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VOLUME FOURTEEN



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Hirundo is the Latin word for martlet, a mythical bird without legs, always shown in flight, unceasing in its quest for knowledge. The McGill coat-of-arms has three martlets.

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Editor's Preface

I am extremely thrilled to present the fourteenth edition of *Hirundo*, McGill University's undergraduate research journal of Classics. Since its creation in 2000, *Hirundo* has provided students with the opportunity to publish and showcase their own research while making outstanding student work more accessible and engaging, both within and outside the McGill community.

The present issue contains six such papers, beginning with Edward Ross's look into the priestess-based symbolism embodied in the wedding practices of Roman noblewomen. Following this is Madeline Warner's postulation that, rather than existing solely as a fairly recent phenomenon, the idea of kitsch has existed since the Empire first spread and mingled with various localities. Changing the topic to gender in the ancient world, Zoe Blecher-Cohen then brings us to an understanding of how polar extremes of the ancient ideas of female sexuality as "other" are directly related to ancient beliefs in magic. After this, Adam Templer relocates our focus to Sparta to analyze how the aspects that set it so far apart from other poleis also appeared in its economic principles. Tess Kaiser then addresses the manner in which female warrior figures and their narratives have been masculinized by those who have written about them. Finally, Donald McCarthy presents his own poem and accompanying essay on Sappho's love poems and Plato's Symposium, tying together the aspect of pain in love all three share.

Special thanks go to Professor Michael Fronda, the Dean of Arts' Development Fund, the Department of History and Classical Studies, the John MacNaughton Chair of Classics, the Arts Undergraduate Society, and the rest of those who have supported us in this publication.

Finally, I would like to extend the utmost gratitude to each and every member of our editorial board for their tireless work and incredible dedication to *Hirundo*. Without them, it would not have been possible to bring together this collection of work, and I cannot begin to praise them enough.

Avelaine Freeman
Editor-in-Chief

Roman Priestesses: A Woman's Best Wedding Planner

EDWARD ROSS

The Roman marriage ceremony of the early Roman Empire was heavy with symbolism. The ceremony was focused on the bride, and each aspect was an attempt to impart onto her the ideals of a Roman aristocratic woman. These symbols, such as the *sex crines* and the *flammeum*, were taken from various Roman priestesses, who were used as symbols of Roman marriage and represented the ideals of aristocratic Roman women. “Aristocratic girls, at least, were expected to bring to their husbands enough education to lend sparkle and desirability as a spouse, maidenly chastity and finally the dual charms of wifely fidelity and fertility.”¹ This essay will discuss the standard Roman aristocratic marriage and how the diverse symbolism within the ritual depicted the ideal Roman aristocratic married woman. Because several of these symbols are directly taken from different orders of Roman priestesses, this essay will look at case studies of three orders in the time of the early Empire. Each priestess represented an aspect of what the ideal Roman aristocratic married woman should be. The Vestal Virgins represented chastity, the Flaminicae represented the importance of modesty and fidelity, and the priestesses of Ceres represented the ideal of motherhood and fertility. The ideal aristocratic woman would be a combination of all of three orders of priestesses. Before the concept of Roman aristocratic marriage can be discussed, it is beneficial to define what made an aristocratic woman in Rome.

A Roman aristocratic woman would commonly belong to an upper-class family and as a result be fairly wealthy. An unmarried woman would live in her father's household belonging to his *manus*, while a married woman would live in her husband's *manus*.² The aristocratic woman was associated with traditional values such as modesty, chastity, gracefulness, austerity, and domesticity, and considered to be passive in political and social situations.³ Despite being prevented from an active political life, the aristocratic women were expected to maintain political connections and take control of their husband's duties while he was out at war.⁴ The rank of her husband usually superseded the rank of her own family, and marriage was a way for a Roman aristocratic woman to raise, or lower, their

1 Karen Klaiber Hersch, “Introduction to the Roman Wedding: Two Case Studies,” *The Classical Journal* 109, no. 2 (2013): 229.

2 M. I. Finley, “The Silent Women of Rome,” in *Sexuality and Gender in the Classical World*, ed. Laura McClure, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2002), 149.

3 Emily Hemelrijk, *Matrona Docta: Educated Women in the Roman Elite from Cornelia to Julia Domna*, (London: Routledge, 1999), 7.

4 Hemelrijk, *Matrona Docta*, 10.

social standing.⁵

A Roman marriage could refer to many different things because of the many layers of requirements called for in a legal marriage. A legal marriage would result in legitimate children which was exceedingly important for the continuation of the aristocratic family.⁶ A legal marriage in the early Empire required that both parties be Roman citizens, of sufficient age and physical maturity, lack a close blood relationship, and be of similar social standing.⁷ These types of marriages were infrequent, but when all the requirements were met, the ceremony of *confarreatio* could be performed. Pliny describes the ceremony of *confarreatio*, saying that “among religious rites none was invested with more sanctity” (Plin. H. N. 18.10).⁸ Though the specific aspects of the ceremony changed greatly over time, the *confarreatio* ceremony signified the movement of the bride from the *manus* of her father to the *manus* of her husband as well as her wedding to her husband.⁹ The *confarreatio* ceremony was considered one of the oldest marriage ceremonies in Rome, but, while the meaning remained the same, the symbolism and actions associated with the ceremony changed throughout Roman history.¹⁰

The Roman aristocratic wedding ceremony itself during the early Empire is heavily symbolized, and its modern understanding of is based on the writings of several Roman authors, including Festus, Pliny the Elder, Plutarch, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.¹¹ While the weddings described by Roman authors varied, many held references to specific aspects that were part of the ceremony as a shorthand description of a wedding, which included the *flammeum*, the torches, and the wedding bed.¹² The ceremony itself differed between authors, though there seemed to have been a common narrative.

Brides would begin by being dressed in their marriage attire with the help of their female relatives. Festus writes that the bridal attire included a yellow veil called the *flammeum*, which covered a crown made of flowers called a *corolla*, and that her hairstyle

5 Hemelrijk, *Matrona Docta*, 11.

6 S. Treggiari, *Roman Marriage*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 13.

7 Karen Klaiber Hersch, *The Roman Wedding: Ritual and Meaning in Antiquity*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 20-21.

8 Pliny, *Natural History*, Volume V: Books 17-19, trans. W. H. S. Jones, *Loeb Classical Library* 371, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1950).

9 Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 24.

10 Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 26.

11 Festus, Pliny the Elder, Plutarch, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus are the only ancient sources to describe the significance of the specific ritual aspects of the marriage ceremony. Festus discusses the significance of the *sex crines* and *flammeum*. Pliny the Elder mentions the colours of several of the brides accoutrements. Plutarch is the only source to mention the speaking of “Ubi tu Gaius ego Gaia.” Dionysius of Halicarnassus defines the situations of different types of marriages and their differences.

12 Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 18.

would consist of six-tresses called the *sex crines*.¹³ Pliny the Elder writes that the bride would wear a straight tunic called the *tunica recta*.¹⁴ Festus also writes that the bride would have worn a knotted belt called the *cingulum* which could be representative of a chastity belt.¹⁵ The specific use of the *sex crines* and the *flammeum* connected the brides to the Vestal Virgins and Flaminicae respectively, which held significant religious roles in the time of the early Roman Empire, indicating that this specific costume might have been in use as a whole during that period.¹⁶

Once the bride was fully dressed in her wedding attire, Festus writes that, at his time, she was ritually torn away from the embrace of her mother, and then led in a procession towards the house of her husband.¹⁷ Catullus also describes several stylized instances of the bride's abduction in his poems which, as Festus writes, were meant to point back to Romulus's abduction of a Sabine woman as his wife.¹⁸ The procession was said to be led by children and included the baring of torches, the shouting of cheers and *fescennies* (bawdy verses), and the throwing of nuts.¹⁹ According to Festus, the three children that would lead the bride in the procession were known as *patrimi et matrimi*, "one, who carries before (the bride/the procession) the torch made of *spina alba* (whitethorn), for they used to wed at night; two, who hold the (hands of?) bride." (Fest. 282, 283 L).²⁰ As seen in the writings of Pliny the Elder, Festus, and Catullus, the throwing of nuts and the shouting of cheers and *fescennies* were meant to grant good fortune to the bride and groom.²¹

Once she arrived at the house, the bride would anoint the doorposts with the fat of a pig or wolf, then she would carefully walk over the threshold and was presented with fire and water as she spoke the words, "Ubi tu Gaius ego Gaia."²² The bride and husband would grasp each other's hands as a sign of consent, and the guests would feast with the royal couple until the time the bridal couple departed to their bed chamber.²³ The actions of anointing the doorpost and avoiding the threshold and the presentation of fire and water are mentioned by several Roman authors as part of the marriage ceremony, but the speaking

13 Fest. 56 L; Fest. 79.23 L; Fest. 454.3 L.

14 Plin. *H. N.* 8.194.

15 Fest. 55 L.

16 Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 113.

17 Fest. 364, 365 L.

18 Catull. 62. 15-31; Fest. 364, 365 L; Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 145.

19 Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 148-158.

20 Fest. 282, 283 L; Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 160. These children attended at all sacrifices, aided the Vestals, and were born from a marriage that was formed through *confarreatio*. Only a few children could hold this role during the early Empire.

21 Fest. 179 L; Plin. *H. N.* 15.86; Catull. 61.114-139.

22 Hersch, "Introduction to Wedding," 225.

23 Hersch, "Introduction to Wedding", 223.

of the phrase “Ubi tu Gaius ego Gaia” is only mentioned by Plutarch.²⁴ The further actions of clasping each other’s hands and the departure to the bed chamber can be considered a metaphysical cementation of their marriage.²⁵ Some authors, including Pliny and Festus, mention the sharing of *far*, a bread made of spelt, between the bride and groom, although its’ ritual significance is debated.²⁶

Each part of the marriage ritual had a symbolic significance and represented an ideal that was meant to be imparted onto the bride. Several of these symbols and actions are said to be taken directly from the Roman priestesses. For example, the *sex crines* was the hairstyle of the Vestal Virgins, the *flammeum* was worn by the Flaminicae during sacrifice and ritual, and the act of tearing the bride from the arms of her mother along with the carrying of torches was representative of the cult of Ceres.²⁷ The next portion of this essay will discuss the Vestal Virgins, the Flaminicae, and the priestesses of the cult of Ceres focusing on who they worshipped, who they were, what they wore, and how they were perceived by Roman authors during the early Empire.

The Vestal Virgins were the virgin priestesses of Vesta, the virginal Roman goddess of the hearth fire and a physical representation of the continuation of the Roman state. She represented the domestic hearth fire of Rome that burned in the *aedes Vestae*, and as long as this fire survived, so would Rome.²⁸ Associated with fire, Vesta is directly compared to virginity by Plutach, who says: “because fire, which offers uncontaminated and undefiled bodies, is pure and uncorrupted or because fire, which is barren and unfruitful, is like virginity” (Plu. Num. 9).²⁹ Seeing this, it is understandable that the most common epithet of Vesta is *virgo*, yet in Ovid’s *Fasti* she is given the epithet *mater* which oddly describes her as a matronly goddess.³⁰ *Mater* represents Roman aristocratic married women, specifically the *matrona*, the idealized matron wife.³¹ This can mean that Vesta did not just represent virginal citizen women but also matron citizen women in some way.³² Vesta is also described as, and compared to, the earth by ancient sources.³³ Dionysius of Halicarnassus muses that

24 Catull. 61.159-161; Pl. *Cas.* 816-817; Plin. *H. N.* 28.157; Plut. *Q. R.* 29, 30; Serv. *Ecl.* 8.29; Varr. *R. R.* 2.4.9.

25 Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 205.

26 Plin. *H. N.* 18.10; Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 26.

27 Sarah Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*, 2nd ed, (New York: Schocken Books Inc., 1995), 85.

28 Robin Lorsch Wildfang, *Rome’s Vestal Virgins: A study of Rome’s Vestal priestesses in the Late Republic and early Empire*. (London: Routledge, 2006), 6.

29 Plutarch, *Lives*, Volume I: Theseus and Romulus, Lycurgus and Numa. Solon and Publicola, Translated by Bernadotte Perrin. *Loeb Classical Library* 46, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914).

