Pagan Gods and Shrines of the Roman Empire

Edited by Martin Henig and Anthony King

Oxford University Committee for Archaeology

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The cover illustration shows a grave relief from Rome with a lady posing as Venus Victrix (Photo. British Museum)

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Introduction

The choice of a title for this volume has not been easy. Originally, in the guise of the conference held at Oxford in May 1984 out of which this volume evolved, we used the title 'Unknown Gods in the Roman World'. The concept of gods being 'unknown' is, of course, taken from a famous passage in the *Acts of the Apostles* (17.23), and in a sense involves a contradiction, since what is unknown cannot be conceived, let alone worshipped. However it was as true of religious experience in Roman times as at other periods that it sought enlightenment and discovered truth in dark and secret places. In the Roman Empire, with its many religious and social traditions, this quest for metaphysical knowledge normally included the identification of foreign 'unknown' gods with those of Italy and Greece. Such a process is implied by the phrase, derived from Tacitus (*Germania* 43), '*interpretatio romana*' which it is best to take literally as the Roman interpretation of alien deities, and of rites associated with them. '*Interpretatio romana*' was, in fact, our working sub-title and one of the leading themes that we requested contributors to consider when writing their papers.

The title finally chosen, however, reflects the wider concerns discussed in many of the papers such as the buildings in which religious activities took place, the organisation of the cults, personal beliefs and the growing interest in personal salvation. For the later periods of Roman history, the relation between pagan and Christian beliefs is obviously of great importance and is of major interest to several contributors; indeed the origins of their relationship in the First century are also explored in one of the papers.

We would like to thank Trevor Rowley and Shirley Hermon of the Department for External Studies, University of Oxford for helping to organise the original conference. Oxford University Committee for Archaeology generously undertook publication of a volume which included all the conference papers (except one, by the second editor, which could not be completed satisfactorily, due to pressure of other commitments) and others especially commissioned in order to enlarge on particular themes. This is the place to thank David Brown for his work in seeing the project through the press. Tom Blagg helped us very considerably with the editing and we are also grateful to Grahame Soffe and Judy Medrington who likewise made our task easier and more enjoyable. Alison Wilkins kindly redrew three illustration for us. Lastly we would like to thank all contributors to the volume, and especially those who spoke at the conference, few of whom are likely to forget the glittering delivery of Glenys Lloyd-Morgan's contribution.

As the production of this volume entered its final stage, we received the news of the death of Professor Emerita Jocelyn Toynbee. The theme of the majority of papers in the book, the religious beliefs which lie behind so much of the art of the Roman Empire, was one very dear to Jocelyn Toynbee. In the circumstances, and with the enthusiastic concurrence of a number of contributors whom we were able to consult at short notice, the editors have taken the opportunity to dedicate these studies to her memory.

Martin Henig
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The Sanctuary of Sulis Minerva at Bath: a brief review

Barry Cunliffe

March 1984 saw the completion of a major programme of excavations in the precinct of the temple of Sulis Minerva, now beneath the eighteenth century Pump Room, in the centre of modern Bath. The project had begun in 1978 and was the first major research scheme to be undertaken by the Bath Archaeological Trust. The present occasion, therefore, allows us to stand back from the complexity of archaeological detail published elsewhere (Cunliffe & Davenport 1985), to view the temple against the background of what is known and can be deduced of the rest of the Roman settlement.

The shrine in the pre-Roman period

Very little is known of the situation before the Roman conquest, largely because of the thoroughness of the Roman building programme, but there can be little reasonable doubt that all three hot mineral water springs were revered, and the discovery of a number of, largely-unworn, Celtic coins in the sediments in the King's Bath spring is an indication (but not proof) that offerings may have been thrown into the waters in the early years of the first century AD, but how much votive Iron Age material was removed when the Roman engineers scoured out the spring we will never know. Another indication of pre-Roman interest in the waters is reflected in the deity's name—Sulis Minerva—evidently a conflation of the Roman Minerva with the local deity who presided over the springs. In all probability Sulis was a goddess who possessed healing powers similar to those of Minerva. She may appear again in multiple form, probably as a triad, in a dedication to the Suleviae (*RIB* 151), and the name recurs twice, as a personal name, among the inscriptions found in the city: Sulinus son of Brucetus, a *scultor*, erected the altar to the Suleviae cited above (as well as another at Cirencester *RIB* 105), and Sulinus son of Maturus dedicated an altar to Sulis Minerva which was found in the Hot Bath in 1774 (*RIB* 150). It is possible that the triad of females, so charmingly carved on a schist plaque found in Cleveland Gardens, is a representation of the Suleviae (Cunliffe 1969, pl. lxxix, a).

The earliest Roman development at Bath

The Roman road system in the vicinity of Bath is obscure but a recent reassessment, in the light of what we now know of the geomorphology of the city area, has suggested that the Fosse way—the early military road—bypassed what was to become the walled enclosure, on the north-west side, and probably crossed the Avon well to the west of the medieval city bridge. A second crossing point, in the vicinity of Cleveland Bridge, served to concentrate roads, coming from the east, west and south, in the Walcot area (Fig. 1). If this suggested pattern approximates to the Roman reality, the Cleveland Bridge crossing must have been one of great importance from the point of view of the early communications network and was quite possibly guarded by a Claudian fort, perhaps sited on a raised gravel terrace on the east bank of the river (now the Bathwick suburb). The whole of this area, and the west bank, has produced ample evidence of occupation spanning the Roman period and may indeed have been the nucleus of the settlement throughout.

The point to be stressed here is that the walled enclosure is to one side of this communication node on land which, at least, can only be regarded as difficult—a zone of steeply shelving terraces, hot springs, and their run-off channels. It was an area to be avoided but for the attraction of the Sacred Spring.

The monumentalizing of the sanctuary

The area around the springs attracted occupation in Claudian and Neronian times and there is now some evidence of a well-metalled road dividing the King's Bath spring from the Cross Bath and Hetling springs. The nature of this early settlement, and the treatment of the springs, at this stage remain obscure.

In the 60s or 70s of the first century AD a major programme of reorganization took place: the main spring was enclosed and the bathing establishment and temple were built south and north of the spring respectively. The structural and visual integrity of the two structures is sufficient to demonstrate their contemporaneity. The entrance hall of the baths, dividing the thermal swimming baths from the artificially-heated suite, provided a most dramatic view across the spring to the altar beyond, creating a north-south visual axis which was crossed, at the altar, by an east-west axis linking the precinct entrance, altar and temple together in a single vista (Fig. 2).

Two points at once emerge: the sheer size of the undertaking and the classical simplicity of it all. The implication is that the scheme was an official project, no

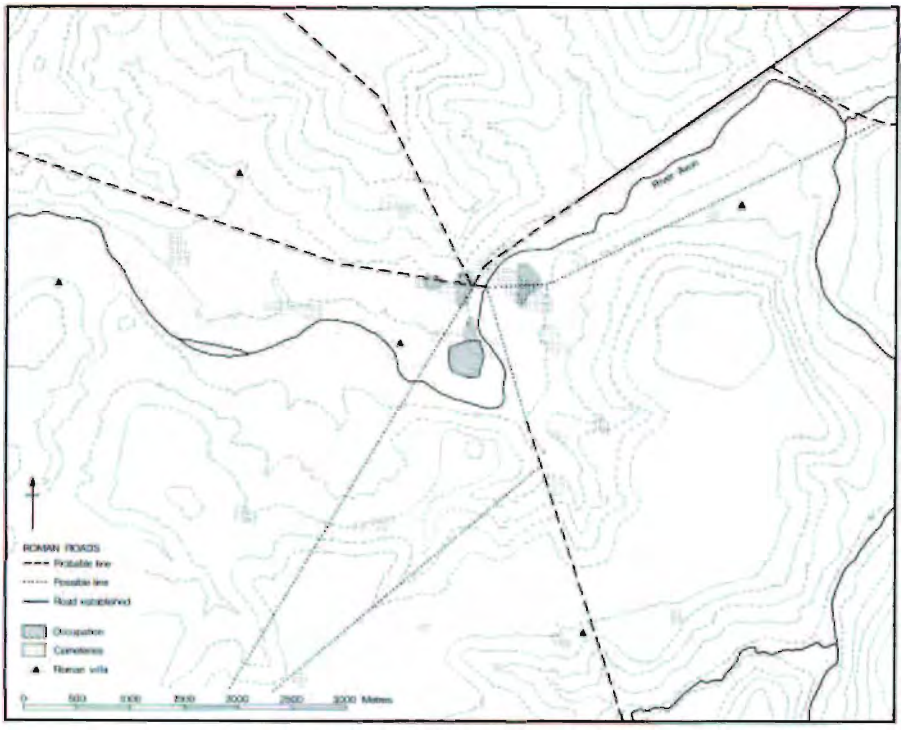

Fig. 1 Roads in the vicinity of Bath.

doubt overseen by military architects and engineers. Stylistic considerations of the temple detail have led to the suggestion that craftsmen from north-eastern Gaul were brought in to provide the decorative embellishments (Blagg 1979).

A scheme of this magnitude, undertaken within two or three decades of the invasion, must represent a deliberate and official act of Romanization, but until more precise dating evidence is available for the initial construction phase, it is impossible to place the event in its historical context. On balance the evidence would suggest that the Agricolan programme of monumentalizing the Roman urban system in Britain in the late 70s comes a little too late. If earlier, then the context might be the rebuilding of the fabric and morale of the province in the aftermath of the Boudiccan rebellion of AD 60–61. The monumentalizing of an ancient sanctuary and the conflation of its deity with the Roman Minerva would have been a shrewd act, legitimizing the Roman presence and demonstrating the unity of the province. The scheme would have been in nice contrast to the politically inept creation of the temple of Divus Claudius at Colchester – one of the sparks which ignited the rebellion. It may even be that the complex iconography of the pediment with its blatantly Celtic centrepiece set within the framework, and amid the symbols, of classical mythology, was deliberately contrived to represent the coming together of Roman and native culture.

The development of the temple

Once having been established, the baths and temple complex underwent a series of changes which have been described in detail elsewhere (Cunliffe 1969; 1984, 38–93; Cunliffe & Davenport 1985). Here we will consider only the general implications of the temple alterations, leaving aside those in the baths, except where they are relevant to an understanding of the religious function of the shrine.

The earliest of the changes seems to have taken place in what had previously been an open space to the east of the temple precinct. The evidence is slight and indirect

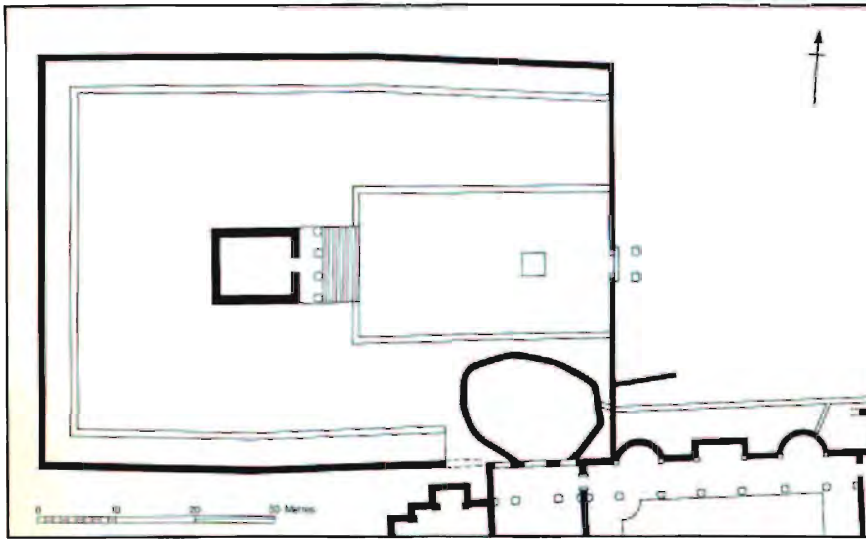

Fig. 2 The Temple: late first century.

but has been laid out in full elsewhere (Cunliffe forthcoming). In summary there is reason to believe that a new precinct was built here in the early second century, the south-west corner of which was recorded by Richard Mann at the end of last century and can still, in part, be seen in the present museum. Within the precinct stood an imposing, and highly ornate tholos of diameter equal to the width of the temple. Several elements belonging to the tholos have been found, including parts of its carved frieze and architrave, sufficient to allow its general proportions and style to be assessed (Fig. 3). The only real uncertainty is the exact location of the building but it is tempting to place it on the same axis as the main temple giving a pleasing symmetry to the ensemble (Fig. 4). At any event it was a most imposing structure and a major addition to the grandeur of the shrine.

Stylistically the tholos is best dated to the Hadrianic period—an observation which raises a most interesting speculation. Could it be that the new precinct was added under the imperial favour of the emperor himself as a consequence of his visit to the province in 122? The speculation is by no means idle. The emperor initiated similar building projects in other provinces, why not in Britain at Bath where 80 years or so earlier official patronage had led to the initial monumentalizing of the sanctuary? A tholos, inspired ultimately by Hellenistic prototypes, would have appealed to the emperor's tastes. Where his predecessors had brought a flavour of Rome to the shrine, he was adding a reminder of the Hellenistic world.

The next significant alterations came about at the end of the second or beginning of the third century. The temple building was now considerably enlarged by the addition of a new facade, incorporating two small rooms, probably shrines, on either side of the rebuilt main steps. Behind this, around the original temple, a raised ambulatory was constructed. The result was that the ground plan of the structure was doubled in size, the new facade adding considerably to the imposing nature of the building while leaving the old temple entirely intact. It is difficult to resist the suggestion that the motive for the change was to bring the temple closer in form to the native Romano-Celtic style. If so it takes with it the implication that there may have been a shift in ritual practice requiring the modifications to be made (Fig. 5).

In parallel with the refurbishment of the temple, the spring was now enclosed within a massive vaulted chamber, erected as part of the programme of reroofing which saw the entire bathing establishment covered in vaulted masonry. The overall effect was to cut off the spring from the precinct with the exception of a single small doorway leading directly to the altar and no doubt reserved for ritual use. Suppliants wishing to communicate with the water now had to find their way to the vaulted passage on the south of the spring (and walled off from the rest of the baths) where three large windows gave a clear view into the chamber. It was probably at this time that the spring was adorned with

two groups of statuary standing on plinths just appearing at water-level, the northern group being interspersed with columns.

Motivation for so dramatic a change must, of course, remain unknown but the overall effect, changing the open pool into a dark, dank, echoing cavern, must have been deliberately intended. Similarly the adding of the groups of statuary was surely part of the desire to increase the mystery of the source. Such changes are reflected elsewhere in the Roman world where we find sacred springs being increasingly elaborated and turned into mysterious grottos.

The dating evidence for these dramatic alterations is imprecise but points to a date *c.* 200 (with a leeway of 20 or 30 years on either side). If we were looking for a context it is possible to suggest imperial intervention once more, this time when Severus and his family were in the province in the early years of the third century. The suggestion is, of course, purely speculative.

The final phases of alterations were brought about more by the need to maintain the fabric than by the desire to aggrandize the sanctuary. Nonetheless structural necessity provided an opportunity for further creative modification. What appears to have happened is that the north wall of the reservoir enclosure began to move under the weight of the vault. The only possible response was to add buttresses but since these would impinge dramatically on to the precinct in front of the temple, they were so designed as to monumentalize the reservoir wall. The result was a central buttress in the form of a quadrifrons flanked by two side buttresses, one arched, the other with a blind arch, together creating a raised ambulatory from which a clear view of the altar, and the activity around it, could be had (Fig. 6).

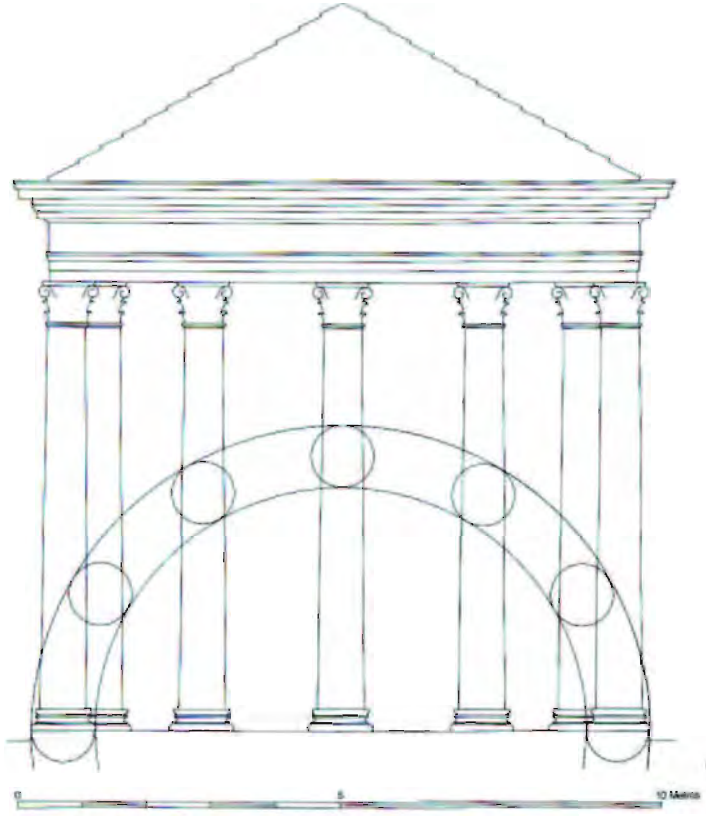

Fig. 3 Reconstruction of the Tholos.

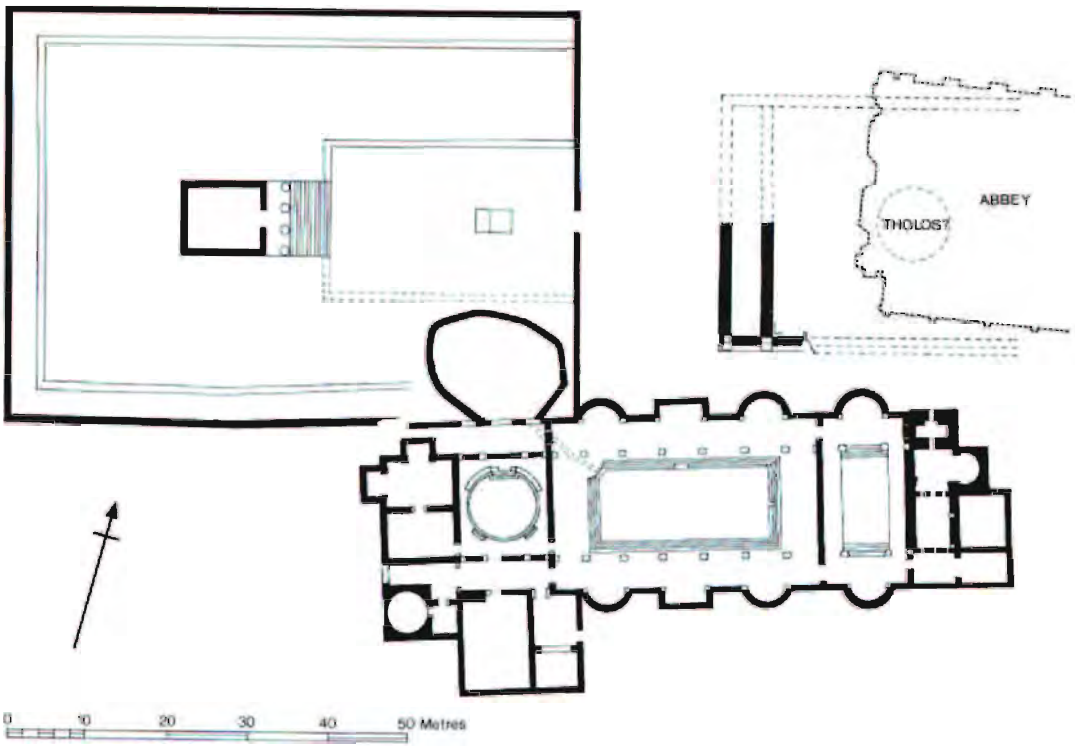

Fig. 4 The Temple and Baths: early second century

All these elements were built in massive, plain masonry enlivened with an entablature copying that of the reservoir. The only decorative element was the sculptured pediment of the quadrifrons the details of which we shall consider later.

The new ambulatory, created to disguise the buttressing, intruded into the precinct and also necessitated the rebuilding of part of the eastern wall and the main entrance. Such a visually disruptive construction must surely have been balanced by a corresponding mass to the north of the altar—an area unavailable for excavation. The only evidence we have that this was so is provided by a number of tumbled blocks belonging to a substantial monument known as the Facade of the Four Seasons. The best-fit reconstruction suggests a highly decorated construction comprising a lower storey, enlivened with fluted pilasters, surmounted by an attic in which was set a sculptured pediment. Such a structure would neatly balance the quadrifrons and, as we shall see, their iconographies perfectly complement each other.

One further detail is worth considering: the Facade of the Four Seasons bears an inscription, now fragmentary, which refers to refurbishment and repainting, after a period of neglect, being undertaken by a guild of craftsmen (*RIB* 141). The dedication fits well if we see the building as part of the programme of renovation initiated to improve the temple ensemble after subsidence and cracks had begun to affect the reservoir enclosure. There is no independent dating evidence to suggest when this might have been but some time in the second half of the third century would fit the sequence.

The last significant phase of rebuilding followed some time later and involved the strengthening of the north-western buttress and the addition of another on the western wall of the enclosure. Presumably, therefore, the structure was still giving problems. At about the same time much of the precinct in front of the temple, and the raised southern ambulatory, were repaved with thin slabs of pennant grit. The evidence, such as it is, indicates a date for this some time towards the middle of the fourth century.

It is tempting to speculate that this last phase of rather poor quality renovation may be associated with the events referred to on a dedicatory inscription found in 1753 which records, 'This holy spot, wrecked by insolent hands and cleansed afresh, Gaius Severius Emeritus, centurion in charge of the region has restored to the Virtue and Deity of the Emperor' (*RIB* 152). The stone was said to have been found at 'the lower end of Stall Street' but there is now good reason to believe that it came from the temple site (Cunliffe & Davenport 1985, 131). There can be little doubt that it refers to the despoiling of the pagan sanctuary, presumably by Christians in the early decades of the fourth century, and may therefore reflect the pagan revival of the middle years of the century. At any event, after this brief phase of repair, permanent decline set in.

Sufficient will have been said to show that the temple has undergone extensive alteration during the 350 years or so of its existence. This, together with the very local nature of much of its design, means that comparison should be made only with great care. One parallel worth considering is the Flavian temple of Conimbriga, Portugal (Alarcão & Etienne 1977). The tetrastyle Corinthian building overlooks a paved inner precinct, defined by a stylobate, beyond which are the enclosing colonnades. The initial Flavian layout incorporated a monumental flight of steps leading to the temple flanked on either side by two rectangular platforms extending outwards from the line of the side walls of the temple. The general plan is not at all unlike the Bath temple modified *c* 200 AD and is a reminder that the motivation for these changes at Bath may not have been (as suggested above) to make it conform to the more normal Romano-Celtic plan. It is also a warning that our reconstruction of these features, as flanking rooms (Fig. 7), is not the only possibility.

A better known parallel for the plan of the third century phase at Bath is the temple of Lenus Mars at Trier (Gose 1955). Although there is scope for varied interpretations, the classical style temple does seem to have been surrounded, sides and back, by a colonnade supported against the temple walls. In this case, unlike Bath, the building seems to have been planned in this manner from the beginning.

At a more local level, if it is accepted that the early third century changes were designed to bring the building more in line with the Romano-Celtic model, we have only to look to Springhead, Kent (Lewis 1966) for similarity in plan, if not in architectural grandeur.

The iconography

Bath is fortunate in that three major groups of relief sculpture survive from the temple complex: the pediment of the temple, the altar, and the two facing facades of the quadrifrons and Facade of the Four Seasons. Taken together they form a remarkable, if somewhat eclectic, collection.

The temple pediment is well known and has frequently been described and illustrated but its allusions are still difficult fully to understand (Fig. 8). The general composition, with a 'gorgon's' head held aloft on a shield by two winged Victories, is a familiar classical form and one appropriate to Minerva. Beneath the shield and close to the feet of the Victories are two helmets. Both are attributes of Minerva: the left-hand helmet, with its Corinthian plume, reflecting her martial aspect, while the right-hand helmet, supporting a little owl, is the symbol of her wisdom.

The central head, fierce and moustached, poses some fascinating problems. Though superficially a Medusa, the creature is blatantly male and decidedly Celtic in style. Some observers have seen it as a water god, comparable to Oceanus, an identification gaining some

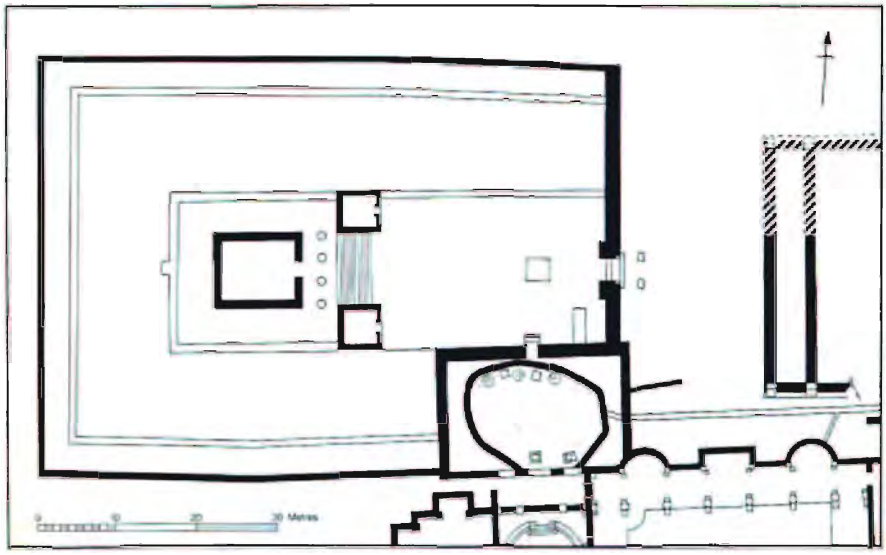

Fig. 5 The Temple: c. AD 200.

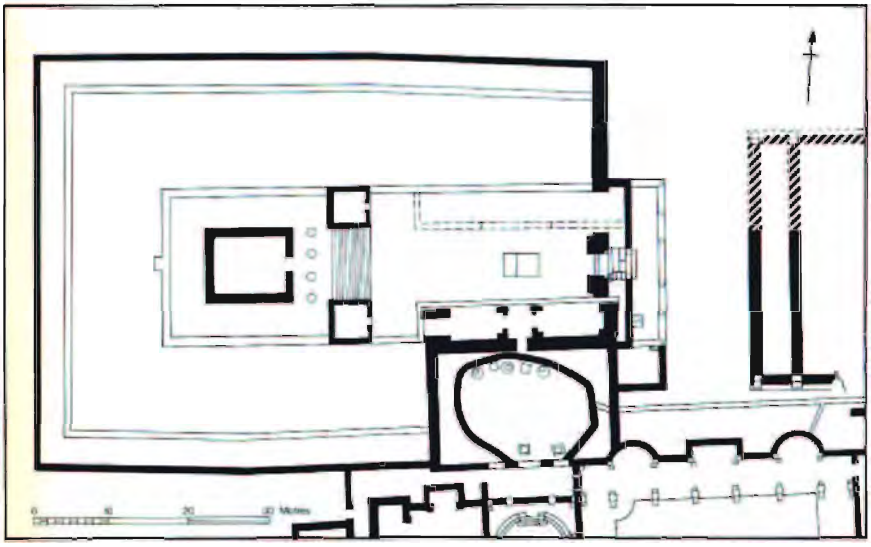

Fig. 6 The Temple: late third century.

support from the two tritons occupying the lower angles. Others have been impressed by its flame-like hair and have sought to see in him solar attributes. If the symbol in the apex of the pediment is a sun (rather than a star) then this might be thought to corroborate the view. But how can we explain this curious complex of allusions? Is it not possible that we are seeing here personified the dual aspects of the Sacred Spring—the flow of water and the heat? The suggestion at least has the merit of simplicity but is probably over-simple. Perhaps behind it all lies some notion of the sacred union between a Celtic male sky god, representing the sun, and a female earth deity of the spring, whose coming together created and maintained the flow of hot water. The general concept is well known in Celtic mythology and, in this context, could explain the male element in the iconography where, on all other counts, one would have expected to find a female. In this interpretation the head emerges as a symbol of the Celtic spirit of the spring, conflated with the strengths of Minerva, set aloft in the heavens dominating all. The threads of meaning, so difficult for us to untangle, would have been readily understandable to a contemporary worshipper and a constant reminder of the power of the presiding deity.

In front of the temple lay the altar each corner of which was carved on two adjacent faces with deities: Jupiter and Hercules Bibax, Apollo and Mercury(?), and Bacchus and Rosmerta(?). Nothing is known of the fourth corner but a small fragment of a hand holding a trident, found nearby, may have come from it, if so implying the presence of Neptune. Since we do not know the relative positions of the individual corners it is impossible to say how the deities were paired on each of the altar faces. Nor is it clear if their selection and placing had any symbolic meaning, but the position in which they were displayed, on an altar dominated by the temple, must surely imply subservience to, and support for, Sulis Minerva.

The third decorative element consists of the two facades north and south of the altar (Figs 9 & 10). The lower storey of the northern facade was ornamented in two registers, the lower comprising four niches containing sitting figures, the upper with four corresponding panels supporting Cupids playing the parts of seasons. The identification of the lower figures is impossible since little of them survives but one suggestion is that they too may have been seasons. However, the discovery of part of a relief of Diana, of proportions matching the figures in the niches, throws

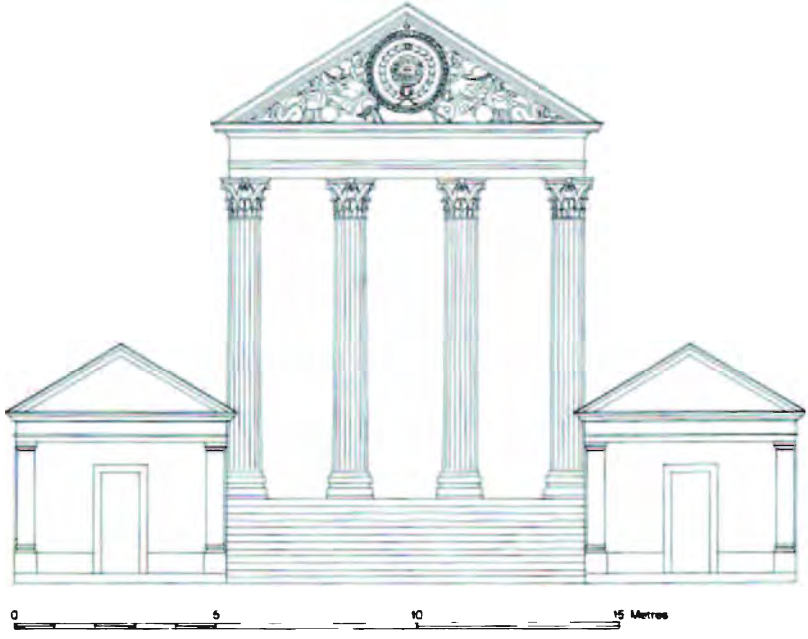

Fig. 7 Diagram of the Temple front c. AD 200.

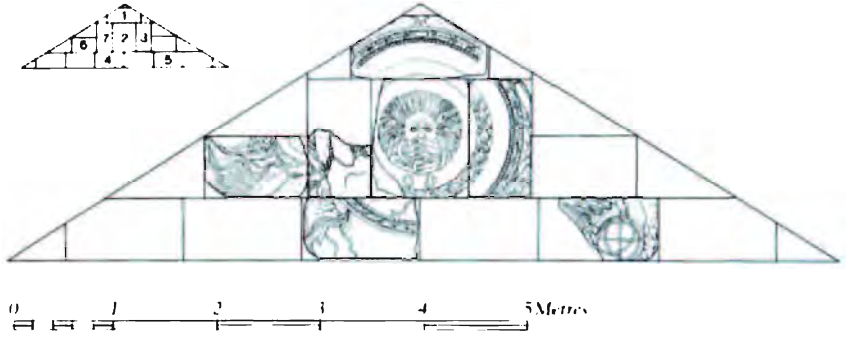

Fig. 8 The Temple pediment.

some doubt on the proposition. In the attic above was a pediment the centre of which was occupied by Luna, goddess of the night sky, holding the reins of her four-horse chariot in one hand and a riding whip in the other.

Of the quadrifrons, south of the altar, sufficient survives for the general outlines of its decorative scheme to be identified. The central motif is a roundel, held aloft by two lightly clad nymphs, supporting what appears to be the head of a sun god, presumably Sol. Below this, between the knees of the nymphs, is a rock from which water pours. The symbolism is explicit – the sun presides over the waters. Here again is a reflection of the Celtic duality, male-female, sun-water, which we identified, albeit rather less surely, in the temple pediment.

The balance between the two confronting pediments on either side of the altar is particularly appropriate. Luna, goddess of the night sky, looks southwards guarding the dark sphere at her back, while Sol commands the southern sphere wherein lie the hot springs. Between the two is the altar of Sulis Minerva.

The iconography of the precinct in its final form was carefully contrived to tell the story of the deity in its many forms and to explain the complex relationships of the gods. Entering the temple for the first time a visitor would first have noticed the altar close to, enlivened with familiar members of the Roman pantheon. Then looking up he would see on either side the guardian deities of the two aspects of the cosmos emphasizing the centrality of the shrine. Finally in front, and towering over all, was the temple pediment, with the symbol of the deity, fearsome and powerful, held aloft by Victories above earth and sky, dominant over all. No-one would be left in any doubt that they were in the presence of a formidable power.

Ritual

The epigraphic evidence relevant to the shrine at Bath is rich, the deity's name appearing many times on dedicatory inscriptions, found at various locations about the town, and on curses recovered from the Sacred Spring. Two inscriptions in particular are of relevance here: the tombstone of Gaius Calpurnius Receptus (*RIB* 155) and the dedicatory inscription erected close to the altar by Lucius Marcius Memor (Cunliffe 1966, pl. XXXIV). Receptus is styled *sacerdos deae Sulis* (priest of the goddess Sulis) while Memor is given the title *haruspex* (augur). Both men would therefore have officiated in the temple though in different capacities. The presence of a haruspex is particularly interesting. The archaic post is most unusual in provincial shrines and may best be explained if Memor is seen as a military official, seconded to, or simply visiting, the shrine rather than as a permanent temple servant.

His presence is a reminder of the martial attributes of the goddess and this same theme recurs among other aspects of the archaeological data. No less than six military tombstones have been found at Bath while five soldiers are mentioned on altars set up in the city. The units to which they belonged, *legio* II Augusta (Saturnalis and Saturninus), *legio* II Adiutrix (Murrius), *legio* VI Victrix (Fortanus and Maximus), *legio XX* (Vitalis, Latinus and Antigonas), two cavalry regiments one of which was a detachment of Vettones (Tancinus), and the unknown unit of the 'centurion in charge of the region' (Emeritus), imply that many of them were visitors travelling some distance to the spring throughout the Roman period (though the two cavalry men could have been stationed at Bath in the early years of the conquest). The offerings from the spring also include two items with military connotations; a piece of a harness decoration and a washer from a model ballista, both of which may have been deposited by soldiers either in anticipation of a successful campaign or as thanks to the goddess for her protection.

The spring was the liminal place where the secular world and the underworld of the gods came into contact and it was here, therefore, that one could come closest to the deity and communicate with her. Against

this background the objects from the spring can be understood. Beside the two military items, most of the objects recovered fall into three categories: metal vessels, curses and coins. The vessels and coins are much what one would expect from a location of this kind representing propitiatory offerings donated to the deity: indeed most of the metal work is inscribed to this effect. The curses, on the other hand, are messages asking the deity to perform a particular service on behalf of the suppliant, usually to exert her wrath on some miscreant. The formulae used conform in most aspects to the general standard 'May the Goddess Sulis make he who', (statement of misdeed), 'whether he be male or female, boy or girl, freedman or slave, pagan or Christian', (here the retribution). 'It may have been', (then follows a list of suspects). The repetitive nature of the formula, though with variants, suggests the guiding hand of a temple scribe whose services were no doubt essential to ensure a proper mode of communication: mistakes could be dangerous. Once composed it is possible that the customer was required to write it out for himself. This is implied in one case which records 'This draft has been copied'.

There can be little doubt that the shrine was endowed with healing properties and that it was in the bathing establishment that the visitor immersed himself in the curative waters, led directly from the Sacred Spring to the Great Bath. In its original form three swimming baths were provided—the Great Bath, the Lucas Bath and the 1923 Bath. The provision seems excessive unless one supposes that the curative ritual involved three stages, each requiring immersion, but in water of decreasing heat. Subsequent modifications, at both the east and west ends, considerably extended the artificially heated facilities and removed the 1923 Bath altogether but the Great Bath and Lucas Bath remained intact throughout and the apse to the north of the Lucas Bath was converted for the use of patients whose treatment involved sitting immersed in the water up to the neck, a regime recommended by physician Antonius Musa.

Given the curative nature of the shrine it is surprising that no ex votos, representing diseased parts of the body, have been found in the Sacred Spring, with the possible exception of an ivory carving of breasts. The only reasonable explanation for this absence is that the ritual at Bath did not require offerings of the kind to be made, since it is inconceivable that the deity did not practise her curative powers at such a place. Perhaps the coins thrown into the spring, combined with an immersion regime in the baths, were sufficient to effect a cure.

It is also worth considering whether or not the waters were drunk as part of the curative ritual. The number of small paterae from the Sacred Spring, each dedicated to Sulis Minerva, is suggestive of a practice requiring the water to be scooped up or poured but it does not imply drinking. Nor should too much credence be given to references in the older literature to a 'dipping place' immediately to the east of the reservoir wall where the overflow empties into the main drain. There were, indeed, steps leading down to the culvert at this point but it is more likely that they were to provide access for maintenance: the hydraulic system requires this outlet to be used only when the spring was being cleared of accumulated sand. The question of whether the waters were drunk in the Roman period must therefore remain open.

Finally we might draw attention to a medicine stamp (now lost) found in 1731 in a cellar in Abbey Yard (Cunliffe 1969, 205). It is a reminder of the ancillary medical services which would have been available in and around the shrine.

The temple and its setting (Fig. 11)

So far we have considered three buildings: the temple of Sulis Minerva, the tholos and the baths. Together they formed the central ensemble of the shrine reminiscent, in many respects, to the sanctuary at Sanxay, near Poitiers (Formigé 1944). One other building, which might be expected in a complex of this kind, is a theatre for the staging of religious performances. No trace of such a structure has been found *in situ* at Bath but fragments of a richly carved monumental cornice, found beneath the floor of a cellar fronting onto Westgate Street, just north of the temple precinct (Cunliffe 1969, pl. lxii), are evidently from a monument of some pretension and the largest fragment is slightly curved as would befit a theatre cornice. A site to the north of the precincts of the temple or tholos would be ideal because the land hereabouts rises quite sharply and would allow a theatre cavea to be dug into the slope with the minimum of structural problems. But until positive evidence is found the question of the existence and location of a theatre must remain open.

The central complex is built around the most powerful of the springs but there is evidence to show that the two lesser sources, the Cross Bath spring and the Hetling spring were both used in the Roman period.

Of the Cross Bath spring there is little yet to be said. Clearing out operations in 1809 produced an altar dedicated to Sulis Minerva and the divinity of the two emperors (*RIB* 146) at a depth of 4 m, while later work in 1885, two metres deeper, dredged out a sculptured block carved with scenes appropriate to the Aesculapius legend (Cunliffe & Fulford 1982, no. 3; Cunliffe 1969, 198). How the spring was treated architecturally is unknown but imminent renovation will provide a valuable opportunity to study the structure in detail.

Rather more is known of the Hetling Spring. Three inscriptions have been discovered: when the hot spring was cleared out in 1774 a dedication to Sulis Minerva was found (*RIB* 150); two years later another, in honour of 'the most hallowed Diana', came to light (*RIB* 138), while the third inscription, found when

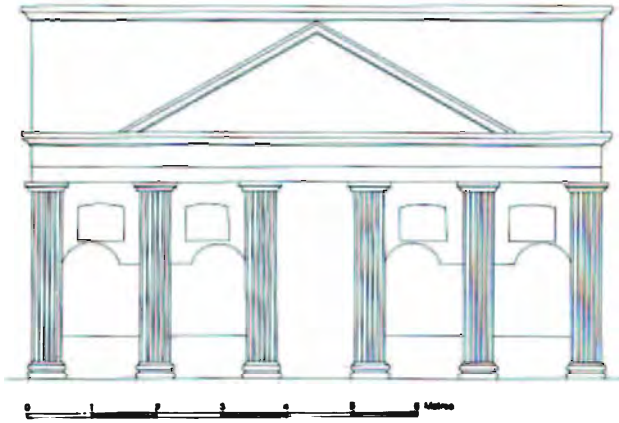

Fig. 9 The Facade of the Four Seasons.

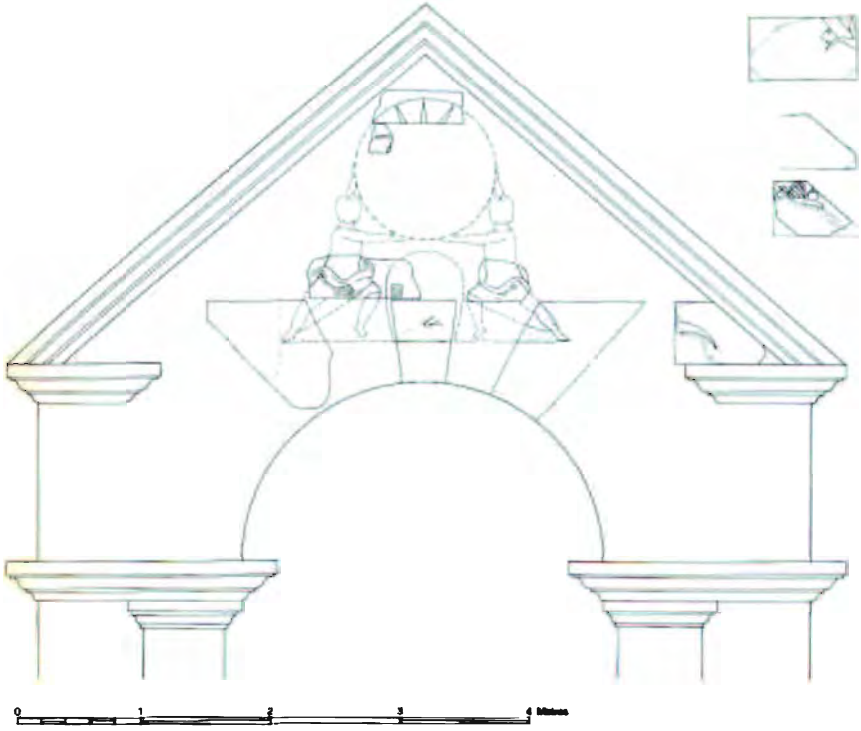

Fig. 10 The Quadrifrons.

foundations were being dug for the United Hospital, has lost its dedication (*RIB* 153).

Immediately to the south of the spring J. T. Irvine recorded the remains of a substantial bath suite, replacing earlier structures, when the Royal United Hospital was built between 1864–6 (Cunliffe 1969, 151–4), and parts of the same complex were noted in building work in 1908 on the west side of Hot Bath Street. One of the structural elements, separate from the bath range, was a rectangular tank, lined with lead, with steps down along its southern wall. Only the south-east corner was seen but since it lies barely 20 m south of the centre of the Hetling spring the strong possibility is that it was the reservoir into which the spring emptied and not a bath as was once thought. It is tempting to see the entire complex as another curative facility serving the Hetling spring.

Taken together, the buildings around the three springs occupied a considerable proportion of the 10 ha enclosed by the 'city wall', emphasizing the marked difference between Aquae Sulis and other small Roman towns and cantonal capitals. Indeed the question is raised—was Bath a walled town at all? One possibility is that the wall was a temenos boundary, the secular area of the settlement lying to the north around the convergence of the roads and the main river crossing. Another is that the settlement and sanctuary developed piecemeal until the late third or fourth century when the need for defence led to the enclosure of the principal public buildings rather on the Gallic model. On balance, this second explanation is preferred for it would explain the rather awkward way in which the wall relates to the Hetling spring bath suite. It might also account for the changes to the temple in the fourth century when there is clear evidence to show the encroachment of buildings of domestic appearance on the old temple precinct. If the wall had been built late in the Roman period for defensive purposes then the now-extramural inhabitants might be expected to have moved into the protected enclosure. Whatever the true explanation, the point which needs to be emphasized is that the zone of the settlement, later to be walled, does not seem to have developed in the same manner as other Romano-British urban centres.

Finally, we must briefly consider the question of the other deities worshipped in Bath, beside Sulis Minerva whose name is so frequently recorded in dedications of various kinds. The list is meagre: Loucetius Mars and Nemetona are mentioned on an inscription probably found in the temple area (*RIB* 140) and the two deities, together with three *Genii cuculati*, appear on a small relief found in the excavation of the baths (Cunliffe & Fulford 1982, no. 39). An altar to Diana was found in the Hetling spring (*RIB* 138) and part of a relief, probably of Diana, was found recently in the Pump Room excavations; the Roman baths produced two small reliefs, one of Minerva (Cunliffe & Fulford 1982, no. 25) and one of Mercury (*ibid.*, no. 24); a relief of Fortuna survives from an unknown Bath location (*ibid.*, no. 20); and the Aesculapius relief came from the Cross Bath spring (*ibid.*, no. 3). The evidence, such as it is, is much what one would expect—a scattering of dedications to a variety of gods attracted to a shrine of a major deity. Leaving aside Aesculapius (if the identification is correct) and allowing Diana to be a conflation with a local huntress deity, then the entire collection has a distinctly rural, Celtic fringe, flavour.

Maintenance and continuity

About the middle of the fourth century the last substantial renovations were undertaken in the temple precinct, involving the reflooring of much of the area in front of the temple with pennant paving. Thereafter the fabric began to deteriorate. During the latter part of the fourth century the colonnade surrounding the precinct was pulled down and secular buildings were allowed to encroach upon the once-sacred area. Such a dramatic decline must imply a change in the pattern of ritual observance but it need not mean that the temple had been abandoned. The end, however, was not far in the future.

The precinct continued to be used for many decades but mud and refuse was now allowed to collect, to be surfaced from time to time with spreads of cobbling incorporating fragments of monumental buildings. The end of the old sanctuary as a pagan shrine came some time in the fifth century when the altar was dismantled. Thereafter several phases of repaving followed before we find sculptured blocks from the temple pediment being used as paving slabs. The collapse (or demolition) of the temple facade provides a dramatic and decisive end to the story.

How the temple site fared in the Saxon period is difficult to define in detail, and is, anyway, not relevant to the present paper. Suffice it to say that there is some evidence to suggest that the precinct remained a topographical unit into the eleventh century and it is possible that in the precinct containing the tholos one of the Saxon precursors of the Norman abbey was sited. It may even be that the podium of the temple of Sulis Minerva was incorporated, in some way, into the new Christian ensemble. But without more extensive evidence than it at present seems feasible to extract we are unlikely to know if there was any degree of direct continuity between the pagan structures and their Christian successors.

Retrospect and prospect

The campaign of excavations undertaken from 1978–1984 marks, at least temporarily, an end to the exploration of the temple of Sulis Minerva. But much remains to be done, and can be done. At the time of writing, the Cross Bath is about to receive the archaeological attention it deserves and a feasibility study is in progress to consider the exploration of the site of the tholos. Meanwhile archaeological work

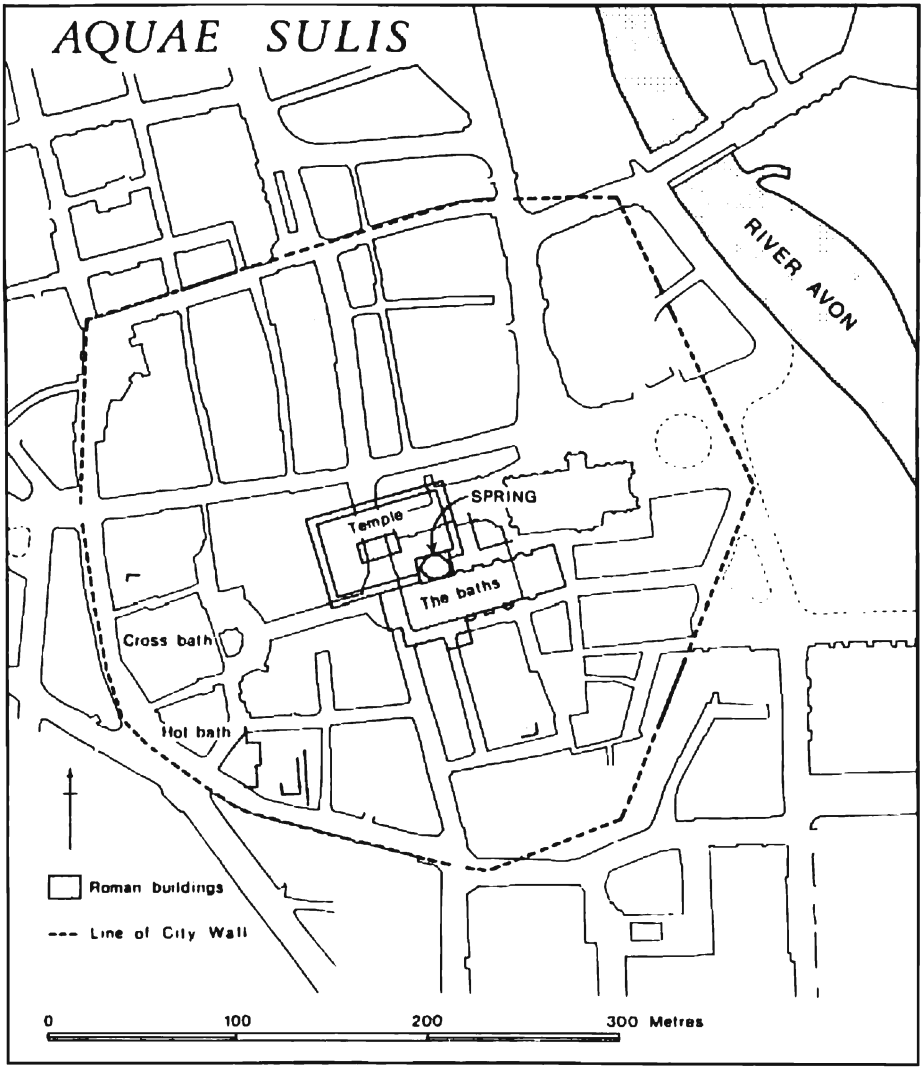

Fig. 11 Aquae Sulis: general plan.

elsewhere within the city continues in advance of development. At any moment further dramatic discoveries could be made. While the present paper is an up-to-date summary of present evidence and thought, it is, at best, only an interim statement.

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Roman or Celtic Temples? A case study

Peter D. Horne

At the beginning of this century a rather unusual temple was discovered in the Roman town of *Aventicum*, in present day Switzerland. This paper studies firstly, the evidence for, and the probable original appearance of, this building, and secondly, other temples of similar form with an emphasis on the relative importance of Roman and Celtic influence on their architecture.

'La Grange-des-Dîmes', Avenches: a Roman or Celtic temple?

The temple at the 'Grange-des-Dîmes', Avenches (Avenches *A*) has usually been considered to be a Romano-Celtic temple[1] (Wheeler 1928, no. 65; Grenier 1958, 559; Bögli 1972, 181) but a recent monograph by M. Verzár (1978) has concluded that it was of an essentially Roman classical type. This important work provides for the first time a detailed study of the architectural stonework associated with the temple as well as summarizing the evidence from all previous excavations of the site. As the plan of the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' temple is basically two concentric squares (Fig. 1a), the conclusion that this was a classical style temple, if proved correct, throws in doubt the commonly accepted belief that the large number of temples with a concentric plan found in the Celtic areas of the Roman Empire were all of the Romano-Celtic architectural type. This is particularly true for the majority of such temples, which provide far less evidence for their original appearance than does the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' temple. It is for this reason that the evidence from this temple must be examined in some detail. The reconstruction of the overall form of the temple presented below is rather different from that proposed by Verzár (1978, 25–29), but in matters of detail owes a great debt to Verzár's work.

The archaeological evidence can be divided into two categories:-

1. The foundations of the temple.
2. The architectural stonework.

This division is important as none of the architectural blocks were found *in situ* as part of the temple and therefore cannot be associated with it with absolute certainty.

The foundations of the temple

The main features of the plan of the temple as recovered by excavation are two concentric rectangles with further substantial substructions extending some 10 m to the east (Fig. 1a). The interpretation of this latter feature is not in question as it seems unlikely that these major foundations had any direct structural connection with the superstructure of the temple (they appear to be butt-jointed onto the outer wall—see Meyer 1968, Taf. 22 and Verzár 1978, pl. 20.1). The probable function of these foundations was as a support for monumental steps leading up to the podium on which the temple was built. Bases, perhaps for statues, flanked the junction of steps and podium. As none of the actual steps survive, nor is there any evidence for doorways in either the inner or outer rectangles, the original height of the podium must remain conjectural, but it is important to remember that Fig. 1a is the plan of the temple below floor level. Whilst the foundations to the east are not themselves structurally important they do indicate the position and width of the entrance facade to the outer rectangle.

The plan of the foundations, with two concentric rectangles and an eastern entrance, is essentially the same as that of over 300 other temples in the Celtic parts of the Roman Empire (Horne & King 1980) and on this basis alone the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' temple would usually be termed Romano-Celtic. However, there are a number of points of detail which are unusual and require some explanation before this epithet can be justly applied. The most obvious way in which this temple differs from the normal Romano-Celtic plan is in the relative thicknesses of the *cella* and ambulatory walls. The *cella* wall appears to be rather narrow to support a tower, as is usual in this type of structure, but this is in fact due to the inordinate width of the ambulatory wall. The dangers of interpreting wall height and construction on the basis of the width of wall foundations has been considered in some detail elsewhere (e.g. Muckelroy 1976, 175) and at 0.75 m wide the *cella* wall of this temple compares favourably with those of other Romano-Celtic temples of similar dimensions (e.g. Trier *R* *cella* 11.7 × 9.3 m, *cella* wall 0.6 m wide). The apparently excessive width of the ambulatory wall can be explained by the need to contain a high podium and also to support decorative features, such as engaged columns, on the ambulatory wall discussed further below. Another unusual feature of the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' temple is that the *cella* is wider than it is deep; but the difference is only slight and this can be paralleled by a few other Romano-Celtic temples such as Koblenz and Trier *S*. A more important variation from the Romano-Celtic norm is the presence of large piers at the eastern corners of the *cella* wall and in the space between the *cella* and

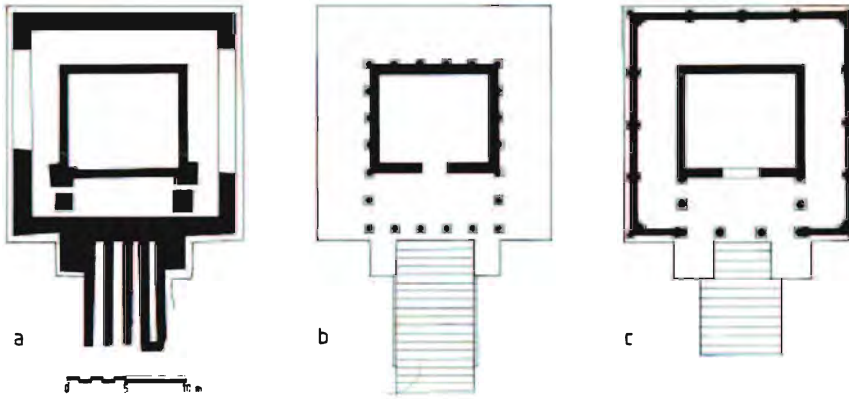

Fig. 1 The temple at 'La Grange-des-Dîmes', Avenches: a, *excavated plan (after Verzàr 1978, Fig. 1),* b, *reconstructed plan after Verzàr (1978, Fig. 6);* c, *alternative reconstruction.*

ambulatory walls. These must indicate a major structural feature and the conclusion seems inescapable that in this area at least the temple differed from the usual Romano-Celtic appearance.

Verzàr suggests four possible reconstructions of the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' temple that do not look to Romano-Celtic architecture for their inspiration but rather to classical models (1978, Figs 5 & 6). In each of these reconstructed plans the inner rectangle marks the position of the *cella*, and a *pronaos* is defined by the masonry piers to the east along with that part of the outer rectangle opposite the *cella*, as in Fig. 1b. Such a reconstruction leaves unexplained, and therefore presumably open to the air, the broad area of podium on the other three sides of the *cella*—a feature for which I have been unable to find a parallel.

The conclusions from the evidence of the plan of the temple can therefore be, either that it was a temple of the Romano-Celtic type with an unusual construction on the eastern side, or that it was a classical temple set on an unnecessarily broad podium; in either case special pleading is necessary.

The architectural stonework

The excavations of the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' temple have produced an important collection of architectural stonework that is catalogued comprehensively by Verzàr (1978, 9–24). The presence of such material alone might seem to favour the argument that this was a classical style temple, but columns are also a well attested feature of many Romano-Celtic temple sites (Wilson 1980, 28) and there are a number of sanctuaries known where quite elaborate classical style architectural decoration is associated with a temple of normal Romano-Celtic plan (e.g. Champlieu, St Amand-sur-Ornain). I do not intend here to consider the parallels for, and the implications of, the decorative schemes ornamenting these architectural blocks (aspects examined in detail by Verzàr 1978, 33–46), but rather I wish to study the purely structural implications of this material.

The most distinctive of the items of architectural stonework are a series of large rectangular blocks ornamented with medallions bearing the faces of deities. The most likely origin for these blocks is, as Verzàr has suggested, from a decorative frieze adorning the lower part of the outer face of the podium/ambulatory wall, either all the way round (as in Verzàr 1978, Fig. 8) or perhaps just on the east side including the faces of the large bases flanking the monumental steps.

Other items of architectural stonework are rather more important for the understanding of the original structure of the temple. They consist of several fragments of engaged columns (diameter *c.* 50 cm), a single large column base (diameter *c.* 82 cm) and a large number of blocks from a single entablature. On this evidence Verzàr suggests four alternative reconstructed plans for the temple (1978, Figs 5 & 6). All of these use the classical pseudo-peripteral arrangement and are based on the assumption that some of the architectural blocks found in proximity to the temple did not originate from it. As many of the blocks appear to have been already collected together in antiquity it seems likely, as Verzàr proposes (1978, 26), that they were destined for a lime kiln and therefore might have been brought to the site from other locations. Three of Verzàr's reconstructed plans are based on the smaller

size of column (*A*, *B*, & *D* – the last is the preferred one and is presented here as Fig. 1b). These plans assume that not only does the large column base come from a different structure, but so does one of the engaged column fragments (Verzár 1978, Cat. No. 19). The latter is part of a double engaged column from an *internal* angle and therefore, despite being of the same dimensions and appearance as the other engaged column fragments, cannot be included in the suggested pseudo-peripteral arrangement. The fourth plan (Verzár *C*) is based on the larger size of column; this has the advantage that this size of column is more in proportion with the recovered entablature (Verzár 1978, 22). However, Verzár thinks this reconstruction unlikely on the basis that the columns would be over-large for such a small temple and moreover it requires the rejection of all the fragments of smaller columns (1978, 22 & 25).

An alternative reconstruction[2]

The evidence from the 'Grange-des-Dimes' temple allows for an alternative reconstruction combining two architectural styles, i.e. a Romano-Celtic temple with a classical *pronaos* incorporated within the front ambulatory (Figs 1c & 2).[3] This is of course a reconstruction along similar lines to that proposed by Wilson for the Lenus Mars temple at Trier-Heidenborn (1975, Fig. 10). Not only does this configuration have a structure that fully uses the known foundations of the 'Grange-des-Dimes' temple, but also it allows for the incorporation of all the recovered architectural stonework. The larger size of column would have fronted the *pronaos*, supporting the recovered entablature and a pediment (as in Verzár *C*), whilst the smaller engaged columns would have been a decorative feature of the ambulatory. The two column sizes are evidence that the *pronaos* and ambulatory were roofed at different heights. However, the available evidence for the 'Grange-des-Dimes' temple is not so complete as to allow for only the one reconstruction shown here; a number of variations on this basic theme are possible.

Fig. 1c shows the *pronaos* entirely supported on columns but a feasible alternative would be with only a facade of columns, the sides of the pronaos being supported on masonry piers (as in Wilson 1975, Fig. 10); this would have the advantage of simplifying the junction of the ambulatory roof with the side elements of the *pronaos*.[4] As we have only the plan of the temple below floor level another unknown is the exact width of the *pronaos*. The reconstructions here are based on an entablature of exactly the same width as the *cella*, but a slightly wider *pronaos* (suggested by the piers at the front of the *cella*) is also possible.

The exact nature of the ambulatory wall also remains speculative. The width of the foundations would allow for a solid ambulatory wall embellished with engaged columns both internally and externally as shown in Fig. 1c (internal engaged columns are evidenced by the above mentioned double column; Verzár 1978, Cat. No. 19) On the other hand, the ambulatory wall may have had internal engaged columns and simple pilasters externally, an arrangement suggested by the ground

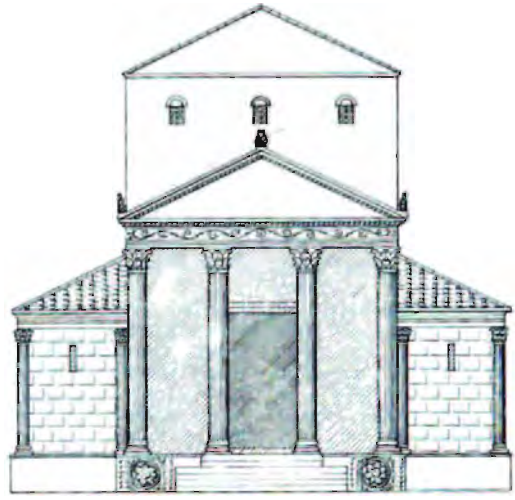

Fig. 2 Proposed elevation of the 'Grange-des-Dimes' temple, scale 1:200.

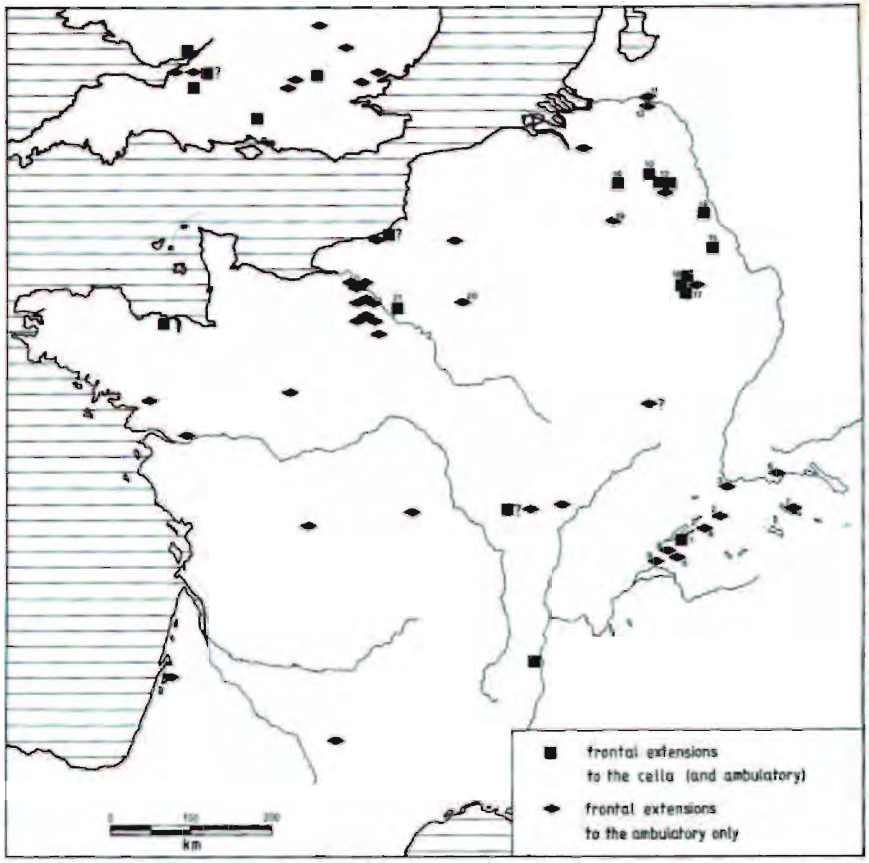

Fig. 3 Distribution of Romano-Celtic temples with frontal extensions. (1, Avenches; 2, Aeschi; 3, Augst; 4, Bern-Engehalbinsel; 5, Riaz; 6, Schleitheim; 7, Ufenau, 8, Ursins; 9, Vidy-Lausanne; 10, Aachen; 11, Elst; 12, Kornelimünster; 13, Nijmegen; 14, Pesch; 15, Pommern; 16, Tongeren; 17, Trier; 18, Trier-Heidenborn; 19, Vervoz, 20, Champlieu; 21, Genainville.)

plan of the temple Augst *D* (Sichelin II) (Fig. 6); here the ambulatory wall is characterized by the provision of regularly spaced rectangular projections that are slight on the external face but much more substantial on the interior. The internal corners of the ambulatory wall at Augst D have double square projections that would be ideal for seating a double engaged column like that found at Avenches. Another example of a Romano-Celtic temple that is known to have had a solid ambulatory wall decorated externally with pilasters, and in this case a blind arcade, is the double temple at Genainville (Mitard 1981, 6). As both solid-walled and colonnaded ambulatories are well attested (e.g. Wilson 1980, 28) this compromise arrangement may also have been quite common.[5]

In conclusion therefore, it seems that whilst a reconstruction of the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' building as a classical temple is feasible there are two main factors weighing against it. Firstly such a reconstruction requires a selective use of the evidence, and secondly any parallel for this arrangement is extremely difficult to find as Verzàr admits (1978, 29–30). Only the plan of the temple at Champlieu (Cauchemé 1912, pl. II; Grenier 1958, 407-15) is closely comparable, but recent

excavations have now shown this plan to be wrong (*Gallia* 39, 1981, 275–7); in fact this is another example of a Romano-Celtic temple with a strong classical element in its decoration.[6] There are also a number of problems with the alternative reconstruction proposed here, particularly with respect to the junction of ambulatory and roof at roof level, but this is perhaps only to be expected in a structure that combines elements of two different architectural traditions.[7] Strong arguments in favour of this reconstruction are its non-selective use of all the available evidence, and that there are no aspects of the architecture that cannot be paralleled at other Romano-Celtic temple sites.

Classicized Romano-Celtic Temples

In the previous section of this paper only one or two temples of a classicized Romano-Celtic design have been mentioned, but in fact there are a number of such temples. Fig. 3 shows the distribution of all Romano-Celtic temples which have a frontal extension of the *cella* and/or ambulatory (other than in the form of annexes, as at Springhead). The map shows that they occur in all areas where standard Romano-Celtic temples occur, but that they are predominantly found in four areas:- Britain, the Lower Seine and Somme, Trier and *Germania Inferior*, and south-eastern *Germania Superior*. Internal similarities within these groupings suggest they are valid, but their precise definition is, no doubt, in part due to the high quality of archaeological fieldwork in these areas. Temples in the British and Lower Seine groups (mainly having elaborate entrances to their ambulatories that had no effect on the main part of the Romano-Celtic plan) along with individual temples with this variation, will be discussed elsewhere. Here the aim is merely to set the Avenches, 'Grange-des-Dimes' temple in its proper context. Whilst Fig. 3 shows that the 'Grange-des-Dimes' temple lies within a geographically closely knit group of temples, its architectural peculiarities find their closest parallels in the much studied group of temples in the Trier area. (As there are relatively few temples of any sort known in the area between Augst and Trier, it is possible that these are not really two distinct groups but simply the extremes of a larger group that spread in a wide north-south band along the Rhine.)

Trier and Germania Inferior

Fig. 4 shows those temples in the Trier and *Germania Inferior* area that have a strong frontal aspect to their ground plans. Probably the best known of these is the Lenus-Mars temple at Trier-Heidenborn where the side walls of the *cella* are continued across the front ambulatory and project in front of it to form a stairwell. Of similar plan are the temples Trier *B* and Kornelimünster *B*, and the Aachen and Pommern *C* temples, with projections of the *cella* wall matched by projections on the interior of the ambulatory wall, may be considered analogous. The Kornelimünster *C* temple is also probably essentially the same, but here the projections of the *cella* wall are not matched on the ambulatory wall; however, the presence of wide steps the same width as the *cella* suggest that the front part of the ambulatory opposite the *cella* was architecturally defined. This argument could be extended to include in the group the Trier *S* and Kornelimünster *A* temples, each with stairwells in front of their ambulatories the same width as their *cellae* (particularly in the case of the latter as it seems to have formed a pair with Kornelimünster *C*). Finally the small Trier *H* temple, with its unusual ground plan, may be of related type. Here the front ambulatory appears to be missing, but it may be that the frontal aspect was not archaeologically evident (e.g. two column bases) and that here again is a defined area in front of the *cella*.

The three principal possible reconstructions for this type of temple, along with their history, have been discussed by Wilson (1975) with particular reference to the Trier-Heidenborn and Trier *B* temples. Their main characteristics are illustrated here in simplified form (Fig. 5). As Wilson says (1975, 23), the reconstruction as a purely classical temple with an ambulatory tacked on to three sides (Fig. 5a) belies the strong Romano-Celtic nature of the plan and is therefore unlikely. More probable are the second two options (Fig. 5b & c) with a *pronaos* incorporated into the Romano-Celtic plan. When it is known that a temple used more than one size of column in its construction, as at Avenches *A* and Trier-Heidenborn, then a reconstruction as in Figs 2 & 5b is more plausible. However, from the ground plan alone it will usually be impossible to say which of these two forms was used, especially as the 2:1 proportions of overall width to *cella* width usually found in Romano-Celtic temples are particularly well suited to the form shown in Fig. 5c; in this reconstruction the apex of the roof of the pediment would be at the same height as the ambulatory roof apex only when the *cella* was exactly twice the width of the ambulatory (assuming the same roof pitch). As we are clearly dealing with a fusion of architectural styles, one might expect there to have been some variation in the ways they were combined, and so it seems likely that both types could have existed. Whichever of these forms was adopted these temples form an architecturally fairly uniform group, i.e. Romano-Celtic temples that have been classicized by the addition of a *pronaos* that is the same width as the *cella*.

A few other temples in this same general area display features that show different ways in which the Romano-Celtic temple could be, to varying degrees, classicized (Fig. 4).

Temple *B* at Pesch is usually, and probably correctly, considered to have been basilical, but there are elements of its plan that betray a strong influence from Romano-Celtic architecture. Not only is the building square in

plan, but also the concentric central area is present—defined by the stylobate walls which do not interrupt what might be termed the ambulatory (see Fig. 4).[8] The rather more complex plan of the temple at Tongeren hides two phases of construction and is difficult to reconstruct with any certainty. Essentially though the intention seems to have been similar to that at Trier-Heidenborn, i.e. to provide a grand classical facade and yet retain the Romano-Celtic plan. The main difference between this temple and that at Trier-Heidenborn is that here the *pronaos* is somewhat narrower than the *cella*. Another form of classicization is displayed by the Romano-Celtic temples at Elst and Nijmegen. Their plans are slightly elongated and, rather than the usual simple central entrance to the ambulatory, they are provided with foundations for steps up to the ambulatory across its whole width.

The classicized Romano-Celtic temples in Trier and *Germania Inferior* area seem to belong mainly to one architectural type, but there seems to have been some experimentation with different styles. In this light it is worth noting that those temples with the simplest form of classicization are probably also the earliest; the Elst and Nijmegen temples are of late first century date whilst the others (with the possible exceptions of Kornelimünster *A* & *C*) belong to the second century.

South-eastern Germania Superior

The 'Grange-des-Dîmes' temple is one of a group of Romano-Celtic temples that are closely related both geographically and in plan (Figs 3 & 6). Five of these temples not only have similar ground plans, with foundations for steps extending in front of their ambulatories, but also are of similar size (overall between 320 & 440 m^2) (Fig. 6 Augst *D*, Avenches *A*, Bern-Engehalbinsel *A*, Schleitheim and Ufenau). A sixth temple, at Riaz, also has foundations in front of its ambulatory and is probably of similar size.[9] However, only the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' temple in this group has evidence for a major structural alteration to the Romano-Celtic plan and so is likely originally to have had an appearance like Fig. 5b. Nevertheless, at all the other sites a reconstruction with a pediment as a feature of the ambulatory roof seems possible, particularly in the case of Augst *D* where the ambulatory wall appears to have been ornamented with pilasters. The Augst *D* temple is unusual in that there are major entrances to the ambulatory at both the front and rear of the temple. Parallels for this treatment are few but one is the double temple at Genainville which also used a combination of Romano-Celtic and classical architecture (Mitard 1981, 5).

A number of other temples in this area may also have had a classical style entrance to their ambulatories; Martigny *B* and Studen *B* had steps leading up to a podium; the temple at Ursins had a thickening of the front ambulatory wall for at least one step; at Windisch columns or pilasters flanked the entrance; at Vidy-Lausanne the entrance to the ambulatory was fronted by a two columned porch. The temple at Aeschi, with a plan that is very similar to the Elst temple, may also have had steps across the whole width of the front ambulatory. Finally one outlier to the group should be mentioned. The temple at Izernore, 120 km south-west of Avenches, also has a mixture of Romano-Celtic and classical styles and incorporates double engaged columns such as are probable features of the Avenches *A* and Augst *D* temples discussed above.

In summary, there are many Romano-Celtic temples (actually a majority of all those known) in the southern Germania Superior area that display some elements of classicization. Whilst a simple porch, as at Vidy-Lausanne, may have been borrowed from Roman secular practice, the provision of a podium and wide steps leading up to the entrance are features taken from classical religious architecture. At only one temple, the 'Grange-des-Dîmes', Avenches, does this fusion of styles lead to any alteration of the internal arrangement of the Romano-Celtic temple, but many temples may have had a classical facade. The strong similarities in the plans of the Avenches *A*, Augst *D* and other temples with provision for wide steps shown in Fig. 6 suggests they may also have conformed to a similar outward appearance, such as Fig. 5b & c. However, in the absence of architectural remains like those found at the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' this must remain speculative.

Discussion

This paper has so far been concerned with the fields of architecture and archaeology, but as the buildings considered are temples it is perhaps worth trying to infer, from their evidence, what we can about the religious practices of the people who built and used them. The concept of *interpretatio Romana*, whereby Roman names were ascribed to native deities, is well known and well attested. Less well known is the degree to which native religious practices were affected by Roman conquest and rule, particularly in the Celtic world. We do know that the Celtic practice of human sacrifice was outlawed in the Roman period, but more everyday forms of worship and sacrifice may well have continued unchanged from the pre-conquest era.

The continuity of use of specific ritual areas has been shown at many sites (e.g. Gournay-sur-Aronde; *Gallia 39, 1981, 270–4; Brunaux & Meniel 1983) and often the* pre-Roman layout of the sanctuary and form of the temple was maintained into the Roman period (e.g. Hayling Island; Downey, King & Soffe 1980, Tremblois). Here is not the place to go into a detailed discussion of the origins of the Romano-Celtic temple, but it is important to note that, from the evidence of the distribution alone (Lewis 1966, Fig. 38; Horne & King 1980, Fig. 17.1), this is a specifically Celtic architectural form. Furthermore, as there is no parallel for the tower-*cella* and concentric lean-to ambulatory of this building

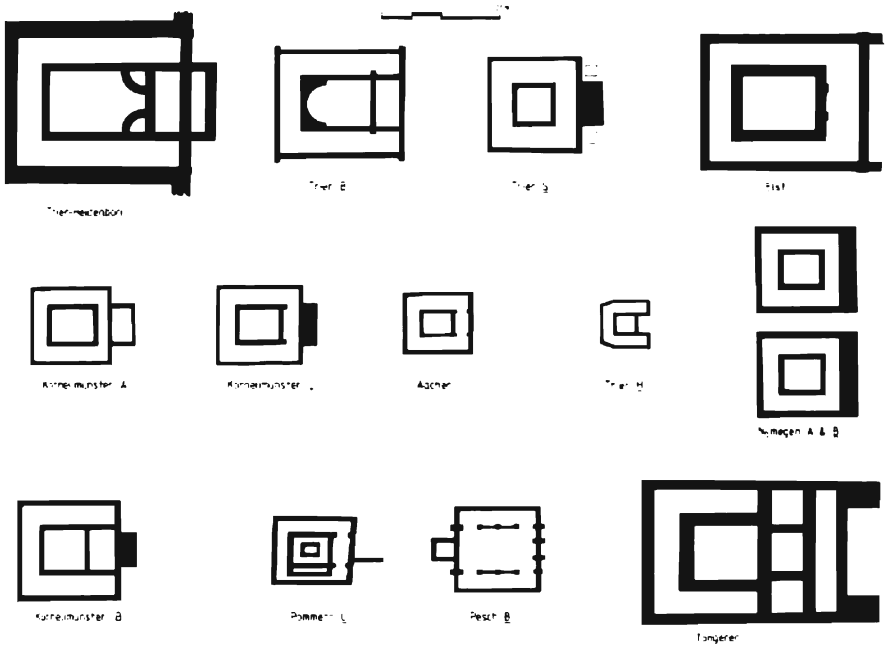

Fig. 4 Classicized Romano-Celtic temples in the Trier and Germania Inferior area.

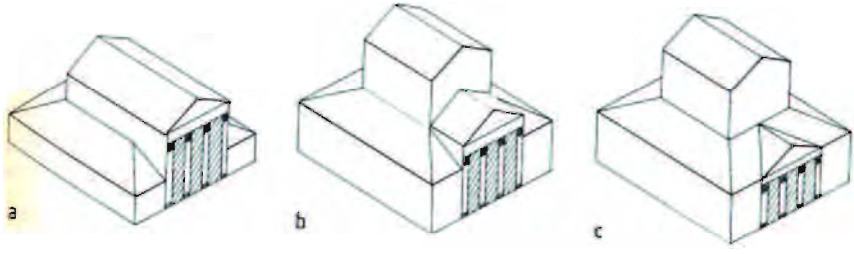

Fig. 5 Classicized Romano-Celtic temples—possible reconstructions: a. *following Krencker (Gose 1955, Fig. 85),* b. *following Wilson (1975, Fig. 10),* c. *following Mylius (Gose 1955, Fig. 101)*

type in classical religious architecture, the 'Romano-' prefix is probably only to be justified at most sites because of the date of the known structures and the building methods used. Only in the cases of those temples described above as classicized can Roman religious architecture be said to have had any real effect on the basic form of the structure. Not only was the Romano-Celtic temple an architectural form that was popular for a remarkably long period (Horne 1981), but also temples of this type were common, with a frequency similar to that of parish churches, at least in some areas (e.g. the Somme valley; Agache & Breart 1975, and the department of Loir-et-Cher: Délétang 1983). In contrast the classical style of temple seems to have never gained widespread acceptance in the Celtic world outside of towns, and towns seem also to have been well supplied with temples of Romano-Celtic form (e.g. Trier, Augst, Colchester). Only one or two examples of classical style temples replacing native religious buildings on a pre-existing cult site are known (e.g. Augst, St. Léomer). This suggests that the two temple forms were not readily interchanged and, as one might expect, there was a certain conservatism amongst the native population where religious matters were concerned. In the light of this basic dichotomy, those temples where there is evidence for an attempt to combine the two architectural forms are of particular interest. The classicized Romano-Celtic temple is a hybrid resulting from the careful selection of certain characteristics of the parent structures and so will show us which elements were considered to be most important. In the Trier-Heidenborn and Avenches, 'Granges-des-Dîmes' temples the architecture of the facades and the decorative elements are strongly classical in style, yet the temples retain their Celtic identity with their concentric plans (and probable tower-*cellae*). The implication from these structures must surely be that whilst the classical architectural facade was considered most impressive and therefore desirable, the form of the classical temple itself was not considered suitable. The retention of the traditional architectural form may have been due to a continuing religious practice that was best served by a concentric temple, though whether this was a rite of circumambulation remains unknown. It is hardly surprising that those temples which show the strongest form of classicization (Trier-Heidenborn, Augst *D* and Avenches *A*) are related to important towns where the effects of Romanization would have been most pronounced. What is perhaps surprising, is that native Celtic elements of religion should remain of major importance for so long a period even in such urban contexts.

The comments above could be applied to all temples in the Celtic world that display a mixture of classical and native styles, but the existence of a group, or groups, of temples that have a specific combined architectural form suggests some further reason is involved. The group of classicized Romano-Celtic temples in the Trier area discussed above include temples in both towns and more rural settings (Pommern and Kornelimünster). This may simply be a reflection of the degree to which Romanization had influenced life, and hence architecture, in the countryside as well as the towns, perhaps due to the wealth of the region (the numerous large villas in the area around Trier are well known; Percival 1976, 82). Alternatively, this regional group may have been due to a specific local cult that found the combined Roman and Celtic temple form particularly suited to their needs. Our knowledge of the deities to which specific temples were dedicated is too limited to allow any firm conclusions on this point, but a tentative case can be made for the cult of Lenus Mars being associated with this form of temple. This deity seems to have been of special importance in the lands of the Treveri (Thevenot 1968, 62) and is attested at two of the sanctuaries with classicized Romano-Celtic temples (Trier-Heidenborn and Pommern). (In Britain one of only two attested inscriptions to this deity (Ross 1967, 173 & 185) is from Caerwent where there is also a Romano-Celtic temple which has many similarities in plan with some of the temple in the Trier group (Nash-Wlliams 1952).)

Whatever the reason for this classicized Romano-Celtic temple form, whether as a result of a development of cult or simply of architectural expression, the important point is that this was a superficial transformation; the essential features of the native architectural form were retained. This phenomenon of a continued use of a traditional form of religious building but with varying degrees of Roman influence apparent in their decor and architecture is not one peculiar to the Celtic world. In other parts of the Empire temples were built to serve established local cults, and whilst their decorative schemes and grand design often show evidence of Roman planning, they also preserve indigenous temple forms. What are probably the best examples of this mixing of styles are to be found in the eastern Empire, at the Baalbeck sanctuary, the temple of Bel at Palmyra, and the 'Qas'r el-Bint' temple at Petra (Ward-Perkins 1981, 317, 354–7 & 332–4). An even closer parallel to the Celtic temples discussed above is to be found in the temples of the sanctuary of Ba'alshamin at Si (Ward-Perkins 1981, 339–41, Fig. 220). These preserve their traditional local plan (again a square within a square—though here there is no suggestion of a tower-*cella*) but with the addition of a facade using the familiar Roman columns and pediment arrangement.

There is an argument that, despite the obvious Roman respect for local deities, the element of religious continuity in different regions of the Empire was of minor importance; all cults would have become Romanized, retaining only a flavour of their original nature (Henig 1984). However, I would argue that the level of Romanization evidenced by the architecture of the religious buildings in the Celtic world suggests the

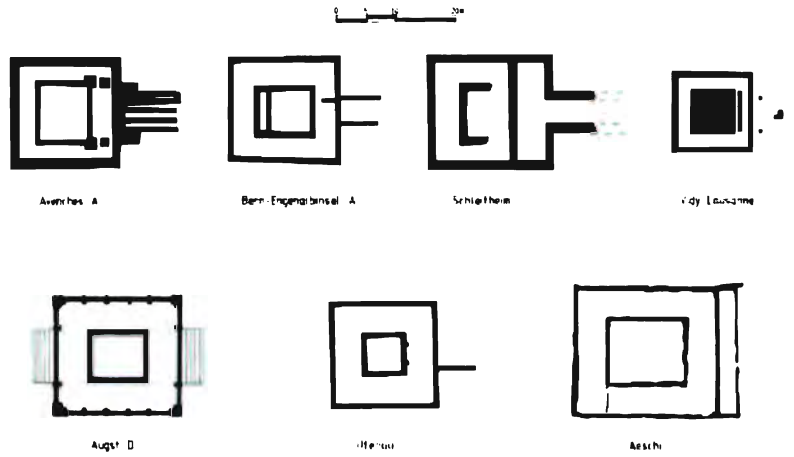

Fig. 6 Classicized Romano-Celtic temples in the area around Avenches.

opposite view. In Britain, Gaul and the Germanies the most common form of religious building is the Romano-Celtic temple – a non-Roman architectural type. Even in those temples discussed above incorporating major elements of classical religious architecture, the Romanization was only at the level of a façade, and the essentially Celtic nature of the temple was retained. As the temple and its surroundings *temenos* would have been the main focus for religious activity, the continued use of a traditional form in their architecture implies the religious practices may also have continued in their traditional form. Therefore, whilst the cult may have accepted a Roman epithet for its deity and utilized the full benefits of Roman material culture the method of worship in the Roman period may have been little different from that of the pre-conquest era.

Notes

1. The phrase 'Romano-Celtic temple' is used throughout this paper to refer to the specific architectural type, which in plan consists of two concentric squares or rectangles, and in elevation conforms to the appearance of the 'Temple of Janus' at Autun, i.e. a tower *cella* surrounded by a lean-to ambulatory roofed at a lower level. Further details and bibliographies for specific temples mentioned in the text can be found in Horne & King 1980.
2. I am grateful to T. F. C. Blagg for his helpful comments on this reconstruction of the 'Grange-des-Dîmes' temple. He has also suggested an alternative to this reconstruction, which although similar in spirit differs in detail – see Note 4.
3. The reconstructed elevation presented here, Fig. 2, is based on the proportions of the 'Temple of Janus' at Autun combined with a classical façade using the dimensions of the recovered column and entablature fragments as published in Verzár (1978). The number of steps, rusticated walling of the ambulatory, and all windows are entirely hypothetical.
4. T. F. C. Blagg has made the interesting suggestion that all the column fragments may have originated from the *pronaos* structure with the larger column size only appearing as a tetrastyle façade. The rest of the *pronaos* structure would then have been supported by the smaller size of column surmounted by blank walling, again simplifying the junction of ambulatory roof and *pronaos*.
5. Other possibilities, if Blagg's suggestion is correct (see Note 4.), are that the ambulatory wall was only decorated with pilasters, or with neither pilasters nor engaged columns.
6. The temples at Mazeroy (St. Amand-sur-Ornain) and Augst (Sichelin II-*D*, here Fig. 6) also cited by Verzár (1978, 29–30) appear to be structurally essentially Romano-Celtic, but again with classical elements in their design and decoration. Verzár rejects the Trier Lenus-Mars temple as a possible comparable type without explanation.
7. An alternative to the reconstruction given here (Fig. 2) might be to use a slightly steeper roof angle (c. 30°) and continue the roofs of the side ambulatories across the front ambulatory. This would allow the ambulatory roof apex to meet the *pronaos* at the base of the entablature.
8. For another example of a non-Romano-Celtic temple that may have used elements of Romano-Celtic architecture in its construction see King (1983, 232).
9. Unfortunately there is no scale on the plan published in Schwab (1975).

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Cult and Ritual Practices at *Argentomagus*, Indre, France

Isabelle Fauduet

Argentomagus is a Roman market town, partly occupying the site of an Iron Age oppidum above the River Creuse, near Argenton (Indre). Occupation in the La Tène period is, at present, attested only by Celtic coins and by the lowest layers in one stratigraphical sequence which runs from La Tène III to the fourth century AD.

In addition to revealing the persistence of native craftsmanship through the first century, one of the most important results of twenty years of investigation at the site has been the demonstration that imported gods were simply superimposed on established local customs and religious practices. In particular, the excavation of two square temples or *fana* by Jacques Allain and the *Association pour la Sauvegarde d'Argentomagus* in 1970 has provided revealing evidence for native cult (Picard 1971, 62).

The temples stood within a four-sided enclosure which had a central gallery, dividing the courtyard into two distinct areas (Fig. 1). A small squarish building at the east end, discovered two years ago by Gerard Coulon, contained several pieces of votive sculpture (as yet unpublished). The two buildings, which dated from the second half of the first century AD, were built over the foundations of two older native temples dating from the early first century; very few finds appear to be earlier. After their destruction at the end of the third century, the temples seem to have been abandoned, and the presence of a few coins dating from the early fourth century does not signify a revival of religious activity.

Not far from this area, some 200 metres to the east, is a sacred fountain, consisting of a basin, six metres square, provided with wide steps on the north and south sides (14 and 15 steps respectively). It was erected in the Flavian period above a series of ritual pits dating from the first half of the century.

A few indications suggest the identities of the deities for whom these monuments were erected. Some dedications to Mercury, dating from the end of the second century, have been found, together with several pieces of sculpture (Picard 1971, 621; 1972, 321; 1974, 308). As well as limestone and bronze figures and attributes in Graeco-Roman style, native terracottas and other crude representations of the god attest a combination of Roman and native types. Very few other Roman gods are attested from the recent excavations: a small bronze eagle may relate to Jupiter, and both Minerva and Apollo are portrayed on fragments from lamps. Such oriental deities whose presence is recorded on the site (Allain 1978) were evidently assimilated to native fertility gods. Most of the deities venerated at Argentomagus are undoubtedly Celtic. The Mother Goddess is represented by several types of figure; she is portrayed holding a cornucopia, as Fortuna or Rosmerta, and as Venus surrounded by children (on a terracotta figurine). It seems that the 'squatting god', perhaps to be equated with Cernunnos, was particularly selected for honour at Argentomagus, as he was throughout Central Gaul (Cravayat 1956, 211). Five limestone representations are known at

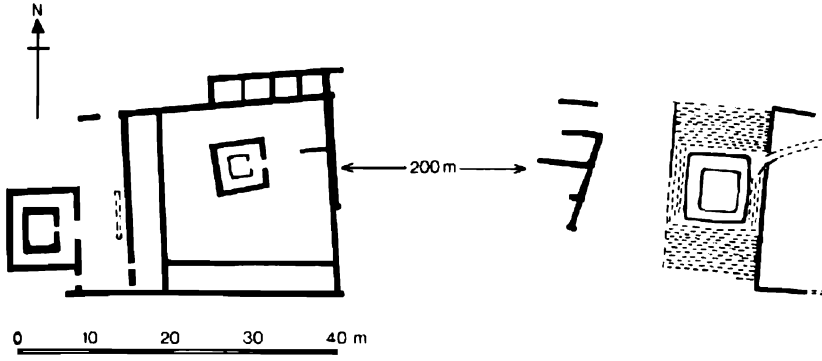

Fig. 1 Temples and fountain at Argentomagus (before 1982). Redrawn by Alison Wilkins, after P. Trotignon.

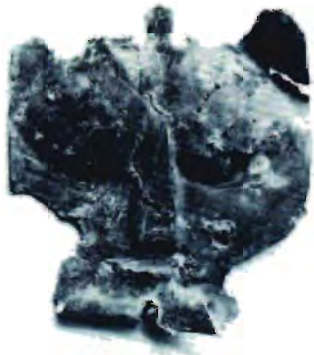

Fig. 2 Bronze mask (ht 5 cm) from a pit in the temple area.

present, although only two have been found in the temple area. Their heads are missing, but one figure bears the inscription AVG E.[1] Most of the votive sculpture comes from the destruction layer of the temples but it is not easy to ascertain whether all of it dates after the reconstruction at the end of the second century or whether some items are earlier.

Apart from the offerings, we have little evidence for cults devoted to specific deities. Native shrines may have sheltered more than one god, and pilgrims could have intended their offerings for different recipients. Some of the sculptures may, indeed, have been identified with a variety of deities. Crude anthropomorphic statuettes, such as the fragment showing a deity or perhaps a dedicator holding a small quadruped, remain anonymous, as does the subject of a small bronze votive mask (Fig. 2) found in a pit. This belongs to a class of offering widespread on religious sites of which that from Vieil-Evreux is perhaps the most characteristic (Mitard 1982). Miniature ex-votos have also been found (Fauduet 1983). Three identical model axes found in the temples area are ornamented with three crescents on their blades. They belong to a category widespread in western Gaul and southern England (Green 1976, 49). Few appear to have been dedicated to specific deities in contrast to those from Allmendingen in Switzerland (Forrer 1948, pl. ii f.), where each one bears the name of a different god or goddess (for example Minerva, Mercury, Mars and the Matres). Examples have been found in temples dedicated to different gods, to Mars Caturix at Riaz (Vauthey 1982, 66) and to Mercury at Uley (Ellison 1980, 305) for example. Since the form of the blade does not correspond with that of a weapon, they may symbolize some type of ceremonial implement. The presence of three examples at Argentomagus is noteworthy and brings to mind the three model axes from Vieil-Evreux respectively engraved with one, two and three straight lines (Fauduet 1984, 11).

No actual weapons have been found within the area apart from a fragment of a spear and two spear heads. However two model weapons were deposited in a pit backfilled in Claudian times, beneath the drain of the fountain. One is an iron *gladius* with bone handle and scabbard, the other a bronze, hexagonal shield.[2] They were found associated with a flagon of white pottery and pieces of antler. They could have been votive offerings from soldiers or armourers or prophylactic ex-votos such as are found in burials. It is known that weapons were cast in the Roman town during the Late Empire, and a large quantity of metallurgical debris has been found beside the fountain and on the steps of its northern side, some of it dating from the first century. There may be a link between the model weapons and Minerva, who is shown armed and was venerated in the Roman world as the patron of crafts including that of the bronzesmith; she was also associated with healing cults.

The majority of the finds from the late filling of the fountain consisted of dozens of terracottas (mainly images of Venus and of the Mother Goddess), bone pins and counters and bronze artefacts such as *specilla* and spatulas. Among these numerous items were many relating to the *mundus muliebris*, testifying to the cult of a goddess worshipped by women. They contrast with the finds from the temple complex and demonstrate the difference that there must have been between the cults practised in the two areas.

If the organization of religious activity in the surrounds of the fountain is still unknown, through lack of extensive excavation, we know that some kind of ritual existed before its foundation. In one of the deep pits discovered under the steps, a votive deposit included a white pottery flagon upon which a dedication to a native goddess was cut in the Celtic language. It is strong evidence for an early healing cult connected with fertility.[3]

I shall not discuss in detail here the deposits from the different pits which will soon be published. It is sufficient to note that various types of offering were placed on their bottoms or within alternate layers of filling separated by sterile layers. One deposit consisted of eight white pottery flagons from Central Gaul while another included the handle of a ceramic patera ornamented with the head of a ram, a type found in Rhenish burials. Amongst other items, the numerous pieces of antler are notable, and the faunal remains are of interest for the study of animal sacrifices.[4] Several similar pits have been found in the area around the fountain. A deep rectangular pit contained in its lower filling the vertebrae and jaws of two young oxen and the vertebrae of another ox associated with a piece of antler at its top (cf. Fauduet forthcoming). Such features are highly significant for the understanding of native customs. In the temple courtyards, thirty-seven pits,

some being circular shafts, have been excavated (Allain *et al.* 1981, 11). They were distributed all around the temples. As in the fountain area, a few may have been rubbish pits but others must be considered to have been votive as a study of their contents demonstrates. The custom of using pits seems to have been confined here to the first century. None of the pits produced evidence for the veneration of a specific deity but they are surely associated with concepts relating to fertility and the underworld. Several of the finds are highly indicative, amongst them those related to the stag. A tiny bronze antler was deposited together with a pottery lamp (one of the very few found on the site) near butchered cuts of pig (Allain *et al.* 1981). In another pit, two antler tines were found and, in a third, the skull of a stag. Although not found in a pit, an intaglio gem figuring a stag, of a type dated to the third century, should also be noted. There may, in addition, have been a prophylactic purpose in the medallions made from antler, some of which have been found on the site. All these finds perhaps indicate the search for protection and immortality, symbolized by the stag. We may wonder whether they are related to the 'squatting god' (perhaps Cernunnos) attested on the site.

Although they were found in a layer post-dating the destruction of the religious precinct, the six rolled-up lead sheets contained in a tile casket may also have been associated with a chthonic cult. They call to mind one of the functions of Mercury as guide of the dead. They must be curses, like those deposited in burials or springs. In Gaul, very few have been found in sanctuaries, but the numerous *defixiones* from the temple of Uley, dedicated to Mercury, provide a close parallel (Hassell & Tomlin 1970, 340). Animal sacrifices known from the contents of the pits may also have had an other-worldly significance. Parts of oxen and of pigs predominate, as in the pit cited above (Allain *et al.* 1981) where the head of a sow cut into two pieces was deposited above the vertebrae of a young pig, associated with a butcher's knife. Skeletons of birds have been found, and dogs are common (one was buried standing on its hind legs). Present indications, though the study of the faunal remains is not yet complete, are that horses were not sacrificed here.

The absence of altars is in marked contrast to the large number of pits, but hearths or scatters of ash, some of them on tiles or amphora sherds, were found in the southern part of the courtyard. It is important that we try to establish the significance of the various finds from successive layers in the courtyard. Their functions can, for the most part, only be understood if they are related to their findspots. Some, such as the knife or the *simpulum* definitely had a ritual use, but it is a different matter in the case of the many brooches, bone counters, rings and pottery flagons discarded during the first century: it is not easy to distinguish a casual loss from a ritual deposit, although a precise analysis of the location of the finds (e.g. in a pit, inside the cella, over a cremation area), of the degree of wear which they exhibit and of their concentration in specific types of structure may help us to detect traces of religious custom. Another problem is the precise interpretation of particular objects such as the gemstones figuring in one case a satyr and in another Mercury.[5] It is not possible here to describe everything which attests the activities and the attitudes of the worshippers,[6] but the concentration of coins inside the cella cut into two or four pieces, for instance (Cothenet 1974, 275), or a deliberate cut in the rim or foot of certain flagons and other pots, may be significant.

Thanks to the great quantity of dated material from Argentomagus, we have a splendid opportunity of elucidating many aspects of native cult which could otherwise remain unknown. The relationships of different native deities and between known gods and anonymous cult objects will never be perfectly intelligible to us or provide information of the same quality as inscriptions and ancient texts. Nevertheless the material revealed draws us to pose other, more general questions. What kind of devotees entered the consecrated areas? When, and for what purpose, did they practise their rites? And, finally, to what extent did purely native cults remain deeply etched in the minds of the Gauls, at least until the end of the first century AD?

