, make a note of the problem to myself, begin some little thing, and then I shall stop. And so my obligation has been fulfilled”. “Not at all”, he said “not so. But you have me here as a listener. Then contend with all zeal. Strength will be the God’s concern. How do you know whether your dream pertains to more than this?” And at the same time, he told me a marvellous deed of the god, how he commanded some sick man to compete in this way, and by causing him to perspire through the exercise, brought an end to the whole disease. It seemed necessary to do this. (18) And while we were talking and taking counsel, Maximus the Libyan,[52] entered in the third place, one of the long-standing worshippers, and in a way keen on oratory. It was he who proposed the problem (καὶ λαλούντων ἡμῶν καὶ βουλευομένων ἐπεισέρχεται Βύβλος ἐκ τρίτων, θεραπευτὴς τῶν παλαιῶν καί τινα τρόπον πρόθυμος περὶ λόγους. οὗτος καὶ τὸ πρόβλημα ἦν ὁ προβαλών·). And the problem was as follows, for I remember it, since it was the first I received: “While Alexander”, he said, “is in India, Demosthenes advises that it is time to act”. I immediately accepted the omen of Demosthenes speaking again and of the subject, which was about empire. And pausing a little, I competed, and my new strength was such as is of the god’s devising, and the year seemed not to have passed in silence, but in training.[53]

This divine prescription has a twofold aim: Aristides is prompted to perform in public and given a technique to improve his delivery by assembling an audience predisposed in his favour, so as to boost his confidence and self-esteem. Predictably enough, he involves the intimate group of *therapeutai* – his socially-powerful fellow-intellectuals – in remodelling his rhetorical career.[54] This time the Roman Senator Sedatus is joined by Q. Tullius Maximus the African, “a fellow incubant and a man who would later reach the consulship".[55] Maximus seems to have been himself interested in oratory and must have served as one of the oldest *therapeutai*. Here again Aristides stresses the socio-economic background of the members of the group. Harold Remus is surely right in thinking that, even if men of lesser financial means were also admitted to the group, Aristides would deliberately fail to mention them in such a context.[56]

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[52] The mss read βύβλοσ or βίβλοσ; Keil adopted the former reading, assuming a proper name Byblos. Behr adopts the reading <Μάξιμος ὁ Λίβυς>, Maximus the African, on the basis of Aristides’ reference to this senator in his *Πρὸς Καπίτωνα* 4.3 Keil (47 Dindorf). See also *RE* 14.2 s.v. Maximus no. 27.

[53] Transl. Behr with alterations.

[54] This was a particularly important dream not only for Aristides’ rhetorical career, but also for his relationship with the god himself, since it was he who, by ordering to Aristides to stay in Pergamum in the first place, had thwarted his professional ambitions.

Although Aristides claims to have forgotten most of the details of the oneiric prescription, he remembers vividly how the god ordered him to go to the temple of Hygeia. It was there that he found his fellow-*therapeutes* Sedatus and revealed to him, not without a certain degree of incredulity, that the god's remedy for his breathing difficulty consisted in urging him to proceed with a full-fledged rhetorical declamation. Aristides lays special emphasis on the difference (both quantitative and qualitative) between these select incubants and everyone else: while the other incubants have left the shrine to enjoy some crowd-pleasing spectacle (a beast-hunt or a *theōria* of some kind; the off-handedness may be interpreted as a sign of contempt), the select *syntherapeutai* opt for the lofty pleasures of oratory and passionate exchange of information about their most intimate bodily cavities.[57] While the tight-knit group of *therapeutai* may have been loosely related to the rest of the patients who consulted the god, nonetheless, it was fairly distinct from them. One is reminded of the two different ritual pathways as well as the two different chambers of incubation in the *lex sacra* (*IvP* VIII 3, 161, see above)

Aristides claims that Asclepius told him to go to the stoa by the small theatre of the Asclepieion and offer to him the first fruits of his extemporary, competitive orations. The term ἀπάρξασθαι implies that sacrificial language was part of the original dream. One thinks again back to the *lex sacra* and to the extremely detailed stipulations about what was to be offered to the gods prior to ritual incubation. Rhetorical declamation is of course not one of them.[58] I am tempted to

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55 Várhelyi (2010, 156).

56 Remus (1996, 156).

57 The term συνθεραπευτής (sing.) is attested in *IvP* VIII 3. 28 (fig. 1), dated between 172–175 CE. For the date, see Pflaum, *Carrières procuratoriennes* no.252 + additions on Tib. Cl. Vibianus Tertullus. The relevant text reads: Κλαύδιον Οὐιβιανὸν / Τέρτυλλον ἐπὶ ἐπιστο- / λῶν Ἑλληνικῶν {^{2}vac.}^{2} / Αὐτοκράτορος Καίσαρος / Μ. Αὐρηλίου Ἀντωνείνου / Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ, / ψηφισαμένης τῆς βου- / λῆς καὶ τοῦ δήμου τῆς / μητροπόλεως τῆς / Ἀσίας καὶ δὶς νεωκόρου / πρώτης Περγαμηνῶν πόλεως / Κειώνιοι Ἑρμογένης / καὶ Γάιος τὸν ἴδιον εὐεργέτην / καὶ συνθεραπευτὴν / στρατηγοῦντος Τι. Κλ. Ἰουλιανοῦ.

58 To be fair, none of the ritual offerings prescribed there are intended for Asclepius. For a detailed account of the list of divinities mentioned in the inscription and an explanation of Asclepius' absence from this list, see Petsalis-Diomidis (2010, 222–238).

interpret this substitution of rhetorical declamation for the prescribed offerings as one of the many ways in which the Mysian orator chooses to manipulate preexisting ritual schemata and adapt them for his own purposes.

Nonetheless, it is not until he receives a thumbs-up from his fellow-patient Sedatus that Aristides finally proceeds with executing the divine prescription. Sedatus generously offers to be the audience of Aristides' rhetorical *agōn* and encourages him to overcome his initial disinclination. To be more precise, Sedatus offers an important corrective to Aristides' hermeneutics: a *token* oration (μίκρ' ἄττα) is not adequate – a full-fledged rhetorical declamation is required. The senator from Nicaea corrects his *syntherapeutes*' interpretation of his dream and even emboldens him by citing an account of another patient's successful treatment of a physical ailment by means of agonistic rhetorical performance (δι' ἀγωνίαν λύσειε τὸ νόσημα πᾶν).[59] Sedatus' intervention reaffirms the efficacy of the 'wondrous' (*thaumaston*) rhetorical remedy prescribed by Asclepius, and provides an explanation in medical terms, namely, that declamation sets in motion a type of mental and/or physical agitation, which in turn causes one to sweat.[60] The fellow *therapeutes* Maximus contributes to the discussion by suggesting the πρόβλημα, the theme of Aristides' declamation, which, once mastered, provides our Mysian patient with the crucial boost of confidence required to reshape his rhetorical career.

The final passage I wish to discuss (*Or.* 50.19 – 21) shows the god providing further career-coaching in the form of a dream vision. An *oneiros*-figure, like those that appear in Homer, appeared in his dreams and kindled his desire for honours (ἐμοὶ τὴν ὕστερον φιλοτιμίαν ἐξῆψε) by informing Aristides that in his rhetorical art he had surpassed Demosthenes in ways that even the old debate between rhetoric and philosophy could not diminish.[61] The *oneiros*-figure had the likeness of yet another distinguished member of the Graeco-Roman elite, the philosopher Rhosandros (lit., 'he, who strengthens men'), who was also a renowned *therapeutes* of the god Asclepius: Ῥώσανδρος ἦν τῶν φιλοσοφούντων καὶ ἄλλως περὶ τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ θεραπείαν ἐπιμελής. However, the true significance of the dream does not become apparent until §21, where Aristides recounts yet another, which was vouchsafed him at the temple of Olympian Zeus. This dream revealed that the philosopher Rhosandros in reality signified the god in some way and that, in turn, Theodotos (the name of one of the doctors in the Asclepieion) signified the god too. Next and through a highly contrived application of Euclid's first axiom on transitive equality—things equal to the same thing are also equal to one another—Aristides concludes that Rhosandros and Theodotos are actually equal to one another:[62]

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[59] ἀγωνία denotes both the mental and the physical struggle as well as rhetorical competition. 'Contest, struggle for victory': Hdt. 2.91; Eur. *Hec.* 314, *Tro.* 1003; esp. in athletic games: Pind. *Ol.* 2.52, *Pyth.* 5.113; 'gymnastic exercise': [Hippoc.] *Art.* 11; Plat. *Men.* 94b, *Leg.* 765c; 'mental struggle, agony, anguish': Dem. 18.33, Arist. *Pr.* 869b6.

[60] Perspiration along with bleeding, vomiting, and excretion, is viewed, at least in humoral medicine, as a potentially helpful outlet for evacuating excess fluid(s), and thus as means of restoring the equilibrium of humours and elemental qualities in the body, cf. Mattern (2008, 64 – 75, esp. n. 63); Wilkins (2016).

[61] E. g. in *Il.* 2.1 – 34; *Od.* 4.841.

> Later I had the following dream, which pertains to Rhosandros. I dreamed that, during some lecture on the grounds of the Temple of Olympian Zeus, either I thought to myself, or someone suggested to me, that Rhosandros may signify the god. And he gave a demonstration of this by means of a line, as the geometricians do, drawing in equal proportion upon the earth two successive names (καὶ τὴν ἀπόδειξιν αὐτοῦ ποιεῖσθαι διὰ γραμμῆς τινος ὥσπερ οἱ γεωμέτραι), the one, "Rhosandros", the other "Theodotos". And somehow in the writing there was also the name *Theodōtēs* ('God giver' καί πως τοῦτο Θεοδώτης ἦν ἐν τῇ γραφῇ). But this was clear, that the doctor Theodotos signified the god. Therefore, "Rhosander" can also signify the same, since "Rhosandros" and "Theodotos" are equal. Such were the things he revealed concerning the name "Rhosandros" (σαφὲς δ' εἶναι τοῦτό γε, ὡς ἄρα ὁ Θεόδοτος ὁ ἰατρὸς τὸν θεὸν δηλοῖ, ταυτὸν οὖν δύνασθαι καὶ τὸν Ῥώσανδρον, ἐπείπερ ἴσον γε Ῥώσανδρος καὶ Θεόδοτος. τοσαῦτα μὲν περὶ τοῦ ὀνόματος ἐδήλωσε τοῦ Ῥωσάνδρου).

This dream and its geometric equation may well contain the key to a full understanding of the revisionist attitudes of the Pergamene *therapeutai*. As far as Aristides was concerned, and not unlike Galen in his *De curandi ratione per venae sectionem* 4.23 (discussed above), there was neither any real need for dream-interpretation by accredited experts nor was there any need for medical experts ('doctors'). Between them, the *therapeutai*, as knowledgeable, high-born individuals, could themselves successfully play all the necessary roles and fulfil all needs, provided, of course, that they had secured Asclepius' seal of approval (cf. *Or.* 50.1919: καὶ μέντοι καὶ ὕπαρ αὐτὸς ἐπεσφραγίσατο ὁ θεός), which had the power to enhance the relevant capacities of the most devoted of his worshippers.

That said, it is important to remember that Aristides was not alone in contesting the knowledge and power of institutionalised experts, religious and medical alike. Physicians, dream-interpreters and patients all claimed direct access to Asclepius. As Pliny reminds us, the gods promise a better outcome.[63] When it came to health issues, no one could promise a better outcome than Asclepius could. Claims to religious or medical expertise provided directly by the god, whether made by patients or physicians such as Galen, appealed to higher, privileged, forms of knowledge and authority. Direct access of this kind was especially important for elite patients such as the *therapeutai* at Pergamum, authorising them to override the professionals' medical and religious expertise, contest the need for such intermediaries and so effectively reclaim command over their own bodies.[64]

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[62] In algebraic logic, one would say "if $x=y$, and if $y=z$, then $x=z$", i.e. things equal to the same thing are also equal to one another. But Aristides in thinking here in terms of Euclidean geometry: *Eucl.*, Κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι 1.1: Τὰ τῷ αὐτῷ ἴσα καὶ ἀλλήλοις ἐστὶν ἴσα.

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[63] Plin. *Ep*. 8.1.3: *Sed di laetiora promittunt*.

[64] As Brooke Holmes (2010, 25) argues, "Physicians secure their authority over the nature of the *sōma* in part by claiming to understand the causes of its sufferings".

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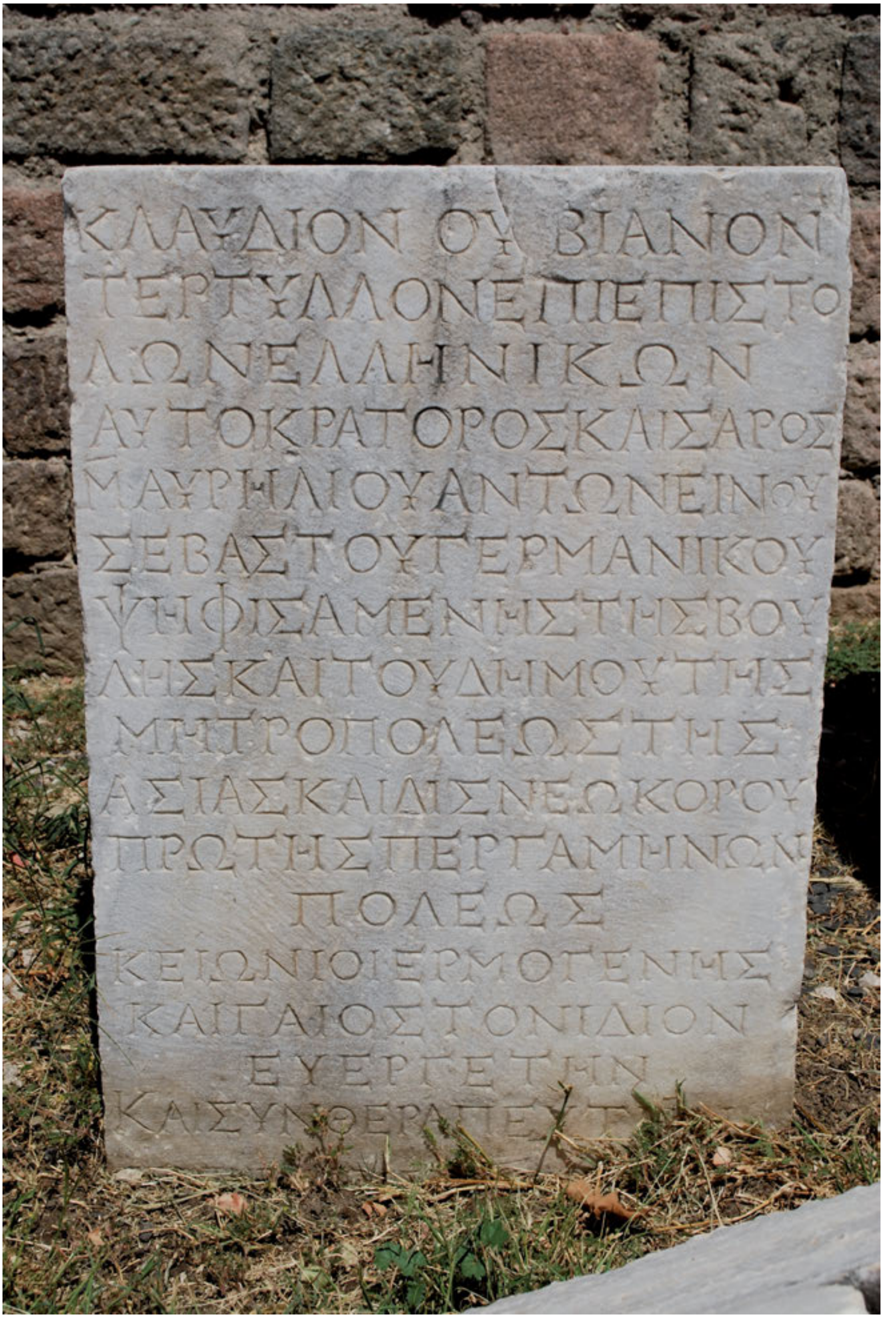
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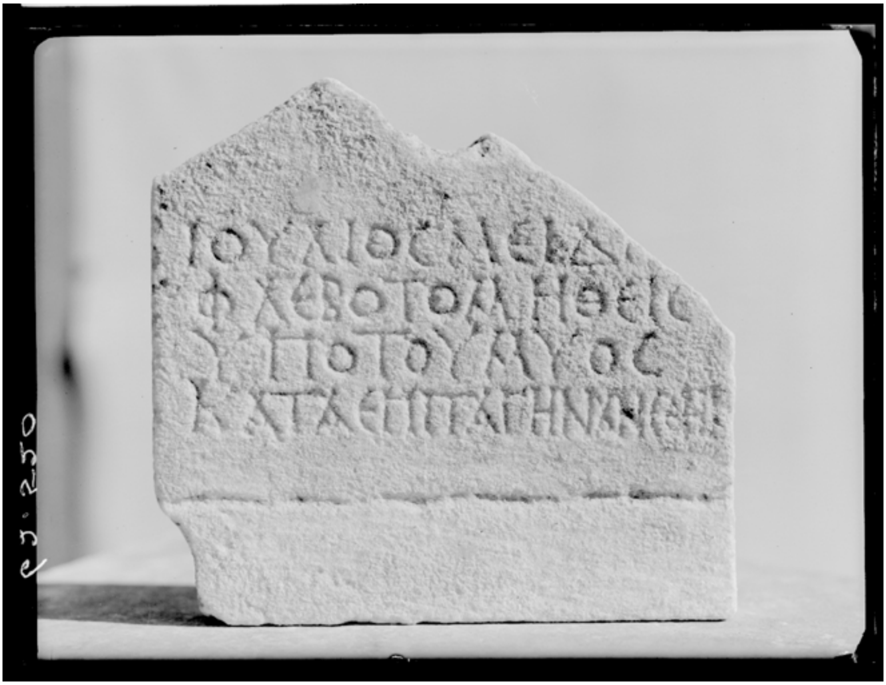
ΚΑΙΣΥΝΘΕΡΑΠΕΥΤ

Fig. 1: One of the *therapeutai*-related inscriptions from the Pergamene Asclepieion, honouring fellow members (*AvP* VIII 3 no. 28, dated c.73 – 175 CE). Photo: Valentino Gasparini.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ΚΑΤΑ ΕΠΙΤΑΓΗΝ ΑΝΕΘΗΚΕ
eJ. 250

Fig. 2: A thanks-giving dedication (*AvP* VIII 3 no. 139, Taf. 41) from the Pergamene Asclepieion on account of a successful (?) phlebotomy. Deutsches Archäologisches Institut (Istanbul).

Markus Vinzent

Christians, the ‘more obvious’ representatives of the religion of Israel than the Rabbis?

This chapter argues that second-century Hellenised ‘Jewish’ and ‘Christian’ philosophers re-conceptualised sacrifice and Temple-cult to compensated for what Guy Stroumsa has called one of the biggest challenges of the time, the cessation of regular blood-sacrifices. Starting from Justin’s *Dialogue with Trypho*, I suggest that collective religious expertise was displaced by individual philosophers whose theme was ‘religion’.

In February 2004, the Israeli historian of religion Guy G. Stroumsa, a former pupil of Emanuel Levinas, delivered an important series of lectures at the Collège de France in Paris, ‘*La fin du sacrifice: Les mutations religieuses de l’Antiquité tardive*’, which was duly published in the following year.[1] After some little delay, the book was issued in American-English translation, under the title *The End of Sacrifice: Religious Transformations in Late Antiquity*, where the term ‘mutations’ has been altered to ‘transformations’.[2] The German translation, on the other hand, *Das Ende des Opferkultes: Die religiösen Mutationen der Spätantike*, retains the original ‘mutations’. In 2008, Stroumsa himself summarised his book in an article in English entitled “The End of Sacrifice: Religious Mutations of Late Antiquity”, retaining the term ‘mutations’.[3]

Although one could happily continue discussing this stimulating book and the vexing terms ‘mutations’ or ‘transformations’, I would like in this contribution to concentrate on one of its main trajectories, the ‘transformation of the ritual’, which occupies the third chapter. Stroumsa starts with the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem by Titus in 70 CE. He writes:

> The Jews had to dramatically reinvent their religion, while arguing that they were changing very little, and this only under duress. If Jews could be perceived by some as a race of philosophers (for instance by Numenius, who famously argued, in the second century CE, that

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[1] Stroumsa (2005).

[2] Stroumsa (2005, 2009).

[3] Stroumsa (2008 [2011]). The article appeared in Houtman, de Jong and Misset-van de Weg (2008, 29 – 46).

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> Plato was 'an atticising Moses'), it seems to me that it is in no small measure due to the fact that they could now be perceived as bearers of a religion without blood sacrifice. Some dramatic consequences followed from the destruction of the Temple. The first one was the birth of two new religions, rather than one. Side by side with the birth of Christianity, the appearance of Rabbinic Judaism after 70 CE, and its growth in the following centuries represents a real mutation of the religion of Israel: indeed, a religion now without sacrifices, a religion whose priests were out of business, in which religious specialists had been replaced by the intellectual elite. In a way, early Christianity, a religion centred upon a sacrificial ritual celebrated by priests, represents a more obvious continuity with the religion of Israel than the religion of the Rabbis.[4]

One may agree in general with what Stroumsa is stating as regards to Israel – although he himself admits that sacrifices did not simply disappear from the minds of Jews and those who lived with them, quoting the fourth century Emperor Julian, who in his work *Against the Christians* wrote:

> The Jews behave like the Gentiles, except the fact that they recognize only one god. On everything else, however, we share the same things: temples, sanctuaries, altars, purification rituals, various demands on which we do not diverge from one another, or else only in insignificant ways.[5]

Whether or not Julian's potentially one-sided view represents historical reality, Stroumsa sees the Rabbinic intellectual turn as one of the major 'religious mutations' of the time after 70 CE, a turn that transformed "the very concept of religion".[6] This he contrasts with the 'post-Temple tradition' of Christianity, which, on account of its priestly orientation and its focus on (self-)sacrifice, "represents a more obvious continuity with the religion of Israel". His view of Rabbinic Judaism works well in the framework of a post-enlightened characterisation of Judaism, as can be found, for example, in Jacob Neusner's *Handbook of Rabbinic Theology*, where Neusner describes Rabbinic Judaism as a religion of intellect, encompassing emotions within the conventions of rationality, a religion that knows God through the close analysis of what God says in so many words […]. God meets holy Israel in the school house more than in the synagogue, in study of the Torah more than in prayer – much more. Neusner thus represents Rabbinic Judaism as a "religion of language", rather than one of emotions.[7]

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[4] I quote from the summary article Stroumsa (2008, 40).

[5] Julian *Gal.* frg. 72; see Stroumsa (2008, 38–39).

[6] Stroumsa (2008, 29–30).

[7] Neusner (2002, 26–27).

One would need to be a scholar of Rabbinic Judaism to discuss the Jewish side of the argument,[8] which I am not, and in this short contribution, I do not pretend to set out an adequate reply to the Christian side of it. Nevertheless, Stroumsa’s thesis stimulates one to think further: to what extent did the Christian rhetoric of ‘novelty’ (New Testament, new birth, renewal) mask a deeper continuity – bordering on intellectual Alzheimer’s – that simply occluded the brute fact of the destruction of the Temple? How are we to judge an emotional behaviour that re-deployed ‘sacrifice’ in a world that had already moved on? Should we not, as Stroumsa implies, lift the veil and understand that it is Christianity, rather than Judaism, that should be called an ‘oriental religion’?

1. Christianity – a priestly Judaism?

Now it would be easy, but perhaps trivial, to refute Stroumsa’s claim that Christianity was “centred upon a sacrificial ritual celebrated by priests”. As I have tried to show in an earlier study, there is little evidence for a regular – for example weekly or even annual – meeting of Christians, be it for prayers or for celebrating the Eucharist.[9] Neither presbyters nor priests are ever mentioned in Paul. And when Paul speaks of the service of liturgy (ἡ διακονία τῆς λειτουργίας), which is provided as eucharist to God (διὰ πολλῶν εὐχαριστιῶν τῷ θεῷ), he talks about the collection of money (2Cor. 9:12). Similarly profane is his single mention of the Temple-service in his letters, when in 1Cor. 9:13 he uses the example that “those who serve in the Temple are nourished from the Temple and those who serve at the altar receive their share from it”. Only in chapter 15 of Romans does the author speak of himself as “minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles” and that he “serves the gospel of God like a priest, so that the Gentiles may become an acceptable offering, sanctified by the Holy Spirit”. Yet chapters 15 and 16 (except the doxology at the end of 16) were not part of Marcion’s version of Romans, as evinced by the so-called Marcionite Prologues to Paul’s letters which could be from Marcion’s own hand, and an explicit statement of Origen in his Commentary on Romans 16:25–27 that Marcion's version ended at Rom. 14:23, the last verse of its chapter 14.[10] Chapters 15 and 16 of Romans as we have it today were unknown to the authors of the capitula in the 8th century Codex Amiatinus, nor do they appear in the Codex Fuldensis or the Concordia epistularum Pauli, a concordance of Paul's letters which can be found in Vulgate manuscripts.[11] As a result, chapters 15 and 16 of Romans may not stem from Paul, but are perhaps a post-Temple, even a second-century addition which shows the sacralisation tendency within Christianity. In other words, outside the suspect chapter 15, Paul's letters do not employ priestly language.

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[8] See, for example, Hezser (1994, 480–489); worth studying would be the *Testament of Levi* amongst the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* with its spiritualised apocalyptic vision of the Temple (*TestLev.* 5). Of course, the problem with this text is to what extent it displays a pre-Christian or non-Christian Judaism and how it relates to the Aramaic versions of this Testament and the Dead-Sea find of the *Aramaic Testament of Levi* (4Q213–214) with its sacrifice and wisdom topics, in the later text transformed into Torah-orientation (*TestLev.* 13); see De Jonge (1975, 247–260); Knibb (1998, 197–213, esp. 212–213; 247–258); Stone (1991, 228–246).

[9] See Vinzent (2011, 193–226); now in a revised German translation: (2014, 265–302).

Likewise, if we look at other very early Christian writings, priestly language and topics are extremely rare. 1Clement applies the word 'holy' (ἱερός) to God's undefiled hands[12] and three times to the Jewish Scriptures;[13] beyond that, the text once mentions Egyptian priests (ἱερεῖς),[14] and once refers to priests and Levites in the Jewish writings (ἱερεῖς καὶ λευῖται).[15] Similarly the author of 1Clement seems to refer to these Jewish writings when he draws on the divine order to underline the hierarchy of the presbyters in the Christian community.[16]Again, the Epistle of Barnabas only introduces priests with reference to the Jewish Scriptures, priests as opponents of Jesus and (once) about 'priests of idols'.[17] The term ἱερεῖς in connection with Christian ministers is, however, absent not just from the 'Apostolic Fathers' but also from all the New Testament writings with the exception of Hebrews and Revelation, where the term 'priest' is applied to

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[10] Orig., *Comm. in Rom.* 16.25–27 (PG 14,1290 A–B).

[11] See Gamble (1977, 16).

[12] *1Clem.* 33.4.

[13] *1Clem.* 43.1; 45.2 (om. in A); 53.1.

[14] *1Clem.* 25.5.

[15] *1Clem.* 32.2; the same goes for λειτουργεύω, see e.g. *1Clem.* 9:2; 32:2; 34:5–6; 43:4. The only exception is *ibid.* 44,3 where the verb refers to those who have served the flock of Christ.

[16] *1Clem.* 40.5: "These things therefore being manifest to us, and since we look into the depths of the divine knowledge, it behoves us to do all things in [their proper] order, which the Lord has commanded us to perform at stated times. He has enjoined offerings [to be presented] and service to be performed [to Him], and that not thoughtlessly or irregularly, but at the appointed times and hours. Where and by whom He desires these things to be done, He Himself has fixed by His own supreme will, in order that all things being piously done according to His good pleasure, may be acceptable to Him. Those, therefore, who present their offerings at the appointed times, are accepted and blessed; for inasmuch as they follow the laws of the Lord, they sin not. For his own peculiar services are assigned to the high priest, and their own proper place is prescribed to the priests, and their own special ministrations devolve on the Levites. The layman is bound by the laws that pertain to laymen" (transl. Roberts-Donaldson); see also *ibid.* 43.4.

[17] *Barn.* 7.3–6; 9.6.

Christ, and ‘priests’ to the believers.[18] In a single passage, The Shepherd of Hermas gives a more detailed description of what is meant by service (λειτουργία), namely bishops who show hospitality:

> […] who always gladly received into their houses the servants of God, without dissimulation. And the bishops never failed to protect, by their service, the widows, and those who were in want, and always maintained a holy conversation. All these, accordingly, shall be protected by the Lord for ever. They who do these things are honourable before God, and their place is already with the angels, if they remain to the end serving God.[19]

Elswhere I have tried to show that Christ as the ‘sacrificed Passover lamb’ (*1Cor.* 5:7) was more prominent than the Risen Christ in early Christianity.[20] Nevertheless, when Paul, *Hebrews* or *1Clement* speak of Christ as the sacrificial Passover lamb, they mean a spiritual sacrifice. Likewise, when we read in the *Didache* the quotation from *Malachi* that the Lord said: “In every place and time, it is said, offer me a pure sacrifice” (*Did.* 14.1–3), the absence of a specific local and temporal reference points once again to the spiritual character of such sacrifice.

2. Christians and the memory of sacrifices

Taken spiritually, Stroumsa is of course right, and here starts the more interesting part of my response: Christians were impregnated with the idea of sacrifice, not in the physical sense of sacrificing in the Temple, but in commemorating, perhaps even emotionally and intellectually identifying themselves with their murdered hero. In documents such as *Hebrews*, *Revelation* and also the *Didache*, we discover that the desire to offer such sacrifices had died out neither with the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple nor with the expulsion of Jews from Jerusalem after the defeat by the Romans in the Bar Kokhba war. Sacrifice came to be understood as a non-local and non-temporal act, just as the Temple was re-configured into a spiritual idea.

It is noticeable that the most explicit reflection about sacrifice does not come immediately after the destruction of the Temple, i. e. in the years after 70 CE, but only after the end of the Bar Kokhba war of 132–135 CE. For it is only then that we find Justin, in his rhetorical dialogue with the Jew Trypho,[21] raising the topic of sacrificice in a serious manner. This passage is importent enough to deserve quoting and discussing this passage at some length:[22]

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[18] *Hebr.* 5:6; 7:1–21; 8:4; 9:6; 10:11.21; *Rev.* 1:6; 5:10; 20:6; I return to these passages below.

[19] *Herm.* 104.3 (Sim. IX 27).

[20] Vinzent (2014, 278–280).

> Accordingly, God, anticipating all the sacrifices which we offer through this name, and which Jesus the Christ enjoined us to offer, i.e., in the Eucharist of the bread and the cup, and which are presented by Christians in all places throughout the world, bears witness that they are well-pleasing to Him. But He utterly rejects those presented by you and by those priests of yours, saying, "And I will not accept your sacrifices at your hands; for from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is glorified among the Gentiles (He says); but ye profane it". Yet even now, in your love of contention, you assert that God does not accept the sacrifices of those who dwelt then in Jerusalem, and were called Israelites; but says that He is pleased with the prayers of the people of that nation then dispersed, and calls their prayers sacrifices. Now, that prayers and giving of thanks, when offered by worthy men, are the only perfect and well-pleasing sacrifices to God, I also admit. For such alone Christians have undertaken to offer, and in the remembrance effected by their solid and liquid food, whereby the suffering of the Son of God which He endured is brought to mind, whose name the high priests of your nation and your teachers have caused to be profaned and blasphemed over all the earth. But these filthy garments, which have been put by you on all who have become Christians by the name of Jesus, God shows shall be taken away from us, when He shall raise all men from the dead, and appoint some to be incorruptible, immortal, and free from sorrow in the everlasting and imperishable kingdom; but shall send others away to the everlasting punishment of fire. But as to you and your teachers deceiving yourselves when you interpret what the Scripture says as referring to those of your nation then in dispersion, and maintain that their prayers and sacrifices offered in every place are pure and well-pleasing, learn that you are speaking falsely, and trying by all means to cheat yourselves: for, first of all, not even now does your nation extend from the rising to the setting of the sun, but there are nations among which none of your race ever dwelt. For there is not one single race of men, whether barbarians, or Greeks, or whatever they may be called, nomads, or vagrants, or herdsmen living in tents, among whom prayers and giving of thanks are not offered through the name of the crucified Jesus. And then, as the Scriptures show, at the time when Malachi wrote this, your dispersion over all the earth, which now exists, had not taken place.[23]

This passage provides us with a fascinating insight into the terms of Justin's debate with people whom he calls 'Israelites', in a text written at most a couple of decades after the Jewish war against the Romans. Justin claims that the sacrifices offered by Christians in the Eucharist are ‘well-pleasing’ to God, while those of the Israelites and their former priests have been utterly rejected – according to their very own Scriptures (again with a quotation from the book of *Malachi* [1:10 – 12]).[24] And yet – if we can take him at his word, and it seems we can – he witnesses to the fact that, after the disaster of the war, i.e. the foundation by the Romans of Aelia Capitolina on the site of Jerusalem, and the creation of a sacred Roman site in place of the Temple, the Jews themselves “assert that God does not accept the sacrifices of those who dwelt then in Jerusalem”, while “He is pleased with the prayers of the people of that nation then dispersed, and calls their prayers sacrifices”. For these are “the only perfect and well-pleasing” ones, “offered in every place”.

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[21] Whether Trypho is a mere literary fiction is undecidable, and anyway here quite irrelevant. On Justin and Jewish-Christian relations see Boyarin (2001; 2004, 37–73).

[22] Elsewhere, Justin mentions the execution of Christians by the Jewish rebel leader: "For in the Jewish war which lately raged, Barchochebas, the leader of the revolt of the Jews, gave orders that Christians alone should be led to cruel punishments, unless they would deny Jesus Christ and utter blasphemy": *1Apol.* 31.

[23] Justin, *Dial.* 117 (tr. here and later by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson in *ANF*).

Both Justin and his interlocutor Trypho start from the acknowledgement that Jewish worship has had to be re-configured after the Bar-Kokhba war. Both sides are represented as subscribing to the reconceptualisation of the notion of sacrifice, such that the physical sacrifices conducted by priests in the Temple in Jerusalem have been replaced by prayers, and the focus on one single location has been given up. How paradoxical such a re-configuration must have sounded in contemporary ears can be seen from the clear distinction made by Plato between ‘sacrifice’ and ‘prayer’. In Plato’s dialogue *Euthyphro* (14c), Socrates states that “sacrificing is giving to the gods, while praying is making a request of the gods”. If so, how can prayer ‘replace’ sacrifice or be considered an equivalent to it?

Even if Trypho is only a prop on which to hang Justin’s arguments, the distinction between ‘giving to’ and ‘requesting of’ God has become blurred, while Justin assumes that both Trypho and himself share the thought that prayers are now called sacrifices and that sacrifices should be interpreted as prayers.

Against this background, we can understand why our passage does not mention priests, but instead speaks of ‘people’ and prayers ‘in every place’ that are now called ‘sacrifices’.[25] Interestingly, Justin states this view as a new Jewish understanding of sacrifice to which he explicitly subscribes. He also claims that at least some Christians too (though not all, as we shall see) shared in this new understanding: “Now, that prayers and giving of thanks, when offered by worthy men, are the only perfect and well-pleasing sacrifices to God, I also admit”. He adds, however, that “Christians alone have undertaken to offer” such sacrifices in the form of the Eucharist (‘solid and liquid food’), whereas he blames the Israelites, particularly the high priests and the teachers, for “profan[ing] and blasphem[ing]” the Christians and their sacrifices “over all the earth”.

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[24] Mal. 1:10 – 12 reads: (10) Oh, that there were even one among you who would shut the doors, so you might not kindle fire on my altar in vain. I have no pleasure in you, says the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hands. (11) For from the rising of the sun to its setting my name is great among the nations, and everywhere offerings are made to my name, pure offerings; for my name is great among the nations, says the Lord of hosts. (12) But you profane it by saying, “The table of the Lord and its fruit is polluted, the food is contemptible”.

[25] Although Judaism still knew Levites and priests, as shown by Hezser (1994, 480 – 489), they now were seen as interpreters of the Torah. Grey (2011) is even more explicit: “Examples of post-70 priestly dynamics include Josephus’ endorsement of priestly leadership after the First Revolt, the priestly ideology behind the Bar Kokhba revolt in the second century, the continued presence of priestly aristocrats in Galilee, the leadership of priestly sages in the Tiberian academy during

Is Justin’s concern with the denigration of Christian worship by ‘high priests’ and ‘teachers’, due, as Stroumsa thinks, to the fact that the latter have given up sacrifices altogether and put the priests out of a job? Were Christians – whom Justin calls the ‘true Israelite race’ – now different in continuing the Israelites’ praxis by establishing a priestly class?[26] The answer to these questions is rather complex and requires some further discussion of Justin’s text.

To defend sacrificial practice, Justin had earlier inverted *Mal.* 1:10 – 12, claiming that Christians glorify God’s name among the Gentiles, while the Jews profane it.[27] His justification for this move was the allegedly universal spread of Christians among the Gentiles, “from the rising of the sun to its setting”. He had also raised the issue of the Jews’ new situation without the Temple, putting into Trypho’s mouth a question about Christians who “even now, wish to live in the observance of the institutions given by Moses”:

> “But if some, even now, wish to live in the observance of the institutions given by Moses, and yet believe in this Jesus who was crucified, recognising Him to be the Christ of God, and that it is given to Him to be absolute Judge of all, and that His is the everlasting kingdom, can they also be saved?”, he [Trypho] inquired of me [Justin].
>
> And I [Justin] replied, “Let us consider that also together, whether one may now observe all the Mosaic institutions”.

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the late third and early fourth centuries, expressions of priestly nationalism in the Byzantine period, and the involvement of priests in synagogue worship”. See also Mimouni (2012); Fine (2014, 182) (with further lit., but note that Ze’ev Weiss is male, not female), although sceptical of the idea of ‘expansion of the priests as a sociological group’ still notices a ‘deepening interest in priests and priestly motifs’ in the Byzantine era in Judaism; see also Schwartz (1990, 58 – 109); Grey also points to the earlier studies by Trifon (1985) and Trifon (1989, 77 – 93); see also Jan Bremmer’s contribution to this volume (Chapter 2) to whom I owe the knowledge of Grey’s PhD thesis.

[26] Justin, *Dial.* 135, see Harvey (1996, 253 – 254).

[27] Cf. the earlier passages *Dial.* 28 – 29 and 41.

> And he [Trypho] answered, “No. For we know that, as you said, it is not possible either anywhere to sacrifice the lamb of the passover, or to offer the goats ordered for the fast; or, in short, [to present] all the other offerings”.[28]

In other words, even after the fall of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Temple, the ban of Jews from living in or visiting the town once a year, and the impossibility of sacrificing the Lamb for Passover in due form after 135 CE, some believers, even those who adhered to the crucified Jesus, evidently still wanted to observe the Jewish Law in its entirety.[29] Yet Justin makes Trypho reject such a possibility. According to him, one can no longer be saved through observance, since there is no ritual sacrificing of the Lamb of the Passover or of the goats or “all the other offerings”, which have vanished with the lost Temple. Yet the Jews are not left without alternatives:

> And I said, “Tell then yourself, I pray, some things which can be observed; for you will be persuaded that, though a man does not keep or has not performed the eternal decrees, he may assuredly be saved”.
>
> Then he replied, “To keep the Sabbath, to be circumcised, to observe months, and to be washed if you touch anything prohibited by Moses, or after sexual intercourse”.[30]

There is no mention here of the study of the Torah that Neusner and Stroumsa foreground: it is rather ritual practice, based on the Torah, that is emphasised. Prayer alone does not seem enough for Trypho, for he adds some observances he thinks are still available, namely keeping the Sabbath, circumcision, calendar observance and purity rites such as ritual washing (βαπτίζειν). And, as the ensuing dialogue shows, it is not only Jews and Jews who believe in Jesus who observe these ordinances, but some of the latter also want to persuade Gentiles to join them in such observances, on the grounds that they are a pre-requisite for salvation.[31] Sacrifice, however, is not mentioned, since physical sacrifices have ceased and need to be replaced by something else.

The further question, however, is whether, with physical sacrifice at the Temple a thing of the past, the privileged group of priests who officiated as those sacrifices also cease to be important. Despite what has been called the ‘traumatising'[32] experience of the destruction and loss of the Temple, Simon Mimouni has claimed that "certain priestly classes, the מ׳שמרות/*mishmarot* [...] preserved their authority and influence with the people both in civic and religious matters".[33] In that case, in now representing all Christians as a 'priestly race', Justin might be broadening the idea of a priestly class and expanding it to apply to every Christian. Moreover, he even claims the sacrifices of prayer that God now receives are offered by gentiles viewed as the true high priests: "We are the true high priestly race of God, as even God Himself bears witness, saying that in every place among the Gentiles sacrifices are presented to Him well-pleasing and pure. Now God receives sacrifices from no one, except through His priests".[34] Can we go so far as to claim that Justin is here claiming that the Christians have inherited the status of the Jewish *mishmarot*, the *cohanim* or that of the members of the tribe of Levi? I think not. The claim is rather that Christians see themselves as being *of the race of* the 'high priests' (as a matter of fact, high priests were never a specific caste, for the individuals chosen were recruited from a variety of backgrounds, such as Pharisees and Sadducees). Hence 'race' (γένος) here represents Christians as belonging to the Jewish people, something that accords with Justin's claim elsewhere that Christians constitute the *verus Israel*. For him "the notion of *verus Israel*, the true Israel, is a key feature in the *Dialogue*", as Mikael Tellbe points out, because "from the start, Justin makes it clear that 'we are the true spiritual Israel, and the descendants (γένος) of Judah, Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham, who, though uncircumcised, was approved and blessed by God, because of his faith, and who was called the father of many nations (ἐθνῶν)' (*Dial.* 11.5)".[35]

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[28] Justin, *Dial.* 46.1–2.

[29] That they also believe in Jesus as ‘absolute Judge of all’ excludes them from being Marcionites, although the latter play a significant role in Justin’s *Dialogue*; see now Hayes (2017).

[30] Justin, *Dial.* 46.2.

[31] Jessica van’t Westeinde (University of Durham) called my attention to the fact that this naturally presumes that such Gentiles had become Jewish, i. e. Jewish-by-conversion, because only then would observance be a pre-condition for being saved.

In opening the following paragraph with 'we', Justin seems indeed to be claiming that all Christians are to be regarded as high priests or priests:

> Accordingly, God, anticipating all the sacrifices which we offer through this name, and which Jesus the Christ enjoined us to offer, i.e., in the Eucharist of the bread and the cup, and which are presented by Christians in all places throughout the world, bears witness that they are well-pleasing to Him.[36]

On the other hand, in a passage of the earlier *First Apology*, where Justin describes baptism, he alludes to somebody whose role it is to "lead to the laver the person that is to be washed, calling him by this name alone [i. e. the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe]”. He is, however, not referred to as a ‘priest’ nor is he said to be an intermediary. On the contrary, Justin continues with the communal ‘we’ and states that “*we* have thus washed” the baptisand, although remarkably enough he differentiates between this ‘we’ and the assembled persons, “who are called brethren”.[37]

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[32] Levine (2000, 491).
[33] Mimouni (2015, 549).
[34] Justin, *Dial.* 116.3.
[35] Tellbe (2009, 124).
[36] Justin, *Dial.* 117.1.

When, in the same work, Justin describes the celebration of the Eucharist, he again refers to a person called the ‘president of the brethren’, who is eminent and set above the others. This person takes “bread and a cup of wine mixed with water, gives praise and glory to the Father of the universe, through the name of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and offers thanks at considerable length for our being counted worthy to receive these things at His hands”. While this person leads the thanksgiving, all the people present give their assent by saying ‘amen’.[38] In addition to the president, a ‘reader’ is mentioned,[39] and also ‘deacons’ who “give to each of those present to partake of the bread and wine mixed with water over which the thanksgiving was pronounced, and to those who are absent they carry away a portion”.[40] It is certainly correct to read into this account an emerging hierarchy (president, deacons, people). But in my view it is questionable whether we should also see it as ascribing a priestly mediating function to the president, especially as the agents in both cases, baptism and eucharist, are God through Christ and the individual who makes a conscious choice, repents and knows, and thus remains no longer a child “of necessity and of ignorance”.[41] This process of emancipation is one of the reasons why “this washing [of baptism] is called illumination, because they who learn these things are illuminated in their understandings”.[42]

My argument is thus that for Justin, as for Trypho, the function of the High Priest as a privileged mediator of the divine has ceased with the end of the Bar Kokhba war. Moreover, both believe that the functions of the *mishmarim*, the *cohanim*, and the priests viewed as descendants of the tribe of the Levites, have come to an end. At least for Justin, the difference between Trypho and himself was not the abandonment of blood-sacrifice or the continuation of a spiritual form of it. The difference he emphasises concerns the identity of those who offer the true spiritual sacrifice. Whereas Trypho maintains that the Temple sacrifices are now being offered in the form of prayers by ‘worthy men’, Justin goes a step further and identifies the Christians not only as ‘worthy men’ but actually as ‘High Priests or priests’, perhaps indeed, as Stroumsa has suggested, to emphasise against Trypho their continuity with the ancient Israelite priestly tradition.[43]

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[37] Justin, *1Apol.* 55.1.

[38] Justin, *1Apol.* 65.5; cf. 67.4 – 5.

[39] Justin, *1Apol.* 67.4.

[40] Justin, *1Apol.* 65.5.

[41] Justin, *1Apol.* 61.10.

[42] Justin, *1Apol.* 61.12.

3. Jewish and Christian intellectualism and ritualism

What purchase does Justin give us on Stroumsa’s account of the situation after 70 CE?

Let us first take Stroumsa’s claim that a Christianity centred on priesthood diverged from a Rabbinic Judaism oriented towards teaching as early as the period after 70 CE. This view depends on an early dating of texts such as *Hebrews, Revelation*, and the canonical *Gospels*. All of these, however, are in my view later texts that attempt to insinuate an early divide between the two ‘new religions’, which is supposed to have occurred at the latest after the destruction of the Temple by Titus.[44] By contrast, I believe that once one recognises that such texts are themselves part of the literature of the ‘second sophistic’ of the mid-second century,[45] they can be used as evidence for the complex re-negotiation of what Judaism was or should become. Although Titus had destroyed the Temple, the Jewish communities continued fervently to believe in the possibility of its being rebuilt.[46] But after 135 CE and the foundation of *Aelia Capitolina*, as I have pointed out, the Romans actually banned Jews from living in Jerusalem.[47] In this new situation, as one can see from Justin, both the Temple and its sacrifices were transferred to the realm of eschatological hope, became linked to the coming of the Messiah, and, in the meantime, had to be spiritualised.

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[43] He does not single out the *prohistamenoi* or presidents of the congregation as the ‘high priest’ or ‘priest’ in contrast to the lay congregation, but instead calls all Christians priests. In this respect, Clement of Rome in his letter to the Corinthians differs from Justin. To Clement, Christ descended from the tribe of the Levites, see *1Clem.* 32; 58. Christ is called the ‘High Priest’, see *1Clem.* 36. Is this a hint that this Letter has been written after 70 CE, but before the end of the Bar Kokhba war? For up to the end of this war, as I point out below, Jews had high hopes of rebuilding the Temple

[44] It is interesting to note that after having shown that the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE did not make much, if any practical difference for western diaspora Jews (they were “long accustomed to honoring their god without offerings and sacrifices … In this respect, with the Temple’s destruction, nothing changed. Instead, through the cycles of reading their scriptures, diaspora Jews could hear and learn about these sacrifices long before 70. They could and did continue to do so long after the Temple had ceased to exist”), even Paula Frederiksen refers to the “small body of interrelated Hellenistic Jewish texts”, “the synoptic Gospels and the Gospel of John” which “within *very* few years of the Roman destruction, do focus quite deliberately on the fall of the Temple”, while at the same time she mentions “the relatively muted trauma for the diaspora”, see Frederiksen (2014, 27); more precisely, she later notes in her summary (48) that ‘later Christians’ (and she should have extended this to the Gospel authors too) looked “through the prism of the Bar Kokhba revolt”, as this event supported their argument that God himself had ‘sent the Jews into exile’, although for centuries, the Jewish diaspora existed.

[45] See Vinzent (2014).

Jews who turned to Rabbis and those who chose rather the one Rabbi, the ‘friends of Christ’, agreed on all this. What they disagreed over was their benchmark narrative of the turn – while the Rabbis used Moses’ Torah and the prophets, the friends of Christ turned to the Prophets, as one can see from Justin, or his contemporary Ptolemaeus, or, even more radically, to the new narrative of the Gospel, which, in the form proposed by Marcion and Justin’s student Tatian, rejected both Moses and the Prophets. Is the Rabbis’ orientation towards the Torah really ‘a religion of the intellect’ in contrast to Christianity, with its orientation towards the Prophets and the Gospel? For it was not only the Christians who formed a religion – as Stroumsa puts it, not of the book but of the ‘paperback’ – producing countless pamphlets, including Justin’s Dialogue, sometimes with more, and often with less, intellectual rigour. The Jews – from whom the Christians had not yet separated – did just the same. Neither of them, however, placed the intellect above emotions and tradition. And only individual exceptions such as Marcion or Tatian ever questioned their shared foundation, Moses and the Prophets, and the rituals prescribed in Scripture.

On the other hand, if we take Justin, the urban visitor to Rome, as our guide, Stroumsa does seem to be correct in his claim that Christianity, far more than Rabbinic Judaism, continued to emphasise the sacrificial topology of ancient Israel. Christianity deployed priestly language, cultic rituals, calendar-observation and a clearly-structured sacred hierarchy (whether from the very beginning[48] or at the latest after the Bar Kokhba war). It drew upon a mixture of traditions, including those of ancient Israel, Rome, even Mithras, re-reading earlier themes and combining them with new, idiosyncratic elements. The degree to which Christianity is to be viewed as continuous with ancient Israel rather than, say, a new form of religion or a transformation of Roman religion seems to me as open as the question of whether Rome was ever Christianised, or whether Judaism became Romanised in Christianity. More research is needed into the beginnings of Christianity and the documents on which its history is conventionally based, Paul's *Letters*, the *Gospels* and *Acts*. At all events, a simple binary reading that contrasts Judaism with Christianity makes little sense: it is an opposition we need to transcend if we are ever to succeed in revising the traditional histories of triumph, be they Jewish or Christian.

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[46] See *Barn.* 16.4.

[47] See also Cass. Dio 79.12 with Schäfer (1981, 33–35).

[48] If Mimouni (2015, 501–563) is correct, the Jesus-movement was inherently priest-oriented, because Jesus’ family belonged to the tribe of the Levites.

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Michael D. Swartz

Rhetorical indications of the poet’s craft in the ancient synagogue

The fourth to eighth centuries CE saw the emergence of a class of professional liturgical poets in the Palestinian synagogue. These poets, known as *payetanim*, composed a genre of intricate poetry known as *piyyut* and formed a religious class independent of the rabbinic movement. This study discusses indications of how synagogue poets saw themselves both in relation to the divine and to their communities, focusing on the rhetoric of early *piyyut* and attestations to its use in the early synagogue. Two methodological models are explored: the construction of a liturgical ‘self’ in the introductions to *piyyutim*; and the analysis of the use of ideal figures and construction of a past in these compositions. It is argued that ritual practitioners in the Jewish communities of late antiquity sought to distinguish themselves as worthy of consideration as members of a vocation that claimed a pedigree, identity, and singular status.

1. Introduction

In the sixth century CE two poets, the Christian hymnologist Romanos the Melodist of Constantinople and a Jewish liturgical poet named Yannai, who lived in the Galilee, signed their names in their compositions in the form of an acrostic spelling out their names in the first letters of a series of lines of verse.[1] This form, a kind of watermark, allowed the author, among other things, to claim the work as his own. Name acrostics had appeared in classical and Hellenistic Greek and Latin poetry from at least the third century BCE (Courtney 1990). Among early Christian poets, Ephraem, the fourth-century Syriac preacher and hymnologist, also signed his name to his compositions in acrostics.[2] Beginning with the sixth century, this practice became popular in Byzantine and Hebrew liturgical

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[1] I wish to thank the organisers of the conference on which this volume is based for allowing me this opportunity to consider these subjects. I especially wish to thank Richard Gordon, whose writing on the economic and interactive dimensions of magical texts has prompted some of these questions, and the editors for their invaluable suggestions. I am also indebted to Derek Krueger, who has shared his work and discussed these ideas with me since their inception, and Peter Lenhardt, who has made his forthcoming book, *Yotser, Piyyut ve-Qahal*, available to me in advance of publication.

[2] On the early history of Greek and Latin acrostics, see Courtney (1990) and Krueger (2004, 170 – 171).

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poetry. The reason for this development has implications for both the culture and the microeconomics of the poet's craft.

The phenomenon of the acrostic signature in liturgical Hebrew poetry is the culmination of a long process of evolution of genres, in which the poet presented himself not simply as a humble supplicant before God, but as a master of religious expertise representing a congregation. From approximately the second to sixth centuries CE, the liturgical poetry of the synagogue in Palestine evolved from a set of prosodic forms used by lay prayer leaders to a highly developed literary corpus known as *piyyut*, composed by professional poets (*payetaim*).[3] These poets produced hundreds of compositions based on the weekly lectionary reading, employing recondite vocabulary and allusions, complex prosodic structures, and often signed their names in acrostics. They also formed a religious class independent of the rabbinic movement and may have represented the interests of a priestly sector of Jewish society after the destruction of the Temple. This study will discuss indications of how synagogue poets saw themselves both in relation to the divine and to their communities, focusing on the rhetoric of early piyyut and attestations to its use in the early synagogue.

We lack any sources of information, reliable or unreliable, about the lives of these poets from their contemporaries. The payetan was sometimes identified with the *ḥazan*, a term for synagogue functionary that may have included singing as a prayer leader, what was called *shaliaḥ tsibbur* or "messenger of the community," and even elementary education (Sky 1992). The terms *payetan* and *piyyut* are derived from the Greek ποιητής. Variations of the word payetan (such as *poyetes* or *poyetan*) appear a few times in rabbinic literature of the fourth to sixth centuries, but the term *piyyut* does not appear.[4] One Rabbi, Eleazar bar Simon, is said to have been a "reader," that is, one who could read scripture liturgically in the synagogue; a *tanna*, one who memorised and taught rabbinic traditions; and a *qarov u-foyetes*. The term *poyetes* most probably refers to one who composed liturgical compositions; the term *qarov* may refer to one who composed a particular genre, the *qerovah*, which embellishes the statutory prayers of petition, the *Amidah*.

Anecdotes about named poets whose work is known to us start appearing in Europe in the Middle Ages and they are singularly unhelpful. For example, Yose ben Yose, the first payetan known to us by name, was said to be an orphan. This notion seems to be based on the custom of naming a child after a deceased relative; that is, if his name was the same as his father's, it must have been because his father died.[5] According to the twelfth-century poet and commentator German Ephraim of Bonn, Yannai was the teacher of the great poet Eleazar Qillir, but he killed his student out of jealousy for his talent by putting a scorpion in his sandal.[6] A few of the poets are said to have been priests, either according to tradition, or on account of their names. For example, the name Pinehas ha-Kohen, "Pineḥas the Priest," is probably an indication of priestly lineage (Yahalom 1999, 111–122). As we will see, this last detail may be socially significant. The Jerusalem Temple was destroyed in 70 CE. Since then, the sacrificial system was obliterated and the priesthood as a class apparently served virtually no professional or ritual function in the Jewish community.

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[3] For introductions to early piyyut, see Fleischer and David (2007); Fleischer (2007); Yahalom (1987 and 1999); Swartz and Yahalom (2005); and Lieber (2012).

[4] For a discussion of sources, see Schirmann (1951, 129 – 133) and Lieberman (1939); see also Sokoloff (1990) s.v. פויטן and פויטס.

Any evidence for the social location of these poets must therefore be internal and comparative. For comparative evidence, we may draw on the role of the liturgical poets and hymnologists in in the wider cultural context, above all Greek and Latin hymnologists, including the emergent Christian poetry from the fourth century onwards. For internal evidence the language of the *piyyutim* can be examined for signs of the role of the poet as he conceived it.

The significance of individual authorship of literary works for the history of Jewish culture of the Roman and Byzantine periods should not be underestimated. Rabbinic literature is almost exclusively a corporate enterprise. This vast corpus of texts encompasses legal compilations, from the Mishnah, redacted around 200 CE, to the Talmuds, completed in fifth-century Palestine and sixth-century Babylonia, as well as various texts of Midrash, dating from the third to the eighth centuries. A pervasive characteristic of rabbinic literature is its multivocality. Rabbinic texts represent themselves as collections of statements, opinions, and exegeses by individual authorities and debates among them. Even when an individual opinion held by a majority of Rabbis, it is marked by attribution to "the sages" collectively. *Piyyut*, however, emerged as the products of individual poets and thus presents an unusual example of single voices. These works thus represent a sustained discourse marked with the style and ideological interests of those individual composers. In fact, the first extant literary works in Hebrew written by a single named author since the Book of Ben Sira (Ecclesiasticus) in the second century BCE are the *piyyutim* of Yose ben Yose in the fourth or fifth century.

In keeping with the theme of religious professionalism that forms the organisational principle of this volume, this study concerns how ritual practitioners in the Jewish communities of late antiquity sought to distinguish themselves as worthy of consideration as members of a vocation that claimed a pedigree, identity, and singular status. In pursuit of indicators of the lived environment of the poet, this study therefore will consist of methodological reflections on two models: (1) the construction of a liturgical “self” in the introductions to *piyyutim*; and (2) the analysis of the use of ideal figures and construction of a past in these compositions. These reflections are each inspired by pioneering work done recently in other fields, including analysis undertaken by Peter Lenhardt, following Ezra Fleischer and other earlier scholars, on the *reshut* form in classical *piyyut*, in which the poet asks “permission” or “authority” to commence his discourse (Lenhardt, forthcoming); and Derek Krueger’s explorations of the construction of the past and the development of a liturgical ‘I’ in Byzantine hymnography (2004: 2014). These reflections are meant to lead to further analysis of the vast corpus of Hebrew hymnology of the Roman and Byzantine eras.

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[5] See Mirsky, (1991, 13 n.4) and the sources cited there.

[6] For sources and bibliography see Lieber (2010, 14).

2. The I of Aleph

Hebrew liturgical poetry introduces the first person due to a useful coincidence: Most *piyyutim* are alphabetical acrostics, and the first-person imperfect or cohortative begins with the first letter, Aleph. This means that the author often begins by expressing his relationship to the liturgical task at hand, often by declaring his intention to recite praise, thanks, or narration in the first stanzas. A simple survey of the titles of early *piyyutim*, taken from their first lines, shows the range of first-person expressions. The following are the titles of the extant the works of Yose ben Yose, the first payetan known to us by name, who lived in the fourth or fifth century CE. This list is based on Aaron Mirsky’s 1991 edition of his poems. The genres are explained below:

Hebrew	transliteration	English	genre
אהללה אלהי	*Ahalelah Elohai*	“I shall praise my God”	*Malkhuyot*
אפחד במעשי	*Efḥad be-Ma‘asay*	“I fear because of my deeds”	*Zikhronot*
אנוסה לעזרה	*Anusah le-Ezra*	“I flee for help”	*Shofarot*
אמנם אשמינו	*Omnam Ashamenu*	“Indeed, our sins”	*Seliḥah*
אזכיר גבורות אלוה	*Azkir Gevurot Elohah*	“I shall recount God’s deeds”	*Avodah*
אתן תהילה	*Eten Tehillah*	“I shall give praise”	*Avodah*
אתה כוננת	*Atah Konanta Olam*	“You established the world”	*Avodah*
אספר גדולות	*Asapper Gedulot*	“I shall tell (God’s) deeds”	*Avodah*
אין לנו כוהן גדול	*En Lanu Kohen Gadol*	“We have no high priest”	confession[7]

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[7] The other compositions in Mirsky’s edition are fragmentary or doubtfully attributed to Yose

In this table, the opening phrases are listed in Hebrew, transliteration, and translation. The right-hand column lists the liturgical genre to which they belong, based on superscriptions in the manuscripts, the conventions of the literature, and Mirsky's designations. The first three of these compositions are recited at the liturgy for Rosh Hashanah, the New Year, specifically as introductions to three units of the Additional Service (*musaf*) in which biblical verses introduce the sounding of the shofar (ram's horn), announcing God's kingship (*malkhuyot*), remembrance (*zikhronot*), and the shofar (*shofarot*).[8] The three prayers for Rosh Hashanah help initiate the ten Days of Repentance, and so the focus of the poems is on the individual's deeds. The *seliḥot* genre is likewise a prayer for forgiveness from God, in this case recited on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.[9] However the Avodah genre deals with another essential component of Yom Kippur. It is an epic retelling of the Yom Kippur sacrifice of purification and atonement carried out by the High Priest in the Temple in Jerusalem as described by Leviticus chapter 16 and the Mishnah tractate Yoma.[10] This complex genre plays an important part in the study of the social and cultural history of Hebrew liturgical poetry, not the least because of the destruction of the temple and the sacrificial system centuries earlier.

