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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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Front and back cover pictures were taken by Jemma Elliott-Israelson on 35mm film. The front cover photograph was taken in June 2014 at the Acropolis in Athens. The Parthenon is currently undergoing major construction, and the photo is evocative of the changes the site has undergone since the 4th C BCE. The donkeys on the back cover represent the traditional transport mechanism on many Greek islands, including Santorini, where this was taken. For 10 euro, tourists can be escorted on these sturdy steeds down to the port and back up again, getting flavour of traditional Greek island life.

*Hirundo* accepts essay contributions, from undergraduate students of McGill University, at least 2,000 words in length, which relate to ancient Europe and the Mediterranean world, including the Near East and Egypt, from prehistoric to late antique times. *Hirundo* is published once a year and uses a policy of blind review in selecting papers. It is journal policy that the copyright to the contents of each issue belongs to *Hirundo*. Essays in either French or English should be sent to the Editor-in-Chief at:

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# Editor's Preface

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the thirteenth edition of *Hirundo*, McGill University's undergraduate Classics journal. Throughout the years, *Hirundo* became a publication that encourages scholarly excellence and engagement with the classical world in a variety of ways. The present issue includes reflections on Greek and Roman history, literature, medicine, sports, warfare, architecture, and Classical reception.

We begin with Alexandra Bilhete's discussion of the origins and development of Hellenistic science in Ptolemaic Egypt and Alexandria. Then, Samuel Low-Chappell brings us to the gladiatorial games, a sport of rules and techniques built upon the idea of bravery. Further on the topic of battle, Alexandru Martalogu explores Dacia as a catalyst for Roman warfare. Opening the topic of methodology, Forrest Picher analyses the *Histories* in a discussion on the temporal and cultural gaps of the study of history. Then, Marcus Wang explores the possibility of Vergilian influence on *Beowulf*. Continuing in literature, Katherine Horgan presents a study on madness and Marlowe's reception of the Herculean myth in *Tamburlaine*. Leaving textual constructions, we turn to Byzantine art and architecture in an essay by Gregory Giannakis. Finally, a light but stimulating piece by Giulietta Fiore illuminates the contrasts between ancient Greek and Chinese conception of old age. In the back matter section, Jacqueline Hampshire and Jemma Elliott-Israelson present unique pieces that link the past and the present. Among these, you will find the voices of four scholars in a short series of interviews compiled by our editors.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Professors Rose MacLean, Eric Nelson, Josiah Ober, and Kurt Raaflaub for contributing to this present edition. Many thanks to our great body of support, the Department of History and Classical Studies, the John MacNaughton Chair of Classics, the Dean of Arts' Development Fund, the Arts Undergraduate Society, and the Students' Society of McGill University for their generous financial donations.

Thanks go, as always, to the dedicated team of editors listed above, whose commitment to hard work and dedication to the study of history have made it possible to bring this project to completion, in a most enjoyable way.

**Clara Nencu**  
Editor-in-Chief

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# Scientific Advancements in the Hellenistic Period: Divergence from Philosophy, Royal Patronage, and the Emergence of Applied Science

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ALEXANDRA BILHETE

The evolution of science reflects a history of innovations traceable throughout civilization. Science is currently defined as a discipline of knowledge based on observation, experiment, and examination. All aspects of science aim at understanding the natural and political world through analytical means.<sup>1</sup> In the ancient world, an unprecedented period of extensive scientific development arose in the Hellenistic era. This essay will address how and why this particular period became a watershed moment for scientific development. It will begin by investigating how the transition from the Classical to the Hellenistic period impacted science. The focus will be on Ptolemaic Egypt and particularly the Mouseion, Library and empirical scientific activity of Alexandria. Overall, the superior nature of Hellenistic science was a direct result of three main factors: the divergence of science from philosophy, royal patronage and the emergence of applied science.

In the Classical period, science was founded on philosophy, as Greek thinkers focused on achieving a theoretical understanding of the world based on observation over experimentation.<sup>2</sup> This deductive approach was inspired by the Ionians, who brought science into the western Mediterranean world.<sup>3</sup> Ionian scientists, such as Thales of Miletus (c.624-565 B.C.) tied science with philosophy by making observations and engaging in deliberations to draw conclusions on the natural world.<sup>4</sup> By the fifth century, Athens had become the scientific centre of the ancient world.<sup>5</sup> The city's intellectuals maintained an approach to science that was embedded in philosophical discourse. Intellectual practices emerged through philosophical debates between prominent intellectuals on morality and politics.<sup>6</sup> This is exemplified by the development of academic schools, whose structure and curriculum were founded on theory and philosophy. Socrates founded the first permanent school in Athens in 445 B.C. and attributed greatest importance to the written word and discussion.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Plato's

<sup>1</sup> G. Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander: 323-30 BC*. (London: Routledge, 2000), 326.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 379.

<sup>3</sup> Charles Singer, *A Short History of Scientific Ideas to 1900* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 12-19. The primary inspiration of Greek science is attributed to the Ionians. Ionia's geographic location, participation in sea trade and warfare resulted in communication networks with the East, bringing science into Greece and the West.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 18. Thales of Miletus' achievements include major developments in astronomical observation and astronomy. His pupils included prominent scientists such as Anaximander (611-547 BC), Anaximenes (c.570 BC) and Hecataeus (c. 540 BC).

<sup>5</sup> Singer, *A Short History of Scientific Ideas to 1900*, 37-61.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> M. Ostwald and John P. Lynch, "The Growth of Schools and The Advance of Knowledge," in *The Cambridge Ancient History* ed. David M. Lewis, 2nd ed., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 594-595.

Academy centered on philosophical discussion of political life and moral principles. Aristotle's Peripatetic school, founded in 335 B.C. also reflected a philosophical community.<sup>8</sup> Ultimately, the schools of Classical Greece relied on philosophical deductive logic in order to draw conclusions about the material world.

Hellenistic science primarily developed in the three large cities of Alexandria, Rhodes, and Pergamum, which all competed to become the dominant centre of science.<sup>9</sup> Fourth-century Hellenistic kings viewed science as a tool to political self-advancement. They monopolized scientific inquiry in order to display superior wealth, reputation and power, and to consolidate their reign over new territories and populations. Ultimately, the city of Alexandria emerged victorious, and became the centre for leading intellectuals of the Hellenistic world. It quickly became a "great magnet," attracting engineers, mathematicians, doctors, and scientists who sought to pursue scientific practices and, by extension, increase their wealth and reputation.<sup>10</sup>

The transition from the Classical to Hellenistic period is marked by a distinct shift from theory to practice in the sciences, as scientists began to apply their work for the purpose of technological, medical and geographic innovation. In the late fourth century, new disciplines including astronomy, medicine and mathematics emerged.<sup>11</sup> Further, academic instruction in Hellenistic schools was now based on practical experiments.<sup>12</sup> The shift from theoretical to practical is epitomized by Hippocrates and the "Hippocratic method," which was adopted by Hellenistic scholars and involved practical procedures founded on experience, experimentation and testing.<sup>13</sup> This shows that science was developing based on facts and proofs, rather than philosophical discussion. Furthermore, the major fields of scientific study became centred on three new themes, all of which emphasized direct observation of the material world: numbers and their relation to material objects; the formation and function of the universe; and the nature of man.<sup>14</sup> This shows an evident break away from Classical Greek science, which focused by contrast on philosophical deductions on the immaterial world in order to draw conclusions about the material world.

Much of this shift in the scientific landscape from the theoretical to the practical is owed to the Ptolemies, who revamped the fifth-century scientific model. They monopolized intellectual theories and applied them in order to gain even greater power. They recognized the value of science as a tool for advancing political and social goals. As such, the Ptolemies were the main patrons of both the arts and sciences in this period. They encouraged inductive over deductive approaches to science, and the application of science in military, medical, and geographic fields. This shift away from traditional Greek thought impacted society, with Greek immigrants becoming dissociated from their

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 594-612.

<sup>9</sup> Singer, *A Short History of Scientific Ideas to 1900*, 61.

<sup>10</sup> J. V. Luce, "Greek Science in Its Hellenistic Phase," *Hermathena* 145 (1988): 23-38, 36.

<sup>11</sup> Singer, *A Short History of Scientific Ideas to 1900*, 32.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 66.

past and disconnected “spiritually from their ancient folk-ways.”<sup>15</sup> This marked a watershed moment and a clear break from Classical Greece, which did not distinguish thought from application. This is supported by Pappus, who noted that the Heron school was divided between theoretical (*logikon*) and manual (*cheiourgikon*) activity.<sup>16</sup> Hellenistic science developed through this break from philosophy and the new use of knowledge toward applied science.

Aristocratic patronage in fourth-century science was motivated by the fierce competition amongst the successor kings who fought to seize land from Alexander’s dissolved Empire.<sup>17</sup> Hellenistic politics reflect a “struggle by those who achieved royal status” to maintain their power and territorial claims.<sup>18</sup> To gain the upper hand in this political chess game, the kings needed to exhaust all avenues to enhance power. By extension, science was exploited to maintain auras of economic success and intellectual superiority.

The Ptolemies were most successful in monopolizing Egypt’s wealth to advance their reputation as the supreme, all-powerful dynasty. They embodied Hellenistic kingship; they used Egypt’s immense wealth to engage in gift-giving and benefaction to an unprecedented degree. They were champions of self-representation and victorious in the competitive philanthropy that categorized the era. They attracted the most prominent Greek writers and scholars to the Alexandrian court.<sup>19</sup> This greatly increased the amount of literature and research produced in Alexandria, which embraced a “new style [of] research institute” and became the central location of scientific activity.<sup>20</sup>

The use of royal patronage in advancing scientific pursuits marks a revolutionary change and explains why science was so advanced in the third century B.C. Preceding centuries reveal no evidence to suggest that state funds were granted to intellectual or scientific pursuits.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, fifth-century academic centres received no state funding or subsidization.<sup>22</sup> This stresses a distinction between a Classical and Hellenistic perspectives on science; whereas the fifth-century philosophers simply sought to understand nature, the third-century kings saw knowledge as a tool to propagate notions of self-superiority.

The Ptolemies remodelled the pre-existing conventional ruler patronage, insofar as that “science as well as literature was now taken under the royal wing.”<sup>23</sup> This revolution explains why science had more opportunity to develop in the Hellenistic period, as the kings funded entire scholarly institutions, rather than exclusively financing

<sup>15</sup> Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander*, 67.

<sup>16</sup> Pappus Alexandrinus, *Mathematical Collection*, GMW ii 615. Translated by D. Jackson.

<sup>17</sup> Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander*, 328.

<sup>18</sup> M. M. Austin, “Hellenistic Kings, War and the Economy,” *The Classical Quarterly* 36, no. 2 (1986): 457.

<sup>19</sup> Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander*, 329. This was done by offering privileged employment as scientists, architects, tax collectors, judges, and professional mercenaries called *kleruchs*.

<sup>20</sup> Luce, *Greek Science in Its Hellenistic Phase*, 23.

<sup>21</sup> T. E. Rihll, *Greek Science* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 16-17.

<sup>22</sup> Rihll, *Greek Science*, 3. The main fifth-century academic institutions include the famous Academy and Lyceum in Athens.

<sup>23</sup> Luce, *Greek Science in Its Hellenistic Phase*, 24.



particular individuals.<sup>24</sup> Furthermore, by re-directing financing to stimulate the multiple fields of science, Ptolemy was able to reap a vast amount of power and prestige. The intensification of royal patronage and new usage of public funding were why science developed so much in Hellenistic Alexandria. The Ptolemies quickly realized that scientific discoveries and innovations made in Egypt would, in turn, bring glory and popularity to the king himself.

In the third century, libraries and museums were royally commissioned as tools of political propaganda throughout the Hellenistic world.<sup>25</sup> They stood as physical testaments to the wealth, status and power of the city and king himself.<sup>26</sup> In Alexandria, the Mouseion and Library were established in order for Ptolemy II to achieve political advancement in light of the competition between Alexander the Great's successors.<sup>27</sup> The Mouseion was strategically constructed to reflect Aristotle's Academy in Athens. Aristotle had been employed by Philip II as Alexander the Great's private tutor, so through the Mouseion, Ptolemy II emphasized his connection to Aristotle and, by extension, Alexander. This would have increased Ptolemy II's legitimacy as king in Egypt and as the most powerful successor of Alexander.<sup>28</sup> Strabo's description of the Mouseion revealed that the elite scientists worked, lived, ate and enjoyed luxurious pleasures at the king's expense.<sup>29</sup> The fact that the most prominent minds came together in close quarters increased the quantity and quality of work disseminating from Alexandria.<sup>30</sup> Royal funding was being employed in a new way by the Ptolemies that resulted in reciprocal political benefits.

A key explanation for powerful advancements in Hellenistic science was the creation of applied science. During this period for the first time science began to be practically used in an effort to accomplish social, political and cultural objectives. The kings and aristocrats began to realize that scientific theories, if realized, could be used to their advantage and had the potential to yield high degrees of power and prestige. The early Ptolemies applied theoretical scientific knowledge in practical ways to benefit themselves. This is apparent in the construction of immense war machines, technological innovations, revolutionary medical and geographic activity, all of which in turn engendered more scientific developments.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Erskine, "Culture and Power in Ptolemaic Egypt: The Museum and Library of Alexandra," *Greece & Rome, Second Series* 42, no. 1 (1995): 40.

<sup>25</sup> S. P. Johnstone, "A New History of Libraries and Books in the Hellenistic Period," *Classical Antiquity* 33, no. 2 (2014): 349.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 362. Many institutions developed across the Hellenistic world, in Cos, Jerusalem, Babylonia, Pergamum, Rhodes, and Athens.

<sup>27</sup> Erskine, *Culture and Power in Ptolemaic Egypt*, 38.

<sup>28</sup> M. Ostwald and John P. Lynch, "The Growth of Schools and The Advance of Knowledge," In *The Cambridge Ancient History Vol. 6*, ed. David M. Lewis, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 622.

<sup>29</sup> Strab. 17.793-4. Translated by H.C. Hamilton and W. Falconer.

<sup>30</sup> Erskine, *Culture and Power in Ptolemaic Egypt*, 41-42.

From the fifth to the third century, a distinct change in warfare ideology occurred.<sup>31</sup> Military technology developed in terms of quantity rather than quality. In the Classical period, military victories belonged to the entire citizen body, highlighting the communal nature of the polis. Contrarily, Hellenistic warfare emphasized the individual successes of the king and army, concentrating on advanced weapons and tactical equipment.<sup>32</sup> Competition between the successor kings developed into “something like a naval arms-race” and from this the Ptolemies arose triumphant.<sup>33</sup> The late fourth century marked the transition from field combat to siege-warfare.<sup>34</sup> Mechanized warfare was underpinned by applied science and the new use of state finances, as kings invested significant amounts of money toward the engineering of weapons such as catapults and missile-throwing machines.

The Hellenistic period saw the practical application of scientific information to construct gigantic battle machines.<sup>35</sup> The new emphasis on gigantism and colossal weaponry had important political ramifications, and was used by the kings as undeniable visual evidence of power, wealth, and the material and intellectual richness of their society. The most famous Hellenistic siege machine was the *Helepolis*, a wheeled tower.<sup>36</sup> Diodorus notes that it was funded by King Demetrios Poliorketes and was used to successfully besiege Salamis, Cyprus and Rhodes.<sup>37</sup> These creations demonstrate that Hellenistic scientists made active efforts to transform scientific theory in pragmatic ways, as a means to achieve tangible results on the battlefield.

Notably, Plutarch states that many of these enormous machines were never used in battle.<sup>38</sup> This further stresses that the Hellenistic kings were monopolizing scientific knowledge for self-advancement. The mere existence of massive siege weapons served as a tool to visually propagate the king’s power, authority and wealth to the public. Motivated by internal competition, the successor kings would mount their colossal artillery which publically promoted the king’s omnipotence and superior military, intellectual, and leadership capabilities.

The schism between science and philosophy and the emergence of applied science are highly evident in the field of medicine. Prior to the Hellenistic era, it was both socially and politically unacceptable to perform human dissections, as it defied the traditional philosophy that the body was sacred.<sup>39</sup> It was Socrates who first rejected the traditional taboo on human dissection, thus triggering the dissolution of philosophical and spiritual ideologies on anatomy. This provoked the rise of practical, hands-on anatomical

<sup>31</sup> Giogrio Santillana, *The Origins of Scientific Thought from Anaximander to Proclus 600 B.C-500 A.D.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 237-240.

<sup>32</sup> Austin, *Hellenistic Kings, War and the Economy*, 453-458.

<sup>33</sup> Luce, *Greek Science in Its Hellenistic Phase*, 30.

<sup>34</sup> Singer, *A Short History of Scientific Ideas to 1900*, 37-61

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>36</sup> Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander*, 338.

<sup>37</sup> Diod. 20.48.2-3 and 20.91.2-6. Translated by Immanuel Bekker. Ludwig Dindorf. Friedrich Vogel.

<sup>38</sup> Luce, *Greek Science in Its Hellenistic Phase*, 31.

<sup>39</sup> Santillana, *The Origins of Scientific Thought*, 129-131.

investigation in the third century B.C.<sup>40</sup> It was this vital “disregard of the body [...] a hundred years later” which “made human dissection possible [...] in Greek circles at Alexandria”.<sup>41</sup>

Backed by royal patronage, Herophilos of Chalkedon (c.330-260 B.C.) and Erasistratos (c.315-240 B.C.) performed the first systematic human dissections in Alexandria.<sup>42</sup> This highlights a scientific watershed, as dissection had now become socially and culturally accepted.<sup>43</sup> Taking it a step further, Celsus wrote “It is necessary to cut open the bodies of dead persons and inspect ... Herophilos and Erasistratos [received] from the kings wicked men brought from prison and cut them open when alive,” which was done to examine first hand the inner workings of the body.<sup>44</sup> This confirms that Hellenistic practices included scientific dissections and vivisections.

These physicians made huge strides in our understanding of the human body, with Herophilos connecting the functions of the brain, spinal cord and nervous system; additionally, both physicians believed illnesses to have natural causes at a time when it was common to believe illnesses were sent from the gods.<sup>45</sup> Thus the development of applied science, triggered by a divergence away from philosophy, caused scientific intensification in the Hellenistic era.

The new trend of using scientific theories in practical ways is highlighted by royal patronage toward geography and exploration. Kings sought to expand their empires and wanted to know the exact amount of land they conquered.<sup>46</sup> Alexander the Great commissioned prominent scholars to accompany him on military conquests and measure the distances his army travelled and amount of territory he seized.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, the early Ptolemies sponsored geographers to study the earth in an effort to determine just how much land, and by extension, power, they controlled. New mathematical advancements allowed for these men to make calculations regarding the earth’s longitude, latitude and meridian lines.<sup>48</sup>

The Ptolemies realized economic investment in territorial sciences would lead to positive political repercussions. The increase in exploration promoted communication and trade networks. By extension, the king enhanced his public reputation and increased the potential to acquire larger commercial markets to fuel his kingdom’s economy. The Ptolemies also applied scientific theories of the Earth toward practical military purposes. For instance, Eratosthenes made practical use of official maps to establish a north-south

<sup>40</sup> Singer, *A Short History of Scientific Ideas to 1900*, 36.

<sup>41</sup> Singer, *A Short History of Scientific Ideas to 1900*, 36.

<sup>42</sup> Luce, *Greek Science in Its Hellenistic Phase*, 29-30.

<sup>43</sup> Rihll, *Greek Science*, 118-122. Herophilos’ hands-on tests on the body led to the discovery of the pulse and distinction between sensory and motor nerves. Further, Erasistratos dissected the heart and discovered of veins and blood circulation.

<sup>44</sup> Cels. 23-4, 26. Translated by Walter Geroge Spencer.

<sup>45</sup> Justin Pollard and Howard Reid, *The Rise and Fall of Alexandria: Birthplace of the Modern World* (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 2006), 68-69.

<sup>46</sup> Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander*, 359.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 360.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 361.

base line across Egypt.<sup>49</sup> The mathematical calculation of geographical landscapes enhanced the king's military power. It gave the king and army a better understanding of territories, which could augment the efficiency and success of campaigns.

Ptolemaic investment in the sciences was not founded on the value of knowledge, but rather as tied to their desire for political and social advancement. Royal patronage increased the prestige of the king, which was the strongest driving factor that encouraged spending state money on science.<sup>50</sup> Science became highly advanced because it diverged from the philosophical sphere and was practically applied in society. Science was applied even in the domain of entertainment. For example, hydraulic innovations were used in making musical instruments.<sup>51</sup> This highlights a "typical Hellenistic mix of theory and the manufacture of amusements [for] the elite."<sup>52</sup> This had reciprocal benefits, as avant-garde objects would have sparked the curiosity of other kings and their elite courts. The Ptolemies owned new unique objects of wonder, which would have increased the king's prestige and the number of visitors into Alexandria, fuelling Egypt's economy.

However, Alexandrian science was not without limitations. The common people were denied access to any benefits that new technology could offer. Many new tools and mechanisms had large potentials to cause communal benefits, but were exclusively employed in elite social spheres. For instance, Archimedes' invention of "snail screw" could have been used to drain farmlands flooded by the Nile.<sup>53</sup> Water-mills, pulley systems and the creation of iron presented significant potential in improving the efficiency of agricultural work. However, the Ptolemies made no attempts at any widespread adoption of this knowledge to assist the population. They governed with the underlying stipulation that everything done in society should have positive benefits for the state and for the king himself.<sup>54</sup> This stresses that royal patronage of scientific pursuit was motivated by the king's desire for political advancement rather than social or educational reform.

To conclude, the Hellenistic period marks a watershed moment where science became focused on experiment and technical innovation. It was practically applied to benefit the king's political ambitions. This diverged from Classical science, which was founded upon philosophical theories rather than practical experimental processes. However, scientific inquiry was not used to benefit the entire population, but was rather monopolized by the kings to enhance their public reputations as powerful rulers. Science became particularly advanced in Alexandria, where the Ptolemies revolutionized the use of royal patronage and redirected state funds toward scientific, medical and technological advancements to bolster their individual power. Science represented a means to an end in achieving political advancement above the other successor kings. Hellenistic science set

<sup>49</sup> Luce, *Greek Science in Its Hellenistic Phase*, 28.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 329.

<sup>51</sup> Shipley, *The Greek World After Alexander*, 331.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 332.

<sup>54</sup> William Linn Westermann, "The Ptolemies and the Welfare of Their Subjects," *The American Historical Review* 43, no. 2 (1938): 275.

the standard for systematic developments on evidence, proof, and practical purpose, thus laying the foundations for empirical science.

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# Bravery in the Face of Death: Gladiatorial Games and Those Who Watched Them

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SAMUEL LOW-CHAPPELL

The gladiatorial games—often portrayed in modern media as brutish spectacles enjoyed by bloodthirsty crowds—were rather a rule-bound sport focused on the Roman ideal of bravery in the face of death. Wildly entertaining, the games were a popular venue for the Roman people, and played an important role within the political structure of republican and imperial Rome. This paper intends to examine why the games were so popular; to reveal the way in which Romans viewed gladiators themselves; and to demonstrate that the games were technical and skill-based, not pure blood sport. It will discuss the contradictions and ambivalent attitudes of the Romans towards the gladiators and explain why this was the case.

It is difficult to give a comprehensive and accurate account of what the gladiatorial games meant to the Romans due to the ever-evolving social and political climate that existed over the long lifespan of the games. The first games were held in Rome in 264 B.C.E., but they did not gain great popularity until the late Republican Period.<sup>1</sup> Their attractiveness greatly increased through the Imperial Period, from which most of the secondary source material used in this essay originates. This paper will draw on multiple ancient sources from different time periods that both laud and decry the games and the gladiators in an effort to gain a basic understanding of what the games truly were and subsequently represented to the Romans. Sources examined include Tertullian, Seneca, Cicero, and Livy, amongst others. Tertullian was a Christian writing around the year 200 C.E. He was critical of the gladiatorial games, so we must view his statements under that light. Similarly, Seneca—writing in the first century C.E.—saw himself as an elite above the base pleasures of the common people, and therefore his descriptions of the games are usually negative. Cicero, a politician and orator in the late Republican Period, expressed ambivalent view towards gladiators, at times using the term as an insult and at others lauding their bravery. Livy’s historical accounts are only sometimes accurate; although we must consult his statements with scrutiny, for this paper’s purposes, his description of the pleasures of the gladiatorial games can be used to supplement other primary evidence.

The gladiatorial games were extremely popular in the Imperial Period. Attending the games was “one of the practices that went with being a Roman,”<sup>2</sup> and an

<sup>1</sup> Matthew Dillon and Lynda Garland, *Ancient Rome: From the Early Republic to the Assassination of Julius Caesar*, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 106.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Wiedermann, *Emperors and Gladiators* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 1.

essential aspect of being Roman was taking the games seriously.<sup>3</sup> Cicero tells us that gladiatorial games delighted the people “above all things.”<sup>4</sup> Additionally, Livy describes the gladiatorial games first as terrifying, but then intensely pleasurable, similar to their description by Tertullian, who also depicts the games as being filled with pleasures.<sup>5</sup> These sources represent the views of individuals from multiple time periods—the Late Republic (Cicero), Early Imperial Rome (Livy), and Mid-Imperial Rome (Tertullian)—showing that the games were popular over a long spread of time. The games provided different things for different people: spectators appreciated how well gladiators faced death, the punishment of criminals, the ability to interact with the emperor, and the ability to view foreign peoples and animals.<sup>6</sup> The foreign peoples described came not only in the form of personal ethnicities of the gladiators but also in the ethnic nature of the fighting styles. Many of the gladiators that fought were dressed as ethnic warriors such as the Thracians, Samnites, and Gauls—all of whom represented some of Rome’s toughest adversaries.<sup>7</sup>

The games’ role in the political sphere helps to elucidate their vast popularity. There are multiple examples of politicians who put on games to gain public support. During the Late Republican Period, Cicero describes in his defense of Murena how he (Murena) won over the populace by putting on gladiatorial games.<sup>8</sup> We see a similar example in Suetonius’ *Life of Divus Julius*, where he describes how Caesar put on lavish gladiatorial games in order to gain the recognition of common people.<sup>9</sup> This issue became so serious that in 63 B.C.E. a law was enacted that prevented games from being put on within two years of candidacy, but most candidates found a way around this law.<sup>10</sup> The fact that a law needed to be created to regulate these games illustrates how much popular support could be gained from holding them; the law would not have been enacted had it not been such a problem. This suggests that the gladiatorial games were highly popular amongst the people.

During the Imperial Period, Augustus attempted to gain a monopoly on gladiatorial games, and by the time of Domitian they were controlled in totality by the emperors.<sup>11</sup> In this way, the emperors maintained power over the popularity that could be gained from the games. Interestingly enough, the arena was a place where the voice of the people could be heard during the Imperial Period. In gladiatorial matches, the crowd decided who would live and who would die, and this decision came down to how well

<sup>3</sup> Valerie M. Hope, “Negotiating Identity and Status, The Gladiators of Roman Nîmes” in *Cultural Identity in the Roman Empire*, ed. Ray Laurence and Joanne Berry (New York: Routledge, 1998), 191.

<sup>4</sup> Cic. *Sest.* 124 Cicero repeats that the people enjoy games in *Leg. Agr.* 2.71.

<sup>5</sup> Liv. 41.20.10-12. And Tert. *De Spect.* 1. This is part of the reason why Tertullian is so critical of the games—the extreme pleasures gained through watching the bloody sport was un-Christian in his opinion.

<sup>6</sup> Donald G. Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 3.

<sup>7</sup> Catherine Edwards, *Death in Ancient Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 50.

<sup>8</sup> Cic. *Mur.* 38-40.

<sup>9</sup> Suet. *Jul.* 26.

