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Foreword

Dear Scholars,

It is with great pleasure and pride that I present the inaugural volume of *Vexillum: The Undergraduate Journal of Classical and Medieval Studies*, a labor of many months of work and sleepless nights of research, both on the part of the editorial staff and the authors whose works are featured herein. I congratulate all who have been published in this volume and thereby chosen to represent the multitudes of undergraduate scholars who study in fields ranging from art history to archaeology. I also wish to thank the editorial staff, who took my ideas for *Vexillum* and created something tangible and worthwhile, and without whom the journal would not have achieved such success—though humble—in this first year.

A little over a year ago the editorial staff of *Vexillum* was selected by me and our brilliant faculty advisor, Diane Johnson, and since then we have created the nation's first undergraduate journal for classical and medieval studies. Our goal is to provide an open-access journal to Classical and Medieval Studies students which will serve as a platform for students to share their work while reaping the benefits of peer-review and undergraduate publication. With no funds and little support, our editorial staff conducted research on over one hundred universities and four-year colleges, searching for relevant degree programs in Anthropology and Archaeology, Art History, Classics, Comparative Literature, History, Linguistics, Medieval Studies, Modern and Classical Languages, Music, Philosophy, and Religious Studies, and compiled a list of contacts for our call for papers. Though we awaited the deadline for the call for papers quite anxiously, when the deadline fell *Vexillum* received twenty-three submissions from eleven institutions across the country. Together the editors and I have had to overcome challenges, but we have been fortunate to receive such enthusiastic support from all over the country and it is my hope that each year the number of submissions, institutions involved, and papers we publish will grow.

In this inaugural volume you will find essays from ten young authors whose intellect and passion for times past comes to life in a number of studies that explore such diverse topics as imagery in early the early Italian Renaissance, the “divine economy” of Plato’s *Euthyphro*, a comparison of the Mongol and Roman imperial guards, and Christ’s image in Byzantine churches. Congratulations and thanks to the authors who have graciously provided their essays; it is my hope that you will encourage others in your fields to publish with *Vexillum* in the coming years and return with further works of your own.

As with any peer-review process, we are not able to publish all of the submissions we receive. This first volume has been a learning process, and with the knowledge we gain from our mistakes and successes we hope to continue publishing every article we can that meets the high academic standards set forth by our editors. In doing so, *Vexillum* will commit to not sacrificing those papers that, with improvement, could easily meet those standards.

Again, thank you to everyone for your contributions to *Vexillum*, and it is my hope that this journal will continue to grow each year and become a go-to source for budding scholars seeking quality academic articles, and a symbol of the drive of students everywhere to push forward the limit of our collective knowledge.

Sean A. Guynes
Editor-in-Chief

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Genuine Literary Criticism and Aristophanes' *Frogs*

CHARLES BETTENDORF
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Aristophanes' *Frogs*, performed at Athens for the festival of Dionysus Lenaius in the early spring of 405 BCE, occupies a peculiar place in the history of literary criticism and in the history of ideas more generally. Indeed, the *Frogs* is usually the first text cited in a history of literary criticism because it exhibits a "historical awareness of literary change."¹ The primary function of the play, however, is not literary criticism but political action. Aristophanes' aim in the *Frogs* is not to save Athens from its second best playwright, Euripides, but from political dissolution.² At the time of the *Frogs*' first production, Sparta and her allies had been threatening Athenian welfare for twenty-six years.³ I argue that the play is only superficially a quest to determine which of Athens' dead playwrights should return to Athens; moreover, I argue that in the *Frogs* we can make out the roots of literary criticism in Aristophanes' acute "awareness of literary change." However, to conclude that the play is primarily about literary criticism is to misunderstand it, underappreciate it, and to otherwise fumble the intricate order of innovations that led to the birth of genuine literary criticism.

It is important to keep in mind that if the above thesis is to be true, this does not mean that Aristophanes failed in an attempt at genuine literary criticism. The notion that he did is altogether

¹ George Kennedy, *Cambridge History of Literary Criticism Vol. 1 Classical Criticism* (Cambridge, UK; Cambridge University Press, 1989), ix. "Criticism as an instinctive audience reaction to the performance of poetry is as old as song. Literary theory begins to emerge in Archaic Greece in the self-reference of oral bards and early literate poets and as part of the conceptualisation of ideas which marked the birth of Greek philosophy. A sense of literary history developed in observation of the changing function of poetry in the Greek states, in the realisation that the composition of heroic epic was becoming a thing of the past, and later in the perception that tragedy too had passed its acme. Aristophanes' *Frogs* in the fifth century and Plato's dialogues in the fourth [century] show historical awareness of literary change."

² Notably this is Aristophanes' aim in a number of his plays, e.g. *Acharnians*, *Peace*, and *Lysistrata*.

³ The Peloponnesian War began in 431 BCE and ended in 404 BCE.

anachronistic. Truly, Aristophanes did not fail because he never intended to write genuine literary criticism and probably had no idea what such a thing entailed. Aristophanes did, however, intend to caricature Aeschylus and Euripides in order to effect his political aims. It is in service of his political agenda that Aristophanes limits his literary critical observations of Euripidean and Aeschylean tragedy. It is possible to see Aristophanes in his caricatures of Euripides and Aeschylus making choices that better align Euripides with that playwright's political antithesis. He firmly aligns Euripides with the new education typified by sophistry and Socrates. Indeed, in the *Frogs* Aristophanes criticizes Euripides and Aeschylus only in order to discuss the centrality of drama to political life at Athens. What appears as a genuine discussion of literature is at all times subservient to Aristophanes' political agenda.

In order to argue that there is no genuine literary criticism in the *Frogs*, we must first define genuine literary criticism. While it is almost universally agreed that the first piece of genuine literary criticism was Aristotle's *Poetics*, written in 335 BCE, there is less consensus as to what genuine literary criticism entails. Although literary critics disagree about the exact nature of genuine literary criticism, it will suffice for the purposes of this essay to keep in mind Rosemary Harriott's definition of genuine literary criticism. Harriott defines genuine literary criticism as "just and reasoned estimates of writers and their works [arrived at by] systematic analysis" for the purpose of enhancing a reader's understanding of literature.⁴ With this definition in mind, it is possible to demonstrate that the *Frogs* is not a piece of genuine literary criticism.

In our analysis of what looks to be literary criticism in the *Frogs*, we will be primarily concerned with the contest which Dionysus presides over at the end of the *Frogs*. In this contest, Euripides and Aeschylus take turns criticizing each other while touting their own merits as playwrights. The contest takes place in the underworld, and the prize is a trip back to Athens accompanied by Dionysus. In the

⁴ Rosemary Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism Before Plato* (London: Methuen & Co., 1969), 161.

banter that is characteristic of the contest, Euripides criticizes the Aeschylean prologue as follows (lines 908-915).

Euripides: And verily the sort of poet I myself am
 In the latter innings of this contest I shall tell,
 But first I will shame this one,
 I will show how he was a vagrant and a cheat
 And in what ways he deceived
 The dull theatergoers he received brought up on Phrynichus.
 For first he would set up some veiled one,
 Some Achilles or Niobe, not showing their aspect,
 A mere show of tragedy, not saying a thing.
 Dionysus: By Zeus they did not!
 Euripides: And then the chorus set to work on strings
 Of songs four in a row stitched together, while the veiled ones sat silent.⁵

Euripides' criticism of Aeschylean prologues is informative, but it is not genuine literary criticism as defined above. Dionysus' response to Euripides' critique shows that his observation was informative, but I maintain that the criticism is not genuine because it is not systematic. Aristophanes does not present his audience with a list of all the Aeschylean prologues that begin with a silent, seated, veiled figure. Such a list would constitute the systematic analysis required for genuine literary criticism. Perhaps such a list would not have been very funny, or perhaps it would have been, but the fact that it is omitted is important. It suggests that criticism in the *Frogs* is subservient to what is funny. This is not to say that Aristophanes' other observations—for example, that Aeschylean prologues often began with a chorus serenading a silent, seated, veiled figure—are inaccurate. Rather, the point is that he failed to prove it by systematic analysis.

⁵ (908-915) All translations are my own.

Εὐρυπίδης: καὶ μὴν ἑμαυτὸν μὲν γε τὴν ποιήσιν οἷός εἰμι,
 ἐν τοῖσιν ὑστάτοις φράσω, τοῦτον δὲ πρῶτ' ἐλέγξω,
 ὥς ἢν ἀλαζῶν καὶ φέναξ οἷοις τε τοὺς θεατὰς
 ἐξηπάτα μῶρους λαβὼν παρὰ Φρυνίχῳ τραφέντας.
 πρῶτιστα μὲν γὰρ ἓνα τιν' ἂν καθῖσεν ἐγκαλύψας,
 Ἀχιλλέα τιν' ἢ Νιόβην, τὸ πρόσωπον οὐχὶ δεικνύς,
 πρόσχημα τῆς τραγωδίας, γρύζοντας οὐδὲ τουτί.

Διόνυσος: μὰ τὸν Δί' οὐ δῆθ'.

Εὐρυπίδης: ὁ δὲ χορός γ' ἤρειδεν ὀρμαθοὺς ἂν μελῶν
 ἐφεξῆς τέτταρας ξυνεχῶς ἂν οἱ δ' ἐσίγων.

Nonetheless, Aristophanes' Greek suggests that such an analysis is possible. He writes, "For first he would set up some veiled one, some Achilles or Niobe, not showing their aspect, a mere show of tragedy, not saying a thing." The subjunctive "would" implies that Aeschylus habitually started his plays in this manner. Further, by making the very well-known characters of Greek tragedy of Achilles and Niobe indefinite exemplars of Aeschylus's method, Aristophanes again suggests that Euripides' accusation is widely applicable to the prologues of Aeschylus. It seems likely that Aristophanes at a symposium in downtown fifth-century Athens would have been able to give the desired systematic analysis of Aeschylean prologues, but we unfortunately are not in a position to provide the hinted-at analysis.

Of the estimated seventy or more plays Aeschylus is thought to have written, only seven remain intact, and of these seven it is clear in only one that a silent character is dragged on stage while others converse. That play is *Prometheus Bound* and the character, who first speaks at line 89, is Prometheus. Unlike in Aristophanes' criticism, however, a chorus does not sing while Prometheus is dragged on stage; instead, Power and Hephaestus talk to each other. Still, if we grant that *Prometheus Bound* is one of the plays that is being criticized, and we add to this the plays Aristophanes mentions in which Achilles and Niobe sit silently veiled on stage while a chorus sings, we can figure that Aristophanes' criticism applies only to three of the seventy or more estimated plays of Aeschylus. Because his criticism is not well substantiated, we must conclude that it is not an example of genuine literary criticism. Nevertheless, while it is not genuine literary criticism, it is at least accurate in a number of cases.

Similar conclusions result from an analysis of Aristophanes' criticism of the Euripidean prologue. In the play, Aeschylus criticizes Euripides by replacing the final metrical foot and a half of real Euripidean prologues with the phrase "he lost his little bottle of oil" (*lekythion apolesen*). The criticism is funny, but again not an example of genuine literary criticism. It has been rightly noted that "the *lekythion* [the little

bottle of oil] business is 99 percent fun.”⁶ The *lekythion* criticism of the Euripidean prologue cannot be genuine criticism because it has no point other than hilarity. Aristophanes nowhere tells us what he means by “the *lekythion* business,” nor is it even apparent that the meaning would have been clear to those in the audience. At best, Aristophanes seems to say that the last foot and a half of the first, second, or third line of Euripidean prologues has the same metrical construction as *lekythion apolesen*. Looking over the prologues to which *lekythion apolesen* is appended, it is possible to imagine what Aristophanes’ criticism would have looked like if he had articulated it better. As the criticism stands, however, it is utterly subordinate to its comic ends and is therefore not genuine literary criticism.

After Aeschylus's abuse of Euripidean prologues, it is again Euripides’ turn to criticize, and he chooses to criticize Aeschylean choral lyrics. Aristophanes’ analysis of this aspect of Aeschylus’s work is similarly opaque. What’s more, it seems that the details would have been opaque even to the Athenian theatergoer. Euripides criticizes Aeschylean lyrics in general and then Aeschylean lyrics written especially for the lyre. He does so by parody, a method common in Old Comedy but by its very nature a questionable means of genuine literary criticism. In order to criticize Aeschylean lyrics, “Euripides... sings a pastiche of warlike, solemn lines drawn from a variety of plays, linked by a refrain whose meaning becomes increasingly irrelevant.”⁷ The overall effect of the refrain, “O, ho, what a stroke, come you not to the rescue?”⁸ is brilliant parody and almost mockery of the Aeschylean chorus, but a systematic analysis with definite conclusions is again lacking. The closest Euripides comes to stating the point of his parody is at line 1262, in which he says, “I will cut all his songs into one.”⁹ This line at best hints at genuine literary criticism.

Presumably after drawing riotous Athenian laughter, Euripides moves to criticize Aeschylean lyrics written for the lyre. He uses the same method, except that this time, instead of a lyric refrain, he

⁶ R. E. Wycherley, “Aristophanes and Euripides,” *Greece & Rome* 15, no. 45 (Oct. 1946), 102.

⁷ Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism Before Plato*, 153.