All but one of these opening phrases begin with the first person, and two with the first person plural; *Atah Konanta* begins with the second person singular. In the two main genres represented here, the triad for the shofar ceremony and the *Avodah*, the first person singular is significant for different reasons. Although the first of the three compositions for Rosh Hashanah tells of God's deliverance of Israel in the past, the second and third focus on the individual's sins and deliverance by God. In *Efḥad be-Ma'asai*, he fears that his deeds will condemn him; in *Anusah la-Ezra*, he flees to God for refuge. The focus on the indi-

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ben Yose. The fragmentary titles are *Or 'Olam* ("The Light of the World;" Mirsky 1991, 217); *Eftaḥ Sefatai* ("I Shall Open My Lips"; Mirsky 1991, 218); and *Az le-Rosh Titanu* ("When We Were Made the Head," Mirsky 1991, 219–221; the first line is based on Deut 38:13). *Az le-Rosh Titanu* is a confession and *Eftaḥ Sefatai* may also be one; *Or 'Olam* consists only of one line and it may be a fragment of a *Yotser*.

[8] On this liturgical unit, see Elbogen (1993, 118–121).

[9] See Elbogen (1993, 177–183).

[10] For an introduction to the Avodah as well as texts and translations of the major early Avodah compositions, see Swartz and Yahalom (2005) and the bibliography there. All translations of Avodah *piyyutim* here are from this volume unless otherwise noted; other translations are mine, unless otherwise noted. A comprehensive study of the Avodah service and *piyyutim* from the perspective of the history of Hebrew literature is Malachi (1974). For further editions and discussions of Avodah *piyyutim*, see also Goldschmidt (1970, 2:18–25); Yahalom (1996); Mirsky (1991); Swartz (1997, 1999, and 2013), and Münz-Manor (2013).

vidual in this confessional mode should not be taken for granted. Traditional Jewish prayers for forgiveness are more often than not cast in the first person plural, especially the two acrostic litanies of transgressions (the *vidui*, confession, and *'al ḥet*, "for the sin […]" that form the core of the confession ceremony of Yom Kippur).[11] Yet, these presumed expressions of individual contrition reflect the poet's consciousness of his environment and vocation. An example can be found in the first stanzas of the second composition in the list, *Anusah le-'Ezra* (Mirsky 1991, 109). The poem introduces the *shofarot* service in the liturgy, which recalls prophecies in which the shofar will be sounded to signify redemption. Therefore, the author uses a technique whereby each stanza ends with the word *qol*, "voice" or "sound". In these translations, each pair of lines represents a hemistich of four feet, adding up to stanzas of two stiches apiece:

> I flee for help
> I find it facing me,
> God is near to me,
> When I call him with my voice.[12]

In translation, this stanza looks like a simple declaration of the poet's dependence on God and faith in His presence; but it is also, like all of piyyut, produced by a complex process of interweaving biblical and post-biblical allusions. The language of piyyut is famous for its use of dense, ornamental phraseology in which no person, thing, or action is allowed to stand for itself; instead, the predominant means of expression is metonymy, in which a substitute word or phrase (*kinnui*), usually based on a biblical verse, signifies the subject of the discourse. The first hemistich, "I flee for help," is based on *Isaiah* 10:3:

> What will you do on the day of punishment,
> When the calamity comes from afar,
> To whom will you flee for help […]?

The *kinnui* form often involves taking a verse out of context, but sometimes the contrast can be instructive. In Isaiah the phrase is less an expression of assurance than a warning to the sinner of his future desperation. In the *piyyut*, the speaker is convinced of his deliverance. This is brought home by the use of the root, *qrb*, to be near. This conceit of the poem, whereby each line ends with the word *qol*, allows the author to establish a homology between the

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11 On the statutory confessions for the Yom Kippur see Elbogen (1993, 125 – 126).

12 All biblical quotations are based on the *NJPS* with occasional modifications.

sound of the shofar and the voice of the poet. That is, God will draw near if he raises his voice to call Him.

It is at this point that the poet acknowledges the liturgical setting explicitly:

> The one who, in the divine assembly,
> Stands close to me
> And here, in the Smaller Sanctuary,
> I open my mouth to Him with my voice.

The first line of this stanza, like the previous one, reflects a remarkable use of a biblical source. God is referred to as the one "in the divine assembly," *asher be-'adat el*. This phrase and the word *nitsav*, "stands," in the next hemistich, are based on *Psalm* 82:1:

> *Elohim nitsav be-'adat el*
> *be-qerev elohim yishpot.*
>
> God stands in the divine assembly;
> Among the gods he pronounces judgment.

In that Psalm, God stands among the assembly of gods. He accuses them of injustice and declares that he will demote them to mortals. But in Jewish exegetical tradition, the phrase *'adat el* is sometimes used to refer to the congregation of ten worshippers (*minyan*): Thus in the Palestinian Talmud (y. *Berakhot* 5:1 [8d-9a]), the following statement is quoted in the name of Rabbi Abahu:[13]

> "Seek the Lord where He can be found" (*Isa*. 55:6). Where can He be found? In houses of study. "Call to Him where He is near" (ibid.). Where is he near? {In synagogues and houses of study.[14]} Rabbi Isaac son of Rabbi Eleazar (said): Not only that, but their God stands next to them. How do we know (by biblical proof-text)? "God stands in the divine assembly" (*Ps* 82:1).

Likewise, in the Babylonian Talmud (b. *Berakhot* 6a), Ravin bar Rav Ada says in the name of Rabbi Isaac:

> How do we know (by biblical proof-text) that the Holy One, blessed be He, is found in the synagogue? As it is said, "God stands in the divine assembly." And how do we know that when ten pray, the divine presence (*shekhinah*) is among them? As it is said, "God stands in

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[13] The manuscript (MS Leiden) reads "Rabbi Abahu in the name of Rabbi Abahu", an obvious scribal error.

[14] So MS Rome.

> the divine assembly." And how do we know that when three sit in judgment,[15] the divine presence is among them?" Among the *elohim* he pronounces judgment."

By rendering *elohim* as referring to the judicial system, one meaning implied by other biblical uses of the word,[16] this exegesis strips the verse of its henotheistic implications. Likewise, *'adat el* can become the quorum for human prayer.[17]

The second line of this stanza, *beqirbi nitsav*, echoes the word *qarov*, "near," in the third line above. While it has been translated here as "stands close to me," the word *be-qirbi* could also mean, literally, "among me" or "within me;" it can, therefore, also refer to God's presence within the community, or perhaps the poet's inspiration. The next line is more specific institutionally. The phrase *miqdash me'at*, "smaller sanctuary," comes originally from *Ezekiel* 11:16: "Say then: Thus said the Lord God: I have indeed removed them far among the nations and have scattered them among the countries, and I have become to them a smaller sanctuary in the countries where they have gone."[18] In one source in the Babylonian Talmud (b. *Megillah* 29a), the verse is used to refer to the synagogue. The citation occurs in the course of a Talmudic discussion about whether God's presence, the *Shekhinah*, is to be found in the diaspora:

> "And I will be to them a smaller sanctuary" (*Ezek* 6:11): Rabbi Isaac said: These are the synagogues and the houses of study in Babylonia. R. Eleazar said: This is the house of our master in Babylonia. Rava expounded: What is the meaning of the verse: "Lord, You have been our dwelling place (*ma'on*)" (*Ps* 90:1)? These are synagogues and houses of study.

This exegesis of *Ezekiel* 6:11 thus interprets the phrase "smaller sanctuary" to refer both to synagogues and houses of study in Babylonia. It reflects the idea that the synagogue is a miniature or lesser temple.[19] The stanza therefore represents the payetan as the one who raises his voice[20] in the substitute temple, bringing forth the divine presence, an echo of the lost sanctuary.

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[15] To constitute a rabbinical court.

[16] See *BDB* p. 43a s.v. אלהים and *Exod* 21:6; on three constituting a rabbinical court, see *Mishnah Sanhedrin* 1:1.

[17] Cf. also Mekhilta de-Rabbi Ishmael *Yitro Baḥodesh* 11; *Avot de-Rabbi Natan* Version B ch. 18; and Deuteronomy Rabba ed. Lieberman, *Ki Tavo* ch. 2, p. 108.

[18] NJPS translates "diminished sanctity".

[19] Although Rabbi Isaac was a third-century Tanna who had traveled to Babylonia (Stemberger 1991), this passage appears in the Babylonian Talmud, which was redacted in the sixth century. This source is often cited in modern historiography to describe Palestinian Jewish concepts of the synagogue. Our piyyut, however, may be one of the earliest attestations to this interpretation of *Ezek*. 6:11 in a Palestinian Jewish source. Cf. also a midrashic fragment on Leviticus from the Cairo Genizah in Ginzberg (1969, 77).

The presence of the first person singular in the Avodah *piyyutim* is worthy of note as well. While the other genres in this list represent the individual's intimate relationship with God, the recounting of the Yom Kippur sacrifice represents the High Holidays at their most collective. In *Leviticus* 16, the High Priest slaughters two bulls and a goat, uses their blood to cleanse the sanctuary of ritual impurity, and sends another goat out to the wilderness bearing the people's sins. In the course of the sacrificial procedure, he also brings incense into the Holy of Holies, where he encounters the Potent Presence of God, the only time in the year when he does so. The Avodah genre relates this procedure step by step, following the Mishnah tractate Yoma's extensive narrative of the ritual and adorning it with elaborate poetic figures, excurses on the glorious appearance of the High Priest and his garments, the drama of his encounter with the divine presence in the Holy of Holies, and the exultation of the nation at the news that she has been forgiven. But preceding this narration, the Avodah *piyyutim* attach an extensive prologue that narrates the history of the world from its creation, through the prehistory of humankind to the lives of the patriarchs, to the selection of Aaron and his clan as priests, culminating in the sacrificial service in the Temple.[21] The Avodah is thus an epic genre, which seeks to produce an almost Aristotelian empathy between the congregation and the High Priest. But more than this, the High Priest is identified mimetically with the payetan himself, whose mission it is to take the community verbally into the vanished Temple.[22]

The early Avodah *piyyutim* sometimes open with a first-person declaration, as we have seen in other genres. For example, the most influential Avodah, Yose ben Yose's *Azkir Gevurot Elohah*, begins:

I shall recount the wonders
Of the magnificent God,
Who is unique, there is no other,
Self-sufficient and none second to Him.

There is none beyond Him in the universe,
None prior to Him in heaven;

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[20] The phrase "open my mouth" is based on *Isa* 10:14, where the silence of birds is used as a metaphor for the silence of the nations while Assyria gathers wealth; for a magical use of this verse see Schiffman and Swartz (1992, 140).

[21] Other related *piyyutim* such as anonymous fourth century *Az be-En Kol* and the fifth-century preamble *Seder Beriyot*, go further, describing the divine world before mundane creation; see Rand (2005) and Swartz (2011).

[22] For this argument, see Swartz and Yahalom (2005) and Swartz (2012).

None preceded Him,
And none can supplant Him.

So too in his *Eten Tehillah* (Mirsky 1991, 173): [23]

I shall give praise
To God, who is to be praised;
I shall tell, in awe,
A few of His works.

God was from eternity[24]
Before there was a world,[25]
Neither before or after Him
Was any god created.

In these examples Yose signifies seeks permission before God to recount how He created the universe, chose a succession of patriarchs and priests, and instructed them to present sacrifices to Him. However, after the first stanza he switches to a third-person account of primordial cosmology. Other examples of the Avodah begin with the second person, such as the phrase *atah konanta olam*, "You established the world," which begins one of the earliest, anonymous Avodah compositions as well as one of Yose ben Yose's poems.[26] Yet the Avodah is not bereft of the kind of self-consciousness we found in the passages described above. By these introductions the poet signals that he is to begin a saga – not quite imploring "O muse, sing to me," but indeed the other way around. By the use of the jussive or cohortative the poet seeks permission from God to sing to Him in front to the congregation. [27]

This idea, that the poet must ask permission to commence his discourse, is therefore built into the structure of this literature. The term for this rhetorical turn is *reshut*, which means "permission," "authority", or "dominion." According to Uri Ehrlich (2004), it has its roots in scholastic protocol, in which the student or servant must ask permission from his master to speak, to approach him, or take leave of him. In a version of the liturgical unit known as the *quedushah*, or sanctification, which introduces the recitation of the *trishagion* of *Isaiah* 6:3, angels are said to "give one another permission (*reshut*) to sanctify their creator."[28] The passage presupposes an angelic chorus that sings antiphonally, answering *Isaiah* 6:3 with *Ezekiel* 3:12. It also presupposes a celestial world ruled by intricate protocol. The "permission" each grants to the other seems to be the pronunciation of the potent divine name.

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[23] My translation.

[24] Hebrew *me-'olam*.

[25] Hebrew *'ad lo 'olam*.

[26] See Swartz and Yahalom, (2005, 70 and 292); cf. *Az be-En Kol*, which begins with a third-person passage on cosmology (Swartz and Yahalom 2005, 97 ff.).

[27] See Lenhardt (forthcoming).

As Ezra Fleischer shows (1977), the poetic and rhetorical pattern in which the prayer leader asks permission from God to sing His praise goes back to some of the earliest *piyyutim* in the third or fourth centuries. It then developed into a distinctive formal component of the more complex compositions of the fifth and sixth centuries, and eventually into a separable unit called the *reshut*. One of the earliest examples is a brief anonymous quatrain that appears in several liturgies as a separable introduction to the Avodah (Goldschmidt 1970, 2:430); its antiquity can be seen from the style and lack of rhyme:[29]

Oḥilah la-El aḥaleh fanav
Esh'alah mimmenu ma'aneh lashon;
Asher bi-qehal-'am ashirah 'uzo;
Abi'ah renanot be'ad mif'alav

I hope for God, I implore His presence;
I ask of Him the response of the tongue,
So that in the assembly of the people I may sing of His power.
I shall express songs of praise regarding His deeds.

In the second line, the poet requests *ma'aneh lashon*, literally, "the response of the tongue." This phrase, from *Micah* 7:7, may mean that the petitioner seeks an answer to his prayer.[30] But it can also be read as a prayer for eloquence—the tongue in question not being the Deity's but the poet's.[31] Once again, the poet places himself in the midst of the congregation, here taking language from Judges 20:2, in which the "people of God", the tribes of Israel, gather under very different circumstances, to go to war against the Benjaminites.

By the eighth or ninth century, one payetan had structured his *reshut* as a remarkable portrait of his synagogue. This *reshut*, first published by Ezra Fleischer (1974), precedes an Avodah *piyyut*, *Eqra be-Garon* ("I Shall Call out Loudly with My Throat"), by Pinehas Ha-Kohen, an eighth-century poet from Palestine. Here he lists the classes that make up the congregation:[32]

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[28] For a text and translation see Birnbaum (1949, 73–74).

[29] On this unit as a pre-classical example of *reshut* see Fleischer (1977, 359).

[30] So Goldschmidt's note ad loc.

[31] So the translation in Silverman (1978, 367): "I will ask Him the gift of speech".

[32] For this passage in the context of the history of the synagogue, see further Swartz and Yahalom (2005, 7–10).

I implore the Rock of eternity,
Who has knowledge of the life[33] of the innocent;
As I cast my eyes to the heavens,
I ask permission from the Merciful One.

And so too when I stand before the wise,
Who hear words from the truthful,
Who understand words of law;
I ask permission from the wise.

I look out at the congregation of the noble;
And am fearful of the One who humbles and raises;
And of those standing behind me and before me as a fence:
I ask permission from the righteous.

The seed of the faithful,
Believers, sons of believers,
Who explore the law and understand:
I ask permission from priests.

Those who […] goodness on my behalf;
Who are satiated with good teaching and instruction,
For they attend grace and favor:
I open my mouth with the permission of Levites.

Those who honor this day and fast,
and respond "holy, holy, holy;"
And teach scripture and Mishnah diligently:
I open my mouth with permission of *ḥazanim*.

Those who are skilled in the subtleties of books;
Abiding in the shade of the One who dwells in mystery;[34]
Who sing sweet, pleasant words:
I open my mouth with permission of scribes.

Those who eternally elevate the Living One
Who say prayer before Him;
Who stand before the One who makes mountains:
I open my mouth with permission of those who recite liturgy.

Those who recite the specific and general;[35]
Who sweep behind like water;
Who recite righteousness and justice:
I open my mouth with permission of singers.

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[33] Lit., "days".

[34] Based on Ps. 91:1, interpreted here perhaps as "the Most High dwells in mysteries"; cf. Swartz (1992, 150).

[35] Referring to the principles by which the Torah is interpreted according to tradition and thus, perhaps, to the Midrash embedded in *piyyutim*.

> Those who lend strong voices in melody;
> Let their cry before you be pleasing;
> May You consider the melody of my tongue.
> I open my mouth with permission of the whole people.
>
> O Almighty, as You forgive treachery;
> Listen to my entreaties from above;
> Grant me a pure heart that I may speak without fear or treachery:
> I open my mouth with permission of the entire congregation.[36]

Each two stanzas represent a different category or pair of social categories in the synagogue; the first three lines of each describe that category, and the last identifies it explicitly. This poem is also built on a religiously and socially hierarchical structure, with God at the top in the first stanza and the congregation and entire nation in the last two. At the top of the social hierarchy, closest to God, are the sages – the “wise” and “righteous,” who surround the poet like a fence and before whom he trembles. Next come the priests and the Levites – the former being the “believers, sons of believers” in that their office is hereditary. Scribes and *ḥazanim* come next. The *ḥazan* is associated with the scribes and described as one who “teach[es] scripture and Mishnah,” two subjects that were taught primarily to children. This is an indication that when this hymn was composed a significant function of the *ḥazan* was elementary education.[37] Next in the social order comes the payetan himself, who “arrange[s] prayers” and possibly an accompanying choir of “singers” (Fleischer, 1974).[38] The poet, therefore, ostensibly places himself in a humble position, close to the people for whom he is a spokesman. At the same time, this entire composition is a declaration of his intention to take on the role of messenger of the community before God.

3. The I of the Ancestors

This brings us to our second model, that of ideal figures. Rabbinic tradition is distinguished by a constant attention to the process of transmission of its wisdom from its mythic origins to contemporary teachers, the rabbis. The Mishnah tractate *Avot*, or Sayings of the Fathers, edited around 200 CE, famously begins with a chain of tradition, tracing the reception of Torah from the initial revelation of Moses, to his biblical and post-biblical successors,

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[36] This translation is from Swartz and Yahalom (2005, 8–9). The text appears in facsimile in Yahalom (1987, 71–72) and is edited in Fleisher (1974, 46–47). See also Yahalom (1999, 41–42).

[37] On this function of the *ḥazan* see Sky (1992, 30–31).

[38] However, according to Yahalom (1999, 41–42), the parallelistic structure of the stanzas, each two standing for one category, makes it less likely that these two stanzas represent separate classes of payetan and chorus.

> Moses received Torah at Sinai and handed it down to Joshua, Joshua to the Elders, the Elders to the prophets, and the prophets handed it down to the Men of the Great Assembly.

The chain of tradition continues, enumerating the teachings of second-temple sages and eventually to the present-day rabbis themselves.[39] But while Moses, biblical prophets and legislators, and Pharisaic leaders of the Second Temple are included in the chain, Aaron, Moses' brother, and the priesthood are omitted. The Mishnah, thus, emphasizes that divine revelation was transmitted through scribes and sages to the Rabbis as a class.

The Avodah *piyyutim*, in contrast, narrate Israel's mythic history so as to privilege the priestly line (Swartz 2013). This tendency goes back to the earliest two Avodah *piyyutim*, *Atah Barata*, "You Created the Entire World" (Swartz and Yahalom 2005, 43–50), and *Atah Konanta 'Olam me-Rosh*, "You Established the World from Eternity" (Swartz and Yahalom 2005, 69–92).In *Atah Konanta*, the poet's concern for selecting the priestly lineage is especially apparent from his description of the sons of Jacob (Swartz and Yahalom 2005, 48–51):

> You distinguished a treasure
> From among his children:
> This is Levi,
> The third from the womb.
>
> You looked favourably
> On those who came forth from his loins:
> This is Aaron,
> The first holy man.
>
> You specified to him with what[40]
> He should enter the shrine
> And informed him of what he should do
> Before you on the Day of Pardoning.

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[39] On the rabbinic chain of tradition and its implications, see Saldarini (1974 and 1982); Tropper (2004); Herr (1979); Fraade (1991, 69–71) and the literature cited there; Lerner (1987); Schofer (2005, 45–46, 206–207); Goldin (1983, xix-xx); Schechter (1997, xxiv); Epstein (1957, 232–233); and Boyarin (2004, 77–86); on alternative chains of tradition in early Jewish magical, mystical, and medical literature see Swartz (1996, 173–205).

[40] Heb. *be-ezeh:* cf. Lev. 16:3.

You clothed him in righteousness
In garments white as snow
And added four
More than his brothers'.[41]

You sanctified him
Like the sanctity of your Seraphim
For he appeased (you for)
The sins of your people.

You made him a chief
For the descendants of the father of a multitude[42]
And an officer
For the third seed.[43]

The names of your tribes
You placed on his two shoulders
So that when he entered before you
They could be remembered for good.

As a substitute for atonement
You informed his sons
So that they serve before you
Following his example.

The poet lists a succession of heroes from Jacob to Levi (the "third seed") to Aaron, and then to Aaron's sons. They are thus traced from the patriarchs to the priest who would later preside in the Jerusalem Temple over the sacrifice that is the subject of the poem. In a very similar passage, *Atah Konanta 'Olam me-Rosh* arranges its history of Israel so that Abraham leads directly to Aaron:[44]

You gave him
Twelve tribes,
Lovers of the Most High,
They were called from the womb.

You placed a fair garland
Of favor upon Levi,
And of all his brothers
You placed a crown on him.[45]

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[41] Referring to the High Priest, who wears eight garments to the ordinary priest's four.
[42] Abraham.
[43] Levi (the third son); Heb. *le-shalesh*; alternatively, one might emend to *le-shamesh* ("to serve").
[44] Swartz and Yahalom (2005, 72–74).
[45] Referring to the priesthood.

> Amram was chosen
> From the seed of Levi
> Aaron, holy to the Lord,
> You sanctified from his stock.
>
> You adorned him
> In woven garments,
> And by his sacrifices
> He annulled your anger.

In both cases Aaron's brother Moses is notable for his absence.

Later on in the Avodah, the High Priest is described as a virtuous, physically strong human being who carries Israel and its deeds heroically with him into the sanctuary, and expiates its impurities by his methodical performance of the sacrificial ritual. This valorisation of the priest stands in contrast with the rabbinic texts that served as sources for the poet, which routinely belittle the priesthood and cast suspicion on the priestly class of the second-temple period.[46] This and other structural and stylistic features of the genre are indications that the payetanim identified themselves with the priesthood, at least for the duration of the Avodah liturgy.

Recently, Derek Krueger (2010) has shown how the extensive use of the history of Israel in early *anaphora*, from the Liturgy of St. Basil to the *Apostolic Constitutions*, served ideological and social purposes. He argues that "the liturgical repetition of Old Testament narrative asserted its relevance to the formation of Christian community" in Western Syria, where there were significant populations of both Jews and Marcionites.[47] So too, the Avodah's rendering of sacred history constituted an alternative to the rabbinic narrative in which the priesthood was belittled and its importance was minimized. This counter-narrative may have strengthened the prestige of the payetan in the cultural environment in Palestine in late antiquity. It has been argued (Yahalom 1999, 107–36; Irshai 2003) that the synagogue was led in late antiquity by priestly circles that had retained their identity.[48] It is not certain whether the payetanim were indeed part of an organised priestly class. However, it has been shown here that the Avodah constructs a priestly pedigree for the poem that is spiritual and cultural, if not genealogical. This poetic strategy would therefore have the positioned synagogue poet in a centre of cultural production.

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[46] See Yahalom (1999); and Swartz (1999).

[47] On textual affinities between the Avodah and the *Apostolic Consitutions*, see Münz-Manor (2013).

[48] Cf. Miller (2007) and Fine (2005).

4. From Poetry to Society

The purpose of the close readings of generic markers offered above has been to prepare the way for understanding the process of professionalism of the synagogue poet from the fourth to sixth centuries. The evidence for such a process increases with the development of the genres that express the poet's conception of his vocation and place in the community. However, it has its roots in the early *piyyutim* in which the poets place themselves in a central position, as representative of the nation, as the successor to the hereditary priesthood, and even as the agent by whom the divine presence hovers over the congregation.

It could be argued that these patterns might be understood more as signs of vocation than professionalisation. However, the trajectory of the history of *piyyut* seems to lead to a society in which the poet was seen as an individual author providing a service to the community, who probably compensated him in some way. The payetan was usually the performer of his works, and would have been recognized as such by the congregation. One consequence of signing one's name in an acrostic is that it protects the author's work. In the Rabbinic milieu at this time and place, in which most literature was collective and transmitted orally, this was not a trivial matter if one's livelihood was at stake. Regarding Greek and Latin poetry, Edward Courtney observes (1990, 8), "In a time of predominantly oral transmission, a poet who wished to retain the title to his poetry needed to stamp it with some mark of ownership."[49] An acrostic signature could prevent another performer from representing another's work as his own.

Two other features of the early literary history of *piyyut* are the increasing proliferation of sources between the fourth and seventh centuries and the increasing intricacy of its language. The only extant compositions by Yose ben Yose are for the High Holidays, the days of repentance between the New Year and the Day of Atonement. The liturgy of those days was the most extensive and dramatic of the year. We do not know whether Yose would have been paid for his efforts but it has been argued here that the poet thought of himself as fulfilling a vocation. In the next century, Yannai wrote detailed exegetical compositions for the entire weekly lectionary cycle. Eleazar Qillir's work is even more voluminous; in addition, his use of novel linguistic forms, recondite allusions, and expanding use of sources gained him both fame and notoriety in late antiquity and the Middle Ages.[50] Hence the legends in which his expertise causes his teacher Yannai to fly into a jealous rage. This development could also be an indication of the transmission of techniques and sources in small groups or guilds of verbal craftsmen. That is, the intricacy of Qillir's language, the poetic and linguistic innovations he instituted, and the overall virtuosity of his compositions could also serve to exclude amateurs and dilettantes who did not have access to them.

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[49] See also Kreuger (2010, 170). For an account of the problem of individual authorship in early Islam see Kilto (2001), especially, the case of the writer al-Jahiz (pp. 67–77), who forged several books and attributed them to ancient authors, and was then faced with the prospect of proving his own authorship of those works. On authorship in medieval Spanish Hebrew poetry, see Pagis (1970, 101–106).

We know from Talmudic sources and fragmentary literary compositions that it was possible to hire professional poets to perform at funerals and weddings.[51] The Babylonian Talmud (b. Moed Katan 25b), contains several anecdotes about funeral poets, including examples of their craft. In one story, Rav Ashi asks two poets. Bar Kipok and Bar Abin, what they would say for his funeral. They each recite several lines. Rav Ashi does not like their work and resolves not to hire them.

With the rise of Christianity after Constantine, according to the most recent archaeological evidence, synagogues in Palestine grew from modest structures to monumental buildings, featuring dazzling mosaics, sculptural architectural ornamentation, and prominent dedicatory inscriptions (Levine 2000 and 2012, Fine 2005). These buildings could compete with neighbouring churches in the new Christian empire. The inscriptions also allowed patrons to display their devotion in the form of the narrative themes and symbols of liturgical graphic arts. The evidence presented here suggests that in their poetry, the payetanim hoped to present themselves as ritual experts trained to be messengers of the community, and that enlisting them was a way for their patrons to display their devotion.[52]

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[50] On the reception of Eleazar and other payetanim on the part of medieval Spanish Hebrew poets and early modern Hebraists See Yahalom (1985, 11–19).

[51] See Yahalom (2006).

[52] It is interesting to note that unlike those inscriptions, the *piyyutim* under study do not seem to thematise such an economic relationship explicitly. For an example of a modern Mediterranean funeral poet's allusion to her compensation see Alexiou (2002, 40.)

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Part III: **Filling in the Blanks**

Esther Eidinow

In search of the ‘beggar-priest’

This paper examines the characterisation of itinerant ritual practitioners in both Greek and Roman cultures. It starts from the Greek term *agurtes*, tracing its development in Greek texts and looking for equivalent terms in Latin texts. Using selected material that describes similar persons and their activities it examines which qualities are highlighted for criticism in which contexts and identifies similarities and differences of characterisation between Greek and Roman descriptions.[1] It aims to illuminate the (different) conceptual models of particular social types developed in each culture, exploring what they reveal about both culturally specific conceptions of identity and power and the risks that were perceived to threaten them.

1. Introduction[2]

The paper starts with an analysis of the meaning and transmission of the term *agurtes*, from its original, ancient Greek conception to its use in the Roman Imperial period (specifically, the late Severan period). Over that time, the term appears frequently in Greek texts: usually employed to describe non-Roman individuals, it tends to sustain an association with begging, linking ritual activity with the quest for economic support. The sense of the term is usually derogatory. Sometimes it is enough that begging is involved at all: it appears that the need for support is perceived to undermine the authenticity of the ritual activity, since it suggests that the practitioner is motivated by acquisitiveness. It may also be that the ritual activity in question is somehow considered to be undesirable; for example, it may be affiliated to a group that is not recognized or for which there is social disapproval.[3] Over time, as we will see, these characteristics come to the fore, and the term also develops further derogatory nuances, including, for example, intimations of weakness and dependency. In sum, *agurtes* was

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[1] In approaching the material in this way, I follow the example of Macris (2008) who examines evidence for the holy man ‘from the East’. To prove the presence of this figure, he notes, one must either scrupulously examine all the evidence for every allusion, however vague, or focus on those texts that specifically discuss ‘holy men’ associated with ‘oriental’ cults.

[2] For reasons of space I have limited the number of quotations; unless otherwise stated, translations of ancient texts are taken from the most recent LCL editions, and retain their spelling.

[3] Contra Dickie (2001, 66).

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a term of abuse, part of a rhetoric of “othering”; it not only signalled contempt for certain individuals, it also drew a strong distinction between those offering judgement and those being judged.

It is somewhat surprising then that texts in Latin neither yield a single equivalent term, nor appear to use *agurtes* or related terms as loan words. Instead, as this paper shows, a variety of Latin words communicated certain aspects or nuances of the Greek term. In terms of lived reality, the difference in terminology does not mean that there were any fewer such individuals ‘on the road’; rather, it draws attention to the different conceptual models of the Romans, and the literary and historical contexts that shaped them. This paper does not argue for a persistent distinction between two cultural models, Greek and Roman, but rather examines how the conception of, and language associated with, the *agurtes* evolved within a different culture, drawing particular attention to evidence for growing concerns expressed in texts regarding the location of itinerant figures, their identity, and their relation to claims to power.

2. Greek origins and development

In Greek texts, the earliest uses of the word *agurtes*, and related terms, such as *agurtazo* and *ageiro*, appear in descriptions of those who survive by travelling and gathering the wherewithal to live and/or profit.[4] But although at first sight it is similar, this is not simply ‘begging’: there seem to be some further nuances of meaning involved in these characterisations. Thus, in *Odyssey* 19.283–284, the emphasis seems to lie on Odysseus’ travelling to amass *more* wealth, rather than the need to beg in order to survive: “only it seemed to his mind more profitable (*kerdion*) / to gather wealth (*chremat’ agurtazein*) by roaming over the wide earth”.[5] Roisman has argued persuasively that the double semantic sphere of *kerd-* ties this term not just to profit, but to skill or craft; its use here suggests that Odysseus’ begging activities require that he be guileful.[6] By the fifth century BCE, *agurtes* and its cognates are acquiring some more specific associations, some of which could be argued to build on this sense of craftiness: they are more regularly found, with a derogatory sense, in descriptions of itinerant sellers of ritual practices of various kinds.[7]

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[4] *Agurtazo:* ‘collect by begging’ (*Od.* 19.284; s.v. *LSJ*); the verb *ageiro* conveys a similar family of meanings: it can be used to indicate gathering with an emphasis on movement or collection, and, finally with the sense of ‘begging’, sometimes for the gods (s.v. *LSJ*; Chantraine notes the relationship s.v. *ageiro*). This paper’s discussion of *agurtes* develops some ideas in Eidinow (2015, 309–310).

[5] Saïd (2011, 82–83) cites this passage as part of a disquisition on networks of trade.

[6] Roisman (1987, 66 and 1990, 23–25, and 1994). She argues that the term may indicate (1994, 10): “resourcefulness exemplified by an immediate response to a situation at hand with one’s own interest uppermost in mind”. She observes differences in nuances of meaning between

The earliest extant occurrence of the term and its cognates, which appears to link beggary with ritual practice, is found in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* where Cassandra is describing the slights she has suffered: "I endured having to wander like an itinerant begging priestess (*agurtria*), a wretched, starving pauper".[8] Matthew Dickie suggests that Aeschylus probably wrote this passage thinking of the ravings of the *metragurtes*, that is, the begging priests associated with the followers of Cybele, which cult, he suggests was already known in the Greek world in the sixth century BCE.[9] This is possible, although the text offers no particular reason to make that connection.[10] Further uses of the term and its cognates in Greek drama maintain the association between ritual practice and financial gain. For example, in a fragment of Aeschylus' *Semele or Hydrophoroi*, the related term *ageirousan* is used to describe the activities of Hera, who has been changed into a priestess and is begging on behalf of the Nymphs of the river Inachus in Argos.[11] It may also lie behind the use of the term in the *Rhesus* to de-

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the *Iliad* where its use may be pejorative (1990, 35) and the *Odyssey* where it is a 'valuable asset' (1994, 13).

[7] Flower (2008, 66) calls it "the harshest insult" along with the term *magos*; cf. Giammellaro (2013). Jiménez (2002, 189), who examines the term in the context of Orphic ritual, also notes the link between begging and magical practice; this is cited in discussion by Edmonds (2013, 203), who adds its use as abuse.

[8] Aesch. *Ag.* 1269 – 1274.

[9] Dickie (2001, 66): Pind. *Dith.* 2.8 – 10 (fr. 70b Snell).

[10] In this paper, I keep the two terms, *metragurtes* and *menagurtes,* separate from *agurtes*, on the grounds that the first two were used to denote specific cult roles; while in contrast, as here, *agurtes* was a term of abuse. This difference may be played upon at Plut. *Mar.* 17.5 in which the Bataces (probably not himself a *metragurtes* but certainly associated with them) is abused as an *agurtes*. A similar play on words seems to occur at Plut. *Pyth. orac.* 25, 407c: here the *agurtikon kai agoraion [...] genos* that Plutarch describes hanging around the ceremonies of Serapis and Cybele are not immediately to be identified as the *metros agurtai* or *galloi agurtai* (as *Anth. Pal.* 6.218, *Babr.* 141, respectively), but certainly recall them (contra Jiménez 2002, 187 – 188 and Dickie 2001, 226, who acknowledges that Plutarch and his other sources refer to the *agurtai* and priests of Cybele as if they were separate categories of person, but argues that they should be regarded as the same).

[11] Aesch. frr. 220a – c (Sommerstein) (= fr. 168 Radt) and Pl. *Resp*. 381d4 – 7; two lines from the fragments (frr. 220a, 16 – 17) are attributed by Asklepiades to the *Xantriai* (schol. Ar. *Ran.* 1344; followed by Dillon 2002, 96, and Dickie 2001, 80, but Sommerstein 2008, 224 – 227 argues for the *Semele or Hydrophoroi*). On priestesses and ritual begging particularly connected to contexts of

scribe Odysseus; this character does not explicitly claim mantic powers but is seen to perform a curse (described later in the play, by the chorus, as Odysseus "speaking bad things" against the Atreidae).[12]

A number of further occurrences seem to place rather more emphasis on the way in which the need or greed for support undermines the authenticity of ritual expertise. In tragedy, one of the most famous examples is from Sophocles's *Oedipus Tyrannus*, when Oedipus is insulting the blind seer Teiresias, alleging that Creon has corrupted him: "[…] this wizard hatcher of plots, this crafty beggar (*agurten*), who has sight only when it comes to profit, but in his art is blind!"[13] And this aspect may have been why, in Old Comedy, the concept of the *agurtes* also seems to have been employed to mock politicians: for example, Cratinus is reported to have alluded to it in his abuse of Lampon. Hesychius reports that in his play *Drapetides*, Cratinus called the politician, *agersikubelis*, and notes that he called him "begging priest" and "axe-wielder" (on the grounds that an axe is called a *kubelis*).[14] Hesychius is again the source for the information that Lysippus mocked Lampon as an *agurtes* in his *Bacchae* – where he also abused the politician as a glutton.[15] Turning to a different genre, the writer of the Hippocratic treatise *On the Sacred Disease* intends to attack the ritual expertise of his opponents when he states that "those who first attributed a sacred character to this malady were like the magicians, purifiers, charlatans (*agurtai*) and quacks of our own day, men who claim great piety and superior knowledge".[16] The writer is trying to distinguish between his own activities and those offered by others who, like him, were itinerant sellers of various services associated with healing. It seems likely that the term acquires its negative power here by associating an individual's need for funds with their exercise of ritual, the one undermining trust in the integrity of the other.[17]

In literature of the fourth century, this pejorative sense of the term continues to associate itinerancy with begging and ritual activities. For example, in the *Republic*, Plato uses *agurtai* of the seers who knock on the doors of the wealthy

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weddings and childbirth see Budin 2016, 110 – 111: a famous example is the priestess of Athene Polias described in *CPG Suppl.* 1: 65 (no. B177) as *ageirei.*

[12] Eur. *Rhes*. 503 – 505 and 710 – 719. Giammellaro (2013, 281) quotes ll. 710 – 719, but discusses l. 503.

[13] Soph. *OT* 387 – 389.

[14] Cratinus, *Drapetides* fr. 66 K-A (Hesych. a 461).

[15] As a glutton: Ath. 344e; as an *agurtes*: Hesych. α 461 (frr. 6a and b K-A, respectively).

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

[17] Lloyd (1979, esp. 15 – 16, 56); Nutton (2013: 113 – 114) states that the writer is "prepared to allow sacrifice, prayer and supplication to the gods" but attacks those who "wander from place to place claiming a personal, non-institutional relationship with the gods".

with the aim of selling them various ritual services; he makes it clear that, in his opinion, these self-proclaimed experts do not know what they are talking about, although they manage to persuade their clients of their ideas.[18] These associations – of ritual practice, even of travelling – may also be implicit in the description by Clearchus of Soli (4th – 3rd century BCE), quoted by Athenaeus, of the Persian adoption of the *Melophoroi* (the so-called Apple-Bearers, a squad of bodyguards) from the Medes. Having first described how, from love of luxury, the Medes would turn their neighbours into eunuchs, Clearchus describes how the Persians adopted the *Melophoroi* "not just as revenge for what had been done to them, but also as a reminder of the bodyguards' addiction to luxury and of what cowards they had become; because their inopportune and foolish addiction to luxury in the way they lived was, apparently, capable of converting even men armed with spears into *agurtai*".[19] This passage makes implicit associations with ritual practitioners through the earlier reference to eunuchs, which could have brought to mind the begging-priests of eastern cults; if so, this aspect also reinforces the more explicit association made between the greed of *agurtai*, their love of luxury and resulting weakness.

Such an evocative concept as the 'begging priest' had staying power. A brief survey of passages from Greek works from across the Hellenistic and Imperial periods reveals the continued clustering, in different configurations, of these ideas of itinerancy, ritual expertise and low social and/or economic status. Strabo for example offers a succinct overview of categories of wanderer in which the activities of the *agurtes* are linked with practices of divination and religious purification/initiation.[20] The individuals that Plutarch describes with this term are also linked to divinatory practices, and are, invariably, of low social or economic status. They appear in incidental comments on, for example, the effects of Lycurgus' legislation in Sparta; the impact of his poverty on Aristides' descendants; and in a tirade against travelling diviners whose practices have helped to undermine the role of poetry in the phrasing and delivery of oracles.[21] Plutarch makes a similar criticism of those who betray the trust of others in his treatise on superstition, where he describes how those who have suffered a bad dream are likely to “put themselves into the hands of *agurtas* and impostors”. [22] The association of the *agurtes* with (false) prophecy is also apparent in the writings of Josephus, who reports that the zealots in Jerusalem, through their extreme actions, mocked prophecies that had been given concerning the fall of that city as impostors’ fables (*agurtikas logopoiias*).[23]

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[18] Pl. *Resp*. 364b2–365a3.

[19] Ath. 12.9, 514d (= fr. 49 Wehrli); see Hdt. 7.40–41 for the 1000 Persian *Melophoroi*. Olson makes the association explicit, translating *agurtai* as 'eunuch priests'.

[20] Strab. 10.3.23, 474C.

[21] Plut. *Lyc*. 9.3; *Arist*. 27.3 (*agurtikous:* of the boards employed for casting fortunes); *De Pyth. or.* 25, 407c.

As well as these more persistent associations, the link with weakness that emerged in the passage from Clearchus of Soli, also reappears: for example, in Lucian’s *Dialogues of the Gods*, where Heracles compares Asclepius’ feeble skills to his own mighty deeds, abusing him as merely a root-chopper and an *agurtes.*[24] The same implication of lack of strength is also apparent in Philostratus’ account of Dionysus vs. the Tyrrhenian Pirates, where the pirates think Dionysus “effeminate and a vagabond (*agurtes*)”.[25] In sum, across these passages from Greek texts, the *agurtes* is a weak and inconsequential figure, usually associated with claims to power through ritual practice (for example, practising *mantike*, *goeteia* or *pharmakeia*) coupled with deceitfulness, often prompted by greed or need.[26] This paper now turns to Latin texts to look for the figure of the ‘begging priest’: it examines the vocabulary used to evoke such characters, and looks for similarities and differences with the Greek model in the ways they were portrayed, and the concerns expressed about them.

3. Latin terminology

3.1. Ritual experts

Similar itinerant ritual experts were active throughout the Roman empire, “disseminated amongst all the religious, political and military activities of the Romans” and operating without centralised oversight.[27] Cicero’s treatises offer myriad possible terms to describe the individuals involved, including *magoi, ha-*

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[22] Plut. *De superst*. 3, 165 f-166a. The link to healing through purification is also found in Plut. *Quaest. Graec.* 54, 303c.

[23] Joseph. *BJ* 4.386.

[24] Luc. *Dial. D.* 15(13).1.

[25] Philostr. *Imag*. 1.19.10.

[26] Polyb. 12.8.5, exploring Timaeus’ contempt for Aristotle, uses *agurtes* with *propetes* (rash or reckless) to evoke the foolishness of a character willing to make random accusations in a law court.

[27] At home: Cato *Agr.* 5 (discussed further below); armies: App. *Hisp.* 85. Quotation from North (1990, 52–53), discussing diviners and divination, specifically.

ruspices, augures, harioli, vates, coniectores.[28] The *De divinatione* provides the kind of value judgement that parallels that so often implied by the Greek term, *agurtes*. This occurs through the voice of Quintus, as a final qualification of his otherwise supportive explanation of divination:

> "I will assert, however, in conclusion, that I do not recognise fortune-tellers (*sortilegos*), or those who prophesy for money, or necromancers, or mediums, (*psychomantia*) whom your friend Appius makes it a practice to consult. 'In fine, I say, I do not care a fig / For Marsian augurs (*Marsum augurem*), village mountebanks (*vicanos haruspices*), / Aastrologers who haunt the circus grounds (*de circo astrologos*), / Or Isis-seers (*Isiacos coniectores*), or dream interpreters (*interpretes sómnium*)—for they are not diviners either by knowledge or skill – / but superstitious bards, soothsaying quacks (*superstitiósi vates ímpudentesque hárioli*), / Averse to work, or mad, or ruled by want, / Directing others how to go, and yet / What road to take they do not know themselves; / From those to whom they promise wealth they beg / a coin. From what they promised let them take / Their coin as toll and pass the balance on.' Such are the words of Ennius who only a few lines further back expresses the view that there are gods and yet says that the gods do not care what human beings do. But for my part, believing as I do that the gods do care for man, and that they advise and often forewarn him, I approve of divination which is not trivial and is free from falsehood and trickery."[29]

Alex Nice has argued that the language and phrasing employed by Cicero in this passage (e.g., *hariolor*) may have been introduced by Cicero in gentle mockery of the belief of his friend, Appius Claudius, in *psychomantia* and the skills of the Marsi.[30] The vocabulary is distinctive; few of these terms occur elsewhere in Cicero's works. However, they are found in the comic plays of Plautus indicating various types of diviner, and often with associations between such a figure, his facility with words and his demands for money (albeit these are seldom as explicit as that made by Quintus quoting Ennius).[31] For example, the idea that diviners state the obvious is a running joke found in different plays;[32] while in the *Rudens*, as Gripus and Trichalio argue over the ownership of the trunk (which contains the crucial proof of identity for the girls Palaestra and Ampelisca), the fraudulence of soothsaying (*hariola*) creates the joke, but is not overt.[33] In a number of examples, the target of mockery is as much those who consult as those who are consulted. Thus, in the *Poenulus*, Lycus is obviously looking for good news before he rewards his diviner (*haruspex*)[34] while in the *Miles Gloriosus*, for example, Periplectomenus lists his wife's need to pay a whole host of divining figures: "the sorceress on the festival of Minerva, to the dream interpreter, to the clairvoyant, and to the soothsayer (*praecantrici, coniectrici, hariolae atque haruspicae*); it's a disgrace if nothing is sent to the woman who uses eyebrows to prophesy."[35]

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[28] See Cic. *Nat. D.* 1.20, and *Leg.* 2.8.20 – 21. On such composite lists, see Nice (2001, 163). The term *magus* in Latin texts has received an initial but thorough analysis by James Rives (2010), which demonstrates that it is not equivalent to the term *agurtes:* its initial usage, down to the second half of the first century CE, (61) "denotes only the Persian religious specialists"; with Pliny it starts to acquire intimations of specific "arcane lore"; (66) in later writers it loses the connection with the Persian tradition, and indicates expertise in divination and necromancy. Tacitus uses it to mean (66) free-lance expert in divination (*Ann.* 2.27.2, 2.32.2 and 12.22.1). The term does not appear to be inherently derogatory.

[29] Cic. *Div.* 1.132. On the structure of the argument see Schofield (1986); on the cultural context, Beard (1986). Nice (2001) provides an overview of the debate concerning how much of this passage is a quotation from Ennius: I have used his conclusions here.

[30] Nice (2001, 158). Lot oracles are explicitly criticised (Cic. *Div.* 2.85) as means of making money or to encourage superstition and error, but, as Nice notes (2001, 154), these could be either local oracles or those of strolling quacks.

Although these passages offer insights into daily attitudes to divination, none of these individual terms provides a close parallel to the term *agurtes*: they are not inherently derogatory.[36] Rather, their use in various contexts, and with different nuances, suggests other concerns. An example can be made of the term *haruspex*, which was used to denote diviners who were employed to serve the interests of the cities of the empire and its legions; we also find them attached to individual political figures, and apparently working freelance.[37] In this capacity, it appears that they were perceived to present something of a risk, which related not to their deceit, but to the power that they might offer: e. g., when Cato warns his bailiff away from visiting "a fortune-teller, or prophet, or diviner, or astrologer [*haruspicem, augurem, hariolum, Chaldaeum*]", he is not concerned to disparage the practice, but to keep the bailiff from acquiring knowledge that might threaten his master's position.[38] Columella, in turn, warns his bailiff that he must not on his own initiative have any acquaintance with a soothsayer or fortune-teller (*haruspices sagasque*), both of which classes of persons "incite ignorant minds through false superstition".[39] We will return to this aspect below.

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[31] Nice (2001, 155): *Hariolor* also appears in Cic. *Att.* 8.11.3. And in Plaut. *Asin.* 316, 579, 924; *Cist.* 746; *Mil.* 1256; *Rud.* 347, 1139, 1141; *Truc.* 602 and Ter. *Phorm.* 492; *Adelph.* 202. *Naucum* (or *naucus*) in Plaut. *Bacch.* 1102; *Mostell.* 1041; *Truc.* 611, 1042; *Par. Pig.* fr. 3.

[32] Plaut. *Rud.* 324–326; *Most.* 572.

[33] Plaut. *Rud.* 1138–1142.

[34] Plaut. *Poen* 456a, b-458.

[35] Plaut. *Poen.* 692–694; Similarly, in Juv. 6, 542–592 the target of the description of the astrologers and diviners in the Forum is, for the most part, the woman who consults them; the poem alludes to their methods of creating confidence in these women, but there is almost some sympathy in the mention of the *mathematici* who have been incarcerated (562).

[36] As Phillips (1986, 2729) illustrates in his brief overview of the treatment of the *haruspices:* "siding with conservative interests throughout the Republic, derided and sanctioned by Cicero, conjoined with magicians and astrologers by Ulpian, purged and welcomed in the fourth century and finally summoned to Rome in AD 408." Similarly, (ibid. 2730) "[t]he astrologers were periodically expelled and periodically returned."

[37] Horster (2011, 337–338).

One way to intimate suspicion about these individuals was to suggest their foreignness. We have seen above Cato's reference to the Chaldaean astrologers. The *De divinatione* also mentions them, offering diverse points of view: while his brother attests to their popularity, Cicero makes a strong case against them.[40] Meanwhile, in Juvenal's *Satire* 6, the only explicit criticism of a diviner is made about a Jewess: "She too gets her hand filled, though with less, because Jews will sell you whatever dreams you like for the tiniest copper coin."[41] The significance of such concerns is reinforced by the historical expulsion of some of these groups from Rome. Thus, Valerius Maximus records the expulsion of the Chaldaeans and Jews in 139 BCE, justified on the grounds that Roman mores must be protected from foreign influences.[42] But these observations, admonitions and expulsions were not necessarily about particular perceptions of race: we can extend them to encompass Quintus/Ennius' references to both the *Isiaci coniectores* and archaic Italian traditions: it appears to be a concern with non-Romanness.[43]

As a parallel, this concern with foreignness/non-Romanness has been productively studied with regard to cult.[44] Where it was used, the label of foreignness/non-Romanness need not create stigma.[45] This was not a concern with maintaining a religion of Empire:[46] as Simon Price has argued about the early Imperial period, "religious identities were [more] fluid and variously defined", and the identities of specific cults should not be regarded as monolithic.[47]

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[38] Cato *Agr.* 5.4.4; as North (1990, 59).

[39] Columella *Rust.* 1.6; 11.22–23.

[40] For: Cic. *Div.* 1.91; against: Cic. *Div.* 2.87–99.

[41] Juv. 6.546–547.

[42] Val. Max 1.3.3 Kempf (only preserved in the epitome by Iulius Paris).

[43] As stated explicitly by Cic. *Div.* 2.70.

[44] Scheid (2005, 226) reminds us that we must be careful about taking sources at face value, remaining aware of the rhetoric of genre, and testing it against other forms of evidence.

[45] See Ando (2008, 106–107), who argues for the importance of the notions of public and private in the regulation of Roman religious practice; but see Bendlin (2000, esp. 131–132) for a deconstruction of these distinctions.

[46] On the history of this idea, see Rüpke (2011).

[47] Price (2011, 272).

Rather, scholarship has shown how the concept of foreignness/non-Romanness seems to have been employed in various contexts, under different historical pressures: the Roman state's association with the Etruscan haruspices offers one illustration; the cult of Cybele/Magna Mater in Rome another.[48] With regard to the latter, Eric Orlin has focused on its simultaneous aspects of inclusion and exclusion: the cult was central to the city and yet simultaneously excluded via regulations that maintained a level of marginalisation of those holding roles in this cult.[49] Dionysius of Halicarnassus reports the ambiguity of identities projected by the rites of the cult—on the one hand, Roman, on the other Phrygian.[50] Orlin argues that there is an aspect of "paraded foreignness" in these phenomena, which is also found elsewhere in Roman religion.[51] Such *peregrina sacra,* Ando notes, "represented in the classical period not so much intrusions by foreign elements *into* Roman religion as privileged sites *within* Roman religion for the negotiation of boundaries between Roman and alien".[52]

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[48] On the *haruspices*, see Potter (1994, 154–157), Orlin (2010, 96–99), Santangelo (2013, 84–114). On the *galli:* Lucr. 2.610–628, Catull. 63, Juv. 6.511–516, Mart. 3.81, Ov. *Fast*. 4.193–244 (not negative); see Orlin (2010, 101), citing Beard (1994, 175) for discussion of their transgression of sexual boundaries. See also A. Klöckner's contribution in this volume (Chapter 13).

[49] Orlin (2010, 102–103, at 104); "Choosing to have the priests remain outside the boundaries of Roman citizenship makes a statement about the style of worship, not the cult itself or the goddess"; see Baslez (2004) on whether "priest" is an appropriate term for the *galli*. Specific to our discussion of the figure of the *agurtai*, it may be that part of what seemed unacceptable about the *galli* was the begging they performed as part of their rite. In evidence dating from the Republican period, the festival descriptions include the *galli* begging for alms from the bystanders (rather than the more usual distribution of food, etc. to them) (see Lucr. 2.610–628 and Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.19 – this dates to the Augustan age, but Orlin (2010, 101) argues that it seems to reflect Republican practice). If so, this was not a new discourse: Clement of Alexandria – admittedly a Christian source and therefore likely to be inimical to most aspects of pagan practice – cites Menander's *Charioteer* (*Heniochus*, 313/2 BCE): "'No god for me is he who walks the streets / With some old dame, and into houses steals / Upon the sacred tray.' – for this is what the priests of Cybele do" (*Protr.* 75.2 = 6.2 fr. 156 K-A).

[50] Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.19.5; see Orlin (2010, 102).

[51] Orlin (2010, 100); he uses this phrase first with reference to the *haruspices*.

[52] Ando (2003, 197; italics in the original).

3.2. Show-men

Returning to the vocabulary for 'begging priests', we find *circulator* given as an equivalent to *agurtes* in glossaries of later Latin.[53] From its earliest use, *circulator* seems to mean a person of no fixed abode or employment, who travelled around selling items, perhaps medicines, or putting on shows of various kinds in order to make a living.[54] But despite some obvious similarities to the Greek term, *circulator* does not offer a full correspondence either. This is because it does not usually convey the same inherent association with ritual expertise as *agurtes*; instead, its emphasis is on remarkable public performances.[55] Indeed, when Tertullian employs the term in various polemics to describe those who offer services such as necromancy, I would argue that he employs it precisely because it suggests that those he is abusing are performers, rather than ritual specialists.[56] This is an aspect that may be implicit in some of the Greek texts we have seen (e.g., Plato's mendicant ritual experts or the individuals abused by the writer of *On the Sacred Disease*), but it is a defining characteristic of the Roman *circulator.*[57]

It is also possible to trace some more specific concerns about these performances, in particular, about where they occurred. A number of sources draw attention to the location of these characters, setting them in the heart of the city. We have seen this, for example, in Cicero's (or rather Quintus') reference to the "astrologers who haunt the circus grounds". We also see it in reverse, as it were, in the edicts to expel the astrologers from the city. And, in Livy's account of the Bacchic conspiracy of 186 BCE, the speech attributed to consul Spurius Postumius Albinus recalling previous expulsions of such figures, offers an even more detailed topographical report (discussed further below): "How often, in the times of our fathers and our grandfathers, has the task been assigned to the magistrates of forbidding the introduction of foreign cults, of excluding dabblers in sacrifices and fortune-tellers (*sacrificulos vatesque*) from the Forum, the Circus, and the City, of searching out and burning books of prophecies, and of annulling every system of sacrifice except that performed in the Roman way".[58] Other sources also show the centrality of such gatherings: Horace in a *Satire* refers to the Circus itself as deceiving because it is where the itinerant fortune-tellers assemble; while Juvenal describes the astrologers and diviners gathered in the Forum.[59]

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[53] Dickie (2001, 225), who is one of the few scholars to explore this term and on whose work I build here, makes this suggestion drawing on a late Latin glossary (no citation given; but see *CGL* 2: 101 and 217.

[54] In Cic. *Fam*. 10.32.3: C. Asinius Pollio describes the appalling behaviour of Balbus the younger, which includes exposing "Roman citizens to the beasts, among them a certain travelling pedlar (*circulatorem quendam auctionum*)". Gardin du Mesnil (1809 no. 500) gives the meaning of *circulator* as one who goes from town to town "selling medicaments in public places", and there seems to be no reason not to take this as the basis for the term. Medicine sellers: Orig. *CCels*. 5.27.3; Apul. *Met*. 1.4 of a sword-swallower, Plin. *Ep*. 4.7 of a travelling actor declaiming in the market-place; Sen. *Ep*. 29.7 of a philosopher.

[55] cf. Dickie (2001, 226–7) who regards the terms as equivalent.

[56] Tert. *Apol*. 23; Idol. 9; *De praescr. haeret*. 43; *De carn. Christ*. 5.

[57] Contra Dickie (2001, 227).

Over time, this concern with place will also start to appear in descriptions of begging priests in Greek texts, specifically in the phrase *en tois kuklois ageirontes*, used by Maximus of Tyre.[60] It has been argued that *circulator* is an attempt to render this phrase into Latin; the Greek being translated as "those collecting money in the centre of a circle of onlookers".[61] This is a persuasive argument, and seems to be supported by the definitions in late Latin glossaries, where *ochlagogos* occurs as a synonym for *circulator* alongside *agurtes*.[62] But closer examination of the Greek phrase reveals concerns not (only) with crowds, but more specifically with location, as suggested above. The idea that *circulator* originally provided a translation of this Greek phrase is less secure if we consider that *circulator* appears to have been used in texts that are dated earlier than those that use *en tois kuklois* with this meaning.[63] It seems more likely to have been connected to a slightly different phrase, *en kukloi*, which does mean "a circle of onlookers", and is in evidence from the fifth-century BC.[64] In contrast, in other texts, we find *en toi kukloi* referring not to people, but to places.[65] It identifies not (only) the people gathered around an individual, but more generally (or in addition) the types of crowded settings—the agora/Forum/Circus—where both crowds and begging performers would congregate.

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[58] Livy 39.16.8.

[59] Hor. *Sat*. 1.6.113 Garrod; Juv. 6.542–592.

[60] Max. Tyr. 13.3.

[61] Dickie (2001, 225). *OLD* gives the etymology of circulator as *circulo* + *tor*; with *circulo* meaning "to form circles or groups around oneself for the purpose of making impromptu speeches" (citing Cic. *Brut*. 200; Caes. *BCiv.* 1.64.2; Sen. *Ep.* 40.3; 52.8; 88.40); cf. however Walde-Hoffmann 1, 220: 'Herumzieher, Gaukler, Hausierer' (Pollio).

[62] Dickie (2001, 225). In *CGL* 2:101, *ochlagogos* is another synonym of *circulator*, alongside *agurtes*. Dickie notes that this term is found in astrological texts (e.g., Vett. Val. 1.3.29; 2.17.57) and cites two Christian texts which associate the *ochlagogos* with ritual experts: first, the *Traditio Apostolorum* (*sic*, presumably a slip for *Traditio Apostolica*), which lists "performers of incantations, astrologers, diviners, interpreters of dreams and makers of amulets"; second, the *Constitutiones apostolorum* (8.32.11; Funk 1905, 1: 536–537) but this does not include the *agurtes* (contra Dickie 2001, 225).

[63] A search of the *TLG* indicates that Maximus of Tyre is the earliest text to use this phrase to describe crowds, rather than, say, the arrangement of heavenly bodies (as, e.g., Arist. *Cael.* 249a6).

[64] *en kuklois* indicating a crowd: e.g., Soph. *Aj.* 723; *Phil.* 356; Xen. *Cyr.* 8.5.8.

3.3. Cultural characteristics

So far, the exploration of terms has offered no direct parallel for *agurtes*, but it has provided some insights into specifically Roman concerns with such itinerant ritual experts, presented in the sources as the risks created by their foreignness, their central physical location, and their connection to power. These three risks come together in Livy's account of the Bacchic Conspiracy of 186 BCE, which also offers some further possible terms for these figures. In giving his account of the conspiracy, Spurius Postumius Albinus is said to have recalled previous responses to religious offences (see above). His words echo an earlier passage where Livy is describing events during the Second Punic War (215 BCE): the account describes how "superstitious fears, in large part foreign at that, invaded the state to such a degree that either men or else gods suddenly seemed changed", and condemns, as above, the activities of *sacrificuli ac vates*.[66] This phrase is used again in association with these events, to describe the *Graecus ignobilis* or 'nameless Greek' who is rumoured to be "a priest of secret rites performed by night".[67] Finally, in another context, it is placed by Livy in the mouth of the Aetolian ambassador Archidamus as he sneeringly describes the behaviour of T. Quinctius Flamininus on the battlefield of Cynoscephalae: "Taking auspices and sacrificing and performing vows like a poor sacrificing priest (*sacrificuli vatis*)".[68]

Sacrificulus is a phrase that, at least in Livy, captures some aspects of the *agurtes*; the *–ulus* ending seems to suggest some kind of disparagement. And yet the term *sacrificulus* is also used without an inherent pejorative sense (notably in the phrase *rex sacrificulus* 'king of sacrifices');[69] and Livy uses *vates* without denigration in a number of other passages.[70] Individually, the terms do not seem to carry a negative sense; moreover, the hendiadys that Livy creates here does not seem to be used elsewhere, so apparently it did not have the same widespread use as *agurtes*. As Livy uses it, the term is associated with risks that are different from those linked to the *agurtes*: it is not clear that the services these figures provided were considered 'false' or undermined by greed or need. Rather, as we have seen above, in at least a couple of cases, Livy's speakers emphasise the foreignness, or rather the non-Romanness of their activities.[71] The Bacchanalian episode also suggests another risk that these figures convey: Orlin has argued that this fear of non-Romanness cannot account for the Senate's reaction to the events of 186, emphasising how the Senate's decree did not ban the cult, but instead placed it very closely under the control of the Senate, which was "[...]very much in keeping with traditional Roman practice, where the Senate served as the final arbiter for religious matters."[72] As he and others have suggested, this indicates some fear of a political risk.[73] If this is the case, it recalls the theme of the warnings of Cato and Columella to their bailiffs, (p. 260 above). They were concerned with access to, or encouragement of, power, at the individual level; here, this possibility threatens the state.