<sup>10</sup> Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*, 50.

<sup>11</sup> Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*, 84. And Edwards, *Death in Ancient Rome*, 49.



gladiators fought.<sup>12</sup> If a gladiator fell, the crowd would give a response. If he fought bravely and was well liked, there was a good chance the crowd would cheer for him. But if he fought in a cowardly manner, the crowd might boo and jeer. The emperor would often bow to the wishes of the people and the gladiator in question would subsequently live or die. This show of deference by the emperor helped to boost the relationship between him and his people.<sup>13</sup> Deciding the fate of gladiators was not the only way the people interacted with the government within the venue of the arena: crowds would cheer or jeer depending on whether or not they approved of a political individual's social promotion, sometimes forcing men to leave their seats.<sup>14</sup> There was a high entertainment value for the people as explained by the ancient authors above, and based upon the evidence of politicians utilizing gladiatorial games to successfully gain popular support; we can discern the level of enjoyment felt by the Roman people in relation to the gladiatorial games. We can also see the important role the games played in the political sphere both during the Republic and the Imperial Period. The arena was one of the few places where people could voice their opinion and be heard, therefore it was extremely important in the political relations of politicians, emperors, and the people.

In order to understand why the games were so popular, we must first look at how the Romans viewed the gladiators. People were highly ambivalent. Archaeological evidence shows that children may have played with clay gladiators in the same way that children today play with action figures.<sup>15</sup> Children would also pretend to be gladiators while at the same time the games served as a stock subject of conversation for Roman elites.<sup>16</sup> As we have seen, the games were wildly popular amongst the people and in some cases individual gladiators were elevated to the point of stardom, with genuine fans.<sup>17</sup>

However, they were also intensely despised. Gladiators suffered much *infamia*—they occupied the lowest strata of society. They had segregated gravesites; they were considered untrustworthy; and they were compared to prostitutes in that they were selling and exploiting their bodies.<sup>18</sup> Being called a gladiator was an insult, and volunteering as a gladiator was debasing.<sup>19</sup> Tertullian interestingly points out the ambivalence shown towards gladiators:<sup>20</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*, 9.

<sup>13</sup> Edwards, *Death in Ancient Rome*, 54.

<sup>14</sup> J.C. Edmondson, "Dynamic Arenas: Gladiatorial Presentations in the City of Rome and the Construction of Roman Society during the Early Empire" in *Roman Theater and Society*, ed. W. J. Slater, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 109.

<sup>15</sup> David S. Potter, "Spectacle" in *A Companion to the Roman Empire*, ed. David S. Potter, (Oxford: Blackwell 2006), 403.

<sup>16</sup> Wiedermann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 24.

<sup>17</sup> Edwards, *Death in Ancient Rome*, 49. And Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*, 85.

<sup>18</sup> See inscription on page 171 of Dillon and Garland for a description of separate gravesites. This idea is reinforced in Hope 184; untrustworthiness in Wiedermann 30; similar to prostitution in Hope "Negotiating Identity and Status", 184

<sup>19</sup> Wiedermann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 28. And Edwards, *Death in Ancient Rome*, 49.

<sup>20</sup> Tert. *De Spect.* 22

...look at their attitude to the charioteers, players, gladiators, most loving of men, to whom men surrender their souls and women their bodies as well, for whose sake they commit the sins they blame; on one and the same account they glorify them and they degrade and diminish them; yes, further, they openly condemn them to disgrace and civil degradation; they keep them religiously excluded from council chamber, rostrum, senate, knighthood, and every other kind of office and a good many distinctions. The perversity of it! They love whom they lower; they despise whom they approve; the art they glorify, the artist they disgrace.

As mentioned above, Tertullian was a Christian who did not approve of the gladiatorial games and criticizing them; we must be aware of this when analyzing this quotation. His words gesture to the differing attitudes towards the gladiators—they are loved above all, glorified, and yet excluded politically and religiously. Taking this into account, we can gain a better perspective as to why the gladiatorial games were so revered. One possible argument is that the Romans wanted a feeling of superiority.<sup>21</sup> Seeing one's fiercest enemies fighting one another for one's own entertainment could easily make an individual feel powerful. To see such "fierce" warriors as their playthings must have made the Roman people feel more secure within their state while at the same time solidifying their feeling of dominance over their neighbors. These psychological effects were compounded, although contradictorily, with the fact that the gladiators exemplified the martial virtues of the Roman state.

The Roman people held skill, training, and bravery in high esteem—all of which were prerequisites for being a successful gladiator. There is a clear connection between fighting and virtue in the Roman system of values.<sup>22</sup> The courage to confront an opponent together with the technical expertise to kill or maim him was highly regarded by the Romans and gladiatorial combat isolated and illustrated these virtues.<sup>23</sup> As explained above, there were different types of gladiator based upon ethnic backgrounds. For example, the *Thraex* (Thracian) was covered in armor, wielded a curved sword, and advanced when he fought, whereas the *Retarius* was lightly armored and fought with a trident and net.<sup>24</sup> The Roman people understood the challenges that come along with fighting different types of adversaries along with the skill required to wield diverse types

<sup>21</sup> Kyle (*Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*, 7-10) has a very interesting discussion about the reasons why gladiatorial games were so enjoyed. He goes through an in-depth historiographical discussion about the various views held by different scholars, both ancient and modern, in an attempt to understand the Romans' mindset. Such a discussion is too large for this essay and the following is my view of the Roman's mindset towards the gladiatorial games based upon primary sources indicated above and below and Kyle's critique.

<sup>22</sup> Wiedermann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 35.

<sup>23</sup> Wiedermann, *Emperors and Gladiators*, 37, and Edwards, *Death in Ancient Rome*, 49, and Hope

"Negotiating Identity and Status, 191, and Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*, 80 all agree.

<sup>24</sup> For a description of Thracian style, see Artemidorus *Oneirocritica* 2.32; For *retarius* style, see David S. Potter and D. J. Mattingly, *Life, Death, and Entertainment in the Roman Empire* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 314.

of weaponry.<sup>25</sup> They recognized and appreciated these abilities in the gladiators. Such skills required training and were learned in gladiatorial schools called *ludi*.<sup>26</sup> There men would train and learn the fighting styles of the different types of gladiators while at the same time learning how to put on a good show. Part of this education included learning how to land a proper deathblow, and part of this was learning to properly receive one. The most important aspect of being a gladiator was bravery—especially bravery in the face of death. These reasons help us understand why the Romans enjoyed the gladiatorial games: the gladiators clearly embodied the Romans’ ideals of skill, training, and, as we shall see, bravery.

Above all, the most important aspect of the arena was the ability to face the sword unflinchingly. This statement comes with some qualifications—I say “in the face of death” because not all gladiators died. Indeed, “elite gladiators had a chance, perhaps a good chance, of survival.”<sup>27</sup> Gladiators were not necessarily expected to kill defeated opponents—this was largely up to the crowd.<sup>28</sup> Interestingly, Seneca writes that when he attended a gladiatorial game, the people were shouting for a gladiator to be killed because he “meets the sword in so cowardly a way.”<sup>29</sup> In this context Seneca is explaining the horridness of crowds, so we must read his observations carefully. However, the fact that he indicates the reason for the crowd’s insistence upon the man’s death as cowardliness shows what the Roman people were looking for in a match—bravery on the part of the combatants. The crowd demanded the man’s death not because he lost, but because he was acting like a coward. This clearly shows what the Romans wanted from gladiatorial combat: bravery in the face of death. Cicero further explains this point:<sup>30</sup>

In battles of gladiators, and in the case of men of the very lowest class and condition and fortune, we are accustomed to dislike those who are timid and suppliant, and who pray to be allowed to live, and we wish to save those who are brave and courageous, and who offer themselves cheerfully to death...we feel more pity for those men who do not ask our pity, than for those who entreat it.

Here again we see exactly what the Romans respected in gladiatorial combat. The people disliked the cowards and attempted to save fighters who bravely accepted death. Both of these examples illustrate the fact that the people did not attend the games only for bloodshed. Rather, they wanted to see men fight bravely in dire circumstances.

Taking off of this point, we see that the most important part of a gladiatorial match was in fact not the death of one of the combatants, but the match itself. “Serious wounds and death were possible, but they were not the point of the show. Rather,

<sup>25</sup> Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*, 84-85.

<sup>26</sup> Potter, *Life*, 321.

<sup>27</sup> Kyle, *Spectacles of Death in Ancient Rome*, 86.

<sup>28</sup> M. J. Carter, “Gladiatorial Combat: The Rules of Engagement.” *The Classical Journal*, vol. 102, no. 2 (2006/2007) 109. See section above on relationship between emperor and people.

<sup>29</sup> Sen. *Ep.* 7.

<sup>30</sup> Cic. *Mil.* 92.

gladiatorial combat was an exciting, rule-bound contest of martial excellence: a demonstration of bravery in the face of death, and of discipline and skill with arms.”<sup>31</sup> There were two referees per match who signaled fouls and determined when combat should be stopped. Some matches ended before a gladiator surrendered if there was fear of injury to one of the combatants.<sup>32</sup>

Gladiators were significant investments and represented a serious financial loss if killed or wounded. The penalty for injury or death when renting a gladiator could be as much as fifty times the original rental price.<sup>33</sup> From these examples we can see the importance of maintaining the health of a gladiator and the consequences that could come along with allowing them to die. If the penalties were so high, gladiators could not have died as frequently as we might think. Many scholars discuss matches that held the rule *sine missione* and interpret this to mean a fight to the death. However, this is a mistranslation. A bout that resulted in a draw was considered *stantes missi*, released standing. A battle that was *sine missione* meant only that it could not result in a draw. One gladiator was not required to kill another; there were no mandatory fights to the death between gladiators.<sup>34</sup> Death was a possibility—that is what made the games so intense and exciting—but it was not a requirement. The real enjoyment came from the appreciation of the gladiators’ skill with weapons, martial excellence, and bravery while facing such dire consequences.

Yet, the simultaneity of the Roman’s feelings of superiority contradicted the Roman identification with the ideals that the gladiators upheld. This paper would argue that although gladiators as a whole represented something deplorable to the Romans, a slave class who fought for gold, the Romans recognized the difficulties that came along with such a life and respected the fact that, at least in one sense, gladiators could be seen as equals. If a gladiator faced death bravely, he deserved to live. If he faced death bravely, he could earn wealth and fame. In some cases, if a gladiator faced death bravely, he could even gain his freedom. There was a great stigma attached to the way gladiators lived, but based upon the way they were willing to die they had a claim to be Roman.<sup>35</sup>

Gladiatorial games were not about killing. They were not even solely about death. Rather, they were about the ability to overcome death. Instead of the slogging matches represented in modern media that always end in one man killing another, the gladiatorial games were intense, enjoyable contests between individuals that displayed the martial virtues of the Romans, and reminded them of their hegemonic position in the

<sup>31</sup> Carter, “Gladiatorial Combat”, 101.

<sup>32</sup> Carter, “Gladiatorial Combat”, 103, and Potter, *Life*, 314-315, discuss the roles of the referees and how they determine the end of a gladiatorial match.

<sup>33</sup> Potter, *Spectacle*, 391.

<sup>34</sup> Potter, *Life*, 307.

<sup>35</sup> There are many different opinions about this point. Wiedermann (38) points out that the martial virtues of the gladiators give them a claim to be Roman. Potter (*Spectacle*) argues that the military virtues were held by the elites and the gladiators brought the virtues to the people. All of the sources listed in the bibliography discuss how the games represented the martial ideals of the Romans. Again, Kyle (7-10) has an interesting discussion about the ambivalence of the Romans and the way that has been viewed by various scholars. I have developed this argument based upon the arguments of these sources.

Mediterranean world. The games served as an important part of gaining political office during the Republican Era and offered a venue for the emperor and the people to communicate during the Imperial Period. Ultimately, the gladiatorial games helped to define what it means to be Roman: train, fight, and show bravery in the face of death.

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# The Catalyst for Warfare: Dacia's Threat to the Roman Empire

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ALEXANDRU MARTALOGU

The Roman Republic and Empire survived for centuries despite imminent threats from the various peoples at the frontiers of their territory. Warfare, plundering, settlements and other diplomatic agreements were common throughout the Roman world. Contemporary scholars have given in-depth analyses of some wars and conflicts. Many, however, remain poorly analyzed given the scarce selection of period documents and subsequent inquiry. The Dacian conflicts are one such example. These emerged under the rule of Domitian<sup>1</sup> and were ended by Trajan<sup>2</sup>.

Several issues require clarification prior to discussing this topic. The few sources available on Domitian's reign describe the emperor in hostile terms.<sup>3</sup> They depict him as a negative figure. By contrast, the rule of Trajan, during which the Roman Empire reached its peak, is one of the least documented reigns of a major emperor. The primary sources necessary to analyze the Dacian wars include Cassius Dio's *Roman History*, Jordanes' *Getica* and a few other brief mentions by several ancient authors, including Pliny the Younger and Eutropius.

Pliny is the only author contemporary to the wars. The others inherited an already existing opinion about the battles and emperors.

It is no surprise that scholars continue to disagree on various issues concerning the Dacian conflicts, including the causes behind Domitian's and Trajan's individual decisions to attack Dacia. This study will explore various possible causes behind the Dacian Wars. A variety of reasons lead some to believe that the Romans felt threatened by the Dacians. The Romans attacked Dacia because of the latter's military, political, strategic and economic advantage. Ancient sources, archaeological evidence and scholarly debates demonstrate that the Dacian threat was the prime reason for each emperor's decision to not only attack this people, but to also occupy their territory later on under Trajan. The threat can be seen as twofold: a direct military and economic threat, and an indirect threat conceived by the Romans about a people that in reality presented a lesser threat than imagined.

<sup>1</sup> Born in 51 A.D. Domitian was the last emperor of the Flavian dynasty. He succeeded his father Vespasian and his brother, Titus to the throne, ruling from 81 to 96 A.D.

<sup>2</sup> His reign was the period in which the territorial size of the Roman Empire reached its peak. Born in Spain, he ruled from 98 to 117 A.D.

<sup>3</sup> Suetonius' *Life of Domitian*, Cassius Dio's book 67 of his *Roman History*, Tacitus' *Agricola* and, to a certain extent Pliny the Younger's letters are used for this study.

## I HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

### *Threats preceding Domitian's Reign*

Although the analysis of Domitian's and Trajan's various conflicts is the prime subject of this study,<sup>4</sup> it is nevertheless relevant to mention that there was a history of Roman intention to invade Dacia. According to Strabo, the Romans had contemplated its invasion during Julius Caesar's time, when king Burebistas had unified the scattered Dacian tribes.<sup>5</sup> Strabo describes Burebistas as a man who raised his troops and "began to be formidable even to the Romans, because he would cross the Ister with impunity and plunder Thrace, as far as Macedonia and the Illyrian country."<sup>6</sup> The recently unified Dacian tribes represented a great military threat. Burebistas was, however, deposed and Caesar assassinated before the Romans could campaign against them.

At the time Strabo was writing, the Dacians were also considered an important threat. He states that they were able to raise an army of about forty thousand men, reaching around two hundred thousand soldiers at the peak of their power.<sup>7</sup> Cassius Dio mentions that Augustus clashed several times with the Dacians. Around 7 A.D., he recalls the Dacian plundering of the Roman province of Moesia.<sup>8</sup> Suetonius too claims that the Dacians had thrashed Moesia during the reign of Tiberius.<sup>9</sup> These examples show that the Dacian threat was not a new notion by the time of Domitian's reign. Their relatively large armies and constant incursions into the Roman province of Moesia were the prime threat according to the ancient authors, especially under Burebistas, the last Dacian king to unify the tribes before Decebalus.

### *The Threat under Domitian*

These issues resurfaced in the early stages of Domitian's reign, as the Dacians were reportedly upset because of the emperor's greed and attacked the province of Moesia.<sup>10</sup> This culminated with the killing of the Roman governor Oppius Sabinus in 86 A.D.<sup>11</sup> Although Jordanes does not specify the nature of Domitian's greed, scholars have argued that he loathed the annual subsidy that the Romans were supposed to allocate to the Dacians in return for peace.<sup>12</sup> At the same time, many of the peoples who owed

<sup>4</sup> Domitian's major campaign in Dacia took place in 86 A.D., whereas Trajan led two wars from 101-102 A.D. and 105-106 A.D.

<sup>5</sup> Strab. 7.3.5. Burebistas is one of the few Dacian leaders mentioned by name by Roman authors. The Dacian tribes mentioned by Strabo are located in modern-day central and western Romania.

<sup>6</sup> Strab. 7.3.11.

<sup>7</sup> Strab. 7.3.13. Although these numbers may be exaggerated, Strabo does seem to show that they must not be underestimated.

<sup>8</sup> Cass. Dio. 55.30. The author mentions the governor of Moesia, Caecina Severus, returning to his province to face the Dacians and Samartians ravaging it.

<sup>9</sup> Suet. Tib. 41. Although the date is not specified, this would be after 14 A.D., therefore the plundering of Moesia appears as a common theme at an early stage.

<sup>10</sup> Shortly afterwards the province was divided into two entities: Moesia Superior (modern day Serbia and northern Macedonia) and Moesia Inferior (modern-day Northern Bulgaria and Romanian Dobruja).

<sup>11</sup> Jordanes, 13.76.

<sup>12</sup> Gabor Vekony, *Dacians, Romans, Romanians*, (Budapest: Matthias Corvinus Publishing, 1989), 57.



tribute to the Romans “revolted when contributions of money were extorted from them,” explains Cassius Dio.<sup>13</sup> The Romans, being at war with several tribes, could not take their chances with a potential Dacian revolt. This would have added to an already great number of frontier conflicts. Ancient sources gesture to the Moesian invasion and the defeat of Sabinus as catalysts for the attack on Dacia.

Jordanes reports that Decebalus, who was the last king of Dacia—ascending in 87 A.D. and ruling until the capitulation in 106 A.D.—asked Domitian for peace on several occasions, eventually infuriating the latter with his demands.<sup>14</sup> Domitian thus sent “troops from all the empire”<sup>15</sup> and appointed Cornelius Fuscus the head of the army that would face the Dacians.<sup>16</sup> Fuscus met the same fate as Sabinus at Tapae, near the Dacian capital Sarmisegethusa.

It would not be until 88 A.D. that the Romans would finally defeat the Dacians near Tapae, under the command of Tettius Julianus.<sup>17</sup> Prior to Julianus’ victory, it may be argued that the situation was as tense in Rome as it had been following the Teutoberg Forest debacle in 9 A.D. during Augustus’ reign.<sup>18</sup> At that time, three legion standards had been lost to various Germanic tribes. The defeats of Sabinus and Fuscus were two of the few major defeats in recent history, and were made even worse by the loss of a standard. Dacian presence was now more threatening than ever. Their raids were no longer brief incursions into Roman territory with an ensuing peace signed by a weak king. Decebalus proved himself to be a capable military commander, delivering a devastating defeat to the Romans at Tapae in 86 A.D., where they lost an entire legion. The Romans, however, did not continue past Tapae. Cassius Dio hints at the reasons behind this. Domitian, upset at the Quadi and Marcomanni tribes for not joining his campaign against Dacia, entered Pannonia with the intention to wage war against them, but lost.<sup>19</sup> Defeated by the Marcomanni, he was forced to flee and establish an impromptu peace with the Dacians that favoured them at first. Eventually, however, this came back to haunt them.

The peace obtained by Decebalus may have solidified his power over other Dacian kingdoms, placing him in a position that seemed threatening from a Roman perspective, especially considering the origins of Trajan’s early rule.<sup>20</sup> After Domitian’s assassination, the subsequent senatorial debate led to Nerva’s short appointment to power. His rule would not last and he would choose Trajan as his successor. The latter

<sup>13</sup> Cass. Dio. 67.5.6.

<sup>14</sup> Cass. Dio. 67.6.5. It is said that Decebalus was at first open to negotiating peace with Domitian. However, upon learning of Domitian’s intention to send troops against him, Decebalus sent an envoy to demand that each Roman pay two obols per year in exchange for peace.

<sup>15</sup> Jord. Get. 13.77.

<sup>16</sup> Suet. Dom. 6. Fuscus was the prefect of the praetorian cohorts and was thus entrusted the commands of the campaigns against the Dacians.

<sup>17</sup> Vekony, *Dacians, Romans, Romanians*, 59.

<sup>18</sup> E. L. Wheeler, “Rome’s Dacian Wars: Domitian, Trajan and the Strategy on the Danube, Part I,” *Journal of Military History* 74.4 (2010): 1206.

<sup>19</sup> Cass. Dio. 67.7.1.

<sup>20</sup> Wheeler, “Rome’s Dacian Wars,” 1220.

was not related by blood to either Nerva or Domitian, and therefore had to ensure the legitimacy of his rule. Another defeat against the Dacians would have seriously endangered this. Additionally, the economic pressure from the treaty signed with Domitian would have been another dent in Trajan's early policies. Cassius Dio claims that Trajan, upset with the annual amount of money the Roman's had received following Domitian's treat, and with their increasing power, attacked the Dacians. This further evidences the ever-present, and perhaps ever increasing, threat.<sup>21</sup>

In accepting the peace treaty, Domitian agreed to pay the Dacians large sums of money right then, as well as in the future. He also promised that the Romans would send "artisans of every trade" into Dacia.<sup>22</sup> This peace would have numerous ramifications and was shameful for various reasons. Not only did the emperor pay a tribe outside the empire, but he also promised payment for years to come. Even the artisans could be seen as a potential threat since they would have helped develop various Dacian skills and trades, thus increasing their potential economic and political threat. As mentioned above, this would all be taken into consideration by Trajan in his final decision to mount a full-scale assault on Decebalus.

The final element worth mentioning regarding Domitian's campaign comes after the Dacian defeat at Tapae in 88 A.D. Decebalus, fearing that the Romans would pursue him to his royal residence, cut down trees that were on the battlefield and placed armours on the trunks to trick the Romans into thinking they are soldiers. This led them to withdraw.<sup>23</sup> It is interesting to note that although the Romans had just won a major victory, they were still afraid of the Dacians and the threat that their armies inspired.<sup>24</sup> Although this was not an actual menace, the event shows that the Romans feared Dacian soldiers.

According to Jordanes, the Dacians were known for being fierce warriors. Even poets, such as Virgil, wrote that Mars himself was born amongst them.<sup>25</sup> In the Aeneid, the Thracian fields are referred to as Mars's homeland.<sup>26</sup> Tacitus' *Agricola* further supports this argument. The author states that Roman casualties were so great in Moesia and Dacia that it endangered the frontier and "the permanent fortresses of the legions and Roman territory"<sup>27</sup>. These events demonstrate the Dacian threat as a reality in the early stages of Domitian's reign. Some scholars have gone as far as to state that the Dacian attacks on the Roman province of Moesia did more than threaten the borders of the empire: they also endangered the very survival of Moesia.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Cass. Dio. 68.6.1.

<sup>22</sup> Cass. Dio. 67.7.4.

<sup>23</sup> Cass. Dio. 67.10.3.

<sup>24</sup> Cass. Dio. 67.10.3. Dio mentions that the Romans were "frightened and withdrew" when they saw the make-believe soldiers.

<sup>25</sup> Jord. Get. 5.40.

<sup>26</sup> Verg. A. 3.16-17.

<sup>27</sup> Tac. Ag. 41.

<sup>28</sup> Vekony, *Dacians, Romans, Romanians*, 57.

### *The Inter-war Period*

The inter-war period is just as important in the causal analysis of the wars as the conflicts themselves. Following Domitian's treaty, Dacia's territory could be used to march into Pannonia and fight the Quadi, Marcomanni and Sarmatians (a Thracian people).<sup>29</sup> This made Dacia a strategic location, since Domitian had marched across the Danube, beyond Augustan frontiers. These were considered ideal since waterways would serve as borders (i.e. Danube, Rhine).<sup>30</sup> Whoever controlled this area could have used it to launch attacks into the Roman Empire and forge alliances with the various tribes surrounding it, mounting an even greater expedition. By 100 A.D., Sarmisegethusa, the Dacian capital, was arguably "the largest European center for iron working outside the Roman Empire."<sup>31</sup> Decebalus's rise to power could have inspired a greater Dacian threat than at the time of Augustus. Had they allied themselves with their neighbours, or established trading routes, and supplied iron for their weapons and other materials, the Roman frontiers could have been in grave danger.<sup>32</sup>

### *Trajan's Campaigns*

As mentioned earlier, Cassius Dio writes that Trajan attacked the Dacians to reduce their rising power. Some historians, such as Vlad Georgescu, think that Dacia's emerging threat rose from its cultural and economic prosperity, which originated in Domitian's treaty.<sup>33</sup> Let us establish a brief chronology of the events of the two wars led by Trajan: the first one from 101 to 102 A.D. and the second from 105 to 106 A.D. The narrative resembles that of Domitian's campaign, with the sole difference being that Trajan would be successful in all encounters.

Both emperors advanced towards Tapae, where a decisive victory emerged. Jordanes describes the territorial advantages of Dacia as having a shield of surrounding mountains and only two access ways (one through Boutae and one through Tapae). This assured a strong Dacian defense and made it inevitable that the Romans would constantly attack through Tapae.<sup>34</sup> Ancient sources mention that Decebalus repeatedly proclaimed peace as Trajan's troops approached Tapae.<sup>35</sup> He was ignored, and Trajan even recaptured Fuscus' lost standard, avenging the past humiliation.<sup>36</sup> Accumulated defeats

<sup>29</sup> Vekony, *Dacians, Romans, Romanians*, 59.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>31</sup> Wheeler, "Rome's Dacian Wars," 1215.

<sup>32</sup> Susan P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 155. It is difficult to establish whether the Romans knew about the riches inside the Dacian kingdom. The scarcity of sources from that period prevents any certain conclusion on this matter. Historians have argued that Trajan's desire to conquer Dacia was not motivated by gold and other riches. His seizing of Decebalus' treasure and the sending of miners from Dalmatia into Dacia only occurred after Trajan's second war (105-106 A.D.)

<sup>33</sup> Vlad Georgescu, *Istoria Romanilor: De La Origini Pina in Zilele Noastre*, (Bucharest : Humanitas, 1992), 17.

<sup>34</sup> Jord. Get. 12.75.

<sup>35</sup> Cass. Dio. 68.9.1-2.

<sup>36</sup> Cass. Dio. 68.9.3.

and the capture of Decebalus' sister led the Dacian leader to capitulate and give in to terms, evidencing a Roman desire to eliminate the increased level of threat from Dacia. They surrendered their arms and engines, demolished forts, withdrew from occupied territory and accepted the same allies and enemies as the Romans. Additionally, Decebalus would not be allowed to use deserters or Roman soldiers whom he had persuaded to join him. These, according to Cassius Dio, constituted "the largest and best part of his force."<sup>37</sup> This only reinforced the perceived threat that the Dacians, or at least their current leader, inspired.

Three years after the peace treaty, Decebalus began gathering arms, repairing his forts and seeking new allies. He also annexed a portion of the territory of the Iazyges, a Sarmatian tribe, which Trajan had refused to return to him.<sup>38</sup> The reason behind this second war is perhaps the most clear of all previous conflicts: a breach of the peace treaty. Some scholars have argued that Dacians faced the peace treaty with humiliation, so they chose to "fight the occupying power to the death."<sup>39</sup> Trajan assembled what some scholars call one of "the greatest concentration of military force in the imperial period."<sup>40</sup> He raised two new legions, either wanting to replace those lost by Domitian or seeking to increase his number of soldiers to ensure the conquest of Dacia; perhaps both.<sup>41</sup> It was no longer enough to simply shift troops, as Domitian had attempted after Sabinus' defeat. The economy was still suffering from Domitian's extreme spending,<sup>42</sup> provinces were mismanaged, and threats were increasing.<sup>43</sup>

## II CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES AND GRAND STRATEGY

### *Geography and Natural Boundaries*

Having established the chronology of events and discussed the primary sources, let us turn to historians' debates on the motives behind the Dacian Wars. One of the leading discussions deals with the geographic location of Dacia. This debate is located within a much larger discussion on Roman grand strategy. In *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, Edward Luttwak argues that the conquest of Dacia established "perhaps the most scientific of all scientific frontiers."<sup>44</sup> It resulted in the consolidation of the Danube armies into about ten legions. Luttwak argues that the elimination of Dacian independence allowed for the "restoration of Roman diplomatic control over the Germans and Sarmatians of [this] region."<sup>45</sup> He also believes that the Romans needed "deterrence

<sup>37</sup> Cass. Dio. 68.9.5-6.