Notes

1. J. J. Hatt has translated the second word as Esus: *cf.* Allain 1975.
2. They have been described in Fauduet 1983, 7. Similar sheaths have mostly been found on civilian sites (Groep 1981). Some of them come from burial deposits: one from Canterbury (I am grateful to S. Groep for this information), others from Bavay (Nord) and near Reims (Marne) (Fauduet 1983, 7). As Dr. Graham Webster has confirmed to me (pers. comm.), the idea of protection is predominant.
3. An interim report on the fourteen pits and shafts of the area is in press: Allain, J. and Fauduet, I. 'Les ensembles clos de la Fontaine des Mersans à Argentomagus' (from a communication of the second author at the Symposium on 'Les ensembles clos du Sud-Ouest', held in June 1984 at Bergerac (Dordogne).
4. The animal bones have not yet been studied, except for the first pit excavated (Albert 1973, 95: 2 cocks, 2 hens, one chick, one woodcock). In another pit, for example, the skull of a goat was deposited.
5. The interpretation of these accessories has been discussed in Albert & Fauduet 1976, and Fauduet 1978, 36.
6. The presence of the word VERCOBRET incised on a piece of pottery calls to mind the existence of public sacrifices (Allain 1981, 1).

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Religious Cults at Roman Godmanchester

H. J. M. Green

Introduction

Thirty years' work at this site on the edge of the Cambridgeshire Fenland has revealed much evidence of religious practices in the Roman town and its neighbourhood (Green 1977).

This paper is a summary report of the excavation of the temples and shrines in the town and a review of burial rites in the cemeteries. Religious objects, which include everything from cult images to personal jewellery, have been found in various contexts. Much of this material has never been published before, or so long ago that its existence has been forgotten. It has therefore been brought together here as a catalogue and includes objects from a range of sites in the locality which may be considered to have a bearing on the nature of the religious life of the settlement. Finally there is a discussion of the Roman and native cults and their possible relationship to local folklore.

The Roman settlement at Godmanchester grew up around the river crossing of the Great Ouse by Ermine Street, the great trunk road to the north, and the junction of two minor roads from Cambridge and Sandy. Within a year or so of the Claudian invasion, military units of legio IX striking north up the Ermine Street had subjugated this part of the Catuvellaunian territory, and founded a network of forts and roads to enable them to hold down the tribesmen. Godmanchester was a key site in their strategic plan, and two successive forts were built on the highest part of the future town site, adjoining the river. When the military presence was eventually withdrawn, the civil settlement around its gates stayed and expanded alongside Ermine Street.

The subsequent history of the Roman town (Fig. 1) has been described elsewhere (Green 1975). The settlement grew rapidly during the late first and early second centuries, despite various fires, and had an essentially linear plan. Shortly after AD 120 the western side of the town was cleared to accommodate an inn (*mansio*) connected with the imperial post service. As eventually completed the mansio complex was of considerable size, the second largest known in Britain, and included a courtyard building, bath house, barns and possibly the shrine of Abandinus. During the third century the construction of walls was started but, as recent work indicates, was never completed. A major public building erected in the centre of the town in the early third century has been claimed to be the *principia* either of an imperial estate or of a tax-collection area (Wacher 1979, 98). In the late fourth century most of the public buildings were pulled down to provide materials for further work on the defences on the east side of the town. Timber structures were still being built in the late Roman period in the town centre and are associated with early Saxon pottery, perhaps that of Saxon mercenaries employed in guarding the government installations. No Anglo-Saxon cemeteries have been recorded within the immediate vicinity, which suggests that any mercenaries were absorbed by the local population and that the place survived essentially as a British settlement throughout the early Saxon period.

The Shrine of Abandinus

West of the mansio, and possibly associated with it, lay the shrine of a native god Abandinus (Fig. 1, no. 1). The site lies over the southern defensive system of the earliest Roman fort, which was succeeded by a group of circular huts (14 and 15) dating to the late first century (Fig. 2).

The temple complex appears to have been sited in the northern part of a large enclosure (*temenos*) 80 × 50 m situated on the north side of the east-west road through the town. The eastern boundary was formed by the leat or aqueduct of the mansio, but elsewhere curtileges were marked by ditches or fences. The evidence suggests that by the third century the temenos had been broken up into tenement plots along the north side of the road. The third century town walls appear to have been laid out to take in the temple site, although the western side of the temenos was cut off. While still 30 m from the road, work on the defences seems to have been discontinued and was not resumed until the late fourth century when an earthwork defence was constructed to plug the gap in the masonry defences.

Temple 1

The plan of temple 1 (Fig. 2), the earliest of the three temples on this site, is only imperfectly known. It has a simple rectangular plan 5 m by 7 m, although the exact position of the rear wall is uncertain. The foundation trench of the front facade suggests that there may have been steps or some other feature here. A timber building or portico, 3 m wide, which lay south of temple 1 and in alignment with it, may have been an associated feature similar to those found at the temple sites of

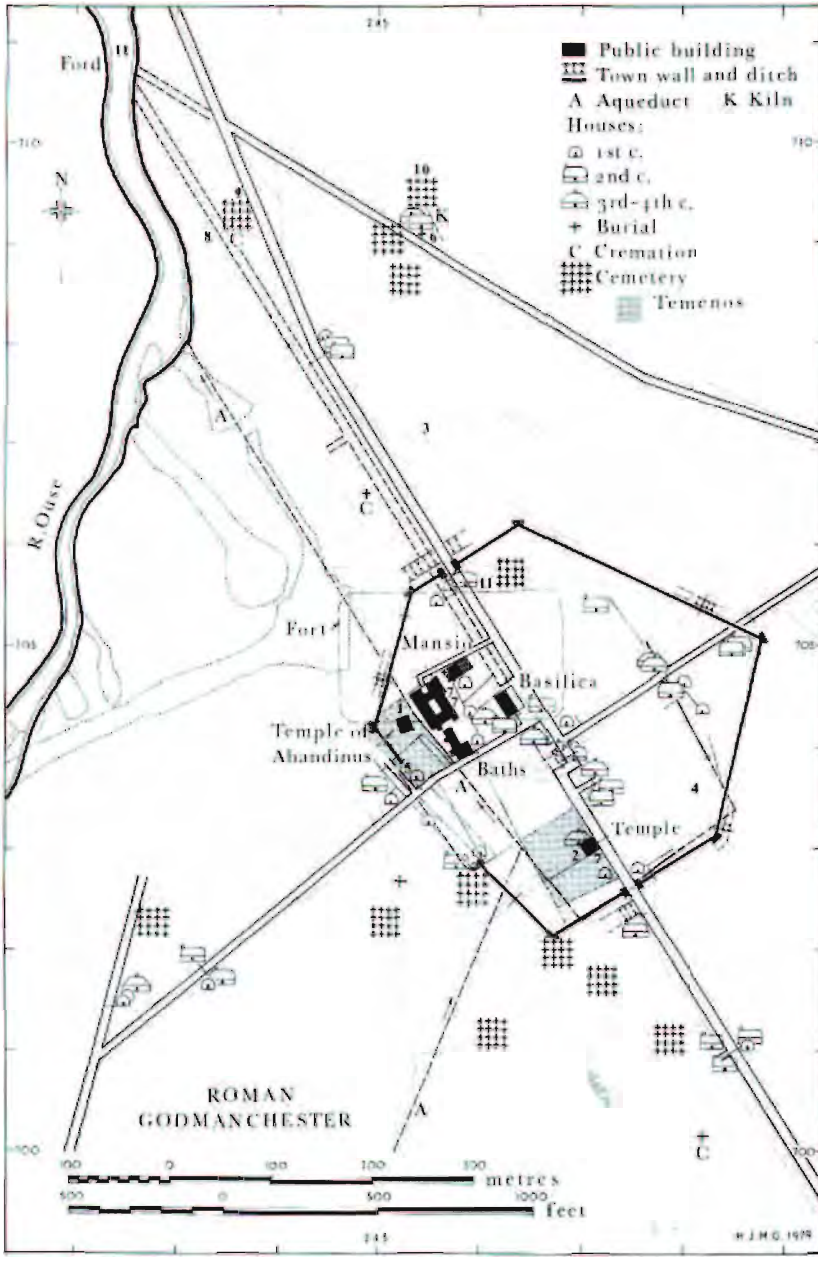
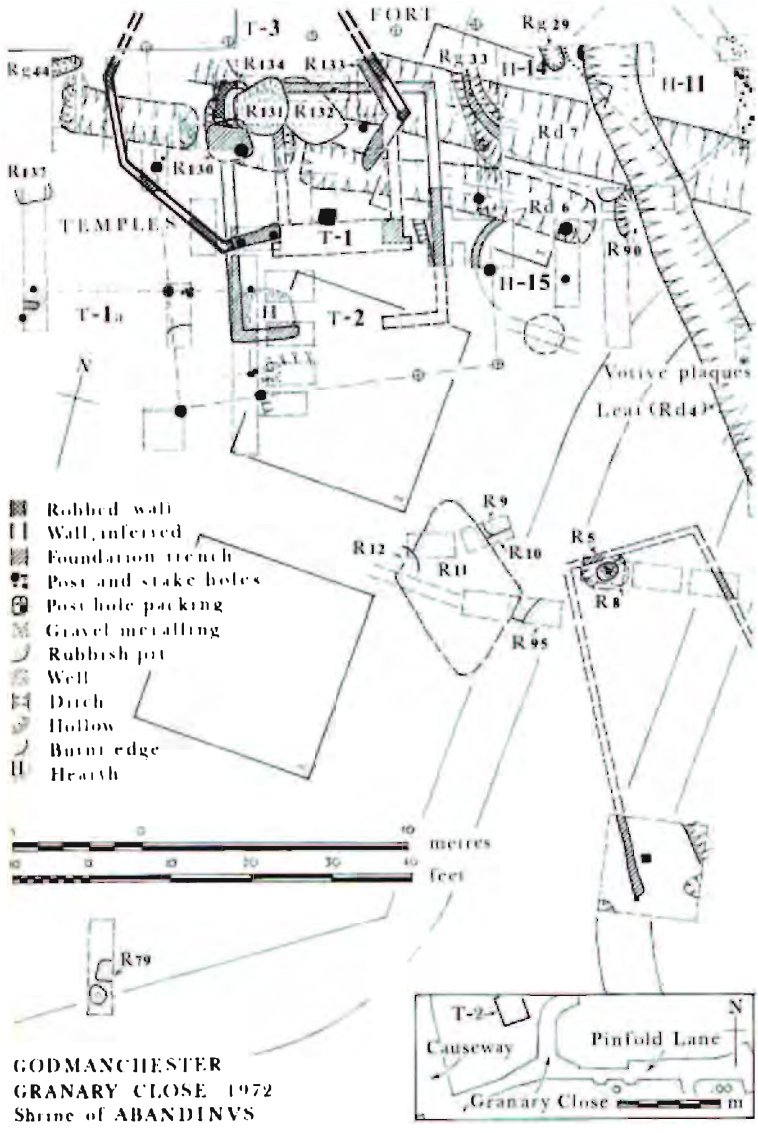

Public building
Town wall and ditch
A Aqueduct K Kiln
Houses:
1st c.
2nd c.
3rd–4th c.
+ Burial
C Cremation
Cemetery
Temenos
Ford
R Ouse
Fort
Mansio
Basilica
Temple of Ahandinus
Baths
Temple
ROMAN
GODMANCHESTER
metres
feet

Fig. 1



GODMANCHESTER
GRANARY CLOSE 1972
Shrine of ABANDINVS

TRENCH PLAN

LOCATION MAP

Fig. 2

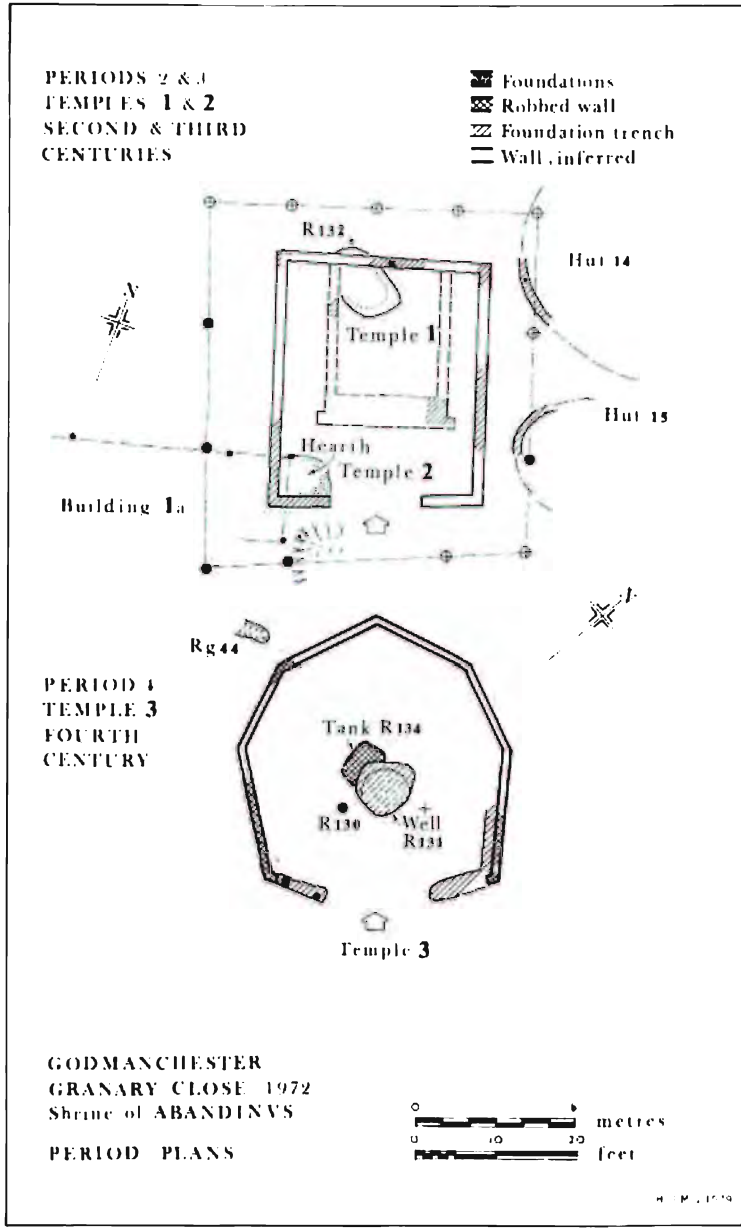

PERIODS 2 & 3
TEMPLES 1 & 2
SECOND & THIRD
CENTURIES
Foundations
Robbed wall
Foundation trench
Wall, inferred
R132
Hut 14
Temple 1
Hut 15
Hearth
Temple 2
Building 1a
N
Rg44
PERIOD 4
TEMPLE 3
FOURTH
CENTURY
Tank R134
R130
Well
R131
Temple 3
GODMANCHESTER
GRANARY CLOSE 1972
Shrine of ABANDINVS
PERIOD PLANS
metres
feet

Fig. 3

Pagans Hill and Thistleton (Lewis 1966, 94). A rubbish pit (R. 132), which appears to antedate temples 1 and 2, contained early second century material. In the gravel levelling of this pit was a freestone block and flint rubble, perhaps hardcore of the floors of the temple.

Temple 2

Temple 2 (Fig. 3), like its predecessor temple 1, was apparently of timber framed construction with foundation trenches for wooden uprights. The simple box shrine (*cella*) of temple 2, 10 m by 8 m, had a somewhat irregular ambulatory carried on widely spaced wooden pillars, 12.5 m by 14.5 m overall. Floors were of gravel, and in the south-west corner of the cella was an open hearth. The axonometric reconstruction (Fig. 4) suggests that the roof was tiled (or possibly had Collyweston stone slates), and was carried on a timber framework of uprights 15 cm by 23 cm at 1 m centres. The timbers are shown exposed although it is equally possible that they were plastered over, as at the mansio.

A timber ambulatory of this form is a rarity in this country, but the arrangement at Godmanchester has a parallel with the sanctuary in the Klosterwald near Bierbach in the Saarland, where the ambulatory of the temple also had four timber posts to each side (Wilson 1975, 10).

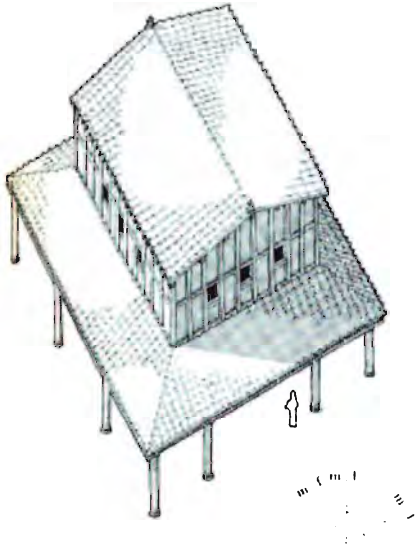
The ascription to Abandinus is due to the discovery in 1971 of a group of bronze votive feathers (Fig. 10), one of which was dedicated to the god Abandinus (see catalogue). The votive group came from a late third century rubbish deposit in the nearby aqueduct, which by then was completely silted up (Fig. 2).

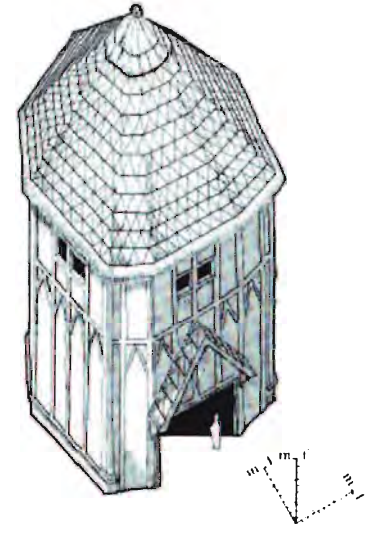
The date of the construction of temple 2 is uncertain. It clearly postdates temple 1 which sealed early second century material (see above). The hearth in the cella of temple 2 contained pottery dating to the later second century. The temple probably survived until the end of the third century when the mansio complex was burnt.

Temple 3

The last of the series of temples on this site straddles the earlier structures, which must have been demolished before the new building was erected. The pottery from the foundation trenches is early-mid fourth century in date, and a robber trench produced a coin of Quintillus (AD 270) which provides a *terminus post quem* for its construction.

The building had a polygonal plan about 10.5 m wide, and is comparable to temple 2 at Brigstock (Lewis 1966, 80). The facade would appear to have been of timber with 3 cm square posts at 1.2 m centres. The





Figs 4 & 5 Shrine of Abandinus: Reconstructions of Temple 2 (Fig. 4) and of Temple 3 (Fig. 5).

sides and rear of the building had footings of masonry, possibly a remodelling, which was robbed in the late Roman period.

Native temples of this type with their odd plans and wide entrances pose particular difficulties in reconstruction. It is suggested that temple 3 (Fig. 5) may have been of tower form with a relatively light thatch roof which would have accommodated the irregularities of the plan. Each side of the temple would have been erected as a prefabricated framed panel, as indeed would also the *cella* walls of temple 2.

No ancient structures of this type survive in this country, but there are late Saxon copies of timber towers in masonry which may reflect general North West European building traditions in timber framed construction during the first millenium AD. The suggested bracing of the panels of the lower stage to form a rudimentary arcading is based on such Midland examples as the church tower at Barton on Humber, Lincolnshire (Taylor 1965, 1, 52), and the polygonal apse of the church at Wing, Buckinghamshire (Taylor 1965, 2, 665). Such a building might well have had two or more upper storeys, which, as in the late Saxon period, might have been used as a treasury, living accommodation, or for general storage purposes. The thatch details and the arrangement of the gabled canopy over the entrance is based on the model shrine from the Titelberg, Luxembourg (Lewis 1966, 12, 14).

Remains of a late fourth century pottery finial, possibly from the apex of the roof, was found nearby in a perimeter ditch of the mansio site. The finial appears to show a tower-like structure with a domed roof and side openings (Fig. 6), reflecting perhaps the design of the temple itself.

Centrally within the temple there appears to have been a masonry tank (R. 134) 1.25 m by 1.75 m, later dismantled and replaced by a clay-lined well, 1.73 m in diameter, which contained late fourth century pottery. Both features appear to have been associated with a massive post (R. 130), possibly one of a pair freestanding within the cella.

Apart from the dedicatory inscription to Abandinus, there are other objects from the vicinity of the temenos which may be related to the shrine. A late second century flask from the temenos boundary ditch (Fig. 1, No. 5) is painted with a wheel motif, usually associated with the Celtic Sky God (Fig. 11, No. 3). Four intaglios were found in the vicinity of the temenos with representations of Jupiter (Fig. 11, No. 2), Mercury (Fig. 11, No. 11), Ganymede (Fig. 11, No. 12) and Minerva (Fig. 12, No. 19). Antler waste was found in the foundation trench of temple 3. The second century rubbish pits of the mansio have produced two pipeclay Venus figurines (Fig. 1, No. 7; Fig. 12, Nos 14 & 15). The evidence of the tank and well of temple 3 suggests associations with a water deity.

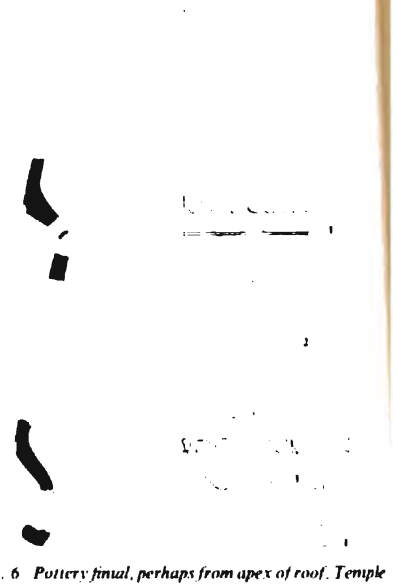


Fig. 6 Pottery finial, perhaps from apex of roof. Temple 3, Shrine of Abandinus.

Piper's Lane Shrine

Temple 1

In the south-west quarter of the Roman town there appears to have been another shrine which fronted the main road (Fig. 1, No. 2). The site was located when the temenos wall and gateway was found while excavating the Roman road in 1973, and subsequent work has revealed what appears to be part of the temple itself close to the entrance.

The temple seems to be centrally sited in an enclosure, whose boundary ditches have been identified on the southern and western sides. An approximate temenos size of 60.5 m by 80.0 m seems to be indicated.

Temple 1 (Fig. 7) is associated with the early second century road 3 of Ermine Street, which here has a wattle-lined road ditch (007) in which a Venus figurine was found (Fig. 12, No. 16). The temple lies close to the road and there is an indication that there was a metalled path up to the temple entrance south of the site.

The ambulatory front is 4 m wide and is carried on a series of large timber posts at 2 m centres, similar to temple 2 of the Abandinus shrine. The north-east corner of the *cella* was also located. It had a corner post (101) 30 cm square, and the stake holes and daub of a cob wall (108).

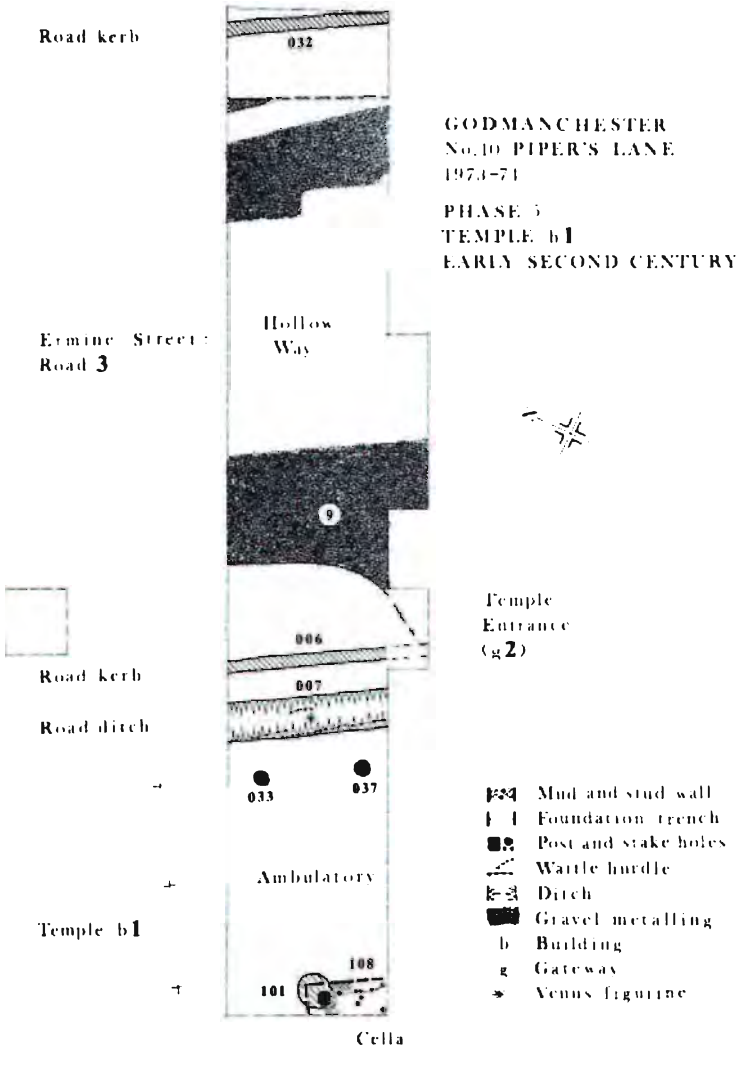

Road kerb
032
GODMANCHESTER
No.10 PIPER'S LANE
1973–74
PHASE 5
TEMPLE b1
EARLY SECOND CENTURY
Ermine Street
Road 3
Hollow Way
9
Temple Entrance (g2)
006
Road kerb
007
Road ditch
033
037
Ambulatory
Temple b1
108
101
Cella
Mud and stud wall
Foundation trench
Post and stake holes
Wattle hurdle
Ditch
Gravel metalling
b Building
g Gateway
Venus figurine
metres
feet

Fig. 7

Temple 2

During the the third century temple 1 was either rebuilt or the ambulatory remodelled (Fig. 8). The earlier colonnade was removed and the sleeper trench for another colonnade or an outer wall was built closer to the cella giving an ambulatory width of 2.5 m.

The temple was set within a walled temenos, which was entered by a metalled drive leading off road 4, dating to the early third century. The entrance had a large masonry pier on the north side which was presumably matched by another to the south. A central gate post suggests an overall width of 2.25 m for the gateway. Northwards a masonry boundary wall has been traced for 24 m. The form of the entrance, and indeed the siting of the temple in relationship to it, is closely paralleled by the temenos gateway found at Irchester (Lewis 1966, 134).

The Piper's Lane temple did not apparently have as long a life as the Abandinus shrine. The building was demolished and replaced by an open-fronted timber shop in the later fourth century. At the same time the temenos wall and gatepiers were robbed of their stonework.

Apart from the Venus figurine there is no indication of the deity to whom the temple was dedicated. However the horned stone head (Fig. 11, No. 1) which was found just over 100 m away (Fig. 1, No. 4), may be associated with this shrine.

Burial Customs

Cemeteries, both cremation and inhumation, are scattered haphazardly round the margins of the town, and in some cases within the walled settlement itself (Fig. 1). Apart from a first century burial near the church (Fig. 1, No. 3), second century cremation groups are known at Green End (No. 31 Post Street, cf. Appendix I) and Porch Farm, indicating the northern and southern limits of the settlement at this period. East of the town, cremations have been found south of the Cambridge Road, and forming the primary burial of the Emmanuel Knoll tumulus dating to the early third century (Green 1973, 20). In the centre of the town an early second century family cremation group was found in the back premises of a Roman strip building in St Anne's Lane (Fig. 1, No. 12). Two well-appointed adult cremations were accompanied by four infant burials (*Britannia* 13, 1982, 363).

The contraction of the settlement within the walled circuit of the town is marked by the growth of inhumation cemeteries. South of the town a large inhumation cemetery spread west of Ermine Street in a wide arc round the south-west corner of the walls. Both here and elsewhere in the town it is clear that the burial groups are quite small, although scattered over a wide area, and represent perhaps family plots containing burials of only a few generations. A typical group from this cemetery was excavated in 1978 in Old Courthall. Four graves were identified, of which the burials of 3 survived, laid out in the corner of one of the compounds within a fenced enclosure. The burials, which were uncoffined, comprised a infant, a girl aged 12–13 and a woman of between 25 and 35 years. A small clay ball, perhaps used as a marble, was buried with the girl.

The other main inhumation cemetery lay north of the settlement along both sides of the by-pass for a distance of over 1 km (Park Lane Cemetery, cf. Appendix I). The nine inhumations excavated by Dr Garrod in 1926 had an east-west orientation, and one grave was lined with hexagonal stone roofing slates. Elsewhere, and indeed in most cases, burials were coffined. In Cambridge Street 4 or 5 inhumations were found during drainage operations in 1956. The burials were in boarded oak coffins which were still intact due to the height of the water table in this area.

Cult Objects

In reviewing the evidence for the various cults at Godmanchester, the opportunity has been taken to include material from other sites along the Ouse within a radius of some 10 km from the town.

The catalogue (Appendix II) brings together a variety of objects, not all of them necessarily ritual. Only one of the Roman finds can be considered to be a cult image, the horned head (Fig. 11, No. 1) and of later date, perhaps the Sheela-na-Gig from St Ives (Fig. 12, No. 22). A large group are ex-votos, of which the bronze from Earith (Fig. 11, No. 8) is perhaps the most substantial, and may well have been specially commissioned. Two smaller figures of Mercury (Fig. 11, No. 10) and Minerva (Fig. 12, No. 18) together with a lost Mercury from Fenstanton are typical of the images which might be sold at temples for use as ex-votos or domestic gods. To those should be added the pipe-clay figurines of Venus (Fig. 12, Nos 14–16). A rather more uncertain group of ex-votos are the pottery mask (Fig. 12, No. 21) and the figured and emblematic pottery vessels (Fig. 11, Nos 3, 6 and 7) which have been found used as dedications elsewhere. The bronze Diana (Fig. 12, No. 20) is presumably a steelyard weight. Several objects are personal jewellery (Fig. 11, Nos 2, 4, 9, 11, 12 & 13; Fig. 12, Nos 17 & 19) which together with the Hercules phalera (Fig. 11, No. 5) are indicative of popular iconography rather than of religious practices. However the series of glass intaglios (Fig. 11, Nos 2, 9 & 11; Fig. 12, No. 19) of which three came from the area of the Abandinus shrine, may have been sold at the temple as amulets. The triadic bronze (Fig. 13) is a frontal plaque from a ritual crown or diadem.

Whatever their source the series is remarkable for the limited range of the deities. The classical gods and heroes are represented by Jupiter, Hercules, Mercury and Ganymede (who is closely associated with Jupiter). Goddesses include Minerva, Diana and Venus. This

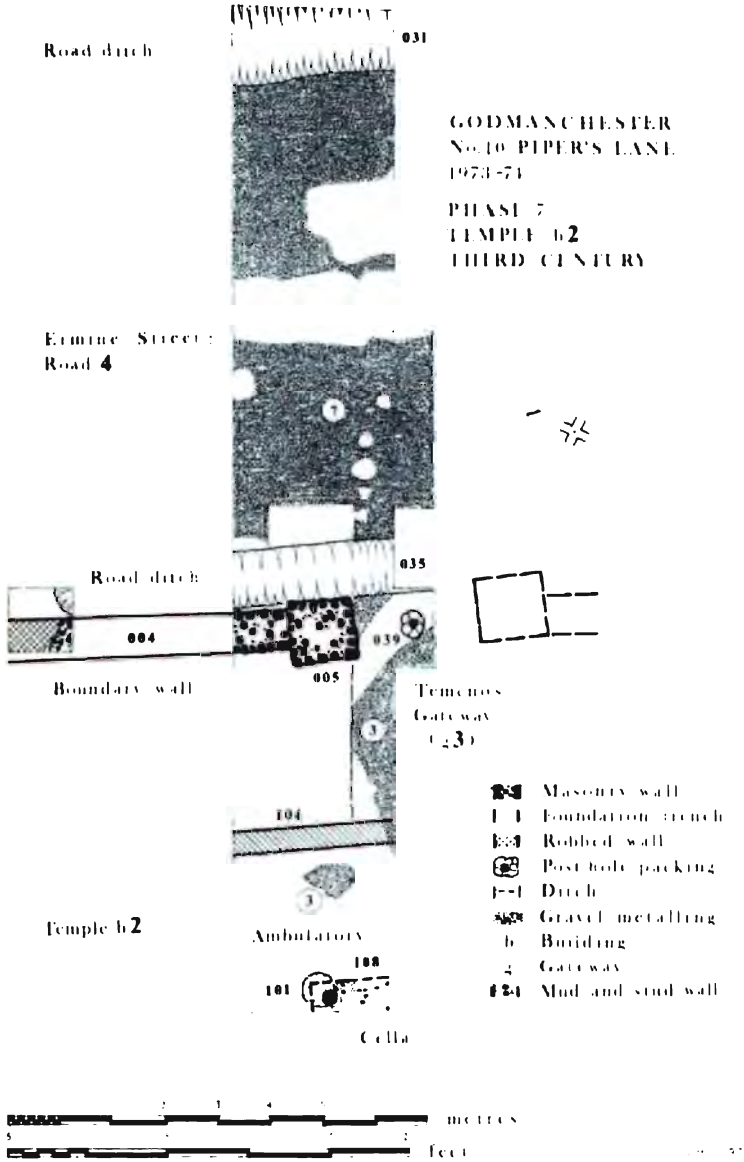
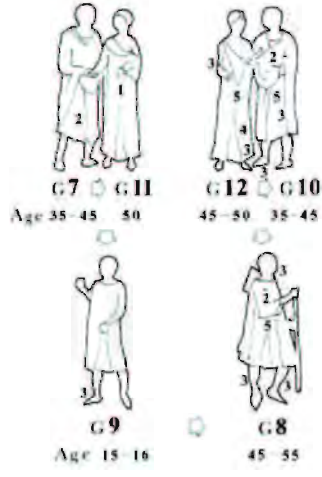

Road ditch
031
GODMANCHESTER
No. 10 PIPER'S LANE
1973-74
PHASE 7
TEMPLE b2
THIRD CENTURY
Ermine Street
Road 4
Road ditch
035
004
039
005
Boundary wall
Temenos
Gateway
(b3)
104
Temple b2
Ambulatory
108
101
Cella
Masonry wall
Foundation trench
Robbed wall
Post hole packing
Ditch
Gravel metalling
Building
Gateway
Mud and stud wall
metres
feet

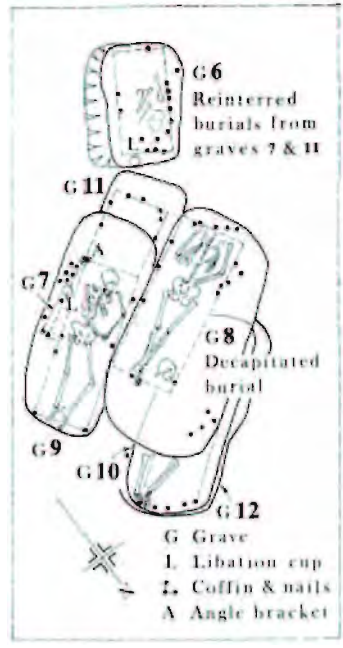
Fig. 8

GODMANCHESTER
PARK LANE 1977
TRENCH 4

PHASE 2
THIRD CENTURY
FAMILY BURIAL PLOT

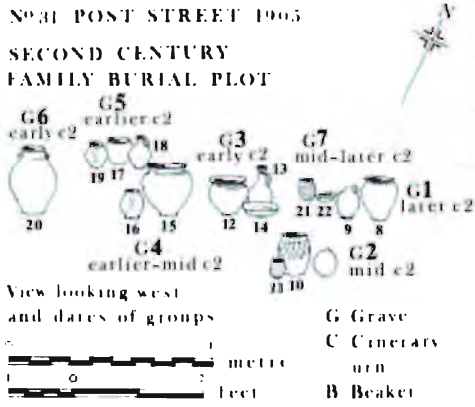


Burial sequence, kinship, pathological features and age

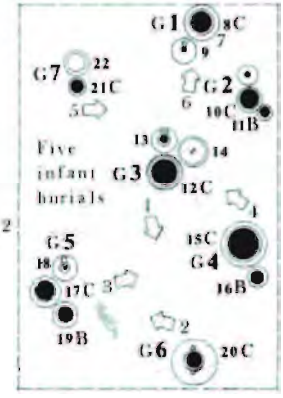


GODMANCHESTER
No 31 POST STREET 1965

SECOND CENTURY
FAMILY BURIAL PLOT



G Grave
C Cinerary urn
B Beaker



Burial sequence

Fig. 9

restricted iconographical range is entirely typical of the Cambridgeshire area.

II

In approaching the problem of the identity and nature of the Celtic gods, all the evidence suggests that there are relatively few primal deities, each of whom had a multiplicity of roles, many of them overlapping.

Over and above the strictly archaeological evidence, there is a large body of local folklore which helps to define the role of the regional gods. The significance of this folklore material, gathered in the early part of this century by C. F. Tebbutt in Huntingdonshire (1942; 1950; 1984) and E. Porter in Cambridgeshire (1969), lies in the backwardness of the Fenland area where witchcraft and other beliefs still have an active life. Unlike the upper reaches of the Great Ouse, the archaeological evidence indicates relatively slight Saxon and Danish occupation in the locality, suggesting a strong element of continuity of native Celtic culture.

The Sky Gods

The Iconographical Evidence

The syncretist tendencies of the native cults have ensured that neither of the temple sites at Godmanchester have produced conclusive evidence for the principal deities worshipped at either.

The god Abandinus is not known elsewhere, at least under that name, and of course he may not have been the principal god of the shrine. It is suggested (see catalogue) that the likeliest etymological origins of the name refers to a river god, possibly associated with the river Ouse. The close association of the temple 1 site with the mansio complex has led A. L. F. Rivet to suggest that Abandinus is the tutelary god of the *pagus* centred on the Roman town.

The area of the Abandinus temple precinct has produced intaglios of Jupiter, Mercury and Ganymede (Fig. 11, Nos 2, 11 and 12). More direct evidence is the horn waste found in the robber trench of temple 3 and the flask with a wheel motif discovered in the temenos boundary ditch of temple 2 (Fig. 11, No. 3). A pewter pendant in the form of a wheel has been found in the area of the northern cemetery (Fig. 11, No. 4).

The Sky God with Club and Wheel

The wheel, perhaps a solar symbol, is associated with the Romano-Celtic Sky God equated with Jupiter. The mould found at Cambridge which depicts a British version of this god shows an armoured figure with a wheel and carrying a club, the symbol of the tutelary tribal gods such as the Irish Dagda.

A shrine dedicated to this Celtic Sky God and lying somewhere on the Fenland edge near Godmanchester is indicated by the hoard from Willingham (Alföldi 1949) and bronzes from Cottenham (Toynbee 1964, 67) and Earith (Toynbee 1962, 191) (Fig. 11, No. 8).

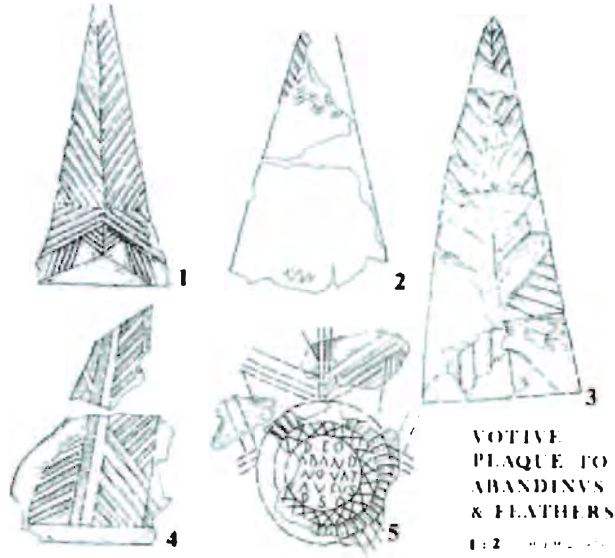


Fig. 10

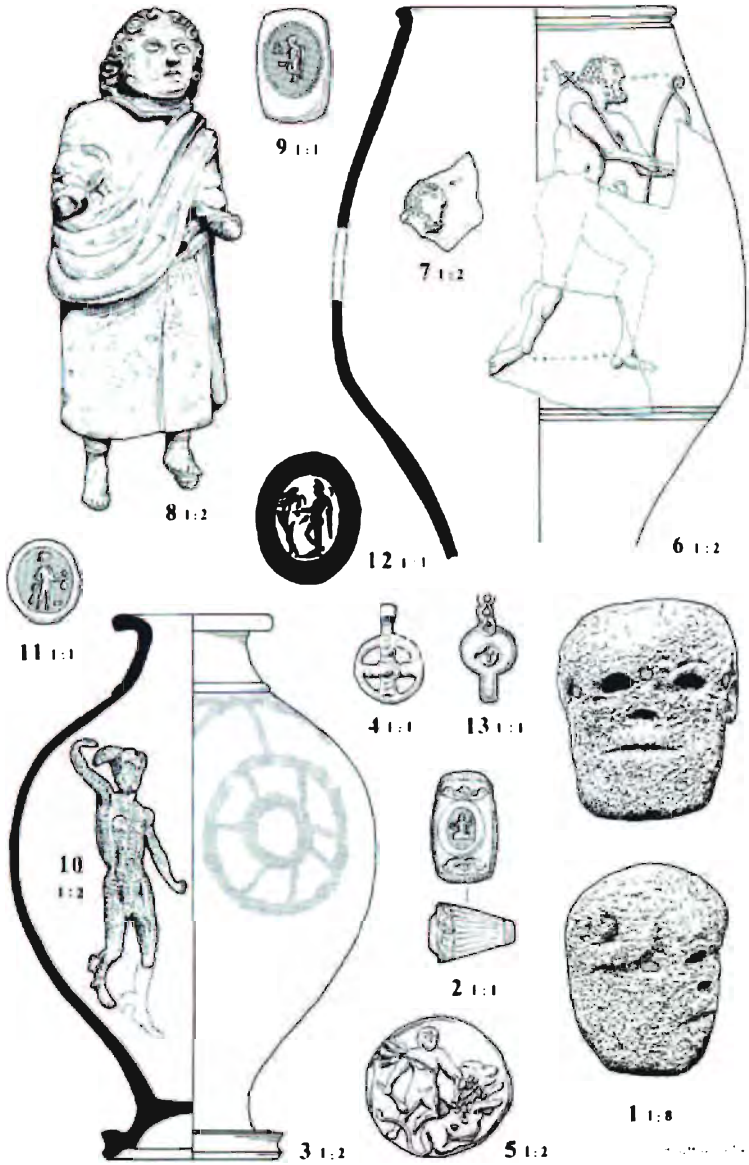
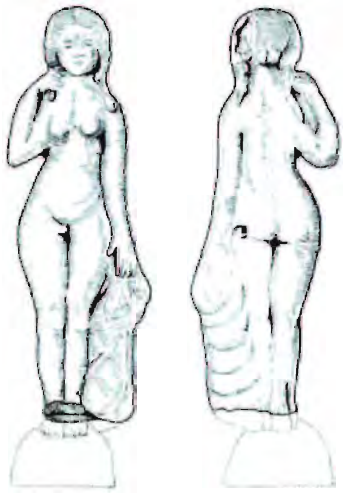
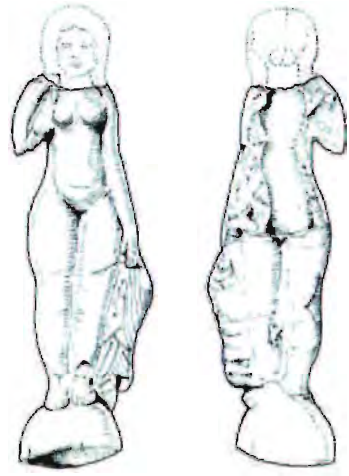


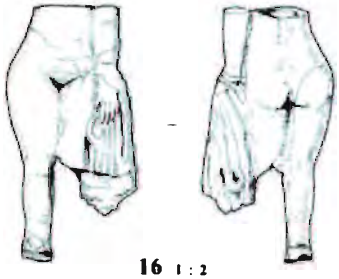
Fig. 11



14 1 : 2



15 1 : 2



16 1 : 2

17 1 : 1

19 1 : 1

18 1 : 1

22 1 : 8

21 1 : 2

20 3 : 4

Fig. 12

What the Britons required from the gods as seen through the pairing of Roman and Celtic deities and the character of votive offerings

Graham Webster

On first approaching this subject one might suppose the existence of fundamental differences between the religious ideas and practice of the Celts and those of the Romans, yet there seems to be no evidence of any serious problems in the merging of the two. Rome's main concern was, on the one hand, the imposition of the Imperial Cult, as a means of securing loyalty, and on the other, the Druids, whom they had come to regard not only as hostile, but very influential with the Celtic rulers. The Greek pantheon, which was adopted by Rome through popular legend, has been regarded as a large family engaged in petty squabbles with much malice and magic on the remote peak of Mount Olympus. The Celts on the other hand had no organised cosmology; there were a few powerful deities and legendary heroes accepted by all, but most of the spirits resided in particular places. The rich and fascinating myths which have survived in Ireland, thanks to the early Christian monks, bear no resemblance to those of Greece and Rome. What has not always been fully appreciated is that the glories of classical literature were enjoyed only by the educated *élite* of Rome and Athens. The participation in public religious festivals and ceremonies was considered as a duty imposed by tradition. Private beliefs were another matter, and there were outlets for emotional release available through participation in the rites of the exotic cults which began to proliferate in Rome in the first century AD. Many of the *nobiles* like Cicero and Seneca sought consolation in Stoicism and other Greek philosophies.

The peasants of rural Italy had little interest or knowledge of such matters, but were as aware as the Celts of the vast unseen world around them. In all primitive societies the world over, it has been the basic cycle of birth, youth, decline and death in the ever constant passage of the seasons and of mankind itself, that has dominated religious practices. The rebirth of vegetation in the Spring was the start of the old Roman calendar and the festivals and rituals which accompanied the succession of equinoxes and solstices were the same everywhere, although with many variations. The seasonal festivals were an essential part of food production also, for the very survival of primitive societies. One can see how the original Celtic year was based on pastoralism to which crop-raising was grafted at a later date, as was viticulture in Italy; so, as it is with all religious practices, there are accretions, but never deletions, in case the gods may take offence. Communities and individuals lived in constant fear of incurring the displeasure of the unseen spirits. Some of the practices, especially the observance of taboos, became highly elaborate, but were maintained with rigid conformity.

There was little basic difference between the religious practices of the British Celts and most of the Romanized invaders and settlers. The newcomers, mainly soldiers, administrators, traders and craftsmen, would have needed most of all to acknowledge the local spirits wherever they went. They would naturally have joined the seasonal festivals and would have found these took much the same form to which they had been accustomed in their own homeland. Having discovered the names of local spirits, they sometimes joined to them those they had always acknowledged and so secured a double indemnity.

There was, however, at the outset a basic difference. In Britain most of the Celtic communities were enclosed, and individual thought and action restricted by the complicated social codes at each level of society. These could only begin to break down through contacts with the outside world. The Britons living near the south coast had been in contact with Greek and Roman traders from *c.* 100 BC, or possibly earlier. Wandering smiths and craftsmen had, of course, moved about freely, providing tools and armaments for the tribal chiefs from the Bronze Age onwards. They were regarded as privileged people, especially the smiths who deliberately cultivated a sense of mystery and sanctity in order to preserve the secrets of their craft. Traders would probably have been viewed differently, and even unwittingly they may have spread doubts among the Celts by breaking taboos and then surviving unscathed the instant wrath of the gods. Apart from making their ritual obeisance to the spirits with small offerings of food, the majority of the Britons probably made no personal approaches to their gods. If they did, certainly there are no archaeological traces of their votive offerings. Those found in the sacred pools and lakes were cast there by members of the ruling class on behalf

of the tribe or community. As one would expect from a people whose ruling class was obsessed with war, their offerings consisted of large quantities of war gear, ritually bent or broken to make them holy as sacrificial objects (*sacer facere*),[1] as well as gold and silver bullion which symbolized their wealth and power.[2]

The main effect of the Roman conquest and occupation on Celtic society was to break down the rigid social and behavioural codes and inter-relationships. However, the great mass of agricultural peasants would have continued in much the same tradition, although their new masters may not have felt obliged to adopt the same social responsibilities towards their workers as their Celtic overlords, but regarded them merely as a source of cheap labour. The main changes in the early stages of the occupation would have been with the smiths and potters now free to make their wares for sale instead of rendering their service to the chiefs. Those who were the first to escape from the tight bonds of the Celtic society were the artisans and craftsmen, some of whom, with the advent of a money economy, became traders and shop-keepers. They were the individuals who turned to the gods for help and protection, and would soon have learned from the newcomers that one could have personal contracts, and even bargains with the gods The Romans had developed, from their strong legal background, the practice of coming to terms with the gods by a process of oath-taking, and fulfilment of contracts, as witnessed by the many altars found all over the Roman world.

To discover how the Celtic deities survived and met the challenge of those from the classical world, one has to turn to the altars, dedications and cult figures. Unfortunately, the epigraphic evidence from Roman Britain is very poor compared with that of other provinces, and the total number of inscriptions listed in *RIB* up to 1955 is 2314, the vast majority of which are military and official. Names of Britons are difficult to find, since it was a common practice for natives who achieved social status to invent *gentilicia*, giving their names a Roman appearance (Birley 1979, 16). The main sources of Celtic names are the proprietary stamps on pottery and metalwork and on the curse tablets which provide valuable side-lights on everyday life, but are not very helpful with information about Celtic deities. With so few Britons making dedications, the only other line of enquiry is through the links and pairings between Celtic and classical gods and goddesses.

There is, however, a further difficulty in identifying the particular power of individual deities of both worlds, and understanding what were the precise needs of the supplicants. In the great majority of cases it is only the name of the Celtic spirit which has survived and only where one is fortunate in having a link with a classical deity is it possible to understand the particular powers of the Celtic partner. One, however, soon also discovers that the popular view of some of the classical deities has not always been the correct one. An example of this is Mars, who has often been portrayed as a war god, suitable for the troops. But Mars was a primitive vegetation god who gave his name to the first month of the old Roman calendar, which we now call March. It was he who brought new life to the soil in the Spring. It was to Mars that Cato the Elder commended the farmers to pray at the start of the year, in his practical handbook *De Agricultura*, with the words 'Father Mars, I pray and beseech you to be propitious and merciful to me, my house and household ... that you may keep away, ward off all severe sickness, both seen and unseen, barrenness and destruction, damage to crops and bad weather, and that you will allow my harvest, my grain, my vineyards and my trees to flourish and produce abundantly, protect my shepherds and my flocks and grant good health to me, my house and my household...'.[3] This accords with the practices of that ancient body, the Arval Brethren, whose function was to ensure the fertility of the crops and herds. The new year was celebrated by twelve priests of Mars Gradivus, so called from the strange ritual they performed of processing round the city bounds in measured steps and leaps, banging staves against their ancient, hour-glass shaped shields (Pliny *N.H.* XVIII, 2). Sir George Frazer has interpreted these rituals as imitative magic intended to encourage the seeds to sprout and to scare away evil spirits.[4] Thus Mars was originally a rural deity, responsible for fertility and fecundity and protecting the farmer against bad weather and illness and disease to man and beast. His spear and shield were entirely defensive and his popularity with the army was due to the need of all soldiers for divine protection against enemy swords and other misfortunes on the battlefield.

Mars had no less than sixteen Celtic counterparts in Britain, nine of which are more common in Gaul and the Rhineland.[5] The most interesting are those concerned with healing and two are associated with known temple sites. In his link with the powerful god Lenus from the Rhineland, Mars takes second place in the joint name Lenus Mars.[6] A healing cult of the joint deities was normally sited at sacred springs and rivers. The British centre appears to have been the large *tempelbezirk* on the River Coln at Chedworth,where the so-called 'villa' was the pilgrims' hostel (Webster 1983). Mars also appears at Lydney Park, the healing spa of Nodens, who may have been of Irish origin (Wheeler & Wheeler 1932, 132–3).[7] This god was accompanied by a dog, an animal often found in association with healing, since it was believed that its lick had curative properties, and at Rome and Epidaurus miraculous cures are testified.[8]

The two most interesting British deities linked to Mars were Cocidius and Belatucadrus, both of whom had shrines in the western sector of Hadrian's Wall. Belatucadrus means 'the bright and beautiful one',

intimating a solar origin. Dr Ross (1967, 371) has noted a number of arms-bearing horned gods on reliefs in the same area, suggesting that they are actually representations of this god. Horns had always been, and remain in some countries today, symbols of strength and sexual potency. The links with Mars may have thought to strengthen his powers or indicate his ability to cure people with such a serious deficiency. Cocidius had a temple near Bewcastle[9] and he is depicted as a hunter-god on an altar from Risingham, where the dedication links him with Silvanus.[10] Cocidius, like Diana, was seen as a protector from the wild hostile world of the northern frontier and his association also with Mars seems logical on this basis.[11] Another hunter deity was the goddess Diana, who was closely associated with Mars in the early Roman Spring festival. She was responsible for the outer limits of the farm, where there were woodlands and uncultivated areas frequented by wild animals. Diana was given a bow and arrow to protect the fruit trees, the herds and wandering pigs (Pausanias X, 35–7). She is seen in her blue gown in this pose, in a remarkable second century mosaic from Utica (Caputo & Driss 1962, Pl. VI). An innocent-looking hart, nibbling at the Tree of Life, is threatened by the goddess with her bow. Diana has another important function in promoting childbirth, and in this capacity resided over a popular temple of Diana Nemorensis on the shores of Lake Nemi.[12] As Tom Blagg records elsewhere in this volume, the late-nineteenth century excavations produced large quantities of baked clay votive models of children, parts of the anatomy,[13] and animals, both wild and domestic. Those whose petitions had been granted returned to the temple on the great festival of the goddess on 13th August. In the procession, garlands were worn and flaming torches carried. It was also the time of the Autumn equinox and harvest, especially of grapes.[14] Such was the popularity of the goddess that it is hardly surprising that the early Christians adopted this festival as 'The Assumption of the Virgin', who took over Diana's role and with it, her lunar crown and blue robe.

The male counterpart of Diana was Silvanus, who was also one of the earliest of the old Roman gods, thought originally to have been a tree spirit. Clearly, he was the guardian of the woods and forests, and all the animals therein. Although both hunter deities were basically protectors, it was natural that they presided over the hunt, which the rich and powerful made into a sport. This is not the place to develop this theme as it takes us beyond the main scope of the present enquiry, but it must not be forgotten that the hunt was from the beginning a powerful symbol of death and resurrection, and as such, survived into Christian iconography. Nor must another important hunting association be overlooked, the identification of Orion, the great hunter of Greek legend, with Mithras of the ancient eastern salvation cult. Mithraism was closely associated with the heavenly constellations and their daily procession across the sky.[15]

Diana has no known epigraphic links with any Celtic deities in Britain, and Silvanus only with Cocidius (*RIB* 1207, 1578), Callirius (*RIB* 194) who is not otherwise known, and Vinotonus, who was local to Bowes, or peculiar to the Thracian unit stationed there. These two Classical hunter deities are also widely found on reliefs, often at places of healing, such as Chedworth,[16] and Nettleton where a relief of a female huntress with a hound has been identified by Professor Toynbee as Diana (cf. Wedlake 1982, 136 no. 3, Pl. 11a). This site has also produced an altar to Silvanus (*ibid.*, 136, no. 2 and Pl. XXXVc; *JRS* 59 (1969), 235); a relief of a male hunter has been found at the Box 'villa', a site which may have had a religious function (Toynbee 1964, 174 and Pl. XLV).[17]

Apollo was another healing god, although never so popular in Britain as Mars or Diana. He had obscure origins in the mists of an Indo-European ancestry and his first recorded appearance at Rome is in 432 BC, when a temple was erected to him as a result of a great pestilence. In Britain, he appears as a healer at the Nettleton temple which has also produced an altar to a Celtic deity, Cunomaglos (*JRS* 52 (1962), 192, no. 8), a name which means 'the hound-prince' another obvious connection with the curative powers of a dog. The frontlet of a diadem, probably a piece of temple regalia, was found at Lydney Park, showing a sun-god driving a four-horse chariot (Wheeler & Wheeler 1932, 90 and Pl. XXVII). He was also linked with Maponus (the divine Youth) whose shrine north of the Wall is listed in the Ravenna Cosmography as *locus Maponi*[18] and possibly situated in Annanshire (Ross 1967, 368–70), where a standing stone near Annan is known as the *Clochmahenstane*. On an altar dedicated to Apollo-Maponus from Corbridge (*RIB* 1121), there are three reliefs, on the left Apollo, on the right Diana, and at the back a much damaged figure, probably Maponus.[19] It has been suggested that an altar from Whitley Castle (*RIB* 1198) bears a relief of Maponus,[20] although the inscription only refers to Apollo.

Another powerful protector was Minerva, with her spear and shield, to which was fixed the Gorgon Mask,[21] with the power to banish all the spirits of evil and disease. The goddess is linked only once with a Celtic equivalent in Britain, but that was the most prestigious healing spa at Bath, over which Sulis presided and took precedence in the joint name, even over the mighty Minerva (*RIB* 141, 146 and 150). That the goddess was clearly accepted by the Britons is indicated by sixteen representations listed in the published thesis of Dr Lindgren (1980). This valuable study clearly demonstrates the manner in which the Britons absorbed the Classical deities and turned them into Celtic images, some of them heavily Celticized; a notable example is the bronze plaque from Lavington, Wiltshire, a most remarkable example of Celtic artistic vigour (*ibid.* Pl. 73; Richmond & Toynbee 1955, 101–2 and Pl. XXI, 1).

There is no doubt, however, that the most popular Classical deity in Britain, as in Gaul (Caesar, *B.G.* VI, 17), was Mercury, the god of the shops and market-places, as his name indicates.[22] There was no Celtic equivalent since Rome introduced trading, marketing and a currency into western Europe in a crude form of capitalism. The British artisans, craftsmen, shop-keeper and traders had no other means of seeking protection and an insurance policy than by appealing to Mercury. Although there is only one Celtic deity linked with Mercury,[23] Dr Lindgren has illustrated no less than 34 figures of the god in the form of statuettes, or sculptured reliefs and even on pottery.[24] Mercury obviously found favour at the lower levels of society among the smaller scale traders and artisans. The same can be said of Venus, who does not appear on a single inscription, yet the large number of pipe-clay figures would appear to indicate that almost every home had a small shrine, and that it was to this goddess that all expectant mothers looked to provide an easy delivery. For fertility, however, they would have sought the aid of the Celtic triad of Mother goddesses, who probably had links with the ancient Earth Mother Goddess, Cybele. The three goddesses normally seated were also repeated in pipe clay, as well as in sculptured reliefs and over fifty dedications.[25] Almost as popular was Fortuna with her large cornucopia, the horn of plenty with its potent sexual connotations, to whom one went for a happy outcome to any enterprise or to satisfy the craving for instant wealth. Fortuna's cornucopia had its Celtic counterpart in the wooden wine-bucket of Rosmerta.

Perhaps more illuminating than the epigraphic name-links are the sculptured reliefs where Celtic and classical deities are paired or appear in groups. It is then possible to analyse their relationships and attibutes. One of the most popular Celtic goddesses in Britain was Rosmerta, the Celtic Fortuna, whose name means 'the good provider'; she appears on at least eleven reliefs and is often paired with Mercury, especially in Gaul and the Rhineland. In four examples she has at her side a wooden wine-bucket or tub, sometimes with a pole in it,[26] probably associated with the magic Celtic cauldron symbolizing plenty.[27] On a relief from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, she has a cornucopia as well as the tub[28] and at Wiesbaden she is holding a patera into which Mercury is emptying his purse (Espérandieu 1931, No. 18). On a number of Gallic reliefs it is Rosmerta who holds the purse, so this must also be regarded as a symbol of plenty.

The continuity and widespread nature of Celtic religious beliefs is evident from the large number of sculptures and reliefs of deities, especially in the Cotswolds where the quality of the local limestone was a contributory factor. Few are inscribed and many are extremely crude, making identification difficult. In any case, most of the Celtic spirits were highly localized and every natural feature had its unseen resident. This is amply demonstrated by the remarkable dedications to Faunus, the ancient wood spirit at Thetford, where no less than eight names of local spirits are linked with the god.[29] This suggests that these spirits are each from different woods in the tribal area.

It should be obvious by now that a study of the deities, either classical or Celtic, does not greatly assist in an understanding of the real needs and desires of individual Britons. A better approach is probably through the votive offerings found at sacred sites. But the evidence has, until recently, been inadequate, since temple excavations have been limited to the building itself, just as villa investigations have tended to cover only the house and neglected the surrounding buildings and yards. There have, in consequence, been very few assemblages large enough to be able to draw any broad conclusions.[30] It is only with the *defixiones*, or curse tablets, that there are direct detailed requests to deities, but these are normally demands for the recovery of stolen property, or else seek revenge for an injury and thus represent the negative side of magic; they do not cater for those desires and needs basic to the human condition. Men have always been driven by the powerful life-force to seek sexual satisfaction, and women equally have a deep need for fulfilment and children. In rather more sophisticated terms, this can be described as the human desire for a stable relationship which provides for this. Equally, of course, there are always those who tire of a relationship and seek a means of breaking it. If one adds to this illness and disease, and the desperate search for relief and cures, together with sudden accidents and misfortunes, one has stated the main reasons why men and women turned to the gods for help.

Votive offerings are symbols of deep-seated human needs and can be interpreted in terms of sympathetic and contact magic. Offering a model or symbol of the thing most desired expresses the belief that the wish can be fulfilled. Women wishing for children offered shells in the shape of the womb, suitably filled with dough or clay. Personal objects such as jewellery, including brooches, rings, bracelets, ear-rings, etc., hair and dress pins, mirrors and dressing-table equipment, have the added force of contact magic, since it was believed that these articles contained the persona of the supplicant. That is why these objects were on death buried with their owner, and often deliberately broken or 'killed' at the time.[31] Temple sites often produce large numbers of brooches, rings, bracelets, pins, chatelaines and fragments of jewel boxes, all of which are objects of personal use, mainly from women, given as votive objects to the resident spirit in their desperate cry for help. Applying the principle of sympathetic magic, it is possible to understand what it was they were really seeking. Brooches are a symbol of a bond since they hold together garments or folds of cloth which are pierced by the pin, and thus can be seen as an image of a union made effective by sexual penetration. Likewise,

rings and bracelets are circles and have always symbolized a union between men and women, and still do, in the form of the wedding ring. Pins have an obvious sexual shape and symbolize the need for satisfactory penetration: maidens in historic times have cast pins into wells at Spring time with a wish for a partner. The chatelaine represents the status of a matron, a desirable attainment for an unattached female. A more detailed study of these objects adds further possibilities. It is surprising how many fragments of rings and bracelets are found, most of them deliberately chopped into pieces.[32] Votive offerings were often broken and rendered useless, as also were personal objects placed in graves: the gifts to the deity could only thus be made holy and acceptable (James 1967, 3–14). Apart from the sacramental aspects, and entering into speculative realms, the breaking of the circle may indicate a need to terminate an unsatisfactory relationship. Small rings made from broken bracelets could have symbolized wishes for existing unions to be ended, so that new ones could be established.[33]

There are also many examples of model axes[34] (Fig 1,5) in the shape of the *ascia*,[35] symbolizing a sacrifice which the poor may not have been able to afford, so could only buy or make a small axe, often in lead. Shields (Fig. 1,4) and spears are symbols of protection from threats of a personal or general nature. The wheel (Fig. 1,1), also a common votive, is a very ancient solar symbol associated with the sky god, such as the Celtic Tanaris and classical Jupiter (see Miranda Green, this volume). It was equally potent as an amulet. The substitution of the swastika for spokes indicated motion and introduced the element of turning. It was this aspect of the turn of the wheel which made it specially suitable for Fortuna-Rosmerta and often appears as one of her attributes,[36] usually when seated (Fig. 2). This was the wheel of Fortuna[37] which has survived through the centuries. Such a symbol would have a wide appeal to all those unfortunates who had suffered from a serious turn of events and explains the popularity of the wheel as a votive offering. It symbolizes also the daily movement of the heavenly constellations, identified from very early times as the Signs of the Zodiac, and from this developed the ancient craft of astrology, which still flourishes.

In conclusion, it may now be evident that the Roman attitude towards the religions of the Celts was not so much that of toleration, but more a pragmatic acceptance of existence of a multitude of local spirits, which they felt obliged to treat as realities, capable of causing mischief and even serious trouble, if neglected. Knowing the name was the first basic requirement, so the spirits could be properly addressed, but this was not always possible, hence so many altars to the *genius loci*, the spirit of the place. It may also be seen that limited progress towards an understanding of the beliefs and practices of the Britons can be made by a study of the deities themselves in dedications and representations. A better method may be by an attempt to penetrate the minds of individuals, through their offerings to the spirits and an appreciation of sympathetic and contact magic. This would involve a careful study of votive offerings, when large enough collections from particular sites become available.

Notes

1 James 1967, 13–14. For examples from Britain, see Fox 1946, 69 and fn. 2.

2 In Gaul the great temple treasure at Tolosa (Toulouse) was seized by Q Servilius Caepio in 106 BC; according to Posidonius as quoted by Strabo (IV, 1, 13), it amounted to 15,000 talents.

3 See also White 1970, 19–20.

4 In his appendix to the Loeb ed. of Ovid's *Fasti*, 400–3.

5 They are Braciaca (*RIB* 278), Condates (*RIB* 731, 1024, 1045), Lenus (*RIB* 126, 309), Loucetius (*RIB* 140), Ocelus (*RIB* 310, 949), Ofludius (*RIB* 1311), Rigisamus (*RIB* 187), Toutates (*RIB* 219), and Vellaunus (*RIB* 309).

6 The main temple was near Trier; Wightman 1970, 211–215.

7 The name appears as Mars Nodons on the inscriptions (*RIB* 305, 616, 617) and as Mars Nudens once (*RIB* 307).

8 *Inscriptiones Graecae* IV, 952, pp. 36–8. The most famous dog was associated with the temple to *Deo Nehalennia* at Domburg on the Dutch coast; Hondius Crone 1955.

9 The *Fanum Cocidi* given in the Ravenna Cosmography, I. A. Richmond has suggested that the rock-cut figure known as Rob of Risingham may have been that of Cocidius (1937).

10 He is also linked with Silvanus at Housesteads (*RIB* 1578).

11 The two names are linked on *RIB* 602, 993, 1017, and 2015.

12 This is the starting point of Fraser's great quest (1911). One is also reminded of an Ode of Horace (*Carmina* III, 22) to Diana, 'Virgin protectress of the mountains and groves, three-fold goddess who thrice invoked hears the young women in their labour and saves them from death, sacred to you is the pine that shades my villa and to which at the end of every year I joyfully dedicate the blood of a boar, preparing its sideways lunge.'

> *Montium custos nemorumque, Virgo*
> *quae laborantes utero puellas*
> *ter vocata audis adimisque leto*
> *diva triformis,*
>
> *imminens villae tua pinus esto,*
> *quam per exactos ego laetus annos*
> *verris obliquum meditantis ictum*
> *sanguine donem.*

This reflects Diana's roles as Luna in the sky, Diana on the earth and Persephone in the Underworld, this tripartite nature is comparable with the three Celtic *Deae Matres*, who had the same function in childbirth.

13 Such votives are not common in Britain, but there are possible examples from Lydney Park. One is a bone plaque of a female holding her stomach (Wheeler & Wheeler 1932, Pl. XXVI, No. 122), referring to an ailment there, or the need for an early delivery. The other is a small bronze arm (*ibid.* No. 121), but this could have been part of a statuette. There is also a pair of breasts in ivory from Bath, Henig 1984, Pl. 74.

14. Catullus (XXXIV. 17) mentions Diana filling the farmers' barns with the bounteous harvest.
15. As depicted on most of the bull-slaying scenes which were the focus of the cult ceremonies (Speidel 1980).
16. Diana is represented by a statue and there is a relief of a hunter god (see Webster 1983, 16 and Pl. 1a and No. 2, ill. by Toynbee 1962, Pl. 79).
17. This site has also produced a fragment of a relief of Neptune's trident, Toynbee 1964, 153 and Cunliffe & Fulford 1982, No. 110 and Pl. 29.
18. The word *locus* could have meant a lake or pool (Rivet & Smith 1979, 369.
19. Phillips 1977, No. 60, pp. 23–4 and Pl. 18; the two Roman deities stand in carefully moulded panels but the figure at the back stands free; this different treatment suggests a distinction.
20. Wright 1934, 36–8, Pl. 11; see also *RIB* Pl. XVI. There are reliefs on all four sides of this altar, on the first is a nude Apollo with lyre and plectrum, and on the back, a god with a radiate crown which could also be Apollo, or possibly his Celtic counterpart. At the two sides are scenes, one with two torch bearers and a central figure on a plinth, identified as Mithras; and on the other is the dedicator with jug and beaker, offering to a clothed god with a sceptre on his shoulder. This is the one identified by Richard Wright as Maponus, but the dedication is to Apollo only.
21. It also has the typical exophthalmic eyes, a common feature of such heads (cf. a mosaic from Sassa; Caputo & Driss 1962, Pl. V). The Bath head is not only a fine example of Celtic barbaric art, but also of the powerful Head Cult, to which the Celts would add an extra potency.
22. *Merx* means 'goods' and 'merchandise' generally.
23. A dedication (*RIB* 163 from Colchester) by a freedman with a North African name, to Andescociuco, a name not otherwise known, but part of it could mean 'the Great Activator'. This may not be a deity, but a Celtic epithet applied to Mercury.
24. 1980, 39–68 and Pls. 1–34; to this can be added fragments of a vessel found at Water Newton with the name of the god in incised letters, and the cock and goat *en barbotine* (Webster 1959, 92 and Pl. XXIV f); the legs and feet of the god on a vessel from Verulamium (Richardson 1944, 121–2 and fig. 20, Nos. 1–1a); and a painted face-pot from Lincoln (BM 1922, 118 and fig. 134).
25. They were often distinguished by a locality when the dedicator was a long way from his or her homeland, i.e. Matres Germanae RIB 2064, Matres Olhontae (*RIB* 574, 1030, 1031, 1032); Matres Suleviae *RIB* 192; Matres Tramarinae (*RIB* 920, 1224, 1989, 1030) etc.
26. At Gloucester she also holds a *patera* and a staff with a pelta-shaped head, probably a symbol of authority; at Bath she has a tub and a sceptre, and at the base of the relief there are three *genii cucullati* and an animal identified by Dr Ross as a ram (1967, 155 and 130, Pl. 55a); but others consider it to be an animal intended for sacrifice (Cunliffe & Fulford 1982, No. 39, Pl. 11). On a stone from Wellow, Somerset, now in the BM, there are three figures, the female on the left holds a long staff and the top of a circular tub or box with a conical lid is visible; the nude male on the right may be Mercury (*ibid.* No. 116; Toynbee 1964, 175–6 and Pl. XLIII (b); at Corbridge, there is a single female holding a patera, the large tub (Phillips 1977, No. 115, Pl. 31, pp. 43–4).
27. The symbolism of barrels, flagons and jars is associated with abundance according to É. Thévenot who also points out the connection of the magic cauldron of the Celtic sagas and red wine with resurrection myths, but as he admits this is a highly speculative area (1968, 136–142).
28. Phillips 1977, No. 183, Pl. 45 and 59–60, where she is identified as Fortuna, making an oblation at 'a round altar'.
29. Professor Kenneth Jackson, however, suggests that they are not names but epithets describing various aspects of Faunus (Johns & Potter 1983, 46–8).
30. Dr Miranda Green (1976, 1978) has rendered a great service in publishing most of the cult and votive objects found in Britain.
31. The purpose of breakage was to make the objects lifeless, as was the owner, and thus make it possible for them to accompany the spirit. A remarkable example of this is a small mirror found in a grave at Chester, which has been broken into twelve pieces, all of which had been carefully placed in a small vessel (Newstead 1912, 141 and PL. XXIV, Fig. 2).
32. Wheeler had so many bracelets at Lydney Park he was able to illustrate a type series (Wheeler & Wheeler 1932, Fig. 17).
33. As at Nettleton, Wedlake 1982, Fig. 90, and Ivy chimneys, Essex, report forthcoming.
34. For some fine examples, some with decoration, often thought to be mystical, from Woodeaton see Kirk 1949, Fig. 8, Nos. 2–5 and Pl. IV, c and d.
35. For the *ascia* and its significance in connection with tomb building, see Hatt 1951, 85–107.
36. As on seated figures from Binchester (Haverfield 1889, No. XXI, p. 19), Carlisle (Ross 1967, Pl. 65 b), Heddernheim (Espérandieu 1931, No. 129); Darmstadt (*ibid.*, No. 214); Carlsruhe (*ibid.*, No. 375); Oehringen (*ibid.*, No. 670); and Jagsthausen (*ibid.*, No. 673); etc.
37. *Fortunae rota* was a popular Roman image used by poets but despised by some of the literary *élite* (Tacitus, *Dialogus* 23, refers disparagingly to Cicero *in Pisonem* 22, although here Cicero may have been using the term deliberately of a vulgar man), but by the end of the fourth century it seems to have been widely accepted (Ammianus Marcellinus, XXVI, 8, 13; *versa rota Fortunae*). Perhaps it may not be too fanciful to suggest that this image lies behind the enigmatic word square ROTAS OPERA TENET AREPO SATOR. The wheels which Arepo holds with such care could be seen in this sense. It could then, if it means anything, indicate that a divine propagator (*sator*) carefully holds the fates of all mankind. The word *opera* has many meanings and could have been used as 'purposefully', as if given a direction without excluding the element of free will.

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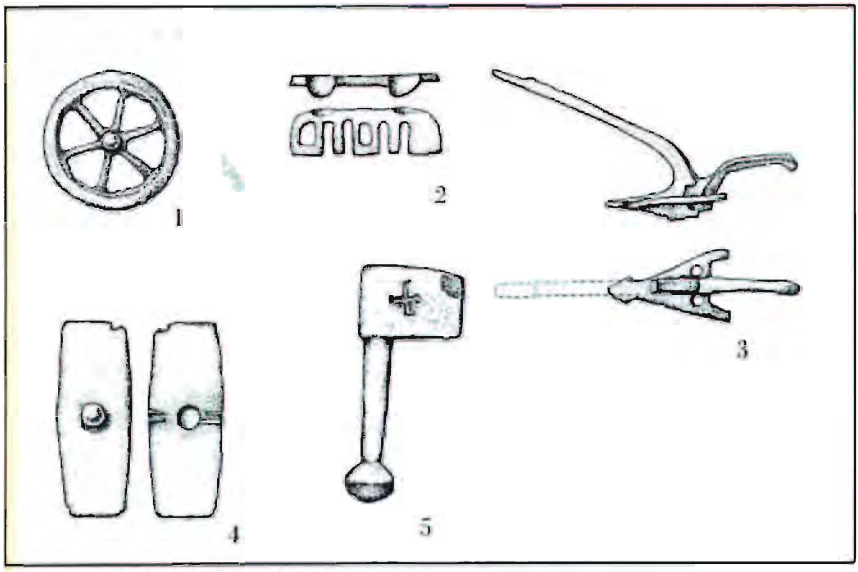

Fig. 1 Votive offerings in the form of models: 1. A wheel from London. 2. A yoke from Sussex. 3. A plough from Sussex. 4. A shield from Fairford. 5. An axe from Woodcaton. Drawing by Diana Bonakis.

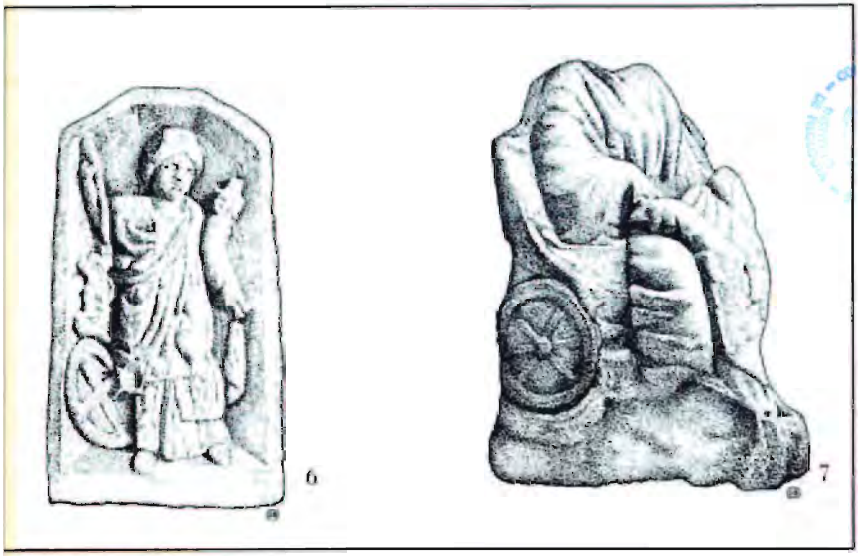

Fig. 2 Sculptured figures: 6. Fortuna-Rosmerta with cornucopia, rudder and wheel from Wiesbaden (Espérandieu 1931, 129). 7. A seated Fortuna-Rosmerta with a wheel from Oehringen (ibid., 670). Drawings by Diana Bonakis.

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Jupiter, Taranis and the Solar Wheel

Miranda Green

Introduction

It is in the nature of Romano-Celtic culture in general and of religion in particular that hybridization, conflation and interaction between Roman and Celtic ideas took place, and is recorded in the archaeological evidence of material culture. During the Roman occupation of Celtic (and indeed of other) lands, gods from the Mediterranean world were introduced and, especially where there already existed the veneration of a divine entity of comparable character or function, composite deities were invoked with the epigraphic or iconographic evidence attesting, in consequence, collation of Roman and alien indigenous forms.

In the Celtic lands of Gaul and Britain, the Roman sky-god Jupiter was introduced. In a Roman context, he was not only the Lord of the Heavens but in addition he was both the highest divinity as father and head of the pantheon, and acted as a political focus of fealty throughout the Empire. As such, Jupiter is frequently represented in classical form; he is evidenced epigraphically as Jupiter Optimus Maximus and depicted in sculpture or in the form of small bronze figurines.

Nevertheless, the interest of Jupiter in the present context lies in the manner of his adoption and adaptation by the Celtic population. The Graeco-Roman sky-god apparently became identified with or linked to celestial powers who were seemingly already venerated in the pre-Roman Celtic world. The transformation of Jupiter in Gaul and Britain appears to have taken a number of forms, but three main Romano-Celtic sky-deities may be distinguished. The god was associated with a Celtic thunderer (Green 1982, 37–42); he was a representative of light, day and the positive element in a dualistic, possibly seasonal, Celtic mythology, illustrated by the so-called Jupiter-columns (Bauchhenss & Noelke 1981); and, lastly and perhaps most important, Jupiter was identified with a Celtic solar divinity (Green 1984).

The Romano-Celtic Thunderer

The poet Lucan wrote in the earlier second century AD of events in the mid first century BC. In his poem, the *Pharsalia* (1, 444–446), he mentions three great Gaulish divinities encountered by Caesar's army in Gaul (Reinach 1897, 137–149; Cerquand 1881–83, 381–881). Of these, one he calls 'Taranis' and describes his cult as being 'more cruel than that of Scythian Diana' (Getty 1940, xxix). This is the only literary evidence for the cult; the word 'Taranis' comes from the Celtic root 'taran' and means 'thunderer'. There is, however, some epigraphic evidence (Fig. 1) for the worship of a god named 'Taranis' or of a derivative form, sometimes identified with Jupiter (Lambrechts 1942, 64–80; Green 1982). The association with the Roman sky-god is suggested also by a commentary on the Lucan

Fig. 1 Altar inscribed 'Deo Taranucno, Veratius Primus, ex iussu'. Böckingen (Baden-Württemburg). Height 99 cm (Württemburgisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart). Copyright Stuttgart Museum.

Fig. 2 Reconstruction of Jupiter-column: Hausen-an-der-Zaber (Baden-Württemburg). Height c. 15 m (original in Württemburgisches Landesmuseum, Stuttgart). After Bauchhenss 1976, Abb. 1.

manuscript in Berne, dating between the fourth and ninth centuries AD (Usener 1869, 30; Zwicker 1934–36, 50). This is in itself not all that significant; apart from the late date of the Swiss commentaries, the commentators themselves need not have had much awareness of Celtic mythology. But the epigraphic material is interesting. Of the seven altars at present known from France, Germany, Yugoslavia and Britain one is too fragmentary to classify, but the others may be divided into groups. At Böckingen (*CIL* XIII, 6478) and Godramstein (*CIL* XIII, 6094) in the Rhineland, the dedications are to a thunder-god 'Taranucnus' alone; at Orgon (Espérandieu 1924, 38, no. 40) and Tours (*CIL* XIII, 3086b) in Gaul, the dedications read 'Tanarus' in Greek letters and 'Taran' respectively. At Scardona in Dalmatia (*CIL* III, 2804), Thauron in Central Gaul (Perrier 1960) and Chester in north-west Britain (*RIB* 452), the invocations are to Jupiter Taranus, Jupiter Taranucus and Jupiter Optimus Maximus Tanarus (Green 1982; 1984, Cat. D).

The Böckingen (Fig. 1) and Chester altars provide the most detailed inscriptions, though the latter is now completely weathered away. The Rhineland altar is inscribed 'Deo Taranucno; Veratius Primus ex iussu'. For the reading of the Chester altar, we have to rely on earlier transcripts. The reading is generally accepted as 'To Jupiter Best and Greatest Tanarus, Lucius Bruttius Praesens, of the Galerian Voting Tribe from Clunia, *princeps* of Legion XX Valeria Victrix, willingly and deservedly fulfilled his vow, in the consulships of Commodus and Lateranus' (i.e. AD 154).

The presence of seven altars to a Celtic thunderer, of which three link the god with Jupiter, raises a number of interpretative issues. First, was Taranis or Taranus in reality the great Gaulish deity implied by Lucan's poem? The question of the importance of the Taranis-cult in the Celtic word is problematical. It could be argued, with Powell (1958, 128), that both the obscurity of location (only three scattered dedications in Gaul, two in the Rhineland, one each in Dalmatia and Britain) and the paucity of the evidence deny Lucan's assertion of the universal power of the cult (Reinach 1897). On the other hand, the widespread distribution of the altars could be taken to imply widespread knowledge. However, this does not get over the fact that the number of epigraphic dedications is so small. Another, related problem, is how far the term 'Taranis' can be used to describe portrayals of a Romano-Celtic sky-god which are not named, e.g. the small bronze figure from Strasbourg (Anon undated, Pl. 15, 31; Boucher 1976, no. 231, Pl. 50) who looks nothing like the Roman Jupiter, wears a long Gaulish cloak and bears as his sole emblem a thunderbolt. He could be Taranis; we have no evidence either way. The second major issue is whether Taranis was fully identified with the Roman sky-god as his Celtic equivalent, as suggested by the Chester, Thauron and Scardona

altars. In arguing for such equation we have, on the one hand, Lucan's mention of Taranis plus some dedications to the Celtic thunder-god alone; on the other hand some invocations, as at Chester, to Jupiter-Taranis. In my view, a number of deductions may be made from this ambiguous evidence. First, we can say that the Celtic thunder-god existed in his own right and the term 'Taranis' is not merely a descriptive epithet for a Roman god. A second, allied point is that Taranis cannot be identified absolutely with Jupiter, for the Celtic god is defined purely by means of his functional name (Cerquand 1881-83). The association of a Celtic thunder-power with Jupiter on a handful of dedications must be the result of conflation between a Celtic supernatural entity and one element of Jupiter's role. Jupiter exercised sovereignty over a far wider realm than that of storm, rain and fertility envisaged in the thunder epithet, Taranis

The final issue to be raised here is the question of identification between Taranis and the wheel-bearing sky-god of the Celts. The assumption of such equation is frequently made since both wheel-god and Taranis are, on occasions, linked with Jupiter. But there is absolutely no evidence for this identification (Green 1982; 1984, 254-257). The name of Taranis never appears in association with the wheel-symbol, though the latter, as discussed below, occurs on nearly two hundred stone monuments. The Celtic solar wheel-god is often identified with the universal sky-god; so, more occasionally (according to epigraphic data), is the Celtic power of thunder. But that does not mean that solar and thunder-gods are one and the same. The fact that the wheel is frequently associated with a thunderbolt is probably due to a link between the Celtic sun-god and the Roman sky-god whose symbol was the thunderbolt; this is implied by the epigraphic dedications to Jupiter alone on wheel-bearing altars. It should be remembered that the Roman Jupiter was all-powerful over the sky and all its bodies and emanations. As such, he was a convenient Roman associate for any Celtic deity connected with cosmic forces

The Equestrian God of the Columns

The so-called Jupiter-Giant columns (Fig. 2) are an iconographic phenomenon confined mainly to Eastern Gaul and the Rhineland (Bauchhenss 1976; Bauchhenss & Noelke 1981). About one hundred and fifty such monuments are recorded and they form an essentially homogeneous group with, as their main elements, a tree-like column at the summit of which, above a figured Corinthian capital, is a sculptured equestrian group. At the base of the column there are, generally, a quadrangular stone and a circular or octagonal stele bearing carvings of deities as well as a dedication to Jupiter or Juno. If, as rarely happens, all the constituents of a Jupiter column survive, it may, like the Merten monument (Espérandieu 1907-66, 4425), be

Fig. 3 Wheel-bearing horseman-group from Jupiter-column, Butterstadt (Hessen). Height 82 cm (Museum des Geschichtsvereins, Hanau). After Bauchhenss 1976, Abb. 26.

as high as 15 m. The shafts themselves are probably best interpreted as tree-skeuomorphs. Some bear scale-decoration, usually considered as imitative of tree-bark. The pillar from Hausen near Stuttgart (Fig. 2, Bauchhenss 1976, Pl. 1) is actually carved with oak-leaves and acorns, thus quite possibly representing Jupiter's sacred oak. The summit-group is the most interesting element; a horseman-god, presumed to be the Jupiter of the dedications, is depicted trampling down, or being supported by, a semi-human, semi-serpentine being. The horseman sometimes wears armour and frequently brandishes a thunderbolt. The interpretation of this group is open to debate. There appears to be a conquering theme and some scholars argue that sculptors, even if themselves of Celtic origin, possessed a precise knowledge of Greek mythology and the classical theme of the gigantomachy. If that is the case, we have here an instance of a basically Graeco-Roman art-form adapted to a Celtic context and used to display a Celtic religious idea. That a Romano-Celtic sky-god is depicted cannot be disputed. The invocation is to the Roman sky-god or his consort, and the thunderbolt is consistent with this. But the classical Jupiter is never equestrian. In addition, the horseman sometimes bears the Celtic solar symbol of the wheel, held by the rider as a protective shield, as at Butterstadt in Germany (Fig. 3; cf. aso Espérandieu 1931, 76). The whole question of the wheel and its significance is

examined below, but its presence in the context of Jupiter columns lends credence to the view that a deity of hybrid ethnic origins is represented, notwithstanding the classical influence in the iconography.

The meaning of the equestrian group, in my view, is deliberately ambiguous. What appears to be depicted is a Romano-Celtic celestial power, symbolic of light, day, life and the positive element in a dualistic, possibly seasonal myth of life, death and rebirth (Lambrechts 1951). The snake-limbed creature is a chthonic being representative of darkness, death and negative forces. But in any dualistic cult the interdependence of life and death is crucial, and this would account for the ambivalent relationship between rider and monster (Green 1984, 174–178).

Jupiter as a Wheel-God

The association of Jupiter with a Celtic solar power is the most frequent Romano-Celtic manifestation of a sky-god in terms of archaeological evidence, and I will therefore concentrate on this association. Here the most potent motif is that of the spoked wheel, whose symbolic use is Celtic in origin and may indeed be traced far back into Celtic and proto-Celtic prehistory in non-Mediterranean Europe (Green 1981a). Before going further into an examination of solar wheel symbolism, a word should be said concerning the interpretation of the spoked wheel as a motif. In my opinion, there is no doubt as to its heliolatric character; whilst within the context of prehistoric and indeed most Romano-Celtic evidence, such an interpretation cannot be proved, the connection of the wheel with unequivocal representations of Roman celestial religion places it firmly within the sphere of sky-symbolism. The adoption of the spoked wheel as representative of the sun is entirely justifiable on intrinsic grounds alone (Cook 1925, 57–93). In terms of physical resemblance, the nave, spokes and felloe realistically imitate the central sphere, rays and nimbus of the sun. In addition, the element of movement is significant; the sun is observed to move through the sky in similar manner to the rotation of a wheel on a moving vehicle.

The wheel-motif occurs consistently in company with representations of an anthropomorphic divinity all over the Romano-Celtic world, implying a certain universality in cult-expression, but it is parts of Gaul and (to a lesser extent) Britain which appear to have been particularly important in terms of the distribution of cult-material and, as a corollary to this, in the reflection of cult-activity (Green 1984, Pls. XXIV, XXVIII).

One of the most interesting features about Romano-Celtic sky-symbolism is the apparent intensity of conflation between Graeco-Roman and Celtic religious ideas. For instance, where an epigraphic dedication accompanies the wheel symbol, it is the Roman sky-god who is named. Moreover, in a large majority of instances where the wheel accompanies a human figure this being bears also the attributes and mien of the Graeco-Roman sky and father-god—sceptre, eagle and, most important, thunderbolt (Fig. 4).

The Celtic Solar Cult and the Roman Jupiter

The Prehistoric Evidence

If we are attempting to establish the wheel as a symbol indigenous to the Celtic world, it is necessary briefly to consider the prehistoric evidence (Green 1981a). Representations of spoked wheels were common decorative and symbolic motifs in central and north-west Europe from around 1200 BC. However, our concern begins only with the Iron Age, since it is now

Fig. 4 Bronze figurine with wheel and thunderbolt; Le Châtelet (Haute-Marne). Height 10.3 cm (Musée des Antiquités Nationales, St. Germain-en-Laye: Acc. No. 32947). Copyright Musée....St. Germain.

Fig. 5 Iron Age bronze torc, Somme-Taube (Marne). Diameter 20 cm (Musée des Antiquités Nationales, St. Germain-en-Laye). Copyright Musée....St. Germain.

that we may first speak of the Celts as a people whose culture and customs were sufficiently unified to be recognized by classical writers. As in previous periods, metalwork was the most common medium for symbolic expression; evidence from armour, jewellery (Fig. 5) (especially in the form of miniature wheel-pendants) and coinage all suggest the dominance of the cult of sky or sun; for the first time we very occasionally catch glimpses of an anthropomorphic representation associated with the wheel-sign; and there begins to emerge the pattern of material evidence for the Celtic sun-cult which reaches its apogee in Romano-Celtic times.

The custom of wearing wheel-shaped amulets continued later Bronze Age tradition. Whilst we generally have to wait for the Roman period to see significant religious associations for these objects (a possible exception being the probably first century BC Hounslow find (British Museum 1925, 147) of wheel-model and boar-figurines), they occur in the Iron Age in quantities on settlement-sites and were frequently buried with the dead; the Dürrnberg in Austria, for example, produced a number of wheel-amulets (Pauli 1975, Abb. 3), including one of fourth century BC date from the grave of a young girl. Torcs bearing the wheel-sign were worn (Fig. 5); and sculptural evidence from, for instance, Fox-Amphoux (Espérandieu 1907 66, 8613) and Orange (Amy *et al.* 1962), both probably of later first century BC date, indicates that soldiers wore armour marked with the apotropaic symbol of the wheel.

The solar sign is common on Celtic coinage and is frequently associated with the horse (Allen 1980). This link between horse and wheel/sun images is significant, and the presence of the horse as a recurrent companion of the Romano-Celtic sky-god on Jupiter columns may be reflected in this earlier iconography. Another important cult-association occurs, for example, on Armorican coinage (Allen 1980, 135), where human heads and wheels are represented; such heads may have been some of the first specific depictions of a wheel-god, the motif accompanying the head in order to give it identity as a celestial power.

Linked with this is the portrayal of a god associated with a wheel on the Gundestrup Cauldron, probably immediately pre-dating the Roman period, and possibly made in Gaul though found in Denmark (Olmsted 1979, Pl. 2). The great cult-bowl is made up of chased silver plates bearing mythological images which are strongly Celtic in theme, though incorporating many other art-styles and motifs. On one of the inner plates a bull-horn helmeted being (recalling the Orange helmets – see above) 'offers' a large naturalistic cart or chariot-wheel to a bearded deity represented by head and shoulders alone.

The Romano-Celtic Evidence

The evidence for the wheel as a celestial motif during the succeeding period of Roman influence on Celtic lands is more direct, determinate and abundant in that we possess epigraphic allusion to a Romano-Celtic sky-god whose attributes included the wheel, and there are also a number of anthropomorphic portrayals of a god associated with the solar sign (Green 1984, 103–134, Cat. B). The material relevant to the cult is diverse, but meaningful and convenient distinctions may be made between, on the one hand, monumental, usually corporate, expressions of worship and, on the other, small ceremonial or personal cult-items.

Though the emblem of the wheel accompanies a variety of god-forms, by far the most common consists of depictions of the Roman sky-god, identifiable as such by means of dedication or by the presence of standard Graeco-Roman symbols. Very often the wheel is the only Celtic element present. One group (Fig. 6), exemplified by a stone from Alzey in Germany (Espérandieu 1907–66, 7749), is composed of seated images of Jupiter in his usual attitude but accompanied

Fig. 6 Statue of Jupiter seated on wheel-decorated throne. Alzey (Rheinland-Pfalz). Height 74 cm (Museum Alzey). After Bauchhenss 1976, Abb. 32

by large wheel-symbols. Another group, illustrated by a relief from Laudun in southern Gaul (Espérandieu 1907–66, 513), shows the Roman Jupiter associated with his sceptre, Roman eagle and Celtic wheel. A stone from Séguret near Avignon (Espérandieu 1907–66, 303; Sautel 1926, no. 501, Pl. LIII), standing over two metres high, depicts a god in the garb of a Roman general, with Jupiter's eagle and a large ten-spoked wheel by his right side (Fig. 7). This warrior-aspect may have symbolic associations with the conquering theme of the Jupiter-columns.

Like most stone statues or reliefs depicting gods in Roman guise, altars are generally expressions of corporate worship and belief or ritual. Where there is epigraphic allusion to Jupiter on wheel-bearing altars, we have indisputable conflation between Roman and Celtic sky-deities, though the Roman name is always used. Frequently, whether or not an inscription is present, the Celtic wheel is balanced by other, Roman, sky-signs such as thunderbolt and eagle, as if the worshipper is either thinking of the sky-god as a true blend of ethnic concepts, and cramming as many different sky-symbols as possible onto one stone to increase its potency, or is covering all eventualities in propitiating native and intrusive god alike. Wheel-bearing altars linked to a Jupiter-cult occur in the Rhineland, as at Cologne (Fig. 8; Espérandieu 1907–66, 6380; *CIL* XIII, 8194; Ristow 1975, Taf. 37) and there is a small North British group, but the main concentration of altars lies in the Lower Rhone Valley centred around Nimes (Espérandieu 1924, *passim*). Another, different group is composed of small, roughly carved stones and is clustered in the Pyrenees around Toulouse (Green 1984, 103–134, Pls. XXIV, XXV); the distinctive feature here is the association of

Fig. 7 Statue of armoured deity with wheel, thunderbolt, eagle and snake curled round oak; Séguret, near Vaison (Vaucluse). Height 2.05 m (Musée Calvet, Avignon). Copyright Miranda Green.

wheel and swastika sometimes on the same stone; and the evidence that wheel and swastika or wheel and god-name were sometimes interchangeable. The inference is that wheel and swastika shared similar but not identical symbolism, and it may be that the latter possessed especially the element of movement in sun/wheel imagery. If we look at the range of altars as a whole, tremendous diversity may be observed. At one end of the scale we have formally carved, totally Roman-looking altars to Jupiter Optimus Maximus; at the other are the small crude blocks made locally for local need, like those from south-west Gaul. The only feature they possess in common is the presence of the solar wheel, and one must conclude that dedicants must have also ranged widely from legionary officers to relatively impoverished Celtic peasants.

The group of small altars just discussed leads on to personal expressions of the wheel-bearing Jupiter, which generally take the form of figurines. As with the monumental material, the wheel by itself or associated with other iconography on small objects may imply the presence of the deity even where anthropomorphic representation is absent. Of the statuettes the most important are a number of figurines from Gaulish sites, and one or two British items. Best-known of the continental material is the bronze from Le Châtelet, Haute-Marne (Fig. 4; Reinach 1894, 33; Boucher 1976, 162; Green 1984, frontispiece), where a naked, long-haired and bearded deity holds Jupiter's thunderbolt and a Celtic sun-wheel: the spirl-shaped objects hanging from his shoulder have been interpreted as spare lightning-flashes. Another, very different, figurine from Landouzy-la-Ville, Aisne (Villefosse 1881, 1–3; Green 1984, Pl. I.XXX) once grasped a sceptre and holds a wheel in the left hand (Fig. 9); it actually bears a dedication to Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the base. The remaining continental material consists of pipe-clay images from the Central Gaulish workshops of the Allier area (Blanchet 1890, 65–224; Rouvier-Jeanlin

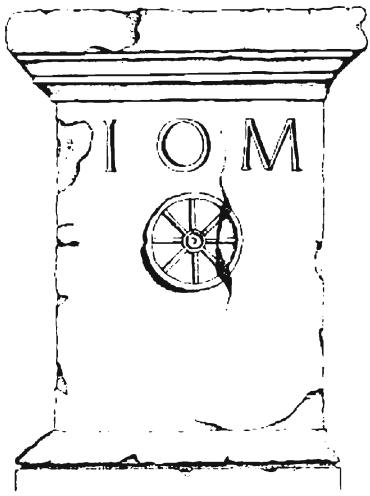

Fig. 8 Wheel-decorated altar to Jupiter Optimus Maximus; Kleinen Griechemarkt, Köln. Height 86 cm (Bonn Rheinisches-Landesmuseum: Acc. No. 7625). Copyright Miranda Green.

Fig. 9 Bronze statuette of wheel-god with sceptre (now lost) in one hand; basal dedication to Jupiter Optimus Maximus and the Numen of the Emperor; Landouzy-la-Ville (Aisne). Height 22 cm (Musée des Antiquités Nationales, St. Germain-en-Laye). Copyright Musée des Antiquités....St. Germain.

Fig. 10 Pipe-clay figurine of wheel-god accompanied by small anthropomorphic figure; Néris (Allier). Height c. 9–10 cm (Musée des Antiquités Nationales, St. Germain-en-Laye). Copyright Musée des Antiquités....St. Germain.