⁸ (1265) ἰὴ κόπον οὐ πελάθεις ἐπ’ ἄρωγάν;

⁹ (1262) εἰς ἓν γὰρ αὐτοῦ πάντα τὰ μέλη ξυντεμῶ.

makes use of an untranslatable musical refrain, “*tophlattothrat tophlattothrat*,” interspersed with recognizably Aeschylean lyrics. Again, “we are not sure...what is the point of the refrain *tophlattothrat*,” but “some features of metrical parody are clear.”¹⁰ Aristophanes nowhere tells us why, technically speaking, *tophlattothrat tophlattothrat* captures the essence of Aeschylean lyric, and thus his criticism, which is utterly lacking in clarity, does not significantly enhance our understanding of Aeschylean literature. Hence, it fails to meet the standard of genuine literary criticism. Rosemary Harriott uses a nice analogy to describe the situation. It is a reasonable assumption that the music was recognizably Aeschylean:

Just as there are many people who could say that piece of music is by Chopin [Bruce Springsteen], and that it is a mazurka [a hunk of raw emotion], so Athenians are likely to have been able to discern the characteristics of the different styles, even if they could not say why a piece sounded Aeschylean.¹¹

Thus, it seems likely that Aristophanes successfully conveyed his meaning to the Athenians without ever giving his criticism a genuine analytic voice; as a result, the full weight of his point which, in order to be funny, must have had a basis in fact, is utterly lost to us.

Aeschylus, in his turn, criticizes Euripides’ choral lyrics and Euripidean lyric monodies. Before he sets in on his parodies, though, he utters these very interesting lines (1301-1303).

Aeschylus: But this man draws [sc. lyrics] from every kind of source, harlot songs,
Banquet songs of Meletos drinking, all that Karian jazz,
Dirges, folksongs.¹²

Here, as is often the case in the *Frogs*, we would have genuine criticism if it were supported by a systematic analysis of the relevant plays. Instead, Aristophanes cuts straight to the point—the comic conclusions. If this description of Euripides were true, Aristophanes’ criticism would be genuine literary

¹⁰ Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism Before Plato*, 153.

¹¹ Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism Before Plato*, 154.

¹² (1301-1303)

Αἰσχύλος: οὗτος δ' ἀπὸ πάντων μὲν φέρει, πορνιδίων,
σκολίων Μελήτου, Καρικῶν αὐλημάτων,
θρήνων, χορειῶν

criticism because it would certainly enhance our reading of Euripides, if we understood the origin of his lyrics. The reader or theatergoer would be invited to compare the songs of Euripides with harlot songs, the banqueting songs of Meletos, Karian jazz, dirges, and folksongs. This comparison could reveal different shades of meaning, tragedy, or irony. The fact remains, however, that Aristophanes does not draw connections between Euripides' songs and those he has Aeschylus list, nor does he present any evidence whatsoever for this comparison. As a result, Aeschylus's criticism of Euripidean lyrics lacks both supporting evidence and a point. Though not literary criticism, the following Euripidean parody, set to the jingle of castanets, comes close (lines 1309-1321):

Aeschylus: Halcyon birds who chatter beside the ever flowing waves of the sea
 Wetting of wings with sea spray
 Besprinkling the surface with a drop.
 And who dwell under roof in the eaves.
 With Fingers-wee-hee-heaving embattle
 Woof – warp webs,
 Of song of shuttle care
 Where the flute-loving dolphin leaps
 With dark prows prowling
 Oracles and stades,
 The sheen of grape shine grape vine,
 The labor ending curl of a bunch of grapes.
 Throw your elbows round me, my child.¹³

Afterward Aeschylus exclaims, presumably in disgust, “Just look at that line!” (line 1322);¹⁴ yet this

¹³ (1309-1321)

Αἰσχύλος: ἄλκυόνες, αἱ παρ' ἀενάοις θαλάσσης
 κύμασι στωμύλλετε,
 τέγγουσαι νοτίοις πτερῶν
 ῥανίσι χροά δροσιζόμεναι·
 αἱ θ' ὑπωρόφιοι κατὰ γωνίας
 εἰειεἰλίσσετε δακτύλοις φάλαγγες
 ἱστόπονα πηνίσματα,
 κερκίδος ἀοιδοῦ μελέτας,
 ἔν' ὁ φίλαυλος ἔπαλλε δελφίς
 πρῶραις κυανεμβόλοις
 μαντεῖα καὶ σταδίου,
 οἰνάνθας γάνος ἀμπέλου,
 βότρυος ἔλिका παυσίπονον.
 περίβαλλ' ὦ τέκνον ὠλένας

¹⁴ (1322)

parody is the closest thing to systematic analysis offered, and the conclusion, while colorful, is no more informative than a joke (lines 1326-1329):

Aeschylus: You [Euripides] writer of lines like that
 You dare censure my verse.
 Making your lyric in the twelve trick
 Style of Cyrene [presumably a famous and flexible whore].¹⁵

Nevertheless, it is possible to surmise what genuine criticism of Euripides is implied by Aristophanes' abuse: that Euripides wrote glorified nonsense. Wycherley remarks that "[a] poet who wrote beautiful nonsense would be a mere 'twittering swallow' for Aristophanes."¹⁶ In a comparison of the choral lyric criticisms, Wycherley further observes that "Aeschylus scores... simply because Aristophanes is able to produce a much more brilliant and effective parody of Euripides, catching the spirit of the lighter Euripidean lyric and turning it to nonsense... by comic exaggeration."¹⁷ However, Wycherley does not assess to what degree the criticism of each is accurate; he merely considers which was likely to have done more damage to its opponent in the context of the contest in the *Frogs*. A systematic analysis which would determine whether each criticism is accurate would be another endeavor altogether. Moreover, for us it is an impossible task because Aristophanes does not provide us with the requisite data.

Aeschylus's criticism of Euripidean monody is likewise effective in the context of the contest, but the criticism is not an example of genuine literary criticism. Here is an exemplary section of his parody of Euripides' monody (lines 1346-1355):

Aeschylus: I, a wretched girl, happened to be plying
 My tasks
 The spindle full of flax

ὁρᾷς τὸν πόδα τοῦτον.

¹⁵ (1326-1329)

Αἰσχύλος: τοιαυτὶ μέντοι σὺ ποιῶν
 τολμᾷς τάμὰ μέλη ψέγειν,
 ἀνὰ τὸ δωδεκαμήχανον
 Κυρήνης μελοποιῶν;

¹⁶ Wycherley, "Aristophanes and Euripides," 100.

¹⁷ Wycherley, "Aristophanes and Euripides," 102.

We-hee-hee-hee-hee-hee-heaving
 With my hands, making a spindle
 So that I at dawn might carry it
 To market to market it there,
 But he fluttered he fluttered away
 On the air with nimble tipped wings
 And sorrows sorrows he's lost to me
 And tears tears from my eyes
 I shed I shed. Poor me.¹⁸

To this Dionysus lamely concludes, “enough already of the lyric verse,” and Aeschylus says, “I too have had plenty” (lines 1363-1364)¹⁹. The criticism, unsubstantiated and not at all systematic, is nevertheless evident: Euripides glorifies the inglorious and repeats himself along the way. In a significant way, Aristophanes' criticism of Euripides is nonetheless informative, for in a number of places his criticism suggests that, in fifth-century Athens, moral lessons were an expected feature of poetry. Aeschylus pontificates in this vein (lines 1030-1036):

Aeschylus: For it is necessary that man poets forge these things. Indeed, examine
 From the beginning how the noble aids of poets have come about.
 Orpheus indeed discovered to us the mysteries and how to ward off death,
 Mousaios discovered to us both the remedies of diseases and also oracles, Hesiod
 Made known to us the deeds of the earth, the seasons of the fruits, the cornfields: the godly
 Homer- from what save this did he gain honor and glory – that he taught useful things,
 The arrangements of soldiers, the virtues, the accouterments of men?²⁰

¹⁸ (1346-1355)

Αἰσχύλος: ἐγὼ δ' ἂν τάλαινα προσέχους' ἔτυχον
 ἑμαυτῆς ἔργοισι,
 λίνου μεστόν ἄτρακτον
 εἰειελίσσουσα χεροῖν
 κλωστήρα ποιοῦς', ὅπως
 κνεφαῖος εἰς ἀγορὰν
 φέρους' ἀποδοίμαν:
 ὁ δ' ἀνέπτατ' ἀνέπτατ' ἐς αἰθέρα
 κουφοτάταις πτερύγων ἀκμαῖς:
 ἐμοὶ δ' ἄχε' ἄχεα κατέλιπε,
 δάκρυα δάκρυά τ' ἀπ' ὀμμάτων
 ἔβαλον ἔβαλον ἂν τλάμων.

¹⁹ (1363-1364)

Διόνυσος: παύσασθον ἤδη τῶν μελῶν

Αἰσχύλος: κᾶμοιγ' ἄλις.

²⁰ (1030-1036)

Αἰσχύλος: ταῦτα γὰρ ἄνδρας χρή ποιητὰς ἀσκεῖν. σκέψαι γὰρ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ὡς ὠφέλιμοι τῶν ποιητῶν οἱ γενναῖοι γεγέννηται. Ὅρφεὺς μὲν γὰρ τελετάς θ' ἡμῖν κατέδειξε φόνων τ' ἀπέχεσθαι,

While in some places Aeschylus's criticism of Euripides informs us about Athenian conceptions of poetry and poets and often effectively damages Euripides' chance of winning the contest, it does not in and of itself constitute genuine literary criticism.

Above we have seen how Aristophanes' criticism often falls short of genuine literary criticism on account of its lack of systematic analysis, but sometimes his criticism falls short of genuine literary criticism because it lacks relevance to literature. This criticism is much more relevant if it is understood in the co-dependent spheres of politics and education. For example, Aristophanes' criticism of Aeschylean diction in lines 1152-1166 does not, I think, even intend to make a point, but rather functions to ridicule sophistic analysis:

- Aeschylus: Become my savior and my ally, in answer to my prayer.
For I have come to this land and I have returned.
- Euripides: Sage Aeschylus has said the same thing twice.
- Dionysus: How twice?
- Euripides: Look at his words and I'll tell you.
"I am come to my land," he says, "and I return."
'I come' is the same thing as 'I return.'
- Dionysus: By Zeus, it's as if someone said to their neighbor,
'Lend me your kneading trough, and if you please, a trough to knead things in.'"
- Aeschylus: This is not so, you chatter man, but I have chosen the best of words.
- Euripides: How so? Show me what you're talking about.
- Aeschylus: 'To come' to a land means to come to one's own fatherland.
But he has come of an altogether other circumstance too.
An exile both returns and has arrived.
- Dionysus: Well done, by Apollo! What do you say, Euripides?²¹

Μουσαῖος δ' ἐξακέσεις τε νόσων καὶ χρησμούς, Ἡσίοδος δὲ
γῆς ἐργασίας, καρπῶν ὥρας, ἀρότους: ὁ δὲ θεῖος Ὅμηρος
ἀπὸ τοῦ τιμὴν καὶ κλέος ἔσχεν πλὴν τοῦδ' ὅτι χρήστ' ἐδίδαξεν,
τάξεις ἀρετὰς ὀπλίσεις ἀνδρῶν;

²¹ (1152- 1166)

- Αἰσχύλος: 'σωτὴρ γενοῦ μοι σύμμαχος τ' αἰτουμένω.
ἦκω γὰρ ἐς γῆν τήνδε καὶ κατέρχομαι—'
- Εὐρυπίδης: δις ταύτὸν ἡμῖν εἶπεν ὁ σοφὸς Αἰσχύλος.
- Διώνυσος: πῶς δις;
- Εὐρυπίδης: σκόπει τὸ ῥῆμ': ἐγὼ δέ σοι φράσω.
'ἦκω γὰρ ἐς γῆν,' φησί, 'καὶ κατέρχομαι.'
'ἦκω' δὲ ταύτὸν ἐστὶ τῷ 'κατέρχομαι.'
- Διώνυσος: νῆ τὸν Δί' ὥσπερ γ' εἴ τις εἴποι γείτονι,
χρ' ἦσον σὺ μάκτραν, εἰ δὲ βούλει, κάρδοπον.'

Kenneth Dover writes that “[m]eaning, definition, and correct diction were a major interest of many fifth-century intellectuals, notably Kratylus, Prodikos and Protagoras.”²² That Aeschylus repeats himself on this occasion, or only seems to repeat himself—that is, if one buys his rebuttal—does not lead a reader of Aeschylus to a greater understanding of his work. It does, however, allow the reader to glimpse what may have been the common opinion of sophistic analysis among Aristophanes’ contemporaries—namely, that it worked wonders on political opponents and was capable of even more wondrous rebuttals of itself. Later in the contest, Dionysus, twice in the span of fifteen lines, calls on the gods to witness each playwright’s ability to turn his opponents’ arguments on their heads.

We have seen that Aristophanes in the *Frogs* does not contain genuine literary criticism, but as noted above, looking for intentional examples in the *Frogs* is an altogether anachronistic exercise. Aristophanes did not really fail at genuine literary criticism because he never intended to write genuine literary criticism and probably had no idea what such a thing entailed. To say that he did fail is to be insensitive and in some sense to deny that there was time before genuine literary criticism.²³ So if one goes to a place prior to the establishment of genuine literary criticism and reconsiders the *Frogs*, suddenly the contest (*agon*) in the *Frogs* will appear as the very curious thing it is.²⁴ In summarizing the prehistory of genuine literary criticism, Gregory Nagy writes:

Αἰσχύλος: οὐ δῆτα τοῦτό γ’ ὦ κατεστωμυλμένε
 ἄνθρωπε ταῦτ’ ἔστ’, ἀλλ’ ἄριστ’ ἐπῶν ἔχον.
 Εὐριπίδης: πῶς δὴ; δίδασκον γάρ με καθ’ ὅ τι δὴ λέγεις;
 Αἰσχύλος: ‘ἐλθεῖν’ μὲν ἐς γῆν ἔσθ’ ὅτῳ μετ’ ἡ πάτρας;
 χωρὶς γὰρ ἄλλης συμφορᾶς ἐλήλυθεν;
 φεύγων δ’ ἀνὴρ ἥκει’ τε καὶ ‘κατέρχεται.’

