THE FEMALE BODY IN ROMAN VISUAL CULTURE

Sarah Rachel Caroline Sheard

Peterhouse

University of Cambridge

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DECLARATION

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any work that has already been submitted before for any degree or other qualification except as declared in the preface and specified in the text.

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the Classics Degree Committee.

ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the representation of the female body in Roman visual culture, exploring a range of images from mainland Italy that date between the late 1st century BC and the 2nd century AD, from three specific contexts of display: the public, domestic, and funerary. It seeks to understand how the two parts of its title – 'the female body' and 'Roman visual culture' – intersect, examining female bodies as they are represented, and how these bodies are shaped by the act of representation itself: i.e., the limitations, conventions, and priorities of their representative medium, and the context in which they were viewed. Images of female bodies could reify normative expectations of women or, alternatively, carve out space for more fantastical concepts of femininity within Roman culture. As these gendered expectations were relational, this thesis also puts the female body into dialogue with the male and sexually indeterminate body to understand how these images constructed and explored a relative spectrum of femininity and masculinity in terms of appearance, gesture, and behaviour. In this sense, this thesis is interested in Roman ideas about gender, and, critically, how gender was constructed within and through visual representation.

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For all my sisters.

tam gratum est mihi quam ferunt puellae, pernici aureolum fuisse malum, quod zonam soluit diu ligatam.

Catullus, 2b.

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INTRODUCTION

Μνάσεσθαί τινά φαμι καὶ ὕστερον ἄμμεων.

I tell you

someone will remember us

in the future.

Sappho, fr.147

'Today's gender is ambiguous.' - @genderoftheday, 11th November 2021

This thesis asks how the female body is represented in Roman visual culture. It examines a range of images from mainland Italy that date between the late 1st century BCE and the 2nd century CE and which can be traced to three specific contexts of display: the public, the domestic, and the funerary. It seeks to understand how the two parts of its title - 'the female body' and 'Roman visual culture' – intersect by examining female bodies as they are represented, and how these bodies are shaped by the act of representation itself.

Images of female bodies in Roman visual culture could reify normative, gendered expectations or, alternatively, carve out space for more experimental and fantastical concepts of femininity. As Roman expectations and fantasies of femininity and masculinity were relational, this thesis puts representations of the female body into dialogue with images of the male and, where appropriate, the sexually indeterminate body, to identify and examine women's appearances, gestures, and behaviours. On this account, by asking how images of the female body are shaped by the representative limitations, conventions, and priorities of social context as well as archaeological context and medium, this thesis explores how gender is constructed within and through visual representation.

'Sisters Are Lookin' for Themselves'1

A brief literature review illuminates the contribution made by the thesis to studies of ancient women, gender, and classical art history, and anticipates and explicates its structure, methodologies, and datasets.

Sarah Pomeroy was by no means the first scholar to study women in the ancient world, but her 1975 monograph Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves remains a benchmark against which further 'progress' has often been measured. Within a decade of its watershed publication, articles pondering the state of women's studies within Classics cited themselves as 'Ten Years After Pomeroy'. A 2021 volume entitled New Directions in the Study of Women in the Greco-Roman World positions itself in direct relation to Pomeroy by claiming her as its 'inspiration', its publication coinciding with the fortieth anniversary of Goddesses.² Such was (and is) the lasting strength of Pomeroy's mission statement: to find out 'what women were doing while men were active in all the areas traditionally emphasised by classical scholars'. Pomeroy powerfully articulated the need for 'recuperative', feminist work – to look for (and find) ancient women whose existence went unmentioned within the traditional remit of classical scholarship. Classical art historians who heeded Pomeroy's directive sought out - and found - evidence of ancient women: fetching water and weaving on Attic vases; arranging their jewellery on Attic grave stelai; working as shopkeepers and midwives on Roman funerary reliefs.³ The result of this collective feminist effort was a rich body of material ripe for the application of more informed and developed theoretical methodologies.⁴ Other disciplines within Classics have continued to follow Pomeroy's lead and sought out 'real' ancient women well into the 2000s: historical studies sought evidence for powerful empresses and leaders; archaeological studies

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¹ With apologies to Eurythmics and Aretha Franklin.

² Pomeroy 1975; for acclamations, see Culham 1987, Ancona and Tsouvala 2021, as well as recent reviews of revised editions by Hall 1994 and Foxhall 2013: 7. For work on women in the ancient world prior to 1975, see Pomeroy's own compiled bibliography on the study of women in antiquity in the 1973 special edition of *Arethusa*: under the 'general' section she cites selected chapters in *Histoire mondiale de la femme*, published in 1965, Burck 1969 and Leipoldt 1955. For earlier work on Roman women, see Balsdon 1962. Natalie Kampen (2015: 76) suggests that Zinserling 1972 anticipated Pomeroy's feminist praxis. Pomeroy 1991 reviews efforts since 1975 and offers suggestions for future study. For scholarship on women classical scholars, see Beard 2000 on Jane Harrison and, more recently, the edited volume by Wyles and Hall 2020.

³ For women in Attic vase painting, see Bérard 1989; Keuls 1985: 233-240; Williams 1983. For Roman women at work, see Kampen 1981; Zimmer 1982; Baltzer 1983. Other early art historical work includes Bonfante 1989b and Keuls 1985. See also two major exhibitions, on Greek and Roman women, respectively: Reeder 1995; Kleiner and Matheson 1996.

⁴ Pomeroy 1975: ix. See the publication of sourcebooks on 'women in the ancient world', e.g., Lefkowitz and Fant 1982; Kraemer 1988; Rowlandson and Bagnall 1998; Grubbs 2002 (more recently, MacLachlan 2012; James and Dillon 2012; Hemelrijk 2021). For early efforts in this direction, see Cantarella 1987, Foley 1981, Fantham *et al* 1994; Cameron and Kurht 1983. See also increasing works on 'Greco-Roman women' in specialised contexts, such as their legal position (Gardner 1986; McGinn 1998, 2004) and marriages (Treggiari 1991).

examined the material remains of women's practices within the home; scholars of dress and adornment mined archaeology and literature for relevant references.⁵

Contemporary theoretical approaches had already been applied elsewhere within Classics, with exciting results. Throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s, literary scholars such as Judith Hallett, Amy Richlin, Nancy Sorkin Rabinowitz, Marilyn Skinner, Susan Treggiari, and Maria Wyke used feminist theory to analyse and interpret ancient literature.⁶ Wyke's articulation of the 'written woman' in Latin love elegy exemplifies this theoretically informed approach: she challenged the prevailing interpretation that women in elegiac poetry were thinly veiled stand-ins for real Roman woman and argued instead that they were maleauthored constructions. Moving away from a desire to identify 'real', individual Roman women, Wyke's 'written woman' threw light instead on male anxieties and fantasies, about women, masculinity, sex and relationships. As such, looking for ancient women demonstratively opened up new ways of looking at ancient men.⁸ The realisation that ancient ideas about masculinity and femininity were essentially relational was indebted to the deconstructionist methods of third-wave feminism and gender theory, articulated most influentially by Judith Butler in the early 1990s: the concept that individuals *perform* gender through repeated series of constitutive acts. For Butler, gender is always constructed, relational, and performative: a matter of *doing* rather than being.⁹

⁵ On ancient royal women see Savalli-Lestrade 1994; Carney 2000, 2006, 2013, 2019; Bielman Sánchez *et al* 2016; more recently, Carney and Müller 2021. For archaeological studies of gender in the household and domestic assemblages, see Allison 1999, 2004, 2009; Berry 1997; Nevett 1995; Parisinou 2000. For general overview of Roman clothing, see Sebesta and Bonfante 1994; Edmondsen 2008. For Roman men's dress, see Vout 1996; Olson 2014, 2017. For Roman women's dress, see Sebesta 1997; Olson 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008; for discourses of *cultus* and adornment, see Wyke 1994; Bartman 2001; Colburn 2008; Olson 2009, 2018. Studies of dress and adornment remain popular today: see Harlow and Nosch 2014; Cifarelli 2019; Berg 2019; Batten and Olson 2021.

⁶ See edited volume by Richlin and Rabinowitz (1993) on feminist theory within Classics; see also 'Studies on Roman Women', edited by Scafuro and Stehle 1989 (*Helios* special issue 16.1-2). See also Hallett 1973; Hallett and Skinner 1997; Richlin 1983, 1992a (drawing explicitly on work of anti-pornography text Kappeler 1986), 1997; Skinner 1987, 1989, 1993; Treggiari 1976, 1979 on women at work; Wyke 1987a, 1987b, 1989, 1995.

⁷ E.g., 'Lesbia' in the poetry of Catullus, who has been identified by scholars as Clodia, wife of the consul Quintus Caecilius Metellus Celer: see Hejduk 2008 on approaches to Clodia.

⁸ On performances of masculinity, see Gleason 1995; Skinner 1993; Gunderson 2000; more recently, Jones 2012 on Greek novels; Goldberg 2020.

⁹ Butler 1990, 1993. The bibliography on theories of 'sex/gender' distinction is capacious and ever-growing, but the essential concept that sex is biological and gender socially and/or culturally determined can be traced back to French philosopher Simone de Beauvoir's statement that 'one is not born, but becomes, a woman'. See 'gender' in these terms in work of Stoller 1968; see also theories that gender is related to personality (Chodorow 1978) and sexuality (MacKinnon 1989). Critiques of sex/gender distinction focus on presumption of universal and potentially 'normative' category of 'woman' (see especially Black feminists such as Spelman 1988, hooks 2000); the argument that biological sex and gender are equally constructed (Butler 1990; see also Laqueur 1992 on one-sex model, and Fausto-Sterling 1993 on intersex individuals); suggestion that sex/gender replicates androcentric binaries of mind/body, culture/nature, in which women are reduced to their bodies (Grosz 1994). Attempts to

Today, classical literary studies, especially studies of Latin literature, remain influential within Classics for their successful and nuanced integration of gender theory. Antony Corbeill, for example, has outlined how the 'heterosexualising' drive of Latin grammatical sex in the Augustan period attempted to establish a discrete gender binary. More inventive still have been contemporary studies that use gender as a tool to explore time in Augustan elegy, sociopolitical discourses of (im)morality and the 'invention' of 'private life' under Augustus; the relationship between the gendered subject of elegiac poetry and the boundaries of the everexpanding Empire. ¹⁰ Gender fluidity – the destabilisation and deconstruction of gender roles and categories – has recently emerged as a vibrant and growing area within studies of ancient literature: these discussions are richly informed by queer theory, which seeks out and analyses material that falls beyond historical and cultural 'norms', particularly those relating to gender and sexuality. ¹¹

Relative to the sophistication of work on gender in ancient literature, classical archaeology and art history may appear comparatively less theoretical, or, at least, more limited in their use of theoretical approaches from cognate fields. This is, in part, due to the segregation of ancient material and visual culture studies into 'classical art history' and 'classical archaeology'; the former often constituted by ancient textual discourses on visual art and aesthetics as much as images themselves, while the latter focuses on material culture, as suits the analysis of objects from a range of contexts, including the prehistoric, and therefore 'a-textual'. Already wedged apart by textuality and a-textuality, as it were, classical art history and archaeology have also suffered from disciplinary isolation from cognate fields, 'hived off' in some academic contexts from archaeology and art history departments into a sub-discipline of Classics. As a result, the critical gender theory that emerged from prehistoric and New World archaeology in the late 1980s and 1990s did not meaningfully filter across into classical archaeology and art history, which was perceived by non-classical archaeologists as an elitist, simplistic, and atheoretical field. Nor did the early feminist art-historical methods developed

^{&#}x27;solve' the sex/gender distinction include gender nominalism (Stoljar 1995), gender realism (Haslanger 2012), gender uniessentialism (Witt 2011a, 2011b).

¹⁰ Corbeill 2015; see also Lees 2018; Milnor 2005; Edwards 2002; Langlands 2006; Lindheim 2021.

¹¹ See Campanile et al 2017; Surtees and Dyer 2020; see also chapters on gender fluidity in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in Sharrock et al 2020.

¹² An exception is the work of Jaś Elsner, whose work is discussed in more detail below. See also the textual divide within Classics cited by Harris 1994 in response to Kampen 1994.

¹³ Brown 1997: 20. For the most influential critique of androcentrism in archaeology, see Conkey and Spector 1984; for overview of androcentric critique and its relationship to classical art history, see Skinner 1987, Engelstad 1991, Brown 1993, 1997 (the exception to the rule is Allason-Jones 1995 on the 'de-sexing' of Roman small finds; Scott 1995, 1997). For some recent archaeologically-focussed work on gender in Italy in the '1st Millenium BC', see edited volume Herring and Lomas 2009.

by the likes of Linda Nochlin and Griselda Pollock, focussed as they were on post-Renaissance art and artists, offer much to engage historians of classical art.¹⁴

As a result, scholars of ancient visual and material culture interested in women and gender progressed from Pomeroy's directive in tentative, halting steps. While their colleagues in ancient literature studies began to do new and exciting things with gender and queer theories in the 1990s, classical art historians and archaeologists processed the realisation that, much like elegiac 'written women', the women represented weaving and fetching water on Attic vases were also male constructs. Scholars were not so much looking *for* images of ancient women but looking *at* representations of them. Such images did not show 'real' women, as Pomeroy had perhaps hoped, but constructions created and consumed by and for male viewers.¹⁵

The realisation that Pomeroy's recuperative methods did not look *for* 'real' women as much as look *at* male-authored images of women foregrounded the integration of 'gaze theory' into classical art history in the 1990s; this was anticipated, too, by adopting the male lens assumed by ancient texts, as per Wyke *et al* in studies of ancient literature. Classical art historians reached out for gaze theory as articulated in the early 1970s by the feminist film-theorist Laura Mulvey and the art critic John Berger, which understood the power of looking as masculine and the powerless-ness of being looked at as feminine. Mulvey explicitly defined the 'male gaze' as how male viewers fragment, sexualise and objectify women; Berger argued that '*men act* and *women appear* [...] men look at women. Women look at themselves being looked at' (original emphasis). The Gaze theory à la Mulvey and Berger gave classical scholars the requisite tools to discuss images of women that they had only recently recognised to be male constructs.

From the outset, however, gaze theory was not without its limitations. Berger, for instance, articulates the dynamics of the gaze in pithy, universalizing aphorisms, predicated upon an unproblematised dichotomization of male and female: this arguably reflects the original format of *Ways of Seeing* as a four-episode television series broadcast in 1972.

¹⁴ Early feminist art history tended to focus on analysing and critiquing representations of women or examining the systemic exclusion of female artists from the Western visual canon. Primary among the vanguard of such approaches include Nochlin 1971, 1988; Tickner 1978; Kuhn 1982, 1985; Betterton 1985, 1987; Pollock 1987; Parker and Pollock 1981; Gubar 1987. For criticism of early feminist art historical methods, particularly in conflation of analysis and critique, see Sherriff 2004: 152.

¹⁵ Vout 2014a: 602-603. C.f. Rabinowitz and Richlin (1993: 9): 'we have many male representations of women but not much 'hard' data about women, let alone material written by women'.

¹⁶ Brown 1997 credits the following as the incipient beginnings of feminist critique within the classics: Hallett 1993; Rabinowitz and Richlin 1993; Scott 1995, 1997; Fantham et al 1994.

¹⁷ Mulvey 1975 (reworked from a paper first delivered in 1973); Berger 1972; quoted text from 46-47.

Similarly, Mulvey herself in a 2018 interview described her original essay as 'polemic', stating that 'it's very much a one- or two-idea piece and that, I think, is its power'. Yet the importation of gaze theory into classical art history often left these limitations unaddressed: although Mulvey's formulation of the 'male gaze' was grounded in psychoanalytic and Lacanian theory, this was quietly and readily omitted by some classical scholars, perhaps fearing a charge of anachronism. More critically, gaze theory is biased towards images that embed the female body in narratives of abuse and violence. Classical art historians interested in gaze theory alighted on depictions of the rape of Cassandra or Ariadne in Pompeian wall painting, or voyeuristic viewings of the Knidian Aphrodite: Incentivised to examine female and feminized bodies that were embedded within these extreme narratives, scholars could and did take the figures' embedded-ness and associated passivity, vulnerability, and exposure as a given. This only reinforced the characterisation of the gaze as male, dominant and penetrative; the gazed-at, as female, passive, and penetrated.

Classical art historical applications of gaze theory were also bolstered by contemporary work on Greek and Roman sex and sexuality. Scholars understood Roman sex as predicated on, and constituted by, a rigid 'active-passive' penetrative paradigm, in which the penetrator was coded as masculine, active and dominant and the penetrated as feminine, passive, and subordinate. This paradigm too was problematic: as James Davidson notes, the dichotomous focus on penetration construes ancient sex as a 'rigid 'zero-sum' game that the penetrator always won', denying the possibility of role reversal, sexual reciprocity, or intimacy. According to the model, women are automatically rendered 'passive' by their desire to be penetrated and their lack of a penis. The issues of the 'active-passive' paradigm were compounded further when it came to its application to Roman sex, given its original

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¹⁸ Mulvey 2018.

¹⁹ As noted by Turner 2009: 37.

²⁰ Koloski-Ostrow 1997a; Fredrick 1995; Salomon 1996. For further uses of gaze theory, see Kappeler 1986; Brown 1993; Richlin 1992b; Kampen 1996a, 1996b, 1997; Lyons and Koloski Ostrow 1997a; Fredrick 1995, 2002; Elsner 1996a; Frontisi-Ducroux 1996 on vase painting; Stewart 1996, 1997. For attempts to locate 'female viewership', see Spencer-Wood 1992; Osborne 1994; Kampen 1996a, 1997; Stehle & Day 1996; Younger 2002; Turner 2009.

²¹ Williams' (1999) use of the terms 'insertive' and 'receptive' for 'active' and 'passive' represents the extremity of this focus on penetration; see also Parker 1997 on his taxonomic grid of sexual acts.

²² Davidson 1997: 169. See also Davidson 2007: 119-121.

²³ Kamen & Levin-Richardson 2015: 49-50. Only the dildo-using *tribas* is ever hinted at as 'active' and is described as a *fututor* who feigns masculinity: e.g., Martial 1.90; cf. 7.67, 7.70; Seneca, *Controversiae* 1.2.23. On feminine passivity in desiring penetration, see Winkler 1990: 186. For omission of women, see Richlin 1991; see also papers in Larmour, Miller & Platter 1998.

formulation from elite-authored, 4th-century BCE Athenian literature on sexual relations between citizen men.²⁴

The woolly extrapolation of the 'active-passive' paradigm from classical Athens to imperial Rome flags the need for an awareness of the fundamental differences between Greek and Roman thought, particularly when it comes to sex and gender. Greek writers posited fundamental, ontological differences between men and women as early as the 7th century BCE. Semonides' pseudo-typology of women traces female vices back to the species of animal from which they descended; Hesiod also describes Greek women as a distinct race ('γένος', *Theogony* 590) descended from Pandora, the manufactured proto-woman.²⁵ As explicated in structuralist analysis, archaic and classical Greek thought and culture were predicated on ontologically grounded polarities, which included the oppositional binary of male and female. These dichotomies paradoxically allowed certain media the elasticity to function as carnivalesque safety-valves of reversal and subversion: Greek tragedy and the playfully self-referential medium of classical vase painting have both been acknowledged as spaces in which potential anomalies of human/animal and male/female could be represented and explored.²⁶

In contrast, Roman culture was not predicated on, or as preoccupied by, such a secure ontology of men vs. women but operated with, or was prepared to countenance, a slipperier conception of gender. The classical art historian Natalie Kampen cites the tale of Iphis in Ovid's

²⁴ Kilmer 1997: 47. Cf. Dover 1978: 20-109 on Aeschines' *Against Timarchus*. Many scholars cite Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (1976-1984) and his argument for a constructionist, socio-culturally specific understanding of sexuality in the development of the penetrative paradigm; see Keuls 1985; Wiseman 1985; Winkler 1990; Posner 1992: 24; Davidson 1997, 2001. For context and critique of Foucauldian model, see Larmour, Miller & Platter 1998; Richlin 1991, 1993, 1998. overview by Skinner 1996, Davidson 2001. On application of Foucauldian model to Rome, see introduction to Fredrick 2002; Hallett and Skinner 1997; Richlin 2006. On caution against extrapolation within ancient world, see comments by Monserrat 1996; Habinek 1997; Vucetic 2014. On Roman sexualities, see Adams 1982 on Latin sexual vocabulary; for overview of Roman sexual mores vis-à-vis Greek ones, see Hallett and Skinner 1997; McClure 2002. On same-sex love and desire, see Halperin 1990, Williams 1999, with revised 2010 edition; Richlin 1993; Hubbard 2003; see also Brooten 1996; Rabinowitz and Auanger 2002. On sexuality in Roman art, see Marcadé 1965; Brendel 1970; Johns 1982; Kampen 1996a; Clarke 1998, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2003c, 2005; Varone 2001; Vout 2013; Sheard 2017.

²⁵ Semonides 7: 50-54; for analysis, see Cantarella 1987: 34-48. Lloyd-Jones (1975: 24-25) defends the text's humour; Osborne 2001 recontextualises the poem within archaic society; see also Morgan 2013; Anderson 2018. Vernant (1989: 47-48) notes the description of Pandora's mind in *Works and Days* as dog-like ('κύνεος ... νόος', 67): she possesses only two traits which make her recognisably human rather than animal, namely strength ('σθένος', 63) and capacity for speech ('αὐδη', 61-62; 'φωνη' 79). See also Blondell 2013: 18. The bibliography on Pandora is broad: see Kenaan 2008; Marder 2014. For description of Pandora's mind as dog-like, and comparison of women and dogs within Greek literature, see Franco 2003, translated 2014; Graver 1995. For intersections with Semonides, see Wolkow 2007.

²⁶ D'Ambra 1998: 547. On structuralist analysis of Greek thought, see collection of essays by Gordon 1981; Zeitlin 1996 on exploration in tragedy; on vase paintings, see particularly the work of the Paris-Lausanne School – c.f. Bérard et al 1989; Lissarrague 1990a, 1990b, 1999, 2001; Frontisi-Ducroux 1995, 1996; see also Cohen 2000; Stansbury-O'Donnell 2006; Lyons 2008. Frontisi-Ducroux 2004 surveys work on images of women in Greek art.

Metamorphoses as evidence that the Romans understood 'the constructed quality of gender, as opposed to its being something natural, inevitable, and permanent'.²⁷ That Ovid tells a tale of gender fluidity with a Greek protagonist perhaps references the few examples of individuals changing sex in earlier Greek literature and mythology, of which Teiresias is arguably the most famous example. The proliferation of such tales by authors writing in the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, however, attests nonetheless to a particularly Roman interest in mutable sexual and/or gender identities.²⁸ For Kampen, the tale of the female-born (or, 'assigned-female-at-birth', to use the modern terminology of transgender identity), woman-loving Iphis underlines the force of story-telling to reassert order over the world: with her transformation into a man by the goddess Juno, Iphis ends up with gender identity and sexual orientation neatly paired; deviant selves and desires appropriately cauterised.

Kampen's work is underpinned by an appreciation of the power of images and stories to construct gender. As a classical art historian unapologetically working on the construction of gender in visual culture, she was an exception to the trend towards holistic and interdisciplinary studies on 'the body' by classicists in the 1990s.²⁹ Kampen, in contrast, examined how and where gender intersected with other factors (e.g., race, age, and status) to constitute and explicate the distribution of power within ancient societies. Visual representation was critical to this endeavour: demonstrating 'the many ways of marking gender on or as body' and putting gender difference to work 'reconfigur[ing] the world', images sought to 'make institutions and practices seem completely natural, [...] inevitable and universal'.³⁰ Kampen recognised that visual imagery did not passively reflect social reality but actively constructed, reinforced, and/or challenged constructions of gender; and that this power was all the more critical within Roman culture, in part due to the slipperier construction of sex and gender categories outlined above.

Kampen's work on Roman *images* in particular was predicated on the acclamation of 'Roman visual culture' as vibrant, playful, and, critically, distinct from Greek art. Since the 19th century, Kopienkritik had characterised Roman art as comprised of unimaginative (and perhaps even 'unsuccessful') copies of Greek art, valuable only as imitations of lost Greek

²⁷ Kampen 1996a: 17.

²⁸ On Ovid's use of the Teiresias myth, see Balsley 2010; Giusti 2018.

²⁹ Kampen 1981a, 1981b, 1988, 1991, 1994, 1995, 1996a, 1996b, 1997, 2015. In Classics, volumes on 'the body' include Porter 1999; Monserrat 1998; Wyke 1998; Cornell et al 1997. See also Stewart 1997.

³⁰ Kampen 1997: 267-268: see also her comment that 'representation ... shows people idealized forms of themselves, forms by which to recognise the categories their society assigns them and by which to mark their hopes and desires' (1996a: 17).

masterpieces. Yet in the 1990s and early 2000s, scholars such as Jaś Elsner built on earlier scholarship by the likes of Otto Brendel to ask, directly or indirectly, what was uniquely 'Roman' about Roman art³¹ – and whether 'art' was a useful term, given the anachronistic baggage of its modern meaning and its potential to exclude 'provincial' images and those produced by and for Roman non-elites. The more holistic term 'Roman visual culture' appeared workable, especially as it could apply to (for example) older Greek sculptures that were retained and restaged alongside later Roman images commissioned and produced specifically for new buildings and spaces under the Republic and Empire.³² The study of an eclectic Roman visual culture was born, distinguished by a range of elements. These included distinctly Roman 'way[s] of seeing' and viewing; interaction between images and texts, particularly during the Second Sophistic period; and the reception and reworking of Greek artworks and artistic styles.³³

Given the recognition of Roman visual culture as playful, slippery, and self-referential – all hallmarks of deconstructionist gender theory – one might expect Kampen to have heralded an explosion of studies from the late 1990s up to the present day exploring the symbiotic intersections between gender and Roman visual culture. This is not, however, what happened.

Women Who Feel Mighty Real³⁴

To look briefly beyond Classics, the contemporary art historical landscape for studies of gender is dominated by a globalising outlook. While the legacy of Nochlin *et al* still looms large – evidenced by a recent spate of edited anthologies of early feminist art history and attempts to locate the missing and/or unacknowledged 'Great Woman Artists' originally sought by the feminist art historians of the 1970s³⁵ – post-colonial art historical approaches are increasingly popular. Recent studies both critique Eurocentricism and give space to the study of gender in Asian, African, and Middle Eastern art, as well as the work of contemporary non-European

³² Hallett 2015: 19, 27

³¹ Brendel 1979.

³³ On ways of seeing, see Elsner 1995, 1996a, 2007; Fredrick 2002; see also, indirectly, via studies on mirrors and reflectivity, Bartsch 2006; Taylor 2008 and, on wall painting, Fredrick 1995; Bergmann 1994, 1996, 2018. On interaction with texts, see Elsner 1996 and edited volume with Meyer 2014; Goldhill 2001; Squire 2009. On reception and reworking of Greek art, see Gazda 2002; Perry 2005; Hallett 2005; Kousser 2008; Marvin 2008; Trimble 2011; on relationship between Greek and Roman art, see also Hölscher 1978 (translated into English in 2004); Zanker 2010.

³⁴ With apologies to Sylvester.

³⁵ See Schmahmann 2021 on 'Mistress-Pieces', its title directly calling back to Nochlin 1971; for edited volumes and anthologies between 2010 and 2015, see review by Ballard and Golda 2015. See also Hustvedt 2016.

women artists.³⁶ Even as its theoretical toolbox has expanded to include queer and post-colonial methodologies, however, studies of gender in art history are still hyperlocal and highly specific. Most recent publications analyse gender construction in visual culture within a particular historical moment, the work of a single artist or even a single artwork, such as Valerie Hedquist's examination of the multiple contexts and viewing(s) of Thomas Gainsborough's *The Blue Boy* (1770).³⁷

Within the field of classical scholarship, Roman visual culture remains a vibrant and ever-growing subject area, its self-referentiality foregrounding studies on the processes of production, framing, replication, and viewership, both within and beyond Roman visual culture. Scholars such as Michael Squire, Verity Platt, and Nikolaus Dietrich, for example, examine the framing of images and the varying ontological shifts between content and decoration, figure, and ornament, while Anna Anguissola explores the role and meaning(s) of support struts within Roman marble statuary. Elsewhere, marble itself and other artistic materials and their place in ancient art historical discourses come under the microscope; other scholars explore the ancient aesthetics of reuse and renovation and interrogate the 'life history' of the 'classical' aesthetic and canon.³⁸ Contemporary classical art history also remains highly textual, in part due to the proliferation of work on ancient ekphrasis. The 'intermediality' of ekphrasis – most simply articulated as a verbal description of a visual image – is particularly attractive to classical art historians, tapping as it does into wider questions around viewing and interpreting visual imagery. Elsner, among others, has even argued that all art history is, on some level, ekphrastic in its attempt to negotiate and interpret the visual through the verbal.³⁹ While ekphrasis is by no means exclusively 'Roman' (the most famous forebear is arguably the Homeric description of Achilles' shield, followed by countless Hellenistic epigrams that describe specific artworks), scholars have recognised the particular complexity of Roman ekphrastic texts: Squire goes as far as to say that Philostratus' Imagines, likely written in the

³⁶ On contemporary female artists, see Hassan 1997 on African artists; Sherwell 1999 on Arab artists; Kelly 2021 examines French women Orientalist artists in the 19th-20th centuries. For feminist art and art histories from Middle East and North Africa, see edited volume by Özpınar and Kelly 2020. On gender in 19th century Iranian visual culture, see Najmabadi 2005. On East Asian art, see primarily the work of Japanese gender scholar Chino Kaori, whose seminal essay is reprinted in Mostow, Bryson and Graybill 2003; on East Asian arts more generally, see also Weidner 1990; Doran 2017.

³⁷ Thomas 2020 on paintings of Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665); Hedquist 2019.

³⁸ Trimble 2011; on replication, see also Settis 2015. On framing, see Platt and Squire 2018; Dietrich and Squire 2018; Anguissola 2018; Jones 2019. On aesthetics of reuse, see Perry 2005; Ng and Swetnam Burland 2018; Adornato et al 2018. On artists and artistic production in Greek art, see Seaman and Schultz 2019; Hedreen 2018; Hurwit 2015. For materials in Pliny the Elder, see recent edited volume by Anguissola and Grüner 2020. On reception of classical art (its 'life history'), see Vout 2018.

³⁹ Elsner 2010. For overviews of ekphrasis, with bibliography, see Squire 2009: 139-146; Zeitlin 2013.

2nd century CE, 'foreshadows some of the most pressing concerns of recent literary critical theory'.⁴⁰

When it comes to gender construction in visual culture, however, classical art historians appear to have circled back round to Pomeroy's recuperative directive, now forty years old. The 'real', 'historical' ancient woman has re-emerged from the 1970s with a vengeance, construed within a bizarrely oppositional dichotomy with her counterpart, the male-authored 'fictional construct'. The near-polemic introduction to Stephanie Lynn Budin and Jean Turfa's 2016 edited volume *Women in Antiquity: Real Women Across the Ancient World* rails against the 'limitations of books on 'women' in 'antiquity'', which are duly charged with being overly focussed on Greece and Rome and 'literary characters, fictional constructs invented by men mostly for other men', 'slight[ing] real women in preference for myth and literature, as though real women simply could not be as interesting as Homer's Andromakhe or Vergil's Dido'. ⁴¹ For Budin and Turfa, the study of 'real women' should be privileged as the only truly feminist endeavour.

The search for 'real' women who exerted agency and power in antiquity also dominates recent calls for papers. ⁴² This search is arguably more feasible for scholars of Roman art and culture than for scholars of classical Athens, given that Roman women were at greater liberty to participate in public life than their Athenian sisters. There are, after all, examples of Campanian businesswomen such as Eumachia and Julia Felix, as well as epigraphic and visual evidence of Roman patronesses participating in civic life across the Empire; scholarship, too, has long recognised how portraiture was utilised by women within and beyond the imperial family as a means of crafting self-image. ⁴³ The limited nature of the list above, however,

⁴⁰ Squire 2015: 20.

⁴¹ Budin and Turfa 2016: 1. Their monograph appears avowedly against queer or trans theories, as the editors state that there will be no 'problematization' of the term 'woman': 'women are human beings with two X chromosomes, X/0 chromosomes, or occasionally a human with a Y chromosome but resistant to testosterone [...] biological sex exists, and that gender is a mutable social overlay associated, but not co-terminus, with biological sex' (2016: 2). Such views are academically limiting and reminiscent of the prejudicial term 'womyn-born-womyn' (that is, individuals assigned-female-at-birth), used by second-wave feminists and which is arguably characteristic of Janice Raymond's influential if wildly transphobic work, *The Transsexual Empire* (1979).

⁴² 'Power, Royal Agency, and Elite Women in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds' (Waterloo Institute for Hellenistic Studies, Fall/Winter 2021); 'Queens: Reimagining Power from Antiquity to the Present' (New York University. September 2021); 'Female agency' (Institute of Classical Studies, London, 2021), 'women, wealth and power' (University of Gothenburg, May 2021), 'women in power' (Society for Classical Studies /Archaeological Institute of America, May 2020); see also 2021 call for submissions to a new monograph with Liverpool University Press entitled *Empresses-In-Waiting: Power, Performance, and the 'Female Court' of Late Antiquity*. See also Carney and Müller 2021, selected chapters in Rantala 2019; Boatwright 2021 on 'personal agency' of 'imperial women'; Longfellow and Swetnam-Burland 2021 on 'female agency' in the Bay of Naples. ⁴³ On Eumachia and Julia Felix, see Bernstein 2007: 528-533; Allison 2007a: 348. See also Gardner 1999; Boatwright 1991, 2021. On women in public life, see van Bremen 1996; Hemelrijk 2015, 2020; Longfellow 2015;

demonstrates how this overly narrow focus on 'historical' women constrains scholarly discussion to the handful of exceptional individuals who left their mark on the archaeological record. In many respects, too, the 'real' ancient woman, whose perspective and experiences are so desperately sought in contemporary studies, is herself something of a construction, glimpsed through the lens of modern scholars' biases, knowledge, and ignorance.⁴⁴ That the Romans were fundamentally different from how today's classicists might perceive them is memorably illustrated by the two time-travellers imagined by Keith Hopkins in *A World Full of Gods*. Despite being selected for the expedition to the past because they are 'fairly knowledgeable about things Roman', both modern time-travellers experience severe culture shock, noting that 'if you need to be convinced that the Romans were different, turn up on gladiator day'.⁴⁵

The oppositional dichotomy of 'real' and 'fictional' women and the total condemnation of the latter as male constructions is deeply misguided. This totalising and binary approach evokes the conflation of analysis and critique that characterised early efforts in feminist art history in the 1970s and 1980s: namely, that scholars should look at images of women only to assess 'the extent to which they seemed to reinforce cultural attitudes the [modern] *authors perceive* [... to be] sexist and detrimental' (added emphasis). It is not that this type of feminist critique has no place in scholarship: Nochlin is right to voice her concern that 19th-century representations of prostitutes by Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec do not speak to the lives of real women but are 'about women for men's enjoyment, by men'. Classical art historians, too, are right to worry that images of women weaving on Attic vases represent patriarchal fantasies of the ideal woman. But to write off male-authored representations as unworthy of further analysis risks throwing out the baby with the bathwater, actively dismissing a wealth of imagery that may speak volumes about the *culture* in which 'real' women lived, even if it can say relatively little about 'real', individual women. Ancient representations of women who

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for overviews, see entries by Meyers and Bielman in James and Dillon 2012. For portraiture of imperial women, see Wood 1999, Alexandridis 2004 as well as specialised studies including Bartman 1999 on Livia; Fittschen 1982 on Faustina Minor; Kokkinos 1992 on Antonia Minor. For female portraiture in general, see Fejfer 2008; Hemelrijk 2005a, 2005b.

⁴⁴ See Clarke 2003a: 9-13 on the 'scholar's point of view' relative to 'ordinary' viewers of Roman art.

⁴⁵ Hopkins 1999: 42.

⁴⁶ Sherriff 2004: 152.

⁴⁷ Nochlin 1988: 138-139. Bérard (1989: 89, 90-91), Sutton (1992: 22-32) and, implicitly, Bennett (2019) have argued that women would have used *lekythoi* and *hydriai* decorated with scenes of weaving and water-fetching, and that the popularity of such scenes indicates that there was a demand for them among 'real' Athenian housewives who liked to see their ideal, painted counterparts engaged in the same activities; *contra* see Keuls 1985: 232; Hackworth-Petersen 1997: 37; Williams 1983: 105. For more speculative attempts to explore experiences of 'real' Athenian women through vase paintings, see Hackworth-Petersen 1997: 53; see also Rabinowitz 2002; Kosso and Lawton 2009; Karanika 2014.

were distinctly *not* real – goddesses, mythical heroines or generic females – constructed and were constructed by a visual culture which helped define the female, vis-à-vis the male, animal or divine.

A useful *comparandum* here is *Dreamworlds*, a series of video essays by Sut Jhalley which analyses the limited repertoire of passive, sexualised and objectified roles and behaviours acted out by women in contemporary music videos. These women appear to have emerged directly from adolescent (heterosexual) male fantasy: they are often genre-characters such as cheerleaders, teachers or babysitters; they are nymphomaniacal, perpetually nude or undressed; their bodies are fragmented into fetishisable parts by the men around them and the camera itself. That the scantily clad, sexually promiscuous women in music videos are male constructions does not mean they are entirely divorced from reality. It is quite the opposite: Jhally underlines how the sexualised representation of women in the 'Dreamworld' translates into reality by intercutting footage from Maggie Hadleigh-West's documentary War Zone (1998) of a woman being sexually harassed while walking down the street.⁴⁸ The average scholar may not learn much about the individual hopes, dreams or experiences of the scantilyclad women who gyrate behind Nelly in his infamous video for 'Tip Drill' (2003), but the representation of these women does speak to contemporary socio-cultural expectations, fantasies, contradictions and anxieties about women. Recent academic work on the representation of gender, race, and class in music videos and the impact on viewers – in terms of body dysmorphia, sexuality and self-image – demonstrates the value of analysing images that may otherwise be dismissed as fantastical male constructions.⁴⁹

The privileging of the 'real', 'historical' woman has left scholarship on gender and representations of non-historical women within Roman visual culture in a rather sorry state. While a handful of recent theses and monographs focus on representations of women within Roman visual culture, these endeavours appear to be legitimated only in their discussion of 'provincial' material: looking at images of women is fine, it would seem, but only as long as they come from Roman Britain, Palmyra and/or Gaul and permit some discussion of 'Roman' and 'non-Roman' culture. ⁵⁰ Meanwhile, Anise K. Strong's recent monograph structures itself

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⁴⁸ Jhally 1995, 2007, 2009; see critique by Rockler 2002. See also Railton and Watson 2005, 2011. See also Durham 2012 on Black femininity in the music videos of Beyoncé.

⁴⁹ For example, on body dysmorphia, see Grabe and Hyde 2009; on sexuality, Werner 2013, Rousseau et al 2019; on gender and masculinity, Lindsay and Lyons 2018.

⁵⁰ Morelli 2009 (Roman Britain); Rogers 1999 (Roman Britain & Gaul); Elkerton 2019 (Roman Iberia); Krag 2018 (Roman Palymra): see also binding of 'gender' and 'cultural identity' in Rantala 2019. Ferris 2015 is a trade

around specific social categories of 'woman', as indicated by its title, *Prostitutes and Matrons* in the Roman World, but visual material makes only a fleeting appearance. Although Strong asks whether you can 'know a *meretrix* when you see one', she limits her discussion by failing to recognise the potential of visual culture to open up space for fantasy and erotic ambiguity.⁵¹

Two recent publications on ancient visual culture that explicitly mention 'gender' in their title are again limited in the range of visual material under discussion. Glenys Davies' 2018 monograph Gender and Body Language in Roman Art glosses 'Roman art' as constituted almost exclusively by Italian, free-standing marble statuary: other media, such as wall painting, relief sculpture, gems, silverware and mosaics, appear to have been largely jettisoned.⁵² Davies' analysis is undermined, too, by what Squire describes as the 'gaping generational difference' between contemporary, deconstructionist queer theory and Davies' heavy reliance on theories of body language dating from the 1970s and 1980s, a disjuncture Davies does not appear to acknowledge.⁵³ Rosemary Barrow's 2018 monograph, Gender in Greek and Roman Sculpture, is at least more honest about its focus on a single medium: yet despite her attentive and capacious analysis, the sculptures that form its ten case studies are often unprovenanced or difficult to put back into their original viewing context.⁵⁴ Within this academic landscape, the work of Jennifer Trimble on the 'Large Herculaneum Woman' statue type proves to be the exception to the rule when it comes to discussions of gender construction in Roman visual culture. Trimble examines how the replicated-ness of the statue's stock body constructed a visual language for honorific female portraiture across the Roman Empire in the 1st-2nd centuries CE. She is, however, arguably less interested in gender or the representation of female bodies per se than in teasing apart the aesthetics of replication within Roman art.

In sum, contemporary studies of Roman visual culture are vibrant and plentiful, its images characterised by a playful reflexiveness suited to deconstructionist methods of gender theory. Yet the discussion begun by Kampen of how and where gender intersects with visual representation in Roman visual culture appears unfinished. The privileging of the 'real' woman over male constructions of women in current scholarship demonstrates that there is still work

publication that surveys Italian and provincial images of women in Roman art. For overview of relevant bibliography on provincial art, see Salisbury 2020, a recent thesis on bodies in Romano-British art.

⁵¹ Strong 2016: 118-141; for discussion of wall paintings from Pompeii's 'purpose-built' brothel, see Levin-Richardson 2019: 64-80. See also Guzzo and Ussani 2003; Varone 2001; Berg and Neudecker 2018.

⁵² Other studies of ancient body language are admittedly broader, but not necessarily focussed on Roman visual culture: Masséglia 2015 focusses on Hellenistic art; see also Cairns 2005, Davies 2005. 'Gesture' studies appear to hold broader appeal still: see Catoni 2005; Clark et al 2015.

⁵³ Davies 2018; see review by Squire 2019: 150-151.

⁵⁴ Barrow 2018; Estrin 2019: 605-606.

to be done to legitimate and open up discussions of how visual representation constructed, constituted, and communicated ideas about gender in Roman culture.

Ways of Seeing, Ways of Thinking

This thesis contributes to the study of representations of women and the construction of gender within and through Roman visual culture. It threads together gender theory with the reflexive sophistication that has characterised contemporary studies of Roman visual culture to date, carving out a space in which to understand how represented bodies are gendered and shaped by medium and context. The following discussion is predicated on an understanding of gender as performed by bodies. The primary focus on female *bodies* is purposeful: rather than structure the material into self-reproducing categories and types of women (e.g., mother, wife, daughter, empress; each of which are to some extent social constructions themselves), analysis is led by the images. While this thesis focusses on representations of the female body, following the spirit if not the letter of Pomeroy's original directive, it examines the representation of the female body in dialogue with male and sexually indeterminate bodies, too. In this sense, discussion embraces not only 'sexy, sexual, or aberrant bodies but all ancient bodies and the contexts for these bodies'.⁵⁵

By eschewing socially-constructed categories of women to focus on images of female bodies, this thesis is also interested in analysing representational strategies themselves: how medium and context shape the depiction of the female body and the relational construction of femininity. The following discussion draws on a range of female bodies represented in various visual media and takes the context of display as an organising principle to analyse the impact of context and representative limitations, conventions, and priorities on the representation of female bodies and the construction of gender. In this sense, there is an interrogation and exploration of both parts of the thesis' remit: the *representation* of *the female body* in Roman visual culture. The latter part calls for an examination of the female body as it is represented, but the former invokes analysis of how representation itself, and context, inevitably helped shape and define the female body in Roman Italy.

To speak of gender inevitably begs the question of intersectionality, of how far gender can be isolated and discussed as an individual phenomenon rather than as one element that operates within and constitutes a broader power structure alongside other factors such as race,

⁵⁵ Vout 2014a: 604.

status, or class.⁵⁶ While gender cannot be entirely separated from other social categories, fully intersectional analysis is tremendously difficult even for contemporary social phenomena.⁵⁷ Scholars of ancient cultures are further disadvantaged given the preservation bias that underpins the archaeological record. Just as the study of ancient literature by its nature focusses on the output of an elite and literate few, the level of personal wealth required to commission most of the monuments and artworks that remain extant from antiquity, even the paintings and altars treated in this thesis, arguably renders them a privileged subsection. While this thesis cannot remedy preservation bias, it does recognise the limitations of its material and attempts to speak beyond it where possible. Its analysis explores the meaning(s) of the female body as represented in a range of visual media and contexts, not only those limited to 'elite' viewers: bodies of evidence linked to 'non-elite' art given their relative affordability (such as funerary altars) are also considered and discussed. What follows is not solely focussed on the thoughts and feelings of the 'elite' few who commissioned these images, but about how these representations spoke to and constructed broader ideas about gender.

The bibliography on which this thesis is building means that there is no escaping the work of Berger and Mulvey. Squire's critique of Davies notwithstanding, few other articulations of the gaze have had as much impact within classical art history as those articulated in the mid-1970s.⁵⁸ As a result, when the following discussion acknowledges gaze theory as articulated by Berger and Mulvey, it does so as a springboard to a broader exploration of what it means to look and be looked at: it realises that the gaze is not necessarily, inevitably male, for example, and that productive grey areas lurk beneath Mulvey's polemic and between Berger's dichotomised and dichotomising aphorisms.

That this thesis is not predicated on an understanding of the gaze as inherently and inevitably 'male' may prompt the question of other kinds of gazes and indeed the existence of a correlate 'female gaze'. Historically speaking, the 'female gaze' has been theoretically ungrounded due to concerns that it can only be defined negatively against the 'male gaze' or is altogether undefinable; within Mulvey's psychoanalytic framework, the 'female gaze' is a red herring, an illusion created when female viewers temporarily adopt the male viewing position

⁵⁶ See, for example, comments by Trimble 2002; Severy-Hoven 2012.

⁵⁷ For development of the concept and term 'intersectionality' - notably within the context of the modern American legal system - see Crenshaw 1991a, 1991b; for its indebtedness to Black feminists, see Gines 2014. For critical appraisal of intersectionality's limitations – namely its lack of depth, see Carastathis 2014: 68-69.

⁵⁸ Black feminists such as bell hooks and Jacqueline Bobo have developed gaze theory into frameworks for understanding critical Black female spectatorship – Black women as possessed of a critical, 'oppositional' gaze, or as 'cultural readers' in their own right: see hooks 1992, 1995; Bobo 1995.

to vicariously experience the power connoted by the 'male gaze'. ⁵⁹ More recent work on contemporary film and television, however, has attempted to formalise and theorise a 'female gaze'. In a 2016 speech, the American television creative Joey Soloway cited three constituent elements of the 'female gaze': the capacity of the 'female gaze' to convey intimacy and sensuality; its ability to express how it 'feels to be THE OBJECT of the Gaze'; its reciprocity, wherein 'THE FEMALE GAZE DARES to return the gaze'. The last of these appears almost as a more self-aware, declarative formulation of Berger's dictum that women 'watch themselves being looked-at': Soloway emphasises that this is 'the gaze on the gazers […] it's about how it feels to stand here in the world HAVING BEEN SEEN our entire lives […] it says WE SEE YOU, SEEING US' (original emphasis). ⁶⁰

The historically tenuous formulation (if not outright denial) of the 'female gaze' has rendered work on ancient female viewership largely speculative. Scholars have attempted to assume female viewers for Attic vase paintings that portray women relaxing and socializing together, Greek temple sculpture and classical Attic *stelai*. Beyond Greece, scholars have most often considered a theoretical female viewer when discussing erotic images, such as the *symplegmata* on Etruscan mirror covers and erotic wall paintings in the apodyterium of Pompeii's Suburban Baths. When it comes to erotic material, however, the hypothesised female viewer is often a foil for asking whether women *really* looked at such images, and *what* they must have thought of them. This discursive tone betrays how deep the roots of Mulvey and Berger go within classical scholarship: when it comes to eroticised bodies, the active female viewer is still an outlier.

Given its lack of theoretical grounding, this thesis does not seek out the 'female gaze'. Instead, the following analysis operates on the understanding that how an individual looks is

⁵⁹ See Mulvey 1981; Doane 1982; c.f. edited volume by Gamman and Marshment 1988. More recent discussions in studies of contemporary film and television have suggested that the 'female gaze' is highly relational, intimate, provocative, subversive: see interviews with female directors in Telfer 2018 and Villarejo 201. Benson-Allott 2017 examines the 'female gaze' in recent television series with female protagonists, such as *Insecure* (2016-), *Transparent* (2014-2019); see also Willmore 2019 on the female-directed film *Hustlers* (2019).

⁶⁰ Soloway 2016. See also female directors interviewed in Telfer 2018; on the 'female gaze' in female-led TV and film such as *Insecure* (2016-), *Transparent* (2014-2019) and *Hustlers* (2019), see Villarejo 2016; Benson-Allott 2017; Willmore 2019.

⁶¹ On Attic vase paintings, see Hackworth Petersen 1997, Rabinowitz 2002; see also Osborne 1994. Younger 2002 on Attic stelai, critiqued by Turner 2009: 14. On temple sculpture, see Stehle and Day 1996. On erotic frescoes from Pompeii, see Clarke 2002; on erotic mirror covers, Stewart 1996. Squire's (2011: 96ff) discussion of whether the Knidian Aphrodite is possessed of a 'female gaze' with which she 'look[s] back' at her assumed male viewer is not necessarily dependent on her gender as much as her divinity, and the ambiguity over whether the statue should be approached as an image of the goddess or the goddess herself. In this line of thinking Squire takes his cue from Osborne 1994; for 'female viewings' of the Knidia, see Lee 2015a.

necessarily influenced by various elements of their identity, which may include their gender but is not necessarily always *dependent* on gender, or usefully understood as 'gendered'. While some of the female figures represented in the imagery under analysis implicate elements that may be identified with Soloway's definition of the 'female gaze' – particularly in terms of reciprocity, and the declarative feminine self-awareness that 'WE SEE YOU, SEEING US' – the following discussion is not led by the gender of the person viewing any more than it is led by their class, ethnicity, and so on. To assume so would also be to assume that elite Roman women viewed one way, enslaved women another, when even within these categories there is no one way of seeing. Not only this, but the images under discussion come from locations in which they were likely seen by both men and women, slave and free. For these reasons, the form, content, and context of each image and the viewing it invites from the viewer leads the discussion. In this way, each image creates an ideal viewer, and with that viewer, a strengthening or subversion of Roman social norms and the relationships that define them.

As this discussion is led by contextual and visual analysis rather than by the coordinates of a pre-imposed theoretical framework, it does not *explicitly* use queer theory either, 'queer' being whatever lies outside of contemporary socio-cultural and historical norms: 'whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant' (original emphasis). 62 In art historical terms, 'queer' can function as an adjective or verb: an image may be described as 'queer' if it represents fluid and/or non-normative sexualities, while any image no matter how apparently 'normative' within its socio-cultural context may be deconstructed and thereby 'queered', sometimes revealing a deeper, subversive meaning at odds with its normative appearance. 63 American literary scholar Jennifer Doyle advocates for a contextual and comprehensive blend of 'queer' as both adjective and verb by suggesting that a Warhol print is not queer solely on the basis of its content, but also 'where it hangs and what its location makes visible'; a matter of positionality, of who looks as much as what they look at. 64 As often as Roman visual culture constituted and reified normative conceptions of male and female, masculine and feminine, it also carved out spaces for fantasy and more exploratory and experimental ideas about gender: as such, although this thesis does not set out to actively

⁶² Halperin 1995: 62. For summary of Foucauldian theory within Classics, see Skinner 1996; for critique, see Larmour, Miller, and Platter 1994. On 'queer theory', see de Lauretis 1991; for critiques of Halperin's capacious definition of queer as referring to 'nothing in particular' (1995: 62), see Jagose 1996; Bawer 1996: xii.

⁶³ Whittington 2012: 164ff; he critiques the active 'queering' of images as predicated on an assumption that socio-cultural norms are monolithic.

⁶⁴ Cited by Vout 2014: 604. See also Ahmed 2006 on queer positionalities.

'queer' the images under discussion, some of its interpretation could be understood as 'queered' or 'queering'.