<sup>38</sup> Cass. Dio. 68.10.3.

<sup>39</sup> Vekony, *Dacians, Romans, Romanians*, 96.

<sup>40</sup> Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 93.

<sup>41</sup> Kimberly Kagan, "Redefining Roman Grand Strategy," *The Journal of Military History* 70.2 (2006): 358.

<sup>42</sup> Suet. Dom.12. There are several mentions of Domitian "having exhausted his funds through expenditure on public works and games."

<sup>43</sup> Kagan, "Redefining Roman Grand Strategy," 361.

<sup>44</sup> Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire from the First Century A.D. to the Third*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 86.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 101.

and positive inducements” in order to keep the Marcomanni, Iazyges and Roxolani from raiding the Danubian lands.<sup>46</sup> Dacia was a strategic territorial shield. While Decebalus would be running free, however, deterrence would no longer be possible since he had shown that he was not afraid of Roman retaliation; this threat had to be removed.<sup>47</sup>

The conquest brought a higher level of security to Dobruja and other Danubian lands, up to modern-day Vienna. Agricultural improvement and urbanization of the area ensued.<sup>48</sup> The strategic importance discussed by Luttwak builds upon the initial argument about eliminating the Dacian threat. Had Decebalus not died, the Romans could have been forced to deal with an even greater number of tribes. Dacian power and prestige was increasing. The Romans were already managing conflict with various neighbouring people. In short, an alliance between Dacia and its neighbours may have proven fatal for the empire.

Luttwak’s work received a mixture of criticism and support. One of the strongest critiques of the idea of using natural frontiers states that the Romans did not have the necessary geographical resources and knowledge for such a strategy; this can be seen in the geographical positions of Dacia and Britannia. They stand out beyond traditional “natural” frontiers and are difficult to defend.<sup>49</sup> Romanian historian Neagu Djuvara has described the two provinces as standing out like “hernias” in an empire that was heavily focused around the Mediterranean.<sup>50</sup> Britannia was not even on the continent, whereas Dacia was in the middle of it, surrounded by Germanic or Thracian tribes; both were remote from the Mediterranean Sea, where the bulk of the empire was situated. Some scholars, including Susan Mattern, explain that Trajan’s end goal might have actually been the ocean itself, which Agrippa had placed 396 miles away from the Danube on his map.<sup>51</sup> This would clarify in part why the emperor would have ventured across the Danube, an ideal frontier since the time of Augustus.<sup>52</sup> The Romans’ issue was that they had little or no idea of geographical environs beyond their borders. Their maps were limited. Considering this, Luttwak’s claim that the Romans were seeking Dacia to use as a protective shield against the Balkans is invalid; they were unaware of this advantage.<sup>53</sup>

Yet some scholars reject the Danube and other rivers as “definitive frontiers of the empire.”<sup>54</sup> Many emperors before and after Trajan attempted excursions beyond their borders. Germanicus operated across the Rhine in Tiberius’ early reign; Claudius invaded Britannia; Vespasian and Domitian went into modern-day Britain and Germany respectively; Antoninus Pius mounted a campaign in Britannia, and Marcus Aurelius and

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>49</sup> Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 115.

<sup>50</sup> Djuvara, Neagu. *O Scurta Istorie a Romanilor Povestita Celor Tineri*. Bucharest : Humanitas, 2002., p. 13.

<sup>51</sup> Mattern, Susan, P. *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate.*, p. 61.

<sup>52</sup> Vekony, Gabor. *Dacians, Romans, Romanians.*, p. 57.

<sup>53</sup> Kagan, Kimberly. “Redefining Roman Grand Strategy.”, p. 343.

<sup>54</sup> Whittaker, C. R. *Rome and its Frontiers: The Dynamics of Empire*. London: Routledge, 2004., p. 8.

Verus fought in modern-day Slovakia and the East, notably against the Parthians.<sup>55</sup> One issue with Luttwak's argument is that it depends more or less on assumptions since there is no mention in any of the surviving sources that the conquest of Dacia was meant as a strategic defense of the Balkans.<sup>56</sup>

At the same time, it is difficult to argue for the idea of geographical ignorance, since many ancient sources do in fact outline as best they can foreign territories. Additionally, it is known that "roads and communications [...] were keys to Roman strategy."<sup>57</sup> These would require a basic knowledge of the surroundings. Scholars defending this view have therefore argued that "a geographical excursus became a historiographical convention before the description of a major campaign."<sup>58</sup> An example of this can be seen at the beginning of Caesar's Gallic Wars, as the author begins with a topographic discussion of Gaul: "All Gaul is divided into three parts".<sup>59</sup> Furthermore, Polybius describes in his *Histories* the geographical consequences of Carthaginian control of Sicily,<sup>60</sup> whereas Strabo describes the strategic importance of Italy as a base for the Roman conquest of the Mediterranean world.<sup>61</sup> Additionally, Pliny the Younger refers to Dacia's "precipitous mountains overhanging the camps," suggesting good knowledge and interest regarding the geography and terrain.<sup>62</sup> These debates reveal that due to the scarcity of historic documents, many assumptions about Domitian's and Trajan's intentions rest on educated guesses and precedents. The previous arguments suggest that the two emperors most likely knew the location and surroundings of Dacia. This alone would have sufficed to expose to them the magnitude of the Dacian threat.

Domitian fought the Marcomanni and Quadi in retaliation for not joining him against Dacia. Suetonius mentions that he was also forced to undertake a war against the Sarmatians after a legion had been destroyed.<sup>63</sup> These were all close to Dacia. An alliance would have brought an even larger coup on the Roman legions, thus they needed to be eliminated. Some have argued that the emperors expanded "primarily to stabilize borders and to prevent foreign threats."<sup>64</sup> This remains debatable, but it does seem that Domitian's first attack was a response to a foreign threat, much like his subsequent peace treaty. The idea of preventing these groups from forming a greater, local alliance was important from a geographical perspective.

### *The Image of Rome*

<sup>55</sup> Idem.

<sup>56</sup> Whittaker, C. R. *Rome and its Frontiers: The Dynamics of Empire*. London: Routledge, 2004., p. 34.

<sup>57</sup> Wheeler, "Methodological Limits and the Mirage of Roman Strategy: Part II," *Journal of Military History* 57.2 (1993): 236.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>59</sup> Caes. Gal. 1.1.

<sup>60</sup> Polyb. 1.10.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 240. For the Strabo reference see Strab. 6.4.1-2.

<sup>62</sup> Plin. Ep. 8.4.2.

<sup>63</sup> Suet. Dom. 6.

<sup>64</sup> Kagan, "Redefining Roman Grand Strategy," 338.

The Dacian geographic advantage leads us to discuss the preservation of Rome's image. Dacia's insubordination and rise to power threatened it. Susan Mattern argues that the Romans' triumph rested on their success in frightening the "barbarians".<sup>65</sup> Their army was relatively small for the size of the empire, which required them to keep up an appearance. When a tribe disobeyed them, they made them see the wrath of the Roman legions to preserve the image of Rome. Peace could only be ensured by aggression since the barbarians maintained it out of fear of the Romans.

There was an alternative to this, which was to obtain the peace from the barbarians for money; Domitian had done this with Decebalus.<sup>66</sup> We may argue Rome's reputation had been ruined through this treaty, and the defeats under Domitian's reign. The barbarians might have seen this as a sign of weakness and thus attacked the frontiers. This display of power—and reminder to the barbarians that Rome was still dominant—may have been the reason behind Trajan's decision to gather two new legions and annex Dacia.

The idea of scaring the barbarians to maintain peace can also be seen in Luttwak's work. He argues that Eastern client states and their relationships with Rome were more developed and therefore security was ensured through only a small number of troops; for instance, Armenia would have provided a certain shield against the Parthians. In Europe, on the other hand, peace and security were maintained through "immediate and visible legionary presence."<sup>67</sup> Luttwak claims that Trajan had no choice but to annex Dacia. Its independence as a client state was no longer an option for the empire. Even if Decebalus had agreed to cooperate with the Romans, the Dacians would have wanted a more independent policy than that offered to client states.<sup>68</sup>

Once again, it is difficult to confirm or deny these statements in the absence of sources, especially the description of events from the Dacian perspective. The actions of Decebalus following the war of 101-102 A.D. suggest, however, that there may be some truth to Luttwak's statements. He gathered arms and sought allies elsewhere. It is difficult to believe that he made this decision of his own accord. He would have consulted the opinion of his advisors and other noblemen. The Dacian threat would have therefore lived on after Decebalus had Trajan attempted to solely reduce them to the condition of a client state.

The eventual one hundred and twenty-three days of festivities thrown by Trajan following his conquest were designed to save the emperor's image.<sup>69</sup> These worked to rise above Domitian's fake triumph, in which he used items "from the store of imperial furniture" instead of loot from the war.<sup>70</sup> By contrast, according to Crito's account in *Getica*, Trajan brought back "[five million] pounds of gold, and twice as much of silver,

<sup>65</sup> Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 108.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, 119-121.

<sup>67</sup> Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, 47.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.

<sup>69</sup> Cass. Dio. 68.15.1.

<sup>70</sup> Cass. Dio. 67.7.4.

apart from drinking cups and equipment surpassing all limits, plus herds and weapons.”<sup>71</sup> These are exaggerated numbers even if overestimated by ninety percent, as was customary for ancient authors.<sup>72</sup>

Their purpose was to show that there was a great amount of loot brought back from Dacia to pay for these festivities, at a time when Rome was still recovering from the supposed economic crash under Domitian.<sup>73</sup> This helped Trajan’s image and reminded his adversaries of Rome’s greatness. The issue with this lies in the fact that scholars are uncertain whether or not Trajan was aware of the riches lying in Dacia prior to his campaign. It is therefore difficult to associate this with the causes for the wars. Until further evidence is found, the immediate threat of the Dacians remains a more plausible argument than the desire to capture riches.

The idea of saving the image of Rome and of the empire as motivation for the war raises issues of its own. There is only one specific reference to the war in Pliny the Younger’s letters, in letter 8.4., written to his friend Caninius, whom he encourages to write about the Dacian wars. He describes these as “so recent, so wide, so sublime, and finally so poetic, and though centred on most truthful events, so legendary.”<sup>74</sup> If this was so, why are they only mentioned once throughout Pliny’s letters? Sir Ronald Syme—one of the leading Roman historians of the twentieth century—has argued that this is not evidence of the wars being less important than what they are described as elsewhere, but rather Pliny’s own decision to leave them out.<sup>75</sup> Syme argues that Pliny consciously omits most notions of war and bloodshed. He does not include any correspondence with three leading generals from the First Dacian War (Cilnius Proculus, Laberius Maximus and Glitius Agricola). Also, he does not begin his letter to Caninius with war and bloodshed, but rather with engineering and siege-works.<sup>76</sup> This is so because Syme does not consider the war to fit the overall style and theme of Pliny’s work; the lack of references to it does not necessarily diminish its magnitude.<sup>77</sup>

### *The Aftermath of Trajan’s Wars*

The final scholarly debate of our discussion explores war, vengeance, and the aftermath of Trajan’s campaigns. Some historians have completely separated the wars of Domitian’s time from those of Trajan’s. They argued that the events surrounding the former’s defeat follow a pattern of “legendary military defeats [...] with emphasis on the slaughter of high-ranking commanders and the loss of a legion.”<sup>78</sup> The Teutoberg forest

<sup>71</sup> Mircea Musat ed., *Foreign Sources and Testimonies about the Forebears of the Romanian People* (Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste Romania, 1980), 57.

<sup>72</sup> Vekony, *Dacians, Romans, Romanians*, 93.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Plin. Ep. 8.4.1-2.

<sup>75</sup> Pliny, one of our most important, and one of the few surviving, sources on Trajan, does not talk about the wars; this does not mean that they were not great or that the Dacians were not a threat. He chooses to leave bloodshed out of the letters. His correspondence would have also been edited and selected before publication.

<sup>76</sup> Ronald Syme, “Pliny and the Dacian Wars,” *Latomus* 23.4 (1964): 751.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy*, 190.



incident is an example. This event seems to be closely related to the notion of rescuing Rome's status. Susan Mattern claims that Trajan's incursions into Dacia were caused by a desire to punish and avenge. It was "mainly for this and for no other reason, [that] the emperor was willing to commit military and financial resources of immense proportions."<sup>79</sup>

There was a monument built at Adamklissi in 108-109 A.D. by Trajan which supports this argument. It was the site of a major Roman defeat in one of the Dacian incursions from the first wars of Domitian, in late 84 A.D. The monument is dedicated to Mars the Avenger. This suggests that Trajan had avenged a previous defeat, which could evidence Trajan's desire to redeem Domitian. But it could also serve as a warning and a reminder to others of what would happen if they attempted to attack the Romans.

The idea of Trajan behaving like an avenger or a seeker of glory can be seen in Cassius Dio's *Roman History*. Dio claims that the emperor would declare "that he himself had advanced farther than Alexander"<sup>80</sup> and describes him as someone who "delight[s] in war."<sup>81</sup> This description resembles Suetonius's description of Domitian, who argues that the emperor went to war in Gaul and Germany in order to "merely [...] emulate his brother in wealth and status," although it was unnecessary and he had been counselled against it.<sup>82</sup> Even Trajan's successor, Hadrian, is described as envying the former's glory and thus relinquishing some of the provinces he had gained and withdrawing his armies (e.g. in Mesopotamia, Assyria).<sup>83</sup> Based on this, some scholars believe that there was no Dacian threat. They think that the invasion was caused by "Trajan's expansionist policies."<sup>84</sup>

The downside of these arguments is that they are based solely on the lack of evidence of Decebalus' hostile behaviour (unlike his predecessor who had invaded Moesia).<sup>85</sup> There had been a long history of Dacian incursions into Roman territory that emphasized the notion of the Dacian threat in Roman minds. The most recent one had occurred less than a generation earlier; additionally, the terms of Domitian's peace treaty had been favourable to them. The treaty would have prevented the Dacians from their usual raids, but they would have nevertheless continued to threaten the Romans even if only indirectly (e.g. by their presence alone, by their stability under Decebalus, by the potential threat of a greater alliance, etc.). As for the idea of a war of vengeance, this too can be tied to the notion of the Dacian threat for similar reasons. The image of the empire had to be saved in order to prevent other threats from manifesting

Upon the conquest of Dacia, Eutropius claims that the land had been exhausted of its inhabitants (namely male inhabitants). This led Trajan to send "an infinite number

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 210.

<sup>80</sup> Cass. Dio. 68.29.1.

<sup>81</sup> Cass. Dio. 68.7.5.

<sup>82</sup> Suet. Dom. 2.

<sup>83</sup> Eutr. Brev. 8.6.1.

<sup>84</sup> Vekony, *Dacians, Romans, Romanians*, 60.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

of men from the whole Roman world.”<sup>86</sup> Eutropius claims that Hadrian had thought of abandoning Dacia but was counseled otherwise by his advisors. They feared leaving “Roman citizens at the mercy of the barbarians.”<sup>87</sup> This statement shows the continuous terror of “barbarians,” whether referring to the Dacians or other surrounding tribes. For the Dacians’ case, the reality of the Dacian threat remained even after their defeat. If it refers to other tribes, this can be seen as evidence of an acknowledgement of the strategic (and precarious) position of the Dacian province, which proves Luttwak’s theories.

The resettlement of Dacia is noteworthy because it “[did] not frequently happen in new [Roman] provinces.”<sup>88</sup> Scholars disagree on this issue as well. Some have argued that Eutropius’ statement cannot be true since the population increased too rapidly, hovering around 500 000 by the time of Commodus.<sup>89</sup> Yet other scholars tend to acknowledge that Eutropius may be right in some ways, considering the number of deaths by war, prisoners of war taken, suicides and potential migrations. The latter are depicted on several frames on Trajan’s column (LXXVI following the first war and the last two CLIV-CLV following the second and final war).

One ought to be careful with the column’s frames, however. It is unclear whether or not they depict the actual war or images from Trajan’s triumph.<sup>90</sup> Both theories can be linked to the Dacian threat since the annihilation of the majority of the male population may signify a desire to wipe out a serious threat. A similar event in earlier Roman history was the destruction of Carthage. If the Dacians had not been wiped out, then the rapid mass-resettlement of the province could be a sign of a desire to assimilate the Dacians and remove the threat of an uprising. However, this is a weak argument based solely on assumptions.

### III CONCLUSION

Partly due to the scarcity of sources and partly due to the later dating of the surviving sources, scholars can only vaguely identify the causes of the Dacian Wars. Some have attempted to show a chronological development between Domitian’s and Trajan’s motives. Some attribute them to a grand strategy. Others have completely separated the two. In some cases they argue that the wars were started mainly for defensive purposes. Their opponents claim that they were offensive in nature, and attempted to either avenge past humiliations, to conquer for the purpose of acquiring glory, or both.

All of these reasons converge in one point as to confirm the presence of a Dacian threat, which could have escalated to an even greater level, had Trajan not put an end to it. At first, through their incursions into Roman territory and then through the

<sup>86</sup> Eutr. Brev. 8.6.2.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Vekony, *Dacians, Romans, Romanians*, 101.

<sup>89</sup> Georgescu, *Istoria Romanilor*, 18.

<sup>90</sup> Vekony, *Dacians, Romans, Romanians*, 97 and 106.

peace treaty signed with Domitian, the Dacians were in a position to inflict a serious blow to the Roman Empire and to threaten its foundations. Some scholarly debates rely on calculated assumptions and precedents. It remains difficult to discern the true motives of Roman emperors and generals. Based on the archaeological and literary evidence available, the existence of the Dacian threat is highly plausible. The emperors dealt with it the best they could, through defensive campaigns or peace treaties, or by mounting an enormous campaign to annihilate or occupy the entire region.

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# The Puddle Plot: An Argument for a Nested Temporal Logic in the Interpretation of Herodotus

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Herodotus wrote *The Histories* nearly two and a half millennia ago. Yet despite the extensive temporal and cultural gaps between Herodotus' own time and the present age, many modern scholars have shoehorned the ancient's writings into our modern, western understandings of history. While Herodotus' writing is more fluid in terms of linearity and cyclical chronologies, our modern histories are constructed within a binary. Indeed, history today is usually categorized as either linear or cyclical, but not both. These modern understandings have been retroactively imposed on Herodotus. For example, in his paper "Historical and Philosophical Time", Chester Starr argued that, "Certainly there is no series of cycles in [Herodotus'] account."<sup>1</sup> Instead, the author wrote that, "On the whole Greek – and Roman – historical writing was in practice what we may call 'linear'".<sup>2</sup> Because Starr is using the binary of linear and cyclical history, the scholar is obliged to categorize in absolute terms. *The Histories*, however does not follow this strict binary. Rather, the chronology of *The Histories* is fluid and comprehensive. In this paper I will argue that the modern binary is inadequate and I will propose an alternative logic in which cyclical histories occur "nested" within a linear chronology. I have coined this framework "The Puddle Plot". To support this new framework I will focus in detail on the logos of Pisistratus.<sup>3</sup>

While the logos of Pisistratus occurs within a chronological framework that moves linearly through time, it also occurs as a series of repeating cycles. Pisistratus is introduced for the first time in the context of a civil contention between two parties: the Sea coast faction headed by Megacles and the Plain faction headed by Lycurgus.<sup>4</sup> Pisistratus, aspiring to become the tyrant of Athens, formed a third party. While Megacles and Lycurgus were busy fighting, Pisistratus acquired a guard and took over Athens. In response, Megacles and Lycurgus reconciled their differences and ousted the tyrant.<sup>5</sup> This completed the first historical cycle of the logos.

At the beginning the historiographical structure of *The Histories* fits a linear narrative framework, but as the logos of Pisistratus progresses it takes on a cyclical interiority. This process occurs much in the same way as waves propagate in a puddle of

<sup>1</sup> Chester G. Starr, "Historical and Philosophical Time," *History and Theory* 6, no. 6 (1966): 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>3</sup> The term logos here is referring to what Elizabeth Irwin and Emily Greenwood describe as an "individual section within the larger story". Elizabeth Irwin and Emily Greenwood, "Introduction: Reading Herodotus, Reading Book 5," in *Reading Herodotus*, ed. by E. Irwin and E. Greenwood (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 6.

<sup>4</sup> Herodotus, *The Histories*, 59.17-19

<sup>5</sup> *Hdt.* 60.1-3

water. The puddle of water represents the logos, while the water underneath the surface represents all the possible representations of the narrative. The puddle as a confined space represents Herodotus' limitations to working within the writer-reader contract of the period, and the surface of the water is the story told. At the beginning of the logos, an event causes a series of cyclical waves that radiate out from this central event, much as if a pebble were dropped in a puddle. These waves, while similar to each other and following the same course, are chronological. The waves flow one after the other, though always in a different temporal space, until the puddle itself passes out of significance. The narratives imbedded within the logos operate in a similar fashion. Each narrative acts as a repeating historical cycle, following the same course but in a different time. Thus the puddle plot framework is both cyclical *and* linear and therefore more suited to Herodotus' writing than traditional interpretations.

The second historical cycle began once Pisistratus had been removed from power. Without a common enemy, the tensions resumed between the Sea Coast faction and the Plain faction. Megacles was so exhausted by this quarrelling that he decided to join forces with Pisistratus and return the former tyrant to power.<sup>6</sup> The two devised a plan in which they dressed a woman up as the goddess Athena, who then rode into the city, asking the people of Athens to once again receive Pisistratus as a ruler. The plan was a success and Pisistratus was returned to power.<sup>7</sup> The tyrant then took the daughter of Megacles in marriage as per their arrangement. Pisistratus, however, was nervous about consummating the marriage, seeing as the Alcmaeonidæ were supposedly cursed. Instead, he, "lay with her in an unnatural manner."<sup>8</sup> After the woman's mother learned of this "unnatural" act, she informed the father Megacles who was so upset that he, "instantly made up his difference with the opposite faction," that of Lycrugus. Pisistratus, nervous about what was coming, fled the country.<sup>9</sup> This completes the second historical cycle. As we can see so far, while the logos moves linearly through time, the general story occurs as a series of nested cycles. Thus, the logos is both linear and circular.

Following this flight, Pisistratus spent eleven years in exile. He then made his way back to Athens and collected a significant number of partisans along the way, ones "who loved tyranny better than freedom",<sup>10</sup> according to Herodotus. Pisistratus also received funds from those who owed him during his eleven-year exile, particularly the Thebans. The former tyrant was therefore materially able to mount an insurgency against the resolved factions. Pisistratus then marched on Athens where he convinced the people to reinstate him as their ruler. Once in power he further entrenched his tyranny.<sup>11</sup> The first half of the third historical cycle was thus completed, ending the logos.

While the exact particulars change from cycle to cycle, the general story is repeatedly retold: Pisistratus gains power, establishes his tyranny, and is then removed

<sup>6</sup> Hdt. 60.3-9

<sup>7</sup> Hdt. 61.1-8.

<sup>8</sup> Hdt. 61.2-6.

<sup>9</sup> Hdt. 61.10-13.

<sup>10</sup> Hdt. 62.4-5.

<sup>11</sup> Hdt. 64.1-4.

from power by the now-united factions. These cycles fit well within a repeating version of literary theorist Frank Kermode's *tick tock* plot. In Kermode's framework stories begin with a *tick* and end with a *tock*: The *tick* represents the beginning of the action and the *tock* represents the conclusion. In his book *The Sense of an Ending* Kermode argues that the interval after *tick* comes with, "a lively expectation of *tock*, and a sense that however remote *tock* may be, all that happens happens as if *tock* were certainly following."<sup>12</sup> The cycles of the puddle plot happen in the same way. Each wave begins as a *tick* that inevitably completes its cycle with the terminal *tock*, followed by the next *tick*.

Pisistratus' rise to power and the entrenching of his authority can be seen as the *tick*, Pisistratus's rule as the interval of silence, and his eventual removal as the inevitable end: the *tock*. By the time the third and final cycle is described, the reader is left with an expectation of closure. Herodotus, however did not complete this cycle of the logos. He sacrificed the completion of the logos for the coherency of the larger narrative and, because of this, the Pisistratus logos was left in the liminality between *tick* and *tock*.

While the cyclical rises and falls of Pisistratus were descriptive, the tyranny of Pisistratus itself was silenced. In the first cycle, Herodotus explained that after acquiring the sovereignty of Athens, Pisistratus held control, "without disturbing the previously existing offices or altering any of the laws."<sup>13</sup> The reader therefore gets the impression that Pisistratus did nothing while in power. In the following cycles, while Pisistratus became known as a tyrant, Herodotus says nothing of his actions. The ancient only mentions those actions relevant to Pisistratus' eventual downfall and therefore, the completion of the cycle. While his political actions as a tyrant were irrelevant to the cyclical fulfillment of the history, his laying with the daughter of Megacles in an "unnatural" manner was essential because it led to Pisistratus losing favour with Megacles, and thus propagated the *tock* of the second cycle.<sup>14</sup> In this way, while Starr may be correct that the overall structure is linear, even the design and detail of the narratives are used for the completion and propagation of cycles.

A major theoretical component of the puddle plot framework is that every effect has a cause, and all cycles radiate out from an initial disturbance, or "pebble". Indeed, throughout the logos, Herodotus built a chain of causality that satisfies this requirement. At the beginning, a prodigy advises Hippocrates that, "if he [Hippocrates] had a son [he should] disown him".<sup>15</sup> Hippocrates disregards this advice, an action that unleashed the subsequent chain of events under Pisistratus. In this way, the entire logos is set up by an initial disturbance that, while setting up the chain of causality for the logos as a whole, simultaneously created an array of echoed narrative waves nested within the narrative. These echoes then propagate one after the other, like the ripples in a puddle. In a sense then, Herodotus nests a micro-structure of causality within the larger causal chain of the logos.

<sup>12</sup> Frank Kermode, *The Sense of an Ending: Studies in the Theory of Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 46.

<sup>13</sup> Hdt. 59.33-38.

<sup>14</sup> Hdt. 61.5-6.

<sup>15</sup> Hdt. 59.14-15.

In the first cycle, Pisistratus wounded himself and then lied to the people, saying that he had been attacked by his enemies. In this way he was able to persuade the people to assign him a guard. Pisistratus, “[t]hus strengthened ... broke into revolt and seized the citadel,”<sup>16</sup> and Herodotus wrote that it was, “[i]n this way he acquired the sovereignty of Athens.”<sup>17</sup> When Pisistratus deceived the people and acquired a guard he created the cause that would lead to his assumption of control. While this progression may seem obvious, it is the language employed by Herodotus that foregrounds the ideological intent of the *logos*. By stating that it was “in this way” that Pisistratus gained power, Herodotus leaves no room for ambiguity. It places this cause as the *only* cause. At the same time, Pisistratus’ assumption of power in Athens, was also a cause. Indeed, Herodotus is explicit in writing that the two factions, “united to drive him out.”<sup>18</sup> It was the desire of Megacles and Lycrugus to drive Pisistratus out, a symptom of Pisistratus’ controlling Athens that lead to the unification of the factions, and therefore the tyrant’s downfall.