Διόνυσος: εὔ νῆ τὸν Ἀπόλλω. τί σὺ λέγεις Εὐριπίδη;

²² Dover, 18.

²³ Or anywhere, anytime, before Aristotle’s *Poetics* of 335 BC.

²⁴ Kenneth Dover, *Aristophanes Frogs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), Introduction. “We know that it [the *Frogs*] was by no means the only play in which poetry was treated as a topic of comedy, and it is highly probable that it was not even the first in which a contrast was drawn between Aeschylean and later tragedy. The relevant plays are twelve in number, five of them by Aristophanes. Two of the twelve, and almost certainly a third—Pherekrates’ *Krapataloi*, in which the ghost of Aeschylus had a speaking part—were earlier than *Frogs*, and the

The Alexandrian scholars who were in charge of the process of separation, discrimination, judgment, were the *kritikoi*, while the Classical authors who were 'judged worthy of inclusion' within the canon were called the *enkrithentes*. The *krisis* of the *enkrithentes*, however, starts not with the Alexandrian scholars, nor even with Aristotle ... the 'crisis' of this *krisis* is already under way in the archaic and classical periods of Greece, where songs and poetry were traditionally performed in a context of competition. What we see in the *agon* of the *Frogs* of Aristophanes is a dramatization of that competition between drama and drama, and this time the competition is happening *within* drama. This way, the ontogeny of drama is recapitulating its own phylogeny as a competitive medium, an *agon* calling for the *krisis* of selection.²⁵

The *Frogs* is not the earliest extant text to robustly criticize literature, but it is remarkable in that it does so within literature. In the *Frogs* it is possible to see Lady Literature in labor, birthing Literary Criticism, but genuine literary criticism is only crowning. As Dover explains, "understanding of such implicit criticism [the criticism in the *Frogs*]... calls for much hard work."²⁶ What then, we ought to ask, comes easily in the *Frogs*? While "the ontogeny of drama" may well be "recapitulating its own phylogeny as a competitive medium," understanding this certainly does not come easily.

To summarize, at this point we have discovered that if genuine literary criticism is "just and reasoned estimates of writers and their works" arrived at by "systematic analysis" for the purpose of enhancing a reader's understanding of literature, then there is no genuine literary criticism in the *Frogs*.²⁷ So if it is not genuine literary criticism, the question becomes, what is Aristophanes driving at?

The climactic weighing of the verse may help to answer this question, for the weighing of verse functions not as genuine literary criticism but as criticism, it seems, of the sort of poetic criticism practiced in Athens in the time of Aristophanes. What such criticism looked like we can only imagine from the following lines (1365-1375):

Muses of Phrynichos competed with *Frogs* in 405." The *Frogs* is still striking as the only extant play indicative of this trend.

²⁵ Gregory Nagy, "Early Greek Views of Poets and Poetry," in *Classical Criticism*, edited by George Kennedy, vol. 1 of *Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*, 1 and 68.

²⁶ Kenneth Dover, *Aristophanes Frogs*, 17. I understand the metaphor is belabored.

²⁷ Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism Before Plato*, 161.

Aeschylus: ...For now I want to bring him to the scale
Which alone will test our poetry.
For it will prove the weight of our phrases.

Dionysus: Then come hither, if it is necessary that I
sell like cheese the craft of human poets.

Chorus: Painstaking are the men of wit,
For once again here's another marvel,
Brand new, full of the unusual, who else could have thought it up?
Oh my, I'd never, not if anybody,
Happening upon me, told me,
Have believed it, but I would have thought
He was talking nonsense.²⁸

It might be concluded then that Greek literary critics of the late fifth century BCE, and perhaps common Athenians as well, were in the habit of invoking a metaphorical notion of “poetic weight.” Aristophanes lambastes this notion by showing that the concept of poetic weight is unanalyzable. Thus, it is clear that Aristophanes is criticizing something larger than the work of two playwrights: he is indicting the city itself for misunderstanding what is good for it.

Since Athenians were the greatest critics of their own plays and decided which play won first prize, Aristophanes wanted to make clear to them which type of playwright they ought to endorse. He does this by caricaturing Aeschylus and Euripides. These caricatures function to effect Aristophanes' political end. In service of this political end, Aristophanes limits his observations of Euripidean and Aeschylean literature.

²⁸ Αἰσχύλος: ...ἐπὶ τὸν σταθμὸν γὰρ αὐτὸν ἀγαγεῖν βούλομαι,
ὅπερ ἐξελέγξει τὴν ποίησιν νῶν μόνον.
τὸ γὰρ βάρος νῶ βασανιεῖ τῶν ῥημάτων.

Διόνυσος: ἴτε δεῦρὸ νυν, εἵπερ γε δεῖ καὶ τοῦτό με
ἀνδρῶν ποιητῶν τυροπωλῆσαι τέχνην.

Χορός: ἐπίπονοί γ' οἱ δεξιοί.
τόδε γὰρ ἕτερον αὖ τέρας
νεοχμὸν, ἀτοπίας πλέων,
ὃ τίς ἂν ἐπενόησεν ἄλλος;
μὰ τὸν ἐγὼ μὲν οὐδ' ἂν εἴ τις
ἔλεγε μοι τῶν ἐπιτυχόντων,
ἐπιθόμην, ἀλλ' ὥόμην ἂν
αὐτὸν αὐτὰ ληρεῖν.

That Aristophanes does caricature Euripides and Aeschylus is evident. Just before the *agon* begins, a conversation between slaves morally polarizes the two playwrights (lines 768-784):

Xanthias: So why has this disturbed Aeschylus?
 Aeacus: He held the chair of tragedy
 As the mightiest in that art.
 Xanthias: And who does now?
 Aeacus: Why, when Euripides came down, he started showing off
 To the muggers and the clothes stealers,
 The father-beaters, and burglars,
 And that's the majority in Hades--and listening to
 His counter speeches, and twists and turns,
 They went mad and hailed him the wisest.
 Then he, all excited, claimed the throne
 Where Aeschylus was sitting.
 Xanthias: And wasn't he bombarded?
 Aeacus: Lord no, the Demos cried out to have a trial,
 To see which was the better dramatist.
 Xanthias: The crowd of rascals?
 Aeacus: Oh yes, as high as heaven.
 Xanthias: Didn't Aeschylus have others to take his side?
 Aeacus: The best's a small group, just like here.
*Pointing to the audience at the Lenaia*²⁹

Euripides is a man of the mob in cahoots with the spectators present at the festival, and Aristophanes, in effect, calls all the spectators knaves (*πανούργων*). Objectively, it is simply false that clothes-stealers,

²⁹ Ξανθίας: τί δῆτα τουτὶ τεθούρηκεν Αἰσχύλον;
 Ἄιακος: ἐκεῖνος εἶχε τὸν τραγωδικὸν θρόνον,
 ὡς ὦν κράτιστος τὴν τέχνην.
 Ξανθίας: νυνὶ δὲ τίς;
 Ἄιακος: ὅτε δὴ κατήλθ' Εὐριπίδης, ἐπεδείκνυτο
 τοῖς λωποδύταις καὶ τοῖσι βαλλαντιοτόμοις
 καὶ τοῖσι πατραλοῖαισι καὶ τοιχωρύχοις,
 ὅπερ ἔστ' ἐν Ἄιδου πλῆθος,
 οἱ δ' ἀκροώμενοι τῶν ἀντιλογιῶν
 καὶ λυγισμῶν καὶ στροφῶν
 ὑπερεμάνησαν κἀνόμισαν σοφώτατον:
 κᾶπειτ' ἐπαρθεῖς ἀντελάβετο τοῦ θρόνου,
 ἔν' Αἰσχύλος καθῆστο.
 Ξανθίας: οὐκ ἐβάλλετο;
 Ἄιακος: μὰ Δί' ἀλλ' ὁ δῆμος ἀνεβόα κρίσιν ποιεῖν
 ὁπότερος εἴη τὴν τέχνην σοφώτερος.
 Ξανθίας: ὁ τῶν πανούργων;
 Ἄιακος: νῆ Δί' οὐράνιον γ' ὅσον.
 Ξανθίας: μετ' Αἰσχύλου δ' οὐκ ἦσαν ἕτεροι σύμμαχοι;
 Ἄιακος: ὀλίγον τὸ χρηστόν ἐστιν, ὥσπερ ἐνθάδε.

father-beaters, and burglars are the only types found in the plays of Euripides. It must have also been false, as it is today, that these and only these types enjoyed Euripides. This is important because it is clear evidence that Aristophanes' criticism is not committed to accuracy in the way that literary criticism must be if it is to be genuine.

Throughout the play the chorus helps Aristophanes to develop his caricatures of Aeschylus and Euripides. At line 822, Aeschylus is on the receiving end of this choral description (lines 822-825):

Chorus: Bristling the shaggy-necked mane of his natural-hair crest,
Terrible brow crumple, roaring,
He will launch bolt-fastened phrases,
Ripping the planks with gigantic blast of breath.³⁰

At line 826, however, Euripides is on the receiving end of the following description (lines 826-829):

Chorus: Then the mouth-worker, tester of phrases,
Smooth tongue, unfurling, stirring the reins
Of envy, dissecting the utterances, will refine away by talk
The great labor of his lungs.³¹

These descriptions are meant to exemplify the moral character of each playwright. Aeschylus, on the whole, is depicted, "as an irascible old gentleman, blindly prejudiced against anything new, and frequently reduced to a state of unreasoning fury."³² Euripides is portrayed as opposite in every way. He is pointedly aggressive and his bold attempt to obtain the seat of tragedy is enough to demonstrate this. At line 830 Euripides says, "I will not give up the throne, don't put [the idea] in your mind. For I say that I

³⁰ Χορός: φρίξας δ' αὐτοκόμου λοφιᾶς λασιαύχενα χαίταν,
δεινὸν ἐπισκύνιον ξυνάγων βρυχώμενος ἥσει
ρήματα γομφοπαγῇ πινακηδὸν ἀποσπῶν
γῆγενεϊ φύσῃματι

³¹ Χορός: ἔνθεν δὴ στοματοργὸς ἐπῶν βασανίστρια λίσφη
γλῶσς' ἀνελίσσομένη φθονερούς κινουῖσα χαλινούς
ρήματα δαιομένη κατα λεπτολογήσει
πλευμόνων πολὺν πόνον.

³² Wycherley, "Aristophanes and Euripides," 101.

am stronger than this one with respect to the art.”³³ The caricature of Euripides favors anything new and even quite comically has his own gods (lines 888-889 and 892-894):

Euripides: Fine;
but I have other gods I pray to....
Air, my sustenance, and pivot of my tongue,
And intelligence, and olfactory nostrils,
To refute stoutly with whatever words I seize.³⁴

He is confident in his own ability to prevail and his perseverance shows that this is so. He never acknowledges a blow (lines 1215-1216 and 1222-1224):

Euripides: It won't be a problem. For to this prologue
He won't be able to attach that flask.
...
Dionysus: I think you should pull in your sails;
That little oil flask blows big.
...
Euripides: By Demeter, I wouldn't think of it.
For now this one here will knock it away from him.³⁵

What is more, Euripides is a man of the next generation. It seems likely that:

Aristophanes has picked out and exaggerated certain aspects of Aeschylus [and Euripides], not because he was ignorant or blind, but because he was more concerned with the force of his *agon* than with the coherence and validity of [his literary criticism].³⁶

³³Εὐριπίδης: οὐκ ἂν μεθείμην τοῦ θρόνου, μὴ νουθέτει.
κρείττων γὰρ εἶναι φημι
τούτου τὴν τέχνην

³⁴ Εὐριπίδης: καλῶς:
ἕτεροι γὰρ εἰσιν οἷσιν εὐχομαι θεοῖς
...
αἰθήρ ἐμὸν βόσκημα καὶ γλώσσης στρόφιγξ
καὶ ξύνεσι καὶ μυκτῆρες ὄσφραντήριοι,
ὀρθῶς μ' ἐλέγχειν ὣν ἂν ἄπτωμαι λόγων.

N.B. Socrates was sentenced to death six years after the *Frogs* was produced for “having his own god”.

³⁵ Εὐριπίδης: ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἔσται πρᾶγμα: πρὸς γὰρ τουτονὶ
τὸν πρόλογον οὐχ ἔξει προσάψαι λήκυθον.

Διόνυσος: ὑφέσθαι μοι δοκεῖ:
τὸ ληκύθιον γὰρ τοῦτο πνευσεῖται πολὺ.

Εὐριπίδης: οὐδ' ἂν μὰ τὴν Δήμητρα φροντίσαιμι γε:
νυνὶ γὰρ αὐτοῦ τοῦτό γ' ἐκκεκώπεται

³⁶ Preface, Lattimore translation.

Moreover, in the *Frogs* Euripides and Aeschylus argue according to the virtues of their respective caricatures. Thus, Aristophanes doesn't altogether accurately depict Aeschylus and Euripides, but caricatures them so that each might stand for something more than what he is—a dead playwright.

