

IMPACT OF EMPIRE (ROMAN EMPIRE, 200 B.C. – A.D. 476)

THE IMPACT OF IMPERIAL ROME ON RELIGIONS, RITUAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIFTH WORKSHOP
OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK
IMPACT OF EMPIRE
(ROMAN EMPIRE, 200 B.C. — A.D. 476)
MÜNSTER, JUNE 30 — JULY 4, 2004

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*To the memory of Han Gieben, our good friend,
former publisher of the series
Impact of Empire*

THE IMPACT OF IMPERIAL ROME ON
RELIGIONS, RITUALS AND RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE ROMAN
EMPIRE

Fifth workshop of the international network Impact of Empire
June 30 – July 4, 2004, at Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster,
Germany

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PREFACE

This volume presents the proceedings of the fifth workshop of the international thematic network 'Impact of Empire', which concentrates on the history of the Roman Empire, c. 200 B.C. - A.D. 476, and, under the chairmanship of Lukas de Blois (University of Nijmegen), brings together ancient historians, archaeologists, classicists and specialists on Roman law from some 28 European and North American universities. The proceedings of the first four workshops, held at Leiden, June 28-July 1, 2000, Nottingham, July 4-7, 2001, Rome, March 20-23, 2002, and Leiden, June 25-28, 2003, have been published in this series as *Administration, Prosopography and Appointment Policies in the Roman Empire* (Gieben, Amsterdam 2001), *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire* (Gieben, Amsterdam 2002), *The Representation and Perception of Roman imperial power* (Gieben, Amsterdam 2003), and *Roman Rule and Civic Life: Local and Regional Perspectives* (Gieben, Amsterdam 2004). The fifth workshop, on the Impact of Imperial Rome on Religions, Ritual and Religious Life in the Roman Empire, was held at Münster on June 30-July 4, 2004. A series of further annual workshops has been planned.

The fifth workshop of the network was funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft Gemeinschaft (German Research Foundation) and the Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster.

Lukas de Blois (from the University of Nijmegen), Peter Funke and Johannes Hahn (both from the University of Münster) acted as organisers for the workshop and wish to thank the staff of the Seminar für Alte Geschichte, University of Münster for their assistance, especially Matthias Haake and Christian Ronning (now University of Munich). David Lambert (Oxford) kindly corrected the English of some of the contributions in this volume.

The editors,
Münster, Germany, March 2006.

RÖMISCHE HERRSCHAFT UND RELIGION – ASPEKTE UND FRAGESTELLUNGEN

JOHANNES HAHN

Die Eroberung des Imperium Romanum erfolgte mit Waffen, und die Präsenz römischer Soldaten blieb das markanteste Zeichen römischer Herrschaft in den Provinzen des Reiches. Der Durchsetzung und Behauptung römischer Macht dienten, natürlich, weitere Instrumente: Provinzverwaltung, Steuererhebung, römische Rechtsprechung und das Lateinische als Verwaltungssprache kamen bereits unmittelbar nach der Eroberung zum Tragen und wurden auch langfristig nach zentralstaatlichen Vorstellungen Roms in den Provinzen des Reiches etabliert. Eine differenzierte und nachhaltige Urbanisierungs- und Bürgerrechtspolitik (nebst anderen Mechanismen) zielte, teils unmittelbar mit der territorialen Inbesitznahme einsetzend, auf eine Durchdringung des eroberten Raumes mit römischen Strukturen und Wertvorstellungen und bewirkte langfristig eine bemerkenswerte Integration des gewaltigen Untertanengebietes in das römische politische und gesellschaftliche System.

Die verschiedenen Aspekte, Mechanismen und Wirkungen dieses weitreichenden historischen Prozesses sind Schlüsselprobleme der Geschichtswissenschaft – und Gegenstände der bisherigen Workshops zum ‘Impact of Empire’. Doch welche Rolle spielt die Religion für die Durchsetzung der römischen Herrschaft oder hinsichtlich ihrer Präsenz in den verschiedenen Räumen des Imperium? Diese Frage wird – und das ist bemerkenswert – kaum einmal in einem Zug mit den vorgenannten Themenfeldern gestellt. Und das regelmäßig zuerst genannte Stichwort, der römische Kaiserkult, verweist auf ein Phänomen des Prinzipats, nach Abschluß der großen Eroberungen, das zudem in seiner Entwicklung wesentlich von Initiativen der Beherrschten, weniger aber dem aktiven Gestaltungswillen Roms bestimmt wurde.

Sollte somit ein Bereich, der von den Anfängen Roms an aufs engste mit dem Selbstverständnis des römischen Staates verwoben war, also jahrhundertlang jegliche entscheidenden Akte des staatlichen Lebens – und so auch das Ritual des Krieges – in solch augenfälliger Weise dominierte, bei der Beherrschung des Reiches seine Bedeutung im Grunde verloren haben? Diese Annahme ist nicht nur deshalb, weil das Feld der Religion sich in der antiken Welt, anders als heute, nicht aus dem des Staates, der Gesellschaft

u.a. herauslösen läßt, a priori bereits wenig einleuchtend, ja käme einem fundamentalen modernistischen Mißverständnis gleich. Tatsächlich lassen sich, selbst wenn dies in den Quellen selten thematisiert wird, auch im Zuge der römischen Herrschaftsausübung in den eroberten Gebieten und im provinziellen Leben regelmäßig offizielle sakrale Akte, mithin die Präsenz römischer Staatsreligion feststellen, und dies an herausgehobener Stelle im öffentlichen Raum.

Einem römischem Kommandeur oder einem Provinzstatthalter oblagen als Repräsentanten Roms und Inhaber von *imperium* und *augurium* die gleichen sakralen Pflichten bei der Durchführung seines Amtes wie hohen stadtrömischen Amtsträgern. *Haruspices* befanden sich aus diesem Grunde in seiner Entourage oder im Militärlager, ein *pullarius* umsorgte tagtäglich die für die Durchführung der vorgeschriebenen sakralen Riten notwendige Schar heiliger Hühner, und dies in jeder Provinz fernab Roms.¹ Und auch die Pflege der römischen Staatskulte in *coloniae* und *municipia* im Untertanengebiet, mithin wichtigen Zentren des politischen, gesellschaftlichen und wirtschaftlichen Lebens der Provinzen (wie zuvor auch Italiens) wurde nicht allein im Kreis der städtischen Bürgerschaft vollzogen, sondern war, ebenso wie die repräsentativen Sakralbauten dieser Städte, zugleich auch für die umwohnende einheimische Bevölkerung sichtbar und in ihrer religiösen wie politischen Aussage wahrnehmbar, wenn nicht sogar in ihrer Semantik weitgehend verständlich.² Mediatoren römischer Religion und damit verbundener Ordnungsvorstellungen waren im Untertanengebiet so erkennbar präsent, und ihre Zahl nahm allenthalben stetig zu.

Und dennoch: Weder erzwang Rom in der späten Republik und der Kaiserzeit bei der Unterwerfung neuer Territorien noch länger die Herausgabe der Staatsgötter der Gegner oder bemächtigte sich ihrer mittels des Rituals der *evocatio* wie zu Zeiten der Eroberung Mittelitaliens,³ noch be-

¹ CIL 14, 2523 = ILS 2662 = LegioXVApoll 128 (aus Tusculum) nennt als Dedikanten des Grabsteines eines Centurio, Primuspilus und späteren Lagerpräfekten der Legio XX Victrix einen *pullarius*. Der Stein selbst enthält neben bildlichen Darstellungen von Feldzeichen und Auszeichnungen auch die eines geöffneten Käfigs mit pickenden Hühnern.

² Ein bemerkenswertes Beispiel solcher Ausstrahlung einer römischen Stadt bietet J. Scheid, 'Sanctuaires et territoire dans la colonia Augusta Treverorum', in: J.-L. Brunaux (ed.), *Les sanctuaires celtiques et leurs rapports avec le monde méditerranéen* (Paris 1991), 42-57.

³ Zu einer möglicherweise allerdings noch im Jahr 75 v.Chr. gelobten, auf einer fragmentarischen Inschrift (AE 1977, 816) angedeuteten *evocatio* vor der Stadt von Isaura Vetus siehe A.S. Hall, 'New Light on the Capture of Isaura Vetus by P. Servilius Vatia', in: *Akten des 6. Intern. Kongresses für griechische und lateinische Epigraphik*. Vestigia 17 (München 1973), 568-571.

strafte es nach seinen Siegen die Götter seiner unterlegenen Feinde durch Zerstörung ihrer Tempel und tabuisierte ihre heiligen Stätten dauerhaft durch Streuen von Salz o.a., wie dies etwa verbreitete Praxis im Alten Orient gewesen war.⁴ Es kann nicht die Rede davon sein, daß das Imperium Romanum eine Religionspolitik verfolgt habe, die der Provinzialbevölkerung die Verehrung der kapitolinischen oder anderer römischer Götter aufgezwungen oder, jenseits der städtischen Gründungen nach römischem Recht, auch nur nahegelegt hätte. Daß die Herrschaft Roms, die Existenz des Imperium Romanum, enorme Wirkungen auf das religiöse Leben in gesamten Mittelmeerraum und in den Provinzen zeitigte,⁵ muß nicht eigens betont werden und wird im vorliegenden Band vielfältig dokumentiert – doch erst das Aufkommen des Kaiserkultes gibt einen politisch beabsichtigten und dann auch nachhaltig praktizierten Einsatz von Religion als Mittel der Herrschaft Roms über die provinziale Bevölkerung zu erkennen.

Will man die spezifische Bedeutung von Religion im Kontext der Herrschaft Roms über sein Imperium ins Auge fassen, wird man sich zunächst der grundlegenden Funktion von Religion in der Antike versichern müssen. Im 2. Jh. n.Chr. formulierte der Grammatiker Festus in seiner auf einem umfangreichen Werk aus augusteischer Zeit beruhenden Schrift *De verborum significatione* die bemerkenswerte Definition “religiös (*religiosus*) zu sein bedeutet nicht einfach die Heiligkeit der Götter mit großem Respekt zu beehren, sondern auch dienstfertig (*officiosus*) gegenüber Menschen zu sein.”⁶ Religion beschränkt sich somit nicht auf das rechte Verhalten gegenüber den Göttern, sondern impliziert zugleich ein gesellschaftliches wie politisches Wohlverhalten, dient mithin *in praxi* der Bestätigung der überkommenen

⁴ Siehe hierzu W. Mayer, ‘Die Zerstörung des Jerusalemer Tempels 587 v.Chr. im Kontext der Praxis von Heiligtumszerstörungen im antiken Vorderen Orient’, in: J. Hahn (ed.), *Zerstörungen des Jerusalemer Tempels. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament* 147 (Tübingen 2002), 1-22. Zu Umständen, Intention und Bedeutung der Zerstörung des Jerusalemer Tempels durch die Römer 70 n.Chr. siehe insgesamt die Beiträge dieses Bandes.

⁵ In diesem Zusammenhang sind die Arbeiten des Forschungsprogramms ‘Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion: Globalisierungs- und Regionalisierungsprozesse in der antiken Religionsgeschichte’ unter Leitung von H. Cancik und J. Rüpke hervorzuheben; siehe dies. (eds.), *Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion* (Tübingen 1997), sowie H. Cancik – K. Hitzl (eds.), *Die Praxis der Herrscherverehrung in Rom und seinen Provinzen* (Tübingen 2003). H. Cancik und J. Rüpke haben auch eine Monographienreihe ‘Religion der Römischen Provinzen’ inauguriert; siehe zuletzt W. Spickermann, *Germania Superior. Religionsgeschichte des römischen Germanien I* (Tübingen 2003).

⁶ Fest. p. 348: *religiosus est non modo deorum sanctitatem magni aestimans, sed etiam officiosus adversus homines.*

Ordnung. Allerdings bietet Festus – und ebenso wenig ein anderer antiker Autor – nicht eine Definition von Religion im engeren Sinne, sondern umschreibt vielmehr nur ein Verhalten. Dies spiegelt einerseits das bekannte ‘pragmatische’, nicht aber glaubensorientierte antike Religionsverständnis, unterstreicht andererseits aber auch den grundlegend *kommunikativen* Charakter antiker Religion. Diese vermittelt ihrer Natur nach zwischen verschiedenen Sphären, bewirkt sprech- und handlungsorientiert den Ausgleich zwischen unterschiedlichen Welten, erlaubt es dem einfachen Menschen, in einen Dialog mit absoluter, sonst unerreichbarer Autorität zu treten und ungeachtet dieses Abstandes einen Interessenausgleich anzustreben und mit den geeigneten, hierfür vorgesehenen kommunikativen Mitteln zu erwirken.⁷

Es ist offensichtlich, daß dieses Verständnis die entscheidende Grundlage für die Entwicklung und sich schnell verbreitende Praxis des Kaiserkultes bildete, indem hier der Kaiser – unabhängig von der genauen Natur und Reichweite seiner Göttlichkeit (die sich vorzustellen oder gemäß der eigenen religiösen Traditionen zu verstehen jedem einzelnen Provinzialen überlassen bleiben konnte) – in ein allort verfügbares Kommunikationssystem eingebettet wurde, das vor allem den Untertanen einen aktiven Zugang zur ‘Person’ und der Wirkmacht des Herrschers gestattete. Als Faktor der Etablierung einer intensiven, gleichermaßen persönlichen wie abstrahierten Beziehung zwischen Herrscher und Bevölkerung erwies sich der Kaiserkult – wie jedes funktionierende kommunikative System – als eminent flexibel: beispielsweise in der Einbeziehung zunächst einzelner Augustae, schließlich der Verehrung der *domus divina* als ganzer. Die historische Ausgestaltungskraft nach innen – etwa in der Einbeziehung oder Akzentuierung neuer Elemente wie des Solarkultes – und nach außen – so die zunehmende Dominanz im Erscheinungsbild und Kultleben der Städte – vermittelte eine Stabilisierung des monarchischen Systems und der römischen Herrschaft insgesamt. Die Adaptionfähigkeit unter den Bedingungen politischen, gesellschaftlichen und religiösen Wandels eröffnete schließlich den Weg zur Sakralisierung des Herrschertums in der Spätantike.

Doch verkörperte der Kaiserkult noch in einer weiteren Hinsicht ein erstrangiges Medium der Übertragung römischer gesellschaftlicher und politischer Ordnungsvorstellungen auf den provinzialen Raum und bediente sich

⁷ Eine Problematisierung religiösen Handelns als eines kommunikativen Geschehens im Sinne von symbolischer Kommunikation bietet J. Rüpke, ‘Römische Religion und ‘Reichsreligion’: Begriffsgeschichtliche und methodische Bemerkungen’, in: H. Cancik – J. Rüpke (eds.), *Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion* (Tübingen 1997), 3-23, hier 13ff.

hierbei nicht weniger der kommunikativen Dimension von Religion in antiken Gesellschaften. Die Existenz von Kaiserpriestertümern als Quelle höchsten Prestiges strukturierte das Hierarchiegefüge der lokalen Gesellschaften und die religiösen wie politischen Selbstdarstellungsmöglichkeiten neu. Als weithin sichtbare Bühne für den Loyalitätsbeweis lokaler Aristokraten gegenüber Rom und Augustus eröffnete sich im Kaiserkult ohnehin ein privilegiertes Feld für die Kommunikation zwischen Herrscher und provinziellen Eliten – nicht selten gefolgt von soziopolitischer Mobilität ins Zentrum des Reiches. Kommunikation, und sei es auch im Ritual der religiösen Praxis, und die Inszenierung wechselseitiger Beziehungen im Feld der gesellschaftlicher und politischer Ordnungsstiftung verpflichteten Religion verkörperten mithin einen entscheidenden Aspekt römischer Herrschaft über das Imperium.

Doch auch lokale Kulte und ihre Priestertümer konnten unter den gewandelten machtpolitischen Bedingungen eine sichtbare Aufwertung erfahren. Der unverkennbare Bedeutungsverlust politischer Ämter in vielen Städten im Kontext der neuen provinziellen Machtverhältnisse einerseits, die deutlich beschränkten Möglichkeiten des Wettbewerbes der Städte untereinander andererseits ließ städtischen Heiligtümern mit überregionaler Ausstrahlung oder aber auch dezidiert lokalen und deshalb privilegiert identitätsstiftenden Kulturen und ihren Priesterschaften ein erhöhtes Ansehen zuwachsen. Nicht zufällig erfuhr das stolz nach außen vertretene religiöse Profil etwa in den Städten Kleinasiens in der hohen Kaiserzeit eine markante Schärfung und Hervorhebung. Auch in diesen Fällen ist das kommunikative Potential der betreffenden Kulte unverkennbar von erheblicher Bedeutung für diese Entwicklung. Lokale Autorität definierte und legitimierte sich unter solchen Bedingungen nicht allein nach traditionellen Vorstellungen: Städtische Religion gestattete, gerade im Medium von Prozessionen, Festspielen und Banketten, auch die Abbildung des Wandels und der Neuformierung gesellschaftlicher Verhältnisse. Und selbst die demonstrative Einbeziehung von Vertretern der imperialen Ordnung, eines römischen Amtsträgers oder gar des Herrschers selbst, war möglich. Der Dialog mit den Sphären des Übermächtigen ließ sich in städtischen Kulturen und Mysterien mithin sogar in mehrfacher Weise und miteinander verknüpft in Szene setzen.

Die Frage nach dem 'Impact of Empire' im Feld der Religion beschränkt sich somit keineswegs auf das Phänomen des Kaiserkultes, wenn dieser auch besondere Aufmerksamkeit beanspruchen darf, oder auf die Rezeption bzw. Wirkungen römischer Kulte in den verschiedenen Provin-

zen.⁸ Dabei ist die starke Aufmerksamkeit, die der Kaiserkult in der Forschung erfährt⁹ (so auch in einer ganzen Reihe von Beiträgen dieses Bandes), nicht nur angesichts des archäologischen, epigraphischen und numismatischen Materialreichtums, sondern gleichermaßen aufgrund der bislang nur teilweise ausgeleuchteten Vielfalt der Ausdrucks- und Adaptionsformen in den Provinzen und Städten des Reiches wohl begründet. Hierdurch darf jedoch nicht der Blick darauf verstellt werden, daß, wie bereits angedeutet, wesentliche religiöse Entwicklungen und Innovationen unter den Bedingungen des Imperium Romanum sich jenseits der staatlich privilegierten Kultausübung vollzogen und weit überwiegend ohne direkte Kontrolle oder Steuerung durch römische Institutionen vonstatten gingen – diese aber sehr wohl zu spiegeln, ja sogar neue, zusätzliche Formen der Verständigung mit ihnen auszugestalten vermochten.¹⁰

Nun ist die Geschichte des römischen Imperium von Beginn an gleichermaßen auch eine Geschichte des Importes oder der Verbreitung fremder Kulte auf stadtrömischem und italischem Boden, verweist mithin auf die tiefgreifenden Wechselwirkungen, denen mit der römischen Expansion in den gesamten Mittelmeerraum und darüber hinaus der Weg gebahnt wurde. Die Ausbreitung zahlloser, vor allem östlicher Kulte über vormalige politische und kulturelle Grenzen hinweg, und dies gerade auch in die Kernregion und das politische Zentrum des Reiches, ist als die bemerkenswerteste religionsgeschichtliche Folge des Imperium Romanum

⁸ Dies ist die leitende (wenn auch nicht ausschließliche) Fragestellung von M. Beard, J. North und S. Price, *Religions of Rome I: A History* (Cambridge 1998), 313ff. in ihrem Kapitel 'Roman Religion and Roman Empire'.

⁹ Ich verweise hier nur auf die wichtigsten jüngeren monographischen Arbeiten von M. Clauss, *Kaiser und Gott. Herrscherkult im römischen Reich* (München 1999); I. Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford 2002); B. Burrell, *Neokoroi. Greek Cities and Roman Emperors*. Cincinnati Classical Studies, n.s. 9 (Leiden 2004) sowie den aktuellen Forschungsüberblick von P. Herz, 'Caesar and God: Recent Publications on Roman Imperial Cult', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 18 (2005), 638-648. Zu einem Abschluß gelangt ist nun auch der monumentale Überblick von D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West. Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire*. 3 Bände (in 7 Teilbänden) (Leiden 1987-2005), mit der Publikation der wichtigen Indices als Bd. III.4.

¹⁰ Allerdings wuchs Statthaltern im Laufe der Kaiserzeit – und mit den zunehmenden wirtschaftlichen bzw. finanzpolitischen Problemen vieler Poleis – eine Aufsichtsrolle gegenüber städtischen Kulturen zu. Diese galt aber zuvorderst der Kontrolle der baulichen Instandhaltung der Tempel (siehe etwa Dig. 1,16,7) und zielte, anders als in der Spätantike, nicht auf eine verwaltungstechnische Kontrolle städtischer Kulte. Hierzu C. Frateantonio, 'Autonomie der antiken Stadt und Zentralisierung religiöser Administration in der Kaiserzeit und Spätantike', in: H. Cancik – J. Rüpke (eds.), *Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion* (Tübingen 1997), 85-97.

zu betrachten: Dauerhaft geschichtsmächtige Wirkung sollten dabei der jüdische und der christliche Kult entfalten.

Nun verfolgt der vorliegende Band nur indirekt religionsgeschichtliche Interessen: Historische Fragestellungen, also primär politische, sozial- und kulturgeschichtliche Perspektiven im Kontext der Religion und ihrer spezifischen Wirkmöglichkeiten stehen im Vordergrund. Die Suche nach religiösen Konstrukten oder Konstellationen, die als Folge römischer Herrschaftsausübung Gestalt annahmen und relevante – so etwa herrschaftsstabilisierende und -legitimierende – Wirkung entwickelten, hat gegenüber erstgenannten Ansätzen Vorrang. Anerkennt man allerdings, daß auch die schlichte Verbreitung von Gottheiten, Kultformen oder Sakralarchitektur, insofern sie sich hierdurch als überregional oder reichsweit verständlich erweisen, eine verbindende, Kommunikation und Gemeinsamkeitsempfinden generierende und damit auch gesellschaftlich und politisch relevante Wirkung unter Beweis stellen können, dürfen auch *prima facie* recht speziellen Phänomenen gewidmete Untersuchungen indikatorischen Charakter für sich beanspruchen.

Die Entstehung einer religiösen Koine auf dem Boden des Imperium Romanum, wie sie die Ausbreitung und Popularität zahlreicher Kulte bezeugt – ob dem der Isis, des Iuppiter Optimus Maximus oder Iuppiter Dolichenus, des Silvanus o.a. –, und damit die Möglichkeit, als Soldat oder Reisender an vielen Orten vertraute Götter zu verehren, und selbst die markante Existenz des ubiquitären Kaiserkultes dürfen aber über einen Sachverhalt nicht hinwegtäuschen: Auch die außerordentliche reichsweite Dynamik im religiösen Leben des 2. und 3. Jh.s n.Chr. führte *nicht* dazu, eine religiöse Einheit oder auch nur einen religiös einigermaßen homogenen Herrschaftsraum im Imperium zu schaffen. Der ‘Impact of Empire’ im Feld der Religion schlug sich vielmehr vor allem dort nieder, wo auch sonst das Herz des Reiches schlug: in den einzelnen Städten Italiens und der Provinzen, den hier lokal verfaßten Kulturen und Gemeinden. Und selbst sakrale Anstöße der Zentrale oder auch reichsweite religiöse Strömungen wurden, wie verschiedene der folgenden Beiträge zeigen, auf lokaler Ebene in durchaus eigenen Formen ausgestaltet und die Traditionen und Autonomie des religiösen Lebens der Heimat hierüber unübersehbar hervorgehoben.

Die ersten vier Beiträge des Bandes behandeln Themen, die sich aus Folgen der territorialen Expansion Roms einerseits, der Etablierung des Prinzipats in der Gesellschaft Roms und Italiens andererseits ergeben. Jörg Rüpke befaßt sich am Beispiel der Lex Ursonensis mit Funktion und Be-

deutung der traditionellen Priesterämter, die in einer provinziellen Stadt römischen Rechtes nach dem Vorbild Roms eingerichtet wurden. Olivier Hekster untersucht Eigenart und Wandel der Genealogien senatorischer Familien im 1. Jh. n.Chr. mit Blick auf die Propagierung göttlicher Vorfahren, während John Nicols die patronale Tätigkeit städtischer Eliten in Italien im gleichen Zeitraum in Hinblick auf Tempelbau und Kulte analysiert. Der Beitrag Clifford Andos zur Interpretatio Romana fokussiert auf spezifisch römische Probleme bei der Einordnung fremder Gottheiten in den eigenen Begriffshorizont.

Die folgende große Gruppe von Aufsätzen geht dem 'Impact of Empire' auf verschiedene religiöse Praktiken, Kulte sowie architektonische Inszenierungen unter der Perspektive des Verhältnisses von Zentrum und Peripherie nach. Nicole Belayche stellt die Frage nach dem religiösen Ursprung der bekannten Beichtinschriften in Phrygien unter römischer Herrschaft, Vera Hirschmann verfolgt die Entstehungsgeschichte und das spezifische Profil des Montanismus vor dem Hintergrund der jüngst geglückten Identifikation der sagenumwobenen Stadt Pepouza der Montanisten. Nach Palmyra führt die Untersuchung Ted Kaizers, der, ausgehend von der Frage der Finanzierung des 32 n.Chr. eingeweihten Bel-Tempels, nach dem imperialen Anstoß zu dieser monumentalen lokalen Kultinszenierung und spezifischen Architekturform fragt und den Beitrag einheimischer Stifter unterstreicht. Gleichfalls nach dem Einfluß westlicher Bauformen fragt Johan Strubbe bei seiner Untersuchung des tiberisch-claudischen Kaiserkult-Komplexes in Pessinous, der die Durchführung von Gladiatorenkämpfen und *venationes* baulich integrierte. Die Herkunft der Architekturform des römischen Podiumstempels in Ras el-Soda bei Alexandria versucht Frits Naerebout zu klären und verweist dazu auf die Möglichkeit bemerkenswerter Interaktion zwischen Nicht-Römern im Kontext des Imperium. Explizit das Zentrum-Peripherie-Modell stellt Günther Schörner für Kleinasien zur Diskussion und notiert aufschlußreiche Varianten in der bildlichen Darstellung römischer Kultformen und Opferpraxis. Die Diffusion regionaler Gottheiten und ihres Kultes in andere Reichsteile auf dem Wege der Dislokation von römischen Militäreinheiten demonstriert Arbia Hilali für Lambaesis, den Hauptstandort in Nordafrika. Gleichfalls die Ausbreitung orientalischer Kulte behandelt Martin Icks; die Einführung des Elagabal-Sol-Kultes aus Emesa nach Rom, das Priesteramt des Kaisers und seine politischen Intentionen bedeuten einen historisch besonders markanten und folgenreichen Fall eines Kultimportes. Die bemerkenswert vielfältigen geographischen Ausbreitungswege, die

komplexen Wechselbeziehungen des sakralen Austausches und ihr Niederschlag in unterschiedlichen monumentalen und bildlichen Ausdrucksformen werden damit für verschiedene Räume und Kulte unter den Bedingungen des Imperium Romanum eindrucksvoll aufgehell.

Die Rolle von Priesterinnen und Priestern im öffentlichen Raum, insbesondere im Kontext des Kaiserkultes, und ihre sozialen sowie politischen Beziehungen stehen im Mittelpunkt der Untersuchungen der dritten Gruppe von Beiträgen. Dabei weist Emily Hemelrijk auf der Basis einer umfassenden Materialerhebung für den Westen das beachtliche, vor allem unabhängige Profil von Priestertümern von Frauen in den Städten auf, die den Kult für Kaiserinnen pflegten. Marietta Horster befaßt sich demgegenüber mit weiblichen Priesterämtern in griechischen Städten und arbeitet den unter römischem Einfluß erfolgten Wandel in der Bestellungspraxis von Priesterämtern heraus, stellt aber auch eine Konkurrenzsituation für die alten Kultfunktionen mit dem Aufkommen des Kaiserkultes fest. Rudolf Haensch gelangt in seiner grundlegenden Untersuchung über pagane Priester im römischen Heer des 3. Jh.s zu der überraschenden Erkenntnis, daß in der Armee im Zuge der religiösen Wandlungsprozesse des 3. Jh.s eigene Heerespriester etabliert wurden; ein Prozess, den er von Elagabal ausgehen sieht. Der Beitrag von Danielle Sloomer geht demgegenüber zeitlich und sachlich einen großen Schritt weiter: die Aufwertung der Kirche im spätantiken Staat ließ dem städtischen Bischof aus vielerlei Gründen erhebliche politische und administrative Macht zuwachsen, ja ihn zu einem natürlichen Gegenspieler des Statthalters im Kampf um Einfluß beim Kaiser und in der Reichsverwaltung werden. Die Beiträge zu hervorgehobenen Kultfunktionären in der Kaiserzeit vermögen so die tiefgreifenden sozialen und politischen Transformationsprozesse im Imperium insgesamt auszuleuchten, insbesondere die engen Zusammenhänge zwischen Religion, Politik und Gesellschaft.

Kaiserkult und die Darstellung der Göttlichkeit des Kaisers sind Leitthema der Beiträge des vierten Teils. Claudia Salz zeigt am Beispiel der Mondsichel über Augusta-Darstellungen auf östlichen Stadtprägungen, daß Götterattribute neben den offiziellen Interpretationen auch lokale Deutungen zuließen, welche die Akzeptanz der Aussage erhöhten. Bemerkenswert differenzierte Ergebnisse vermag Janneke de Jong auf der Basis papyrologischer Quellen hinsichtlich der Rezeption römischer Vorstellungen von Divinität (und *damnatio memoriae*) in Ägypten zu präsentieren, wo altägyptische Traditionen eine flexible Einbindung gestatteten. Inge Mennen arbeitet die religiösen Aspekte der imperialen Selbstdarstellung Caracallas heraus und

bietet Indizien für einen hohen Frömmigkeitsanspruch dieses Kaisers. Lukas de Blois wiederum legt abschließend dar, daß vor dem Hintergrund der vielfältigen Krisenphänomene des 3. Jh.s eine stärker religiöse Akzentuierung, ja Sakralisierung der kaiserlichen Selbstdarstellung eine sinnstiftende Antwort auf den Wandel des Imperiums bedeutete.

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URBAN RELIGION AND IMPERIAL EXPANSION:
PRIESTHOODS IN THE LEX URSONENSIS

JÖRG RÜPKE

Roman religion and imperial religion

There is no doubt that – in a certain sense – the *Imperium Romanum*, the ancient Mediterranean and the many regions beyond dominated by the Romans, formed a space of intensive cultural interaction. Any look at the history of religion in Roman times could confirm that. Dozens of volumes of the *Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l’empire romain*, EPRO, collected the evidence for the diffusion of cults from different religious centres. A certain religious homogeneity existed. People travelling from one end of the empire to another were able to recognize local religious practices like animal sacrifice, could identify temples, know about religious concepts like ‘priests’. This homogeneity was furthered by the political integration, but its development preceded the Roman empire. Cultural interaction from Mycenaean and Phoenician times onwards had prepared for this situation. At the same time it is difficult to talk about the borders of this cultural space and about its *differentia specifica*. Judging from the texts, it was difficult for the Romans to recognize what we would call Indian religion,¹ even if the reception of Mediterranean statuary and iconography radically influenced the development of Buddhism as the Begram treasure and Gandhara art or the new imperial culture of the Kushan and even the Gupta empire at the eastern end of central India attest.² At the same time, Greek and Roman ethnography managed to identify a lot of cultural practices of Celtic and Germanic tribes as “religion”. Again, the degree of cultural interaction is even more prominent if judged by the reception and assimilation of Mediterranean cultural techniques by Scandinavians.³

Obviously, research in cultural interaction is often too narrowly defined by political boundaries. Within the priority program of the *Deutsche For-*

¹ See the collection of texts in J. André – J. Filliozat, *L’Inde vue de Rome: Textes latins de l’Antiquité relatifs à l’Inde*. Collection d’Études Anciennes (Paris 1986).

² R.C. Craven, *Indian Art: A Concise History* (rev. ed.; London 1997 [1976]), 74-78; 81ff.

³ See – without systematic stress – O. Sundqvist, *Freyr’s offspring: Rulers and religion in ancient Svea society* (Uppsala 2002), passim.

schungsgemeinschaft “Roman Imperial and Provincial Religion”⁴ this problem is avoided or perpetuated by concentrating on the interaction of religion and political structures. Thus, the analysis of local or regional religious developments focuses on the impact of the presence of Romans or the integration into the administrative structures of the Roman empire, the analysis of transregional phenomena concentrates on their political significance.⁵

Political effects of transregional phenomena within the Roman empire are normally taken for granted. At least, Romanization is at work, rendering government easier. Yet Romanization was a complex process. The municipal elites of Middle-Italian townships thoroughly hellenized their cities during the second century BC, thus spreading the culture of Rome’s important adversaries in the Eastern Mediterranean. However, that was no act of separation, but of Romanization. Assimilation by imitating the preferences of Roman aristocrats.⁶ “One of the most striking features of Roman imperialism”, remark BEARD, NORTH, PRICE starting from the cult of Cybele, “is that (especially in the west) the spread of Roman religious culture through the empire was marked by the diffusion of cults that in the context of Rome itself claimed a ‘foreign’ origin.”⁷ Given these difficulties it seems fruitful to concentrate on the spread of the religion of the city of Rome of *stadtrömische Religion* into the empire.⁸ The cult of central gods of the city of Rome, the existence of Capitolia, of Roman priesthoods and festival calendars promise a glance into the concepts and explicit practices of employing religions as a means of political dominance. I shall follow this line in my paper.

⁴ M. Petzold – Ch. Steimle – J. Rüpke (ed.), ‘Ein neues Schwerpunktprogramm der DFG: Römische Reichs- und Provinzialreligion’, *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 3 (2001), 296-307; H. Cancik – J. Rüpke, *Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion: Globalisierungs- und Regionalisierungsprozesse in der antiken Religionsgeschichte* (Erfurt 2003), 207.

⁵ See Cancik – Rüpke 2003, op.cit. (n.4); W. Spickermann, ‘Kultorganisation und Kultfunktionäre im Gebiet der Colonia Ulpia Traiana’, in: Th. Grünewald (ed.), *Germania inferior – Reallexikon germanischer Altertümer Erg.bd.* 28 (2000/2001), 212-240; H. Cancik – K. Hitzl (ed.), *Die Praxis der Herrscherverehrung in Rom und seinen Provinzen* (Tübingen 2003), or Cancik – Rüpke 2003, op.cit. (n.4) for examples.

⁶ P. Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (München 1987).

⁷ M. Beard – J. North – S. Price, *Religions of Rome. 1: A History. 2: A Sourcebook* (Cambridge 1998), 338f.

⁸ The concept was stressed already by G. Wissowa, *Religion und Kultus der Römer*. 2. Aufl. Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 5,4 (München 1912); A. Bendlin, ‘Rituals or Beliefs? Religion and the Religious Life of Rome’, *Scripta Classica Israelica* 20 (2001), 191-208.

Contradictions

The Romans' intention to integrate the empire religiously is usually taken for granted.⁹ Yet, the evidence remains feeble. Imperial cult remained a highly diverse system. It not only fulfilled primarily local ends, as SIMON PRICE has shown,¹⁰ but differed substantially between Rome, waiting for the official and posthumous *consecratio*, and the rest of the empire, which frequently addressed the living emperor in rituals and festivals.¹¹ Even if some festivals, notoriously the *Saturnalia*¹² and the New Year festival of the January kalends,¹³ and later on some imperial festivals,¹⁴ were celebrated in many places and by different groups, the prominent features of the Roman calendar were not accepted on the local or provincial level. Even the famous calendar of the province of Asia conventionalized the lengths of its month according to Greek calendars, thus only taking the idea of a solar calendar and its day of the New Year from the Roman system.¹⁵

Frequently, more attention is given to Roman citizens and their foci outside of Rome, Roman colonies and the army. Architecturally and ritually, the cult of the Capitoline triad, Iuppiter Optimus Maximus, Iuno and Minerva, is regarded as a significant indicator. There is no doubt, that the Capitol was an important central symbol, as seen from within as from outside. And yet again, its realization was very unevenly distributed. Practice differed from the period of the expansion in Italy onwards. The monumental foundation or a grandiose later rebuilding of a colony – or *municipium*! – did include forum-like structures and a *Capitolium*¹⁶ (a combination not present at Rome!),¹⁷ a fictitious *Capitolium* – as might be surmised for the Samaritan

⁹ Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 314f.

¹⁰ S. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1984).

¹¹ A. Bendlin, 'Peripheral Centres – Central Peripheries: Religious Communication in the Roman Empire', in: H. Cancik – J. Rüpke (ed.), *"Reichsreligion" und "Provinzialreligion"* (Tübingen 1997), 45f.; Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 349 ff.

¹² Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 337f.

¹³ M. Meslin, *La fête des kalendes de janvier dans l'empire romain*. Collection Latomus 115 (Bruxelles 1970), 138f. for the evidence.

¹⁴ P. Herz, 'Kaiserfeste der Prinzipatszeit', in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.16,2 (1978), 1135-1200.

¹⁵ J. Rüpke, 'Religion in the lex Ursonensis', in: C. Ando – J. Rüpke (ed.), *Religion and Law*. (Stuttgart 2006) (in press) for the spread of the Roman calendar.

¹⁶ Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 334-336; more negatively accentuated by Bendlin 1997, op.cit. (n.11), 46f.

¹⁷ For details at Thugga see F. Dohna, 'Gestaltung öffentlichen Raumes und imperiale Ideologie am Beispiel des Kapitols von Thugga', *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung* 10 (1997), 465-476.

Neapolis¹⁸ – might underline a city's claim to status. As in Tuscan Cosa or Bantia, a detailed reproduction of Roman institutions and religious topography might stress the Romanness or loyalty to Rome of the polity.¹⁹ It must be noted, however, that the same symbols were used by *municipia*, cities without or lesser Roman status.

Even minute details of Rome's range of priests had been reproduced by some Latin townships, Tibur and Lanuvium in particular, even though for different reasons.²⁰ In some cases ancient parallel or even older developments could not be excluded.²¹ On the basis of the *lex Ursonensis*,²² local augurs and pontiffs have been noticed frequently; *flamines* or *seviri Augustales* of the imperial cult lack a similar base, but were even more popular. Again, attestations of the aforementioned priests are more frequent in colonies of Roman citizens; it is impossible to say whether every colony conformed to this pattern.

Given the hazards of epigraphic and archaeological transmission, any inductive reasoning could give nothing but indications about the centre's intentions. This consequence implies another one. The knowledge of the centre's intentions will not tell us anything about peripheral reality. The problems of communication and control, the interplay of administrative and local initiatives and interurban competition would have produced very different results. These limits of knowability should be kept in mind for the rest of my paper, which is dedicated to a document found in the periphery that is more than indicative of reasoning in the centre.

¹⁸ N. Belayche, 'Forschungsbericht Römische Religion (1990-1999)', *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 2 (2000), 283-345.

¹⁹ A short critical survey of the recent research by A. Bendlin in: Belayche 2000, op.cit. (n.18), 293f.; for Bantia and Cosa see M. Torelli, 'Un Templum augurale d'età repubblicana a Bantia', in: *Rendiconti della Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche dell'Accademia dei Lincei* 8. ser., 12 (1966), 293-315 (Repr.: Id., *Studies in the Romanization of Italy* [Edmonton 1995], 97-129); A. Magdelain, 'L'auguraculum de l'Arx à Rome et dans d'autres villes', *Revue des Études Latines* 47 (1969), 253-269.

²⁰ J. Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum: Die Mitglieder der Priesterschaften und das sakrale Funktionspersonal römischer, griechischer, orientalischer und jüdisch-christlicher Kulte in der Stadt Rom von 300 v.Chr. bis 499 n.Chr.* Potsdamer altertumswissenschaftliche Beiträge 12/1-3 (Stuttgart 2005), 1530f.

²¹ Rightly stressed by Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 323f.

²² See below.

Religion in the Lex Coloniae Iuliae Genetivae

The late republican *lex Ursonensis* professes a type of legal reasoning that, in the first century BC, is new for Roman religious thought.²³ Thus, one should not seek for models that were much older. Certainly, the text is a conglomerate, composed out of norms that might be older.²⁴ Yet, it is not very probable that any encompassing legal composition had been prepared more than one or two decades before – if any at all. Cicero's *De legibus*, the archaizing collection of laws, dates from the 50s BC, the systematic treatises concerning religion (and prominent in Varro) are not much older. The surviving parts of the *lex Iulia municipalis*, if we identify the second part of the *Tabula Heracleensis* (lines 83-163) with this Caesarian law of 45 BC,²⁵ do not allow us to suppose a direct relationship to the *lex Ursonensis*. The heterogenous origin of the collection of norms displayed at the south Italian city of Heraclea reveals the lack of a comprehensive law: it is composed of norms addressed to the city of Rome as a law for Italian colonies and *municipia*. It is the incoherence of the charter of Urso itself that speaks for a recent composition at the time of its passing as a law. When in late Flavian times, i.e. by the end of the first century AD, more than a century later, the *lex* was republished on bronze tablets contemporaneously with the charters of Salpensa and Malaca,²⁶ the probable reason was that it had not been superseded by anything and was a prestigious model itself.

Found from 1870/71 onwards at the Spanish locality of Osuna, the surviving fragments contain about one third of all of the regulations for the Caesarian colony of Iulia Genetiva Ursonensis, founded in 44 BC on the initiative of an unknown person who had won Caesar for his plan.²⁷ The surviving chapters 61-82, 91-109, and 123-134 do not have any explicit overall structure. The same holds true for the fragments of the Flavian municipal laws. At the same time, principles of ordering are recognizable in the *lex Ursonensis* and reveal significant differences in comparison to the later texts.²⁸

²³ M. Beard, 'Cicero and Divination: The Formation of a Latin Discourse', *Journal of Roman Studies* 76 (1986), 33-46, for late republican religious reasoning in general.

²⁴ E. Gabba, 'Reflessioni sulla Lex Coloniae Genetivae Iuliae', *Anejos de Archivo Español de Arqueología* 9 (1988), 162f., for archaic features.

²⁵ I follow the pragmatic stance of M. Crawford (ed.), *Roman Statutes*. 2 Bde. Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies, Suppl. 64 (London 1996), 362f. See Cicero, *Ad familiares* 6.18.1 for a possible date and *CIL* 5, 2864 = *ILS* 5406 for the name.

²⁶ Gabba 1988, op.cit. (n.24), 158f.

²⁷ Gabba 1988, op.cit. (n.24), 160-162.

²⁸ Rüpke 2006, op.cit. (n.15).

Within the surviving fragments, the bunch of material concerning “religion” in our sense is contained within the chapters 64 to 72 and 125 to 128. The section 64 to 72 is composed of regulations on the local definition and financing of cult (64-65), on pontiffs and augurs (66-68), the procedure for payments for ritual ingredients (69), the organisation and financing of games (70-71), and the administration of money given to temples (72). The three chapters on priesthoods are integrated into a frame of regulations on the financing of cult. Pontiffs and augurs, grouped together with the preceding decurions, are again the subject in chapter 91. It prescribes that any newly elected decurion or priest must own a residence within at least one thousand paces of the town – a residence that could serve as a pledge.²⁹ The following chapters suggest that 91 is an integral part of a sequence dealing with the decurions and, in particular, with questions of liability. In chapters 125-128, games are the subject of the regulations. Here, the context is clearer. At least from chapter 124 onwards, questions of the dignity and authority of the decurions and the magistrates are discussed. Hence three of the four chapters on games (125-127) exclusively deal with the order of seats for different status groups during different types of *ludi*, even discussing the problems of the occasional presence of higher provincial magistrates or Roman senators and their sons (127). Chapter 128 describes the organisation of all kind of religious cult by the annual appointment of *magistri* and their control. The presence of chapter 128 was certainly due to the intention to complete regulations for the games, but the main *raison d’être* is the continuing of the detailed discussion of the division of labour and authority between the magistrates and the decurions.

Religion is dealt with insofar it is public religion. There is religion outside public religion – otherwise the author would not need to stress that he is talking about *quae sacra fieri publice placeat*, about the public cult of the colony. But this religion is not part of any regulation. To talk of religion is to talk about rituals – as far as the author of the *lex Ursonensis* is concerned. *Sacra* is the most general term employed, rituals could be specified as *ludi circenses* and *scaenici*, “games and plays”, and even *gladiatores*, “gladiators”, *sacrificia*, “sacrifices”, and *puluinaria*, meals prepared for the statues of the gods.³⁰ These rituals depend on public money and the decurions’ and magistrates’ action. Religion comes into focus only as part of the magistrates’ competence. It is, however, a primary duty, to be regulated

²⁹ *Contra* Crawford 1996, op.cit. (n.25), 440f. ad loc. and translation.

³⁰ See ch. 128.

early in their year of office: the festivals have to be defined within the first ten days (ch. 64), concrete measures and financial regulations have to be completed within sixty days (ch. 69). In the view of the *lex Ursonensis*, religion is not something to be instrumentalized, to be regulated or tolerated, but part of a Roman colony's magistrates' business, an important part even.

Priesthoods

Chapters 66-68 of the *lex Ursonensis* prescribe the institutionalization of two priesthoods, which by their names and specific regulations point to the city of Rome: pontiffs and augurs.

LXVI. Quos pontifices quosque augures C(aius) Caesar, quiue iussu eius colon(iam) deduxerit, fecerit ex colon(ia) Genet(ia), ei pon<t>ifices eique augures c(oloniae) G(enetiuae) I(uliae) sunt, eiq(ue) pon<t>i[fi]ces auguresque in pontificum augurum conlegio in ea colon(ia) sunt, ita uti qui optima lege optumo iure in quaque colon(ia) pontif(ices) augures sunt erunt. iisque pontificibus auguribusque, qui in quoque eorum conlegio erunt, liberisque eorum militiae munerisque public<i> uacatio sacro sanctius esto uti pontifici Romano est erit, <a>e<r>aque militaria ei omnia merita sunt. de auspiciis quaeque ad eas res pertinebunt augurum iuris dictio iudicatio esto. eisque pontificib(us) auguribusque ludis, quot publice magistratus facient, et cum ei pontific(es) augures sacra publica c(oloniae) G(enetiuae) I(uliae) facient, togas praetextas habendi ius potestasq(ue) esto. eisque pontificib(us) augurib(us)q(ue) ludos gladiatoresq(ue) inter decuriones spectare ius potestasq(ue).

LXVII. Quicumque pontif(ices) quique augures c(oloniae) G(enetiuae) I(uliae) post h(anc) l(egem) datam in conlegium pontific(um) augurumq(ue) in demortui damnatiue loco h(ac) l(ege) lectus cooptatusue erit, is pontif(ex) augurq(ue) in c(olonia) Iul(ia) in conlegium pontifex augurq(ue) esto, ita uti qui optima lege in quaque colon(ia) pontif(ices) auguresq(ue) sunt erunt. neue quis quem in conlegium pontificum kapito sublegito cooptato nisi tunc cum minus tribus pontificib(us) ex iis, qui c(oloniae) G(enetiuae) sunt, erunt. neue quis quem in conlegium augurum sublegito cooptato nisi tum cum minus tribus auguribus ex eis, qui colon(iae) G(enetiuae) I(uliae) sunt, erunt.

LXVII<I>. Iluiri praff(ectus)ue comitia pontific(um) augurumq(ue), quos h(ac) l(ege) <f>a<c>ere oportebit, ita habeto, prodi<c>ito, ita uti Iluir(um) creare facere sufficere h(ac) l(ege) o(oprtebit).

LXVI. Whichever pontiffs and whichever augurs C. Caesar, or whoever shall have founded the colony at his command, shall have appointed from the colonia, they are to be the pontiffs and they the augurs of the colonia Genetiva Iulia, and they are to be the pontiffs and the augurs in the college of pontiffs or augurs in that colony, in the same way as those who are or shall be pontiffs and augurs with the best conditions and the best status in any colony. And for those pontiffs and augurs, who shall be in each of their colleges, and for their children, there is to be exemption from military service and compulsory public service <prescribed> by what is sacred, as for a

Roman pontiff, and their periods of military service are all to be credited to them. Concerning auspices and whatever things shall pertain to those matters, jurisdiction and right of judgment are to belong to the augurs. And those pontiffs and augurs at the games, whenever the magistrates shall give them publicly, and when those pontiffs and augurs shall perform the public sacrifices of the *colonia* Genetiva Iulia, are to have the right and power of wearing *togae praetextae*. And those pontiffs and augurs are to have the right and power to watch games and combats of gladiators among the decurions.

LXVII. Whoever after the issuing of this statute shall have been chosen or coopted according to this statute as pontiffs and augurs of the *colonia* Genetiva Iulia into the college of pontiffs and (the college) of augurs in the place of a man who has died or been condemned, he is to be pontiff or augur in the *colonia* Iulia in the college as pontiff or augur, in the same way as those who are or shall be pontiffs and augurs with the best conditions in any colony. Nor is anyone to receive or choose in replacement or coopt into the college of pontiffs, except at a time when there shall be less than three pontiffs among those who are of the *colonia* Genetiva. Nor is anyone to choose in replacement or coopt anyone into the college of augurs, except at a time when there shall be less than three augurs among those who are of the *colonia* Genetiva Iulia.

LXVIII. The *Iiviri* or prefect is so to hold and proclaim an assembly for pontiffs and augurs, whom it shall be appropriate to appoint according to this statute, in the same way as it shall be appropriate to elect or appoint or appoint in replacement a *Iivir* according to this statute (trsl. MICHAEL CRAWFORD).

At first glance, the text seems to be rather straightforward. Urso is given the appearance of a Roman town by minutely transferring two of the most prestigious religious institution of the city of Rome, the augurs and pontiffs. The tone of the *opinio communis* had been set already by THEODOR MOMMSEN'S remark: "Privilegia sacerdotum coloniae ea fere sunt, quae constat obtinuisse apud Romanos." Thus, the commentaries on this passage are concentrated on the minimizing of apparent differences, for instance with regard to the number – the Roman colleges of the time of the foundation would contain fifteen or sixteen priests each – or the question of the loss of the augurate in cases of *damnatio*.³¹ The situation, however, is more complex. The *lex* – and this is my point in this paper – is engaged in a dis-

³¹ Th. Mommsen, 'Lex coloniae Iuliae Genetivae urbanorum sive Ursonensis: Data a.u.c. DCCX', in: Id., *Gesammelte Schriften* 1: *Juristische Schriften* 1 (Berlin 1905), 248-251 (first published: *Ephemerides Epigraphica* 2 [1875], 108-151, 99-101); Crawford 1996, op.cit. (n.25), 434-436; G. Crifò, 1962. 'La c.d. inamovibilità dell' 'augur publicus p.R.Q.' (A proposito di Plutarco, Quaest. Rom., 99)', *Latomus* 21 (1962), 689-710; J. Scheid, 'Le délit religieux dans la Rome tardo-républicaine', in: *Le délit religieux dans la cité antique* (Rome 1981), 117-171; J. Scheid, 'Le prêtre et le magistrat: Réflexions sur les sacerdoces et le droit public à la fin de la République', in: C. Nicolet (ed.), *Des ordres à Rome*. Publications de la Sorbonne: Sér. Hist. Anc. et Médiév. 13 (Paris 1984), 243-280.

course about religion and public religion that is structured by controversial stances.

The first observation. For the founder(s) of the colony, the existence of augurs and pontiffs as colonial priesthoods is a matter hallowed by tradition and universal practice. The most visible symbolic honour, the seating and the dressing at games, is regulated as well as the most important personal consequence, the exemption from military and public services. The rest is given to a “most-favoured-nation clause” implying a global view on a widespread institution rather than the existence of “general regulations on priesthoods in Roman colonies” as envisaged by CRAWFORD.³² In a comparison between different colonies (and even Rome), the local negation of certain privileges for priests would not be acceptable.

Secondly, tasks. Roman *pontifices* and *augures* were not only the most prestigious of public priesthoods, but the most powerful, too. Judging priestly conduct, the religious quality of land and the gods’ property, last but not least about the sacral quality of the time and – before the calendar reform in 45 BC – intercalation, the pontiffs held a central position within the diffuse network of religious authority. The position of the supreme pontiff, the *pontificatus maximus*, would develop into the most important and most visible religious function of the emperors.³³ The augurs, by their expertise on augury, were involved in every major political decision from the election of magistrates, through legislation, to the battlefield.³⁴ What did these priests do at Urso? We learn nothing about the pontiffs. Supervision of cults and funds is given to the *duoviri* and the *aediles*, the definition of days of festivals to the decurions. The specific sacral categories of *feriae* and *locus sacer* are nowhere hinted at, the question of *loca religiosa*, burial places, is basically left to the magistrates (ch. 73); perhaps the pontiffs had a stake in the expiation, mentioned in passing in the same text.

A direct definition of their field of activity is given for the augurs: augury and the like. What, however, was “the like”? And what sorts of augury existed in a colony? The copying of – or even parallel to – the Roman *auguraculum* in the Roman colony of Bantia is, as far as we can see,

³² Thus, however, Crawford 1996, op.cit. (n.25), 434 *ad loc.*

³³ F. van Haepelen, *Le collège pontifical (3ième s. a.C.–4ième s. p.C.): Contribution à l’étude de la religion publique romaine*. Belgisch historisch Instituut te Rome: Studies over oude Filologie, Archeologie en Geschiedenis 39 (Bruxelles 2002).

³⁴ J. Linderski, ‘The Augural Law’, in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* II.16,3 (1986), 2146-2312.

unique;³⁵ it does not imply a politically relevant rôle comparable to Roman augurs' participation in *obnuntiatio*.³⁶ There is no indication at all in the *lex Ursonensis* or fragments of other regulations, that the highly complex system of the Roman republican balance of senatorial groups and individuals was reproduced in colonial institutions outside Rome. To sum up, we do not see what the priests did at all. At least it is certain that they did not have any rôle within the functioning of the institutions described in the *lex coloniae*. This is congruent, thirdly, with those modifications of Roman rules that we can observe. I leave aside the question whether a colonial augur could lose his office unlike – or like? – augurs at Rome.³⁷

It has to be remembered that even the lack of housing property in the town could lead to a removal within the first five years of office (ch. 91) – standards of aristocratic behaviour and honour could not presupposed for an elite *in statu nascendi*. Other differences are more decisive. At Rome, a complicated procedure was followed for the election of the candidates nominated (and later coopted) by the college proper. Seventeen out of thirty-five tribes (*tribus*), that is just a minority, were selected by lot in order to determine the succeeding priests.³⁸ At Urso, that attempt to differentiate priests from magistrates and preserve religious authority as authority *sui generis* was not followed. Pace chapter 68, priests were selected in the same manner as magistrates. The second difference concerns the number, three instead of fifteen or sixteen members in each college. That is no attempt to reproduce original Roman practice,³⁹ but the restriction of the college to the very minimum of what could be called a *collegium* at all. I even doubt the copying of the Roman procedure of *nominatio* by the college: the position of the two (or even one) remaining would not be strong enough to make a preselection of candidates socially acceptable.

A fourth observation. Chapters 66 to 68 are ruling about augurs and pontiffs, not about priests. The generic term *sacerdotes* is never used in this

³⁵ Torelli 1966, op.cit. (n.19).

³⁶ J. Linderski, 'Römischer Staat und Götterzeichen: Zum Problem der obnuntiatio', in: Id., *Roman Questions* (Stuttgart 1995), 309-322; L.A. Burckhardt, *Politische Strategien der Optimaten in der späten römischen Republik*. Historia Einzelschriften 57 (Stuttgart 1988); L. de Libero, *Obstruktion: Politische Praktiken im Senat und in der Volksversammlung der ausgehenden römischen Republik (70-49 v.Chr.)*. Hermes Einzelschriften 59 (Stuttgart 1992).

³⁷ Crawford 1996, op.cit. (n.25), 435f. for a summary of the discussion and a rather negative view concerning that possibility. I would prefer a more positive stance: the norms at Urso spell out a position that was controversial at Rome: the augur could lose his office.

³⁸ Cicero, *De lege agraria* 2.18.

³⁹ Mommsen 1905, op.cit. (n.31), 248f. ([1875], 99).

text. The only instance of its application in chapter 91 concerns the public lists of decurions and *sacerdotes*. The implication must be spelled out: there might be other priesthoods at Urso, too. They are, however, neither decreed nor granted any privileges. If they had any, it would be due to their quality as decurions, for example. Compared to the number of public priesthoods at Rome, this list of two items only, pontiffs and augurs, is very restrictive.

Conclusion

The analysis of the regulations concerning pontiffs and augurs (or augurs and pontiffs in chapter 91, thus excluding a ranking of both) does not reveal a slim version of the actual stance of Roman priesthoods during the late republic. These traditional colleges are not positively used as symbols of the colony's Romanness, but they are accepted rather as unavoidable remnants of tradition. The potential political implications of the office are restricted. With regard to the structure of public cult as developed in the other chapters, these colleges are not necessary. Against the backdrop of traditional Roman religious authority, the inclusion of the priesthoods held for life in the charter's chapters on religion does not mark an integration, but an explicit exclusion, a literal as well as metaphorical bracketing. The execution of public religion is given to annual *magistri*, appointed and controlled by the local council as regulated in chapter 128. Or handled by the magistrates themselves.

It must be noticed, however, that the model of Urso only partially dominated later developments. Priestly positions, old and new, remained important in many localities. They are to be found in the fourth-century *album* of African Timgad, but are missing in the third-century copy of Italian Canusium.⁴⁰ It is, however, the annual office of the *flamen* dedicated to the cult of the emperor and frequently reserved for former magistrates full of merits that formed the most successful innovation – and compromise – in the long run.⁴¹ In several instances, even the pontificate became an annual and only exceptionally life long honour (*pontifex perpetuus*).⁴²

⁴⁰ J.-F. Rodríguez Neila, 'Magistraturas municipales y funciones religiosas en la Hispania romana', *Revista de estudios de la vida local* 40 (1981), 92f., espec. n.2.

⁴¹ Cf. Rodríguez Neila 1981, op.cit. (n.40), 96-107, drawing on epigraphic material from Spain, and the detailed study J. Delgado, *Sacerdocios y Sacerdotes de la Antigüedad Clásica*. Biblioteca de las Religiones 9. Madrid, 2000. – See J. Delgado, 'Los sacerdotes de rango local de la provincia Romana de Lusitania', *Conimbriga* 39 (2000), 107-152, for Lusitania. The findings in Northern Africa ge-

The model of religion as drawn by the surviving norms of the *lex Ursonensis* is characterized by a two-layered structure. Religion has a firm place within the socio-political fabric of the *colonia*. As public cult (*sacra publica*) it is financed and organized by the council and its magistrates – the financing of the cult is the leitmotif that holds together the whole passage on religion.⁴³ It is characterized by large public rituals. The concrete content of this religion is left to the local elite and its financial power. The cult of the Capitoline triad and, to a lesser degree, Venus, presumably Genetrix, the only religious element fixed *a priori*, does not seem to aim at providing a focus for or island of Romanness within a foreign province. More probably, it ensures that any attempts of local magistrates to create a distinctive personal image for themselves must employ devices – *ludi Capitolini*, so to speak – symbolically related to the central government, to Rome.

The existence of a second layer of religion is rather implicitly or even negatively formulated. Priesthoods, expiation, burials and ancestor cult belong to this layer; associations might form further elements. This layer does not form an integral part of the political structure and public religion of the colony. It is by no means illegal, but it must not interfere with political activities. The regulations concerning pontiffs and augurs attempt to transfer a traditional element of the first layer to the second layer, acknowledging and isolating this time-honoured institution of public religion at Rome. At Urso, all priesthoods are subordinated to magisterial power. Chapter 72, dealing with private donations to temples, should not be read as an extension of public guarantees for the functioning of religion, but as a regulation that religious activities at the borderline between public and private – that is private donation to publicly defined cults – should be kept within a spatially circumscribed (*in ea aede*) realm of religion. Resources legally accumulated under the umbrella of religion should not be used to interfere with the larger socio-political realm.

Some more general conclusions can be formulated on this basis. First, Roman imperialists, at least those, who drafted and voted the *lex Ursonensis*, did not aim at exporting the *contents* of their religion, but their *concept* of religion. This vision included a highly visible, public religion controlled by local political elites and a tolerance of other forms of religion and religious

nerally agree: M.S. Bassignano, *Il flaminato nelle province romane dell'Africa*. Università degli Studi di Padova, Pubblicazioni dell'Istituto di storia antica 11 (Roma 1974).

⁴² Rodríguez Neila 1981, op.cit. (n.40), 116; the inscriptions from *CIL* 2 are cited on p. 109 (2,2081. 2098. 2343. 5441); Delgado 2000, op.cit. (n.41), 112.

⁴³ See chs. 65, 69-72; it is important for 128, too.

authority as long as these did not interfere with the procedural principles and power of the ruling elite. Secondly, centrally defined or suggested religious norms were only used to orientate or reorient local elites towards the central power. The Capitoline triad and the pair of augurs and pontiffs point into two different directions. Judged by the aim and the mechanism employed, the cult of the Capitoline triad and imperial cult as analyzed by SIMON PRICE as a medium for the local elite⁴⁴ are functionally equivalent.

Third, polis religion. The two-layered model of religion of the *lex Ursonensis* shows *polis* religion to be an indigenous, emic concept. At the same time it reveals the narrow boundaries of the concept, thus providing arguments to limit its use as an etic, analytical concept. *Sacra publica* encompass an important, but only small portion of legal, open, public religion.

Fourth and last, the previous analysis implies that it will be even more difficult to detect Roman religion in the Roman empire. The presence of the Roman concept of religion – and its variants, as attested by the discursive stance of the author of the *lex Ursonensis*⁴⁵ – is not attested by the presence of Capitolia, *augures* or the festival of the *kalendae Ianuariae*. It might be identified by the public presence of religion, its agents and its financing, might be attested by the irrelevance of “important” cults and their priests. Changes might have been subtle, but they were important. In the long run, they were changing the face of the empire itself.

Erfurt, Dezember 2004.

⁴⁴ Price 1984, op.cit. (n.10).

⁴⁵ Thus, the successful “bracketing” of the *sacerdotes publici* would lead me to the hypothesis that passages on pontiffs and augurs are not missing from the surviving fragments of the Flavian municipal laws, but had never been written.

DESCENDANTS OF GODS: LEGENDARY GENEALOGIES IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE

OLIVIER HEKSTER

Many late Republican notables were heirs to gods and heroes. The triumvirs are illustrative. According to ancient tradition, Mark Antony descended through Anton from Hercules, Octavian (or rather Caesar) through Aeneas from Venus and, interestingly, Lepidus from the Vestal Aemilia, who was condemned for unchastity.¹ Sextus Pompey followed suit and: “assumed a certain additional glory and pride by representing himself to be son of Neptune, since his father had once ruled the whole sea”.² In doing so, the late Republican dynasts were in no way exceptional. The great patrician family of the Aemilii, through the Trojan royal house, placed their origins with Jupiter, whilst the Caecilii were deemed to descend from Caeculus, a son of Vulcan who also founded Praeneste. The theme is explored in a splendid 1974 article of Peter Wiseman, who rightfully concludes: “with a god in the family tree, who needed consuls?”³ After Augustus came to power, however, the trend is much less well attested. What happened to the notion of divine (or at least heroic) ancestry during the empire? What was the impact of empire on this phenomenon?

The impact of empire, in these instances, may be correlated to the impact of emperors. Not all of them seem to have been partial to fame acquired in republican times. Thus, according to Suetonius, Caligula destroyed the statues of Republican heroes so utterly that “they could not be set up again with their inscriptions entire” and:

¹ Mark Antony: Plutarch, *Antony* 4.1-4.3; 60.3, with U. Huttner, ‘Marcus Antonius und Herakles’, in: C. Schubert – K. Brodersen (eds.), *Rom und der Griechische Osten. Festschrift für Hatto H. Schmitt zum 65. Geburtstag* (Stuttgart 1995), 103-112; 104, n.7. Octavian: Suetonius, *Divus Iulius* 6.1; Appian, *Bella Civilia* 3.16; 3.19, with O. Hekster, ‘Hercules, Omphale, and Octavian’s “anti-propaganda”’, *Bulletin Antieke Beschaving* 79 (2004), 159-160. Lepidus: Livy, *Periochae* 63.4; Dio, 87.3.

² Dio, 48.19.2: δόξαν τέ καὶ φρόνημα ὥς καὶ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος παῖς ὢν ὅτι πάσης ποτὲ ὁ πατὴρ αὐτοῦ τῆς θαλάσσης ἤρξε, προσέθετο. Cf. Dio, 38.31.5; P. Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (München 1987), 52-61. Sextus’ preference for Neptune is well attested in coinage.

³ Caecilii: Cato, *Fragment* 59P; Servius, *Aeneid* 7.678; Festus (Paulus), 38L; Aemilii: Silius Italicus *Punica* 8.294-8.296; T.P. Wiseman, ‘Legendary Genealogies in Late-Republican Rome’, *Greece & Rome* 21 (1974), 153-164; 153; 164 (quote); T.P. Wiseman, ‘Domi Nobiles and the Roman Cultural Elite’, in: M. Cébeillac-Gervasoni (ed.), *Les «Bourgeoisies» municipales italiennes aux II^e et I^{er} siècles av. J.-C.* (Paris – Naples 1983), 298-306; 304.

He took from all the noblest of the city the ancient devices of their families, from Torquatus his collar, from Cincinnatus his lock of hair, from Gnaeus Pompeius the surname *Magnus* belonging to his ancient race.

*Uetera familiarum insignia nobilissimo cuique ademit, Torquato torquem, Cincinnato crinem, Cn. Pompeio stirpis antiquae Magni cognomen.*⁴

So far, so Caligula. After all, the same emperor is said to have considered destroying the poems of Homer and removing books and busts of Virgil and Livy from libraries.⁵ Descent, however, may have been of particular importance. Thus, he allegedly boasted of incestuous descent from Augustus in order to deny any link to Agrippa, whose origin was deemed to be too humble. In like vein, he reacted irate when listening to “some kings, who had come to Rome to pay their respects to him, disputing at dinner about the nobility of their descent”.⁶ Even if all of the above statements were but literary commonplaces and inventions of Suetonius, the emphasis on descent could still be telling. Yet, at least in one instance, there is supporting evidence.

Caligula’s decision to take the cognomen *magnus* away from Gnaeus Pompeius (following the emperor’s statement that “it was not safe for him that anyone should be called *magnus*”) seems to be corroborated by epigraphic evidence.⁷ In the early 40s, when Pompeius was a Salian priest, he still used his cognomen, whereas in the Arval acts of 44 A.D., *magnus* was used as *praenomen*. By the time of Pompeius’ death, however, he was again allowed his cognomen *magnus*, as it read on his epitaph.⁸ The reappearance of the *cognomen* links up with Claudius’ allowing Gnaeus Pompeius to return his name to its former glory, unsurprisingly, since Pompeius had become the emperor’s son in law.⁹

A more general history of the Licinii Crassi, of whom Gnaeus Pompeius formed part, may illustrate different emperors’ attitudes to important Re-

⁴ Suetonius, *Gaius Caligula* 34.1; 35.1.

⁵ Suetonius, *Gaius Caligula* 34.2.

⁶ Suetonius, *Gaius Caligula* 22.1; 23.1.

⁷ Caligula’s statement: Dio 60.5.8-9, with A. A. Barrett, *Caligula. The Corruption of Power* (London 1989), 237-238; P. Kragelund, ‘The Emperors, the Licinii Crassi and Pompey’, in: J.M. Højte (ed.), *Images of Ancestors* (Aarhus 2002), 188-191; 193.

⁸ Cognomen (Salian Priest): *ILS* 9339; *praenomen*; *CIL* 6.2032, 44; *cognomen* (epitaph) *CIL* 6.31722. On the altar of Gn. Pompeius Magnus in the tomb of the Licinii Crassi: F. van Keuren et. al., ‘Unpublished Documents to Shed New Light on the Licinian Tomb, Discovered in 1884-1885’, *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 48 (2003), 53-139; 54; 102 figs; 32-33; Museo Naz. Rom. 78163. On the changes of Pompeius’ name, see especially H. Solin, ‘Namenwechsel und besondere Vornamen römischer Senatoren’, *Philologus* 133 (1989), 252-259; 256; Kragelund 2002, op.cit. (n.4), 193.

⁹ Suetonius, *Divus Claudius* 27.2; Dio, 60.5.9. B. Levick, *Claudius* (London 1990), 58.

publican descent. The Licinii Crassi, after all, could claim descent from both Pompey and Marcus Licinius Crassus – images of both of whom seem to have been present in their family tomb.¹⁰ Indeed, emphasis on this high-brow descent seems to have been stressed in public life.¹¹ This kind of prominence made Caligula uneasy, but was highly attractive to Claudius, whose power base was weak at the beginning of his reign, and who resorted to intermarriage schemes to boost his status. Claudius' choices of his sons-in-law indicate the importance he gave to high brow descent: alongside Gnaeus Pompeius was Lucius Junius Silanus Torquatus, who was a member of the Junii, of impeccable Republican prominence and also related to Augustus and Marcus Aemilius Lepidus. These in-laws were, for a while, given all sorts of honours and a high profile.¹² In A.D. 42, however, after a failed revolt, Claudius (or perhaps Messalina) felt threatened – Magnus and his parents were executed overnight, the first in fact stabbed to death, allegedly in bed with his (favourite) male lover.¹³ Surprisingly, no *damnatio memoriae* followed and the prestige of the family was undiminished.

This same kind of mixture of fear and respect for families with ancestral claims can already be detected in Tiberius' reign. One seems to have been more likely to fall victim to a trial for high treason (*de maiestate*), when one had “a house filled with ancestor masks (*imagines*)”.¹⁴ Indeed, having Pompey amongst ones ancestors could be a risk, as the A.D. 16 trial against M. Scribonius Libo Drusus and the A.D. 20 trial against Aemilia Lepida made clear.¹⁵ But even famous ancestors who led to ones downfall could still be emphasised to demand respect. Thus, famously, Aemilia Lepida, who was great-granddaughter of Sulla as well as of Pompey, entered her forebear's theatre, still named after him and:

as she appealed with piteous wailings to her ancestors and to that very Pompey, the public buildings and statues of whom stood there before their eyes, she roused such sympathy that people burst into tears ...

¹⁰ Kragelund 2002, op.cit. (n.4). On the tomb: D. Boschung, ‘Überlegungen zum Liciniergrab’, *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 101 (1986), 257-287.

¹¹ Kragelund 2002, op.cit. (n.4), 191. Cf. H. I. Flower, *Ancestor Masks and Aristocratic Power in Roman Culture* (Oxford 1996), 257-258.

¹² W. Eck, ‘Pompeius Magnus’, *RE* S 15 (1978), 328. On Claudius' relation to the aristocracy of Rome, see Levick 1990, op.cit. (n.6), 93-103.

¹³ Suetonius, *Divus Claudius* 27.2; 29; Kragelund 2002, op.cit. (n.4), 193-195.

¹⁴ Tacitus, *Annales* 2.27.2; with Flower 1996, op.cit. (n.8), 247.

¹⁵ P. Grenade, ‘Le mythe de Pompée et les Pompéiens sous les Césars’, *Revue des Études Anciennes* 52 (1950), 28-63; Kragelund 2002, op.cit. (n.4), 197-198.

*lamentatione flebili maiores suos ciens ipsumque Pompeium, cuius ea monimenta et adstantes imagines visebantur, tantum misericordiae permovit ut effusi in lacrimas*¹⁶

Notwithstanding the crowd's arousal, Lepida was exiled. But hers was an exile in style, befitting one with such honourable lineage.

Under Julio-Claudian rule, lineage continued to matter. Hence, Claudius' aside to the senate in A.D. 48:

Behold all these young men whom I am looking at. We should no more regret that they are senators than Pericus, a man of the highest lineage and my friend, is sorry to read the name Allobrogicus among the masks of his ancestors.

*Tot ecce insignes iuvenes, quot intueor, non magis sunt paenitendi senatores, quam paenitet Persicum, nobilissimum virum, amicum meum, inter imagines maiorum suorum Allobrogici nomen legere.*¹⁷

Hence, also, Seneca's repeated complaints about ancestral boasts in senatorial *domus*. Why would he emphasise that: "an *atrium* full of smoke stained masks does not make a man 'noble' (*Non facit nobilem atrium plenum fumosis imaginibus*)", if common opinion did not assume that this was so?¹⁸

Augustus could be used as example in this, as in almost every aspect of imperial ideology. After all, he had moved the statues that Caligula destroyed so wholeheartedly from the Capitol to the Campus Martius to give them more room.¹⁹ Augustus also gave special attention to the great men of old in his Forum, where bronze statues of the *principes viri* and accompanying *elogia* were given pride of place. Then again, these Republican greats were linked to Augustus' Julian ancestry – perhaps even to the extent that the *summi viri* who could not claim kinship with Augustus were segregated from the others.²⁰ Again, it appears that Republican honour was venerated and (hence) incorporated in imperial lineage.

¹⁶ Tacitus, *Annales* 3.23.

¹⁷ *CIL* 13.1668.2.25; Flower 1996, op.cit. (n.8), 259; 291 T26 (with translation).

¹⁸ Seneca, *Epistulae* 44.5; Flower 1996, op.cit. (n.8), 315 T75 (with translation). Cf. Seneca, *Dialogi* 12.12.6-7 (= T72); Seneca, *De Clementia* 1.9.10 (= T73); Seneca, *De Beneficiis* 3.28.2 (= T74), Seneca, *Epistulae* 76.12 (= T76). On *De Beneficiis* and social conduct: M. Griffin, 'De beneficiis and Roman society', *Journal of Roman Studies* 93 (2003), 92-113.

¹⁹ Suetonius, *Gaius Caligula* 24.1.

²⁰ Ovid, *Fasti* 5.563-5.566; Dio, 55.10.3; Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 9.11.10. The *elogia* have recently been republished (with new fragments) by G. Alföldy – L. Chioffi (*CIL* 6.8.3, nos. 40931 ff). Cf. L. Chioffi, *Gli elogia augustei del Foro Romano* (Rome 1996). On the sculptural display of the Forum, see now M. Spannagel, *Exemplaria Principis. Untersuchungen zu Entstehung und Ausstattung des Augustusforums* (Heidelberg 1999), especially 288-299 on the placement of the *principes viri* who were linked to the gens Iulia, and those who were not. Cf. P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor 1988), 210-215; V. Kockel, 'Forum Augustum', *LTUR* 2, 289-295; J. Poucet,

Indeed, one of Galba's main claims when coming to power was his impressive ancestry, coupled with numismatic emphasis on republican ideals.²¹ According to Suetonius, his inscriptions consistently traced lineage to his great-grandfather Quintus Catulus Capitolinus and, when he became emperor, "he even displayed a family tree in his *atrium*".²² Tacitus makes Mucianus argue that it was logical for Vespasian to "defer to Galba's *imagines*" but that following this ruler's death, Vespasian was entitled to put himself forward for the throne.²³ When appointing an heir, Galba once more showed his preference for tradition by adopting Lucius Calpurnicus Piso Frugi Licinianus – progeny of an old line.²⁴

Galba's ancestry, however, was not limited to mere mortals. From his father's side, he claimed descent from Jupiter himself, whilst his maternal line traced back to Pasiphaë, Minos' daughter.²⁵ This, then, brings us back to the political religiosity with which this article started.

Impressive mortal ancestry was potentially threatening to the ruling emperor. How about divine or heroic claims? What had happened to the divine descendants? Galba's assertion is an interesting case. It can be reasonably suggested that his divine claim was consistent with a second century B.C. coin, minted by a Sulpician moneyer, which perhaps implied descent from the Alban kings.²⁶ This seems to imply continuity of some sort. Galba was the last of the patrician Sulpicii, so it need not surprise that the ancestral claim was not repeated in later times. But, interestingly, there is no evidence that any of the Sulpicii made the claim to descent from Jupiter during the Julio-Claudian reign. Nor, in fact, does there seem to be evidence for any descendant of the great families using the divine claims which in the late republic were connected to that family, in imperial times.

'La fonction fondatrice dans la tradition sur les rois de Rome', in: M. Coudry – T. Späth (eds.), *L'invention des grands hommes de la Rome antique. Die Konstruktion der grossen Männer Altroms* (Paris 2001), 195-219.

²¹ A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Galba's *Aequitas*', *Numismatic Chronicle* 141 (1981), 20-39; at 37-38; id., 'Image and Authority in the Coinage of Augustus', *Journal of Roman Studies* 76 (1986), 66-87; at 70; O. Hekster, 'Coins and Messages. Audience Targeting on Coins of Different Denominations?', in: L. de Blois (et. al.), *Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power* (Amsterdam, 2003) [= *Impact of Empire* 3], 20-35; at 26.

²² Suetonius, *Galba* 2. Cf. on his lineage Suetonius, *Galba* 3; Dio, 64.1; Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.49; Plutarch, *Galba* 3.1. Epigraphic evidence does not support Suetonius' claim.

²³ Tacitus, *Historiae* 2.76.2; with Flowers 1996, op.cit. (n.8), 262; 321 (T94).

²⁴ Tacitus, *Historiae* 1.14-1.19; 1.88; Suetonius, *Galba* 12. The prosopography is set out by Boschung 1986, op.cit. (n.7), 260-263.

²⁵ Suetonius, *Galba* 2.

²⁶ Wiseman 1974, op.cit. (n.3), 153, with n.5 for references.

Partly, this may result from a less flexible system of minting. With moneyers no longer at real liberty to put iconographical claims forward, evidence for ideological assertions of senatorial families is much harder to trace. It may simply be evidence that changed under the empire, not practice. Some literature indicates that the practice of creating legendary genealogies was at least well *remembered* in imperial times. Plutarch, in his life of *Numa Pompilius* mentions how:

Others will have it that he left also four sons, namely, Pompo, Pinus, Calpus, and Mamercus, every one of whom had issue, and from them descended the noble and illustrious families of Pomponii, Pinarii, Calpurnii, and Mamerci, which for this reason took also the surname of Rex, or King. But there is a set of writers who say that these pedigrees are but a piece of flattery used by writers who, to gain favour with these great families, made them fictitious genealogies from the lineage of Numa.²⁷

The passage implies awareness of legendary genealogies, though it may be that Plutarch, in the imperial epoch, is writing about Republican objections. One should, in this context, note Asclepiades of Myrlea, “who about 100 B.C. divided history into three categories, the true, the seeming-true and the false”. The latter category incorporated only one kind of history – genealogy.²⁸

Seneca is much more unequivocal about the practice in the imperial age: “Do not be deceived by them when they often enumerate their ancestors, and wherever there is no famous name, there they slip in a god”.²⁹ For the statement to make sense as advice to the young Nero, the claims of divine ancestry must have continued.

Still, they cannot be systematically traced. There are some glimpses, though. Silius Italicus in his eighth book of the *Punica* explicitly draws the distinction between the useless consul Varro, whose “birth was obscure: the name of his ancestors never heard” *atque illi sine luce genus surdumque parentum nomen*³⁰ and on the other hand the much more wonderful Lucius Aemilius Paulus:

yet his race was akin to the gods, and he was related to the lords of heaven through his ancestors. For through Amulius, the founder of his line, he could trace descent from Assaracus, and through Assaracus to Jupiter.

²⁷ Plutarch, *Numa* 21.4. Cf. Wiseman 1974, op.cit. (n.3), 158. Note also Herodian 2.3.4 on Glabrio's descent.

²⁸ Sextus Empiricus, *Adversus Mathematicos* 1.252-1.253; Wiseman 1974, op.cit. (n.3), 158.

²⁹ Seneca, *De Beneficiis* 3.28.2: *Non est, quod te isti decipiant, qui, cum maiores suos saepe recensent, ubicumque nomen illustre defecit, illo deum infulciunt.*

³⁰ Silius Italicus, *Punica* 8.246-8.247.

*sed genus admotum superis summumque per altos / attingebat auos caelum: numerare parentem / Assaracum retro praestabat Amulius auctor / Assaracusque Iouem.*³¹

The reference did not refer to contemporary politics. After all, the Aemilii had demised under the Julio-Claudians.³² Silius, too, withdrew from politics in his later life. He did not even go to the new emperor to congratulate him on his accession, which did not do him any harm, since ‘without aiming for power, no one resented him’.³³ Silius did include Galba’s claim of divine descent in the *Punica* – but wrongly made it paternal, rather than maternal.³⁴ In one passage, however, there might be a glimpse of how mythological ancestry could be used under the emperors:

Young Pedianus dressed in Polydamantean arms / Waged war ferociously and proclaimed himself / of Trojan seeds and origin and of Antenor’s stock, / as famous for his family and the holy Timavus/ and a name blessed for his glory on Euganean shores.

*Polydamanteis iuuenis Pedianus in armis / bella agitabat atrox Troianaque semina et ortus / atque Antenorea sese de stirpe ferebat, / haud leuior generis fama sacroque Timauo / gloria et Euganeis dilectum nomen in oris.*³⁵

This name of this Paduan Pedianus is the same as the cognomen the well-known literary critic of Silius’ time, Quintus Asconius Pedianus.³⁶ Some lines below, Silius’ Pedianus is described further: “nor was any other youth/more famed in war, or any youth more famed in verse”.³⁷ Here, then, it seems that Silius is heaping praise on someone whose praise was important to him, by giving him a namesake with mythological ancestry. It may well be relevant that the glimpses that can be detected refer to a past emperor, an aristocratic family that was no longer politically relevant and a literary critic. None of these ‘divine’ claims were politically employed. It may also be

³¹ Silius Italicus, *Punica* 8.293-8.296.

³² T. P. Wiseman, *Roman Drama and Roman History* (Exeter 1998), 106-120 on the demise of Aemillii.

³³ Pliny, *Epistulae* 3.7.4. Not going to the emperor: Pliny, *Epistulae* 3.7.6; M. Wilson, ‘Flavian Variant: History. Silius’ *Punica*’, in: A. J. Boyle (ed.), *Roman Epic* (London – New York 1933), 218-236; 233.

³⁴ Silius Italicus, *Punica* 8.470f, with Wiseman, 156 n.4.

³⁵ Silius Italicus, *Punica* 12.212-12.216.

³⁶ M. Leigh, ‘Oblique Politics: Epic of the Imperial Period’, in: O. Taplin (ed.), *Literature in the Roman World* (Oxford 2000) 184-207; 197.

³⁷ Silius Italicus, *Punica* 12.221-12.222.

noticeable that Julia Babilla, who scratched her poems on the statue of Ammon, traced her ancestry back to her grandfathers, not to any divinity.³⁸

Indeed, there are indications that politically, divine ancestry had run its course. When Vespasian came to power, an apparent attempt to make the new emperor part of the old aristocratic context failed rather dramatically. Suetonius alludes to an exceptional (and seemingly unexpected) reaction by Vespasian to those who wanted to boost his descent:

[12] In other matters he was *civilis* and *clemens* from the very beginning of his reign until its end, never trying to conceal his former lowly condition, but often even parading it. Indeed, when certain men tried to trace the origin of the Flavian family to the founders of Reate and a companion of Hercules, whose tomb still stands on the Via Salaria, he laughed at them for their pains.

[12] *Ceteris in rebus statim ab initio principatus usque ad exitum civilis et clemens, mediocritatem pristinam neque dissimulavit umquam ac frequenter etiam prae se tulit. Quin et conantis quosdam originem Flavii generis ad conditores Reatinos comitemque Herculis, cuius monimentum exstat Salaria via, referre irrisit ultro.*³⁹

It seems that some people wanted to give the new emperor the chance to enhance his ancestors' prestige and that Vespasian did not think that this was necessary, nor a good idea.

Perhaps, since the beginning of the Empire, gods had lost some of their status. Galba's divine descent had not sufficiently strengthened his hold on power. One important aspect of rule, *civilitas*, did not sit well with any form of divine claim, though refusing such claims would show a ruler as the perfect *civilis princeps*.⁴⁰ In that context, Suetonius' emphasis on Vespasian's *civilitas* and *clementia* in the direct framework of the emperor's refusal to accept superior mythological ancestry may be noteworthy.⁴¹ Rather than stressing divine claims, Vespasian put himself forward as a 'new Augustus',

³⁸ She, in fact, celebrated both paternal and maternal ancestry: Tiberius Claudius Balbillus and Antiochus IV. A. Bernand – E. Bernand (eds.), *Les inscriptions grecques et latines du Colosse de Memnon* (Cairo 1960), no. 29; J. Balmer, *Classical Women Poets* (Newcastle 1996), no. 95. Both the themes of ancestry and of human relations to gods are discussed in Statius' *Thebaid*, but not in relation to divine ancestry: N.W. Bernstein, 'Ancestors, Status, and Self-Presentation in Statius' *Thebaid*', *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 133 (2003), 353-379.

³⁹ Suetonius, *Divus Vespasianus* 12.1-12.2.

⁴⁰ See on this notion the justly famous A. Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civilis Princeps: Between Citizen and King', *Journal of Roman Studies* 72 (1982), 32-48.

⁴¹ Also Dio, 65.10.1: οὐχ ὡς αὐτοκράτωρ ἀλλ' ὡς ἰδιώτης (not as an emperor, but as a private citizen). Cf. Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 33.41; Eutropius, 7.19; B.W. Jones (ed.), *Suetonius. Vespasian* (Bristol 2000), 78.

illustrated by the *Templum Pacis* and the ‘Augustan’ titulature and legends on his coin types.⁴²

Not all Flavians were alike. Domitian is said to have claimed descent of a somewhat surprising divine ancestor. Philostratos’ life of Apollonius tells how Domitian imprisoned a magistrate from Tarentum who refused to mention Minerva as his mother in a public prayer.⁴³ The notion is, however, not backed up through further evidence – importantly, epigraphic evidence does not support it at all. It may well result from deliberate or accidental misreading of the special attention that Domitian gave the goddess; probably as a divine *comes*, but not, it seems, as an ancestor.⁴⁴ Why would he? The important divinities whose ancestry was there for all to see were the divine Vespasian and Titus. Celebrated in Domitian’s arch of Titus, and in the *Templum Gentis Flaviae*, they were the real divinities to whom Domitian owed his status.⁴⁵ The mechanisms of competition had changed alongside the changes in the highest magistracy.

There were now new gods whose ancestry counted, a new *domus divina* of which one wanted to form part. During the Julio-Claudian dynasty, effectively only the divine Augustus counted as an ancestor who could provide relevant status. Either one tried to emphasise familial links to Augustus or one disbanded the notion altogether. Interesting, in this light, is once again Galba, who played all ancestral cards. He stemmed from an important Republican family, made public – as we have seen – his lineage back to Jupiter himself, but also put Livia’s portrait on his coinage, and styled himself ‘Lucius Livius Galba’.⁴⁶ Galba’s claims to the throne, however,

⁴² B. Levick, *Vespasian* (London 1999), 73; B.W. Jones, *The Emperor Titus* (London 1984), 121. Cf. C.F. Noreña, ‘Medium and Message in Vespasian’s *Templum Pacis*’, *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 48 (2003), 25-43. Titus followed a similar policy, minting coins that showed the ‘good’ Julio-Claudian rulers, and emphasising (up to the point of credibility) his friendship with Britannicus; Suetonius, *Divus Titus* 2; Jones, *Titus*, 121 with n.42.

⁴³ Philostratus, *Vita Apollonii* 7.24.

⁴⁴ On Domitian and Minerva: Suetonius, *Domitianus* 5; 15.3; Martial, 5.53.1-5.53.2; 9.3.10; Dio, 67.1; 67.16; Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 10.1.91; *ILS* 1998; *CIL* 6.953; B.W. Jones, *The Emperor Domitian* (London – New York 1992), 100; *RIC* 5.1.322, with J.L. Girard, ‘Domitien et Minerve: une prédilection impériale’, *ANRW* II.17.1 (1981), 233-245; 243; I. Carradice, ‘Coinage and Finance in the Reign of Domitian. AD 81-96’, *BAR Int. Series* 178 (1983), 21-22; 55 n.59; 159-160. On the notion of a divine *comes*, see still A.D. Nock, ‘The Emperors’ Divine comes’, *Journal of Roman Studies* 37 (1947), 102-116. Now also L. Possenti, ‘Le divinità comites’, *Annali della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Università di Macerata* 28 (1995), 141-170.

⁴⁵ Cf. P. J. E. Davies, *Death and the Emperor. Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius* (Austin 2000), 19-27.

⁴⁶ *BMCRE* I, nos. 201-2, Pl. 58.4; *SEG* 15.873 = M. McCrum – A. G. Woodhead, *Select Documents of the Principates of the Flavian Emperors* (Cambridge 1961), no. 328.

were transitory. It seems that when the emperorship further developed itself, divine ancestry other than dynastic divine claims lost impetus as a political tool.

The attention in our sources to the presence and absence of ancestor masks of the divine members of the ruling house in funerary processions emphasises the point. Caesar's mask was publicly prevented from being used at such occasions as gods could not have *imagines*. Indeed, during Augustus' funerary pomp, Caesar's *imago* was absent – though Romulus was put on display. Likewise, the *divus Augustus* was prevented from having an *imago*.⁴⁷ Hence, in Drusus' funeral of A.D. 23

the most arresting feature of the funeral was the parade of ancestral images, while Aeneas, author of the whole Julian line, with the whole dynasty of Alban kings, and Romulus, the founder of the city, followed by the Sabine nobles, by Attus Clausus, and by the rest of the Claudian effigies, filed in long procession past the spectator.

*funus imaginum pompa maxime inlustre fuit, cum origo luliae gentis Aeneas omnesque Albanorum reges et conditor urbis Romulus, post Sabina nobilitas, Attus Clausus ceteraque Claudiorum effigies longo ordine spectarentur.*⁴⁸

Imagines of Caesar and Augustus were conspicuously absent. Vespasian's mask, however, may have been carried along in his own funerary procession. According to Suetonius:

At his [Vespasian's] funeral, Favor, a leading mime, who wore his mask and according to custom imitated the actions and words of the deceased during his lifetime, having asked the procurator in a loud voice how much his funerary procession would cost, hearing the reply '10 million sesterces' cried out: 'Give me a hundred thousand and fling me into the Tiber'.

*et in funere Favor archimimus personam eius ferens imitansque, ut est mos, facta ac dicta vivi, interrogatis palam procuratoribus, quanti funus et pompa constaret, ut audiit, sestertio centiens, exclamavit, centum sibi sestertia darent, ac se vel in Tiberim proicerent).*⁴⁹

It is not clear, however, whether Vespasian's *imago* was carried along in Titus' funeral procession. Yet, whatever the exact context of these statements, or indeed their trustworthiness, it is evident that the notions of divinity, ancestry and public display became closely linked to the imperial household. With continuing 'sacralisation' of emperorship over the cen-

⁴⁷ Dio, 47.19.2; Dio, 56.34; Flowers 1996, op.cit. (n.8), 291-293 (= T27-29), with discussion and further references.

⁴⁸ Tacitus, *Annales* 4.9.2.

⁴⁹ Suetonius, *Divus Vespasianus* 19.2.

turies, this must have become, if anything, more pronounced in the later empire.

Based on the above evidence, then, it appears that divine genealogies no longer served an ostensibly political use for senatorial families during the *principate*. Perhaps other evidence can be employed to support the notion.

Firstly, the iconography on sarcophagi. As Hennig Wrede expertly analysed years ago, during the empire the concept of *consecratio in forma deorum* arose. Individuals, in death, characterised themselves through divine attributes. Importantly, the vast majority of these depictions concern *libertini*, their wives and children. Hennig herself already noted that it must have been easier for those who could not take up a magistracy to make divine associations publicly visible.⁵⁰ This notion is further strengthened by her recent book on senatorial sarcophagi, which seem to emphasise senatorial – rather than divine – virtues.⁵¹ A parallel to this may be Werner Eck's observation on senatorial self-representation in the Augustan period; with Augustus and his family incorporating relevant ancestry and gods, it became difficult for non-imperial families to do so. As a result, the inscription of a *cursus honorum* – the qualifications in life – became the new model.⁵²

Secondly, the private display of art in the senatorial *domus*. Pliny talks at some length about the difference between contemporary displays of art, and the way the *atria* of old used to look: “family trees traced their lines to ancient portraits. The *tablina* (archive rooms) were filled with ledgers of records and deeds done by office holders”.⁵³ In his time, on the other hand, people “leave behind portraits of their money, not themselves (*itaque nullius effigie vivente imagines pecuniae, non suas, relincunt*)”.⁵⁴ Perhaps this was simply the standard complaint that everything was better of old, but it is noticeable how in many imperial villas “the gallery of imperial personages

⁵⁰ H. Wrede, *Consecratio in Formam Deorum. Vergöttlichte Privatpersonen in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz 1981), 159; 163.

⁵¹ H. Wrede, *Senatorische Sarkophage Roms. Der Beitrag des Senatorenstandes zur römischen Kunst der hohen und späten Kaiserzeit* (Mainz am Rhein 2001).

⁵² W. Eck, ‘Senatorial Self Representation’, in: F. Millar – E. Segal (eds.), *Caesar Augustus. Seven Aspects* (Oxford 1984), 129-167; 150-151. Perhaps the absence of divine representations in the above mentioned tomb of the Licinii Crassi ought to be seen in this light. Of course, these examples somewhat cross boundaries between divine ancestry and personal divinity; which is a different subject altogether, although the developments might well run parallel.

⁵³ Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 35.6-35.7; Flowers 1996, op.cit (n.8), 302-306 (= T54); S. Carey, *Pliny's Catalogue of Culture. Art and Empire in the Natural History* (Oxford 2003), 141-156; esp. 142-143; 148-149. Cf. Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 35.12, in which Appius Servilius wanted his ancestral portraits “to be in full view on an elevated spot (*in excelso spectari*)”.

⁵⁴ Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 35.4.

extended over several generations or dynasties graphically portraying the distinguished lineage of a patron long connected with the imperial circle”.⁵⁵ In this context, too, the imperial household had become the divine core on which to focus genealogy, or at least vicinity. The well-known late antique practice of emphasising, and even fabricating, relationships with ‘Rome’s most fashionable *gentes*’, or indeed the notion of ‘appropriation of ancient aristocratic prestige’ through buying *domus* for reputed ancestral links, demonstrates, of course, that at least the perception of ancestry continued to matter.⁵⁶ Ammianus, in his digression on Rome’s elite scolds how “some plume themselves on what they consider distinguished forenames or trace their descent from some high-sounding family”.⁵⁷ But the impact of empire, through the centrality and divinity of the roman emperor, had made emphasis on divine genealogies a practice of the remote past. With an emperor to impress, who needed gods?⁵⁸

Nijmegen, January 2005.

⁵⁵ B. Bergmann, ‘Sculptural Collecting and Display in the Private Realm’, in: E. Gazda (ed.), *Roman Art in the Private Sphere. New Perspectives on the Architecture and Decor of the Domus, Villa and Insula* (Ann Arbor 1994), 51-88; 77.

⁵⁶ J. Hillner, ‘*Domus*, Family and Inheritance. The Senatorial Family House in Late Antique Rome’, *Journal of Roman Studies* 93 (2003), 129-145; 130-131; 139 with nn. 18-19; G. S. Nathan, *The Family in Late Antiquity* (Oxford 1997), 31; 167. Cf. F. Jacques, ‘L’ordine senatorio attraverso la crisi del III secolo’, in: A. Giardini (ed), *Società romana e impero tardoantico I* (1986), 1-225 and especially C. Settapani, *Continuité gentilice et continuité familiale dans les familles sénatoriales romaines à l’époque impériale. Mythe et réalité* (Oxford 2000). Cf. also the claims of descent by Cappadocian churchfathers: R. van Dam, *Becoming Christian. The Conversion of Roman Cappadocia* (Philadelphia 2003), 76-80.

⁵⁷ Ammianus 28.4.6-28.4.7. Cf. the earlier practice as illustrated by Pliny, *Naturalis historia* 35.8 in which Messala proclaims after being attacked that a bust of another family was placed amongst those his of *gens* that: “even to falsely claim the portraits of famous men as one’s own revealed a certain love for their virtues”, with Carey 2003, op.cit (n.40), 144.

⁵⁸ This is the first publication of a larger project, eventually to appear as *Emperors and Ancestors: Lineage and Roman Imperial Ideology*. I hope to address some obvious omissions from this paper, such as the use of lineage by Greek-speaking elites, at a later stage. My gratitude goes to the participants of the workshop at Münster and to Peter Wiseman for their comments on the original paper. Needless to say, they are not responsible for any remaining flaws.

THE CIVIC RELIGION AND CIVIC PATRONAGE

JOHN NICOLS

It is manifest in the *Res Gestae* and in the art of the Augustan Period that the restoration of the Republic was closely tied to a program of moral renewal; and that moral renewal was closely tied to the re-establishment of the *pax deorum*. Much attention has been given to attempts of Augustus to limit luxury, to control manumissions, and to encourage the procreation of citizens. On the whole much less scholarly attention has been devoted to problem of religious renewal. Here the concern is not so much with the problem of belief, but rather with the role of formal religion in the development of a new self identity for patriotic individuals and loyal cities in the in Roman Empire. Specifically, I would like to argue here that the example set by Augustus for *pietas* (Image 1: Augustus veiled¹) and benefaction was to a considerable degree followed by the elites of the cities of Italy especially and of the Empire. Just as Augustus held the highest offices in the constitutional order and served as a member of all the priestly colleges, so too did the leading members of the Roman communities accept similar offices, honors and functions in their *patriae* and in their client communities. Just as Augustus worked as a benefactor of Rome, so too did the local elites serve as patrons and benefactors of their own communities.² I argue here that local elites legitimized their status through imperial and community service, through their leadership in ritual and cult, and by using their time, energy and wealth to benefit their communities. I am not of course the first to argue that these services were significant, what I do wish to explore is how the components built a coherent whole.

In what follows I would like to review the basics of what we may label the Augustan model first in respect to Augustus' behavior and then broaden the investigation to include behavior of senators, equestrians and decurions. There are, however, some words of caution about the limits of this investigation:

¹ An index of images may be found in Appendix A.

² W. Eck – H. Galsterer – H. Wolff (eds.), *Die Präsenz senatorischer Familien in den Städten des Imperium Romanum bis zum späten 3. Jahrhundert* (Studien zur antiken Sozialgeschichte = Festschrift Vittinghof) (Köln – Wien 1980), 283 ff.