1972, Type 2). They depict a god with a wheel and thunderbolt or a wheel and a diminutive human figure weighed down by the hand of the sky-god resting on its head (Fig. 10). I would see a direct parallel between the symbolism here and the allegory of the Jupiter columns already examined. The small figure in the clay groups may well correspond to the anguished earthbound monster of the columns in representing the vanquished forces of the Underworld. All these Gaulish depictions have one particular feature in common—the combination of Roman and Celtic iconographical expressions of cosmic power, the Celtic solar motif on the one hand and classical sky-signs on the other.

The British material is, for the most part, essentially similar in theme. The Willingham Fen bronze is curious and demonstrates a complex mythology or set of religious concepts (Green 1979, no. 42; 1984, Pl. LXXXI). It is probably best interpreted as some kind of mace or sceptre-terminal and comes from a ritual hoard of bronzes possibly originally from a shine and perhaps the property of priests. The item depicts a naked youth accompanied by an eagle, a Celtic solar wheel, the head of a three-horned bull and a dolphin (Fig. 11). The most unJupiter-like god rests one foot on the head of a grotesque humanoid figure. Here sky and chthonic, classical and Celtic emblems seem to have been evenly balanced. Eagle and wheel can be seen as representative of Roman and indigenous celestial elements respectively; monster and dolphin of Celtic and Roman chthonicism. The presence of the bull is interesting and enigmatic, especially in that it is of the triple-horned variety, a popular Celtic cult-beast in eastern Gaulish contexts (Deonna 1954, 403–428). It should be recalled that bull and wheel-associations are present at Gundestrup and at Orange. One should bear in mind also the associations between Jupiter and the bull in classical mythology, and it may be that at Willingham, Celtic craftsmen have linked an essentially Graeco-Roman associate with the Celtic solar god, in keeping with the presence of the eagle, but have Celticised it by the addition of a third horn, in keeping with the essentially Celtic nature of the god portrayed.

If we are correct in associating the solar wheel with the Romano Celtic sky-god, it is true also that not all wheel-bearing representations possess the characteristics of Jupiter. We may cite the British carving of a

Fig. 11 Bronze sceptre-terminal depicting youthful god accompanied by wheel, eagle, three-horned bull's head and dolphin, small human figure beneath god's foot, Willingham Fen, Cambs. Height 12.1 cm (Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology). Copyright Cambridge University Museum.

Fig. 12. Relief of seated, half-draped Genius with cornucopiae, and with wheel held over altar. Netherby, Cumbria. Height 39 cm. (Tullie House Museum, Carlisle). Copyright Carlisle Museum.

seated *genius*-like figure from Netherby in Cumbria (Fig. 12; 1983, 41–47), and the clay mould of a warrior-god with club and wheel from Corbridge (Forster & Knowles 1910, 224, fig. 6). The wheels and human heads on the Caerleon antefixes (Fig. 13) provide little clue as to the identity of the deity portrayed (Boon 1972, Pl. 14), only the presence of the solar symbols themselves imply the cosmic nature of the accompanying depictions.

Of small cult-objects without the image of a deity in person, the most interesting group is that of wheel-models (Green 1975a, 54–70; 1981b, 253ff). These would presumably have possessed both a votive and talismanic function. Many miniature wheels have no sacral associations whatever (Fig. 14), but a significant number occur in graves and shrines or are associated with other material of a definitely religious nature. The undeniably sacral character of at least one wheel-model is demonstrated by the presence at Augst in Switzerland of an example bearing a fragmentary votive inscription (Laur-Belart 1942, 20–23, Abb. 11; Green 1984, no. A 140, Pl. LVIII), at the same *colonia* clusters of models occur on what was in all probability a temple-site. In relation to other evidence for solar symbolism associated with a Celtic sky-god, it may be argued that

Fig. 13. Clay antefix decorated with human head, star-signs and wheel. Caerleon, Gwent. Height c. 17 cm. (National Museum of Wales, Cardiff). Copyright National Museum of Wales.

Fig. 14. Group of bronze wheel-models from Gaulish sites (unprovenanced). (Musée des Antiquités Nationales, St. Germain-en-Laye). Copyright Musée des Antiquités, St. Germain.

the presence of models in the shape of spoked wheels is definite and further evidence of that symbolism. But wheel-models occur in such numbers on Gaulish sites both of pre-Roman and Roman date (Green 1984, 73–101), that it would be dangerously speculative and, indeed simplistic, to link them all specifically to one celestial cult; many could merely have been 'good-luck' or apotropaic objects. We have already examined sculptural evidence for the wearing of wheel-amulets during the Iron Age, for instance, at Fox Amphoux and at Orange. However, there are one or two instances of specific association between wheel-models and a sky-

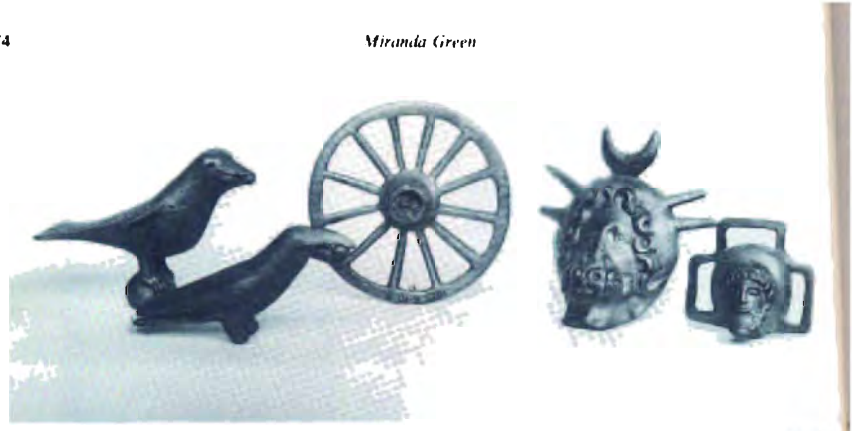

Fig. 15 Part of cache of bronze religious items including twelve-spoked wheel-model, Felmingham Hall, Norfolk. Diameter of wheel c. 4.5 cm (British Museum). Copyright Trustees of the British Museum.

cult. The sacral deposit at Felmingham Hall, Norfolk (British Museum 1964, 60; Gilbert 1978) contains a number of bronzes associated with sky or solar symbolism, including a hollow bronze head of a Jupiter-like god, a small head of a radiate Oriental deity, generally taken to be that of Heliosarapis and a large cart-wheel model (Fig. 15). It appears as though here oriental, classical and Celtic sky-elements are all deliberately present. At Icklingham, Suffolk, a wheel-brooch, wheel-model and the wing from a bronze eagle-figurine may likewise evidence both Celtic and Roman emblems of Jupiter (Fig. 16; Green 1975b).

Fig. 16 Bronze wheel-model and wing from eagle-figurine: Icklingham, Suffolk. Diameter of wheel 4.1 cm (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford). Copyright Miranda Green.

Conclusion

In this paper, three major aspects of a Romano-Celtic Jupiter-cult have been identified: we have observed that, on occasions, in certain places, the Roman sky-god was associated with a Celtic thunder-power, a conqueror of chthonic forces, and a pre-existing solar divinity. The nature of evidence for these three aspects has both common and diverging ground. The seven altars to Taranis provide the sole epigraphic evidence for the existence of such a deity, and this is corroborated by Lucan's poem, indeed the only unequivocal evidence we have for Taranis is epigraphic, not iconographic. The Jupiter-Giant columns, where the Romano-Celtic sky-god occurs as a conqueror of dark and death, are once again a specific phenomenon and, like the Taranis data, reflect the activity of corporate worshippers and an organized cult. Here the evidence is largely iconographic, but the dedication, as well as the presence of Jupiter's classical thunderbolt emblem, links the Jupiter column groups with the Graeco-Roman High God. The last main aspect of the cult, the association with the sun, is perhaps the most interesting. We possess no name for the solar god, apart from that of Jupiter, but the Roman deity was not associated iconographically with solar symbolism, and we have specific evidence for the worship of the sun represented by a spoked wheel long before the period of Roman influence on Celtic lands.

Two final points may be made. The first concerns the relationship between the three major aspects of sky-religion here examined. The archaeological data associated with the three types are quite distinct but certain links may be recognized. Most obvious is the connection, both iconographic and epigraphic, of Taranis, the Equestrian of the columns and the Solar god, with the Roman Jupiter. It should be stressed, however, that this common link does not imply equation between the three Celtic types of manifestation. But there is some other common ground. First, the ubiquity of the thunderbolt which accompanies both the horseman and solar motifs, suggests the universal potency of the thunder-emblem, though only with Taranis does it become supreme. Second, solar symbolism is on occasions added to the panoply of the

sky-horseman, as we have seen. Third, though the iconography of the Jupiter-columns is essentially a monumental form, certain small objects reflect similar symbolism. For instance, the Willingham Fen wheel-god rests his foot on the head of an earthbound creature, and certain clay figurines represent the wheel-god accompanied by a small subjugated being. Moreover, the conquering attitude of the horseman is occasionally reflected in solar iconography; the Séguret statue wearing Roman armour, and the Corbridge wheel-god exemplify this connection.

My final point concerns the character of dedicants to these three aspects of a Celtic Jupiter-cult. It is interesting that, apart from wheel-god representations, small personal objects are virtually unknown. Whilst Taranis-altars and Jupiter-columns were the direct result of the stimulus of Roman monumental traditions upon beliefs previously unrepresented, Celtic solar symbolism was already firmly established as a private and personal cult with its own amulets and talismans. In the Roman period the Solar god was elevated to the ranks of organized worship suitable for an associate of Jupiter. But at the same time, he retained his broader, more individual, pre-Roman functions. These were represented not only by the presence of cheap clay figurines and miniature symbols, but also by the association of the sun-cult with such other concepts as those of fertility and death.

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The Goddess Epona: concepts of sovereignty in a changing landscape

Laura S. Oaks

From 1977 to 1979 an American research team under the direction of Carole L. Crumley made extensive excavations at the summit of Mont Dardon (506.4 m) in the southwest-central portion of the department of Saône-et-Loire, France. Mont Dardon is the highest eminence (along with Mont Dône, where less evidence of occupation has been found) within a radius of 25 km from its summit. At about that outer distance to the north-east is Mont Beuvray, site of ancient Bibracte, the old Aeduan capital near Gallo-Roman Augustodunum (modern Autun). Remains at Mont Dardon attracted the attention of antiquaries as early as the eighteenth century, and came to be identified in the nineteenth century partly as those of a Roman fort and partly as a citadel of earlier origin. Modern excavations, first undertaken in 1959, confirmed both La Tène III and Gallo-Roman occupation and found evidence of perhaps more intensive occupation in the late Bronze Age and early Iron Age. The American team began preliminary field research in 1975 and spent 1976 investigating a larger research area around Dardon, developing plans for an integrated regional survey of settlement. Primary aims included establishing the sequence and intensity of the several occupations on Mont Dardon, establishing the functions of the site in the larger settlement system of which it was a part, and determining if and how these functions changed over time.[1]

By 1979 excavations on Dardon had revealed further evidence of Gallo-Roman occupation and also two Medieval structures. Gallo-Roman remains included fragments of low-fired, white-clay figurines, probably manufactured in nearby Gueugnon, which was famous for its potteries. Among these fragments are several relating to feminine deities, both standing and seated, and also equestrian motifs, such as fragments showing a bridled head. An authoritative comment on the possible identity of these finds must await the final reports on the excavations, but interest in the broader functions of the site in its surrounding context justified research on maternal deities known in the area. Discovery of an infant cemetery adjacent to the foundations of a Medieval chapel (*c.* AD 900–1050) on the summit of Dardon intensified this interest, as it suggested that association of the site with a maternal force may have continued, to become integrated with Christian observance.

The research area lies at the southern edge of the distribution of the Gallo-Roman horse goddess Epona (see Linduff 1979, fig. 1; Magnen & Thevenot 1953, 65), whose cult enjoyed great popularity in an unusually well-defined geographical context in northern and eastern Gaul. Epona is often associated with other maternal deities such as the Matres. In the interior of Gaul she was evidently a deity of fertility, healing, and intercession with with the Underworld, often associated with sacred springs (Linduff 1979; Thevenot 1968, 185–191). A distinct type of Epona cult object is connected with Gaulish cavalry who served as auxiliary forces in Roman military campaigns, especially along the border in Germania Superior (Linduff 1979; Magnen & Thevenot 1953). There is ample evidence that the Aedui, the Gaulish tribe (*civitas*) within whose territory the research area lies, had a distinguished tradition of horsemanship and would have been among the likeliest sources of auxiliary cavalry in Gallo-Roman times. One concentration of the most prominent variant of Epona representations in the interior of Gaul centres around Augustodunum; a second cluster is located just to the north near Alesia (Alise-Ste-Reine), chief town of the Mandubii, who are generally treated as a client tribe within the area of Aeduan hegemony.

Thus aside from the possibility that Epona might be one of the maternal deities represented in Gallo-Roman remains at Mont Dardon, her place in the surrounding human landscape of the Aedui made her a focal point for investigations of several larger issues, including what her cult might reveal about the social, political, and economic life of the tribe. Special interest in continuity and change in that human landscape led to questions about the history of the cult—if it could be determined—in the era before the conquest and in the early stages of Romanization.

Modern scholarly interest in the Gallo-Roman cult of Epona began with Reinach (1895). A comprehensive and still standard catalogue of inscriptions and artefacts relating to the goddess was compiled by Thevenot (in Magnen & Thevenot 1953; suppl. 1956). An easily accessible and informative study of the iconography and function of the goddess is Linduff's recent article in *Latomus* (1979, 817–37). Linduff elaborates Magnen and Thevenot's (1953) conclusions about two (or perhaps three) distinct formal types, each

with variants. The first (Linduff's type A, 130 examples) depicts Epona as a woman, usually fully dressed, riding sidesaddle on a horse that is moving sedately to the right; the chief variant (21 examples from around Augustodunum and Alesia) includes a foal alongside the mare. More problematic is the typology of remaining examples from further afield: four from along the Rhine and *limes* in Germania Superior show Epona between horses, which are facing away from her; eight from the Danubian provinces, Italy, North Africa, and England have her seated, with horses facing inward. Linduff distinguishes these as types B and C, appending to type C Spanish examples of the *domador* type. Blazquez's (1959) treatment of the problem of these and other Spanish items of related interest suggests that this may be unnecessary. In all other respects the association of both types B and C with Roman imperial military and administrative personnel stationed abroad (usually Gaulish cavalry auxiliaries, one known courier) indicates that the distinction there may be one of technical variation in execution in dispersed geographical areas. An alternative conceptual scheme might thus combine types B and C as B1 and B2, leaving the Spanish material as a separate category pending further investigation.

The main focus of Linduff's (1979) argument is the function of the cult among cavalry stationed along the German border. She places the auxiliary Gaulish cavalry firmly within its surrounding milieu of Roman imperial interests in the area and presents a convincing case that Epona would have had, in addition to her usual equestrian functions, the added appeal of a familiar cult in an alien environment. The goddess would also have offered (in the late second and third centuries AD) a substitute, among lesser ranks, for the cult of Mithras, which was largely confined to a more cosmopolitan elite in the upper echelons. The physical types of cult objects (Linduff's B and C) that originated in such environments may thus reflect a desire on the part of the worshipper to present the goddess in a pose befitting her new surroundings, emphasizing her dignity and power rather than her fertility. In addition, artisans in imperial military centres may have been inclined to adapt ethnic deities to local and Romanized conventions.

As for parallels of Epona in pre-conquest religious art in Gaul, Linduff's cautious conclusions (1979, 833) can now be modified and greatly expanded in light of a new and comprehensive study of the Gundestrup cauldron (Olmsted 1979), which must have been in press as she was writing. Olmsted dated it to the decades just before or during the conquest and believed it to have been made somewhere in the area between the Loire and the Somme (1979, 53–54, 99–102)– perhaps near the central sacred meeting place of the druid courts (Caesar *B.G.* 6,13). The cauldron is interpreted as the prime extant example of detailed, presumably integrated religious imagery from pre-conquest Gaul. Olmsted's synoptic view of the narrative import of the plates on the cauldron brings him to the conclusion that the goddess flanked by elephants who appears on one of the inner plates (his B) can be connected through both iconography and mythological parallels with a primary type of Celtic goddess who represents sovereignty and, as such, functions as a divine consort of kings, conferring legitimacy and sponsoring territorial control (1979, esp. 132–143, and *passim* on Medb). Aspects of this have been a matter of scholarly speculation for some time, but Olmsted is the first, to my knowledge, to use the diverse evidence to focus firmly on the meaning of the Gundestrup cauldron and related history in pre-conquest Gaul. Among the cluster of known Celtic goddesses connected with this tradition of sovereignty are Irish Medb and Macha, Welsh Rhiannon, and Gaulish Epona—that is, Epona as an earlier and more powerful avatar than the benign lady of the popular Gallo-Roman cult. Epona has been most closely linked with Rhiannon (see Gruffydd 1953), who in turn has clear parallels with Macha; Medb may be regarded as the strongest and most complete representative of the feminine principle of sovereignty in question.

How could what was known about the research area around Mont Dardon be integrated with the religious traditions concerning Epona– both the Gallo-Roman types and the larger mythological deity? The historical context of the area suggested several lines of inquiry, Caesar's *Gallic Wars* being the primary source.

The Aedui were a powerful tribe, prominent in the history of eastern Gaul before and after the Roman conquest. They were among the chief forces in the inter-tribal politics of the region: like their rivals and neighbours the Sequani and Arverni, they had the allegiance of a cluster of adjoining client tribes and maintained political relations further abroad for various purposes. The balance of power throughout the region was further complicated by what seems to have been a shifting notion of sovereignty among the Gauls in general. At the level of the individual tribe, the institution of kingship had in some cases declined or been modified by more fluid systems of leadership. The Aedui, for instance, were proud of their system of magistracy, by which nobles were elected to short terms of kingship (see e.g. *B.G.* 7.32), though effective power still rested in the hands of the high nobility at large, whose most prominent public scions were termed *principes* often translated as 'chiefs' or 'principal citizens'. On a broader scale, it seems that the notion of inter-tribal sovereignty, already in effect with regional alliances, may have encouraged the contemplation of pan-Gaulish hegemony in some quarters, and a fear of it in others (e.g. *B.G.* 1,2 4; 7,4). What toppled the balance of power in eastern Gaul was the threat of a massive migration by a foreign people, the Helvetii; when diplomatic agreements between the Sequani and Aedui on the one hand and the Helvetii on the other concerning the latter's safe conduct through the area

failed, the Helvetii began pillaging in their passage. The Aedui appealed to Rome in the person of Julius Caesar, then proconsul of the Roman province of Gaul further to the south. Thus began the Roman conquest of Gaul. The Aedui remained allies of Rome throughout the ensuing years of struggle, until the final push for a unified and independent Gaul came with Vercingetorix. (Interestingly, he had arisen among the Arverni, who had some traditional claim to inter-tribal sovereignty; see *B.G.* 7,4.) The story of the internal collapse of Aeduan political stability, which catalyzed the success of Vercingetorix's bid for supreme command over Gaul (*B.G.* 7,32–33,37,54–55,63), amply illustrates how shifting perceptions of sovereignty within a tribe might affect much larger regional events. Aeduan power in Gaul was sufficiently strong that, despite their long-standing alliance with Caesar, when a large faction of the tribe entered the side of Gaulish independence near the end, Vercingetorix was obliged to come to Bibracte to stake his claim to power against an Aeduan counterproposal, in a pan-Gaulish assembly (*B.G.* 7,63). Vercingetorix was defeated at Alesia; the subsequent annexation of all Gaul as a Roman province was Caesar's mounting-block to personal imperial sovereignty in the greater Roman world.

Once pacified, Gaul rapidly adapted to the status of a Roman province, truly unified for the first time under one rule (but eventually subdivided into three provinces) and quick to take advantage of associated benefits of trade and incentives to political advancement in the new administration. The high nobility—a twofold elite comprised of the druids and the knights, or *equites* (horsemen) had been virtually the only severe losers from the conquest and subsequent Romanization. Druidism was eventually suppressed; whether this was by design to alter powerful Gaulish cults that might serve as a touchstone for revolt, or more a political policy to reduce the influence of druids in other affairs and break their strong inter-tribal organization (*B.G.* 6,13) is unclear. The *equites*, especially those with claims to tribal leadership, would have felt the military defeat and loss of independent sovereignty in Gaul most keenly. Ultimate responsibility for the economic losses in the long war would have fallen on the nobility through their networks of patronage; they now had the task of accounting to Rome for taxes or tribute. The mobile political and economic situation must have had far-ranging social effects.

The Aedui seem to have repaired their standing with Rome fairly quickly. Augustodunum was one of the earliest Roman cities founded in Gaul (*c.* 12 BC); the old *oppidum* at Bibracte was abandoned. Aeduan nobles were the first from Gaulish tribes to be admitted to the Roman senate, in AD 48.

From the beginning of the Roman conquest, Aeduan cavalry had won Caesar's unqualified approval, and he used it extensively in his campaigns; he was also prepared to compliment the cavalry of his opponents. This reputation for excellence remained with Gaulish cavalry over the transition to imperial rule, and for centuries Gaulish auxiliaries remained an important arm of Roman forces in the West and beyond, especially along the German *limes*. In Caesar's accounts of his campaigns in Gaul, the distinction between *equites* (horsemen, knights) and *equitatus* (cavalry) is blurred, at least in reference to Gaulish forces; *equites* numbering in the thousands are mentioned in battle reports. But as a class (*B.G.* 6,13) the *equites* had both *ambactes* and *clientes*; the former are assumed to be 'liegemen' of some sort (trans. Edwards, Loeb edition, with note therein), the latter being lesser military or civilian retainers. The social structure of the cavalry itself must, therefore, have been more complex than at first appears. In the event it may have remained relatively intact under imperial service (Lindauff 1979, 827).

Thus from several perspectives the relation of cavalry to sovereignty is a complex issue, even localized in historical Gaul. Kings were chosen from the *equites*; with few exceptions the *principes* would have been the most prominent independently powerful individuals in that class: magistrates and kings were elected from the same pool. The power of the class lay in its control of military resources, above all, the mounted forces of the tribe, in which they themselves served in large numbers, with retinues of retainers. This social structure and its attendant tensions can be traced in most Indo-European societies of the ancient world.

At its most basic level, sovereignty involved the preservation of the state (the tribe or larger alliance) against outside threat, and the agent by which the sovereign accomplished this was the cavalry, the class from which he and his family originated. The speed and manoeuvrability of mounted forces made cavalry the only effective way to patrol tribal boundaries, protect the periphery of the state, and on occasion launch offensive strikes against neighbours similarly prepared. Without security against invasion the interior could have no guarantee of the peace and stability upon which the welfare of the general populace depended, including agricultural production and raising of livestock. Political stability in the interior likewise depended on the cavalry, in that the sovereign's social origins lay in that group and he also would have to retain its loyalty in order to maintain effective rule. Heredity had some influence in succession, but the oldest sources in several traditions make it plain that demonstration of right to rule, either practically by force or through ritual tests, was an important criterion of legitimacy (see e.g. Dumézil 1975, 116–138). The historical state of affairs in Gaul just before and during the conquest certainly shows that kingship was a contested role in several senses and that tribal *principes* (*equites*) mustered rival factions of political sovereignty.

The roots of that close social connection between kings and high retainers were so deep that it would be a mistake to attribute their viability purely to the use of the horse. A simpler explanation for the attraction of horses to the military elite in a society would be that this class had the power and economic leverage to take advantage of the technological benefits offered by riding or driving, and also had the greatest incentives to do so. The speed and manoeuvrability of the horse made it ideal for long-range military campaigns and also for transportation and communication in and beyond the tribal area, in ways that would relate to large-scale economic and political interests. Because state security and the conduct of state-level affairs would have resided with this military, equestrian class (by definition including the king), the bulk of equestrian resources would have remained there as well.[2] From this would have arisen a specialized domestic industry (rather like a modern 'defence' industry) centred on the equestrian economy as it nested within the more general economy of the interior: specialized in function, it would have had considerable social breadth, from the stableboys and farmhands in charge of immediate maintenance and feedcrops, to breeders and trainers, charioteers, messengers, managers of mule trains, craftsmen involved in the manufacture of tack, weapons, vehicles, and other equipment, and estate managers and bureaucrats who kept track of these resources and personnel and their deployment in various affairs of war and peace (see e.g. Renard 1959, esp. 318–321; Vigneron 1968).

In such a context horse deities are not unexpected, aside from the mass of other social and religious significances the horse surely had in all ancient cultures that made use of the animal. In this sense one would expect to find the horse in rites pertaining to kingship and sovereignty, as the central emblem of the king's ability to protect, expand and manage his state. Among the cavalry—the elite equestrian class—religious aspects of the horse might appear in paying allegiance to the king, but also in functions relating to success in military affairs and economic prosperity in the interior—from fertility of fields and stock to ventures in trade and routine protection of these assets. Other groups in society would have made connections between the horse and the ruling classes, both the king and the individual master, but more particularly concerning the equestrian economy—fertility of brood stock, skill in training, luck in campaigns, safety while travelling. At any social level the horse could have other religious meanings as well, which might be integrated with or even subsume these concerns.

This picture of how the horse might have found its way into religious traditions associated with sovereignty is supported by documentary evidence. The spatial and equestrian aspects of primal state security are uncannily echoed in ancient Vedic sources (see e.g. Gonda 1969, chs. 1–2, 20–22), from which also come some of the most complete information on Indo-European observances relating to kingship and sovereignty, in which cavalry and horsemanship feature in various ways. Chief among these was the Aśvamedha, an extremely elaborate proceeding specifically concerned with imperial sovereignty over annexed states (Gonda 1969, ch. 20; Puhvel 1970). Its central mechanism was the ritual preparation and sacrifice of a prized stallion, with which the king's chief wife then underwent a simulated mating; throughout the year-long preliminaries, when the stallion was allowed to roam through the realm, it was to be followed by a herd of one hundred gelded or older horses and a retinue of four hundred young men picked as representatives of their caste, clearly a ritual cavalry. More precisely, the name Aśvamedha is used in the Rig Veda in reference to the prince who celebrates the rite (Puhvel 1955). *Aśva-* can be directly linked with Indo-European **ekwo-*, 'horse,' and *-medha* with a cluster of related terms referring to offerings of food and drink and particularly to ritual intoxication (English 'mead' is a familiar cognate; Medb, the name of the Irish goddess of sovereignty, is another). Puhvel (1955) discusses at some length a cognate of the entire compound, ΙΠΠΟΜΗΔΥΟΣ, which is 'attested repeatedly on silver coins of the Gaulish Arverni' who we have seen had interests in inter-tribal sovereignty in Gaul, at least by the generation or two before the conquest (*B.G.* 7,4).

Other ceremonies in India were directed toward establishing the king's legitimacy in his own state; a ritual chariot race is the central feature of one, the Vājapeya. Considering these together with the Aśvamedha, Dumézil (1975, 115–219) has carefully adduced a parallel between Indian rituals surrounding kingship and a cluster of state rituals of sovereignty in republican Rome that served the same function, culminating in the Equus October. He is at great pains to explain the lack of overt sexual elements in the Roman ceremonies and ends by lamenting the lack of clear evidence in Celtic traditions that might elucidate the discrepancy (1975, 218–219). This perceived lack may be attributed to misdirected attention; the immediate context of his remarks is a long-standing controversy over whether an Irish kingship rite involving king and mare rather than stallion and queen, described in a comparatively late Medieval source (Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topographia Hibernica* 3,25), can be cited as a parallel of the Aśvamedha. He thinks not (1975, 216–218; see also Le Roux 1963). A broader look at insular Celtic mythology would have included Medb as goddess of sovereignty, along with Macha and Rhiannon who are clearly horse deities (and Epona by extension) and horse and chariot races with kingship and sovereign assemblies (see e.g. Draak 1959; Puhvel 1970; Rees & Rees 1961, esp. 246). To do so would have focussed squarely on the underlying issue of the feminine principle involved in all these traditions of sovereignty (perhaps excepting Rome), and its relation

to the horse. Leaving aside the controversial mare in the late Irish report, whether that feminine principle was invested in the queen who 'mated' with a stallion, or in a goddess who represented sovereignty, may be a matter of cultural variance in emphasis or expression. The functional concerns with kingship and sovereignty transcend that decision. It may be that differences in social structures relating to sovereignty in Indian, Mediterranean, and Celtic societies would account for these variations on collective themes [3]

The elephants with the goddess on the Gundestrup cauldron may shed light here. Concerned chiefly with tracking their antecedents in pre-conquest Gaulish artefacts and detecting what meaning that tradition had in Gaul, Olmsted cites parallels on the Marlborough vat, but concentrates on coin-types in which the popular convention of the horse evolved into an elephant (starting with the nose) (1979, 51, 83-86, pls. 27, 30, 51). Gauls in the far south would have witnessed Hannibal's elephants in passage towards Rome in 218 BC. Domitius Ahenobarbus used elephants in a battle against the Arverni and Allobroges in 121 (near modern Avignon) and celebrated his victory and the annexation of southern Gaul as a Roman province by riding one in a procession through his new domain. Evidence that Caesar may have brought elephants to the north during the conquest or taken them to Britain is doubtful; its relevance would be in explaining why Caesar's post-conquest coinage featuring elephants enjoyed a rapid rise in popularity and was much imitated in tribal issues. Otherwise Caesar's own motive for choosing the elephant is 'unclear' to Olmsted (1979, 86), beyond the fact that it would have clearly represented Roman 'invasion'—or perhaps appealed to Gaulish tastes for fanciful animals as decorative motifs.

Caesar's motive becomes plainer when the larger context of sovereignty in which he operated is considered, a context whose ceremonial and ritual aspects can be variously traced in the history of the triumphal celebrations awarded to Roman generals who had enjoyed signal victories. This history can be linked with a tradition of religious pageantry that entered Europe through Greece, from Persia, and came to Rome through the Greeks, perhaps via the Etruscans. Depending on different modern interpretations of the Roman version, the *triumphator* would have been, for that single day, either a king or a god, Jupiter (Weinstock 1971, ch. 5). The opulent ceremonies of divine kingship that Alexander the Great encountered in his conquest of Persia were of the same roots; his assumption of imperial sovereignty there made him part of that tradition, aspects of which came back to Greece and the Mediterranean world through him and his successors. It was in this fashion that the elephant, long a royal and imperial beast in India, and eventually adopted in Persia, entered the symbolism of imperial sovereignty in the West. Elephants had begun to figure in triumphs at Rome from Pompey's in 79 BC; Caesar's stellar triumph of 46 in which both elephants and a chariot drawn by white horses (in all traditions a sign of divinity) featured prominently, was evidently carefully designed to maximize his personal claims to sovereignty in a republican state that ruled a vast and expanding empire (Weinstock 1971, 37, 68–79).

In economic and functional respects the elephant was rather like a giant horse. Trained elephants were, even in India, a relatively rare commodity, and their military utility was even more specialized and even more devastating on the battlefield. Ancient sources state emphatically that, unless specially pretrained, horses will shy from elephants, and much has been written on cavalry tactics designed to overcome this difficulty, often by outflanking or avoiding the elephants altogether (see Scullard 1974, *passim*). The Gauls had had a taste of this in 121, and perhaps that simple symbolic point—elephant beats horse—had contributed to developments in iconography further north. It is likely that the elephant represented not merely some fantastical beast from an alien and powerful world, but a clear message of sovereignty, especially imperial rule over other sovereigns. From both the Gaulish and the Roman perspective it fits Caesar; it likewise suits a goddess of sovereignty, as on the Gundestrup cauldron.

One wonders whether the popularity of the elephant on post-conquest coinage marked acceptance of Caesar's personal sovereignty over Gaul, demonstrated by unquestionable might at a point when pan-Gaulish unity was already at issue, or whether local chieftains adopted the image for their own aggrandizement in the early years of Romanization. The early acceptance of the cult of the deified Julius (Weinstock 1971, 407–408) and the lasting popularity of the cult of the emperor(s)—especially as *numen Augusti* or *numina Augustorum* (Toutain 1905, 1, 53-54, 123-124), rather than individual incumbents by name—suggests that Gauls took their allegiance to this higher sovereignty seriously, in concept as well as in deed. This may help explain why there is so little extant evidence of indigenous religious practices of the same scope: aside from deliberate suppression, new and satisfying loyalties may have been at work.

But among the Gaulish military elite, in the cavalry and in the areas of equestrian economy, the native deity Epona would have retained her less direct sovereign functions, remaining a fitting protectrice of a specialized human landscape and the people and horses in it. In fact a sort of layered divine responsibility seems to have been in effect. Our earliest inscription to Gallo-Roman Epona, from Entrains (Nièvre) in Aeduan territory and dated to around the end of the first century or slightly later, was found together with a second-century inscription dedicating a temple to the goddess; both begin AVGVSTO SACRVM DEAE EPONAE . . (Magnen & Thevenot 1953, nos. 2–3).

On the purely local and individual level the cult need

not have been confined to equestrian economies. That might justify the retention of the horse as a prominent feature of Epona's iconography in an area, but it also obscures her known connections with sources and healing, or blends them with other Gaulish traditions in which equestrian deities appear in a similar light (see e.g. Thevenot 1968, 37–40, on the *dieu-cavalier*). Her association with maternal deities is complex and also linked with healing and sacred sources (Thevenot 1968, ch. 8, esp. 187–191). This might explain the congeries of feminine deities, and the equestrian elements, in fragments discovered on the summit of Dardon. (There is at least one spring known on the slope.) More important, these maternal figures were easily assimilated with the Virgin in Christian times. Thevenot (1968) closes his chapter on the *déesses mères* with a discussion of 'sanctuaires de répit' in Franche-Comté, Burgundy, and Savoy that have functioned in more recent Christian times as special centres for miraculous intervention on behalf of infants who have died without baptism. These sanctuaries, usually dedicated to the Virgin, have special infant cemeteries, 'often located beside the Chapel'.

Within the theme of this volume it must be emphasized that the diffuse argument presented here had its beginning in the desire to understand a specific site in the context of its larger human landscape—not simply the geographical area, in which settlement changed over time, but also the climate of human ideas that informed the area over its history. In that sense what the phrase 'research area' means becomes difficult to define. In the specific context presented here, the effective scale of inquiry embraces both the site on Mount Dardon and the broader geographical surround of Aeduan territory—and its inter-tribal and international relations. The proximity of the hillfort to the Aeduan capital Bibracte (later Augustodunum) has led to a focus on two larger issues: the history of the Aedui and the concentration of a particular variant of the cult of Epona connected around that urban centre. But the second concern would not have arisen without data from the site, however fragmentary at the time of writing. As for the scope of inquiry (as opposed to scale), the history of the area and the history of the goddess had led much further afield. Following the Aedui, and Epona, through inter-tribal and international political events over the crucial era from the years just before the conquest up to the period of Romanization, however sketchily, and with reference to traditions of deeper antiquity and later significance, has resulted in a focus on questions of sovereignty, both practical and religious.

Sovereignty involves both protection of the state and control of the state; as such it is a fundamental human concern, but from the individual perspective it may have many guises and become modified, even dissipated, in concerns that seem entirely unrelated. Thus Epona in her long history and multiple functions reflects a number of human concerns: goddess of sovereignty, protectrice of cavalry and domestic equestrian economies, maternal deity of less specifically equine significance. She lost most of her profoundly powerful aspects of sovereignty with the Romanization of Gaul, when an alien tradition of supreme rule subsumed her functions there, but for the Gaulish cavalry she retained her specialized equestrian nature, sufficiently for her iconography in specific localities to retain the horse, both among military and other equestrian personnel stationed abroad and among the horsemen in her homeland. But as an enduring maternal goddess among individual worshippers in her realm in Gaul, she kept many functions that lasted far later in history, goddess of sources and healing, and psychopomp, with connections to cults of the Virgin in Christian times. The equestrian iconography may not have been entirely lost in the transition. Magnen (in Magnen & Thevenot 1953) has commented that the pose of the horse (necessitating an unconventional sidesaddle mount to the offside) appears in later fine arts iconography and in folk practice. A twelfth-century capital in the choir of the cathedral at Autun, shows the flight into Egypt (Grivot & Zarnecki 1965, 69–70, pl. 5a); the lady and the horse or donkey seem very familiar, the latter moving calmly rightwards, with typical poised foreleg, the former holding the attention of the spectator by the benign majesty of her gaze.

Notes

1. Typescript reports of excavations from the 1950s and 1960s are on file in the archives of the Association des Amis du Dardon, which also publishes *Echos du passé*, a bulletin of news and articles on local antiquities (annual reports of the American team's excavations appear in issues for 1978 through 1981). A forthcoming volume on the research area (Crumley & Marquardt), chiefly anthropological in focus, will contain site and survey reports. Readers interested in the background of the project may wish to consult several recent works by Crumley (1974; 1979; 1983).
2. This and what follows is not intended to dispute the generally accepted view that cattle were the standard of wealth in most Indo-European societies. That is why discussion here centres on equestrian wealth and industry as a *specialized* economy. In any event control of both general wealth and this specialized wealth would have resided with the nobility through outright ownership, patronage, or powers of the state to control economy (i.e. through kings or assemblies).
3. Several lines could be pursued profitably here. Rome, with its abhorrence of kings but respect for sovereign traditions, would have sublimated or abandoned aspects of the underlying myths and rites that concentrated on the personal powers of the king. Or it may be that these had resurfaced in the ceremonies of triumph—which I suspect are, in their eastern roots, another strand of the imperial functions that appear in the Aśvamedha. This distinction between imperial and merely royal sovereignty should be closely

observed in tracing traditions of sovereignty, especially in view of the differential development of vast empires in East and West. Until Alexander, sovereignty in the West operated on a much smaller scale, and judging from classical sources on Gaul and early Medieval sources on insular Celts in Britain, the Celts in general may have shared a uniquely fluid conception of inter-polity balances of sovereignty, which permitted area-based, multi-tribal assemblies and conferences (or conflicts and alliances) but discouraged interest in outright imperial hegemony. It could be observed that the latter arose in Gaul only when outside pressures from Rome to the south and Germany to the east forced some new consensus of regional solidarity. From a different perspective, the abstraction of principles into feminine deities is another factor in the problem that may have differential values. The focus on the person of the king seems much greater in the East, especially in Persian traditions of deified emperors. In any event, to disregard Celtic traditions because of one late example where gender in a ritual is reversed seems unwise when Celtic mythological evidence in general seems to have a firm abstract (deified) feminine principle of sovereignty, in this sense Rome could equally be excluded from the picture because its operant feminine principle is more obscure than in either the Indian or the Irish tradition. My conjecture is that the Regia (as a feminine noun and locus of significant procedure) deserves a further look, regardless of whether blood from the sacrificial October horse has a masculine sexual connotation (see Dumézil 1975, 181–7).

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The London Hunter-God

Ralph Merrifield

An excavation in 1977 in the crypt beneath the western end of the choir of Southwark Cathedral, directed by Michael Hammerson on behalf of the Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Excavation Committee, revealed the lower part of a Roman timber-lined well. On the evidence of three mid third century coins, the latest being of Postumus (AD 259 268), found in the clay packing between the square timber frame and the circular pit in which it was set, the well was probably constructed about AD 270, or not long after. At a later unknown date, possibly in the fourth century, it was deliberately filled. The lowest layer of the fill, a clayey deposit, contained the skeletons of an old dog and a young cat. Mr Hammerson is reluctant to see any ritual significance in this, and would prefer to explain the animal remains as the result of an accident due to the natural antagonism of the two species (Hammerson 1978, 209). I have elsewhere drawn attention, however, to a rather common Romano-British custom of depositing in pits the bodies of two dogs, presumably as sacrifices (Merrifield 1969, 67 8), and the substitution of a cat for one of the dogs could be a mere variant of this practice. It is a custom that seems to have been practised on a large scale on another site in Southwark, 1-7 St Thomas Street, where three pits contained no fewer than twenty complete dog skeletons (Dennis 1978, 306). Here the ritual deposit seems to have been followed by the demolition of an adjacent building, the debris of which filled the pits. The sequence is very similar to that of the well beneath the Cathedral crypt, where the clayey deposit containing the animal bones was overlaid by a layer of charcoal, above which the fill consisted of dumped building debris, including pilae, tile tesserae, ragstone blocks, pieces of mortar and a little painted wall-plaster. Much of this was caked with soot, suggesting damage by fire before demolition. An important group of Roman sculptures was found amongst the building debris, at about the level of the present water-table. There is nothing to indicate a date later than the fourth century for the fill, and if the destruction of the sculptures is to be attributed to Christian iconoclasm, as seems likely, this would appear to be late Roman, or at latest sub-Roman. The interpretation of the animals in the lowest deposit in the well as sacrificial victims does not conflict with this hypothesis, but rather supports it, since this custom is at present known only in Romano-British contexts, and pagan ritual of this kind commonly survived the abandonment of pagan gods.[1] The alternative possibility that buildings and sculptures were destroyed in some barbarian incursion, at a period subsequent to the disuse of the well and deposition of the animal bodies, seems less likely but cannot be wholly ruled out.

The largest and most impressive sculpture from the Southwark well is a free-standing figure 73.5 cm high, accompanied by a dog on the left and a deer on the right, sculptured in oolitic limestone (Fig. 1). It is a stocky figure, indisputably male one would think, holding a bow in the left hand and wearing a short sword with a very military-looking shaped hilt,

Fig. 1 Hunter-god in oolitic limestone, height 73.5 cm, from late Roman well beneath Southwark Cathedral. Copyright Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Committee (SLAEC).

attached to a belt on his right side. The raised right arm is missing, but the hand is taking an arrow from a quiver suspended from a baldric behind the right shoulder. The figure wears a short tunic, just reaching the knees, and a Phrygian cap, below which hangs shoulder-length hair (Fig. 2). The dog on the left wears a collar and looks up at him (Fig. 3). The head of the rather stocky cloven-hoofed animal on his right is missing, but its identification as a deer is established by the branches of the left antler, which remain, sculptured in relief, under the figure's right arm. The identity of the deity is the subject of this paper, but before considering the question further, it is necessary to give a brief account of the accompanying sculptures, also found in the well, and presumably from the same general context, which they may help to clarify.

There is the rather muscular left leg of a figure, which appears to be masculine, against which is the inverted head of a dolphin. This fragment, 15 cm high, is of marble from the Greek islands, and is considered to be the earliest of the sculptures, dating from the first or second century AD. It was therefore already an antique at the time of its destruction. It presumably represents a sea-god, such as Neptune or Oceanus, and according to Professor Toynbee could be a small-scale copy of a major classical work. As an object of considerable value, it could have been presented as a votive offering to a temple, but is as likely to have been used as an ornament in a luxurious non-religious setting, such as a bath-house or rich man's residence. It was undoubtedly imported as a finished work of art, possibly as a family heirloom in private possession.

Then there is the figure of a Genius, 27.5 cm high, well-sculptured in a fine-grained sandstone of unknown origin. The head and right arm, the hand of which would probably have held a patera, are both missing, as is the greater part of both legs. The left hand holds a cornucopia, which, like the folds of drapery round the lower part of the body, is treated in a formal, decorative fashion, in a style attributed to the first half of the third

Fig. 2. Rear view of hunter-god from well beneath Southwark Cathedral, showing quiver with right hand extracting arrow. Copyright SLAEC.

Fig. 3. Dog wearing collar with ring for leash, on left side of hunter-god from well beneath Southwark Cathedral. Copyright SLAEC.

century. The Genius was a minor deity, personifying the spirit of a locality or group of people. Its representations were cult objects, which could have been accommodated in the temples of other deities (like the marble figure of a Genius that almost certainly came from the Walbrook Mithraeum) or in shrines set in buildings used by the organizations they personified.

A small limestone altar (22 cm high) also testifies to the proximity of an actual cult. This has an inscription, the significant parts of which, including the name of the deity, are unfortunately quite illegible. Only the name of the dedicator in part remains: ....CASSIANUS POSVIT – 'Cassianus set up (this altar)'.

Two other finds from the well, however, point in a different direction. One is a lid, or rather cover, for there is no back flange, in the same unidentified sandstone as the Genius. This is 38 cm long, and is in the form of a draped woman lying on a couch, holding what appears to be a bunch of grapes in the left hand, and a cake or fruit in the right. The head and part of the right arm are missing, and the remaining portion has been reconstructed from several fragments. This object is obviously funerary, and was presumably used as the cover of the cremated ashes of the woman represented. These were evidently not in an ash-chest, but presumably in the niche of a columbarium, and could be concealed by sliding the cover over them from the front. The sculpture was probably intended to be seen, so that the likeliest context seems to be a family vault or mausoleum in which cremated remains were kept and periodically visited by living members of the family. No parallel seems to be known from Britain or Gaul, or, as yet, on this small scale, from any other provinces of the Empire. It can have no direct connection with the much earlier terra-cotta ash-chest lids of the Etruscans, which it superficially resembles, but was presumably commissioned by someone who was familiar either with the couch monuments of the first to third centuries near Rome, or more probably with the reclining figures on sarcophagus lids of the later second to third centuries. These were of Asiatic origin, but were imported into Italy and sometimes copied there (Toynbee 1965, 97–8, 102–5). The combination of a Mediterranean fashion with conservatism of rite, at a time when cremation was giving place to inhumation, together with the family pride that required an elaborate mausoleum, all seem to point to high-ranking officialdom with aristocratic connections.

Finally we may note that another funerary find came from a higher level in the fill, and may have been deposited a considerable time after the main group of sculptures was dumped in the well. This was a small portion of a tombstone of a slate-like material, in three fragments, with an inscription containing three letters only of the name of the deceased, -TIC- or -TIO-; his age, XXX(-)I M(-), 'thirty and an unknown number of years and an unknown number of months; and lastly MATRONA, the name of the lady who commissioned the tombstone. The letters are well-shaped and do not suggest a date later than about the mid third century. Matrona is known as a personal name throughout the Empire, and seems to have been particularly popular in North Africa.

It is a reasonable assumption that all these finds came from the immediate neighbourhood, where we know from earlier discoveries beneath the Cathedral and south of it that a substantial Roman building stood (RCHM 1928, 149–50), in the angle between two Roman roads, the main road to London Bridge from Kent and Sussex and a road from the bridge to the south-west, presumably leading to a river-crossing at Westminster. This could have been a temple complex, the meeting-place of a religious guild, or a residence with private shrines. The proximity of an elaborate mausoleum would perhaps be more likely in the last case (as at Lullingstone Roman villa), but it should be noted that the triangular temple at Verulamium stood at a similar road junction, and mausolea also often stand beside main roads leading out of town. The deposition of the sculptures seems to have followed the destruction of the building, which included some burning. The prior damage to the sculptures was probably deliberate, although, surprisingly, the hunter-god retains his head. He had, however, been broken across the thick part of the body, and this would have needed a very considerable blow. Subsequent to this damage, a layer of soot had been deposited on the broken surface of the lower part, as if this had remained standing in a building that was burnt after the upper part of the figure had been broken off. These circumstances certainly suggest Christian iconoclasm, although it is rather surprising to find that it was extended to funerary sculpture, since Christians usually respected the pagan dead. Perhaps superstitious fear, of ghosts as well as gods turned devils, rather than religious fanaticism, was the motive for the deposition of these sculptures deep in the earth.

The hunter-god is clearly the most interesting of the Cathedral finds, and raises many problems, for his identity is far from obvious. The animal attributes and the posture are identical with those of Diana, although there is little doubt of the figure's masculinity. In two important details also it differs from the normal representations of Diana; it wears a Phrygian cap and a weapon much more like a sword than a hunting-knife. Yet in these respects also it closely resembles another well-known sculpture from Roman London, that has always been identified as Diana. The figure in relief on the altar found at Goldsmiths' Hall, Foster Lane (Fig. 4), is described by Professor Jocelyn Toynbee as follows (1962, 152, No. 64, Pl. 68):

> 'Diana stands to the front, a slim girlish figure in a cloak, a short belted tunic, and boots, holding her bow in her left hand and with her right pulling an arrow from the quiver that is slung behind her. A hound is seated, snout in air, on the spectator's left, beside its mistress.'

Fig. 4 Altar of oolitic limestone from site of Goldsmiths' Hall, Foster Lane, City of London, with relief formerly identified as Diana, but probably representing the London hunter-god, height 58.5 cm. Copyright Museum of London.

Fig. 5 Figure in oolitic limestone, wearing Phrygian cap with bow in left hand, found in Bevis Marks, City of London, before 1859, height 68.5 cm. Copyright British Museum.

'Girlish' here evidently means 'not obviously womanly' and 'boyish' would have been equally appropriate if any suspicion had then been entertained about the deity's sex. The details of posture and costume described are identical with those of the much stockier Southwark god, and the figure in relief certainly appears to be wearing a pointed cap, though details are sufficiently obscured by wear for this to have been identified in the past as a top-knot of hair. The weapon worn on the right side hangs behind the figure, but the large projecting hilt suggests that it is a short sword rather than a knife. The hilt would certainly need to be balanced by a fairly long blade. There seems little doubt that the altar relief would have been identified as the same deity as the Southwark figure if the latter had been found first.

There is another sculpture from Roman London that has always been considered enigmatic, but would readily have been identified with the Southwark god if the latter had been known at the time of its discovery. This is the almost free-standing limestone figure with shoulder-length hair, wearing a Phrygian cap, a short belted tunic and a cloak, and holding a bow in the left hand (Fig. 5), found in Bevis Marks in 1849, apparently in sewer excavations, since it was rescued by Charles Roach Smith from 'persons in the employ of the Commissioners of Sewers', who had removed it from the City (Roach Smith 1859, 47, Pl. 7). Since passing into the possession of the British Museum it has been identified as Attis (British Museum 1951, 55, Pl. XX, 9), perhaps partly on the assumption that it came from one of the two bastions of the city wall in Bevis Marks, and the late Roman bastions often contain in their fill sculptures and masonry from neighbouring Roman cemeteries beyond the wall. Attis, symbol of a loved one lost, would have been the most likely figure with a Phrygian cap to appear on a funerary monument. In fact, however, the figure presumably came from within

the walls beneath the roadway of Bevis Marks, if it was found in a sewer excavation, and in any case both Bevis Marks bastions are remote from the two Roman cemetery areas north of Bishopsgate and south of Aldgate. Eve and John Harris were doubtful about the attribution in 1963 but concluded that 'the identification as Attis, if not beyond question, is plausible' (Harris & Harris 1963, 100). In his recent reassessment, however, Professor Harris states that he is now convinced that the Bevis Marks figure does not represent Attis (J. R. Harris, this volume). On first seeing the Southwark figure, the writer was immediately reminded of the Bevis Marks statue, and with the preconceived idea that the latter was Attis, was inclined to identify the new find similarly, and to associate it with the funerary rather than the cult finds from the well. According to one legend, Attis was killed in a boar-hunt, but otherwise he has no close association with hunting, and is normally represented as a shepherd lad armed only with the *pedum* or shepherd's crook. His character, both as victim and mourning figure, seems very different from that of the well-armed and aggressive huntsman depicted by the Southwark sculpture. The Bevis Marks statue apparently lacks the accompanying dog, but we cannot be certain of this, as the base is missing, and if the dog's nose were completely clear of the upper portion of the figure, as is by no means impossible, there would be no evidence of its presence. In any case, the rare combination of Phrygian cap and bow points to the identity of the persons represented.

There seems to be at the very least a strong probability that the Goldsmiths' Hall, Bevis Marks, and Southwark figures represent the same deity, and were all associated with the practice of his cult, somewhere near the places in which they were found. In view of the wide separation of these – in the west and north-east of the city, and in its southern suburb south of the river – we are forced to a rather surprising conclusion. This unknown god seems to have been the subject of a cult in London that was rivalled in popularity only by that of the mother-goddesses—at least in the class that could afford to commission religious sculptures in stone. Like the hunter-god, the mother-goddesses are represented by three sculptures from various parts of the city (Hart Street, an unknown site in London before 1859, and Blackfriars, where the anomalous relief of four mother-goddesses was found built into the riverside wall). Mithras also is represented three times in sculpture, but these all come from a single site, the Mithraeum in Walbrook. The identification of the Southwark figure as the deity of a major cult in London enables us to dismiss interpretations identifying him with mere legendary or semi-divine personalities, such as Aeneas or Paris, who might be depicted with bow and Phrygian cap. Sculptures representing such minor figures might conceivably be commissioned for personal or family reasons, but hardly more than once in a single town.

It is of course unlikely that a major cult was confined to Londinium, and it is quite possible that the figure represented *en barbotine* with bow and Phrygian cap, together with Hercules and Mercury, on a pot from Verulamium, may be the same deity, rather than Mithras, as has been thought (Toynbee 1962, 190 No. 157, Pl. 190).[2]

The possibility that the London god may in fact be Mithras must, however, be considered. This god is certainly sometimes represented as an archer, in the miracle of water from the rock, as in the Mithraeum at Palazzo Barberini in Rome and in various Mithraea in the Danube and Rhine regions (Vermaseren 1963, 85–8). More relevant for comparison with the London god are the representations of Mithras as hunter, in which he is depicted on horseback, shooting with bow and arrow at various animals. At Dura-Europos these are deer, gazelles and a boar; at Dieburg in the Rhineland, a hare, and at Osterburken, also in Germany, the quarry is not shown (Vermaseren 1963, 89–95). It may also be noted that two examples of bone plates from composite bows were found in and near the Walbrook Mithraeum, suggesting that bows may have played some part in the Mithraic ritual. The difficulty about a straightforward identification of the London hunter-god with Mithras is the exclusive character of Mithraism as a cult for initiates only. Representations of Mithras are normally found associated with other Mithraic objects in a Mithraeum, from which the uninitiated were excluded. None of the hunter-god figures seems to have such associations and, equally significantly, no figure resembling the hunter-god is to be found in the extraordinarily rich iconographic assemblage from the London Mithraeum. This does not mean, however, that Mithras was totally unconnected with him; for the Persian god could have contributed to his character and attributes. For it is clear that, as with most 'unknown gods' that are not purely local, we are dealing with a case of conflation, in which two or more deities are identified as basically the same. This was not merely a useful political expedient in the expansion of the Roman Empire, enabling foreign local gods to be readily absorbed in the Roman pantheon; it was also an important step in the development of religion, leading ultimately towards monotheism. Far from being the result of confusion and ignorance, it could be the product of highly sophisticated and constructive religious thought. It is therefore not surprising that the cosmopolitan city of Londinium should have produced a complex and puzzling religious image.

In most Romano-British cases of conflation, one of the major gods of the Graeco-Roman pantheon is the central figure, with a native British god associated with him; in London the situation may well be more complex, but the central figure is not difficult to find. If we are looking for a male deity closely corresponding with Diana, and likely to adopt the same posture, we

must surely turn to that other great divine archer, her brother Apollo, who is represented with bow in left hand and drawing an arrow from a quiver behind his right shoulder in a number of Gaulish monuments—e.g. at Agen, Avallon, Vienne and Kervadel-en-Plobannelec (Espérandieu 1907–66, nos. 1254, 2238, 2595, 3030).

One of the attributes of the hunter-god can certainly be paralleled in representations of Apollo, if rarely. Professor Jocelyn Toynbee has suggested that the robed figure with Phrygian cap and lyre on the Littlecote Park mosaic is not Orpheus but Apollo, citing in support of this an undoubted Apollo with lyre and Phrygian cap represented on a sarcophagus preserved in the cloisters of S. Paolo fuori le Mura in Rome. Here other scenes on the sarcophagus represent the Muses and Marsyas's punishment by Apollo, so that the identification of the god seems certain (Toynbee 1981, 2, Pl. II and III). In Germany, there is a relief found in the forest between Oberburg and Wörth, representing Apollo playing his lyre and apparently wearing a cap (Espérandieu 1931, no. 321).[3] Also, in Britain, there is the relief from Ribchester, identified by its inscription as Apollo Maponus, in which the composite deity is represented with a quiver on his back, a lyre by his side, and apparently wearing a Phrygian cap (*RIB* 583).[4] It seems likely that Apollo acquired this head-dress by a double association—with Orpheus through their common attribute, the lyre, and with Mithras through his solar connections. He is depicted as archer on an architectural fragment from Champlieu, closely associated with another figure in Phrygian cap and costume on the side of the same fragment (Espérandieu 1907–66, no. 3806). Espérandieu describes the latter as 'sans doute Mithra', though here again there is the anomaly of Mithras apparently not from a Mithraeum but from a public temple complex.

A better-armed archer with Phrygian cap comes from Toul, near Nancy. He carries, in addition to the bow and quiver slung on his shoulder, not a sword but a lance (Espérandieu 1907–66, no. 4711). Espérandieu suggests 'peut-être Attis', but this guess seems to be based merely on the attitude of the figure with right hand under chin.

The Diana-like attributes of hound and deer associated with a male deity are best paralleled in Britain. An altar from Risingham, Northumberland, has an inscription dedicating it 'to the god Cocidius and Silvanus', and with a hunter-god, presumably Silvanus Cocidius, represented on it. He holds a bow in his left hand, and is flanked on his left by a dog, and on his right by a stag. On the side of the altar are two deer and a tree (*RIB* 1207).[5] A votive slab from Chedworth (Glos) represents a god wearing cloak, short tunic and boots (Toynbee 1962, 156 No. 78, Pl 79). The head is too damaged for it to be certain that he is wearing a cap, but the elongated shape of the head certainly suggests this. In his right hand he holds a hare above the head of a dog, and on his left is the fore-part of a stag, emerging from behind his legs. A similar figure, who is certainly wearing a high conical head-dress, is shown on an altar from Bisley (Glos), holding in his right hand a dead hare above the nose of a dog standing on its hind legs, while in his left he holds a crooked branch (Clifford 1938, fig. 7).[6]

An interesting find from Upton St Leonards, only ten kilometres from Bisley, may well represent the same deity. This is a stone relief sculpture in a niche, of which the head only survives, broken off all round from a larger block and deliberately defaced. Long hair, like that of the Southwark god, hangs in ringlets on either side of the face, held in place by a cap, which from its general shape would naturally terminate in a point, though this is missing. The fragment was associated with an octagonal building, almost certainly a shrine, some 150 m from the Sudbrook, a tributary of the Severn (Rawes 1977, 31; 1978, 11–12, Pl. opp. 13).

These hunter-gods from the north and south-west are usually identified by modern scholars with Silvanus, god of the woodlands and wild-life, and it is quite likely that this is how they were normally identified by the Romans also. It is also possible that the London hunter-god was actually called Silvanus, in spite of his iconographic links with Apollo, since the recent find of the ring of a member of 'the Guild of the God Silvanus' at Wendens Ambo suggests that there was an organized cult in the name of this god no further away than Essex (Hassall & Tomlin 1981, 384, No. 36). Yet Cocidius was identified both with Mars and Silvanus, and it is clear that this god of the northern frontier had a more generalized function than that of hunting or warfare alone. This is probably true of all these local gods, and the bias towards Mars and Silvanus may merely reflect the interests of the Roman soldiers who interpreted them. Both warfare and hunting were the special concern of the young men of the tribe, and there may be little real difference between these variously named local gods and Mabon, the northern god of male youth, called Maponus by the Romans and identified with Apollo. If the medieval legend of the *Mabinogion* reflects the original character of Mabon, as seems likely, he was a great huntsman who alone could handle the mighty hound Drudwyn, without whom the supernatural boar Twrch Trwyth could not be overcome.[7] His power in the hunt may well account for his special appeal to Roman officers who took pleasure in the chase, and there are dedications to Apollo Maponus in northern Britain by the commandant of a region, the prefect of a camp, a tribune and a centurion (*RIB* 583, 1120, 1121, 1122). Maponus, or a southern equivalent likewise considered a mighty hunter, could have had a similar appeal for the officer class in Londinium, and might well have been represented as Hunter-Apollo. One other point is worth mentioning in connection with the medieval legend of Mabon; he is

said to have been stolen from his mother, Modron, as a baby; and to have been incarcerated for long ages. If this reflects ancient tradition, he could serve as a symbol of a loved one lost, like Attis or Eurydice—a possible link with the oriental saviour-gods. We have concluded that the Southwark hunter-god is more likely to be a cult-figure than a funerary monument; but it has to be noted that the name of the lady who set up the tombstone found in the same well is Matrona, the Latin form of Modron.[8] In all probability this is a coincidence, though a remarkable one.

The London god need not have been called Maponus, though the links between the army and London officialdom might well have brought the name and cult to the south. There is however another British name, also identified with Apollo, that has a direct bearing on the iconography of the London figure. This is Cunomaglos, 'Hound-Prince', which appears on an altar dedicated to Apollo Cunomaglos by Corotica daughter of Iutus, from the temple at Nettleton, Wiltshire (Wedlake 1982, 53, 135–6, Pl. XXXIV). Confirmation that Apollo was the principal deity worshipped there is given by a votive plaque bearing his name, and also by a finger-ring with intaglio representing the god resting his lyre on a column and holding a branch (Wedlake 1982, 143–5, 215). In view of the tangled iconography that we have been considering, it is interesting that there is also at Nettleton a dedication to Silvanus, and it is of even greater interest and relevance that there is a portion of a relief representing a hound looking up, and seated at the feet of a long-robed figure, found in another building of the complex. Not surprisingly this figure has been identified as Diana (Wedlake 1982, 136–7). Could it, however, be Apollo wearing his long tunic or robe, as depicted in the Littlecote mosaic and on the sarcophagus from S. Paolo fuori le Mura (see Toynbee 1981, 2)? We have from Nettleton in any case clear evidence that there was a native god in south-western Britain so closely associated with a hound that he was named accordingly. We may also suspect that this was the same deity that was represented with a hound not far away at Bisley (Clifford 1938, fig. 7). The Romans might reasonably call him Silvanus, but at Nettleton chose to identify him with Apollo. We may also wonder whether Nodens at Lydney, with his numerous votive figures of dogs, may not have been basically the same deity. In inscriptions he was identified with Mars, and as Nuadu in medieval Irish legend he had a sword that none could escape (Ross 1967, 177 8).[9] He was predominantly a healing god at Lydney, however, and the representation of a sun-god on a bronze plate found there suggests that he was also a solar deity. He might therefore more appropriately have been identified with Apollo. It may also be noted that Nodens, Cunomaglos and Maponus were all in varying degrees associated with water.[10]

If the suggestion made here that these variously named deities were basically the same is correct—or even if they were merely considered to be so in the conflationary mood of the third century—we need seek no further for an explanation of the attributes of the Southwark god as warrior, hunter and hound-master. His identification also with the classical Apollo explains the emphasis on his role as archer, together with the adoption of a posture and iconographic grouping commonly associated with Apollo's sister Diana. Yet there is also another element, that is derived ultimately from one or other of the Asiatic mystery cults. As we have seen, there are parallels for the adoption of the Phrygian cap by Apollo, and the vaguely Asiatic costume- lacking, incidentally, the Mithraic trousers- is not so very different from that in which Diana is normally represented in her role as huntress. Yet we must assume that the sculptor was instructed to give the god his Phrygian cap in order to make a definite iconographical point. It may be that a pointed cap of some kind, possibly a helmet, was an attribute of the British god, and that the Phrygian cap was the only head-dress approaching this form that was familiar to the sculptor. On the other hand, there may have been a deliberate attempt to invite comparison with one of the oriental mystery gods. If we knew more about religious initiation in pre-Roman Britain, and the mythology underlying it, we might perhaps be able to understand this. Could there be a faint echo of it, no doubt garbled and much exaggerated by later literary convention, in the legend of the long incarceration of Mabon told in the Mabinogion? It may seem fanciful to postulate a western 'mystery' that invited comparison with those of the east. Yet one of the more likely explanations of the curious subterranean structures called souterrains or fogous is that they were used in a rite of initiation. Souterrains have of course a restricted distribution in Britain,[11] though a wider one in Gaul, but natural or artificial caves or even shafts and pits could have been used for similar purposes. If, in imitation of a god, the initiate suffered a period of seclusion and tomb-like imprisonment, followed perhaps by a dream or simulation of a visit to the Underworld, a Roman interpreter could have been sufficiently impressed by the similarity to an eastern mystery cult to bestow on the god the distinctive cap of an oriental deity.

To summarize, it is suggested that there was a cult in later Roman London, almost certainly under the patronage of officialdom, of a deity who appears to be a conflation of Apollo, an oriental saviour god and a British god of male youth. The characteristics of the last were skills in hunting and war, and mastery of one of those great hunting-dogs that had been admired as a British product since the time of Strabo. This god was variously named, and was sometimes identified elsewhere with Apollo, but more usually, though probably less appropriately, with Mars or Silvanus. An association with sacred waters may have made him particularly acceptable as a tutelary deity of the

Thames. The precise source of the oriental element remains obscure, as is its point of entry into the conflation. It may have been attached to Apollo by association, or may relate to some comparison between the myth and ritual of the British god and those of an eastern mystery cult. The position of the Southwark site, in the acute angle between two main roads, is remarkably similar to that of the triangular temple at Verulamium, and it is interesting that Verulamium has provided us with another representation of the archer-god with Phrygian cap (Toynbee 1962, 190, No. 157, Pl. 190). It has been suggested, on the evidence of deposits of pine-seeds in the triangular temple, that the cult of Cybele and Attis, or some derivative thereof, was practised there, but the attribution is far from certain (Wheeler 1936, 119–20). Even if Attis lent his cap and a taste for pine-seeds, however, the iconographical evidence from London indicates that this was not a straightforward case of the importation of an eastern cult, but something very much more complex.[12] It also suggests that there was someone in authority in Londinium with a strong interest in comparative religion and the initiative to develop a new syncretic cult.

Notes

1. This is a topic that the writer hopes to pursue elsewhere. Here only one parallel can be cited. At Lower Slaughter, Glos., a well contained in its fill three altars, three votive tablets and two statuettes, accompanied by 4th century pottery and stone rubble, presumably from the demolition of the farm-house, which was rebuilt after the mid-fourth century. A neighbouring well contained in its fill a coin of AD 330–7, much stone debris and two dogs. It is likely that both were filled on the same occasion (*JRS* 48 (1958), 49–55).
2. Professor J. R. Harris comments in a letter, 'It is not obviously Mithras, *ride* the dress, and on reflection, one would not expect to find Mithras except on a cult-vessel—i.e. in a clearly Mithraic context. I can think of no parallel for Mithras-Hercules-Mercury-A.N.Other, as they appear(ed) on this pot.' See also Henig, this volume.
3. As Apollo here is shown with shoulder-length hair, the 'cap' is unlikely to be hair drawn into a top-knot.
4. It may be noted that the central figure of a relief from Vindolanda, identified by Robin Birley as Maponus, also wears a pointed cap (Birley 1977, pl. 33).
5. See also Ross 1967, 160–1, figs 112–13.
6. It may also be noted that the hunter holding the hare above the nose of a dog also occurs in a gemstone from South Shields, though in this case the hunter is wearing a round cap, described by Henig as a beret, not a pointed one (Henig 1978, 88 and 208, No. 184, Pls. VI and XXXVI).
7. The legend is told in the story of Kilhwych and Olwen, in which a series of apparently impossible tasks is imposed as a bride-price.
8. Mabon and Modron simply mean Son (or Boy) and Mother; latinised as Maponus and Matrona. There was a centre of the cult of Mabon north of the border—*Locus Maponi*, probably Lochmaben in Dumfries and Galloway Region, which may have been a sacred pool associated with his cult (Rivet & Smith 1979, 395–6). There may well have been other centres, for the god's name also occurs in inscriptions in Gaul.
9. He was also identified with Neptune, but the statement that he was invoked as Silvanus is an error, derived from the dedication of a inscription by one Silvianus. The view that the Irish Nuadu was derived from the British Nodens or Nodons seems to be widely accepted.
10. Nodens with the Severn, Maponus with Lochmaben and Solway Firth, Cunomaglos with the little Broadmead Brook,one of the sources of the Avon. Possibly the London hunter-god had the same relationship with the Thames.
11. Scotland, Ireland and Cornwall. Ritual function seems the most likely purpose of these structures, since they would have been excessively damp for storage and death-traps as hiding-places.
12. Cf. Henig (this volume) calling attention to the existence of *dendrophori* at Verulamium, and the suggestion that the Southwark sculpture may be connected with such a *collegium* of Attis.

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Faunus at Thetford: an early Latian deity in Late Roman Britain

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The study of ancient religion is a particularly challenging area of research, since it is central to the understanding of ancient society, yet it usually presents exceptional difficulties of interpretation. Both literary and archaeological evidence tend to be patchy, inadequate and sometimes misleading. We know a good deal about Graeco-Roman religion, but have been able to infer only a little about the beliefs of the Celts. The complex way in which indigenous and introduced cults combined and interacted when Celtic lands became Roman provinces has always been one of the most fascinating aspects of Roman provincial studies.[1] In dealing with the later Empire, an additional factor enters the picture, the ever-increasing power and status of Christianity, which was destined to overthrow the old, pagan order.

Knowledge in this field of study has moved forward steadily, and planned work, such as the painstaking excavation of temple sites will always be the most important and rewarding tool of research. But occasionally a chance find can throw sudden and unexpected light on a subject, and this paper deals with one of these rare and exciting discoveries. The finding of the Thetford treasure was significant in many ways, but what concerns us here is that it provided proof of a hitherto completely unknown and unsuspected religious cult; not merely a pagan cult in the Christian milieu of the late fourth century, but more surprisingly, a Celtic manifestation of the worship of a minor early Italian god, Faunus.

It was shortly after Easter 1980 that rumours were heard of an undeclared hoard of Roman jewellery and silver plate from near Thetford, Norfolk.[2] Tracing the discovery was not straightforward, but was eventually achieved, and the material was handed over to the authorities, in the first instance, the Castle Museum, Norwich, and subsequently the British Museum. The treasure had been found in November 1979, and it was not until May 30th, 1980, that it arrived in the British Museum for study, analysis, and for the requirements of the law of Treasure Trove to be fulfilled. In the interim, the site of its discovery had been built over, removing all traces of its archaeological context; this six-month delay in declaring the find has had irreversible effects on the amount and quality of the information we can extract from it. The sad story has been fully told elsewhere, in the detailed catalogue of the treasure (Johns & Potter 1983): here, it is appropriate only to summarize the contents of the hoard, before turning to a discussion of the religious significance of this remarkable assemblage.

The treasure consists of gold jewellery and silver plate. The jewellery includes twenty-two finger-rings, a belt buckle, four bracelets, and several pendants and necklaces. The silver items are thirty-three spoons and three strainers. The jewellery shows certain remarkable features; most of the items display no traces of wear, and were evidently unused, and detailed analysis of stylistic traits indicates that most of the pieces are likely to be products of a single workshop. While some of the items belong to well-known types, others are unique, and the information they give us about favoured designs in opulent Late Antique personal ornaments is unprecedented.

Two different types of late-Roman silver spoon are represented. Sixteen are of the large ligula type, with short curled handles terminating in the head of a swan or duck, and seventeen are long-handled cochlearia, which have smaller bowls and a decorative offset between handle and bowl. Both types are well known in hoards of the fourth century (Johns & Potter 1983, chapter 5; Cahn *et al.* 1984). Of the thirty-three spoons present, all but two are inscribed.

The duck-handled spoons are inscribed in the bowl, except for one which has a brief inscription on the handle and a single uninscribed example. The long-handled spoons have inscriptions either in the bowl or on the handle; one only, though ornamented with figural decoration in the bowl, has no lettering. One spoon from each group has elaborate pictorial decoration in the bowl, picked out in gilding. Because of their close similarities in form, decoration and inscription, these two spoons provide a clear link between the two sets, but there is plenty of other evidence in the inscriptions themselves to demonstrate that the entire assemblage of silverware is closely associated. The strainers are neither inscribed nor decorated, but they too belong to a known Late Antique type. While the silverware can be regarded as a set, the relationship of the gold jewellery to the spoons is a more difficult question to which we shall return.

The typology of both jewellery and spoons defines the treasure as late Roman: after careful study, we have concluded that the objects were buried not earlier than

the last two decades of the fourth century. No help was forthcoming from the context of the find. Not only had the findspot disappeared, but the finder, who was already a sick man at the time when he made his extraordinary discovery, unfortunately died little more than a month after the hoard was declared. It was therefore impossible to seek answers to the many questions which arose about the nature of the deposit, the relationship of the objects within it, and possible traces of other materials or containers. It is virtually certain that some small objects were overlooked during the recovery of the treasure from the ground, but the details must remain forever shrouded in doubt.

One of the most unexpected initial impressions made by the Thetford treasure arises from the content of the inscriptions. On spoons of this date, we would confidently predict Christian symbols and phrases, but instead they refer repeatedly to the pagan deity Faunus, combined, moreover, with obviously Celtic by-names or epithets. One of the first tasks in the study of the material was therefore an investigation of the cult of Faunus.

This Roman god seems familiar enough at first, yet study very quickly demonstrates that he is surprisingly obscure and ill-documented, and that he is virtually unattested iconographically. The literary evidence is chiefly concentrated in writings of the late Republican and early Imperial periods, and though there are numerous references, the sum total of the information they impart is disappointingly small. The ancient authors who refer to Faunus include Virgil, Ovid, Livy and Horace. There are also several modern sources which summarize what is known of Faunus, by far the most detailed being the monograph by Elisabeth Smits (1946). She discusses the ancient references very fully.

The general nature of Faunus is easy to define. He was originally localized as a deity and/or an early king of Latium, the area around Rome itself. He was an earth deity, connected with the woods and fields, and with the protection and fertility of flocks and herds. He therefore belongs to a deep and basic stratum of religious belief which can be paralleled in almost any ancient rural community. All such communities have paid the most careful attention to religious rites and observances designed to ensure the health and fertility of crops and stock, since these factors were the basis of their prosperity, and indeed of their survival. Many Graeco-Roman deities have some fertility aspects, and the same is undoubtedly true of gods and goddesses venerated in Celtic lands, though we know less about their names and attributes. Just as Faunus appears originally to have been a local god, many of these now unknown Celtic spirits might well have had different names and aspects in different areas.

Though Faunus exercised a protective power over plants and animals, like many other deities of this type, he had a corresponding malevolent side, and if displeased would actually cause illness and harm; appropriate rites and sacrifices were therefore essential to ensure that he remained benevolent. These opposing sides may be symbolically reflected in his goat-like characteristics on the one hand, and on the other, his connections with the wolf, seen as a major predator of domestic animals.

The literary evidence and one of the theoretical derivations of the god's name indicate a further specific power: Faunus was a seer or foreteller, and his oracular skills could be placed at the disposal of human worshippers if the correct approach were made. Dreams can be the vehicle of prophecy and divine inspiration, and Faunus was able to cause dreams of various kinds, including nightmares, and (if it is right to regard *Incubus* as one of his several names), erotic dreams. A common additional role of fertility deities is that of protecting property, such as we see in the boundary-marking duties of gods such as Silvanus and Hermes, and there is a hint of this quality in Faunus, who appears to have been specifically responsible for guarding treasure.

A final noteworthy point which emerges from reference to the ancient sources is that Faunus was not infrequently referred to in the plural, as *Fauni*, and that there also existed a female counterpart, *Fauna*, variously identified as the god's sister, daughter and/or consort, but perhaps simply a female manifestation of Faunus himself. Fauna has been equated with the Bona Dea, whose rites, though secret and therefore unknown to posterity, were concerned at least in part with fertility.

Many of the traits summarized above apply equally to other known gods, above all to the Roman Silvanus and the Greek god Pan. Some of the correspondences are remarkably close; for example, Pan was responsible for the irrational fear, *panic* fear, which can afflict humans in lonely country places, while Faunus was said, in very much the same way, to be the source of the mysterious and unearthly noises which sometimes frighten people in the same circumstances. The plural aspect of the god is also significant. Both in antiquity and in modern times, there has been a tendency to equate *fauns* with *satyrs*; these, in turn, are very similar to Pan himself, and form part, with him, of the Bacchic retinue or thiasos. In Greek myth, the satyrs and the *sileni*, though separate in origin, eventually became conflated, and the *fauni* seem to constitute the Latin counterpart to this process. It is probably the casual use of the term 'faun' for 'satyr' which creates the impression that Faunus is a familiar deity. The point has further implications, to which we shall return.

We can turn now to some of the specific myths which are recorded for Faunus. As mentioned above, he was a local god of Latium. He was also identified as an early king of the same area; it is not unusual for an ancient deity to be humanized in legend as an actual ruler, or indeed for a human ruler to be deified in later accounts. Virgil (*Aeneid* 7, 45) records Faunus as the son of Picus,

grandson of the god Saturn, and father of the king Latinus. Another literary source (Dionysius of Halicarnassus 1, 31) makes Faunus the son of Mars, though Picus could possibly be a manifestation of Mars. The name *Picus* also means 'woodpecker', and this bird was sacred to Mars and possessed power over nightmares. Wolves were also sacred to Mars, and may also have been closely concerned in the mythology of Faunus. To disentangle these mythological strands is a hopeless task, since we are dealing with an early and scantily documented cult, but the elements which can be isolated and defined form a picture of a primitive and powerful local fertility god.

Two Faunus myths are of special interest to us in our attempt to understand what part such a pagan god might have played in the context of late-Roman Thetford and an officially Christian Empire. The first is related, with variations, by both Virgil and Ovid (Virgil, *Aeneid* 7, 81–91; Ovid, *Fasti* 4, 649); it is an account of the king Latinus (or Numa, in Ovid's version), consulting the oracle of Faunus at a place called Albunea. There were no priests, no temple or shrine: the ritual required the suppliant to bring votive gifts and make sacrifices and then sleep at the site, when the oracle would be revealed to him in a dream. This type of ritual was well known in Greek religious practice, and is particularly well recorded in connection with the major shrine of the healing god Asclepius at Epidauros. The nature of the Faunus shrine, which was a holy place rather than a man-made temple, underlines the primitive and basic nature of the cult, and it may also provide a significant link with Celtic religious practice, in which sacred places such as woods, groves, hills and springs were often left undisturbed and in their natural state.

Another Faunus myth is worthy of attention because it was singled out for ridicule by the fourth-century Christian writer Arnobius of Sicca (*Adversus Nationes* 5, 1; see also Smits 1946, 11–13). It is an account of how Numa, wishing to discover how he might avert the evil portended by lightning, obtained the knowledge from Faunus and Picus by the simple expedient of making them drunk and binding them fast until they gave him the information. Arnobius picked this story as an illustration of the absurdity of pagan beliefs and the foolishness and unworthiness of the deities venerated, but the fact that he quotes it, early in the fourth century, demonstrates to us that Faunus myths were still well-known, and the cult presumably current, at this time.

The legends stress the rural nature of shrines to Faunus, but there is literary evidence of one temple, in Rome itself on the Tiber island. No archaeological traces of this building remain. Livy records (33, 42) that it was built in 196 BC, and that its dedication date was February 13th, two days before the feast of the Lupercalia. The connection of Faunus with the Lupercalia, if any, is a contentious matter; it has been widely accepted, but the evidence is far from convincing. Smits classifies Faunus as being primarily a wolf-god, which would indeed support a link with this festival, but in the opinion of the present author, that viewpoint is unproven. The rites of the Lupercalia concerned fertility and the marking of the city boundaries, and referred in particular to the legend of the Capitoline wolf and the founding of the city. Faunus could well relate to most of these elements, but none is peculiar to him. It is obvious that ancient authors, writing during the late Republic and the early Empire, were themselves uncertain about the identity of the god honoured at this primitive and traditional ceremony: Livy identifies him as 'Inuus' (1,5), an otherwise unknown name, which has therefore been claimed as another of Faunus's aliases. If the god concerned was Faunus, it seems surprising that this fact was never plainly stated. It is at least possible that no specific deity was ever involved in the rite. Smits herself speculates on this possibility (Smits 1946, 25), suggesting that the name of the god may originally have been secret, or even that there was no actual god at all, but she is convinced that in due course Faunus *became* the presiding deity. Nevertheless, the wolf connections of the Lupercalia and of Faunus would appear to be of totally separate origin, and the two-day proximity of the feast and the celebration of the temple's founding proves nothing.

We do know of one certain Faunalia, which took place on December 5th. This is referred to by Horace (*Odes* 3, 18), and is described as a rural feast, with sacrifices, eating, drinking and dancing. Since the festival does not feature in any of the ancient calendars, this record of it is a lucky chance, and serves to remind us that there may have been many other such events which have left no trace; the assumption that this was the sole or even the major festival of Faunus is unwise and unjustified.

The few scraps of archaeological evidence for Faunus are so slight or uncertain that they add nothing to what is known from literary sources. A fragment of a calendar from the Esquiline refers to the February 13th temple dedication (*CIL* VI, 2302), and an altar from the Campus Martius has a long inscription which includes a reference to Fauns (in the plural) (*CIL* VI, 23083). There are no known altars dedicated to Faunus himself, let alone any association of a statue, statuette or other visual image with an inscription which would enable us to learn what Faunus looked like in the minds of his worshippers. Some bronze statuettes have been claimed as representations of Faunus (Roscher *et al.* 1886–90, 1459–60); these depict a dignified, bearded god wearing boots and a goatskin, and carrying symbols of plenty and fertility, such as cornucopiae and drinking horns. It is difficult to see how such an image (e.g. Fig. 1) can be distinguished from one of Silvanus, who has so many of the same attributes. Some of the written sources on Faunus imply that he could be horned and goat-legged; if depicted in this form, it would be impossible to

Fig. 1 Bronze statuette of Silvanus Faunus or a similar deity (British Museum, ph. C. M. Johns).

distinguish a statuette or relief of Faunus from one of Pan or a satyr.

It is almost certainly the lack of iconographic evidence and the confusion about nomenclature which provide the key to the apparent lack of information about Faunus. If we do not know what Faunus looked like, and if, moreover, his attributes resemble those of other, known deities, there could be surviving representations of Faunus which have totally escaped us. For example, there is no lack of archaeological evidence in the form of altars and statues for the worship of Silvanus; they occur throughout the Roman period and in many areas of the Empire, including the Celtic provinces. In the province of Britain, Silvanus was often worshipped in Celtic guise, and provided with Celtic by-names. Nor is there any paucity of evidence for the worship of Pan throughout the Empire, often in his role as a member of the Bacchic retinue. Indeed, the cult of Bacchus and his associates gained ground markedly in the later Empire, its mystical element making it a more effective focus of pagan tradition in the conflict with Christianity than the more impersonal cults of the Olympian deities. If, in both the Latin and Celtic traditions, the identity of Faunus was closely intertwined and conflated with those of Pan, the satyrs, and other Bacchic personages, the absence of specific references to Faunus ceases to be either surprising or important. It may be that the Pans and satyrs which so frequently appear in Late Antique art such as silverware and sarcophagi (Figs 2 & 3) were also being called Faunus and fauns; this conflation is normal in modern times, as noted above, and may also have applied in antiquity. The idea is not a new one (Gerhard 1825),[3] but it is worth re-stating, as it clarifies the position of the Faunus cult, and makes it far easier to understand and assess the meaning of the inscriptions from Thetford, which at first sight seemed so inexplicable.

Turning our attention now to those inscriptions, we can consider some of the likely implications of their wording and in particular of the descriptive epithets, Celtic and Latin, which accompany the name of the god himself.[4] The Latin epithets include those on spoons no. 72 and on 68 (Figs 4 & 5), which read AGRESTE VIVAS and SILVICOLA VIVAS. While these are probably used here simply as names, in the 'vivas' formula so familiar on spoons and other utensils of this period with Christian inscriptions, it is probably no accident that the names recall adjectives which occur more than once in Latin poetry describing Faunus, *agrestis* and *silvicola*, words which stress the god's connections with the fields and woods (Hassall & Tomlin 1981).

The Celtic words are of even greater interest, because they demonstrate the practice of the cult in a Celtic-speaking community, and they make known some completely new Celtic names. As we noted earlier, the words were placed in the bowls of the spoons, or in the case of some of the long-handled cochlearia, on the end of the handle nearest the bowl; small punches were used and in most cases the lines were subsequently filled with black niello inlay. The positioning and spacing of the inscriptions make it quite certain that they were put on the silver objects at the time of manufacture: this is an important point, since it indicates that the spoons were made, as well as used, in a Celtic province, either Gaul or Britain. The form taken by many of the inscriptions is a dedication to the god Faunus plus another name 'DEI FAVNI (Celtic name)'. Where this occurs in full, it reads, for example, (spoon 55) DEI FAVNI AVSECI. There are variants, which include misspellings, e.g. DEII, a form that occurs more than once, and a range of abbreviations like DEI FAV, or the reduction of Celtic names like 'Blotugus' and 'Medugenus' to BLO and MED. Other types of inscription include the 'vivas' exhortations already mentioned and the traditional VTI FELIX (no. 59). In all, the name of Faunus occurs on twelve of the thirty-one inscriptions, and abbreviations of the Celtic names associated with Faunus occur alone on a further seven.

The combination of a Celtic god-name with a Latin one to make a Romano-Celtic compound is very familiar, and symbolizes the way in which deities of

Fig. 2 Silver dish from the Mildenhall (Suffolk) treasure, diameter 60.6 cm. British Museum 1946.10-7.1

Fig. 3 The Badminton sarcophagus, an example of Bacchic iconography in a funerary context

different origins but similar characteristics were brought together in Roman provincial religion. Compare, for instance, the many by-names of Mars in Gaul and Britain, such as 'Mars Alator' and 'Mars Toutatis' on the silver plaques from Barkway (Henig 1984, 40 and 50–51).

Not all the Celtic names can be interpreted with certainty, but those which can strongly underline the qualities we should expect from our investigation of the nature of Faunus. Four of the spoons, nos. 54, 56, 71 and 79, bear the name MEDVGENVS in some form. On 56 and 71 it is spelt 'Medigeni', and on 79 it is abbreviated to 'Med' (Figs 6–9). This is a known name, and means 'mead-begotten'. BLOTVGVS, on spoon 57 (Fig. 10), and shortened to 'Blo' on spoons 64, 75 (Fig. 11) and 80, means 'bringer of blossom' or 'bringer of corn', a suitable epithet for a god who ensured the fertility of crops. AVSECI, which is found on two spoons, 55 and 73 (Figs 12–13) is also suggestive: Professor Jackson interprets its meaning as 'prick-eared' or 'long-eared'. While this may refer simply to the animal ears of a Pan-like god, it is tempting to see a connection with the wolf aspect stressed by Smits. 'Prick-eared' evokes an image of a canine more readily than that of a goat.

The more uncertain names include NARVS, which is found on spoon 51 and on the two beautifully decorated gilded spoons, 50 and 66 (Figs 14 & 15). It probably means 'noble' or 'mighty'. CRANVS, on spoons 52 (Fig. 16) and 74, may be related to a Celtic word for treasure; in his property-protecting guise, Faunus was a guardian of treasure, a peculiarly appropriate duty in this instance.

Insofar as these new names can be understood, therefore, they fully support the image of Faunus which we have already gained from the classical literature. Progressing to the broader context of Bacchic worship, can we see any evidence in the Thetford treasure that the rites of Faunus formed a part of this more universal cult? There is no such hint in any of the inscriptions, but three of the spoons have figural decoration, and two of these can be firmly related to Bacchic iconography. They are the gilded spoons, nos. 50 and 66. The former has a figure of a Triton accompanied by a dolphin, a theme often seen in the sea-thiasos of Neptune, the marine counterpart to the Bacchic rout (compare, for example, the marine frieze on the Mildenhall dish; Fig. 2). The scene on the long-handled spoon, 66, is even more specifically Bacchic, depicting a leaping panther, the Bacchic creature *par excellence*, in front of a tree.

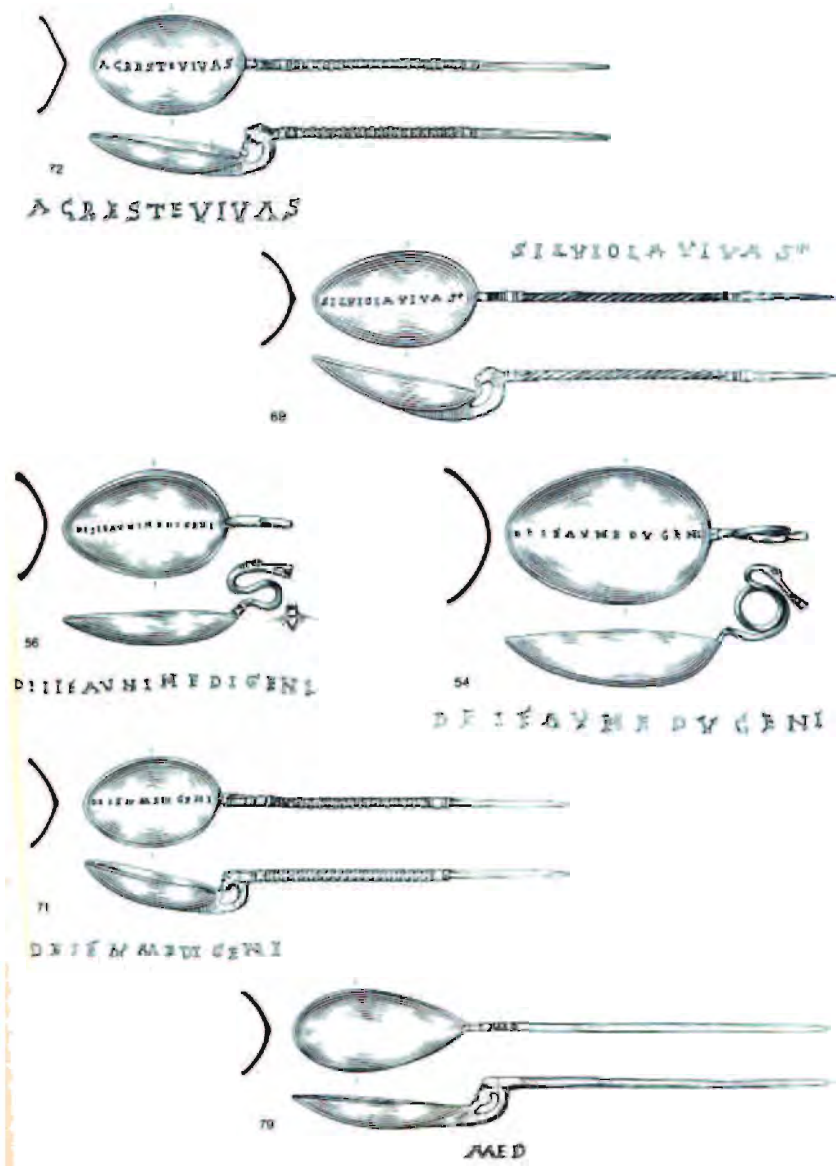
The third decorated spoon, no. 67 (Fig. 17), presents more of a problem; it is uninscribed, it is typologically slightly different from the other spoons, and it has a figure of a fish engraved within the bowl. Spoons decorated with fishes are known in Christian silver hoards of the late-Roman period, and in such contexts, they have naturally been taken to be examples of deliberate Christian symbolism. However, we do not have to assume that all fishes refer to the Christian *ichthus* acronym, and in the uncompromisingly pagan surroundings of the Thetford material, it seems inconceivable that this one should do so. The fish could be symbolically neutral, and in any case the remote possibility of a Christian meaning is not enough to negate the positive Bacchic implications of the other decorated spoons in the set.

One of the problems presented by the treasure concerns the relationship between the silverware and the jewellery. Although we do not know precisely what form the rituals of Faunus worship would have taken, we can safely assume that they included feasting, and it is therefore easy to envisage the silver objects playing some part in this activity. On the other hand, it is very difficult to see how the jewellery, elaborate, delicate and in pristine condition, can have filled any role in religious rites of this type. There can be no serious doubt that the gold and silver items were buried together, and though it is possible to invent a number of theories which could account for this fact even if the two groups had entirely disparate sources and histories (a selection of these theories is discussed in Johns & Potter 1983, 73–75), it seems more likely that the jewellery belonged with the spoons before burial, and that it was therefore connected with the Bacchic cult in general and with that of Faunus in particular.

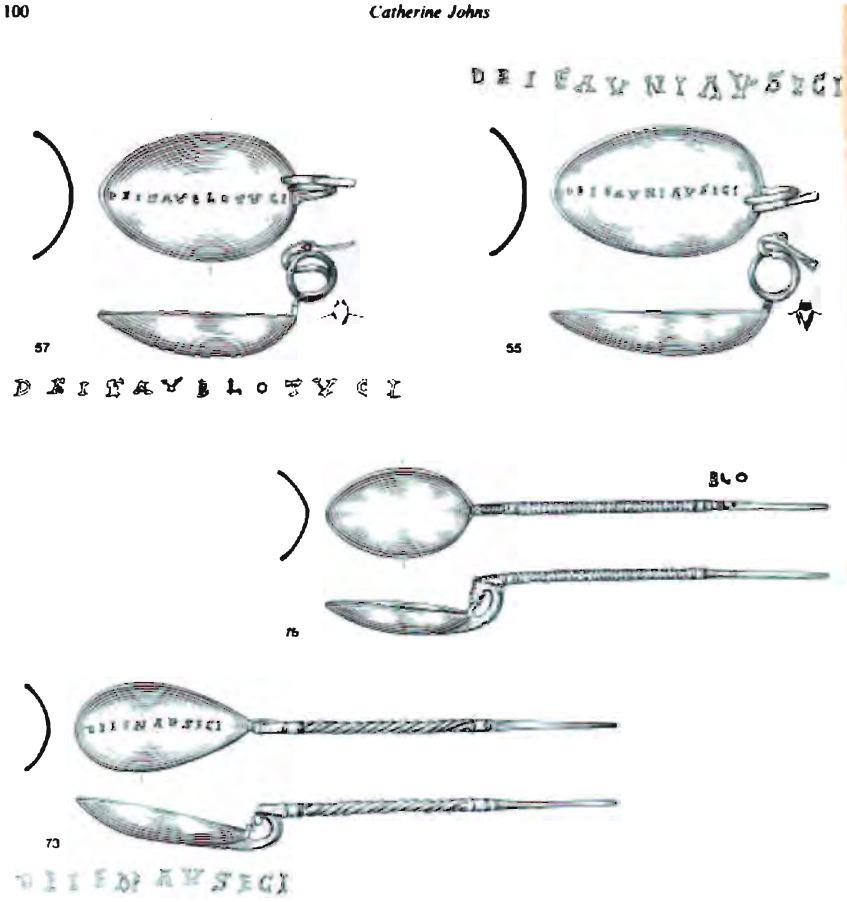
The design and decoration of at least three items of the jewellery do in fact bear out such a connection. Most obvious is the decoration of one of the finest pieces, the gold belt-buckle, no. 1 (Fig. 18). This displays the figure of a dancing satyr holding aloft a bunch of grapes, with a pedum in his other hand; it is as classically Bacchic an image as the panther on spoon 66.

The other two items, rings no. 23 and 7, bear motifs which are not simply Bacchic, but appear to allude specifically to Faunus. Ring no. 23 (Fig. 19) has a bezel in the form of a tiny Pan-like horned head embellished with garnets. The scale is so minute, the head measuring only about 6 mm from forehead to chin, that few conclusions can be drawn about the appearance of Faunus, if it is he. Apart from the horns, the whole head seems simultaneously goat-like and yet human, as in many classical representations of Pan.

Ring no. 7 (Fig. 20), is even more curious, and the allusion to Faunus, though subtle, is quite specific: the bezel is modelled in the form of a tiny vase supported on each side by a bird, in itself a motif which occurs in both Bacchic and Christian iconography. These birds, though only about 10 mm long, are recognizable as woodpeckers (Fig. 21), and were identified as such by the writer before she encountered the Faunus myth which names the god's father as Picus (= woodpecker). This detail can hardly be fortuitous, and it constitutes very strong evidence that the jewellery was linked in some way with the Faunus cult and with Bacchic worship. It seems, therefore, that the whole of this



Figs 4–9 Spoons from the Thetford treasure: 4, spoon 72, AGRESTE VIVAS. *L. 18.3 cm; 5, spoon 69,* SILVIOLA VIVAS. *L. 18.4 cm; 6, spoon 54,* DEIFAVMEDVGENI. *L. 10.4 cm; 7, spoon 56,* DEIIFAVNIMEDIGENI. *L. 8.5 cm; 8, spoon 71,* DEIFAVMEDIGENI. *L. 17.3 cm; 9, spon 79,* MED. *L. 19.2 cm. (after Johns & Potter 1983, drawings by Robert Pengelly)*

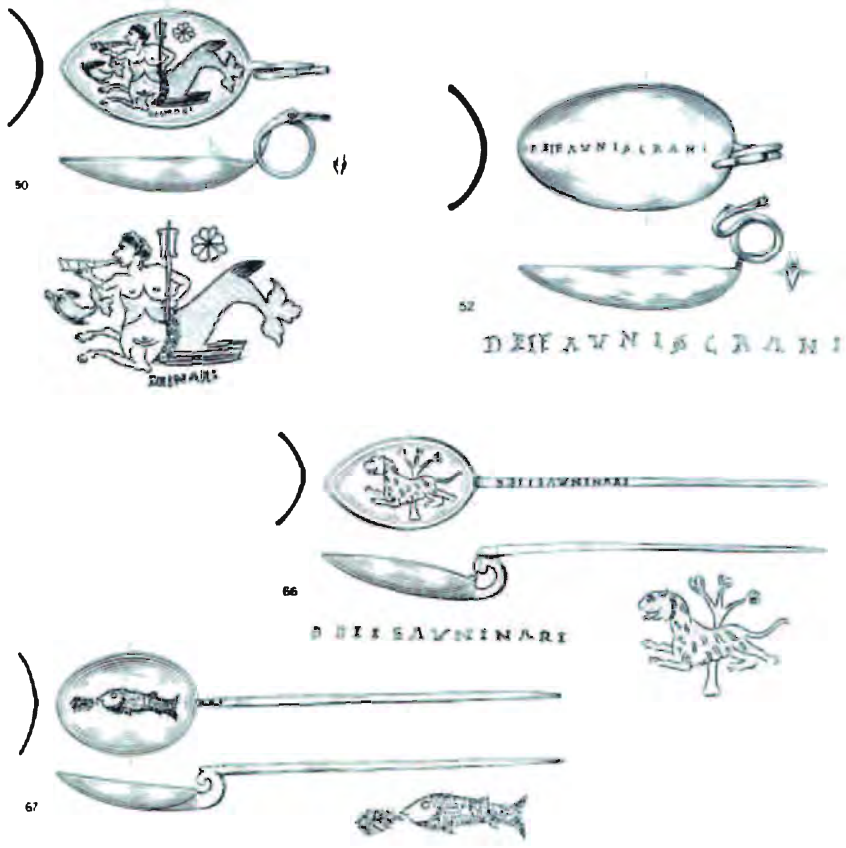


Figs 10–13 Spoons from the Thetford treasure: 10, spoon 57, DEIFAVBLOTVGI. *L. 9.2 cm; 11, spoon 75,* BLO. *L. 18.0 cm; 12 spoon 55,* DEIFAVNIAVSECI. *L. 9.4 cm; 13, spoon 73,* DEIFAVAVSECI. *L. 17.3 cm. (after Johns & Potter 1983, drawings by Robert Pengelly)*

remarkable assemblage was associated with the veneration of Faunus and Bacchus in a Celtic province in the fourth century AD. How are we to interpret its function and use, and are we to connect it with Thetford, where the treasure was hidden, or not?