Indeed, in the caricatures it is possible to detect Aristophanes making choices that better align Euripides with his political antithesis, for it is evident in the *Frogs* that “Aristophanes treats as one issues that we should divide into religious, political and artistic.”³⁷ In other words, Aristophanes treats the work of Euripides and Aeschylus not as art but as a whole bag of religious, political, educational and artistic views. In the *Frogs*, “there is no opposition between ‘life’ and ‘literature,’ no idea that literature provides an escape from life nor that it is an adornment to the city nor that it supplies objects for aesthetic contemplation.”³⁸ Aristophanes aligns Euripides firmly with the new education typified by sophistry and Socrates. After Aeschylus is chosen and Euripides is left to die, the chorus describes the education of Aeschylus thus (lines 1483-1491):

Chorus: Blessed is the man in possession
Of sharpened intelligence.
It is possible to learn this in many ways.
For this one proving to know well
Returns again to his fatherland,
To act for the good of his fellow citizens
For the good of his very self,
His family and friends,
On account of his wisdom.³⁹

In contrast, the chorus describes the education of Euripides thus (lines 1491-1499):

Chorus: So it is refined not by Socrates

³⁷ Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism Before Plato*, 157.

³⁸ Harriott, *Poetry and Criticism Before Plato*, 157.

³⁹ Χορός: μακάριός γ' ἀνὴρ ἔχων
ξύνεσιν ἡκριβωμένην.
πάρα δὲ πολλοῖσιν μαθεῖν.
ὁδὲ γὰρ εὖ φρονεῖν δοκήσας
πάλιν ἄπεισιν οἴκαδ' αὖ,
ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ μὲν τοῖς πολίταις,
ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ δὲ τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ
ξυγγενέσι τε καὶ φίλοις,
διὰ τὸ συνετὸς εἶναι.

To sit and chatter
 Casting aside music
 And neglecting the greatest things
 In the art of tragedy.
 But it is of a man deranged
 To make glistening discourse
 On august words
 With the scrapings of trash.⁴⁰

While Aristophanes found Euripides “full of subtleties and sophistries,” it is critical that contrary to Aristophanes' caricature, Euripides was, in fact, “fundamentally opposed to the sophistic spirit in its more violent manifestations.”⁴¹ What is more, Wycherley thinks that “Aristophanes must have realized it.”⁴² If this was the case, then Aristophanes made a deliberate choice to misrepresent Euripides as a proponent of the new education. Thus, the caricatures in the *Frogs* are neither simply artistic nor comical, but political and not altogether honest.

By the end of the *Frogs*, proponents of Euripides ought to feel slighted. Consider, for example, the *Troades* of Euripides produced immediately after the destruction of Melos, which “contained a bitter reproach of the Athenians for their brutality, and a solemn warning.”⁴³ As the caricatures in the *Frogs* would have it, Euripides is a man of the democratic mob and he is partially responsible for the brash decisions made by Athens in the last few decades of the fifth century BCE. Aristophanes caricatures Euripides so as to better align him with his political opponents. Thus, when Dionysus decides to bring Aeschylus back with him to Athens, Aristophanes damns not only Euripides, but also the new

⁴⁰ Χορός: χαρίεν οὔν μὴ Σωκράτει
 παρακαθήμενον λαλεῖν,
 ἀποβαλόντα μουσικὴν
 τὰ τε μέγιστα παραλιπόντα
 τῆς τραγωδικῆς τέχνης.
 τὸ δ' ἐπὶ σεμνοῖσιν λόγοισι
 καὶ σκαριφησμοῖσι λήρων
 διατριβὴν ἀργὸν ποιεῖσθαι,
 παραφρονοῦντος ἀνδρός

⁴¹ Wycherley, “Aristophanes and Euripides,” 105. The most violent manifestation of sophism being that, “there is no right but might”. Wycherley notes that in this, “There is no room... for sympathy with the suffering, the weak, and the defeated, which Euripides felt so intensely.”

⁴² Wycherley, “Aristophanes and Euripides,” 105.

⁴³ Thucydides, *Book V*. The destruction of Melos was in 416.

education and the new political figures educated by Athens: they fall as one and fall by the sole decision of a god, for when Dionysus issues his judgment, he says, "This will be my decision for them: I'll choose the one my soul desires."⁴⁴ The decision (*krisis*) of Dionysus is the linchpin of the *Frogs*. At the moment of Dionysus' decision the unaware reader or spectator realizes that the contest, the tremendous awareness of literary change, and Dionysus' journey to the underworld have been more than just fun.

In the *Frogs*, Aristophanes criticizes Euripides and Aeschylus only in order to discuss the centrality of drama to political life at Athens. What appears as a genuine discussion of literature is at all times subservient to Aristophanes' political agenda. However, the *Frogs* does raise controversial and critical literary questions. Can a poet use ordinary words and introduce familiar, everyday objects into tragedy? And further, does the audience need always to be confused by the lofty thought and diction of tragedy, or can a tragedy be plain spoken? Are ugly realities a fit subject for art or should they be hidden?⁴⁵ These questions are, however, overshadowed by the political overtones of the play, and Aristophanes' advice to the Athenians overwhelms the budding literary criticism.

Aristophanes seeks not so much to condemn Euripides as to remedy his ailing city by means of parody and criticism. The remedy he offers is not Aeschylus, for he is dead and the play will not really bring him back. Nor is it the tragedies he wrote, for those would entail many an opaque chorus. Aristophanes' remedy is the advice of the Aeschylus in the *Frogs* and the advice of his choral parabasis. I must leave a discussion of exactly what this advice is for another essay, but for the time being, we may conclude that by the time the *Frogs* was produced at Athens in 405 BCE, Athenians were—thanks to the comedy of Aristophanes—aware of literary change, and further, that the birth of genuine literary criticism would have to wait for another medium.

⁴⁴ (Lines 1467-1468)

Διόνυσος: αὕτη σφῶν κρίσις γενήσεται:
αἰρήσομαι γὰρ ὄνπερ ἡ ψυχὴ θέλει.

⁴⁵ Wycherley, "Aristophanes and Euripides," 103.

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Domesticity, Intimacy, and Pictorial Space in the Fourteenth- and Fifteenth-Century Italian Renaissance

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Forma vero est duplex, forma tractatus et forma tractandi. — Dante Alighieri
[And the form is twofold: the form of the treatise, and the form of the treatment.]¹

Among their many achievements, Italian Renaissance artists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries transformed conventions for the depiction of space within the medium of painting. The flat, intangible, “otherworldly” spatial representations of the Gothic iconographic style fell increasingly into disuse as the tastes of the Quattrocento audience shifted to favor treatments of greater sophistication, illusionism, and naturalistic detail—treatments in which the figures depicted were perceived as occupying the same theoretical spaces of the domestic, devotional, and monastic as their audiences. A pictorial space that simulates three-dimensionality via the use of one-point perspective is intuitively more relatable, especially to an audience whose focus was shifting to a humanistic model—a philosophy which espoused that man was the measure of all things. The intentional blurring of the line between pictorial space and real space was a device put to powerful use in Renaissance painting as a tool to enforce the sense of intimacy and accessibility of devotional works.

This connection between feeling and seeing is often exemplified in paintings that include depictions of either devotional or prominent secular figures within a carefully created domestic environment. The Dominican priest Michele da Carcana elucidates this point in his 1492 sermon:

Second, images were introduced on account of our emotional sluggishness, so that men who are not aroused to devotion when they

¹ Dante Alighieri, “Letter to Can Grande della Scala, c. 1319,” in Paget Toynbee, ed. and trans., *Dante Aligherii epistolae: The letters of Dante*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 200.

hear about the histories of the Saints may at least be moved when they see them, as if actually present, in pictures. For our feelings are aroused by things seen more than by things heard.²

Experiencing the emotional potential of the sense of sight would have been a familiar experience for the Renaissance audience, for whom the figures depicted in iconographic art could manifest their power at any time. Images of Christ, the Virgin Mary, saints, devils, and other figures were capable of exercising real power over their viewers' lives. As such, devotional art could serve as a gateway between the world of the devotional object and the world of the devotee—a relationship that extended both ways. The painting of devotional figures within an appropriate and recognizable environment, whether that environment was a cloister or a private residence, manifests the reciprocity between the divine and the individual in spatial terms.³

Simone Martini's *Altarpiece of St. Louis of Toulouse* (c. 1319) is an early Trecento work that demonstrates the highly decorative stylistic conventions carried over from the previous Byzantine tradition. The stiffly posed, rigidly two-dimensional quality of the painting makes pointed reference to firmly established techniques deployed in earlier altarpieces of this type, such as Bonaventura Berlinghieri's 1235 *Altarpiece of St. Francis*. St. Louis appears to exist outside of tangible space and time, here evinced by the use of a gold background to symbolize celestial space, thus implying the saint's role as an intercessor with the Divine. Despite the artifice of the diagonals placed on the floor and a billowing, rather voluminous treatment of anatomical forms, the artist conspicuously indicates that St. Louis belongs to a realm clearly outside of the viewers' own physical reality—a space that is shared with God. This heavenly space is reinforced by the presence of two angels, who reward the saint with a heavenly crown while he presents his brother, King Robert of Naples, with an earthly one.⁴

In contrast, Piero Lorenzetti's *Birth of the Virgin* (1335-1342), painted some sixteen years later, is

² Michael Baxendall, *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth Century Italy* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 41.

³ Bruce Cole, *Italian Art 1250-1550* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1987), xxii.

⁴ John T. Paoletti and Gary M. Radke, *Art in Renaissance Italy* (London: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005), 131.

a more naturalistic treatment of the Virgin's birth, a lively scene in which midwives and family in contemporary dress flock to support Anna in her confinement, bathing the baby Mary while a young boy informs Joachim of his daughter's delivery.⁵ The illusionistic space of a contemporary bedchamber and anteroom is richly detailed, presenting a scene that would have been intimately familiar to an audience accustomed to seeing very similar images on commemorative childbirth plates, the traditional gift for expectant mothers.⁶ This sense of shared space unites the sacred and the secular by employing the same environment to achieve similar ends. Within a secular context, a childbirth plate such as Bartolomeo di Fruosino's birth plate of 1428 shows a composition based on conventions drawn from sacred art. Bartolomeo increased the immediacy of this work by borrowing specific details from a drawing of the birth of John the Baptist by one of his contemporaries, Lorenzo Monaco.⁷

Ambrogio Lorenzetti, Piero's brother, is more emphatic in his choice of environment for the *Purification of the Virgin* (c. 1342), setting Mary's ritual Presentation of Jesus at the Temple in a scene that directly references the interior architecture of the cathedral in which the piece was installed. The works of both brothers conflate their depicted time and space with that of the viewers; Ambrogio makes the Virgin's life a clear and present part of the specific Sienese experience, emphasized by the Christ Child's realistic childlike behavior, sucking on his fingers and kicking at his blanket.⁸ Placing their narratives within a familiar setting, both artists enhance the accessibility of the figures and enrich the viewing experience of their audience.

Members of the Renaissance clergy were well aware of the potential of the sacred within the context of the vernacular. Itinerant preacher Girolamo Savonarola's sermons were not only published in the vernacular, but also included illustrations to provide immediate and easily understood spiritual didactics. In *The Art of Dying Well* (woodcut, unknown master, c. 1470), both angels and devils appear in

⁵ Paoletti and Radke, 109.

⁶ Paoletti and Radke, 219.

⁷ Andrea Bayer, ed., *Art and Love in Renaissance Italy* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2008), 152-53.

⁸ Paoletti and Radke, 109-10.

a dying man's bedchamber to wait for the moment of death. While the narrative of competing for souls was an established spiritual convention, the setting—an illusionistic presentation of a domestic interior—demonstrates a very human reality, making the ephemeral—that is, the idea of a life being evaluated based on how well it was lived—manifest within an immediately palpable environment, the domestic sphere.⁹

During the Renaissance, laity and clergy alike were encouraged to use visualization as a tool to increase the accuracy, efficacy, and emotional resonance of their spiritual experiences. Specifically, they were exhorted not only to use devotional images as a visual reference point, but also to create their own individualized mental images of sacred characters upon which to meditate, placing the events within their own cities, streets, churches, or homes, while using images of people from their own lives to internally explore sacred events and biblical stories. This practice put painters in the position of needing universal, archetypal visualizations to avoid competition with the individualized versions of persons and scenes that already existed in the viewer's mind. Painters such as Piero Perugino (1450-1523), whose works were highly popular with the devout, relied on an ability to paint figures and environments that were generic, non-individualized archetypes that would not encroach upon the viewer's personal visualizations. Facilitating the opportunity of the beholder to integrate his or her individual vision into the pictorial space could then enhance the emotional impact of the piece. The painter's role was to create a work of art that suggested and structured, providing a solid visual construct and allowing the narrative to co-exist with the viewer's personal visualizations while simultaneously existing within the painting itself.¹⁰

Fra Angelico's *Annunciation* (1438-45), in the North Corridor of the monastery of San Marco, was created for an audience who spent much of their lives in private meditation and prayer. Enhanced by the use of one-point perspective, the scene extends the austere monastic space into the imagined

⁹ Paoletti and Radke, 287.