30 Ovid. *Fast.* 4.828

31 TLL 8. 435-447

32 Wildfang, *Rome’s Vestal Virgins*, 7.

33 Ov. *Fast.* 6.267-268

“Vesta is the earth” (D. H. 2.66.3)³⁴ which can mean that Vesta was considered a chthonic goddess, and therefore linked with purification and purity.³⁵ Vesta’s essence represented not only virginity but also purity, and it was connected to both types of Roman citizen women, *virgines* and the *matronae*.

The Vestal Virgins themselves, according to Plutach, consisted of six maidens selected as children to serve thirty years as the priestesses of Vesta.³⁶ Seneca writes that for the first ten years of their service they would learn their duties, during the next ten years they would perform their duties, and during the final ten years they would teach the novices their duties.³⁷ Throughout their time as Vestal Virgins, the priestesses had to maintain a solemn vow of chastity to the state.³⁸ Their chastity was representative of the virtue of the city of Rome, and if it was broken, it would cause ruin to the state. A Vestal who committed the *crimen incesti* would be tried in a judicial process, and, if found guilty, would be dressed in funeral garments, and buried alive in a room.³⁹ A Vestal’s chastity/virginity was the most important aspect that she had to uphold as it played a significant role in her ritual duties and social perception.

The Vestal Virgins’ central responsibility, as described by Roman authors, was to tend the central hearth fire of Rome in the *aedes Vestae* that was located in the Roman forum.⁴⁰ If the Roman hearth fire were to be quenched, the existence of Rome would have been threatened.⁴¹ On top of this central responsibility, the Vestal Virgins performed purification rituals, maintained the storehouse of the *aedes Vestae*, and participated in various public rites.⁴² As priestesses, the Vestals held central roles in the public purification rituals such as the *Argei*, where the Vestals would participate in a procession. Dionysius of Hallicarnassus writes that the ritual would conclude with the Vestals throwing “from the sacred bridge into the river Tiber thirty effigies made in the likeness of men, which they call *Argei*” (D. H. 1.38.3).⁴³ This ritual, along with many others involving the Vestal Virgins, has been suggested to act as symbolic purification of the city of Rome.⁴⁴ Through their

34 Ernest Cary, trans. “Dionysius of Halicarnassus” in *Loeb Classical Library*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1937).

35 Wildfang, *Rome’s Vestal Virgins*, 6.

36 Plu. *Num.* 10.

37 Senec. *de Vit.* Beat. 29; William Ramsay, “Vestales,” *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* eds. William Smith, William Wayte and GE Marindin, (London: John Murray, 1875), 1189.

38 Ramsay, “Vestales,” 1189.

39 Fest. p. 277 L.

40 Cic. *de Leg.* 2.8.12; Liv. 28.11.

41 Wildfang, *Rome’s Vestal Virgins*, 1.

42 Wildfang, *Rome’s Vestal Virgins*, 7-18.

43 Wildfang, *Rome’s Vestal Virgins*, 27. These processions included the Pontifices, the Praetors, and other citizens who were legally allowed to participate which were most likely all men.

44 D. Harmon, “The Public Festivals of Rome,” *ANRW*, 2.16.2: 1455.

chaste and virgin nature, the Vestal Virgins were able to complete purificatory rituals.

The Vestal Virgins maintained a dress code that symbolized virginity and chastity. Their dress was simple as fancy ornaments and accessories outside of their vestments were viewed with suspicion of corruption.⁴⁵ Pliny writes that they normally wore a *stola* made of linen over the upper part of their bodies.⁴⁶ Festus states that during sacrifices they would wear a white and red twisted wreath made of wool called an *infula*, a white woollen *vitta*, and an oblong head-dress called a *suffibulum*, consisting of a piece of white cloth bordered with purple and secured by a clasp.⁴⁷ Their hair was usually held in a style known as the *sex crines*, which consisted of three to six braids, and represented their powers of chastity.⁴⁸ The Vestals powers of virginity and purity were exuded from these specific items of dress.⁴⁹

Looking at the Vestal Virgins, it can be seen that the *sex crines* is representative of the importance of virginity and purity in the Roman context. When the bride wears this hairstyle on her wedding day, it seems to impart the morals of the Vestal Virgins onto them. Festus writes: “brides are adorned with the *sex crines* because it is the most ancient style for them. Certain others because the Vestal Virgins were adorned with it, whose chastity promised to their men...by others” (Fest. 454.3 L).⁵⁰ This seems to indicate that the ideal *virgines*, who is both virginal and pure, is depicted through the *sex crines* and that the bride is embodying that aspect in the ceremony. Seeing as the values associated with the Vestal Virgins influenced the hairstyle of the bride, the ritual influence of the Flaminicae on the ceremony must be examined.

The Flaminicae were female priestesses of the imperial cult. They worshiped the emperors, empresses, and the Roman state as deities.⁵¹ The imperial cult was created by Augustus whose reign began in 27 BCE, and it extended to the late Roman Empire with Constantine in 306 CE.⁵² Its creation was a way to align divinity with the Roman state, and it elevated Augustus’ family and bloodline to the same level as the major Roman deities.⁵³ After the death of an emperor or empress, he/she would be elevated to the status of a deity by the Senate, and temples would be built in his/her honour around the empire.⁵⁴ In these

45 Plin. *Ep.* 4.11; Ramsay, “Vestales,” 1191.

46 Plin. *Ep.* 4.11.

47 Ramsay, “Vestales,” 1191.

48 Festus, p.454 L.

49 Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 285.

50 L La Follette, “The Costume of the Roman Bride,” in *The World of Roman Costume*, eds. Judith Lynn Sebesta and Larissa Bonfante (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 56.

51 Duncan Fishwick, “Dio an Maecenas: The Emperor and the Ruler Cult,” *Phoenix* 44, no. 3 (1990): 247.

52 Katherine Crawford, *The Foundation of the Roman Imperial Cult* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 1.

53 Crawford, *Foundation Imperial Cult*, 5.

54 Zsolt Magyar, “Imperial Cult and Christianity: How and to What Extent Were the Imperial Cult and Emperor

temples, cults would be created with priests and priestesses who would lead sacrificial rites and rituals for the city of Rome in the emperor or empress's name. The essence of the imperial cult was to maintain the importance of the imperial bloodline of Rome and uphold the state.

The Flaminicae themselves were priestesses in the imperial cult, who, according to inscriptions, were mainly civic priestesses elected to their positions.⁵⁵ The Flaminicae in Rome were known to be married during their time as priestesses.⁵⁶ They were sometimes married to other *flamens*, priests of the imperial cult, and took part in rituals alongside them, though this was not always the case. Some Flaminicae were married to priests of other orders, and they did not have any ritual association.⁵⁷ In both cases, Flaminicae were married during the time of their priesthood, and the death of one's husband would end her period of service, just as her death would end her husband's period of service.⁵⁸ Although the age of the Flaminicae varied as the election of the priestess required public favour, there are very few examples of young priestesses, while there are numerous examples of older priestesses.⁵⁹ Since these priestesses were usually part of wealthy Roman families, their children would regularly take up the priesthood, thus creating a lineage for a specific emperor or empress.⁶⁰ The Flaminicae were considered the ideal *matronae* by Tertullian, and their ritual roles were significantly based on their marital status.⁶¹

The Flaminicae's duties consisted of performing common priestly duties, such as praying to the deity, welcoming visitors to the temple, overseeing the maintenance of the temple, organizing religious festivities, and presiding over sacrifices of wolves and other animals.⁶² Several epigraphic examples in Rome have described the Flaminicae as having

Worship Thought to Preserve Stability in the Roman World?," *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 60 (2009): 386.

55 Emily Hemelrijk, *Hidden Lives, Public Personae: Women and Civic Life in the Roman West* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 83; CIL 8, 211.

56 Hemelrijk, *Hidden Lives*, 73.

57 CIL 12.1363 Catia Servata served as a flaminica during the 1st century AD, and was married to a Sevir Augustalis, which was a title given to freed merchants, physicians, and traders. That being said, Catia Servata served as a priestess while not being married to a flamen.

58 Hemelrijk, *Hidden Lives*, 73.

59 Hemelrijk, *Hidden Lives*, 83; CIL 6.2177 Flavia Vera died at age 6 years 11 months, but since she was so young she did not perform many religious duties. Since she was so young, she was most likely elected to the position to appease the aristocratic families of Rome; CIL 8. 23333 Ulpia Secunda died at age 85 after serving for several years as a priestess. Like most *flaminicae*, she was most likely elected to the position of priestess and perpetually re-elected until she died.

60 Emily Hemelrijk, "Priestesses of the Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Benefaction and Public Honour," *L'Antiquite Classique* 75 (2006): 88.

61 Tert. *Mon.* 17.4

62 Hemelrijk, *Hidden Lives*, 88. Wolves were the sacred animal of Rome as a reference back to Lupa who brought up Romulus and Remus to be the founders of Rome.

maintained a symbolism as a sort of matronly figure of the temple as the ideal faithful wife, and their role was mainly ceremonial and representative.⁶³

The Flaminicae's costume varied depending on the specific imperial figure they worshipped, but they are regularly depicted wearing a conical headdress called a *tutulus*, a white or purple band around the head called a *vittae*, and a mantle fastened by broaches called a *palla*.⁶⁴ Festus writes: "the garment known as the *flammeum* is worn by the Flaminica Dialis, that is the wife of the Flamen Dialis" (Fest. 82.6 L). This vestment was worn by most Flaminicae and was a symbol of their ritual role as the wife of a *flamen*, or a sign of their modesty.⁶⁵ Both Festus and Pliny describe the *flammeum* to be the colour of a flame or an egg yolk.⁶⁶ All of these pieces of clothing were representative of the Flaminicae and the ideals of modesty and fidelity which they upheld.

When looking at the Flaminicae, we can understand that the *flammeum* used in the marriage ceremony was representative as a symbol of modesty in a ritual context that was worn by the ideal *matrona*. Festus writes: "the bride is wrapped in the *flammeum* as a good omen, because the Flaminica, the wife of the Flamen Dialis, to whom divorce was not permitted, used to wear it constantly" (Fest. 79.23 L). The inclusion of this vestment in the wedding attire of a Roman bride insinuates that the ideal Roman aristocratic wife would have to uphold the ideal of being modest and remain faithful to her husband in order to maintain the order of the Roman *familia*, just like that of a *matronae*. After seeing that the bride is wrapped in the *flammeum* to associate her with the Flaminica, the influence of the cult of Ceres on the ceremony must be examined.

Ceres was a Roman goddess who was associated with fertility and liminality, meaning transition.⁶⁷ As a fertility goddess, she is tied to agriculture and brides seeking sexual fertility.⁶⁸ She is most commonly identified with the Greek goddess Demeter and the myth of the rape of Demeter's daughter Persephone.⁶⁹ Proserpina, Persephone's Roman equivalent, was taken from Ceres by the god of the Underworld and made his wife. As her mother, "Ceres sought through all the earth with lit torches for Proserpina" (Serv. on Verg. Aen. 4.609). This event shows the separation between the two important roles in a woman's life: the *virgines* and the *matrona*.⁷⁰ Ceres, acting as the *matrona*, is very protective of the

63 Kelly Olson, *Dress and the Roman Woman: Self-Presentation and Society* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 113; CIL 2.5.69, 2.5.89.

64 Olson, *Dress Roman Woman*, 113.

65 Sebasta, J. L., "Symbolism in the Costume of the Roman Woman" in *The World of Roman Costume*, eds. by Judith Lynn Sebasta and Larissa Bonfante (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 48.

66 Fest. 82 L; Plin. *H. N.* 21.46.

67 Barbetta Stanley Spaeth, *The Roman Goddess Ceres* (Austin: Texas University Press, 1996), 24.

68 Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves*, 214.

69 Spaeth, *Ceres*, 104.

70 Spaeth, *Ceres*, 108.

virgines and, for this reason, is described by Plutarch to be protective of brides.⁷¹ Despite being separated, there seems to be a promise of reconciliation and reunification between the *virgines* and the *matrona* after this period of transition.⁷² This myth played an important role in the rituals performed by the priestesses of the cult of Ceres.⁷³

The cult of Ceres itself during the early Empire was brought to Rome from Greece, and was maintained by female priestesses.⁷⁴ Cicero tells us that the rites of the cult were always celebrated by Greek priestesses, meaning that only women could have held the priesthood.⁷⁵ The priestesses, much like the *Flamenicae*, were public priestesses elected by civic vote.⁷⁶ These positions were desired by Roman aristocratic married woman; Plutarch found it to be a role that *matronae* could aspire to attain.⁷⁷ It is quite probable that the priestesses of this cult were usually Roman aristocratic women because the roles of *matronae* and *virgines*, held by aristocratic women, played a significant role in the rituals performed by the cult.