The first point to emphasize is that we cannot say with any confidence that the material was made in Britain. In the catalogue of the find, we made the tentative suggestion that it was of Gaulish origin. Nevertheless, it is perfectly possible that both the jewellery and the silver could have been made in Britain, and a small piece of evidence has recently come to light which supports this theory. In 1984, a single ring appeared on the antiquities market which was said to be from Norfolk, though not, evidently, from Thetford. Judging from its condition, it is not a stray item from the treasure itself, though that possibility cannot be totally discounted: it is, however, without the slightest doubt, a product of the same atelier as that which produced the Thetford rings.[4] It is still possible to say no more than that the material was made in Gaul or Britain, but the evidence may now be pointing more towards the latter. Only future discoveries are likely to cast additional light on this subject.

The significance of the site itself is another dubious point. The number of coin hoards found in the vicinity



Figs 14–17 Spoons from the Thetford treasure: 14, spoon 50, DEINARI, *with Triton, dolphin and rosette. L. 10.2 cm; 15, spoon 66,* DEIFAVNINARI, *with panther and tree. L. 17.7 cm; 16, spoon 52,* DEIFAVNI CRANI. *L. 9.2 cm; 17, spoon 67, decorated with a fish and plant. L. 17.8 cm. (after Johns & Potter 1983, drawings by Robert Pengelly)*

on Gallows Hill lends convincing support to the assumption that there was a temple precinct, but we should be very careful before we infer that there was a temple there to Faunus in the fourth century. Treasures are not necessarily buried for safety near the place where they were in use; indeed, on occasion it may be a wise precaution to bury valuables far away from their 'home'. There *may* have been a centre of Bacchic worship based on Celtic manifestations of the god Faunus at Thetford, but it cannot be too strongly stressed that the presence there of the Thetford treasure does not prove it.

The rites involved are perhaps easier to infer, using the literary sources and the evidence of the objects themselves. Spoons and strainers are standard items in hoards of Christian silverware from the Late Antique period, and it is not difficult to envisage their use in the ritual meal, the enactment of which is a central element of the faith. We can imagine likewise a ritual meal, though maybe of a more uninhibited nature, in the Faunus cult. The similarity between Christian and pagan liturgical equipment at this date is no surprise. The Water Newton treasure, for example, provides an elegant illustration of such borrowing, with the presence in an undoubtedly Christian church assemblage of votive plaques of a type common in pagan

ritual contexts (Painter 1977). The feasting, drinking and dancing which probably took place in Faunus worship could well have included the use of spoons for food and strainers for wine. Additional information is given by the personal names which appear on several of the spoons, since it seem reasonable to take these to be names of actual members of the 'congregation', possibly special names given to them within the religious circle. Mark Hassall has pointed out (1981) the possibility of a guild or *collegium*, and we should not ignore the links with the later witch-cult, which undoubtedly has some of its roots in the Pan/Faunus rites.

As remarked earlier, the function of the jewellery in the rites is far more difficult to conceive. It seems highly unlikely that it was worn during Faunus festivals by the celebrants, if only because its condition makes it clear that most of it has never been worn at all. The only reasonably satisfactory explanation of its presence is as a rich votive gift to the temple, worked into the form of jewellery with appropriate decoration in order to increase its fitness for the purpose. But it would be idle to pretend that this explanation is wholly convincing. The total destruction of the context in which the treasure was found has prevented us from investigating the exact nature of the deposit, which might have contained some evidence to help towards the solution of this mystifying problem.

In summary, we remain a long way from understanding all the information which has been brought to light by the discovery of the Thetford treasure. What we can infer is nevertheless of the first importance for the study of Roman religion in the Celtic provinces in the fourth century. The ancient Latian god Faunus had by this time evidently become totally conflated with similar gods, above all with Pan, but perhaps also with Silvanus and others, and had thus become part of the complex web of mystical religious belief incorporated in the worship of Bacchus. Since he shared many features with certain Celtic gods, for all peasant societies have their agricultural fertility deities, Faunus, like numerous other Roman gods, had been absorbed into Celtic religious belief, and fitting names and descriptions from Celtic mythology had been provided for him.

The actual burial and concealment of the treasure seems likely to have taken place in response to the anti-pagan decrees of Theodosius, enacted in the 390's. These specifically forbade pagan rites, and are in many ways of greater significance than the conversion of Constantine, which is often perceived as the turning-point between the pagan and Christian Roman Empire. From the evidence of the Thetford treasure alone, we cannot say whether the worship of Faunus took place in Norfolk, since it is quite possible that the treasure was brought there from elsewhere for safekeeping. On the other hand, there is no evidence that would preclude Thetford from being the centre of a Bacchus and Faunus cult, and there is certainly no reason why such a cult should not have been widespread in late-Roman Britain. In Britain, as elsewhere in the Empire, there must have been many people who were desperately trying to halt the spread of the increasingly powerful doctrine of Christianity, and mystery religions such as that of Bacchus were a major focus of this rearguard action. They were doomed to fail, but it is a measure of the integration of Celtic Britain into the Roman Empire that it was taking its full part in the final struggle of pagan classicism against the onset of the Christian world of the early Middle Ages.

Acknowledgements

The preparation of the catalogue of the Thetford treasure left the authors very much indebted to a number of scholars for their help and co-operation; the present article is largely based on the research carried out at that time, and thus also owes much to the individuals acknowledged in the introduction to the book.

I should, however, like to add a note of gratitude specifically to the friends and colleagues who have read and commented upon this article in draft, and have given me the benefit of their sound scholarship and good sense, namely Don Bailey, Tim Potter and Val Rigby. In addition, I have enjoyed many discussions on relevant themes with Martin Henig, and these have had a profound effect on my knowledge of ancient religion, and my approach to the subject.

Notes

1. *Religion in Roman Britain* (Henig 1984) admirably illustrates the theme and the approach to its study.
2. The eventual declaration of the treasure was due in great measure to the efforts of Tony Gregory of the Norfolk Archaeological Unit; without his perseverence and tact this important find might have remained unknown to scholarship.
3. I am grateful to Don Bailey for bringing to my attention an early reference, Gerhard 1825, in which the Pan/Faunus identity is proposed and argued.
4. It was once more Tony Gregory who brought this find to my attention, and Ian MacIntyre of the British Museum Conservation Department who was able to acquire the ring for a short period, so that it could be examined, recorded and restored. Unfortunately, it was not possible to acquire it for a museum collection.

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Fig. 18. Gold buckle, no. 1, from the Thetford treasure. 9.2 cm high.

Fig. 19. Thetford treasure, ring no. 23. Height of face in bezel 0.7 cm.

Fig. 20. Thetford treasure, ring no. 7. Internal width 1.8 cm.

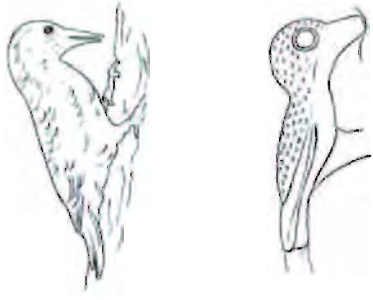

Fig. 21. Comparison between the Green Woodpecker (Picus viridis) and one of the pair of birds on Thetford ring no. 7. The height of the gold bird is c. 1.0 cm. (drawing C. M. Johns)

Words and Meanings: *ACCIPE ET VTERE FELIX*

Eve Harris

The original bearer of the latin words of the title is a pot (Trier 05.318a) of black clay gloss coated pottery[1] decorated with white and coloured slips applied both *en barbotine* and as a wash paint (Figs 1–2). Quoted and reproduced on postcards and in catalogues and books, both popular and learned, as a fine and typical piece of Treveran craftwork, it is certainly the first but almost as certainly not the second. The shape is by no means unusual though not one of those most frequently found, the decoration is rare, both in quality and in style, and the inscription is unique to date on this particular type of pottery. As with so many things, familiarity has perhaps bred contempt, and Krüger's (1926) article, *Die Trierer Göttervase*, incorporating a careful description of the piece and its provenance, together with discussion of the decoration in relation to other deity vases then known from Trier and elsewhere, has been taken as adequate treatment.

In Roman times as now, Trier was an important centre of wine production, its monuments and inscriptions bearing full and happy witness to the activities of its vintners and shippers. As now, their product obviously enjoyed a local market as well as more distant ones, and it is no wonder that the city's potters were soon providing vessels from which wine could be served and drunk, and which some wine merchants may even have traded along with the wine itself (Loeschcke 1933a, 57).

The pottery area of Trier lay at the south-west corner of the city and along the east bank of the Mosel (Binsfeld 1977, 223–5 and Beilage 1). Unfortunately, in spite of obviously careful excavation and some well executed plans, very little solid information is available on the detailed chronology of the kilns and workshops of the potters. It is clear that they were working from the first to the fourth centuries AD, moving southwards

Fig. 1. The bust of Treberis Bellona on the deity vase from Trier. This portrait roundel was broken, but is complete apart from a small fragment of the border below the E. (Photograph by kind permission of the Landesmuseum Trier.)

Fig. 2. The bust of Mercury on the deity vase, before restoration. The triangular divider is clearly visible between the V and the A. (Photograph by kind permission of the Landesmuseum Trier.)

when the city wall was erected and recovering from the barbarian invasions of *c.* AD 276.

Like terra sigillata, this black clay gloss ware had an ancient and classical lineage, its forerunners being the Greek and, more noticeably, the Etruscan white decorated black clay gloss wares. In Gaul it seems to have been made in association with the red terra sigillata, although in considerably smaller quantities, and is generally either plain apart from rouletting or grooved lines, or decorated with appliqués or barbotine ornament, both applied beneath the gloss slip. Uncommonly, a white slip decoration may be used. A similar pattern is possibly to be seen at Köln with the development there of the hunt cup. In Trier, however, although the vessels were apparently being made in association with terra sigillata, the sub-gloss slip decoration is rare, and the white, over-slip barbotine work and painting of the earlier classical world reappears alongside a variety of plain, rouletted and indented vessels. The potters developed a recognizable and wide repertoire of forms which – interestingly in view of its great popularity and suitable shape as a drinking vessel – tends to exclude the hunt cup form; perhaps in Trier its place was taken by the barrel-shaped beaker. These black clay gloss wares are wheel-made rather than moulded, and the best pieces display considerable potting skill in their thin walls, fine hard fabric, and neatly turned bases, amply fulfilling Hamada's requirement that a pot 'should never look heavier to the eye than it feels when it is picked up' (Leach 1975, 104).

The Trier product, now often referred to as *Moselkeramik* to differentiate it from the other black clay gloss pottery covered by the umbrella term 'Rhenish' ware, includes, amongst the decorated pots, a group variously called *Spruchbecher*, motto pots, or – rather charmingly – *poterie parlante*. Few have inscriptions as long as ACCIPE ET VTERE FELIX, and indeed most contain only one word.

The employment of an inscription as part of the intended design of a vessel is fairly common on some of the elaborate glass of the third century, and is occasionally found on ceramics; but it seems to be only at Trier that words or phrases were developed as a common and important part of the decoration on pottery. Perhaps the reason is obvious when one considers the purpose of the vessels and the meaning of the words. The importance of Trier's wine industry has already been noted: many of the pots are decorated with grapes and vine tendrils, the shapes are those of beakers, bowls, flasks and jugs, and the words, BIBE – 'drink', MISCE – 'mix' (the wine), DA MERVM – 'give pure wine', VIVAS – 'long life', or perhaps simply 'your health', are obviously terms familiar in the tavern. Loeschcke (1933a, 43–50) and more recently Bös (1958) have done some initial work on the classification of the legends on these drinking vessels, and both of them – Bös in particular – have included some other fabrics for this purpose. Mention of straightforward wine, DA VINVM (Trier 05.135a), occurs together with words emphasizing the demand for unadulterated or unmixed wine, PARCE AQVAM ADIC MERVM (Trier 04.431a). DA CALDAM (Trier 04.643) says one pot, while yet another requests spiced or vintage wine, REPLE ME COPO CONDĪTI or CONDĪTI (Bonn 17298: see Bös 1958, 20). A further group bears words and phrases of greeting and general good wishes, AVE, VTI ME FELIX and VIVITE. A final group, as noted by Loeschcke (1933a, 49), 'spricht nicht vom Wein, sondern im Wein von der Liebe'. These swing between the probably thoughtless if earthy argot of the tavern to phrases with indubitably erotic meanings and *doubles entendres*. AMA ME AMO TE may do no more than remind one of the English 'Little brown jug, don't I love thee', but FVTVITE makes its meaning abundantly clear, while LVDE, VTIVLA and even VTERE FELIX[2] carry nuances according to the circumstances or the depth of one's appreciation.

But were the potters simply suppliers to the catering trade and dining halls? A few vessels certainly do not fit so happily into this category, for although the legend, as with ACCIPE ET VTERE FELIX, may be acceptable, the decoration introduces an entirely different theme. Indeed, these pots have previously been considered from the decorative and iconographic point of view—the legends, with their overtones of conviviality, being passed over as possibly complicating an otherwise straightforward interpretation.

At this point one should perhaps consider where *Spruchbecher* have been found. Bearing in mind their purpose as drinking vessels, one might expect to find them scattered in fragments, mainly on town sites and perhaps along with the household pottery in villas. But this is not so. Comparatively few fragments have turned up within Roman town sites – two definitely from the earlier excavations at Clausentum, a few sherds from Southwark, some from Verulamium, a pot from Leadenhall Street, London, some from within the city at Trier, a fragmentary flask from a pit in Dorchester, and so on. Examples are found, but not to any extent, and our knowledge of the genre would be greatly reduced if we had to rely on material from houses and commercial premises.

Some pieces come from the area of the pottery kilns at Trier. These either are obvious wasters or were presumably broken and therefore not marketable, and are chiefly important as showing where the *Spruchbecher* were made, or, in the case of some vessels, that potters would make to order for a specific purpose. Others, but not so many, come from religious contexts – the Altbachtal in Trier and Lullingstone villa to cite only two examples. The greatest number of provenanced finds are, however, from cemetery sites, and it is likely too that many of the unprovenanced pieces in museum collections will have originated from graves. These are most often complete, and (notably in the case of the Herstatt collection) so many whole

vessels in reasonable condition can surely have come only from burial finds. It may be argued that grave goods merely represent the deceased's ordinary everyday household needs—the owner of the Simpelveld sarcophagus was, after all, installed within a miniature home—but is it worth examining the pots and their decoration more closely?

Loeschcke (1933a, 50–51 n. 157) pointed out that the *Spruchbecher* come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and that, in the grave groups, care was taken to provide both drinking cups and *Vorratsgefässe*, literally store or supply pots. These latter recall the days when beer or cider could be collected in one's own container from the off-licence side of an English inn, just as is shown on the reliefs of the Roman period (Eydoux 1962, fig. 233; Tarradell 1969, 134, fig. 109). The *Vorratsgefässe* may be either jugs, carafes, or large versions of barrel-shaped pots (*Fassbecher*) and of the bulbous beakers generally associated in this country with the Mosel wares. Pot or jar is a term vouched for by the Treveri themselves, for one vessel (Köln N.2460) bears the legend TENE OLA —'hold the pot'. There was apparently no attempt to match materials in individual burials; a black clay gloss carafe may well be associated with glasses or with a red terra sigillata bowl from which to drink. A find of 1775 in Kent (Smith 1857, 173, pl. 10, 1) mentions a beaker inscribed BIBE associated with a Castor cup. Although the wealthy, as indicated by an impressive grave group from Wehringen, now in München, could possess an entire service of plain black gloss ware for use in the after-life, only one or two motto pots seem as a rule to be found in any one burial, and where there are two or more these do not appear to have any immediate association in terms of the sense of the words.[3] One must assume for the moment that, awkward as many are for the purpose, the smaller beakers served as drinking cups, but it is clear from pottery grave groups that the straight-sided black clay gloss bowls (Loeschcke 1933a, Taf. 9, 2) and terra sigillata bowls such as Dragendorff 27 and 33 frequently fulfilled this purpose, and reliefs of people drinking seem to show them with bowls, horns, or cylindrical vessels (Doppelfeld 1967, Taf. 47; Mariën 1980, fig. 200; Wightman 1970, pl. 17a). Although it would appear at present that a large portion of the *Spruchbecher* production was intended for normal daily use, it is obvious that the potters were also meeting a demand for funerary furnishings and religious wares, some of which were made to order while others fall into that twilight world where the everyday carries with it an aspect of the eternal. It is perhaps worth noting in this connection that the recent cemetery excavations in Nijmegen have produced a noticeably higher proportion of gloss and colour coated wares (including *Spruchbecher*) in relation to terra sigillata and cooking pots than have the habitation sites where the latter predominated.[4] Trier's status as an imperial city and its impressive Roman remains may perhaps give a wrong impression today. It was essentially a local capital, situated in a Celtic area, and if there was a classical temple overlooking the mithraeum in the Altbachtal, Mars was also Lenus Mars and Mercury was the consort of Rosmerta. Indeed as Edith Wightman (1970, 208 ff.) has shown, Tacitus' *interpretatio romana* can readily be seen to have operated in Trier. The vine and its products not only were an essential element in the city's prosperity, but were connected with Bacchus and Sucellus and in turn appeared as Christian symbols. In using their lettered wine pots for religious purposes, the Treveri were only adding a further dimension and level of interpretation to the religious life of the area and beyond.

A damaged carafe bearing the words DEO I(N)VICTTO M[ITHRAE] DONO DEDIT above rolling vine scrolls, recovered from an early excavation in the kiln area (Loeschcke 1933a, xi, 15, Zusatztaf. E15), was obviously a bespoke item intended either to bring libations to Mithras or to serve his worshippers. Rather less clear in its dedication is the large fragmentary cantharus (Trier 33.513) recovered from the clay store excavated along the former Horst-Wessel-, now Pacelli-Ufer (Loeschcke 1933b, 172, Taf. 20; Doppelfeld 1974, Bild 166). On the shoulder, above curled tendrils, were the seven planet gods, seemingly favoured in this area, each on a separate appliqué; only four now survive (Figs 3–4). Above them is the restored iscription D[EO RE]GI CVPITI[ ]DD, of which the final ending of CVPITI, two or three letters at most, is now missing. Again, the DD indicates a bespoke piece, but here the planets and the dedication are Celtic in inspiration. I am indebted to Mr R. P. Wright who kindly confirmed my suspicion that the translation 'Dem Gott und König Cupido' proferred in a recent exhibition guide (Schulze 1980, 101, nr. 114) was unacceptable, and who drew my attention both to the possibility that there might be a parallel in the Malton inscription DEO MAR(TI) RIGAE (*RIB* 711) and one to Mars Rigisamus (*RIB* 187), and to the fact that Cupitus with its variants is a recognized cognomen. Whether we have to do with a deity Rix or Rex,[5] or whether DEO REGI/RIGI is an allusion to Mars is an open question until some further evidence comes to light. From the many possible parallels to the donor's name cited by Holder (1896, 1197–8) one could mention RESTITVTVS CVPITVS from the Saalburg, a CVPITI at Billig and CVPITA from Castel. More recently, the name has been found on a greave from Straubing and on a mosaic at Linz. Was Cupitus, or perhaps Cupitina, intending the piece as an offering to Lenus Mars whose great temple lay just over the Mosel from the potteries, and what in any case happened to the order? Was another cantharus made or did the buyer fail to collect the vessel when it was ready?

Two, more ordinary, pots were found in well pits 14 and 16 at Neatham, Hampshire, in positions which suggest that they were votive offerings.[6] The inscriptions, DA MERVM[7] and VITVLA,[8] can in each case

be paralleled, and both are straightforward drinking apostrophes. VITVLA, a term of endearment (Bös 1958, 22), has no immediate relevance to the Neatham circumstances, but MERVM, usually rendered as 'pure wine' actually means just 'pure' or 'unadulterated', so that DA MERVM might well be deemed an appropriate request to a deity concerned with providing spring water. A late pot (Trier 26.105), apparently inscribed BIBI·ME, was found by a well at Hundheim in the area of the Lenus Mars temple at Trier, where at least one healing spring is known. A rather more unusual votive offering appeared at Lullingstone, where a small vessel bearing the word SVAVIS and containing part of a rib bone, possibly from a sheep, was placed in front of the family busts walled up in the late third century renovation of the villa (Meates 1955, 78). During the clearance of the mithraeum in Walbrook, an incomplete carafe was found, inscribed VIRES VINV (Guildhall Museum 18610 – now Museum of London) and, while it is possible that this had been employed in the service of Mithras, it may have been more directly associated with the relief of Bacchus also found during the rescue operations.

The Walbrook carafe bears a vine scroll below the letters—appropriate enough in view of its legend, the end of which is indicated by a small, somewhat triangular divider. This shape, which may be formed in various ways (a series of dots, a triangle and dots, or a dash and dots) is always, when it occurs, an indication of the end of the inscription. Letters or words may be separated by a dot, a straight line of dots, a tree, a leaf or a tendril, but never by this triangular or Y-shaped motif. In one or two examples it is shown very clearly as a phallus, and there seems a strong case for arguing that the schematic triangle is in fact intended as such, and is possibly offering some apotropaic protection. Pottery from the Venusstrasse-Ost kilns in Augst suggests that the palm branch or tree-like symbol occasionally used as a divider or terminal may convey overtones of the worship of the Mother Goddess, as may the snake which appears on at least one motto pot (Alexander 1975, 29–31, 33–4). On a large beaker, unfortunately of unknown provenance but now in Mainz (Mittelrheinisches Landesmuseum 03.955), the legend VIVAMVS FELICES is ended with both a snake and a phallus.[9]

ACCIPE ET VTERE FELIX belongs to a very small group of elaborately decorated pots, nearly all of which were found in the cemeteries or kilns of Trier. One (Trier 04.431a), from grave 81 at St Matthias and accompanied by a wordless cup, is inscribed PARC[E] AQVAM ADIC[E] MERVM above tendril scrolls. Between the

Fig. 3 The front of the planet cantharus from Trier, in course of restoration. What little remains of the E and the O of DEO is visible to the left, but the surviving traces of the lower horizontal stroke of the middle vowel of [RE]GI and of the G are too faint to show up. (Photograph by kind permission of the Landesmuseum Trier.)

Fig. 4 The back of the planet cantharus, showing the surviving letters of the donor's name. The length of the lower horizontal strokes of the two Ts is such than an I might equally well be restored on the front to give [RI]GI. (Photograph by kind permission of the Landesmuseum Trier.)

Fig. 5 One of a pair of carafes from the St. Matthias cemetery, Trier. The inscription terminates with a triangular divider, visible to the left of the horse's head (Photograph E. H., reproduced by kind permission of the Landesmuseum Trier.)

scrolls, appliqué busts of the four Seasons look out, and it may well be that these representations, so popular in mosaics, have no significance. On the other hand, the presence of the Seasons in the Sulis Minerva temple at Bath and the apparent Celtic concern with the cycle of the week, the seasons of the year, and the circle or wheel of life may well suggest that this pot reflects the religious beliefs of its owner. Similarly, a pair of carafes (Trier 04.921 b and a) in another grave may also be seen to have symbolism. Inscribed REMISCE MI and REMISCE ME, the one has large rosettes in the decoration over the body (a possible solar reference) and the other has an appliqué leaping horse and lion who spring upwards out of the barbotine tendrils into the line of letters (Fig. 5). Is there a reference here to the horse as a symbol of immortality, whether or not associated specifically with Epona, and is the lion solar, or other-worldly, or neither? If these vessels are elusive in their iconography, the same cannot be said of ACCIPI ET VTERE FELIX. Found in January 1906 in an inhumation burial of which not all survives, it was associated with a curious group of objects – a money box, a handled jug, the broken statuette of a seated god, and a lamp decorated with a Bacchic head. Unlike the appliqué busts of the Seasons, those of the four deities portrayed are carefully painted directly onto the body of the pot itself and do not rely on relief for any of their effect. Krüger (1926, 1ff.) identified them as Mercury, Minerva, Fortuna or Rosmerta, and Bellona. He noted the Teutates element present in the Gallic Mercury, the association of Minerva with the healing Herrenbrünnchen in Trier and with Sul at Bath, and even observed, when dealing with Bellona, that Brigantia is shown as a warrior goddess; but it was left to Loeschcke (1933a, 5–6) to suggest that Minerva might be equated with Roma, and to show the similarity between Bellona and Treberis as portrayed on a calendar of AD 354 (Binsfeld 1984, 157, 159, 160).

The calendar survives only in a copy of 1620, and although the figures owe more in spirit to the seventeenth century than to the fourth, the details are sufficiently authentic for them to be worth considering. Treberis is shown as a warrior goddess, helmed and holding a spear and shield in her left hand while her right rests on the head of a bound barbarian and seems gently to restrain him. At first sight the goddess's right shoulder and breast appear to be bare, but the curved lines on her neck and arm suggest that the copyist may have misunderstood a muscled cuirass (Robinson 1975, 150–151), and that she was in fact wearing the dress distinctive of a military leader (Robinson 1975, 147). A cloak, possibly caught by a round fibula, lies over her left shoulder. Her hair flows freely from beneath the strangely ornate helmet. Above the barbarian, a straight-sided cup, a cantharus, a bowl and a drinking horn recall the city's wine industry.

The busts on the pot have a certain similarity in style and feeling to the early fourth century frescoes from the Roman palace beneath the Dom (Weber 1984, Abb. 15, 22). The deities are youthful and look alternately left and right. Bellona appears to wear a corslet buckled on the shoulders,[10] and her hair falls freely, if more tidily, from below the rather foreshortened helmet, whose diadem-like peak shares the same patterning as Minerva's. Behind her right shoulder the double axe associated with barbarian peoples is clearly visible, and a stick or baton-like object projects from behind her left shoulder. Loeschcke, perhaps, was unfortunate in the date of his publication: national symbolism noted in 1933 was best forgotten post 1945. But in the year of the two thousandth anniversary of the foundation of Trier, one may, with reason, look with more favour on Loeschcke's Treberis Bellona.

Some of the inscriptions here quoted are odd latin. Errors are due not only to local usage and pronunciation, but also to potters misreading their instructions or forgetting to render a cursive note completely into the capitals required on the pot. One potter perhaps even suffered from mild dyslexia.[11] Many of the mistakes are no doubt mere carelessness, and it is easy enough to be critical if one has neither tried to do this kind of decoration oneself nor endeavoured to copy a collection of these inscriptions in a limited time. With a few of the pots it becomes possible to recognize the same hand at work, and with others the order of march is visible: the inscription was put on first, then the spacers and further decoration,

with the appliqués apparently added at the end.[12]

Some of the pots reflect fashion or the fashionable, for the use of Greek words written in the Roman alphabet is not uncommon. PIE and ZESES appear both on glassware and on the *Spruchbecher*, and must surely have appealed primarily to the educated, or to the trend-setters of the time. The presence of ZESES on a pot has been interpreted as an indication that the burial it accompanied was a Christian one, for PIE ZESES occurs in proven Christian contexts. There is certainly plenty of evidence to show that, in the early days at least, Christian beliefs were not a complete bar to grave goods, but one should hesitate to accept ZESES on its own as a sign of Christianity. It is perhaps rather more a sign of world-wide fashion, for, at about the same time as a Treveran citizen was buried with a black clay gloss carafe proclaiming PIE ZESES, a wealthy Meroite was interred at Sedeinga in Nubia with two glass beakers engraved with Egyptian offering scenes and the same words *IIIE ZHCEN* in Greek round the neck[13] (Leclant 1971,254 5, pl. 46).

Were these pots with ordinary phrases, when they occur in burials, merely chance, or were they the prized possessions of their owners, and even indicative of their beliefs and hopes? If ZESES is not necessarily an indication of any one religious belief, one might think that a pot with DA CALDAM, perhaps a request for *Glühwein* or punch, is no more than a wine jug, were it not for a fourth century catacomb painting where Agape, Love and Irene, Peace are seated at a meal beneath the legends AGAPE MISCE MI and IRENE DA CALDAM (*CIL* IV, 1291n.).

In reviewing the report on the third to fourth century cemetery at Intercisa, Reece (1978, 186–7) comments that the many glazed jugs there look very much at home; 'In Germany, France and Switzerland these jugs seem to be exotic pieces ... a Pannonian material export for funerary purposes'. Is it possible that the *Spruchbecher* of Trier also had some strange and desirable value in themselves, if only because the magic of the written word ensured the perpetuation of the wish?

CIL (XIII, 10018) gives about 200 different words or phrases occuring on *Spruchbecher*, and even in 1933 Loeschcke was able to show that its editors had omitted several further examples. In 1984, just under 240 are known, and, if some have been lost over the years, many others have come to light, nor is there any reason to suppose that this will be the final total. The commonest word is VIVAS, and it is perhaps a good example of the duality of meaning and purpose which some of them seem to have. Rendered 'long life' or 'prosit', the word fits well into drinking scenes; more literally 'may you live', it embodies the hopes of funeral guests towards the departed. MISCE – 'mix the wine' is the next most popular word followed by DA MI 'give to me'. BIBE 'drink', which at first sight is not so high on this list as one might expect, is in fact as popular as MISCE if one takes into account the Greek version PIE which occurs on many beakers.

In publishing a grave incorporating a pipe to carry libations from the living to the dead, Wheeler (1929, 1–7) drew attention to both the antiquity and the spread of this custom, and many mausolea provide space for commemorative feasts to be shared with those remembered. An interesting gravestone, now in the Vatican Museum (*CIL* VI, 2357) almost carries this one stage further, for it requests the passer-by not to defile the tomb but, if he is a kindly man, to mix a draught, drink and give me one: MISCE BIBE DA MI an idea re-echoed in the lines of a northern folk song:-

> 'Lavender's blue
> Lavender's green
> When I am king
> You shall be queen.
> . . . . . .
> If you should die
> As it may hap
> Then you shall lie
> Under the tap.
> I'll tell you why
> I'll tell you why
> That you may drink
> When you are dry.'

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Notes

1. The description of the ware follows the definition of Alexander (1975, 9–12) who provides a sensible and clearly reasoned argument for the terms used.
2. VTERE FELIX, for example, appears on a bronze handle from South Shields, on a spoon from Avenches, on a soldier's belt from Lyon, on a fibula—DOMINE MARTI VIVAS VTERE FELIX (*CIL* XIII, 10027, 146), and as a graffito on the reverse of a mould for an erotic group from Trier.
3. AVETE and AMO TE, BIBE and FRVI, CALO and VINV from burials in Trier REMIISICE ME and REMISCE MI (Trier 04.921 a and b), are, however, more obviously related.
4. Dr J. H. F. Bloemers, lecture in Durham, Nov. 1984.
5. Holder's (1901, 1197–8) entry on *rix* indicates its widespread appearance in the area.
6. I am indebted to Dr M. Millett for allowing me to read the relevant excavation notes before publication.
7. Bonn, Köln, Remagen, St. Albans.
8. Köln, Nijmegen, Tongres, Trier.
9. *CIL* XIII, 10018, 202 suggests that a palm branch, now missing, was also present.
10. Krüger (1926, 5) interprets the buckles as round brooches, in which case Bellona is presumably wearing a sleeveless tunic such

as is worn by the lyre player on the frescoes (Weber 1984, Abb. 16) who also apparently sports a brooch on her right shoulder.

11. Trier kilns 33.514: BBIERT is perhaps for BIBITE. Köln 2491: DMAI is surely DA MI.
12. Three pots, two in Andernach (898: V·I·V·A·S· and 7083: M·I·S·C·E·Ψ·) and one in Trier (33.3944n: M·I·S·C·E·Ψ·) illustrate some of these points. In all three cases the S had apparently been forgotten at first and was put in after the rest of the letters, and in the same snake-like form, with the spacers added at the last. This is very noticeable in the MISCE from Andernach, where the S and its flanking spacers are squeezed into a single 'em' unit so that the spacers lap onto the S and the C. Both the MISCE inscriptions terminate in a swastika with a dot in each quarter.
13. Prof. Jean Leclant also kindly supplied drawings, photographs and further information on both vessels.

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The Concept of Genius in Roman Britain

Joan P. Alcock

Introduction

During the past few years several discoveries have been made of sculptured remains depicting Genii (Phillips 1979; Toynbee 1978; Hammerson 1978, 270) and two papers have commented on the representation of Genius and Lar (Boon 1973; 1983). In view of this interest it seems appropriate to gather together material relating to both the Genii and the Junones in Roman Britain, and to comment on their significance. In the past, the term 'Genius' has often been loosely applied, especially in the cases of small bronze figurines; any male figure standing and about to sacrifice or even simply wearing a radiate headdress is liable to have received such a designation. More rigid definitions should be employed and the opportunity has been taken to list the known examples of small bronze Genii and Lares found in Britain and to consider their artistic derivation.[1]

The concept of Genius in classical religion

The Romans believed that individuals had deified personalities attached to them; each man had his Genius and each woman her Juno (Pliny, *N.H.* 2,5,16). A Genius was personal to a man, being formed at birth and remaining attached to him throughout his life (Horace, *Epist.* 2,2,187). Censorius (*De Re Natura* 3,1) noted *Genius est deus cuius in tutela ut quisque natus est vivit*. It was honoured on the birthday of the man and slaves swore by the Genius of their master, thus taking an oath upon the ultimate authority of his being (Horace, *Odes* ii; Plautus, *Pseud.* 165; *Capt.* 977; Seneca, *Epist.* 114,5). The concept was an intellectual as well as a spiritual one which 'survived and expanded its meaning all through the life of the Roman People' (Fowler 1914, 7) and was associated with their most solemn actions. The bridal bed was sacred to the Genius on account of its connection with procreation being known as *rectus genialis*. For the majority of people it was 'l'être divin présent à tous les degrés de la réalité, avec la double qualité de producteur et de conservateur, la conservation n'étant qu'une création successive, comme l'action dans les individus n'est que la manifestation de la force intime' (Daremberg & Saglio 1896, *s.v.* Genius). At the death of a man his Genius does not seem to have died with him but accompanied him beyond the grave, belief in the concept apparently merging with that in deceased ancestors who were venerated by the living (cf. Horace, *Trist.* 3,13,18). Occasionally the Genius of a dead person is mentioned (De-Marchi 1896, 7). Almost certainly this is a continuation of the Greek belief in the *daimon* and the implication is that the Genius is watching over the dead man in the Otherworld. Servius (*Comment. Verg. Aen.* 6, 743) in fact declared that at birth every man acquired two Genii, one attracting him towards good, the other leading him towards evil; the influence of these two Genii on the man's consequent actions affected his destiny so that at death he either rose to a higher state of existence or was condemned to a lower one. This however, seems to be a unique interpretation and it is more likely that, as Horace (*Epist.* 2,2, 187-8) implies, the Genius was *voltu mutabilis, albus et ater*, being of dual character exhibiting good or evil characteristics at various times according to the nature of the man. It was thus his double, his *alter ego* exhibiting his own characteristics and tastes.

From being linked with the lives of men the concept was to include the gods themselves, institutions and places (Servius, *Comment. Verg. Georg.* 1, 302). Not every deity had a Genius but, when present, it presumably performed the same function as a Genius attached to a man (cf. the Genius Priapi in Petronius, *Sat.* 21). With institutions such as colleges and military units, it was appropriate that Genii should be their protectors, for each had its *dies natalis* and would thus have had a Genius present from its inception. Servius implies that every object had a Genius, *genium autem dicebant antiqui naturalem deum uniuscuique loci vel rei vel hominis* but this may be disputed. Certainly every place had its Genius, as the many dedications to the Genius Loci indicate. Servius (*Comment. Verg. Georg.* 1,302) remarks that there was *nullus Loci sine Genio*. In fact there might be occasions when it was not clear whether a particular Genius was connected with a place or a person. When Aeneas was placing an offering on his father's tomb a brilliantly coloured serpent, so long that it could coil itself seven times (a significant number), glided out from beneath the tomb, tasted the food laid out as the offering and then returned leaving Aeneas uncertain as to whether he had seen the Genius of his father or the Genius of the place (Vergil, *Aen.* 5,95).

A serpent might represent the Genius or complement its powers. The painted representations of the Genii and Junones in the lararia at Pompeii often have serpents shown below them, either a single one indicating the

dual concept of Genius and Juno, or two, one having a crest to indicate the male power (Boyce 1937, 72, no. 331; 79, no. 349; 98, no. 489). Cicero (*De Div.* 1,36) remarks that the actor, Roscius, when a young boy, was discovered as he slept with a serpent coiled round him and this manifestation of his Genius was held by soothsayers to predict a brilliant career. The serpent can also be depicted coiled round an altar over which the Genius Populi pours a libation. It can rear up to obtain the food indicated by the patera (Toynbee 1978, 330) and this emphasizes the connection of Genii with fertility. The serpent, however, is the bearer of death as well as of life and this links the Genius with the Underworld and the Manes (although these may have been regarded as possessing complementary natures as indicated by inscriptions, e.g. *CIL* V, 246 from Pola). A further extension of this connection with the dead would be the sacrifices made to the Lares, companions of the Genius, performed at the festival of the Feralia on February 22nd (Ovid, *Fasti* 2, 631).

It was the beneficent attitude of the Genius which came to the fore when its protection was invoked. This beneficence was indicated by a cornucopia, representing fertility and the gifts of nature necessary for life. Libations to Genii reinforce this attitude. Tibullus honours his Genius with incense, with cake drenched in honey, and with streams of wine, with games and with dancing (Tibullus 1,7, 49–56; 2,2, 5).

A second concept of Genius developed in a wider sphere. This was the public cult which first appeared during the Second Punic War when the Roman Republic faced the forces of Hasdrubal. Of several expiations demanded, after a consultation of the Sibylline books had been made, one was the sacrifice of five major victims in honour of the Genius (Livy 21,69, 2). The Genius mentioned here must be the Genius Populi Romani who was given a shrine near to the temple of Concord in the Forum. An annual sacrifice was made on October 9th to the Genius, to Fausta Felicitas and Venus Victrix in Capitolio which suggests that there was a shrine to them on the Capitol. Cassius Dio noted two omens connected with the shrine or temple in the Forum. In 43 BC during the struggles of the Triumvirate, a crowd of vultures settled on its roof; in 33 BC, when Antony and Octavian were engaged in conflict, an owl, a bird of ill omen,[2] but also, through its association with Athena, an omen of victory, perched in the same place (Cassius Dio 47,2, 3; Platner & Ashby 1927, 246; *CIL* VI, 6248). Belief in the Genius Publicus continued throughout the Empire. In AD 363 the Emperor Julian, then waging war against the Persians, was resting in his tent one night, when an image of the Genius appeared to cross from one side to the other, making neither word nor gesture, but having the cornucopia veiled. This story, quickly passed on, was held to herald disaster, which occurred soon afterwards when the emperor was killed in battle (Ammianus Marcellinus 25,2). In this instance the Genius represented both a warning by the public Genius of the Roman state prophesying disaster for the Roman army (the representative of the Roman people in arms) and a warning that the emperor's own Genius was about to desert him.

In art the Genius Populi Romani was first depicted in Praxitelean form as a male figure draped in an himation, holding a cornucopia and sometimes a patera over an altar. Occasionally he has a modius on his head. This type was used for propaganda purposes on coins issued in the Republic and during the Empire, indicating both the benevolence of Roman Rule and the prosperity afforded to the Roman people (Béranger 1965). There was however a change in the depiction. During the Republic, in the first century BC, the Genius appeared as a bearded figured with sceptre, globe, crown and cornucopia. He reappeared again on the coinage of Vespasian as a young, clean-shaven figure holding a cornucopia and with the left arm held diagonally downwards in the manner of a worshipper, the evocation of a golden age, a type which continued until the reign of Constantine.

In a development of the reign of Augustus, however, this type had become associated with a further concept of Genius which fused both public and private realisations. The first intimation came with the Senatorial decree that a libation should be poured out to the emperor's Genius at every formal dinner, both public and private (Cassius Dio 51,20, 1). This would accord with the tradition, previously mentioned, of providing offerings for the Genius, simple offerings which could be obtained in every household and which did not require the sacrifice of a victim. Horace (*Odes* 4,5,31) implied that this action soon became a popular feature at private banquets (*et laribus tuum miscet numen*). It was the emperor's Genius, not the emperor himself, who was honoured, making it easy for the Genius of Augustus to be confounded with the private Genius of an individual and the public Genius of the Roman state. Thus an abstraction assumed a concrete personality and the emperor's Genius became the object of a state cult with sacrifices of victims, previously unknown in the traditional Roman cult of the Genius (Taylor 1931, 151).

The implication behind the senatorial decree was that Augustus was father of the State and the Genius Augusti was portrayed in the sacrificial act of a Genius Paterfamilias pouring a libation, with his toga pulled over his head. In the kitchen of the Casa di Pansa at Pompeii the representation of the Genius is flanked by long panels on which are painted articles of food and household objects, symbols of prosperity of the household (Boyce 1937, no. 156, pl. 18.1). The representation may be the Genius of the head of the household, the Genius Paterfamilias, or the Genius Augusti as both may carry the same objects: a cornucopia, a scroll or an incense box in the left hand, a grain of incense or a patera in the right. This togate

Genius stands in the attitude represented in small bronze figurines. Very few of these have been found at Pompeii, and Hill (1962, 72) suggests that the portrayal of the figure ceased at the end of the Julio-Claudian period.[3] This would accord with the fact that coins of Nero bearing the inscription GENIUS AUGUSTI (Mattingly 1923, 248, 250-3) portray the art type of the Genius Populi Romani, that is the half-draped Genius. Seemingly the late Republican representation had ousted the Augustan one.

The concept of the Lares in classical religion

Associated with the Genius Augusti were the Lares, the guardians of home and hearth, but in a translated form. The Lares are encountered throughout the whole history of the Roman religion, ranking low in the hierarchy of deities, but all-pervasive in their influence. Their spheres of activity resulted in numerous epithets being attached to them: Lares are thus associated with neighbourhoods (*vicinales*), maritime victories (*permarini*), protection (*praestites*), the state (*publici*), oakgroves (*querquetulani*) to name but a few (Palmer 1974, 114). In their earliest form they were connected with the household, being guardians both of the hearth and of the spirit of the Roman people: they were invoked in association with the Penates, the spirits of the household. The plural form is usually used, while the singular is reserved mainly for the Lar Familiaris, who provided indiscriminate protection for all members of the household, that is for the whole *familia* (Dumézil 1966, 342). The first action of the master on visiting his estate in the country was to greet the Lar Familiaris (Cato, *De Agr.* 2). At death a *praculum* was made to the Lar (Cicero, *De Leg.* 2,55). In the Prologue to the *Aululuria* Plautus (3–4, 24–25) makes the Lar summarize his function, 'For many years I have possessed this dwelling and preserved it for the sire and grand sire of the present occupant', and the daughter of that occupant gave to him the traditional offerings of incense, wine and garlands. In the *Trinummus* (39), Callicles remarks that the household god must be honoured with a garland (*corona*). He should be beseeched to bless the dwelling and promote its prosperity. Macrobius (*Sat.* 1,15) comments that when a bride entered her husband's house, her first task was to offer a sacrifice to the Lares. The worship of the Lares thus ensured health, prosperity and welfare and, in a form simple and direct, was applicable to any household, rich or poor.

It was this worship which was revived by Augustus in his revitalization of the Lares Compitales. These Lares were associated with boundaries (Livy 4,30, 7–11). Each vicus or district into which Rome was divided had at its centre a point where roads met, a *compitum*. Each person, at that point, recognised the Lar from his own area and the one adjoining so that two Lares presided over the crossroads. Shrines erected to those deities had been common since the fifth century BC. Augustus was to transform their worship. In 7 BC he reorganized Rome into 265 vici, placing in each one a restored crossroads sanctuary and ordering that sacrifices should be made on the days of the Compitalia (Suetonius, *Aug.* 31,4; Varro 6,25; Wardman 1982, 76). He ordered that two statues of the Lares and a representation of the Genius Paterfamilias (which by an easy transition soon became identified with the Genius Augusti) should be placed in each sanctuary. This gave the Lares, until then a private cult, a place in public worship but with their rites confined to slaves and the lower classes. The epithet 'Augusti' soon became linked with all three figures so that the Lares Augusti became the term most used (e.g. *CIL* VI, 443, 445–49, 451-55) and the cult spread rapidly. Ovid in the *Fasti* (5, 143–46) searches for the images of the two gods. In their place are a thousand Lares and the Genius of the leader who gave them to the public (*mille Lares Geniumque ducis, qui tradidit illos urbs habet*). Augustus' aim was not only to invoke a latent sense of loyalty towards his rule but also to offer some scope for religious honours to the freedmen, who formed the group from which the six appointed each year to manage the cult were selected.

The art form of the Lares also began to change. In the Republic (Waites 1920) the Lar Familiaris was represented in a position of repose holding a cornucopia and a patera, wearing high boots and a chiton, often with a mantle hanging from one shoulder and falling in a fold between the legs (Thomas 1963). The cornucopia may contain wheat ears rather than fruit. A wreath was placed round the head and the whole appearance of the republican Lar was more dignified than the Lares Augusti, who were personified as dancing figures, each holding a rhyton high above its head. Occasionally the rhyton was held at such an angle that it appeared to be pouring wine into a patera held in the other hand. The two Lares were designed to complement each other in the position of their arms. They each wear a short chiton splayed out on either side and sport a wreath round the head with its fillet dropping onto the shoulders. Although the religious concept is completely Roman, the type may have derived from a Hellenistic original, since a fragment of a comedy by Naevius in the second century BC has a painter, Theodotas, seated in the cella of a temple depicting the *Lares Ludentes* for the Compitalia (Daremberg & Saglio 1896, *s.v.* Lares, 947). The statuary type may have resulted from the creation of the cult of the Lares Augusti, but whatever the origin it soon became a common feature of the cult as seen at Pompeii, for example, where the groups are found painted on *lararia* (e.g. Boyce 1937, no. 16, pl. 13.2; no. 156, pl. 18.1; no. 211, pl. 30.2; no. 371, pl. 31; no. 419, pl. 16.2; no. 468, pl. 22.1). It is possible that Lares of this type may be those mentioned by Suetonius (*Aug.* 8,1) who noted a presentation of a bust of Augustus to Hadrian who placed it amongst the Lares of the

bedchamber, although the reference may refer to Lares in general.[4]

The Genius in Roman Britain

The worship of the concept of Genius is well-attested in Britain although that statement may have to be qualified following a consideration of whether it was a purely Roman idea or one involved with Romano-Celtic syncretism. A survey of the evidence reveals inscriptions, statuary, both in relief and in the round, gemstones and bronze figurines.

Inscriptions

A variety of inscriptions indicate the worship of the Genii of places, of societies and of groups. The first of these was entirely appropriate to Celtic beliefs wherein each element of nature had its own individual spirit, and it is most likely that many of the inscriptions naming the Genius Loci were attempts to pacify the spirits of unknown areas unfamiliar, and therefore hostile, to the dedicator. In all 23 inscriptions refer to the Genius Loci, 12 in association with other deities (Table 1) and two which refer to the Genius of a specific place (Table 2). The Genius Loci could be involved in both the wider and the more localized scene (Toutain 1907, 448) as in the case of the Genius Noricorum (*CIL* III, 4781), the Genius Daciarum (*CIL* III, 993), the Genius P(rovinciae) P(annoniae) (*ILS* 2923) and the Genius Patriae (*CIL* VIII, 4189) at Verecunde in Numidia. Marcus Coccius Firmus's inclusion of the Genius of Terra Britannica (*RIB* 2175) at Auchendavy implies not only the deity responsible for the welfare of the whole island but also a determination to placate any hostile force. The same view of a Genius may be applied in the York inscription to Britannia Sancta set up by a freedman, Publius Nikomedes (*RIB* 643; RCHM 1962, 120); probably the Greek hoped that he would prosper both in York and in Britain by placating the Genius of the whole island. The Genius of another land is seen in the dedicaton to Terra Batavorum set up at Old Carlisle by one of the Imperial slaves (*RIB* 902; Collingwood 1928, 112). Four inscriptions to the Genius Loci found at York relate to the Genius of that particular place (*RIB* 646, 647; Wright & Hassall 1973, 325, no. 5, Hassall & Tomlin 1977,430, no. 18). One linking the Genius with the Numini Augustorum and Jupiter Dolichenus, dated AD 221, records the gift of an altar and a shrine. Another specifically mentions the Genius Eboraci and couples the presiding Genius with the Numen Augusti. An inscription, found near Milecastle 59 on Hadrian's Wall, set up by a centurion of Cohors I Batavorum, couples Mars Cocidius and the Genius ... valium, which may be the ending of a local placename (*RIB* 2015). At Carrawburgh a prefect of the same cohort made a dedication to the Nymphs and the Genius Loci in a shrine where there was a tank fed by a spring. The Cohort was stationed at Carrawburgh during the third and fourth centuries (Taylor 1961, 163; Smith 1962, 80–1, pl. 8, fig. 1).

Table 1 Inscriptions Relating to Genii Loci

Provenance	Associated with other deities	Dedicator and status	Reference	Comments
1. BATH		Fortunus	*RIB* 139, Cunliffe 1969, 199, 4.10, pl. 67	
2. BINCHESTER	Matres Ollototae	Ala Vettonum	*RIB* 1032	
3. ? BROUGHAM	I.O.M.	Subrius Apollinaris, Princeps, Cohors I Vangionum	*RIB* 792	The dedicator would be a senior Decurion (decurio princeps) of a cohors equitata
4. CARLISLE			*RIB* 945; *Archaeologia*, 9, 1789, 220, figs. b,d,e	On the left side is a seated goddess holding a cornucopia in her left hand and a ?patera in her right; on the right side is the Genius holding a patera and a cornucopia
5. CARLISLE	?Matres		*Britannia* 12, 1981, 379, pl. 32A	Fragments with part of inscription ?Genio et Matribus
6. CARRAWBURGH	Nymphs	Hispanius Modestinus, Praefectus Cohors I Batavorum	*JRS* 51, 1961, 163; Smith 1962 80–1, pl. [illegible] fig. 1	This cohort was stationed here during 3rd and 4th centuries. Found in a shrine which includes a tank fed by a spring
7. CARRAWBURGH		The Texandri and the Suvevae, Members of a detachment of Cohors I Nerviorum	*RIB* 1538	

Provenance	Associated with other deities	Dedicator and status	Reference	Comments
8. CASTLESTEADS	I.O.M.	Gaius Verecundius Severus	*RIB* 1984	
9. CHESTER	For the welfare of our Lords the most invincible Emperors	Flavius Longus and Longinus his son. Tribunus militum. Legionis XX V V	*RIB* 450; Wright & Richmond 1955, 12-13, no. 5, pl. 3	On the right side is a Genius with a cornucopia in his left hand and a patera in his right hand. The Emperors could be Septimius Severus and Caracalla, or Elagabalus and Severus Alexander
10. CHESTERHOLM	Mogons or Moguntis	Lupulus	*Britannia* 4, 1973, 329, no. 10	
11. CHESTERHOLM	I.O.M. and Di Custodes	Cohors IV Gallorum and Ve.... Caecil....	*RIB* 1687	Found in ruins of ?Commandant's house, 3rd or 4th century
12. CIRENCESTER	'Genio Sancto'		*RIB* 102; Toynbee 1964, 163, pl. 41a	Genius standing in a niche and wearing a turreted crown. In the left hand he carries a cornucopia and in the right he holds a patera over a small altar
13. DAGLINGWORTH	Matres		*RIB* 130	
14. HOUSESTEADS	I.O.M. and Cocidius	Milites Legionis II Augustae, on garrison duty	*RIB* 1583; *Durham University J.* 36, 1943, 6	Found in the Mithraeum, south of the fort, but Richmond suggested that it was originally placed in or near the aedes
15. LINCOLN			*RIB* 246; *JRS* 14, 1924, 243; Whitwell 1969, 124	Found one mile N.E. of the Upper Colonia
16. MALTON		? a slave in a goldsmith's shop	*RIB* 712	Set in an ansate panel said to have been found in a plastered room
17. MARYPORT	Fortuna Redux, Roma Aeterna, Bonus Eatus	Gaius Cornelius Peregrinus, Tribunus Cohortis	*RIB* 812	
18. YORK			*RIB* 646; RCHM 1962, 116, no. 34	Dedicated Deo Genio Loci
19. YORK			*RIB* 647; RCHM 1962, 119, no. 51, pl. 37	Dedicated Genio Loci Feliciter
20. YORK		Marcus Quintus Crepereius	*Britannia* 4, 1973, 325, no. 5	Found incorporated into a 4th century cobbled surface
21. YORK	I.O.M. Dolichenus and Numini Augustorum	Lucius Placidus Viducius, Sevir, pottery merchant, place of origin, Rouen	*Britannia* 8, 1977, 430, no. 18	Dedicated to I.O.M. Dolichenus and Genius Loci and Numini Augustorum AD 221. Recessed panel recording gift of arch and shrine

Table 2 Inscriptions Relating to the Genii of a Specific Place

Provenance	Genius	Dedicator	Reference	Comment
1. AUCHENDAVY	Genius of the land of Britain	Marcus Cocceius Firmus, Centurion of Legion II Augusta	*RIB* 2175; Macdonald 1934, 429, pl. 54a	cf. *RIB* 2174, 2176, 2177
2. YORK	Numen Augusti and Genius of York		*RIB* 657; RCHM 1962, 116, no. 35	

According to Toutain (1907, 451), one of the earlier writers on the cult, dedications to the Genius Loci are found mainly along the military frontiers of the Empire and the deity is invoked principally by the military, that is, strangers to the area, who could be the ones most likely to be hurt by hostile influences, for they would disrupt the sanctity and peace of a localized influence. Nineteen of the 23 inscriptions relating to the Genius Loci or the Genius of a specific place are found on the frontiers and of the others, one was set up at Chester by a military tribune of the 20th Legion and another at Lincoln (*RIB* 450; Wright 1955, 12–13, no. 5, pl. 3; *RIB* 246). Eleven link the Genius with a specific deity, and one has a link with a deity which was unspecific. The Cohors III Galliorum, stationed at Chesterholm in the third and fourth centuries, dedicated an altar *IOM et Genio Diisque Custodibus* (*RIB* 1687) which might be compared with an inscription from Lyons dedicated *IOM diis deabusque omnibus et Genio Loci* (*CIL* XIII, 1745) and another from Upper Pannonia dedicated *IOM dis deabusque et Genio Loci* (*CIL* IV, 3903). Dedications made by civilians come from Carrawburgh (*RIB* 1538) where the Texandri and the Suevae may be local detachments on duty with Cohors II Nerviorum. An inscription at Malton dedicated *Feliciter sit Genio Loci* (*RIB* 712), said to be from a house, urges the slave to use his good fortune in the goldsmith's shop. One of the York inscriptions also adds the word *Felicitet*; this and two of the other dedications were made by civilians. Only three dedications were found far from frontier regions, at Bath (*RIB* 139), Cirencester (*RIB* 102; Toynbee 1964, 163, pl. xli) and Daglingworth (*RIB* 130; Toynbee 1959, 3); the last links the Genius with the Mother Goddess and probably has an equally Celtic concept behind it.

Three inscriptions bear representations of the Genius Loci and three show the form of the half-draped figure holding a patera over an altar and carrying a cornucopia. One from Carlisle (*RIB* 945) seems to be wearing a mural crown, in which case he represents the tutelary deity of Luguvalium. On the left hand side is depicted a seated goddess with patera and cornucopia who may be Fortuna or a personification of a local Celtic goddess. The dedication may have included another deity because the inscription is illegible after the words *Genius Lo(c)i*. A further dedication found at Carlisle (Hassall & Tomlin, 1981, 379, pl. xxxiiA) came from the base of a statue. Only two feet and the base of an altar remain but the dedication can be restored as *Genio et Matribus*. The dedication from Cirencester also depicts a Genius in traditional pose and wearing a badly-carved mural crown. If this figure represents the tutelary deity of Corinium then both this and the Carlisle figures are evidently assuming the functions of a Tyche.

The dedication at Daglingworth, probably erected by a civilian to the Matres and the Genius Loci, an altar from Chichester (Table 3) dedicated *Genio Sacrum*, set up by Lucullus, son of Amminius (or more probably Amminus; *RIB* 90; Henig & Nash 1982, 245) and a similar dedication by Attius said to be from Siddington, Glos (*RIB* 101)—but possibly from Cirencester—presumably indicate a similar role for the deity, which might have been as much Celtic as Roman. As Lucullus had a father with a Celtic name it would seem, however, that the Roman form of dedication had penetrated into Britain very soon after the conquest.

Dedications to the Genius of an individual do not seem to be present in Britain. An altar from Gloucester (*RIB* 119) seems to read *Genio Chogunci[/Orivendus* but whether this is an individual, a group or a place cannot be determined. An individual bearing so Celtic a name might have had no notion of the Roman concept of Genius but could have linked the name to the numerous Celtic godlings akin to the spirit of place. Another doubtful case is a dedication from Old Carlisle (*RIB* 891) where Aurelius Martialis and Aurelius Eburacio inscribe an altar *Genio*. This term cannot refer to their

Table 3 Inscriptions Relating to Genii

	Provenance	Dedicator's Name and Status	Reference	Comment
1.	CAERWENT		*Britannia* 3, 1972, 313–4, no. 9	
2.	CHICHESTER	Lucullus, son of Ammin(i)us	*RIB* 90, Henig & Nash 1982	Lucullus had a father with a Belgic name, therefore this altar might be dated to the 1st century
3.	EBCHESTER	Praefectus	*RIB* 1099	
4.	GLOUCESTER	Chogunc(um or Orivendus	*RIB* 119; Clifford 1938, 303, pl. 9, 15	The form of the inscription *Deo Genio Chogunc(um* seems to indicate that a personal Genius is intended
5.	OLD CARLISLE	Aurelius Martialis and Aurelius ? Eburacio	*RIB* 891; Collingwood 1928, 113, no. 5	
6.	SIDDINGTON (? from Cirencester)	Attius	*RIB* 101	

individual Genii and both this and the Gloucester altar probably invoke a local beneficient deity.

Three inscriptions found respectively at High Rochester (*RIB* 1268), Overborough, Kirkby Lonsdale (*RIB* 611) and York (Wilson 1970, 309, no. 12) indicate that the concept of a Genius of a guild was known in Britain (Table 4). Two have a link between the Genius and the Numen Augusti. The evidence for the presence of collegia in Britain comes entirely from urban and military sites as is only to be expected: the principal object of a guild was to provide a social club but one with a serious purpose, particularly as far as the army was concerned, that of a burial club (Waltzing 1895, 196; Duff 1938, 102). Membership of such an organization ensured a burial carried out with the correct rites and, what was more important, the performance of the necessary ceremonies on the anniversary of a death. For the soldier who had no family to carry out these ceremonies, membership was particularly attractive. Under the Republic the collegia were suspected of engaging in political activity and many had been suppressed. A *Lex Julia* of Augustus decreed that every guild (apart from the ones formed purely as burial clubs) must be sanctioned by the Senate or the emperor (Suetonius, *Aug.* 32; *ILS* 4966). Licences were freely given, but the army was discouraged from forming collegia during the first two centuries of the Empire. Under the Severi, however, the climate of opinion changed and encouragement to found collegia, within both legions and auxilia, was forthcoming though only for officers and specialist groups. Indeed the latter seem to have promoted them, rather cautiously, from at least the reign of Hadrian, although official recognition only came with Septimius Severus (Waltzing 1895, 309; Domaszewski 1885, 78; Cagnat 1913, 390).

Table 4 Inscriptions Relating to Genii of an Object or Institution (grouped by subject matter)

Provenance	Deities	Dedicator	Reference	Comment
1. OVERBOROUGH Kirby Lonsdale	Numen Augusti and Genius of Guild of Apollo	Bellinus	*RIB* 611, 1946, 138, fig 3	cf. *RIB* 2103 at Birrens
2. HIGH ROCHESTER	Minerva and Genius of the Guild	Caecilius Optatus, Tribune	*RIB* 1268; Northumberland County History Committee 1893–1940, vol. 15, 149, no. 21	Optatus was tribune of Coh. I Vardullorum under C. Julius Marcus, AD 213
3. YORK	Genius of Guild	Beneficarius of Gordianus	*Britannia* 1970, p. 307, no. 12	Part of arcuate building slab, set up 'ob promotionem'
4. CAERLEON	Numina Augustorum and Genius of Legion II Augusta	Primus Pilus under charge of Ursus, actarius of same legion	*RIB* 327	Given 'in honour of the eagle' and dedicated on 23 September in consulship of Peregrinus and Aemilianus (AD 244). 23 September was the birthday of Augustus; the eagle represents both the Imperial might and the spirit of the legion. *RIB* restores aquilae to the text
5. CHESTER	Genius of Legion XX	Titus Vet ...	*RIB* 449; Wright & Richmond 1955, 1, no 1, pl. 1	The erasure after the name of the legion might be the name of the Emperor Decius (AD 249–11). Fragments of moulded door jamb which might have been part of the aedes
6. HOUSESTEADS	Cocidius and Genius of the Garrison	Valerius, miles, Legio VI V.P.P.	*RIB* 1577, *JRS* 15, 1925, 249	On the front base of the altar are 2 dolphins facing each other which might refer to the journey of the Legion across Oceanus
7. BENWELL	Matres Campestres and Genius of First Cavalry Regiment of Asturian Spaniards Gordiana	Terentius Agrippa, Praefectus	*RIB* 1334; Northumberland County History Committee 1893–1940, vol. 13, 554, no. 15	The dedicator restored the temple from ground level. Dated to 3rd century possibly after AD 238

Provenance	Deities	Dedicator	Reference	Comment
8. CARLISLE	Genius of the century	Century of Basilius Crescens	*RIB* 944, pl. 14, Toynbee 1962, 140, no. 33, pl. 30	Above the inscription is set a figure of a Genius wearing a mural crown and holding a cornucopia. The cornucopia appears to have a pinecone placed on the top.
9. CHESTER	Genius of the century		*RIB* 446; Wright & Richmond 1955, 2, no. 3, pl. 2	
10. CHESTER	Genius of the century of Aurelius Verinus	Julius Quintilianus	*RIB* 447; Wright & Richmond 1955, 2, no. 4, pl. 1	
11. CHESTER	Holy (Sancto) Genius of his century	Aelius Claudianus, Optio	*RIB* 448, Wright & Richmond 1955, 1, no. 2, pl. 1	
12. LANCHESTER	Numen Augusti and Genius of Cohors I Fida Vardullorum	Flavius Titianus, Tribunus	*RIB* 1083	Set up under Antistius Adventus who governed Britain, AD 175-8
13. CHESTER	Genius of standard bearers of Legion XX V.V.	Titus Flavius Valerianus	*RIB* 451, Wright & Richmond 1955, 2, no 5a, pl 2	Semi-circular base rounded as if to fit into a niche. on the top a roughened surface and an iron dowel to hold a statuette of the genius. The lettering suggests a 2nd century date
14. HIGH ROCHESTER	Genius and standards of Cohors I Fida Vardullorum	Titus Licinius Valerianus, Tribunus	*RIB* 126; Northumberland County History Committee 1893–1940, vol. 15, 140, no. 17	This probably stood in the sacellum; 3rd century date
15. HIGH ROCHESTER	Genius of Our Lord and standards of Cohors I Vardullorum and of unit of Bremenium Scouts	Egnatius Lucilianus pro praetore, set up under charge of Cassius Sabinianus, Tribunus	*RIB* 1262, Northumberland County History Committee 1893–1940, vol. 15, 146, no. 16	Found in strong room of aedes. The top was cut down as if to be used as a stair tread. Obviously the stones were not venerated at a later date. Egnatius Lucilianus was governor of Britannia Inferior *c.* AD 238–41
16. CHESTERHOLM	Genius of Commandant's house	Pituanius Secundus, Praefectus, Cohortis IV Gallorum	*RIB* 1685	Found in ruins of ?Commandant's House, 3rd or 4th century
17. CHESTERHOLM	I.O.M. Di Ceteres Immortales and Genius of Commandant's House	Quintus Petronius Urbicus, Son of Quintus Praefectus Cohortis IV Gallorum	*RIB* 1686; Birley 1931, 191	3rd or 4th century. Birley suggests this should be dated AD 213–35. On the left side a stork or crane with a chick, on the right side a stork or crane alone. cf. Kewley 1973, 125–6. The crane was sacred to the Gauls, Toutain 1907–20, Vol. 3, 280
18. LANCHESTER	Genius of Commandant's House	Claudius Epaphroditus Claudianus, Tribunus Cohortis I Lingonum	*RIB* 1075	
19. CAERLEON	I.O.M. and Genius of the Emperors	Titus Eauvius ...	*Britannia* 1, 1970, 305; Boon 1972, 42	Commemorates restoration of the aedes and refers ? to joint reign of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, AD 176–80
20. OLD PENRITH	I.O.M. and Genius of our Lord Emperors the Philippi Augusti	Cohors II Gallorum	*RIB* 915	Dated to AD 244–9

A collegium placed itself under the protection of a deity and its meeting hall usually contained a cult statue. An institution, as already stated, could honour an individual Genius, which performed the same function and was regarded in the same light as the Genius associated with the individual. The same functions could also be extended to the Lares (Waltzing 1885, 208, 210) but no case of the Lares of an institution receiving such veneration is recorded in Britain. The inscription from York indicates that the Beneficarii had formed themselves into a guild. As soldiers normally detached from their particular legions and attached to the praetorian governor, possibly on a more casual basis than most, a meeting place would be essential and protection of the collegium by a Genius deemed imperative. The appeal would be directly to the Genius Collegii and not to any deity, but this particular dedication was made perhaps on the occasion of the promotion of either an individual or a group. The date suggested for the inscription, AD 216, would accord with Severan encouragement. A dedication from High Rochester dated to AD 213, was made to Minerva and the Genius of the Guild by L. Caecilius Optatus, a tribune of Cohors I Vardullorum. This would be another specialist group composed of those connected with the clerical administration of the fort. Two other altars found in the vicinity and dedicated to Minerva were probably made by members of the same collegium. The inscription from Overborough dedicated to the Numen Augusti and the Genius of the Guild of Apollo raises two interesting points. The first relates to the dedicator, Bellinus, who Birley suggests was not a Roman citizen and therefore the dedication is earlier than the *Constitutio Antoniniana* (Birley 1946, 138). In this case the guild might have been composed of *medici* (doctors), who venerated Apollo in his capacity as god of healing, and were somewhat apart from the normal soldier and not subject to any prohibition. Certainly they formed a particular group and another altar dedicated to Aesculapius and Hygiaea (*RIB* 809), now in Tunstall church but probably from the fort, seems to confirm their presence here. The second point relates to the dedication, not merely to the Genius of the Guild but to the Genius of the guild of Apollo. No conflict of interest is involved, a Genius might be associated with an individual or an institution, and if the members of the guild accepted Apollo as patron deity then the functions of the Genius were still appropriate to such a body.

The concept of a Genius of institutions was extended to military units for each of these had a *dies natalis* which generated a protective force. Such Genii are well attested in Britain (Table 4). The Genius of the century is invoked three times at Chester (*RIB* 446–448). At Carlisle the century of Bassilius Crescens dedicated a sandstone statuette (Fig. 1) described by Professor Toynbee as a 'British carver's product, reflecting a brave, if somewhat ludicrous attempt to perpetuate the

Fig. 1 Sandstone statuette depicting Genius from Annetwell Street, Carlisle. Ph. Tullie House Museum, Carlisle

Graeco-Roman type' (*RIB* 944, Toynbee 1962, 140, no. 33, pl 30; 1964, 40). However, as this figure, like the one previously mentioned, is also wearing a mural crown it seems to reinforce the possibility that the concept of the Genius at Carlisle was closely linked to that of a city Tyche. The cornucopia appears to be crowned not with fruits but with a pinecone, a symbol of mourning and ultimately of death. This and the crown are indicative of ideas not normally associated with a mere Genius Centuriae.

The Genius Cohortis I Fidae Vardullorum was invoked at Lanchester (*RIB* 1083) during the governorship of Quintus Antistius Adventus, *c.* AD 175–8, by the tribune, Flavius Titianus (who also dedicated an altar to Aesculapius). Here, the Genius was coupled with the Numen Augusti. The Numina Augustorum were also linked with the Genius of Legio II Augusta on a stone dedicated by the Senior Centurion at Caerleon (*RIB* 327) on September 23rd, Augustus' birthday, and also that of the legion (cf. *RIB* 328). The inscription can be dated to AD 244 and was probably a door jamb from the headquarters building. The Genius of Legio XX VV was commemorated on a door jamb from Chester (*RIB* 449) which may be dated to AD 249–51. The contemporaneity of the Caerleon and Chester inscriptions poses the question as to whether Legio VI was similarly encouraged to dedicate

to its Genius as an aspect of official policy in Britain during the mid third century. If this was the case then the Ala I Hispanorum Asturum at Benwell (*RIB* 1334), who raised an altar to the Matres Campestres and the Genius of the Ala, clearly regarded the protection of both Celtic and Roman deities as essential.

The Genius of the Standard Bearers of Legio XX VV was venerated at Chester (*RIB* 451) in an inscription cut on a semi-circular base of white marble with an iron dowel on top, probably to support a statuette of the Genius. At High Rochester (*RIB* 1263) the Genius was linked with the Standards of Cohors I Fida Vardullorum, which seem to have been regarded as divine in their own right (*Genio et signis Cohortis*), on an altar dedicated by the tribune, Titus Licinius Valerianus. Another dedication (*RIB* 1262) showing the variation in the concepts of religious thoughts on one theme, comes from the same fort in a combined dedicatuon of this cohort and a unit of Scouts of Bremenium to the *Genius Domini Nostri et Signorum Cohortis I Vardullorum et Numeri exploratorum*; it was set up by Egnatius Lucilianus, Legatus Augusti Pro Praetore and is probably datable to AD 241.

The Genius of the Commandant's House was recorded at Lanchester (*RIB* 1075) on an inscription set up by a tribune of Cohors I Lingonum and on two inscriptions from Chesterholm (*RIB* 1685, 1686) one by the prefect of Cohors IIII Gallorum and the other dedicated by another prefect who added the deities I.O.M. and the Di Immortales. The second of these Chesterholm stones dated to AD 213-5 and both were found in the ruins of the praetorium. Their presence may imply that the praetorium was regarded as an institution. Similarly one of the inscriptions at Chester which mentions the Genio C(enturiae) might refer to the Genius of the barrack block (*RIB* 446).

The above dedications were obviously made as part of the religious practice of the military and in this context may be included two further inscriptions. One from Chester (*RIB* 450) inscribed *pro sal(ute) Domin(oru)m N(ostrorum) Invict(i)ssimorum Aug(ustorum) Genio Loci* and set up by Flavius Longus, military tribune of Legio XX, and his son Longinus, had a carving of the Genius on the right side and may date either to the the reigns of Severus and Caracalla or Diocletian and Maximian. The other, found at Caerleon (Wilson 1970, 305) links I.O.M. with the *Genius Imperatorum Antonini et Commodi*. This is dated to AD 176–80 and, as it records the restoration of the aedes, probably came from the basilica.

Figurative Portrayals

Sculptures of Genii from Roman Britain, of varying quality, adopt the type of the half-draped figure of the Genius Populi Romani with cornucopia and patera. The finest example is that found in London, almost certainly from the Walbrook Mithraeum (Wheeler 1930, 45, pl 16a). In her discussion of this piece and another, now in Chedworth Manor, Professor Toynbee (1978, 327-30) draws attention to the serpent. In the case of the London sculpture the serpent rises behind the altar to reach up to the patera; on the Chedworth Manor relief it is entwined round the altar. It, incidentally, appears again on a similar relief now cemented into the outside wall of the church at Tockenham (Taylor & Collingwood 1926, 232, pl. 30). The serpent is a reference to the notion of the Genius as a beneficient deity of 'life and fertility' while the prow of the boat on the left side of the London statue may indicate the prosperity inherent in the trade of the port. Such prosperity is invoked for another town, Lincoln (Richmond 1946, 103, pl. 9) where figures seemingly representing the Genius and Fortuna (or Abundantia) with a cornucopia were set in niches within a four-sided base. Another well-carved statuette is that found recently under Southwark Cathedral with a group of statuary either used as filling or deliberately thrown into a Roman well (see Merrifield, this volume; also Hammerson 1978, 210; Goodburn 1978, 453, pl. xxixa). The group was deposited sometime between AD 270 and the fourth century but the style of the Genius is of the early third century. Both cornucopia and drapery are presented as distinctly ropelike - similar treatment is given to the rolled fold of the drapery on a figure recently discovered at Burgh-by-Sands, and appears elsewhere in British sculpture, on hair for example. It is very much a native Celtic feature, as Phillips (1979) noted.

Other figures, show the work of local or military sculptors. For example, there is the figure of a Genius with a veil drawn up over its head from Lechlade (Taylor 1948, 76, pl. 7a), and at Caerleon (Nash Williams & Nash Williams 1935, 38, no. 82, pl. 15) there is a fragment of the torso of a half-draped figure holding a palm branch upright in its left hand, an unusual feature, which may have been intended to suggest a fertility aspect. The latter was found in one of the rooms in the principia which had a mosaic floor bearing the design of a Cretan labyrinth. Boon (1972, 74) has suggested that this might indicate the schola of some particular grade of the headquarters staff, noting that such a room at Lambaesis in North Africa (Cagnat 1913, 465, Room E) was the schola of the *custodes armorum*. In this case the Genius was that of the guild. The so-called praetorium, at Lambaesis, had at its entrance a statue of Victory with a palm and a statue of a Genius with a cornucopia and an unknown object. The Caerleon Genius also may have been linked with Victory, since it had both the cornucopia and the palm. The Genius of the Century from Carlisle, previously mentioned, was probably carved by a Celtic sculptor as particularly witnessed by its facial features. Richmond (1943, 160-1, pl. iv.5; Phillips 1977, 3, no. 4) identified a fragment broken from a decorative frieze at Corbridge, wearing a turretted crown and carrying a cornucopia, as the presiding Genius of a military unit, perhaps the

Genius Cohortae or Vexillationis. This well-carved piece probably came from a prominent building. A crudely carved figure at Corbridge carrying a large patera and a somewhat crooked cornucopia can also be identified as a Genius (Phillips 1977, 3, no. 5). It may have been carved by an apprentice, whereas the other Corbridge sculpture was carved by a sculptor well-versed in classical form. A third Genius at Corbridge wearing a mural crown is to be found on one side of an altar dedicated to Jupiter Dolichenus, Caelestis Brigantia and Salus (*RIB* 1131). In this capacity he might represent the Genius of the land of the Brigantes. A torso of unknown provenance in the Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle upon Tyne, draped over the right shoulder, with the material gathered round the waist in a thick roll, may also be a Genius. Here the left hand is pushed forward as if it once held a cornucopia (Phillips 1977, 127, no. 348).

Other reliefs portraying a Genius use the same iconography. Examples are found on altars at Chester (Wright and Richmond 1955, no. 5, pl. 3), Cirencester (Fig. 2; Clifford 1938, 303, fig. 17; *RIB* 102) inscribed *G(enio) s(acrum) huius loc(i)*, King's Stanley (Clifford 1938, pl. i, fig. 1, described as Fortuna) and from the Thames at Bablock Hythe (Fig. 3; *JRS* 1945, 84, pl. 11, fig. 1, described as a goddess). The Cirencester figure wears a crudely formed diadem which probably derived from the modius and is thus relatively truer to the Roman concept. Toynbee (1976) also suggests that two other half-draped figures carved in relief may be Genii. A figure placed beneath a gable shrine on a carving from Custom Scrubs was made by the same sculptor who did a carving representing Deus Romulus (Baddeley 1906, 177-8; Toynbee 1962, 152, no. 66, pl. 66). Just as he clothes that figure in unconventional Roman military dress so he dresses the Genius in the

Fig. 2 Limestone altar with relief of Genius Loci found in Sheep Street, Cirencester. Ph: Corinium Museum.

Fig. 3 Limestone altar with relief of Genius found at Bablock Hythe, Oxfordshire. Ph: Ashmolean Museum.

Celtic cucullus. The merging of Celtic and classical concepts is even more pronounced as the stone is dedicated to Mars Olludius, a Celtic name meaning, 'Great Tree' (Ross 1967, 37). The intention of the sculptor was to emphasize the fertility aspect of the cult, and the inclusion of the early agricultural concept of Mars reveals some sophisticated knowledge of the meaning of Roman religious belief. In this area there may perhaps be ideas of fertility and prosperity underlying the cults, which though Romanized by name, as in the case of the Genius and of the Matres, are still basically Celtic in origin. It is also possible that some of the altars, found as they are in rural areas, might be an indication of the presence of a cult of the Lares Compitales whose festival fell in early January (Scullard 1981, 58–60; Henig 1982, 220).

A relief found at Stonesfield (Speake 1982, 377–9, pl. 61) depicts a male figure to the right and a female figure to the left within a gable-topped shrine. These have been identified as Bonus Eventus and Fortuna but the male figure has the attributes of a Genius. Between the two figures, carved directly under the gable, is a head. Unfortunately the features are lost although there is a suggestion of a tunic below the neck. The head rests on a ledge or possibly on the top of a lararium. It could represent the portrait bust of an ancestor or a figural indication of a third deity, the household Lar. It is suggested that the relief came from the large villa discovered in this area in 1712; it would certainly fit well into such a context.

More orthodox representations are found at Carrawbugh (Budge 1907, 322, no. 111, fig. 41), where the figure is portrayed in correctly classical form, at Lanchester (Bruce 1875, 369, no. 710) and at Carlisle (*Archaeol J.* 17, 1860, 159). Each of the last two figures carries double cornucopiae and holds a patera over the flames on an altar. Double cornucopiae are rare although they are present on bronze figurines found at Lakenhurst and Brandon. A fragment of another relief at Carlisle (Hassall & Tomlin 1981, 379–80, no. 29) has an inscription placed under it which may indicate a dedication to a Genius. Phillips suggests that a relief of unknown provenance in the Museum of Antiquities at Newcastle upon Tyne may show a Genius (Phillips 1977, 123, no. 336).

The Roman fort at Netherby has produced three reliefs representing Genii (Haverfield 1899, 36–7, nos. 88–9, figs 16–17). One of these wears a mural crown, another holds a patera over an altar and places a boar beside the base of a tree. The third, more interestingly, holds a cornucopia cradled in the crook of his left arm but the object held over the altar is not a patera but an eight-spoked wheel. This associates the Genius with the Celtic cult symbol of the wheel and by extension 'it is possible to identify a Celtic celestial divinity whose specifically solar power is indicated by the presence of a spoked wheel representing the central sphere, nimbus and rays of the sun' (Green 1983 and this volume). This appears to be a unique occurrence in this particular context of the display of Celtic and classical syncretism.

Two possible figures of Genii have been found at Housesteads (Bruce 1857, 237, no. 40; Birley & Charlton 1932, 234, pl. xxxiv). The top of a relief shows the upper part of a figure with drapery falling from the left shoulder. Another, on a small stone block found in Vicus II, exhibits a figure with drapery hanging from his shoulder and wearing high boots. An object is resting crooked in the right arm and on the top of the head there may be a mural crown (or a modius). It has been suggested that the figure portrays Mercury or Jupiter but a more likely identification is a Genius. A small relief from Maryport shows a draped figure holding a cornucopia and a patera (Bailey 1915, 151, no. 51). If this is a Genius it would seem that there was a particular cult located in the Maryport—Burgh-by-Sands Carlisle area. This might have come about because of the particular location of the area which had added danger from potential attacks from the sea. There might have been Celtic deities already well established who could be syncretized with the Genius Loci. The fact that two of the representations from Carlisle wear mural crowns and are thus identified with Tyche may have a bearing on this. The Greek Tyche had become absorbed into Roman Fortuna, thus assuming a more universal aspect as the personification of inexorable fate. In the Roman world Fortuna was more a goddess of chance, a goddess of good or bad luck, than a goddess of good fortune. It would have been easy for Genii to become associated with this type of concept, especially as they could be associated with places. In the promotion of Romanization within the provinces in the late first and early second centuries the opportunity might have been taken to encourage the association of Genius with Tyche. Two last fragments come from the South-West. Professor Toynbee has identified the lower fragment of a lifesize sculpture, found in the debris of the Llantwit Major villa, as part of a figure of a Genius (Nash Williams 1953, 134–5, pl. 12, fig. 2; Toynbee 1964, 163, n2). Here the presence of this image with another, of Fortuna, indicate that the villa's owner was concerned to invoke Roman deities of prosperity and fortune. Two reliefs, now in the Royal Ontario Museum, from Dorn (Taylor 1962, 194–5, pl. xix; Toynbee 1976, 95–6) show Genii draped around the waist, wearing boots and holding cornucopiae in their right hands and paterae in the left.

Genii are depicted on six gemstones found in Britain (Henig 1978, 198–9, nos. 103–8; 301, no. App 116). On a plasma intaglio from Silchester (no. 103) the Genius wears a modius on his head, thus being conflated with the god Serapis, protector of the Severan dynasty. This is further emphasized by the presence of a military trumpet and a vexillum-head in the field (Fig. 4). Another intaglio from Silchester (no. 105; Fig. 5) and a gem from Vindolanda (no. 104; Fig. 6) are of the same type but lack these symbols. Genii are depicted nude on

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Impressions of intaglios from Silchester (Figs 4 & 5), Vindolanda (Fig. 6) and South Shields (Fig. 7). The first shows the Genius Populi Romani wearing a modius, the others Genii. Materials plasma, sardonyx, Sard and red jasper. Photos: Ashmolean Museum.

gems from South Shields (no. 106; Fig. 7), Caerwent (no. 107) and London (no. 108), in the last two instances appearing in relaxed stance with one leg flexed.

All the representations mentioned are those which took their origin from the Genius Populi Romani. This type is represented in two of the small bronze figurines definitely of British provenance (Table 5), one from Carrawburgh (Smith 1962, 81) and one from Richborough (Collingwood & Taylor 1931, 24, pl. xxviii). Another in the Ashmolean Museum (Kunkel 1974, Tafel 93.3) may be from Britain. The example from Carrawburgh is particularly interesting not only because when the figure was cleaned traces of silvering were found but also because of the fact that it was found in a nymphaeum. Nymphs as well as Genii were associated with natural phenomena and this is expressed in the inscription *Nymphis et Genio Loci* on the altar found in the shrine. The bronze figure could have been placed on the low bench which would receive votive objects. A bronze key found on the site is not out of place, since the key was associated with the goddess Epona as the key to the Otherworld, whose entrance could be approached through water. It could equally relate to the chthonic nature of the Lares although this aspect was specifically associated with the Lares Compitales (Benoit 1950, 56). It was also a votive object given by women approaching childbirth, who would seek help from the nymphs since their function in Britain was akin to that of the Mother Goddess. The gift of a key might also draw attention to a possible dual nature of the Genius, who might not be entirely associated with the masculine principle. Both at Carrawburgh and Richborough the figures wear drapery in the same style but the latter, with pedestal intact, is more classical in appearance. There are two other figures in British collections of similar nature. One, now in the Ashmolean Museum (No. 1960.1308) is certainly a Genius but is unprovenanced and probably not from Britain. The other, in the Corinium Museum, Cirencester (No. B249) has the stance of a Genius, the drapery and the patera but has lost the object balanced on the left hand which could be a cornucopia (Kunkel 1974, Tafel 93.3).

The other relevant bronze figures are those representing the Genius Paterfamilias and the Lares. These have been discussed in a recent article (Boon 1983) in relation to their date and to their context

Table 5 Bronze Figurines of Genius Publicus Populi Romani

Description of Type

The weight of the body rests on the right foot, the left leg is flexed and the foot placed to the rear with the toes touching the ground. The figure wears a cloak (himation) which is thrown over the left shoulder, falls down the back, is brought round the front of the body and descends over the left forearm. The right arm is held diagonally downwards; the hand holds a patera. The left arm is held against the side of the body, the hand supports a cornucopia which rests against the upper arm and is raised higher than the shoulder

	Provenance	Location	Number	Height	Reference	Comment
1.	CARRAWBURGH	Museum of Antiquities, Newcastle-upon-Tyne	1960 35.2	7.1 cm	Smith 1962, 81	? 3rd century AD, when the figure was cleaned there were traces of silvering
2.	?OXFORD REGION	Ashmolean Museum			Kunkel 1974, Tafel 93.3	
3.	RICHBOROUGH	Richborough Museum		8.2 cm, 10.5 cm with base	Toynbee 1964, 91, Bushe-Fox 1949, 133-5, no. 158, pl. 41; *JRS* 21, 1931, 247, pl. 28	

within lararia, a subject not treated in detail here, though a further comment on the Lares may be of interest. Nine figures representing the Genius Paterfamilias/Genius Augusti have been found in Roman Britain (Table 6). The Genius is shown in the conventional position taken by the head of the household when he was sacrificing to the Gods with the toga praetexta drawn over the head either to ward off harmful elements or to prevent him from hearing sounds of ill omen. These came from Barham (Toynbee 1962, 149, no. 51, pl. 54), Bruton (Taylor & Wilson 1961, 187, pl. 20; Green 1976, 185), Caerleon (Boon 1983, 47, n.1.), Cricklade (Fig. 8; Toynbee 1964, 68, n 1), London(?) (Pitts 1979, 69, no. 92; in the Leicester Museum but reported to be from London), Richborough (Bushe-Fox 1928, 50–1, no. 65, pl. 23), Silchester (Boon 1957, 124–5, pl. 17), Southbroom near Devizes (Boon 1973, 268) and 'North Britain' (Seaby's Coin and Medal Bulletin Dec. 1980, pl. 40). All of these, save the last, which is not clearly provenanced, are from the Romanized part of the province.

The Bruton and Southbroom examples were found in connection with other figurines and that from Caerleon has been associated with a private shrine in a barracks where it may have been regarded as a Genius Centuriae. The concept behind these figures is purely Roman and Boon suggests that the togate figures may have as strong a link with the Imperial cult (a connection also implied by the several inscriptions to the Numen Augusti and the Genius Loci) as with that of the numen of the individual.

The togate Genius could have as attendants the Lares Compitales/Lares Ludentes, again completely Roman in character, as previously stated (Tables 7 & 9). None of these were found in connection with a togate Genius and only one of them, from Felmingham Hall (British Museum 1955, 60(c), no 2, pl. 24) was found in association with other sacred objects of a votive nature

Table 6 Bronze Figurines of Genius Paterfamilias

Description of Type

The weight of the body is on the left leg, the right leg is placed slightly behind. The toga is drawn over the head in the characteristic manner of the Roman citizen while sacrificing. It hangs down on the left side and the weight is taken on the extended forearm. On the right side it drops down the body at the back, is brought under the right arm and is gathered into a fold at the waist. The style of the toga is drawn from official statues of the Julio-Claudian period (Ryberg 1953, 110–111). The figure stands with arm stretching forward; he holds a patera in his right hand and in his left an incense box (*acerra*) or a scroll. Pryce (in Bushe-Fox 1928, 50–1) argued that the object was an augur's or Lictor's staff but Comstock and Vermeule (1971, 174A) suggests that 'the *rotulus* in the left hand is an attribute common to marble statues when this part is preserved rather than restored in Renaissance or later times'.

	Provenance	Location	Number	Height	Reference	Comment
1.	BARHAM	Royal Museum, Canterbury	2097	8.5 cm	VCH Kent 3, 145; Toynbee 1962, 149, no 51, pl. 54; Toynbee 1964, 118	The position of the hands is unusual
2.	BRUTON	Bristol Museum	49/1967.4264	7.2 cm	*JRS* 51, 1961, 187, pl. 20; Toynbee 1962, 149, no. 53, pl. 53; Toynbee 1964, 118, Green 1976, 185	Good casting might indicate a central Italian workshop
3.	CAERLEON				Boon 1983, 47	In men's quarter of barrack block 1980
4.	CRICKLADE	British Museum	1842.3–14.4	11 cm	Reinach 3, 177, 6; Toynbee 1964, 86, n.1	
5.	? LONDON	Leicester Museum		3.5 cm (half length)	Pitts 1979, 69, no. 92	Said to be from London
6.	RICHBOROUGH	Richborough Museum		10.6 cm	Toynbee 1964, 86, n.1; Bushe-Fox 1928, 50–1, no. 65, pl. 23	The drapery is strictly formalized
7.	SILCHESTER	Reading Museum	03646	11 cm	Boon 1957, 124–5, pl. 17; 1974, 162, pl. 34; Toynbee 1964,86; Pitts 1979, 68, no. 92; Green 1976, 195	
8.	SOUTHBROOM	Lost			Boon 1973, 268, Tafel 58–9	
9.	NORTH BRITAIN				*Seaby's Coin Medal Bull.* Dec. 1981, A393, pl. 40	

with chthonic significance. Other examples come from Cirencester (Toynbee 1964, 85), Baston Ford (Green 1976, 176), near Bath (*Proc. Archaeol. Inst. Bristol* 1851, lxx), Colchester (Pitts 1979, 87, pl. 17), near Ely (Pitts 1979, 88, pl. 17), London (Green 1976, 223, fig. 11c) and Silchester (Boon 1957, 125, now lost). The lack of context and the somewhat poor execution of the one found near Ely does not belie the classical nature of the group as a whole. The Lares were very much associated with servants and slaves. Although no evidence yet exists in Britain for Collegia Compitalicia, which were formed to tend the shrines at crossroads and which held their own festivals, yet the fact that four of the figurines were found in towns might hint at such organisations: certainly the cult of the Lares Compitales would be present in the more rural areas (Henig 1982, 220).

The last group of figurines represents the Lar Familiaris, the Lar in a position of repose, whose type differs from those of both the Genius Populi Romani and the Lares Compitalia (Tables 8 & 9). While it clearly developed from the former, it incorporated the dress of the latter and so was depicted wearing a short chiton usually gathered into an overfold at the waist and possibly a mantle falling down the back and front and having an end falling between the legs. A patera is held in the right hand and a cornucopia in the left; occasionally this is double, indicating an intensification of the powers of fertility. Examples have been found with a single cornucopia at Bewcastle (Richmond 1928, pl. facing 219), Hadleigh (Pollitt 1935, 51; VCH Essex 3, 135), Stamford (City Museum, Lincoln, no. 93, 73) and Papcastle (Charlesworth 1965, 114, fig. 49, identified as Ceres), and with double cornucopiae at Brandon (Fig. 9; Green 1976, 213, pl. 11b; Pitts 1979, 68, no. 89, pl. 18) and Lakenheath (Green 1976, 213). The latter two, similar in appearance, might be from the same workshop. Figures found at Harlow (VCH Essex 3, 143) and Wallingford (VCH Berkshire 1, pl. opp.

Table 7 Bronze Figurines of Lares Compitales

Description of Type

The Lar Compitalis was depicted as a youth advancing on tiptoe in a dancing attitude with one foot placed forward. One arm was raised above the head and the hand held a rhyton; the other extended forward and held a patera. A pair of Lares Compitales would complement each other in the position of the arms. The head may have a wreath placed on it with fillets dropping onto the shoulders. The Lar wears a short chiton, splaying out on each side. The figure may have two grooves running down in front and over each shoulder, which were usually inlaid with silver and represented the *clavus angustus*. Clavi are the insignia of the Equestrian class and Thomas (1963, 21) explains the *Lares Augusti clavi* as the Lar of this group. Over one shoulder and covering the arms there is a mantle which is twisted up and knotted round the waist, one end falling down and splayed out below the knees (*cincrus gabbous*). On the feet are high boots which often have their tops split or turned over.

Provenance	Location	Number	Height	Reference	Comment
1. BASTON FORD	City Museum, Worcester			Green 1976, 176	
2. CIRENCESTER	Corinium Museum, Cirencester	B.594	6.7 cm	Toynbee 1964, 85	The rhyton touches the head, cf. Boube-Piccot 1969, 220
3. COLCHESTER	Colchester and Essex Museum		7 cm	Green 1976, 216; Pitts 1979, 82, pl. 17	Cf. Hockmann 1972, 75; Menzel 1969, 8
4. NEAR ELY	Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Cambridge	22.695	5.8 cm	Toynbee 1964, 85, n.8 iii; Pitts 1976, 88, pl. 17	A very crude face with chin sunk into chest giving a first impression of being bearded
5. FELMINGHAM HALL	British Museum	1923.6–10.4	9.6 cm	Toynbee 1964, 85; Green 1976, 208; Pitts 1979, 68; British Museum 1955, 60c, no. 2 iv, pl. 24	
6. LONDON (Swan Lane)	British Museum	55.5-2.14	9.2 cm	Toynbee 1964, 85, RCHM London 3, 1928, pl. 66; Green 1976, 223, pl. 11c; Pitts 1979, 67, no. 83	
7. SILCHESTER	Lost in fire		10.2 cm	Boon 1957, 125, *Archaeologia* 60, 1896, 239 and fig. ; *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Lond.* 16 (2) 1895–7, 75, fig. ; Pitts 1979, 84	Eyes hollowed for silver, wreath on head. Both arms lowered; the left one possibly supported a cornucopia. Cf. Simonett 1939, 15. Found in lararium

Table 8 Bronze Figurines of Lares Familiares

Description

The figure is standing with the weight on one leg. In the right hand is held a **patera**; in the left, a cornucopia which is supported against the shoulder. Occasionally the figure carries a double cornucopia. The figure wears a short chiton which is gathered into an overfold at the waist. A mantle may fall down the back, come over one shoulder, be knotted round the waist and fall in front of the legs (*cinctus gabinus*). The Lar wears high boots and a wreath is placed on the head.

	Provenance	Location	Number	Height	Reference	Comment
1.	BEWCASTLE	Tullie House Museum, Carlisle		7.2 cm	Richmond 1928, pl. facing 218, fig. 20	
2.	BRANDON	British Museum	95.1-16.1	10.5 cm	Green 1976, 213, pl. 11 b; Pitts 1979, 88, pl. 18	The figure carries a double cornucopia. Cf. Boucher 1973, 86
3	HADLEIGH	Prittlewell Priory Museum, Southend-on-Sea	L33/1	6.3 cm	VCH Essex 3, 135; Pollitt 1935, 69; Green 1976, 230	Well preserved. The cornucopia is held on the arm by a figure found at Bona
4.	LAKENHEATH	British Museum	19.21.11-18-3	10 cm	Toynbee 1964, 85, n.8, pl. 20; Pitts 1979, 68, no. 90	The figure is very similar to that found at Brandon. For double cornucopiae cf. Boucher 1973, 86; Fleischer 1967, 281
5.	STAMFORD	Lincoln Museum	93.73	6.9 cm	Unpublished	Well preserved. The figure wears a wreath which crosses at the back of the head and hangs down in two fillets cf. Rolland 1965, 131
6	PAPCASTLE	Tullie House Museum, Carlisle		7.3 cm	Charlesworth 1965, 114, fig. 49	Identified as Ceres
7	? BATH	Taunton Museum			Green 1976, 187	
8.	VERULAMIUM	Private collection			Green 1976, 207; Pitts 1979, 67, no. 86	
9.	HARLOW (temple)				Green 1976, 210	

Table 9 Bronze Figurines of Lares, Now Lost

	Provenance	Height	Reference	Comment
1.	NEAR BATH		*Proc. Archaeol. Inst. Bristol* 1851, lxx	'One of the genii sometimes termed camilli'; one hand upraised (now lost) probably held a rhyton and in the other was a patera. Exhibited together 'with a bronze lar found in Monmouth Street, Bath'
2.	HARLOW		VCH Essex 3, 143	Bronze figure of Lar reported c. 1860 being found at Home Farm near Moot Hall
3.	WALLINGFORD	4¼ inches	VCH Berkshire 1, 216, pl. opp. 202	'Poorly modelled figure of a man'. The photograph shows a male figure wearing a tunic and cloak both of which have hatching on the upper edge; cf. Richter 1915, 186. The figure appears to hold a bowl in the left hand and a patera in the right

Fig. 8 Bronze figurine of the Genius Paterfamilias from Cricklade, Wiltshire. Photo: British Museum.

Fig. 9 Bronze figurine of Lar Familiaris from Brandon, Suffolk. Photo: Lynn Pitts.

202) may also have represented Lares of this type.

A clear distinction has been made between the varieties of Lares although in the Romano-British context this might not have been important. The distinction may instead have lain between those who believed in a Romanized concept of Genius and Lar and those who believed in something less classical. The purchase of figures of Lares and the placing of them in lararia would seem to indicate that this practice was carried out by persons who had adopted, no matter how superficially, Romanized ways of thinking. The inscriptions may confirm this, for they are mainly to be found in military areas where official and unofficial classical cults were promoted. Even so there is an underlying feeling that the concept of Genius might not have been understood completely in its Italian form. The lack of forceful Roman implementation of belief and the nature of Roman tolerance meant that Celtic religious views were not eradicated. The concept of Genius may not have been an entirely Roman one in Britain, therefore, and this dichotomy of interest is also to be found in the Junones.

The Junones

As each man had his Genius so each woman had her Juno (cf. Seneca, *Epist* 110.2), but the situation is a little more complex as the manifestation is linked to the oldest of the Roman deities who played a prominent part in Roman religious life (Pauly-Wissowa 1893, s.v. Juno). In the last hundred years research regarding the origins of the goddess has centred on her functions as a deity who presided over marriage, birth and those aspects particularly relevant to female life. This led to her being regarded as the consort of Jupiter concerned principally with female matters, as emphasized by her epithet Regina implying the King's consort or woman (Rose 1948). Juno Regina, as a deity in her own right, had been invited to come from Veii to Rome, by M. Furius Camillus, and was established in a temple on the Aventine Hill in the fourth century BC (Livy 5.21.3). More recent research has emphasized her connections with the power and statecraft that the epithet implies (Palmer 1974). Her importance in the Empire was emphasized in the Antonine period in relation to the imperial consorts, Sabina and Faustina, when Juno

Regina and Juno Lucina appear on coins; a further revival came in the next century under Severus Alexander, no doubt because of the influence of Julia Mamaea (Beaujeu 1955, 419–22; Mattingly 1923–1936, 3, 355, nos. 908–10, 936–43, 4, 255, nos. 1596–98, no. 2188).