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[65] *en toi kukloi* indicates a particular location: Cass. Dio 63.22 (the circle of the theatre); 73.19 (the arena); I think that Maximus of Tyre uses it in the plural to indicate a type. The distinction between crowded place and gathered crowd would easily be lost: this accounts for various definitions of related terms in later texts, for example, the gathering of a crowd leads the scholiast on Pl. *Rep*. 364b to see this as the origin of the word *agurtes*, defining it as those who gather (*ageirontes*) a crowd around themselves; while Hesychius (α 868) gives the definition of *agurtes* as *sunathroistas. manteis. hos Apion.*

[66] Livy 25.1.6 – 9.

[67] Livy 39.8.3; 39.4.1.

[68] Livy 35.48.13.

Finally, in Livy's alternative explanation for the changes in Dionysian worship, we find a figure who brings together all three elements of risk discussed so far.[74] Hispala identifies a priestess (*sacerdotes*), one Paculla Annia from Campania, as responsible for the innovations to the cult of Dionysus, which renders it "more dangerous" in the senate's eyes.[75] Other sources give us some idea of the narrative appeal of such a figure: Fontaine has observed that in Plautus' *Truculentus*, dating to 186 BCE, the manipulative and greedy *hetaira* Phrynesium is "a thinly veiled and politically conservative allegory for Paculla and her involvement in the scandal".[76] Moreover, Phrynesium is based on the *hetaira* Phryne, who was famously taken to court for impiety in fourth-century Athens: her crime was to bring together groups of men and women in a *komos* to worship a new god.[77] Thus we can see how Livy's account of Paculla Annia's involvement draws on a shared narrative of long-standing with a recognisable stock character: a foreigner (a woman) who has come to live among us, whose personal charisma, rooted in ritual competence and claims to ritual knowledge, endangers civic security.

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[69] *Sacrificulus:* Livy 2.2.1; and 6.41.9. Suetonius uses *sacrificulus* to describe priests of Isis alongside the phrase *variae superstitionis* (Suet. *Dom.* 1).

[70] *Vates*, e.g., 1.4.6; 5.17.1; 7.6.3; 44.37.9 (among others); Newman (1967) traces the development of *vates* from a term of disparagement in Ennius and Lucretius, to a more exalted sense, related to the idea of the poet as prophet, in Augustan verse.

[71] As Pailler (2005) has noted, the sources offer a very one-sided account of these events, portraying the Senate as protecting the Roman state from a foreign threat.

[72] Orlin (2010, 168); compare Ando (2008, 12), who emphasises how the Senate concentrates on institutionalising the cult, along with financial and legal relationships among its members. The decree does ban male priests: the Senate's concern is "loyalty to other members of the cult, and not loyalty to Bacchus".

[73] North (2003, 215) cautions against distinguishing between "political as against religious action" in this context: "the Senate might be said to be solving a political problem or at least a problem of the control of power". He argues that the role of perception is important: the movement may have been "fundamentally a movement of women and of lower-class men, without an integrated political purpose", but led by a small group of "upper-class men with definite political purposes"—or it could be that this was what the Senate feared it was or could develop into; he argues (217) that the response of the authorities led in the long term to much more significant threats to the state.

4. Concluding contrasts

Tracing the figure of the itinerant ritual expert from Greek to Roman culture has not revealed a Roman term directly equivalent to the Greek *agurtes*. In texts written in Greek, use of the term *agurtes* identifies cultural marginality: in a world of religious plurality, in which all claims to supernatural relations were possible, it succeeded in undermining those claims by raising questions about the integrity of those who made them. It did this on the basis of cultural values that looked askance at the individual who continually moved between *poleis* and made a living on the basis, not of a skill or art, but rather on their economic dependence on others. In general, those described as *agurtai* or with its cognates were being abused weak and ineffectual, their claims to power not to be trusted, their information unreliable. Thus, it seems likely that the term could be employed as useful shorthand for criticising, for example, not only ritual practitioners, but also politicians who claimed ritual expertise.

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[74] See also Livy 39.13.8 – 10, which North (2003, 201, n. 12) describes a "different though not necessarily irreconcilable".

[75] Some scholars overlook the role of this woman, e.g. Orlin (2010, 165).

[76] Fontaine (2010, 187 – 190); quotation, p. 189.

[77] Charge against Phryne: *Anonymus Seguerianus* 215 (pp. 40 – 41 Patillon) = Euthias fr. 2, 2 p. 320 [no. LVIII] Baiter-Sauppe (not the actor/comic poet but the opponent of Hypereides in the trial of Phyne; see Eidinow (2010) and (2016).

In contrast, in texts written in Latin, no separate linguistic category develops to describe such a contemptible group. As Phillips observes, in Rome, "the debates did not center on the existence of individuals with special powers—that was granted. The source of the powers mattered far more".[78] Latin sources associate a different set of risks with the itinerant figures who offered ritual expertise, portraying them as potential sources of social and political danger.[79] Tacitus, in describing how the astrologers urged on the ambitions of Otho, offers a succinct but unsparing judgment of the ways in which such people are dangerous, because they encourage those who seek power. They are, "a tribe of men untrustworthy for the powerful, deceitful towards the ambitious, a tribe which in our state will always be both forbidden and retained".[80] We might still expect to find such figures marginalised, as in the Greek evidence; certainly the rhetoric of foreignness could be used in such a way, but that is only half the Roman story. Unlike the original Greek *agurtai*, these characters are also at its heart, both literally – they are in the centre of the city, on the Palatine, in the Forum and Circus – and figuratively, since they are shaping the everyday decisions of its inhabitants. References to these figures offer us insights that go beyond attitudes to divination: as North has described, the role and presence of the diviner, and how it changes over time, is a "marker of the location of power" – and, I would add, of the location of threats to power.[81] Over time, as we have seen, this concern will also become a characteristic of the *agurtes*, as the term loses the nuances of its original meaning, and the itinerant beggar priest becomes a single monolithic figure.

But before that overlap occurs, as Greek and Roman concepts still run, as it were, in parallel, we find the idea of the *agurtes* used to provide a contrast with figures that are in some ways considered, or who claim to be, ritually more powerful. For example, Apollonius defends himself by drawing a distinction between the "learned" and "semi-learned arts", comparing "poetry, music, astronomy, oratory, and public speaking except of the forensic kind", and "painting, sculpture, of statue makers, of pilots, of farmers as long as they follow the seasons", with "a kind of sham learning and hucksterism [*pseudosophoi te kai ageirontes*] that you should not equate with prophecy", which he associates with sorcerers, who aim to dupe their audience.[82] The implications of the term *ageirontes* would have been immediately understood by his audience: Apollonius is referring to itinerants, who are selling false services, among them divination.[83] The contrast is also drawn, more explicitly, by other characters in this work: in an earlier passage, set in Egypt, Thespesion—the oldest of the so-called 'Naked Ones' and a great sage—clarifies the difference between Apollonius, who seeks wisdom, and mere wandering *agurtai* who aim simply to "flatter people's eyes and ears, and seem no better than anyone else".[84] In developing this claim, Apollonius goes beyond mere accusations of greed to assert that being an *agurtes* is likely to result in far greater pleasure. This can be seen as a further refinement of the accusation of weakness or even greed for luxury, which we have seen levelled at *agurtai* in earlier narratives.[85]

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[78] Phillips (1986, 2714).

[79] On the importance of *cognitio deorum* ("knowledge of the gods": *Ant. div.* fr. 3 Cardauns) as interpreted by the Senate, and the problems of its regulation within the multiple dimensions of the Empire, see Ando (2008, 104–8).

[80] Tac. *Hist*. 1.22.1; and cf. Tac. *Ann*. 12.52 – the expulsion of astrologers from Italy after the alleged consultation of Chaldeans by Furius Scribonianus, who was looking into the death of the emperor.

[81] In biographical narratives they provide a *topos* for reflecting on the nature of Imperial characters: Suet. *Dom*. 8.3; *Vit*. 7.4–5; *Otho* 7.2.4. *SHA Comm*. 1.5.

These examples show how the rhetorical figure of the *agurtes* could be used, as a comparison, by those who wanted to claim they had real power; in turn, as the Roman examples show, such claims to power were taken seriously. The risks of making such a claim are neatly illustrated by a story from among the fragments of book 7 of Strabo's *Geography:* Orpheus, a Ciconian *goes*, lives in the village of Pimpleia (said to be the birthplace of the mythical Orpheus), near the city of Dium at the foot of Mt. Olympus. He is described as starting off *agurteuonta* from various activities including *mantike* and mystic initiatory rites.[86] To begin with, he simply uses his ritual expertise to support himself. But subsequently,

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82 Philostr. *VA* 8.7.9 – 10. See North (1990, 68 – 70).

83 Macris (2008, 221 – 222, and 224 – 226). Such self-proclaimed 'holy men' were, for the most part, of Eastern origin, from Egypt, Libya, Asia Minor and Anatolia, Syria and Palestine. Rejection of payment will become part of the discourse that distinguishes the Christian 'holy man'. Paul does talk about being paid as perfectly justifiable (*1Cor.* 9:12 – 20; *2Cor.* 11:7 – 12; and 12:13 ff; and *1Thess* 2:9. But he is rare for not wanting to be paid (Auffarth 2013, 35). The risk posed by money or economic transactions is raised in connection with prophecy in Christian writings. There, we find the idea that an individual may have mortal economic interests characterised as being opposed to Christianity; by implication this is understood to threaten the integrity of the supernatural transaction. Auffarth (2013, 19) notes that this is personified in the person of Simon Magus – who tries to buy from Paul the ability to cure people miraculously (see *Acts* 8:18 – 24, Sidonius *Letters* 7.9.15). As the *Didache* (11.12) makes clear. the request for silver indicates a false prophet.

84 Philostr. *VA* 6.10.6.

85 It is also found in Philo *Cain and Abel* 2.268.32, where it features among the list of adjectives describing what happens to the character of those who yield to Pleasure.

86 Str. *Geogr.* 7a.18 Meineke = fr. 10 Radt = *OF* 554, 659, 816 Bernabé.

his ambition develops, and he acquires “a crowd (*ochlos*) and power”.[87] This passage draws attention (again) to the way in which the drawing of a crowd, the possibility of power, distinguishes the ineffectual *agurtes* from his more threatening brothers-on-the-road. In response, Strabo tells us, some received Orpheus willingly, but among others, suspicions arose that he had plans and meant violence; as a result, he was killed.

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[87] The term for crowd used here, *ochlos*, reminds us of the term *ochlagogos*, discussed as a near-synonym for *circulator* and *agurtes*, see above p. 266.

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Projects, performance and charisma: Managing small religious groups in the Roman Empire

This contribution concerns small-group religion, which has been a major focus of research on religious developments in the Roman Empire over the past two decades. It thus relates directly to one important concern of the Lived Ancient Religion project, to explore themes that in one way or another relativise the dominance of the paradigm of polis/civic religion. However, instead of assuming that the task is to focus on the 'demand' side, I am more interested in the 'supply' side, in the petty religious entrepreneurs whose enthusiasm and resources created and sustained these projects. The focus is thus on religious imagination, the creation of authority, and the performative (and pecuniary) resources required for the maintenance of small-group religion in the Graeco-Roman tradition. The basic claim is that ideas developed on the margins of the traditional religious framework of the Greek and Roman worlds offered greater scope to such petty religious entrepreneurs, which I have elsewhere termed (Weberian) mystagogues, than indigenous ones, exemplified here by the Dionysiac associations of the Greek-speaking world.

Some time ago, borrowing from Weber's notion of *der Mystagoge* as a 'failed prophet', I outlined an ideal-type of the mystagogue (lower-case) in the Roman Empire as a petty entrepreneur or administrator of the holy.[1] I saw these men (and a few women) as interested in exploiting a niche between the vast range of minor religious mastery on the one hand, fascinating but troublesome, as exemplified in the Greek-speaking world by the ἀγύρτης, the θαυματο-

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[1] Gordon (2013).

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ποιός, the ἀπομάκτης, or the many kinds of specialist μάντεις, and the high-profile religious offices largely monopolised by the politico-social élites of cities and metropoleis, on the other.[2] The mystagogue in this sense can legitimately be studied under the rubric of the institutionalisation of relatively enduring, relatively bounded associations whose primary aim was the intensified worship of specific deities. In the context of this section of the volume, on the resources available for minor religious innovation, I want to explore some possible contrasts between the mystagogic rôles available to, or constructable by, such petty entrepreneurs of the holy. Although the innumerable early Christian founders of small groups and 'heresies' might have furnished excellent examples,[3] I have chosen to compare three rather different kinds of non-Christian groups in the Roman Empire, those that worshipped Dionysus, close to local élites and clustered very largely in western Asia Minor; Mithraic groups, attested archaeologically and epigraphically throughout the western Empire but hardly at all in the entire Greek-speaking Mediterranean; and the enigmatic, even conjectural, groups that honoured the so-called 'Danubian Riders' in the central Balkans, mainly attested by small, almost entirely anepigraphic, plaques mass-produced in lead.

Small-group religion has become a major focus of research over the past two decades, whether as such, or under the guise of work on mystery-cults other than Eleusis and Samothrace, or under the heading of the contested topic of 'oriental cults'.[4] It can thus be subsumed, at any rate to some extent, under the larger enterprise of outflanking the dominance of the paradigm of polis/civic religion.[5] Despite this, various scholars have attempted to deny that such a classification is useful, on the grounds that all associations performed religious rites to some degree.[6] In my view however that is no reason for claiming that Kloppenborg's notion of 'cultic associations' is of no heuristic value at all.[7] Here, if anywhere, we need to work with the notion of continua, of which we ought to be working with several rather than focusing exclusively on, say, eating together or civic membership. We should be allowing for sliding scales between at least the following possible differentia:

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[2] On 'minor religious masters', see e.g. the very selective lists compiled by the second-century CE grammarian and rhetor Iulius Pollux of Naukratis, *Onom*. 7.188 (2 p. 103f. Bethe) and Artemidorus, *Oneir.* 2.69 (p.259 McCoy); see further (in various directions) Sfameni Gasparro (2001, 23–60); Dillery (2005); Flower (2008, 58–71, 211–215); Rüpke (2016, 303–333; and the contribution by Esther Eidinow in this volume (Chapter 10).

[3] Cf. e.g. Markschies (2002, 114–119) (on Justin and Origen); Barclay (2006); Marjanen and Luomanen (2008); Wendt (2016, 146–216) (mainly on Paul) and the contribution of Denzey Lewis to this volume (Chapter 3). Note also Urciuoli's remarks in this volume (Chapter 12) on the construction of the category 'pseudo-prophets' in the process of consolidating episcopal primacy in the early Church.

[4] See e.g. Kloppenborg (1996); Egelhaaf-Gaiser and Schäfer (2002); Seesengood (2002); Gutsfeld and Koch (2005); Bonnet, Rüpke and Scarpi (2006); Buchmann (2006); Rüpke (2007); Öhler (2011); Kloppenborg and Ascough (2011); Gordon (2014) (my review of Bonnet, Pirenne-Delforge and Praet 2009, with further literature); Steinhauer (2014); Bremmer (2014, 81–141).

[5] Cf. Rüpke (2011; 2012; 2013).

- associations or groups primarily professional at one pole, and groups primarily religious at the other;
- associations or groups primarily concerned with socio-political presence and those for whom this was not a significant goal;
- associations or groups whose leaders were primarily interested in converting real capital into social and/or religious capital (and vice versa) and those whose concern was solely or mainly with religious capital;
- associations or groups that sought to intensify existing civic cults and those that strove to establish and develop religious forms not recognised by the civic calendar;
- associations or groups that sought some form of perpetuity and those that simply assembled in informal groups around a figure in some sense charismatic and interested only in the short term.

Any or all of these criteria can be applied, at any rate heuristically, to the phases and styles of individual associations.[8] Many small religious groups, however – perhaps even (as I suspect) the great majority – left no epigraphy and are thus lost to history; but, as is abundantly clear from the history of early Christianity, this does not mean they never existed or that we can ignore them theoretically. That Roman lawyers were perfectly familiar with the notion of small groups specifically founded for religious purposes, and, at latest from the reign of Septimius Severus, if not of Hadrian, approved of their existence provided that they made no trouble, is clear from *Dig.* 47.22.1.1 (Marcianus, *Inst. Bk.* III): *Sed religionis coire non prohibentur, dum tamen per hoc non fiat contra SC, quo illicita collegia arcentur.* To be sure, such unregistered groups enjoyed no protection under the *lex Iulia*, could not inherit under wills or lay out money at interest, and were liable to summary police-action at the whim of local magistrates or the

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[6] E.g. Scheid (2011 [2003]), who even wants us to believe that Mithraic groups were semi-professional associations, citing the dedications by members of the *Publicum portorium Illyrici* in Pannonia; cf. also Verboven (2012, 19 – 20).

[7] See e.g. Kloppenborg 1996; Kloppenborg and Ascough (2011, 1: 2 – 4).

[8] Cf. Belayche (2003); also Nigdelis (2010), who evinces no difficulty in accepting the existence of a range of small groups in Thessalonike.

Roman authorities;[9] but, for small-time religious entrepreneurs, none of this mattered very much.

That said, my provisional claim here is that ideas developed on the margins of the traditional religious framework of the Greek and Roman worlds, as exemplified by what is misleadingly known as ‘Mithraism’ and the regionally-based worship of the ‘Danubian Riders’, offered greater imaginative scope to my small religious entrepreneurs (‘mystagogues’) than indigenous ones, as exemplified by that small-group form of the worship of Dionysus known, since Martin Nilsson’s monograph of 1957, as ‘the Dionysiac mysteries’.[10] This choice is partly motivated by serendipity, in that Anne-Françoise Jaccottet has provided us with an excellent corpus of epigraphic material relevant to late Hellenistic and Roman Dionysiac associations (ignoring the Dionysiac *technitai*),[11] and partly by the fact that all are ‘banal’, in the sense that none attracted much, if any, interest among the literary élite – indeed there is not a single literary reference to the ‘Danubian Riders’ in any literary source.[12] Except in the special case of the Roman Senate’s attempt in the early second century BCE to control developments in small-group religion in Italy, which cast a long shadow over Bacchism there, all were utterly quotidian, all dwelled ‘in the shadows’ of history. Yet in each case, the model of the small group offered my mystagogues the challenge of making interesting and meaningful religious experiences available to those they could persuade to become long- or short-term adherents of their group. Such mystagogues may have been attracted by the rôle of ‘priest’ they could thereby assume (whatever they took it to mean), but my interest lies in what they could make of this rôle in contexts relatively – and I emphasise *relatively*, for reasons that will shortly become clear – free from existing models of what such a rôle required and how it should be understood.

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[9] cf. Sirks (2006); Tran (2012, 72–77); Van Haeperen (2012, 53–55).

[10] That is, the seventh of the eight phases of Dionysos-worship over 2000 years outlined by Burkert (2011). See Nilsson (1957), based on his earlier accounts in Nilsson (1934; 1950, 94–98, 341–47; and 1953); also Burkert (1993). It was no doubt the discovery in 1909 of the *triclinium* of the Villa Item at Pompeii, much more than Nietzsche’s *Geburt der Tragödie* (1872), that set the ball rolling.

[11] Jaccottet (2003); see also eadem (2005, 2006 and 2011). She chose to ignore the *Technitai* not merely because of the then very recent studies by Le Guen (2001) and Aneziri (2003, to be read with Le Guen’s rather critical review [Le Guen 2004]) but because they were not primarily religious groups.

[12] “Par leur nature autant que religieuse, par la plasticité dont elles font preuve, par leur diffusion aussi large géographiquement que temporellement, les associations dionysiaques que nous évoquerons ici sont, en fin de compte, l’expression banale du dionysisme, celle qui, loin des violences et les scandales, loin des crises sociales et religieuses, échappe à l’histoire et à la littérature et vit dans l’ombre [...]”; Jaccottet (2003, 1: 12). The cult of Mithras came to literate notice almost entirely through the interest of Middle and Neo-Platonism in ‘Persian’ mysteries, whence it was picked up by Apologists such as Justin and Tertullian: Gordon (2012, 988–1004).

1. Organising small groups

Jaccottet entitled her major study *Choisir Dionysos*. Her aim, as almost invariably in this area, was to lay stress on the motivations of the ordinary group-members. Why did they join? My interest, by contrast, was and is in the organisers of such groups, who are usually, in a thoroughly un-Weberian spirit, taken entirely for granted, as though their motivations and rôles were obvious and not worth investigating. Indeed, in subsequent discussions, I have been struck by colleagues' unwillingness to concede that the topic of *Mystagogentum* might be fruitful, so deeply engrained are three assumptions, that a) people in antiquity were 'naturally religious'; b) that 'le phénomène associatif' is essentially a matter of looking for links with the public realm, and c) that the word 'elective' in the expression 'elective cults' applies only to those termed 'adherents', 'believers', or (more neutrally) 'members'.[13] We don't want to think mystagogues' motives might have been complex, do we? And anyway, where does such an interest lead? Isn't the implicit model the ancient Elmer Gantry, Lucian's Alexander the 'False Prophet'?[14] The emphasis of the Lived Ancient Religion project upon personal appropriation and synthesis of religious motifs invites us rather to focus precisely upon the organising figures whose energies and enthusiasm led them to found, or to lead, small religious groups.

Jaccottet's main argument was that 'Dionysiac cult' as practised in small groups or associations of the (mainly) Hellenic world was a completely heterogeneous affair, in which individual religious entrepreneurs organised their 'religious supply' as they wished, drawing selectively upon civic cult, local traditions and personal invention.[15] It was in no sense the quasi-religion imagined by Martin Nilsson under the influence of the then time-honoured term ‘mystery religions’. This conclusion seems to me convincing. I also agree with her that far too much attention has been paid to the ‘mysteries’ supposedly developed within the context of Dionysiac worship in the Hellenistic period.[16] As she points out, many such associations apparently offered no ‘initiation’; and it was perfectly possible to be initiated without belonging to a small group.[17] Moreover, although he was aware of what he called the “loose use of the words ‘mysteries’ and ‘mystic’”,[18] Nilsson based his case largely on the occurrence of the term μύσται in the epigraphy; yet it is now clear that this term only occurs from the first century CE, and indeed mainly in the second and third centuries, so that one would have to posit some striking religious shift at this point rather than in the Hellenistic period, which Nilsson selected as his focus on the basis of the *idée fixe* that the Hellenistic period saw a crisis of traditional civic religion. Yet it is precisely at the same time, i.e. the middle Principate, that μύσται appear in other cults, at the expense of the older terms θιασῶται/θιασίται, so that it is more appropriate to imagine that the emergence of ‘mystery’ is a matter of terminological fashion, or possiby to emphasise the mainly religious nature of a group, rather than denoting the sudden spread of a new type of religious experience.

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[13] For 'elective cults' see e.g. Price (2011). John North's 'supermarket model' seems to imply a focus on customers choosing rather than managers managing (North 1992).

[14] The answer here might well be positive, if we assume not Lucian as our starting-point but a sympathetic account of the kind offered by Sfameni Gasparro (2001, 149–202), emphasising creative bricolage of existing themes. 'Elmer Gantry' is the eponymous preacher in Sinclair Lewis' novel of 1927, based on the activities of successful small-time preachers in Kansas City.

[15] "Chaque association dionysiaque représente une réponse personnalisée, une solution toujours nouvelle au paradoxe de l'union du dieu ubiquitaire, incoercible et indéfinissable, avec

Jaccottet indeed argues that Dionysiac cult continued to consist of the same basic features from the Classical period, public procession, song and dance, celebration of natural fecundity and wild nature, sacrifice, the ceremonial consumption of wine, the revelation of the ὄργια, in other words, material sufficient for mystagogues (a term she does not use) to appropriate as they saw fit as the basis for group religious life. The diversity of this raw material led directly to the heterogeneity of Dionysiac cult as practised in small groups.[19] Although a synthetic or integrative model of ‘the’ cult of Mithras has for decades been dominant, it is increasingly clear that this apparent coherence is the result of incautious conclusions ostensibly drawn from a) the relative uniformity of the *biclinium* as an architectural form and b) the standardisation of the central image, the scene in which Mithras kills the bull, but is in reality based on an im-

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les forms précises et bien arrêtées d’associations [...]” (2003, 1: 10). A page or two later she asks rhetorically: “Que faire d’un corpus de quelque 200 cas uniques?” (ibid. 13).

[16] Bremmer (2014, 101): “Despite the attention they have received, not many Dionysiac Mysteries are epigraphically attested”, citing Jaccottet (2003, 1: 130). The same is true of the cult of Isis: see Steinhauer (2017).

[17] Jaccottet (2003, 1: 123–46, esp. 123 n.4; 145 f.); eadem (2006, 221 f.).

[18] Nilsson (1957, 4).

[19] Cf. also Sfameni Gasparro (2013); Schäfer (2006) stresses the urban character of Dionysiac groups, a point that can be linked to the communicative advantages of such environments.

plicit assimilation to a(n idealised, unhistorical) version of 'Christianity'.[20] Under the communicative conditions of antiquity can anyone truly believe that all 'Mithraists' (a characteristically modern term suggesting a personal religious identification quite impossible in pagan antiquity) can have had the same beliefs or sought the same ends? Since there has been very little synthetic work on the Danubian Riders, there are few such pre-suppositions to criticise; but the sheer variety of designs on the major source of evidence, the leaden plaques (see fig. 4), seems sufficient to suggest a loosely integrated set of ideas open to local interpretation, which means interpretations by locally dominant figures, in my terms mystagogues.

The basic drive of the mystagogue in my sense is to manage uncertainty by controlling or influencing the actions of others.[21] Such an approach foregrounds the issues of power and authority, which are implicit in any attempt to organise and channel the religious experiences of others, even if only in a single context, namely the group in question. To do this he (or sometimes she) [22] necessarily constructs a series of narratives regarding sources of authority, choices, meanings and promises. Such an endeavour says nothing about other parallel endeavours ('identities', rôles) in which such an individual may be engaged. The mystagogue needs to impress upon his adherents/clients the value of the ritual practices he prescribes in attaining the promised *Heilsgüter.* [23] There are several 'identities' he may thus assume. One is the local recognition of his merits, i.e. an appeal, combined in many cases with charismatic charge, to a pre-existent, relatively complex, discourse regarding religious qualification. Another is the possession of sufficient resources to set up an institutionalised cult: even where the group depended largely upon individual contributions, the mystagogue, aligning him-/herself with local standards of generosity and socially-approved uses of financial resources, relied heavily upon the highly unequal distribution of resources characteristic of the Empire, combined with the generalised commitment to the *Theodizee des Glückes*.[24] A third 'identity' is the establishment of a regular institution, centred upon a common meal, that in the ideal case will outlive the founder. Appeal to epigraphic culture, the very condition of our knowing anything at all about these institutions (and there must have been very many that never even attempted to record their existence in such a way), was an additional resource here. Such stelae were often set up in prominent places in front of, or near, the *antron*, *megaron* or *thiasôn*, sometimes even acting as a sort of advertisement, as at Halicarnassus, where the passer-by is enjoined in verse to keep silence but listen to the words it is lawful to listen to (ὅσσα θέμις).[25] It was this desire to avoid the ephemerality attending most mystagogic projects that explains the adoption of the much older, and therefore relatively familiar and unexceptionable, form of the ἔρανος for these individual religious projects. But even then, as the epigraphy makes clear, such groups often foundered on character differences, internal disputes, embezzlement, bankruptcy, and finally indifference.

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[20] The very coinage 'Mithraism', capital M and all, which first emerges in the late nineteenth century, is sufficient evidence of this long-standing desire to turn the cult into a Religion. On the true intention of Renan's celebrated claim that "le monde eût été mithraiste" (i.e. irremediably irrationalist and credulous) if Christianity had died the death, see Praet (2013, 288f.).

[21] Cf. the general arguments of Eidinow (2011) on the dichotomy 'public-individual' in the context of religious action. Eidinow makes some use of the work of the US network theorist Harrison White (White 2008). For White, actors constantly strive for control over the contingency (i.e. unpredictability) of experience by seeking to create safe(r) situations through action. Every social situation is fundamentally agonistic; action is perceived as an effort to control situations. Social life is thus a negotiation about the control of identities and agency, which are constantly exchanged as individual and collective narratives. Social meanings and order are generated by collective participation in such narratives, which interpret the lived reality of the interaction network.

[22] It is often difficult to tell whether women who donate buildings, or additional buildings, such as Kritarista, daughter of Diodoros, on Thera (*IG* XII, 3. 420) are themselves mystagogues, i.e. organisers of small groups, or simply wealthy supporters; cf. Cole (2011, 278f.).

[23] *Heilsgüter* is the convenient Weberian term for all the possible benefits offered by religious praxis, in our case, as mediated by the mystagogue.

The mystagogue attempted to assert control over his worshipper's access to the god he 'serves' – he might be an enabler but he was also a manager, claiming rights and authority. The obvious model in the Graeco-Roman world for such claims is that of priests appointed in the public realm, and their executive form, the *lex sacra*. Proximity to the public realm might also seem an advantage regarding the issue of ephemerality. At the same time, it seems to me, the mystagogue needed, irrespective of merits, money, models and suasive force, his or her own imaginative resources, ideas, practices, in order to construct a distinctive offer sufficiently attractive to hold his group together.[26] In short, he or she needed a degree of specifically religious capital. Here perhaps lay the attraction of an appeal to 'mystery', to an offer of special knowledge, insight, privilege, however formulated, whose correlate might well be the hierarchisation of information, rights and duties, a process that reaches baroque proportions in the multiple divisions, not least by gender, of the album of Pompeia Agrippinilla's *thia-*

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[24] Another characteristic Weberian concept, which can only clumsily be put into English as the 'theodicy of good fortune', referring to the claim by the prosperous and healthy that they enjoy these blessings thanks to their own merits, recognised in turn by the gods.

[25] Merkelbach and Stauber (1998 no. 01/12/09 = J. 152 [II – I^{a}]).

[26] In grand households of course (see e.g. the next n.), direct social power, i.e. compulsion, might be exercised.

sos from Torre Nova of c.160 – 70 CE, now in the Metropolitan Museum, where a key gesture is that of 'binding' (the head or perhaps the waist) – ἀπὸ καταζώσεως – which marked a decisive point of incorporation into the group.[27]

A triangular comparison between the leaders of Dionysiac associations, Mithraic Fathers and initiators into the cult of the Danubian Rider is obviously problematic. All but a handful of Jaccottet's θίασοι are located in the eastern Mediterranean, mainly in western Asia Minor and the western seaboard of the Euxine; virtually all Mithraic finds lie much to the west of these areas; the cult of the Danubian Riders is effectively confined to the central Balkans. Dionysiac epigraphy is virtually all in Greek (even in Rome); Mithraic epigraphy is virtually all in Latin; in the case of the Danubian Riders there is only a vestigial interest in communicating with third persons through the written word. This cult thus represents the degree zero of epigraphic culture. The contrasts between the other two are likewise extreme: there are several Dionysiac *leges sacrae*, but no Mithraic examples; honorific resolutions both by public institutions and by Dionysiac groups abound, but are completely absent from the Mithraic evidence; because they can draw on this public language, the Dionysiac groups have access to a meta-level of self-description – they dispose of numerous local variations of the basic terms βακχεῖον, βάκχος, βάκχη, βάκχεια – which is again completely lacking in the Mithraic case, so much so that we have no idea what general terms, if any, these worshippers used to describe themselves and their specifically Mithraic activities.

That said, it is quite striking how closely, in the surviving evidence, Dionysiac associations are linked to civic élites and sub-élites, how many presidents and officials of such groups were also civic priests, how foundations and funding derive from practices familiar to these sub-élites, how these groups used their prestige and status to their own advantage in the local political and social arena, for example by including the reigning emperor as an honorary member, or even writing to him directly. [28] The immemorial continuity of Dionysiac cult, the range of imagery and themes derived from the carefully nurtured tension between the natural and the artificial,[29] together with the combinatorial possibilities so offered, made Bacchism an obvious choice for mystagogic projects. On the other hand, those very advantages made it all too easy to subordinate personal mystagogic activity to the attractions offered by admission to socio-political influence, open competition with other similar groups, celebration of the group's value to the public weal. To put it somewhat differently, the religious capital available within the framework of Dionysiac ideas was usually not dense or atypical enough to constitute a set of goals easily distinguishable from those subsumed by civic cult.

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[27] *IGUR* 1: no.160 = J. 188, transl. Ascough et al. (2012, 216 no. 330); cf. Nilsson (1934); Scheid (1986); Jaccottet (2003, 1: 30 – 53). Face 3 of the altar is badly damaged; 335 names survive, but the total number of members was originally over 400.

[28] For this last, see e. g. *IEphesos* 3329 = J. 135 (Trajan as honorary member); 275 = *AE* 1975: 800 = J. 136 (Hadrian as σύνθρονος of Dionysos); *ISmyrna* 622 = J. 119 (erection of a statue of Hadrian); 600 = J. 122 (correspondence between the *syndos* of Dionysos Breiseus and Antonius Pius and Marcus Aurelius). The hereditary priest of Dionysos at Pergamon succeeded in obtaining the city's second neocorate from Trajan: Kantiréa (2011, 526); cf. Isler-Kerényi (2011) on Dionysos as an identification-figure at Pergamon for Hellenistic rulers and Roman emperors.

One contrast is offered by the worship of Mithras, which was an early beneficiary of the explicit legal recognition of the effective right of small groups of ordinary individuals to meet regularly for religious purposes without the obligation to register in any way, a recognition that, as we have seen, was made explicit by Modestinus around 200 CE but probably granted *de facto* much earlier. 'Mithras' offered mystagogues ideal materials for increasing their religious capital: this was a loose tradition that laid out a heroic myth of some dramatic force, integrated the 'new' cosmology fully into its concept of the world order, and offered a space for the construction of new, relatively focused experiences within the familiar general context of the dining-group. Two aspects were of especial importance here: the possibility of developing interesting claims in relation to 'astronological' knowledge,[30] and the development, at least in some places, of functional grades that offered the idea of a continuing religious life within the group under a leader whose qualification was to a significant degree itself religious. The idea of 'Persia', hitherto unoccupied by civic religion but sufficiently analogous to Phrygia and Egypt to appear safely exotic, freed entrepreneurial imaginations to draw upon the Graeco-Roman reception of Persia as raw material for developing new types of ethico-religious capital centred on the body.

My notion of 'mystagogue' is not however limited to leaders of small religious groups of some duration. This possibility seems to be raised by the case of the 'Danubian Riders', a purely conventional modern term for a set of religious

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29 See e. g. Horn (1972); more recently Dunbabin (2008), on an important III^p mosaic at Zeugma on the Euphrates with the word Τελετή; cf. too Jaccottet (2010 [2011], 257–262), discussing the image of Thebes on a late-antique mosaic at Sawran in the Apamène. Henrichs (2013, 563 f.), evoking the several hundred ancient epithets of Dionysos, offers a masterly survey of the "complexity and elusiveness of this multiple figure" – for which almost simultaneous appearance of two vast Sammelbände (Schlesier 2011; Bernabé Pajares et al. 2013) from the same publisher, de Gruyter, provides a suitable metaphor.

30 'Astronological' refers to the absence in antiquity of a clear distinction between what we term astronomical knowledge and astrological lore.

ideas and practices emerging in the second century CE that may have had much earlier Balkan roots but which evidently drew upon newer themes made available by the Roman occupation of central Pannonia and the conquest of Dacia. Frankly, there is no established knowledge about the organisation of the cult, for which the evidence is exclusively archaeological. Some facts are however quite striking: the relatively few reliefs in stone or bronze are far too small to have served as cult-images in a temple, and no such building has ever been found, at least by legitimate archaeology, that might have served as a shrine.[31] That in turn implies that the cult was not considered suitable by the local élites for monumentalisation and adoption into local civic panthea. Virtually none of the images, even those in stone, are inscribed, that is, they name no personal names and therefore cannot have served the socially communicative function that ordinary inscribed votives serve in public or semi-public spaces.[32] Moreover, there are no inscribed altars, so there are no images of urcei and paterae to affirm incorporation into the Roman sacrificial system – indeed the images show that the cult deliberately ignored or rejected important aspects of that system (see below). We do not even know the name or identity of the divinities addressed.[33] In other words, although the images incorporate Graeco-Roman iconographic elements, they do not seem to have much to do with the ordinary Graeco-Roman votive system. The variety of types among the lead plaques, together with the existence of many virtually identical casts of some types, imply the existence of a number of workshops in the Balkan provinces that produced them in series.[34] This in turn, as well as the presence of 'mystagogues' on some types, who direct the sacrifice without themselves being sacrificants, implies the existence of local centres, whether we call them shrines or not, where these figures were active and where they presumably produced the different designs.[35] In other words, this was a form of worship conducted or directed by 'mystagogues' outside the civic context in which small groups may not have figured very largely: the plaques, though individually surprisingly heavy (up to 180 gr., though most are lighter), seem to have been intended to be carried on the person. Manfred Clauss has recently drawn attention to five lead examples, two in his own collection, roughly 10 x 9 cm or slightly larger, that carry the legend *Comes tibi so(m)*, 'I go with you'.[36] The fifteen or so intaglios with similar imagery, which mainly derive from finger-rings, were also carried on the person and functioned as protective amulets.[37] Small objects of this sort might easily travel very great distances.

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[31] Tudor (1969–1976) collected 142 monuments in materials other than lead, all of them relatively small, or even tiny, as against 88 lead plaques. All but a handful of the 333 lead plaques in Rudolf Ertl's collection are supposed to have been found in Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia), some 75 km west of the confluence of the Sava with the Danube. The site was of great strategic importance: the city was made a *colonia* already under Vespasian, and became the main residence of the governor of Pannonia Inf. under Trajan. The sheer number collected by Ertl suggests that some shrines must have existed, even if many are likely to have come from tomb-robbing. Ertl did however buy a couple that were supposed to have come from Carnuntum, and a few plaques are now known that were discovered in regular excavations there, one at least in the legionary castra (e. g. Humer 2009, 248 fig.980; Humer and Kremer 2011, 129 fig. 60; 223 fig. 211; I owe these references to Romy Heyner of the Badisches Landesmuseum, Karlsruhe).

[32] The most important exception is the sculptor's signature Γέρμανος ἐποίησεν on the marble plaque T. 29 ('Dacia', provenance unknown). A few gems carry 'magical' words, cf. Zwierlein-Diehl (2010), but these are of course not interpersonal communications in the ordinary sense.

[33] The sole exception here is one of the new lead examples from Carnuntum that reads DOMINO (*AE* 2006: 1052, mid-III^{p}), which is baffling, since two Riders are shown, as usual, on either side of a female deity.

2. Dionysiac associations

Of the 'mystagogic imperative' in relation to Dionysus during the imperial period, there can be little doubt. In some of the relevant cases, such as the association that worshipped Dionysus Erikepaios at Hierocaesarea in Lydia (second century CE), the basis seems to have been an (extended) family, exactly as one would expect of individual mystagogic efforts.[38] In the other thirteen cases that are visible in the epigraphic record, however, a formula is used to indicate that the group was founded by a specific individual, such as the Bakcheastai περὶ Ἐράτονα Δημοφίλου at Dionysopolis (Thessalonike) or Alexandros κτίστῃ εἱερῶν μυστῶν on the island of Melos.[39] A group at Puteoli called itself *Plancidianus* after its founder (or a benefactor).[40] In two cases, the honour due to the founder is further elaborated by a portrait bust or statue.[41] In some cases, on Jaccottet's criterion, these mystagogues had introduced τελεταί into their scheme of things, since a hierophant is attested: Junius Laberius Macedon was not only the founder of his group of Thasos but also hierophant; the *thiasos* of a woman named Paso at Tomis was presented with a statue of Dionysus *Pyribromios* by the owner of a local workshop, who had gained the μ]υστικὸν στέφος in the *baccheion* and was himself hierophant of the ἀρχαίην [...] τ[ελετήν].[42] In one or two cases we can see these mystagogues at work: the brief *lex sacra* of a *thiasos* founded by Amandos at Physcus in Caria survives: the rituals are to be held after two meetings; each member is to pay a minimum of 14 obols; the common fund is to provide three lamps; no maenad is to provoke or insult another maenad; no *boukolos* is to provoke or insult another. Failure to observe this rule incurs a fine of 4 drachmae for *each insult*; a fine of the same amount for failure to turn up to a meeting; of 5 dr. for failing to turn up 'to the mountain (journey)' (εἲς ὅρος μὴ συνέλθων [...]).[43] The use of 'maenad' and 'boukolos' here suggested to Jaccottet that Amandos' inspiration was literary (Euripidean), since by the second century 'maenads' who rush off to the mountains are otherwise unknown, and certainly not in the company of men. Such an allusion might also be a source of authorisation for a personal innovation. The very fact that failure to 'go the mountain' – the very pitch of Bacchic inspiration in Euripides – might incur a hefty fine wonderfully captures the paradox Jaccottet notes between a refracted ideal of liberation from the quotidian and prosaic reality.[44]

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[34] Ertl (1996) identified 10 major types (A-H) of the lead plaques, most of which occur in several different sub-types. The commonest sub-types are F01, of which Ertl lists 72 examples, B03 (66 examples), H02 (55 examples) and H01 (36 examples). All these figures are notional, since Manfred Clauss has acquired more than 800 plaques over the past twenty years, which have not been classified and may well include types unknown to Ertl. Most derive from clandestine excavations in Serbia. The antiquities trade in Munich and London is particularly involved in the business, though Ertl mentions that he picked up some of his collection at flea-markets in Vienna.

[35] Virtually all of Ertl's lead plaques are supposed to have been found in Sirmium (Sremska Mitrovica in Serbia), some 75 km west of the confluence of the Sava with the Danube. The site was of great strategic importance: the city was made a colonia already under Vespasian, and became the main residence of the governor of Pannonia Inferior under Trajan. Even in Tudor's day, it was realised that the main centre must have lain between the triangle between Teutiburgium and Viminacium on the Danube and the Sava up to Sirmium (cf. the distribution map in Tudor 1969 – 1976, 2: fig. 2, at the end of the book).

[36] See *AE* 2006: 1828 – 1831. An identical legend appears on a rather damaged plaque found in the shrine of Liber at Apulum (*IDR* III.5, 371) but was, perhaps unsurprisingly, misunderstood by the editor. In all these cases the legend was first inscribed on the clay matrix from which the lead-alloy plaque was cast.

[37] See again Zwierlein-Diehl (2010).

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[38] *TAM* V.2, 1256 = J. 110 with her discussion on p. 200. On such family relationships, real or fictive, in associations, see more generally Harland (2009, 61–81).

[39] Resp. *IGBulg* 20 = J. 52 (III^{a}); *IG* XII, 3 1098 = J. 166 (early III^{p}).

[40] *CIL* X 1585 = *ILS* 3366 = J. 174 (Severan).

[41] Rufus son of Zipas at Philippae, both founder and benefactor: *BCH* 17 (1983) 634 (III^{p}); Junius Laberius Macedon on Thasos: *IG* XII, 8 387 = J. 34 (Caracalla).

[42] Macedon: see previous n.; Tomis: *IScythMin* 2: 120 = J. 62 (I^{a}), cf. Jaccottet (2003, 1: 132). The statue was actually made by a sculptor named Hermogenes.

[43] *IG* IX, 1^{2} 670 = Sokolowski, *LSCG* 181 [J'.s ref. incorrect] = J. 153. At 1: 139 Jaccottet dates the text to III^{p}.

The issue of control of such groups founded upon individual initiative was evidently in many cases a pressing one: how best to ensure not merely that the wishes of the founder were followed but also how to ensure that an association would outlast him (or her)? In some cases, at least the answer was found within the family. Thus the treasurer of a *thiasos* in Byzantium for Dionysus *Parabolos* at the time of Hadrian was either brother or father of the *prostates*, while the secretary seems to have been the son of the gymnasiarch honoured by the group, who may in turn have been the son of the *prostates*.[45] After the decease of its founder Dionysios of Marathon, an Hellenistic association of Dionysiastai in the Piraeus resolved to ensure the succession to leadership through his family.[46] The choice of initiatory language might be another means of binding a group to the leader in a quasi-familial structure: Lykomedes, the priest of a 'large [or 'grand': μεγάλοιο] *baccheion*' dedicated to Zeus-Dionysos at Malko-Tarnovo (in modern Bulgaria), evidently the founder, dedicated an altar for himself, for his children, for his own honourable position, καὶ μυστῶν ἰδίων, 'and my initiates', whom he asks Dionysos to preserve.[47]

Another significant form of control is the inscribed list of members: the externalisation, monumentalisation, of a list (normally confined to papyrus) exercises a tacit hold over the individuals so commemorated. An inscription from Napoca (Cluj, Romania) of a *speira Asianorum*, now lost, contained a list, separated by gender, of at least 24 men and more than 16 women, in separate columns, under the rubric of the *spirarches* Germanus and the *mater* Tattaro Epipodia; another from Apollonia on the Black Sea at least 29 names, mostly with filiation.[48] This latter employs an even more effective device, often found elsewhere, namely the enumeration of posts and grades attained or filled by individuals. Such hierarchies, of which a text from Cirpan (Bulgaria) and again the Torre Nova inscription are the finest examples,[49] attest to the additional motivations that could be given to individual commitment to the group by the elaboration of titles that run parallel to the ordinary administrative offices. Here Dionysism, with its plethora of imaginable functions, carriers of the narthex, bearers of the thyrsus, bearer of the cistus, lamp-carrier, bearer of the *liknos*, and many more, to say nothing of grades such as *boukolos* or *bacchos/bacchê*, and serendipitous addition such as *sebastophoros*, carrier of the image of the emperor, *semiophoros*, bearer of the *thiasos*-emblem, scored highly.[50] Such hierarchies created ambitions, goals and commitments. As Jaccottet observes, out of temporary rôles or functions that individuals could slip in and out of, mystatogues learned how to create formal structures of responsibility, of rights, of personal interests. Yet at the same time, there are hints of quite humble people offering simple mystagogic services: a third-century BCE resolution from Miletus allows any woman to initiate others within the city and its *chora*, and in the dependent islands, so long as she pays the civic priestess (who will have purchased the position) a stater every two years.[51]

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[44] Cf. Cole (2011, 264): "The traditional themes of Dionysiac literature seem absent from his rituals as reported in inscriptions"; and the remarks of Stella Georgoudi in the same volume on routinisation (Georgoudi 2011).

[45] *IByz*. 37 = J. 40. Poland (1909, 87 f.) already stressed the frequency of such family relationships within associations. The epithet *Parabolos* seems to refer to a special type of fishing-net; this group may have called itself the *Dionysobolitai* (*IByz*. 38 = J. 41).

[46] *Syll.*^{3} 1101 = *LSCG* 49 = J. 2 (176/5 BCE), with Jaccottet's comments ad loc.

[47] *IGBulg* 1865 = J. 44, cf. Cole (1993, 293).

[48] Resp. *CIL* III 870 = *ILS* 4061 = J. 71 (235 CE); *IGBulg* 421 = J. 46 (late II/early III$^{\text{p}}$). This list runs continuously, i.e. no columns.

It is time to turn to my other concern here, the 'consumption' of such associations by the city.[52] One of the major means of perpetuating an association was for it to possess property that would render it less dependent upon the subscriptions of members, which would hardly cover more than minimal regular expenses. The point of such property, such as a vineyard or an insula, was not merely to throw up regular interest at 10 % or 15 % but to align the association with other property-owners in a society of orders based on wealth.[53] Property meant perdurance and status. This meant that the founders of associations had a direct interest in attracting members who could not merely afford the entrance fee and the annual or monthly payments but were in a position to assign fixed property to the association in perpetuity. At least 34 of Jaccottet's 200 texts (17 %) contain explicit reference to members of the high- or sub-élite (such as doctors or owners of businesses), either as themselves members, or as donors of cult-furniture, sometimes entire buildings, or as patrons or benefactors, or as honorands in consideration of gifts, political or financial help. In one case at Kallatis on the west coast of the Euxine, for example, the honorand, a man named Bikôn, had not only given the *thiasos* presents but administered the laying out of the common fund at interest; and when this investment – probably a bottomry loan at very high interest (say 30 – 40 %) – failed, he restored both capital and the promised interest out of his own pocket.[54] About the same number of texts (36) record euergetic gestures, payments, foundations etc. This dependence of recorded Dionysiac associations upon members of local élites must have led to their assimilation to the dominant concerns, prejudices and social exclusions of such socially-prominent groups.[55] As Susan Cole pointed out, although several *thiasoi* ran their own cemeteries, or at least saw to the fitting burial of their members, expressions of post-mortem hopes in epigraphy are either purely conventional, in that they make no reference to what we think of as the Dionysiac mortuary *imaginaire*, or content themselves with conventional Dionysiac themes: eternal dances in the *thiasos*, the idea of satyrs weeping, or the possibility of gazing at Dionysus after one's death.[56]

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[49] Cirpan: *IGBulg* 1517 = J.47 (235 CE); for the Torre Nova inscription (*IGUR* 1.160), see n. 22 above.

[50] For many of these terms, see the relevant entries in Turcan (2003, 49 – 93). The appropriation of Dionysiac imagery by Hellenistic rules and Roman emperors, e. g. in Pergamon, is discussed by Insler-Kerényi (2011).

[51] *LSAM* 48 ll. 18 – 20= J. 150 (276/75^{a}). It is not clear (to me) whether the preceding stipulation about women sacrificing also refers to such small-time mystagogues, i. e. whether they are sacrificing on behalf of others; Suys (2011, 216) at any rate seems to take it in this sense. Note Dignas (2002) on the relationship between civic priesthood and small-time mystagogic activity in the case of the Corybantes at Erythrae.

[52] Jaccottet (2005, 193) goes so far as to suggest that we should be asking 'Why are not *all* Dionysiac *thiasoi* public?' Her answer is couched in religious terms: every *thiasos*, public or private, plays a rôle in rehearsing or re-actualising the reception of this ambivalent god into the city.

[53] Vineyards of course had a direct connection with a major activity in Dionysiac associations, the consumption of wine. For interesting comments on the resources required to run a Dionysiac group, see Horster (2011).

These texts do refer to a number of themes that indicate the interest of mystagogues and members in imagining the continuing force of Dionysiac myth and Dionysiac presence in the life of the associations,[57] through appeal to local manifestations of the god, through dramatic performances and mime, through 'going to the mountain', through 'initiation', through dances, sometimes at least in costume, such as a *boukolos* apparently dressed in skins from Philadelphia in Lydia or Rufus at Kestel (?Bursa) in Bithynia, whose tomb shows him dressed in a sort of harness covered in little bells, and holding a shepherd's pedum and a wriggling snake.[58] On the other hand, Dionysiac motifs are virtually unknown on sarcophagi found in Asia.[59]

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[54] *Syll.*^{3} 1108 = *ISM (=IKallatis)* 3: 36 = J. 55 (late III^a), with Avram (2002, 74), who emphasises the eminently public profile of the Dionysiac *thiasos* in the city.

[55] Cf. Harland (2009, 145 – 160) on rivalries for social prominence between associations in Asia Minor, citing inter alia *ISmyrna* 639 = J. 121 (the synodos of Dionysos Breiseus honouring the Asiarch M. Aurelius Iulianus, later II^p); also Hirschmann (2006, 49 f.).

[56] Cole (1993). In one case at Ancyra Sidera in Phrygia, the text simply mentions that the person commemorated, a boy of 12 who had held the rank or grade of *boukolos*, was killed by a wall falling on him during an earthquake: unpubl. = J. 86 (the text is not listed in *MAMA* X, which covers Ancyra Sidera).

[57] Magnesia on the Maeander claimed to have been instructed by an oracle from Delphi to fetch three Maenads from Thebes as founders of its official Dionysiac thiasoi – who duly settled in Magnesia and died there (*IMagn* 215 = *FGrH* 482 Anhang F5 = J. 146). In his commentary (IIIB Komm., Text, p. 387), Jacoby points out that the inscription is dated by the *prytanis*, which means that the original text (our version is a Roman copy of Hadrianic date) must date from be-

Despite all this, it seems to me that, especially in the larger towns of the eastern Mediterranean, the pressures exercised by public cults, by the desire of local élites to demonstrate euergetism, by financial need and the interests of founders in the perpetuity of their associations, that there was a continual tendency for 'Dionysism', for all its diversity in associations and the energy and imagination expended by mystagogues, to be assimilated into the religious habits of the dominant class and thus lose its potential for alterity.[60] The leaders of most, if not all, Dionysiac associations saw themselves as extending, amplifying, intensifying the civic cult(s) of the deity.[61] For the wealthy and nearly-wealthy had two powerful arguments: not only did they enjoy social power but they themselves already enjoyed divine blessing, as their wealth itself, irrespective of character and ethics, tended to prove.

3. Mithraic associations

The opportunities offered to mystagogues by Dionysus had to be navigated within the framework of Greek convention. As I have already observed, Mithraic mystagogues could claim their god was Persian. The truth of this claim is currently, and in all likelihood permanently, insoluble – we simply are not in a position to write the early history of the forms of the cult that established themselves in the West. I want instead here to highlight the category 'specialised small-group cult',

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fore the mid-III^{a}, when the eponymous magistrate of Magnesia began to be termed *stephanephoros*.

[58] Keil & Premerstein, *DAW* 53 (1910) 28 no.42 = J. 113 (II^{p}).

[59] Geyer (1977, 57), whereas Dionysiac themes are of course very frequent on the Roman sarcophagi, cf. Turcan (1966).

[60] "On voit donc que, bien souvent, il y avait place pour les associations [cultiques] au sien du culte officiel, et qu'il y avait place pour le culte officiel parmi les activités des associations": Suys (2005, 211).

[61] Suys (2005, 214). On p. 200 she lists the incidence of the expression οἱ πρὸ πόλεως μύσται, which neatly expresses the subjective aims of the initiates.

and look at the ways in which the mystagogues who elaborated the cult of Mithras all over the Latin-speaking part of the Empire, but especially in Italy and the provinces along the Rhine-Danube frontier, used the notion of alterity to clear a space for the construction of private, relatively focused experiences aiming to provide specific types of ethico-religious capital. That is, I take 'Persia' primarily as a metaphor for the assertion of a religious difference, namely the claim that religious experience is not a mere function of socio-political life but can, through routinisation of alternative ritual structures, become relatively autonomous.[62] At the same time, I would want ultimately to fall back on the Weberian position that it is intermediate urban populations who are most open to the assertion of alternative religious goals, since they are not particularly susceptible to the *Theodizee des Glücks* subscribed to by the élite, but are still in a position to take advantage of new currencies. However, the surviving material dictates a different approach from that in the previous section, in that the epigraphy is relatively poor and confined by the tight generic rules for votives. It thus seems preferable to offer a very brief synthetic account based mainly on iconography. This is intentionally a mere sketch of a complex historical reality, since it goes without saying that every modern account of the Roman worship of Mithras necessarily both over-simplifies and over-generalises – no writable scenario can manage the unforgiving dialectic here between the particular/local and the general/supra-regional.

I recur to the term 'narrativity', albeit in a sense not unrelated to but rather different from, Harrison White's usage.[63] Here the word stands for one aspect of the construction of specifically Mithraic meanings, namely the evocation of mythic narrative as a device for generating subjective experiences over the long term. Viewing Mithraic cognition as a long-term matter helps to escape from the closure that still tends to be implied by the term 'mystery', understood in the Eleusinian sense of a momentary revelation or illumination. At the same time, I retain something of White's insistence on the implicitly conflictual character of such narratives: the mystagogue says 'this is my version; the differences are my differences'. By increasing the number of personal or individual inputs and influences the mystagogue directly affects the degree of differentiation between individual religious careers, and so the degree of religious individualisation.

The most important contribution of narrativity in this sense is to sustain the religious group that practises it. I have already stressed the organisational needs of the founder of small, voluntary groups, dependent on individual financial contributions and an often considerable input of time and energy by members. In the case of Mithraic associations, there is little trace of generous gifts by wealthy individuals, though they are not completely unknown.[64] That is, the drive to survive had to be satisfied in a different manner from the Dionysiac associations in the eastern Mediterranean, namely by continually renewing their investment in their own activity, not arbitrarily but (a) in such a manner that each separate activity was meaningfully connected to others, and (b) by linking that construct to the acquisition of moderate symbolic and moral capital. A differentiated, non-standard narrative,[65] such as that of Mithras, which can invoke a distinctive religious authority – in this case from a 'wise nation' – can be thought of as the simplest means of combining first-level coherence with such a promise of symbolic capital.

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[62] On the options offered by 'Persia', see further Gordon (2017b).

[63] See n. 21 above.

To illustrate the cognitive strategies at work under the heading narrativity, I take four related themes: drawing boundaries, the Mithraic body, cosmic play, and re-staging myth.[66] All, in one way or another, illustrate how Mithraic mystagogues might use aspects of a narrative in order to create over time a series of 'interesting' moments, short-term goals, emotionally-laden experiences, that aimed at constructing a meaningful (but of course not exclusive) 'Mithraic life'. I have selected them partly because they require very little use of material derived from sources outside the archaeological record. They make no claim to exhaustiveness and one could easily multiply them; nor should I be thought to be claiming that every mystagogue used these materials, either at all, or in the same way. The archaeological evidence (and we have really no other reliable source of information) suggests considerable diversity – as it were, every mystagogue for himself; but it was easier to adapt from a (local or regional) model than to invent from whole cloth.

(1) Drawing boundaries. Pierre Bourdieu has pointed out that what is significant in so-called rites of passage is not so much the shift of status itself as the nature of the boundary/ies asserted.[67] In the Mithraic case, we find two types of exclusion being legitimated through reference to the narrative. One of the commonest by-scenes is the birth of Mithras from a heap of rocks. At one level of evo-

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64 For example the elaborate (and expensive) marble sculptures donated in the mid II^{p} by C. Accius Hedychrus at Emerita (V. 773–781), or the complex panelled reliefs at Saarburg (V. 966), Königshoffen/Strasbourg (V. 1359), Neuenheim/Heidelberg (V. 1283 = S. 141a) or Osterburken (V. 1292 = S. 148a), all of which must have meant considerable outlays of cash.

65 On the originality of Mithras' mythic sacrifice in terms of Graeco-Roman norms, see e.g. Turcan (2016, 43–84).

66 For a fuller discussion, see Gordon (2017a).

67 Bourdieu (1995, 176 f.).

cation, this event connoted a claim about how light and fire came into the world. But it also implied a negative: if he was born from rocks, Mithras can have had no mother. This negative in turn legitimated the Mithraic exclusion of women. A *symbolon* recorded by Firmicus Maternus implies that, at any rate in the eastern Mediterranean, the assembled worshippers might acclaim the god so born by repeatedly shouting: θεὸς ἐκ πέτρας, 'God from Rock!'[68] The frequent presence in mithraea of individual representations of this moment, detached from their narrative context in the cult-relief and turned into free-standing objects within the temple, suggest that such acclamations, which 'staged' the Rock-birth at a certain point in the ritual, were also a feature of the cult in the west.[69] The group affirms its own solidarity by invoking the continuing immediacy of the mythical event, simultaneously encoding its implicit references, including: "No women here!" The existence of such monuments in the temple was a permanent reminder of the importance of this boundary for group-identity.[70]

If 'God from Rock' constructed one sort of boundary, another allusion to myth, the agreement between Mithras and Helios-Sol at the altar prior to their joint banquet, constructs another, namely between those who have become, or are eligible to become, *syndexioi* ('those bound by the handshake') and those who are not, i.e. the great majority.[71] Membership in the group is referred to a mythical moment after the death of the bull, when Mithras shakes the hand of Helios/Sol, just as the Father might at certain ritual moments assimilate himself to Mithras.[72] The same gesture draws for its authority upon the grander world of political harmony and concord, implying the internalisation of an ideal model of controlled, non-aggressive male collegiality, which was directly relevant to the survival of such small groups and is directly thematised in many *leges sacrae* in the Greek East.

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[68] Firmicus Maternus, *de errore*, 20.1: *alterius profani sacramenti signum est* θεὸς ἐκ πέτρας, with Turcan (1982, 301f.); cf. on this theme, Gordon (2012, 983–984).

[69] The most important archaeological evidence for the role of acclamations in the cult of Mithras comes from the large number of dipinti that were painted all over the interior walls of the final Mithraeum at Dura, c.240–256/57: Rostovtzeff et al. 1939, 116–127. Most of them mark the acquisition of a new grade, which suggests the significance of this type of mechanism in creating loyalty and commitment to longer-term membership of the group.

[70] It is often supposed that the exclusion of women was a 'weakness' of the cult. But the vast majority of ancient associations were likewise exclusively masculine.

[71] The term *syndexioi* for the members of a small Mithraic group is known from Dura: Rostovtzeff et al. (1939, 87 no. 848 (= V.54); 120 no.858 (= V.60)); and from a foundation inscription from Rome: *AE* (1950: 199 = V.423): *ut possint syndexi hilares celebrare vota per aevom* (mid-third century CE); cf. Clauss (2012, 101). The word *syndexios*, like several others in the cult, such as *heliodromus* or *nymphus*, is of course Greek, and thus hints either at the historical origin of the cult in the eastern Mediterranean or at any rate a claim to such an origin.

[72] Ritual moments based on evocations from myth: Clauss (2012, 98–100 with fig. 99; 142–144 with fig. 110).