1. The quality and variety of evidence declines as we move down the social pyramid.
2. Are we speaking of “patronage” as a universal concept or of a particularly formal and Roman institution? It is easy, and often confusing, to allow oneself to cross the line on this point, but *patrocinium* was a very flexible institution with many nuances; indeed though we may identify some general rules, there were as many local variations as there were cities in the Empire.³ In my opinion both ancients and moderns, though keenly aware of the legal problems (and formal civic patronage was legally regulated⁴), also used the term *patronus* and its cognates fairly loosely and to satisfy immediate and long-term needs. Even so, one needs to be candid about which perspective is relevant at each step of the argument.
3. Augustus was never called patron of Rome, either of the city or of the empire.⁵ As the founder of colonies, he did ipso facto enjoy that title in many communities, but generally avoids the use of the word in reference to himself after 12 B.C. After he became *pater patriae*, there may have been no need for the title. On the other hand, Velleius claims that Tiberius was the *patronus perpetuus* of the Empire and that Dio states the same about Caesar.⁶ This is a good example of the usage problem just mentioned. Specifically, there is no reason to believe that Tiberius was ever formally given such a title, yet it was evident to some Romans that his position was at least analogous to such a status. Moreover, and in contrast to Augustus, Tiberius never accepted the title of *pater*

³ For a different perspective, see Claude Eilers’ introductory chapter in *Roman Patrons of Greek Cities* (Oxford 2002).

⁴ J. Nicols, ‘Zur Verleihung öffentlicher Ehrungen in der römischen Welt’, *Chiron* 9 (1979) 243-246; J. Gonzáles, ‘The *lex Irnitana*: A New Copy of the Flavian Municipal Law’, *Journal of Roman Studies* 76 (1986), 147-243.

⁵ Ibid. also, the Roman calendar for January 30th, the date of the dedication of the *ara pacis*, refers to Augustus as the “custodian /guardian of Roman citizens and of the world” [*iii k. Febr. Eo die ara Pacis Aug. dedicata] est. Supplicatio imperio Caesaris Augusti cust[odis civium Romanorum orbisque terrar]um*, *ILS* 108.

⁶ Dio’s version of Anthony’s eulogy to the dead Julius Caesar: “For these and for all his [Caesar’s] other acts of legislation and reconstruction, great in themselves, but likely to be deemed small in comparison with those others which I need not recount in detail, you loved him as a father and cherished him as a benefactor, you exalted him with such honors as you bestowed on no one else and desired him to be continual patron (*prostates*) of the city and of the whole domain (44.48.2).”

Velleius Paterculus uses similar language to describe Tiberius’s status in the last years of the Augustan Principate: “On these events (the defeat of Varus), [Tiberius] Caesar, the constant patron of the Roman empire (*perpetuus patronus imperii Romani*), hurried to his father...” (2.120).

patriae.⁷ It is equally true that individuals at the local level functioned as patrons and benefactors in a sociological sense even though they may not have held the title *patronus* formally.

4. The mechanism by which patterns of behavior associated with moral renewal were transmitted to members of the senate and from them down to equestrians and decurions remains to some degree uncertain. Clearly there was no mandate or (as best we can tell) any formal recommendation. Three forces may be at work: the desire to emulate an emperor perceived as virtuous had a powerful effect on behavior, second, the notion of *pietas* clearly resonated with the local elites of Italy and the empire, and third formal religion was perceived as civilizing and humanizing. These concepts will be discussed below.

In what follows, I want to focus on two aspects of the Augustan model that are most relevant to the practice of civic ritual and civic patronage in the communities of the empire, namely on the role patrons in those rituals of a religious character.

Paul Zanker in *Power of Images* has shown in some detail how Augustus operated to encourage the reform of ritual and religion.⁸ The devices were often anachronistic including, for example, the recitation of verses that were incomprehensible to their contemporaries and the leather hats with metal spikes worn by the *flamines* (Image 2: a *flamen* on the *ara pacis*), but even if Augustus acted in a way that was sometimes naive, it was astonishingly effective. The civic and ritual calendars were filled with events of religious significance commemorating especially (though not exclusively) the achievements of the imperial house. Prayers, sacrifices, processions, and feasts all served to place the emperor and his family at the center of Roman civic religion. All of these features are vividly displayed on the *ara pacis*: note the focus on sacrifice, the procession of priests, the presence of the imperial family and the connection to abundance, peace and traditional values (Image 3: procession). The annual celebrations of such events served to reinforce these connections. There are several official and annual celebrations or *feriae* associated with the *Ara Pacis Augustae*: July 4th commemorating the placing of the cornerstone, and January 30th, for the

⁷ I cannot make the case here, but suspect that reference in Velleius might have been a “trial balloon” to profile Tiberius.

⁸ P. Zanker, *Augustus und die Macht der Bilder* (München 1987), Chapter 4, 107ff.

formal dedication of the altar.⁹ The *Ara Pacis* was clearly central to the Augustan program, but it was also not the only monument that references civic religion. In the *Res Gestae* 20, Augustus notes that he repaired and/or restored 82 temples in Rome itself. Given the sums involved in these restorations, repairs and new structures, he clearly believed that such an investment was useful and indeed efficacious. He surely wished to be foster the idea that Rome ruled by serving the gods.¹⁰

How important were the priesthoods in this process?¹¹ By assuming a membership in each of the most important priestly colleges himself (Image 4a: Augustus veiled; 4b: Aurelius sacrificing), Augustus let it be known that he placed a high value on this service. To reinforce the importance, the priesthoods, life-long appointments, were given to those of the highest rank and best families.¹² Indeed the competition for such appointments was intense. Tacitus notes the case of the disappointed candidates who considered their failure to receive a promised appointment to be the equivalent to a death sentence.¹³ Pliny, who did not receive the augurate until after his consulship, wrote to Trajan:

As I am sensible, Sir, that the highest applause my actions can receive is to be distinguished by so excellent a prince, I beg you would be graciously pleased to add either the office of *augur* or *septemvir* (both which are now vacant) to the dignity I already enjoy by your indulgence; that I may have the satisfaction of publicly offering up those vows for your prosperity, from the duty of my office, which I daily prefer to the gods in private, from the affection of my heart.¹⁴

and took special pride in his cooption among the augurs:

My advancement to the dignity of augur is an honor that justly indeed merits your congratulations; not only because it is highly honorable to receive, even in the slightest instances, a testimony of the approbation of so wise and discreet a prince, but because it is, moreover, an ancient and religious institution, which has this sacred and peculiar privilege annexed to it, **that it is for life.**¹⁵

⁹ Also Ovid, *Fasti* I 709-722.

¹⁰ Horace, *Carmina* 3.6.

¹¹ I am primarily concerned with the municipal priesthoods, including the *flamines perpetui* as well as the cults established for individual emperors at the local level. The latter were common throughout Italy and are to be found in provincial cities as well. J. B. Rives, *Religion and Authority in Roman Carthage from Augustus to Constantine* (Oxford 1995), 51-63 notes cults at Carthage for Augustus, Vespasian, Titus, Nerva, Antoninus Pius and Septimius Severus.

¹² As will be discussed below, the civic *flamines* belonged to a group of *perpetui*.

¹³ Tacitus, *Annales* 6.40.

¹⁴ Pliny, *Epistulae* 10.13.

¹⁵ Pliny, *Epistulae* 4.8.

Now it may be true that members of the imperial house received positions in the priestly colleges early in their lives. But for senators in general the appointment typically came late in one's career, as a kind of capstone.¹⁶ Indeed, it is apparent from the note in Tacitus, that emperors sometimes made (perhaps private?) commitments in advance, establishing a kind of "waiting list" for these life-long appointments.

When we turn to Roman cities, we also find that there is a high correlation between municipal patrons of the decurial and equestrian orders, priests (especially of the imperial cults) and *quinquennales*. Indeed, at the local level, patronage, priesthoods and high office (both civic and imperial) are all closely associated.

Table 1: Civic Patrons, Priesthoods and Rank

rank	patrons	<i>flamines</i>	<i>pontifices</i>	other priests	<i>qq/patron</i> ¹⁷	Rank in imperial service ¹⁸
decurions	69	33	23	20	24 / 35%	22 / 32%
equestrians	56	28	14	14	22 / 40%	30 / 54%

That is, of the 125 patrons of "equestrian" status and who held priesthoods in their client community, more than one-third of them were also *quinquennales*. (If we included *IIviri* or *IVviri*, the number would be above 70%). Bear in mind that this table may be somewhat misleading. If the pattern articulated above holds, then the priestly office might well come very late in life.

Moreover, and as a check on our data, we have a complete list of patrons and magistrates of Canusium (in southeastern Italy) from the early third century.¹⁹ The *album* (Image 5) records eight patrons of equestrian status. Of these four are *quinquennales* (three in Canusium, one in a neighboring town); one is an aedile and presumably younger. Two are otherwise un-

¹⁶ When one compares these two letters, it is apparent that Pliny's first letter / petition was not successful. It was only several years later that he became an *augur*. A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny the Younger* (Oxford 1966), 79-80.

¹⁷ The higher the rank of the patron, the less likely he would be a native, and therefore the less likely he would be to hold local office.

¹⁸ This is an approximation, for the values are not complete in all cases. In general, decurions appear more often as *primus pilus*; while equestrians appear as *tribuni* or *praefecti*.

¹⁹ *CIL* IX 339; from c. A.D. 221. The *album* and its contents have been discussed in many contexts, in general, M. Chelotti et al., *Le epigrafi romane di Canosa I* (Bari 1985), and most recently by B. Salway, 'Prefects, *patroni*, and Decurions: A New Perspective on the *album* of Canusium', in: A. Cooley (ed.), *The Epigraphical Landscape of Roman Italy* (London 2000), 115-171.

known, possibly from neighboring towns to judge by their names and may have been *quinquennales* in their *patria*. The last is the brother of a *praefectus Aegypti*. Eleven *quinquennales* are recorded on the inscription (seven elected; four are *adlecti*), suggesting that patronal status (with eight entries) was more selective than quinquennial. Priesthoods are not listed on the album.

The 4th century *album*²⁰ of Thamugadi records its members in this order:

- 10 *patroni* of senatorial standing,
- 2 patrons of equestrian standing,
- 2 provincial *sacerdotes*,
- 1 *curator reipublicae*
- 34 *duoviri* almost all of whom are listed also as *flamen perpetuus*.
- 4 *pontifices*
- 3 *augures*

Admittedly, this *album* is much later (c. A.D. 360) than the other evidence cited here, but it clearly demonstrates that significant numbers of the local aristocracy, indeed all of the *duoviri* also were priests, and overwhelmingly *flamines*.

These arguments make it quite clear that the accumulation of titles (*patronus*, *flamen* and *quinquennalis*) were extended to only a very exclusive group of equestrians. So much is also confirmed by the fact that most of these individuals also held important positions in the imperial service. They were then individuals who must have performed or were expected to perform exceptional services for their communities even if we do not know what those services might have been. The fact that patrons and priests included individuals who had reached lower offices [as happens on both of the *alba*] is not an argument against this thesis. The individuals in question may have been coopted for expected rather than actual benefits (as certainly applies to Pliny whose case I will discuss below) and not yet have reached the higher offices. The important point is this: at the time that the inscription was authorized, well over 70% of municipal patrons had already reached the two of the highest offices (*Iivir*; priest) their communities had to bestow.²¹

But what did these priests do? They were responsible for the regulation of sacrifices and ceremonies, for dedications and consecrations (Images 6a-e); they managed the calendar and pontifical archives; and had some legal

²⁰ CIL VIII, 2403. A. Chastagnol, *L'album municipal de Timgad* (Bonn 1978), 22-26; D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the West III* 2 (Leiden 2002), 9.

²¹ Some examples: T. Flavius Germanus = CIL IX 2922; M. Gabinius Bassus = CIL VIII 26467-8.

responsibilities.²² But the major focus of activity was clearly the imperial cults. As *augur*, Pliny writes, "... I may have the satisfaction of publicly offering up those vows for your prosperity, from the duty of my office, which I daily prefer to the gods in private, from the affection of my heart." Similar focus on the emperor and on the members of the imperial house may also be seen in the records of the Arval Brethren.²³ Moreover, it is readily apparent in the epigraphical evidence that at the municipal level the *flamines* were especially constituted to administer the imperial cult. Approximately half of all patrons and priests were also *flamines*. Cults honoring Augustus, Claudius, Vespasian, Titus, Trajan, Hadrian, Pius are all recorded on the same inscriptions that record civic patronage. On some occasions, such sacrifices involved victims, but on other ones wine and incense may have been sufficient. It seems reasonable to conclude that priests at all levels participated in or administered sacrifices on behalf of the emperor and his family, that their role was a very public one, and that they may have been responsible for providing the sacrificial victims and for sponsoring the social events (public banquets: *epulones*) that surrounded the festivities.²⁴ At the provincial level, the same activities may also be identified.²⁵ Priestly patrons and patronal priests had a very public role in the civic and ritual life of a community.

In respect to benefaction and patronage, let us consider also the pattern of temple construction among the elite. As Zanker notes, Augustus had reserved this task for himself in Rome, but throughout Italy and the provinces there was ample opportunity to emulate Augustus.²⁶ Agrippa set the pattern by building many structures including the Maison Carée in Nîmes (dedicated to his sons, Caius and Lucius). In this case too, Pliny offers a splendid example of how a senator and patron of an Italian community could emulate Augustus and construct a temple for the benefit of a client community.²⁷ He writes to his grandfather-in-law that a long promised trip to Comum will be delayed so that he can visit Tifernum

²² D. Fishwick, *Imperial Cult* II 1 (Leiden 1991), 500ff. provides a summary of the activities of priests; admittedly he is focused on the provincial cults, but given the parallel structure of the municipal and provincial cults, there is good reason to believe that the activities were similar. Also G. J. Szemler, *RE Suppl.* 15 (1978), 331. s.v. pontifex.

²³ *CIL* VI 2041.

²⁴ Fishwick 1991, op.cit. (n.22), 502 ff.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ See also, Eck 1980, op.cit. (n.2) note 1.

²⁷ Pliny, *Epistulae* 4.1

which adopted me as its patron when I was scarcely more than a child, its enthusiasm outrunning its discretion. The people always celebrate my arrivals, regret my departures, and rejoice in my official titles, and so to express my gratitude (one always feels disgraced at being outdone in friendly feeling) I defrayed the cost of building a temple in the town. As this is now completed, it would be a sacrilegious to postpone its dedication any longer.

Emulation of Augustus may not be explicit, but the analogies are readily apparent. Note that the celebration of Pliny's comings and goings resembles the celebrations on the Roman calendar, for example, October 12th, commemorating the return of Augustus from the overseas provinces, or the accounts in Tacitus and Suetonius of how the whole population went out to greet a returning emperor.²⁸

There is however a major problem. Epigraphical evidence simply does not provide much indication of a connection between civic patronage and the construction of buildings of a religious character. Indeed of 125 cases I have collected, the construction of temples is mentioned twice (e.g., *CIL* VIII 26467 and 8) while the overwhelming majority of inscriptions (76 cases of 61%) make no mention of any benefaction at all and another 23 (10%) employ some variation of the common but vague formula *ob merita*²⁹.

Table 2: Benefactions

	temples	buildings	other	<i>ob merita</i>	no mention
dec – 69	2	8	3	12	46
equ – 56	0	6	1	11	31

Does this mean that members of the elite did not build temples or even confer material benefactions? Probably not. Duncan-Jones notes that 23 cases in Italy of “miscellaneous building works and restorations” where we have specific information on the amount spent. Of those 22 cases, 7 were related to the construction of bathing facilities and 6 to temples (the remaining involve the construction of porticos, roads, and other structures). In this

²⁸ In reference to Tiberius, Suetonius, *Tiberius* 72; Tacitus, *Annales* 4.67 and 4.74. Eilers 2002, op.cit. (n.3), 102-104 argues that there is no connection between the benefaction and the fact of patronage in this passage; but such a interpretation is too narrow, for Pliny clearly means that he defrayed the cost of constructing the temple because of the accumulation of honors including not only the celebration of his comings and goings but also his cooption as patron.

²⁹ *AE* 1997, 1663. There are five additional cases in which a patron conferred the benefaction of a temple, but I have not included them here because their status and patria are uncertain. An additional case involves the benefaction of an altar, but it is not clear whether it was for public or private purposes. I am indebted to Johannes Hahn for pursuing this issue. Whether there are two cases or eight does not significantly alter the line of the argument.

sample, some 27% of the structures are temples. In Africa, he identifies 76 structures, of which 28 have some religious significance.³⁰ If this is a normal distribution then we ought to expect that patrons also conferred benefactions of a religious character in a similar proportion.

The conundrum, namely that there is very little direct evidence to support a connection between formal *patrocinium* and benefaction, has been a major problem for many scholars who have studied formal civic patronage. The literary evidence about Augustus and his successors and the official propaganda (e.g., the many coins) places a great deal of emphasis on the construction of temples and the administration of the state rituals and cults as a means to secure the good will of the gods. Moreover, the literary evidence emphasizes the power of emulation. Consider the statement of Tacitus on moral reform:

The new men who were often admitted into the Senate from the towns, colonies and even the provinces, introduced their household thrift ... But the chief encourager of strict manners was Vespasian, himself old-fashioned both in his dress and in his diet. Henceforth a respectful feeling towards the prince and a love of emulation proved more efficacious than legal penalties or terrors.³¹

And indeed, Tacitus reinforces this perception in the *Agricola*, 15, when he describes how his father-in-law pacified the Britons: “Agricola gave private encouragement and public aid to the building of temples, courts of justice and dwelling-houses, praising the energetic, and reproving the indolent. Thus an honorable rivalry took the place of compulsion.” This pattern of emulation, Zanker has shown, may also be seen in the visual arts.³² It is no wonder that scholars have expected to find the local elites doing exactly that: emulating Augustus as *pater* / *patronus* / benefactor of the Roman Empire and building temples and supporting the state cults (traditional and imperial) in their communities, just as Augustus did in Rome.

But if these arguments have any validity, how are we to explain the dearth of epigraphical data explicitly linking formal patronage with benefaction? Eilers’ recent book on civic patronage argues that patronage in the Principate was in decline, the fact that we have such minimal evidence on benefaction demonstrates that patrons simply were not the benefactors we might have expected.

³⁰ R. Duncan-Jones, *The Economy of the Roman Empire* (Cambridge 1976), 90-93 for Africa; 160-163 for Italy.

³¹ Tacitus, *Annales* 3.55.

³² P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor 1990), 32-40.

The critique does carry considerable weight and it has forced me to rethink my own perceptions on civic patronage. While it cannot be proven as directly as one might like, I do think there are several considerations that suggest that patrons and communities did not like to list specific benefactions.

First, the focus of Eilers study is on the formal patronage of Greek communities in the late middle and late republic. Such relationships virtually disappeared under Augustus. Whatever the nature of the benefactions conferred or anticipated, temple building and cult in the Augustan sense surely were not in the forefront (i.e., Roman patrons in the late republic did not build temples in their client communities; indeed the opposite may be closer to the truth). Second, comparative studies of patronage have demonstrated that the lack of specificity in respect to benefaction is a characteristic phenomenon of the institution.³³ Indeed, and what needs to be stressed here, the degree to which the responsibilities of the two parties have been generalized is typical of long term ‘clientelistic’ relationships.³⁴ In my opinion, however, we must distinguish between actual performance and expectation. That is (regarding the latter), communities might use honors in general and that of patronage specifically to generate a sense of obligation in the patron, as *ILS* 6106 puts it in respect to the cooption of Pomponius Bassus that as patron he would assist Ferentinum, the client community (... *vir auxilio sit futurus municipio nostro ... in clientelam amplissimae domus suae municipium nostrum recipere* ...). In this case, the client community could not specify services because it hoped to secure many advantages over the longer-term. Alternatively, if the honor were used discretely, it could also serve as a reward or incentive for a series of benefactions; Seneca³⁵ and Pliny³⁶ offer many examples. Clearly, the status and the wealth of the patron, actual or potential, were significant factors in both scenarios but in the former, benefactions could not be specified. Patrons may have been ready to confer benefactions, but clearly could not meet all expectations.

³³ S. N. Eisenstadt – L. Roniger, *Patrons, Clients and Friends* (Cambridge 1984), 248ff.

³⁴ Eisenstadt – Roniger 1984, op.cit. (n.33), 250ff. So much is also indicated in the *tabulae patronatus* (the formal text of cooption), which typically stress that the relationship should extend to future generations, J. Nicols, ‘*Tabulae Patronatus*: A Study of the Agreement between Patron and Client-Community’, in: H. Temporini – W. Haase (eds.), *ANRW* II, 13 (Berlin 1980), 535-561.

³⁵ E.g., Seneca, *De beneficiis* 4.30.3; 4.15.3.

³⁶ Inter alia also Pliny, *Epistulae* 5.11.

Consider the case of Nonius Balbus.³⁷ We read on the latter inscription from Herculaneum that Balbus was patron of the town but nothing is said about any of his benefactions. On the former inscription, however, we learn that he had given Herculaneum its gate, walls and basilica, significant benefactions by any standard, but the text does not refer to him as *patronus*. There appears to be a tendency to avoid specific reference to benefactions in connection with inscriptions referring to *patroni*. We may guess at a reason: Because the title was prestigious, communities did not want to suggest that it could be had for a specific price, for example, for funding of a temple. Rather, they wished to stress the continuing nature of benefaction and obligation (as Pliny and Seneca indicate, see above). Allow me to mention here one other well known example of this phenomenon. Calpurnius Fabatus was the grandfather in law of Pliny; he had a successful career as an equestrian officer as *praefectus* and *tribunus* in a number of legions and cohorts, became *IIIvir iure dicundo* in his *patria* of Comum. He was also *flamen* of Augustus and patron of his city.³⁸ No benefactions are recorded on this inscription, but Pliny, *Epistulae* 5.11 tells us he [Fabatus] built a portico to honor himself and his son and, on the occasion of the dedication, made an additional and significant monetary gift to the citizens of Comum. Characteristically (and important for our purposes), Pliny urges Fabatus to continue his generosity. In brief: the inscription which must have been set up fairly late in Fabatus' life, notes his status as patron and priest but does not mention any benefaction; Pliny's letter specifies the benefactions but does not note the patronal or priestly status. If this pattern has any general validity, then we may have to conclude that at least some of the many of the benefactors recorded on Latin inscriptions may also have been formal patrons; at the same time, we must also be aware that the reference to benefactions and achievements does not alone demonstrate the existence of formal patronage. Conclusions based then on lists of patrons will inevitably be more tenuous than one might wish. Even so, let us extend the argument a bit further. As noted above, Duncan-Jones found that a quarter of public benefactions involved religious structures of some kind, suggesting that patrons too may have devoted a similar proportion to structures of a religious character. Did Pliny confer a benefaction on his *patria* similar to the one he gave to Tifernum? Unfortunately, the fragmentary inscription summarizing Pliny's gifts to Comum does not mention any religious structures, but

³⁷ *CIL* X 1425 and *AE* 1976, 144 – Appendix B.

³⁸ *CIL* V 5267 = *ILS* 2721.

another inscription records that he was a *flamen* of Titus in Comum, so he may well have done something to support the cult.³⁹ What were the rewards? To judge by the two *alba* patrons were given a special place at the head of the decurions and presumably enjoyed the same priority at official functions. Specifically, as significant numbers of civic **patrons** were also **quin-quennales** and **priests** in the civic cults and had held leading positions in the **imperial equestrian** service, we may indeed identify a four-legged “chair” that allowed the leading men in the communities to play a highly visible role in the public, civic, and ritual life of their communities. If we cannot be certain about the exact nature of the benefactions provided, at the very least this combination served to generate and support civic *benevolentia* by cultivating an honorable rivalry.

In sum, I believe patrons provided their communities with a range of benefactions. Legal services, access to the court and the senate, mediation are all recorded activities. Moreover, even if there is no direct connection made, patrons also provided benefactions in the form of civic buildings *inter alia*, the construction of markets, porticos, roads, altars, temples and the support of other ritual events in the civic calendar. Of course, one does not have to be the formal patron of a community to provide such benefactions, but communities, the literary evidence⁴⁰ suggests that the latter used the honor as a way to encourage benefaction.

Fundamentally I am reluctant to speculate on such issues over the longer eras of Roman history, but we may conclude this investigation with the following observation. Patronage and civic religion in the Early Republic may have little to do with the practice of either in the time of Augustus. So it is with some caution that I mention the following. Peter Brown makes a compelling case for a connection between the local elites, civic patrons, bishops and the cult of “patron” saints in the practice of late Roman Christianity.⁴¹ Indeed, one sees how easy it was for the local patrons, now as bishops to embrace elements of the Christian religion that allowed them to legitimize their authority and to profile their social position. Functionally, the cult of the saints and the cult of the emperors were not that far removed from one another. Indeed, the primary duty of the local patron and bishop

³⁹ Another example of this phenomenon is A. Gabinius Datus of Dougga, *CIL* VIII 26468 and *ILAfr* 569.

⁴⁰ Especially the letters of Pliny and Fronto, e.g., *Epistulae* 2.11.

⁴¹ P. Brown, *The Cult of the Saints* (Chicago 1981), 32-36; more generally, chapters 2 and 3.

was the proper veneration of the saint, just as patrons earlier venerated deified emperors through the control of ritual and sacred buildings.

Eugene (Oregon), December 2004.

Appendix A: Index of Images.

Please go to: http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/~nic/civic_religion

- Image 1: Augustus veiled
= http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/nic/civic_religion/image1.jpg
- Image 2: *Ara pacis*, *flamen* in the procession of senators.
= http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/nic/civic_religion/image2.jpg
- Image 3: *Ara pacis*, overview of procession and of “Italia”.
= http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/nic/civic_religion/image3.jpg
- Image 4a: Augustus functioning as a priest.
= http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/nic/civic_religion/image4a.jpg
- Image 4b: Aurelius sacrificing.
= http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/nic/civic_religion/image4b.jpg
- Image 5: Album Canusinum
= http://darkwing.uoregon.edu/nic/civic_religion/image5.jpg
- Images 6a-d: low resolution scans of sacrificial scenes from various sources. For high resolution images, see the plates in Fishwick, II 1, plates LXXXIa-b; LXXXIIa; LXXIXa-d; XCa-c; XCIa-b; also the plates in Zanker, Nos. 86; 93; 95 - 97; 99- 102; 108-11.

Appendix B: The case of M. Nonius Balbus

M NONIVS M F BALBVS PROCOS
BASILICAM PORTAS MVRVM PECVNIA SVA

CIL 10, 1425 (Naples, national museum)

[QV]OD M(ARCVS) OFILLIVS CELER II VIR ITER(VM) V(ERBA)
F(ECIT) PERTINERE AT MVNICIPI /
DIGNITATEM MERITIS M(ARCI) NONI BALBI RESPONDERE D(E)
E(A) R(E) I(TA) C(ENSVERVNT) /
[CV]M M(ARCVS) NONIVS BALBVS QVO HAC VIXERIT PARENTIS
ANIMVM CVM PLVRIMA LIBERALITAT(E) /
SINGVLIS VNIVERSISQVE PRAISTITERIT PLACERE
DECVRIONIBVS STATVAM EQVESTREM EI PONI QVAM /
(5)CELEBERRIMO LOCO EX PECVNIA PVBLICA INSCRIBIQVE M
NONIO M F MEN BALBO PR(AETORI) PROCO(N)S(VLI) **PATRONO**
VNIVERSVS /
ORDO POPVLI HERCVLANIESSIS OB MERITA EIVS ITEM EO LOCO
QVO CINERES EIVS CONLECTI SVNT ARAM /
MARMOREAM FIERI ET CONSTITVI INSCRIBIQVE PVBLICE
M(ARCO) NONIO M(ARCI) F(ILIO) BALBO EXQVE EO LOCO
PARENTALIBV(S) /
POMPAM DVCI LVDISQVE GVMNICIS QVI SOLITI ERANT FIERI
DIEM EDICI VNVM IN HONOREM EIVS ET CVM IN THEATRO /
LVDI FIENT SELLAM EIVS PONI C(ENSVERVNT)

AE 1976, 0144

*[qu]od M(arcus) Ofillius Celer Iivir iter(um) v(erba) f(ecit), pertinere at
municipi dignitatem meritis M(arci) Noni Balbi respondere d(e) e(a) r(e)
i(ta) c(ensuerunt) : [cu]m M(arcus) Nonius Balbus, quo hac vixerit parentis
animum cum plurima liberalitat(e), singulis universisque praestiterit,
placere decurionibus statuam equestrem ei poni quam celeberrimo loco ex
pecunia publica inscribique: « M(arco) Nonio, M(arci) f(ilio), Men(enia)
Balbo, pr(aetori) proco(n)s(uli), **patrono**, universus ordo populi
Herculaniensis ob merita eius » ; item eo loco quo cineres eius conlecti sunt
aram marmoream fieri et constitui inscribique publice: « M(arco) Nonio
M(arci) f(ilio) Balbo » exque eo loco parentalibu(s) pompam duci ludisque
gumniceis qui soliti erant fieri diem edici unum in honorem eius et cum in
theatro ludi fient sellam eius poni c(ensuerunt).*

INTERPRETATIO ROMANA

CLIFFORD ANDO

Among scholars of classical religion, the terms *interpretatio Graeca* and *interpretatio Romana* commonly refer to the “broad identification among Greeks and Romans of a foreign godhead with a member of their own pantheons”. These identifications are generally studied at the level of naming – not least because most easily collected evidence for them is linguistic, namely, the epigraphically-attested use of “theonyms as appellatives”. What is more, many argue that the central interest of *interpretationes* lies more or less exclusively in the act of naming, and not in the act of identification, and that *interpretatio* itself is “therefore a phenomenon in the linguistic-conceptual realm.”¹ This seems to me shortsighted. It is my object in this note to suggest that an inquiry into *interpretatio Romana* might well reveal as much about Roman gods as it does about Roman language. Indeed, the currency of these terms in religious historiography today is all the more striking for their rarity in ancient usage, in which they functioned largely within discourses on linguistic and cultural translation. It is, in fact, precisely and paradoxically the import of *interpretatio* in problems of language that, I wish to suggest, reveals most clearly what *interpretatio* does not reveal in problems of theology.

We might start with *interpretatio Romana* itself. The phrase occurs in extant Latin literature only once, in a famous passage of Tacitus’ *Germania*:²

Apud Naharvalos antiquae religionis lucus ostenditur. Praesidet sacerdos muliebri ornatu, sed deos interpretatione Romana Castorem Pollucemque memorant. Ea vis numini, nomen Alcis. Nulla simulacra, nullum peregrinae superstitionis vestigium; ut fratres tamen, ut iuvenes venerantur.

Among the Naharvali is shown a grove, the seat of a prehistoric ritual. (A priest presides in female dress, but the gods commemorated there are, according to *interpretatio Romana*, Castor and Pollux. That, at least, is the power manifested by the godhead, whose name is Alci. There are no images, no trace of any foreign superstition, but nevertheless, they worship these gods as brothers and young men.) (trans. after Hutton/Warmington)

¹ F. Graf, ‘Interpretatio, II. Religion’, *Der Neue Pauly* 5 (1998), 1042-1043.

² Tacitus, *Germania* 43.4.

What did Tacitus mean by *interpretatio Romana*? Did he, for example, assume that the gods in question were both ontologically prior to human language and everywhere the same, and that their names in different languages arose arbitrarily? In which case, does he intend no more by *interpretatio Romana* than the identification of a referent by its Roman sign? Or did he assume that names arise organically, in which case Castor and Pollux were in some as-yet-to-be-determined sense different at Rome and among the Naharvali, and yet still the same? In which case, does *interpretatio Romana* refer not simply to the translation of natural signs, but to the intellection necessary to recognize the identity of their referents?

This development of Tacitus' diction takes us in a rather different direction than does traditional scholarship on the passage and its context. *Interpretatio Romana* has generally been studied not for what it reveals about a specifically Roman form of polytheism, or in particular about its epistemic and linguistic premises, but rather as a phenomenon of religion in the provinces of the empire. To such scholars, Tacitus has provided a name for – and is often taken by them to have intended no more by that name than – a simplistic form of translation, kindred to contact syncretism, by which Romans and Germans, in this case, recognized some identity between the *vires* of the *numina* of gods whom they knew by different names.³ (I note in passing my own astonishment that this mode of understanding the divine has not provoked more reflection than it has; it seems to me an extraordinarily perilous way of being in the world.)⁴ And scholars subscribing to such a reading of Tacitus have compiled vast catalogs of correspondences between Roman and provincial gods, drawing on both epigraphic and literary evidence.⁵

³ This is the usage foregrounded by Graf 1998, op.cit. (n.1). See also M. Henig, 'Ita intellexit numine inductus tuo: Some Personal Interpretations of Deity in Roman Religion', in: M. Henig – A. King (eds.), *Pagan Gods and Shrines of the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1986), 159-169; at 160-161, or R. Bloch, 'Héra, Uni, Junon en Italie centrale', *Revue des Études Latines* 51 (1973), 55-61; at 55: both scholars assume that *interpretatio* was a (simple) matter of naming and therefore, as it seems, unimportant in cult and largely irrelevant to individual religiosity.

⁴ Perilous, that is, because the processes of recognizing a god on the basis of some exercise of its power and then naming it properly were so fraught with difficulty and simultaneously so essential. For a study of Roman cult advancing this position, see C. Ando, *Roman Religion* (Edinburgh 2003), 1-15; 141-146.

⁵ For two recent studies of *interpretatio Romana* along these lines, see J. Webster, 'Interpretatio: Roman Word Power and the Celtic gods', *Britannia* 26 (1995), 153-161, and W. Spickermann, 'Interpretatio Romana? Zeugnisse der Religion von Römern, Kelten und Germanen im Rheingebiet bis zum Ende des Bataveraufstandes', in: D. Hopp – C. Trümpler (eds.), *Die frühe römische Kaiserzeit im Ruhrgebiet* (Essen 2001), 94-106, each of whom uses the term more or less with the meanings it has

My concern with this body of scholarship lies not with its aims or achievements, but with the unreflective way in which Tacitus is made to serve them. For what few scholars other than Georg Wissowa have respected are the very different origins whence ancient evidence for the theory and practice of *interpretatio Romana* derives. It is hardly a distortion to say that extant theoretical reflections on *interpretatio* are universally Roman, while the vast majority of evidence for its practice is provincial.⁶ And while it might therefore be salutary to suggest that a certain caution is in order before aligning Roman theory with provincial practice, it is surely time that we placed Tacitus' remark in its Roman context and situated Roman theories of *interpretatio* alongside other Roman writings on religion, language and knowledge.⁷

acquired in twentieth-century usage. The principal development of recent years in scholarship of this kind has been an effort to situate translation and naming in post-conquest societies and so, often enough, to redescribe them as forms of power relations, a development that harmonizes well with efforts then commencing to view Romanization as a form of competitive performance among local elites. Exemplary studies of this kind include G. Alföldy, 'Epigraphica Hispanica VI. Das Diana-Heiligtum von Segobriga', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 58 (1985), 139-159; M. Alföldi, 'Zur Frage der "interpretatio Romana"', in: F.-R. Herrmann – I. Schmidt – F. Verse (eds.), *Festschrift für Günter Smolla II* (Wiesbaden 1999), 597-605, who issues the important caution that other aspects of cult – including ritual – were likewise subject to "interpretation"; and T. Derks, 'The Perception of the Roman Pantheon by a Native Elite: the Example of Votive Inscriptions from Lower Germany', in: N. Roymans – F. Theuvs (eds.), *Images of the Past. Studies on Ancient Societies in North-Western Europe* (Amsterdam 1991), 235-265. It would, however, be a mistake to reduce translation solely to a function of power: "In this chapter and the next I want to say: (1) that translation is an art of recognition and response, both to another person and to another language; (2) that it carries the translator to a point between languages, between people (and between peoples), where the differences between them can be more fully seen and more nearly comprehended--differences that enable us to see in a new way what each one is, or, perhaps more properly, differences in which the meaning and identity of each resides; (3) that it involves an assertion of the self, and of one's language too, that is simultaneously a limiting of both; and (4) that in all these respects it is a model of law and justice, for these two are at their heart also ways of establishing right relations, both between one person and another and between a mind and the languages it confronts" (J.B. White, *Justice as Translation. An Essay in Cultural and Legal Criticism* [Chicago 1990], 230).

⁶ Indeed, G. Wissowa, 'Interpretatio Romana. Römische Götter im Barbarenlande', *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 19 (1916/1919), 1-49, is practically alone in recognizing in any systematic way how far modern inquiry into provincial forms of *interpretatio* has developed, indeed, has distanced itself from its theorizing at Rome; note, e.g., 28: "Im allgemein darf man sagen, daß wir aus den *interpretationes Romanae* mehr für unsere Kenntnis römischen Denkens als für die der provinziellen Religionen gewinnen."

⁷ There have been two attempts to consider *interpretatio Romana* in light of Roman writings on *interpres*, neither terribly satisfactory: J.-L. Girard, 'Interpretatio romana. Questions historiques et problèmes de méthode', *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 60 (1980), 21-27; at 23-24, and W. Schenk, 'Interpretatio Graeca – Interpretatio Romana. Der hellenistische Synkretismus als semiotisches Problem', in: P. Schmitter – H.W. Schmitz (eds.), *Innovationen in Zeichentheorien: Kultur- und wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Studien zur Kreativität* (Münster 1989), 83-121; at 86; 92-93.

To start with, Tacitus' *interpretatio Romana* is perhaps most easily aligned with a glib but long-lived ancient tradition of remarking upon the names of gods:⁸

(83) *Age et his vocabulis esse deos facimus quibus a nobis nominantur?* (84) *At primum, quot hominum linguae, tot nomina deorum; non enim ut tu, Velleius, quocumque veneris, sic idem in Italia Volcanus, idem in Africa, idem in Hispania.*

(83) Come now: do we really think that the gods are everywhere called by the same names by which they are addressed by us? (84) But the gods have as many names as there are languages among humans. For it is not with the gods as with you: you are Velleius wherever you go, but Vulcan is not Vulcan in Italy and in Africa and in Spain.

Thus situated, Tacitus finds his place alongside Greeks from Herodotus to Ammianus and Romans from Caesar to, well, Ammianus, in rendering barbarian religions intelligible to the educated elite of the Mediterranean basin by, in effect, eliding problems of cultural and theological difference altogether.⁹ (I say this despite some misgiving that Greeks and Romans based their practices of identifying and naming gods on very different grounds and gave them expression in very different arenas.)

This reading of Tacitus finds support in other uses of *interpretatio*, both within and without ethnographic literature. Pliny, for example, explained that the Druids held nothing more sacred than mistletoe and the tree on which it grows – provided that tree is an oak. Indeed, he says, the Druids perform no rite without the foliage of those trees, so that it might seem that the Druids might well, or might seem to have gotten even their name *interpretatione Graeca*.¹⁰ Presumably what Pliny meant is that the Druids got their name from the Greek word for oak. More specific to religion and akin to its usage in Tacitus is the use of *interpretatio* by Varro, who denominates *interpretationes physicae* or *physiologicae* the allegorical identification of gods with natural forces that constitutes one important doctrine of so-called “natural theology”.¹¹

⁸ Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.83-1.84.

⁹ F. Richter, *De deorum barbarorum interpretatione Romana quaestiones selectae* (Halis Saxonum 1906), 5-11; Wissowa 1916/ 1919, op.cit. (n.5), 2-18; A.S. Pease, *Marcus Tullius Cicero, De natura deorum* I (Cambridge 1955), 426-427. On Herodotus in particular see now T. Harrison, *Divinity and History. The Religion of Herodotus* (Oxford 2000), 251-264.

¹⁰ Pliny, *Historia naturalis* 16.249: *iam per se roborum eligunt lucos, nec ulla sacra sine earum fronde conficiunt, ut inde appellati quoque interpretatione Graeca possint Druidae videri* (“[The Druids] even choose groves of such oak for their own sake, nor do they perform any rite without the foliage of those trees, so that they could seem to have been named ‘Druids’ by *interpretatio Graeca*”).

¹¹ Augustine, *De civitate dei* 7.5; see Varro, *Antiquitates rerum divinarum* fr. 225; cf. fr. 206; 23.

But there is a further problem. It is not simply that words rarely map precisely the semantic fields of other words, even in the same language. The Romans knew that and remarked frequently upon it: the emperor Tiberius urged senators to speak only Latin in the *curia*, and himself apologized for using “monopoly”; on another occasion, he requested that the word ἔμβλημα be replaced in a *senatus consultum* either with a Latin equivalent, regardless whether that took one word or several, or with a periphrasis – I mean, circumlocution (which Suetonius calls an *ambitus verborum*).¹² Quintilian acknowledged this difficulty when writing about “rhetoric”: the standard translations *oratoria* and *oratrix*, he complained, were no less ugly than the Plautine coinages *essentia* and *queentia*; what is worse, they were inexact.¹³

The problem is rather one of cultural difference, of which language difference is but one index. Polybius’ narrative of the negotiations between the Aetolians and Manius Acilius Glabrio exemplifies the pitfalls that confronted Greeks in their early encounters with Roman magistrates, in which cultural differences were problematically masked by the apparent ease with which each side supposedly translated what the other was saying.¹⁴ In 191 B.C. the Aetolians decided to ask the consul Glabrio for his pardon and resolved to commit themselves “to the faith of the Roman people” (εἰς τὴν Ῥωμαίων πίστιν), not knowing, as Polybius writes, the import (δύναμις) of the phrase. In fact, a Roman understood surrender *in fidem* as unconditional; the Aetolians, Polybius explains, were deceived by the word “faith” into believing that their action would obtain a more complete pardon (ὥς ἂν διὰ τοῦτο τελειότερου σφίσιν ἐλέους ὑπάρξοντος). After granting the Aetolians an audience, Glabrio began to dictate the terms under which they could act in the future. The Aetolians cried out in surprise: “What you demand is not Greek (Ἑλληνικόν)”. Glabrio responded coldly: “Are you still going to run around acting Greek (ἔτι γὰρ ὑμεῖς ἐλληνοκοπεῖτε

¹² Suetonius, *Tiberius* 71.

¹³ Quintilian, 2.14.1-2.14.4.

¹⁴ For preliminary remarks on Roman attitudes to language difference in diplomatic and provincial contexts, see M. Dubuisson, ‘Y-a-t-il une politique linguistique romaine?’, *Ktema* 7 (1982), 187-210, and W. Eck, ‘Latein als Sprache politischer Kommunikation in Städten der östlichen Provinzen’, *Chiron* 30 (2000), 641-660; for some further remarks on dissonance between Greek and Latin political vocabularies and on the “effectiveness” of translation, see C. Ando, ‘Was Rome a polis?’, *Classical Antiquity* 18 (1999), 5-34; 7-18.

...), even after you have given yourselves εἰς τὴν πίστιν? I will throw you all in chains if I want to”.¹⁵

The jurist Gaius reflected rather more self-consciously on this issue when treating verbal obligations, which are created by formulae of question and response. The particular *verborum obligatio* ‘*Dari spondes? Spondeo*’, ‘Do you promise conveyance? I promise’, he writes, was peculiar to Roman citizens. Other obligations, he allows, are part of the *ius gentium*, and so are valid among all people, citizens and aliens alike. Did he mean that the one formula could only be employed by Roman citizens, and only in Latin, while all others were available to both citizens and aliens? And could those formulae be uttered in any language? And if Gaius indeed draws that distinction, on what basis did he do so? Gaius goes on to list Greek *formulae* valid between Roman citizens – provided they understand Greek; and he concedes that Latin formulae are valid between aliens, provided they understand Latin.

“But the verbal obligation *dari spondes? spondeo*, is so peculiar to Roman citizens that it cannot even be rendered in Greek in an accurate interpretation (*ut ne quidem in Graecum sermonem per interpretationem proprie transferri possit*), even though the word *spondeo* is said to derive from a Greek word”.¹⁶

The specific connection here established between language and political identity merits further study; it is in many ways peculiar, and peculiarly Roman.¹⁷ For now, I want to work my way back to religion and to Tacitus. For what Quintilian, Polybius, and Gaius draw our attention to, is the contingent particularity and cultural specificity of concepts and the terms used to represent them. In other words, they draw our attention to translation as a historical problem, one we should seek locate not simply in place and time, but from place to place, and time to time.

Within the sphere of religion, constructing an identity between gods through naming will have elided differences in iconography and theology that must have been negotiated at levels other than the language of prayer,

¹⁵ Polybius, 20.9-20.10. The accounts of this episode have generated an enormous bibliography that is not immediately relevant to my purposes here, since I cite this episode merely as an example of a larger phenomenon that is not itself in doubt. For bibliography and a thorough reading see E.S. Gruen, ‘Greek *pistis* and Roman *fides*’, *Athenaeum* 60 (1982), 50-68; on *fides* in international relations see K.-J. Hölkesskamp, ‘*Fides - deditio in fidem - dextra data et accepta*: Recht, Religion und Ritual im Rom’, in: C. Bruun (ed.), *The Roman Middle Republic: Politics, Religion and Historiography c. 400 - 133 B.C.* (Rome 2000), 223-250; esp. 234-248.

¹⁶ Gaius, 3.92-3.93.

¹⁷ For the present see J.N. Adams, ‘*Romanitas*’ and the Latin Language’, *Classical Quarterly* 53 (2003), 184-205, and C. Ando, review of T. Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire. The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford 2001), *Classical Philology* 99 (2004), 89-98.

for example. This much is already visible at moments when an *interpretatio* was contested. So, for example, Tacitus concludes an extended meditation on the origin of Serapis by allowing that:¹⁸

deum ipsum multi Aesculapium, quod medeatur aegris corporibus, quidam Osirin, antiquissimum illis gentibus numen, plerique Iovem ut rerum omnium potentem, plurimi Ditem patrem insignibus, quaeque in ipso manifesta, aut per ambages coniectant.

Many identify the god himself with Aesculapius, because he heals the sick; some with Osiris, a very ancient divinity of those peoples; many again identify him with Jupiter, for his power over all things; but most identify him with Dispater, from the emblems that are manifest in him, or through arcane reasoning.

We can perhaps trace something of the intellectual energy involved in these processes of identification in Pliny's remarks on the god who permits the harvesting of cinnamon: for it can only be culled *non nisi permiserit deus*, "if the god allows it". "Some understand (*intellegunt*) this god to be Jupiter; the Ethiopians call him Assabinus".¹⁹ The identification evidently required more than merely instantaneous recognition.

The slippery nature of such identifications was never more evident than when those identifications were based on iconography, for the ancient world had itself already developed a sophisticated critical tradition on action and representation in the practice of cult.²⁰ This emerges with particular clarity – or particular complexity – in Lucian's remarkable ethnographic travelogue regarding the temple of Atargatis at Hieropolis. Of its inner chamber Lucian writes:²¹

ἐν δὲ τῷδε εἶται τὰ ἔδεα, ἥ τε Ἡρῆ καὶ τὸν αὐτοὶ Δία ἔοντα ἑτέρῳ οὐνόματι κληίζουσιν.... Καὶ δῆτα τὸ μὲν τοῦ Διὸς ἄγαλμα ἐς Δία πάντα ὀρῇ καὶ κεφαλὴν καὶ εἵματα καὶ ἔδρην, καὶ μιν οὐδὲ ἐθέλων ἄλλως εἰκάσεις. ἡ δὲ Ἡρῆ σκοπέοντί τοι πολυειδέα μορφήν ἐκφανέει καὶ τὰ μὲν ζύμπαντα ἀτρκεὶ λόγῳ Ἡρῆ ἐστίν, ἔχει δέ τι καὶ Ἀθηναίης καὶ Ἀφροδίτης καὶ Σεληναίης καὶ Πέρης καὶ Ἀρτέμιδος καὶ Νεμέσιος καὶ Μοιρέων.

In it are two images, one Hera, the other Zeus, whom they call by another name.... Certainly the image of Zeus resembles Zeus in all respects--his head and cloak and throne--so that you would not willingly liken him to anyone else. But Hera will reveal to you as you look at her a form of diverse appearances. Taken all together, to

¹⁸ Tacitus, *Historiae* 4.84.5.

¹⁹ Pliny, *Historia naturalis* 12.89.

²⁰ For references and bibliography see C. Ando, 'Idols and their Critics', in: J.B. White (ed.), *How to talk about Religion* (Notre Dame – Indiana 2005), forthcoming.

²¹ Lucian, *De dea Syriae* 31-32.

be sure, she is Hera, but she also has something of Athena and Aphrodite and Selene and Rhea and Artemis and Nemesis and the Parcae.

Lucian's text is rife with such play on the identity of gods and statues. Here it is perhaps sufficient to note the irony that Hadad can be confidently identified as Zeus on the basis of iconography, despite the fact that the god was there addressed by another name, while the identity and name of Atargatis, or Hera, are not explicitly problematized, despite the enormous caveats Lucian must then issue about the form she assumes in the temple.²² It is, however, precisely to the question of form or appearance that Gaius Aurelius Cotta addressed himself in his dismissal of Epicurean anthropomorphism at the end of *De natura deorum* 1:

(82) What are you thinking? That Apis, that bull sacred to the Egyptians, does not seem to the Egyptians to be a god? He is as much a god to them, I'll wager, as that Sospita of yours is to you. Nor do you ever see her, even in your dreams, but that she is dressed in a goat skin with a spear, small shield, and little shoes turned up at the toe. But such is not Argive or Roman Juno. Therefore Juno has one form among the Argives, another among the Lanuvians. Indeed, the form of Jupiter is that of Capitolinus among us, but that of Ammon among the Africans....²³

The difficulties raised by Cotta, of sheer iconographic heterogeneity, on the one hand, and of the appearance of Roman gods in foreign lands on the other, were often discussed, and Cicero's comments deserve placement in that long tradition.²⁴ What demands our attention here is not, once again, the fact of any given correspondence. Rather, Cicero through Cotta dramatizes the dynamics of naming and interpretation in two ways.²⁵ First, as part of an overall assault on anthropomorphism, he draws attention to the paradoxical power and contingency of representations. Velleius always sees Juno as Juno Sospita, and yet others see Juno in radically different forms, and will,

²² On this passage see J. Elsner, 'Describing Self in the Language of Other: Pseudo (?) Lucian at the Temple of Hierapolis', in: S. Goldhill (ed.), *Being Greek under Rome. Cultural Identity, the Second Sophistic and the Development of Empire* (Cambridge 2001), 123-153; at 136-138.

²³ Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.82: *Quid igitur censes? Apim illum sanctum Aegyptiorum bovem nonne deum videri Aegyptiis? Tam hercle quam tibi illam vestram Sospitam. Quam tu numquam ne in somnis quidem vides nisi cum pelle caprina, cum hasta, cum scutulo, cum calceolis repandis. At non est talis Argia nec Romana Iuno. Ergo alia species Iunonis Argivis, alia Lanuinis. Et quidem alia nobis Capitolini, alia Afris Hammonis Iovis.*

²⁴ See, e.g., K. Kleve, *Gnosis theon. Die Lehre von der natürlichen Gotteserkenntnis in der epikureischen Theologie* (Oslo 1963), 98 n. 2, suggesting that Cotta's argument might be an adaption of a sophistic argument against belief in gods altogether.

²⁵ On the probability that Cotta distorts Epicurean disquiet about the naming of gods see Kleve 1963, op.cit. (n.25), 100-101; for a positive treatment of the Epicurean position see D. Obbink, *Philodemos: On Piety, part 1* (Oxford 1996), 427-429.

presumably, always see her in those forms. And yet, Cotta asks, must we believe that Jupiter himself always has a beard, or that Apollo is in fact beardless?²⁶

The second problem to which Cicero draws our attention is that such identifications, once made, must be made to work in and over time. Having identified Ammon with Jupiter through *interpretatio Romana*, short of repudiating the identification, one would have the on-going challenge of recognizing in Ammon with his horns the essence? the person? of Jupiter brandishing his thunderbolt.²⁷ Hence what might have appeared a simple problem of translation stands revealed as but one moment in a complex nebula of personal accommodation and cross-cultural dialogue whose implications reach far beyond the merely lexical. Or perhaps I should say, translation is here so revealed.

Cicero and Varro's most attentive ancient reader did not fail to perceive the logical instability of this system, even at the level of cult within a single state. Writing about Jupiter, Augustine complained:²⁸

Dixerunt eum Victorem, Invictum, Opitulum, Impulsorem, Statorem, Centumipedam, Supinalem, Tigillu, Almu, Ruminu et alia quae persequi longu est. Haec autem cognomina inposuerunt uni deo propter causas potestatesque diversas, non tamen propter tot res etiam tot deos eum esse coegerunt.

They called him Victor, Invictus, Opitulus, Impulsor, Stator, Centumpea, Supinalis, Tigillus, Almus, Ruminus, and other names that it would take long to enumerate. They have assigned these *cognomina* to one god for different reasons, on account of different powers; nevertheless, they did not compel him to be as many gods as they had justifications for names.²⁹

We should be careful to observe first what Augustine for once does not seize upon, and that is the classical Roman tendency to atomize godheads and

²⁶ Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.83 (cf. 1.101-102): *Isto enim modo dicere licebit Iovem semper barbatu, Apollinem semper inberbem....*

²⁷ Cf. Lucan, 9.511-9.514:

*Ventum erat ad templu, Libycis quod gentibus unu
inculti Garamantes habent; stat sortiger illic
Iuppiter, ut memorant, sed non aut fulmina vibrans
aut similis nostro, sed tortis cornibus, Hammon.*

He arrived at the temple, which one alone the uncivilized Garamantes maintain for the races of Libya; Jupiter the dealer of lots stands there, so they say, but neither brandishing lightning-bolts nor as before us, but as Ammon, with twisted horns."

²⁸ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 7.11.

²⁹ Augustine, *De civitate Dei* 7.11.

individuate divine powers and personalities at the level of cult.³⁰ Indeed, the power of his critique here partially rests upon his magnanimous concession that gods normally have single powers and are known by virtue of them: in other words, that one can identify a god by the *vis* of its *numen*, to adopt the terminology of Tacitus.³¹

The object of Augustine's scrutiny here is thus not Varro's *Divine Antiquities*, but his *De lingua Latina*, a fact made clear by attention to the niceties of Augustine's diction.³² In reading that work, we are, alas, constrained by the loss of its first four books, and especially of the second, third and fourth, in which Varro discussed the science of etymology in general, as well as arguments for and against it.³³ But beyond whatever he will have said there about etymology – he will, for example, have had to consider whether names are natural or arbitrary – he turns in his fifth book to case studies and there admits a further object of study, namely semantics. As he there asserts, “every word has two innate features: from what thing and in what thing it is assigned as a name” (*Cum unius cuiusque verbi naturae sint duae, a qua re et in qua re vocabulum sit impositum...*).³⁴

Varro's first case study is the body of terms used to describe places and the things that are connected to them; his second subject is immortal and mortal things, which he discusses in such a way that he treats things concerning the gods first.³⁵ At an etymological level, some gods' names are

³⁰ J. Scheid, ‘Hiérarchie et structure dans le polythéisme romain: façons romaines de penser de l'action’, *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* 1 (1999), 184-203 = ‘Hierarchy and Structure in Roman Polytheism: Roman Methods of Conceiving Action’, in: Ando 2003, op.cit. (n.3), 164-189; see also Ando 2003, op.cit. (n.4), 141-146.

³¹ Cf. Caesar, *De bello Gallico* 6.17: *Post hunc Apollinem et Martem et Iovem et Minervam. De his eandem fere, quam reliquae gentes, habent opinionem: Apollinem morbos depellere, Minervam operum atque artificiorum initia tradere, Iovem imperium caelestium tenere, Martem bella regere.* (After him, [they worship] Apollo and Mars and Jupiter and Minerva. Concerning them [the Gauls] have practically the same opinion as other races do: Apollo wards off disease, Minerva teaches the principles of works and crafts, Jupiter holds the rulership of the heavens, and Mars reigns in warfare.) – a list of *potestates* if ever there was one. The problem of identifying gods by their *vires* is noted, if not theorized, by Girard 1980, op.cit. (n.7), 25, “... les identifications que fait l'*interpretatio Romana* ne sont pas, comme l'on dit aujourd'hui, génétiques, mais fonctionnelles”; and Alföldi 1999, op.cit. (n.5), 597: “Konkret zu unserer Übersetzung mag man fragen, was soll ‘die Kraft der Gottheit’ besagen?”

³² Cf. Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.1 (*In his ad te scribam, a quibus rebus vocabula imposita sint in lingua Latina...*); 5.58 (*Terra enim et Caelum, ut Samothracum initia docent, sunt dei magni, et hi quos dixi multis nominibus...*); 5.62 (*Utrique testis poesis, quod et Victoria et Venus dicitur caeligena*).

³³ Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.1.

³⁴ Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.2 (translation after R.G. Kent, *Varro. On the Latin Language Books V-VII* (Cambridge 1951), ad loc.).

³⁵ Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.10; 5.57.

clearly arbitrary, as others are natural: otherwise, they could not derive from their powers, as Saturn is from *satus*, ‘sowing’,³⁶ nor could their names or the names of their powers be specific to Latin.³⁷ It might then seem quite natural for Varro to supply foreign names for gods. But that task – which is not, I should acknowledge, a dominant feature of his project – involves more complicated problems of theology and language than it might seem at first glance to do.

Take, for example, the gods to whom he devotes the most space, *Caelum* and *Terra*, Heaven and Earth. These, it turns out, are also Serapis and Isis of Egypt, and Saturnus and Ops in Latium. Varro uses many different phrases to establish or describe these identities; indeed, he himself allows that he can call Heaven and Earth *multis nominibus*, by many names.³⁸ We may or may not, as ancient readers might or might not, find the arbitrary nature of gods’ names troubling. But there is still a further difficulty, and that is one of semantics. It is not simply that as Varro allows Latin names to point to gods who are known by other names in other cultures, so he must also allow that gods’ names are subject to the processes of coinage and borrowing and the vagaries of usage that he so meticulously documents regarding everyday words.³⁹ Among many examples, he cites the currency of Pollux, which not only derives from Greek, but is itself a departure from old Latin *Polluces*.⁴⁰

Rather, the semantic problem rests with the naming of gods in the first place, and with the epistemic foundation upon which practices of naming must rely. For even as Varro refuses to qualify his equation of *Caelum* with Serapis with Saturn with Jupiter, he nevertheless debates the appropriateness of any given name. Ennius calls Jupiter *pater*, “Father”, writes Varro, because Jupiter *patefacit*, “makes evident” the seed: “for then it is evident that conception has taken place, when that which is born comes out”. “This same thing is shown more clearly by Jupiter’s ancient name: for he once was

³⁶ Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.64.

³⁷ I take the emphatic focus on *vocabulorum impositio in lingua Latina* at the start of Book 5 to be decisive in this regard (Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.1).

³⁸ Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.58. See also Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.57 (*Principes dei Caelum et Terra. Hi dei idem qui Aegypti Serapis et Isis.... Idem principes in Latio Saturnus et Ops*); 5.64 (*Quare quod caelum principium ab satu est dictus Saturnus, et quod ignis, Saturnalibus cerei superioribus mittuntur. Terra Ops, quod hic omne opus et hac opus ad vivendum, et ideo dicitur Ops mater, quod terra mater*); 5.65 (*Idem hi dei Caelum et Terra Jupiter et Iuno..*).

³⁹ See the abstract discussion at Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.3; 5.5-5.6.

⁴⁰ Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.73-5.74.

called *Diovis* and *Diespiter*, which is to say, ‘Father Day’”.⁴¹ (I note in passing that Tacitus, *Hist.* 4.84.5, cited above, seems to reject precisely the identification of Jupiter and *Dispater* that Varro here assumes.)

If some names are more appropriate than others, and if naming normally proceeds from the perception of an exercise of power on the god's part, then both naming and identification must remain subject to the uncertainties inherent in any religious system that relies upon an empiricist epistemology.⁴² “*Luna*, Moon”, we are told, “is so named because she alone shines at night”.⁴³ And if one does not so neglect the stars? “Some call her *Diana*, just as they call *Sol Apollo*”.⁴⁴ But why do those who do not call *Luna Diana*, act as they do? Whom do they call *Diana*? What if the moon is not *Diana*? And what if she is?⁴⁵

But here we must part company with Varro, or at least with Augustine’s disingenuous reading of *De lingua latina*. For if *interpretatio* were merely a matter of cataloguing names, if, that is, it consisted solely in *nominis pro nomine positio*, then we might expect two things: a more extensive set of mappings than is attested, the vast majority of names of gods receiving no *interpretatio*; and near universal consensus on particular *interpretationes*, especially in later periods, and especially at particular cult sites, within, as it were, a specific linguistic or cultic community.⁴⁶ But that we do not find. For what speaking thus of names as synonyms in fact ignores are two related factors essential to the unpacking of any trope, including *interpretatio* – and metonymy, for that matter: the capacities of individual speakers and the microcontexts of their utterances, on the one hand, and the referents for their signs, on the other.⁴⁷ By referents, naturally, I intend the gods. But it is

⁴¹ Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.65-5.66.

⁴² Ando 2003, op.cit. (n.4), 1-15.

⁴³ Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.68.

⁴⁴ Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.68.

⁴⁵ Cf. Varro, *De lingua latina* 5.69: *Quae ideo quoque videtur ab Latinis Iuno Lucina dicta, vel quod et Terra, ut physici dicunt, et lucet; vel quod ab luce eius qua quis conceptus est usque ad eam, qua partus quis in lucem, luna iuvat...* She appears therefore to be called *Iuno Lucina* by the Latins, either because she is also Earth, as natural scientists maintain, and ‘shines’ [*lucet*]; or because from that light of hers in which someone is conceived, until that light in which someone is born into the light, the moon [*luna*] helps...

See also 5.71: “To be sure, gods are named *a fontibus et fluminibus et ceteris aquis*. But how do the waters get their names, and what is the nature of the connection between god and river?”

⁴⁶ The phrase is Quintilian’s, describing not *interpretatio*, nor, for that matter, translation, but metonymy (8.6.23).

⁴⁷ Cf. P. Schofer – D. Rice, ‘Metaphor, Metonymy, and Synecdoche Revis(it)ed’, *Semiotica* 21 (1977), 121-149; at 133-136.

precisely the gods who even in antiquity were as elusive as their identification was essential:

eo modo nulli dubium esse . . . ita esse utilem cognitionem deorum, si sciatur quam quisque deus vim et facultatem ac potestatem cuiusque rei habeat. Ex eo enim poterimus . . . scire, quem cuiusque causa deum invocare atque advocare debeamus, ne faciamus, ut mimi solent, et optemus a Libero aquam, a Lymphis vinum.

For this reason it should be doubtful to no one, how useful is knowledge of the gods, if one could know what power and skill and capacity each god has in any matter. For from this we would be able to know, which god we ought to summon and to call upon for any particular reason, lest we should act like mimes are accustomed to do, and wish for water from Liber, or wine from Lymphs.⁴⁸

The pronounced tendency of Romans in foreign lands to worship the gods of those lands, by the names they held there, or even by such generic titles as *Genius* or *Praesides huius loci*, may thus be understood as the consequence of an epistemic problem and a theological conundrum: one needed to address the very god in a position to provide aid, but the naming of that god rested upon ultimately upon factors extralinguistic.⁴⁹

In light of these concerns, we should return to Varro's assertion of a simple identity between Terra and Isis and Ops and Juno, and Caelum and Serapis and Saturn and Jupiter, for what Varro asserts about them is precisely what Cicero could not allow regarding Vulcan.⁵⁰ It is, of course, possible, even likely, that Cicero meant no more than that Vulcan was not called Vulcan in Africa or Spain; likewise, it is possible that Cicero meant no more than that Jupiter is not always represented as bearded, any more than Apollo is always depicted as beardless. But how would we know? We run afoul here of that tendency in ancient literature to refer to cult statues as though they were the gods whom they seem to represent.⁵¹ I say "seem to represent" both because ancient theorists often deplored the representational capacity of plastic images and their power "over the affections of the

⁴⁸ Varro, *Antiquitates rerum divinarum* fr. 3.

⁴⁹ Ando 2003, op.cit. (n.4), 141-146; see also Scheid 1999, op.cit. (n.31). On the worship of local gods, see, e.g., D. B. Saddington, 'Roman Soldiers, Local Gods and *interpretatio Romana* in Roman Germany', *Acta Classica* 42 (1999), 155-169.

⁵⁰ Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.84, above n.8.

⁵¹ R. Gordon, 'Production and Religion in the Graeco-Roman World', *Art History* 2 (1979), 5-34; C. Ando, 'The Palladium and the Pentateuch. Towards a Sacred Topography of the Later Roman Empire', *Phoenix* 55 (2001), 369-410; and C. Ando, 'A Religion for the Empire', in: A.J. Boyle – W.J. Dominik (eds.), *Flavian Rome* (Leiden 2003), 323-344 = Ando 2003, op.cit. (n.4), 220-243. For a valuable survey on the representation of gods in cult see H. Funke, 'Götterbild', *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 11 (1981), 659-828.

miserable”, and because what is at stake in Cicero’s diction might not be representation at all.⁵²

There remains in any event the problem that the identity of the gods turns out to be distressingly and disconcertingly labile. It is not simply their names and forms, but the gods themselves who are πολυειδής and *multiplex*. On this point, cult practice diverges strongly from philosophical theology, for it was Plato who set the terms for virtually all traditions of Hellenistic theology, and they believed in gods whose identities were fixed and unchanging. The ontological presuppositions of cult were quite different. How should one then name a god? And how did one recognize another’s god as identical to one’s own, not least in light of their radical difference?

Gods were not alone in defying the reductive taxonomies of the semantic urge. Of the oak Pliny the elder wrote:

It is not possible to distinguish the types of oak by their names, which are different in different places, for while we see the *robur* and *quercus* growing all over, we do not see the *aesculus* everywhere, while a fourth member of the oak family, which is called the *cerrus*, is unknown even to a large part of Italy. We will therefore distinguish them by their characteristic properties and natures and, when compelled, by their Greek names.⁵³

What then of the Druids, whose name, you may recall, Pliny not only proposed to derive from δρῦς, Greek for oak; he seems to have suspected that it might actually have come from Greek. But a druid was not an oak, nor, it seems, did Pliny necessarily believe that Gallic oaks were, in fact, δρῦες, to the extent that he associated that word with a specific kind of oak. In other words, if Druid did in fact derive from δρῦς by *interpretatio Graeca*, it did so despite being, in Varro’s terms, etymologically and semantically untrue. In other words, if it is true, it is false.

⁵² See Augustine, *Enarratio in Psalmos* 113.2.6: “But, it will be said, we have many instruments and vases made of materials of this kind or from metal, for use in celebrating the sacraments, which, being consecrated by this function, are called holy, in honor of Him who is worshipped for our salvation. And what are these instruments or vases, except the works of human hands? But do they have mouths, and not speak? Do they have eyes, and not see? Do we pray to them, because through them we pray to God? This is the chief cause of that impious insanity: the form resembling a living creature has such power over the affections of the miserable that it arouses prayers to itself, even though it is clear that it is not alive, so that it ought to be despised by the living. The images have more power to distract an unhappy soul because they have mouths, eyes, ears, noses, hands, and feet, than they have power for correcting such a soul because they do not speak or see or hear or smell or argue or walk.” Quoted and discussed in C. Ando, ‘Signs, Idols, and the Incarnation in Augustinian Metaphysics’, *Representations* 73 (2001), 24-53. On the classical critique of idolatry see Ando 2005, op.cit. (n.21). Cf. Cicero, *De natura deorum* 1.84, discussing the sheer multiplicity of gods.

⁵³ Pliny, *Historia naturalis* 16.17.

Which returns us, at long last, to Tacitus. If the Alci were Castor and Pollux by *interpretatio Romana*, I do not know how to construe that identity. I suppose, in the words of William Jefferson Clinton, “it depends on what the meaning of ‘is’ is”.

This much at least is clear. In its enigmatic status, *interpretatio Romana* resembles many of the other mechanisms with which Romans and their subjects negotiated cultural difference, translation among them; it is likewise emblematic of the myriad problems besetting the study of cross-cultural contact in the ancient world.

I will close by asking one more question that I cannot answer. I turn once again to Tacitus’ *Germania* 43.4: “There are no images, no trace of any foreign superstition, but nevertheless, they worship these gods as brothers and young men”. Foreign to whom?⁵⁴

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⁵⁴ The final version of this paper was prepared with the support of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. An earlier version appeared in *Classical Philology* 100 (1995), 41-51. For comments and conversation along the way, my thanks to Ruth Abbey, Andy Dyck, Sabine MacCormack, Jörg Rüpke, and Phiroze Vasunia.

LES STELES DITES DE CONFESSION:
UNE RELIGIOSITÉ ORIGINALE DANS L'ANATOLIE IMPÉRIALE?

NICOLE BELAYCHE

ὁ θεὸς τοῦτο ἐνεμέσῃσε, ὅτι οὐκ
ἐξεφάντευσσε οὐδὲ ὕψωσε τὸν θεόν
Beichtinschr. n° 59, ll.17-19

Les deux dernières décennies du XX^e siècle ont vu fleurir des travaux qui, grâce à la mise en série, permettent aux historiens des religions de ré-apprécier des phénomènes religieux attestés dans le centre-ouest de l'Anatolie romaine, Lydie et Phrygie principalement. Outre la publication de nouveaux textes, des répertoires thématiques ont collecté les épigraphes propres à des figures divines singulières (comme Hosios et Dikaïos)¹ ou attestant de relations singulières entre les dieux et les hommes («confessions/*Beichtinschriften*» ou malédictions gravées sur les tombes à fins de protection).² Une deuxième piste d'investigation, non moins féconde, a exploré les relations des dévots avec leurs dieux, en particulier lorsque ces derniers étaient représentés comme assumant une fonction judiciaire dans les collectivités villageoises.³

Dès 1913, la combinaison des deux démarches avait abouti à l'étude fondatrice de F. Steinleitner, *Die Beicht im Zusammenhange mit der sakralen Rechtspflege in der Antike*.⁴ Comme son titre l'indique, l'auteur entendait analyser le lien entre aveu et justice divine. Pour les études ultérieures, son premier recensement de 33 inscriptions (elles ont plus que

¹ M. Riel, 'Hosios kai Dikaïos', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 18 (1991), 1-70; 19 (1992), 71-103 et G. Petzl, *Die Beichtinschriften im römischen Kleinasien und der Fromme und Gerechte Gott* (Opladen 1998).

² Respectivement G. Petzl, 'Die Beichtinschriften Westkleinasiens', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 22 (1994) [désormais *Beichtinschr.*] et J. Strubbe, 'ΑΠΑΙ ΕΠΙΤΥΜΒΙΟΙ. Imprecations against Desecrators of the Grave in the Greek Epitaphs of Asia Minor. A Catalogue', *IGSK* 52 (1997).

³ Cf. H.S. Versnel, 'Les imprécations et le droit', *Revue du Droit* 65 (1987), 5-22, développé dans 'Beyond Cursing: The Appeal to Justice in Judicial Prayers', in: C.A. Faraone – D. Obbink (éds.), *Magika Hiera. Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York – Oxford 1991), 60-95; A. Chaniotis, '“Tempeljustiz” im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien. Rechtliche Aspekte der Sühneinschriften Lydiens und Phrygiens', in: G. Thür – J. Vélissaropoulos-Karakostas (éds.), *Symposion 1995. Vorträge zur griechischen und hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte, Korfu 1995* (Köln – Weimar – Wien 1997), 353-384; et Id., 'Under the Watchful Eyes of the Gods: Divine Justice in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor', in: C. Colvin (éd.), *The Greco-Roman East*, Yale Classical Studies 31 (2004), 1-43. Voir aussi M. Riel, 'The Appeal to Divine Justice in the Lydian Confession-Inscriptions', in: E. Schwertheim (éd.), *Forschungen in Lydien*, Asia Minor Studien 17 (Bonn 1995), 67-76.

⁴ *Ein Beitrag zur näheren Kenntnis kleinasiatisch-orientalischer Kulte der Kaiserzeit* (Leipzig 1913).

quadruplé)⁵ a estampillé sous le nom de «*Beichtinschriften*/stèles de confession» des narrations originales de relations avec des instances supérieures. La définition pénitentielle reconnue à ces témoignages fut renforcée dans les années 1930 par la belle étude comparatiste de R. Pettazzoni, *La confessione dei peccati*.⁶ Des terminologies alternatives ont été utilisées, trahissant une certaine insatisfaction face à cette définition: stèles d'expiation ou de repentance (*Sühneinschriften*), stèles de propitiation ou de réconciliation.⁷ Même H.-J. Klauck, qui conclut pourtant avec justesse sur «la parenté» (*Ver-wandtschaft*) des inscriptions avec les litanies merveilleuses des aréalogies conserve la grille de lecture pénitentielle.⁸

Les historiettes rassemblées sous ce label présentent un schéma formulaire très élaboré, qui rapporte un processus ritualisé complexe. Après une adresse aux dieux, généralement acclamatoire, les textes les plus complets suivent un plan quadripartite énonçant successivement: 1) la punition subie (κολάζειν), sous la forme d'une pathologie physiologique ou mentale, quand ce n'est pas la mort; 2) l'exposé de la faute, son aveu (ὁμολογεῖν), étape privilégiée par l'historiographie depuis F. Steinleitner; 3) la propitiation du (ou des) dieux (ἱλασκέσθαι); et 4) l'écriture de la stèle (στηλ(λ)ογράφειν), qui clot le processus par une action publicitaire au profit du(des) dieu(x) et qui est le plus souvent accompagnée d'un acte d'adoration exprimé comme une εὐλογία.⁹

⁵ Beaucoup d'inédites sont annoncées par H. Malay, dans un recueil préparé avec le regretté P. Hermann, et désormais revu par G. Petzl.

⁶ I-III (Bologne 1929-1936). Dans cette lignée, cf. récemment M. Riel, *La conscience du péché dans les cultes anatoliens à l'époque romaine. La confession des fautes rituelles et éthiques dans les cultes méoniens et phrygiens* (Belgrade 1995), en serbe, rés. français 131-142.

⁷ Expiation: L. Robert, *Hellenica* VI (Paris 1948), 107-108, n° 43 et Riel 1995, op.cit. (n.6). Repentance: à la suite de L. Robert – G. Petzl, 'Résumé des conférences du Professeur invité', *Annuaire de l'EPHE, section des Sciences religieuses* 112 (2003-2004), sous-presse. *Sühneinschriften*: P. Herrmann – E. Varinlioglu, 'THEOI PEREUDENOI. Eine Gruppe von Weihungen und Sühneinschriften aus der Katakekaumene', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 3 (1984), 1-18 et Chaniotis 1997, op.cit. (n.3). Propitiation: H.W. Buckler, 'Some Lydian Propitiatory Inscriptions', *Annual of the British School at Athens* 21 (1914-1916), 164-183. Réconciliation: A. Rostad, 'Confession or Reconciliation? The Narrative Structure of the Lydian and Phrygian 'Confession Inscriptions'', *Symbolae Osloenses* 77 (2002), 145-164. Cf. récemment l'analyse sociale de R. Gordon, 'Raising a Sceptre: Confession-Narratives from Lydia and Phrygia', *Journal of Roman Archeology* 17 (2004), 177-196.

⁸ H.-J. Klauck, 'Die kleinasiatischen Beichtinschriften und das Neue Testament', in: H. Cancik – H. Lichtenberger – P. Schäfer (éds.), *Geschichte – Tradition – Reflexion. Festschrift für Martin Hengel* III (Tübingen 1996), 85-86.

⁹ L'analyse de Klauck 1996, op.cit. (n.8), 66-68, est différente: il reconnaît deux «Grundtypen» (l'écriture de la confession et la malédiction qui enclenche la justice divine) et examine six «Aufbaumomente» (72-85).

En examinant ces textes en même temps que des dédicaces contemporaines,¹⁰ il m'est apparu que ce ne sont pas les phases de l'aveu, certes originale, ni même de l'expiation, plus courante en système ritualiste, qui justifient l'érection de la stèle et la mise en scène durable de l'expérience vécue de la divinité. Leur raison d'être tient dans la dernière phase: l'action de grâce permanente, voire catéchétique – sinon prosélyte. Aussi ai-je proposé de reconnaître dans ces documents des «stèles d'exaltation».¹¹ Si cette analyse est pertinente, ils seraient à verser au dossier de la tendance arétalogique bien attestée dans les manifestations religieuses du monde impérial oriental.¹² Ils seraient donc en parfaite cohérence avec l'évolution du paganisme aux premiers siècles de notre ère, et non pas à isoler comme des phénomènes singuliers, propres à des sociétés perpétuant des traditions millénaires.¹³ Cette analyse n'enlève rien aux origines possiblement indigènes de la deuxième étape, celle de la «confession».

1) Un élément de contextualisation: l'onomastique des dévots

Il n'est pas inutile de replacer brièvement ces textes dans leur contexte historico-culturel, car la définition pénitentielle qu'on leur attribue généralement s'appuie sur des pratiques hittito-anatoliennes qui auraient perduré par suite de l'état enclavé des plateaux entre l'Hermos et le Méandre, pays brûlés pour la Lydie dite Katakekauménè.¹⁴

¹⁰ La démarche est appliquée par Petzl 1998, op.cit. (n.1) pour la notion de Saint et de Juste.

¹¹ N. Belayche, 'Résumé des conférences et travaux', *Annuaire de l'EPHE, Section des sciences religieuses* 111 (2002-2003), 238-242.

¹² Cf. V. Longo, *Aretalogie nel mondo greco I. Epigrafi e papiri* (Gênes 1969). A.D. Nock, *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World I* (Oxford 1972), 427 n. 77, avait déjà reconnu "the aretalogy type in general". Pour la religiosité isiaque, H.S. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion I. Ter Unus. Isis, Dionysos, Hermes. Three studies in Henotheism* (Leiden – New York – Köln 1990), 39-72.

¹³ Par ex. H.W. Pleket, 'Religious History as the History of Mentality: the 'Believer' as Servant of the Deity in the Greek World', in: H.S. Versnel (éd.), *Faith, Hope and Worship. Aspects of Religious Mentality in the Ancient World* (Leiden 1981), 156 ("a contribution of Oriental religiosity") et Riel 1995, op.cit. (n.5), 131-132. Pourtant S. Mitchell, *Anatolia. Land, Men and Gods in Asia Minor I* (Oxford 1993), 194: "it is implausible to imagine that the gods of northern Lydia ... played a radically different part in mens's lives than the gods elsewhere". Pour les conditions de l'acculturation, T. Gnoli – J. Thornton, 'Σὼζε τὴν κατοικίαν. Società e religione nella Frigia romana. Note introduttive', in: R. Gusmani – M. Salvini – P. Vannicelli (éds.), *Frigi e Frigio. Atti del 1 Simposio Intern., Roma, 16-17 ottobre 1995* (Rome 1997), 153-200.

¹⁴ Selon Strabon (12.8.18; 13.4.10), cette région était peuplée de Mysiens et de Lydiens, mais il la considère comme phrygienne.

Les inscriptions révèlent des sociétés de petits et moyens exploitants,¹⁵ héritiers en partie des colons installés à l'époque hellénistique. La permanence des autonomies traditionnelles et des identités culturelles s'exprimait entre autres autour d'une multitude de sanctuaires ruraux indigènes, dédiés à des divinités à épiclèses locales ou topiques, derrière les appellations génériques de Zeus, Mên ou Meis et Metèr,¹⁶ héritières de figures millénaires asianiques ou perses (comme Artémis Anaitis, avatar d'Anahita).¹⁷ Elles manifestaient leur puissance de façon singulière, par exemple par leur sceptre, attribut et symbole opératoire.¹⁸ Cohabitant et coopérant,¹⁹ ces diverses instances divines sont honorées sous une forme exaltée dans des acclamations affichées dans les sanctuaires. L'invocation de dieux magnifiés était fréquemment redoublée par celle de leur *numen*, à fins d'intensification: "Grande est la Mère Anaïtis maîtresse d'Azita et Mên Tiamou et leurs puissances".²⁰ Ces expériences religieuses glorifiaient plus spécialement le statut souverain des divinités: *kyrioi*, *basileis* tout-puissants,²¹ maîtres du territoire (*katechôntes*)²² – même si ce sont de petits villages ou des lieux-dits²³ –, à la puissance justicière intraitable.

Ces formes de relations entre les dévots et leurs dieux ont conduit plusieurs savants à considérer les dédicants comme appartenant à une population rurale ayant échappé globalement aux courants historiques de l'hellénisation, puis de la romanisation. À l'écart des grands courants

¹⁵ Par ex. *Beichtinschr.* n° 68. Cf. Gnoli – Thornton 1997, op.cit. (n.13), 159-162; 182 pour les bœufs.

¹⁶ Cf. M.P. de Hoz, *Die lydischen Kulte im Lichte der griechischen Inschriften*, Asia Minor Studien 36 (Bonn 1999).

¹⁷ I. Diakonoff, 'Artemidi Anaeiti anestesien. The Anaeitis-Dedications in the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden at Leyden and Related Material from Eastern Lydia. A Reconsideration', *Bulletin Antieke Beschaving* 54 (1979), 139-188.

¹⁸ Mis en action par une opération rituelle: ἐφίστημι τὸ σκῆπτρον, *Beichtinschr.* n° 35, ll. 12-13.

¹⁹ Cf. N. Belayche, "'Au(x) dieu(x) qui règne(nt) sur ...'. *Basileia* divine et fonctionnement du polythéisme dans l'Anatolie impériale', in: A. Vigourt et al. (éds.), *Pouvoir et religion dans le monde romain. En hommage à J.-P. Martin* (Paris 2005), sous-presses.

²⁰ *Beichtinschr.* n° 68. Cf. L. Robert, *Hellenica* X (Paris 1955), 86-89; B. Müller, *Μέγας θεός*, (Leipzig 1913). Pour l'accent mis sur le pouvoir divin plus que sur les personnalités divines, cf. Nock 1972, op.cit. (n.12), 34-36.

²¹ Cf. *Beichtinschr.* n° 68, l. 16 (Mên *kyrios* de Tiamos); 123, l. 2 (Apollon Lairbenos, *kyrios*). Pleket 1981, op.cit. (n.13), 179, considère que la structure sociale offrait un terreau favorable à cette "ideology of power".

²² Cf. P. Herrmann, 'Men, Herr von Axiotta'. *Studien zur Religion und Kultur Kleinasien's*, Études préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain 66/2 (Leiden 1978), 415-423.

²³ Par ex. Tarsis (*Beichtinschr.* n° 3, ll. 1-2), sur le territoire de Sattai ou Silandos, ou Axiotta (ibid. n° 55, ll. 4-5) sur le territoire de Sattai ou Kollyda, etc. Cf. la carte de H. Malay, *Greek and Latin Inscriptions in the Manisa Museum*, *Ergänzungsbande zu den Tituli Asiae Minoris* 19 (Wien 1994).

d'échange, la présence administrative et militaire romaine y était lâche.²⁴ Pourtant, le tissu civique s'est densifié depuis Auguste et des établissements impériaux furent facteurs d'intégration,²⁵ comme l'indiquent des faits lexicaux.²⁶ L'anthroponymie des dédicants des stèles dites de confession oriente elle aussi vers un paysage plus acculturé. En 1963 déjà, L. Robert avait remarqué qu'en Méonie, "monde à part", "les noms indigènes ont été abandonnés et il n'y a pratiquement que des noms grecs dans ces familles de pieux adorateurs de vieux dieux indigènes".²⁷ Près de Kollyda (aujourd'hui Gjölde), dans le village des Tazéniens qui s'en remet au jugement par le sceptre des dieux, une famille illustre les trois composantes ethnico-culturelles présentes dans la région: anatolienne hellénisée (Métrophanès un fils), gréco-macédonienne (Philippikos le père) et romaine (Flavianus l'autre fils).²⁸ Majoritairement, les dédicants répondent à des noms grecs (Apollonios, Hermogenès, Trophimos, pour les plus fréquents).²⁹ Mais, même avant la révolution onomastique de 212, de nombreux anthroponymes latins, mêlés à des noms indigènes hellénisés ou à des noms grecs, trahissent l'influence romaine.³⁰ Telle Iulia est fille de Mètras et telle autre, sœur de Théodoros.³¹ Un Apollonios, dévot de Meis Labanas et Meis Petraeitès, deux dieux locaux, a appelé son fils Εἰούλιος (Iulius); ce dernier conserve l'inspiration romaine pour sa fille Marcia. En revanche, un autre Iulius, fils d'Agrios, a préféré pour sa fille le nom grec affectueux de Glykia.³² Dans ces pays où le dieu Mèn est présent partout, diversement épiclésé, il inspire peu les parents qui se rangent sous son pouvoir. Les théonymes de Mèn (Menodoros/-phanès/-genès/-philos, etc.) sont peu nombreux.³³

²⁴ Une seule grande voie de Tabala à Dorylaeum. Sur ces aspects, Mitchell 1993, op.cit. (n.13), I, 124-132.

²⁵ Cf. les dédicaces aux *Theoi Patrioi* et à l'empereur, Malay 1994, op.cit. (n.23), n° 192; 193; 195 (Hadrien et Antonin le Pieux); une imprécation par les dieux du peuple romain, Strubbe 1997, op.cit. (n.2), n° 5 ll. 4-5 et H.S. Versnel, 'Religious Mentality in Ancient Prayer', in: H.S. Versnel (éd.) 1981, op.cit. (n.13), 14. Des combats de gladiateurs à Sattai, L. Robert, *Les Gladiateurs dans l'Orient grec* (Paris 1940), n° 134-136 et Id., *Hellenica VIII* (Paris 1950), 65-66.

²⁶ Par ex. *synklètos* pour l'assemblée des dieux, *Beichtinschr.* n° 5, ll. 22 ; cf. Chaniotis 1997, op.cit. (n.3), tableau 382-383. Pour la terminologie des pétitions, M. Ricl, 'Society and Economy of Rural Sanctuaries in Roman Lydia and Phrygia', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 35 (2003), 101.

²⁷ L. Robert, *Noms indigènes de l'Asie Mineure gréco-romaine I* (Paris 1963), 322.

²⁸ *Beichtinschr.* n° 35.

²⁹ Pour Meltinè, Robert 1963, op.cit. (n.27), 230-232. Cf. Ricl 1995, op.cit. (n.6), 127-129.

³⁰ 17 % des idionymes dans *Beichtinschr.* ; 4 *tria nomina* dont 3 *Aurelii* (n° 108; 76; 97; 110).

³¹ Respectivement *Beichtinschr.* n° 40 (en 143/4); n° 13.

³² Respectivement *Beichtinschr.* n° 37; n° 75.

³³ À peine 8 dans *Beichtinschr.*: Menandros (n° 1), Mènophilos (9), Mènophila (31; 47), Métrophanès (35), Menecratès (69), Mènodôros (72), Mètrodôros (78).

Sans solliciter indûment l'onomastique pour les études religieuses, ces remarques, si brèves soient-elles,³⁴ indiquent que, en tout cas, l'anthroponymie n'a pas servi de conservatoire aux traditions ethnico-culturelles. Les pratiques onomastiques montrent que ces régions n'ont échappé ni à l'hellénisme, diffusé avec la colonisation macédonienne,³⁵ ni à la romanisation qui suivit.

2) Malheurs et punition divine

L'originalité des stèles dites de confession ne se trouve pas non plus dans la relation entre faute et souffrance comme punition divine. Dans plusieurs beaux articles, A. Chaniotis s'est attaché à analyser les procédures judiciaires évoquées, ou décelables, dans ces stèles. La présentification du dieu réalisée par l'érection du sceptre donne aux paroles prononcées valeur juratoire et appelle par ce fait la punition sur le coupable.³⁶ Henk Versnel a montré que le procédé était connu pour faire triompher la justice et le droit, en Orient comme en Occident, depuis ces pratiques ritualisées sous forme de procès³⁷ jusqu'aux tablettes imprécatoires de Bretagne, de Corse ou d'Espagne.³⁸ Pour le monde grec, Hérodote rapporte qu'à Apollonia (en Illyrie), une stérilité frappa la cité qui avait injustement châtié le gardien des troupeaux sacrés du Soleil: "Ils [les dieux] avaient eux-mêmes envoyé ces loups, et ils ne cesseraient pas de venger Evénios [le gardien] avant qu'on lui eût accordé

³⁴ L'analyse est développée dans N. Belayche, 'Onomastique et aires culturelles: les limites d'un genre I. L'Asie Mineure (Lydie-Phrygie)', in: M. Dondin Payre (éd.), *Pratiques onomastiques dans l'Empire romain* (Paris 2005), sous-presses.

³⁵ La strate onomastique macédonienne est vivace, cf. Makedôn (*Beichtinschr.* n° 22), Alexandros (46), Amyntas (67), puis Attalos (34). Pour l'hellénisation linguistique, Cl. Brixhe, 'La langue comme critère d'acculturation: l'exemple du grec d'un district phrygien', in: R. Lebrun (éd.), *Hethitica VIII. Acta Anatolica E. Laroche oblata* (Louvain – Paris 1987), 45-80.

³⁶ Sur ces aspects, cf. N. Belayche, 'Résumé des conférences et travaux', *Annuaire de l'EPHE, section des Sciences religieuses* 112 (2003-2004), à paraître.

³⁷ Cf. le cas de Théodoros, *Beichtinschr.* n° 5. Riel 1995 et Chaniotis 2004, 26-30, op.cit. (n.3) en tiennent pour un procès symbolique, alors que G. Petzl, *Beichtinschr.* 10, envisage plus pertinemment une procédure judiciaire effective pratiquée par les prêtres.

³⁸ Versnel 1991, op.cit. (n.3). Les malédictions gravées sur des tombes activent préventivement le sceptre, c'est-à-dire la puissance vindicative des dieux, pour protéger le tombeau, cf. *TAM V* 1, 62 (à rapprocher de *Beichtinschr.* n° 4), 160 (καὶ ἐπηράσαντο μὴ τις αὐτοῦ τῷ μνημείῳ προσαμάρτη διὰ τὸ ἐπεστάσθαι σκῆπτρα); 167a (Εἰ δέ τις προσαμάρτη ταῖς στήλαις, ἔσται τῶν δώδεκα σκῆπτρων ἡκουκώς); E. Lane, *Corpus monumentorum religionis dei Menis*, *EPRO* 19, I (Leiden 1971), n° 71; Strubbe 1997, op.cit. (n.2), n° 55. Le sceptre n'est pas nécessairement mentionné, *CMRDM I*, n° 56. Cf. P. Moraux, *Malédictions et violations de tombes* (Paris 1939) et J.H.M. Strubbe, 'Cursed be he that Moves my Bones', in: C.A. Faraone – D. Obbink (éds.), *Magika Hiera. Ancient Greek Magic and Religion* (New York – Oxford 1991), 33-59.

telle réparation qu'il choisirait lui-même et déclarerait juste".³⁹ Les formes de «*Tempeljustiz*», selon la formule d'A. Chaniotis, où les dieux sont pris à témoin dans des procédures juratoires, ou bien les puissances divines activées dans des procédures ordaliques, ne sont donc pas spécifiques à ce genre de textes ou à cette région.⁴⁰ Lors d'un conflit de voisinage en milieu rural, après l'échec d'une conciliation à l'amiable, les plaignants en appelèrent à la justice du dieu. L'affaire est rapportée au passé par la famille du coupable, puni de mort entre-temps. La famille distingue la propitiation de la déesse – sans doute par réparation du délit – de sa gratitude et de son adoration envers la grandeur des dieux (μαρτυροῦμεν καὶ εὐλογοῦμεν), exprimée au présent de durée.⁴¹ Le recours au sceptre surveillait également l'ordre dans la collectivité, par exemple dans un bain public où l'activation permanente du sceptre de Mèn contrôlait les actions délictueuses. Un manteau y ayant été dérobé, la vengeance du dieu fit que, une fois le coupable découvert, le manteau fut vendu au profit du trésor du temple.⁴²

Le lien entre faute, souffrance et punition divine, sous forme de pathologie en particulier, n'est pas non plus original, ni propre à la tradition hittito-anatolienne. Il caractérise toutes les sociétés pré-scientifiques dans lesquelles les instances supérieures font office de système d'explication du monde et de puissances d'action dans celui-ci.⁴³ Pour le monde grec, il suffit de se remémorer le discours de Zeus au début de l'*Odyssée*⁴⁴ ou bien

³⁹ Hérodote, 9.93.

⁴⁰ Les rois du Pont juraient par leur Tychè et Mèn Pharnakos, Strabon 12.3.31; voir aussi S. Mitchell, *The Ankara District. The Inscriptions of North Galatia, RECAM Regional Epigraphic Catalogues of Asia Minor II* (Oxford 1982), 242 (à Haymana). Pour l'Égypte, B. Menu, 'Le serment dans les actes juridiques de l'ancienne Égypte', in: R. Verdier (éd.), *Le serment I* (Paris 1991), 329-344 et C. Traunecker, 'L'appel au divin, la crainte des dieux et les serments de temple', in: J.-G. Heintz (éd.), *Oracles et prophéties dans l'Antiquité, Colloque de Strasbourg juin 1995* (Paris 1997), 35-54. Plus généralement, E. Benveniste, *Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes II. Pouvoir, droit, religion* (Paris 1969), 163-175.

⁴¹ *Beichtinschr.* n° 68, ll. 19-20; 23-24.

⁴² *Beichtinschr.* n° 3. À comparer avec Versnel 1987, op.cit. (n.3), 12-18.

⁴³ Cf. Pettazzoni, op.cit. (n.6) et récemment A. Sima, 'Kleinasiatische Parallelen zu den altsüd-arabischen Buß- und Sühneinschriften', *Altorientalische Forschungen* 26 (1999), 140-153. W. Burkert, *Creation of the Sacred. Tracks of Biology in Early Religions* (Cambridge – London 1996), 102-128 (résumé dans 'Causalité religieuse: la faute, les signes, les rites', *Métis* 9-10 (1994-1995), 27-40) compare ces comportements avec *I Samuel* 5-6. Cf. M. Riel, 'CIG 4142 – A Forgotten Confession-Inscription from North-West Phrygia', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 29 (1997), 41-42. Pour un parallèle chrétien, H.J. Klauck, 'Heil ohne Heilung? Zu Metaphorik und Hermeneutik der Rede von Sünde und Vergebung im Neuen Testament', in: H. Frankemölle (éd.), *Sünde und Erlösung im Neuen Testament* (Freiburg – Basel – Wien 1996), 22-26.

⁴⁴ Homère, *Odyssée* I, 32ff.: "Ah vraiment, de quels griefs les mortels ne chargent-ils pas les dieux? C'est de nous, à les entendre, que viennent leurs maux". A. Chaniotis a analysé le traitement religieux

l'ouverture de l'*Illiade* par la peste envoyée aux Achéens par Apollon à la suite d'une malédiction proférée par l'un de ses prêtres.⁴⁵ Les attestations épigraphiques des *Asclepeia*, comme celles du temple d'Esculape sur l'île tibérine à Rome, en donnent des exemples d'époque hellénistique et romaine.⁴⁶ Mais A. Chanotis a justement souligné que, dans ces sanctuaires médicaux, les consultations ouvraient sur de véritables ordonnances médicales, alors que, dans le cas des stèles dites de confession,⁴⁷ la maladie et la guérison objectivent l'état peccamineux, puis racheté des dévots,⁴⁸ considérés comme perdus par les hommes.⁴⁹ Les consultations des dieux – les dieux sont “interrogés” (ἠρώτησε οὖν...) – jouent donc un rôle important dans la recherche de la cause des maux.⁵¹ La réponse révèle à la fois l'origine du mal et le moyen de sa réparation, indiqué probablement par le terme obscur de ἱεροπό(ι)ημα, qu'on rencontre aussi bien en contexte votif que dans les stèles dites de confession.⁵² Le fidèle le recherche (ἐπεζήτησεν) et s'en acquitte (ἀποδίδει) dans une structure de dette, une relation obligataire.⁵³

3) L'objectif des stèles: exalter le(s) dieu(x)?

Tous les textes dits de confession insistent sur l'exaltation des dieux par l'écriture de la stèle (c'est la phase 4). Dans plusieurs cas, la fonction

des maladies, 'Illness and cures in the Greek propitiatory inscriptions and dedications of Lydia and Phrygia', in: Ph.J. van der Eijk – H.F.J. Horstmanshoff – P.H. Schrijvers (éds.), *Ancient Medicine in its Socio-Cultural Context II* (Amsterdam – Atlanta 1995), 323-344.

⁴⁵ Homère, *Illiade* I, 93-100; cf. aussi Sophocle, *Œdipe roi*. Sur le rôle des oracles dans les enquêtes sur l'origine des maux, cf. *infra* n. 50.

⁴⁶ Cf. E.J. – L. Edelstein, *Asclepius. Collection and interpretation of the testimonies* (Baltimore 1998²).

⁴⁷ Chanotis 1995, op.cit. (n.44), 334-335.

⁴⁸ *Beichtinschr.* n° 70 (qui ne rapporte ni punition ni confession); n° 75.

⁴⁹ Cf. *Beichtinschr.* 96 et Malay 1994, op.cit. (n.23), n° 187; 75 n. 123.

⁵⁰ Par ex. *Beichtinschr.* n° 57: «Trophimè interrogea la Mère Tarsène, Apollon Tarsios et Mèn d'Artémidoros Axiottenos Seigneur de Koresa et il [Apollon, dont la bipenne est représentée au sommet droit de la stèle] m'ordonna d'inscrire sur une stèle leur puissance justicière [*Beichtinschr.* 69: «Bestrafung», et M. Sartre, *L'Asie Mineure et l'Anatolie d'Alexandre à Dioclétien* (Paris 1995), 326: «vengeance»] et de m'inscrire moi-même pour le service des dieux.»

⁵¹ Cf. H.W. Parke, *The oracles of Zeus* (Oxford 1967), 261 n° 7 et Claros consulté sur des «pestes», R. Merkelbach – J. Stauber, 'Die Orakel des Apollon von Klaros', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 27 (1996), n° 2; n° 4.

⁵² Diakonoff 1979, op.cit. (n.17), n° 6; n° 13.