In addition to this supreme goddess whose worship was established in the Republic and continued in the Empire under a variety of epithets (Curitis, Moneta, Populona, Caprotinae), there developed the notion of the Junones a multiplication for the goddess who represented the female principle, the Numina which watched over women and their activities and which funded a reservoir of power on which all women drew at critical moments (Whatmough 1937, 159). The debate over the precise function and emergence of Juno has been extended also to the Junones for it is possible that a great goddess emerged as the female principle *par excellence* from them. If this is so her situation contrasts with that of the Genius, for no great god, Genius, emerged from the multiple Genii.

In the poems of Tibullus (3.19.15; 3.6.48) the poet swears by the numina of his mistress's Juno (*hoc tibi sancta tuae Junonis numina iuro*); however, he also implies she has a personal Venus for he brands her as faithless unless she swears by her eyes, her Juno and her Venus. This may imply an incomplete evolution of Venus. In the *Satyricon* of Petronius (*Sat.* 25), Quartilla urges the mock marriage of Pannychis and Giton, inviting the wrath of her own Juno if she could remember that she was ever a virgin.

It is probable that the distinction between the Genius for men and the Juno for women was not absolute. Male deities had Junones as did political persons (Palmer 1974, 23). This would be a natural development if the root of the name *Juno*, *Iuveno* means youth or the deity of youthfulness and is not connected absolutely with young women. It is therefore possible that the Genius represents the procreative force while the Juno implies procreation itself.

That the two were regarded as complementary is revealed in the evidence from the lararia at Pompeii (Boyce 1937, 72, no. 331, 75, no. 349, 98, no. 489) where the paintings reveal the togate Genius holding a hand over an altar or pouring from a patera on one side, and a female counterpart also holding a hand over an altar and carrying a cornucopia or a sceptre in the other. Below is a single serpent probably representing the fusion of the male and female principles separately portrayed above. However a distinction must be made between Genius and Juno in that they do not have exactly the same tutulary function. The concept of Genius could be attached to gods, institutions and places as well as to men; the Juno was mainly restricted to women, presumably offering protection more confined to the sexual-psychological part of their lives.

Juno and Junones in Britain

In Britain only one aspect of Juno is represented, that is the cult of the goddess herself. As a deity in her own right her name appears on an altar found north-west of the Maryport fort (*RIB* 813) where she was invoked by Hermione, daughter of Quintus, who also set up an altar to the Valour of the Emperor (*RIB* 845), an unusual choice for a woman. This sparseness of epigraphic evidence is also found in Gaul where little evidence is available for the cult (Pascal 1964, 83–4).

The one certain figured relief of Juno comes from Corbridge with a representation of Juno as divine sacrificant (Richmond 1943, 156–8, pl. 5, fig. 1; Phillips 1977, no. 8) and probably dating to the third century. This attitude of Juno may be depicted also in figurines found at Carlisle (Tullie House Museum, Carlisle) and Chichester (Royal Albert Museum, Exeter: Montague collection 5;1946, 152). There may also be one in London (Green 1976, 224).[3] The two figures, each dressed in a chiton, hold their arms by their sides; the latter has a round object in her right hand. Juno also appears on the ritual clamp found in the Thames, if the female figure wearing a diadem is correctly identified as her rather than as Cybele (British Museum 1955, 60(c) no. 1, pl. 21). She may be represented on the handle of one of the Capheaton paterae as a female figure wearing a high diadem and rising from a calyx of petal-shaped leaves (Walters 1921, 48–9, fig. 85). The fact that the figure is placed at the top of the handle indicates that she is a presiding deity, just as Jupiter presides over scenes represented on another patera found in the hoard. Both fulfil the functions of divine rulers of deities and humans.

The remaining representation, a statue from Chesters, refers to Juno Regina in her oriental aspect as consort to Jupiter Dolichenus. Richmond suggests that it portrays Julia Mamaea, mother of Severus Alexander, in the guise of the goddess (Richmond 1957). Given the popularity of the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus with the army in Britain it is not surprising to have some reference to his consort but her cult was not widespread in a male-dominated military area. Indeed the worship of Juno played little part in Romano-British religion and the allusion to her in the inscription on the Lullingstone pavement (Toynbee 1964, pl. 60a) rather implies familiarity with the Aeneid than an intention to worship the goddess.

Four gemstones found in Britain (Henig 1978, 213, nos. 222–224, App. 121), dating to the second or third centuries, a time which would fit the general popularity of the goddess, depict her standing, holding a patera and sceptre presumably in the context of Juno Regina (Figs 10, 11). A fifth (no. 226) perhaps shows her seated. It is difficult to say how far these signet stones were worn because a woman wanted an amulet of her personal Juno or to ensure protection, perhaps in childbirth.

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Figs 10 & 11 Impressions of cornelian intaglios from Bredon Hill, Gloucestershire and from Vindolanda showing Juno. Photos: Ashmolean Museum.

The apparent neglect of the worship of Juno is understandable. In the *Feriale Duranum* the goddess is not worshipped alone but is included in the homage paid to the Capitoline Triad (Fink 1940, 56). As Juno Regina she could be part of the cult of Jupiter Dolichenus and thus a separate existence was not required. She could appear as the Juno of an empress and this could be either by allusion as in the case of Sabina or by specific identification as in the case of Julia Mamaea. As far as the official cult was concerned she need have no completely separate existence and she was venerated in military areas usually in association with the worship of her consort. In Britain however there was probably another reason in that many of her functions could be undertaken by the dominant Celtic Mother Goddesses and this was almost certainly the reason for the complete lack of any reference to the Junones. Their cult did not develop like that of the Genii, nor was there any need for it to do so.

Genii were more universal in the sense that they could be attached to people, institutions and places, whereas Junones had lost their wider aspect and had become restricted to the more personal needs of women; in this capacity they were indistinguishable from the Mother Goddesses. In Italy and Cisalpine Gaul dedications to the Junones (*CIL* II, 944, 8082; V, 422, 5510) indicate that they were regarded as goddesses having a separate existence but they were also so closely identified with the Matronae that they were invoked as Matronae Junones (*CIL* V, 3237, 5249, 5450). In Britain this Celtic aspect dominated and the Junones were not invoked. The intensity of the power of the Matres probably prevented any development of the cult of the Junones and, in turn, there was no specific function which Juno could appropriate to her own and thus claim the devotion of the suppliant. The powerful consort of the supreme Roman deity was thus subsumed in the far more powerful Mother Goddess.

Notes

1. The material for this paper was mainly collected during an investigation of museum collections, 1974–1978. I am indebted to Mr M. W. C. Hassall and Professor R. M. T. Hill for their helpful comments and corrections to the paper, and to Dr Miranda Green for assistance with illustrations.
2. The owl is associated with Orpheus, hence its funerary context (Toynbee 1973; Pollard 1977, 238).
3. Hill suggests that all statuettes with the toga pulled over the head represent Genii and not the emperor.
4. See Suetonius, *Dom.* 17,2. When Domitian was slain in the bedchamber the act was witnessed by the boy who had been engaged in the usual duty of attending the Lares (*puer qui curator larum cubiculi erat consuetudine*). Amongst these Lares may have been Genius and Lares who would require the most personal attention from a permanent attendant.
5. The figurine of the draped female at York claimed to be Juno (Hoste 1924, pl. opp. 130; Toynbee 1964, 72, n. 2) appears to be a recent forgery (Martin Henig, pers. comm.)

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The Cult of Bacchus in Roman Britain

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At once familiar and mysterious, Bacchus holds a unique place among gods of the ancient world.[1] Generations of scholars have found him difficult to describe and all but impossible to understand. For no matter how diligently we pursue him through the records, literary and artistic, left behind by his many devotees and admirers, he seems at every other step to elude us by changing his image—rather like Proteus fleeing before Telemachus. At times his figure seems to invite laughter, while at other times it clearly demands awe. He may appear in the guise of a playful child or in the role of a conquering warrior. He is a god of both confusion and confrontation, the mask god *par excellence*. He is both the giver of fleeting joys and the lord of everlasting paradise: a god whose power to intoxicate may last for an hour or for eternity. Small wonder that in the first century BC, Cicero (*Nat. Deor.* III, 58) counted not one, but five Bacchi; small wonder, too, that writers since antiquity have speculated on the content of Bacchus' mysteries and have sought again and again to define his essence—with disappointing results.[2]

Indeed, scholars in our own day have largely abandoned the attempt to understand Bacchus and his cult. Many have taken the convenient view, perhaps best expressed by Martin Nilsson, that no god so peculiar could really have been taken seriously; hence, why should one struggle to analyse him? In Nilsson's opinion (1957, I, 143-147), the Graeco-Roman Bacchus—for all his complexity—was probably little more than a token deity; his cult was designed for rich people who liked to drink, dance, and be entertained, who 'wanted a little thrill of religion' for their leisure hours but did not care to have it dominate their lives, and who instinctively preferred a familiar god who would serve them to a strange god who might demand service. All this of course meant that the cult's appeal was severely restricted, even among Mediterranean peoples, and that it would have been all but unintelligible to their poorer and less sophisticated neighbours in the provinces.

The tendency to dismiss the Bacchic cult in some such way, if not to neglect it altogether, may be observed in numerous studies of Graeco-Roman religion, and it is particularly marked in most works—apart from Martin Henig's recent volume (1984)—devoted to the northwestern region of the Empire, which conclude that Bacchus had no significant following here. Admittedly, some objects with Bacchic decoration have turned up in 'Celtic' provinces from time to time, but they are not generally held to present a serious challenge to Nilsson's view of the cult, or to provide a reason to take a closer look at Bacchus himself.[3]

In this paper I should like to consider the evidence for Bacchus' success in Roman Britain. From this one remote province alone, some 400 objects with Bacchic subject matter—many more if we count coins and pottery—have been recovered. Ironically, while most of these finds have been at least nominally published, to date only a few have received the full scholarly attention that they deserve. Yet these data are more than simply numerous. Viewed *en masse*, they present us with a richly varied tapestry of Bacchic themes, with glimpse after glimpse of the god himself, his mythical colleagues and attendants, his ritual paraphernalia, and the symbols of his cult. Viewed one by one, they demonstrate that the influence of the Bacchic cult in Britain was both widespread and deep. Widespread, because the objects occur throughout the island and represent people in many different types of communities: wealthy and not so wealthy, immigrant and native, urban and rural. Deep, because many of these finds—as judged by their findspots and functional types—bespeak an interest in the cult that was far from casual. My aim, in presenting a survey of this material, is twofold. I hope, first of all, to shed some light on the ways in which the Roman Britons perceived Bacchus and interpreted his message, and secondly, to emphasize the need for continued research on the Bacchic cult as a whole. For just as one does not revise a book merely by adding footnotes, so one cannot hope to re-evaluate a cult's history unless new information is duly considered along with the old. There is, as I hope to show, much new-found information on the Bacchic cult, the time is ripe for its re-evaluation, and the British material alone may be the worthwhile focus of a first chapter.

Let us now begin to draft this chapter in truly pragmatic fashion, with reference to the few full paragraphs that already exist. Taken together, these paragraphs—by which I mean individual scholars' analyses of particular Bacchic monuments from Britain—form a brief but useful prelude to our main inquiry. What this prelude will give us is a sense that Bacchic ideas were indeed present in provincial Britain, along with a virtual certainty that some Romano-Britons, at any rate, cared about them deeply. Generally speaking, the monuments which have thus

Fig. 1 Marble group statuette from the Walbrook Mithraeum. Photo: Museum of London.

far inspired scholarly research are atypical in being large, well-preserved (or well-documented), and visually pleasing; the same monuments, in short, that most often attract the casual visitor to a museum or the reader of a general book on Roman Britain. Yet because they do have significant things to tell us, a brief review of them here is both fitting and necessary.

Heading the list of familiar Bacchic representations from Britain are mosaics, including some which actually survive and others that are documented by lithographs and written reports. Of the extant examples, doubtless the best known is a large roundel from a house at London, on which Bacchus himself, reclining on a tiger and holding his time-honoured attributes of thyrsus and cantharus, forms the focal point (Smith 1977, 109, no. 8). Regardless of where this Bacchus may have appeared in the house, it is virtually impossible to dismiss him as merely the jovial patron of the dinner-table. Drunk he certainly is; and yet the pronounced asymmetry of his eyes, as he gazes up into the distance, and the reflective half-smile on his lips impart what has aptly been called a soulful expression (Rainey 1973, 113) – a hint that he is preoccupied not merely with drink, but with his responsibilities as divine Lord of souls. In an even more solemn vein, in a corner of the famous pavement in Room 12 at Brading Villa (Smith 1977, 138–139, nos. 116–117), the viewer is presented with a cautionary tale drawn from Bacchic mythology: here is the terrible fate of Lycurgus, who had the impiety to reject Lord Bacchus and to persecute his Maenads, until one intended victim, Ambrosia, was transformed into a vine which choked him. The Brading artist has effectively combined the two parts of the story, for while Ambrosia, still fully human, sinks to the ground before Lycurgus, vines already spring up around his body: his punishment has begun. Is this a literal warning to beware vexing Bacchus – a god who, like the vine, could be equally quick to destroy and to bless – or is it an allegory of 'the triumph of good over evil' (Rule & Sturgess 1974, 13)? Either interpretation is possible; but, in either case, one has to assume that the story was taken with some measure of seriousness. Likewise, it is generally acknowledged that the lost or fragmentary mosaics from Stonesfield, Thruxton, Chedworth, and Pitney Villas, each of which featured Bacchus as a prominent subject, betray at the least a strong sympathy towards his cult, or, to use D. J. Smith's careful phrasing, 'a preference *for that theme or subject* as opposed to any other' (1969, 82).[4] While the supporting evidence of other, less elaborate mosaics with Bacchic themes (see below) is often overlooked, these few at any rate have been duly recognized as proof that Bacchus had his following among the upper classes of Roman Britain.

By the same token, hardly a scholar would question the serious import of the three marble statuettes which were found in the Mithraeum beside the Walbrook, London. In the group sculpture (Fig. 1), a dreamy-eyed Bacchus, clearly under the influence of his favourite beverage, is being supported by a Satyr, in the company of a panther, a snake (coiled about his arm), and three more figures from the usual cortege. Pan (recognizable from his hairy goat's leg) perches up in a vine branch at left, while below him Silenus sits on his donkey, holding a cup, and to the right a Maenad leads off the procession with a *cista mystica*, the basket which in real-life Bacchic festivals held ritual items and generally also a snake – emblem of the underworld. The symbolic import of this group is underscored by the inscription across the base, HOMINIBVSBAGISBITAM, 'Life to men who wander' (*RIB* 1), plainly a reference to the eternal life of bliss which Bacchus promised to his followers at the end of their pilgrimage through the world, and which they could see foreshadowed in the mysteries of his cult (Toynbee 1962, 130). The two fragmentary male torsos, which occurred in the same layer as the Bacchic group, appear to have been posed similarly to the group's central figure; and if they are not meant for Bacchus, as Ralph Merrifield suggests (1977, 382), they are almost surely related to him in some fashion. Be that as it may, the cultic significance of the major group piece is unmistakable; it may even be a clue, again as Merrifield suggests, that the Mithraeum was in its last days *re-dedicated* to none other than Bacchus. The latter hypothesis is quite attractive since it would explain the wine-god's elevation from the humble place he normally held in Mithraic hierarchy (Vermaseren

1963, 113f.) to what was clearly an important position at the Walbrook shrine. At any rate few would dispute that, whatever may have gone on in the vicinity of this statuette, it must have amounted to far more than a 'little thrill of religion' for the people who frequented the shrine.

From house and from temple, we pass next to the grave—still following only the thin trail of exceptional Bacchic monuments from Britain—and once again find dramatic evidence of Bacchus' importance. From the Spoonley Wood Villa, in Gloucestershire, comes the somber-faced marble image of the god holding a grape-cluster and accompanied by a panther; this object (Green 1976, 174) had been placed in the coffin of an adult male, presumably in the hope that Bacchus might act as the deceased's guardian and guide to the next world—and there grant the 'wanderer' eternal life. In, doubtless, the same spirit, at Holborough, Kent, the remains of a baby boy were consigned to the earth in a lead sarcophagus with Bacchic decoration; the lid here is adorned with the figure of a Maenad holding a thyrsus and with two dancing male figures (probably Satyrs), one adult, one child. Additional decoration on the Holborough coffin consists of large sea-shells, six on the lid, eight more distributed about the sides. Even though it is expressed in the most concise shorthand, the theme of the Holborough piece is fundamentally the same as that of the elaborate Great Silver Dish from Mildenhall: the theme of the soul's final journey into Paradise (Toynbee 1962, 181).

No survey of Bacchic monuments from Britain, however brief, would be complete without reference to the Great Mildenhall Dish. Though to do full justice to its subject matter would almost require a separate paper—note that T. Dohrn's excellent description of the piece runs for seven pages (1949, 71–77)—it is nonetheless both possible and fair to speak briefly of its overall design and meaning. This is so because, as Toynbee (1962, 170) shows, the artist who created this magnificent piece has imparted a striking thematic unity to its wealth of individual figures and objects. In effect, the viewer is invited to take an imaginary journey over the sea, through the smiling company of Tritons and Nereids filling the inner frieze and on into the paradise represented in the outer frieze, the so-called Isles of the Blessed, where Bacchus himself is shown presiding over the endless revels. It is a design which, to be sure, repeatedly delights the eye; yet at the same time it contains a coherently written message which, whether read as an allegory or as literal truth, can hardly have been taken for a mere joke. While scholars may still disagree as to the dish's precise function, its ownership (individual or communal?), and whether or not it was used exclusively (or even at all) in Bacchus' honour,[5] their very concern to answer these questions reflects agreement that the dish must have had a religious significance. Together with such monuments as the Spoonley Wood and Walbrook sculptures, the London, Brading, and other mosaic pavements, and the Holborough coffin, it constitutes strong proof that Bacchus in Britain was a god to be reckoned with—a god who had earned both recognition and respect in this distant province.

But how widespread was that recognition and respect? A handful of magnificent pieces can hardly be said to represent a trend; indeed, if this were all that remained of Bacchus' influence in Britain, we should be obliged to call him a rich man's god—a god whose cult, however important in the lives of some, probably meant little or nothing to the vast majority of Romano-Britons. After all, it was one thing for such a cult to succeed in a cosmopolitan city like London; it was quite another for it to succeed in the more remote provincial towns, where the Celtic heritage remained comparatively strong. It was one thing for the educated, well-to-do proprietor of a country estate, such as Brading or Spoonley Wood, to adopt a foreign cult, just as he would have adopted so many other foreign ideas and customs; it was quite another for the ordinary farmer, or villager, by and large content with the old ways, to embrace such a cult. And what of people dwelling on the far frontiers of the province? There, as Nash-Williams once remarked, you could see what the Romans were capable of when they were really up against it. What about Bacchus in places like these? What was *he* capable of when 'really up against it'? For answer, we must turn to that majority of hitherto unsorted, largely ignored finds to which reference was made earlier, and proceed to sort them as best we can in the process drafting, as it were, new paragraphs in the Bacchic cult's history.

To begin with, it is clear that an appreciation of Bacchus, his mythology,and his supposed powers had travelled to Britain with the Roman army. The most obvious (though by no means the only) proof of this fact lies in objects of specifically military design, adorned with Bacchic subjects; it is interesting to note that all these—with the possible exception of a phalera(?) found at Sandy (see below)—carry definite allusions to Bacchus' military exploits. Thus, for instance, on a bronze helmet cheekpiece found at Leicester, Cupid, who carries grape-clusters (a simple reference to Bacchus) in one hand, clutches in his other hand an Indian parrot, its wings folded in submission to suggest the god's conquest of India (Clay 1984). On a beaten brass helmet from Newstead, Cupid is shown more explicitly in the role of the Indian Bacchus—riding in a chariot pulled by leopards (Curle 1911, 166–168). Familiarity with the concept of Bacchus as warrior is attested also by bronze cart attachments in the form of panthers or leopards, from Kingsholm (Toynbee 1976, 72) and Caerleon (Lee 1849, 79), and by a tantalizing piece of a mosaic pavement from the Caerleon fortress baths (Boon 1972, 80–81) on which the tip of a *thyrsolonchus*, i.e. a spear disguised as a Bacchic wand, adorns one corner. In short, whatever

may have been the precise rationale linking Bacchus' adventures to those of the Roman army, it is apparent he was sometimes viewed by soldiers in Britain as a kind of military patron or model, and honoured accordingly.

Nor was this the only role that he was called upon to play. As a peacetime god, giver of the joys that accompanied civilization or Romanitas, he may be said to have given his blessing to the temple of Dea Roma at Corbridge. There, on the pediment, a canopy formed by two fruited vines, each springing magically from a cantharus, frames Romulus and Remus nursed by the she-wolf (Phillips 1977, 12–13, no. 38); while on the frieze below, Faunus/Pan dances against a backdrop of more vines—as if, in Richmond's words, to recall the 'rustic world from which Rome drew her strength' (1943, 175). Elsewhere on the British frontier, Bacchus was invoked in a role in which we have already seen him: as guardian of the dead, the one who would see their souls safely into the next world to partake of the never-ending joys. A grave stele erected just outside Watercrook is thought to have portrayed him in his juvenile guise, holding a pedum or shepherd's crook (still partly visible on the relief). Though the Watercrook figure's head is now lost, an early report (Nicholson 1832, 10) notes the presence of a crowning wreath, and the pedum itself is a common attribute in Bacchic scenes. A bronze balsamarium or incense-container, found in the River Eden near Carlisle (Webster 1973), takes the form of a bust of the adult Bacchus wearing leaves in his hair and a slipped garment, probably a nebris. Incense-containers of this type, many of them portraying recognizably Bacchic subjects, have been found throughout the Roman Empire; from the fact that a good number occur in graves, it is reasonable to infer some funerary or ritual purpose common to them all (see now *ibid.*, 92).

As Bacchus himself received due recognition along the British frontier, so too did his divine associates. Consider the testimony of a quartet of bearded demi-gods carved in gritstone, from the fort at Bar Hill: their duty, to judge from the context in which they appeared (MacDonald & Park 1906, 86), seems to have been to watch over one of the buildings at the fort.[6] While it is often assumed (e.g. Toynbee 1964, 107) that they represent local gods, they find their most satisfactory parallel in Silenus: witness the portly bodies of the three better-preserved figures, the bushy beards and sideburns worn by all four, and the skyphos or cantharus held by one. The *infamis digitus* gesture, as made by two of these figures, is no doubt to be read as apotropaic a kind of obscene curse, aimed at potential thieves or vandals. Although the gesture itself is not typical for Silenus, the implied idea of entrusting Bacchus' old guardian with material goods makes sense, especially if we assume (as we probably may) that one of the items in store at the fort was wine.[7] Elsewhere in the military zone, individuals sought a more personal alliance with Silenus: choosing cut gems, adorned with exotic symbols incorporating the old man's visage, to wear, use as seals (again to protect property?), or carry as charms (Henig 1978, nos. 378, 379, 382). Meanwhile the apotropaic powers of Bacchus' son Priapus, the phallic god *par excellence*, were recognized as well: thus near Birrens fort we find him, identified by an inscription (*RIB* 2106), in the act of watching over a tombstone.

Nor did the remaining members of the god's thiasos lag behind him in popularity. On the contrary, objects representing Satyrs, Maenads, and Bacchic genii or Cupids (including the two whom we have seen masquerading as the god himself) are quite common among finds from military outposts in Britain. Generally made on a small scale, from affordable material, viz. bronze for dishes and furniture, cornelian, jasper or glass for intaglios—these finds leave us in no doubt about the wide appeal which Bacchic subjects exerted. To be sure, not all of the representations are equally significant from a religious standpoint. Yet the presence even of Bacchic genre scenes, for instance the type of a Satyr milking a goat which appears on a cut gem from Cramond,[8] betrays, if nothing else, familiarity and sympathy with such concepts, if literal belief in them was another matter, it can scarcely have been an unthinkable one. Moreover, the use to which some of the objects were put does point to serious consideration of their religious themes: cases in point range from a sandstone candelabrum with vintaging Cupids found near York, whose functional type almost certainly identifies it as a tomb furnishing (Richmond 1946),[9] to a carved ivory plaque from Caerleon (one of the few true luxury goods in the class) found in what appears to have been a burial context (Boon 1972, 7, 106–107). In its pleasing design of a Maenad and putto who half walk, half dance with their burden of fruits, we are reminded of the twin blessings of joy and plenty which Bacchus was thought to bestow; while in its presumed use as a grave offering, we may well read someone's hope that these blessings would endure in the hereafter.

Filling out the picture of the cult's influence in military Britain is one more class of finds, namely, those which bear either isolated Bacchic attributes or designs based on them. Besides the aforementioned mosaic from Caerleon, military sites have yielded a number of objects adorned with plain thyrsi, including a cornelian intaglio from the fort at Ham Hill, Somerset with the device of a panther peering over his shoulder at the emblem (Fig. 2; Henig 1978, no. 641). Other items from the Romano-British frontier feature prominent or isolated masks or dramatic vignettes. All of these are implicitly Bacchic, alluding as they do to the theatre of which Bacchus was patron; moreover, the findspots of one or two suggest that the inherent religious symbolism of the mask—emblem of contradiction and mystery—did not go unheeded. Thus we find, in a

probable burial context at Caerleon (see above), an ivory plaque carved to represent a tragic mask and at Backworth, in a votive cache offered to the Celtic Matres, a finger-ring with the device of a masked actor holding an extinguished torch (Henig 1978, no. 523). Finally the cantharus, symbol of refreshment in both this world and the next, circulated quite freely on objects throughout the military zones. Like many of the motifs already cited, it seems to have travelled chiefly by way of small objects, but travel it did: a scatter of gold and silver finger-rings, from Castell Collen, Watercrook, Chesterholm, and Corbridge (Fig. 3), illustrates the point, as do more modest personal possessions such as a shale hairpin (with cantharus-shaped head) from South Shields (Allason-Jones & Miket 1984, 325, no. 7.204).[10]

As one surveys the abundant and varied evidence for Bacchus' popularity in frontier Britain, an inevitable question arises. How much of this material merely reflects interest on the part of the invaders, and how much represents the local populace? The readiness with which one may recognize and interpret virtually all of the images cited above[11] is proof of how faithfully they reflect Graeco-Roman traditions; but to what extent were these traditions embraced by native men and women? Certainly, some of the Bacchic material from the frontier can be classified as the property of Romano-Britons: especially in the case of objects found in civilian contexts (notably vici), those dating to the closing years of the occupation (when the very army was in essence Romano-British), and all those that belonged to women (including, probably, a good deal of the jewellery). But since distinctions like these are often difficult to draw, we shall need to look elsewhere in Britain to see just how deeply the Bacchic cult may have penetrated and influenced local belief.

With this in mind, let us now move on to a different milieu altogether and see how Bacchus and his colleagues fared in the heart of the civil zone of Britannia. Here, admittedly, we shall encounter some new problems, for the data form a rather incoherent picture. On the one hand we shall find ample evidence that people throughout the province were attracted to the new cult, and not infrequently became involved with it. On the other hand, the archaeological record has yet to reveal a definite pattern for their interest and involvement, a fact which may as well be admitted at the outset. Did the cult of Bacchus, we may ask, appeal to urban dwellers in Britannia? The answer afforded by the finds is a maddening, 'sometimes yes, sometimes no.' Did Bacchus win a following among villagers and small farmers (as well as estate owners) in the province? Again the answer varies from a definite 'yes' to an apparent 'no' But if we put aside the quest for a consistent pattern of Bacchic sentiment, which may or may not have existed, we can nonetheless learn much from a study of the individual pieces of evidence. In their sheer variety of content and functional type, in

Fig. 2 Cornelian intaglio from Ham Hill (Impression). Photo: Ashmolean Museum.

Fig. 3 Gold finger-ring from Corbridge. Photo: Museum of Antiquities, The University, Newcastle upon Tyne.

their distribution from context to context, site to site, as well as in their total number, these documents can make a significant contribution to our overall knowledge of the Bacchic cult as practised in Britain ... and perhaps elsewhere as well.

Let us turn our attention first to those which re-create familiar themes. Like northern and western Britain, the civilian zone has yielded a good number of Bacchic images of purely classical type, a survey of sites from which these have been recovered reveals that they were known even in the most remote, thinly populated, and (from a Roman point of view) backward areas of the province. Two examples in bronze, one an ivy-wreathed bust of Bacchus himself, from Thaxted (Green 1976, 211), the other a figurine of a kneeling Satyr with vine-stalk belt and crown, from Holme-on-Spalding Moor,[12] are instructive—coming as they do from settlements which were not only small and modest, but many miles distant from each other. Furthermore, there is good reason to assert that *native craftsmen* had a hand in reproducing these time-honoured Bacchic types. Consider one of the better-known cases in point, a bronze steelyard weight in form of a nebris-clad bust of Bacchus; from the fact that it was found at Silchester, a town with a well attested bronze-working industry, we may easily suppose that it is a product of that industry (Green 1976, 196; Boon 1974, 272). Likewise

Fig. 4 Red jasper intaglio from Cambridge (Impression). Photo: Ashmolean Museum.

classical in spirit but surely provincial in origin is a pewter relief of a Nereid reclining on a hippocamp, from the village at Little Chester (Brassington 1967, 61–62). So closely does she resemble the Nereids on the Great Mildenhall Dish that she could easily have stepped, or rather floated, out of their midst; yet whereas their place of origin is still unknown, hers is betrayed by the medium in which she was cast – pewter, a native Romano-British product.

Not only the god's time-honoured iconography, but his many time-honoured roles as well, were familiar to people throughout civilian Britannia. For example, his promise to bring 'life to men who wander' is echoed in the design of a bronze disc, identified by Toynbee (1964, 337) as a phalera, from the village at Sandy. Whether the subject portrayed on this disc is meant for Bacchus himself, with the somewhat unusual feature of wings, or whether it is Medusa without her snakes (*ibid.*), in either case the surrounding wreath is both a clear reminder of Bacchus and an emblem of life eternal; accordingly, whatever the disc's original purpose may have been, it is reasonable to suppose that it ended as a funerary offering (Heichelheim 1946; cf. Johnston 1975, 228). A more generalized wish to be under Bacchus' protection, or perhaps merely to enjoy his various gifts, is expressed by a series of smaller items designed for personal use or wear; these occur at all types of settlements, large and small, throughout the lowland zone, and they carry as many traditional types as does the Bacchic jewellery from the forts. Intaglios range from such handsome pieces as a red jasper gem from Cambridge, with an elegant bust of Bacchus holding the thyrsus (Fig. 4), to modest creations in glass, bearing genre scenes of the theatre, Satyrs, and Bacchic Cupids.[13] The one-piece finger-ring with the device of panthers flanking a cantharus appears, too: at Great Chesterford in silver (Marshall 1907, no. 1184) and at Kenchester in the humbler medium of bronze (Walton 1949–51, 192). Clearly, then, even in the less Romanized districts of Britain, Bacchus did not *necessarily* have to change his original character to win a following among native people.

On the other hand, the record shows that there were not a few occasions when Bacchus did change, or at any rate acquired new associations, as he entered the pantheon of Roman Britain. To begin with, there is evidence that he was sometimes worshipped there in company with Romano-Celtic deities, including some whose character was definitely more Celtic than it was Roman. From within (or near?) the temple complex at Caistor by Norwich, one of the more conservative major towns in the province (cf. Wacher 1974, 229), comes a good illustration: this is a small bronze relief, depicting Bacchus in a drunken attitude, wearing leaves in his hair, holding grapes in his free hand (Green 1976, 204). Evidently a votive offering, the plaque attests the honour in which Bacchus could be held even among the strangest of deities. Equally curious is the presence of Bacchus at the rustic shrine of Ruxox Farm, near Flitwick (Beds). Here a votive cache of pipeclay figurines (Jenkins 1977, 316) included a *deu nutrix*, a number of Venuses of the Gaulish type, an unidentified male deity, and—placed literally side-by-side with these former strangers – Bacchus, crowned with his traditional head-dress of vine-leaves and grape-clusters and perhaps[14] accompanied by his old friend the panther. Other small finds from Romano-Celtic sanctuaries in Britain include a lead plaque with the figure of a dancing Satyr, from the temple of Nodens at Lydney (Wheeler & Wheeler 1932, 87), and a good handful of the cut gems with Bacchic themes, including two from Ruxox Farm and others from the shrines at Harlow, Kirmington, Farley Heath, Lamyatt Beacon, and Bath (Henig 1978, nos. 102, 113, 114, 126, 133, 156, 160, 343, 373, 386, 588, 642, Appendix nos. 78 and 87).[15] While it is true that some of these last may represent casual losses rather than offerings, they at any rate prove that Bacchus was no stranger to the people who frequented these spots. Evidently it was quite possible to serve him while serving other masters, including the numerous gods peculiar to the region. No rivalry was involved; this was a partnership.

Indeed, at Bath the partnership may well have been a close one, with Bacchus joining deities both native and foreign. On a carved limestone altar-block from this site, we find him portrayed in full view, standing, holding his thyrsus in one hand, a wine-vessel in the other, pouring out refreshment for a thirsty panther (Cunliffe & Fulford 1982, 9, no. 29). Other figures on the same altar included Hercules Bibax and perhaps a second Hercules, Jupiter, Apollo playing the lyre, and a seated goddess or nymph with cornucopia, shown in the act of pouring a libation. The altar stood directly before the temple of Sulis Minerva, the presiding deity at the spa, and so will have formed a focal point for sacrifices held in her honour. From this we may infer that the gods represented on the piece, including Bacchus himself, were not only well-known at Bath, but considered appropriate and worthy to 'serve' the chief deity of the site. Furthermore, there is an intriguing

possibility that visitors to Bath also worshipped Bacchus directly. That possibility hinges on the interpretation of a carved limestone relief found in the Cross Bath; it may have come from a well-head or perhaps from a second altar (*ibid.*, 6, no. 3). In the past, this block has generally been interpreted as a monument to Aesculapius, whose stock emblems, a dog, a tree, and a tripod entwined with snakes, do appear on the reverse and side panels. Nonetheless, the subject of the main relief is at least strongly reminiscent of Bacchus' rescue of Ariadne: a standing figure, nude and apparently male, reaches out to a reclining, half-draped one, almost certainly a female. An ordinary tripod, the common attribute of Aesculapius, Apollo and Bacchus, appears in the background of the scene; and beside it is a diminutive beast whose outlines suggest a feline. It is tempting to wonder if Bacchus and Aesculapius were not venerated together on this monument, perhaps because there was felt to be some link between the power to heal the body (as shared by Sulis Minerva and Aesculapius) and Bacchus' power to resurrect the soul.[16]

An unusual link, yes. An unlikely one, perhaps. But it is after all doubtful that Bacchus could have entered the Romano-Celtic shrines without being re-interpreted to some degree—even if there were no corresponding change in his own iconography. Besides, elsewhere in the province, we may look to find conclusive proof that the Celts transformed Bacchus, assigning strange new roles to him and his colleagues, and (no doubt) investing the symbols of his cult with entirely new meaning. This *'interpretatio celtica'* of an already complex religion is without doubt the most interesting chapter of its history in Britain; and time may well show it to be the most significant chapter as well.

For a dramatic first illustration, we may turn to Roman Cirencester. Here, as has been convincingly shown by E. J. Phillips (1976), Bacchic figures were selected to adorn all four faces of a large and spectacular Corinthian capital, carved from local limestone. The character illustrated on one face can only be Bacchus himself, drunk once again, as can be inferred from the classic position of the arm over the head, semi-draped, holding a thyrsus and cup, and crowned with grapes. He is flanked, so to speak, by two trusty companions: a Maenad with tympanum and ivy-crown and Silenus, supporting himself with a gnarled stick and holding up a rhyton from which he prepares to drink. Finally, on the face opposite the one on which Bacchus appears, we find none other than his old enemy, Lycurgus: wild-eyed, dishevelled, gripping a fruited vine in one hand, the double-axe in the other (Fig. 5). Ironically, though the Bacchic character of this monument was recognized at the time of its discovery (Anon. 1838), most twentieth-century scholars have denied it on the grounds that Bacchus was not an important figure in Britain(!). They have assumed instead (e.g. Haverfield 1917–18, 191–192; Toynbee 1964, 145; Ross 1967, 36, 196, 228) that the figures must represent either Celtic deities or Celticized Seasons, unparalleled elsewhere. In reaffirming the Bacchic nature of the Cirencester piece, Phillips has forced us to confront anew two difficult issues: first, what kind of monument the capital came from; and second, what the rationale was for decorating it in this manner. If we assume that it was made to honour Bacchus, and Bacchus alone, then we must wonder at the equal prominence given to his arch-enemy; it is almost as though Lycurgus' villainy had been forgotten or his part in the story changed. If, on the other hand, we accept (as seems likely on the grounds of form and style) that the capital comes from a Jupiter-Giant column, then we have the equally troublesome burden of explaining why the Bacchic thiasos would have been shown in such a context.

Fig. 5 Limestone capital from Cirencester; Face with view of Lycurgus. Photo. Corinium Museum.

The latter problem is raised a second time at the town of Wroxeter. Here we are confronted by two fragments of sandstone column-shaft(s), each with prominent Bacchic decoration. The better-preserved piece (Fox 1897, 169–170) has a standing full-length figure of Bacchus carved within a sunken niche; like his counterpart on the Bath altar-block, he holds a thyrsus in one hand and with the other feeds wine to a crouching panther. The remaining surface of the shaft is covered with a pattern of overlapping scales, a feature typical of Jupiter-Giant columns. The second Wroxeter fragment (*ibid.*), perhaps from the same monument, depicts Cupid in a niche, kneeling upon a basket into which he is dropping grapes; here again, scales adorn the rest of the surface. So it would appear that at Wroxeter, and perhaps also at Cirencester, local artists may have juxtaposed Bacchus and company with their own peculiar version of Jupiter as a mighty Rider-God

who trod chthonic monsters underfoot (cf. Hertlein 1910; Bauchhenss & Noelke 1981). Just why they should have done this is another, more perplexing matter. It might be that the serene figures of Bacchus and Cupid, as seen on the Wroxeter example(s), were supposed to symbolize the aftermath of Jupiter's victory: peace, prosperity and happiness. On the other hand, at Cirencester, assuming that the capital found there is indeed from a Jupiter-Giant column, Bacchus might have been viewed more as an ally of Jupiter, with his defeat of Lycurgus possibly seen as an episode in the larger divine triumph. Whatever the details, there is at any rate strong reason to suspect that Bacchus and his cult underwent a fundamental change at both sites, a change that helped them to retain their centuries-old power and vitality in a wholly new setting.

Still other British finds reflect an *interpretatio celtica* of the cult that we cannot begin to analyse: we may only note that it happened. Consider the evidence of a painted clay head from the village at Irchester (Green 1976, 181), which judged by its form is almost certainly part of a face-flagon, a type of vessel peculiar to the Celtic-speaking provinces. While it is generally agreed that these flagons must have served some ritual purpose, as they turn up most commonly in shrines and graves, the details of that purpose remain obscure; this is largely because their typical subjects (not to mention the atypical ones) have yet to be securely identified (cf. Ross 1967, 105; Green 1976, 47). Accordingly, we have no way of knowing which local god or concept was here conflated with Bacchus, nor why the resulting ivy-crowned image may have been deemed appropriate to adorn a face-flagon. Equally puzzling is the case of a jasper intaglio from the River Tas, at Caistor St. Edmund. Here a combination device, featuring Silenus' head, an elephant's trunk and tusks, and a palm branch – all stock motifs in Bacchic iconography – together with an unidentified male head, is juxtaposed with the letters CEN: evidently part of the tribal name, Iceni (Ross & Frere 1972; Henig 1978, no. 380). How, when or why such a device could have been adopted as the emblem of a British tribe is at present an unanswerable question; we may console ourselves perhaps with the thought that the gem's Icenian owner may have understood it little better than we.

Even the Bacchic feline seems to have acquired some new and rather mysterious associations in provincial Britain. At London an unnamed local deity may well have been the recipient of an enamelled bronze plaque (Henry 1933, 11, 114) bearing a unique mixture of designs: felines flanking canthari, that emblem so popular in Bacchic art; and colourful abstract patterns, of a type dear to the Celts (Fig. 6). The plaque was found in the River Thames, a fact which may or may not be accidental; one is tempted to link it to the well-known Celtic practice of casting votive objects into water. It is particularly curious to think that even in London, where one might suppose Bacchic ideas had

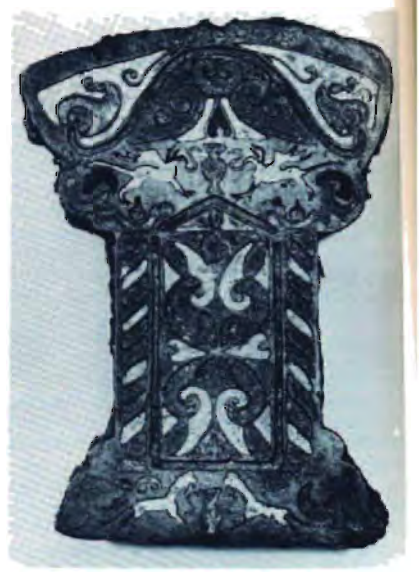

Fig. 6 Enamelled bronze plaque from the River Thames, London. Photo: Trustees of the British Museum.

the least occasion to merge with native ones, they nonetheless did so. At Thetford, too, the feline apparently was selected to serve a new divine master; this can be inferred from one of the silver spoons in the hoard (Johns & Potter 1983, no. 66). While a panther bounds across the field of the bowl, an inscription on the spoon's handle invokes Faunus Pan, himself an old companion of Bacchus, but one who was drastically re-interpreted at this site (*ibid.*, *passim*, and Johns, this volume). At the same time as the Bacchic feline changed masters, did its underlying significance change too? Very likely; but once again we have moved into the realm of rhetorical questions. Yet even as questions like these perplex us, the fact that we are now able to ask them is surely a reflection of progress. For by merely recognizing that the Celts had tailored Bacchic ideas to fit their own religious beliefs, we have significantly enlarged our focus on who was involved with the Bacchic cult to begin with. Not only were many of these people clearly serious about Bacchus, but they responded to him many miles, if not worlds apart, from his traditional homeland.

How the Bacchic cult first arrived in Britain is scarcely a problem. Military sites account for some forty per cent of relevant finds, including what are doubtless the earliest; if we add to these the finds from civil sites which had military origins (including Cirencester, Wroxeter, and perhaps Bath), the

percentage climbs even higher. Nor is the idea of the cult's introduction by the army at all surprising. Religion is known to have played an important part in the lives of the troops, and there is no question of Bacchus' popularity in the lands from which the first soldiers came—be they legionaries from Italy or auxiliaries from throughout the Empire. Far more difficult to sift out are the reasons for the cult's survival in its new setting, especially among the less sophisticated people of Britannia in the years following the army's departure to the frontiers. On the one hand there is no question that the Graeco-Roman Bacchus was a god of manifold appeal, and we have seen that he often succeeded on his own merits, playing the full range of his traditional roles, in his newly adopted land of Britain. In addition, it is tempting to suppose that his religion may have had something in common with native British cults or concepts—something which helped to assure its success and determine the course of its *interpretatio celtica* in the province. But unluckily, our present knowledge of Celtic religion does not permit us to carry the quest for that 'something' very far. It is absurd, for instance, to make Sucellus with the beer-keg any more than a remote cousin of Bacchus (if that); the Celtic stag-horned deity, Cernunnos, is, at best, barely comparable to Faunus/Pan or to the Satyrs of the Bacchic cortege; and the veneration of severed heads by the early Celts is hardly to be compared to the Romans' fondness for Silenus-head combinations. Failing in these and in other attempted comparisons, we are left to imagine who or what the Celts of Britain may have recognized in Bacchus and his cult. It is to be hoped that, in future, research on both the Bacchic cult and the religion of the Celts will gradually yield the answer to this problem.

To evaluate every aspect of the Bacchic cult in Britain, let alone the surrounding region, is a major task that may never be wholly finished. Indeed, it might be objected (recalling the rhetoric with which this paper opened) that the classical Bacchus is still enough of a problem to scholars without bringing in all of his provincial variants! Yet a mere survey of Bacchic material from the north-west provinces must confirm one thing beyond all else: this was an extremely powerful cult, too powerful by far to be simply ignored, even if we shall never understand it entirely. Whatever difficulties we may encounter, it is surely a worthwhile task to study these finds, along with Bacchic material from the rest of the Graeco-Roman world. Through them we are sure to arrive, little by little, at a deeper and clearer understanding of one of the most influential and, perhaps, best-loved cults in antiquity.

Notes

1. This paper is based on research for my Ph.D thesis, 'Bacchus in Roman Britain: Archaeological Evidence for His Cult' (University of Michigan, 1983), publication forthcoming in British Archaeological Reports. While the notes below are intended as a small supplement to the paper, the reader is referred to my book for a full descriptive catalogue of the finds and for more detailed analyses of the issues which they raise.
2. A useful commentary on 'das Dionysische' is contained in Henrichs (1979, 1–6).
3. Even Brühl (1953, 212, 240–248) makes short work of the Bacchic cult in the north-western provinces—with no reference whatever to the cult in Britain. See further the limited treatment and somewhat disparaging views of the cult in Duval (1957, 99–100) and Thevenot (1968, 132).
4. My emphasis. The pavements from Stonesfield and Thruxton (Smith 1977, 109, nos. 9–10; cf. Levine 1978) featured central medallions similar to the London example, while that at Pitney (Smith 1977, 151, no. 142) had a central octagon with a figure of Bacchus seated, holding thyrsus and cup. The theme of the pavement at Chedworth (which *may*, incidentally, have been a public rather than a private building—see below, note 15) was Bacchus' thiasos; the god himself is thought to have appeared in either the lost central octagon or one of the radiate panels (Stupperich 1980, 292–293).
5. For the suggestion that the Mildenhall silver was brought to Britain by a Christian, Lupicinus, see Painter (1977, 22–23). That Bacchus' image was acceptable as a symbol *even to early Christians* (his appearance in the Frampton pavement, Smith 1977, 149, no. 136, and Black, this volume, is highly suggestive) is in my view a tribute to his amazing adaptability and well-nigh universal appeal. See Henig (this volume) for alternative view.
6. Most recently, Keppie and Arnold (1984, 37, nos. 97–100) have reaffirmed the Bacchic character of the Bar Hill sculptures.
7. Note the appearance of Silenus on a bronze lock-plate from Bavai (Faider-Feytmans 1957, 97, no. 213)—very likely a reflection of the same idea.
8. To be published in the forthcoming report on Cramond by Nicholas Holmes.
9. Tufi (1983, 73) however, disagrees.
10. A cheaper and less elegant version of the better known jet hairpins from York (RCHM, *Roman York* 143) and (in the civil zone) Silchester and Fishbourne (Lawson 1975, 258, no. 66; Cunliffe 1971, 150, no. 12). The rings are published by Boon (1973, 18, no. 2), Potter (1979, 205), and Charlesworth (1961, 16 and 31 no. 95), respectively. Also cf. Henig 1977, 355.
11. It is true that religious syncretism is implied by the context of the Backworth ring; it may be inferred also from the design of a Bacchic face-flagon (?) found at Chester (Green 1978, 53). Elsewhere on the frontier, however, it is all but impossible to trace.
12. Hull, Museum of Transport and Archaeology, Acc. No. 684.1980.
13. The Cambridge gem has been published twice by Henig (1977, 361 pl. 15.6d and 1978, Appendix no. 99)—reproduced here as Fig. 3. Other gems are catalogued by Henig (*ibid.*, *passim*).
14. Jenkins (1977, 196ff.) reconstructs the statuette by comparison with a complete example from Bingerbrück.
15. Perhaps to be added to this list is the fragment of the so-called statuette of Diana from Maiden Castle (Henig 1983, for suggested identification as Bacchus). See also below, note 16.
16. A similar association may be recognized at Chedworth, if Webster (1984) is correct in re-interpreting the 'Villa' there as the pilgrims' hostel of a large healing spa. The Chedworth mosaic, as noted earlier in this paper, has long been famous, albeit only as the presumed property of a single family; if Webster is right, then the pavement's design is perhaps even more significant than has been thought. Note that a small Bacchic mount (*ibid.*, 20, no. 21) has also been found at Chedworth.

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Christian and Pagan hopes of salvation in Romano-British mosaics

E. W. Black

Introduction: Christian and Pagan symbolism at Aquileia and Igel

By AD 313 Christian churches enjoyed religious toleration and their property was being restored. In the decade or so which followed, bishop Theodore constructed a basilican church at Aquileia. The floor of the church was covered by a series of mosaic carpets (Brusin & Zovatto 1957, 67, Fig. 25). The subject-matter of these reveals the resources of Christian art at a time which must be almost contemporary with the beginnings of the fourth century revival of floor mosaic in Roman Britain. Across the east end of the basilica lay a vast sea-scape filled with marine creatures, in the midst of which are four boats with fishermen-putti; in addition three narrative scenes tell the story of Jonah who is shown heroically nude. The fish are being caught for Christ and the story of Jonah is an allegory of death, resurrection, and salvation.

The remainder of the basilica is filled with nine mosaics bordered and separated by acanthus scroll-work. The figural subjects of most of the panels are two only: portraits of individuals, 'donors' towards the new church and possibly members of the imperial house, and animals and birds representing the anonymous members of Christ's congregation. In one of the mosaics in the south aisle a central panel shows the Good Shepherd. On his right is another panel containing an antelope and on his left one with a stag (Brusin & Zovatto 1957, 89, Fig. 37), for the *ovilia dei* encompassed all such *pecora inertia*. The central figure of the mosaic in the nave immediately west of the sea-scape was the Eucharistic Victory—a personification of undoubted pagan origin holding a palm branch and crowning the Christian bread and wine with a laurel wreath—and other panels contained figures bearing offerings (Brusin & Zovatto 1957, 97, Fig. 41). It is worth noting that creatures of all three elements—the earth, the sea and the air—are employed to represent the new converts and the Christian faithful.

As has been pointed out (e.g. by Dorigo 1971, 169–71) the art derives in part from catacomb painting, but is also notable for its adherence to the motifs of pagan secular art. Dunbabin (1978, 188–9) has similarly noted an inconographic poverty in the mosaics from early Christian contexts in North Africa. The adoption of motifs and figures from pagan art would not have presented any real difficulty, for so many of the myths were devoid of any inherent religious meaning and at the same time were used freely in an allegorical way by pagans who also hoped for some sort of salvation and paradise. The sculptures on the third century grave monument at Igel near Trier exemplify this (Dragendorff & Krüger 1924). At the very top of the monument is Ganymede being carried aloft by Jupiter's eagle, symbolizing the transport of the soul to paradise, perhaps an astral paradise, perhaps not so precisely conceived. The base has panels of Tritons, sea-monsters and putti astride dolphins, recalling the old concept of a voyage to an island paradise across the Ocean. Among the other sculptures are scenes from myths which betoken mortality (Achilles dipped in the river Styx; Hylas and the nymphs), salvation (Perseus and Andromeda) and apotheosis as a reward for bravery and effort (Hercules). Interspersed with these are the real toils in which the Secundinii were engaged, as merchants in the cloth trade.

Christian Mosaics in Roman Britain

While it is generally acceptable to consider mythological scenes as allegory on the Igel column, it is always possible to doubt such interpretation of mosaic floors, and in many scenes where an allegorical explanation would be possible—such as the Cupid on a dolphin from Fishbourne—one is not compelled to look for such meaning in what may have been simply intended as pleasing decoration. Let us begin then, in Britain, with the Christian pavement from Hinton St. Mary (Neal 1981, pl. 61). The placing of the bust of Christ centrally in the larger area of floor leaves no doubt that the pavement is Christian. Professor Toynbee (1963) tentatively identified the figures in the corners as the four evangelists, based on figures of the wind-gods. She suggested that the hunt scenes could represent the teeming life of paradise. R. T. Eriksen saw in these rather 'the struggles of a Christian life or the pains of Christ' (Eriksen 1980, 43). For the second alternative his evidence is partly in biblical exegesis which explained the hart as symbolic of figures such as David who looked forward to Christ. Eriksen showed that the story of Actaeon who was transformed into a deer and

attacked by his own hounds could be re-interpreted by a Christian to refer to the passion of Christ, but he does not cite any evidence earlier than the late Medieval period (Eriksen 1980, 45). An equation of the Actaeon-deer on the Hinton St. Mary pavement with Christ Himself would be an iconography arising from a very creative, or recondite, syncretism of Christian and pagan literature.

If we turn to the representational evidence cited by Eriksen (1980, 46), both on the third century African lead vessel and on the fourth or fifth century mosaic from Skhira, a pair of deer is shown drinking the waters of paradise. We have already noted a deer and antelope accompanying the Good Shepherd at Aquileia and there can be no doubt that these and the African examples represent Christians rather than Christ Himself. The deer pursued by hounds on the lead vessel and the mosaic with the same scene from the basilica of Cresconius at Djemila should then also represent Christians rather than Christ. Although it would be foolish to deny that Christians would wish, or be obliged, to compare their own fortitude when tested to the temptation or the passion of Christ—as the pagan Secundinii compared themselves to Hercules—I think that we must view the deer portrayed in North Africa and on the Hinton St. Mary mosaic in Britain primarily as the followers of Christ, and the hounds as the dangers or perhaps the sins which lie in wait for them and pursue them through life.

The allegory of deer pursued by hounds was common to Christian and pagan art. The drawing of a mosaic from East Coker which used to be thought to show the birth of Bacchus (Smith 1969, 91–2, Fig. 3.3) has been re-interpreted by Stupperich (1980, 291–2) as the rescue of Ariadne by Bacchus. Shown at the corners of the floor are figures of the four winds, just as the winds were present assisting Hercules' apotheosis on the Igel column (Dragendorff & Krüger 1924, 70 Abb. 42). Also shown in the drawing are two hunt scenes, a dog pursuing a stag and another pursuing a hare. The inclusion of these makes little sense unless they have a symbolic meaning: that is, they stand for the sufferings and trials of humanity, finally ended by union with the divine.

There is nothing in the East Coker mosaic to suggest that its symbolism was addressed to a Christian villa owner, rather the opposite. The hare in the central roundel of a unique mosaic from Cirencester (Neal 1981, pl. 25c), when taken in conjunction with the petalled flowers and the adjoining panel showing peacocks flanking a cantharus (symbols of renewal and salvation), must be another instance of the representation of the human soul by an animal. The mid fourth century date would allow it to be a Christian soul, but an almost identical hare is found on the tombstone of Anicius Ingenuus from Housesteads (*RIB* 1618), and a pagan ancestry seems likely. A frieze on a tombstone from Savaria in Pannonia shows first a hare pursued by a hound, then the hound devouring it prey (Mócsy 1974, pl. 11b). Professor Toynbee (1964, 196) has noted 'hounds pursuing stags (as Death pursues mankind)' on two stones from Chester (Wright & Richmond 1955, nos. 142 and 142a), and similar scenes from funerary monuments have been found near Bath (Cunliffe & Fulford 1982, Nos. 49 and 140). Such funerary monuments seem a more likely source for the hunt motif in the Hinton St. Mary mosaic than biblical exegesis. It is apposite to recall the second century floor from St. Albans which shows a lion carrying a stag's head in its jaws (Frere 1983, 163 and 167 pl. XVIII a–b).

In her discussion of the representations of Bellerophon and the Chimaera in the Christian mosaics at Hinton St. Mary and Frampton and in the mosaic at Lullingstone, a villa where Christianity was later practised, Huskinson (1974, 73–8) rejected the equation of the pagan hero with Christ. She preferred to see the scene retaining a general significance, also apparent in pagan floors, and symbolizing the conquest of evil by the forces of good. This perhaps followed from her acceptance of Brandenburg's view of the Frampton mosaic as a virtually discrete series of one Christian and several pagan good luck symbols and allegories (Huskinson 1974, 76–7 with references). We shall see below that the choice and disposition of motifs in the Frampton mosaic conveys a very detailed and specific Christian message, and Huskinson (1974, 77) did in fact admit to reservations in the case of the Hinton St. Mary floor because of the balancing of the roundels containing Bellerophon and Christ. Eriksen (1980, 47) actually argues for an identification and he may be right. However, if we allow that the representation of Bellerophon in the act of slaying the Chimaera might have been intended to recall the circumstances of this victory, the identification may be not with Christ but with a Christian who has been saved, one who has listened to the message of salvation represented by the figures of Christ Himself and the evangelists. Significantly, Bellerophon was led into danger because he had rejected the advances of Queen Sthenoboea, i.e. he had already overcome the temptation to commit adultery and murder before his triumph over the Chimaera. Of course the pagan Bellerophon also aspired to ride the winged Pegasus to the dwellings of the gods. The Christian Bellerophon at Hinton St. Mary had found an infallible way to salvation.

This significance for Bellerophon is in the mainstream of the pagan use of heroes to represent ordinary mortals and their aspirations, such as occurs on the monument of the Secundinii. The juxtaposition of the hunt scenes recalls the design of the East Coker mosaic, and the message of the two floors is very similar. Above all this removes the awkwardness of two representations of Christ, one allegorized and one not.

It was noted above that there has been an attempt to play down the Christian significance of the Chi-Rho in the Frampton mosaic (Fig. 1). Huskinson (1974, 77)

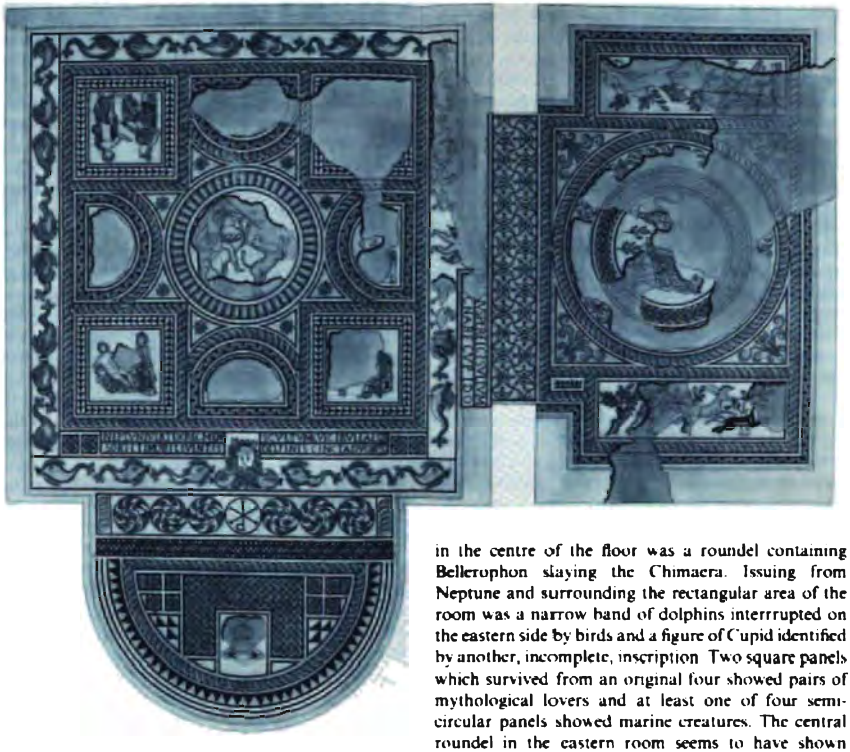

Fig. 1 Mosaic at Frampton, Dors. from Lysons 1813 III. pl. I.

states: 'Although most of (the Frampton motifs) occur in other unequivocally Christian contexts, they do so individually and cannot justify an explicit *interpretatio christiana* for the pavement as a whole'. However, if an explicit unitary meaning can be proposed for the floor this seems far and away preferable to regarding it as a virtually random juxtaposition of motifs. As we shall see, the meaning of the floor, while Christian, is similar to that of pagan mosaics.

Two rooms were linked through a wide opening, as at Hinton St. Mary, but at Frampton an apse opened off the southern side of the larger western room (Lysons 1813, part III, pl. I). The focal point of the mosaic flooring the apse was occupied by a cantharus. In line with this at the base of the apse was the Christian Chi-Rho. Adjoining, indeed facing, the Christogram in the main area of the room was the head of a sea-god flanked by an inscription. Iconographically the sea-god is Oceanus, but the inscription identifies him as Neptune. In line with the cantharus, Christogram and Neptune, in the centre of the floor was a roundel containing Bellerophon slaying the Chimaera. Issuing from Neptune and surrounding the rectangular area of the room was a narrow band of dolphins interrrupted on the eastern side by birds and a figure of Cupid identified by another, incomplete, inscription. Two square panels which survived from an original four showed pairs of mythological lovers and at least one of four semi-circular panels showed marine creatures. The central roundel in the eastern room seems to have shown Dionysus on a leopard, and this, Cupid, and Bellerophon form a second axis of major figures. The side panels showed a man pursuing a deer and another creature (or perhaps a pair of deer) and a man facing the attack of a leopard.

In the western room the inscription (see translation in Henig, this volume) tells us that here is the head of Neptune to whom fell the kingdom (of the sea) agitated by the winds and whose blue brow is flanked by two dolphins. The significance of these words is uncertain, but it seems worth calling attention to the passage in Vergil's *Aeneid* (I, 124–7), where Neptune surfaces to find a storm caused by the winds Aeolus has let loose to wreck Aeneas' fleet;

> Interea magno misceri murmure pontum
> emissamque hiemem sensit Neptunus et imis
> stagna refusa vadis, graviter commotus, et alto
> prospiciens summa placidum caput extulit unda.

There are no close verbal echoes, though *mobile* and *commotus* and *vertex* and *caput* could be suggestive of some degree of reminiscence. The couplet on the Lullingstone floor (Meates 1979, 77 and frontispiece)

attests Romano-British acquaintance with the subject-matter of *Aeneid I*, and of course another floor at Frampton itself shows Aeneas grasping the Golden Bough as in *Aeneid VI* (Barrett 1977, 312–13). It will be remembered that Cupid also figures in the first book of the Aeneid. On this basis I am inclined to regard the inscriptions as a display of literary culture, as caption for the figures, and perhaps not contributing very much to the message of the floor. It is what the gods and other figures symbolize that is important and produces a coherent meaning.

In the smaller room Dionysus riding the leopard represents the taming of the terrestrial animals, and the panels of human huntsmen echo this. Both fishes and birds, creatures of the sea and air, are shown as attendants on Cupid, and the focal placing of the god of love in relation to both rooms shows that his power was also greater than that of Dionysus. But this superiority of sexual desire is at once rejected, for the central roundel in the larger room showed Bellerophon and the Chimaera. The significance of this choice of myth has already been explained. Mounted on Pegasus and therefore the conqueror of the air, Bellerophon is shown spearing the leonine monster. The message is reinforced by the pairs of lovers in the corner squares. Stupperich (1980, 298) suggests that those which survived were Paris and Oenone, and Selene and Endymion. Despite their 'divine' spouses both Paris and Endymion, like Achilles and Hylas, suffered at last the common fate of mortals. Bellerophon proved himself superior to the earth, the sea, and the air, and to the temptations of Cupid. The Christogram and the chalice in the apse stand apart, the source of his salvation in the world of physical and moral danger.

Such elaborately composed, and explicitly Christian, floors can hardly have belonged to anything but chapels or house-churches within the mansions of wealthy landowners. Yet neither the Good Shepherd nor Jonah, that we saw at Aquileia, nor any other figural scene derived from the Bible, appears in these mosaics. The explicitly Christian elements, even though they imbue the floors with a unity of meaning, are an insignificant part of them. The almost exclusive use of motifs from the pagan tradition, and the apparent originality of the adoption of Bellerophon as a symbol of moral superiority, provide food for thought both on the character of Christianity in Roman Britain and on the creativity of her mosaic workshops.

Pagan Mosaics

At Brading three rooms (3, 6 and 12) contained figured mosaics or panels (Price & Hilton Price 1881, plan between p. 6 and 7). Room 3 was a wing room. The eastern part of room 12 occupied a similar position at the opposite end of the house and communicated with its western division through a wide opening. Room 6, a wide gallery fronting rooms 2, 5, 7 and 9, linked 3 and 12. The Orpheus panel in the gallery was not designed to lead the visitor through to room 7 in the domestic range behind, for it was not placed centrally in relation to the walls of this room. Rooms 2 and 7 may have been entered from the passage (5) opening off the gallery rather than directly from the gallery itself. It seems to this writer that the house was in two parts: at the front an elaborately-floored series of rooms, and behind a much more modest dwelling. Dr Henig (1984, 219–20) has suggested that it may have been more expedient for pagans in fourth century Britain to endow private rooms for worship in their homes than to make offerings to the established temples which were under the risk of confiscations. The contrast between the mosaics in rooms 3, 6 and 12, and the plain tessellated floors of the domestic rooms behind, suggests that the expense of the former may not have been met entirely by the owner of the Brading villa.

The panel with Orpheus and the seasons in room 6 (Price & Hilton Price 1881, pl. facing p. 10) was probably placed facing the main entrance into the villa. He may simply have represented a propitious figure welcoming the visitor, but the authority of Orpheus was claimed for all sorts of systems of belief (West 1983, 2–3) and this role for him would fit the character of the other mosaics at Brading. That in room 3 is discussed by Dr Henig in his contribution to this volume. This writer will confine his attention to room 12.

The floor of the eastern division of room 12 was well-preserved and showed at one end a marine thiasos (Price & Hilton Price 1881, pl. between p. 16 and 17). Beside this was a more complicated scheme with a central Medusa head surrounded by the four Winds and four mythological scenes. Stupperich (1980, 297) has suggested that these represented the productivity of the earth since three of them show Ceres and Triptolemus, a shepherd and a female figure (perhaps Paris and Oenone), and Lycurgus and Ambrosia. The fourth panel shows a female in flight from a male figure but it is partly damaged and no distinguishing attributes survive. Dr Ling (1981) has identified the shepherd as Attis rather than Paris, and the nymph as Sagaritis.

The Winds are sometimes found together with figures of the Four Seasons and could represent here the ordering of the weather and its importance for the growth of crops (Hanfmann 1951, 253). The Medusa head may have been prophylactic, guarding over this productivity. However, Dr Henig (1984, 220–21) believes that the myths express complementary themes: the acceptance and rejection of a god by mortals (Ambrosia and Triptolemus; the shepherd and the fleeing female, perhaps Daphne). This puts the main emphasis on the human figure in each of the scenes, rather than on the divinity who is involved. Dr Ling (1981, 293) saw that the fourth, partly-damaged scene does not belong with the others in a display of episodes from the major mystery-cults. However, the presence of

scenes from three such cults testifies to some level of syncretism and reminds us that they did not claim an exclusive devotion from their adherents (Matthews 1973). Nor is the thematic link noted by Stupperich a coincidence. The mystery cults and, at any rate, the gods which the three identifiable scenes invoke were concerned both with the productivity of the earth and with the salvation of mankind. The panel with the sea-thiasos is complementary to the themes of earth and the winds, and may contain a further allusion to the voyage to a trans-Oceanic paradise.

In the largely-destroyed floor in the western part of the room were busts of the Four Seasons. A peacock, fruit, and cantharus (awkwardly placed on its side) remains above the figure of Summer and a similar representation presumably once occupied the space above each of the seasons. Four rectangular panels again seem to have contained mythological scenes, but only one has survived. This shows Perseus and Andromeda. Rather than showing a series of mythological lovers with simple decorative appeal, or a literary reminiscence, the panels may have expressed the theme of salvation, as Dr Henig (1984, 221) has suggested. Again Perseus and Andromeda are found on the Igel column, presumably with this significance. The Seasons are found on funerary monuments with a number of more or less precise meanings (Hanfmann 1951, 185–92 and 230–45). Here they may symbolize the ordered cycle of time, and the peacock and cantharus again the hope of salvation. The central panel in this inner part of the chamber is destroyed and cannot assist us to be more specific. However, between the two parts of the room there is the figure of an astrologer pointing to a globe. Behind him on one side is a sun-dial on a column and on the other side a crater and ladle. This figure may indicate that the way to achieving salvation was by contemplating the heavens or, more generally, by acquiring *sapientia* or *sophia*, or he may be there to remind the viewer that his days in this world have their predetermined span which is completed sooner or later. He thus serves as a significant link between the messages of the floors in the two main parts of the room. The crater and ladle may again allude to Dionysiac salvation.

The border of the mosaic in the western part of room 12 is a debased form of the T-shaped crenellations found on the city wall mosaic from Fishbourne. A 'gateway' in this border occupies the mid-point on the north-west side of the room and is filled by a swastika. Benches may have been placed on the border (Henig 1984, 221), and the president or officiant in the meetings which took place in room 12 may have been seated at the focal point (Price & Hilton Price 1881, 17). These features are matched in a remarkable way in room 2 of building 8 at Rudston in Yorkshire. This was in two divisions, like room 12 at Brading. The mosaic had a border of debased crenellations, as at Brading, and in the north wall of the room, corresponding to the position of the gateway and swastika in the floor at Brading, there was a shallow alcove (Smith 1980, pl. VIII).

The figured mosaic in the southern division of room 2 at Rudston was largely destroyed, but that in the inner part of the room and the panel occupying the threshold between them were well preserved. In the centre of the inner floor facing the alcove was the figure of a victorious charioteer, shown frontally in his chariot and holding a wreath and a palm branch. In the angles of the figured design were roundels showing the Four Seasons and between these long-tailed birds pecking at fruit. The threshold panel showed a cantharus flanked by leopards. Dr Ling (1983, 18–19) has suggested that the charioteer may be meant to recall the sun-god and the image of the circus as a microcosm of the universe. The seasons would fit well into such an image, but Dr Ling is unable to relate it satisfactorily to the four panels with birds or to the threshold panel. If a symbolic meaning is given to some figural motifs in a mosaic it must embrace them all. We have met Seasons and birds (with fruit and canthari) on the pavement in room 12 at Brading. The same eschatological significance can be suggested for them at Rudston, and the figure of the victorious charioteer represents a human victor over the struggles of life or over death itself. Dunbabin (1982, 84–5 and pl. 9, Fig. 24) has suggested a similar meaning for the charioteer on a domestic mosaic from Conimbriga. At Rudston the cantharus flanked by leopards contains an allusion to Dionysiac salvation.

To the west of room 2, room 1 was paved with a geometric mosaic and may have served as an ante-room to it. A heated room to the east was only partially excavated and it is not known how much further the building extended in this direction. The room may have been an adjunct to rooms 1 and 2 or these may have been at the west end of a larger domestic unit, forming a self-contained suite functioning as a religious meeting-place.

The scheme of an inner and outer room, as at Brading and Rudston, is matched in the large chamber recently re-excavated at Littlecote Park in Wiltshire (Walters and Phillips 1981, 13, pl. 4). The outer division here is rectangular while the inner part approximates to a square with three apses opening from it (a triconch). The mosaic in the main area of the inner room is a wheel design. The hub of the wheel is occupied by a figure wearing a Phrygian cap and playing a lyre. Professor Toynbee (1981, 2–3) has shown that this is not a straightforward representation of Orpheus, but that it combines characteristics of Orpheus and Apollo, and Walters and Phillips (1981, 9–12) have related the motifs of the mosaic to a cult in which Zagreus-Dionysus was the chief deity. Their exegesis carries conviction because it can invest all the elements of the floor with a significance and meaning. The only element which is omitted from their provisional commentary is

the grid of four petalled flowers in the outer area. These derive from funerary symbolism and, like the Dionysiac panels on either side, carry an allusion to renewal and salvation in the afterlife.

Walters and Phillips (1981, 12) have noted that: 'The terminal apse would have been the logical seat of enthronement of the officiating master.' The apse corresponds to the shallow recess in room 2 at Rudston and to the 'gateway' and swastika motif in the mosaic in room 12 at Brading.

A final point to be noted (and this also applies to the Withington mosaic discussed below) is the absence of any anthropomorphic representation of the main deity, Dionysus. This is of course paralleled by the absence of Christ from the Christian floor at Frampton, though not at Hinton St. Mary.

A mosaic from Bramdean again has reminiscences of the Igel column and the theme of struggle in life and eternal reward. The central scene shows Hercules conquering Antaeus whose mother was the Earth, while Minerva looks on (Rainey 1973, pl. 2A; Stupperich 1980, 299). Busts of the four Winds surround this, as they surround the apotheosis of Hercules on the Igel column, and canthari and dolphins occupy the semi-circular panels placed midway along each side of the floor. The mosaic from East Coker with its message of Dionysiac salvation has been discussed above.

At Bignor the prophylactic and magical is represented by the mosaic in room 56, the apodyterium of the baths, which shows the head of Medusa (Lysons 1817a, pl. XXVIII). In room 7 the figure of Ganymede being lifted up by Jupiter's eagle, as Toynbee (1964, 261) has noted, may be an allegorical re-interpretation of the myth. The scene is found on tombstones and sarcophagi and, as already pointed out, it tops the funerary monument of the Secundinii at Igel. It signifies a belief in the transport of the soul to the stars (Cumont 1942, 98), or perhaps more generally an aspiration to a state of blessedness in eternity. The other figures on this floor—dancing Maenads—are a similar expression (Lysons 1817a, pls. VIII and IX).

The nimbed and diademed head in the apse in room 3 (Fig. 2; from Lysons 1817a, pl. II) is generally interpreted as a goddess. Identifications have included Venus, Juno, and Diana (Johnson 1982, 33). The problem is that there is no unambiguous attribute or symbol, like the Chi-Rho behind the head of the Hinton St. Mary Christ, to establish who she is. The long-tailed birds pecking at fruit do not have the distinctive identifying features of peacocks (the bird of Juno) as these are seen in mosaics at Withington, Woodchester and elsewhere, and there is in fact no Romano-British mosaic in which a peacock need be taken as symbolic of Juno. Here, along with the two cornucopiae below them, the birds may symbolize a general prosperity and abundance. It is also worth recalling that the peacocks at Brading and the long-tailed birds at Rudston had an eschatalogical meaning. At Bignor a similar bird and cornucopiae occurred in room 26 along with putti and dolphins (Lysons 1817a, pl. XIV). In room 3 there are also putti—to call them Cupids is a misnomer, for the Cupid-putto is only one aspect of a figure, ubiquitous in Roman art, who has many roles (Stuveras 1969). Thus the putti do not in themselves identify the nimbed figure as Venus. In one panel they are acting as gladiators (not necessarily meant as an illusion to the role of Diana/Nemesis as patron of the amphitheatre) and in the partly-destroyed south-western area of the room the putti are engaged in a Bacchic dance.

Stuveras (1969, 87 and n. 5) regarded the putto-gladiators as a genre scene without symbolic meaning, but he does not seem to have been aware of the Dionysiac putti in the main part of the mosaic. Stuveras' chapter four is devoted to the Dionysiac putto on funerary monuments. He himself comments on the pagan view of life as a contest or struggle and on salvation as a victory, and he draws attention to a third century sarcophagus which shows putti in various symbolic roles around the deceased. One carries a garland to crown the dead man, symbolizing his conquest of death (Stuveras 1969, 48–9 and Fig. 135). The putti at Bignor can be interpreted in this light. The sequence of gladiatorial scenes shows: (i) a fight between a secutor and retiarius with an umpire standing by; (ii) (damaged) a secutor seems to have disarmed his opponent but an umpire is intervening to save the latter; (iii) the gladiators are preparing to renew the fight with a comrade about to replace the helmet on the secutor's head and with the umpire leading back the retiarius; (iv) the retiarius has fallen wounded and the secutor is about to strike the final blow—no umpire is present. This is highly symbolic and shows the dangers of life, some of which we survive, but which sooner or later prove fatal. The Bacchant putti signify our hope of salvation after death, having won the joys of paradise.

The general theme of the floor is apparent: the struggles of this life and the joys of the afterlife. It is necessary for an identification of the nimbed figure to take account of this. Had the central panel around which the putti are dancing survived it may have shown the figure who held out the promise of eternal happiness. This figure and that of the goddess would then have formed a pair, linked by their focal positions in the design. This recalls the pair of Christ and Bellerophon at Hinton St. Mary. In view of the absence of any attribute to indicate a particular goddess at Bignor, I am emboldened to identify the nimbed figure as a mortal, deified in death by union with her god, as the Hinton St. Mary Bellerophon was saved by his adherence to Christ.

Ambivalent Mosaics

Dr D. J. Smith once suggested that Romano-British mosaics which figure Orpheus might carry a Christian

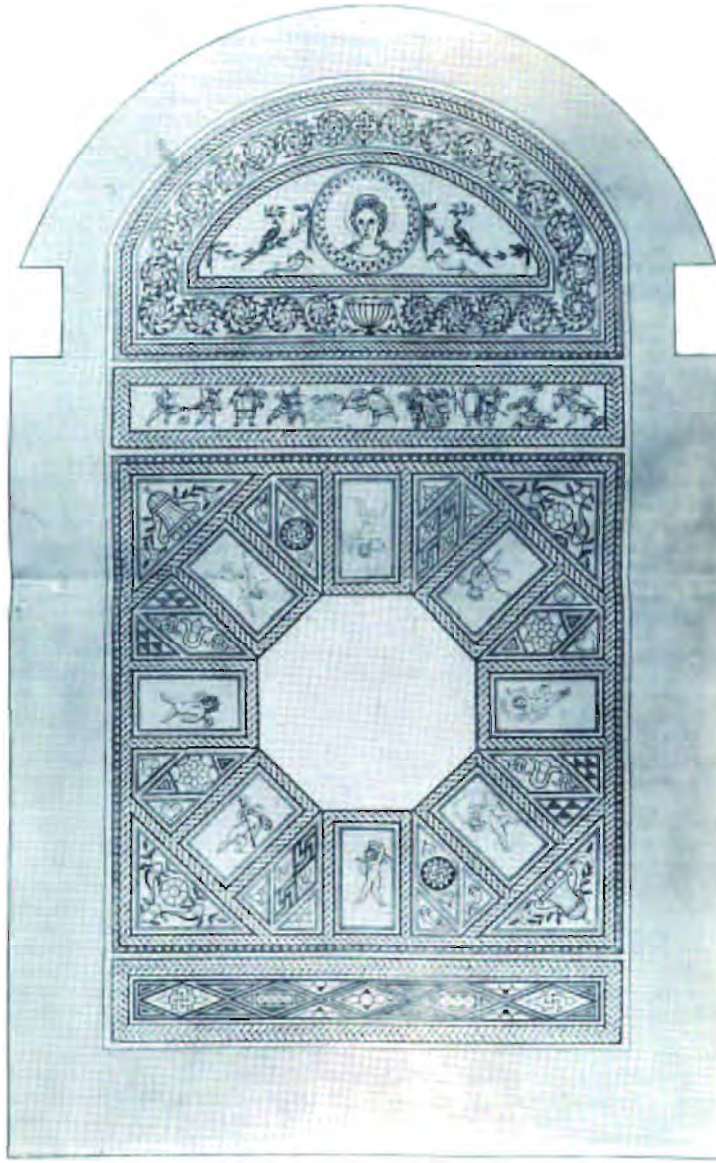

Fig. 2 Mosaic at Bignor, West Sussex, from Lysons 1817a, pl. XVI.

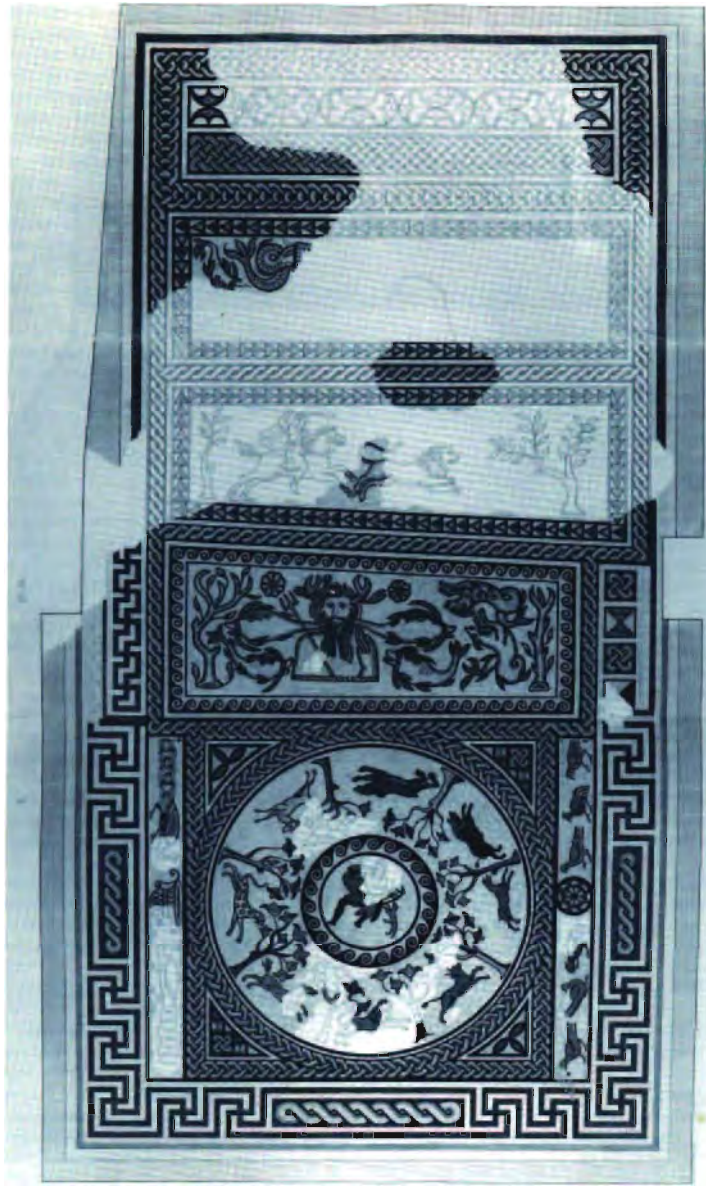

Fig. 3 Mosaic from Withington, Glos., from Lysons 1817b, pl. XVIII.

meaning (Smith 1969, 88–90). More recently Huskinson (1974, 69–73) and Sister Charles Murray (1981, 37–63) have stressed how the iconography of the traditional scenes of Orpheus taming the beasts was changed and adapted to express such a meaning. In many instances (though not all) it was only birds and docile herbivores which were shown enchanted by the hero's music; carnivores were excluded. In these writers' view Orpheus was not simply an alternative to the Good Shepherd. The fact that his power lay in his music was important, suggesting to Christians a comparison with Our Saviour's message which brought salvation to the believer when he died. It has been pointed out that the Orpheus panel at Brading belonged to a pagan context (though it is interesting to note that no large carnivore is present among the animals). Several other Romano-British floors which show Orpheus have a scheme with the hero in a central roundel surrounded by at least one circular zone containing animals. These were laid by mosaicists belonging to what Dr Smith (1984, 366–9) has now termed the Corinian Orpheus School, active *c.* 300–320. The origin of their concentric design is significant as we shall see.

The mosaic from Withington (Fig. 3) is the most revealing of the floors of this type (Lysons 1817b, pl. XVIII; Smith 1983, pl. III). The animals in the circular zone around Orpheus are alternately prey and hunter, and Dr Smith notes that they are not docile, spell-bound by Orpheus' music, but rather pursued and pursuing. To one side of the floor is a long narrow panel containing birds with a petalled flower in a central position. On the other side was a corresponding panel containing a central cantharus flanked by peacocks. Birds and rosettes were well-established in pagan funerary symbolism (e.g. Wright & Richmond 1955, No. 156), and the peacock had associations with Dionysus and immortality for pagans (Dunbabin 1978, 166–9; Toynbee 1973, 252–3). The two panels cannot be claimed to symbolize a Christian rather than a pagan paradise. The zone of animals again might represent the *oves dei* pursued by the carnivores, but we have already seen that this allegory is also pagan. The variety of animals—bear, goat, leopard, horse, lion, bull, hound, boar—is not found in indubitably Christian contexts like Hinton St. Mary, but all of them (and gryphons as well) are represented on the flanges of a set of four circular bowls in the Mildenhall treasure, perhaps dating to the third century (Painter 1977, 13 and pls. 15 and 20). On the flange of each bowl there are four scenes of animals separated by figures of human heads. Two of the scenes show animals peacefully grazing. The two remaining scenes, with the heads on each side both turned inwards towards them, show carnivores pursuing or seizing or devouring their prey. Another figure—a head or in one case a huntsman spearing a bear—occupies a roundel at the base of the interior of each bowl. Not only the variety of the animals at Withington, but also the scheme of circular zone and central roundel, could derive from silver dishes like those from Mildenhall. If such models were not available to mosaicists Dr Henig has pointed out to me that similar friezes of animals are found just below the rims of bronze buckets of Hemmoor type (Willers 1901, Taf. II 1–4; V 2; VIII 1–2). The animal scenes on the Mildenhall bowls can be interpreted as showing struggle and death alternating with repose and salvation. The mosaic at Withington carries a similar double message. The zone of animals represents the sufferings of life and the panels with the birds represent repose in paradise. Orpheus is here apart from the animals and represents the messenger of salvation.

Throughout antiquity a wide variety of poems and hymns was attributed to Orpheus. The followers of particular cults appropriated his name for poems expounding their beliefs or in praise of their gods, but there was no unified Orphic religion. This means that in dealing with a monument like the Withington mosaic we cannot know its meaning simply by the appearance of Orpheus, for he represents some text known to the patron of the mosaicist but unknown to us. Orpheus has no intrinsic significance and we must look at other motifs which may point in a particular direction. In the Withington floor the rosette and cantharus indicate a concern with salvation and the cantharus should allude to the saving power of Dionysus. West (1983, 227–58) has shown that a number of earlier theogonies attributed to Orpheus were combined, probably in the first century BC, to produce what he terms the Rhapsodic Theogony. This superseded its predecessors, and, at least by the late fourth century AD, it was widely used in literary and philosophical study. As it can be reconstructed (West 1983, 70–5), the Theogony attributed to Zeus the creation of the present world and indicated that he intended Dionysus to be his successor. While still a child Dionysus was killed and eaten by the Titans but his heart was saved. A new Dionysus was created from this heart and Zeus destroyed the Titans with a thunderbolt. The smoke from their destruction gave rise to the present race of mortals. The souls of men are immortal but they must inhabit a series of animal and human bodies. After each human incarnation the soul is judged and detained below the earth for 300 years before being reborn. To obtain release from this cycle the soul must perform the sacrifices and rites which are revealed with the help of Dionysus and Kore (Persephone). It is certainly a possibility that the Orpheus at Withington represents the prophet of this saviour—Dionysus.

Next to those already described further panels were laid later in the fourth century by the same workshop that was responsible for the Christian floors at Hinton St. Mary and Frampton (Smith 1969, 112–3). Immediately adjacent to the earlier mosaic was Oceanus/Neptune with sea-creatures, and again with petalled flowers, flanked on each side by a tree. In this

context, accompanying a sea-god, trees are totally incongruous unless they have some symbolic meaning. This requires detailed discussion.

Trees are often employed to frame a scene or representation in mosaic, for example the embrace of Dido and Aeneas from Low Ham (Smith 1969, pl. 3.5), and the buildings in three panels from Taburka (Dunbabin 1978, pls. 111-13). They appear on a silver patera handle in the Capheaton hoard which shows Minerva as the goddess of a sacred spring, framing the temple and the stream which flows away from it (Henig 1984, 46, pl. 8). In these rural compositions the trees serve a purpose in the organisation of the scene and in focusing the viewer's attention, and are in no way out of place. They have an artistic rather than an iconographic significance.

The petalled flowers on the Withington panel symbolise the eternal renewal of life. The trees here may duplicate this meaning. Their 'hollow bases' are distinctive. As Dr Smith (1969, 122, n. 4) saw, the feature is matched on the Hinton St. Mary mosaic but only in the great tree which occupies the semi-circular panel below the head of Christ. There too the busts of Christ and the evangelists are flanked by petalled flowers and pomegranates, another symbol of eternity. Further indication that this was the significance of the Withington trees comes from another mosaic which shows a water-god, from Rudston (Neal 1981, pl. 67). Above and below its main figural panel were rectangular panels which originally showed a bird pecking at each side of a central cantharus, representing the joy of paradise. From each side of both of the panels a tree grows upwards, its top almost touching the nearest bird. In relation to the central motif these trees are lying on their sides, so they are hardly intended to portray a realistic landscape setting. Nor are they an obvious choice as a filling motif. In the similarly proportioned panel at Withington birds were shown in triplicate on each side of the central flower. The trees at Rudston can only have had a symbolic meaning, complementing that of the central motif. This was pointed out by Hawkes (1972, 156) in her discussion of a similar tree flanked by peacocks on a late Roman buckle from Tripontium in Warwickshire. At Hinton St. Mary the tree, derived from pagan symbolism, could appear as an emblem of eternity associated with Christ, and the bust of Christ Himself received pomegranates as an attribute signifying His everlasting power. The association of similar emblems with the head of Oceanus/Neptune at Withington must mean that the god was meant to be regarded as more than an artistic motif or an allegory.

Below the sea-god panel there were three others. One contained geometric motifs, another a further marine scene, and the third a lion hunt. The latter panels may show a development in the symbolism of the mosaic. While the theme of the Corinian mosaic might be taken as a pagan hope of eternal happiness after life's struggles through heeding the admonitions of some work attributed to Orpheus, the additions emphasize the power of the message over the three elements, air, sea and land. The earlier animals zone and the panels of birds might be reasonably re-interpreted as the earth and the air, while the sea-god panel and the panel with the marine creatures represent water. The forelegs of the horse which survive in the added hunt panel imply that the lion was pursued by a human huntsman. This represents the struggle of human life and its presence may indicate that this symbolic meaning of the animals around Orpheus had ceased to be understood. Readers will note the similarity of the interpretations of the extended pagan mosaic at Withington and the Christian floors at Frampton.

In the geometric surround of the great Orpheus pavement at Woodchester we find roundels containing canthari and rosettes (Neal 1981, pl. 87). These are the motifs which occupied so significant a position in the panels on either side of Orpheus and the animals at Withington, but here they lack the attendant peacocks and other birds. They *seem* to be purely decorative, but this cannot be taken for granted. The spandrels of the square which frames the concentric circular zones of the design show pairs of water nymphs. The acanthus scroll in the outer zone was broken by a mask of Oceanus. The next zone contained a procession of pacified animals. Of the ten attested out of a likely original eleven, six are carnivores (counting the gryphon) and four represent their prey, but they are not arranged in alternation nor on any apparent principle. Next came a zone or border in the form of a laurel wreath and within this a zone of birds. Both were broken by the figure of Orpheus who was flanked on his right by a peacock and to the left by a fox or dog. His head also broke the octagonal panel which occupied the centre of the pavement. There is a single unauthenticated report that this contained fish and a star (Smith 1983, 320).

It is most unfortunate that no illustration survives of the central octagon, for if the Woodchester pavement had a Christian significance, it is this motif which will have conveyed it, as with the Christograms at Hinton St. Mary and Frampton. We can at least say that whatever was there must have been important enough to displace Orpheus from the centre. The reported fish and star may then have had a Christian meaning, for such representations in this positon seem otherwise inexplicable. A cantharus set against a sea of fishes is found at Aquileia (Brusin & Zovatto 1957, 133, Fig. 56), and Dr Smith (1969, 87) has suggested that the cantharus surrounded by dolphins at Fifehead Neville was the Christian chalice, like the cantharus in the apse at Frampton. Fish are found around an anchor in the form of a cross on a Christian tomb mosaic in Sousse Museum (Foucher 1960, 92 and pl. XLVIIIa). What was identified as a star at Woodchester might have been another of the eight-petalled rosettes seen elsewhere on the floor (Neal 1981, 117) or, conceivably, the less

common form of the Christogram which combines the Greek letter Iota (for Iēsous) with Chi (for Christos). One Romano-British example of this occurs at Chedworth (Webster 1983, 12, Fig. 3.2). A Christian interpretation could also apply to the water nymphs, for they might contain an allusion to baptism, and the laurel wreath surrounding the zone of birds might allude to the Christian's conquest of sin and death (compare the figure of Victory holding such a wreath at Aquileia).

The harmonious procession of animals at Woodchester is certainly more appropriate for an Orpheus identified with Christ than the hunters and their prey on the Withington floor. This change must be significant. However, it may have resulted simply from a desire to show the mythological Orpheus, without the allusion to salvation which the Withington mosaic contained, but retaining its innovatory design (see Stern 1955 and Harrison 1962 for Orpheus mosaics found in other provinces). In the floor from Newton St. Loe (Smith 1983, pl. CCIII.2) the original intention had been to have confronting pairs of animals, a carnivore and a herbivore, though the mosaicist miscalculated the spacing. This was presumably the initial adaptation of the Withington animals. The Barton Court Farm mosaic (Smith 1983, pl. CCV) shows the animals subdued, all moving in a single direction as at Woodchester, but all those which survive (five out of the original six) are carnivores. This certainly conflicts with the emphasis on *oves* accompanying the Christian Orpheus, and suggests perhaps a greater interest in the more exotic species of animals and their greater decorative effect. The lack of any apparent principle in the arrangement of animals in the Woodchester floor makes it seem likely that here also the only intention was to present a decorative display. The variation in the treatment and selection of the animals in the Orpheus mosaics laid by the Cirencester school and its disregard of the emphasis placed on *oves* in Christian contexts elsewhere seem decisively against the identification of the Woodchester Orpheus with Christ unless some specifically Christian emblem was originally present.

The purely decorative effect of the Woodchester mosaic is undeniable, and it could have been appreciated simply and straightforwardly as the mythical Orpheus' power to calm all nature (compare Stern 1955, 64). The particular problem which then arises is to account for the displacement of Orpheus from the centre of the floor. Professor Toynbee (1973, 293) suggested that a fountain may have occupied the central position, and the fish and star motifs would have been appropriate decoration for this. The association of fountains with mosaics showing Orpheus elsewhere had already been noted by Stern (1955, 65–6). At Woodchester limited excavation has the potential to prove or disprove the suggestion and it is to be hoped that this will take place.

One feature found at Hinton St. Mary, Frampton, and Withington, but apparently absent at Woodchester, is a representation of the struggle of life. This is found at Horkstow in the chariot-race panel in the same room as an Orpheus mosaic which itself incorporates the motif of deer pursued by hounds (Smith 1983, pl. CCVIII, 1–2). Dr Smith (1976, 26) has pointed out the relevance of the trio of mosaics in this large room to the theme of salvation, but because of damage to the central area it is not possible to decide confidently between a Christian and pagan significance.

Conclusion

The principle followed in this paper has been to look for unity of conception in any mosaic which is suspected of not being simply decorative. If there is a meaning in one motif in a design it ought to be extendable to all the major motifs. Either its meaning will be repeated or it will be part of a larger theme. It seems possible to apply this successfully to the Christian pavements at Hinton St. Mary and Frampton which incorporate the Chi-Rho. Some of the scenes in these pavements and other analogous motifs are found in mosaics with no apparent Christian significance and analysis of these floors has revealed a recurring pagan concern with salvation or some sort of apotheosis, with many of its representations derived from the repertory of funerary sculpture. One is left wondering whether the age of Constantine and his sons in Roman Britain should be characterized as an age of spirituality or an age of anxiety.

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Ita intellexit numine inductus tuo: some personal interpretations of deity in Roman religion

Martin Henig

The student of the archaeology of Roman Britain is not necessarily concerned just with parochial matters. Marcus Caecilius Donatianus' syncretistic poem (*RIB* 1791) set up at Carvoran sometime between AD 212 and 217 equates Virgo Caelestis, the punic Tanit, with Dea Syria, Pax, Virtus and Ceres. Donatianus, it seems, was a North African and he was probably prefect of the Syrian unit *cohors I Hamiorum Sagittariorum* (Stephens 1984). Some sort of dynastic compliment to the Severan House, and to Julia Domna in particular may be indicated, but the poem in general points to private piety. This sort of aretology belongs to a familiar class of syncretistic document of which that dictated by Isis to the sleeping ass Lucius (Apuleius, *Met.* XI, 5) is the most famous. If such documents are taken at face value, they indicate the living nature of revelation bestowed on mankind by the gods.

The concept of religious choice, implying the freedom of individuals to discover and then define the nature of deity for themselves, is foreign to the revealed faiths of the West today. In the Roman world, provided that traditional practices were not challenged (as they were above all by the Christians), every man was free to define the nature of the gods as he wished. For example he could equate deities one with the other, a process we call syncretism, or he could discover new, previously unknown gods. Gnostic writings exemplify one line of speculation which draws on a tradition as old as the Greek mysteries to find hidden meanings in texts and through acquired knowledge to achieve salvation.[1] However Gnosticism frequently uses Jewish and Christian elements, that is elements drawn from religious systems which refused to merge with others that existed in the Levant, and these often give Gnostic writings a rather different flavour from that of entirely pagan speculations. Furthermore there are also strong links with magic, exemplified by texts and amulets designed to control the powers. Gnostic Christianity no doubt marked the extreme limit of the concern of monotheists with the contemporary thought of the gentiles around them, but it seems to the writer that Pauline Christianity, the religion which developed in the second half of the first century AD, was not untouched by it.

New gods in the Roman Empire

As already implied, Christianity hardly belongs here, and yet it is hard to see how the claim made for Jesus of Nazareth to partake of the same or similar nature as God could have arisen in an entirely Jewish environment where expectations were fixed on a prophetic leader or Messiah. If Geza Vermes is right (1973), the historical Jesus may be seen as a charismatic healer and teacher within the traditions of the pious and provincial Judaism of Galilee. By the time of Nero the experiences of Paul and of gentile converts in particular led to the perception of Jesus as the Christ (Tacitus, *Annals* XV, 44), and he came to be thought of and addressed in the language which contemporary pagans used for their gods (Vermes 1973, 213 and Grahame Soffe, this volume). Leaving aside a few possible Late Antique instances until later, Jesus was not venerated by pagans, which is hardly surprising considering that he was a Jew (i.e. a 'misanthropist') who had been executed as rebel, real or potential. However we do have at least one fascinating glimpse of how a pagan, a page in the paedagogium at Rome, saw a contemporary worshipping this new 'god'. The crucified Christ is portrayed, upon a wall, with the head of an ass and a certain Alexamenos is adoring him. The sketch is accompanied by a graffito *'Αλεξάμενος σέβετε θεόν* (Dinkler 1967, 150-53 pl. xiii, fig. 33 a).

Another example of a new god, this time within the pagan tradition is Hadrian's youthful favourite Antinous who was drowned in the Nile in mysterious and tragic circumstances in October AD 130 and was thereafter the recipient of unusual honours, not simply those accorded to a hero, although we find these, but to a god. The story has recently been examined with great good sense by Royston Lambert (1984). He favours the hypothesis found in the ancient sources that the youth deliberately drowned himself as a propitiatory sacrifice to save the emperor and the Empire from certain perceived dangers, probably the onset of Hadrian's illness and the threat of serious crop-failure in Egypt. The influence of the other-worldly Eleusinian mysteries on his heightened sensibilities and local Egyptian beliefs which identified those who drowned in the Nile with the god Osiris may have had an effect on Antinous' mind and persuaded him that such a death was the way of salvation.[2]

For our purposes here the great interest of Antinous's death is how it was received by contemporaries: the mixture of spontaneous adulation for the new god and imperial encouragement, and even more the signs that he continued to be venerated long

afterwards. In Egypt Hadrian founded the city of Antinoopolis whose presiding god was Osirisantinous. Here we find a range of religious manifestations connected with him, an oracle, ecstatic festivals and games. As we might imagine, the cult here was very long lived.