Bodies of Evidence

This thesis focuses on representations of female bodies from the Italian mainland dating from the 1st century BCE to the 2nd century CE. The focus on Italy is partly in response to the recent trend in scholarship for provincial case-studies.⁶⁵ More critically, the geographical and temporal scope of this thesis coincides with the transformation of Roman society, culture, and identity between the late Republic and during the early years of the Principate – what Andrew Wallace-Hadrill terms 'Rome's Cultural Revolution', which left a lasting impression on the literary and material culture of Roman Italy.⁶⁶

As Robin Osborne and Caroline Vout have noted, however, the enactors of Wallace-Hadrill's cultural revolution are almost exclusively 'builders, traders, and antiquarians': women, among others, are absent from the discussion, while the question of how, where, and when gender intersected with the boundary-ing of Romanness, and the intersection of Romanness with other ethnic, social and cultural identities, is left undiscussed.⁶⁷ Nor does Wallace-Hadrill venture beyond the establishment of the Principate in his discussion, writing that Augustus 'did not initiate a process of cultural change' rather than merely resolve the turmoil of the late Republic.⁶⁸ It is in part due to the self-imposed temporal boundary of Wallace-Hadrill's cultural revolution that this thesis examines visual representations of female bodies from mainland Italy from the late Republican and early imperial periods. As a result, this thesis not only remedies a historic lack within the relevant scholarship, but also aims to thread gender into a broader conversation about Roman identity: to ask how and where gender comes into what it meant to be Roman, and how this changed over time. In part due to the increased preservation and publication of evidence dating from the 1st century CE onwards, this thesis primarily focuses on representations from the imperial period, although it refers to Republican imagery where pertinent and possible.

Discussion is broken down into three chapters, each focussed on visual material from different contexts within Roman visual culture: the domestic, the public and the funerary. These

⁶⁵ Supra n.50.

⁶⁶ Wallace-Hadrill 2008; see also Habinek and Schiesaro 1997.

⁶⁷ Osborne and Vout 2010: 242.

⁶⁸ Wallace-Hadrill 2008: 450-451 (although three pages later, he concedes that there was a cultural revolution under Augustus 'in a limited sense'); Osborne and Vout 2008: 244-245.

are admittedly, to some extent, modern categories, but they are not intended to be strictly drawn, overly prescriptive, or unquestioned. On the contrary, these categorisations are themselves interrogated; there is an acknowledgement, for instance, that 'domestic' space in the Roman house operated along careful and relative axes of 'private' and 'public', and that the 'funerary' context encompasses both road-side funerary reliefs and altars that call out to passers-by and sarcophagi secluded in family tombs. The contexts of the public, domestic and funerary spheres have been selected to comprise a broad range of material and to enable analysis that cuts across narrow definitions of media or periodisation.

This contextual approach does, however, necessitate the selection of workable datasets that can be adequately outlined, addressed, and discussed within the three chapters of this thesis. For this reason, as well as the preservation, publication, and availability of evidence, this thesis primarily addresses material from the city of Rome and the Bay of Naples, with references to other Italian evidence made where possible. Rome and the Bay of Naples evidently do not encompass the entirety of the Italian mainland. Their pre-eminence in prior art historical scholarship begs the pertinent question of whether modern scholars have inadvertently siloed other categories of Italian visual and material culture (such as Etruscan terracottas or northern Italian funerary *stelae*) as somehow adjacent to, rather than constituent of, 'Roman visual culture'; that a northern Italian funerary *stela* is not really 'Roman' in quite the same way as Trajan's column. While these are valid questions to ask, the constraints of time and space available to this thesis necessitates its focus on the visual material long understood by scholars as a core element of 'Roman visual culture' – familiar images from Rome and Campania – while asking new questions of them.

By organising discussion according to context, this thesis asks how the representative limitations, conventions, and priorities of any one genre of material impact on how the female body is presented and prescribed. How does the representation of the female body change from the funerary sphere to a public, civic space, for instance? Are there more, or fewer, representative possibilities for the female body in terms of action, behaviour, and appearance when the image is displayed within the Roman house rather than on a grave altar or sarcophagus? Do domestic images, painted and framed on dining room walls and in peristyles, do gender differently – and/or to different audiences – from the performance and reification of normative conceptions of masculinity and femininity in freestanding and relief sculpture in the public sphere? How should (or shouldn't) the female body look?

Chapter Abstracts

This thesis begins with public sculpture to understand how and where female bodies were represented in the cityscape, taking the extensive scholarship on the representation of patronesses in the cities of the Greek East as its point of departure. It is not only that in the city of Rome, in contrast, the closest equivalents to Plancia Magna are empresses; it is that any search for them is to miss the range of female bodies that were made visible within the *caput mundi*; bodies that break down the distinctions between the real and the unreal, the imperial and the private, individual and generic, Roman and foreign, mortal and divine.

In death, the female body is depicted very differently. Funerary visual culture offers up a dizzying range of visual media and contexts across which gendered roles, expectations and behaviours range from the normative figures of daily life – mothers and wives in dialogue with fathers, husbands, statesmen, tradesmen, generals – to the more fluid and experimental subjectivities of female protagonists within mythological narratives. On Italian funerary altars, in contrast to Roman sarcophagi, which have benefited from far more sophisticated scholarly treatment, male and female bodies are more often represented beyond the dichotomy of 'real life' and 'fantasy' in a state of fragmentation. Although these fragmented male and female forms initially appear to speak to the disintegration of death, the fragmented female body is strangely rendered as less corporeal still: represented as decoration, blurring the figurative and the ornamental.

The final chapter turns to the domestic sphere and to the female bodies painted on the walls of Campanian houses between the first century BCE and the eruption of Vesuvius in 79 CE. Rather than make these paintings speak to the sex-specific use of domestic space or trap the female body within a self-selective model of gaze theory predicated on her violation and objectification, this chapter adopts a new starting point by focussing on the seated woman within Campanian wall painting. The value of the seated figure lies precisely in the fact that it is a mundane, unmarked category: it encompasses and embraces all kinds of bodies – male, female, mortal and divine, starring and ancillary – and thereby expresses a range of behaviours and attitudes, playing off the iterative, allusive nature of wall paintings as a medium. For the seated female figure in particular, seated-ness can make her less obviously a body, and empower her to become an observer of herself and others, levelling a challenge to the scholarly conception of gendered viewing within Roman culture.

These contextual case studies are organized along a relative spectrum of 'projectedness': that is, their ideological and spatial relationship to the physical reality of the Roman world. In the public context, for example, images were projected *out* into the world and sought a broad viewership: accordingly, such imagery often had an associated didactic meaning that correlated with and reified contemporary social values and expectations of men and women, masculinity and femininity. The funerary context, too, offered up images that existed out 'inthe-world', such as the funerary reliefs and altars that called out to viewers from the peripheries of Roman cities and towns. Even for those images that existed within less public, closed contexts, such as sarcophagi or sculptures contained within private tombs, funerary visual culture is underpinned by a sense of 'projected-ness'; in that it represents images of, or connected to, the deceased in an attempt to make the absent present once more while simultaneously allowing the viewer to let go. At the opposite end of the spectrum, the images painted on the walls of domestic houses within Roman Campania do not exist 'in-the-world' as much as they attempt to draw or entice the viewer into a more intimate, visual experience, connoted by illusionistic trompe l'oeil architecture, Egyptianising elements, and sacro-idyllic landscapes, as well as mythological scenes. The depiction of three-dimensional objects and scenes on a framed, flat surface emphasises the represented-ness of the image and promotes a much more self-reflexive and perhaps self-involved viewing than is possible within the context of the forum or funeral. For this reason, analysis of domestic imagery draws this thesis on the female body to its close.

I.

THE PUBLIC

'The changing representation of woman in text and image circles around the unanswered question, what is she? And, like a magnet twitching back from its like pole, it can never come to rest with an unchanging definition. The female figure metamorphoses from one sign into another.' (Warner 1978, p331).

To think about the 'public' and its associated visual culture is to think about the Roman city and the images with which it was filled. One might think that the gender politics of Greek and Roman life excludes images of women from the public sphere, and yet female bodies are pervasive within the city, many of them constitutive of these politics, others a challenge to orthodoxy.

Counterintuitive as it may seem, a brief diversion to 2nd-century CE Roman Asia Minor illuminates what is different about the representation of female bodies in the cities of Roman Italy. The eastern Roman Empire, or 'Greek East', inherited a longstanding visual tradition for the representation of women in public contexts: from at least 100 BCE onwards, Hellenistic-era dynastic sculptural displays included statues of women, which in time evolved into the provision of honorific statues for women who acted as patronesses to civic organisations, towns, and cities.⁶⁹ By the second-century CE, the city of Perge, unusually even for eastern cities (the neighbouring city of Side has yielded just the one example, and Aspendos, none), ⁷⁰ had as many as nine female statues of the Large Herculaneum type. This statue-type was named after a sculpture excavated from the Theatre of Herculaneum in Italy in the 18th century and is widely attested in public spaces across the Roman Empire from the 1st century CE onwards.⁷¹

⁶⁹ See van Bremen 1996; Smith 1998a. Longfellow 2014: 82; see also van Bremen 1994 on female patron from Sillyon. On female patronage in general, see Cooley 2013; on non-Romanness of representing patronesses, see Cooley 2013: 25.

⁷⁰ Trimble 2011: 118.

Fponymous Large Herculaneum Woman: Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, inv. Hm326; Daehner 2007:
 111. To date there have been no instances of Large Herculaneum Women discovered in domestic or residential

At least five different women between 120 and 190 CE were represented at Perge with this body type, suggesting that the type held 'local visual authority in addition to its interregional meanings'.⁷²

Part of the Large Herculaneum Woman's particular 'local visual authority' at Perge was likely due to the influence of Plancia Magna, a local patroness of the period.⁷³ Honorific inscriptions identify Plancia Magna as one with the city of Perge: she is described as the 'daughter of the city', and 'demiourgos' ('one who works for the people/city'), while her role as priestess to the city's patron goddess, Artemis Pergaia, further assimilated Plancia to Perge, and vice versa.⁷⁴ At least five statues of Plancia Magna are known to have existed across Perge, inserting her image into the city in a way that would have made her truly 'impossible' to miss: 'images of [Plancia Magna] and her name would have been literally everywhere you looked'.⁷⁵

At least two of these statues, dedicated by her freedmen, depicted Plancia in the Large Herculaneum Woman type. Plancia stands in a casual pose, draped in a chiton and himation, with a veil drawn over her crimped, wavy hair (fig. 1.1).⁷⁶ This statue stood in front of the South City Gate: a two-storey, triple-bayed spectacle renovated at Plancia's own expense, which, according to extant epigraphy, was filled with statues of Perge's mythological founders and historical patrons, Olympian deities and members of the imperial family.⁷⁷ Of the Gate statuary, only two female figures survive: one of them is identified securely by her inscribed base as the emperor Hadrian's wife Sabina, the other, more tentatively, as Sabina's mother, Matidia the Elder, or Trajan's wife Plotina on the basis of other extant inscriptions.⁷⁸ Neither woman, however, is distinguished stylistically or iconographically as a member of the imperial family, but represented 'in close visual proximity' to the honorific statue of Plancia that stood in front of the Gate complex. Not only do they share Plancia's Large Herculaneum Woman

spaces, emphasising its function as a public honorific statue: Daehner 2007: 92-102; Trimble 2011: 206-259. See Trimble 2011: 18ff for the 1711 excavation at Herculaneum, a catalogue (2011: 360-456) of attested Large Herculaneum Women statues, variants, statuettes, and fragments, and specific regional case studies (2011: 268-307). Daehner (2007: 87) notes existence of the motif on grave reliefs and sarcophagi, too and provides a map (2007: 90-91) of attested Large Herculaneum Women statues discovered found across the Empire. For further examples of draped female statue types, see Davies 2018: 154-193. On 'Romanness' of Roman art, see Perry 2005; Gazda 2002; Marvin 2008.

⁷² Trimble 2011: 194.

⁷³ Boatwright 1991, 1993; Dillon 2010: 155-163; Caceres-Cerda 2018; on bilingualism of South City Gate, see Gatzke 2020. On civic patronage in the Roman world, see Nicols 2014; Ng 2015.

⁷⁴ Gatzke 2020, n51.

⁷⁵ Feifer 2008: 42, with references; Dillon 2010: 156.

⁷⁶ Antalya Museum, Antalya, inv. A3459; Trimble 2011: 185, catalogue #84.

⁷⁷ Boatwright 1991: 250-251.

⁷⁸ Sahin 1999, inscriptions no.97-99.

statue-type;⁷⁹ but they are represented not with the physiognomic individualism and fashionable hairstyles that normally define portraits of Sabina and other Roman women, but with more generalised, Hellenic features: centrally-parted, wavy hair, small mouths, and large eyes.

The representation of at least two imperial women in the Large Herculaneum Woman type might be read as a peculiarly local strategy. By contrast, there are only two attested examples of empresses represented in the Large Herculaneum Woman type in the whole of Italy – statues identified as Vipsania and Faustina the Elder which hail from the relatively small towns of Pozzuoli and Ostia.80 That the imperial women share a visual mould with Plancia attests to the influence of her self-representation.⁸¹ Later in Perge, a woman named Aurelia Paulina, who may have constructed and dedicated a nymphaeum to Septimius Severus and his family, is represented in 'typical Syrian costume' in an adjacent building (fig. 1.2): a long, high-waisted garment accessorised with a shawl, a heavily jewelled neckline and a shellpendant necklace. Aurelia apparently sought to amplify the parallels between herself and the Syrian-born empress Julia Domna, whose statue stood within and to whom the nymphaeum was dedicated as part of the Severan family. 82 Aurelia's imitation of Julia Domna's visual representation only further emphasises the self-directedness of Plancia's self-representation at Perge: she does not follow imperial models but challenges the empress's paradigmatic status by representing both herself and the imperial women using a statue-type that has been described as 'the visual concept for the exemplary woman per se'. 83 In this way, the empress too was embraced into a reproduction-series, one of many iterations of the ideal elite woman.

The Large Herculaneum Woman was but one of the statue-types repeatedly used in female honorific portraiture across the Empire: the others are the Small Herculaneum Woman, as well as the so-called 'Ceres', 'Shoulder-bundle', 'Hip-bundle', and 'Pudicitia' types. Yet, as with the Large Herculaneum type, fewer of them were found in Italy than in other parts of the Empire: Jane Fejfer estimates that around only ten per cent of public honorific statuary in Italian towns represented women.⁸⁴ Public statuary for women in Italy was not as prevalent as

⁷⁹ Antalya Museum, Antalya, inv.A3086, A3066 ('Sabina'); A3045 ('Marciana/Matidia/Faustina'); Trimble 2011: catalogue #85-86.

⁸⁰ Davies 2013: 187, n32.

⁸¹ As do other female honorific statues in Perge that use in the Large Herculaneum Woman type whose identities remain unknown: Trimble 2011: catalogue #84-92.

⁸² Anatalya Museum inv.3280, 3456; Fejfer 2008: 362-363; on Julia Domna, see Levick 2007; on her iconography, Baharal 1999.

⁸³ Vorster 2007b: 139.

⁸⁴ Feifer 2008: 362.

in the Greek East, in part due to the absence of a comparable visual tradition. The few Republican examples of public statues of women in Roman Italy are all from contexts that had contact with Hellenistic Greek cities 'through centuries-old colonization and trade', such as the familial sculptural groups attested at Cartoceto and the statue of Viciria, the mother of local magistrate Nonius Balbus, which stood in his eponymous basilica at Herculaneum.⁸⁵

Thanks to their engagement with Hellenistic culture, communities on the Bay of Naples are exceptional in Roman Italy in offering examples of women inserting themselves into the sculptural landscape of the city. Trimble understands the 'original' Large Herculaneum Woman excavated from the theatre as likely a member of one of 'Herculaneum's leading families', although, in the absence of inscriptional evidence, her identity is unclear (fig. 1.3).86 At Pompeii, Brenda Longfellow estimates from epigraphic evidence that there may have been up to seven female patrons 'at work in the [Pompeian] community', although it is not quite clear over what timescale.⁸⁷ Some honours bestowed upon women at Pompeii were uniquely local. A public priestess named Mamia is recorded in inscriptions as the dedicator of the Sanctuary to the Genius of Augustus in the Pompeian forum: she received the publicly-voted honour of an inscribed schola tomb, a tomb type that is unique to Pompeii, with eight extant examples erected for elected officials and their relatives. Mamia is one of only three women to receive such an honour, and the only one who received it in her own right. Her inscription lacks any mention of her husband.88

Another monumental tomb – self-built, rather than voted for by the Pompeians – marks out the most prominent female patrons in the Pompeian cityscape, Eumachia, a public priestess of Venus and patron of the local fullers' guild.⁸⁹ Eumachia's tomb at Porta Nocera made her and her family visible to those entering and exiting the city, but she was likely best known amongst Pompeians as the patron who constructed and dedicated a large building in the Forum.

⁸⁵ Lindner 2015: 206. Viciria statue, MANN, Naples, inv.6168. For references to Cartoceto group and Balbii, see Fejfer 2008: 333.

⁸⁶ Trimble 2011: 52-53. For broader epigraphic and archaeological approaches to female patrons in the Latin West, see Hemelrijk 2013, 2015, 2021; Hemelrijk and Woolf 2013; Trimble 2011; Hänninen 2019.

⁸⁷ Longfellow 2014: 82. She identifies two 'female patrons' from honorific female statues inside the city, such as to Eumachia (see below); Holconia, whose statue base was found inside the tetrapylon erected for the Holconii family (see Longfellow 2014: 88-89; on extant statue of Holconius Rufus, see Longfellow 2018: 34-40; Welch 2007: 555-557); female honorific statue from the macellum in the Pompeian forum, with varying identifications by scholars (as elite woman, Welch 2007: 561-564; Zanker 1995: 85; Longfellow 2014: 97, 2018: 40-43; contra Small 1996) and a female statue from the Temple of Augustan Fortune whose face has been sheared off (Longfellow 2014: 97 and 2018: 43-44).

⁸⁸ Longfellow 2014: 85-86; Zanker 1995: 124. Inscription on Sanctuary of Genius of Augustus, CIL.X.816; see Ling 2005: 122-123; Dobbins 2007: 163-164.

⁸⁹ Cooley 2004: 141-142.

The inscription on the so-called 'Eumachia Building', likely Augustan in date, stated that Eumachia built and dedicated the complex to Augustan Concordia and Pietas in her own name and that of her son. The function of the building remains unclear, but it undoubtedly served to insert Eumachia into the material fabric of Pompeii itself, both in the inscription of her name above the door and the display of her image within.⁹⁰

The building was comprised of three distinct parts: the *chalcidicum* that faced onto the forum with *exedrae* for statuary display, an interior colonnade with a large central apse flanked by two smaller niches, and finally the *crypta* which housed Eumachia's own statue, the inscription of which records its dedication to her by the fullers of Pompeii. 91 The statue shows Eumachia standing in a casual, relaxed pose similar to the 'Pudicitia' statue type, with her weight shifted onto her left foot, as if to better display the delicate folds and drapery of her stola and palla: she has grasped the edges of the latter in her right hand and allows the excess fabric to fall elegantly over her left elbow (fig. 1.4). The palla has been pulled up over her head, drawing the viewer's eye to her idealised, unlined face, its symmetry framed by her centrally-parted, crimped hair. While her stola suggests Eumachia's status as a married woman, the statue itself eschews physiognomic individuality to represent Eumachia in an idealised and classicising style: her depiction as 'young, beautiful and Aphrodite-like' may have correlated with her public role as a priestess of Venus. 92

Unlike Plancia Magna at Perge, Eumachia appears to emulate the visual template set by the imperial household a hundred-and-fifty miles away, in the city of Rome. The *chalcidicum* of the Eumachia Building preserves evidence of statues of Roman heroes such as Aeneas and Romulus, which evoke the sculptural display of Rome's mythical and historical *summi viri* in the hemicycles of the Forum Augustum: Eumachia's building may even have presented the Pompeian *summi viri*. The entrance to the portico of the Eumachia Building was also adorned with an acanthus-scroll relief similar to the floral decoration on the Augustan

⁹⁰ CIL.X.811 - largely restored from inscription on rear entrance (CIL.X.810). Zanker (1995: 92) identifies Eumachia's son as the same M. Numistrius Fronto who served as *duumvir* in 2/3CE and understands the joint dedication in the 'context of [Fronto's] election campaign'. Other scholars, however, advocate for slightly later Augustan date or even a Tiberian one, anywhere between 9BCE and 22CE: see Zanker 1995: 92; Dobbins 2007: 165; Cooley 2013: 36. On Eumachia building as multipurpose space, see Richardson 1998: 198 For overview of Pompeii's forum, in particular its redevelopment after the earthquake of 62CE, see Dobbins 1994, 2007; Ling 2005; Frankl 2013.

⁹¹ Statue, MANN, Naples, inv.6232; inscription, *CIL*.X.813. Eumachia may have had ties to the wool-industry and sheep-farming via marriage, as her own *gens* dealt in ceramics and tiles: Bernstein 2007: 530-531.

⁹² Welch 2007: 558; Longfellow 2014: 94-95.

⁹³ Zanker 1995: 104; Frankl 2013: 4; Longfellow 2014: 92-94. On *summi viri* at Rome, see *infra* p.55.

Ara Pacis, with Paul Zanker even suggesting the reliefs were produced in the same workshop. Eumachia's public self-representation put her into even closer dialogue with the empress Livia. In founding a public building characterised by a portico, Eumachia built on the precedent set by Livia as the second female patron of a portico at Rome; the 'first' being Augustus' sister Octavia, whose name was attached to the renovation of the Republican-era Porticus Metelli into the Porticus Octaviae around 27 BCE. Eumachia's construction of a public building with a portico may have encouraged 'Pompeians to draw connections between her benefaction and those of imperial family members'; her dedication of the building to Augustan Concordia and Pietas, like the Porticus Liviae at Rome, further aligned herself with Livia. This parallel was likely reinforced by the erection of a statue of the goddess Concordia, which may have had Livia's own features, in the large apse in the portico, directly aligned with Eumachia's own image in the *crypta*. 97

Although 19th-century excavation reports describe the discovery of a female statue holding a cornucopia somewhere in the Eumachia Building, the precise findspot was not recorded. A statue matching this description now in Naples is attributed to the Temple of Augustan Fortune (fig. 1.5). It is impossible to say whether this is the hypothesised statue of Concordia-Livia from the portico of the Eumachia building: the idealization of the statue's face, as was standard for Roman female portraiture in the early imperial period, makes it difficult to say if it was intended as a portrait of Livia. Ranker, however, suggests that the hypothesised Livia-Concordia statue is corroborated by a relief from a fountain on the Via dell'Abbondanza near the side-entrance to the Eumachia Building, which depicts Concordia with a cornucopia and a hairstyle Zanker deems reminiscent of Livia's own portraiture (fig. 1.6). His analysis is tenuous, however, given the low-relief of the image and the replication of the *nodus* hairstyle across contemporary portraits of elite Roman women. Altion Cooley, in contrast, cites the uncertain provenance of the portico statuary and the woolly dating of the Eumachia Building as evidence against too forceful an understanding of Eumachia as a

⁹⁴ Zanker 1995: 94-96; contra Cooley 2013: 35.

⁹⁵ Roller 2018: 220; for references to renovation of Porticus Metelli, see Pliny *Naturalis historia* 34.31, 36.42; see *infra* p43-45.

⁹⁶ Longfellow 2014: 93.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 94. For imperial women's patronage of the arts, see Kleiner 1996.

⁹⁸ MANN, Naples, inv.6362; for reports, see references in Longfellow 2014; 84, notes 74-76.

⁹⁹ Zanker 1995: 97. Richardson (1978: 268) goes one further in suggesting the central apse held an image of Livia, flanked by statues of Concordia and Pietas; *contra* Cooley 2013: 36-37. For portraits of Livia, see overview in Wood 1999: 87ff; Winkes 1995: 19-63, catalogue 80-207; Bartman 1999. On 'suppressed physiognomy and typologically identical hairstyles' in contemporary female portraiture, see comments by Fejfer 2008: 355-357.

Pompeian Livia. 100 Yet even without the hypothesised statue of Concordia-Livia, it is apparent that Eumachia navigated her self-representation in the public eye at Pompeii at least in relation to, if not by the example of, Livia.

Eumachia and Plancia Magna demonstrate highly localised and culturally specific ways of inserting oneself into the Roman cityscapes of Pompeii and Perge. If Plancia projected herself as a trend-setter within Perge, whose choice of statue-type was followed even by imperial women, then Eumachia's self-portrayal at Pompeii draws more subtle parallels with the imperial family in Rome. Eumachia was typical of the Pompeian elite in emulating monuments and iconographies from the capital, as many of her elite male contemporaries constructed and renovated public buildings at Pompeii that closely resembled Augustus's imperial projects at Rome: the planned Sanctuary of Venus at Pompeii and the so-called 'Large Palaestra' next to the amphitheatre may have paralleled Augustus' complex on the Palatine Hill and various portici at Rome. A local Pompeian magistrate, Marcus Holconius Rufus, also renovated the Pompeian theatre just as Augustus dedicated the Theatre of Marcellus in Rome; these parallels were further reinforced by the erection of a cuirassed statue of Holconius Rufus that strongly resembles the Prima Porta Augustus. 101 Yet if Eumachia and Pompeian elites more generally were looking towards Rome for models of public self-representation, the question inevitably arises: what was happening at Rome? What were the representative options for women (and men), and how far were they unique to the capital?

Sex and the caput mundi

While a greater volume of material evidence from 'public contexts' has been preserved at Rome relative to the rest of Roman Italy, there are a number of contextual, categorical, and methodological problems at stake which are particularly acute in the interpretation of the 'public' as a context. The scare quotes flag the discrepancy between ancient definitions and the modern oppositional dichotomy of 'private' vs. 'public' and the difficulties of mapping these concepts onto physical space. As discussed by scholars such as Wallace-Hadrill in reference to the Pompeian house, 'public' and 'private' were defined by the Romans in relative rather than absolute terms. ¹⁰² The definition of urban space was no less blurry across the city and over

¹⁰⁰ Cooley 2013: 36-37.

¹⁰¹ Zanker 1995: 78-79; Ling 2005: 123. On Marcus Holconius Rufus' statue, see MANN, Naples, inv.6233, *CIL*.X.830; Welch 2007: 555-557; Longfellow 2018: 34-40.

¹⁰² See Wallace-Hadrill 1988, 1994, 1996. Other accounts of Roman domestic space include Laurence and Wallace-Hadrill 1997; Hales 2003; Wallace-Hadrill 2007; Tuori and Nissin 2015.

time; from porticos to *horti*, public baths, temples, theatres, amphitheatres, as well as more transitory public spectacles including triumphs, processions and religious festivals. As Amy Russell has recently demonstrated, public spaces in Republican Rome could be 'public and sacred, private and leisurely, private and political, public and erotic – and practically any other combination'. 104

With the establishment of the Principate, the fluidity of Republican public space was replaced by new forms of spatial control. These changes were most explicitly demonstrated by the construction and renovation of Roman monuments and buildings often referred to by scholars as the 'Augustan building program'. Under Augustus, the line between 'public' and 'private' in the socio-political and cultural discourse was particularly blurred, with Rome transformed into a 'moral museum' in which monuments and public buildings sought to proscribe ways of being and behaving that reflected contemporary moralising legislation. He Basilica Aemilia in the Forum Romanum, for example, was fitted out with Augustan reliefs that visualised female *exempla* and anti-*exempla*: one relief showed the punishment of Tarpeia, crushed to death for her betrayal of Rome, while another depicted the rape of the Sabine Women, whose cooperation with their abductors is implicitly praised as part of Rome's foundation myth (figs. 1.7, 1.8). He colonnade of the Danaids in the complex of the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine visualised the destruction of the disobedient Danaids, perhaps to underline the need for strict codes of conduct.

Yet Ovid's description of the colonnade of the Danaids as a pick-up spot emphasises that the Augustan fusion of public, private, personal and political was ripe for subversion and manipulation. ¹⁰⁹ In elegiac poetry, the 'sober monuments of Roma' are not unchanging, static

¹⁰³ On baths and bathing culture at Rome, see Yegül 1992; Fagan 1999; on Baths of Caracalla at Rome, see Gensheimer 2018. On theatres, see for example Pompey's theatre complex: Temelini 2006; Packer 2010; Russell 2016: 153-186; on Roman *horti*, see Purcell 2007; on porticos, Quenemoen 2006; Evans 2009; Thorsen 2012; Jenkyns 2013: 94-101. On the Roman triumph, see overview in Beard 2008; for architecture and material traces of triumphs, see Popkin 2016. On topography and significance of Rome's seven hills, see Vout 2012. For cosmopolitanism of Rome, see selected papers in Edwards and Woolf 2003.

¹⁰⁴ Russell 2016: 187.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 192-193; on Augustan urban development, see Zanker 1988; Favro 1996; Haselberger 2007. On interplay between monuments and monumental(ised) texts in Augustan Rome, see various papers in Habinek and Schiesaro 1997; Heslin 2019; Padilla Peralta 2019; see also Woolf 1996.

¹⁰⁶ Walker 2000: 69; Milnor 2005.

 $^{^{107}}$ Kampen 1988: 15; she dates the Basilica reliefs to 14BCE, contemporaneous with the Ara Pacis, although the dating may range from 60BCE to 60CE. See also Kranzle 1991, 1994; Boatwright 2011: 124.

¹⁰⁸ The importance of the Danaids colonnade is further underlined by the fact that it was constructed by Augustus after his victory at the Battle of Actium, and the temple complex was physically connected to his private house on the Palatine. See Evans 2009: 139-140; see *infra* p51-52.

¹⁰⁹ Amores 2.2.3-4; Ars amatoria. 1.73-4, 1.492, 3.389; Edwards 1996: 25.

backdrops but tempered, altered or subverted altogether by the erotic encounters that take place within them. As Ovid writes, Augustus' own ancestral goddess Venus has taken up permanent residence in the city and transformed every space into an arena in which to refine the art of love; If from her temple, Venus watches lovers chatting up girls at the porticoes of Pompey, Livia and Octavia; in lawcourts, shrines, theatrical shows; at races and triumphs. It Augustan constructions and renovations had a seemingly didactic meaning, rooted in contemporary social policy; yet the elegiac city of Rome remained mutable, fluid and complex, constituted as much by the men and women who moved through and inhabited the city as the bricks and marble with which it was built. In light of this, scholars have recently recognised the value of experiential, phenomenological and spatial analysis for understanding Rome as urban space and foregrounding the slipperiness of its definition: they ask, for example, when and how the colonnade of the Danaids might have been political, erotic, personal or political, sacred or profane.

The fluid definition of 'public' space at Rome, however, is just one dynamic to negotiate when it comes to thinking about the public sphere. The academic organization and categorisation of material culture from public contexts poses a significant challenge to the interpretation of this evidence and its construction of gender. To date, the breadth of material evidence from public contexts at Rome has been underplayed by the overly narrow scope of previous academic studies. Scholars have historically eschewed a *longue durée* view to hone in on specific periods of public visual culture, with the Augustan building program providing a natural focal point. Furthermore, previous scholarship has historically analysed individual sites and monuments from Rome by spatially and semantically divorcing them from the wider context and chronology of the city and its viewers. ¹¹⁴ Barbara Kellum, for example, argues that the Forum Augustum – arranged with the Temple of Mars Ultor at the rear, flanked by *exedrae*

¹¹⁰ Edwards 1996: 25; see also Welch 2005 on Propertius' 'elegiac cityscape'.

¹¹¹ Ars am 1.59-60; see Rogerson 2012. On gendering of Rome in Renaissance texts, see Gessert 2015.

¹¹² Ars am. 1.67-87 (civic and public buildings); 1.89-134 (theatre); 1.135-176 (races); 1.177-229 (triumphs). Ovid advises women to be seen in similar public places (3.381-431). This catalogue of pick-up spots is corroborated by other elegiac poets: Catullus records being sexually propositioned by women in Pompey's portico (55); Propertius is banned by his jealous lover from walking through the portico, theatre, and forum (4.8.75); elsewhere (2.32.11), Propertius asks why his *puella* has stopped frequenting the same portico. For further references see Russell 2016: 179-182.

¹¹³ For experiential accounts of movement around Rome, see Jenkyns 2013; Betts 2011, Boatwright 2015; selected chapters in Betts 2017 and Flohr 2020; selected papers in Caldelli and Ricci 2020. On walking at Rome, see Favro 1996; Macaulay-Lewis 2011; O'Sullivan 2011; Östenberg *et al* 2015. For similar analysis at Pompeii, see Bon and Jones 1997: Poehler 2017.

¹¹⁴ See site-specific studies such as D'Ambra 1993 on the Forum Transitorium; see also, on the Hadrianeum, Hughes 2009; Juhasz 2018; on Forum Romanum, Boatwright 2011. The Columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, in contrast, are frequently discussed in relation to each other: see Dillon 2006; Kampen 1995; van den Borne 2017.

and preceded by a long forecourt – has a phallic layout that reflects its function and significance as a space for the performance of masculinity. To do so, however, she must assume that the Forum was always planned as such rather than fitted in and around pre-existing buildings as part of an ever-developing city. She assumes, too, a viewer with a birds-eye view of the forum: a view that is not dissimilar to later academic maps and plans of the imperial fora and their development. ¹¹⁵

The categorization of the visual and material culture of the public sphere, both at Rome and in Italy more broadly, causes additional problems. 'Public' art is often reduced to sculpture, like the reliefs that adorned the Basilica Aemilia, or the statuary from the portico of the Danaids on the Palatine. The unthinking equivalence of 'public' art with sculpture risks excluding other aspects of visual culture that were part of the city but are not preserved in the archaeological record: visual and verbal graffiti, for instance. The sculptural evidence generally understood as 'public art' has also previously been classified by scholars as 'state' art, despite the erroneous implication that such images were produced by co-ordinated efforts at the highest levels of Roman governance, a comparison that uncomfortably and anachronistically invokes modern nationalist propaganda. The alternative definition of 'historical' art is similarly problematic, however, as it falsely suggests that such images were grounded in and by historical veracity. For this reason, some scholars have suggested that 'monumental' art is a more suitable term for the sculptural imagery that decorated the urban context. What the specificities of nomenclature cannot mitigate, however, is the patchy preservation of such sculpture from public monuments and reliefs. 117

'Public' sculpture is constituted, too, by honorific portraiture and statuary usually set up by civic organisations to honour the financial generosity of local elites in public spaces. Thinking through female representation in the cityscape through honorific statuary is already problematic when it comes to Roman Italy. As referenced above, the absence of a comparable visual tradition for public statues of women in Italy relative to the Greek East means there are fewer statues with which to work. Secondly, the interpretation of surviving portrait images and statues of women from Italy is complicated by long-standing issues with their academic

¹¹⁵ Kellum 1996, 1997. Kellum's interpretation of the forum-as-phallus falters further with the discovery of foundations for additional smaller *exedrae* belonging to the Forum Augustum, which presupposes the existence of a second pair of *exedrae*: see Geiger 2008: 107-108, citing La Rocca 2001.

¹¹⁶ For visual graffiti from across the Empire, see Languer 2001.

¹¹⁷ Grubow Sobocinski and Wolfram-Thill 2015: 278; see also Wolfram-Thill, forthcoming.

¹¹⁸ Fejfer 2008: 16-18; in contrast, in 'private' contexts such as the buildings of corporations, houses, villas and tombs, the hororand could erect images of herself: ibid, 73ff.

categorisation and discussion. Often segregated from other material evidence due to their general lack of provenance and secure physical context, Roman portraits have suffered further segregation according to gender: female and male portraits are separated, with publications solely focussed on female portraits often divided into 'Imperial Women' – those images identified as representations of empresses or members of the imperial family through iconographic, epigraphic or contextual clues – and anonymous images of elite Roman women. As the idealised and unlined face of Eumachia's statue illustrates, however, the visual distinction between images of empresses and elite women was not always obvious. Without inscriptional evidence, the 'suppressed physiognomy and typologically identical hairstyles' common to most Roman female portraiture, as well as the limited repertoire of statue-types used for imperial and elite portraiture, for honorific and funerary sculpture, often make it difficult to understand whom a portrait is supposed to represent: an empress or *privata*. 120

Many of these intersecting issues of chronology, categorisation, and medium emerge in previous scholarship on images of women in public contexts. The exception to the rule, however, is Kampen's series of essays on the construction of gender in what she terms 'historical' Roman art. Kampen's approach takes a thematic, broad, and synthesised view of the female body as represented in public contexts in the Roman Empire. She discusses, for example, the moralistic representation of the right (and wrong) way for women to behave on the Basilica Aemilia; how women function as 'boundary markers' and negative foils to the construction of masculinity on the victory columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius; and how the depiction of women in public contexts used them as symbols of the domestic sphere to communicate the 'ideal and idealized relationship between public and private'. This functionality of the female body was particularly useful in the Augustan, Antonine, and Severan periods where the adoption of, and transfer of power to, a male heir required further legitimation through a careful negotiation of the personal and political, familial and dynastic. ¹²¹

The strength of Kampen's work lies in its organisation by theme rather than medium or chronological period: her analysis cuts across overly narrow categorisations of material

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¹¹⁹ See, for example, the minimal treatment of 'The Empress and her Fellow Elite Women', who receive just 40 pages of discussion from Fejfer (2008: 331-373) out of a 600-page tome on Roman portraiture. On 'Imperial Women', see Wood 1999, Alexandridis 2004; Fittschen 1996; see also Bartman 1999 on Livia, Fittschen 1982 on Faustina Minor, Kokkinos 1992 on Antonia Minor. For female portraiture in general, see Hemelrijk 2005.

¹²⁰ Fejfer 2008: 355-357, with references; see also Fittschen 2010: 221.

¹²¹ Kampen 1988; 1991; 1995.

evidence, the isolation of specific monuments and sites, and preservation bias. This chapter aims to adopt Kampen's thematic approach by looking at representations of female bodies in public contexts across Rome, putting them back into their physical context where possible and into dialogue with each other. In turn, it builds on and broadens Kampen's scope of discussion: where she excluded images of goddesses and personifications to examine the use of the *mortal* female body as a signifier (of good and bad behaviour; of the 'private' world), and the inherent conservatism of these representations (where women either fulfil or transgress gender roles), the following discussion explores the intersections between different types of female body in public spaces at Rome more broadly. This chapter is less interested in the functionality of the female body as represented in public visual culture than in how different *kinds* of female bodies were represented in public; how they existed and interacted in the urban fabric of Rome spatially, visually and conceptually; and, critically, how they overlapped with one another. How far were the bodies of the barbarian, the *matrona*, the goddess, and the personification visually distinguished from each other, and how charged was this distinction, given the physical juxtaposition of such images in the city?

To answer these questions, this chapter stays with the *caput mundi* as its case study. Although Rome is exceptional, relative to Roman Italy and further afield, in the volume of evidence preserved from public contexts, even it does not offer sufficient material culture in situ to justify focussing on one specific period. Accordingly, this chapter takes a more flexible approach to chronology within the remit already outlined for this thesis, namely the early to high Imperial period. The material evidence under discussion is – previous criticisms notwithstanding – primarily sculptural. This focus on sculpture seeks to go beyond previous studies by bringing the types outlined above (barbarian, *matrona*, goddess, personification) into a single scenography to understand how they circumscribed ideas about femininity and womanhood. While funerary sculpture is also 'public', and often reuses statue-types from 'public sculpture' such as the 'Pudicitia' type, it is discussed in a separate chapter of this thesis, in light of the physical segregation of most funerary monuments beyond the built-up area of the city, and the funerary context's unique negotiation of physical presence and absence.¹²³ Similarly, while references to images on coins are made where relevant, this chapter does not

¹²² Kampen 1991: 218.

¹²³ On distinction between funerary and honorific sculpture, see Davies 2013.

give numismatic imagery a starring role to avoid conflating the portable with the (generally) permanent.¹²⁴

Putting these images into dialogue with each other means paying closer attention to how viewers would have seen and interpreted the female bodies represented in different contexts across the city, and how these representations spoke to each other. In this sense, the ensuing discussion is also inspired by the recent work that privileges walking as a way of putting objects in space and into dialogue with each other within the ancient cityscape, across both space and time. This chapter enacts a dialogic and holistic examination of the female bodies represented within Rome, contemplating their physical relationship to each other as well as flagging, where pertinent, how the representation of the female body changed over time.

The discussion is structured according to three 'nodes', each of which focusses on a particular kind of female body to bring it into dialogue with others. The first 'node' focusses on the elite Roman woman as represented in honorific portraiture, asking how and where her image stands within the city and in relation to comparable statues of imperial women. The second turns to the monuments and imagery that sought to bring Rome's conquered territories into the city itself and compares the depiction of foreign and Roman women. Finally, the third section examines the depiction of personifications, asking how these female figures are visually distinguished – or not – from the other female bodies (divine and mortal) represented in the public sphere. This chapter concludes by drawing these 'nodes' together to plot an image of female representation within the city.

The Mortal Woman of Rome

As demonstrated by its usage in the Greek East and beyond, the replicated-ness of the Large Herculaneum Woman statue-type was key to its function as a visual shorthand for what was generally expected of womanhood. Even the figure's stock pose emphasises a sense of containment: her right arm is bent as if drawing the voluminous mantle more tightly around herself. Although the Large Herculaneum type is also attested in small Italian towns like those clustered on the Bay of Naples, ¹²⁶ the archaeological record suggests that she was rarer at

¹²⁴ Recent work examines public architecture as represented on coins: see Manders 2012, Elkins 2015. Harvey 2019 is an instructive example of similar work on Roman women in numismatic imagery.

¹²⁵ O'Sullivan 2011: 16-33, 51-71; for references to walking and experiential accounts of Rome, see *supra* n113. For an examination of the *passeggiata* and public space in a contemporary Italian town, see del Negro 2004.

¹²⁶ For chronological development of distribution patterns, see Trimble 2011: 114-115.

Rome.¹²⁷ If what survives is indicative of what was produced and displayed, then why does the type fail to find a foothold in Rome itself? How and where (if at all) were elite Roman women represented in free-standing statuary in the *caput mundi*?

In Republican Italy, statues of women were primarily set up in domestic or funerary contexts and tended to represent goddesses, personifications, or mythological figures rather than 'real', individual women. Republican Rome was no exception: while the Forum Romanum and other public contexts were filled with portrait statues of contemporary politicians, aristocrats, and men-about-town, there is evidence for but five statues of women, none of which survive but are attested by imperial authors such as Pliny the Elder and Plutarch. These women were not of Rome's present but embedded within some of the earliest, quasi-mythical yarns spun about Rome, its foundation, and growth: Gaia Caecilia, the wife of the fifth king of Rome, who ruled in the 7th century BCE; Claudia Quinta, who is said to have singlehandedly towed the beached ship carrying the image of the Magna Mater in the 3rd century BCE; Taracia Caia, a Vestal Virgin who donated land to the city in the late 2nd century BCE; Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, whose image may have stood in the Porticus Metelli; and finally the heroine Cloelia, who escaped captivity during the Etrusco-Roman war in the late 6th century BCE.

There is compelling evidence that the latter two statues of Cloelia and Cornelia were on display from the late 1st century BCE onwards, prior to the senatorial vote of 35 BCE that granted the right to public statues to Livia (59-29 CE), Augustus' wife, and his sister Octavia (66-11 BCE). That Republican-era images of the exemplary Cloelia and Cornelia co-existed with imperial statues of the still-living women illustrates how older sculpture could and did speak to contemporary socio-political mores. Despite – or perhaps because of – their age, these Republican statues loomed large in imperial discussions of what it meant to put up a statue to

¹²⁷ Ibid, catalogue #39-43, with tentative provenance within Rome; #44-53 more tenuous still.

¹²⁸ Hemelrijk 2005: 310; Boatwright 2011: 120ff.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid. On Gaia Caecilia/Tanaquil, see reports by Plutarch (*Moralia* 271E), who records that a bronze statue of Gaia Caecilia stood inside the Temple of Sancus at Rome, along with her sandals and spindle as symbols of her domestic virtue. On Claudia Quinta's deeds and statue, reportedly placed inside the Temple of the Magna Mater, see accounts by Livy, 29.14.10-14; Ovid, *Fasti* 4.305-44; Valerius Maximus, *Facta* 1.8.11; Tacitus, *Annals* 4.64.5; see also Flory 1993: 289. For Vestal Virgin Taracia Caia, see Pliny, *NH* 34.25; see Lindner 2015: 201, and, on iconography of Vestals, 99-125, 126-163. Cloelia: see Pliny *NH* 34.28 (n.b., Boatwright appears to total 'four' Republican statues of women, but this is due to her focus on the Forum Romanum rather than the entire city). Cloelia: see Livy, *Ab urbe condita* 2.13.4-11; see also account by Valerius Maximus 3.2.2.

¹³¹ Boatwright 2011: 124: Livia received the same honour after the death of her son Drusus the Elder in 9BCE.

a woman in Rome: they continued to shape, as well as to reflect, expectations about gender roles in society.

Cloelia was certainly embedded within the furthest reaches of Rome's history: taken hostage by the Etruscans during the war of 508 BCE, Cloelia managed to escape from the enemy camp and lead her fellow prisoners to safety by swimming across the Tiber. Livy reports that her courage, unprecedented for a woman, was praised by all, including the Etruscan king Porsenna. Accordingly, the Romans voted to honour her with a monument that was as unprecedented as her bravery: an equestrian statue of Cloelia was placed at the highest point of the Sacred Way at the entrance into the Forum Romanum. The precise date of Cloelia's statue is unclear: the earliest equestrian statues from Italy date from 338 BCE, when Livy records that they were erected to two consuls. Also unclear is the statue's imperial afterlife. Dionyius of Halicarnassus reports that the statue was destroyed in a fire at some point between its erection and the 1st century CE. It must have been repaired or entirely re-erected at least once by either Augustus or Tiberius, as it was witnessed on display in the Forum Romanum by Pliny the Elder and his contemporaries in the 1st century CE, and Servius in the early 5th century CE. Pliny describes the statue as follows:

Pedestres sine dubio Romae fuere in auctoritate longo tempore; et equestrium tamen origio perquam vertus est, cum feminis etiam honore communicato Cloeliae statua equestri, ceu parum esset toga eam cingi, cum Lucretiae ac Bruto, qui expulerant reges, propter quos Cloelia inter obsides fuerat, non decernerentur.

Pedestrian statues have been, undoubtedly, for a long time in estimation at Rome; equestrian statues are, however, of considerable antiquity, and females have even participated in this honour; for the statue of Cloelia is equestrian, as if it had not been sufficient to have her clad in the toga; and this, although statues were not decreed to

¹³² Livy, *Ab urbe* 2.13.4-11; see also account by Valerius Maximus, *Facta* 3.2.2.

^{133 &#}x27;Romani novam in femina virtutem novo genere honoris, statua equestri, donavere': Livy, Ab urbe 2.13.14. On Cloelia as an exemplum, see Roller 2018: 66-94; Keegan 2021: 124-125. Ancient identifications of the statue as Cloelia: Pliny, NH 34.28; Servius, note on Aeneid 8.646; Seneca the Younger, Consolation to Marcia 6.2. The precise location of Cloelia's statue varies: it potentially stood 'on summit of Sacred Way, or where the Sacred Way enters the forum, or opposite the temple of Iuppiter Stator in the vestibule of Tarquinius Superbus' house': see Roller 2018: 87.

¹³⁴ Livy, *Ab urbe* 8.13.9.

¹³⁵ *Roman Antiquities* 5.35.2; Roller 2018: 89.

Lucretia, or to Brutus, who had expelled the kings, and through both of whom Cloelia had been given as a hostage. 136

Although Pliny's account of the statue sounds definitive, he later mentions that another 1st-century CE historian understood it to be a depiction of Valeria, the daughter of the consul Publicola, who reportedly also escaped the Etruscan camp by swimming across the Tiber. Such doubts have continued. Largely motivated by the lack of precedent for a female equestrian statue at any period within Roman art history, various modern scholars have questioned whether the statue witnessed and described by Pliny as Cloelia was always understood as the mythical heroine. Maureen Flory, for example, suggests that the statue may have originally represented a 'female divinity, perhaps Venus, [which] was claimed as an actual Roman and then endowed with a history that fitted the customary reasons for erecting honorific statues of men'. Emily Hemelrijk, in contrast, takes the inherent masculinity of the equestrian statue type as proof that the statue must have originally honoured a man. 139

Hemelrijk's doubts are motivated, in part, by Pliny's description of the sculpted figure as togate. That said, ancient authors' references to prostitutes wearing the toga to distinguish them from other women suggest that Cloelia's toga may have served to set her apart from other women too. This sense of exceptionality is reinforced by Pliny, who suggests that the equestrian statue was bestowed on the heroine as an additional honour, as if the toga itself was not enough (*Cloeliae statua equestri, ceu parum esset toga eam cingi*). ¹⁴⁰ Cloelia's toga can be explained by the Romans' desire to honour her with something manly (*aliquid virile*, as Servius puts it), while her horse may also reference the steed she received from Porsenna in recognition of her bravery, a gift described by Plutarch as befitting a male warrior (δωρεᾶς ἀνδρὶ πολεμιστῆ). ¹⁴¹ The repeated identification of Cloelia as a 'manly maiden' in imperial literary texts, who performs 'the kind of deed[s] male warriors do' (escaping a prisoner-of-war camp; leading the hostages like a *dux*; swimming the Tiber under a shower of Etruscan javelins) provides justification enough for her statue-type. ¹⁴²

¹³⁶ NH 34.28, trans. Bostock, 1855.

¹³⁷ Pliny, *NH* 34.29. See also Plutarch's comments on whether the statue represents Cloelia or Valeria: *Mulierum virtutes* 14, *Life of Publicola* 19.4.

¹³⁸ Flory 1993: 289: Roller 2018: 88-89.

¹³⁹ Hemelrijk 2005: 312.

¹⁴⁰ Pliny, NH 34.28. For suggestion that prostitutes wore togas to mark them as 'other', see Olson 2014b.

¹⁴¹ Servius, ad. Aen. 8.646; Plutarch, Mulierum virtutes 14.

¹⁴² Roller 2018: 79-84.

Whether the female equestrian statue in the Forum was originally set up as an image of 'Cloelia' or adapted from a pre-existing image is unclear. What *is* clear is that it was understood as Cloelia by the first century CE, when it functioned less as an *exemplum* for contemporary women as for men. Cloelia appears, for instance, as a *puella* among *viri* in Valerius Maximus' catalogue of courageous male heroes (*de fortitudine*). Seneca similarly uses Cloelia's statue to rebuke contemporary youths for riding in sedans and litters around the city. For Seneca, these young men fall short of what was expected of male behaviour, when compared to the image of a togate woman on horseback: an image that shows, perhaps, better than any other that masculinity is (in the Butlerian sense) a performance. It is Cloelia's relevance, and perhaps resemblance, to men that keeps her statue on show.

The contemporary negotiation of exemplarity, gender and identity exemplified by Cloelia's statue is paralleled by the imperial retention of a statue of Cornelia, who lived in the 2nd century BCE. Various imperial authors report that Cornelia was honoured with a bronze statue displayed in the Augustan Porticus Octaviae, which was renovated from the Republicanera Porticus Metelli. ¹⁴⁵ Only the base of Cornelia's statue survives today: it is made of Pentelic marble and still bears its Augustan-era inscription to Cornelia, identified as the mother of the Gracchi, as well as traces of what may have been a pre-Augustan inscription that has been damaged or removed. ¹⁴⁶ The size and position of the anchorings on the base suggest that it once held a larger-than-life, seated statue similar to Hellenistic statue-types used for goddesses including Demeter, Cybele and Hera (fig. 1.9). ¹⁴⁷ Pliny describes Cornelia as seated:

sicuti corneliae gracchorum matri, quae fuit africani prioris filia. sedens huic posita soleisque sine ammento insignis in metelli publica porticu, quae statua nunc est in octaviae operibus.

There is the statue of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi and daughter of the elder Scipio Africanus. This represents her in a sitting position and is remarkable because

¹⁴³ *viris puella lumen uirtutis praeferendo*: Valerius Maximus, *Facta* 3.2.2. On Cloelia's similarities to the hero Horatius, their deeds being contemporaneous and directed against the same enemy, see Roller 2018: 66.

¹⁴⁴ Consolation to Marcia 6.2. See also Cicero's suggestion that one may insult a man by accusing him of having a womanly spirit, compounding his humiliation by referring to a maiden (*virgo*) with a masculine soul: this *virgo* is not identified as Cloelia but she is surely the invoked ideal of manly maiden. The parallel is only strengthened by Cicero's note that statues of Roman heroes usually wear military dress (*statuas quoque videmus ornatu fere militari*), a category to which an equestrian statue would conceivably belong; Cicero, *de Officiis* 1.61; see Roller 2018: 74-76.

¹⁴⁵ Pliny *NH* 34.31.

¹⁴⁶ Roller 2018: 216; contra Fejfer (2008: 332) who suggest both statue and base may then be Augustan in date.