¹⁰ Baxendall, 46-47.

space of the fresco, which in turn evokes the actual cloister. Being a monastery, there was no real differentiation between domestic and sacred space; climbing the stairs from the ground floor to the cloister's upper corner, a Dominican brother would have seen the *Annunciation* framed by the entrance door at the top of the stairway, the pictorial space established by the painting sharing and extending the avenue of the stairwell. The fresh, delicate palette and graceful, gently swaying figures complement the tone of quiet, meditative intimacy befitting this semi-private space. As a work of art set within the domestic environment of the cloister, it served as a constant reminder to the brotherhood that these scenes lived within them. To reinforce these scenes' immediacy, the caption beneath the image exhorts, "As you venerate, while passing before it, this figure of the intact Virgin, beware lest you omit to say a Hail Mary."¹¹

This sense of shared, cloistered space evident in the *Annunciation* takes on yet greater depth and intimacy in another *Annunciation* by Fra Angelico, painted specifically for a single monk's cell at San Marco. Again, the space depicted extends and echoes the viewer's own space, a sparse, sequestered room dedicated to contemplation and prayer. The Virgin appears reflective; she is observed by St. Peter Martyr of the Dominican order, meditating on the same subject as the cell's occupant would. The sense of closeness and physical proximity is augmented by the dimensions and size of the space portrayed, while the integrative and exclusive location of the painting heightens its quality of intimacy, creating a visual prayer to complement the monk's internal one. Originally, works of this locative type were only displayed within the privacy of the monks' cells at San Marco. They were deemed so successful that this treatment was later expanded to include the communal spaces of the corridors.¹²

As with concepts of sacred and secular, distinctions between public and private spaces are of limited use when considering the functions of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century painting. Private lay commissions could play very public roles, often in public or semi-public places; an altarpiece or a fresco

¹¹ Paoletti and Radke, 258-59.

¹² A. Richard Turner, *Renaissance Florence: The Invention of a New Art* (London: Pearson Prentice Hall, 1997), 120.

cycle for a family chapel or in the chambers of a private residence would not have been private in any significant way.¹³ Utilizing domestic environments to enforce a sense of shared space and immediacy also occurred within works of art created for private homes. Domestic life in Renaissance Italy encompassed multiple generations who cohabited in rooms that shared functions—a single room could be a bedroom, a hallway, a dining room, and concurrently a receiving room for guests,¹⁴ allowing layers of meaning to accumulate within spaces over time.¹⁵ Andrea Mantegna's private frescoes for the Camera degli Sposi (Palazzo Ducale, Mantua, c. 1465-1474) do not merely decorate the walls of this large, semi-private courtly space. The artist has instead integrated the pictorial space with the space occupied by the viewer, which is a technique similar to Fra Angelico's works for the monastery of San Marco. The pictorial space here appears as a continuation of the room's actual space, incorporating the *in situ* stone mantelpiece into the painted courtiers' floor, which then continues as a painted staircase. Along with the high level of detail in clothing, architecture, and decoration, the illusion of shared space acts to reinforce the close relationships of the specific sitters and the relatively informal, secular nature of the work.¹⁶

Fra Filippo Lippi's *Annunciation* (c. 1445-1450) utilizes a combination of devices to create meaningful associations for the viewer. While the space inhabited by the Virgin and Gabriel is ostensibly a contemporary *camera*, or bedchamber, most of the detritus of an earthly woman's life— cosmetics, jewelry, ornate curtains, tapestries, bedclothes, and so on—are deliberately omitted, a reference to the Virgin's worldly poverty and a subliminal warning against the lasciviousness that follows luxury. Here, Fra Filippo has cleverly transmuted part of a golden bed canopy into a drapery for the back of a suggested throne. Other deliberate departures from typical *camera* often appear in depictions of the *Annunciation* from this period; while chairs with arms and backs, such as the one upon which Mary rests

¹³ Baxendall, 3.

¹⁴ Cole, 1.

¹⁵ Paoletti and Radke, 14.

¹⁶ Cole, 10.

in the *Annunciation* are rarely found in inventories of fifteenth-century homes, these throne-like benches and chairs appear in the Virgin's *camera* with regularity. For this Christian audience, such subtle indicators would have been a visual cue that the painted domestic interior was in deliberate service to a devotional function.¹⁷

In accordance with the apocryphal Gospel of the Birth of Mary (based on an anonymous Franciscan text, c. 1350-1400), it became conventional to depict the Virgin Annunciate in a carefully controlled domestic setting that included a bed. The popularity of this text led to a widely accepted belief that the Annunciation took place within the bedchamber of the Virgin's own house. Although the appearance of a bed indicates the scene's location, sleeping beds were also associated with conception, a moment foreshadowed by the dove of the Holy Spirit emanating a golden light and pointing directly at Mary's womb. Based on a long-standing connection between the bedchamber of the Virgin and the bridal chamber referenced throughout the Old Testament book Song of Songs, it becomes possible to overlay the imagery of the bridal chamber onto the Virgin's *camera*; this overlay makes the chamber described in the Song of Songs belong metaphorically to both the Virgin and to Christ. St. Augustine took this association a step further when he wrote of "[Christ's] appearance as an Infant Spouse, from His bridal chamber, that is from the womb of a virgin." In a sermon he further elucidated upon the theme of the Virgin's bridal chamber doubling as a surrogate womb for the Incarnation of the Word by describing the latter as "a marriage which...is impossible to define." The overlapping layers of meaning evoked by a simple painted bedroom may have contributed to the increasing popularity of this domestic setting for private devotional images of the Virgin and Child.¹⁸

By understanding the potential for transference of the emotional associations inherent to domestic and devotional spaces into the illusory space of painting, artists were able to use specific

¹⁷ Marta and Flora Dennis Ajmar-Wollheim, eds., *At Home in Renaissance Italy* (London: V&A Publications, 2006), 89.

¹⁸ Ajmar-Wollheim, 91-92.

locations to enhance the two-way relationship between actual and pictorial space, and thus, between the secular and the divine. The increasing sophistication and complexity apparent in the multiple layers of meaning evinced through painted reconstructions of these places set the stage for works such as Giovanni Bellini's *Transfiguration* (c. 1460) to resonate within contemporary beholders' minds, a work in which the artist does not show a personalized version of locations and persons as much as he evokes and augments the viewer's private, interior vision.¹⁹ The same evocative suggestion of actuality would allow for future developments of increasing intellectual sophistication in Renaissance art, like Andrea del Sarto's *Birth of the Virgin* (1513-1514), in which the highly contrived casualness of the portrayed domesticity works to convince the viewer of the vitality and accessibility of this "shared" world.²⁰ The transference of emotion through the illusion of shared space, pioneered in the Trecento and Quattrocento Renaissance, allows for the continued spatial accessibility of these works. They are the "dreams, hopes, ideas, and ideals" of the Renaissance made visual.²¹

¹⁹ Baxendall, 47-48.

²⁰ Freedberg, S. J. *The Pelican History of Art: Painting in Italy 1500-1600* (New York: Penguin Books, 1979), 92.

²¹ Cole, xxiii.

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The *Ecclesiazusae* and the *Republic*

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“Many of the things we are saying, being contrary to custom, would stir up ridicule, if carried out in practice in the way we are telling them.”

(Plato, *Republic*, 452a)

I. Introduction

In the end of the fourth book of Plato’s *Republic*, Socrates completes the task that Glaucon had given him at the beginning of Book II. He defines justice by examining an Ideal State, and shows that a well-ordered state, like a well-ordered soul, is preferable to one in disarray. He defines the Ideal State in specific terms: its citizens¹ are to hold property in common; they are to abide by the sexual “lottery” implemented by the State; and able women are not to be dissuaded from holding offices normally reserved for men. Around the same time,² Aristophanes produced a play depicting his own ideal state with provisions similar to those we find in Plato. Since both authors proposed constitutions that differ greatly from the existing Athenian constitution, and since the two proposals resemble each other so closely, scholars have given the relevant parallels between the two works considerable attention.³ In this paper I will summarize the various interpretations put forth by scholars attempting to explain these congruencies, offer a somewhat novel solution, and explain why my solution is preferable to at least the consensus explanations.

¹ There is disagreement among scholars as to whether Plato’s “communism” extends to the craftsman class or not. Though it seems unlikely to me, I will not consider the issue in this paper.

² This is a point of contention among some scholars and will be the focus of the ensuing paper.

³ For an extensive list of the earlier discussions on the topic, see James Adam, ed., *The Republic of Plato* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1926), 1:345.

II. The Parallels

Aristophanes' comedy tells the story of a group of women led by Praxagora ("Woman Effective in Public")⁴ that infiltrates the Athenian assembly one day and passes sweeping legislative changes designed to save the city. The women's proposals call for city-wide abolishment of private property, communal housing, and sexual equality—for example, Praxagora decrees that good-looking young men and women must have sex with ugly older partners before they can have sex with attractive younger partners (*Ecc.* 591-2, 674, 614-618).⁵ This decree by Praxagora parallels Plato's suggestion that women participate in government, that goods be held in common, and that the state mandate sexual practices. The discerning reader will quickly notice that the women's legal reforms in the *Ecclesiazusae* do not exactly match Plato's, but similarities in theme are not the only thing at work here. James Adam skillfully points us toward seven passages in which there are parallels in language as well as in style.⁶ We will explore some of these parallels in order to get a firmer grasp on how these two compositions correspond and the controversy that has ensued among scholars in their attempt to explain these correspondences.

The first and perhaps most textually explicit parallel between the *Republic* and *Ecclesiazusae* comes at lines 465b and 635, respectively. In each, the authors ask how, in the absence of a nuclear family, a person will know his father, son, or brother in order to avoid the possibility of parricide, or sons "pissing" on (*Ecc.* 642) their fathers. The answer in both cases is that each will treat the other as if they were their father or son, thus bringing peace and harmony to the State (*Ecc.* 637, *Rep.* 463b-c). Another similarity occurs at line 679 in the *Ecclesiazusae*, when Praxagora claims that she will use wine, water, and dinner as rewards for the brave soldiers. Plato makes a similar proposal at lines 468c-e when he

⁴ This translation is from Bernard Freydeberg, *Philosophy and Comedy* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 113.

⁵ All citations from the *Ecclesiazusae* are from Aristophanes, *Assembly of Women (Ecclesiazusae)*, trans. Robert Mayhew (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1997).

⁶ Adam, 350-51.

extols Homer's methods of decorating his heroes through gastronomical incentives. There are five more passages that Adam cites as being analogous, but these two illustrate some of the clearest examples.⁷

III. Interpretations

The question then arises: why do these two pieces, each inarguably written within a span of thirty years,⁸ resemble each so closely? Logic allows us four possible conclusions:

- a. Plato copied Aristophanes, applying his philosophical modification of the poet's comical innovations.
- b. Aristophanes got his ideas from Plato.
- c. They each drew from a common source.
- d. Coincidence.⁹

a. Plato Copied Aristophanes

The first possibility that we will look at is that Plato got his ideas from Aristophanes. While this argument may at first strike the reader as absurd—Plato was, after all, a serious philosopher, and it would have been unlikely for him to base the *Republic* solely on a comedy—there are a few details to consider before this possibility is rejected. In fact, passages in the *Republic* seem to refer to Aristophanes' play, especially at line 452b and following: "We must not be afraid of all jokes of the kind

⁷ Adam also sees parallels at *Rep.* 457c and *Ecc.* 614; 458b and 583; 462a and 594; 464d and 657-673; 465a and 641-643. See Adam, 1:350-51.

⁸ Here we begin to tackle the question of chronology. Traditional estimates place the *Republic* between 380 BCE and 370 BCE; see Plato, *The Republic*, trans. G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1974), ix, and E. David, *Aristophanes and Athenian Society of the Early Fourth Century B.C.* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1984), 21, 92n. *Ecclesiastus* was first performed between 393 and 390 BCE, 392 being the most popular estimate. See Mayhew, 10, and K. J. Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy* (London: Batsford, 1972), 190.

⁹ While coincidence is surely a *logical* possibility, I will not discuss it in this paper for two reasons: first, there is no evidence that allows us to argue for *or* against this conclusion, and second, because it would invalidate all the other reasons that scholarship has led us to so far.

that the wits will make.”¹⁰ This passage, with its reference to comedy in general, could be used to support the notion that Plato’s political ideas had precedence in the theater. I do not, however, think that the evidence suggests that Plato got his *ideas* from Aristophanes, nor that the *Ecclesiazusae* was necessarily produced before the *Republic*.¹¹ However, pure logic dictates that we at last consider the priority of the *Ecclesiazusae* to the *Republic*, and though I do not agree with this conclusion, I consider it the best evidence in support of that claim. Though it is safe to say that Plato’s ideas did not originate with Aristophanes, I am convinced that he was in some way influenced by the comic and that they were in a “conversation” of sorts.

b. Aristophanes Copied the Republic.

The second theory likewise runs into difficulties, though of a different sort. It is generally believed that the finished version of the *Republic* was published at some time between 380 and 365 BCE (see note 4 above). Thus, the idea that Aristophanes’ *Ecclesiazusae* is a parody of the *Republic* in its current form seems chronologically impossible. Furthermore, some scholars, notably Bergk and Meineke, suggest that Aristyllus, who appears in the *Ecclesiazusae* as a coprophiliac, is Plato.¹² If this suggestion were so, one could make the point that a reference to Plato in the *Ecclesiazusae* is evidence that that Aristophanes is parodying the *Republic*. It is certainly possible that Aristyllus is Plato—Plato used to be called Aristocles, of which Aristyllus would be the diminutive, insulting form.¹³ However,

¹⁰ Freyberg, 112.