The veneration of Antinous was widespread in the Greek East both as hero and god. Most of the statues and coins date to the latter part of Hadrian's reign but not all: Bithynion, his home city struck issues with his effigy down to the reign of Caracalla (Blum 1914; Lambert 1984, 194, also 238–42). Vigorous denunciations of the cult by Clemens Alexandrinus, Tertullian and others may serve to reveal its popularity. The early fathers were only too aware of the parallel between Christ and Antinous as saviours. Antinous fitted into pagan religious practice well for he could be syncretized with saviour and veneration gods including Dionysos Zagraeus, Hermes and Silvanus. Here it is interesting to look at what are perhaps the latest material manifestations of his cult to have survived. These are contorniate medallions struck in the fourth century which hail him as a god and equate him with Pan (Blum 1914, 58 and pl. V, 12). Thus Antinous ultimately came to be associated with the same rustic world as that represented by the cult of Faunus attested by the Thetford Treasure (Catherine Johns, this volume).

Another deity, or manifestation of deity, who appeared some decades later than Antinous, makes a contrast with him. While much about Antinous remains obscure there is no real hint of fraud in his cult. If we believe our major source, Lucian, the moral basis of Alexander's serpent-oracle at Abonouteichos was exceedingly dubious. The 'prophet' Alexander pretended to be inspired to find a snake called Glycon, theriomorphically equated with Asklepios. In fact he recovered a baby snake from a goose-egg, previously planted by him on a building site. Subsequently he substituted a full-grown serpent and by means of an elaborate mask and a speaking tube arranged that it uttered oracles. Glycon appears on the local coinage of Abonouteichos until well into the third century (Waddington 1904, 129–32, pl. xvii, nos. 1–22) and his image has been recognized, probably correctly, in a marble serpent from Constanza in Romania (see MacMullen 1981, 120–1). Like the cult of Antinous, that of Glycon was widely propagated. While the emperor and powerful aristocratic groups in the Eastern provinces played a key role in fostering the former, the cause of Glycon was taken up by an eminent consular P. Mummius Sisenna Rutilianus, incidentally a one-time legate of the Sixth Legion at York (AD 135) who 'was crazy about religion and had the most fantastic beliefs. He only had to see a stone with a fillet tied around it, or daubed with olive-oil and he would fall down and venerate it for ages' (Lucian, *Alexander* 30). According to Lucian (*Alex.* 35), Rutilianus actually married Alexander's daughter in the belief that she was the daughter of the moon. There seems to have been a liturgy and sacred drama associated with the cult wherein the borderline between the world of mortals and that of the gods was kept deliberately indistinct. Lucian tells us that Marcus Aurelius and his priests actually took advice from the Oracle of Abonouteichos during the Marcomannic War (*Alex.* 48). The god commanded two lions to be cast into the Ister in order to ensure Imperial victory but, in the event, the lions were killed by the enemy and the Romans were defeated.

These three instances are perhaps the most dramatic of new gods appearing in the Empire, if only because of the publicity – and notoriety – associated with them. There are, of course, other instances of cults being fostered and spread by individuals, mainly emperors, who had the power to do so: Isis by the Flavians, Elagabal by Elagabalus and Sol Invictus by Aurelian and his successors are examples.[3] Such deities may not have been new in the sense that they originated in the Roman period but many people must have perceived them for the first time. The dynamic, oriental cults (those of Isis and Mithras in particular) certainly appealed to individuals seeking a fresh, personal relationship with the gods. This does not mean that the ancestral cults of Greece and Rome had failed, for devotees of such foreign gods did not abandon their traditional devotions and, in any case, the number of adherents (e.g. non-Egyptian votaries of Isis) has often been exaggerated. Nevertheless, the *Golden Ass* of Apuleius is instructive in informing us of emotional and intellectual curiosity amongst at least the upper reaches of society, which may be taken as a sign of religious health. Much has been written on the topic and here a few instances will suffice; for them I have limited my field of enquiry to Britain both because this insular material is less well-known and because it leads naturally to a consideration of some curious and important mosaics which seem to relate to eclectic cult practices in Britain during the fourth century.

New images of the divine in Roman Britain

Antinous, Glycon and Jesus of Nazareth were all products of a complex Mediterranean civilization. Britain was part of the Celtic world where deities were hardly envisaged in the same way, as universal and beneficent powers, until after the Roman conquest. Dr Graham Webster has indeed pointed out some of the problems involved (this volume).

Visiting Romans, soldiers and traders, settlers in the coloniae, administrators and travellers would simply worship obvious universal powers such as Jupiter or Fortuna, or gods and genii of the place, often ascertaining the local name of a god and interpreting it; thus for instance Cocidius was interpreted as Mars or

Silvanus, Maponus as Apollo and Sulis as Minerva. The *interpretatio romana* allowed cultural assimilation to take place but did not necessarily imply deeper obligations towards the gods than the purely contractual.

Sometimes, however, individuals introduced other elements into the cults of the North-West which allowed more complex attitudes to develop. In Britain the outstanding case is Brigantia, presumably the eponymous goddess of the Brigantes. Our one certain representation of this deity is a relief from Birrens which is, to say the least, highly surprising in its iconography (Toynbee 1962, 157 and pl. 77 no. 80). The goddess wears the mural crown of a city tyche, as might be expected in the case of a territorial goddess. She is endowed with the wings of Victory but otherwise appears in the persona of Minerva with gorgon aegis, spear and shield. The unusual features are perhaps the globe proclaiming universal rule in her left hand and the aniconic stone by her side, which is to be associated with an oriental deity, in this case possibly Juno Caelestis. The accompanying inscription tells us that the relief was set up to Brigantia by Amandus the *Architectus* (presumably an engineer employed in construction work during Severus' campaigns in Scotland) by command of the goddess (*RIB* 2091).[4] Gaius Julius Apolinaris, a centurion of the Sixth Legion, set up an altar to Jupiter Dolichenus, Caelestis Brigantia and Salus at Corbridge (*RIB* 1131) at the behest of the god (presumably Dolichenus). Both of these cases recall Donatianus' poem both in their allusion to Caelestis and in the religious attitude they display, in that men receive and act upon personal messages from the gods. Norah Jolliffe (1941)—and I have followed her (Henig 1984a, 212–3)—sees Brigantia as more or less an official creation of the Severan period. An altar from near Brampton (*RIB* 2066), set up by the procurator Marcus Cocceius Nigrinus to Dea Nympha Brigantia, was vowed for the welfare and safety of Caracalla, probably in 212 after the overthrow of Geta's supposed coup. This and a somewhat earlier altar from Greetland, Yorkshire, erected in AD 205 by Titus Aurelius Aurelianus who describes himself as *Magister Sacrorum*, to Dea Victoria Brigantia and the Imperial Numina (*RIB* 627) point in such a direction but other dedications are hardly likely to have been officially inspired to any great extent. Brigantia was useful to the Severan regime as a focus for loyalty in northern Britain during a period in which the island was being divided into two provinces but the goddess catered for religious needs as much as political ones.[5] The introduction of an oriental element in the cult of a native territorial goddess is not, as it happens, without parallel, for Noreia, the goddess of Noricum, was conflated with Isis (Alföldy 1974, 194 and 240, pl. 14).

Ralph Merrifield reminds us of another case of a localized syncretism. While he does not accept the London Huntsman as depicting Attis in the traditional manner, he allows an oriental element in the creation of his iconography. Admittedly Professor Harris in his paper is doubtful even of this. There are clearly problems but I still believe that the figure may have been regarded as Attis by his votaries. In the first place some of the other objects in the Southwark cache of sculptures are funerary in nature and these would make explicable the presence of a god who had funerary connections, not least through his guild of *dendrophori*. Secondly the Verulamium pot to which Merrifield makes allusion, showing a running figure wearing a Phrygian cap, must portray a god known at Verulamium. We now have not only the old hypothesis that the triangular temple belonged to such an eastern deity but also a guild of *dendrophori* from Verulamium attested by a graffito on a pot from Dunstable (Hassall & Tomlin 1980, 406–7 no. 7). Merrifield himself points out (pers. comm.) that the Southwark find is from a location beside a road out of London, a similar position in fact to that of the Verulamium temple, being on the periphery of the settlement and thus not far from the cemeteries.[6] We may further note that the cognomen *Matrona* on a fragmentary funerary inscription from the cache might be a theophoric name derived from the Magna Mater. Nevertheless the Southwark and Bevis Marks figures and the Goldsmiths' Hall relief are no conventional Attis type but represent symbiosis between Attis and a local deity.

Bacchus, too, has many of the characteristics of an eastern god, and his hitherto unregarded importance within Roman Britain is the subject of Valerie Hutchinson's paper. The great figured capital from Cirencester (Phillips 1976) which bears images of Bacchus himself, a maenad (perhaps Ariadne?), Silenus and the defeated adversary of Bacchus, Lycurgus, is thought to be part of a Jupiter column. If so it is probable that the man who commissioned it invested a traditional form, a statue of Jupiter as a sky-god, with a deeper, more personal meaning. The non-appearance of Bacchus on official inscriptions from Britain (which above all is the reason for his neglect) is to be explained simply by the fact that he was a god of personal fulfilment, especially in terms of the feast and of salvation. The public expression of his power, and the capital must come from a public monument, can only be the result of deliberate choice.

Personal choice is easier to find the higher up the social scale one looks. There is little doubt that the wealthiest centre of 'local' cult so far excavated is that of Sulis Minerva (which Professor Barry Cunliffe writes about elsewhere in this volume). The goddess, who seems to have appeared in person before her votaries (*RIB* 153), was venerated in a temple of Roman type embellished with sculpture, notably with a pediment which portrays a mask of Medusa conflated with that of Neptune. These two aspects are symbolized in addition by two helmets, one in dolphin form (for Neptune), the

other with an owl-crest (for Minerva). As Barry Cunliffe has pointed out, the mask has a solar aspect both in the nimbate appearance of the hair and in the minute sun in the apex of the pediment above it. The explanation of Neptune's presence may lie in a reminiscence of the west pediment of the Parthenon: a temple dedicated to Neptune and Minerva at Chichester (*RIB* 91) by the authority of the client-king Cogidubnus, raises the possibility that the same (Rome-educated) ruler was influential at Bath. The solar connection is in part explained by a Roman attempting to understand etymology: Solis and Sulis sound similar. In front of the temple stood the Great Altar. Who selected the deities figured on it, including Jupiter, Apollo and Hercules as well as Bacchus (not the most obvious choice in this context as explained above) and Venus (or Rosmerta)? The final choice was surely made by whoever commissioned the altar; perhaps the very person who authorised the building of the temple itself.

While it need not be doubted that deep thought went into the sculptural programme of the Bath temple and its later embellishments, we are not faced with the recondite theology of the Housesteads Mithraeum for example. Here, as mentioned by Professor Harris, a fine relief portraying Mithras born from an egg holding in his right hand a sword and in his left a torch, within an elliptical zodiac, is accompanied by two dedications to *Mithras Saecularis* (*RIB* 1599 and 1600). The former was dedicated by Litorius Pacatianus, a *beneficiarius consularis*, who may have been involved in the foundation of the Mithraeum. Charles Daniels portrays him as a cosmopolitan figure, holder of 'advanced religio-philosophical concepts' (Daniels 1962, 112). He further suggests that a small altar (*RIB* 1601) which he reads as 'Soli Herion v.l.m.', may be the dedication of 'a slave or servant acquired by Pacatianus in some province where he was more likely to pick up his sophisticated beliefs than in Britain'. Professor Merkelbach has suggested (on the basis of a photograph) that the altar reads 'Soli Hiperioni v.l.m.' (Merkelbach 1983). I am not convinced by the final 'i' of 'Hiperioni' but the name Hiperion as the dedicator makes good sense, for Pacatianus (or whoever it was) was just the sort of man to bestow a religious name, that of the titan father of the Sun, Moon and Dawn, on his servant. Even within Mithraism Pacatianus was probably not an inventor but he and his kind were very willing to take esoteric beliefs from elsewhere. The closest parallel to the Housesteads relief seems to me to be the Modena relief again mentioned by Professor Harris, showing a winged youth carrying a sceptre and thunderbolt. He has the hooves of Pan and rays of light emanate from his head. A serpent twines itself around his body representing Time in the Orphic rhapsodies: the figure with his syncretistic attributes is Protogonos or Phanes. Above and below him are the half-shells of the primeval egg and surrounding him the oval frame of the zodiac (Daniels 1962, 109–11; West 1983, 70 and 253–5 pl. 6).

Advanced thinkers in the Empire, as manifested in the writings of Neoplatonists and Stoics, and composers of the Orphic rhapsodies, were fascinated by the cosmos. The magnificent cosmological pavement found in a house next to the Mithraeum at Merida (Quet 1981) is thought to have belonged to a Stoic. Tempting as it would be to ascribe this fine work of art to a Mithraic circle, Quet concludes that the close proximity is coincidental. Both Stoics and Mithraists were nourished by the same cosmological speculations, elaborated in a Hellenized, but Latin-speaking cultural milieu (Quet 1981, 208). We may imagine philosophical and religious discussions between neighbours at the same friendly and constructive level at which intellectuals today criticize and adopt each other's ideas. The scene of a meeting of friends in second or early third century Merida leads me naturally onwards to survey the evidence for such sophistication somewhat later in Britain during its fourth century 'Golden Age'.

Mosaics and mysteries in Roman Britain

Unlike statues in Mithraea, mosaics in villas were intended to be seen by a wide range of people; not only friends, relatives, and dependants of the owner but also by a far wider circle of individuals amongst the aristocracy and gentry. Villa art lacks the formality of public art (such as monumental arches and the *scaenae* of theatres) but it is by no means as private as we are inclined to think. In Late Antiquity, especially, the great villas must often have functioned in many respects like medieval castles or Elizabethan great houses and the events of everyday life within them may have become orchestrated in a kind of pageant. Indeed, it will be suggested here that some so-called villas such as that at Frampton in Dorset (Lysons 1808; Farrar 1956) may have existed largely to serve the spiritual and ceremonial needs of their owners and friends.

It is seldom realized how extraordinary are the fourth century mosaics of Britain in their iconographic interest. They compare and often more than compare with contemporary floors in North Africa and Syria (see Dunbabin 1978; Levi 1947), provinces which were in other respects richer at this time. The phenomenon is scarcely heralded by earlier developments in the province; though we may note that at Verulamium floors depicting a bust of Neptune or Oceanus, a bivalve shell and a cantharus with dolphins entwining the handles may refer to the journey of the soul after death to the Blessed Isles (Toynbee 1962, 196–7, nos. 177, 178, 180), while at Cirencester, the Dyer Street pavement illustrates the legend of the death of Actaeon (symbolizing devouring death) and various figures from the Bacchic thiasos (emblems of liberation and salvation) and was likewise more than a pretty decoration (Smith 1977, pl. 6.xii). It has, indeed, been suggested that the great Bacchic mosaic in Cologne

dating to the first decades of the third century illustrates various aspects of Bacchic cult and may have had a serious religious significance (Horn 1972).

New developments, including new developments in iconography, probably came to Britain from the continent at the beginning of the fourth century. This has been suggested with regard to Bignor (Johnson 1984). The significance of these mosaics is discussed by Ernest Black (this volume). The history of mosaics in Britain thereafter is, however, an internal matter with workshops established in various centres in the province, each with its own distinctive repertory (Smith 1984).

The Durnovarian school which flourished largely after the middle of the century is especially interesting from an iconographic and religious point of view. A good starting point is the Hinton St. Mary mosaic, for it is hardly possible to deny that the main subject of the larger section of the floor —a head of Christ with Chi-Rho behind—has religious overtones (Toynbee 1964) and it is tempting to restore the rooms in which the mosaic was laid as a chapel with a narthex. Two considerations should be taken into account before doing so. The first is purely negative: we know very little of other buildings on the site and by implication of other mosaics which may exist or may have existed (Painter 1967–8). The second is more serious and concerns the motif in the centre of the floor of the ante-chamber or narthex, Bellerophon, on Pegasus, spearing the Chimaera. Janet Huskinson has pointed out that this legend was not normally part of the Christian repertory of pagan themes (1974, 73–8). In Britain there are three apparent cases of Bellerophon appearing in a Christian context, but at Lullingstone the Bellerophon mosaic is earlier than the painted chapel on the upper floor, while it will be argued below that the so-called villa at Frampton is not Christian despite the presence of a Chi-Rho on an apse mosaic off its main hall. At the very least, it seems to me, there is an aspect of original thought at Hinton St. Mary in juxtaposing Christ with Bellerophon. In Christian terms such religious speculation verges on heterodoxy, especially in the light of the fact that the sacred image and monogram are here placed on the floor. However it is charitable to explain the device as a borrowing by a local Christian from the rich Graeco-Roman iconography of contemporary insular art (Frend 1982, 7–8), for other devices on the Hinton mosaic, a tree of life, hounds chasing deer (an allegory of the pains of the Christian's life in this world, beset as it is by sin) and de-personalized wind-gods or seasons in the corners are decidedly neutral and orthodox.

It is certainly in great contrast to the imagery used on the Frampton floors, though Bellerophon, the Chi-Rho and hunting scenes all occur here too. We know more of the Frampton buildings, which occupy a low-lying site by the river Frome. Lysons did not think it was a villa at all and R.A.H. Farrar follows him in suggesting a religious use for the site. 'The "Frampton villa" ... if its true nature could be determined, could yet contribute materially to our knowledge of early Christianity in Britain and its relation to the pagan cults' (Farrar 1956, 83). The mosaics, reburied or destroyed, were recorded by Lysons. Parts of one important mosaic found two years before he came to the site he restored in outline from a fine coloured drawing by James Engleheart now in the Dorset County Museum (Henig 1984b).

Leaving aside the Christian element for the moment, we may make a perambulation of the various rooms. In the main southern hall, the Chi-Rho looks on to a head of Neptune spewing forth dolphins. The motif is accompanied by a hexameter verse;

> Neptuni vertex sortiti mobile ventis
> Scutum cui caerulea est frons delphinis cincta duobus.
>
> 'The head of Neptune to whose lot fell the kingdom of the sea scoured by the winds is figured here, his deep-blue brow girt by a pair of dolphins'.

Within the border we find a central roundel showing Bellerophon and the Chimaera. Only traces of mosaic remained in the lunettes in the centre of each side but one included dolphins. Of the four corner panels two were complete and must show Paris with the nymph Oenone and Endymion discovered by the moon goddess (Stupperich 1980, 298). The third scene is very fragmentary, a child in front of a seated woman. Could it be one of the children of Jason and Medea bearing poisoned gifts to Glauce? Unfortunately the fourth panel is missing, but it seems likely that the general theme is unhappy love and death. Bellerophon takes the heroic path, the aim of virtuous mortals. The dolphin border is broken on one side, the east, where a youthful figure identified by a verse (now incomplete) as Cupid is depicted flanked by water birds. Here is the vestibule to another chamber, the centre of whose floor is occupied by a representation of Bacchus with his panther. Cupid is an entirely appropriate herald to this scene both as a member of the thiasos and also because he can stand for the infant Bacchus himself (Stuveras 1969, 13–31). From here we can proceed north down a long corridor. Unfortunately the mosaic panel in its centre was missing but the room at the end certainly refers to the realm of Neptune with a head of the god in its central panel and wind-gods and dolphins in subsidiary ones.

From the room with Bacchus and the panther another corridor seems to lead off eastwards (though Lysons' plan is not very clear as to how it links on). It leads to a chamber likewise laid with mosaic portraying the winds, though in the centre stands Bacchus epitomizing not simply prowess like Bellerophon but power. In four panels, one at the centre of each side, we see scenes taken in all likelihood from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Henig 1984b). They show the monster-slayers Cadmus (*Met.* III, 90–2) and Perseus

(*Met.* IV, 706–36) and the inspired seers Aeneas (*Met.* XIV, 113–5) and, probably, Tages (*Met.* XV, 553–9). In another part of the chamber is a much damaged panel portraying Venus surrounded by fabulous sea-beasts.

We do not know enough to interpret the mosaic in detail, but the subjects clearly have to do with both the sea and the land thiasoi. We might wonder whether Bacchus shown with the winds in the chamber of the *Metamorphoses* is not a subtle reference to the famous story of the god, captured by pirates, transforming his captors into dolphins (see *Met.* III, 597–691), who appear in other rooms. At any rate Bacchus, Neptune and Venus are deities of fecundity, rebirth and salvation.[7] Surely Bacchus who appears three times (if Cupid is counted), Neptune who is shown twice and even Venus are as important here, and were to the original owner, as Christ to whom allusion is also made once? Indeed Brandenburg (1968) argues that it is the Christian motif which is out of place here and Huskinson (1974, 76–7) concurs.

The Christian element may be regarded in any one of four ways. It might be later than the rest of the mosaic decor. This was Lysons' view but it does not stand up to art-historical scrutiny. It might reflect the personal beliefs of a Christian member of the owner's family, who could sometimes use the relevant room as a church, but this suggestion is much weakened if Frampton is not really a villa. It is possible that in the words of Huskinson, we 'have an owner, pagan or Christian, trying to secure for his household the best protection of both worlds' (1974, 77). Finally, it might be suggested that the owner had a heterodox approach to religion and treated Christ here no more nor less than as a pagan god. This last, I believe to be the probable explanation. In support of it, we may cite a passage in the late fourth century *Historia Augusta* which purports to inform us about the religious beliefs and practices of the 'ideal' emperor, Severus Alexander. As testimony about the third century it is probably without much value but the passage becomes highly interesting and significant when it is seen against the milieu of the society for which this strange 'history' was written. Alexander is said to have had images in his house shrine of Apollonius of Tyana, Abraham, Orpheus, Alexander the Great and Christ (Hist. Aug., *Sev. Alex.* XXXIX, 31). E. J. Bickerman (1973, 27–31) has pointed out that the pagan figures in the list were not regarded as fully divine but as holy men with thaumaturgic powers ('animos sanctores'), and Christ is clearly being added to this group. Significantly 'Aelius Lampridius' tells us that the emperor wished to build a temple to Christ but was dissuaded because it was ascertained that those who became Christians would abandon the other temples (Hist. Aug., *Sev. Alex.* XXIX, 43). The second part of this statement recalls the Theodosian assault on the pagan shrines, but the first hints at a widespread situation for which we have a certain amount of evidence from Britain. A gold ring from Silchester carries on its bezel the name and portrait of Venus, but around its hoop are the words SENICIANE VIVAS IN DEO). The apparently Christian legend on the hoop is often said to be secondary (Toynbee 1953, 19–21, fig. 6) but there is no proof of this and it is possible that the juxtaposition of pagan and Christian elements is deliberate and reveals what, from an orthodox point of view, could be regarded as alarmingly syncretistic tendencies. Another case of what may have been confusion in the minds of worshippers is perhaps to be deduced in the case of the Water Newton votive leaves or feathers, silver plaques which recall the very similar objects from Barkway and elsewhere dedicated to pagan deities. As Professor Thomas writes, citing John Chandler, 'the very existence of these objects suggests a notion of Christianity current in Britain which would have horrified the Church leaders on the continent (1981, 121).

It is even possible that there were nominal Christians in Britain who visited temples—otherwise how can we explain the superscription of a Bath curse, 'Seu gentilis seu Christianus' (Hassall & Tomlin 1982, 406 and fig. 32 no. 7)? Curses worked when society as a whole believed in them, and some Christians may have been very well aware of what went on around the spring of Sulis Minerva at Bath and felt uneasy if they excited the wrath of the goddess. Such a state of affairs is very different from the literary and romantic love of myth by cultivated Christians such as Ausonius, tutor to the emperor Gratian (Frend 1982, 8). Ausonius raised no threat to the continued supremacy of the church but the 'Christian syncretist', by ultimately denying the uniqueness of Christ in a world of other saviour gods, was in effect a pagan. With regard to Frampton we may conclude that the combination of pagan themes with the Christian monogram certainly demonstrates a breadth of outlook which is the mark of an independent thinker.

The Frampton complex is comparable with another suite of rooms at Brading on the Isle of Wight (Price & Hilton Price 1881). The mosaic in the main double hall here contains in one part nereids and tritons, relating to the marine thiasos, and then four scenes of myth separated by winds (as was also the case in the room of the *Metamorphoses* at Frampton). Three of the scenes can be identified with some certainty, Lycurgus and Ambrosia, Attis and Sagaritis (Ling 1981), Ceres and Triptolemus and a scene of amorous pursuit, perhaps Apollo and Daphne. We cannot do more than guess their meaning but we could see Ambrosia and Triptolemus as representative of keeping faith in the gods and Attis and the running girl (Daphne?) as rejecting the divine. The Medusa head in the centre of the floor recurs again in the hand of Perseus who is rescuing Andromeda on the only surviving figure scene in the other section of the mosaic. Between the two areas is the figure of an astrologer, perhaps representing one of the holy men of Late Antiquity imbued by the knowledge and power of the divine.

A corridor leading off from this Perseus and Andromeda room, has an Orpheus mosaic set half way along it, at the point where indeed the visitor gained entrance to the entire suite of rooms. This mosaic (Smith 1983, 328) is unusual in a Romano-British context for the beasts are grouped around Orpheus rather than encircling him as, for instance, on the Corinian mosaics, and instead of a hound for a familiar he has a fox. At the end of the corridor is a small chamber with a mosaic (Fig. 1). In the centre is a human bust, apparently undraped and with long hair and holding a staff: he is probably the god Bacchus holding a thyrsus. To one side is a small building and a tree. A fox is about to enter the building, and it is tempting to see the creature here as referring in some way to Orpheus. The building presumably offers protection, perhaps symbolizing the powers of salvation to be obtained from hymns and prayers associated with Orpheus. Beyond Bacchus is another house with a ladder leading up to its entrance. On one side are two ferocious griffins, bearers of destruction and death, on the other a figure with the head of a cockerel and perhaps also avian feet, but with human arms and wearing a tunic. This is probably the figure who often appears on magical amulets, where he has serpentiform feet and is frequently called Abraxas though this is not his true name; Iao, the name which accompanies him with equal frequency, seems at least as appropriate (see Johns & Potter 1983, 30–1, 88–9, no. 13). With the exception of a bronze figurine from Avenches (Leibundgut 1976, 38–9, no. 21) this seems to be the only representation of Iao-Abraxas outside amulets. However, he is the subject of an Oracle of Apollo reported by Macrobius.

> 'Those who have learned the mysteries should hide the unsearchable secrets, but, if the understanding is small and the mind weak then ponder this: that Iao is the supreme god of all gods; in winter, Hades; at spring's beginning Zeus; the Sun in summer; and in autumn the splendid Iao.' (*Saturnalia* I, 18, 20)

This passage forms part of a fictitious discourse by the late pagan statesman and intellectual Vettius Agorius Praetextatus. It occurs in response to a question by Avienus, as to how the sun god may be equated with a number of different deities, amongst them Bacchus (Liber), Orpheus, Mars, Mercury and Aesculapius. Is it not possible that the owner of the Brading villa treated those who came to dine with him and to venerate the gods with a discourse on the symbolism of his floors bringing in Iao, Orpheus, Bacchus, the Perseus myth and other assorted myths and items of sacred lore?[8]

Bryn Walters has recently rediscovered and excavated another interesting pavement at Littlecote in Wiltshire (Walters 1984). The site, as at Frampton, is low lying, by a river. One section of the floor contains two oblong panels, the first of which contains two dolphins and a pair of confronted sea-panthers with a cantharus between them; the second has two land panthers and a cantharus: they stand for the sea thiasos and the land thiasos. Then comes a stylized portrayal of a pool of water, perhaps the pool of memory, and (within the tri-conch chamber) Orpheus surrounded by the figures of Aphrodite, Nemesis, Demeter and Persephone standing for the Seasons; beside them are wild beasts which represent the transformations of Dionysus-Bacchus when he was fleeing from the Titans. The shell motifs in the apse are deliberately, and brilliantly, ambiguous. Shells are associated with rebirth but these shells may represent solar rays, while the little heads shown at the points where the rays converge are those of panthers and are manifestly Bacchic. While the explanation so far provided may not satisfy every scholar, it seems to me substantially on the right lines for those of us whose 'understanding is small'. The Littlecote cult room, in all probability a product of the pagan revival under Julian, simply displays themes which the owner wished to display to his guests, fellow votaries of a Neoplatonic cult, perhaps at sacred meals held there.

The sort of cult being envisaged here and at Frampton and Brading differs from that at public temples such as the one at Lydney (Wheeler & Wheeler 1932) which was indeed given a mosaic at this time, dedicated to Nodens by the officials of the cult, out of offerings. Alongside public obeisance to traditional and local gods we find esoteric and obscure cults followed privately in situations where elevated conversation, banquets and acts of devotion were inextricably combined.

We get a glimpse of the activities of one such group in the mysteries mosaic in the Kornmarkt at Trier (Moreau 1960) where a mythological scene figures Leda and Jupiter (Iobis) as an eagle together with the eggs containing Castor, Pollux and Helen, engendered by their union. In addition Agamemmon is portrayed. The remainder of the floor depicts members of the cult and most interestingly a ritual in which a vessel, perhaps containing wine, is being passed from one person to another. The presiding personage is apparently called Qodvoldeus, literally 'What (the) god wishes', and the line of text describing the scene says

> Qodvoldeus Andesasi pone Felox some dix(it)
>
> 'Qodvoldeus says Andesasus lay it down, Felix take it up'.

Both Andesasus and Felix are shown elsewhere on the mosaic (see Moreau 1960, 14). The ritual fomula echoes some lines in Arnobius (V,26) giving the words of an Eleusinian rite;

> Ieiunavi atque ebibi cyceonem; ex cista sumpsi et in calathum misi, accepi rursus, in cistulam transtuli.
>
> 'I have fasted and drunk the *cyceon*. I have taken it out of the cista and put it into the basket (calathus), taken it again and put it into the little box (cistula).'

Objects indicative of the celebration of such rites are

only likely to have survived by chance. The recent find at Thetford on which Catherine Johns is so enlightening (this volume) may present us with examples of cult-equipment used by a similar late Roman *Collegium* to that figured on the Trier mosaic, which doubtless met in the room that contained it. Here Praetextatus would not have felt out of place.

In Macrobius' work (*Saturnalia* I, 17) Praetextatus gives us a list of epithets to be applied to Apollo, including Loxias, Delius, Phoebus, Phanes and Lycius. Such attributes and geographical names are not, in any sense, equivalent to the local names of gods such as Maponus into which the Greek and Roman name Apollo translates under the *interpretatio romana*, though we may be closer to such epithets as Cunomaglos (Hound Prince) at Nettleton and Anextiomarus (the Great Deliverer) at South Shields (on which see Graham Webster, this volume). The cult, as revealed by the inscriptions on the Thetford spoons, was concerned with the veneration of an early and fairly obscure Latian deity, but the community which met to worship him and to have a convivial time wine-drinking, as demonstrated by the presence of strainers in the cache, belonged to the Celtic West, and the epithets for Faunus such as Medugenus ('mead begotten') and Ausicus ('long eared') have a local flavour. The names of his votaries are surely *signa*, religious names appropriate to the cult: Agrestius, from agrestis, countryman; Auspicius, auspicious; Ingenua, native; Silviola, from silva, a forest and Persevera, she who has persevered.

The Thetford silver and jewellery belonged, in the opinion of the writer of this paper, to a small pagan religious community. Its meeting place is unknown but there are some grounds for thinking it had some association with Thetford not only because a number of other hoards and finds of coins in the vicinity of Gallows Hill are suggestive of a sanctuary but because the much earlier enclosure excavated beside it seems to me to be sacred in character. However, it is most unlikely that the local godling here was equated with Faunus from the first, and from what we can surmise from the very valuable jewellery and the silver, the objects did not belong to a public cult. In any case long before the time at which the Thetford treasure seems to have been made at the very end of the fourth century, public temple treasures had been confiscated. What we see at Thetford is an essentially private response by local pagans of wealth and perhaps rank, such as we might have expected in villas or in specially built cult rooms near them or on villa estates, here carried out at an old sacred site.

Elsewhere in the Empire we may see the same response in the way in which some pagans literally invited the gods into their houses, just as Proclos did in Athens when he gave Pallas Athena a home after her cult image had been removed from the Parthenon by impious Christians (Marinos, *Proc.* 30). It is true that Garth Fowden makes the point that the mystical Neoplatonic traditions of Iamblichos and Proclos were foreign to the 'highly conservative paganism' of the western aristocracy, such as Virius Nicomachus Flavianus and Vettius Agorius Praetextatus (Bloch 1963), but the fact remains that the holy men (and we may here include the more committed devotees) in both East and West came from very similar, prosperous, high-ranking family backgrounds (Fowden 1982, 40 and 48–51). The mosaics of Frampton, Brading, Littlecote and perhaps some other sites—Horkstow in Lincolnshire springs to mind seem to exemplify this. On certain days of the year these floors provided the settings for elaborate liturgies, processions and feasts. It may be that the frescoes on the walls and the silver plate of the celebrants would have reflected these rites as well: with regard to the latter we may think not only of the Thetford treasure but also of such splendid items of plate as the great Mildenhall dish, the Corbridge lanx and the Achilles and Bacchus and Ariadne dishes from Kaiseraugst. There are, it is true, Christian elements in all three hoards but our assessment of the Frampton mosaic may have suggested, if nothing else, the dangers of speculation in the matter of personal religious allegiancies (Painter 1977, 26, no. 1; Haverfield 1914; Toynbee 1962, 172, no. 108 pl. 121; Kaufmann-Heinimann & Furger 1984, especially pp. 60–65, no. 63 and 50–53, no. 61). A remarkable find, a plate from a grave at Ballâna in Nubia, probably traded or looted from Roman Egypt, is especially worthy of mention in assessing the syncretistic beliefs of Late Antique pagans (K. Shelton in Weitzmann 1970, 189–90, no. 168). It shows a seated figure with the wings of Hermes on head and feet, holding the thyrsus of Dionysos, feeding the serpent of Asklepios and accompanied by the griffin of Apollo. The armour of Ares, the tools of Hephaestos and the lion-skin of Herakles are also represented.

It has often been claimed that the use of classical legend in decoration, on the walls of Pompeian houses for example, are to be read simply as an aspect of the owner's taste and culture (or lack of it). Doubtless this is sometimes true, as in the case of Trimalchio whose walls evidently showed 'the Iliad, the Odyssey, and the gladiatorial show given by Laenas' (Petronius, *Satyricon* 29), or at the most they made simple moral points, evil punished, virtue rewarded. However we must not ignore the deepening religious response of the Roman (and provincial) aristocracies in the fourth century, pagan as well as Christian. For the emperor Julian, Homer, Vergil and other Greek and Roman authors were writers of 'holy writ', and in his rescript on Christian teachers he forbade teachers of rhetoric to practise if they were Christians (Ammianus Marcellinus XXII, 10, 7) on the reasonable grounds that if they were real interpreters of the classics they should imitate the piety of the ancients towards the gods. 'If they think the classics wrong in this respect let them go and teach Matthew and Luke'[9] (see Alan Wardman, this volume).

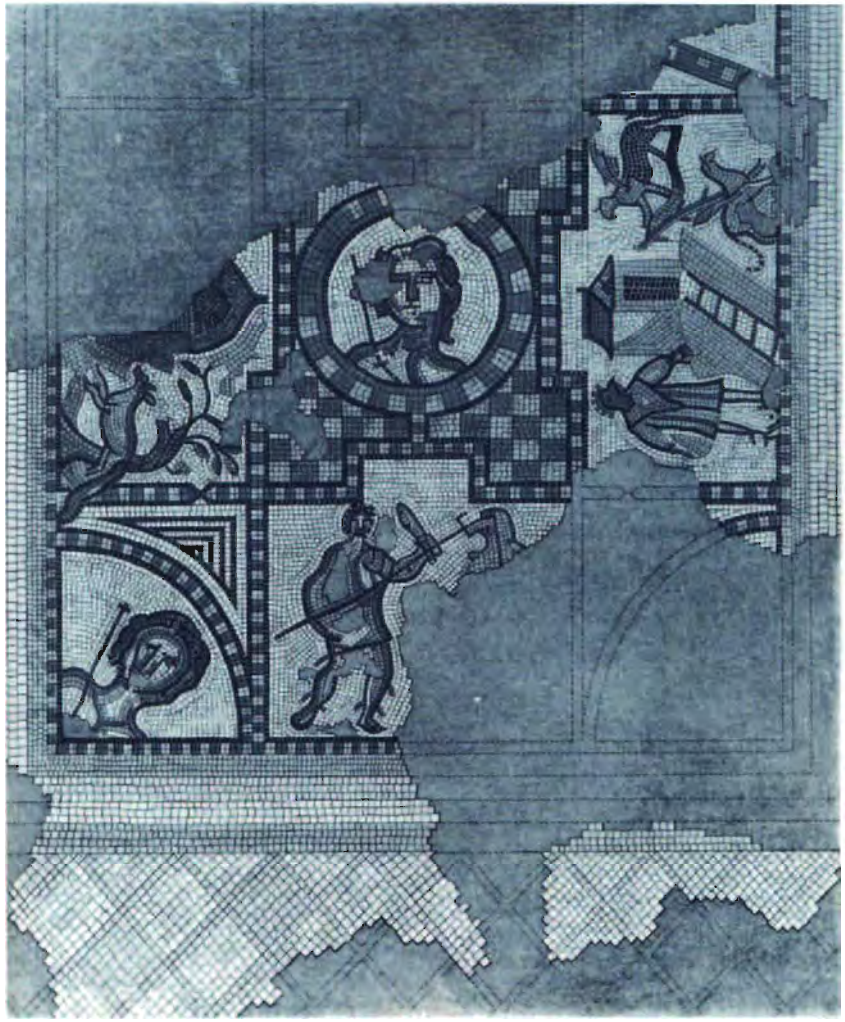

Fig. 1 Mosaic, room of Iao, Brading, Isle of Wight. (From Price & Hilton Price 1881.)

The owner of the Low Ham bathhouse may well have been proclaiming his religious allegiance by having scenes from the Aeneid shown on its mosaic floor (Toynbee 1962, 203–5, no. 200, pl. 235) as, we have suggested, did the owner of the Frampton building with its Ovidian theme on one of the floors.

The beliefs of the Late Antique Christian intellectuals were ultimately dragooned into orthodox paths, though there were different orthodoxies, catholic, arian, monophysite. Those who did not conform were heretics, outside the pale. The pagan lacked such constraints, and could have said with the great twentieth century Jewish philosopher, Martin Buber 'the Word of God crosses my vision like a falling star to whose fire the meteorite will bear witness without making it light up for me, and I myself can only bear witness to the light but not produce the stone and say "This is it".' (Buber 1961, 24).[10] Autority for him rested in the gods who advised and guided him through initiations, prayers, dreams and visions.[11] The lack of temporal organization hastened the decline and ultimate suppression of pagan cults (at least above the peasant level) but in our age which values freedom above other virtues, the search of the individual in antiquity for personal revelation, whether in the context of the Mediterranean world or in that of late Roman Britain, must retain an absorbing interest.

Notes

1. See Mead 1906 for the translated texts of a number of Gnostic tractates. There is a vast and growing literature on the subject cf. for example *The Rediscovery of Gnosticism*. Proceedings of the International Conference on Gnosticism at Yale, 1978 (van Ross, Sharpe & Werblowsky 1980).
2. Other and more material pressures may have been involved, notably the ambiguity of his position at the Imperial Court. He was almost adult yet could not hope for a responsible place as he might have done if he had been a westerner. If Hadrian, *Graeculus* as he was, ever toyed with the idea of raising his favourite to the purple as he did in the case of Aelius Caesar in 136, he was wise enough to reject it, for the Roman world and notably the legions could never have tolerated an obscure Bithynian in such a role. A psychologist who has specialized in adolescent suicide and attempted suicide might have something to tell us here.
3. See also Oleg Neverov (this volume) on Nero's extraordinary self-advertisment of himself as Apollo. There is of course the Imperial Cult, the veneration of deified emperors, but while this met a need (Wardman 1982), the *Divi* never received the spontaneous devotion of the traditional gods.
4. Keppie & Arnold (1984, 7–8, no. 12) date the relief, tentatively, to the Antonine age on the grounds that recent excavation has not yielded any Severan material from the site. Despite this the iconography and style of the piece and the fact that related inscriptions appertaining to Brigantia and to Caelestis in Britain are certainly Severan (see below) leads me to prefer the traditional later date. It seems more than likely to me that Amandus was in charge of an abortive attempt to reconmission the site during the years 208–12 with the divine aid of Brigantia in her victorious martial guise.
5. Marwood (1984) sees in the rise of the cult of Brigantia, a spontaneous identification of interests between the needs of her votaries and those of the State. Certainly inscriptions from Castleford (*RIB* 628) and Adel (*RIB* 630) in Yorkshire and at South Shields (*RIB* 1053) are set up by people of low rank and in the last two cases by non-citizens, while at Slack in Yorkshire Titus Aurelius Quintus venerates Bregans, a male equivalent (RIB 623), a variant hard to explain if the cult of *Dea Brigantia* had been fostered with all the resources of Imperial propaganda.
6. An inscription set up by *dendrophori* was found with an uninscribed altar in the cellar of a building on the road leading to the north-west gate of the vicus of Hedderaheim (Fischer & Schleiermacher 1962).
7. Other elements on the Frampton mosaics include hunting scenes. As at Hinton St. Mary we may follow Eriksen (1980) in seeing them as referring to the pains of life, not necessarily Christian; Eriksen himself cites a Bacchic example (*ibid.*, 46, note 28).
8. The Iao pavement also includes a panel with a gladiatorial scene upon it, presumably a reminder of the uncertainty of this life.
9. Letter 36 in the *Loeb* edition of his works.
10. In other ways, for instance in his rejection of number mysticism (*ibid.*, 29) and more importantly in his persistent monotheism, his thought is very different from those of the late pagan sages.
11. Bloch 1963 is still a most valuable paper on the character and attitudes of the metropolitan aristocracy with its devotion to religion and culture

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Iconography and Context: *ab oriente ad occidentem*

J. R. Harris

On one of the two state chariots from the tomb of Tutankhamūn, the mask of a Bes-god[1] adorns the rear ends of the siding frame, the outer legs of the yoke saddles, and the accompanying bridle bosses.[2] Its apotropaic function is evident, and the grimacing iconographic type, generally shown full-face and with protruding tongue,[3] is common on other objects, notably mirrors, cosmetic pieces, and the headrests and footboards of beds—protecting the mysteries of the reflected image, the eyes, and sleep. In consequence, it is often assumed that the Bes-god is apotropaic in most other contexts, and in particular in the representations of Horus on the crocodiles of which it is an important feature.

These representations (Bonnet 1952, 317–8; Barb 1953a, 15–21), which vary considerably both in size and in material, are principally in the form of stelae, and were designed to have water poured over them, or to be placed in water, which then would absorb the magical virtues of the protective texts with which they were covered. The youthful Horus, shown naked and normally full-face, stands on a pair of crocodiles and grasps in his hands the snakes and scorpions and other obnoxious beasts against which he assures protection, while immediately over his head is the mask of the Bes-god—more often without the protruding tongue (Fig. 1). That this is not at all Bes but the presiding older manifestation of the young god, as spelled out in the text of the Metternich stela,[4] has on occasion been recognized (Budge 1904, vol. 2, 286; Bonnet 1952, 105–6), and in a characteristically wide-ranging article Barb (1953a, 19–21) has identified the cosmic relationship as that of Kronos and Kairos,[5] with the clear implication of consubstantiality: God the Father and God the Son. From an Egyptian standpoint, the representation may be construed as alluding also to cosmic eternity (*nḥḥ*) and earthly time (*ḏt*), a fundamental distinction in terms of Egyptian dual symbolic classification.

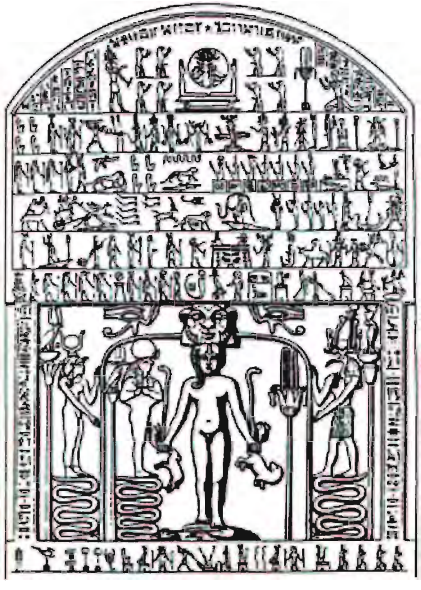

Fig. 1

The stelae of Horus date principally from the later dynasties, down to the Roman period, but some are a little earlier, and the identification of the Bes-image with that of the older cosmic manifestation of a young solar divinity goes back to the eighteenth dynasty.[6] It is, indeed, part of a complex of such ideas, related to the sun's ageing (Hornung 1971, 145–6) and more specifically parallel to the status of the creator Rē-Atum and Shu as effectively Kronos and Kairos, and of the king as the young hypostasis of the solar demiurge (Harris 1976, 81, 84 nn. 13, 14).

At the same period, and in magical contexts, there also appears a cosmic giant (*nḥḥ*) who is the forerunner of the composite figure seen, for example, on the reverse of the Metternich stela, and often described as a pantheistic Bes (Fig. 2). Undoubtedly it is a pantheos, and its face is the mask of a Bes-god, but one of the several bronze images of it is labelled as Horus, and, more importantly, two analogous representations are fully described and defined in a magical text of perhaps the later fourth century BC (Sauneron 1970). The representations differ in detail and the descriptions vary accordingly, but the two are quite clearly the same in essence, and each has the face of a Bes, as the text asserts. From the text it is also evident that the outward appearance of both is largely composed of attributes—the animal faces, the wings, the falcon's plumage, the bestial feet, the sceptres—all of them virtual hieroglyphs for the manifestations of power that go to

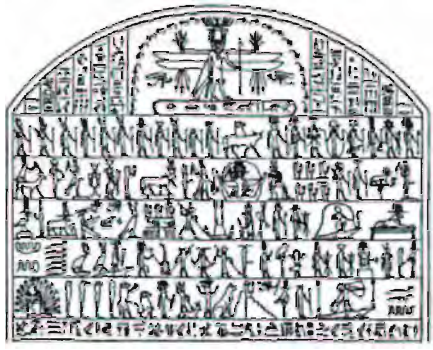

Fig. 2

make up the entities. The overall heading is lost for one of the two and there is no name attached to the first vignette, but in the case of the other the figure as such is described as 'the Bes' and in the text is said to be both the visible powers (*bȝw*) of Amon-Rē and, indirectly, a giant, while the god of the second vignette is actually labelled as Shu-Khepri-Atum the sun in its phases.

The cosmic giant who is a pantheus in the image of Bes may be reflected in later references to 'a Bes' as an item in temple inventories of the Roman period from Oxyrhynchus (P. Oxy. 3473) and Soknopaiou Nesos (BGU 387), and in Coptic allusions to Kronos and Petbe ('Requiter'), whose form is an animal composite and who stretches from the abyss to heaven (Donadoni 1965, 28–9), like the Rabbinic Adam and Christ the giant of dual substance (Kantorowicz 1957, 69–71; Kropp 1930–31, vol. 1, 25 and 2, 152). The Bes image does indeed stand for Christ in a number of iconographic variants, derived from the pantheos and from the Horus stelae (Barb 1964, 15 16; Kropp 1930–31, vol. 3, 10, 214 5), while in his frightening aspect he also survives as a demon, identifying himself to one of the Coptic Fathers.

The apotropaic image of Bes has a classical counterpart in the mask of Jupiter Ammon, whose prototype is the awesome head of Amūn as a ram affixed to the doors of his temples at Thebes, and mentioned in texts of the eighteenth dynasty.[7] Only the horns survive to distinguish the iconographic type of the Roman period, which is otherwise that of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, but the identification is never in doubt.[8] All over the Empire, Jupiter Ammon occurs in a number of contexts and on a range of objects as an essentially formal motif (Leclant & Clerc 1981), in many instances either precisely parallel to, or in conjunction with, the mask of Medusa.

This affinity is of importance for any analysis of the material, since it is clear that each of the types may be classified under four principal headings. Both are generally apotropaic, and in some connections, especially architectural, this would appear to be the only acceptable explanation. Both are of frequent occurrence in bacchic and funerary contexts, where the occasional parallelism with lions suggests that the primary function again was apotropaic (L'Orange 1976), though Barb (1953b, 208–12) has argued convincingly that the gorgoneion was also the *diva matrix* and therefore a symbol of rebirth. Both appear upon armour and military ornaments, where they refer to valour (Medusa recalling the deeds of Perseus) and where there are overtones of awesome power. Both, finally, are connected with water, and more particularly the sea, to which their respective origins are appropriate –Medusa being a watery demon from the abyss (Barb 1953b, 210; 1966, 9) and Jupiter Ammon of Siwa oasis a god of the sea, whose cult was diffused through commerce to maritime centres (Budischovsky 1973).

What is important here is that in none of these contexts is Jupiter Ammon to be regarded as an Egyptian god, or even as having some cultic meaning[9]—of which, in the West, only inscriptional evidence can be a true indication. Effectively this disposes of all the material from Britain,[10] and also of most of that from the German provinces– indeed, of the greater proportion of the entire corpus.

In some of the contexts in which the masks of Medusa and Jupiter Ammon occur there also appears, occasionally in identical circumstances,[11] the head of a youth (or child) in a Phrygian cap, usually said to be Attis, though for no very good reason. Identification is problematic because of the very wide reference in Late Antiquity of the Phrygian cap, or something akin to it. It is worn, among 'oriental' gods, not only by Mithras and Attis but also by Men and Sabazios, and by the Danubian Rider-gods and, more rarely, their Thracian counterpart. Among figures of classical myth it is likewise normal for Ganymede, Paris and Orpheus—as well as Aeneas—all of them in a sense 'orientals', but also occurs with other heroes and deities. In Christian iconography too it is commonly used as a sign of the East, as for the Magi, Daniel, and the 'three children' who braved the burning, fiery furnace—to mention only a few.

Attis, of course, is appropriate to a funerary context, and to refer to the typical mourning shepherds and similar representations as Attis may not be unreasonable.[12] But Attis cannot in any realistic sense be considered as apotropaic, much less a suitable symbol for military valour and awesomeness, and unless a particular item can be established as funerary (or is undoubtedly Attis because it belongs to the cult) the identification of any anonymous figures with Phrygian caps should be regarded as suspect. Thus, on a greave from the Straubing hoard (Garbsch 1978, B12), a pair of confronted heads are more likely to represent the Danubian Rider-gods or the Dioscuri, or possibly

Ganymede, who through his association with Jupiter occurs on a number of other pieces of armour (e.g. Garbsch 1978, B21, K1, K2, R1, R3);[13] and Ganymede too as the cupbearer of the god, will be the explanation of any such heads on the handles of jugs or the like.

As in the case of Jupiter Ammon, the British material[14] may be disposed of along these lines. Apart from errors of observation—the Froxfield Venus and the Willingham Fen bronze,[15] two of the erstwhile representations of Attis—the Pitney mosaic and the jet fragment from Whitton—are certainly Paris,[16] and others on metal vessels are probably Ganymede. There are also a number of clearly mortuary pieces—the funerary figures and finials from tombs—to which should be added the Gloucester Attis with syrinx, which parallels might suggest was a funerary monument (cf. Vermaseren 1966, 14f.).[17] Two further items are to be understood as mithraic, namely the Gloucester rock-birth,[18] and the little bronze head from Mildenhall, which has been classed as Attis largely because mithraic bronzes are rare, whereas one may now refer to a very fine figure of Cautopates from Rudchester.[19] As to the well-known statue from Bevis Marks, the suggestion most recently made (Merrifield, this volume) that it is in fact a Romanized native hunter-god carries conviction[20]—with the result that the only Attis remaining which may relate to the cult as such is the curious ithyphallic bronze recovered from gravel at Barnes, but which presumably came from the Thames around London Bridge, and is possibly from a lararium.

The Kronos-Kairos arrangement of the stelae of Horus is found on mithraic monuments, in relation both to the birth of Mithras and to the cardinal act of the bull-slaying.[21] On reliefs from Nersae (650), Virunum (1430) and Ptuj (1593), the figure presiding over the representation of Mithras' birth from the rock is clearly intended as Saturn,[22] and Saturn appears, identified with Oceanus, above the bull-slaying scene on a roundel from Split (1861) and, in a different form, at the head of the arch that framed the reliefs at Dura-Europos (42 [1]). On the major relief from Dura (40), the Kronos position is occupied by a bust that is either Baalshamin or Sarapis, and Jupiter in the form of Sarapis has similar status on a relief at Bologna (693), where he is both a planetary deity and the cosmocrator, shown full-face. Three major heads of Sarapis, from the important mithraea of Santa Prisca (479), Mérida (783) and Walbrook, London (818), may also have been incorporated as the presiding cosmocrator, since they are all of the Hellenistic Zeus-Helios-Sarapis type (Vidman 1970, 149–51).[23] More specifically solar are the lion mask on a relief from (?) Apulum (2198)—for which there is an approximate parallel on a relief from Rome showing a single Danubian Rider-god (Tudor 1969, no. 174)—and the sun-disk attached above the bull-slaying scene on a bronze bust of Sabazios (659 [1]), while Sol is effectively in the Kronos position within the tympanum of a relief from Dragu (1919), and a radiate head, presumably Sol or Mithras himself, would seem to have crowned the cult-relief from Sarrebourg (966).[24] A head with a Phrygian cap, which is undoubtedly Mithras, here in the rôle of cosmocrator, appears in the vault of a fine relief from Hermopolis Magna, el-Ashmūnein (Egyptian Museum, Cairo, J.E. 85747),[25] and on a silver plaque from Stockstadt (1206) the image of Mithras born from the rock stands over the vault of the cave but within the tympanum of the aedicula.[26] The most interesting variation, however, occurs on a lost relief from Rome (335),[27] on a painting within the cult-niche of the Barberini mithraeum at Rome (390),[28] and on a fragmentary relief from Ptuj (1510), in all three of which the Kronos position is occupied by a figure such as is often referred to as the mithraic 'Aion' or the '*léontocéphale*'.

The potential significance of these latter examples for the interpretation of this particular being was noted by Nock (1958, 292–3) in reviewing Vermaseren's corpus, and has been recognised by a number of other scholars (Duchesne-Guillemin 1960, 96–7; Roll 1977, 59; von Gall 1978, 524). Discussion has hitherto been confounded by the lumping together of too many disparate pieces, some of them not mithraic, and by the singling out of a few of the more elaborate figures, which may not in fact be typical, as well as by undue concern for presumed Iranian origins and conceptions of time—a tendency owed to Cumont, which Gordon (1975) has recently criticized. A full review of the evidence is beyond the scope of the present paper, the object of which is merely to sketch out a fresh approach to the problem. It should, however, be borne in mind that of the items most commonly cited—some 60 or so in all[29]—a number have no real claim to be called mithraic,[30] while even of those that are (or would appear to be) few have a definite context—and, moreover, that out of the total no more than a third are iconographically typical of the léontocéphale.

The figures that stand in the Kronos position above the bull-slaying scene are, in that context, clearly identified as cosmic, but their connection with the léontocéphale is tenuous. One (335) is quite certainly human-headed, one (1510) is in all probability so, and of the third (390) the head is now missing but may have been human also (von Gall 1978, 523–4). All are wrapped in the coils of a snake, but one only is winged, and there is no consistency in the remaining attributes. The signs of the zodiac are associated with one, and another appears to be standing within the zodiac, which in itself suggests a cosmic figure (L'Orange 1953, 90–102; Ristow 1978). The zodiac also recalls two rather unusual representations of Mithras' birth—a sculpture from Housesteads (860) and an altar from Trier (985), both of them actually found in mithraea. The former shows Mithras born from an egg within an encompassing zodiac, and is doubtless to be connected

with two dedications to Mithras *saecularis* that flanked it *in situ* (Harris 1965, 34–5). On the latter, an infant Mithras, in Phrygian cap and holding a globe, seizes the wheel of the zodiac (which has only one half of the year, beginning with Aries) and spins it into continuous motion—*volventem sidera Mithram* (L'Orange 1953, 14, 96). Related to these again is the well-known relief at Modena (695) showing the birth of a cosmic deity, probably Phanes, which although not mithraic in origin was adapted to serve as such, and by a *pater*. Taken together, these several representations are perhaps to be understood as variants of the same theme: the birth of Mithras cosmocrator into the cosmos as symbolized by the zodiac.

It has recently been suggested that one of two statues from Mérida, usually classed as 'Aion' but which is in many ways similar to the relief at Modena, should in fact be interpreted as a version of Mithras' birth (Bendala Galan 1981, 293–6). The figure (777) is that of a handsome youth, whose solar nature is evident both from his radiate head (the rays now lost) and from the fiery lion mask that appears on his breast. Around him is coiled a snake, which will here be symbolic of birth—as when it circles the rock from which Mithras emerges,[31] and for which the mysterious mummiform personage found in the Syrian sanctuary on the Janiculum offers an obvious parallel.[32] There is no zodiac, but the head of a goat on a tree-trunk beside the youth may be for Capricorn, the sign under which he was born. It is just possible that two other fragmentary sculptures were of a similar kind,[33] and the figure is also related to that on a gold lamella found at Ciciliano (168) but not of mithraic origin (Vermaseren 1975), where the names *IAΩ* and *ΑΔΩΝΑΕΙ* link the magical god with the cock-headed anguipede of the 'gnostic' gems (Bonner 1950, 123–39, 280–4), who also occurs with the head of a lion and with a human head, and is a cosmic giant as Barb (1957, 76–81) has established.[34]

It is perhaps to the realm of cosmic giants that one should assign three anomalous figures with lion heads that do not appear to belong to the group of léontocéphales. These are a statuette (102) offered for sale at Luxor during the nineteenth century and since unaccounted for, a relief of an obviously solar being from Oxyrhynchus (103), generally taken as evidence of a mithraeum there, and the statue from Castel Gandolfo (326) discussed at some length by Pettazzoni (1954, 186–90), which is undoubtedly also Egyptian in origin and may have been brought to Italy during the Roman period, possibly under Domitian. This last is the closest in terms of its iconographic complexity to the image of Bes as a pantheos, and for a similar reason: the accumulation of attributes. One feature the other two have in common is that not only the head but the body, at least from the waist, is bestial, suggesting the hybrid Petbe (Bonnet 1952, 588; Donadoni 1965, 28–9) and recalling the curious godling on a magical stone in Vienna, possibly also from Egypt, who has similar lower limbs but a head with horns, not unlike Jupiter Ammon (Wünch 1909, 32–6). All of these figures would seem to reflect Egyptian ideas (cf. Will 1955, 190–1) and to be cosmic or solar entities, but none can be shown to have any connection with mithraism as such.[35]

Apart from the several representations that are to be recognised as Mithras himself born into the cosmos, there are two further pieces that do not belong to the group of léontocéphales, and which may be identified otherwise. One is a damaged relief from Strasbourg (1326) known principally from a cast, the other the much-discussed sculpture from York (833), which unfortunately lacks its head. Both figures are naked except for a loincloth, both have two pairs of wings, and both were apparently human-headed—certainly so in the case of the Strasbourg piece. Their appearance is hardly distinctive and might almost suggest a classical Titan, but the York statuette is ostensibly Ahriman—whether the text should be read as a dedication to Arimanius or, as seems probable, of an Arimanium, i.e. the figure itself (Bianchi 1975, 462). That icons of Ahriman were actually dedicated is certain from other inscriptions,[36] and in the absence of any conflicting evidence this may perhaps be acknowledged as being the iconographic type.[37]

Of the various figures with lion masks, several may well be no more than personifications of *leo* initiates or of the lion grade itself. The most interesting is a sculpture in high relief from Heddernheim (1123), found in one of three closed-in niches at the end of the left-hand bench of mithraeum III. The figure is naked except for a loincloth, and has on its breast an indistinct (?) gorgoneion; it carries the fire-shovel associated with *leo* and is loosely looped by a snake. The upper part of another statuette also from Heddernheim (1134) is essentially similar and may likewise have held a fire-shovel, while a statue from Mît Rahîna (94) is probably of the same genre—for which a relief from Konjic (1896) provides additional indirect evidence.[38] There is, further, a statuette from the mithraeum at Rusicade (125), showing a cloaked individual wearing a mask of disproportionate size, which in spite of its different appearance is likely to represent an initiate too.[39] And one or two other figures that now lack heads may also belong to this class.[40]

It is clear that the lion grade, marking the point at which the initiate made the transition to fuller membership, was of special importance (Cumont 1913, 159; Vermaseren 1959, 119–21; Gordon 1980, 32–3),[41] and that this was reflected in the arrangements of many mithraea, albeit in different ways (Hinnells 1975, 363–4 n.111). A recently published inscription referring to a *leonteum cum signo et cetero cultu exornatum* (Ciotti 1978, 234–5) suggests the existence of some form of representation appropriate to the grade, of which the piece from Heddernheim III may be the outstanding extant example.

It is, however, possible that the *signum* in question

was actually the léontocéphale—the typical lion-headed figure, almost invariably winged and with an encircling snake, who frequently grasps a pair of keys, but whose remaining attributes are more disparate.[42] Twenty representations at most have any positive claim to belong to this group,[43] and even with some of these there have to be reservations.[44] With possibly one exception,[45] all of them come from Italy or from Mediterranean provinces (Mérida, Arles, Vienne, Sidon), which may perhaps be significant, and several were found together as 'pairs' in the same mithraeum.[46] Only one (382) was recorded *in situ*, and this was walled into a vaulted niche and surrounded by lamps,[47] as though, like the Heddernheim piece, it was designed to be viewed as a mystery. Some of the figures are so contrived that the mouth of the lion mask could have been made to breathe fire, which again would imply a theatrical rôle in the mysteries, and one of this kind, from Sidon (78), had as its counterpart a statue of Hecate (84), of similar workmanship and with a parallel dedication.[48]

As a protector of gateways, Hecate is a liminal deity, and Gordon (1980, 32–7) has underlined the ambiguous liminality of the fiery lion in mithraism, and the power inherent in any anomalous entity.[49] But if the léontocéphale was in some sense a guardian of the threshold, this threshold—the portal to which he held the keys—was probably that of initiation, or rather, rebirth through the mysteries, as symbolized by the encircling snake (cf. Delatte & Derchain 1964, 73–5) and by the wings and other possible references to the cycle of time and renewal.[50] A specific connection with whatever *rites de passage* attended the crucial transition to membership of the lion grade is by no means unlikely, and variant attributes such as the thunderbolt and staff may link the figure with Jupiter, to whose planet the grade was assigned. The léontocéphale would then be closely related to what have been classed above as representations of *leo* initiates, and the two may indeed have fulfilled a similar function, depending upon the particular milieu—just as the birth of Mithras could be interpreted in a number of different ways.

What the figure was called remains an intractable problem, but it was almost certainly neither Aion nor Ahriman, the two designations most commonly given to it.[51] Perhaps it had no one name, like the cock-headed anguipede, who was invoked as Iao and as Abrasax but was probably neither, or the pantheos of the Brooklyn papyrus described as the Bes and as being the visible powers of Amon-Rē, but labelled as Shu-Khepri-Atum. A sculpture of Mithras slaying the bull, from Ostia (310) has an inscription identifying it as a *sig(num) imdeprehensivilis dei*. It came from the lost Mitreo Fagan,[52] together with two léontocéphales, one of them (312) very elaborate and with a dedication relating it to the bull-slaying piece through the name of the principal donor. Did this particular donor refer to the god as *imdeprehensivilis* (sic) because of the many levels at which he was immanent in the cult and the many hypostases in which he might be conceived, and was the léontocéphale—for him—Mithras as mediator of the perils of rebirth?

Notes

1. As has been pointed out by Bonnet (1952, 101 2), the iconographic type is that of a number of similar beings, and the name Bes is generic. It is therefore more prudent to speak of a Bes-god or a Bes-image.
2. The blinkers ascribed to this chariot have the protective *udjat*-eye of Horus.
3. The type is doubtless derived from an animal, possibly in the first instance a lion or the gelada 'baboon', though later the features are closer to those of a chimpanzee.
4. The god is addressed (l. 38) as the 'aged one who rejuvenates himself at his appointed time, (the) elderly one who is made a youth'.
5. Here and throughout, the name Kronos is used in a purely classificatory sense, and without prejudice to the identification of any particular figure.
6. There is some evidence that the older Bes-god had as its youthful counterpart a solar lion, and it is significant too that the Bes-god is sometimes placed within a cartouche, which is in essence a cosmic symbol of all that the sun encircles.
7. Inscriptions of both Thutmose III and Amenhotpe III allude specifically to this ram-headed image (*ỉwt ngr mi ỉft*), and similar bosses (*ỉwt ngr* and *ḥpw*) of gold, electrum and other metals are also referred to elsewhere and in relation to different gods. A papyrus from Oxyrhynchus of the second century AD (P. Oxy. 3473) mentions bronze busts of Sarapis and of Apollo mounted upon the doors of a temple.
8. In Egypt, Jupiter Ammon is on occasion identified with Sarapis and with the ram-headed Chnubis (Khnum).
9. One should perhaps emphasize that representations of Jupiter Ammon do not refer to the Isiac cult.
10. See Harris 1965, 83–4. Other items have since been noted, but none that affects the overall classification of the material.
11. On a piece of horse furniture, probably from the yoke of a waggon, and said to have come from Köln, a chubby face in a Phrygian cap is the central device of a shield or medallion held by a lion. A similar object from Vindonissa, but with a female panther holding the shield, has the mask of Medusa, while another from Colchester, again with a female panther, has Jupiter Ammon. There can be no doubt that in such a case the three are effectively interchangeable.
12. The type is discussed by Will (1955, 198–203) who would prefer the term '*serviteur oriental*'.
13. There may be a further allusion to the ascent of the soul to heaven, and Ganymede will be appropriate also in funerary contexts, as symbolizing the rape of the body by death and the soul's immortality. Rapes and attempted rapes from classical myth are a favourite theme in Coptic sculpture, no doubt as an allegory of death.
14. See Harris 1965, 100–4. Other items have since been noted, but again none that affects the argument.
15. The latter in fact is a representation of Africa wearing an elephant's scalp.

16. The Whitton plaque may be taken as representing the judgement of Paris, and will have come from a toilet implement or similar item. Some of the very small metal appliqués and studs with heads in Phrygian caps may also belong to trinket boxes and therefore be Paris, though if they were meant to ward off evil—and there are miniature Jupiter Ammon masks too—they are probably Ganymede.
17. A figure built into the wall of the vicarage at Wigton in Cumberland, and probably brought from Old Carlisle, may be another example.
18. A stone sculpture of Attis dancing or holding cymbals would be extremely unusual, nor as a rule is Attis entirely naked. The piece was clearly cut off at the waist, as though it was meant to fit onto something else, and there are parallels both for the chubby features and for the Phrygian cap with 'ear-flaps' among representations of Mithras' birth.
19. The piece was found to the south-east of Rudchester fort in 1983 and is as yet unpublished.
20. In the original draft of this paper I had already rejected the figure, and had even suggested a rather 'butch' Diana.
21. The numbers hereafter refer to Vermaseren 1956/1960.
22. The arrangement on three other pieces (1656, 1972, 2194) is comparable, though not so precise; cf. Vermaseren 1951, 294–7; Gordon 1978, 125, 150 n.30.
23. Sarapis occurs (in his chthonic form) together with Isis on two major reliefs of Jupiter Dolichenus, where they may actually represent the Egyptian deities as such (Vidman 1970, 141–2, 151). Sarapis is not, however, 'Egyptian' in any sense when he appears as cosmocrator in a mithraic context (cf. *ibid.*, 144–51).
24. The central position above the bull-slaying on the relief itself is occupied by a group of gods with Jupiter in the middle, and this is repeated on a relief from Osterburken (1292). On an altar from Trier (985) the tympanum over the representation of Mithras' birth has a collection of symbols that seem to be cosmic.
25. See Grimm 1975, 38, pl. 73. The piece is described by Vermaseren under 91, but is incorrectly ascribed to Memphis and thereby confused with the two reliefs from Mit Rahina (92, 93). It is interesting that the Kronos-Kairos relationship should be expressed so exactly on a relief from Egypt.
26. The rock-birth also appears above the bull-slaying, though slightly to one side, on a relief from Rome (556).
27. See now Vermaseren 1978. It is clear that the upper register was a separate piece, and that it may not have belonged to this particular bull-slaying scene. It will, however, have stood in a like position on some other monument, so that the Kronos argument stands.
28. See now Vermaseren 1982, pls. 11, 16.
29. The most recent attempt to analyse the material in its entirety is Hinnells' article (1975) but, as will appear, I do not agree with his judgement of individual pieces, or with much of his argument.
30. Some items are clearly irrelevant and have here been omitted (185, 644, 877, 1890), while others are either too dubious or too fragmentary to be interpreted properly (970, 971, 1172, 1323, 1325, 1327, 1705). The figure on 2359 does not have a lion's head and is presumably Cautes.
31. A base from Rome (525), another from Rüsselsheim-Hassloch (1051), and a fragmentary statue from Gross-Krotzenburg (1156) belong in all probability to representations of Mithras' birth.
32. See Delatte & Derchain 1964, 73–5, where the snake is interpreted as a cosmic symbol of the primordial abyss and of the demiurge himself who emerged from it.
33. A much restored statue now in the Vatican (545) and a figure known only from an amended drawing by Pirro Ligorio (611) have several features in common and may not belong to the group of léontocéphales, whereas the signs of the zodiac—four on the one and three on the other—might perhaps be appropriate to a representation of Mithras' birth. Whether the head of either was of the form in which it has been restored is open to question. See also below, n.44.
34. What is clearly an anguipede, and not a *gigas*, was found in the Santa Prisca mithraeum (491), and a head from Les Bolards may also be that of an anguipede (Walters 1974, 92, pl. 11).
35. This will also apply to a little relief from Rome (419) with an Egyptianizing figure accompanied by either a female deity or an attendant.
36. An inscription from Ostia (222) refers to a *signum Arimanium*, and there are three dedications *deo Arimanio* (369, 1773, 1775).
37. It is possible that a number of fragments from Königshoffen (1338) and a wing from the Saalburg (1049) are the remains of figures of this type.
38. A lion-headed figure also occurs on terra sigillata, but its connection with mithraism has not been established.
39. A little figure from Auvergne (892) was apparently similar and may have been of this type.
40. A sculpture in high relief from Housesteads (855) may represent an initiate, and could have had a lion mask—which would apply as well to a broken figure from Rückingen (1146*d*). A second figure from Rückingen (1141) and a statue from Wahlheim (1298) are probably also initiates, but interpreted in another sense.
41. There may at an early stage have been only three grades: *corax*, *leo* and *pater*.
42. It is often implied that the zodiac is a characteristic feature of the léontocéphale, but this is by no means so. The full zodiac occurs only once (879), the solstices and the equinoxes once (545), and three individual signs once (611)—and in each case there is reason to doubt the identity of the figure (cf. nn. 33, 44).
43. Nos. 78, 312, 314, 382, 383, 503, 543, 544, 545, 550, 551, 611, 665, 776, 879, 902, and possibly also 589 + 882 *bis* and 2320.
44. Two of the figures (545, 611) may be connected with Mithras' birth (cf. above, n.33), and a third, from the Tiber (503), headless, without wings, and with the arms crossed, may not be mithraic. A well-known statue from Arles (879) is unique in being entirely veiled, and may not have had a lion's head (Turcan 1972, 22–4; Walters 1974, 53–6)—though a bearded head as restored by Montfaucon would be unparalleled, apart from the Pirro Ligorio drawing of 611.
45. On a relief from Sofia (2320) what would appear to be the léontocéphale stands on the left in the lowest register, but, from the available photographs, the head is not clearly distinguishable and could be that of a heavily bearded man. I am unable at present to comment further.
46. Two are from the Mitreo Fagan at Ostia (312, 314), two from a lost mithraeum near San Vitale in Rome (382, 383), and two from elsewhere in Rome (543, 544). In each case one is a statue and the other a slab with a representation in relief.
47. This may explain two features in other mithraea at Ostia: the little construction (253) in the Mitreo del Palazzo Imperiale, and the niche facing the entrance in the Mitreo di Felicissimo (299).
48. A figure of Hecate from the Santa Prisca mithraeum (486) may have been paired in some way with the anguipede (491) mentioned above (n.34).
49. Gordon (1980, 35–6, 77–8 nn. 32–3) also discusses the sistrum, but it is surely its liminality and its ambivalent power to blast or placate/protect that made it a suitable instrument to associate with the lion grade. As representing the *diva matrix* (Barb 1953*b*, 199, 222 n.100) the sistrum would have had further ranges of meaning—and ambiguity.
50. The fruits of the seasons—if such they be—on the elaborate figure from Ostia (312) may also allude to the cyclical passage of time, as will the signs of the zodiac when they occur (but cf. above, n.42). The globe may also refer to time, but is more generally of cosmic significance as a symbol of Jupiter and the heavens (Caelum).

51. There is much to be said for the view that Aion was not a name but a descriptive concept (Nock 1934, 78, 84, 99), although it has also been pointed out that figures are actually labelled as Aion to which the leontocephale does not in any way correspond. Figures of Ahrimanes, on the other hand, will have taken the form of the York statuette.

52. It may be worth noting here that this mithraeum was certainly found not later than the beginning of 1798, since Zoega had studied the reading *inderpehenairihi* on the bull-slaying piece by the time he composed the manuscript of the address delivered on 10th May 1798 and later published in his *Abhandlungen*. This manuscript is now in the Kongelige Bibhotek in Copenhagen.

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Roman Venus: public worship and private rites

G. Lloyd-Morgan

O Venus Regina Cnidi Paphique
sperne dilectam Cypron et vocantis
ture te multo Glycerae decoram
transfer in aedem.

Fervidus tecum puer et solutis
Gratiae zonis properentque Nymphae
et parum comis sine te Iuventas
Mercuriusque.

Horace *Odes* 1, 30[1]

By the time Horace was writing this ode, or invocation, to Venus, the goddess had changed greatly from the Italian divinity whose original functions had long since become obscured. There were learned discussions by antiquaries, but even there some uncertainties existed. Cicero, in *De Deorum Natura*, written at the end of his life, suggests various alternatives in book III, 58, but these had been transferred from the stories of Greek Aphrodite. In one section (II, 69) he says 'Some say that it [the name of the goddess] is derived from our word for charm and grace. But it is more likely that the word itself is derived from Venus' (transl. H. C. P. McGregor). It seems likely that Italian Venus was the numinous spirit which helped gardens and vegetation to flourish and multiply. A spirit which took on female form, though her name, according to grammarians and scholars should be neuter.[2]

Stories of Venus as born of the sea foam, as the wife of Vulcan-Hephaistos and lover of Mars-Ares, which Cicero noted, are taken from the Greek tradition. So it is of no surprise when he goes on to say that; 'She came from Syria and Cyprus. She is called Astarte and is said to have been the bride of Adonis' (*Nat. Deor.* III, 58). There is also the Etruscan tradition which must be taken into account, as it plays an important role in the transmission of aspects of Greek culture, intermingled with the native Italian. From the fifth century BC onwards scenes and motifs from the wider Greek world are reinterpreted and used in tomb paintings, as decoration on domestic furnishings, and on the less numerous finds from cities and settlements.[3] At first some figures are anonymous but gradually become identifiable as members of a pantheon of deities and lesser divinities.

One early fifth century engraving on the back of a bronze mirror, in the Louvre, may represent one aspect of Italian Venus, or Etruscan Turan; a winged numinous spirit holding a flower and surrounded by a deep border of stylized foliage (Gerhard 1897, V, 19-20, pl. 13). By the fourth century BC, Turan had become firmly linked with Aphrodite, and is seen on the mirrors with her female companions, her youthful lover Adonis, and the other gods, often carefully labelled (Figs 1 and 2). Scenes from the Trojan war cycle were exceedingly popular and Paris' Judgement of the three goddesses is illustrated in a delightful series of versions and related variations (Fig. 3). A more curious aspect of Etruscan contact with Greek art and culture is the so-called 'Venus of Cannicelle' from the sanctuary outside Orvieto. It seems that it started out as an eastern Greek *kouros* of the late sixth century BC, the very personification of male youth and beauty. At some stage it came to Etruria and, after major surgery during which it acquired breasts, it was transformed into a goddess (Cristofani 1979, pl. on p. 105).

It was noted above that the Etruscans used scenes and stories from the Trojan War cycle as inspiration for paintings and decoration in the major and minor sphere. Perhaps the most striking example can be seen in the story of Aeneas, son of Anchises and Aphrodite.[4]

1 2

Figs 1 & 2 1,Turan with wreath, on a mirror, after Gerhard pl. CCCXX; 2, Venus weeping for Adonis, on a mirror, after Gerhard pl. CCCXXV.

Fig. 3 Mythological group on a late fourth century BC mirror, Allard Pierson Stichting, Amsterdam no. 1448. Photo: Allard Pierson Stichting.

A terracotta statuette of the early fifth century BC from Veii shows Aeneas carrying the aged Anchises away from the sack of Troy (Schilling 1982, pl. Ia with two other versions). It would seem not unlikely that the Greek colonists arriving in Italy were prepared, by adaptation of legends and dubious etymology, to see kinship links between themselves and the Etruscans. Hence we get the story of the links with Lydia in Asia Minor; links between Odysseus, and Aeneas, wandering around the western Mediterranean all of which gave the Etruscans the sense of belonging not to the 'barbari' but to the cultivated Greek world. It is only a short step from here to the development of the full Aeneas story that Virgil relates, and the claims of the Julian clan to be descendants of Aeneas and hence of Venus (cf. Fig. 18). Any original distinction between Turan, Venus and Aphrodite had been forgotton.

In 67 BC Julius Caesar gave the funeral oration for his aunt Julia, and in praising her ancestors was also, with little modesty, proclaiming his own impeccable lineage;

> 'Her mother was a descendant of Kings, namely the Royal Marcians, a family founded by the Roman King Ancus Marcius; and her father, of gods—since the Julians (of which we Caesars are a branch) reckon descent from the goddess Venus. Thus Julia's stock can claim both the sanctity of kings who reign supreme among mortals, and the reverence due to gods, who hold even kings in their power.'
>
> (Suetonius, *Div. Iul.* 6,2 transl. Robert Graves)

Caesar's devotion to Venus as the divine ancestress was genuine. During the battle of Pharsalus in 50 BC he vowed that if successful he would build to her honour a temple in Rome. This was started in the following year and although the temple and the Forum Iulium which he built to set it off were unfinished, it was dedicated in 46 BC. Both were finally completed by Augustus.[5]

Temples to Venus were already established at Rome before Caesar's time. A similar vow had been made during the Third Samnite War by Q.Fabius Gurges to Venus Obsequens Indulgent: or Gracious Venus and was founded in 295 BC (Balsdon 1974, 31 and 292, n. 27; Schilling 1982, 95). The temple was dedicated later, after the war.

Pompey had dedicated a temple to Venus Victrix in 55 BC. This was at the top of the cavea of his magnificent stone built theatre in the Campus Martius, and was something of a ploy to get round conservative opposition to having a permanent place of entertainment; the tiers of seats curving and rising in front being interpreted as the podium stairs (Schilling 1982, 296–99; Nash 1961, II, 423). Was this, perhaps, in Caesar's mind as he called on the goddess during that last bloody battle against his enemy and erstwhile son-in-law, to give her a more magnificent temple in a more worthy setting decorated by the best artists that could be found?

Octavian was only nineteen at the time of Caesar's assassination in 44 BC, and it was essential that, during the subsequent power struggle, he should consolidate his position as Caesar's heir and true successor. Caesar was finally deified in 42 BC, and the appearance of a comet in the July after his death was usefully claimed as heralding his epiphany (Suetonius, *Div. Iul.* 88). Octavian used his kinship with the divine Julius, and Venus as the divine ancestress and patron of the family, as part of his armoury of weapons against Brutus and the conspirators, and then against Antony and other enemies (Fig. 4).

Curiously enough, the devotion that Caesar had shown to Venus, and indeed that earlier members of the Julian and some other families had proclaimed on coins from the second century BC onwards, as *Tresviri Monetales*, is lacking during the early years of the Empire (Figs 5 7). As has already been noted, Augustus completed the Temple of Venus and the Julian Forum started by Caesar, and there are a few coins with her image dating to the first half of his reign. After that there is a gap in the official veneration of the goddess.

The first revival comes at the beginning of the short reign of Titus with Venus Victrix appearing on several issues in precious metals –perhaps a delicate reference to his successes in love and war.[6] But it is from the reign of his brother Domitian that types of Venus are found almost exclusively on reverses of coins produced for the ladies of the Imperial family. Some exceptions do occur. Trajan repaired Julius' temple of Venus and

4 5 6 7

Figs 4–7. 4. Denarius of Augustus with reverse of Venus, RIC² Augustus 26, 28–26 BC; 5. Denarius of C Considius Nonianus with obverse of Venus Erycina. Sydenham 1958, no. 886, 63–62 BC; 6. Reverse of Fig. 5 with temple of Venus on Mount Eryx. 7. Denarius of M Cordius Rufus with reverse of Venus Verticordia. Sydenham 1952, no. 976, c. 46 BC. Photos: British Museum

rededicated it on 12th May AD 113, and this is commemorated on a coin.[9] Other issues look back to Republican types, including one with the head of Venus on the obverse, and Aeneas and Anchises on the reverse.[8] Hadrian struck a denarius showing the cult statue of Venus-Aphrodite of Aphrodisias.[9] With a few others, these issues are heavily outweighed by the sheer quantity in gold, silver and bronze produced by the Imperial mint for wives, sisters and daughters of the Augusti, in their lifetime and afterwards.

Faustina the Younger, daughter of Antoninus Pius and wife of his successor Marcus Aurelius is a case in point.[10] Her coins include reverses showing Venus as ancestress of the Imperial family, they also make reference to Faustina's own fertility (she had at least twelve children) as she holds the apple, to show her link with Trojan Aphrodite, and a swaddled child (Fig. 8).

Some forty years later, Julia Domna's coinage, produced during the reigns of her husband Septimius Severus and her murderous son Caracalla, show reverses with Venus Victrix, Genetrix, and Felix each with minor changes in pose and attributes, reflecting their glory onto the lady herself as a mother, helpmeet and powerful member of the ruling family. Here she is equated with the goddess as Venus Victrix (Fig. 9). Another example produced for her niece, Julia Mamaea, has a reverse with Venus Felix (Fig. 10). These were not intended as a blasphemy, but rather as a compliment to the Julias and their personal qualities, just as on some tombstones and memorials a lady of less exalted rank could be shown immortalized as Venus. One tombstone, now in the British Museum (inv. no. 1948.4-23.1) shows the unnamed lady in a similar guise as Venus Victrix, partially draped leaning on a column, and holding a palm with a dove at her feet, suggesting the triumph of love over death (Fig. 11).[11]

The use of Venus as a reverse type on the imperial coinage continued with few intervals throughout the third century. The last major issues were produced during the reign of the Tetrarchs. One, with Venus

8 9 10

Figs 8–10. 8. Sestertius of Faustina II with reverse of Venus Genetrix, RIC² Antoninus Pius 1386, AD 145–6; 9. Denarius of Julia Domna with reverse of Venus Victrix. RIC² Septimius Severus 535, AD 193–196; 10. Aureus of Julia Mamaea with reverse of Venus Felix. RIC² Severus Alexander 350, AD 222–235. Photos: British Museum.

Fig. 11. Grave relief from Rome with unnamed woman as Venus Victrix. AD 100-120. British Museum no. 1948.4-23.1. Photo: British Museum.

Fig. 12. Follis of Galeria Valeria with reverse of Venus Victrix. RIC 'Tetrarchy': Mint of Siscia. 210. AD 310-311. Photo: British Museum.

Felix, was minted in Fausta's name to celebrate her wedding with Constantine I early in AD 307.[12] It is interesting to note that it was her brother Maxentius who rebuilt Hadrian's double temple to Venus and Rome, which was damaged in a fire that year.[13] The largest and latest issues, all with reverses depicting Venus Victrix, were produced for Galeria Valeria, daughter of Diocletian and wife of that enthusiastic persecutor of Christians, Galerius (Fig. 12). With his death in 311, these came to an abrupt end, and the goddess was replaced from then on by sterner types extolling male values.

It was not every family that could afford to build or repair a temple to Venus; nor in the days of the Republic, a son whose public career included a period at the mint, where he could influence the design of the coinage and pay homage to his ancestors – whether they had been victorious generals or a goddess.

Our evidence for the more personal aspects of the worship and reverence of Venus can be found in small statuettes (Figs 13–17) and dedications as well as in literature. She is found on frescoes and mosaics, from the most princely Mediterranean villas to somewhat smaller ones in Britain (Figs 18, 19 and see Smith 1977, 134–6), or even in a wine bar at Ostia, the 'Caupona di Alexander' dated to the first half of the third century AD (Fig. 20, see Becatti 1953, 205, pl. cxii, no. 391, Reg. IV, Insula VI no. 4).

It is in Rome and the provinces of Imperial times that we see Venus completely equated with Aphrodite as the presiding deity of romantic and sexual love, as in Tibullus' poem to Sulpicia, dated a little after 20 BC:

> 'Love at last has come to me
> Venus has brought him to my breast and laid him there.
> She has kept her promise, and anyone whose own bliss
> Shall be said to have passed him by – let him tell mine for his.'
>
> (in Tibullus III, 13 transl. Philip Dunlop)

Passion can be unwelcome, as witnessed by graffiti from Pompeii:

> 'Anybody in love, come here. I want to break Venus' ribs with a club and cripple the goddess' loins. If she can pierce my tender breast, why can't I break her head with a club?'

> 'I write at Love's dictation and Cupid's instruction. But damn it! I don't want to be a god without you.'
>
> (trans. Lewis & Reinhold 1966, 360 nos. VIII, IX)

or joyfully consummated, as Apuleius relates in his novel 'The Golden Ass':

> 'She ... pulled off every stitch of clothing, untied her hair and tossed it into happy disorder with a shake of her head. There she stood, transformed into a living statue: the Love goddess rising from the sea. The flushed hand with which she pretended to screen her mount of Venus showed she was well aware of the resemblance; certainly it was not held there from modesty ...'
>
> (*Metamorphoses* II, 17 transl. Robert Graves)

But consummation once achieved does not guarantee happiness,

> 'Dear lamp, thrice Heraclea here present swore by thee to come, and cometh not. Lamp, if thou art a god, take vengence on this deceitful girl. When she has a friend at home and is sporting with him, go out and give them no more light.'
>
> (Asklepiades, *Anth. Pal.* 5,7 transl. W. R. Paton)

Certainly, not all the girls who were celebrated or commemorated in verse were respectable. A poem of Nossis from the Greek city of Locri in southern Italy puts it neatly:

> 'Let us go to the temple
> to see Aphrodite's image
> delicately worked in gold
> It was put up by Polycharis
> who had become a person of substance
> from her body's beauty.'
>
> (*Anth. Pal.* 9.332 transl. Sally Purcell)

A successful courtesan might expect to wear rich jewellery, earrings hung with cupids to show she was a votaress of the goddess of Love,[14] and use salves and perfumes to enhance her natural beauty.[15] At the end of her career she might, as Laïs the celebrated Greek courtesan had done, dedicate her mirror to the goddess:

13

14

15

Figs 13–15. 13. Terracotta of Venus from Myrina. AD 20. British Museum no. 1906.3–10.1. Photo: BM; 14. Terracotta Venus with priapic herm, from Myrina, late second century BC. British Museum no. C528. Photo: BM; 15. Bronze Venus with bosom band, from the Roman cemetery at Krefeld-Gellep. Grave 3316. Photo: Museum Burg Linn, Krefeld, W. Germany.

Fig. 16 Bronze Venus from Verulamium, 1959. Photo: Verulamium Museum, St. Albans.

Fig. 17 Bronze Venus with apple, said to be from Hungary. Photo: Christie's, London.

'I, Lais whose haughty beauty made mock of Greece
I who once had a swarm of young lovers at my door
dedicate my mirror to Aphrodite
since I wish not to look on myself as I am
and cannot look on myself as I once was.'
(*Anth. Pal* 6.1 transl W. R. Paton)

Shrines in the home might have their own statuettes of Venus (Petronius, *Sat.* 29); public shrines and temples could hold examples as gifts from worshippers. Pieces in terracotta (Figs 13, 14), bronze (Figs 15, 16) or precious metals such as the silver Venus dedicated by Caltilia Diodora (Meiggs 1973, 369), marble (Figs 20, 21) and other lustrous stones, have survived. These were not only given to the temples dedicated to her. C Cartilius Euplus dedicated a series of seven statuettes, including one of Venus Genetrix, which were found in and around the shrine of Attis in the Campus Magnae Matris, the Sanctuary of the Great Mother, at Ostia (*ibid.*, 359); and the Elder Pliny records that Vespasian dedicated a statue of Venus in the precinct of his temple of Peace (*N.H.* XXXVI, 27).

Some statues became as famous as their sculptors. Arcesilaus carved the statue of Venus Genetrix which, Pliny records, was erected in Caesar's Forum (*N.H.* XXXV, 155). So famous was the undraped Venus of Praxiteles which was bought by the people of Cnidos, that it attracted visitors to the island to see it. It was universally admired, and on one occasion the statue was sexually assaulted by an unnamed man who had fallen in love with it (Pliny *N.H.* XXXVI, 20–21).

There are many aspects of Venus and her worship which have not been covered here (Room 1983, Appendix II, 319–22 lists epithets of Venus-Aphrodite). The Bearded Aphrodite of Cyprus (Farnell 1896, 755–6, n.113, for sources; 628–9 for discussion) is as curious to our modern ears as the Venus Calva, Bald Venus (Balsdon 1977, 31, n.28, 292 and 332). She is said to have been a dedication in honour of Roman women who gave their hair for bow strings when the Gauls beseiged the Capitol in 390 BC; and Venus-Aphrodite with her origins as the sea foam became, inevitably, the protectress not only of lovers but sailors, Greek and Roman alike:

'this spot is sacred to Cypris, for she ever loves to behold from the land the glittering main, that she may give the mariners a voyage such as they desire, and all the surrounding sea trembles when it sees the radiant image'
(Anyte of Tegea, *Anth. Pal.* 9.144, translated and discussed by Farnell 1896, 189–90 who links it with the goddess by Praxiteles at Cnidos noted earlier)

Fig. 18 Aeneas, Ascanius, Venus and Dido, panel of the Low Ham mosaic.

Fig. 19 Venus with attendant Cupids, centre panel of the Low Ham mosaic. Photos: Somerset County Museum, Taunton

Even the advent of Christianity as the official religion of the state could not keep her image out of the poet's vocabulary, as in the *Epithalamium* written by Claudian to commemorate the wedding of the emperor Honorius and Maria, daughter of Stilicho, in AD 398;

> ' Venus was on her throne having her hair combed, by her stood the three sister graces. One poured an ointment of nectar on her head, one parted her hair with ivory combs and a third braided the hair and arranged it in its place with one lock escaping to enhance her beauty. Her face eagerly sought the mirrors opinion, that image was reflected by the palace walls and wherever she looked she was pleased by the sight.'
>
> (I. 97–108 transl. H. Isbell)

Drawing upon the classical authors and the surviving works of artists both major and less skilled, an attempt has been made to suggest some aspects of the changing ideas about Venus and her counterparts from Greece and Etruria, which coalesced to produce the Venus of Roman imperial times. A goddess whose powers are so beautifully evoked in the *Pervigilium Veneris*, the 'Night Watch of Venus'.[16]

> 'It was she who made Latins of her Trojan descendants, she who gave the girl of Laurentum as wife to her son; soon afterwards from the sanctuary she gave the chaste virgin to Mars. It was she who made the marriage of Romulus' men with the Sabines, that, from their union she might create the Ramnes, the Quirites, and, for later generations the mother of Romulus and Caesar the grandson.
>
> who has never loved shall love tomorrow
> tomorrow shall love who has loved before
>
> Delight quickens the fields, the fields sense Venus' power. Love himself, the child of Dione, is said to have been born in the fields. While the land was in labour, she took him to her breast and nourished him upon the tender kisses of flowers.'
>
> *Cras amet qui numquam amavit quique amavit cras amet*
>
> (ll. 70–80)

Fig. 20. Marble standing Venus from Ostia. Roman copy of a Greek original. British Museum no. 1805.7-3.16. Photo: BM.

Fig. 21. Marble crouching Venus. Roman copy of the original by Doidalsas of Bithynia. British Museum no. 193.10-29.1. Photo: BM.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1. 'O Queen of Cnidos, Paphos
   come, leave, though dearly thine,
   Cyprus: for here's thick incense
   and Glycera calls divine
   Venus to her new shrine.

   Bring fiery little Cupid
   and the Nymphs as company.
   Bid the loose-girdled Graces
   and, graceless without thee,
   Youth come, and Mercury.'
   (Transl. James Michie, 1967)
2. Schilling 1982 is particularly useful for his discussion of the early evidence; cf. especially chapter I 'Venus aux origines', section II and III, 30–64; also 'Venus' *Oxford Classical Dictionary* 2nd. edition 1973, 1113.
3. The gold tablets from Pyrgi, the port of Caere (Cerveteri), give another link between the various Mediterranean cultures. Three are in Phoenician and two in Etruscan and commemorate a dedication to Uni-Astarte. Phoenician Astarte being equated here with Etruscan Uni or Juno rather than the Etruscan Turan or Venus. The inscriptions have been dated to the end of the sixth century BC (Bonfante & Bonfante 1983, 52 56 fig. 5. also Cristofani 1979 pl. on p. 78).
4. Friedrich 1978, 66 8 for discussion of the Fifth Homeric Hymn which tells of the love of Aphrodite and Anchises; Galinsky 1969 provides a survey and interpretation of the use of these Trojan War motifs in art and literature, but note the caution in the review by A. Drummond, *JRS* 62 (1972) 218–220.
5. Schilling 1982, 304–7 for discussion of the vow at Pharsalus; 307–16 for the temple of Venus Genetrix; also Nash 1961, I, 424, figs. 519–524 for views of Templum Venus Genetrix and architectural fragments.
6. *RIC* (Titus) 3, 9, 15 all dated AD 79, after July 1st.
7. *RIC* (Trajan) 577; Nash 1961 vol. I fig. 26; Schilling 1982, 309 who quotes the fragment of the *Fasti Ostienses* which records the rededication.
8. *RIC* (Trajan) 801; Sydenham 1952, no. 1013 pl. 27.
9. *RIC* (Hadrian) 512; see also Reynolds 1982 for the links between Aphrodisias and the Roman emperors, established through the devotion of Julius Caesar and his family to Venus/Aphrodite, exploited to the advantage of Octavian-Augustus during the Civil Wars and continued by succeeding emperors in grants of rights and privileges to the city and the temple.
10. *RIC* (Antoninus Pius) 495; 511–517; 1367; 1386–1389; 1407–1410; as Empress *RIC* (Marcus Aurelius) 720 736; 1678–1688; deified *RIC* (Marcus Aurelius) 1718. The types include Venus Genetrix, Felix and Victrix.
11. Friedrich 1978 especially chapter 4 'The meaning of Aphrodite : B. The Structure' pp. 72–103 has especially interesting comments on love and death in relation to Aphrodite and is helpful for the understanding of some aspects of Venus in Roman Imperial times.
12. *RIC* (Tetrarchy, mint of Trier) 756.
13. Nash 1961, vol. II. 496–9, figs 1314–8. The building of the original temple was started on 21st April AD 121 and the structure was dedicated in 136 or 137. Nash 1961, fig. 1316 illustrates a sestertius of Antoninus Pius with the temple on the reverse (*RIC* (Antoninus) 623, dated 140–144).
14. MacMullen 1981, 36 and 14 on p. 161; Marshall 1911, xxxv–xxxvi and 201 209 no. 1858–1916 pls. XXXII, XXXIII; 273, no. 2324–7 pl. LI; 280, no. 2374 5 pl. LII. The type is thought to have been popular from the fourth century BC to the third century AD.
15. Plautus, *Mostellaria* 1, 247–271 gives a glimpse of the preparations that Philematium makes before she receives her admirer. The writer wishes to thank Mr J. J. Bowden for bringing the reference to her attention.
16. Text and translation in L. Catlow, Pervigilium Veneris, *Collection Latomus* 172 (1980).

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Nero-Helios

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Translated from the Russian by Gertrud Seidmann

After the establishment of the Empire, the posthumous apotheosis of the Roman emperor analogous, in some respects, to the ancient Latin custom of ancestor worship tended gradually towards the veneration of the emperor in his own lifetime. This custom stemmed from traditions established in the ancient and Hellenistic East. The first emperors of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, unable to stem the tide of such worship, strove to limit it either to the strictly private sphere, or to the eastern confines of the Empire, where the apotheosis of the ruler was an ancient tradition. The edicts and letters of Tiberius, Germanicus and Claudius show that even on the peripheries of the Empire rulers, in attempting to preserve a republican style, tried to divest themselves of honours of this type, since they were despised by the inhabitants of Rome and Italy. In Claudius's letters to the Alexandrians this refusal is most clearly explained.

> 'I forbid the installation of a High Priest and the erection of temples for my person, as I do not wish to behave in a provocative manner towards my contemporaries, and I hold that sacrifices and similar ceremonies are at all times meet only for gods.' (Wilamowitz-Moellendorff & Zucker 1911; Janne 1936)

Nero, last of the Julio-Claudians, broke with this tradition. While Claudius forbade the erection of temples to himself in far-off Alexandria, his successor listened indulgently to the Senate's debates about the construction, in Rome itself, of a 'temple to Divine Nero ... for the Prince has risen above the lot of mortals and deserves to be worshipped by them' (Tacitus, *Ann.* XV, 74). This temple was not erected, but there existed in the capital several representations of Nero as a god: he presided over the temple of Mars in the guise of the god of war (*Ann.* XIII, 8), on the Palatine as Apollo (Suetonius, *Nero* 25) and in the Theatre of Pompey and the Golden House as Helios (Pliny, *N.H.* XXXIV, 45; Cassius Dio LXIII, 6). Pliny tells of a gigantic painted image of the emperor in the gardens of Maius, more than 30 m (120 Roman feet) in height; here too it is likely that Nero was depicted as a god (*N.H.* XXXV, 51).