¹⁴⁷ See example from Sanctuary of Demeter at Knidos: BM, inv.1859,1226.26; for iconography, see Demeter: *LIMC* s.v. I: 'Demeter': 164-169.

there are no straps to the shoes; it stood in the public colonnade of Metellus but is now in Octavia's Buildings. 148

Was Cornelia always Cornelia? Much like the female equestrian statue of 'Cloelia', the jury is out. The extant base may indicate that the statue which came to be identified as Cornelia was made as a sculpture of a goddess. Given that the Porticus Metelli was built to display the artworks acquired during Metellus' military campaigns in Macedonia in 148 BCE, it is possible that 'Cornelia' was originally either a 4^{th-3rd} century BCE Hellenistic statue brought from Greece, or a Roman version of a Hellenistic sculpture that was produced in Italy in the 2nd century BCE in the style of the Hellenistic statues with which the portico was filled. That some of Metellus' Greek statuary survived the Augustan renovation of the portico in the late 1st century BCE is suggested by Pliny's description of various sculptures displayed there by Classical and Hellenistic artists, such as Dionysius, Polycles, and Praxiteles.¹⁴⁹

In any case, at some point between the 2nd century BCE and 1st century CE, the statue was understood as a representation of Cornelia, whose reputation chimed with Augustan moral reform: she was famed for having a total of twelve children, of whom three survived to adulthood, and for remaining a faithful and erudite *univira* after the death of her husband in 154 BCE. She eschewed feminine fripperies for pride in her offspring: Valerius Maximus recounts how Cornelia, when questioned on the relative simplicity of her garments, claimed her sons were her *ornamenta*.¹⁵⁰ That the statue in the Porticus Octaviae made her look, contrarily, like a Greek goddess rather than Roman *matrona* elevated her from the mundanity of flesh-and-blood women to an archetype of womanhood, embodied by divinities like Demeter, the paradigmatic mother; Cybele, the mother-goddess, and Hera, the forbearing wife. As such, Cornelia paralleled the motherly and wifely virtues of Octavia, for whom the portico was named and who was deified in 11 BCE, three years after its completion.¹⁵¹

Like Cloelia, Cornelia was thus represented as being 'outside of time': an ancient image that spoke to contemporary values. But the curiosity of these images (the former, togate on horseback, and the latter in Greek-looking dress and sandals) only served to exacerbate the problem of granting Octavia herself, or indeed Livia, similar honours. How were these contemporary women to be represented? Although scholars have suggested that the imperial

¹⁴⁸ NH 34.14, trans. Bostock 1855.

¹⁴⁹ Pliny, *NH* 36.15, 22, 24, 28, 34, 35.

¹⁵⁰ Valerius Maximus, *Facta* 4.4.init; see also Barnard 1990; Kleiner 1996: 36.

¹⁵¹ Roller 2018: 217; see also Hemelrijk's (2005: 309, 314) parallels between Porticus Octaviae and later Forum Augustum as visual teleologies of Augustan history.

retention of Republican-era statues of women may have helped justify the erection of statues to Augustus' still-living relatives, early images of Livia and Octavia looked very different.¹⁵² While it is not clear where in Rome these public statues stood or what their bodies looked like, surviving portrait heads identified as Livia from the late 1st century BCE show her with the simple *nodus* hairstyle commonly used in Republican funerary sculpture (fig. 1.10).¹⁵³ One such example from Baltimore, likely created soon after her marriage to Augustus in 38 BCE, illustrates the relative formalism of Livia's iconography in the late 1st century BCE. A roughly contemporary portrait head now in New York, tentatively provenanced to a tomb context and identified (on the grounds that its facial features are distinct from those of Livia) as an anonymous 'elderly woman', attests to the popularity of the *nodus* hairstyle and to the softly idealised facial features of Republican female portraiture (fig.1.11).¹⁵⁴ If these visual parallels are any indication, the earliest public images of Livia and Octavia were likely traditional and conservative, resembling Republican portraits of *privatae* rather than carving out a distinctively 'imperial' or 'exemplary' look.¹⁵⁵

Such restraint may reflect anxiety over how and where to fit imperial women into a cityscape in which the public representation of women was relatively uncommon. It is critical to note that, while the granting of public images for Livia and Octavia followed what was already happening in the eastern Mediterranean, 'the extension of this custom to Rome itself' was unprecedented. Some scholars have suggested that the conservatism of Livia and Octavia's early images may reflect that their roles in public discourse were still 'under construction', as it were, and/or a fear of making 'too open a declaration of dynastic intentions' in the earliest period of the Principate. This reticence, however, did not last. As much as early representations of the imperial women may have looked like portraits of *privatae*, the depiction of contemporary women in the cityscape of Rome became the exclusive preserve of the *imperial* woman. As Molly Lindner puts it, statues of Octavia and Livia 'do not seem to have paved the way for other elite women in the capital to receive such honorifics [...] the capital became a place to hono[u]r imperial women. However, and octavia and constructing and

¹⁵² Hemelrijk 2005: 309, 314; Sehlmayer 1999: 100-101. See also Stewart 2003: 148-150.

¹⁵³ Wood 1999: 52, 98.

Portrait of Livia, Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, inv.23.211; 'elderly woman', MMA, New York, inv.2000.38; see Zanker 2016: 194-195. On traditionalism of *nodus* hairstyle, see Wood 1999: 52, 98; on its imitations by non-imperial woman, Kleiner 1996: 37.

¹⁵⁵ Hemelrijk 2005: 315; see also Lindner 2015: 202; Flory 1993: 304 on early imperial conservatism.

¹⁵⁶ Lindner 2015: 202.

¹⁵⁷ Wood 1999: 28; Milnor 2005: 179; Severy-Hoven 2003: 232-234; Boatwright 2011: 125.

¹⁵⁸ Linder 2015: 202. On later exchange of statue-types and iconographies between imperial and elite women more generally - a phenomenon primarily confined to provincial public space - see Fejfer 2008: 338-340.

depicting models of contemporary womanhood at Rome, it was the *imperial* female body that did the work.

The imperial stranglehold on public honorific statuary at Rome is demonstrated by the portrait statues of Chief Vestals displayed within the Atrium Vestae in the Forum Romanum. The first of these statues were likely set up in the early 2nd century CE, with the bulk of the sixteen extant sculptures created throughout the 2nd and 3rd centuries CE. 159 These sculptural images may have been displayed on low plinths in the intimate peristyle of the Atrium Vestae, which Lindner suggests was closed to the general public and accessed only by clients and invited guests during controlled 'visiting hours'. Within the Atrium Vestae, the Vestals' statues did not 'impinge on the imperial women's 'turf'', even as, in the early to mid 2nd century CE, some of them emulated imperial women's physiognomy and iconography. One such statue portrays a Chief Vestal with protruding eyebrows similar to those of Matidia the Elder, while another closely resembles Faustina the Younger, the wife of Marcus Aurelius. Lindner perceives these physiognomic resemblances as 'exceed[ing] such likenesses in portraits of private women', and thereby evidencing patronage connections: 'a Vestal Virgin who wanted to hono[u]r an imperial woman by adopting her facial features might do so almost to the point of losing her own identity'. 160

The Atrium Vestae demonstrates the extent to which Rome was reserved as an arena for images of imperial women at the expense of private individuals. Not that the depiction of the imperial woman at Rome remained bound by the traditionalism of the late Republic. In the early 1st century CE, the imperial woman was not represented as a real person as much as a personage, identified and conflated with divine iconographies. This visual abstraction of the imperial woman was most likely foregrounded by the recutting and/or labelling of the statue that came to be understood as 'Cornelia', which was implicitly paralleled with Octavia herself in her eponymous portico. Yet while Octavia died and was deified in 11 BCE, just three years after the completion of the portico, representations of Livia began to conflate the woman and the divine during her own lifetime and long before her own deification in 41 CE.¹⁶¹

A larger-than-life-size statue now in the Louvre and previously in the Borghese Collection in Rome, exemplifies the conflation of Livia's portraiture with the iconography of

¹⁵⁹ Lindner 2015: 63; for catalogue, see 126ff. She identifies 4 statues as Trajanic or Hadrianic, 7 as Antonine, and 5 as early-mid Severan.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 122, 261, catalogue #3, #7 (Palazzo Massimo, Rome, inv. 639; Antiquario Forense, Sala degli Architetti, Rome, inv.424933).

¹⁶¹ Feifer 2008: 342.

Ceres, 'one of the earliest and one of the most enduringly popular of such associations, first for [Livia] and later for many other Julio-Claudian women' (fig. 1.12). 162 Although the precise context of its ancient display in Rome is unknown, the statue was likely created after 14 BCE for display in a public building, perhaps a portico or temple. The statue shows a female figure standing in a casual, open pose, a cornucopia in the crook of her left elbow and a bundle of poppy-flowers in her right hand. 163 The figure is veiled and wears a crown of flowers and the ritual headband, or *infula*, associated with official religious posts. Her hair is again in the simple *nodus* hairstyle, but the facial features appear too youthful to reflect how Livia must have looked at the time, when well into her sixties. If anything, the statue's combination of attributes, iconographies, and motifs lead the viewer in interpretative circles: while its monumentality and size, as well as the cornucopia and poppy-flowers, indicate that it is an image of a goddess, the *infula* points to a religious role. Daniel Roger is not wrong when he says that 'the only thing that the artist has allowed us to perceive with certainty here is that this is indeed a portrait of Livia'. Whether this is Livia as mortal (if airbrushed) woman, goddess, or priestess, however, is left entirely open. 164

This enigmatic mixing of mortal and divine modes would prove popular with successive imperial women, particularly those from the Julio-Claudian house. 'Le programme Julien d'assimilation feminines fut stable', as Mikocki puts it, with Livia, Julia, Antonia Minor and Livilla identifying themselves most commonly with Ceres, Fortuna, and Venus. The same goddesses prevail in images of women from the Flavian, Trajanic, Hadrianic, and Antonine dynasties, blurring and blending the individual woman with the *desiderata* of Roman femininity: beauty, fertility, youth. ¹⁶⁵ The borrowing of divine iconographies would appeal to *privatae*, too, with funerary sculptures of elite women represented in the 'guise' of goddesses widely attested from the 2nd century CE. ¹⁶⁶ The crossover from the iconography of the imperial to that of the *privata*, public to the funerary, attests to the power of this blended visual culture to represent and celebrate female exemplarity. From Cloelia and Cornelia to Livia and

¹⁶² Louvre, Paris, inv. MA1242. See Wood 1999: 113, citing Mikocki 1995. Wood sees this statue as pre-empting the first 'explicitly' divine image of Livia, a colossal statue at Leptis Magna (1999: 123-124); on divinised posthumous portraits of Livia, see Bartman 1999: 134-137.

¹⁶³ These attributes are modern reconstructions, but draw upon a common iconographic repertoire attested on another sculpture from Puetoli (Ny Glyptotek, Copenhagen, inv.N.1643; see Wood 1999: 129) and on a sardonyx cameo now in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv.IX A 95; Roger 2007: 70).

¹⁶⁴ Roger 2007: 70.

¹⁶⁵ Mikocki 1995: 49: for Flavian dynasty, 50-54, Trajanic 54-55, Hadrianic and Antonine, 55-68. On unprecedented influence of Livia and Octavia for visual arts, see Kleiner 1996: 39.

¹⁶⁶ On *consecratio in formam deorum* and human/divine in funerary visual culture, see Wrede 1981b; Hallett 2005: 159-222; D'Ambra 1996. On so-called 'Venus matronae', see *infra* p78-84.

successive imperial women, the 'real', individual, mortal Roman woman was only ever briefly represented in public at Rome: nor did she stay mortal for long, if she ever was truly mortal in the first place.

Ladies of the World¹⁶⁷

Beyond the imperial female body, the only other mortal female body commonly depicted within Rome itself, as befitted its status as the *caput mundi*, was that of the foreigner. This next 'node' asks how ethnic identity was translated into visual representations of the foreign female body; how these bodies were distinguished, if at all, as non-Roman; and what was at stake in the representation of the foreign female body over the course of Rome's imperial expansion.

The best-known examples of foreign women represented in public contexts at Rome are arguably those from the spiralling friezes on the victory columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, which visualised their respective military campaigns in Dacia in 101-102 and 105-106 CE, and against the Marcomani and Quadi in the late 2nd century CE. ¹⁶⁸ It is difficult, however, to spot the foreign women on the Trajanic column just by looking at them, even with the advantage of examining modern casts of the reliefs rather than attempting a ground-level viewing of the helical, 100ft column. ¹⁶⁹ As Sheila Dillon notes, the Dacian women are represented wearing a 'long undergarment and an overgarment', and do not look particularly different to the Roman women who are depicted in one scene on Trajan's column as attendants at a sacrifice performed by the emperor himself [scene 86] (fig. 1.13). ¹⁷⁰ Visually speaking, only 'subtle differences' in drapery, jewellery and the long-sleeved undergarments demarcate the Dacian women from the Roman. ¹⁷¹

Nor do the similarities between the Dacian and Roman women represented on Trajan's column end with how they look, but also extend to their behaviour and treatment by others. Just as the Roman women watch Trajan's sacrifice, the Dacian women are generally

¹⁶⁷ As per the Flight of the Concords (2008): 'Just wanna do something special for all the ladies in the world […] Namibian, Eastern Indochinian, Republic of Dominican, amphibian, Presbyterian […]'.

¹⁶⁸ Most previous work on the Column of Trajan has focussed on reconstruction of the history of Dacian campaign from the column itself, analysis of its narrative structure, and interpretation of the figural style: for recent overview, see Beckmann 2011. For studies on the representation of women and gender, see Dillon 2006; Kampen 1995; Zanker 2000; van den Borne 2017. The following numbered scenes refer to the divisions made by Conrad Cichorius in his publication of the reliefs between 1896-1900.

¹⁶⁹ Wolfram-Thill 2022 summarises issues of modern and ancient approaches to visibility of victory columns: see also Galinier 2007 and, on temporary scaffolding around the column, Lancaster 1999. ¹⁷⁰ Dillon 2006: 245.

¹⁷¹ Ibid, 250; see also Kampen 1995.

represented on the edges of scenes, passively watching Trajan's arrival [82-84], a public sacrifice [86-91] and occasionally fleeing into the mountains [76] and towards a Roman camp [39]. 172 Even in these latter scenes, however, the Dacian women do not appear distressed: the sense of threat is 'nonspecific and not immediate; there is no sense that these women are in imminent physical danger'. ¹⁷³ On the Trajanic column, the foreign female body is not at risk of violence or violation but treated with dignity that is almost equivalent with their Roman counterparts; Trajan himself offers an exemplum of respectful conduct towards the foreign women when he escorts a 'panicked' Dacian woman onto a waiting boat [29-30]. 174 The lack of any obvious visual distinction in the appearance and treatment of the foreign women on the Trajanic column may reflect the column's primary purpose: to elevate Trajan (quite literally) above the morass of bodies, both barbarian and Roman, represented at work and war on his column. The nebulous distinctions between the Roman and non-Roman bodies on the victory column may also underline Trajan's aim of integrating rather than annihilating the Dacian people and territories, as visualised by scenes of Roman soldiers exerting constructive rather than destructive control over the Dacian landscape: cutting trees, bridging water, and building camps. As such, the Dacian women do not look too different from the Roman because they will shortly become Roman themselves. 175

In contrast, the foreign women on the Column of Marcus Aurelius are represented more frequently than their Dacian sisters and visually identified as non-Roman by their more overtly non-classicising clothing: they wear long-sleeved tunics under sleeveless over-garments, or short-sleeved tunics belted at the waist. ¹⁷⁶ It is the manhandling of the foreign women on the Aurelian column, however, that most strikingly emphasises their foreign-ness: they are forcibly separated from their children [97], physically and sexually assaulted by Roman soldiers [104], as implied by the repeated visual motif in which women are stripped and dragged by the hair [20, 68-69, 97, 104-105] (fig. 1.14), and killed [97-98]. While the Dacian women were

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¹⁷² van den Borne (2017: 77) notes that women appear on fewer than 4% of total scenes on the Column of Trajan. On boundaries and liminality, see Dillon 2006: 246; Kampen 1995: 64.

¹⁷³ Dillon 2006: 252-257.

¹⁷⁴ van den Borne 2017: 77-78.

¹⁷⁵ Zanker 2000; Dillon 2006: 260-261. This conclusion does not hold for the anomalous so-called 'torture scene' [45] that represents several women in long-sleeved tunics and sleeveless over-dresses torturing naked and bound men. Dillon (2006: 263-267) understands the women as 'non-Roman' but is unclear on the identity of the victims; Kampen (1995: 54, 57-59, 64) suggests that the childlessness of the women constructs them 'outside the system of representation' established for the rest of the column and distances the torture from Trajan's benevolence and the orderly behaviour of his army in Dacia.

¹⁷⁶ Dillon 2006: 247-249. See also Zanker 2000; Ferris 2009: 77.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, 247-249.

undemonstrative even when fleeing to the mountains, the facial expressions, posture and dishevelment of the foreign women on the Aurelian column visibly convey their distress: heads bowed, shrinking away from violence, raising their hands to 'ward off blows or to plead for mercy or shield their children.¹⁷⁸ Dillon attributes the representative differences between the columns to the distinct military imperatives of Trajan and Aurelius' campaigns: as Aurelius sought to destroy the barbarian threat to the north, there was a greater need to visually distinguish between Roman and non-Roman on his column.¹⁷⁹ As such, the mistreatment of the barbarian women on the Aurelian column is both predicated on, and constitutes, their non-Romanness: they are mistreated because they are foreign, but it is also this mistreatment that marks them out as non-Roman. If the female body provides 'a particularly expressive and supple medium with which to write the visual language of Roman victory', then the foreign female body on the Aurelian column provides the site upon which ethnic difference is constructed, then destroyed.¹⁸⁰

Although the mistreatment of the foreign women on the Aurelian column underwrites their non-Romanness, the brutalisation of the female body was not always an indication of its foreignness. A few hundred metres up the road in the Forum Romanum, comparable images of the abused and violated female body decorated the Basilica Aemilia from perhaps as early as the 1st century BCE (figs. 1.7, 1.8). ¹⁸¹ One of the reliefs shows a woman represented frontally, her arms outstretched and her clothes slipping from her shoulders as if exposing her body to the stones hurled by the men around her, many of whom wear breastplates and helmets. The woman's open body language, as well as the even spacing of the figures across the relief, makes the violence appear ritualistic and controlled: this is an ordained punishment that she accepts penitently. The other relief, in contrast, portrays a chaotic, feverish tangle of bodies as men seize and restrain struggling women: the desperation of the captive women is clear from their loose hair and dishevelled clothing. One contorts her body into a deep backbend as she pushes away her captor, while another woman attempts to twist herself free as the man holding her firm places his hand on her exposed breast. This visual motif, amid the violence that characterises the scene, would seem to put these women into the same category as the stripped, abused and violated foreign women on the Aurelian column.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, 257-258.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid, 245, 258, with references.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid 263

¹⁸¹ For dating of the reliefs, *supra* p37.

In truth, the seized and struggling women *are* foreign, namely the Sabine women raped by Romulus' men shortly after the foundation of Rome, while the woman stoned in the first relief can be identified as Tarpeia, the treacherous Vestal Virgin who betrayed her city to foreign forces. The Basilica Aemilia reliefs construct foreignness and Romanness in a self-reinforcing paradigm of [anti-]exemplarity that appears at odds with how the scenes look and feel to modern viewers. Although the rape of the Sabine women is visualised by the relief as violent and chaotic – in tune with the erotics of fear and rape that characterise literary accounts of the episode¹⁸² – the scene offers them, and their subjugation, as an *exemplum* for female behaviour. Despite their foreignness, the Sabine women fulfil their roles as 'daughters, wives, and mothers', demonstrated most forcefully in their defence of their Roman husbands against the Sabine men and the priority they give to the bonds of Roman marriage over their biological and familial ties. The brutal punishment of Tarpeia, in contrast, communicated that Romnanness offered no protection to women who would betray their countrymen; Roman women were not above reprisal if they failed to live up to the expected behaviours. ¹⁸³

The Basilica Aemilia reliefs complicate any straightforward (visual) division of 'foreign' and 'Roman', in part perhaps because the foreign Sabines and Roman Tarpeia share in the same slender, classicising female body – as do the foreign women on the Trajanic and Aurelian columns. This commonality becomes more obvious when it is contrasted with the visually 'Other' bodies of the Danaids from the portico next to the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine complex, dedicated by Augustus in 28 BCE. The portico alternated columns of Punic marble and giallo antico with statues of the fifty mythical Danaids, all but one of whom reportedly killed their foreign husbands at the order of their father, Danaus, whom Ovid reports was also depicted in the portico with his sword drawn. A set of herms, now in the Antiquario Palatino, may be the Danaids described by Ovid, or later but still Julio-Claudian replicas of the original figures (fig. 1.15). The herms depict near-identical subjects, who pull at their dresses at hip-level and raise their other arm to their diadem-crowned heads, perhaps balancing the water jars they were condemned to carry for eternity as punishment. Their expressions are inscrutable, with one bearing an archaic smile. Their peploi are rendered in thick folds that are

¹⁸² Beard 1999; see also Stehle 1989b; Richlin 1992b; Brown 1995; Arieti 1997; Keegan 2021: 71-80.

¹⁸³ Kampen 1988: 15.

¹⁸⁴ Boatwright 2015: 255.

¹⁸⁵ Ovid, *Tristia* 3.1.60-62; Kellum 1993: 80; Milnor 2005: 51. Quenemoen 2006 reconstructs the portico.

¹⁸⁶ Welch 2005: 86; Candilio (1989: 86, 88) reports their findspot as close to the Domus Tiberiana and hairstyles as evidence for a Julio-Claudian date. For statues see Candilio 1989, catalogue #13-15; Antiquario Palatino, Rome, inv.1048, 1053, 1056.

gathered at the waist and fall away into the flat, block-like column of the herm. Rather than classicising, these Danaids are a 'combination of discordant stylistic elements': although their drapery recalls the so-called 'Severe Style' of the early classical period, their diadems, skirt-pulling and archaic smiles evoke archaic Greek art. The rendering of the Danaids in nero antico, a black marble that was reportedly sourced from Greece or Africa also contributes to the 'Otherness' of their appearance. The rendering of the Danaids in the 'Otherness' of their appearance.

Why do the Danaids look so visually 'Other', vis-à-vis the other foreign bodies described above? The Danaids may owe their stylistic and material otherness to the fact that they symbolise a 'fratricide and civil war' analogous to the bloodshed of the late Republic: in other words, their old-fashioned appearance might be designed to suggest that civic and familial violence has been consigned firmly to the past (that foreign country) thanks to Augustus' victory over Antony. Is In contrast, the stories and narratives in which the women of the Basilica and columns were embedded had urgent relevance for an ever-expanding empire. The female bodies represented on the Basilica Aemilia and victory columns look relatively similar, regardless of their specific ethnic identity, because of their role in the imperial project: to be integrated like the Dacians and Sabines to produce further Roman generations, or, in the case of Tarpeia and the foreign women on the Aurelian Column, expelled, discarded, and destroyed for undermining Rome's continual growth. Is In the case of Tarpeia and the foreign women on the Aurelian Column, expelled, discarded, and destroyed for undermining Rome's continual growth.

While the female bodies discussed above, both Roman and non-Roman, were represented as useful or harmful to the imperial project, other non-Roman female bodies were consigned instead to a tradition of anthropomorphic visualisations of Rome's *imperium*.¹⁹¹ The Republican-era Theatre of Pompey and its connected portico, for instance, reportedly contained personified images of the fourteen nations conquered by the eponymous general.¹⁹² This pre-existing visual tradition – taking the foreign female body to represent entire provinces, nations, and territories – was only expanded and strengthened with the establishment of the Principate. Pompey's theatre complex likely served as the inspiration for an Augustan Portico ad Nationes, the location of which within Rome is unknown. A similar 'map' of the Roman world, painted

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¹⁸⁷ Candilio 1989: 85. The statuary may have been crafted by Greek artists, as indicated by Pliny's report of other sculptures by Greek masters in the same portico: Pliny, *HN* 36.9-13; Welch 2005: 83-84.

¹⁸⁸ Pliny *NH* 36.135, 138; Candilio 1989: 85.

¹⁸⁹ See also the contrary interpretation of the Danaids as 'heroines' for rejecting their foreign husbands, just as Rome rejected the eastern-loving Antony and his foreign queen Cleopatra: Milnor 2005: 52. See also Carucci 2011: 42-44; Kellum 1993: 81.

¹⁹⁰ On integration of foreign female bodies, see Stehle 1989: 150; Dougherty 1998: 274-276, 279.

¹⁹¹ Edwards 2003: 65.

¹⁹² Suetonius, Nero 46; Servius, ad Aen. 7.721.

or incised on stone, was displayed in the Porticus Vipsania in the Campus Martius from 7 BCE onwards, although it is unclear whether anthropomorphic depictions of nations were also displayed there; there is also fragmentary evidence that figures representative of, or personifying, lands and nations were displayed at the Ara Pacis, which was consecrated in 9 BCE upon Augustus' return from military campaigns in Hispania and Gaul. A 1st-century CE monument at Aphrodisias, the Sebasteion, offers some impression of what these 'maps' and *portici* at Rome may have looked like, although 'modified by a strong Eastern, provincial, Hellenistic [visual] tradition': one of the extant reliefs shows the personified Britannia sprawled on the floor, her breast bared by her slipping drapery, as a mighty, muscular figure identified by the inscription on the relief as Claudius, in full military dress, drags her by the hair (fig. 1.16).

The columnar female figures that adorned the upper storey of the colonnade in the Forum Augustum, inaugurated in 2 BCE, are part of this same project. The figures were flanked on either side by shields, a potential visual reference to the fact that the forum was built with the spoils of war. Yet the figures do not seem to originate from a militaristic context. They wear peploi that cling to their breasts and fall in regular, column-like folds around their weightbearing left leg. In their column-ness, repetition and archaicism, the figures evoke the Danaid sculptures from the Palatine complex, although they look more naturalistic and classicising: unsurprising, given that they were likely sculpted using casts of the six peploi-clad maidens that stood as columns on the south porch of the Erechtheion on the Athenian acropolis from the mid-5th century BCE (figs. 1.17, 1.18). The representation of the Erechtheion maidens in the Forum Augustum evidenced Augustus' control over Athens, but also linked the Augustan building program in Rome to that undertaken by Pericles during Athen's 'Golden Age' in the 5th century BCE.

¹⁹³ On Porticus Vipsania: Pliny, *NH* 3.17; Dio, *History* 55.8.3-5; see Boatwright 2015: 236-242. On Portico ad Nationes, see Servius, *ad Aen.* 8.721; see also Pliny's distinction between the complexes of Augustus and Pompey (*NH* 36.41); Ferris 2000: 30. On the Ara Pacis, Boatwright 2015: 243; Kleiner and Buxton 2008: 85, note 123 for references. For discovery, trans-location and housing of the Ara Pacis, see overview provided by Strazzulla 2009. On Greek/Hellenistic precedents for the Portico ad Nationes, and relationship to exhibition of live barbarian prisoners in triumphal processions, see comments by Ostrowski 1996a: 267-268; see also Östenburg 2009.

¹⁹⁴ Isaac 2017: 66. For Aphrodisias reliefs, see Smith 1987, 1988, 2013.

¹⁹⁵ Res Gestae 4.21.

¹⁹⁶ Further versions of the Erechtheion maidens may have stood at the Pantheon and then been removed to Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli: Lesk 2007: 33-34; Broucke 1998; Schmidt 1982: 106-107. On provenance of sculptures from Tivoli, see Pensabene et al 2012.

¹⁹⁷ The shared visual style also emphasised the common goal of restricted and protected citizenship grounded and facilitated by strict legislation focussed on proper sexual and social behaviours: Walker 2000: 71; Kleiner 1992:

At first glance, the Erechtheion maidens in the Forum Augustum may seem to have a very different kind of foreign female body to the Dacians or Sabine women: their bodies have been plucked from classical Greece rather than narratives of violation, war, or conquest. Within the Forum Augustum, however, the Erechtheion maidens did not merely stand as quotations of Greek art but were translated into visual symbols of conquest that spoke to and beyond Augustus' control of Greece. The 1st-century writer Vitruvius describes the development of woman-shaped architectural supports as 'caryatids', referring to women from Caryae enslaved for their betrayal of Athens during the Greco-Persian Wars. 198 Vitruvius' invention of a militaristic etymology for the Erechtheion maidens fundamentally changed the figures' meaning: they were given, and embedded within, a narrative in which they are conquered women, subjected to similar [mis]treatment as the foreign women on the Aurelian column or on the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias. Juxtaposed with both Vitruvius' text and the trophies on display in the Forum Augustum, the caryatid was transposed from an element of Greek classical art into a universal symbol of enslavement and humiliation. Not only did this highlight that the caryatids were halfway between figure and ornament, woman and object; 199 it made them part of 'the Roman iconography of triumph [... symbolic] of submission and humiliation'. 200

Already recast by Vitruvius' text as symbolic of conquered humiliation, the caryatid was further allegorised and dehumanised in the Forum Augustum by her placement around the upper storey of the colonnade, capable of holding up monumental weight without visible strain while maintaining an elegant, classicising pose and immaculate drapery. ²⁰¹ That the caryatids were iterations of a generic, universal symbol of conquest rather than real, individual women was also highlighted by the repetition of identical caryatids around the colonnade and their juxtaposition with other sculptures in the Forum Augustum: especially the hundred-plus overlife-sized statues of figures from Rome's history and mythology known as the *summi viri* that

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^{100;} Zanker 1988: 256-257; *contra* Lesk (2007: 38) who argues that the Erechtheion maidens are used to indicate Roman superiority over the debased Greek culture.

¹⁹⁸ Vitruvius, *de Architectura* 1.1.5. For an overview of caryatids in ancient art, see Schmidt 1982; Ridgway 1990: 176-80 and, for archaic caryatids, 1993: 147-148. Vitruvius' association of the caryatids exclusively with postwar Caryae has been disputed, however: caryatids are attested in archaic Greek art, notably supporting the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi, while there is also reference in Pausanias (3.10.7) to young female worshippers of Artemis Caryatis who may provide the model and etymology for caryatids: see Platt and Squire 2017: 51-52, n.109. On the conflation of 'caryatid' with the maidens from the Erechtheion, see Lesk 2007: 28-32.

¹⁹⁹ As Neer (2018: 232-233) notes, Jacques Derrida 'threw up his hands at the question of whether a caryatid is or is not a *parergon*': see also Platt and Squire 2017: 51ff. See comparable Augustan iconography of kneeling barbarians; Schneider 1986.

²⁰⁰ Lesk 2007: 40; Ramsby and Severy-Hoven 2007: 51-52; see also Galinsky 2015: 7.

²⁰¹ C.f. Warner (1978: 36) on caryatids at the 17th-century Pavillon de l'Horloge in Paris: 'they do not seem widowed, grieving, or even humbled by the burden they bear... [but] as nameless and captive bearers, they epitomize the condition of the flocking allegorical figures.'

lined the forum's porticoes and *exedrae*.²⁰² Although Joseph Geiger has argued that statues of women such as Cloelia or Livia may have featured in the sculptural display in the Forum Augustum, most scholars understand the *summi viri* as just that: statues of preeminent men that helped constitute the hyper-masculinity of the Forum Augustum as a didactic space for the instruction of young Roman boys as well as for the business of running the Empire such as military enrolments, dispensation of commands, and dedication of plunder.²⁰³ Each of the *summi viri* was labelled with 'a grand title declaring the name of the man represented and his brief cursus honorum', while a separate plaque detailed his achievements. The cumulative effect of these inscriptions would likely have overwhelmed even illiterate viewers, who could still understand that the words and letters visualised the honourable deeds of each figure.²⁰⁴ It was for this visualisation of male prestige and its reification in the day-to-day activities of the Forum Augustum that the cookie-cutter caryatids served as something like a captive audience.

The Augustan innovation was not only the use of the foreign female body to visualise the extent of Roman *imperium* but the *assimilation* of the foreign body into raw material for the monuments of the Empire: the caryatids literally hold up the forum that celebrated and monumentalised Augustus' military success and, by implication, their own conquest. In the second century CE, the Augustan caryatid was reworked into a foreign male body, as demonstrated by the sculpted Dacian men placed along the colonnade in the Forum of Trajan. The appearance and display of these figures undoubtedly alluded to the Forum Augustum and its caryatids next door, a parallel further reinforced by Trajan and successive emperors' erection of statues of worthy men, à la the *summi viri*, in Trajan's colonnaded portico. ²⁰⁵ The sculptured Dacian men reportedly came in two types: small type-figures that may have decorated the attic of the colonnade, like the Augustan caryatids, and a larger type that was potentially displayed on the attic of the basilica. Eight of the latter may survive as spoliated statues placed alongside the long sides of the Arch of Constantine in the early 4th century CE. ²⁰⁶ These figures stand in a resting pose not dissimilar to the Augustan caryatids, their arms either

²⁰² Shaya 2013: 85; see Geiger 2008 for overview.

²⁰³ Geiger 2008:115; *contra* Kellum 1996; see also Evans (2009: 139) who argues that the Forum Augustum was conceived of as deliberately masculinized in opposition to the feminized, vegetal space of Pompey's portico; see also Woolf 2015: 210. On didacticism of Forum Augustum, see Evans 2009: 139; Woolf 2015. For functions of Forum Augustum, see Dio, *History*, 50.10.2-5; Suetonius, *Life of Augustus* 29, 31; Dowling 2006: 157; Ramsby and Severy-Hoven 2007: 50.

²⁰⁴ Shaya 2013: 85-86; for extant but fragmentary inscriptions, see Degrassi 1937, *Inscriptiones Italiae* II 13(3). See also, for instance, Laird 2015 on inscribed monuments erected by Augustales.

²⁰⁵ See inscriptional evidence for statues 'in foro Traiani': e.g., CIL.VI.31640, VI.1599, VI.1710, VI.1721.

²⁰⁶ Waelkens 1985: 650, 645, n.3-9; for Arch of Constantine and spoliation, including four Trajanic relief panels, see Elsner 2000. On Forum of Trajan as a whole, see Packer 1997, 2001.

held below the waist or crossed over their chests. Their expressions are difficult to read, their heads inclined and cast into shadow by thick beards and hair. Unlike the caryatids, however, the Dacian men are not easily understood as 'defeated' but retain a 'sinister potency'. As Catharine Edwards notes, they stand at ease, waiting for the order to spring back into combat. As such, they embody a latent danger indicative of the stress of retaining even conquered territory.²⁰⁷

Less than half a century later, and a similar 'sinister potency' was blended into female bodies that adorned the Temple to the Divine Hadrian or Hadrianeum in the Campus Martius, dedicated by Antoninus Pius in 145 CE. Of the reliefs that likely decorated the attic of the portico, or the interior of the *cella*, there survive twenty-five sculptural reliefs; nineteen depicting female figures, and six military trophies. Both the figures and weaponry are represented within discrete rectangular slabs against a plain background, as if they exist external to any specific historical or geographical context. The figures appear similar to the caryatids in the restfulness of their pose, their weight shifted onto one leg, and in their classicising physiognomy: slender bodies with small breasts placed high on the torso and fuller hips. Onto this repeated female body is projected a diversity of costumes that evoke ethnic identity: e.g., a long peplos-like garment tied underneath the breasts (fig. 1.19), fringed capes, heavy trousers, Phrygian-style caps, multi-fastened boots, as well as weapons including an axe, sword, arrow and scythe.

Understanding who (or what) these female figures are supposed to be is complicated by the fact that scholars struggle to securely identify each figure as a specific province or territory within the Roman Empire based on their attributes and costumes, which do not map easily onto contemporary coin-images of 'personified' provinces. ²¹⁰ As Jessica Hughes points out, there is little room for explanatory labels on the reliefs and their visibility may have been further compromised by their potential location on the attic of the portico: she also cites Ovid's advice to lovers to make up facts about the enslaved peoples displayed in triumphal processions to impress their *puellae* as evidence that the typical Roman viewer likely could not identify

²⁰⁷ Edwards 2003: 67-68.

²⁰⁸ See catalogue in Sapelli 1999; there is evidence of a further four figural reliefs and three of trophies that have since been lost. Toynbee 1934: 152-159. On original location of reliefs, see Juhasz 2018: 91; Ferris 2000: 84; Sapelli 1999: 14.

²⁰⁹ Hughes 2009: 13.

²¹⁰ Juhasz (2018: 92) questions if modern restorations have forced 'completely fictional attributes' into the figures' hands. For attempt to typologize and catalogue provincial personifications, see Ostrowski 1990.

individual ethnic costumes.²¹¹ As such, the Hadrianeum figures were most likely not intended to be faithful or even recognisable representations of individual ethnic identities, but generically if not abstractly 'foreign' variations on a theme. Each figure is dressed up as a synecdoche of an abstract, generic 'Other' to create a 'group aesthetic' that is greater than the sum of its parts.

What is most interesting about the representation of the foreign female body on the Hadrianeum, however, is how the represented figures appear to map out a spectrum of gender presentation that corresponds with latent power, agency, and threat. While all the figures are recognisably female, some appear demonstrably more 'classically' feminine than others. A figure tentatively referred to as 'Libya' by Marina Sapelli exhibits an appearance that is 'decisamente classicheggiante' with a long garment tied under the breasts, much like a peplos; her hair is long, rendered in classicising, centrally-parted waves;²¹² 'Mauretania' similarly shows off a ringleted hairdo and a smock-like dress that clings to and emphasises the curvature of her breasts, hips and thighs (figs. 1.19, 1.20).²¹³ In contrast, the bodies of other figures are obscured: 'Scythia' and 'Parthia' are both swamped in fabric from their capes, belted tunics and thick trousers (figs. 1.21, 1.22). ²¹⁴ The most masculine-presenting figure, 'Hispania', wears a detailed cuirass and square-necked cape, which gives her an entirely rectilinear silhouette reminiscent of the Prima Porta Augustus (fig. 1.23). 215 Even the figures who bare one or both of their breasts appear built and brawny: the belted garment worn by 'Moesia' has slipped entirely off her left shoulder, but the viewer's eye is drawn not to her breast but to the musculature of her exposed biceps. The representation of 'Achaia' is even more striking: her drapery is swathed and tied around her waist, with sash-like section draped across her torso, revealing well-defined oblique and abdominal muscles as well as her biceps (figs. 1.24, $1.25).^{216}$

The subtle anatomical diversity of the Hadrianeum figures both enacts the 'decorative variation' that makes them a collective group of individuals and attests to a semantic shift in the representation of foreign female bodies in the 2nd century CE. Just as the Dacian men's

²¹¹ Hughes 2009: 8-9: Ovid, *Ars am.* 1.219-228. On Ovid and elegiac tropes of *militia amoris* and *servitium amoris* in relation to foreign women, see Ramsby and Severy-Hoven 2007: 64-70.

²¹² Sapelli 1999: catalogue #20; Pal. Con., Rome, inv.755.

²¹³ Ibid, catalogue #21; Pal. Con., Rome, inv.768. See also the classicising drapery of 'Germania' and 'Iudaea'; ibid, catalogue #7-8; Villa Doria Pamphilj, Rome.

²¹⁴ Ibid, catalogue #1, 3; MANN, Naples, inv. 6753, inv. 6757.

²¹⁵ Sapelli 1999: catalogue #19; Pal. Con., Rome, inv.767. See Hughes 2009: 5; on cuirassed body-type in Roman statuary, see Fejfer 2008: 207ff.

²¹⁶ Sapelli 1999: catalogue #12, 13; Pal. Con., Rome, inv.761, inv.756.

shagginess, folded arms, and resting posture may have connoted their latent ability to seize weapons and recommence the fight against Roman conquest, the Hadrianeum figures openly carry weapons with most exhibiting toned musculature and indications of serious physical strength. If the other foreign female bodies discussed above were transposed into or represented as raw material for the imperial project, either willing or unwilling, the Hadrianeum figures appear to retain the instruments of, and capacity for, rebellion. As such, foreignness is paramount in their representation on the Hadrianeum: their costuming and masculinised gender presentation serves to distance them both from the 'real' Roman women who moved through the city of Rome and witnessed such images, and from the Roman concept of womanhood itself.

I'm Your Venus, Pax, Tellus (And So On)

The foreign female figures that adorned the Hadrianeum could be described as 'personifications': this chapter has so far avoided using this term, however, as it is far from straightforward and largely untheorized across art and literature. Emma Stafford cites the broadest definition of 'personification' as a 'person or thing viewed as embodying a quality, etc. or as exemplifying it in a striking manner' (e.g., 'she was evil personified'), as opposed to the 'more technical sense of personify [...] to figure or represent (a thing or abstraction) as a person, esp. in speech or writing; in art, to symbolize by a figure in human form' (e.g., 'Evil stalked the country'). In Greek art and literature, various concepts are understood in anthropomorphised human form: from natural phenomena, time, emotions, states of being, to concepts and ideas such as democracy and victory. Evil

It is this final category that causes the most difficulty when it comes to understanding who, or what, is a 'personification'. The debate is particularly acute for modern scholars of Rome's religious culture who quibble over how and where to distinguish 'artistic personifications' from 'real cult figures', i.e., goddesses or divinities who share the name of a concept such as 'victory' or 'democracy' but in their receipt of public cult and worship were

²¹⁷ Benjamin Isaac has questioned whether the foreign female bodies represented in Roman public sculpture can be interpreted as personifications of individual nations and territories, rather than generic, documentary-style depictions of Roman victory and foreign defeat. His concern, however, appears rooted in an overly rigid reading of 'personification' that understands the representation to be 'imaginary or ideal': Isaac 2017: 64, 66. See also overview of allegorical representation of provinces in Parisi Presicce 1999.

²¹⁸ Stafford 2000: 3.

²¹⁹ For broad overview, see papers in Herrin and Stafford 2005; on personifications in classical Athens, see Shapiro 1993. For male personifications of rivers, drawing on Hellenistic sculpture, see Ostrowski 1991.

more than just 'abstractions' or anthropomorphised ideas.²²⁰ The need for a distinction originates in part from modern scholarly anxiety over 'the whole problem of the development of personal gods and their names; were the gods originally concepts which have become deified, or are abstract ideas de-personalized gods?'.²²¹ Victory is a good example with which to think about these categories and their implications, as she is defined varyingly by scholars as a 'conceptual goddess', a 'Divine Quality' and 'Virtue' rather than a straightforward 'personification'.²²² The tendency in English to capitalise 'Victory' when referring to the goddess as opposed to the concept of 'victory' makes a false distinction between the concept and divinity, which not only does not exist in Latin but which obfuscates the fluidity on which such figures were predicated.²²³ Given this definitional looseness, scholarly hand-wringing over who or what may qualify as a 'personification' or 'personified' is to miss the point: within the rest of this chapter, this fluidity will be flagged by the use of scare quotes around 'personification' and the names of such figures.

A capacious definition of 'personification', rather than a thorough delineation of 'conceptual goddess' and 'Divine Quality' is all the more necessary when it comes to the visual representation of 'personification', when these distinctions become somewhat moot: as Stafford notes, there is 'no room for ambiguity between abstract and personification: the artist either represents an abstract in human incarnation, or the idea must be expressed without recourse to anthropomorphism at all'.²²⁴ While there are some visual elements that may distinguish a 'personification' at first glance – 'improbable nudity, heroic scale, wings, [and] unlikely attributes' – this list is exhaustive.²²⁵ Rather than prevaricate over the criteria of a 'personification', it is more useful to ask how and why a 'personified' figure is visually distinguished (if at all) from other figures, mortal and divine, and how this speaks to the allegorical use of the female body in public sculpture at Rome.

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²²⁰ Stafford 2000: 2.

²²¹ Stafford 2000: 23.

²²² 'Virtues' and/or 'Qualities' – Fears 1981a, Clark 2007; 'conceptual goddesses'; Miano 2018. See also 'scales of personification' discussed by Stafford 2000: 2. Dressler 2016 offers some interesting thoughts on female personifications in Roman philosophy. Isaac (2027: 52) somewhat reductively dismisses both the terminology and meaning of 'personifications' in Roman visual culture by suggesting that, per the OED definition, a 'personification' is 'imaginary or ideal'.

²²³ Clark 2007: 18; c.f. also Isaac 2017: 47.

²²⁴ Stafford 2000: 14.

²²⁵ Warner 1978: 28. Warner writes from her observance of 'personified' figures in the cityscape of contemporary Paris, such as the figures of 'Law, Equality and Truth' at the Place du Palais-Bourbon: her list of 'personified' visual markers, however, aligns closely with those listed by Stafford for Greco-Roman representations.

In the Republican period, 'Victory' appears almost as a visual motif or symbol, rather than a 'personified' body that meaningfully interacts with her surroundings. On early Roman coins, for example, she is often depicted as a peripheral, tiny figure who crowns the charioteering triumphator, as on an *aureus* minted by Sulla in 82 BCE.²²⁶ The figure of 'Victory' also appears on a set of Republican-era reliefs excavated from Rome's Piazza della Consolazione: the monument which they originally decorated likely dates from the 1st century BCE and may have been a triumphal monument commemorating Sulla's victory over the Numidian king Jugurtha (fig. 1.26). The relief depicts two 'Victories' standing in profile on either side of a central roundel, embossed with the image of an eagle. The bodies of the 'Victories' are identical, static, and columnar: they appear less as sentient, animate figures than as iterations of a visual motif.²²⁷

It is only with the establishment of the Principate that 'Victory' begins to look and act more like a sentient female figure, rather than a motif. Octavian, a year away from attaining the title of Augustus, renovated the Curia Julia in the Forum Romanum in 29 BCE, within which he placed a statue of, and altar to, 'Victory'. Contemporary coins show the 'Victory' alighting on top of the building: a close-up of the figure from the reverse of an aureus minted in 29-27 BCE shows her as winged, her feet placed on a spherical globe, a military standard balanced against her neck and a wreath in her right hand (fig. 1.27). The representation of 'Victory' both within the Curia itself and on coins that represented the building demonstrates the increased capacities and sensibilities of the 'personified' body in the early days of the Principate: 'Victory' alighting atop the Curia Julia would have given the impression that she was crowning the building itself, doubtless harking back to her role in triumphal numismatic iconography, but also expanding her remit as anointing and legitimating the rule of Octavian-Augustus and his adopted father Julius Caesar, who had begun the project and for whom the Curia was named.

The transformation of 'Victory' from visual motif to interactive figure was fulfilled, however, on the Arch of Titus. Constructed in 81 CE, the triumphal arch features multiple

²²⁶ BM, London, inv. 1855,0603.1. The obverse of the same coin is decorated with an image of a woman's helmeted head: she has been identified as 'Roma': another conceptual goddess, both a representation of Rome and its *imperium* and its guardian deity, in the mould of the Hellenistic Tyche figure. See also a *denarius* with the same iconography: BM, London inv.1904,0204.86. On iconography of 'Roma' in Roman visual culture, see Vermeule 1959.

²²⁷ Centrale Montemartini, Rome, inv.2749; Kleiner 1992: 52.

²²⁸ BM, London, inv.R.6012; see Cornwell 2017: 98-101. Edwards (2003: 59) understands this statue as the 'Nike of Tarentum' but notes it is unclear if it was brought to Rome in the 3rd century BCE.

representations of 'Victory' and other 'personifications' that stressed their value as a symbolic motifs *and* individual figures with agency. The awkward triangular spandrels of the arch's long sides were filled by the wings and billowing peploi of two 'Victories', which resemble swags of drapery or garlands hung on either side of the archway.²²⁹ The arch's keystone was also decorated with 'personified' figures: on the east side stands a female figure in military dress, identified as 'Roma'; on the west, a semi-nude male figure who may represent the 'Genius Populi Romani'. These 'personifications', along with 'Victory', reappeared on one of the panels in the central bay of the arch, in which they surround Titus during his triumphal procession (fig. 1.28). A female figure, identifiable by her long hair, leads the horses pulling Titus' chariot into the city, while a semi-nude man stands attendant below the emperor in his chariot. Behind Titus stands 'Victory', identifiable by her wings, her peplos slipping suggestively from her right shoulder. Ida Östenberg suggests that the female figure leading the horses is 'Roma' or 'Virtus', and the semi-nude man 'Honos' or the 'Genius Populi Romani': she also understands the position of 'Victory's' wings directly behind Titus as a visual reference to his deification.²³⁰

The triumphator scene on the Arch of Titus marks the first time in *monumental* imperial Roman art that the human and divine were represented as explicitly co-existent, a dynamic likely facilitated by the fact that Titus' arch was constructed after his death and visualises his apotheosis on the back of an eagle.²³¹ Yet it ushered in a visual mode, albeit foregrounded in 'minor arts' like the Gemma Augustea, in which the 'real' and the 'personified' could mingle and interact with each other: 'Victory' took a major role alongside other 'personified' female figures within public sculpture. The Cancellaria Reliefs provide a case in point: named for their findspot, their precise dating and original location within Rome still uncertain, one of the reliefs (frieze 'A') is usually interpreted as a visualisation of Domitian's departure to the Samartian War in 92-93 CE (fig. 1.29). Domitian is depicted as hurried along by a variety of personae, including 'Victory', identifiable only by her single surviving wing, the deities Mars and Minerva, replete with their attributes, armour, and aegis, a bare-chested figure identified as the 'Genius Populi Romani', and a bearded togate figure understood by Kleiner as a representation of the Senate. A helmeted female figure, clad in a short tunic with one breast exposed, stands

²²⁹ See also possible Victories in spandrels of Augustan monuments known through coinage, e.g, Actian and Parthian Arches in the Forum Romanum: Kleiner 1992: 82, 87.

²³⁰ Östenberg 2021: 38; on visual representations of imperial apotheosis, see Beard and Henderson 1998.

²³¹ Kleiner 1992: 188. N.b., the so-called Altar of Domitius Ahenobarbus, dated to the 2nd century BCE, does represent Mars attending a *lustrum*, although he does not seem to interact with the other figures but legitimate the ceremony by his presence.

behind Domitian and presses at his elbow. A shield on her other arm, she is identified by Kleiner as either 'Roma' or 'Virtus'.²³²

Kleiner's equivocal identification of the bare-breasted figure speaks to the difficulty of telling one 'personification' from another. While the 'Roma/Virtus' figure from the Cancellaria Relief bears some attributes that give a clue to her identity, this is not the case for other 'personifications' in this new visual mode, many of whom appear 'in the form of idealized young women with no distinguishing features, only identifiable if accompanied by an inscription'. The difficulty of identifying who exactly a 'personified' figure is supposed to be is exemplified by 'Victory' herself on the column of Trajan (fig. 1.30), where she is represented as a semi-nude, winged figure writing on a shield. She is dislocated from the otherwise continuous visual narrative and fixed between individual scenes as an interstitial figure that indicates and glosses over the intervening years between military campaigns. As such, 'Victory' stands outside of the war itself and distils its chaos into the words on her shield: her nudity, wings and shield serve to distinguish her from the Roman and foreign women represented on the column.

By writing on a shield, however, she evokes a classical Greek motif in which Aphrodite uses a shield for a mirror, immortalized in literature and her sculptural iconography, notably in the 'Aphrodite of Capua' statue-type (fig. 1.31). ²³⁴ Where does 'Aphrodite' end, and 'Victory' begin? Does it matter? The conflation of 'Aphrodite' and 'Victory' on the Trajan's column may not have been advantageous in creating additional meaning (except, perhaps, to express the desirability of victory), but it certainly was not harmful to understanding or interpretation of the monument as a whole, as demonstrated by the repetition of the figure on the later Aurelian column. A productive overlap evidently existed between the 'personified' and divine.

Arguably the most famous example and maximisation of this overlap remains the 'syncretistic' female figure depicted on the Ara Pacis. The monument consists of an altar surrounded by a precinct wall which is split into two registers: the lower depicts an elaborate floral frieze, the upper a continuous procession along the east and west; in addition, there are

²³³ Stafford 2000: 14; see similar comments by Shapiro 1993: 15; Vermeule 1959: 16; Isaac 2017: 66.

²³² Kleiner 1992: 191-192.

²³⁴ For 'Victory-writing-on-shield' as a pastiche of elements from Greek and Hellenistic sculpture, see Havelock 1995: 93-98; Kousser 2008; for motif in coinage, see Smith 2005. Literary references to Aphrodite using a shield as a mirror: Apollonius, *Argonautica* 1.742-5; Callimachus, *Hymns* 5.21-22; see McNelis 2015: 203. 'Victories' were also represented slaying bulls in a now-fragmentary frieze from the Basilica Ulpia in the Forum of Trajan: Kleiner 1992: 214; Packer 2001, figs. 145-146.

four self-contained panel scenes on the north and south.²³⁵ The 'syncretistic' figure is depicted on the north-eastern panel, surrounded by foliage and seated upon rocks that resemble a throne (fig. 1.32): this suggests her enthronement within and exaltation by the natural world. Beneath the figure recline an ox and sheep, both of which appear dwarfed by the figure's size and monumentality. Her clinging drapery has fallen from her right shoulder and swags between her breasts, bunching up between her slightly parted thighs. Grapes and fruit rest in her lap: one piece has been picked up by the baby who sits on her left thigh and holds out the fruit like an offering. Another baby squirms on the figure's right hip, held safe and sure by her right hand. This central triad is flanked by two smaller female figures, seated on a water-bird and a dragon-like creature that bares its sharp teeth.²³⁶ These female companions are semi-nude, their drapery billowing and blooming behind them as though they might become airborne at any second.