¹¹ Rather, Plato could be simply anticipating that his proposals in the *Republic* are ripe for parody. It should be noted that, while this first theory presents itself as one *logical* explanation of the parallels between the *Ecclesiazusae* and the *Republic*, there is little scholarship supporting this view.

¹² For a summary of Bergk and Meineke’s views, see Aristophanes, *Ecclesiazusae*, ed. R. G. Ussher (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), 165, and Adam, 348, respectively. On Aristyllus as a coprophile, see Mayhew, 85 and 68n.

¹³ Adam, 348.

apart from the name, this character is hardly recognizable as Plato.¹⁴ Additionally, Middle Comedy, the category into which the *Ecclesiazusae* is generally placed,¹⁵ tended to shy away from personal satire.¹⁶

Nonetheless, the fact that passages of the *Ecclesiazusae* mirror those in the *Republic* remains. The echoes—and the fact that each author is depicting a drastically new system of government—are too strong to be overlooked. Despite this fact, there is not a homogeneous continuity between the two works. There remain dramatic differences in the political programs described by the two authors that need to be examined. First, Plato's communism and sexual selection may only be confined to the guardian classes,¹⁷ whereas Praxagora's decrees are city-wide (*Rep.* 423c ff.; *Ecc.* 577 ff.). Plato is relatively quiet about the craftsman class, but it is probable that they will at least own property.¹⁸ Second, the entire parallel between Plato's and Aristophanes' "community of wives and children" begins to fall apart if we examine it more closely. Praxagora is in favor of *equal-opportunity* sex—the least "fit" are forced to mate with the "fittest," which would beget a homogenous "average" race, were it presented as a reproductive program. But Plato's scheme, elaborated in Book V, entails the opposite of this scheme. For Plato, the State is in charge of who mates with whom (*Rep.*, 460a). Unlike Praxagora, Plato does not care about the feelings or reproductive rights of the ugly, less fit members of his State. Instead, his breeding program is instituted with the aim of producing a highly differentiated citizen body, with the best people mating with the other best people to create more of the best people. Thus he

¹⁴ Aristophanes would probably have done a better job identifying those he was satirizing, if that had been his intent. See the introduction to *Clouds* in Douglas M. MacDowell, *Aristophanes and Athens* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 130, and Adam, 348.

¹⁵ Mayhew, 10.

¹⁶ Thomas K. Hubbard, "Utopianism and the Sophistic City," in *The City as Comedy: Society and Representation in Athenian Drama* (Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 35.

¹⁷ Plato does not say definitively whether or not technicians and craftsmen will have their reproductive lives regulated, though the benefits derived from his program of eugenics seem to serve the guardian class best.

¹⁸ That is, if *Kallipolis* is to be a functional state, those with practical *technē* must possess the tools and materials necessary to create artisanal products. Thus, we can suppose that it is most likely that the lower classes will have private property of some sort.

enforces a “strict division of the classes,”¹⁹ which is not at all what Praxagora had in mind.²⁰ Hence, a close examination of the apparent similarities between Praxagora and Plato reveals incongruities, and we can begin to see that attempts to show that Aristophanes copied Plato whole-cloth have generally been misguided.

c. There Was Something “in the Air.”

Faced with the difficulties of the previous two theories, many scholars²¹ have adopted the third theory, asserting that both authors drew from a third source. Herodotus mentions Agathyrsians (Scythians) and Libyans who practiced “sexual communism” (*Herod.* IV, 104 and 180), each with the supposed aim of promoting a spirit of brotherhood amongst the tribesmen—although this could be an instance of Greek rationalization, as Mayhew reminds us.²² The constitution of Sparta was also well-known to the Athenians. Sparta’s distribution of land and the presence of a military aristocratic ruling class, overseen by a council of twelve elders and two kings,²³ are echoed in Books IV-V of the *Republic*. But Plato differentiates Kallipolis from a *timocracy* such as one might find in Sparta in Book VIII. Aristoxenos says in a fragment that Plato lifts his plans for Kallipolis from Protagoras,²⁴ and Hubbard tells us that Cleisthenes, Democritus, and Archytas all articulated political programs in which the sharing of wealth was intended to bring about social harmony.²⁵ There may be some truth to these arguments: Plato was undoubtedly influenced by the Pythagoreans, and Archytas himself was a member of this sect. However, it is likely that that group’s influence on Plato was limited to his theories on the tripartite soul

¹⁹ Karl Popper, *The Spell of Plato*, vol. 1 of *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, 5th ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 86.

²⁰ It is important to keep in mind as well that Praxagora did not have any sort of eugenics or breeding program in mind—she simply wanted “equal opportunity” sex for everyone.

²¹ See Ussher, MacDowell, and Hubbard.

²² Mayhew, 25.

²³ For a discussion of Lycurgus’ “communist” reforms, including the abolition of private property and redistribution of land, see Plutarch’s *Life of Lycurgus*, chapters 8-10 especially.

²⁴ Kenneth H. Dover, *Aristophanic Comedy* (Oakland, Calif.: University of California Press, 1972): 201.

²⁵ Hubbard, 36.

and Philosopher-Rulers.²⁶ As these theories do not figure into the *Ecclesiazusae*, citing the Pythagoreans as a potential “common source” seems dubious at best (Klosko, 60-63 and 70-71).²⁷

In addition, Aristotle makes the possibility of a common source difficult when he claims that no one before Plato, philosopher or statesman, had ever proposed a state that held women and children in common (*Pol.* 1273b). This statement of Aristotle’s is cause for some consternation among scholars: if Plato was the first to propose such a constitution, then surely his *Republic* came before Aristophanes’ *Ecclesiazusae*—an important chronological detail, generally thought impossible, to which we will return later. This apparent contradiction to Aristotle’s claim can easily be explained, however; Aristotle, though familiar with the *Ecclesiazusae*, would not have considered it an actual proposition of a constitution. The poet Aristophanes would likewise not have ranked among statesmen or politicians. Herodotus’ reports predated Plato’s *Republic*, but again, barbarian tribes’ customs would not have held much sway in the minds of Athenian intellectuals, and Aristotle would not have taken their constitutions seriously. In the end, Aristotle hinders those who favor a “common source” theory regarding the congruities of the texts. If Plato was the first “credible source” proposing these reforms, then neither author could have drawn from a common source, in the concrete sense of the word. This conclusion leaves subscribers to “common source theory” no choice but to claim that the idea of a communistic, utopian city was merely “in the air” (see note 9). While the idea surely was “in the air,” we shall see that there was more to it than that.

We have now examined each of the prevalent theories and seen that while each has its own merit, each still leaves questions unanswered. It seems improbable that Plato plagiarized a comedy—that his seed of inspiration came solely from Aristophanes. It is also chronologically and thematically difficult to allow that Aristophanes copied from the completed *Republic*. This process of elimination

²⁶ For the Pythagoreans’ influence on Plato, see Cicero, *De republica*, Book 1, Section 16. On Archytas as a Pythagorean and Pythagoreans influence on Plato, see George Klosko, *The Development of Plato’s Political Theory* (New York: Methuen, 1986), 60-61.

²⁷ George Klosko, *The Development of Plato’s Political Theory* (New York: Methuen, 1986): 60-63 and 70-71.

leaves us to resort to the idea that they each drew from a common source—yet attempts to provide concrete evidence of such a source have been speculative at best. A cautious scholar would then maintain that these ideas were simply floating around Athens at the beginning of the fourth century BCE and that Plato and Aristophanes coincidentally covered the same ground.²⁸ But these coincidences seem too fortuitous to chalk up to chance. The ideas and language are too similar to allow me to resign myself to the position that the time was simply ripe for literary representations of “communistic utopias” in Athens. So what are the forces at work here? I propose an idea that has seldom been explored, but which will, I think, paint an equally if not more logical and much more concrete picture of what actually happened.

IV. An Unconsidered Possibility

I think that all three theories discussed above have validity, to a certain extent. Though we can easily see how theories (1—Plato copied Aristophanes) or (2—Aristophanes copied Plato) can each work with (3—the ideas were in the air), how can we reconcile (1) and (2) with each other—how could Plato have copied from Aristophanes and vice versa? For the answer, we must turn both to chronology and the texts themselves.

I said before that the *Republic* as we have it (Books I–X, in that order) was not completed until sometime around 375 BCE. However, it seems unlikely that Plato spun it off in a few years’ time.²⁹ It is obviously a central work in Plato’s entire corpus and iterates fundamental ideas of his metaphysics.³⁰ Thus it seems possible, even probable, that earlier versions were produced and perhaps circulated, with or without the author’s consent or knowledge. Most Plato scholars accept that Book I was written

²⁸ Ussher is certain that a common source, which he cannot name, is responsible for the coincidences.

²⁹ Nails’ argument, based on strong cases for different dramatic dates of the *Republic*, shows that the *Republic* was “cobbled together and revised over decades.” See Debra Nails, “The Dramatic Date of Plato’s *Republic*,” *The Classical Journal* 93 (1998): 385.

³⁰ Plato, *The Republic*, trans. G. M. A. Grube (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1974), ix.

before the rest of the *Republic*—its format and language are different from the rest of the work.³¹ Furthermore, it reaches a familiarly Socratic ending: *aporia*.³² But Book I mentions none of the things with which the *Ecclesiazusae* is concerned—Aristophanes could not have gotten the idea for his play from the first book.

The "Proto-Republic"

There is, however, another possibility—that of a “proto-*Republic*”: an earlier, incomplete version of the *Republic*. This idea is in itself controversial,³³ but I think it is the only possibility that adequately explains how well the *Republic* and *Ecclesiazusae* dovetail. Holger Thesleff provides an illuminating discussion of the possibility of a “proto-Republic,” and I will go over some of what he says. His main evidence for the existence of an incomplete version of the *Republic* is the “re-cap” in the *Timaeus* of the “discourse [Socrates] delivered yesterday” (*Tim.* 17c). What Socrates says concerns the sexual reforms and communal property, not the Sun, Line, Cave, or Philosopher-Rulers. This focus implies that the discussion to which he was referring was not actually “finished”; Plato returned to and elaborated on it after the *Timaeus* was published.

In order to assign a date to the proto-*Republic*, Thesleff uses evidence from a pamphlet distributed by Polykrates and Plato’s *Apology*.³⁴ Though I do not necessarily agree with Thesleff’s dating

³¹ Ruby Blondell, “Letting Plato Speak for Himself,” in G. A. Press, *Who Speaks for Plato? Studies in Platonic Anonymity* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 128.

³² Blondell, 136-37.

³³ Adam seems to dismiss the “separatists” and insists that the two questions should be kept separate. I think that the two questions are completely intertwined, as the anachronism between the works seems to be the only thing keeping scholars from wholeheartedly agreeing that Aristophanes is parodying Plato. See Adam, 353.

³⁴ Thesleff spends thirteen pages attempting to prove what I have simply glossed over, but he does sum it up nicely on 115: “Proto-*Republic*”—*Ecclesiazusae*—*Apology*—Polykrates; see Holger Thesleff, “Studies in Platonic Chronology,” *Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum* 70 (1982): 115. However, Thesleff is certainly not without detractors. David finds the idea of a ‘Proto-*Republic*’ especially abhorrent, standing by c. 375 as the most likely date of publication of the *Republic* and asserts that the theater-going Athenian audience would not have been familiar with Plato’s ideas, even if they had been circulated; see David, 21. Why then, would Aristophanes choose to parody him? An answer lies in some of the very ideas that David puts forth: that the idea was “in the air.” The audience did not need to know that Aristophanes had Plato in mind—they still would have found the play funny.

of the *Apology*, his conclusion supports my general thesis: Plato was miffed by the hostile reception given to the proto-Republic by Aristophanes, and probably others, and the proto-Republic was circulated before the *Ecclesiazusae*.³⁵

Aristotle and the Timaeus

Accepting then the probability, or at least the possibility, of a proto-Republic, we can move on. Exactly what was written or disseminated by 392 BCE cannot be known with complete confidence, but I think that by exploring the text of the *Republic* and the ancient evidence provided by Aristotle and Plato himself, we might be able to glean some hints. The *Timaeus* has already been discussed, and it leaves us fairly certain that the *Republic* that it referred to contained no mention of Philosopher-Rulers or the advanced educational system that they were to receive.³⁶ It seems, then, that the proto-Republic contained Books II-V, but only the first half of V.³⁷ Furthermore, if these gaps alone were not enough

Furthermore, the intellectual “elite” would probably have been familiar with Plato’s preliminary sketches. Plato himself would have recognized the jab, and that was what was important. Debra Nails offers similar arguments in neglecting the date assigned to the *Apology* by Thesleff while agreeing upon the existence of the “Proto-Republic.” See Debra Nails, *Agora, Academy, and the Conduct of Philosophy* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publisher, 1995), 116. An important addition to Thesleff’s arguments that she makes is the fact that “there is *no* [emphasis in original] hard evidence—neither from plays, nor speeches, nor any other literary production contemporary with Plato—that refers to...” the Sun, Divided Line, Cave, Philosopher Kings, and other passages in the *Republic* generally regarded as middle to late period Platonic metaphysics. See Nails, *Agora*, 117. Nails continues to argue for—indeed, almost takes for granted—the Proto-Republic in a more recent paper; see Debra Nails, “Plato’s Republic in Its Athenian Context,” in *International Plato Society, IX Symposium Platonicum: Plato’s Politeia* (Tokyo: Keio University, 2010), 56.