These were images of the very type that were destroyed by order of the Senate immediately after Nero's death, 'when the crimes of the deceased were condemned' (*N.H.* XXXIV 45). We do, however, possess a number of memorials untouched by that *damnatio memoriae*, which caused the emperor's statues to be razed to the ground and his name to be removed from honorific inscriptions: these are gems, a priceless source for the reconstruction of lost works of ancient art. Portrait-gems of Nero may have been made for distribution to the people during the games, as Suetonius reports (*Nero* 11). The most precious of them were dedicated in the temples of the gods. In any case the aim was to propagate ideas pleasing to the innermost circles of the Court.

In gems, Nero appears as though in a kind of masquerade, now as Triptolemos (Neverov 1976, no. 134),[1] now as Romulus-Quirinus (Vollenweider 1964, 17 and pl. iv), now as Jupiter (Neverov 1976, no. 135; *id.* 1974, 86, fig. 6; Eichler & Kris 1927, nos. 20, 351), now as a new Apollo (Milani 1912, pl. 134), sometimes with a variety of attributes (Fig. 1). If the literary sources do not cite quite the range of identifications attested by glyptic art, there is no shortage of corroborative testimony in respect of Nero as Apollo and Helios. Seneca makes Phoebus himself thus characterize Nero: 'He who is like me in features, who is like me in beauty' (*Apoc.* 4,22). The favourite pastimes of the emperor 'who resembled, by general consensus, Apollo in song and Helios in chariot-racing' (Suetonius, *Nero* 53), furthered such associations. Nero's public appearances were accompanied by the cries of hired claques; 'Thou

Fig. 1 Nero with the symbols of Jupiter, Romulus and Helios. Cameo. Cammin, Cathedral treasury.

2

3

4

Figs 2–4. 2, Nero-Apollo on a Cornelian intaglio; 3, Nero-Apollo on an agate intaglio from Phanagoria; 4, Nero-Helios. Topas intaglio set in a gold medallion found in the Transcaucasus. (All Hermitage)

art beautiful, O Caesar Augustus Apollo; thou resemblest the Pythian god ... O Nero Apollo' (Cassius Dio LXI, 20; LXIII, 20). Apparently the emperor appeared crowned with a golden diadem and wrapped in a star-studded cloak on such theatrical outings (Suetonius, *Nero* 25; Pausanias II, 17, 6).

These attempts by the Prince to liken himself to a god were turned to good account by the opposition in mocking his defeats in the Parthian wars. They wrote under the statues of the New Apollo: 'While our ruler plucks his lyre, the Parthian plucks his bowstring' (Suetonius, *Nero* 39).[2]

We can deduce the appearance of such images of Nero-Apollo, of which the historians write, on the basis of coins and gems. On an intaglio in the Hermitage (inv. no. J 4650; Fig. 2), a laureate Apollo Citharoides bears the features of the emperor, and these are even exaggerated. A cameo in Florence, on which Nero-Apollo is noticeably idealized, nevertheless resembles his portraits in the hairstyle, 'in gradus formata' (Suetonius, *Nero* 51), which characterizes the emperor's undoubted images (Milani 1912, pl. 134). The creator of this gem was evidently familiar with Seneca's flattering verses on Nero-Apollo: 'His visage irradiates all with bright reflection and abundant curls cover his shining neck' (Seneca, *Apoc.* 4, 31–2). The Apollonian idealization appears even in more realistic portraits of Nero – his features are illuminated by ecstasy, his eyes pathetically raised; the upward-turned head, with curls cascading onto the shoulders, is encountered even in those portraits of the emperor where there are no divine attributes present. Such is Nero's appearance on a gem from Phanagoria (Neverov 1980, 60 no. 224; Fig. 3).

The rational form which the first Roman emperors had tried to give to the Imperial Cult, that distinct and politically motivated form of monotheism which had united the inhabitants of a vast empire, no longer corresponded to its needs. The demands of the times, combined with the artistic nature of Nero himself, demanded a revitalized state cult, with a show of brilliance, enhanced through the magic of art, approximating to the more sensuous Hellenistic forms. This seems to be the explanation of Nero's concentration, during the last five years of his life, on a single, but, at the same time, universal image—that of the god Helios. In contemporary inscriptions the emperor is frequently called 'the New Helios'.[3]

The ways in which Nero underlines this identification do not lack logic and consistency, but in the lengths to which they go and in their unusually strident character they seem to border on the manic. These are the years when Nero breaks with the Senate (L'Orange 1942a, 253; *id.* 1947, 57). Not only do images of Apollo Citharoides with his portrait features appear on coins, but in his official portraiture the emperor usurps the attributes of the gods—the aegis of Jupiter and Helios' radiate crown. Nero was the first of the Caesars to have himself portrayed in his lifetime with these symbols of posthumous apotheosis.

The building of the Domus Aurea was to symbolize the beginning of a new period of Roman history, those 'golden centuries' which Seneca foretold on Nero's ascent to the throne (*Apoc.* 4, 2). This gigantic construction was evidently planned to be not only a luxurious villa in the centre of the city, but also very definitely a 'palace of the Sun', the dwelling-place of a cosmic divinity (L'Orange 1942b; *id.* 1953, 28). Studded with stars, the circular banqueting hall, rotating 'as if following the universe in its course' with a colossal statue of Nero-Helios himself, more than 30 m high, in the vestibule, makes such a suggestion most attractive. The very name of the palace, the Golden House, was less a reference to the splendour of its decorations, than a programmatic statement, carrying ideological overtones. Its architects had, as it were, to create the palace of the Sun, 'glittering with bright gold', sung by Ovid (*Met.* II, 1). To the Roman populace it seemed as if a magic wand had been waved: anything touched by Nero-Helios was transformed into gold. There is a well-known story of how Nero ordered Lysippus's statue of Alexander to be gilded. I believe that this must have occurred at the same time as the embellishment of the

Golden House. 'Its monetary value increased, but by this its artistic value was made to suffer,' remarked Pliny the Elder (*N.H.* XXXIV, 63).

When the traditionalist Lucan turns to thoughts about the posthumous apotheosis of Nero, he too places him in the palace of the Sungod.

> 'When your watch on earth is over and you seek the stars at last, the celestial palace you choose will welcome you and the heavens will be glad. Whether you choose to wield Jove's sceptre, or to mount the fiery chariot of Phoebus and circle earth with your moving flame– an earth untroubled by the change of divine charioteer, every god will give place to you...' (*Phars.* I, 46–51)[4]

As if anticipating his apotheosis, almost as though to prepare public opinion for it, we have seen how the emperor arrayed himself in the golden diadem of the Sungod and the purple cloak strewn with golden stars. The astral symbolism of these garments was perfectly well understood by his contemporaries.

The programmatic, magical meaning of the word 'golden', linked with the image of Nero-Helios, occurs, too, on the occasion of the feasts held in honour of the embassy of the Armenian king Tiridates in AD 66. The theatre of Pompey was gilded, and the day on which Tiridates was crowned with the diadem, symbol of the victory of Roman arms, was called 'golden'. Above the theatre a purple awning was hung, embroidered with a golden Nero in his quadriga, galloping amongst the stars (Cassius Dio LXIII, 6). And when he prostrated himself before the Roman emperor, the eastern dynast proclaimed: 'I came to bow before you, O divine one, as before Mithras' (*ibid.*, 5).

Rome in those years, then, possessed two images of Nero-Helios, one in sculptured, the other in painted form. The sculptured colossus standing in the Golden House bore his portrait features. Pliny, after a visit to the studio of its creator, the sculptor Zenodorus, wrote: 'In his studio we marvelled at the extraordinary likeness of the clay model' (*N.H.* XXXIV, 46). The colossus, executed in bronze, gold and silver, survived the *damnatio memoriae* of Nero; it alone, of all the portraits of the deified emperor escaped destruction. According to Pliny's testimony: 'The 120 foot tall Colossus, intended as a portrait of the emperor, was dedicated to the worship of the Sungod, after the crimes of the prince had been condemned' (*N.H.* XXXIV, 45). We are told that Vespasian richly rewarded the artist who 'transformed the Colossus' (Suetonius, *Div. Vesp.* 18). The transformation evidently consisted in attenuating the portrait likeness; this seems to be borne out by Cassius Dio's remark that 'according to some, it bore the features of Nero, according to others, those of Titus' (LXVI, 15). However, according to the Historia Augusta, when in the second century the head of the Colossus was twice replaced by a different one, it was believed that it had been Nero's portrait which had been removed (Hist. Aug., *Had.* 19; *Comm.* 17).

Assuming that the painting from the *horti Maiani*, later to be destroyed by lightning, also represented Nero as Helios (Boethius 1952, 132), the coincidence of the measurements of the sculptured Colossus and of this painting was evidently not accidental (Pliny, *N.H.* XXXV, 51; XXXIV, 45). A copy of the latter may be preserved in a relief sculpture in the Museo Nazionale at Rome (Paribeni 1914, 285, fig. 6). Nero may be recognized by his characteristic facial features and his typical 'layered' hairstyle; the background of the relief is studded with stars. In as much as the emperor looks younger here than he does on his portraits of the sixties, we may see in the relief and the painting from which it derives, the earliest recorded representations of Nero as the Sungod.

The resemblance to Nero's portraits and the pathetic expression of Helios as he appears on one of the Hermitage gems, appears to relate it to the Colossus. This gem, found in the Transcaucasus at the beginning of the twentieth century is engraved on a rare gemstone, a golden topaz, and in a fairly rare technique: the intaglio-portrait is viewed through the reverse, convex side of the stone, which is set in a golden frame (Neverov 1976, no. 139; *id.* 1980, no. 221; Fig. 4). The typical 'swollen' lower part of the face broadening towards the chin, and the exaggerated pathos appearing as morbid exaltation, which transfuses the god's features, indicate a new iconography of Helios, an image to replace the popular Pharos which once stood on Rhodes. By the first century, little remained of this sculpture, once famed beyond all others, lying where an earthquake had shattered it three centuries before. The Roman Colossus, as Martial had it, 'darkened the wonder of Rhodes' (*Epigram* I, 70, 8). Henceforth Rhodes, too, was dedicated to the 'new Helios', Nero, as we read in Antiphilos' shamelessly fawning epigram (*Anth. Pal.* IX, 178).

The golden colour, too, of the Hermitage gem is symbolic of Nero-Helios. Another gold-coloured mineral, amber, was lavishly used in the decoration of the amphitheatre at a show given by Nero. Nero had sent a special expedition to Germany in order to obtain this (Pliny, *N.H.* XXXVII, 45).

Two further gems portraying Nero-Helios have long been in the Hermitage collection. One, cut in a rock-crystal measuring 4.1 by 3.2 cm bears the exaggerated, schematic image of the god, of the type based on Nero's Colossus (inv. no. J.1433; Fig. 5). Another gem, a cornelian, 1.2 by 0.9 cm, appears to have features of Nero's portrait (inv. no. J.1690; Fig. 6). A chalcedony with a profile head of Helios has been found at Panticapaeum (inv. no. J.476; CR 1872, xxvi. The gem measures 1.3 by 1.1 cm). That such gems should appear in the Transcaucasus and on the northern Black Sea coast at this time, the fifties and sixties of the first century AD, seems very apt. These regions were of the greatest interest to Nero, who was then planning

grandiose military expeditions to the East. The gems may have found their way there either with Corbulo's legions or with Tiridates' huge ambassadorial train.

From these same distant borders of the ancient world originated also a gold plaquette, 6.6 by 6.5 cm, stamped with the image of Helios on his quadriga (Hermitage Museum inv. no. D 116; CR 1906, 127, fig. 179; Fig. 7). It was found at the beginning of the twentieth century during earth works in Anapa, ancient Gorgippia, a small coastal town on the Black Sea (Northern Caucasus). From the shoulders of the naked Sungod flutters a cloak, his outstretched right hand holds a whip, his head bears the radiate crown, above which is a sun within a crescent moon – the Achaemenid symbol of Mithras. The four horses are conventionally placed on either side of Helios standing in the chariot. Despite the schematic form which, one would think, must exclude realistic portraiture, we can discern even here the features of Nero, the face broad and swollen, prominent eyes turned pathetically upwards, and a typological similarity to the Hermitage gems described above.

It appears that the image on the plaquette from Anapa may be based on the prototype preserved in the description of the awning stretched over the theatre of Pompey during the days of the reception of the Armenian king, Tiridates. What the contemporary Roman artists showed in their sculpture and painting was familiar to the Romans in the verse of Lucan and Seneca. Thus the beginning of Nero's reign was celebrated by his tutor using similar imagery (Seneca, *Apoc.* 4, 25–31).[5]

Our surmise that it is, indeed, Nero who is portrayed in the guise of Helios on the Hermitage plaquette, is confirmed by a late antique cameo in Paris, where a similar representation is accompanied by the legend *NERON AVGVSTE* (Babelon 1897, no. 287; Fig. 8).

The gold plaquette from Anapa appears to be part of a priest's diadem, its *προμετωπίδιον*. It may be compared to a fragmentary diadem of the first century from Naucratis, in the British Museum (Marshall 1911, no. 3045). This, to judge by its inscription, belonged to a priest of the Imperial Cult, with the characteristic name of Tiberius Claudius Artemidorus. In its centre there is a *προμετωπίδιον* with a relief of Helios. On the northern Black Sea coast, the cult of the Roman emperors was established in the first century; by Nero's time the title of 'High Priest of the Augusti for Life' was included amongst the titles of the kings of Bosphorus, and they were given characteristic Roman names of a dynastic character such as Tiberius Julius.[6] To the same series as the Anapa plaquette belong, so it seems, both the inscription on the base of Nero's statue from Panticapaeum, and the golden wreath with a circular medallion, depicting Helios and his horses found in 1870 on the Taman peninsula (CR 1872, 21). On the inscription from Panticapaeum King Cotys, 'High Priest of the Augusti for Life' calls Nero his 'saviour and benefactor'.[7] A more extensive inscription from Boeotia shows the honours that the emperor assumed outside Rome and the forms which the cult of Nero took in the east of the Empire. The 'High Priest of the Augusti and of Nero Epaminondas' extols him not only as the 'benefactor of Hellas'; in the eyes of the votaries of the Imperial Cult he is the 'Sovereign of the whole Universe ... the new Sun which has shone upon the Hellenes' (Holleaux 1888, 514).

The requirements of the Imperial Cult, after it had been introduced to the far eastern confines of the ancient world, explain the appearance, in those regions, of such images of Nero-Helios as those we found on the gold plaquette from Anapa and on the gems from the Northern Black Sea coast. Nero's popularity in the East is mentioned by the Roman historians; there too, the would-be 'pseudo-Neros' who made their appearance after the Emperor's death, found their support. This may explain why reproductions of monuments destroyed in Rome itself were preserved only in these distant confines of the Empire. Cassius Dio's report that Tiridates managed to have artisans sent from Rome to embellish his capital, Artaxata, explains how local craftsmen became acquainted with the repertory of the capital's art (LXIII, 6). Evidently his association with the Sungod, of whom the emperor regarded himself as the incarnation, and with Mithras, major divinity of the Persian-speaking world, played a not unimportant role in maintaining Nero's popularity in the eastern regions of the Empire. Nero, with his weakness for the secret and occult, is supposed to have been initiated into the Mithraic mysteries during Tiridates' stay in Rome (Cumont 1933, 145). In any case, as can be seen from the presence of a Mithraic symbol on the Anapa plaquette, allusions to an identification of the Hellenic and Persian variants of the ruler cult were not lacking in the sacred arts.

The vestiges of glyptic and toreutic art which we have examined have preserved into our own days the appearance of short-lived images in an ephemeral monotheistic cult, a universal religion which Nero attempted to establish. These specimens of applied art allow us to visualize the forms through which the worship of the emperor-god, Nero-Helios, was expressed in monumental art.[8]

5 6

Figs 5 & 6 5. Nero-Helios on a rock-crystal intaglio; 6, Nero-Helios on a Cornelian intaglio. Hermitage.

Fig. 7 Gold plaquette from Anapa. Hermitage

Fig. 8 Nero-Helios on a sardonyx cameo. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

Notes

1 Also Severos 1971, no. 55 (Germanicus and Agrippina I) and Babelon 1897, no. 276 (Claudius and Agrippina II).

2 Dum tendit citharam noster, dum cornua Parthus.
Noster erit Paean, ille *iaculabitur* ...

3 For an inscription from Boeotia, Dittenberger 1920, no. 814. For an inscription from Attica, *IG* I[2] II, 1085. For an inscription from Asia Minor, *Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes* III, no. 345.

4 Astra petes serus, praelati regna caeli
excipiet, gaudente polo, seu sceptra tenere,
seu te flammigeros Phoebi conscendere currus,
telluremque nihil mutato sole tuentem
igne iugo ostrare iuvat, tibi numine ab omni
cedetur ...

5 Quis, cum primum tenebris Aurora solutis
induxit rubicunda diem, Sol aspicit orbem
lucidus et primos e carcere concitat axes
talis Caesar adest, talem iam Roma Neronem
aspiciet

6 *Corpus of the Inscriptions from the Bosphorus* (in Russian, Moscow-Leningrad 1965) 50.

7 *ibid.* 41.

8 Since the above was written, Miriam Griffin's interesting and useful study of Nero (1984) has appeared (ed.s).

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Abbreviation

CR *Compte rendu de la Commission (Impériale) Archéologique*. 1859 onwards.

The Cult and Sanctuary of Diana Nemorensis

T. F. C. Blagg

Most of the other papers in this volume are concerned with examining, through the medium of religion, the effects of cultural confrontation in the provinces of the Roman Empire with what in the first instance was simply a new political reality: Roman rule. Values, systems of belief and long traditions were transformed, and the adaptations were not unilateral. What we understand by *interpretatio romana* is something much more subtle than an ethnocentric imposition of Roman religious concepts. It involved the accommodation of those concepts to what the Romans found in the provinces which they came to rule. The ability to make these adaptations, generally with remarkably little friction, must be seen as fundamental to the resilience of the Roman Empire as an institution. In default of any strongly expressed political ideology, religion provided both a means of reinforcing social cohesion, and at the same time an opportunity for the expression of local identities without causing violent reaction. In general, the virtues of diversity and tolerance served the Roman Empire well until the reign of Constantine.

Given the very ritualistic and prescriptive nature of Roman religion, it is in a sense rather surprising that it could be so accommodating to alien religious practices. But Roman religion was not a static entity, a neat package of beliefs and practices, to be juxtaposed to a varied collection of smaller and untidier provincial parcels. The background to *interpretatio romana* in the Empire is a long history of *interpretatio* and religious transformation within Italy. This paper is an examination of such a process of transformation in relation to one particular cult in Latium, that of Diana Nemorensis. The literary and epigraphic evidence for the cult, combined with the archaeological evidence from the sanctuary, reveals a complicated series of changes, representing at least four different phases of *interpretatio* in the course of a thousand years.[1]

I

There is little certainty about the early nature of the cult of Diana as an Italian and, more specifically, a Latin goddess (Gordon 1932). The wood sacred to her, the Nemus, surrounded a lake within a volcanic crater of the Alban Hills, and lay in the territory of the Latin town of Aricia, 26 km south-east of Rome (Figs 1 & 2).

Several features associated with the cult go well beyond the reach of historical sources, notably the worship of the minor divinities Egeria and Virbius. Egeria was the nymph of the neighbouring spring, and was worshipped also as a birth goddess (Gordon 1934, 13); Virbius is a more shadowy figure, possibly the deity of the lake (Ovid, *Fasti* VI, 755–6; Pairault 1969, 437). The original role of the *Rex Nemorensis*, the priesthood held by a fugitive slave who had to kill his predecessor in order to obtain the office, is equally obscure; though the institution is more familiar, as having provided the inspiration and starting point for Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890). Our understanding of these associated features of Diana's cult is impeded by the fact that, by the time we find references to them in ancient literature, they have become entangled in the ramifications of mythology. It seems reasonable, however, to agree with Pairault's observation (1969, 428) that they attest an almost immemorial divine presence at Nemi.[2]

The archaeological evidence for the earliest form of the cult is equally scarce. There is no evidence for any buildings at the sanctuary before the fourth century BC. A few bronze brooches and figurines found in excavation of the sanctuary are datable from the eighth to the sixth centuries BC, and may be votive (Nottingham Museums 1983, 54–58). So too, probably, was the collection of miniature pots found between the sanctuary and the lakeside, assignable in part at least to the Archaic period, or even the Late Iron Age (Gierow 1964, 361–363).

The question of the early cult of Diana at Nemi is connected with that of the introduction of her worship to Rome. According to tradition, the temple of Diana on the Aventine was established by Servius Tullius in the sixth century BC, as a federal sanctuary for the Latins under Roman leadership (Dionys.Hal. IV, 26). This was later said to be on the model of the Artemision at Ephesus (Livy I, 45, 2–3), but its foundation may originally have had a more direct political purpose as a rival to the sanctuary at Nemi, part of a policy designed to extend the influence of the Etruscan kings over the Latins through control of their religious institutions (Gordon 1932, 178–179; Pairault 1969, 430–431). That Nemi was at some time the focus for a league of Latin towns is suggested by the dedication made there by the *dictator Latinus* Egerius Baebius (or Laevius), in the common name of eight of them.[3] The date is uncertain though many scholars have accepted one in the later sixth century; the priority of a federal sanctuary at Nemi over that of the Aventine has also been debated (Gordon 1934, 1; Pairault 1969, 426–434, 440). The arguments orbit around the absence of Rome from the

towns listed in Egerius' dedication, and Momigliano (1962, 390–391) has argued that this might be more appropriate to the time of hostility between Rome and the Latin league during the early years of the Republic, before the battle of Lake Regillus (*c.* 496 BC). He has also argued that another key point in the debate, the fact that 13th August, the date of Diana's festival at Nemi (Statius, *Silv.* III, 1, 55–60), was also the *dies natalis* of the Aventine Temple, does not necessarily imply that Rome was following Nemi's precedent, since it was the date when Diana was celebrated, not only there, but throughout Italy.

Much of the discussion relates more to the Aventine cult, about which we are much better informed, than to Nemi, and only the main points of it have been mentioned here. In relation to Nemi, it is perhaps more significant to know, from Egerius' dedication, that Diana's wood attracted religious devotion from other Latin communities than that of Aricia itself, than to speculate about how far it was a federal sanctuary in a formal sense. It need not have been so, to have influenced the establishment of Diana's cult in Rome. The fact that, in the early Empire, Diana's festival was marked by a procession of women carrying torches from the city to the Nemus (Ovid, *Fasti* III, 270; Propertius, II, 32, 9–10) would seem to commemorate an ancient association between the two cult centres. On the other hand, whether or not Nemi provided a precedent for the Aventine cult, the *lex Dianae in Aventino*, which was applied as a model for the regulation of other cults, may well have affected cult practice at Nemi in turn (*CIL* III, 1933; XI, 361; XII, 4333; Momigliano 1962, 387). Also, the Aventine temple was established as a place of asylum, originally as neutral ground for the settlement of differences between the Latin towns (Dionys. Hal. IV, 26). These rights of asylum would also appear to have been inspired by the example of the Artemision at Ephesus (van Berchem 1960, 31). In Rome they were enjoyed, among others, by fugitive slaves, and the festival of Diana on the Ides of August acquired the character of *servorum dies festus* (Festus 510 = Lindsay 1913, 460). As Pairault has argued (1969, 429) the association between slaves and Diana probably derives from this right of asylum rather than from the slave-priesthood at Nemi: in remarking that it is not certain that originally the *rex Nemorensis* was a slave, Pairault seems to imply that this feature of the priesthood may be a modification deriving from the asylum given to fugitive slaves at Diana's Aventine sanctuary.

We thus have to consider two aspects of *interpretatio romana*: first, the possible adoption of a Latin cult by Rome in the sixth century for political reasons; secondly, whatever the source for the introduction of the cult of Diana to the Aventine, its subsequent influence on the nature of Diana's cult at Nemi.

At the same time, we have also to consider the *interpretatio hellenica* of Diana. Explicit parallels between the Aventine cult and the Artemision at Ephesus have already been mentioned. Strabo informs us (IV, 1, 4–5) that the design of the cult image (*xoanon*) reproduced that of Artemis at Marseilles, which itself preserved that of the *xoanon* of Ephesian Artemis. The Marseilles image, if Ampolo's identification (1970) is correct, was very different from the cult image of Diana at Nemi. This was recognized by Alföldi (1960) as the subject represented on *denarii* struck by P. Accoleius Lariscolus, *tresvir monetalis* in 43 BC, and apparently a member of an Arician family. The reverses show statues of three female figures, holding different attributes, and joined together by a horizontal bar behind their necks. They stand, evidently in the open, against a background of cypress trees. The obverses of the coins show the head of Diana in late archaic style, with two rows of tightly-coiled curls round the forehead. Subsequently, Riis (1966) has related this obverse design to a bronze head, now in Copenhagen but formerly in the collection of Cardinal Despuig, who had excavations done on the site of the Nemi sanctuary in the late eighteenth century. Riis suggested, most plausibly, that possibly this head had belonged to one of the three statues; he dated it to *c.* 480 BC. The statues represent Diana in three forms: as Artemis, with her bow, as Luna/Selene and as Hekate, reflecting the Greek assimilation of Artemis with Hekate (cf. Aeschylus, *Suppl.* 674–677) and with Selene or Persephone. The different attributes of each figure distinguish the three archaic statues at Nemi from the Hellenistic triple images of Hekate as three identical torch-bearing figures (Kraus 1960, 102–112; Pairault 1969, 458–462). Through her assimilation with Hekate, however, the triple deity of the crossroads, Diana also acquired the name of Trivia, by which Augustan and later poets address her.[4]

The Hellenization of Diana also gave Nemi a place in classical mythology, notably in those myths which relate to the migration and death of Orestes and Hippolytus. Orestes, after having killed King Thoas in Tauris, was supposed to have come from the Crimea to Nemi, bringing with him the statue of Artemis Tauropolis. He died at Aricia and his bones were later translated to Rome (Servius, *ad Aen.* IV, 136 and II, 116). Hippolytus, by contrast, after Asclepius had rescued him from death, was concealed by Diana 'in the *nemus* of the nymph Egeria' where he remained in obscurity under the *alius* of Virbius, and begot a son of the same name (Vergil, *Aen.* VIII, 761–782), or alternatively, became king and founded Diana's *temenos* (Pausanias, II, 27, 4). He was unable to console Egeria after the death of her husband (Ovid *Fasti* III, 275–276) or lover (Servius, *ad Aen.* VII, 763), the Roman king Numa, so Diana turned Egeria into a spring (Ovid, *Metam.* XV, 482–551). Finally, there is the association between the story of the golden bough and the slave priesthood (Servius, *ad Aen.* VI, 136), the latter described by Strabo (V, 3, 12) as a barbaric

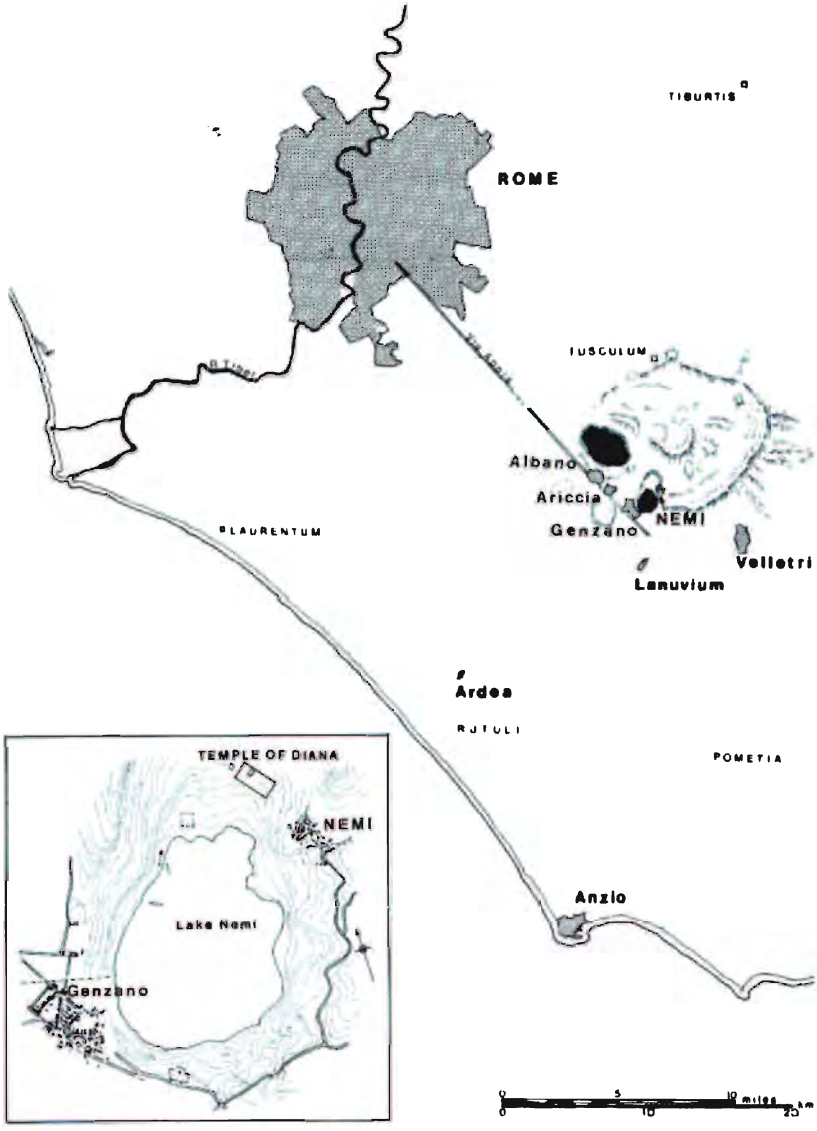

Fig. 1 Nemi and its surrounding area, showing towns and peoples of the Latin League. Inset: location of the Temple of Diana (Drawing by Alan MacCormick).

Scythian element among the sacred customs.

Clearly, these mythological stories are aetiological: they offer accounts for the origins of the cult and explanations of some of its more peculiar aspects (e.g. Virbius, Egeria, the *Rex Nemorensis* and the cult statue). They are not mutually consistent, and while they inform us about the way in which Diana's cult at Nemi was viewed by *literati* of the early principate, it is impossible to judge how far they were part of the culture of those who erected the Hellenized cult statue early in the fifth century.[5]

To summarize the evidence for the early period of Diana's sanctuary at Nemi: we have the sacred wood, where worship is attested by a small number of offerings in bronze and pottery, and where from the early fifth century BC there was a Hellenized cult image. It has a claim to be a Latin federal sanctuary, and a somewhat ambiguous relationship with the cult of Diana instituted on the Aventine Hill outside the *pomerium* of Rome.

II

In its second phase, as defined by the archaeological evidence, the sanctuary acquired a very different character, which might be described as its *interpretatio italica*. It is at this time that there is evidence for the first buildings on the site, in the form of pedimental sculpture, terracotta antefixes and revetment plaques from temples. The earliest are datable to the late fourth or early third centuries BC, and they came from at least two buildings (Nottingham Museums 1983, 27–37). More significant, however, in relation to the *interpretatio italica*, are the votive terracottas, in the form of figurines and parts of the human anatomy (Nottingham Museums 1983, 46–53). The figurines include deities; women and, less frequently, men; seated couples with infants on the woman's lap; and animals. The anatomical terracottas include male and female heads, eyes, hands, feet and models of the uterus, and they reflect a popular religious devotion connected mainly with health and fertility. These are matters of perennial and universal concern: the point of interest here, therefore, is the particular way in which the concerns were expressed.

As Comella (1981, 771–5) has shown, the practice of offering anatomical models of terracotta is a regional characteristic of religious sanctuaries in southern Etruria, Latium and northern Campania, mainly from the fourth century to the first century BC. It is the use of terracotta which is the particularly distinctive feature. The general phenomenon of the votive offering of parts of the human body was, of course, much more widespread in the Mediterranean area, as it still is.[6] At such sites as the Artemision at Ephesus and various sanctuaries of Asklepios, models were made from metal, ivory and marble. In relation to these more costly materials, the large quantity of anatomical votives in terracotta found in the Asklepieion at Corinth, and datable mainly from the late fifth to the late fourth century BC, is exceptional (Roebuck 1951, 111–113).

In general, these precedents for votive practice suggest yet another aspect of the Hellenization of Italian religion. In relation to Nemi, however, the phrase *interpretatio italica* is used here to signify, not the ultimate origins of the practice, but the more immediate context for its introduction to Nemi, and the way in which the sanctuary of Diana thus came to share in a common and essentially localized Italian phenomenon.

The first aspect of this to consider is the extension to a new category of object of the existing technology of manufacturing architectural terracottas—antefixes and revetment plaques—from moulds. Votive terracottas made in this way were relatively cheap, compared with votive offerings in bronze and more precious metals, and relatively permanent, compared with wood and other organic materials.[7] They thus provide evidence for popular religious devotion of a kind which was not previously visible in the archaeological record. In several respects, this devotion took a form which did not relate in any very specific way to Diana. Her association with procreation and childbirth (Kahil 1979, 83) does not seem to be specially reflected in the type-range of anatomical terracottas from Nemi: there are a few seated couples with infants and a few uteri, but none of the swathed infants found at other sites; and the majority of the anatomical votives are heads, feet and hands.[8] Most of the figurines are those of women, in the so-called Tanagra style; although Diana is the most common among the deities represented, statuettes of Minerva, Apollo and Dionysus also occur. Certain religious sites appear to have specialized in particular aspects of health or fertility, but such specializations seem largely unrelated to the identity of the principal deity of the sanctuary.[9] Particular cults associated with the deity no doubt continued, at Nemi as elsewhere. Diana's sanctuary, however, together with other sanctuaries in western central Italy, became during this period a focus for a particular type of religious practice associated with health and procreation.

The common repertoire of votive objects from these sites was the result of their being associated in a common system of production and distribution. Figurines from Nemi can be identified with others from the same mould series at Segni, Rome, Lavinium and Ardea, and terracotta heads, likewise, with examples from Rome and Lavinium (Nottingham Museums 1983, 48–53). The spread of the religious practice of making votive offerings in this form, and the underlying commercial and technical organization which produced the objects themselves, require explanation in both political and social terms.

The political explanation is the easier to envisage. It is the increasing Roman influence, first over southern

Etruria, with the defeat of Veii in 396 BC, then over Latium, with the defeat by Rome and its allies of the Latin Towns, including Aricia, in 338 BC. This was followed by the extension of Roman citizenship to the Latins, and the establishment, during the late fourth and early third centuries, of colonies with rights of contract and intermarriage with Romans. These new political relationships were accompanied by new routes of communication, notably with the construction in 312 BC of the Via Appia, which passes the lip of Nemi's crater. Roman military and political expansion, which was extended into northern Campania in the course of the second and third Samnite wars, provided the catalyst by which new religious ideas were assimilated. That is not to say that Rome itself provided the actual model for the change. The precedents for the anatomical votives and figurines are Greek, and it may be suspected that Campania, long familiar with Greek artistic forms, was most influential in the response of Italian religious imagination to those precedents.

The social background to the change is more difficult to identify. What becomes manifest is the concern of a peasant population with health and fertility: the ideas may well have been long-established, even if the forms of expression were new. For two or three centuries, the inhabitants of southern Etruria, Latium and northern Campania paid their gods, whether *pre votum* or *ex voto*, with models in terracotta which represented the parts of their bodies which were in need of divine attention, or with images representing either themselves or their gods. This suggests a new self-awareness, a mental and spiritual equivalent to the opening up of the territory with new roads and new cities, a new mobility of people and ideas.

The architectural enrichment of the sanctuary attests a greater degree of wealth in the local community than might be deduced from the votive offerings. Like the latter, the pedimental sculpture and terracotta antefixes of the late fourth and third century BC show Nemi's participation in a cultural tradition which had been established in western central Italy for two centuries. The sanctuary was endowed with at least two major buildings, presumably temples, and in the third century one of them was decorated, or redecorated, in an outstandingly lavish way with gilt-bronze revetment plaques, frieze and roof-tiles (Morpurgo 1903, 318 ff.; Andrén 1940, 383). That this benefaction was extraordinary may be inferred from the criticisms made of Q. Lutatius Catulus (cos. 78 BC) for having gilded the bronze tiles of the Capitolium in Rome (Pliny, *N. H.* XXXIII, 57; Andrén 1940, 340), even though by that time spectacular magnificence in public building was much more familiar to the eye in Rome than it had been in third century Latium.

Fig. 2. Nemi, view of the town and lake from the south-west, 1885. The sanctuary of Diana is in the centre by the shore, to the right of the rising smoke.

III

'Fictilibus crevere deis haec aurea templa' (Propertius IV. 1. 5)

Despite this indication that Nemi already attracted some generous expenditure, this was relatively small compared with the enormous scale of the rebuilding by which, late in the second or early in the first century BC, the sanctuary was transformed. The hillside was terraced and retained by walls constructed as a series of arched niches of Roman concrete faced in pseudo-reticulate masonry, enclosing a precinct 44,000m² in area. A new temple was built, with a podium and stuccoed Doric colums of *peperino* tufa (Nottingham Museums 1983, 25 7). When this was uncovered in 1885, it was assumed to be the temple of Diana, but what was recorded of the structure does not appear to correspond with what was said by Vitruvius (IV, 8, 4) about the temple of Diana Nemorensis. That, like the temples of Castor in the Circus Flaminius and of Veiovis *inter duos lucos* at Rome, had a cella placed transversely to the pronaos; i.e. it had a porch attached to one of its long sides, not forming one of the short sides as was normal (Gros 1976, 143–7). If what was found in 1885 was that temple, the recorded evidence for the structure is insufficient to prove it.[10]

Colini proposed, in relation to his excavation of the temple of Veiovis, that this type was "une création hellénistique proprement latiale" (Gros 1976, 145, summarizing Colini 1942, 52–55), and the same words might equally well be used to describe the architectural complex as a whole. The large-scale rebuilding of Latin sanctuaries, of which those of Fortuna at Praeneste and of Hercules Victor at Tivoli are among the better known, is a phenomenon of the second half of the second century and the first decades of the first century BC. Roman concrete construction had developed sufficiently to be used in retaining walls and vaulted platforms to adapt the landscape architecturally for grandiose and imaginative effect. Hellenistic concepts of design and the money with which to realize them were acquired in the same way: through increased Roman involvement in the East Mediterranean during the second century by conquest and trade. Many Romans and Italians made fortunes.

One of the ways in which they spent them was in the munificent funding of building projects; it was time for increasing emulation and self-advertisement. The sanctuaries themselves may well have participated in the process. Bodei Giglioni (1977, 72) has suggested that the resources in wealth of their home sanctuaries were the bases for the trade by which such families as the Munatii and Cosinii of Tivoli made their own fortunes as well as enriching the sanctuaries.[11] As these local families acquired interests and positions of importance outside their own communities, they developed wider political ambitions which they had to fight the Social War to achieve. Coarelli (1983, 193) has seen the rebuilding of the religious sanctuaries as 'a sort of self-affirmation by the Italian ruling classes, who revalued their religious and municipal traditons as part of their developing confrontation with Rome'.

The Accolei may have been one such family at Nemi: by representing the cult image of Diana on the coins issued by him in 43 BC, the moneyer P. Accoleius may have been recalling a significant earlier association between his family and the sanctuary. M. Accoleius was one of the aediles, presumably of Aricia, whose names appear as dedicators on a statue base found there (*CIL* XIV, 4196). Despite these hints, however, we lack epigraphic and other evidence to identify those responsible for the rebuilding of the sanctuary. The scale of the work is likely to have exceeded the collective means of donors of cheap votive terracottas. Indeed, it is at approximately the same time as the rebuilding that the practice of offering votive terracotta dies out. As will appear below, this reflects a change in the character of the local population, a wider process which had as one of its results the realignment of local religious practices 'in a new framework, that of urban, Roman Italy' (Crawford 1981, 160).

IV

The change in the local population was the result of a different sort of Roman colonization from that which had followed the defeat of the Latins. From the mid second century onwards, rich Roman senators and equestrians began to build luxury villas for themselves in the Alban and Sabine Hills (e.g. Brutus and Metellus. Cicero, *de Orat.* II, 224, 263). The area between Rome and such towns as Tivoli, Praeneste and Aricia became, it has been said, 'so dotted with villas as to seem like a suburb of Rome' (Bodei Giglioni 1977, 63). The sanctuaries acquired a new Roman and increasingly cosmopolitan clientèle. At Nemi, for example, an inscription records a dedication by C. Aurelius Cotta (cos. 75 BC: *CIL* XIV 4268; Pairault 1969, 441, n.2). Another honouring C. Salluvius Naso, propraetorian legate in Asia under Lucullus between 74 and 73 BC, was erected by two of the peoples he had saved in the Mithridatic War (*CIL* XIV 2218 = *ILS* 37; Broughton 1952, 105). In 50 BC Caesar was busy building for himself at Nemi (Cicero, *ad Att.* VI, 1, 25), a sumptuous villa which, if we are to believe Suetonius (*Div. Jul.* 46), he later had pulled down because it did not wholly please him. His sister Julia married Atius Balbus, a local man, and Cicero defended the Arician origin of their daughter Atia, the mother of the future emperor Augustus, and mentioned other young women from the town who had married Roman notables (Cicero, *Phil.* III, vi, 15–17).

The late Republic set the pattern for the early Empire, and the life of the sanctuary became increasingly part of the background to the seasonal presence of emperors and aristocrats and those who

followed them. It is a sign of this that Diana's cult at Nemi, which had rarely received mention in Latin literature before the Augustan age, then found a place in the writings of Ovid (*Ars Am.* 259–60; *Fasti* III, 260–76), Propertius (II, 32, 10) and Strabo (V, 3, 12), and in other writers of the early principate (Lucan, Juvenal, Martial, Statius, Valerius Flaccus). Nemi appears to have shared in Augustus' revival of traditional Roman religious institutions, and it is perhaps in that context that the origin myths of the cult were elaborated (see above). The imperial family was honoured at Nemi by statues and dedications: for example, in the dedication to Vespasian by the senate and people of Aricia in AD 71 (*CIL* XIV, 4191). Trajan, as *dictator*, continuing the ancient institution,[12] is named, with his prefect and the quaestors and aediles, on an inscription to *Dianae Nemoresi Vestae* erected by P. Cornelius Trophimus, *pistor romaniensis*, and his wife Lania Thionoe (*CIL* XIV, 2213). A more sinister continuation of ancient practices is attributed to Caligula, when he had the *Rex Nemorensis* killed, thinking that he had survived too long (Suetonius, *Gaius Cal.* 35). One can imagine how the ancient religious setting was perverted into the background scenery for luxurious summer entertainment on Caligula's floating palaces, the Nemi ships (Ucelli 1950).

Nevertheless, in the Julio-Claudian period, participation in worship at Nemi was of wider and deeper significance than that. Adjacent to the sanctuary was a luxurious villa (Morpurgo 1931) which, to judge from the stamps on lead pipes, was owned or occupied by Volusia Cornelia, daughter or neice of the consul of AD 3 (Coarelli 1982), and also, perhaps later, by Darius, the Parthian princely hostage who was a favourite of Caligula's (Suetonius, *Gaius Cal.* 19, 2). Darius dedicated a shrine at Nemi (*CIL* XIV, 2216; see Coarelli 1982, no.19), but Volusia's greater munificence was to restore the theatre which had been built adjoining the temple sanctuary in the late Republic.[13]

This theatre accounts in part for a temple clientèle of less exalted social rank than those mentioned so far. Although, within the sanctuary, there appears to have been little new building of importance after the late Republic, smaller embellishments are attested by terracotta antefixes and architectural ornament in marble (Nottingham Museums 1983, 27–8, 38). Shrines of Isis and Bubastis, and an *aedicula*, are recorded epigraphically (*CIL* XIV, 2215 and 4184). A series of rooms was constructed within the precinct ambulatory on the north-east side, including a room with a mid first century BC inscribed mosaic pavement (*CIL* XIV, 4183) and Julio-Claudian statues and portrait herms (Nottingham Museums 1983, 41–3; Poulsen 1973, 112–7, nos. 77–84). The main figure was Fundilia C. F. Rufa, of whom a statue and a herm were erected by one Doctus. He, as his own statue tells us, was her client and freedman C. Fundilius Doctus, a *parasitus* of Apollo, or player of the fourth part, the Parasite, in Roman comedy; as was another of those represented, L. Faenius Faustus (*CIL* XIV, 4198). Others include Q. Hostius Capito, a *rhetor*; L. Aninius Rufus, a quaestor of Aricia; and Staia Quinta, a freedwoman.

They could all afford or be thought worthy to be commemorated by marble portraits, but are not otherwise people of known distinction, and with the possible exception of Aninius,[14] they seem unlikely to be of local origin. The Fundilii are obscure, named on a couple of funeral monuments at Reate and Rome (*ILS* 7325, 7883). Faenii are more widespread; by the third century they included the tribune of an auxiliary cohort in Britain (*RIB* 2097) and *duoviri* at Canusium (*ILS* 6121) but the Syrian Faenia Felicitas (*CIL* X, 1975) and the *thurarius* L. Faenius L. L. Alexander (*ILS* 7615), both at Puteoli, hint at eastern origins. The Hostii are significantly represented in inscriptions at Capua (*ILS* 3609, 5641, 6303).

A full prosopographical study of the inscriptions from Nemi has not yet been undertaken. Nevertheless, the brief examination made here shows clearly enough the incidental influence of the city of Rome, first, in attracting people from all over Italy, notably Campania, and secondly, in the increasing effects of the upward social mobility of manumitted slaves and their descendants. Purcell's recent study (1983) of the *apparitores* has demonstrated the particular serviceability of those offices as a means to social advancement, though only one apparitor has left identifiable record at Nemi (*CIL* XIV, 2221). One should not think of Nemi as exclusively the preserve of the rich: where the Caesars and the Volusii had led, the Fundilii and their associates followed.

The votive offerings of the local peasantry had ceased, since few peasants can have remained to make them. In any case, many traditional ritual practices were forgotten in the last years of the Republic, and were only revived in Rome as the result of antiquarian research by such scholars as Atticus and Varro (Gros 1976, 22–24). The recorded role of Egeria at Nemi should be linked with her association with King Numa in Livy's account (I, 19–21) of early Roman religion. Thus Nemi, as a result of its increasing social domination by Rome, followed the pattern of Rome's religious evolution during this period. The Nemus became a place for *villegiatura* from Rome, attractive for its delightful scenery and the summer coolness of its wooded slopes. In anticipation of the market gardens which now cover Diana's sanctuary, Aricia acquired a horticultural reputation, notably for its leeks or chives (Martial XII, 32, 10; Pliny *N.H.* XIII, 19, 1). The area was evidently much frequented by visitors to villas as well as to Diana's temple, to judge from its attractions for the large number of beggars for which the *clivus Aricinus* was notorious (Martial II, 19, 3–4; XII, 32, 10; Juvenal, *Sat.* IV, 117–8). During the early Empire the sanctuary attracted worship to a wider extent than

perhaps at any previous time. Emperors were associated with the cult. Aristocrats were, like Volusia Cornelia, benefactors of the sanctuary or, like M. Acilius Priscus Egrilius Plarianus,[15] personal devotees of Diana. Municipal magistrates of Aricia were joined there by actors, former slaves, and numerous other inhabitants of Rome. Propertius addresses a poem (II, 32, 10) to a lady who went round various sanctuaries in Latium and took part in the torchlight celebrations in the Nemus on 13th August, Diana's feast day, when the lake shone with the reflections of the lights (Statius, *Silvae* III, 55–60). Ovid (*Fasti* III, 260–76) describes in more detail the offerings made by women who came from Rome to record their particular thanks to Diana, evidently something special to Nemi which her temple on the Aventine did not attract. He had himself drunk from Egeria's spring.

The epigraphic evidence continues into the Antonine period, and the coins until the fourth century (Morpurgo 1903, 340), but we lack archaeological evidence for what eventually became of the sanctuary. One might summarize the final phase at Nemi, by contrasting the fate of the slave priest under Caligula with the prosperity and status of the former slave, the actor Fundilius, who could both afford and presume to erect marble statues of his patroness and himself. The cult remained and flourished, though the worshippers were different. That was the *interpretatio romana* of Diana Nemorensis.[16]

Notes

1. The first part of this paper, in particular, owes much to Pairault's comprehensive review (1969) of the written sources and secondary literature; full bibliographic references will be found there to supplement selective citation here. For the archaeological evidence and bibliography, see Nottingham Museums 1983. The main excavations in the sanctuary are those undertaken by Sir John Savile Lumley (later Lord Savile) in 1885 (Pullan 1887; Wallis 1891).
2. Ancient writers refer to the Nemus in relation to Aricia, e.g. Statius, *Silv* III, 1, 56: 'Aricinum Triviae nemus'; Nemi is the modern name of the lake and the medieval town which overlooks it from the hillside above the sanctuary. 'Nemi' is used here as the place of reference, to avoid confusion with the actual site of Aricia (modern Ariccia), which is 3 km west of the sanctuary.
3. Priscian, *Inst. Gram.* IV, 21 = Cato, fr. 58 (Peter 1883, 52): 'lucum Dianium in nemore Aricino Egerrus Baebius Tusculanus dedicavit dictator Latinus; hi populi communiter: Tusculanus, Aricinus, Lanuvinus, Laurens, Coranus, Tiburtis, Pometinus, Ardeatis Rutulus'.
4. Propertius, I, 32, 10: 'In nemus et Trivias humina ferre deae'; Catullus, 34, 15; Statius, *Silv.* III, 1, 57.
5. Pairault (1969, 445–457), in exploring the degree of coherence between legend and cult, has considered the evidence for knowledge of the Orestes myth in early fifth century Italy.
6. Fenelli (1975, 207–209) summarizes much relevant bibliographical information.
7. This relates to votive offerings in the widest sense, not just to anatomical models. Speculations about whether offerings were previously made of wood or other perishable materials can rarely be proved. Note, however, the offering to Artemis at Brauron of the clothes worn by women at childbirth: Kahil 1979, 83.
8. *Cf.* the sanctuary at Gravisca, where 222 model uteri were found in cult rooms dedicated to Aphrodite and Hera, and others elsewhere, by far the dominant type of ex-voto from the site: Comella 1978, 89–92.
9. I have discussed this point more fully elsewhere: Blagg 1985.
10. The records of the excavation leave much to be desired. There are several discrepancies between the first publication of the temple (Pullan 1887) and the site plan and later descriptions (Wallis 1891; Morpurgo 1903, 305–6; Nottingham Museums 1983, 25.
11. The wealth in coin accumulated by Nemi and other Latin sanctuaries was an important resource for Octavian during the Civil War: Appian, *B.C.* V, 24.
12. For the *dictator Latinus* see p. 211 above. A funerary inscription in Rome, however, records Cn. Dupulius, *dictat. Aricinus* (*CIL* XIV, 2169).
13. For the excavations of the theatre, see Morpurgo 1931. Coarelli (1982) has revised Morpurgo's interpretations of the pipe stamps and the Volusia Cornelia inscription.
14. Another L. Animius was IIII vir at Tivoli. *CIL* XIV, 3670.
15. A man of consular family, and *pontifex* of Vulcan at Ostia in AD 105 (Meiggs 1973, 503–4). The inscription, to Deanae (sic) Nemorensi, was found in Rome.
16. Diana's epithet *Nemorensis* seems to apply specifically to her cult in the wood at Aricia; the usage corresponds with that by which the wood was known simply as *Nemus*, without further identification. She was, of course, worshipped in such other woodland settings as Tifata (Morpurgo 1903, 347), and indeed, every *lucus* was consecrated to her (Servius, *in Verg. Georg.* III, 332). Nevertheless, inscriptions from elsewhere than Nemi which address her as *Nemorensis* are very rare. In two cases, from Rome and Tivoli (*CIL* XIV, 2212, 3537), proximity suggests that they relate to the Nemi cult. The third, from Narona in Dalmatia (*CIL* III, 1773 = *ILS* 3245) erected by Ti. Claudius Claudianus, the prefect of an auxiliary cohort, stands in such isolation that one may also suspect a reference to Diana at Nemi; unfortunately the dedicator's nomenclature gives us no clue about his *origo*. By contrast, note the phraseology of *CIL* VIII 9834 (= *ILS* 3257) from Mauretania: 'Deanae deae nemorum comiti, victrici ferarum'.

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Fig. 1 was drawn by Alan MacCormick of the Castle Museum, Nottingham; Fig. 2, also supplied through his kindness, is from the series which Lord Savile had taken at the time of his excavations in 1885, the negatives for which are held by Nottingham Museums.

Interpretatio Romana: the Semitic populations of Syria and Mesopotamia

Malcolm A. R. Colledge

Syria and Mesopotamia are the lands of the Fertile Crescent, the hot lands of the present-day countries of Lebanon, Syria and Iraq. The region is one of stark contrasts, geographically: around its western, northern and eastern sides are the fertile lands, those of the mountainous Lebanese and Syrian coasts, the hills of north Syria and southern Anatolia, and the flat lands through which the River Tigris and Euphrates flow; across its centre, and stretching southwards into Arabia, lies the barren wilderness of the Syrian desert, whose dryness is relieved only by the occasional oasis such as that of Palmyra, and by periodic rainfall, especially in spring, which temporarily fills the dry river beds or wadis and allows some plant growth. In such a region, water will obviously be a prime concern of the inhabitants, as well as what crops can be grown, what animals can be fed, and what protection can be gained from the threats of nature and mankind (Fig. 1).

When the Romans began to be involved in the Syrian area during the first century BC, they were encountering populations of already ancient civilization, whose written history went back three thousand years and more. After the important early phase of Sumerian civilization in the fourth and third millennia BC, Semitic populations took over the area during the third millennium BC in the form of Babylonians and Akkadians, later to be overwhelmed by the dynamic north Mesopotamian Assyrians; in the Syrian region Aramaeans emerged, with further Semitic neighbours arising from the later second millennium BC in the Palestine area in the form of Phoenicians and the oddly monotheistic Hebrews. The Sumerian and Semitic Babylonian culture was immensely influential throughout the region. Its main cultural elements were formed early, and tended to change slowly, if at all. Architectural forms, the habit of keeping written records, an art of forms only approximating to nature and expressed in a schematic, linear style with a love of ornament, the deities and religious practices changed comparatively little between the old Babylonian period of the third millennium BC and the Roman era of the first century BC onwards (Frankfort 1970). In the religious sphere specifically, the Semitic communities of the region tended to cling to certain basic types of cult. There were primitive ones that still survived, notably those of the high places, of water in its various forms as wells, springs, river, lakes and the sea, of trees held to be sacred, and of sacred stones called *beth-el* ('house of god', in Greek *baetyla*), which might be carried in processions. More developed forms of cult were those of divinities conceived more in human terms, often given human form and frequently associated with or symbolized by beings from the animal kingdom. Inscriptions tell us who these were: they were the countless local deities of the Semitic world, often called the *baal* and *baalat* ('Lord' and Lady') of a particular area, or the divinity, addressed in the Roman period as the Gad or *gny* (guardian spirit) of a town or village. There were important astral aspects to these Semitic religions, deities of the sky, the sun, the moon, the morning star, the evening star and thunder; there was also a great goddess. The tasks of many of these deities were to produce fertility, often by producing rain and thus good harvests. Their characters tended to remain much the same, although names might vary from place to place or region to region. A further important religious concept was that of the sacred area, or *haram*, which was thought of as belonging to a deity or a tomb. Semites also believed in an afterlife, and so normally provided generously for the dead, practising inhumation and putting food, jewellery and other items with the deceased (Colledge 1985).

These were the general characteristics of Semitic religion between the third and first millennia BC. Of course at any one Semitic centre a number of these cults was present, although usually not all of them. Interestingly, as inscriptions show, by the Roman period the cults practised at many Semitic sanctuaries often included others imported from other Semitic cities or regions, so mixing obviously took place here. But the sheer survival power of ancient religious forms and deities is very impressive: thus the Sumerian 'broad room' temple form, evolved in the fourth millennium BC, and the old Babylonian deities Marduk, Nebu, Anu, Nanai and Ishtar, popular from the third millennium BC, were still widespread in the Roman period (Colledge 1977, 37-8).

In the fullness of time, however, the Semites were to lose political control of their own area to another, and completely different, ethnic group: the Indo-Europeans. The Persians were the first on the scene. Under their king Cyrus they took Babylon in 539 BC, establishing an empire that king Darius I (*c.* 522/1–486 BC) extended to Egypt and the Punjab, although an

attempt to take Greece as well failed. Being of partly nomadic background, the Persians had to learn much about government and art from those they had conquered. Their religion is not well documented, but texts and archaeological evidence indicate the existence of an Iranian prophet, Zarathushtra (Zoroaster to the West), of a priestly caste in the Magi, and of beliefs in the supreme good god Ahura Mazda, who was constantly battling with the evil Angra Mainyu (Ahriman) and was favoured by the rulers, in the god of contracts called Mithra, and in Anahita, goddess of fecundity; cults of fire, streams and mountains also existed, and horse sacrifice took place. So far were the Persian monarchs from imposing this religion on their Semitic subjects, however, that they went to great lengths to demonstrate their respect for the old Babylonian deities openly, doubtless as a political gesture. Yet the Persians did leave one legacy which was to last even to Roman times: the custom of using the language of the Aramaeans, Aramaic, as a lingua franca, for official texts and documents (Cook 1983; Colledge 1985). And it was also seemingly at this time, too, that a further Semitic group began to make its first hesitant appearance in the historical Near East: the Arabs, who were now beginning to filter north from the Arabian peninsula to the lusher lands they found there in Syria and north Mesopotamia, wandering as nomads and also beginning to settle and mingle with local populations, and to bring to the Semitic religious mix their own Arabic slant (Colledge 1976, 11).

The Greek conquest of the Persian empire, led by Alexander, and consolidated by succeeding Hellenistic dynasties, had an enormous impact on western Asia (Hammond 1967; Will 1979–81; Walbank 1981). Greek political and cultural forms were imported on a grand scale. The Greek language was used, alongside Semitic Babylonian and Aramaic, for official and unofficial purposes. Some architectural forms were brought in, although for religious purposes Greek forms tended to be blended with local ones or not used at all. Greek art, with its rich subject matter expressed through the world's first naturalistic style, challenged the old traditional forms of Western Asia, and gave the people in that area a whole new range of iconographical motifs (Colledge 1977). The invaders brought with them their own religion, with its own set of deities, beliefs and practices, well documented in the Greek homeland, and different again from those of Western Asia. By the time of Alexander the Great in the fourth century BC a mixture of old and more recent nature, regional, tribal, sky and social deities including Zeus, Hera, Poseidon, Demeter, Apollo, Artemis, Aphrodite, Hephaistos, Hestia, Helios, Dionysus (or Bacchus) and Heracles along with spirits and personified abstractions such as Dike (Justice) or Nike (Victory) had been roughly welded into some sort of (fairly hierarchical) system. Religious developments in the Hellenistic period included the rise to prominence of certain among these cults, such as those of Dionysus, Aphrodite, Helios or Apollo, Heracles and Tyche (Fortune); and Eros was frequently represented in art. The Greek rulers also adopted the old Western Asiatic practice of having the king worshipped as a god, along with his ancestors. A further development, and one of great importance for the future, may be seen beginning at this time. This was syncretism, the finding of correspondences between the deities of the Greek and oriental pantheons. The process may have begun fairly early in the Hellenistic period, to judge from inscriptions found at Persepolis in Iran addressed in Greek to Zeus the Greatest (Megistos), Apollo Helios and Artemis Athena: these make no sense in a Greek context, but would have meaning if the Greek names really conceal equivalent Iranian deities, doubtless here the great god Ahura Mazda, together with Mithra and Anahita. An extraordinarily developed example of the creation of composite deities is found in the little south Anatolian independent kingdom of Commagene, where inscriptions of the mid-first century BC are addressed to Zeus-Oromasdes (that is, Zeus and Ahura Mazda), Apollo-Mithras-Helios-Hermes (four gods in one), and Artagnes-Heracles-Ares (three gods in one, where Artagnes is a Hellenized form of the Iranian god Verethraghna, Victory). Although the evidence from the Hellenistic period refers exclusively to Greek and Iranian religion, the fact that syncretism between Greek and Semitic religion occurs in the Roman period implies that this process similarly had origins in the Hellenistic period (Colledge 1985).

The history of Seleucid Greek rule of western Asia is one of slow but inexorable territorial disintegration. Most of Anatolia was lost during the third and second centuries BC to sprouting usurpers who carved little kingdoms for themelves there. Worse, Bactria (that is, roughly, Afghanistan and part of southern Russia) was taken over by its governor Diodotus I about 239–238 BC, who made of it another independent kingdom and whose successors here and in the Punjab maintained dynasties of Greek origin for no less than two centuries against all odds. Worst of all was a native Iranian rebellion by Parni or Parthian tribesmen under their leader Arsaces. They lived east of the Caspian Sea and seized their home territory perhaps around 247 BC. Despite periodic Seleucid attempts to crush it, this rebellion simply would not die down; exploiting Seleucid weakness, the Parthians took much of Iran in the earlier second century BC, and by 113 BC had added the whole of Mesopotamia to what was now their empire, with the Euphrates river acting for practical purposes as their western frontier. Meanwhile Seleucid power was collapsing in the west under the continuing onslaughts of another expansionist power, that of the Romans, Indo-Europeans again but of a group, the Italic, different from that of the Greeks; battles and diplomacy gained the Romans control of Greece and a sizable foothold in Anatolia in the second

century BC. Centuries of acquaintance with Greek culture had led the Romans to find equivalents for Greek deities– Jupiter for Zeus, Juno for Hera, Mercury for Hermes, Venus for Aphrodite, and so on, with Apollo common to both systems. By 64–63 BC the Romans had crushed the last of Seleucid resistance and added Syria, or at least its coastal regions, to their growing list of provinces (Will 1979–81; Walbank 1981). From then on the Romans and Parthians more or less acquiesced in having the Euphrates river as their mutual boundary line. Periodically, the Romans moved forward a little: probably under their second emperor Tiberius (AD 14–37) they took over much of the Syrian desert, including Palmyra, and a century later Trajan, in AD 115–117, conquered the whole of Mesopotamia; but this triumph was brief, and Mesopotamia was given up by Trajan's successor Hadrian in AD 117. About AD 165 the Romans seized Dura-Europos, which they controlled for the last ninety years of its existence, and after the Parthian dynasty had been supplanted in the AD 220s by another another Iranian monarchy, the Sasanian, the Romans occupied Hatra for its last eight years between AD 233 and 241. But these were minor adjustments to the general picture, which was one, from the point of view of the Semitic inhabitants of Syria and Mesopotamia, of partition by foreign, and racially different, super-powers, the Roman and Parthian, who ruled them from exceedingly distant capitals (Crawford 1978; Scullard 1976; Garzetti 1974; Parke 1958). What difference did this make to their culture and religious life?

To begin with, the comparative peace that now settled on the area stimulated agriculture and above all trade, which in turn produced wealth which could be spent on public and private projects. So, many of the communities of the region were enabled to spend lavishly on architecture, on art, and on documenting their prosperity in inscriptions, particularly between

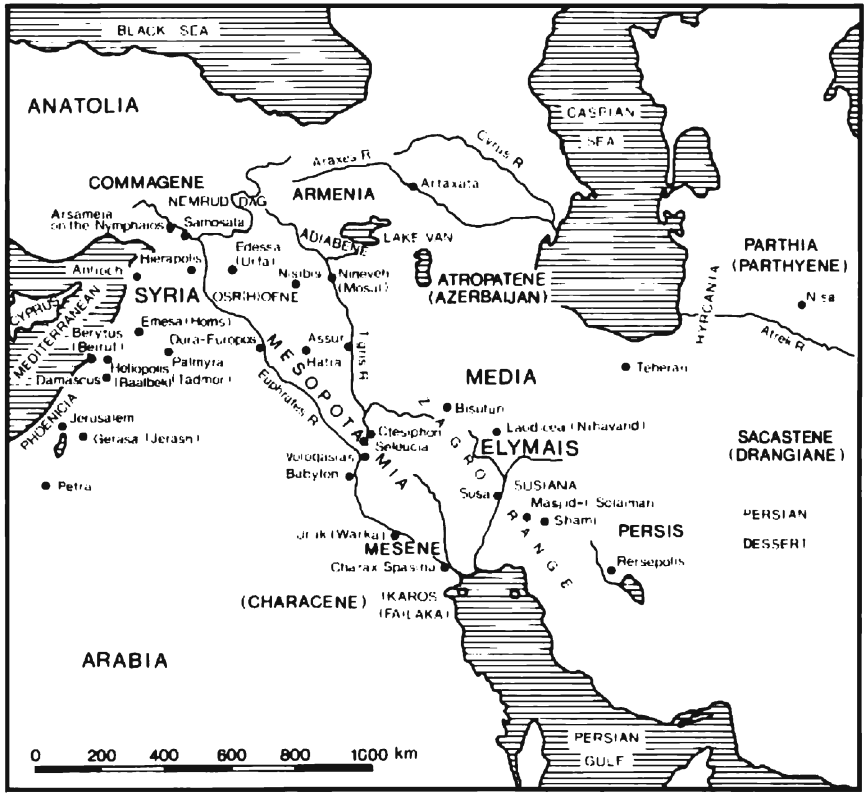

Fig. 1 Map of the region.

Fig. 2 Hatra: dedication to Hercules by a member of the occupying Roman garrison. The text is in Latin, c. AD 233–41.

the Roman takeover of Syria in 64 BC and the turmoil and disruption of the mid- to later third century AD. The resulting wealth of documentation tells us much about the life of these communities, particularly during these three centuries. Certain striking overall aspects soon emerge. The culture of the whole area clearly manages to maintain a fundamental unity, despite certain differences and different emphases from place to place and region to region. The culture is still essentially Semitic, but has absorbed numerous elements, such as the use of the Greek language, some Greek architectural forms and Greek art figures and motifs, from the Greek settlers. Documents are frequently in Aramaic, or bilingual, with Aramaic and Greek versions; dating is most commonly by the Seleucid Greek era. Latin only ever appears in the regions conquered by the Romans, and then rarely (Fig. 2). The unity of culture, such as it is, must be due to the fact that there was constant traffic across the border, as is attested for instance by the inscriptions of Palmyra, which record frequent trips by merchant caravans to Babylonia, well inside Parthian territory (Colledge 1967, 63, 79; Colledge 1976, 18–21).

For architectural purposes, local materials were naturally the most favoured, as cheaply and easily available. This usually meant mud brick, supplemented where possible by timber. The Greek cut stone tradition, too, had an impact, usually executed in limestone, and found normally at sites in Syria and north Mesopotamia. The commonest temple form was still the ancient Babylonian 'broad room' kind, consisting of a transverse chamber entered through one long side, sometimes through a vestibule, with a niche set centrally in the back wall, and set in a court, a sacred area or 'haram', which might have other rooms and chambers around it, the addition of towers and roof terraces was also Babylonian. The Greek temple type, with its main hall of 'long room' variety entered through one short end, surrounded by a colonnade, having a gabled roof with pediments each end, and set on a three-stepped platform, had a certain influence, but tended to be merged with Semitic forms, as happened for instance with the temple of Bel at Palmyra, dedicated in AD 32, where a basically Greek building has been altered to suit Semitic demands for a 'broad room' layout. A more specifically Roman temple type, with deep porch, wide cella, set on a high podium and approached only from the front by a single flight of steps, again executed in cut limestone, made its appearance in Syria, at Baalbek and Palmyra for instance, around the mid-first century AD; it was used for fine buildings such as the so-called 'temple of Bacchus' at Baalbek, that of Baalshamin at Palmyra (AD 130–1), and even the so-called 'Hellenistic temple', recently restored, across the border in Parthia, at Hatra. In Parthian Mesopotamia, however, a seemingly local form evolved during this period in the form of the vaulted, open-fronted hall or 'iwan', popular for instance also at Hatra (Fig. 3). Inscriptions tell us that there appears to have been no necessity for there to be any close connection between deity and sanctuary type. On the one hand divinities of very different origins were happy to dwell in sanctuaries of roughly the same kinds—and several deities might dwell together in one such sanctuary, as 'synnaoi theoi'. On the other hand, one particular cult might have its structure changed radically, as happened with the god Baalshamin at Palmyra, who in AD 130–1 moved from a shrine of oriental to one of Roman design (Colledge 1976, 27–8; Colledge 1977, 37–46).

The evidence concerning the deities worshipped in this area between the first century BC and the later third century AD consists of the temples, inscriptions,

theophoric names, art and literary texts. These combine to show that the ancient Semitic religious forms lived on. Any particular centre might possess all these forms, from the worship of stones and springs to a 'Lord' and 'Lady', or only some of them; and it is striking how in this period any one centre may well have cults of deities from other Semitic regions or places. The deities and their symbols are commonly depicted in art, in statuary, relief and wall-painting above all, in styles which over almost all the region are plainly an updated version of the old near eastern linear, schematic kinds with their love of ornamental detail, styles which are commonly, and conveniently, lumped under the heading 'Parthian', as they were also in use on the Parthian side of the border. The documentary evidence also tells us that a certain amount of grouping of deities seems to have gone on, usually into pairs or triads, a process perhaps developed in Hellenistic Babylonia. Furthermore, the process of finding Greek equivalents for oriental deities has clearly developed considerably, although it was not completely fixed and embodied some overlapping, and in any case was used only for a tiny minority of deities. Thus among male deities both Bel, the old title of Babylonian Marduk now used as the name of a god, and Baalshamin were addressed in Greek texts and depicted as Zeus, although Baalshamin is sometimes distinguished by the adjective Kyrios, 'Lord'; Nebu becomes Apollo, and Nergal Heracles. Among the goddesses, both Nanai and Azzanatheona were equated with Artemis, as was Allat in a text of 6 BC at Palmyra, but Allat was normally equated with, and shown as, Athena. Gad appears at Dura-Europos as Tyche, while Atar'até simply has her name westernized as Atargatis. Many deities were depicted in a Greek or Roman cuirass, doubtless to improve their protective capabilities. A Greek writer of the second-century AD, Lucian of Samosata, in his work *On the Syrian Goddess* (33), mentions a Semitic religious standard, called by the Greeks Semeion, and depicted at Hatra (Fig. 4) and elsewhere (Colledge 1976, 44, 55, 153, Henig 1983). A much more unusual process is exemplified at Palmyra and Dura-Europos, where a Greek goddess apparently without any oriental equivalent is addressed by her own name in Aramaic: this is the fateful Nemesis. Other Greek deities are shown only in art, without being named (Colledge 1985).

Let us now glance at the religious life of some of the communities of the area. Lucian, in the work just mentioned, gives glimpses of cults, legends and practices primarily of the Syrian coast and of the north Syrian city of Hierapolis-Bambyce (Membidj), as yet little explored archaeologically; he speaks of a Zeus and Hera (doubtless a *baal* and *baalat*) who are represented on bulls and lions respectively (31), but whose oriental names he frustratingly omits to give, as with Apollo and the other deities spoken of. He also says nothing of Heliopolis (now Baalbek) in the Lebanon, as regards which texts, representations and coins attest a father-mother-son triad translated as Jupiter, Venus and Mercury (Ragette 1980).

Other sites of the area, better documented (particularly by inscriptions), reveal a rich religious life

Fig. 3 Hatra, façades of the north and south 'ivans' in the Sun sanctuary, second century AD.

Fig. 4 Hatra: reliefs picturing a divine eagle with a Semeion standard and a youthful male divine bust, c. AD 100–240

and mixtures of deities. Thus the people of north Syrian Edessa adored Babylonian Nebu, Bel (the title of Babylonian Marduk now becomes a supreme god in his own right), and such Arab deities as Shamash the sun god, 'Azizu, Mun'im and Nahi; unusual funerary mosaics depict some Roman themes. At the north Mesopotamian, semi-independent city of Hatra where the inhabitants and monarchs seem mostly to have been of Arab stock, texts record the worship of Babylonian Nebu, Nergal (Fig. 5) and Nanai, west Semitic Baalshamin (the Lord of Heaven) and Atar'atê (Atargatis) and perhaps also Hadad; and a majority of Arab deities, Shahiru, the goddess Allat (Fig. 6), and a triad called Marên (Our Lord), Martên (Our Lady) and the Dionysus-like Bar-Marên (Son of Our Lord). Further divinities are represented in art (Fig. 7), including imported Roman statues of Poseidon (Fig. 8), Nike (Victory) and others, and an extraordinary figure who may be Aššur-Bel or the Apollo (that is, Nebu) of Hierapolis described by Lucian (Fig. 9). The still richer religious life of Palmyra, at the centre of the Syrian desert, included as objects of worship the local spring Efqa, sacred stones and trees, and a wide range of divinities such as the Palmyrene solar Iarhibôl, lunar 'Aglibôl, Malakbel who had both vegetation and solar aspects and local spirits called Gad and *gimnavê* (like those of the village of Bêt-Phasiel), together with Babylonian Bel, his consort Belti, Nebu, Nergal and goddesses Ishtar and Nanai, west Semitic Baalshamin, Belhammôn, Shadrafâ, Elqonera and Atargatis, Arab Shamash the sun god, Ma'anu and Sha'aru, Abgal and Rahm (sometimes paired), Arsu, Azizû and goddesses Allat and Manôt, and, most unusually for this Semitic area, the Iranian goddess Anahita, although her cult was insignificant (Colledge 1985). Reliefs picture the deities, the ceremonies (Fig. 10), the casting of incense on to a blazing burner (Fig. 11), and the processions associated with these cults. By contrast, a wall-painting pictures the Greek deity Dionysus, and other reliefs depict the Greek gods Eros and the ithyphallic Priapus, the zodiac, and a specifically Roman theme in one depiction of the she-wolf and twins, from the Bel temple. Palmyra also, through its funerary art and in particular its wall- and ceiling-paintings in the Tomb of the Three Brothers (*c.* AD 160–191) where the standard Roman funerary scenes of Achilles among the daughters of Lycomedes, Victories and the Rape of Ganymede (Fig. 12), makes its contribution to the debate as to whether such scenes carry funerary symbolism, of courage, victory over death, and so on (Colledge 1976).

But even more dramatic testimony to the effect that Roman control might have on a city's religious life is furnished by Dura-Europos, the north-east Syrian city on the bank of the Euphrates river, founded by Greeks about 300 BC, taken over by Parthians from about 113 BC, and then seized by the Romans permanently from about AD 165. Under Parthian and then Roman contol there was the usual wide range of Semitic deities: the town's own spirit or Gad, the divinities Aphlad and

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Fig. 5. Hatra: bronze figurine representing the Greek deity Heracles (Roman Hercules), identified locally with Nergal. c. AD 100–240.

Fig. 6. Hatra: limestone relief of Allat (shown as Athena) with two acolytes, standing on a lion. c. AD 100–240.

Fig. 7. Hatra, shrine 1, painted limestone relief representing a bearded god with axe, Semeion standard, seated goddess (Atargatis?), three headed Cerberus-like dog and symbolic snakes and scorpions, second century AD.

Fig. 8. Hatra, imported Roman marble statue of Poseidon, c. AD 100–240.

Fig. 9. Hatra, Mosul marble statue of 'Aššur-Bel' or Apollo-Nebu of Hierapolis, c. AD 100–240.

Azzanathcona seemingly from the neighbouring Euphrates village of Anath (Fig. 13), the Gad and Iarhibôl from Palmyra, west Semitic Baalshamin, Hadad, Atargatis and Adonis, Babylonian Bel, Nanai and Nebul, Arab Arsu, Asheru and Sa'ad, and probably others as well not mentioned in texts. But with the Romans established, the way was open for other cults to be brought in, all ultimately of oriental origin. First on the scene was the Roman cult of Mithras, obviously in origin the same as Iranian and Indian Mithra, but now profoundly transformed into a saviour god with a legend attached about how he slew the primeval bull; he was given a shrine about AD 168 by a Roman army unit, the Palmyrene mounted archers, with reliefs and later wall-paintings of the god. Second came Judaism: in the earlier third century a house was converted into a Synagogue, which was redecorated about AD 244–5 with a rich series of paintings which, in apparent defiance of the second commandment, present three superimposed tiers of figured scenes illustrating the Old Testament, a discovery which has considerably perplexed scholars of Judaism. Thirdly came Christianity: towards AD 250 another house was converted into a Christian baptistry, the walls of which were also embellished with Biblical scenes, on the back wall was the main painting, of a beardless, short-haired Christ as the Good Shepherd, together with Adam and Eve idiosyncratically depicted in loin cloths. However, all this religious activity came to an end when, some six years later, Dura-Europos was utterly destroyed by the Sasanian Persians (Perkins 1973; Gutmann 1973; Colledge 1985).

Fig. 10 Palmyra: terracotta religious token with a relief showing a priest reclining at a banquet (actual size), first to third centuries AD.

Fig. 11 Near Palmyra, limestone relief showing four gods, two curtasyed, and a goddess before whom a worshipper casts incense on to a burner, dated AD 225.

Fig. 12 Palmyra, tomb of the Three Brothers: ceiling roundel in the painted exedra with Ganymede abducted by the eagle of Zeus, probably AD 160–91.

Fig. 13 Dura-Europos, limestone religious relief of the cuirassed god Aphlad with a priest, datable c. AD 54

Acknowledgements

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The Procession-House of the Great Hermaion at Hermopolis Magna

D. M. Bailey

At an unknown date in Ptolemaic times at Hermopolis Magna in Egypt, Thoth the Twice Great became Hermes the Thrice Great (Parlebas 1974; Derchain & Derchain 1975) and his temple was known as the Great Hermaion. An historical stela of Nectanebo I (378–361 BC) of the Thirtieth Egyptian Dynasty describes the commencement of the temple's construction (Roeder 1940, 78; Roeder 1959, 299), but it was not finished until well after his death. There is some evidence (Spencer *et al.* 1984, 5) for parts of the temple being decorated by Nectanebo II, and its pronaos, which survived until 1826, was inscribed to Alexander the Great's half-brother Philip III Arrhidaeos, probably by Ptolemy I Soter shortly before he assumed the Kingship of Egypt. In 1982, the British Museum Expedition to Middle Egypt found a paved way which runs north-south through the Sacred Area of Hermopolis (Spencer *et al.* 1983, 4–5, 9–10; Spencer *et al.* 1984, 1–3), which can be identified as the Dromos of Hermes, first mentioned in a papyrus of 89 BC and last heard of in AD 268 (Roeder 1959, 54). This sacred Way leads from (but not from the centre of) the Great Hermaion in the north, to (but not to the centre of) a substantial building about 400 m southwards, a building which backs on to Antinoë Street, the main east-west road of the city, and which is placed within and partially upon the cut-down Great Temenos Wall of Nectanebo I. This building would seem to be the Komasterion of Hermopolis Magna, a place where processions formed to wind their stately way to the Great Hermaion and other sacred structures within the Sacred Area.

The term komasterion is, perhaps, confined to Egypt, although procession-houses are known from elsewhere, for example the Pompeion in the Kerameikos at Athens and a similar building at the other end of its sacred way, at Eleusis (Hoepfner 1976; Mylonas 1961, 170). There was a Ptolemaic komasterion at Hermopolis (Roeder 1959, 54) but its site is unkown except that it was close to the Dromos of Hermes. Other komasteria are mentioned in papyri and inscriptions. Government auction-sales of confiscated property took place at one of the Ptolemaic komasteria at Crocodilopolis (Hunt *et al.* 1938, no. 871) and a komasterion is known from an inscription found at Taposiris Magna near Alexandria (Preisigke 1915, no. 5051). In the reign of Vespasian, manure was obtained from the vicinity of a komasterion on a rural estate near Hermopolis (Johnson 1936, 186, 200), and a komasterion was placed adjacent to the Dromos of Apollo and Aphrodite, apparently at Apollinopolis (Wilcken 1920, 428). A priest of a guild of porters was in charge of a komasterion mentioned on a third century inscription from Nubia (Boeckh & Franz 1853, no. 5028). In addition to the papyri mentioned above, the komasterion at Hermopolis Magna is listed on a papyrus of about AD 267, now in Vienna (Wessely 1905, 69–85; Schmitz 1934; Drew-Bear 1984, 810–811). This papyrus was a record, made by one Aurelius Appianus, of expenditure on the repair of buildings, perhaps damaged in riots which took place before AD 266 (Wessely 1905, 57–8), which were situated along Antinoë Street, from the Gate of the Sun in the east to the Gate of the Moon in the West. These buildings include the Temple of Antinous, the Temple of Hadrian, the stoa in the south-west, the Makellon (produce-market) and the stoa outside it, the stoa in front of the Agora, the Temple of Sarapis in front of the Temple of Neilos and the Neileion itself, and the Temple of Tyche (Wessely 1905, 77; Schmitz 1934, 427; Johnson 1936, 700–701). Also mentioned, as landmarks, are various tetrastyla, groups of four free-standing columns placed at the cossings of north-south streets with the east-west Antinoë Street.

In the 1940s there was a considerable amount of archaeological activity in the centre of the city site of Hermopolis Magna, in areas barely touched by Günter Roeder's work of 1929–39 or by the *sebbachin* who removed for fertilizer so much of the overburden of the mound in the half-century preceding Roeder's Hildesheim Expedition; this was because of the presence of a dense grove of palm-trees running through the centre of the site, from el-Idara to el-Ashmunein, the villages built on the north and south extremities of the mound. Many of these trees were cut down by the 1940s excavators and most of the remainder have now died off. Émile Baraize began in 1939 to clear the area and to re-erect a four-columned structure which he thought was one of the tetrastyla of Antinoë Street (Baraize 1941). He was followed in 1942 by Moharrem Kamal, who cleared a large area partially buried under the north end of Kom el-Kenissa, the Mound of the Church, where many red granite columns were lying and some indeed were still standing (Kamal 1947). As long ago as 1904 it had been suggested by

Rubensohn (1904, 110) that this was the site of the Agora of the city, described by the mid-third century Senate of Hermopolis as 'an excellent ornament of our city' (Wessely 1905, 51): this identification still plagues the spot as many modern guide-books continue to refer to it and sign-posts directing visitors to the 'Agora' were erected in 1982. Kamal discovered it to be a fifth century Basilica Church, probably a cathedral, built with Antonine *spolia* (Kamal 1947). But the misidentification of the Agora has bedevilled all attempts to interpret Aurelius Appianus's papyrus list of buildings. Hermann Schmitz amongst others did much work on this problem of trying to place the various structures along Antinoë Street and their relationship one with another (Schmitz 1934; Roeder 1959, 100–117), but was hampered by the necessity to place the Agora where the church is now known to be, and by the notion that the Thirtieth Dynasty Temenos Wall was still in existence as a wall during Roman times it appears now that large stretches of it were cut down and built upon. The actual site of the Agora is unknown.

Moharrem Kamal also exposed a long stretch of Antinoë Street at its fifth century level. Baraize returned in 1945 and re-erected many of the columns of the Basilica Church and found evidence that it was built upon the demolished remains of a Ptolemaic sanctuary, with a temple dedicated to Ptolemy III Euergetes and his queen, Berenike (Wace *et al.* 1959, 4–11). In 1949 and 1950, A. J. B. Wace opened up the site again and A. H. S. Megaw, working with him, published his reconstruction of the Basilica Church in 1959 (Wace *et al.* 1959, 17–82), showing that Baraize's 'tetrastylon' was the entrance porch of the church on its north side.

Also in 1945, Rizkallah Makramallah excavated the building which is the subject of this paper, and the area around it, lying north of Antinoë Street (Fig. 1). Makramallah died shortly afterwards, and the only mention of the work is a short note by Wace (1945, 109). Since 1945 the site lay open and became so overgrown with vegetation that little could be made of it in the 1980–81 survey undertaken by the British Museum, and this lack of detail is evident in the published map (Spencer 1983). In 1982 the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation stripped it of flora and the present writer took the opportunity to make a 'present-state' plan in 1983 (Fig. 5); no excavation was undertaken. Full details of the architectural features are now published (Bailey 1984, 29–48) and it is not thought necessary to repeat them all here, although some additional information came to light in 1984 which will be mentioned. (Incidentally, the reconstruction given in Bailey (1984, fig. 42) shows the Temenos Wall standing to its full height: I no longer think this is so, see Fig. 8.)

Fig. 1 General view of Makramallah's 1945 excavations.

Makramallah exposed about two-thirds of the building; the remainder still lies beneath the modern earth road between el-Idara and el-Ashmunein. The building is some 40.66 m wide and 31.5 m long, without the steps, which extend 4.44 m to the north. It was largely supported on a substructure of arched brick springing from brick piers running north-south. However, on its east side, the builders cut down the Temenos Wall to use it as a foundation, except in the north-east corner, where the wall was less thick than the length of the building, and brick piers and arches were necessary at this point. At the front and the rear was a podium of limestone blocks extending for the full width of the building, 3 m in depth and 2.6 m high. The northern steps, about 17 in number, were of limestone supported on pounded brick, with a balustrade on each side. At the rear, because Antinoë Street was at this period much higher than the level of the Sacred Area, only one or two steps would have been necessary. Except for one column base on Antinoë Street, small areas of calcined flooring and a couple of floor slabs, nothing remains *in situ* above foundation level.

Fig. 2 Red granite ridge-beam found in 1984.

What does remain, however, is a considerable number of red granite monolithic columns, and their limestone bases and capitals, which, together with the foundation piers and the podium frontages, show this remarkable building to be a basilica with no fewer than four aisles on each side. The order is Corinthian of early Antonine date. At the front of the main hall there are four large columns, consisting of two round examples flanked by two square columns (Fig. 7a). These square columns have on their outer face an engaged half-round column of lesser height (Fig. 3), the same height as the four shorter columns of the aisles. At the rear, along Antinoë Street, the four large columns in front of the main hall are all round, indicating a broken entablature between them and the small columns in front of the aisles (Fig. 7b). All eight of the large columns survive, but only seven intact examples of the forty-six small columns of the aisles remain above ground, although there are several fragments of others. There is great variation in the heights of the limestone column capitals and bases. These variations were dictated by the differing heights of the ready-made red granite column shafts delivered to the site from the Aswan quarries far to the south: there is over 50 cm difference between the heights of the large columns used for the front and for the rear, and up to 20 cm difference in the heights of the small columns. Thus, the limestone columns and capitals, made on the spot by masons probably imported from Asia Minor, had to vary to produce a

Fig. 3 Main columns from front of Antonine building, 1983.

Fig. 4 Statue base and its foundations; brick piers and vaulting, 1983.

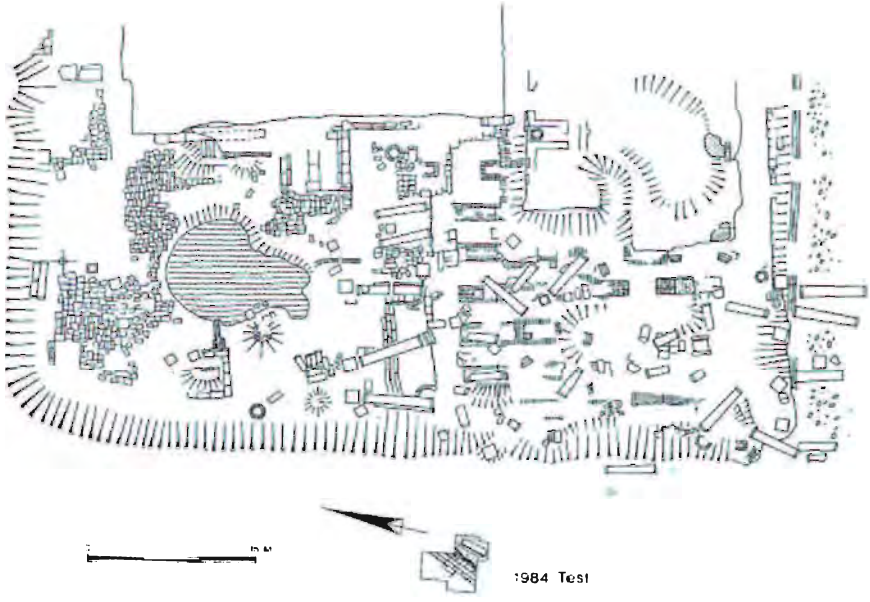

Fig. 5 Present-state plan, with 1984 excavations.

level entablature. There is evidence for pilasters within the main hall, and they may have existed on the colonnades; there may also have been pilasters within the aisles, but there is no proof of this. The floor was made of large limestone slabs about 30–35 cm thick, but most of these are gone. In the centre of the main hall, near the rear end, was a large limestone statue base, supported on a foundation of stone blocks beneath the floor (Fig. 4). The statue base is uninscribed.

The ground floor plan of the building must have been very like the reconstruction shown in Fig. 6, although there is no evidence for the south door onto Antinoë Street. The front and rear façades are shown in Fig. 7, with the high podium and steps of the north front, and the low podium, just above street level at the rear, facing south. The front shows the entablature of the aisled colonnade, taken off from the engaged half-round columns of the main hall portico; at the rear, the four round columns of the portico show that a broken entablature was necessary here. Much timber must have been employed in the roofing of this building, and Appianus's list shows that the komasterion used more timber in its repair than any of the other buildings mentioned.

In 1984, excavations were made to try to locate the north-west corner of the building and its relationship to the Dromos of Hermes, which, if its line was extended from the parts discovered in 1982–3, should pass along the western edge of the Komasterion. In the event, the corner and the road were found to be totally destroyed by the insertion of a large water-channel during Late Roman times (see Fig. 5). However, a red-granite object was found which I believe to be a ridge-beam (Fig. 2) placed over the front colonnade; it weighs more than six tons, and may have been placed there to support an acroterial group.

The building fronted on an extensive paved area, made up of limestone blocks of the Amarna Period, which probably came from a pylon of Rameses II, the foundations of which were found by Roeder (1940, pls 11–12). The east side of this paved area was occupied by a storehouse of mud-brick chambers, probably of

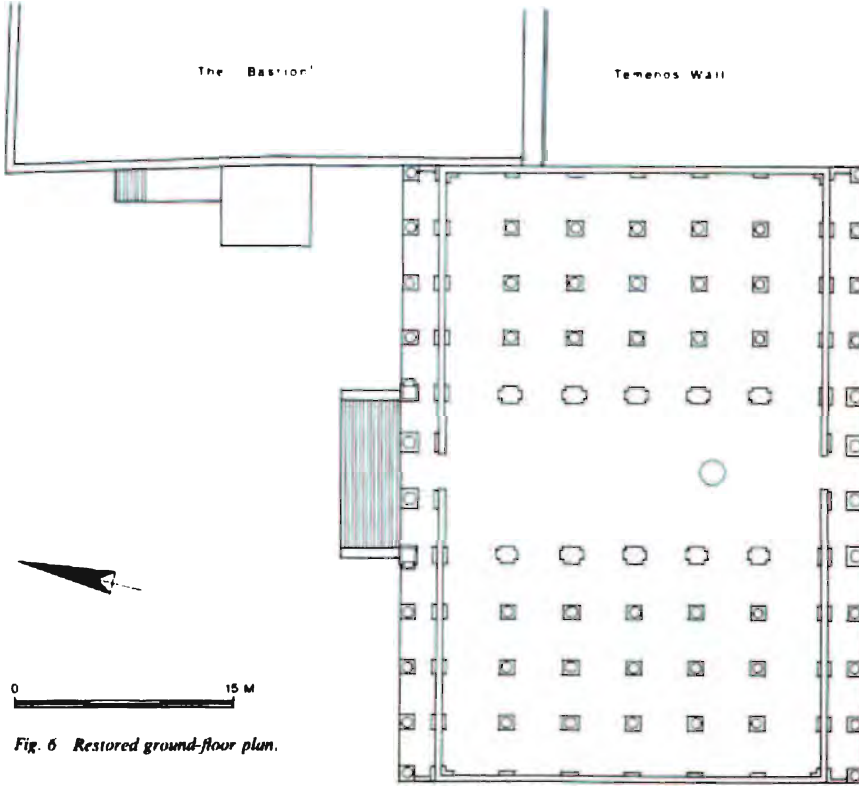

Fig. 6 Restored ground-floor plan.

Ptolemaic date, designated 'The Bastion' in the plan in Fig 6. This storehouse, much denuded, was some 35 m wide by 43.8 m long, and was exposed by Makramallah in 1945.

At nearby Antinoopolis (Antinoë), founded by Hadrian on October 30th, AD 130, following the death by drowning of his favourite, tetrastyla were recorded at street crossings by the Napoleonic Expedition of the end of the eighteenth century (Jomard 1821, 237–42; pls 53, 59). Such groups of columns, no doubt inspired by the Antinoite examples, are mentioned in Hermopolite papyri. Close to the crossing of Antinoë Street and the Dromos of Hermes at Hermopolis is the lower part of a huge column capital, which when complete must have been about 2.5 m high and 3.5 m across the abacus. An inscribed base nearly 4 m high dedicated to Marcus Aurelius and Commodus, now lost (Letronne 1842, 437–44), apparently stood at this crossroads, and Schmitz (Roeder 1959, 104) suggested that it was the pedestal of a tetrastylon column. If our capital goes with it the whole column must have been more than 22 m high, and was undoubtedly one of four forming a tetrastylon, and from its prime position was probably the Great Tetrastylon mentioned in Aurelius Appianus's papyrus (see Fig. 8).

Although there is always the possibility that our building was not one of those listed in the repair papyrus of Aurelius Appianus, there are good reasons for believing it to be the Komasterion, the procession-house of Hermopolis Magna. The only other building listed there which it might be is the Makellon or produce-market: its design, I believe, precludes it from being a temple. It is not a stoa (and probably the stoas were merely colonnaded streets) and it is not a Nymphaion (the Western and Eastern Nymphaia were probably small fountain-houses like those of the second century AD recently re-erected flanking the dromos of the Temple of Hathor at Dendera, outside the North Gate; Castel *et al.* 1984). The position of our building at the southern edge of the Sacred Area, adjacent to the Sacred Way leading to the Great Hermaion, and having a large paved area in front of it, indicates that it was ideally placed for sacred processions to form; and such processions were still taking place in the fourth century AD (Rees 1964, no. 2).

At the end of paganism, the Sacred Area of the city became available for secular exploitation, and there are indications of industrial activity taking place on the site of our building: vats, wells, the water-channel mentioned above, glass-making. The structure became a quarry for building material, but many of the columns probably still stood until they were brought down by an earthquake which also destroyed the Basilica Church, perhaps in the seventh century (sherds of this date are amongst the accumulated rubbish on which the columns fell). This was a melancholy but not unusual end to an impressive and imaginative structure (Fig. 8), but it is pleasant to record the presence of such a fine classical building in Egypt, a country where, other than Egyptian-style temples or Christian churches and monasteries, so little of the Roman period survives.

Acknowledgements

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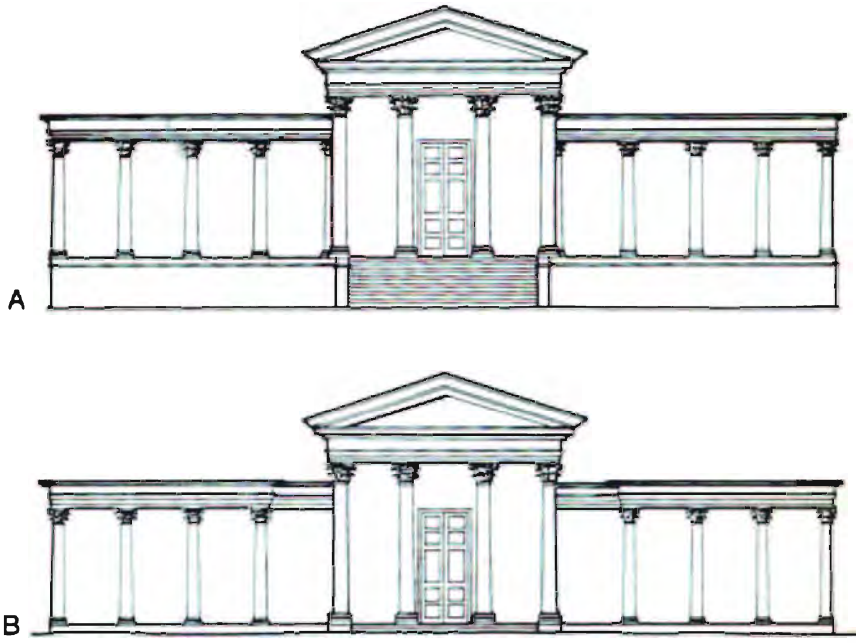

Fig. 7 Front (A) and rear (B) façades.

Fig. 8 Reconstruction of Antonine building and storehouse, with tetrastylon.

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Christians, Jews and Pagans in the Acts of the Apostles

Grahame Soffe

διερχόμενος γὰρ καὶ ἀναθεωρῶν τὰ σεβάσματα ὑμῶν εὗρον καὶ βωμὸν ἐν ᾧ ἐπεγέγραπτο ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΘΕΩ.

'As I passed along, and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: To an unknown god.'

(Acts 17, 23).

In addressing the Athenian Areopagus, Paul draws our attention to an important dichotomy in religious outlook in the first century AD. It lay between the new revelation of the God of Israel to Christians, and the established gods of the Graeco-Roman world. In his speech, Paul, as the principal exponent of earliest Christianity, communicates directly to a pagan audience the God they admit as being 'unknown' to themselves, and tells them that through natural revelation they should always have known him. Paul cannot use the precedent of revelation to the Jews in his efforts to expose the perverseness of pagan polytheism and image worship, or the folly of imagining that this God could be accommodated in a material temple. Indeed the difficulties early Christians experienced in propagating their new religion had much to do with its exclusive nature. Not only did it advocate avoidance of other gods but denied their very existence as influential agents in the universal environment of men. In setting up altars to unknown gods the polytheistic Athenians were prepared to accommodate the Christians' God, but the Christian attitude was not mutually reciprocal in return.

With Judaism the dichotomy was different. The earliest Christians saw their religion as the fulfilment of Judaism. At his interview with the leaders of the Jewish colony in Rome, recorded at the end of Acts (28, 20), Paul tells them that 'it is because of the hope of Israel that I am bound with this chain.' To the early Christians the hope of Israel was Christ and the hope of resurrection in general, which had been given concrete historical shape in their belief in the resurrection of Jesus. This was the vital aspect the Jews found hardest to accept, they even more so than the pagans who scoffed when Paul mentioned it in his Areopagus speech. This led to a strong Jewish resistance to a new religion which might have been considered as no more than another sect under the mantle of Judaism, and encouraged its propagation beyond the confines of Judaism to the Gentile populations of the Graeco-Roman cities.