⁵³ *Beichtinschr.* n° 70; 73; 74. En contexte votif (εὐχαριστοῦντες), *Corpus inscriptionum et monumentorum religionis Mithriacae* I, 45; 60. Le vœu non acquitté déclenche la colère des dieux, cf. *Beichtinschr.* n° 45 (une fois les dieux propitiés / εἰλασάμενοι, «ils ont consacré [la stèle]»).

acclamatoire de l'écrit est soulignée par l'usage redondant de deux verbes: στηλ(λ)ογραφεῖν et ἐγγράφειν, ou par la formule ἐνγραφον ιστάναι,⁵⁴ qui rappelle l'usage des inscriptions honorifiques: ἐτείμησεν στηλλογραφία.⁵⁵ L'écriture objective la puissance justicière des dieux – leur νέμεσις⁵⁶ –, la punition n'étant que le discours divin en acte pour pro-voquer la prise de conscience de la faute. Sur une inscription de Philadelphie de Lydie, la dédicante, considérée comme perdue par les hommes – comme sur beaucoup d'inscriptions de sanctuaires thérapeutiques⁵⁷ –, dit simplement: “elle a fait inscrire la stèle et elle a dressé cet écrit et ils rendent grâce à la Mère”.⁵⁸ La stèle inscrite est parfois la seule exigence du dieu.⁵⁹ Une inscription, hélas très mutilée, laisse néanmoins comprendre que les dieux ont puni une famille, car elle n'avait pas fait les offrandes de blé et de vin réclamées καὶ οὐκ ἐστηλλογράφησαν.⁶⁰ Dans l'inscription qui ouvre le corpus de G. Petzl, à la suite d'une faute rituelle, une injonction nocturne de Zeus a réclamé l'écriture de la stèle (ἵνα στήλην στήσας ἐπιγράψῃ ἃ πέποσ-χεν).⁶¹ Celle-ci célèbre les pouvoirs divins successivement punitifs après l'infraction, puis bienveillants et miséricordieux, une fois que le fidèle a manifesté sa piété. En contexte votif plus courant, Tatianè, dont le vœu avait été exaucé, mais qui n'avait pas les moyens d'offrir le taureau promis, “interrogea le dieu et il a accepté de recevoir en échange une stèle”.⁶² Le texte expose donc la résolution d'un contrat votif par un objet de substitution publiant la bienveillance de Mèn. Une autre dédicante, punie c'est-à-dire malade, et qui a reconnu sa faute – puisque la maladie révèle l'état coupable –, indique aussi: “j'ai consacré l'eulogie [= la stèle], parce que j'ai recouvré la santé”.⁶³ Même lorsque le texte n'explicite pas les modalités du jugement

⁵⁴ Respectivement *Beichtinschr.* n° 11, ll. 6-10; n° 70, l. 8; cf. *ibid.* VII, n. 1.

⁵⁵ Malay 1994, *op.cit.* (n.23), n° 36 (ll. 3-4).

⁵⁶ Cf. Apulée (citant Platon, *Lois* 715e – 716 a), *De mundo* 38 [374]: “accompagné toujours et partout de la Nécessité vengeresse (*ultrix Necessitas*), prête à châtier ceux qui se seront écartés de la loi sainte”. Cf. dans un oracle alphabétique: Ἡ Νέμεσις ἀνθρώποισι τὴν δίκην νέμει; C. Brixhe – R. Hodot, *L'Asie Mineure du Nord au Sud. Inscriptions inédites* (Nancy 1988), n° 46, l. 7.

⁵⁷ Par ex. *IGVR* I, 148 = *IG* XIV, 966 (II^e siècle): ἀφελπισμένῳ ὑπὸ παντὸς ἀνθρώπου.

⁵⁸ *Beichtinschr.* n° 96 (les changements de sujets sont fréquents dans les phrases).

⁵⁹ *TAM* VI, 329 (en 244-245). Elle n'est pas retenue par *Beichtinschr.*, sans doute parce que la punition n'y est pas indiquée, mais elle est retenue par Riel 1995, *op.cit.* (n.6), n° 36. Voir aussi *TAM* VI, 364, en 145-146 (= Riel 1995, *op.cit.* [n.6], n° 100). Même injonction sur une stèle offerte à Asclépios, *Syll.*³, 1172.

⁶⁰ *Beichtinschr.* n° 8.

⁶¹ *Beichtinschr.* n° 1, ll. 7-8.

⁶² *Beichtinschr.* n° 61, ll. 5-7.

⁶³ *Beichtinschr.* n° 43, ll. 6-8.

divin, il détaille en revanche l'exaltation des instances supérieures, la glorification de leur ἀρετή,⁶⁴ si l'on en croit Syntychè:

Et celle-ci ayant caché la puissance du dieu par suite d'une demande de la mère de la jeune fille, pour qu'elle n'en dise rien, le dieu s'irrita de cela aussi, parce que Syntychè ne le révélait pas (οὐκ ἐξεφάντευσεν) et n'exaltait pas (οὐδὲ ὑψωσε) le dieu.

Alors, il lui intime “de dresser la *némésis* (c'est-à-dire la stèle) sur son lieu [*i.e.* le sanctuaire ou le territoire du dieu]”. Et elle signe: “Syntychè qui a publié par écrit le châtiment”.⁶⁵

La stèle inscrite peut être un des moyens rituels pour se délivrer de la faute et elle constitue en tout cas le terme du processus.⁶⁶ Pollion indique dans sa dédicace, après avoir rapporté la faute et la punition:

Il a levé [la punition] par un *triphōnon* – une taupe, un moineau et un petit thon – et la libération de leur colère (τὴν θυμολυσίαν), les dieux l'ont obtenue par la coutume d'ériger la stèle (τὴν εἶχαν οἱ θεοὶ ἐν ἔθι ἀναστανομένης τῆς στήλης);

suivent des offrandes pour les dieux et pour les prêtres.⁶⁷ Ces procédures rappellent les sacrifices expiatoires évoqués par Apollonius de Tyane pour obtenir le pardon divin (ὕπερ ξυγγνώμης θύσας).⁶⁸ De son côté, la stèle d'Eudoxos reproduit une réglementation religieuse pour se délier des serments qui subordonne le droit d'écrire la stèle au paiement d'une amende: εἰ ταῦτα δικαίως γ(ι)εγραμμένα εἰσί, ἵν' ἀνέσστησεν στήλῃν.⁶⁹ Dans un autre cas, la somme rendue au double par les fils d'un délinquant permet que la stèle “existe à l'avenir (ἵνα ἐξ αὐτῶν γενήσται ἡ στήλῃ)”.⁷⁰ Sur une inscription tardive (elle date de 263/4), Athénaios rapporte:

“châtié par le dieu pour une faute commise par ignorance, je fus sommé dans un songe, après avoir reçu beaucoup de châtiments, d'élever une stèle et j'y ai inscrit les puissances du dieu. En action de grâce, j'ai fait écrire sur la stèle”.⁷¹

⁶⁴ *Beichtinschr.* n° 50, l. 8; cf. aussi n° 33, ll. 9-13: “et elle a écrit la stèle et elle a montré leurs [les dieux] grandes puissances et, désormais, elle rend grâce”.

⁶⁵ *Beichtinschr.* n° 59, ll. 14-24, cf. G. Petzl – H. Malay, ‘A New Confession-Inscription from the Katakekaumene’, *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 28 (1987), 469-471; cf. aussi *Beichtinschr.* n° 57 (ll. 11-12); n° 33 (ll. 3-7).

⁶⁶ Cf. *CMRDM* I, n° 57: Ἀρτέμιδι Ἀναεῖτι καὶ Μηνὶ Τιάμου Ἀλέξανδρος Τειμόθεος Γλύκων τῶν Βολλιάδος καὶ οἱ συνβολαφόροι ἐγλυτρω[σάμεν]οι ἀνέστη[σαν —].

⁶⁷ *Beichtinschr.* n° 6, ll. 11-15. Cf. Riel 2003, op.cit. (n.26), 94.

⁶⁸ Philostrate, *Vie d'Apollonius de Tyane* 6.40.

⁶⁹ *Beichtinschr.* n° 58, ll. 14-16.

⁷⁰ *Beichtinschr.* n° 46.

⁷¹ *Beichtinschr.* n° 11.

Il s'est fait représenter faisant le geste de l'adoration, main droite levée. À sa gauche, un personnage main droite tendue tenant une couronne est sans doute un prêtre, curateur/épimélète du sceptre, dont le bras gauche est pendant en support.⁷² Les deux stèles qui montrent plastiquement le sceptre, comme ici, intensifient en même temps l'étape finale d'exaltation de la divinité par l'eulogie. Les dévots, toujours en position frontale et statique, s'y font représenter main droite levée.⁷³ Le geste est celui de l'eulogie. La main droite levée est banale pour figurer la prière sur les reliefs grecs dès l'époque classique⁷⁴ et certains textes le disent: 'Οσίῳ τε Δικαίῳ χειρὰς ἀείρω.⁷⁵ En l'occurrence, l'appel au Saint et au Juste évoque la main levée du serment, prise à témoin à valeur performative d'une instance supérieure, mains supines dont F. Cumont a magistralement montré que leur figuration sculptée renchérisait sur les appels à la justice divine contenus dans les textes gravés.⁷⁶ En redoublant le geste de l'eulogie mains levées par la déclaration couchée sur un support durable, les dévots diffusent en l'intensifiant le même message religieux que les stèles votives habituelles, au texte plus laconique, où les dédicants figurent l'exaltation de la divinité par l'image, en se faisant représenter en orants, main droite levée. Les stèles votives phrygiennes fournissent nombre de ces figurations d'orants,⁷⁷ semblables à celles des reliefs qui accompagnent les stèles dites de confession.

Sur la stèle élevée par la famille de Tatias pour se délivrer du parjure de leur grand-mère, l'exaltation des dieux par l'acclamation trame le texte

⁷² Un dieu peut soutenir son sceptre de la même façon, cf. Zeus Masphalatenos sur une stèle de Kula, *CMRDM* I, n° 54.

⁷³ Le relief de *Beichtinschr.* n° 38 présente à gauche d'une orante debout une femme à genoux, main droite tendue en signe d'action de grâce (ll. 7-9), cf. F. van Straten, 'Did the Greeks Kneel before their Gods?', *Bulletin Antieke Beschaving* 49 (1974), 159-189. Sur les reliefs de Grèce dédiés à Mèn, les orants sont représentés de profil, *CMRDM* I, n° 2 (Athènes); n° 10 (Thrace).

⁷⁴ Cf. F.T. van Straten, *Hiera Kala. Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece*, *Religions in the Graeco-Roman World* 127 (Leiden 1995), fig. 66; 76.

⁷⁵ Strubbe 1997, op.cit. (n.2), n° 19. Cf. S. Knippschild, 'Drum bietet zum Bunde die Hände'. *Rechts-symbolische Akte in zwischenstaatlichen Beziehungen im orientalischen und griechisch-römischen Altertum* (Stuttgart 2002), 55-63 et, plus généralement, A. Corbeill, *Nature Embodied. Gesture in Ancient Rome* (Princeton 2004), 20-33.

⁷⁶ F. Cumont, 'Il sole vindice dei delitti ed il simbolo delle mani alzate', *Atti della Pont. Accad. Rom. di Arch., Ser III, Mem. I* 1 (1923), 65-80; 'Nuovi epitaffi col simbolo della preghiera al dio vindice', *Atti della Pont. Accad. Rom. di Arch., Ser III, Rend. V* (1926-1927), 69-78; et 'Invocation au Soleil accompagnée des "mains supines"', *Syria* 14 (1933), 385-395.

⁷⁷ T. Drew Bear – C.M. Thomas – M. Yildizturhan, *Phrygian Votive Steles, The Museum of Anatolian Civilizations* (Ankara 1999), n° 30 par ex.

comme une litanie.⁷⁸ La formule gratulatoire qui clôt de nombreux textes (ἀπὸ νῦν ἐυλογεῖ / συ ἐυλογῶ)⁷⁹ exprime la phase finale d'adoration, d'exaltation des puissances divines, qui est en lien générique avec l'écriture.⁸⁰ La finalité de l'eulogie dans le processus complexe auquel appartient la confession me semble clairement exprimée dans une inscription que la cassure de la pierre rend anonyme. La dédicante

qui était retenue dans le temple a été punie par les dieux, afin qu'elle proclame leurs puissances. Ayant fait la dépense [sans doute pour la stèle],⁸¹ elle s'est concilié les dieux et elle a fait inscrire la stèle et a proclamé leurs grandes puissances et, désormais, elle rend grâce.⁸²

Ce témoignage indique que la punition voulait obliger la dévote, qui était peut-être hiérodoule,⁸³ à exalter les dieux. Une inscription récemment publiée⁸⁴ est venue également conforter l'analyse que je propose. Après une adresse classique, en forme d'*ekboësis*, à la Mère de Mèn Axiottenos, un couple de dédicants offre une prière (*eulogia*) à Mèn et célèbre en forme de litanie (ll. 8-12) sa grande sainteté (μέγα σοι τὸ ὄσιον), sa justice (μέγα σοι τὸ δίκαιον), son pouvoir victorieux (μεγάλη (ἡ) νείκη), ses puissances (μεγάλαι (αἱ) σαὶ νεμέσεις) et la grandeur des douze dieux qui partagent probablement avec lui le sanctuaire local (μέγα σοι τὸ δωδεκάθεον τὸ παρὰ σοὶ κατεκτισμένον).⁸⁵ La formulation rappelle cette autre acclamation retrouvée près d'Ephèse: Μέγα τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ, μέγα τὸ ὄσιον, μέγα τὸ ἀγαθόν, κατ' ὄναρ.⁸⁶ La narration de ses malheurs par le dédicant,

⁷⁸ *Beichtinschr.* n° 69, ll. 2-3; 23-24; 32-34.

⁷⁹ *Beichtinschr.* n° 37. Pour la diffusion de l'*eulogia* dans l'épigraphie païenne de l'Asie Mineure impériale, cf. L. Robert, *Nouvelles inscriptions de Sardes* (Paris 1964), 28-30. Pour l'origine juive ou perse, cf. Pleket 1981, op.cit. (n.13), 184-189. Cf. l'invention de la prière pour Burkert 1996, op.cit. (n.43), 91.

⁸⁰ *Beichtinschr.* n° 34, ll. 16-18; n° 69, ll. 32-34. Déjà chez Euripide, *Ion* 136.

⁸¹ Cf. *Beichtinschr.* n° 46; 58.

⁸² *Beichtinschr.* n° 33.

⁸³ Cela pourrait expliquer le ἐνποδισθῖσα (l. 2) et la datation originale par une prêtresse (ll. 13-14). Cf. Riel 2003, op.cit. (n.26), 91.

⁸⁴ H. Malay, 'A Praise on Men Artemidorou Axiottenos', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 36 (2003), 13-18 (signalé par *Beichtinschr.* n° 56). Je remercie G. Petzl d'avoir consacré à ce beau document une des conférences qu'il a données comme Professeur invité à l'EPHE, section des Sciences religieuses (19 mai – 9 juin 2004).

⁸⁵ Sur la présence de collectivités divines indifférenciées (*hoi theoi* topiques) dans ces sanctuaires locaux de grands dieux, cf. *Beichtinschr.*, index s.v. Θεοί, 149 et Belayche 2005, op.cit. (n.19).

⁸⁶ Riel 1991, op.cit. (n.1), 47 n° 105. Cf. une amulette espagnole (*Bulletin Épigraphique* 1953, 205) qui en appelle au «grand nom», le «dieu l'Hypsistos» comme rempart contre l'injustice (ἀδικήσις) à la façon d'un papyrus magique (*PGM* I 2, V, ll. 45-46).

malmené par un neveu ingrat (Il. 12-18), n'est pas une confession; elle entend administrer la preuve de la grandeur du dieu. Et le texte se clôt par une nouvelle acclamation du dieu sauveur et par une eulogie exprimée au présent de durée: εὐλογῶ ὑμεῖν (Il. 18-20). Du fait que son formulaire diffère des «*standard confession texts*», H. Malay, son éditeur, s'interroge sur son appartenance à la catégorie.⁸⁷ Son scrupule disqualifie moins le témoignage qu'il n'encourage plutôt à réapprécier le concept. Sa forme rappelle, en plus développé, les épigraphes qui acclament un dieu épiclésé comme *tyrannos* ou acclamé comme *heis theos*. À Sattai par exemple, Mèn est “dieu unique dans les cieux, Grand est Mèn céleste, grande est la puissance du dieu immortel”.⁸⁸ En revanche, ces divinités ne portent pas les épiclèses superlatives qui qualifient l'exaltation des dieux à la même époque, comme μέγιστος,⁸⁹ ou ὑψιστος sauf deux exceptions.⁹⁰ Leurs épiclèses sont topiques, ethniques, historiques (en relation avec le fondateur du sanctuaire), ou encore fonctionnelles.⁹¹ Ces divinités ne sont pas non plus “ἐπηκόος”, autre qualité souvent célébrée alors,⁹² bien qu'étant rigoureusement atten-tives au respect des droits de tous, hommes et dieux.

Cette forme d'expression originale par rapport aux épigraphes votives peut s'expliquer par l'écriture de la stèle. Les épiclèses de définition théologiques sont ici remplacées par la narration du dieu en action (sa/ses némés[e]is),⁹³ ce qui confirme, me semble-t-il, que la confession n'a pas

⁸⁷ Malay 2003, op.cit. (n.84), 17-18. Pareillement, G. Petzl, à la suite de P. Herrmann, s'était interrogé sur la pertinence de l'appartenance d'une épigraphe qu'il avait retenue comme «*Beichtinschrift*», 115 n° 97, cf. *infra* n. 98.

⁸⁸ CMRDM I, n° 83; voir aussi n° 63 *infra* (n.107). Cf. E. Peterson, *EIS ΘΕΟΣ* (Göttingen 1926), 200-208. Cf. Aelius Aristide, *Discours sacrés* 4. 50: “Je crierai: ‘Un seul!’, voulant dire le dieu”. L. Robert, ‘Reliefs votifs et cultes d’Anatolie’, *Anatolia* 3 (1958), 128 a très pertinemment relevé “l'équivalence pratique entre *heis* et *mégas* (dieu suprême, non point ‘dieu unique’)”.

⁸⁹ Cf. Müller 1913, op.cit. (n.20), par ex. 316-317 pour Zeus Panamaros et M. Bissinger, *Das Adjektiv ΜΕΓΑΣ in der griechischen Dichtung*, I (München 1966). Zeus est *megistos* à Iconium (Galatie), Lagina (Carie), Perta (Lycaonie), cf. Th. Drew-Bear – Chr. Naour, ‘Divinités de Phrygie’, *ANRW* II, 18, 3 (1990), 1970-1973.

⁹⁰ Apollon Lairbēnos est «dieu hypsistos» à Badinlar en Phrygie, *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 10 (1889), 223 n° 11, et la Thea hypsistē de Gjöle (Lydie) est sans doute une Mère, *TAM* V 1 (1981), n° 359,

⁹¹ Cf. CMRDM III (1976), 67-80.

⁹² Cf. O. Weinreich, ‘ΘΕΟΙ ΕΠΗΚΟΟΙ’, *Athenische Mitteilungen* 37 (1912), 1-68 (réed. *Ausgewählte Schriften* I [Amsterdam 1969], 131-195). Elle s'appliqua d'abord logiquement aux dieux médecins, mais s'élargit bien vite à toutes les grandes divinités. Σωτήρ a connu un développement analogue, passant du qualificatif fonctionnel de divinités guérisseuses (Asclépios, Hygie) à l'attribut essentiel de grandes divinités.

⁹³ Némésis est appelée pour protéger les tombes, cf. Strubbe 1991, op.cit. (n.38), 46.

valeur pénitentielle. Ces textes rapportent un aveu ou une confession de ce que le fidèle comprend comme une faute, une fois qu'il a mis cet acte en relation avec le mal ou le malheur qu'il a enduré.⁹⁴ Mais, par rapport à l'expérience du surnaturel dans son ensemble, cette deuxième étape du formulaire est d'ordre anecdotique, même si elle relate un rituel qui a pu se dérouler en public dans le temple.⁹⁵ Sa fin est narrative, illustrative, destinée à mettre en avant – à «ex-alter» – les puissances du dieu. La divinité réclame, explicitement dans certains cas, une publicité faite à sa nature infiniment supérieure et absolue et ce sont ses pouvoirs que toutes les stèles célèbrent, quelles qu'en soient les modalités. La transcription sur pierre de l'aveu de la faute n'est qu'un moyen pour faire éclater cette grandeur, mais elle n'en est pas la finalité. Sa finalité consiste en un exposé écrit et durable de théologie «pragmatique» – pour employer un vocabulaire réservé d'habitude aux religions du Livre –, ce qui laisse soupçonner un rôle de l'encadrement sacerdotal, même si les textes le taisent.⁹⁶ En revanche, sauf sur un relief figurant des orants, les textes ne signalent pas de dimension publique de l'action de grâces, comme on le lit dans les épigraphes de sanctuaires thérapeutiques qui consignent les guérisons: “Et il guérit, et il rendit publiquement grâces au dieu (δημοσίᾳ ἡὺχαρίστησεν τῷ θεῷ), et la foule le félicita (ὁ δῆμος συνεχάρη αὐτῷ)”.⁹⁷ La stèle exposée en permanence assume ce rôle de représentation.

La stèle d'Aurélios Trophimos en donne confirmation.⁹⁸ Le dédicant, représenté en eulogie, déclare: “ayant interrogé la divinité [probablement parce qu'il souffrait de quelque mal], j'ai érigé la stèle à la Mère des dieux en rendant grâce à ses puissances”. Les deux premières étapes (punition et confession) ne sont pas explicitées derrière le ἐρωτήσας τὸν θεόν, qui fait sans doute référence à une procédure divinatoire quelconque. L'érection de la stèle entre dans la conduite propitiatoire, mais elle la dépasse pour servir surtout d'exaltation du dieu dans et par l'écriture. Renforcés par les reliefs d'orants, les textes entassés dans les sanctuaires servent à exhorter les fidèles qui viennent auprès du dieu. Ils diffusent une «catéchèse», qui peut être écrite en toutes lettres. Les parénèses finales du type: “Il [le dédicant] avertit / conjure (παραινέλλει) tous les hommes qu'il ne faut pas mépriser le

⁹⁴ En règle générale, le dédicant est sorti de la peine lorsqu'il relate son expérience sur la stèle d'action de grâce, cf. *Beichtinschr.* n° 1, ll. 8-9.

⁹⁵ Cf. Chaniotis 2004, op.cit. (n.3), 12-15.

⁹⁶ Cf. Belayche 2003-2004, op.cit. (n.36).

⁹⁷ *IG XIV*, 966 (II^e siècle), à Rome (île tibérine).

⁹⁸ *Beichtinschr.* n° 97.

dieu”⁹⁹ inscrivent la toute-puissance des dieux, assortie parfois de réglementations rituelles ou morales.¹⁰⁰ La stèle est un ἔξενπλον selon le mot latin transcrit,¹⁰¹ un *exemplum* rappelant à toutes et à tous l’ordre des dieux capables de manifestation (ἐπιφανέστατοι).¹⁰² Celle de Babou, fille de Manas, est une «pierre parlante»: elle s’affiche comme “un exemple pour les autres dans ce lieu (ὕπόδειγμα τῶν ἄλλων ἰς τὸν τόπον)” et appelle le bonheur sur le *laos* venant au sanctuaire.¹⁰³

4) Conclusion: la narration écrite, une *eulogia* arétalogique

Cette fonction apologétique est certainement la plus originale au sein de la documentation religieuse païenne de l’Anatolie impériale. Les pierres érigées *ex uoto*/εὐχὴν servent elles aussi d’hommage durable, par delà l’acquittement du vœu. Mais ces stèles-ci insistent sur la fonction mémorielle: elles servent de μαρτύριον.¹⁰⁴ Le terme, rare dans les documents épigraphiques, appartient au domaine juridique; il désigne à la fois le *monumentum* concret (la stèle)¹⁰⁵ et l’expérimentation de la nature des dieux par l’aveu de la souffrance,¹⁰⁶ comme chez ce couple dévot d’Artémis Anaitis et Mên de Tiamos: μαρτυροῦντες τὰς δ[ύνα]μεις τῶν θεῶν ἀπέδω[κον] τήν εὐχὴν.¹⁰⁷ La stèle objective la transformation du fidèle: de la douleur à la convalescence, de la faute à la piété, donc de la mécréance à la soumission. La forme narrative pour les textes – par l’effet de la «confession» en particulier – est choisie pour montrer en racontant. La stèle n’est pas qu’un acquittement (les stèles explicitement votives ne sont pas nombreuses), mais un moyen de proclamer sa gratitude envers une instance supérieure en la glorifiant. Ceci permet de comprendre que, pour un vœu dont l’acquittement a tardé (παρήλκυσε), la divinité “a ordonné d’écrire les

⁹⁹ *Beichtinschr.* n° 9 et les dédicaces à Apollon Lairbénos, par ex. *Beichtinschr.* n° 106. Sur le sanctuaire, T. Ritti – C. Simsek – H. Yildiz, ‘Dedicace e ΚΑΤΑΓΡΑΦΑΙ dal santuario frigio di Apollo Lairbenos’, *Epigraphica Anatolica* 32 (2000), 3-6 (avec bibl. ant.).

¹⁰⁰ Par ex. *Beichtinschr.* n° 27.

¹⁰¹ *Beichtinschr.* n° 120, l. 8; voir aussi n° 111 (ll. 8-9); 112 (l. 9); 121 (l. 5).

¹⁰² *Beichtinschr.* n° 118, ll. 3-4.

¹⁰³ Riel 1997, op.cit. (n.43), 37, ll. 11-13; 18-20.

¹⁰⁴ *Beichtinschr.* n° 9, ll. 13-14.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. *Anthologie palatine* VI, 147: “ce tableau (ὁ πίναξ) déclare qu’il fournira son témoignage (μαρτυρίην) [s.-e. de l’acquittement du vœu]”.

¹⁰⁶ *Beichtinschr.* 1, ll. 7-8.

¹⁰⁷ *CMRDM* I, n° 63. Elle n’est pas retenue par *Beichtinschr.*, sans doute parce que la punition (“les puissances des dieux”) n’est pas précisée.

puissances du dieu”.¹⁰⁸ Le but de la stèle inscrite est la louange de la grandeur du dieu; il n’est pas “l’aveu de sa faute ... et son repentir”, comme l’écrivait F. Cumont.¹⁰⁹ Ou plus exactement, la fonction de l’écrit de l’aveu n’est pas pénitentielle (comme dans le christianisme naissant), mais eulogique: elle est une forme d’exposé de la grandeur des dieux.

L’image du fidèle en orant a des parallèles dans les stèles votives de Lydie et Phrygie; mais, sa représentation appuyée sur un texte lui-même arétalogique confère à l’objet-stèle une fonction prosélyte dans laquelle l’image intensifie les mots.¹¹⁰ Cette originalité s’appuie sur un moyen de communication lui-même original: l’usage de l’écrit. Dans ces villages ruraux, où l’analphabétisme était sûrement majoritaire, et qui ne connaissaient pas l’*epigraphic habit* de l’auto-représentation des élites, c’est pourtant par un acte d’écriture que les divinités étaient magnifiées.¹¹¹

Paris, décembre 2004.

¹⁰⁸ *Beichtinschr.* 65, ll. 6-7; cf. aussi n° 11, ll. 6-8.

¹⁰⁹ F. Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain* (Paris 1929, 4^{ème} éd.), 36.

¹¹⁰ Déjà Pleket 1981, op.cit. (n.13), 184, avait souligné une institutionnalisation de ce “*making propaganda’ for the gods’ power*”.

¹¹¹ Gnoli – Thornton 1997, op.cit. (n.13), 161, mettent ce phénomène en relation avec le dynamisme de l’économie villageoise.

DER MONTANISMUS UND DER RÖMISCHE STAAT¹

VERA E. HIRSCHMANN

Doch, wer dieser neue Lehrer ist (Montanus), zeigen seine Taten und Lehren. Er ist es, [...] der Pepouza und Tymion – zwei kleine Städte in Phrygien – Jerusalem genannt hat, in der Absicht dort Menschen aller Gegenden zu versammeln...²

Die Aussage des Apollonius, bei Eusebius von Caesarea wiedergegeben, bezieht sich auf Ereignisse in der Mitte des zweiten Jahrhunderts nach Christus im westlichen Phrygien.³ Dort bildete sich in dieser Zeit um einen Mann namens Montanus und zwei Frauen (Maximilla und Priscilla) eine Gruppe ekstatisch prophezeiender Christen. Neben der ekstatischen Prophetie waren weitere wichtige Charakteristika dieser Gruppe die gleichberechtigte Haltung Frauen gegenüber, die innerhalb der montanistischen Ämterhierarchie Priesterinnen und Bischöfinnen werden konnten,⁴ und eine Naherwartung des Weltenendes.

Das obige Zitat von Eusebius berichtet davon, dass von Montanus zwei phrygische Orte, Pepouza und Tymion, als diejenigen Stätten angesehen wurden, auf die das in der Johannes-Apokalypse⁵ verheißene ‘Neue

¹ Der hier vorliegende Text ist die schriftliche Version einer Poster-Präsentation während des 5. Workshops ‘Impact of Empire’ in Münster. Dabei wurde auch das an der Universität Heidelberg durchgeführte archäologische Projekt ‘The Archeological Surface Survey in Phrygia’ unter der Leitung von Prof. Dr. Peter Lampe vorgestellt.

² *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.18.2.

³ Über die genaue Datierung des sog. „Ausbruchs“ des Montanismus herrschte bereits in der Antike Uneinigkeit. Eusebius setzt den Beginn der montanistischen Bewegung in das Jahr 172 n.Chr. (*Historia Ecclesiastica*, 5.16.7), während Epiphanius, der Bischof von Salamis, ein früheres Datum um 156/57 n.Chr. nennt (*Panarion Haeretikon*, 48.1.2). Zur Diskussion der verschiedenen Daten siehe A.R. Birley, *Marcus Aurelius, A Biography* (Revised Edition, New Haven – London 1987), 260. Vgl. auch *Martyrium Polycarpi* 21; W. Tabbernee, *Montanist Inscriptions and Testimonia: Epigraphic Sources Illustrating the History of Montanism*. North American Patristic Society Patristic Monograph Series 16 (Macon/Georgia 1997), 17. Tabbernee setzt den Beginn des Montanismus in das Jahr 165 n. Chr. Für ein früheres Datum siehe A.R. Birley, ‘Die „freiwilligen“ Märtyrer. Zum Problem der Selbst-Auslieferung’, in: R. v. Haehling (Hg.), *Rom und das himmlische Jerusalem* (Darmstadt 2000), 106-108; G. Buschmann, ‘Martyrium Polycarpi 4 und der Montanismus’, *Vigilia Christianae* 49 (1995), 105-145. Für 172 n.Chr. siehe T.D. Barnes, ‘The Chronology of Montanism’, *Journal of Theological Studies* 21 (1970), 403-408.

⁴ Die Begründung dafür sahen die Montanisten in einer von der Hauptkirche verschiedenen Sicht Evas, die bei ihnen nicht als die Verführerin galt, die sich über das Gebot Gottes hinweggesetzt hatte, sondern vielmehr als der Mensch, der als erster zur Weisheit gelangte, Epiphanius, *Panarion Haeretikon*, 48.2.2.

⁵ Kapitel 21.

Jerusalem', die Stadt der Endzeit, herabkommen werde. Über die Lage dieser beiden Städte wurde in den letzten hundert Jahren viel spekuliert.⁶

Im Jahr 2000 entdeckte ein internationales Forscherteam unter der Leitung der Universität Heidelberg im Garten des Museums von Uşak ein kaiserliches Reskript, aus dem hervorgeht, dass sich die *coloni* der Ortschaften Tymion und Simoe über unzulässige Dienstleistungen beim Kaiser beschwert haben.⁷

I. Die Tymion-Inscription



lassen.

Die Inschrift, die *in situ* auf einem Feld im Hinterland von Uşak gefunden wurde, zeigt die Lage einer bisher unbekannten kaiserlichen Domäne an.⁸

In ca. 12 km Entfernung von der Fundstelle fand dasselbe Team im Tal des Banaz-Flusses die Reste eines gigantischen Felsenklosters sowie antike Besiedlungsspuren in der Nähe des Klosters, die sich sowohl für den West- als auch für den Ostteil des gesamten Tales nachweisen

⁶ In Auszügen: Ch. Marksches, 'Nochmals: Wo lag Pepuza? Wo lag Tymion? Nebst einigen Bemerkungen zur Frühgeschichte des Montanismus', *Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum* 37 (1994), 7-28. Weiter G. Radet, *En Phrygie. Rapport sur une mission scientifique en Asie Mineure: Nouvelles archives des missions scientifiques et littéraires* 6 (Paris 1895), 531f; W.M. Ramsay, *Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia I-II* (Oxford 1895-1897). Ramsay vermutete die Orte im Lykos-Tal, 2, 574f. Vgl. dazu A. Strobel, *Das heilige Land der Montanisten* (Tübingen 1980), 23. Ausschlaggebend für die Lokalisation in der Nähe der heutigen Ortschaft Bekilli war für W.M. Calder die Inschrift, die 1930 in Bekilli gefunden wurde (*Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua* 4, 120, Nr. 321). Sie lautet: Μοντανοῦ πρωτοδιακόνου. Calder erklärt, dass ein Mann mit dem Namen Montanus, der in dieser Gegend wohnte, nur ein Montanist gewesen sein kann, 'The New Jerusalem of the Montanists', *Byzantion* 6 (1931), 421-425, hier 423.

⁷ Siehe P. Lampe, 'Die montanistischen Tymion und Pepouza im Lichte der neuen Tymioninschrift', *Zeitschrift für Antike und Christentum* 8 (2005), 354-357; P. Lampe – W. Tabbernee, 'Das Reskript von Septimius Severus und Caracalla und die Kolonen der kaiserlichen Domäne von Tymion und Simoe', *Epigraphica Anatolica* 37 (2004), 169-178.

⁸ Fotos I-III mit freundlicher Genehmigung von Prof. Dr. Peter Lampe.

II. Das Felsenkloster im Tal von Pepouza



In den folgenden Jahren wurden ein systematischer archäologischer Survey sowie geophysikalische und geomorphologische Untersuchungen durchgeführt. Die Konzentration von Scherben und die Art der Funde und architektonischen Reste im Tal

lassen eine durchgängig von hellenistischer bis in byzantinische Zeit besiedelte und bebaute Fläche erahnen. Die geophysikalischen Ergebnisse konnten durch das Sichtbarmachen der unterirdischen Strukturen von öffentlichen Gebäuden, Mauern und Nekropolen die Resultate des Surveys bestätigen.⁹

III. Das Tal von Pepouza



Montanistische Gemeinden sind in der Gegend von Temenothyrai (heute Uşak) und dem angrenzenden Sebaste belegt.¹⁰ Christliche Grabsteine, die in

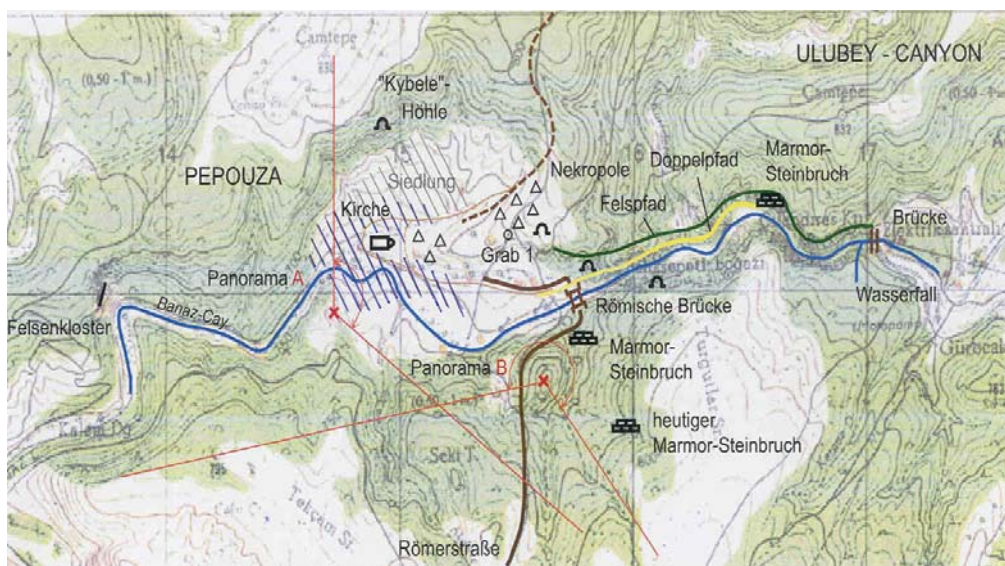
⁹ In Auszügen: P. Lampe, 'The First Campaign of the Pepouza and Tymion Archaeological Surface Survey 2001', 20. *Ara t rma Sonuçlar Toplantı s. 2. Cilt, 27-31 Mayıs 2002 Ankara*, ed. Kültür Bakanlığı, Anıtlar ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü (Ankara 2003), 1-10 (mit acht Fotos und einer Karte) [*Proceedings of the International Symposium of Excavations, Surveys and Archaeometry in Ankara, May 27th –31st, 2002*, ed. by the General Directorate of Monuments and Museums (Ankara 2003), 1-10]; ders., 'The Phrygian Archeological Surface Survey Project of the University of Heidelberg and the Discovery of Pepouza and Tymion', *Zeitschrift für Antike und Christentum* 6 (2002), 117-120; ders., 'Die 2002-Kampagne des archäologischen Phrygien-Surveys der Universität Heidelberg', *Zeitschrift für Antike und Christentum* 7 (2003), 156-159; ders., 'Pepouza 2002: Vermessungsnetz, neue archäologische Zeichnungen, Oberflächenfunde', 21. *Ara t rma Sonuçlar Toplantı s. 1. Cilt, 26-31 Mayıs 2003 Ankara*, ed. Kültür Bakanlığı, Anıtlar ve Müzeler Genel Müdürlüğü (Ankara 2004), 109-118; ders. 2005, a.a.O. (Anm.7).

¹⁰ St. Mitchell, *Anatolia II. The Rise of the Church* (Oxford 1993), 39 und 42. Vgl. auch die Zeichnungen der zahlreichen Grabsteine bei Tabbernee 1997, a.a.O. (Anm.1).

der näheren und weiteren Umgebung von Temenothyrai gefunden wurden, lassen sich als montanistisch identifizieren.¹¹

Ein Anzeichen für montanistische Provenienz ist die Abbildung des sog. *panis quadratus* auf dem Stein. Ein Brotstempel in dieser Form wurde 2002 auf dem Gelände von Pepouza gefunden.¹²

Aufgrund der Funde, einschließlich der epigraphischen Zeugnisse, die den bisherigen Lokalisationsversuchen fehlten, ist die Wahrscheinlichkeit hoch, hier im Banaz-Tal die Reste der montanistischen Metropole Pepouza wiedergefunden zu haben.¹³



(Karte Tal von Pepouza: Dr. B. Hanemann, Landesmuseum Speyer)

Der Montanismus ist historisch gesehen ein Teil der komplexen religiösen Struktur Phrygiens. Im zweiten Jahrtausend vor Christus prägten die Hethiter mit ihrer Kultur Kleinasien. Es folgten weitere Einflüsse durch die griechischen Einwanderer und die persische Besatzung. Als die Römer sich in der Kaiserzeit intensiv im westlichen Teil Kleinasiens ausbreiteten, hatte das Land schon beträchtliche Übung in der Anpassung an neue Eindrücke. Die religiöse Struktur, immer wieder ergänzt durch die verschiedenen Herrscher über das Land, hatte einen lebendigen Synkretismus geschaffen.

¹¹ Mitchell 1993, a.a.O. (Anm.10), 41. Für die einzelnen Fundorte und Beschreibung der Steine siehe Tabbernee 1997, a.a.O. (Anm.1).

¹² Siehe Lampe 2003, a.a.O. (Anm.9).

¹³ Vgl. Anm. 9 und s. W. Tabbernee – P. Lampe, *Pepouza and Tymion: The Discovery and Archaeological Exploration of a Lost Ancient City and an Imperial Estate in Phrygia* (im Druck).

Außer indigenen kleinasiatischen Gottheiten wie Kybele¹⁴, Men¹⁵ oder den Göttern des griechisch-römischen Pantheons finden wir im Westen vielfach auch Anhänger der jüdischen Religion, die in einer multi-kulturellen Gesellschaft mitwirkten.

Der römische Staat seinerseits hatte ebenfalls Übung im Umgang mit religiöser Vielfalt. Grundsätzlich herrschte religiöse Freiheit und Toleranz, die erst dann ihre Grenzen hatte, wenn sich ein Kult oder eine Gruppe als öffentlich störend oder gar gefährlich (siehe den Bacchanalienprozeß) erwies. War das nicht der Fall, so waren religiöse Vereinigungen grundsätzlich erlaubt.¹⁶

Das im ersten Jahrhundert unserer Zeitrechnung nach Kleinasien einfließende Christentum sollte diese Parameter ändern. Zunächst aber war es wieder ein neuer Kult aus dem Osten, der rasch Anhänger fand. Die epigraphischen Zeugnisse, die für diese Frühzeit in Kleinasien die größte Quellengattung ausmachen, zeigen keine Spuren eines aggressiven Konkurrenzkampfes unter den verschiedenen religiösen Gruppen. Das Geheimnis dieses Miteinanders lag sicherlich darin, dass die Christen wohl anfangs noch nicht durchgängig als exklusive gesellschaftliche Gruppe wahrgenommen wurden. Wenn eine Konkurrenz der unterschiedlichen religiösen Elemente innerhalb der Bevölkerung keinen Nährboden finden konnte, so war für die staatlichen Dependancen am Ort kein Grund zum Einschreiten gegeben. Im kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien, in dem wir uns zur Zeit des Auftretens der Montanisten bewegen, waren die Menschen zwar der römischen Autorität untergeordnet, behielten aber trotzdem die Charakteristika ihrer Lebensweise und ihres religiösen Verhaltens bei. Eckhard Stephan¹⁷ formuliert am Beispiel der griechischen Bevölkerung prägnant: „Die griechische Identität war hingegen an Kriterien wie Sprache, Bildungskanon, regionale Herkunft und persönliche Abstammung gebunden. Auf

¹⁴ Das vielfach von Göttinnen einwandernder Kulturen überlagerte Bild stellt die Forschung immer wieder vor die Frage nach der ursprünglichen Gestalt der Göttin. In einer neueren Untersuchung hat sich Lynn E. Roller mit der Problematik auseinandergesetzt, die kleinasiatische Göttin differenziert. Sie betrachtet frühe Erscheinungsformen der kleinasiatischen „Mutter“. Siehe L.E. Roller, 'The Phrygian Character of Kybele: The Formation of an Iconography and Cult Ethos in the Iron Age', in: A. Çilingiroglu – D.H. French (Hrsgg.), *Anatolian Iron Ages. The Proceedings of the Third Anatolian Iron Ages Colloquium held at Van, 6 – 12 August 1990* (Ankara 1994), 189-198.

¹⁵ Mitchell, 1993, a.a.O. (Anm.10), 24-25. Dazu siehe *Inschriften von Ephesos VII 1* (= IGSK 17,1), 3100.

¹⁶ *Digesten* 47.22.

¹⁷ E. Stephan, *Honoratioren, Griechen, Polisbürger. Kollektive Identitäten innerhalb der Oberschicht des kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien* (Göttingen 2002), 260.

diese Weise konnte ein und dieselbe Person gleichzeitig über eine kulturelle Identität als ‘Griechen’ und eine politische als ‘Römer’ [...] verfügen.” Und weiter unten heißt es: “Dies (die Konkurrenz beider Identitätssphären) hätte der Fall sein können, wenn es gesellschaftliche Strukturen gegeben hätte (z.B. eine Art griechischer Freiheitsbewegung o.ä.), die der griechischen Identität eine politische Relevanz verschafft hätte, oder wenn beispielsweise durch den hypothetischen Versuch einer rücksichtslosen Romanisierung ‘von oben’ die Dominanz des griechischen Modells im kulturellen Bereich in Frage gestellt worden wäre.”

Die zentralen Begriffe sind “Identitätssphären” und “Konkurrenzlosigkeit”. Das römische Modell ermöglichte den Angehörigen des Reiches, sich nicht als Untertanen zu fühlen, und schloß so einen potentiellen Unruheherd weitgehend aus.

Mit dem Christentum kam eine neue Komponente in dieses staatlich geförderte Miteinander. Die christliche Religion arbeitete im Gegensatz zu den sie umgebenden Kulturen exklusiv statt integrativ. Man konnte nicht Christ sein und gleichzeitig der Kybele huldigen. Man konnte ebenso wenig Christ sein und dem Kaiser als Gott opfern. An diesem Punkt hörte der christliche Bürger auf, ein Teil der kollektiven politischen Identität zu sein. Dazu kommt bei entsprechend konsequenter Umsetzung des Christentums auch der Verlust der vorherigen sozialen Identität. Ein Christ sollte möglichst nicht an den Opfermahlzeiten der Tempel teilnehmen,¹⁸ die für Menschen ärmerer Schichten der Bevölkerung oft die einzigen Fleischmahlzeiten waren. Der Theaterbesuch stürzte einen Christen in einen Konfliktpunkt mit der eigenen Überzeugung, von der Teilnahme an den staatlichen bzw. städtischen Festen, die ja zumeist mit bestimmten Götterheiten verbunden waren, ganz zu schweigen. Durch die Zugehörigkeit zum christlichen Glauben entstand eine neue Identitätssphäre, die im Gegensatz zu anderen Kulturen im römischen Reich die Konkurrenzlosigkeit zwischen den religiösen Gruppen aufhob. Der christliche Gott war ein alleiniger Herrscher im Himmel, und seine Anhänger mussten sich für ihn gänzlich entscheiden. Der in einer multikulturellen Gesellschaft sowohl politisch als auch religiös einigende Kaiserkult erreichte die Christen nicht mehr. Nun sind pauschale Urteile immer gefährlich, und Eckhard Stephan hebt zu Recht hervor, dass die meisten Aussagen, die wir über das Leben der Menschen in

¹⁸ P. Lampe, ‘Das korinthische Herrenmahl im Schnittpunkt hellenistisch-römischer Mahlpraxis und paulinischer Theologia Crucis (1 Kor 11,17-43)’, *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 82 (1991), 183-213.

Kleinasien treffen können, aus Quellen zur städtischen Bevölkerung herrühren. Der ländliche Teil des kleinasiatischen Westens ist in seiner kulturellen Entwicklung für uns häufig noch uneinsichtig. Wir haben aus dem phrygischen Eumeneia (3. Jh.) christliche epigraphische Zeugnisse, die zeigen, dass ein friedliches Miteinander der paganen und der christlichen Bevölkerung durchaus möglich war.¹⁹ Um solch eine alltägliche Kooperation zu erreichen, müssten Christen zumindest in diesen Gebieten nicht sozial auffällig geworden sein. Das wiederum hieße, sie bewegten sich innerhalb der Toleranzgrenzen, die der römische Staat religiösen Gruppen steckte.

Die Montanisten sind in ihrer Frühphase in Phrygien eine christliche Gruppierung, die im ländlichen Gebiet entstand. Ihre Geschichte kann einen Beitrag leisten, den Integrationsmöglichkeiten christlicher Gruppen auf dem Land ein Stück näher zu kommen.

Obwohl die Montanisten schon früh durch ihre Hindrängung zum Martyrium auffielen und dadurch möglicherweise die Aufmerksamkeit auch auf andere Christen in ihrer Umgebung lenkten,²⁰ konnten sie sich in Phrygien schnell ausbreiten. Die bei Eusebius zitierten Quellen für die Frühphase des Montanismus berichten nichts über ein Einschreiten des Staates. Ihr Umfeld schien sie – so weit wir es zu beurteilen vermögen – offen aufgenommen zu haben.

Die sich rasch vergrößernde Gruppe erforderte auch mehr organisatorischen Aufwand. Schon bald, so hören wir weiter, gab es einen Verwalter, der sich offensichtlich um die geschäftlichen Belange kümmerte. Wir hören auch von Predigern, die Montanus bezahlte, damit die neue Lehre über die Kernzelle, das 'neue Jerusalem', hinausgetragen werden konnte.²¹ Spätestens hier hätte eine offizielle Stelle aufmerksam werden können, wenn sich eine kleine, örtlich begrenzte Truppe christlicher Selbstverwirklicher zu einer strukturierten prophetischen Bewegung mauserte. Über die Stadtgrenzen hinaus verkündeten sie nun das nahe Ende der Zeit und damit natürlich auch der römischen Herrschaft. Doch kurz nach dem Auftreten des Prophetentrios schaltete sich nicht etwa der Staat in Form von lokalen Exekutiven ein, sondern die Hauptkirche, die sich angesichts des raschen Wachstums montanistischer Mitgliederzahlen plötzlich bedroht fühlte.²²

¹⁹ Mitchell 1993, a.a.O. (Anm.10), 41.

²⁰ Birley 2000, a.a.O. (Anm.3), 113ff.

²¹ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.18.2.

²² Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.16.4.

Durch die Autoren bei Eusebius hören wir Sitzungen der zuständigen Bischöfe, die über die Christlichkeit der Phryger berieten. Wir hören von Diskussionen mit der Prophetin Maximilla, die man sogar exorzieren wollte (vergeblich, denn ihre Anhänger schützten sie). All diese Bewegungen liefen, soweit für uns nachvollziehbar, ohne Eingreifen der Behörden vor Ort ab. Nicht nur das, der anonyme Schriftsteller bei Eusebius kann sogar die Sicherheit, in der die Montanisten lebten, als Argument gegen ihre (angeblichen) Märtyrer verwenden.²³

Eine einzige Begebenheit ist aus der Frühphase bekannt. Apollonius bei Eusebius²⁴ beschreibt nicht ohne Hohn, dass Themiso, ein Mitglied der prophetischen Gruppe, bei seinen Mitbrüdern und Schwestern als Märtyrer galt, obwohl er sich aus dem Gefängnis freigekauft und nicht den Opfertod erlitten hatte. Das übliche Vorgehen der Montanisten war eine Selbstbezichtigung als Christen, um ein Martyrium zu provozieren.²⁵ Es ist anzunehmen, dass der hier beschriebene Märtyrer trotz seiner Auffälligkeit als Christ nicht allzu viel Unruhe ausgelöst haben mag oder vielleicht sogar mit einem Opfer an die paganen Götter seine vorherige Selbstanzeige ad absurdum führte. Abgesehen von diesem Vorfall hören wir nichts über derartige Schwierigkeiten in der ersten Zeit. Offensichtlich war es den Montanisten möglich, ihre Keimzelle Pepouza als Basis auszubauen und viele Jahre zu halten. Dies erstaunt umso mehr, als unter Marc Aurel Verschärfungen für die Christen in Kleinasien spürbar wurden.²⁶

Unweigerlich muß man hier fragen, ob es den Montanisten vielleicht gelungen war, ein im Rahmen der Bedingungen, die der römische Staat an seine Bürger stellte, integratives Christentum aufzubauen. Der römische Staat duldet keine Vereinigungen, die zu Unruhen oder politischen Gruppenbildungen führen konnten. Bei aller Religionstoleranz gehörten auch religiöse Vereine oder Glaubensgruppen in diese Kategorie, die als politisch suspekta Parteigungen auffällig werden konnten. Für ein unbehelligtes Dasein war es wichtig, den Staatskult bzw. auch den Kaiserkult mitzutragen und ein aktiver Teil des gesellschaftlichen Gefüges zu sein. Darüber hinaus war es den Menschen freigestellt individuelle religiöse Bedürfnisse auszuleben, sofern sie keinen Nährboden für Unruhen in der Gemeinschaft bildeten. Doch nicht nur in der vertikalen Ausrichtung auf den Staat hin war ein

²³ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, 5.16.11-12 einschließlich.

²⁴ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.18.5.

²⁵ Birley 2000, a.a.O. (Anm.3), 109, siehe auch dort Anm. 67.

²⁶ Melito ap. Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 4.26.5. Siehe auch C. Motschmann, *Die Religionspolitik Marc Aurels* (Stuttgart 2002), 251-260; Birley 1987, a.a.O. (Anm.3), 256-265.

solches Verhalten empfehlenswert, auch auf der horizontalen Ebene im alltäglichen Zusammenleben mit den Mitmenschen mußte sich die persönliche oder auf Gruppen bezogene religiöse Exotik in Grenzen halten. Gerade im ländlichen Gebiet war es wichtig, nicht allzu fremd zu wirken. Die Montanisten konnten in ihrer frühen Phase diesen Anforderungen aus zwei Gründen vermutlich genügen: Einmal durch ihre äußere Organisation, zum zweiten durch die Art ihres prophetischen Auftretens.



Die Goldplättchen links im Bild wurden den toten Priestern der Kybele auf den Mund gelegt. So ehrte man sie als Sprachrohre der Göttin. Michael Syrus (auch als Michael von Melitene bekannt, vgl. Tabbernee 1997, a.a.O. [Anm.1], 35-40) zufolge fand man bei der Öffnung der Gräber von Montanus, Maximilla und Priscilla auch ihre Mäuler mit solchen Goldplättchen bedeckt.

(Foto von der Autorin im Museum von Uşak aufgenommen.)

Die Art der ekstatischen Prophetie, wie sie Montanus und die beiden Frauen ausübten, war nach den Schilderungen ihrer Gegner der Kirche unbekannt. Der anonyme Schriftsteller bei Eusebius²⁷ beschreibt, dass sie während der Prophezeiungen von Verzückung ergriffen wurden, sich unkontrolliert bewegten und undeutliche Laute ausstießen. Eine nähere Betrachtung der prophetischen Charakteristika zeigt in der Tat, dass entscheidende Elemente wie der spezielle Zustand der Ekstasen, die den Propheten nur als Sprachrohr Gottes agieren lassen, oder auch die Art der prophetischen Rede ihre Vorbilder in paganen prophetischen Kulturen Phrygiens finden, wie z.B. dem des Apollon und der Kybele.²⁸

Das Auftreten der beiden Prophetinnen Maximilla und Priscilla war für das soziale Umfeld der Montanisten ebenfalls unproblematisch. Den Men-

²⁷ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.16.7.

²⁸ Dazu V. Hirschmann, *Horrenda Secta. Untersuchungen zum frühchristlichen Montanismus und seinen Verbindungen zur paganen Religion Phrygiens* (Stuttgart 2005).

schen waren ekstatisch-prophetische Priesterinnen an den Heiligtümern verschiedenster Gottheiten geläufig, sie galten als angesehene Mitglieder der Gemeinschaft. Man vertraute ihrem Charisma und glaubte, dass ein Gott mit Hilfe seines Mediums zu den ratsuchenden Menschen sprechen konnte.

Das zweite vertrauensbildende Element war das äußere Erscheinungsbild des Montanismus gewesen. Oben wurde schon der erste Verwalter der Montanisten erwähnt. Weiter hören wir von Geldern, die ihre Anhänger einzahlten und die als 'Opfer' bezeichnet wurden. Gegen diese Praxis empörte sich die Hauptkirche, vor allem aber, dass die Beträge nicht nur von finanziell starken Mitgliedern der Gruppe eingenommen wurden, sondern von allen, auch von Witwen und Armen. Hinter der Polemik der montanistischen Gegner ist zu erkennen, dass die Montanisten für ihre Umgebung mit diesem Vorgehen nicht fremd waren. Die heftige Kritik der Kirche, der Hinweis auf das Fremde, Kirchenferne, fordert auf, die Vorlagen für das montanistische Vorgehen außerhalb der Kirche im paganen Umfeld zu suchen. Tatsächlich existieren im paganen Vereinswesen Strukturen, anhand derer die Organisation der Montanisten enträtselt werden kann. So deklarierten manche Kultvereine die Beiträge aller Mitglieder als Opfer für die Vereinsgottheit.²⁹ Solche Opfer konnten sogar von Nicht-Mitgliedern angenommen werden, die der spendenden Person die Nutzung des Vereinsheiligtums ermöglichten.³⁰ Die Abgaben wurden κοινωνικά oder auch τὸ κοινόν genannt.³¹

Der bei den Montanisten erwähnte Verwalter Theodotos könnte der bei Vereinigungen übliche Kassenwart (ταμίας) oder Aufseher (ἐπίσκοπος) gewesen sein, der die Finanzen des Vereins verwaltete.³² Das Ansehen dieses Beamten ist bedingt durch seine Verantwortung entsprechend hoch und kann einen sakralen Nimbus erlangen.³³

²⁹ Das bestbelegte Exempel sind hier die sog. Orgeonen in Piräus, E. Ziebarth, *Das griechische Vereinswesen* (Wiesbaden 1969, Nachdruck von Stuttgart 1896), 194/195.

³⁰ Ziebarth 1969, a.a.O. (Anm.30), 161.

³¹ Poland, *Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesens* (Leipzig 1967, Nachdruck Leipzig 1909), 164, Anm. † (bei Poland übliche Bezeichnung von Anmerkungen).

³² Der ἐπίτροπος (so wird der montanistische Verwalter bezeichnet) ist ursprünglich ein staatlicher Beamter, der später in den Ämterapparat der Vereine Eingang findet. Sein Aufgabengebiet liegt höchstwahrscheinlich im Bereich der Finanzverwaltung. Nicht immer also findet man den Finanzbeamten unter dem Namen ταμίας. Die Vielfalt der Termini ist erstaunlich und kann in unterschiedlichster Ausprägung auf das Amt hinweisen. Es ist also durchaus denkbar, dass eine Vereinigung oder ein Verein seinen eigenen Ausdruck für dieses Amt kreierte, Poland 1967, a.a.O. (Anm.32), 377ff; s. auch O. van Nijf, *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East* (Amsterdam 1997).

³³ Für die Weihung eines ταμίας, vgl. Poland 1967, a.a.O. (Anm.32), 382, auch P. Foucart, *Associations religieuses chez les Grecs* (Paris 1873), 12.

Auch die Information, die wir von Apollonius bei Eusebius³⁴ bekommen, einer der montanistischen Propheten habe Geld auf Zinsen ausgeliehen, passt zum Vereinswesen. Von einem theräischen und einem delischen Verein z.B. wissen wir, dass es zu den Aufgaben der Aufseher gehörte, Vereinskaptal verzinst auszuleihen und aus den Einnahmen große Festlichkeiten zu veranstalten.³⁵

Diese frühen Zeugnisse zur Organisation der Montanisten stimmen gut überein mit drei epigraphischen Texten³⁶ aus dem 5. und 6. Jahrhundert. Dort wird ein genuin montanistisches Amt, der κοινωνός (der Teilhaber), erwähnt.³⁷ Zwei dieser Männer werden als κοινωνός ὁ κατὰ τόπον bezeichnet. Einer von ihnen wird geehrt von der συνόδος Μυλουκωμητῆν. Wie Synodos ist auch der Begriff des Topos in der Vereinssprache verankert. Synodos ist eine der häufigsten Bezeichnungen für (kultische) Vereinigungen.³⁸ Mit "Topos" werden Grundstücke oder Immobilien bezeichnet, die eine Vereinigung für ihre Zwecke erworben hat.³⁹ Der Begriff des Topos als *terminus technicus* des Vereinswesens ist für den späteren Montanismus in Phrygien interessant. Denkbar wäre, dass die montanistischen Koinonen als Teilhaber des Vereinskaptals sich vor Ort einkauften und mit ihrem Geld Grundstücke oder ein Haus erwarben.⁴⁰ Diese Handlungsweise gemäß des römischen Gesetzes ermöglichte der Gruppe eine rasche Ausbreitung und relative Unauffälligkeit.

Die Montanisten hätten so geschickt die Spielräume genutzt, die der Staat religiösen Zusammenschlüssen anbot, sofern sie nicht ordnungswidrig waren. Interpretiert man die Quellen in dieser Hinsicht, so wurden die

³⁴ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.18.11.

³⁵ Vgl. Poland 1967, a.a.O. (Anm.32), 377, vgl. Ziebarth 1969, a.a.O. (Anm.30), 210, der die Entwicklung und Organisation der griechischen Vereine analog zu denen Kleinasien sieht. Interessanterweise wissen wir von opulenten Mählern bei den Montanisten: Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 5.18.6, vgl. auch 5.18.2.

³⁶ Alle drei Inschriften bei W. Tabbernee, 'Montanist Regional Bishops', *Journal of Ecclesiastical and Christian Studies* 1,3 (1993), 249-280, hier 269-279.

³⁷ Vgl. *Codex Justinianus* 1.5.20.3: *Et haec quidem generaliter de omnibus haereticis: specialiter autem contra impios Montanistas constituimus, ut nulli ex patriarchis eorum quos dicunt vel sociis vel episcopis vel presbyteris vel diaconis vel reliquis clericis [...].* Siehe auch Hieronymus, *Epistula 41 ad Marcellam*, 3. Für die Interpretation des Koinonen-Amtes siehe Hirschmann 2005, a.a.O. (Anm.28); Tabbernee 1993, a.a.O. (Anm.37), 265 und G. Buschmann, 'Χριστος κοινωνός', *Zeitschrift für Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 86 (1995), 243-264.

³⁸ Poland 1967, a.a.O. (Anm.32), 158ff.

³⁹ Für die Privatrechtsfähigkeit, die es einer Gruppe ermöglichte, Grundstücke oder Immobilien zu kaufen, siehe Poland 1967, a.a.O. (Anm.32), 164 und 488, Ziebarth 1969, a.a.O. (Anm.30), 161.

⁴⁰ Für nähere Ausführungen zu diesem Thema siehe Hirschmann 2005, a.a.O. (Anm.28).

Montanisten von offizieller Stelle nicht unbedingt als Christen wahrgenommen, sondern als religiöse Vereinigung, die sich in bestehende Strukturen einfügte und so wenig aufseherregend agieren konnte. Entlang einer bestehenden organisatorischen Infrastruktur bauten sie ihre Gemeinschaften auf und konnten legal Kapital aufbauen.

Sucht man hier nach dem Einfluß des römischen Staates auf die phrygische Bewegung, so kann ein passives Einwirken festgestellt werden. Nicht rücksichtslose Romanisierung, sondern vor allem im religiösen Bereich praktizierte Toleranz bildete für die Montanisten die Basis für eine bestimmte Form von Individualität, die – um mit Eckard Stephan zu sprechen – die kulturelle Identität als phrygischer Christ wahrte und die politische als Römer nicht störte. Für die Montanisten war dies die Nische, christliches Gedankengut nicht nur zu leben, sondern auch zu verbreiten.

Widerstand bekam die phrygische Bewegung in ihrer Konsolidierungsphase nach Aussage unserer Quellen nur von der Kirche. Dieser Widerstand bekam ein entscheidendes Gewicht, als die christliche Religion als *religio licita* nicht mehr der Verfolgung ausgesetzt war. In einem christlichen Staat änderte sich die Zielsetzung der Religionspolitik. Die kulturelle und religiöse Identität konnte nicht mehr neben der politischen ausgelebt werden. Religiös abweichende Gruppen, seien es Nichtchristen, seien es innerchristliche Varianten, störten die politische Ruhe. Religiöse Einheit war nun gefragt. Um diese zu erreichen, musste der Staat aktiv werden und eine Eingliederung in die Hauptkirche vorantreiben. Das bekamen die Montanisten zu spüren. Als Häretiker aus der Hauptkirche ausgegrenzt, traf sie nun die Verfolgung per Gesetz. Im Jahr 540 befahl Kaiser Justinian eine Kampagne in ganz Kleinasien, um Nicht-Christen, Juden und Häretiker zu bekehren. Geleitet wurde diese Maßnahme von Johannes, dem Bischof von Ephesus (ca. 507-589).⁴¹ In der uns noch in Teilen erhaltenen Kirchengeschichte des Eusebius werden die Ereignisse dieser Kampagne beschrieben. Die Säuberungsmaßnahmen trafen auch Pepouza, den Zentralsitz der häretischen Prophetiebewegung. Man verbrannte Gebäude der Montanisten, öffnete die Gräber der ersten Propheten und übergab ihre Kirchen der Hauptkirche.⁴²

Während die vorchristliche römische Herrschaft Unruhen und illegale Gruppenbildung vermeiden wollte, war das Ziel der Kirche und des christlichen Staates die innere Einheit. Trotz der massiven Maßnahmen gegen

⁴¹ Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 3.36-37. Von Johannes sagte man, er habe allein in der Gegend um Tralles 70.000 Nicht-Christen getauft.

⁴² Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 3.36-37.

religiös Abtrünnige gelang jedoch keine schnelle Ausrottung der Montanisten. Die Verwurzelung in der phrygischen Kultur und die geschickte Nutzung legaler Vorteile zur Zeit der paganen Kaiser machten es der Kirche schwer, den Montanismus einzudämmen. Erst im 9. Jahrhundert verschwinden die letzten Nachrichten über die Montanisten.

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REFLECTIONS ON THE DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE OF BEL AT PALMYRA IN AD 32¹

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This paper, which examines the dedication of the great temple of Bel at Palmyra in AD 32, is built around two related questions. Who financed the construction of the magnificent temple complexes dotted around the Near East in the Roman period? And what impact could individual benefactions have on the nature of worship which took place in a particular sanctuary?

The temple of Bel dominated ancient Palmyra. Built upon a tell in the eastern part of the city and directly bordering on the oasis of palm trees, its cella, with a prostyle of Corinthian columns, stood on a podium in the middle of a large temenos, surrounded by a large altar, a dining hall and other cultic constructions.² The temple is well-known for its peculiar mix of Classical baroque and non-western features.³ Referring to the Oriental-Hellenistic innovations in its architecture and decoration, Colledge argued that one of the Julio-Claudian emperors presented Palmyra with an enormous financial gift. He explained the fact that indigenous deities, rather than Roman ones, were worshipped in the temple as an imperial decision “pour ne pas blesser les sentiments des Palmyréniens”.⁴ In addition, Kennedy suggested that the swift completion of the temple was a further argument in favour of the theory of imperial largesse.⁵ However, the epigraphic evidence does not support this hypothesis at all, and shows instead how the successive stages of the construction of the temple of Bel, which took place over a long period of time, were made possible by contributions from individual Palmyrene citizens.⁶

The starting point to discuss the building history of the temple of Bel is an inscription from AD 45. It records how a statue was set up for a certain

¹ I should like to acknowledge support by the British Academy through the award of a Postdoctoral Fellowship.

² The main publication is in two volumes, by H. Seyrig – R. Amy – E. Will, *Le temple de Bel à Palmyre. Album; Texte et planches* (Paris 1968-1975). See now also the interesting semiotic interpretation of the temple by M. Hammad, *Le sanctuaire de Bel à Tadmor-Palmyre* (Urbino 1998).

³ On which see e.g. M. Lyttleton, *Baroque Architecture in Classical Antiquity* (London 1974), 93-96 and 193-195.

⁴ M.A.R. Colledge, ‘Le temple de Bel à Palmyre: qui l’a fait, et pourquoi?’, in: *Palmyre. Bilan et perspectives* (Strasbourg 1976), 45-52, with the quotation at 51.

⁵ D. Kennedy, ‘Syria’, in: *The Cambridge Ancient History X²* (Cambridge 1996), 720. Cf. E. Savino, *Città di frontiera nell’impero romano* (Bari 1999), 58. M. Gawlikowski, ‘Les dieux de Palmyre’, in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt II*, 18,4 (Berlin 1990), 2610, admits ‘contributions extérieures’.

⁶ See T. Kaizer, *The Religious Life of Palmyra* (Stuttgart 2002), 67-71, with references.

Lishamsh, who had dedicated the temple in AD 32.⁷ To be more precise, Lishamsh is said to have dedicated the *hykl'* of Bel, Yarhibol and Aglibol, either with its sacred objects or during their feast (*bqdšwhy*). This consecration of the *hykl'*, a term which in a bilingual inscription from AD 131 is rendered with $\nu\alpha\acute{o}\varsigma$,⁸ took place on the sixth day of the month Nisan, a day which fulfilled an important function at Palmyra, considering an inscription from AD 163 which dates the foundation of a set of sacrifices to be made 'for ever' on the sixth of Xandikos, the equivalent of Nisan.⁹ It is now clear that the *hykl'* which was dedicated by Lishamsh in AD 32 was not the whole cella as it still stands nowadays, but its northern adyton. Following the convincing thesis of Pietrzykowski, in the original plan of the new temple only the northern adyton was built, with the entrance situated opposite.¹⁰ As inscriptions show, construction was on its way by at least AD 19,¹¹ but for unknown reasons the facade of the northern adyton was never finished. Works on the temple restarted shortly after AD 50, when a certain Hairan, who is later referred to as 'decorator of the temple of the gods', appears in our sources.¹² According to Pietrzykowski, it was in this phase that the groundplan for the cella was substantially changed and the second, southern adyton added. Instead of the originally planned front hall opposite the northern adyton, the entrance to the cella had to be built in the long wall. The addition of the southern adyton certainly gave the temple a more opulent appearance, but it is also possible that it was constructed for cultic reasons, to house the couch of Astarte, a goddess who appears a number of times alongside Bel.¹³ Still later in the first century, the court of the temenos was levelled, and works continued on its porticoes and the peristyle of the cella.

Honorific inscriptions, set up in the temenos or elsewhere to accompany statues for Palmyrene merchants, in gratitude either for specific gifts to the temple or for financial support of its construction in general, illustrate how

⁷ D.R. Hillers – E. Cussini, *Palmyrene Aramaic Texts* (Baltimore – London 1996), n° 1347. Hillers and Cussini wrongly date the inscription to AD 32. See on the date also D.G.K. Taylor, 'An annotated index of dated Palmyrene Aramaic texts', *Journal of Semitic Studies* 46 (2001), 209 n.33, and for further references: Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 69.

⁸ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit. (n.7), n° 0305.

⁹ J. Cantineau, *Inventaire des inscriptions de Palmyre VI* (Beirut 1931), n° 13, with Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 207-209. Cf. J. Tubach, 'Das Akitu-Fest in Palmyra', *ARAM* 7 (1995), 128 with n.30.

¹⁰ M. Pietrzykowski, *Adyta wi ty palmyre skich. Studium funkcji i formy* (Warsaw 1997).

¹¹ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit. (n.7), n° 0270.

¹² J. Cantineau, 'Tadmorea', *Syria* 14 (1933), 175-6, n° 2b (AD 74); Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit. (n.7), n°s 1356 (AD 56) and 2801 (AD 52). Cf. Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 68 n.4.

¹³ As is suggested by L. Dirven, *The Palmyrenes of Dura-Europos. A Study of Religious Interaction in Roman Syria* (Leiden 1999), 71. Cf. Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 198-200.

Palmyra's major sanctuary was conceived and paid for, step by step, by local benefactors. The above-mentioned suggestion, of a large gift by the emperor, is not supported by our sources. It is not a necessary hypothesis either. Similar patterns, of subsequent stages in the building works of temples being financed by a number of local benefactors, are visible in the evidence both from other shrines at Palmyra and from elsewhere in the Roman Near East. A complete overview is neither feasible nor necessary, and a few examples will do.

At Gerasa of the Decapolis, two brothers are recorded to have given money out of their own pocket towards the building of the temple of Zeus Olympios, one of them in his role as priest of Tiberius, the other one as gymnasiarch.¹⁴ Another benefactor, who is described as a supplicant (ικέτης), contributed to the construction works at different stages.¹⁵ Also at Gerasa, an ἀρχιερωμειστής of Pakeidas and Hera helped financing a shrine of Hera.¹⁶ At Burj Baqirha, on Jebel Barisha in the Limestone Massif, a temple for a god called Zeus Altar (βωμός) was also built through individual contributions over a longer period. The earliest building inscriptions date to the early second century AD, and a gate in the temenos was built in AD 161, followed shortly by columns around the temple.¹⁷ Elsewhere in the Limestone Massif, on Jebel Sheikh Barakat, another temple for a similar Zeus (*Madbachos*, an epithet based on a Semitic word meaning 'altar') was built according to inscriptions between AD 80 and 120. In those texts, most of them still unpublished, members of different families emphasised how many cubits, and for how much money, they had built.¹⁸ A slightly different problem is of course presented by the Temple at Jerusalem, as some of our best evidence for building contributions is related to Jews who were living in the diaspora, such as Nicanor of Alexandria, who paid for the bronze gates on the eastern side of the forecourt.¹⁹

A notable exception, however, may be found in the case of Baalbek-Heliopolis. Already Seyrig suggested that money from the imperial centre lay

¹⁴ C. Welles, in: C. Kraeling (ed.), *Gerasa: City of the Decapolis* (New Haven 1938), 373-374, n^{os} 2-3.

¹⁵ Welles 1938, op.cit. (n.14), 375-377, n^{os} 5-6.

¹⁶ Welles 1938, op.cit. (n.14), 383f, n^o 17.

¹⁷ O. Callot – J. Marcillet-Jaubert, 'Hauts-lieux de Syrie du Nord', in: *Temples et sanctuaires. Séminaire de recherche 1981-1983 sous la direction de G. Roux* (Lyon 1984), 195-198.

¹⁸ Callot – Marcillet-Jaubert 1984, op.cit. (n.17), 187-192.

¹⁹ *CII* II.1256, probably the gates mentioned by Josephus, *Jewish War* 5.201-205. Following Rabbinic sources, Nicanor had brought the gates to Jerusalem himself. See E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ II*, eds. G. Vermes – F. Millar (Edinburgh 1979), 57f. n.170, for full references.

behind the construction of the temple complex situated in the Beqa'a valley.²⁰ More recently, it has been argued that “the expense of construction, plus the use of imported red Egyptian granite for the portico, strongly suggests financing from Rome, even from the emperor himself.”²¹ Unlike Palmyra, there is no documentary evidence from Baalbek to inform us about local benefactors.²² However, Baalbek is a different case for three reasons. Firstly, the magnificent temple complex was at least partly constructed in the period in which it belonged to the territory of the *colonia* Berytus, which has been described as a “unique island of Roman culture in the Near East”.²³ Secondly, the sheer size of the “colossal enigmas”,²⁴ most notably expressed in the row of six standing columns, which are amongst the tallest from Antiquity, and in the gigantic monoliths used in the podium, has raised questions about the authorities who could have conceived such a project.²⁵ As is now known, the temple was planned to be even larger. In a quarry not far south of the sanctuary another monolith was never cut out of the rock completely. It was meant for the podium as well, where advanced measuring methods have been applied to establish its supposed position.²⁶ But neither this ‘stone of the pregnant woman’, as it is popularly referred to, nor a second unfinished monolith, which was unearthed only recently, made it to the precinct of Zeus. The reasons behind the change of plan are unknown, but it is likely that the original gigantomaniac project was later considered as non-realizable and that it was decided that enough resources had been squandered in the process so far.²⁷ Thirdly, the deities worshipped in Baalbek (and also those who received a cult elsewhere in the territory of Berytus) had Latin names, and Jupiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus obviously borrowed part of his name from the Capitoline god. But all of this notwithstanding, imperial contributions to Baalbek can of course not be proven. Recently, Freyberger stated that it is unlikely that Rome would have financed a sanctuary that placed its own

²⁰ H. Seyrig, ‘Questions héliopolitaines’, *Syria* 31 (1954), 80-98, esp. 95-98.

²¹ M. Beard – J. North – S. Price, *Religions of Rome* I (Cambridge 1998), 334.

²² There is not much dated material, and there are only a few hints at individual contributions, e.g. by an imperial freeman and a Roman soldier, who both paid for decorative details. See *IGLS* VI 2711-3. The large altar structure is believed to have been added in the early second century AD, and the series of entrance gates was apparently not completed until the first half of the third century. See now, in general, M. van Ess – T. Weber (eds.), *Baalbek. Im Bann römischer Monumentalarchitektur* (Mainz 1999).

²³ F. Millar, *The Roman Near East* (Cambridge, MA – London 1993), 279.

²⁴ Thus referred to by A. Segal, ‘Colossal enigmas: the ancient stone temples of Baalbek’, *Odyseus*, September/October (2000), 50-61.

²⁵ Famously commented on by M. Wheeler, ‘Size and Baalbek’, *Antiquity* 36 (1962), 6-9.

²⁶ E. Ruprechtsberger, *Vom Steinbruch zum Jupiterempel von Heliopolis/Baalbek (Libanon)* (Linz 1999).

²⁷ Cf. K. Butcher, *Roman Syria and the Near East* (London 2003), 364.

temples in the shadow.²⁸ Instead he raised the hypothesis that the monumental building project was first ordered by the tribal principality of Chalkis ad Libanum (of which Baalbek's dignitaries would have been members simultaneously), alongside other principalities.²⁹ In the first century BC, the sanctuary was probably situated within the tetrarchy of Chalkis, whose Ituraean dynasts identified themselves on their coins as 'high priests', a title which may be connected with the temple complex in the Beqa'a valley.³⁰

The excursion into Baalbek does not take away the fact that, in general, the shrines and sanctuaries of the Roman Near East were built thanks to individual dedications. This should not surprise us. "An accumulation of donations from small givers can change the environment just as effectively as a few large gifts",³¹ but that is of course not to say that there was no united architectural effort behind the temples. Nevertheless, benefactors were not necessarily themselves planners. It is impossible to know what determined the location or the eventual size of a temple. But it is clear that there must have been an element of religious choice that created an extraordinary sacred place by building an impressive sanctuary, especially when its location was not easily accessible, as in the case of the above-mentioned temple on Jebel Sheikh Barakat.³² The boom in the construction of Near Eastern sanctuaries with a Classical appearance has been explained by Freyberger as the result of a suddenly developing self-awareness of the tribal principalities. In this view, their leaders wished to express their growing political and economic independence, against the background of the declining central power in the late

²⁸ K.S. Freyberger, *Die frühkaiserzeitlichen Heiligtümer der Karawanenstationen im hellenisierten Osten* (Mainz 1998), 66 n.858.

²⁹ Freyberger 1998, op.cit. (n.28), 66-67. Both a king Agrippa and a king of Emesa were honoured at Baalbek as *patronus coloniae*, see *IGLS VI* 2759-60. Note that Freyberger in a later article, 'Im Licht des Sonnengottes. Deutung und Funktion des sogenannten 'Bacchus-Tempels' im Heiligtum des Jupiter Heliopolitanus in Baalbek', *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 12 (2000), 132f., placed emphasis instead on the "lokale Würdenträger von Baalbek, die als Funktionäre im römischen Verwaltungs- und Militärwesen eng an Rom gebunden waren".

³⁰ See M. Sartre, *D'Alexandre à Zénobie. Histoire du Levant antique, IV^e siècle av. J.-C. – II^e siècle ap. J.-C.* (Paris 2001), 171, and for further references T. Kaizer, 'Kingly priests in the Roman Near East?', in: R. Fowler – O.J. Hekster (eds.), *Imaginary Kings: Royal Images in the Ancient Near East, Greece and Rome* (Stuttgart 2005), 186-187. See now, above all, J. Aliquot, 'Les Ituréens et la présence arabe au Liban du II^e siècle a.C. au IV^e siècle p.C.', *Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph* 56 (1999-2003), esp. 218-224.

³¹ Thus R. Tanner – C. Mitchell, *Religion and the Environment* (Basingstoke 2002), 64.

³² Tanner – Mitchell 2002, op.cit. (n.31), 122: "A sacred space is not normally extraordinary in its characteristics. It is made so by religious choice."

Hellenistic period, by making themselves more visible.³³ The thesis has its merits, as rivalry (in the widest sense of the word) between different parts of society could also find expression in patterns of worship. But this notion of rivalry should not be taken too far in interpreting the joint presence of major deities in a specific region or city.³⁴

Where did the money come from that financed the evocative shrines in the Levant? Questions about the social structures in which the benefactors were embedded seldom lead to straightforward answers. It is generally taken for granted that the growing importance of Palmyra in the Roman period was due to the city's participation in the long-distance trade. However, the list of inscriptions that refer to the caravan trade shows a concentration in the first half of the second century AD³⁵, heralding also a further development of Palmyra's Classical appearances, while construction works on the temple of Bel were going on early in the first century. Is it necessary to assume that only earnings from the trade in Persian commodities could have paid for the sanctuary? Gawlikowski stated that the increasing importance of trade via Palmyra was "understandable only in the particular conditions of a sudden urbanisation of nomads, induced by the possibility of international commerce".³⁶ In contrast, Young argued that the route from the Euphrates via Palmyra was artificial, and had to be created as such by "the landowning aristocracy of the oasis and its surrounding territory", capitalising on the opportunities that trade brought with it: "we should not think in terms of the city coming into existence due to the trade route, but of the trade route coming into existence due to the enterprise of the city."³⁷ Being a landowner and being a caravan leader are not mutually exclusive, and, as I suggested elsewhere, it is not infeasible to imagine certain ecological conditions at Roman Palmyra in which a pattern of settlement could develop with substantial interaction between the city and villages in its hinterland.³⁸ In any case, there is no hard evidence for the importance of long distance trade via

³³ Freyberger 1998, op.cit. (n.28), 103-106, at 103: "Die zu vielbesuchten Handelsmetropolen gewordenen Oasen und Lagerplätze konnten nur mit Zelten und einfachen Lehmziegelbauten der neuen Rolle nicht mehr Genüge leisten und mussten deswegen eine ihrer jetzigen Bedeutung adäquate Form erhalten."

³⁴ Cf. P. Richardson, *City and Sanctuary. Religion and Architecture in the Roman Near East* (London 2002), 160ff.

³⁵ M. Gawlikowski, 'Palmyra as a trading centre', *Iraq* 56 (1994), 27-33, with the list on 32f.

³⁶ Gawlikowski 1994, op.cit. (n.35), 32.

³⁷ G.K. Young, *Rome's Eastern Trade. International Commerce and Imperial Policy, 31 BC – AD 305* (London – New York 2001), esp. 136ff.

³⁸ Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 51-55.

Palmyra in the period that nomads supposedly settled down because of that same trade.³⁹

Having established that sanctuaries owed at least part of their existence to individual benefactions, it ought to be asked to what degree individual benefactions could affect the character of the cults which were celebrated at the sacred place to which they were made. It is important in this context to distinguish between dedications of specific cult objects, such as altars, and dedications of a larger construction. Throughout the Near East, in almost all of the shrines more than one deity was worshipped. The conventional names given to temples therefore present a misleading picture of the way in which the divine world and the related patterns of worship were organised. The temples of Hatra, situated in northern Iraq, provide the clearest case in point.⁴⁰ To which particular deity, or set of deities, a shrine was dedicated can only be established for certain when we have a proper dedication inscription of that shrine as such.

With regard to Palmyra, the identification of the ruins situated southwest of the agora as the remains of the temple 'of Arsu', on the basis of an altar dedicated 'to Arsu, to Qismaya and to the daughters of El',⁴¹ can be justified because the existence of a temple 'of Arsu' is also known from inscriptions which include it amongst those sanctuaries which are characterised as belonging to one of the city's official tribes.⁴² But the identification of the Classical temple at the beginning of the central colonnade as the temple 'of Nebu', on the basis of dedications of columns and other building material to this god,⁴³ is more problematic, as many other deities are the recipients of a cult in the temple as well, and there are no Palmyrene inscriptions which would encourage us to look for a temple 'of Nebu'.⁴⁴

But also in the case of the temple 'of Arsu' it is likely that this designation is an abbreviated working name. One of the inscriptions which list the official tribal sanctuaries includes the temple 'of Baal-Shamin' alongside that 'of

³⁹ Scholars often refer to a passage in Appian to support their view that Palmyra in 41 BC was already a rich caravan city. But see now O. Hekster – T. Kaizer, 'Mark Antony and the raid on Palmyra: reflections on Appian, *Bella Civilia* V, 9', *Latomus* 63 (2004), 70-80.

⁴⁰ See T. Kaizer, 'Some remarks about the religious life of Hatra', *Topoi* 10 (2000), esp. 231f.

⁴¹ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit. (n.7), n° 0992.

⁴² Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 116-124.

⁴³ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit. (n.7), n° 0009. Twelve years after the volume of plates, the text volume with the new inscriptions from this temple has now finally been published, see A. Bounni, *Le sanctuaire de Nab à Palmyre. Texte* (Beirut 2004), esp. 45-76.

⁴⁴ Kaizer 2002, op. cit. (n.6), 89-99.

Arsu'.⁴⁵ From the temple of Baal-Shamin itself come a number of dedications that are directed also to other gods.⁴⁶ A certain Yarhai offered, in AD 67, a portico with its columns, architrave and roofing, to Baal-Shamin.⁴⁷ From the same time dates a dedication of a banquet hall, to Baal-Shamin and Durahlun.⁴⁸ In AD 62/3 an altar was dedicated at the temple to Baal-Shamin, Durahlun, Rahim and the Gad (Personified Good Fortune) of Yedibel.⁴⁹ In the aftermath of Hadrian's visit to the oasis, a certain Malè Agrippa, the son of the above-mentioned Yarhai, was honoured with a statue, according to the accompanying bilingual inscription because he had built the cella, including the pronaos and the entire portico.⁵⁰ But the two versions of this bilingual text are different: in the Palmyrenean the cella (*hykl'*) is dedicated to Baal-Shamin, Durahlun and (probably) the Gad of Yedibel, while the Greek refers to the temple 'of Zeus', with whom Baal-Shamin was identified at Palmyra. Is it relevant that dedicatory inscriptions from the same temple, even those referring to building works on the same project, are inconsistent with regard to the deities they list? Who actually decided to which god or goddess a temple that was built, or added to, belonged? Is it just a matter of 'the one who pays decides to whom one prays'? Was it always the benefactor who could choose single-handedly to which deity or constellation of deities a particular dedication was made, and if so is this sufficient to explain sometimes seemingly arbitrary dedications?

Let us return, finally, to the temple of Bel. As we have seen, in AD 32 the *hykl'* (which must refer to the northern adyton) was dedicated to Bel, Yarhibol and Aglibol. Seyrig put forward the influential hypothesis that the priesthood of Bel, itself attested in inscriptions since 44 BC⁵¹, introduced (under the influence of an astrological set of beliefs) a new and official triad to coincide with the building of a new sanctuary.⁵² The temple of Bel as it stands nowadays was preceded by earlier structures. It was built upon a tell whose stratification goes back to the third millennium, and which had been occupied

⁴⁵ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit (n.7), n° 0197, with Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 60ff.

⁴⁶ See Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 79-88.

⁴⁷ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit (n.7), n° 0158.

⁴⁸ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit (n.7), n° 0177.

⁴⁹ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit (n.7), n° 0179.

⁵⁰ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit (n.7), n° 0305.

⁵¹ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit (n.7), n° 1524.

⁵² H. Seyrig, 'Bél de Palmyre', *Syria* 48 (1971), 85-114, esp. 94-97.

in the pre-Roman period by the so-called ‘Hellenistic temple’.⁵³ Our knowledge of this earlier sanctuary is very limited, and based on fragmentary, so-called ‘archaic’ epigraphic and sculptural material, mainly coming from an old foundation wall. Soundings in the eastern part of the temenos, published only recently and showing a row of columns ca. two meters below the level of the cella but parallel to it, may have revealed the first and so far only archaeological remains of this ‘Hellenistic temple’ in situ.⁵⁴ According to the archaic inscriptions and sculptures, the older sanctuary was the centre of worship of a number of deities, among whom Aglibol, Bolastor, Bel-Hamon, Manawat, Yarhibol, Herta, Nanai, Malakbel, and a Heracles figure (probably Reshef).⁵⁵ It is usually assumed that these deities had their own ‘chapels’ within the larger complex, and the Hellenistic temple has been compared in this respect with the enormous temple complex in the centre of Hatra.⁵⁶ However, as I have shown elsewhere, the evidence does not actually refer to separate shrines within the temenos, but rather to porticoes within that temenos which were dedicated to a variety of deities, both before and after the construction of the new cella.⁵⁷ Therefore, the contrast between the temple complex in the pre-Roman period and that whose remains still stands nowadays was probably not as substantial as is sometimes assumed.

The thesis that the introduction of a new ‘triad’ by the priests of Bel concurred with the dedication of the new temple, which implies a noticeable theological reconstruction of the divine world, is tempting because it fits so well.⁵⁸ However, and that problem has long been recognised, this ‘triad’ is seldom depicted on its own on the monuments which are preserved for us. Naturally, the fact that other deities could be mentioned or portrayed alongside the three deities is in itself insufficient disproof of the notion of a triad: at Hatra, the only undisputed triad in the Near East in the Roman period, ‘Our Lord, Our Lady, and the Son of Our Lord and Our Lady’, commonly appeared

⁵³ See M. al-Maqdissi, ‘Note sur les sondages réalisés par Robert du Mesnil du Buisson dans la cour du sanctuaire de Bêl à Palmyre’, *Syria* 77 (2000), 137-158, a recent re-examination of the excavations made in the 1960s.

⁵⁴ Noted already by E. Will, ‘Les salles de banquet de Palmyre et d’autres lieux’, *Topoi* 7 (1997), 878 n.14. See now A. Bounni – M. al-Maqdissi, ‘Note sur un sondage dans la cour du sanctuaire de Bêl à Palmyre’, *Topoi* 11 (2001) [2003], 17-34.

⁵⁵ M. Gawlikowski, *Palmyre VI. Le temple palmyrénien. Étude d’épigraphie et de topographie historique* (Warsaw 1973), 56-60.

⁵⁶ Dirven 1999, op.cit. (n.13), 45: “In this respect the ancient temple of Bel reminds one of the great sanctuary at Hatra, where several shrines dedicated to different deities were likewise located in the court of the temple.”

⁵⁷ Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 75-78.

⁵⁸ E.g. Dirven 1999, op.cit. (n.13), 51-57.

in combination with other deities.⁵⁹ Seyrig's original hypothesis has been modified by Gawlikowski, who interpreted the co-appearance of Bel, Yarhibol and Aglibol as an abbreviated format of the position of Bel as lord over the cosmos.⁶⁰ Important in this context is the sculptured ceiling of the cupola of the north adyton, on which a zodiac surrounds the busts of seven deities. A god in the centre is encircled by male figures wearing a helmet, a solar radius, a *caduceus*, a sickle and a crescent respectively and a female figure who is veiled.⁶¹ In Gawlikowski's interpretation, the Jupiter figure represents Bel, Mars can be identified with Arsu, the Sun with Yarhibol, Mercury with Nebu, Saturnus with Malakbel, the Moon with Aglibol, and Venus with Atargatis. Because it is clear that, if these identifications are correct, the astrological formation in the cupola did not match the actual cultic situation in the temple, Gawlikowski argued that the deities were brought together because of their astral correlation, in order to create a planetary series which could give proper expression to the cosmic nature of Bel.⁶²

In this paper I would like to suggest, quite simply, that the joint dedication in AD 32, of the first part of the new temple, to Bel, Yarhibol and Aglibol, should first and foremost be explained by reference to the initiative of the man who paid for it. What we call the temple 'of Bel' was indeed referred to in precisely those terms also in ancient times, as is attested by inscriptions both from the early first century AD and from the second half of the second century AD.⁶³ But by the time of its construction, the sanctuary was also known as 'the house of the gods of the Palmyrenes'.⁶⁴ It is of course a natural process

⁵⁹ K. Beyer, *Die aramäischen Inschriften aus Assur, Hatra und dem übrigen Ostmesopotamien* (Göttingen 1998), n^{os} 25; 29-30; 50; 52; 74f.; 82; 151; 235. In general, see Kaizer 2000, op.cit. (n.40), 229-252.

⁶⁰ M. Gawlikowski, 'Aus dem syrischen Götterhimmel. Zur Ikonographie der palmyrenischen Götter', *Trierer Winckelmannsprogramm* 1/2, 1979/80 (Mainz 1981), 17-26; Gawlikowski 1990, op.cit. (n.5), 2610-2613.

⁶¹ H.J.W. Drijvers, *The Religion of Palmyra* (Leiden 1976), pl.II. For a drawing, see I. Browning, *Palmyra* (London 1979), 123 fig.62.

⁶² Gawlikowski 1990, op.cit. (n.5), 2624: "Le groupe de Bel nous paraît donc comme une association de différentes divinités dont chacune jouissait d'un culte indépendant, rassemblées en fonction de leurs correspondances astrales, pour former un cycle planétaire exprimant le caractère cosmique du dieu principal, régisseur du destin de l'univers."

⁶³ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit. (n.7), n^{os} 0270 (AD 19): *bt bl/εἰς τὴν [κτίσιν τ]οῦ ναοῦ Βήλου*; 1352 (AD 24): *h[y]kl' dy bl*; 2769 (AD 171): *(b)bt bl/ἐν δ[ἐ] τῷ τοῦ Βήλου ἱερῷ*; 0260 (AD 175): *bbslq' rbt' dy bt bl/ἐν τῇ μεγάλῃ βασιλικῇ τοῦ Βήλου*.

⁶⁴ Hillers – Cussini 1996, op.cit. (n.7), n^{os} 1353 (AD 25): recording how the assembly of the Palmyrenes had set up a statue for someone 'because he did good to them and to their city and to the house of their gods' (*[mn d]y špr lhwn wlmhwzhwn wlb't 'lhyhwn*); 0269 (AD 51): recording how the Palmyrene community honoured a benefactor who had offered cultic objects 'to the temple of their gods' (*lbt 'lhyhn*),

that, over time, the working name ‘temple of Bel’ became widely accepted. But it was, and remained, a simplification of the actual cultic situation. In this hypothesis, Yarhibol (the lord of the Efqa spring⁶⁵) and Aglibol (worshipped together with Malakbel in the Sacred Garden⁶⁶) were chosen to accompany Bel also because they were, for whatever personal reason, of particular relevance to the benefactor Lishamsh, while the inclusion of Bel in the dedicatory formula was a matter of course. Along the same lines one could then argue that another benefactor, Hairan, ought to be credited for the addition of Astarte to those who occupied pride of place, by housing her in the newly built south adyton later in the first century. By AD 127 Bel, Yarhibol, Aglibol and Astarte had then become a ‘standard’ divine constellation, when another benefactor (with a special piety towards Allat) is said to have offered a golden bowl to the four deities.⁶⁷

This paper has reviewed the evidence for the construction of the temple of Bel at Palmyra and argued that it was, like most other shrines and sanctuaries of the Classical Levant, funded and subsidized by individual benefactors. There are no good sources to corroborate the suggestion that imperial largesse lay behind its building process. The paper then went on to investigate the possible consequences of the individual dedications for the patterns of worship in the temple. Of course, new religious building additions to existing temple complexes could not be dedicated arbitrarily to any ‘new god’. Similarly, it is unlikely that individual dedications to a sanctuary would have had immediate profound effects on its religious systems and cultic realities. However, it can be argued that, over time, dedications in a temple to deities who did not originally receive a cult at that particular temple, may well have come to redefine its character, even if only gradually. In any case, such dedications certainly have an effect on how modern scholars conceptualise ancient patterns of worship.

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with the Greek counterpart stating how this man had pleased the city ‘and the gods’ (καὶ τοῖς θεοῖς) by giving the objects ‘to the temple’ (εἰς τὸ ἱερόν). For possible attestations of similar phrases, see Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 70 n.21. Cf. Butcher 2003, op.cit. (n.27), 363.

⁶⁵ Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 143-148.

⁶⁶ Kaizer 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 124-143.

⁶⁷ H.J.W. Drijvers, ‘Inscriptions from Allât's sanctuary’, *Aram* 7 (1995), 109-119.

THE IMPERIAL CULT AT PESSINOUS

JOHAN H.M. STRUBBE

The city of Pessinous at the beginning of the imperial period

Pessinous is a small city situated in Galatia in the interior of Asia Minor. It is located at a distance of approximately 130 km south west of Ankyra. It was identified with the village of Ballihisar near the small town of Sivrihisar by Charles Texier in 1834. During the period 1967-1973 excavations have been conducted there by the University of Gent, Belgium, under the direction of P. Lambrechts. Since 1987 new excavations have been undertaken by J. Devreker and other scholars from the University of Gent. Pessinous is famous, since time immemorial, as the cult centre of the Phrygian goddess Kybele, the Mother of the Gods. According to myth, the Phrygian king Midas erected the first and expensive shrine for the goddess.¹ After the invasion of the Galatian tribes in Asia Minor (278/7 B.C.) and their final defeat against king Attalos I of Pergamon, the area around Pessinous was occupied by the tribe of the Tolistobogioi (around 240 B.C.). Pessinous was a temple-state, governed by priests, and remained so for a long time. Even in the 1st century B.C., it had not yet evolved into a Greek city; it was just the central place of the tribe of the Tolistobogioi, still lacking public buildings and civic coinage.²

During the 1st century B.C. several rulers governed central Asia Minor. The last one was king Amyntas. When he died in 25 B.C., his realm was annexed by Augustus and added to the Roman Empire as the province of Galatia. It was an imperial province, governed by *legati Aug. pro praetore*. The first governor was M. Lollius. The process of urbanization started soon

¹ Diodorus Siculus, 3.59.8. All testimonia and inscriptions of Pessinous have been collected in the new corpus "The Inscriptions of Pessinous", edited by J.H.M. Strubbe (with the assistance of F. Schuddeboom), Bonn 2005, *IGSK* 66 (hereafter *I.Pessinous*).

² Remains of a Hellenistic building have been discovered underneath the temple (from c. 200-0 B.C.), see J. Devreker – F. Vermeulen, *Anatolia Antiqua* V (1997), 123-128. The initial hypothesis of a citadel or defence work, demolished in view of the construction of the temple, was abandoned later in favour of the idea of a Late Hellenistic cult place, see J. Devreker et al., *Anatolia Antiqua* XI (2003), 144. There are bronze coins issued by Pessinous as a religious centre, struck during the reign of king Deiotaros (c. middle of the 1st century B.C.). The images are almost exclusively Kybele and Attis and the legend is, ΜΗΤΡΟΣ ΘΕΩΝ ΠΕΣΣΙΝΕ(Ι)ΑΣ and ΜΗΤΡΟΣ ΘΕΩΝ. See J. Devreker, "Les monnaies de Pessinonte", in: J. Devreker – M. Waelkens, *Les fouilles de la Rijksuniversiteit te Gent à Pessinonte, 1967-1973* IA (Brugge 1984), 173-174 no. 1-10; 200 no. 72-79; id., *Epigraphica Anatolica* 24 (1995), 85 no. 1; G. de Wilde, *Epigraphica Anatolica* 28 (1997), 101 no. 1.

after the annexation and the Pessinuntian temple-state was quickly transformed into a Greek polis. This was not only the case with Pessinous but also with the centres of the other Galatian tribes, Ankyra, centre of the Tektosages, and Tavium, centre of the Trokmoi. No doubt the boundaries of the territoria of these three cities were delineated at that time, and also of the newly founded colony of Germa, which received part of the living area of the Tolistobogioi (at the detriment of Pessinous, which also had to cede territory in the north to Ankyra, which became the capital of the province). The delineation of the territories must have been conducted for all cities simultaneously, in 22 or 21 B.C., the year in which the era of Tavium began.³ In that year Pessinous must have been founded as a Greek city. It has been argued that the Galatian cities received a constitution based on the organization of the cities in Pontus-Bithynia; these had received civic institutions from Pompey by the *lex Pompeia*. In some cities of Pontus-Bithynia, like Prusias on the Hypios, there were, besides the normal magistrates, *politographoi*, who took new citizens into the citizen list, and *boulographoi*, who registered new members of the city council. These occur only rarely outside Pontus-Bithynia. But they are attested at Ankyra. Another significant parallel is the existence of twelve *phylai* at Prusias, each headed by two *phylarchoi*. At Ankyra there were also twelve *phylai*, each headed by one *phylarchos*.⁴ Ankyra and the two other Galatian cities may have been organized on the basis of Pompey's model.