(2) The Mithraic body. Following up work by Foucault and Bourdieu, the late Catherine Bell has explored the dialectical relationship between body and ritual performance.[73] This invites us to look more carefully at representations of the body in Mithraic contexts. In the present context I select just one image (fig. 1), taken from a now well-known Schlangengefäß in Wetterauer ware found in the mithraeum beneath the Ballplatz at Mainz that was deliberately destroyed in 1976 before it could be excavated.[74] My drawing shows two members of an imaginary procession (led by an initiate into the grade *Miles*, not shown here), namely a Father and a *Heliodromus* (i.e an occupant of the next grade down), both of whom are considerably larger and more imposing than the preceding *Miles*. The Father strides forth, wearing an exaggerated Phrygian cap as an unmistakable reference to the 'Orient', and a long shapeless robe that leaves the right shoulder naked, and is thus sharply differentiated from the toga – this is no Roman priest. The wavy lines on the material and the angle of the staff in his right hand convey a sense of brisk, purposive forwards movement. But it is above all the angle of the head that gives the desired impression of *gravitas* and *auctoritas* suitable to the ritual moment. The element of masquerade is still more prominent in the case of the *Heliodromus*, whose inferior status is marked by the shorter, simpler robe and his shorter steps — he is really just a lay-figure for the magnificent whip that evokes the whole gamut of associations in the cult with Helios/Sol as charioteer, lord of the entire cosmic order, that he represents. These two highest members of the grade-system — we cannot say what form it took at Mainz in the first half of the second century — thus exemplify an ideal corporeal manifestation of authority, the satisfaction of distinction, itself the fruit — notionally at any rate — of submission to and internalisation of the moral rules.

(3) Cosmic play. Though the themes of light and darkness are naturally omnipresent in polis- or civic-cult, the condensation effected by the mithraeum lent itself to the systematic use of ritual-dynamic impressions in allusion to the theme of Mithras as controller of the cosmic order. Most familiarly, the presence of pierced reliefs, statues and altars, which could be illuminated at certain mo-

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[73] Bell (1992, 94–117); cf. Wulf (2008, 397–402).

[74] On what can now be known of this temple see Huld-Zetsche (2008); on the Schlangengefäß, ibid. 99–108. 'Schlangengefäß' is the German term for a type of wine-krater decorated with a snake and sometimes (as in this case) with other significant creatures, for specifically ritual purposes. In my view, Roger Beck's account of this scenario (Beck 2000, 154–158) is unnecessarily speculative.

ments, implies a widespread determination not merely to communicate the universal and continuing implications for the cosmos of Mithras' act but, by sharing in their re-enactment, to realise a personal responsibility for the maintenance of the cosmos understood as an order regulated by this god. The lighting and extinguishing of lamps, torches and incense-burners constituted a perfomative rehearsal of mythic events, and thus a personal participation in them.[75] Not the least interesting aspect of this play is the incorporation into it of images of the Lion-headed god, a purely Mithraic conception of the highest cosmic divinity, the diversity of whose representations admirably illustrates the theme of mystagogic inventiveness.[76]

(4) A similar desire to communicate a 'direct' emotional experience of mythic events to members of such groups is suggested by many monuments, of which I select just two:

a) The mosaic floor of the *mitreo degli Animali* at Ostia (mid-second century CE) contains a number of images alluding to the cult-image, whose spatial distribution implies that they had some ritual rôle.[77] The most interesting in the present context is an image of a bull's head, with fibulae, with part of a *culter*, the usual equipment of the *victimarius*, beside it (fig. 2). The bull's death has been, as it were, brought down 'out' of the cult-relief (which would have been close by, in the cult-niche) down to the level of the human actors, in a manner analogous to the excerpting of the rock-birth discussed earlier (and many other Mithraic monuments); yet here its head faces forward, so that it appears to look back up to the relief, just a few metres in front. Packed into the mosaic image, on which individuals could evidently at certain ritual moments take their place, are many of the links between cosmic order, divine action, death, blood, meat, wine, and 'salvation' (i.e. well-being and other Heilsgüter), that this mystagogue was concerned to assert and enact. In other words, the 'floor-decoration' has a modelling function for ritual performances, even if we can only guess at their precise nature. "L'image est spectacle et support de spectacle rituel".[78]

b) A different mode of subjectively re-experiencing myth is suggested by the large Schlangengefäß from the late third-century Mithraic feast at Tienen/Belgium described by Marleen Martens, which is furnished inside with a hollow clay tube that on the outside is modelled as a snake.[79] Here the crater-snake motif, which occurred on the Schlangengefäß from Mainz and is frequently found on images both of the bull-killing, and occasionally at the divine banquet shared by Mithras and Helios/Sol (fig. 3), has been operationalised, so that the individual participant could directly experience the warm blood drunk by the serpent at the moment of the original bull-killing, transmuted into the wine it 'drinks' from the krater.[80] Every Schlangengefäß, used to mix the wine for the cult-meal, implicitly conveys these allusions (several also include the lion from the lion-snake-krater triad), but only in late third-century Tienen, so far as we know, did it occur to anyone to take the next step in subjectivisation of the experience. Nevertheless, it can usefully stand as an exemplum of the performative creativity inspired by the centrality of myth in the cult.

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[75] See esp. Clauss (2012, 116 – 123).

[76] Cf. now Turcan (2016, 419 – 442).

[77] See Becatti (1954, 87 – 92 = V. 278 – 279).

[78] Bricault and Prescendi (2009, 69).

[79] Martens (2004, 34 – 38 with fig.10). The external 'snake' is likewise a tube, so that it could serve as a drinking 'straw'.

4. The 'Danubian Riders'

Although it is concentrated in the Danube-Sava triangle in southern Pannonia Inferior (later Pannonia Secunda), the iconographic evidence for the cult of the Danubian Riders is found scattered all along the heavily Romanised valley of the Danube from Carnuntum in Pannonia Superior to Durostorum in Moesia Inferior, but also in the major towns of northern Dacia, and even as far West as Poetovio, Virunum and Salonae. For whatever reason it seems to have emerged only after the Roman conquest of Dacia, perhaps around the middle of the second century CE, and the cult in this 'classic' form is therefore likely to have been developed through contact with Roman cultural habits. Its basic element, the Rider-god, is however closely related to that of the Thracian Heros, a cult of the same general area, the Moesias, especially Moesia Inferior, and Dacia, but for which there is much more evidence.[81]

Given the very limited degree of integration into the civic religious system (itself, in this general area, of no great antiquity), with a correspondingly low degree of normative control over evocations and meanings, it is a plausible inference that there were numerous different, individual or personal, understandings of the nature of the cult of the Danubian Riders, if indeed we should think of them as the major focus at all – the name 'Danubian Riders' is after all simply a modern pigeon-hole to distinguish the cult from that of the Thracian Rider. A case in point is the radical doubt over whether there was just one or two Riders, or whether the two Riders, which were evidently in some way related to the Dioscuri, were thought of as a sort of hendiadys, the equivalent of one – the dedication DOMINO at Carnuntum might support such a conclusion. There are rather more than thirty examples of a single Rider; it used to be thought that they were early, but Manfred Oppermann showed that they continued well into the third century and thus co-existed for several decades with the Double-Rider type.[82] There was evidently freedom to choose even on so fundamental a point. The designers of the various matrices known to us clearly had a variable set of notions of what was important and needed to be represented; the finished objects in turn communicated these choices to purchasers, thus influencing their understanding of priorities as well as of their own cultic experience. Serial production thus provided a degree of normativity within the context of a highly decentralised religious praxis. In the case of stelae and roundels on stone, individual urban craft-shops evidently disposed of composition models, both for the registers and for individual groups, which bestow a family resemblance on the monuments even though no type is identical to any other.

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[80] The wine-krater shows clear signs of having been repeatedly placed on the cooking-fire, so the wine would have been warm. It contained no fatty residues, so had never been used for ordinary cooking.

[81] The standard catalogue is Gočeva et al. (1979 – 1982), but see now Oppermann (2006), whose ample discussion supersedes that of Dimitrova (2002).

Since I do not want to get involved in the details of these images, I simply reproduce one rather well-preserved example of s single type, Ertl's B03 (fig. 4), from Sirmium.[83] The frame, the egg-and-dart vault supported by columns or pilasters, evokes the general idea of a high-prestige public building. Just as one looks up to such a vault, this vault claims to be the sky – hence the stars in the field; the principal inhabitant of the visible heaven is Helios/Sol, who here faces front towards the spectator. This focus on Helios/Sol, which is common in the Pannonian plaques, is replaced elsewhere by joint representations of Luna (l.) and Sol (r.).[84] This sun in this case is simply there in majesty, he does not evoke the diurnal rhythm of the two major luminaries.[85]

Below Helios/Sol, and less prominent, but nevertheless centrally placed, and likewise in 'heaven', are 1) the Great Goddess, as always facing front towards the spectator, flanked by 2) the two Riders who hold up their right hand in a gesture of respect. The left-hand horse stands on a large fish; behind him is a gladiator, generally identified with the god Mars. Behind the right-hand Rider, whose horse stands on or over a prostrate man, is a female deity with her finger to her mouth, usually identified as Nemesis. In the present context these divine figures,

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82 Cf. Oppermann (1981, 519 – 521).

83 E. B03 – 37 with *Taf.* XXXIX. As I have observed above (n.34), Ertl knew 66 virtually identical examples of this type.

84 E. g. Ertl's types F, G, and H which are likewise extremely common.

85 I ignore here the possible allusion to imperial solar iconography.

though obviously of great importance to the cult's conceptual apparatus, do not concern me, except to make a point about protection/well-being: the Riders' ability to overcome ills is enshrined in the routinised iconography of the cult; and it must be this aspect of their power that lies behind the production of the plaques, the tiny stone roundels and the intaglios.[86]

My main concern here, however, is with the lower part of these plaques, which clearly relate to human religious action. In the centre is a sacrificial feast-scene with one dominant seated figure placed directly below the Great Goddess, and a smaller figure seated on either side. On the table is clearly a large fish, a creature closely bound up with the Goddess.[87] To the right of this group there approach two young men who are holding hands. To the left is what is for me the crucial scene among these representations, namely (fig. 5) a tree on which a sacrificed ram has been hung by the hind-legs for skinning and disembowelling by a male figure.[88] To the left of this group there stands a taller, and therefore in the context more important, figure with the head of a ram. In the single Rider types, the ram is shown being dragged by the sacrificant to an altar; in others, we find a ram's severed head in the field.[89] Tudor called this scene the *occultatio* and saw it as a kind of initiation, implying a shift of moral and religious status through the merit of subduing the ram, cutting its throat, hanging it up and disembowelling it – that is, single-handedly doing all the things involved in sacrifice that in civic cult were done by slaves; i.e. a rejection of civic rules.[90] This seems plausible enough, but lends still greater interest to the taller, ram-headed figure who supervises the action. I do not believe this is a mask (any more than I believe members of Mithraic groups wore masks): the ram's head is a visual sign of a specific rôle or dignity in connection with a ritual performance whose aim is to establish a special relationship with the Riders. The difference in height between this figure and the disemboweller suggests that this is a mystagogue directing the process of skinning and disembowelling and perhaps explaining its significance.

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86 On some other images, the Rider on the l. is accompanied by a lion, which attacks the prostrate figure beneath the horse's hooves.

87 On the Goddess and the fish, see the remarks of Tudor (1969 – 76, 2: 208 – 212).

88 This is still today a standard means of butchering sheep and pigs. I remember coming up to a Greek farmer in the Mani in the early 1980s shortly before Easter, who was preparing a large lamb in just this manner.

89 Single Rider: Tudor (1969 – 76, 2: 213); head in field: e.g. Ertl's G02 and G04; in exedra: C01 and C02.

90 Tudor (1969 – 76, 2: 243 – 249), picking up the term from M. Abramić. In some cases, bulls are shown (though not in this scenario of butchery), implying a shift in husbandry, differential wealth, and the search for distinction thereby within the general context of the Rider-cult.

The reproduction of this scene (and its analogues) on several series of lead plaques suggests that we should understand it as a site of intense personal memory, in which a special relation was established between the ‘initiate’ (for want of a better term) and his mystagogue. The second aspect of this memory is the central scene of eating the fish, which must represent another stage or a complement to the relation to the Riders established by the ram-sacrifice. One cannot but be struck by the plaques’ interest in detailing or ‘rehearsing’ cultic instruments, victims and emblems, in a manner reminiscent of the series of sacrificial instruments on Flavian temples. We should understand these as individual points of evocation, or triggers for personal cultic memories, even if we can make much less sense of the items than we can for public cult.

One of the advantages of using cast lead as the medium was to communicate greater detail cheaply – as though the protection provided by the lead plaque was in direct proportion to the information it could convey. We should therefore not use ‘schemes’ and ‘types’ in a mechanical way to construct pseudo-histories of development but treat them as so many divergent choices relating to the communicative problem, which is at the same time also an interpretative problem: what is important (to me, the mystagogue)? How am I best to communicate it? Each iconographic choice is conditioned partly by personal experience, partly by ‘theological’ concerns, and partly by other iconographic choices known to the designer. To a significant degree, I think these monuments were intended to act, inter alia, as sites of memory, recalling ritual events in the lives of those who owned them, but by that very fact, perpetuating and memorialising the authority and charisma of the individual mystagogue who controlled both the ‘ram-event’ and the communicative form in which it was held fast to become, as an amulet, a source of physical protection.

5. Conclusion

My general aim here has been to illustrate not merely the inventiveness of mystagogues working on different materials but also the price to be paid for the struggle to maintain the viability of these small groups – and the unexpected benefits arising. If we take Michael Stausberg’s rough scheme of the development of a category of ‘religion’, namely attributive, structural and functional differentiation, we can locate the emergence of small group religion as one aspect of the transition between attributive and structural differentiation, that is, between the phase of making things ‘religious’ and the phase of making institutions 'religious'.[91] In a recent article Jörg Rüpke has proposed several kinds of questions we can ask of our material in order to get a purchase on individual religious action perceived as communication.[92] For my purposes, two of these are of special interest: How does 'religion' influence the ability and willingness of individuals to deal creatively with daily and extraordinary problems? And how does human agency contribute to the institutionalisation of what is specifically perceived as religious practice? In both cases, we would do well to start from the Weberian idea of natural talent (if not necessarily 'virtuosity') and focus on the linkage between pragmatic awareness and individual performances in the acquisition of personal religious authority. Authority in turn founds a plastic narrative identity which, however, remains at this historical juncture, between attributive and structural differentiation, just one among many possible identities. The emergence of 'religion' is the essential precondition for this narrative to be considered even by ego as plausible; and without the narrative there can be no drive to create a specifically religious institution.

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[91] See Stausberg (2010, 361–363).

[92] Rüpke (2015, 355).

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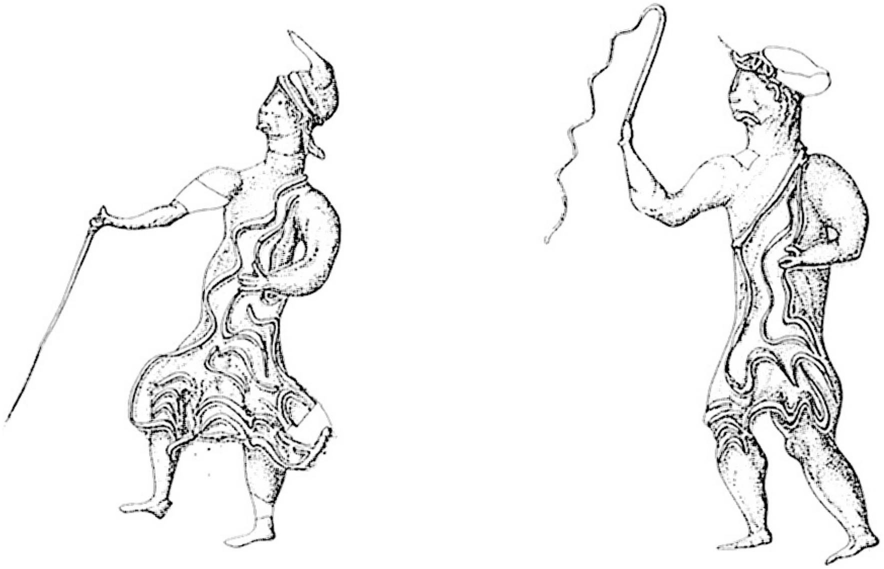

Fig. 1: Drawings of the Father (l.) and the Heliodromus (r.) on face 2 of the Schlangengefäß in Wetterauer ware from the Mainz Mithraeum, c.120 – 140 CE. The figures, which occupy the two central elements of a short ‘procession’ of four persons, were created individually in barbotine technique. Image: Generaldirektion Kulturelles Erbe Rheinland-Pfalz, Direktion Archäologie, Mainz.

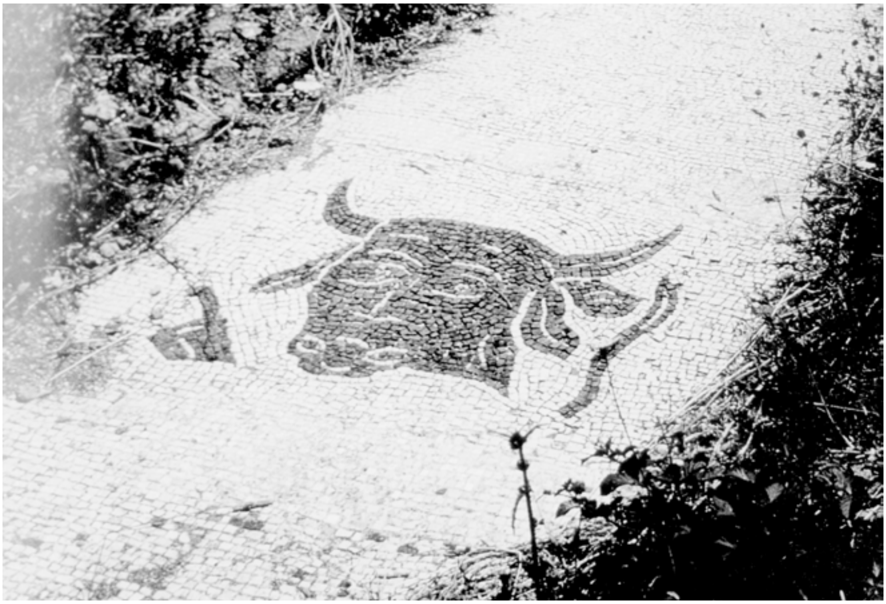

Fig. 2: The bull's head on the mosaic floor of the Mitreo degli Animali, Ostia (Reg. IV, Ins. II, 11). Note the *fibulae* (ribbons) hanging from the horns, and the butcher's knife, both of which serve to refer the human practice of sacrifice with the mythic moment of Mithras' sacrifice, which is connoted by the severed tail on the right. Photo: R.L. Gordon.

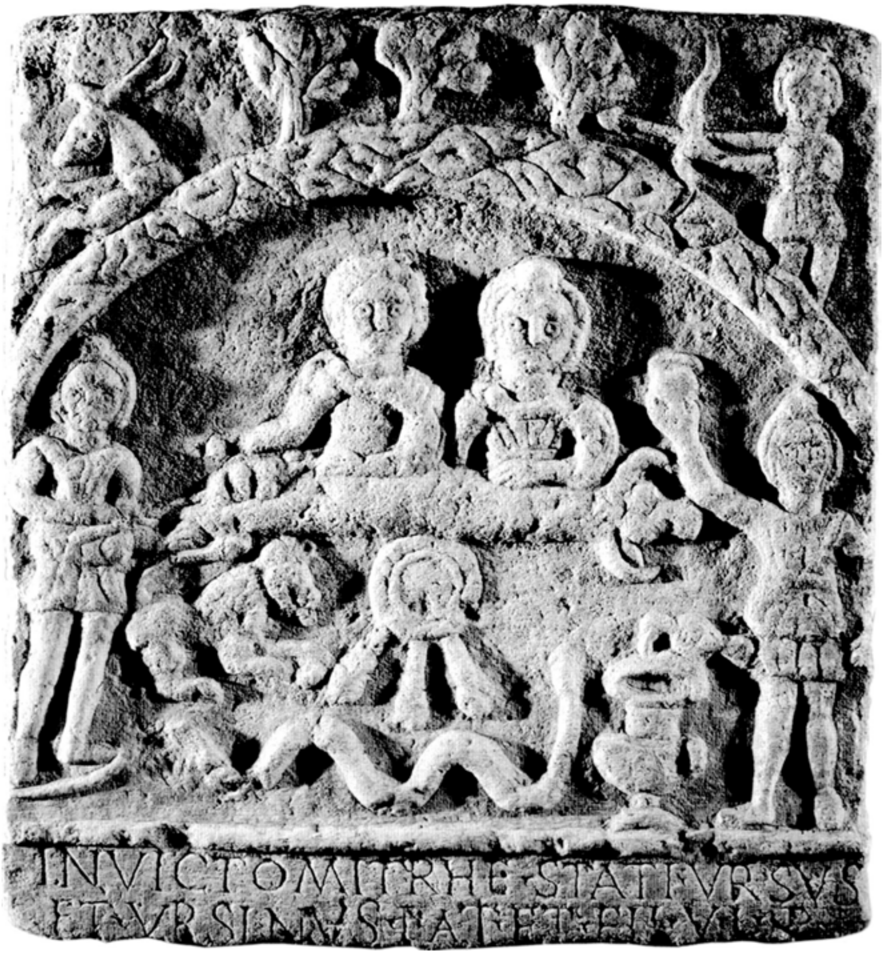

Fig. 3: The reverse of the double-sided relief from Proložac Donji, nr. Imotski, Croatia, showing the usual scene of the ‘First Sacrificial Meal’ shared between Mithras and Helios/Sol, who are reclining on the hide of the skinned and butchered heavenly bull. In front of the table with the meat is the symbolic group lion-krater-snake, which imaged the relationship asserted between Mithras’ act in sacrificing the bull, the blood that flowed, and the food and wine consumed in Mithraic groups. Photo: Muzej Hrvatskih Arheoloških Spomenika/Museum of Croatian Archaeological Monuments Split.

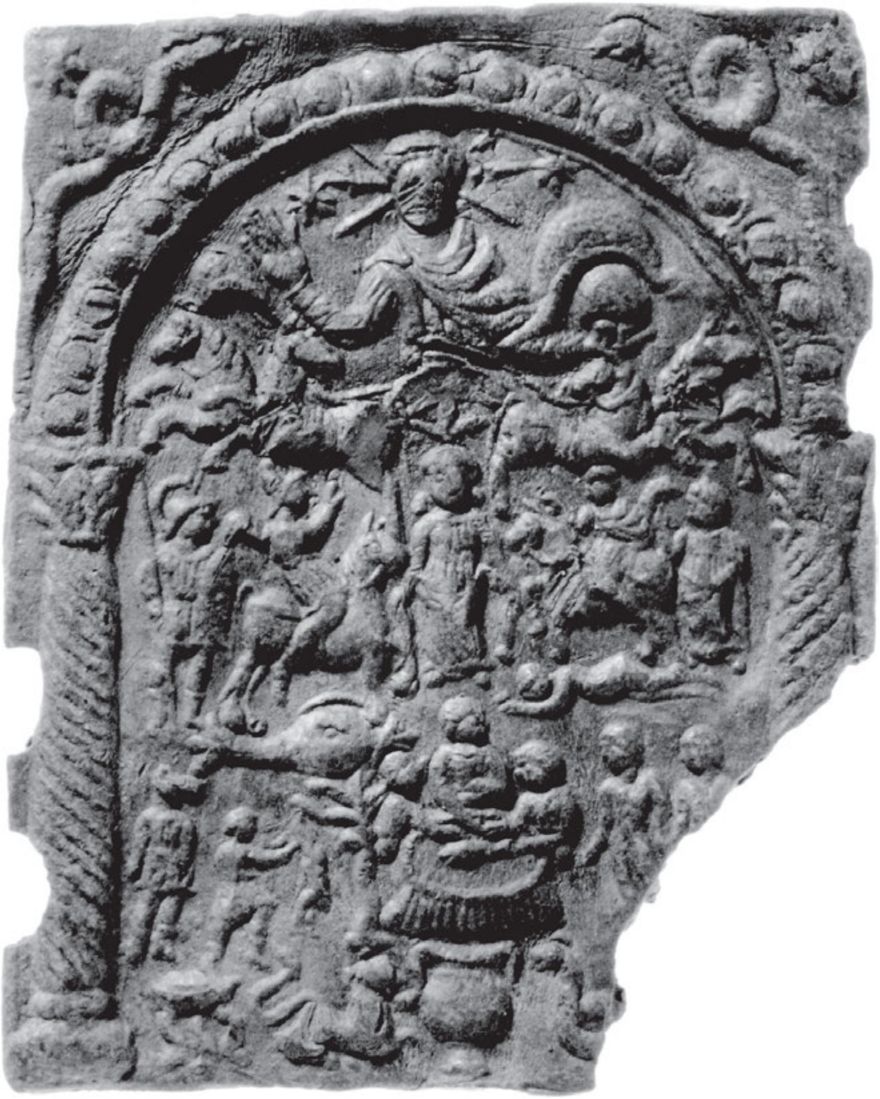

Fig. 4: A lead plaque from Sirmium, Pannonia Inferior (Sremska Mitrovica, Serbia) of type B03 (Ertl 1996 no. B03.37). The upper section shows a schematic version of heaven, dominated by Helios-Sol, yet centred upon a Great Goddess, the two Riders, and some other divine figures. The central section focuses upon a sacrificial meal based on fish, an event that bears an unknown relation to the 'ram-sacrifice' on the left. The lowest register contains a sequence of objects of high symbolic value in the ritual praxis. Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Mainz, inv. no. O/42691/57. Photo: RGZM/Sabine Hölper.

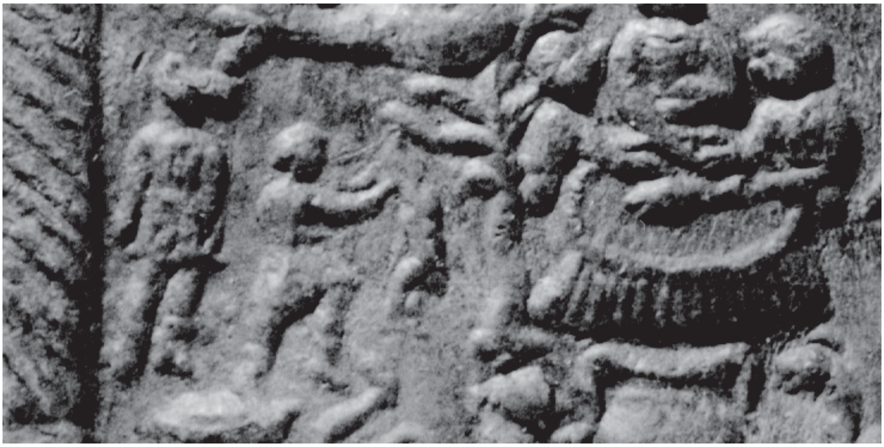

Fig. 5: Detail from fig. 4, showing the skinning and disembowelling of the sacrificed ram, a procedure directed by a ‘Ram’, i. e. a mystagogue who assumed a managing rôle in this praxis. Its precise significance is however unknown to us.

Emiliano Rubens Urciuoli

Enforcing priesthood. The struggle for the monopolisation of religious goods and the construction of the Christian religious field

Drawing on a Bourdieusian framework, this paper aims to sketch out the main strategies by which the ‘ecclesiastical party’ of successive bishops from the mid-second to the late third century CE managed to establish itself as mainline, to make its normative claims effective, and to see off the major forms of religious competition, thereby constructing the Christian religious field of the imperial era. To accomplish all this, what we might call the bishop’s viewpoint had to be brought to prevail over that of specialists endowed with different types of religious capital. Among these, three categories of religious providers were particularly competitive: the ‘charismatics’, the ‘great laymen’ and those who viewed themselves as ‘enlightened’, usually known as Gnostics.

1. Ignatius of Antioch as *nomothète*

1.1. The mantra: ‘Do nothing without the bishop’

At some point in the second quarter of the 2nd century CE,[1] the Jesus-follower Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, sought to counter what he saw as the administrative and liturgical disorder of certain Christian groups in which ecclesiastical order was virtually non-existent. To this end, he writes to the Magnesians as follows:

> Since, then, I have *observed* [emphasis mine], by the eyes of faith, your entire congregation through those I have already mentioned, and loved it, I urge you to hasten to do all things in the harmony of God (ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ θεοῦ σπουδάζετε πάντα πράσσειν), with the bishop presiding in the place of God and the presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles, and the deacons, who are especially dear to me, entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ [...].
> *Magn.* 6.1.[2]

And to the Smyrneans:

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[1] On this ‘new dating’ to Hadrian’s reign, see for example Brent (2006, 318). For a *status quaestionis* on both authenticity and dating, see Brent (2007, 95–158).

[2] I use the English translation of Ehrman (2003). All other citations from Ignatius’ letters are from this version.

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> Let no one do anything involving the church without the bishop (Μηδεὶς χωρὶς ἐπισκόπου τι πρασσέτω τῶν ἀνηκόντων εἴς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν). Let that Eucharist be considered valid that occurs under the bishop or the one to whom he entrusts it. Let the congregation be wherever the bishop appears; just as wherever Jesus Christ is, there also is the universal church. It is not permitted either to baptize or to hold a love feast without the bishop (Οὐκ ἐξόν ἐστιν χωρὶς ἐπισκόπου οὔτε βαπτίζειν οὔτε ἀγάπην ποιεῖν). But whatever he approves is acceptable to God, so that everything you do should be secure and valid.
>
> *Smyrn.* 8:1; transl. slightly modified.

These are not descriptive texts, since they do not reproduce an existent historical-empirical reality. They point rather to the ought-to-be of the world to come, which is not satisfied by being uttered, but rather strives to become the medium through which the present world is at once perceived and valued (Squarcini 2012, 22). These openly prescriptive words help us to grasp how the bishop sought to achieve his dominant position as ruler of the ἐκκλησία essentially "by making the field in which a place could be found for him" (Bourdieu 1996, 76).

Ignatius of Antioch can be considered the 'legislator' (Bourdieu 1996, 62: 'nomothète') of the Christian religious field as socio-symbolic space whose key term is the slogan χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδέν, that is, "nothing without the bishop". The slogan summarises a collective struggle to transform a hitherto anomic and fluid space, criss-crossed by the efforts of a whole variety of different subjects to manipulate the sacred, into a structured universe of transactions and struggles between objectively related positions. By the same token, the bishop's presence will bring order and visibility to a confused and blurred socio-religious space: "Wherever the bishop appears, there let the congregation be"; for, as Ignatius puts it, the visible bishop represents the invisible Christ (*Magn.* 3.2).

This transformative visibility corresponds to the bishop's status at the pinnacle of a threefold structure of church government (bishop-priests-deacons).[3] For his 'vision' (cf. ἐθεώρησα) to become the sole legitimate standpoint – the very principle of 'seeing as Christians' as it were –, his view of the salvation-game must be diffused throughout the field. Optical metaphors aside, this means that the theocratic-messianic idea, namely that the Jesus-follower submits solely to an immediately apprehensible divine power that overwhelms any human power (Taubes 1987, 5), has now been tempered by the claim that the religious services provided by a single *ex officio* specialist have a unique value and privilege. The very enjoyment of Christian liberty consists thus in the practical recognition of this primacy implying religious submission to the bishop alone. In other words, the eschatological lordship of Jesus is in the process of being historicised and institutionalised in the primacy of the bishop, while the authority of the apostles can be used to cover the time in between.[4]

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[3] On Ignatius' "highly idiosyncratic view of Church Order", see Brent (2006, 23–30).

1.2. The ‘shamanistic complex’

“Χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν ποιεῖτε” is Ignatius’ pastoral mantra (see *Philad.* 7.2; also *Trall.* 2.2; *Smyrn.* 8.19). The claim is that the freedom acquired by the believer in Jesus can only be safeguarded by being transferred to the bishop as both provider of salvation-services and rights-holder:

> For when you are subject to the bishop (τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ ὑποτάσσησθε) as to Jesus Christ, you appear to me to live not in a human way but according to Jesus Christ, who died for us that you may escape dying by believing in his death. And so—as is already the case—you must not engage in any activity apart from the bishop (Ἀναγκαῖον οὖν ἐστίν, ὥσπερ ποιεῖτε, ἄνευ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου μηδὲν πράσσειν ὑμᾶς), but be subject also to the presbytery as to the apostles of Jesus Christ, our hope.
>
> *Trall.* 2.1–2.

The practical motto of the Jesus-like lifestyle is thus “that none may enter here!”, i.e. into the ecclesiastical space of eschatological freedom, without first being subject to the bishop by adhering to his vision of the salvation-game.[5] Who is the Christian? He who “do[es] [no]thing apart from him” (*Magn.* 4.1). How does the Christian think? As one with his bishop:

> For this reason it is fitting for you to run together in harmony with the mind of the bishop (συντρέχειν τῇ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου γνώμῃ), which is exactly what you are doing. For your presbytery, which is both worthy of the name and worthy of God, is attuned (συνήρμοσται) to the bishop as strings to the lyre. Therefore Jesus Christ is sung in your harmony and symphonic love (ἐν τῇ ὁμονοιᾳ ὑμῶν καὶ συμφώνῳ ἀγάπῃ). 2. And each of you should join the chorus, that by being symphonic in your harmony, taking up God’s pitch in unison, you may sing in one voice (Καὶ οἱ κατ’ ἄνδρα δὲ χορὸς γίνεσθε, ἵνα σύμφωνοι ὄντες ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ, χρῶμα θεοῦ λαβόντες ἐν ἑνότητι, ᾄδητε ἐν φωνῇ μιᾷ) through Jesus Christ to the Father, that he may both hear and recognize you through the things you do well, since you are members of his Son.
>
> *Eph.* 4.1–2; see also 20.2.

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[4] The idea of the apostolic succession is absent in Ignatius and first appears in Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3.3. On the ‘dead end’ of a position such as that taken by Papias of Hierapolis – i.e., a master-disciple transmission of charisma –, see Norelli (2005, 139–153).

[5] The citation is from Bourdieu (1996, 223).

The imposition of the monopoly of a symbolic power (here: religious authority) depends on the ability of the institution that claims it "to make known to those who are excluded from it the legitimacy of their exclusion" (Bourdieu 1991, 25). The work of transfiguration of the relations of religious production and subordination into euphonious chords of a choral melody helps to conceal – above all from the writer – "the arbitrariness of the monopolization of a power and a competence in principle accessible to anyone" (*ibid.*).[6]

Bourdieu takes over from Claude Lévi-Strauss what the latter called the 'shamanistic complex' (*ibid.*, p. 21). This can be defined as the "quasi magical circulation of powers in the course of which the group produces and projects the symbolic power that will be exercised upon itself and in the terms of which is constituted" (Lévi-Strauss 1963, 179). Applying Bourdieu's terms to Ignatius' text, unanimity between religious dominants and dominated is called the harmony (συμφωνία) of the church body, just as the concord (συναρμογή) among the dominants (i.e. the presbyteral college) is attuned to the bishop's will.[7] The overall effect is to efface the arbitrary character of the accumulation of both material and symbolic resources that is necessary for the construction of asymmetrical religious power. It is this effacement that allows the dominant point of view to establish itself in the dominated vision: "It is necessary, as your practice (ὥσπερ ποιεῖτε), to do nothing without the bishop"; or "it is right for you to run together with the purpose of the bishop, which you indeed do (ὅπερ καὶ ποιεῖτε)". As ancient epistolography attests, to urge others to do what they are already doing is a diplomatic means of asserting a certain type of demand, one whose legitimacy is accepted by both sides, but whose implementation is uncertain, or at least delicate (Shoedel 1985, 51).[8]

Some recent contributions relieve me of the task of sketching a brief genealogy of monespicopacy (see e.g. Stewart 2014). Nor do I intend to deal with the struggles within what Ignatius calls the presbytery (πρεσβυτέριον; see *Eph.* 4.1; *Trall.* 7.2; 13.2; *Philad.* 4; 5.2; *Smyrn.* 8.1), that is, the college of the clergy. I interpret here the inchoate clergy as a *body*, that is, as a collective agent, ruled by forces of fusion that unify its ranks and synchronise its movements within the competitive space of a broader Christian religious field. Consequently, this very social unit is not scrutinised as a *field*, that is, a social universe shaped by forces of fission arising from "the interests of the various members of the group [= of

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6 This is the mechanism that the young Bourdieu (1958, 453–458) traced back to the Sartrean concept of bad faith.

7 On ὁμόνοια as the principle of Church Unity, see Brent (2006, 296–308).

8 Schoedel (1985, 51) reports a parallel drawn from a private letter (*P.Freib.* 39). See also *1Thes*s. 4.1, which can hardly be considered a subtext.

the clergy], who may be more or less inclined to accept the common vision [= of the bishop] and more or less capable of imposing their ‘selfish’ point of view” (Bourdieu 1998, 70).

2. The Christian religious field: a brief sketch

2.1. The marketplace of Christian services and religious goods

In Ignatius’ view, the bishop must prevail over other providers of religious goods and services in some way related to the saving figure of Jesus of Nazareth, in order to establish both his own point of view and his specific religious capital within the growing symbolic market of Jesus-followers. As the emergent leader of the clergy – first *de facto* and then *de jure* –, the bishop must enforce his power in two different ways. He must first mark out and defend the boundaries of the field as he understands it, and then he must define the functions of the clergy, which involves entering into conflict with other religious agents over the leadership of the ἐκκλησία.

I have chosen to discuss three types of challengers to the emergent power of bishops on account of their significant positions within the Christian religious field. As in the case of the bishop, each of these categories of religious providers disposed of powerful resources in the competition for domination over the field. They are:

1. the charismatics, endowed with ecstatic-prophetic capital;
2. the great laymen, able to deploy ample social and economic capital;
3. the enlightened, claiming ontological capital signalled by ‘true knowledge’ achieved through discipline (hereafter termed ‘gnoseo-ontological’).

Note that my choice of the term ‘enlightened’ here deliberately avoids terms such as Gnostics and Gnosticism, which derive from the discourse of the ancient polemical texts and have subsequently been naturalised by modern scholarship based on standard theological assumptions, which until very recently simply reproduced the agenda of the ancient texts viewed as ‘sources’.[9]

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[9] See King 2003, and the contribution by Denzey Lewis in this volume (Chapter 3). Bentley Layton has suggested a radical nominalist position, using the term Gnostic only when the author of the text is supposed to apply the label to himself and the group: see Layton (1995, 334–350).

The following passages, read against the background of Ignatius' governmental project, provide an initial insight into these three different forms of challenge:

> The Lord has sent me as a partisan, revealer, and interpreter of this suffering, covenant, and promise. I am compelled to come to understand the knowledge of God whether I want to or not
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> Maximilla ap. Epiph. *haer.* 48.13.1.[10]

> "Believe us, Brother Peter", they [i.e., the brethren] said, "none among men was so wise as this Marcellus. All the widows who hoped in Christ took their refuge in him; all the orphans were fed by him. Will you know more, brother? All the poor called Marcellus their patron; his house was called the house of the pilgrims and poor. To him the emperor said, I will give you no office, lest you rob the provinces to benefit the Christians.
>
> *Acts Pet.* 8.1[11]

> Those whose name he knew in advance were called at the end, so that one who has knowledge is the one whose name the Father has uttered. For he whose name has not been spoken is ignorant. Indeed, how is one to hear if his name has not been called? For he who is ignorant until the end is a creature of oblivion, and he will vanish along with it. If not, how is it that these miserable ones have no name, (how is it that) they do not have the call? Therefore, if one has knowledge, he is from above. If he is called, he hears, he answers, and he turns to him who is calling 1 him, and ascends to him. And he knows in what manner he is called.
>
> *Gospel of Truth* [*NHC* I,3] 21.27–22.10.[12]

Both Maximilla, the co-leader of a prophetic and apocalyptic movement (the 'New Prophecy', i.e. Montanism), and the senator Marcellus, a fictitious character in the *Acts of Peter* – whom we can take as a representative of well-off and socially influential Jesus-followers –, believe in the authority and final jurisdiction of Christ just as Ignatius does.[13] This commitment matters to all three, the bishop, the prophetess and the wealthy patron. Yet, in the course of the second century CE, i.e. the period between the beginning of Ignatius' authoritative teaching and the composition of the *Acts of Peter*, a struggle has broken out in the main urban areas where organised Christian groups had established themselves. The conflict is about who has the authority to interpret the implications of Christ's lordship for believers' conduct. Who decides? Who interprets? (see Schmitt 1963).

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[10] Tr. Heine (1989).

[11] Tr. Elliott (1993). All other citations from the *Acts of Peter* are from this version.

[12] Tr. Attridge and MacRae (2000, vol. 1).

[13] As recognised, for example, in Paul's *Romans* and *1 Corinthians*. On Maximilla and Paul, see Trevett (1996, 130). On the familiarity of the *Acts of Peter* with the Pauline letters, see Thomas (2003, 28).

By contrast, the enlightened author of the third passage, taken from the Coptic *Gospel of Truth*,[14] seems to have neither a judicial-jurisdictional conception of the role of Jesus nor of the otherworldly order to which he belongs. As a superhuman agent sent to reveal a complete and all-encompassing salvific knowledge, Jesus does not dominate, reign, or rule; rather he teaches that where he comes from, which is also the place to which he aims to bring his disciples back, no one dominates or rules.[15] Messiahs who erase the law are all false messiahs. However, even though this Jesuology tones down messianic theocracy, including its peculiar scenario of a struggle for jurisdictional dominance over the world, its representatives – here, possibly, the Gnostic teacher Valentinus – are objectively involved in the struggle within the emergent Christian social universe; just as Ignatius, Maximilla and Marcellus are.

An alternative way of representing the situation might be to draw on the language of political economy: what kind of capital (A: juridical-divine and apostolic, B: ecstatic-prophetic, C: social and economic, D: gnoseo-ontological) is capable of endowing its owner (A: leaders of the ordained clergy, B: charismatics, C: great laymen, D: enlightened) with the right to occupy the dominant position in the new religious field?

2.2. Conflict with the charismatics

Since the time of Max Weber, it has become a truism that bishops prevailed over charismatics by enforcing and imposing the principle of the charisma of office over personal charisma as the basis for defining both those who are authorised to produce religious capital and the nature of religious capital itself as an institutionalised resource. Such precious capital, say the winners, must be in the hands of the mainstream clergy, above all the bishops, and cannot be allowed to float freely from one location to another.

The victory of the ordained clergy over the motley range of its extra-ordinary competitors – wandering prophets, inspired leaders of grouplets, martyrs and confessors claiming sacramental and disciplinary authority, etc. – is the outcome of a conflict that we can already see smouldering in some early prescriptive passages such as *Didaché* 12–13 and 15 (apparently written in Syria-Palestine and dated to the first half of 2nd century) between sedentary groups dependent on farming, with their hierarchy, and itinerant prophets, who rely on them for food.[16] Control of what we may with Foucault call the 'modes of veridiction' or the 'alethurgic forms'[17] of the charismatics, and so establishing the criteria for differentiating between true and false prophecy (προφητεία), distinguishing true from false possession (ἔκστασις) (Tabbernee 2007, 87–105), or even denouncing prophecy altogether (Trevett 1996, 65),[18] went hand in hand with the reinforcement of the bishop's ruling power by appeal to his own charisma of office. The institutionalisation of an ecclesiastical command-structure headed by elected officers was thus successfully combined with the charismatisation of the office. The rapid spread of ordination by the laying on of hands is clear evidence of this double strategy (Stewart-Sykes 2002, 124–125).

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[14] I choose the Valentinians as a prototype of the enlightened precisely on the account of the centrality of Jesus in their systems, by comparison with the so-called Sethian texts. On this point, see King (2003, 159) and Brakke, (2010, 102). I return to this issue below.

[15] On the monarchic representation of the divine Pleroma and the transcendent God, see Filoramo (2002, 198–199). An example is provided by Clement of Alexandria, *Exc. Theodot*. 72.2.

The conflict between ordinary organisation and extraordinary action, between banalising and de-banalising (Bourdieu 1991, 24) religious powers, is carried on by means of bans, excommunications and anathemas on the one hand, disavowals and schisms on the other. At the same time, in the case of early Christianity we can also discern the exchange relations and the strategic compromises by which the extra-ordinary could be incorporated into the dominant institution. In Bourdieu's view, both kinds of relations (competition and exchange) "constitute the principle of the dynamic of the religious field" (Bourdieu 1991, 17). I discuss two such cases here.

(1) To start with the relation of competition, one can see how, at some stage, measures to control 'pseudo-prophecy' came to be associated with strategies for safeguarding orthodoxy. Among the so-called architects of the Great Church, Irenaeus of Lyon provides a grotesquely distorted account of the prophetic performances of the Marcosian women:

> It appears probable enough that this man [i.e., Marcus, an 'enlightened' figure of the 'school' of Valentinus active in the Rhone valley][19] possesses a demon as his familiar spirit, by means of whom he seems able to prophesy (προφητεύειν δοκεῖ) and also enables as many as he counts worthy to be partakers of his *charis* themselves to prophesy (προφητεύ-

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[16] See Alikin (2010, 73); Niederwimmer (1989, 243).

[17] See Foucault (2011, 8 and 3): "Etymologically, alethurgy would be the production of truth, the act by which truth is manifested". The coinage was part of his late interest in 'le souci de la vérité'.

[18] See the vibrant protest in *Pass. Perp.* 1 and the rejection of the *Shepherd of Hermas* in the late second-century Roman *Muratorian Fragment*/*Kanon Muratori* (see e.g. Hahnemann 1992).

[19] On this figure, see Förster (1999).

> ειν ποιεῖ). He devotes himself especially to women, and those such as are well-bred, and elegantly attired, and of great wealth, whom he frequently seeks to draw after him, by addressing them in such seductive words as these [the quotation of the ritual formula for transmitting prophetic skills follows] […] She then, vainly puffed up and elated (χαυνωθεῖσα και κεπφωθεῖσα) by these words, and greatly excited in soul (διαθερμανθεῖσα τὴν ψυχήν) by the expectation that it is herself who is to prophesy, her heart beating violently from emotion, reaches the requisite pitch of audacity, and idly as well as impudently (κενῶς καὶ τολμηρῶς) utters some nonsense as it happens to occur to her, such as might be expected from one heated by an empty spirit… But such spirits as are commanded by these men, and speak when they desire it, are earthly and weak, audacious and impudent, sent forth by Satan for the seduction and perdition of those who do not hold fast that well-compacted faith which they received at first through the Church.
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> Iren. *haer.* 1.13.3 and 4.[20]

Rich women, suggests the bishop, have more than wealth. They are also ambitious and unrestrained, that is, inclined to vanity (Gr.: κεπφωθεῖσα;[21] the Latin version has *elata*) and shamelessness (Gr.: τολμηρῶς; Lat.: *audaciter*),[22] a trait that is typical of their class. They have the right amount of what Lenski has termed "status inconsistency" (Lenski 1961, 485 – 494) to arouse expectations about their own religious talent – especially if it is oriented towards one of the less gendered religious acts, namely prophecy.[23] The only antidote for this diabolical deception is to cling to the faith of the church, which is embodied and transmitted by ministers who teach that it is not possible to prophesy on command (*haer.* 1.13.4, ll. 69 – 73). It is not by chance that the most faithful women "have withdrawn from such a vile company of revellers" (ibid. ll. 65 – 69).

(2) The second area concerns the 'exchange relations' (Bourdieu 1991, 17) between ecclesiastical authorities and those endowed with extra-ordinary charismatic powers, including exorcists (on whom see Nicolotti 2011, 80 – 84) and, above all, confessors. Their enrolment as functional members of the clergy is clear evidence that religious capital can be unpacked and distributed among several different producers under the aegis of the bishop. The best example is per-

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[20] I use the version of Roberts and Donaldson (1995 [= 1885], vol. 1). All other citations from Irenaeus' treatise are from this translation.

[21] The verb κεπφόω literally means 'trap, ensnare' [κέπφος is the name of an unidentified, rather plump, bird that lived by shallow waters and was evidently easy to catch, cf. Arist., *Hist. an.* 8.35, 620a14 – 16]; the verb occurs almost exclusively in a metaphorical sense in the passive 'easily misled, ingenuous, light-minded'.

[22] Here transcribed and despised in sexual terms. Predictably, such a habit of 'rewarding' the grace received is mentioned (Iren. *haer.* 1.13.3, ll. 59 – 59). Förster (1999, 123 – 126) rightly expresses doubts about this representation of libertinage.

[23] With regard to early Christianity see Jensen (2003, 254 – 362).

haps the *modus operandi* of Cyprian of Carthage during and immediately after the Decian persecution (from May 250 to March 251).

To appreciate its subtlety, one must consider the context in which this strategy was adopted: on the one hand, there is the uncertainty regarding the penalties to be imposed on those who have sacrificed, on the other, we have the objective pastoral weakness of the bishop (who had himself fled) over against those who remained, had not sacrificed but actually been tortured, and are now visited in prison by 'fallen' and anxious believers. Having little room for manoeuvre, Cyprian opted for recognising the power of the charismatic intercession of martyrs and confessors concerning penance, reconciliation and readmission of the *lapsi* into the church. Yet, at the same time, he tried to limit the force of the concession in three ways: a) by limiting it formally to the recommendation of individual penitents (*nominatim*) and not groups (*ep.* 15.4), (b) by subordinating it to episcopal authorisation via the laying on of hands (*ep.* 15; 16; 17), and (c) linking it chronologically to the end of the persecution and the restoration of the Lord's peace (*pax domini*),[24] in order to allow him to return to Carthage and hold a synod on penitential matters (*ep.* 17.3.2; 20.3; 16.1.2; 33.2.1; etc).

Cyprian's interpretation of the Decian persecution as divine punishment (e.g. *ep.* 11) underpins the 'sociodicy' of the bishop's faction, insofar as it provides a means of re-affirming the religious 'good fortune' of the clergy.[25] The bishop is under pressure from two sides, on the one hand from the self-interested charismaticism of the *lapsi* and laxist priests, and on the other from the spiritual aristocracy and rigour of martyrs and confessors (Brent 2010, 10). Part of the bishop's strategy to secure his position is to assert his right to discharge and readmit apostates:

> For this the fallen can certainly be pardoned. Who would not, when dead, hasten to be brought to life? Who would not make speed to gain his own salvation? But it is the duty of the appointed leaders to adhere to the commandments and give instructions to both the hasty and the ignorant. Otherwise there is the danger that those who ought to be shepherds of their flock may become the butchers. To grant concessions which lead to destruction is to deceive. This is not the way to lift the fallen to his feet; rather, by offending God, he is being driven towards total ruin. And so let those who ought themselves to have been the teachers be taught at least by you [i.e., the confessors]. They should keep your petitions and requests for the bishop, awaiting the seasonable time (when peace has been restored)

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[24] Brent suggests (2010, 55–68) that we should view *pax domini* as the counterpart within the constitutional church of the traditional Roman *pax dei*.

[25] Bourdieu's claim that "*theodicies* are always *sociodicies*" (Bourdieu 1991, 16) is the result of applying the Weberian concept of theodicy differentially to different social groups.

> for granting the peace which you request. The mother needs first to receive peace from the Lord and then the question of peace for her son can be considered, in the way you desire.[26]

Cyprian is here grounding his claim to jurisdiction over penitential matters in a normative tradition that actually does not exist. A legal epistemologist would see a rule (*praeceptum*) being enforced here through its infraction. The rule of ecclesial readmission through episcopal reconciliation is historically and existentially second, but logically and theologically first (i.e. prior to the infraction that it sanctions): 'logically' because, according to a normative order, infraction is always the violation of an existing prohibition;[27] 'theologically' because, as the 'episcopal' Jesus of Nazareth claims, "the church is founded upon the bishops" (*ep.* 33.1; see also 59.4).

Anyway, once their 'religious capital' has been granted legitimacy, some confessors seem willing to recognise the fullness of a bishop's sacramental and disciplinary prerogatives.[28] Moreover, the rapid relaxation of the principle established in the synod of Carthage (Spring 251 CE) reduces 'the explicit price of entry' into the field still further (Bourdieu 2004, 50), in that reconciliation and immediate re-admission could be obtained by means of the 'minimum requirement' of public penance and episcopal blessing. A non-negotiable offer is made to all the charismatic positions deemed at odds with the main-line ecclesiological vision: either integration – under much more favourable conditions than before – or schism.

2.3. Competition with 'great laymen'

By 'great laymen' I mean the wealthiest, most powerful and influential members of the various local ἐκκλησίαι/*ecclesiae*, that is, people with a more or less extensive power of patronage. Some Latin sources occasionally call them *seniores* (e.g. Tert. *Apol.* 39.5; *Pass. Perp.* 12).[29] The tension was handled by making the 'principle of internal hierarchisation' prevail over the 'principle of external hierarchisation' (Bourdieu 1996, 217) in defining who was authorised to produce religious capital and distinguish in practical terms between producers and consumers of religious goods and services.

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[26] Cypr. *ep.* 15.2, tr. Clarke (1984, vol. 1). All other citations from Cyprian's letters are from this version.

[27] "Consequently it is not paradoxical to say that the abnormal, while logically second, is existentially first" (Canguilhem 1991, 243).

[28] According to Burns (2002, 22), most of them. The reference is to *ep.* 25.1.2.

[29] The question is much debated: see Stewart-Sykes (2002, 118 ff.).

It would be quite wrong to imagine that it was the loss of the traditional means of religious production experienced by a wealthy *paterfamilias* on becoming a Jesus-follower that ensured the dominance of the bishop over the high-status patron. For early on, and probably for many decades, ἐπίσκοποι and πρεσβύτεροι are found in charge of Jesus-groups inasmuch as they both organised and largely financed a domestic cult in which the patronage model was taken for granted.[30]

Yet, however much his religious capital may have derived from his activities as patron, the bishop's point of view could truly prevail only when the principle of the separation of the religious office from the candidate's economic and social assets came to be formally established. That is the point when the government of the church turned into a professional office, thereby evolving towards an autonomous status independent of any duties associated with the material support of the congregations (Stewart-Sykes 1991).[31] As they grew in size and number, such groups became more and more expensive to sponsor, so that, in the end, it is they who began to pay salaries to their own ministers.

The (ecclesio)logical foundations of this principle seem already to underlie the paraenetic discourse of the canonised *Pastoral Letters*, a single block of pseudonymous texts from Asia Minor possibly dating to the age of Hadrian (117–138 CE):

> Tell the rich in this world not to be arrogant and not to put their hope upon the uncertainty of wealth, but rather upon God who supplies us with all things richly for our enjoyment. Tell them to do good work, to be wealthy in noble deeds, to be generous in giving, to be sharers of possessions, thereby storing up for themselves a noble foundation for the future, so that they can lay hold of real life.
>
> *1Tim* 6:17–19.[32]

Under the name of Paul, the author of *1 Timothy* urges the rich to get rid of their own class pride (μὴ ὑψηλοφρονεῖν), to make their resources available and to place all their hopes (ἠλπικέναι) in the generous patronage of God by investing in the special fund (θεμέλιον) of future salvation. This call to surrender a portion of one's own assets for an eschatological profit – i.e. for the sake of a future

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30 On this aspect, see Maier (1991). On the role of patronage in the rise of monepiscopate, see Lampe (1989, esp. 334–345) and, in an opposite sense, Brent (1995, 409–412).

31 Yet, in Cyprian's Africa, where the bishop continues to operate as *patronus*, even the rite of ordination suggests a framework of patronage: see Stewart-Sykes (2002, 115–130).

32 Tr. Johnson (2001). All other citations from *1 Timothy* are from this version.

'treasure' (ἀποθησαυρίζοντας) – contains an implicit demand to turn economic capital into spiritual capital[33] ("be wealthy in noble deeds!") and possibly shows a first textual hint of the imposition of a specific conversion-rate of economic capital into religious capital.[34]

Theoretically, then, the aim of transferring some economic assets to the ἐκκλησία is to garner a treasure in heaven. Yet this does not exclude investing a fraction of this treasure in order to make a double 'profit' in this world, helping donors to increase their own spiritual capital and so reassert their social position within the religious group. In other words, spiritual capital, which is specifically associated with Christ's saving patronage of well-off Christian benefactors, can cover part of the cost of their ecclesiastical patronage; to gain the other part, one has to await the real life (τῆς ὄντως ζωῆς), that is, the afterlife. This deferral is not however compatible with hopes of – let alone claims to – church leadership strictly based on one's financial resources.

The author of *1 Timothy* separates the injunctions regarding the bishop from those for the rich, placing them in two different sections of the text (ἐπίσκοπος: *1Tim* 3:1–7; πλουσίοι: 6:17–19). This seems to indicate that for him the short-term convertibility of financial resources and social power into symbolic capital (gratitude, loyalty, prestige, even spiritual adequacy) is irrelevant to the right to dispense the goods of salvation and so to the legitimate exercise of religious power. Economic assets may become religious capital only if routed through the 'clearing house' of the clergy.[35] Those who date the letter after the middle of the second century are prepared to find throughout the text some allusions to Marcion, the shipowner from Pontus who, thanks to an initial donation of 200,000 sesterces (Tertullian, *Praescr.* 30.2), is supposed to have launched his own takeover bid for control over the unstable and contested Christian *regula fidei*.[36] One of these supposed references is precisely about deluded people who think that godliness is a means of financial gain:[37]

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[33] *Pace* Verter (2003), the non-Bourdieusian notion of 'spiritual capital' can hardly replace the original notion of 'religious capital'. Whereas the latter amounts to the legitimate authority to rule the group, the former may designate the set of religious competences, preferences, credentials and markers for distinguishing lay benefactor from the lay group of recipients.

[34] The flexibility of the conversion-rate is indicated by the not uncommon election to the rank of bishop by 'popular will' of some *honestiores* lacking ecclesiastical qualification, such as Fabianus in Rome (Euseb. *Hist eccl.* 6.29.2–3). As I stress below, even Cyprian of Carthage himself lacked specifically religious qualification (Pontius, *Vit. Cypr.* 5).

[35] I do not share L.W. Countryman's assumption that "in the *Pastorals*, the intent was clearly to co-opt such men into the clergy" (Countryman 1980, 167).

[36] See e.g. Hoffmann (1984, 287–288); Vinzent (2011, 125–127). A reference to Marcion's purchase of the Christian faith in *1Tim* 6 remains conjectural.

> If anyone teaches otherwise and does not attend to the healthy words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, that person is deluded, understanding nothing. Instead, he is sick from debates and controversies, from which come envy and strife and reviling speech, evil suspicions, the constant wrangling of people with corrupted minds. And defrauded from the truth, they think that godliness is a means of financial gain (νομιζόντων πορισμὸν εἶναι τὴν εὐσέβειαν).
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> *1Tim.* 6:3 – 6.

The general principle of the ideal independence of the authorised production of Christian religious goods and services from social and economic capital can be seen at work in the *Acts of Peter*, a text written in Asia Minor and dating from a few decades after the *Pastorals* (late second century CE). A work of popular religious propaganda, intended to promote but also reshape the role of Christian patrons, its basic message may be summarised as follows: No donor becomes a leader in the community (Stoops 1986, 95). All the well-off and well-adjusted characters of the story, starting with the senator Marcellus, whom I have already mentioned, are represented as unsteady, naive and unperceptive: they are disastrous as leaders, since they are liable to drag the whole group into the spiritual bankruptcy of heresy.[38] Some of Marcellus' clients are made to ascribe their 'apostasy' to the influence of Simon Magus over the senator:

> This, brother Peter, we know and report to you, now that the great benevolence of the man has been turned into blasphemy. For had he not been changed (*versatus non fuisset*) we certainly should not have left the holy faith in God our Lord. Now this Marcellus is enraged and repents of his good deeds and says, "So much wealth have I spent for such a long time in the foolish belief that I spent it for the knowledge of God."
>
> *Acts Pet.* 8.

Had Cyprian been like Marcellus, the history of Christianity in Africa would have taken a different turn. Between 248 and 249 CE, this man, a newly-converted but wealthy patron, was appointed bishop in Carthage by the vote of the 'whole people' (*populi universi suffragio*), but in reality with the endorsement of other influential benefactors and the acclamation of their numerous clients within the

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[37] Vinzent's much more expressive translation of the passage is "(people who) think religion should yield dividends" (Vinzent 2011, 127).

[38] See also the rich and "*honesta nimis in seculo hoc*" Eubula, who was swindled by Simon's men in Jerusalem (*Acts Pet.* 17).

Christian populace (*ep.* 59.6, but also 43.1:2; 5.4; Pontius, *Vit. Cypr.* 5).[39] Moreover, this bishop-*patronus* continued regularly to support the most needy of the congregation out of his own pocket (*de quantitate* [*su*]*a propria*) even after his flight to escape the Decian persecution (*ep.* 7.2; 13.7; 41.1 etc.), while the presbyters receive wage-like *sportulae* in the normal manner of clients (*ep.* 39.5.2).

In Carthage, then, the Christian religious field seems to have been shaped by the logic of patronage relations, such that the exchange between socio-economic capital (patronal power) and religious capital (episcopacy) appears highly favourable to the former. However, the competition between the bishop-*patronus* and other lay donors induced Cyprian to take a number of steps to professionalise the clergy and reduce its dependence on non-episcopal support. The three most important are: (a) the claim that episcopal election is an expression of popular *and* divine will (e.g. *ep.* 43.1; 67.4–5), (b) a deliberate recruitment strategy for the clergy (*ep.* 38; 39; 40), and (c) the establishment of a rudimentary *cursus honorum* (e.g. *ep.* 29). [40]

In general, all that ecclesiastical hierarchies needed to impose was a minimum threshold to hinder the conversion of social power into specifically religious leadership. They opposed the purchase of religious capital (i.e. what will be later be termed simony), since it negates the difference between patron and clergy by nullifying the religious labour of the latter. Another danger they perceived was that patronage might support the enemies of the faith, such as the misguided patrons of the *Acts of Peter*, or the alleged vanity of the rich women lured by Marcus the Valentinian and his followers (Iren. *haer.* 1.13.3).[41]

Despite such conflicts between socio-economic and religious power, early Christianity escaped becoming wholly proletarianised. To be sure, *mediocritas* would remain the “solid keel of the Christian congregations” (Brown 2012, 81) even in the fourth and fifth centuries, but was not incompatible with a growing number of wealthy individuals, even *egregii* and *clarissimi*. Religious hierarchies,

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39 For the initial donation to the poor, see Pontius, *Vit. Cypr.* 2. 7. On the semantic evolution of *suffragium* from the end of the Republic onwards, see still de Ste. Croix (1954, 33–48).