After Pisistratus was removed, the quarrelling between the factions began anew. This quarrelling “wearied” Megacles. It was this exhaustion that became the cause for Megacles’ approaching of Pisistratus, and the beginning of the second historical cycle. Pisistratus then regained power and married the daughter of Megacles. While in the first cycle, the cause of his downfall was his holding power in the first place, the second historical cycle is a repetition of the original cause of the *logos* as a whole: a curse. Pisistratus did not want to have sex with the daughter of Megacles, because the Alcmæonidæ, the group from which she belonged, was, “supposed to be under a curse.”<sup>19</sup> This caused Pisistratus to lay with his new wife in an “unnatural” way, which caused his second downfall, thus completing the second cycle.

After his eleven-year exile, Pisistratus and his force began marching up from Marathon and they met their adversaries near the temple of Pallenian Athena.<sup>20</sup> This time, however, the state was not weakened by quarrelling and also no easy alliances could have been made to ensure Pisistratus’ return to power. Herodotus logically could not reuse his previous causes and thus, the third cycle of history seemed interrupted. However, before the cyclicity was permanently interrupted, the inceptive disturbance—the theme of the prophecy—returned to his aid. While the theme of the prophecy had previously had negative effects for Pisistratus, this time the theme was mobilized for his benefit. The soothsayer, named Amyphilylas, announced:

Now has the cast been made, the net is out-spread in the water,  
Through the moonshiny night the tunnies will enter the meshes.<sup>21</sup>

This prophecy was the cause that set into motion Pisistratus’ plan through which he would eventually restore himself to power for a third time. The idea of the cast having already been made and the nets in the water referred to the motions set in place by the

<sup>16</sup> Hdt. 59.33-38.

<sup>17</sup> Hdt. 59.34-35.

<sup>18</sup> Hdt. 60.1-3

<sup>19</sup> Hdt. 61.2-4.

<sup>20</sup> Hdt. 62.11-13.

<sup>21</sup> Hdt. 62.18-19.



original cause of the logos, the pebble in the puddle. Because the cycle was already in motion, it would inevitably reach its fulfillment, at which point the “tunnies ... [would] enter the meshes”. While the text does not state in any explicit way that the prophecy caused Pisistratus’ third rise to power, it mobilizes a series of indications that do. The first indication was that, “Pisistratus, apprehend[ed] its meaning... [and] accept[ed] the oracle.”<sup>22</sup> Thus, at a fundamental level, the Oracle gave Pisistratus advice he could use, leaving the reader with the nagging possibility that Pisistratus would and did use it. A second indication involves the prophecy’s words themselves, “Through the moonshiny night the tunnies will enter the mesh.” What is implied in this statement is that through the night (a period of sleep) the fish will enter the mesh (the trap) of the already cast net (chain of events). Pisistratus realized the oracle’s predictions by attacking the enemy troops after their midday meal while many had taken “to dice” or “to sleep” (moonshiny night) and, “put them to the rout.”<sup>23</sup> He then sent his sons on horseback to “overtake the fugitives”, bringing his enemies into his control, like tunnies into the mesh of his net.<sup>24</sup>

A third allusion involves Herodotus’ aesthetic<sup>25</sup> of narrative minimalism that shaped the overall historiography of the logos. To clarify, the minimalist aesthetic I am referring to is the way Herodotus silenced any particular event that did not propagate the cycle or contextualize the logos within the greater narrative. For example, Pisistratus’ actions while in power in Athens were not important to the fulfillment and propagation of the cycle, and were not mentioned in *The Histories*. Herodotus sufficed to say that, he was a tyrant and left the gap-filling to the reader. In this sense, given the governing aesthetic logic of the logos, the very mention of the oracle immediately preceding Pisistratus’ actions is evidence that those actions were precipitated by the oracle’s prophecy.

Furthermore, Pisistratus’ purifying the island of Delos after his conquest of Athens could easily be seen as further corroborating the oracle’s prophecy as a cause for his behaviour. Pisistratus purified the island as per the “injunctions of an oracle” following his conquest of Athens.<sup>26</sup> By implying that an oracle influenced Pisistratus’ actions, Herodotus established the character of Pisistratus as one who listens to oracles.

<sup>22</sup> Hdt. 63.1-3.

<sup>23</sup> Hdt. 63.3-7.

<sup>24</sup> Hdt. 63.9-12

<sup>25</sup> My choice of the word “aesthetic” instead of “style” here was deliberate and speaks to other scholarship on ancient history. Meir Sternberg, in his book *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, explains that when reading ancient histories there are three principles at play: ideological, historical and aesthetic. Sternberg explains that, “Historiography has no eye but for the past,” and that, “it would like nothing better than to tack fact onto fact in an endless procession, marching across all artistic and ideological design.” Opposing this is the aesthetic principle, for which the performance is everything. Sternberg goes on to write that, “ideology and aesthetics meet to shape history, and with it the narrative as a whole.” This is where it becomes important to use aesthetic instead of style. A style could refer to length of sentences, amount of detail, word choice, etc. But aesthetic necessarily implies an influence on the historical narrative itself. Here, the aesthetic is a principle that pulls on the historical narrative with such force that it literally truncates the historical logos of Pisistratus in favour of an aesthetic of minimalism. Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1987), 41, 46.

<sup>26</sup> Hdt. 64.8-10.

Thus the possibility that Amyphilylas's prophecy would have been listened to and acted upon is substantiated and placed conceptually as the initial cause that allowed for the cycle of history to continue.

At this point in the logos, the reader is anticipating the end of the third cycle, yet the *tock* of the third cycle is never established and the reader is simply left with the silence between *tick* and *tock*. Indeed, because the continuation of the Pisistratus logos is irrelevant at this point to the greater narrative, Herodotus does not complete the third cycle. In this way Herodotus' aesthetic of minimalism silences the historiography of Pisistratus. He writes only that, "Thus was the tyranny of Pisistratus established at Athens,"<sup>27</sup> ending the logos. In this way, while the interior narratives of *The Histories* may be cyclical, they are ultimately nested within and thus at the mercy of the overarching linear narrative.

Thus, while Starr was correct to suggest that the overall narrative form of *The Histories* is linear, he was wrong to state that it is *exclusively* linear. In doing so the scholar fell into modern western trappings of binaries, in which a narrative must be exclusively linear or exclusively cyclical. Herodotus' narrative, however, was a mixture of both. Indeed, while *The Histories* as a whole takes on a chronological form, there is a series of cyclical narratives nested within it. While the linear narrative creates an initial disturbance, the disturbance creates a series of cyclical narrative waves within the overarching linear structure: the puddle plot. By restricting Herodotus' works to the modern binary of cyclical and linear histories, we obscure the complexity of his narrative nuances. In doing so, we move Herodotus from the father of history to the adopted son of modernity.

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<sup>27</sup> Hdt. 64.12

# On Heroes and Monsters: The Proposed Influence of the *Aeneid* on *Beowulf*

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MARCUS WANG

Since the inception of *Beowulf* scholarship, academics have proposed various possible influences for the authorless work, and while advocates of Biblical, Scandinavian, and Celtic influences have developed many convincing arguments.<sup>1,2</sup> However, more than a century of scholarship has generated relatively few such arguments for classical influences. This dearth could be due to the fact that advocates of classical influence take less into account the textual references and archeological evidence that gestures to the presence of Virgilian influence upon the text; or scholars may lack the necessary foundation for such an argument. Yet, these obstacles have not prevented the current consensus that *Beowulf* has Scandinavian origins, at least in part; moreover, this is an argument based only on textual features. Perhaps the lack of scholarship on classical influences of *Beowulf* is due less to a lack of evidence, and rather to the methodology that scholars have applied to this material so far.

In perhaps the most comprehensive study of classical influence on *Beowulf*, Tom Burns Haber exhaustively analyzes and compares the motifs, sentiments, and phraseology of *Beowulf* and the *Aeneid*. Yet, Haber's meticulous analysis proves little Virgilian influence on *Beowulf* because of his broad theoretical framework. For instance, Haber correctly points out that both *Beowulf* and Aeneas are proud and sympathetic to the causes of their companions. But these traits are so common among epic heroes that Haber's argument holds little weight in specifically advocating for Virgilian influence. On the other hand, convincing pieces of scholarship on *Beowulf*'s influences, such as Andy Orchard on the influence of Samuel 1 or Fidel Fajardo-Acosta on the poet's role in *Beowulf* and the *Aeneid*, share a common methodology: a comparison of lengthy passages or summaries of lengthy passages followed by an extensive discussion on their similarities.<sup>34</sup>

Scholars seeking to prove Virgilian influence on *Beowulf* based solely on textual features should adopt the above method. Doing so will bring such arguments to a more concrete theoretical foundation. The best demonstration of the technique mentioned in the previous paragraph is the application of this method to a comparative study of the heroes and monsters of *Beowulf* and the *Aeneid*. Therefore, the proposed study will take an in-

<sup>1</sup> Frederick Klaeber et al., *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008) 184-185.

<sup>2</sup> Andy Orchard, *A Critical Companion to Beowulf* (New York: D.S. Brewer, 2003) 143-145.

<sup>3</sup> Orchard, *A Critical Companion to Beowulf*, 143-145

<sup>4</sup> Fidel Fajardo-Acosta, "Beowulf and the Aeneid," in *The Influence of the Classical World on Medieval Literature, Architecture, Music and Culture: A Collection of Interdisciplinary Studies* ed. Fidel Fajardo-Acosta (Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 1992) 17-29.

depth approach by examining two sets of passages to show that the similarities between the behaviors, descriptions, and lineages of the heroes and monsters are so precise that they exclude many other possible influences of *Beowulf*. Where it is found that a scholar has already applied the proposed methodology, attempts will be made to refute possible counterarguments, or to point to similarities missed or omitted by the scholar so as to strengthen the existing argument.

An application of this method applied to the exclusion of evidence outside of the passages chosen for comparison may, however, be unproductive. Instead, the analysis will be kept to the confines of the chosen passages while drawing minor points from others. The textual samples used for this argument are so large they border close to not having a limit at all, an approach directly opposed to the proposed methodology of the study (Appendix A). However, such a large sample functions here because the parallel plot points contained within are numerous and specific. They show the chosen passages to be singular, coherent units of narrative that parallel each other rather than collections of smaller passages.

In his search for shared motifs and sentiments in *Beowulf* and the *Aeneid*, Haber compares Beowulf's arrival in Denmark to Aeneas' arrival in Libya, listing several plot points and the similar motifs contained within them, such as the fact that the roads of Carthage and Denmark are well-decorated.<sup>5</sup> While Haber's analysis is convincing due to the sheer number of similarities, it fails to link the gap between similarity and influence. It is therefore vulnerable to criticism of the sort.<sup>6</sup> However, the effectiveness of this counterargument can be tempered if one can prove that the *Beowulf* poet was aware of Virgil, in which case the heroic similarities between *Beowulf* and the *Aeneid* are more likely to be imitative rather than coincidental in nature. Haber's cultural argument for this fact avoids addressing the lack of direct Virgilian reference in *Beowulf* by showing Virgilian awareness in several possible contemporaries but not the *Beowulf* poet himself.<sup>7</sup> By contrast, David Crowne makes a promising case for Virgilian influence in "The Hero on the Beach," in which he argues that poets' imitations of a tradition tend to reduce a scene to several small elements that they then reintroduce in their own narrative.<sup>8</sup> According to Crowne, these elements in Beowulf's landing are: a beach; a *comitatus*<sup>9</sup> relationship; a bright light; a voyage. Moreover, even though he uses this method to link Aeneas and Beowulf, Aeneas' arrival in Libya also involves him and his companions washing up on a beach at the end of a long voyage under a cliff containing a "twinkling forest."<sup>10</sup><sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, even Crowne concedes that shared motifs do not necessarily

<sup>5</sup> Tom B. Haber, *A Comparative Study of the Beowulf and the Aeneid* (New York: Phaeton Press, 1968), 122-123.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 121-128.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 5-19.

<sup>8</sup> David Crowne, "The Hero in the Beach: an example of Composition by Theme in Anglo-Saxon Poetry," in *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 61 (1960), 362-72.

<sup>9</sup> A *comitatus* relationship is a term commonly used when discussing *Beowulf* to reference the relationship between a vassal warrior and his lord

<sup>10</sup> Crowne, "The Hero on the Beach," 371.

<sup>11</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 1.157-165.

imply imitation but they do make a likely case that the Beowulf poet belonged to some larger tradition with knowledge of Vergil's work.

Haber's analysis could have been further strengthened. Further analysis into the may have shown that the first third of both epics are parallel in nature. One such plot point is that both heroes impress their hosts with a retelling of their past deeds. For instance, Aeneas impresses Dido with his recounting of his voyage to Libya to the point that she falls in love with him.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, Beowulf's retelling of his adventure with Breca impresses Hrothgar and drives him to trust Beowulf's assistance.<sup>13 14</sup>

However, Haber's argument has been questioned. Gilbert Highet criticized Haber, calling some of his supposed parallels "ludicrously far-fetched,"<sup>15</sup> and in principle, Highet is right. A hero landing on a beach and encountering someone who inquires of his origins is nothing extraordinary. However, criticism such as that of Highet is not applicable to this study for two reasons: first, far-fetched points such as the fact that the heroes are allowed to proceed after answering the interrogator's questions have largely been excluded from Appendix A; second, the similarities that Highet suggests are far-fetched are much less so when one sees them in the context of the numerous other similarities proposed by Haber, as described in previous paragraphs.

Yet, Aeneas' influence does not end at Beowulf. When it comes to lineage, Aeneas and Hrothgar share a number of similarities. The passages in which these similarities are most apparent are the introductory lines of *Beowulf* and the prophecy on Vulcan's shield.<sup>16 17</sup> Although Hrothgar is not the primary hero of Beowulf, he does embody the heroic values of his society by having *wiges weorðmynd*<sup>18</sup> and participating in the gift-giving economy—a behavior held in high esteem by the poet himself. Therefore, Hrothgar should be considered as much a hero as Beowulf, who exhibits the same traits.

Both passages contain a semi-historical narrative of the founding of a great nation, beginning with likely mythical, orphan founders. While Beowulf's Scyld Scefing<sup>19</sup> was *feasceaft funden*,<sup>20</sup> Romulus in *Aeneid* is raised by a she-wolf.<sup>21,22</sup> Additionally, rulers in the epics conquer surrounding nations to form their own kingdom. Scyld conquers the *ymbsittendra*<sup>23</sup> from whom he demands tribute, and Augustus defeats

<sup>12</sup> Virg, *Aen.* 4.13-27.

<sup>13</sup> *Beowulf* 607-610.

<sup>14</sup> A summary of Haber's work—too long to be included in its entirety—as well as the augmentations necessary to show a plot parallel for the first third of the poems can be found in Appendix A.

<sup>15</sup> Gilbert Highet, *The Classical Tradition: Greek and Roman Influences on Western Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press 1949), 563.

<sup>16</sup> *Beowulf*, 1-100.

<sup>17</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 8.626-731.

<sup>18</sup> Literally, "War-honour," a term used to denote that one has participated enough battles to be recognized as a great warrior

<sup>19</sup> Name of one of the legendary leaders of the Danish clan, to which Beowulf belongs

<sup>20</sup> Literally "found wretched," a reference to the fact that Scyld was found as orphaned in destitute conditions

<sup>21</sup> *Beowulf*, 7.

<sup>22</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 8.626-634.

<sup>23</sup> sc. "ordering tribes"

Cleopatra and the *Aegyptus et Indi, omnis Arabs* <sup>24</sup> in the battle of Actium. <sup>25,26</sup> Lastly, the rulers in both epics earn the praise of the poets, who interrupt their own narrative to applaud the rulers. For instance, the *Beowulf* poet attributes one of three uses of *þæt was god cyning* <sup>27</sup> to Scyld while Vergil openly praises Augustus, calling his victory at Actium a *triplici triumpho* <sup>28 29 30</sup> These similarities are neither as plentiful nor as direct as that between Aeneas and Beowulf, but they do provide some precise parallels that are effective in excluding other possible influences and thus increase the likelihood that the *Aeneid* influenced the first lines of *Beowulf*.

While many scholars have compared the heroes of *Beowulf* and the *Aeneid*, any comparison of the monsters between the epics is scarce. This shortage is probably due to the fact that while *Beowulf* is structured around three fights with monsters, the *Aeneid* contains little about monsters and offers no monster descriptions of a comparable length. The scholarship that does exist compares Grendel's approach on Heorot to Vergil's Cyclopes. While they provide some sample methodologies, description of the Cyclopes is short and scattered, and similarities to Grendel are rare and vague, which explains why scholars have found no other comparable passage. <sup>31,32</sup> Nevertheless, the *Beowulf* author's approach in describing Grendel and Vergil's approach in describing Rumor exemplify numerous specific similarities. The following comparison of the two monsters—citing no sources, for none exist—will demonstrate the effectiveness of the proposed methodology than those put forth on Grendel and the Cyclopes, which cite numerous sources. <sup>33,34</sup>

Both creatures are gigantic in stature, yet size alone does not make a compelling argument for Virgilian influence on Beowulf, for larger-than-life size is a common feature among epic monsters. The argument, therefore, is based on the similarity of techniques that both poets apply judiciously to create slow, labored verses that in turn reflect the massive size of their monsters. For instance, Vergil uses apposition, describing Rumor as *celerem*, <sup>35</sup> *horrendum*, <sup>36</sup> and *ingens*. <sup>37,38</sup> This technique rarely occurs in Latin poetry, which is known for its word economy. Yet, Vergil's application of it here effectively creates a verse that drags on the description of Rumor beyond the norm to

<sup>24</sup> sc. "Arabs, Egyptians, and Indians"

<sup>25</sup> *Beowulf*, 4-10.

<sup>26</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 8.705-731.

<sup>27</sup> sc. "That was a good king;" this is an expression often repeated by the *Beowulf* poet

<sup>28</sup> sc. "a triple triumph"

<sup>29</sup> *Beowulf*, 11.

<sup>30</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 8.714.

<sup>31</sup> Richard North, *The Origins of Beowulf: From Vergil to Wiglaf* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 86-87.

<sup>32</sup> J.R.R. Tolkien and Michael D. C. Drout, *Beowulf and the Critics* (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies 2002), 117.

<sup>33</sup> *Beowulf* 702b-749.

<sup>34</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 4.173-188.

<sup>35</sup> sc. "fast"

<sup>36</sup> sc. "horrible"

<sup>37</sup> sc. "giant"

<sup>38</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 4.180-181.

give it a sense of weight and sluggishness that reflect Rumor's massive size. A comparable technique in *Beowulf* is repetition with variation. Between lines 703-720, "com"<sup>39</sup> repeats three times, each time followed by a prepositional phrase describing a different location. This repetition conveys a sense that Grendel is so massive that it requires three separate acts of "coming" stretched over 18 lines for him to actually arrive at Heorot.<sup>40</sup>

Along with repetition, both poets also apply metrics to create spondaic verses that show the massiveness of their monsters. A good example of this in the *Aeneid* is lines 180-181<sup>41</sup>:

~ v v/~ v v/~ v v/ ~ ~/ ~ v v / ~ ~  
 progenuit pedibus celerem et pernicious alis  
 ~ ~/ ~ ~/ ~ ~/ ~ ~/ ~ v v / ~ ~  
 monstrum^horrendum ingens cui quot sunt corpore plumae  
 ~ v v/~ ~ ~/ ~ ~/ ~ v v/ ~ ~  
 tot uigiles oculi subter mirabile dictu<sup>42,43</sup>

Whereas line 179 shows a fairly typical distribution of long and short syllables in dactylic hexameter, lines 180-181 are almost entirely spondaic except the fifth foot, which must always follow a long-short-short pattern. Based on the meter of these verses, one may argue that Vergil intended the form of these heavily spondaic lines to reflect their meaning, which is Rumor's massive size. Similarly, the alliterative verses of *Beowulf* constantly offer stressed syllables in oral performance.<sup>44</sup> This stressing of syllables combined with the repetition of "com"<sup>45</sup> gives the poem an onomatopoeic quality that one could construe as the sound of Grendel's heavy footsteps as he approaches Heorot.

Another feature that is specific to Grendel and Rumor is that their size is altered based on both poets' story-telling needs. For example, while Grendel is so large that Heorot's doors burst open at the touch of his hands, he has no problem fitting inside a hall built for humans.<sup>46</sup> Vergil takes similar liberties with Rumor by making the gnomic statement that she is the fastest creature of all when only three verses later, she is large enough to stride on the ground and hide her head in the clouds simultaneously. His

<sup>39</sup> sc. "came"

<sup>40</sup> Orchard, *A Critical Companion to Beowulf*, 193.

<sup>41</sup> Here a tilde represents a long syllable, "v" represents a short syllable, slash represents a foot break, and a circumflex represents an elision.

<sup>42</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 4.179-181.

<sup>43</sup> sc. "She bore a horrible, giant monster swift on her feet and pernicious wings, who has as many feathers on her body as vigilant eyes below—miraculous to recount"

<sup>44</sup> Robert Stockwell and Donka Minkova, "Prosody." in *Beowulf: A Handbook*, ed. Robert Bjork, John Niles (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 55-84.

<sup>45</sup> sc. "came"

<sup>46</sup> *Beowulf* 720-725.

decision shows that he has no qualms about altering Rumor's size to the needs of his narrative.<sup>47</sup>

Size is not the only similar feature between the two passages. Another trait that Rumor and Grendel share is their inhumanity. Klaeber, in summarizing existing scholarship on Grendel, writes: "scholarship has explored Grendel's close relation to humans, interpreting him as representing the dark side of humanity or the anti-*thegn*<sup>48</sup>, a dualistic creature."<sup>49</sup> Although Klaeber's summary is concise and simple, an analysis of neither Grendel's nor Rumor's inhumanity cannot be, for their inhumanity is inextricably tied to all aspects of their existence. This essay will address two ways in which their inhumanity manifests itself: appearance and motivation.

Grendel's appearance has made him the subject of much scholarly debate. On the one hand, Grendel does not appear to be entirely different from humans. One can surmise that Grendel is a large humanoid creature with human features such as *eagum*<sup>50</sup> and *folmum*.<sup>51 52</sup> On the other, the poet ascribes some quality that highlights Grendel's inhumanity to every aspect of Grendel's appearance that he mentions. For example, Grendel's eyes emit a *leoht unfæger*.<sup>53 54</sup> In a similar vein, Vergil balances his mention of Rumor's facial features with the statement that her eyes *nec dulci declinat lumina*<sup>55</sup> making clear that while she possesses human features, Rumor is far from human.<sup>56</sup>

Before discussing the manifestation of inhumanity in lack of motivation and divine favor, one must first consider how these factors interact. After all, the statement that one with a singular motivation or without divine favor is inhuman cannot be correct without the appropriate context. In discussing motivation and divine favor, one must accept that both monsters are only inhuman because they are set in opposition to their respective human heroes.

The monsters' lack of motivation in both poems highlights their inhumanity in contrast to the heroes' complex incentive for action. For all the visceral texture in Grendel's attack, the *Beowulf* poet offers little motivation for his behavior in text.<sup>57</sup> One could only argue that Grendel kills for food;<sup>58</sup> nevertheless, other passages suggest that he kills because he is annoyed by the sounds coming from Heorot.<sup>59 60</sup> The poet is silent on the issue otherwise. This lack of motives sets him in direct contrast to Beowulf, who

<sup>47</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 4.174-177.

<sup>48</sup> sc. "thane"

<sup>49</sup> Klaeber et al., *Klaeber's Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg*, 44.

<sup>50</sup> sc. "eyes"

<sup>51</sup> sc. "hands"

<sup>52</sup> *Beowulf*, 720-726.

<sup>53</sup> sc. "unholy light"

<sup>54</sup> *Beowulf*, 727.

<sup>55</sup> sc. "do not close in sweet sleep"

<sup>56</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 4.182-183.

<sup>57</sup> *Beowulf*, 702b-749.

<sup>58</sup> *Beowulf*, 733-734.

<sup>59</sup> *Beowulf*, 87-88

<sup>60</sup> *Beowulf* 733-734



has a complex network of motivations including his desire for treasure and glory, the safety of his men, and his allegiances to Hrothgar and Hygelac. Applying the above mentioned logic, one sees that while Beowulf has very human motives for his behavior, Grendel's single-minded and primal motivation reflects his inhumanity. Similarly, Vergil, despite calling Rumor a *nuntia veri*<sup>61</sup>, writes that she is also *tam ficti praveque tenax*<sup>62,63</sup>. This description suggests that Rumor's only motivation is the spread of information as opposed to Aeneas, whose motivations are many such as his desire to rebuild his fallen nation, the safety of his people, and his lust. Therefore, like Grendel, Rumor's inhumanity is manifest in her single-minded motive.

Lastly, Grendel and Rumor's relationship with the divine is, barring a few minor differences, identical. The first similarity between their divine standings is that both bear the disdain of their contemporary deities through no fault of their own. For example, although the poet mentions that Grendel *godes yrre bær*,<sup>64</sup> Cain is the one who first began the feud with [*se*] *metod*.<sup>65,66</sup> As mentioned above, Grendel's relationship with God is only a reflection of his inhumanity in that he is in opposition to Beowulf, to whom God grants *guðhréð*<sup>67</sup> in battle against Grendel.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, Rumor is the abhorrent result of Earth's feud with the gods. Earth, who was *ira inritata deorum*,<sup>69</sup> bore Rumor. Furthermore, Rumor is *Coeo Enceladoque sororem*,<sup>70</sup> both of whom were children of the titans whom the gods cast out from heaven after a great battle. On the other hand, Vergil describes Aeneas as pious twenty times throughout the *Aeneid*, and for his piety, Jupiter allows him to overcome Rumor's destructive nature and grants him success in his quest.<sup>71</sup>

The combination of Haber's analysis and the research done for this study brings precision to the argument for Virgilian influence on *Beowulf* that surpasses the broad labels of heroism and monstrosity in some of Haber's work and the concept of archetypal scenes in Crowne. The numerous parallels between the heroes and monsters of *Beowulf* and the *Aeneid* exclude other possible influences on *Beowulf*. With so many plot points occurring in approximately the same chronological sequence and numerous similarities between Grendel and Rumor, it is difficult to deny the absence of Virgilian influence in at least the first third of *Beowulf*. Nevertheless, the application of the proposed methodology in this essay is by no means exhaustive. Passages such as Priam's Fate and Grendel's Attack on Heorot, with their shared motifs of bursting doors and slaughter, merit further exploration of the epics using the proposed methodology.<sup>72,73</sup>

<sup>61</sup> sc. "messenger of truth"

<sup>62</sup> sc. "tenacious about falsehood and wrong"

<sup>63</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 4.188

<sup>64</sup> sc. "he bored god's ire"

<sup>65</sup> sc. "the creator"

<sup>66</sup> *Beowulf*, 100-114.

<sup>67</sup> sc. "victory-in-battle"

<sup>68</sup> *Beowulf*, 819.

<sup>69</sup> sc. "incited by the anger of the gods"

<sup>70</sup> sc. "a sister to Coeus and Enceladus"

<sup>71</sup> Haber, *A Comparative Study of the Beowulf and the Aeneid*, 53.

<sup>72</sup> *Beowulf*, 720-836.

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### Appendix A

- (1) Both heroes sail because of the destruction of a famed place (115-185, Aeneid I, 12-49).
- (2) Both heroes are interrogated upon their arrival at shore, Aeneas by Venus and Beowulf by the coastguard, who asks them to explain their origins and their business there (Haber, 121).
- (3) Both heroes introduce themselves through boasting their own fame (Haber, 122).
- (4) After satisfying the interrogators' demands, both heroes are lead to the established settlement of ruler of the land, Dido and Hrothgar (Haber, 122).
- (5) Both heroes are stopped once again and introduced through another one of the ruler's henchmen (Haber, 123).