Shortly after the beginning of the Christian era, Pessinous was provided with several public buildings. The construction of a canalisation system started under the reign of Augustus. The canal was meant to contain and carry away the waters of the seasonal river, the Gallos, which traverses Pessinous. After heavy rains the city was literally divided into two by the swollen waters of this river. The earliest part of the canal is a quay formed

³ S. Mitchell, *Chiron* 16 (1986), 20-21. The Pessinuntian era started somewhere between 29 and 13 B.C., see S. Mitchell, *Anatolia. Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor* I (Oxford 1993), 86-87. W. Leschhorn, *Antike Ären. Zeitrechnung, Politik und Geschichte im Schwarzmeerraum und in Kleinasien nördlich des Tauros* (Stuttgart 1993), 398-414 has argued that Ankyra and Pessinous used the Galatian era, starting in 25/24 B.C., while Tavium used a different era starting in 21/20 B.C. The land of the Trokmoi would have been incorporated into the province of Galatia some years after that of the two other tribes.

⁴ Mitchell 1993, op.cit. (n.3), 88-89; *politographos* and *boulographos* at Ankyra in for example IGR III 179 (= E. Bosch, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Ankara im Altertum* [Ankara 1967], no. 288, see also no. 287); twelve *phylai* are mentioned in IGR III 208 (= Bosch 1967, op.cit., no. 117). *Phylai* are attested at Pessinous in SEG XLVI (1996) 1634 (= AE [1996] 1490; *I.Pessinous* 21). For the institutions of Prusias, see W. Ameling, *I.Prusias* (Bonn 1985), 19-26.

by steps (7 in origin); in these steps there are bases on which columns once rested, no doubt belonging to a portico or basilica along the river (l. 57m at maximum; with an upper floor). During the first half of the 1st century A.D. and later, other parts were added to the canal, so that a continuous construction with walls (at some places at least 2.75m high) and steps of c. 500m length came into being (the width varied from 13 to 11m).⁵ At the north west end of the canal, the river turns sharply away to the west. In the first half of the 1st century A.D., quay walls were built here to protect the terrain behind the walls from inundation. That terrain was under heavy construction at the same time. Three monumental buildings were erected: a temple on the hill, a monumental stairway (being at the same time a theatre) and a colonnaded square in the valley. They were all laid out along the same axis, parallel to the quay walls after the westward turn. The whole area forms one monumental concept and the three buildings together with the canal were constructed at the same time as one entity.

The imperial temple (see pl. I 1)

The temple is a peripteros with six columns across the front and eleven on the sides (w. 13.70m; l. 24.10m). It is constructed upon a podium of five or six steps on all sides. The temple itself has disappeared; only the foundations are preserved, built of enormous limestone blocks (w. c. 1.25m; l. max. 3.25m). These blocks form a massive wall of c. 7m high. Along the sides of the building the foundation wall is only 3m high; upon this wall massive square pillars of over 4m high are constructed. The columns along the sides of the temple were once placed upon these pillars. Parts of the columns have been found back, as well as other architectural elements, such as architraves, so that the temple may confidently be reconstructed. It belongs to the Corinthian order. The study of the architectural ornaments has shown that the building of the temple started shortly after the death of Augustus and that the construction was completed under Tiberius (14-37 A.D.). Recent investigation of the ceramic sherds, discovered in the fill of the foundations, gave a somewhat more accurate date: the open spaces between the walls of

⁵ The results of the excavations of the canal are presented by M. Waelkens, "Le système d'endiguement du torrent", in: Devreker – Waelkens 1984, op.cit. (n.2), 77-141; the earliest parts of the canal are the sectors DR 10-12, see 128-133. It is interesting to note that the bases in the steps are of the Tuscan order, which is rare in the East, according to Waelkens. It shows a strong Roman influence.

the foundations were filled up after 25 A.D. and before 35 A.D.⁶ The construction of the temple itself must be dated to the years after the filling up, that is between 25-plus and c. 35 A.D. One would wish to have these data corroborated by other evidence. Indeed, as S. Mitchell has written, “stylistic dating without reference to chronological fixed points provided by epigraphic evidence is an inexact science”.⁷ Unfortunately, there is no inscription which proves the date fixed by the archaeologists. There is also no inscription which reveals the name of the god to whom the temple was dedicated. However, several indications point to a temple of the emperor cult.

The identification of the excavated temple as an imperial temple was first proposed by M. Waelkens and has been generally accepted since.⁸ His arguments are the following:

- At Ankyra, an inscription is engraved on the left-hand anta of the temple of Roma and Augustus, the temple of the provincial imperial cult. It contains a list of the Galatian high priests of the imperial cult and commemorates the benefactions of these priests.⁹ In the first year of the governorship of Silvanus (31/32 A.D.), the high priest M. Lollius (?) provided a public banquet (*demothoinia*) in Pessinous, twenty five pairs of gladiators at Ankyra and ten more pairs at Pessinous, olive oil for the whole year for the two tribes of the Tektosages and Tolistobogioi; he also erected a divine statue (*agalma*) at Pessinous.¹⁰ Waelkens supposed that the statue was a statue of the emperor for the imperial cult at Pessinous and that the imperial cult was thus officially introduced at Pessinous in 31/32 A.D. This interpretation is very plausible. Though the inscription does not mention the name of the god of the *agalma*, it is very likely that the statue was that of the emperor since Lollius was high priest of the imperial cult.¹¹ The identification of the temple as a *sebasteion* is reinforced by the gift of gladiatorial

⁶ J. Devreker – H. Thoen – F. Vermeulen, *Anatolia Antiqua* III (1995), 137-143; H. Thoen, *Anatolia Antiqua* X (2002), 145-154.

⁷ S. Mitchell – M. Waelkens, *Pisidian Antioch. The Site and its Monuments* (London 1998), 167.

⁸ M. Waelkens, *Epigraphica Anatolica* 7 (1986), 33-73, especially 67-73.

⁹ Bosch 1967, op.cit. (n.4), no. 51; cf. Mitchell 1986, op.cit. (n.3), 17-27, 31-32 note 63 (*SEG XXXV* [1985] 1361).

¹⁰ l. 58-63: [Ἐπὶ] Σιλουανοῦ | Μ. Λό[?]λλιος ἡμοθοινίαν ἔδωκεν | ἐν Π[ε]σσινοῦντι, μονομάχων [ξεύγη] | κεῖ καὶ ἐν Π[ε]σσινοῦντι ι', ἡλ[ι]ψεν | τὰ δύο ἔθνη ὅλῳ τῷ ἐνιαυτῷ ἄγα[λμα] | ἐν Π[ε]σσινοῦντι ἀνέθηκεν.

¹¹ S. Price, *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1984), 176-179 has argued that *agalma* was the normal term for the imperial statue in a temple.

games at Pessinous, which were often organized in the context of the imperial cult, as is well-known.¹²

- In the first year of the governorship of T. Helvius Basila (35/36 A.D.), the high priest Q. Gallius Pulcher gave two public banquets at Ankyra, a hecatomb at Pessinous and olive oil for the two tribes for the whole year.¹³ Waelkens supposed that in that year the final completion and inauguration of the temple was celebrated.

- Under the same governor T. Helvius Basila, who was in office from 35 A.D. onwards, coins were issued at the instigation of the provincial authorities. They were minted at Pessinous and depicted for the first time a hexa-style temple façade.¹⁴ This fact is not only important for the dating of the temple, but the coins reveal, according to Waelkens and other scholars, the involvement of the provincial governor, Basila, in the completion and dedication of the temple.

The Pessinuntian *sebasteion* may be compared with the temple of the imperial cult at Ankyra, which was dedicated in 19 A.D., some 15 years before the temple at Pessinous. However, the date of the dedication of the temple at Pessinous may be questioned. How to explain the fact that the cult statue was given in 31/32, four years before the completion and inauguration of the temple? What happened to the *agalma* before 35 A.D.? Of course, one could suppose that it was placed in the temple of another god. When C. Vibius Salutaris at Ephesos presented about 30 statues to his city (of Artemis, Athena, Androklos, Lysimachos, Augustus etc.), most of these were placed in the pronaos of the temple of Artemis, except for the silver statue (εἰκὼν ἀργυρέα) of the emperor Trajan and that of the empress Plotina. These were kept in the house of Salutaris himself until his death.¹⁵ But these were images for processions, no cult statues. It seems more plausible to me that the cult statue was erected by M. Lollius when the

¹² For these and other festivities, see for example P. Herz, *Die alte Stadt* 22 (1995), 72-81.

¹³ I. 72-76: 'Επὶ ασιλᾶ' | Κόϊντος Γάλλιος Ποῦλχε[ρ δημοθoinίας] | δις ἔδωκεν καὶ ἐν Πεσσινουῶν[τι] | ἑκατόνβην ἔθυσεν, ἔλαιον ἔθηκ[εν τοῖς] | δυ[σ]ὶν ἔθνεσιν δι' ὅλου τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ.

¹⁴ J. Devreker, "Les monnaies de Pessinonte", in: Devreker – Waelkens 1984, op.cit. (n.2), 191 no. 4-6 (ΕΠΙ ΒΑΣΙΛΙΑ ΠΡΕΣ(βευτοῦ) ΣΕΒ(αστοῦ) and variants). For an image, see M. Grant, *The Numismatic Chronicle* (1950) pl. II 8. Provincial coins depict the same images as civic coins but bear no city name.

¹⁵ G.M. Rogers, *The Sacred Identity of Ephesos. Foundation Myths of a Roman City* (London – New York 1991), 110; the text of the inscription is presented on 152-185 (*I.Ephesos* 27). Likewise, imperial images for processions in the imperial cult were kept in a special room of the curia, see Herz 1995, op. cit. (n.11), 70.

temple was completed. Moreover, the arguments in favour of a dedication of the temple in 35 A.D. do not look solid to me.

First, there is no proof that the temple depicted on the coins of Helvius Basila is the temple of the imperial cult. It could be any temple, like the old sanctuary of Kybele, which had existed at Pessinous for centuries. Strabo mentions that it had been enlarged by the Attalid kings with a *temenos* and embellished with porticos of white marble.¹⁶ This temple is for the rest totally unknown, apart from a very dubious drawing by C. Texier from the year 1834, which shows six columns across the front (!); no trace of it has ever been found. However, the identification with the venerable sanctuary of Kybele is not likely since the Anatolian cities of the imperial period seem to have preferred to depict Roman temples on their coins rather than older monuments.¹⁷ If it is a Roman temple, is it the temple which has been excavated? It is possible since the temple on the coins of Basila and the excavated temple both show six columns across the front. But this is no good argument since die-engravers took artistic liberties. The temple on the coins displays sometimes two, sometimes four, usually six and rarely eight columns.¹⁸ The idea that Helvius Basila, whose name is written on the coins depicting the temple, was involved in the construction and the dedication of the temple, is also a mere hypothesis. There exist other coins depicting the temple, which bear the name of the governor (M. Annius) Afrinus, who was in office under Claudius, 49-54 A.D.¹⁹ Should one assume that this governor was also involved in the construction of the temple, which by that time had already been dedicated? It is possible. If the *temenos* wall was constructed after ca. the middle of the 1st century A.D. Afrinus may have been involved

¹⁶ Strabo, 12.5.3; cf. Devreker – Thoen – Vermeulen 1995, op.cit. (n.6), 127. The construction probably took place soon after 205/204 B.C.

¹⁷ S. Handler, *American Journal of Archaeology* 75 (1971), 57 note 7.

¹⁸ It is well-known that die-engravers took liberties with the actual appearance of the temples which they illustrated. A reduction in the number of façade columns was a standard artistic convenience, see T. Drew-Bear, *The American Numismatic Society. Museum Notes* 19 (1974), 29-30. There exists one Pessinuntian coin type showing a distyle temple (J. Devreker, “Les monnaies de Pessinonte”, in: Devreker – Waelkens 1984, op.cit. [n.2], 176 no. 25 under Antoninus Pius), and one showing a tetrastyle temple (op.cit., 190 no. 204 under Geta); they may depict the same temple as the hexastyle temple which is represented on most coins (though the tetrastyle temple has flowers in the pediment, whereas all other temples have a disc). There is also one coin type depicting an octostyle temple (op.cit., 179 no. 63 under Marcus Aurelius). It is not certain whether this is the same temple as the hexastyle temple, since die-engravers normally did not exaggerate the actual number of columns, see Drew-Bear, op.cit., 30.

¹⁹ J. Devreker, “Les monnaies de Pessinonte”, in: Devreker – Waelkens 1984, op.cit. (n.2), 175 no. 13; 191 no. 11; 200 no. 80; Devreker 1995, op.cit. (n.2), 85 no. 2 (ΕΠΙ ΑΦΡΙΝΟΥ).

in this work, but that seems rather improbable to me. In my view the coins are insufficient evidence for assuming a connection between Helvius Basila and the completion or dedication of the temple c. 35 A.D. They just show the image of an important building of the city which may be the temple of the emperor cult. This temple may have been completed before 35 A.D.

Secondly, the idea that the high priest Q. Gallius gave a hecatomb at Pessinous in 35/36 at the occasion of the inauguration of the temple, is highly hypothetical. In my view Pulcher may have presented his gift at any occasion. It should be remarked that no other gifts by high priests to the city of Pessinous are recorded for the period 19-37, according to the list of priests from Ankyra. Therefore there must have been a very special occasion. One could suppose that Pulcher, high priest of the provincial emperor cult at Ankyra, was a citizen of Pessinous and that he therefore donated a special gift to his native city. Hecatombs, by the way, were not given by high priests rarely: no less than six priests offered a hecatomb to the city of Ankyra, without any special occasion being mentioned. A hecatomb, a sacrifice of numerous animals (not necessarily one hundred), led to a public banquet, a *demothoinia*, for a large group of people. Such a gift is firmly located in the Celtic-Galatian tradition of feeding members of the tribe.²⁰ I do not think that the gift of a hecatomb proves that the temple was inaugurated in 35 A.D.

In conclusion, I believe that the Pessinuntian temple of the emperor cult was completed under M. Lollius in 31/32 A.D. As regards this date, it should be noted that it is not absolutely certain that M. Lollius held the office of high priest in that year. The date of the priesthoods mentioned in the Ankyran list is much debated. There are several diverging opinions concerning the year in which the list starts.²¹ According to some scholars, it was in 10 A.D., according to others between 15 and 19 A.D. or in 23 A.D. S. Mitchell has argued on the basis of arguments, which I consider solid, that the list starts in 19 A.D. and that the priesthood of M. Lollius should therefore be dated to 31 A.D.²² Even if this date is correct, the problem remains whether Lollius presented his gift in the year of his priesthood. At least one of the high priests mentioned in the list, Pylaimenes (22/23 A.D.), refers to a

²⁰ Mitchell 1993, op.cit. (n.3), 109-110.

²¹ Mitchell 1986, op.cit. (n.3), 19.

²² Mitchell 1986, op.cit. (n.3), 27-33; 1993, op.cit. (n.3), 103. For the chronology of the governors, especially Silvanus and Basila, as reckoned by H. Halfmann (1986) and W. Leschhorn (1992), see the summary in *SEG XLII* (1992) 1162; there is no significant deviation from Mitchell's chronology. No new data concerning Basila are provided by W. Weiser, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 123 (1998), 275-277.

gift which he had presented several years before, the plot of land on which the temple of Roma and Augustus at Ankyra was built.²³ However, it seems most likely that Lollius gave the divine statue in the year in which he held the office of high priest.

When we now turn back to the problem of the identification of the temple, the identification proposed is further reinforced by the study of the second architectural element of the temple complex, which was built at the same time.

The theatre-stairway (see pl. I 2)

In front of the temple on the hill lies a stairway (w. 11.5m) which leads down to the valley (c. 11.5m lower).²⁴ The central block consists of normal steps (30 in origin); it is flanked on either side by curved wings consisting of seats (one seat is as high as two steps; there were twelve seats on each side originally). Mainly limestone foundations are preserved now, but also a few marble seats. The seats were of course intended to accommodate spectators. The construction is thus a combination of a monumental stairway and a theatre for attending religious or other performances in the orchestra before the steps. The seats do not reach down to the level of the lowest step but rest on a high podium (c. 1.45m high, equal to six steps). This fact seems to show that the public had to be protected from some danger. It is almost inevitable to think of gladiators or wild beasts (probably the steps too could be closed with a fence). If gladiatorial games and/or *venationes* took place in front of the temple, the identification of the temple as an imperial temple is reinforced since these games were often associated with the imperial cult. It should be remembered that the high priest M. Lollius presented ten pairs of gladiators to the city of Pessinous. If the games took place in the orchestra before the stairway, that construction must have been completed in my view in 31/32 A.D. Unfortunately, the study of the ceramics discovered in the foundations of the stairway has not confirmed this date. Only material which cannot be accurately dated, such as tiles, has been found there.²⁵

²³ Waelkens 1986, op. cit. (n.8), 58; Mitchell 1986, op.cit. (n.3), 29-30; 1993, op.cit. (n.3), 103.

²⁴ For a description, see Waelkens 1986, op.cit. (n.8), 47; Mitchell 1993, op.cit. (n.3) 105.

²⁵ Devreker – Thoen – Vermeulen 1995, op.cit. (n.6), 138. It is interesting to note that two dedications to the goddess Nemesis have been found at Pessinous: *Epigraphica Anatolica* 28 (1997), 97-98 no. 1 (*SEG* XLVII [1997] 1699; *I.Pessinous* 25) and 33 (2001), 57-58 no. 2; (*I.Pessinous* 26). Nemesis was the goddess of the theatre and the amphitheatre; victorious gladiators said grace to her.

The combination of a temple and a theatre situated in front of the former and thoroughly integrated (located along the same axis), is without parallel in the eastern part of the Roman Empire; it was popular in the western part. The best parallels can be found in Italy and date from the Late Republican period (Tivoli, Gabii, Cagliari).²⁶ It looks as if we have to do with direct architectural import from the west. This fact well suits the identification of the temple as an imperial temple. One can refer in this context to the temple of the emperor cult at Antioch near Pisidia (in the province of Galatia). This temple was built not later than the death of Augustus in 14 A.D. The plan of the temple, a tetrastyle temple on a high podium, and of the entire temple complex, shows western influence. The best parallels are found at Praeneste, Rome, Arausio, Nemausus.²⁷ The curved portico behind the temple has parallels in the cavea porticos in Italy and Gaul in the Late Republican period, especially at Alvernium (Vernègues).²⁸ The identification of the temple as an imperial temple is almost certain thanks to the reliefs of the propylon in front of the temple, which refer to Augustus' naval and land victories, and thanks to the *Monumentum Antiochenum*, fragments of a (Latin) version of the *Res Gestae* of Augustus, probably engraved on the inner walls of the propylon.²⁹

The next element of the architectural complex may also offer a small contribution to the identification of the temple.

The colonnaded square in the valley (see pl. II 1 and 2)

In the valley at the foot of the temple and of the stairway-theatre a square surrounded on at least three sides by a colonnade has been unearthed.³⁰ It has the same orientation as the other two buildings, though it lies somewhat aside of their longitudinal axis (l. minimum 32m, w. at the east side 28.4m). Three sides have been excavated; they all have three steps; on the upper step the columns of the portico were placed (twelve on the east side, including the

²⁶ Waelkens 1986, op. cit. (n.8), 62-65. I have not been able to consult the article of G. Tosi on the typology of the temple-theatre, in: G. Tosi (ed.), *Gli edifici per spettacoli nell' Italia Romana I. Catalogo* (Roma 2003).

²⁷ Mitchell – Waelkens 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 160-161.

²⁸ J. Süß, 'Kaiserkult und Urbanistik. Kultbezirke für römische Kaiser in kleinasiatischen Städten', in: H. Cancik – K. Hitzl (eds.), *Die Praxis der Herrscherverehrung in Rom und seinen Provinzen* (Tübingen 2003), 260 note 35; Mitchell – Waelkens 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 164.

²⁹ Mitchell – Waelkens 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 157-167. The propylon was dedicated to the living emperor Augustus in 2/1 B.C., see op.cit., 146-147.

³⁰ For a description of the finds, see Waelkens 1986, op.cit. (n.8), 47.

columns on the corners). The width of the portico is approximately 5m. The columns which have been found there are Ionic, but on the east side a few Doric capitals have been discovered. It is not impossible that the portico had a Doric first floor on the east side, that is the side in front of the temple (a so-called Rhodian peristyle). The portico is constructed with limestone blocks, but the stones have been plastered with a layer of marble ground to powder, so that the building has the appearance of a marble construction. The portico may have been a commercial centre with stores and shops; in a fire layer, dating to c. 400 A.D., many remains of amphoras and pots have been found.³¹

The portico dates to about the same time as the temple and the stairway-theatre; it is either late Tiberian or Claudian at the latest.³² It is an organic part of the vast urbanization programme. It is interesting to note that the area shows a combination of the three architectural orders: Ionic and Doric on the east side of the portico, Corinthian on the temple on the hill which must have been visible above the portico from the valley. S. Mitchell has argued that such a combination of the three orders is typical of Roman imperial symbolism: it symbolises the unification of the Greek world under Roman domination. One observes the same symbolism at the imperial temple at Antioch near Pisidia: a semicircular two-storey portico with Ionic and Doric columns is situated behind the Corinthian podium temple.³³ This observation may reinforce the identification of the temple at Pessinous as a *sebasteion*.

The emperor cult at Pessinous

Previous scholars have argued that the Italian influence in the temple complex of Pessinous, the involvement of the high priests of the provincial emperor cult in the Pessinuntian temple through their benefactions, and the possible involvement of the provincial governor in the construction of the temple suggest that the sanctuary was not a temple of the municipal emperor cult but of the provincial cult, so to say a local branch of the provincial

³¹ J. Devreker – L. Bauters et al., *Anatolia Antiqua* IX (2001), 61-64.

³² The very few sherds discovered in the foundation trenches seem to be contemporary with those from the temple filling, see Waelkens 1986, op.cit. (n.8), 59 note 147; Thoen 2002, op.cit. (n.6), 153: Augustan sigillata provides a *terminus post quem*.

³³ Mitchell 1993, op.cit. (n.3), 105; Mitchell – Waelkens 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 164.

sanctuary at Ankyra.³⁴ I will discuss this argument at the end of this study. A second argument has been advanced by S. Mitchell. He has pointed to an inscription from Pessinous dating to the reign of Marcus Aurelius, which honours Tib. Claudius Heras, who had been high priest of the provincial *koinon* and Sebastophant of the temple at Pessinous (σεβασ | τοφάντην τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἐν Πες | σινοῦντι).³⁵ The Sebastophant was a priest of the emperor cult, ranking lower than the high priest. All inscriptions mentioning a Sebastophant, which I have been able to collect (37 items), come from Pontus-Bithynia (Nikaia, Kios, Prusa, Prusias on the Hypios, Pompeiopolis), from Asia (Ephesos, Smyrna, Sardes, Aphrodisias, Akmonia, Dorylaeion) and from Galatia (Ankyra, Pessinous, Ikonion). It looks as if the organization of the imperial cult in Galatia was modelled after the cult in Bithynia and Asia, instituted some years earlier, in 29 B.C.³⁶ S. Mitchell has argued that the words σεβαστοφάντην τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἐν Πεσσινούντι echo the expression ἀρχιερεὺς Ἀσίας τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ or ἐν Σμύρνῃ.³⁷ In Asia, Pergamon was the first city which obtained a temple of the provincial emperor cult, but afterwards other cities, among which Ephesos and Smyrna, also received such a temple (or even several temples). The high priest of the provincial emperor cult in these cities is called ἀρχιερεὺς Ἀσίας τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἐν Ἐφέσῳ or ἐν Σμύρνῃ in inscriptions. According to Mitchell, this proves that the Pessinuntian temple was a provincial sanctuary. Before we evaluate this argument, one difficulty has to be cleared.

³⁴ Mitchell 1993, op.cit. (n.3), 103, 104 note 30, 116; 1986, op.cit. (n.3), 32-33 with note 66; followed by for example Devreker – Thoen – Vermeulen 1995, op.cit. (n.6), 129; J. Devreker – J.H.M. Strubbe, *Epigraphica Anatolica* 26 (1996), 54.

³⁵ IGR III 230 (= OGIS II 540; *I.Pessinous* 17). For the date, see J. Devreker, “L’ histoire de Pessinonte”, in: Devreker – Waelkens 1984, op.cit. (n.2), 20. l. 10-12: σεβασ | τοφάντην τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἐν Πες | σινοῦντι ἱερασάμενον πρῶτον.

³⁶ Pontus-Bithynia: *I.Iznik* I 116 (cf. SEG XXVIII [1978] 1032; Nikaia); *I.Kios* 4; *I.Prusa* 16; *I.Prusias* 5?, 17, 19, 46, 47; Chr. Marek, *Stadt, Ära und Territorium in Pontus-Bithynia und Nord-Galatia* (Tübingen 1993), 136 no.3 (Pompeiopolis). Asia: *I.Ephesos* 2037, 2061 II, 2062, 2063; *I.Smyrna* 591; *I.Sardis* 62 (cf. SEG XLVI (1996) 1527-1532?); SEG XXXI (1981) 901 (Aphrodisias); IGR IV 643, cf. 1696 (Akmonia); IGR IV 522 (= OGIS II 479; Dorylaeion; a σεβαστοφάντης διὰ βίου and a female σεβαστοφαντίς διὰ βίου). Galatia: IGR III 162 (a female σεβαστοφαντούση), 173 (= OGIS II 544), 194, 195, 204, 208 (= respectively Bosch 1967, op.cit. (n.4), no. 98, 105, 142, 139, 251, 117); Bosch, op.cit., no. 100, 106, 249-253; SEG XXVII (1977) 844 (Ankyra); IGR III 225, 230 (= OGIS II 540, 541), 232; SEG XLVI (1996) 1627 (= AE [1996] 1486) (= *I.Pessinous* 18, 17, 14, 12) (Pessinous); AE (1906) 70 (Ikonion). Several Sebastophants were honoured with numerous inscriptions; for example, all records from Ephesos and the inscription from Akmonia honour T. Flavius Montanos, six records from Ankyra relate to T. Flavius Gaianos.

³⁷ Mitchell 1993, op.cit. (n.3), 116. See for example *I.Ephesos* 618, *I.Smyrna* 727.

The inscription mentions that Heras was the first who held the priestly office of sebastophant at Pessinous (ἱερασάμενον πρῶτον). At first sight, this seems to imply that the imperial cult was introduced at Pessinous only under Marcus Aurelius. This runs counter to earlier conclusions. Perhaps one must interpret the inscription as saying that the priesthood of sebastophant was established at Pessinous for the first time under Marcus Aurelius.³⁸ If the sebastophant was connected with imperial mysteries, as has been argued by some scholars, mysteries may have been introduced at that time. However, I am not convinced that the sebastophant was connected with imperial mysteries.³⁹ I wonder whether this office was equal to that of the σεβαστοφόρος in other cities.⁴⁰ His function was to carry and to show the sacred symbols and the images of the emperors at processions. One may guess that processions, perhaps in honour of the emperors, were introduced in Pessinous at the time of Marcus Aurelius, but this remains a hypothesis.⁴¹ Anyway, there are some indications that something happened to the Pessinuntian temple under Marcus Aurelius. As a fact, after a long absence the image of the temple reappears on coins of Pessinous in that time (without the name of a governor).⁴²

³⁸ The interpretation of πρῶτος as ‘the first, the most important one’ of a group of sebastophants (compare πρῶτος ἄρχων) is not tenable; such a college is nowhere attested to my knowledge.

³⁹ For the sebastophant, see L. Robert, *Revue des Études Anciennes* 62 (1960), 321-322 (= *OMS* II, 837-838); for more bibliography, see T. Corsten, *I. Prusa* ad no. 16 (I p. 32). Only in two inscriptions from Prusias on the Hypios (*I. Prusias* 17, 47) and possibly one text from Sardes (*SEG* XLVI [1996] 1527-1532), there seems to be a connection of the sebastophant, together with the hierophant, with imperial mysteries, see M. Clauss, *Kaiser und Gott. Herrscherkult im römischen Reich* (Stuttgart – Leipzig 1999), 339-340. But what was the difference between these two priests? Perhaps the texts should be read as saying that only the hierophant was connected with the mysteries, not both sebastophant and hierophant (see *I. Prusias* 47: καὶ Ἑλλαδάρ[χην κ]αὶ σ[ε]βαστοφάντην [καὶ] τοῦ μεγάλου καὶ κοινοῦ τῆς Βειθυ[νίας νά]ου τῶν μυστηρίων ἱεροφάντην)).

⁴⁰ The σεβαστοφόρος is recorded in several cities, among which Oinoanda in Lycia (for example *SEG* XXXVIII [1988] 1462 and XLIV [1994] 1187) and Athens (see L. Robert, *Revue de Philologie* 13 [1939], 122-128 [= *OMS* II, 1275-1281]); cf. the εἰκονοφόρος from near Aizanoi (*MAMA* IX 131). At Athens there was a special fund, σεβαστοφορικὰ χρήματα, which may be comparable to the σεβαστοφαντικὰ χρήματα in Ankyra (see note 44).

⁴¹ The carrying of images of the emperors was one of the most important rituals of the imperial cult, see A. Chaniotis, ‘Der Kaiserkult im Osten des römischen Reiches im Kontext der zeitgenössischen Ritualpraxis’, in: Cancik – Hitzl 2003, op. cit. (n.28), 9-10; Herz 1995, op. cit. (n.12), 70-71.

⁴² One could think of repair works to the temple, but these are not recorded during Marcus Aurelius' reign (they are ascertained at the end of the 1st or the beginning of the 2nd century A.D. for the peristasis architraves, possibly in the aftermath of an earthquake, see Waelkens 1986, op.cit. [n.8], 53-54). We know that repair works were conducted in the portico, sc. in the northern part, from the later Antonines onwards, perhaps even under Marcus Aurelius, and that these apparently continued in the period of the Severi (a marble floor, a partial fill of the theatre and the construction of a new stairway

It is not clear whether the sebastophant was a priest of the provincial emperor cult or of the municipal cult. Apparently sebastophants could belong to either cult. In some cities, like Prusias, the sebastophant seems to have been a civic officer, in other cities, like Smyrna, he seems a provincial officer.⁴³ In Ankyra some sebastophants were civic, others provincial priests.⁴⁴ As with other priestly offices of the emperor cult, it is often difficult or even impossible to decide.⁴⁵ Anyway, it is well possible that Tib. Claudius Heras was a municipal sebastophant at Pessinous. If we take a look again at the inscription in honour of Heras, we notice that he held the following offices (l. 5-12):

ιερέα μητρὸς | θεῶν μεγάλης τῆς ἐν Πες | σινοῦντι καὶ <M>ειδαίῳ τῶν | τε
 Σεβαστῶν ἐξάκις, ἀρχιερέ | α τοῦ κοινοῦ Σεβαστηνῶν Γα | λατῶν καὶ
 ἀγωνοθέτην, σεβασ | τοφάντην τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἐν Πες | σινοῦντι ἱερασάμενον
 πρῶτον.

So he was priest of the Great Mother of Gods at Pessinous and Midaieion, six times priest of the emperors (namely in Pessinous),⁴⁶ high priest and agonothete of the *koinon* of the Sebastenoi Galatai (at Ankyra),⁴⁷ and sebastophant in the temple at Pessinous, being the first who held this office. If Heras had not added that he held the office of sebastophant at Pessinous, the readers of the text would have thought he held that office at Ankyra. And

between valley and temple), see Waelkens 1986, op.cit., 59. Precisely under Septimius Severus, Caracalla and Geta (193-217) the temple is frequently depicted on Pessinuntian coins. It should be noted, however, that the function and date of the called “Severan theatre” (or stairway) are not at all clear, see Devreker 2003, op.cit. (n.2), 147.

⁴³ Prusias: *I.Prusias* 19: the office of sebastophant is mentioned amidst municipal offices: *timetes*, *protos archon*, *presbeutes*, sebastophant, *agoranomos*, *dekaprotos*, *grammateus*, *koinoboulos*. Also at Ikonion: duovir of the colony, irenarch, sebastophant. Smyrna: *I.Smyrna* 591: the honorand was high priest and sebastophant and agonothete for life of the goddess Roma and the god Caesar Augustus.

⁴⁴ Civic: *IGR* III 173 (= Bosch 1967, op.cit. [n.4], no. 105; vgl. 106): the sebastophant returned money, σεβαστοφαντικὰ χρήματα, to the city; Bosch 1967, op.cit., no. 100: after provincial offices follow municipal ones: *archon*, sebastophant, eirenarch. Provincial: *IGR* III 195, 204; *SEG* XXVII (1977) 844. The honorand of the first inscription was archiereus of the *koinon* of the Galatians, galatarch and sebastophant for life of the divinised emperors.

⁴⁵ See for example the case of Tib. Claudius Bokchos at Ankyra; in Bosch 1967, op.cit. (n.4), no. 100, he seems to be a municipal sebastophant (cf. the preceding note), but in no. 142 a provincial one (sc. galatarch, *archiereus*, sebastophant, agonothete).

⁴⁶ S. Mitchell, *Anatolian Studies* 27 (1977), 73 note 35 argues that the priesthood was a civic office at Pessinous, not part of the organization of the *koinon*, since no priest of the provincial cult is known to have held the priesthood more than three times.

⁴⁷ Games of the provincial Galatian *koinon* were possibly also held at Tavium. Tib. Claudius Patrobios, who died at Rome c. 60 A.D., gained victories in penteteric games: κοινὸν Γαλατίας ἐν Τα[ουίῳ ? πενταετηρί] | κό[ν, κοινὸν Γαλ]ατίας ἐ[ν Ἀγκύρῃ ? πενταετη] | ρικόν, --] (*IAG* 65, l. 16-18).

they would not have understood the meaning of the words ἱερασάμενον πρῶτον, since the office of sebastophant had most probably existed at Ankyra since the beginning of the cult. The expression τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἐν Πέσσινοῦντι has only a superficial resemblance to the formulae from Ephesos and Smyrna, to which Mitchell referred. In my view, the parallel is misleading.⁴⁸

I now return to the first argument, the presence of western influence in the temple complex of Pessinous. Is it sufficient proof that the temple was a provincial temple? I believe not: it just shows that the building activity was directed from the west (just as in the colony of Antioch near Pisidia). Who directed the works? One may think of the emperor himself or of the provincial governor or his staff. There are no indications that the emperor himself was involved in the constructions at Pessinous.⁴⁹ The idea that the governor, perhaps instructed by the emperor, directed the building works, does not sound unreasonable.⁵⁰ In many Anatolian cities governors erected buildings by order of the emperor, for example after earthquakes. It is also well-known that Roman provincial governors sometimes played an active role in the development and organization of the imperial cult in their

⁴⁸ Bosch 1967, op.cit. (n.4), 102 note 12 argued that the sebastophant in his no. 98 was a civic not a provincial priest on the basis of the inscription of Heras, which mentions explicitly that he held the office in the temple at Pessinous. I consider this the most obvious interpretation. It should be noted that no ἀρχιερεὺς Γαλατίας (or τοῦ κοινοῦ τῶν Σεβαστηνῶν Γαλατῶν) τοῦ ναοῦ τοῦ ἐν Πέσσινοῦντι is on record in inscriptions. For the technical formula 'high priest of the temple(s) in (a given city)', see S.J. Friesen, *Twice Neokoros. Ephesus, Asia and the Cult of the Flavian Imperial Family* (Leiden – New York – Köln 1993), 97. I cannot answer the question whether the other sebastophants, on record in inscriptions from Pessinous (see above), held their office at Pessinous or at Ankyra; all three were archiereus of the koinon of the Galatai and sebastophant, and two of them were also agonothete. These offices come very near to the careers of the provincial sebastophants at Ankyra, who were all *archiereus*, sebastophant, agonothete, and also galatarch. The dates of the texts cannot help to decide.

⁴⁹ There are no certain records which prove that emperors gave money for buildings in the cities of Galatia. Nero may have contributed to the building of the proscenium of the theatre at Ikonion (see S. Mitchell, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 91 [1987], 355). The view that the city wall of Antiocheia near Pisidia was financed from contributions from the emperor (Augustus?) (so Mitchell, op.cit., 339; followed by E. Winter, *Staatliche Baupolitik und Baufürsorge in den römischen Provinzen des kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien* [Bonn 1996], 124) does not seem to be correct (see Mitchell – Waelkens 1998, op.cit. [n.7], 94: the walls date to the late Roman period). The claim of Malalas (9 p. 221, 18 ff., ed. Dindorf) (= Bosch 1967, op.cit. [n.4], no. 47) that Augustus built the city walls of Ankyra (which was the village of Arsine before) is suspect, see Winter 1996, op.cit., 123; Bosch 1967, op.cit., 25-26.

⁵⁰ Waelkens 1986, op. cit. (n.8), 71.

province.⁵¹ The western influence in particular could be explained by the fact that architects, skilled labourers and other specialists from the west were employed. There are many examples of this practice. Pliny often requested the emperor Trajan to place at his disposal architects and engineers for building projects. Hadrian frequently employed workmen, specialists, architects and engineers, who had worked before at Rome, i.a. at the construction of his temple at Kyzikos.⁵² The involvement of the governor may also have concerned the finances of the building: governors rarely gave money out of their own pockets, but they often took care of collecting the money needed by encouraging private generosity.⁵³ The fact that the high priest M. Lollius gave a gift to the temple, namely a divine statue, shows that the local notables of Pessinous also contributed to the imperial temple. All this does not imply that the temple of Pessinous was a provincial sanctuary.

The fact that Pessinous is never called νεωκόρος ('temple-warden') in inscriptions or on coins, cannot be used as an argument in favor of my view. As is well known, cities which possessed a temple of the provincial emperor cult, called themselves neokoros (twice, thrice neokoros) from the late 1st century A.D.⁵⁴ This privilege was jealously guarded and an important

⁵¹ Price 1984, op.cit. (n.11), 69-71. A possible parallel for the involvement of the authorities in the erection of a building for the imperial cult may be found in an inscription from Xanthos in Lycia: A. Balland, *Inscriptions d' époque impériale du Létôon. Fouilles de Xanthos VII* (Paris 1982), 25-28 no. 11. A room (joining a portico in the Letoön), which may be an (*ethnikon*) *Kaisareion* (an imperial room for the provincial emperor cult), seems to be constructed and dedicated by the emperor Claudius himself in 43 A.D., the year in which Lycia was made a Roman province. A rather suspect source (*Scholiae In Aristidem* I 391, 7, ed. Dindorf) tells that Vespasian built an imperial hall at Kyzikos (Mitchell 1987, op.cit. [n.49], 355). An inscription from Kibyra, which is often adduced as evidence in this context, mentions σεβαστὰ ἔργα, imperial buildings constructed under the supervision of the governor of Lycia, Q. Veranius (43-47 A.D.) (*I.Kibyra* I 36 l. 9-11). But these ἔργα probably refer to the construction of roads, see the commentary of T. Corsten in *I.Kibyra*.

⁵² Winter 1996, op.cit. (n.49), 195, 197-198; Winter also refers to *CIL* V 977 = 8666 (*ILS* 1468), a grave inscription from Concordia in Italy, shortly after 40 B.C. It was erected for the brothers L. Calius in] | *operis publicis in Bithynia fuit* and [...] Calius Malliolus *et in operis publicis in Asia* et [-- (resp. l. 2-3 and 5). In l. 5 one may perhaps restore *Bithynia*; the reading *et Isauria* of *CIL* V 8666 must be rejected because Isauria was not a province at that time. Winter argues that these men ("Bauunternehmer") were involved in the construction of public buildings (*opera*) in the provinces. But S. Panciera in: *Xenia. Scritti in onore di Piero Treves* (Roma 1985), 129-140, followed by G. Lettich, *Iscrizioni romane di Iulia Concordia* (Trieste 1994), no. 40 (with discussion on 112-114) has argued that the brothers worked in public service (*in operis alicuius esse*), perhaps in the service of the governor or of the provincial administration, possibly as *scriba*.

⁵³ Winter 1996, op.cit. (n.49), 157-158 for the first two centuries A.D.; the cases of gifts of proconsuls (at Nikaia, Ephesos) are not clear.

⁵⁴ Friesen 1993, op.cit. (n.48), 53-59.

element of intercity rivalry.⁵⁵ One may argue that, if Pessinous had housed a provincial temple, it would certainly have used this title. The argument, however, is not solid since Ankyra, which possessed a provincial temple of the emperor cult, did not use the title *neokoros* until the middle of the third century A.D., when the city received a second neokorate from Valerian.⁵⁶

Even if the temple at Pessinous was ‘just’ a municipal sanctuary, the introduction of the imperial cult at Pessinous exerted great influence on the development of the city. The temple on the hill dominated the view of the town, certainly for those people who walked through the canal which had the function of a traffic-artery in dry season. The prominently located temple was a symbol of the central position of the imperial cult and of the impact of the Roman Empire on the life of the new polis. At Pessinous, just as in other towns, the architecture of the emperor cult determined the spatial organization of the town.⁵⁷ The building of the temple may not only have been a mark of loyalty towards the Roman rulers and an indication of growing romanization, but also an element of self-glorification in the context of intercity rivalry, as has been observed by J. Süß. By building the vast complex Pessinous may have reacted against the capital city, Ankyra, where a place for the *panegyris* and for the horse race (an hippodrome) were constructed next to the imperial temple.⁵⁸

Leiden, October 2004.

⁵⁵ E. Collas-Heddeland, *Revue des Études Grecques* 108 (1995), 418-419. It would have been very odd if the city of Pessinous had received a provincial temple less than fifty years after it became a polis, c. ten years after Ankyra, while Smyrna, an ancient, large and most prestigious city, had to fight three years against rivals to obtain such a privilege in 26 A.D., more than fifty years after Ephesos; cf. Friesen 1993, op.cit. (n.48), 17-19. It would be speculative to assume that the esteem of Pessinous with the Romans increased much under Augustus, when Kybele and her ‘Phrygian’ homeland were valued highly by Roman poets, see M. Beard – J. North – S. Price, *Religions of Rome I. A History* (Cambridge 1998), 197-198.

⁵⁶ Inscriptions: *IGR* III 179 (= Bosch 1967, op.cit. [n.4], no. 288), 237. Coins: Bosch, op.cit., no. 283-286.

⁵⁷ Price 1984, op.cit. (n.11), 136-146; Mitchell 1986, op.cit. (n.3), 27; Waelkens 1986, op.cit. (n.8), 72; Süß 2003, op.cit. (n.28), 264, 268.

⁵⁸ Süß 2003, op.cit. (n.28), 268. For the constructions at Ankyra, see the inscription of the benefactions of the high priests, referred to in note 9.

Pl. I 1: The imperial temple (back side with the foundations of columns and the cella), seen from the S.



Pl. I 2: The theatre-stairway in front of the temple, central part (E.) and N. curved wing with foundations of seats.



Pl. II 1: The portico in the valley (E. and N. side) with at the right-hand the so-called “Severan” stairway, seen from the S.



Pl. II 2: General view (from the N.) of the portico in the valley, the theatre-stairway and, at the left side, the imperial temple on the hill.



AFTER THE HIGH ROMAN FASHION?
THE TEMPLE AT RAS EL-SODA SEEN IN CONTEXT

FRITS G. NAEREBOUT

Introduction

Götter und Pharaonen, an exhibition held in Essen, Munich, Hildesheim and Rotterdam in 1978-1979 was groundbreaking in introducing a wide audience to the subject of Egyptian (dis)continuity, from the late 3rd millennium B.C. to the late 4th century A.D. In the catalogue there is a photograph of the temple at Ras el-Soda, which at the time drew my attention.¹ The small temple in the photograph looked very ‘Roman’ and altogether different from the Roman-period temples in Egypt, such as the temples at Dendera, Kom Ombo, Esna or Philae with their decidedly un-Roman, ‘Egyptian’ appearance.² I forgot about it, but when I recently came across that same picture again, it still intrigued me, and I asked myself what this temple could tell us about the Roman presence in Egypt.³

Ras el-Soda, with its supposedly Roman looks, appears to be something of an oddity in its Egyptian context. Certainly, Boëthius and Ward-Perkins, in their authoritative overview of Etruscan and Roman architecture, single Ras el-Soda out as something special and remark: “there are hints of influence from Italy ... in the high podium of a small Ionic tetrastyle temple ... in Ras el-Soda”.⁴ They leave it at that. Others were not much more informative. But is it really an oddity? Where does its inspiration come from? Indeed from Italy? Where do we find parallels? And if we manage to put it into some context, what does that tell us about the “impact of empire”?

¹ D. Wildung – G. Grimm (eds.), *Goden en farao's* (Rotterdam 1979), 32.

² Grandiosely illustrated in D. Arnold, *Temples of the last pharaohs* (New York 1999) and in G. Hölbl, *Altägypten im römischen Reich. Der römische Pharao und seine Tempel 1: Römische Politik und alt-ägyptische Ideologie von Augustus bis Diocletian. Tempelbau in Oberägypten* (Mainz 2000).

³ This was a rather presumptuous undertaking, considering that I am no archaeologist; I thank Nathalie de Haan, Rolf Tybout and Miguel John Versluys, all three archaeologists, for their comments. Of course I retain full responsibility.

⁴ A. Boëthius – J.B. Ward-Perkins, *Etruscan and Roman architecture* (Harmondsworth 1970), 459.

The temple and its contents

First the facts about this temple at Ras el-Soda, discovered in 1936 in a commercial sand pit, and excavated by Achille Adriani, director of the Alexandria Museum, who also published the results.⁵ Ras el-Soda is a spot immediately to the east of Alexandria, between the sea and the road to Aboukir.⁶ Once it must have been near the Canopic branch of the Nile channel, where according to Strabo rich Alexandrians had their retreats. The temple might have been part of such a private estate.⁷ What Adriani uncovered were the remains of a Ionic prostyle tetrastyle temple, oriented towards the SSE, on a podium, 1.40 meter high, 7.5 x 5 meter, with a wide staircase in front.⁸ It was built of squared blocks and the four columns were of marble. To either side stood some related structures, all in rough masonry and very ruinous: one room was recognized as a biclinium, another contained two big terracotta jars, probably water jars. The cella had a secondary doorway in the long wall on the right-hand side, and a pavement with two marble strips running lengthwise from the door to a bench at the back. On this raised bench five marble sculptures were *in situ*: from west to east: Isis, Osiris-Kanopos type A, Osiris-Kanopos type B, Hermanoubis, and Harpokrates.⁹ Inside the cella there also were found a small conical marble altar on a high base and two black granite sphinxes.

Centred between the four pillars of the *pronaos*, in an extra wide intercolumnation, stood a marble pillar, crowned with a marble foot, the whole 1.28 meter high, which carried the following inscription: Ῥιφτεῖς ἐξ ἱππων

⁵ A. Adriani, 'Sanctuaire de l'époque romaine à Ras El Soda', *Annuaire du Musée gréco-romain d'Alexandrie* 1935-1939 (1940), 136-148, and idem, *Repertorio d'arte dell'Egitto greco-romano*, vol. C 1-2 (Palermo 1963-1966), no. 56 (Ras es-Soda, sic), 100-101, pl. 32, partly summarized in R. Wild, 'The known Isis-Sarapis sanctuaries from the Roman period', in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt* II.17.4 (Berlin 1984), 1739-1851, 1810-1811. The following description is based on Adriani; there seems to be no other account based on autopsy.

⁶ A few years ago the temple was moved from its find spot to Al Shatby Garden on Horreya Avenue, Alexandria, to grace a new museum complex: see the March 2001 News Bulletin of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities at <http://www.guardians.net/sca/bulletin03-15-01.htm>; a small image of the new situation is to be found at <http://aclegyp.com/html/assort/sights.html>. Both sites were last accessed on August, 10, 2004.

⁷ Strabo 17.1.16; Adriani 1940, op.cit. (n.5), 148, repeated idem 1966, op.cit. (n.5), 101.

⁸ To my understanding of the word 'podium' we will come back below.

⁹ *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* vol. 5 (Zürich 1990), 764, s.v. Isis, no. 9; vol. 7 (1994), 119, 124, s.v. Osiris Kanopos, no. 15 (A) and no. 53 (B); vol. 5 (1990), 267, s.v. Harmanubis, no. 14; vol. 4 (1988), 418, s.v. Harpokrates, no. 5. All are illustrated except the Isis statue. The dating of the statues in *LIMC* is erratic, if one accepts Adriani's opinion (1940, op.cit. [n.5], 147) that they are from the same workshop or even from the same hand.

ἀπ' ὀχήματος ἐνθ' Ἰσίδωρος σωθεὶς ἂν τὶ ποδῶν θῆκεν ἵχνος μάκαρι.¹⁰ We could translate: “Flung from his carriage by his horses at the spot, Isidoros, restored to health by divine intervention, in exchange for his feet, dedicated this image of a foot to the blessed”. As I reconstruct it, Isidoros’ horses bolted, his carriage crashed, he was seriously injured in his legs and could have been maimed for life, but a supposedly divine intervention led to a full recovery of the use of his feet. Some commentators have called Isidoros a charioteer, but that need not be the case. Adriani argued that the prominent position of the dedication seems to indicate that the temple is a private foundation by this very Isidoros, possibly at the venue of his accident. Indeed, the whole complex may have sprung up around the foot of Isidoros, so to speak.

The temple was dated by Adriani to the second half of the 2nd century A.D., based on a stylistic analysis of the statuary. This is corroborated by the lettering of the inscription.¹¹ Of course the building and the sculptures are not necessarily contemporary, nor are the building and the inscription, unless of course the dedication was the *raison d'être* for the building in the first place, but as we will see below, there are 2nd-century architectural parallels.

The temple was dedicated to, most probably, Isis. The Isis statue is the largest statue. The inscription, and the dedicated foot, seem quite at home with Isis, even if no name is mentioned in the text: offering feet, for various reasons, is common with Sarapis and Isis.¹² Also, Ras el-Soda has some architectural features in common with other Isis sanctuaries: we will come back to that below. There does not really seem to be any reasonable alternative.

The Egyptian context

How many classical temples, large or small, have we actually got in Egypt? By ‘classical’ I mean everything that is Graeco-Roman and not Pharaonic Egyptian or some variant thereof. Not a prevalent concern: apart from an

¹⁰ Latest edition of the text, with full references: É. Bernand, *Inscriptions métriques de l'Égypte gréco-romaine* (Paris 1969), 428-430, no. 109, pl. 78.

¹¹ *Bulletin Épigraphique* 1950, 223 (L. Robert).

¹² See M. Le Glay, ‘Un “pied de Sarapis” à Timgad, en Numidie’, in: M.B. de Boer – T.A. Edridge (eds.), *Hommages à Maarten J. Vermaseren*, vol. 2 (Leiden 1978), 573-589, esp. no. 14 (el-Daba, near Alexandria: fragment of a marble foot inscribed: Ἰσιδι Ἀμμώνιος Ἄπιτος ἀνεθήκε and no. 15 (Ras el-Soda). Cf. Adriani, *Repertorio d'arte dell'Egitto greco-romano*, vol. A 2 (Palermo 1961), 50-52, nos. 186-192 (no. 188 = Ras el-Soda), pls. 86-88. Add L. Bricault, *Atlas de la diffusion des cultes isiaques (IVe s. av. J.-C. – IVe s. apr. J.-C.)* (Paris 2001), 74 (Syria); 167 (Rome).

article by Donald Bailey I know of no detailed overview of classical style architecture in Egypt outside Alexandria.¹³ Interest in the use of non-Egyptian architectural idiom in Egypt has been slight: for the Egyptologist Alexandria is ‘ad Aegyptum’, and other Greek or Roman style structures are negligible compared to the long Egyptian architectural tradition – which moreover was still vital during the Ptolemaic and Roman eras. Thus Kurth can state that “more than a 100 temples of the [Graeco-Roman] period are known, all of them in Egyptian style”, without as much as mentioning that there are temples in another style, also known, even if underresearched.¹⁴ Dieter Arnold, dealing with imperial temples, discusses about forty temples and chapels in Pharaonic style from the Roman period, and dismisses “Roman-style temples” as “restricted to Alexandria and a few other towns, and they cannot be discussed here”.¹⁵ For the ancient historian and classical archaeologist looking at religious architecture, Egyptian cults in hellenized garb, such as the Isis cult, are something that ‘spreads from Egypt’, so Egypt is not studied. It is all about “l’Egypte hors d’Egypte”.¹⁶

I give here a selective – but nevertheless fairly complete – catalogue of existing religious buildings in classical style:

- 1 Luxor, in the court of Nectanebo I. Sarapeion. Dedicated 126 A.D. Peripteral of four by five columns. Podium. 10 x 8 meter. Statues of Isis and Osiris Canopus were found *in situ*.¹⁷
- 2 Mons Porphyrites. Iseion (‘the Eastern Iseion’). Badly preserved 10 x 7 stairs in front because of the sloping site.¹⁸
- 3 Mons Porphyrites. Possibly an Iseion (‘the Western Iseion’). Badly preserved, divergent reports about the interior arrangements. Stairs in front because of the sloping site. 12 x 7 meter.¹⁹

¹³ D.M. Bailey, ‘Classical architecture in Roman Egypt’, in: M. Henig (ed.), *Architecture and architectural sculpture in the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1990) 121-137.

¹⁴ D. Kurth, ‘The present state of research into Graeco-Roman temples’, in: S. Quirke (ed.), *The temple in ancient Egypt. New discoveries and recent trends* (London 1997) 152-158, 152.

¹⁵ Arnold, op.cit. (n.2), 226; cf. Hölbl, op.cit. (n. 2). Of course, Ras el-Soda and other small temples like it are no imperial projects, so Arnold and Hölbl need not mention them (Hölbl includes the Luxor temple mentioned below), but still it is telling that their focus is as it is.

¹⁶ Bricaut 2001, op.cit. (n.12), xi.

¹⁷ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1789; J.-C. Golvin – S. ‘Abd El-Hamid – G. Wagner – F. Dunand, ‘Le petit Serapieion de Louqsor’, *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie orientale* 81 (1981), 115-148.

¹⁸ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1997.

¹⁹ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1997.

- 4 Mons Porphyrites. Sarapeion. Dedicated 117-119 A.D. to Zeus Helios Sarapis καὶ θεοῖς συννόοις. Prostyle tetrastyle, with a side door in the cella, and a bench at the back. Ionic. 10 x 6 meter.²⁰
- 5 Mons Claudianus. Sarapeion. Dedicated 118 A.D. to Zeus Helios Sarapis καὶ θεοῖς συννόοις . Originally a simple cella (6 x 4.5 meter) surrounded by a *peribolos* wall, later turned into what may have been a prostyle tetrastyle. Corinthian.²¹
- 6 Hermopolis Magna (Tuna el-Gebel), East sector. Temple 12. Either a funerary temple or a cult temple, possibly an Iseion. Prostyle tetrastyle, with a side door in the cella. Unknown order. 9 x 5 meter.²² There supposedly are more Greek style buildings in the same necropolis.²³
- 7 Philae. Temple of Augustus. Dedicated 13/12 B.C. Prostyle tetrastyle. Corinthian-Doric. Increased central intercolumnation. Low podium. 16.8 x 10 meter.²⁴
- 8 Karanis, in front of the Neronic south temple. Kiosk. Peripteral with 4 by 7 columns. Ionic. Podium. 10.2 x 13.5 meter.²⁵
- 9 Akoris. Sarapeion. Tetrastyle propylon. Podium. 7 x 7 meter.²⁶
- 10 Karnak. Possibly temple of the Imperial cult. Prostyle tetrastyle. Increased central intercolumnation. Podium 8.6 x 14 meter.²⁷
- 11 Memphis. On the *dromos* leading up to the Osiris-Apis temple of Nectanebo I. Supposedly of Ptolemaic date. Distyle *in antis*. Corinthian. 14 x 8 meter.²⁸

²⁰ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1799.

²¹ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1793.

²² S. Gabra – P. Perdrizet – E. Drioton – W.G. Waddell, *Rapport sur les fouilles d'Hermopolis Ouest (Touna el-Gebel)* (Cairo 1941), 66: possibly “édifice de culte”. See pl. 2.2, and S. Gabra – E. Drioton, *Peintures à fresques et scènes peintes à Hermopolis-Ouest* (Cairo 1954), 8, for the 1934 excavations. S. Gabra, ‘Fouilles de l’Université “Fouad el Awal” à Touna El Gebel (Hermopolis Ouest)’, *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte* 39 (1939), 483-496, speaks of ‘imperial period’, Adriani 1940, op.cit. (n.5) states that it is older than Ras el-Soda. Arnold 1999, op.cit. (n.2), 156-157, mentions Tuna el-Gebel under Ptolemy I, but his text speaks of “The Ptolemaic and Roman necropolis”.

²³ Gabra 1929, op.cit. (n.22), 484, speaks of “temples funéraires, en pierre calcaire du style grec de l’époque impériale.” His plate 77 shows a tetrastyle (some 7 x 4 m).

²⁴ L. Borchardt, ‘Der Augustustempel auf Philae’, *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 17 (1903), 73-90; Arnold 1999, op.cit. (n.2), 237.

²⁵ A.E.R. Boak (ed.), *Karanis. The temples, coin hoards, botanical and zoological reports, seasons 1924-31* (Ann Arbor 1933), 24, and the plan of layer E (structure T2A); Arnold 1999, op.cit. (n.2), 254.

²⁶ P. Grossmann, ‘Ein kaiserzeitliches Sarapis-Heiligtum in Akoris’, *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 37 (1981), 199-202.

²⁷ J. Lauffray, ‘Abords occidentaux du premier pylone de Karnal. Le dromos, la tribune et aménagements portuaires’, *Kēmi* 21 (1971), 77-144, 78, fig.2.

²⁸ Bailey 1990, op.cit. (n.13), 125, with references.

Eleven items might not seem very impressive, but as Bailey has stressed, there certainly were many more: there is Alexandria, of which so little is left; there is Antinoupolis, where around 1800 much classical architecture still survived, as attested in the fourth volume of the *Déscription de l'Égypte*, but now it is almost completely gone. Many temples are mentioned in papyrological sources which are now not to be traced.²⁹ So we should probably think of Egypt as rich in classical architecture, a lot of it small-scale. So our initial question needs some qualification: Ras el-Soda may stand out as something remarkable now, but in its own days this will have been rather different. There will have been quite a few classical style temples comparable to it. As one can see above, there are still some fairly close parallels to our temple. We have eight buildings with a front presenting four columns, five of these are raised on a podium, three or more are of the Ionic order, at least two have increased central intercolumnation.³⁰ Some architectural features link Ras el-Soda to other sanctuaries of Isis or with Isis as *sunnaïos*: the *banquette aux statues*, also seen at Luxor and Mons Porphyrites, and the side door, also found at Luxor, Mons Porphyrites, and Hermopolis, and which may be a unique feature of temples of Egyptian deities.³¹ So Ras el-Soda does not stand alone. It is no oddity. The other question, however, still remains: are Ras el-Soda, and buildings like it, Roman in the sense of being derived from Roman architectural examples? Where has the inspiration for temples of the kind represented by Ras el-Soda come from?

Temples for the Egyptian gods outside Egypt

We should have a look at buildings with a comparable function outside Egypt, that is temples for Isis or the Egyptian gods. I present another catalogue, and this one is very selective: from all possible candidates, I have

²⁹ Bailey 1990, op.cit. (n.13) (also non-religious architecture).

³⁰ On intercolumnation, see Golvin et al. 1981, op.cit. (n.17), 121; P. Gilbert, 'Un trait d'expressionnisme dans l'architecture de l'Égypte et de la Grèce: l'exagération de l'entrecolonnement central', *Chronique d'Égypte* 36 (1961), 225-268, describes increased central intercolumnation as a Greek phenomenon which was inspired by Egyptian examples, and which may have been reintroduced into Egypt from Greek examples. M. de Vos, 'Aegyptiaca Romana', *La Parola del Passato* 49 (1994), 130-159, 133, speaking of the Isis temple in Pompeii, stresses the "larghezza ed altezza maggiori dell'intercolumnio centrale". But it is a fairly common feature (see also below), certainly not restricted to Isis or other Egyptian deities.

³¹ On the side door, see Golvin et al. 1981, op.cit. (n.17), 122-123, 143-144, and on the podium, *ibid.*, 144.

picked out those temples that in their small size or some other feature are comparable to the temple at Ras el-Soda. There are certainly examples of very different buildings, but I am looking for architectural parallels.

- 1 Gortyn. Dedicated to Isis, Sarapis καὶ θεοῖς συννόοις. Possibly 1st century B.C., but reconstructed in the Imperial era. A simple *oikos*, consisting of a forecourt and a cella, with steps leading up into the cella, with some adjacent structures. 15 x 10 meter. Statues of Isis, Sarapis, Hermes and an unidentified female figure were found in front of a bench at the back of the cella.³²
- 2 Gortyn, Praetorium. Dated to the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Prostyle tetrastyle. Podium. May have been dedicated to the Egyptian gods.³³
- 3 Delos, Sarapeion C. Isis temple. 2nd century B.C. Distyle *in antis*. Doric. Increased central intercolumnation.³⁴
- 4 Athens, South slope of the Acropolis. Iseion. Built, or probably rebuilt, under Hadrian. Distyle *in antis*. Corinthian. 8.25 x 5.40 meter.³⁵
- 5 Dion. Iseion. 2nd century A.D. Prostyle tetrastyle. Ionic. 12 x 10 meter. Podium, under the cella only. Statue of Isis *in situ* in a neighbouring *naiskos* with *apsis*.³⁶
- 6 Thessaloniki. Possibly Iseion. Possibly 3rd century B.C., remodelled in Roman imperial times. The sanctuary contains several small rectangular buildings. A simple *oikos*, with an apsidal cella, is the largest. 11 x 8 meter.³⁷
- 7 Cyrene, Akropolis. Iseion. Hellenistic, rebuilt after A.D. 115-117. Distyle *in antis*. 11 x 6 meter.³⁸
- 8 Cyrene, Apollo precinct. Iseion. Hellenistic, rebuilt after A.D. 115-117. Distyle *in antis*. 7.5 x 5.3 meter.³⁹
- 9 Pompeii. Iseion (VIII,7,27-28). Possibly 2nd century B.C., remodelled in 63 A.D. Prostyle tetrastyle. Podium. Increased central inter-

³² Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1781. A. di Vita, 'A special water spout with a crocodile head and the temple (or temples?) of Egyptian deities in Gortys', in: A. Karetsou (ed.), ΚΡΗΤΗ-ΑΙΓΥΠΤΟΣ. Πολιτισμικοί δεσμοί τριών χιλιετιών. Μελετές (Athens 2000), 232-243.

³³ Di Vita 2000, op.cit. (n.33).

³⁴ P. Roussel, *Les cultes égyptiens à Délos du IIIe au Ier siècle av. J.C.* (Paris 1915-1916). F. Dunand, *Le culte d'Isis dans le bassin oriental de la Méditerranée*, vol. 2 (Leiden 1973), 87-89, pl.13.1.

³⁵ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1839. D. Plácido, 'El culto de Isis en Atenas durante el Imperio Romano', in R. Rubio (ed.), *Isis. Nuevas perspectivas* (Madrid 1996), 2-11 (non vidi).

³⁶ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1841. Cf. D. Pandermalis, *Dion. The archaeological site and the museum* (Athens 1997), 22-29.

³⁷ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1824.

³⁸ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1770-1772. S. Ensoli Vittozzi, 'Indagini sul culto di Iside a Cirene', *L'Africa Romana* 9 (1992), 167-250.

³⁹ Ibid.

columnation. The cella has a side door, and a bench at the back. 8 x 7 meter.⁴⁰

Here we have again two instances of increased intercolumnation, one of a side door, and two of the *banquette aux statues*. But even if this supports the identification of Ras el-Soda, still there are here no close parallels, certainly none as close as amongst the Egyptian material listed above. Dion, Pompeii, and possibly Gortyn, are the only tetrastyles, with a podium. Dion is special in having a staircase inside the *pronaos* and not in front of it, and Pompeii has several features which turn it into a rather unorthodox structure. We can safely conclude that there is no common design for sanctuaries of the Egyptian gods, emanating from some centre and used both inside and outside Egypt. So we still do not know what inspired the builder of Ras el-Soda.

A Hellenistic development?

Maybe we need not look far. Ras el-Soda is very close to Alexandria. We are hampered by our overall ignorance of Alexandrian temple architecture, and nothing forbids that Alexandria held examples of the same kind of architecture. But on the other hand Ras el-Soda is not stylistically close to anything we know of in Alexandria. Judith McKenzie has summarized, I think rightly so, that ‘classical architecture’ in Egypt comes in two variants: the first Alexandrian, a Ptolemaic tradition that was carried on into Coptic times, and had a quite distinctive, baroque look, and a general eastern Mediterranean variant, not specific to Egypt.⁴¹ Everything indicates that Ras el-Soda belongs with the second variant.

According to McKenzie “general eastern Mediterranean” is the style prevalent in the Roman empire in the East. But is that style *Roman*, in a stricter sense than occurring there and then in what happened to be Roman territory? Could not Ras el-Soda be the logical outcome of the development of the non-peripteral temple in the Hellenistic world outside Rome? In this discussion, I think the podium is the crucial element. It was the podium of Ras el-Soda that struck Boëthius and Ward-Perkins as ‘Roman’, and indeed the podium is seen as a distinguishing characteristic of the Roman temple. The *communis opinio* states that the Roman temple following Etruscan traditions consisted of a podium with stairs at one end, carrying a columnar

⁴⁰ Wild 1984, op.cit. (n.5), 1809.

⁴¹ J. McKenzie, ‘The architectural style of Roman and Byzantine Egypt’, in: D.M. Bailey (ed.), *Archaeological research in Roman Egypt* (Ann Arbor 1996), 128-142.

porch and a cella. Greek influence led to pseudo-peripteral and even peripteral variants.⁴² This specific Roman element then penetrated architectural practice outside Italy, trailing Roman political dominance.

If this is true, there should be no Hellenistic temples on a podium. This is a much debated question: let us restrict ourselves to temples comparable to Ras el-Soda. There certainly should be comparable temples: Hans Lauter stresses the Hellenistic preference for small size and frontality. Much copied by Romans was the early third-century pseudoperipteral Temple L at Epidauros.⁴³ But it is on a *krepis*, not a podium, and it is not prostyle either, and thus not like Ras el-Soda. However, there are also Hellenistic prostyle *naiskoi*, or *templa in antis*.⁴⁴ Lauter discusses, amongst others, the *naiskos* in the heart of the Apollo temple at Didyma (after 300 B.C.), and the ‘Statuenschrein’ of Artemis Laphria at Messene (1st half of the 2nd century B.C.).⁴⁵ Neither is on a podium. The same holds good for the small Ionic prostyle tetrastyle temple of Zeus Sosipolis in Magnesia on the Meander.⁴⁶ Thekla Schulz discusses two *prostyloi* at Corinth and two at Samos.⁴⁷ The Pantheon (temple G) and Hermes temple (temple D) at Corinth are both of Hellenistic origin, but were rebuilt during the early empire. They are on a *krepis*. The Pantheon was made to look like a podium temple, with stairs in front, but that happened in the 1st century A.D. Samian Prostýlos 1 (previously ‘Corinthian temple’), possibly early imperial, also has a *krepis*. Prostýlos 2 (previously temple E) is on a podium with a frontal stairs. But it is late imperial, possibly Antonine. Other *prostyloi* on a podium are to be found in Ephesos (Divus Julius), Antiocheia Pisidia (Augustus) and Alexandria Troas (Augustus and Roma? Divus Julius?).⁴⁸ Pre-Roman *prostyloi* on a

⁴² Represented by, for instance, T. Blagg, ‘Architecture’, in: M. Henig (ed.), *Handbook of Roman art. A survey of the visual arts of the Roman world* (Oxford 1983), 26-65, whose words I paraphrase here.

⁴³ H. Lauter, *Die Architektur des Hellenismus* (Darmstadt 1986), 180ff. Epidauros L: *ibid.*, 189-190, fig. 63.

⁴⁴ T. Schulz, *Die römischen Tempel im Heraion von Samos* (Bonn 2002), xv, rightly notes that these have been underresearched compared to *peripteroi* and *dipteroi*.

⁴⁵ Lauter 1986, *op.cit.* (n.43), 182-183, fig. 61b, 189ff., fig. 64.

⁴⁶ G. Gruben, *Die Tempel der Griechen* (München 1966), 365-366.

⁴⁷ Schulz 2002, *op.cit.* (n.44), 87-88, 165, clearly associating the podium with Roman practices: “eine Bauform, die in der römischen Kaiserzeit sowohl im Westen als auch im Osten üblich ist”.

⁴⁸ L. Vandeput, ‘Frühkaiserzeitliche Tempel in Pisidien’, in: C. Berns et al. (eds.), *Patris und Imperium. Kulturelle und politische Identität in den Städten der römischen Provinzen Kleinasien in der frühen Kaiserzeit. Kolloquium Köln, November 1998* (Leuven 2002), 205-215, with clear arguments for the podium temple as a reflection of Roman presence; K. Gorkay, ‘An early-imperial podium temple at Alexandria Troas’, *ibid.*, 217-232.

podium seem not to be there.⁴⁹ Nor *peripteroi* for that matter.⁵⁰ That is not to say that the podium is not used in Greek architecture: it is not used in Greek *temple* architecture.

Ferdinando Castagnoli has, to my mind, shown where the source of much confusion lies, by pointing out that “il podio ... uno degli elementi più caratteristici del tempio romano” is not a “piattaforma”.⁵¹ This distinction between platform and podium is rarely made, and thus Hellenistic platforms have, wrongly, been turned into podiums. Oddly enough, even though ‘podium temple’ seems to be used in a very specific sense, the words platform, podium, plinth, base etcetera, and their equivalents in other languages, are used interchangeably and with hardly any attempt to define the underlying concepts.⁵² I define a podium as a continuous raised substructure of some appreciable height, necessitating the presence of stairs or a ramp (commonly situated at one of the short ends only, in the case of a podium of rectangular shape), not primarily intended to even out the terrain (although it might do that as well), and not, or not much, bigger than the structure which it supports. Other substructures are the pedestal (a podium to which there is no access), the *krepis* (a stepped substructure), and the platform (primarily intended to even out the terrain and commonly bigger

⁴⁹ H. von Hesberg, *Formen privater Repräsentation in der Baukunst des 2. und 1. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.* (Köln 1994), 58-60, mentions some Hellenistic temples with a podium: the ‘Markttempel’ in Pergamon – but it is on very uneven terrain and besides the podium is a reconstruction by Schrammen; the two temples in the harbour sanctuary on Cos – these certainly look like podium temples, although documentation is very sparse; they are usually dated to the mid 2nd c. B.C. (by which time Cos is firmly within the Roman sphere of influence, it should be said); a *tholos* on Knidos – which is *sui generis* and the temple at Mamurt Kaleh – but that is on a *krepis* which rests on top of a low platform.

⁵⁰ Podium temples in Greek lands are usually peripteral, and those are also of Roman date: Corinth, Temple E, a Greek peristyle on a Roman podium (S.E. Freeman, ‘Temple E’, in: *Corinth 1.2: Architecture* [Cambridge, Mass. 1941], 166-236), the Traianeum at Pergamon (H. Stiller, *Das Traianeum, Altertümer von Pergamon* vol. 5.2 [Berlin 1895], pl. 31), and a large 1st-c. *pseudodipteros* at Sardis (C. Ratté – T.N. Howe – C. Foss, ‘An early imperial pseudodipteral temple at Sardis’, *American Journal of Archaeology* 90 [1986], 45-68).

⁵¹ F. Castagnoli, ‘Il tempio romano. Questioni di terminologia e di tipologia’, *Papers of the British School at Rome* 52 (1984), 3-20, 11.

⁵² R. Ginouvès et al., *Dictionnaire méthodique de l’architecture grecque et romaine*, vol. 2: *Éléments constructifs: supports, couvertures, aménagements intérieurs* (Paris 1992), 13-17, has all the elements, but does not offer a way to distinguish between a terrace for reasons primarily of construction and a podium. Dictionaries and encyclopedias, general and of art and architecture, are very uninformative. The exceptions are J.S. Curl, *A dictionary of architecture* (Oxford 1999), 507-508, s.v. podium: “in classical architecture it is essentially the platform on which stood a Roman temple”, and several Italian works of reference, such as the *Enciclopedia Italiana di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti* vol. 27 (Roma 1935), 581-582, s.v. podio: “il piedistallo su cui si elevano gli edifici, in particolare i templi, per assicurar loro una posizione dominante”, but they do not tell what would distinguish a podium from other substructures.

than the structure or structures which they support). Obviously, podia, *krepides* and pedestals can be found on top of platforms. All have to be distinguished from bases that are part of the structure itself: socles.⁵³

So we might say that Ras el-Soda is a Roman variant of a Hellenistic temple. But what does 'Roman' mean? Where do we find the closest parallels to our temple?

Italian derivation?

Is there a direct link to be established between Italian temple architecture and Ras el-Soda? Hardly. There are in Italy a few small temples which are comparable, such as Formia (2nd century B.C.) and Vastogirardi (1st century B.C.), but their dating and location make it doubtful that these could have been of any influence. Some prostyle or distyle *in antis* podium temples attesting Roman architectural borrowings in Sicily are also 2nd century, or early 1st century B.C. (Agrigento, Monte Iato, Monte Erice).⁵⁴ The Isis temple at Pompeii is too distant a relative. All in all, Italy seems to have had links with Alexandria, not so much with the whole of Egypt, and besides, the influences tend to flow towards Italy, or also towards Italy.⁵⁵ For the un-Alexandrian architecture of which Ras el-Soda is a representative, it seems we will have to look elsewhere.

Architectural parallels in the East

I have concentrated on the large number of small temples in Syria, Arabia and Iudaea, for reasons of space and because there we find interesting parallels to our temple – but that does not mean that there would be nothing relevant elsewhere.⁵⁶ A selective catalogue:⁵⁷

⁵³ Clearly explained in M. Vetter, *Der Sockel* (Strassburg 1910), who also contrasts podium and pedestal.

⁵⁴ R.J.A. Wilson, 'Roman architecture in a Greek world: the example of Sicily', in: Henig 1990, op.cit. (n.13), 67-90, 74-75.

⁵⁵ Alexandria influences architecture in the West and the East, but it is not purely one-way traffic: cf. Lauter (1986), op.cit. (n.43), 178: "vielfältigen Wechselbeziehungen". See above all R.A. Tybout, *Aedificiorum figurae. Untersuchungen zu den Architekturdarstellungen des frühen zweiten Stils* (Amsterdam 1989). He argues persuasively for a hellenistic *koine* (333). He rejects the idea of a specific Alexandrian architecture (328-329), but accepting a *koine* need not imply the negation of local idiosyncracies.

⁵⁶ E.g. S. Cormack, 'Funerary monuments and mortuary practice in Roman Asia Minor', in: S.E. Alcock (ed.), *The early Roman empire in the East* (Oxford 1997), 137-156, 153: "Tombs on tall podia

*Limestone Massif, between Antiocheia and Beroia:*⁵⁸

- 1 Jebel Sheikh Barakat⁵⁹ (Mons Koruphaïos, Koryphe Oros). Temple of Zeus Madbachos and Salamanes. 1st century A.D. Prostyle tetrastyle. Corinthian. Podium. 20 x 11 meter.
- 2 Burg Baqirha. Temple of Zeus Bomos. Dedicated A.D. 162/163. Prostyle tetrastyle. Corinthian. Podium. 18 x 9 meter.
- 3 Srir. Temple of Zeus Tourbarachos. A *naos* (7 x 6 meter), dated to A.D. 116, to which was added in 150 a *pronaos* (5 x 8.80 meter – wider than the *naos*). Distyle *in antis*. Corinthian. Low podium.

Jebel Ansariyeh (Bargyllos Mons), between the valley of the Orontes and the coast:

- 4 Hosn Soleiman. Distyle *in antis*. Probably Ionic. Increased central intercolumnation. No podium. 15.5 x 7 meter.⁶⁰
- 5 Hosn Soleiman. Temple of Zeus Baitokaikes. Possibly late 2nd century A.D. Pseudoperipteral with tetrastyle *pronaos*. Increased central intercolumnation. Ionic. Podium. 24 x 13.5 meter.⁶¹

Libanus Mons, Northern part:

- 6 Husn Sfiri. Temple B ('Antentempel'). Prostyle distyle. Ionic. Increased central intercolumnation. No podium, but with a flight of stairs in front because of the sloping site. Secondary door. 20 x 9 meter.⁶²

with frontal steps and prostyle columns constructed throughout the provinces of Asia Minor ... reveal the penetration of the western Roman podium temple form as a model for funerary architecture."

⁵⁷ In addition to the titles to be quoted below, see the general overview of Nabatean and Syrian temples, in Th.A. Busink, *Der Tempel von Jerusalem von Salomo bis Herodes. Eine archäologisch-historische Studie unter Berücksichtigung des westsemitischen Tempelbaus*, vol. 2 (Leiden 1980), 1252-1358.

⁵⁸ For the three following temples, see H.C. Butler, *Publications of the Princeton University archaeological expedition to Syria in 1904-1905, Division 2: Ancient architecture in Syria* (Leiden 1907-1908), B 153; O. Callot – J. Marcillet-Jaubert, 'Hauts-lieux de Syrie du Nord', in: G. Roux (ed.), *Temples et sanctuaires* (Lyon 1984), 187-192-198; M. Gawlikowski, 'Les temples dans la Syrie à l'époque hellénistique et romaine', in: J.-M. Dentzer – W. Orthmann (eds.), *Archéologie et histoire de la Syrie 2: La Syrie de l'époque achéménide à l'avènement de l'Islam* (Saarbrücken 1989), 323-346, 335-336; G. Tchalenko, *Villages antiques de la Syrie du Nord. Le massif du Bélus à l'époque romaine*, vol. 1 (Paris 1953), 14 (hauts-lieux), and P.-L. Gatier, 'Villages et sanctuaires en Antiochène autour de Qalaat Kalota', *Topoi* 7 (1997), 751-775 (non vidi).

⁵⁹ The transliteration of the Arabian names poses a problem; I have followed the *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman world* (Princeton 2000).

⁶⁰ D. Krencker – W. Zschietzschmann, *Römische Tempel in Syrien* (Berlin 1938), 97-99.

⁶¹ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.6), 79-87; Gawlikowski 1997, op. cit. (n.58), 336-337.

⁶² Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.61), 24-28.

- 7 Qasr Naous. Prostyle tetrastyle. Corinthian. Podium. 25.8 x 12.5 meter.⁶³
- 8 Qasr Naous. Prostyle tetrastyle. Corinthian. Podium. Secondary door. 26 x 14 meter.
- 9 Bziza. Prostyle tetrastyle. Ionic. No podium. Secondary door. 14 x 8.5 meter.⁶⁴
- 10 Yanuh. Distyle *in antis*. Podium. Two side doors? 14.3 x 9 meter.⁶⁵
- 11 Qasr el-Banat (Shliffa). Distyle *in antis*. Increased central intercolumnation. "Dorisierend". No podium. 14 x 7.5 meter.⁶⁶

Libanus Mons, Southern part:

- 12 Hosn Niha. Temple D ('Antentempel'). Distyle *in antis*. Ionic order. Increased central intercolumnation. No podium, but a flight of stairs in front because of the sloping site. 9.5 x 9.5 meter.⁶⁷
- 13 Hosn Niha. Temple A ('Grosser Tempel'). Prostyle tetrastyle. Increased central intercolumnation. Corinthian. Podium. Secondary door. 29 x 16 meter.⁶⁸
- 14 Qasr Neba (Tsarnaba). Prostyle tetrastyle. Possibly Corinthian. Podium. Secondary door. 31.5 x 14 meter.⁶⁹
- 15 Nihata (Niha). Temple B. Prostyle tetrastyle. Possibly Corinthian. Increased central intercolumnation. No podium, with a flight of stairs in front because of the sloping site (reconstructed). 27.5 x 12 meter.⁷⁰

Hermon:

- 16 Bekka. Prostyle tetrastyle. Unknown order. Podium. Secondary door (reconstructed). 20.5 x 13 meter.⁷¹
- 17 Ain Hersha. Distyle *in antis*. Increased central intercolumnation. Ionic. Podium or platform. 13 x 7.5 meter.⁷²
- 18 Rahleh. Distyle *in antis*, with a unique apsidal cella. Ionic. Increased central intercolumnation. Podium. 18 x 10 meter.⁷³

⁶³ For the two temples at Qasr Naous: Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60) 8-19; G. Taylor, *The Roman temples of Lebanon* (Beirut 1967), fig. 109 (Eastern temple).

⁶⁴ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60), 4-7; Taylor 1967, op.cit. (n.63), figs. 2, 105-106.

⁶⁵ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60) 35-37; Taylor 1967, op.cit. (n.63), figs. 99-100. According to Taylor, this temple was prostyle.

⁶⁶ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60), 152-155.

⁶⁷ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60), 133-134; Taylor 1967, op.cit. (n. 63), fig. 15.

⁶⁸ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60), 123-131; Taylor 1967, op.cit. (n.63), figs. 12-13.

⁶⁹ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60), 148-151; Taylor 1967, op.cit. (n.63), figs. 17-18.

⁷⁰ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60), 116-117; Taylor 1967, op.cit. (n.63), fig. 10.

⁷¹ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60) 177; Taylor 1967, op.cit. (n.63), figs. 63-64.

⁷² Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60), 245-255; Taylor 1967, op.cit. (n.63), figs. 1, 57-58.

⁷³ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60), 226-228.

Batanaia:

- 19 Sanamein (Aere). Dedicated 191. Probably prostyle tetrastyle. Increased central intercolumnation. Podium. 11.7 x 17.5 meter.⁷⁴

Hauran (Auranitis):

- 20 el-Qanawat (Kanatha/Canatha/Gabinia/Septimia). Distyle *in antis* with prostyle tetrastyle *pronaos*. Increased central intercolumnation. Podium. 25.5 x 12 meter.⁷⁵
- 21 Si (Seia). Temple 3 (South Temple) of the sanctuary of Ba'alshamin. Late 1st century A.D. Prostyle tetrastyle. Podium. 15 x 8.5 meter.⁷⁶

The monuments listed above all have classical exteriors, not only in details, but also in general aspect.⁷⁷ I explicitly say “exteriors”, because many of these buildings have interior arrangements that are not classical at all and obviously derive from local traditions.⁷⁸ These are not purely Roman temples – whatever that elusive building, the purely Roman temple, would look like. They are Syrian temples in the shape of Roman variants of Hellenistic buildings. Thirteen out of twenty-one temples listed above are situated on a podium, thirteen are prostyle tetrastyle, seven or more are of the Ionic order, at least eleven have increased central intercolumnation. Some six temples have secondary doors (and so have other temples not discussed here), situated in the *pronaos* to the right, to the left or on either side of the main door. The two doors in the side walls at Yanuh look like doors, but

⁷⁴ Butler 1907-1908, op.cit. (n.58), A 316-320; Gawlikowski 1997, op.cit. (n.58), 331-333.

⁷⁵ Butler 1907-1908, op.cit. (n.58), A 347-350; Gawlikowski 1997, op.cit. (n.58), 331-332.

⁷⁶ Butler 1907-1908, op.cit. (n.58), A 368 and map opposite A 365; Boëthius – Ward-Perkins 1970, op.cit. (n.4), 440; K.S. Freyberger, *Die frühkaiserzeitlichen Heiligtümer der Karawanenstationen im hellenisierten Osten. Zeugnisse eines kulturellen Konflikts im Spannungsfeld zweier politischer Formationen* (Mainz 1998), 50-51. Freyberger's note 672 will cause confusion referring as it does to Butler's plan of the Dusares (Dushara) temple, not of Temple 3.

⁷⁷ Several authors underline this: Callot – Marcillet-Jaubert 1984, op.cit. (n.58), 196, on Burg Baqirha: “extrêmement classique”; Gawlikowski 1997, op.cit. (n.58) 342, on Baalshamin in Palmyra: “d'aspect très romain”; R. Gogräfe, ‘The temple of Seriane-Esriye’, *Annales archéologiques arabes syriennes* 42 (1996), 179-186: “pronounced Roman feature”; A. Schmidt-Colinet – K. Al-As'ad – C. Mütting-Zimmer, *Das Tempelgrab Nr. 36 in Palmyra. Studien zur palmyrenischen Grabarchitektur und ihrer Ausstattung* (Mainz 1992), 38: “grundsätzlich in römischer Tradition”.

⁷⁸ Freyberger 1998, op.cit. (n.76), 73, on Jebel Sheikh Barakat: “Fassade italischer Tempel”; 50-51, on Temple 3 at Si: “gleicht aber nur in seiner äusseren Form einem spätrepublikanischen Podiumstempel”. W. Ball, *Rome in the East* (London 2000), obsessively repeats how un-classical the architecture of the East actually was. I feel that establishing what it generally looked like, namely classical, is a legitimate concern as well.

might be windows.⁷⁹ Anyhow, several Syrian temples have a second entrance into the cella. Not one of these temples is as small as Ras el-Soda, but they are small enough.

This does not imply that there is necessarily any direct link between Syria and Ras el-Soda.⁸⁰ It implies that Ras el-Soda as an architectural phenomenon is not specifically Egyptian, is not an example of immediate Roman influence either, but is part of an eastern Mediterranean classical religious architecture for local consumption that elaborates on the example of the small Hellenistic temple, for instance by raising it up on a Roman style podium.

Conclusions: the impact of Empire

Now that we have tried to locate Ras el Soda in a particular architectural tradition, maybe this small Egyptian temple can suggest something about the ways along which ‘the impact of Empire’ travelled. It is still a very common tendency to look at Rome, Italy, ‘the Romans’ as the source and the instruments of ‘romanization’ – whatever is meant by this word that has been thoroughly deconstructed during the past decade. Our view of the interaction between Roman (different kinds of Roman) and non-Roman (many different kinds of that too) has become very sophisticated, multi-layered, context-dependent. But deconstructed or not, there still is much talk of models that derive from the centre, and are being copied or adapted in the periphery. So-called Roman influence is too easily thought to emanate from Rome or from Roman heartlands. That is what happens when one reads Boëthius and Ward-Perkins on “the hints of Rome” in the podium of Ras el-Soda. But we have to add more terms to the equation: non-Romans interact with other non-Romans within the context of a Roman empire.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Krencker – Zschietzschmann 1938, op.cit. (n.60), 36, argue that windows occur in Syrian temples, side doors never. And although the Yanuh apertures certainly look like doors, there are (now) no stairs. One or two small secondary doorways in the *pronaos* are quite common (also at bigger temples not mentioned here), and give onto staircases, and/or give access to the cella.

⁸⁰ Direct links need not be excluded, considering the intimate ties between Egypt and Syria. J. Dentzer-Feydy, ‘Les chapiteaux ioniques de Syrie méridionale’, *Syria* 67 (1990), 143-181, offers excellent material for a comparison of architectural detail. But the capitals of the Ras el-Soda temple are not documented in the literature, and this is a field where a historian should not rush in.

⁸¹ H. Dodge, ‘The architectural impact of Rome in the East’, in: Henig 1990, op. cit. (n.13), 108-120, 118: “In the study of imperial building construction all roads do not necessarily lead *from* Rome”. Cf. also V.M. Strocka, ‘Wechselwirkungen der stadtrömischen und kleinasiatischen Architektur unter Trajan und Hadrian’, *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Istanbul* 38 (1988), 291-307.

Let restrict ourselves to architecture, to a small temple, commissioned locally. It has got to be something classical. Ras el-Soda gets planned, approved and built. Whatever its exact Roman antecedents, unknown to the Egyptian audience, this is not 'a Roman temple'. Looking at it from a second-century Egyptian perspective, Roman architecture might be above all Pharaonic Egyptian, because the most prestigious, imperial projects use this idiom. Ras el-Soda would be considered a temple in a typically Eastern, in, why not, Syrian style, a building representative of the 'modern' architecture of the Greek-speaking world of the Eastern Mediterranean. This would make what we consider to be Egyptian Roman, and what we consider Roman 'Eastern'. In fact, the impact of empire is much better illustrated by Romans building Egyptian temples and by a Syrian temple representing Roman architecture in Egypt, than by some temple imported lock, stock and barrel from the capital of the Empire to the mouths of the Nile.

Leiden, December, 2004.

OPFERRITUAL UND OPFERDARSTELLUNG IM RÖMISCHEN
KLEINASIEN –
EIN TESTFALL FÜR DAS ZENTRUM-PERIPHERIE-MODELL*

GÜNTHER SCHÖRNER

Das Begriffspaar Zentrum – Peripherie, so wie es hier verstanden ist, verweist ursprünglich auf das ‘world system’ von I. Wallerstein.¹ Obwohl als Erklärungsmodell für die frühkapitalistische Welt des 16. Jh.s entwickelt, wird es schon seit geraumer Zeit auch von Altertumswissenschaftlern jeglicher Fachrichtung verwendet, freilich in unterschiedlicher Genauigkeit der Rezeption.² Ein bevorzugtes Anwendungsgebiet dieses ‘Weltsystems’ im Bereich der Antike ist das *Imperium Romanum*, wobei das Begriffspaar ‘Zentrum’ und ‘Peripherie’ benutzt wird, um die Beziehung zwischen Rom und seinen Provinzen besser strukturieren zu können.³ Auch bei dieser eher allgemeinen Rezeption hat jedoch die Tatsache Bestand, dass durch die Begriffe ‘Zentrum’ und ‘Peripherie’ immer ein Herrschafts- bzw. Abhängigkeitsverhältnis oder zumindest ein kulturelles Gefälle ausdrücken.⁴ ‘Zentrum’ und ‘Peripherie’ sollen hier ebenso in diesem eher allgemeinen Sinn gehandhabt werden. Dabei wird an einem signifikanten Beispiel –

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¹ I. Wallerstein, *The Modern World System I. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (San Diego – New York – Boston 1974); dt.: I. Wallerstein, *Das moderne Weltsystem 1: Die Anfänge kapitalistischer Landwirtschaft und die europäische Weltökonomie im 16. Jahrhundert* (Wien 2004).

² M. Rowlands – K. Kristiansen (Hrsgg.), *Centre and Periphery in the Ancient World* (Cambridge 1987), 1-11; T. Champion, ‘Introduction’ in: T. Champion (Hrsg.), *Centre and Periphery. Comparative Studies in Archaeology* (London – New York 1989), 1-21; J. Rowlands, ‘Centre and Periphery. A Review of a Concept’ in: K. Kristiansen – M. Rowlands (Hrsgg.), *Social Transformations in Archaeology. Global and Local Perspectives* (London – New York 1998), 219-242; C. Kümmel, *Frühe Weltsysteme. Zentrum und Peripherie-Modelle in der Archäologie* (Rahden/Westfalen 2001), 5-15 (mit Bibl.).

³ G. Woolf, ‘World-Systems Analysis and the Roman Empire’, *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 3 (1990), 44-58; Beispiele bei Kümmel 2001, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 81-85; die religiösen Implikationen bei A. Bendlin, ‘Peripheral Centres – central Peripheries: Religious Communication in the Roman Empire’, in: H. Cancik – J. Rüpke (Hrsgg.), *Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion* (Tübingen 1997), 38-41.

⁴ Z.B. Champion 1989, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 13-15; Rowlands 1998, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 227-234.

Opferritualen und Opferdarstellungen in Kleinasien – geprüft, ob die Anwendung dieser Termini samt den damit verbundenen Implikationen gerechtfertigt ist bzw. einen heuristischen Gewinn nach sich zieht.

Das Verhältnis von Rom und Kleinasien ist anscheinend gefestigt und eindeutig: Es gibt genügend authentische antike Zeugnisse, die auch aus kleinasiatischer Sicht Rom als Zentrum ansprechen.⁵ Von Strabon stammt das Bild des Imperiums mit Rom als Mittelpunkt und den Provinzen als konzentrischen Kreisen. Aelius Aristides setzt das Imperium Romanum mit einer Polis gleich und parallelisiert Rom mit dem städtischen Zentrum, der *Asty*, und die Provinzen mit der *Chora*, dem Umland.⁶ Es steht also zu erwarten, dass sowohl in religiös-kultischer als auch in künstlerisch-ikonographischer Hinsicht eindeutig ein Zentrum-Peripherie-Verhältnis konstituiert wird. Religiöse Mittel wären zum einen Götter, Rituale, religiöse Spezialisten, Kalender usw., die aus Rom übernommen werden. Als künstlerische Mittel sind solche Phänomene zu nennen, die auf ein eindeutiges Verhältnis von Zentrum und Peripherie hinweisen, wie sie im Italien der Renaissance untersucht wurden.⁷ In diesem Kontext wären vor allem zwei Vorgehensweisen zu erwarten:

1.) Die erzwungene Übernahme stilistischer und ikonographischer Modelle des Zentrums in der Peripherie; ergänzt durch:

2.) Ausarbeitung unterschiedlicher Codes im Zentrum, von denen die einen für das Zentrum, die anderen für die Peripherie gültig sind.

Im Folgenden soll anhand der Opferikonographie im römischen Kleinasien untersucht werden, ob solche Mechanismen zur bewussten Konstituierung einer Zentrum-Peripherie-Relation beobachtet werden können.

Das beste Beispiel für die Übernahme einer stadtrömischen Opferdarstellung bietet ein ‚Medaillon‘ aus der phrygischen Stadt Laodikeia am

⁵ Fundamental: B. Forte, *Rome and the Romans as the Greeks Saw them* (Rom 1972); A. Erskine, ‘Rome in the Greek World: The Significance of a Name’, in: A. Powell (Hrsg.), *The Greek World* (London – New York 1995), 368-383; vgl. auch Bendlin 1997, a.a.O. (Anm.3), 34-68, vor allem 36-38.

⁶ Strabon, *Geographika* 17.3.24; Aristides, *Orationes* 26.61 Keil.

⁷ Zusammenfassend: E. Castelnovo – C. Ginzburg, ‘Zentrum und Peripherie’, in: L. Bellosi et. al. (Hrsg.), *Italienische Kunst. Eine neue Sicht auf ihre Geschichte* (München 1987), 21-91, spez. 75-76 (mit weiterer Lit.). Rom als Kunstzentrum des Imperium: H. Wrede, ‘Die Funktion der Hauptstadt in der Kunst des Prinzipats’, in: H. von Hesberg (Hrsg.), *Was ist eigentlich Provinz? Zur Beschreibung eines Bewußtseins* (Köln 1995), 33-55; H. von Hesberg, ‘Die Bildersprache der Provinz – Konflikte und Harmonisierungen zwischen semantischen Systemen’, in: H. von Hesberg (Hrsg.), *Was ist eigentlich Provinz? Zur Beschreibung eines Bewußtseins* (Köln 1995), 57-72, vor allem 65-69.

Lykos in der Provinz *Asia*.⁸ Anlass für die Prägung war der Feldzug Caracallas gegen die Parther, der bei seiner Reise durch Kleinasien im Jahr 214 wahrscheinlich auch Laodikeia besuchte.⁹ Die Münze zeigt ein Opfer, das der Kaiser in Anwesenheit von Soldaten und Kultpersonal vor einem Tempel vollzieht. Das ganze Bildschema geht auf stadtrömische Münzdarstellungen zurück: Die engste Parallele zum Stück aus Laodikeia ist ein Medaillon aus der Regierungszeit des Kaisers Commodus, das im Jahr 185 n.Chr. entstand.¹⁰ Man erkennt am linken Bildrand die Stiertötungsgruppe mit *popa*, der mit einem Beil ausholt und das Opfertier mit gesenktem Kopf. Es folgen ein Liktör mit *fascies*, ein Flötenspieler (*tibicen*) und ein kleiner Camillus. Der Kaiser in Toga opfert *capite velato* an einem Dreifuß, umgeben von weiteren Assistenzfiguren bzw. Togati. Den Hintergrund bildet die Front des Iuppiter-Tempels auf dem Kapitol.¹¹

Aufgrund der Datierungen muss die Münze aus Laodikeia die stadtrömische kopiert haben. Zwischen den beiden Medaillons lassen sich jedoch auch signifikante Unterschiede feststellen. So wird aus dem Liktoren mit Rutenbündel ein *vexillum*-Träger. Der Kaiser opfert nicht mehr *capite velato*, sondern in griechischer Manier mit unbedecktem Kopf. Auch die Architektur im Hintergrund erfährt eine Änderung: Die Front des sechssäuligen Iuppiter Capitolinus-Tempels mit reichem Skulpturenschmuck wird durch die Fassade eines oktostylen ionischen Tempels ersetzt, der zwar keine Skulpturen, dafür aber drei Fenster im Giebel zeigt. Diese Modifikationen können nur durch die gewollte Anpassung des stadtrömischen Vorbildes an das neue kleinasiatische Umfeld erklärt werden. Der deutliche Konnex mit der Stadt Rom, der durch den Liktör und die Architekturangabe gegeben war, wurde

⁸ M.J. Price – B. Trell, *Coins and their Cities. Architecture on the Ancient Coins of Greece, Rome, and Palestine* (London 1977), 129 Abb. 126; F. Rebuffat, *Les enseignes d'Asie Mineure des origines à Sévère Alexandre*, 31. Suppl. Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique (Paris 1997), 305 Taf. 27, 1; S. Karwiese, 'Artemis Ephesia Sebasteia. Ein Entzifferungsbeitrag', in: P. Scherrer – H. Taeuber – H. Thür (Hrsg.), *Steine und Wege. Festschrift für Dieter Knibbe zum 65. Geburtstag* (Wien 1999), 65 Abb. 17; 75.

⁹ Zur Reisetätigkeit Caracallas: K. Harl, *Civic Coins and Civic Politics in the Roman East, A.D. 180 - 275* (Berkeley 1987), 55; A. Johnston, 'Caracalla's Path: The Numismatic Evidence', *Historia* 32 (1983), 58-76, vor allem 70 Nr. 43; H. Halfmann, *Itinera principum* (Stuttgart 1986), 229f.

¹⁰ F. Gnechchi, *I medaglioni Romani* (Mailand 1912), 34 Nr. 60; 70 Nr. 166. 167; I. Scott Ryberg, *Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art, Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 22 (Rom 1955), 180f. Abb. 108.