Who is this figure? To ask such a narrow question is to miss the point. The figure's semi-nudity, monumentality and the timeless natural context would seem to identify her as a deity or 'personification' of some kind, although she may be read as 'Tellus', a 'personification' of the earth, a 'personification' of 'Italy', or even as the goddess Ceres, for the lush vegetal landscape in which she sits; Venus, for her semi-nudity; and 'Pax', to whom the altar was dedicated. The smaller female figures atop of the water-bird and sea-creature have also been variously identified as 'personifications' of specific winds and breezes or embodiments of Venus' celestial and marine aspects. ²³⁷ The general scholarly consensus is that the figure's identity is deliberately unclear, either to allow her identification with multiple divinities in line with different aspects of Augustan ideology, or because she is a synthesis of these divinities and 'personified' values. The ambiguity of her visual representation also allowed a cross-fertilization of the imagery on the now poorly preserved panel on the northwest, which likely replicated the composition of north-east panel by depicting a central seated female figure flanked by two smaller female figures (fig. 1.33). This triad-composition has been identified from Republican coin-images as 'Roma' attended by 'Honos' together with 'Virtus' or the 'Genius Populi Romani'. 238 The interpretative options are multiple and expanded further by the spatial, visual and stylistic parallels between the two northern panels:

²³⁵ On floral frieze and its symbolism, see Caneva 2010.

²³⁶ Spaeth (1994: 66) notes that the modern reconstruction of the bird's neck makes it difficult to clarify if a swan or a goose is represented; she also identifies the dragon-like creature as a *ketos*, or sea-monster.

²³⁷ For identification of central figure as Ceres, see Spaeth 1994: as Venus, see Galinsky 1966, 1992: as Pax, see de Grummond 1990. For interpretations of the attendant figures, see Spaeth 1994: 67, n11-21.

²³⁸ Kleiner 1992: 96. The presence of 'Honos' on the Ara Pacis is also mentioned by Galinsky 1992: 461, note 28. A further alternative identity for this figure, as the 'Genius Populi Romani', is noted by Rehak 2001, n7.

both the 'syncretistic' figure and 'Roma' look towards the entrance of the altar and each other, directing the viewer to read between and across the panels.

The 'syncretistic' figure represented on the Ara Pacis not only demonstrates the capaciousness and fluidity of the 'personified' vis-à-vis the divine as represented in monumental Roman sculpture, but also foregrounds the extension of this visual and semantic blurriness to the 'real' Roman woman. The procession on the long sides of the Ara Pacis, for instance, likely visualised the altar's consecration and is made up of 'real' figures: members of the imperial family, senators, Vestal Virgins and other priests, all of whom are 'subsumed beneath the classicising gloss of Augustan portraiture'. ²³⁹ One figure on the south frieze has been identified as Livia wearing a 'Greek coiffure borrowed from fifth-century images of goddesses' in place of her characteristic *nodus* (fig. 1.34). Elizabeth Bartman has argued that the locks of hair falling onto Livia's shoulders and behind her ears bring her into dialogue with the 'syncretistic' figure on the north-east, emphasising that she and Livia 'possess equivalent virtues – beauty, modesty, fertility and peacefulness [and ...] closely resemble one another in face, comportment, and dress'. ²⁴⁰

While these allusions were necessarily subtle on the Ara Pacis, on which Livia is represented as one classicising figure among many within a long extensive procession, the 'syncretistic' figure was one of the iconographies with which Livia was assimilated after the death of Augustus, as attested by a fragmentary 1st-century CE turquoise gem, which may have post-dated Livia's death in 29 CE but likely pre-empted her formal deification by Claudius in 42 CE. The gem shows Livia either with one of her sons or holding a bust of the young Augustus (fig. 1.35). Livia's hair, posture, dress and expression all closely resemble the 'syncretistic' figure on the north-east of the Ara Pacis.²⁴¹ Is this still Livia, as conflation of mortal and divine as we saw earlier, or is she a 'personification'? Any answer would undermine and erase the productive overlaps between 'personification', divinity, and mortal that existed within Roman visual culture: the 'personified' body is one element within a mosaic of female body-types that rubbed against and overlapped with each other to produce an image of woman that was more generic than real.

²³⁹ Kleiner 1992: 92. See also Bartman 1999: 87.

²⁴⁰ Bartman 1999: 88. See also Wood 1999: 102-103; Kleiner 2005: 223; Lesk 2007: 42.

²⁴¹ Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, inv.99.109: Wood 1999: 120-121. For portraits of Livia, see overview in Wood 1999: 87ff; Winkes 1995: 19-63, catalogue #80-207; Bartman 1999.

Facciamo una passeggiata

This chapter has surveyed three categories of female body: the Roman, the foreign, and the 'personified' and/or divinised. Although the above discussion has already indicated how and where these categories overlap and blur into one another, to bring them together necessitates a short *passeggiata*: a meander through an imagined version of late second-century CE Rome, in which all the bodies discussed above are simultaneously on display.²⁴²

To begin, the Forum Romanum. Look up at the female bodies exposed, brutalised and violated on the reliefs decorating the Basilica Aemilia: one standing openly, almost calmly, her body exposed to the stones hurled by the men who stand either side of her; the other frieze a chaotic tangle of female bodies struggling and twisting in the grip of their male captors. Are these foreign women, or Roman? It is not immediately clear. Does it matter? Both Tarpeia and the Sabines have their place in upholding the order of things. Wander a little further through Rome to the Campus Martius, and look at the victory column of Marcus Aurelius, decorated with images of yet more brutalised women: stripped, dragged by their hair, forcibly separated from their children, their bodies splayed and exposed. If any ancient viewers felt sympathy for the women seized by Roman soldiers on the Basilica Aemilia, could they not feel similarly towards the foreign female bodies obliterated on the Aurelian column? Can this be squared with their foreignness? How?

A few hundred metres from the Aurelian column, however, the foreign female body reappears, this time on the Hadrianeum, looking extremely different. Here she is not violable or brutalised: on the contrary, her body is powerfully muscular, wrapped in war-ready cuirasses and cloaks, equipped with weapons. She embodies and visualises the latent threat of the foreign, or should that be – if these are to be read as personifications of the provinces – the range of what are now Rome's military resources? Is her sinister potential really that perturbing when she looks like the figure of 'Roma/Virtus', bare-breasted and Amazon-like, on the Cancellaria reliefs? While these reliefs do not have a clear provenance, they were likely displayed in close proximity to the Hadrianeum and Aurelian column, either in the imperial fora or on a Domitianic triumphal arch. What is the viewer supposed to do with the brawny, bicepped female bodies of the Hadrianeum and the personified body of 'Virtus' – or even 'Rome' herself – when they look so alike?

²⁴² As per Warner's wander through contemporary Paris (1978: 37ff).

Turn back towards the Forum Romanum, and the confusion is only compounded by the sight of a togate woman astride a horse at the entrance: her dress identifies her as Roman and elevates her into a symbol of masculinity, even a 'personification' of *virtus* and derring-do. By her action and appearance, the togate woman has clearly been dredged up from Rome's deep past rather than reflecting the women and womanhood of its present. One might still be pondering her 'foreignness', when stumbling across the monumental statue of a female figure wearing an *infula* and clutching a cornucopia and poppy-flowers, which was likely displayed somewhere in the centre of the city. Her soft, idealised facial features are vaguely reminiscent of the empress Livia, but that is the only indication as to what kind of female body this is. Is she mortal, divine, divinised, deified? Does it matter?

Conclusion

Plancia Magna, with whom this chapter began, demonstrates a distinctly local way of representing women in the public cityscape. At Pompeii, in contrast, Eumachia's self-insertion into the urban fabric of Campania followed the model set by the imperial family and the empress Livia at Rome, a cityscape that was dominated in the Republican and later imperial periods by female bodies that were, on some level, unreal and unknowable.

Early representations of Livia and Octavia in the capital as still-living, flesh-and-blood women quickly morphed into more unreal images through attributes and iconography. Enemy female bodies, meanwhile, might retain something of their individual humanity and proximity, asking for empathy from their viewers, even as the Erechtheion maidens were translated into symbols of conquest and conquered land through Vitruvius' text. This transposition of meaning acquired new force in the later Empire, as evidenced by the replication and abstraction of the Hadrianeum figures as a visualisation of conquered (yet apparently still potent) territories. 'Personified' figures were also popularly depicted throughout public sculpture at Rome; much of their power came from their overlap with the bodies of the divine, mortal, and even the foreign.

Because so few *kinds* of female body (analogous to the limited roles available to women in Roman society) were represented in public at Rome, the representative discourse seems to have been less concerned with visually distinguishing between them than capitalising on the allusiveness of the classicising female body they had in common, plotting these 'nodes' as constitutive of a broader semantic and symbolic network of meaning. The female bodies

represented at Rome are arguably unified by their visual and conceptual distance from the 'real' Roman woman, who would have walked through the city and seen them on public buildings and in public spaces. She is almost entirely absent from the visual images that decorated the cityscape of Rome, which is given over to female bodies, the meaning and impact of which rests in their allusive, iterative nature.

II.

THE FUNERARY

'But those women who beautify the outside, are unawares all waste in the inner depths...' (Clement of Alexandria, *Against Embellishing the Body*, 2).

For those Romans who could afford a material record of their life and death, the funerary landscape offered various commemorative options. Its heterogeneity was driven, in part, by the shift from cremation to inhumation in Italian burial practices in the 1st-2nd centuries CE. There were monumental tombs, for example, such as the turreted rotunda of Caecilia Metella and the Pyramid of Gaius Cestius on Rome's Via Appia and Via Ostiensis, which were followed by the imperial mausolea of Augustus and Hadrian. There were also smaller chamber tombs, like those at Ostia's Isola Sacra, emblazoned with reliefs and inscriptions that jostled for the attention of those walking along the so-called 'streets of the dead' outside the city walls:²⁴³ the communal burial contexts of the columbarium and catacomb, in contrast, often sprawled beneath the ground.²⁴⁴ Inside the tomb, the commemorative options expanded even further. The dead could be represented in the form of *kline* monuments, statues, and busts; their physical remains could be contained within a sculpted ash chest or, from the late 1st century CE, laid prostrate in a sarcophagus.²⁴⁵

This chapter asks how one aspect of this crowded funerary landscape constructed and explored gender: funerary altars from mainland Italy, which broadly date from 50-150 CE. Averaging less than a metre in height, the funerary altar could be placed on the tomb's exterior or within the precinct itself: some altars contained receptacles for the deceased's ashes, while

²⁴³ Toynbee 1971 remains the classic work on Roman death but see also Carroll 2006; Pearce *et al.* 2000. For edited volumes of recent work on ancient death and commemoration, see Brink *et al* 2008; Hope and Huskinson 2011; Carroll and Rempel 2011; Newby and Toulson 2019. A necessarily limited bibliography: on tombs, see Kockel 1983; Eisner 1986; von Hesburg 1992; Feraudi-Gruénais 2001; Gee 2003; Borg 2019. On Isola Sacra, see Hackworth-Petersen 2006: 184ff; on the 'streets of the dead' see Koortbojian 1996.

²⁴⁴ On catacombs, see Pergola 1997; Fiocchi Nicolai et al 1999; on use of columbaria and catacombs, see Bodel 2008.

²⁴⁵ For ash urns, see Sinn 1987. For reliefs, Zanker 1975; Frenz 1977; Zimmer 1982. For tomb paintings, see Blanc 1998. For *klinai* monuments, see Wrede 1977, 1981a; for later tomb decoration, see Borg 2013. On funerary stelae from northern Italy, see Scarpellini 1987; Pflug 1989.

others functioned only as commemorative markers.²⁴⁶ Although this body of material was extensively catalogued and typologised by scholars between the 1970s and early 1990s, the questions asked of funerary altars have remained primarily sociological: the altars' smaller size, relative affordability and popularity in the provinces of the Roman Empire have led scholars to examine their representation of ethnicity, social identity and class.²⁴⁷ When it comes to gender and the body, however, the altars remain an ill-worked but promising corpus.

Before turning to the funerary altar, however, an overview of how gender was marked in other visual media within the funerary sphere is necessary to illuminate how and where funerary altars differ. To ask how funerary visual culture constructed gender is a difficult question. It depends on what kind of funerary art one looks at. Historically, most scholars interested in such questions have taken the sarcophagi produced and distributed across the Empire from the 1st century CE as their primary dataset. 248 It is easy to see the appeal of sarcophagi for understanding gender construction: a range of sculpted figures are represented across the Roman corpus, which is itself voluminous and heterogenous in form and style. Some sarcophagi, however, have proved more popular in discussions of gender than others. The 'biographical' sarcophagus type, for example, popularised in the 2nd-3rd centuries CE, remains relatively undiscussed except for a 1981 article by Kampen. The biographical sarcophagus purportedly represented the deceased's life and achievements: it constructed and reinforced normative gender roles, which do not appear to vary based on the sex of the body inside the box. Male figures are depicted as developing from infants to authoritative generals and politicians, whereas female figures are characterised by their static-ness: they either supervise their children's baths or marry the male protagonist.²⁴⁹ The women on Roman biographical sarcophagi are articulated solely within the narrow parameters of wife and mother: they are foils to enhance male status.

²⁴⁶ Kleiner 1987a: 76-77; Boschung 1987: 12-13; 37-41 (38 for ash receptacles).

²⁴⁷ For catalogues of minor funerary monuments, see Kleiner 1977, 1987a; Boschung 1987; Kockel 1993. Comparable funerary reliefs from Roman provinces have attracted significant attention in recent years: for Palmyrene reliefs, see Sokolowski 2017, Heyn 2010 and Davies 2017; for monuments from Roman Britain, Carroll 2012b and, from Roman Gaul, Hope 2001. For critique of the category of 'freedman art' see Hackworth-Petersen 2006; Stewart 2014 provides a recent, positive view of 'non-elite' monuments.

²⁴⁸ For catalogue and publication of sarcophagi, see ongoing publication of *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs* and overview in Koch and Sichtermann 1982; Koch 1993. Davies 2010 provides an overview of development of sarcophagi as funerary monuments. Sarcophagi reliefs have been subjected to a range of analytical approaches (formalist - Riegl 1901; chronological/developmental – Rodenwaldt 1935, summarised by Andreae 1981; typological – Matz 1968-1975, Andreae 1956) prior to the art historical ones that pertain to this chapter.

²⁴⁹ Kampen 1981a. A later development of the biographical sarcophagus represented the life of a child who died young, before attaining a public career: even in this iteration, which largely depicted the child's education and sometimes his apotheosis, the representation of women is limited to the social role of motherhood.

Comparable Attic grave stelai from the late Classical period represent women in similarly domestic terms to the Roman biographical sarcophagi: weaving, child-rearing and selecting jewellery. Yet the Attic material is also characterised by a sense of female companionship generated by the representation of female slaves or family members. ²⁵⁰ The Roman woman represented on the biographical sarcophagus is, in contrast, a lonely figure. When seated to supervise the child's bath, as on the left end of a sarcophagus now in Los Angeles (fig. 2.1), she appears as a self-contained vignette, her engagement with the rest of the scene limited to gazing down at the baby at her feet. It is almost as if the baby's birth and physical separation from the mother signifies that the woman's role in the biography of the sarcophagus' occupant is completed, and that she is now redundant.²⁵¹ It is only in the midlate 3rd century CE that women on biographical sarcophagi transcend the roles of wife and mother to be represented as 'learned' women, equipped with scrolls. While such images evoke the elegiac docta puella familiar from Ovid and his fellow poets, they also speak to the increasing education of upper-class women in the 3rd century, inspired, perhaps, by the empress Julia Domna, who kept company with sophists and philosophers. The representation of some 'learned' women on sarcophagi in an *orans* pose evokes associations of piety and prayer that attest to the incremental expansion of acceptable feminine roles as conduits of Christianity. 252

If biographical sarcophagi commemorated individuals by inserting them into a textbook life, complete with paint-by-number gender roles, it is unsurprising that most scholars interested in gender have instead concentrated on Roman sarcophagi decorated with visualisations of myth: this is a larger corpus of material which offered a rich range of iconographies, narratives and identities through which gender could be more fluidly constructed and explored. The myth chosen to decorate the sarcophagus mediated between the living and the dead: it often spoke to the personality and virtues of the deceased - both in life and potentially beyond - and to the bereaved relatives who visited the tomb for funerals and commemorative rituals.²⁵³ To both the dead and the living, the mythological sarcophagus

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²⁵⁰ Clairmont 1993 provides the first systematic collection of classical Attic stelai, complete with modern location of each, a brief description, bibliography: see introductory volume, 217-267 for an overview of earlier scholarship on the stelai. See Stears 1993, Leader 1997 on female roles on Attic stelai.

²⁵¹ Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, C.A., inv.47.8.9. This interpretation works best if the sarcophagus was intended for an adult male deceased, as implied by Kampen in the absence of inscriptional evidence or physical remains; admittedly, if the sarcophagus was intended for the mother herself rather than her son, the image could be read as elevating motherhood. For further comments on how the sex of sarcophagus occupants may impact the interpretation of imagery, see below.

²⁵² See Hemelrijk 1999, specifically 122ff on Julia Domna's circle. For women on sarcophagi, see Huskinson 1999: 199-200 (women with scrolls), 200-205 (*orans* images). See also Birk 2014: 248, 2017; Hansen 2007. A recent doctoral thesis, Allen 2014, addresses *Entmythologisierung* across late antique Roman sarcophagi.

²⁵³ On funerary ritual, see Toynbee 1971: 43-64.

offered a 'multiplicity of prompts and associations' and 'space for alternative and fictive subject positions', including those relating to gender. The range of narrative and iconographic options for mythological sarcophagi ensured that there truly was something for everyone.²⁵⁴

A popular choice for sarcophagi was the myth of Meleager, the hero who slew the Calydonian boar and was struck down by a fatal fever caused by his mother: she had sought revenge for her brothers, whom Meleager had killed after they challenged his gift of the boar's hide to his lover, Atalanta.²⁵⁵ The image of Meleager in the midst of the hunt – as on a sarcophagus now in the Palazzo Doria Pamphilj, Rome, which depicts him driving his spear home, all rippling muscles and brawn (fig. 2.2) – could visualise masculine virtues of bravery and fortitude. These qualities were then transposed onto the deceased within the sarcophagus itself.²⁵⁶ On the Doria Pamphilj sarcophagus, Atalanta is visible behind Meleager, the only woman amongst the hunting party of nude men. Although she takes an active role in literary accounts of the hunt, even striking the first blow in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Pseudo-Apollodorus' *Biblioteca*,²⁵⁷ on the sarcophagus Atalanta is depicted hanging back and tentatively glancing at the fray. She provides a feminine audience for what is unequivocally man's triumph, but her static pensiveness may also foreshadow the dispute that will immediately follow the hunt's success. Grief is writ large throughout the image: the death of the boar foretells Meleager's own tragic demise.

Images of Meleager's *death* were also common on mythological sarcophagi: an example now in the Louvre depicts Meleager lying prostrate and surrounded by mourners. Such images emphasise the pathos of the hero's now sapped strength.²⁵⁸ Relatives standing in front of these sarcophagi may have recalled their own experiences of seeing their loved one's final hours and the laying-out of the corpse – the body which now lies only inches away from them

²⁵⁴ Zanker 2012: 167; Ewald 2012: 47. Critical works on mythological sarcophagi include Koortbojian 1995; Zanker and Ewald 2004 (trans. 2012). See also Lorenz 2016, the special issue of *RES* (2012), and recent edited volumes by Elsner and Huskinson (2010); Galinier and Barette (2013); Hallett and Clark (2019).

²⁵⁵ As recounted by Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8.267-546: for literary references, see Lorenz 2010: 307, note 12.

²⁵⁶ Lorenz 2010: 307-308 estimates that approximately 70 extant sarcophagi represent the Calydonian hunt, with a further 15 examples depicting a feast made from the boar. See Lorenz 2010 for examination of the Meleager myth on sarcophagi; D'Ambra 1988 contextualises and analyses a Meleager sarcophagus from an Ostian tomb. For further examples of *exempla virtutis* on sarcophagi, see also Koortbojian's discussion of the myth of Adonis (1995: 23ff).

²⁵⁷ Ovid, Metamorphoses 8.379-383: 'celerem Tegeaea sagittam imposuit nervo sinuatoque expulit arcu: fixa sub aure feri summum destrinxit harundo corpus et exiguo rubefecit sanguine saetas'; Pseudo-Apollodorus, Biblioteca 1.8.2: 'τὸν δὲ κάπρον πρώτη μὲν Ἁταλάντη εἰς τὰ νῶτα ἐτόξευσε'.

²⁵⁸ Louvre, Paris, inv. Ma 539. Lorenz 2010: 308 estimates that 38 sarcophagi represent the recovery of Meleager's body; 10, Meleager on his death bed: fragmentary examples indicate that the latter was more popular than suggested by the extant evidence.

within the sarcophagus. It is no accident that the most performative mourning in the relief is done by women: the seated Atalanta holds her head in her hands at the foot of Meleager's couch, as three women with loose hair gesticulate around the corpse itself. The sarcophagus identifies mourning as distinctly feminine, mirroring and validating the experiences of the deceased's female relatives, while offering a negative model of grief to Roman men, who should not be tempted to excessive emotion even in bereavement. The depiction of Atalanta and the female mourners may then offer a cipher through which even male viewers may channel any unruly emotion.²⁵⁹

Another popular myth represented on sarcophagi, with a more mutable construction of gender, was that of Endymion, the hunter or herdsman beloved by the moon-goddess Selene. ²⁶⁰ A typical Endymion sarcophagus now at San Paolo fuori le mura in Rome depicts the youth sleeping in a rocky landscape (fig. 2.3). His tunic has slipped to reveal the contours of his muscular body. His right arm is flung over his head, further exposing his chest: this gesture dates back to archaic Greek art and can denote sleep, drunkenness, or death, as well as weakness.²⁶¹ Selene approaches, her eyes trained on the young man. The divine acknowledgement of Endymion's beauty may suggest that the deceased inside the sarcophagus would also prove worthy of a god's affection. A relative who looked upon this sarcophagus may have recalled seeing the deceased's body rendered inert by death and gain consolation from understanding death as repose: as Zanker notes, the suggestion that 'sleep is not a final state' and that the deceased is 'still within reach' may have brought comfort to the bereaved. 262 The mourner may also have taken comfort in understanding the deceased as beloved by a goddess and transcending mortality to some happier existence, foreshadowed by the bucolic paradise in which Endymion peacefully sleeps.²⁶³ Finally, the myth evokes the emotions and experience of bidding farewell: Selene may come to Endymion in the night but must depart when dawn arrives, just as the mourner repeatedly leaves, and returns to, the tomb. 264

The extant corpus of Endymion sarcophagi contains various iconographic variants: he is alternately represented as a hunter or herdsman, nude or clothed, sleeping or awake,

²⁵⁹ C.f., Seneca's admonishments that 'nemo tristis sibi est' and 'est aliqua et doloris ambitio': Epistles 63.2.

²⁶⁰ For literary references, see Sorabella 2001: 70, note 17.

²⁶¹ For iconographic motif, see Oddo 2014.

²⁶² Zanker 2012: 170. The phrase 'to sleep Endymion's sleep' was synonymous with death in both Latin and Greek; for further literary references to sleep as death, and vice versa, see Ogle 1933.

²⁶³ Koortbojian 1995: 98, 84; for a full analysis of development of Endymion iconography, see 63-99.

²⁶⁴ Ibid, 99.

indicating the malleability of myth and masculinity.²⁶⁵ There are substantive visual and narrative parallels, too, between the image of Endymion lying within a rocky landscape and approached by a divinity, and another myth popularly depicted on sarcophagi: Dionysus' discovery of Ariadne, the Cretan princess abandoned by Theseus on Naxos.²⁶⁶ David Fredrick has argued that the iconographic similarities between the two myths indicate that Endymion, in being viewed and desired by Selene, has been endowed with a 'synthetic female sensibility': Fredrick understands this as a passive, looked-at quality embodied by Ariadne, who is subjected to the metaphorical violence of the male gaze and physical rape by Dionysus.²⁶⁷

Fredrick's understanding of gender roles, however, relies on the assumption that only the female body can be violated, and that Endymion, as an Ariadne-lookalike, must be similarly understood as feminized. Yet this makes gender as stereotypical and normative as it was on the biographical sarcophagi referenced above, flattening out the nuance of specific myths and iconographies. A closer inspection of sarcophagi on which Ariadne appears would reveal that her body is usually unveiled by Eros, who is symbolic of and foreshadows loving marriage: Ariadne often appears on sarcophagi in procession scenes as Dionysus' equal. A more compelling reading of Endymion and Ariadne sarcophagi would understand the appeal of both protagonists to the living and dead. Ariadne, like Endymion, finds eternal happiness in divine love; her tale offers comfort for the deceased inside the sarcophagus and the bereaved who gazed upon it. 269

The myths of Ariadne, Endymion and Meleager are just a few of the narratives represented on sarcophagi that could speak to whomever lay within or gazed at its exterior. Other mythological scenes on sarcophagi constructed gender roles that appear more difficult to rationalise. A sarcophagus now in Basel visualised the myth of Medea, a narrative that illustrates the potential dangers of female agency: the image of the filicidal Medea literally riding off into the sunset on Helios' chariot after committing multiple murders is, at best, a

²⁶⁵ Zanker 2012: 172.

²⁶⁶ Matz catalogues 22 extant sarcophagi that represent Dionysus' discovery of Ariadne (1968, vol.3: 360-403).

²⁶⁷ See Fredrick 1995.

²⁶⁸ Matz records 15 sarcophagi that depict the couple in a (marital?) procession (1968, vol. 2: 188-121).

²⁶⁹ See Ariadne myth on a on a child's sarcophagus in J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, inv. 83.AA.275; Huskinson 1996: 102. Ariadne sleeps soundly even in the crowded discovery scenes, as if she is 'blissfully immersed in contemplation of the god' (Zanker and Ewald 2012: 162); her sleep could be understood as a transformative state from mortal to divine bride, consistent with Dionysiac ritual which necessitated a destruction of the self: see Taylor 2008: 90-136.

problematic parallel for the deceased's journey into the afterlife.²⁷⁰ Yet the front panel of the Basel sarcophagus is dominated by the figure of Creusa, thrashing in pain. The graphic violence of Creusa's agonised death may have consoled the bereaved viewer, elucidating that their relative had a more peaceful passing than the Corinthian princess. The sense of Creusa's death as premature – as emphasised by the similarity of Creusa's pose to iconographies of Persephone's abduction – may also have suggested that the deceased was taken too soon. Here, the sarcophagus's lasting impression is not a secure identification with either woman, but one of chaotic violence, bolstered by the dense interweaving of figures.

As such, mythological sarcophagi offered both the deceased *and* bereaved a performative space, in which sex could become gender through the processes of transposition and projection, and where the viewers' loss of (and perpetual desire for) the deceased could be modelled by, and mapped onto, mythical figures. These connections were in some cases literalised and strengthened by the addition of portrait features to the bodies of mythical figures on sarcophagi.²⁷¹ An Endymion sarcophagus now in the Louvre, for instance, represents the youth and moon-goddess with blank faces that were perhaps left deliberately unfinished, or, more likely, were intended to be finished with the portrait features of the deceased and their spouse, constructing a direct link between myth and mourner. As Zanker puts it, 'the wife depicted as Selene could say 'I loved my husband, and I miss him the way Selene missed Endymion'.'.²⁷²

Zanker's assessment of the Louvre sarcophagus indicates the appropriateness of the Endymion myth for the sarcophagus of a man, who could be identified with the young herdsman or hunter and his wife and/or relatives with Selene. Yet it is not always a man inside the box bearing Endymion's image: an Endymion sarcophagus originally found in a chamber tomb in Ostia was dedicated by Aninia Hilara for her 50-year-old mother, Claudia Arria (fig. 2.4).²⁷³ Next to the dedicatory inscription on the sarcophagus lid is an image of a mature woman wearing a palla and a helmet-like hairstyle reminiscent of Julia Domna's portraiture: this is presumably a likeness of Claudia herself.²⁷⁴ The representation of Claudia on the sarcophagus

²⁷⁰ See Gessert 2004: 245; *contra* Buchanan 2012, who argues that the fundamental incomprehensibility of the Medea myth on the Basel sarcophagus is synonymous with the opacity of death itself. See also Newby 2014, 2016: 273-319.

²⁷¹ For portraits on sarcophagi in general, see Newby 2010; for a broader examination of portraits in tomb contexts, see Audley-Miller 2010.

²⁷² On unfinished faces, see Elsner 2018: 560ff. Zanker 2012:168-169.

²⁷³ MMA, New York, inv. 47.100.4a, b; *CIL*.XIV.565. See Sorabella 2001.

²⁷⁴ Ibid, 76-77.

emphasises the peculiarity of mapping her onto Endymion's sensuously nude, slumbering form.

Why did Aninia not choose the myth of Ariadne approached by Dionysus for her mother's sarcophagus? The Ariadne myth is, after all, narratively and iconographically similar to the Endymion myth, and provides a female rather than a male protagonist. Although Jean Sorabella suggests that 'the two myths do not have the same existential value [... as] Endymion's sleep may be endless, and Ariadne's culminates in waking', she argues that the myth chosen for Claudia's sarcophagus offered 'romances ripe for retelling in the light of personal recollection'. Aninia may have chosen the sarcophagus because she saw her own grieving self in the figure of Selene: the gender discrepancy between Claudia and Endymion (as well as his erotic rather than familial relationship to Selene) was an acceptable trade-off given how powerfully the sarcophagus articulated the experience of saying goodbye. Zanker notes that 'contemporaries could evidently abstract the essentials from the distribution of role and gender in the mythological figures to relate the love of the couple [of Selene and Endymion...] to the love and longing of the daughter for her deceased mother'. 275

Claudia's sarcophagus emphasises that the relationship between the visualised myth and the body in the box need not always be straightforward. A similar example is provided by a sarcophagus found during the 1964 excavation of a 2nd-century CE trench grave at the intersection of Via Cassia and Via Grottarossa in Rome. The excavated sarcophagus was decorated with hunting imagery (fig. 2.5):²⁷⁶ on the right of the front panel, two men raise their weapons and urge their dogs to bite into a fleeing stag. The animal has already buckled to its knees. A man on horseback rushes towards it with his spear held aloft, as if keen to have the final blow. Behind these figures stand two men, a woman wearing a quiver of arrows and a child. The Phrygian caps worn by two of the men and constellation of would-be hunters have led scholars to identify the scene as a representation of Aeneas, accompanied by his son Ascanius, hunting with Dido.²⁷⁷ In the funerary context, the imagery of hunting would appear

²⁷⁵ Ibid, 78; Zanker 2012: 172.

²⁷⁶ Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, inv.168186. See Bordenache-Battiglia 1983: 100-123 for hoard and dating. ²⁷⁷ On the short, left end of the sarcophagus were figures identified as Venus, a personification of Africa, and a 'fluvial deity' that may represent a specific river near Carthage: this lends further weight to the identification of the scene as drawing on *Aeneid* 4: see Ascenzi and Bianco 1998: 63. Resinous analysis of the mummy inside also suggests mummification may have happened in northeast or tropical Africa: see Ciuffarella 1998.

to speak to the senseless brutality of death – its dog-eat-dog nature, perhaps – but also a masculine conception of *virtus*. ²⁷⁸

Yet the sarcophagus contained the mummified body of an eight-year-old girl, dressed in a silk tunic and golden jewellery, couched in a world that appears quintessentially feminine. An articulated ivory doll, approximately 16cm in height, was found inside the sarcophagus, equipped with its own miniature trousseau in amber (fig. 2.6): a little vase, a long-handled spoon, and a shell-shaped pot that may have contained solid perfume.²⁷⁹ The doll's head features a carved diadem and may have been dressed in clothes that have since perished.²⁸⁰ These attributes suggest that the doll, like other examples dated to the 2nd century CE, allowed little girls to play at, and practise, their self-fashioning as attractive, well-groomed wives. Literary references to girls dedicating their dolls at sanctuaries upon marriage seem to corroborate this hypothesis, while scholars have suggested that the dolls buried with unmarried girls functioned as substitutes for their prospective, lost futures.²⁸¹ The Grottarossa doll embodies a womanliness that is beyond reach for the other body in the box. Although the girl's body is paralysed by death and mummification, the doll's moveable limbs suggest it will attend to the business of beautification on her mistress' behalf, and perhaps even imply that the girl will regain some animacy in the next life to continue her play.

The girlishness of the doll and her toy beauty kit rubs up against its container, which visualises the brutality of hunting.²⁸² Zahra Newby has argued that photographs of the

²⁷⁸ Birk 2013: 120. C.f. the potential association of Diana and girlhood with a masculine *virtus*: see D'Ambra 1989.

²⁷⁹ Miniature amber objects in the shape of a die, wedge and female bust were also found among the linen in which the girl's body was wrapped: see Bordenache-Battiglia 1983: 124-138 for hoard. The doll is Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, inv.168191. For an overview of Greco-Roman dolls, see Manson 1987, which cites 493 dolls in total, 45 of which can be traced to a funerary context. Manson estimates the number of extant bone and ivory dolls from the imperial period to be approximately 70-80. For examples of such dolls from Italian contexts, see Elderkin 1930; Martin-Kilcher 2000; Pavolini 1992; Harlow 2012; Bianchi 2012; Dolansky 2012, and Bordenache-Battiglia 1983: 124-138. For similar dolls from non-Italian contexts, see Dardaine 1983, Almagro-Gorbea and Sese 1996, Rinaldi 1956: 118; Rouvier-Jeanlin 1995; Rossi 1993; Coulon 1994: 94-98; Rahmani 1960.

²⁸⁰ Only one extant ivory doll, from a 4th century catacomb on the Via Appia, retains traces of its gold-threaded 'vestitino': Musei Vaticani, Rome, inv.12224, see also Rinaldi 1956: 122. For a general insistence that dolls were clothed, see D'Ambra 2014a, 2014b: 317; Martin-Kilcher 2000: 66; c.f. also the woollen clothes worn by fabric-dolls extant from Roman Egypt: Janssen 1996: 232, 238; Petrie Museum, London, inv. UC.28030.

²⁸¹ On dedication upon marriage, see Persius, *Satires* 2.69-70, with comment by scholiast; Lactantius, *Divinae Institutiones* 2.4.13; Wiedemann 1989: 149-53; see also D'Ambra 2014b: 316; Manson 1992: 58-59; Coulon 1994. Bettini (1999) reads dolls dedicated at sanctuaries as embodiments of lost girlhood, a reading which likely inspired the suggestion that they serve as substitutes for lost womanhood in funerary contexts: see Martin-Kilcher 2000: 69-71. For specific suggestions that dolls were evidence of the deceased's virginity, see Elderkin 1930: 275 and Ricotti 1995:58.

²⁸² A further example of gender in- and outside the sarcophagus can be found in a 2nd century CE burial in Lyon, in which a sarcophagus contained a ten-year-old girl, identified by the inscription as Claudia Victoria, and a male articulated doll at her feet: its incised cuirass suggests it may have been a soldier or gladiator: see Clivaz 2013;

mummified corpse, taken in 1964 before its deterioration, attest that the girl, doll, and the figure identified as Dido on the sarcophagus shared the same individualised features: a 'straight nose, full but firmly closed mouth [and] slight dimple in the curved chin'. She argues that the diadem carved into the doll's head identifies it as an 'empress or goddess' and unifies it with the figure of Dido on the sarcophagus, who also wears a diadem. For Newby, the visual and spatial alignment of the doll, Dido and the mummified girl indicates that the deceased has been transformed into 'a more enduring state, assimilated to the gods and eternally sealed into the form of a goddess'. 284

Yet Newby's hypothetical trio of co-ordinated portraits remains speculative, while her analysis erases the representative and ontological differences between the figures by conflating them into a singular 'feminine' entity.²⁸⁵ The dissonance between the sarcophagus' exterior and interior is ironed out, along with its potential meanings: the parallels, for instance, between Dido as an Eastern queen, as fundamentally 'Other', and the little girl whose mummified body literally embodies her non-Romanness in perpetuity. The sarcophagus also visualises a critical moment for Dido, namely the hunting trip during which she will consummate her relationship with Aeneas and begin the tragic chain of events that culminates in her suicide: the '*leti primusque malorum causa*' (4.169-170), as Virgil puts it. The hunting imagery may also subtly reference that Dido herself is being hunted here, having been manipulated by Venus into falling for Aeneas. The broader narrative of a woman tormented by a fateful and ultimately fatal desire also parallels the perpetual desire of the living to see and know the dead.²⁸⁶

More flattening than Newby's discussion is Stine Birk's monograph on portrait features on sarcophagi, in which she argues that female figures carved with apparently masculine facial features, and vice versa, were not workshop errors but deliberately 'cross-gendered' figures. Birk cites an Endymion sarcophagus now in London which depicts the youth with a soft, feminine body, as proof that mythical figures could be picked for reasons beyond biological sex, and that it was 'not an outrage' for men to identify themselves with feminine bodies.²⁸⁷ Yet Birk does not meaningfully engage with the representation of feminised male bodies

Allmer and Dissard 1890, vol. 3, op.291. Similar male gladiator dolls, in terracotta, were found in a necropolis at Cádiz: see Dardaine 1983.

²⁸³ Newby 2018: 133

²⁸⁴ Ibid, 147-148.

²⁸⁵ It is unclear, too, if Newby considers the sarcophagus and the doll to have been manufactured as entirely bespoke objects or as stock options that were personalised, either before or after the girl's death.

²⁸⁶ Virgil, *Aeneid* 4.129ff: see Dunkle 1973 on symbolism of the hunt.

²⁸⁷ BM, London, inv. 1947,0714.8; Birk 2013: 238-242. For a broader look at crossdressing/transgenderism in the ancient world, see Campanile *et al* 2017.

elsewhere in Roman visual culture (such as images of Narcissus, ever-popular in Campanian wall painting²⁸⁸); nor, more critically, does she consider that the Endymion sarcophagus belonging to the quinquagenarian Claudia Arria demonstrates that explicit 'cross-gendering' was, on the whole, unnecessary. This is perhaps reflected in the limited number of 'cross-gendered' examples identified by Birk herself.²⁸⁹ Myths with male protagonists were, after all, not restricted to male sexed burials: Birk's methodology risks admitting a circular logic that would classify sarcophagi decorated with specific myths as appropriately 'his and hers', which in turn could be used to 'sex' other sarcophagi which no longer contain remains, or those of indeterminable biological sex. Given the lack of provenance for most sarcophagi, the existence of multiple burials and patterns of sarcophagus (re)use, Birk's approach presents a dangerously slippery slope.

If the myths visualised on sarcophagi provided a lens for understanding and representing the dead and living, which inevitably included gender as part of identity, then they appealed precisely for their ability to abstract and highlight different aspects of gendered behaviour and appearance across a number of figures, narratives, and iconographies. Various aspects of grief, gender, and identity – and, critically, the new status of the body as inert corpse – could be mediated and processed within the tomb by the mythological sarcophagus, in part because it had no obligation to be faithful to, or necessarily documentary of, real life or a normative performance of gender: the inclusion of divine and mythical figures on the mythological sarcophagi opened up new gender expectations and dynamics. ²⁹⁰ Mythological sarcophagi challenged the expectation that gender had to work in death as it did in life.

Borrowing a Body

Mythological and biographical sarcophagi are just two elements within the funerary landscape. Sixteen so-called 'Venus *matronae*' statues, of which at least two can be traced to a funerary context, tell a profitably different story of gender.²⁹¹ A statue linked to the Tomb of the Manilii

²⁸⁸ *Infra* p132-138.

²⁸⁹ Examples of explicitly 'cross-gendered' portraits on sarcophagi are extremely limited, even when the criteria for identifying portrait features are generously woolly. As Kleiner has noted, Birk omits unfinished portrait heads but includes 'idealised representations of the deceased ... so lacking in specificity that they are no different from a blank face': Kleiner 2016, see also Meinecke (2015: 605) who cites Studer-Karlen (2012: 13-16) for a clearer definition of what constitutes a 'portrait' on Christian sarcophagi.

²⁹⁰ See Vout 2014a: 612ff.

²⁹¹ The Tomb of Claudia Semne off the Via Appia, Rome, as reconstructed by Wrede 1971 and the Tomb of the Manilii, Rome (statue - Musei Vaticani magazine 267/2952). D'Ambra notes the tentative provenance and identification of a sculpture now in the Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen, and concludes that the statue's 'context in a tomb, however, can be surmised' from literary references (1996: 223).

in Rome, dated to the late 1st- or early 2nd-century CE, is typical of the corpus (fig. 2.7): it depicts a female figure standing against a small column, her weight shifted onto her right foot and her left hand aligned with her mons pubis. Her body is youthful in its fleshiness, with pert breasts and swelling hips: her face, in contrast, is mature, almost severe, with pronounced nasolabial folds and wrinkles. An elaborately tiered hairstyle, not dissimilar from a diadem, teeters above the figure's stern expression: a few loose locks fall onto her left shoulder. The figure's pose was first made famous by Praxiteles' Knidian Aphrodite in the 4th century BCE, as suggested by the dolphin curling sinuously around the column supporting the figure. Yet while the Knidia was supported by a *hydria* and drapery that placed her within the context of bathing, potentially making voyeurs of her viewers, here the sculpted 'Venus *matrona*' poses a different challenge of understanding.

Although previously dismissed as awkward 'odd bods', emblematic of so-called 'freedman art' in their apparent (mis)use of Greek visual motifs, ²⁹² the Venus *matronae* have since been understood as divisible into mortal head and divine body. Eve D'Ambra and Rosemary Barrow both argue for 'the replacement' of the aged *matrona* body by 'the immortal physique' and 'image' of Venus, while Barbara Borg understands the Venus *matronae* as donning 'divine costume ... [as] representations of some intangible truth'. ²⁹³ The sculpted body resolutely does *not* belong to the woman it apparently commemorates. Instead, the *matrona* borrows Venus' body to express and project the admirable facets and qualities of her own, unrepresented anatomy. Given the longevity required of the *matrona* body to fulfil her obligations over the course of multiple marriages and pregnancies in her lifetime, D'Ambra argues that the eternally youthful, fertile Venus body provided an 'appropriate' proxy. ²⁹⁴ Seen like this, the Venus *matrona* statue embodied a respectable, maternal fertility: this connection was further strengthened by the acclamation of Venus Genetrix in imperial propaganda and cult. ²⁹⁵

²⁹² C.f. Barbara Borg's description of the *matronae* statues as 'a rather irritating phenomenon' to modern viewers, and the figure from the Manilii tomb as 'a grumpy-looking matron' (Borg 2019: 192). On the associations with 'freedman art' see Wrede 1981: 159-170; Barrow 2018: 118. For a critique of the category 'freedman art' itself, see Hackworth-Petersen 2006. See also male statues which pair youthful bodies with mature portrait features: see Hallett 2005: 159-222.

²⁹³ D'Ambra 1996: 229; Barrow 2018: 122; Borg 2019: 232; see also Vout (2014a: 294): '[the Venus *matronae*] are given bodies that are resolutely other – immediately recognisable as different from their own bodies [...] unconvincing is the point. They do not conjure up the dead woman but dissolve her flesh through metamorphosis'. ²⁹⁴ D'Ambra 1996: 230.

²⁹⁵ Ibid, 229. Salathé 2000 similarly emphasises Venus as a symbol of domestic, marital harmony and respectable female virtue on 3rd-century sarcophagi; see also Matheson 1996: 188-189.

This 'costume', however, was still a variation on a theme famed from its inception for its eroticism: the Venus *matrona* remains 'suffused with sex', as Vout cautions.²⁹⁶ Within a visual culture in which the heavily draped 'Large Herculaneum Woman' statue-type could serve as a kind of collective body in honorific female portraiture across the city- and townscapes of the Greek East and Italy, the nude Venus *matrona* was a provocation, a challenge to the viewer to consider the sexuality as well as the fertility of the female body.²⁹⁷ Just as the 'stock body' of the Large Herculaneum Woman 'very deliberately does not depict the actual body of the woman portrayed', so too could the Venus *matrona* perform different aspects of gender that hinge on fertility and sexuality precisely because her body, too, was unreal.²⁹⁸ Paradoxically, borrowing a goddess' body allowed the matron, in death, to be more 'woman' than real-life decorum would ever allow: perhaps even the kind of woman whose corporeality might challenge the patriarchal limits placed upon it – limits that permitted female sexuality only within the boundaries of procreative marriage.²⁹⁹

Pairing the sculpted Venus body with the matron's portrait head pushed at the very limits of what was and was not acceptable when it came to representing the body of a Roman woman. The representation of this gendered body in other visual media, however, began to strain the limits of representation itself, as demonstrated by a relief which originally adorned the façade of the Tomb of the Volusii along Rome's Via Appia and dates to the early 2nd century CE (fig. 2.8). ³⁰⁰ Inscribed to Ulpia Epigone, the relief shows a semi-nude woman reclining on a couch. Her deep naso-labial folds and ringed neck suggest that she is of a certain age and that her youthful body, indicated by her pert breasts and taut stomach, is borrowed. The woman's legs are wrapped in translucent drapery and primly crossed at the ankles: her right hand is placed flat against her mons pubis, suggesting Venus has once again loaned her form. The

²⁹⁶ Vout 2014a: 615: she notes that Praxiteles reportedly used a courtesan named Phryne to model for the sculpture, with whom he may have been having an affair. See Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 13.590f-91a and Greek epigrams which cast Praxiteles as voyeur (c.f. 'Paris, Adonis, and Anchises saw me naked [...] how did Praxiteles contrive it?' – Anonymous, sometimes attributed to Antipater, *Greek Anthology* XVI.168); Morales 2011; Davidson 2006: 35; Havelock 1995: 42-49. See also the suggestion that viewers attempted to have sex with the statue in its original temple complex, made by Pliny (*NH* 36.20-22) and Pseudo-Lucian (*Erotes* 11-17).

²⁹⁸ Ibid, 158. As Rachel Kousser notes, writing on Antonine statues of Roman couples which married portrait features with classicising bodies identified as those of Ares and Venus, the mythical lens was 'deployed to exalt, by association, contemporary – and *clearly mortal* – individuals' (italics added - Kousser 2008: 684). Kousser's statues emphasised the bodily borrowing to allow the mythical body to do its job: to present mortal, marital intimacy through the strength of feeling between divinities, with the fluidity of myth avoiding any unnecessary handwringing over the fact that Ares and Venus are, famously, married to other people.

²⁹⁹ Treggiari 1991 remains the classic work on Roman marriage: see 262ff on marital sexual relations. On the constructed dichotomy between *matronae* and prostitutes, see Strong 2016.
³⁰⁰ See D'Ambra 1989: 392.

woman has bent her left arm to support her head and elaborate beehive-style coiffure. A small dog peeps out from beneath her armpit, while her feet rest upon a wicker wool-basket. The domestic attributes around Ulpia acknowledge her virtues in the home as well as her fertility and beauty,³⁰¹ although their diminutive size and their tucked-away placement within and behind Ulpia's anatomy means they must work hard to compete with the Venus body. It is almost as if Ulpia's gender in life – symbolised by the wool-basket and domestic paraphernalia – and in death are in direct conflict.

Ulpia looks strikingly like the roughly contemporary Venus matronae, as D'Ambra notes. 302 But why choose to represent a horizontal Venus matrona? Is Ulpia supposed to be reclining here? She bears little relation to the typical 'Totenmahl' scenes in which a figure, usually identified as the deceased, reclines at a banquet indicated by small tables, garlands, drinking paraphernalia and/or diminutive slaves. This visual motif can be dated back to archaic Greek art and remained prevalent on Roman ash urns and funerary altars. Modern scholars have interpreted Totenmahlen as eschatological representations of the deceased enjoying their final meal on earth, a banquet in the afterlife, or ritual offerings made by their surviving relatives, and also representations of 'otium, privilege, luxury and various specific pleasures such as wine, food, companionship and sex' linked to the elite *convivium*. ³⁰³ Reclining diners on Italian funerary altars are usually male, however, whose female companions appear content to perch on the end of the kline, as on the front panel of an altar dedicated to Publius Vitellius Successus by his wife, Vitellia Cleopatra (fig. 2.9). The man, presumably Publius himself, reclines casually on a couch, his left hand hovering over a table stacked with drinking cups and dishes: he reaches out with his other hand to touch the woman, likely Vitellia, who sits on the end of the couch. Her drapery has slipped from her right shoulder, evoking the iconography of Venus, as do the cupids flanking the altar's inscription.³⁰⁴

Vitellia's bare shoulder is suggestive, while her distance from the victual-laden table further indicates that she is one of several sensual pleasures to be enjoyed as part of the

³⁰¹ Ibid, 399-400. Ulpia's relief is unusual among Italian funerary monuments in its representation of 'feminine' attributes indicative of domesticity, unlike the well-known appearance of wool, children, dogs, and jewellery boxes on classical Attic grave stelai: see Younger 2002: 178. For similar attributes on Roman monuments, primarily from central Italy between the 2nd and 4th centuries CE, see Shumka 2008, 2016.

³⁰² Ibid, 395.

³⁰³ Roller 2006: 36; see also Dunbabin 2004.

³⁰⁴ Boschung 1987, catalogue #327 (Musei Vaticani, Rome, inv.546, *CIL*.VI.29088). Kajava (1988: 252) disputes Kleiner's inferences about Vitellia Cleopatra's ethnic identity based on her name. See also Boschung 1987 catalogue #383 and #784 (Louvre, Paris, inv.MA212).

banquet.³⁰⁵ Only a handful of Italian funerary altars represent recumbent female diners, such as an altar inscribed to Attia Agele, which shows her reclining in front of a small, glassware-laden table. Ulpia's dog and wool basket, however, ground her firmly in the domestic, rather than the convivial.³⁰⁶ As such, a more productive as a parallel for Ulpia are the sculptures of reclining figures that served as '*kline* monuments' (either free-standing within the tomb, or, in the second century, deployed as sarcophagus lids).³⁰⁷ While male figures on these monuments continue the tried-and-tested format of the Totenmahl – reclining bare-chested, clutching drinking vessels – female figures are never represented drinking or dining but appear to slumber peacefully, recalling the common ancient analogy of sleep and death.³⁰⁸ An example now in the Vatican and dated to the mid-2nd century shows the deceased lying fully-dressed on a couch, her right arm laid across her body onto her pillow and her palm cupping her cheek.³⁰⁹ An Eros at her feet perhaps identifies her with Venus or, more generally, suggests that her sleep is divinely sanctioned and/or protected.

A second *kline* monument in the Vatican is more abstractly rendered and closely resembles Ulpia's own relief: here the woman is represented as semi-nude, her pert breasts contrasting with her flabby, heavily-set facial features and elaborate coiffure (fig. 2.10).³¹⁰ Her body is stretched out flat along the couch, her left arm and hand bent at almost perpendicular angles to support her head, while her right arm is laid parallel to her body to rest upon on her pubic area.³¹¹ Even in this more abstract rendering of the *kline* monument, there is a three-dimensionality that equates to physical presence. Generally speaking, the figures sculpted in the round on *klinai* monuments allowed the bereaved to imagine that they could see and touch the body of their beloved relative, even as this fantasy was undermined by the image's physical

³⁰⁵ Roller 2006: 30, 131, 138-139.

³⁰⁶ For Attia's monument, see Boschung 1987, catalogue #8 (Musei Vaticani, Museo Chiaramonti, Rome, inv. 1471, *CIL*.VI.12758); Roller 2006: 124ff. In contrast to the Italian Totenmahlen, almost half of all reclining figures on Romano-British grave monuments are identified as female: Stewart 2009: 271; see Salisbury 2020 on figural representation in Romano-British art. On genderedness of the motif, see Roller 2006: 136. On potential for 'iconographic shorthand' linking reclining figures with minimal attributes to the triclinium, see Roller 2006: 36: the *kline* monument of Flavius Agricola, for example, depicts him with a single a drinking vessel and crown rather than full dinnerware, although the convivial connection is strengthened by the lengthy inscription which exhorts the viewer to drink, love and be merry (Indianapolis Museum of Art, Indianapolis, inv. 72.148, *CIL*.VI.1789a and 34112).

³⁰⁷ Wrede 1977: 414; an overview of *klinai* monuments, including development, is found in Wrede 1977, 1981.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, 423-425. N.b., sleeping 'Eros' figures were commonly sculpted on children's funerary monuments: see Sorabella 2007.

³⁰⁹ Musei Vaticani, Rome, inv.1365.