³⁵ Thesleff does not commit himself to a specific method through which the public might have received the ‘Proto-Republic,’ nor do I. It is possible that Plato gave it in a speech, or an unpublished manuscript was circulated without his consent, or even that through discussions with his friends and colleagues his ideas became known among the Athenian intellectuals.

³⁶ To add emphasis to this point, the recapitulation concludes with Socrates asking Timaeus if they had “omitted...[any] point.” Timaeus says no—this was “precisely what was said.” See Plato, *Timaeus*, ed. G. P. Goold, trans. R. G. Bury (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1989), 9:19b.

³⁷ Nails thinks that the ‘Proto-Republic’ contained II, III, V, and VII; see Nails, *Agora*, 117. Why she thinks that Book VII is part of an earlier “tier” of work is beyond both me and the scope of this paper, especially as that book contains the famous Allegory of the Cave and instructions on the education of Philosopher Kings, neither of which can really be considered early Platonic metaphysics. Furthermore, nothing in Book VII is paralleled in *Ecclesiazusae*, and Nails relies, as I do, on Aristophanes’ parody to establish the presence of a ‘Proto-Republic.’

evidence, we will see that evidence from Aristotle confirms the assumption with his own criticism of the *Republic*.

Thomas Robinson gives us an illuminating article on Aristotle's treatment of the *Republic*, thereby confirming the existence of a proto-*Republic*. According to Robinson, Aristotle has "divorced the political recommendations from their broader metaphysical context",³⁸ and has instead focused solely on the pragmatic implications of commonly held wives and property. Robinson also cites Aristotle's "unwillingness to engage [with Plato] in argument at [a] meta-level,"³⁹ and attributes both "errors" [my quotations] to a failure to "distinguish...his inaccurate understanding of what the *Republic* was up to from what Plato may *actually* [my italics] have written."⁴⁰ It is Robinson's claim that Aristotle is purposely referencing Plato in a "selective way,"⁴¹ and that one possibility for this is a *Republic* that "went through several stages of publication by Plato himself."⁴² I think that Aristotle was criticizing the proto-*Republic*, a work devoid of the metaphysics of Plato's Middle Period that could have still been in circulation, or perhaps was even better known by the majority of Athenians. Not only does this reading give much-deserved credit to Aristotle's aptitude as a literary critic, but it dovetails nicely with the evidence provided by the *Timaeus* of the kind of proto-Republic, that all these ancient sources had at hand, including Aristotle, Aristophanes, and Plato himself.⁴³

Furthermore, it has been noted that while the general theme of the reforms that Praxagora introduces to Athens resembles that of the *Republic*, the reforms' particulars differ greatly. This difference would make sense if Aristophanes offered some of the character Polemarchus' criticisms (423e) in his *Ecclesiazusae*, after which Plato addressed them in his reworking of the beginning of Book

³⁸ Thomas Robinson, "Aristotle as a Political Critic," in *Aristotelian Political Philosophy*, ed. K. I. Boudouris (Athens: International Center for Greek Philosophy and Culture, 1995), 155.

³⁹ Robinson, 157.

⁴⁰ Robinson, 157.

⁴¹ Robinson, 153.

⁴² Robinson, 153.

⁴³ Again, Fine's argument on 117, cited above, reinforces Robinson's argument.

V—a prospect that, as we can now see, seems quite likely. A few careless statements⁴⁴ claiming that community of wives, children, and property should be held in common would be ideal fodder for a witty comedian such as Aristophanes. If all he heard was that the guardians—soldiers, the backbone of the state—would not own anything, and that sex would be mandated by the State, he would most certainly feel compelled to put this theory into practice—in a comedy, of course—to see how it played out. This is exactly what Aristophanes did.⁴⁵ Based on the treatment given by Aristophanes, I suggest a proto-*Republic* that consisted of Books II-IV/V⁴⁶ and continued on to VIII-IX.⁴⁷ In summary, Aristophanes was the first critic to object, as Polemarchus does in the beginning of Book V, to Plato's political and social innovations, and Plato was forced to rework the opening of Book V to address the concerns that Aristophanes brought to his attention.

V. The *Republic*: Internal Evidence of a "Proto-*Republic*."

Having already examined the ancient evidence, we will now turn to Socrates' language as he begins to address Polemarchus' criticism. Plato reiterates the passage at 423e, where Socrates mentions the community of wives and children. Then Adeimantus reminds Socrates that even if he is right about holding wives and children in common, he had better explain the manner in which this will come about, because there are many ways of doing this, and the right or the wrong way will make "all the difference to the government of your city" (449d-e). He is essentially saying, "look, you did not quite give this idea enough attention, and people could really take this the wrong way and run with it." Socrates was "still in

⁴⁴ Perhaps "careless" is too harsh of a word to use with Plato—nonetheless, we must suppose that his political program laid out in the 'Proto-*Republic*' was not a flawless system. Plato was still "searching and in doubt."

⁴⁵ We must bear in mind that however Aristophanes influenced Plato, it was in regard to Plato's more peripheral ideas, such as the practical functionality of his ideal State. The heart and depth of the *Republic* (i.e. the Sun, Line, and Cave passages) are unique to Plato. I believe that Plato would have eventually included these passages with or without influence from Aristophanes. Still, the inevitability of Plato's arrival at these beliefs does not preclude the possibility that Aristophanes was responsible for Plato's initial revisions, which is what I am claiming here.

⁴⁶ That is, the beginning of what is now Book V. This could have been attached to Book IV, Book VIII, or on its own.

⁴⁷ The "problem" of Book I has no bearing on this argument, so I will ignore it completely. It was probably an earlier dialogue or a proto-"proto-*Republic*," but we will leave it at that. Book X is also dissimilar in style and theme, so I shall simply consider the proto-*Republic* to have contained "at least" the books mentioned.

doubt and searching” (450d) when the proto-*Republic* was circulated, so he did not yet have all the answers as to how this community of women and children was going to work; Aristophanes took advantage of this uncertainty in his *Ecclesiazusae*.

Then Socrates begins his explanation, showing that his way of communalizing the women and children was vastly different from Aristophanes’ by making a bow to Adrasteia. This reference in itself is important and has been often overlooked by scholars trying to find the connection between the *Republic* and the *Ecclesiazusae*. Adrasteia was an alias for Nemesis. She “hate[d] every transgression of the bounds of moderation, and restore[d] the proper and normal order of things.”⁴⁸ This “bow” *could* be interpreted as Plato acknowledging his earlier mistakes and actually “thanking” Aristophanes, who played the role of Adrasteia, for bringing them to his attention. This connection is not definitive by any means, but it is another possible piece in the puzzle.

Socrates then “begs these people not to practice their trade of comedy at our expense,” and says that it is “foolish to think anything ridiculous except what is bad, or try to raise a laugh at any other spectacle than that of ignorance” (*Rep.* 452c). It does not take a vivid imagination to suppose that these remarks are the result of the proto-*Republic* being lampooned. Only after having been insulted at the hands of Aristophanes would Plato preface his introduction of the Philosopher-Ruler⁴⁹ by saying that the suggestion needed to be made, even if, “[l]ike a wave of laughter, it will simply drown me in ridicule and contempt.”

⁴⁸ See Harry Peck, ed., *Harper’s Dictionary of Classical Literature and Antiquities*, 3rd ed. (New York: Cooper Square Publishers, 1965), 1086.

⁴⁹ Plato, *Republic*, section 473c. Note that the Philosopher-Ruler was not mentioned in the *Ecclesiazusae*, making a “Proto-Republic” that contained the completed version of Book V next to impossible—Aristophanes surely would have jumped at the chance to make fun of Philosopher-Rulers.

VI. Conclusion

Unless we uncover an ancient version of the *Republic* different from the one we already have, we shall never know for certain what the relationship between the *Republic* and *Ecclesiazusae* was. But it does seem nearly impossible that two works written within twenty years of each other and traversing such similar ground had no connection or interaction. I do not think that we should become overzealous in our attempts to pin down a reason for their similarities. But it would be implausible to chalk their differences up to coincidence. I also believe that multiple versions of the *Republic* must have been circulated, even if it was among a small crowd of friends and intelligentsia. It is hard to believe that a mere seventeen years before its publication there were no drafts, speeches, or pamphlets discussing the basic ideas set forth in the *Republic*.⁵⁰ Our efforts, then, need to be directed toward finding the *most likely* scenario in which these two works are connected. By examining the chronology and the texts, I find the idea that Plato and Aristophanes were in a “dialogue,” of sorts, to be the most compelling.

⁵⁰ Again, citing David’s claim that 375 is the “almost commonly” accepted date for publication as a whole (21, 92n).

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The Representation of Christ in Byzantine Hermitages: A Comparison

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A common feature among the church decoration of Byzantine Cappadocia is the depiction of Christ in human form. It is primarily within hermitages, where ascetic monks dwelled, that there was a demand for this particular kind of image. During the Middle Byzantine period, Christological narratives became the standard for mural decoration, since the images could stand for the theology and history of the church. Two scenes of the Crucifixion, one at the hermitage of Niketas the Stylite and the other at the New Church of Tokalı Kilise, give special emphasis to the dual nature of Christ while providing evidence of the historical event as told by the Scriptures. The Crucifixion scenes found at the chapel of Niketas and the New Church at Tokalı Kilise correspond to the function of the church primarily as a space to perform the liturgy in remembrance of Christ's sacrifice. Situated near the altar, the paintings convey a central theme of transformation as witnessed by the monks performing the Eucharistic liturgy. Expressing the divine through the human experience—that is, through the senses—is a vital part of the spiritual encounter and, as such, requires a particular kind of imagery that promises salvation and eternal life.

The spread of Christianity had a tremendous effect on the culture and life of Cappadocia. Christianity was prevalent throughout the region as early as the second century C.E.¹ During the eighth and ninth centuries, Arab invasions began to deplete the population and threatened to overcome the Byzantine Empire. Miraculously, the eastern provinces were regained, and the prominence that

¹ Lyn Rodley and Nicole Thierry. "Cappadocia," in Grove Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.pdx.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T013854>, from Oxford Art Online, accessed October 10, 2010, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/>.

Christianity once had was restored. The period marks the gradual uprising of monasticism, particularly in the Tufa valleys of Kizil Irmak.² The area proved to be a desirable location for monks seeking a landscape that resembled those described in the narratives of the prophets in the Old and New Testaments. As a result, many hermits assumed an ascetic life in the desert, where pilgrims would travel to visit them. These same pilgrims doubled as donors who funded the decoration of numerous rock churches throughout Cappadocia.

Inscriptions such as the one found at the hermitage of Niketas the Stylite were included as a way of celebrating the pious acts of wealthy donors. The patron associated with the decoration of the chapel of Niketas is commonly known as Eustratios the *Kleisourarch*, commander of a military division. There has been some speculation about Eustratios's reasons for commissioning the chapel, the general belief being that he wanted to commemorate a military victory that had been supplied to him by the prayers of a monk.³ A second inscription was also found in the chapel and reveals the identity of the monk as being Niketas, who followed St. Simeon the Elder, likely the first hermit to establish himself on the top of a column. It has been speculated that directly below Niketas's column was a chapel decorated with a program and style of painting that is more or less dated to the early eighth century.⁴ It has been assigned an early date on the basis of composition, which emphasizes a narrative cycle recounting the lives of Christ and the saints. On the nave of the chapel is a Crucifixion scene that is flanked by representations of St. Simeon and the Apostles. The inscriptions were placed alongside each figure to identify them but also to call attention to the sanctity of both human and divine forms. For instance, an inscription found inside of Niketas's chapel reads, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins

² Ann Wharton Epstein. "The Problem of Provincialism: Byzantine Monasteries in Cappadocia and Monks in South Italy," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*. (1979): 29.

³ Ahmet Ertuğ and Catherine Jolivet-Lévy. *Sacred Art of Cappadocia: Byzantine Murals from the 6th to 13th Centuries* (Istanbul: Ertuğ & Kocabıyık, 2006).

⁴ Lyn Rodley. *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 189.

of the world.”⁵ The meaning behind the passage gains more strength when paired with the actual image. In order to fully describe the imperceptible details of Christian theology, artists and patrons in Cappadocia turned to art to express their beliefs and ideas.

Representing these complexities in visual form became problematic and resulted in the institutionalization of a standardized code for image production. The Quinisext Council of 692 enforced a litany of canons that affected art directly. The eighty-second canon, for example, declared that the representation of Christ should be shown in human form instead of symbolically as a lamb.⁶ There were numerous changes made to the pictorial schemes of churches throughout the region.

In the Göreme Valley in particular, where the New Church of Tokalı Kilise is located, there was a gradual shift towards depicting Christ in human form. Tokalı Kilise underwent several stages of construction, the first being as a functional hermitage. A vast amount of wealth went into the decoration of the interior, which incorporated the use of costly materials such as lapis lazuli. Once again, a great deal of emphasis was placed on the narrative cycle, which features scenes from the lives of Christ and his disciples. The Crucifixion scene at the chapel of Niketas is one example of a composition that uses saintly figures such as John the Baptist to underscore Christ’s human nature. At Tokalı Kilise, the figure of Jeremy points to the Crucifixion as if to reinforce the sacrifice of the lamb.⁷ To commemorate their pious act, the patrons, Constantine and Leon, instructed the workshop of Nikephoros to include the inscription, “[y]our (most holy church) was completely decorated by Constantine out of love for the monastery (of the heavenly angels). He adorns his new work with twenty venerable images....”⁸ As the inscription implies, the church contains a number of Christological scenes as well as hagiographic depictions, but it is the image of the Crucifixion in the main apse of the church

⁵ Rodley, 186.