¹¹ Z.B. H. KÜthmann – B. Overbeck, *Bauten Roms auf Münzen und Medaillen* (München 1973), 48-50 Nr. 88-95.

gelöst. Der durchfensterte Giebel ist dagegen eine Eigenart kleinasiatischer Tempel, z. B. der Tempel der Artemis in Ephesos und in Magnesia.¹²

Eindeutig an einheimische Gepflogenheiten angepasst ist auch die Darstellung des Kaisers selbst, da er nicht mehr in westlich-römischer Manier *capite velato* opfert, sondern in östlicher Art mit unverhülltem Kopf.¹³ Die Münze liefert keinen Hinweis, dass im Ritual stadtrömische Einflüsse zu greifen sind. Im Gegenteil: Anscheinend folgt der Kaiser den typischen Kultformen des Landes, zumindest ist er in dieser Art wiedergegeben. Der sicher als Vorbild dienende stadtrömische Darstellungstypus wurde entscheidend umgeformt. Ausschlaggebend sowohl für die Adaption als auch für die Umformung waren die lokalen Eliten der Stadt.¹⁴ Es gibt keine Hinweise für eine zentral angeordnete, somit erzwungene Übernahme des ikonographischen Modells aus dem Zentrum. Die Umformung weist zudem auf ein Maß an Eigenständigkeit hin, das nicht typisch für 'Peripherie' ist. Freilich bleibt es bemerkenswert, dass die Laodikeier sich veranlasst fühlten, wegen des Kaiserbesuches eine deutliche Anleihe an stadtrömisch-westlicher Ikonographie zu nehmen.

Ein deutlich anderes Verhältnis zwischen Rom und Kleinasien ist in einer anderen Opferdarstellung belegt. Wohl zu einer Kleinarchitektur, evtl. einem Altar, gehörte ein Block mit Reliefdarstellung aus Ilion, jetzt im Museum von Çanakkale.¹⁵ Laut Inschrift handelt es sich um die Weihung des *curator* Pontius Auctus an den Flussgott Skamander, deren praktische

¹² Zu Fenstern bzw. Türen in den Giebeln kleinasiatischer Tempel: P. Hommel, 'Giebel und Himmel', *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Istanbul* 7 (1957), 29-55. Zu den Tempeln von Ephesos und Magnesia am Mäander: O. Bingöl, 'Epiphanie an den Artemistempeln von Ephesos und Magnesia am Mäander', in: F. Krininger et. al. (Hrsgg.), *100 Jahre österreichische Forschungen in Ephesos: Akten des Symposions Wien 1995* (Wien 1999), 233-240; R. Fleischer, 'Die Amazonen und das Asyl des Artemisions von Ephesos', *Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts* 117 (2002), 200-208. Eine Liste aller bekannten Tempel mit Giebeltüren: K. Rheidt, 'Ländlicher Kult und städtische Siedlung: Aizanoi in Phrygien', in: E.-L. Schwandner (Hrsg.), *Stadt und Umland. Diskussionen zur archäologischen Bauforschung* 7 (Mainz 1999), 244-245 mit Anm. 39.

¹³ Unterscheidung bereits bei antiken Autoren: Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 3.6.17; Servius, *Scholia zu Vergil, Aeneis* 3.407; 8.288.

¹⁴ 'Greek Imperials' als Mittel der städtischen Repräsentation: Harl 1987, a.a.O. (Anm.9), 23-33; J. Nollé, 'Zur neueren Forschungsgeschichte der kaiserzeitlichen Stadtprägungen Kleinasien. Der schwierige Umgang mit einer historischen Quelle', in: *Internationales Kolloquium zur kaiserzeitlichen Münzprägung Kleinasien München 1994* (Mailand 1997), 11-36; E. Stephan, *Honoratioren, Griechen, Polisbürger. Kollektive Identitäten innerhalb der Oberschicht des kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien* (Göttingen 2002), 116-120 (mit weiterer Lit.).

¹⁵ M. Ricl, *The Inscriptions of Alexandria Troas* (Bonn 1997), 102-103 Nr. 77; das Relief wurde jedoch nicht in Alexandria Troas gefunden, wie von Ricl angegeben, sondern stammt aus Ilion/Troia (pers. Auskunft von Prof. Dr. E. Schwertheim, Münster).

Ausführung Sextus Pontius Seneca übernommen hatte. Eine Datierung des Monumentes ist problematisch, am wahrscheinlichsten erscheint ein Ansatz im 2. Jh. n. Chr.¹⁶ Das Relief zeigt drei unterschiedliche Bildelemente: eine Wagenfahrt, einen Reiter und ein Opfer an einen auf einer Kline gelagerten Mann. Die Hauptperson, laut Inschrift der Flussgott Skamander, ist also dreimal als jugendlicher Heros dargestellt. Er ist es auch, dem im Rahmen des Heroenmahles ein Opfer dargebracht wird.¹⁷ Zwei Kinder treiben von rechts zwei kleinere Opfertiere heran, anscheinend ein Schaf und ein Schwein. Ein Mann, sicher der Stifter Pontius Auctus, vollzieht an einem Rechteckaltar ein Weihrauchopfer. In der linken Hand hält er eine *acerra*, in der rechten ein *volumen*. Bekleidet ist er mit einer Toga, die zur *velatio capitis* drapiert ist. Das Relief zeigt also einen römischen Bürger beim Opfer an eine Lokalgottheit, das dem westlich-stadtrömischen Opferritual entsprechend mit bedecktem Kopf durchgeführt wird. Allein dieses Element folgt nicht östlicher Darstellungstradition. Insgesamt zeigt das Relief nämlich eine eindeutig griechisch geprägte Szene. Dies gilt sowohl in religiöser Hinsicht für den Kulturempfänger als auch in künstlerischer Hinsicht für die Ikonographie und stilistische Umsetzung. Um das Monument korrekt einzuordnen, ist das konkrete Umfeld zu berücksichtigen: Der Auftraggeber war *curator*, ein höherer römischer Beamter.¹⁸ Das Relief richtet sich an Römer bzw. deutlich romanisierte Provinziale, wie die lateinische Motivinschrift zeigt. Ilion hatte einen besonderen Stellenwert für Rom, das Ambiente war also wohl stärker romanisiert als in anderen kleinasiatischen Städten vergleichbarer Größe¹⁹.

In dieser Hinsicht ist das Relief nicht nur ein Zeugnis für römische Ritualformen in einer kleinasiatischen Stadt, sondern auch ein Beweis für die Hellenisierung der persönlichen Kulturausübung eines römischen Bürgers.

Grundsätzlich ist jedoch festzustellen, dass die archäologisch-ikonographische Evidenz die gezielte forcierte Verbreitung stadtrömischer Rituale in Kleinasien nicht belegen kann. Von einer erzwungenen Übernahme westlicher Bildschemata kann jedenfalls nicht die Rede sein. Die

¹⁶ Riel 1997, a.a.O. (Anm.15), 103.

¹⁷ E. Pfuhl – H. Möbius, *Die ostgriechischen Grabreliefs II* (Mainz 1979), 353-377, z. B. 375 Nr. 1521.

¹⁸ *Curator*: G.P. Burton, 'The Curator Rei Publicae: Towards a Reappraisal', *Chiron* 9 (1979), 465-487; G. Camodeca, 'Ricerche sui curatores rei publicae', in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt II* 13 (Berlin – New York 1980), 453-534 (mit Bibl.).

¹⁹ Das römische Ilion als 'Erinnerungsort': D. Hertel, *Die Mauern von Troia. Mythos und Geschichte im antiken Ilion* (München 2003), 274-292.

Adaption erfolgt nur in Ausnahmefällen. Werden ikonographische Modelle mehr oder minder geschlossen übernommen, so werden sie gleichzeitig in bezeichnender Weise umgeformt. Zur expliziten Konstituierung einer Zentrum-Peripherie-Relation wird die Kultikonographie nicht genutzt. Auf der anderen Seite werden stadtrömische Rituale und Ritualikonographie insofern funktionalisiert, als die Rituale auf privater Ebene auch im griechischen Umfeld die eigene *romanitas* unterstreichen bzw. auf offizieller Ebene die Ritualikonographie für ein herausragendes Ereignis wie einen Kaiserbesuch die direkte Verbundenheit mit dem Zentrum herausstreicht, auch wenn in der praktischen Durchführung Differenzen beibehalten werden.

Zur Überprüfung dieser ersten vorläufigen Eindrücke ist ein Blick auf den Kaiserkult zu werfen, der als das bevorzugte Mittel zur Konstituierung einer Zentrum-Peripherie-Relation gilt.²⁰ Darstellungen von Opfern, die eindeutig auf den Kaiserkult bezogen werden können, sind in Kleinasien jedoch grundsätzlich selten – an sich ein interessantes Phänomen. Aufwändige Reliefs, die das Ritual in allen Einzelheiten schildern, gibt es nicht, so dass auf kleinformatige numismatische Zeugnisse zurückgegriffen werden muss. Zwei Lokalprägungen aus Pergamon mit der Darstellung eines Opfers an den Kaiser stammen aus severischer Zeit, einmal ist Septimius Severus und Iulia Domna auf der Vorderseite, bei der zweiten Münze Caracalla.²¹ Die Komposition des Opfers ist bei beiden Münzbildern ähnlich: Im Zentrum wird ein festgebundener Zebustier von einem Opferdiener mit einer Doppelaxt niedergeschlagen. Daneben steht der Kaiser oder seine Statue als der Empfänger des Opfers. Bei beiden Münzen haben wir spezifisch kleinasiatische Ritualeigenheiten wie das Zebu und das Festbinden, aber auch die Doppelaxt kommt nur in Kleinasien vor. Stadtrömische Bildelemente sind dagegen nicht festzustellen. Ikonographisch ist ein Opfer für einen Kaiser nicht von einem Opfer für einen Gott zu unterscheiden, während eindeutig zwischen westlichen und östlichen Opferdarstellungen differiert werden kann.

Ikonographisch noch prägnanter zum Ausdruck gebracht wird die Ähnlichkeit von Ritual im Kaiserkult und herkömmlichem Götterkult durch pointiert verkürzte Darstellungen:

²⁰ Zum Kaiserkult in Kleinasien und seiner Ikonographie: S. Price, *Rituals and Power: The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1984).

²¹ Septimius Severus: H. von Fritze, *Die Münzen von Pergamon* (Berlin 1910), 76f. 93. 106 Taf. 8,15; Caracalla: von Fritze a.a.O., 72f. 106 Taf. 7,16.

Auf der Seitenwange des Altares vor dem Domitianstempel in Ephesos ist in Abbraviatur ein Opfer an den Kaiser wiedergegeben. Der Bezug ist aufgrund des Kontextes eindeutig. Dargestellt sind nur der brennende Altar und der festgebundene Opferstier.²² Trotz oder gerade wegen der Knappheit dieser Komposition ist die Besonderheit kleinasiatischer Opferbilder, das durch ein Seil an einem Ring fixierte Rind, besonders prägnant herausgestellt. Aus Rom sind ähnliche Bildfassungen nicht bekannt. Direkt vergleichbar sind dagegen andere kleinasiatische Denkmäler, z.B. eine Serie von Reliefs aus Antiocheia ad Pisidiam, die ebenfalls einen Altar und ein angebundenes Opfertier zeigen.²³ Geweiht sind diese Stelen alle dem Men Askaenos, also einer typisch kleinasiatischen Gottheit. Auch in der verkürzten Ritualwiedergabe, im Signet, ist der Kaiserkult an die traditionellen, griechischen oder auch indigen-anatolischen Kulte angepasst.

Die Ritualdarstellungen sprechen also eindeutig für eine identische Durchführung bei Kaiseropfer und Götteropfer. Angesichts der Tatsache, dass bildliche Darstellungen zu den effektivsten Mitteln zur Steuerung oder Beeinflussung von Handlungen und Einstellungen in der Antike zu zählen sind, so ist es erstaunlich, dass die Kultikonographie, sogar die Ikonographie des Kaiserkultes, nicht zum Ausdruck eines eindeutigen Machtverhältnisses genutzt wurden. Die Bilder beschreiben gerade nicht eine Zentrum-Peripherie-Relation, sondern belegen die Inkorporierung stadtrömischer Kulte in das bereits bestehende religiöse System.

Nicht in Einklang mit dem üblichen Zentrum-Peripherie-Schema zu bringen ist auch, dass deutliche Einflüsse kleinasiatisch-östlicher Rituale und Ritualikonographie in Rom selbst zu greifen sind.

Das beste und vollständigste Beispiel für die Übernahme östlicher Ritualikonographie ist ein severischer Altar wohl aus Rom, jetzt in der Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek von Kopenhagen.²⁴ Der rechteckige Altar ist auf allen

²² Z.B. J. Keil, 'XVI. Vorläufiger Bericht über die Ausgrabungen in Ephesos', *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts* 27 (1932) Beibl., 55f. Abb. 38; F. Miltner, *Ephesos* (Wien 1958), 38 Abb. 28; G. Seiterle, 'Artemis, die grosse Göttin von Ephesos', *Antike Welt* 10/3 (1979), 11 Abb. 18.

²³ Z.B.: Istanbul, AM Inv. 2649: E. Lane, *Corpus Monumentorum Religionis Dei Menis 1: The Monuments and Inscriptions* (Leiden 1971), 112 Nr. 177 (mit der Lit.).

²⁴ Kopenhagen, NCG 858: P. Arndt – W. Amelung (Hrsgg.), *Photographische Einzelaufnahmen antiker Skulpturen* Nr. 3794 (O. Brendel); V. Poulsen, *Catalogue of Ancient Sculpture in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* (Kopenhagen 1951), 62 Nr. 53; *Antike Kunstvaerker, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek. Billedtavler til Kataloget* (Kopenhagen 1952), Taf. 4, 53; Ryberg 1955, a.a.O. (Anm. 10), 96; J. Stubbe Østergaard, *Catalogue Imperial Rome. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* (Kopenhagen 1996), 26-28 Nr. 2.

vier Seiten reliefsiert. Auf der Rückseite ist ein Hirsch vor einem Altar neben einem Baum dargestellt, auf den Nebenseiten Kultgerät sowie ein weiterer Hirsch. Die Vorderseite zeigt die hier besonders interessierende Ritualszene: Eine Frau in *tunica* und *palla* vollzieht an einem brennenden Altar das unblutige Voropfer. Ihr assistiert ein Camillus in Tunika mit einer runden Schüssel voller Opfergut. Links neben dem Altar ist ein Rind an einem Ring am Boden festgebunden. Hinter ihm steht ein weiterer jugendlicher Opferdiener in Tunika, der in der erhobenen rechten Hand ein Messer hält. Diese Ritualszene zeigt deutlich kleinasiatisch-östlichen Einfluss, d.h. sie weicht in mehreren Details von westlich-stadtrömischen Darstellungen ab, die jedoch in Kleinasien häufig zu belegen sind. Im Einzelnen ist dies vor allem die Tötungssequenz, d.h. das Anbinden des Tieres sowie die Bewaffnung des Opferdieners nur mit einem Messer und dessen Handhabung.²⁵

Eine Inschrift, um Auftraggeber und Empfänger des Votivaltars genauer bestimmen zu können, fehlt, doch dürfte aufgrund der Reliefs auf den Nebenseiten ein Opfer an Diana/Artemis dargestellt sein, wobei es keinen direkten ikonographischen Hinweis gibt, dass eine orientalische Form der Artemis, z.B. die Artemis von Ephesos, gemeint ist. Da es keine stilistischen oder typologischen Anhaltspunkte gibt, den Altar mit einer kleinasiatischen Werkstatt in Verbindung zu bringen, liegt es deshalb nahe, in dem Relief einen Reflex für die Beeinflussung stadtrömischer Kultpraxis durch entsprechende östliche Ritualformen zu sehen.

Für das Anbinden des Opfertieres als eine östliche Besonderheit gibt es auch ein direktes Zeugnis aus Rom selbst. Im Museo Nazionale Romano befindet sich eine quadratische Marmorplatte mit Einlassung in der Mitte.²⁶ Sie stammt aus dem Tempel der Syrischen Götter auf dem Gianicolo²⁷ und trägt eine griechische Weihinschrift: Δεσμὸς ὅπως κρατερὸς θύμα θεοῖς παρέχοι | ὃν δὴ Γαιωνᾶς δειπνοκρίτης ἔθετο. Die richtige Deutung der Inschrift und somit des Objektes selbst wird J. Scheid verdankt.²⁸ Er

²⁵ So die Reliefs vom Theater in Perge: G. Ateş, 'Vorbericht über die Untersuchungen an der Fassade des Theaters von Perge', *Archäologischer Anzeiger* (2000), 331-335.

²⁶ C. Huelsen, 'Der Hain der Furrina am Janiculum', *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Rom* 22 (1907), 233-239; G. Wissowa, 'Cistiber – ΔΕΙΠΝΟΚΡΙΤΗΣ', *Hermes* 49 (1914), 626-627; E. Will, 'Le ou les sanctuaires syriens du Janicule', *Syria* 26 (1949), 166-168; IGUR 109; J. Hajjar, *La triade d'Héliopolis-Baalbek I* (Leiden 1977), 368-369; J. Scheid, 'Le DESMOS de Gaionas. Observations sur une Plaque inscrite du Sanctuaire des Dieux Syriens à Rome (IGUR 109)', *Mélanges d'École Française de Rome* 107 (1995), 301-314 (mit der älteren Lit.).

²⁷ J. Calzini Gysens, 'Santuario Siriaco', in: E. M. Steinby (Hrsg.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae III* (Rom 1996), 139-143 (mit Bibl.).

²⁸ Scheid 1995, a.a.O. (Anm.26), 307-314.

interpretierte die Platte als Vorrichtung zum Festbinden eines Opfertieres, wobei der Metallring verloren ist. Stifter ist Gaionas, der als δειπνοκρίτης für die Organisation des Opfermahles zuständig war.²⁹ Der Ausdruck Δεσμὸς κρατερὸς, der schon bei Homer belegt ist, bezieht sich auf die Fessel.³⁰ Ähnliche Halterungen sind im griechischen Osten des Imperiums relativ häufig, im Westen fehlen sie dagegen fast vollständig.³¹ Durch die Wahl des Griechischen für die Weihinschrift, den Rekurs auf Homer und die Zugehörigkeit zu einer weitgehend orientalisch geprägten Kultstätte ist die Verbindung mit der östlichen Reichshälfte evident. Es ist also sicher, dass in Rom in dieser vor allem aus dem Osten bekannten Form geopfert wurde. Dies war nicht nur im Zusammenhang mit Kulturen für östliche Gottheiten möglich, sondern auch in anderen Kulturen.³²

Wie in Kleinasien stadtrömisch-westliche Einflüsse sind in Rom selbst kleinasiatisch-östliche Einflüsse sowohl in den Ritualen selbst als auch in der Ritualikonographie zu konstatieren. Freilich lassen sich auch Unterschiede feststellen, so weit die begrenzte archäologische Evidenz weitergehende Schlüsse erlaubt. So belegen die Zeugnisse in Rom eine Rezeption überwiegend auf privater oder halb-öffentlicher Ebene, während in Kleinasien mit dem Medaillon aus Laodikeia eine Adaption durch ein offizielles Gremium vorliegt. Grundsätzlich bleibt in Rom die Rezeption östlicher Kultformen und auch von Kultikonographie stärker an Einzelpersonen gebunden. Auf der bildlich-künstlerischen Ebene fällt auf, dass kein vollständiges Modell, sondern immer nur einzelne Bildelemente übernommen werden. Dadurch entstehen immer ikonographische Einzellösungen, die anscheinend die tatsächlich vollzogenen Rituale sehr akkurat umsetzen. Dies ändert sich

²⁹ Scheid 1995, a.a.O. (Anm.26), 303-304.

³⁰ Homer, *Ilias* 5.385-386; Homer, *Odyssee* 8.335; Scheid 1995, a.a.O. (Anm.26), 311.

³¹ Beispiele: Magnesia am Mäander: A. von Gerkan, *Der Altar des Artemis-Tempels in Magnesia am Mäander* (Berlin 1929), 4 Abb. 2 Taf. I; C. Humann – J. Kothe – C. Watzinger, *Magnesia am Mäander: Bericht über die Ausgrabungen der Jahre 1891 – 1893* (Berlin 1904), 91-92 Abb. 88. 95; Thasos: M. Launey, *Le Sanctuaire et le Culte d'Hérakles à Thasos, Études Thasiennes I* (Paris 1944), 29 mit Anm. 3 (unvollständige Liste weiterer Belege).

³² Z.B. Mosaik aus der 'caserna di vigili' in Ostia: Ryberg 1955, a.a.O. (Anm.10), 96-97 Abb. 46; G. Becatti, *Mosaici e pavimenti marmorei, Scavi di Ostia IV* (Rom 1961), 61-62 Nr. 76 Taf. 100; Ryberg 1955, a.a.O. (Anm.10), 96-97 Abb. 46; H. von Hesberg, 'Denkmäler zum römischen Kaiserkult', in: *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt II* 16,2 (Berlin – New York 1978), 924-925 Nr. 8; R. Sablayrolles, *Libertinus Miles: Les Cohortes de Vigiles* (Rom 1996), 389-390.

erst, wenn auch von offizieller Seite östliche Kulte und Kultikonographie verbreitet werden, wie das vor allem für Elagabal überliefert ist.³³

Der zweite Teil der Untersuchung gilt allein den kleinasiatischen Poleis, denn für diese innerstädtische Ebene sind die meisten archäologisch greifbaren Denkmäler konzipiert, findet somit die eigentliche Kommunikation statt. Das große Thema kann mit dem Stichwort ‚Städtekonkurrenz‘ gefasst werden, ein typisches Phänomen des kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien, das vor allem in der Form zu greifen ist, dass die einzelnen Städte auf unterschiedlichen Gebieten um Ehrentitel wetteiferten.³⁴ Diese Städtekonkurrenz ist der Bezugsrahmen, unter dem eigentlich erst die literarische und künstlerische Produktion der kaiserzeitlichen Städte in Kleinasien verstanden werden kann. Als Ehren sind in erster Linie die Verleihung der Neokorie, die so genannte Proteia und damit zusammenhängend die Propompeia, weitere Ehrentitel wie Metropolis und auch die Privilegierung durch Agone zu nennen. Diese Städterivalität, d.h. der Streit der Städte um die Frage nach dem Zentralort ist für die Provinzen Asia (Smyrna, Ephesos, Pergamon), *Bithynia et Pontus* (Nikaia, Nikomedeia), *Lycia et Pamphylia* (Side, Perge) und *Cilicia* (Anazarbos, Tarsos) gut bekannt.³⁵ Die Argumente in diesem Wettstreit entstammen häufig – allgemein gesprochen – dem kultisch-mythischen Bereich. Opferdarstellungen spielen deshalb in diesem Bezugsrahmen eine wichtige Rolle. Besonders geeignet sind Rituale, die polis-spezifisch waren und so als distinktive Merkmale benutzt werden konnten.

Ein Beispiel für eine solche Darstellung stammt aus Ilion, bei der ein Stier an einem Baum hängend getötet wurde; ein ähnlich ungewöhnliches

³³ Besonders: H. R. Baldus, ‘Das ‘Vorstellungsgemälde‘ des Heliogabal. Ein bislang unbekanntes numismatisches Zeugnis’, *Chiron* 19 (1989), 467-478; kritisch dagegen: M. Zimmermann, *Kaiser und Ereignis. Studien zum Geschichtswerk Herodians* (München 1999), 228-230.

³⁴ Die Literatur zu diesem sehr bekannten Phänomen ist überreich; z.B. R. Merkelbach, ‘Der Rangstreit der Städte Asiens und die Rede des Aelius Aristides über die Eintracht’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 32 (1978), 287-296; M. Dräger, *Die Städte der Provinz Asia in der Flaviozeit: Studien zur kleinasiatischen Stadt- und Regionalgeschichte* (Frankfurt/Main 1993), 107-200; Ch. Roueché, ‘Floreat Perge’, in: M.M. Mackenzie – C. Roueché (Hrsgg.), *Images of Authority. Papers presented to Joyce Reynolds* (Cambridge 1989), 206-228; P. Weiss, ‘Auxe Perge. Beobachtungen zu einem bemerkenswerten städtischen Dokument des späten 3. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.’, *Chiron* 21 (1991), 375-384; P. Weiss, ‘Festgesandtschaften, städtisches Prestige und Homonoiaprägungen’, *Stadion* 24 (1998), 66-68; Stephan 2002, a.a.O. (Anm.14), 140-154.

³⁵ *Bithynia*: L. Robert, ‘La Titulature de Nicée et de Nicomédie. La Gloire et la Haine’, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 81 (1977), 1-39 (= *Opera Minora Selecta* 6, [1989], 211ff.); Dräger 1993, a.a.O. (Anm.34), 238-240; *Asia*: Merkelbach 1978, a.a.O. (Anm.34), 287-296; *Pamphylia*: Weiss 1991, a.a.O. (Anm.34), 378-384; J. Nollé, *Side im Altertum 1* (Bonn 1993), 88-94; *Cilicia*: R. Ziegler, *Städtisches Prestige und kaiserliche Politik: Studien zum Festwesen in Ostkilikien im 2. und 3. Jh. n. Chr.* (Düsseldorf 1985).

Ritual, bei dem Epheben das Opferrind tragen, zeigt eine Münze aus Nysa.³⁶ Diese Bildzeugnisse (sowie weitere Beispiele) betonen die Einmaligkeit der Prägestädte in kultischer Hinsicht – ein sehr guter Weg, um im Rahmen der Städterivalität zu ‚punkten‘.

Indirekt ist m. E. die kleinasiatische Städterivalität jedoch nur als Folge der römischen Herrschaft zu verstehen, nicht nur als Fortsetzung des Agons freier griechischer Poleis, wie er seit klassischer Zeit bekannt ist, mit anderen Mitteln, da die Städtekonkurrenz ohne die Einbindung in das *Imperium Romanum* nicht vorstellbar ist.

Dafür sprechen verschiedene Gesichtspunkte:

- Beim Wettkampf um Ehrentitel wie *prote* etc. werden die Grenzen der Provinz nicht überschritten. Das ‘Spielfeld’ ist also durch die römische Verwaltung bestimmt.³⁷
- Die angestrebten Ehren, z.B. Neokorie, werden vom Kaiser vergeben. Auch über den Titel einer Metropolis, die *Proteia* etc. wird nicht von den Städten direkt befunden. Der Kaiser ist somit die oberste Entscheidungsinstanz.³⁸
- Ein Hauptvehikel der Auseinandersetzung, die Münzprägung, folgt römischen Gestaltungsprinzipien: Zum einen zeigen sie im Regelfall ein Mitglied der *domus imperatoria*, so dass der Konnex zum Kaiser gegeben ist. Zum anderen ist die Vielfalt der Rückseitentypen eine Eigenheit des römischen, nicht des griechischen Münzwesens.³⁹

Versucht man diese kleinasiatische Städte-Landschaft mit ihrer internen Rivalität, die sich im wesentlichen um die Anhäufung von symbolischem Kapital dreht, und ihrer externen Abhängigkeit, in ihrer Gesamtheit zu verstehen, so lässt sie sich am ehesten als modifiziertes Modell der *peer polity interaction* fassen, wie es von Colin Renfrew entwickelt wurde.⁴⁰

³⁶ Ilion: A. Bellinger, *Troy: The Coin* (New York 1979), 60 Nr. T 198 Taf. 9 (Crispina); 64 Nr. T 218 (Septimius Severus); 65 Nr. T 221 Taf. 10 (Iulia Domna); Nyssa: *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum: Danish National Museum: Lydia* (Kopenhagen 1947), Nr. 323 Taf. 10; R. Lindner, *Mythos und Identität. Studien zur Selbstdarstellung kleinasiatischer Städte in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Stuttgart 1994), 195-196 Taf. 7,3.

³⁷ Merkelbach 1978, a.a.O. (Anm.34), 287-291; Dräger 1993, a.a.O. (Anm.34), 111-121.

³⁸ Dräger 1993, a.a.O. (Anm.34), 107-110; vgl. auch Price 1984, a.a.O. (Anm.20), 66-69.

³⁹ Harl 1987 a.a.O. (Anm.9), 15-16; D. Klose, ‘Münzprägung und städtische Identität: Smyrna in der römischen Kaiserzeit’, in: J. Nollé – B. Overbeck – P. Weiß (Hrsgg.), *Internationales Kolloquium zur kaiserzeitlichen Münzprägung Kleinasien München 1994* (Mailand 1997), 54.

⁴⁰ C. Renfrew, ‘Introduction: Peer Polity Interaction and Socio-political Change’, in: C. Renfrew – J. Cherry (Hrsgg.), *Peer Polity Interaction and Socio-political Change. New Directions in Archaeology* (Cambridge 1986), 1-18.

Ein Kennzeichen dieses Konzepts ist der Austausch materieller und symbolischer Güter zwischen mehr oder minder gleichgestellten sozio-politischen Einheiten in einer geographischen Einheit, normalerweise auch in enger Nachbarschaft. Ein weiteres wesentliches Element dieser *peer polities*, wie später von T. Champion noch einmal herausgestrichen, ist auch, dass sie meist von einem außerhalb des eigentlichen Bereichs liegenden Zentrum stimuliert werden und sich von diesem beeinflusst zeigen, obwohl sie sich selbst als eigenständig empfinden.⁴¹ So sind die materiellen und symbolischen Güter, um die sich die Konkurrenz dreht, häufig zentralen Ursprungs. In diesem Sinne können die von Rom den kleinasiatischen Poleis gewährten Ehren wie Neokoros, Prote usw. als vom Zentrum verliehene symbolische Güter in einem System von *peer polities* verstanden werden.

So steht am Schluss das scheinbar paradoxe Ergebnis, dass die kleinasiatischen Städte sich in ihrer gegenseitigen Konkurrenz indirekt deutlich abhängig von Rom zeigen, während von Rom auf direktem Weg – zumindest im hier untersuchten Bereich – Zentralität nicht konstituiert wird.

Jena, Januar 2005.

⁴¹ Champion 1989, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 9-10.

LA MENTALITÉ RELIGIEUSE DES SOLDATS DE L'ARMÉE ROMAINE D'AFRIQUE: L'EXEMPLE DES DIEUX SYRIENS ET PALMYRÉNIENS

ARBIA HILALI

L'intérêt des études portant sur l'armée romaine impériale et leur contribution à une meilleure approche des réalités impériales romaines reposent désormais sur un effort plus systématique pour mettre en relation les questions militaires avec ce que l'on connaissait jusqu'à maintenant du fonctionnement de l'État, de la société, avec l'analyse des comportements et des mentalités. En effet, un camp et particulièrement un camp légionnaire était un lieu où se concentraient tous les savoirs et toutes les conduites engendrées par la civilisation romaine, où se développait un modèle humain défini par des valeurs propres, où vivait et s'activait une collectivité, un groupe modelé par les réalités d'un métier aux dimensions d'une société.

Comme pour les autres communautés composant la société romaine, la vie religieuse était imbriquée dans la vie quotidienne des légionnaires. La raison de cette prééminence du religieux est qu'aux yeux des Anciens, il n'existait pas de séparation entre vie religieuse et vie sociale. Tout comportement social comprenait nécessairement une composante religieuse. Par conséquent, tout acte religieux exprimait l'identité d'une communauté donnée. Un Romain, selon l'expression de J. Scheid, pratiquait un culte avant tout parce qu'il appartenait à un milieu social donné, et non parce qu'il avait fait un choix intellectuel.¹ Par conséquent, le citoyen participait au culte public de sa cité, l'artisan à celui de son collège, le soldat à celui de son unité, l'habitant d'une ville à celui de son quartier, et l'individu privé à celui de sa famille.²

Appliquant ce principe général des religions romaines, dans une cité militaire, le légionnaire romain, en tant que citoyen romain, honore les dieux gréco-romains pour exprimer son appartenance à la cité romaine et à sa patrie d'adoption, le camp militaire. Communautaires, les religions du monde romain étaient marquées par le sceau du polythéisme et l'ouverture à l'ensemble des forces divines à l'œuvre dans le monde antique. Les religions de la communauté militaire n'échappent pas à cette règle. Ainsi, dans le panthéon des légionnaires de l'armée romaine d'Afrique, on trouve une mo-

¹ J. Scheid, *Rome et l'intégration de l'Empire I* (Paris 1990), 112.

² J. Scheid – R. Hanoune, *Nos ancêtres les Romains* (Paris 1993), 70.

saïque divine composée aussi bien de dieux gréco-romains, de dieux orientaux que de dieux africains.³

Afin d'analyser certains des mécanismes et fonctionnements des pratiques religieuses au sein du corps légionnaire en Afrique, j'ai pris comme échantillon d'étude les dieux syriens et palmyréniens et comme outil de recherche les sources épigraphiques. Je propose, dans un premier temps, de définir le cadre religieux, spatial et temporel en décrivant le paysage monumental et divin. Ensuite, en fonction de la générosité des textes, je dégagerai le contexte des dédicaces, les expressions et les manifestations cultuelles. Tous ces éléments me permettront enfin de situer la place exacte accordée à ces dieux au sein de la légion romaine en Afrique, la *III Augusta*, et de mieux saisir quelques aspects de la mentalité religieuse de la collectivité légionnaire.

Sur 249 inscriptions, l'épigraphie religieuse de la légion en Afrique nous en a livrées 27 se rapportant à la présence des dieux syriens (Jupiter *Dolichenus* et Jupiter *Heliopolitanus*), des dieux palmyréniens (Malagbêl, Yarhibôl) et du dieu d'Emèse Sol. En dépit de la faible documentation épigraphique sur la présence de ces dieux à l'intérieur de l'Afrique ou dans d'autres provinces latines du monde romain, la question de la place qui leur est réservée a fait couler beau-coup d'encre. Les idées étaient partagées entre un constat de succès et un constat d'échec de l'implantation de ces cultes. Certains historiens n'ont cessé de s'intéresser à l'orientalisme comme phénomène religieux. La plupart, dans la lignée de F. Cumont, ne se sont attardés qu'à l'aspect proprement religieux, c'est-à-dire au contenu mythologique et doctrinal du message oriental. L'idée était que le succès de ces dieux est dû à la nature de ces religions orientales qui promettaient aux fidèles un sort meilleur dans l'au-delà.⁴ Si pour certains, ces «mystères barbares» satisfaisaient davantage les sens et le sentiment que pouvaient le faire les dieux gréco-romains,⁵ pour d'autres, ces cultes ont conquis les âmes des légats et des officiers, soit par goût pour les superstitions,⁶ soit parce

³ Sur 249 inscriptions religieuses relatives à des adeptes dans l'armée romaine en Afrique, on a repéré 14 inscriptions pour les dieux africains.

⁴ H. Seyrig, 'Iconographie de Malakbêl', *Syria* 18 (1937), 206: H. Seyrig pense que la vogue particulière du culte de Malagbêl en dehors de Palmyre chez les auxiliaires palmyréniens s'explique par le fait qu'en "un temps, les soldats mirent leurs espoirs dans les dieux qui leur réservaient une vie meilleure dans l'au-delà". Cette idée de promesse d'immortalité aux fidèles est attestée dans l'article de M. Le Glay, 'Les religions de l'Afrique romaine au II^e siècle d'après Apulée et les inscriptions', *L'Africa romana* 1 (1983), 57-59.

⁵ F. Cumont, *Les religions orientales dans le paganisme romain* (Paris 1929), 24; 35.

⁶ J. Toutain, *Les cultes païens dans l'Empire romain* II (Paris 1967, 4^{ème} éd.), 263.

qu'ils étaient attirés par l'aspect combattant ou victorieux de la divinité importée.⁷ Si, pour certains chercheurs, les cultes orientaux avaient conquis les cœurs des soldats, pour d'autres, ces «cultes exotiques» n'ont pas pris sérieusement racine dans le sol provincial.⁸ Ils sont restés, en effet, des cultes à part qui font partie d'un «îlot de civilisation orientale»,⁹ implanté à l'ouest de l'Aurès en Numidie.

À la lumière d'une nouvelle relecture des textes épigraphiques, notre communication se propose de mettre à l'épreuve la validité de ces interprétations. Il devient dès lors intéressant de situer les données de l'analyse du rapport entre la troupe et certains dieux orientaux dans un contexte régional spécifique qui pourra nous éclairer sur un ou plusieurs aspects des mentalités collectives chez les légionnaires en Afrique romaine.

La géographie des édifices religieux

Les provinces de la Numidie (Lambèse, Dimmidi et Calceus Herculis) et de la Tripolitaine (Lepcis Magna et Thenadassa) ont livré certains édifices religieux, lieux de demeure des dieux syriens et palmyréniens. La documentation épigraphique nous permet de dater le premier monument consacré à Jupiter *Dolichenus* dans la cité de Lambèse, construit en son honneur en 125-126 et dédié par le légat Sex. Iulius Maior (n°1). Il n'en reste malheureusement que très peu de choses aujourd'hui. R. Cagnat n'a donné aucune description des fondations qui en restent, sinon pour indiquer qu'elles sont situées contre le mur actuel de la prison centrale, près de l'emplacement où se trouvait dans l'Antiquité la porte du camp légionnaire de Lambèse.¹⁰ Le dieu a fait son entrée dans le panthéon de l'armée romaine d'Afrique au début du II^e siècle, période où le recrutement oriental et surtout

⁷ P. Merlat, *Jupiter Dolichenus, essai d'interprétation et de synthèse* (Paris 1960), 16; H. Seyrig, 'Les dieux armés et les arabes en Syrie', *Syria* 47 (1970), 92. Il a montré que la présence des dieux armés en Syrie et à Palmyre en particulier, est due à la coutume des nomades de représenter leurs dieux comme des guerriers, protecteurs du fidèle face aux incertitudes de la vie sous la tente; M. Gawlikowski, 'Les dieux de Palmyre', *ANRW II*, 18.4 (1990), 2653.

⁸ Toutain 1967, op.cit. (n.6), 56; 264; M. Le Glay, 'Les Syncrétismes dans l'Afrique ancienne', in: F. Dunant (éd.), *Les syncrétismes dans les religions de l'Antiquité. Colloque de Besançon 1973* (Leiden 1975), 124. Il a noté que l'Afrique était accueillante à l'égard des religions, sauf à l'égard des religions orientales.

⁹ Y. Le Bohec, *Les unités auxiliaires de l'armée romaine en Afrique proconsulaire et Numidie sous le Haut Empire* (Paris 1989), 119.

¹⁰ R. Cagnat, *Musée de Lambèse* (Paris 1895), 55-56; Id., *L'armée romaine d'Afrique et l'occupation militaire de l'Afrique sous les empereurs I* (Paris 1912), 351, n°2: Toutes les dédicaces à Jupiter *Dolichenus* ont été trouvées au même endroit, au Sud-Est des thermes du camp.

syrien était fort dans la *III Augusta*.¹¹ D'après les statistiques faites par Y. Le Bohec, sous Hadrien et Antonin le Pieux, les soldats non italiens dans la légion étaient majoritaires avec 41%.¹² Outre le recrutement oriental individuel dans la légion, la documentation épigraphique nous a fourni la présence de six unités auxiliaires orientales.¹³

Il est possible que d'autres bâtiments culturels aient été élevés en Tripolitaine en l'honneur de Jupiter *Dolichenus* et dont la pratique du culte est attestée sous les Sévères. En effet, à Lepcis Magna, un autel dédié à Jupiter *Dolichenus* fut découvert sur le quai à 30 m au nord-ouest du podium d'un temple qu'on appela, en conséquence, temple de Jupiter *Dolichenus* (n°10). A Thenadassa, sous la même dynastie, un autel érigé à Jupiter *Dolichenus* a été trouvé parmi les ruines d'un édifice qui pourrait avoir été dédié à la même divinité (n°9). A Aïn El Avenia, au cours de la même période, un bâtiment religieux fut probablement bâti en hommage au dieu Yarhibôl par la *uexillatio* de la *III Augusta* ainsi que les soldats de la cohorte des archers syriens (n°11).

En Numidie, au poste militaire de Calceus Herculis, l'unité militaire en place sous les Sévères, le *numerus* des Hémésiens a remis à neuf un temple du dieu Sol et a restauré sa statue (n°12). Sous Caracalla, la même unité a agrandi le sanctuaire du même dieu en l'agrémentant d'un jardin sacré (n°14).¹⁴ Les derniers édifices religieux attestés sont ceux consacrés au dieu Malagbêl et situés au camp de Dimmidi. Les fouilles archéologiques à cet endroit ont permis de dégager plusieurs chambres dont l'une pourrait être

¹¹ Y. Le Bohec, *La troisième Légion Auguste* (Paris 1989), 497-498; 505. Fig 7: recrutement syrien.

¹² Le Bohec 1989, op.cit (n.11), 503; 507; Y. Le Bohec, 'Les Syriens dans l'Afrique romaine: civils ou militaires?', *Karthago* 2.1. (1987), 91: On note la présence de 63 Syriens et peut-être de 70 dans la III^e légion Auguste au II^e siècle, qui représentent 44,05% des «étrangers» recensés, (voir la liste dans *CIL* VIII., 18084: Lambèse). Sur les 63 Syriens, 48 sont venus en Afrique dans la première moitié du II^e siècle. Les Syriens recrutés à cette période pourraient être mis en rapport avec la guerre contre les Parthes en 113-117. Cf. E. Ritterling, 'legio', *RE* XII 2 (1923), 1282. En effet, les soldats syriens ou orientaux, après avoir appartenu à une légion de Syrie, avaient été versés dans une *uexillatio* de la *III Augusta*, participant sous Trajan à une guerre orientale, puis étaient venus finir leur temps de service en Afrique avec leur nouvelle unité. Cf. P. Merlat, *Répertoire des inscriptions et monuments figurés du culte de Jupiter Dolichenus* (Paris 1951), 282.

¹³ Le Bohec 1987, loc.cit, (n.12), 82-83: La I^e cohorte des Chalcidédiens, la VI^e cohorte des Commagédiens, la II^e cohorte des Hamiens, la I^e cohorte des Syriens.; Le Bohec 1989, op.cit (n.9), 70-76; 82-84; 88-90.

¹⁴ Du fait que le dieu Sol est lié au culte solaire, E. Albertini, 'Inscriptions d'El Kantara et de la région', *Revue Africaine* 72 (1931), 198, a supposé que la formule *ortum constitutum* dans l'inscription indique que l'autel a été érigé à une certaine place et suivant une certaine orientation, après le lever du soleil à un jour déterminé.

identifiée, selon G.-C. Picard, à une chapelle palmyrénienne sous Sévère Alexandre.¹⁵

Les manifestations cultuelles

L'examen de la répartition géographique et chronologique de ces cultes orientaux traduit l'importante contribution de certaines unités auxiliaires orientales dans la diffusion des dieux syriens et palmyréniens. Il n'y a pas de doute que les éléments syrien et palmyrénien ont fortement contribué à l'introduction de ces dieux, venus selon l'expression de M. Janon, 'dans les bagages des soldats'.¹⁶ Les premières attestations de la présence de ces dieux datent du début du deuxième siècle, période durant laquelle la légion faisait appel à des éléments orientaux.¹⁷ Le Proche Orient voit naître des corps militaires qui gardent le nom de leur lieu d'origine: Pétra, Emèse, Chalcis, Iturée, Palmyre. Il s'agit là, en règle générale, d'unités de cavalerie parmi lesquelles figurent les archers palmyréniens.¹⁸ Ces derniers étaient soit transférés collectivement sous la forme d'unités militaires spécifiques (ailes, cohortes, *numeri*, *uexillationes*), soit de façon individuelle, dans le cadre de la mobilité des soldats dans les légions.

Piété privée: dieu de la patrie

L'origine orientale de certains dédicants vient confirmer leur attachement aux dieux des ancêtres. Parmi les adeptes du dieu, il y a ceux qui sont d'origine syrienne tel que Sex. Iulius Maior, légat de la *III Augusta* (n°1) et

¹⁵ G.-C. Picard, *Castellum Dimmidi* (Alger 1944), 102-103. G.-C. Picard qui a fouillé le site de Dimmidi a supposé l'existence d'une chapelle aménagée, ornée de fresques qui rappellent des événements de Dura Europos. D'après lui, deux fresques pourraient faire allusion, l'une au dieu Malagbêl et l'autre à une scène de sacrifice d'un prêtre ou du centurion, chef de l'unité. A cela s'ajoutent deux vases en bronze, qui servaient probablement au culte Id., op.cit (n.15), 163-170. Dans la chapelle palmyrénienne de Dimmidi, il y avait un fragment (A4) qui a été interprété par G.-C. Picard comme étant le dieu Malagbêl, car cette fresque avait la forme d'un guerrier. On sait que les dieux palmyréniens étaient représentés ou figurés en monarques triomphants. Il arrive à la conclusion suivante: "il est ainsi extrêmement probable que notre peinture représente un dieu syrien et plus précisément un dieu palmyrénien solaire: nous n'hésitons donc pas à l'identifier à Malagbêl, principal patron des Palmyréniens d'Occident". Il confirme cette idée par le fait qu'à Calceus Herculis, Malagbêl est peut-être représenté par une statue. Cette image peut être celle d'un guerrier palmyrénien soutenu par la victoire.

¹⁶ M. Janon, 'Cultores dei Ierhobolis Iuniores', *Bulletin Archéologique Algérienne* 2 (1966-1967), 227.

¹⁷ Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 507.

¹⁸ E. Will, *Les Palmyréniens, la Venise des sables* (Paris 1992), 48.

L. Septimius Maximus, tribun de la III^e légion Auguste (n°3). On connaît deux centurions qui seraient syriens: T. Flavius Marinus (n°10)¹⁹ et C. Iulius Valerianus (n°8).²⁰ Ce dernier a occupé ce grade à deux reprises dans deux légions en Syrie, la IV^e légion Scythique et la XVI^e légion Flavienne.²¹ Bien des vétérans d'origine pal-myronienne n'ont pas pu rejoindre leur cité natale, mais s'étaient installés à Lambèse sur les terres que l'empereur mettait à leur disposition, et ont contribué à répandre certains de ces cultes parmi les Africains. Une inscription trouvée à l'est du temple d'Esculape à Lambèse et remontant au 15 mars 217 nous révèle l'existence d'un collège du dieu Yarhibôl et celle du vétéran Iulius Temarsa parmi les fidèles (n°13). Le nom de Temarsa, très répandu dans sa ville natale où il s'écrit TYRSW, est déjà connu en Afrique (à Calceus Herculis) sous les vocables de Themarsa, Temarse ou Themarsas.²² Si on trouve des adeptes du culte de Yarhibôl parmi les populations civiles,²³ c'est sans doute par l'intermédiaire des vétérans qui s'installaient dans le pays une fois leur temps de service

¹⁹ P. Merlat, *Répertoire des inscriptions et monuments figurés du culte de Jupiter Dolichenus* (Paris 1951), 284 suivi par Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 178 a restitué pour le *cognomen* du dédicant, Marinus. En effet, Marinus dérive du syriaque *mârînâ* = notre maître. Il s'agit du dieu palestinien Marnas de Gaza: Historia Augusta, Alexandre, 17, 3-4; G. Mussies, 'Marnas god of Gaza', *ANRW II*, 18.4 (1990), 2455. C'est un dieu de la fertilité identifié à l'origine au Zeus crétois. D'ailleurs ce *cognomen* était porté fréquemment par les adorateurs de Jupiter Dolichenus. Ce *cognomen* est attesté 14 ou 16 fois dans l'onomastique dolichénienne, voir Merlat 1951, op.cit. (n.19), index.

²⁰ C. Iulius Valerianus est connu à Lambèse par une épitaphe gravée pour son ami syrien Valerius Rufus *CIL VIII*, 2997 (Nécropole III) – D. M. / L. Valeri(i), L. f, Co[l.], / Rufi, domo / Antiochia, (centurionis) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae) / et leg(ionis) XXII Primi[g(eniae)]. / C. Iulius Valeri[anus], / (centurio) leg(ionis) III Au[g(ustae)] / amicus ei[us], / faciendum [cur(auit)]. L. Valerius Rufus – était peut être l'ami de son frère Iulius Proculus puisque tous les deux ont servi dans la XXII^e Primigenia. C'est peut-être pour cette raison que E. Birley, suivi de Y. Le Bohec, affirme que le dédicant est d'origine syrienne, contrairement à Y. Hajjar qui parle d'une origine inconnue. E. Birley, 'Promotions and Transfers in the Roman Army', *Carnuntum Jahrbuch* (1963-64), 27: "Valerianus was no doubt of Syrian origin (witness his dedication to the Baal of Heliopolis!)" ; Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 164; Y. Hajjar, *La triade d'Héliopolis-Baalbek, son culte et sa diffusion à travers les textes littéraires et les documents iconographiques et épigraphiques* (Leiden 1977), 730. Je partage la prudence de Y. Hajjar, puisque l'inscription ne comporte pas d'indices sur l'origine du dédicant. En effet, le fait que le dédicant honore Jupiter *Heliopolitanus* n'est pas un argument pour prouver son origine syrienne. On peut trouver des adeptes de ce dieu qui ont une autre origine, italienne ou africaine.

²¹ E. Ritterling, 'legio', *RE XII.2* (1925), 1556ff.; 1765ff.

²² L. Leschi, *L'Algérie antique* (Paris 1952), 153; J. M. Lassère, 'Un Syrien et sa famille à El-Kantara', *Revue des Études Anciennes* 76 (1965), 356; Baras T(h)emars(a)e (f); *AE* 1965, 274; Potsillus (ou Postillus) Themarsae f, *AE* 1933,37; *CIL VIII*, 2511, 2512, *Revue Africaine* 72 (1931), 214, n°19.

²³ Une inscription à Lambèse est faite par des prêtres: J. Carcopino, *Bulletin Archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques* 1920, p. LXXXVIII. Une inscription dont le commencement nous manque et qui a été brisée en deux tronçons est gravée sur le rebord d'une table calcaire.

a)---]inius Saturninus / [cul]tor Iorchobolis / [---]sacerdotium meritis / [---]r a deo;

b) M(arcus) Aemilius Iulianus, /sacer(dos) .

accompli.²⁴ La pratique religieuse individuelle de ces orientaux exprime une piété privée et un attachement aux dieux de la patrie. On s'interroge pour déterminer si ces dieux orientaux ont gardé ce trait d'un culte privé et isolé ou s'ils manifestent d'autres comportements religieux qui dépassent un simple honneur rendu aux dieux des ancêtres.

Piété collective: dieu de l'unité auxiliaire

Les textes épigraphiques nous dévoilent d'autres pratiques cultuelles. En effet, les premières attestations des inscriptions relatives à la présence des dieux syriens et palmyréniens sont contemporaines de l'occupation militaire de certains sites par des *numeri* et des cohortes orientales. Ainsi, le dieu Malagbêl a fait son apparition avec le *numerus* des palmyréniens au poste de Calceus Herculis à la deuxième moitié du II^e siècle (n°2, 4)²⁵ et au poste de Dimmidi sous Sévère Alexandre (n°15, 16, 17). A Calceus Herculis, le dieu Sol était contemporain de la présence du *numerus* des Héméséniens sous Caracalla (n°12, 14). Quant au dieu Yarhibôl, il était contemporain à la présence de la I^{ère} cohorte des archers syriens sous les Sévères (n°11). A travers ces témoignages, on est face à une pratique cultuelle collective, puisque c'est tout le groupe (*numerus palmyrénien et Hémésénien*, II^e cohorte des Hamiens) ou son représentant (centurion ou préfet) qui dédie le monument. En effet, on est en présence d'une nouvelle expression religieuse à laquelle s'identifie toute l'unité en place qui exprime son identité militaire. Le religieux et le social sont ainsi imbriqués et la formation d'une unité militaire était suivie par l'adoption d'un dieu qui rappelle l'origine de son recrutement et lui sert d'identité morale. Selon J. G. Février, Malagbêl apparaît plutôt comme un dieu essentiellement national qui était pour les Palmyréniens à la fois le symbole de leur religion la plus intime et la plus personnelle et celui de leur patrie.²⁶ En revanche, avec le temps et avec l'intensité du recrutement africain au III^e siècle, ni Malagbêl, ni d'autres dieux syriens n'ont pu répondre à cette fonction de dieu de patrie, mais plutôt au symbolisme social de cette collectivité multi-ethnique. Comme

²⁴ M. Janon, loc.cit. (n.16), 227.

²⁵ Ce phénomène est constaté à Rome et à Dura Europos dans la seconde moitié du I^{er} siècle, en Dacie au début de II^{ème} siècle, en Afrique pendant la seconde moitié de II^{ème} siècle; E. Equini Schneider, 'Palmireni in Africa: Calceus Herculis', *L'Africa romana* 5 (1987), 395; Ead., 'Il santuario di Bel e delle divinità di palmiria, comunità e tradizioni', *Dialoghi di archeologia*, III série, n°1 (1987), 83; Will 1992, op.cit. (n.18), 105.

²⁶ J.G. Février, *La religion des Palmyréniens* (Paris 1931), 79.

pour les dieux gréco-romains, prier les dieux orientaux était, pour ces unités auxiliaires, une manière d'exalter leur communauté et d'honorer les institutions et les valeurs qui la commandent. En vénérant les dieux de leur unité, les membres du *numerus* et de la cohorte adressent un salut à l'être collectif, à cette personnalité sociale qu'est le corps auxiliaire légionnaire. Cette mentalité religieuse puise son origine dans une conception romaine selon laquelle les religions sont pratiquées non pas pour le salut de l'individu mais bien pour celui de la collectivité. Dans ce contexte, c'est-à-dire l'adoration des dieux syriens et palmyréniens dans un milieu romain, le camp n'échappe pas à cette règle.

Piété collective: dieu légionnaire

L'examen des inscriptions épigraphiques entre le II^e et le III^e siècle nous révèle la diversité des origines et des grades des pratiquants. Il n'est plus question d'un adepte syrien ou palmyrénien ou d'une unité orientale; progressivement, des légionnaires d'origines diverses honorent sous une forme individuelle ou collective (*vexillatio* n°9; 11) les dieux syriens et palmyréniens. La documentation épigraphique montre bien que Jupiter *Dolichenus* était honoré par des militaires d'origine italienne, de Mésie supérieure et même d'Afrique, tels que Ti. Memmius Vlpianus (n°6), tribun de la *III Augusta*, originaire de Rome, ou M. Adiutor Faustianus qui serait italien, chef du détachement de la *III Augusta* à Thenedassa (n°9), ainsi que le préfet de la III^e légion Auguste M. Aurelius Iustus, originaire de Mésie Supérieure (n°19).²⁷ Un même constat peut s'appliquer à Jupiter *Heliopolitanus* qui fut adoré par P. Seius Rufus, préfet de la *III Augusta*, originaire de la ville italienne Teate (n°24). Quant aux Africains, on peut citer avec prudence l'exemple de Publius Aelius Col(...), centurion de la III^e légion Auguste, qui serait originaire de Volubilis (n°23). C'est d'ailleurs en tant que dieu légionnaire, et non pas en tant que dieu oriental, que le culte de Jupiter *Dolichenus* s'est diffusé en dehors de l'Afrique par des éléments africains.²⁸ L'exemple des soldats africains est une preuve que les militaires

²⁷ La Syrie ne fut pas le seul foyer des cultes syriens, Rome et l'Italie en formèrent un second. Les fidèles à Rome sont au nombre de 85 et en Italie de 34. Voir M. Hörig – E. Schwertheim, *Corpus Cultus Iouis Dolicheni*, EPRO 106 (Leiden 1987).

²⁸ *CIL* XIII, 7411 (Grosskrotzenburg): C'est le cas de Flavius Antiochianus, préfet de la *cohors IV Vindelicorum* stationnée en Germanie supérieure. Il était originaire de la province de Maurétanie Césarienne et il a dédié un autel à Jupiter *Dolichenus*; *CIL* XIII, 11782; 11783 (Stockstadt). Quant au deuxième personnage, L. Caecilius Caecilianus, préfet de la *cohors I Aquitanorum*, stationnée aussi en

réagissent plus en fonction de leur profession que de leur milieu d'origine. Qu'ils fussent orientaux, provinciaux ou italiens, les adorateurs concevaient les dieux syriens et palmyréniens comme des dieux de la légion, vénérés au même titre que les dieux romains. La légion romaine, qui est une forme de collectivité militaire, considère, à l'exception des dieux de la patrie, que les dieux tolérés sont les dieux de la communauté qui, en les vénérant, traduisent une appartenance à tel ou tel corps militaire. S'ils doivent la continuité de leur culte après le II^e siècle, ce n'est pas en tant que dieux orientaux, car l'élément oriental n'est plus présent et le recrutement local devient la règle, mais en tant que dieux légionnaires. L'exemple d'Aïn El Avenia (n°11) est significatif: la *uexillatio* de la *III Augusta* était à côté de la cohorte des archers syriens pour rendre hommage au dieu Yarhibôl. Les dieux syriens et palmyréniens sont intégrés au panthéon de la légion et font désormais partie des cultes de la *III Augusta*. En effet tous les membres de la légion étaient invités, s'ils le désiraient, à les honorer à titre collectif ou individuel. Contrairement à l'idée reçue selon laquelle la diffusion des dieux orientaux à l'échelle de l'Empire au III^e siècle s'explique soit par une politique favorable des Sévères,²⁹ soit par une croissance des orientaux dans l'armée ou dans l'administration,³⁰ à mon avis dans un contexte militaire africain, ce succès trouve son origine dans cette nouvelle image de la divinité orientale dans le camp de la *III Augusta*, non plus en tant que dieu oriental, mais en tant que dieu légionnaire aussi mobile dans les provinces de l'Empire que le sont les soldats.

Un autre élément qui peut témoigner que les dieux syriens et palmyréniens ne sont pas demeurés des cultes à l'écart est leur association aux dieux traditionnels du panthéon militaire dans certaines inscriptions (les dieux conservateurs et immortels de l'Empire, les dieux gréco-romains (n°18; 20) et les dieux militaires: le Génie de l'exercice (n°27). Aussi, ces dieux étaient intégrés dans la vie du légionnaire et étaient sollicités pour répondre à ses soucis habituels. On a avancé que la vogue particulière des dieux orientaux en dehors de Palmyre et de la Syrie s'explique par une

Germanie supérieure, était originaire de Thaenae en Afrique Il s'agit d'une colonie honoraire d'Hadrien, située à la pointe sud-est de l'*Africa vetus*, sur la petite Syrte. Aujourd'hui à 15 km de Sfax. Voir J. Gasco, *La politique municipale de l'Empire romain en Afrique proconsulaire de Trajan à Septime Sévère* (Rome 1972), 135; *CIL* XIII, 8812. Il y a la mention d'un troisième Africain, le légat Q. Antistius Adventus Postumius Aquilinus, originaire de Thibilis en Numidie.

²⁹ Cumont 1929, op.cit. (n.5), 105; Toutain 1967, op.cit. (n.6), 263; Merlat 1960, op.cit. (n.7), 19.

³⁰ V. Najdenova, 'The Cult of Jupiter *Dolichenus* in Lower Moesia and Thrace', *ANRW* II 18.2 (1989), 1380.

promesse divine d'un sort meilleur dans l'au-delà.³¹ Ce que l'on observe pour les soldats de la *III Augusta* infirme totalement cette idée. En effet, un légionnaire, dans un contexte romain et dans un milieu militaire, a un comportement identique à celui d'un citoyen romain. Il invoque les dieux pour satisfaire à des attentes dans la cité militaire. La religion romaine avait un contenu qui ne résidait pas dans les sentiments et la morale mais dans l'action et la pratique. Les dieux de la légion étaient l'expression de la volonté de cette communauté et répondaient à ses besoins. L'expression qui traduit le plus souvent dans les inscriptions cette demande était le *votum*.³² Ce dernier était à la fois un rite religieux par l'expression habituelle *votum soluit libens animo*, mais aussi un objet voué ou un acte promis par l'expression *votum posuit, fecit* ou *dedicavit*. Le vœu constituait un contrat entre l'homme et la divinité, qui en fixait lui-même les deux termes, c'est-à-dire ce qu'il demandait et ce qu'en échange il offrait à la divinité. Il convient d'examiner dans quelles circonstances le légionnaire proposait ce contrat. D'après les inscriptions, on observe que les objectifs des dédicaces et leur mode d'action ne diffèrent pas de ceux adressés aux dieux romains. On sollicite les dieux syriens et palmyréniens pour manifester une piété officielle tel que le salut, la sauvegarde, la victoire et le retour des empereurs (11 fois n°1-2; 9-13; 16-17); pour exprimer un culte lié à l'exercice de ses fonctions tel qu'une promotion professionnelle (n°5) ou pour l'accomplissement des travaux de fondation (n°11), d'entretien et d'agrandissement des lieux de culte (n°12;14); et enfin pour un événement privé tel que la bonne santé de la famille (n°7). Contrairement à ce qui a été signalé plus haut, les dieux syriens et palmyréniens n'étaient pas répandus grâce à une vocation de victoire militaire. Aucun texte épigraphique n'atteste une dédicace à la suite d'un combat victorieux. Sans doute, ces dieux sont représentés en armure romaine par référence à la puissance impériale.

En dépit de la faible documentation épigraphique relative aux dieux syriens et palmyréniens, on a pu observer l'intégration de ces cultes dans les cultes traditionnels des troupes. Ce sont des cultes parmi les autres, beaucoup moins répandus que les autres, et qui ne sont nullement séparés

³¹ Seyrig 1937, loc.cit. (n.4), 206.

³² Les formules d'expression romaine *VSLA* sur les inscriptions religieuses des Palmyréniens ont été attestées dans d'autres régions de l'Empire romain à Rome et en Dacie (*ILS*, 4344; *AE* 1912, 303). Voir T. Kaizer, 'Religious mentality in Palmyrene documents', *Klio* 86 (2004), 182. On constate la même langue rituelle latine pour les dévots de Jupiter Dolichenus dans l'Empire romain. Voir M.P. Speidel, *The Religion of Iuppiter Dolichenus in the Roman Army* (Leiden 1978); N. Belayche, 'DEAE SURIAE SACRUM. La romanité des cultes orientaux', *Revue Historique* 302 (2000), 588.

des autres. La compréhension des mentalités religieuses chez les Romains oblige l'historien à s'attarder non seulement au contenu mythologique et philosophique des religions, mais également à prendre en compte la conception romaine des religions, d'une réalité sociale, ici le camp, de l'évolution des pratiques culturelles dans le temps et d'une réalité locale, ici l'évolution du recrutement africain. On a pu dégager deux niveaux d'expression religieuse. Le premier exprime l'identité personnelle du dévot à travers son attachement au dieu de la patrie. Le second reflète l'identité légionnaire d'un petit noyau social (*numerus*, cohorte, *vexillatio*) ou du corps militaire élargi (légion). Ces cultes sont adoptés par la légion et expriment une mentalité communautaire d'appartenance au camp, comme le culte des enseignes, et des Génies des unités militaires. Le succès de la romanisation culturelle et le maintien d'un polythéisme vivant puisent leur origine dans la capacité de l'État romain à intégrer d'autres cultes et à les adapter à son propre modèle de religion ritualiste, fonctionnelle et communautaire.³³ Comme il ressort de l'ensemble des autres cultes de la légion, les dieux syriens et palmyréniens étaient recrutés pour défendre les valeurs du camp romain et de la religion traditionnelle romaine. Si, pour le soldat, et selon l'expression de Tacite, 'le véritable honneur était dans le camp; là était sa patrie, là étaient ses pénates',³⁴ on peut affirmer que ces dieux orientaux sont désormais des dieux légionnaires qui devaient renforcer chez les uns et les autres, Italiens, Syriens et Africains, le sentiment de l'appartenance à cette nouvelle patrie qui est le camp, avec son corps social qui est la légion.

Nanterre, décembre 2004.

³³ L. Dirven, 'The Palmyrene Diaspora in East and West: a Syrian Community in the Diaspora in the Roman Period', in: G. ter Haar (ed.), *Strangers and Sojourners, Religious Communities in the Diaspora* (Leuven 1998), 93-94. Dans cette étude, Dirven a montré que les soldats palmyréniens avaient plus de facilité que leurs compatriotes, les marchands à s'assimiler à leur nouveau milieu, la légion. En effet, les soldats palmyréniens ont réussi à s'adapter aux religions de leur nouvel environnement et aux tendances culturelles de l'époque.

³⁴ Tacite, *Histoire* 3.84.2.

Annexe épigraphique

1) *CIL* VIII 2680 = 18221 (D. 4311 a) Lambèse au sud-Est du camp. Trois fragments d'une plaque de marbre.

Pro s[alute] et incolumitate / Imp(eratoris) Cae[s(aris) Traia]ni Hadriani Augusti, / Sex(tus) Iuli[us Maio]r, legatus ipsius pro praetore, / templ[um] I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) D]olicheno dedicauit.

a 125-126.³⁵

2) E. Albertini, *Revue Africaine* (1931), 205 n°8 (*AE* 1933, 42). Calceus Herculis, Table, brisée à droite, mais l'angle inférieur est conservé, et la dernière ligne est complète.

Deo Malacbel[o], / pro salute d(ominorum) n(ostrorum) im[p(eratorum duorum)], / [ded(icante) A(elio) Iulio Pompilio Piso], leg(ato) Aug(ustorum duorum) pr(o) p[r](aetore), / T(itus) Cl(audius) [---]i[---]us (centurio) [[leg(ionis) III]] Aug(ustae).

a 176-177.³⁶

3) *CIL* VIII 2622, Pierre trouvée dans le camp de Lambèse, au sud-est du prétoire.

Ioui Dolicheno Aug(usto), / L(ucius) Septimius L(ucii) f(ilius) Fabia (tribu) Maximus, / tribunus leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae), suo nomine et / L(ucii) Septimi(i) Marcelli trib(uni) leg(ionis) eiusd(em), patris sui, / cum Lurcia Putiolana uxore et / L(ucio) S[epti]m[io] M[aximo] Fab(ia) Magno filio, u(otum) s(oluerunt) l(aetus) l(ibens) m(erito).

a milieu du II^e siècle.³⁷

4) *CIL* VIII 2497 (= D. 4339) Calceus Herculis, base sur une dalle entièrement encadrée d'une moulure.

³⁵ B. E. Thomasson, *Fasti Africani. Senatorische und ritterliche Amtsträger in den römischen Provinzen Nordafrikas von Augustus bis Diokletian* (Stockholm 1996), N 22. La datation se fonde sur la IX^e et la X^e puissance tribunicienne d'Hadrien. Cf. D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle: Grundzüge einer römischen Kaiserchronologie* (Darmstadt 1996), 130; Il est originaire de la Syrie, *PIR*² I, 397.

³⁶ A. Iulius Piso, légat de la III Augusta à cette date, Cf. *PIR*² I, 477; Thomasson 1996, op.cit., (n.33), N 41.

³⁷ H. Devijver, *Prosopographia militarium equestrium quae fuerunt ab Augusto ad Gallienum* (Louvain 1976), 33. Le fils et le père sont originaires de la Syrie, peut-être d'Aradus, *IGLS* VI, 4015-4016 = D. 2657.

Malagbello / Aug(usto) / sancto sacr(um), / T(itus) Fl(auius) Mansue/tus, (centurio) [[leg(ionis) III]] Aug(ustae), / u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito).

a Sous Marc Aurèle (161-180) ou Commode (176-192), époque pendant laquelle le site de Calceus Herculis a été occupé par un détachement légionnaire de la *III Augusta*.³⁸

5) *CIL VIII 18224 (= D. 2415)* Base d'un autel trouvé dans ce qui devait être le *Dolichenum* à 150 m à la porte du camp. Sur le côté droit de cette base, une tête de bœuf.

I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) D(olicheno), / p(ro) p(rouectu) uel p(ro) p(rogressu) uel p(ro) p(rocessu) Flau(i) Studi/osi, Sabinius / Ingenuus et / Aurelius Sed/atus, sig(niferi) leg(ionis) / III Aug(ustae), agentes cura(m) macelli, / u(otum) l(ibentes) a(nimo) s(oluerunt) cum a/zutoribus (sic)³⁹ suis.

a Peu avant 200, date à laquelle Flavius Studiosus était nommé *dioecetes Aegypti*.⁴⁰

6) *CIL VIII 2623 = 18097.* Petit autel situé au sud du camp de Lambèse

I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / Dolicheno, / Ti(berius) Memmius / T(iberii) f(ilius) Palatina (tribu) / Vlpianus, Roma, / praef(ectus) coh(ortis) II[c(iuium) R(omanorum) / e]q(uitatae) p(iae) f(idelis), trib(unus) mil(itum) leg(ionis) / III Aug(ustae), cum Verati[a] / Athenaide con[iu]/ge et Memmia Ma/crina, filia, u(otum) s(oluerunt) l(ibens) m(erito).

a II^e siècle.⁴¹

7) *CIL VIII 18217.* Lambèse, base dont la partie supérieure a disparu.

[I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo)] / [D]ol[icheno], / Ti(berius) Memmius, / T(iberii) f(ilius), Palatina, / Vlpianus, / Roma, praef(ectus) / coh(ortis) II[c(iuium) R(omanorum) eq(uitatae) p(iae) f(idelis), / trib(unus) mil(itum) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae), / cum Veratia Athenaide, con(iuge), / et Memmia Macrina, fil(ia), / u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) m(erito) [---et] / Ge[-]

a II^e siècle.⁴²

³⁸ Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 168.

³⁹ Merlat 1951, op.cit. (n.19), 285, n°1. Les *azutores* de notre inscription devaient être les auxiliaires des *signiferi* mentionnés (*adiutores*).

⁴⁰ B. Dobson, *Die Primipilares* (Köln 1978), 355.

⁴¹ Devijver 1976, op.cit. (n.37), M 41.

⁴² Ritterling, 'legio', *RE XII* (1923), 1503; Devijver 1976, op.cit. (n.37), M 41.

8) *CIL VIII 2627* Autel situé près des ruines du temple de Minerve à Lambèse

Ioui O(ptimo) M(aximo) Heliopolitano, / C(aius) Iulius Valerianus, (centurio) / leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae), XVI F(lauiae) F(irmae) bis /, III Scyt(hicae) bis, pro salute sua / et Liciniae Aquilinae uxor(is) suae / et Iuli(i) Proculi, (centurionis) leg(ionis) V Mac(edonicae), / et III Gal(licae), et XXII Primig(eniae), / fratris suis et Variae / Aquilinae uxoris eius / et Iuliae Aquilinae fil(iae) eorum posuit. a II^e siècle.⁴³

9) *IRT 868 (AE 1950, 126)* Thenadassa, autel

[I(ovi)] O(ptimo) M(aximo) D(olicheno), / [pr]o salute et uictoria [dom]/inor(um) nostror(um) imp(eratorum duorum) L(ucii) Sep[timii] / Seueri Pii Pert(inacis) Aug(usti), et M(arci) Aurel[i(i)] / Antonin(i), Aug(usti), Aug(usti) n(ostri) f(ili), et P(ublii) / [[Septimi(i) Getae,]] Aug(usti), Aug(usti) / n(ostri) fil(ii), Aug(usti) n(ostri) fratr(is), et Iuliae / Aug(ustae), matr(is) castr(orum), M(arcus) Caninius / Adiutor Faustianus,⁴⁴ praef(ectus) / coh(ortis) II H(a)m(iorum),⁴⁵ praep(ositus) uex(illationi) [[leg(ionis) /III]] Aug(ustae) p(iae) u(indicis), aram po[su]/it et dedicauit.

a 198-211.

10) *IRT 292* Lepcis Magna, autel en calcaire

Face antérieure:

I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / Dolicheno, / pro salute et uictoria domi/norum nostrorum Augg[[g]](ustorum trium)) et / [[--- / --- e]]t redi/tu [I]m[pp] [[p]]](eratorum trium) in urbem [s]uam, / T(itus) Flauiu[s] [.]arin[us]⁴⁶, (centurio) leg(ionis), / u(otum) l(ibens) p(osuit).

Flanc gauche, sous la corniche.

Sur le côté droit de l'autel: *D(e)d(icatum) (ante diem) (tertium) idus Apriles.*

a 11 avril 203 ou 204.

⁴³ Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 164.

⁴⁴ Il serait italien: Devijver 1976, op.cit. (n.35), C 76.

⁴⁵ Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.9), 82-83. La mention la plus ancienne de cette cohorte remonte à 128, d'après un fragment de la célèbre inscription de Lambèse où sont retranscrits les discours prononcés par Hadrien (*CIL VIII 2532* = 18042).

⁴⁶ P. Merlat, suivi par Y. Le Bohec, a restitué pour le *cognomen* du dédicant, Marinus. Merlat 1951, op.cit. (n.19), 284; Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 178.

11) O. Brogan – J. Reynolds, *Papers of the British School at Rome* 38 (1960), 51 n°1 (AE 1962, 304) (Ain El Avenia, Tripolitaine). Bloc mouluré en calcaire

Soli Hierobolo, pro sa[lute] / dominorum n(ostorum) Aug[g(ustorum trium) Se]/ueri et Antonini e[t Getae] / e[t] Iuliae totiusq(ue) do[mus] / diuinae, per uexilla[tio]/nem leg(ionis) III A[u]g(ustae) et mil[ites] / coh[o]rt[is] S[yro[r]um sagit/[ta]riorum⁴⁷, a solo [---].

a 209-211.

12) J. Carcopino, *Syria* 1933, 31 (AE 1933, 47). Calceus Herculis

[Pro]salute d(ominorum trium) n(ostorum) A[ug(ustorum trium)], / templum dei So[lis inuicti], / Iulius Draco, (centurio) l[eg(ionis) III Aug(ustae)], / pr(a)epositus n(umeri) Hem[esenorum],⁴⁸ / delapsus restitu[it dedicauitq(ue) uel ampliavit(que)] / [et] sigi(l)lum renou[auit].

a 209-211.

13) M. Janon, *Bulletin d'Archéologie Algérienne* II (1966-67), 222-224. (AE 1967, 572) Lambèse, bloc portant 2 inscriptions et trouvé à l'est du temple d'Esculape.

a) *Pro salute et / incolumitate domini nostri / Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) M(arci) Aureli(i) Seueri Ant(onini) Aug(usti), Pii, Felicis et Iul(iae) Aug(ustae), matris Aug(usti) et cas(trorum) et senatus et patri(ae), cultores dei Ierhobolis / iuniores, constituti Prae(sente) et Extricato (iterum) co(n)s(ulibus), / [id]ib(us) Martis fecerunt. / [Magistri] cultorum [qui nomina s]ua subiece/[runt, dedicauerunt---] Iul(ius?) Victor / [---]*

b) *Iuliu(s) Tem(arsa), / uet(eranus), / sacer(dos) ma(ior), M(arcus) / Aureli(us)... uel im(munis) / Aureli(us).*

a 15 mars 217.

14) E. Albertini, *Revue Africaine* (1931), 197 (AE 1933, 46) Calceus Herculis, autel

⁴⁷ La cohorte des archers syriens est connue dans la région de Lambèse (AE 1892, 13). Selon Y. Le Bohec, cette cohorte faisait partie de l'armée d'Afrique au moins de 208-221 à 238-244 (Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. [n.9], 90).

⁴⁸ Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.9), 116; 120. En effet, cette unité n'est pas attestée à d'autres moments par la documentation dont nous disposons. Nous n'avons qu'une seule certitude en matière de chronologie: la présence de cette unité à El Kantara est assurée pour l'époque de Caracalla (CIL VIII 2494 = D. 2636 Kherbet el-Bordj). Pour le reste, on connaît mal l'histoire de cette unité.

*Deo Soli[.] / ortum con/stitutum per / C(aium) Iulio (sic) Aelu/rione(m),
(centurionem) [[leg(ionis) / III]] Aug(ustae) Anton/iniane, pr(a)ep(ositum) /
n(umeri) Hemesen(orum).*

a 211-217

15) G.-C. Picard 1944, op. cit. (n.15), 187, n°10 (AE 1940, 150). fragment
*D(omino ?) Deo num[ini Malagbelo], / n(umerus) Pal(myrenorum)
Seue[rianorum], / morante[s castello Dimmidi].*

a 222-235.

16) *CIL VIII 8795 = 18020*; G.-C. Picard 1944, op. cit. (n.15), n°9, 186 (AE 1940, 149). Pierre.

Face principale

*Deo num(ini) Malag(belo) A(u)gusto, / pro salute D(omini) n(ostri)
Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) M(arci) Aurel(ii) / Seueri [[Alexan/dri]], Inuicti,
Pii, Felici, / Aug(usti), diui m[agni Antoni/ni fili---].*

Face latérale droite

*N(umerus) P(almyrenorum) / Seu(erianorum), / (centuria) Galtoniani,⁴⁹ /
C(aius) Modius (centurio) s(uprascriptus)⁵⁰ / L(ucius) Rubrius Felix, /
C(aius) Iulius Maximus, / C(aius) Cannius Malcus, / L(ucius) Host(ius)
Florentin(us), / C(aius) Iulius Tonneus, / C(aius) Iulius T[--- /---].*

Face latérale gauche

*[(centuria) H]onorati /--- ET --- amicus / [Iu]l[ius] Donatus fil(ius), / [---]
Jran Messor / [---]tron Rogattian(us), / T(itus) Annius Victor, / Q(uintus)
Gran(us) Donatus, / C(aius) Iulius Tertull[us] ---*

a 222-235.

17) G.-C. Picard 1944, op. cit. (n.15), 186, n°8 (AE 1940, 148). Dalle brisée.
*Deo numini Mal(agbelo), / pro sal(ute) d(omi)n(i) Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) /
M(arci) Aur(elii) Seueri [[Alexan/dri]], Inuicti, Pii, Felicis, / Aug(usti), diui
magni Antoni/ni fili, et Iuliae [[M [amae]]]/ae Aug(ustae) Matris Aug(usti)
e[t / castrorum---].*

a 222-235.

⁴⁹ Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.9), 129 propose le *cognomen* Caltonianus.

⁵⁰ Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.9), 129. Concernant les deux lettres 7S, il pense que ce sont les deux premières lettres mal lues du *cognomen* de C. Modius.

18) *CIL* VIII 2624 (D. 4323) (Lambèse) autel trouvé à 500 m au sud des thermes de la légion.

I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) Dolic(heno), / Aesculapio, / [Hy]giae, ceter/isq(ue) diis / Immort(alibus), T(itus) F(laius) / Maximus⁵¹, ex (centurione) / praet(oriano), p(rimus) p(ilus), praef(ectus) / [[leg(ionis) III]] Aug(ustae) Seueri(anae), / cum Antonia An/tonina coniu/ge, u(otum) s(oluit). a 222-235.⁵²

19) *CIL* VIII 18222 Autel situé devant l'entrée de la maison centrale à Lambèse. (cité)

I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) D(olicheno), / M(arcus) Aurel(ius) Iustus⁵³, / praef(ectus) [[leg(ionis) III]] / Augu(stae), cum Cl(audia) / Maximilla, / coniuge et / Aureliis Ma/ximina, Iusto, / Iustina, Ius/tiano, Maximi/no fili(i)s, suisq(ue) / omnibus, / u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) (merito).

Avant la dissolution de la *III Augusta* en 238, à cause du martelage du nom de la légion.⁵⁴

20) *CIL* VIII 4578 (D.3091) Autel. Diana veteranorum

Ioui Optimo / Maximo, Iuno/ni Reginae, Min/eruae Sanctae, / Soli, Mithrae, / Herculi, Mar/ti, Mercurio, / Genio loci, Diis deabusque / omnibus, Marcus Aureli/us Decimus, u(ir) p(erfectissimus), p(raeses) / p(rouinciae) N(umidia), ex principe pe/regrinorum, / uotum soluit. a 284.⁵⁵

21) J. Carcopino, *Syria* (1926), 50 (*AE* 1925, 125). Calceus Herculis

Deo Soli / [A]ug(usto) sac(rum). / [A]ufus[t]ius⁵⁶ / Adiutor, / b(ene)f(iciarius) co(n)s(ularis), / u(otum) s(oluit) l(ibens) a(nimo).

a II^e moitié du II^e siècle- fin III^e siècle.

⁵¹ H.-G. Pflaum, *Carrières des procureurs équestres sous le Haut-Empire, supplément II* (Paris 1982), 1106; Dobson 1978, op.cit. (n.40), 300, n°204; Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 134.

⁵² Dobson 1978, op.cit. (n.40), 355.

⁵³ Dobson 1978, op.cit. (n.40), n°197; Devijver 1976, op.cit. (n.37), A 239.

⁵⁴ Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 133-134. Il date le texte peu après 224, en se fondant sur l'idée qu'il s'agit de la même personne qui a exercé le primipilat dans la I^e légion italique en 224 avant d'être nommé en Numidie.

⁵⁵ Thomasson 1996, op.cit. (n.33), N 73.

⁵⁶ J. Carcopino proposait *Afustius* ou *Rufusius* comme gentilices, mais ceux-ci ne sont pas attestés en Afrique; Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 198. Il propose *[A]ufus(t)ius* (?).

22) *CIL* VIII 18223 Autel découvert dans ce qui devait être le *Dolichenum*. Son côté droit est orné d'un bucrane (cité). Lambèse
I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) / Doliche[no], / Valerius / Rufus, (centurio) / [[leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae)]] / u(otum) l(ibens) l(aetus) m(erito).
 a II ou III^e siècle.⁵⁷

23) *CIL* VIII 2625 = 18098; Merlat 1951, op. cit. (n.19), 286; G. Forni, 'La dedica sacra a Giove Dolicheno da Lambaesis', *MEFR* 95 (1983), 757-760; (*AE* 1983, 981); M. P. Speidel, 'The centurions titles', *Epigraphische Studien* 13 (1983), 43ff. Base de statue.
 Sur la face de la base: *I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo) D(olicheno)*.
 Sur la tranche antérieure: *P(ublius) Ael(ius) Cl(audia tribu), Col(---) I(---) / l(egionis)⁵⁸ Vol⁵⁹(---) III Aug(ustae).*
 a II^e-III^e siècle.⁶⁰

24) *CIL* VIII 2628. Lambèse, autel situé près des ruines du temple de Minerve.
Ioui / Optimo Maximo / Heliopolitano / Sanctissimo / sacrum. / P(ublius) Seius P(ublili) f(ilius) Arnensis Rufus⁶¹ / Teate Marrucinorum, / praef(ectus) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae).
 a II^e ou III^e siècle, Y. Le Bohec penche plutôt pour le II^e siècle.⁶²

25) M. Le Glay, *L'Africa romana* 5 (1988), 137 (*AE* 1988, 1122). Lambèse, petit autel en calcaire blanc, trouvé près des sanctuaires du cardo nord de la ville.
Soli sacr(um) / [[L(ucius) Ouinius / Pudens Ca/pella⁶³, leg(atus) / Aug(usti) pr(o) pr(aetore)]]].
 Indéterminée: III^e siècle?⁶⁴

⁵⁷ Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 166.

⁵⁸ Ce personnage, est probablement un gradé de la *III Augusta*. Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 302.

⁵⁹ Les éditeurs de *CIL* suivi par G. Forni suggère *Vol(ubilis)* comme patrie. M. P. Speidel incline pour *uol(untarius)*.

⁶⁰ Selon P. Merlat, la dédicace est antérieure à 238, date de la dissolution du nom de la légion. Pour G. Forni, la dédicace date de la seconde moitié de second siècle.

⁶¹ Dobson 1978, op.cit. (n.40), 29; 355.

⁶² Le Bohec 1989, op.cit. (n.11), 134.

⁶³ *PIR*², O 189.

⁶⁴ Thomasson 1996, op.cit. (n.33), N 75; H.-G. Kolbe, *Die Statthalter Numidiens von Gallien bis Konstantin (268-320)* (München – Berlin 1962), 1 n°7.

26) M. Le Glay, *Bulletin Archéologique du Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques* 1954 [1956]), 172-174 (AE 1957, 88). Autel en calcaire blanc trouvé chez un particulier et semblant provenir de Lambèse.

*I(oui) O(ptimo), D(olicheno)*⁶⁵ / *Soli inuict(o), / L(ucius) Iunius / Felix, ar(morum) / cus(tos) leg(ionis) III Aug(ustae).*

a II^e-III^e siècle.

27) *CIL* VIII 17621 (D. 4483). Pierre. Vasauï

Diis conserua/toribus, I(oui) O(ptimo) M(aximo), / Mercurio, Ge/nio exercitus, / Torchoboli deo [---].

a II^e-III^e siècle.

⁶⁵ M. Le Glay développe *D(eo)*, je partage plutôt le point de vue de P. Merlat, en effet assez souvent Jupiter est invoqué avec ses deux épithètes *maximus* et *optimus*.

PRIESTHOOD AND IMPERIAL POWER
THE RELIGIOUS REFORMS OF HELIOGABALUS, 220-222 AD¹

MARTIJN ICKS

Although he occupied the Roman throne for only four years, Heliogabalus² has managed to build up a reputation which is virtually unrivalled for its infamy. The fourteen-year-old boy, who came to power in 218 AD by claiming to be the son of Caracalla, provoked both the Roman elite and the praetorian guard to such an extent that his position soon became untenable. The praetorian guard revolted and killed the young emperor, by then probably eighteen years old, in 222 AD. The elite, in the persons of Cassius Dio, Herodian and, later, the author of the *Historia Augusta*, made sure that his reputation would be blackened for centuries. History has come to know Heliogabalus as a degenerate monster. According to Edward Gibbon, the “inexpressible infamy” of the emperor’s acts surpassed that of “any other age or country.”³ Only in the last few decades have scholars adopted a more moderate view and tried to reconstruct the facts behind the fiction. Much attention has been given to the emperor’s religious reforms, most notably by G.H. Halsberghe and M. Frey.⁴ However, little has been written on the way in which Heliogabalus tried to present his power to the elite, the soldiers and the people of Rome. The importance of imperial representation has been stressed by J. Elsner, who remarks: “Power is, then, a far more complex and mysterious quality than any apparently simple manifestation of it would appear. It is as much a matter of persuading those over whom authority is wielded to collude in their subjugation.”⁵ How did Heliogabalus try to persuade his subjects to accept his rule and why did he fail so miserably, becoming one of the most mocked and despised rulers of all time? What exactly did the emperor do wrong – and what was he trying to achieve?

¹ This article is based on a poster presentation at the 2004 Impact of Empire congress in Münster, which in turn was based on my MA thesis, ‘Heliogabalus, de onoverwinnelijke priester-keizer’ (2003).

² I have chosen to refer to the emperor as Heliogabalus instead of Elagabalus or Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, as he was officially called, to avoid confusion with the god Elagabal and emperor Caracalla, whose official name was also Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

³ E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (ed. D.M. Low; Harmondsworth 1960), 73.

⁴ G.H. Halsberghe, *The Cult of Sol Invictus* (Leiden 1972); M. Frey, *Untersuchungen zur Religion und zur Religionspolitik des Kaisers Elagabal* (Stuttgart 1989).

⁵ J. Elsner, *Imperial Rome and Christian Triumph* (Oxford 1998) 53.

Many of the accusations made by ancient historians touch on all too familiar topics. Heliogabalus is said to have been bloodthirsty, cruel, immoral, lustful, effeminate, vain, decadent and mad. In most cases it is impossible to check the anecdotes about his supposedly outrageous behaviour, but their extraordinary nature renders many of the stories doubtful at best.⁶ Even if we assume there is a grain of truth in them, they are probably not the main cause of the emperor's downfall. Morality might have been important for the senate, but it was hardly a concern of the praetorian guard, which had put up with 'bad emperors' like Domitian and Commodus in the past. Leaving aside stories about Heliogabalus' sexual prowess, his extravagant banquets and his notorious preference for 'practical jokes', it seems to have been in religious matters that the young prince stirred up the most controversy. Like any Roman emperor, Heliogabalus acted as the empire's chief priest, striving to secure the favour of the gods on behalf of his subjects. However, the way in which he chose to perform his religious duties was without precedent in Roman history.

A new emperor

Contrary to what the literary sources seem to suggest, epigraphical and numismatic evidence indicates that the first years of Heliogabalus' reign were not marked by any major religious reforms. This may partially be due to the boy's lack of influence on imperial policy. Heliogabalus ruled the empire in name, but both his age and the way he had gained the throne suggest that he was little more than a puppet at first. According to Herodian, it was the boy's grandmother, Julia Maesa, who had put him forward as the rightful heir to the throne. This lady, the sister of empress Julia Domna and the aunt of emperor Caracalla, had spent a large part of her life at the imperial court. However, in 217 AD Caracalla was murdered while he was waging war on the Parthians in the east. Power fell to his praetorian prefect, Macrinus, putting a sudden and unexpected end to the Severan dynasty. Julia Domna died not long after her son. The new emperor ordered Julia Maesa to return to her native city, Emesa, in Syria.⁷ There, the local sun god Elagabal was

⁶ A famous example is the story that Heliogabalus smothered his guests at a banquet by releasing a dense rain of flowers (Scriptores Historia Augusta (Loeb), *Vita Antonini Heliogabali* 21.5). This anecdote is clearly an exaggeration of Suetonius' remark that Nero had ceilings with turning panels in the dining rooms of his palace, which he used for showering down flowers on his guests (Suetonius [Loeb], *Vita Neroni* 31.2).

⁷ Herodian (Loeb) 5.3.2.

worshipped in the form of a black, conical stone. The high priest of this sun god was Julia Maesa's grandson, Varius Avitus Bassianus, better known as Heliogabalus.⁸ The boy was the son of Julia Maesa's oldest daughter, Julia Soaemias. His father was Sextus Varius Marcellus, a man of senatorial rank who had had an impressive career in the imperial administration, but had died some time earlier.⁹

At the time of the events described, Heliogabalus was about fourteen years old.¹⁰ He performed his duties as high priest of Elagabal by dancing around the altars to the music of flutes, pipes and other instruments.¹¹ In doing so, he attracted the attention of the soldiers of Legio III Gallica, which was stationed not far from the city. Presumably, Julia Maesa spread the rumour that her grandchild was a bastard son of Caracalla and promised the legionaries money if they would revolt.¹² The soldiers may or may not have believed the story about Heliogabalus' ancestry, but they had little love or respect for Macrinus, who had put an end to Caracalla's Parthian expedition by buying off the enemy and who wanted to withhold certain privileges from new recruits.¹³ The concerns of the army were probably better served with a son of Caracalla on the throne, whether he was Caracalla's true offspring or not. On May 16th, 218 AD, the soldiers of III Gallica proclaimed Heliogabalus as the new emperor.¹⁴ Many other legions joined the uprising. Three weeks later, Macrinus was defeated and the Severan dynasty restored.¹⁵

Heliogabalus and his family arrived in Rome in the summer of 219 AD, after spending a year in the east to consolidate their power.¹⁶ During this

⁸ Herodian 5.3.3-6; *PIR*¹ IV A 1204. The name Heliogabalus is probably a Latinised contraction of the name of the Greek sun god, Helios, with the name of the Emesan sun god, Elagabal. It first turns up in the work of the fourth century-author Aurelius Victor (23.1) and may not have been used during the emperor's reign.

⁹ Cassius Dio (Loeb) 79.30.2; Herodian 5.3.3. Marcellus' grave has been found in Velitrae, bearing an inscription which lists all the administrative posts he held (Dessau, *ILS* 478 [= *CIL* X 6569]).

¹⁰ Herodian 5.3.4. This corresponds with Dio's remark that the emperor was eighteen years old at the time of his death, four years later (80.20.2).

¹¹ Herodian 5.3.8.

¹² Herodian 5.3.9-11. Cassius Dio gives a slightly different version, which places the initiative for the coup with Gannys, a man who had been reared by Maesa and was Soaemias' husband (79.30.2-31.4; 80.6.1-2). However, the notion that the Emesan women had no part whatsoever in the instigation of the revolt does not seem very credible.

¹³ Cassius Dio 79.28.2-3; 29.1.

¹⁴ Cassius Dio 79.32.2.

¹⁵ Cassius Dio 79.34.5-40.5; Herodian 5.4.1-12.

¹⁶ The exact date of arrival is unknown, but Alexandrian coins indicate that it must have been before the 29th of August, since the coins already show Julia Paula as the emperor's wife before the start of

period, much emphasis had been put on military matters. The victory over Macrinus was celebrated on coins with legends like MARS VICTOR, VICTORIA AVG(VSTI) and VICTOR(IA) ANTONINI AVG(VSTI), the last one referring to Heliogabalus' official imperial name.¹⁷ Just like Caracalla, the emperor styled himself Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, implying to be not only the son of Caracalla, but also the legitimate heir of the Antonines.¹⁸ Many coins also stressed the unity and loyalty of the army, bearing legends like CONCORDIA MILIT(VM), FIDES EXERCITVS and FIDES MILITVM.¹⁹ The fact that these legends appeared mostly on silver coins, which were used to pay the troops, suggests that the message was in the first place aimed at the army. To a large extent they must have been the product of wishful thinking, since Cassius Dio mentions several pretenders who wanted to rob Heliogabalus of his newly acquired power.²⁰

When the emperor finally arrived in Rome, his position seemed relatively secure. There were no more pretenders and he had the official support of both the army and the senate. The emphasis of the reign now shifted to civic matters. Coins celebrated the beginning of a happy age (TEMPORVM FELICITAS), characterised by civil liberty and legal security for the elite (LIBERTAS AVGVSTI) and a steady grain supply for the common people (ANNONA AVGVSTI).²¹ Right upon his arrival, Heliogabalus married Julia Cornelia Paula, described by Herodian as “a woman from the most aristocratic family in Rome”.²² It seems an effort was made to make the emperor ‘fit in’. The imperial mint in Antioch minted some coins which pictured the black stone of Emesa²³, but in Rome Providentia, Mars, Fortuna and Pax usually featured on coins.²⁴ Sol was sometimes depicted as well²⁵,

the new Alexandrian year at that date: J. Vogt, *Die alexandrinischen Münzen. Grundlegung einer alexandrinischen Kaisergeschichte I* (Stuttgart 1924), 177. The *equites singulares* devoted an altar to Heliogabalus ‘ob reditum domini nostri’ on the 29th of September, 219 AD (Dessau, *ILS* 2188).

¹⁷ *BMC V*, Elagabalus, nrs. 17-22; nrs. 37*-37†; nrs. 30-37.

¹⁸ Some inscriptions date Heliogabalus' ancestry all the way back to the emperor Nerva (96-98 AD): Dessau, *ILS* 469; *AE* 1910, nr. 157.

¹⁹ *BMC V*, Elagabalus, nrs. 274-276; nrs. 10-15, 105-109; nrs. 15*-16.

²⁰ Cassius Dio 80.7.1-3.

²¹ *BMC V*, Elagabalus, nrs. 29†, 164-168; nrs. 151-153, 218-222A (LIBERTAS AVGVSTI); nrs. 126-127.

²² Herodian 5.6.1: γυναῖκα τὴν εὐγενεστάτην Ῥωμαίων; *PIR*² IV J 660.

²³ *BMC V*, Elagabalus, nrs. 273, 284-287.

²⁴ *BMC V*, Elagabalus, nrs. 99-104; nrs. 17-22; nrs. 94-96; nrs. 97-98.

²⁵ *BMC V*, Elagabalus, nrs. 93*, 408.

but with the exception of one or two coin types, it was Jupiter who was celebrated as Heliogabalus' divine champion: IOVI CONSERVATORI.²⁶

Religious reforms

Things changed at the end of 220 AD, when Heliogabalus was sixteen or seventeen years old. As Frey has remarked, all the dated imperial inscriptions of 218 and 219 AD just give the emperor the traditional qualifications *pontifex maximus*, *tribunicia potestate*, *consul* and *pater patriae*. With one exception, this goes for the known inscriptions of 220 AD, as well. However, in 221 and 222 AD, a new, unprecedented title appeared.²⁷ The emperor became *sacerdos amplissimus dei invicti Solis Elagabali*, 'most elevated priest of the invincible Sun god Elagabal'.²⁸ He issued coins, both in Rome and in Antioch, which showed him sacrificing at an altar. The iconography of the scene is standard, except that the emperor does not wear a Roman toga, but a pair of apparently translucent trousers, fastened with a girdle, and a long cloak. It is clear that we are seeing Heliogabalus depicted as high priest of Elagabal, not as *pontifex maximus*, since the legends on the coins often read SACERD(OS) DEI SOLIS ELAGAB(ALI), SVMMVS SACERDOS AVG(VSTVS) or INVICTVS SACERDOS AVG(VSTVS).²⁹

A small, but remarkable change was also made to the imperial portrait on the obverse of some coins. Something which is usually described as a 'horn' protrudes from the emperor's forehead.³⁰ E. Krenzel has remarked that the 'horn' only appears on coins which show either a sacrificial scene on the reverse or celebrate the appointment of the new consuls – an event on which sacrifices were made as well. This strongly suggests that the significance of the 'horn' was religious. As Krenzel has argued, the object

²⁶ BMC V, Elagabalus, nrs. 138-142; RIC IV.II, Elagabalus, nr. 91. One type of *antoninianus*, minted in Rome in 219 AD, already mentions the black stone of Emesa as *conservator Augusti* (H.R. Baldus, 'Das "Vorstellungsgemälde" des Heliogabal. Ein bislang unerkanntes numismatisches Zeugnis', *Chiron* 19 (1989) 467-476, at 471; see 470 n. 15 for the dating). The same goes for a Roman coin which Mattingly dates in 219 AD (BMC V, Elagabalus, nr. 104*), although this date may be incorrect (BMC V. Text, ccxxxvii). It seems that the administration already experimented with presenting Elagabal as the emperor's divine protector before the god was officially elevated to the head of the Roman pantheon.

²⁷ Frey, *Untersuchungen*, 86 n. 1 and 2.

²⁸ AE 1961, nr. 79; 1964, nr. 269; 1975, nr. 775; CIL VII 585; XVI 139-141.

²⁹ BMC V, Elagabalus, nrs. 225-228, 332, 359-360, 364§; nrs. 230-233, 333-334; nrs. 209-213, 330, 350, 368.

³⁰ BMC V, Elagabalus, nrs. 332-334, 444, 445, 454-457†.

shows a remarkable likeness to the end of a dried bull's penis.³¹ Several examples of gods and priests wearing a human phallus on their head are known from antiquity, so it is quite possible that Heliogabalus indeed wore a bull's penis on certain religious occasions. According to Krenzel, the penis symbolised the strength which Elagabal transferred to his high priest.³²

We can only guess what the Romans thought about this curious change in imperial style, but it is hard to believe they looked upon it favourably. Dio, at least, was not amused. To him, Heliogabalus' offence consisted, "not in his introducing a foreign god into Rome or in his exalting him in very strange ways, but in his placing him even before Jupiter himself and causing himself to be voted his high priest".³³ Coins from 220 AD onwards indeed show either the black stone of Emesa or an anthropomorphic Sol as CONSERVATOR AVG(VSTI).³⁴ After 220 AD, Jupiter is no longer depicted on coins.