40 In this case it is a matter of appointing *presbyteri doctores* for the instruction of the catechumens and *lectores* to assist the priests involved in teaching.

41 Another example might be the case of case of Theodotus, the Roman money-lender who paid Natalius, a bishop of his ‘heresy’ (ἐπίσκοπος […] ταύτης τῆς αἱρέσεως) a salary of 150 denarii a month to take care of the group that followed his adoptionist doctrine, which had split off from the main congregation led by Zephyrinus (Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 5.28.8–10). On ‘disguised patronage’ see further Stoops (1986); Perkins (1995, 133).

fully aware of the value of a wealthy patron, never hesitated to procure possible benefactors for needy groups.[42]

For well-off people to be personally interested in church affairs, there needed to be a reliable trade-off between them and the clergy. The symbolic and material support provided by the 'great laymen' to the structures ruled by the religious hierarchy was rewarded by pastoral teachings and training in which the social order is barely questioned. Such teaching confined itself for the most part to a religious reassessment of private domination (over wives, children and slaves) and the role of *patronus* (vis-à-vis clients and subalterns in general). In *1Tim* 'Paul' claims that it is God's will that the proper asymmetry between slaves and masters be not upset, a position that encourages the mischievous metaphorisation of the conventional language of patronage:

> Let those who are slaves under a yoke regard their own masters as worthy of all respect, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be blasphemed. And those who have believers as masters should not despise them (μὴ καταφρονείτωσαν), because they are brothers. Rather they should serve them better (μᾶλλον δουλευέτωσαν), because those who are receiving their benefaction[43] are believers and beloved (ὅτι πιστοί εἰσιν καὶ ἀγαπητοὶ οἱ τῆς εὐεργεσίας ἀντιλαμβανόμενοι).
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> *1Tim* 6:1–2.

2.4. The struggle against the enlightened

We have seen that charismatics may be absorbed into the church, and the wealth of the great laymen co-opted to serve church structures for the common good. Yet there still remain some opponents who cannot be integrated by such strategies and even try to move the goalposts (see Bourdieu 1993, 134): they dispute the clergy's domination of the field, and refuse to accept the principles that are claimed to legitimate that dominance.

What these people seem to question is the very idea that ἐκκλησίαι/*ecclesiae* must be structured, organised and dominated by appeal to any type of socio-symbolic property, whether it be institutional grace, gift of the spirit, extraordinary resistance to intimidation and torture, wealth and social influence, skill in exegesis, family relationship to the founder. Their own mystic knowledge of the divine and its relation to the world is founded upon a different reading of (almost) the same series of cosmic and historical events from which the bishop draws his knowledge-power. This reading entitles them to downgrade clerical-episcopal authority, without claiming that they themselves are entitled to rule or concern themselves with visible leadership. While admitting the circulation of different Christian currencies, they in effect deny that such an admission legitimates any claim to definitive religious power.

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[42] See Lampe's reading of the apocalyptic paraenesis in *The Shepherd of Hermas* (Lampe 2003, 90–99).

[43] It is hard to agree that the author is here "using conventional shame/honour language in a manner subversive of the system itself" (Johnson 2001, 285). The exegetical dispute over the alternative between 'masters-as-benefactors' and 'slaves-as-benefactors' is old as the Vulgate and John Chrysostom.

The Valentinians, that is, the various disciples who understood themselves as influenced by the Egyptian master Valentinus (see Thomassen 2006), who was active in Rome between c.135 and 169 CE, considered ideological dissent regarding proper beliefs, experiences and conducts a natural fact, perhaps even an anthropological given.[44] They may even have looked upon such differences with some soteriological optimism and confident missionary zeal. Otherwise they would not have 'lovingly' (Lampe 2003, 388, also Brakke 2010, 115–119) mixed with the non-enlightened ('Psychic') groups of Jesus-followers in order to invite them to their own meetings and perhaps put them through a systematic course of instruction (Layton 1987, 306, referring to Ptolemy's *Letter to Flora* [ap. Epiph. *haer.* 33.3–7), as though they were infiltrating a class of promising students taught by an unsatisfactory master.

A few decades after Valentinus' failed attempt to become a bishop, Florinus, a former pupil of Polycarp but also one of these 'enlightened' individuals, took over one of the various congregations in Rome and became a priest.[45] According to Irenaeus, he taught doctrines that were incompatible with those of Bishop Victor and allegedly quite inappropriate for one holding a priestly office:

> These opinions, Florinus, that I may speak sparingly, do not belong to sound doctrine. These opinions, Florinus, do not reflect sound judgment. These opinions are inconsistent with the church, and bring those who believe them into the greatest impiety. These opinions not even the heretics outside the church (ἔξω τῆς ἐκκλησίας) ever dared to proclaim (Iren. *ep. Flor.*, ap. Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 5.20.4).[46]

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[44] What does being "inscribed in the book of the living" (*Gos. Truth* [*NHC* I,3] 21:4–5) imply exactly? Scholars have long disagreed over the nature of the predestination: see, e.g., Ménard (1972, 104) ("prédestination gnostique") *contra* Grobel (1960, 75) ("*ex post facto* predestination – where the *factum* is the acceptance of good news"). According to King (2003, 193), the *Gospel of Truth* posits that all humanity will be saved in the end. The *Tripartite Tractate* too anticipates the ultimate entrance of the Psychics into the pleroma (*Tri. Trac.* [*NHC* I,5] 123).

[45] Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 5.20.5–6.

[46] Transl. Kirsopp Lake (1926, vol. 1).

In the course of his teaching in a Valentinian 'community house' on the Via Latina Florinus expounded to the *illuminandi* the gospel of Valentinus, that is, the advanced version of the revelation. But when he worked with Victor and celebrated the Eucharist in the congregation of the 'Psychics', his teaching "resembl[ed] the doctrine of the faithful" (Iren. *haer.* 3.17.4), in full accordance with what Polycarp used to preach and Irenaeus now professes.

These 'enlightened' persons held to a triadic anthropology, optimistic soteriology, and a 'concentric', *soft* ecclesiology. Their view of religious knowledge-power did not include monopolistic claims on the government of congregations. Personal career plans did not imply exclusive rights to all church leaderships. This weakly-developed conception of governance was a serious challenge to those who, like Irenaeus, were intent on constructing and policing an institution tailored so that they might hold leading positions. Such a programmatic invisibility and indifference to institutionalised prominence, which blurred the ecclesiastical space of representation, was an affront to the church's emergent hierarchy. Their claimed 'gnoseo-ontological' capital infiltrated structures that hierarchs wished to control by means of juridico-apostolic capital. From Irenaeus' standpoint, these people were worse than enemies: they were false friends and deceivers.

The Valentinians thus gave improper answers to questions about representation, organisation, and the internal hierachisation.[47] How can the hierarchs combat those unwilling to show themselves, let alone fight? How were they to create a clear line of separation against those who actually tolerate different opinions, and in their own systems permit different visions and even different principles of vision (Dunderberg 2005, 94)? Valentinians did not even believe there was an 'outside the church' (ἔξω τῆς ἐκκλησίας), and thus rejected the use of descriptive tags and labels apart from 'Christians' (see *Gos. Phil.* [*NHC* II,3] 52:24; 62:31; 64:25; 67:26). Perhaps they did not even care much about those who decided to defect: "Make steady the feet of those who have stumbled and stretch out your hands to those who are sick [...] Focus your attention upon yourselves. Do not focus your attention upon others, that is, ones whom you have expelled" (*Gospel of Truth* 33.1–3 and 12–15).[48] Such a struggle required a new discursive formation, a unique ‘regulatory scheme’ (Le Boulluec 1985, 1:15–16) capable of generating a specific set of enunciative strategies aimed at detecting and suppressing doctrinal dissent. In other words, it required a new device and a new engine: ‘heresy’.[49]

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[47] On a probable Valentinian text such as the *Apocryphon of James* (*NHC* I,2), see Rouleau (1987, 17–22).

[48] I follow here the version of Layton (1987) rather than Attridge and MacRae, who translate: "do not be concerned with *other things* which you have rejected from yourselves" (italics mine). Orlandi too thinks the Coptic word *hnkaye* ('others') refers to people rather than things: Orlandi (1992, 67).

Of course, I do not claim that heresy and heresiology were invented to neutralise precisely this ‘enlightened’ view of church order. In fact, as Irenaeus says of his predecessors, “they did not know enough about their systems”,[50] and so their attacks failed to hit home. Indeed, the inventor of heresy, Justin (Martyr) of Neapolis, probably did not include the followers of Valentinus among the heretics until his last work, the *Dialogue with Trypho* (Lampe 2003, 390; more cautiously, Dunderberg 2005, 77).[51] As a universal *passe-partout* for decoding division by emphasising differences, heresy was as yet the only weapon capable of warding off the challenge launched by such a spiritual elite, whose centrifugalism mocked the identitarian narcissism championed by the leaders of the Great Church.

When he writes that Valentinian doctrine is the *recapitulatio […] omnium haereticorum* (*haer.* 4 *praef.* 2), Irenaeus is suggesting that the ontogeny of this particular species of heretic sums up the entire phylogeny of the genre. Target and device virtually overlap. Although it fits the excesses of the charismatics and the claims of some great laymen to specifically religious capital, the heresiological frame is particularly associated with the Great Church’s wrestling with the ‘enlightened’ and their subtle strategies of recruitment. Other forms of control were simply too crude for the intellectual skills of these masters.[52] They too could cite apostolic authorities and traditions (Koester 1987, 1–16);[53] they too were unquestionably skilled exegetes of biblical texts; they were careful not to challenge the principle of internal hierarchy for defining the legitimate producers of religious capital; they could speak of the Biblical creator in a non-dismissive and even sympathetic manner – at any rate, not more slightingly than other people who championed updating his legislation by means of revelation (Layton 1987, 306).

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[49] Le Boulluec (1985, 1:88) rightly uses the word *artifice*, defined by the Petit Robert as “moyen habile, ingénieux”.

[50] ....*ignorabant regulam ipsorum:* Iren. *haer.* 4 *praef.* 2.

[51] Valentinus is not mentioned among the heresiarchs in *1Apol.* 1.26; while the Valentinian Ptolemy even receives praise: see *2Apol.* 2.9–11. Although Justin’s character has often been identified with Valentinus’ pupil, the case cannot be proven.

[52] This is probably true for Valentinus, Heracleon, Ptolemy, Florinus, Theodotus. Conversely, it may not be pure chance that Marcus’ group is called θίασος not σχολή at Iren. *haer.* 1.13.4.

[53] At some point, the Valentinians began to link Valentinus with Paul via some intermediate figures like Teuda or Glaucia, who are however unknown to us (see Clem. Al. *Strom.* 7.106.4). In his *Letter,* Ptolemy tells Flora to be “worthy of the apostolic tradition (τῆς ἀποστολικῆς παραδόσεως), which even we have received by apostolic succession (ἐκ διαδοχῆς)” (ap. Epiph. *haer.* 33.7.9).

What we might term the heresiological software re-set and re-organised the scattered incriminating evidence within an epistemologically ironclad framework. Repeatable and consistent, it recontextualised new and old polemical motifs as statements of properly (heresiological) subjects, objects, concepts and themes (Le Boulluec 1985 following Foucault 1969).[54] This technique of updating and optimising the programme made it possible to reveal things hitherto unremarked and which, until a few years before, had never even been heard of. It was thus that the ‘wrong-doing and false-telling’ of the ‘enlightened’ could be successfully unmasked and fought off.

Once identified on Irenaeus’ heresiographical radar-screen, Florinus was apparently kicked out by his own bishop (Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 5.15) and his works suppressed. Exclusion, however, was not the only method at hand: systematic depreciatory ‘interpellations’ could work as well. It does not really matter, Judith Butler argues, if the addressee of the interpellation does not respond to or protest against the name-calling. “Indifferent to protests, the force of interpellation continues to work” and, as the following passage of Tertullian clearly attests, constitute the subject “at a distance from her/himself”:[55]

> We know, I say, most fully their actual origin, and we are quite aware why we call them Valentinians, although they affect to disavow their name (*Valentinianos appellemus, licet non esse videantur*). They have departed, it is true, from their founder, yet their origin is by no means destroyed; and even if it chance to be changed, the very change bears testimony to the fact (*testatio est ipsa mutatio*) (Tert. *Adv. Valent.* 4.1).[56]

3. Concluding remarks

I have identified three main strategies by means of which a Christian religious field favourable to bishops was constructed and the particular ‘economy of symbolic goods’ we know as early Christianity was shaped and institutionalised.

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[54] Le Boulluec singles out two pivotal themes in the original programme: “L’un de ces thèmes dérive de l’historiographie grecque appliquée à la description des courants de pensée. L’autre reprend une tradition chrétienne aux fores diverses, celle de l’origine démoniaque des querelles, qui s’est édifiée principalement autour de la figure du faux prophète” (Le Boulluec 1985, 1:110).

[55] Butler (1997, 33).

Tr. Roberts and Donaldson (1995 [= 1885], vol. 3/3).

These are: a) the imposition of institutional charisma; (b) the assertion of the autonomy of specifically religious power as against other socially-legitimate forms of influence; and (c) the elaboration of heresy as a toolkit for producing exclusion from dissent and turning similarity into otherness. In every market, the objective possibilities of profit rest on the creation of collective expectations matching the intentions of certain producers. A non-economic or, more precisely, an 'anti-economic' market such as the religious field, however, requires the denial of interest and calculation by both producers and consumers. To put the point somewhat differently, the collective misrecognition of the true nature of the religious exchange – that its 'social logic' consists in the asymmetrical exchange of religious goods and services – cannot be allowed to become common knowledge (Bourdieu 2000, 192).[57]

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[57] "This anti-economic economy (using the restricted modern sense of 'economic') is based on the denial (*Verneinung*) of interest and calculation or, more precisely, on a collective labour devoted to maintaining misrecognition with a view to perpetuating a collective faith in the universal, which is simply a form of individual and collective bad faith (in the Sartrean sense of lying to oneself)" (Bourdieu 2000, 192).

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Part IV: **‘Written on the Body’**

Anja Klöckner

Tertium genus? Representations of religious practitioners in the cult of Magna Mater*

The representations of practitioners in the cult of Magna Mater/Cybele hold a special position in Roman imperial imagery. The male images in particular exhibit characteristic somatic features and types of clothing as well as striking attributes, connected to certain rituals, religious duties or to the expertise of divination. The images oscillate indeterminately between genders. The effect is to contruct a *tertium genus* by visual means. It seems that this marked otherness was chosen deliberately as a pictorial scheme to accommodate the specific religious status of the cult of Magna Mater and its practitioners.

The cult of Magna Mater featured many elements which would have been perceived as strange and exotic, such as shrill music, intensive smells and ecstatic dances, in the course of which the participants whipped themselves in frenzy.[1] We may assume that contemporaries also viewed the sexual status of some of the cult-functionaries, the *galli*, as ambivalent. They were believed to follow their mythological prototype, Attis, by castrating themselves.

The literary tradition offers surprisingly many references to *galli*.[2] Their tenor however is monotonous, for they play unsubtle variations on a familiar stereotype: by deliberately emasculating themselves, *galli* renounced their procreative capacity and altered their physical appearance, thereby acquiring an ambivalent gender-status and sexual identity. They thus literally embody their specialised relation with the divine; their religious role, once chosen, irrevocably determines

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[1] See e.g. *Anth. Pal.* 6.234.

[2] Sanders (1972) has collected most of the relevant material.

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their individuality and their social status. They are effete, perfumed creatures wearing flamboyant garments;[3] they make a mockery of themselves, follow deviant sexual practices and thus exist on the margins of normal society.[4] These stereotypical claims were often applied to other functionaries in the cult of Magna Mater, irrespective of their specific office.

Even today, one can still find such factoids more or less unquestioningly repeated. Yet most of the 'sources' in question are highly polemical or ironic perceptions by others, not by the subjects themselves. Yet there are some personal testimonies by functionaries in the cult that do give us some idea of their self-image or self-perception, namely images commissioned by themselves or by their relatives.[5] Their distribution is striking: with one exception, all are from Italy, indeed mainly from Rome and Ostia.[6]

Yet this evidence, which derives mostly from funerary contexts, has for the most part been interpreted exclusively in the light of the literary sources.[7] As a result, they are generally read quite staightforwardly as 'illustrations' of the stereotype: they are supposed to show the protagonists as feminised, taking Attis as their role-model.[8] Such interpretations, which ignore a number of typological and iconographic elements of these images, makethe mistake of *attributing meaning* to them rather than *deducing information* from them. Even the criteria for distinguishing between different religious offices are often very vague. Hence, most of the images in question have been considered indiscriminately as representations of ‘priests’ (*sacerdotes*), of *galli*, and/or of *archigalli*. An informed analysis of these visual media is still a desideratum.

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[3] See e.g. *Anth. Pal.* 6.219; August. *De civ. D.* 7.26; Juv. *Sat.* 6.511–521.

[4] Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.19; Lucr. 2.610–28; Ov. *Fast.* 4.179–90; Sen. *Vit. beat.* 26.8; Val. Max. 7.7.6. See also the expression in one of the new *defixiones* from the joint temple of Isis and Mater Magna in Mainz: *ita uti galli Bellonarive absciderunt concideruntve ... nec ... in numero hominum sunt: AE* 2005: 1126 ll.3–5 = Blänsdorf 2012, 97–105 no.6. Some of these texts list the 'followers of Bellona' (*Bellonarii*) and, in one case (*AE* 2005: 1123 ll.10, 12 = Blänsdorf 2012, 64–75 no. 2), *magali* (a new term) alongside the *galli,* cf. Blänsdorf 2012, 13 and 70 f.

[5] I use the somewhat clumsy term 'functionaries' for these cult-personnel, since there is so much uncertainty about the status of the *galli* – can we properly refer to them as 'officials', which would be the obvious alternative? My original choice, 'participants', might apply to any worshipper, whereas I am concerned here only with individuals who held some sort of recognised rank or station within the cult, excluding *dendrophori* and *cannophori.* Like other contributors to this volume, I have not felt able to satisfy the desire of the Lived Ancient Religion group to avoid the traditional term 'cult', although I accept that it may under certain circumstances be misleading. Moreover, I have sometimes felt forced to fall back on the adjective 'Metroac', which is an ugly Gallicism, but is sometimes difficult to avoid.

[6] The tomb-reliefs from Phrygia, whose interpretation is controversial, cannot be discussed here; see Cremer (1986); Koch (1990, 120–121); Rumscheid (2000, 86).

[7] E.g. Helbig (1966); Beard (1996); Hales (2002); Mekacher (2005); Sbriglione (2012).

[8] See e.g. Hales (2002); Mekacher (2005, 97).

In this paper, the relevant images are interpreted against the background of contemporary imagery: what is emphasised? What deviations from the norm are present? What are their semantic connotations? What iconographic modes and markers are used to depict these individuals and their religious and social roles? How do they communicate their standing in the public realm (at any rate, insofar as funerary representations count as such)? My starting assumption is that the pictorial language of the imperial period was not limited to simple dichotomies such as Roman/exotic or male/female, but was capable of expressing an elaborate set of different meanings.[9]

1. Images with an inscription that explicitly links the monument to the cult of Magna Mater

There are in all just four such monuments that can definitely be assigned to the cult-personnel of Magna Mater. All derive from a funerary context, and all bear a portrait or likeness of the deceased.[10] The inscriptions carefully record the religious offices or cult functions held. To take the two women first: Laberia Felicla was *sacerdos maxima matris deum m(agnae) I(daeae)*, high priestess of the Great Mother of the Gods of Mt. Ida (cat. no. 11 in the Appendix below).[11] This is the only certain portrait of a priestess of Magna Mater.[12] Whereas this relief is quite well-known, the ash-urn of the *tympanistria* Culcia Metropolis (no. 5) is often ignored, due to its conventional decoration.[13] Drums were an important part of the musical offering in the cult of the Great Mother of the Gods. As for the men, L. Valerius Fyrmus (no. 12) was *sacerdos Isidis Ostensis* (sic) *et Matris deum transtiberinae*, priest of Isis in Ostia and of the Mother of the Gods in her sanctuary 'across the Tiber', i.e. in what is today known as Trastevere.[14] The fourth item, the funerary relief of C. Iulius Bassus (no. 13), has not hitherto been mentioned in this context. Friederike Sinn ingeniously complemented the missing lower left edge of the altar with a fragment, which, although lost, is preserved in a drawing.[15] Now the inscription is fully restored[16] and we know not only the names of the deceased and the commissioner, namely Bassus and M. Aquilius Primigenius, but also the religious office of Bassus: he was *archigallus Tusculanorum*.[17]

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[9] Beard (1996); Varner (2008); Birk (2010).

[10] For some grave monuments on behalf of cult personnel of Magna Mater from Rome and its environs *without* an image of the deceased, see e. g. the funerary of C. Camerius Crescens, *archigallus Matris deum magnae Idaeae et Attis populi Romani*, and his *liberti* now in the Vatican Museums: *CIL* VI 2183 = *ILS* 4161 = Vermaseren (1977, 69 – 70 no. 261) = Mekacher (2005, 99 no. 98); the funerary of Iulius Charelampes, *sacerdos Matri<s> deum coloniae Ostiensium: CIL* XIV 4627 = *ILS* 9509 = Vermaseren (1977a, 132 no. 420), who, according to his (half-)brother, Calpurnius Iovinus, who was responsible for the monument, led the March procession of the *dendrophori* nineteen times (*induxit arbores XVIIII*). For votives dedicated by *archigalli*, see e. g. the two marble bases of Q. Caecilius Fuscus, *archigallus coloniae Ost(i)ensis: CIL* XIV 34 – 35 = *ILS* 4111 – 12 =Vermaseren (1977a, 125 – 126 no. 401 – 402); and the famous *modius* of the *archigallus* M. Modius Maxximus from Ostia: *CIL* XIV 385 = *ILS* 4162 = Vermaseren (1977a, 123 – 124 no. 395) = Rieger (2004, 146 – 147; 282 no. MM 4 fig. 119).

[11] *CIL* VI 2257 = *ILS* 4160 = Vermaseren (1977a, 67 no. 258). Beside her is an altar showing an eagle. On priestesses of Magna Mater in general, see van Haeperen (2011, 471 – 473).

All four of these objects were found in Rome (nos. 11 and 13) or Ostia/Portus (nos. 5 and 12); only in two cases do we know at least something about their original setting in a necropolis (nos. 5 and 13).[18] The altar of Fyrmus (no. 12) is the earliest example in our group (second half of the first century CE), followed by the ash-urn of Culcia (no. 5), dating from the reign of Hadrian. The reliefs of Laberia Felicla and Bassus were made around 150 CE (no. 11) or slightly later (no. 13).

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[12] The seated statue in Malibu, J. Paul Getty Museum 57 AA 19 (Wrede 1981, 220 – 221 cat. no. 78 pl. 9,3), which portrays a Roman matron dressed as Magna Mater/Cybele, is surely to be understood as a *consecratio in formam deorum*, but not necessarily as a priestess.

[13] *AE* 1940: 131 = *IPOstie* A92 = Vermaseren (1977a, no. 444) = Sinn (1987, no. 542) = Helttula (2007, 211–212 no. 182): *D(is) M(anibus). Culciae / Metropoli / tympanistriae / M(atris) D(eum) M(agnae) utriusq(ue) / portus*. On musicians in the cult of Magna Mater, note van Haeperen (2011, 475).

[14] *CIL* XIV 429: *L. Valerius L. fil(ius) Fyrmus / sacerdos Isidis Ostens(is) / et M(atris) d(eum) tra (n)stib(erinae) fec(it) sibi*. On male priests of Magna Mater, see van Haeperen (2011, 471–473). On the sanctuary of Magna Mater *transtiberinum,* so far known only through epigraphy, see Meiggs (1973, 366); Rieger (2004, 299 *MM 84); Steuernagel (2004, 78; 237). Against recent arguments that it is to be identified with the Vatican shrine, Erpetti (2009, 201–202) argues that it must have been situated near Ostia. On cult-officials both of Isis and Magna Mater: Vidman (1970, 140); and for the cult of Isis in Ostia, Steuernagel (2004, 212–227).

[15] Sinn (1991, 43–45).

[16] *CIL* VI 19875: *D.M. / C. Iulio Basso / M. Aquilius / Primigenius / [...]bernali suo b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit) / [...] vix(it) ann(os) XXXI / [...]usculanor(um)*. The fragmentary relief was found before 1867. The missing lower left edge with the inscription was found seperatedly in 1894. Borsari (1895: 104) gives a sketch of the fragment. It was read in *CIL* VI 32466 as: [...] / ỊỊ[...] / *coniu be*[...] / *cum quo vi*[...] / *archigallo Tus*[...] / *et sibi*. Friederike Sinn recognised that *CIL* VI 19875 + 32466 belong together. She convincingly argues that the fourth letter in the second line of the fragmented lower left edge has been misread as I. It should be read as T. Therefore the relevant word is not *coniugi*, but *contubernali*. Combining *CIL* VI 19875 + 32466, the inscription can be restored as: *D(is) M(anibus) / C. Iulio Basso / M. Aquilius / Primigenius / contubernali suo b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit) / cum quo vix(it) an(nos) XXXI / archigallo Tusculanor(um) / et sibi*. On the relation between C. Iulius Bassus and M. Aquilius Primigenius see below, § 3.4.

[17] On *archigalli*, see van Haeperen (2011, 473–474).

Turning now to the ways in which these religious officials are represented or, in one case (no. 12: *fecit sibi*), had himself represented. In the case of the *tympanistria* Culcia Metropolis (no. 5), the inscription alone refers to her role within the cult of Magna Mater.[19] The decoration of the ash-urn includes no iconographic elements connected to the cult. The same is true of her rather inconspicuous image, a modest bust in front of a sea shell, supported by two cupids. The cupids, the shell, and the doves in the pediment connect the deceased rather to the sphere of Venus, following the conventional codes of praising female virtues.[20]

The relief of Laberia Felicla (no. 11), on the other hand, shows her as a respected matron, as beautiful as Venus, dutifully performing pious service. Images like this were familiar for the Roman viewer: offering and praying women belong to the standard repertoire of contemporary imagery, often used in a rather generic way as a formula of *pietas*.[21] In her case, however, the iconography does evoke Laberia Felicla's role as a religious professional. Like Culcia, she is shown in front of a large sea shell, but in her case the trunk is depicted, at any rate from the hips. She pours wine onto a small altar from a patera held in her right, and with her left hand she holds up a laurel garland. She wears a sleeved garment under a *tunica*.[22] A mantle is draped around her waist in a bulge and falls down over her left forearm. The back of her head is covered, though the published photographs do not allow a decision between a mantle or a veil. *Vittae* (woollen head-bands) hang down to her breasts. She wears a necklace with a pendant apparently in the form of the bust of a bearded god, probably Jupiter. Such images, worn as ornament on the breast, are often mentioned in literary sources as typical for religious functionaries in the cult of Magna Mater.[23] Like Galatea, the priestess of Isis on a nearly-contemporary funerary relief,[24] Felicla is depicted with specific garments and attributes, which are associated with the cult she serves (long sleeved *tunica*, pendant shaped like a bust) and with the sacral sphere in general (*vittae*, *patera*, altar).

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[18] See the relevant catalogue-entries in the Appendix below.

[19] See n. 12 above.

[20] For female portraits framed by a sea-shell see e. g. the relief of Felicla (no. 12) or, without any connection to the cult of Magna Mater, a funerary relief in Rome, Villa Albani inv. no. 179: Wrede (1990, 19 fig. 5).

[21] Alexandridis (2004, 74–81).

[22] Contrast Vermaseren (1977a, 68): "She is wearing a sleeved chiton and a himation".

[23] Hdt. 4.76; Polyb. 21.6–7. On the pectoral/*prosthetidion* see Graillot (1912, 237; 298); Sanders (1972, 1021–1022); Müller (2006).

The images of Laberia Felicla (no. 11) and Culcia (no. 5) refer to their religious offices by means of inscriptions and attributes. Overall, however, they conform to the standard representations of women. By contrast, the representations of the two male functionaries differ quite markedly from standard representations of males.

Lucius Valerius Fyrmus (no. 12) is wearing a girded *tunica* with a long *kolpos*, for which there are some parallels in sepulchral imagery.[25] His long mantle is secured by a brooch on the right shoulder, for which there are likewise parallels in funerary contexts.[26] However, his *anaxyrides* and his headdress[27] – a tall hat whose crown is bent forward, and with side-flaps hitched up above the ears – are quite unfamiliar in such contexts: Roman citizens are never depicted in this way on their tomb-altars. In contemporary imagery the combination of these motifs is used to assert an origin from, or to evoke the idea of, Asia Minor.

Fyrmus acted as *sacerdos* of Isis as well as of Magna Mater. Attributes such as the lotus flowers and the ritual vessels may refer to the cult of the first, while the *flagellum* (whip) in his right hand clearly alludes to the rituals performed for the latter. The bird on the right border may be a cock, but we should not take this as a play on the word *gallus*, since Fyrmus explicitly calls himself a *sacerdos*.[28] It is to be read rather as a reference to the cult in general, where depictions of cocks are common enough: figurines of cocks, for example, were used as votives.[29]

However, whereas the attributes are related both to Isis and to Magna Mater, the image of Fyrmus emphasises his relation to the latter. He is not depicted with a shaven head, which would be typical for Isis priests, but wears an eye-catching pointed hat, which no doubt alludes to the Phrygian *mitra*, which was worn by some Metroac cult officials.[30]

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[24] Musei Vaticani, Museo Pio Clementino, Loggia Scoperta, inv. no. 840 (ca. 150 CE): Spinola (1999, 174 no. 2).

[25] Cf. e.g. the tomb-altar of Q. Flavius Criton and his son Q. Fl. Proculus, *miles cohortis XII urbanae* (*CIL* VI 2911), now in the Museo Gregoriano Profano (Vatican): Sinn (1991, 72–73 no. 39 figs. 116–117).

[26] See below.

[27] It is a great pity that Fyrmus's face (no. 10) is damaged, since he was probably depicted as clean shaven. In the second half of the first century CE, however, this fashion was standard in male portraiture and the absence of a beard has no special connotation.

[28] Contrast Vermaseren (1977a, 133): Fyrmus is "unquestionably a *gallus*".

[29] See e.g. the terracotta figurine of a cock from the temple of Magna Mater on the Palatine: Vermaseren (1977a, 27 no. 126 with pl. 126).

If the image of Fyrmus can be said to be unusual thanks to its combination of clothing, cult-utensils and attributes, the relief of the *archigallus* C. Iulius Bassus (no. 13) must have struck a contemporary viewer as bizarre. Like L. Valerius Fyrmus, Bassus bears the *tria nomina* – that is, like other *archigalli*, he was a Roman citizen.[31] However, his image is strikingly different from the standard male portrait, not only of Roman citizens, but of any social stratum.

The image is framed by two flaming torches. The mask of a lion, the animal-companion of Magna Mater, is depicted above Bassus' left shoulder. The right hand is raised in a gesture of adoration, while the left is lowered and holds a *patera*. His garments cannot be identified completely, since the relief shows only the upper trunk from the waist. But he clearly wears some kind of mantle above his *tunica,* which falls loosely forward over both shoulders. Such drapery is not usual in the case of male subjects.

In contrast to Fyrmus (no. 12), Bassus is not wearing a hat but a hair-veil, which covers the back of his head and falls down behind his shoulders, secured by a head-band with an ornament at the front. Such items are highly unusual in male portraits. Equally striking is the fact that the hair is covered completely, for even priestesses such as the Vestals are depicted with the hairline visible, despite their elaborate headdresses and lavish *infulae*.[32] Another remarkable feature of this relief is the fact that Bassus' face is beardless, for since the time of Hadrian a well-groomed beard belongs to the typical features of male representation in visual art. I return to this point later.

Now we have examined these four examples (nos. 5, 11–13), which are explicitly linked to the cult of Magna Mater by the epigraphy, I turn to a further group whose iconography hints at a connection with Magna Mater.

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[30] Juv. 6.511–521.

[31] On the citizenship of *archigalli* Van Haeperen (2011, 474). It cannot however be excluded that he was a Junian Latin, since the mere *tria nomina* tell us little about precise legal status.

[32] See e.g. the well preserved statue in the Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Altemps, inv. no. 639: Fittschen and Zanker (1983, 92–93 cat. no. 134 pl. 160). On the headdress of the Vestal Virgins, see Siebert (1995); Mekacher (2006, 44–49).

2. Images assigned to the cult of Magna Mater solely through iconography

There are eight such monuments in all. Seven of these come from Rome or its immediate environs: the city itself (nos. 8–9), Ostia (nos. 2–4 and 6) and near Lanuvium (no. 10). Only one example, that from Caesarea (Iol) in Mauretania Caesariensis (no. 1), derives from outside Latium.

The earliest of this group, the famous relief in the Centrale Montemartini (no. 10), is Hadrianic. The statue in the Musei Capitolini (no. 9) dates from the Late Antonine period, while the bust in the Musei Capitolini (no. 8), the sarcophagus lid (no. 2) and two reliefs (nos. 3–4) from Ostia are all of third century date (the latter indeed from the second half). The latest in date, from Caesarea, has been dated to c.400 CE (no. 1).

I take first the figure of a recumbent man on a sarcophagus lid from the necropolis of Isola Sacra (no. 2). His garment shows many features we have already discussed. He lies supine on a *kline*, which is covered with a cushion and a sheet, with his head supported by his left hand and his left leg bent. By his feet stands a round *cista* 'mystica' of the kind found on no. 10 (see below). Like Fyrmus (no. 12), he is fully dressed in shoes, *anaxyrides* (trousers) and a long sleeved *tunica* like that of Laberia Felicla (no. 11), but in this case with a fringed bottom hem and a sash. As in the case of Bassus (no. 13), he has a mantle draped over both shoulders. His headwear is only partially preserved; the lower edge is clearly separated from the hair by deep drilling. This, together with its erect appearance, suggests a crown.[33] The pine branch in his right hand alludes to the myth and the cult of Attis.

There is at least one ring on each finger of his left hand (supporting the head), but not the thumb.[34] The right wrist bears a large bracelet with a representation of the goddess seated on a throne. Two rather late inscriptions mention such bracelets (Lat. *occabus*) as a regular part of the *insignia* of *sacerdotes Matris Magnae*.[35] On that basis, we can assume the deceased to have been a *sacerdos*.[36]

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[33] Compare Vermaseren (1977a, 141); Rumscheid (2ß000, 56–57).

[34] There are several literary references to heavy use of jewellery by functionaries in the cult of Magna Mater, e.g. *Anth. Pal.* 7.709.3; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 36.13; *Rhet. Her.* 4.49.62. Rings decorated with Metroac images have been found in the Eastern Mediterranean, cf. Naumann (1983, 276 cat. nos. 662–664). We can take them to have been typical ornaments in the cult.

[35] The only inscriptions that refer to the *occabus* plus crown as the typical insignia of *sacerdotes Matris Magnae* are *CIL* X 3698 (Cumae) and *CIL* XIII 1751 = *ILS* 4131 (Lugdunum), both

Vermaseren argued that this monument intentionally alludes to figures of recumbent Attis, such as the famous statue donated by C. Cartilius Euplus to the *Campus Matris* by the Porta Laurentiana in Ostia,[37] or another well-known relief from the town.[38] They belong to a small group of images of the reclining god.[39] On the other hand, this recumbent position is very common in funerary contexts, so that one wuld have expected an allusion to Attis to be clearly signalled, which they are not. Images of reclining Attis and our figure have hardly anything in common apart from the outstretched legs: posture, positioning of the arms and the upper body, as well as the clothing, are all significantly different. Moreover the deceased is portrayed as mature if not actually elderly, which seems hardly reconcilable with the youthful god.

Two smaller reliefs were found in the necropolis of Isola Sacra (nos. 3 – 4) at the same time as the sarcophagus-lid. One of these shows a man standing in front of a statue of Attis, with a torch in each hand. The other relief apparently depicts the same person[40] offering incense on a *thymiaterion* before a statue of Magna Mater seated on a throne. Both figures wear identical clothing: *calcei*, *toga contabulata*[41] and *tunica manicata*. The main attributes too are the same: on both reliefs the man has not only an *occabus* around his right wrist but also a crown with busts of Magna Mater and Attis on his head. There is archaeological evidence for such crowns in the Metroac cult.[42]

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mid-third century CE. See also van Haeperen (2011, 472). On priestly gear in the cult of Magna Mater, see also Rieger (2007, 94 – 97).

[36] So Rieger (2004, 146). Most writers take him to be an *archigallus*, e. g. Calza (1932); Vermaseren (1977a, 140 – 141 no. 446 and 1977b, 100); Helbig (1972, 12 – 14: *archigallus coloniae Ostiensis*). More cautiously, Sbriglione (2012, no. 2.3): *archigallus*, *gallus* or other servant of the goddess.

[37] Vatican, inv. no. 10785: Vermaseren (1977ª, 123 no. 394 pl. 244); Vermaseren (1977b, 61 with pl. 44); Vermaseren and de Boer (1986, 36 no. 312*); *Imperium der Götter* (2013, 108), etc.

[38] Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 163: Vermaseren (1977, 119 no. 384 pl. 239 a); Vermaseren and de Boer (1986, 37 no. 316*).

[39] Vermaseren and de Boer (1986, 36 – 37 no. 312*-324) collect a dozen images of reclining Attis.

[40] Most scholars have identified him as an *archigallus*, e. g. Vermaseren (1977a, 141 – 142 nos. 447 – 448); Vermaseren and de Boer (1986, 27 no. 96*); Delgado (2005, 139 no. 253*); Helbig (1972, 12 – 14) calls him *archigallus coloniae Ostiensis*; Sbriglione (2012, no. 2.4) *gallus* or *archigallus*. Rieger (2004, 146) contents herself with calling him a high-ranking priest.

[41] Goette (1990, 59 – 60; 146 no. 122) identified the garment as a *toga contabulata*, but his view has hitherto been ignored.

[42] See e. g. a crown with protomai of Attis and Cybele (second or third century CE): Berlin, Antikensammlung der Staatlichen Museen zu Berlin, inv. misc. 8169, illustrated in colour in: *Imperium der Götter* (2013, 98). For the pairing of crown and *occabus* as priestly insignia, see n. 35 above.

Guido Calza's suggestion that the figures on the reliefs represent the same person as the sarcophagus lid has now assumed the status of a factoid.[43] It is, however, far from certain. The facial features are quite similar, but this is due to the so-called 'Zeitgesicht', that is, the current workshop-conventions for representing faces. And an *occabus* on the right wrist is an insufficient basis for claiming identity. We should instead stress the differences, notably in the clothing: the priest in the sacrificial reliefs is depicted as *togatus*, quite unlike the man on the lid, whose mantle is draped around both shoulders with a fringe and a sash.[44] In other words, these monuments are in some ways similar but do not necessarily represent the same person.

The clothing connects the reliefs from Ostia with a statue of a *togatus* from Caesarea Mauretaniae (no. 1), which is our only example that does not derive from Rome and its environs. Since it was found not in a necropolis but within the city area, it may have been a dedication or a statue erected in public space, but this is far from certain. The statue represents a beardless man standing close to an altar. A drawing of the year 1856 indicates that the left hand, now missing, held a round container, possibly an *acerra* used for holding incense.[45] Like the sacrificant on no. 4, the statue is clad in a garment looped over the left arm.[46] The *lacinia* (tip clearly indicates that the garment is the short *toga contabulata* that becomes usual in late antiquity.[47] However, while the draping of the garment is not unusual, a belt above a *toga* is, so far as I know, unparalleled for men – belts are only typical on female sculptures.[48] The statue also features *calcei* and a laurel wreath. Since the right arm is missing from the biceps down, we cannot decide if the figure once wore an *occabus*.[49] The surviving evidence suggests the figure is wearing a *tunica manicata* beneath the toga.

The long knotted *infulae* reaching down from the back of his head over his shoulders and right down to below his knees remind us of Felicla (no. 11). The rendering of the hair is unusual: short strands are shown under the wreath, not unfamiliar in male portraits of this time,[50] but the hair on top of the head is shown in a so-called 'Melonenfrisur', a typical style for women.[51]

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[43] Calza (1932). A factoid is an idea or claim or that, through frequent repetition by those who know no better, has assumed the status of truth.

[44] Goette (1990, 59–60. 146 no. 22); *contra* Helbig (1972, 12–14 no. 3003), Steuernagel (2004, 238).

[45] Cf. the relief from Ostia (no. 4): the *togatus* is offering on a *thymiaterion*.

[46] For this motif see also the relief of Felicla (no. 11).

[47] Müller (2008, 665) however thinks he is wearing a *tunica manicata* and a *pallium*.

[48] I know of only one other example of a male figure wearing such a girdle, namely a grave relief from Ostia showing a boy with an 'Isis curl' wearing a belt above his toga, see Goette (1990, 73 n. 361a); Landwehr (2008, 71 Beilage 3d).

[49] On both of the reliefs from Isola Sacra, the long sleeved *tunica* more or less touches the upper rim of the *occabus*.

We turn now to three examples which are linked together by the flamboyant dress-code of the individuals depicted (nos. 8 – 10).

A bust of the third century CE, found in Rome, shows a beardless male (no. 8). Its original function is unclear, but it may have been the upper part of a tomb-altar.[52] Both the right hand raised in a gesture of adoration and the (upper) garment recall the relief of Bassus (no. 13). The figure wears a long sleeved *tunica*,[53] a mantle draped loosely over both shoulders, a hair-veil and *infulae*. Unlike the case with Bassus, the hair is not covered completely, for there are two thin strands of hair showing beneath the headwear and reaching down to the cheeks, which is highly unusual for male portraits. The most significant difference from Bassus, however, is the rich jewellery adorning the headwear, the neck, the chest, the finger and the forearms. The pendant on the *torques* shows a bust of Magna Mater,[54] so both ornament and its decoration evoke her. The fingers of both hands are covered in rings. The decoration on the lost object in his left, perhaps a *flagellum*, which shows an altar flanked by two lions, likewise evokes Magna Mater. There can thus be no doubt that the bust represents a functionary in this specific cult, even if his religious office can not be specified precisely.[55] The same is true of the following sculptures.

A slightly over-life-sized statue, found without the head in Rome in the 17th century and restored then as an Attis, dates from the late Antonine period (no. 9). In fact, as the *flagellum* on his left arm makes clear, it represents a cult-functionary of Magna Mater.[56] Like nos. 2, 8 and 13, he wears an over-mantle loosely draped over both shoulders. The hemline of the garment beneath his left elbow suggests we are dealing with a distinct piece of clothing which was worn in addition to the garment draped around the hips. The over-mantle was not drawn over the head, but ended at the neck. It is not possible to say whether there was a hair-veil. Around his neck, the man wears a necklace made of astragals and a *torques*. Below it, there hang two circular medallions and a large metal pedimented plaque decorated with images of Magna Mater and Attis.

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[50] As Landwehr (2008, 99 n. 2) points out, it is difficult to tell whether the strands are falling down or are combed upwards. In her opinion, the image shows short strands falling over the forehead.

[51] For Attis making his long hair filthy as he goes mad, see Ov. *Fast*. 4.238: *longaque in immundo pulvere tracta coma est*, cf. *iactatis … comis* (244), explicitly referring to the *galli*.

[52] Cf. e.g. the funerary altar of P. Albius Memor: Boschung (1987, 87 no. 317 pl. 8).

[53] Although the available photos make it impossible to be sure, it looks as though he is wearing two garments, one over the other.

[54] The goddess is wearing typical attributes: a mural crown and a circular pectoral. The winged Eros, who is flying towards her, is rather unusual in the iconography of Magna Mater. The same is true for Atargatis – Dea Syria. *Contra Pietrangeli* (1951, 19 – 20); Fittschen and Zanker (2014, 80).

[55] Pietrangeli (1951, 19 – 20 no. 28 pl. 3): priest of Atargatis; Vermaseren (1977: 65 – 66 no. 250): *gallus*; Mekacher (2005: 98): 'stadtrömischer Gallus'; Simon (1997, 763 no. 123): *archigallus*; Sbriglione (2012, no. 3): *gallus* or *archigallus* (?); Fittschen and Zanker (2014, 79 – 80 no. 72 pl. 91): priestess or priest of an oriental cult (Atargatis – Dea Syria?).

The next case, a well-known Hadrianic relief showing the upper trunk of an unbearded man (no. 10), is rather similar.[57] The breast ornament, however, which is decorated with an image of Attis, is considerably smaller than those we have already noted. Like the reclining figure on the sarcophagus lid (no. 2) and Laberia Felicla (no. 11), this man wears a long sleeved *tunica* and a garment hung around his waist. As in the case of nos. 8–9 above, he wears a *torques*, in this case with lion-head finials, and, finally, a kind of jewellery we have not seen before, namely large ear-rings.

Long knotted *infulae*, as in the case of nos. 1 and 11, descend from the hair to the chest. He wears a head-veil with a broad band to which three large circular medallions are attached, the central one figuring a bust of Jupiter, while the two lateral ones show a bust of Attis, in three-quarter view, looking towards the spectator. In contrast to the relief of Bassus (no. 13) and the bust (no. 8), where the veil and the headband covered the hair, his hair can be seen falling in waves from the centre parting, just as we find in contemporary female hair-styles.[58]

In his right hand the figure holds up a poppyseed-capsule from which three laurel twigs emerge (perhaps a form of *aspergillum*). In his left, he has a bowl of fruits, including a pine cone. A horrid-looking *flagellum* with a handle ornamented top and bottom with a head of Jupiter hangs over his left shoulder, with numerous astragals knotted into all three leather straps. In the panel to the spectator's right, various cult objects and attributes of Magna Mater are depicted, from top to bottom a *tympanum*, crossed *auloi*, one curved the other straight, and a *cista* with pyramidal lid represented as hanging from a peg. On the other side, in the upper left corner of the relief, a small pair of *cymbala* is shown above the laurel twigs.

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[56] E. Simon in: Helbig (1966, 31–32 cat. no. 1183): priest; Mekacher (2005, 99–100 no. 103): 'stadtrömischer Gallus'; Vermaseren (1977, 64–65 no. 249); Simon (1997, 762 no. 121): *archigallus*; Sbriglione (2012, no. 2): Attis?, in the odd belief that the inscription is antique.

[57] On the male characteristics of this image, see below. Identifications vary: Vermaseren (1977, 153 no. 466): 'priest'; Helbig (1966: 29–30 no. 1176) and Rumscheid (2000: 54): *gallus*; Mekacher (2005: 99 no. 102): 'local *gallus*'. Simon (1997: 762–3 no. 122*) and Fittschen and Zanker (2014: 108): '*archigallus*'.

[58] On comparable female portraits Fittschen and Zanker (2014: 108 n.3). On female hairstyles worn by male Metroac cult practitioners, see n.49 above.

Our last example in this group, a statue found in a funerary context in Ostia (no. 6), is unpublished and I can only refer to the one brief description that has been published.[59] The head is lost, but the wrinkled neck indicates that the person depicted was elderly. A band of astragals in the left hand and a fragmentary *flagellum* on the left shoulder make the connection to the cult of Magna Mater obvious. The clothing is described as a '*peplos*', though in the absence of a photo its identification has to remain open. Nevertheless the very choice of the term indicates that the statue is not wearing a toga or any typical male garment, but a form of dress characteristic of women.

3. The imagery of Metroac cult-functionaries – a conspectus

3.1. Contexts

It is most unfortunate that we know virtually nothing about the original context either of these or the other grave monuments of these cult-functionaries.[60] There are hints, however, that at least some tombs were situated side by side or at least close to each other. The sarcophagus lid (no. 2) and the two reliefs from the necropolis of Isola Sacra (nos. 3–4) were found together at the Via Severiana. The grave inscriptions of Salonia Euterpe, *sacerdos* of Magna Mater in Portus, and M. Cutius Rusticus, flute-player in the same cult, are inscribed side by side on a single marble slab.[61] An *ager religiosorum* is documented in Quarto/Campo flegreo (now part of Naples), conceivably for the *religiosi* of the Metroac cult.[62] These hints allow the inference that, at any rate in some cases, the grave monuments bear a relationship to one another, thus creating a form of in-group communication, even if they were also visible to all visitors to the necropolis.

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[59] Helbig (1966: 32): "Eine unveröffentlichte Statue eines Eunuchenpriesters der Magna Mater/Cybele, im Peplos, mit Astragalkette in der Linken und den Resten einer Geißel (mit Löwenköpfen …) an der linken Schulter, befindet sich im Magazin des Museums von Ostia. Der Kopf ist nicht erhalten (wohl aber der faltige Halsansatz), deshalb wurde der Cybelepriester bisher nicht erkannt. Nach dem Fundort handelt es sich um eine Grabstatue".

[60] We can surely exclude the so-called 'Catterick gallus' (see n.74 below) from consideration here.

[61] *CIL* XIV 408 = Vermaseren (1977a: 139 no. 442). Two funerary monuments of *fanatici* of Bellona, a cult related to that of the Magna Mater (see n. 4 above), were found close by one another, namely the relief of L. Lartius Anthus, *cistophorus* of Bellona Pulvinensis (see n.63 below) and the funerary of Q. Caelius Apollinaris, *fanaticus* of the same goddess (*CIL* VI 2232 = *ILS* 4181): Fittschen and Zanker (2014, 109 n. 1).

If we now review all this imagery, the most obvious conclusion is that the cult-functionaries are not represented uniformly. As the ash-urn of the *tympanistria* Culcia Metropolis shows (no. 5), functionaries in the cult could name their religious office in the inscription, but at the same time prefer a conventional portrait. The alternative, as our other examples show, was to draw upon a recognised set of characteristic features, which appear repeatedly though none of them is invariably present.

3.2. Features and clothing

These attributes will by now be familiar to the reader. They include *infulae* and *vittae* (nos. 1, 10 – 11), *flagellum* (nos. 6, 8?, 9 – 10, 12), torches (nos. 3 and 13), *cymbala* and *tympanum* (no. 10). Many of our subjects are wearing rich ornaments, such as *corona* (nos. 2 – 4), diadem (no. 13), ear-rings (no. 10), *torques* (nos. 8 – 10), a pectoral (nos. 8 – 11), the *occabus* (nos. 2 – 4), bracelets (no. 8) or rings (nos. 2 and 8).

Some images can be linked on account of a similar attitude or gesture (nos. 8 and 13) or because of their clothing. Trousers appear twice (nos. 2 and 12). In three cases, the subject wears a *toga contabulata* (nos. 1, 3 – 4). Distinctive clothing patterns include the mantle draped symmetrically over both shoulders (nos. 2, 8 – 9, 13) as well as hair-veils (nos. 8, 10, 11?, 13).

Despite the iconographic and typological variations between these images, the male functionaries have one feature in common, at least where the head survives: they are all beardless. As I have already mentioned, this can be classified as a ‘strong’ iconographic marker of difference. Since the time of Hadrian, the standard representation of a Roman male shows him bearded, so that depicting a male without a beard had a specific semantics. The hairlessness of Isiac priests, for example, evokes the ritual shaving of the cranium and face. As for the male functionaries in the cult of Magna Mater, beardlessness may allude to the hormonal consequences of the eviration.[63] It makes no material difference whether the subjects in reality had no beard, i.e. were indeed eunuchs, or employed the feature to make a symbolic statement about their 'true' status.

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[62] *CIL* X 1894 = Vermaseren (1978, 9 no. 16). However, the funeraries of this section of the Campo flegreo, which were collected by Camodeca (1980: 87 – 99), reveal no other possibly relevant cases. For a *religiosus* of Magna Mater at Larinum (Reg. II), who erected a funerary for himself and a *sacerdos* of Mater Magna, his *patronus* (though the *gentilicia* are different), see *CIL* IX 734 = *ILS* 4170 (Dessau thought the two inscriptions might be related) = Vermaseren (1978, 42 no. 105). See also Steuernagel (2004, 239 with n.1229).

3.3. Religious offices

In the case of four of our images, an inscription explicitly states the religious office of the deceased. This is of little help to me here, since three of them show no iconographical overlap with the more interesting cases in my § 2: the image of the *tympanistria* Culcia Metropolis is completely conventional, and the images of Laberia Felicla (*sacerdos maxima*) and L. Valerius Fyrmus (*sacerdos*) are share some attributes with those in § 2. Only the *archigallus* C. Iulius Bassus (no. 13) shares distinctive features (hair-veil and headwear) with two other images in that group (nos. 8 and 10).

However the iconographic elements allow us to specify the religious office of the subjects only to a certain degree. The pectoral is typical of the Metroac cult, but the literary sources do not state explicitly that it was specific to a certain religious office. On the other hand, the epigraphic evidence does seem to confirm that *occabus* and *corona* were, or came to be, the *insignia* of *sacerdotes* in the cult.[64] This would mean that we could identify three individuals who are wearing *occabus* and *corona* as priests (nos. 2–4). Although this is indeed plausible, we should bear in mind that the only certain image of a *sacerdos* (L. Valerius Fyrmus, no. 12) displays neither the *occabus* nor the *corona*. The obvious inference is that the iconography of Metroac *sacerdotes* was not fixed but varied both in time and space.[65]

There is however one specific ritual expertise that seems to be visualised in the monuments. The *archigallus* Bassus (no. 13) is depicted with huge eyes. The same is true, to a lesser degree, of the *togatus* from Caesarea (no. 1) and the individual on the relief from Lanuvium (no. 10). Since divination played an important role in the cult of Magna Mater,[66] these wide-open eyes may perhaps be read as a reference to prophetic power. But I think it rather unlikely that such monuments were made for ordinary *galli*, as has often been suggested. Not only is this group of functionaries almost completely absent from the religious epigraphy, not one funerary inscription identifies the deceased as a *gallus*.[67] Given their life-style, we should not expect that *galli* were in a position to order expensive grave monuments or that such monuments were set up on their behalf – they simply did not have the money required for such outlays.

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[63] In this context the image of L. Lartius Anthus (see n.61), which is in many ways similar, is quite revealing, since he sports a beard: Fittschen and Zanker (2014, 108–110 no. 111 pls. 115–116). Though *fanatici* thrashed themselves till the blood came, they were not required to be castrated.

[64] See n.35 above.

[65] No. 12, which dates to Neronian-Flavian times, is from Rome, whereas nos. 2–4 are from Isola Sacra. All three however seem to date from the third century CE.

In sum, while it is clear we cannot classify the subject's cult-role in every case, there are a few characteristics that allow us to differentiate between them. A well-known wall painting from Pompeii (no. 7) may help us to understand the modes of differentiation better. It does not belong to our group of representations commissioned by the functionaries themselves or their relatives. We do not know if the person who commissioned the painting had a specific relation to the Magna Mater cult. What makes the image relevant for us is the fact that it shows many Metroac cult-functionaries in a narrative context.

The painting was produced shortly before 79 CE. It depicts a procession in honour of Magna Mater. The cult-statue of the goddess is being carried through the streets, followed by her entourage. Slightly to the right of centre of the image, we see a male in a representative *toga* who is clearly foregrounded as the main officiant. Two persons in short white tunicas are standing to his right, one playing the 'double-flute'. Behind these three, there are several men, crowded together, all dressed in long, loose, colourful garments, whom we may identify as *galli.*[68]. To the right of the painting, four men are standing by the statue on its *ferculum*, about to lift it up. Each one holds a long, thin carrying strap. Their clothes recall those of Fyrmus (no. 12). Although it seems unlikely that they are wearing *anaxyrides*, their belted tunics with wide *kolpos* and the draping of the mantle are quite similar.

This wall-painting shows clearly that specific functions and roles in the cult of Magna Mater could be differentiated by visual means: musicians are depicted with short tunics and *galli* probably with coloured garments. In the context of our funerary representations, it is also relevant that *togati* could play an important part in processions, and that the men whose duty it was to carry the divine image could be rendered in a similar fashion to the *sacerdos* Fyrmus.[69]

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[66] Van Haeperen (2011, 483 – 484). *Galli* and *archigalli* practised divination as well.

[67] Van Haeperen (2011, 476). Quite apart from their absence from funerary inscriptions, *galli* hardly appear as benefactors or as dedicators of votives.

[68] On the literary evidence for the garments worn by *galli*, see n.3 above.

3.4. Male/female semantics

If we cannot establish a clear cut typology, it is nevertheless true that the images display an abundant iconography, which evokes specific semantic fields. Striking attributes such as the pectoral, the *anaxyrides* or the *torques*, and objects such as the *flagellum*, are items clearly connoted as foreign, un-Roman. We also find details highly unusual for male images in a representative context, namely the beardless faces, the hairstyles, and the exceptional garments, veils, *infulae* and jewellery.

Some images, such as those of the *sacerdos* Fyrmus or the three *togati* from Ostia (nos. 2–4, 12), which seem also to represent priests, do not emphasise feminine characteristics even though the subjects are unbearded. On the other hand, in other cases almost every iconographic element seems to be out of place for the representation of a man. This is true of the funerary relief of Bassus (no. 13), the relief from Lanuvium (no. 10), the bust (no. 8) and the statue from the Capitol (no. 9). The clothing of the unpublished statue from Ostia (no. 6) seems also to be characteristically female. The statue from Caesarea (no. 1) also belongs to this group, since the subject is clad in the *toga contabulata*, but also wears *infulae*[70] and a belt around the waist, which is quite unparalleled for adult male *togati*. Moreover, it combines male and female elements in the coiffure by combining a 'Melonenfrisur' with short hair above the forehead. At least one of these cases is explicitly stated to represent an *archigallus* (C. Iulius Bassus, no. 13), whose large eyes, as we have seen, probably indicate his ritual expertise in divination. The same is true of two other items in the group (nos. 1 and 10). On the basis of these iconographic similarities, I would urge that these other examples (1, 6, 9, 8–10) are to be understood as *archigalli* too.

The crucial question now concerns the relation between the social discourse about these functionaries and the images we possess. As everyone knows, the literary discourse of imperial Rome mocked the 'feminine' behaviour and attire of Metroac cult-functionaries. The images are therefore often read as depictions of effete eunuchs dressed in women's garments, as representations of crossdressers. But in my view the sheer variety of detail shows that it is simplistic to read these monuments as mere visualisations of prejudices known from literary sources. These subjects, or their friends, are making their own specific choices of how to represent themselves in the public realm.

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[69] Van Haeperen notes that in the literary tradition both *galli* and *sacerdotes* may carry the divine image (2011, 471–472; 484).

[70] Landwehr (2008, 97) points out that *infulae* were used in various cults, but that it is mainly priestesses who are depicted with this attribute.

One striking example is the well-known relief from Lanuvium (no. 10). We can usefully contrast this image of a male cult-official with that of a female one, Laberia Felicla (no. 11), since they are comparable in terms of date, origin, size and quality. The two individuals are shown wearing similar clothing and attributes, for example, long sleeves, hair-veil and *infula*e. All of these features, together with the beardless face[71] and the striking hairstyle, are highly unusual for contemporary depictions of men. Nevertheless, it would be too simple to conclude that the person is represented ‘as a woman’. Neither the facial nor the bodily features nor the garment are really ‘feminine’. Take the physiognomy, which has often been described as effeminate: the hairless cheeks may appear soft, but other elements of the face are not to be found in contemporary female portraits. Women’s noses are usually thinner,[72] the eyes smaller, the foreheads smoother. Jug-ears are completely out of place for female portraits, whereas the ears of this subject protrude in an extreme fashion. As for the clothing, there are no analogies in either female or male clothing to the way the mantle is draped in several layers tightly around the waist. The bagginess of the *tunica* folds may suggest a certain fullness of the upper trunk, but there is no indication of bulging breasts, as it would be the case with female figures.[73] Women are not typically represented wearing a long-sleeved *tunica*; the man’s sleeves are longer than those of Felicla, and the seam at the wrist is folded back to form a sort of ruff. And while Felicla’s *tunica* has a rolling, slightly overlapping neckline, that from Lanuvium has a straight V-neck.

In contrast to Felicla, the subject on the relief from Lanuvium is wearing several different kinds of body-ornament in addition to the pendant on his breast. Besides the *torques* round the neck and the headwear with the three medallions, it is especially the earrings which have prompted modern scholars to think he is represented 'as a woman'. The point of representing the subject with protruding ears was to evidently to emphasise the earrings to the viewer. On the other hand, jewellery is not at all a characteristic female attribute on funerary and votive monuments in the imperial period, nor is it common in actual burials.[74] At any rate as far as Italy is concerned, women are rarely depicted wearing rings, earrings or necklaces.[75] For the contemporary viewer, images showing jewellery had rather a geographical connotation than a gender-specific one: they were seen as characteristic of the eastern part of the Empire.[76]

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[71] Soft facial features and venus rings are also cited as evidence for the alleged female characterisation. This is methodologically problematic: before wearing a beard became fashionable in the early second century CE, unbearded men with no connection to the cult of Magna Mater whatsoever were depicted with very similar features, e. g. the funerary relief of L. Licinius Peregrinus (*BCAR* 1985, 434; now Rome, Musei Capitolini, Museo Nuovo Capitolino: Arachne no. 16257; not in Helbig).

[72] The bust of a young woman with a thickened nose in Rome, Museo Capitolino inv. no. 201 is a rare exception: Fittschen and Zanker (1983, 76 – 77 no. 100 pl. 125 – 127).

[73] This absence is indicated by the fact that the fold runs straight down from the shoulder without indicating a bulge.