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<sup>73</sup> Virg. *Aen.* 2.486.

(6) When both heroes finally meet their respective rulers, they address the rulers without being invited to do first (Haber, 124).

(7) In response, the rulers already know of the fame and past deeds of the heroes (Haber, 125).

(8) Both heroes then sit and feast with the rulers, during which they elaborate on the deeds of their past, earning the affection of the lands' rulers (529-6010; Aeneid II, 1-804, III 1- 718, IV 13-23).

(9) Both heroes are first afflicted by a monster one third of the way through the poem (702b- 749; Aeneid IV, 173-188)

# Defining Sanity: The Reception of Euripides' *Herakles* and Seneca's *Hercules Furens* in Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*

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KATHERINE HORGAN

In his reception of Herculean myth, Marlowe, in *Tamburlaine*, interrogates a concept of madness developed both by Euripides, in his tragedy *Herakles*, and by Seneca in the tragedy *Hercules Furens*. Marlowe, through a comparison between Herakles/Hercules and Tamburlaine, reveals that, though Tamburlaine may behave like a madman, by the Euripidean and Senecan standard, he cannot in truth be called mad. Euripides gives a clear definition of Herakles' madness. Herakles experiences a delusion: a disjunction between the subjective reality Herakles perceives and under whose logic he acts and objective reality as defined by other characters. Herakles kills his sons only because he does not perceive them to be his sons, even though, in reality, they are. Not only is madness in *Herakles* well defined conceptually but also in terms of duration and cause. Herakles' madness is a temporary episode with a clear beginning and end and is imposed by the gods. Herakles is not fundamentally mad; he is a sane man who experiences a temporary delusion. Seneca, on the other hand, muddles the distinction between madness and sanity in *Hercules Furens*. Hercules still kills his sons under a delusion, but it is unclear where reality ends and delusion begins. Although his madness is still defined against an objective reality, Hercules expresses a desire to rule like the gods when sane as well as mad, implying that the tyrannical ambitions Hercules reveals in his madness may at any point bleed into his conscious actions. Hercules, unlike Herakles, may be a madman who experiences bouts of sanity.

When Tamburlaine kills his son in *Tamburlaine Part II*, Marlowe brings the scene into dialogue with the parallel scenes of filicide in *Herakles* and *Hercules Furens*. Just before Tamburlaine stabs Calyphas, he all but quotes Hercules' mad ravings in *Hercules Furens*, saying, "For earth and all this airy region/ Cannot contain the state of Tamburlaine."<sup>1,2</sup> The reference seems to make Tamburlaine a figure for the mad Hercules, calling into question Tamburlaine's sanity at the point of murder. However, the murders that Herakles and Hercules commit within a delusion, Tamburlaine seems to commit with the perfect knowledge that he is killing his son. By Euripidean standards, this could be an argument for Tamburlaine's total madness: as a character, Tamburlaine functions within a delusion so complete that it allows him to justify the conscious murder of his son. Unlike *Herakles* and *Hercules Furens*, there is no objective reality against which to define such a delusion. In the absence of active divine powers, Tamburlaine is

<sup>1</sup> Compare to *Hercules Furens*: "The earth cannot contain Hercules, and at last yields him to the world above" Lucius Annaeus Seneca. "Hercules." Trans. John G. Fitch. *Hercules; Trojan Women; Phoenician Women; Medea; Phaedra*. (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard UP, 2002), 126.

<sup>2</sup> *Tam II IV.i.119*.

the only functional divinity. Tamburlaine is the only character with the power to realize his will; the only reality that exists for Tamburlaine is the reality that his own will determines. Here, Marlowe has fully realized the godly ambitions which the mad Hercules expressed in *Furens*: Tamburlaine has the power to make his subjective perspective the objective reality. As a figure for the mad Hercules, Tamburlaine transcends the possibility of madness by imposing a reality so absolute that it does not allow for alternatives; Tamburlaine is sane by default.

Marlowe's conception of Tamburlaine's madness (or lack thereof) results from his reading, through Seneca, of Euripides' *Herakles*. Euripides, in *Herakles*, defines Herakles' madness as a delusion in which he experiences an alternate reality. Madness strikes Herakles mid-sacrifice, as he is purifying his house after killing Lycus. In the early moments of his madness, Herakles is still aware that he is in his own house and of his actions: "Why hallow fire, Father, to cleanse the house/ before I kill Eurystheus?.../.../I'll go and fetch Eurystheus' head, add it/ to those now killed, then purify my hands."<sup>3</sup> Here, Herakles registers that he is home and that he has killed Lycus. Madness, imposing upon Hercules a logic of her own, inspires him to kill Eurystheus before cleansing the house, so as to do all of his sacrificing at once. The problem, however, comes in the following lines, when he imagines that he travels to Eurystheus' city. The messenger reports that Herakles "fancied his chariot stood there;/ he made as though to leap its rails and ride off;/ prodding with his hand as though it held a goad."<sup>4</sup> Unfortunately for Herakles, he hasn't moved but remains in his own house. In his madness, Herakles believes that he has moved from his own house to Eurystheus' city, and prepares to act accordingly.

Herakles, within the context of his delusion, mistakes the identities of his own family members for members of Eurystheus' family. Herakles does not recognize his sons; the messenger says that Herakles clearly thought that "he was killing Eurystheus' children."<sup>5</sup> Even when his son cries out to him, saying "'Dearest Father...do not murder me./ You're killing your own son, not Eurystheus'!',"<sup>6</sup> Herakles merely stares at his son with "stony Gorgon eyes" and kills him. The delusion is total. Herakles, though he sees and hears his sons, does not recognize them with his senses, but acts upon the assumption that sons in Eurystheus' house must belong to Eurystheus.

Within the context of his delusion, Herakles' behavior makes sense. He has set out to revenge himself upon Eurystheus, and he does so. However, Euripides takes care to distinguish between the subjective context within which Herakles believes he is acting and the objective reality in which he is actually functioning. The other characters in the play define objective reality through their perspective on Herakles' madness. The mad Herakles never appears on stage, nor does he speak. His words and actions are reported to the audience by the Messenger. Within the Messenger's account of the madness, other

<sup>3</sup> Euripides. "Herakles." Trans. William Arrowsmith. *Euripides III: The Complete Greek Tragedies Edited by David Greene and Richmond Lattimore*. Ed. David Grene. (London: U of Chicago, 2013), Line 936.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, Line 947.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, Line 971.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, Line 988.

characters are constantly remarking on the madness they perceive in Herakles. An unnamed bystander is the first to bring up the deadly question of madness, when he asks “‘Is the master playing, or has he gone...mad?’”<sup>7</sup> Amphitryon too, interrupts Herakles in his madness, saying “What do you mean my son/ what is this change in you? Or has the blood of those you’ve slain/ made you mad?”<sup>8</sup> Herakles’ madness requires other perspectives to define it; he would be unable to define madness for himself because within his delusion, he acts logically. The resulting disjunction between the two perspectives creates Herakles’ madness.

Even Herakles, when he returns to sanity, must react as an outsider to his own madness; initially, he does not know that he had been mad. When he awakes after murdering his children, he says to Ampitryon that he “cannot remember being mad.”<sup>9</sup> He is forced to assess his own madness from the outside, and turns upon himself: “Let me avenge my children’s murder:/ let me hurl myself down from some sheer rock,/ or drive the whetted sword into my side,/ or expunge with fire this body’s madness.”<sup>10</sup> He sees only the result of what he has done rather than the logic with which he did it. Indeed, Herakles seems to have even less information about his own madness than the rest of the characters, who know that he killed his sons thinking that they were Eurystheus’ children. Herakles is never told of his own deluded logic and is left to condemn himself. Herakles reaction to his own crime makes him a member of the objective reality, cementing the distinction between his deluded reality and objective reality, which does not exist for Hercules when he is sane.

While Herakles may condemn himself for his mad behavior, Euripides goes to great lengths to emphasize that madness is not fundamentally part of Herakles’ psychology. For one thing, Herakles’ madness has a clearly defined beginning. When Herakles asks Amphitryon “Where did my madness take me? Where did I die?” his father is able to answer with the precise location and time: “By the altar, as you purified your hands.”<sup>11</sup> He is able to do so because Lyssa, when she appears with Iris in line 821, begins to drive the sane Herakles mad at a fixed moment: “to the heart of Herakles I run,/ more fast, more wild than ocean’s groaning breakers.”<sup>12</sup> Herakles does not descend slowly into madness; the exact beginning of his insane episode can be located in the text.

As a god marks the beginning of Herakles’ madness, so too does a god end his madness. The messenger reports that Pallas appears to the bystanders just as Herakles makes to kill his father: “a vision came—or so it seemed to us—/Pallas, with plumed helm, brandishing a spear./ She hurled a rock; it struck him in the chest,/ stopped short his murderous rage and knocked him/ into sleep.”<sup>13,14</sup> Herakles’ madness is limited to a

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, Line 952.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, Line 965.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., Line 1122.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., Line 1148.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., Line 1144-1145.

<sup>12</sup> Here, I refer to Madness as Lyssa, to avoid confusion between madness and Madness.

<sup>13</sup> Euripides, Line 861.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., Line 1002.

fixed period, initiated by the gods and ended by them. By bracketing off Herakles' madness with instances of divine intervention, Euripides marks it as an anomaly within the play, indicating that the madness ought to be dealt with as an episode in and of itself rather than as something that may have been inherent in Herakles throughout the play.

In her article "Euripidean Madness: Herakles and Orestes," Karelisa Hartigan discusses Euripides' strange choice to stage the divine intervention in the middle of the play. She notes that "the dramatic effect of the total peripatry is one of the most powerful in tragedy." So, when the playwright chooses to use divine intervention as a device, it signals a dramatic emphasis within the play. Here, the "unusual intervention of deities at midpoint, rather than at prologue or closing" emphasizes "the external nature of Herakles' punishment."<sup>15</sup> The physical, rather than supposed or conjectured, presence of the gods at the moment of Herakles' madness indicates that it is the result of an actual external will, "rather than a sickness that grows from within, resulting from some crime or deed he has done" or "an aspect of his character which is just now with divine assistance being revealed."<sup>16</sup> Euripides' unusual dramatic choice indicates that madness for Herakles is equally unusual. The very fact that divine intervention is necessary to drive Herakles mad is evidence of his natural sanity.

However temporary or externally imposed Herakles' madness, the scene of madness itself does not constitute the tragedy. Hera sends Iris and Lyssa to "taint [Herakles] with fresh murder" by making him "destroy his sons."<sup>17</sup> She gives no real reason; now that Herakles' labors are over, Zeus is no longer protecting him, so Hera seems to feel that Herakles ought to have more misery. Lyssa, though reluctant, agrees to cause Herakles' madness. She will cause him to kill his sons, but that "he [Herakles] won't know/ he kills what he begot, until my [Lyssa's] madness leave him."<sup>18</sup> According to Lyssa, Herakles cannot know his crime until she leaves him and he returns to sanity. The tragedy of Herakles' madness lies in the fact that he must cope with the actions of his insane behavior when he becomes sane; his punishment isn't madness but his grief at having killed his own sons. Herakles is a sane man; his very punishment relies on the clear distinction between Herakles' behavior in madness and that he himself is able to rejoin the objective reality of others in condemning his own actions.

In his telling of Hercules' madness, Seneca retains the general shape of Euripides' *Herakles*. For Hercules, however, the boundary between madness and sanity is less clearly defined; it is clear that Hercules goes mad, but it is not clear when, how, or to what degree. The fact that the audience hears of Hercules' experience of madness from his own lips makes it particularly difficult to determine the moment of his madness. The madness begins somewhere in the middle of his sacrificial prayer in Act IV. As he prays, he suddenly says, "But what is this? Midday is shrouded in darkness. Phoebus' face is obscured though not by clouds. Who chases the daylight back and drives it to its

<sup>15</sup> Karelisa Hartigan. "Euripidean Madness: Herakles and Orestes." *Greece & Rome* (1987), 127.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> Euripides, Line 831.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, Line 865.

dawning...Why are so many stars filling the heavens in daytime?”<sup>19</sup> Here, Hercules seems to exist in a liminal space between madness and sanity. He is conscious that the reality he begins to perceive is different from the one he knows to be true. He sees stars, and yet he knows that it is midday. In Euripides’ *Herakles*, madness requires an outside perspective with which to define it. While the messenger in *Herakles* is able to pinpoint the moment madness strikes from an outside perspective, from Hercules’ own perspective, it is impossible to tell at what point his delusion becomes complete.

The extent to which Hercules experiences a delusion like Herakles’ is also in doubt. Hercules’ delusion is less clearly divorced from reality than Herakles’. Herakles, in his madness, believes that he has travelled to the palace of Eurystheus and kills Eurystheus’ children, rather than his own. He experiences a complete delusion, almost entirely divorced from reality. Hercules, on the other hand, believes that his children are actually the sons of Lycus, whom he has just killed: “But look, here in hiding are my enemy’s children, King Lycus’ vile seed. This hand will send you straightway to join your hated father.”<sup>20</sup> Clearly, Hercules is still aware in his madness that he is in Thebes, that Lycus is his enemy, and that Lycus’ children might be in the vicinity. Hercules has a surprising grip on reality in his madness: he is aware of his surroundings and the people likely to be there. If he is aware that Lycus’ children are in Thebes, he should also be aware that his own sons live in Thebes. Hercules’ madness is still, by Euripidean standards, a delusion: the reality he perceives is different from the reality in which he acts. However, Hercules’ delusion contains elements of objective reality, calling into question the extent to which he is conscious of that reality in his delusion.

The direct cause of Hercules’ madness is also unclear, as there are no gods physically present in Act IV to drive Hercules mad. In *Herakles*, Euripides drew attention to the gods’ intervention by placing them in the middle of the play as the physical impetus behind Herakles’ madness. Seneca has moved the physical divine presence to its more common location at the beginning of Act I, when Juno makes her speech. While Juno implies here that she will cause Hercules’ madness, she is not physically present in Act IV when his delusion begins. The audience is left to assume that Hercules’ madness begins because, in the middle of his prayer in Act IV, he asked Juno to bring on her next labor: “if she [Juno] is furnishing some monster, let it be mine.”<sup>21</sup> Of course, from Juno’s speech in Act I, the audience knows that Juno’s next labor is to set Hercules against himself: “Do you need a match for Alcides? There is none but himself. Now he must war with himself.”<sup>22</sup> Seneca, by removing divine intervention from the moment of Hercules’ madness, seems to deliberately muddy the waters, suggesting the possibility that Hercules may have gone mad naturally without divine assistance.

<sup>19</sup> Seneca, 125.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.



Further questioning Hercules' sanity are the threads of continuity between his insane ravings and his sane thoughts. When Hercules returns from the underworld, bringing back Cerberus, he reflects that he has done more than any other person or god: "I have seen things inaccessible to all, unknown to Phoebus, those gloomy spaces which the baser world has granted to infernal Jove."<sup>23</sup> Moreover, he insists that "if the regions of the third lot" had "pleased" him, he "could have reigned there," deposing Pluto.<sup>24</sup> When mad, he seems to take these thoughts to another extreme, threatening to unleash the Titans and to lead them in a war against the heavens: "Let the Titans in rage prepare war under my leadership...with a pair of mountains I shall now construct a pathway to the world above: Chiron must see his Pelion set beneath Ossa. Then Olympus, placed as a third step, will reach to heaven—or else be hurled there."<sup>25</sup> He not only wishes to rule in heaven but over heaven, threatening to stack the underworld, the earth and Olympus on top of each other to ascend to a heaven beyond the gods. It seems that the thoughts Hercules had while sane are magnified by his madness rather than being imposed on him entirely from the outside, as madness is in *Herakles*. Madness seems to work with material already present in Hercules' mind, implying that there is potential for madness in the thoughts of the sane Hercules.

It is Hercules' potential for madness, as indicated by this continuity, which seems to have caused Juno to turn against him in the first place. While in *Herakles* Hera seems to punish Herakles for no adequately explored reason, in *Hercules Furens* Juno states a motive. Hercules, she says, has become too powerful: "It is heaven we must fear for—that after conquering the lowest realm he may seize the highest. He will usurp his father's scepter!"<sup>26</sup> She fears that Hercules may attempt, after subduing hell, to conquer the gods. In his article "Seneca's *Hercules Furens*: Tragedy from Modus Vitae," David Bishop elaborates on Juno's fears:

In Act 1 Juno plainly tells us that Hercules' type of life is tragically outrageous...His physical capacity and accomplishments and his psychological readiness are dangerous. That is, the kind of man Hercules is, coupled with the kind of deeds he does produces a violence of action which Juno abhors because it is contrary to the *ordo mundi*, regardless of the results and intentions of the doer.<sup>27</sup>

Bishop notes in particular, Hercules' "psychological readiness," or potential for madness. According to Bishop, Juno seems to think that Hercules is exactly the sort of person who would get it into his head to threaten war with the gods, and that he is powerful enough to make good on the threat. In punishing Hercules, then, Juno intends to exploit his

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 127.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>27</sup> Bishop, J.D. "Seneca's *Hercules Furens*: Tragedy from Modus Vitae." *Classica et Medievalia*, Vol 27. (1966), 221.

“psychological readiness” to destroy himself, thereby protecting Jove and preserving the order of things from a potential usurper. Hercules, in this scenario, takes the role of the villain. While he is usually seen as a hero who preserves order on earth by subduing monsters, here Juno locates in him a potential madness that, when combined with his strength, could cause him to overthrow the natural order of things. Bishop suggests that there is something inherently subversive in Hercules that Juno fears. If in *Herakles*, Herakles is a sane man who experiences madness at Hera’s savage whim, the Senecan Hercules seems to be a madman who functions under a veneer of sanity who even the gods fear.

Marlowe invokes the Senecan Hercules with the lines “For earth and all this airy region/ Cannot contain the state of Tamburlaine,”<sup>28</sup> which directly echo Seneca’s Hercules: “The earth cannot contain Hercules, and at last yields him to the world above.”<sup>29</sup> Both these lines occur in moments of questionable sanity involving filicide. The passage Marlowe references marks the moment when Hercules’ madness is most clear. In Euripides, Herakles’ madness required an outside perspective to name it. After Hercules expresses his desire to ascend to the heavens and usurp the gods, his madness is finally named by Amphitryon: “Banish these monstrous notions! Restrain the crazy impulses of your mind, which is great to be sure, but scarcely sane.”<sup>30</sup> In this passage, just before Hercules kills his sons, an outside perspective has finally decided that Hercules is no longer acting on the same plane of reality as the other characters. He is officially mad. Thus, when Tamburlaine echoes the mad Hercules as he kills his son, Marlowe seems to imply that Tamburlaine is insane, as Hercules is when he kills his children.

Marlowe complicates the reference, however, because by the Euripidean standard with which we determined madness in both *Herakles* and *Hercules Furens*, Tamburlaine cannot be mad. In both Euripides and Seneca, the other mortal characters defined Herakles’/Hercules’ madness; in Tamburlaine, there is no outside perspective. No other character ever calls him mad when he kills his son. Amyras, Techelles, and Theridimas beg for mercy for Calyphas; even Tamburlaine’s enemies call him a “damned monster,” and a “fiend from hell,”<sup>31</sup> but no one ever questions his sanity.

The other outside influences that determined madness in *Herakles* and *Hercules Furens* were the gods. There are many deities on people’s lips throughout *Tamburlaine Parts I and II*, but it is not clear if and for whom these deities act. They are never present on stage and they do not speak. For example, in Act II of *Tamburlaine II*, when Orcanes, a Muslim general, invokes Christ rather than Mahomet, against the Christians who have broken their treaty with him:

Thou Christ that art esteemed omnipotent./  
If thou wilt prove thyself a perfect God

<sup>28</sup> *Tam II* IV.i.119.

<sup>29</sup> Seneca, 125.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>31</sup> *Tam II*, IV.i.169.

Worthy the worship of all faithful hearts,  
 Be now revenged upon this traitor's soul  
 make the power I have left behind  
 (Too little to defend our guiltless lives)  
 Sufficient to discomfit and confound  
 The trustless force of those false Christians.<sup>32</sup>

While the idea of Muslims invoking Christ against Christians is ironic, it seems to work out for Orcanes. However, because Christ never answers him or appears to him, he isn't quite sure whether it is Christ or Mahomet who has helped him: "Now lie Christians bathing in their bloods/ And Christ or Mahomet hath been my friend."<sup>33</sup> Ultimately, he decides that Christ has saved them, concluding that in their victory "the justice of Christ" and his "power" here "appears as full/ As rays of Cynthia to the clearest sight."<sup>34</sup> Gazellus, Orcanes' general, takes a more practical view of the case. He says that no gods were involved in the battle but that their victory is due to "the fortune of the wars.../Whose power is often proved a miracle."<sup>35</sup> In this passage alone, three different religions are referenced, turned against each other, confused, and ultimately, dismissed. In *Tamburlaine*, the power of divine beings to affect the world is completely in doubt. In contrast to the worlds of Herakles and Hercules, Tamburlaine's world is, for all intents and purposes, godless. There are no gods to cause madness, and no gods to blame for it.

Justina Gregory, in her chapter on *Herakles* in Lusching's *Greek Tragedy* vol. 25, says that "It is almost a definition of divinity that its will must be done. A god's wishes may be postponed...but they may not go unfulfilled."<sup>36</sup> By this definition of divinity, Tamburlaine is the closest thing to a god in his world. Mahomet, Jove and Christ never speak, so they have no articulated "will" to realize. Tamburlaine repeatedly articulates his will and makes good on it with his deeds. He goes so far as to say his word and deed are one when he tells Theridimas, Usumcasane and Techelles in *Tamburlaine Part I*, "Fight all courageously and be you kings: I speak it, and my words are oracles."<sup>37</sup> According to Tamburlaine, his word decides the course of events.

Having a will, however, is not enough. In order to be a god, one must enforce one's will. When Tamburlaine attacks Damascus, he sets his purpose: Damascus will be conquered, and the Soldan, Zencorate's father, should surrender the city to him. He then sets an arbitrary timeline for their surrender. On the first day, he will appear in white to signify "the mildness of his mind/ That, satiate with spoil, refuseth blood."<sup>38</sup> On the second day, he appears in red and will attack only soldiers, "not sparing any that can

<sup>32</sup> *Tam II*, II.ii.55.

<sup>33</sup> *Tam. II* II.iii.10.

<sup>34</sup> *Tam II* II.iii.28.

<sup>35</sup> *Tam II* II.iii.31.

<sup>36</sup> Justina Gregory, "Euripides' Herakles." *Greek Tragedy*. Vol.25. Ed. T. F. Gould and C. J. Herington. (New York: Cambridge UP, 1977), 268.

<sup>37</sup> *Tam I* III.iii.101.

<sup>38</sup> *Tam I* IV.i. 52.

manage arms.”<sup>39</sup> On the third day, however, he will appear in Black, and will kill every citizen “without respect of sex, degree, or age.”<sup>40</sup> Though arbitrary, cruel and somewhat ridiculous, Tamburlaine has set his intention and therefore will not deviate from it: “When they see me march in black array/.../Were in that city all the world contained,/ Not one should ‘scape, but perish by our swords.”<sup>41</sup> He is true to his word. In Act V, when he is advancing on Damascus with his “coal-black colors everywhere advanced,”<sup>42</sup> the Governor sends four virgins to make peace with Tamburlaine by surrendering the city. It is too late; Tamburlaine is wearing black, so he kills all the virgins without a second thought:

Away with them I say and show them Death.  
I will not spare these proud Egyptians,  
Nor change my martial observations  
For all the wealth of Gihon’s golden waves,  
Or for the love of Venus, would she leave  
The angry god of arms and lie with me.  
They have refused the offer of their lives,  
And know my customs are as peremptory  
As wrathful planets, death, or destiny.<sup>43</sup>

Tamburlaine’s will is absolute: he enforces his will because it is his will and in doing so performs as both god and hero, setting the labors and carrying them out.

Juno’s worst fears, as she articulates them in Act I of *Hercules Furens*, are realized in Tamburlaine: he has become the hero who is more powerful than the gods in his world. In terms of the Herculean myth, if Tamburlaine is cast in the role of the mad Hercules, he also plays the role of a god with the power to determine reality. Whatever reality Tamburlaine envisions, he has the power to make it so.<sup>44</sup> If madness results from the disjunction between a perceived reality and an objective reality, Tamburlaine cannot experience such a disjunction because the only reality that exists for him is his own. Sanity, for Tamburlaine, is a condition of his absolute will.

Tamburlaine’s murder of Calyphas, therefore, needs no justification. The filicides of both Hercules and Herakles are justified by their madness; in both cases, they experience a delusion and kill their children by mistake. Tamburlaine kills his son because he is an insufficient son: “Here, Jove, receive his fainting soul again,/ A form not meet to give that subject essence/ Whose matter is the flesh of Tamburlaine.”<sup>45</sup> Calyphas refused to fight alongside his brothers as Tamburlaine ordered him to. According to Tamburlaine, Calyphas’ disobedience is reason enough to kill him. It is his duty, he says,

<sup>39</sup> *Tam I*, IV.i. 57.

<sup>40</sup> *Tam I*, IV.i.62.

<sup>41</sup> *Tam I*, IV.ii.119.

<sup>42</sup> *Tam I* V.i.9.

<sup>43</sup> *Tam I* V.i.120.

<sup>44</sup> To a certain degree; Tamburlaine does die. However, his last words determine his own death: “For Tamburlaine, the scourge of God, must die. [*He dies.*]” *Tam II* V.iii.248.

<sup>45</sup> *Tam II* IV.i.111.

to kill those whom “Heaven abhors” and to fit the title of “scourge of God and terror of the world.” To maintain his title as “arch-monarch,” he must “apply [himself] to fit those terms,/ In war, in blood, in death, in cruelty/ And plague such peasants as resist in me/ The power of heaven’s eternal majesty.”<sup>46</sup> For Tamburlaine, Calyphas’ resistance of his will is reason enough. To maintain his godly status, he must kill his son because his son denied his will, and Tamburlaine’s will is always done. Therefore, unlike in Euripides and Seneca, Tamburlaine needs no madness to justify his filicide; his will is enough.

Sanity in *Tamburlaine* is completely relative. Marlowe underlines this by the complete inversion of the Herculean myth of filicide. What Herakles and Hercules do in a state of madness, Tamburlaine does with complete consciousness. Marlowe, in drawing on *Herakles* and *Hercules Furens*, exploits the potential of a madness defined by outside perspective. If madness depends on a difference between the perceived reality of the mad person and an objective reality as determined by other characters or divine forces, sanity is dependent on what constitutes objective reality. In the absence of gods, the most powerful individual will determines reality. Thus, carrying the idea of the empowered hero to its fullest extent, Marlowe reveals Tamburlaine, the hero turned tyrant. Tamburlaine, though he behaves like a madman, cannot be called so by the people he subjects. His will destroys all perspectives which are not his own, and without an alternative perspective, madness is impossible to define.

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<sup>46</sup> *Tam II*, IV.i.155.



# Power and Hierarchy in Byzantine Art and Architecture

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The dissemination and assertion of power in building and landscape, or in other words, art and architecture, is said to be extremely pervasive in societies with a strict and complex state hierarchy.<sup>1</sup> Thus, the Eastern Roman Empire, during Late Antique and Byzantine times—where society was rigidly structured along political lines—was an ideal environment for this deliberate and pervasive manipulation of space. This paper will discuss how the Byzantines used their art and architecture to unite and divide, to construct their social hierarchy, and to make clear the relationships between the different entities and institutions of the Empire. In particular, Byzantine art and architecture established the hierarchical dimensions of power in three fundamental relations: those of the commoners and the Church, the emperor and his subjects, and the emperor and the Church.