Festus, Valerius Maximus, and Propertius allude that the rituals of the cult of Ceres followed the myth of Ceres and Proserpina. Since the cult of Ceres included an aspect of Mysteries, there is little literature that explicitly describes the rituals, but there are descriptions of the need of *matronae* and *virgines* to be present for the rituals to occur.⁷⁸ The *matronae* could have played the role of Ceres, and the *virgines* could have played the role of Proserpina. Ovid even relates the rituals to “when your daughter has been found,” (Ovid. *Am.* 3.45) which recalls the finding of Proserpina.⁷⁹ It is likely that the cult of Ceres held the myth of Ceres and Proserpina in high esteem which represented a sort of transition period of *virgines* into *matronae*.

Also, the priestesses of the Cult of Ceres, unlike other cults, performed ritual sacrifices of pigs and other animals in the name of Ceres.⁸⁰ An inscription associated the sacrifice of a pig with a symbol of fertility related to Ceres’ aspect of agricultural and sexual fertility.⁸¹ Through these rituals, the cult of Ceres held the transition from *virgines* into *matronae* and Ceres’ fertility aspect in high esteem.

Within the wedding ceremony, the action of ritually tearing the bride from her

71 Plu. *Romulus*. 22.3.

72 Spaeth, *Ceres*, 108.

73 Pomeroy, *Goddesses*, 217.

74 Fest. 97 L.

75 Cic. *Leg.* 2.36-37.

76 Spaeth, *Ceres*, 105; Cic. *Balb.* 55.

77 Spaeth, *Ceres*, 105; Plu. *De Mul. Vir.* 26.

78 Fest. 97 L; Val. Max. 1.1.15; Prop. 4.8.3-14; Spaeth, *Ceres*, 216.

79 Spaeth, *Ceres*, 110.

80 Hemelrijk, *Hidden Lives*, 91.

81 CIL 10.5073.

mother and leading her to the house of her husband with torches is a symbolic representation of the story of Ceres and Proserpina. The action of tearing a bride away from her mother symbolizes the bride as the *virgines* and her mother as the *matronae*. Festus writes that “at weddings the torch was carried in honour of Ceres,” (Fest. p. 77 L) which likely refers to the torch that Ceres carried while searching for Proserpina.⁸² This action within the ceremony can represent a transition period as the bride begins the ritual as a symbolic *virgo* and is transformed into the *matrona*.⁸³ This period of transition is very representative of Ceres, insinuating that the bride has now become a *matrona* who will uphold the ideal of motherhood that was representative of Ceres.⁸⁴

By looking at these examples of Roman priestesses, it is possible to see a fuzzy image of what an ideal Roman aristocratic married woman in the early Empire would have been. She would have been a chaste, modest, and matronly figure that would follow her husband. This is seen through the standard marriage ritual of a Roman woman which was deeply steeped in symbolism. The hairstyle of the bride, the *sex crines*, was taken from the Vestal Virgins, and it represented the importance of chastity as a symbolic *virgo*. The flame coloured veil, the *flammeum*, was taken from the Flaminicae and represented the modesty of the ideal *matrona*. The ritual actions of taking the bride from the hands of her mother and leading her to her husband’s house by torch was taken from the cult of Ceres and represented the transition from being a *virgo* to a *matrona*, as well as the importance of motherhood. The bride, by wearing these vestments and performing these actions would be exhibiting the ideals of chastity, fidelity, and motherhood. These aspects show the influence of these major priestesses on a Roman aristocratic bride, but there is one more example which is much more striking.

When the bride anointed the door frame of her husband’s house, she did three very important things: by anointing the door with the fat of a wolf, the sacred animal of Rome, she can be related with the Flaminicae; by anointing the door with pig’s fat, an animal sacred to Ceres, she can be considered to have performed a ritual like a priestess of the cult of Ceres; and by avoiding the threshold, which Servus describes as a sacred object of Vesta, she is demonstrating her chastity like the Vestal Virgins.⁸⁵ In the Roman wedding ceremony during the early Empire, the bride is not only honouring the priestesses of each cult by wearing parts of their ritual dress and embodying their ideals but also symbolically becoming a priestess of Vesta, Rome, and Ceres herself.

82 Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 171.

83 Hersch, *Roman Wedding*, 285.

84 Spaeth, *Ceres*, 109.

85 Plin. *H. N.* 28.135, 28.142; Serv. *Ecl.* 8.29.

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Faux Real
Globalization and the Emergence of Roman Kitsch: A Acquired Taste

MADELINE WARNER

From Graceland to gold-plated faucets, Obama flip-flops to Ra Ra Rasputin, our modern globalized world is “drowning in a sea of kitsch.”¹ But neither globalization nor kitsch are phenomena specific to the Information Age. As Malkin and Hingley have each demonstrated, the Ancient Mediterranean world operated on expansive trade networks, resulting in highly integrated, global societies reminiscent of our own.² If we are to understand modern kitsch as an inherent product of globalization (a common diagnosis), the existence of kitsch in a globalized ancient world must also be acknowledged.³ In a Roman empire marked by colonization and imperial integration, plausible instances of kitsch abound, including imported styles of housewares, architecture, and iconography. This essay will touch upon the presence of kitsch in the Roman world as a product of both globalization and, at the risk of appearing cynical, the ontological collapse between the genuine and the fake.⁴

Literally translated as “scraped up rubbish from the streets” or “bad art,” kitsch implies a hierarchy of taste and elitism directly relevant to the discussion of colonization.⁵ Aesthetic theorist Gary Tedman describes kitsch as “the material manifestation of class struggle,” defining it as a product born when the feelings “of those at the roots of production” differ from those of the original producers, implying not only a change in emotional charge, but in the creation of an “associated alienation.”⁶ To exemplify this, Tedman uses the mid-16th century Mannerist movement—an artistic style born by artists fleeing the Roman plague of 1522 and “transplanting” their Italian aesthetic upon arrival in France.⁷

1 Ruth Holliday and Tracey Potts, *Kitsch! Cultural Politics and Taste*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012), 1-2.

2 Irad Malkin, *A Small Greek World: Networks in the Ancient Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Richard Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture: Unity, Diversity and Empire* (London: Routledge, 2005).

3 “Kitsch is generally acknowledged to be the offspring of globalized production.” Holliday and Potts, *Kitsch!*,

6. For further consensus see: Fiss, Karen. “Design in a Global Context: Envisioning Postcolonial and Transnational Possibilities”. *Design Issues* 25 (3). The MIT Press: 3–10, 2009.

4 Holliday and Potts, *Kitsch!*, 8.

5 Gary Tedman, “Origins of Kitsch and Counterfeit Dialects.” In *Aesthetics & Alienation*. (Winchester, UK: Zero Books, 2012.) 137.

6 Tedman, “Origins of Kitsch,” 138.

7 Tedman notes artists Rosso and Primaticcio, both of whom arrived in France via Fontainebleau in the 1530s. “Origins of Kitsch,” 139. And Shearman, John. *Mannerism*. Penguin, London and Wisbech, 1969.

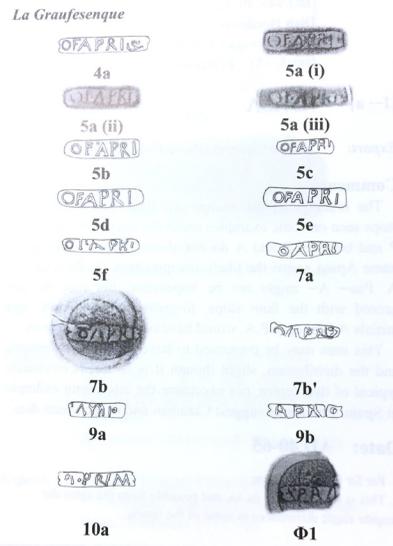


Figure 1 Reproductions of Latin stamps placed on *terra sigillata* from La Graufesenque. Hartley, Dickinson, and Dannell. Names on *Terra Sigillata*, 212.

“authentication” purposes (see Figure 1).¹¹ This Latin stamping, carried out by primarily non-Latin-speaking Gauls, implies a demand for the pottery’s “Romanness” and, by

The kitsch Tedman describes can be seen in far earlier examples, however, and proves a valuable concept when applied to the process of Roman integration. *Terra sigillata*, high-quality clay vessels decorated with standardized figurative reliefs, are perhaps the most apparent example of ancient kitsch. Cast using two separate molds, one for the vessel itself and one for the relief, *terra sigillata* were easily crafted containers originally used in elite Tuscan households.⁸ Over decades of Roman expansion, many locally produced commodities including these vessels were exported from places like Tuscany to the provinces as emblems of Roman identity.⁹ In 1st to mid 3rd century Gaul, *terra sigillata* began to be produced on a mass scale, utilizing new local potting techniques and materials.¹⁰

One of the largest sites for *terra sigillata* production was the southeastern French settlement La Graufesenque, where the pots were referred to in their Latin names by Gallic craftsmen and stamped with Latin markings for

8 Richard Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture: Unity, Diversity and Empire* (London: Routledge, 2005), 45.

9 P. Freeman, “Romanisation” and Roman material culture.” *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 6 (1993): 444.

For further information of locally produced products inspired by high-status Roman wares, see Willis, S.

“Roman imports into late Iron Age British societies: towards a critique of existing models.” In: *Proceedings of the Fourth Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference*, S. Cottam, D. Dungworth, S. Scott and J. Taylor, eds. (Durham 1994, Oxford: Oxbow.) And Cooper, N. “Searching for the blank generation: consumer choice in Roman and post-Roman Britain,” In *Roman Imperialism: Post-colonial Perspectives*, J. Webster and N. Cooper, eds. Leicester Archaeological Monographs no. 3. (Leicester: School of Archaeological Studies, University of Leicester, 1996).

10 “Production, as documented at La Graufesenque in the south of Gaul, for example, ran into the tens of thousands of vessels.” Hartley, Brian, Brenda M. Dickinson, and G. B. Dannell. *Names on Terra Sigillata: An Index of Makers’ Stamps & Signatures on Gallo-Roman Terra Sigillata (Samian Ware)* (London: Institute of Classical Studies, University of London, 2008), ix.

11 Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture*, 99-100.

extension, the desirability and status once associated with it.¹²

Archaeological findings of *terra sigillata* indicate their popularity in provincial military and civil contexts within newly conquered areas and, notably, their infrequency in Rome proper.¹³ The provincial popularity of a formerly iconic Roman object simultaneously indicates an “alien” desire to be Roman and a Roman rejection of “alien” interpretation—an accusation of falsity or, dare I say, tackiness.¹⁴ As Hingley notes, these pots are largely referred to as “Roman” in archaeological scholarship “despite their local production and native aspects of character.”¹⁵ The common labeling of these pots as “Roman” is a misconception that does not take into account the complicated history behind the foreign production of *terra sigillata*. Not unlike the Renaissance Mannerists mentioned above, the change in (a); the emotional charge and (b); the local origin of materials used in Gallic *terra sigillata* production would qualify the objects as neither genuinely Roman nor Gaulish but as something new: kitsch.

Previously, the world’s history had consisted, so to speak, of a series of unrelated episodes, the origins and results of each being as widely separated as their localities, but from this point onwards [after the Second Punic war] history has been an organic whole: the affairs of Italy and Africa interlinked with those of Greece and Asia, all leading up to one end.

—Polybius, *Histories* 1.3

In the years following the Second Punic War, the Mediterranean world became more and more interconnected, a process only exacerbated by Roman colonization.¹⁶ The inherent building processes associated with Roman expansion made not just housewares but architecture a prime mechanism for the spread and definition of an emergent material culture.¹⁷

Prior to the arrival of Roman colonists, German, French, and British landscapes were speckled with relatively standard Celtic houses: skinny and rectangular in shape, with a front

12 Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture*, 99-100.

13 J. W. Hayes, *Handbook of Mediterranean Roman Pottery* (London: British Museum, 1997), 42; Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture*, 100.