To sum up: the relief from Lanuvium would have been potentially unsettling for a contemporary viewer because the subject jars against expectations both of male and of female representation. The subjects represented in this and my other examples (nos. 1, 6, 8–10, 13) can be said to 'oscillate' between genders, being represented deliberately in accordance neither with conventional male nor female iconography but so as to display a certain ambiguity of gender characteristics. They are represented in a manner way strikingly different from conventional iconography, a manner that is appropriate only for them, members of a *tertium genus*. Such ambivalence is paralleled in some imperial literature, where eunuchs are viewed not as men but not as women either.[77]

Although the elusive status of eunuchs usually evokes moralising disgust in literature,[78] the imagery, for obvious reasons, refers to it affirmatively. For they had been commissioned by the depicted themselves or by people sympathetic to them. They were meant as representative images with a positive connotation. The alterity of these representations is related to the religious offices of the protagonists and to their sociocultural standing, reflecting the specific personal circumstances of the functionaries in the cult of Magna Mater. There were married men among the *sacerdotes*,[79] but *galli* and *archigalli*, castrated or not, were always unmarried.[80] They lived in groups together with other cult members; some, however, lived alone or as a male couple. The conventional Roman family was not an option for them.[81] The case of the *archigallus* Bassus (no. 13) shows clearly how a nonconformist life-style found its expression in funerary representation. His relief was commissioned by his *contubernalis* M. Aquilius Primigenius. As the two inscriptions tell us, they had lived together for 31 years. Such an open reference to a non-conjugal, probably homosexual,[82] relationship, is rare on Roman funerary monuments. Both image and text thus refer to a special way of life closely connected to the religious role of the subject.[83]

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[74] In the case of a burial of the fourth century CE at Cataractonium (Catterick, Britannia), the male skeleton was wearing a rich jet necklace, a jet bead bracelet, a shale armlet and a copper-alloy anklet: Wilson (2002, 1:176–178 fig. 95, on grave 951 with skeleton 952). Two stones had been placed in the mouth of the deceased. It has been suggested that the burial might be that of a devotee of Magna Mater: Wilson (2002, 2:41–42). Other male burials with single pieces of jewellery are known from Roman Britain, but none with such a variety of objects: Wilson *ibid.*

[75] Alexandridis (2004, 71–74). See e.g. the portraits on the sarcophagi Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 1522 (c.200–250 CE); Rome, Museo Barracco inv. no. 245 (late Constantine period): Fittschen and Zanker (2014, 163–164 no. 189 pl. 168).

[76] Krumeich (2001); Alexandridis (2004, 72). For male portraits with earrings, see Krumeich (forthcoming 2016). On mummy portraits, women are often adorned with jewellery: Borg (1996, 167); and likewise on Palmyrenian reliefs, especially from the beginning of the third century CE, see e.g. Munich, Glyptothek inv. no. 470: Fuchs (2002, 52–53 no. 13 fig. 16).

[77] E.g. Prudent. *Perist*. 10.1071–73: *uterque sexus sanctitati displicet; medium retentat inter alternum genus: mas esse cessat ille nec fit femina*; August. *De civ. D.* 7.24: *hic ita amputatur virilitas, ut nec convertatur in feminam nec vir relinquatur.*

[78] E.g. SHA *Alex. Sev.* 23.7: *tertium genus eunuchos esse dicebat*. See also Tert. *Ad nat*. 1.20.4; Val. Max. 7.7.6; Juv. 6.513: *semivir*; *Anth. Pal.* 6.219. See Sanders (1972, 1024. 1030); Murray (2000, 301); Cordier (2002); Rieger (2004, 167).

This role, as well as the life-style, of Bassus and other such functionaries was highly distinctive. Carefully chosen 'deviant' images achieve a specific aim in this context, reflecting as they do the specific religious status of the Metroac cult-functionaries, especially that of *archigalli*, and their ambiguous gender-status.

4. Conclusion

The monuments discussed here show the readiness and ability of the protagonists and their relatives to take account of their unusual representational needs by creating extraordinary images. Moreover they show that such innovations in iconography are bound to historical and socio-cultural dynamics. The imagery is documented mainly in Rome and its environs. It is surely not by chance that almost all of our images are Hadrianic or later, when broader strata of Roman society engaged themselves in the cult of Magna Mater[84] and the fashion for growing beards opened up a new means of visualising not only the religious role but also the alternative self-fashioning of the subjects.

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[79] See e. g. the funerary inscription of C. Iulius Spiclus, *sacerdos* of Magna Mater and Aesculapius, married to Ulpia Metropolis, *tympanistria publica: IPOstie* 142 = Helttula (2007, no. 178) = Vermaseren (1977a, 140 no. 445). The inscription also mentions their children and grandchildren.

[80] It is unknowable whether every *gallus* was actually castrated. All that is certain is that they were believed to be castrated and that the *communis opinio* was that they were eunuchs. Some scholars, e. g. van Haeperen (2011, 474), believe that *archigalli* were not castrated. However Sinn (1991, 44–45 with n.18) has shown convincingly that a key item in this debate, the inscription on the Bassus relief (no. 13), has always been misunderstood. Castrated *archigalli* are explicitly mentioned in literary sources, see e. g. Firm. Mat. *Math.* 3.6.22; Serv. *ad. Aen.* 9.115. All this inclines me to doubt whether this is really just a case of confusion, as van Haeperen suggests.

[81] Sanders (1972, 1020; 1030).

[82] Sinn (1991, 44).

[83] A different choice was made by the person who commissioned an early imperial grave-monument in the northern necropolis of Anazarbus (Cilicia) for a eunuch who had served as a *tropheus* at the court of Trakondimotos I and is shown wearing civic dress: Kelp (2008).

Appendix: Catalogue of the material evidence

The list is arranged alphabetically by the modern name of the city where it is now kept.

1) Statue of an unknown Metroac functionary (fig. 1)

Cherchel, Museum inv. no. 107.
From Caesarea Mauretaniae. Found in 1845 between the theatre and the central baths.[85]
Date: about 400 CE.[86]
H.: 110 cm.
Conservation: The left hand, and the right arm below the biceps are lost. Originally attached with dowels.

Bibliography: Gauckler (1895, 141–143., pl. XV, 3); Vermaseren (1986, 53 no. 146 pl. 39); Landwehr (2008, 95–101 no. 320 pl. 60–61 fig. 29 Beilage 11); Müller (2008).

2) Marble sarcophagus-lid depicting a *sacerdos* lying on a *kline* (fig. 2)

Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 158.
From the necropolis of Isola Sacra, on the Via Severiana, Portus (now Fiumicino), near tomb 75; found together with nos. 3 and 4.
Dimensions: 40 x 220 x 110 cm.
Date: second half of the third century CE.
Conservation: well preserved, apart from the damaged headdress.

Bibliography: Calza (1932); Squarciapino (1962, 13–14); Helbig (1972, 12–14 no. 3003; Bergmann (1977, 140–141); Vermaseren (1977a, 140–141 no. 446 pl. 282–283); Vermaseren (1977b, 100 with pls. 66–67); Rumscheid (2000, 56–57; 149–150 cat.

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[84] Mekacher (2005, 97); van Haeperen (2011, 472). On the increasing reputation of the Magna Mater cult among the urban élite of Ostia from the second century CE onwards Rieger (2004, 128–172); Steuernagel (2004, 241–242).

[85] Landwehr (2008: 95).

[86] Landwehr (2008: 99), arguing convincingly for a late date. The statue has traditionally been dated to the second or third century CE, cf. e.g. Vermaseren (1986, 53 no.146); Müller (2008, 665).

no. 75 pls. 35,3; 36,1); Hales (2002, 93 – 94 fig. 2); Steuernagel (2004, 237 – 238; 240 n. 1237); Sbriglione (2012, no. 2.3); *Imperium der Götter* (2013, fig. on p. 108).

3) Marble relief portraying a *sacerdos* (fig. 3)

Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 159.
From the necropolis of Isola Sacra, on the Via Severiana, Portus (now Fiumicino); found together with nos. 2 and 4.
Dimensions: 62 x 40 x 9 cm
Date: second half of the third century CE.
Conservation: lower left section lost.

Bibliography: Helbig (1972, 12 – 14 no. 3003); Vermaseren (1977a, 141 – 142 no. 447 pls. 284 – 286); Vermaseren (1977b, 100 with pl. 68); Vermaseren and de Boer (1986, 27 no. 96* [= 395]); Goette (1990, 59 – 60; 146 no. 22); Rumscheid (2000, 56; 58 cat. no. 77 pls. 36, 3 – 4); Rieger (2004, 146 – 147); Steuernagel (2004, 238; 240 n.1237); Delgado (2005, 139 no. 253* a); Sbriglione (2012, no. 2.4); *Imperium der Götter* (2013, 128 cat. no. 54 with colour figure).

4) Marble relief depicting a *sacerdos* (fig. 4).

Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 160.
From the necropolis of Isola Sacra, on the Via Severiana, Portus (now Fiumicino); found together with nos. 2 and 3.
Dimensions: 62 x 40 x 9 cm.
Date: second half of the third century CE.
Conservation: well-nigh perfect.

Bibliography: Helbig (1972, 12 – 14 no. 3003); Vermaseren (1977a, 142 no. 448 pls. 287 – 289); Goette (1990, 59 – 60; 146 no. 22); Simon (1997, no. 124*); Rumscheid (2000, 56; 58 cat. no. 76 pl. 36,2 [detail]); Steuernagel (2004, 238 fig. 6 [drawing]; 240 n.1237); Delgado (2005, 139 no. 253* b); Sbriglione (2012, no. 2.5); *Imperium der Götter* (2013, 128 cat. no. 53 with colour fig.).

5) The ash-urn of Culcia Metropolis (fig. 5)

Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 1319 = Calza Sc. Sarc. 366.
Found in the necropolis at Portus.
Dimensions: 23 x 32 x 26 cm
Date: early Antonine.
Conservation: well preserved.
Inscription: *D(is) M(anibus). Culciae / Metropoli / tympanistriae / M(atris) D(eum) M(agnae) utriusq(ue) / portus.*

Bibliography on the inscription: *AE* 1940: 131 = *IPOstie* A92 = Helttula (2007: 211 – 212 no. 182)
Bibliography on the ash-urn: Vermaseren (1977a: 140 no. 444 pl. 280); Sinn (1987: 223 no. 542 pl. 80e).

6) Funerary statue of an unknown Metroac functionary

Ostia, Museo Ostiense, Depot.
From Ostia.
Date: uncertain.
Conservation: the head is missing.

Bibliography: unpublished. Brief notice in Helbig (1966: 32).

7) Painting on the façade of a *taberna* (fig. 6)

Pompeii, via dell'Abbondanza, to the right of the entrance.
Date: first century CE.
Conservation: surface partially damaged.

Bibliography: Spinazzola (1953: 213 – 222 with figs.); Vermaseren (1977b: 66 and 108, with fig. 46); Rumscheid (2000: 54); Rieger (2004: 156); Delgado (2005: 139 no. 254); *Imperium der Götter* (2013: fig. on p. 96, in colour).

8) Bust of an unknown Metroac functionary (fig. 7)

Rome, Musei Capitolini inv. no. 2971.
Presumably from Rome or its environs, exact provenance unknown.
Dimensions: 44 (without plinth) x 45 x 23.5 cm.
Date: mid-Severan.[87]

Bibliography: Pietrangeli (1956, 19 – 20 no. 28 pl. 3); Vermaseren (1977a, 65 – 66 no. 250 pls. 142 – 143); Simon (1997, 763 no. 123*); Mekacher (2005, 100 no. 104); Sbriglione (2012, no. 2.2 fig. 2); Fittschen and Zanker (2014, 79 – 80 cat. no. 72 pl. 91).

9) Funerary statue of an unknown Metroac functionary (fig. 8)

Rome, Musei Capitolini Centrale Montemartini inv. no. MC 3047/S.
Found in Rome in the 17th century, exact provenience unknown. Formerly Coll. Cardinal Mazarin, then in Marseilles, then in the Coll. Nicolas-Joseph Foucault near Paris, then in the collection of the 11th Earl of Pembroke, Wilton House. Back to Rome in 1961.
H.: 189 (Helbig) / 191 cm.
Date: late Antonine.[88]
Conservation: The head does not belong to the body. Right forearm and left hand are missing (originally fixed with dowels). Both feet damaged.
Modern inscription: ΑΤΤΙΣ.

Bibliography: Gow (1960, 90 fig. 1 pl. 8,1); Cat. Christie's, London 03. 07. 1961 no. 147; Helbig (1966, 31 – 32 cat. no. 1183 [E. Simon]); Vermaseren (1977a, 64 – 65 no. 249

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[87] On the date, see the convincing arguments of Fittschen and Zanker (2014: 80).

[88] *Contra* Vermaseren (1977, 65): "probably third century A.D".

pls. 140 – 141); Vermaseren 1977b, 99 with fig. 65; Simon (1997, 762 no. 121); Roller (1999, 295 fig. 70); Hales (2002, 91 – 92 fig. 1); Mekacher (2005, 99 – 100 no. 103*); Sbriglione (2012, no. 2.1 fig. 1).

10) Funerary relief of an unknown Metroac functionary (fig. 9)

Rome, Musei Capitolini, Centrale Montemartini, Magazzino Teatro del Opera inv. no. 1207.
Found in 1736 between Genzano and Lanuvium.[89]
Dimensions: 120 x 120 cm.
Mat.: Luna marble.
Date: Hadrianic.[90]
Conservation: exceptionally well preserved.

Bibliography: Stuart Jones (1926, 254 – 257 no. 32 pl. 100,3); Pietrangeli (1956, 20 – 21 no. 29 pl. 2); Helbig (1966, 25 – 26 no. 1176 [E. Simon]); Vermaseren (1977a, 152 – 153 no. 466 pl. 296 – 197); *LIMC* Zeus/Iuppiter no. 130*; Simon (1997, 762 – 763 no. 122*); Beard, North and Price (1998, 2: 211); Rumscheid (2000, 54 – 56; 86; 148 no. 73 pl. 34,3); Mekacher (2005, 99 no. 102); Müller (2006, 132 – 133 fig. 1); Sbriglione (2012, no. 2.6 fig. 3); *Imperium der Götter* (2013, 129 cat. no. 55 with colour image on p. 103); Fittschen and Zanker (2014, 107 – 108 no. 110 pl. 115).

11) Funerary relief of Laberia Felicla (fig. 10)

Rome, Musei Vaticani, Galleria delle statue inv. no. 552.
From Rome, provenience unknown.
Dimensions: 104 x 74 x 27 cm.
Date: mid-second century CE (Spinola).[91]
Inscription: *Laberia Felicla / sacerdos maxima / Matris deum m(agnae) I(daeae)*. The cognomen is sometimes falsely given as 'Felicia'.
Conservation: Head, neck, lower parts of the arms, hands, *patera*, lower part of the altar and much of the garland are all restored

Bibliography on the inscription: *CIL* VI 2257 = *ILS* 4160 = Vermaseren (1977a, 68 – 69 no. 258).
Bibliography on the relief: Amelung (1908, 614 – 615 cat. no. 403); Vermaseren (1977a, 68 – 69 no. 258 pl. 150); Vermaseren (1977b, 109 with pl. 41); Spinola (1999, 26 – 27 cat. no. 26); Rumscheid (2000, 55); Mekacher (2005, 99 no. 101*); Rüpke (2005, 1089 no. 2155); Sbirglione (2012, no. 1).

12) The tomb-altar of L. Valerius Fyrmus (fig. 11)

Rome, Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregoriano Profano, Reparto di Ostia inv. no. 10762.
Found by the otherwise unknown Signor Cartoni near Ostia in 1824, in the area of 'La Torretta'

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[89] On the provenience, see Fittschen and Zanker (2014: 107).
[90] Fittschen and Zanker (2014: 108) argue convincingly for this date.
[91] *Contra* Vermaseren (1977) and Mekacher (2005), both of whom date it to the first century CE.

(now ‘Pianabella’) near the chapel of S. Ercolano.
Dimensions: 99 x 51–63 x 43–50 cm.
Date: Neronian-Flavian.[92]
Conservation: face damaged.
Inscription: on the upper border [*D.] M. [s.]*, on the *tabula: L. Valerius L. fil(ius) Fyrmus / sacerdos Isidis Ost(i)ens(is) / et M(atris) d(eum) tra(n)stib(erinae) fec(it) sibi.*

Bibliography on the inscription: *CIL* XIV 429 = *ILS* 4406 = Vidman (1969: 252 no. 543); *RICIS* 503/1123 with pl. XCV. See also Erpetti (2009: 196–202).
Bibliography on the altar: Graillot (1912, 247 pl. 6); Squarciapino (1962, 2; 15); Vidman (1969, 252 no. 543); Malaise (1972, 68–69: Ostia 6); Meiggs (1973, 366); Vermaseren (1977a, 133–134 no. 422 pl. 266); Vermaseren (1977b, 108); Schillinger (1979, 258 no. 648); Sinn (1991, 70–72 no. 37 figs. 114–115); Rieger (2004, 299 *MM84); Steuernagel (2004, 237).

13) The funerary relief of C. Iulius Bassus (fig. 12 and 13)

Rome, Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregoriano Profano, Sez. 15 inv. no. 9826. Larger part probably found in Rome, Via Latina before 1867. Lower left corner (now lost) found in April 1894 on the left side of the Via Latina, beyond the third mile-stone (Località Torre Fiscale), near tombs made of brick.
Dimensions: 53 x 38 x 5.5 cm.
Date: 150–170 CE (Sinn).
Inscriptions:
On the acroteria: *D(is) // M(anibus).*
Beneath the image *(CIL VI 19875): C. Iulio Basso / M. Aquilius / Primigenius / [...] bernali suo b.m.f. / [...] vix. ann. XXXI / [...]usculanor(um).*
Lower left corner *(CIL VI 32466): [...] / ỊỊ[...] / coniu be[...] / cum quo vi[...] / archigallo Tus[...] / et sibi.*
Reconstruction (Sinn): *C. Iulio Basso / M. Aquilius / Primigenius / contubernali suo b(ene) m(erenti) f(ecit) / cum quo vix(it) an. XXXI / archigallo Tusculanor(um) / et sibi.*

Bibliography on the inscription: *CIL* VI 19875; *CIL* VI 32466 (lower left corner, now lost); Borsari (1895, 104); Di Stefano Manzella (2003, 188 no. 2581).
Bibliography on the relief: Vermaseren (1977a, 151 no. 462 [lower left corner]); Sinn (1991, 43–45 no. 18 with drawing B; fig. 49).

Note: Students of the Isiac cults have regularly identified the figure I take as a portrait of Bassus as one of Isis holding a patera, an interpretation that goes back at least to Adolf Michaelis in *CIL* VI 19875. See e.g. Vidman 1969, 218 no. 454: *Superne inter duas faces Isis pateram tenens*;

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[92] Sinn (1991, 71) argues convincingly on stylistic grounds against a dating in the second century CE, which had been proposed e.g. by Vermaseren (1977, 134). EAGLE however still dates it 100–200 CE.

Malaise 1972: 128 Rome 54; *RICIS* 501/191 with pl. XCI: “au dessus de l’inscription est figurée Isis tenant une patère, entre deux torches”.

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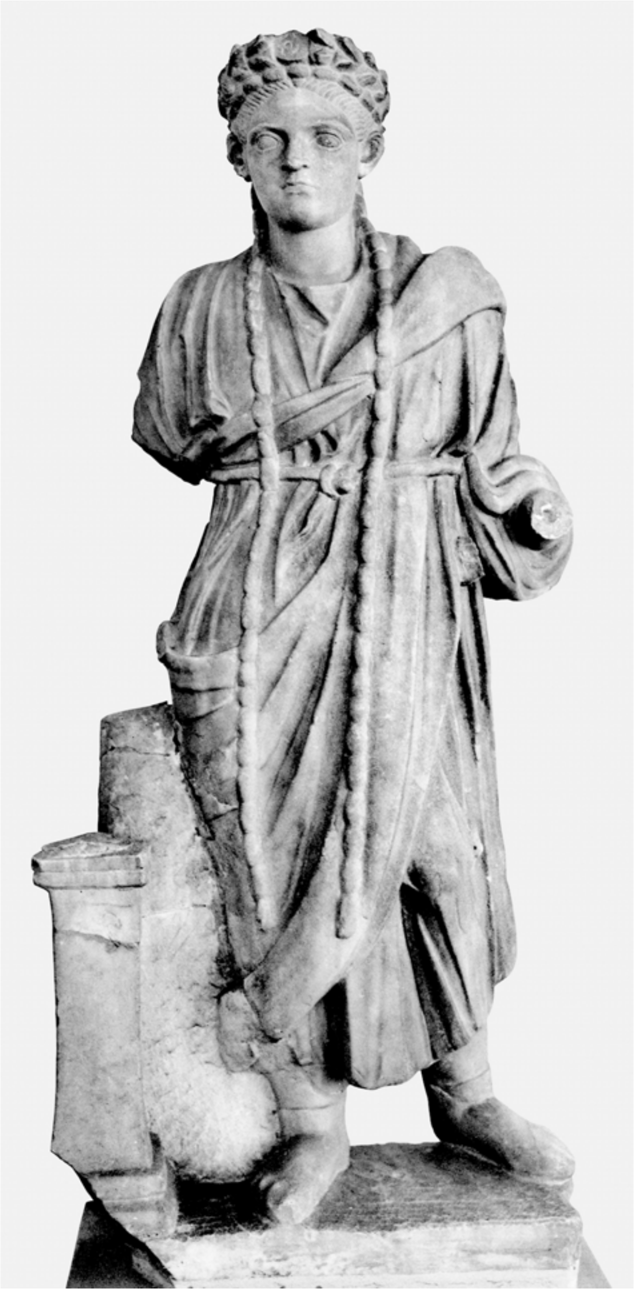

Fig. 1: Cherchel, Museum: Photo Hans R. Goette.

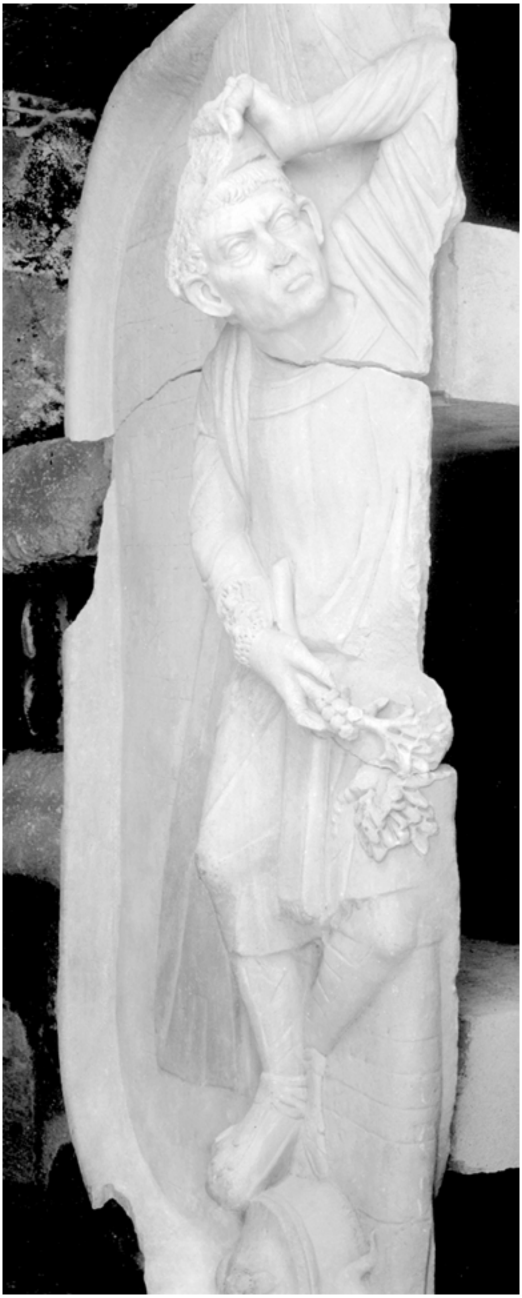

Fig. 2: Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 158: C. Faraglia (neg.), D-DAI-Rom-36.620.

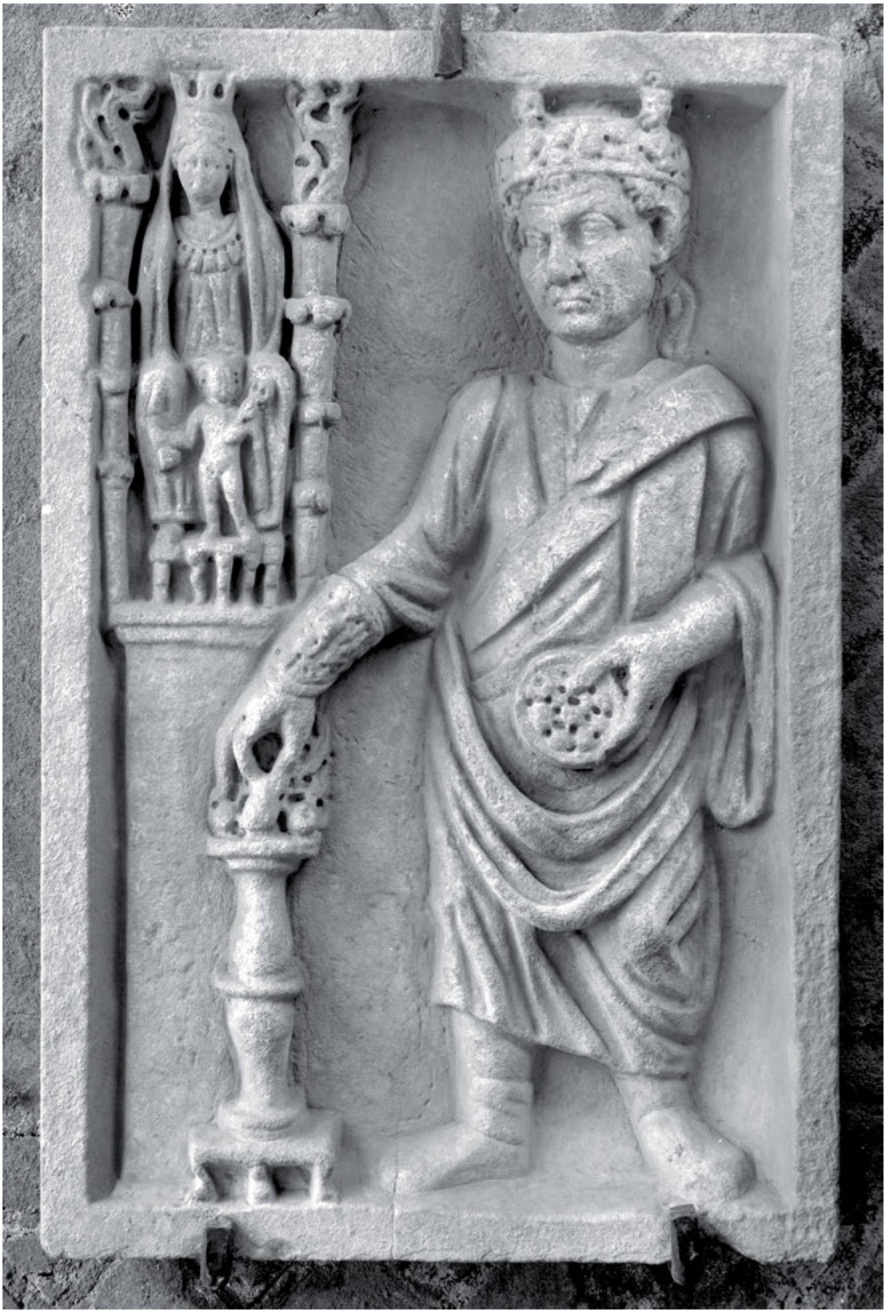

Fig. 3: Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 159: C. Faraglia (neg.), D-DAI-Rom-36.622.

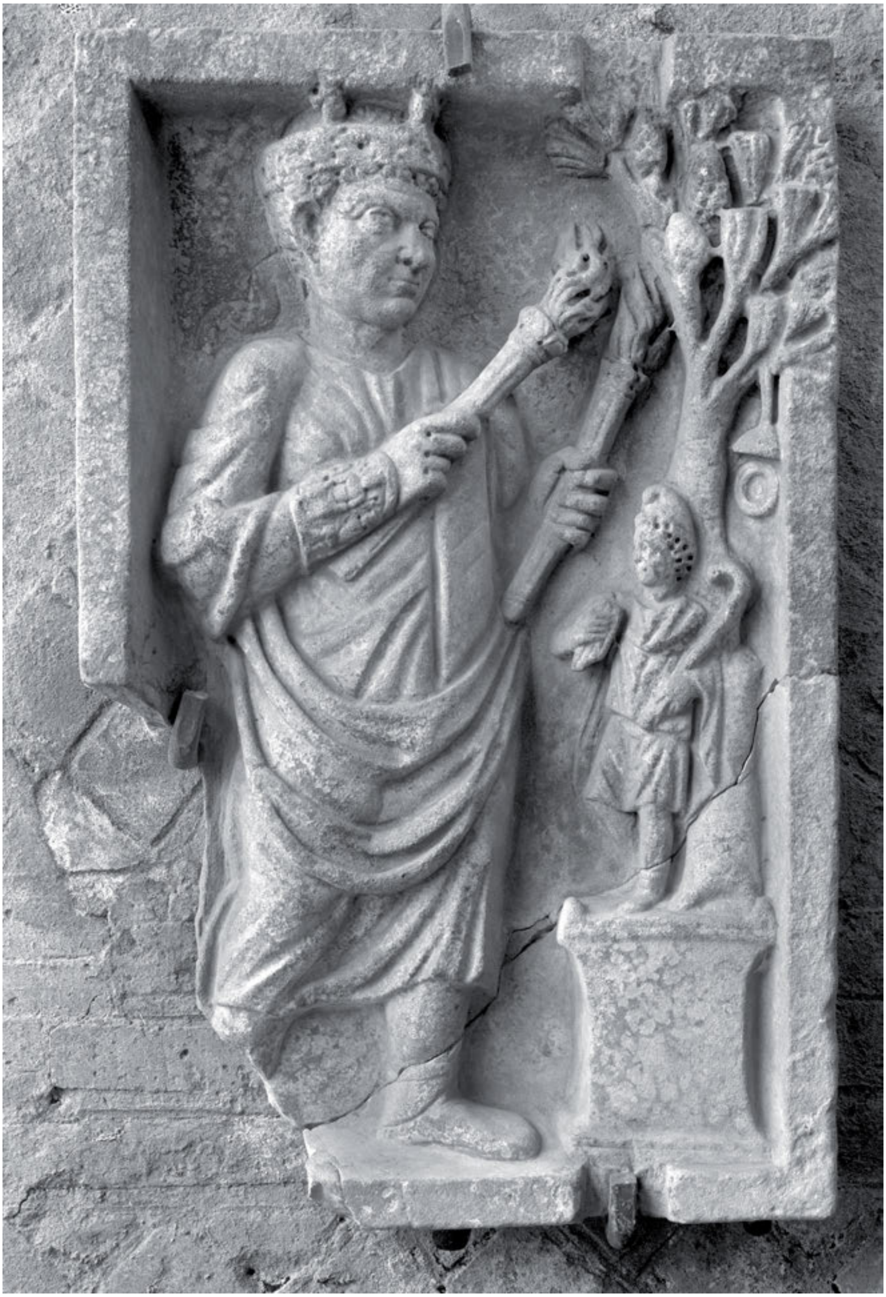

Fig. 4: Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 160: C. Faraglia (neg.), D-DAI-Rom-36.623.

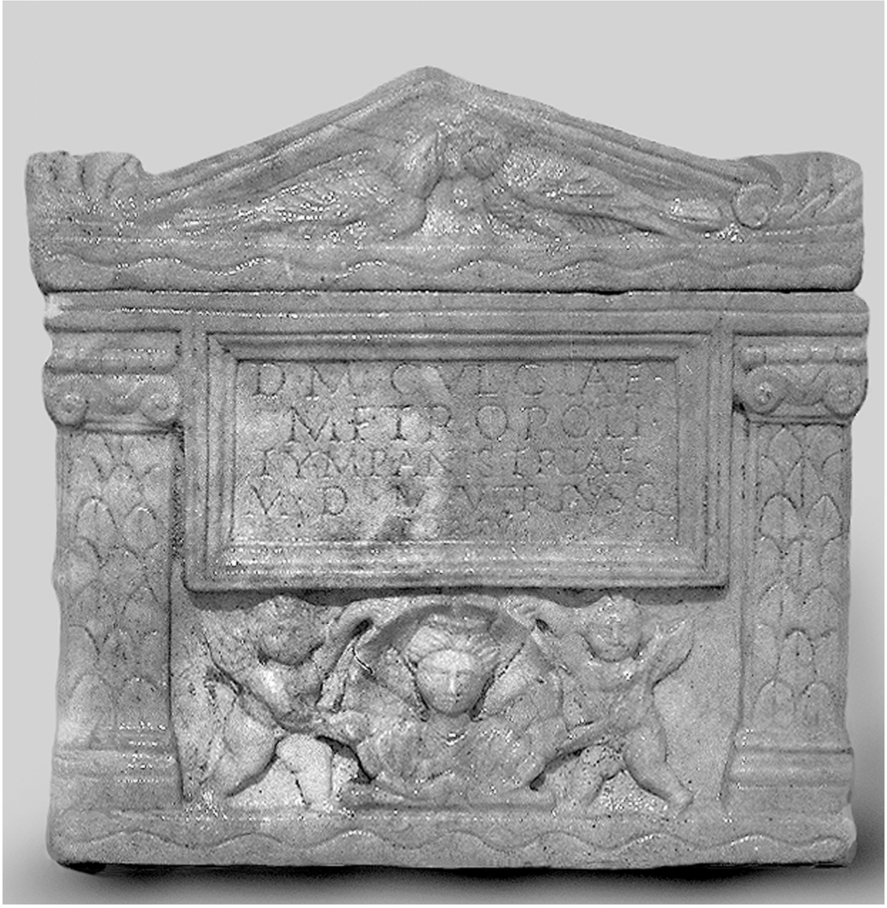
D M C VLCIAE
M F TROPOLI
TYMPANISTRIAE

Fig. 5: Ostia, Museo Ostiense inv. no. 1319 – Calza Sc. Sarc. 366: Archivio Fotografico del Parco Archeologico di Ostia Antica.

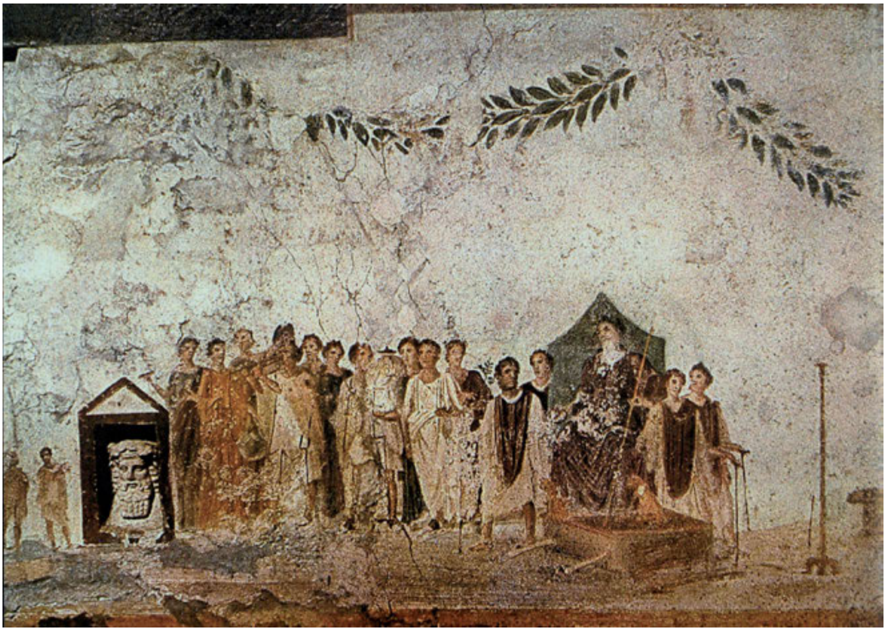

Fig. 6: Pompeii, via dell’Abbondanza, façade painting: su concessione del Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo.

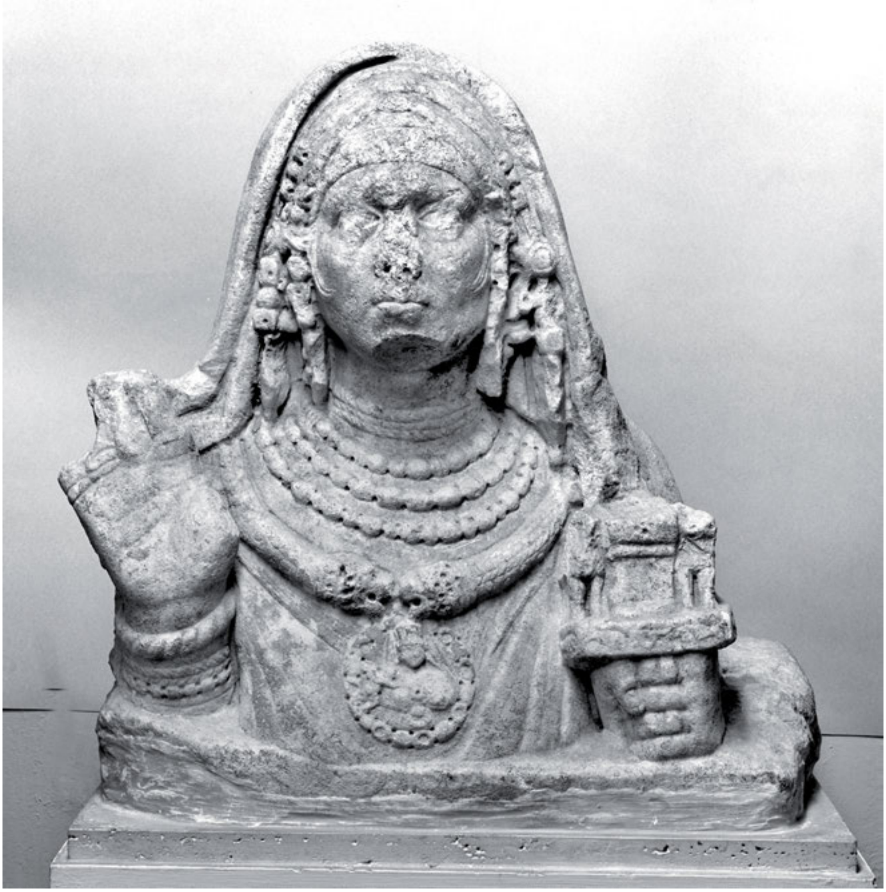

Fig. 7: Rome, Musei Capitolini inv. no. 2971: http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/item/marbilder/685615.

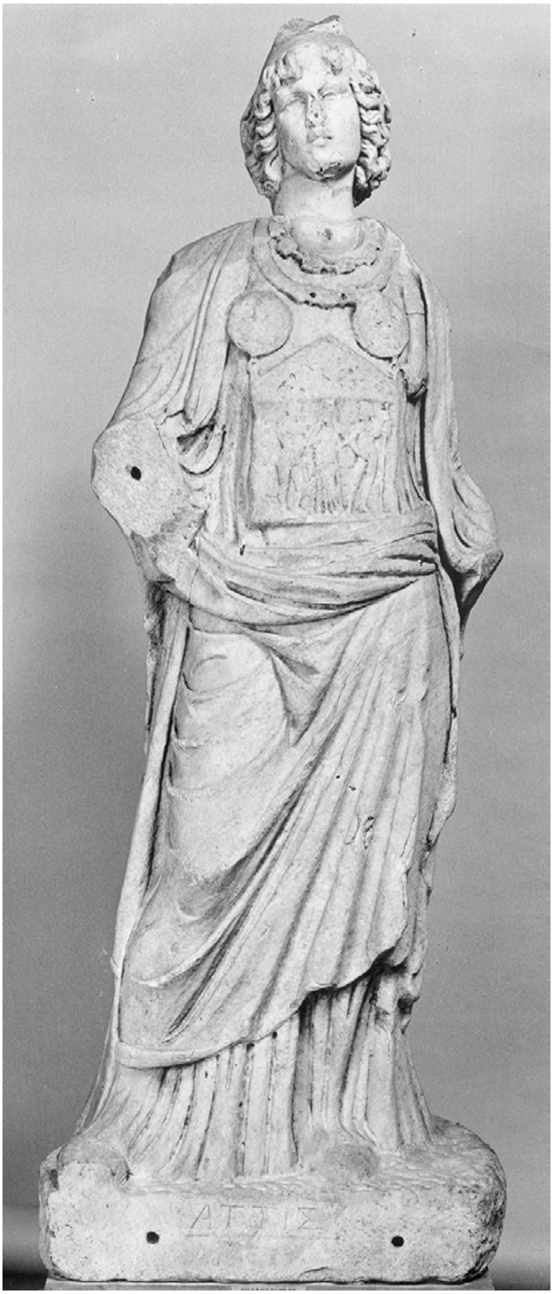

Fig. 8: Rome, Musei Capitolini, Centrale Montemartini inv. no. MC 3047/S: Archivio Fotografico dei Musei Capitolini, foto Araldo De Luca, © Roma, Sovrintendenza Capitolina ai Beni Culturali – Musei Capitolini.

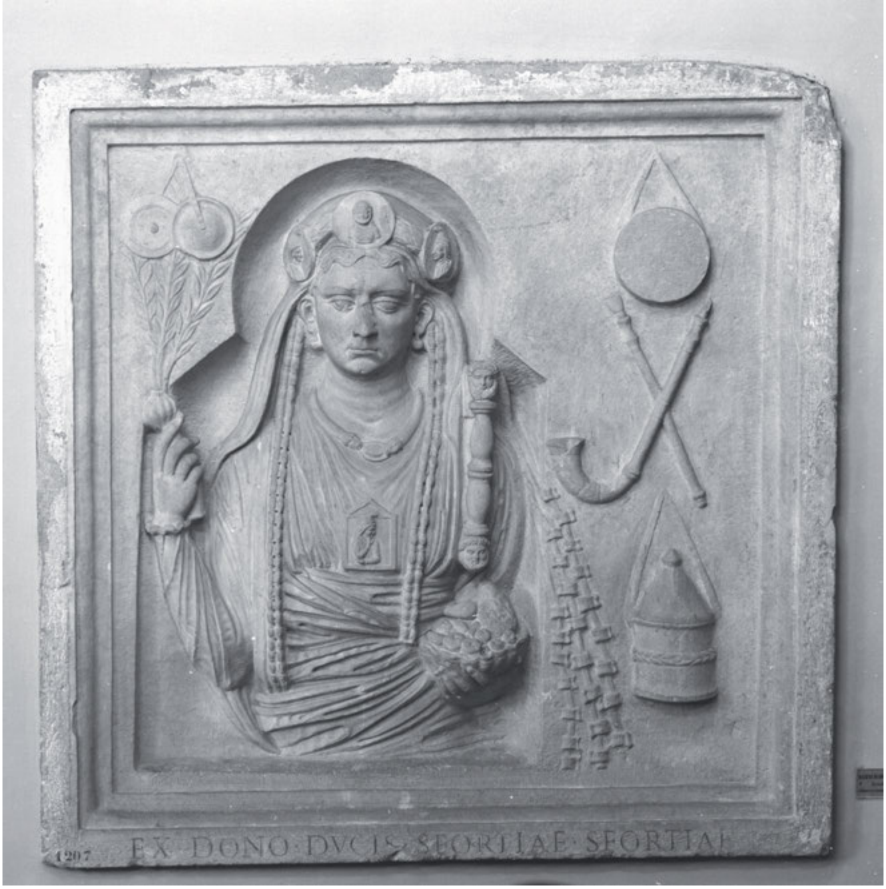
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Fig. 9: Rome, Musei Capitolini, Centrale Montemartini inv. no. 1207: http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/item/marbilder/6678564.

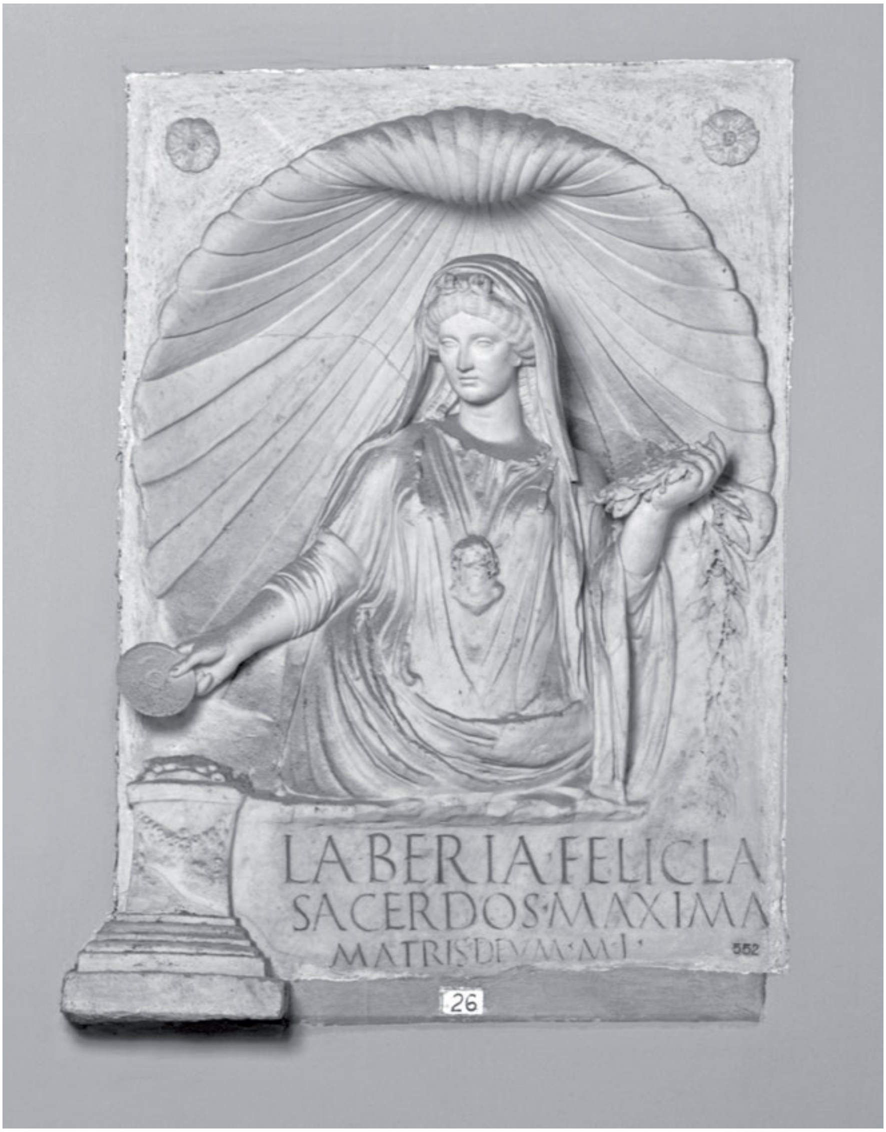
LABERIA·FELICLA
SACERDOS·MAXIMA
MATRIS·DEVM·M·I·
552
26

Fig. 10: Vatican, Galleria delle statue inv. no. 552: K. Anger (neg.), D-DAI-Rom-97Vat.679B.

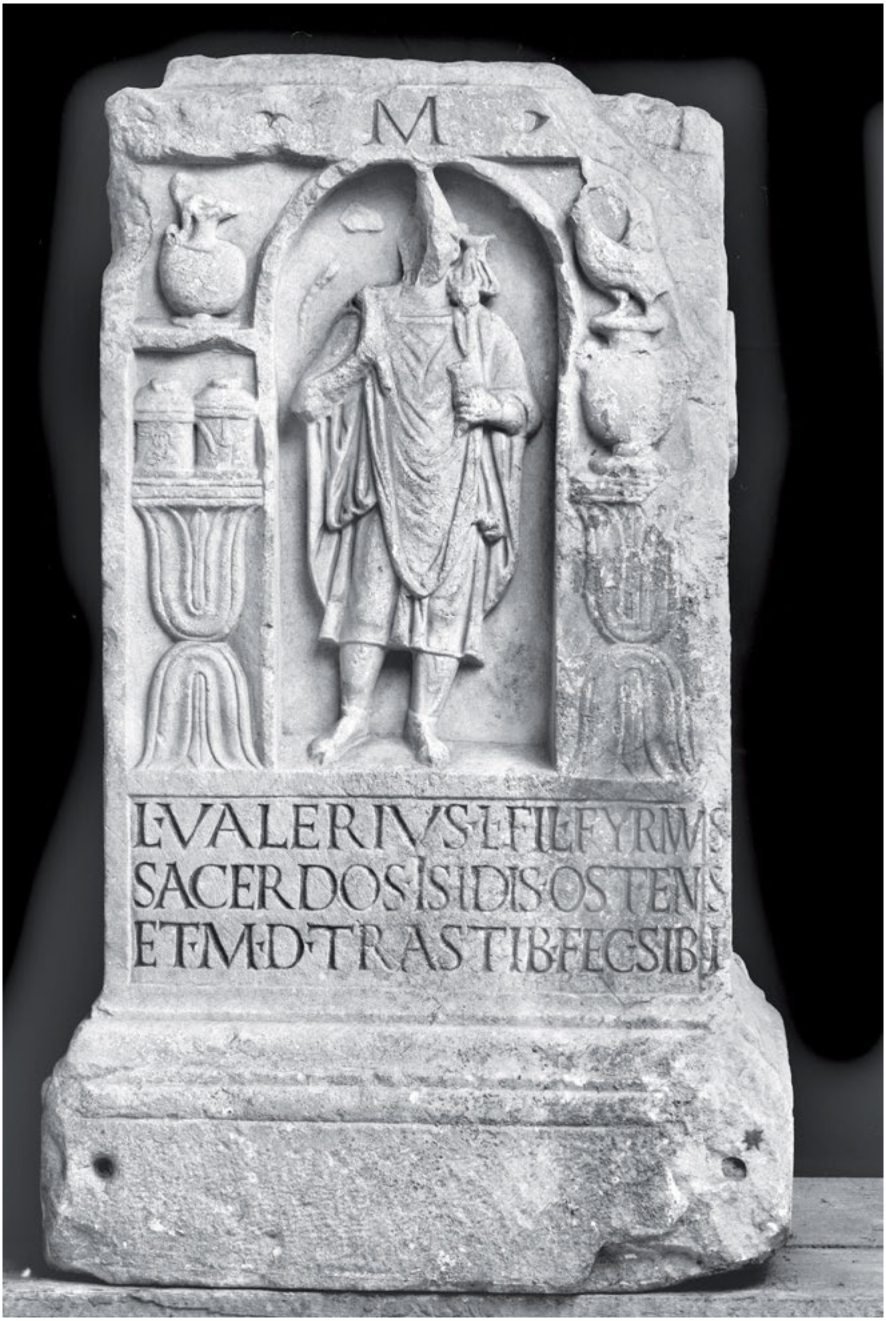
M
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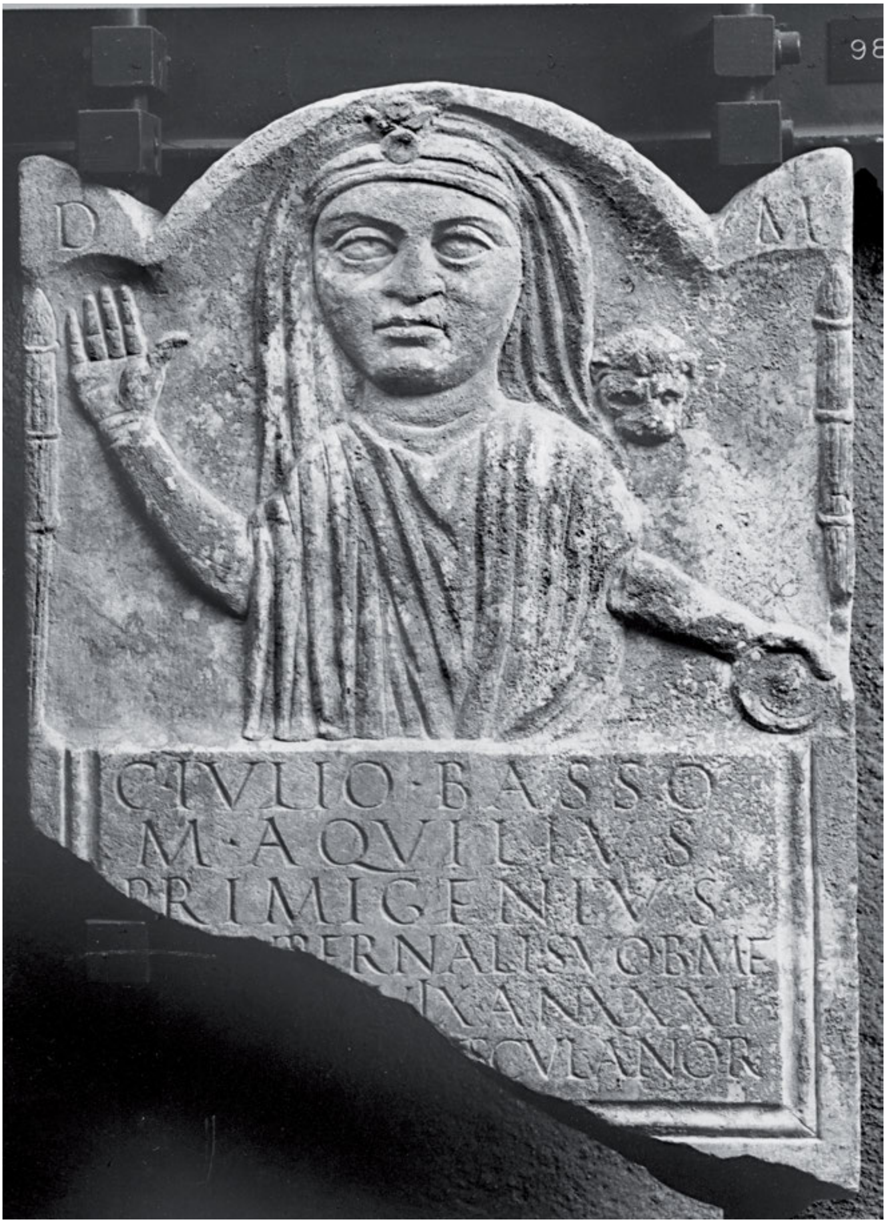
Fig. 11: Vatican, Museo Gregoriano Profano, Reparto di Ostia, inv. no. 10762: http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/item/marbilder/6674791.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IX AN XXXI
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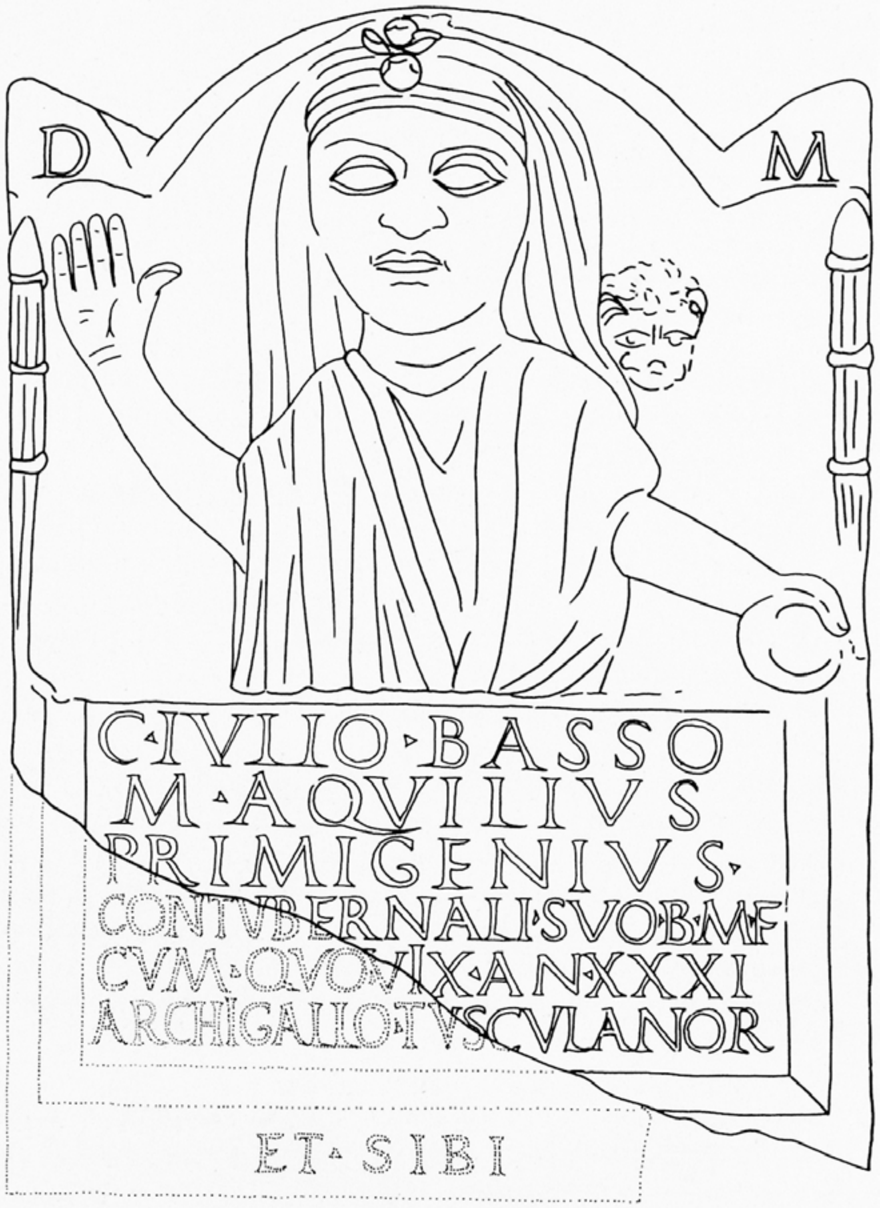
98

Fig. 12: Vatican, Museo Gregoriano Profano, Sez. 15 inv. no. 9826: http://arachne.uni-koeln.de/item/marbilder/7247263.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ARCHIGALLO·TVSCVLANOR
ET·SIBI

Fig. 13: Vatican, Museo Gregoriano Profano, Sez. 15 inv. no. 9826, reconstruction. Image: Sinn (1991: 44 drawing B).

Valentino Gasparini

Negotiating the body: Between religious investment and narratological strategies. Paulina, Decius Mundus and the priests of Anubis[1]

According to Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews* (18.65–80), Decius Mundus, a man of equestrian rank, seduced a noble woman (Paulina) in an Isiac temple-complex at Rome during the reign of Tiberius by bribing the priests and pretending to be Anubis in person. Against a recent suggestion that the encounter is to be understood as an example of an institutionalised ritual involving actual sexual intercourse between a priest wearing a jackal-mask and and a female worshipper, this paper argues that the entire story is probably a fiction, one not necessarily invented by Josephus, but at any rate used by him mainly as a ploy to discredit the new cult of Christ. Just as in the case of the claimed resurrection of the latter, Josephus fixes on the body (in this case female) as his focus in this vignette of the exploitation of the gullible in the name of religion. The choice of Anubis is explained on the basis of his visual prominence in the Egyptian cults, which was an easily available 'index' both of Isiac identity and of the deviant 'otherness' represented by the trope of 'demented Egypt'.

There are very few literary accounts of episodes occurring between the end of the Republic and the beginning of the Empire whose protagonists are priests of Anubis. There are even fewer accounts of such priests who, by deviating from established ritual patterns or mis-appropriating priestly attributes, intentionally used the body as a means of religious and social power, in pursuit of a private goal. My concern in this paper lies with the sharp contrast between the moral depravity shown by the religious specialists on these occasions and the paradigm of bodily purity, chastity, asceticism and virtue, which seems else-

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[1] The following article forms part of my project *Embodiment, Experience and Communication in Everyday Isiac Cultic Practice*, in the context of *Lived Ancient Religion: Questioning 'Cults' and 'Polis Religion'*, organised at Erfurt by Jörg Rüpke and funded by the European Union Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2013, no. 295555). I would like to thank the editors most warmly for their help in improving this contribution, for whose remaining errors I am of course solely responsible.

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where to be a recurrent feature of the Isiac cults and to have contributed materially to their wide success. This contrast invites questions relating to the political and authorial interests served by these rather special literary accounts.

What is probably the earliest story of this kind concerns Marcus Volusius, a plebeian aedile proscribed by the Triumvirs in 43 BCE (after Caesar's assassination), who escaped from Rome by wearing an Isiac linen garment and a mask in the form of an Anubis-head, items lent him by friend who was a member of the cult.[2] This story however I must defer to another occasion.[3] My concern here is with the much more famous story told by Josephus in his *Antiquitates Iudaicae* (18.65 – 80).[4] The protagonists of the story, set in Rome during the reign of Tiberius, are the young, rich and virtuous Paulina, her husband Saturninus, and the *eques* Decius Mundus.

1. Plot, Setting and Chronology of the Story

Josephus' account can be summarised as follows. Decius Mundus fell so heavily in love with Paulina that, when she refused point-blank to consider his proposal (despite the promise of 200,000 Attic drachmae for a single night's sex), he vowed to starve himself to death. In order to prevent this, and (on the model of the clever stage-slave) at the same time help him out, Mundus' freedwoman Ide devised a plan. With 50,000 drachmae from Mundus, she bribed the priests (ἱερεῖς) of Isis, to whose worship Paulina was highly devoted, and gave them careful instructions.

It was the eldest priest who set the trap, persuading Paulina that Anubis himself had fallen in love with her and wanted her to share supper and his own bed (εὐνή). Paulina's husband gave his consent and the trap was sprung. After Paulina had eaten her dinner inside the temple and the doors been closed, Decius Mundus stepped out of hiding and, in the guise of Anubis, enjoyed Paulina's favours (ὁμιλία) all night long. Not all the Isiac priests were involved in the conspiracy, so Mundus left early the following morning before anyone stirred, while Paulina went back home to her husband and her friends, proudly proclaiming to everyone her nocturnal encounter with a god. These friends were evidently puzzled (which itself says something about contemporary attitudes to such a claim), but it seems that Paulina's account was studiously vague about what actually happened inside the temple, the event being represented as a divine epiphany (ἐπιφάνεια).