Probably around the same time as he began to style himself *sacerdos amplissimus*, the emperor divorced his wife Julia Paula and married Aquilia Severa instead.³⁵ Both Cassius Dio and Herodian agree that Severa was a Vestal Virgin; according to Dio, she was even the Vestal Virgins' high priestess.³⁶ Supposedly, Heliogabalus explained his motives for marrying her by expressing the wish that "godlike children" might spring from this union between a high priest and a high priestess.³⁷ Perhaps, the emperor planned to become the founding father of a whole 'godlike' dynasty of

³¹ E. Krenzel, 'Das sogenannte "Horn" des Elagabal – Die Spitze eines Stierpenis. Eine Umdeutung als Ergebnis fachübergreifender Forschung', *Jahrbuch für Numismatik und Geldgeschichte* 47 (1997), 53-72, at 56-62.

³² Krenzel 1997, op.cit. (n. 30), 64-72. On p. 72, n. 64 Krenzel gives an interesting parallel: during the vegetation festival in honour of the mountain god near the Hethitic city of Zippalanda, the king was offered the penis of a sacrificial bull to magically give him strength (V. Haas, *Hethitische Berggötter und hurritische Steindämonen* [Mainz 1982], 56-58).

³³ Cassius Dio 80.11.1: οὐχ ὅτι θεόν τινα ξενικὸν ἐς τὴν Ῥώμην ἐσήγαγεν, οὐδ' ὅτι καινοπρεπέστατα αὐτὸν ἐμεγάλυνεν, ἀλλ' ὅτι καὶ πρὸ τοῦ Διὸς αὐτοῦ ἤγαγεν αὐτόν, καὶ ὅτι καὶ ἱερέα αὐτοῦ ἑαυτὸν ψηφιστῆναι. In other passages, Dio uses the word ψηφισθῆναι to indicate a vote by the senate (79.16.3; 80.8.1), which confirms that the *sacerdos*-title became an official part of Heliogabalus' imperial titles.

³⁴ BMC V, Elagabalus, nrs. 197-200.

³⁵ Alexandrian coins show that Julia Paula was still empress after the 29th of August, 220 AD. Heliogabalus' marriage to Annia Faustina took place before the 29th of August, 221 AD (Vogt 1924, op.cit. [n. 14], 176-177). The marriage to Aquilia Severa must have occurred between these two dates.

³⁶ Cassius Dio 80.9.3 (ἀρχιερεῖας); Herodian 5.6.2.

³⁷ Cassius Dio 80.9.3 (θεοπρεπεῖς παῖδες).

priest-emperors, destined to rule Rome after him.³⁸ However, the marriage probably also had a symbolic meaning. By marrying the most important priestess of Rome, Heliogabalus forged a strong and personal bond between his own Emesan cult and traditional Roman state religion. From now on, the two were linked inseparably.

The god Elagabal was also married, perhaps at the same time as the emperor. His bride was the Punic goddess Urania, known to the Romans as Dea Caelestis.³⁹ Herodian also mentions an earlier marriage between Elagabal and the warrior goddess Athena, which was apparently dissolved because Athena was too war-like for the taste of Elagabal.⁴⁰ A capital found on the Forum Romanum shows the stone of Emesa flanked by two goddesses, one of which is recognisable as Athena.⁴¹ An inscription from the Spanish city of Córdoba mentions Elagabal, the oriental goddess Athena Allath and the Cyprian goddess Kypris Charinazaia, who became Urania in Carthage.⁴² This confirms a connection between Elagabal and Athena, but renders the notion of their divorce doubtful. Perhaps, the god had two wives at the same time. M. Pietrzykowski interprets Elagabal, Kypris Charinazaia and Athena Allath as a triad, meant to replace the traditional Roman triad of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva.⁴³ This idea seems plausible, although the evidence is suggestive at best.⁴⁴

From the end of 220 AD onwards, the invincible sun god and his high priest were highly visible in Rome. Dio mentions that Heliogabalus frequently appeared in public in his priestly vestments.⁴⁵ Herodian gives a detailed description of the daily sacrifices for Elagabal, an event of exotic splendour in which many cattle were slaughtered, cymbals and drums

³⁸ This would perhaps explain the emperor's alleged, somewhat enigmatic wish to share the consulate "with a real son" (μετὰ γνησίου υἱοῦ) in the year after he would share it with his adopted son Alexander (Cassius Dio 80.19.1^a).

³⁹ Cassius Dio 80.12.1; Herodian 5.6.4-5.

⁴⁰ Herodian 5.6.3-4.

⁴¹ F. Studniczka, 'Ein Pfeilercapitell auf dem Forum', *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Römische Abteilung* 16 (1901), 273-282, at 274-278, Tafel XII.

⁴² *SEG* IV 164. The name Kypris Charinazaia has been reconstructed by H. Seyrig in: 'Antiquités syriennes 95. Le culte du Soleil en Syrie à l'époque romaine', *Syria* 48 (1971), 337-373, at 370.

⁴³ M. Pietrzykowski, 'Die Religionspolitik des Kaisers Elagabal', *ANRW* II 16.3 (1986), 1806-1825, at 1817.

⁴⁴ Coins of the emperor's mother, Julia Soaemias, have either Juno Regina or Venus Caelestis on the reverse (*BMC* V, Elagabalus, nrs. 39-43; nrs. 44-60; *RIC* IV.II, Elagabalus, nr. 241). Since the coins cannot be dated to an exact year, the Juno Regina coins might be from the period before the official introduction of the new triad, and the Venus Caelestis coins from the period 220-222 AD.

⁴⁵ Cassius Dio 80.11.1.

sounded and the emperor danced around the altars with several women. Supposedly, the entire senate and equestrian order were present and religious tasks were performed by military prefects and important officials.⁴⁶ A big, splendid temple was devoted to Elagabal on the Palatine, while a second temple was located in the suburbs.⁴⁷ As Herodian records, the god travelled from the Palatine to the suburb temple at midsummer, seated in a chariot drawn by six horses and led by the emperor himself, who held the bridles of the horses and walked backwards all the way to keep facing his divine champion.⁴⁸ The images of all other gods, precious temple dedications and all the imperial standards went in front of the chariot, which was followed by the cavalry and the army.⁴⁹ According to the author of the *Historia Augusta*, Heliogabalus intended to collect all the sacred objects of the Romans, like the fire of Vesta and the Palladium, in the temple of Elagabal.⁵⁰ This may or may not have been true, but the overall message must have been clear enough at any rate: Sol Invictus Elagabal was the new chief deity of the Roman Empire.

Priesthood and imperial power

For the one and a half years that Heliogabalus' religious reforms lasted, resistance was ever growing. The praetorian guard soon grew weary of the young emperor, who presented himself in such an exotic, 'un-Roman' fashion. Heliogabalus did not continue Caracalla's military policy at all, as they had probably hoped. Instead, he seemed entirely focused on the worship of his oriental sun god.⁵¹ According to Herodian, Julia Maesa made an

⁴⁶ Herodian 5.5.8-10.

⁴⁷ Herodian 5.5.8; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 3.4. According to A. Scheithauer (*Kaiserliche Bautätigkeit in Rom* [Stuttgart 2000], 194 n. 70), there is a striking likeness between the Palatine temple of Elagabal, depicted on a medallion from the reign of Heliogabalus (*Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* III [Roma 1996], 384 fig. 9), and the temple of Jupiter Victor, depicted on one of Trajan's coins (*BMC* III, Trajanus, nr. 863 [Pl. 32,8]). This leads him to the conclusion that the temple of Jupiter Victor was rededicated to Elagabal. However, the differences between the two depicted temples are too great to warrant such a definite claim.

⁴⁸ Herodian 5.6.6-8. A similar scene is depicted on coins, but without the emperor and with only four horses: *BMC* V, Elagabalus, nrs. 197-198.

⁴⁹ Herodian 5.6.8. Herodian mentions that the procession took place each year, but if it started after the religious reforms, it cannot have occurred more than once, in the summer of 221 AD.

⁵⁰ *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 3.4-5. Herodian mentions that all cult objects were restored to their original temples after Heliogabalus' death (6.1.3).

⁵¹ Perhaps, Heliogabalus tried to placate the guard by paying the soldiers extra money. According to Dio, the emperor complained that he couldn't please the praetorians, although he kept giving them "so much" (τοσαῦτα; Cassius Dio 80.18.4).

attempt to moderate her grandson's course of action. She persuaded him to leave wordly affairs in the hands of his cousin, the later emperor Severus Alexander.⁵² On or around the 26th of June, 221 AD, Heliogabalus adopted Alexander as his son and heir.⁵³ He divorced Aquilia Severa and married Annia Faustina, a noble woman from the line of Marcus Aurelius.⁵⁴ However, the marriage was obviously not to his liking, for he soon discarded Annia Faustina and took back the controversial Aquilia Severa.⁵⁵ Meanwhile, the praetorian guard looked ever more favourably upon Alexander, which caused rising tensions between the emperor and his 'son'. On the 13th of March, 222 AD, the praetorians revolted and killed Heliogabalus. His memory was cursed by the senate; Alexander became emperor instead.⁵⁶

The affairs of the period 220-222 AD beg the question why Heliogabalus persisted in his deviant religious behaviour, even after it had become clear this would lead to his downfall. Religious conviction must have played a major role in the emperor's unflagging devotion to Elagabal. The fact that the infamous religious reforms occurred as soon as Heliogabalus was old enough to put his own mark on imperial policy is telling. Yet other considerations may have played a role as well; probably not for Heliogabalus himself, but for the people behind the throne whose fate was connected to that of the emperor. After all, even before 220 AD, Heliogabalus' position cannot have been too stable. He was a fourteen-year-old boy when he gained the throne, with a dynastic claim that was no more than fiction. After the victory over Macrinus, he had accomplished no significant military triumphs, nor had he done anything else to distinguish himself and build up a favourable reputation. In terms of prestige, the new ruler cannot have made much of an impression.

The religious reforms at the end of 220 AD offered a good opportunity to strengthen Heliogabalus' position. By presenting the very young and

⁵² Herodian 5.7.1-3.

⁵³ Cassius Dio 80.17.2-3; Herodian 5.7.4; Fink, R.O., A.S. Hoey, W.F. Snyder, 'The Feriale Duranum', *Yale Classical Studies* 7 (1940), 1-222, at 141.

⁵⁴ Cassius Dio 80.5.4; 9.4; Herodian 5.6.2; *PIR*² A 710. Vogt dates the marriage before the 29th of August, 221 AD (see note 31).

⁵⁵ Cassius Dio 80.9.4. The second marriage to Aquilia Severa took place before the end of 221 AD (Vogt 1924, op.cit. [n. 14], 177).

⁵⁶ Cassius Dio 80.20.1-2; Herodian 5.8.5-10; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Vita Ant. Heliog.* 16.5-17.4; 17.7. According to Dio, Heliogabalus defeated Macrinus on June 8, 218 AD (79.39.1) and reigned for three years, nine months and four days counting from that day (80.3.3), which means he perished on March 13, 222 AD.

inexperienced emperor as a faithful servant and priest of a very powerful god, Heliogabalus' advisors hit the mark. In this way the reign could be provided with a solid religious foundation. However, their policy was weakened by the emperor himself, who devoted himself to a local god who was little known in large parts of the empire: the Emesan Elagabal. It is interesting that most of the coins with religious themes do not show the god Elagabal, but the emperor, sacrificing in his oriental priestly garb.⁵⁷ Even when the god *does* feature on coins, it is always in connection to his earthly servant. Elagabal was the *conservator Augusti*⁵⁸; the emperor's invincible, divine protector who ruled supreme over the Roman pantheon. Heliogabalus, on his part, functioned as the god's *invictus sacerdos Augustus*⁵⁹; the invincible priest-emperor who looked after the fortune of the empire by securing divine favour. There is no conclusive proof that Heliogabalus had divine status himself, as his nickname suggests, but he *did* have a powerful, personal god to look after him and his subjects.

Ironically, the attempt to enhance Heliogabalus' prestige by presenting him as the high priest of a new religious order only hastened his downfall. The violation of sacred Roman traditions earned the emperor nothing but scorn and hate. Besides, the cult of the Syrian Elagabal, with its aniconic cult image and its abundant rituals, was clearly too alien for the Romans to identify with. The ultimate fault probably lay with Heliogabalus himself, who seemed unwilling to compromise in religious matters and was first and foremost concerned with the worship of his god. The boy's sincere devotion to Elagabal conflicted with the strategic goals of his advisors, causing the new representation to fail. However, the priest-emperor from Emesa was not the first Roman ruler whose divine connections were stressed, nor would he be the last. In the turmoil of the crisis of the third century, when personal achievements became less and less a means of distinction, many emperors would choose a similar path.

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⁵⁷ The *BMC* has 31 types of gold and silver coins with Heliogabalus as high priest in the categories 220-222 AD, 221 AD and 222 AD (nrs. 209-213, 225-228, 230-233, 256-263, 268-270, 330, 332, 333, 338-341). In the same categories, we only find ten types depicting Sol or the black stone (nrs. 197-200, 240-245).

⁵⁸ *BMC* V, Elagabalus, nrs. 197, 198.

⁵⁹ *BMC* V, Elagabalus, nrs. 209-213, 330, 350, 368.

IMPERIAL PRIESTESSES, A PRELIMINARY SURVEY*

EMILY A. HEMELRIJK

The third edition of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* mentions as one of the major differences between Greek and Roman religious practice that Greek cities had both male and female priests, whereas in Rome “priests are (with the exception of the Vestal Virgins) males”.¹ This remark is surprising. How is it to be reconciled with the hundreds of inscriptions of priestesses serving the cults of goddesses such as Ceres and Venus, and the imperial cult in Roman cities all over the Empire? Were they not part of Roman religion? Should we perhaps understand that when ‘Roman religion’ is mentioned – or the religious practice of ‘Rome’ as opposed to ‘Greece’ – only the city of Rome is meant? Yet, even in that case the belief that, apart from the Vestals, Roman priests were exclusively male, can be easily proved false: for example, from the late third century B.C. onwards there were priestesses of Ceres in the city of Rome.²

The idea that Roman priests were exclusively male is perhaps caused by the tacit assumption not only that Roman religion is the religion of the city of Rome, but more particularly that it is the religion of Rome in the early Republican period, allegedly still untainted by foreign influences. Indeed, when early Republican Rome is taken as the standard, female priesthoods (with the exception of the Vestals) may be ignored as foreign innovations or as restricted to the *sacra peregrina*.³ But in this way one takes the small, backward village of Rome in the early Republic as the ‘real’ Rome, ignoring the large cosmopolitan city of late Republican and imperial times. Moreover, this view excludes the cities of Italy and the Empire. As in other aspects of city life, great differences in religious practice existed between the capital and the other cities of Italy and the provinces; yet, together with Rome, they

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¹ The lemma by J.A. North on “priests (Greek and Roman)” in: S. Hornblower – A. Spawforth (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford 1996³), 1245.

² See, for instance, B.S. Spaeth, *The Roman Goddess Ceres* (Austin 1996), 103-123.

³ O. De Cazanove, ‘Exesto. L’incapacité sacrificielle des femmes à Rome (à propos de Plutarque *Quaest. Rom.* 85)’, *Phoenix* 41 (1987), 168: about priestesses of Liber, Juno, Ceres and Bona Dea, J. Scheid, ‘D’indispensables étrangères. Les rôles religieux des femmes à Rome’, in: P. Schmitt Pantel (ed.), *Histoire des Femmes en Occident I: L’Antiquité* (Rome 1991), 413-414 and M. Beard – J. North – S. Price, *Religions of Rome I* (Cambridge 1998), 70 and 96-97: about priestesses of Ceres, Bacchus and Magna Mater in Republican Rome.

make up the complex system that may be called ‘Roman religion’. In this system, influence was no one-way process, from the city of Rome to the provinces, but went both ways: the initiative came not only from the capital but also from the cities in the provinces. Therefore, we should not generalise from the religious practice of the city of Rome to ‘Roman religion’ in general, nor take the religious practice of Rome as the standard to judge the cities of Italy and the provinces.⁴

One of the fields in which the differences between Rome and the cities of the Roman Empire come to the fore is the imperial cult. Though this difference concerns various aspects of the cult – for example, the cult of the emperor during his lifetime⁵ –, I shall restrict myself to the role of women as priestesses and to the western part of the Roman Empire. In the first three centuries A.D. priestesses of the imperial cult seem to have been quite common both in the cities of Italy and in those of the Latin-speaking western provinces: I have collected a *corpus* of 258 inscriptions testifying to the presence of priestesses of the imperial cult in Italy and in the provinces of Spain, Northern Africa, Gaul (especially Gallia Narbonensis), the Alps and Germania Superior.⁶ This relatively large number of inscriptions makes the priesthood of the imperial cult by far the most widely attested public office for women in the Latin West. By contrast, in the city of Rome no priestesses of the imperial cult have been found;⁷ this may be the reason why they are so often overlooked in modern studies of Roman religion.

⁴ Confusion of the two concepts: ‘religion of Rome’ and ‘Roman religion’, also appears in the seminal work of Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.3). Though in their preface (p.xi) the authors define their subject as “the changes in religious life at Rome”, the Empire is not wholly ignored. Their Romano-centric approach, however, leads to a misunderstanding of the role of the *flaminica* in the imperial cult and of the possible difference between *sacerdotes* and *flamines* in the western provinces (p. 357).

⁵ Cassius Dio, 51.20.8 remarks that, in contrast with the rest of the Empire, no emperor received a cult during his lifetime in the capital or in Italy generally. This is generally accepted for Rome, see Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.3), 349, but for Italy it is plainly contradicted by the epigraphic evidence showing priests and priestesses of both living and deified emperors and empresses; for this difference between Rome and the other cities of Italy and the Empire in general, see S.R.F. Price, *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1984), 75; S.R.F. Price, ‘From Noble Funerals to Divine Cult: the Consecration of Roman Emperors’, in: D. Cannadine – S.R.F. Price (eds.), *Rituals of Royalty. Power and Ceremonials in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge 1987), 84-85 and I. Gradel, *Emperor Worship in Roman Religion* (Oxford 2002), 73-91.

⁶ No priestesses of the imperial cult have been found in Britannia, Gallia Belgica and Germania Inferior. My *corpus* includes priestesses of the imperial cult in the Latin-speaking western provinces only; inscriptions mentioning *flaminicae* and female *sacerdotes* of the imperial cult from the provinces to the east of Italy such as Macedonia, Dalmatia and the Danube provinces have not been taken into account.

⁷ I here omit the few women of the imperial family known to have served the cult of the deified emperor. More about them at the end of this paper.

Due to the relative lack of investigation,⁸ old opinions and prejudices about the status of imperial priestesses in Roman society have remained unchallenged resulting in much confusion as regards the nature of their priesthood: were they priestesses themselves or only the wives of priests (or perhaps both)? How should we explain the various titles used for them? What was the social status of an imperial priestess and what benefits did she reap from her priesthood? What did she actually do during her year as a priestess of the imperial cult and what was her relationship to the empress(es) whose cult she served? Full discussion of all these questions is beyond the scope of this paper. Here, I only intend to give a preliminary overview of the main problems, touching briefly upon these questions. After surveying the main titles used for imperial priestesses and the confusion these titles have caused in modern studies, I shall briefly go into the social status of the priestesses and the benefits they received from holding an imperial priesthood. Finally, I shall return to the relation between the capital and the towns of Italy and the western provinces by taking a closer look at the relationship between the priestess and the empress whose cult she served.

Priestly titles

The main titles used for imperial priestesses, *flaminica* and *sacerdos Augustae* or *divae Augustae*, have given rise to confusion in modern studies of two different kinds. First, the difference between *flaminica* and *sacerdos* is believed to follow the same rules – and therefore to be explained by the same theories – as the corresponding titles of male imperial priests: *flamen* and *sacerdos*. Second, modern confusion of the most common title for an imperial priestess, *flaminica*, with that of the *flaminica Dialis* of Republican Rome has led to a misunderstanding of the status of imperial priestesses and of the nature of their priesthood.

⁸ The few studies devoted exclusively to imperial priestesses chiefly present the epigraphic evidence of a specific province or region, see L. Ladjimi Sebaï, 'A propos du flaminat féminin dans les provinces africaines', *Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'École Française de Rome, Antiquité* 102.2 (1990), 651-686; W. Spickermann, 'Priesterinnen im römischen Gallien, Germanien und den Alpenprovinzen (1.-3. Jahrhundert n. Chr.)', *Historia* 43 (1994), 189-240 and, for the same region, A. Bielman – R. Frei-Stolba, 'Les flaminiques du culte impérial: contribution au rôle de la femme sous l'Empire Romain', *Études de Lettres* (1994.2), 113-126; D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West. Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire*, III 2: *The Provincial Priesthood*, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 146 (Leiden 2002) is disappointing in paying little attention to female priests.

To account for the use of the titles *flamen* and *sacerdos* for imperial priests modern studies have suggested various, often contradictory, theories. Thus, for instance, a chronological development has been proposed from *sacerdos* to *flamen* and *vice versa*. The difference between the titles has been explained by the different degree of Romanization between the provinces with its concomitant difference in religious buildings (a *sacerdos* in newly conquered provinces where the imperial cult centred on an altar; a *flamen* in Romanized provinces that had a temple). And the difference has been believed to reflect the distinction between the cult of the living ruler (served by a *sacerdos*) and the cult of a *divus* (served by a *flamen*).⁹ None of these explanations, however, is sufficiently supported by the evidence,¹⁰ and strict adherence to any of them stretches the evidence, thus leading to unwarranted conclusions.¹¹

⁹ Fishwick combines the last-mentioned theories by suggesting that a *sacerdos* served the living emperor in less Romanized provinces where the cult centered on an altar, whereas the *flamen* served the cult of the deceased, consecrated emperors in Romanized provinces that had a temple, see D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West. Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire* I, EPRO 108 (Leiden 1987), 165-166 (with references to earlier studies); D. Fishwick, 'The Development of Provincial Ruler Worship in the Western Roman Empire', *ANRW* 2.16.2 (1978), 1214-1215; D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West. Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire* III 1: *Provincial Cult: Institution and Evolution*, *Religions in the Graeco-Roman World* 145 (Leiden 2002), 109-110 (about provincial priests) and Fishwick 2002, op.cit. (n.8), 294-295; see also Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.3), 357 and R. Étienne, *Le culte imperial dans la péninsule Iberique d'Auguste à Dioclétien* (Paris 1958), 190-192. This theory is based on the distinction between a *flamen* and a *sacerdos* in Republican Rome: whereas a *flamen* served an official state cult, a *sacerdos* was restricted to cults of non-Roman origin, such as that of Ceres and Magna Mater, see Fishwick 1978, op.cit. (this note), 1207; Fishwick 1987, op.cit. (this note), 132; 165; and M. Beard, 'Priesthood in the Roman Republic', in: M. Beard – J. North (eds.), *Pagan Priests. Religion and Power in the Ancient World* (London 1990), 43-47.

¹⁰ For a brief survey – and refutation – of earlier theories, see J. Deininger, *Die Provinziallandtage der römischen Kaiserzeit von Augustus bis zum Ende des dritten Jahrhunderts nach Chr.*, *Vestigia* 6 (München 1965), 148-149; also D. Ladage, *Städtische Priester- und Kultämter in Lateinischen Westen des Imperium Romanum zur Kaiserzeit* (Köln 1971), 41-46 and J.A. Delgado Delgado, *Elites y organización de la religión en las provincias Romanas de la Bética y las Mauritánias: sacerdotes y sacerdocios* (Oxford 1998), 83.

¹¹ For example, because of the evidence contradicting his belief that a *sacerdos* served the cult of the living emperor and a *flamen* that of a *divus*, Fishwick has to take recourse to exceptions and strained reasoning. For instance, when mentioning the change of the title of the provincial priest from *flamen* to *sacerdos* in Africa Proconsularis under Trajan, he concludes that there was no change in the nature of the worship, which included the deified emperors despite the title *sacerdos*, see Fishwick 2002, op.cit. (n.8), 188; 200. Elsewhere, he has to concede that, despite the use of the title *flamen*, the cult was "directed to the living emperor in association with deified, deceased rulers", see Fishwick 2002, op.cit. (n.8), 213. In spite of this, he draws conclusions about the content of the cult that are based only on the use of the title *flamen* or *sacerdos*, see for instance, Fishwick 1987, op.cit. (n.9), 165-166 and Fishwick 2002, op.cit. (n.8), 166.

In these studies the titles of female priests – if mentioned at all – are forced into the theories explaining the titles of their male counterparts. However, when we take a fresh look at the evidence for female priests, a distinct pattern emerges. Apart from the overall preference for *flaminica* (220 inscriptions mention a *flaminica*, but only 38 a *sacerdos* of the imperial cult), there is a marked regional difference in the use of these titles. The 38 inscriptions mentioning *sacerdotes* of the imperial cult are found exclusively in Italy (28) and in the Spanish provinces (10), especially Baetica.¹² No other difference between these titles can be detected. Despite suggestions in modern studies that a *flaminica* served the cult of the deified empress and a female *sacerdos* that of the living one (and *vice versa*), there are no indications that the titles had any bearing on the content of the cult. Inscriptions mentioning the object of their cult seem rather randomly divided over the living and deified empresses showing *flaminicae* and female *sacerdotes* occupied with the worship of both of them.¹³ Also as regards their spread over time and the social status of the priestesses no distinction can be made.¹⁴ Therefore, it seems most likely that their use is connected with regional, or local, preference only and that they were, in fact, synonyms. It may be asked whether the same may hold for the corresponding titles of male imperial priests.

The second problem concerns the title *flaminica* for a priestess of the imperial cult. Earlier studies take it for granted that a *flaminica* of the imperial cult was not a priestess, but the wife of a *flamen* and derived her title from his, like the *flaminica Dialis* of Republican Rome. It goes without saying that these studies regard her title as purely honorary.¹⁵ Although this view is now mostly abandoned, the belief that the *flamen* and *flaminica* of the imperial cult were, as a rule, husband and wife, and that the position and office of the wife was to some extent dependent on that of her husband is

¹² I do not include the female *sacerdotes* of the imperial cult in the provinces to the east of Italy such as Dalmatia, Macedonia and the Danube provinces.

¹³ Ladage 1971, op.cit. (n.10), 45-46: a *sacerdos* of the living empress and a *flaminica* of her deified predecessor(s). For the opposite view, see G. Grether, 'Livia and the Imperial Cult', *American Journal of Philology* 67 (1946), 249-250 who believes that a *flaminica* was "more common for a priestess of the living" and a *sacerdos* "for a priestess of the dead and consecrated empress"; for this view see also F. Geiger, *De Sacerdotibus Augustorum Municipalibus* (Halle 1913), 3-5. Of the 86 inscriptions of my corpus that mention the object of their cult, 33 refer to a *flaminica*, and 11 to a female *sacerdos*, serving the cult of a living empress. As regards the cult of the deified empress(es) 18 *flaminicae* are mentioned and 24 female *sacerdotes*.

¹⁴ For a detailed discussion of the evidence, see my article, E.A. Hemelrijk, 'Priestesses of the Imperial Cult in the Latin West: Titles and Function', *Antiquité Classique* 74 (2005), 137-170.

¹⁵ For an example, see Deininger 1965, op.cit. (n.10), 41; 109; 125f.; 154.

still widely held.¹⁶ However, apart from ignoring female *sacerdotes* of the imperial cult (who do not fit into the supposed pattern of a *flamen* married to a *flaminica*), these studies have to strain the evidence to the utmost to uphold their a-priori conclusion. This has led to confused and often (self-) contradictory opinions as regards the status of imperial priestesses and the nature of their office. For instance, in his discussion of 75 *flamines provinciae* and 12 *flaminicae provinciae* from Hispania Citerior G. Alföldy suggests that, as a rule, the wife of a *flamen provinciae* received the title *flaminica provinciae*, but because of the insufficiency of the evidence he has to allow for exceptions.¹⁷ D. Ladage somewhat half-heartedly assumes that the priesthood of a *flaminica* was independent of that of a *flamen*, who was not necessarily her husband, but that, for practical purposes, wives of *flamines* were often appointed as *flaminicae*. Similarly, Fishwick wavers between the notion that a *flaminica* was “usually, if not necessarily, the wife of the *flamen*” and the idea that “there is nothing to show that the *flaminica* was by definition the wife of the *flamen*”, which leads to an unclear and inconsistent view of the status and office of an imperial priestess.¹⁸ Despite the fact that his own study shows that in Gaul, Germania and the Alps only very few (namely three) *flaminicae* were married to a *flamen*, W. Spickermann assumes that the wife of a *flamen provinciae* had the “Rang” of a *flaminica provinciae*, but that not every *flaminica* was the wife of a *flamen*. Similarly, M. Clauss believes that the wife of a provincial priest received the “Rang” of a *flaminica* suggesting that when the provincial priest was unmarried, some other woman could be elected to the priesthood.¹⁹ Only R. Étienne assumes that imperial priestesses held their office in their own right, remarking that “les flaminiques municipales possèdent une dignité indépendante de tout lien conjugal”.²⁰

Yet, when one looks at the evidence, the notion that the *flamen* and *flaminica* of the imperial cult were, as a rule, husband and wife, is

¹⁶ See, for instance, Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.3), 357 and the studies mentioned in the following notes.

¹⁷ G. Alföldy, *Flamines Provinciae Hispaniae Citerioris* (Madrid 1973), 49-53. For a similar view see S. Panzram, *Stadt und Elite. Tarraco, Corduba und Augusta Emerita zwischen Republik und Spätantike*, Historia Einzelschriften 161 (Stuttgart 2002), 53.

¹⁸ Ladage 1971, op.cit. (n.10), 117; Fishwick 1987, op.cit. (n.9), 166; 293. In Fishwick 2002, op.cit. (n.8), 97; 147; 208; 226; 306 there seems to be a development in his thinking about female imperial priesthood towards an independent office, but this is not consistent (see p. 228 n. 27).

¹⁹ Spickermann 1994, op.cit. (n.8), 192; 228-229, M. Clauss, *Kaiser und Gott. Herrscherkult im römischen Reich* (Stuttgart – Leipzig 1999), 407.

²⁰ Étienne 1958, op.cit. (n.9), 247; see also 169-171; 246.

unfounded: in my *corpus* of 258 inscriptions only 26 *flaminicae* are known to have been the wives of *flamines*. Of course, more *flaminicae* may have been married to *flamines* whose names or titles are lost, but the evidence unmistakably suggests that, in the Latin West, priestly couples formed only a small minority among imperial priests.²¹ Why, then, is the theory so persistent that the *flamen* and *flaminica* were, as a rule, husband and wife and that the priesthood of the wife depended on that of her husband?

The main reason seems to be the supposed analogy between the imperial *flamines* and those of Republican Rome. According to the reigning opinion the imperial flamine was modelled on the priesthood of the *flamines* of Republican Rome, especially that of the *flamen Dialis*.²² Yet, though the titles *flamen* and *flaminica* for priests of the imperial cult are obviously borrowed from the Republican priesthood, the similarity between the two is highly superficial: like the Republican flamine the imperial flamine is devoted to one specific deity (but a very different one) and some – but only some – of the honours and privileges, and as far as we know none of the restrictions, of the Republican *flamines* were transferred to the imperial flamine. In defence of the analogy some scholars refer to the *lex de flamonio* of the *provincia Narbonensis* in which the privileges of the provincial *flamen* and the honours and restrictions of his wife are set down.²³ However, there are two objections. First, the rules concerning the wife of the provincial *flamen* correspond only partially to the wider set of privileges and restrictions associated with the *flaminica Dialis*; in fact, her privileges – such as her special seat at the games – more closely resemble those of the Vestals.²⁴ Second, the surviving clauses of the Narbonese law refer to the wife of the provincial priest and not to the priestess: to distinguish her from the priestess of the imperial cult she is called *uxor flaminis*, not *flaminica*.²⁵ The distinction between these two terms must have been deliberate, since *flaminicae* of the

²¹ For a full discussion of the evidence, see Hemelrijk 2005, op.cit. (n.14).

²² See, for instance, Fishwick 1987, op.cit. (n.9), 66; 125; Fishwick 2002, op.cit. (n.8), 3 and the studies mentioned in the following note.

²³ See, for instance, Beard – North – Price 1998, op.cit. (n.3), 357. For a recent edition of the *lex de flamonio provinciae Narbonensis* (CIL 12, 6038 = ILS 6964), see C.H. Williamson, 'A Roman Law from Narbonne', *Athenaeum* 65 (1987), 173-189. Fishwick 2002, op.cit. (n.8), 7 assumes that the restrictions pertaining to the wife of the provincial *flamen* (lines 7-8 of the Narbonese law) also applied to the provincial priest himself, but there is no evidence for this.

²⁴ See also Williamson 1987, op.cit. (n.23), 181-184. For the duties, privileges and restrictions of the *flaminica Dialis*, see Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* 10.15.26-10.15.30, Servius, *Ad Aeneidem* 4.518; 4.646; Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 1.16.8; 1.16.30; Plutarchus, *Quaestiones Romanae* 50 (*Moralia* 276 D-E).

²⁵ See line 6 of the Narbonese law.

imperial cult were already well known in Narbonese Gaul at the time the law was drafted.²⁶ Thus, the Narbonese law cannot be used as evidence for the alleged analogy between the *flaminica Dialis* and the *flaminica* of the imperial cult. This analogy appears to be highly misleading: apart from their name the two cults had little in common. Therefore, the much fuller literary evidence for the *flaminica Dialis* of Republican Rome should not be used for the reconstruction of the status and office of priestesses of the imperial cult.

This leaves only the inscriptions for the study of the imperial priestesses: as has been remarked above, they clearly show that, in the Latin West,²⁷ priestesses of the imperial cult held their priesthood in their own right. Whenever the object of their cult is mentioned, they appear to have served the cult of the female members of the imperial family. Though a small minority of them were married to imperial priests, there are no indications that husband and wife held office together. On the contrary, several inscriptions show that husband and wife held office in different years or in different towns.²⁸

Though holding separate priesthoods, priests and priestesses of the imperial cult may be regarded as complementary. The female imperial priesthood was organised as the counterpart of that of men: like their male colleagues, imperial priestesses were elected by the local senate or the provincial assembly (depending on whether they served on the municipal or

²⁶ See for instance *CIL* 12, 1363 = *ILS* 6991 a *flaminica Iuliae Augustae* in Vasio and another one in Baeterrae (*CIL* 12, 4249), who probably served the cult of Livia during her lifetime, see Spickermann 1994, op.cit. (n.8), 211 nr. 40; 198 nr. 12. Also *AE* 1999, 1033 = *CIL* 12, 4230 + 4241 = *ILGN* 558: a *flaminica* in Baeterrae in the Augustan period, see Spickermann 1994, op.cit. (n.8), 197 nr. 10. According to accepted opinion, the *lex de flamonio* of the *provincia Narbonensis* dates from the reign of Vespasian, see Fishwick 2002, op.cit. (n.8), 5; 8-9; 14 and Williamson 1987, op.cit. (n. 23), 174-175.

²⁷ In the Greek East, however, priest and priestess of the imperial cult – though having clearly separate duties – were regularly presented as a couple, see R. van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation. Women and Civic Life in the Greek East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Amsterdam 1996), 114-141.

²⁸ For instance, Iulia Decumina held her priesthood in Forum Claudii Vallensium (Alp.Poen.) only after the death of her husband, the *flamen* M. Pansius Severus (*CIL* 12, 150-1), see Spickermann 1994, op.cit. (n.8), 193. Fishwick 2002, op.cit. (n.8), 7 n. 15; 97 suggests that the husband of Fulvia Celera (*flaminica perpetua* of Tarraco and *flaminica provinciae H(ispaniae) c(iterioris)* in the late 1st or early 2nd century A.D., see *RIT* 322 = *AE* 1928, 197) attained the provincial priesthood only after his wife's death, and the title *flaminicus*, used for the husband of Vinia Fusca, *flaminica* of Forum Claudii Vallensium (Alp.Poen.), suggests that he was at the time an ex-priest of the imperial cult (*CIL* 12, 140), see Spickermann 1994, op.cit. (n.8), 192-193 nr. 1. For priesthoods held by the husband and the wife at different places, see for instance *CIL* 5, 6514 = *AE* 1999, 763: the husband was a *flamen* of the deified emperors Vespasian, Titus, Trajan and Hadrian in Novaria, and the wife, Albucia Candida, was a *flaminica divae Iuliae* in Novaria and a *flaminica divae Sabinae* in Ticinum, see also *CIL* 5, 6513.

provincial level).²⁹ After being elected, a priestess was called *designata*³⁰ until she actually took up office, which she probably held for one year, like her male colleagues. Her priestly title might have the same additions as those of male imperial priests, such as *prima*, *perpetua* or *provinciae*. All this seems to point to the existence of parallel priesthoods in the local towns that were neatly divided between the sexes, male priests serving the cult of the emperor and his deified predecessors, and female priests that of the female members of the imperial family.

However, the difference in numbers between male and female priests disturbs this neat picture. Against the 258 inscriptions of imperial priestesses from the western part of the Roman Empire, we have more than 1,100 inscriptions of male imperial priests in the same area and period, roughly a proportion of 4.5 to 1 (but the regional variation is great, showing a higher percentage of female priests in the more Romanized provinces).³¹ This difference in the numbers of male and female priests cannot solely be explained by the hazards of survival, or by the fact that women, being excluded from local magistracies, were less often honoured with a public statue than men, since the imperial priesthood was one of the few offices open to them that did entitle them to a public statue. To my mind, it reflects a

²⁹ For some examples, see AE 1984, 528 = AE 1979, 339 (2nd century A.D.): Albia Domitia Severiana was elected as a *flaminica perpetua* of Barbesula (Hisp. Baet.) *ex decreto splendidissimi ordinis*. See also CIL 8, 7119 = ILAlg 2, 693 (3rd century A.D.): Sittia Calpurnia Extricata held her priesthood in Cirta (Num.) *ex consensu populi*, and AE 1991, 514a (1st century A.D.): Coelia Tertulla, *sacerdos divae Augustae* at Larinum (It.), received her priesthood by decree of the decurions: *decurionum decreto sacer/dotium datum est*. For the election of provincial priestesses, see RIT 327 = CIL 2, 4246 = ILS 6939 (Tarraco, c. A.D. 174): the *flaminica provinciae* Sempronia Placida was elected *consensu concili(i) p(rovinciae) H(ispaniae) c(terioris)* and Rubria Festa in Caesarea (Maur., late 1st-early 2nd century) was “endowed with the highest honour (*i.e.* the provincial priesthood of Mauretania) by the great judgement of the *patres*” (*exornata summo honore magno iudicio patrum*), see AE 1995, 1793.

³⁰ See, for instance, CIL 12, 690: a marble sarcophagus from Arelate carrying the epitaph of Caecilia Aprulla, *flaminica designata* of the colony of the Vocontii (Vasio) in Gall. Narb., in the late second or early third century A.D., who died at the age of 14, in all likelihood before taking up office.

³¹ Spickermann 1994, op.cit. (n.8), 221-225 counts 83 inscriptions mentioning *flamines* against 45 of *flaminicae* in Gallia Narbonensis and the Alps, but in the other provinces of Gallia and Germania taken together he notes a proportion of 40 *flamines* to 8 *flaminicae*. However, the large number of inscriptions recording *flaminicae* from North Africa (90, most of them from the highly Romanized Africa Proconsularis) should be set against the 643 inscriptions listed by M.S. Bassignano, *Il flaminato nelle province romane dell’Africa* (Rome 1974) for male priests of the imperial cult in the Latin-speaking provinces of Northern Africa. Étienne 1958, op.cit. (n.9) lists 202 male priests of the imperial cult in the provinces of Spain. Most of the 53 Spanish inscriptions mentioning priestesses are from the Romanized provinces Baetica and Tarraconensis. The 63 inscriptions mentioning priestesses of the imperial cult in Italy in my *corpus* should be set against the 156 for male priests of the imperial cult in Italy (outside Rome) listed by Gradel 2002, op.cit. (n.5), 87; 376-379. No priestesses of the imperial cult are found in Gallia Belgica, Britannia and Germania Inferior.

difference in their actual numbers.³² The imperial cult centred on the emperor(s), not on his female relatives who were worshipped mainly because of their connection with the emperor. Thus, it seems likely, that some towns had a priest serving the cult of the emperor, but no priestess for the female members of his family, whereas the opposite is unthinkable. In such towns male priests may also have performed sacrifices on the birthdays of the living and deified empresses. But their main task, of course, was to serve the cult of the emperor. Though in the very early period we know of an odd priest of Livia,³³ no male priests were, as a rule, appointed for the cult of the female members of the imperial family. Thus, though fulfilling complementary duties, male and female priests were not equal; as is to be expected, the greater number of male priests reflects the greater importance attached to the cult of the emperor as compared to that of his female relatives.

Social status and visual representation

It is usually taken for granted that priests of the imperial cult were members of the decurial or equestrian elite. This appears to be only partly true. Obviously, an imperial priesthood required wealth, not only because of the fixed *summa honoraria* that had to be paid when entering upon office – a high sum that exceeded that for local magistracies³⁴ – but also because of the numerous festivities of the imperial cult and the benefactions expected from

³² If we follow Duncan-Jones's estimate of the average rate of survival of inscriptions (lower than 5%), see R. Duncan-Jones, *The Economy of the Roman Empire. Quantitative Studies* (Cambridge ²1982), 360-362, this would mean that originally there were more than 5160 inscriptions mentioning imperial priestesses in Italy and the western provinces in the first three centuries A.D. However, this does not lead us very far. For instance, it doesn't help us to reconstruct the original extent, or distribution, of female imperial priesthood in the western provinces, since we have no indication of the relationship between the number of inscriptions and the actual number of priestesses. For instance, though a small minority of imperial priestesses received more than one inscription, many municipal priestesses may have received no inscription at all, especially in the less Romanized provinces. Because of regional variation and changes over time in the 'epigraphic habit', the chances that an imperial priesthood was recorded in an inscription must have varied greatly.

³³ *CIL* 2, 194 (Olisipo in Lusitania) in honour of Q. Iulius Plotus *flamini / Germ(anici) Caes(aris) fla(mini) Iuliae Aug(ustae) in perpetum*; *CIL* 2, 473 = *AE* 1946, 201 = *AE* 1997, 777b (Emerita Augusta): a certain Albinus who was *flamen d[ivi Augusti et] / divae Aug(ustae) provinciae Lusitan[iae]*. For a male priest serving the cult of Livia only, see *AE* 1915, 95 (Emerita Augusta, Lus.): in honour of a Cnaeus Cornelius Severus *[fl]amini Iuliae Augustae*. In *CIL* 10, 7501 = *ILS* 121 (the island of Gaulos near Malta) husband and wife both served the cult of Livia – which is quite unusual – the wife bearing the title *sacerdos Augustae* and the husband that of *flamen Iuliae*.

³⁴ Duncan-Jones 1982, op.cit. (n.32), 82-88.

imperial priests. As to their social rank, however, matters appear to be more complicated. Though most priestesses whose social rank is known, did indeed belong to the decurial (or equestrian) elite, the social rank of more than half of the priestesses cannot be established, thus leaving room for doubt about their background. Some priestesses stemmed from families of freedmen, or even were freedwomen themselves, despite the fact that it is usually believed that freed persons were excluded from holding an imperial priesthood.³⁵ Their unusual priesthood can, in some cases, be explained by exceptional wealth and generosity;³⁶ obviously, for freed persons a priesthood of the imperial cult was very attractive since it brought prestige and social recognition.

Prestige and social prominence must have been the main rewards for any priestess of the imperial cult. Being an important civic priesthood – perhaps even the most important one, if we may judge from the height of the *summa honoraria* – an imperial priesthood brought its priest(ess) to the centre of public attention: during her year of office she was much in the public eye performing sacrifices before the statues of the living and deified empresses, probably leading the procession of the imperial images on the empress's birthday and other festal days, while conspicuously dressed in her priestly attire, and possibly presiding – from a special seat – over the public games, which were a fixed element of imperial celebrations.³⁷

After their year of office, many imperial priestesses were honoured by their cities with a statue set up in a public place and some of them were even decreed a public funeral at their death.³⁸ Such honours raised the priestess

³⁵ See Étienne 1958, op.cit. (n.9), 246; Ladage 1971, op.cit. (n.10), 45; Spickermann 1994, op.cit. (n.8), 209; *contra* Y. Burnand, 'De la servitude au flaminat: quelques cas de promotion sociale en Gaule romaine', in: E. Frézouls (ed.), *La mobilité sociale dans le monde romain. Actes du colloque organisé à Strasbourg (novembre 1988)* (Strasbourg 1992), 203-213.

³⁶ See, for instance, Licinia Prisca, *flaminica perpetua* of Thugga, AE 1969/70, 650 = *Dougga* 26 (Thugga, Afr. Proc., 1st century A.D.); for her generosity to the city see AE 1969/70, 648-9 = CIL 8, 26464; 26603.

³⁷ Unfortunately, there is very little evidence for the religious duties of imperial priestesses: the inscriptions are generally uninformative at this point and most statues and reliefs representing imperial priestesses are lost. Their duties can only tentatively be reconstructed by reasoning from analogy with the tasks of male imperial priests; for a detailed description of the duties and costume of imperial priests, see D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West. Studies in the Ruler Cult of the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire* II 1, EPRO 108 (Leiden 1991), 475-590.

³⁸ For public funerals for imperial priestesses, see CIL 2/7, 197 = CIL 2, 2188 = *ILER* 6361 (Saciliense, Hisp.Baet., 2nd century A.D.): for the *flaminica* Cornelia Lepidina; AE 1988, 730: for Procula, *flaminica* of Baelo Claudia (Hisp.Baet., 2nd-3rd century A.D.); CIL 2, 339 = *ILER* 1774 (Collipo, Hisp.Lus.): for Laberia Galla, *flaminica* of Ebora and of the province of Lusitania in the 2nd century A.D.; CIL 12, 4244: for Iulia Celsa, *flaminica* at Baeterrae (Gall. Narb., 1st century A.D.);

high above her fellow-citizens, symbolically putting her on a level with the other recipients of public statues: apart from the gods, these were chiefly local magistrates and benefactors, the emperor(s) and – the most relevant category – the empress(es). In the last part of my paper – which will inevitably be somewhat speculative – I shall briefly consider the relationship between the imperial priestess and the empress arguing that the imperial cult in the towns of Italy and the western provinces offered wealthy women an opportunity to fulfil a prominent public role, a role that – in a sense – is similar to that of the main object of their cult: the empress herself. Space does not allow me to go into this deeply, but I shall touch upon two striking similarities in the visual representation of priestesses of the imperial cult and the empresses whose cult they served: the *infula* and the diadem or crown.

Empresses are often represented wearing the so-called *infula*, a woollen, beaded or knotted band that encircled the head, the ends falling along both sides of the neck. Since the *infula* was a mark of priesthood in the Roman world,³⁹ this has usually been believed to refer to their role as priestesses. Recently, however, S. Wood has proposed that it should be interpreted more broadly, referring not only to their priesthood but also to their own godlike status; thus, it might be a sign of deification. For instance, after her death and deification, several portraits of Drusilla were re-carved to add the *infula*.⁴⁰ The *infula*, therefore, when worn by a woman of the imperial family, was an ambiguous sign showing her either in a priestly capacity, or after her deification. Perhaps this ambiguity was deliberate, the *infula* symbolising both roles simultaneously and representing the empress during her lifetime as a sanctified person with a more than human status.⁴¹ For ordinary women

ILGN 429: for Terentia Marcella, *flaminica Augustae* in Narbo (Gall. Narb., 2nd or 3rd century A.D.); IAM 2, 430 = ILAfr 625 = ILM 123 = AE 1916, 91 (Volubilis, Maur. Ting., ca. AD 110): for Aemilia Sextina from Vienna, who was twice *flaminica*.

³⁹ For the *infula*, see C.B. Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period* (Cambridge 1997), 76-77 (with references to the main archaeological and literary evidence) and S. Wood, 'Diva Drusilla Panthea and the Sisters of Caligula', *American Journal of Archaeology* 99 (1995), 471-479. According to Isidorus, *Etymologiae* 19.30.4: *infula est fasciola sacerdotalis capitis alba in modum diadematis, a qua vittae ab utraque parte dependent, quae infulam vinciunt; unde et vittae dictae sunt, quod vinciant. Infula autem plerumque lata erat, plerumque tortilis, de albo et cocco*.

⁴⁰ S.E. Wood, *Imperial Women. A Study in Public Images, 40 B.C. - A.D. 68*, *Mnemosyne Supplementum* 194 (Leiden 1999), 116; 134-135; 155; 170-172; 224-225; 240-242; 300 and Wood 1995, op.cit. (n.39), 457-482.

⁴¹ Cf. Wood 1995, op.cit. (n.39) noting that as a general mark of sanctity, the *infula* could also decorate sacrificial animals or adorn sacred objects such as temples and altars; cf. Festus, *de significatione verborum*, s.v. *infula* (ed. Lindsay 1913, 100, line 7): *infulae sunt filamenta lanea, quibus sacerdotes et hostiae templaue velantur*.

such ambiguity was, of course, impossible, but it seems not unlikely that the divine status of imperial women, marked by the *infula*, reflected on her priestesses, who seem to have worn the *infula* as a badge of their priesthood, as can be seen on the funerary portrait of Licinia Flavilla, *flaminica Aug(ustae)* in Nemausus. D. Fishwick identifies Licinia's "striking hair style" as the *tutulus*, the puzzling traditional hairstyle of the Republican *flaminica* in Rome, and therefore assumes that it was bound by *vittae*.⁴² However, as I have remarked above, we should refrain from using the literary evidence for the priesthood and traditional dress of the *flaminica Dialis* in Republican Rome to reconstruct that of the imperial priestess in the towns of Italy and the provinces, unless there are decisive arguments in favour of it. Moreover, according to the description of the *tutulus* by Festus, it was a bun on top of the head braided with purple fillets and, therefore, quite different from the coiffure of this lady.⁴³ Clearly, Licinia Flavilla is portrayed with the Flavian coiffure of her days. Round her head is a band, probably of wool, laced up at regular intervals so as to look like a chain of thick beads; the long ends fall down on her shoulders. Instead of *vittae*, which are plain ribbons without knots or beads, this must be the woollen *infula*, which she sports as a sign of her priesthood, just as her husband, a legionary tribune and a *praefectus fabrum*, displays his military garb.⁴⁴

The second attribute to be briefly considered here is the diadem. At first a sure sign of their deification, the diadem became, from the mid first century onwards, more and more frequent on the portraits of living women of the imperial family.⁴⁵ It was usually worn together with the *infula* and, being a common attribute of goddesses, it had strong sacred connotations. The combination of a diadem and *infula* on the portraits of empresses may be reflected by the priestly crown and *infula* worn by their priestesses. These golden crowns bearing small busts of emperors and empresses have been found mainly on portraits of priests in the Greek East, especially Asia

⁴² Fishwick 1991, op.cit. (n.37), 480-481. For a photo of the relief, see Th. Schäfer, *Imperii insignia: sella curulis und fasces. Zur Repräsentation römischer Magistrate*, MDAI(R) – Erg.-H. 29 (Mainz 1989), pl. 117.4.

⁴³ Festus, *De significatione verborum*, s.v. *tutulus* (ed. Lindsay 1913, 484, line 32), speaking of the traditional hairstyle of the *flaminica Dialis* in Republican Rome: *tutulum vocari aiunt flaminicarum capitis ornamentum, quod fiat vitta purpurea innexa crinibus, et exstructum in altitudinem*; see also Varro, *De Lingua Latina* 7.44.

⁴⁴ CIL 12, 3175 (Gall. Narb., late first or early second century A.D.).

⁴⁵ Rose 1997, op.cit. (n.39), 53; 76-77; E. Bartman, *Portraits of Livia. Imaging the Imperial Woman in Augustan Rome* (Cambridge 1999), 126; for some examples see Wood 1999, op.cit. (n.40) fig. 45; 49; 50-52; 64-66; 93-94; 101-104; 114-117; 136-140; 142.

Minor.⁴⁶ Unfortunately, we do not know how common such crowns were for imperial priest(esse)s in the Latin West. Yet, I have found some inscriptions for priestesses mentioning such crowns.⁴⁷ The supposition that the similarity between the empress and her priestesses expressed by the *infula* and the crown was deliberate is supported by the similarity of the headgear of the emperor Domitian and his priests at the Capitoline games, as described by Suetonius: “on his head he (= Domitian) wore a golden crown adorned with the images of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva, while the priest of Jupiter and the college of Flaviales sat at his side similarly dressed, except that their crowns also bore Domitian’s own image”.⁴⁸

Thus, we see in Rome the college of imperial priests wearing golden crowns in deliberate imitation of the emperor, except that their crowns also bore his image. Similarly, by both crown and *infula*, and possibly also in her hairstyle and dress, the imperial priestess must, in the eyes of the public, have resembled the empress whose cult she served. Moreover, the public statues set up for them and the public funerals which some of them received, must have given them a highly elevated status, which – on a local scale – resembled that of the empress. Such things were unthinkable in Rome, where public statues and public funerals – at least, for women – were the prerogative of members of the imperial family.⁴⁹ In Rome no priestesses of the

⁴⁶ J. Inan – E. Rosenbaum, *Roman and Early Byzantine Portrait Sculpture in Asia Minor* (London 1966) and J. Inan – E. Alföldi-Rosenbaum, *Römische und Frühbyzantinische Porträtplastik aus der Türkei, Neue Funde* (Mainz am Rhein 1979), 38-47 list 21 portraits of imperial priests with crowns, 14 males and 7 females, from cities of Asia Minor between the Flavian and Theodosian periods.

⁴⁷ AE 1995, 1793 (Caesarea, Maur., late 1st-early 2nd century): the inscription on the funerary altar for Rubria Festa mentions the *corona Mauricae provinciae* as one of the *insignia* of her priesthood of the province. AE 1983, 521 = AE 1982, 521 = CIL 2, 2, 358 (Hisp. Baet., first half of the third century): an inscription set up by Vibia Modesta, who was twice *flaminica* of Italica and a benefactress of the city, mentions a *corona(m) aurea(m) flamin(al)em* as one of her donations. CIL 2/5, 69 = CIL 2, 1663 = ILS 5080: Lucretia Campana, *flaminica perpetua domus Augustae* in Tucci (Hisp. Baet.) donated a golden crown (*coronam auream*). For priestly crowns in the Latin West, see also Tertullian, *De idololatria* 18.1 mentioning the golden crowns of the provincial priests (*coronae aureae sacerdotum provincialium*).

⁴⁸ Suetonius, *Domitianus* 4.4: *capite gestans coronam auream cum effigie Iovis ac Iunonis Minervaeque, adsidentibus Diali sacerdote et collegio Flavialium pari habitu, nisi quod illorum coronis inerat et ipsius imago*.

⁴⁹ In the imperial period public space in the capital was increasingly monopolized for the self-representation of the emperor and his family, see G. Lahusen, *Untersuchungen zur Ehrenstatue in Rom. Literarische und epigraphische Zeugnisse*, *Archaeologica* 35 (Rome 1983) and W. Eck, ‘Ehrungen für Personen hohen soziopolitischen Ranges im öffentlichen und privaten Bereich’, in: H.-J. Schalles – H. von Hesberg – P. Zanker (eds.), *Die römische Stadt im 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr. Der Funktionswandel des öffentlichen Raumes. Kolloquium in Xanten vom 2. bis 4. Mai 1990* (Köln 1992), 359-376; see also W. Eck, *Senatorial Self-Representation. Developments in the Augustan Period*, in:

imperial cult have been attested: instead, the empresses Livia and Agrippina Minor themselves were priestesses of the cult of their deified husbands.⁵⁰ Their dual role, as both priestess and object of the imperial cult, may have reflected on the status of local priestesses. In their local towns priestesses of the imperial cult, therefore, were not just wealthy women; their priestly duties and empress-like attire and honours marked them off as more than ordinary human persons. Thus, during her year of office an imperial priestess not only worshipped and represented, but also resembled – and within her local town was – the *femina princeps*.⁵¹

Utrecht, November 2004.

F. Millar – E. Segal (eds.), *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects* (Oxford 1984), 129-167 and, for honorific statues of women, E.A. Hemelrijk, 'Octavian and the Introduction of Public Statues for Women in Rome', *Athenaeum* 93.1 (2005), 309-317.

⁵⁰ For Livia as a priestess of the deified Augustus, see Ovid, *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.9.107, Velleius Paterculus, 2.75.3, Cassius Dio, 56.46.1-56.46.2; for Agrippina Minor as a priestess of the deified Claudius: Tacitus, *Annales* 13.2.5.

⁵¹ For the expression *femina princeps* used for Livia, see Ovid, *Epistulae ex Ponto* 3.1.125.

(WEIBLICHE) PRIESTERÄMTER IN GRIECHISCHEN STÄDTEN –
BEMERKUNGEN ZUM WANDEL IN DER ÜBERLIEFERUNG*

MARIETTA HORSTER

Die Quellen, durch die wir heute über Priesterinnen in den griechischen Städten von Griechenland, den Inseln über die Pontusregion bis Kleinasien etwas erfahren, ändern sich von der klassischen über die hellenistische bis in die römische Zeit. Dieser Quellenwechsel betrifft allerdings Männer wie Frauen, männliche wie weibliche Priester gleichermaßen, und sagt im Sinne der Gender-Forschung nur wenig aus über veränderte Lebenswirklichkeiten wie z.B. die Handlungsspielräume und das Engagement von Frauen in den Städten.

In klassischer Zeit sind es neben verschiedenen literarischen Quellen wenige epigraphische Quellen wie *leges sacrae* oder auch Abrechnungen oder selten auch Volks- oder Ratsbeschlüsse wie im Fall der Beschlüsse für den neuen Kult der Athena Nike in Athen. In der Regel werden Namen der Priesterinnen in solchen Inschriften nicht genannt. Ehrendekrete für Priesterinnen sind nicht bekannt, in Grabinschriften von Frauen wird nur in wenigen Fällen auf ein solches Amt hingewiesen. Aus dem 4. Jahrhundert gibt es dann außerdem einige größere Weihgeschenke bzw. Bauten in sakralem Kontext, die von Frauen gestiftet wurden und deren Name und Funktion als Priesterin in der dazugehörigen Inschrift vermerkt wurden. Die meisten der direkt belegten weiblichen Priesterämter klassischer Zeit sind solche von wichtigen Kulturen der Städte.¹

In hellenistischer Zeit treten neben literarische Quellen, die in verschiedensten Kontexten Priester und Priesterinnen nennen, und den schon für die klassische Zeit genannten epigraphischen Quellen nun auch Ehrenmonumente und verschiedenartige Weihgeschenke hinzu, in denen Priesterinnen und Priester namentlich genannt werden. Nicht nur die Weihgeschenke,

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¹ Zu Priesterämtern in klassischer Zeit vgl. L. Bruit Zaidman – P. Schmitt Pantel, *Die Religion der Griechen – Kult und Mythos* (München 1994), 50-54; für Athen R.S.J. Garland, 'Religious Authority in Archaic and Classical Athens', *Annual of the British School at Athens* 79 (1984), 75-123 und zu den erblichen Priesterämtern der *gén* in Athen R. Parker, *Athenian Religion. A History* (Oxford 1996), bes. 284-327 sowie zu weiblichen Priesterinnen M. Dillon, *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion* (London – New York 2002), 73-106.

sondern auch die meisten der bekannten Ehrenmonumente, d.h. in der Regel Statuenbasen, für Priesterinnen wurden in hellenistischer Zeit noch in den Heiligtümern errichtet. Sie wurden von Rat und / oder Volk der Stadt oder häufig auch von Angehörigen, in vielen Fällen wohl postum, dort aufgestellt. Selten dagegen sind umfangreiche Ehrendekrete, die Wohltaten und Stiftungen von Priesterinnen aufzählen. In solchen Texten konnten dann genauso wie für männliche geehrte Bürger auch andere Formen der Ehrung aufgezählt werden wie ein öffentliches Begräbnis, Bilder und Büsten in einem Heiligtum, Statuen auch auf öffentlichen Plätzen einer Stadt, postume Ehrerweisungen einmal jährlich durch Schmücken der Statue der Verstorbenen usw.

In hellenistischer Zeit sind aber nicht nur die Hauptkulte der Städte Griechenlands, Kleinasien oder auch der ionischen Inseln durch die literarischen und schon genannten epigraphischen Quellen belegt, sondern zumindest im kleinasiatischen Raum auch eine Vielzahl von kleineren Kulte mit weiblichen Priestern. Diese sind jedoch fast ausschließlich durch die Listen und Regelungen für die Verkäufe von Priesterämtern bekannt, die in Inschriften verewigt wurden.² Für die meisten der durch diese Verkaufstexte bekannten Priesterämter, männliche wie weibliche, gibt es kaum Parallelüberlieferung wie zum Beispiel Weihgaben für die jeweilige Gottheit oder auch Ehrungen oder Grabinschriften der Priester.

In der römischen Kaiserzeit sind dagegen sowohl in Griechenland wie auch in Kleinasien, der Pontusregion und den ägäischen Inseln explizit fast nur Priesterämter der großen Kulte der Städte sowie der Mysterienkulte durch die epigraphischen Texten bekannt. Listen mit Verkäufen kleinerer Priestertümer fehlen. Die meisten Inschriften, die weibliche wie männliche Priester und Priesterämter nennen, dokumentieren Ehrungen zu Lebzeiten oder auch postum. Es ist also offenbar ein Wandel in der überlieferten epigraphischen Dokumentation zu beobachten, nicht aber zwangsläufig auch in der lebensweltlichen Realität der kaiserzeitlichen Kulte und Priesterämter.

Im Folgenden werden die zwei unten genannten Beobachtungen und Thesen kurz erläutert, die durch die (vor allem epigraphischen) Quellen nahe liegen, die jedoch in manchen Fällen auf den schon angesprochenen Veränderungen in der epigraphischen Quellenbasis beruhen und nicht notwen-

² Zu den Verkaufslisten und Regelungen über den Verkauf vgl. P. Debord, *Aspects sociaux et économiques de la vie religieuse dans l'Anatolie gréco-romaine* (Leiden 1982), 51-75; H.-U. Wiemer, 'Käufliche Priestertümer im hellenistischen Kos', *Chiron* 33 (2003), 263-310; B. Dignas, *Economy of the Sacred in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor* (Oxford 2003), bes. 251-271.

digerweise auch wirklich veränderte Verhaltensweisen oder soziale Wirklichkeiten widerspiegeln. Auch wenn verschiedenartige Formen der Selbstdarstellung, wie vor allem die Zunahme von Ehrenmonumenten mit ihren Inschriften in der Kaiserzeit, sicher auch einen Reflex veränderter gesellschaftlicher Bedürfnisse und Lebensformen widerspiegelt, so müssen sie dennoch nicht auch Unterschiede z.B. in der Rekrutierungsbasis der Priester und Priesterinnen von der hellenistischen Zeit in die Kaiserzeit reflektieren.

These 1: Der Bestellmodus von (Priestern und) Priesterinnen hat sich in einigen Städten verändert und könnte damit zumindest zum Teil in Folge auch die Rekrutierungsbasis für die in Frage kommenden Bürger und Bürgerinnen, die gewillt waren, solche Aufgaben zu übernehmen, verändert haben. Es wird gezeigt werden, dass sich zwar in einigen Fällen der Bestellmodus von hellenistischer Zeit zur Kaiserzeit geändert hat, aber nicht zwangsläufig die Rekrutierungsbasis von einer ‚Bourgeoisie‘ zu einer ‚Aristokratie‘.³

These 2: Durch den Kaiserkult, an dessen Ausübung in geringem Maße auch Frauen beteiligt waren, wurden möglicherweise seit dem späten 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr. den traditionellen Hauptkulten die weiblichen Mitglieder besonders wohlhabender und einflussreicher Familien als potentielle Priesteramtsinhaber entzogen, sofern für sie die Möglichkeit bestand, nicht nur im städtischen Kult, sondern auch im Provinzialkult für den Kaiser aktiv zu sein und weiter Ämter und Liturgien (ehrenhalber finanzierend) zu übernehmen.

1. Zum Bestellmodus von Priesterinnen und Priestern in griechischen Städten

Der in augusteischer Zeit schreibende Dionysios von Halikarnassos lobt in seinen Römischen Altertümern die Römer, insbesondere Romulus:⁴ Anders als die Griechen habe Romulus entschieden, die Priestertümer nicht für Geld zu versteigern oder einfach zu verlosen, sondern vielmehr lediglich ältere, erfahrene, wohlhabende Männer (über 50) von vornehmer Abstammung und mit körperlicher Unversehrtheit mit diesen Aufgaben zu betreuen. Sie sollten die ihnen übertragene Ehre bis an ihr Lebensende innehaben und von anderen Verpflichtungen für die Stadt Rom befreit werden.

³ So die Formulierung von Debord a.a.O. (Anm.2), 70f.

⁴ Dionysios von Halikarnassos, *Römische Altertümer* 2.21.3.

Verkauf, aber auch Verlosung von Priesterämtern ist es, was Dionysios an der griechischen Praxis anprangert. Auch wird durch den Kontext deutlich, dass durch diese Maßnahmen offenbar nicht die vornehmen, wohlhabenden – und damit in den Augen der Römer und des Dionysios einzig der Priesterämter fähigen und würdigen – Bürger mit Priesterämtern bestellt worden seien. Außerdem betont er die lebenslange Übernahme des Priesteramtes, das damit als spezifisch römisch hervorgehoben wird.

Über die Bestellung von männlichen wie weiblichen Priestern in griechischen Städten ist wenig bekannt. In vielen Fällen waren es in der klassischen Zeit nachweislich einzelne Familien, aus denen Priester und Priesterinnen bestimmt wurden;⁵ in wenigen Fällen war es das Los, durch das aus der ganzen Bürgerschaft ein Priester ausgewählt wurde – so bekannt durch den Volksbeschluss für die Einsetzung einer Priesterin für den Kult der Athena Nike mit einem Heiligtum auf der Akropolis von Athen.⁶ Auch der Verkauf von Priesterämtern ist epigraphisch überliefert, nicht nur aus der Heimatstadt des Dionysios. Er ist jedoch auf wenige Regionen und vor allem fast gänzlich auf die hellenistische Zeit begrenzt und betraf und galt dann außerdem auch nicht zwangsläufig für alle Kulte einer Stadt, in der Priestertümer käuflich waren.⁷

Obwohl es kaum eine explizite Überlieferung hierfür gibt, so erscheint es dennoch wahrscheinlich, dass viele Priesterämter in einem Gremium einer griechischen Stadt (oft die Volksversammlung) oder eines Bundes oder Stammes durch Wahl vergeben worden sein dürften. In vielen griechischen Städten von der klassischen bis in die römische Zeit gab es ganz offensichtlich verschiedene Arten der Bestellung von Priestern, die nebeneinander existierten, dabei ist neben Erblichkeit des Priesteramtes innerhalb eines Genos vor allem die Wahl offenbar von Westgriechenland bis Kleinasien verbreitet, das Losverfahren ist nur in wenigen Städten Griechenlands und Kleasiens belegt, und der Verkauf scheint von Ionien ausgehend sich nie in Griechenland und in den westlichen Städten verbreitet zu haben.

Ein Wandel ist allerdings unter römischer Herrschaft feststellbar, möglicherweise was die Dauer der Übernahme von Priesterämtern betrifft, aber vor allem auch was den Bestellmodus betrifft.

⁵ Übernahme von Priesterämtern durch Mitglieder bestimmter Familien vgl. Parker 1996, a.a.O. (Anm.1).

⁶ Volksbeschluss über den Kult und das Priesteramt der Athena Nike: *IG I³ 35* (um 448 v. Chr.), vgl. auch *IG I³ 36* mit weiteren Regelungen aus dem Jahr 424/3 v. Chr.

⁷ Zum Verkauf von Priestertümern vgl. mit unterschiedlichem Fokus und Erklärungsansätzen die ausführlichen Diskussionen und Hinweise auf die ältere Literatur in der in Anm. 2 genannten Literatur.

Die epigraphischen Zeugnisse für den Verkauf von Priesterämtern sind vor allem auf die hellenistische Zeit und einzelne Städte der Regionen Ionien, Nordwestkleinasien, Pontusregion (Kolonien Milet) und wenige Inseln begrenzt.⁸ Nur wenige Zeugnisse stammen noch aus dem 1. Jahrhundert n. Chr.⁹ Ein Verbot des Verkaufs von Priestertümern hat es offensichtlich von Seiten römischer Autoritäten aber nicht gegeben. Überliefert ist lediglich ein Edikt des Paullus Fabius Persicus aus Ephesos aus claudischer Zeit.¹⁰ Der Statthalter der Provinz Asia Persicus konstatiert darin, dass ein solches Verfahren dem Ansehen von Priesterämtern nicht zuträglich sei, insbesondere da es ungeeigneten (d.h. in seinen Augen unwürdigen) Bürgern die Übernahme solcher Aufgaben gestatte, bzw. so ist wohl seine konkrete Kritik an den Verhältnissen in Ephesos zu verstehen, dass die Auktion, mittels derer der Verkauf durchgeführt wurde, Missbrauch bei der Vergabe ermöglicht habe. Nicht die Priesteramtsinhaber stehen daher im Zentrum seiner Kritik, sondern die für die Auktion verantwortlichen Amtsinhaber. Nichtsdestotrotz scheint aber dadurch das ganze Verfahren in den Augen des Persicus desavouiert worden zu sein. Als Folge dieser Missbräuche sei es außerdem auch zu Unregelmäßigkeiten in den Finanzen des Artemisheiligtums von Ephesos gekommen.

⁸ Bei dem in diesem Kontext oft zitierten frühesten Zeugnis (Syll.³ 1002, Ende 5. Jh. v. Chr.?) aus Milet wird jedoch nicht der Verkauf eines Priesteramtes dokumentiert, sondern lediglich die Verpachtung der Einkünfte. Offenbar noch im 4. Jh. v. Chr. begannen dann aber die Verkäufe einzelner Priestertümer in Erythrai, Chios, Milet und Priene, vgl. Wiemer a.a.O. (Anm.2) 266. Aus dem 3.-1. Jh. v. Chr. stammen epigraphische Hinweise auf Verkäufe aus den folgenden Städten: Alexandria Troas, Andros, Chios, Erythrai, Halikarnassos, Hyllarima (in Ionien), Iasos, Kalchedon, Kasossos (Mylasa), Kos (hier neben Texten bei M. Segre, *Iscrizioni di Cos* 1, 1944 [1993], 11-171 und F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* [Paris 1969] neue Texte publiziert von R. Parker – D. Obbink, 'Aus der Arbeit der „Inscriptiones Graecae“ VI. Sales of Priesthoods on Cos I', *Chiron* 30 [2000], 415f. Nr.1 und 31 [2001], 233-246 Nr. 2-6); Kyzikos, Magnesia am Mäander, Milet, Mylasa, Priene, Samos (dabei stammt IG XII 6,2, 1197 nicht aus Samos, sondern ebenfalls aus Erythrai wie von P. Herrmann, 'Eine „Pierre errante“ in Samos: Kultgesetz der Korybanten', *Chiron* 32 (2002), 157-172 gezeigt werden konnte); Sinope (miles. Kolonie), Skepsis, Thasos, Theangela, Tomoi (miles. Kolonie). Außerdem ist der Verkauf einer Reihe von Priestertümern in Ägypten außerhalb der griechischen Poleis in hellenistischer wie römischer Zeit nachweisbar.

⁹ Die wenigen Inschriften aus der Kaiserzeit, die in diesem Kontext meist genannt werden, sollen an anderer Stelle ausführlich diskutiert werden. Es sind dies aus dem 1. Jh. n. Chr. Milet: *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure* 52; Perge: *Inschriften von Perge II* (= IGSK 61) 428; Ephesos: *Inschriften von Ephesos III* (= IGSK 13) 618 (Kaiserpriester) und das Edikt des Prokonsuls Persicus *Inschriften von Ephesos I* (= IGSK 11/1) 18b. 19; Prusias ad Hypium: IGR III 66 = *Inschriften von Prusias ad Hypium* (= IGSK 39) 20; Philadelpheia: *Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes* IV 1637, aus dem 2. Jh. n. Chr.; Seleukeia (bei Kalykadnos): J. Keil – A. Wilhelm, Vorläufiger Bericht über eine Reise in Kilikien, *Jahrbuch des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts* 18 (1915), Bb. 22-32.

¹⁰ *Inschriften von Ephesos I* (= IGSK 11/1) 18b, Z. 0-20 und c, Z. 0-13 (griechisch), 19 IV und VI (lateinisch).

Anders als das Edikt des Persicus es suggerieren könnte (Unwürdigkeit der Verkäufer-Amtsinhaber wie auch der Anwärter für die Priesterämter), scheinen es jedoch zumindest in hellenistischer Zeit die weiblichen und männlichen Mitglieder der wohlhabenderen Familien der jeweiligen Städte gewesen zu sein, die sich an diesen Auktionen für den Verkauf von Priestertümern beteiligten und die Ämter dann in den meisten Fällen wohl sogar lebenslang übernahmen.¹¹ Es ist also kaum denkbar, dass es gravierende Unterschiede in der Personengruppe der gewählten Priester und der durch Auktion und Verkauf bestimmten Priester gab – beide Priestergruppen kamen aus der gleichen gesellschaftlichen Schicht, die wohlhabend und bereit war, Zeit und Geld für die Belange ihrer Stadt zu investieren. Eine zeitgenössische Kritik kann also kaum die Würdigkeit der Bewerber als solche gemeint haben. Dagegen könnten jedoch die häufig belegten Anreize (Liturgie- und Abgabebefreiungen usw.) für die Übernahme eines käuflichen Priesteramtes als für die Polis schädlich empfunden worden sein. Aber auch dies erscheint wenig wahrscheinlich, galt doch gerade die Vergabe derartiger Vorrechte in den Ehrendekreten auch für besonders verdiente Bürger, das heißt insbesondere solche, die sich besonders stark finanziell engagiert hatten und wohl auch weiterhin engagieren würden, als Auszeichnung. Befreiungen von Steuern und Abgaben waren Ausnahmen und keineswegs ein oft vergebenes Privileg. Wenn der Verkauf in vielen Fällen außerdem noch mit der lebenslangen Übernahme des Amtes verknüpft war, war es wohl kaum ein Massenphänomen, das plötzlich alle wohlhabenden Bürger von den Pflichten in der Stadt befreit hätte. Eine Gefahr für die Städte mit einer solchen Verkaufspraxis, plötzlich keine Bürger mehr zu haben, die die notwendigen Pflichten für die Stadt übernahmen, dürfte daher aus diesem Grund wohl kaum bestanden haben.

Es ist zwar nicht bekannt, dass (bis auf die auf Ephesos begrenzte anweisende ‚Empfehlung‘) römische Autoritäten versucht hätten, auf den Bestellmodus der städtischen Priestertümer Einfluss zu nehmen,¹² so ist doch der Umschwung in der Art der Bestellung der Priester und

¹¹ M. Wörle, ‘Inschriften von Herakleia am Latmos II: Das Priestertum der Athena Latmia’, *Chiron* 20 (1990), 19-58, hier 47 spricht von „wirtschaftlichen und ‚staatsstragenden‘ bürgerlichen Oberschichten“ und verweist auf F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte. Religionsgeschichtliche und epigraphische Untersuchungen zu den Kulte von Chios, Erythrai, Klazomenai und Phokaia* (Rom 1985), 284 mit dessen Beispiel der Priester des Dionysis Phleus im 2. Jh. v. Chr. in Priene (*Inschriften von Priene* 107. 138,6. 162. 174. 177); ähnlich auch das Ergebnis der Untersuchung von Wiemer 2003, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 291 für die verkauften Priesterämter in Kos.

¹² Dies gilt auch für Priester von religiösen Vereinigungen oder privat finanzierten Totenkulten.

Priesterinnen im kleinasiatischen Raum schon im Verlauf des 1. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. deutlich. Die Abnahme der Zeugnisse ist hier sicher nicht auf einen Wandel des ‚epigraphic habit‘ zurückzuführen, sondern auf einen Wandel in der Art und Weise, wie Städte ihre Priester und Priesterinnen bestellten: in der Kaiserzeit in der Regel nicht mehr durch den Verkauf.

Auch wenn also kaum direkte Einflussnahme nachweisbar ist, so ist doch im Ergebnis eine Kompatibilität mit den Vorstellungen und Funktionen der stadtrömischen Priesterämter wie sie Dionysios von Halikarnassos beschreibt auf der Ebene der städtischen Priestertümer griechischer Städte durch den Verzicht auf den Verkauf von Priesterämtern gegeben.

Wie lange dagegen das ebenfalls von Dionysios von Halikarnassos kritisierte Losverfahren für die Bestellung von Priestern und Priesterinnen, von dem wir aus Athen Kenntnis haben, Bestand hatte, ist unbekannt. Dass Dionysios es in augusteischer Zeit als eines der Bestellmodi griechischer Städte erwähnt, spricht dafür, dass es in Athen wie anderswo noch existierte. Zumindest aus Kos, von wo es bisher die meisten erhaltenen Zeugnisse für den Verkauf von Priesterämtern gibt, gab es in hellenistischer Zeit allerdings auch zwei Priesterämter, das des Apollo von Halasarna und das der Demeter von Antimacheia, die (zumindest teilweise) durch Los vergeben wurden.¹³

Die Dauer der Übernahme der Priesterämter – meist entweder jährlich oder auf Lebenszeit (erblich oder nicht), auch wenn vereinzelt ein anderer Rhythmus belegt ist¹⁴ – wird in der Forschung hinsichtlich Fragen nach der Unabhängigkeit der Priester von den Städten, nach dem Einfluss der Städte auf die Kulte und nach priesterlicher Autorität und Expertentum diskutiert.¹⁵ Dabei soll einerseits der Regelbedarf und die Praxis der Festlegung von Kultpraktiken und den damit verbundenen Kosten und Einnahmen das Bedürfnis der Städte nach Zunahme des Einflusses auf die Priestertümer und Kulte manifestieren (Himmelman), andererseits gerade aber der Verkauf auf Lebenszeit, der in der Regel detaillierte Regelungen über Einnahmen und Ausgaben voraussetzt, die Unabhängigkeit des Priesters und damit auch des

¹³ Halasarna: Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* (a.a.O. [Anm.8]), 173 Z. 91-95, Antimacheia: *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* 75 vgl. Wiemer 2003, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 302f.

¹⁴ So belegt in Milet mit 3 Jahren und 8 Monaten für das Amt der Priesterin der Roma: F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées de l'Asie Mineure* (Paris 1955), 49.

¹⁵ Vgl. hier insbesondere N. Himmelman, ‘Die Priesterschaft der Kyrbantes in Erythrai’, *Epigraphica Anatolica* 29 (1997), 117-121, B. Dignas, ‘Priestly authority in the cult of the Corybantes at Erythrae’, *Epigraphica Anatolica* 24 (2002), 29-40, Dignas 2003, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 246-271.

Kultes mit dessen Finanzen unter seiner Leitung manifestieren (Dignas).¹⁶ Beide Annahmen scheinen jedoch fraglich, da zu keiner Zeit die lebenslange Übernahme eines Priesteramtes zwangsläufig an den Verkauf geknüpft war, und auch nicht die Festlegung der Kultpraktiken und der Einkünfte des Priesteramtes mit dem Verkauf der Priesterämter einhergehen musste.

In einer Inschrift aus Herakleia am Latmos ist die Rede von einer Orakelanfrage des Demos der Herakleoten, ob das Priestertum der Athena Latmia auf Lebenszeit verkauft werden oder ob es eher durch Wahl jährlich vergeben werden solle.¹⁷ Die Anfrage, die wohl Anfang des 1. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. an den Apollo von Didyma gestellt worden sein dürfte, beantwortete der Gott folgendermaßen: „Darüber, wie ihr den Vollzieher des Kultes der wohlbewaffneten Pallas und heiligen Tritonis sowohl der Göttin wie dem ganzen Volk genehm einsetzen sollt mit trefflichen Entscheidungen und bestem Rat, hört des Phoibos allwahre göttliche Weisung: ‚Wer nach Familie und Lebensführung der Hervorragendste ist, den wählt aus allen Bürgern jedes Jahr und setzt dabei entsprechend Umsicht und Eifer ein, denn es ist recht, dass solche Männer zum Heiligtum der Göttin schreiten.‘“¹⁸ Wörle (Anm. 11, 50) bemerkt hierzu, dass durch die Priesterwahl und die jährliche Partizipation der Bürger an der Wahl dieser bedeutende Kult der Bürgerschaft in besonderer Weise als „Anliegen der gesamten Politengemeinschaft sichtbar“ bliebe und dass möglicherweise auch ein „Verlust an gemeinsamer Identität“ durch den Verkauf dieses Priestertums in der Bürgerschaft empfunden worden sein könnte. Dies ist eine durchaus nachvollziehbare Annahme, wenn man versucht, Gründe für die oben genannte Orakelanfrage zu finden und auch das Phänomen zu klären versucht, wieso ab dem 1. Jahrhundert v. Chr. immer weniger Zeugnisse den Verkauf von Priesterämtern belegen. Andererseits gibt es aber auch ab der hellenistischen Zeit, neben den schon durchaus für zentrale Kulte in verschiedenen Städten belegten lebenslangen erblichen Priestertümern, zunehmend Ehrendekrete für Bürger und Bürgerinnen, in denen unter anderem lobend die lebenslange Übernahme (ohne Verkauf) einzelner Priesterämter, manchmal mit der Aufzählung von Euergesien im Zusammenhang mit dem Priesteramt verknüpft, als besonderer Dienst an der Polis hervorgehoben wird.¹⁹ Gerade solche

¹⁶ Himmelmann 1997, a.a.O. (Anm.15), Dignas 2002, a.a.O. (Anm.15).

¹⁷ SEG 40, 956 nach Wörle 1990, a.a.O. (Anm.11).

¹⁸ Übersetzung von Wörle 1990, a.a.O. (Anm.11), 26.

¹⁹ Bisher scheint nur ein Fall der Ehrung einer Frau bekannt zu sein, die lebenslang Priestertümer als eine Art Euergesie übernommen hat: Epie in Thasos, 1. Jh. v. Chr., SEG 18, 343. Für die wesentlich zahlreicheren Nachweise männlicher Euergeten, die ein Priesteramt lebenslang übernommen haben,

Ehrendekrete belegen außerdem, dass, anders als beispielsweise von Dignas angenommen, die Übernahme von lebenslangen Priesterämtern keineswegs die Übernahme anderer Verpflichtungen für die Stadt, Ämter wie auch Liturgien, ausschloss. Es ist also weder die Dauer eines Priesteramtes noch der Bestellmodus als solcher, der die Dignität des Priesteramtes, das Engagement des Bürgers für seine Stadt oder auch die Autorität eines Priesters determinierte.

Meines Erachtens haben wir es vielmehr mit zwei verschiedenen Ebenen der Überlieferung – Verkaufslisten auf der einen und Ehrendekrete auf der anderen Seite – zu tun, die offenbar zwei verschiedene Wirklichkeiten widerspiegeln.

Die Verkaufslisten nennen zahlreiche kleinere Priesterämter, von denen in Ehrendekreten kaum die Rede ist. Die Ehrendekrete scheinen dagegen vor allem Mitglieder von Familien zu nennen, die aufgrund ihrer finanziellen Möglichkeiten und ihres Engagements für ihre Stadt (oder auch mehrere Städte) oft wirtschaftlich und damit auch in ihrem Ansehen weit über den meisten der in den Verkaufslisten genannten Personen standen. Geehrt werden diese Personen selten, weil sie Priester waren, sondern weil sie sich für ihre Stadt engagiert hatten und unter anderem auch Priester waren. Auch wenn alle Priester und Priesterinnen, solche von wichtigen wie von kleineren Kulte, solche die gewählt wurden wie solche die ihr Priesteramt durch eine Auktion erworben hatten, zu den wohlhabenden Schichten der Bürgerschaft gehört haben dürften, so gab es innerhalb dieser Wohlhabenden doch eine kleinere Gruppe besonders reicher Familien, die einen großen Teil der finanziellen Pflichten und Aufgaben in ihrer Stadt über das übliche Maß hinaus erfüllten – und in den meisten Fällen nur solche Männer und Frauen, die (oder deren Familienmitglieder) sich derart engagiert hatten, wurden dann auch geehrt.²⁰

Eine Ab- oder Auskopplung aus der städtischen Kontrolle und Aufsicht für verkaufte Priestertümer hat es wenn überhaupt dann wohl nur in Ausnahmefällen für die finanziellen Aspekte gegeben. Und das ist es auch, was der Statthalter Fabius Persicus beklagt, ein Missbrauch seitens der Amts-

um damit die Finanzierung zu gewährleisten, vgl. die entsprechenden Hinweise auf Ehrungen in den in der nächsten Anm. genannten Literatur.

²⁰ Vgl. mit jeweils zahlreichen Beispielen Ph. Gauthier, *Les cités grecques et leurs bienfaiteurs (IVe-Ie siècle avant J.-C.), contribution à l'histoire des institutions* (Paris 1985); R. van Bremen, *The Limits of Participation. Women and civic life in the Greek East in the Hellenistic and Roman periods* (Amsterdam 1996), bes. 11-40 sowie zahlreiche Beiträge in dem von M. Wörle und P. Zanker herausgegebenen Sammelband *Stadt und Bürgerbild im Hellenismus*, München 1995.

inhaber der Stadt Ephesos, die ihrer Verpflichtung zur sachgemäßen Auktion der Priesterämter sowie der ordnungsgemäßen Abrechnung der Verkaufssteuer und der Überprüfung der Finanzen der Artemis offenbar nicht nachgekommen waren.

In römischer Zeit scheint es in einer Reihe von Städten eine Zunahme der Übernahme von Priesterämtern auf Lebenszeit gegeben zu haben,²¹ auch wenn eine Beurteilung der Dauer von Priesterämtern in der Regel schwierig ist, und ein einzelnes belegtes *dia biou* – auf Lebenszeit – nicht auch bedeutet, daß ein in einer Ehren- oder Grabinschrift einmal als ein solches bezeichnetes Priesteramt nun auch in der Folgezeit dann immer auf Lebenszeit vergeben wurde. Hier könnte ein schon in klassischer wie auch in hellenistischer Zeit in griechischen Städten belegter Brauch der lebenslangen (z.T. erblichen) Übernahme von Priesterämtern durch die von römischen Vorbildern geprägten Vorstellungen römischer und damit zunehmend auch griechisch-römischer Eliten beeinflusst worden sein und zu einer Zunahme einer solchen Praxis geführt haben.

Nicht nachweisbar dagegen ist ein Wandel der die Priesterämter übernehmenden Personengruppe. Die Verkaufslisten mit den z.B. in Erythrai mehr als 50 Priestertümern geben eine Vielfalt von Kulturen und Priesterämtern und der sie übernehmenden Personen wieder, wie sie durch die Ehrendekrete, die vor allem die Überlieferung für die Priesterämter der Kaiserzeit bestimmen, nicht wiedergegeben wird. Durch die Beschränkung der Überlieferung auf die Ehrendekrete scheint sich auch der Personenkreis der Priester und Priesterinnen nun auf die ganz reichen Bürger zu begrenzen. Aber nicht nur die bekannte Priesteramtsinhabergruppe ist durch die Art der Überlieferung beschränkt, sondern auch die Art und Anzahl der Kulte, für die diese Priester tätig waren.²² Wie verschiedenartig und vielfältig dagegen

²¹ So ist z.B. nach Parker 1996, a.a.O. (Anm.1), 269 erst im kaiserzeitlichen Athen ein Wandel von einem jährlichen Priesteramt zu einem auf Lebenszeit sicher nachweisbar. Es betrifft hier die beiden Kulte des Asklepios und der Artemis Kalliste. Parker ebd. betont allerdings auch den Wandel der sozialen Zugehörigkeit der Priester einiger Priesterämter zu besonders wohlhabenden Familien ab dem späten 3. Jh. v. Chr. Allerdings mag auch hier die Art der Überlieferung durch Ehrendekrete eine Rolle zu spielen.

²² So sind z.B. ohne den Kaiserkult nach den entsprechenden Inschriftencorpora an die 190 Götter und Heroen aus Attika bekannt aber nur 50 männliche und 20 weibliche Priesterämter, in kleinen Städten wie Alexandria Troas 25 Gottheiten zwei männliche und kein weibliches Priesteramt, in Byzantion 33 Götter und Heroen und vier männliche Priesterämter und kein weibliches, aus Perge kennen wir durch die Inschriften 30 Gottheiten und vier weibliche und acht männliche Priesterämter, in Pergamon sind es 104 Götter und Heroen, sieben weibliche Priesterämter und gut doppelt so viele männliche. Aus Samos kennen wir aus den Inschriften für die 77 inschriftlich belegten Gottheiten außer männlichen Priesterämtern neben einer Priesterin einer unbekannten Gottheit an weiblichen Priesterämtern nur den

auch in der Kaiserzeit noch das Kultleben der Städte war und wie viele Priester und Priesterinnen kleiner und kleinster Kulte es noch neben denen, die vor allem aus den Ehreninschriften bekannt sind, auch weiterhin gab, zeigt vor allem Pausanias für das kaiserzeitliche Griechenland.

Für die Priesterämter steht nicht etwa eine hellenistische Bourgeoisie, eine breite wohlhabende Schicht engagierter Bürger, einer römischen Aristokratie, einer kleinen Gruppe ganz Reicher, gegenüber, sondern für Kleinasien gibt es für die hellenistische Zeit eine einzigartige Überlieferung durch Verkaufslisten von zahlreichen Priestertümern (sowie einige Hinweise bei Strabo), für deren Angaben über Kulte und deren Priesterämter es kaum eine Entsprechung aus römischer Zeit gibt. Kontinuierlich überliefern dagegen die Ehrendekrete und Inschriften aus hellenistischer Zeit wie dann vor allem aus der Kaiserzeit häufig außerordentliches Engagement einzelner Bürger, Bürgerinnen und Familien. Sie übernehmen in hellenistischer Zeit wie in der Kaiserzeit wenn dann häufig nur die besonders bekannten und prestigeträchtigen Priesterämter und sie füllen sie oft außerdem besonders freigebig aus. Die kleineren Kulte dürften mit ihren Priesterämtern auch weiter existiert haben, nur werden sie in der besonderen Art der epigraphischen Überlieferung der Kaiserzeit dann meist nicht mehr erwähnt.

2. Kaiserkult als Konkurrenz für die alten Kulte?

Eine auf der Basis von Riet van Bremen²³ durchgeführte Überprüfung des von ihr (nicht vollständig) erfaßten Materials über die Übernahme von Ämtern in griechischen Städten durch Frauen in der Kaiserzeit scheint einen Verdrängungsmechanismus der Übernahme von Priesterämtern alter Kulte durch die Priesterämter der Kaiserkulte zu zeigen, der zumindest bei Frauen der Oberschichten zum Tragen kam.

Aber auch hier gilt wie für das zuvor zum Überlieferungswandel zu Übernahmeart (Verkauf, Wahl, Los, Erblichkeit) und zu Dauer (jährlich oder auf Lebenszeit) Gesagte: die meisten der uns bekannten Priesterämter und deren Inhaber, männliche wie weibliche, sind in den griechischen Städten der Kaiserzeit vor allem durch ehrende Inschriften bekannt. So gilt auch hier bei den folgenden Aussagen über die Gruppe der Personen, dass vor allem

für den Herakult, und für diesen sind gerade einmal vier Priesterinnen bekannt. Nicht jede bekannte Gottheit hatte notwendigerweise auch einen eigenen Kult mit Priester, die Listen aus Erythrai und Kos mit den zahlreichen Einzelkulten für einen Gott mit verschiedenen Epiklesen lassen aber vermuten, dass ein großer Teil der bekannten Gottheiten in den Städten auch eigene Priester besaß.

²³ Van Bremen 1996, a.a.O. (Anm.20).

Mitglieder der besonders wohlhabenden Familien geehrt werden, die über das übliche Maß an Ämtern und Liturgien ihren Städten auch weitere Wohltaten angedeihen ließen, und über die Auswahl der in den Texten genannten Kulte und Priesterämter, dass diese auf eine recht kleine Zahl von offenbar besonders prestigeträchtigen Kulte reduziert sind.²⁴

Besonders deutlich wird dies an einer Stadt wie Ephesos, da hier für die Kaiserzeit eine besonders große Zahl an Inschriften für Frauen erhalten sind, die ihnen zu Lebzeiten oder auch postum oft in Verbindung mit einer Statue als Ehrung und zur vorbildhaften Erinnerung aufgestellt worden sind. Dort sind aus den ersten drei Jahrhunderten n. Chr. mit einem deutlichen Schwerpunkt im 2. Jahrhundert bisher insgesamt 55 weibliche Priester der Artemis bekannt. Aus dem 2. und 3. Jahrhundert sind 26 Priesterinnen des lokalen oder provinzialen Kaiserkultes bezeugt. Lediglich sechs weitere Priesterämter (Hera, Hestia, Meter, Apollo Panionion, Ares und Leto) sind bekannt, meist nur durch eine einzelne Priesterin.²⁵

Gerade wenn man bewusst die Überlieferungsart berücksichtigt, scheint es in der Oberschicht – und zwar sozusagen der ‚crème de la crème‘ – ab der zweiten Hälfte des 2. Jahrhunderts in Kleinasien eine Tendenz zu geben, neben Euergesien und der Übernahme von Liturgien oder auch ehrenden Ämtertiteln (mit oder ohne finanzielle Verpflichtung) zumindest in den Städten, wo sich eine solche Möglichkeit eröffnete, außerdem ein Priesterinnenamt für den Kaiserkult zu übernehmen, und wenn dann auch noch das

²⁴ Beispielsweise sind aus Milet ca. 130 Gottheiten bekannt, die wohl zu einem größeren Teil auch eigene Priester gehabt haben dürften. Von weiblichen Priesterämtern aus hellenistischer Zeit ist lediglich das der Hydrophoren für Artemis Pythia bekannt (13 Priesterinnen). Priesterinnen der Artemis Pythia kennen wir aus der Kaiserzeit ca. 80, eine weitere für Athena Polias, eine für Artemis, weibliches Kultpersonal für die Theoi Kabiroi (2), für die Koureten zwei, drei weitere Priesterinnen für Artemis, Demeter und die Korybanten sowie vier für den Kaiserkult. Vgl. *Didyma II. Die Inschriften* 182. 243. 249. 265. 307-388. 496. Dabei sind von den nur einmal überlieferten weiblichen Priesterämtern zwei durch jeweils eine Person übernommen worden, von den Kaiserkultpriesterinnen haben drei der vier auch ein anderes Priesteramt innegehabt, zwei von ihnen waren Hydrophore der Artemis Pythia. Solche Beobachtungen gelten ebenso für Griechenland. So sind bspw. in Sparta der Kaiserzeit vor allem Priesterinnen der Demeter und Kore (12) sowie der Hestia Poleos (10) überliefert, fünf weitere weibliche Priesterämter sind aus der Mitte des 3. Jh.s n. Chr. durch eine einzige Frau bekannt (*Inscriptiones Graecae* V 1, 602), lediglich von zwei weiteren Kulte kennen wir inschriftlich zwei (Hyakinthos und Apollon in Amyklai) bzw. vier (Dioskuren) weitere Priesterinnen in den drei Jahrhunderten der Kaiserzeit. Auch hier zeigt sich also eine deutliche Konzentration der epigraphischen Überlieferung, die keine Aussage über die Menge der weiblichen Priesterämter zulässt, wohl aber über das Prestige und die Zugehörigkeit der die wenigen überlieferten Ämter übernehmenden Frauen zur Oberschicht der Stadt.

²⁵ Nachweise in den Indices der Inschriften von Ephesos-Bände (= *IGSK* 11/1-17). Drei Herapriesterinnen sind bekannt, außerdem sind aus dem 2. und 3. Jh. bei neun Inschriften *hiereia* genannt, die Gottheit aber nicht erhalten oder nicht genannt

wichtigste weibliche Priesteramt der Stadt. Denkbar ist zwar, dass solche Frauen sich auch in anderen Kulturen engagierten, zumindest hielten sie oder die sie ehrenden Familienmitglieder oder die ehrenden Institutionen der Stadt es dann nicht für notwendig, auch darauf hinzuweisen.

Möglicherweise hat es einen Verdrängungsprozess gegeben, bei dem die Frauen der besonders wohlhabenden Schicht, deren männliche Mitglieder oft auch in der römischen Reichsverwaltung als Ritter oder Senatoren aktiv waren, sich bevorzugt im römischen Kaiserkult und wenigen ausgewählten prestigeträchtigen lokalen Kulturen engagierten. Dieses Phänomen lässt sich jedoch nur in wenigen Städten und Regionen zeigen – Griechenland ist beispielsweise hiervon fast gänzlich ausgeschlossen, da Frauen in den Städten Griechenlands nur selten die Möglichkeit hatten, Priesterinnen des Kaiserkults zu werden, und überhaupt keine Möglichkeit, sich durch Archai und Liturgien zu profilieren.

Einen ersten Eindruck vom Wandel in der Wertschätzung der Übernahme von Priesterämtern durch Frauen für traditionelle Kulte auf der einen und dem Kaiserkult auf der anderen Seite könnte für kleinasiatische Provinzen, die Pontusregion und die ägäischen Inseln die Studie *Limits of Participation* von Riet van Bremen bieten, auch wenn deren Erfassung nicht umfassend ist, die Quellentypen nicht unterschieden werden und einzelne Gruppen von Frauen, die Ämter übernommen haben, ausgespart sind.²⁶ In einer Appendix hat van Bremen eine Liste von 237 Frauen der kaiserzeitlichen Oberschichten der Städte einer Reihe von Provinzen zusammengestellt,²⁷ die in ihren Städten Ämter (ehrenhalber) und Liturgien sowie Priesterämter übernahmen. 161 dieser Frauen hatten verschiedene Archai und Liturgien übernommen (Gymnasiarchen, Prytanen usw.) – aber kein Priesteramt. Weitere 26 hatten ein lokales oder provinzielles Kaiserkultpriesteramt inne, sonst aber kein anderes Priesteramt. Lediglich 50 (= 21%) dieser für ihre Städte so engagierten Frauen hatten nach van Bremen auch eines der traditionellen Priesterämter inne. Allerdings ist ihre Zusammenstellung insbesondere der Priesterinnen keineswegs vollständig (vgl. Anm.