In this paper the relationships between earliest Christianity, Judaism and paganism will be examined. This theme of course relates closely to the vast field of New Testament studies, the corpus of which has been built up through the disciplines of criticism, exegesis and theology.[1] However, our theme is more easily found in the historical evolution of the early Church served by a tradition of record which commenced with the Acts of the Apostles and was taken up again two hundred years later in Eusebius's historical writings about the Church.[2] It was through Eusebius and other contemporary Church leaders that the Christian cause was fostered so that, despite persecutions and internal schisms, it was itself eventually 'converted' to the culture and ideals of the Graeco-Roman world. Even before the end of the first century, the apostles were intent upon the absorption of a whole society, but not in the way that Christendom was to develop following the conversion of Constantine in 312.

The Christianization of the Roman state was a culmination of complex developments, the earliest of which will be examined here through the medium of a primary source, the Acts of the Apostles.[3] This document received general canonical recognition *c.* 150 and was thus differentiated from the several apocryphal Acts circulating in the early Church, written mostly in the second half of the second century. Apart from its religious importance, Acts is a unique record and invaluable for the insight it gives into the beginnings of Christianity. Without it, even if we had the rest of the New Testament, the origins of organized Christian religion would be a subject for ingenious conjecture. As a contemporary account of the events it seeks to record it is veracious and comes well within the standards accepted by classical scholarship. Acts gives a relatively detailed account of the progress of the new religion from Jerusalem via Asia Minor and Greece to Rome. This can be appreciated particularly when we consider how scanty is our knowledge of its progress in other directions in the period following the time of Christ. Compared with Acts the only other sources worthy of serious consideration are those epistles of Paul generally held to be authentic. The canonical epistles by other authors for the most part belong to the period after Paul's arrival in Rome, and so do not relate to the period of Acts. In Acts we remain firmly rooted in the first century when Christianity was as yet relatively uncluttered with an accumulated theology. The study of the rise and progress of this new religion is beset with difficulties; were it not for Acts some of these problems

would be intractable. For example, how was it that a new religious movement, which began in the bosom of Judaism, was recognized a few decades later as a distinctly Gentile religion, firmly set against a background of Graeco-Roman society? The answer is largely, though not entirely, bound up with the career of Paul the Jewish Pharisee, the Roman citizen and apostle to the Gentiles. It is he who is given the role of principal hero in Acts.

In order to gain a proper understanding of Christianity in its earliest stages we need above all else an accurate knowledge of the documents themselves. This view, stressed by many scholars (e.g. Dibelius 1936; Kümmel 1975), has much to commend it; after all, the documents are virtually the only evidence we have. This knowledge can only be sound if we are clear as to the literary character of the evidence; so what of Acts itself?

Authorship, date and text

The work's title: *Πράξεις Ἀποστόλων* 'Acts of the Apostles', dates from its occurrence in the anti-Marcionite prologue to Luke at the end of the second century. The book provides a sequel to the 'first book' *Κατὰ Λουκᾶν* 'According to Luke' which is generally agreed to be the 'first book' referred to by the anonymous author in his dedication of Acts to Theophilus, to whom the first book was also dedicated (1,1ff., Lk 1,3). The original titles of Luke and Acts have not been preserved but they may well have taken the form 'Luke to Theophilus, books I and II'. The two-fold work was conceived as a history of the origins of Christianity covering the first 60 years of its existence. The prologue to the first book, composed in good literary Greek, introduces and describes the purpose of the complete history (Lk 1,1–4). It claims to present a better and more reliable account than any existing one, and its appeal to eyewitness testimony conforms to a well-established literary pattern. In fact, Acts, the second book, viewed as a historical document, is derived from the style of Thucydides both in the prologue and *kerygma* proper (Bruce 1952, 15f.). Also, Alexander (1977) has shown strong parallels with the prologues of scientific treatises of the period, including one of Apollonius of Citium, a medical writer.

Acts, like the first book, does much to confirm its own historicity by numerous and sometimes elaborate synchronisms (as in Lk 3,1f., and Thucyd., *Hist.* 2,2), many of which can be confirmed in the works of Josephus, Suetonius, Tacitus, Juvenal, etc. There are also many references to names and titles of provincial and municipal officials, and its political geography compares with the record of contemporary Greek and Roman writings and epigraphy. The internal evidence confirms that Acts is not a work of historical fiction. The presence of the author at some of the events he records is indicated by the transition from the third person to the first person plural in his narrative; the three 'we sections' are 16,10–17; 20,5–21,18 and 27,1–28,16. (The last of these, the narrative of Paul's voyage from Judaea to Italy, is probably one of the most instructive documents for the knowledge of ancient seamanship.) In comparing Acts with the Epistles contemporary with it, there are numerous corresponding references particularly in details of Paul's movements (Bruce 1985, 2579–82). But Acts is selective and does not record all the important experiences related by Paul (2 Cor 11,23ff.) or Paul's planned visit to Spain (Rom 15,22ff.).

The tradition of Greek historical writing is maintained in the speeches of Acts (Bruce 1944; 1974; 1985). They do not claim to give a verbatim reproduction of what was said, but each is suited to the speaker, the audience and the occasion, giving the 'general purport of what was actually said' (Thucyd., *Hist.* 1,22). They contain diverse viewpoints, some at variance with the author's own. In Stephen's speech (7, 2–53), 'a manifesto of one segment of early Hellenistic Christianity',[4] the Temple is criticized, whereas a much more positive attitude to the Temple is taken elsewhere throughout Luke/Acts. However, there has been a tradition of criticism that claims the speeches to be 'compositions' of the author. Dibelius (1936; 1939) describes their content as consisting of three parts: the Christian message, confirmatory evidence from the Old Testament, and a call to repentance. However, they all have individual characteristics making each unique. Bowker (1967) sees parallels with our limited knowledge of early synagogue practice in Paul's Pisidian Antioch speech and also in James's words at the Council of Jerusalem, confirming the influence of Judaism discussed below. As we would expect, all the Acts speeches are quite different from those in the Epistles, which were addressed to Christians. Only in one speech in Acts, Paul's at Miletus to the Ephesian Christians (20, 18–35) are there close affinities with the Epistles. As there is little evidence that the author of Acts knew the Epistles, how could he reproduce Pauline teaching so accurately? The speech occurs in a 'we-section', and it seems reasonable to assume that it was recorded in the author's travel-diary (Dupont 1962).

Source-criticism of Acts has been discussed by Bruce (1952, 21–29; 1985) together with its style and language. The author hints at his sources in the prologues. Several possible Aramaic written sources emanating from Jerusalem and Caesarea have been suggested. A certain first-hand source is the travel-diary written by the author, or by others with him, or indeed separately. But the style and language of the 'we-sections' is indistinguishable from the rest of the work and the fact that the author retains the first person plural indicates that he wrote those sections and was personally involved in the events described. He is generally identified as Luke,[5] the companion of Paul who is called his 'dear physician' in Col 4,14 and was with Paul shortly before the latter's probable death (2 Tim 4,11).

The earliest extant statements about Luke's authorship of Luke/Acts belong to the end of the second century (Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 5,12 (*c.* AD 180) and Irenaeus, *Haer.* 3,1,1). The anti-Marcionite prologue to Luke (*c.* 160–80) gives similar testimony.[6]

Perhaps it is more important to establish whether the author was an eyewitness to some of the events he records or whether he belonged to later generation. The *terminus a quo* for the composition of Acts is the end of Paul's *libera custodia* in Rome (28, 30f.), probably early AD 62. Paul's death may be implied in 20, 25 and 38, but if he had died by the time Acts was written, the end of the book requires explanation. Also, if Luke/Acts is a continuous work, the date for Luke must also be considered. If Luke is dependent on Mark, probably composed about the time of the Neronian persecution of Roman Christians (AD 64–5), then Luke/Acts must have been written after this date. Also the occurrence of the Olivet discourse in Lk 21,5ff. has suggested to some that the fall of Jerusalem had already taken place. Dodd (1947) however, rejects this argument and sees the background to this passage and the parallel one in Mark (13, 1–27) exclusively in the Septuagint and the fall of Jerusalem to Nebuchadrezzar in 597 and 587 BC (2 *Kings* 24,10–25,21; Wiseman 1956, 32–5). This view has helped Hemer to suggest a very early date for Luke/Acts (1977, 46–8). Bruce (1985, 2594–8) reviews the arguments for a post-apostolic origin for Acts but concludes that 'a major difficulty in the way of such theological arguments for the late, and even second-century dating of Acts is the evidence that its historical, geographical and political references are true to its dramatic date in the mid-first century.'

To appreciate the historicity of Acts, knowledge of its text and manuscript tradition is necessary (Kümmel 1975, 133–2, 360–86). As with the majority of important writings of the period, no early Christian book is preserved in the original. However, on the basis of the earliest Christian papyri, the original Acts must have been written on both sides of papyrus sheets ('book-form'). What we possess are Greek manuscripts which are only more or less accurate copies, and extracts in the writings of the early Christian fathers. The well known Latin and English translations are based on the Byzantine text-group derived from four uncial manuscripts and many miniscules. This text probably originated *c.* 300 in Syrian Antioch. Preferable to this is the 'Western' text represented mainly by the bilingual Codex Bezae, a Graeco-Latin manuscript compiled in the fifth century, probably in Sicily. Both these text-groups are outweighed in quality by the Alexandrian or 'Egyptian' text represented by the famous parchment uncial Codices—Sinaiticus, Vaticanus (both early fourth century), and Alexandrinus (fifth century)—and modern critical editions such as Westcott and Hort's standard Greek text (1896–8), are based upon these (Milne & Skeat 1963; Pattie 1979). If they are older than the preserved parchments, papyrus manuscripts take on a special significance, and many have been discovered and read this century (Aland 1966). Furthermore, certain relevant recently-read papyri appear to be as early as the early second century. We now therefore possess manuscripts compiled very shortly after the original document was written, a fortunate position not shared by many other works of the period. This makes it possible to reconstruct a version of Acts of great authenticity, relatively unaffected by corruption from later copying and editing.

An Apologetic Purpose?

By comparing Luke/Acts with Justin Martyr we can detect a strong apologetic purpose throughout the work—the defence of Christianity as law-abiding, constituting no threat to the Pax Romana. In Luke this is clear from the reference to tribute money and the account of Pontius Pilate. In Acts there is an impressive series of authorities, Gentile and even (occasionally) Jewish, who show good will to Paul and his fellows or at least admit that charges brought against them lack any basis. In contrast to this we can detect a critical note against Judaism or its exponents, different from Paul's attitude, who was 'a Hebrew born and bred' (Phil 3,5). This is seen in the release of Barabbas (Lk 23,25) and in Acts the prosecution of Paul before Felix and Festus. As the new religion is carried through Asia Minor and Greece, it is the local Jewish communities who incite opposition as they refuse it and are furious when Gentiles accept it. It might be suggested that the unpopularity of the Jews in the eyes of Rome at the time of the Revolt of 66–74, would make an appropriate setting for this apologetic, and therefore indicates a date for the writing of Acts. But if Acts belongs to an historical tradition we should not see it as part of an anti-Jewish plot (Maccoby 1982), even if it may have been made part of an anti-Semitic emotion in the Medieval Church and since. As Acts recounts, the early Christians saw their message as fulfilment of a legacy of which Judaism, the Temple and the synagogue institution were the obvious manifestations.

'To the Jew first and also to the Greek' (Rom 1,16)

Acts agrees with the Epistles in presenting Paul and the Christian message through the medium of Judaism (cf. Rom 2,9f.). But in Acts, are Paul and his fellow Christians more 'Jewish' than elsewhere? An important indication is surely his circumcision of Timotheus whose mother was a Jewish Christian (16,3), 'because of the Jews that were at Lystra and Iconium, for they all knew that his father was a Greek'. On the other hand Paul insists that circumcision is religiously irrelevant (Gal 5,6; 1 Cor 7,19) and writes that his policy is to live like 'a Jew among Jews and a Gentile among Gentiles' (1 Cor 9,20ff.).

Despite Paul's policy Judaism provides the stay to

which the thread of the Christian message is continuously tied throughout Acts. The urban synagogues of the Diaspora provide the vehicle for the apostles' teaching throughout Asia Minor and Greece. Paul's concessions could not have applied to his participation in the Temple ceremony of 21,23ff. or his appeal to the Sanhedrin as a Pharisee in 23, 6–9. The problem is that part of the Christian message was acceptable to the Sanhedrin Pharisees gathered by Claudius Lysias, tribune of the Antonia fortress.' Paul had appealed to Lysias as a Roman, he now appealed to the Jews as a Pharisee 'with respect to the hope and the resurrection of the dead'. The hope of Israel, as Paul saw it, was completely bound up with the resurrection and accorded with the general beliefs held by the Pharisees: the message fitted the Pharisaic framework but not the Sadducean, as is shown by the existence of Pharisees in the early Jerusalem church (15,5; 21,20). A Sadducee had to cease to be a Sadducee to become a Christian (24,15) 'for the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, nor angel, nor spirit, but the Pharisees acknowledge them all' (23,8).

In turning back to the beginning of Acts we are at once introduced to the Diaspora whose origins are to be found in the formation of Judaism proper after the first exile from the kingdom of Judah in 597 BC. Judaism was a religious system of practice and belief based on the books of the Old Testament describing God's dealings with Israel over several hundred years. Although the Restoration provided some recovery, the original disaster of exile produced the permanent effect of the Diaspora or a 'dispersion' of Jews throughout the world.

The history of the Diaspora during the period down to the first century AD is complex. Leaney (1984) provides a recent review, and accounts of developments during the period of Acts are contained in Safrai and Stern (1974) and Schürer (1973–9). The phenomenon was, in essence, a diffusion from a centre, Jerusalem and Judah. Jerusalem continued to be a focus because the Temple remained there but Jewish communities often encouraged a loyalty to foreign authority (cf. *Esther*). Acts provides one of two first century accounts of the location of Jews (2,9–12). The other is in Philo (*Leg Caium*). The context of the list of countries in Acts indicates its importance to the theme of the work as a whole. The Diaspora was to provide a foundation, albeit an insecure one, for the establishment of Christianity. Jews staying in Jerusalem for the Pentecost feast are referred to as 'devout men, from every nation'. The large area surveyed by the list stretches from Parthia west to Italy, prominence being given to the provinces of Asia Minor, and the reference to Judaea perhaps betraying compilation by a non-Jewish historian. However, by contrast to Philo he omits Syria which according to Philo and Josephus was, like Asia Minor, 'full of Jews'. These are areas whose Jewish populations are given prominence later by Acts in the description of early Christian beginnings. It is significant that Acts reports that James, at the Council of Jerusalem, speaking on behalf of Gentile Christians in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia, says that 'from early generations Moses had in every [Gentile] city those who preach him, for he is read every sabbath in the synagogues' (15,1).

Synagogues and the birth of Christianity

It was through the medium of the *synagoge* (literally a 'gathering for prayer and reading'), that Judaism must have been preserved in the Diasporaic cites. Moreover, because Christianity was to its early exponents a fulfilment of Judaism, the urban Christian groups obviously took the worship of the Diaspora synagogue as the nearest and most natural model for their own. The Pauline missionaries nearly always went first to the synagogue to speak and debate at the regular sabbath meetings (Sandmel 1978).

From the first century, synagogue buildings were numerous throughout much of the Graeco-Roman world. Before that period there is, apart from inscriptions, scanty literary and archaeological evidence for synagogue buildings outside Egypt. Indeed it was only in Egypt, at Elephantine and Leontopolis, that substitutes for the Temple were provided, but both were syncretistic and anachronistic.[6] By the first century the principal synagogue in Alexandria was one of the most magnificent. Philo describes it as a huge five-aisled basilica used as a religious, administrative and commercial centre. Here also, according to the pattern usual in Hellenistic cities, the Jews were numerous enough to form a *πολίτευμα*, a corporate body of resident aliens with their own rights (Whittaker 1984, 10).

The province of Asia is particularly rich in archaeological evidence of synagogues, the city of Sardis for example providing some impressive remains (Mitten 1965). Josephus mentions synagogues in Syria and Palestine at Antioch, Dora, Caesarea and Tiberias (*B.J.* 7,3,3) but the New Testament provides the earliest witness to them in Palestine, especially Galilee, where Jesus is said to have first 'shown himself' in the synagogues of Nazareth and Capernaum (e.g. Lk 4,14–37). The archaeological evidence from these areas is also considerable (Levine 1981).

How could the early Christians easily remain associated with the Temple- and synagogue-orientated environment of Judaism? On the face of it, like the Pharisees or the Essenes, they could be considered as just another sect within Judaism. It may have been as such that they would have been initially protected from persecution by the Roman sanction accorded to Judaism as an official religion (*religio licita*). Here, however, we are in danger of simplifying the situation. The great irony was that during the period of Acts, Judaism and the Jewish establishment constituted the main opposition to the Christians, greater than any

persecution they would receive from the Roman state or pagan Gentile sources in the cities of Asia Minor and Greece. This seems clear even when we are mindful of the possible apologetic nature of Acts. Not even the hostility of the votaries of Artemis Ephesia could compare with the wrath of Paul in his early guise as a Pharisaic servant of the High Priest, a hunter of Christians (7,54 8,3; 9,1–2); He also continued to emphasize his Jewishness by describing himself as a Hellenized Jew from Cilician Tarsus but educated as a Pharisee in Jerusalem under Gamaliel (23,3). The Jewish leaders, however, were uncertain in their dealings with Christians. For example, in the second appearance of the apostles before the Sanhedrin (5, 17–42), the Pharisean leader, Gamaliel I draws a salutory comparison between the apostles and Theudas and Judas Gamala, two patriotic revolutionary leaders who had instigated insurrection against the Roman power. Gamaliel's view has recently been taken up with stylish fervour by Maccoby (1973), who claims that the passage only makes sense on the basis that the Judaeo-Christians (if we dare call them that) were regarded as a threat to Rome (*ibid.*, 306). This is one element in a difficult conflict, and others have been discussed elsewhere (e.g. Parkes 1934). The overridingly important result of Jewish opposition was the encouragement of the spread of the new religion from Jerusalem throughout the eastern Mediterranean, particularly the cities of Asia Minor and Greece, and thereby to non-Jews.

In turning back to the record of Acts we find that the first members of the earliest church (ἐκκλησία) in Jerusalem, as the name implies, were 'called out' from the Jews, or like one of the seven Hellenists, Nicolas of Antioch (6,5), they were proselytes. The apostles, after Pentecost, were found continuously in the Temple (2,41–4,4; 5,42), appearing twice before the Sanhedrin after converting large numbers. It was not until the Jewish persecution following the martyrdom of Stephen that they dispersed to take the new religion further afield in Judaea and Samaria (Avi-Yonah 1984, 138f.). These Judaeo-Christians accepted circumcision and the rest of the ritual commandments and so they might have been indistinguishable from the rest of the Jewish community with whom they had most contact. Like Jesus himself they would have been familiar with the original Hebrew scriptures and thus able to argue with the leaders of Judaism over texts and interpretations in the precincts of the Temple and the synagogues. Nevertheless, Hellenist Jews and Greek-speaking proselytes accepted the Septuagint as scriptural and would not have been so concerned to argue with the rabbis in Jerusalem. Indeed, after the period of Acts, Christian leaders of Gentile origin gave up the attempt to convert the Jews of Palestine. After the first Jewish War there is little evidence for thriving Christian communities in Palestine outside Jerusalem until the fourth century.

The record of Acts suggests that the initial opposition from Judaism was a continuation of that which led up to the crucifixion. In a similar way the apostles were arrested by the captain of the Temple and the Sadducees and brought before the High Priestly family, Annas, Caiaphas, Jonathan and Alexander (4,1–12).[9] The first synagogue referred to is a Diasporaic one (or possibly a group of synagogues) in Jerusalem, belonging to the Λιβερτίνων, 'Freedmen of Rome' (Schürer 1979, 57)—the characteristic Lukan 'as it was called' almost apologises for the foreign word. It also served Cyrenians, Alexandrians, Cilicians and Asians (6,9–10). Their opposition to Stephen's speech led to his martyrdom and the first major persecution of the Judaeo-Christians by Hellenistic Jews. This persecution continued against Paul in the synagogues of Jerusalem and Damascus (9,23–5, 29–30).[10]

During Paul's first journey with Barnabas they carried the message through the synagogues of Salamis in Cyprus (13,4–5; see Fig. 1 for location map), Pisidian Antioch (13,13–52) and Iconium (14, 1–7). Large numbers of Gentiles who had previously been attached to the synagogues (σεβόμενοι τὸν Θεόν, 'God-fearers'), were converted, resulting in a chain of predominantly Gentile churches far into Asia Minor and a surging opposition from the Jews (13,44–52) who incited civic leaders to persecute the apostles. Acts makes it clear that the Graeco-Roman authorities never acted on their own initiative. The ability of Gentiles to receive Christianity is emphasized by the surprising belief of Sergius Paullus, proconsul at Paphos, Cyprus (13, 6–12).[11] Paul continued his activity in the synagogues of Thessalonica, Beroea, Athens and Corinth during his second journey through the Greek mainland (*c.* AD 49–50). At Thessalonica, as elsewhere, the envy of Jews was aroused at the offer of salvation to Gentiles (17,5). The Jews may have regarded Gentile 'God-fearers', who were addicted to worship at the synagogue, almost as though they were Jews already; thus they would have considered the Christians to be poaching on their preserve. There is reference to the Jewish attitude in the first epistle to the church at Thessalonica where its Judaeo-Christian heritage is also stressed (1 Thess 2,14). The Jewish charge that the apostles were acting against the imperial decrees was subtle and more plausible, but it was more concerned with allegiance than with emperor-worship.[12]

Between Autumn 50 and Spring 52 Acts states that Paul was in Corinth living with a Jew 'named Aquila, a native of Pontus, lately comes from Italy with his wife Priscilla, because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to leave Rome' (18,2).[13] Priscilla and Aquila became prominent members of the new religion (cf. Rom 16,3; 1 Cor 16,19; 2 Tim 4,19) and may have been joint authors of the Hebrew Epistle. After further altercations with synagogue Jews, Paul established himself in a house of Titius Justus next door to the synagogue. Justus was presumably a Roman citizen

and one of the *coloni*, and can probably be identified with the Gaius mentioned elsewhere (Rom 16,23; 1 Cor 1,4). He was a 'God-fearer' and no doubt Paul could keep in touch with others from here. In the light of all this it seems remarkable that both Crispus and his successor as ruler of the synagogue, Sosthenes, were both converted (18,8; 1 Cor 1,14), helped somewhat by the impartiality of Gallio, proconsul of Achaia, at the tribunal instigated by the Jews (18, 12-17). At synagogue there, Paul 'withdrew from' the Jews, taking his disciples with him to argue daily in the σχολή of Tyrannus continuously for two years (AD 52–4, cf. also below). Thus 'all Asia heard him' and this province became the chief centre of Christianity in Acts. Probably all Seven Churches of Asia addressed by the Apocalypse were founded during these years (19,1-20; Rev 1-3).

Ephesus marks the 'official' departure from the synagogues in the history of Acts. Previously, Acts had stressed their importance as a vehicle for preserving the vitality of Judaism and for the propagation of the earliest Christianity. The two religions were thus considerably interwoven, acting as catalysts upon one another (cf. the epistle to the Hebrews and the salutations in Jas 1, 1; 1 Pet 1, 1–2). The tradition of the synagogue was to survive into the earliest years of Christian gatherings, to the extent that James uses the word for a Christian assembly (Jas 2,2). Similarly, the archaeological record does not always distinguish easily between synagogue and church (Avi-Yonah 1981)—but this is a matter of ceremonial form, which will be discussed further below.

Judaism and Earliest Christianity: the Ceremonial Form

Having established some of the considerable influences of Judaism upon the new religion, these influences should be defined more closely. One way of doing this is to turn to Paul, the principal character of Acts, and examine his own Judaism. As he was also the principal agent in propagating early Christianity in Acts and the Epistles (i.e. 'Pauline Christianity') it is important to establish how his Judaism influenced it and thereby the whole Church in the Graeco-Roman world of the first century. In a sense he tells us himself in his defences and *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* before the procurators Antonius Felix and Porcius Festus, and also before Agrippa II (23–24). We can gain little comfort here from Pauline scholars, since these are questions which have perplexed them for over a century. We have already mentioned the Pharisaic background. Schweitzer (1912; 1931) however, saw a clear distinction between Palestinian Judaism and Hellenistic or Diaspora Judaism in the first century. He considered that Paul belonged to the former. Such a sharp distinction can no longer be made. It is now clear that Jewish Rabbinic literary sources reveal strong Hellenistic influences (Davies 1970, ch. 1) and the material evidence displays similar influences from all directions (Goodenough 1953–65). Indeed the literary and archaeological evidence shows that the Temple in Jerusalem itself, rebuilt by Herod from 19 BC, was strongly influenced by Greek forms (Parrot 1957; Mazar 1976; Avigad 1984, 64–204), as were synagogues of this period throughout the eastern Mediterranean (Levine 1981).

Pharisaic tradition, moreover, was syncretistic in that it contained post-Exilic teaching. This contrasted with the Sadducees who were sectarian in their rejection of what they considered to be late accretions to original Judaism (Davies 1966). So did the Essenes, another sect of Judaism. Their influence on earliest Christianity requires brief examination, particularly in the light of the claims made for them over the past 35 years. They also provide us with an opportunity to examine early Christian ceremonial form or 'ritual' in order to investigate the possibility of more 'anthropological' influences from Judaism and perhaps even Hellenistic paganism.

The Essenes are described by Josephus (*B.J.* 2,8,2–13; *Ant.* 18,1,5), Philo (*Quod omnis prob.* 75,19ff.) and the elder Pliny (*N.H.* 5,17). They were to be found in isolated desert villages and monastic communities near the Dead Sea during the period 100 BC–AD 80. Study since 1947 of certain manuscripts among the Dead Sea Scrolls (Vermes 1968) has done much to advance understanding of the Essenes. The texts found near the site of the monastic settlement at Khirbet Qumran, belonged to that community which was *probably* a branch of the Essenes. Under the leadership of their 'Teacher of Righteousness' their doctine was essentially eschatological. The Qumran community was rigorous in self-discipline and entry to the sect was through a testing novitiate. Members underwent regular ceremonial ablutions and partook of fellowship meals. They also claimed initiation by God into the mysteries and manner of fulfilment of prophecy (Bruce 1957). When we compare this sect with the early Church as seen through Acts and the Epistles there are similarities (Howlett 1957; Daniélou 1979; Black 1983) particularly in eschatological outlook, remnant consciousness, scriptural exegesis and ceremonial form. However, on closer examination, the parallels are less certain. Qumran's ablutions and ceremonial meals did not have the sacramental significance of early Christian baptism or 'Lord's Supper'. The early Christians mixed freely in society instead of forming monastic units, and saw their Messiah in one person in contrast to the three persons of the Qumran eschatology.

In order to follow these arguments further we need to examine Christian ceremonial practice in the Acts and Epistles more carefully. Some scholars, including Judge (1980), have suggested that early Christianity could not have been a religion in the normal sense because of its lack of ritual. Here they are adopting the language of the 'anthropological' history-of-religions school. In this sense the hypothesis seems tenable particularly if

one is thinking of the array of visible forms by which the pagan cults of the Roman world displayed themselves (MacMullen 1980, 1–48). In spite of the background of the Jerusalem Temple ritual, not only did the first Christians lack temples, cult statues and sacrifices, they did not stage public festivals, dances, musical performances, pilgrimages, and as far as is known, they set up no inscriptions. However, the assertion that the early Christians were without ritual is clearly false. At the beginning of the second century a non-Christian writer such as the younger Pliny was able to describe in a limited way some ceremonial practice to Trajan. In view of this it seems unlikely that in the time of Acts we had no more than an 'ethical debating society' (Meeks 1984, 140), meeting regularly to read Paul's epistles over an evening meal. Pliny saw Christianity as 'a perverse, uncontrolled superstition'—*Nihil aliud inveni quam superstitionem pravam, immodicam* (*Ep.* 10,96,8). Tacitus (*Ann.* 15,44,3) and Suetonius (*Nero* 16,3) also used the term *superstitio*.

In turning to the evidence from Acts and, very usefully here, the Epistles, two ritual complexes stand out, baptism and the ritual meal. These were of self evident importance to the early Christians. In later centuries they accreted increasingly complex actions and meanings making it difficult to divest them of accumulated theology. They both took place at regular Christian meetings at familiar times and places. This is usually referred to as a 'coming together' (the verb is *συνέρχομαι*) 'to eat the Lord's Supper' (1 Cor 11, 17–34) i.e. a meeting of the whole *ekklesia*. Paul uses an alternative verb, *συνάγω*, in a 'gathering' of the Church to expel a member who had violated sexual practice (1 Cor 5,4). The concept also occurs fairly frequently in Acts, e.g. the joyous gathering of the Antioch Christians (14,27). In all these instances a parallel with synagogue gatherings can be detected.

Apart from the two main rituals, other minor ones should be mentioned. Firstly Paul's epistles were read aloud at these assemblies (1 Thess 5,27). Sometimes specific churches are named singly or in groups, for instance where Paul indicates that his epistle to Colossae should also be read to the church of Laodicea and *vice versa* (Col 4,16). These meetings often took place in private houses in the same tradition as that of some early synagogues, like Gaius's in Corinth, Nympha's at Laodicea (Col 4,15), and Philemon and Apphia's house at Colossae (Philemon 2). Perhaps it was difficult to find a suitably large hired room and Gaius's contribution earned special mention (Rom 16,23). Following Jewish example the churches met on the first day of the week (20,7; Pliny, *Ep.* 10,96,7). What then occurred is described by Paul; 'each has a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation' (1 Cor 14,26). The hymns seem to follow Jewish models such as the one quoted in Phil 2,6–11, or the Qumran 'Hymns' scroll from Cave 1. However, hymns to deities were prominent in numerous pagan cults. Prayer also

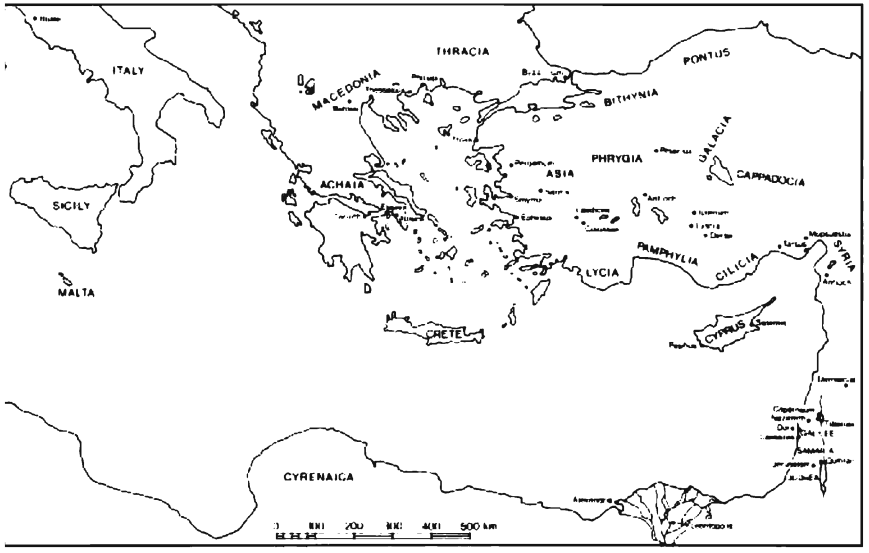

Fig. 1 Map: The Eastern Mediterranean in the time of Acts. Drawing: Alison Wilkins.

adopted Jewish models either 'by tongue' or 'rationally' (1 Cor 14, 13–15) as did prophesying, the holy kiss and reading (1 Thess 5, 12–27).

John the Baptist provides the obvious starting point for the ritual of initiation. Although it is possible that he spent his wilderness period before *c.* AD 27 with the Essenes (Robinson 1957), there is no direct evidence for this. If he had done so, his prophetic period must have involved a break with his previous way of life. In Luke's account (Lk 3,9ff.) John's ministry is characterized by a condemnation of established Judaism and the use of baptism with water, and John himself is the precursor of the 'Coming One'. Josephus's statements about him envisaging the formation of a Jewish religious community which was entered by baptism seem to accord with Luke/Acts, but when he refers to baptism as an outward purification of the body he clearly differs (*Ant.* 18,5,2). Josephus may be transferring to John's baptism what he knew of the Essene washings. The Qumran *Rule* gives an almost identical account of the significance of such washings. Perhaps John's teaching and baptism was a deliberate turning away from Essenism and his campaign in Samaria may explain certain features of Samaritan religion in the early centuries AD. The narrative of the Baptist is carried over into Acts and it is there that we find a straightforward, if rather short, description of the ritual applied to the Ethiopian eunuch (8,38–9). The Epistles explain baptism and contain references to specific ceremonies, such as the baptism of Stephanas's household (1 Cor 1,16; 16, 15–17). The term implies a water bath in which the convert was immersed, made holy and, according to Paul, 'justified in Christ and the Spirit'. The rite was also seen as a symbolic burial with Christ (1 Cor 6,11; Rom 6,4; Col 2,12).

At the end of the second century Hippolytus provides a description of threefold immersion (*Apost. Para.*), but the *Didache* (7,3) mentions the pouring of water three times over the head in cases where insufficient was available for immersion. All the evidence points to Christian converts being baptised naked, symbolically taking off the old body (via their clothes) and putting on the new body of Christ. Acts and the Epistles frequently mention the gift of πνεῦμα, 'the Spirit' in connection with baptism and the apostles' laying on of hands. In fact the power and manifestations of this phenomenon pervade the whole of Acts, it records few events unrelated to it, and *glossolalia* and prophecy were considered signs of it. However, in the description of the conversion of the centurion Cornelius's household, the converts appear to shout, as former pagans might, 'great is God' (10, 44–46) just as the worshippers of Artemis Ephesia did to their deity (see below). The simple baptismal confession mentioned by Paul (Rom 10,9), may be echoed in the oath described by Pliny (*Ep.* 10,96). In Pauline teaching baptism meant a permanent division between the washed Christian and his unwashed fellows in terms of 'morality' rather than an actual physical separation (1 Cor 5–6), and it also meant symbolically dying and rising with Christ (Rom 6, 4, 8; Col 2,12; etc.).

In trying to find antecedents or analogies for baptism outside the Christian orbit we naturally turn again to Judaism, where the *tebilah*, the normal rite of purification is a probability. We come closest in the Jewish immersion of proselytes. By the first century AD the Pharisees had invented the *mikveh* or ritual immersion pool (Neusner 1977), but it seems very unlikely in view of what we have already discussed that any Christian baptism took place in a synagogue. With the Pharisees, no permanent transition from impure to pure was meant. The line between was in constant flux and the process could be repeated. Despite attempts by some to make it a direct antecedent to Christian baptism (Moore 1927, I. 323–53), the immersion of Jewish proselytes in any case was not an initiation but a preparatory purification.

There is also early evidence for the second major Christian ceremonial practice, the ritual meal best seen in the 'Lord's Supper'. The only explicit reference to it in the period of Acts is in 1 Cor 10, 14–22; 11, 17–34, where Paul addresses the Corinthian *ekklesia* with the curious statement; 'consider the practice of Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything?' Paul states that the ritual imitates the 'Last Supper' of Jesus and is in reply to his injunction 'do this as my memorial'. The theological symbolism of all this is considerable (Meeks 1984, 158–63), but in its commemoration of death it does provide us with the opportunity of examining possible analogies in pagan society and religion.

Paganism and Earliest Christianity: the Ceremonial Form

Festive meals were a common feature of voluntary associations in Graeco-Roman society. So Pliny understood the Christian rite when in the early second century, in Bithynia, he forbade such meals, in accordance with Trajan's ban against associations (*Ep.* 10,97,7). We can also see a general analogy between the early churches and the *collegia tenuiorum* or burial societies, known from numerous inscriptions, and sometimes associated with a single household or trade. Although the earliest clear evidence for Christian funeral meals is in Tertullian (*De monog.* 10; *De cor.* 3), it would be unreasonable to suggest that these did not occur in the time of the Acts (but cf. the enigmatic 1 Cor 15,29).

The Corinthian church had presented Paul with the problem of food offered in sacrifice to the gods. Here we get to the heart of first-century religious life and also the normal domestic or social scene. Only part of a sacrifice was presented to the god in the temple. This action was usually followed by a cult meal where the remainder of the food was consumed in the temple precincts, or at

home, taken to the market to be sold, or given to the poor. The last four situations presented a thorny problem to the Christians. Paul follows the Jewish tradition of forbidding absolutely the consumption of food and drink in a temple but agrees to its sale in a market a distinct departure from rabbinical rules (10, 9–16). In a private house a Christian was able to accept an invitation to a meal and eat freely. If, however, he was told that the food had been offered in sacrifice, he would be placed in a false position and for his religion's sake have to refuse it, thus setting an example to any pagans at the meal.

The connection of Christian gatherings with households and trades is well illustrated by Acts in relation to Aquila and Stephanas. The latter, however, although head of a Christian household, is not honoured like the usual *collegium* patron and Paul urges the Corinthian *ekklesia* to give him more recognition (1 Cor 16, 15–18). It is also difficult to find a suitable analogy for the charismatic functions of the early Church. The exclusive and totalistic view of the early Christians may find distant parallels among the Epicureans or Pythagoreans but does so more closely in parent Judaism, in all its Hellenistic manifestations (Nock 1933, 164–86).

Individual early churches were much more inclusive in terms of social stratification and ruling hierarchy than pagan voluntary associations. Although the latter often included both men and women, freeborn, freedmen and slaves, there was no equality of role. They were socially homogeneous, whereas the early Christians in the time of Acts were precisely heterogeneous (Meeks 1984, 51–73). In terminology we find very few links between Christians and pagan secular institutions. The Christian usage of *ekklesia* belongs to the Septuagint rather than to the assembly of free citizens at Athens. Only the hierarchical *episkopos* (Phil 1,1), *diakonos* Phil 1,1, Rom 16,1) and *prestatis* (Rom 16,2) find counterparts in association inscriptions. *Diakonos* is used for persons waiting at tables whereas the Christian technical usage is different and only the title of 'overseer' or bishop could have been borrowed, although bishops had scarcely begun to appear in the time of Acts.

Pagan Graeco-Roman analogies for the baptism ritual are interesting but insignificant beside those of Judaism. They are found in the mystery and saviour cults originating in the eastern Mediterranean world. These cults were generally most active in the second century. Like Christianity they were exclusive, personal, sometimes secret and often involved the understanding of salvation in terms of symbolic participation in the fate of the cult deity. Here also perhaps we can compare baptism as defined by Paul (Rom 6,1ff.) with the mysteries, but of course, to Paul the resurrection was in the eschatological future, and the mysteries contain no such doctrine (Reitzenstein 1956). They do nevertheless contain kinds of washing and splashing, often preparing a candidate for initiation. For example in the Eleusinian mysteries, the official in charge of the rite was called a *hydranos*. These ideas go well back to the fourth century BC which has produced a carved relief depicting a goddess, possibly Persephone, in this role, pouring water from a phial over a young nude figure (Mylonas 1961, 194, fig. 70). Pouring and bathing also occur in the Lesser Mysteries held at Agrai, a preparatory purification for the Greater Mysteries at Eleusis. Similarly the initiates to the cult of Isis (where a strong moral code of behaviour applied) had to undergo a washing and ten days' fasting before the initiation ceremony proper (Apuleius, *Met.* 11,23).

In other cults of eastern origin related to the mysteries, the death, resurrection and salvation themes appear again (Halliday 1925; Cumont 1956). They are present in Mithraism and in the cults of the Magna Mater of Pessinus in Phrygia, otherwise known as Cybele, and those of her consort Attis. Although Cybele had been well established in the Roman state pantheon for over two hundred years, her association with Pessinus continued (Magie 1950, 455), and the early Christians in that region at the time of Acts probably knew her sanctuary and cult well. The priests of Cybele called *Galli* had imitated Attis by ritually castrating themselves, but among early Christians we know only of Origen who, misinterpreting Jesus's exhortation (Mt 19,12), mutilated himself. The Anatolian cult of the mother goddess is also found in Asia Minor in the veneration of Meter, Leto, Ma and most important of all, Artemis.

The cities of the area also popularized the standard pantheon and the emperor-cult. The Christian attitude to all these was distinctly exclusive and monotheistic (Nock 1964). Pliny illustrates this in his correspondence with Trajan from Bithynia (*Ep.* 10,96) where he stresses the Christians' refusal to worship statues of the gods or make offerings to a statue of the emperor. Many similar situations in later years are recorded in Eusebius's writings. The attempt to relate the Christian title *Κύριος* 'Lord' with the emperor cult (Lohmeyer 1919; Stauffer 1955), has failed because the emperor cult did not have any serious religious implications during the earliest Christian period. The same title occurs in Hellenistic hero cults and although its use in Acts seems to originate in the Septuagint, its occurrence in Phil 2,11 is similar to a usage in the mysteries.

It is interesting that in Acts (15,20) all pagan worship is equated with unchastity; in the Epistles it is equated with sexual covetousness (1 Cor 5,11; Eph 5,5, etc.). In other words, pagan religious practice was considered representative of the relative ease with which Graeco-Roman society viewed illicit sexual connections (cf. the catalogues of vice in 1 Cor 6,9, etc.). According to Paul, a Christian by baptism was 'washed' from these.

Gnosis

We have compared important elements in Christian ceremonial form with other religious groups in the period of Acts. Certain forms derived from Judaism and the pagan mystery cults occur in Acts and the Epistles, with Judaism providing the stronger influence. However, these influences tend to be filtered through the ordinary vocabulary of the Graeco-Roman environment. We should be surprised if they were absent.

This language has produced a single concept, *gnosis* or 'knowledge', which has been discussed at length (Wilson 1958). It has been claimed that there was an almost exclusive Gnostic influence on Paul and the apostles in Acts and the Epistles, and also on their Jewish and Gentile opponents everywhere (Schmithals 1956). On the other hand, there has also been an absolute denial of any Christian or pagan Gnosticism before the teaching of Valentinus in the mid second century (Grant 1959). The problem has been that Gnosticism has never been satisfactorily defined. Jonas (1963) has made an attempt, but there are still arguments over whether it was of Jewish, oriental or Hellenistic origin. It seems to have elements of all these, and was sufficiently novel to be taken up as a charismatic religious experience. Its doctrine was that man is a foreigner in the world, he is of divine origin, and that the world and whoever created it is inferior or even hostile to man's ultimate destiny.

In Acts the problem starts in 8, 9–42 where Simon Magus has swept Samaria off its feet with his magical arts. Acts reports that he claimed to be a divine emanation and ἡ Δύναμις του θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη Μεγάλη 'that power of God which is called Great'. Acts tells us that under the influence of the apostle Philip, Simon was baptised, but later rebuked by Peter for the action named after him. How do we interpret Simon's claim? On the one hand the term Μεγάλη might be a transliteration of Aramaic *megalle* 'revealer', in which case καλουμένη apologizes again in typical Lukan fashion for the foreign word (see above), or on the other that the 'Great power of God' syncretizes the God of Israel with Zeus. Whatever we may think of this it is clear that Simon Magus played a prominent part in post-apostolic Christian literature as the first heretic, the father of Gnosticism, and the adversary of Peter in the latter's travels beyond Samaria to Antioch and Rome. This tradition is confirmed by Justin, but his statement that Simon was honoured in Rome with a monument dedicated SIMONI DEO SANCTO seems due to a misreading of an inscription to an Italian deity.[14]

In a more general sense, if much of Gnosticism has an origin in Judaism, we would expect its terminology in the early Christian literature (Robinson 1974). But if it is a form of Gnosticism that is being referred to in the Pastoral Epistles in response to a threat 'O Timotheus ... *avoid* the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called *gnosis*' (1 Tim 6,20; also 6, 3–4 and Titus 3,10), then this may not be the false teaching refuted by Paul in 1 Cor 15, 12–19, 29–34.[15]

Parallels or Antitheses?

One of the problems, in attempting to detect good evidence for cross-fertilization between early Christianity and the non-Christian religious environment, is that our knowledge of that environment is just not adequate enough compared with the information presented by the author of Acts and the other first-hand sources. To an extent we have indulged in the arrangement of religious parallels in a non-historical fashion—a process encouraged by the 'history-of-religions' method. Our understanding of contemporary society in its geographical setting is equally inadequate. No wonder the place of Paul within it has led to endless speculation. For the first-century Greeks their 'golden age' was long past, and we, like Augustine, tend to focus more easily on the 'classical' tradition. It would be easier to reconstruct the religious and social environment if there was a reasonable body of Hellenistic writing for the period. We also need a thorough analysis of the Graeco-Roman Diaspora communities and their context, of the type frequently provided for Rome itself.

To return to the question of drawing parallels with earliest Christianity, we have reviewed some of the difficulties with Judaism, the mysteries and Gnosticism, but an important point is that perhaps we assume too readily that early Christianity can be assigned in advance to a place defined according to the conventions of comparative religion. We may not be paying sufficient regard to the exclusiveness and singularity of early Christianity if we attempt to explain it in terms of ideas derived from the mysteries and Gnosticism (Metzger 1968). Paul's vocabulary shares the language of the Judaized Hellenistic mystery religions, not his theology. The theology tends to be uniquely Christian, and although it often refers to Hellenized Judaism, there is not sufficient Judaism in it to explain enough of its theological content. An illustration of this is Paul's doctrine of justification by faith, one of the most important in the earliest Church. In the Epistle to the Jewish Christians in Rome, this doctrine is expressed as being separate from the background of Jewish religious tradition (Rom 3, 21–5, 21) and the language is much less Jewish Hellenistic than in other epistles. This point is made even more strongly in the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, an anonymous treatise addressed to those Jewish Christians on the point of giving up their Christianity and reverting to the religious practices of their ancestors. The writer in cataloguing heroes of faith in the Old Testament states that 'all these, though well attested by their faith, did not receive what was promised, since God had forseen something better for us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect' (Heb 11, 39–40).

Another important point derives from the difficulty

of placing Acts and the Epistles within the historical geography of their period. It is often too easy to make broad assumptions. For example, the social status of Paul and his converts, and their position with regard to Roman law and citizenship may not be so unequivocal as some scholars have assumed. Roman citizenship was possibly not so decisive a status factor in the first century cities of Asia Minor and Greece as it was further west (Levick 1967). It is generally considered that as Paul was a Roman citizen his reference to himself fighting beasts at Ephesus (1 Cor 15, 32) must be a metaphorical allusion. Ramsay (1900, 230–1, 276–7) for instance, interprets the beasts as the Ephesian mob, a 'vulgar, uneducated, and grossly superstitious city populace', and Paul's regular use of metaphor, a product of a Graeco-Roman education. Perhaps there is room for an alternative view and we should take the passage more literally.

A similar problem lies in Paul's relationship to the emperor (in 17,7), for this also depends on his status and citizenship. Also his frequent use of legal language should perhaps be seen in terms of Graeco-Roman rather than Jewish or Roman law (cf. note 12). The record of Acts and the Epistles shows that Paul encourages his own doctrine of subordination, constantly using status terms and dwelling on humiliations. Although obviously entitled to considerable respect himself he may have been caught up in serious conflicts of rank.

Whilst it may be beyond question that the culture of the author of Acts, together with Paul and many contemporary Christians, was grounded to varying degrees in Greek language and philosophy, Koester's claim (1966, 187) that Paul depended on the Cynic-Stoic diatribe in his style and method of argument is surely a distortion. Paul belonged to a society used to vigorous argument about ideas and behaviour, conducted through privately organized meetings, but we do not know enough about the sophist movements in the period of Acts (Bowersock 1969). Obviously the diatribe writers contributed to the fund of ideas available to Paul and other Christians and we would expect to find similarities. The fascinating aspect here is that some of Paul's associates found him embarrassingly eccentric—like modern Paulinists, they could not put him in his place. They found it hard to understand him or to put up with what he was saying (2 Cor 6,8; 2 Pet 3,16). His personal bearing was unimpressive and his style of speech contemptible (2 Cor 10,10). In the face of Jewish and pagan opposition he even refused to boast of his record and rank (Betz 1972). Paul also had a reputation for very lengthy discussion and conversation (the verb is διαλέγομαι), and Acts makes a point of this in the account of the fall of Eutychus at the evening meeting at Troas (20, 7–12), and in Paul's second interview with the Jews in Rome (28, 23). These were familiar interchanges of thought between the apostle and other Christians or potential converts.

All these factors must have contributed to the overall impression of the early Christians and their leaders on the religious and social world of their potential converts. That world was concerned, fascinated and threatened. Many pagan attitudes may be summed up in Festus's declamation: 'Paul, you are mad: your great learning is turning you mad'. But Paul felt able to reply: 'I am not mad, most excellent Festus, but I am speaking the sober truth' (26,24–5). Even Agrippa II who believed the prophets, was almost 'persuaded to act the Christian'.[16] That many were persuaded, and continued to be persuaded and converted, has much to do with the acts of the apostles recorded for us in a text of considerable value.

We have established that Judaism was the overriding 'foreign' religious influence on earliest Christianity. The pagan contribution is insignificant by comparison. However, the reaction of the well-established pagan religious outlook of the Gentiles to the earliest propagation of Christianity is surprisingly strong. It is illustrated by Acts in three distinct episodes at Lystra, Athens and Ephesus and these are sufficiently important to be discussed individually.

Zeus and Hermes at Lystra (14,1–18)

The importance of Lystra is that it provides us, and indeed provided the apostles, with a welcome escape from the Judaism of the Graeco-Roman Diaspora, and an opportunity to examine briefly Acts' record of the first encounter of early Christianity with pure paganism. The colonia, along with Pisidian Antioch, had been founded by Augustus in AD 6. The town was centred in a fertile region connected by a military road to Antioch, but it was in no way cosmopolitan and its commerce had suffered from the remoteness of trade routes (Magie 1950, 463; Levick 1967). It was used by the apostles as an asylum from the Jewish persecution in Iconium (14,1–7) and they may have been attracted by the presence of Timotheus and his Jewish mother (16,1–2), although the two may not have been converted to Christianity until Paul and Barnabas's visit to Lystra. Acts records a people speaking Lycaonian, presumably local inhabitants rather than military colonists.

The account of the healing of the 'cripple from birth', although couched in medical terms, is a very close parallel to Peter's cure of the lame man, as recorded by Acts, in the Beautiful Gate of the Temple (3,2ff.). But here the temple belongs to Zeus, or perhaps Zeus and Hermes jointly. Presumably if the parallel with Jerusalem can be taken further, the cripple lay in the *pronaos* of the temple 'of the Zeus who was in front of the city' πρὸ τῆς πόλεως (14,13). In referring to Zeus with the definite article Acts illustrates the ancient 'failure' to distinguish between god and cult statue at the linguistic level. This attitude is seen by Gordon (1979) as part of the 'popular' conception of pagan religious art. In other words people believed

simultaneously that cult statues were gods, and that they were not. 'The Zeus' may have been very large—a colossus to convey its 'otherness', perhaps after Pheidias's colossal seated statue at Olympia described by Strabo (8,3,30) as being so large that the head almost touched the temple roof.

We may think of the healing miracles as being overtly Christian but this would have been precisely what the worshippers of Zeus would have hoped for and expected from their cult of temple, images, altars and priests (Grant 1952; MacMullen 1981). An important extension of all this was that if the gods were manifest in image form, they could also appear as living, moving men. The Lystrans in Acts shout 'the gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!', and the identification of Barnabas with Zeus (perhaps he was tall and handsome), and Paul with Hermes 'because he was the chief speaker', is a striking illustration of this. It is also analogous to the second reaction to Paul from the similarly foreign-speaking Maltese (28,6). We find an important comparison with the story of Philemon and Baucis, a pious couple of that region who gave hospitality to Jupiter and Mercury (Ovid, *Met.* 8,626ff.). In fact the *Metamorphoses* may have encouraged a popular local tradition that revelation could always be anticipated in human form rather than by image, dream or oracle. This seems to have occurred when Mark Antony was hailed as the personification of Dionysus amid music of harps, flutes and pipes, when he arrived at Ephesus during a festival of that god (Plutarch, *vita Ant.* 24).

The point to be made here is that when paganism is confronted with the new religion, Christ is immediately interpreted as being overtly pagan, part of the standard pantheon, or perhaps an unknown or unnamed god. The gods are not immediately threatened until Christianity's exclusive monotheism becomes oppressive in attracting converts in sufficiently large numbers. The Christian reaction to the form of overt paganism was not reciprocal. In Acts when the priest of Zeus brought oxen and garlands to the gates of the temple to offer sacrifice with the people, the hostile reaction of the apostles, according to Acts, was unrestrained and has its echo in Gal 4,8. Indeed, the complete repudiation of paganism is taken up again at Athens, as in this first recorded address to a pagan audience, and an appeal is made to such knowledge of the Christian God as they might have by 'natural revelation'.

Unknown gods at Athens (17,16–34)

The description of Paul's visit to Athens (*c.* AD 50) is replete with exceptional features and tells us much in few words about the relationship between the monotheism of early Christianity and the polytheism of the Graeco-Roman world. Judaism, although of course essentially the same monotheism as Christianity, is for once in Acts passed over quickly in Paul's token sabbath argument with Jews, proselytes and 'God-fearers' at the synagogue. The rest of his time was spent in the agora 'every day with those who chanced to be there'.

The Areopagus speech is so markedly different from the other speeches of Acts as to lead to the impression that it may not fit in at all with Acts or the religion of that time and place. Schweitzer (1931), following Norden (1923), regarded certain features of the speech (especially 17,28), as expressing a God-mysticism which is Stoic rather than Christian in outlook. For this reason he concluded that the speech is unhistorical and there 'can never have been such an inscription' (17,23). Dibelius (1939) saw the speech as Hellenistic, its general theme searching for the true knowledge of God and his relationship with man and the world. Against this it might be suggested that the speech is in fact Pauline, and not a Lukan invention, a view given support by its similarity with Paul's diatribe in Rom 1,19ff.

Acts states that Paul's audience did not recognize immediately that their religious views had much in common with his new religion. He seemed to the Epicureans and Stoics to be bringing 'strange gods' (i.e. Jesus and the resurrection), and a novel teaching. We are told that the Athenians and foreigners there 'spent their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new' (17,21).

Why was Paul at Athens? His purpose according to Acts was to find a brief respite from the arduous experiences of his activity in Macedonia. He was taking a brief holiday prior to his long stay at Corinth and he was waiting for Silas and Timotheus so that he could continue his journey with them. Paul was clearly struck by the magnificent temples which surrounded him. However, he could not have viewed Pheidias's colossal ivory and gold cult-statue of Athena Parthenos (Pausanias, *Descript. Graec.* 1, 24,5) as simply an object of art – 'his spirit was provoked within him as he saw that the city was full of idols' (17,16). These words find echoes in the Septuagint and thereby Paul's Hellenistic Judaism. The images and statues were providing permanent 'homes' for the gods (Gordon 1979) and thus provided a hindrance to the single Christian God. The gods could be brought to their temples by entreaty, there to listen and act. In this guise they were said to perform miracles or even move (MacMullen 1981, 59–60). The Epicureans (17,18) on the other hand conceived the gods as being material, existing in eternal calm in intermundane spaces, having nothing to do with men (Lucretius, *De Rerum Nat.*).

The setting of the speech was probably the *Stoa Basileios* in the agora where the Areopagus council met at that time (Gaegan 1979; Thompson 1976) rather than the Hill of Ares or Mars Hill as the English translation of 1611 has it. Acts states that Paul stood 'in the midst of the Areopagus' (17,2; Ramsay 1900, 243ff.). At the beginning of the speech, the religious nature of the Athenians is emphasized (cf. Josephus

B.J. 2, 11; Strabo 9,1,16; Livy 45, 27), and attention is kept away from the Christian message. Paul introduces, among the 'objects of worship' he had examined, an altar inscribed *ΑΓΝΩΣΤΩ ΘΕΩ*, 'To an unknown god'. Norden, Schweitzer and Dibelius found this part of the speech particularly unhistorical on the basis of the reference being to an unknown god in the singular rather than to the 'unknown gods' found in ancient literature and epigraphy. This argument does not carry so much weight however, when we note that Paul states that he found only a single such dedication among the many other 'objects'. The allusions are interesting. Pausanias reports that he noticed on the road from the city to the Phaleron harbour: *βωμοὶ θεῶν ὀνομαξομένων ἀγνώστων*, 'altars of the gods named unknown' (*Descript. Graec.* 1,1,4). Also there is the statement Philostratus ascribes to Apollonius, that it is part of wisdom 'to speak well of all the gods, especially in Athens where altars are set up in honour even of unknown gods' (*vit. Apoll. Tyan.* 6,3,5), which is sufficiently general to include a singular form. Again there is the account of Diogenes Laertius concerning Epimenides the Cretan, who, when summoned during a plague, advised that sheep should be driven from the Areopagus and that where they came to rest the Athenians should sacrifice to *τῷ προσηκοντι θεῷ* 'the appropriate god' (*Lives of Philosophers* 1,110). We should note that the sacrifice was to specific, though unknown gods. Elsewhere in Greece, Pausanias mentions an altar to unknown gods by the great altar of Zeus at Olympia (5,14,8). Epigraphical allusions include, among others, an altar from Pergamum dated to the second century and inscribed: *Θεοῖς ἀγν[ώστοις] Καπιτω[ν] δρδούχο[ς]* (Fig. 2).[17]

Did Paul regard Athenian polytheism as a kind of imperfect monotheism, a *gnosis* that only needed to be made clearer? Acts certainly gives the impression that the altar in Paul's view represented the idolatrous worship of one god among many. Paul found that Athenian polytheism needed to be supplemented with new information. After all (Rom 1,19), all men were religious beings, pagan or Christian. Acts and Paul use the altar to describe the religion of the Areopagus as one of ignorance. Paul is saying in effect, 'that which you worship acknowledging openly your ignorance, I proclaim to you' (Stonehouse 1957, 19). This ignorance, he says, God tolerated for a time (Rom 3,25), but as we have seen at Lystra the early Christian reproof of paganism was plainly not moderate, and Paul's introduction of poetic quotations here is done to support the untenability of paganism. In his proclamation of 'God the creator and ruler of the world, not living in temples built by man' Paul seems to be indicating a doctrine of God's availability to man by quoting from two Greek poets. The first appears to be Epimenides, who is also quoted in Titus (1,12), the second is Aratus (*Phainomena* 5) where, in a hymn, the Stoic poet sees Zeus as the *λόγος* or 'world-principle'

Fig. 2 Marble altar dedicated to 'unknown gods' from Pergamum, c. 2nd century AD. Drawing: J. Edis after Hepding 1910.

which animates all things. Therefore in Acts Paul attaches some validity to these poets while presumably taking into account their presence in pagan thought. The speech maintains that as pagans were continuously confronted with the revelation of God in nature, they were inexcusable (14,17; Rom 1,19ff.). They would therefore not have been without an awareness of God, but it was essential to Graeco-Roman Gentile Christians that their converts should turn from gods and serve the God they had not known (1 Thess 1, 8–9).

Great is Artemis Ephesia (19)

After the philosophical considerations at Athens the themes considered at Ephesus were at once more materialistic, although still firmly enclosed by religious bounds. According to Acts Paul had spent two years arguing daily in the *schole* of Tyrannus at Ephesus (19,9). This may have been in a private house, but more likely was a guild hall or *collegium* meeting place. The suggestion, however, that Apollos of Alexandria (18, 24–8), Paul, and others had set up a school of Christian 'wisdom' at Ephesus (Conzelmann 1965; 1966), is very intriguing. We may take it as clear that by the time of

Fig. 3 Marble cult-statue of Artemis Ephesia from the Prytaneion, Ephesus. Early 2nd century AD. Height 1.75 m. Fragments of the hands and two accompanying deer were also found. Photo: Österreichisches Archaologisches Institut, Vienna.

the riot instigated by Demetrius the silversmith, an *ekklesia* of some strength had been established and was flourishing in this leading metropolis of the Graeco-Roman world (AD 52–55).

In the episode of the 'sons of Sceva' (19, 11–20), Acts shows the relationship between the early Christians and a long tradition of Egyptian and Jewish magic at Ephesus (Bonner 1950).[18] Christian healing miracles using items of dress can be related to the Greek medical tradition as one might expect (Lk 8,44; Hobart 1882, 47). But the Christian attitude to the itinerant Jewish exorcists and their 'magic' περίεργα or *Ephesia grammata* was firmly negative. Their valuable papyrus scrolls were publicly burnt (cf. Suetonius, *Aug.* 31,1). Ironically, in later times exorcists formed an order in the Church.

Paul's friendship with the Asiarchs (19,31) indicates through Acts how well-established he and the *ekklesia* had become. As municipal benefactors the Asiarchs repaired public baths, minted coinage and bore the expense of arena spectacles. One Ephesian Asiarch for instance gave a spectacle lasting 13 days in which African beasts were slain and 39 pairs of gladiators fought to the death (Magie 1950, 450, 1298–1301; Strabo 14, *passim*; 1 Cor 15,32).

The new religion at Ephesus, in its refusal to syncretize and in the strength of its establishment, was to become a certain threat to the economy, *grammata* and religion of the Asian metropolis. In the economic sense it was through disrespect to the goddess Artemis Ephesia in her cultural role that the public good of Ephesus was threatened. Acts illustrates this by the behaviour and speech of Demetrius, who was perhaps a leader of one of the Asian *collegia* of gold, silver and copper workers (Magie 1950 49; Alexander, the Jew (19, 33–4), being a coppersmith, may have been similarly influential). But what of the long established religion of Artemis herself? Although chief among the deities and heroes of Asia, she shared the stage at Ephesus with Demeter, Kore and Roma. The prominent Egyptian cults of Serapis, Isis and Anubis were also well established by the time of Acts. Among others, the Pythian Apollo, Apollo of Claros, Hestia, Athena, Asclepius, Zeus and Dionysus also had impressive cults there. In spite of all these it was Artemis Ephesia (often Romanized as Diana Ephesia elsewhere in the Empire) who became the most formidable pagan adversary to early Christianity. The apocryphal *Acts of John* vividly portray this conflict after the time of Acts,[19] and it was to continue at least until the Goths attacked the Artemisium in the third century.

The concept of Artemis Ephesia involved intense syncretism between the Hellenistic Artemis and the indigenous Anatolian mother goddess (Seiterle 1979; Fleischer 1984). Her iconography, in cult statues (Fig. 3) and the coins from the Ephesian mint in the first century, is strangely eastern and Anatolian. Her cult tended to be sexually pure (Strabo 8,13,1) and the egg-shaped objects covering her front are probably not breasts; Fleischer has suggested that these were in fact bulls' scrota. Her iconography also illustrates her association with an Asian bee cult. Acts mentions the 'sacred stone that fell from the sky' (19,35). Although the meaning of the Greek here is uncertain, the expression may refer to the transcendent origin of Artemis as the offspring of Zeus. The term used in Acts, διοπετούς, probably indicates a meteorite, like the 'iron shield' which fell on Rome during the reign of Numa Pompilius, which was put into the custody of priests. Others are associated with Zeus (Cook 1940, 881–942 and the Tauric Artemis (Euripides, *Iph. in Taur.* 87f., 1384f.).

Artemis's cultural significance was contained in the obvious expression of her name *Artemis Ephesian* (19,28), and the role Ephesus played in caring for her cult. The city is indeed always described as her νεωκόρος 'temple-keeper' (Oster 1976, 30–31). The city performed a special ministry in reply to Artemis's selection of Ephesus as her abode (Gordon 1979). The goddess

was thereby believed to be invulnerable (19,36), and visibly manifest in her temple the Artemisium. The temple at the time of Acts was the fifth and last on the site—a waterlogged area which has impeded a series of archaeological excavations (Wood 1877; Hogarth 1908; Bammer 1982). It was described by Antipatros of Sidon (*Anth. Pal.* 9,58) as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

The Artemisium was also important as the centre of an Asian fiscal and banking system closely associated with the imperial mint. From here the temple estates were administered, and there was the archive of civic inscriptions and herd of sacred deer, together with an important asylum for the relief of debtors and the helpless (cf. Blagg, this volume). In this role Artemis had once to rescue the whole city when it was attacked by Croesus (Herodotus 1,26). In view of all this we can better appreciate the dynamics at play in Acts 19,23ff. If Christianity went unchecked even the Artemisium might come to nought (19,27; *Acta Jh., passim*).

Artemis's other personality was more religious, although we know comparatively little about her cult or ceremonial form (Fleischer 1984). She encouraged an annual festival, the Artemisia, and the performance of mysteries involving a college of priests. Her power to make believers happy stemmed from power over astrological fate. As Queen of the Cosmos she determined the movement of the stars, a symbolism seen in the zodiacal signs on her cult statues (Fig. 3). Lastly her 'missionary' zeal, that through dreams and other revelations her cult should be disseminated throughout the world, came into direct conflict with the comparable aims of the first Christians at Ephesus, expressed *par excellence* in 1 Tim. Demetrius acts as her apologist in 19,27, and his remarks are backed up by Strabo (4,1,4–8) who testifies to her cult as far west as Massilia and Carthage. In the same way Paul in Acts is sent to Rome and toward Spain (23,11).

Conclusion

In this paper some stress has been given to the uniqueness of Acts in the literature of the New Testament and the other writings of the early Church. When considered as a historical work, written before *c.* AD 90, nothing survives to compare with it. Apart from its religious importance, its historical value is inestimable, since without it we could know nothing of how the religion of early Christianity, independent of Judaism and the pagan cults prevailing in the first century, came into being. In order to understand Acts we need to be clear about its historical and geographical setting, its origins and purpose, and even the text itself. For the last of these it is not just a question of occasional words and grammatical forms, but of different editions presented by a wealth of very early manuscripts unsurpassed in the documents of the classical world.

Unfortunately, the picture presented by Acts and supplemented by the Pauline Epistles, the Apocalypse, and a few references in the classical writers, is in no way complete. We are instead presented with a vast interpretative literature, including some archaeological study of early Christian remains. Much of this scholarship is of great value, particularly when concerned with the documentary sources, but unfortunately the direct application of archaeology to this subject does not as yet come up to a comparable standard and so has not been discussed to any degree in this paper.

The evidence of Acts underlines the Jewish background of early Christianity seen through the Gentile eyes of its author. The new religion was expressed by its advocates as the fulfilment of Judaism in that Christ and the resurrection are presented as the 'hope of Israel'. The Jewish establishment, and the majority of Jews, felt unable to accept this from their fellow countrymen, and instigated a series of persecutions of Christians in Judaea and beyond to the cities of Syria, Asia Minor and Greece. It was in these provincial cities that the apostles continued to use the urban synagogue as a medium for propagating the new religion and thus through the attachment of Gentile proselytes and 'God-fearers' to the synagogues, it came to non-Jews. The influence of Judaism has been shown to be stronger than paganism in creating a ceremonial form for early Christianity within a Graeco-Roman environment, although the organization of the individual *ekklesia* borrowed forms from the secular habits of Graeco-Roman society. Indeed, much of earliest Christian dogma and exhortation, especially in the actions and writings of Paul, is expressed through a language which is essentially Graeco-Roman. Where the new religion comes into direct contact with paganism in Acts, it is greeted with initial interest, and is only rejected and its believers persecuted when it seems to come into conflict with the material components of Graeco-Roman society. The apologetic of Acts shows that Christians hoped for a rapprochement with the Roman state (a hope eventually fulfilled). From the beginning, Pontius Pilate's condemnation of Jesus was intended to placate the Jews, not because a crime against Roman law had been proven. The early Judaeo-Christians refused to identify with the nationalist Jewish zealots and the Jerusalem church left the city when the resistance led to the Jewish War in AD 66.

In the Gentile world of Asia Minor and Greece the apostles had every interest in the maintenance of public order and were not disposed to quarrel with the authorities they hoped to convert from paganism. It was the paganism, however, that the Christians wished to displace; their religion was exclusive, it was not content to be appended to an existing non-exclusive pantheon. For its part, the Roman government under Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius had even been prepared to grant privileges to the monotheistic Jews,

but when the Christians refused to participate in emperor-worship, a political act was construed and seen as dangerous to the state. The Neronian persecution of the Christians in Rome in AD 64 did not come about for this reason however: it was almost an accident. Nero found in them a scapegoat to avoid suspicion of himself in the arson. Tacitus (*Ann.* 15,37–44), writing fifty years later, did not believe the Christians guilty of arson but saw no harm in executing a few of them, for by his time they were thought to practice incest and cannibalism at their private meetings.

The atmosphere under Domitian (81–96) was more tense as the emperor-cult became officially obligatory. It is against this period that we should see the denunciations of Roman paganism in the Apocalypse and the tensions in the urban churches of Asia Minor. Indeed, in the Epistles to the Seven Churches of Asia there are obscure allusions to sporadic and local persecutions with specific mention of one martyr, Antipas, in the *ekklesia* of Pergamum (Rev 2, 13). Also, as we have seen, Pliny's correspondence with the emperor Trajan reflects a concern over Christian attitudes to the emperor-cult in Bithynia.

Although in the early second century, Christians in general were often seen as virtuous, their religion remained a capital offence and the martyrdoms of Christian bishops and 'philosophers' such as Ignatius, Telesphorus, Polycarp and Justin, provide the stuff of Eusebius's *Ecclesiastical History*. These persecutions were however sporadic and far from concentrated and the Church was given breathing space to expand, change and deal with internal problems.

Acts itself ends on an optimistic note with Paul in Rome, but at this point the light goes out. There is no positive evidence of the ultimate fate of Paul or Peter or many other apostles, and when some adventurous scholar has presumed to doubt the belief that they died as martyrs in Rome, he is met by 'rebuke for questioning the authority of the Catholic church' (Foakes-Jackson 1931, xx). Paul was left in Rome with the Jewish leaders of the synagogues, trying to conciliate them. They professed ignorance of the new religion and certainly, in the centuries following, the Jewish rabbis maintained a silence with regard to Christianity. The process of preaching to the Jews first repeated itself again (28, 16–31), and the Jewish establishment was to become the springboard for a distinctively Gentile church in Rome, whereas hitherto the Jewish element had predominated.

Of the fate of the great apostle, the author of Acts appears ignorant or does not see fit to record. 'But the conclusion of his story, if not satisfactory to us, is at least artistic' (Foakes-Jackson 1931, 236).

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Notes

1. See the lists of articles in Metzger 1951; 1960, and Mattill & Mattill 1966
2. For modern expositions see Foakes-Jackson & Lake 1920–33, Chadwick 1967 and Frend 1984. Markus 1974, Theissen 1978 and Brown 1984 are also very useful
3. All references to Acts in this paper will give chapter and verse numbers only. The Greek text used is Westcott and Hort's (1896–8) and the Revised Standard Version is the English translation preferred. Standard abbreviations are given for other New Testament references. A recent review of the literature on Acts is contained in Bruce 1985. Numerous commentaries on Acts have been published. Most useful are Foakes-Jackson 1931 and Bruce 1952. Other important general works are Dibelius 1936, Kümmel 1975, Ramsay 1890; 1900; 1906, and Cadbury 1955. The narrative of Acts is summarized by Bruce 1952; 1985
4. Stephen's *apologia* may contain elements of Samaritan theology or perhaps traces of a wider non-conformist tradition of Judaism.
5. Lucas (Λουκᾶς), an abbreviation of Lucanus and Lucius. He cannot with certainty be identified with either of the other Lucii in 13,1 and Rom 16,21.
6. It describes Luke as from Syrian Antioch, a physician by profession and a disciple of the apostles. He 'served the Lord without distraction, having neither wife nor children, and fell asleep in Boeotia, aged 84, full of the Spirit.'
7. His name suggests a Greek who acquired the citizenship under Claudius. He was 'military tribune in command of the cohort' (i.e. an auxiliary cohort; 21, 31; 23, 26). Josephus in describing the Antonia located at the north-west corner of the Temple Mount (*B.J.* 5,5,8; Benoit 1976), says a τάγμα was stationed regularly there. The *temenos* had to be under constant military supervision, especially at important festivals
8. After flight from Palestine, the deposed High Priest Onias rebuilt and adapted a ruined temple granted to him at Leontopolis by Ptolemy VI (*c.* 167 BC; Josephus, *Ant.* 13,3,1ff.). After the destruction of the Temple in 587 BC places of prayer and learning were needed and even after the rebuilding it could not meet distant requirements.
9. They were Sadducees. Annas was senior ex-High Priest. Caiaphas, his son-in-law, had been appointed High Priest by the procurator Valerius Gratus in AD 18. He remained in office throughout the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate (AD 26–36). Both played a leading part in the arrest, trial and crucifixion of Jesus (Jn 11,49ff.; 18,24ff.)
10. The 'Twelve' apostles may not have been persecuted immediately after Stephen's martyrdom. This suggests a division, not originally intended, between Greek speaking Jewish Christians and those speaking Aramaic (4,32).
11. He may have been Jewish, as was Ti. Julius Alexander, prefect of Egypt from AD 66, a nephew of Philo (Josephus, *B.J.* 2,18,7–5,1,6), except if he were a member of the Sergii Paulli, several of whom held public office (Bruce 1952, 256)
12. As in the case of Jesus before Pontius Pilate (Lk 23,2). The text in Acts is difficult (Sherwin-White 1963, 96 and 103). Recently discovered inscriptions show that the oath of personal loyalty was expressed in prescriptive terms through the cities. Paul's legal position as a Roman citizen in the Graeco-Roman cities is not clear (Judge 1972, 26).

13. It is usual to connect this edict with that referred to by Suetonius (*Claud.* 25,4). *Iudaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit*, probably dated to 49. If we accept that *Chrestus* has here replaced the more unfamiliar *Christ*, Suetonius may indicate, with Acts, not only the early presence of Christians in Italy but also that Judaism and Christianity in the official Roman eye were not yet differentiated as separate religions. Why Jewish Christians were rioting is another question, but it may be that only they were banished, or that the Jews in general remained undetected or returned after this and other edicts, because non-Christian Jews were at Rome to meet Paul when he eventually arrived in AD 60 (28,17–23).
14. Justin (*Apol.* 1,26) may have misread SEMONI SANCO DEO FIDIO 'to Semo Sancus the god of oaths' (*CIL* VI.567) or the Simonians in Rome may have regarded a similar inscription as applicable to Simon. The Simonians survived at least into the third century (Origen, *c. Cels.* 1.57). Irenaeus (*Adv. Haer.* 1,16), Hippolytus (*Philos.* 6.7ff.), and Epiphanius (*Panar.* 21.2ff.) describe their doctrine.
15. Criticism (e.g. Dibelius & Conzelmann 1955) has continuously challenged the Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles, despite their prologues and the traditions of the early Church.
16. *ἐν ἀλήθειᾳ μὲ παίδευε Χριστιανὸν ποιήσου*.
17. The drawing, by Jonathan Edis, is taken from a photograph in Hepding 1910. The altar, Hepding's no. 39 (pp. 454–7, Abb. 3), is considered from its provenance in a secondary position to be of second century date.
18. In the time of Acts there was a large colony of Jews at Ephesus enjoying a privileged position (Josephus, *Ant.* 14,10, 12–25).
19. *Acts Jh.* 42, 4ff. As a result of John's teaching a portion of the Artemisium was said to have collapsed, crushing one of the priests of Artemis

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Pagan Priesthoods in the Later Empire

Alan Wardman

My main purpose in discussing pagan priesthoods in the later Empire (I mean by this mostly the fourth century AD) is to consider their importance in the social order and in politics. It is clear that by about the year 400 paganism was in decline and retreat: it was then far more difficult to practise a pagan cult or officiate as a priest, thanks to the combined effects of ecclesiastical pressure and government legislation. In the course of the century since the persecutions of Diocletian paganism had been put more and more on the defensive. The circumstances of the reign of Honorius were far removed from the days when some pagan priests had helped the authorities with investigations into Christianity.

The subject is in some ways elusive and complicated. Complicated, because the one term priesthood has to stand for an immense variety of functions in different forms of religion and cult; municipal flamens, priests of the provincial cult, diviners and soothsayers, pontiffs and augurs, officials in the cult of oriental religions. One can, I think, imagine a textbook of fourth century history in which a chapter would deal with the social and political power of bishops, to say nothing of the more theological aspects of church councils; but it would be hard to think that a counter or parallel chapter on pagan priesthoods would be a feasible undertaking.

Pagan priests, of course, did not make the political headlines like Athanasius and Ambrose. But that is not the only reason which makes the subject elusive. The Christian and government onslaught on paganism was directed at many objectives; removing temples, abolishing sacrifices, destroying cult-images ... as well as making priests go away or (better still) become converts to the true faith, whether it be Catholicism or Arianism or some other heresy. In the literary sources, for the most part, we hear much more about temples and images than we do about priests. There are, I think, good reasons for this disappointing tendency in the church historians and in the laws of the Theodosian code. Take temples first. It must have been a satisfying demonstration of the power of the new creed when these monuments were knocked down by a congregation of the faithful, sometimes with the help of government troops. Similarly, St Martin, at some risk to his personal safety, succeeded in doing away with a sacred tree (Stancliffe 1983, 155). Sometimes the temple was nullified in a different way; the Christians of Antioch set up a memorial to the martyr Babylas in the temple of Apollo at Daphne;

> 'The Caesar Gallus considered that the readiest method (of purging the place of superstition) would be to erect a house of prayer in the temple and to transfer thither the tomb of Babylas, the martyr, who had, with great reputation to himself, presided over the church at Antioch and suffered martydom.' (Sozomen 5, 19; cf. Geffcken 1978, 123)

There is another, perhaps more earthly reason, for the prominence of temples. They might be destroyed or lose the lands which had been attached to them and had provided them with revenue. Consequently (to put the matter somewhat extremely) pagan building material could be incorporated into Christian dwellings and the property of the temple might be added to the revenues of the church. Libanius indicates that attacks on temples also involved the seizure of land;

> 'They claim to be attacking the temples, but these attacks are a source of income Though some assail the shrines, others plunder the peasantry. Others still are not satisfied with this, but they appropriate the land too, claiming that what belongs to this or that body is temple property, and many a man has been robbed of his family acres on this false title.' (*Speech* 30, 11)

Presumably, to claim (whether truly or falsely) that some coveted land was temple property would only be plausible if some temple land had been so taken.

Many cult-images, similarly, were destroyed. Eusebius (*Life of Constantine* 3, 54) describes how Constantine's troops were sent out to show the people that the statues of gods and goddesses were hollow or else stuffed full of matter that would explain their co-operation in apparent miracles. There was, besides, a long tradition of Christian hostility to this form of graven image, which makes it easy to understand why the statues and images are so often mentioned (Wardman 1982, 143; Barnard 1974, 51). But the ideological fury of the church was not always matched by government attitudes. The government sometimes looked at the images with a less spiritually discerning, but perhaps a more aesthetic eye. Constantine used such statues to adorn his new Christian city. The more conservationist approach of the government is illustrated by a law of 382;

> 'We decree that the temple (probably at Edessa) shall continually be open that was formerly dedicated to the assemblage of throngs of people and now also is for the common use of the people, and in which

images are reported to have been placed which must be measured by the value of their art rather than their divinity.' (*Codex Theodosianus* = *CTh* 16,10,8)

These remarks may explain, I hope, why many of the sources are more informative about temples and images then they are about priests. A typical remark may be found in the church historian Socrates (1,3): 'Constantine either closed or destroyed the temples of the pagans and exposed the images which were in them to popular contempt.' (Nothing about priests.) Less typical, it seems, is Libanius' outraged comment on 'the black-robed tribe who eat more than elephants' (the monks, needless to say) and (so he says) on their illegal attacks on temples (*Speech* 30,8); 'Then utter desolation follows, with the stripping of roofs, demolition of walls, the tearing down of statues and the overthrow of altars, and the priests must either keep quiet or die.' One may doubt the last remark about dying. Indeed, one historian (Dodds 1965, 133) has written—'Pagan martyrs were few—not because Christianity was more tolerant, but because paganism was by then too poor a thing to be worth a life'. The thrust of this seems right though I am unsure about the reason given; surely the point is that death in paganism did not have anything like the ideological appeal of martyrdom in Christianity.

I do not mean (by this preamble) that the religious history of the fourth reverberated all the time to the blows of the axe. The rate and manner of the decline in paganism varied considerably; I will illustrate this point by taking first two kinds of priests, the flamens of the imperial cult and those who were in the groups called diviners.

The Imperial Cult was managed at municipal level by those called *flamines perpetui* and at provincial level by *sacerdotales provinciae*. Holders of these offices were usually appointed to them after they had performed other tasks which were of benefit to their communities. In this way such priesthoods were the crowning recognition of a life of public service. The striking feature about these priests—they were in charge of an official and pagan religious function—is that they continued to flourish throughout the fourth century and beyond. Even after the legislation of Theodosius and his sons against paganism, Lepelley (1979, 1,367) in his work on Roman Africa has counted thirteen *flamines perpetui* after the year 383; and the office is also known from the Vandal period. The offices were sometimes held by Christians; indeed one modern authority (Leclerq 1923, 1649) asserts with some vigour that 'the faithful in large numbers accepted and actually sought the title and function of *sacerdotalis* and *flamen perpetuus*'. Lepelley has observed that the proceedings of church councils and the works of church writers are quick to show hostility to pagan cult; but they say nothing about the municipal flaminate, or the provincial priesthoods. 'Yet', as he says 'there were many flamens in each city ... and (because of the increase in conversions) they necessarily included a growing number of Christians'.

It is clear that early in the fourth century Christians were holding such flaminates at a time when 'the honorific sense had not yet concealed the religious sense' (Leclerq 1923, 1649). The first three canons of the Council of Elvira (seemingly 306) lay down penalties and penances for those who have sacrificed after receiving baptism. The third canon is of particular interest. It runs as follows; 'as for flamens who have not sacrificed but have only given a show, because of the fact that they have abstained from those deathly sacrifices, it is decreed that they should be given communion (in the end) when due penitence has been performed'. It looks as though some Christians (Leclerq rather unkindly called them 'arrivistes') had invented an ingenious device; they took the name of flamen (and, I suppose, paid for the show) but had themselves replaced on the actual occasion.

The most objectionable feature of the cult (to ordinary Christians and bishops) was the act of sacrifice (Helgeland 1979, 724f); the entertainments were less objectionable except to fulminating bishops. The government took a friendly hand in encouraging a new arrangement. In 333/7 Constantine allowed the people of Hispellum (*ILS* 705) to have a temple of the Flavian family (to be on a scale commensurate with the grandeur of the name) where plays and gladiatorial games would be performed. The proviso was that the 'temple dedicated to our name should not be polluted by the deceits of contagious superstition' (*contagiosa superstitio*). It is arguable but unlikely that the phrase should be taken to refer to Christianity on the grounds that the whole inscription was intended for the pagans. The balance of scholarly judgement takes the view that the emperor meant to exclude pagan sacrifices, which would make the set-up more acceptable to Christians. It is worth adding that, according to Aurelius Victor (*Caesars* 40,28) a priesthood of the Flavian family was instituted in Africa, and we also hear of a pontifex Flavialis in Rome (*CIL* VI, 1690/1691).

Government was anxious to maintain the flaminates and to ensure the respectability of the holders. One law declares that duumvirs, flamens and priests of a province (*CTh* 4,6,3) 'shall suffer the brand of infamy and become foreigners in the eyes of the Roman law if they should wish to consider as legitimate the children born to them of a slave woman'. Other laws emphasize the rewards for flamens rather than penalties for misconduct. Thus (*CTh* 12,1,21) one measure protects flamens and civil priests from being forced 'to become provosts of the public post stations, a duty which, in each municipal council, men of a lower grade and rank customarily perform'. The inscriptions and the laws (cf. *CTh* 12,1,60; 12,1,145; 16,5,52; 16,10,20) nearly all point in the same direction. Both at local and at government level there was a clear desire to maintain some activities of the flaminates once the sacrifices had

been removed. Here was a part of paganism which could be said to have been modified by a kind of secularization, as Bowder (1978, 152) has put it. To elaborate on this point briefly, one may suggest that paganism aided its own decline not because it was a creed outworn but because of its flexibility or lack of intransigence. Some parts of it adapted all too easily to the new pressures. I would like to introduce here by way of comparison a remark made by Libanius (30,42) in his speech *On the Temples*. He praises the temples as the chief glory of the cities and urges that they should be maintained 'as part of the fabric of the cities. They are at least buildings, even though not used as temples. Taxation, presumably, requires offices of collection: so let the temple stand and be the collecting office, and keep it from demolition'. The stance seems surprising until one remembers that temples were often multi-functional. This forms part of Libanius' argument for preserving them, but it would of course entail that they would be closed for purposes of worship even while they continued to function as an office of the inland revenue.

Flamens, it might be said, were at the fortunate end of the spectrum. By contrast diviners (especially *haruspices*) had little to offer Christians and stood for activities that were feared by different emperors. Government legislation brings out very clearly the restrictions that were imposed. A law of 319 (*CTh* 6,19,2) prohibits 'soothsayers and priests and those persons who are accustomed to minister to such ceremonies to approach a private home or to cross the threshold of another person under the pretext of friendship'. They can however go to public altars for 'we do not prohibit the ceremonies of a bygone perversion (*usurpatio*) to be conducted openly'. A law of 357 (*CTh* 6,19,4) is even more strenuous: 'No person shall consult a soothsayer (*haruspex*) or an astrologer or a diviner .... The inquisitiveness of all men for divination shall cease for ever. If any person should deny obedience to these orders he shall suffer capital punishment, felled by the avenging sword'. Other laws object in the same forcible language to activities and consultations of this sort during the night. A law issued by Valentinian (*CTh* 6,19,9) in 371 is more moderate– 'I judge that haruspication has no connexion with cases of magic and I do not consider this superstition (the word used is *religio*), or any other that was allowed by our elders, to be a kind of crime ... We do not condemn divination but we do forbid it to be practised harmfully'. That clause gives a let-out of sorts, though perhaps a dangerous one to interpret, but it is not on the whole typical of the laws. Much fourth century legislation was perhaps less alarming in real life than in court rhetoric. But even so the government's fears and intentions are plain. By coupling soothsayers with astrologers and others they were expressing a fear, which was at times well-founded, that such practices might be part of a conspiracy or an enquiry into who might be the next emperor. Soothsayers were not socially useful like flamens and their practices could all too easily seem tainted with a sort of political disloyalty.

These cases may be taken to indicate that the decline of paganism, as far as the priesthoods are concerned, was variable. I will now consider some instances in which pagan priesthoods were incorporated into efforts to stay the course of Christianity as the new religion and to produce something of a pagan revial.

Anti-Christian emperors, at the beginning of the fourth century, usually tried to secure the return of Christians to the pagan fold by persecution; making use of extreme sanctions such as death, exclusion from public life and compulsory sacrifice. Although many Christians suffered and died as a result, there is no doubt that these measures were difficult to administer, partly because Christians often resisted with spirit and cleverness, partly because the agents in the enquiry at local level were somewhat indifferent and not given to being thorough. If Christianity was to be terminated, paganism would have to be given a new look; it would be necessary to organize the activities of priests, for example, in such a way that they might be regarded as a serious rival of Christian organization.

The first such attempt was made by the emperor Maximin Daia, appointed to office in 305 and ruler of the East until his defeat by Licinius in 313. It is difficult to form a favourable idea of this emperor, to find something positive on his side to set against the all too understandable hatred that rises from the pages of Lactantius and Eusebius (*History of the Church* 8,14). The latter describes him as a lord of misrule (quite apart from his main offence as persecutor). Thus 'his drunken orgies he carried to such a pitch that in his cups he went crazy and out of his mind, and issued orders when drunk which he regretted next day when sober' Stein's (1959, 1, 88f) assessment of Maximin has gone some way towards detecting the credible ruler inside the man as well as the dedicated opponent of Christianity. But even so one is not wholly convinced by the remark that 'he decreed, because of the representations made by his pretorian prefect, that the orders he gave on rising from the table should not be carried out. This trait alone speaks in favour of the sovereign as well as on behalf of his first minister'.

Maximin was a determined persecutor of Christians especially in the years 306 and 309. Things did not change much for the better (in the eastern part) when the dying Galerius published his edict of toleration in 311. Maximin is said to have arranged for deputations to come from the cities to ask that Christians should not be allowed to build their meeting-places within their own respective territories. The Christian sources suggest (understandably) that Maximin was not responding to popular requests but was making clear to the cities that deputations with this sort of request would be welcome. The question of whether or not

there was a genuine non-government-inspired, popular feeling is not really answerable, given the nature of the sources (as R. M. Grant (1975, 4, 143f.) has suggested). It is clear from some inscriptions (see Ramsay 1897, 1.2,56f.) that paganism was still vigorous in parts. At any rate, so Lactantius (*Deaths of the Persecutors* 36) says, Maximin

> 'went on to adopt the novel practice of appointing high-priests, one for each city from among its leading citizens; and these were to make daily sacrifice to all their gods, and with the support of the long-established priests, they were to make sure that the Christians did not do any building or assemble either in public or in private; further, they were to have powers to arrest Christians and compel them to sacrifice or hand them over to the magistrates. He set individuals of even higher rank over each province to be as it were pontiffs, and he ordered that both these new classes of priests should appear, when they proceeded to their duties, in white cloaks'.

Eusebius (8,14,9) makes much the same observation, that the priests and high-priests were chosen from among men 'of the greatest note in political life and continuously in the public eye'. Some have thought that this structure was an imitation of bishops and archbishops, but I am doubtful whether the resemblance is more than superficial. To judge by Lactantius' account these priests would have been largely concerned with vigilance against Christians, as a kind of additional support for the authorities– a support, one might add, that was badly needed if Christianity were to be seriously impeded. But whatever we think of that, the institution was presumably short-lived. Maximin was soon after defeated and killed, and the active toleration of Christianity supported by Constantine and Licinius came into force.

The priesthoods as organized by Maximin have sometimes been compared with the revival of paganism under Julian, between 361 and 363. The comparison cannot be very instructive as relatively little is known about Maximin's own brand of paganism. The case is very different with Julian, whose ideas and aims are expounded in several letters and treatises.

His general aim has been trenchantly expressed by Dr Athanassiadi-Fowden (1981, 184); 'By conferring power upon the priesthood he sought—just as Constantine had done before him—to confine power within one class and to use it as an instrument of social control.' Julian's revival had two sides to it. In one way he set out to make life difficult for Christians as is shown by his rescript (*Letter* 36, Loeb) on Christian teachers, in which he lays down the principle that it is absurd that men 'who expound the works of these writers (the Greek classics) should dishonour the gods whom they used to honour'. Teachers, that is, were to take the content of the curriculum seriously or else (as he puts it) 'betake themselves to the churches of the Galilaeans to expound Matthew and Luke'. The discomforting of Christians was to be accompanied by a reorganized 'philosophical clergy', constituting a sort of pagan church. At its head, in spite of his self-declared unworthiness, was Julian himself as *pontifex maximus*. Next in the hierarchy came the regional high priests, many of whom were neo-Platonists: and beneath these, appointed and supervized by the the regional officers, are the local priests.

Julian had the highest regard for the priestly function;

> 'It is our duty to adore not only the images of the gods, but also their temples and sacred precincts and altars. It is reasonable to honour the priests also as officials and servants of the gods; because they minister to us what concerns the gods, and they lend strength to the gods' gift of good things to us, for they sacrifice and pray on behalf of all men. It is therefore right that we should pay them all not less, if indeed not more, than the honours that we pay to the magistrates of the state.' (Athanassiadi-Fowden 1981, 182)

He is perhaps a bit uneasy about the last point as he goes on to admit that the officers of state are dedicated to the service of the gods, as being guardians of the laws --but even so we ought to give the priests a far greater share of our good will. The priests were to be chosen for their good and upright character, their suitability for their function, without taking into account their poverty or wealth. He intended that there should be as well as reverence towards the gods a strong emphasis on social welfare. Priests must practise philanthropy, making a hospitable welcome to strangers, helping the poor and those in prison, for some of these 'will prove to be innocent'. He derives this duty from Zeus' function as god of Strangers; how, he asks, can one sacrifice to this Zeus if one forgets the saying; 'From Zeus come all beggars and strangers, and a gift is precious, though small' (*Letter* 22, Loeb; *Letter to a Priest* 289B). The welfare programme, so to call it, was explicitly meant to counter the achievements of Christians. Julian recognized that Christians had done good works which should be emulated by his priests. As he puts it; 'Why do we not see that it is *their* benevolence to strangers, *their* care for the graves of the dead and the pretended holiness of their lives that have done most to increase atheism (i.e. Christianity)'. Such plans needed resources if they were to be implemented by priests, some of whom at least (if they had nothing but good character and spirituality) would not be able to dip into their own pocket. Julian assigned a substantial amount of corn and wine to go every year to the province of Galatia, adding that one fifth should be spent on the poor who assist the priests and the remainder on strangers and beggars. 'It is disgraceful that, when no Jew has to beg and the impious Galilaeans support not only their own poor but ours as well, all men see that our people lack aid from us' (*Letter* 22).

There was, however, a more austere side to Julian's demands on the priests. They were required to remain in the temple precincts for as long as the law commands– thirty days 'is the number at Rome but at other places the number varies' (*Letter to a Priest* 302D). Throughout this time a priest would have to devote himself to philosophy, not enter a house or see a magistrate, except in the precincts. He might attend a feast when invited but only, as the Loeb text has it, when the invitation came from 'persons of the highest character'. The new priesthood was to be much less festal; 'No priest must anywhere be present at the licentious theatrical shows of the present day, nor introduce one into his own house, for that is altogether unfitting'. There is the voice of the earnest, puritan Julian who gave offence by his solemnity and his beard to the cheerful people of Antioch.

It is impossible to say whether or not this ambitious plan would have worked since Julian's reign was soon ended, but it worth considering some of the implications.

Some have maintained that Julian's schemes would have done much to 'change the attitude of contemporaries towards the social function of the priesthood, which had sunk considerably in social esteem' (Athanassiadi-Fowden 1981, 184; cf. Bidez 1965, 226). For this alleged state of affairs the oriental cults have been blamed on the grounds that they produced a 'new priestly class (drawn from all social strata) whose odd habits and behaviour shocked the middle classes'. I am not entirely convinced that there is sufficient evidence to justify us in saying this sort of thing. One can be too easily impressed by stories about a few individuals (and, to take a parallel) one might readily pick out some demeaning clerics from among the Christians—but it would be misleading to think of them as typical. But, at any rate, it must be admitted that Julian's priests would have been of necessity very respectable members of society. It is worth making the observation that some of the pagan cults were bound to be less important now that the emperors were so mobile and not as Rome-centred as they had been in the past. Julian could not have changed this new development.

It is interesting, I think, to speculate on slightly different lines and to compare the priesthoods of the Early Empire with those in the later. In the Early Empire there were many fewer political and administrative jobs; honorific priesthoods were coveted as a prize in a Roman senator's career, and much the same is true of the decurions in the towns throughout the Empire. The situation in the fourth century was more complex. Because of the increase in the bureaucracy and in the size of the army, there were many more official posts to satisfy the appetites of the ambitious. Many of those held no priesthoods at all. One might suggest, not wholly frivolously, that if Diocletian had done the job properly he should have multiplied priesthoods as well as government posts, for which he was so much blamed by Lactantius (*Deaths of the Persecutors* 7). The Julianic priesthoods might have been vulnerable to the objection that they were to be conferred on good men but not on men of substance who were good public servants. They might have looked less full of the desirable civic qualities which were (at times) manifest in the local magistrates with whom they were to be on par. In this way the Julianic plan was, I suggest, likely to prove an uneasy addition to a ramshackle structure.

A pagan church so designed would have had one overwhelming advantage. Although some of Julian's proposed appointees were reluctant to serve, it is hard to envisage any of them actually standing up to their religious and political leader. I cannot see that there would have been any conflicts like those between bishops and emperors. The government might have felt more comfortable in this respect.

On the other hand it is quite possible that many of the high-priests and priests appointed by Julian would have been, in religious terms, too remote from the interests and practices of ordinary people. The characteristic interests of the elite as described by the historian Eunapius include; sacrifice, theurgy, prophecy, religious silence, magic, study of omens and 'medicine' in the form of iatrosophy. Men chosen from such a group would appeal to intellectuals rather than to the man in the street. The latter, without any doubt, was understandably addicted to feasts and festal enjoyment as well as to the traditional pagan ritual. Julian himself did not wish his priests to join in the licentious theatrical shows, as he called them. And one may well wonder whether his version of paganism, in spite of its emphasis on social welfare and its appeal to tradition, would not have been too austere for ordinary tastes.

There was a lack of aggression about some pagans which makes it unlikely that the counter-attack would have prospered. Chrysanthius (Matthews 1975, 104), for example, was appointed high priest of Lydia but he went about his job with caution. 'He built no temples ... nor was he excessively harsh to any of the Christians. Such was the mildness of his character that throughout Lydia the restoration of the temples almost escaped notice' (Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers* 501). Even committed pagans like Libanius were aware that a restoration would lead to many problems. Friendships between men were far from being dominated by the religious question. Libanius wanted the temples to be restored and rebuilt; but he saw that difficulties would arise if only because sometimes the building material from a temple had been legally acquired and had been used as part of a Christian's house. It would be wrong to take back the gods' property by simple force, for 'we pagans complain about what happened in the past but we don't want to have the same things said of ourselves' (*Letter* 1364). Such moderation and caution are not the most promising starting-point for a counter-revolution.

The proposals and schemes I have mentioned would

have raised great problems which Maximin and Julian never had to face. The reason for this may be understood if we do not allow ourselves to dwell overmuch on the great extremists, men like Ambrose for the Christians and Julian and Nicomachus Flavianus for the pagans. Sir Ronald Syme (1984, 801) has drawn attention to the large numbers whose differences of religion did not urge them to take up overtly combative positions against the other side. (We have already noticed the moderation of Libanius.) He puts it as follows; 'between the extreme positions of Nicomachus and Ambrose a wide territory extends, inhabited by worthy and neutral personalities. They were devout and decorous. They also saw it as a clear duty to preserve wealth and station all through, under any regime or surface perturbations. On the other side, a Christian government now as previously could not afford to deny their claims or forfeit their services'. To apply these comments to the particular subject, the decline and attempted revival of pagan priesthoods, one has to remember that the acts of high drama under Maximin and Julian should loom less large than other matters—the government's need for good men at a high level, be they pagan or Christian, and, at local level, the fact that people respected fellow-affluence more than they hated a dissident practice.

The century which began with the last imperial persecution of Christians ended with the victory of the Christian prince Theodosius over forces which were in part motivated by a zeal or at least a sympathy with religious objectives of men such as Symmachus and Flavianus. But the analysis I have presented should, I suggest, be borne in mind in any consideration of the viability of anti-Theodosian paganism.

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