14 Tedman, “Origins of Kitsch,” 138.

15 “The labelling of these goods as ‘Roman’ is itself a simplification; these objects cannot merely, in the terms explored above, be viewed as representing native acceptance of material elements of Roman civilization.” Hingley, *Globalizing Roman Culture*, 45.

16 Polybius, *Histories* 1.3. For more on the Second Punic War as a chronological marker for Roman globalization, see MacKendrick, P. L. “Roman Colonization”. *Classical Association of Canada, Phoenix* 6 (4): 139-46, 1952.

17 P. Perkins, “Power, culture and identity in the Roman economy.” In *Experiencing Rome: Culture, Identity and Power in the Roman Empire*, J. Huskinson, ed. (London: Routledge, 2000), 203.

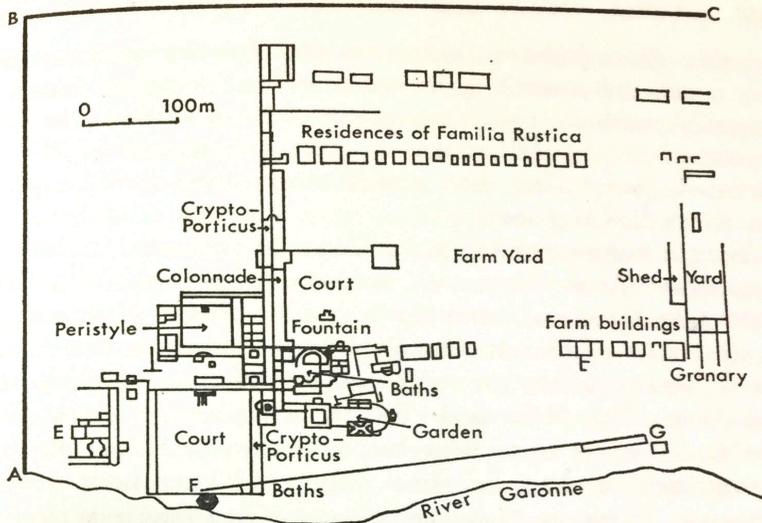


Fig. 56 Chiragan (Haute Garonne), villa, plan. P. MacKendrick, Roman France, fig. 5-7

Figure 2 Chiragan (Haute-Garonne), villa, plan. P. MacKendrick, Roman France, fig. 5-7.

corridor and rooms projecting from the ends. This style was “surprisingly consistent” in the continental provinces pre-Romanization.¹⁸ Post-Roman arrival, however, we begin to see the construction of large, villa-inspired homes square in shape, containing multiple inner courtyards—a distinctly different model from the narrow plans of the provincial past.¹⁹

An example of this “Roman nouveau” style can be seen in a Gallo-Roman villa at Chiragan in Haute-Garonne, which offers insight into the everyday life of provincial elites. The villa at Chiragan was built during the reign of Augustus (27 BCE–14 CE) in the form of a peristyle mansion, enlarged multiple times over several generations to boast an additional garden court, hexagonal summer house attachment, *cryptoporticus*, and updated baths (Figure 2).²⁰ Far more extravagant than the corridor-style originally used in the European provinces, these additions are aesthetically very Roman. As McKay notes,

18 Alexander G McKay, *Houses, Villas, and Palaces in the Roman World* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975), 164.

19 R. Agache, “Aerial Reconnaissance in Picardie.” *Antiquity XXXVIII*, 118. And McKay, *Houses, Villas, and Palaces in the Roman World*, 165-166.

20 McKay, *Houses, Villas, and Palaces in the Roman World*, 166.

however, this villa's construction was led by a Gallic (not Roman) architect and utilized marble from local (not Roman) quarries in nearby St. Béat, demonstrating a complicated local encroachment on the traditional Roman style.²¹

This is not the only "Romanesque" villa in Gaul. Montmaurin and others also bear vast peristyle homes with colonnades and Italianate stylings.²² The sheer size of these homes and their distance from Rome made the use of local materials accessible, while still retaining the imported, elite Roman ideology of a villa for obvious political purposes. In this sense, provincial architecture was always an amalgamation of local and imperial traditions.²³ Chiragan represents a special kind of globalized fashion that we saw in the Gallic copies of Tuscan *terra sigillata*: a regional kitsch, the meaning of which shifts upon its transplantation.²⁴ Both of these examples demonstrate a design that would not be unrecognizable to a Roman, but would not be familiar, either.

"Most scholars reckon kitsch to be less than two centuries old, although a few, citing Hellenic miniatures and medieval devotional pictures, have suggested that there was kitsch in mass cultures of the distant past."²⁵ In their work "Kitsch and Aesthetic Education", philosopher John Morreall and artist Jessica Loy rightly highlight the modern contexts to which most kitsch studies are limited and the fiercely post-Industrial Revolutionary mindsets with which they are explored.²⁶ Through replica housewares such as *terra sigillata* and architectural fusion like that seen in Roman Gaul, however, it is apparent that kitsch is not a concept tied to time or space, but to global interactions. The examples explored in this essay are but two of many cases of "ancient kitsch". Whilst considering the Egyptian-inspired Pyramid tomb of Caius Cestius in Rome or the appearance of crocodiles on imperial coinage, we are reminded that with Romanization came not just the exportation of Romanness but the importation of provincial iconography.²⁷ This two-way acculturation and the inherent class struggle associated with Roman expansion is, by definition, kitsch.²⁸ Viewing transcultural materials of the Roman world through the lens of kitsch aesthetic

21 McKay, *Houses, Villas, and Palaces in the Roman World*, 166.

22 *Montmaurin Villa Rustica*, In Montmaurin, France: circa 50 AD. In McKay, *Houses, Villas, and Palaces in the Roman World*, 168-170.

23 McKay, *Houses, Villas, and Palaces in the Roman World*, 169.

24 For more on "regional kitsch", see Botz-Bornstein, Thorsten. *Transcultural Architecture: The Limits and Opportunities of Critical Regionalism* (2015), 146.

25 John Morreall and Jessica Loy, "Kitsch and Aesthetic Education". *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 23 (4) (University of Illinois Press), 63.

26 Morreall and Loy, "Kitsch and Aesthetic Education." 63-73.

27 *Pyramid of Cestius*. In Rome, Regione XIII *Aventinus*: 12 BC. In Orbaan, J. A. F. "Records of Roman Town Planning". *The Town Planning Review* 13 (4): 257-60. Liverpool University Press: 1929. And *Roman crocodile coinage*. In Voelkel, Laura B. "Coin Types and Roman Politics". *The Classical Journal* 43 (7): 405. The Classical Association of the Middle West and South: 1948.

28 Tedman, "Origins of Kitsch," 138.

theory enables us to unfold emotional responses to Roman globalization in a way other theories cannot, thus revealing the contemporary positive and negative attitudes toward globalization itself.

We should push the globalization analogy harder, applying to the ancient Mediterranean the same tough questions that scholars ask about connectedness in our own time.
 –Ian Morris, “Mediterraneanization.” 33.

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Women who Control their Sexuality are Weird and therefore Magical

ZOE BLECHER-COHEN

The overwhelming majority of women in the Late Republic and Early Empire were subject to strict sexual control and punishment by their male guardians and the legal system. Control over female sexuality was vital to maintaining the order of state and society in Rome and was the main area of advantage that men had over women. However, not all women fit neatly into this legal and social structure – namely Vestal Virgins and prostitutes. In addition, out of all women in Rome, both prostitutes and Vestal Virgins were said to either practice magic or have magical abilities. Despite occupying opposite ends of a sexual behavior spectrum, both categories of women were imbued with this supernatural power because of their existence at the fringes of society and male control. However, they each exercised different types of magic because they occupied different exceptions from the norm. Their exceptional nature was also evident within the structure of Roman law, where it was made clear that Vestals and prostitutes did not exist in the same legal category as a typical Roman matron.

There is a lengthy tradition regarding Vestals and their abilities to perform magical acts as well as supposed historical accounts of these acts happening. In one such ‘historical’ narrative, the Vestal Tuccia is accused of breaking her vows of chastity around 230 BCE. She proves her innocence by carrying water, in a sieve, from the Tiber to the priests in charge of her trial.¹ What is most important about this specific case is that Valerius Maximus records her prayer to Vesta before the trial. It is a conditional prayer saying that if Tuccia has always been chaste, then let her be able to perform this magical act (Val. Max. 8.1).² Her ability to perform this magic is entirely contingent upon her status as a Vestal – which, in turn, is entirely contingent upon her status as a virgin. “By losing her physical virginity, the Vestal more importantly betrayed the ideology of her unique status...not only did she cease to be a virgin, but more importantly...she ceased to be a Vestal.”³ Similarly, in 178 BCE, the sacred flame went out under the watch of the Vestal Aemilia, an occasion usually regarded as an omen and therefore a sign of unchaste behavior. However, Aemilia proved her innocence by throwing her sash onto the coals of the fire, whereupon

1 Dion. Hal. 2.69; Val. Max. 8.1; Pliny, *H.N.* 28.12.

2 ‘Vesta’ inquit, ‘si sacris tuis castas semper admovi manus, effice ut hoc hauriam e Tiberi aquam et in aedem tuam perferam.’

3 Ariadne Staples, *From Good Goddess to Vestal Virgins: Sex and Category in Roman Religion* (Psychology Press, 1998), 135.

it magically rekindled itself.⁴ A more general claim about the magic of the Vestal Virgins is that they were able to stop runaway slaves if they were within the *pomerium* of Rome (Pliny, *H.N.* 28.13). Cassius Dio, in fact, claims that they had to do this during the civil wars of Caesar and Pompey because so many slaves were attempting to escape (Dio, 48.19.4). It is important to note the limitations that are placed on the magical abilities of the Vestal Virgins. The magic that our sources ascribe to them is always related to their roles as the priestesses of Vesta and protectors of the city, such as proving their sanctity or stopping runaways. They seem to be able to perform only specific types of magic in specific ritual spaces – namely within the sacred boundary of the city of Rome.

Prostitutes also seem to be limited in the types of magic they can perform, although most of the extant sources talking about prostitutes being involved with magic are strictly literary rather than historical. Horace discusses throughout his various works the magical shenanigans of the prostitute Canidia and her cohorts.⁵ In *Epode* 5, Canidia buries a boy alive so that she can starve him to death and use his liver as an ingredient in a love charm or potion. Interestingly, we do not hear about the actual usage or effects of this love charm she has made. However, in *Epode* 17, Horace begs Canidia to take her curses and spells off of him and admits to believing in her magical powers now, whereas before he had not. In *Satire* 8, Horace describes Canidia actually performing magic, this time in a cemetery where the poor people were buried.

Besides Horace's clearly exaggerated literary references, the *Maiores Declamationes* of Pseudo-Quintilian also links prostitutes with magic. In one very clear instance, the litigant states that “veneficium...tota vita meretricis est”, “the whole life of a prostitute is magic/sorcery” (Quint. *Decl. Mai.* 14.5); i.e. magic is endemic to the practicing of prostitution. There does not seem to be a separation of the woman from her trade here; she is a prostitute and therefore she does magic. From all of these references, “what may be fairly concluded is that there was a presumption that if a woman was a prostitute, she was probably an expert in the whole gamut of erotic magic.”⁶ In addition, being a prostitute not only directly affected a woman's status in the social order but had long-term effects on her legal standing. Prostitutes were *infames* and were viewed as an entirely separate category of person, not just as having a particular career.

Although female sexuality and sexual behavior were strongly controlled by social mores in the Late Republic and Early Empire, they were increasingly also controlled by legal means. The most famous example of legal restrictions on female sexuality is the Augustan reforms, a collection of laws and edicts passed by Augustus at the beginning of

4 Dion. Hal. 2.68; Val. Max. 1.1.7; Livy *Per.* 41.

5 Description: *Epod.* 5 & 17, *Sat.* 1.8. Reference: *Epod.* 3.7-8, *Sat.* 2.1.48 & 8.94-5.

6 Matthew Dickie, *Magic and Magicians in the Greco-Roman World* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003), 172.

the Empire. Of these, the *Lex Iulia et Papia Poppaea*,⁷ which is actually an amalgamation of several different laws, is the most relevant. The main focus of the law is to increase the rates of both marriage and childbirth among the Roman people. This was done through a complex system of rewards and punishments – rewards for getting married or having more children and punishments for remaining unwed or childless. In addition, many sections of this law control methods of inheritance and make it hard for Roman women to inherit anything if they are not married and mothers.