³¹⁰ Musei Vaticani, Rome, inv.878; the parallels with Ulpia's relief are noted by D'Ambra (1989: 395).

^{311 &#}x27;liegt die Frau flach ausgestreckt auf ebenfalls flachen': Wrede 1977: 424.

context and proximity to the deceased's deteriorating remains within the tomb.³¹² This dynamic was even more insidious for the figures sculpted as part of sarcophagus lids: the tactile figure on the box's lid then performed a perverse kind of 'homology' with the liquefying, formless corpse within.³¹³

Ulpia, however, is not represented in peaceful slumber: her pose is neither comfortable nor feasible but characterised by an artificial frontality that allows an unobstructed view of her anatomy. Her arms, too, are compacted and elongated at impossible angles to allow her both to support her head and perform the quintessentially Knidian gesture of placing one hand upon the pubis. By referencing, but ultimately resisting, the three-dimensionality of the Venus *matronae* and Vatican *klinai* monuments, Ulpia's figure highlights its own represented-ness: her body is flattened as if pressed up against a window for the viewer. The desire elicited by the Venus *matrona* type is thus redirected to speak of things ungraspable.

Perhaps Ulpia should be understood not as a relief version of a *kline* monument, or a *recumbent* Venus *matrona* statue, but a *toppled* one. While the erasure of individuals from the visual and/or epigraphic record is more commonly attested with public figures, whose expungement both alters and constitutes collective memory, the processes of the phenomena now covered by the term '*damnatio memoriae*' have been traced in the removal of names and images from private funerary monuments, suggesting that memory erasure was at work in the necropolis as well as the forum.³¹⁴ While literary accounts of *damnatio* often focus on the mutilation or removal of identifying facial features, Juvenal describes how statues of Sejanus were lassoed and pulled down by a mob. Cicero similarly refers to the people of Sicily toppling portrait images of Verres, the bases of which were left intact, as the Sicilians believed 'it would be more serious for [Verres] if people knew that his statue had been thrown down [...] than if they thought that none had ever been set up'.³¹⁵ If *damnatio* paradoxically requires people to 'remember to forget', the statue bases perpetually triggered viewers to acknowledge the absence of Verres' name and image. Perhaps Ulpia's relief operated along similar lines of

³¹² As referenced by *kline* monuments in which the recumbent figure clutches an object. An example now in London (BM, London, inv.2335), for instance, shows a woman embracing a man's marble bust as if highlighting that they are both objects to be viewed and touched: see other examples e.g., BM, London, inv.1858,0819.1 and Terme di Diocleziano, Rome, inv.125829. See also reports that Augustus kept a bust of his deceased grandson in his bedroom, which he kissed whenever he entered: Suetonius *Gaius* 7; Hope 2011: 183-84.

³¹³ On embodiment of kline monuments, see Elsner 2018: 550-551; on their framing and mimesis of the corpse, see Elsner 2012: Platt 2012. 2017.

³¹⁴ For funerary *damnatio memoriae*, see Carroll 2011; Flower (2006: 11) recognises the need for further study of such 'private memory eradication'. On *damnatio* in the political sphere, see Flower 2006; Vout 2008; Hackworth Petersen 2011; more recently, Calomino 2016.

³¹⁵ Juvenal, Satires 10.58-59; Cicero, In Verrem 2.4.95, 2.2.160-2. See Stewart 2003: 267ff.

denial and reassertion, resembling the Venus *matrona* statue-type even as, by virtue of its medium, it fundamentally deferred the still palpable sexuality of the Venus body.

Understanding Ulpia's relief as an image of a now toppled statue effectively parallels Ulpia's own body, which once 'was', and 'is' no longer, except, of course, in the relief image itself, the represented-ness of which is perpetually emphasised by the presentation of the body as though in a display case. Ulpia's horizontal position on the couch apparently calls to the slumbering women on *kline* monuments and sarcophagi lids, yet her awkward, flattened frontality suggests she is a Venus *matrona*, pushed off her pedestal and paired with the oddly parochial attributes of a dog and weaving basket. If the Venus *matrona* represented the woman as Venus in death, then the grindingly domestic attributes on Ulpia's relief seem to demythologise Venus and insert her into the minutiae of daily life, ultimately subverting the gendered power of the Venus *matrona* statue-type. The representation of gender in death had its own self-referential rules that spoke not only to who these women were, but to the dead and distant bodies that they have become.

Pun-believable Bodies on Funerary Altars

The above discussion has sought to show how gender worked within, and was impacted by, different kinds of visual media in the funerary landscape of Roman Italy. It is into this broadly drawn context that the funerary altar can now be introduced to illuminate how and where its representation of the female body and construction of gender aligns with, and diverges from, other visual media within the funerary context. This next section discusses a dataset of approximately 150 funerary altars with figural decoration, all of which are provenanced from Italy and date from 50-150CE, collated from two catalogues published in 1987 by Diana Kleiner and Dietrich Boschung.³¹⁶

First, a note on form and function: what is a funerary altar? The definition is arguably modern and formal. Boschung describes funerary altars as 'tombstones in the shape of an altar' ('Grabaltäre sind Grabsteine in altarform', 1987: 12), but understands funerary altars and 'Götteraltäre' as fluid rather than fixed categories.³¹⁷ God-altars were usually inscribed to the god to whom the monument was dedicated; in contrast, funerary altars were inscribed to a

³¹⁶ Kleiner 1987a; Boschung 1987; henceforth abbreviated as K87 and B87, with catalogue number assigned to each altar: e.g., Kleiner 1987, catalogue #1 = K87.1. Only altars *explicitly* provenanced as 'Italian' were included in the dataset. For earlier scholarship on altars, see Altmann 1905.

³¹⁷ 'Götteraltäre konnten in Grabaltäre und umgekehrt Grabaltäre durch die Inschrift in Götteraltäre verwandelt werden': Boschung 1987: 12-13.

deceased individual (or individuals) with information about their age, occupation, and relationship to the altar's dedicator (if they did not erect their own monument): this was normally the spouse of the deceased, more often a husband to his wife than vice versa, or the deceased's parent(s), especially in the case of deceased children.³¹⁸ Funerary inscriptions generally feature the formulaic dedication 'dis manibus' followed by the deceased's personal name in the genitive, dative or nominative case: this reflects a belief in posthumous individual identity attested from the 1st century BCE onwards, and the Augustan-era shift in understanding the 'manes' not as a collective ancestry but identifiable with individual people. Some funerary altars are also inscribed to named gods as well as to the deceased. This may correlate with a late Republican and early Imperial conception of the deceased as enjoying a 'richer, happier and more godlike life' after death, but ultimately underlines the fluidity between the god-altar and the funerary altar.³¹⁹

God-altars and funerary altars share a similar form and iconographic repertoire, including common elements like pulvinars, gables, garlands and bucrania. Yet while altars to divinities and gods were likely used for sacrifices, funerary altars do not appear to be big enough for this function: they were probably not routinely used for sacrificing to the dead, although offerings of flowers and food could be left on them as part of post-funerary rituals.³²⁰ The boundary between funerary and god-altars is made more fluid by the fact that most funerary altars did not contain receptacles for the deceased's ashes and most likely functioned as *cippi* or funerary markers, distinguished from frontal Roman funerary *stelae* only by their altar form and iconography.³²¹ Some have been found in situ, mounted on blocks of travertine within individual tombs and/or burial precincts, but most are unprovenanced.³²²

A small number of these Italian funerary altars reach out for, and capitalise on, the fluidity and experimentality of myth in ways that recall the mythological sarcophagi discussed earlier. The front panel of an altar now in the Louvre, for example, depicts a female figure in an active pose, a dog gambolling around her feet (fig. 2.11): the figure's left knee is bent, her

³¹⁸ Kleiner (1987a: 45ff) records more instances of husbands dedicating altars to their wives and children, which she understands as a product of women having a higher mortality and less financial resources than men.

³¹⁹ Toynbee 1971: 34-38.

³²⁰ Kleiner 1987a: 21-24. The right and left sides of funerary altars are often decorated with images of sacrificial tools, namely a patera and ritual pitcher, further evoking and implying ritual sacrifice.

³²¹ Boschung 1987: 12-13. Altmann (1905) distinguishes altars with ash-receptacles as 'Aschenaltäre', as opposed to generic 'Grabaltäre'; on ash urns, see Sinn 1973. On funerary stelae, popular in northern Italy, see Scarpellini 1987; Pflug 1989.

³²² For in situ altars, see Boschung 1987: 37 on necropolis at Autoparco Vaticano. Funerary altars could be used as boundary-markers for burial precincts, too, as evidenced by epigraphic references such *in fronte pedes* and *in agro pedes*; see Kleiner 1987a: 24.

weight shifting from her right leg as if she is turning to sprint into the distance. She grips a bow in her left hand, her muscular left arm extended in the direction of travel. The figure's billowing drapery reveals her right breast, a visual detail that evokes the iconography of the Amazons as simultaneously woman and warrior, even as the figure's pose and attributes appear borrowed from the goddess Diana.³²³ The altar seems to represent the divine huntress in hot pursuit of her prey. Atop the androgynous, muscular body, however, is a face characterised by puppy-fat and pouting cheeks, suggesting that Diana's body has been borrowed by a younger girl.

The monument's inscription records its dedication to both Diana and the memory ('memoria') of Aelia Procula by her parents; these words not only underline the fluidity of the altar-form as used for both god-altars and funerary altars but may indicate that Aelia is no longer a mortal girl; that she is somehow divinised in and by death. While the inscription describes Aelia as a 'filia [...] dulcissima', 324 the gendered-ness of the formula feels incongruous next to the image of the huntress-goddess, who appears anything but sweet or girly. While Aelia's untimely death has left her unable to fulfil the typically feminine obligations of marriage and motherhood, it is precisely because she is 'neither fully mature nor domesticated' that the altar can represent Aelia in the guise of Diana and highlight different virtues: 325 perpetual virginity, courage, even the masculine virtus connected with hunting imagery. The altar seems to show Aelia not as passively seized by death but boldly sprinting into the afterlife.

A funerary altar now in Urbino also turns to the world of myth to find a body suitable to commemorate a child (fig. 2.12). The front panel of the altar depicts a nude woman standing, or perhaps frozen, in place: her legs pressed firmly together, her arms raised and bent at a stiff 90-degree angle. The markers of sexual difference – her gently swelling hips and pert breasts – emphasise that this is a mature female body, although the viewer soon starts to wonder what kind of body this is. The figure's legs merge into a single, unbroken trunk, while branches festooned with leaves emerge from her calves and thighs; they even sprout vertically from her upper arms, mirroring the crown of fronds wrapped around her forehead in place of a coiffure. Even the fingers of her outstretched left hand appear to be rounding out into the teardrop shape

³²³ K87.104 (Louvre, Paris, inv.MA1633, *CIL*.VI.10958); an altar dedicated to Aelia Tyche also represents Diana with the features of a child (Museo delle Navi, Nemi, *CIL*.VI.6826; see Mander 2013, catalogue #117); on rituals of Diana at Nemi, D'Ambra 2007a.

³²⁴ On gender in epigraphy, see Keegan 2014.

³²⁵ D'Ambra 2008: 176, 181.

³²⁶ K87.75 (Palazzo Ducale, Urbino, CIL.VI.20990).

of the leaves growing on the other branches. The altar depicts the metamorphizing body of Daphne, whose pursuit by Apollo and transformation into a laurel tree is most famously recounted by Ovid in his *Metamorphoses*.³²⁷ The altar's inscription records its dedication to Laberia Daphne, another 'filia [...] dulcissima'. There is no mention of how old Laberia was when she died, leaving it unclear whether the Daphne pictured and Laberia are one. The philological play on Laberia's cognomen, 'Daphne', however, clearly elucidates the choice of myth for her altar: the girl and the nymph were already entwined in life, and remain so in death.³²⁸

The formulaic sweetness of the inscription alerts the viewer to the chasm between text and image. The body represented on Laberia's altar belongs to nature, yet it is fundamentally unnaturalistic, albeit still recognisable as a sexually mature female body. The representation of such a body on Laberia's altar may have spoken to her lost future: Laberia's death means that the grown-up female body depicted on her altar is just as unattainable and impossible as Daphne's fantastical metamorphosis. The representation of Daphne's transformation also parallels Laberia's transition from life to death, literally and metaphorically: just as Daphne transforms from woman to tree, Laberia's body will change from living sentience into decomposing, organic material, even as her spirit may enter a more enduring state in the afterlife. The fact that Daphne's transformation was willed as a means of escaping Apollo's advances may also suggest that Laberia has fled and transcended death – much like Aelia, who was represented as huntress rather than prey.³²⁹

These girls' altars may be understood as a counterpoint to the images of Persephone's abduction by Hades that were so popular in Greco-Roman funerary art. Aelia and Laberia, by virtue of their death, are freed from the gendered familial and social obligations that would have dominated their lives: namely the static roles of wife and mother, as depicted on the biographical sarcophagi with which this chapter began. On their funerary altars, Aelia and Laberia are represented with an agency that was attainable for Roman girls and women only in

³²⁷ Ovid, *Met.* 1.452; Sharrock 2020 notes that 'metamorphic destination is heavily gender-determined for trees', occurring primarily to female characters, in contrast to gender-neutral changes into watercourses, stones, birds and other animals.

³²⁸ Kleiner 1987b: 551; Mander 2013: 56. On female *cognomina*, see comprehensive thesis by Nuorluoto 2021. ³²⁹ Boyd 2020 is instructive on Ovid's portrayal of Daphne's continuing agency as she continues to flee Apollo's kisses once transformed (*'refugit tamen'*, 556): 'Daphne's new state as that of an 'agent object', whose very nature is a form of resistance—not perhaps the one she would most desire, but a condition that allows her to embody forever, *semper*, her determination not to capitulate'.

death.³³⁰ Although their altars play the same games of mythical associations, projections and identifications as the mythological sarcophagi discussed earlier, mythical imagery was relatively uncommon on Italian funerary altars as a whole. Instead, most of the images on them were restricted to a limited repertoire of basic, figural motifs rather than anything approaching the richness or volume of mythological narratives that decorated sarcophagi.³³¹

One altar even rejected the mythological narratives of the kind found on sarcophagi by actively subverting them. The altar dedicated to Titus Statilius Aper and his wife Orcivia Anthis by his parents, roughly dated to 120CE, depicts on its front panel a togate man standing next to the carcass of a boar (fig. 2.13). If this man represents Aper himself, he performs neat visual homology of the boar (aper) and his own cognomen.³³² The incongruity of Aper's toga-clad form and the dead boar emphasises that he could not be further from the Meleager sarcophagi with which this chapter began if he tried. While Meleager embodied masculine force and decisiveness as he drove the spear into the boar's skull, Aper adopts a relaxed pose, showing off an elegant toga rather than rippling pecs: he appears more suitably dressed for the curia than the hunt. The inscription on the altar's base further emphasises the boar as a visual reference to Aper's identity, as its opening exclamation ('innocuus aper ecce iaces ...') draws the viewer's attention to it, and/or to the man himself, before noting that this 'aper' has not been slain by Diana or Meleager but by 'mors tacita'. This revision of traditional mythology elucidates the unexpectedness of Aper's death at the age of twenty-two, which has cut short a promising professional career as a surveyor or architect, referenced in the inscription and by the architectural tools depicted on the altar's sides.³³³ Aper's monument uses mythological imagery obliquely, the etymological play on his cognomen left implied by visual devices rather

³³⁰ Mythological imagery appears to have been particularly suited to children's monuments, likely in part because the death of a child entailed the loss of their prospective adult life, an abstract and fluid concept that was well represented by mythological imagery: Kleiner 1977: 87ff; see also Mander 2013: 55-64. An example of prospective, if mythologically vague, imagery on children's funerary monuments is an altar now in the Louvre, Paris (inv.1443; K87.15; B87.918, *CIL*.VI.20727) dedicated to the ten-year-old Iulia Victorina by her parents. Two images on the altar show a child, marked by puppy-fat and tousled hair, and an older woman, who wear the same chunky earrings. The inscription and a small bulbous shape underneath the representation of the older woman emphasise that this is a prospective image: see Mander 2013: 61-62, 55-64.

³³¹ See, for example, a squatting Venus - B87.763 (Musei Capitolini, Rome, inv.2101) reminiscent of the Lely Venus on display at the BM, London (Royal Collection inv.69746); 'Hercules' with two snakes - K87.119; Cupid and Psyche - B87.981 (Galleria degli Uffizi inv.982). Dionysus - B87.374 and maenads - K87.22, B87.836 (Museo Archeologico di Firenze, Florence, inv.138131), K87.6, B87.848 (Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, inv124514); B87.977 (Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, inv.949); B87.973 (Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen, inv.1659). For overview of mythological figures on ash chests and altars, see Davies 1978: 192-250.

³³² K87.83; B87.326 (Musei Capitolini, Rome, inv.MC209, CIL.VI.1975); see Koortbojian 1996: 229-231.

³³³ Kleiner 1987a: 63: Aper's father is mentioned in the inscription as an *accensus velatus*, a supernumerary troop who often built roads.

than wrought on or through his own body. Mythology is used to emphasise his premature demise in mundane, rather than heroic, circumstances. 334

Although the altar is dedicated to both Aper and his wife Anthis, she barely gets a look in. Anthis's image is relegated to a seashell tondo set within the altar's pediment. 335 While the inscription waxes lyrical about Aper, specifying his age and profession at the time of his death, Anthis is only briefly mentioned and identified as his wife. In this way, Aper's altar exemplifies the gendered representation of male and female figures on the funerary altars that follow. Of the 67 full-body figures represented on funerary altars, 48 are male and 18 female. Not only are male figures represented more often, but they fulfil a broader range of roles as 'holders of high office, the victors in great military battles [...and] members of the professions'; female figures, in contrast, are represented on funerary altars infrequently and often only in relation to men.³³⁶

Aper's dress places him within the most substantial category of full-figure scenes on Italian funerary altars, that of togate men (at some 16 examples), some of which appear to commemorate military men, who sit astride horses.³³⁷ Togas also appear in scenes of men at work, as on an altar inscribed to Lucius Cornelius Atimetus. 338 On one side of the altar, a seated figure holds an object firm on the block while his companion stands with his hammer raised and ready to strike; on the other side, two men stand in front of what appears to be a cabinet stacked with tools and blades ready for use. The figure on the right wears a simple tunic, while the other is togate, perhaps identifying him as the owner of the business: the viewer may have read these figures as Atimetus and his freedman, L. Cornelius Epaphras, who is also mentioned in the altar's inscription. Atimetus' altar emphasises that the togate man does not labour himself but supervises the work of others.

The togate man was also represented on funerary altars sitting or standing against a blank background, clearly a self-explanatory figure: the toga indicated Roman citizenship,

³³⁴ Huskinson 2011: 122-123. On funerary inscriptions' demand for diligent, close reading, see Beard 1998.

³³⁵ Kleiner (1987a: 215) suggests that this indicates Anthis predeceased Aper, but there is no hard evidence for this reading.

³³⁶ Kleiner 1987b: 554.

³³⁷ K87.84 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, Rome, inv.9312), which features images of cavalry and a festival on its left and right sides; it is inscribed to a boy named Tiberius Claudius Liberalis who reportedly died aged sixteen, by his parents, a further evocation of the desirability of this togate model of manhood. See also K87.110 (Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore inv.23.18); K87.118 (extant only in drawing).

³³⁸ B87.968 (Musei Vaticani galleria lapidaria, Rome, inv.9277, CIL.VI.16166). See Zimmer 1982, Kampen 1981b for images of figures at work.

while the addition of attributes such as a scroll could further highlight learning and erudition.³³⁹ An altar now in Centrale Montemartini in Rome offers an extreme example of this type; the altar depicts a togate youth holding a scroll in his left hand, flanked by long ribbons of a Greek inscription with a Latin inscription beneath (fig. 2.14).³⁴⁰ The altar's Latin inscription records a dedication to an eleven-year-old boy, Quintus Sulpicius Maximus, a budding poet whose own Greek verse is inscribed on his monument. The wall of text demands to be read alongside the prospective, aged-up image of Quintus, evidencing his precocious maturity and heightening the tragedy that he never grew up into the bright young man depicted on his monument. The representation of Quintus as an accomplished, togate man speaks to the perpetual desirability of this model of Roman masculinity: various altars depict boys clad in tiny togas or looking up to togate men, as if eager to become them.³⁴¹ Whether their emphasis is militaristic or erudite, the togate man is a homogeneous and gender-normative category: he achieves a civic and/or militaristic career, and inspires other Roman men to do the same.

Other full-figure scenes on funerary altars, for example those of mixed-sex couples clasping hands (so-called 'dextrarum iunctio') and Totenmahlen, overwhelmingly centre men, with women included only to enhance male status. This occurs even when the altar is apparently jointly dedicated to both a man and woman. Of six extant scenes of mixed sex couples shaking hands, often understood by scholars as a visual reference to marriage, one is uninscribed, one is dedicated to a woman, one to both members of the couple, and three are dedicated solely to a man. Similarly, Totenmahlen scenes usually depict women sitting on the edge of the recumbent diner's kline rather than actively participating in the dinner itself. One exceptional

³³⁹ Togate figures with scrolls: K87.45 (Pal. Con., Rome, sala vi inv.1102); K87.68 (Villa Albani, Rome, n.920); K87.124, B87.962; K87.121, B87.961 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria inv.7461). For seated togate figures, see K87.28; B87.970 (Musei Vaticani, gabinetto delle maschere, Rome, inv.1034); see also Zanker 1995. The popularity of the togate man in low relief on the funerary altars may well reference freestanding, in-the-round honorific male portrait statues, such as that of the baker Eurysaces that was associated with his exceptional tomb by the Porta Maggiore in Rome: K77.12 (*CIL.*I.1206) – on the tomb, see Hackworth Petersen 2006. Further *comparanda*: K77.8 (Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, inv.121324); K77.11 (Pal. Con., Rome, inv.2142)

³⁴⁰ Centrale Montemartini, Rome, inv.1102; Latin inscription *CIL*.VI.633976; Greek inscription *IG*.XIV.2012; Mander 2013: 59ff.

³⁴¹ E.g., K87.20; B87.979, *CIL*.VI.38264. On the left, a small boy in a tunic grasps the hand of a much taller, togate man, perhaps identifying them as father and son. The boy stands in profile as he gazes up at his companion, while the man stands in a frontal pose and stares into the middle distance, as if about to turn and depart. The altar presents the dual processes of becoming a man and providing a role-model for future men as worthy of commemoration. The altar's inscription records its dedication to Crixius Secundus by his wife Crixia Secunda: the lack of any reference to a son of Crixius in the inscription raises the question of who this child is. Mander suggests that the altar may commemorate a child who had predeceased his father and was 'only now receiving some form of commemoration' (2013: 111-112); alternatively, perhaps Crixius was honoured in this way for setting a good example to the next generation, represented by a generic little togate boy.

³⁴² K87.7; B87.974 (Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregorio Profano, Rome, inv.9836); K87.22, B87.836 (Museo Archeologico di Firenze, Florence, inv.138131); B87.771; B87.784; B87.848, K87.6 (Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome, room V, inv.124514).

altar found in Rome bears an inscribed dedication to a woman named Pedana by her husband but features a standard Totenmahl scene in which the male figure reclines and his female companion perches on the end of the couch.³⁴³ The dissonance between text and image on Pedana's altar parallels the incomprehensibility of loss, but also underscores the gendered-ness of the visual motif.³⁴⁴

As women are most often represented on funerary altars in relation to men, rather than as individual figures, it comes as no surprise that maternity looms large. An altar in the Musei Vaticani dedicated to Grania Faustina (fig. 2.15) depicts a woman and a togate man seated clutching a small figure, presumably their child:³⁴⁵ the woman reaches around his shoulders with her right arm and clutches his little hand to her breast with her own. The deep swags of drapery created by the man's toga and the woman's palla complement the soft curves of their arms as they reach out to caress their child. If the woman is supposed to represent Grania herself, and the togate man her *contubernalis*, Granius Papias, who is referenced in the altar's inscription, then Grania's maternity is dignified on her own funerary monument only within the broader context of the nuclear family, which ultimately reflects positively onto Granius as paterfamilias. An altar now in Liverpool similarly depicts a woman only in relation to her sons: each of the altar's side panels represents a woman embracing a smaller figure, presumably her child, each of them on pedestals of different heights. In the damaged right panel, a veiled woman caresses a small boy, their bodies and faces pressed together as her right arm grasps his bicep; in the intact left panel, an unveiled woman with long hair and a small child reach for each other, their faces pressed together in an affectionate kiss. The front panel of the altar records its dedication to Passienia Gemella and her two sons by her husband: 346 it is overlooked by three truncated figures that are presumably portraits of Passienia and her two sons.³⁴⁷ Like Grania, who is represented first and foremost as wife and mother, the representation of Passienia as a full figure on the funerary monument appears to be legitimated only by her sons' presence in her embrace.

³⁴³ B87.775 (Lady Lever Art Gallery, Liverpool, inv. LLAG12, CIL.vi.17050). See Vout 2014b.

³⁴⁴ See other examples: K87.7; B87.974 (Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregorio Profano, Rome, inv.9836); K87.22, B87.836 (Museo Archeologico di Firenze, Florence, inv.138131); B87.771; B87.784; B87.848, K87.6 (Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome, room V, inv.124514).

³⁴⁵ K87.100 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, Rome, inv.9837, *CIL*.VI.2365). Kleiner understands the dedicator to be 'Granius Papias'; *contra* Kajava 1988: 254, who thinks the text merely 'implies that *Papi. ser. publicus* was *contubernalis* of Grania Faustina', and not necessarily the dedicator of her altar.

³⁴⁶ K87.91 (Liverpool World Museum, Liverpool, inv.59.148.302, *CIL*.VI.23848).

³⁴⁷ Davies 2007: 143.

It is more difficult to imagine Grania or Passienia represented as individuals, on their own terms. The very few altars that do show women dislocated from the context of the family or their relationship with men are almost entirely religious in nature. One example is the altar dedicated to Cantinea Procla by her husband, the front panel of which depicts a female figure clad in robes and headdress. The woman's right hand is raised, while she carries a basket in her left hand: the left side-panel of the altar also depicts a *cista* basket encircled by a snake, a clear visual reference to the Isis cult. If this figure is identified as Procula herself, she is presented as a devotee or even priestess of the Isis cult.³⁴⁸ A similar pose is adopted by the figure represented on an altar dedicated to Flavia Telete and Flavia Faustilla by their mother, Valeria Prima: the figure raises an unidentified object in her right hand which may also refer to the cult of Isis.³⁴⁹ If the prevalence of togate male figures on funerary altars in a variety of contexts evidenced the wide availability of social roles for men in Roman life, it is telling that religion is the only sphere that offers female figures any hope of individuality.

The figures on Italian funerary altars are less often represented in full, however, than in a state of fragmentation. Nor is this fragmentation, *prima facie*, particularly gendered: there is only a slight skew towards fragmented female figures (44) rather than male (40). This may seem surprising, given the tendency for fragmentation to operate as a form of female subjugation, as elucidated by literary studies that explore the female body in Roman elegy by drawing on Mulvey's work to understand it as framed, objectified and fragmented by the male gaze. In the case of the funerary altars, however, equal-opportunity fragmentation may be a route to liberation, challenging how and where gender is marked on the body and constructed beyond the dual, oppositional frameworks of 'every-day' gender roles and mythological abstraction and fantasy. The rest of this chapter asks what happens to gender when it comes to the fragmented body on the funerary altar.

Fragmenting the Figure

To foreground closer examination, a brief overview of the three types of fragmentation found across the corpus is in order. While men and women are fragmented in roughly equal numbers, the *format* of fragmentation is markedly gendered.

³⁴⁸ B87.971 (Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, casetta A, inv.125406); see Kleiner 1987b: 550-551.

³⁴⁹ K87.71; B87.978, *CIL*.VI.18442; see Kleiner 1987a: 38, 56. Kleiner understands 'VALERIA PRIMA MATER' as indicating Valeria's position as *prima mater* within Isiac cult; *contra* Kajava 1988: 253.

³⁵⁰ See Mulvey 1975, 1981; see also Nochlin 1989. On elegiac women and fragmentation, see Elsner 2007 on application of Mulvey to Catullus 64; more generally see Wyke 1987a, 1987b.

The first type of fragmentation is 'window-style', which often features on the altar's front panel or within its pediment. 'Window-style' images depict the figure from the chest or collarbone as if looking out of an aperture within the monument. This format was common in monumental 'window reliefs' that represented groups of up to five or six figures and were placed on the exterior of tombs along the 'streets of the dead', giving the impression that the tomb's occupants were looking out at passers-by. A funerary altar now in Copenhagen illustrates 'window-style' fragmentation: the altar is dedicated to Iulia Saturnina and C. Sulpicius Clytus, who are duly represented between two pillars (fig. 2.16). Saturnina clutches Clytus' right hand in a *dextrarum iunctio* that likely symbolises their marriage; the fingers of Clytus' left hand curl around the folds of his toga. The inclusion of the figures' arms suggest that the couple are looking through a window and that their bodies continue beneath the lintel. As such, 'window-style' is the most naturalistic of the three formats in which fragmented or incomplete bodies appear on funerary altars: men appear twice as often in the 'window-style' format as women. Star

The second type is the bust-portrait, in which the figure's head and neck are artificially truncated with sharp diagonal cuts underneath the clavicle: this format appears to be gender neutral, with equal numbers of male and female figures represented in this way.³⁵⁴ The representation of a bust-portrait on an altar is already playing a game of represented-ness: the depiction of a low-relief image of what is normally a three-dimensional sculpture of the kind kept in the *atria* of elite houses, reinforces that this is a representation of an object rather than a real person.³⁵⁵ The altar inscribed to Successus and his wife Vitellia (fig. 2.9) offers an instructive example: the front panel shows their full bodies in a Totenmahl scene while they are represented in the pediment as bust-portraits, highlighting the disjuncture between their appearance in life and their posthumous memorialisation.³⁵⁶

³⁵¹ See Kleiner 1977 for catalogue: henceforth abbreviated as K77, with catalogue number assigned to each altar: e.g., Kleiner 1977, catalogue #1 = K77.1. Kleiner she notes the 'greater physical presence' of figures equipped with arms to perform relevant gestures (1977: 82, 83). See Koortbojian 1996: 225ff on contortion and elongation of figures' arms on funerary reliefs.

³⁵² B87.790 (Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen, inv.861); for similar altar, see B87.104 (Antikenmuseum Basel, Basel, inv.284).

^{353 &#}x27;Window' style: 20 male figures, 10 female, with 4 of these examples portraying a mixed-sex couple.

³⁵⁴ Bust format: 13 male figures, 15 female, with 5 of these examples showing a mixed-sex couple represented in the same format.

³⁵⁵ Kleiner 1977: 84.

³⁵⁶ B87.327, K87.43 (Musei Vaticani, galleria delle statue, Rome, inv.546, *CIL*.VI.29088). Further examples include B87.106 (Louvre, Paris, inv.MA2147, *CIL*.VI.20538); B87.791, K87.113, (Louvre, Paris, inv.1331, *CIL*.VI.20674); B87.943, K87.54 (Villa Borghese, Rome, *CIL*.VI.1924).

The third and final type of fragmentation is similarly self-conscious: the containment of the figure's head and/or shoulders within a circular frame, which may be rendered as a concave seashell or wreath.³⁵⁷ There is a tendency for modern scholars to refer to these circular frames on funerary altars as *imagines clipeatae* or *clipeus*-portraits, using the terminology of a specific visual format dating from the 3rd century BCE, in which the head of a celebrated man, ancestor, or god was represented on a shield.³⁵⁸ It is unreasonable, however, for scholars to understand all round frames, regardless of how they look, as shield-portraits. This definitional looseness is laid bare in Donatella Scarpellini's monograph on funerary *stelae* from northern Italy, in which she argues that there is no meaningful distinction between the variations of what she refers to indiscriminately as *imagines clipeatae*, despite the visual (not to mention semantic) distinctions between the circular frame when it is rendered as a seashell or as a wreath.³⁵⁹ In light of this definitional ambiguity, this section refers to round portraits as 'tondi' and analyses the rendering of each type. In contrast to the gender-neutrality of the bust-portrait, women appear twice as often in tondi frames as men.³⁶⁰

Before turning to the fragmented bodies themselves, it is important to briefly note that the window-style, bust-portrait, and tondo formats are not unique to funerary altars. As referenced above, the 'window-relief' was a popular format for familial funerary reliefs, while tondi and bust-portraits are also found on sarcophagi, and, to a lesser extent, on ash chests, where they serve to paradoxically represent the body that is now contained, destroyed or decomposing, within the sarcophagus and ash chest itself.³⁶¹ While some funerary altars were inlaid with a receptacle for the deceased's ashes, most altars were freed from negotiating the physical reality, presence, and dimensions of the remains themselves. This disconnection highlights the represented-ness of bust portraits and tondi on funerary altars, and powerfully subverts the naturalism of the 'window-style' format. While funerary 'window reliefs' were mounted on the exterior of tombs to engineer the illusion of the deceased looking out at the living, the freestanding funerary altar averages less than a metre in height: the conceit fails as it becomes impossible to believe there is any[-]body looking through the aperture. 'Window-

³⁵⁷ Examples of the unarticulated circular tondo: B87.949, K87.59 (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, inv.K.1951/12.1). Seashell tondo: K87.29, B87.309 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, wall XXI, no.158, Rome, inv. 9395), K87.102, B87.946 (Musei Vaticano, Museo Chiaramonti, Rome, inv.1344); K87.92 (Muzeum Narodowe, Kraków, inv.MNb2115). Wreath tondo: K87.4, B87.938 (Pal. Con., Rome, sala X, no.21, inv.119). ³⁵⁸ Pliny *NH* 35.4; see Winkes 1969, 1979.

³⁵⁹ Scarpellini 1987: 37; *contra* Kleiner 1987a: 182. Florescu also makes the important distinction between 'médaillons en forme de bouclier [...et] en forme de disque' (1957: 220, 225).

³⁶⁰ Tondi: 7 male figures, 19 female, with 3 of these examples depicting a mixed-sex couple in the same frame.

³⁶¹ For tondi on sarcophagi, see Brandenburg 1967.

style' figures were also often shrunk to fit the pediment of altars, further disrupting any illusion of naturalism: an altar dedicated to a five-year-old boy named Secundus is a case in point, his form so minute that he is dwarfed by the letters of his inscription.³⁶²

When compared to familial 'window reliefs', all three types of fragmented female figure on the funerary altars appear to lack any obvious corporeal markers of gender. Familial funerary reliefs depict figures from the waist up, with female figures perhaps overcompensating by performing gestures that accentuate their breasts: they place a hand underneath a breast to push it up into a more globular shape or pluck at the drapery over the breast itself. The funerary altars, in contrast, generally only portray the figure's head and shoulders, limiting the depiction of, and emphasis placed upon, anatomical markers of gender difference: relatively few figures emphasise secondary sexual characteristics through gestures or behaviour. Eleven male figures are depicted on funerary altars with bare chests, for example. A Hadrianic example, dedicated by Iulia Isias to her *collibertus* Lucius Iulius Flavus, portrays a male bust-portrait whose form tapers around his impressive pectoral muscles (fig. 2.17). Fragmented female figures, meanwhile, are never nude on these altars; references to their bodies are largely left implied. Mythological subjects like Daphne excepted, only 4 female figures, out of 86 full and fragmented female figures across the dataset of Italian altars, show off their bare shoulders. Similarly, only 12 female figures across the entire dataset emphasise their

³⁶² K87.64 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria wall XXI, n6, Rome, inv.936); Kleiner understands his cognomen to be 'Glycytatus', although Kajava (1988: 253) cites the first editor of the inscription to dispute this. A similar case of miniaturisation occurs on an uninscribed altar that shows the head and torso of a small figure flanked by shields which, if the scale was accurate, would be monumental in size: K87.78, B87.318 (Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregoriano Profano, Rome, inv.10560); for similar altars, see B87.307 (Musei Vaticani, Rome); B87.333, K87.98 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, Rome, inv.9337); B87.334, K87.96 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria,, Rome, inv.9174); B87.336, K87.94 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, Rome, inv.9276). Alternatively, some 'window-style' images appear to 'size-up' the figure, as one altar (K87.34; B87.16 - Villa Massimo, Rome, *CIL*.VI.20645) measures 1.14m in height and accordingly represents the figure's head and clavicle on its front panel as larger-than-life

³⁶³ K77.45; K77.89 (Musei Vaticani, Rome, inv.10464); K77.59 (BM, London, inv.1920-20.1); K77.63 (Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, ala iii); K77.71 (Musei Vaticani, Rome, inv.10491). Attempts to read gender into the body language and gestures of figures on funerary reliefs include Heyn 2010 and Davies 2017. Heyn (2010: 635-636) attempts to identify a gestural 'female signifier' in Palmyrene funerary relief. Davies (2017: 30) compares poses of figures in Italian funerary reliefs to modern glamour photography, a comparison that is undermined by the characteristic softness and dewiness of white photographic models relative to the medium of stone relief. On soft-focus of white glamour photography, see Kuhn 1985: 12-13. A more relevant and productive parallel for funerary reliefs is the 'synthetic *finish*' that characterises photographs of Black entertainer Josephine Baker: this is explored later in this chapter: *infra* p103.

³⁶⁴ B87.106 (Louvre, Paris, inv. MA2147, *CIL*.VI.20538). On comparative iconography of Antinous, see Vout 2005; *contra* Fittschen 2010: 244-245. See also male nudity on altars: K87.95, B87.332 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria inv.7869, *CIL*.VI.29238); B87.862, K87.116 (Musei Vaticani, sala delle Muse, Rome, no.504a, inv.294, *CIL*.VI.3520); B87.795; K87.55, B87.319 (Villa Borghese, Rome, *CIL*.XIV.3994).

³⁶⁵ K87.83, B87.326 (Musei Capitolini, Rome, inv.209, *CIL*.VI.1975); B87.949, K87.59 (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, inv.K.1951/12.1); K87.69 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, Rome, inv.9170, *CIL*.VI.29376); K87.86 (MMA, New York, inv.14.130.8).

breast(s) through the rendering of the drapery in a triangular-shaped fold. The most demonstrative example, an altar dedicated to the nineteen-year-old Iulia Synegoris by her parents, depicts the figure's right nipple as unnaturalistically visible through the thick folds of draped cloth (fig. 2.18).³⁶⁶

More common is to have the figure's hair signal their gender. Male figures are notable for the minimal styling options available to them: they either closely adhere to the veristic portraiture typical of the late Republic or the styles popularised in imperial portraiture. This is unsurprising: while the act of cutting off a man's first beard was a 'solemn religious ceremony [that] signalled his passage to the status of adult citizen', male grooming was otherwise to be kept to a minimum. Ovid advises the would-be lover in his *Ars Amatoria* (1.505ff) to keep his nails clean and hair trimmed, and leave everything else to women ('cetera lascivae faciant, concede, puellae': 1.523).

As Ovid's comment indicates, creating and maintaining an elaborately groomed appearance was women's work. Hair was a critical element in feminine self-fashioning and *cultus*, cultivating an attractive and pleasant appearance: as the second-century writer Apuleius notes: 'no woman, although dressed in gold, fine fabrics, jewels, all other cosmetical apparatus, could be described, unless she had arranged her hair, as dressed at all'. While female figures on comparable Palmyrene funerary reliefs share one common hairstyle, a naturalistic centreparting that was sometimes accentuated with turbans or diadems, female figures on Italian funerary altars show off a range of intricate coiffures. The elaborate nature of the hairstyles encoded specific social messages about the women who wore them: primarily that they were

³⁶⁶ K87.70; B87.315 (Musei Capitolini, Rome, inv.1941; *CIL*.VI.20694); see Kleiner 1987a: 198. For other altars with indications of breasts, see K87.89, B87.324 (Antiquario Communale, Rome, inv.11367, *CIL*.VI.27790); K87.85, B87.789 (Palazzetto Venezia, Rome, *CIL*.VI.8575); K87.113, B87.791 (Louvre, Paris, inv.1331, *CIL*.VI.20674); K87.27, B87.939 (Musei Vaticani, cortile Ottagono, Rome, inv.1032, *CIL*.VI.16399); K87.49, B87.944 (Musei Vaticani, cortile Ottagono, Rome, inv.1038, *CIL*.VI.18911); K87.33 (Villa Albani, Rome); K87.46 (Museo Nazionale Archeologio, Naples, *CIL*.VI.18348); K87.92 (Muzeum Narodowe, Kraków, inv.MNb2115, *CIL*.VI.10515); K87.102, B87.946 (Musei Vaticani, Museo Chiaramonti, Rome, inv.1344, *CIL*.VI.28361); K87.111 (Palazzo Falconieri, Rome).

³⁶⁷ Wyke 1994: 135-137; see 142 for references for beard cutting ceremony; Bartman 2001: 3, notes 13-14 for full literary references. C.f. an altar inscribed to Aiedius and his wife (K77.18 (Altes Museum, Berlin, inv.840, *CIL*.VI.25787), dated between 30 and 13 B.C., shows the deceased man with the unapologetic baldness typical of contemporary veristic portraiture: combined with his deep nasio-labial lines, sagging jowls and puckered chin, the representation stresses his age, experience, and wisdom. An imperial-era monument accordingly depicts three male heads with hair falling over the forehead in long, straight bangs in a style common in Trajanic male portraiture (K87.45; B87.957 (Pal. Con., Rome, inv.1102, *CIL*.VI.20819). Although these artistic styles and associated hairstyles were chronologically distinct, they appear to have coexisted within the wider medium of funerary monuments, with older coiffures retained for longer than in other media: see Kleiner 1977: 140-141.

³⁶⁸ Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 2.8-9; Myerowitz Levine 1995: 88.

³⁶⁹ Bartman 2001: 17, with references.

wealthy enough to afford both enslaved labour to fix their hair and the luxury of time required by such delicate and complicated styles.³⁷⁰ The hairstyles represented on the funerary altars were also likely chosen for their impressive frontality. Some altars depict women with hair arranged in elaborate tiers, such as the hairstyle worn by the female figure on the altar inscribed to Iulia Synegoris (fig. 2.18). Alternatively, the 'beehive' hairstyle was particularly visually striking, as demonstrated by an altar inscribed to Cornelia Glyce – a monument festooned with the image of palm trees and dates that might further evoke the 'sweetness' hinted at in her name and her inscription. The modern label 'beehive' reflects the height of the hair and the resemblance of the densely packed, drilled curls to a wall of honeycomb (fig. 2.19).³⁷¹

As Wyke notes in her discussion of *cultus* and adornment, 'woman is constructed and constructs herself as a physical appearance, an object to be gazed upon by men'. There was, however, a risk that that female self-construction could become too elaborate, allowing her to deceive her male viewers. This was articulated most explicitly by second-century CE satirists who were suspicious that women could make themselves appear more beautiful than they really were: Juvenal's Sixth Satire accordingly ridicules an adulterous wife who excessively cakes her face in unguents and creams. Hair was no different: it is notable that scholars have long questioned whether the coiffures represented in portraiture and on funerary altars attest to the use of wigs and/or hairpieces. This hypothesis that has been disproved, or at least strongly disputed, by Jane Stephens, a modern hairdresser who has recreated the beehive and tower coiffures using Roman-era tools and without recourse to artificial hairpieces. Yet the question of whether these elaborate hairdos attest to the use of hair extensions, pieces or complete wigs – whether, in effect, the created appearance is 'natural' or 'false' – speaks to the discourse of enduring distrust around *cultus*: the fear that nature may be replaced entirely by artifice.

Scholars' questions over the feasibility of the hairstyles represented on funerary altars are to some extent justified. Funerary altars depict female figures with hair that seems, if not

³⁷⁰ Stephens (2008: 131) notes some hairstyles would necessitate two or more slaves' assistance.

³⁷¹ K87.27, B87.939 (Musei Vaticani, cortile Ottagono, Rome, inv.1032, *CIL*.VI.16399).

Selected examples of tiered coiffure: K87.38 (S. Paolo fuori le mura n.83, *CIL*.VI.18168); K87.65, B87.321 (Palazzetto Venezia, *CIL*.VI.36125); K87.69 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, Rome, inv.9170, *CIL*.VI.29376); K87.79 (Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, inv.106406, *CIL*.VI.16431); K87.83, B87.326 (see *supra* p88). Beehive: K87.23, B87.649 (Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, inv.950, *CIL*.VI.20905); K87.24, B87.992 (Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome, aula II, inv.52694, *CIL*.IV.12688); K87.33 (Villa Albani, Rome,); B87.95 (Louvre, Paris, MA2130, *CIL*.VI.24919).

³⁷² Wyke 1994: 138; see also Richlin 1995.

³⁷³ Juvenal, *Satires* VI.457-507; Wyke 1994: 146ff.

³⁷⁴ Stephens 2008. For literary references to wigs, Bartman 2001: 14.

artificial, then self-supporting: a 'deliberate falsification of visual appearances'. 375 On some altars, female hairstyles appear all the more vocal for being the only definitive marker of gender between individual figures. Two remarkably similar figures are represented as high-relief busts on an altar now in the Villa Borghese, Rome (fig. 2.20): they share the same pronounced nasolabial lines, heavy-set foreheads and heavily lidded eyes. All that distinguishes them as male and female – aside from the inscription panel below, which indicates that the altar was commissioned by the viator Lucius Tullius Diotimus for himself, his wife Brittia Festa and their descendants³⁷⁶ – is hair: the figure on the left wears his flat over the crown, while his companion shows off an intricate beehive coiffure. Festa's hair towers on the very crown of her head, undercut by a deep incision, creating the impression that the coiffure is not her natural hair but a wig that has been laid upon (and can be separated from) her scalp. As Richard Brilliant notes, inverting Festa's head results in her hair 'gain[ing] considerable compositional importance as an aerated mass set off against the closed, stony oval'. 377 A similar gendering of hair can be seen on an altar inscribed to Musicus and his wife Volumnia (fig. 2.21), on which Musicus' hair is laid slick against his forehead in individual strands whereas Volumnia's beehive coiffure is cleanly separated, wig-like, from her face.³⁷⁸ Given the compelling evidence that Roman hairstyles did not necessarily entail the use of artificial hairpieces, the fact that the altars consciously seek to represent women with wig-like hair speaks to the artifice of cultus (and femininity).³⁷⁹

The most extreme example of wig-like, artificial female hair on funerary altars is found on a monument inscribed to Iulia Procula by her husband C. Iulius Theophilus (fig. 2.22). ³⁸⁰ In the centre of the deeply recessed panel on the altar's front stands a bust-portrait, whose face is left uncut: nor do the few folds of drapery around the figure's neck betray any sense of the body beneath. The only indication of the figure's gender is the beehive coiffure that teeters above her blank, pockmarked face. It is not clear whether the altar was intended to be finished

³⁷⁵ Bartman 2001: 3.

³⁷⁶ K87.54, B87.943 (Villa Borghese, Rome, *CIL*.VI.1924).

³⁷⁷ Brilliant 1994: 86; see also comments by Kleiner 1987a: 92-93, who understands the hair as the product of a 'less talented and less costly artist'. This is tenuous speculation likely predicated on the altar's inscription, which clarifies that Diotimus set a budget of 10,000 sestercii for his tomb and monument, which ran out and had to be supplemented by Brittia.

³⁷⁸ K87.49, B87.944 (Musei Vaticani, cortile Ottagono, Rome, inv.1038, *CIL*.VI.18911). Kleiner understands the images on the sides of Musicus' altar as bespoke commissions that show the deceased teaching music to students and honoured by his slaves' participation in a funerary procession; it is unclear, however, if Musicus' identity as a music teacher is a product of Kleiner's own speculation based solely on his cognomen: see Kleiner 1987a: 30; *contra* Kajava 1988: 252.

³⁷⁹ See similar comments by Ackers 2019b on 3rd century portraiture of women.

³⁸⁰ K87.34, B87.16 (Villa Massimo, Rome, *CIL*.VI.20645).

with Procula's facial features. But even without her face, the figure represented on the altar is intelligibly *female* based solely on her wig-like hair, highlighting how powerfully femininity has been boiled down into a single attribute. If the figure's face was left unfinished on purpose, then the dynamics of artifice are amplified further: rather than illustrating Procula's femininity by representing her *with* a stylish hairdo (and thereby indicating her agency as an individual engaged in self-fashioning and *cultus*), the altar bypasses Procula's individuality by reducing her to the 'beehive' hairdo that appears homogenously artificial across its representation on Italian funerary altars. ³⁸¹ Procula, and the women, for which she stands, can be adequately represented on their funerary altars by being reduced to *cultus*; individual personhood intelligibly substituted for their representation as image and artifice.

Designing (and Viewing) Women

Procula's monument is admittedly exceptional among Italian funerary altars. Yet the way the altar renders femininity as surface and image underpins the representation of fragmented female bodies more broadly. The conscious representation of women *as* image is driven in part by the gendered formats of fragmentation discussed earlier. Although male and female figures are equally represented as bust-portraits, women are more commonly represented in tondi. While the naturalistic 'window-style' format alluded to its use in 'window reliefs' as a way of peeking into (or out of) the tomb, even as it suspended this disbelief by virtue of the smaller size and shape of the altar relative to a tomb, the circularity of the tondo indicated that this was not an aperture but a conscious framing device.

The pediment of an altar dedicated to Precilia Aphrodite by her husband Lucius Titius Phocas, for example, features a tondo rendered as a wreath that contains a female head, presumably that of Precilia herself (fig. 2.23). Precilia is crowned with a beehive hairdo, indicated by regular pockmarking which may have been intended as a low-relief substitute for the more deeply drilled curls found in other examples.³⁸³ Precilia wears her hair in one thick band arched around her face, which harmonises with the wreath encircling her head, while the patterning of the hair aligns her with the orderly incision of its leaves. The overall effect is of

³⁸¹ Procula's hair, intelligible even without her facial features, recalls modern popstar Ariana Grande's 'signature' high ponytail: in the music video for 'In My Head' (2019), the ponytail takes on a life of its own by appearing to 'dance' to the music even when detached from Grande's body: Denton 2019.

³⁸² Cf. Platt 2017: 378.

³⁸³ B87.95 (Louvre, Paris, MA2130, *CIL*.VI.24919). It is not clear where the inscription is located on the monument itself: see de Clarac 1841: 974, catalogue 589, pl.252.

Precilia's face and head receding into the tondo and the pediment, which itself is characterised by soft, fluid lines in its curlicued cornices.

A fragmentary altar now in New York also shows a woman harmonising with its decorative elements: the extant monument is comprised of a pediment with apsidal niches on three sides, each framed by a delicately carved band of laurel leaves (fig. 2.24).³⁸⁴ Two male bust-portraits occupy the niches on the altar's left and right sides, their bodies angled towards the female figure in the frontal recess. No inscription survives, but this may have been a monument set up by two sons to their mother. The female figure on the front panel is undoubtedly the focus: unlike the stock bust-portraits of the men, the representation of the female figure is refined and detailed. Her hair is stacked in layers, like an elaborate frieze, its arched shape working with the contours of the niche she occupies. The first 'register' of her coiffure is an orderly line of ringleted curls, above which two sections of hair have been combed forward to the front of the head and swirled into two flower-like rosettes: these resemble tondi themselves, or the circular rosette decorations often seen on the cornices of other altars. The frieze-like orderliness of the woman's hair speaks not only of *cultus* but also renders her a continuation of the pediment's decorative border.³⁸⁵

Art historical scholarship on ornament helps illuminate the characterisation of the woman as image and surface, which foregrounds her assimilation with décor and pattern on the funerary altar. Modernist critiques have understood ornament as functionless, meaningless parerga (to borrow a term from Kantian aesthetics). These discussions took their cue from antiquity and the likes of Vitruvius, who disparaged contemporary wall painting as excessively decorative, especially the representation of fantastical, odd figures with human or animal heads ("monstra", "sigilla alia humanis, alia bestiarum capitibus"). According to Vitruvius, this fashion in wall painting was improper because it lacked verisimilitude: decorativeness and ornamentation had, true to their excessive tendencies, overtaken mimesis. For Vitruvius and the art historians who followed him, the characterisation of ornament as over-the-top, sensuous,

³⁸⁴ K87.86 (MMA, New York, inv.14.130.8).

³⁸⁵ A similar effect is generated by the highly decorative representation of the Empress Theodora in the Byzantine mosaics at the Church of San Vitale at Ravenna: for a recent overview of Byzantine mosaics, with bibliography, see Connor 2016; on representation of Theodora and conflation of figure/ornament, see McClanan 2002: 121ff and Carile 2018.

³⁸⁶ Recent 'ornament studies' have, however, largely neglected ancient art, with the exception of Dietrich and Squire 2018; in the introduction to the volume, Squire (2018a: 16) provides an overview of the current bibliography on ornament beyond classical art history. On femininity and ornament, see Negrin 2006, and, for a comprehensive if superficial overview, Daw 1999.

frivolous, irrational, and meaningless went hand in hand with its association with femininity.³⁸⁷ Against this backdrop, the characterisation of women as image, appearance, and surface foregrounds their repurposing as decoration for and on the funerary monument.