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[2] Val. Max. 7.3.8. See also the later account by App. *B. civ.* 4.47.

[3] Bricault and Gasparini (forthcoming).

[4] Cf. also Zonar. *Epit.* 6.5 Dindorf.

But truth will out. After a couple of days, Mundus happened to meet Paulina and boasted of his subterfuge. Once aware of the real identity of the person with whom she had spent the night, Paulina immediately confessed to her husband. Here Josephus gives the impression that she told him not only about Mundus but about the real (amorous) nature of his 'epiphany'. Saturninus immediately reported the episode to Tiberius, who, after careful investigation, pronounced Ide and the Isiac priests guilty. Whereupon the priests were crucified, while Decius Mundus, in consideration of his legal status, was simply banished. The Emperor also gave orders to demolish the temple (ναός) and to throw the statue (ἄγαλμα) of Isis into the Tiber.

Josephus identifies the temple simply as τὸ ἱερὸν τῆς Ἴσιδος τὸ ἐν Ῥώμῃ, which suggests that it was the largest of the at least four Isiac sanctuaries that were in use at Rome under Tiberius, namely the *Iseum Campense* (fig. 1).[5] This temple was probably built after a Triumviral decision in 43 BCE[6] and dedicated in the 30s.[7] Thanks to its location in the Campus Martius, the building did not suffer the consequences of the decrees of 28 and 21 BCE that allowed the Isiac cults to establish themselves only half a mile beyond the *pomerium*.[8] Moreover, Josephus himself refers to the sanctuary as τὸ ἱερὸν τῆς Ἴσιδος in the context of the overnight stay of Vespasian and Titus before their triumph in June 71 CE.[9] We are surely justified in assuming that the *Iseum Campense* was considered the main Isiac sanctuary of early Imperial Rome, and that the episode of Paulina and Decius Mundus was supposed to have taken place there.[10]

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[5] The other three sanctuaries were: 1) the *Iseum Capitolinum*, which was built on the *Arx* probably in the Sullan period (Apul. *Met*. 11.30); 2) the *Iseum Metellinum* (SHA *Tyr. trig.* 25), which was probably built on the Caelian by Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius in 71–64 BCE (Coarelli 1982, 55–57), if not already by Q. Caecilius Metellus Balearicus a little before 123 BCE (Fontana 2010, 21–31); 3) the temple of *Isis Pelagia*, which is attested in the mid first century CE (*RICIS* 501/0132), but may well date from before the year 1 CE, when the cult of *Isis Pelagia* is first attested in Rome (*RICIS* 501/0137). On all this, see Gasparini (2007, 68–74 and 2008); Malaise (2011, 188–198) with further references.

[6] Dio Cass. 40.47.3–4 and 47.16.1. In my view, it is highly unlikely that the triumviral decision was never enforced, which is the argument used by those who wish to postpone the chronology of the *Iseum Campense* to the period 21 BCE – 19 CE (Malaise 1972a, 212) or even to the reign of Vespasian (Scheid 2004; 2009).

[7] Lembke (1994, 65–67; 87–88).

[8] Dio Cass. 53.2.4 and 54.6.6.

[9] *BJ* 7.123. The sanctuary is located by Juvenal (6.528–529), the Regional Catalogues and the *Forma Urbis* next to the *Saepta*. The overnight stay was celebrated in three sestertius issues in 71 CE: *RIC* II^2, p. 67, nos. 116–117; p. 73, no. 204. Cf. Gasparini (2007, 73 nn. 10–11; 2008, 102; 2009, 349 with references). These very small early issues by the mint of Rome were evidently commemorative.

The Tiber is not particularly close to that temple (or to any of the other known Isiac temples of the period, for that matter), a point that further underlines the symbolism of throwing the cult-statue into the river. Isis evidently suffered the *damnatio* or *deletio memoriae* sporadically applied in particularly serious cases under the Republic (e. g. Tiberius and Caius Gracchus) and into the late Empire (Elagabalus, Maximinus Thrax, etc.).[11] In effect, Tiberius declared Isis a public enemy.[12] In this context, it is worth remembering that crucifixion was a punishment reserved for enemies of the state (such as brigands and pirates), *peregrini*, *liberti* and slaves, and that Roman citizens were usually exempt from it.[13] The clear implication is that the Isiac priests of the *Iseum Campense* were *peregrini* as well as public enemies.[14]

There is a general consensus that the Paulina incident took place in 19 CE. Immediately after his account of Paulina and Decius Mundus, Josephus tells a similar story about an event that occurred "about the same time", concerning a Jew (*Ant. Jud.* 18.81–84). There was a wicked man in Rome who "professed to instruct men in the wisdom of the laws of Moses", the same laws that he had himself previously transgressed in Judaea, as a result of which he had been banished.[15] With the complicity of a couple of friends of like character, he persuaded Fulvia (a woman of great dignity and fervent Jewish devotion) to entrust him with a quantity of purple stuffs and gold, to be brought to the temple of Jerusalem, whereupon they simply appropriated both goods and money. Fulvia's husband, a man named Saturninus (like the husband of Paulina), promptly informed Tiberius, who ordered all Jews to be banished from Rome.[16] The consuls drew up a list of four thousand men, and packed them off to Sardinia. Many were, however, punished for refusing to become soldiers on the grounds that this was against their religion.

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[10] Apuleius, in the last third of the 2nd century, refers to *Isis Regina* as *quae de templi situ sumpto nomine Campensis summa cum ueneratione propitiatur: Met*. 11.26.

[11] See e. g. Kyle (1998, 218–224); Hope (2000, 115–116).

[12] The *Iseum Campense* was probably rebuilt soon after Tiberius' death, already under Caligula: see Gasparini (2007, 73).

[13] Cook (2014, 358–416).

[14] Cook (2014, 182).

[15] Tr. W. Whiston.

[16] This is also attested by Dio Cass. 58.18.5a, who simply states that most of the Jews, who were arriving in Rome in great numbers and converting many of the natives, were banished. On this incident, see e. g. Marasco (1991) and Rochette (2001).

The measures taken against the Isiac cults and the Jews are, however, assigned a quite different context by both Suetonius and Tacitus. Suetonius (*Tib.* 36) says that in the year 19 CE the Emperor:

> […] abolished foreign cults, especially the Egyptian and the Jewish rites, compelling all who were addicted to such superstitions to burn their religious vestments and all their paraphernalia. Those of the Jews who were of military age he assigned to provinces of less healthy climate, ostensibly to serve in the army; the others of that same race or of similar beliefs he banished from the city, on pain of slavery for life if they did not obey (transl. J.C. Rolfe).

According to Tacitus (*Ann.* 2.85.5):

> […] another debate dealt with the proscription of the Egyptian and Jewish rites, and a senatorial edict directed that four thousand descendants of enfranchised slaves, tainted with that superstition and suitable in point of age, were to be shipped to Sardinia and there employed in suppressing brigandage: 'if they succumbed to the pestilential climate, it was a cheap loss'. The rest had orders to leave Italy, unless they had renounced their impious ceremonial by a given date (transl. J Jackson)

It is probably this episode to which Seneca (4 BCE – 65 CE) refers when he states that "[t]he days of my youth coincided with the early part of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. Some foreign rites (*sacra alienigena*) were at that time being inaugurated, and abstinence from certain kinds of animal food was set down as a proof of interest in the strange cult (*superstitio*)".[17]

2. Interpreting the source

2.1. The amorous affair as a recurring ritual?

Before proceeding further, it is perhaps necessary to say a few words about the recent interpretation of the Paulina episode by David Klotz, who claims that Josephus' account is based on actual ritual events.[18] The sole item of evidence he can adduce is part of a wall-painting found by Friedrich von Bissing in the Roman-period 'Tomb of 1897' at Akhmim (Panopolis/Chemmis) in upper Egypt, which was rediscovered in the 1980s (fig. 2). On the left side of the fresco, there is a man facing left, with upraised hands, adoring a falcon-headed Horus,

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17 Sen. *Ep*. 108.22.
18 Klotz (2012).

who holds the feather of Ma'at. On the right, there is a scene described by Marjorie S. Venit in the following terms:

> A violent encounter between a demon and a human figure [...]. The demon pushes the human figure backward with his left hand and thrusts it further off balance by grasping its right foot with his right hand, as he leans forward to kneel on the altar. Though the image is badly damaged, based on the grey, intestine-like coil that he seems to suck into his mouth, the demon appears to be eviscerating his victim.[19]

Klotz, however, completely ignoring the left-hand scene, interprets the scene as a sexual encounter between Anubis and a woman on a Graeco-Roman style *klinê*.[20] Combining it with the episode of Paulina in Rome, he takes it as evidence for an authentic religious practice, widespread in Rome and Roman Egypt,[21] whereby priests wearing an Anubis mask had sexual intercourse with women inside temples.[22] I find this interpretation both sensationalist and extremely implausible. I also think we need to look closer at the episode and re-contextualise it properly.

Klotz attempts to justify his interpretation by emphasising the jackal's reputation in ancient Egypt for promiscuity and Anubis' involvement in ritual banquets.[23] Nonetheless, this leads us nowhere. Equally feeble is the idea, for which there is no evidence whatsoever and can only be described as voyeuristic, that the priests wearing the Anubis-mask, who are usually represented as dressed in an all-enveloping cloak covering body and hands (fig. 3), "should be understood to be naked under their robes, ready to perform a ritual *hieros gamos*".[24] Even more so are the two Latin literary parallels invoked to support the hypothesis. The first is Tertullian's allusion (*Apol.* 15.1) to adulterous Anubis (*moechus Anubis*):

> The rest of your licentious wits also work for your pleasures through the dishonour of the gods. Examine the farces of the Lentuli and Hostilii, and consider whether it is the buffoons or your gods whose jokes and tricks you are laughing at; such subjects as an adulterous Anubis, a masculine Moon, Diana scourged, the will of the deceased Jupiter read aloud, and three starving Herculeses held up to ridicule (tr. A. Souter).

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[19] Venit (2010, 116).
[20] Klotz (2012, 386).
[21] Klotz (2012, 388).
[22] Klotz (2012, 396).
[23] Klotz (2012, 388–392).
[24] Klotz (2012, 392–394).

All the references in this passage are of course to ‘Atellan’ farces, whose plots were deliberately burlesque, a fact which in turn implies that Anubis ordinarily was not at all perceived as adulterous.

The second is a passage by Juvenal (6.532–541):

> It’s Anubis, therefore, who receives the best and highest honour, / Running along, mocking the lamentations of the crowd for Osiris, / Surrounded by his shaven-headed creatures, in their linen robes. / He’s the one who petitions on your wife’s behalf, when she fails / To refrain from sex on the holy days, owing a fine for violation / Of the bed. After the silver asp has been seen to raise its head, / It’s his tears and professional muttering that guarantees Osiris / Won’t refuse to pardon her transgression, provided, of course, / He’s bribed, with a fat goose and a large slice of sacrificial cake (tr. A.S. Kline).

But again this is satire (cf. 9.22–26), fusing the sexual abstinence imposed on women at the *Isia* with Anubis’ role in the *Inventio Osiridis*. Its historical accuracy can be gauged from the representation of a sacrifice as a ‘bribe’ (*ansere magno … et tenui popano corruptus Osiris*).[25]

These are not the only passages that Klotz misrepresents. He also claims that “[a]lthough inconceivable to modern readers, neither Paulina, her husband, nor any of her friends were surprised by her encounter with Anubis. In other words, the scandal arose not from the fact that Anubis (or an official priest dressed as Anubis) seduced a noble woman in a temple setting, but because this event transpired under deceitful pretences”.[26] But this is not exactly what Josephus says. In fact, we are told that Paulina’s friends were inclined to disbelieve her story but were at the same time surprised, given her modesty and virtue (§ 76). Evidently, the reason why at least *some* of them, to say nothing of her husband, accepted the story was her stainless reputation. But the detail that she stayed in the temple all night ‘at the service’ of Anubis (the term here employed is διακονέω) was perhaps suspicious; we may not be too far off the mark in thinking rather of adultery.

The incredulity of some of Paulina’s friends had good grounds. The practice of sexual abstinence preceding the festival of the *Isia* and the representation of the Isiac deities as paradigms of marital love and fidelity were well-known at Rome. Moreover, as Herodotus already pointed out, “the Egyptians were the first who made it a point of religion not to lie with women in temples, nor to enter into temples after going away from women without first bathing" (2.64). Similarly, Chaeremon (ap. Porphyry, *De abst.* 4.7.6), Plutarch (*De Is. et Os.* 2, 351 f and 8, 354a-b) and Apuleius (*Met.* 11.6; 11.19) all stress the chastity of the Egyptian priests and their abstinence from the lusts of the flesh. In view of all this, the idea of an actual institution of 'sacred marriage' in the context of an Isiac cult is entirely implausible.

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[25] Smelik and Hemelrijk (1984, 1965) suggested that Juvenal’s scorn for Egyptian religion (note also *Sat*. 15, whose theme is Egyptian animal-worship) may have been connected to his putative exile to Egypt by Domitian. Though 15.45 shows that Juvenal had visited Egypt, a satirist’s denunciation of Egyptian religion requires no such special explanation.

[26] Klotz (2012, 384).

It is, thus, frankly impossible to agree with Klotz' claim that "by identifying the progenitor [*sic*] with Anubis, an otherwise taboo extramarital coupling could have been elevated to a morally acceptable religious experience. Such an arrangement would explain the Decius Mundus affair, and account for the popularity and surprising efficacy [*sic*] of incubation sessions".[27] As he himself recognises, "the role of paramour is unexpected for Anubis, who is otherwise almost exclusively associated with mortuary functions, such as mummification, guarding the netherworld, and directing the deceased as a psychopomp".[28]

If Klotz' hyper-realist reading of the Decius Mundus affair is unacceptable, what alternatives are there? To my mind, the most promising strategy is precisely to re-embed Josephus' narrative in its rightful narratological context.

2.2. Josephus' narratological strategy

Irrespective of the historicity of the Paulina incident, the evidence of Suetonius and Tacitus surely confirms that the measures against Isiac and Jewish *superstitiones* are historical. For his part, Josephus links them to specific instances of deception practised on high-status Roman women (Fulvia, Paulina) by unscrupulous men. These men took advantage of the women's genuine religious devotion to serve private ends (money; sex), using a religious script.

Now, the passage that immediately precedes these two incidents (*Ant.Jud.* 18.63–64) is the well-known, albeit controversial, description of Jesus' wonderful works and the community of Jesus-followers that grew up after his resurrection, the so-called '*testimonium Flavium*' or '*Flavianum*':

> About this time, there lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man. For he was one who wrought surprising feats and was a teacher of such people as accept the truth gladly. He won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. He was the Messiah. When Pilate,

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[27] Klotz (2012, 396). The reference to Isiac incubation is misplaced, since it seems not to be attested either at Rome or in the entire Western Mediterranean: Renberg (2006, 116). Cf. Gordon and Gasparini (2014, 41).

[28] Klotz (2012, 388).

> upon hearing him accused by men of the highest standing amongst us, had condemned him to be crucified, those who had in the first place come to love him did not give up their affection for him. On the third day, he appeared to them restored to life, for the prophets of God had prophesied these and countless other marvellous things about him. And the tribe of the Christians, so called after him, has still to this day not disappeared (tr. L.H. Feldman).

At this point, it is essential to say a few words about the scholarly reception of these passages. Many scholars have had strong doubts about the authenticity of the *testimonium Flavium*.[29] Some maintain that the entire passage is authentic;[30] a few would excise it completely as a Christian interpolation,[31] while most scholars think it is original but interspersed with later (Eusebian?) interpolations.[32] Similarly, some scholars have dismissed Paulina's story as mere invention or street gossip,[33] while others have been more inclined to accept its historicity. Alfred Grimm even suggested that some sculptural fragments found in the Tiber (now in Munich) might be the remains of the cult-statue of Isis that was thrown into the river.[34] Very few scholars, however, have viewed the Jewish and Isiac episodes in conjunction with the Christian passage quoted above (and vice versa).

I remain confident that the Christ-passage is for the most part original (although perhaps subsequently altered), and that, despite the differences,[35] the three episodes are clearly related and needed to be understood as a single narrative block. In terms of narratological strategy, Josephus sets up an implicit comparison between Jesus and the Isiac and Jewish examples of misuse of religious belief. The suggestion is that Jesus was no true religious prophet, but a fraud like Decius Mundus (who, as a man, pretended to be a god) or like the anonymous Jew (who was banished from Judaea for transgressing the same religious laws he should have upheld).[36] Consequently, Josephus' argument is that

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[29] There is an enormous bibliography. I need only refer to Feldman (1989, 430 – 435), who found at least 87 articles dedicated to this topic in the period 1937 to 1980; and Whealey (2003), who lists 150. See also Evans (1998) and esp. Bardet (2002, 189 – 226).

[30] See for example the abundant bibliography in Evans (1998, 466 – 467 n.57).

[31] E. g. the authors mentioned in Evans (1998, 467 n.58) and, more recently, in Carrier (2012, 489 – 490 n.1). See now also Feldman (2012) and Olson (2013).

[32] E. g. Meier (1991, 56 – 111); Paget (2001); Bardet (2002); Dunn (2003, 141); van Voorst (2003); Whealey (2003); Victor (2010). Earlier bibliography in Evans (1998 467 n.59).

[33] E. g. Malaise (1972b, 88; 391); Heyob (1975, 117 – 119).

[34] Grimm (1997, 120 – 121), with catalogue entries on pp.174 – 179.

[35] On the Isiac and Jewish episodes, see Moehring (1959) and van Unnik (1979, 254 – 258).

[36] If we press the comparison a bit further, Mary Magdalene might be thought of as the wronged woman, just like Paulina and Fulvia: see Pharr (1927, 143 – 145) and Klotz (2012, 373 n.3).

Jesus-followers are to be condemned, exactly as Jesus himself was by Pilate and the Isiac priests and the Jews were by Tiberius. Further, we may note the rather ironic and sceptical tone of the passage, and especially the derogatory reference to “the tribe (φῦλον) of Christians”. In all likelihood, this represents Josephus’ hostility to the idea of humans assuming or acquiring divine identities or qualities. Intending to discredit the figure of Jesus,[37] Josephus likens Christ-proselytism to the misuse or perversion of ‘noble’ religions, such as that of the Jews (embraced by Josephus himself) and the cult of Isis (embraced by the Flavian dynasty at Rome). Such narratives enabled Josephus to place the rising numbers of Jesus-followers’ within the framework of the historical episode of the expulsion of the ‘foreign’ cults in 19 CE, as described by Suetonius and Tacitus. Regardless of whether they are historical or fictional (on balance I incline to the latter view), these anecdotal accounts recast Christ-proselytism in terms of what Seneca himself described as *sacra alienigena* and *superstitiones*.[38] And this brings us back once again to the issue of Roman reception of ‘foreign’ and specifically Isiac cults.[39]

Examining closer Josephus’ narratological strategy gives us a much more plausible reading of the Paulina and Decius episode than that proposed by Klotz, and suggests to go on in this direction. Let us start our analysis by pinpointing the literary *topoi* of the story.

3. Roman reception of Isiac cults

3.1 Women and dogs: between fidelity and untrustworthiness

As I have already pointed out, there is no serious evidence to support the hypothesis that the Paulina episode could reflect an authentic religious practice taking place inside temples of Isis in Rome. On the contrary, the story is full of literary *topoi*, which surely supports the idea that the episode is entirely or largely fictitious.

There is first the *topos* of the resourceful but unscrupulous slave or freedman, which is deployed twice, in the figure of Ide the clever freedwoman, and that of the senior Isiac priest, who actually convinces Paulina that Anubis has fallen in love with her. The figure of Paulina on the other hand draws on the *topos* of the virtuous innocent abroad. She is depicted as very beautiful, aristocratic, young, rich yet modest: Josephus twice stresses her σωφροσύνη, prudence, and discretion. Chastity, marital love and fidelity are a constant feature of the depiction in Latin elegy of women devoted to the cult of Isis.[40] Tibullus (1.3.23–32), around 26–25 BCE, laments the ritual lustrations and the sexual abstinence which his beloved Delia periodically underwent. Around the same time, Propertius (2.33.1–6) complains that his muse, Cynthia, is busy celebrating Isis' *tristia sollemnia* – an ironic allusion to the *Hilaria*, which evidently involved a ten-day period of sexual abstinence.[41] In his amatory poetry Ovid too repeatedly complains about the absence of Corinna, leaving him in an empty bed while she is busy with her rituals.[42] A variant of the *topos*, Isis as protector of women's chastity, is found in the Greek novels.[43]

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[37] Josephus also alludes to the ‘so-called Christ’ at *AJ* 20.200, whose authenticity most scholars accept, e. g. Evans (1998, 469 – 477); Dunn (2003, 141); van Voorst (2003); and Painter (2004, 132–133). Contra, Rajak (2002, 131 n.73) and Carrier (2012).

[38] See p. 389 above.

[39] Cf. Esther Eidinow’s contribution to this volume (Chapter 10).

The story however also draws on a quite different *topos*, which can be traced throughout Greek and Latin literature.[44] Female adultery was of course morally quite unacceptable; already in Homer an unfaithful wife was associated with the fawning bitch.[45] The bitch symbolises women's untrustworthiness and inability to control bodily impulses, thus naturalising the subordinate position of women in a male-centred society.[46] One epithet for an adulterous wife, notably Helen of Troy, who abandoned her husband Menelaus for Paris, thus provoking the Trojan War, was thus 'bitch-eyed' (κυνῶπις).[47] " As the paradigmatically seducible figure – the wife who abandons her husband and gives her companionship to another man – Helen is well suited to don the mask of traitorous dog […]. Whatever the means by which the woman is seduced – whether love or riches or power – the mask of the dog traitor is a spectre of uncontrolled feminine mobility".[48] Rather than Klotz' idea of a ritual *hieros gamos*,[49] the narrative implies that, for all her modesty, Paulina is incomprehensibly foolish or, worse still, misusing the Isiac 'ethical code' in order to commit adultery.

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[40] Alvar (2008, 177–192).

[41] The motif recurs at Prop. 4.5.33–34 (20–16 BCE).

[42] *Am*. 1.8.73–74; 2.2.25; 2.13.7–18; 3.9.33–34 (written between 23 and 14 BCE).

[43] Cf. Heyob (1975, 66–68).

[44] Cf. Franco (2014, 99–108).

[45] Franco (2014, 104).

[46] Franco (2014, 158–159).

[47] E. g. Hom. *Il*. 3.180; *Od*. 4.145 (both self-descriptions of Helen); cf. δολοφρονέουσα at *Il*. 3.405.

[48] Franco (2014, 103 and 106). It is not at all clear to me why Franco's American translator prefers the word 'dog' here to 'bitch'; but the quality of the translation will be apparent even from this brief excerpt.

[49] The term *kynogamia*, 'Dog-wedding', coined by Crates the Cynic, neatly combines a reference to yet another offensive habit of dogs, copulation in the street, with Crates' own philosophy, cf. Dutsch (2015).

But what of Anubis? Strictly speaking, Josephus says that Decius Mundus simply pretended to be Anubis: no dressing-up is actually mentioned, he just appeared in the temple when all was dark and enjoyed the girl. We must be reminded of the (apocryphal) story of Tyrannus, priest of 'Saturn' at Alexandria, who supposedly made a habit of entering the temple by a secret passage and making a strange 'divine' noise while hiding behind the bronze statue of the god; when the lamps were extinguished, he would have sex with the woman he had appointed to meet.[50] Nothing suggests that Decius Mundus was wearing an Anubis-mask while he was with Paulina: darkness was disguise enough. Darkness represented a perfect setting for erotic epiphanies,[51] and female rites in honour of male deities during a *pannychis* were widely perceived as closely linked to illicit sex and, consequently, to illegitimate pregnancies.[52]

Whether Mundus was actually disguised as Anubis during the sexual encounter is however of little importance here. But the idea of someone impersonating Anubis, with the complicity of Isiac priests, must surely have evoked the role of *anubophori*, persons wearing jackal-masks, in the Roman cult of Isis.

3.2. The epigraphic and iconographical evidence: Anubis, *anubophori* and jackal-masks

The early Egyptian iconography of Anubis represented him as a black-skinned, jackal-like canid.[53] The process of anthropomorphisation that set in with the New Kingdom created a new form, with the jackal-head being superimposed onto a human body. It was this type that was carried over into the Graeco-Roman iconography, though the Pharaonic tunic was abandoned in favour of a long *himation*, often worn under a *chlamys*. In addition, Graeco-Roman Anubis usually carries Hermes' caduceus (symbol of the communication between heaven, earth and underworld), and sometimes his winged sandals.

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[50] Cyril, *Adv. Iul.* 7 (Migne, *PG* 76, 847B); Rufinus, *Hist. eccl.* 2.25 (Migne, *PL* 21, 533–534). See Poulsen (1945, 188); Petridou (2015, 247). There was indeed an underground passage in the Ptolemaic temple of Sarapis at Alexandria, see Alvar (2008, 56 with fig.2 on p.57).

[51] See Petridou (2015, 235–236).

[52] See Petridou (2015, 237–238 with n.65).

[53] See on this and the following topics Malaise (2014) and Sfameni Gasparro (2017), with extensive bibliographical references.

At the two major Isiac festivals celebrated outside Egypt, the *Navigium Isidis*[54] (5 March) and the *Isia*, culminating in the *Inventio Osiridis – Hilaria* (3 November),[55] it was the custom to stage more or less elaborate public processions.[56] It was for these processions that some privileged initiates of Anubis, named *anubiaci*,[57] and in some cases professional actors,[58] were chosen to dress up as the god and wear a mask in the form of a jackal's head (figs. 4a – c). In this role, they were termed *anubophori*, which was not a fixed position or status but a term for a specific, temporary role.[59]

An indication of the visual prominence of these *anubophori* in the annual processions is provided by some of the images employed in calendars to represent the month of November. In the mosaic of the 'Calendar of *Thysdrus*' (early 3rd cent. CE) the month is signified by two *pterophoroi* and a priest dressed as Anubis (fig. 5).[60] The images preserved in the various copies of the 'Calendar of 354' ('of Philocalus') show a shaven Isiac priest holding a sistrum and a tray with an asp raising its head,[61] and standing next to a pedestal bearing an

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[54] See Apul. *Met*. 11.11.

[55] Bricault and Gasparini (forthcoming).

[56] Commodus himself is supposed to have participated in these processions – marked by stations – as *anubophorus:* see SHA *Comm*. 9.4 and 6 (this biography is notoriously unreliable); *Nigr*. 6.9*; M. Ant*. 9.11. Cf. Bricault (2000 – 2001, 29 – 30).

[57] Mentioned in *RICIS* 605/0107 (3rd cent. CE, Nîmes). See the analoguous cases of the *bubastiacae* (*RICIS* 501/0169 and 503/1113) and of the more common *isiaci/isiacae* (*RICIS* 501/0210; 503/1115; 503/1118 – 1119; 504/0209 – 2010; *504/0212). Neither *sarapiaci* nor *osiriaci* are attested. The main evidence for thinking that these terms refer to initiates is *CIL* VI 1780 = ILS 1260 = *RICIS* 501/0210 (384 CE, Rome), where Fabia Aconia Paulina, the wife of Vettius Agorius Praetextatus, is said to be *sacrata apud Eleusinam deo Iaccho, Cereri et Corae, sacrata apud Laernam deo Libero et Cereri et Corae, sacrata apud Aeginam deabus, tauroboliata, isiaca, hierophantria deae Hecatae, Graecosacraneae deae Cereris* (I have turned the original datives into nominatives) As for *anubiaci*, the most interesting inscription comes from Ostia and is dated 16 March (?) 251 CE: Flavius Moschylus (*isiacus*) honours Decimus Fabius Florus Veranus, who was priest of the Holy Queen (*sacerdos sanctae reginae*, i. e. Isis) and *electo anubiaco* by decision of her Majesty (*iudicio maiestatis eius*): *CIL* XIV 352 = *ILS* 6149 = *RICIS* 503/1115. This supplementary consecration is evidently closely linked to – but distinct from – that of *isiacus*, as another inscription from *Ostia* attests, referring to P. Cornelius Victorinus who was at the same time both *isiacus* and *anubiacus* (*CIL* XIV 4290 = *ILS* 4369 = *RICIS* 503/1118, 2nd – 3rd cent. CE).

[58] Bricault (2000 – 2001, 31). See also Gasparini (2017).

[59] Cf. Bricault's note to *RICIS* 605/1001 (Vienne, 200 – 250 CE?). See also the expression 'bearer of (Anubis) Hegemon' in *SEG* 22.167 = *RICIS* 101/0402 (mid 1st cent. BCE, Attica), which Bricault (2000 – 2001, 31– 32) interprets as the mask of Anubis as psychopomp, carried in Isiac processions.

[60] Stern (1968); Grenier (1977, 157 no. 250); Foucher (2000); Deschamps (2005).

[61] As in Juvenal's account (see p. 389 above).

Anubis-mask (figs. 6a–c).[62] The Pelizaeus Museum in Hildesheim possesses a somewhat similar late-Egyptian Anubis-mask weighing 8 kg (6th–4th cent. BCE) (fig. 7).[63]

It is surely this visual prominence in processions of followers of Isis impersonating Anubis, the deity who more than any other stood in the Graeco-Roman world for the unacceptable face of 'demented Egypt', that explains how a scandalous story involving such priests could find such ready acceptance. And this brings us to the third, and final, requirement for a good interpretation of the Paulina episode.

3.3. The historico-religious context: animal worship and Egyptian religious 'indexicality'

A proper socio-historical contextualisation of these *topoi* requires at least a few words devoted to the Roman reception of 'Egyptian' cults under the Julio-Claudians, the period at which the Paulina episode supposedly took place.

Firstly, the story needs to be considered in the light of the social context of 19 CE, that is at the very end of a period marked by Augustus' legislation against bribery and adultery, viz. the *lex Iulia de ambitu* (18 BCE), the *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* (18 BCE), the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* (17 BCE), and, finally, the *lex Papia Poppaea* (9 CE). This legislation in fact represented a continuation of the late Republican process of 'democratisation' of elite ethics that effected a gradual moralisation of social and sexual conduct. The complaints of the Augustan elegists (26–14 BCE), immediately after the years when the *Iseum Campense* was dedicated, seem to confirm the willingness of elite women to undergo voluntary periodic sexual abstinence in the protective context of the cult of Isis.

Secondly, and parallel to the first process, Augustus was very concerned to separate Roman from 'foreign' cultic traditions.[64] This concern also required the banishment of some religious specialists in order to combat 'subversive' behaviour that was evidently perceived as a source of danger to political stability.[65] And the cult of the 'Egyptian' deities was not only widely perceived as *superstitio* or *deisidaimonia* (i.e. a non-traditional, unsanctioned, improper religious action),[66] but also as religiously deviant.[67]

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[62] Grenier (1977, 165–166, no. 274); Koemoth (2008).

[63] Inv. no. 1585. See Eggebrecht (1993, 34–35, no. T3); Bricault (2000–2001, 35–37).

[64] See e.g. Orlin (2008) and Malaise (2011).

[65] Rüpke (2014, 91–92). On the relationship between morality and political stability see Steenblock (2013).

Among the features of Egyptian religiosity which were regarded with suspicion, animal worship in the Graeco-Roman world was perceived not just as inappropriate, but as outlandish, despicable, monstrous. Roman abhorrence of Egyptian theriomorphic deities made these *omnigenumque deum monstra et latrator Anubis*[68] stereotypical Egyptian bestial deities that appealed greatly to the Roman imagination (*Quis nescit … qualia demens / Aegyptos portent colat?*).[69] However, it also perpetuated the idea of Egypt as a land of deceitful, licentious, and lustful behaviour.[70] And this clearly influenced the modern scholarly belief that "in the eyes of the Roman public, Egyptian religion was bound up with corruption and licentiousness",[71] thus supporting Klotz' idea.

Thus the (at least partial) theriomorphism of Anubis and his *anubophori* represented a very peculiar religious 'index' (in Peirce's terminology), which points to the cultural otherness of the god's homeland Egypt. As Giulia Sfameni Gasparro argues,

> for Roman authors and later Christian polemicists, the dog-headed god is the most obvious 'identity mark' *ad extra* of the Isiac cults, in all their mythical, theological and ritual aspects… The god appeared as the most immediate and specific expression within the Roman religious landscape of Egyptian cultic identity. This feature then became the main target of Christian polemicists in their condemnation of the pagan cults. In this documentation … the active role of the performer who played Anubis within the ritual reconstructing the dramatic quest and the joyful *inventio Osiridis*, was seen as the most representative sign of Egyptian religious identity … .[72]

Given all this background, it becomes plausible to suppose that the Decius Mundus story was adroitly constructed on the basis of such stereotypes. Presumably the earliest form of the story considerably antedates Josephus, though he himself was perfctly capable of elaborating the details. For elsewhere, in his attack upon Apion, the head of the Alexandrian library, he easily rallied Greek, Roman and Judean prejudices against animal worship by arguing that Apion "has been gifted with the mind of an ass and the impudence of the dog, which his countrymen are wont to worship".[73]

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[66] Cf. Gordon (2008, 75) with further bibliographical references.

[67] Rüpke (2014, 18; 89).

[68] Verg. *Aen.* 8.671–674.

[69] Juv. 15.1–2.

[70] Prop. 3.11.39; Ov. *Am.* 2.13.9; Luc. 8.542–544; Juv. 6.82–84 and 15.44–46. Cf. Smelik and Hemelrijk (1984; 1929 with n.486).

[71] Smelik and Hemelrijk (1984, 1932). See also Becher (1970).

[72] Sfameni Gasparro (2017) (my transl.). Cf. also Rosati (2009).

4. Conclusion

It is time now to sum up the results of this brief analysis of the story of Paulina and Decius Mundus.

Josephus – a Jew operating under the aegis of the Flavian dynasty, protected in its turn by the Isiac deities – chose two episodes involving the moral depravity of Jewish and Isiac priests and devotees during the reign of Tiberius, around 19 CE. The probable setting of the story is the *Iseum Campense* in the Campus Martius, built in 43 BCE and in all likelihood dedicated just before the Augustan decrees of 28 and 21 BCE (which excluded the Isiac cults from the area of the *pomerium*). It was here that Vespasian and Titus spent the night before their triumph in June 71 CE, thus invoking the protection of Isis and Serapis for the new dynasty. The conclusion of the story of Decius Mundus, by contrast, features Tiberius, the Julio-Claudian, declaring Isis a public enemy and throwing her statue into the Tiber.

In Josephus' version, the story draws heavily on literary (comic and satirical) *topoi* (the cunning freedman, the devious old man, the credulous woman, the faithless wife). The story also shows knowledge of the requirements of sexual abstinence and marital fidelity demanded by the Isiac cults, and of deep-rooted Roman beliefs and anxieties about Egyptian religious practices.

We can dismiss out of hand the idea that priests wearing an Anubis mask had sexual intercourse with women inside Isiac temples. The plausibility of the story derives rather from the familiarity at Rome of Anubis and the *anubophori*, which acted as an ambivalent indexical sign both of Isiac identity and of the deviant 'otherness' represented by the trope of 'demented Egypt'. It is probably no coincidence that the story is set in 19 CE, when Germanicus was visiting Egypt but failed to ask permission beforehand, thus arousing Tiberius' suspicions (Tac. *Ann.* 2.59).

Both of Josephus' stories, of Paulina and of Fulvia, were generated in the force-field between the moral programme of the early Principate on the one hand and the forced dichotomy between 'foreign' and 'Roman' religion on the other. Foreign priests exploit helpless Roman women. Beyond that, however, I have suggested that the context within which Josephus develops the story of Paulina implies that the real target here is the gullibility of people in the face of religious trickery, and in particular the Judeans who are attracted by the figure of Jesus and his supposed martyrdom and resurrection. Paulina yields her chaste body to Decius Mundus thanks to priestly trickery; Jews have defrauded Fulvia of her wealth; then what are the Judean sectarians up to with the body of Jesus?

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[73] Joseph. *Contra Apionem* 2.85 (but see also 1.224 and 2.139), cf. Smelik and Hemelrijk (1984, 1912).

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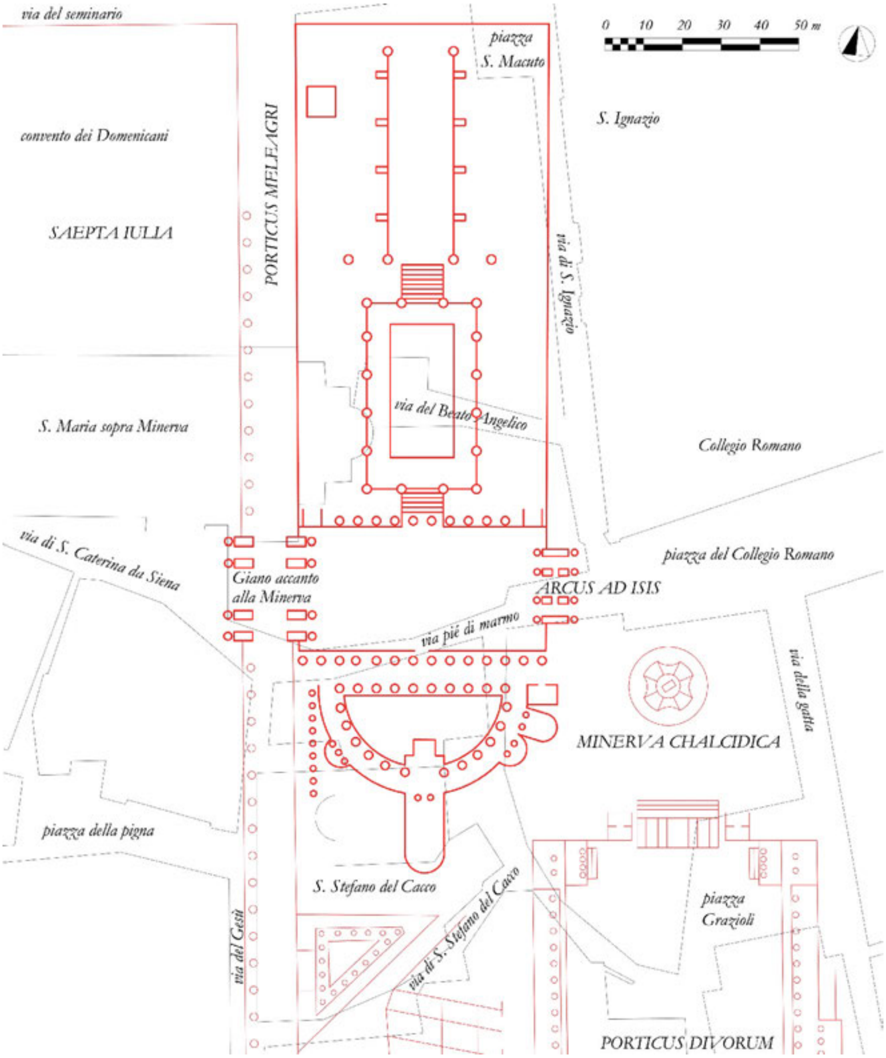
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via del Beato Angelico
S. Maria sopra Minerva
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via di S. Caterina da Siena
piazza del Collegio Romano
Giano accanto alla Minerva
ARCUS AD ISIS
via piè di marmo
via della gatta
MINERVA CHALCIDICA
piazza della pigna
S. Stefano del Cacco
via di S. Stefano del Cacco
piazza Grazioli
via del Gesù
PORTICUS DIVORUM

Fig. 1: Conjectural plan of the *Iseum Campense* in Rome (adapted by V. Gasparini).

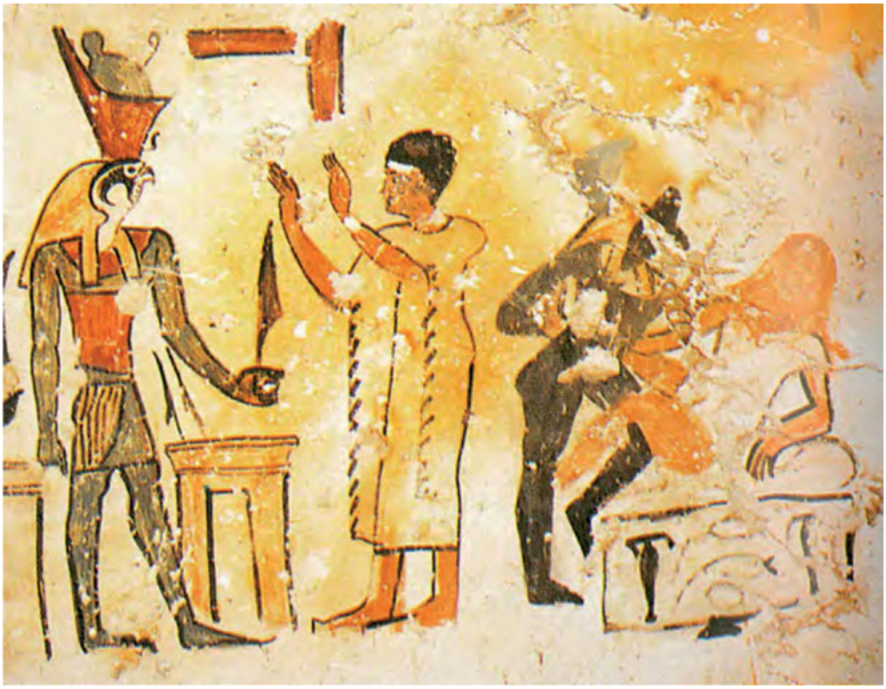

Fig. 2: Wall-painting from the Roman ‘Tomb of 1897’ at Akhmim (after Klotz 2012, 385, fig. 1).

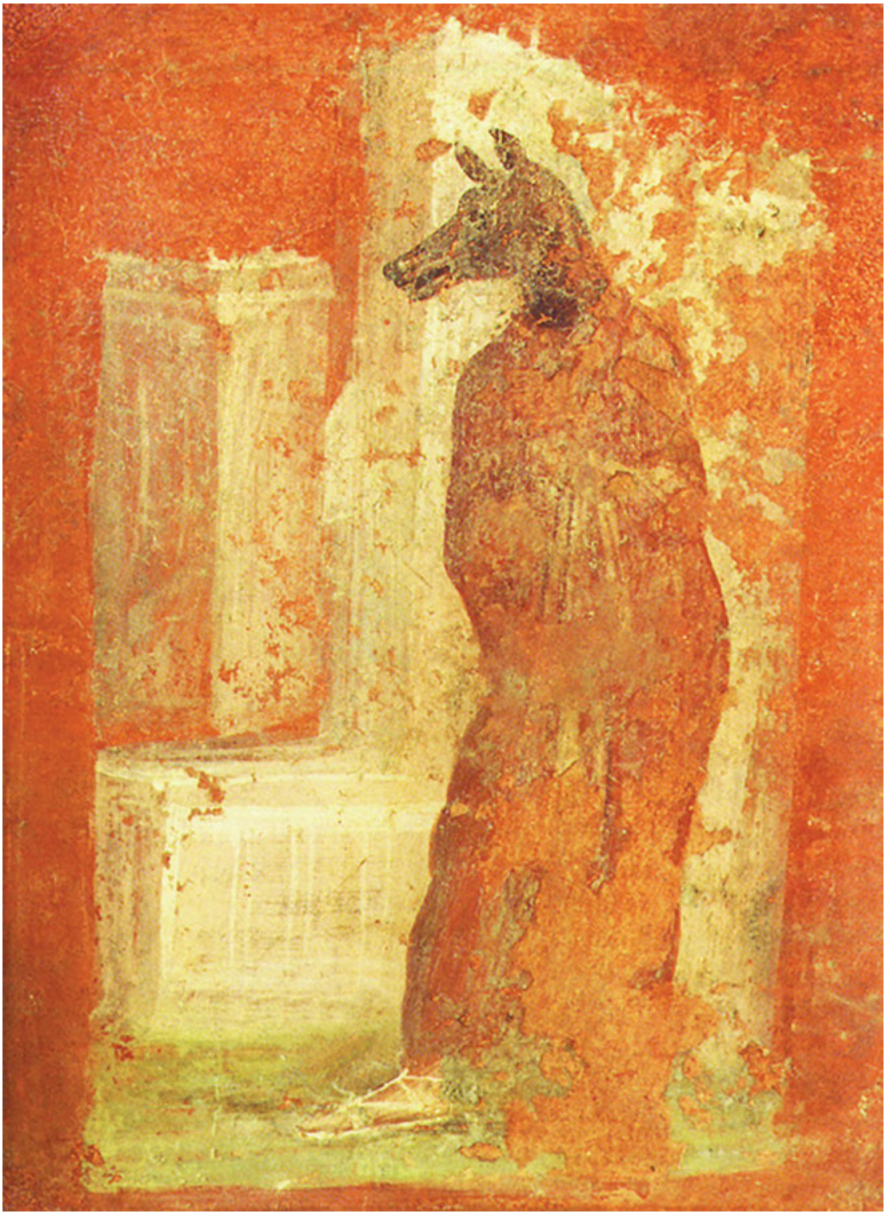

Fig. 3: Pompeii, 62 – 79 CE. Wall-painting from the portico of the Temple of Isis representing an *anubophorus*. National Archaeological Museum of Naples, inv. no. 8920 (after De Caro 2006, 58, fig. 65).

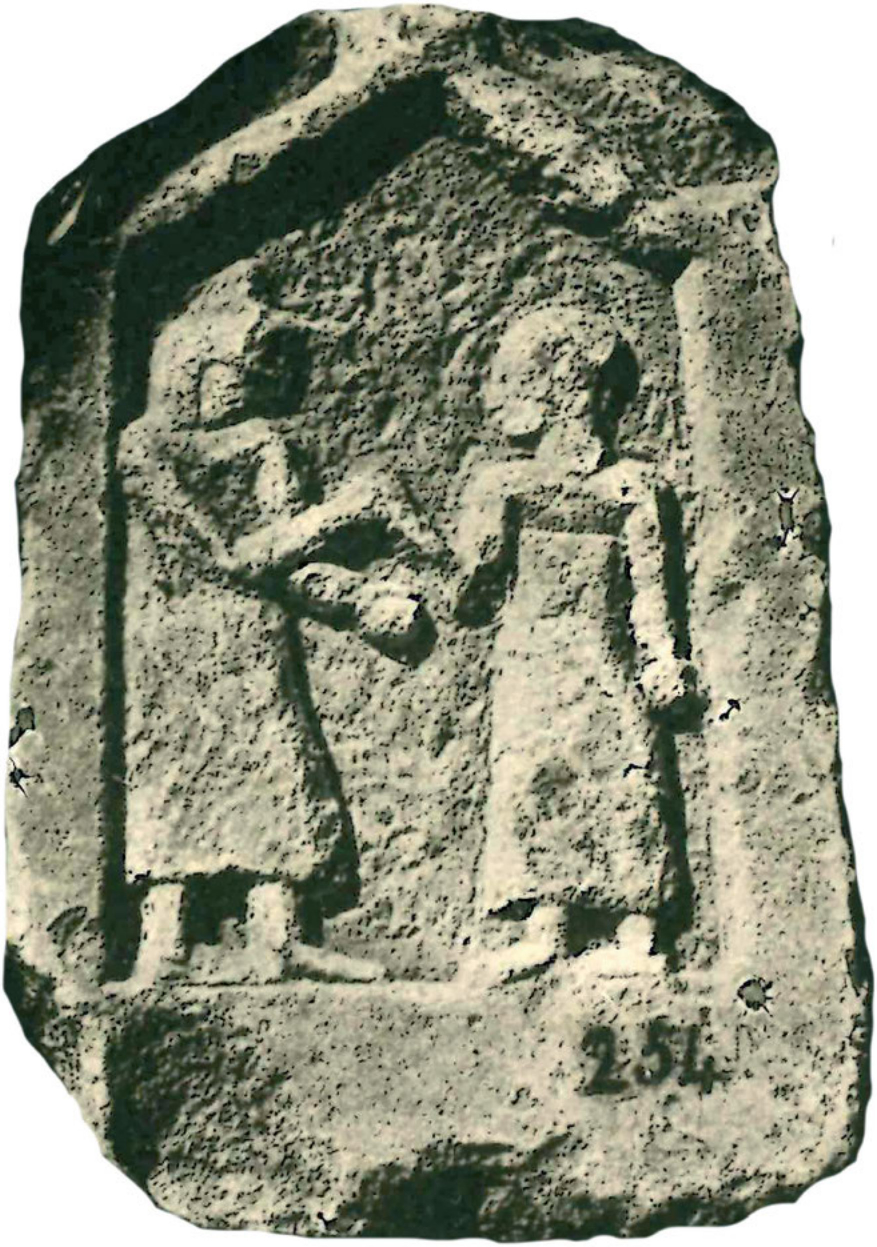

Fig. 4a: Samos. Hellenistic stela with a representation of two Isiac priests, one of them an *anubophorus*. Vathi Archaeological Museum, Samos. After Robert 1938, pl. X.

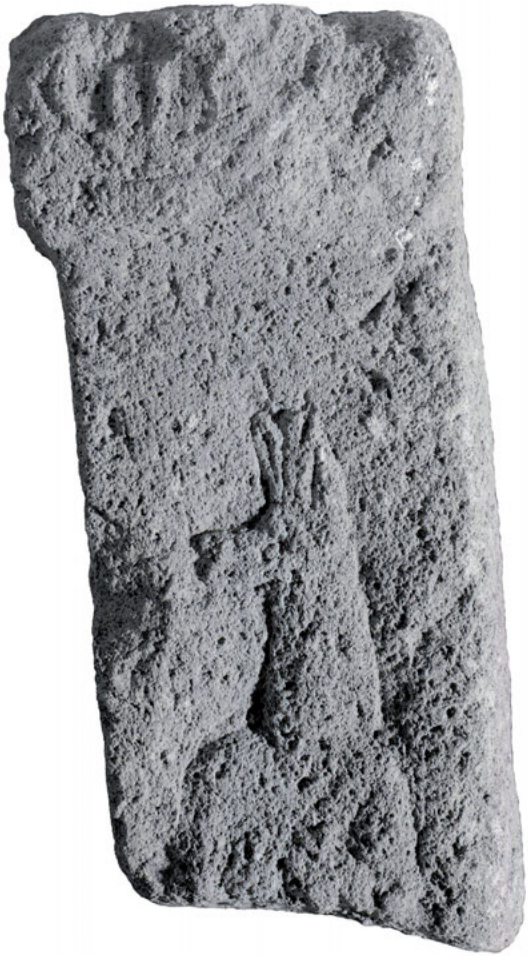

Fig. 4b: *Siscia*/Sisak (Pannonia Superior), late 2nd – early 3rd cent. CE. Altar with representation of an *anubophorus* (?) © National Museum of Slovenia, inv. no. L 146. Photo Tomaž Lauko.

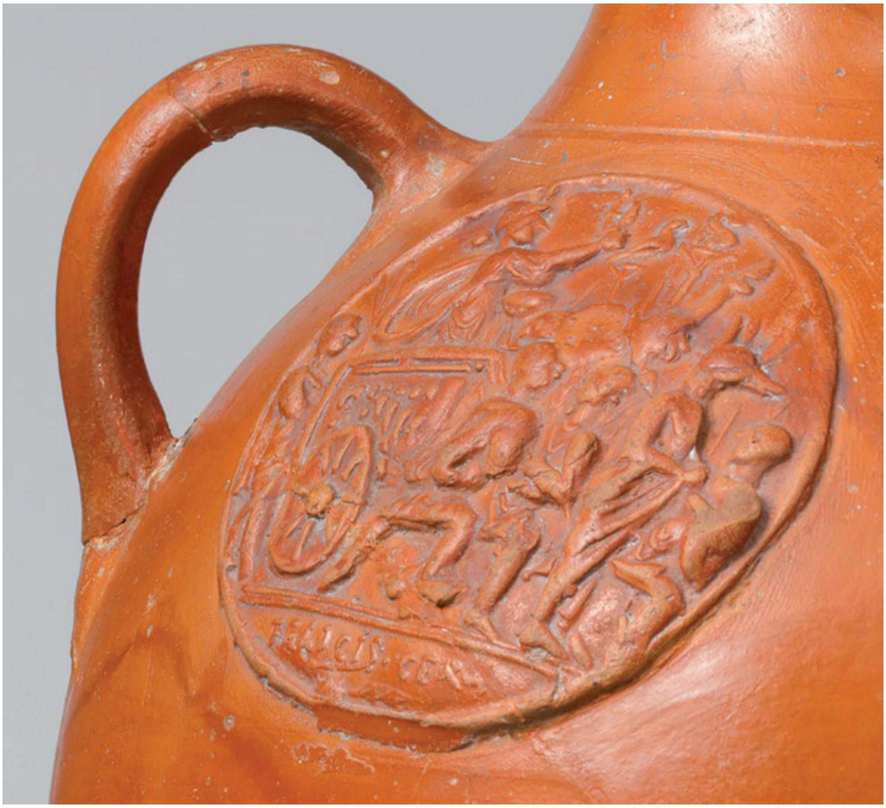

Fig. 4c: *Arausio*/Orange (Gallia Narbonensis), late 2nd – early 3rd cent. CE. Three-handled jug decorated with three moulded appliqué discs, one of which shows a procession with the cult statue of Isis being paraded in a cart and an *anubophorus* leading the cortège (© Metropolitan Museum of New York, inv. no. 17.194.870).

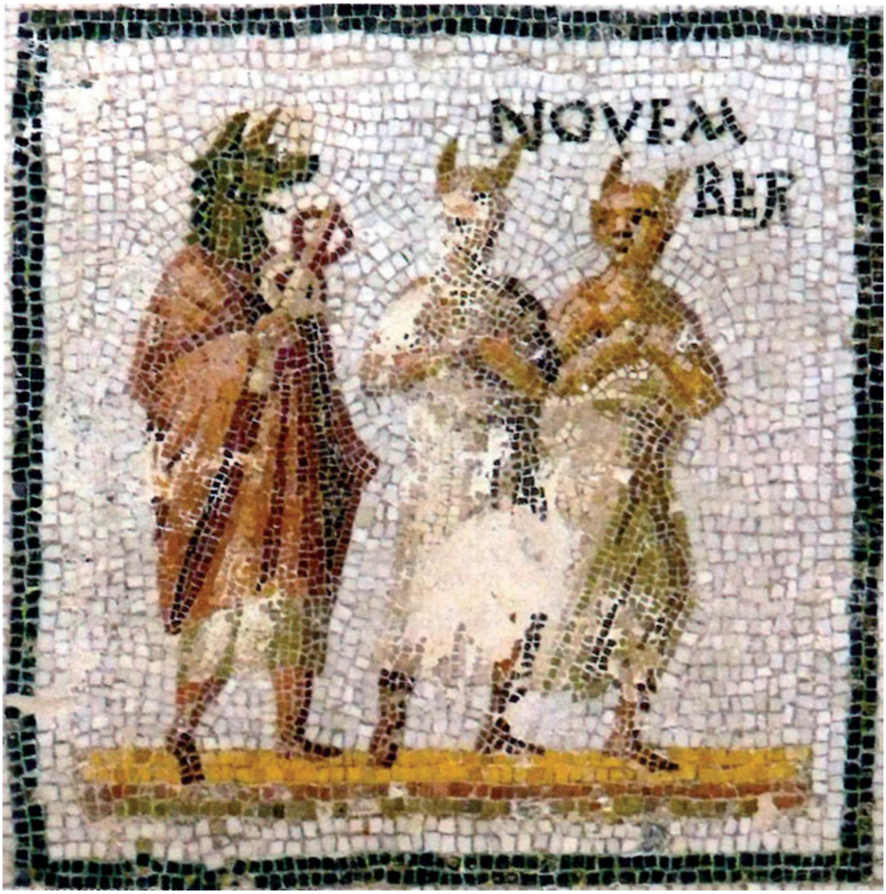

Fig. 5: The 'Calendar of *Thysdrus*' (El-Djem). Month of November (after *Archeo* 357 November 2014, 104).

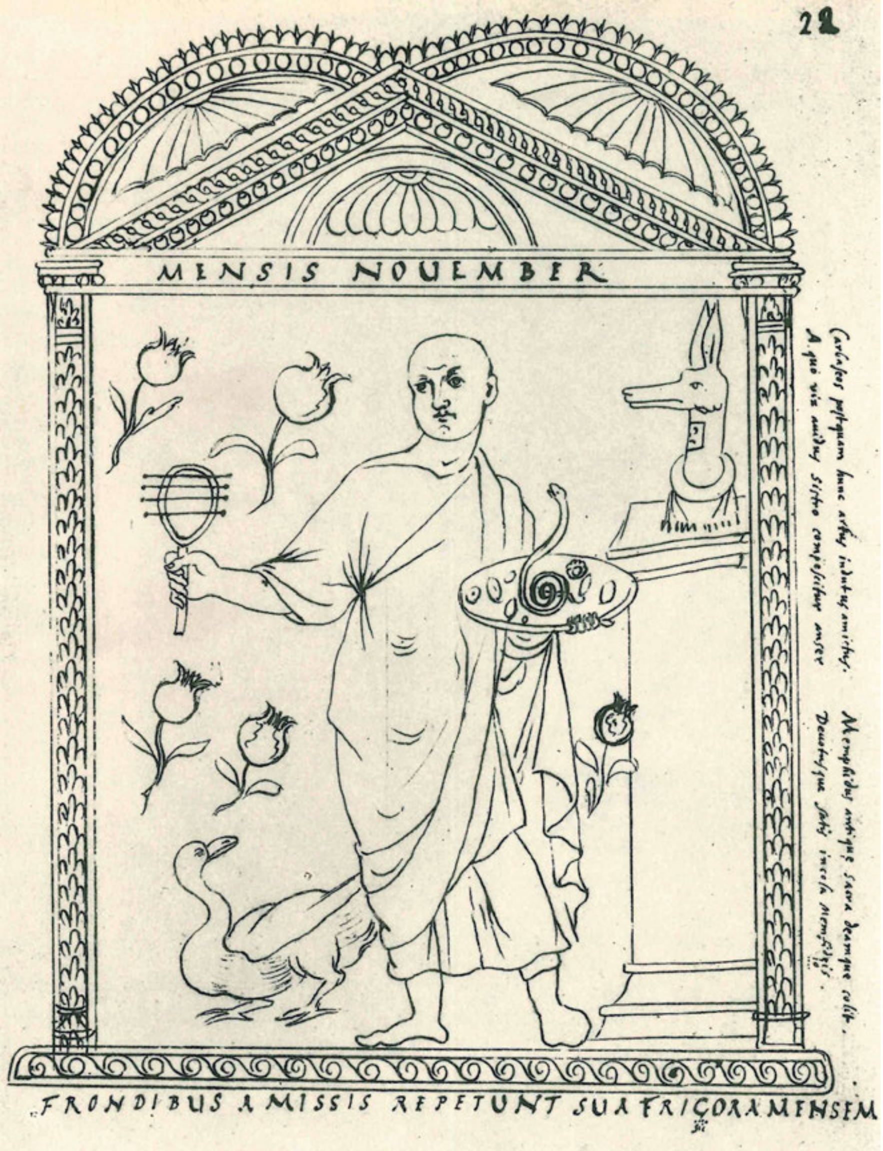
22
MENSIS NOUEMBER
Carbaseos postquam hunc artus indutus amictus Memphidos antiquae sacra deamque colit.
A quo vix avidus sistro compescitur anser Devotusque satis incola Memfidos.
FRONDIBUS AMISSIS REPETUNT SUA FRIGORA MENSEM

Fig. 6a: The 'Calendar of Philocalus' (354 CE). Month of November , drawn from a Carolingian ms in Luxembourg at the behest of the learned antiquarian Nicolas-Claude Fabri de Peiresc (1580 – 1637). The original ms disappeared after 1620. Vatican, Biblioteca Vaticana, ms. Barb. lat. 2154, f.22 (after Stern 1953, pl. XII.1).

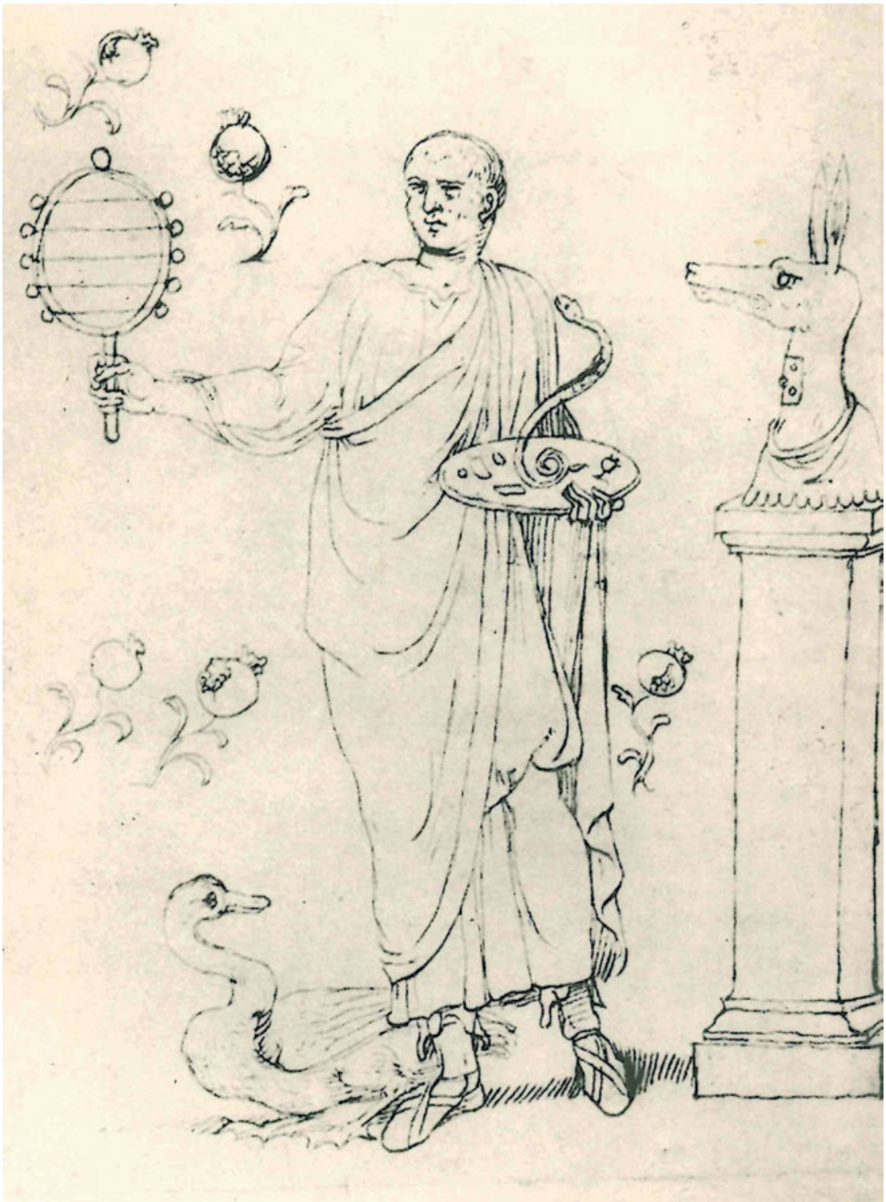

Fig. 6b: The ‘Calendar of Philocalus’ (354 CE). Month of November, likewise copied from the Carolingian ms. Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale ms. 7543–7549 (after Stern 1953, pl. XVII.2).