At the root of these laws was the concern over falling population numbers after the civil wars of both Caesar and Augustus and the need for legitimate children.⁸ The method of ensuring an increase in legitimate children who could inherit property and money was through controlling female sexuality. Not only were most of the laws focused on giving women incentives for having more children but the penalties were mainly focused on preventing adultery and other sexual misconduct by women which would have put their children's legal status at risk.

The *ius liberorum* is an excellent example of the system of benefits that was created under these Augustan reforms. Under these new laws, a citizen woman who had three children or a freedwoman who had four children would be exempt from the requirement of a *tutor* to control their actions and public interactions. For Vestal Virgins and prostitutes, the effects of the laws were different. The Vestals already had the right to not need a *tutor*; this law would therefore have precluded them from exercising their traditional privileges as they could not have any children let alone three or four. In this case, the Vestals were automatically granted the *ius liberorum* as soon as the Augustan laws went into effect thereby preserving their status.⁹ On the other hand, prostitutes could actually inherit more property by not marrying their clients, if they were 'kept women', than if they did marry their clients. Although this may seem counterintuitive, prostitutes were on the lower edges of Roman society and were not the target audience for the marriage laws; traditional Roman matrons were.¹⁰

All of the extant sources make it extremely clear that Vestal Virgins were not viewed within the category of normal women in either the eyes of the public or the law. Roman society was centered around the idea of *patria potestas*, and, when intestate, there was little difference in the powers of men and women.¹¹ There were different ways to change

7 Thomas A. J McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

8 James A. Field, "The Purpose of the Lex Iulia et Papia Poppaea," *The Classical Journal* 40, no. 7 (1945), 398–416.

9 Dio 56.10.2; Plut. *Num.* 10.5.

10 Thomas A. J McGinn, *Prostitution, Sexuality, and the Law in Ancient Rome* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 3.19.

11 Staples, *Good Goddess*, 141-142.

the legal status of a Roman citizen, shown by the various forms of *capitis deminutio*, which could affect any combination of liberty, citizenship, and family rights. For women, the most common form was a *capitis deminutio minima* which only affected family rights; generally this occurred through marriage *cum manu* where she was transferred into the power of her husband or his father if he were still living.¹² A Vestal, however, after being chosen specifically, passed out of the power of her father without *emancipatio* or *capitis deminutio* and gained the right to make a will (Aul. Gell. 1.12.9).¹³ This is extremely important. The Vestal did not, like a normal woman, move from one man's *potestas* to another. She is removed from the entire *potestas* system upon which Roman law and society was so dependent and to which every other citizen was subject. Indeed, later sources confirm that the only women who existed, legally, wholly outside of *patria potestas* were the Vestal Virgins (Gai. *Inst.* 1.30 & 1.45).

Although similar on the surface, a Vestal's legal rights should not be equated with those of Roman men. "The Vestal's privileges were a product of her status outside the system... a man's testamentary privileges were defined positively, a Vestal's negatively. To take an analogy from medicine, it is as though two very different diseases were present with the same symptoms."¹⁴ Although they had most of the rights that citizen men had, such as the right to make a will, bodily autonomy, and the right to own property, Vestals were never viewed as equal to men simply because they were in a completely different category. Vestal Virgins were first and foremost Vestal Virgins, not male or female nor patrician or plebeian. Their sacrosanct status was the most defining characteristic of their identities which therefore placed them outside of the normal Roman social structure.

Prostitutes also existed outside of this normal regulatory legal and social system. Although prostitutes were in no way venerated in the same way as Vestals, they were similarly removed from any other category of society because of their occupation. As shown earlier, at the beginning of the Empire there was a major concern about the birthrate in Rome of legitimate heirs that could inherit which led to very strict laws governing female sexuality. The punishments for adultery included the loss of half the woman's dowry, the inability to remarry, and possibly exile.¹⁵ It was to avoid these harsh punishments that noblewomen supposedly registered as prostitutes with the aediles during the reign of Tiberius.¹⁶

Prostitutes could not be tried for adultery as they were exempt under Augustan

12 Nicholas, 1962, 96. Cf.

13 "eo statim tempore sine emancipatione et sine capitis minutione e patris potestate exit et ius testamenti faciendi adipiscitur."

14 Staples, *Good Goddess*, 143.

15 McGinn, *Prostitution*, 5.142-143.

16 Suet. *Tib.* 35.2.; Tac. 2.85.

law – sex with a prostitute could not count as adultery because adultery was a crime that relied upon the woman’s status. In addition, by registering as prostitutes, the women were able to avoid the punishments for remaining unmarried after a certain age¹⁷ since prostitutes could not marry freeborn citizens. This allowed the Roman matrons, who would otherwise be restricted in various ways by the Augustan marriage reforms, to control their own sexualities and therefore a greater portion of their lives. In this way, identifying as a prostitute enabled a woman to remove herself from the constraints put upon normal Roman women by moving into a legal category that held a lower status in society. The downside of this tactic is forfeiting the traditional rights that a matron held, like not being subject to corporal punishment, which was held exclusively by Roman citizens in good standing.

The perception of members of groups who exist at the social margins of their society as magical ‘Others’ is widely accepted by modern sociology and psychology. There is an incredible amount of scholarly dialogue on the precise definitions of ‘magic’ and ‘witch’ as well as how beliefs about each come to exist in different societies.¹⁸ For the purposes of this paper, it is enough to say that minority groups, especially women, were extremely vulnerable to speculations of magic and witchcraft. It is therefore unsurprising that Vestal Virgins and prostitutes who were already marginalized would be further ‘othered’ by being accused of or linked to magic. What is important to point out is the fact that “... the particular shape magic assumed in each case reflects the particular issues at stake in that context and, especially for those deploying the stereotype.”¹⁹ All minority groups who were at risk of being alleged to wield magic did not risk the same kind of accusations of magic.

Although the modern term ‘magic’ has an inherently pejorative or delegitimizing connotation, here it is meant, in general, to be the ability to “alter the course of events automatically or mechanistically.”²⁰ This definition fits well with the model of Vestal Virgin magic as it was exemplified in the story of Tuccia, mentioned above, where her chastity enables her to perform magic. In fact, Valerius Maximus describes what happens after her prayer as “*rerum ipsa natura cessit*”, “the very nature of things gave way” (Val. Max. 8.1). This description makes it apparent that the occurrence of a magical event was not simply a spontaneous religious happening due to Tuccia’s sanctity to the goddess but instead was a direct result of her speech (perhaps better understood here as a spell). In addition, the consequence of this spell was clearly outside the normal bounds of the natural world, since that is what is giving way – i.e. the event is supernatural.

17 Ulp. *Frag.* XII, XVII, XXII

18 Foundational works: Douglas and Evans-Pritchard, 1970; Malinowski and Redfield, 1954; Frazer, 1951. Recent analyses: Pollard, 2001; Stratton, 2007; Remus, 1999; Graf, 1997; etc.

19 Kimberly B Stratton, *Naming the Witch: Magic, Ideology, & Stereotype in the Ancient World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 3.

20 *Ibid.*, 5; Frazer, 1951, 48-49. Cf.

In addition, this model fits well with the descriptions we have of prostitutes performing magic in Horace and other Roman authors.²¹ They are almost always plotting or constructing some kind of magic to affect a lover or a rival's lover. Magic performed by prostitutes is meant to either make people act against their will or to change their will so that the desired outcome would be obtained. "The main overt value of the witch-bawd in Roman poetry is precisely as a foil to the lover, who whispers temptation into his or her ear...to enhance their own security."²²

This sort of mental control would put a Roman man at a severe disadvantage, taking away his freedom to make sexual choices. "Freeborn men in antiquity claimed the right to sexual freedom outwith [*sic*] the marriage – bond...the sexual freedom of wives [however] was a perfectly dystopian thought, an image of social disorder."²³ Love magic was therefore dangerous not only to individuals but to Roman male elite society as a whole – increasing the uneasiness towards prostitutes as the Other. It makes sense that there was such a great dichotomy between prostitute love magic and the chaste magic of the Vestals. Although Vestals were distinctly Other, they did not represent the same threat or corrupting force to Roman society that prostitutes did. Both Vestals and prostitutes could do magic, but the types of magic they were believed to perform were completely different.

It bears repeating that: "...the particular shape magic assumed in each case reflects the particular issues at stake in that context."²⁴ Vestals and prostitutes were both viewed as marginalized groups who could do magic but the qualities of their magic were dependent on their differing exceptions from the normative Roman society. The Vestal's sexual status was private but her magic was for the public whereas the prostitute's sexual status was public but her magic was private. In addition, the way in which prostitutes were an exception to Roman sexual norms was much more threatening to the overall structure of Roman male society because they represented female sexual freedom, a concept which undermined the idea of *patria potestas* upon which society was based. There could only be six Vestal Virgins at one time and they were chosen as children²⁵ whereas there could hypothetically be an infinite number of prostitutes at any age. There was no concern that women would run off to become Vestal Virgins and not bear legitimate children for Rome so their magic was not feared.

"Magic was central [to Roman society], inasmuch as it played on the underlying model of female sexuality, which was that the violent passion lay just below the surface,

21 See: Acanthis in Propertius 4.5; Dipsas in Ovid *Amor.* 1.5.

22 Richard Gordon. "Imagining Greek and Roman Magic." *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe*. Ed. Valerie I. J. Flint. (London: Athlone, 1999), 194.

23 Ibid, 196.

24 Stratton, *Naming the Witch*, 3.

25 Dion. Hal. 2.67; Plut. *Numa* 10.1.

ready to burst out..."²⁶ Although there is no comprehensive, satisfactory definition of magic available, it is always understood to help explain the unexplainable or control the uncontrollable; it eases social tension.²⁷ Therefore, the potentially bizarre practice of labelling both Vestal Virgins and prostitutes, two opposite extremes of female sexual status, as magical women can be viewed as completely logical. Their sexualities were very different from that of regular Roman women, either completely repressed or completely freed – both statuses that would cause underlying social tension. Designating them as magical further ‘others’ them and allows traditional society to continue on as it is since it no longer has to try to incorporate these outliers who might cause unwanted change.

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²⁶ Gordon, *Roman Magic*, 199.

²⁷ Mary Douglas and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Association of Social Anthropologists of the Commonwealth, Witchcraft Confessions & Accusations*; (London; New York: Tavistock Publications, 1970).

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Conquerors Due: Economics, Forced Labour, and Expansion in Sparta

ADAM TEMPLER

Sparta has always captured the imagination, and the unique position of Sparta in Archaic and Classical Greece is apparent through many ancient sources. The Spartan *polis* diverged from many of the more traditional social, political, and economic structures observed in other areas of ancient Greece. Sparta's constitutional system was based on a dual monarchy, and its social system was supposedly handed down from Lycurgus the lawgiver, a heavily mythologized, if not entirely fictional, figure. The laws attributed to Lycurgus not only radically altered the course of the Spartan social system but also altered the development of Sparta's economic structure. In part the social system constructed by Lycurgus would determine the foundation of Sparta's economy with implications for both the *polis*' economic and foreign policy. The cumulation of these changes would make Sparta an outlier compared to patterns of trade, agriculture and labour that typified the economies of the archaic Greek *poleis*. Constitutionally abnormal and societally militant, the economic peculiarities of the Spartan *polis* encouraged major territorial expansion but also laid the foundation for the ultimate undoing of Spartan power.

A brief aside is necessary before a proper exploration of Sparta's economy and its sociopolitical effects can begin. The fascination that has prompted thousands of years of study and analysis has also led to the idealization of a society resulting in a historical record that is deeply problematic for the uncritical scholar. It has been argued that the idealization of Sparta began around the fifth century BCE, but some have argued that Homer displays similar mythologizing biases with respect to Sparta in his writings dating back to the eighth century.¹ This has severe implications for the study of Sparta and the Lycurgan Reforms, especially considering that Lycurgus was deeply intertwined with the creation of the Spartan mythos.² The historical record is further marked by the idealization of Sparta by outsiders with a limited experience of the xenophobic and exclusionary state, as well as a pro-aristocratic bias towards aristocracy that coloured the account of ancient authors.³ All of this is to say that any exploration of Spartan society should be tempered by moderation and the sources available for study must be treated critically.