The art and architecture of the Byzantines vividly expressed the power relationship between commoners and the Church. As Taft believes, the Byzantine religious community deliberately created an environment for themselves in which they could stage ceremonies and religious acts that promoted a hierarchy within the congregation.<sup>2</sup> Here one turns to San Vitale in Ravenna to look at Paliou and Knight's study "Mapping of the Senses," wherein they create a sensory map using isovists and visibility graphs to shed light on how different parts of the congregations would have observed and experienced the service.<sup>3</sup> By not conforming to the more prevalent basilica-style construction, San Vitale is of a much more focused and concentrated shape. In such a church, as in the later cross-in-square churches, the role of the laity, or the commoners, became increasingly passive, and was restricted mostly to listening and observing.<sup>4</sup> Naturally, some found themselves in better vantage points than others, thus corresponding to the social order of Byzantium. In San Vitale, women were either in the *matroneum*, the second storey balcony, or in the left and right ambulatories flanking the main nave in which the men sat.<sup>5</sup> Whereas female members had quite restricted visual

<sup>1</sup> P. Magdalino, "Power Building and Power Space in Byzantine Constantinople: The Ethics and Dynamics of Construction and Conservation," in *The Byzantine Court: Source of Power and Culture; Papers from the Second International Sevgi Gönül Byzantine Studies Symposium, Istanbul 21 - 23 June 2010*, ed. Ayla Ödekan, Nevra Necipoğlu, and Engin Akyürek (Istanbul: Koç UP, 2010), 55.

<sup>2</sup> R. F. Taft. "Women at Church in Byzantium: Where, When and Why?" in *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 52.

<sup>3</sup> E. Paliou and D. J. Knight, "Mapping the Senses: Perceptual and Social Aspects of Late Antique Liturgy in San Vitale, Ravenna," *Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology*, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> R. Mainstone, *Hagia Sophia: Architecture, Structure and Liturgy of Justinian's Great Church* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988), 230.

<sup>5</sup> Paliou and Knight, "Mapping the Senses," 2.

access to the focus of the ceremony, the chancel, there were no architectural features in the main nave that obstructed the view of the men.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, there are some locations in the *matroneum* that offered women a unique perspective, affording them the opportunity not only to observe the ceremony unfolding below, but also the male congregation members themselves.<sup>7</sup> Due to this elevated position, these women would have had close eye-level access to symbolically important architectural and decorative features invisible and inaccessible to their male counterparts below.<sup>8</sup> This could be indicative of the special place of women in Byzantine religious spheres, and suggestive of their stout devotion to the sole institution in which they could hope to wield any power.<sup>9</sup> This position is best exemplified by images of the Virgin and Child, as a “silent witness of women in Orthodox Christianity.”<sup>10</sup> These devotional images were presented in the apse, a revered but notably inferior location within the decorative scheme of Byzantine churches.

Segregation also occurred between the clergy and the laity. This was realized physically by the division between the sanctuary and the nave of the church. Over time, the chancel barrier between these two areas grew in height and opacity, using the now hidden space of the sanctuary to give an air of mystery, power and inaccessibility to the acts performed and the mysteries observed behind these closed doors.<sup>11</sup>

Paulus Silentiarius, a sixth-century poet and palace official of Justinian, describes the sanctuary as an “inside place reserved as the Holy of Holies and accessible only to priest [with the] barrier of bronze as a holy reminder, so no one may simply enter by accident.”<sup>12</sup>

A structural element of the church that did allow for more interaction between these two distinct realms was the *ambo*, an elevated platform in the middle of the nave, from which the Gospel and Epistle would be recited. While access to the *ambo* could only be gained from the sanctuary, it extended



**Figure 1: Procession of the Holy Martyrs at S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna.**

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 4-5.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>9</sup> J. L. Bintliff, *The Complete Archaeology of Greece: From Hunter-Gatherers to the 20th Century A.D.* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 405.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Paul. Sil. *Descr. s. Sophiae*, 563-66. Translated by Immanuel Bekker.



out into and high above the assembly before it so that it could be surrounded by the congregation.<sup>13</sup> The *ambo* allowed both clergy and laity—and by extension, heaven and earth—to temporarily co-exist in a less segregated relationship, as preachers gave their homilies here rather than from their chair within the apse, which would have placed them at a much greater distance from their followers.<sup>14</sup>

This temporary co-existence was further encouraged by varieties of churches such as the cross-in-square, the dominant style from the Middle Byzantine period onwards. By concentrating the congregation beneath its main dome and in a central position, as in Hosias Loukas, the laity was now surrounded on all sides by powerful religious activities, images and messages.<sup>15</sup> Within an architectural style that best lent itself to the expression of a celestial hierarchy, with those most powerful and revered within the domes of the church, and those below them decreasing in importance the closer one moved to the ground, the congregation would find themselves “bodily enclosed in a grand icon” that was the church itself.<sup>16</sup>

This spatial order was hinted at even earlier in the basilica church of San Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna, with its procession of saints just above the laity, as part of the church’s redecoration after the Byzantine conquest in 540 A.D. The sequence features two rows, one on each side of the nave, with the gender of each row’s members corresponding to the gender occupying their side of the floor below them. These saints (Figure 1), carrying crowns toward the Virgin and Christ at the church’s eastern end, mimic the wine and bread (or *coronae*) of



**Figure 2: Justinian in processional mosaic in apse of San Vitale, Ravenna**

the Eucharist brought to the same end of the church by the congregants below.<sup>17</sup> In doing so, the laity “imitates the sacrifice of the martyrs,”<sup>18</sup> and looks to the holy men and

<sup>13</sup>D. L. C. Clark, “Viewing the Liturgy: A Space Syntax Study of Changing Visibility and Accessibility in the Development of the Byzantine Church in Jordan,” *World Archaeology* Vol. 39, No. 1. (2007): 101.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Bintliff, *The Complete Archaeology of Greece*, 404.

<sup>16</sup> O. Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration: Aspects of Monumental Art in Byzantium* (London: Kegan Paul, 1948), 13.

<sup>17</sup> O. von Simson, *Sacred Fortress: Byzantine Art and Statecraft in Ravenna* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 1948). 90-103.

<sup>18</sup> Clementina Rizzardi, “Il mausoleo nel mondo culturale e artistico di Galla Placidia / The Mausoleum in the cultural-artistic world of Galla Placidia,” in *Il mausoleo di Galla Placidia a Ravenna*, eds. Clementina Rizzardi and Patrizia Angiolini Martinelli, (Modena, 1996), 112.

women directly above them as the heavenly embodiment of their own spiritual devotion on Earth.<sup>19</sup> These holy individuals offered the commoners temporary entrance into the celestial to the commoners, blurring the lines of an otherwise strict cosmic hierarchy. Therefore, architecture and art illuminated the complexities of the power relations between the Church and its devoted laity.

Byzantine art and architecture also played a role in delineating the power relationship between the emperor and his subjects. An expression of the power held by the emperor in this relationship could most readily be seen in newly annexed parts of the empire, as with the church of San Vitale in Ravenna, after the city's conquest in 540. While a discussion of the symbolism of the images within Theodora and Justinian's panels in the building's apse will soon follow, the very presence of these two figures in a city they never actually visited themselves must first be explained.

The answer is found in the two figures to Justinian's left, the man explicitly labelled as Maximian, and the figure between the two, most likely Julianus Argentarius, the church's founder and benefactor (Figure 2).<sup>20</sup> While it must be made clear that plans to build San Vitale were already in the works before Ravenna was annexed by the Byzantines, it was only finished post-conquest and was consecrated by an archbishop (Maximian) appointed by the Emperor and Empress themselves. Maximian's presence in Ravenna is important here because he was, as Verhoeven states, "the one outstanding representative of Byzantium in Italy," especially in ecclesiastical matters and dogmatic controversies.<sup>21</sup>

Thus, these panels strongly identify Ravenna with Maximian's, and by association the imperial court's, political and ecclesiastical stance.<sup>22</sup> Even the plan of the church brings to mind the Church of Saints Sergios and Backhos, completed before the construction of San Vitale had even begun. The Church of San Vitale, while undeniably influenced by local traditions, oozes of a distinctly Constantinopolitan and imperial flavour and reinforce the power relationship between the subjugated, Ravenna, and the subjugator, Justinian and his recently expanded Byzantine Empire.<sup>23</sup>

Defining power over one's subjects in art was also essential in times of Byzantine decline, especially when dealing with foreign allies. This can be observed in the late eleventh and twelfth centuries leading up to the Crusaders' sack of the capital in 1204, when allies were inscribed into the Byzantine hierarchy by means of "title-diplomacy," subordinating them in a more symbolic and implicit way.<sup>24</sup> For instance, on the Holy Crown of Hungary, the Hungarian King Geza I is placed beneath the imperial

<sup>19</sup> Demus, *Byzantine Mosaic Decoration*, 48.

<sup>20</sup> M. Verhoeven, *The Early Christian Monuments of Ravenna: Transformations and Memory* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 125.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

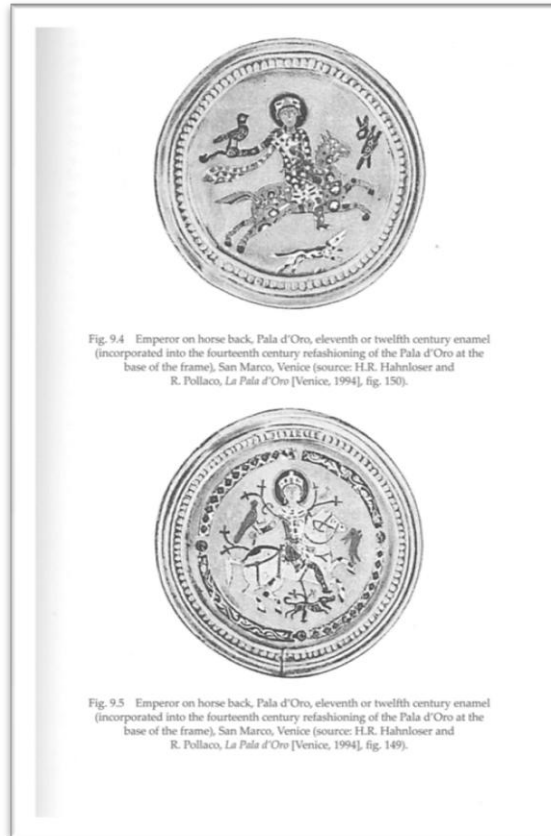
<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 129.

<sup>24</sup> H. Maguire, "'Signs and Symbols of Your Always Victorious Reign.' The Political Ideology and Meaning of Falconry in Byzantium," in *Images of the Byzantine World: Visions, Messages and Meanings: Studies Presented to Leslie Brubaker*, ed. Angeliki Lymberopoulou, (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), 138.

family in status, as he lacks the halo and costume of Emperor Michael VII and his son Constantine. So too does his pose exude an air of deference. Instead of looking straight ahead like the other figures, his gaze is directed towards the centre, to the holder of real, albeit weakening power in the physical world; towards the Byzantine Emperor.<sup>25</sup>

This statement of what Jonathan Shepard terms “soft power” is also exemplified by falconry and its corresponding imagery, as in the Pala D’Oro medallions (Figure 3).<sup>26</sup> Here, emperors are depicted on horseback, with birds of prey in their right hands.<sup>27</sup> Some contemporary writers such as Achmet in his tenth-century *Oneirocriticon* argue that these creatures symbolize the subjugated lands and rulers that allow the Byzantine Emperor to rule his empire by proxy.<sup>28</sup> For the first time, these images of obedient and trained birds of prey replaced the similarly symbolic scene of the Emperor hunting wild beasts himself. Now the Emperor had subjects to do his work for him, and required portrayals of his allies in

subordinate positions to preserve this system. This effectively highlights the use of art to represent and accompany the non-static political realities of Byzantium and the medieval world at large. Hence, art and architecture played a strong role in establishing the power



**Figure 3: Pala d’Oro Medallions with Images of Falconry**

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> J. Shepard, “Byzantium’s Overlapping Circles,” in *Proceedings of the 21<sup>st</sup> International Congress of Byzantine Studies, London, London 21-26 August 2006, Vol 1 Plenary Papers*, ed. F.K Haarer and E. Jeffreys (Aldershot and Burlington VT: Ashgate, 2006), 22.

<sup>27</sup> Maguire, “The Heavenly Court,” 137.

<sup>28</sup> Achmet, *Oneirocriticon* 285. Translated by Steven M. Oberhelman.

relations between the emperor and his subjects, even if the nature of these relations changes throughout the lifetime of the Empire.



**Figure 4: Constantine IX Monomachos and Zoe flanking Christ in a mosaic in Hagia Sophia**

III Argyros, highlights the need Byzantine emperors felt to continuously outdo one another in their contributions to the Church, and by doing so, guaranteeing their place in heaven after death.<sup>29</sup> The fact that Romanos' body was preserved on the mosaic, however, suggests a tradition of emperors, regardless of a change in face and name, constantly giving generous sums of money to the Church. This is shown by the full bag in his hands, and further emphasizes the dependence of the Church on the imperial court for financial support.<sup>30</sup>

The relationship between the emperor and the state religion was likewise exploited to assert his position within the celestial hierarchy. San Vitale's panels of Justinian and Theodora in a procession towards Christ do just this. Justinian is surrounded specifically by twelve individuals, explicitly referencing the twelve Apostles

The Byzantine hierarchy was also defined by the relationship between the imperial court and the Church, something constantly mirrored in the Empire's artistic and architectural programs. This is shown in several depictions of the court donating to and funding the Church, as seen with the mosaic of Empress Zoe and Constantine IX flanking Christ (Figure 4). The obvious erasure of the face of a previous Emperor, here Zoe's first husband, Romanos



**Figure 5: Side of Leo VI's Ivory Comb depicting Leo, Mary and Gabriel**

<sup>29</sup> R. Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and its Icons* (London: George Philip, 1985), 189.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

of Christ.<sup>31</sup> The division of these men's military and religious associations reflects the balance of power held by the Emperor.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, it is the clergy that leads the procession, perhaps showing Justinian's need to demonstrate the origin of his earthly power.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, Justinian carries the host bread of the Eucharist, strongly likening himself to Christ as the Redemptive Bread of Life, or at least to a High Priest.<sup>34</sup> Finally, the Chi-Rho emblem on the shields of the soldiers on his right reminds us of Constantine's vision and victory at the Milvian Bridge, where the very foundation of Constantinople as capital of the Empire rested on a triumphant and militant Christ.<sup>35</sup>

By commissioning works such as these, the emperor alone had the privilege of placing his portrait and ideology where that of an ordinary person could not be permitted.<sup>36</sup> By placing himself within the celestially symbolic Hagia Sophia, he situated himself in a location and relationship both physically and symbolically closer to God, exemplifying his special status within the Byzantine world and the court of heaven.<sup>37</sup>

His elite status was perpetrated too by the increasing iconographic association of emperors with angels. For instance, the ceremonial comb of Leo VI shows on one side Christ flanked by the Saints Paul and Peter, and on the other the Virgin flanked by the Archangel Gabriel and Leo himself (Figure 5). The figures on both sides of the comb are framed within domes that remind the viewer of either the Hagia Sophia or the apsidal rooms used for receptions in the Great Palace.<sup>38</sup> Perhaps this ambiguity was created consciously, to further imply the links between the earthly and heavenly courts.<sup>39</sup>

We find that the Mary shown on the comb diverges in interesting ways from her otherwise very similar depiction in the church's central apse. On the comb, the Emperor has replaced one of the archangels. Both Gabriel and Leo don the imperial robes, complete with *loroi* (embroidered scarves) and orbs, and bear staffs positioned at identical angles. Similarly, the Mary on the comb adds a single pearl to Leo's crown on her right, explicitly stating the divine approval of the Emperor's earthly rule.

<sup>31</sup> P. Hunt, "Byzantine Art as Propaganda: Justinian and Theodora at Ravenna," *Philolog*. Stanford University, 2006.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> R. Cormack, *Writing in Gold: Byzantine Society and its Icons* (London: George Philip, 1985), 193.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> W.T Woodfin, "Celestial Hierarchies and Earthly Hierarchies in the art of the Byzantine Church," in *The Byzantine World*, ed. P. Stephenson, 334-351, (London: Routledge, 2010), 305.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*





**Figure 6: Figure 6: Side of Leo VI's Ivory Comb depicting Leo, Mary and Gabriel (Photo: Museum fur Spatantike un Byzantinische Kunst, Byzantine, Constantinople)**

This contrasts with the image we are confronted with in the portrayal of Nikephoros III Botaneiates' in a 1072 frontispiece to a compilation of John Chrysostom's homilies (Figure 6). Here, the Archangel Michael and St. John Chrysostom flank the Emperor, wearing the antique tunic and *himation* (mantle). As referenced in the poem above the painting, they fulfill the roles of the Emperor's courtiers or eunuchs, mediating interactions between the Emperor and his subjects by means of their heavenly associations.<sup>40</sup>

Why then do we have two incongruent portrayals of the relationship between angels and emperors? For Byzantines, this was because the earthly imperial court, where imperial dress attributed the highest position in court hierarchy to its wearer, and the heavenly court, where imperial dress was a

marker of second rank and deference to Christ, were not completely synonymous entities.<sup>41</sup> Instead, the two realms were "interpenetrating, with each incorporating members of the other."<sup>42</sup> This assignment of a powerful position to the emperor in both

the corporeal and celestial world was instrumental in justifying the emperor's position in society. Placing himself as first-in-command in this world, and second only to God in the world above, served not only to convince his subjects but also himself of his power and the place he had secured for himself in heaven after death.<sup>43</sup>

In the eyes of the Byzantines, the wings of angels embodied their ability to travel freely between the two worlds.<sup>44</sup> By assuming these wings as seen on coins issued by John Komnenos-Doukas and Michael VII from Thessaloniki (Figure 7), the Emperors could now firmly assert that they too were a mediator between God and his believers, between heaven and earth. Hence, art and architecture clearly served to define the power relationship between the emperor and the Church.

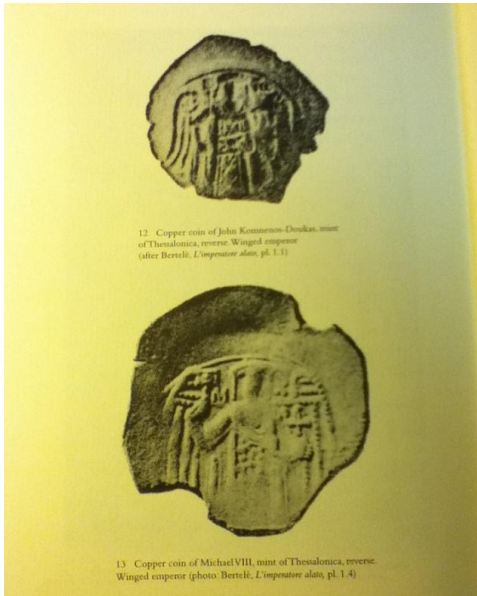
<sup>40</sup> Maguire, 249.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 256-7.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 256.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 258.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 253.



**Figure 7: Coins depicting John Komnenos-Doukas and Michael VIII as winged. (Photo: Maguire)**

In closing, art and architecture succeeds in accurately representing the power relations and hierarchy of the Byzantine Empire. The relationship between the Church and its followers in art, while at some times more segregated, separating women from men, and often the clergy from the laity, could also have its boundaries loosened, as with the clergy's use of the *ambo* and the proximity of holy men and women to the congregation on the ground. So too did the power structure existing between the emperor and his subjects find its expression in visual representations, especially in cases of indirect assertions of power throughout the Byzantine period.

This method was changed to suit the different periods of the Empire's decline and growth. Art made clear

the intimacy in the hierarchy between the emperor and the Church, through depictions of church funding, imperial processions mimicking those of a religious nature, and the images of archangels.

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# Decay and Reverence: Conceptions of Old Age in Ancient Greece and China

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GIULIETTA FIORE

Coming to terms with the inescapable process of aging is a timeless issue, evident even in ancient civilizations. The Greek conception of sad old age as a downward slope of decrepitude starkly contrasts with the systematic admiration and respect directed toward the elderly in ancient China. With the exception of Sparta, the people and *poleis* in the Greek world did not revere the elderly as intensely as the ancient Chinese. Because of the unavoidable nature of aging and its presence in everyday life, people in the ancient world contemplated this topic often, and allowed their conceptions of age to influence literature, laws, politics, and space. These conceptions of age also have deep roots in the religions and state organizations of each culture, with the basic relationship between young and old at the core of the difference in conceptions of order. As evidenced in literary, spatial, and legal spheres, the conception and treatment of the elderly in ancient Greece and China differ due to the fundamental structural differences between China's society of hierarchy and Greece's democracy.

Before examining differing conceptions of age, it is necessary to define old age and its starting point in each society. Estimates of average lifespan in pre-modern societies can be misleading due to high infant mortality. Before modern medicine, survival past childhood greatly increased chances of surviving into old age. Although the majority of the population died young, many did live into old age. Age statistics also favor men, because their lives were more likely than women's lives to be recorded on monuments or in documents.<sup>1</sup> Aristocrats were also more likely to live to an old age because of their superior diets and resources. Therefore, when speaking of conceptions of the elderly, it is mainly in reference to elderly aristocrats. Some examples of these aged men include Sophocles, who wrote *Oedipus at Colonus* at age ninety, and Euripides, who wrote the *Bacchae* at age eighty.<sup>2</sup> Old age was also defined differently in each culture. For instance, in ancient Greece, the elderly called *presbuteroi* (elders) somewhat arbitrarily fell between the ages of thirty and fifty-nine, and the *gerontes*, (literally old men) somewhere above sixty.<sup>3</sup> In ancient China, however, old age was less defined by age categories, and more defined by relationships; for example, children respected their

<sup>1</sup> Pat Thane, *Old Age in English History: Past Experiences, Present Issues* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 32.

<sup>2</sup> Thane, *Old Age in English History*, 40.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Roisman, *The Rhetoric of Manhood: Masculinity in the Attic Orators* (London, England: University of California Press, 2005), 205.

parents because of their status as an older generation, whether or not they would have been considered elderly by today's standards of advanced years.<sup>4</sup>

The specific perceptions and definitions of age in ancient Greece and China were embedded into their rituals, religions, and beliefs. Hesiod outlined the history, genealogy, and cosmological order of the Greek world in the *Theogony* and in his *Works and Days*, both written around the eighth century B.C. The relationships in Hesiod's accounts of the mythical beginnings of the world lay the foundation for a broader Greek understanding of the world.<sup>5</sup> Thus, the conception of "sorrowful old age" evident in these poems, forms the building blocks for the Greek impression of the topic.<sup>6</sup> The birthright of Old Age (*Geras*) as the son of Night (*Nyx*) and grandson of Chaos defines aging as a dark and sinister subject at its origins.<sup>7</sup> Also prominent is the underlying theme of elders dethroned by their children, which sets up this practice as an acceptable precedent.<sup>8</sup> For example, Ouranos was castrated by his son Kronos, and the younger Olympian generation won in the fight between the Olympians and the Titans.<sup>9</sup> In Hesiod's accounts of the world's mythical origins, the old gods are invariably wicked and rightfully vanquished. The Olympian gods as natural rulers were not only young; they were eternal and unable to age.<sup>10</sup> Hesiod's story of Pandora unleashing evils including "illness and age" on the world summarizes the Greek view of the ugly and sad nature of age versus the ideal state of youth.<sup>11</sup>

Just as myths and gods constructed Greek culture, ancestral worship was at the foundation of ancient Chinese religious beliefs. In the Zhou and Shang periods (1600-771 B.C.), it was customary for travelers to make sacrifices to local lords and the elderly in each state they visited.<sup>12</sup> Shang ancestor worship—which included the offering of valuable items such as meat and grain—"preserved the potency of ancestral beings."<sup>13</sup> They believed that the ancestors were anthropomorphic beings with special powers that could be extracted through a ritual process. This system of ancestor worship ensured that a person could never escape authority and that his or her status as a respected elder or parent was carried over into ancestorhood.<sup>14</sup>

Understanding the cosmological order and hierarchy evidenced in ancestor worship was also important to Confucian beliefs. Like the elderly transferring their

<sup>4</sup> Hong Lu, *China's Death Penalty: History, Law and Contemporary Practices* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 69.

<sup>5</sup> Georges Minois, *History of Old Age: From Antiquity to the Renaissance*, trans. Sarah Tenison (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 43.

<sup>6</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony*, 70-100. Translated by Dorothea Wender.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 80-100.

<sup>8</sup> Minois, "History of Old Age," 44.

<sup>9</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony*, 29. (lines 140-150)

<sup>10</sup> Minois, "History of Old Age," 44.

<sup>11</sup> Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 69-82. Translated by Dorothea Wender.

<sup>12</sup> David Keightley, *These Bones Shall Rise Again: Selected Writings on Early China* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2014), 78.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 156.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

position in life to a position of authority in death, Confucian thought asserted that all phenomena have an appointed role. Therefore, “superior” and “inferior” existed in a natural order, and those with higher abilities or experience were ranked superior.<sup>15</sup> In essence, according to ancient Chinese spiritual beliefs, just as the living naturally become dead, those who were older were naturally superior. One passage from the *Shijing*, or *The Book of Songs*, illustrates the spiritual connection between the elderly and the ancestors:

May the spirit send down excellent blessing,  
Causing extreme longevity without end.  
May children and grandchildren  
Be forever numerous.<sup>16</sup>

This excerpt demonstrates that the ancient Chinese prayed for longevity both for their familial lines and for their personal lives, wishing to survive and become a grandparent. In contrast to the Greeks, the ancient Chinese hoped for old age; this stage marked a new period in a person’s life as the keeper of legacy. Despite the clear themes that resound in these beliefs and customs, the obscure origins of the Greek myths and the constantly evolving understanding of ancestor worship in China, requires a look at other sources for evidence about the ancient conception of age.

One of the more abundant, yet questionable sources of information on ancient conceptions of old age comes from literature, namely Greek tragedies, comedies, and poetry, and Chinese classics. In general, leitmotifs in Greek tragedies included suffering, ugliness, and rejection by society. Sophocles used these leitmotifs in *Oedipus at Colonus*. Because he wrote this tragedy when he was ninety years old, Sophocles clearly demonstrated his opinion and negative experience of sad old age.<sup>17</sup> In the play, Oedipus despairs on his wretched life, declaring that “long life and sorrow is written” upon him. Even when his daughter Ismene suggests that he may still have purpose, he declares that he would have “a poor return: youth lost and age rewarded.”<sup>18</sup> Euripides also sung of the woes of age in his dramatic assertion that:

Youth is what we love. Age weights upon  
our head like a burden heavier than the rocks  
of Etna, drawing a curtain of darkness over  
our eyes...age is miserable, tainted with  
death; away with it!<sup>19</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Geoffrey MacCormack, *The Spirit of Traditional Chinese Law* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1996), 70-72.

<sup>16</sup> K. E. Brashier, *Ancestral Memory in Early China* (Cambridge: Harvard University Asia Center, 2011), 261.

<sup>17</sup> Thane, *Old Age in English History*, 32.

<sup>18</sup> Soph. OC. 1780. Translated by E.F. Watling.

<sup>19</sup> Eur. Her. 639. Translated by K. McLeish.