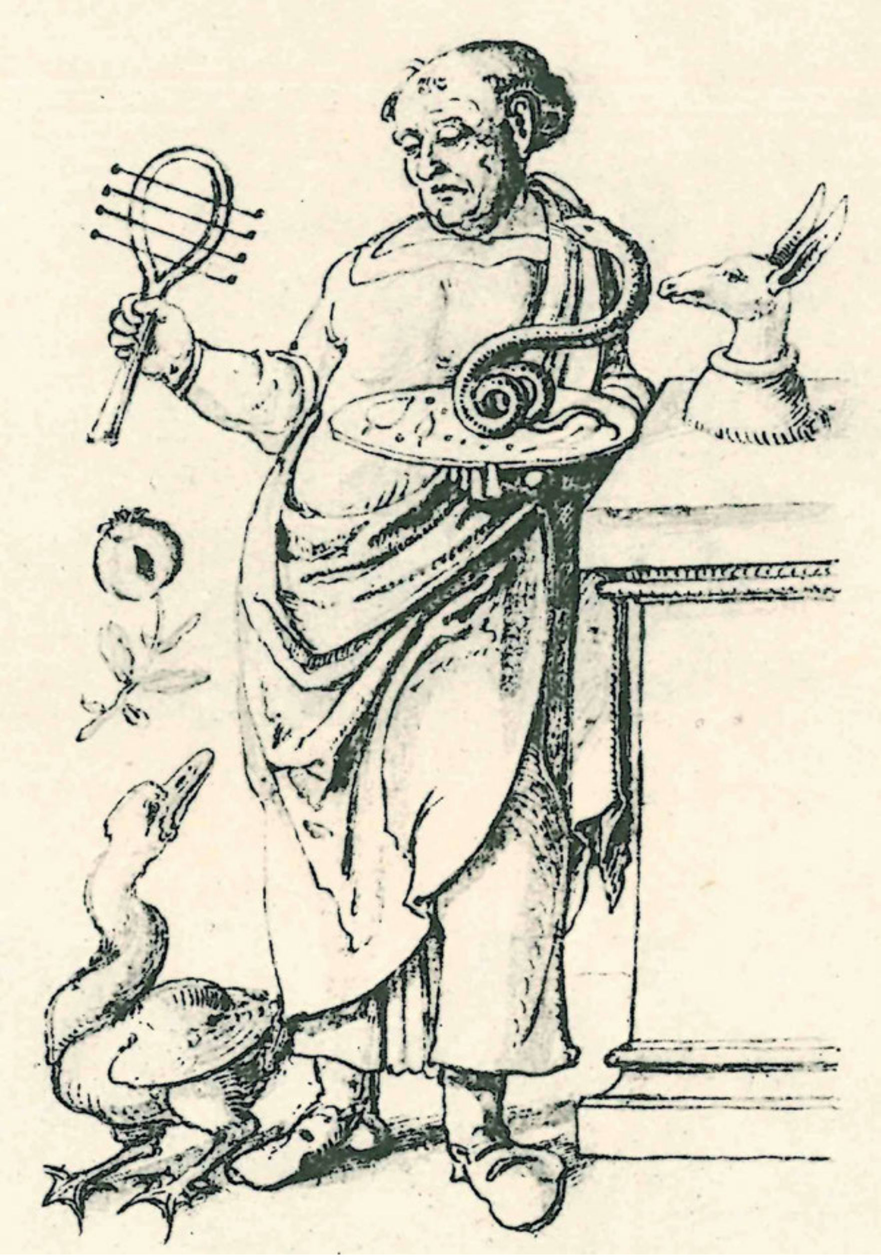

Fig. 6c: The 'Calendar of Philocalus' (354 CE). Month of November, again from the Carolingian ms. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, ms. 3416 [written between 1500 and 1510] (after Stern 1953, pl. XIX.1).

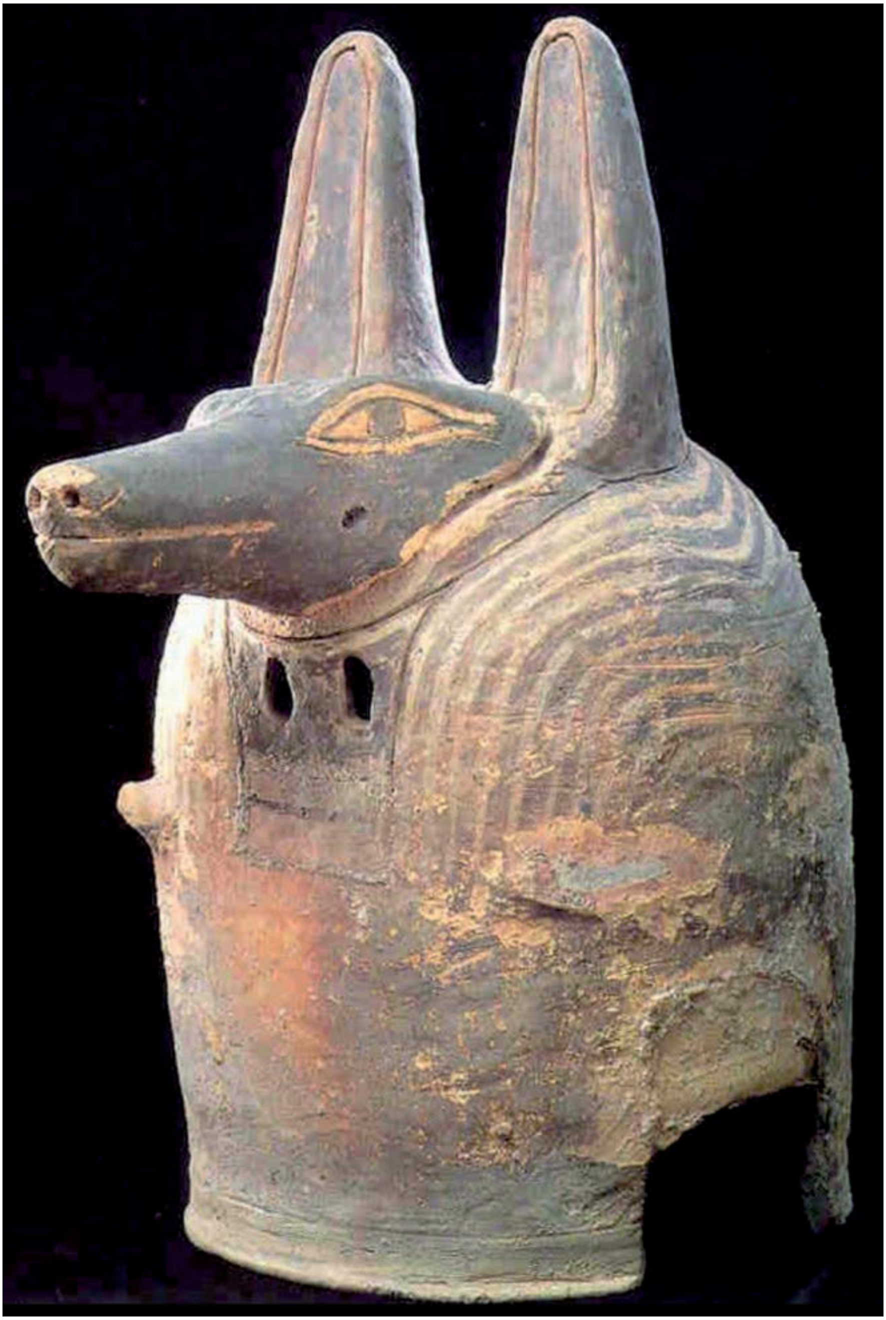

Fig. 7: Egypt, 6th – 4th cent. BCE. Terracotta mask of Anubis (Pelizaeus-Museum Hildesheim, inv. no. 1585) (after Eggebrecht 1993, 87).

Rubina Raja

‘You can leave your hat on.’ Priestly representations from Palmyra: Between visual genre, religious importance and social status

This contribution addresses the rich corpus of funerary portraits depicting Palmyrene priests. These representations make up 20 percent of male representations stemming from the funerary sphere in Palmyra and 10 percent of all funerary representations from Palmyra. A total of approximately 300 priestly portraits is a significant number; the tight chronology and the single provenance render this group unique in the ancient world. It is argued that these representations tell us less about priesthoods in Palmyra than about status-differentiation within Palmyrene society. Furthermore, they allow inferences concerning priestly appointments among elite families and raise more general questions about the significance of the family within religious contexts in Palmyra.

1. Introduction[1]

The oasis city of Palmyra in the Syrian Desert has been the subject of immense amounts of research over the last few decades.[2] After its rediscovery by the British travellers Robert Wood and James Dawkins in 1751, the city first came to be celebrated in literature, poetry and music, and later, from the 1920s, after the cre-

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[1] I would like to thank Jörg Rüpke and the ERC group ‘Lived Ancient Religion’ for sharing their knowledge with me over the last four years. The funding by the ERC should also be acknowledged, which was received under the 7th Framework Programme of the European Community under agreement no. 295555 (ERC-Advanced Grant ‘Lived Ancient Religion’). Furthermore, the generous financial support of the Carlsberg Foundation for the Palmyra Portrait Project should be acknowledged as well as the support of the Danish National Research Foundation (grant number 119) for the Centre of Excellence for Urban Network Evolutions, which has created new research opportunities feeding into my research on Palmyra. More can be learned about the Palmyra Portrait Project on the following webpage: http://projects.au.dk/palmyraportrait/.

[2] See Smith (2013) for a recent monograph on Palmyra as well as the important publications by Colledge (1976); Henning (2013); Kaizer (2002); Sartre and Sartre-Fauriat (2008), (2014), (2016); Schmidt-Colinet and Al-As’ad (2013) as well as Yon (2002). See also the newly published volume edited by Kropp and Raja (2016), which brings together a set of articles by leading Palmyra scholars. For further references see Raja (forthcoming a) and (forthcoming b).

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ation of the state of Syria, was the focus of intensified archaeological research, which has not ceased even after the outbreak of the Civil War in 2011/12 and the subsequent seizure of the site by the IS.[3] Much of this interest was originally inspired by the fame of Queen Zenobia, whose revolt against the Romans through her drastic expansion of the Palmyrene Empire led to the final downfall of the city when it was sacked by the troops of the emperor Aurelian in 273 CE. Palmyra flourished as a trade hub and a link between East and West, North and South. Camel caravans coming from the East were re-loaded there and the city also acted as a tax point for goods, which were distributed further on to the western parts of the ancient world and vice versa.[4] It was to a large extent this sizeable trade that caused the city to flourish and was responsible for its immense growth in the first three centuries CE. The wealth of the upper class of Palmyra led to an increased adornment of the city in terms of both architecture and visual culture.[5] The rich corpus of funerary sculpture from Palmyra began in the first century CE when the new material wealth first became apparent in the archaeological record. With more than 3,000 portraits still extant, it constitutes the largest single group of representations of individuals of the Roman period from any context.[6] This in itself makes the corpus an outstanding resource for scholars working on issues of identity, social representations and the funerary sphere. Representations of Palmyrene priests make up approximately 10 percent of the total number of individuals and almost 20 percent of the total number of males represented.[7] These are significant figures, which provide the opportunity of studying aspects of priesthood in Palmyra that are otherwise not available to us – the epigraphic sources, for example, tell us very little about the structure of the Palmyrene priesthoods or their status within the social order.[8] My main focus in this contribution on the representations of priests will be on the methodological issues of how we can best combine visual representations of priests used to adorn the seal-stones of the *loculi* (burial niches) with the epigraphic sources in order to arrive at a synthetic account of priesthood in Palmyra. I seek to tackle three main issues: the intention behind the choice by high-status individuals to commission representations of themselves dressed in priestly vestments and adorned in priestly insignia; the relation between such representations and actual religious functions; and the relation in Palmyra between socio-political and religious competition.

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[3] Wood and Dawkins (1753) is the earliest report of the rediscovery of Palmyra. See also Sartre and Sartre-Fauriat (2016) for an account of travellers and the history of Palmyra. The recent book by Veyne (2015) also deserves mention, despite criticism.

[4] Seland (2015); Meyer, Seland, and Anfinset (2016) for a collection of articles on the Palmyrene, the region of Palmyra.

[5] See Henning (2013) and Schmidt-Colinet and Al-As'ad (2013). The monograph by Andrade (2013) contains a chapter on Palmyra.

[6] See Raja (2015a) and Raja (2016) for introductions to the project.

[7] Raja (2016) is the first study of the funerary representations of priests based on the loculus-reliefs showing such men together with members of their family.

[8] See esp. Kaizer (2002, 213–259) for a discussion of the evidence relating to groups of worshippers, priests and beneficiaries. On pages 237–238 he discusses the various terms used for priestly titles in Palmyra.

2. The nature of the evidence for priesthoods in Palmyra

Palmyrene funerary portraiture was created in the first century CE within a cultural sphere that had long been in contact with Hellenistic traditions. We do not, however, know whether portraiture already existed in Palmyra during the Hellenistic period, since there is no clearly relevant archaeological evidence.[9] Grave markers in the shape of stelae showing full figures under life-size and the stelae *loculus* reliefs with full-figure representations from funerary contexts certainly draw on Hellenistic forebears, implying that an earlier portrait tradition did exist in the area – the region certainly was in contact with already-Hellenised areas.[10] Current research suggests that portraiture in Palmyra did not, as was formerly believed, come into being solely as a result of Roman influence, and that reliefs of Roman freedmen and their families cannot have been the prime models for the Palmyrene funerary portraits.[11] The Palmyrene elite did not view themselves as middle-class citizens of the Roman Empire but as a network of powerful families.[12] With the monumentalisation of the tombs in Palmyra, beginning with the tower tombs and followed by the underground tombs (*hypogea*) and the temple tombs, the elite found new ways of enhancing funerary commemoration and representation.[13] The 'extended portrait bust' (i. e. images that include the upper part of the trunk down to the navel) that was used to adorn the seal-stone of the *loculus* was the ideal medium for personalising the new funerary monuments. These *loculus* reliefs were not Roman-style head-and-shoulder busts, either in relief or in the round, as found in Italy, but represent an iconographic formula specific to Palmyra (see figs. 1 and 2).[14] More space for the display of visual elements and attributes was thereby created: the dead person could be personalised by having specific items added that might be worn or carried on the upper limbs.[15]

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[9] See Raja (forthcoming b) for an account of the state of evidence for the Hellenistic period. See also Schmidt-Colinet and Al-As'ad (2013) on an excavation that aimed at recovering Hellenistic phases in Palmyra but in the end found only Roman-period phases.

[10] See Raja (2015a, 335) as well as Parlasca (1976, 34–39) and Parlasca (1982, 22–23). Parlasca's studies on the Palmyrene funerary portraiture are seminal, and some aspects remain valid today, but they are now largely outdated due to the much-improved state of the evidence.

[11] See for example Zanker (1992) for the argument that the Palmyrene reliefs were inspired by freedmen reliefs.

[12] See Raja (forthcoming a), (forthcoming b), (forthcoming c) for discussion of Palmyrene identity.

Palmyrene funerary portraiture falls into several categories. The *loculus* reliefs are by far the most common medium employed. They typically consist of a rectangular limestone slab with a bust of the deceased carved in relief.[16] Some represent more than one individual (fig. 3).[17] Another type is the stela motif showing a complete figure less than life-size. This type, too, sometimes shows more than one individual.[18] Yet another distinct type is the banqueting scene, which occurs in several different formats: as big plaques set into a niche, as exedras in *hypogea* or as normal *loculus* reliefs (fig. 4).[19] Sarcophagi were introduced into Palmyra in the later second century CE. These afforded space on the on the lid for elaborate family scenes, while additional family members could be depicted on the body (figs. 5 and 6).[20] A few wall paintings as well as ceiling decorations also display funerary busts.[21] True sculpture in the round is seldom encountered in the evidence from the graves, and we can say nothing about their actual use.[22] We find representations of priests as a distinct visual genre across all these categories of funerary representations and throughout the first to third centuries CE. Other, non-funerary, representations of Palmyrene priests are known from the public and religious spheres.[23] These include reliefs from sacred contexts, such as the Sanctuary of Bel and of Nebo (fig. 7).[24] A few pieces of potential honorific statues depicting priests have also been found.[25] Another category of evidence depicting Palmyrene priests is the so-called banqueting *tesserae* (see figs. 8 and 9).[26] These small objects, usually made of clay, belonging to the public and religious sphere, were mostly found in sanctuaries and a few domestic contexts.[27] They functioned as entry tickets to religious banquets in Palmyrene sanctuaries and give ample insight into the organisation of religious life there.[28]

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[13] See Raja (forthcoming b) on the development of the grave monuments and the possible *Genese* of the funerary portraits. See also Henning (2013) on the tower tombs; Schmidt-Colinet (1992) and Raja and Sørensen (2015) on examples of the few temple tombs. See also Sadurska and Bounni (1994) for examples of hypogea with *in-situ* portraits. All of these discussions provide references to other monuments.

[14] See further Kropp and Raja (2014) as well as Raja (2015a) and (forthcoming b).

[15] On gestures and attributes see Heyn (2010) and (2012). Krag (2016) discusses female funerary portraiture; her forthcoming monograph assembles for the first time all known female funerary portraits from Palmyra using the database of the Palmyra Portrait Project (Krag forthcoming).

[16] In 1928 the Danish scholar Harald Ingholt published the first general study of these portraits on the basis of his own private archive (Ingholt 1928). Although slight adjustments to his chronological outline have had to be made, his book remains a standard work on the Palmyrene funerary sculptures.

[17] There are 145 loculus reliefs with multiple representations in the Palmyra Portrait Project database.

[18] There are 29 loculus stelae-motif reliefs with multiple representations in the database showing that this group was not as prevalent as the reliefs showing the bust representations.

[19] There are 93 banqueting reliefs in the Palmyra Portrait Project database, four of them with single representations, indicating that the single representations were not prevalent.

Earlier contributions have generally been satisfied with giving an introduction to the Palmyrene priests in the funerary sculpture.[29] But with the virtual completion of the Palmyra Portrait Project, a reliable overview can now be provided on the basis of good statistical evidence. Moreover, the *tesserae* have also been extensively studied within the project. These lines of enquiry have yielded new results concerning how to approach priesthood in Palmyra during the

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[20] There are 193 sarcophagi In the Palmyra Portrait Project database, some of them mere fragments. See further Parlasca (1984); Schmidt-Colinet (2009) discusses the famous sarcophagus depicting the same individual on the lid as well as on the box.

[21] There are c. 20 examples in the Palmyra Portrait Project database.

[22] See Raja and Sørensen (2015) for discussion of hitherto unpublished fragments of sculpture in the round from a Palmyrene tomb, Qasr Abjad.

[23] See Raja (2016); Heyn (2008); Stucky (1973) as well as Gawlikowski (1966) for further references to monuments from the public and religious sphere.

[24] On the reliefs from the Sanctuary of Bel, see Stucky (1973, 164 – 165); and on that from the Sanctuary of Nebo, (ibid., 167 – 168).

[25] Stucky (1973, 165 – 166). However, one of the examples he inclined to ascribe to the public sphere (p. 166) might well have come from a funerary context.

[26] See Raja (2015b) and (2015c) for recent contributions on the Palmyrene banqueting *tesserae*. But see still the older catalogue of Ingholt et al. (Ingholt, Seyrig, and Starcky 1955) and the important publication of a complete set of tesserae by Al'-As'ad et al. (Al'-As'ad, Briquel-Chatonnet, and Yon 2005).

[27] Seyrig (1940, 51 – 58); cf. Stucky (1973, 12).

[28] See Raja (2015b) and (2015c).

[29] See for example Heyn (2008). Stucky (1973) remains a standard account of the priestly representations in Palmyra.

Roman period. The epigraphic and literary evidence for public priests in Palmyra and their family relations does not give us much of an idea of what it meant to hold a priesthood in the oasis city, let alone about the organisation of such priesthoods.[30] One important group we do know of is the Bene Komare, meaning 'sons of the priests'.[31] It does not, however, seem to have provided priests for all cults within the city.[32] But its very existence, together with other scattered iconographical evidence, such as the relief of the three generations of priests shown on a relief from the Sanctuary of Nebo, does seem to underline that Palmyrene priesthoods were, if not formally hereditary, then at least handed down within families from fathers to sons, from uncles to nephews or even from grandfathers to grandsons.[33]

No evidence survives from Palmyra that explicitly tells us about professional associations within the religious sphere.[34] However, recent research on the Palmyrene banqueting *tesserae* does suggest that such groups existed and were important actors in the religious life of the city, among other things because they could act across extended families (or 'tribes') and facilitated structured intercourse between these groups.[35] The social structure of Palmyra was centred around extended families: they and their genealogies figure largely in inscriptions set up in public spaces as well as in funerary representations.[36] This practice demonstratively underlined the importance of the family and its history but also situated high-status individuals and their families within the broader network of great families in Palmyra. The religious sphere thus seems to have been a field in which the social prominence of selected families intersected with religious standing within Palmyrene society. It also provided possibilities for interaction – perhaps even demanded interaction – in order to deal with affairs whose ramifications went beyond the sphere of the family.[37]

On the other hand, it must be admitted that we have no explicit evidence for the structure of the religious groups within Palmyrene society and their precise functions, or even their relationship to Palmyrene priesthoods.[38] It is impossible to infer with any assurance the role of priesthood in Palmyra during the Roman period from the literary and epigraphic evidence. However, it does seem that, apart from some slight evidence for a sanctuary and possibly a priesthood of the imperial cult, the structure of Palmyrene religious life remained quite untouched by imperial trends.[39] It would not come as a surprise, however, if the imperial cult found its way into the Palmyrene world in the Roman period, since, as a highly flexible institution, it seems to have been easily integrated into already Hellenised areas and expressed a conveniently ill-defined adherence to the Roman system of power.

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[30] See again Kaizer (2002, 213–259). A summary can be found in Raja (2016, 128–129).

[31] See e.g. Kaizer (2002, 240).

[32] Kaizer (2002, 240).

[33] See Stucky (1973); Kaizer (2002, 240); Raja (2016, 142–144).

[34] Kaizer (2002, 215–216).

[35] Raja (2015c).

[36] See for example Yon (2002).

[37] Kaizer (2002, 215).

[38] Kaizer (2002, 216). For a recent discussion of the sources relating to religious dining at Palmyra, see Gnoli (2016, 31–41).

3. Representations of Palmyrene priests – a stable visual genre among the funerary representations

Any attempt to assess the evidence for Palmyrene priests must rely very heavily on the representations of priests deriving from funerary contexts. The Palmyra Portrait Project has registered 289 portraits of this kind,[40] which occur on a total of 250 objects of all types.[41] There is in addition a group of single heads, broken or sawn off as art trophies for museums, which have not yet been assigned to their original monuments.

As I have pointed out, Palmyrene funerary sculpture came into existence during the first century CE.[42] From then on, there was a steady increase in production until 273 CE when it seems to have ceased after the capture of the city by the Romans.[43] The representation of priests in funerary contexts follows the same pattern. Two main chronological groups can be made out: 1) there was a noticeable increase in such depictions from the first century CE to the middle of the second century CE; 2) numbers continue to increase, albeit less markedly, from then on until 273 CE. The only exception was the group of so-called 'former priests'. These are men displayed in ordinary clothing worn by men in the funerary portraiture – Greek- and Parthian-style clothing – and wearing different hair styles. Their priestly hats are displayed beside them, usually on a pedestal.[44] This particular representation, however, was more than anything else a fashion phenomenon, allowing priesthood holders to combine a display of fashionable clothing and hairstyles with a record of their priesthood. We should think of such representations as genre fusions, combining traditional representations of high-status males with those depicting priesthood.

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[39] See Kaizer (2002, 239; 148 – 149).

[40] The number has now increased slightly, but this does not affect the overall statistics. The corpus now includes more than 3,000 portraits. The statistical distribution, however, has remained unchanged since we reached the 1,000 mark.

[41] These can be broken down as follows: 87 individual portraits displayed on 86 *loculus* reliefs; two priestly portraits displayed on one loculus stelae relief; 10 banquet reliefs displaying a total of 84 priests; 84 portraits of priests displayed on a total of 49 sarcophagi (a few complete but most more or less fragmentary); three free-standing sculptures of priests; one ceiling decoration displaying two priests; 10 miscellaneous objects displaying in total 12 priestly portraits. For the details, see Raja (2016, 131).

[42] Raja (2015a, 337).

[43] See Sadurska and Bounni (1994); see also Colledge (1976).

On the *loculus* reliefs, priests are almost always depicted alone. Only in four cases out of 87 are they accompanied by other family members. In a recent article, I argued that this preference was mainly due to the high status of the families that held public priesthoods.[45] Since everyone knew that priesthood was an exclusive privilege, it was unnecessary to underline family relations in their *loculus* reliefs. Single representations of priests thus communicated high social status simply by virtue of the image. Moreover, we must not forget that these representations were set up in groups inside the *hypogea*, surrounded by family members, closer and more distant relations. The graves as such functioned as large family-portrait galleries, not static ones as is often supposed.[46] Family constellations were expanded and extended and even changed over time, since we know that parts of tombs could be demolished in order to make way for new and larger niches, for example.

The case is quite different with the sarcophagi. On both the lids and the decorated boxes, we find up to five priests represented within one family scene.[47] This is, however, not surprising, since the sarcophagus was a much more elaborate medium than the *loculus* relief: both lids and boxes could carry numerous full-figure representations. It is well-known that such items were expensive to produce and thus reserved for the wealthy; in the case of Palmyra, this means the richest families or branches of families, which were often also those within which priesthoods descended. The depictions on sarcophagi of priests across generations are thus best understood as showcases for family status within Palmyrene society.[48]

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[44] See below for further interpretation.

[45] Raja (2016).

[46] The situation within the underground tombs is, however, highly complex, and the few well-excavated cases we are forced to rely on do not give a complete overview. From cession texts displayed on the entrance to *hypogea*, we know that funerary portraits might be removed and new ones inserted. Burials could also be cleaned out and new extensions of underground tombs replace earlier ones. Parts of tomb complexes could also be sold on to other families. For a collection of sources concerning these matters, see Raja forthcoming c. Cussini (2016, 42–52) provides a number of examples of the extension and sale of parts of tombs.

[47] Raja forthcoming b and Raja forthcoming c.

Stylistically, the representation of priests, be it on the *loculus* reliefs or in the scenes on sarcophagi, did not change much over the centuries. As in the case of other representations of male figures in the funerary sphere, the priests were fairly conservative. They kept to a certain scheme, depicting the dead person in recognisably priestly attire: a cloak fastened at the shoulder, a tunic – sometimes embroidered – underneath it, the priestly hat on the shaved head. The face is clean shaven. Ritual performance is indicated solely by the presence of a libation pitcher and an incense bowl.[49] By contrast, the female portraiture shows a wide variety both of stylistic developments over time and diversity within any given period. What does this iconographic stability tell us about Palmyrene priesthoods? Perhaps not very much. A degree of personalisation was achieved by combining different facial traits, clothing details and attributes, as well as the inscription, which often accompanied the image and might include the family's genealogy for up to five generations.

Generally speaking then, Palmyrene funerary portraits depicting men were not meant to emphasise difference but to underline the individual's membership of the wealthy stratum of Palmyrene society. 'Individuality' was merely hinted at, and might anyway be purely typical, a construction by the workshop. The Palmyrene representations of priests fall into this category of male representations, except that they add a hint of special distinction, in that the body and even facial traits seem to be even more schematic, perhaps even sterner, than in the case of non-priests. The treatment of the body and face (as well as the hat) thus communicate the social status and symbolic capital that was both the necessary condition of, and the reward for, the acquisition of a priesthood. With regard to the issue of the embodiment of religious knowledge, however, we can say little on the basis of these representations. They seem devoid of explicitly religious connotations: for example, none of the numerous inscriptions, either on the *loculus* reliefs or the sarcophagi, actually name the priesthoods held by these men.[50] Whatever their religious significance may have been, we must conclude that the tomb was not considered an appropriate place to emphasise such matters

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[48] 84 sarcophagi out of a total of 193 carry representations of priests.

[49] Heyn (2008); Stucky (1973).

[50] Raja (2016, 141–143).

– quite unlike the lists of honours and achievements we find among Roman senators and equestrians, which often mention the names of priesthoods acquired.

4. The term ‘modius’

The Palmyrene priestly hat was a round hat with a flat top. It is depicted in a variety of designs, more or less elaborate, and it has been speculated that it might have been made of some sort of felt (like a tarbush or ‘fez’).[51] The iconography of Palmyrene priests shows them wearing such a hat; alternatively, it is represented beside them as a status marker. The latter convention, with the hat located either on a pedestal next to the priest or being held by a person presenting it to him, has generally been interpreted as indicating that the person was a former priest, who no longer held such an office.[52] However, new research suggests that these representations are more of a fashion trend where hairstyles and non-priestly (secular), sometimes elaborate, clothing could be displayed together with the status symbol of the priesthood.[53]

It has long been usual in the scholarship to refer to this hat as a ‘modius’.[54] Priests in the Roman Near East usually wear hats in the form of a complete cone with an apex.[55] The Palmyrene priests, however, wear the round flat-topped hat, independently of whether they are depicted within Palmyra or outside it. The form seems to draw upon Hellenistic forerunners, such as those depicted on the Hellenistic stelae from Umm al-Ahmad on the Phoenician coast.[56] However, since we do not know anything about religion and priesthood in Palmyra during the Hellenistic period, we cannot exclude the possibility that the convention originated in Palmyra itself.

On the other hand, it is certain that men depicted with such hats in Palmyra were indeed priests. A few inscriptions, such as those on the relief from the Sanctuary of Nebo, confirm this beyond doubt,[57] as do the inscriptions and representations on the banqueting *tesserae*.[58] There is, however, not a shred of evidence to tell us what it was called. In the absence of such knowledge, scholars have appropriated the term ‘modius’ from the corn measure found on the head of Serapis. In my view, this was a poor analogy, since there is very little formal resemblance between the modius of Serapis and the hat worn by the Palmyrene priests. We should simply refer to the Palmyrene priests’ hat as a ‘hat’. The danger of a pseudo-learned term such as modius is that it implies religious connotations which are probably quite irrelevant to the religious situation in Palmyra. It is much more likely that the Palmyrene hat served as a deliberate mark of local distinction vis-à-vis the wide-spread near-eastern conical priests’ hat.

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[51] Cf. Kaizer (2002, 235).

[52] E. g. Kaizer (2002, 236) relying on earlier discussions such as those in Stucky (1973) and Gawlikowski (1966).

[53] For this argument, see Raja (2016). All of the 23 examples of males displayed next to their priestly hats from a funerary context belong either to the late second century CE (six examples) or the third (17 examples). This is a clear indication that we have to do with a fashion phenomenon rather than a convention indicating that the individual had once held a priesthood.

[54] Kaizer (2002, 235).

[55] See Drijvers (1976, 22) for the typology; on the clothing of Palmyrene priests, note Stucky (1973, 176I); Balty (1996, 439).

[56] Drijvers (1976, 22).

5. Visual representations and social reality – the implications of the representations of the Palmyrene priests

Having concluded that the funerary representations of Palmyrene priests tell us less about priesthood in Palmyra than about status differentiation within Palmyrene society, we should ask about the likely relation between the visual representations and religious reality in ancient Palmyra. Are we really to imagine that 20 percent of all Palmyrene men held priesthoods? We might perhaps push the evidence a little further and actually use this material to enquire into the structure of priesthoods in Palmyra, of which we know so little through epigraphy. I have stressed that 20 percent of the male representations depict Palmyrene priests is a significant proportion. It is, however, difficult to compare with situations in other parts of the Roman Empire, since no other region has provided a similar body of evidence. However, for what it is worth, a rough count of priestly representations from Rome and other provinces reveals that the proportion in Palmyra seems to have been unique. This, however, might of course be due to the mere fact that so much funerary sculpture has survived there. Nonetheless, it would surely be fair to conclude that there was a large percentage of priestly representations in funerary contexts in Palmyra. My inference from this is that priesthood was important primarily as a status symbol.

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[57] Stucky (1973, 167–168). See further Heyn (2008, 185); Tanabe (1986, pl. 173); Milik (1972, 164) for the inscriptions.

[58] See Ingholt, Seyrig and Starcky (1955).

We may now return to the claim made above that public priesthood was a privilege reserved for men belonging to certain extended families and even then not to all such males. Some sarcophagi lids show fathers represented as priests together with their sons, some of whom are depicted as priests and some not.[59] Do such representations reflect actual family constellations? Or are they merely typical or generic images of high-status families? We can hardly answer such questions. We have no evidence of how many legitimate male children an average elite Palmyrene woman may have had, or whether some of the children may already themselves be deceased. However, the frequent combination of several representational categories[60] on the same sarcophagus lid suggests that these scenes do indeed represent (idealised) extended nuclear families, a conclusion confirmed by the accompanying inscriptions.[61] In this way, the lids became, on the one hand, a window onto the ideal Palmyrene family as well as being a showcase for awareness of styles, varieties and fashions available in the Palmyrene funerary sphere.[62] The priestly representations in the *loculus* reliefs as well as sarcophagus scenes played a central role in this context.

It is thus hard to imagine that the priestly representations do not reflect some sort of social reality. It seems unlikely that a man would have himself depicted as a Palmyrene priest in a funerary context if he had never held such an office. The reverse does not hold true, however: we simply do not know whether priests (or ex-priests) might have chosen to be depicted in secular attire. On the other hand, such images are of course not transcripts of reality. On the basis of statistics drawn from the database of the Palmyra Portrait Project, we can establish that representations of men outnumber those of women by a factor of 1.5.[63] Children, too, are depicted, but not frequently, and when they are, they very often occur together with deceased parents, in particular their mothers, underlining the status which motherhood held in Palmyrene society.[64] Other representations of extended nuclear families, such as uncles, nephews and nieces, and siblings assembled together, are likewise ideal types. All such representations serve to reproduce a social and, no doubt, political norm whereby the family was the crucial context of social life. In much the same way, images of priests in funerary contexts reproduce a normative claim that within the Palmyrene elite, religious office was primarily a statement about status, both ascribed and achieved.

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[59] For one example showing three priests on the lid and two on the matching box from the Hypogaeum of Yarhai, west exedra, Valley of the Tombs (west) see: Tanabe (1986, 274–275, pl. 241–244); Cantineau (1938, 157, d); Amy and Seyrig (1936, 250, pl. XLVII, 1).

[60] ‘Representational types’ include men in Greek and Parthian clothing, men depicted as priests, women depicted in a variety of head gear and jewellery, as well as depictions of children.

[61] On family constellations in Palmyrene funerary sculpture, see Raja forthcoming c.

[62] Two reclining men are shown on a relief from the Hypogaeum of Yarhai, west exedra, Valley of the Tombs (west): see Tanabe (1986, 270–272, pl. 237–240); Amy and Seyrig (1936, pl.XLVI, 1–2). For another example of a sarcophagus lid, in this case from the tomb of ʽAlaine, Valley of Tombs (west), depicting a reclining male figure, four standing figures and one female figure seated on a chair at the end of the banqueting bed: Fortin (1999, 296, cat. no. 331); Sadurska and Bounni (1994, 174–176, cat. 232, fig. 248); Tanabe (1986, 405–415, pl. 374–384); Taha (1982, fig. IV); Sadurska (1977, 76–93, cat. no. 1, figs. 18–35, pl. XI); Sadurska (1976, 11–33, figs. 11–12).

[63] 60 % to 40 %: Raja (2016 and forthcoming b).

6. Conclusion: Reconsidering the social and religious meaning of priesthood in Palmyra

We may now reconsider aspects of the social and religious meaning of priesthood in Palmyra during the Roman period. As I have repeatedly stressed, we do not know much about the structure of Palmyrene priesthoods at any time. On the other hand, by combining all our sources of information – epigraphic evidence, the very numerous banqueting *tesserae* with depictions of priests, the reliefs from the public and religious spheres as well as the corpus of funerary representations – we can venture some conclusions about the status of priesthood within Palmyrene society. First of all, priesthood seems to have carried a profound social importance, which went beyond the priesthood itself and provided a notable index of the status of a particular family. The numerous representations of individual priests on the *loculus* reliefs allow us to conclude that being represented as a priest in itself carried implications of a certain societal status, which in turn meant that one could dispense with representations of other family members in this context. When sarcophagi were introduced, the ample surface of the lids offered the possibility of displaying larger family constellations. Priestly representations, often including representations of priestly office held across generations, now became a favoured motif. This again underlines the status implications of depictions of priesthood. We must conclude that such representations were mainly concerned with communicating the social status of families rather than emphasising the religious implications of priesthood.

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[64] Krag and Raja (2016) have for the first time collected all representations of women and children depicted together in the *loculus* reliefs. S. Ringsborg (Aarhus University, Denmark) submitted an MA thesis on the child representations on these reliefs in August 2016.

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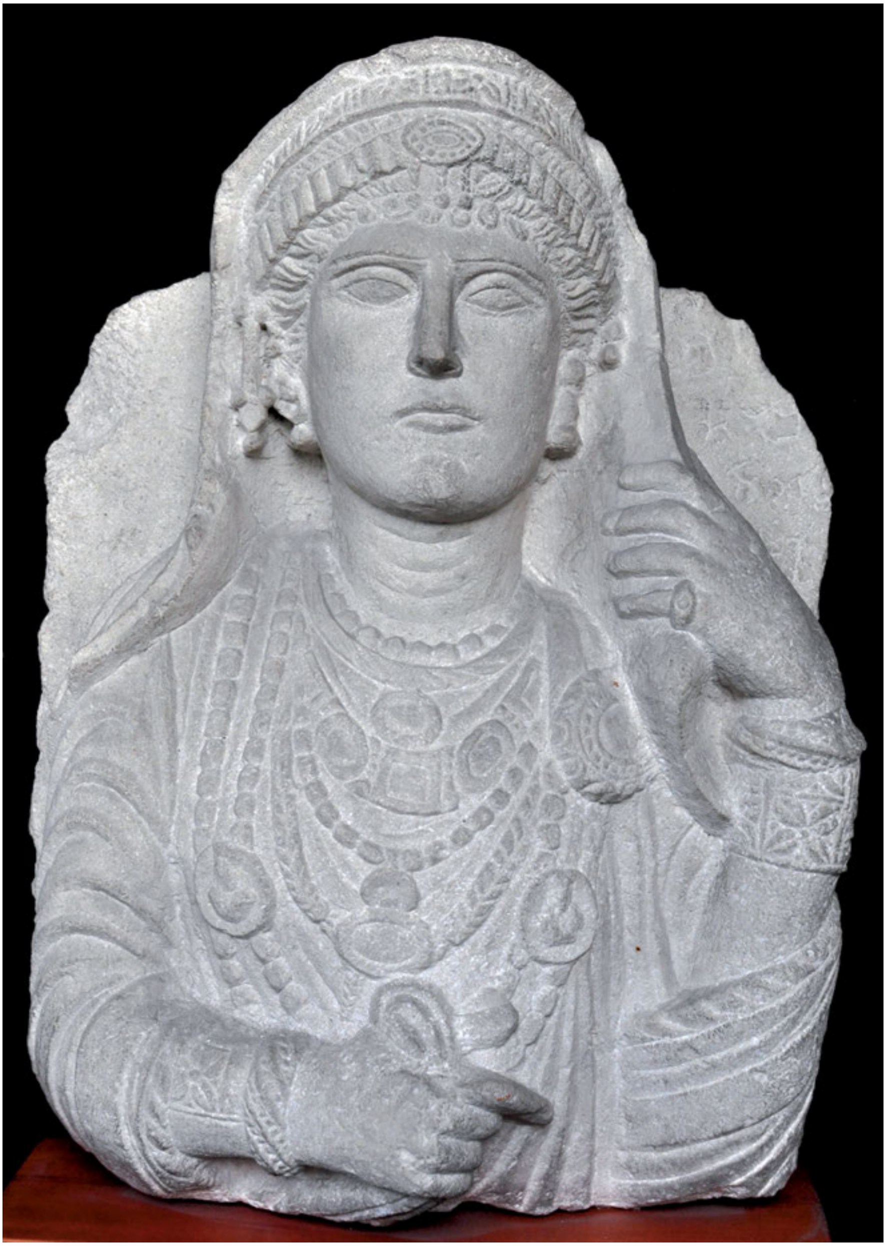

Fig. 1: *Loculus* relief with single representation of a female, dated to 230 – 250 CE. The inscription reads: '[Ša]lma[t], daughter of Taimê. Alas'. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen (I.N. 1054). Courtesy of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, © The Palmyra Portrait Project.

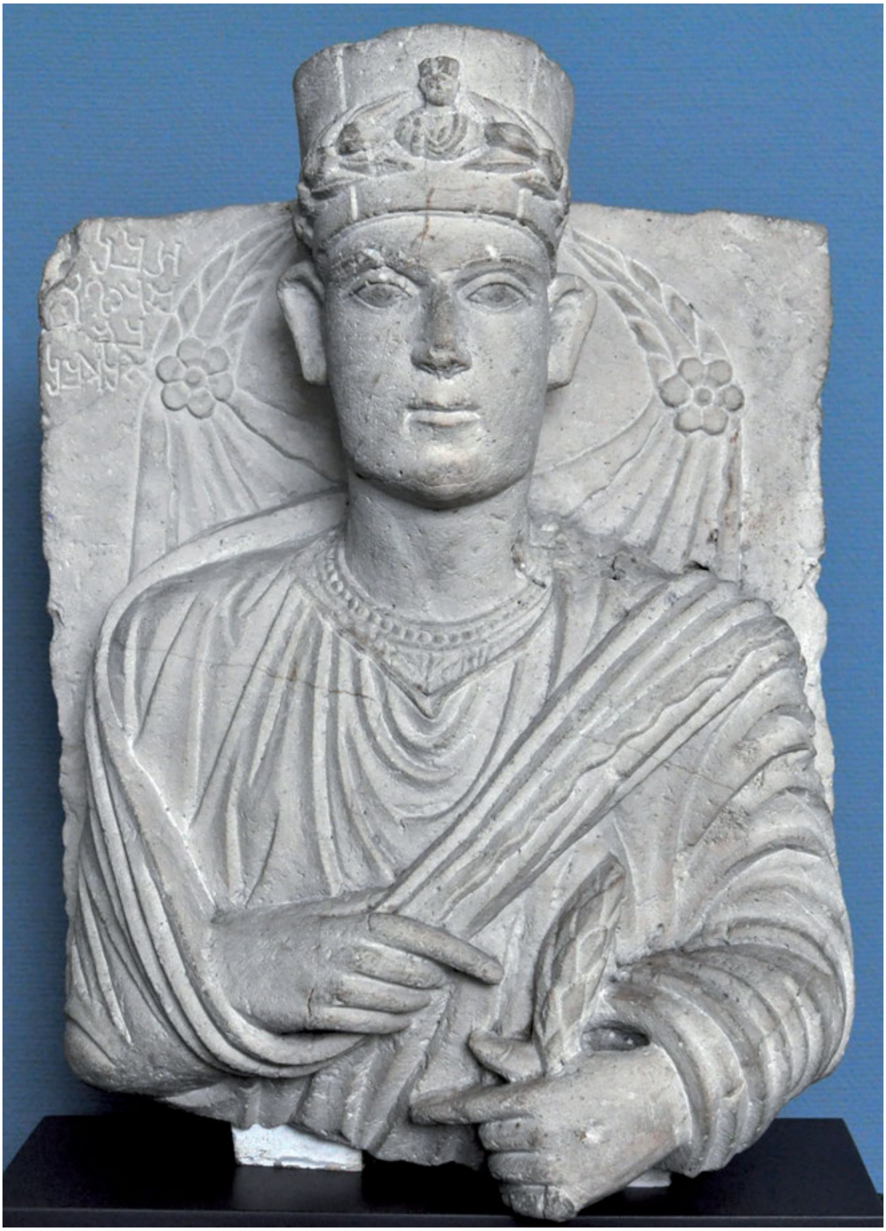

Fig. 2: *Loculus* relief with single representation of a Palmyrene priest. The relief is dated to 230 – 250 CE. The inscription reads: ‘Alas! Mariôn, son of ʾElâhbêl’. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen (I.N. 1033). Courtesy of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, © The Palmyra Portrait Project.

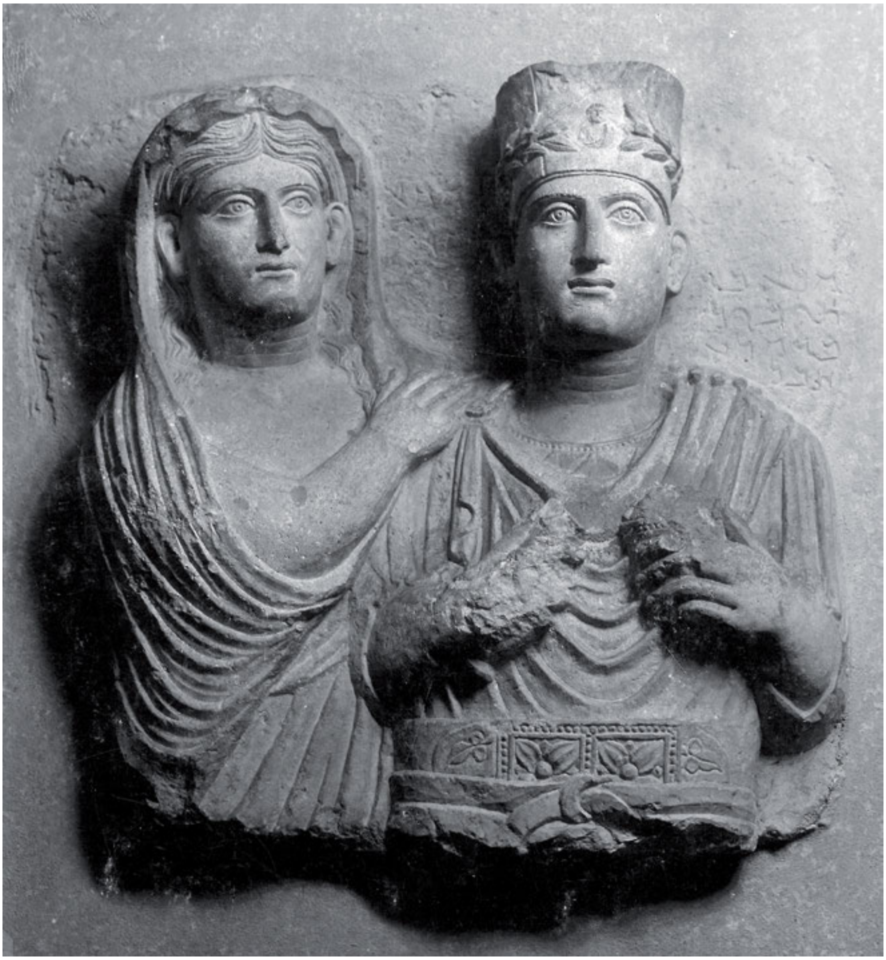

Fig. 3: *Loculus* relief depicting a Palmyrene priest and woman who places her right hand on his shoulder. This motif connotes mourning for an adult who has died before the parents. It is, however, rare for priests to be configured with other individuals in *loculus* reliefs (we only know of four). Current location of the piece is unknown. Photo: Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen. © The Palmyra Portrait Project.

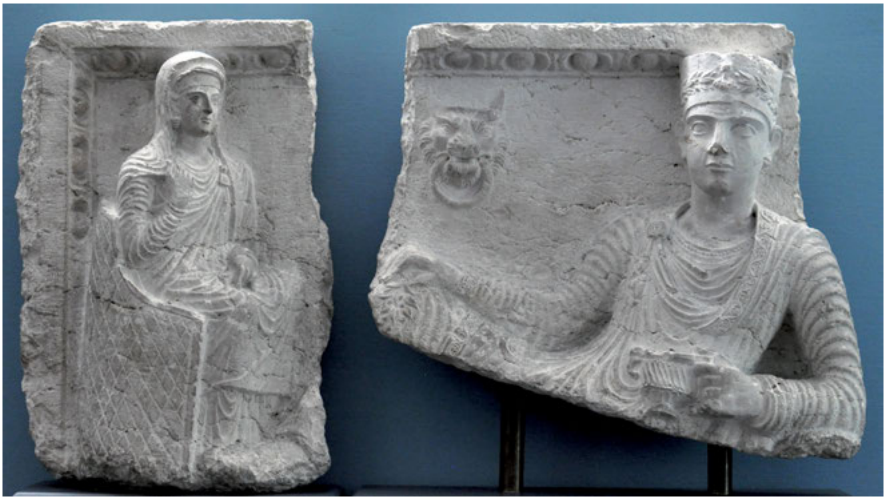

Fig. 4: Banquet *loculus* relief depicting a reclining priest and a seated woman. The relief is dated by inscription to 146 – 147 CE. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen (I.N.: 1160/I.N.: 1159). The inscription reads: ‘Malikû, son of Lišamš, son of Ḥannabêl ʾAʿabî, year (4)58. Šimʿôn, son of Ḥairân, Firdûsî, his wife’. Courtesy of Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, © The Palmyra Portrait Project.

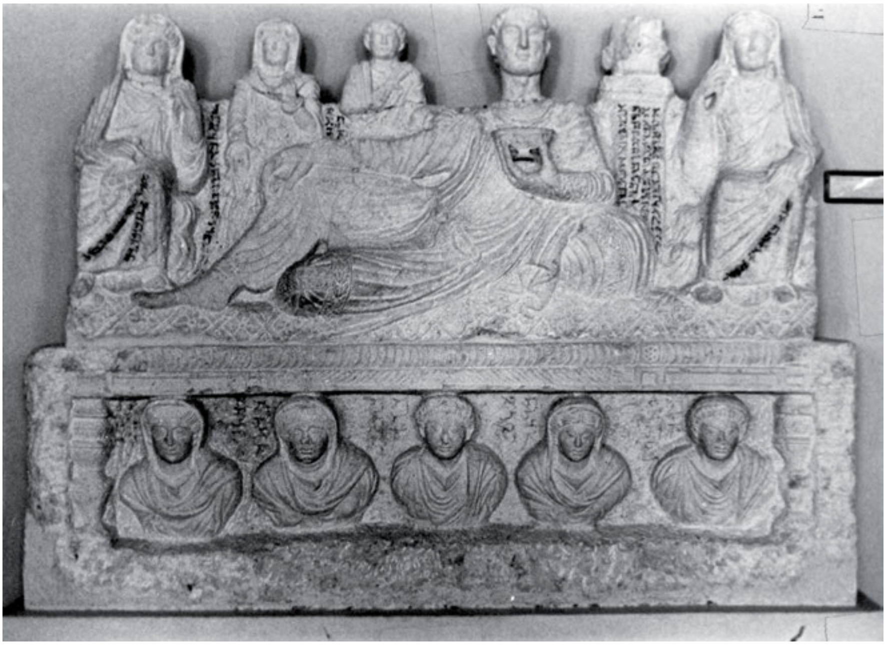

Fig. 5: Complete sarcophagus from the *hypogeum* of the Bôlbarak family, Valley of the Tombs. Lid with two seated women, reclining priest and two standing individuals; box depicting three women and two men. The sarcophagus is dated by the inscription to 239 CE. Palmyra Museum, Palmyra, Syria (I.N.: 1795/6644, 1796/6645). For the inscriptions see PAT nos. 1526 – 1535. Photo: Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, © The Palmyra Portrait Project.

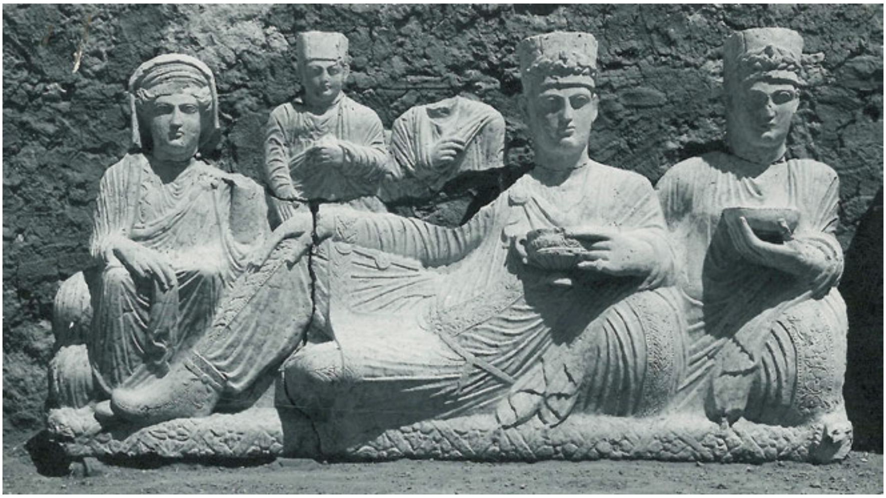

Fig. 6: Sarcophagus lid with a seated woman, two reclining priests and two standing individuals, a priest and a man; box depicting two priests and two women. The sarcophagus is dated to between 237 – 255 CE and originally came from the Hypogeum of Yarḥai, west exedra, central *triclinium*, Valley of the Tombs. National Museum of Damascus, Damascus, Syria. Photo: Ingholt Archive, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen, © The Palmyra Portrait Project.

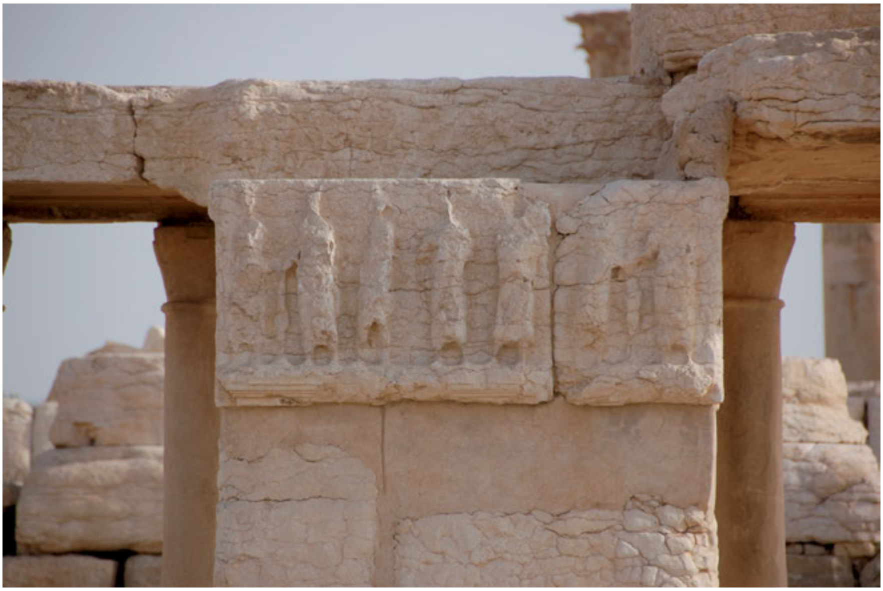

Fig. 7: Frieze of the altar in the Sanctaury of Nebo in Palmyra. The frieze depicts Palmyrene priests in the act of sacrificing. © Rubina Raja.

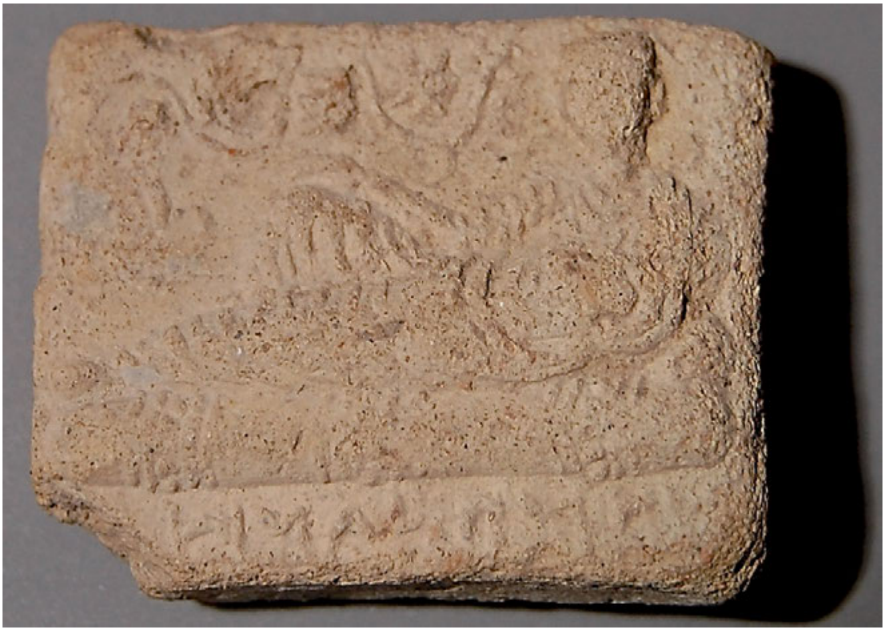

Fig. 8: Tessera 186, obverse, showing a reclining Palmyrene priest (Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993). © Rubina Raja.

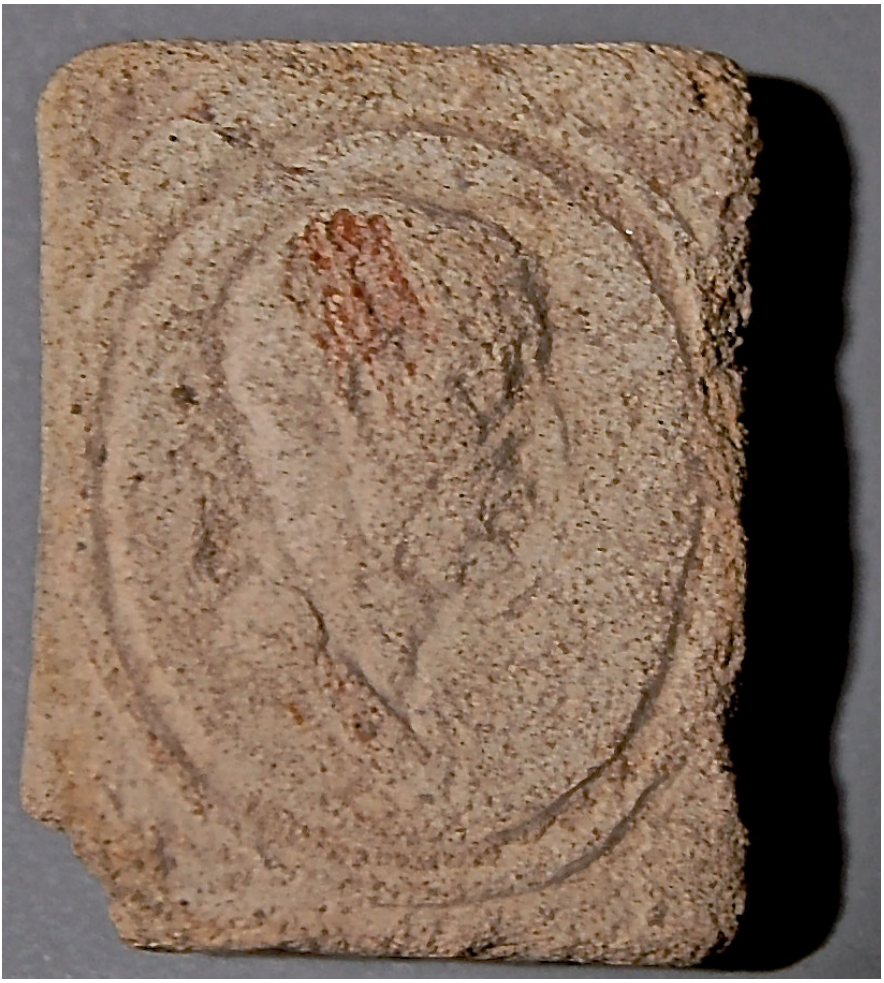

Fig. 9: Tessera 186, reverse depicting a Roman-style portrait bust in profile (Hvidberg-Hansen and Ploug 1993). © Rubina Raja.

Index rerum

Note: Readers who enjoy access through a library to the digital edition of this book will in most cases find further references to the headwords listed here, which we have deemed of secondary importance and therefore omitted in the printed edition. Equally, only the most significant references to authors and texts are entered; specific passages can be located by consulting the digital version. Transliterated Greek words are listed in the main index, whereas untransliterated Greek appears at the end, after Latin words. Titles of works in Latin appear (very selectively) in the main index. The siglum f. denotes that the discussion continues onto the following page.

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