²⁶ In die Zahl der 237 Frauen in dieser Liste sind allerdings nicht systematisch integriert die ca. 80 Hydrophoren der Artemis aus Didyma sowie die 29 Paare, bei denen die Frauen den Kult der Hekate in Lagina und die Männer den des Zeus von Panamara versahen. Weitere Priesterinnen scheinen offenbar ebenfalls in Einzelfällen nicht aufgenommen worden zu sein, wenn sie sonst keine anderen Ämter innehatten, so z.B. die Priesterinnen der Hera (*Inschriften von Ephesos III* [= IGSK 13] 883; *Inschriften von Ephesos VII 1* [= IGSK 17,1] 3405. 3416) oder auch der Meter (*Inschriften von Ephesos IV* [= IGSK 14] 1214).

²⁷ Aufgenommen bei van Bremen 1996, a.a.O. (Anm.20), Appendix 2 sind Münzen und Inschriften der Provinzen Asia, Lycia et Pamphylia, Cilicia, Bithynia und Pontus sowie die der ägäischen Inseln.

26), so dass die Liste einen falschen Eindruck vermitteln dürfte. Hier sind sicher noch Einzelstudien notwendig, die nicht nur das Material für einzelne Regionen und Städte vollständig erfasst, sondern auch bei der Art der Überlieferung differenziert.

Festzuhalten gilt, dass die kaiserzeitliche Überlieferung mit einer deutlichen Konzentration auf die ehrenden Inschriften, nicht nur in Kleinasien, sondern auch in Griechenland, die *überlieferten* männlichen wie weiblichen Priesterämter auf wenige zentrale Kulte inklusive des Kaiserkultes reduziert. Die bekannten männlichen wie weiblichen Priester dieser Kulte sind entsprechend dieser besonderen Überlieferung durch die Ehreninschriften vor allem aus den Oberschichten rekrutiert.

Die Möglichkeit des Engagements von Frauen der Oberschichten in Kleinasien, der Pontusregion und den ägäischen Inseln auch in anderen Bereichen städtischen Lebens (Liturgien, Ämter, Kaiserkult) als nur die der Übernahme von Priesterämtern traditioneller Kulte hat möglicherweise in diesen Regionen des römischen Reiches ab der zweiten Hälfte des 2. Jahrhunderts n. Chr. ein Nachlassen des Engagements der weiblichen Mitglieder der reichen Familien als Priesterinnen in traditionellen Kulturen zur Folge gehabt – was es aber im Detail noch zu untersuchen gilt.

Rostock, Januar 2005.

PAGANE PRIESTER DES RÖMISCHEN HEERES
IM 3. JAHRHUNDERT NACH CHRISTUS

RUDOLF HAENSCH

Bekanntlich bezeichneten seit frührepublikanischer Zeit *imperium* und *auspicium* die beiden Seiten der Amtsgewalt eines römischen Magistrats. So wie dieser im Auftrag seines Staatswesens den Willen der Götter zu erkennen und zu beobachten hatte und in diesem Zusammenhang vor allem die von der Gemeinde geschuldeten kultischen Akte durchzuführen hatte, so galt dies auch für die senatorischen und ritterlichen Offiziere und die von ihnen geführten Formationen. Epigraphisch schlägt sich diese Rolle des Offiziers als Vermittler seiner Einheit gegenüber den Göttern allem Anschein nach vor allem in den zahlreichen Inschriften nieder, deren Wortlaut nach Einheiten einen Altar für Iuppiter Optimus Maximus errichteten und in denen mit der Formel *cui praeest* darauf hingewiesen wurde, von welchem Offizier diese Formation geleitet wurde.¹ Explizitere Formulierungen finden sich normalerweise nicht, weil es sich eben um ein selbstverständliches, tausendfach zu beobachtendes Phänomen handelte, das schon durch eine knappe, formelhafte Anspielung hinreichend evoziert wurde. Nur in einer besonderen Situation wurde man so ausführlich wie ein *prae[po]situs castelli Tamu[den]sis* – also bezeichnenderweise ein nur ad hoc als Ortskommandant eingesetzter *decurio* – es auf dem Altar tat, den er anlässlich des Kaisergeburtstages im Jahre 210 stiftete (AE 1991, 1743). Er wies nicht nur explizit darauf hin, daß er mit diesem Akt *c[ul]tum produx(it)*, sondern verkündete auch *et deinceps ob[ser]vabimus*, forderte also die ihm unterstellten Soldaten und die zukünftigen Ortskommandanten dazu auf, seinem Beispiel in kultischer Hinsicht zu folgen.

Diese Rolle römischer Offiziere im Kultwesen schlug sich aber nicht nur in Inschriften, sondern auch in bildlichen Darstellungen nieder: Die detaillierteste und bekannteste ist ein Gemälde aus Dura Europus aus der

¹ O. Stoll, *Zwischen Integration und Abgrenzung: Die Religion des Römischen Heeres im Nahen Osten* (St. Katharinen 2001), besonders 224, 296 bezeichnet sie als "Einheitsweihungen" (a.O. auch entsprechende Beispiele). Epigraphische Publikationen werden nach F. Bérard u.a., *Guide de l'Épigraphiste* (Paris 2000³); papyrologische nach J.O. Oates u.a. (Hg.), *Checklist of Editions of Greek and Latin Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets* (Atlanta 2001⁵) (auch im Internet) abgekürzt. Die Studie entstand im Rahmen des Projektes "Die römische Armee im Osten zwischen Staatskult und lokalen religiösen Kulturen" des Schwerpunktprogrammes 1080 "Römische Reichsreligion und Provinzialreligion" der DFG und wurde erstmals bei dem 3. Berichtskolloquium des Schwerpunktprogrammes in Neudietendorf vom 13.-15.10.2003 vorgestellt.

Zeit Gordians.² Es zeigt einen wahrscheinlich im Jahre 239 gefallenem Tribun der *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* namens Iulius Terentius beim Opfer an der Spitze seiner Abteilung. Der Offizier vollzieht das Weihrauchopfer. Seine Männer sind nur insofern an dem Akt beteiligt, als ihre Geste der rechten erhobenen Hand erkennen läßt, daß sie zu der Gottheit beten oder sie zumindest anrufen.³

Wie ein Magistrat vollzog auch der Offizier den kultischen Akt selbst. Er mußte ihn nicht wie ein mittelalterlicher oder neuzeitlicher Befehlshaber einem religiösen Experten, einem Feldgeistlichen, überlassen. Religiöse ‘Spezialisten’ spielten im Römischen Heer der Hohen Kaiserzeit höchstens als Helfer oder Berater eine Rolle. So finden sich z.B. in den Legionen und Auxilien, aber auch bei den stadtrömischen Truppen und Flotten *aeditui* (Tempelwärter) und *victimarii* (Opferdiener). Ebenfalls nur mit Hilfsfunktionen betraut waren *haruspices*, *marsi* (Spezialisten für Weissagungen mit Hilfe von Schlangen) und *turarii* (Hilfspersonal für Weihrauchopfer), bei denen es zweifelhaft bleiben muß, ob es sie in allen Arten militärischer Formationen gab.⁴

² Immer wieder abgebildet, s. z.B. M. Sartre, *D’Alexandre à Zenobie* (Paris 2001), 723f. oder H. Devijver, *Prosopographia militarium equestrium quae fuerunt ab Augusto ad Gallienum*, Band 1 (Leuven 1976), 6f.

³ Zu Iulius Terentius: AE 1948, 124 = R. Merkelbach – J. Stauber, *Steinepigramme aus dem griechischen Osten* (Leipzig 2002), IV 20/28/02 (mit veralteter Datierung; s. Devijver 1976, a.a.O. [Anm. 2] Band 1, 131; Suppl. 2, 131). Eine in Vielem vergleichbare Szene findet sich schon circa 80 Jahre früher auf dem sogenannten “Bridgeness slab”. Hier vollzieht allem Anschein nach der Legionslegat der *legio II Augusta* die *suovetaurilia*: RIB 2139 mit Plate XVIII. Zur Geste der erhobenen rechten Hand: F. Cumont, ‘Deux monuments des cultes solaires’, *Syria* 14 (1933), 381-395, besonders 387; A. Corbeill, *Nature Embodied* (Princeton 2004), 20-33.

⁴ *Aedituus*: CIL VI 3712 = 31180 (*eq. sing. Aug.*; 2. Jh.); CIL III 5822 = ILS 2526 (*singulares praesidis*); *P. Dura* 82 = *Rom. Mil. Rec.* 47 I 7.17. II 12 (*coh. XX Palmyrenorum*; Sev. Alex.); vgl. auch CIL VI 231, cf. 30721, p. 3755 = ILS 2215 sowie CIL IX 1609 mit M.P. Speidel, *The Religion of Iuppiter Dolichenus in the Roman Army* (Leiden 1978), 52. *Victimarius*: CIL VI 32533, cf. p. 3834, 4351 (= ILS 431) b 24 (*praetoriani*; 209); CIL VI 32522 d 2. 8 (*urbaniciani*; 3. Viertel des 2. Jh.s); CIL VI 1056, cf. p. 4320 (3) 11 (*vigiles*; 205); CIL VI 1057, cf. p. 4320 (3) 4 (*vigiles*; 205); CIL VI 1058, cf. p. 4320 (3) 14 (*vigiles*; 210); CIL VI 31149 = ILS 4833 (*eq. sing. Aug.*; 141); CIL X 3501 = ILS 2875 (*classis*); CIL VIII 18085 e 4 (*legio III Augusta* – wenn einschlägig); CIL XIII 8292 = Galsterer 230 (*legio XXX Ulpia Victrix*; Ende 2.-3. Jh.).

Haruspex: CIL VIII 2586 = ILS 2381 = CBI 783 (*legio III Augusta*; um 220 – Speidel; 2. H. 2. Jh.s – CBI); CIL III 14214 = ILS 9107 (Domitian); zu CIL VI 1058, cf. p. 4320 (2) 7; (4) 15 (*vigiles*; 205) s. aber R. Sablayrolles, *Libertinus miles. Les cohortes de vigiles* (Rome 1996), 231 Anm. 185. Vgl. auch den *marsus*: CIL VIII 2564, cf. 18052 b 23 = ILS 470 (*legio III Augusta*; Elagabal); CIL VIII 2618, cf. 18096 b 25-26 (dito; 211-212).

Turarius: CIL VI 31150 Z. 10 (*eq. sing. Aug.*; 142); CIL VI 31164 = ILS 2189 (*eq. sing. Aug.*; 241); CIL VI 3236 = ILS 2204, zum Verständnis vgl. M.P. Speidel, *Die Denkmäler der Kaiserreiter. Equites*

So sehr die gerade gegebene Darstellung der *opinio communis* entspricht, so wenig passen einige schon seit Jahrzehnten bekannte Zeugnisse aus dem 3. und beginnenden 4. Jh. zu ihr. Allem Anschein nach aus Koptos⁵ stammen zwei Weihinschriften aus der Zeit des Kaisers Licinius.⁶ Beide erwähnen die gleiche unter dem Kommando eines gewissen Victorinus stehende *vexillatio*. Diese *vexillatio* bestand aus abkommandierten Abteilungen der *legiones III Gallica* und *I Illyrica* sowie aus einem Verband emesenischer Bogenschützen (oder nur einer Abteilung eines solchen Verbandes). Die beiden genannten Legionen waren grundsätzlich in der Syria Phoenice stationiert (Die letztgenannte war wahrscheinlich erst von Aurelian aufgestellt worden).⁷ Sie hatten aber offensichtlich im Zusammenhang mit einem der Feldzüge des beginnenden 4. Jh.s Abteilungen an das in Ägypten stationierte Heer abgegeben.

Bei einer der beiden Inschriften handelt es sich um eine Bauinschrift eines nicht mehr bestimmbar Gebäudes oder Gebäudeteils. Der Architrav hat eine Höhe von 22 cm und eine Breite von 70 cm. Diese Inschrift orientiert sich grundsätzlich am üblichen Formular griechischer Weihinschriften. Sie ist mit Hilfe der *consules* ins Jahr 321 datiert.

Die andere Inschrift ist die Dedikationsinschrift eines Weihrauchbeckens. Sie wurde offensichtlich von jemandem verfaßt, der des Griechischen nicht besonders mächtig war. Deshalb 'schusterte' er den Text aus einer Reihe von Textbausteinen zusammen. Selbst diese sind aber durch Fehler so sehr verunstaltet, daß die Inschrift nach Ansicht aller bisherigen

singulares Augusti (Köln – Bonn 1994), 330 Nr. 599; in diesem Corpus sind auch die anderen Zeugnisse für entsprechende *equites singulares Augusti* neu herausgegeben worden.

Coronarius: CIL XI 30 = ILS 2876 (*classis*). Ein *pullarius* ist demgegenüber in AE 1926, 69 gegen den Kommentar von Année Epigraphique und z. B. A. v. Domaszewski / B. Dobson (Bearb.), *Die Rangordnung des Römischen Heeres* (Köln – Graz 1967²), XIII gerade nicht explizit bezeugt (vorsichtiger A. Passerini, *Dizionario epigrafico di antichità romane*, 4 [1942-1985], 604).

⁵ Zur Herkunft von AE 1900, 29 vgl. E. Bernand, 'Recherches muséographiques. A propos des inscriptions de Koptos', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 62 (1986), 221-236, hier 226.

⁶ AE 1894, 163 = *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 2 (1903), p. 451f. Nr. 94 = J.G. Milne, *Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du musée du Caire. Greek Inscriptions* (Oxford 1905), p. 45f. Nr. 9272 = ILS 8882 = *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 62 (1986), 225 = A. Bernand, *Les portes du désert* (Paris 1984), Nr. 91, cf. SEG 34, 1588; 45, 2093; 47, 2119 = AE 1995, 1611 (aus dem Jahr 316) bzw. AE 1900, 29 = *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 2 (1903), p. 445 Nr. 67 = Milne 1905, a.a.O., p. 45 Nr. 9238 = SB I 4223 = *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 62 (1986), p. 225 f. = SEG 34, 1598, cf. 45, 2116; 47, 2119 (aus dem Jahr 321 nach T.D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge/Ma. – London 1982), 91 und R.S. Bagnall u.a., *Consuls of the Later Roman Empire* (Atlanta 1987), 92, 321; damit überholt D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle* (Darmstadt 1996²), 295 f. [322] und die immer wieder angeführte Datierung ins Jahr 323).

⁷ E. Ritterling, RE I 12, 2, 1925, 1406.

Herausgeber kaum verständlich ist. Offensichtlich hat sich hier der Einfluß einer semitischen Sprache massiv auf die Gestaltung des Textes ausgewirkt. Diese Inschrift ist mit Hilfe der Seleukidenära ins Jahr 316 datiert.

In unserem Kontext ist allerdings vor allem die andere Inschrift aus dem Jahr 321 wichtig. Sie nennt nämlich in den Zeilen 7 ff. zwischen einem nicht näher bezeichneten ἀρχιερεύς und einem ebensowenig näher charakterisierten ἱερεύς einen ἱερεύς λεγ(εῶνος) γ´ (τρίτης) Γαλλ(ικῆς) und einen ἱερεύς λεγ(εῶνος) α´ (πρώτης) Ἰλλυρικῆς. Offensichtlich gehörten also zu Beginn des 4. Jh.s selbst zu den Legionen, den genuin römischen Formationen des Reichsheeres, spezielle Priester.

Die Aufgabe dieser Priester kann auch nicht von untergeordneter Bedeutung gewesen sein: beide werden nämlich nicht nur mit ihren Namen angeführt, sondern auch – da ihre Nennung allem Anschein nach von τῇ προ[νοίᾳ] abhängig ist – zusammen mit den übrigen beiden Priestern als die eigentlichen ausführenden Organe der Weihung der Einheiten gekennzeichnet.⁸

Im Falle der anderen zwei genannten und nicht näher spezifizierten Priester legt der ganze Kontext der Inschrift es nahe, daß der zuerst genannte Archiereus derjenige der *vexillatio* war⁹ und der zuletzt genannte Hiereus der den emesenischen Bogenschützen zugeordnete Priester.¹⁰ Akzeptiert man diese Hypothese, dann hätte es zu dem Zeitpunkt der Inschrift sogar schon eine Hierarchie unter den paganen Armeepriestern gegeben – nämlich einen Archiereus der ganzen *vexillatio* und je einen Hiereus für die drei zur *vexillatio* gehörenden Einheiten. Aber selbst wenn man diesen Schluß nicht ziehen will, bleibt auf jeden Fall das Faktum, daß zu Beginn des 4. Jh.s selbst in den Legionen der Offizier einer Einheit nicht mehr der allein einzig wichtige Vertreter seines Verbandes gegenüber den Göttern war. Zudem bestätigt die zweite, sprachlich problematischere Inschrift die Aussage der ersten insofern, als wiederum im Zusammenhang mit der gleichen *vexillatio* und partiell denselben Göttern ein ἀρχιερεύς (mit einem anderen Namen) angeführt wird, für den man das Gedenken des Lesers erbittet.

⁸ Zu diesem Formular W.K. Prentice, 'Officials Charged with the Conduct of Public Works in Roman and Byzantine Syria', *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 43 (1912), 113-123.

⁹ So auch B. Palme, *Corpus Papyrorum Raineri* 24, *Griechische Texte* 17 (Wien 2002), p. 97; kaum zutreffend M. Christol – Th. Drew-Bear, 'Inscriptions militaires d'Aulutrene et d'Apamée de Phrygie', in: Y. Le Bohec (ed.), *La hiérarchie (Rangordnung) de l'armée Romaine* (Paris 1995), 57-87, hier 60.

¹⁰ So z.B. Speidel 1978, a.a.O. (Anm. 4), 53 Anm. 173 ("may have been attached").

Wenn man diese Inschriften bisher überhaupt wahrnahm, dann versuchte man sie entweder in der Weise ‘wegzuerklären’, daß man vermutete, ἱερεὺς meine nur *haruspex*.¹¹ Das scheitert schon an der Art und Weise, wie diese Priester in der Inschrift aus dem Jahre 321 angeführt werden – nämlich als ausführende Organe der Baumaßnahme. Oder man mutmaßte, die paganen Armeepriester seien von einem der Kaiser des beginnenden 4. Jh.s eingeführt worden, die in Reaktion auf die zunehmende Christianisierung die heidnischen Kulte stärken wollten.¹² Auch dieser Erklärungsversuch überzeugt wenig. In einer Aufstellung (vielleicht von Ausgaben?) auf der Wand eines Tempels in Dura Europus erscheint nämlich u.a. in Zeile 10 die Angabe ἱερεὶ λεγι[ω]ναρίῳ α΄.¹³ Man hatte also diesem Priester und Legionär ein Exemplar einer bestimmten Sache zur Verfügung gestellt. Dura war aber seit der persischen Eroberung im Jahre 256 nicht mehr römischer Truppenstandort. Die gerade angeführte Erwähnung eines zu den Legionären gehörenden Priesters muß also noch vor das Jahr 256 datieren. Sicherlich, der Priester wird nicht so eindeutig wie bei den bisher diskutierten Beispielen als Priester seiner Einheit gekennzeichnet. Aber andererseits ist die Dokumentation für das römische Heer in der 2. Hälfte des 3. Jh.s so dünn, daß man diesen mehr als sechzig Jahre früheren Beleg nicht ‘wegdiskutieren’ sollte, indem man behauptet, ἱερεὺς meine nur *haruspex* bzw. *aedituus*¹⁴ oder der Mann sei nur in seinem ‘Privatleben’ Priester gewesen.

Da die drei angeführten Priester zweifelsfrei Angehörige von Legionen waren, ist es auch nicht möglich, sie so ‘wegzuerklären’, wie es im Falle eines anderen Priesters geschieht. Es ist dies der auf dem Gemälde aus Dura Europus bezeugte Θεμης Μοκίμ ἱερεὺς. Zweifelsfrei derselbe Mann wird auch in einem aus dem Jahre 239 stammenden *morning report*, also einem offiziellen Dokument der Einheit, genannt.¹⁵ In diesem lateinischen Dokument wird er als *sacerdos* bezeichnet. Entweder will man in ihm, so wie es Arthur Nock tat, nur den “sacristan” des Schreines sehen, in dem die Standarten der Kohorte aufbewahrt wurden.¹⁶ ἱερεὺς bzw. *sacerdos* sei nur

¹¹ So Ritterling 1925, a.a.O. (Anm. 7).

¹² So A.D. Nock, ‘The Roman Army and the Roman Religious Year’, *Harvard Theological Review* 45 (1952), 186-252 = ders. (Z. Stewart ed.), *Essays on Religion and the Ancient World*, Band 2 (Oxford 1972), 736-790, hier 782.

¹³ F. Cumont, *Les Fouilles de Doura-Europos* (Paris 1926), 375ff. Nr. 14.

¹⁴ So Nock 1972, a.a.O. (Anm. 12), 789; Cumont 1926, a.a.O. (Anm. 13), 113 meinte λεγιονάριος stünde nur für “militaire”.

¹⁵ *P. Dura* 89 = *Rom. Mil. Rec.* 50 I 2 – [sacer]dos ; 9 – [sace]r(dos); II b 2 – sacer(dos).

¹⁶ Nock 1972, a.a.O. (Anm. 12), 746, 782 ff.

“a more high sounding designation” für *aedituus* gewesen.¹⁷ Zweifellos hat Nock insofern Recht, als er unterstreicht, daß der Tribun das Opfer vollzieht. Aber Themes ist auch nicht nur “one of the soldiers in the upper row”.¹⁸ Vielmehr steht er an der Spitze dieser zweiten getrennten Gruppe und wird neben dem Tribunen als einziger namentlich genannt. Wenn dieser Priester nach dem Zeugnis des erwähnten *morning report* rangmäßig zwischen einem *bucinator* und einem *tesserarius*, also unter den Unteroffizieren (*principales*) rangierte, so ist dies recht gut mit der Position vergleichbar, die einem christlichen Presbyter in der Hierarchie eines spätantiken *numerus* zukam.¹⁹

Es ist bezeichnend für die Probleme der heutigen Militärforscher mit diesen Zeugnissen für pagane ‘Feldgeistliche’, daß z.B. Speidel bezweifelte,²⁰ ob man den Rang des *sacerdos* aus diesem Dokument ableiten dürfe. Eine solche Einordnung eines Priesters unter die hochrangigen Unteroffiziere paßt zweifellos nicht zu den bisherigen Vorstellungen von der römischen Armee als professionellem Berufsheer ohne spezifisch religiöse Motivation. Aber es gibt prinzipiell keinen Grund, warum in einem amtlichen Routinedokument von dem ansonsten grundsätzlich immer beachteten hierarchischen Prinzip abgewichen worden sein sollte.

Ein anderer Versuch, diesen Priester ‘wegzuerklären’, besteht in der These, bei solch ‘nationalen’, aus semitischen Bevölkerungsteilen des Reiches rekrutierten *numeri* habe der Kommandeur infolge jahrhundertealter Traditionen die Hilfe eines Priesters benötigt.²¹ Diese Erklärung könnte nur dann überzeugen, wenn pagane Priester nur bei *numeri*, wie denen der Palmyreni oder Emeseni, bezeugt wären oder wenn es sich nur um Priester orientalischer Gottheiten wie Iuppiter Dolichenus oder Mithras handeln würde, die gleichzeitig aktive Soldaten waren.²² Aber ein solcher Ansatz

¹⁷ Nock 1972, a.a.O. (Anm. 12), 790.

¹⁸ Nock, a.a.O. (Anm. 12), 746.

¹⁹ *P. Med.* I 70 = *SB* VI 9499 = *SB* XX 15168; dazu F. Mitthof, *Annona Militaris*, 2. Teil: Katalog (Firenze 2001), 514 f. und 580 und Palme 2002, a.a.O. (Anm. 9), 97.

²⁰ Speidel 1978, a.a.O. (Anm. 4), 53 Anm. 171.

²¹ H. Devijver, ‘Equestrian Officers and their Monuments’, in: Ders., *The Equestrian Officers of the Roman Imperial Army* (Amsterdam 1989), 416-449, hier 443.

²² *Sace[r(dos)] Iovis Doliche[ni]* und *eques singularis*: *CIL* VI 31181 = Speidel 1994, a.a.O. (Anm. 4), Nr. 43; ein *candidatus* – wohl für das Priesteramt, s. zuletzt J. Rüpke, *Fasti sacerdotum*, Teil 3 (Stuttgart 2005), 1539 mit Anm. 12 – vielleicht in *CIL* III 1135; einschlägig möglicherweise auch *CIL* XIII 7786, s. Speidel 1994, a.a.O. (Anm. 4) 49 f. sowie *AE* 1965, 30 = *I. Apulum* 221, dazu Speidel, a.a.O. 50 und den Kommentar von *I. Apulum*. S. jetzt auch die städtischen Magistrate und *sacerdotes dei et coh(ortis)* von *AE* 2001, 1707, dazu zuletzt I. Piso, ‘Die cohors III Campestris in Porolissum’, in: F. Beutler – W. Hameter, “Eine ganz normale Inschrift” ... und ähnliches zum Geburtstag von Ekkehard Weber, Wien 2005, 325-331.

reicht nicht dazu aus, um allem Anschein nach generell zuständige Priester bei Kernverbänden des römischen Heeres wie den Legionen zu deuten. Zudem sind nicht nur für Legionen, sondern auch für eine andere, ganz besonders "römische" Formation, nämlich die Prätorianer, entsprechende Priester bezeugt. *CIL* VI 30685 belegt für den 11.V.241 einen *sacerdos* und *miles cohortis X pr(aetoriana) p(iae) v(indicis) Gordiana* namens Aurelius Mucianus. Weiterhin ist auf eine ebenfalls aus Rom stammende Grabinschrift eines Prätorianers zu verweisen.²³ Wegen der Nennung der *tria nomina* ist sie sicher nicht allzu spät ins 3. Jh. zu datieren. In dieser Inschrift wird in abgekürzter Form darauf hingewiesen, ein gewisser T. Aelius Malc(h)us sei *antistes sacerd. temp(li) Martis castror(um) pr(aetriorum)* gewesen. Statt *sacerd.* zu *sacerd(os)* aufzulösen und dann vor dem Problem zu stehen, warum man dieselbe Funktion gleich mit zwei Bezeichnungen – *antistes* und *sacerdos* – ausgedrückt habe,²⁴ liegt es viel näher, an den Plural *sacerd(otum)* zu denken. In diesem Sinne hat z.B. auch Durry die Inschrift verstanden.²⁵ Bei dieser Auflösung ergibt sich aber mit *antistes sacerd(otum)* ein lateinisches Äquivalent zu ἀρχιερεύς.²⁶

Damit scheint sich insgesamt abzuzeichnen, daß schon in der ersten Hälfte des 3. Jh.s die Funktion eines oder mehrerer Priester (*sacerdos* / ἱερεύς) im Rang eines *principalis* auch bei römischen Kerneinheiten eingeführt wurde. Größere Truppenverbände verfügten sogar über eine Hierarchie entsprechender Amtsinhaber. Bei den kultischen Akten der jeweiligen Einheiten ersetzen diese Priester zwar zumindest in der 1. Hälfte des 3. Jh.s noch nicht die Offiziere der jeweiligen Formationen. Aber sie waren auch nicht mehr bloße Helfer. Vielmehr kam ihnen bei der Durchführung dieser Akte nach dem Fresco von Dura Europus eine zwar nicht mehr genau bestimmbare, aber eigengewichtige Rolle zu.

²³ *CIL* VI 2256, cf. 32456 = *ILS* 2090.

²⁴ Nock 1972, a.a.O. (Anm. 12), 790. *CIL* VI 716 ist bezeichnenderweise wesentlich anders formuliert.

²⁵ M. Durry, *Les cohortes prétoriennes* (Paris 1938), 321 (allerdings nicht aufgelöst). Durry hat die Inschrift unterschiedlich datiert: a.O. – circa 250 (ebenso 32); Philippus Arabs: a.O. 110. *CIL* VI 31165 = *ILS* 2190 = Speidel 1994, a.a.O. (Anm. 4), Nr. 64 aus dem Jahr 250 liefert auf jeden Fall nur einen terminus ante quem. Zur Bedeutung von *tector* in beiden Inschriften zuletzt vor allem Speidel, a.a.O.

²⁶ Der *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* kennt keine Parallele, führt die Inschrift jedoch auch nicht an. Das erläuterte Verständnis würde noch wahrscheinlicher, wenn Mars, wie es v. Domaszewski darstellte, der zentrale Schutzgott der Prätorianer gewesen sei, "dessen Tempel im Lager selbst steht" (*Die Religion des römischen Heeres* [Trier 1895], 47). Doch ist – wie so oft bei v. Domaszewski – nicht zu erkennen, worauf sich seine These stützt (sie wurde daher auch – mit nicht immer überzeugenden Argumenten – von Durry 1935, a.a.O. [Anm. 25], 320 ff. angegriffen).

Seit wann genau gab es solche Armeepriester? Einerseits liefern die hier vorgestellten Zeugnisse eine Reihe von *termini ante quem* im 2. Drittel des 3. Jh.s: Im Jahre 239 ist für die *cohors XX Palmyrenorum* erstmals ein *sacerdos* belegt, aus dem Jahr 241 stammt das Zeugnis für einen *sacerdos* und *miles praetorianus* und spätestens im Jahre 256 gab es einen ἱερεὺς λεγιονάριος. Wie immer bei solchen ersten Belegen für eine bestimmte, nur epigraphisch bezeugte Institution ist aber damit zu rechnen, daß diese schon Jahre, vielleicht sogar Jahrzehnte früher entstand.²⁷

Andererseits möchte man aber auch nicht allzuweit ins frühe 3. Jh. zurückgehen, weil gerade die Zeit der severischen Dynastie eine Periode mit einer besonders reichen epigraphischen Überlieferung ist. Das gilt speziell für das römische Heer. Wären die paganen Heerespriester schon von Septimius Severus geschaffen worden, müßte man eigentlich entsprechende epigraphische Zeugnisse schon unter diesem Kaiser oder seinem Sohn Caracalla erwarten.

Schließlich ist bei einer vergleichsweise geschlossenen Institution wie dem römischen Heer und speziell seinen Kernverbänden davon auszugehen, daß man nur dann vom *mos maiorum* und seinen Vorstellungen über die Aufgabenverteilung zwischen Offizieren und Soldaten abwich, wenn der Anstoß dazu von der zentralen Institution des Reiches, also dem Kaiser, ausging.

Grenzt man den fraglichen Zeitraum und den Gründungszusammenhang auf diese Weise ein, so liegt vor allem der Gedanke an einen Kaiser nahe: Elagabal. Es war nicht nur so, daß unter diesem, in unserer Überlieferung nicht besonders gut faßbaren Kaiser mit dem Sonnengott von Emesa ein Gott aus dem Osten des Reiches mit ganz anderen Kultcharakteristika, als sie für die klassischen griechisch-römischen Götter typisch waren, zum wichtigsten römischen Staatsgott werden sollte. Wichtiger ist, daß dieser Kult allem Anschein nach hierarchisch organisiert wurde. Das läßt sich vor allem daran festmachen, daß sich der Kaiser durch Senatsbeschluß zum *sacerdos amplissimus dei invicti Solis Elagabali* ernennen ließ.²⁸

Wichtig ist weiterhin, daß dieses neue kaiserliche Amt auch – und gerade – gegenüber Soldaten propagiert wurde. Neben den Münzen²⁹ ist uns

²⁷ Vgl. W. Eck, 'Die Einrichtung der Prokuratur der IIII Publica Africae, Zu einem methodischen Problem', in: Ders., *Die Verwaltung des römischen Reiches in der Hohen Kaiserzeit*, 1. Band [Basel 1995], 349-354.

²⁸ Cassius Dio 79.11.1.

²⁹ Dazu M. Thirion, *Le monnayage d'Elagabale (218-222)* (Bruxelles – Amsterdam 1968), besonders 12 f.

der neue kaiserliche Titel vor allem aus den sogenannten Militärdiplomen bekannt.³⁰ Diese Militärdiplome wurden seit 221 auf einmal wieder in einer gegenüber den vorausgegangenen Jahren, ja Jahrzehnten wesentlich größeren Zahl³¹ an die stadtrömischen Truppen und die Flottensoldaten ausgegeben. Die Ausgabe solcher Diplome gehörte offensichtlich zu den zahlreichen Gaben des Kaisers an die Prätorianer (und die anderen in Italien stationierten Soldaten), die aber wirkungslos ‘verpufften’. Darüber soll sich der Kaiser jedenfalls einmal beklagt haben, wenn man Cassius Dio Glauben schenken will.³² In diesen vergleichsweise zahlreichen Diplomen wird nicht nur in der Titulatur Elagabals selbst, sondern auch in derjenigen des ihm aufgedrängten Mitregenten, des späteren Kaisers Severus Alexander,³³ auf das Priesteramt Elagabals hingewiesen.

Daß unter diesem kaiserlichen “Höchst”priester eine Reihe von Priestern bei den einzelnen Armeeverbänden institutionalisiert wurden, liegt auch deshalb nahe, weil uns unsere fragmentarischen literarischen Quellen immer wieder davon berichten, Elagabal habe die Soldaten in den von ihm propagierten Kult einbinden wollen. Ritter und Soldaten standen an der Spitze der vom Kaiser in Rom veranstalteten Prozessionen seines Gottes.³⁴ Gerade Offiziere und Soldaten waren besonders von dem kaiserlichen Befehl betroffen, bei allen Opfern von Magistraten oder im Zusammenhang mit

³⁰ Unter den epigraphischen Belegen für den Titel (vgl. M. Frey, *Untersuchungen zur Religion und Religionspolitik des Kaisers Elagabal* [Stuttgart 1989], 86) sind folgende Militärdiplome: *CIL* XVI 139; *CIL* XVI 140; *CIL* XVI 141; *RMD* I 75 (= *AE* 1964, 269); *RMD* IV 307 (= *AE* 1995, 1565); *RMD* IV 308; *AE* 2000, 1849; B. Pferdehirt, *Römische Militärdiplome und Entlassungsurkunden in der Sammlung des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums* (Mainz 2004), Teil 1, Nr. 53; 54. Ansonsten stammen *RIB* 1465 und *AE* 1995, 1641 von Soldaten. *AE* 1936, 85 = P.S. Leber, *Die in Kärnten seit 1902 gefundenen römischen Steininschriften* (Klagenfurt 1972), Nr. 56 = *ILLPr* 747 ist eine Bauinschrift des Theaters von Virunum, also einer Provinzhauptstadt, wobei es zumindest einen weiteren Anhaltspunkt dafür gibt, daß Soldaten an der Maßnahme beteiligt waren: M. Horster, *Bauinschriften römischer Kaiser* (Stuttgart 2001), 392f. Ähnliches gilt für *AE* 1990, 654 – wenn zutreffend ergänzt, dazu auch Horster, a.a.O., 359ff. Dazu kommt noch der Meilenstein *AE* 1975, 775 = 1999, 1422 und die städtische Ehrung *AE* 2001, 938 (von Asisium).

³¹ Vgl. den Überblick bei *RMD* IV 379.

³² Cassius Dio 80. 18. 4: τοῖς δὲ δορυφόροις οἷς τοσαῦτα δίδωμι οὐκ ἀρέσκω.

³³ *CIL* XVI 140; *RMD* I 75 (= *AE* 1964, 269); *RMD* IV 307 (= *AE* 1995, 1565); *RMD* IV 308; *AE* 2000, 1850, Pferdehirt 2004, a.a.O. (Anm. 30), Teil 1, Nr. 54: *nobilissimus Caes(ar) imperi et sacerdotis*; zu dieser Titulatur vor allem S. Dušanić, ‘Nobilissimus Caesar imperii et sacerdotis’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 37 (1980), 117-120.

³⁴ Herodian 5.6.8; vgl. zu diesen und den folgenden Passagen Herodians: A. Scheithauer, ‘Die Regierungszeit des Kaisers Elagabal in der Darstellung von Cassius Dio und Herodian’, *Hermes* 118 (1990), 335-356; M. Zimmermann, *Kaiser und Ereignis* (München 1999), 230ff.; M. Sommer, ‘Elagabal – Wege zur Konstruktion eines ‘schlechten’ Kaisers’, *Scripta Classica Israelica* 23 (2004), 95-110, besonders 105 ff.

einer öffentlichen Tätigkeit den von ihm verehrten Sonnengott von Emesa vor allen anderen Göttern anzurufen.³⁵

Daß diese und wohl auch andere, in unserer Überlieferung nicht mehr faßbare Maßnahmen zu einer religiös erhitzten Atmosphäre gerade auch in den Militärlagern führte, das belegen die Angaben Herodians zum Tode Elagabals.³⁶ Nach diesem Autor nahmen die zur Ermordung Elagabals führenden Ereignisse ihren Ausgang von einer Bitte meuternder Prätorianer, Severus Alexander möge sich im Heiligtum der Prätorianer zeigen. Die Meuterer wollten sich auf diese Weise davon überzeugen, daß Severus Alexander noch bei guter Gesundheit war. Welchem Gott oder Göttern das entsprechende Heiligtum gewidmet war, sagt Herodian allerdings nicht. Elagabal begleitete seinen Caesar in das Lager und verbrachte eine Nacht in diesem Tempel – vielleicht mit Kultakten zu Ehren seines Gottes. Als er am nächsten Morgen die Verhaftung der Rädelsführer anordnete, wurde er ermordet. Ein im Lager der Prätorianer gelegenes Heiligtum spielte also gleich mehrfach bei diesen Ereignissen eine Rolle.

Die hier dargelegte These, Elagabal habe die Stellen paganer Priester bei den Formationen der römischen Armee geschaffen, zieht die zusätzliche Annahme nach sich, diese Anordnung sei im Gegensatz zu vielen anderen nach seinem Tod nicht vollständig rückgängig gemacht worden. Das ist aber ohne weiteres denkbar. Man mußte die Priester ja nur anweisen, in Zukunft nicht mehr den Sonnengott von Emesa zu verehren, um das zu beseitigen, was an den Anordnungen Elagabals besonders Anstoß erregt hatte. Daß Armeeangehörige im Mannschaftsstand als Priester ihrer Formation fungierten, war zwar auch keine altrömische Einrichtung. Aber es war doch eine solche, die man in die seit Jahrhunderten üblichen religiösen Praktiken integrieren konnte. Die auf dem Fresko von Dura Europus dargestellte Position des *sacerdos* – herausgehoben gegenüber allen anderen Soldaten seiner Formation, aber zurückgesetzt gegenüber dem Tribun seiner Einheit – würde gut zu einem solchen Integrationsversuch passen. Der Vorteil eines solchen Vorgehens hätte darin bestanden, daß man den mit dieser Funktion betrauten Soldaten nicht die Privilegien entziehen mußte, die sie erlangt hatten, und damit nicht ihren Unmut in einer instabilen Situation wecken mußte.

Es ist angesichts der eingangs diskutierten Zeugnisse aus Koptos durchaus in Erwägung zu ziehen, ob solche Priester in der zweiten Hälfte des

³⁵ Herodian 5.5.7.

³⁶ Herodian 5.8.6-9.

3. Jh.s über die unter Severus Alexander festgelegte Position hinaus zunehmend Eigengewicht bekommen haben. Das entspräche nur der generellen Entwicklung der paganen Religionen in dieser Krisenzeit des Reiches. Allgemein ist zu beobachten, daß pagane römische Priesterämter in diesen Jahrzehnten zunehmend an religiöser 'Qualität' gewannen.³⁷ Dabei bräuchte eine entsprechende Entwicklung bei den Armeepriestern keineswegs nur ein unbewußter, sich 'unter der Oberfläche' vollziehender Prozess gewesen zu sein. Vielmehr könnten weitere Initiativen anderer Kaiser des 3. und beginnenden 4. Jh.s für eine zunehmende religiöse Qualität gesorgt haben. So könnten z.B. aus den Bemühungen Aurelians um den Kult des Sol – es sei nur an das von ihm gegründete Kollegium der *pontifices Solis* erinnert³⁸ – auch neue Anweisungen an die *sacerdotes exercitus* entsprungen sein. Wir wissen z.B. auch nicht, wie die inschriftlich bezeugten Befehle des Licinius genau lauteten, mit denen er den Verbänden seines Heeres auferlegte, alljährlich am 18. November Weihrauch- und Trankspenden zugunsten Sols durchzuführen.³⁹

Insgesamt werfen die paganen Armeepriester des 3. Jh.s unbestreitbar noch eine Reihe von ungeklärten und vor dem Neufund weiterer epigraphischer oder papyrologischer Zeugnisse kaum endgültig zu klärender Probleme auf. Aber soviel ist doch zu erkennen: Entgegen der bisherigen Forschungssicht wurde die Institution paganer Armeepriester viel früher geschaffen als bisher angenommen. Sie waren weiterhin von größerer Bedeutung, als dies bisher unterstellt wurde. Die religiösen Wandlungsprozesse des 3. Jh.s gingen auch an der römischen Armee und ihren Institutionen nicht spurlos vorbei.

München, Dezember 2005.

³⁷ Rüpke 2005, a.a.O. (Anm. 22), 1607.

³⁸ Dazu jetzt insbesondere S. Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum von den Severern bis zu Constantin I. (193-337 n. Chr.)* (Stuttgart 2004), 109ff. und Rüpke, a.a.O. (Anm. 22), 1615 mit unterschiedlichen Bewertungen.

³⁹ *I. Scyth. Min.* V 290.

GOVERNOR TRUMPED BY BISHOP:
SHIFTING BOUNDARIES IN ROMAN RELIGIOUS
AND PUBLIC LIFE

DANIELLE SLOOTJES

The city of Edessa in the Roman province Oshroene suffered terribly when plague and famine repeatedly hit the city in the period between A.D. 494 and A.D. 502.¹ While under these dire circumstances and struggling to stay alive, the population, nonetheless, was expected to pay their taxes to the Roman imperial government. The burden of taxation became too much and in the year 500 the populace turned to their bishop for help. While the bishop went to the imperial court to plead with the emperor to waive the land and capitation taxes, the Roman governor, meanwhile, decided to follow his own strategy.² After all, the imperial government would hold him responsible for the lack of tax revenues.³ He chose to put force on the local landowners, and somehow made them produce the required amount of taxes in gold which he then quickly sent to the imperial court, where the emperor must have been surprised by its arrival while he at the same time had this bishop plead with him to waive these taxes. The emperor, of course, had no intention of giving back the money, even though he was also careful not to dismiss the bishop empty-handed. So he gave him a rather small amount of money to distribute among the populace and released them from the duty to provide water for Roman soldiers.⁴

¹ Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* 25-46. F.R. Trombley – J.W. Watt, *The Chronicle of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite* (Liverpool 2000).

² Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* 39: “Our father Mar Peter went to the emperor at this time to urge him to waive the *synteleia* [= payment of the land and capitation taxes], but the governor got hold of the village landowners, put them under great pressure, and required them (to pay up). While the bishop was still (trying to) persuade the emperor, the gold was sent by the governor to the capital. When the emperor saw that the gold had arrived, he did not want to let go of it, but so as not to dismiss our father empty-handed, he remitted two *folles* to the villagers and the prices which they were paying, and released the citizens from the duty to draw water for Roman (soldiers).” Translation by Trombley – Watt 2000, op.cit. (n.1). For *folles* and *synteleia* see Trombley – Watt, glossary, p. 139 and 141.

³ *Codex Theodosianus* 8.8.5 of 395, cf. 11.7.8 of 355.

⁴ See Trombley – Watt 2000, op.cit. (n.1), 41 n.199, for an indication of the value of the two *folles*, the amount of money given by the emperor to the bishop. As for the duty of providing soldiers with water, according to Trombley – Watt 2000, op.cit. (n.1), n.201, this must have been one of the so-called *munera sordida*, even though Jones does not list this particular duty as one of them. A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire, 284-602* (Baltimore 1964), 452.

Unfortunately, no more details are given of this incident, as told by Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite in his *Syriac Chronicle*.⁵ Many questions remain. Why did the bishop get involved? Would one not have expected the provincial population to turn to their governor first? After all, he was the official representative of the Roman imperial government and responsible for the tax collection. Or, had the provincials, indeed, appealed to their governor, but found him unwilling to help them? On the other hand, perhaps they went to the bishop immediately, because they knew they could certainly count on him for support? The fact that the bishop traveled to the imperial court seems to indicate that, even if he talked to the governor first, the governor and the bishop had not been successful in finding a solution together.

To go to the emperor seems an extreme measure. What had happened in Edessa that the bishop and governor seemed to have been caught in a power play? Clearly, in this specific case, we will not be able to answer all these questions, but the obvious tension between governor and bishop in local issues brings to the fore a new element in the daily affairs of late antique provincial communities: the presence and influence of the bishop. In this paper I take a closer look at the relationship between Roman governors, bishops and provincials in the period of the Later Roman Empire, in particular in the period between A.D. 284 and A.D. 500, with a focus on the eastern half of the empire.

The reign of the emperor Diocletian marks the beginning of a period in which significant reforms eventually led to the transformation of Roman society into the world of the Later Roman Empire. The inhabitants of the empire had to deal with changes in the sphere of their political, economic, cultural and religious life. Roman society changed considerably due to the emergence and acceptance of Christianity as the leading religion of the empire.⁶ The appearance of bishops as influential members in provincial communities, for instance, triggered major changes for the position of Roman governors. I argue that bishops were in an ideal position to take over the role and responsibilities of civil governors, and in effect contributed to the redundancy and eventual disappearance of governors. Bishops represented a force that governors increasingly had to reckon with, but proved not to be

⁵ The name of the author of the *Chronicle* is unknown, although the name of Joshua the Stylite has been attached to it. Trombley and Watt believe that he was the scribe of the manuscript. Against A. Luther, *Die syrische Chronik des Josua Stylites* (Berlin 1997), 12-16, who argues that Joshua was the author of the *Chronicle*. See Trombley – Watt 2000, op.cit. (n.1), introduction, 25-28, for their hypotheses on the author and his sympathies based on internal evidence of the text.

⁶ Jones 1964, op.cit (n.4), 165.

able to match.⁷ By the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th century provincial government as it had existed for many centuries had gradually collapsed and the institution of civil governors had disappeared.⁸

From the time when Rome had started to expand her empire and create a system of provinces, officials had been sent out to govern the provincial territories. Provincial communities, as a result, had grown accustomed to dealing with the presence of governors whose duties were of military, judicial and administrative nature.⁹ At the beginning of the Later Roman Empire, under Diocletian, provincial government underwent important changes which had important consequences especially for the position of governors. Diocletian's new arrangements doubled the number of provinces to nearly hundred, and established a novel system of twelve dioceses and four prefectures headed by vicars and praetorian prefects respectively.¹⁰ Furthermore, he separated the traditional military and civil functions of the governor. From now on, each province had a governor who had become merely a civil official, and a military commander (the so-called *dux*) who was often responsible for a territory larger than one province.¹¹ The status of governors was clearly diminished by these new arrangements.

In the late Roman world provincial subjects could expect their governor to act as judge in civil and criminal cases, and to supervise the collection of taxes.¹² Apart from these official duties, governors also supported public

⁷ D. Hunt, 'The Church as a Public Institution', *Cambridge Ancient History*² VIII (Cambridge, 1998), 269: "as leader of an organization now central to the life of the city and its surroundings, the bishop had entered the ranks [...] of those few powerful *patroni* who were expected to look after the weaker majority confronting the harsh world of late Roman officialdom".

⁸ C. Roueché, 'Provincial governors and their titulature', *Antiquité Tardive* 6 (1998), 89.

⁹ See for general discussions of the governor in the Republic and the Early Empire G.P. Burton, *Powers and functions of proconsuls in the Roman Empire, 70-260 AD* (diss) (Oxford 1973); R. Schulz, *Herrschaft und Regierung. Roms Regiment in den Provinzen in der Zeit der Republik* (Paderborn 1997); E. Meyer-Zwiffelhofer, *Πολιτικῶς ἀρχεῖν. Zum Regierungsstil der senatorischen Statthalter in den kaiserzeitlichen griechischen Provinzen* (Stuttgart 2002).

¹⁰ See T.D. Barnes, *The New Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Cambridge/London, 1982), especially chapters 11 and 13, for more details on this new division, with revisions in 'Emperors, panegyrics, prefects, provinces and palaces (284-317)', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9 (1996), 532-552. Also, Jones 1964, op.cit. (n.4), 37-76, for an explanation of Diocletian's re-organization of the provinces.

¹¹ Jones 1964, op.cit. (n.4), 44 and 608. Jones believed that the separation of the civil and military command of a province was not universal, and argued that in many provinces governors continued to be in charge of local military forces.

¹² On judicial duties, *Codex Theodosianus* 2.1.2 of 355. On the supervision of the tax collection, *Codex Theodosianus* 8.8.5 of 395, 11.7.8 of 355. Several bureaus were involved in the tax collection. The amount of provincial taxes in cash (*largitiones tituli*) was arranged for by the bureau of the *Sacrae Largitiones*, headed by the *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum*, whereas the office of the Praetorian Prefect

building projects such as walls, baths or theaters, and behaved as benefactors and protectors of their province. Especially in times of need, for instance when crop failure, famine or earthquakes struck a province, provincials could turn to their governors.¹³

Governors would arrive in their province with an imperial appointment in hand, but were by law not allowed to come from the province they governed.¹⁴ In principle, therefore, a governor was a stranger to his province and most likely unfamiliar with the current state of affairs, the social hierarchy, local friendships and animosities. Of course, he would try as soon as possible to get a sense of the local structures and relationships, but in principle he was an outsider. A governor's term of office was not fixed, but seems to have been – on average – less than two years.¹⁵ As a consequence, he would not have much time to establish himself before he had to leave again. For the imperial administration a rapid turnover of governors – and officials in general – protected the position of the emperor. It created more dependence on imperial favor for the securing and holding of offices. In addition, it impeded the rise of powerful individuals in the provinces.¹⁶ For provincial subjects it also meant that their time for building a relationship with an individual governor was limited. Before they knew it, their governor

(in this capacity called *fiscalis arca*) assessed the quantities for the taxes in kind. The *Comes* and Praetorian Prefect delegated the duties of the tax collection to governors, who in their turn handed down the actual collection to local communities which they supervised. See R. Delmaire, *Largesses Sacrées et Res Privata. L'Aerarium Impérial et son administration du IVe au VIe siècle* (Paris 1989), 17, for a schematic overview of the terminology of the different bureaus responsible for taxes between the beginning of the fourth century and the beginning of the sixth century.

¹³ P. Brown, *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity* (Madison 1992), 21.

¹⁴ *Codex Justinianus* 1.41 of 610, *ut nulli patriae suae administratio sine speciali permissu principis permittatur*. Μηδεὶς Ἀγροστάλιος ἢ ἀνθύπατος ἢ βικάριος ἢ κόμης Ἀνατολῆς εἰς τὴν οἰκείαν ἐπαρξίαν γινέσθω, ἰδικῆς ἐπὶ τούτῳ χηρεύων κελεύσεως. Cf. Cassius Dio 72.31.1. *Codex Theodosianus* 8.8.4 of 386 even forbade an imperial bureaucrat to serve in the province “in which he was born or where he had established his lares”. See also *Oratio* 38 of Himerius, in which he praised Cervonius, proconsul of Achaia in 353-54 for restoring Athens, the city in which he was raised: (38.9) “O most beautiful creature of Athena herself, whom you yourself repaid for the wonderful upbringing”; ὦ καὶ αὐτῆς Ἀθηνᾶς θρέμμα τὸ κάλλιστον, ἣ καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκτίνεις τὰ τροφεία καλῶς. See T.D. Barnes, ‘Himerius and the fourth century’, *Classical Philology* 82 (1987), 216.

¹⁵ Based on the *fasti* of Africa and Egypt, Jones 1964, op.cit. (n.4), 380-81, has drawn the conclusion that on average it was probably under two years. For Africa (in the period between 357-417) the average was little more than a year, and for Egypt (328-73, when the prefects of Egypt were mere provincial governors) well under two years, perhaps even 18 months. Governors were not the only officials with relatively short terms of office. Praetorian Prefects, for instance, rotated every three or four years, and urban prefects every one or two years. See also C. Kelly, ‘Emperors, government and bureaucracy’, *Cambridge Ancient History*² VIII (Cambridge 1998), 153.

¹⁶ Kelly 1998, op.cit. (n.15), 153.

would leave again, and they would have to receive the next governor. This repetitiveness is, of course, in itself an element deeply imbedded in the rhythm of provincial life, as this system of frequent arrival and departure of governors functioned for several centuries.

Bishops, in contrast, were in quite a different position from governors. They were not agents of the secular imperial government, but were representatives of a religion: Christianity, which was made the official religion of the empire toward the end of the fourth century under the emperor Theodosius I (379-395).

Every province had a leading bishop, the so-called metropolitan, who resided in the most important city, which was often the secular capital of a province as well.¹⁷ Both the governor and the metropolitan, therefore, had their headquarters in the same city. Apart from the metropolitan many or perhaps even most provincial cities had a bishop as well. In comparison to a governor, the absolute number of bishops in a province generated a much greater visibility – and therefore much greater accessibility – for provincial inhabitants. If one needed help, church officials were more likely to be present or available to assist. Bishops were appointed for life, and their appointment was dependent upon the agreement between the local community and the other bishops of the district. Local communities could show their consent by way of acclamations during the election process.¹⁸ This type of local provincial involvement was absent with the appointment of a governor.

Bishops were not under the legal restriction that they were not allowed to be bishop in their area of origins.¹⁹ As a consequence, it would have been easier for them to have personal relations and maintain valuable contacts or connections in a town or area where they had come from and where their family might still live. A governor could never make up for these types of contacts. Though, of course, with an appointment for life, it might have been more valuable to a bishop to have these local relationships, whereas a governor would leave after a short term of office. That is not to say that local

¹⁷ Hunt 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 244. Also, E. Herrmann, *Ecclesia in Re Publica. Die Entwicklung der Kirche von pseudostaatlicher zu staatlich inkorporierter Existenz* (Frankfurt a.M. 1980), 54-57.

¹⁸ J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford 2001), 141. Herrmann 1980, op.cit. (n.17), 298-302.

¹⁹ For instance, Synesius who became bishop of Ptolemais in 410, was born in nearby Cyrene, and Augustine, bishop of Hippo in 395, was born in Thagaste which was in the same region.

relationships were not important to governors; on the contrary, they were crucial for their survival.²⁰

The fact that the church organization and structure clearly corresponded with the existing secular institutions and divisions into provinces and dioceses facilitated the merger of the Christian church and its officials with some of the secular institutions.²¹ The city, for instance, functioned as the basic unit of the organization and had its own bishop and clergy. As the cities were part of a larger network that made up a province, the bishoprics also fell within the boundaries of a province.²² With this type of overlapping structure in mind one could even compare a bishop to a secular official as Liebeschuetz argued: “the urban bishop was as it were an official of a second Empire-wide administration, with comparable access to the head of state”.²³ It needs emphasis, however, that this ‘second Empire-wide administration’ not emerged instantaneously. It developed slowly over a period of decades if not centuries. In addition, bishops were certainly not treated as secular officials by the emperors. Bishops would in principal not have regarded themselves as secular leaders either, even though they might have taken over duties that had been part of the responsibilities of secular officials as will be argued below.²⁴

Before turning to the ways in which bishops took over the role of governors, I briefly present two examples that illustrate the communication between bishops and governors. They can serve as a demonstration of the pressures involved in their relationship. First, in the 380s, when Gregory of Nazianzus wrote a poem of praise for the governor of Cappadocia, Nemesius (*PLRE* I, Nemesius 2), he opened his poem with expressions of praise similar to those that had long been customary within the classical traditions of Roman rhetorical practices:

²⁰ Brown 1992, op.cit. (n.13), 23 and 29.

²¹ Liebeschuetz 2001, op.cit. (n.18), 139. See also the study by Herrmann 1980, op.cit. (n.17).

²² Hunt 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 242.

²³ Liebeschuetz 2001, op.cit. (n.18), 139.

²⁴ There were, of course, bishops who conducted themselves as secular officials, as, for instance, Paul of Samosata who was heavily criticized for behaving like a worldly leader. See R. Haensch, ‘Römische Amtsinhaber als Vorbilder für die Bischöfe des 4. Jahrhunderts?’, in: L. de Blois – P. Erdkamp – S. Mols (eds.), *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power. Proceedings of the third workshop of the international network Impact of Empire (Roman Empire, c. 200 B.C. - A.D. 476)*, Netherlands Institute in Rome, March 20 - 23, 2002 (Amsterdam 2003), 117-136. See also F. Millar, ‘Paul of Samosata, Zenobia and Aurelian: the church, local culture and political allegiance in third-century Syria’, *Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971), 1-17.

Light of justice and of eloquence, Nemesis, who before was on the tribunal of right judgment, who carried glory from the emperor, who added great courage to the first Ausonian laws, who with an equally matching voice questioned weaker versions, finally shining upon the tribunal for the most holy Cappadocians, displaying the first fruits of your justice.²⁵

Praise of Nemesis' sense of justice, his courage and rhetorical skills was exemplary for the common themes used in the language of communication between members of the elite. Even though there are plenty of examples of bishops – especially those in the countryside – of humble upbringing, governors and bishops were often members of the higher classes of society who shared a common background and culture that can be associated with an 'elite' language based on longstanding classical traditions and education.²⁶ Gregory himself came from one of the most prominent families in Cappadocia, and was 'an aristocrat to his fingertips' as McGuckin would classify him.²⁷ Familiarity with classical culture was certainly not confined to those men who had enjoyed a traditional pagan education. If one compared the expressions and themes of praise used by Gregory with the works of Himerius and Libanius, two contemporary pagan authors, one would come across similar phrases.²⁸ Gregory's poem is therefore also an illustration of how Christian rhetoric could be woven into traditional patterns and classical models of political oratory.

After the introduction filled with praise Gregory unmistakably changed his tone and used the poem as an opportunity not only to introduce Christianity to Nemesis, but also to convince him to adhere to it:²⁹

²⁵ Gregory of Nazianzus, *Carmen* 2.2.7, l. 1-6: Ὅμμα δίκης μύθων τε, Νεμέσσιε, ὃς τοπάροιθεν / Βήμασι ἰθυδίοκοισι, φέρων κλέος ἐκ βασιλῆος, / Πρώτοις Αὐσονίοις τε νόμοις μέγα κάρτος ὀπάζων, / Ἐξ ὅπδ' ἀντιπάλοιο καὶ ἥσσανα μῦθον ἐλέγχων, / Ὑστατον ἀντέλλεις θώκων ὕπερ ἡγαθέοισι, / Καππαδόκοισι, θέμιστος ἀπάργματα σῆς ἀναφαίνων.

²⁶ See R. Van Dam, *Kingdom of Snow. Roman Rule and Greek Culture in Cappadocia* (Philadelphia 2002), 81. Cf. Hermann 1980, op.cit. (n.17), 294-295, on the differences in background and education between bishops who came from the upper classes and those who came "aus bäuerlichen und handwerklichen Familien".

²⁷ J. McGuckin, *St. Gregory of Nazianzus. An Intellectual Biography* (New York 2001), 3.

²⁸ The parallel with Himerius' work is not too surprising, because Himerius was Gregory's teacher in rhetoric when Gregory had studied in Athens. See R.R. Ruether, *Gregory of Nazianzus. Rhetor and Philosopher* (Oxford 1969), 19. The examples of similar expressions of praise in the works of other authors are numerous. For instance, Himerius, *Oratio* 12.23-24; Libanius, *Epistulae* 339, 668, 1230. Cf. the instructions of Menander Rhetor 379, p.96 in D.A. Russell – N.G. Wilson (eds.), *Menander Rhetor* (Oxford 1981). Not only in literary sources, but also in honorary inscriptions one finds these same themes repeatedly. For instance, in L. Robert, *Hellenika* 4 (Paris 1948).

²⁹ Van Dam 2002, op.cit. (n.26), 87.

But I (for the great God has made me understand heavenly and earthly affairs [...]) spoke loud and clear of what a priest needs to say, as the faithful divine messenger of the truth, [...] But, come on, pay attention to these words, you who for such a long time offered your ears to sweet and false words, in which grace is false, similar to lustful images.³⁰

Gregory claimed that he possessed the only right way of praising a governor, because he was speaking through God, whereas he classified any other form of praise as being of lesser value and containing a lesser truth. Also, in Gregory's opinion, the time had come for Nemesius to turn away his ears from the false pagan words, and listen to the true words of the Lord. If Nemesius, indeed, converted to Christianity, will remain unknown, but it is notable in itself that Gregory as a religious leader felt the need to make the effort to convince Nemesius to convert.³¹ In addition, we need to keep in mind that Gregory's prominent public position in Cappadocia as member of one of the elite families of the province will have played a role in the way he communicated with the governor. Even though the poem is supposed to be a laudatory composition for Nemesius as he could have expected in his position as governor, in my opinion the poem can equally be regarded as a pamphlet for Christianity at a time when this religion certainly had become prominent, but was not yet officially recognized as the sole religion of the empire. The poem then is also an illustration of the tension that undoubtedly existed in the interactions between pagan officials and church leaders.

Another example of interaction – or actually a real clash – between a bishop and a governor is found in the early decades of the fifth century, when Synesius of Cyrene, the bishop of Ptolemais (*PLRE* II, Synesius 1) decided to write several letters against Andronicus of Berenice (*PLRE* II, Andronicus 1), the new governor of his province Libya Superior. Synesius accused Andronicus of being appointed illegally, because originally he was born in this province. The real reason however seems to have been that as governor Andronicus did not meet provincial expectations. The provincials had turned to Synesius for help, although the bishop felt he himself had failed the provincials who had counted on his protection. To Synesius'

³⁰ Gregory of Nazianzus, *Carmen* 2.2.7, ll. 18-19, 21 and 27-29, Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ (δὴ γὰρ με Θεὸς μέγας ἴδριν ἔθηκεν / Οὐρανίων χθονίων τε, [...] / Φθέγξομαι, ἄσσο' ἐπέοικε θυηπόλον ἄνδρ' ἀγορεύειν. [...] / Ἀλλ' ἄγε, τοῖσδ' ἐπέεσσι δίδου φρένα, καὶ γλυκεροῖσι, / Μαυιδίοις ἐπέεσσι τόσον χρόνον οὐσας ὑπσχων, / Ὡν χάρις ἔστ' ἐπίπλαστος, ὁμοῖος εἶδεσι μάχλοις.

³¹ See R. von Haehling, *Die Religionszugehörigkeit der hohen Amsträger des Römischen Reiches seit Constantins I. Alleinherrschaft bis zum Ende der Theodosianischen Dynastie* (Bonn 1978), in which von Haehling has collected evidence of the religious sympathies of high officials.

frustration the provincials seemed not to understand that he might not be able to help them:

Once everyone rushed to me; from all sides I was pressed to hear and see atrocities. When I admonished him (= Andronicus), I failed to convince him, when I upbraided him, I only irritated him. [...] For I do not succeed in persuading them that I do not have the power; but they insist on my power to gain all just ends. All that remains to me, therefore, is to grief and to be ashamed.³²

The bishop managed to have the governor excommunicated. After a passionate plea for the excommunication, Synesius not so much perhaps regretted the final outcome, but remarkably tried to turn around the verdict. Apparently some higher Roman authorities had expressed their annoyance about the excommunication as Synesius wrote to the patriarch of Alexandria in Ptolemais: “we have incurred the displeasure of those now in power”.³³ In this instance, we gain some insight into a real power struggle between influential members of the church and representatives of the Roman government. Clearly, Synesius had to give in. Although one could discuss the cases of Nemesisius and Andronicus in much more detail, and one could point to numerous other examples, I want to present these two examples merely as an illustration of how bishops could be formidable partners in a dialogue in which they eventually surpassed the power and authority of governors.

³² Synesius, *Epistula* 41, p. 60: Δρόμος ἀπάντων εὐθὺς ἐπ’ ἐμέ, καὶ πανταχόθεν εὐθὺς ἐβαλλόμην ἀκοῇ καὶ θεᾷ κακῶν. Νουθετήσας οὐκ ἔπεισα ἐπιτιμήσας ἡρέθισα. [...] Οὐδὲ γὰρ πείθω αὐτοὺς λέγων ὡς οὐ δύναμαι, ἀλλ’ ἀξιοῦμαι πάντα τὰ δίκαια δύνασθαι. Περίεστιν οὖν αἰσχύνεσθαι καὶ λυπεῖσθαι. Text edition of Synesius by A. Garzya (ed.), *Synesii Cyrenensis Epistulae* (Rome 1979). Translation of Synesius based on A. Fitzgerald, *The Letters of Synesius* (London 1926).

³³ Synesius, *Epistula* 90, p. 152-53, to Theophilus: “In the past Andronicus did injustice, but now he in turn is treated with injustice. Nevertheless, it is the character of the Church to exalt the humble and to humble the proud. The Church detested this man Andronicus on account of his actions, wherefore she pressed for this result, but now she pities him insofar as his experiences have exceeded the measure of her malediction. On this account we have incurred the displeasure of those now in power. [...] So we have snatched him from the hateful tribunal here, and have in other respects greatly mitigated his sufferings. If your sacred person judges that this man is worthy of any interest, I shall welcome this as a signal proof that God has not yet entirely abandoned him”. Ἀνδρόνικος καὶ πρότερον ἡδίκηει καὶ νῦν ἀδικεῖται. Τὸ δὲ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἡθος οἷον ὑψῶσαι μὲν ταπεινόν, ταπεινῶσαι δὲ ὑψηλόν. Τοῦτον δὲ τὸν Ἀνδρόνικον ἐμίσει μὲν ἐφ’ οἷς ἐποίησε (διὸ καὶ προήκατο μέχρι τούτων ἐλθεῖν), ἔλεει δὲ νῦν ἐφ’ οἷς ἤδη τοῖς ὑπὲρ κατάραν ὠμίλησεν, ὅτι καὶ τοὺς νῦν ἐν δυνάμει δι’ αὐτὸν ἐλυπήσαμεν. [...] Ἡμεῖς τε οὖν ἐνταῦθα στυγνοῦ βήματος αὐτὸν ἐξειλόμεθα καὶ τᾶλλα ἐλάττους αὐτῷ παρὰ πολὺ τὰς συμφορὰς ἐποιήσαμεν. Κἂν ἢ σὴ θεοσέβεια φροντίδος αὐτὸν ἀξιῶσιν, τοῦτο μέγιστον ἐγὼ τεκμήριον δεξιόμαι τοῦ μὴ παντάπασιν τὸν ἀνθρώπον ἀπογνωσθῆναι παρὰ θεοῦ.

Bishops could undermine a governor's position in several ways. First, the main difference between the appointment of an individual governor and that of a bishop was the length of their term of office which had consequences for the provincial perception of the individual officials. Governors had a relatively short term, whereas bishops with their office for life became a permanent presence in provincial communities. It is understandable that provincials, especially in the case of long-term problems, turned to a bishop rather than to a governor for a solution, because a bishop was much more likely to have knowledge of and an understanding for what had been going on in a community. Of course, there are also advantages to having officials rotate relatively often. If provincials were dissatisfied with a particular governor, they did not have to wait too long for his replacement, whereas it could take many years, even decades, before a new bishop might be installed.

Second, a governor's right and duty of jurisdiction was partly taken over by bishops, because a bishop's court, the *episcopalis audientia*, was acknowledged by the imperial government as an official judicial court in which a bishop's verdict in civil cases was legally valid and had equal authority as a governor's judgment.³⁴ Even though this bishop's court is much cited as example of the expanding influence of bishops in secular affairs, it is, nevertheless, relevant to mention here again because provincial jurisdiction was the most important official task of a governor in the Later Roman Empire and the emergence of the bishop's court could seriously interfere with this duty. In A.D. 318 Constantine the Great had already bestowed upon bishops the right to judge civil cases. Even if a case was already begun at a governor's regular court, if one of the parties – not even necessarily both parties – decided they wanted to transfer their case to a bishop's court, they were allowed to do so. A bishop's decision was final and called 'sacred' by Constantine.³⁵ In legal sources it is not until the end of the fourth century when the bishop's court appeared again in laws of Arcadius and Honorius who allowed bishops to try civil cases, but this time with the agreement of both parties. In a law of A.D. 408, the emperors

³⁴ *Codex Justinianus* 1.4.7 of 398 (Arcadius), *Codex Theodosianus* 1.27.1 of 318 (Honorius). Jones 1964, op.cit. (n.4), 480. Constantine had already set up this bishop's court (*Codex Theodosianus* 1.27.1 of 318), but based on the evidence Jones suspected that this court did not survive the rule of Julian. Liebeschuetz 2001, op.cit. (n.18), 139-40. Much, however, remains unknown about the *episcopalis audientia*. P. Brown, *Poverty and Leadership in the Later Roman Empire* (Hanover – London 2002), 67.

³⁵ *Codex Theodosianus* 1.27.1, *pro sanctis habeatur quidquid ab his fuerit iudicatum*.

Arcadius, Honorius and Theodosius proclaimed that a bishop's verdict could not be appealed, which meant that a bishop's judgment was more final than a governor's, because provincials could appeal the latter.³⁶

All their involvement in secular affairs could create tension for bishops who might not necessarily have been pleased with many court cases, because it took time away from church affairs which would have had priority to them. Augustine, for instance, complained that he had to spend too much time in court.³⁷

If provincials had a choice, would they rather go to a bishop's court or a governor's? The answer can be simple and practical. If provincials had to wait for the arrival of a governor into their city to deal with their court case or if provincials had to travel to the provincial capital to receive a judgment from their governor, it is understandable that they rather turned to their bishop whose local court could work much faster in such circumstances.³⁸ Besides, the bishop who lived among them would know the existing situation and its tensions much better than a governor. Moreover, the image of a bishop as righteous representative of God who had True Justice on his side was a powerful one. Overall, imperial validation combined with the ideology that bishops by virtue of their calling were just and fair made their courts attractive settings to have a case heard.³⁹ Also, from a financial point of view it was attractive for provincials to go to a bishop's court, because bishops would settle cases without a charge, whereas most often one would have to pay to get access to a governor and have him try one's case.⁴⁰

Third, governors in their role as protectors and benefactors of their province – as we often see them as being presented in honorary inscriptions⁴¹ – received competition from bishops. Gradually bishops had become spokesmen for their communities, and sometimes even for provinces

³⁶ *Codex Theodosianus* 1.27.2 of 408. See also Hunt 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 272. In his *Novella* 96 of 539 Justinian even gave the impression that the bishop's court, and not the Praetorian Prefect's, was the first instance of appeal from the governor's judgment. Liebeschuetz 2001, op.cit. (n.18) 139-140.

³⁷ Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 118.24.3. For more examples see Haensch (2003), op.cit. (n.24), 127, n.52.

³⁸ Hunt 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 271, "As against what might seem the arbitrary unpredictability – and remoteness – of secular justice, the bishop was a permanent figure of authority close at hand, an arbiter who could be approached free from the intimidating need to navigate the channels of influence and favor which customarily surrounded secular Roman officials".

³⁹ Liebeschuetz 2001, op.cit. (n.18) 151.

⁴⁰ A notable exception can be found in the case of Alexander (*PLRE* II, Alexander 14), governor of Oshroene in 497. Every Friday he settled lawsuits free of charge (Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, *Chronicle* 29). Cf. Jones 1964, op.cit. (n.4), 480, on corrupt clergy.

⁴¹ See for instance Robert 1948, op.cit. (n.28).

at large.⁴² They became involved in building projects in the communities.⁴³ Not only churches, but also public buildings were built at their initiative. When Helias, the governor of Cappadocia (*PLRE* I, Helias), arrived in his province in the early 370s, he found Basil of Caesarea taking the initiative in building projects the governor himself would have undertaken. Basil told him that he should not be worried, because the emperor had already given Basil permission to get involved. He was, of course, not competing with the governor, but essentially doing him a favor by helping him not to become too overwhelmed with all the other things he was supposed to do during his term of office. Besides, as Basil said, these new buildings were “a source of pride for our governor”.⁴⁴ In times of need, we also find that provincials not necessarily turned to the governor alone, but bishops became increasingly involved. We find them pleading for tax relief, as demonstrated in the example from Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite. We also find them doing works of charity. Bishops became real ‘governors of the poor’ as Peter Brown argued.⁴⁵ They could gather enormous support in their communities and push governors out of the way.

Finally, in the sixth century under Justinian laws were issued in which bishops were encouraged to supervise governors and bring complaints against them to the emperor’s attention.⁴⁶ In addition, provincials were invited to use a bishop’s court as a court of appeal when they were discontent with a governor’s verdict.⁴⁷ Also, upon entering their province at the beginning of their term of office, governors now had to swear an oath in the presence of the metropolitan bishop and the leading citizens.⁴⁸

In conclusion, one can say that civil governors became increasingly expendable, because at the local level, in the provincial communities them-

⁴² Liebeschuetz 2001, op.cit. (n.18), 142.

⁴³ Herrmann 1980, op.cit. (n.17), 318.

⁴⁴ Basil, *Epistula* 94, τῷ δὲ ἀρχοντι ἡμῶν σεμνολόγημα. See also *Epistulae* 84 and 96 for more letters to Elias. Cf. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Oratio* 10, Theodoret, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 4.19, Sozomenus, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 6.34. Also van Dam 2002, op.cit. (n.26), 82-83.

⁴⁵ Brown 2002, op.cit. (n.34), especially chapter 2, ‘Governor of the poor: the bishops and their cities’.

⁴⁶ *Codex Justinianus*, *Novella* 1, 8 and 86.

⁴⁷ *Codex Justinianus*, *Novella* 86.

⁴⁸ Liebeschuetz 2001, op.cit. (n.18), 151 and 154, “It may be that Justinian’s legislation assigning duties to bishops involved an element of wishful thinking. There evidently was a vacuum of leadership in the cities. The bishop was in many ways ideally placed to fill it – as indeed bishops eventually did in the much reduced cities of the West. But Eastern bishops did not take the road towards secular lordship”. Liebeschuetz (p.155) even takes his argument a step further when he claims that bishops were past their peak when Justinian issued these laws. Also, Liebeschuetz clearly separates the function of bishops in the eastern and western part of the empire.

selves, bishops were more than capable and effective in taking over the responsibilities of governors, if they were inclined to do so. Of course, it depended greatly on the individual bishops how involved they got with secular affairs.⁴⁹ That is not, however, to say that bishops became secular officials with similar duties as governors. Bishops remained religious leaders and never gained military power.⁵⁰ Civil governors were still held responsible for the tax collection. Bishops only rendered verdicts in civil cases, and not in criminal cases. Furthermore, there must have been a difference between the authority of a metropolitan bishop and the bishops in the surrounding territories. Clearly much remains to be said about the relationship between governors and bishops.

Ultimately, bishops did not cause the collapse of provincial government, but their newly gained position of power and influence in Late Roman society did certainly not strengthen the institution of civil governors.

Nijmegen, January 2005.

⁴⁹ Liebeschuetz 2001, op.cit. (n.18), 153, "The actual extent of any bishop's involvement in secular affairs, even at this late stage, depended very much on local circumstances, the cohesion of the secular administrative structures, and the personality of the bishop himself".

⁵⁰ Haensch 2003, op.cit. (n.24), 124; 136.

DIE MONDSICHEL DER KAISERIN*

CLAUDIA SALZ

In den Städteprägungen des römischen Ostens fällt die große Anzahl von Münztypen auf, die die Augustae mit einer Mondsichel darstellen. Diese befindet sich hinter den Schultern oder auch über dem Kopf vor der Stirn. Einige Abbildungen erwecken den Eindruck, als würde die Büste in der Mondsichel ruhen. Da eine besondere Häufung dieses Attributs im 3. Jh. n.Chr. nach Einführung des Antoninians festzustellen ist, wird die Mondsichel in der Regel als Kennzeichnung der Kaiserin und damit als Pendant zur Strahlenkrone betrachtet. Die Angleichung des Kaisers an Helios/Apollo wird durch die Angleichung der Kaiserin an Selene/Artemis ergänzt.¹ Zur Herkunft und Bedeutung der Strahlenkrone der Kaiser gibt es bereits Arbeiten,² die Mondsichel der Kaiserin wurde dagegen bisher nicht entsprechend untersucht, sondern wird nur am Rande anderer Forschungen erwähnt, so wie z.B. bei Bergmann und Alexandritis.

Die Einführung der Mondsichel als analoges Attribut zur Strahlenkrone des Kaisers in die Reichsprägung durch Septimius Severus, sieht Bergmann als Übernahme eines Symbols zur Kennzeichnung der Kaiserin, das sich „über Hadrian und Sabina in Tarsus, Augustus und Livia in Romula bis zu Kleopatra Selene von Mauretanien zurückführen läßt und damit vermutlich bis in hellenistische Zeit“. ³ Nach Meinung von Svenson⁴ spielt die Mondsichel als Herrscherinnen-Attribut hellenistischer Königinnen keine Rolle. Er nennt den gleichen Münztyp wie Bergmann als einziges ihm bekanntes Beispiel. Weitere Belege fehlen, so daß es sich hier wohl eher um einen Einzelfall handelt und nicht um hellenistische Tradition.

* Der hier vorliegende Text ist die schriftliche Version einer Poster-Präsentation während des „Fifth Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire, Münster, June 30-July 4, 2004“. Es handelt sich hierbei um einen Arbeitsbericht aus meinem Dissertationsvorhaben zum Thema „Stadt und Kaiserin. Die Angleichung der Kaiserin an lokale Gottheiten in städtischen Ehrungen des römischen Ostens“.

¹ A. Alexandritis, *Die Frauen des römischen Kaiserhauses von Livia bis Julia Domna in statuarischer, epigraphischer und numismatischer Überlieferung* (Diss. Heidelberg 1996), 216.

² M. Bergmann, *Die Strahlen der Herrscher. Theomorphes Herrscherbild und politische Symbolik im Hellenismus und in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz 1998); S. Berrens, *Sonnenkult und Kaisertum von den Severern bis zu Constantin I. (193-337 n. Chr.)* (Stuttgart 2004).

³ Bergmann 1998, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 271.

⁴ D. Svenson, *Darstellungen hellenistischer Könige mit Götterattributen* (Frankfurt a.M. 1990), 94.

Münzen aus der Zeit von Livia bis Julia Domna, die die Kaiserinnen mit dem Attribut der Mondsichel zeigen, sind Einzelfälle. Aber gerade diese Einzelfälle sind interessant und werfen die Frage auf, ob die Mondsichel als Attribut der Augusta einen Bezug zu den auf der Rückseite abgebildeten Astralgottheiten darstellt, zum Beispiel als Angleichung der Kaiserin an eine dieser Gottheiten,⁵ oder ob die Mondsichel allein zur Kennzeichnung der Kaiserin als eine der Strahlenkrone der Kaiser entsprechende Ausstattung der Kaiserin entworfen wurde.⁶

Ab dem 3. Jh. tritt eine Vielzahl von Typen auf, die die Kaiserin auf der Vorderseite mit dem Attribut der Mondsichel darstellen. Der Großteil dieser Münzen läßt sich mit dem Einfluß der Reichsprägung erklären. Hier wird die Mondsichel als Symbol zur Kennzeichnung der Kaiserin, entsprechend der Strahlenkrone für den Kaiser wie beim Antoninian,⁷ verwendet. Die parallele Entwicklung in der Häufigkeit des Auftretens der beiden Attribute Strahlenkrone und Mondsichel weist auf eine Abhängigkeit hin, die die Rolle der Mondsichel als Pendant zur Strahlenkrone bestätigt.⁸ Es ist jedoch die Frage, ob es nicht auch in dieser Zeit lokale Einzelfälle gibt, die die Kaiserin in Bezug zu einer bestimmten lunaren Gottheit setzen.⁹

Welche Bedeutung hat die Mondsichel als Attribut der Augustae auf Städteprägungen? Im folgenden soll untersucht werden, ob sich Beziehungen zu lokalen, lunaren Gottheiten nachweisen lassen. Wenn dies der Fall ist, muß geklärt werden, um welche Orte und Göttinnen, um welche Augustae es sich handelt und welches Motiv und welche Aussage seitens der Stadt dahinter stehen.

⁵ P. Bastien, *Le buste monétaire des empereurs romains* (Wetteren 1993), II, 645; T. Mikocki, *Sub specie deae. Les impératrices et princesses romaines assimilées à des déesses* (Rom 1995), 59; U. Hahn, *Die Frauen des römischen Kaiserhauses und ihre Ehrungen im griechischen Osten anhand epigraphischer und numismatischer Zeugnisse von Livia bis Sabina* (Saarbrücken 1994), 355, Nr. 224-226. Das Attribut der Strahlenkrone stellt einen Bezug zu Helios/Sol und Kaiser dar, näheres dazu bei Bergmann 1998, a.a.O. (Anm.2) und Berrens 2004, a.a.O. (Anm.2).

⁶ Bergmann 1998, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 105 u. 167. Wobei Bergmann für den Fall der jüngeren Faustina in Hierapolis-Kastabala in Kilikien (dieses Beispiel wird an anderer Stelle besprochen) die Möglichkeit eines lokalen Hintergrundes zumindest nicht ausschließt; s. Bergmann 1998, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 167.

⁷ Einführung des Antoninians durch Caracalla: auf der Vorderseite wird der Kaiser mit Strahlenkrone dargestellt und die Augusta mit Mondsichel (*BMCRE* V, XVII ff.).

⁸ Ab Caracalla ist eine deutliche Zunahme der Typen mit Strahlenkrone bzw. Mondsichel in den Städteprägungen zu verzeichnen, wobei Bildtypen ohne diese Attribute weiterhin häufiger auftreten als diese.

⁹ Dies trifft selbstverständlich auch auf die Kaiser und die Strahlenkrone zu. So wurde z.B. Caracalla in Tarsos an Helios angeglichen vgl. *SNG Levante* 1043 u. 1044, siehe dazu auch Berrens 2004, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 48.

Die Mondsichel als göttliches Attribut

Die Mondsichel als Attribut der Göttin Selene/Luna bedarf sicherlich keiner weiteren Erläuterung. Sie befindet sich in den Darstellungen über ihrem Kopf oder auch über oder hinter den Schultern¹⁰. Für beide Formen gibt es Entsprechungen auf Münzen der Augustae. Die Verehrung von Selene im griechischen Osten ist allerdings wie die von Helios¹¹ oft nur schwer nachweisbar, da es nur wenige bekannte Kultstätten gab. In Griechenland spielt Selene kaum eine Rolle, anders als in Kleinasien, wo die Göttin zumindest numismatisch fassbar wird. Die meisten Münzen stammen aus der Zeit von Hadrian bis Gordian III, nur wenige Typen sind aus hellenistischer Zeit bekannt.¹²

Neben Selene gab es eine Reihe anderer Mondgottheiten in Kleinasien. So verehrten die semitischen Völker einen männlichen Mondgott (dieser hieß Enzu, Sin oder Nannar)¹³, in Phrygien wurde mit Mên ebenfalls eine männliche lunare Gottheit verehrt. Für diesen Mondgott war die Mondsichel das kennzeichnende Attribut. In der Regel wurde Mên mit der Mondsichel hinter seinen Schultern dargestellt, aber auch die alleinige Abbildung einer Mondsichel konnte den Gott symbolisieren.¹⁴ Ein Revers aus Philomelium zeigt seine Büste mit der typischen Phrygermütze auf einer Mondsichel ruhend.¹⁵

Weiterhin findet man die Mondsichel auf Münzen, die Isis, Hekate, Astarte und auch Athena abbilden,¹⁶ und natürlich auf zahlreichen Darstellungen der Göttin Artemis. So tritt bei den verschiedenen Erscheinungsformen der Artemis auch ihr lunarer Charakter immer wieder hervor, sei es durch die Verbindung mit ihrem Bruder Apollon, der als Lichtgott dem Helios angeglichen wurde, sei es durch die Verschmelzung mit ursprünglichen lokalen Mondgottheiten. Dies schlägt sich vor allem in ihren Beinamen nieder, wie z.B. Artemis Perasia, Artemis Ephesia, Artemis Pergaia

¹⁰ Eine Zusammenstellung der Quellenzeugnisse unterschiedlicher Gattungen findet sich bei F. Gury, s.v. 'Selene', in: *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* VII, 1, (1994), 706ff.

¹¹ P. Matern, *Helios und Sol. Kulte und Ikonographie des griechischen und römischen Sonnengottes* (Istanbul 2002), 10.

¹² Z.B. Olba: Hadrian, *SNG Levante* 374; Thyatira: Sept. Severus *SNG Aul* 8276; Attaleia: Gordian III *SNG Pfalz* 6, 696; hellenistisch: Tralles: *BMC Lydia*, S. 347,139; Termessus: *SNG Aul* 5340.

¹³ E. Wüst, Mondgottheit, in: *RE* XVI, 1935, 107-112.

¹⁴ E.N. Lane, 'Men: A Neglected Cult of Roman Asia Minor', in: *ANRW* II,18,3 (Berlin – New York 1990), 2161.

¹⁵ *RPC* I 3043 u. 3045; *BMC Galatia*, Ancyra 8,1; 9,1.

¹⁶ Caria Aphrodisias, Isis: *BMC Caria* 36,67; Caria Stratonicaia, Hekate: *SNG Tübingen* 3472; Syria Gabala, Astarte: *BMC* 245,11; Lesbos Methymna, Athena: *BMC Lesbos* 178,11.

usw. Neben diesen bekannteren Gottheiten gibt es weitere Verschmelzungen der Artemis, z.B. mit Eileithyia, Astarte und Bendis, die hier aber nicht weiter erläutert werden können.¹⁷

Wie oben gezeigt, gab es viele verschiedene Gottheiten, zu denen die Augustae durch das Attribut der Mondsichel in Bezug gesetzt werden konnten. Nur bei einer genauen Untersuchung der Einzelfälle läßt sich entscheiden, an welche Göttin eine Kaiserin an einem bestimmten Prägeort angeglichen wurde.

Die Mondsichel der Kaiserin im Zusammenhang mit lokalen Gottheiten

Im folgenden soll anhand von Einzelfällen gezeigt werden, daß die Mondsichel der Kaiserin im Zusammenhang zu lokalen astralen Kulte stehen kann. Diese Prägungen sind in Hinsicht auf die verehrte Gottheit und die Motivation der Stadt individuell.

Die Verehrung von Livia in Tralles

Das erste Mal tritt die Mondsichel als Attribut bei Livia auf. Bei diesem frühesten Beispiel handelt es sich um eine Münze aus Tralles, geprägt unter Augustus. Sie zeigt die Augusta stehend mit einem Schleier, in den Händen hält sie Ähren und Mohn. Neben ihrem Kopf befindet sich eine Mondsichel. Durch die Inschrift „KAΙΣΑΡΕΩΝ Λ(E)IBIA“ ist die Zuweisung an die Kaiserin eindeutig.¹⁸

Livia soll offenbar durch diese Darstellung an eine lokale Göttin angeglichen werden. Um welche Göttin es sich dabei handelt, scheint leicht zu beantworten. Ähren und Mohn sind typische Attribute der Göttin Demeter. Auch der Schleier gehört häufig zu ihrer Ausstattung.¹⁹

In Tralles ist ein Kult für Demeter anhand von Münzen nachweisbar. Das früheste Zeugnis stammt aus dem 1. Jh. v.Chr. und zeigt eine verschleierte Demeter-Büste.²⁰ Weitere Demeter-Darstellungen findet man auf

¹⁷ L. Kahil, s.v. ‘Artemis’, in: *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* II, 1 (1984), 618ff.

¹⁸ *RPC* I 2648.

¹⁹ Vgl. L. Beschi, s.v. ‘Demeter’, in: *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* IV, 1 (1988), 846ff.

²⁰ *BMC Lydia* 337,73; *SNG München* 710; ein weiterer Hinweis auf Demeter könnte die Darstellung eines Ährenbündels sein, geprägt im Zeitraum von 29-21 v.Chr.: *SNG München* 721; siehe dazu auch R.L. Farnell, *The Cults of the Greek States III* (Oxford 1907), 372.

Münzen von Domitia. Auf der Rückseite ist die verschleierte Göttin stehend mit Ähren, Mohn und Fackel abgebildet.²¹

Die Mondsichel wird jedoch nicht für Demeter verwendet, sondern ist wesentliches Accessoire einer lunaren Gottheit, zu deren weiteren Attributen häufig auch ein Schleier gehört. Vermutlich handelt es sich hier also um eine synkretistische Darstellung von Demeter und einer lunaren Gottheit. Hierfür kämen in Tralles zwei Göttinnen in Frage, nämlich Selene und Hekate.

Die Göttin Selene läßt sich in Tralles anhand von Münzen schon für die ersten zwei Jahrhunderte v.Chr. nachweisen. Die Vorderseite zeigt eine Büste von Helios mit Strahlenkrone und die Rückseite Selene in einer von Stieren gezogenen Biga, neben ihrem Kopf befindet sich eine Mondsichel.²² Dieses Motiv findet man auf Münzen für Antoninus Pius wieder. Bei diesen Typen ist die Mondsichel nicht mehr im Feld abgebildet, sondern hinter den Schultern der Göttin.²³ Aus der gleichen Zeit gibt es eine weitere Darstellung, die Selene und Helios zusammen auf der Rückseite abbildet: Helios mit erhobener Linken steht, auf ein Zepter gestützt, Selene gegenüber. Die Mondsichel ruht auf ihrer Schulter, in der Linken hält sie eine Fackel. Die Umschrift lautet $\text{HAIO}\Sigma \text{ΣΕΛΕΝΗ ΤΡΑΛΛΙΑΝΩΝ}$.²⁴ Diese Münze weist daraufhin, daß die beiden Götter in Tralles zusammen als Stadtgötter verehrt wurden.²⁵ Für Helios ist inschriftlich aus dem 2. Jh. n.Chr. ein Priester und damit zumindest für diese Zeit ein institutionalisierter Kult bezeugt.²⁶ Die gemeinsame Verehrung mit Selene wird durch Münzen seit dem 2.-1. Jh. v.Chr. bis Commodus dokumentiert.²⁷

Ein Kult für Hekate ist in Tralles ebenfalls belegt. Epigraphisch²⁸ sind Priester für Hekate nachweisbar, so daß man wohl sicher von einer Kultstätte ausgehen kann. Numismatisch präsentiert sie sich als Hekate-Triformis zur

²¹ BMC Lydia 346,135; SNG Fitzwilliam 4906; SNG München 746; eine weitere Münze mit Demeter stammt aus der Zeit von Antoninus Pius: SNG München 747.

²² BMC Lydia 337,72; SNG Kopenhagen 28,677; SLG Lindgren III 533.

²³ BMC Lydia 347,139.

²⁴ SNG Righetti 1109; F. Imhoof-Blumer, *Lydische Stadtmünzen* (Genf – Leipzig 1897), 178 Anm. 2.

²⁵ So auch bei Matern 2002, a.a.O. (Anm.11), 14.

²⁶ F.B. Poljakow, *Die Inschriften von Tralleis und Nysa I*, Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 36,1 (1989) 131, Nr. 134.

²⁷ Siehe Anm.22-25, für Commodus SNG Tübingen 3877. Für Helios gibt es eine große Typenvielfalt. Der Gott erscheint auf Münzen der Stadt bis Valerian (SNG Aul 3294), wohingegen Selene zuletzt auf der genannten Münze des Commodus auftritt und für diese Göttin nur wenige Typen bekannt sind.

²⁸ Kult der Hekate: *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique* 4 (1880), 337 und *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique* 5 (1881), 347, Nr. 11 (= Poljakow 1989, a.a.O. [Anm.26], 17, Nr.12).

Zeit von Gordian III.²⁹ Ein weiterer Münztyp mit dem Attribut der Mondsichel, der sich zeitlich nicht eindeutig einordnen läßt, zeigt auf der Vorderseite einen Herakles-Kopf und auf der Rückseite eine weibliche Halbfigur mit einer Mondsichel auf dem Kopf. Diese Figur wird von Head als Hekate bezeichnet.³⁰ In einer weiteren Inschrift³¹ aus Tralles wird Livia als „EKATH ΣΕΒΑΣΤΗ“ bezeichnet:

ἱερεὺς Τιβερίου Καίσαρος
καὶ Ἑκάτῃ Σεβαστῆς
τοῦς Ἑρμῶς ἀνέθηκεν

Diese Inschrift stammt aus der Zeit des Tiberius, da Livia den Augusta-Titel erst nach dem Tod des Augustus bekam.³² Sie belegt, daß es in vielen Städten Kleinasiens wie hier in Tralles Priester des Tiberius gab, entgegen der Anordnung des Tiberius keine Heiligtümer oder Statuen zu seiner Verehrung zu errichten.³³

Tralles gehörte zu den elf Städten der Provinz Asia, die sich 23 n. Chr. darum stritten, in welcher von ihnen ein Tempel für Tiberius, Livia und den Senat errichtet werden sollte. Wie Tacitus³⁴ berichtet, entschied sich der Senat letztlich für Smyrna, Tralles wurde als unbedeutend übergangen.

Aufgrund dieser Fakten ist folgendes Szenario denkbar: Tralles wurde bei der Vergabe des Tempelbaus übergeben und suchte nach alternativen Möglichkeiten, den Kaiser zu ehren. Livia wurde schon in der Zeit des Augustus geehrt und einer lokalen Gottheit angeglichen, wie die oben behandelte Münze belegt. Es spricht viel dafür, daß eine Statue der Livia im Heiligtum der Hekate aufgestellt wurde. Dieser Statue fügte man eine weitere des Tiberius hinzu und setzte einen Priester des Tiberius und der Hekate Sebaste ein, der durch die Inschrift belegt ist. Damit würde es sich

²⁹ *BMC Lydia* 355, 171. Eine weitere Münze mit Hekate-Triformis stammt vermutlich aus der Zeit Elagabals: *SNG München* 768.

³⁰ *BMC Lydia* 341, 97 Head ordnet sie zeitlich zwischen Domitian und Antoninus Pius ein. Siehe auch *BMC Lydia* 389, vgl. G. Grether, 'Livia and the Roman Imperial Cult', *American Journal of Philology* 67 (1946), 231, Anm. 48; und Hahn 1994, a.a.O. (Anm.5), 47 und Anm. 276.

³¹ *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique* 10 (1886), 516 Nr. 6.

³² Zum Problem der Datierung siehe Hahn 1994, a.a.O. (Anm.5), 47, Anm.276, und 70, Anm.40.

³³ Zum Verbot göttlicher Ehrungen siehe Cassius Dio 57,9,1; Sueton, *Tiberius* 26,1; für weitere Städte, aus denen Priester des Tiberius zu seinen Lebzeiten bekannt sind, vgl. D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (Princeton 1950), I, 501 (Anm.39).

³⁴ Tacitus, *Annalen* 4, 55. Siehe auch Magie 1950, a.a.O. (Anm.33), I, 501 und II, 1358 Anm. 23.

bei der Münzdarstellung Livias auf der Münze aus augusteischer Zeit vermutlich um Demeter-Hekate-Selene handeln.³⁵

Mit dieser synkretistischen Darstellung Livias als Demeter-Hekate-Selene bezeugte die Stadt ihre Dankbarkeit gegenüber dem Kaiserhaus, hatte doch schon Augustus nach einem Erdbeben den Wiederaufbau von Tralles gefördert.³⁶ In einer Inschrift aus Tralles wird Augustus daher als κτίστης³⁷ der Stadt bezeichnet, ferner nahm die Stadt den Namen Kaisareia an, wie man auch auf den Münzen für Livia und Gaius bzw. Lucius Caesar sehen kann.³⁸ Die Angleichung der Augusta an lokale Gottheiten der Stadt war eine besondere, individuelle Art, dem Kaiserhaus Wertschätzung, Loyalität und Dankbarkeit zu zeigen.³⁹

Dieses Beispiel zeigt, daß eine Angleichung der Kaiserin an eine Mondgöttin schon im 1. Jh. n.Chr. vorgenommen wurde, und zwar im Rahmen eines lokalen Kultes und Motivs. Dieses Phänomen läßt sich auch in den folgenden Jahrhunderten, z.B. für Faustina die Jüngere in Hierapolis-Kastabala, für Etruscilla in Anazarbos usw., nachweisen. Diese weiteren Einzelfälle werden an anderer Stelle besprochen.

Düsseldorf, Dezember 2004.

³⁵ Auch wenn die Mondsichel als Attribut nur für Selene in Tralles belegt ist (wenn man die unsichere Zuweisung von Head vernachlässigt s.o.) ließe sich dies insofern mit Hekate vereinbaren, da beiden Göttinnen ein lunarer Aspekt gemeinsam war. Eine Kultstätte für Selene ist nicht nachweisbar, für Hekate aber schon. Eine kultische Verehrung von Selene im Heiligtum der Hekate wäre daher durchaus denkbar. Möglicherweise handelte es sich um zwei Erscheinungsformen einer Gottheit. Letzten Endes kann man nicht eindeutig entscheiden, ob nun Selene oder Hekate oder eine Verschmelzung beider Göttinnen gemeint war.

³⁶ Magie 1950, a.a.O. (Anm.33), II, 1331 Anm. 7. Das Erdbeben war 26/25 v.Chr., eine Gesandtschaft aus Tralles suchte Augustus in Spanien auf, um Hilfe zu erbitten. Diese wurde in Form von Geldspenden und Sendung italischer Kolonisten gewährt. Der Wiederaufbau der Stadt mit Hilfe der italischen Kolonisten dauerte sicherlich einige Jahre. Die Münzen für Livia (RPC I 2647 mit VS: Augustus, und 2648 mit VS: Gaius Caesar) sowie eine Münze für Gaius Caesar mit pflügenden Kolonisten auf der Rückseite werden im RPC I auf 2 v.Chr. datiert und stehen sicherlich in Zusammenhang mit dieser Unterstützung.

³⁷ *Bulletin de Correspondence Hellénique* 10 (1886), 516, Nr. 5; Magie 1950, a.a.O. (Anm.33), II, 1331, Anm. 7.

³⁸ RPC I 2647-2653; siehe auch H. Halfmann, *Itinera Principum* (Stuttgart 1986), 160 und Magie 1950, a.a.O. (Anm.33), I, 469 und II, 1332, Anm. 7; vermutlich hieß die Stadt in der Zeit von Augustus bis Nero Kaisareia, siehe RPC I 438.