The assimilation of the figure to the altar's decoration is corroborated by the gendered variation of the tondo itself, as demonstrated by an altar inscribed to Tiberius Iulius Primionus and his father, now in Villa Celimontana in Rome. The altar features two tondi portraits, one male and one female, on separate sides, (fig. 2.25). The male head appears within a plain tondo and the female inside a seashell (figs. 2.26, 2.27).³⁸⁸ The female head sits within a concave recess articulated by ridged lines: these gently taper together towards the lipped base of the shell. The seashell tondo was clearly coded as feminine, not least due to its associations with the marine iconographies of Aphrodite/Venus, who herself appears squatting inside a seashell on an ash chest now in the Musei Capitolini in Rome. 389 Within this chapter's dataset, 8 extant altars feature female figures within seashell tondi, compared with 2 examples of male figures.³⁹⁰ One of the two altars represents a boy whose youth may have permitted a more fluid use of feminized visual motifs, or who may be construed as Cupid by the iconographic links between the seashell and Venus.³⁹¹ The second altar shows a mixed-sex couple occupying the same heart-shaped seashell: the female figure may have dictated the format of the tondo, while the impression of the couple's closeness was prioritised over separating the pair into 'his and hers' tondi, as on Primionus' altar. 392 These examples of male heads within seashell tondi may also reference the analogy between marine voyages and death commonly made in Greek art

³⁸⁷ Vitruvius, de Architectura 7.5.3-4.

³⁸⁸ K87.2 (Villa Celimontana, Rome, *CIL*.VI.20224). A further gendered distinction would likely be the wreathed tondo (see Vermeule 1965): there is only one example of a woman within a wreathed tondo, on an altar dedicated to Precilia Aphrodite (B87.95, Louvre, Paris, inv. MA 2130, *CIL*.VI.24919), in contrast to two examples of male figures, on altars inscribed to Quintus Octavius Magullinus and a Publius Cordius Cissus: K87.40, B87.101 (Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence, inv.969, *CIL*.VI.23293) and K87.4, B87.938 (Pal. Con., Rome, sala X, no.21, inv.119).

³⁸⁹ Platt 2017: 376. Ash chest: B87.763 (Musei Capitolini, Rome, inv.2101).

³⁹⁰ Female examples: K87.29, B87.309 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, wall XXI, no.158, Rome, inv. 9395, *CIL*.VI.7388); K87.83, B87.326 (Musei Capitolini, Rome, inv.209, *CIL*.VI.1975); B87.661 (Palazzo Barberini, Rome, *CIL*.VI.16993); K87.102, B87.946 (Musei Vaticano, Museo Chiaramonti, Rome, inv.1344, *CIL*.VI.28361; K87.2 (*CIL*.VI.20224); K87.33 (Villa Albani); K87.92 (Muzeum Narodowe, Kraków, inv.MNb2115, *CIL*.VI.10515).

³⁹¹ K87.97 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, Rome, inv.9311).

³⁹² K87.33 (Villa Albani, Rome). This seems consistent with an instance of a mixed-sex couple also sharing a shell-tondo on a group window-relief now in London (K77.20 – BM, London, inv.2275, *CIL*.VI.2170): a brief survey of Kleiner 1977 would suggest that, in group monuments, figures do not seem to 'pick and mix' formats based on their individual gender but seek to present a homogenous, harmonious image. For further instances of men in shells on Roman funerary stelae, see Scarpellini 1987: 84-85 and catalogue #20, 21, 22, 25.

through the representation of Venus in a seashell on funerary monuments, a motif which was continued on Roman funerary altars and sarcophagi. 393

The seashell tondo and its association with female figures may have invoked a comparison of the deceased's beauty and desirability with that of the goddess, not unlike the Venus matronae statues discussed earlier. 394 Yet the seashell format has a distinctive effect on the representation and visibility of the female figures it contains: on Primionus' altar, the male head is carved in high relief within the recessed, plain niche, as if peering out of the altar, and attracting the viewer's attention. The ridged lines of the shell in which the female head is contained, in contrast, taper down towards its lipped base, which is rendered as a ribbon-tied bow. The patterning behind the female head curls downwards to indicate the shell's concavity and appears to be sucked down into the altar itself. The female head, too, appears at risk of being swallowed up due to the visual harmonisation between the patterned ridging and the neat, vertical rows of ringlets laid across her crown. While Primionus' features emerge from his tondo, the woman appears designed to recede into the monument itself and become part of the décor. Tellingly, she remains anonymous: there is no inscribed record of her name or relationship to Primionus or his father.

The relative invisibility of the unknown woman on Primionus' funerary altar is not dissimilar to that of Anthis on the altar inscribed to her and her husband Aper (fig. 2.13).³⁹⁵ The front of the altar is dominated by a full-body depiction of Aper so large that he exceeds the frame of the front panel, which has been cut away around his head. Anthis, in contrast, is relegated to a seashell tondo placed high up within the altar's pediment (fig. 2.28). The tapering ridges of the shell provide the same effect of being sucked down into the altar and away from view. Anthis recedes into the shell's patterning due to the stylized representation of her hair, which is arranged in a tiered style with regular vertical lines that may indicate braided sections of hair but which critically, align her with the ridging on the shell. Another woman, Acilia Capitolina, is similarly located in and at one with her seashell on the altar dedicated by her husband (fig. 2.29).³⁹⁶ The tondo, set into the top of Capitolina's altar above the inscription panel, is typical in its tapering, ridged lines, and lipped base. Much like Anthis, Capitolina's

³⁹³ Deonna 1917: 409, 410, 416; Florescu 1957 also reads eschatological significance into the seashell motif. On death as analogous to a voyage, see Bonner 1941; Nock and Beazley 1946.

³⁹⁴ Platt 2017: 376; see also Deonna 1917. An ash chest represents Venus squatting, twisting her torso away from the viewer as if surprised while bathing, within a seashell: B87.763 (Musei Capitolini, Rome, inv.2101).

³⁹⁵ K87.83, B87.326; *supra* p88.

³⁹⁶ K87.92; *supra* p94.

hair is arranged in a tiered style made up of three distinct layers of increasing size, each of which is comprised of oblong sections divided by vertical lines that harmonise with the shell's ridging. Each layer of hair undulates, creating an effect like a crested wave, melding Capitolina into the seashell tondo and making her own coiffure evocative of marine imagery, too.

Capitolina and Anthis harmonize with their funerary altars but are rendered in high enough relief that their features are still distinguishable from the decorative elements that threaten to swallow them. Low-relief representations of women in seashell tondi are less visible still. An altar inscribed to Sempronia Glycera by her husband features a shell tondo in its pediment (fig. 2.30):³⁹⁷ Glycera's features have been miniaturised to fit into such a small space. Carved in low relief, there is some definition underneath her chin to distinguish between her face and neck, but Glycera's forehead and hair are flattened into the shell ridging behind her. Beyond the undulating line of curls laid across her crown - which themselves harmonize with the beaded trim of the shell-frame - Glycera's hair gradually loses all sense of definition. Glycera is pasted against the shell and even dissolves into it, her hair and features infected by and assimilated to decorative patterns.

In representing the female body as ornament, the funerary altars blur the lines between figure and object, woman and shell, animate and inanimate. Anne Anlin Cheng's examination of glamour photography of the Black entertainer Josephine Baker helps further illuminate this blurring. While contemporary white Hollywood starlets were photographed in soft-focus to accentuate the dewiness and softness of their skin, 398 photographs of Baker represented her as 'sculptural rather than visceral', with a 'more synthetic [...] *finish*' [original emphasis]. The confusion between 'the artificial and the organic, between life and death' that characterised Baker's self-presentation elucidates, too, how women are subsumed by and elided with the stone-cut decoration on Italian funerary altars. 399

That the female body was particularly ripe material for this kind of visual refraction is demonstrated elsewhere in the funerary sphere. The Tomb of the Haterii, for instance, originally stood along Rome's Via Labicana in the 2nd century CE, bears an inscription recording its construction by Haterius Tychicus and his wife Hateria for their family.⁴⁰⁰ The

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³⁹⁷ K87.29, B87.309 (Musei Vaticani, galleria lapidaria, wall XXI, no.158, Rome, inv. 9395, *CIL*.VI.7388). For a further example of low-relief shell tondo and the flattening of the female figure, see B87.310.

³⁹⁸ The characteristic softness of the white glamour models makes them a deeply odd *comparandum* for stone funerary relief, as exemplified by Davies' discussion (2017: 30); *supra* p95.

³⁹⁹ Cheng 2011: 114, 118: her monograph illuminates the significance of the surface in modernism.

⁴⁰⁰ CIL.VI.19148; for physical context of the tomb, see Trimble 2018: 330-334.

so-called 'crane relief' from the tomb is populated by an array of bodies that blur the lines between ornament and figure (fig. 2.31). As Trimble emphasises, it is the *female* body – that of Hateria herself - that is repeatedly represented in different media and genres: as a veiled figure in the mausoleum's pediment, as a 'living' woman recumbent on a couch, and as nude, miniaturised statue of Venus within an aedicula. The representation of Hateria evokes Statius' description of the deceased Priscilla, whose tomb is decorated with images of her '*in varias mutata novaris effigies: hoc aere Ceres, illo Maia luto, Venus hoc non improba saxo*' (5.1.231-4). The multiplicity and materiality of Hateria and Priscilla on their respective monuments opened up spaces between life and death, absence and presence: the viewer reads across and between the various representations of the same individual, which naturally rub up against one another and do not provide any satisfying answer to the question of where Hateria or Priscilla, 'really' is. The viewer knows that, regardless of how many times she is represented, the woman *was*, but *is* no longer.

The visual refraction and representation of the fragmented women on the Italian funerary altar, in contrast, eschews multiplicity by instead following through on the *cultus* they performed in life. It is, after all, the elaborate coiffures worn by women on the funerary altars that make them dissolve into their seashell tondi. Femininity, already constructed through and as artifice in life, is forcibly returned to nature in death: the feminine and the organic are conflated, uniting figure and ornament, body and monument.

Conclusion

Recent discussions of gender in the funerary sphere have been dominated by bodies of evidence that construct funerary visual culture as a binary dichotomy between myth and 'reality'. The figures on mythological sarcophagi open up a capacious and fantastical variety of projections and identifications for the deceased and bereaved; on biographical sarcophagi, in contrast, male and female figures fulfil and reify socially-accepted gender roles. The boundary between myth

⁴⁰¹ Trimble 2018: 329, 339.

⁴⁰² Ibid, 339.

⁴⁰³ Whether these 'effigies' represented the divinities themselves or a composite divinity inflected by Priscilla's personality is up for debate. The discussion of composite goddesses is seemingly prompted by Statius' later comment that the goddesses accepted ('accipiunt') Priscilla's features: Borg 2019: 222-223. See also comments on the tomb of Claudia Semne, the titulus of which records that she was represented in the guise of Fortuna and Spes: Borg (2019: 222) notes that the genitive case of her name may 'be read as referring not only to memoria, but also to Fortuna, Spes and Venus, thus creating three personalised divinities' and that the statues of Claudia in formam deorum could be read as the goddesses Fortuna Claudia/Claudiae, Spes Claudia/Claudiae, etc.

Trimble (2018: 340) describes the repetition as helping to 'visualise death and remembrance', accustoming viewers to the physical changes Hateria's body has undergone.

and 'reality' is straddled by the Venus matronae with their naturalistic, 'real' heads and idealised, mythical bodies, and the relief of Ulpia Epigone, which locks itself between media, fantasy and domesticity, life and death.

This chapter has examined funerary altars both within and beyond this binary in which gender may be experimental and exploratory through myth, or documentary of social reality. Full-figure scenes on funerary altars, for instance, align with this binary. The altars of Laberia Daphne and Aelia Procula appropriate bodies from mythical narratives to express an agency permitted to them by their premature deaths; the togate man performs his masculinity through wit and learning; women fulfil their obligations as wives and mothers. When it comes to fragmented figures, however, the funerary altar departs from the dichotomy of myth and reality. It is the representation of women with elaborate hairstyles, demonstrative of self-fashioning and *cultus*, that foregrounds their containment within, and assimilation to, an ornamental frame.

If, as Squire puts it, funerary visual culture must 'mark the site where bodies disintegrate and melt away [... and] interrogate the promise and failure of manmade monuments to stand in for the deceased', 405 the funerary altar must negotiate the absence of the flesh-and-blood female body as the primary site on which gender difference is marked – in part through discourses of self-fashioning and appearance. This negotiation is fundamental for the funerary altar given its distanced, if not abstracted, relationship to the deceased's physical remains. Whereas the body-in-the-box grounds and charges the viewing of the imagery on sarcophagi, the woman trapped within the seashell on a funerary altar no longer has a body-or at least, not one with any tangible or perceivable relationship to the altar itself. Unable to engage in the continual process of constructing herself as a sight, as she did in life, woman is permanently conflated with, and reduced to, the decoration of her own monument.

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⁴⁰⁵ Squire 2018b: 520.

III.

THE DOMESTIC

'My perception is filled up by the painted person. She is *of me* while I look and, later, she is of me when I remember her.' (Hustvedt 2016, p5).

Two women stand in front of a loom (fig. 3.1): one separating the threads falling from the top of the loom, her companion standing ready with the shuttle. The loom-workers are flanked by two pairs of larger female figures, who perform the first and final tasks of the textile-making process: processing wool into thread and folding up the finished cloth. This image decorates the body of a black-figure *lekthyos* attributed to the Amasis Painter and dated to the 6th century BCE. 406 On the shoulder of the vase, a separate frieze depicts women dancing towards a seated, veiled woman performing the bridal gesture of anakalypsis. She is surrounded by four men, two of whom carry sections of folded cloth over their arms: this scene may visualise the bride receiving her wedding veil from her male relatives. 407 The veil itself may be the cloth produced in the main scene on the *lekythos*'s body, as suggested by the visual alignment of the bride directly above the loom. The timelessness of the weaving scene may visualise both the domestic environs of the bride's pre-marital youth and her new duties as mistress of her husband's household: whether married or single, a Greek woman can expect – or so the vase suggests - to spend most of her life weaving. The perpetuity of weaving in the female experience is emphasised, too, by the homogeneity of the weavers themselves: while the smaller stature of the loom-workers may indicate their status as slaves, 408 the other female figures are arranged in pairs as mirror images of each other. Weaving is visualised as female, universal and inescapable.

Attic vase painting from the 5th and 6th centuries BCE is dominated by scenes that represent women as domestic creatures: either weaving inside the house or performing tasks related to the running of the household, such as collecting water at public fountain houses. On

⁴⁰⁶ MMA, New York, inv.31.11.10. The bibliography on Attic vase painting is, unsurprisingly, vast. For a highly selective overview, see Bérard *et al.* 1989; Lissarrague 2001; Marconi 2004; Rasmussen and Spivey 1991, especially Beard and Robertson's essay on 'adopting an approach'; Steiner 2007; Osborne 2018; Oakley 2020.

⁴⁰⁷ Llewellvn-Jones 2003: 222-223.

⁴⁰⁸ Bérard 1989: 90-91.

the body of a black-figure *hydria* now in London, the fountain house constitutes the main register of decoration (fig. 3.2). 409 At the left of the scene, water gushes from a lion-head spout into a *hydria* on the floor below. A column and roof indicate the fountain-house and partition it from the rest of the scene, which is dominated by five female figures. A dark-skinned woman waits for the *hydria* to fill: her status as a slave is suggested not only by her skin colour but also her diminutive size relative to the four women standing in pairs behind her, whose pale skin is picked out by a white slip. Social distinctions, however, do not seem to matter much in the collective female space of the fountain house: 410 the pale women queue behind their dark-skinned sister and engage in spirited gossip, visualised by written inscriptions between some of them. As with the weaving scene on the *lekythos*, the women are represented taking equal enjoyment in the grindingly everyday task of fetching water.

The depiction of the women as domestic creatures is reinforced by the other registers of decoration on the *hydria*. The frieze on the shoulder of the vase shows a bearded man in a long chiton standing between two warriors: if the British Museum is right to identify the central figure as Zeus, the vignette of combat is elevated to the level of Homeric epic, characterised by the kinds of bouts between heroes in which gods themselves intervene. The base of the vase, in contrast, depicts a lion and panther fighting two boars, watched by a Siren. If the hydria presents a hierarchical microcosm of the world, the male heroes of Homeric epic come out on top. The chattering women at the fountain-house are subordinated and undermined by their proximity to the bickering animals and the female-headed Siren. It is as if instinct triggers both the fight between the lion and panther and the flocking of women to the fountain-house. The comparison of women to animals was a common misogynistic trope in Greek thought and literature. Semonides, who likely wrote in the 6th and 7th centuries BCE, devised a pseudotypology of unscrupulous women based on the species of animal from which they descended: the nymphomaniacal weasel-woman, for example, steals from neighbours and sacrificial feasts. 411 Animalistic traits also distinguish women in Hesiod's description of the first woman, Pandora, in Works and Days: she possesses only two traits which make her human, namely strength (' $\sigma\theta$ ένος', 63) and capacity for speech (' $\alpha\dot{\nu}\delta\dot{\eta}$ ', 61-62; ' $\phi\omega\dot{\eta}$ ', 79)', 412 while her mind is dog-like ('κύνεος ... νόος', 67). Pandora, as the manufactured and animalistic Ur-woman

⁴⁰⁹ BM, London, inv. 1843,1103.77.

⁴¹⁰ While fountain house scenes occasionally feature male interlopers who attempt to assault the women, but the threat of male intrusion only emphasises the fountain-house as female space: see Keuls 1985: 233-240; Bérard 1989: 95-96.

⁴¹¹ Semonides 7: 50-54; Cantarella 1987: 34-48; *supra* p12-13.

⁴¹² Vernant 1989: 47-48; Blondell 2013: 18.

from whom all Greek women descend, renders womankind a distinct 'γένος': a separate species. 413

Greek women who follow their instincts to become homemakers, wives, and mothers are duly praised for it, even in death. On Attic grave *stelai*, female figures are decked out with attributes that distil domesticity into a limited visual repertoire – jewellery boxes, balls of wool, children and small dogs, and finely woven clothing. On the late 5th-century BCE *stele* inscribed to Hegeso, for instance, a standing woman holds out an open box to a woman seated on a *klismos*, who is likely the deceased herself (fig. 3.3). If the box contains jewellery, then Hegeso appears undecided about what to wear today: she curls her right hand towards herself in a pensive manner. Her decision is patiently awaited by the standing woman, whose dress and smaller stature suggests she is Hegeso's slave. In contrast to her slave's thick, amorphous chiton, Hegeso wears a himation and chiton made of fine, diaphanous fabric. The quality and quantity of her garments indicate significant time, energy and cost in their production, which indirectly exhibits Hegeso's own weaving abilities 'and/or her ability to manage the productivity of her household'. On her household'.

Even though the quality and expense of the *stele* suggests that Hegeso's family was likely wealthy and not economically reliant on her weaving, the *stele* articulates female virtue through the attributes and activities that appear innate to all Greek women. This depiction is obviously not documentary but an idealised projection of Hegeso's life and virtues. The physical and semantic context of grave *stelai* as expensive, public funerary monuments make them visualisations of expectations of women and femininity. While *lekythoi* and *hydriai* were everyday vessels likely used on a semi-daily basis, the images of women weaving and fetching water on such Attic vases do not document reality but are also constructions of a

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⁴¹³ *Theogony* 590. For comparison of women and dogs within Greek literature, see *supra* p12-13. For an overview of Pandora's motives in opening the pithos, and intersections with Semonides, see Wolkow 2007.

⁴¹⁴ Lewis 2002: 62; Lee 2015a: 91. See Xenophon's description of a wife overseeing wool-working and managing the household; *Oeconomicus* 7.34-36; *Memorabilia* 2.7.7-10. C.f. the verb 'ἄγειν' describes dragging a resistant animal and 'leading' a woman in marriage: Blondell 2013: 12: e.g., *Iliad* 13.572.

⁴¹⁵ Younger 2002: 178; Leader 1997: 691. For overview of classical Attic *stelai*, see *supra* p70. Stears 1993 is the first attempt to analyse the representation of female roles on *stelai*; see also Osborne 1997; Leader 1997, on depiction of women in private contexts, an argument built upon by Burton 2003 who problematizes the dichotomy of oikos/polis on the *stelai*. Younger 2002 attempts to reconstruct a female viewing of women on *stelai*; Turner 2009 explores gender and viewing more generally.

⁴¹⁶ National Archaeological Museum of Athens, inv.3624; Clairmont 1993 2.150. Stewart 1997: 124-129 examines a desirous viewing of the stele of Hegeso.

⁴¹⁷ Turner 2009: 58; see also Stewart 1997: 124-129; Burton 2003: 27-28.

⁴¹⁸ Burton 2003: 27; c.f. Reeder 1995: 200-202.

⁴¹⁹ See Younger 2002.

patriarchal discourse: a discourse which characterises Greek women as domestic creatures, whose habits and instincts compel them to weave and fetch water. 420

Back to Rome

To take this handful of examples as representative of women in the visual culture of Athens in the 6th and 5th century BCE, or Athenian visual culture for the entirety of Greek art, constitutes a necessarily crude précis: to state that all women in Greek art are only ever represented at home or occupied by domestic tasks is obviously also an oversimplification. ⁴²¹ What this brief digression does illuminate, however, is the relative absence of comparative images of female domesticity or 'daily life' in the Roman visual culture discussed in this thesis, beyond the extremely brief and airbrushed imagery of the biographical sarcophagi discussed earlier. ⁴²² There are caveats to drawing any straightforward equivalence between Roman and Greek visual media, but even Roman approximations to Greek *lekythoi* and *hydriai* are not decorated with images of domesticity. The red ceramics known as terra sigillata, Samian and/or Arretine ware that were produced and used across the Roman world are usually adorned with generic decorative patterns, or figural scenes that are less depictions of 'daily life' than visualisations of fantasy and luxury, involving erotic *symplegmata*, symposia, maenads, and heroes. ⁴²³

Domestic imagery is absent, too, from Roman terracotta lamps, which were produced and widely distributed across the Roman world: of the thousands of lamps held by the British Museum in London, only two examples (both of them showing scenes of women washing) are categorised as 'domestic'. 424 Other visual media with use-patterns that would suit 'domestic'

⁴²⁰ Claud Bérard (1989: 89, 90-91) and Robert Sutton (1992: 22-32) argue that female preferences likely shaped the choice of decoration, and that the weaving and water-fetching scenes were popular because women liked them: see also, implicitly, Bennett 2019. This is argument is circular, and simply reifies the patriarchal discourse that glorified weaving as essentially female: Keuls 1985: 232; Hackworth-Petersen 1997: 37; Williams 1983: 105; Beard 1991: 20-24.

⁴²¹ On (speculative) attempts to read 'real' experiences of Athenian women into scenes of weaving and water-fetching, see Hackworth-Petersen 1997; see also work by Rabinowitz 2002; Kosso and Lawton 2009; Karanika 2014. Other scenes painted on Attic vases depict women engaged in other activities, such as bathing and reading aloud together, touted as 'visual reminder[s] of individual experiences' (Hackworth Petersen 1997: 53); for discussion of bathing scenes on Attic vases, and their potential representation of *hetairai*, see Williams 1983: 99-100; Bérard 1989: 92-93; Sutton 1992: 23-25, 2009. Further work on female viewership in Greek contexts includes Osborne 1994; Younger 2002; Turner 2009; Toscano 2013; Lee 2015a.

⁴²³ For an overview of this visual medium, see Johns 1977; on nomenclature, Johannsen 2013; for subject matter, Castaldo 2018. On Roman pottery more generically, see Greene 1992.

⁴²⁴ The most popular images that appear on lamps are linked to categories such as 'religion and myth', 'the amphitheatre' and 'war': Bailey 1980: 'religion and myth': 7-45; other categories: 44-71; the two 'domestic' lamps are Q773, Q1360. An overview of Greco-Roman lamps can be found in Bailey 1972. On the production of Roman lamps, see Harris 1980. Vutecic 2013 offers comparative case study on erotic imagery on lamps.

imagery throw up issues of preservation. Most textiles from the ancient world do not survive, and those that do often come from highly specific contexts outside Italy. Also Roman silver, too, is often found in hoards dated between the 4th and 7th centuries, which can complicate any understanding of its practical usage, if it was not reserved for ceremonial use or display. The decoration of silverware is often highly allegorical, dominated by mythological figures and scenes: Although the Projecta Casket from the Esquiline Hoard is decorated with an image of a woman's adornment, she is aligned with an image of Venus at her toilette, putting the fantasy and documentary into an explicit dialogue. This blurring of reality and the imaginary was not entirely absent from Attic vase painting – Eros often stands attendant in toilette scenes, for example, making the adorned woman an 'Aphrodite'. Yet these images co-existed with, and were to some extent predicated upon, the frequent visualisation of self-sufficient and generic, 'daily-life' scenes, like the weaving scenes with which this chapter began – imagery which, for Rome, is lacking.

The absence of a self-evident Roman equivalent for the depictions of domesticity on Greek vases may be explained by the lack of definitively 'female' spaces into which Roman women were segregated. Unlike their Greek counterparts, Roman women were not confined to the fountain-house or *gynaikon* and could participate more fully in public life – at least, in theory. But even if they were not strictly confined to the house, Roman women likely spent most of their time raising children and weaving. Eumachia and indeed Julia Felix of the House of Julia Felix fame remain exceptions to the rule. There are few representations of Roman

⁴²⁵ E.g., linen funerary shrouds from Roman Egypt, dating from 2nd century CE; see Jimenez 2014; Ortiz-García 2017; see also a further case study of textiles at use in the late Roman house, in Stephenson 2014. For an overview of Roman textiles, see Walton Rogers *et al* 2001; Gleba and Pásztókai-Szeőke 2013; Harlow and Nosch 2014.

⁴²⁶ See Strong 1966 and Leader-Newby 2004 for an overview of late Roman silverware. Otherwise, scholarship is largely focussed on specific hoards and/or pieces: on the Thetford Treasure, Johns and Potter 1983; on the Hoxne Treasure, Johns 2010; on the Sevso Treasure, Mango and Bennett 1994; for the Esquiline Hoard, Shelton 1971; for the Mildenhall Treasure, Hobbs 2012. On personifications in late Roman silver, see Watson 2012.

⁴²⁷ BM, London, inv.1866.1229.1. For the complete hoard from the Esquiline, see Shelton 1981; for date, Cameron 1985; for a reading of its imagery, Elsner 2003. A similar image is found on a situla from Herculaneum (MANN, Naples, inv.25289) decorated in low relief with an image of women bathing Aphrodite (either the goddess herself or her image): see Rabinowitz 2002: 237-238. On 'undermining the stereotype' on Greek vases, see Beard 1991: 27ff.

⁴²⁸ Admittedly the total segregation of women was likely a literary ideal, feasible only for elite Athenian families who could afford for female members of the household to remain economically unproductive: see Cohen 1989; Nevett 1994; Katz 1995. On Greek domestic space in general, see Nevett 1999.

⁴²⁹ Bernstein 2007: 528-533; Allison 2007a: 348. For Eumachia's self-presentation within Pompeii, *supra* p30=33. For overview of domestic activities in Roman house, see D'Ambra 2007b: 94-111; Knapp (2011: 53-96) surveys life of 'ordinary' Roman women.

women at work: despite its title, Kampen's 1981 monograph on the subject discusses but six such images from Ostia. 430

A stone relief from the Via delle Foce that depicts a busy shop can be read from left to right like a comic strip (fig. 3.4). 431 Two bearded figures, clad in cloaks and boots, stand looking at each other, as if in conversation: the man on the left holds what may be a rabbit in his right hand, while the other has flung out his right arm to block his companion, as if warning him not to jump the queue. Next to them, a smaller cloaked figure reaches up to receive an item from the shop's proprietor, who is elevated behind a counter stacked with platters of food. Two chickens hang by their feet behind the smaller customer's head and two monkeys sit on the counter, gazing out at the external viewer. Kampen identifies the shop's proprietor as female only by her beardlessness and hair, which is swept up into a diminutive bun: she wears a tunic without a palla or jewellery, and shares the flat, block-like body of her male customers. The representation of the shop-keeper emphasises her role, rather than the body with which this business is conducted. The relief, which Kampen categorises as 'literal', is more readily understood as an advertisement of the shop's wares. The depiction of the shop-keeper, 'so simple that one cannot deduce anything about her social status or the precise period in which she lived', is typical of these working scenes. 432 The only gendered component of images of working women identified by Kampen is the tendency for women to occupy supervisory or customer-service roles rather than perform manual labour. 433

Given the patchy preservation and limitations of other evidence, it is unsurprising that scholars interested in domesticity and gender in the Roman world have seized upon the images painted on the walls of Roman houses as their main source: primarily the rich corpus of wall paintings from domestic contexts along the bay of Naples that predominantly date from the 1st century CE. ⁴³⁴ Discussion has often focussed, however, on the relationship between painted

⁴³⁰ Kampen 1981b: there is a brief additional catalogue on imagery from Italy and the provinces: 21-61. Zimmer 1982 provides a purely typological overview of Roman work scenes, while Clarke 2003a: 95-129 approaches them as examples of 'non-elite art'.

⁴³¹ Museo Ostiense, Ostia, inv.134: Kampen 1981b: 52-57, 1993: 116-118.

⁴³² Kampen 1981b: 55.

⁴³³ Ibid: 104. Epigraphic data turns up almost six times as many occupations for Roman men than for women: for further gendered distinctions in Roman employment, see Treggiari 1976, 1979; Keegan 2014: 94ff. See also Groen-Vallinga 2013; Larsson Lovén 2019; and, on labour and the Roman freedwoman, Perry 2014.

⁴³⁴ For an overview of Roman wall painting, see Ling 1991, and 198-211 on Roman techniques for plastering and painting walls. See also Donati 1998; Bragantini and Sampaolo 2013; papers collected in Bragantini 2010. Beyond Pompeii, a sizeable number of wall paintings are preserved at Rome: for the House of Augustus, see Iacopi 2008; for the Palatine, Iacopi 1991; for the Domus Aurea, Meyboom 1995; for the Villa Farnesina, Di Mino et al 1998; Mols and Moorman 2008. For overview of studies of domestic decoration in contexts beyond Campania, see Gazda 2010: 83-84, with bibliography.

decoration and the use of the domestic spaces they adorn. While the Greek house operated on the principle of 'male/outside/public and female/inside/private', ⁴³⁵ made explicit by the segregation of men and women into separate quarters, Wallace-Hadrill has argued that no such dichotomy applied to the Roman house. His analysis of the archaeology of Pompeian houses and the architectural writings of Vitruvius suggests that Roman domestic space was organised along relative axes of 'public/private' and 'grand/humble', which allowed the Roman paterfamilias to host (un)invited friends and business clients in settings that were appropriate to the intimacy of each encounter. ⁴³⁶ These axes of public/private and grand/humble operated over and above gender, which Wallace-Hadrill describes as 'virtually undetectable' within the Roman house. ⁴³⁷

Yet Wallace-Hadrill goes on to declare that 'individual rooms in houses must have been used in appropriate circumstances by women, and there must have been gender distinctions to observe'. For lack of other evidence, the sex-specific use of space within the Roman house quickly became a puzzle that only painted decoration could decipher. The use of wall painting to understand the functionality of domestic space dates back to the earliest academic studies of domestic decoration in the late 19th century, when August Mau first categorised Pompeian wall paintings into four chronologically progressing 'styles', despite the fact that different styles were both repeated throughout time and co-existed within specific domestic contexts. In addition to this stylistic framework, Mau understood wall paintings as elements of 'programmatic' visual schemes within individual rooms and houses that were unified by a common meaning or theme: paintings of Venus fishing and Polyphemus yearning for Galatea, for example, were combined as depictions of 'Love'. Additional common meaning or theme:

Decoding the meaning of a visual 'programme' became critical to scholars' understanding of the space it adorned: images of Venus or otherwise associated with love were suitable for bedrooms, while Bacchic iconography and symposia were depicted on the

⁴³⁵ Trümper 2011: 33.

Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 45. See also Wallace-Hadrill 1996, 1997, 2007, 2015. Other analyses of Roman domestic space focused on Pompeii include papers in Laurence and Wallace-Hadrill 1997; Grahame 2000; Hales 2003; Anguissola 2010; collected papers in Tuori and Nissin 2015; more recently, see Fertik 2019; Platts 2020.
 Wallace-Hadrill 1994: 8.

⁴³⁸ Ibid: 9.

⁴³⁹ For stylistic chronology see Mau 1882, 1899: contra Wallace-Hadrill 1990: 180-181; Elsner 1995: 63.

⁴⁴⁰ Mau 1899: 481-2. The first 'programmatic' approach is made by Trendelenburg 1876 but more fully realised by Schefold 1952 and Thompson 1960. Lorenz 2008 identifies four specific types of visual program. On existence of pattern books, see Ling 1991: 128-129, 217-220; Clarke 2003a: 227-228, with bibliography. For an attempt to identify specific figure-painters in Campania, see Richardson Jr. 2000. On Roman eclecticism in art, see Tronchin 2012a, 2012b; Hackworth Petersen 2012.

triclinium walls.⁴⁴¹ Gender was then written into this approach: accordingly, Fredrick advocates for 'determining, as best we can, which rooms were occupied by women and if this results in a clear distinction in the paintings selected'.⁴⁴² Yet understanding the gendered use of space through its painted decoration quickly becomes problematic, primarily due to the nebulousness of 'programmatic' visual schema. Room 'g' in the Villa dei Misteri in Pompeii, for example, is identified by John Clarke as a 'woman's room', based entirely on the 'feminine subject matter of the central pictures: Venus dressing her hair, Ariadne giving Theseus a ball of string to lead him out of the labyrinth, and the Battle of Troy (launched by the beautiful Helen)'. Yet the association of a war scene with an adorned woman is 'tenuous', as Clarke himself admits: the presumed correlation between wall paintings and room use (gendered or not) is fundamentally circular.⁴⁴³

More recent discussions of Roman domestic space and its use(s) have shifted from decoration to the analysis of space, architecture and artefact assemblages in Campanian houses, recognising the multifunctionality and seasonality of Roman domestic space. 444 Accordingly, scholars have since understood wall painting as a medium in which Roman ideas about gender were constructed, challenged, and explored. Ann Olga Koloski-Ostrow, for example, argues that images on the walls of Roman houses reinforced the power of the male *paterfamilias* and *patronus*. David Fredrick builds on her argument to suggest – as demonstrated in the previous chapter, when he understood Endymion as endowed with a 'synthetic female sensibility' – that the bodies painted on Pompeian walls that are exposed to violence and/or the viewer's penetrative gaze are then rendered passive and feminine. 445 Fredrick's discussion is explicitly underpinned by the conceptualisation of looking as masculine and being looked-at as feminine as per Mulvey's 'male gaze' and Berger's dictum '*men act* and *women appear* [...] men look at women. Women look at themselves being looked at' (original emphasis). 446

⁴⁴¹ Ling 1991: 135-136. For further examples see Clarke 1991: xxiii; Leach 2004.

⁴⁴² Fredrick 1995: 282. For a comparably gendered methodology to mythological sarcophagi, see the funerary chapter of this thesis, especially *supra* p70-78.

⁴⁴³ Clarke 1991: 157.

⁴⁴⁴ Gazda 2010: 79-80; Brain 2018: 42; Nevett 2010: 89-118; see also Leach 1997 on prescriptiveness of labels for rooms in the Roman house. On artefact assemblage in Campanian houses, see Allison 1999, 2004, 2009; Berry 1997; for overview of Roman materiality and object studies, see papers in Van Oyen and Pitts 2017. A more integrative approach to decorative art is Swift 2009, encompassing dress, objects, and interiors; Jones 2016; Haug 2020; collected papers in Haug and Lauritsen 2021. See also the display of sculpture in Roman domestic contexts (e.g., Bartman 1991, 2010); new work on gardens and green space (von Stackelberg 2017; Barrett 2019) and holistic studies of individual houses at Pompeii, such as Tronchin 2006; Powers 2006; Allison 2006.

⁴⁴⁵ Fredrick 1995; see discussion of such scenes on sarcophagi, *supra* p72.

⁴⁴⁶ Original italics. For all quotes see Berger 1972: 46-47.

Yet the application of 'gaze theory' to ancient material is far from straightforward. 447 Koloski-Ostrow's work, for instance, primarily focusses on images in which the female body is embedded in narratives of abuse and violence, such as the rape of Cassandra or the abduction of Helen. Fredrick's 'synthetic female sensibility', meanwhile, is borrowed from a parallel discussion of imperial literature - namely pantomime, elegy and satire - in which men become feminised and passive. 448 Fredrick does not address, let alone delve into, the consequences of adopting femininity as a 'state'. Fundamental questions about 'synthetic female sensibility' are left unaddressed and unanswered: what kind of man is Endymion, the poster-boy for this concept? How far does his status as a man or as masculine depend on his adoption of a 'synthetic' rather than an 'authentic' femininity? Is 'synthetic female sensibility' temporary, or permanent? Is it even possible for a man to assume an 'authentic' femininity? And what kind of figure does this make Selene: can she be understood as cloaked in a 'synthetic *male* sensibility'? Fredrick's argument relies upon the adoption of gendered behaviour or action as a one-way street: men can play-act at femininity, but never vice versa.

The unsatisfying nature of the labels applied to Endymion and others as mere adopters of a false femininity perhaps explains the recent shift away from gender in discussions of Roman wall painting. Trimble and Beth Severy-Hoven focus on the power implicit in Koloski-Ostrow and Fredrick's discussions and minimise gender as a subordinate component of broader power structures within Roman society. Severy-Hoven explicitly denies that it is possible or useful to perceive gender as an independent, coherent dynamic within Roman wall painting: for her, it is not a question of the 'male gaze', but the 'master gaze'. The 'viewer-master' is central to Severy-Hoven's discussion of the violent punishments of Pentheus and Dirce visualised in wall paintings in the Casa dei Vettii: the 'viewer-master's' pleasure in viewing exposed and mutilated bodies correlates primarily with his control over the bodies of male and female slaves, rather than his own maleness. While gender obviously cannot be examined in a vacuum – the female body must be put into dialogue with the male, and gender into dialogue with class, race, and power – the theorised, ungendered 'master gaze' risks allowing gender to

⁴⁴⁷ See discussion of gaze theory, *supra* p10-11.

⁴⁴⁸ Fredrick 1995: 279; see discussions of masculinity in Roman elegy and literature more broadly in Skinner 1993; Richlin 1992; Wyke 1987a, 1987b.

⁴⁴⁹ Trimble 2002; Severy-Hoven 2012.

⁴⁵⁰ Severy-Hoven 2012: 542.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid: 551-566. The theme of power/dominance inherent in the 'master gaze' is also implicit in the work of Hannah Platts (2020: 23-30) and Harriet Fertik (2019): Fertik's minimal discussion of Pompeian domestic contexts, however, at least tries to push beyond images of rape and violence, such as the image of a pensive Alcestis in the House of the Tragic Poet (2019: 104-128; Alcestis, 116-119).

fall out of the equation altogether. Similarly, scholars who think with and through the 'master gaze' seem stuck analysing the same kind of images as Koloski-Ostrow and Fredrick: visualisations of mythical narratives in which bodies are subjected to violence. While Kristina Milnor has attempted to push beyond the limitations of previous discussions by analysing representations of female virtue in Roman wall painting as part of Augustan 'private life', her discussion of wall painting is still highly selective.⁴⁵²

To date, discussions of the female body as represented in Roman wall painting have been largely limited by a narrow set of specific theoretical approaches and by self-selecting imagery, namely depictions of violated and exposed bodies which are inevitably classed as female or feminine. The selection of evidence conditions its interpretation. The considerable potential of wall paintings for visualising a range of femininities (some normative, others more challenging) has, therefore, gone untapped: the material from Pompeii in particular, although often made to speak beyond its temporal and geographical limitations, constitutes a discrete and dialogic body of evidence. Individual paintings, placed adjacent to each other in both specific rooms and across households, put male and female bodies side by side and allowed comparison of bodily presentation and behaviour.

A brief analysis of two paintings from a Pompeian *fullonica* demonstrates this compelling reflexivity (figs. 3.5, 3.6). 454 While a *fullonica* is not a domestic context, these paintings exemplify the dynamics of comparison, interaction and inter-visuality characteristic of Campanian wall painting. One of the scenes appears, at first glance, to depict a *triclinium*, with two couches and small circular tables stacked with glassware. Lolling over the couches are two couples: the men are burnished and shirtless, the women in a similar state of undress as their baby-blue and yellow chitons fall from their pale shoulders. The couple on the right snuggle together, the man pointing towards the other lovers engaging in a passionate kiss. Another look at this dinner-party draws the eye upwards to a sweeping canopy hung over the makeshift dining room, and, to the left, a background of lush greenery punctuated by trees. A golden herm glitters and two female figures peep out from among the foliage.

Are the women in the woodland maenads? They certainly behave like the followers of Bacchus often painted on the Attic vases used at symposia: one drinks deeply from a cup while the other stares out at and entices the external viewer to follow her into the woods. These

⁴⁵² See discussion of Pero and Micon: Milnor 2005: 100-102; Fredrick 2007: 606; *infra* p138-144.

⁴⁵³ Gazda 2010: 81

⁴⁵⁴ Fullonica of Sestius Venustus (I.3.18, MANN, Naples, inv. 9015-9016).

elements – the maenads, forest and herm – dislocate the scene from the traditional Roman dining room and evoke Attic conceptions of communal drinking as a topsy-turvy, fantastical arena populated by a Dionysiac entourage. The central figures within the scene may appear Roman given the *triclinium*-style layout of their picnic, but they otherwise fulfil the typical roles of the Greek symposium. The men egg each other on, while the women become sexually available objects of individual fantasy – *hetairai*, overly amorous wives, or perhaps both. The fringed bower indicates that this is an impromptu picnic rather than the summer *triclinium* of a Roman villa, while the striped couches appear incongruous next to the wild forest. The party appears to have been transported to an alternate, temporary world: one where Roman men and women may immerse themselves in Hellenized sensuality.

Back in the *fullonica*, the adjacent painting depicts a dinner party within a *triclinium*, with the typical arrangement of three couches around a small circular table (fig. 3.6). Yet here all the guests are female. In the centre, a standing woman holds an unidentified object aloft in her right hand, bunching up her saffron drapery on her hip with the other hand in a cocky, arrogant stance. She is surrounded by reclining women in various states of merriment: one woman bows her head to drink deeply from her cup, while the woman next to her plays the double-reed enthusiastically, lifting the pipes until they are almost vertical. The tableau is surveyed by two women who peer from behind a sweeping cloth that forms a backdrop to the dinner. Their slightly diminutive forms and identical mauve chitons suggest they are slaves: one carries a dish in her left hand as the other pulls aside the cloth for a cheeky peek at the diners, cautious not to be seen and reprimanded. She stares at the female drinkers with a baffled expression. The slave's confusion is mirrored by a diner on the right-hand side of the fresco. She is primly draped from head to toe in thick cloth that obscures her body; she stares directly out at the viewer, her eyebrows furrowed and mouth set. While the coy maenad gazing out of the woodland symposium asked the viewer to venture into the woods with her, this reluctant guest appears to be asking for an excuse to leave the party.

The interplay of gazes in this painting is complex and layered: the cloth backdrop and the peeping slaves effectively 'stage' the party as a spectacle to be looked at. Unlike the representation of enslaved and freeborn women united by their shared femininity on the Attic vases discussed earlier, here the slaves are mystified by the female drinkers; perhaps because

⁴⁵⁵ For an overview of Attic imagery of the symposium, see Lissarrague 1990b; Topper 2012.

⁴⁵⁶ On uncertain identification of female figures in Attic symposium scenes, see Kurke 1997; Beard 1991.

⁴⁵⁷ On outdoor 'summer *triclinia*', see Vitruvius, *De architectura* VI.4.1-2.

the women perform the activities of the quintessentially male symposium - such as drinking heavily and playing music - yet there are no men to be seen. While the presence and behaviours of the men in the al-fresco symposium identify their female companions as erotic objects, it is their absence from the second scene that makes it unintelligible. If the first painting visualised a carnival-esque fantasy world in which men and women might release their inhibitions, the second poses much more troubling questions, embodied by the reluctant guest on the fringe of the party. Is this what Roman women get up to in private? Are these still women, even as they play-act at male behaviours and activities? If so, what kind of women are they?

Please be Seated

The female symposiasts illustrate gender as performance: as 'instituted [...] through a stylized repetition of [habitual] acts', in the words of Butler, including but not limited to wearing gender-coded clothing, walking and sitting in gender-coded ways, speaking or gesticulating in a gender-coded manner, and so on. 458 While Butler ultimately deconstructs both 'biological sex' and any sense of a uniform, unified 'gender' category, this chapter uses her articulation of gender as relational, behavioural, and constructed to explore the male and female bodies represented in domestic Campanian wall painting. This category of evidence is ripe for comparative analysis of gender presentation, as wall paintings depict a range of bodies engaged in different actions and in different contexts, the juxtaposition of which helps to create and enhance meaning. Given the volume of extant wall paintings from Roman Campania, this chapter selects for its dataset depictions of seated figures.

'The seated figure' is admittedly a modern, constructed lens through which to view Pompeian wall painting, but one that facilitates comparative analysis across a workable dataset. Rather than 'bake in' assumptions and prejudices by filtering and selecting wall paintings by protagonist or subject-matter (prejudices that would segregate scenes of myth from generic scenes, divine from mortal figures), the seated figure is a deliberately broad church. Seated figures in Campanian wall painting may be male or female, divine or mortal, while the replication of specific seated postures and poses across multiple paintings and domestic contexts enables discussion of how a woman sits differently from a man, god, or goddess. This chapter takes seated figures as its point of departure. It asks what kind of figure is seated? How far does the figure's gender inflect upon their seated-ness, and how does their seated behaviour

⁴⁵⁸ Butler 1990: see *supra* p8.

shape their gender? How does the representation and interpretation of a seated figure change based on their relationship with other painted figures?

Prior scholarship on body language within the ancient world and visual culture more broadly offers some preliminary context for 'seated-ness' and what it means to be seated.⁴⁵⁹ Seated figures in Greco-Roman art are commonly represented sitting straight-backed and upright on a chair or stool. This pose immediately marks the figure out, in part due to the visual tradition, attested as early as the archaic period, for cult icons to show the deity seated on a high-backed chair. Although the god's head is lowered by their seated posture relative to a mortal figure who may stand in front of them, the increased mass of the seated figure automatically draws the viewer's eye and renders the god visually dominant. In this context, seated-ness also implies the monumentality of divinity, as any standing mortal nearby would be dwarfed if the god chose to rise from their throne. 460 The close link between seated-ness and divine enthronement was exploited in Roman visual culture – as illustrated by the statue of Cornelia repurposed from a Hellenistic sculpture of Demeter in the Porticus Octaviae – and defined images of the god-like emperor and his family, like the colossal seated statue of Claudius in the guise of Jupiter from the theatre at Cerveteri and the similarly oversized sculpture of the seated Livia found at Paestum. 461 That seated-ness could distinguish an individual's superiority in public, and private, is demonstrated by an anecdote recounted in Aulus Gellius' Attic Nights: when the governor of Crete, his father and the philosopher Taurus are faced with only one chair between them, they are forced to assess and rank each other by status. 462 In contrast, those who sit or squat directly on the floor or ground are identified in ancient visual culture as 'the antithesis of prestigious': in Hellenistic art such figures are invariably identified as down on their luck – beggars, suppliants, and drunken old women. 463

⁴⁵⁹ Masséglia 2015: appendix, 'the body language of sitting': 319-328; Davies 2018. Masséglia 2015: 12 offers a bibliographic survey of modern work on body language. For the use of body language theory within ancient contexts, see Brilliant 1963; Cairns 2005; Davies 2005. 'Gesture' has attracted broader discussion and a wider bibliography: see Bremmer & Roodenburg 1991 (with bibliographic suggestions 255); Boegehold 1999; Corbeill 2004; Catoni 2005; Clark et al 2015. For assessment of gesture in literature, see Bakewell & Sickinger 2003.

⁴⁶⁰ Davies 2018: 203-210; c.f. Davies 2005: 217 on relief from Villa Albani; alternatively see Powers 2018 on relief from Pompeii, V.3.10, now MANN, Naples, inv.126174, depicting goddess and worshippers.

⁴⁶¹ On statue of Cornelia from Porticus Metelli, see *supra* p43-45. For statue of Claudius: Musei Vaticani, Museo Gregoriano Profano, inv.9950. Livia: National Archaeological Museum of Spain, Madrid, inv.2737.

⁴⁶² Attic Nights 2.2: they conclude that, in public, the rights of the father concede to his son's position as magistrate, but that in private the father should have precedence over the son; Davies 2005: 217-218.

⁴⁶³ Davies 2018: 199. The hypothesised association of ground-sitting or squatting postures with excretion in Western culture may explain the comparative rarity and denigration of figures depicted sitting on the ground in ancient visual culture. See Masséglia 2015: 326-327; Bremmer 1991: 25-26.

Also characteristic of Hellenistic art is the seated male philosopher type. Primarily known through later Roman copies, the philosopher's seated posture is usually combined with either 'teaching' or 'thinking' gestures, such as a hand placed on the chin or face, to indicate 'a state of extreme mental concentration'. 464 Seated female figures, such as those often found sitting on a high-backed klismoi in Attic vase paintings and funerary stelai, are usually understood by scholars as the 'lady of the house', if not expressly identified as Penelope, the paradigmatic Greek wife. 465 There is a danger, however, that these 'his and hers' models reproduce modern gender biases. This is exemplified by the scholarly discussion of a sculpture of a young girl seated on a chair, leaning back onto her right arm while resting her left elbow on her knee, now in Rome's Centrale Montemartini. 466 Her crossed legs, shyly inclined head and averted gaze twist her body into something introspective and self-contained: in the original Hellenistic version of the statue, she likely held her head in her hand, a pensive if not mournful gesture consistent with the original statue's hypothesised function as a grave marker. She bears more than a passing resemblance to the Hellenistic statues of thinking philosophers, yet it is the 'Penelope' type that dominates discussion – so much so that both Davies and R. R. R. Smith read the figure as Penelope herself, 'a little coquettish', her coyly crossed legs and lowered eyes understood as the 'mixed signals [that] accord very well with Penelope's dilemma'. 467 Much like the similar sculptural type of the Muse Polyhymnia, attested in Roman horti, or the seated Tyche that was used to 'personify' cities from the Hellenistic period, modern gender biases understand the sculpted 'Penelope' as all surface, with little to no sense of interior psychology.468

Such seated figures should be read, however, beyond the self-reinforcing model of male philosopher and good wife. Campanian wall painting capitalises on the ability of the seated figure to express a range of behaviours, actions, and emotions: it delights in the meaning generated by repeating and juxtaposing seated-ness with other figure-types (seated and not) for the sake of comparison, contrast, and ultimately the creation of meaning, including the construction of gendered roles, behaviours, and expectations. Most obvious and marked within wall painting is the contrast between seated and reclining figures. In the scene from the

⁴⁶⁴ Zanker 1995: 106; Davies 2018: 210-217.

⁴⁶⁵ *LIMC* VII. 'Penelope', 291-295. C.f., 'Der Penelope-typus zeigt eine junge Frau in Chiton und Himation mit übergeschlagenen Beinen auf einem Diphros sitzend'.

⁴⁶⁶ Centrale Montemartini, inv.1107.

⁴⁶⁷ Smith 1991: 77; Davies 2018: 225. For *comparanda* see Esdaile 1914.