When discussing the form of the Spartan economy and society the figure of Lycurgus the lawgiver looms large. The image of Lycurgus that has come to us has been heavily altered by the authors that passed his record down through subsequent generations,

1 Alan Blakeway, "The Spartan Illusion," *The Classical Review* 49, no. 5, (1935), 184.

2 *Ibid.*, 184.

3 Blakeway, "The Spartan Illusion," 184.

imbuing him with their own, “political and philosophical ideas.”⁴ Even Plutarch admits this, writing, “Concerning Lycurgus the lawgiver, in general, nothing can be said which is not disputed.”⁵ However, we cannot ignore the role of Lycurgus in shaping Spartan society. Even if the “real” Lycurgus cannot claim responsibility for them, Lycurgus’ name became attached to a set of reforms that transformed Spartan society in direct, practical ways and created an ideal that Spartan society attempted to achieve.⁶

The Lycurgan Reforms mark a major divergence in the development of Sparta from the pattern of the stereotypical Greek *polis*. Lycurgus mandated two significant changes in Spartan economic policy, along with wide-sweeping social reorganization. His first change was the redistribution of territory under state ownership to give every Spartan a minimum plot of land.⁷ Plutarch attributes this to the growing problem of inequality within the polis, writing, “there was a dreadful inequality in this regard, the city was heavily burdened with indigent and helpless people, and wealth was wholly concentrated in the hands of a few.”⁸ Given that land redistribution later became a highly contentious issue in many Greek *poleis*, Sparta’s early adoption of such policies is worth noting, though the extent of Lycurgus’ reforms may have been exaggerated. As mentioned above, even if Lycurgus’ actions to distribute wealth and reduce inequality were not literally true, they became essential in Spartan self-identification.⁹

To further limit the accumulation of wealth and inequality in Spartan society Lycurgus also sought to remedy what he saw as one of the chief causes of vice. Plutarch writes:

“In the first place, he withdrew all gold and silver money from currency, and ordained the use of iron money only. Then to a great weight and mass of this he gave a trifling value, so that ten minas’ worth required a large store-room in the house, and a yoke of cattle to transport it. When this money obtained currency, many sorts of iniquity went into exile from Lacedaemon. For who would steal, or receive as a bribe, or rob, or plunder that which could neither be concealed, nor possessed with satisfaction, nay, nor even cut to pieces with any profit?”¹⁰

4 E.N. Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity*, (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1974), 50.

5 Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 1.1.

6 Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta*, 50,51.

7 Michael H. Crawford and David Whitehead, *Archaic and Classical Greece: Sources in Translation*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 112.

8 Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 8.1.

9 Ian Morris and Barry B. Powell, *The Greeks: History, Culture and Society*, 2nd. ed., (Upper Saddle River: Pearson, 2010), 207.

10 Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, 9.1-2.

The abolition of high value coinage stands in stark contrast with the rest of Greece, where coinage began to be introduced around 600 BCE to facilitate exchange and to serve as a sign of prestige.¹¹ Athens would later go so far as to mandate the subjects of its empire to use Athenian coins, weights, and measurements.¹² Meanwhile, in Sparta payment appears to have been mostly in kind, with cattle serving as a sort of currency.¹³ This radical deviation from the norm of a Greek *polis* is striking and reflects Spartan concerns over both the accumulation of wealth and the effects of individual greed on the wider society. Tellingly, Diodorus Siculus relays a proverb which was supposedly told to Lycurgus by an oracle of Delphi that, “Covetousness, and it alone, will work the ruin of Sparta.”¹⁴ This is important because surviving archaic literature and poetry indicate a strong “acquisitive drive,” which would have strongly influence the archaic economy.¹⁵ Sparta’s attempts to distribute wealth and inhibit its accumulation were highly unusual compared to other Greek *poleis*. However, Spartan society went another step further: building a society that supported a core body of politically and militarily active citizens on the labour of the *perioikoi* and helots.¹⁶ Many other cities, such as Athens, did not separate the two.¹⁷ This illustrates the effort by Lycurgus and Spartan society to eliminate the role of wealth in identifying the noble classes and remove its citizenry from economic concerns. Instead, “Spartiates were encouraged in competition among each other, not in intellectual achievement or for economic advantage but in physical prowess and stamina. The prizes were honorific rather than material ... but (included) positions of authority and leadership.”¹⁸ Despite all of these practices it is an exaggeration to think that Spartan society did not have its own share of inequality among its citizens, even if it was less than in the average *polis*. Spartans in later years explained that in their society “luxury, wealth, and debt were recent departures from an older equality,” while taking the lower legal status of the *perioikoi* and the helots for granted. It was to these lower classes that economic work and labour functions were

11 Morris and Powell, *The Greeks*, 26; Jonathan M. Hall, *A History of Archaic Greece*. 2nd. ed., (Chichester: John Wiley and Sons Inc, 2014), 278.

12 Morris and Powell, *The Greeks*, 26.

13 G. L. Huxley, *Early Sparta*, (New York: Barnes & Noble Inc., 1970), 52.

14 [Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*] Oldfather, C. H. *Library of History*. Vol. 3. Loeb Classical Library. 1933. 7.12.37-38. pp 373; For further context, see Hans van Wees, “The Economy” in *Companion to Archaic Greece*, (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 450.

15 Wees, *Archaic Greece*, 450.

16 Leopold Migeotte and Janet Lloyd, *The Economy of the Greek Cities: From the Archaic Period to the Early Roman Empire*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 30.

17 *Ibid*, 30.

18 M. I. Finley, *Early Greece: The Bronze and Archaic Ages*. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1970), 115.

relegated.¹⁹

Looking more closely at the social and economic roles of the helots and *perioikoi* further peculiarities of Spartan society emerge. These groups were essential to the Spartan economy, and, unlike other Greek *poleis* where their role was the domain of fully-fledged citizens, Spartan helots and *perioikoi* made up a subservient labour class. While both were conquered peoples, when compared to the helots the *perioikoi* were relatively free,²⁰ In a comprehensive survey of the role of *perioikoi*, R. T. Ridley concludes that “we have evidence for the social and economic diversity of the *perioikoi*, and the still standard view that they were basically an industrial and commercial class will not do.”²¹ Not only was this based on significant evidence that they were crucial to the Spartan military machine through production of weapons, procurement of resources, and responsibility of fighting in the ranks of the hoplites, but also that there is “evidence for social classes within the *perioikoi*,” including some form of an “aristocracy.”²² The word “helots” appears to indicate some sort of captive, and prior to the conquest of Messenia they remained few in number.²³ Probably originating as a class of war captives, the helots were placed under far more restrictions than the *perioikoi* and took on a much more strictly delimited and controlled role in the Spartan economy.

The role of helots and *perioikoi* in Spartan society was determined by their status as a conquered people. Although the Spartans were not alone in taking a conquered people as slaves their treatment of conquered ‘slaves’ was unique. In contrast to the general patten of conquest, enslavement, and dispersion practiced by most Greek states, the Spartans adopted a policy of “keeping a whole population in subjugation at home, in what amounted to their native territory.”²⁴ This led to an unusual system where, like slaves, the helots’ personal freedom was severely restricted, but unlike slaves, helots were the property of the Spartan state. Helots enjoyed some traditional rights but shouldered heavy obligations in agricultural labour.²⁵ These rights, however, were extremely limited compared to the *perioikoi*, and their role in the economy was also far less consummate. The peculiarities of the arrangements in Sparta led many ancient writers to categorize the helot and *perioikoi* populations in a similar and uncertain status between slave and peasant.²⁶ Neither helots nor the ‘free’ *perioikoi* were sold as slaves or owned by individuals. Rather, they were a self-perpetuating slave-caste. However, the helots were also subject to brutal oppression

19 Morris and Powell, *The Greeks*, 208.

20 Huxley, *Early Sparta*, 25.

21 R. T. Ridley, “The Economic Activities of the Perioikoi,” *Mnemosyne* 27, no. 3, (1974), 291.

22 *Ibid.*, 285, 291.

23 Huxley, *Early Sparta*, 25.

24 Finley, *Early Greece*, 115.

25 Ridley, “The Economic Activities of the Perioikoi,” 288.

26 Hall, *Archaic Greece*, 263.

best exemplified by the annual ritual declaration of war against them. Interestingly, the *perioikoi*, as ‘free’ people, were allowed to own slaves in the sense of chattel ownership like in the rest of Greece despite this form of slavery being far less common in Spartan society.²⁷

Given the subservient role of helots and *perioikoi*, the majority of economic work was relegated to them, including agriculture and craft work. The work needed to make a developed society like Sparta’s function was “obtained by compulsion.”²⁸ This is a remarkably different society compared to many of the other Greek *poleis*. Taking Athens as an example, citizens were generally expected to take part in the economic life of the city, and a citizen’s ability to amass political power and respect was usually linked to having a prosperous economic foundation. In Athenian society the ideal citizen had an economic foundation in agriculture, his slaves working for him so that he could take part in civic life. In Sparta, citizens were able to take part in the military or political life of their *polis* because state owned ‘serfs’ already worked land assigned to them by the state. Similarly, in most *poleis* it was unlawful for foreigners to operate certain craft businesses. Meanwhile, Spartan society held craftsmen in deep contempt. Certainly the reforms of Lycurgus did the craftsmen no favours, the abolition of coinage probably being especially injurious to them, possibly resulting in significant emigration.²⁹ What remained of the crafting industry was under the control of the *perioikoi*. Just as with their control over the trade and agriculture markets, the *perioikoi*, “were the beneficiaries of a monopolistic position, free from competition either from Spartans themselves or from outsiders ... outsiders were denied all access to the economy except through the mediation of the *perioikoi* or the state.”³⁰

Together, this meant that the economic basis of the Spartan polis relied more heavily on subject labour, either of *perioikoi* or helot, than other Greek city-states, even if they made substantial use of slave labour. Spartan reliance on subject-labour was one of the key motives for territorial expansion. However, in addition to economic motives, Spartan expansion was justified by a mythos which taught that Spartans had conquered the indigenous Greeks of the Lacedaemon region while invading with a larger Dorian population. Although many scholars believe this is true in the sense that Doric Greeks, like the Spartans, entered the Peloponnese during the so-called “Dorian Invasion,” the traditional Spartan version of this story, creating a mythic genealogy linked to Heracles, was more of a founding myth than a historical account.³¹ They “believed that this descent gave them the

27 Finley, *Early Greece*, 111.

28 M. I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, (New York: The Viking Press 1980), 68.

29 Crawford, *Archaic and Classical Greece*, 113.

30 Finley, *Early Greece*, 114.

31 Massimo Nafissi, “Sparta,” in *Companion to Archaic Greece*, (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 117-119.

right to dominate the defeated indigenous peoples.”³² This combination between economic structures and a dominating militaristic culture compounded in the eighth century BCE to create Sparta’s unique response to overcoming the resource shortages probably caused by of population growth. Other *poleis* founded far flung colonies around the coasts of the Mediterranean to alleviate the burden of massive populations. Sparta instead invaded the fertile lands of Messenia and enslaved its population, reducing their status to helots while effectively doubling both the land and labour at their disposal.³³ The newly subjected population and territory both increased Sparta’s agricultural output and the production of iron.³⁴ The sheer scale of resources brought into the *polis*, in terms of land and labour, made Sparta one of the largest and most powerful *poleis* of the region. Ironically, this would upset the distribution of land among Spartan citizens and gradually result in civil unrest. Calls for redressing the inequality of land allotment were eventually taken up, undermining the key Spartan narrative of citizen equality that was central to its prestige. Shortly thereafter, the Messenians would revolt and any further conquests triggered renewed calls for land redistribution. Effectively, Sparta faced civil unrest from a citizen population it could not supply with the resources available, and, when taking the resources necessary to supply them, it was answered with civil unrest regarding the division of conquered spoils.³⁵

It is necessary to note that Spartan society was more complex than this three-way division of Spartan, *perioikoi*, and helot. Indeed, a significant lack of evidence has led to much debate over the role of the *perioikoi* and how their position as a ‘free’ and subject people affected their role in Spartan society. Once again, the difficulties facing historians of ancient Sparta should be kept in mind, and caution against unjustifiable speculation is advisable.³⁶

Ultimately, the social and political system constructed by Lycurgus would result in a state that bore relatively little resemblance to other Greek *poleis* of the Archaic Period. Perhaps this is part of what has driven the myth of Spartan exceptionalism; rather than being so dedicated to valour and martial prowess that they abandoned economic ambitions, their active suppression of economic ambitions among the citizenry fostered the *polis*’ martial character. The cumulation of these differences – the use of subject labour, the diminished role of manufacturing and trade, and the state-controlled land distribution – would make Sparta an outlier among other archaic Greek *poleis*. The peculiarities that made it an outlier also encouraged an unusual degree of aggressive expansion while other *poleis* tended to found colonies on distant shores to support their cities. However, this expansion by Spartan

32 Morris and Powell, *The Greeks*, 199.

33 Morris and Powell, *The Greeks*, 201, 202.

34 Finley, *Early Greece*, 109.

35 Morris and Powell, *The Greeks*, 202.

36 Ridley, “The Economic Activities of the Perioikoi,” 292.

society was both unplanned for and unsustainable. This was a fundamental weakness in the Spartan system. The extent of the order imposed by Lycurgus - the same system which earned Sparta much of its fame - was antithetical to changing economic realities and fatally unadaptable. Constitutionally abnormal and societally militant, the economic peculiarities of the Spartan polis would make it the society that has fascinated generations for thousands of years after its downfall, though its bizarre economic order is an often overlooked cause.