Comedies as well depicted the elderly in a negative light; they often appeared as caricatures in physical and mental decay. Both old men and women were stock figures in classical comedy. Men were often shown in competition with their sons, while women were either supportive matronly figures or figures of ridicule.<sup>20</sup> As an illustration, in Aristophanes' *Clouds* a son criticizes his elderly father for his "fuddy duddy, old fashioned belief in the gods."<sup>21</sup> This competition between the younger and older generations is an extension of the myths described by Hesiod and the struggle for power between the Olympians and Titans. Women were also often portrayed as physically disgusting. In *Ecclesiazusae*, or *Women in Power*, Aristophanes refers to the old women as "old crusts," "old prunes," "dirty old bags" and "vinegar dregs" among other colorful insults. A young man also asserts that "sex with [an old woman] is like having sex with death."<sup>22</sup> Taken together, these examples of comedic elderly figures demonstrate the general disrespect and competition felt toward the elderly in ancient Greece.

Poetry in ancient Greece tended to have a more bittersweet view of old age. It was less scathing and focused more on the poignancy of a lost youth that contained aesthetic and erotic power.<sup>23</sup> For example, Sappho—a female poet from the island of Lesbos who wrote around 612 BCE—had more sentimental views of aging. She implored readers to "tremble in pity for [her] state" in which "old age and wrinkles cover [her]."<sup>24</sup> The writer remembered fondly the old days of youth and lamented over her physical deterioration. She somberly resigned herself to the fact that "to be ageless is impossible" and reflected on death that "even in Hades I will love you."<sup>25</sup> Her poem "No Oblivion" demonstrated the preoccupation with heroism and remembrance in ancient Greece, adding yet another layer to considerations of age when she wrote that "someone, I tell you, will remember us."<sup>26</sup>

In contrast to the sad and ugly view of age in Greece, ancient Chinese authors viewed age as an elegant and necessary stage in life. Confucius summed up this view of age when he said, "At the end of a man's life, his words are graceful."<sup>27</sup> The *Shijing* is the oldest collection of Chinese poetry, dating from the eleventh to the seventh centuries B.C. It was memorized by the educated and compiled by Confucius, thereby ensuring the widespread understanding of its words. One excerpt reads:

Our vow is beyond death and life,  
I and you are together I always remembered.  
I will hold your hand,  
And together we grow old.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Vervoorn Aat, *Men of the Cliffs and Caves: the Development of the Chinese Eremitic Tradition to the End of the Han Dynasty* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1990), 10.

<sup>21</sup> Aristoph. Cl. 1054. Translated by M. Hadas.

<sup>22</sup> Aristoph. Eccl. 617; 940-50. Translated by K. McLeish.

<sup>23</sup> Aat, "Men of the Cliffs," 12.

<sup>24</sup> Sappho, fr. 24a, 58. Translated by Willis Barnstone.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., fr. 21, 121.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., fr. 147.

<sup>27</sup> Keightley, *These Bones Shall Rise Again*, 30.

<sup>28</sup> *Shijing* 31, Translated by Arthur Waley.

There is nothing shameful about growing old in this passage. On the contrary, old age appears as a period of prosperity and respect to which honorable men and women could look forward. Romance in old age was still possible and encouraged in ancient China as is suggested in this passage. The Chinese expressed no outward concern for physical deterioration as in Greece. Another Chinese account of old age comes from the historian Sima Qian's *History of the Han Dynasty*. He recounts the story of the Four Greybeards, four elderly men who had withdrawn to the Chang Mountains in the Warring States era and lived as hermits. These men were wise, poor, humble, and retreated to the mountains in order to "keep their virtue intact."<sup>29</sup> This motif of the hermit was a common theme in Chinese literature. In contrast to the Greek character of the old man in mental decay, the Chinese emphasized the old hermit as the "Wise Rustic" and the "Paragon of Extraordinary Virtue."<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, one of the Five Confucian Classics, the *Da Dai liji*, or *Elder Dai's Book of Rites*, explains the necessity of the young learning and memorizing classical texts as to fulfill their duty to "instruct and admonish as an elder."<sup>31</sup> The elderly thus had an active role in preserving and passing down the familial and state legacy. While an analysis of literary works from ancient Greece and China is useful in examining the roles of the elderly as seen through the eyes of contemporary authors—since each genre and each author depicted old age in a different manner—it is misleading to take their accounts wholly at face value.

Ancient Chinese and Greek laws shed more concrete light on the treatment of the elderly. While both cultures obliged children to take care of the elderly, the punishment for neglecting to fulfill this duty was more severe in the Chinese case. This is largely because the reverence for the elderly was written into the legal and political systems throughout ancient Chinese history. Most Chinese laws follow the Confucian tenets regarding the natural order of the world, thus resulting in a hierarchy in the law regarding age. For instance, a senior who committed an offense against a junior was punished less severely than a junior who had committed the same offense.<sup>32</sup> Another major doctrine in ancient China was filial piety, or *xiao*. Filial piety required respectful care of elderly family members. For example, children were not permitted to take long journeys while their parents were still alive; they were also responsible for their parents' physical and mental well-being. Unfilial behavior included disrespecting an elderly family member in any way.<sup>33</sup> Although filial piety was important throughout Ancient Chinese society, it became especially important later in Chinese history during the Tang Period with the inauguration of the Tang Code. The new law established death as the penalty for murdering or beating the elderly, failure to support the elderly, or even

<sup>29</sup> Aat, *Men of the Cliffs and Caves*, 30.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>31</sup> Brashier, *Ancestral Memory in Early China*, 251.

<sup>32</sup> MacCormack, *The Spirit of Traditional Chinese Law*, 70.

<sup>33</sup> Hong Lu, *China's Death Penalty: History, Law and Contemporary Practices* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 30.

lodging accusations against the elderly.<sup>34</sup> The elderly also had economic and political privileges. A socio-economic ranking system for commoners and nobles that structurally favored the elderly began as a twenty rank system created by Shang Yang during the Qin Dynasty (221 to 206 B.C.) and continued to be used throughout the Han Period (206 B.C. to 220 C.E.). As commoners advanced in rank (up to a level of eight), they were granted better seats and food at banquets, could become exempt from labor service, and were punished less severely for certain crimes.<sup>35</sup> This system favored the elderly because a longer lifespan afforded a man more opportunities for advancement.

In contrast, Greek laws regarding the elderly were based on the idea that a man deserved respect because of his deeds instead of his age, and that an old man's position in society was always precarious. The care of elderly, or *geroboskia*, was a sacred duty. Because ancient Greece was a democratic state, citizens were required to take care of other citizens. As a result of this obligation, free meals were served to the old citizens in the Athenian Prytaneum.<sup>36</sup> Vitruvius also mentioned the House of Croesus in Sardis, which functioned as a home for the elderly.<sup>37</sup> Those who did not uphold their obligation to the elderly members of the community could have been thrown in prison, fined, or deprived of citizens' rights.<sup>38</sup> Solon's decree in the sixth century B.C. specified that neglecting parents could lead to disenfranchisement.<sup>39</sup> The fact that Athenian laws about the elderly were repeatedly renewed suggests that abuse of the elderly must have been a problem requiring constant awareness.

In a culture centered around heroes and great deeds, the elderly did not have a defined place because they fell short of masculine and communal ideas essential to the Greek *polis*.<sup>40</sup> Along with women, children, and the disabled, the elderly were exempt from military service in Athens, thus depriving them of the role of citizen as warrior.<sup>41</sup> However, the elderly in Greek society still had an important political presence. For example, in the *Iliad*, Nestor, King of Pylos, was an old man in a world of young heroes, but he held a powerful position on the Council of Elders due to his heroic deeds.<sup>42</sup> The oldest were also always the first to speak in general assemblies, and because the elderly were mostly aristocrats, they still held some power.<sup>43</sup> However, the elderly did not have a very active presence and were often outwardly snubbed and called "foolish" during political proceedings.<sup>44</sup> They were used as passive rhetorical devices to appeal to the

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>35</sup> Sadao Nishijima, "The Economic and Social History of Former Han," in *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 1: the Ch'in and Han Empires*, ed. Denis Twitchett and Michael Loewe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 50.

<sup>36</sup> Minois, *History of Old Age*, 45.

<sup>37</sup> Vitr. 8.10. Translated by Morris Hicky Morgan.

<sup>38</sup> Thane, *Old Age in English History*, 20.

<sup>39</sup> Minois, *History of Old Age*, 62.

<sup>40</sup> Roisman, *The Rhetoric of Manhood*, 206.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 206.

<sup>42</sup> Minois, *History of Old Age*, 45.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Minois, *History of Old Age*, 46.

Athenian sense of justice, social responsibility, and piety.<sup>45</sup> In summation, the ancient Greeks privileged heroic deeds over age. The elderly had a restricted and passive political role, admired only if they had completed heroic deeds.

This pattern of elderly disrespect in the Greek world does not seem to have extended to Sparta. According to Herodotus, the Spartan custom required that “young men yield the road to their elders and get up from their seats when old men approach.”<sup>46</sup> They had a *gerousia* (council of elders) made up of the oldest Spartans that governed politics and foreign policy. The gerontocracy in Sparta only grew into the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. as the role of the old in Athens continued to dwindle.<sup>47</sup> However, the Spartan model did not differ as greatly from the Greek system as it outwardly seems. Old men in Sparta were probably rare since most would have died in battle at a younger age. Therefore, instead of being honored for age alone as in the Chinese system, the elderly Spartans were indeed being recognized for deeds over age like in Athens.

In order to understand how these different conceptions of old age and the elderly shown in literature, religion, and law evolved, it is essential to examine how the state organizations of ancient Greece and China were formed as a result of unique histories and circumstances. The nature of each state organization helped dictate the interactions and relationships between generations. The bureaucratic and hierarchical ruling system of ancient China developed first in the Western Zhou state as a complex and extensive administrative apparatus useful in establishing control in order to expand over a large and diverse area. This system was defined by binaries. For example, the distinction between the “hou” and the “bo” in bronze inscriptions from the Western Zhou period help us understand how political thought and organization in the Western Zhou was informed by the binary conception of east and west. Rulers of regional states in the east were often referred to as “hou,” or “Ruler,” while heads of aristocratic lineages in the west (Wei River valley) were often referred to as “bo”, or “Elder.”<sup>48</sup> These titles demonstrate the hierarchical structure of the Western Zhou bureaucracy. These bronze inscriptions also describe an expansive network of staff involved in running the bureaucratic administration, which were appointed and ranked hierarchically. For example, the three Supervisors in the Bureau of Ministry had a higher rank, whereas clerical roles were ranked lower. In addition, there were still differentiations of rank within clerical roles, such as scribes and secretaries.<sup>49</sup> The conception of the elderly continues along this vein of binaries and hierarchies. Thus the hierarchical structure of the Chinese bureaucracy not only reflects how the ancient Chinese structured and categorized the political sphere, but also how they structured and categorized the broader social sphere. There was a clear

<sup>45</sup> Roisman, *The Rhetoric of Manhood*, 209.

<sup>46</sup> Hdt. 2.80. Translated by George Rawlinson.

<sup>47</sup> Minois, *History of Old Age*, 64.

<sup>48</sup> E.H. Robinson, “The Distinction Between State and Government,” *The Geography Compass* vol 7.8 (2013): 556.

<sup>49</sup> Feng Li, *Bureaucracy and the State in Early China: Governing the Western Zhou* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 6.



distinction between old and young, and the elderly were worthy of more respect than the younger generations.

The Greek *polis* emerged from a very different political and social climate. The *polis* as a politically independent city-state with an explicit concept of citizenship first appeared in the Greek Archaic Period (800 to 480 B.C.). In simplest terms, the *polis* was a social group defined by geography.<sup>50</sup> In the absence of a centrally organized leader, the state was organized around common ideologies. Unlike the Chinese bureaucracy, the *polis* emphasized communal activities. While Greeks had political terms such as *archai* (office holders), *hoi politeuomenoi* (politically active), and *ekklesia* (assembly), they did not have a structured or hierarchical administrative system.<sup>51</sup> The *polis* was especially unique in its emphasis on participation. *Demokratia*, translated literally as “the power” (*kratos*) “of the people” (*demos*), had the meaning for the ancient Greeks of participatory democracy, not representative democracy. Citizenship was conceived of as both a communitarian and legal-political responsibility.<sup>52</sup> In order to be an accepted member of the community, a Greek citizen had to perform his participatory political duties as well. Obligation, tradition, and belief in the community fueled the Greek political system. In their dealings with old age, the Greeks saw it as their obligation to take care of the elderly by providing them with homes and food; however, their elders were not hierarchically superior to any other citizen. In fact, the old were seen as lesser members of society because they could no longer contribute to the community as rigorously as in youth. While there was clearly a binary between sweet, beautiful, and heroic youth (*neotas*), and ugly and tragic old age (*geras*), there was no middle ground or third age, and there was no hierarchy.<sup>53</sup>

Views of old age and the elderly are clearly shown in the myths, religious practices, literature, and laws of ancient Greece and China, and are reflected in the state organizations of each society. While the old were revered and ranked highly in ancient China due only to their age, the elderly were admired in ancient Greece for their deeds. In a world of heroes, the decrepit elderly occupied the precarious position in Athens of requiring the support of the community but no longer contributing to the community. Because contribution and participation was the basis of citizenship in the *polis*, the elderly could no longer operate fully in society and thus became objects of ridicule and a reminder of every man’s sad end. From the despairing elderly characters in Greek tragedy to the stock figures in comedy and decaying lovers in poetry, the Greek literary portrayal of old age was nothing less than abysmal. Whereas the Greek *polis* emphasized collective participation and equality, the Chinese system operated under the notion of hierarchy. According to laws of Confucianism, it was only natural that the Ancient Chinese viewed age as a binary and thus a hierarchy. The ancient Greeks saw the same binary without the

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 45.

<sup>51</sup> Minois, *History of Old Age*, 48.

<sup>52</sup> B. Strauss, “The Classical Greek Polis and Its Government,” in *A Companion to Ancient Greek Government*, ed Hans Beck (Malden, Mass.: Wiley Blackwell, 2013), 23.

<sup>53</sup> Chris Gilleard, “Old Age in Ancient Greece: Narratives of Desire, Narratives of Disgust,” *Journal of Ageing Studies* vol. 21, no.1 (2007): 1.

superiority of one element over the other. The connection between the elderly, their past, and their soon eternal presence in the pantheon of ancestors made them figures of wisdom and paragons of virtue. Ancestor worship was, and continues to be, one of the most important tenets of Chinese religious beliefs, thus largely contributing to the respected nature of the elderly throughout ancient and Modern China.

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B A C K

M A T T E R

# The Greek Container: Challenging Received Ideas about Ancient Greek Culture

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JACQUELINE HAMPSHIRE

Greek vases and containers are among the most studied ancient Greek artifacts. They are numerous, diverse, and were adapted to an ever changing society. The adaptability of these particular artifacts makes them highly informative. As their civilization developed, declined, and rose again, the ancient Greeks demonstrated a capacity for innovation by continuing to produce containers to suit their needs and represent their values. Apart from displaying some quintessential works, the following exhibition will attempt to challenge pre-conceived ideas and stereotypes about Greek history. Did the Minoans really vanish without a trace? How dark where the Dark Ages? How do the vases of the geometric period tell a different story?

The vase, or container, provided an ideal medium for artistic representation. It was a common object, it provided a smooth surface and, integrally, it was present in the lives of all people; everyone had a need to store items. With the beginning of a trade industry, transportation of goods became increasingly important. In the home, containers were used for many purposes, from holding perfumes to storing grains and olives. Smaller cups and plates were used for social events and gatherings.<sup>1</sup> The container found its way into all social classes and areas of life and, as a result, has benefitted the modern scholar with its ability to reveal Greek history and culture.

Ancient Greek culture was constantly changing and developing. By transforming everyday objects into art, the Greeks found a way to communicate their history, their communal values and ideals. In this exhibition, viewers will be guided through Greek civilization, from the early Minoan and Mycenaean people through the Homeric ages to the height of Athens. Viewers will experience the ever-changing society through the different shapes, functions, and decorations of its vases and containers.

## **Stirrup jar with octopus**

ca. 1200–1100 B.C., (53.11.6)

(Photo: *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*)



<sup>1</sup> Kathryn Topper, *The imagery of the Athenian symposium*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1

The Mycenaean and Minoan people have provided modern viewers and historians with some of the earliest known Mediterranean art. Stirrup jars (made from terracotta and used for transporting wine and oil) were designed to be easy to carry and hard to spill. This particular jar illustrates exquisite artistry, depicting an octopus, water creatures, and ornamental patterns. The focus on the sea might lead one to mistake this jar for a Minoan artifact, but the work is Mycenaean. Although the Minoan people are thought of today as ‘sea people,’—because they relied heavily on the surrounding waters for the success of their culture—this jar reveals that the Mycenaeans also saw the sea as essential to their society. This stirrup jar suggests the influence of the Minoan culture on the later Mycenaeans, thus challenging the notion that the Minoans disappeared without trace. While historians have only vague explanations for why the Minoans disappeared, artifacts like this allow us to see their influence on later societies. Pieces such as this jar remind us that no culture can be understood in unitary terms; the Mycenaean society is more complex than many stereotypes indicate, while the Minoans have had a greater afterlife than imagined.

**Pyxis (box with lid)**

mid–8th century B.C., (48.11.5a,b)

(Photo: *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*)

This bizarrely shaped box is decorated in the geometric-style, prominent during the Greek Dark Ages and famous for its geometric shapes, straight lines, and repetitive patterns. In this particular example, the lines accentuate the strange shape as they are most complex at the widest point of the container. This Pyxis box demonstrates how an object’s form may lead to our understanding of the society that created it. It is often assumed that during the Dark Ages society was put on hold and that the loss of literacy meant the loss of a civilized people. This artifact illustrates the contrary. New container shapes were constantly invented to suit the needs of a community that was continuously innovating and becoming more sophisticated.<sup>2</sup> The Greeks valued these advancements and adapted their material world to historic and social changes. Objects like this box point to a collective desire to evolve and a refusal to be satisfied with the status quo. While Dark Age society may remain partly a mystery to modern viewers, objects like this reveal a society unsatisfied with the old and constantly striving for new.



<sup>2</sup> John Boardman, *Greek art*, (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 36.

**Kylix:** eye-cup (drinking cup)  
ca. 530 B.C., (09.221.39)

(Photo: *The Metropolitan Museum of Art*)

This kylix cup is made of terracotta and designed for drinking alcohol. Specifically, the kylix cup was used at symposiums, party-like gathering of Greek aristocrats. Sharing similarities with the later French salon or English coffee house, the Greek symposium was an event where the elite could drink and converse together on politics and current affairs. This artifact remains a symbol of symposium culture and the importance of these social gatherings in Greek society. The two eyes that decorate the cup allow the cup to



function as a mask when held to the face, investing the cup with the ability to project an alternate reality, just like the alcohol it would have contained. The sense of alternate reality conveyed by the masked and alcohol allowed elites to remove themselves

from the general population in these private settings. At the same time, since symposiums were events where politics and social affairs were discussed with members beyond the family, they could be considered public affairs. The kylix, therefore, demonstrates the fusion of two distinct aspects of Greek society. The decoration and function of this cup thus challenges the stereotype that Ancient Greek society rarely mixed the public and private realms.<sup>3</sup>

**Attic red-figure psykter**

late 6th c. B.C., (20.00.78)

(Photo: *State Hermitage Museum*)

<sup>3</sup> Anton Powell, *Greek World*, (London, GBR: Routledge, 1997), 435.

The patriarchal society of ancient Greece denied women a place outside of the *oikos*, household. Because of the absence of women in public life, it is often assumed that women depicted in Greek art were prostitutes. The following vase provides an alternative



vision. It illustrates four women in a symposium scene, typically a male dominated gathering. The four women have assumed the position, location, and activities of elite men, while no men are present.<sup>4</sup> In Greek art, women at symposiums were *hetaira*, courtesans. Yet, these women are not in the presence of men, raising questions whether these women meant to represent *heteira*. Some critics suggest that these women are a source of comic warning, while others argue that they are Spartan women from a less reserved and gendered society.<sup>5</sup> Whether or not these women were Spartan, this vase does not provide evidence that they were *hetaira*. It is more likely that this vase served as a warning to society of the dangers of gender ambiguity and of allowing women the same rights as men. Here is a chance to re-think Greek conventions of female representation and question what was behind depictions of women in Greek art.

<sup>4</sup> Topper, *The imagery of the Athenian symposium*, 119.

<sup>5</sup> Topper, *The imagery of the Athenian symposium*, 120-121.



# Classicists in Conversation: Interview Series

Professor Rose MacLean  
University of California Santa Barbara

Interview by Brett Clapperton

**BC:** How did you get into Classics, or why did you choose this field?

**BC:** Starting with the hard one.

**RM:** It's a boring story because I started taking Latin in seventh grade because my mom told me that it was like figuring out a crossword puzzle and I really liked crossword puzzles. As soon as I started taking Latin in seventh, eighth grade I knew; and I don't think I even knew what a Classics professor was, but I sort of knew that I wanted to be a Classics professor and keep doing that. And so I just did. I started taking Greek in high school, and I was more interested in the literature. I remember the first time I read the *Aeneid* in Latin it was one of the most mind-blowing experiences I had had as a young student. Then when I went to college, I became more interested in the history part of things because I was inspired by one of my history professors.

**BC:** Which history professor?

**RM:** Her name is Roberta Stuart. She's at Dartmouth College and she works on slavery – ancient slavery. Her most recent book is on slavery in the plays of Plautus.

**BC:** Oh cool. Is there anyone else that you would say has really motivated your research or that you feel influenced by?

**RM:** Yes, I mean she was my main advisor, but all my teachers are Dartmouth. Then when I went to graduate school I wanted to work on freed slaves because I had been inspired by Roberta; and so I went to Princeton and I wanted to work with Brent Shaw, who has done a lot of important work on freed slaves but also Roman slavery in general and now is more into late antiquity. He is an amazing historian and a wonderful man. I wanted to go work with him. And he has obviously shaped my career up to this point. I was quite young.

**BC:** Any memories of graduate school?

**RM:** Any happy memories of graduate school [laughing]? Memories of graduate school...I remember when I started teaching. It was a big change for me because I went

to graduate school and I majored in Classics because I loved the topic and I wanted to study the topic, I wanted to learn more and write and do all the research part. But I didn't realize that there was going to be this teaching part of it as well. So when I started teaching as a graduate student, I really realized that the job includes both the research part and also interacting with students, being in a classroom, working through problems together, and I hadn't realized how fun that would be.

**BC:** So you enjoy it, that aspect?

**RM:** Yes, yeah!

**BC:** Because we have a lot of undergraduates here who are thinking about graduate school. Any advice for them?

**RM:** The advice I would give is the advice I was given, which is that if you can imagine yourself doing anything else besides going to graduate school and trying to be an academic, you should do that other thing. The reason is that it's very difficult. It's very difficult to get through graduate school. It's hard not to start making money really until you're twenty eight, twenty nine, thirty years old. And shaping your life around that way and then getting out of graduate school and having a PhD in a very difficult job market, trying to find a job that is going to sustain you. And normally you can't choose where you live after graduate school because you have to go where the job is. On the other hand, I graduated with my PhD and now I live in like the most beautiful place I have ever lived in southern California. There's like three beaches on campus.

**BC:** Wow! That's very different from here.

**RM:** It's very different, and I have incredible colleagues and so I got really lucky. So I would say at the same time, if you can't imagine yourself doing anything else, and that's what you really want, that's what you're really passionate about, then you should just go for it. Because I got lucky and it worked out and I have everything that I want now. That would be my advice. The other thing is there are a lot of things you can do with a PhD. So you can go and you can pursue a PhD, and that in itself can be gratifying. It's not like your life ends and it starts again when you leave graduate school. You continue to be a person and you continue to have experiences and learn new things. Even if I hadn't gotten so lucky, I wouldn't have felt like it was wasted or anything.

**BC:** Yes, that's good to hear, that you can still be a person.

**RM:** You know, I have friends that got married and had kids in graduate school, who traveled all over the place and you can get money from your graduate program to go to Turkey for a summer, or Greece.

**BC:** Any big research projects coming up?

**RM:** Well I'm just publishing my book—hopefully publish my book. You basically finish your dissertation and then you revise it and change it and it goes in different directions. And then you put your first book out, and that's the book that gets you tenure. I have a little side project I'm doing on the *Great Gatsby* and the author Petronius.

**BC:** That's really cool.

**RM:** So I've taught it first, and that's how I got interested in it, but a lot of people don't know that Fitzgerald was going to call the *Great Gatsby* *Trimalchio in West Egg*. It was almost named that, and then there's a mention of Trimalchio in the text when all the lights go off in Gatsby's house. Nick says something about his career as Trimalchio is over, but even beyond that, there's a lot of really interesting connections that you can draw. I was teaching a Latin literature class when I did it like for teaching purposes, but then I realized that it's a very interesting relationship between these two texts and how each one kind of represents – well how Petronius represents Neronian Rome and then how Fitzgerald obviously represents the Roaring Twenties and the changing morality of both periods.

**BC:** That's fascinating. We have a modern media class here, but I don't know if they've ever touched on that, so that's super interesting.

**RM:** It's fun because most people have read it, most people have read *Gatsby* and no one has read Petronius, like when you teach a big class of undergraduates. So they get really excited because they read it in high school and it's some people's favorite book, and then there's the movie. Working on something like that, but the freed men thing is my main thing.

**BC:** In the next five to ten years, do you have any major research plans?

**RM:** After I publish my book? I haven't really gotten there yet. I mean, I have some ideas. I'm really interested in not just how freed men communicated through inscriptions but how the medium itself shapes other ways of communicating, interacts with other ways of communicating. Maybe something like ancient communications and trying to learn some of the theories that people apply to the nature of communication in the media, and then taking that and bringing it back to antiquity. I might do something like that.

**BC:** Thank you so much!

Professor Eric Nelson  
Pacific Lutheran University

Interview by Jemma Israelson

**JJ:** When did you know you wanted to be a classicist?

**EN:** Well, that was actually kind of late. I started off as many students do, wanting to be something different than what I eventually became. I was a piano performance major when I entered university, and I wanted to be an architect, but I took originally a religion class in which I wanted to get into the discussion of topics. The background of one side of my family was very evangelical, so these kinds of issues were present for me. I wanted to be a little arguer and discuss with my professors, but they always kept saying: “Well in the Greek...it says...” and I thought after a semester or two of this, “Damn it –

**JJ:** I’m gonna learn Greek! [Laughing]

**EN:** “... I’m gonna learn Greek!” I’ve always been fascinated in the genealogy of ideas. Where our ideas come from and the evidences for them and the kind of power the past exercises over us, particularly the pasts that we don’t know. When I began to take Greek, all of a sudden a lot of this opened up to me, and I became really interested in the Hellenistic and early empire because my interests were primarily in the history of Christianity—*at first*. And now I am firmly ensconced in the pagan world. But, that’s how I eventually got into that.

**JJ:** It was in your undergrad when you discovered this?

**EN:** Yes, so it was kind of an identity crisis –

**JJ:** *Identity crisis!*

**EN:** You know, during the junior year or so, but that really changed, it really opened me up as a person and it changed who I was.

**JJ:** What’s the best thing about being a classicist for you? Having all that background...

**EN:** [Laughing] Well, it’s a double-edged sword. You find yourself constantly in positions where you wish to correct the kind of claims made around you, even sometimes by colleagues. So that is not always the most comfortable thing. On the other hand, you’re very glad that you have that knowledge. One of the best things about being a classicist is that – this is probably true for everybody that gets really into a discipline –

you get to talk to all these other like-minded people and find out all of this crazy information, this crazy cool information about things that you really wonder about.

**JJ:** Everybody has their very specific niche.

**EN:** I think Classics is particularly interesting because it is a part of so many things and it still has relevance.

**EN:** And it still has relevance! Particularly if you believe that the past is something worth really investigating for our present.