³⁹ Im Gegensatz zu Bergmann, die diese Münze mit einer Prägung aus Romula in Spanien vergleicht, bei der Livia die Mondsichel als Pendant zur Strahlenkrone des Augustus gegeben wurde. Vgl. Bergmann 1998, a.a.O. (Anm.2), 105; 167.

EGYPTIAN PAPYRI AND 'DIVINITY' OF THE ROMAN EMPEROR¹

JANNEKE DE JONG

In papyrus documents from Egypt from the first three centuries A.D. we frequently encounter Roman emperors. Mostly the reason for this is a practical one, since the name and titles of the ruling emperor were used to date a document. Nevertheless, the way in which the imperial titles were used, was bound by certain principles. Scribes were to a great degree free to choose from a wide pool of formulas, but it is likely that these all met with the officially approved standard. Thus, it can be assumed that imperial titulature in papyri is informative on the way the emperor wanted himself to be portrayed.²

Through imperial titulature the emperor could broadcast a propagandistic message. Besides the emperor's personal names, the titulature could contain elements that stressed dynastic, military and religious characteristics that legitimized the power position of the emperor. These elements supplemented and reinforced one another, resulting in a most complete legitimization of power. In the course of time the imperial titulature had developed into what it was in the third century A.D.³ The titles that were used for the first emperor, Augustus, were personal ones. His personal name *Imperator Caesar Augustus*, consisting of military, dynastic and religious

¹ This article is based on a paper presented at the fifth workshop of the international workshop Impact of Empire, Münster, 2004. The topics touched on in this paper will be explored in more detail in my dissertation about imperial representation and perception in third-century papyrus texts (forthcoming 2006). I owe gratitude to L. de Blois, O.J. Hekster and R.P. Salomons for reading preliminary drafts of this article and for their helpful suggestions. Thanks are also due to H. Whitehouse, curator of the Egyptian collections of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, for her kind response to my questions about archeological matters related to the Roman imperial cult, and to G. Platz, of the Antikensammlung of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, who granted me permission to examine the Berlin tondo, inventory number 31329. The Greek texts (with diacritical signs) are taken from the editions. The end of a line is indicated by a vertical bar. The translations are the editors'.

² M. Peachin, *Roman Imperial Titulature and Chronology, A.D. 235-284* (Amsterdam 1990) states on p. 20 that papyri are useful for chronology since they seem not to include titles that were not held officially. Cf. D. Kienast, *Römische Kaisertabelle* (Darmstadt 1996), 20-21: "Im allgemeinen darf man aber davon ausgehen, daß die Urkunden und die Münzen der römischen Reichsprägung die offizielle Titulatur wiedergeben, während inoffizielle Titel auf lokalen Inschriften und Münzen sowie zum Teil auch in den Papyri begegnen."

³ M. Hammond, 'Imperial Elements in the Formula of the Roman Emperors during the first two and a half Centuries of the Empire', *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 25 (1957), 19-64.

elements developed into standard elements of the imperial titulature.⁴ Because of this standardization of the imperial titulature, in the third century its personal aspect had diminished. The individual emperors would still have their own titulature, but the variation would lie in the details, not in the broad outline.⁵ Although this might suggest that imperial titulature in the third century A.D. becomes less informative on imperial representation, this need not be the case. It can still be very useful, since imperial titles reflect imperial propaganda. A good example of this is provided by what modern scholars know as *damnatio memoriae*, the condemnation of someone's memory.⁶ This concept, of which a recent example is provided by the mutilation of Saddam Hussein's portraits after his expulsion, was expressed in different ways. The destruction of statues of the 'damned', or the erasure of his name from inscriptions, are just two among many well-known examples of how to get rid of someone's memory. Less well-known, but certainly interesting, is the occurrence of *damnatio memoriae* in papyrus.⁷ Whereas in the first and second centuries *damnatio memoriae* was decided

⁴ R. Syme, 'Imperator Caesar: A Study in Nomenclature', *Roman Papers I* 29 (Oxford 1979), 361-377.

⁵ For a case study of imperial titulature in papyrus texts from A.D. 238, see: J. de Jong, 'Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power in Greek Papyrus Texts from AD 238', in: L. de Blois (ed.), *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power. Proceedings of the Third Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Roman Empire)* 3 (Amsterdam 2003), 269-281.

⁶ General terminology: S. Brassloff, 'Damnatio memoriae', *RE* IV, 2 (1901), 2059-2062. A. Mlasowsky, 'Damnatio memoriae', *DNP* 3 (1997), 299-300: "Damnatio memoriae ist die Auslöschung der (öffentlichen) Erinnerung an eine Person (in der Regel eines röm. Kaisers), dessen Name und Bildnisse aus öffentlichen Inschr. und Bauwerken entfernt werden." Criticising this terminology and dealing with the different methods and purposes of *post mortem* penalties: H. Flower, 'Rethinking "Damnatio Memoriae": The Case of Cn. Calpurnius Piso Pater in AD 20', *Classical Antiquity* 17, 2 (1998), 155-187. General on *damnatio memoriae*: F. Vittinghoff, *Der Staatsfeind in der römischen Kaiserzeit. Untersuchungen zur "damnatio memoriae"* (Speyer 1936). Recently, a book about purposeful mutilation of imperial statues has appeared: E.R. Varner, *Mutilation and Transformation. Damnatio Memoriae and Roman Imperial Portraiture*, *Monumenta Graeca et Romana* X (Leiden – Boston 2004).

⁷ *Damnatio memoriae* in papyrus texts is dealt with in some papyrological contributions, though generally from a papyrological point of view – i.e. lacking historical analysis: E. van 't Dack, 'La papyrologie et l'histoire du Haut-Empire: Les 'formulae' des empereurs', in: *ANRW* II, 1, 875-876; P. Mertens, 'La damnatio memoriae de Géta dans les papyrus', *Hommages à L. Herrmann*, Collection Latomus 44 (Bruxelles 1960), 541-52; P.J. Sijpesteijn, 'Macrinus' Damnatio Memoriae und die Papyri', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 13 (1974), 219-227; id., 'Theognostos alias Moros and his family', *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 76 (1989), 213-218; R. Pintaudi, 'Frammento di un documento con la damnatio memoriae di Macrinus e Diadumenianus (P. Cair. J.E. 87697)', *Aegyptus* 67 (1987), 95-98; D. Delia, *Columbia Papyri* X 272. The papyrological evidence for *damnatio memoriae* will be explored further in my dissertation (n.1).

for some emperors, we lack papyri that testify this. In third-century texts, however, it sometimes occurs. This might suggest that in this time *damnatio* had taken a stricter place in the imperial representational programme, or at least that in the third century *damnatio* had obtained a fixed place in official life in Egypt. If an emperor was ‘damned’, people would have to adapt their papers if the need arose. Unless the explanation lies in the randomness of preserved texts, this suggests that in the third century something had changed, and greater attention was paid to dealing with dead emperors. A further motivation for this may be found in the increased Romanization of Egypt, the effect of which was that also the lower-level administrators in Egypt took over Roman customs.⁸

Placed within the framework of imperial representation, *damnatio memoriae* can be considered as a negative way of using the dead predecessor in the successor’s legitimation of his power position. This automatically leads to the assumption that there is also a positive way of using the dead predecessor in the successor’s legitimation of his power position, namely by deification of a dead emperor.⁹ Indeed, papyrus texts reflect imperial deification, but the way in which it occurs cannot be compared with that of *damnatio memoriae*, as this paper will show.

Deification of emperors is only one aspect of the imperial cult, which is a complex phenomenon of the Roman world. In this context, imperial cult is interpreted as the combination of honours or reverences surrounding the emperor during his lifetime, or after his death. ‘The imperial cult’ does not really exist.¹⁰ It is rather an umbrella term under which various aspects come together, which do not – as the term in our perception might suggest – all have religious implications. Equally problematic is the concept ‘divinity’ of the Roman emperor. Interpretation of this phenomenon depends on historical context (the ancients’ against our modern view); conceptions will have varied from time to time.¹¹ Thus, the relationship between the imperial cult and the divinity of the emperor is hard to state in general terms.¹² Therefore,

⁸ The increase of Romanization of Egypt is enhanced formally by the introduction of the town councils in A.D. 200, and the *Constitutio Antoniniana* in A.D. 212.

⁹ H. Gesche, ‘Die Divinisierung der römischen Kaiser in ihrer Funktion als Herrschaftslegitimation’, *Chiron* 8 (1978), 377-390. I. Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford 2002), 287-288; 369-371. Varner 2004, op. cit. (n.6), 6: “*Damnatio* is the direct antithesis of *consecratio*...” S.G. MacCormack, *Art and Ceremony in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley 1981), 97; 98; 132-133; 149; 254.

¹⁰ M. Beard – J. North – S. Price, *Religions of Rome. Volume I: A History* (Cambridge 1998), 318.

¹¹ Gradel 2002, op. cit. (n.9), 4-7 deals with the the modern inclination to categorize the imperial cult as a religious or political phenomenon, and the deficiencies caused by this anachronistic approach.

¹² Gradel 2002, op. cit. (n.9), 7.

dealing with the subject in a more specific context may be worthwhile. In this paper, I will consider how the Roman imperial cult is presented in Egypt, taking papyri as the point of departure. Although this paper will only deal with a few aspects that are part of the imperial cult, the evidence that will be discussed indicates that the Roman imperial cult in Egypt was very visible and open for participation by the inhabitants of that province.

Some aspects of the imperial cult in documentary texts

The position of the Roman imperial cult in Egypt is not uncomplicated. When treating the subject, scholars tend to place the Roman imperial cult within a frame of Egyptian traditional religious life.¹³ Egypt had a strong and ancient religious tradition in which the pharaoh was king of men and mediator between men and gods. The pharaoh was the guarantor of Maat, stability in the broadest sense of the word, that was necessary for the well-being of the Egyptian people.¹⁴ The Ptolemaic kings had taken over this role and, after them, Roman emperors were seen as their successors. This seems to be putting the Roman emperor on a par with the Egyptian pharaoh, and the way in which the emperor was depicted on Egyptian temple walls, indeed corroborates this view.¹⁵ The accompanying titlature consists of both Egyptian and Roman elements, that were recognizable for Egyptians.¹⁶ An early example of the presentation of the Roman emperor in pharaonic style is provided by the gate of a temple of the Nubian Sun god Mandulis, and Osiris and Isis at Kalabscha. Augustus is represented as a pharaoh, offering to the goddess Isis fruits of the lands. Hölbl transcribes the

¹³ The basic publication on the imperial cult in Egypt was written almost a century ago by F. Blumenthal, 'Der ägyptische Kaiserkult', *Archiv für Papyrusforschung und verwandte Gebiete* 5 (1913), 317-345. Until far into the 20th century the topic was hardly treated again. In the nineties of the last century, however, G.S. Dundas studied the subject again in his doctoral thesis, and he showed that many elements of the Roman imperial cult were familiar to the Egyptians from their pharaonic background: G.S. Dundas, *Pharaoh, Basileus and Imperator: The Roman Imperial Cult in Egypt* (Los Angeles 1994). On p. 178-258, he deals with the cultural connections of pharaonic, Ptolemaic and Roman imperial rituals. For religious syncretism of native Egyptian, Greek and Roman elements, see also N. Lewis, *Life in Egypt under Roman Rule* (Oxford 1983), 84-106. A short discussion and bibliography on the Roman imperial cult in Egypt is given in H.-A. Rupprecht, *Kleine Einführung in die Papyruskunde* (Darmstadt 1994), 184-188.

¹⁴ E. Hornung, *Der Eine und die Vielen. Ägyptische Gottesvorstellungen* (Darmstadt 1983), 275.

¹⁵ G. Hölbl, *Altägypten im römischen Reich. Der römische Pharao und seine Tempel I* (Mainz am Rhein 2000); K. Lembke – C. Fluck – G. Vittmann, *Ägyptens späte Blüte. Die Römer am Nil* (Mainz am Rhein 2004), 37.

¹⁶ J.-C. Grenier, *Les titulatures des empereurs romains dans les documents en langue égyptienne* (Bruxelles 1989). Hölbl 2000, op. cit. (n.15), 19-24.

inscription with the names of Augustus: “Sohn des Re, Herr der beiden Länder [Romaioi], König von Ober- und Unterägypten, Herr der Diademe [Kaisaros, der Gott, der Sohn des Gottes].“¹⁷

In this form of imagery and accompanying titulature two principles come together. On the one hand, the traditional Egyptian pharaoh is referred to, on the other hand, by means of the titles this Egyptian pharaoh is presented as a Roman ruler. The fact that Augustus could present himself as *divi filius* would, according to Günther Hölbl, make him very suitable for a position within the cultic pharaonic tradition.¹⁸ However, this has nothing to do with the Roman imperial cult. Still, the observation that the Roman emperor was portrayed in the visual language of Egypt is important. In this way, the Romans just took over the place of the rulers the Egyptians were used to. Of course, it is important to take into account the traditions that have been maintained for so long, but Egyptian religious traditions cannot be put at the same level as the Roman imperial cult. In the first place, Egyptian religion did not disappear suddenly, but remained in practice during the Roman period in Egypt.¹⁹ Secondly, the Roman imperial cult also had political implications. It did not replace anything that was already present in Egypt, it was rather an addition, or even better a means to come to a mixture of existing Egyptian practices and Roman politics, cleverly started by Augustus, and taken over by his successors.²⁰ Thus, the Roman imperial cult consisted of elements that were recognizable and acceptable for the

¹⁷ Hölbl 2000, op. cit. (n.15), 16. See also E. Winter, ‘Das Kalabsha-Tor in Berlin’, *Jahrbuch Preussischer Kulturbesitz* 14 (1977), 59-71; D. Arnold, *Temples of the Last Pharaohs* (New York – Oxford 1999) 240. The gate is now in the Ägyptisches Museum in Berlin-Charlottenburg.

¹⁸ Hölbl 2000, op. cit. (n.15), 22: “Die Bezeichnung <<Gott>> stellt ein Beispiel für Kontinuität aus der Ptolemäerzeit dar und ist auch in demotischen wie in griechischen Dokumenten für den Kaiser seit Beginn der römischen Zeit gebräuchlich; der zweite Teil ist das auf den großen Caesar zu beziehende <<divi filius>>, das Oktavian seit der Vergöttlichung Caesars (Herbst 40 v. Chr.) im Namen führte. Somit kamen die bereits an Oktavian haftende Göttlichkeit und die durch den Augustus-Namen noch zusätzlich ausgedrückte Übermenschlichkeit bei der Entstehung des augusteischen Pharaos zur Geltung; als <<Sohn Gottes>> (divi filius) konnte Augustus bruchlos in die kultische, pharaonische Rolle hineinwachsen.” This practice was carried out for Augustus’ successors as well: Hölbl 2000, op. cit. (n.15), 24-46.

¹⁹ D. Frankfurter, *Religion in Roman Egypt. Assimilation and Resistance* (Princeton – New Jersey 1998); Hölbl 2000, op. cit. (n.15); K. Lembke – C. Fluck – G. Vittmann 2004, op. cit. (n.15), 37.

²⁰ Hölbl 2000, op. cit. (n.15), 22-24 argues that there was a syncretism between two separate movements. On the one hand, there was the ancient Egyptian cultic pharaoh, on the other hand the Roman emperor as the political ruler, who constitutionally had taken over the pharaoh’s role.

Egyptians, because it made the Roman emperor visible and recognizable as a more than human force.²¹

The most direct way in which the Roman imperial cult was made visible in Egypt was by means of imperial temples and the activities that took place there. Unfortunately, there are only few archeological remains left. Information about temples in papyri is hardly informative on how they looked like and how the imperial cult was celebrated.²² In papyrus documents the most common reason for mentioning an imperial temple was to specifically define the place where some kind of action was carried out, without any detailed description of this location.

What, then, can be deduced from papyri? Firstly, that imperial temples were omnipresent, that is, temples of various emperors were present in urban centres, the *metropoleis*, but also in smaller villages. And secondly, that they were used not only for cultic happenings, but for several other purposes, such as judicial and administrative matters. So, although the contents of the imperial cult do not appear from these documents, in any case they prove that the buildings were present, and represented imperial authority.

What cannot be deduced from the papyri is how these temples were decorated. Were the buildings Roman, and how were the emperors depicted by statues and images: in Roman or Egyptian style? There are certainly papyri that refer to images and statues, but many uncertainties remain, although some texts give us some clues. For example, in a number of papyri imperial busts are mentioned, that point to a Roman form of portraiture.²³ Apart from references to statues and busts, painted images are also referred to. An example of a painted image of this type may be recognized in the

²¹ Such elements of the imperial cult are, for example, temples, imperial days, imperial oaths, imperial statues.

²² The best known imperial temples appearing in papyrus texts are *Kaisareia*, *Sebasteia* and *Hadrianeia*. Imperial temples had many different functions, as becomes clear from papyrus documents. For the judicial importance of *Caesarea*, see: C. Kunderewicz, 'Quelques remarques sur le rôle des Kaisareia dans la vie juridique de l'Égypte romaine', *Journal of Juristic Papyrology* 13 (1961), 123-129. See also A. Lukaszewicz, *Les édifices publics dans les villes de l'Égypte romaine: problèmes administratifs et financiers* (Warsaw 1986). Temples for Augustus: a *Caesareum* is attested in Alexandria, and one in Philae. For an overview of sources to these, see: H. Hänlein-Schäfer, *Veneratio Augusti. Eine Studie zu den Tempeln des ersten römischen Kaisers* (Roma 1985), 203-222. Dundas 1994, op. cit. (n.13), 132-177, discusses each of the known imperial temples. For building activities in imperial times in native Egyptian style, see Arnold 1999, op. cit. (n.17), 225-273. The emperor represented on temple walls as Egyptian pharaoh: Hölbl 2000, op. cit. (n.15), 47-115.

²³ T. Pekárý – H.-J. Drexhage, 'Zur Behandlung und Restaurierung von Bildwerken in der Antike', *Festschrift für Max Wegner zum 90. Geburtstag* (Bonn 1992), 343-355.

famous Berlin tondo.²⁴ However, in many cases it remains unknown what kind of representation is precisely meant: was the emperor depicted alone or with his colleagues or family, what material was the representation made of? Still, the point is clear: the Roman emperor was visible for the people.²⁵

So much for the outward appearance of the temples. Let us now turn to the activities that took place there, and were linked to the imperial cult. One of the moments on which there will certainly have been festivities in the Roman temples, was the imperial accession. Papyrological evidence for this is provided by a few very interesting documents. P. Oxy. VII 1021 of A.D. 54, for example, is a text that refers to Egyptian traditions rather than to a Roman concept of rulership, as Gregory Dundas argues in his dissertation in which he has investigated the syncretism of pharaonic, Ptolemaic and Roman ritual in the Roman imperial cult.²⁶ The text tells us:

Ὁ μὲν ὀφειλόμενος | τοῖς προγόνοις καὶ ἐν- | φανῆς θεὸς Καῖσαρ εἰς | αὐτοὺς
κεχώρηκε, | ὁ δὲ τῆς οἰκουμένης καὶ προσδοκηθεὶς καὶ ἐλπισ- | θεὸς Αὐτο-
κράτωρ ἀποδέ- | δεικται, ἀγαθὸς | δαίμων δὲ τῆς | οὐκουμένης (1. οἰκουμένης)
[ἀρ]χὴ ὧν | [[με]γιστ]τε πάντων | ἀγαθὸν Νέρων Καῖσαρ ἀποδέδεικται. | Διὸ
πάντες ὀφείλομεν | στεφανηφοροῦντας (1. στεφανηφοροῦντες) | καὶ βουθυ-
τοῦντας (1. βουθυτοῦντες) | θεοῖς πᾶσι εἰδέναι | χάριτας. (ἔτους) α Νέ-
ρωνος | Κλαυδίου Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ | μη(νὸς) Νέ(ου)
Σεβα(στοῦ) κα

The Caesar who had to pay his debt to his ancestors, god manifest, has joined them, and the expectation and hope of the world has been declared Emperor, the good genius of the world and source of all good things, Nero, has been declared Caesar. Therefore ought we all wearing garlands and with sacrifices of oxen to give thanks to all the gods. The 1st year of the Emperor Nero Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, the 21st of the month Neos Sebastos.

²⁴ Berlin, Staatliche Museen, inv. 31329. K.A. Neugebauer, 'Die Familie des Septimius Severus', *Die Antike* 12 (1936), 155-172. Varner 2004, op. cit. (n.6), 181-182, n. 225 (with bibliographical references) and Fig. 187. Another example of imperial imaging (painting) is provided by P. Oxy. LV 3791. The introduction to the texts contains a further bibliography on the subject.

²⁵ Also the purpose of imperial representations in temples is not explicitly stated in texts. According to D. Fishwick, 'Statues Taxes in Roman Egypt', *Historia* 38 (1989), 335-347, it was not meant as divine representation, but rather as honouring the emperor. The purpose of these images, therefore, had a clear political aim. Fishwick concludes on p. 347: "...images that were intended to be set in temples, theoretically as offerings to the deity. But they were also transported in processions as ritual objects on feast days...As so often, one cannot but admire the Roman knack for harnessing native practices to imperial purposes, in this case the projection of the emperor's image with all the benefits that this entailed for the ruling power."

²⁶ Dundas 1994, op. cit. (n.13), p. 4, 178-258. The text, with comment, is also discussed by J. Hengstl, *Griechische Papyri aus Ägypten als Zeugnisse des öffentlichen und privaten Lebens* (München 1978), 48-50, Nr. 10.

Reference is made to ‘the ancestors’, a phrasing having parallels in Egyptian traditions.²⁷ The idea of dynastic succession was important for both the Egyptians and the Romans, though the underlying concepts may have been different. However, that was not the issue. The wording of the document quoted would be understandable and acceptable for Egyptians and Romans, even if their conceptual views on leadership and succession of leaders differed. The result, after all, was the same: a new emperor had come to power.

The sacrifice of oxen was also normal practice in Roman imperial cult. Although not specifically mentioned, the sacrifices probably took place at the altars of the imperial temples. Unfortunately, the context of this text is unknown, so we do not know whether this was part of an official letter or whether it originates from non-official sources.

Official communication of imperial accession and accompanying festivities was done by the prefect of Egypt, as appears from other documents relating to imperial accessions. Doing so served a double purpose. On the one hand it would evoke goodwill of the inhabitants of Egypt towards the new emperor. On the other hand, in this way the prefect could display his loyalty towards the new emperor.²⁸ An example of this is provided by P. Oxy. LV 3781 of A.D. 117. This papyrus contains a letter of the prefect of Egypt to the *strategoi* of the Heptakomia, announcing the accession of Hadrian. Lines 2-18 run as follows:

Ῥάμμ(ιος) Μαρτ(ιάλις) στρ(ατηγοῖς) [[.]] νομ(ῶν) χαίρειν | ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ τοῦ
 σύνπαυτ(ος) | ἀνθρώπων γένους ἴστε | τὴν ἡγεμονίαν παρὰ τοῦ | θεοῦ πατρὸς
 διαδεδέχ(αι) | Αὐτοκράτορα Καίσαρα | Τραϊανὸν Ἀδριανὸν Ἀριστ(ον) |
 Σεβαστὸν Γερμανικὸν Δακί | κὸν Παρθικόν. Εὐχόμε[νοι] οὖν πᾶσι θεοῖς
 αἰώνιον | αὐτοῦ τὴν διαμονὴν | ἡμεῖν φυλαχθῆναι | στεφανηφορήσομ(εν) |
 ἐφ' ἡμ(έρας) ι, ὅπερ καὶ τοῖς | ὑφ' αὐτοῦ νομ[οῖς] | φανερὸν ποιήσητε
 (followed by date and listing of the *nomes* belonging to the Heptakomia).

Rammius Martialis (to the strategi of the underwritten districts?), greetings. Be it known to you that for the salvation of the whole race of mankind the imperial rule has been taken over from the god his father by Emperor Caesar Traianus Hadrianus Optimus Augustus Germanicus Dacicus Parthicus. Therefore we shall pray to all the gods that his continuance may be preserved to us for ever and shall we wear garlands for ten days. This you are to publish to the districts under your charge.

²⁷ Dundas 1994, op. cit. (n.13), 220-221.

²⁸ P.J. Sijpesteijn, ‘Edict of C. Calvisius Statianus’, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 8 (1971), 186-192; J. Hengstl 1978, op. cit. (n.26), 49.

Although the documents date from different times, the contents are comparable. In both documents the arrival of a new emperor is announced, which should be celebrated. A specific outward similarity is the wearing of garlands. Sacrifices, as mentioned in the former text, and prayers, mentioned in the latter, probably were customary parts of the celebrations, too. Another point of interest in the latter text is that it shows that the prefect and *strategoi*, who have administrative functions, are involved in the communication of imperial celebrations.

Still, these texts are not conclusive in all respects. From the wording of the documents it becomes clear that prayers, offerings, and thanksgiving to the gods were carried out, but who were these gods? Roman or Egyptian gods, or both? Were the deified emperors among them, or even living emperors? The lack of explicit answers to these questions is not the main point. It makes more sense to focus on what these documents do reveal. Just as is the case with the representation of Roman emperors in pharaonic style, in these texts the syncretism of Roman rule with Egyptian traditions becomes clear.

Dead emperors

So far, the elements discussed are all connected to the living emperor. However, the imperial cult also included dead emperors. After an emperor had died he could be deified. He became a god, expressed in Latin by the word *divus*, and would be given a temple and priests. Is this deification also found in papyri? This is a complicated question, because this means that we have to look out for dead emperors in papyri, a rather difficult thing to do, since, as has already been stated earlier, the main purpose of the occurrence of emperors in papyri was to date the documents. Some documents, however, that were written at a certain time, do refer back to earlier dates. These are documents that, for example, have to do with applications for privileges, such as admission to a certain status group, like the gymnasium class.²⁹ In order to obtain these privileges it was necessary to prove that also the previous generations had enjoyed these. In these documents, often the word *θεός* is used when reference is made to a dead emperor, which would point to deification.³⁰ However, papyrologists usually take this word just in

²⁹ C.A. Nelson, *Status Declarations in Roman Egypt* (Amsterdam 1979). The third chapter discusses the gymnasial class (26-35).

³⁰ H.J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions: a Lexicon and Analysis* (Toronto 1974).

the meaning of ‘dead’ or ‘deified’. Indeed, in most instances the word is used when the documents refer to deceased emperors. In very few texts, however, it is used to refer to a living emperor, but this seems to be exceptional.³¹ On the other hand, there are also examples of deceased emperors who are referred to without the use of *theos*. The adjective *theios* occurs as well, in phrases applied to the living emperor. If this is used in official contexts, it is usually translated as ‘imperial’. No doubt, this is what is meant, but it is interesting that we in our language feel the need to translate it like that, since ‘divine’ for us has other implications. Is this an example of our inability to understand Greek religious terminology in full? Or is it the other way round and has the Greek language here found a way to express political matters by using – what we would call – religious words, in order to underline the uniqueness of this political phenomenon?³²

It is interesting to note that deified emperors were not always referred to as *theos* in Greek papyrus texts. Examples of texts exist in which a deceased and deified emperor is referred to without the use of *theos*. In P. Oxy. XXII

³¹ For the contemporaneous use of *theos* in connection with the name of an emperor, see J.E.G. Whitehorne, ‘Augustus as ‘Theos’ in Contemporary Papyri’, *Proceedings of the XIXth International Congress of Papyrology* (Cairo 1989), 421-434. He argues that *theos Kaisar* is used when reference is made to a dead emperor (deduced from Latin *divus* + name), and *Kaisar theos*, when the emperor is still alive. The last instance only appears in contexts in which members of local priesthoods contact governmental administrators. Whitehorne, 431, argues that: “The factor common to almost all these examples of the contemporaneous use of the title *theos* is therefore their connection with the native religious tradition for with the exception of SB XVI 12312 all of the documents involve Egyptian priests or temples in one way or another. In all of them we are faced with the cult of the emperor as pharaoh and hence as living god, something deeply rooted in the indigenous tradition but now, like many other aspects of Egyptian religious belief, embraced also by the Greek-speaking element of the population.”

P. Vindob. Salomons 3 is a copy of an imperial oath, from A.D. 36. It is sworn by the emperor Tiberius, who is called *theos* (l. 6), although he is still alive. According to the editor this implies: “...dass aber der Glaube an die Göttlichkeit des Herrschers so tief im Bewusstsein des Ägypters verwurzelt war, dass sogar in der Zeit, als die Römer bereits mehr als 50 Jahre das Szepter über Ägypten führten, die Praxis stärker war als die Lehre und der noch lebende Kaiser doch noch hier und da “Theos” genannt wurde.”

³² Interesting in this respect is the discussion by Gradel of the Greek rendering of the Latin term *Divus Julius*: Gradel 2002, op. cit. (n.9), 61-72, demonstrates that the language, or religious terminology, is used to express political reality. Cf. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley – Los Angeles – London 2000), 393-395. According to Ando: “Modern translations and dictionaries rob texts from this era of much of their power when they render the words ‘sacred’ and ‘divine’ as ‘imperial’, as though Augustus had been merely a man.” (393) and “Even if we lack the apparatus to understand ancient belief and the terminology to describe it, we should not underestimate its power.” (395). See also S.R.F. Price, ‘Gods and Emperors: The Greek Language of the Roman Imperial Cult’, *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 104 (1984), 79-95; Id. *Rituals and Power. The Roman Imperial Cult in Asia Minor* (Cambridge 1984), especially chapter 9.

2345 of A.D. 224, the deified emperors are dealt with somewhat inconsistently. The document contains an application for membership of the gymnasium for Aurelius Dioskoros by his parents. The text is somewhat fragmentary, the papyrus being broken both to the right and the left, and the beginning of the document is lost. The purport of the text is a statement that the declarant's son, turning fourteen in the year the declaration was made up, should be examined to be allowed membership of the gymnasium. The Greek term for this examination is ἐπίκρισις. The normal procedure for this examination was that the candidate would prove that he was entitled to such gymnasial membership, which was hereditary.³³ Therefore, in applications like this, the *epikriseis* of ancestors are mentioned, explicitly stating who was examined, and when this happened. Reference to past times is made in the following lines:

- l. 4: ιγ (ἔτος) θεοῦ Μάρκου
- l. 5: ε (ἔτους) Οὐεσ(πασσιανοῦ)
- l. 6: τῷ ε (ἔτει) Οὐεσ(πασσιανοῦ)
- l. 7: τῷ β (ἔτει) θεοῦ Αἰλίου Ἀντωνίνου

The text is difficult to understand, due to its state of preservation and the use of many abbreviations.³⁴ Still, the point that matters in this context is that in lines 5 and 6 *theos* in combination with *Vespasianou* is left out, whereas Marcus Aurelius is designated *theos* in l. 4, as is Antoninus Pius in l. 7. It may be that this is due to carelessness of the scribe. It may also suggest that there were no strict prescriptions for the use of *theos* when deified emperors were referred to. In this case, the conclusion that can be drawn from the papyri that inform us about this matter would be that *theos* may, but not must be used, when an emperor had been deified. If, however, an emperor was not deified, *theos* is never used.³⁵

³³ Nelson 1979, op. cit. (n.29), 35-36, concludes that membership of the gymnasial class was restricted "and rigidly controlled" and that "the privilege resulting from this membership was simply that of status and all the benefits a superior Greek status provided its holders".

³⁴ The document is further obscured by the fact that the ancestors are not listed in chronological order. Nelson 1979, op. cit. (n.29), 34 points out that both maternal and paternal ancestors were listed in this type of document. However, since a large part of the text is lost, the exact genealogy of the persons mentioned cannot be reconstructed. Reference is made to *epikriseis* in the reigns of *divus* Marcus, of *divus* Aelius Antoninus, and of Vespasian. Nelson 1979, op. cit. (n.29), 26-30 has included the text, but does not discuss its contents.

³⁵ In P. Oxy. XVIII 2186, an epikrisis document from A.D. 260, line 5 has been restored as ... (ἔτει) θεοῦ Διομητιανοῦ. The *Duke Databank of Documentary Papyri* still gives this transcription, in spite of the note in *Berichtigungsliste der Papyrusurkunden aus Ägypten* VIII, p. 254: 'Die Erg. Θεοῦ vor

P. Mich. XIV 676 is also instructive. The text, like the previous one, contains an *epikrisis* document. Many dead emperors feature in this text, the earliest one being Nero. Six of them are referred to as *theos*: Vespasian (l. 4), Trajan (l. 7), Antoninus Pius (ll. 8, 16), Commodus (ll. 9, 17), Caracalla (l. 10, in an attempt to avoid direct mentioning of Elagabal), and Severus Alexander (l. 18). Two emperors, Nero (l. 12) and Domitian (l. 14), are mentioned without *theos* and one of them, Elagabal, has been avoided, since his memory had been condemned.³⁶ This is striking, since Nero and Domitian are mentioned, although their memories had been condemned as well. This may have to do with the chronological distance, the reigns of Nero and Domitian being part of a distant past, while the reign of Elagabal was more recent. Concomitantly, the way of dealing with dead emperors in the third century may have become stricter. Whereas imperial condemnations of previous times had not yet been practiced in papyri, the fact that they had in the third century may account for their observance and borrowing by (later) third century scribes. So, when Elagabal's memory was condemned, his name was not allowed to appear in official documents anymore. This would account for the periphrastic description of his reign.

All in all, the conclusion that should be drawn from papyrus texts concerning deification of emperors, is a negative one: papyri do not really contribute to this matter. Apart from some exceptions, the wording *theos* in most cases reflects that an emperor was deified. Since *theos* was not always added, it seems right to conclude that, if a dead and deified emperor was concerned, *theos* could be used when a scribe wanted to do so, but that there were no official prescriptions for that. This might sound not very striking, but it is interesting when imperial deification in papyri is compared to *damnatio memoriae* in papyri. Both imperial deification and imperial damnation occurred during the whole principate, but *damnatio memoriae* only occurs in papyri from the third century, whereas the use of *theos* referring to emperors appears in papyrus texts right from the start of Roman rule in Egypt. This implies that *damnatio* and *consecratio* in papyri cannot be considered as each other's equivalent opposites, the one negative, the other positive. The goals for applying either of them were different. Erasing imperial names and titles in papyri was carried out only in specific political

Διομιτ[τ]ιανού wird abgelehnt', A. Martin, *Chronique d'Égypte* 60 (1985), p. 170. O.Cair. 76, 4, from A.D. 60, restores Θεοῦ Νερῶνος. I do not agree with this restoration.

³⁶ The formula used to refer to the reign of Elagabal is l. 10: τ[ο] ε (ἐτει) τῆς μετὰ θεὸν Σε[ου] ἡρὸν Ἀντωνίνον βασιλείας.

circumstances, whereas the use of *theos* has a more ‘timeless’ character, and would often concern emperors from a further past. As a way of dealing with deceased predecessors, neither *damnatio memoriae* nor *consecratio* was uncommon. But these methods may have become a more prominent feature of the legitimization of imperial power programme in the third century A.D. At least, this is suggested by the occurrence of *damnatio memoriae* in third century papyri. Unfortunately, the use of *theos*, indicating consecration, is too widespread in time to be of help in corroborating this hypothesis. But at least the occurrence of *theos* in papyri reflects, how inconclusive it may be, the awareness of godly – if dead – emperors. Dealing carefully with dead emperors was part of the Roman imperial power legitimization programme, and the fact that deified emperors are reflected in papyri is therefore meaningful for our understanding of how the imperial cult was part of the representation of Roman imperial power in Egypt.

The impact of the imperial cult in Roman Egypt

It is clear that papyrus documents are an interesting source for the Roman imperial cult in Egypt. Papyri make the imperial cult visible to us in words, sometimes referring to concrete aspects of the cult (temples, images etc.), sometimes reflecting ideological policy – if the use of words like *theos* and *theios* may be taken as such. Many things remain speculative, but that is just a consequence of the character of papyrus texts. Still, the cumulation of all the different aspects of the imperial cult provides us with unique information. The matters discussed cover only a few of the many aspects of the Roman imperial cult, but nevertheless allow the following observations to be made.

To begin with, the Roman imperial cult was visible for the inhabitants of Egypt, both by means of buildings and by their decoration with imperial images. Beside this visibility, the imperial cult was something that had an ‘involving impact’. The yearly or regular celebration of imperial days, for example the days of imperial accessions, probably had a unifying effect.³⁷ People from all over the province would be invited to celebrate.

³⁷ There were many other occasions on which ‘national holidays’ were celebrated. People would have had the feeling that they really participated in the celebration of important events in the life of their ruler. These days were called *hemeraí sebastai*. On *hemeraí sebastai* in Egypt and papyrus documents see: W.F. Snyder, ‘Ἡμέραι Σεβασταί’, *Aegyptus* 18 (1938), 197-233. Id., ‘Progress Report on the Ἡμέραι Σεβασταί’, *Aegyptus* 44 (1964), 145-169.

Then, as it comes to religious connotations, which are also recognizable in the imperial cult, one may ask whether the different aspects of the imperial cult contributed to an emphasis on divinity of the emperor. This is a difficult and complex question, and actually it is not really what matters here. The language with which the imperial cult comes forward in papyrus documents can sometimes be placed in a religious register, for instance, when dead emperors are called *theos*. The modern interpretation of the meaning of *theios* as 'imperial' may be not totally wrong, but reflects our deficiency in converting the ancients' concept of 'divinity'. The consequence of this is not necessarily that the emperor was identified as a god. In fact, this may have been experienced differently by Egyptians and Romans, and may have depended on whether the emperor was dead or alive. But for these matters papyri do not offer conclusive evidence.

In conclusion, the Roman imperial cult in Egypt was acceptable for the Egyptians, because it made the Roman emperor visible in a visual programme that was understandable for them and in which they could participate actively. It did not overrule or replace Egyptian religious traditions and this was not what it meant to do. It was a well chosen means of communicating Roman imperial power. It was a kind of binding factor, an institution in which both parties were able to express themselves, although each party for its own purpose. The Roman imperial cult in Egypt is one of the examples in which the Romans showed their virtuous self-representation, by making their subjects participants of the Roman way. In terms of representation of imperial power one can conclude that the emperor may have been far away geographically, but ideologically he was very present in Egypt, among other things through the imperial cult.

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THE IMAGE OF AN EMPEROR IN TROUBLE
(LEGIMITATION AND REPRESENTATION OF POWER BY
CARACALLA)

INGE MENNEN

Introduction

After their father Septimius Severus died in AD 211, Caracalla and Geta became emperors of the Roman Empire. It is no secret that the brothers could not get along and their discord resulted in Caracalla murdering Geta in AD 212. From that moment, Caracalla was sole emperor of the Empire and in search for a good image to legitimize his position and to shed the image of a brother killer.

Nowadays, Caracalla is being looked upon as a true soldier emperor. Many modern scholars still assume that the emperor, in legitimizing his position, focused solely on military aspects. In this article I will discuss whether this assumption is correct.

I will examine various expressions of imperial representation by Caracalla to see to what extent they contain military, dynastic and religious aspects. Before I move on to this examination, I will say something about legitimation and representation of power by Roman emperors in general. Why was legitimation so important and in what kind of sources can we find representation of imperial power? I will also briefly deal with the way Septimius Severus legitimized his position, in order to compare the imperial representation of father and son.

Every new Roman emperor had to convince three groups that his claim for power was appropriate and obvious: the senate, the army and the people. If the newcomer could not convince those groups, he ran the risk of being dethroned, which only too often resulted in his death. One way to ‘convince’ them was by handing out money (*donativa*) to the soldiers, medallions to the elite, or food to the people of Rome, or by organizing games for them, yet these gifts only had a short-term effect. As soon as the emperor stopped handing out gifts, he was no longer assured of the loyalty of his subjects.

Another way to legitimize his position, one that was directed more at long-term loyalty, was more personal. Emperors addressed different messages to the various groups to create a certain image of themselves. This image

had to appeal to at least one, and preferably more, of the groups and constituted the representation of the power of the emperor.

Within this image, the emperor could emphasize three aspects: military aspects (the emperor showed that he was a good general, who could lead the army to victory), dynastic aspects (the emperor emphasized that he descended from a respected dynasty or that his predecessor chose him as successor by adopting him) and religious aspects (the emperor claimed that he ruled under the auspices of one or more gods or heroes. This could even lead to an emperor identifying himself with a certain god or hero).¹ Usually, all these aspects appear in the representation of power of an emperor, yet sometimes an emperor emphasized one aspect more than the others, by choice or out of necessity to compensate for certain deficiencies.

These messages of emperors can be found in numismatic sources (coin portraits, themes on reverses, edge inscriptions), archaeological material (appearance and location of imperial buildings) and inscriptions and papyri (particularly in the choice of titles in salutations). Historiographical sources can tell us something about how the emperor was looked upon by contemporaries, but one must keep in mind that these authors had an elite point of view and were often not very objective, because they knew the emperor, which influenced their view in a positive or negative way. On the other hand, these sources can be very useful to supplement the other sources.

Septimius Severus

Before I will discuss the legitimation of Caracalla during his sole reign, it is necessary to take a brief look at how his father Septimius Severus legitimized his position.² Septimius Severus was one of four men who seized imperial power after Pertinax' death in AD 193 and he was not the most likely candidate to end up as sole ruler of the Roman Empire. He was not related to Pertinax or his Antonine predecessors and was not favoured by the senate. But against all expectations, he managed to defeat each of his rivals by means of military successes and crafty political games. Even during these civil wars, Septimius Severus realized that he needed a more solid basis for his emperorship. He created the impression that he was not so much eager to

¹ A well-known example is Commodus, who identified himself with Hercules. For a recent study on this subject see: O.J. Hekster, *Commodus. An emperor at the crossroads* (Amsterdam 2002).

² In the discussion I will deal with the sources that appeared during Caracalla's sole reign only. Sources that date from his joint rule with Septimius Severus are so closely connected to the image of his father that they probably tell us more about Septimius Severus than about Caracalla.

become the new emperor, but as to be Pertinax' avenger and to restore peace and quiet in Rome.³ He even assumed the name 'Pertinax' and deified his predecessor. In this way, he still managed to create a link between himself and Pertinax, who had been very popular among many soldiers, and, more probably, officers and military cadre, because he had been one of Marcus Aurelius most able commanders. While still fighting for his position, Septimius Severus put much emphasis on his image as a good general. Portraits of these first years of his reign are far from idealized and show the emperor with a short haircut, typical for soldiers, and with military clothes. His first coins mainly express traditional military themes, for example Victoria, Mars and captives in chains. Yet no specific victories over his rivals are mentioned. Much emphasis was put on peace and the safety of the Roman people with coins that show Pax Augusti and Mars Pacator. The only military victory that was specifically mentioned was the one over the Parthians, who were being punished by Septimius Severus for supporting his rival Pescennius Niger. The decision to erect a triumphal arch at the Forum Romanum might have been taken in this period, since the inscription on the arch uses the title *Parthicus Arabicus et Parthicus Adiabenicus*. This title appears on coins only until AD 196 and it is hardly found on inscriptions after AD 198, when it was replaced by the more general title *Parthicus Maximus* after Septimius Severus' second victory on the Parthians.

By the time Septimius Severus had eliminated all his rivals except Clodius Albinus in AD 195, the emperor claimed that he had been adopted by Marcus Aurelius. From that moment on, he changed tactics. While the dynastic references in the representation of his power started to increase, the military references decreased. After Septimius Severus had defeated Albinus and thus ended the civil wars in the Empire, he apparently wanted to make his people forget about his former military image. He continued to connect himself and his family with his Antonine predecessors, especially Marcus Aurelius, who was a perfect example of a 'good' emperor. By changing his eldest son's name to Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, by portraying himself and his sons with the luxuriant, curly hairstyle of the Antonines and by constantly calling himself the son of Marcus Aurelius (*divi Marci Pii filius*), Septimius Severus hammered it into the minds of his subjects: he was the right person to succeed the Antonine emperors.

As soon as his position seemed secure, Septimius Severus dared to go even further: he started to draw attention to his own family. It was obvious

³ Herodian 2.14.3.

that he wanted his sons to succeed him as emperors. He put a lot of effort into stressing his role as the founder of a new, successful dynasty: the Severan dynasty. This development is particularly noticeable on the coins of this period. As early as AD 195, a coin shows a portrait of Septimius Severus on one side and a portrait of Caracalla with the legend “SEVERI AUG[USTI] PII F[ILII]” on the other.⁴ After Caracalla had been proclaimed *caesar*, coins with his own portrait were spread. Some of Septimius Severus’ coins depict Geta with the legend “IMPERII FELICITAS”.⁵ Besides these examples, there were a lot of other coins that show various members of the imperial family. One type even shows all the members of the family: Septimius Severus on the obverse, Julia Domna between her two sons with the legend “FELICITAS SAECULI” on the reverse.⁶

From about AD 200-201 the titles *Fundator Pacis* and *Restitutor Urbis* appeared on coins. The former obviously referred to Septimius Severus’ role as peacemaker, which was strengthened by his restoration of the Temple of Peace in Rome. *Restitutor Urbis* probably referred to his many restorations of important Roman buildings as well. The message was clear: the situation in Rome was restored by Septimius Severus. Everything would be as it had been in the old days when good emperors ruled the Empire.

The *Septizodium* was one of the new buildings the emperor erected in the city. Although it totally disappeared in the 16th century,⁷ fragments of the *Forma Urbis Romae* and recent excavations show that it was a large, free-standing façade consisting of three levels with niches. According to Ammianus Marcellinus, it was a *nymphaeum* and recent studies confirm the presence of water.⁸ A statue of Septimius Severus was presumably placed in the middle of the *Septizodium*. There were probably also statues of Julia Domna, Caracalla and Geta and there may have been statues of the seven gods of the planets, which gave the building its name. For visitors of the city, who traveled over the Via Appia, it was the first thing they would see: an imperial billboard, a monumental demonstration of the presence of the emperor and his family. Through the inscription it can be deduced that the building was consecrated by Septimius Severus in AD 203, a year before the

⁴ *BMCRE* V, 43, †.

⁵ *BMCRE* V, 56, no. 221 (pl. 10.16)

⁶ *BMCRE* V, 203, no. 255 (pl. 33.6)

⁷ When it was pulled down by pope Sixtus V for the sake of the marble. See for a recent study on the *Septizodium*: Ch. Gorrie, ‘The *Septizodium* of Septimius Severus revisited: the monument in its historical and urban context’, *Latomus* 60 (2001), 653-670.

⁸ Ammianus Marcellinus 15.7.3; Gorrie 2001, op.cit. (n.), 657.

celebration of the *Ludi Saeculares*, which offered a great opportunity to show the imperial family, the new buildings and the many restorations to many people from all over the Empire.

Meanwhile, Septimius Severus was trying to strengthen his dynasty by arranging a marriage between Caracalla and the daughter of Plautianus, the powerful *praefectus praetorio*. Unfortunately he had little success. Caracalla hated Plautianus and his daughter Plautilla and their marriage remained childless.

During the rest of his reign Septimius Severus continued to emphasize the Severan dynasty. References to the Antonines and other respected predecessors never entirely disappeared either. Military references were limited to traditional reverses on coins in periods of war, and to the assumption of the honorary title *Britannicus (Maximus)* at the end of his life.

Some religious aspects can be found in Septimius Severus' representation of power, but to a lesser extent than dynastic and military aspects. There are scholars who claim that, in his portraits, Septimius Severus wanted to identify himself with the god Serapis. I agree with Drora Baharal that this assumption is at the very least far-fetched.⁹ I believe that, as far as Septimius Severus referred to gods, he did this to refer to his African origin, as I will argue below, or to underline the piety (*pietas*) of the imperial family, and was thus combining religious references with dynastic ones.

Caracalla's imperial representation: military aspects

Caracalla's image as a soldier emperor is hardly surprising. According to the historiographical sources, Caracalla spent a lot of time and money on the military. These sources suggest that he fancied it so much that he behaved like a common soldier among soldiers and wanted them to call him comrade (συστρατιώτης) instead of emperor (βασιλεύς).¹⁰

Most of the research on Caracalla focuses on his portraits. Images of a youthful Caracalla portray him in the Antonine tradition.¹¹ The older he gets,

⁹ D. Baharal, 'Victory of propaganda. The dynastic aspect of the imperial propaganda of the Severi: the literary and archaeological evidence', in: *Tameo Archaialogikon Poron kai Apallotrioseon 193-235*, BAR International series 657 (Oxford 1996), 91.

¹⁰ Cassius Dio (translation E. Cary, Loeb edition), 78.3.1-2; 78.9.1; 78.16.7; 78.24.1; Herodian 4.4.7-8; 4.7.4-7; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Caracalla*, 2.8; 5.4.

¹¹ For studies of portraits of Caracalla during his joint rule with Septimius Severus see H.B. Wiggers – M. Wegner, *Caracalla bis Balbinus. Das römische Herrscherbild, III. Abteilung Band 1* (Berlin 1971), 17-27; Baharal 1996, op.cit. (n.), 31-33.

the less his portraits show Antonine influences. The typical luxuriant Antonine hairstyle is exchanged for a short, curly hairdo. Typical also is the increasingly serious facial expression. Portraits of Caracalla dating from his sole ruler period lack the typical Antonine hairstyle, but progressively emphasize a serious expression and a frown on his forehead. In comparison to his earlier portraits, the sole ruler type is somewhat intimidating. Much has been written about Caracalla's gruff expression. For a long time scholars considered this expression as the confirmation of the cruel character of the emperor, as described in the historiographical sources.¹² Assuming the emperor would at least have had to approve of the way he was portrayed, what reason could Caracalla have possibly had to portray himself like a cruel man? During the last decade, scholars have tried to come up with other possible explanations for the frown on Caracalla's face. Anne-Marie Leander Touati compared the facial expression of Caracalla to the expressions of soldiers at the Trajan frieze on the Arch of Constantine and detected striking iconographical similarities.¹³ The faces of the soldiers on this frieze also showed contorted muscles, particularly on the forehead. So even though this tradition cannot be found within the imperial portraiture of the second century, it can be seen within the historical reliefs. Leander Touati deduces from this that Caracalla's portrait was meant to express military virtue, *virtus*, originating from the artistic tradition within Roman state relief.¹⁴ She suggests that this type is not so much realistic in the sense that the emperor was depicted the way he really looked, but that one should consider it in contrast with the idealism within the Antonine tradition, in which no traces of emotion and age were visible.¹⁵ Imperial portraits of the third century show a clear influence of the new style Caracalla introduced.¹⁶ Not only the look on his face links this portrait type to the military, Caracalla also wears a military cloak (*paludamentum*) in many of the portraits. His short haircut is also typical for soldiers.

¹² Cassius Dio 78.6.1a; 78.10.2; Herodian 4.3.3-4; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Caracalla*, 2.1; 2.3; 9.3; 11.5.

¹³ See A.M. Leander Touati, 'Portrait and historical relief. Some remarks on the meaning of Caracalla's sole ruler portrait', in: A.M. Leander Touati et al. (eds.), *Munuscula Romana. Papers at a conference in Lund (October 1-2, 1988) in celebration of the re-opening of the Swedish Institute in Rome* (Stockholm 1991), 117-131.

¹⁴ Leander Touati 1991, op.cit. (n.), 127.

¹⁵ Leander Touati 1991, op.cit. (n.), 124.

¹⁶ S. Wood, 'Subject and artist: Studies in Roman portraiture of the Third Century', *American Journal of Archaeology* 85 (1981), 59-68; 65-68.

Many of the reverses of the coins struck by Caracalla during his sole reign show traditional military themes. This is not surprising, since Caracalla undertook several military campaigns. The victory over the Germanic people was celebrated with coins that depicted Victoria with laurel wreath, Mars with captives and Caracalla as *triumphator* in a *quadriga*. Military themes kept occurring abundantly: Victoria inscribing a shield, the *adlocutio*-type on which the emperor addresses his troops, Caracalla on a horse throwing a javelin to an enemy, Fides with a standard, Pax as indicator of the end of a war, the emperor accompanied by Mars and Victoria, Caracalla crowned by Victoria etc. These were all traditional themes, which had occurred on coins since the days of Augustus. So Caracalla showed no innovation in his coins as far as military themes were concerned.

In AD 212-213, the combination *Parthicus Maximus Britannicus Maximus* appeared in many inscriptions and kept occurring until AD 216. It was also used on Alexandrian coins, but cannot be found on Roman coins.¹⁷ The use of *Parthicus Maximus* is striking, since it referred to the victory over the Parthians in AD 198, a victory gained by Septimius Severus. The combination of titles probably appeared for the first time in AD 211, before Geta was killed by Caracalla. It might have been a way of convincing the soldiers that the latter was more suited to succeed Septimius Severus than Geta was. According to the historiographical sources, Caracalla received the title *Parthicus Maximus* in AD 216.¹⁸ From AD 213 onwards, the title *Germanicus Maximus* was added to Caracalla's imperial titles. It was used until his death in AD 217.

According to a study by Janet DeLaine, Caracalla's *thermae* at Rome also contained some military references. Fragments of the frieze above the portico at the *palaestra* show two armed men. DeLaine identifies them as soldiers. On the basis of this, she suggests that the frieze might have shown a military campaign and she compares this relief to the ones on the pillars of Trajanus and Marcus Aurelius.¹⁹ The capitals of the portico of the *palaestra* depict eagles and winged thunderbolts, which also occurred on the shields of

¹⁷ P. Kneissl, *Die Siegestitulatur der römischen Kaiser. Untersuchungen zu den Siegerbeinamen des ersten und zweiten Jahrhunderts* (Göttingen 1969), 157-159; 226-227; K. Wittwer, *Kaiser und Heer im Spiegel des Reichsmünzen: Untersuchungen zu den militärpolitischen Prägungen in der Zeit von Nerva bis Caracalla* (Tübingen 1986), 122.

¹⁸ Herodian mentions that the title *Parthicus* was the main motive for Caracalla's Parthian expedition (4.10.1); see also Herodian 4.11.8.

¹⁹ See J. DeLaine, *The baths of Caracalla. A study in the design, construction, and economics of large-scale building projects in imperial Rome*. *Journal of Roman Archaeology Suppl.* 25 (Portsmouth 1997), 83.

soldiers on the column of Trajanus. Caution is required: it is possible that the eagles and thunderbolts refer to Jupiter. However, the similarity to the military reliefs on the columns of Trajanus and Marcus Aurelius is conspicuous and it might very well be possible that Caracalla refers to his military *virtus* here.

In conclusion: military images and legends are one of the dominant aspects of Caracalla's imperial representation.

Dynastic aspects

While discussing dynastic aspects in the representation and legitimation of imperial power by Caracalla, one important aspect cannot be ignored. By killing his brother and his own wife, who had left him no heirs, Caracalla personally ruined the Severan dynasty. Since his father had put much emphasis on the dynastic aspect, Caracalla had to put much effort at making the people forget about it. This is probably why Caracalla ordered a *damnatio memoriae* for Geta and Plautilla. The *damnatio memoriae* of Geta especially was very drastic. His portrait was scratched off coins and some coins with his portrait were even melted down.²⁰ The portraits and names of Geta and Plautilla were, in all probability, also removed from the relief and inscription on the so-called Porta Argentariorum.²¹ Cassius Dio mentions that saying or writing Geta's name became a capital offence.²² This is probably why his name was even removed from papyri and inscriptions.²³ Instead of reminding everyone of his role in the Severan dynasty, Caracalla did everything in his power to make everyone forget about the dynasty. The only family members he refers to are the ones whose existence he cannot deny: his mother and father. However, even in these references a change is visible. Julia Domna was no longer referred to as mother of Caracalla and Geta, but

²⁰ See Cassius Dio 78.12.6. For an example of the removal of the portrait of Geta from coins, see E.R. Varner, *From Caligula to Constantine: tyranny and transformation in Roman portraiture* (Atlanta 2000), cat. 46; Collection of the American Numismatic Society (1944.100.48080).

²¹ D.E.L. Haynes and P.E.D. Hirst, *Porta Argentariorum* (London 1939), 6.

²² Cassius Dio 78.12.5.

²³ Examples of the removal of Geta from inscriptions are *CIL* VI 1033 = *ILS* 425 (Arch of Septimius Severus, Rome); *CIL* VI 1035 = *ILS* 426 (Porta Argentariorum, Rome); *ILS* 458-460. Examples in papyri are *P. Oxy.* I 56; *BGU* XI 2101; *BGU* XIII 2226. I owe thanks to Janneke de Jong, who was so kind to show me these papyri.

just as mother of Caracalla, as an unsubtle alteration of the inscription on the Porta Argentariorum shows.²⁴

There are other discontinuities between Septimius Severus and Caracalla. As mentioned above, the portraits of Caracalla, that appear during his sole reign, lack the references to the Antonine portraits, which could be found in portraits of a young Caracalla. The idealism, which is still visible within the portraits of Septimius Severus, made way for a realistic style, which was copied later on in the third century. Caracalla broke drastically with a tradition that had existed for many decades and that his father had carefully carried on. In this respect, one could speak of an almost anti-dynastic reaction. With regard to his portraits, Caracalla did not continue the tradition of his father.

Whereas Septimius Severus refers to the Antonines regularly, Caracalla does not refer to them anymore. On the contrary, the historiographical sources mention that he had family members of Marcus Aurelius killed.²⁵

Caracalla's baths in Rome were situated near the *Septizodium*, the most striking building of Septimius Severus. If this location was chosen intentionally, Caracalla associated himself with his father in his building policy. On the other hand, the *thermae* covered a large area and Caracalla may not have had an alternative location. Besides, stamps on the bricks of the baths show that the construction started in AD 212.²⁶ Before the construction started, a design had to be made, land had to be obtained and cleared for building and foundations had to be placed. That would mean that the project had probably started in AD 211 or even earlier. The possibility that the project had already been planned during the reign of Septimius Severus can certainly not be ruled out.

The *Historia Augusta* mentions a portico, which Caracalla should have erected in honour of his father. However, the location is not mentioned and no remains of such a building have been found, so the existence of this portico is questionable.²⁷

While the reverses of the coins struck by Septimius Severus showed many references to the Severan dynasty, the reverses of the coins struck by Caracalla showed none.

²⁴ "IULIAE AUG MATRI AUGG" was obviously changed into "IULIAE AUG MATRI AUG N". See *CIL* VI 1035 = *ILS* 426.

²⁵ Cassius Dio 78.16.6a; Herodian 4.6.3; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Caracalla*, 3.8.

²⁶ DeLaine 1997, op.cit. (n.), 15.

²⁷ *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Severus*, 21.12; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Caracalla*, 9.6. See also: E.M. Steinby (ed.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae* (Roma 1993-2000), IV, 150.

About the same time Caracalla adopted the titles *Parthicus Maximus* *Britannicus Maximus*, the title *Severus* was used in inscriptions and papyri. Some papyri indicate that the emperor started to use this name before Geta died. So it might have been used to make clear that his claim to the emperorship was to be preferred to Geta's.²⁸ No coins were found with this name on it. References to Septimius Severus seem to have been available mainly until AD 211, when Geta was still alive.

Religious aspects

Concerning religious aspects in the representation of power of Caracalla, the most striking are the various coins which show Eastern gods. The rise of oriental gods in the West is a general development, which can be observed by the end of the second and the beginning of the third centuries. So the appearance of these gods on Roman coins in itself is not very conspicuous; the fact that Eastern gods hardly occur on coins of Septimius Severus, on the other hand, is.

On the Roman coins struck by Septimius Severus only a few oriental gods occur. Depicting Africa with headgear of elephant skin obviously refers to Septimius Severus' African origin.²⁹ The type was struck in AD 194, just after he became emperor, but also in AD 207, when it might have referred to a journey to Africa.

At the beginning of his reign, many coins occur depicting Hercules and Liber as guardians of Leptis Magna and thus of Septimius Severus. The legends "LIBERO PATRI," "HERCULI DEFENS[ORI]" and "DIS AUSPICIB[US]" confirm their role as patrons of the city. They are also depicted on coins in 204 in connection with the *Ludi Saeculares*, as the legend "LUD[OS] SAEC[ULARES] FEC[UNDOS]" makes clear.³⁰ According to Cassius Dio, Septimius Severus built a temple for these gods.³¹

There are also a few coins that show Sol.³² A reverse of AD 197 with Sol and Aurora and Tellus is very similar to a medallion of Commodus of

²⁸ Kneissl 1969, op.cit. (n.), 158-159.

²⁹ *BMCRE* V, 127, no. 504 (pl.22.4 rev.)

³⁰ *BMCRE* V, 29, no. 60 (pl. 6.20): Liber Pater; *BMCRE* V, 55, no. 218 (pl. 10.15): Hercules Defensor; *BMCRE* V, 29, no. 58 (pl. 6.18): Dis Auspicibus; *BMCRE* V, 324, no. 843 (pl. 50.12): Ludi Saeculares.

³¹ Cassius Dio 77.16.3.

³² For example *BMCRE* V, 57, no. 227 (pl. 10.20): Sol with whip; *BMCRE* V, 57, 226 (pl.10.19): Sol, Aurora and Tellus.

AD 190-191. According to Marianne Bergmann it should be connected to the Golden Age, which Commodus officially declared during the last years of his reign.³³ It may refer to a promise of a Golden Age, made by Septimius Severus, but it might also just refer to the campaigns in the East or to the emperor's connection with the sun god, while he was married to the daughter of the priest of the sun god of Emesa. It is quite different from another reverse with Sol, which shows the god standing, holding a whip. It should be noted that, although Sol appears on reverses of coins of Septimius Severus, the god occurs far more often on coins of Caracalla.

Dea Caelestis with the legend "INDULGENTIA AUGG IN CARTH[AGINEM]" is probably connected with an improvement of the water supply at Carthage in AD 203-204.³⁴ Coins with Aesculapius in AD 207 may point at an illness of Septimius Severus.³⁵ Coins with a portrait of Caracalla, dating from his joint rule with his father, show the same gods.

The coins that were struck during the first years of Caracalla's sole reign do not differ very much from the traditional types that Septimius Severus used. On these coins, both Hercules and Jupiter appear a few times. Mars probably appears in connection with the victory over the Germanic people.³⁶

It is striking that Serapis appeared on many coins.³⁷ The god frequently appears on coins from AD 212 until Caracalla's last coins in 217 AD. Although the historiographical sources mention that Septimius Severus was a fervent devotee of Serapis, no coins depicting this god have been found with a portrait of Septimius Severus on the obverse.³⁸ It is possible that Septimius Severus did strike coins depicting Serapis and that we simply have not found them yet. However, if many coins with Serapis had existed, it is very unlikely that none of them survived.

From AD 214 onwards, many reverses with religious themes appear. This is the last year in which Hercules is depicted. Besides Jupiter and Serapis, there are several other religious types: Aesculapius frequently occurs in AD 214-215, accompanied by Telesphorus, which was probably just an indicator that the emperor suffered from diseases. Sol appears with a

³³ Cassius Dio 73.15.6; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Commodus*, 14.3; M. Bergmann, *Die Strahlen der Herrscher. Theomorphes Herrscherbild und politische Symbolik im Hellenismus und der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Mainz 1998), 252; see also: Hekster 2000, op.cit. (n.1), 101 (n.69).

³⁴ *BMCRE* V, 334, no. 830 (pl. 50.1).

³⁵ *BMCRE* V, 348, no. 850 (pl. 51.7).

³⁶ *BMCRE* V, 436, no. 36 (pl. 68.10): Hercules; *BMCRE* V, 436, no.34 (pl. 68.9): Jupiter; *BMCRE* V, 472, no.235 (pl. 74.13): Mars.

³⁷ *BMCRE* V, 437, no. 44 (pl. 68.12).

³⁸ See *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Severus*, 17.4; Ammianus Marcellinus 22.16.14.

globe and, on another type, in a *quadriga*. His presence might refer to Caracalla's traveling to the East in AD 214.³⁹

Very often coins depict a man wearing a *polos*, sitting on a throne, with Cerberus sitting next to him. He is usually identified as Pluto.⁴⁰ It is possible that the man should be identified as Serapis, who was also connected to the underworld and was sometimes accompanied by the hell-hound. The presence of Serapis on coins of Caracalla was after all not unique. On the other hand, it is rather difficult to explain the presence of Serapis in his role as king of the underworld. What kind of message could Caracalla have had in mind? Should it be seen as just a reference to a popular Eastern god or should we look for a deeper meaning? A variation on the type of Pluto with Cerberus shows a figure sitting on a throne and wearing a *polos* on his head, accompanied by what seems to be the Minotaur. The sitting figure has therefore been identified as Minos, but an identification as Serapis might be more logical. Not many examples of this type have been found.⁴¹

There is also an occurrence of a woman in a carriage, who is usually identified as Diana (Luna) Lucifera, probably a counterpart to Sol/Apollo.⁴² It remains unclear what kind of role the moon cult had in Caracalla's life, but it is certain that it meant something to him: the emperor was on his way to the temple of a moon god at Carrhae, when he was murdered in AD 217.⁴³ Luna was apparently important to the emperor during his sole reign, since many coins with this reverse are found, dating from AD 215 until AD 217. The goddess did occur on coins before, yet was used mainly on coins of empresses. There are coins with a portrait of Julia Domna and Plautilla that show Diana Lucifera on the reverse and which date from the reign of Septimius Severus.

There is also a coin which shows the goddess Isis kneeling before Caracalla and offering an ear of corn, while the emperor keeps a crocodile

³⁹ *BMCRE* V, 448, * and *BMCRE* V, 451, no. 103 (pl. 70.7): Aesculapius; *BMCRE* V, 457, no. 141 (pl. 71.4): Sol in *quadriga*.

⁴⁰ Usually, the coin legend on the reverse refers to the scene, which is depicted. Unfortunately, the legends on the reverses of the coins of Caracalla record a part of the titles of the emperor instead, which makes identification of the depicted figures sometimes difficult.

⁴¹ *BMCRE* V, 449, no. 96 (pl. 70.1): Pluto and Cerberus; *BMCRE* V, 454, no. 122 (pl. 70.16): Minos and Minotaurus.

⁴² *BMCRE* V, 486, no. 283 (pl. 76.12 rev.) Although much can be said about the dualistic connection between Diana/Luna and Apollo/Sol, it would be going too far to deal with it in this article.

⁴³ Herodian 4.13.3; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*, *Caracalla*, 6.6.

under control. This type probably dates from AD 215 and most probably refers to the emperor's visit to Alexandria.⁴⁴

Typical also is the fact that Caracalla was depicted in military outfit, sacrificing in front of the temple of Vesta, on coins of AD 214-215.⁴⁵ The cult of Vesta was usually reserved for empresses. It can even be considered provocative, if what Cassius Dio tells us is true: he mentions that Caracalla killed four Vestal virgins and even raped one of them.⁴⁶ Only a few examples of this type have been found.

Not only the coins indicate a certain fascination of Caracalla for the, especially Eastern, gods. Epigraphic evidence shows that Caracalla built a temple for Serapis at Rome. This is supported by the *Historia Augusta*, which also mentions that he built temples for Isis.⁴⁷

The historiographical sources tell us that Caracalla did not want to be called by the name Hercules or by the name of any other god, although he did compare his prowess to that of Hercules and his method of driving to that of the Sun god.⁴⁸ According to the historiographical sources, Caracalla identified himself with Alexander the Great, but the exact interpretation of this Alexander imitation remains unclear, because there is not much evidence for it.⁴⁹ Herodian mentions portraits of Caracalla that suggested a connection between the emperor and Alexander the Great. It remains unclear what the author meant. No such portraits have been found.

Cassius Dio tells us that Caracalla invoked the help of spirits and of the gods, because he was sick, in both body and mind.⁵⁰ However, "although he paid homage to all the more prominent ones", none of the gods gave any response. He continues by saying that:

⁴⁴ *BMCRE* V 487, no. 287 (pl. 76.8).

⁴⁵ *BMCRE* V 450, no. 101 (pl. 70.5).

⁴⁶ Cassius Dio 78.16.1-3; Herodian also mentions that Caracalla ordered the burial alive of some Vestal virgins (Herodian 4.6.4).

⁴⁷ See *CIL* VI 570; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Caracalla*, 9.10-11; Steinby 1993-2000, op.cit. (n.27), IV, 302-303.

⁴⁸ Cassius Dio 78.5.1; 78.10.3; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Caracalla*, 5.5; 5.9.

⁴⁹ There are two *bracteae* of the same size and weight that show on the obverse respectively a bust of Caracalla and a bust of Alexander (*BMCRE* V, 466, nos. 201-202 [pl. 73.11-12]). This is the only Roman numismatic evidence for a connection between Caracalla and Alexander the Great. No further evidence is found as far as I know. For the Alexander imitation in the historiographical sources see: Cassius Dio 78.7-8; Herodian 4.8.1-2; *Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Caracalla*, 2.1-3

⁵⁰ Cassius Dio 78.15.3.

He received no help from Apollo Grannus, nor yet from Aesculapius or Serapis, in spite of his many supplications and his unwearying persistence. For even while abroad he sent to them prayers, sacrifices and votive offerings, and many couriers ran hither and thither every day carrying something of this kind; and he also went to them himself, hoping to prevail by appearing in person, and did all that devotees are want to do; but he obtained nothing that contributed to health.⁵¹

According to Cassius Dio, Caracalla was “claiming to be the most pious of all mankind”.⁵² Although Dio was definitely not a friend of Caracalla and this account of the way in which Caracalla acted was probably exaggerated, the numismatic evidence especially indicates that there may have been an element of truth in this story. The fact that many gods occur on his coins, more than once accompanied by the emperor himself, does indicate that Caracalla held the relationship between himself and the gods in high regard.

Although Caracalla, in legitimizing his position, put much emphasis on military aspects, this does not mean that the emperor totally ignored religious aspects. The archaeological and numismatic evidence, as well as the historiographical sources, show that gods played a considerable role in the representation of his power. Apparently, the relationship with these, especially Eastern, gods was important to Caracalla. The motive for his interest remains unclear. It is possible that the emperor just needed the help of these gods, because he was mentally or physically ill. However, his sudden interest in the Eastern gods can also be a sign of the changing state of mind concerning Eastern gods in the third century. It is even possible that it was meant as a clear break with the legitimization Septimius Severus came up with. A break that is also visible in the dynastic aspects.

While Septimius Severus put much emphasis on his role as the founding father of the Severan dynasty, Caracalla had no reason to underline his position as a member of this family. On the contrary, the total lack of dynastic representation and the *damnatio memoriae* of Geta and Plautilla is logical, considering the fact that Caracalla, by killing his brother and wife after Septimius Severus' death, personally ruined the Severan dynasty. Since there was no future for this dynasty, Caracalla could not build on the image of his father and it became necessary for him to find another way to legitimize his position.

When Caracalla was murdered in AD 217, it appeared as if he was still looking for an appropriate image and an alternative for the Severan dynastic

⁵¹ Cassius Dio 78.15.6-7.

⁵² Cassius Dio 78.16.1

ideology. He was still dividing his attention between military and religious aspects.

Nijmegen, December 2004.

EMPERORSHIP IN A PERIOD OF CRISES.
CHANGES IN EMPEROR WORSHIP, IMPERIAL IDEOLOGY AND
PERCEPTIONS OF IMPERIAL AUTHORITY IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE
IN THE THIRD CENTURY A.D.

LUKAS DE BLOIS

In this paper¹ I would like to argue that during the third century A.D. Roman emperor worship and imperial ideology were moving toward a view of the Roman empire as an organic, hierarchical structure with emperorship at the top, and away from personal merit of governing princes and traditional imperial cult, in a Roman world that came under heavy pressure, in which imperial authority was losing its grip on actual developments and its image of permanent success, but in which provincials nonetheless started to style themselves as *hemeis* and the emperor as “our emperor”, when speaking about the Romans over against foreign enemies like the Persian empire or Northern tribes.

There is no doubt that the third century A.D. was a period of rising tensions, and from about 250 even crisis, in the Roman Empire.² Under the emperor Marcus Aurelius (161-180), whose reign was characterised by epidemics and warfare against invading tribes from the North and the Parthians in the East, prosperity seemed to have come to an end, although this period of problems and tensions was followed by a few decades of recovery, which lasted until about 230. From 230, and even more so from about 250, the Empire got into serious trouble again. In the East an aggressive, dangerous opponent, the new, well-organised Persian kingdom of the Sassanids, had taken the place of the less well-organised, less aggressive Parthian empire. From 230 to 266 the Romans and their allies fought one Persian war after

¹ I owe many thanks to Merton College, Oxford, where I was a visiting research fellow during Hilary Term, 2004, which gave me the opportunity to prepare this paper in excellent Oxford libraries.

² On the third century crisis in the Roman empire see for example G. Alföldy, ‘The Crisis of the Third Century as Seen by Contemporaries’, *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 15 (1974), 98-103 (= Id., *Die Krise des römischen Reiches. Geschichte, Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbetrachtung. Ausgewählte Beiträge* (Stuttgart 1989), 328-333); M. Christol, *L’ empire romain du troisième siècle* (Paris 1997); C. Witschel, *Krise – Rezession – Stagnation? Der Westen des Römischen Reiches im 3. Jahrhundert n.Chr.* (Frankfurt a.M. 1999); J.-M. Carrié – A. Rousselle, *L’ empire romain en mutation des Sévères à Constantin, 192-337* (Paris 1999); L. de Blois, ‘The Crisis of the Third Century AD in the Roman Empire: A Modern Myth?’, in: L. de Blois – J. Rich, *The Transformation of Economic Life under the Roman Empire. Proceedings of the Second Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire, Nottingham, July 4-7, 2001* (Amsterdam 2002), 204-217; D.S. Potter, *The Roman Empire at Bay* (London – New York 2004); A.K. Bowman et alii, *CAH XII*, 2nd ed., Cambridge 2005.

another. In the North previously small Germanic tribes had combined into large, dangerous conglomerates such as Franks, Alamanni, Marcomanni and Goths, who had learnt much from Roman warfare and had become dangerous, able opponents, who repeatedly invaded Roman territory, more intensively so from about 238 in the Balkans and from 253 on the Rhine frontier. Epidemics returned with devastating force from about 250.³ After the death of the last emperor of the Severan house, which had reigned the empire with some success from 193 to 235, there was no longer a generally accepted strong dynasty, so that civil wars between rival armies who all wanted to give the imperial throne to their own generals – if only to lay hands on the returns of the imperial estate – were a constant threat. External and internal warfare brought devastation, death and impoverishment to many regions and put a heavy strain on the hinterlands of the war-zones. Regions that were not affected by warfare and extra requisitions, however, still could prosper in the third century. Such regions were, for example, Britain, Sicily and North Africa.

A sign of rising tensions was the debasement of the imperial coinage.⁴ It had set in already under Commodus, who had to adjust the coinage to the rise of prices and wages that had come about between 160 and 190, as a consequence of the Antonine plague, and under Septimius Severus (193-211), who raised the pay of the soldiers by 50 % in order to attract good recruits in sufficient numbers in times of shrunken populations and higher prices and wages. The debasement of the imperial coinage may have been caused by a lack of plate, decreasing tax returns and – particularly from 253 onward – the decentralisation and enlargement of imperial coin production. Surprisingly until about 274 the debasement of the coinage did not yet result

³ On the effects of the Antonine plague, see D.W. Rathbone, 'Villages, Land and Population in Graeco-Roman Egypt', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 216 (1990), 103-142; R.P. Duncan-Jones, 'The Impact of the Antonine Plague', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 9 (1996), 108-136; C. Bruun, 'The Antonine Plague in Rome and Ostia', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 16 (2003), 426-434. On the plague of about 250-280 see E. Lo Cascio, 'La dissoluzione dell' impero Romano d' Occidente: la spiegazione demografica', in: G. Cacciatores et al. (eds.), *Filosofia e storia della cultura. Studi in onore di Fulvio Tessitore* (Napoli 1997), 168 ff. and Carrié – Rousselle 1999, op.cit. (n.2), 521 ff.

⁴ On the debasement of the coinage see R.F. Bland, 'The Development of Gold and Silver Coin Denominations, A.D. 193-253', in: C.E. King – D.G. Wigg, *Coin Finds and Coin Use in the Roman World. The Thirteenth Oxford Symposium on Coinage and Monetary History*, 25.-27.3.1993 (Berlin 1996), 63-100; in the same volume; D.W. Rathbone, 'Monetisation, not Price-inflation, in Third Century AD Egypt?', in: King – Wigg 1996, op.cit. (this note), 321-339.

in a steep rise in prices. This only happened when the emperor Aurelian gave up the fixed relation between gold and silver coinage, in 274 and thereafter.⁵

Other indications of rising tensions are complaints about military misconduct. From about 230, intensified border warfare resulted in large-scale military displacements. Emperors moved legionary *vexillationes*, auxiliary units and detachments from the fleets from one border region to another, to concentrate armies, which would be large enough to beat the enemies. What about the consequences? Bands of looting military personnel, which did not have enough food or means of transportation, left the highways and plundered villages in a broad zone along the transit routes, degrading local notables to subservient slaves who had to give the soldiers what they needed or face the dreadful consequences. Complaints and petitions about military misconduct became recurring phenomena. Already under Caracalla, Gordian III and Philip, villagers from Takina, Skaptopare and Aragoë, places in the Balkans and Asia Minor, complained to the emperors telling them that military avarice and misbehaviour had brought them into misery and bankruptcy, which would ultimately lead to lower tax returns from their regions. In their rescripts the emperors did not use firm language, as their predecessors such as Hadrian had done, but referred the villagers to their provincial governors.⁶ Were the emperors afraid of the soldiers? The historian Cassius Dio may have thought so. In all his eighty books, which he probably wrote between 211 and 235, Dio is virtually obsessed with the risks of military misconduct. His near-contemporary Herodian, who may have

⁵ See H.-J. Drexhage, *Preise, Mieten / Pachten, Kosten und Löhne im römischen Aegypten bis zum Regierungsantritt Diokletians* (St. Katharinen 1991); Rathbone 1996, op.cit. (n.4), 329-337. Cf. E. Lo Cascio, 'Dall' *antoninianus* al 'laureato grande': l'evoluzione monetaria del III secolo alla luce della nuova documentazione di età diocleziana', *Opus* 3 (1984), 135-201; id., 'Dinamiche economiche e politiche fiscali fra I Severi ed Aureliano', in: *Storia di Roma Einaudi* III 1 (Torino 1993), 276 ff.; id., 'How did the Romans View their Coinage and its Function?', in: King – Wigg 1996, op.cit. (n.4), 281. See now also M. Corbier, *CAH* XII, 2nd ed., op. cit. (n. 2), 330-392.

⁶ See de Blois 2002, op.cit. (n.2), 209-214. On petitions of villagers about military misconduct: see T. Hauken, *Petition and Response. An Epigraphic Study of Petitions to Roman Emperors 181-249*, Monographs from the Norwegian Institute at Athens 2 (Bergen 1998), 2-139. A stern reply to a petition about military misconduct: "I [i.e. the *praefectus Aegypti*] am informed that without having a warrant many of the soldiers when travelling through the country requisition boats and animals and persons improperly, in some cases seizing them by force, in other obtaining them from the *strategi* through favour or obsequiousness, the result of which is that private persons are subjected to insults and abuses and the army is reproached for greed and injustice." The prefect commands never to furnish to any person without a warrant any contribution for the journey (PSI 446 = A.S. Hunt – C.C. Edgar, *Select Papyri* II (London – Cambridge, Mass. 1956), nr 221. transl. by Hunt – Edgar, a text from Hadrian's time).

died between 250 and 253, regarded the greed and lack of discipline of the soldiers as the root of much evil.⁷

There are other indications that from 217 to 284 actual imperial authority was not very strong. In Egypt local councillors tenaciously tried to push off burdens to farmers or to appoint one person to more than one liturgy simultaneously, or to a succession of liturgies without any pause, in spite of a ruling by Septimius Severus, who about 200 forbade such conduct, and in spite of continuous repetition of those Severan rulings by later emperors. In the same province emperors and governors could not stifle *anachoresis* which undermined the returns of taxation. Maybe they were also losing their grip on some very rich landowners who had good connections with leading military men and high bureaucrats. Such landowners attracted farmers and lower local councillors who became managers on their estates, as is indicated by the Heroninos archive from Egypt and some other papyrus texts. Some inscriptions from the Bagradas Valley and other places in Africa Proconsularis and from Asia Minor suggest that similar problems existed in other parts of the Roman world as well.⁸

Another phenomenon that has often been interpreted as a sign of crisis is the decrease in building activity in most regions of the empire. This decline set in under Severus Alexander, perhaps even earlier, and progressively continued during the next decades of the third century. It was accompanied by an empire-wide steep decline in the number of inscriptions. Local notables who progressively came under control of military foragers and *curatores* who supervised local finance, undoubtedly lost status, started to consider *euergesia* as an obligation more than as a privilege, and had no longer sufficient means to pay for new buildings and monuments. Local culture

⁷ See L. de Blois, 'Volk und Soldaten bei Cassius Dio', *ANRW* II 34.3 (1997), 2650-2676; id., 'Emperor and Empire in the Works of Greek-Speaking Authors of the Third Century AD', *ANRW* II 34.4 (1998), 3404-3423; id., 'The Perception of Roman Imperial Authority in Herodian's Work', in: L. de Blois et al., *The Representation and Perception of Roman Imperial Power. Proceedings of the Third Workshop of the International Network Impact of Empire (Roman Empire, 200 B.C. – A.D. 476), Rome, March 20-23, 2002* (Amsterdam 2003), 148-156.

⁸ On Severan rulings about liturgies in Egypt (about A.D. 200) see P. Mich IX 529; N. Lewis, *Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists* 9 (1972), 33-36; id., 'The Severan Edict of P. Mich IX 529', *Chronique d'Égypte* 50 (1975), 202-206; id., 'The Michigan – Berlin apokryma', *Chronique d'Égypte* 51 (1976), 320 ff. On the Heroninos Archive see D.W. Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism and Rural Society in Third Century AD Egypt* (Cambridge 1991). Texts from Asia Minor and Northern Africa: Hauken 1998, op.cit. (n.6), 2-139.

continued to live on, but its most expensive aspects, like building, already diminished.⁹

How did Roman emperors represent their power in such troubled times? Was there a strong continuity in the representation of Roman imperial power, or did emperors break new ground? Indeed continuity reigned in the continuous practicability of traditional imperial coin legends and images and of *paradigmata* such as Trajan and Marcus Aurelius.¹⁰ This continuity in imperial representation was not an isolated phenomenon. At least until A.D. 260 a tendency towards continuity also characterised imperial appointment policies, military strategy and tactics, and Greek and Latin elite culture. Continuity dominated the social and economic structures of many regions, which were not directly and protractedly hit by invasions or internal strife.¹¹

However, there were changes and discontinuities as well. In the third century A.D. the imperial cult as it had been, with its educative accentuation of personal merits of good emperors of the past, entered a phase of decay. The emperors could no longer show great successes and merits. *Felicitas temporum* was becoming a hollow phrase. In a fine book on emperor worship and Roman religion, published in 2002, Ittai Gradel¹² observes that from 180 onward hardly any temples of the Dea Roma and the emperors were built. He adds to this that the last known *cooptatio* to the *sodales Antoniniani* was recorded in 236, and that in a list of members of two seats in the state priesthood of Augustus and Claudius, seats 27 and 28, which regularly had been allotted to members of governing dynasties, there are no appointments recorded beyond 219 (seat 28) and 230 (seat 27). According to

⁹ On the decay of the epigraphical habit see R. MacMullen, 'The Epigraphical Habit in the Roman Empire', *American Journal of Philology* 103 (1982), 233-246. On the decay of public building see e.g. A. Mócsy, *Pannonia and Upper Moesia. A History of the Middle Danube Provinces of the Roman Empire* (London – Boston 1974), 263f.; G. Alföldy, *Noricum* (London – Boston 1974), 193; E. Winter, *Staatliche Baupolitik und Baufürsorge in den römischen Provinzen des kaiserzeitlichen Kleinasien*, *Asia Minor Studien* 20 (Bonn 1996), 191f.; J.S. Richardson, *The Romans in Spain* (Oxford 1998), 254f.; R.J.A. Wilson, *Sicily under the Roman Empire. The Archaeology of a Roman Province, 36 BC – AD 535* (Warminster 1990), 183f.

¹⁰ See for example Herodian, 1.2-1.4 (Marcus Aurelius as the paradigm of a good emperor); Ps.-Aelius Aristides, *Eis Basilea*, on which see L. de Blois, 'The *Eis Basilea* of Ps.-Aelius Aristides', *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 27, 3 (1986), 279-288. This oration probably comes from the times of the emperor Philip the Arabian. The emperor Decius borrowed Trajan's name and called himself Traianus Decius. See M. Peachin, *Roman Imperial Titulature and Chronology, A.D. 235-284* (Amsterdam 1990), 239-264. His original name may have been C. Messius Q. Decius Valeri(a)nus. See P.M.M. Leunissen, *Konsuln und Konsulare in der Zeit von Commodus bis Severus Alexander (180-235 n.Chr.)* (Amsterdam 1989), 187f.

¹¹ See de Blois 2002, op.cit. (n.2), 206f.

¹² See I. Gradel, *Emperor Worship and Roman Religion* (Oxford 2002), 356 ff.

Gradel, lustration rites of the Arval Brothers are evidenced in 183 (twice), 218, 224 and 240, not beyond. In 183, 218 and 224 the last gods receiving sacrifices in this ritual were the *Divi ante Caesareum* in the Arval grove, but they were absent from the ritual in 240. In Gradel's view, Maximinus Thrax contributed heavily to this decay. He quotes a passage from Herodian 7.3.5-7.3.6, in which this author tells us that Maximinus appropriated municipal funds put aside for theatres and festivals, temple dedications, statues of gods, honorary presentations to the heroes – who may be *divi* –, ornamentation on public buildings, and material that could be turned into coin. According to Herodian, the people particularly resented this appearance of a siege, when there was no fighting. Herodian adds that some of the lower classes turned to opposition and set a guard round the temples, prepared to be slaughtered and killed in front of the altars rather than to see their country plundered. Popular emotion rose to a high pitch at this moment throughout the cities and the provinces of the empire. Herodian observes that soldiers were not in favour of what was happening either, because their relatives and families bitterly upbraided them, alleging that it was their fault that Maximinus was acting in this way.¹³ Taking away local funds for the imperial cult, Maximinus may have degraded this type of ritual into a rather poor show. The emperor Decius may have tried to revive the imperial cult. He struck series of coins that broadcasted the cult of the *divi*. He posed as a *restitutor* and wanted to revive the cult of the old Roman patron gods of the empire as well as the worship of good emperors of the past, but – as J.B. Rives rightly points out – by forcing the population of the entire empire to participate in the worship of the Roman gods he actually became the first emperor to found an imperial

¹³ Herodian, 7.3.5-7.3.6: ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ Μαξιμῖνος τοὺς πλείστους τῶν ἐνδόξων οἰκῶν ἐς πενίαν περιστήσας, ἃ δὴ μικρὰ καὶ ὀλίγα οὐδ' αὐτάρκη τῇ αὐτοῦ βουλῇσει ᾤετο, μετῆλθεν, ἐπὶ τὰ δημόσια, καὶ εἴ τινα ἦν χρήματα πολιτικά ἐς εὐθηνίας ἢ νομᾶς τῶν δημοτῶν ἀθροιζόμενα εἴτε θεάτροις ἢ πανηγύρεσιν ἀνακείμενα, ἐς ἑαυτὸν μετῆγε, ναῶν τε ἀναθήματα θεῶν τε ἀγάλματα καὶ ἡρώων τιμάς, καὶ εἴ τις ἦν κόσμος δημοσίου ἔργου ἢ καλλώπισμα πόλεως ἢ ὕλη νόμισμα ποιῆσαι δυναμένη, πᾶν ἐχωνεύετο. ὅπερ καὶ μάλιστα τοὺς δῆμους ἐλύπησε. (6) πένθος τε δημοσίων ἐνεποίει δίχα μάχης καὶ ἄνευ ὀπλῶν ὅψις πολιορκίας, ὥς τινας τῶν δημοτῶν καὶ χειρᾶς ἀντιθῆναι καὶ τοὺς νεῶς φρουρεῖν, ἐτοιμῶς τε ἔχειν πρότερον ἀναιρεθέντας πρὸ τῶν βωμῶν πεσεῖν ἢ σκύλα τῶν πατρίδων ἰδεῖν. ἐντεῦθεν δὴ καὶ μάλιστα κατὰ τε πόλεις καὶ κατὰ ἔθνη διοίδαινον τῶν ὀχλῶν αἱ ψυχαί. ἀπηρέσκοντό τε καὶ οἱ στρατιῶται τοῖς πραττομένοις, ὀνειδίζόντων αὐτοῖς ἐπιφθόνως συγγενῶν τε καὶ οἰκείων ὥς δὴ δι' αὐτοὺς ταῦτα πράττοντος τοῦ Μαξιμίνου.

religion, to be shared by all free inhabitants. Trying to revive the past he accelerated the rise of empire-wide political religiosity.¹⁴

In her forthcoming dissertation Janneke de Jong will show, among many other things, that the *damnatio memoriae* of Geta, unlike earlier *damnationes memoriae*, found a widespread echo in papyrus texts that had a rather formal character and so should be produced in court, if need be. This seemed to be a unique phenomenon, however. Before A.D. 200 Egypt did not yet have the Romanized structures that Septimius Severus introduced to the province in this year, and *damnationes memoriae* of subsequent third century emperors were not so prominently present in papyrus texts from Egypt. According to Janneke de Jong, in the case of Geta we are actually dealing with an equal contemporary rather than a successor since Geta was co-emperor of his brother Caracalla; in other cases we are dealing with preceding and succeeding emperors.¹⁵ This may have been one of the reasons why Caracalla put so much stress on this affair and people in Egypt started to react correspondingly. But there may have been another reason too. Beyond Severan days imperial ideology developed towards more institutionalization and less emphasis on personal damnation or consecration, and so writers of papyrus texts no longer accentuated personal *damnationes* in the way they had done in Caracalla's times.

In a recently published article Fernando López Sánchez shows that from A.D. 268, on coins and in epigraphical texts, empresses and other members of the *domus divinae* beside the emperor, were not so prominent any more.¹⁶ This may be accidental, but it may reflect a structural development. The very personal propagation of the *domus divina*, which had existed since the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, and returned in force under the early Severans, was declining. Instead, favourite gods such as Sol Invictus appeared on coins as divine rulers of the cosmos and the empire, who had emperors as their prime servants. Elagabalus and his advisers tried to achieve this and Aurelian returned to this device with more success. A structural, cosmic, religious

¹⁴ See J.B. Rives, 'The Decree of Decius and the Religion of Empire', *Journal of Roman Studies* 89 (1999), 135-154; *RIC* IV, iii, Traj. Decius, nrs. 77-98. Cf C. Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley 2000), 206 ff. ('Decius and the *divi*').

¹⁵ So she told in a paper, which was read to the 24th International Congress of Papyrology, Helsinki, August 5th, 2004. The title of this paper: J.H.M. de Jong, 'Damned or Deified? Dead Emperors in Third Century Papyri.'

¹⁶ F. López Sánchez, 'Du masculin dans le féminin: les pouvoirs réels de Séverine (274-275 ap. J.-C) et d'autres femmes à Rome. L'apport de la numismatique', in: Y. Perrin – T. Petit, *Iconographie impériale, iconographie royale, iconographie des élites dans le monde gréco-romain*. Travaux du centre de recherche en histoire de l'université de Saint-Étienne I (Saint-Étienne 2004), 249-265.

basis of imperial power took the place of personal merit and tangible persons and families. Personal elevation, sacralization or indeed deification of living emperors, which had existed in different parts of the empire in informal, private texts since the beginning of the Principate, had become official doctrine under Commodus–Hercules, to compensate for his lack of *res gestae*, but lost ground again in the third century. Commodus acted personally as a new Hercules, but Elagabalus, who in a similar way had to compensate for a lack of proven merit, positioned himself under his great god, as a servant and priest, a *sacerdos amplissi[mus] dei invicti Solis Elagabal*,¹⁷ a priest within a fixed hierarchical order which was independent of the person who was sitting on the throne.¹⁸ His god, being too Syrian, was not very welcome in Rome, but the idea was not bad. An ideology of this type could give continuous legitimisation to the Severan clique that was in power under this infant emperor, who did not have many *res gestae* to show. In the third century Roman emperors could afford such solutions. In current third century philosophical and ideological views emperorship was an earthly counterpart to the cosmic rule of the highest god, whose faithful servant the emperor had to be, and the empire was a hierarchical organism. To insiders such as Cassius Dio and Herodian the empire was a kind of world-*polis*, an organism in which various parts of the empire and various social groups each had their place and function, in a world-wide hierarchical structure, with which they completely identified. In this structure Rome was the *astu*, and Italy and the provinces formed the *chora*, Italy being no more than just another part of the empire. Emperorship was a quintessential element in society, the very summit of the hierarchical organism which was the empire. The third century was also the period of the rise of neo-platonist and neo-pythagorean world-views, the time of Plotinus, Porphyry and probably some neo-Pythagorean writers, such as Ecphantus. The latter tells us that on earth, man has the best nature, but the king (or emperor?) is a more divine being and by his nature more supreme. He is made from the same matter, but was produced by a finer artist, who created him in his own image. The king is the only person on earth capable of visualizing the true heavenly king; he is always recognized by his creator and also by his

¹⁷ *CIL* XVI 141.

¹⁸ *sacerdos amplissi[mus] dei invicti Solis Elagabal*: *CIL* XVI 141. Cf *RIC* IV, ii, Elag., nrs. 88, 131, 146. I owe thanks to Martijn Icks, who kindly showed this piece of evidence to me. On Commodus and his imperial representation see O.J. Hekster, *Commodus. An Emperor at the Crossroads* (Amsterdam 2002), 87-202; esp. 117-128.

subjects, in whose eyes he appears surrounded by an aura of light.¹⁹ The emperor Gallienus appears to have been a sympathizer of neo-platonist and neo-pythagorean theories. In previous publications I tried to demonstrate that this emperor represented himself as a *meson ti*, thinking that, just like Sol Invictus, he too occupied an intermediate position between the supreme god, whom he piously revered, and the world that he had to protect, a task in which he was assisted by deities invoked as *dei comites* or *dei conservatores*.²⁰ Even Christian authors started to use language that belonged to such ideologies. In his *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7 Eusebius quotes passages from a letter to Hermammon, written by bishop Dionysius of Alexandria. The bishop dreaded the power of persecutors of Christians such as the usurpers Macrianus and Quietus, who opted for Valerian's anti-Christian policies. Dionysius favoured Valerian's son Gallienus, who disagreed with his father and stopped the persecution of Christians in 260, after Valerian had been taken prisoner by the Persian king Shapur. In *Historia Ecclesiastica* 7.23 Eusebius quotes a passage from Dionysius' letter to Hermammon, in which we read:

“Macrianus, after goading one of his emperors and attacking the other, suddenly disappeared root and branch with his whole family, and Gallienus was proclaimed and recognized by all. He was both an old emperor and a new one; he both preceded and followed them. For, in accordance with the message given to the prophet Isaiah: See, the earliest things have come about and new things shall now arise.²¹ You know how a cloud sweeps under the sun's rays and for a time screens and darkens it and is seen in its place; then when the cloud has gone by or melted, the sun reappears, shining as it did before. In the same way Macrianus, after pushing himself forward and insinuating himself into the imperial prerogatives of Gallienus is no more, while Gallienus is just as he was before, and as if it had cast off its old age and purged away its former dross, the monarchy flourishes now as ever before, is seen and heard over a wider sweep, and spreads in all directions.”

In this passage we see a combination of prophetic biblical language, terminology borrowed from the imperial cult, and maybe even images taken from third century solar ideology.

¹⁹ See de Blois 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 3432ff. Ecphantus, in Stobaeus, 4.7.64, 272f.

²⁰ See L. de Blois, 'Plotinus and Gallienus', in: A.A.R. Bastiaensen et al. (eds.), *Fructus Centesimus. Mélanges offerts à Gerard J.M. Bartelink à l'occasion de son soixante-cinquième anniversaire* (Steenbrugge – Dordrecht 1989), 69-82; esp. 77f.; id., 'Traditional Virtues and New Spiritual Qualities in Third Century Views of Empire, Emperorship and Practical Politics', *Mnemosyne* 47 (1994), 166-176; id. 1998, op.cit. (n.7), 3434.

²¹ Isaiah, 42.9.

In this text personal merits of Gallienus and his opponents regarding the Christians still seem to be at stake, but there are a few indications that third century emperors no longer had to convince provincial populations of their personal merits and actual effective protective power as intensely as they had done before. Regional elites sided with them anyway, against threatening enemy forces. Admittedly recurrent precarious situations at the eastern and northern borders did not yet lead to a general identification among lettered Greeks and – we may guess – among leading westerners with the Roman Empire at war. In fragment 28 of the *Chronica* by the Athenian historian Dexippus, a local notable, it is the fleet of the emperor that comes to Athens' assistance in 267, not "our" fleet ("our" being *hèmeteros*). Just like Arrian and Lucian in the second century AD most third century Greek writers only referred to the Romans, the emperors and the Roman empire as "we" (Greek: *hèmeis*), "our fellows", and "our emperor" when they themselves felt involved in conflicts between the Roman empire and others outside its confines. Even Christians did, in their own way. In *Contra Celsum* 8.73 Origen tells us:

While the others battle as soldiers [the Christians] fight as priests and servants of the Lord and they keep their right hands clean but fight by praying to God to favour those who go to battle for a just cause and him who rules as a king, so that everything that is hostile to those who act justly can be defeated.

So in his view struggles of a good emperor are a good cause, something to pray for.

To conclude, in the third century was emperorship further emancipated from the actual successes and personal merits of persons who were sitting on the throne. The emperor, as a concept, became a normal, integral part of the organic Roman world-structure as it was seen by contemporary cultured authors. Simultaneously, because of a lack of funds and of waning political and ideological significance, traditional forms of imperial cult entered a phase of decay and became less personal and more formalized, in spite of Decius' endeavor to revive it. At the same time emperors were losing grip of events and developments, in a world of rising tensions and increasing problems, which resulted in outright crisis in the third quarter of the century. So they had to rely on a more permanent structural ideological, religiously tinged basis of their power anyway, to compensate for a lack of actual successes, and they could do so in the changing ideological and mental climate of the age. Leading people in various regions of the empire needed the emperor as an ally against foreign enemies and looting soldiers, whatever

his personal merits were. Historiographers and philosophers saw emperorship as a natural part of the organism which was the empire. To some philosophical writers the empire was a counterpart to the greater structure of the cosmos that was governed by the supreme god, who was the paradigm and source of power of emperors.

Nijmegen, November 2004.

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