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The Application of Masculine Narratives in Ancient Greek Sources: The Transformation of the Female Warrior to the Male Warrior.

TESS KAISER

The study of Classical literature through the analysis of female characters, especially in narratives taking place in a time of war, can be very difficult. Often the treatment of women appearing in Classical literature and the language surrounding women of this time give us a very negative view of womanhood in ancient times. Most often, women are seen as weak, helpless, and the property of men. This differs in the stories of the poetess Telesilla of Argos and those of Artemisia of Caria, the Queen of Halicarnassus and a Persian naval commander. Although both of these women are proof that not all women in the ancient world were weak and subservient, their tales of bravery were viewed quite differently by the ancient sources. Rather than seeing their heroic acts as indicative of their characters, the ancient sources attempt to masculinize these women and their actions. After first examining the definition of a masculine narrative, one must look at the commonplace role of the woman in society and the scarcity of the warrior woman. The case studies will finally be explored in order to prove that the descriptions of events by the ancient authors ultimately undermine the successes of these warrior women by applying a masculine narrative to their stories.

A masculine narrative is a narrative that has been masculinized. Masculinization is defined as the act of making someone or something masculine in character, action, or appearance.¹ A masculine narrative itself, however, has a definition with two parts. The masculine narrative can refer to the work itself as one told from the point of view of the male. In this case, it can often mean the sexualization or erasure of female roles in the events in question. A masculine narrative can also impose the prejudices or stereotypical views held by the author of the work, and these prejudices are often, at least in the case of Classical literature and works, against women. However, a masculine narrative can be applied to characters as well. In this usage, the writer follows a set narrative that would have been the archetype for a male hero and applies it to the character, regardless of their gender or sex. This paper focuses on how authors apply this masculine narrative to female characters rather than male. Authors can accomplish the application of a masculine narrative to female characters by having the female characters take part in various actions that would have been a clear indication of masculinity in ancient times, as well as simply referring to the women in a way that indicates they either were male

¹ Yael Even, "Mantegna's Uffizi Judith: The Masculinization of the Female Hero," *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* Vol. 61 (1992), 9.

or becoming male.² These actions and references would have been a clear indication to the ancient reader that something was different about these women and that their actions were out of the ordinary.

Looking at ancient literature and sources, we can see a clear trend in what it meant to be a woman in times of war. The Amazons being the exception, women were not usually known for actually fighting in wars. They often took a more passive role in the wars and were either victims or prizes of the victors.³ This is further illustrated in Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, where he describes that the Athenians "...marched to Plataea and brought in provisions, and left a garrison in the place, also taking away the women and children and such of the men as were least efficient" (Thuc. *Pel.* 2.7).⁴ The example Thucydides provides us clearly indicates that women were not of use in times of war. They were not seen as able bodies that could contribute to campaigns or battles but rather as weak and unfit for war. Thus, the women are compared with men that are too old to fight anymore, as well as with children that are too young to fight yet.

We know from extant works that Telesilla of Argos was indeed a real woman and that she was a popular poetess during her time. Her name is mentioned in passing in several different works, including the *Chronicon* by Eusebius of Caesarea, *Anthologia Palatina* by Antipater of Thessalonika, *Bibliotheka* by Apollodoros, and even in the *Handbook of Meter* by Hephaestion.⁵ Telesilla wrote lyric poetry in Argos around the fifth century BCE. Many of her poems were hymns to various gods, and these hymns usually concerned women.⁶ But even more important than her poetry concerning women is the story about how she defended her home of Argos from Spartan invaders. Both Plutarch and Pausanias mention the courage Telesilla had in defending her homeland of Argos from an invasion by King Cleomenes of Sparta. According to Plutarch⁷ and Pausanias⁸, after the men of Argos had been essentially wiped out in the war against the Spartans, Telesilla decided to rally the elderly men of Argos to guard the walls of the city and then gathered her fellow women to fight in the defense of their home (Plut. *Mulier.* 4.245d-f, Paus. 2.20.8-9). Pausanias further specifies that Telesilla and her army of women won against the Spartans and that King Cleomenes surrendered because it

2 Even, "The Masculinization of the Female Hero," 11-12.

3 F. Graf, "Women, War, and Warlike Divinities," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 55 (1945): 245.

4 Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Richard Crawley (London: J. M. Dent and Co., 1903).

5 John Maxwell Edmonds, *Lyra Graeca; Being the Remains of All the Greek Lyric Poets from Eumelus to Timotheus Excepting Pindar*, (London: W. Heinemann, 1922), 236-245.

6 Willis Barnstone and William E McCulloh, *Ancient Greek Lyrics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 137.

7 Plutarch, *Mulierum Virtutes*, trans. Frank Cole Babbitt (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931).

8 Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, trans. W.H.S. Jones (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1918).

would have been disgraceful to continue a battle against women (Paus. 2.20.9). Plutarch, however, leaves this aspect out of his version of the story, simply stating that the women of Argos, led by Telesilla, provided a great loss to Cleomenes and were also able to drive out the other Spartan king Demaratus (Plut. *Mulier*. 4.245e-f). These two sources do not seem to give us an accurate image or agree upon how the Spartan defeat by Telesilla came about, so we may never know for sure whether she and the other Argive women won because they were women or because they were warriors.

In one version of Telesilla's story, the women who fell in battle were buried close to the Argive Road, and the women who survived the battle were given privilege of erecting a statue of Ares as a memorial to their courage. The act of erecting a statue of Ares was normally an honor that was solely reserved for male warriors. The action itself would have likely been empowering to Telesilla and the other female Argive warriors, but it could also be seen as an action that furthered the ideas of the contemporaries that this event was a reversal of the genders.⁹ In yet another version of the story of Telesilla and the women of Argos, the statue that the women erect is of the god Enyalios.¹⁰ It is debatable whether in this story the name "Enyalios" refers to the minor god of war and attendant of Ares or if it refers to the usage of "Enyalios" as an epithet for Ares, as can be seen in Homer's *Iliad*.¹¹ Whether the statue erected was actually of Ares or of Enyalios, its importance still remains. Both gods were usually worshipped only by men, and the Argive women erecting a statue of either was a complete reversal of these gender norms. In his work *Origines Kalendariae Hellenicae; or, The History of the Primitive Calendar Among the Greeks, Before and After the Legislation of Solon*, Edward Greswell recounts the military exploit of Telesilla, stating that the Spartans were "encountered and repulsed by the women of the place, equipped in armour like men, and led on by Telesilla."¹² The statement that the women appeared to be "like men" is of extreme importance. Armor was not meant to be worn by women - armor was reserved solely for male warriors, and women charging the enemy dressed in armor would have thus evoked the notion that these women were no longer feminine but had shifted towards masculinity and, thus, the male gender. Furthermore, although Greswell's masculinization of the Argive women is far more recent than the masculine narratives of Pausanias and Plutarch - his work having been published in 1862 - it still follows many of the themes put forth by the ancient sources before him. It also shows that the masculinization of the Telesilla

9 Robin Cross and Rosalind Miles, *Warrior Women: 3000 Years of Courage and Heroism* (London: Quercus Publishing Plc., 2011), 27.

10 Graf, "Women, War, and Warlike Divinities," 247.

11 William Smith, ed., *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*: Volume II (London: John Murray Press, 1880), 21.

12 Edward Greswell, *Origines Kalendariae Hellenicae; or, The History of the Primitive Calendar Among the Greeks, Before and After the Legislation of Solon*, Vol. 6 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1862), 125.

narrative was not unique to ancient times; these views have continued through history and are still held today.

Telesilla's masculine narrative continues in Plutarch's description of the battle between the Spartans and the Argive women. Plutarch discusses the date of the battle, stating that some believed it to have occurred on the first day of the fourth month, and that Argives still celebrated that day with a festival called the "Festival of Impudence." At this festival, the women would wear men's clothing, and the men would wear the women's robes and veils (Plut. *Mulier.* 4.245e-f). This reversal of gender roles in celebration of the Argive women's victory makes a clear statement as to how this event was perceived in ancient times. The trading of clothing, representing the reversal of genders, shows that on that day when the Argive women defeated the Spartan forces, the women became men and the men became women. Rather than celebrating the women's victory in itself, the Argives saw that the women were only victorious after taking on the role of men and becoming masculine.

Telesilla was not the only woman around this time period to take matters into her own hands during times of war. Thirty years after Telesilla's defense of Argos, Artemisia of Caria made history. Not only was Artemisia the queen of Halicarnassus, but she was also the only female naval commander under King Xerxes of Persia. As such, Artemisia did not have as much say as her male counterparts in making military decisions. In 480 BCE, following the Battle of Thermopylae, King Xerxes planned to enact a naval attack against the Greek cities.¹³ Although she warned against this attack and suggested instead an attack against the Greeks by land, Artemisia's advice was ultimately dismissed. So, having made an oath to the Persian king, Artemisia had no choice but to command her ships against the Greeks. Although she fought ferociously, Artemisia ran into trouble when the Greeks began to target her ship. As she tried to escape, she found herself blocked by an allied ship. So, thinking quickly, she decided to simply ram through and sink the other ship in order to escape.¹⁴ Although Artemisia and the Persians fought rigorously, they were unable to succeed. Artemisia managed to survive the battle, however, and apparently urged King Xerxes to flee after the loss, advice that he actually decided to heed. This is where the military record of Artemisia ends. However, it is said that after the war, she decided to end her life by jumping off a cliff into the Aegean Sea, the same sea on which she had so often commanded her ships.¹⁵ According to Herodotus, when Artemisia rammed through the ally ship, King Xerxes famously said, "Truly, my men are becoming women and my women, men," (Hdt. 7.99).¹⁶ Taking extreme action

13 Cross and Miles, *Warrior Women*, 21.

14 Cross and Miles, *Warrior Women*, 21-22.

15 Cross and Miles, *Warrior Women*, 21-22.

16 Herodotus, *Histories*, trans. George Rawlinson (Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions, 1996).

and exhibiting quick decision-making skills in a time of war and being a competent naval commander did not earn Artemisia the attentions of Herodotus. Instead, the part of her success that Herodotus chose to focus on was her masculinization. By highlighting the alleged quote by King Xerxes, Herodotus was putting more emphasis on Artemisia acting in a traditionally masculine way rather than on her accomplishments. Herodotus chose to apply this masculine narrative to the successes of Artemisia by having King Xerxes emphasize the change in gender roles and the symbolic change of sexes by his naval soldiers. King Xerxes' statement was an illustration of the transformation of Artemisia from a female to a male through the perception of her military prowess by the ancient sources.