⁴⁶⁸ C.f. Smith 1991: 77ff; see also Shapiro 1993; Matheson and Pollitt 1994; Stafford 2000. See Pompeian *comparandum, infra* n475.

fullonica, for example, the female symposium is charged by the contrast between the female symposiasts languorously slumped across the couches, flutes and kylixes in hand, and the reluctant guest who perches, bolt upright, on the edge of the couch (fig. 3.6). Postural differences foreground and emphasise the disparity between the wild, debauched symposiasts and the chaste, respectable matrona.⁴⁶⁹

Seated-ness and reclining are similarly juxtaposed to visualise different states of being and feeling in two paintings in the Villa Farnesina in Rome - the decoration of which dates from 20BCE, making it an appropriate comparandum for Campanian fresco. The paintings were found on either side of an aedicula in a room identified as a cubiculum, both of which show a man and woman seated on a bed (figs. 3.7, 3.8). In the scene on the left, the man has already stripped down to his bare torso and reclines on his left elbow. The woman, in contrast, sits bolt-upright, veiled and dressed in yellow, with her legs pressed demurely together: she grasps her partner's forearm as he reaches suggestively into her lap. Her body language connotes reluctance, which Clarke reads as corroborative of her depiction as a chaste, veiled bride. Yet the scene on the other side of the aedicula shows the opposite: the woman reclines alongside her partner, her yellow drapery in disarray around her waist and her breasts exposed. She yanks the man's head towards her own in an aggressive kiss. If the yellow drapery indicates that this is the same woman who chastely withstood the man's sexual advances in the first scene, then the second painting constructs a narrative in which 'the modest bride becom[es] the immodest lover': this is visualised by the contrast between her upright seated-ness and the louche lustfulness of reclining with a man. 470

Elsewhere in Campanian wall painting, the seated figure is used to visualise the different attitudes and behaviours of youth and old age. Room 7 of the Villa Arianna at Stabia, for example, contained paintings of four seated figures, two female and two male, in different stages of life. The younger of the two women is seated on a stool with her torso bare, her legs swathed in pink drapery and her ankles crossed. She plays with her loose hair with one hand and holds a long-handled mirror in the other (fig. 3.9). For this reason, Rabun Taylor understands her as a teenager 'involved in the timeless ritual of adolescent self-contemplation'.⁴⁷¹ The other female figure in room 7 is fully dressed in pink drapery: she sits

⁴⁶⁹ On dining postures and their associated social meaning in Roman culture, see Roller 2006; Dunbabin 2004.

⁴⁷⁰ The paintings are now in Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, inv.1188. For dating of decoration of the Villa Farnesina, see Clarke 1998: 93-107; for interpretations of the paintings, see Clarke 1998: 103-104 and Valladares 2021: 31-65.

⁴⁷¹ MANN, Naples, inv.9088; Taylor 2008: 38.

with her legs crossed, her elbow balanced on her knee and fingers pressed against her mouth (fig. 3.10).⁴⁷² While the younger woman was represented as all body - nude, youthful, and beautiful - the older woman is swathed in drapery and less obviously possessed of a body at all: she appears more pensive and introspective than her counterpart. That their seated posture underlines the contrast in age between these two figures is indicated by the other two seated figures, both male. One has a prominent widow's peak in his white hair, a beard, and a walking stick; the other shows off his bare chest and crooks one arm over his head in an iconography that suggests being as open to love as Endymion (figs. 3.11, 3.12).⁴⁷³

What is interesting is not only the relative youth of the 'older' woman relative to the wizened, white-haired old man – speaking, perhaps, to the compounded stigmatisation of old age and femaleness in the ancient world, exemplified by the drunken old women of Hellenistic sculpture⁴⁷⁴ – but to the ways in which female maturity and youth are visualised through divine iconographies and motifs. The younger man performs a gesture that used frequently, but not exclusively, in the iconography of Endymion: unlike the young herdsman, however, this young man is not asleep, and he is depicted with a sense of individuality that makes him a person, rather than a type-figure. In contrast, the two women might be mistaken, at first glance, for goddesses. The younger woman evokes the iconography of Aphrodite Anadyomene as she grasps her loose hair and the myriad images of Venus-Aphrodite at her toilette by clutching a long-handled mirror; the older woman, in contrast, resembles sculptural images of the Muse Polyhymnia in her pose, while the lattice-like structure above her head suggests a further correlation with the display of Muse sculptures in Roman *horti*, including one attested example from a Pompeian peristyle.⁴⁷⁵

The borrowing of divine iconographies raises the question of whether women and goddesses sit similarly in Pompeian wall painting. Notably, Venus is frequently represented in a seated posture in multiple scenes across Pompeii. A painting from the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone depicts Venus' wedding to Mars: the god of war stands behind his bride, who is seated on a high-backed chair with a foot-stool (fig. 3.13). And She is elegantly draped, her legs pressed

⁴⁷² MANN, Naples, inv.9097.

⁴⁷³ MANN, Naples, inv.9142, inv.9093. On the hand-over-head gesture, see *supra* p72.

⁴⁷⁴ See Masséglia 2015.

⁴⁷⁵ For Aphrodite Anadyomene in visual arts, see *LIMC* II. 'Aphrodite', 423-455, 688-735. For iconography of the goddess' toilette, c.f. *LIMC* II. 'Aphrodite', 494-496; *LIMC* VIII. 'Venus', 165-181; Bragantini 2013: 456. The Muse sculpture from Pompeii was excavated from the garden of Casa di Loreius Tiburtinus (II.2.2, now SAP inv.2917). See also the three seated women, each clutching an attribute such as a kantharos, flabellum, etc., in the triclinium of Villa Arianna: Bragantini 2013: 465-467; MANN, Naples, inv.8892, 9641.

⁴⁷⁶ Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (V.4.a tablinum, north wall).

together and her right arm tucked inside her lilac himation, holding a small red object in her left hand. Unlike her characteristic smouldering sexuality in other paintings at Campania in which she reclines alongside her lover, her nude body exposed to the viewer's eyes and the god's hands, here Venus sits and looks like a chaste, mortal Roman bride – not entirely unlike the 'modest bride' of the Villa Farnesina.⁴⁷⁷

The figures of Mars and Venus in the wedding scene clearly formed an intelligible and coherent motif, as the pair were extracted from the broader narrative of the wedding and used as a vignette in other Pompeian houses. In the Casa dell'Amore punito, for example, Mars and Venus are depicted in the same tableau on the north wall of the tablinum, hovering against a pale background, contextless, further spotlighting Venus' seated-ness (fig. 3.14, 3.15). Mars leans over Venus as if trying to slip his right hand inside the folds of her chiton, while Venus' right arm rests impassively upon her lap. A cupid flutters next to the couple and, to their left, a smaller female figure – perhaps a slave – kneels in front of a small box. 478 The painting seems to boil domesticity down into its constituent parts and reassemble them with the divine couple, blurring their identities: are these gods, or regular Romans? Is this really the passionate affair of Venus and Mars, or do even gods end up in sexless marriages characterised by unreciprocated desire? A second painting from the south wall of the same room depicts the seated Venus looking down at a chubby boy identifiable as her son, Amor, who has been led by a female figure – a personification of Persuasion, or another slave – for a telling-off from mum. Goddesses, it would seem, can sit like mortal women: Venus appears in these scenes more as *matrona* and mother than sex goddess. Seatedness, it would seem, embraces the mortal and the divine bodies in equal measure.

The prior discussion has outlined how seated figures in Campanian painting - both mortal and divine - could express different states of being and feeling, either through both the repetition and juxtaposition of the seated pose with other iterations of seated-ness (like the young and old women in the Villa Arianna), and with other bodily postures (such as the seated bride and reclining lover of the Villa Farnesina). These dual processes of repetition and juxtaposition served to spotlight the seated figure, conditioning the viewer to home in on and understand her as a meaningful visual motif, whether used as a vignette (Venus in the Casa dell'Amore punito) or embedded within a narrativized scene (the wedding of Venus and Mars

⁴⁷⁷ E.g. Casa di Marte e Venere (VII.9.47, room 6, west wall, MANN, Naples, inv.9248).

⁴⁷⁸ Casa dell' Amore punito (VII.2.23, tablinum, south wall, MANN, Naples, inv.9249; north wall, MANN, Naples, inv.9257).

in the Casa di Lucrezio Frontone). The emphasis placed on the seated female figure as a motif that can work independently of a wider narrative context seems to translate across into the figure herself: often, the seated female figure appears 'spotlit', critically distanced from her surroundings, and thereby able to observe them.

Two wall paintings at Pompeii, for instance, depict female artists sitting at their easels (figs. 3.16, 3.17). ⁴⁷⁹ In one of these images, the artist is seated in the centre of the scene wearing a delicate violet chiton that slips from her shoulder as she reaches into her paint-box, brush in hand. Behind her, two women clad in polychromous drapery lean against a column, their heads close together as if gossiping: like the artist, they gaze across at the herm that has been set up as an inanimate model. The second scene that depicts a female artist shows only two figures: the artist sits with her paintbrush poised upon the *tabella* while a veiled woman sits directly behind her. The second woman cranes her neck to glance over the artist's shoulder at the work-in-progress. In both scenes, the interplay of internal gazes reinforces that the sitting women are either engaged in the creative process and/or looking at (and appreciating) the produced image. The female artist at its centre does not play the traditionally feminine role of model, but that of masculine producer and creator: the women in the scene together look at the fruits of feminine, rather than masculine, creativity. ⁴⁸⁰

A fresco from the Villa Arianna at Stabia also visualises the gaze of the seated woman (fig. 3.18). ⁴⁸¹ The scene consists of three women inside a room. On the right, a seated woman dressed in pastel drapery with a pink headscarf dangles a cupid by his wings over an elegant cage, which contains another miserable-looking cupid. Opposite, a woman stands behind another seated woman who is dressed in pale pink chiton, a golden net visible over her hair: she gazes so intently at the cupid wriggling in the air that an escaped cupid, who stands meekly in the background, goes apparently unnoticed. In this scene, the internal gaze is powerful enough to be harnessed for commercial gain: the seated woman leans back on her right arm to contemplate the cupid and weigh up its price, while the cupid-seller examines her prospective customer's face, perhaps calculating if she will make the sale.

⁴⁷⁹ Casa del Chirurgo (VI.1.10, room 9, east wall, MANN, Naples, inv.9018); Casa della Imperatrice di Russia (VI.14.42, cubiculum 3, MANN, Naples, inv.9017).

⁴⁸⁰ See, for example, Morales 2011 on the (in)famous sexual relationship between the model Phryne and the sculptor Praxiteles; on 'womanufacture' and the myth of Pygmalion, whose sculpted dream-girl comes to life, see Sharrock 1991.

⁴⁸¹ Villa Arianna, room 25. The painting, discovered in the mid-18th century, inspired Joseph-Marie Vien's *La Marchande d'Amour* (1763) now in Musée National du Château, Fontainebleau.

The premise of cupids-for-sale locates the scene firmly in the realm of the fantasy and whimsy, and the cupid-seller bears little relation to the androgynous bodies of working women depicted at Ostia. 482 The elegantly dressed cupid-seller and her customers are contrived ideals within a fanciful scene. They, alongside the other seated figures discussed above, are ultimately figures painted on a wall, likely by a male artist, and looked at by external viewers, both male and female: there is no drawing a straightforward equivalence between them and the 'real' women who existed within the rooms decorated by such paintings. 483 What the cupid-seller and female artists do illustrate, however, are the unique resonances and capabilities of the seated figure within Campanian wall painting: used variably for mortal and divine figures in both vignette-form and narrativized scenes, the seated female figure is immediately recognisable as visual motif and less obviously as a female body. As a result, she can more readily become an observer of herself and others around her, challenging the relationship between gender and looking within Roman visual culture: a question which, by virtue of the medium of wall painting, is inevitably triangulated out to the external viewer who looks at the figures painted on the wall.

The rest of this chapter explores this hypothesis through three narrative case studies. Analysis focusses on seated figures – male and female, mortal and divine - represented in visualisations of mythical episodes to embed the potential connotations of their seated-ness and the construction of gender within a richer narrative and socio-cultural context. The following discussion aims to understand how the seated female figure looks at herself and others, and how her representation and juxtaposition across the walls of Campanian houses constructs and subverts gendered expectations of looking and being in wall painting.

A Shield for a Hand-Mirror

Blocks of stone and a heap of shining, golden armour litter the floor of a cavernous room occupied by five figures (fig. 3.19). A male figure, identifiable by his tanned skin and simple tunic, sits on the left of the image. He holds an object in his right hand and places it slightly behind himself; a counterbalance, perhaps, to the gigantic shield held out with his left arm,

⁴⁸² Kampen notes that images of 'working' women do appear in domestic contexts, but these often represent 'Hellenized' or mythologised contexts. Cupids and Psyches commonly appear in such scenes: see Kampen 1981b: 101-102.

⁴⁸³ Ibid, 102; c.f. their resemblance to the formulaic femininity of terracotta figurines of veiled women produced in Hellenistic Tanagra: Barrow 2018: 49-62. On the conceptualisation of imagined or contrived visions of womanhood, see Wyke 1987a, 1987b. For an attempt to identify specific figure-painters at Pompeii, see Richardson 2000.

which is almost the length of his entire torso and so weighty that another man stands by to support it. The standing figure twists slightly, his upper body curled inwards and his right foot delicately propped on a loose brick on the floor. Below the pair of men and the shield, another tunic-clad man sits hunched over a crested shield, presenting his back to the external viewer as he works on the armour. On the right-hand side of the image, separated from the craftsmen and their detritus, are two female figures, one of which is rendered in indistinct lines behind her seated companion. The seated female figure is draped in a vibrant blue chiton, her feet demurely crossed at the ankles on an elegant footrest. She rests her right elbow on the armrest of her chair and lifts her hand to her face. She gazes at the blacksmith sat opposite her and the shield he proffers, in which her figure is reflected.

The presence of female figures in a blacksmith's workshop identifies this scene, originally located on the north wall of the *triclinium* of the Casa di Paccius Alexander, as a visualisation of the goddess Thetis in the forge of Hephaestus.⁴⁸⁴ In the *Iliad*, Thetis is welcomed into the forge by Hephaestus' wife Charis and seated on a silver-studded throne with a footrest ('ἐπὶ θρόνου ἀργυροήλου / καλοῦ δαιδαλέου: ὑπὸ δὲ θρῆνυς ποσὶν ἦεν', 18.389-90), before asking Hephaestus to create new armour for Achilles (368-470). He accepts, initiating the extensive ekphrastic passage that describes the production of the arms and, in particular, the shield (470-613), which Thetis then transports to Achilles. While it is unclear if the painting in the Casa di Paccius Alexander deliberately set out to visualise the *Iliad*, two type-scenes in Pompeian wall painting seem to depict the same story. There are seven known instances of the 'Thetis in the forge of Hephaestus' scene, in which Thetis is almost always represented as seated on the right and Hephaestus standing or sitting on the left.⁴⁸⁵ Five extant paintings from Pompeii represent Thetis transporting the armour on the back of a Triton.⁴⁸⁶ These two type scenes – the production and transportation of the armour – were often juxtaposed with paintings that visualised other episodes in the Trojan cycle: such as the discovery of Achilles on Scyros

⁴⁸⁴ Casa di Paccius Alexander (IX.1.7; MANN, Naples, inv.9529).

⁴⁸⁵ Squire 2013b: 169. Thetis in Hephaestus' forge: Casa del Criptoportico (I.6.2), Casa di Meleagro (VI.9.2; room 27, north wall, MANN, Naples, inv.9528;), Casa degli Amorini Dorati (VI.16.7, room g, north wall), Casa dei Principi di Russia - referred to by Squire as the Casa di Sirico but referenced otherwise here to avoid confusion (VII.1.25), Casa di Paccius Alexander (IX.1.7; *supra*); Domus Uboni (IX.5.2, room 20, west wall); Domus Vedi Sirici (VII.1.47, exedrae 10).

⁴⁸⁶ Transportation scenes: Domus Uboni (IX.5.2 room 20 east wall); Casa dei Dioscuri (VI.9.6 room 2); Thermopolium (V.2.19 entrance); Casa di Meleagro (VI.9.2 peristyle 16, west wall, MANN, Naples, inv.8873); Casa delle Quadrighe (VII.2.25 triclinium, MANN, Naples, inv.8863). For full account of these iconographies outside of fresco, see *LIMC* VIII 'Thetis' specifically, F. 'Thetis in der Schmiede des Hephaistos' and N. 'Waffentransport'.

in the Domus Uboni, or the construction of Troy's foundations by Apollo and Neptune in the Domus Vedi Sirici.

Yet the *Iliad* does not describe Thetis sitting to contemplate the shield for any extended period: on the contrary, Hephaestus has barely laid the arms in front of her before she springs down from Olympus like a hawk (' $\hat{\eta}$ δ' $\check{\eta}$ ρ $\hat{\phi}$ $\check{\omega}$ ς $\check{\alpha}$ λτο κατ' Οὐλύμπου', 616). Even if the fresco visualises Thetis' first glimpse of the armour, her body language suggests prolonged, pensive examination: her bent right elbow, for example, brings her hand to her face in a gesture associated with thought. She has brought her left arm across herself, forming a barrier gesture that closes off her body and gives the impression of defensiveness typically identified as 'feminine' in modern body language studies. ⁴⁸⁷ Yet, even though Thetis' body appears guarded and self-contained, she leans forward. Her slight inclination emphasises her engagement in the process of gazing, although her intention remains unclear. Is she looking at the shield thoughtfully, considering its implications? The armour will, after all, allow her son Achilles to fight at Troy once more and fulfil the prophecy that dooms him to perish there. Is her gaze meta-aware, a reference to the famous and extended ecphrasis of Achilles' shield? ⁴⁸⁸ If so, what is the viewer to do with the active displacement of the Homeric decoration on the shield – images of cities at war and at peace – in favour of Thetis' own reflection?

The painting from the Casa di Paccius Alexander is difficult to interpret in part because of its exceptionality relative to other instances of the scene at Pompeii, which attempt to represent the shield's moulded decoration rather than its reflectivity. In the Domus Uboni and Casa di Sirico, the female figure standing behind Thetis points to swirling lines on the shield with an elegant rod, as if explaining what they mean (fig. 3.20). Thetis has raised her hand to her mouth in a gesture that may denote surprise or sorrow. In the painting from the Casa dei Principe di Russia, the female figure is winged: this suggests that she may represent Fate, who is interpreting the shield's imagery for Thetis and reminding her of Achilles' tragic destiny. Although the painting from the Casa di Paccius Alexander does not depict any decoration on the shield, but Thetis' 'true reflection', Martin Robertson understands it as a variation on the more 'interpretative' or discursive representations from the Casa dei Principe di Russia and Casa di Sirico; Thetis is reflected in the shield to emphasise that she is using it for catoptromantic purposes, her intense expression indicative of her desire to somehow avert

⁴⁸⁷ Davies 2018: 232-234.

⁴⁸⁸ C.f. Francis 2009. For overview, see Stockdale 2020. See also Squire 2013b.

⁴⁸⁹ Squire 2013b: 169.

⁴⁹⁰ Taylor 2008: 153.

Achilles' fate. 491 Squire suggests that Thetis' reflection in the shield plays with the intermediality of visually [re]representing the verbal ekphrasis of the *Iliad*, and the 'promise and failure of all representation'. Finally, Taylor understands the reflection of Thetis as alluding to the duality of her persona before and after the death of Achilles, as she is 'queen of her narrative realm' in the forge but 'all alone in the mirror'. 492

These scholars are more uncomfortable, however, with any suggestion that Thetis is simply looking at herself: Robertson's mantic interpretation is motivated by his sense that 'the tragic mother, trying to arm her son against a fate which she in fact knows he cannot escape, should not [...] sit looking at her own reflection in the shield, or even just admiring its workmanship' (added emphasis). And yet Thetis sits, looks, and sees herself in the shield. The scene from the Casa di Paccius Alexander demands to be plugged into a wider discourse on self-examination and femininity. Nor is Thetis an unlikely candidate with which to explore the dynamics of women looking at themselves and changing their appearance: she is a shape-shifter, who transforms herself into a bird, tree and tigress in Ovid's account of her pursuit by Peleus, and she also appears in traditional toilette scenes painted on Attic vases. Thetis' reflection in Achilles' shield further evokes Aphrodite-Venus, who gazes at herself in Ares' polished shield in Apollonius' ekphrastic description of Jason's embroidered cloak; a literary vignette that persisted in Venus' Roman iconography.

The parallels between Venus and Thetis are made explicit by a forge scene originally located in the atrium of the Casa di Meleagro. At first glance, the painting appears to have boiled the scene down into its critical elements, namely the figures of Hephaestus and Thetis and a few stone blocks and items of armour lying on the floor (fig. 3.21). Upon closer inspection, the figure behind Thetis is still present, although she is barely visible.⁴⁹⁷ Hephaestus is standing, his weight shifted onto his right leg and a soft bend to his left knee: the painting is poorly preserved, but it is possible that he is represented nude. The blacksmith holds out the shield, which is further supported by a block of stone. Thetis is depicted in the same seated

⁴⁹¹ Robertson 1975: 586; *contra* Taylor 2008: 155. See also Gury 1986.

⁴⁹² Squire 2013b: 170; Taylor 2008: 157.

⁴⁹³ Robertson 1975: 585.

⁴⁹⁴ See Wyke 1994; Bartman 2001; Myerowitz Levine 1995; on mirrors as feminine, Stewart 1996: 143-144.

⁴⁹⁵ Ovid, Met. 11.221ff; see LIMC VIII 'Thetis', 'Thetis im Kreis der Nereiden'

⁴⁹⁶ Supra p62. For sculpture, see the Capuan and Melian Aphrodite types, in which Aphrodite held Ares' shield at both ends to use as a mirror: c.f. Havelock 1995: 93-98. For the representation of this motif on coinage, see Smith 2005. See also Kousser 2008. References to Venus living in a mirrored palace include Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*. 4.31 and Claudian, *Epithalium* 106-8.

⁴⁹⁷ MANN, Naples, inv.3528.

posture as in the Casa di Paccius Alexander but is dressed in a pale pink palla and magenta chiton. Thetis' garments put her into dialogue with another painting from a *cubiculum* in the Casa di Meleagro which depicts an identically dressed female figure sitting in the exact same pose. This figure, however, does not look at a shield but at a cupid, who opens a small box which likely contains jewellery (fig. 3.22). While the presence of a cupid cannot definitively identify the seated figure as Venus, his presence emphasises that every woman who examines her own reflection speaks in some way to the paradigmatic goddess of appearance and reflections. The visual parallels between the two scenes in the Casa di Meleagro do not highlight the shield-mirror's catoptromantic potential, but Thetis' gaze at the shield and her own reflection. Thetis takes her cue from Aphrodite-Venus by gazing at herself in the shield, subverting its normative function as masculine tool for the purposes of feminine self-examination.

In one badly damaged forge scene from the Domus Vedi Sirici, Thetis even begins to resemble Aphrodite-Venus herself (fig. 3.23).⁴⁹⁹ It is the only extant forge scene in which Thetis stands, rather than sits, opposite Hephaestus. The blacksmith does not look particularly different to how he appeared in the paintings from the Casa di Paccius Alexander or Casa di Meleagro - his tanned, muscular body on display, a purple loincloth wrapped around his waist - but the figure opposite him does not look like Thetis. This figure is almost entirely rendered in a peach-coloured hue to indicate her nudity: together with her frontal, open pose, the figure does not resemble the dignified, seated, well-dressed, matrona-like figure from the Casa di Paccius Alexander, but the Knidia and other nude sculptures of Venus-Aphrodite. Yet the shield between the two figures and the breastplate adjacent to the female figure lead the viewer to conclude that this is Thetis. Thetis' imitation of Aphrodite would only have been further emphasised by the juxtaposition of this painting with another forge scene on the same wall of the exedra: the latter scene is more traditional and represents the seated Thetis listening to the winged female figure's interpretation of the shield. The contrast between Thetis' appearance in the two scenes seems to suggest two very different ways of interacting with the shield: to interpret its potential symbolic and narrative significance, or to use it for self-examination and reflection.

⁴⁹⁸ Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, inv.AN1990.80. Compare the traditional toilette iconography attributed to Venus-Aphrodite (see *supra* n475). Schefold (1957: 112) identifies the figure attended by the cupid as Sappho, although no specific detail explains or warrants this identification.

⁴⁹⁹ VII.1.47, exedrae 10.

With these iconographic parallels in mind, it is worth taking a closer look at the painting from the Casa di Paccius Alexander in which Thetis is reflected in the shield-mirror. While Taylor dismissively suggests that 'we learn little of importance by looking at the details around the periphery of the shield or of the painting', it is only by examining Thetis as a seated figure in the context of the forge that the significance of her interaction with the shield-mirror becomes clear. For Thetis' powerful gaze is matched by her privileged position and status within the forge itself. She is seated on a chair that appears thronelike in comparison to the blocks of stone on which the blacksmiths are perched. Thetis is represented as a grounded, solid figure, whose gaze marks her primary means of engagement with other figures and objects in the scene.

The craftsmen, conversely, appear to display a more open body language. Hephaestus' legs sprawl apart astride his impromptu seat on a block stone, and his chest is broadened by his outstretched arms, displaying a muscular, stocky physique produced by and suited to his labour-intensive profession. Although Hephaestus is seated, like Thetis, the blacksmith is still 'on the clock', as is the smaller craftsman who sits hammering at a crested helmet in the foreground of the forge. The seated man is still active or 'doing', whereas the seated woman appears only to observe. Upon closer inspection, however, the craftsmen's body language in the forge betrays the power of Thetis' gaze. The man working at the crested helmet is hunched over, collapsing himself almost into a position that is almost foetal and ensures that he blends into the browns and bronzes of the forge: he shrinks under Thetis' supervision. Hephaestus' body also appears diminished, as he is unable to hold up the shield without the assistance of another blacksmith: his assistant is contorted into a strangely balletic pose, his right foot propped up on a block of stone and his body twisted uncomfortably towards Thetis.

The formidable capacity of the blacksmith body is undermined by these poses and bodily presentations, and further compromised by the context of the scene itself. By holding up the shield as Thetis' mirror, Hephaestus is drafted into a process of self-examination that is distinctly feminine. As the two paintings in the Casa di Meleagro make explicit, Hephaestus is playing a role usually undertaken by the cupids who flutter around Venus-Aphrodite and her lookalikes in toilette scenes. While Taylor wants to understand Hephaestus as a 'maker of snares, a wizard of entrapment' based on his characterisation in Greek literature, ⁵⁰¹ the painting from the Casa di Paccius Alexander represents Hephaestus seeking to defend himself against

⁵⁰⁰ Taylor 2008: 156.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid. 158.

Thetis and her gaze: he is visibly uncomfortable, holding the shield as far away from his body as possible as if trying to distance himself from Thetis. Paradoxically, while Thetis subverts the shield's original purpose as an instrument of war, Hephaestus uses the shield for the purpose for which it was designed, namely to protect himself from Thetis and her gaze. While Hephaestus seeks to shrink from Thetis' gaze, the assistant steadying the shield has contorted his muscular, macho body into a position of servitude. He props the ball of his right foot upon a block of stone on the floor, shifting his weight into his left leg, and reaches down to support the bottom of the shield with his left arm: in doing so, he adopts a pose similar to the Hellenistic iconography of Aphrodite loosening her sandal. The assistant twists himself around to glance anxiously at Thetis, as if seeking her approval.

The painting in the Casa di Paccius Alexander, as the only extant forge scene in which Thetis' reflection is rendered in the shield-mirror, represents Thetis' gaze and its emasculating effect on the men of the forge. Yet the dynamics of Thetis' gaze and position within the smithy are arguably latent in other instances of the forge scene, even when her reflection does not appear in the shield itself: the Casa di Meleagro is a case in point. In room 20 of the Casa di Achille, the feminizing potential of Thetis' gaze is reinforced further by the juxtaposition of a forge scene on the east wall and a transportation scene on the west, with the north wall dominated by an image of Achilles discovered on Scyros after being disguised as a woman and forced into hiding by his mother, as recounted in Statius' *Achilleid*. The painting from the Casa di Achille depicts a chiton-clad Achilles lunging forward to seize a shield; the object is turned towards the external viewer to reveal its moulded decoration, which appears to represent the iconography of Chiron teaching Achilles. Close by, a woman's mirror lies prominently on the ground, as if to drive home the point that Achilles ultimately rejects his mother's feminizing influence; shields and mirrors are two distinct objects, with different purposes; girlish mirrors are of no use to a warrior. ⁵⁰³

The Scyros scene depicts Achilles as suspended between the worlds of the masculine and the feminine, but ultimately affirming his masculinity by reaching for the weaponry. In the forge, on the other hand, Thetis subverts the blacksmiths' corporeal skill and masculine knowledge by using the shield as a mirror. Thetis' subversive power in Hephaestus' forge is

⁵⁰² C.f. a bronze statuette now in the Louvre, Paris, inv. Br4417; *LIMC* II. 'Aphrodite' 465-487: 'die sandalenlösende Aphrodite'.

⁵⁰³ IX.5.2: Scyros scene – MANN, Naples, inv.116085; Taylor 2008: 146-150. For gender in Statius, see Barchiesi 2005; Heslin 2005; Russell 2014. Cameron 2009 provides an overview of Roman representations of Achilles' childhood.

replicated and corroborated by a similar scene from the Casa dei Vettii (fig. 3.24). ⁵⁰⁴ The painting shows a workshop, indicated by the small figure of a man in the foreground who is seated at his workstation, busily hammering a nail into a plank of wood. In the centre of the scene, a male figure stands with his back to the external viewer: his skin is tanned, and his speckled beard is visible. The man has placed his right hand on the hind of a bull, which appears to be fixed to a platform equipped with rollers. The man's open-armed gestures suggest that he is engaged in conversation with the elegantly draped female figure seated in the background. Behind her, two faint figures, likely also female, cover their faces in a mournful gesture. The robot-bull identifies the scene as Daedalus presenting Pasiphae with the wooden contraption which will allow her to copulate with King Minos' prize bull.⁵⁰⁵ The painting visualises Pasiphae's viewing of Daedalus and the bull: she almost appears to judge the craftsman and the bull against one another. Her decision, indicated powerfully by her left hand, which gestures towards the bull, affirms the inferiority of Daedalus' finely muscled form. Much like Thetis' subversion of Hephaestus' skill by seeing herself within the shield, Pasiphae's excessive, feminine lust has resulted in the production of the false bull, a gross misuse of Daedalus' famous skills.

The Thetis and the Pasiphae scenes suggest that, while men may sit to work, women sit to look. Thetis and Pasiphae's ability to look at themselves and at the products of male labour and effort are construed as subversive, with potentially dangerous ramifications for their own bodies and the bodies of those around them. Yet, in a more abstract way, these paintings challenge the process of viewing itself, including the gaze of the external viewer looking at these figures upon the wall. Whoever sits or reclines in the *triclinium* of the Casa di Paccius Alexander and looks at the painting takes their cue from Thetis, following the goddess' gaze by examining her reflection within the shield. How far does Thetis' divinity play into her observation of herself and the blacksmiths around her? The next case study pushes at these questions by looking at paired scenes which actively juxtapose images of a man and a goddess sitting and to look at themselves (or not).

⁵⁰⁴ VI.15.1, exedra, north wall.

⁵⁰⁵ Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 3.1.4; c.f. a potential description of the fresco by Philostratus the Elder, *Imagines* 1.16.

Fishing for Compliments

It is unsurprising that, in using Achilles' shield as a mirror, Thetis is represented using or reworking the iconography of Aphrodite-Venus adorning and looking at herself. For Taylor, images of Aphrodite-Venus gazing into her mirror demonstrate 'the constricted, solipsistic ideal of femininity that prevailed throughout the Roman world'. Consulting her mirror allows Aphrodite-Venus to become aware of how she looks to herself and to others; to 'look at [herself] being looked at', as per Berger's dictum. The goddess' awareness of her own looked-at-ness is most famously embodied by the Knidian Aphrodite, who appears conscious of her viewers and places a hand on her pubis to block or draw the viewer's gaze. Most Campanian wall paintings depict Venus as all body, exposing, if not expressly exhibiting, her body to the external viewer. A painting from the Casa di Mars e Venere is a case in point: it shows her reclining, semi-nude, with her lover Mars, surrounded by his discarded weaponry. Son

Yet twenty-five Pompeian wall-paintings - of which five are known only through 19th-century drawings - portray a very different kind of Venus body. The type-scene of 'Venus fishing' is generally consistent across Pompeii:⁵⁰⁹ a female figure sits on a rock (fig. 3.25, 3.27), her sandaled feet peeping out from beneath the drapery around her legs, which she sometimes crosses at the ankles but otherwise presses together. The figure is semi-nude, her torso adorned with bracelets, armlets, and gold chains crossed between her breasts. She holds herself upright, her left arm placed behind her and locked at the elbow to support her body; in her right hand she holds a fishing rod, which droops down into a pool of water. A few fish bob close to the end of the string. Opposite the seated figure, one or two winged children often sit or stand; three paintings also depict an additional winged, adult female figure fluttering or crouching next to the seated figure.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁶ Taylor 2008: 45-46; Berger 1972: 46-47.

⁵⁰⁷ Osborne 1994; Salomon 1997.

⁵⁰⁸ II.9.47, tablinum, west wall. For a full overview of Venus in Pompeian fresco, see Brain 2018.

⁵⁰⁹ Extant: Taberna Lusoria (VI.14.28); Casa di Centenario (IX.8.6, outer room, west wall); Casa degli amorini dorati (VI.16.7); Casa della Caccia Antica (VII.4.48); Casa del Larario Fiorito (II.9.4); Casa dei Suonatrice (IX.3.5); Casa del Giardino (V.3); Unnamed house (VI.16.27, triclinium); Osteria della Via Mercurio (VI.10.1); Casa di pittori al lavoro (IX.12.9, room 12, north wall); Casa del'Efebo (I.7.11); Casa degli Archi (I.17.4); Casa di Loreius Tibertinus (II.2.2, room b, north wall); Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (V.4.a); Casa delle forme di Creta (VII.4.62); Unnamed house (VI.16.26); Casa di Cinghiale (VIII.2.26-27); Casa di Apollo e Coronide (VIII.3.24); Unnamed house (IX.5.11/13); Casa di Lupanare piccolo (IX.5.14-16, room c, north and east walls). Drawings: Casa della Pescatrice (VII.9.63); Casa del Poeta Tragico (VI.8.3/5, room 15, north wall); Casa del Marinaio (VII.15.2); Casa di Ganimede (VII.13.4); Unnamed house (IX.9.d, tablinum); Casa di Meleagro (VI.9.2, room 14, south wall).

⁵¹⁰ Casa del Larario Fiorito (II.9.4 room 8, south wall); Osteria della Mercurio (VI.10.1); Casa delle Suonatrice (IX.3.5 room 5, north wall); Taberna Lusoria (VI.14.28).

The depiction of a semi-nude, bejewelled female figure accompanied by a winged child suggests that she should be identified as Venus, and the scene as 'Venus fishing'. Yet the scene is bizarre, with unclear origins. 'Venus fishing' does not appear elsewhere in the goddess' Roman iconography and it is few and far between elsewhere: there are only a few visual antecedents, namely an Etruscan mirror cover and a handful of Sicilian coins dating from the 5th and 4th centuries BCE. Contemporary visual parallels are also difficult to find: the fishing goddess bears little resemblance to Hellenistic sculptures of wizened old fishermen, while Roman fishermen are usually rendered as indistinct figures in landscape paintings, or peripheral figures in mythological paintings, such as the miniscule fisherman who stands on a rock opposite the abandoned Ariadne in a painting from the Casa dei Vettii. Only one of the 'Venus fishing' scenes attested at Pompeii fits this criterion. It is a marine landscape in which Venus is a minor figure rather than the central protagonist, the style of which was likely chosen to match the other painting in the room, which visualised the myth of Hero and Leander.⁵¹¹

The sheer oddity of 'Venus fishing' complicates its interpretation. Why is Venus fishing, rather than looking at herself, and watching herself being looked at? In an effort to understand the meaning of 'Venus fishing', scholars have turned to the paintings with which it was paired. These include images of divine lovers and their passive, mortal beloveds, such as Selene and Endymion, or Jupiter with Danae, Leda and Europa. Accordingly, Tiziana D'Angelo has suggested that 'Venus fishing' merely 'reiterates [the] underlying message of love and erotic passion' of the lover-beloved scenes.⁵¹² Yet if the general theme is 'love and passion', then why is Venus is depicted *fishing*, instead of looking at herself in the water, or cuddling up to a lover – a type-scene that was already characteristic of her iconography, and more obviously erotic?

Moreover, 'Venus fishing' was paired twice as often not with images of divine beloveds but with Narcissus, the youth who falls in love with his own reflection in a spring, consequently becoming both active gazer and passive gazed-at (fig. 3.26, 3.28).⁵¹³ Although the myth of Narcissus *is* recorded in Greek and Roman literature, the scenes are united by visual and

⁵¹¹ Ariadne painting - Casa dei Vetti (I.15.1, cubiculum, north wall); 'Venus fishing' and Hero and Leander: Casa di Lupanare piccolo (IX.5.14, room c). For visual antecedents of Venus fishing, see Brain 2018: 97-100. For overview of fishing in art, see Marzano 2013: 21-28; on Hellenistic sculptures of fishermen, see Smith 1998b; on 'villa maritima' genre of landscape painting, see Ling 1977; Peters 1963: 125ff.

⁵¹² D'Angelo 2012: 231, 230, n73.

⁵¹³ Elsner 1996: 255; Fredrick 1995: 284-287. See also Valladares 2011; D'Angelo 2012. Pairings with 'Venus fishing': IX.9.d, tablinum; Casa di Loreius Tibertinus (II.2.2, room b); Casa della Pescatrice (VII.9.63, small room off peristyle); Casa d'Efebo (I.7.11, cubiculum, west wall); Casa di Apollo e Coronide (VIII.3.24, oecus, east wall); Casa di Ganimede (VII.13.4, cubiculum).

contextual parallels. Just as 'Venus fishing' seems to have appeared primarily in Campanian fresco in the 1st centuries BCE-CE, the story of Narcissus was not represented in Greco-Roman visual culture prior to its popularity in Roman wall painting: as Hérica Valladares notes, 'all surviving ancient depictions of Narcissus belong to the Roman imperial era [...] more than half [of which] are wall paintings dated after 62 CE'.⁵¹⁴ While both the 'Venus fishing' and Narcissus scenes depict semi-nude figures seated in a rocky landscape by a pool, it is only by reading these images together that their differences emerge, mutually constructing gender through looking and being looked-at, and complicating the model of gazes articulated by Berger.

A closer look at images of Narcissus in Pompeian wall painting further elucidates its parallels with 'Venus fishing'. While poetic accounts of the myth generally describe Narcissus as almost plunging head-first into the pool out of desire for his reflection, most Pompeian paintings depict the youth in an upright position, either reclining or sitting alongside the pool.⁵¹⁵ Narcissus is usually alone with his reflection, although sometimes he is accompanied by a winged child identified as Eros and/or the love-struck nymph Echo. Yet these companions are generally ignored by Narcissus, who consistently looks out of the image and presents a frontal perspective of his body to the external viewer. He often leans on his left arm to create a languorous, sensual diagonal across the scene: the paleness and softness of his flesh is highlighted further by scenes in which his wooden shepherd's crook has been laid against his body, as in the Casa d'Efebo (fig. 3.28). In the single painting from Pompeii in which Narcissus is represented standing, originally paired with 'Venus fishing' in the Casa di Ganimede, the youth arranges his body as a paradigm of contrapposto: hips inclined, right arm crooked over the head, drapery falling from his fingers onto his left shoulder where it is grasped taut by his left hand, leading the viewer's eyes over him in a fluid and elegant loop (fig. 3.26). 516 While Narcissus is unusual in adopting a standing posture in the Casa di Ganimede, across the walls of Campania he invariably presents his body as a spectacle to be looked-at by the external viewer, subordinating the narrative to a faint, disembodied head floating in the pool.

The fishing Venus, in contrast, holds her body in a self-contained and upright manner. She does not lean back onto her supporting arm in a reclined position, but keeps it locked in a straight line to maintain an upright torso: accordingly, Venus' upper body is depicted in three-

⁵¹⁴ Valladares 2011: 378.

⁵¹⁵ D'Angelo 2012: 255ff.

⁵¹⁶ VII.13.4.

quarter, rather than frontal, view: her body is subtly hunched over as she leans towards the pool. Venus' focus on her fishing is further emphasised by the position of her right arm, with which she holds the fishing rod. Most of the paintings show Venus with her arm bent at the elbow and held close to her body, as if she is anxious to feel the slightest nibble on the line; in a painting from the Casa del Efebo, however, Venus extends her arm until it is almost perpendicular to her torso, curling her body over the pool as if leaning out to tempt a fish or explore different waters (fig. 3.27).⁵¹⁷ The goddess' head is generally inclined towards the pool or in profile. Despite her semi-nude, adorned body, Venus appears uninterested in her potential to be looked-at.

Venus' reluctance to make herself a sight while fishing is emphasised by the juxtaposition of 'Venus fishing' with paintings of Diana surprised by Actaeon and Leda's encounter with the swan in the Casa degli amorini dorati (fig. 3.29, 3.30, 3.31). In the latter scenes, both figures are represented standing nude. Diana's left hand gingerly covers her pubic area in an evocation of the Knidia; Leda adjusts her hair with her right hand but appears ready to preserve her modesty from the swan with her left hand, which hovers on her hip. Venus, in contrast, blocks her torso by reaching across herself with her right arm, in which she holds the fishing rod. Diana and Leda's adoption of Aphrodite-Venus' visual iconography denotes their unwilling exposure and emphasises the unprecedented nature of Venus' body and behaviour in the fishing scene. The juxtaposition of these paintings emphasises that Venus' Roman, fisherwoman body does not work as her classical and Hellenistic bodies did. 'Venus fishing' is not a contrived excuse to paint and then gaze at her semi-nude form.

If paintings of Narcissus presented and emphasised his body as a spectacle, body-asimage, then 'Venus fishing' appears to do the opposite. Berger's dictum that 'men act and women appear' is duly reversed, or at least complicated. Here it is Narcissus, and not Venus, who appears: he is static, using the reflective water to examine his own appearance and present his body as a beautiful surface for the external viewer. While Roman literature suggests that men may appropriately use the mirror to gain philosophical self-knowledge, Narcissus appears to veer too close to the feminine use of reflective surfaces and mirrors to manipulate one's appearance with cosmetics and create an attractive façade to be presented to the male viewer. Venus, however, does not look at herself at all. She simply fishes. If Narcissus has settled in a

⁵¹⁷ I.7.11.

⁵¹⁸ VI.16.7.

⁵¹⁹ Berger 1972: 47.

⁵²⁰ Hales 2012: 63-64; Taylor 2008: 32-38; Wyke 1994.

female or feminine role, then Venus seems to adopt a correspondingly masculine one. This is playfully referenced in the depiction of her fishing rod, which she uses almost as an extension of her own body. Most paintings in which the rod remains visible depict it as bendy and flexible, drooping down towards the pool, contrasting with the rigid line of the shepherd's crook that lies uselessly along Narcissus' languorous body. While it is not as firm as one might expect, Venus is equipped with a phallic object that she actively uses to mediate her experience of the world. Even though Venus leans dangerously far out over the pool, the rod is a critical tool with which she can measure her own distance from the water: as long as the rod is in her hand, Venus never risks losing her grip on reality, falling into the water and drowning, as Narcissus does in some literary accounts of the myth.⁵²¹ Where Narcissus fails, Venus succeeds.

The line dangling from Venus' rod draws the viewer's gaze down to the pool below, from which the goddess' reflection is, strikingly, absent. This detail cannot be attributed to a lazy or incompetent artist: most paintings depict a few fish swimming around the line, and 'Venus fishing' scene appears frequently alongside Narcissus scenes, in which his disembodied head is always reflected in the pool, even though his gaze is directed elsewhere. Taylor would describe Narcissus' gaze as 'flexed', as the angle of reflection is pitched incorrectly and unnaturalistically within the scene itself: the internal subject would be unable to see their reflection, which is rendered frontal for the external viewer. 522 In Pompeian wall paintings, Narcissus' reflected head is depicted frontally in the pool, as if it belonged to the external viewer looking at the painting: as such, the scene challenges whoever looks at Narcissus' body to navigate his precise situation of viewing a beautiful body.⁵²³ Yet Venus does not look at herself in the water, contradicting the pervasiveness of mirrors and toilette in her iconography. Other depictions of Venus with a mirror feature a flexed gaze similar to that of Narcissus in Pompeian wall painting. A 4th-century CE mosaic from north Africa, for instance, depicts Venus' face as impossibly duplicated in a hand-mirror that she holds adjacent to her head but does not even glance at: the flexed gaze allows the external viewer to imagine that the reflection belongs to her, that she is the goddess, even if the fantasy is filtered through the representative medium. 524 Yet in the fishing scene there is no flexed gaze – indeed, no gaze at all.

⁵²¹ Taylor 2008: 60-62; c.f. also Frontisi-Ducroux 1997: 205.

⁵²² Taylor 2008: 38.

⁵²³ Elsner 1996; D'Angelo 2012.

⁵²⁴ See Hales 2012: 53, 56, 59.

There are two possible explanations for this missing detail, which are not entirely separable. The first takes Venus' lack of reflection as the artist's forceful (if somewhat unnaturalistic) way of indicating that the goddess is not looking at herself in the water, even secondarily to the main action of fishing. The second explanation, however, recognises and builds on the fact that Venus can control whether her reflection appears at all. As memorably demonstrated in the archaic Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, in which the goddess disguises herself as a human virgin to seduce Anchises, Venus can manipulate her image - and, consequently, her own viewing of that same image – in a way that the mortal Narcissus fundamentally cannot. 525 Narcissus' lack and loss of control over his image and his gaze is exacerbated as he becomes lost in a feedback loop of self-love which is rendered (and renders him) feminine because it is excessive and superficial, almost castrating: only his disembodied head in the water is visible in the water, his performative body entirely erased. Venus, by not looking at herself, checks out of this process altogether. Although Thetis and her shield-mirror demonstrated the potential for masculine objects to be subverted into tools of feminine selfexamination, Venus undermines any expectation that a woman must use a reflective surface to construct herself as a visual object. Instead, Venus exhibits a self-control that is inevitably coded as masculine in Roman discourses on mirrors, reflections, and viewing. This parallels the representation of Venus in the fishing scene as active, not passive; doing, not being.⁵²⁶

Venus' refusal to look at herself is further emphasised by her status as a goddess whose raison d'être is to be looked-at: accordingly, Narcissus appears more divine than his counterpart in many of these paired images. When he stands, as in the painting from the Casa di Ganimede, Narcissus adopts the pose of the Lycian Apollo, rendering the Cupid by his feet a keen divine attendant (fig. 3.26); when he reclines, as in most of the paintings from Pompeii, Narcissus appears more Venus-like than Venus herself, his body forming a sensuous diagonal line across the scene that echoes the triangular iconography scheme common to Pompeian frescoes of Venus reclining with Mars and Adonis. Without the Cupids who flutter around the fishing Venus, in contrast, one ends up with an image of a woman inexplicably fishing in the seminude.

Venus' divinity is not clearly or solidly demarcated in the fishing scene - not unlike Thetis in Hephaestus' forge, who looks more like a dignified, draped Roman *matrona* than a

⁵²⁵ Bergren 1989: 13-14; Kenaan 2010: 35-37.

⁵²⁶ Taylor 2008: 20.

⁵²⁷ See Provenzale 2008.

goddess. How, then, is the external viewer to approach these goddesses and their gaze? Perhaps the understated representation of the two divinities was deliberate, to underplay their capacity to transcend the supposedly feminine vice of excessive self-examination; to look at themselves, and others, in a controlled manner. Yet the fact that Thetis and Venus do not look any different from the other seated women represented across Campanian walls challenges any assumption that the power of the gaze belongs – where female figures are concerned – to goddesses alone. The final case study explores a pair of mortal figures, male and female, to test this hypothesis and understand the influence and impact of the seated *woman*'s gaze.

Breast is Best

A tiny window allows a narrow shaft of light to fall through a gloomy room upon two huddled figures (fig. 3.32). The glimpse of a baby-blue, cloudless sky through the iron bars criss-crossing the window prompts the sinister realisation that no one is here of their own volition. The figures are arranged in a roughly triangular group in the centre of the fresco, but they are not cast into shadow by the shaft of light falling behind them, a quirk of physics that foreshadows the oddness of their representation and interaction. ⁵²⁸ In the foreground, on the floor, sits an elderly man. He is naked except for the meagre drapery in which his outstretched legs are swathed. Wisps of grey hair, a thin beard and matchstick-like arms emphasise his advanced age. His left arm rests across the knees of a female figure seated on a stool, her head inclined towards him. She has lifted her right breast out of her stola and guided the nipple with her middle- and fore-fingers to the man's lips. With her right hand she gathers up her drapery, drawing it up behind the man's spine.

Two versions of this scene are known in Pompeian wall painting, one of which is preserved in a 19th-century drawing, as well as a terracotta sculpture of the figures from a Pompeian peristyle.⁵²⁹ In a *cubiculum* in the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone, a painting of Narcissus preening over a lake was juxtaposed with the breastfeeding scene that featured three elegiac couplets in the top left-hand corner of the latter scene (fig. 3.33):

Quae parvis mater natis alimenta parabat

⁵²⁸ I thank Kostantinos Lygouris for this observation.

⁵²⁹ Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (V.4.a, cubiculum, south wall); IX.2.5 (triclinium, south wall; MANN, Naples, inv.115398). The 19th-century drawing records a painting from the Casa di Bacco (VII.4.10); the terracotta figurine, peristyle of Casa di M. Pupius Rufus (VI.15.5).

Fortuna in patrios vertit iniqua cibos.

Aevo dignum opus est: tenui cervice seniles,

as[pice iam] venae lacte ... [

]q(ue) simul vultu fricat ipsa Miconem

Pero: tristis inest cum pietate pudor.

The food a mother prepared for her little children unjust Fortune has changed into a father's meal. It is a work worthy of eternity. Look how the old veins on his thin neck swell with milk! At the same time, Pero caresses Mycon with a mixed expression: sad shame is there, with piety.⁵³⁰

These couplets have no direct extant source in Roman literature, but clearly link the painting to a semi-mythological story in which a young woman breastfeeds her father after he is unjustly sentenced to death by starvation.⁵³¹ Valerius Maximus' version of the tale is as follows:

Idem praedicatum de pietate Perus existimetur, quae patrem suum Mycona, consimili fortuna adfectum parique custodiae traditum, iam ultimae senectutis velut infantem pectori suo admotum aluit. haerent ac stupent hominum oculi, cum huius facti pictam imaginem vident, casusque antiqui condicionem praesentis spectaculi admiratione renovant, in illis mutis membrorum liniamentis viva ac spirantia corpora intueri credentes. quod necesse est animo quoque evenire, aliquanto efficaciore picture literarum <monumentis> vetera pro recentibus admonito recordari.

The same goes for the piety of Pero, whose father Mycon, similarly imprisoned, was affected by bad luck of the same kind. Though he was extremely old, she put him like a baby to her breast and fed him. Men's eyes are riveted in amazement when they see the painted image of this deed, and in admiration of the spectacle before them, they revisit the circumstance of this ancient misfortune, believing that they see living, breathing bodies in those silent outlines of limbs. And indeed, this must also happen to

⁵³⁰ CIL.IV.6635, trans. Valladares 2011.

⁵³¹ Knox 2014: 44-45. For other visual-textual schema in Roman wall painting, see Squire 2009: 249-288.

the mind whenever it is forced to remember old things as though they are new through painting, which is considerably more effective than the monuments of literature. ⁵³²

While Valerius Maximus names the individuals as Pero and Micon, successive versions leave the father and daughter unnamed, while Hyginus refers to the daughter as 'Xanthippe' in his *Fabulae*. San In Valerius Maximus' account and the epigram in the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone, Pero is applauded as the embodiment of the feminine virtues of *pietas* and *pudor* by performing an act which is itself intrinsically feminine. Modern scholars have leapt upon the unequivocal praise of Pero in the textual tradition, salthough this often seems to stem from discomfort with the image of an adult man being breastfed by his daughter and a desire to scrub out the painting's perceived sexual deviance. Milnor, for example, argues that the specific reference to *pudor* in the epigrams is intended to 'empty the scene of erotic connotations' and underline that, 'despite how it looks', the scene does not represent incest or intergenerational sexual love, but female virtue.

The use of the verb *fricat* in the epigram, synonymous with masturbation and sexual touching, does introduce an ambiguously erotic note into the scene. The implication that an adult man being breastfed can only 'look' like an image of sexual deviance, however, arguably says more about the limited 'normative' profile of breastfeeding in the modern West – that a woman should breastfeed her biological child solely for nutritional purposes, in a private setting, and wean them by the age of two or three – than about the hypothetical Roman viewer of the Pero and Micon painting. ⁵³⁶ As Tara Mulder notes, breastmilk was considered by various medical writers to have curative properties and may even have been sold in the Roman forum for consumption by adults: ⁵³⁷ there is no reason, then, to believe that the Roman writers were overcompensating or deflecting when they described Pero's admirable piety. Setting aside modern squeamishness allows for a closer look at the fresco, and a more considered understanding of how the figures of Pero and Micon relate to other Greco-Roman images of breastfeeding, to each other, and to relative models of femininity and masculinity.

⁵³² Facta 5.4.ext. 1, trans. Sullivan 2011. On transmission of Valerius Maximus' text, see Raffaelli 2019.

⁵³³ Festus, *De verborum significatione* 288L; Hyginus *Fabulae* 254.3; Solinus, *Collectanea rerum memoriae* 1.124-125; Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 26.101-142; for literary history of anecdote, see Parkin 2003b. For Roman iconography of the myth, see Deonna 1954, 1956.