**JJ:** What do you think its relevance is today?

**EN:** Well, I think there's so much relevance really. If you think about it, a lot of current disciplinary fascinations, whether it's gender studies, whether it's sexuality, whether it's urban planning, whether it's linguistics, philosophy. So many of these things have roots in the classical tradition, *but*, that tradition is being re-examined. While there is much of what we might think we know, all it takes is some enterprising student who comes at something in a different fashion and helps us to re-see the past – and then it has to be done. You really have a chance to be a revolutionary because you can affect the foundations upon which a lot of claims and ideas are made. At least that is my fantasy!

**JJ:** I agree! What are some of your best and/or worst memories of graduate school?

**EN:** Oh gosh, I think the best memories of graduate school are going into graduate school and discovering that there were whole bunch of people like you. That is just one of the things that were terrific because all of a sudden you're surrounded by people who you don't bore talking about all of this arcane stuff.

**JJ:** People still don't know what Classics is.

**EN:** Part of what's good with being a classicist though is that there's a certain amount of cultural caché. Latin, Greek, the ancient world, at the least in the United States there's a certain amount of anti-intellectualism. So on the one hand, you may be seen as irrelevant. But they're suspicious that somehow we must be very special in a way, or you might know something that they don't. There's a certain amount of caché, I found. That is kind of nice to have.

**JJ:** What would your overall advice be for undergraduate students and for anyone thinking about career paths in Classics or in history?

**EN:** Well first you have to be – with the way that the job market is and everything else – you have to be stone cold sober about the kind of career and prospects that there are because you have to be just about completely drunk or stoned to go on, in that practical

vision. You really have to take a look at the possibilities. We had a position open in my university, a three-year visitor position. We had a hundred and sixty applications from all over the world and there's one person that gets it. That's very dispiriting, so going into academia is like acting: you try to dissuade talented people from doing it, and they just end up going ahead and doing it anyway. If you make it, it's one of the most terrific lives ever. You get to deal with young people all the time, new ideas, interesting people, fascinating colleagues, eccentrics of all kinds. You always get to do something that is of value.

**JJ:** So why then did you choose to go into academia?

**EN:** I couldn't do anything else. Well, I *can* do many things. The other thing is that in a graduate program, all the way through, all of this is like a marathon. It doesn't matter how you're doing in any particular moment; it matters that you keep going and you finish. I've known so many people who are so crazy talented, but they just couldn't keep going.

**JJ:** It's all of persistence.

**EN:** It's persistence and a lot of the succeeding is a lot talent. You have to have talent, but it's discipline and just being more stubborn than hell. Saying "I'm not going to quit this thing." My wife has a picture of this long road going into the distance, up a hill, a long, long hill, and on the road there's this little turtle looking up the road. And my wife always said that's what she felt like about half way through the dissertation. Looking up and thinking "*How* much farther do I have to go?" But the thing is the turtle reaches the top of the hill eventually and it keeps going. I'm not an inspirational speaker! [Laughing]

**JJ:** That being said, what are a few of your proudest, professional accomplishments?

**EN:** Well, there's a couple. One so far is making a good argument that I have found an excerpt of a previously lost history and an author. I think that's the moment at which I realized that I think I knew where this piece came from and I knew who wrote it, it was electric. I wouldn't trade that for anything.

**JJ:** It must be interesting using texts that haven't been widely translated by a lot of different people. It's an area of discovery.

**EN:** I think going back to the original texts holds the most satisfaction and promise. I think from our discussion today it's obvious that I need to go back and take a look at some of these texts because sometimes they're technical. So it seems to you a common word, but really within this other very esoteric or specialized discourse it has a specific meaning that you don't know.

**JJ:** Who has influenced your research, either academically or otherwise?

**EN:** Name-wise, I think first of all Larry Bliquez. He was my dissertation adviser but very, very influential on my teaching and my research and approach to the discipline. That would probably be one of the major ones. On a larger scale, I would say, probably Philip Vanderan, Vivian Nutton, Heinrich Von Staden, and John Scarborough. As far as teaching me to write, my wife did that. She's a terrific writer, and she's a philosopher, writing arguments are philosophers' forte.

**JJ:** We just heard about it now, but could you briefly outline your current research project?

**EN:** My current research project is to investigate the formation of the early Hippocratic corpus, and by early I mean third century BCE to second century AD. From that research, to develop a theory of corpus formation that helps to explain not only the Hippocratic corpus but the way other literary corpora formed.

**JJ:** Is there anything specific that you would like to achieve in your career?

**EN:** Well, I would like to get this book out. I would be thrilled – I think one always would – if a couple of terms and concepts that I –

**JJ:** To coin something.

**EN:** Yes, to coin. That would be cool. In our world, that's pretty cool. If you have something that people adopt, something like synthetic author. I wouldn't want to try to do that at the expense of having a sound idea, but having a sound idea that gets adopted and talked about by other people is pretty special.

**JJ:** Awesome. Thank you *so* much for taking the time.

**EN:** Well thank *you*! It's fun to be able to talk about it.

**Professor Josiah Ober**  
Stanford University

Interview by Brett Clapperton

**BC:** The first question is really about the keynote address. I unfortunately did not get to see most of it because I were all in the back, but that must have gone great, I assume it all went really well?

**JO:** I certainly enjoyed giving it, it was based on a book that is going to be coming out with Princeton University Press in April. It was on a set of ideas I have been thinking about for a long time, drawing on some work I have been doing and some of my colleagues at Stanford have been doing. Basically we can now show that the Greek world did have sustained economic growth for several hundred years in a highly decentralized world with city states. It's often been said that the only way you could really have sustained growth is by central organisation, and so the question is how did they do it? And so it is fun trying to work out the answer to that.

**BC:** So is that your main area of focus for your research, or where would you see it going in the next few years?

**JO:** That project is going to be done, I think, I will have said pretty much all I have to say about on the question of economic growth and its relationship to politics and to certain kinds of political institutions, political culture. What I'm trying to do next is write a book with the tentative title of "Democracy before Liberalism" about how democracy worked in classical antiquity, but not as a work of ancient history, but rather as a work of political philosophy. It's meant to be a general theory of what democracy looks like if you just think about it as citizen self-governance instead of thinking about it in terms of human rights. I think today we tend to bring together the idea of democracy as self-governance with an idea of democracy as supporting human rights.

**BC:** Yes, exactly, we have got the modern connotations attached to the word.

**JO:** Yes, it's very reasonable that we think about that way, obviously rights are hugely important, but I think that because we tend to create a hybrid of democracy plus rights, it's harder for us to think about what democracy without rights looks like. The danger, I think, is that we begin to think that democracy is a problem, rights is what we want, and maybe we could do without the democracy if we had some other way to guarantee that we keep our rights, which I tend to think is a dangerous conception basically because I think that rights won't be robustly supported unless there is some enforcement mechanism. I think ultimately the enforcement mechanism has got to be collective action



[...] by many people who act to protect rights. I think the only way to create that large scale collective action without strange forms ideology and propaganda is through a form of democracy. I think that the idea that democracy is really a necessary foundation for a robust and sustainable system of rights requires that we get clear about what democracy is before we import rights into the story.

**BC:** Wow, that's really interesting! So you're working on that book right now, or that's a future research project?

**JO:** I'm working on that now—in fact I was supposed to have done that all last year. I had a leave from Stanford, a sabbatical leave, and I had announced that was going to be the work I was going to work on. It was just one of those things. I had started a year ago last summer looking forward to my leave and I thought, 'well maybe I just have this little project' - I had promised to do a little small book on Greek History - and I just thought, 'I'll just take a few weeks off and throw that together, small little book over the summer' I had a few ideas here and there. Then when I started getting into it, I realized it was a much bigger book. So here it is fourteen months later and the book is done, but it was meant to be done in about two months and it took fourteen. But I have been making some progress on the other, thinking through the basic ideas and doing some background reading and I'm hoping I'll be able to make some progress.

**BC:** So what originally got you into Classics?

**JO:** Well it was really a mistake.

**BC:** I find that is how it happens with most people.

**JO:** I think that's right. Back in the day I suppose people were raised in families in which knowledge of Greek and Latin was just assumed, but that's not very common anymore. So when I started college—I had not been a very dedicated high school student, many other things interested me than proper academics—I sort of went to college as a second thought. It seems odd now, everybody spends all this time—

**BC:** Planning and thinking about it since they were 12! [Laughing]

**JO:** Exactly! But you know I was raised in Minneapolis, and I kept good enough grades and so on to get into University of Minnesota. At the last minute I decided to sign up for some classes and my first term there was pretty random, I didn't do very much. But in my second term, I took a class in Greek history and it was just one of those things, like falling in love.

**BC:** Or the light bulb goes on.

**JO:** Yeah, the light bulb goes on. The guy who ran it was Thomas Kelly, was a really severe sort of guy. You have to imagine the 1970s and you know I had hair down to the middle of my chest and all the apparatus like that and then here is this guy with his crew cut and dressed all severely and doesn't take any gruff from any students. Then I thought, how interesting, he really is serious! And he delivered these lectures, not fancy lectures, he didn't go in for a lot of bells and whistle. It's just his clear passion for it. Just as if this is the most important thing in the world and if you don't get it then here is the door because this really is the most interesting subject you could possibly study. So I just got hooked; it really was just as he was presenting it. I went into his office at the end of the term and went 'Professor Kelly, I've decided I just would like to be like you, a professor of Greek history' and he sort of looked me up and down, all scruffy and that, and said 'That's not going to happen!' [laughing] You know, he wasn't one of these friendly, Mr. Chips kinds of professors, 'no, just forget it,' he said, 'you're not willing to put the work in' and so I asked, 'Well, just in case I was, what would I have to do next?' 'You have to start learning Greek.' So I signed up for Greek and went from there. It was as I said, very much by accident, I think, as it is with many of us, just a matter of, without expecting it, falling in love with the whole way of thinking, way of doing history, way of the past, way of politics, economics, philosophy. All the things come together nicely studying Classics. So that's what got me into it.

**BC:** Well that's great! And clearly you've made a great career of it and it ended well!

**JO:** Well, I was pleased that I proved him wrong [laughing]. In fact, he retired some years ago and I was asked to give the lecture in honour of his career and his retirement. Of course I told the story, which he took very well indeed.

**BC:** It's a great story, but I think we'll have to end there as I think they are getting set up. Thank you.

# Professor Kurt Raaflaub

Brown University

Interview by Clara Nencu

**CN:** Alright, so, the first question is why do you do classics?

**KR:** Why do I do classics? There's a very simple answer to that: I went to a classical high school and I loved the ancient languages and literatures and I loved history. So I decided to become a teacher. I thought not necessarily of university teaching, I thought of high school teaching, which in my country, Switzerland, was a perfectly normal thing to do. You got a PhD as a good end of your academic training and then you went to teach high school. So when it came to make decisions about my studies at university, I studied history and the ancient languages and literatures. Then I decided to write a PhD, and I combined my two main interests. So I became an ancient historian. That is a very simple answer to why I do what I do, but you want to know more than that.

Of course, once you get into a career, then you like what you do, then you continue to do it and you don't think necessarily whether what you do has immense social importance. But I confess to having thought occasionally— when I was student — whether there were perhaps areas of study which would be more meaningful or contribute more to benefit humanity. I thought of perhaps being a doctor and go into Africa and working there. In my mother's family there was a very strong streak of philanthropy in terms of service. But I decided that this is what I love to do and I am good at doing it. Actually, educating young people to make something meaningful out of their lives is an important contribution to society as well. And so I stuck with it. Why classics? That leads to a broader question, which you were probably going to ask me anyway. Why do we do classics today and what is the meaning of classics today? I think there are various answers one can give but if a parent asked me while I was teaching, "Why should my daughter or my son study classics and what can they do with it?" By that they often meant, "Why would they waste great opportunities to do something that would become more profitable in life?" My answer always was, "Your daughter or your son can do with classics whatever they want because they get an education of their mind. They learn something about historical developments, about humanity, about values, and they learn it in a field that is not easy. They learn to think, they learn to make arguments, and they learn to write. All these things are extremely useful for whatever you are going to do in life." To some extent a classics education is not a waste but it is a basic foundation for whatever you want to do later. In addition, in my view, the ancients in their literature remain so important to us, and perhaps more important than some other peoples' was, because the Greeks have a very uncanny tendency to pursue essential problems or dilemmas of human life and society. They follow these problems down deeper and deeper until they isolate what the real problem is, then they try to find answers to these. And that I think is why a poem like the *Iliad* remains fascinating to generation after generation or

tragedy to tragedy because they are more than literature. They are exploration of the human condition in a very essential way, and that I think makes Greek and, through the Greek, also Roman literature important and eternally important in the sense that every generation – every new generation – discovers itself in these dilemmas, in these problems, in these literary forms that the Greeks have left to us. That makes it valuable as an educational tool for every society and every generation. So that was a long answer to your question.

**CN:** You've certainly answered a number of my questions; thank you. What is the best thing about being a classicist?

**KR:** I have to distinguish – what is the best thing about being a teacher or professor? Whatever you teach and whatever you do research in, you are able to do something that you love to do, that you find interesting and relevant. I compare that with many, many professional occupations where people do things and it gives them a living, but they don't do it with passion or they just do it because that's their job. We have the privilege that we can do something we find relevant, and we can specialize in it and we can teach it, so that's a very, very important thing.

I often had students – at Brown we have sort of an open door policy that means when we are in our office the door is open, students are encouraged to come at office hours, but they also sometimes just come in. Anyway, often students came and said, "We see you working all the time!" and that doesn't seem to be very attractive about a job that you work all the time. So I answered, "Yes, if you want to be successful in an academic career, you have to be ready to work hard." Especially at the beginning because you need to establish yourself and so on. But, where do you find the profession where 90% to 95% of what you do, you love to do. That is the attraction of being an academic, a classicist. If you are capable and able and have the opportunity to work in a field that you really like and are interested in, then to be a professor – teaching students, doing research – in your chosen field is an immense pleasure and privilege.

**CN:** On this note, what would be your overall line of advice for undergraduate students who are still trying to find a career for themselves, specifically in the classics and history in general?

**KR:** It has become more difficult than it used to be when I was a student. I never even wondered whether I would find job or be able to pursue a career. We just took it for granted, and it was essentially so, because at the time universities expanded. There were more jobs, new jobs and so on. That's no longer the case. It's harder, the career path is more difficult because you have to move – usually you have to move from one year jobs to one year jobs to perhaps a two year job until you have enough experience and perhaps get into a tenure track job and so on. But, the good people, the dedicated, devoted people still make it and have their career. So my advice would be, if this is what you love to do and this is what you feel passionate about, then go for it, do the best you can, and it will

work out. It will not be easy, but it will work out. Do what you love to do, whatever you do, it doesn't have to be classics. Do it with passion and commitment, and do it well, and then you will succeed. So that's my advice.

**CN:** I think that's sound advice, for any aspiring professor, for anyone thinking about graduate school.

**KR:** I talked yesterday with an undergraduate who said, "You know, my mother says what you are saying, but my friends are saying: 'You have to get a job and earn a lot of money'." I say, "Money doesn't make you happy." If your priority in life is to drive a Ferrari and have glamorous girlfriends, then classics is not, or academics, is not the way you want to go. But if you want to have a satisfied, happy life and feel that you are doing something meaningful, and you will still earn enough to have a good life, even though not a luxurious or an abundant life. That's, I think, a simple fact. You have to choose what you want. What is a priority for you? If making money is a priority, then go somewhere else, but if it's being happy and having a good life and an interesting life, then that's a good option. That's my response to that.

**CN:** What are some of your proudest professional accomplishments?

**KR:** Because academic life is a life with quite a lot of freedom –you are constrained by teaching needs of the university and the department, and so there are lots of constraints – essentially you are free in part of your life [research] to do things that you like to do. So, you can make choices about what you work on and what you do research on. I think if I look back I would say I have been able in a number of ways to identify issues or periods or historical problems that were under-researched, and to provide impulses to get those more into the mainstream.

One example would be, it was mentioned today by Griet<sup>6</sup> in her lecture, the struggle of the orders, early Roman history, social conflicts. At the time when I started out as an assistant professor at Brown, this was a very under-researched field. It was dominated by legal historians who looked at everything from the perspective of legal regulations. So I organized a series of workshops and published a volume and that volume had a serious impact in stimulating people to do research on that area. By now, it has become much better known and better understood. Or thinking of this global antiquities network here, ten years ago, by now fifteen years ago, I took a program at Brown that was simply called "Ancient Studies," the purpose of which was to bring together people who do work on earlier societies and to make them know each other, create a virtual space where we could talk with each other, where we perhaps could collaborate with each other. We organized workshops on what we were doing so that other people would know about it and this developed into a program where we had an undergraduate major. We did seminars every year – a seminar on an interesting topic that we pursued as many ancient societies as we

<sup>6</sup>Griet Vankeerberghen, Professor of History at McGill University.

could. For example, the issue of *War and Peace*: how did early societies react to this common challenge of every society, and what were the different answers? We organized a seminar in which students chose a society, so early China, or Japan, or Greece, or let's say the Inca or the Aztecs in early America. We would work on establishing a common catalogue of questions, and the students would then seek for answers in their society, and give presentations in the second half of the seminar trying to answer these questions. While in the first part of the seminar we would go a little deeper with Greece and Rome, which I knew best and we have most evidence and so on, so we could have some detailed discussions there. And then eventually I developed it even further so that by the end of the semester we had a conference where we got in the experts who would then talk on the issues with which we had been grappling throughout the whole semester. For the students that was a wonderful experience. I edited those volumes, published them. I did global antiquity before its name.

**CN:** Were these annual seminars?

**KR:** They were every year and we had different topics. So one year it was *War and Peace*, the most recent I did was *Thinking, Recording, and Writing History* in the ancient world. Another one was *Society and Aliens* – foreigners – how did societies see themselves in the world and how did they see their relationship to other societies? One year it was on *Geography and Ethnography* in ancient societies and so on. We picked a topic that was promising every year, a different topic. I have published the whole series of these volumes on these things that I think at the time nobody did. So again I was giving an impulse for something new, a new direction, which by now has become much more fashionable. That was in 2000 before the Stanford people did their comparison of empires and of course before this network here came up, or before the Center for the Ancient World in New York at New York University was created, which does essentially what I did at Brown on a much smaller scale.

If you ask me what some of my proudest accomplishments are, I would say, in terms of scholarship, giving new impulses that were then picked up by all those that followed, by others, and became mainstream. Another thing of which I am very proud is that I have always been very interested in helping younger scholars, not only students, but also young scholars. I have a whole cohort of young scholars who are not my doctorate students, but in some ways or other I have helped, to assess their dissertation for publication, I wrote reviews for when they were applying for jobs and things like that. So I have a whole, large cohort of younger scholars whom I know, with whom I interact, who are friends by now and whose career I was able to influence in a positive way, which is not unique to me, but I always felt this was a particularly important aspect of my own career. It has something to do with my passion for teaching. Not only teaching students, but also coaching younger scholars and so on.

**CN:** So now that we have covered the past, let's move forward. What are your research goals in the coming five, ten years? Is there anything specific you would like to achieve in your career?

**KR:** The last twenty-five years – you're asking excellent questions by the way, you're very good. In the last twenty-five years of my career, I was always involved in what I call academic leadership, of one way or another, which took a lot of time. I was able to write articles, I have tons of articles and chapters and books and so on. I edited, for the reasons I explained to you, edited a whole lot of volumes, but I was never able really after my second book project, which is now a long time ago, to pursue major research projects of my own. I just didn't have the coherent amount of time you need to do this kind of thing. So my retirement now has given me the opportunity to do this, and one of the main reasons why I wanted to retire was to have time to finally do my major projects.

I have two that are most urgent for me right now. I'm editing a Landmark series. I don't know whether you know the Landmark series? It's a series of user friendly translations of ancient historical authors, like Thucydides, Herodotus. I'm doing one of the works of Julius Caesar, and it is user friendly because it is printed in a larger font; it has space in the margins where you can scribble something; it has the footnotes right at the bottom of the page, not somewhere in the back. It has maps every few pages, not just two maps and a thousand names in the back, and so on. It's really something that has become very popular: students love it, teachers love it. It's the brain child of an engineer, a hobby ancient historian, and I am doing one with all the works of Julius Caesar, which I hope will bring Caesar back into the mainstream of public interest, not essentially as a military historian, but as an interested cultural figure. So that's one thing, and that will be done by next year.

And the other project is on early Greek political thinking. That is, how did political thinking emerge among the Greeks, and how is that related to other forms of political thinking in the ancient world. First looking in the orbit where the Greeks moved, I mean to the ancient near East and the eastern Mediterranean, but I will have a final chapter in which I compare early Greek political thinking with early Chinese political thinking because one can do very interesting things actually and comparison will help to make it clear and give more profile to the specifics of each society's developments. These are my main projects that I have right now, apart from interests in the social dimensions of ancient war. I have developed an interest in war and the home front in antiquity, which is again an under researched topic. So, I'm not going to run out of projects; I might run out of time at some point.

**CN:** Well that's certainly an influential project, and I think it's going to be of interest to many. But I also wanted to know: who were your influences in terms of academic research or otherwise?

**KR:** Largely, my own doctoral advisor, his name is Christian Meier, who is a very, very interesting and path-breaking German ancient historian, who had a very strong interest in

theory as well as the practice of history. So he has certainly influenced me very importantly. Other than that I would find it difficult to identify individuals. You learn from many people, it's a constant process of learning.

**CN:** Yes.

**KR:** My classics teachers at the university in Switzerland where I studied or were... It is a miracle I became a classicist because the way they did classics was so boring and such a turn-off and so socially irrelevant because they were only interested in restoring the texts. They didn't think about the larger dimension, about what does the text mean to them and to us. That was not an issue. I told you the anecdote before, you know where my professor said, "Well if that's a problem to you then you are not in the right place." So they just took it for granted, and they were not interested in promoting their field or in thinking about what is important about it – they just did it. At the time, you still had captive audiences, your students still needed to take your courses because they wanted to be teachers in Latin and Greek, which was still commonly taught in high school at the time. They just could do what they wanted to do, and they didn't have to think about justifications and relevance and things like that.

**CN:** Since you brought up the subject of high school and your early career, what are some of your best and worst memories of graduate school? After you decided you wanted to go on with classics, what do you remember?

**KR:** Well, I think, you know this is no longer relevant because academic life has changed, and it was always different in this country. In Europe, at the time, universities were extremely hierarchical. The professors were up there, the students were down here. In Switzerland it was better than in Germany, but when I started my academic career in Germany, Berlin, after the first year, the chairmen of the department – the history department – said to me, "Oh, by the way, if you continue to talk so much with the students, you might never get to be a professor." He meant, "Don't waste your time with the students. Do your research and that will make your career." That was just totally opposite to what I was about because I was about being a teacher, and I could anytime have returned to teaching high schools and it would have been fine. I was happy doing it. I missed doing research – if you teach twenty five hours per week you can't do much research. I had written a dissertation, I had loved my research, and so I was looking for a job or career in which I could combine the two and that's what university teaching is about. I always felt I was a teacher, and in German, a professor is a high school teacher. High school in Germany means university, okay? So a *Hochschullehrer*, a high school teacher, is a professor at the university.

**CN:** Ah, okay.



**KR:** But despite that, teaching didn't matter for them. What mattered was your research, that was what made your career. To some extent, this is true everywhere, but it's much less the case in this country, particularly not at the university where I taught for thirty five years – Brown University – where teaching is taken very seriously. You cannot get a tenured position unless you are at least a decent, if not a really good and committed teacher. And that's what corresponded to my values, and that's why I felt very comfortable there.

So, if you asked for worst experiences, I would say the confrontation with a university system in which these values were not established. They were not taken seriously. The best is that you always found very interesting friends and even among the professors, always found interesting people. Some of my very best friends still, not from graduate school so much, are from when I was an assistant professor. My colleagues at the University of Berlin were just absolutely wonderful people with whom I am still very, very close friends. So it's what you make of life and not what others want to make you. That's the important thing. Ok?

**CN:** Okay. So let's end it on that note. Thank you very much.

**KR:** You are most welcome.

# Steps and Waters

JEMMA ELLIOTT-ISRAELSON

## MOTOR BOATS



This photograph was taken in Venice on the Rialto Bridge. The area used to be home to the largest market in Venice in the high renaissance, with the Fondaco dei Tedeschi on the right side. Much of the original architecture of the surrounding buildings remain intact.

\* All photographs were taken on 35mm film

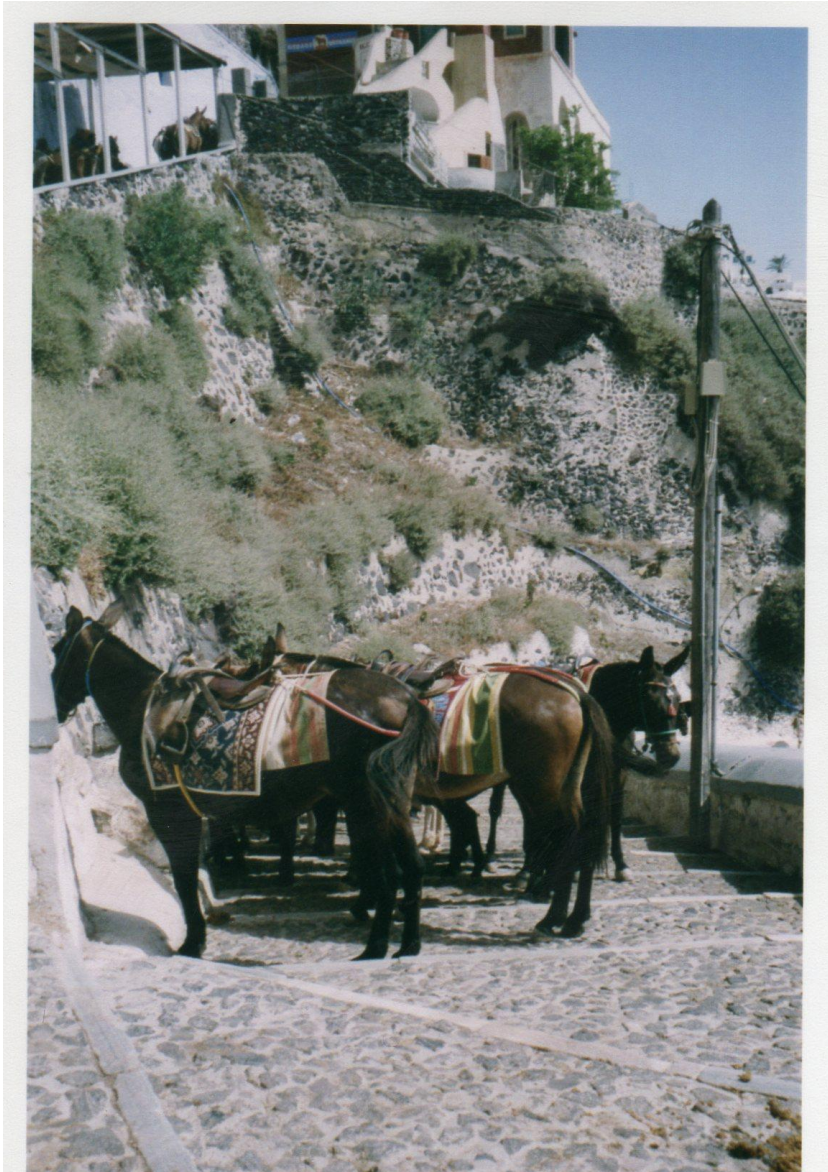
# MEDITERRANEAN



This is the island of Thera, just off of Santorini. The island is home to a volcano which erupted in around 1500 BCE resulting in the plethora of islands now found in the Aegean and Mediterranean seas.



# MULES



Donkeys are the traditional transport mechanism on many Greek islands, including Santorini, where this was taken. For 10 euro, tourists can be escorted on these sturdy steeds down to the port and back up again, getting flavour of traditional Greek island life.