In times of war, both Telesilla and Artemisia decided to take matters into their own hands in order to protect the best interests of their people. However, these brave endeavors were viewed through a gendered lens by the ancient sources. In his *Histories*, Herodotus himself admits that his interest in writing about Artemisia is solely based on the fact that "...she was a woman who played a part in the war against Greece" (Hdt. 7.99). Ultimately, it was not Artemisia's naval savvy that earned the attention of Herodotus but rather the oddity of a woman behaving like a man. Herodotus continues in his gendered praise of Artemisia, stating that, "...although she had a grown up son, she took part in the expedition on account of her daring and manly courage, and not under any compulsion" (Hdt. 7.99). This line of Herodotus' *Histories* is especially significant in his masculine narrative of Artemisia. In the original ancient Greek, Herodotus uses the word ἀνδρηϊκής, which can be roughly translated into English as "manly courage". The use of this word by Herodotus places further emphasis on the perceived masculinity of Artemisia. It also enforces the stereotypical perception of men having to be strong and courageous and of women being weak and timid. Rosaria Vignolo Munson also points out the emphasis that Herodotus places entirely on Artemisia in her article titled "Artemisia in Herodotus." She points out that Artemisia only contributes five ships out of the 1,207 ships in the fleet of Xerxes.¹⁷ But despite Artemisia's rather minimal contribution to the campaign, she still receives a rather large section in Herodotus' *Histories* and an even larger amount of his focus and praise.

An explanation for Herodotus' strong interest in Artemisia and her undertakings can most likely be explained by the fact that she was a woman who behaved in a remarkable and masculine way.¹⁸ Doubtless, Herodotus was instantly interested in the narrative of a woman behaving in such a way as a man would be expected to act. The application of a masculine narrative to Artemisia continues when Artemisia herself in a speech to King Xerxes states that "the [Athenian] men are as much stronger than thy men by sea,

17 Rosaria Vignolo Munson, "Artemisia in Herodotus," *Classical Antiquity* Vol. 7 No. 1, (April 1998): 92.

18 Munson, "Artemisia in Herodotus," 92.

as men are stronger than women” (Hdt. 68a). Despite being a woman herself, and one that was a naval commander as well, Artemisia still made the claim that men are stronger than women. Artemisia may have been so submersed in a culture that did not see women as being capable of bravery that she voluntarily made this statement without seeing its irony. However, a far more likely scenario is that, seeing as Herodotus has been known to take many liberties in his *Histories*, Herodotus himself added this statement. This further solidifies the idea that female warriors were given a more masculine narrative by the ancient sources. Although Herodotus makes the point that Artemisia was a brave and skilled naval commander, he could not help but to point out the dominance of men over women at the time and felt the need to emphasize the superiority of men. This addition by Herodotus also may point to Artemisia’s transformation into a more masculine role. The irony of this statement is ultimately lost if the reader and Artemisia herself view Artemisia as a masculine figure at this point. If Artemisia sees herself as a man at this point in the narrative, her claim that men are stronger than women would raise no issues.

In conclusion, although their situations differed greatly, one thing is true about Telesilla of Argos and Artemisia of Caria: they were both women who decided to fight. They both stepped up and took what they believed to be the best plan of action to defend their own. In the end, both were hailed as heroes in the Ancient World and are still considered as such today. However, the praise they received as heroes may have been misplaced. Despite their various contributions in times of war, these warrior women were given a masculine narrative that ultimately undermined their abilities as women. Their victories were not seen as an accomplishment by brave citizens that just so happened to be women but rather as women acting like or becoming men. The ancient sources chose to apply masculine traits and narratives to these warrior women, and so shaped how the reader views them. By means of their works, ancient writers such as Pausanias, Plutarch, and Herodotus essentially transformed the stories of these heroic women into yet another male-led heroic narrative. This more masculine view of events can also still be seen today in more modern sources and is not unique to the ancient sources. Although these women acted in a way that was not expected in ancient times, it is important to praise them for their actions apart from their sex or gender.

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**Η ΝΟΣΟΣ (The Sickness)
The Symposium and Sappho**

DONALD MCCARTHY

αἷματ' ἐμὰ μοῦ κατὰ μὲν τιν' ὄρμη
ἡσύχῳ ὤμου ψακάζουσι δ' ἐγὼ
πέφρικ' ὡς πῶλοι ὑπὸ τῷ νέφει ἢ
πνεύματι φύλλα.

φαίνομαι ἐγὼ μαλακώτερος νῦν
ἢ πόαι καὶ ἡσυχία ὄξεια
ζημίας μενῶ γε νοσῶ τε δ' ἄνευ
σοῦ παρὰ μοι γε.

ἢ γὰρ ἡμῶν μὲν φύσις οὐχ πάλαι ἦν
ὡς ἐν ἡμέραις χαλέπαις δὲ νῦν ἢ
ἔστι. σὸς γέλως δ' ἔτι καρδίαν μοι
σαρκὶ ζέει μάν.

χωρὶς οὖν σοῦ νῦν σχίζομαι γε δ' ἤλθεσ
καὶ ἐμὴν μνήμη φρένα σίγα καύσας,
καὶ τύχοιμι τὴν φύσιν εἰς ἀπελθῶν,
σὺ φιλότητα.

Streams of blood pour in a quiet rush from my shoulder, and like foals under a cloud or petals in the breeze I shivered.

So now I seem softer than grass, and in the sharp quiet of loss I'll wait, really, and I'll be sick without you beside me.

For our nature of long ago was not as it is now in these painful days. Yet, your laugh still boils the heart in my flesh.

So now I'm split apart from you, but you came in a memory and quietly burned my heart, and I hope now that I might meet that bygone nature, my dearest.

There is a thematic intersection between Sappho's love poems and Plato's *Symposium*. In this poem I have attempted to graft some of the themes from both writers onto the frame of the Sapphic meter, paying particular attention to the fable of Aristophanes in the *Symposium* and a number of Sappho's poems, including Fragment 31. The predominant themes of both the Aristophanes segment and Sappho's poetry circle around the notion of a physiologically painful response to separation from a lover and the sense of being less than whole without one's natural partner. Taken together, these ideas are perhaps akin to the loss of a literal part of oneself such as a limb.

Both Sappho's work and Plato's aristophanic fable play into a Greek theme of love as violent, which is often personified in the form of the gods. Homer's *Iliad* for example is at its simplest a conflict of love: "To Greek archaic poets, the Love goddess and her representative Helen were notoriously the agents of precisely such destruction, the Sack of Troy."¹ Likewise, both Sappho and Plato write with deference to the gods. Most obviously, Aristophanes' fable holds that it was Zeus himself who sundered human bodies from their original nature of being bound together in perfect pairs out of a fear of the power these people held when in unison with one another (Plat. *Sym.* 190c-190e).² This was a violent breaking of the human body, and, according to Aristophanes, it left a permanent vacuum in the human experience, as people were then compelled to devote their lives to the search for their natural partner as their bodies were left scarred in the wake of the split (Plat. *Sym.* 190e). Sappho does not go so far as to completely analogize her romantic sufferings into myth, but she does capture a similar sense of the physical pain joined to an emotional trauma while laying blame upon the gods:

Ἔρος δηῦτέ μ' ὀ λυσιμέλης δόνει,
γλυκύπικρον ἀμάχανον ὄρπετον

Once more Love
Loosens my limbs
Stirring me up
Bittersweet
Irresistible
A creeping thing
(Sappho 130).³

1 Armand D'Angour, "Conquering Love: Sappho 31 and Catullus 51," *The Classics Quarterly*, 56, no. 1 (2006): 299.

2 Plato, *Symposium*, trans. Harold N. Fowler, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1925).

3 Sappho, *The Poems*, trans. Terence Duquesne, (Thame: Darengo Publications and Prebendal Press, 1990), 68.

Ἔρος here is meant to be the god as opposed to just an abstract emotion,⁴ and it is clear from λυσιμέλης δώνει that the god is acting physically upon Sappho, the assumed narrator of the poem. The unpleasantness of being shaken about by Eros is compounded by ἀμάχανον ὄρπετον, “an irresistible creeping thing,” which MacLachlan proposes is intended to be a likening of Eros to a bee: “. . .the creature Sappho had in mind in this poem was the bee, that creature which carried both honey and a sting, pleasure and pain.”⁵ The analogy fits well in conjunction with the *Symposium*, as, for one, it is clear in this fragment that Eros is exerting a physical force upon Sappho, just as Zeus did upon all people. Secondly, the two-fold nature of Eros which Sappho mentions, both bitter and sweet, speaks to the pain of Love’s sting, or with Plato in mind, pain at the separation from a lover combined with the pleasurable goal of regaining that lost connection:

In Plato’s myth, love is a condition which is generated by a painful state of loss and lack and consists of a longing to assuage the pain by finding once again that which was lost. . . . Later in the *Symposium*, Plato qualifies this myth by arguing that, while love is indeed the consciousness of a sense of lack, it seeks to find only what is good.⁶

The same theme of separation appears again in Sappho, notably in Fragment 31:

φαίνεται μοι κῆνος ἴσος θεοῖσον
ἔμμεν’ ὄνηρ, ὅττις ἐνάντιός τοι
ισδάνει καὶ πλάσιον ἄδῳ φωνεῖ -
σας ὑπακούει

Just like a god he seems to me
That man who sits
Across from you so closely
Attentive to your sweet words
(Sappho 31).⁷

Here, the narrator is observing the one she loves from afar, and they are in the company of someone else. The distance between the narrator and the one she loves proves to be a

4 Ibid.

5 Bonnie MacLachlan, “What’s Crawling in Sappho Fr. 130,” *Phoenix*, 43, no. 2 (1989), 96.

6 Warren Colman, “Love, Desire and Infatuation: Encountering the Erotic Spirit,” *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 39, (1994): 502.

7 Sappho, 38.

painful experience for her, as the poem continues on to describe the physical symptoms she suffers while watching her love, including sweating and burning up under her skin.⁸ This reemphasizes the thematic connection between Sappho and the *Symposium* as it shows the painful nature of separation and implies that the remedy is understandably in breaching the split. However, the breach never occurs in Aristophanes' myth, as obviously he is telling the story in a world where people are not fused together as in his fantastical story. In Sappho too there is no reconciliation at the end of Fragment 31 between lover and beloved, though, as the poem is incomplete, the ending is open to conjecture.

In my own poem, I attempted to take the similarities between Sappho and Plato's thoughts on love and combine them. The first two stanzas are meant to be predominantly sapphic in character, focusing on simile and personal sickness at the thought of love. The second stanza in particular calls back to Sappho 31 by describing the subject as "softer than grass" just as Sappho wrote "...χλωροτέρα δὲ μοίας / ἔμμι..." (I am paler than grass... Sappho, 31.14-5). Similarly, in the first stanza I likened the narrator to young horses or flower petals being acted upon by the harshness of the weather, or rather, by an uncontrollable nature. This follows upon a reference to Plato in the first line of the poem with the description of blood seeping from the narrator's shoulder, meant to be a likening to the literal severance described by Plato. At that severance, Zeus changed the nature of people and made it harsher, and in the wake of that split the foals and the petals of the poem must live under bleaker weather than before.

In the latter two stanzas I attempted to make more direct references to the *Symposium*. The third stanza opens with a direct reference to 189d of the *Symposium*: "ἢ γὰρ πάλαι ἡμῶν φύσις οὐχ αὐτὴ ἦν ἤπερ νῦν..." (For our nature from before was not as it is now...) (Plat. Sym. 189d). This direct reference serves as an explanation of sorts for the first two stanzas, signaling a link between the sapphic emotion, which is implicitly present as well by virtue of the metre, and Plato's *Symposium*. The poem continues then in the same miserable tone as Sappho's poems before ending with the word φιλότητα, "dearest." The emphasis on the last word bookends the poem with the opening lines. While the opening lines signal a Platonic metaphor with the cutting at the shoulder, implying an experience felt by all according to Plato's Aristophanes, the last line is more Sapphic in its focus on the personal, which is here the superlative "dearest" person. While love and love-pains are an inevitable part of being human according to Plato, that does not stop them from being entirely personal troubles for all, to be experienced alone.

The intersections between Plato and Sappho in regard to love emphasize a Greek understanding of the emotion as being one of unavoidable violence and suffering. The way in which both writers stress the physical suffering associated with love, Plato with the cleaving of people's bodies, Sappho with individual lovesickness, stresses the need

8 Ibid.

to assuage the emotion by finding one's missing half while also highlighting the painful possibility of being incapable of doing just that.

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