⁵³⁴ Milnor 2005: 100-102; Clarke 1991: 159; Knox 2014: 45; Newby 2016: 161-163.

⁵³⁵ Milnor 2005: 100.

⁵³⁶ See Giles 2010: 304. On the breast and nipple, see Levin 2006.

⁵³⁷ Mulder 2017: 235-240.

Despite recognition of its benefits by medical writers, and iconographic antecedents in Italic and Etruscan art, Roman artists do not commonly represent breastfeeding. Status as an every-day, domestic activity, often delegated to employed wet-nurses by elite families, and its essential relevance to female experience, may explain its absence from a visual record that placed more emphasis on male activities. Similarly, Roman men may have envied the power of the breastfeeding mother and the close bond she enjoyed with the breastfeed child, and consequently sought to undermine feminine knowledge by neglecting its representation. Accordingly, there are few images of 'normal' Roman women breastfeeding. The iconography of lactation is normally reserved for a handful of divine and/or allegorical mother-child dyads: the Egyptian goddess Isis breastfeeds her son Horus; Hera suckles Heracles; the 'Dea Nutrix', represented in countless terracotta figurines found in funerary contexts across the Empire, holds one or two babies to her breast.

The representation of Pero at Pompeii brings her into close dialogue with the goddesses and divinities cited above. The suckling goddesses are usually depicted seated, even enthroned: the Dea Nutrix usually sits within a wide-brimmed wicker chair, while a statuette of Isis now in Berlin represents the goddess seated upon a towering throne with finely-worked legs (fig. 3.34, 3.35).⁵⁴² Pero sits upon a stool rather than a throne, but she is nevertheless dignified by her visual alignment with the iconographic tradition of breastfeeding goddesses and literally elevated above her father, who is sprawled on the floor. Pero's figure constitutes the primary focus of the scene; she is represented as a solid and grounded figure, paralleling her metaphorical resilience within the narrative and focussing the viewer's attention on her active role within the breastfeeding dyad. Pero herself has offered her breast to Micon and helped him to latch by holding her nipple between her middle- and forefinger. In both the painting and the narrative, Pero does not wait to be asked but takes the initiative herself: she is not passively fed-upon, but actively feeds her father. Accordingly, Valerius Maximus casts Pero as the active subject of *aluit* while Micon is passively put to her breast like a baby (*velut infantem pectori* suo admotum). 543 The symbolic power of the breastfeeding goddesses cited above can, accordingly, be attributed to Pero: just as Hera suckled Heracles to bestow immortality upon

⁵³⁸ Bonfante 1989a, 1997.

⁵³⁹ Centrelivres Challett 2017: 371.

⁵⁴⁰ Ibid: 377-378: for representations on gravestones, see 370. See also Lawrence 2021 on anxieties and dangers of breastmilk and breastfeeding in imperial Rome.

⁵⁴¹ Dea Nutrix: Jenkins 1957, 1962; Bonfante 1989a: 91-92; Dasen 1997; Burleigh *et al* 2006. Isis and Harpocrates: Tran 1973. Hera and Heracles: Bonfante 1989a: 180-188.

⁵⁴² Dahlem Museum, Berlin, inv. J19/61; Tran 1973 fig.17.

⁵⁴³ Valladares 2011: 388; see also Carucci 2011.

him, Pero plays the role of benevolent, generous divinity and gives life to her own parent.⁵⁴⁴ She draws up the bottom of her stola around Micon in a protective fashion, almost cocooning him, literally and metaphorically, in a female space.

Pero's control and agency within the breastfeeding dyad corresponds with her awareness of, and control over, her own image and body. The reference to Pero's *pudor* in the epigram may suggest that she is embarrassed by her father's emasculation, or aware that her act may appear incestuous and immoral: as Valladares notes, however, *pudor* is most strongly evoked in those subjected to 'another's evaluating gaze', indicating that Pero 'is conscious of the viewer's gaze and is responding to it as if aware of his or her presence'. Yet Pero does not incline her head for the comfort of external viewers, to indicate that she is an object to be looked-at, or dispossessed of her own gaze. On the contrary, Pero's internal gaze provides a model for the external viewer: she watches Micon suckling at her breast, implicitly indicating that its exposure is functional and not fetishized; that she feeds her father out of necessity, not sexual titillation. Pero's control over her gaze and thereby her appearance perhaps explicates the juxtaposition of her painting with an image of Narcissus in the Casa di Marco Lucrezio Fronto, beyond a simple dichotomy between 'self-consuming desire and [...] selfless devotion'. S46 While Narcissus loses control over both his gaze and his image, Pero retains her agency.

The characterisation of Pero as strong, controlled, and composed only emphasises the literal and metaphorical diminishment of her father Micon: if Pero is construed as a benevolent goddess, then Micon is a pitiful suppliant. His sprawled position on the floor beneath Pero's seat indicates his pathetic situation and brings him into dialogue with Hellenistic depictions of stigmatised figures who squat directly on the floor, such as beggars and foreigners. Ground sitting is also more common for children in ancient visual culture, which further infantilises Micon and indicates his passive position with the mother-child dyad. His physical weakness is obvious from his skinny, matchstick-like limbs, which fall haphazardly among Pero's for support: Micon's right hand rests upon her covered breast for balance and his left arm sinks across her knees. He is too feeble to hold himself upright, even to lift his head and look directly up at Pero. Instead, he receives her breast in his mouth and looks into the middle distance. This act, in more ways than one, connotes his helplessness: according to Artemidorus, a single man

⁵⁴⁴ Bonfante 1997: 180-182. See also Deonna 1954, 1956. On Heracles suckled by Hera, see Pedrucci 2017.

⁵⁴⁵ Valladares 2011: 389.

⁵⁴⁶ Ibid. 389.

who dreams of being breastfed will become sick, while an imprisoned man who has this dream will be unjustly accused and languish in prison.⁵⁴⁷ The relevance of the latter to Micon's sorry imprisonment emphasises that his diminished, infantilised body language correlates with his emasculation and powerlessness.

A brief foray back into literary accounts of the myth further emphasises the significance of Pero and Micon as a gendered role-reversal of empowered child and helpless father. In the same volume of Facta e Dicta Memorabilia, Valerius Maximus recounts another anecdote that involves a child breastfeeding their parent. This alternative version takes place in an Italian context, however, and involves a daughter breastfeeding her mother rather than her father. A similar version with a plebeian woman and her freeborn mother is also recounted by Pliny. 548 There is no evidence that the mother-daughter scene was ever represented in Roman art, as there are no extant Roman depictions in any visual medium. Nor does Valerius Maximus make any reference to a visual tradition for the mother-daughter scene, in contrast to his extended description of the stupefying power of the pictam imaginem of Pero and Micon.⁵⁴⁹ Writing on the reception and explicit eroticisation of Pero and Micon by Renaissance artists, Jutta Gisela Sperling explains the lack of an comparable visual tradition for the mother-daughter scene by suggesting that an 'eroticised all-female lactation scene' would not be intelligible within a male-centred sexual universe, whether in the 1st or 16th century CE. Yet, for the reasons already outlined, this hypothesis is not particularly convincing: Campanian paintings of Pero and Micon do not place undue emphasis on the scene's erotic potential in the first place.

Tim Parkin has suggested that the prevalence of the father-daughter pairing in extant Campanian wall painting may reflect a contemporary tension in 2nd-century legal texts over the maintenance of elderly male relatives. The question of who was responsible for the care of such relatives laid bare a potential conflict between 'civil law and natural law': namely, that the male *paterfamilias* was supposed to provide and care for his family and dependents rather than the other way around. ⁵⁵⁰ As Parkin suggests, the father-daughter pairing communicates the paradox of the dependent 'looking after the *paterfamilias*' in a way that the mother-daughter pairing

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⁵⁴⁷ Artemidorus, *Oneirocritica* 1.14-1.16. In contrast, for a man to dream of breastfeeding or bearing children is usually a sign of future good fortune. On Artemidorus, see Thonemann 2020. See also Parkin 2003a on Roman conception of old age as burdensome and miserable.

⁵⁴⁸ Pliny, *NH* 7.121.

⁵⁴⁹ Sperling 2016: 37-102.

⁵⁵⁰ Sperling 2016: 239-241, 24; Parkin 2003b: 209-210.

cannot: the latter evokes a sense of 'direct reciprocity', as the daughter feeds the mother who once fed her.

This symmetrical mother-daughter relationship may have been more 'pleasing' in the literary tradition of the 1st century CE, bolstered further by the likelihood that the mother and daughter shared the same social status.⁵⁵¹ The cross-gendered iconography of the father breastfed by his daughter, in contrast, visualises the reversal and subversion of traditional gendered roles and expectations, including Pero's capacity (and Micon's inability) to control her gaze and appearance. The topsy-turviness of the Pero and Micon, articulated in its visualisation in Campanian wall painting, is aptly summarised by a 12th-century Greek manuscript record of the tale, which includes a riddle to which the figures serve as the solution: 'how could my father, the husband of my mother, become my son and then my father again?'.⁵⁵²

Conclusion

While images of the Greek everyday depict women as drawn to the loom and the fountain house, as if drawn by biological instinct, this chapter has explored a more relational, relative, and constructed spectrum of gendered appearances, behaviours, and actions within paintings from the Roman domestic sphere. Despite scholars' prior focus on Campanian wall painting for its representations of images of violated and exposed bodies - which are inevitably identified as 'feminine' - the medium of wall painting operates on the repetition and juxtaposition of bodies, behaviours and narratives, and a playful awareness of the dynamics of looking at an image painted flat upon a wall: it naturally lends itself to an exploratory, relative, and slippery construction of gender across a broad range of represented bodies.

Using seated figures within Pompeian wall painting as its springboard, this chapter has undertaken a comparative analysis of a range of bodies, male and female, divine and mortal, and the narratives in which they are embedded. Discussion has repeatedly alighted upon how the seated female figure appears less obviously a *body* and is consequently empowered to observe herself and her surroundings, demonstrated by the goddesses Venus and Thetis and the mortal woman Pero. It is as if the repetition, variation, and resonances of seated-ness for female

⁵⁵¹ The daughter is identified as plebeian ('humilis in plebe et ideo ignobilis, plebeia') by Pliny and Solinus in their accounts of the mother-daughter pair: this was perhaps a jibe aimed at the elite Roman women scorned by Juvenal and other satirists for employing wetnurses to preserve their figures; see Centlivres-Challett 2021: 136-137

⁵⁵² Parkin 2003b: 197.

figures in particular across the walls of Campanian houses have heightened the woman's sense of herself as a figure looked-at upon a wall, and thereby herself possessed of the ability to look. Her internal gaze has significant consequences for the male figures around her, exemplified by the emasculation of Hephaestus, the uncontrolled gaze of Narcissus, and the infantilization of Micon.

The internal gaze of the seated female figure often provides a model for the external viewer, an interplay that is typical of a medium that experiments with the dynamics of gazing upon a flat, two-dimensional scene on the wall. The Roman viewer who looks at the painted Thetis follows her gaze across to the shield-mirror, Pero's glance down at the suckling Micon, and Venus' contemplation of a pond in which her reflection does not appear. These gazes, divine as they are in the case of Thetis and Venus, frustrate any conception of gendered viewing within Roman visual culture as something that a man does to a woman. These questions emphasise the vibrancy of fresco as a playfully self-reflexive medium that prefers spectrums to binaries and pushes at the boundaries of a gendered body and 'gaze'.

IV.

CONCLUSION

'No, symbols are not real. They are representations. But they are alive inside us nevertheless when we look and when we read. They become us, part of our cellular make-up, part of our bodies and our brains.' (Hustvedt 2016, p33)

This thesis has examined representations of the female body to understand how and to what extent the construction of gender in Roman visual culture was shaped by the representative priorities and limitations of context and medium. By looking at images of female bodies from three distinct contexts across Roman Italy – the public, funerary and domestic – this discussion has demonstrated the power of representation for defining, manipulating, and subverting what the female body meant within Roman visual culture and the Roman conceptualisation of gender in the imperial period.

Images of the female body – vis-à-vis the male – in Roman visual culture are hugely impacted by their context and medium. Within public sculpture that decorated the city of Rome, for instance, female representations were limited in number, scope, and style, with little visual distinction made between different kinds of female body such as the empress, goddess, 'personification' or barbarian. In funerary culture, representation either appears to have replicated 'real life', as on 'documentary' biographical sarcophagi, or to escape fixed gender roles altogether by diving into the fluidity of myth, with funerary altars suspended somewhere between reality and abstraction by representing the coiffured woman as framed by, and assimilated to, the decoration of her own monument. Finally, the wall paintings that decorated domestic space in Roman Campania depict a much more dialogic, relational construction of gender than the previous two contexts; the replication and juxtaposition of seated figures – particularly female figures – challenged any conception of straightforwardly gendered viewing and instead blurred masculinity and femininity into highly situational and relational concepts.

Some of the visual media and contexts within this thesis may be understood as broadly conservative within Roman culture and its conceptualisation of the feminine. The female body is represented in generally classicising terms, for instance, across the dataset. In the case of the public and the funerary, the female body appears to be represented and used to create and

communicate normative gendered expectations. Foreign, divine, and mortal female bodies are represented within public monumental sculpture only in so far as they accord with the medium's didactic and communicative imperatives; on funerary altars, female bodies are characterised as decorated, and decorative, in life and, accordingly, in death. Yet this thesis has also explored how representations of the female body could challenge gendered roles and expectations in contexts and visual media that could reach out for mythological narratives or abstracted representations, in which gender did not necessarily work as it did in Roman society. This is most notable for more 'Hellenised' contexts and media, such as the Greek myths that decorated sarcophagi as well as the paintings that decorated the walls of Campanian houses. In this sense, one might conclude that Italian representations of female body adhere to a broad dichotomisation of the 'documentary' and 'fantastical'. The former represented gender as it ought to work in reality, visualised in scenes that were drawn from real life; the latter carved out space in which to play with gender, while simultaneously situating them within 'Hellenised' contexts to distance this exploration and experimentation from the Roman context in which they were viewed and understood.

In reaching these conclusions, this thesis seeks to contribute to studies of Roman visual culture. This thesis has been foregrounded by the understanding of Roman visual culture as playful, self-referential, and iterative: it has put these principles to work together with gender theory to understand how representation constructed, constituted, and communicated Roman ideas about masculinity and femininity. The elucidation of different representative priorities, strategies, and limitations and their impact on the appearance and potential of the represented female body marks a fundamental shift from the restricted scope of prior studies on gender construction in Roman visual culture, which often (consciously or not) made one visual medium speak for the entire visual landscape. The application of this approach to Roman Italy in the early imperial period has addressed a serious historic lack within prior academic studies, in which Roman Italy has too often been discussed as a foil to provincial case studies; its representation of female bodies and gender construction assumed, rather than compellingly demonstrated.

By analysing the dynamics of representation itself, as well as the bodies represented, this thesis has also corroborated, consolidated and built upon the approach outlined by Kampen: understanding representation as shaped by its socio-cultural context but, critically, as

a 'social frame shaping what can be thought about people and bodies and sexes'.⁵⁵³ Importantly, Kampen's approach has been supplemented within this discussion by the decision to let close visual analysis lead rather than imposing self-selecting methodologies onto the images at hand, and to examine the representations of the 'female body' rather than socially-constructed categories of women (goddesses, mothers, wives, etc.). As a result, the discussion above has been able to draw together a range of images and look at them closely, applying theory where relevant and pertinent, with revelatory results: see, for instance, the emergence of seated-ness and its implications for mortal and divine figures in Campanian wall painting, or the breakdown of the categories of foreign, Roman, and divine in public sculpture. In contrast to the relative theoretical narrowness that has characterised prior classical art historical studies of women and gender, this thesis demonstrates the value of a broad approach that allows the images to lead the way rather than cramming them into a framework with predetermined conclusions.

Finally, and most fundamentally, this thesis has illustrated the vital potential of even male-authored images of women and female bodies in Roman visual culture for understanding the Roman construction and conceptualisation of gender. The importance of this contribution cannot be understated in the contemporary academic landscape, in which the 'real' women who lived and breathed two thousand years ago have once again become the quarry, and the fictional and represented are abjured as patriarchal and therefore mute constructions. The unapologetic focus on, and analysis of, depicted women that underpins this project has demonstrated their power in constructing, constituting, and communicating ideas about and expectations of femininity and masculinity in early imperial Rome. This approach can and should be applied to the wealth of visual evidence for and of ancient women more broadly: both within its own right and as a critical discussion that can exist alongside, contextualise, and further enhance the study of 'real' ancient women.

The study at hand has made significant contributions to knowledge that will hopefully inspire further work on the representation of women within ancient visual culture: in particular, to address and push forward on the areas to which this thesis has been unable to speak. The chronological scope of this project, for instance, has generally halted at the 3rd century CE: consequently, it has not meaningfully addressed the socio-cultural sea-change of late antiquity, effected primarily and most influentially by the emergence of Christianity. This is a critical

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⁵⁵³ Kampen 2015: 81, 85.

space in which to understand how and where Christianization does (or doesn't) change the rules of visual representation and the construction of gender outlined above. Similarly, although studies of gender construction in provincial visual cultures already exist, this thesis has looked at the visual culture of Roman Italy on its own terms to provides a comprehensive, detailed discussion, ensuring that Italian visual culture is given equal importance within future comparative discussions of the Roman and provincial.

This thesis offers an important contribution to knowledge by marrying art historical approaches to gender with the ongoing exploration of Roman visuality; by demonstrating that ideas about gender are not only disseminated in visual culture but, critically, shaped by the respective limitations and capacities of their visual context and medium.

FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE: THE PUBLIC

- Figure 1.1: Honorific portrait statue of Plancia Magna. South City Gate Complex, Perge. Early 2nd Century CE. Marble. Antalya Museum, Antalya, inv.A3459. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statue_of_Plancia_Magna,_a_great_benefactress_of_Perge,_2nd_century_AD,_Antalya_Museum,_Turkey.jpg [last accessed 21.2.22].
- Figure 1.2: Honorific portrait statue of Aurelia Paulina. Building F4, Perge. Late 2nd century CE. Marble. Antalya Museum, Antalya, inv.3280 (head), inv.3456 (body). Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statue_of_Aurelia_Paulina.jpg [last accessed 21.2.22].
- Figure 1.3: 'Large Herculaneum Woman'. Theatre of Herculaneum. 1st century CE. Marble. Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Dresden, inv. Hm326. Source: < https://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/herculaneum_women/> [last accessed 21.2.22].
- Figure 1.4. Honorific portrait-statue of Eumachia Eumachia building, Pompeii. Marble. MANN, Naples, inv.6232. Source: < http://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/r7/7%2009%2001%20p6.htm> [last accessed 21.2.22].
- Figure 1.5: Statue of goddess (Fortuna?). Potentially recovered from Eumachia buildings, Pompeii. 1st century CE. Marble. MANN, Naples, inv.6232. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R7/7%2009%2001%20p5.htm [last accessed 21.2.22].
- Figure 1.6: Relief of Concordia from fountain by rear entrance to Eumachia building. 1st century CE. Marble. In situ, Via dell'Abbondanza, Pompeii. Source: < http://www.athenapub.com/aria1/_Pomp/pomp-viaabbond-fountcon3.html> [last accessed: 21.2.22].
- Figure 1.7: Relief depicting Punishment of Tarpeia. Basilica Aemilia, Rome.
- Figure 1.7: Relief depicting Punishment of Tarpeia from Basilica Aemilia, Rome. Likely 1st century CE. Marble. Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Massimo, Rome. Source: < https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Frieze_Basilica_Aemilia_Massimo_n3.jpg> [last accessed 21.2.22].
- Figure 1.8: Relief depicting Rape of the Sabines from Basilica Aemilia, Rome. Likely 1st century CE. Marble. Museo Nazionale Romano, Palazzo Massimo, Rome. Source: http://ancientrome.ru/art/artworken/img.htm?id=828> [last accessed 21.2.22].
- Figure 1.9: Statue of seated Demeter. Sanctuary of Demeter at Knidos. 350-330BCE. Marble. BM, London, inv. 1859,1226.26. Source: < https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/G_1859-1226-26> [last accessed: 21.2.22].
- Figure 1.10: Portrait head of Livia. 37-31BCE. Marble. Walters Art Museum, Baltimore, inv. 23.211. Source: < https://art.thewalters.org/detail/16696/portrait-of-livia/> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

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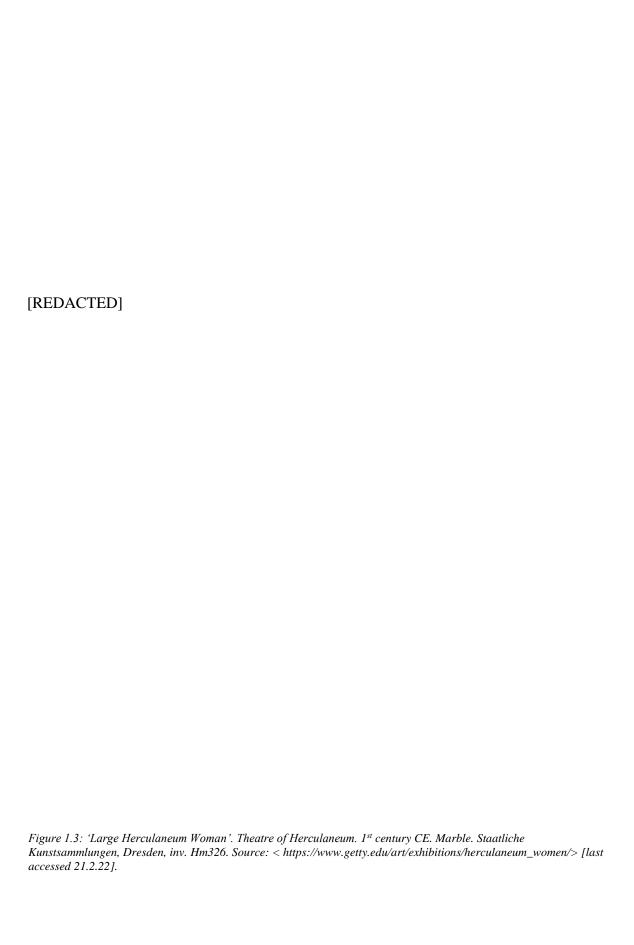
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Figure 3.34: Statuette of Isis breastfeeding Harpocrates. 4th century CE. Limestone. Dahlem Museum, Berlin, inv. J19/61. Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Limestone-statuette-of-Isis-lactans-from-Antinoe-fourth-century-CE-Dahlem-Museum_fig3_312192708 [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.35: Drawing of statuette of Dea Nutrix. Found in child's grave, Baldock. 4th century CE. Pipeclay. Letchworth Museum, Letchworth, inv.1988.4.109. Source: Burleigh et al 2006, fig.9 [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 1.1: Honorific portrait statue of Plancia Magna. South City Gate Complex, Perge. Early 2nd century CE. Marble. Antalya Museum, Antalya, inv.A3459. Source: https://century_AD,_Antalya_Museum,_Turkey.jpg [last accessed 21.2.22].

Figure 1.2: Honorific portrait statue of Aurelia Paulina. Building F4, Perge. Late 2nd century CE. Marble. Antalya Museum, Antalya, inv.3280 (head), inv.3456 (body). Source: < https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Statue_of_Aurelia_Paulina.jpg> [last accessed 21.2.22].



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Figure 1.4. Honorificinv.6232. Source: <	c portrait-statue of Eumac http://www.pompeiiinpictu	hia. Eumachia building, i ires.com/pompeiiinpictur	Pompeii. 1 st century CE. es/r7/7%2009%2001%2\	Marble. MANN, Naples, 0p6.htm> [last accessed

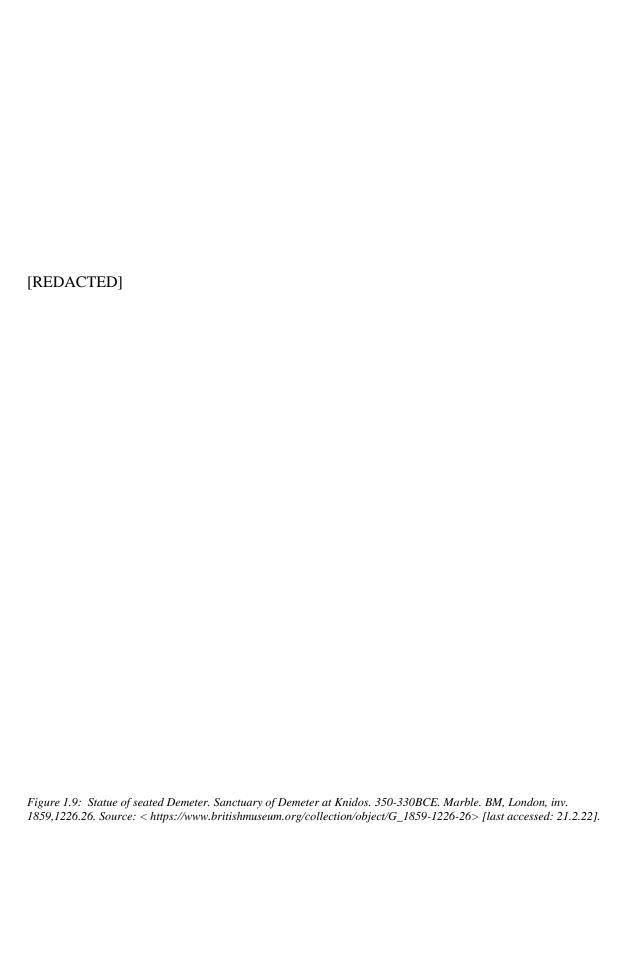
Figure 1.5: Statue of goddess (Fortuna?).

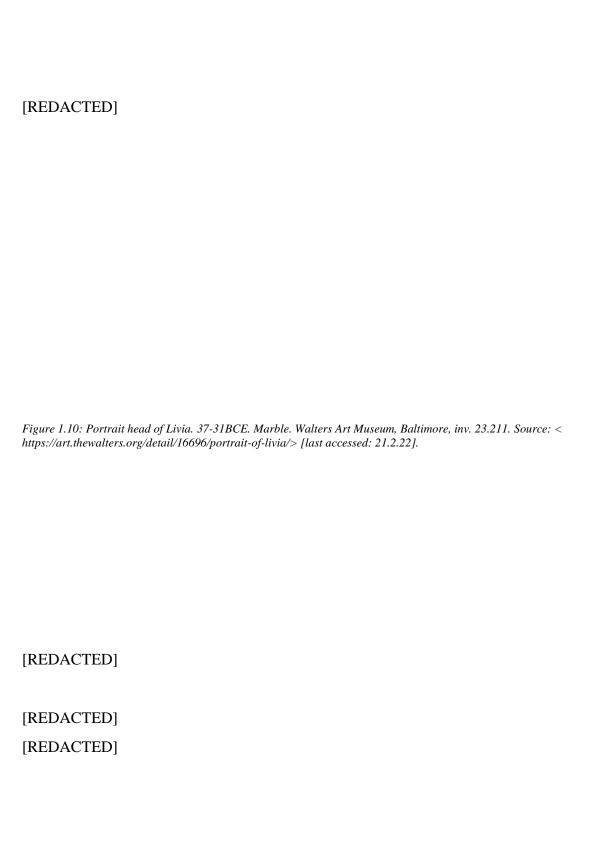
Potentially recovered from Eumachia buildings,
Pompeii. 1st century CE. Marble. MANN, Naples,
inv.6232. Source:
https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R7/7%2009%2001%20p5.htm [last
accessed 21.2.22].

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Figure 1.6: Relief of Concordia from fountain by rear entrance to Eumachia building. 1st century CE. Marble. In situ, Via dell'Abbondanza, Pompeii. Source: http://www.athenapub.com/aria1/_Pomp/pomp-viaabbond-fountcon3.html [last accessed: 21.2.22].







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Figure 1.12: Statue of Livia-Ceres. Originally Borghese Collection, Rome. Marble. Early 1 st century CE. Louvre, Paris, MA1242. Source: < https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Statue_de_Livie_(Louvre,_Ma_1242).jpg> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

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Figure 1.16: Panel from Sebasteion at Aphrodisias with 'Britannia' subjugated by Claudius. 20-60CE. Marble. Aphrodisias Museum, Geyre. Source: < http://aphrodisias.classics.ox.ac.uk/sebasteionreliefs.html> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

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Figure 1.17: Partial reconstruction of upper storey of colonnade at Forum Augustum, Rome, with caryatid figures and shield with head of Jupiter Ammon. 1st century CE. Marble. Mercati di Traiano e Museo dei Fori Imperiali, Rome. Source: https://www.abgussmuseum.de/de/die-erechtheion-koren-durch-die-zeiten> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

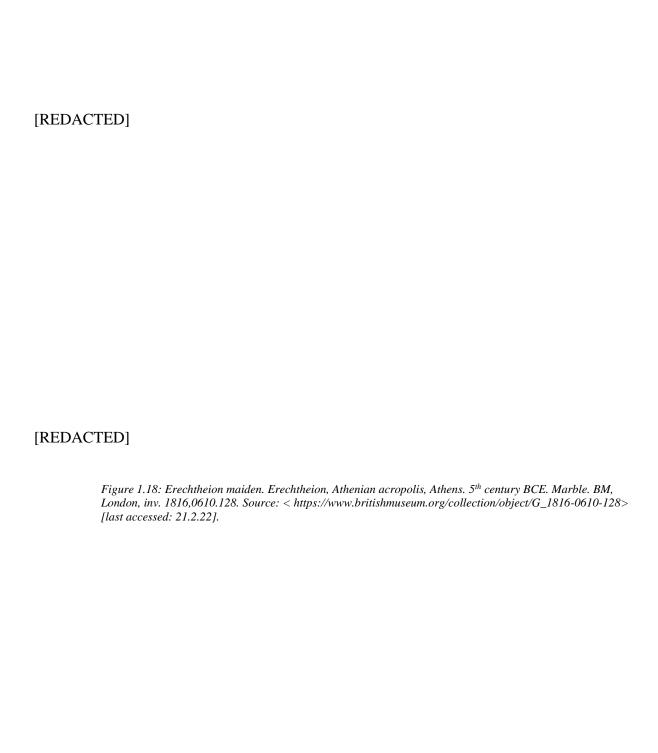


Figure 1.19: Figure identified as 'Libya'. Hadrianeum, Rome. 145CE. Marble. Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome, inv.755. Source: < https://followinghadrian.com/2015/01/21/the-hadrianeum-and-the-personifications-of-provinces/> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

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Figure 1.20: Figure identified as 'Mauretania'. Hadrianeum, Rome. 145CE. Marble. Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome inv.768. Source: < https://followinghadrian.com/2015/01/21/the-hadrianeum-and-the-personifications-of-provinces/>accessed: 21.2.22].	?, > [las

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ure 1.21: Figure identified as 'Scythia'. Hadrianeum, Rome. 145CE. Marble. MANN, Naples, inv.6753. Source: < os://followinghadrian.com/2015/01/21/the-hadrianeum-and-the-personifications-of-provinces/> [last accessed: 2.22].

Figure 1.22: Figure identified as 'Parthia'. Hadrianeum, Rome. 145CE. Marble. MANN, Naples, inv. 6757. Source: https://followinghadrian.com/2015/01/21/the-hadrianeum-and-the-personifications-of-provinces/ [last accessed: 21.2.22].

Figure 1.23: Figure identified as 'Hispania'. Hadrianeum, Rome. 145CE. Marble. Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome, inv. 767. Source: < https://followinghadrian.com/2015/01/21/the-hadrianeum-and-the-personifications-of-provinces/> [last accessed: 21.2.22].



Figure 1.25: Figure identified as 'Achaia'. Hadrianeum, Rome. 145CE. Marble. Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome, inv.756. Source: < https://followinghadrian.com/2015/01/21/the-hadrianeum-and-the-personifications-of-provinces/> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

[REDACTED] Figure 1.26: Relief with 'Victories'. Piazza della Consolazione, Rome. Likely 1st century BCE. Marble. Centrale Montemartini, Rome, inv.2749. Source: < https://www.romeartlover.it/Vasi118r.jpg> [last accessed: 21.2.22]. [REDACTED]

Figure 1.27: Aureus with head of Octavian and image of 'Victory'. 29-27BCE. Gold. BM, London, inv. R.6012. Source: <

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/C_R-6012> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

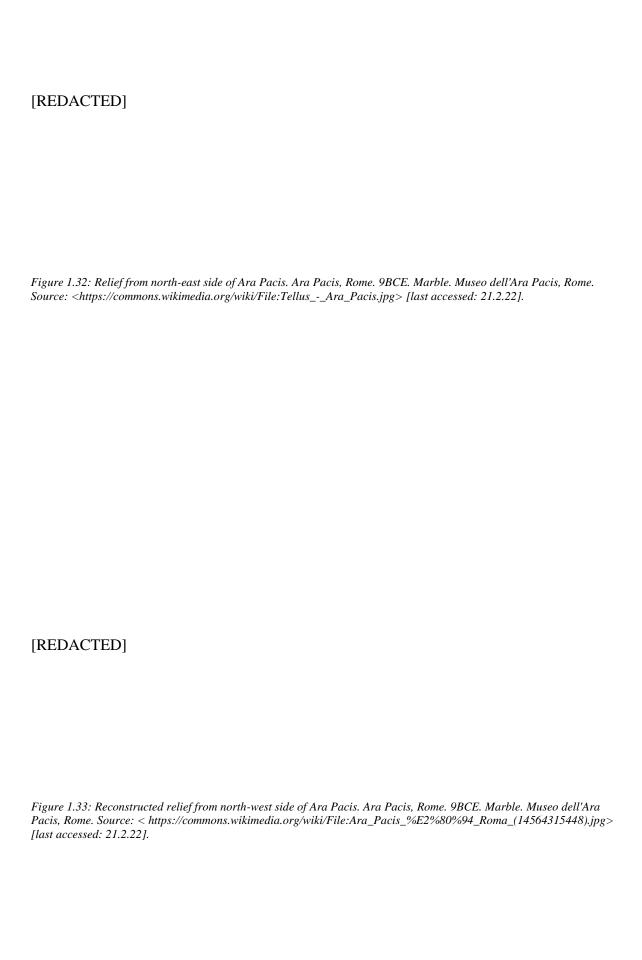
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Figure 1.28: Detail of triumphator relief on Arch of Titus, Rome. 81CE. Marble. Source: https://tinyurl.com/4bnyc55k [last accessed 21.2.22].

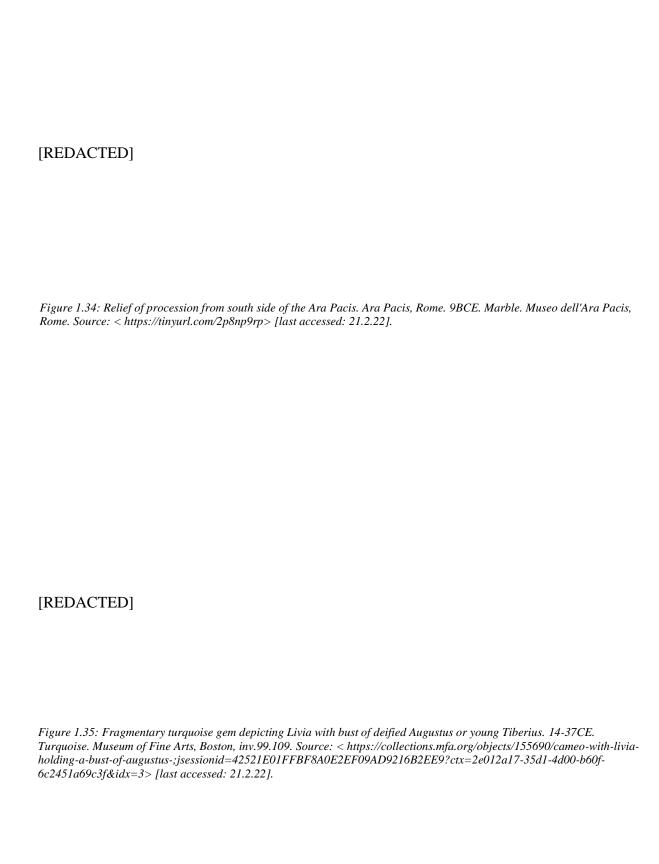
[REDACTED] Figure 1.29: Detail of 'Frieze A' of the 'Cancellaria reliefs'. 81-96CE. Marble. Musei Vaticani, Rome. Source: < https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/8c/Cancelleria-Relief-Fries_A.jpg> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

Figure 1.30: Detail of Victory writing on a shield from Column of Trajan, Rome. 113CE. Marble. Source: < http://omeka.wellesley.edu/piranesi-rome/exhibits/show/column-for-trajan/victory-writing-on-a-shield> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

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Figure 1.31: Aphrodite of Capua. Late 4th-3rd century BCE. Marble. MANN, Naples, inv.6017. Source: < https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Venus_of_Capua_MAN_Napoli_Inv6017_n01.jpg> [last accessed: 21.2.22].





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	Figure 2.1: Detail of biographical sarcophagus. 2 nd century CE. Marble. Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, C.A., inv.47.8.9. Source: Kampen 1981. fig.3.
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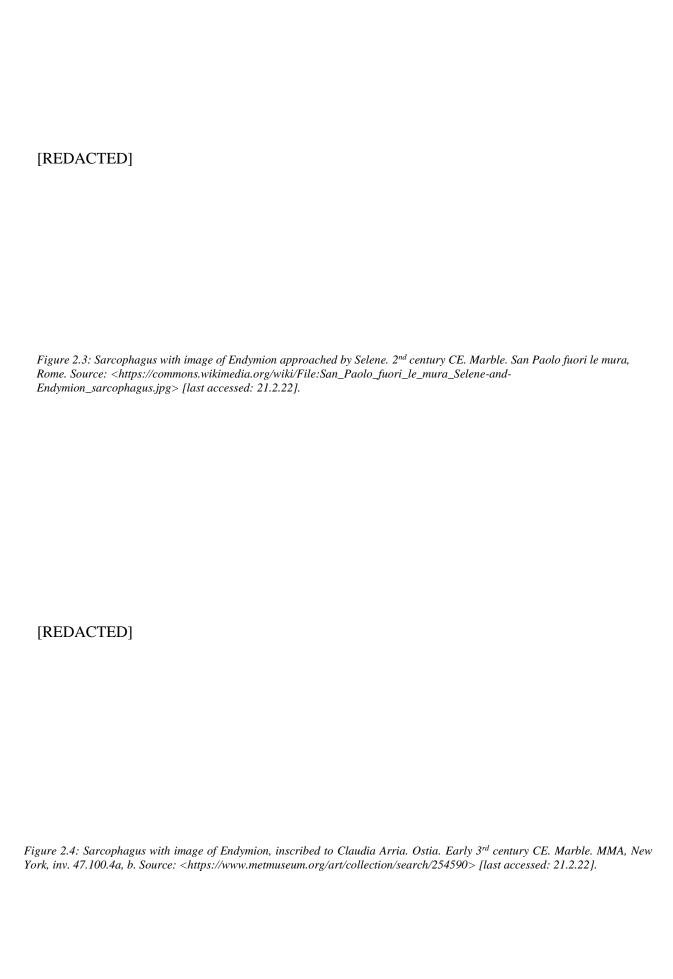


Figure 2.5: Detail of sarcophagus with hunting imagery. Found at intersection of Via Grottarossa and Via Cassia, Rome. 2nd century CE. Marble. Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome, inv.168186. Source: < https://live.staticflickr.com/65535/49743947153_cb0f05baf9_b.jpg> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

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Figure 2.6: Ivory articulated doll.
Found in sarcophagus excavated at intersection of Via Grottarossa and Via Cassia, Rome. 2nd century CE. Ivory.
Museo Nazionale Romano, Rome. inv.168191. Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cf/Doll_Massimo_Inv168191.jpg> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

Figure 2.7: Statue of matrona. Tomb of Manilii, Rome. 2nd century CE. Marble. Musei Vaticani, Rome, magazine 267/2952.Source: Borg 2019, fig.4.3.

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Figure 2.8: Funerary relief of Ulpia Epigone. Tomb of Volusii, Rome. 1st-2nd century CE. Marble. Museo Gregoriano Profano, Musei Vaticani, Rome. Source: < https://www.flickr.com/photos/69716881@N02/13599086314> [last accessed: 21.2.22].

Figure 2.9: Funerary altar of Vitellius Successus. 75-100CE. Marble. Musei Vaticani, Rome, inv.546. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.XXVI, fig.1.

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Figure 2.10: Kline monument of sleeping woman. 1^{st} - 2^{nd} century CE. Marble. Musei Vaticani, Rome, inv.878. Source: < https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/81135230765958031/> [accessed: 21.2.22].

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Figure 2.12: Funerary altar inscribed to Laberia Daphne. 90-120CE. Marble. Palazzo Ducale, Urbino. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.XLII, fig.3.

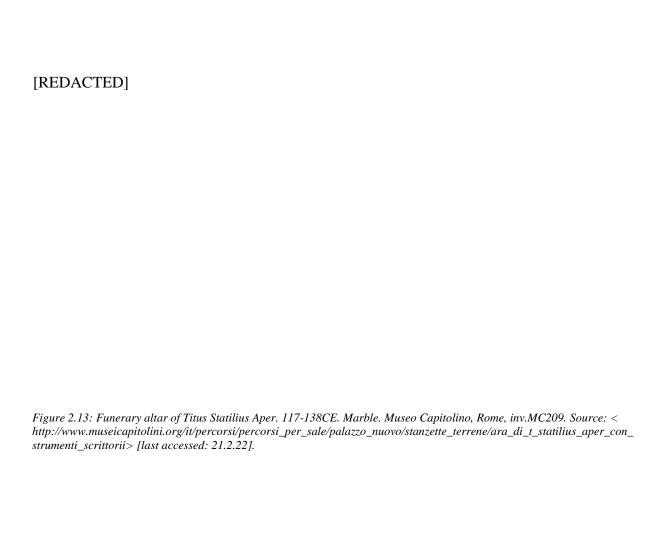


Figure 2.14: Funerary altar inscribed to Quintus Sulpicius Maximus. 94-100CE. Marble. Centrale Montemartini, Rome, inv.1102. Source: https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/funerary-altar-of-q-sulpicius-maximus/GAGdiJ7r-EomCQ?hl=en [last accessed: 21.2.22].



Figure 2.16: Funerary altar inscribed to Iulia Saturnina and C. Sulpicius Clytus. 130CE. Marble. Ny Carlsberg Glyptothek, Copenhagen, inv.861. Source: https://www.flickr.com/photos/roger_ulrich/5392440183 [last accessed: 21.2.22].

Figure 2.17: Funerary altar inscribed to L. Iulius Flavus. 2nd century CE. Marble. Louvre, Paris, inv. MA2147. Source: Boschung 1987, tafel 4, fig.106.

Figure 2.18: Detail of funerary altar inscribed to Iulia Synegoris. 100-115CE. Marble. Musei Capitolini, Rome, inv.1941. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.XL, fig.3.

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Figure 2.20: Funerary altar inscribed to Lucius Tullius Diotimus and Brittia Festa. 100CE. Marble. Villa Borghese, Rome. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.XXXIII, fig. 3.



Figure 2.22: Funerary altar inscribed to Iulia Procula. 80CE. Marble. Villa Massimo, Rome. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.XXI, fig.3.

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Figure 2.26: Detail of funerary altar inscribed to Tiberius Primionus: male portrait. 15-30CE. Marble. Villa Celimontana, Rome. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.II, fig.2.

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Figure 2.27: Detail of funerary altar inscribed to Tiberius Primionus: female portrait. 15-30CE. Marble. Villa Celimontana, Rome. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.II, fig.3.

Figure 2.28: Detail of portrait of Orcivia Anthis on an altar inscribed to her and Titus Statilius Aper. 117-138CE. Marble. Museo Capitolino, Rome, inv.MC209. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.XLVI, fig.2.

Figure 2.29: Detail of funerary altar inscribed to Acilia Capitolina. 125-135CE. Marble. Muzeum Narodowe inv.MNb2115. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.LI, fig.2.

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Figure 2.30: Detail of funerary altar inscribed to Sempronia Glycera. 80CE. Marble. Museo Pio Clementino, Musei Vaticani, Rome, galleria lapidaria, inv. 9395. Source: Kleiner 1987, pl.XIX, fig.2.

Figure 2.31: 'Crane relief'. Tomb of the Haterii. 79-80CE. Marble. Musei Vaticani, Rome. Source: https://museivaticani.va/content/museivaticani-mobile/en/collezioni/musei/museo-gregoriano-profano/Mausoleo-degli-Haterii.html [last accessed: 21.2.22].

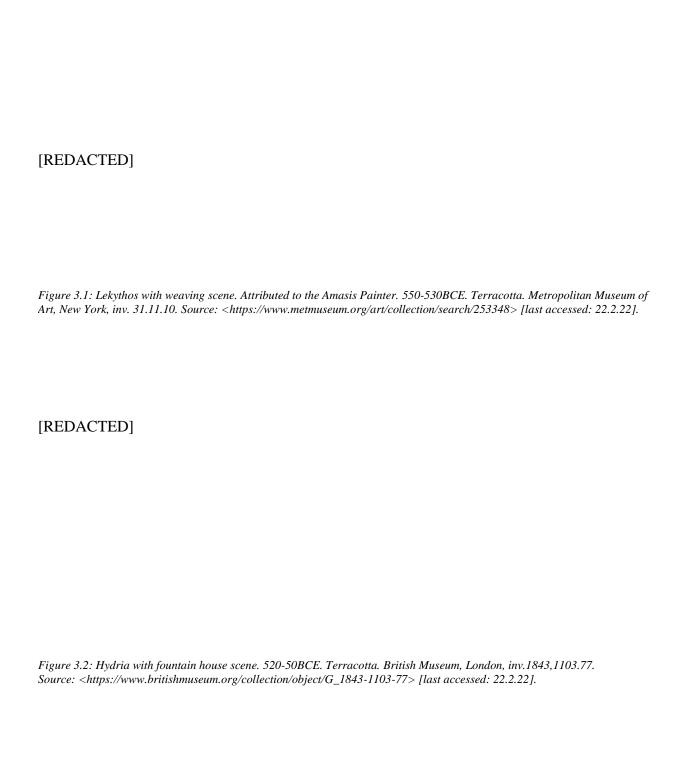


Figure 3.3: Stele of Hegeso. 410-400BCE. Marble. National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Athens, inv.3624. Source: [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.4: Stone relief of poultry shop. Via delle Foce, Ostia. 2nd century CE. Marble. Museo Ostiense, Rome, inv.134. Source: https://www.romanports.org/en/articles/human-interest/687-tabernae-at-ostia.html [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.5: Painting of symposium. Fullonica of Sestius Venustus (I.3.18), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9015. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R1/1%2003%2018.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure 3.6: Painting of female symposium. Fullonica of Sestius Venustus (I.3.18), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9016. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures/R1/1 %2003%2018.htm> [last accessed: 22.2.22].



Figure 3.9: Painting of woman with hand-mirror. Room 7, Villa Arianna, Stabia. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9088. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/VF/Villa_102%20Stabiae%20Villa%20Arianna%20p 07.htm> [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure 3.10: Painting of seated woman. Room 7, Villa Arianna, Stabia. Ist century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9097. Source:
khtps://www.pompeiiinpictures.co
m/pompeiiinpictures/VF/Villa_102% 20Stabiae%20Villa%20Arianna%20

p07.htm> [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.11: Painting of young man. Room 7, Villa Arianna, Stabia. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9093. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/VF/Villa_102%20Stabiae%20Villa%20Arianna%20p07.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure 3.12: Painting of old man. Room 7, Villa Arianna, Stabia. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9142. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures/VF/Villa_10 2%20Stabiae%20Villa%20Ariann a%20p07.htm> [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.13: Painting of the wedding of Mars and Venus. Tablinum, north wall. Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (V.4.a). 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R5/5%2004%20a%20house%20p3.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.14: Painting of Mars and Venus. Tablinum, south wall, Casa dell'amore punito (VII.2.23), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9249. Source:

kither.commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eros_Peitho_Venus_Anteros_MAN_Napoli_Inv9257.jpg [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.15: Painting of Amor brought to Venus. Tablinum, north wall, Casa dell'amore punito (VII.2.23), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9257. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mars_Venus_MAN_Napoli_Inv9249.jpg [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure 3.16: Painting of female artist. Room 9, east wall, Casa del Chirurgo (VI.1.10), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9018. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pompeii_Painter.jpg [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.17: Painting of female artist. Room 3, Casa della Imperatrice di Russia (VI.14.42), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9017. Source:
mailto://www.pompeiiinpictures/R6/6%2014%2042.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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[REDACTED] Figure 3.18: Painting of 'cupid-seller'. Room W.28, east wall, Villa Arianna, Stabia. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: https://www.getty.edu/art/exhibitions/pompeii/cupid_sellers.html [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.19: Painting of Thetis at the smithy of Hephaestus. Triclinium, north wall, Casa di Paccius Alexander (IX.1.7), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.9529. Source: https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/doc/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935390.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935390-e-58-graphic-001-full.jpg<">[last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure 3.20: Photograph of painting of Thetis at the smithy of Hephaestus (likely pre-1942). Room 20, west we Domus Uboni (IX.5.2), Pompeii. 1 st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: Squire 2013, fig.5.	ull,

Figure 3.21: Painting of Thetis at the smithy of Hephaestus. Atrium, Casa di Meleagro (VI.9.2), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv. 9528. Source:
khttps://www.pompeiiinpictures.co
m/pompeiiinpictures/R6/6%2009% 2002%20part%202.htm> [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure 3.22: Painting of seated figure at toilette. Room 13, Casa di Meleagro (VI.9.2), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster.
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, inv.AN1990.80. Source:
https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R6/6%2009%2002
%20part%204.htm> [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure 3.23: Painting of Thetis in the smithy of Hephaestus. Exedra 10, east wall, Domus Vedi Sirici (VII.1.47), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R7/7%2001%2047%20p3.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.24: Painting of Daedalus presenting the wooden bull to Pasiphae. North-east exedra, north wall, Casa dei Vettii (VI.15.1), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pompeii_-_Casa_dei_Vettii_-_Pasiphae.jpg [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.25: 19th-century drawing of painting of Venus fishing. Cubiculum, Casa di Ganimede (VII.13.4), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R7/7%2 013%2004.htm> [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure: 3.26: 19th-century drawing of painting of Narcissus. Cubiculum, Casa di Ganimede (VII.13.4), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R7/7%2013%2004.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.27: Painting of Venus fishing. Cubiculum, west wall, Casa dell'Efebo (I.7.11), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R1/1%2007%2011%20p7.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure 3.28: Painting of Narcissus. Cubiculum, north wall, Casa dell'Efebo (I.7.11), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures/R 1/1%2007%2011%20p7.htm > [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.29: Painting of Venus fishing. Cubiculum, north wall, Casa degli amorini dorati (VI.16.7), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source:

httm> [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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Figure 3.30: Painting of Diana surprised by Actaeon. Cubiculum, south wall, Casa degli amorini dorati (VI.16.7), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: http://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/r6/6%2016%2007%20p10.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.31: Painting of Leda and the Swan. Cubiculum, west wall, Casa degli amorini dorati (VI.16.7), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: http://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/r6/6%2016%2007%20p10.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.32: Painting of Pero and Micon. Triclinium, south wall, IX.2.5, Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. MANN, Naples, inv.115398. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures.com/pompeiiinpictures/R9/9%2002%2005.htm [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.33: Painting of Pero and Micon. Cubiculum, south wall, Casa di Marco Lucrezio Frontone (V.4.a), Pompeii. 1st century CE. Pigment on plaster. In situ. Source: https://www.pompeiiinpictures/R5/5%2 004%20a%20house%20p4.htm> [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.34: Statuette of Isis breastfeeding Harpocrates. 4th century CE. Limestone. Dahlem Museum, Berlin, inv. J19/61. Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Limestone-statuette-of-Isis-lactans-from-Antinoe-fourth-century-CE-Dahlem-Museum_fig3_312192708 [last accessed: 22.2.22].

Figure 3.35: Drawing of statuette of Dea Nutrix. Found in child's grave, Baldock. 4th century CE. Pipeclay. Letchworth Museum, Letchworth, inv.1988.4.109. Source: Burleigh et al 2006, fig.9 [last accessed: 22.2.22].

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ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

ASR = Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs

AJA = American Journal of Archaeology

BM, London = British Museum, London

CIL = Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum

CQ = The Classical Quarterly

DAIR = Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rom

IG = Inscriptiones Graecae

JDAIR = Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung

JRA = Journal of Roman Archaeology

JRS = Journal of Roman Studies

LIMC = Lexicon Iconographicam Mythologiae Classicae

MANN = Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli

MDAIR = Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung

MMA, New York = Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Pal. Con. = Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome

Rev. Arch. = Revue Archéologique

SAP = Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei

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