⁶ Robin Cormack, *Byzantine Art* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 82.

⁷ Ertuğ and Jolivet-Lévy, 50.

⁸ Rodley, 218.

that bears mentioning. The Crucifixion, in addition to showing Christ in human form, seems to be referencing liturgical events such as the transubstantiation of the Eucharist.

Illustrating the conversion of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ proved to be just as difficult as explaining verbally, in theological terms, his dual nature. The problem of representing Christ's two natures was fiercely debated throughout the eighth and ninth centuries, the period commonly known as the Byzantine Iconoclasm. Consequently, leaders of the church began to deeply criticize all acts of worship incorporating religious iconography. Any material aid that might assist in pagan rituals, such as sacrificial victims, shrines, and images, were immediately renounced.⁹ Spiritual aids were prohibited for contradicting the Second Commandment, which forbids graven images. If, however, the decoration was in any way symbolic or narrative, it was deemed acceptable.

In response to these changes, images of the Crucifixion along with non-figural images such as the crucifix became the standard motifs for church decoration of the period.¹⁰ The chapel of Niketas exemplifies the artistic style of the eighth century, since a prevalence of crosses dominates much of the scheme. There has been some debate about the influence of imagery of the Crucifixion on religious groups such as the Cult of the Cross.¹¹ The cult encouraged the production of images that might help heretics "understand...the depths of the humiliation of the Word of God...that we may recall to our memory his conversation in the flesh, his passion and salutary death, and his redemption which was wrought in the whole world."¹² As the passage implies, Christological scenes became a popular theme among the interiors of churches, since it was the historical events of Christ's life that provided the model for monks like Niketas.

⁹ von Grunebaum, G. E. "Byzantine Iconoclasm and the Influence of the Islamic Environment." *History of Religions*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (Summer, 1962), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1062034>, (accessed November, 17 2010), 5.

¹⁰ Rodley and Thierry, "Cappadocia."

¹¹ Rodley, *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia*, 189.

¹² von Grunebaum, "Byzantine Iconoclasm," 4.

The development of Christological narrative in church programming may have begun with single isolated figures and evolved into complex narrative cycles by the Middle Byzantine period.¹³ In general, the predisposition towards narrative was common both before and after the Byzantine Iconoclasm. Historical narratives were appropriate subjects for church decoration, since the themes were derived from Christian traditions and could not be traced back to paganism. In addition, the architectural space of the church could allow continuous narratives to be extended throughout the interior without disruption. This appreciation for narrative seems to be the case with the New Church of Tokalı Kilise, where the space from the eastern side of the barrel vault to the entrance of the apse is covered with registers of Christological scenes. The conch of the central apse features the image of the Crucifixion, which is unusual for a Byzantine church. The novelty of the image also comes from the fact that because the artist painted the scene on a curved surface, he had to add a slight modification to the arms of the cross so that it could be read horizontally.¹⁴ To ensure legibility, the scenes are presented in sequential order with organizational divisions that are provided by the architecture. Not all of the figures are neatly arranged, since there are saints who clearly stand isolated from the larger scheme. The combination of narrative with single figures was not introduced until later on and can only be explained in terms of the specific liturgical needs of the particular region. In all probability, the purpose of the narrative was to represent a liturgical calendar of the Christian feast cycle.¹⁵

If Middle Byzantine mural decoration was meant to represent a calendar of feasts, then perhaps the most important dates would be those that occurred during Lent. Literary evidence suggests that stylites venerated the life of St. Simeon because it was during Lent that he practiced severe mortification.¹⁶ Each year he would go without food until he became deathly ill. By celebrating the

¹³ Ann Wharton Epstein, *Tokali Kilise: Tenth-Century Metropolitan Art in Byzantine Cappadocia* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1986), 45.

¹⁴ Epstein, *Tokali Kilise*, 24.

¹⁵ Harvey, "The Stylite's Liturgy," 523.

¹⁶ Harvey, 523.

Eucharistic liturgy, Simeon broke his fast and was restored back to life. Like the bread and wine of the Eucharist, Simeon and his followers were transformed. One may postulate that placing an image of the Crucifixion over the altar, like at the New Church of Tokalı Kilise, indicates the need to express these ideas.

By observing the decoration of the church, it becomes clear that a great deal of thought was put into the arrangement of the figures. Compared to the New Church of Tokalı Kilise, the chapel of Niketas the Stylite contains a much more ambiguous program of Christological and hagiographic scenes. Niketas's chapel differs from the New Church in that it reserves the most significant space, the conch, for the Virgin and Child. In addition, the Crucifixion scene is placed on the east wall lunette and is accompanied by the solitary figures of St. Simeon and John the Baptist. Paired with each figure is an inscription that identifies the saints and a passage that reads, "[f]or the prayer and salvation and the forgiveness of sins of Niketas, stylite, by the faith of the ascetic...."¹⁷ It seems as though Niketas wanted to redeem himself and ensure his salvation through a lifetime of pious devotion and ritual worship. Redemption and salvation were thought to be attainable through enacting the Eucharistic liturgy, which would explain why so much attention was given to the space where this ceremony took place. The mural decoration of Niketas's chapel reflects the intended function of the church as a sacred space to celebrate and remember Christ's sacrifice.

A ceremonial practice such as the Eucharistic liturgy involves each and every one of the senses, which makes an encounter with the divine ever more conceivable. The incense, chants, and processions all contribute to the feeling of being a witness to the events commemorated in the liturgy. Viewing the panels of Christological narratives painted on the walls of the church, holy men like Niketas may have been inspired to devote themselves to being witnesses and practitioners of spiritual worship. After all, the body and senses are the means for bridging the gap between the human and the divine. By

¹⁷ Rodley, *Cave Monasteries of Byzantine Cappadocia*, 187.

practicing asceticism, the monk's body was transformed into a vessel for containing the divine within the earthly realm. It is not surprising that themes of resurrection, victory over death, and redemption dominated the interiors of Byzantine churches.

Perhaps the reason why Christ is portrayed in such a triumphant manner in Byzantine church interiors is because he was meant to embody both the physical and spiritual hardships that monks like Niketas endured for much of their lives. The extent to which they would dedicate themselves to performing pious acts, such as praying for the forgiveness of sins for others or commissioning expensive church decorations, suggests that these holy men were on a quest for salvation. Based on the evidence that remains from texts and architectural decoration, the hermitages of Cappadocia were sacred spaces with a form and function that provide some insight into the cultural and artistic developments of the period.

The hermitages of Niketas the Stylite and the New Church at Tokalı Kilise are but two examples of the painted decorations that remain from the Byzantine Era; both depict the figural representation of Christ at the moment of the Crucifixion. Contemporary theological debates resulted in the intervention of the Catholic Church on matters concerning the representation of Christ. In response to these ongoing changes, mural decoration was modified to accommodate liturgical needs. Christological scenes became the standard for church programs because the images were didactic symbols of Christ's mission on earth. As a historical account of Christ's sacrifice and triumph over death, these murals inspired the pious acts of ascetic monks eager for forgiveness and salvation.

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To Protect, Serve, and Sell Out: The Mongol Imperial Guard and the Roman Praetorian Guard

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In order to successfully maintain and secure an empire, rulers often sought to establish a personal bodyguard charged primarily with the preservation of their lives. Such situations were particularly true in the cases of the Mongol and Roman Empires, in which elite guards attended their leaders day and night, during peacetime and in open battle. Whereas the Mongol Imperial Guard was created with honest intent and found to be exclusively loyal to its political patron, the khan, the Roman Praetorian Guards were often bribed to sacrifice their own values for the political agendas of the Senate and swayed by their own agendas to oust one emperor for another better suited. This essay compares and contrasts these two imperial corps, their later incarnations, their expectations, and their loyalties and disloyalties within the context of their respective empires and the political patrons they were entrusted to protect. Many differences and similarities can be found between the two sets of soldiers, who thrived in two completely different eras of history and in two completely different parts of the world.

The first incarnation of the Mongol Imperial Guard differed from the Roman Praetorians, who were, from the moment of their origins, seen as an elite unit¹ and an “important arm of the state and a formidable personal military power base.”² The Mongol Imperial Guard under command of Chinggis Qan, established in 1206,³ differed somewhat from that of the Romans. According to Richard A. Gabriel,

¹ Michael Kerrigan, *A Dark History: The Roman Emperors* (New York: Metro Books, 2008), 47.

² Kerrigan, 47.

³ Richard A. Gabriel, *Genghis Khan's Greatest General: Subotai the Valiant* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 2004), 37.

“in the early days, the [Mongol Imperial] Guard had comprised only 1,000 men and consisted of the khan’s household, personal servants, and old, trusted comrades from the tribal wars who acted as a battle guard when engaged.”⁴ Chinggis Qan’s elite guards were not only fully capable of protecting his life, but they were also his family members, his cooks, and his personal valets. The mundane nature of the khan’s bodyguard changed dramatically over time, as these attendants’ titles eventually gave way to a designation as “the personal bodyguard of the Khan,”⁵ who made up the “*tungaut*, or Day Guard, *kabtaut*, or Night Guard, and the Quiver Bearers, or battle guard.”⁶ Once the Mongol Imperial Guard had developed into this particular incarnation, they closely resembled the standing Praetorian Guards in Rome under Caesar Augustus and his successors.

Praetorians ranged from “men of lowly origin and of possibly doubtful Latinity and Romanization to sons of the municipal middle classes who possessed much higher standards of culture and education.”⁷ Such similarities can be seen among the Mongol Imperial Guard under Möngke Qan, who also “drew upon his guard and that of his father for lower echelon personnel of non-Mongol origin.”⁸ In some respects, the makeup of the Praetorians nearly mirrored that of the Imperial Guard, with foreigners and commoners—and in the case of the Mongols, prisoners—mixed heavily with the elite from the more prominent rungs of society. Perhaps this recruitment from the lower echelon was also strategic, as soldiers with fewer accolades and less clout might be less likely to plan a *coup d’état* for control of the empire. Both sets of soldiers were indeed qualified for the positions they came to hold, and circumstances and internal structure eventually determined their ultimate allegiances—whether to their rulers, to their policymakers, or to themselves.

⁴ Gabriel, 37

⁵ Gabriel, 37.

⁶ Gabriel, 37.

⁷ William G. Sinnigen, “The Roman Secret Service,” *The Classical Journal* 57, no. 2 (1961): 65-72.

⁸ Thomas T. Allsen, “Guard and Government in the Reign of the Grand Qan Möngke,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 47, no. 2 (1986): 495-521.

Upon their initial establishment under Caesar Augustus in 27 B.C.E., the Praetorian Guard remained loyal to its emperor, just as the original Imperial Guard of Chinggis Qan did in 1206 C.E. Thomas Allsen points out that Möngke Qan “simply drew upon his own and his father’s *kešigs* for key personnel.”⁹ Due process for recruitment worked similarly in ancient Rome, when Emperor Vespasian named his son Titus as his prefect, or head of the Praetorian Guard. Both instances can be seen as strategic ways of choosing one’s personal guard in order to eliminate the chances of disloyalty. This idea leads into the primary argument of this paper, which seeks to distinguish the loyalty of the Mongol Imperial Guard from the treacherous tendencies of its Roman counterpart.

Though the Roman and Mongolian Guards paralleled one another in many ways, they also differed significantly in others. While the Praetorians consisted of elite soldiers and Roman citizens elected to the title of prefect, the Imperial Guard claimed a heavy contingent of prisoners, as “most of the hostages sent to the Mongols served as guards.”¹⁰ In Ch’i-ch’ing Hsiao’s book, he reports that Rashid al-Din described one such occurrence, in which “they (the Korean court) removed *turqaqs* and *keziktens* without number from the land of Solanqa, and sent them to Qa’an.”¹¹ Surely, the land of Solanqa refers to Korea, and the terms *turqaqs* and *keziktens* probably translate to prisoners or perhaps vagabonds—people considered the dregs of Korean society who had done nothing to benefit the Korean state. Later in the same section Hsiao writes that Hulegu, grandson of Chinggis, also chose the sons of Armenian and Georgian princes and placed them in his Persian court as guards.¹² This evidence fails to point towards the loyalty of the Imperial Guard, but it does perhaps suggest a forced appointment to the position—namely, as foreigners conscripted into the protection of the Mongol emperors under punishment of possible death. In the case of the Armenian and Georgian princes taken from their fathers, who were

⁹ Allsen, 507.

¹⁰ Ch’i-ch’ing Hsiao, *The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1978), 149.

¹¹ Hsiao, 150.

¹² Hsiao, 150.

surely kings subjugated by the Il-khanate, their sons' appointment to the Imperial Guard as hostages could have been used to ensure these subject kings' good behavior. Perhaps if the subject kings challenged or displeased the Mongol rulers in any way, their sons would be put to death as a direct result of their actions. In a sense, even in this particular case, the foreigners appointed to the Imperial Guard could be seen as loyal to the cause of protecting their khan's life—just in a different circumstance than those originally loyal to Chinggis Qan.

The term *keshig* is often associated with the Mongol Imperial Guard. As Ch'i-ch'ing Hsiao writes in his book on the establishment of the Yuan military, "[k]eshig is a Mongolian word from the Turkish *kāzik*,"¹³ and that in "Yuan sources it was used to denote the Imperial Guard created by Činggis."¹⁴ Of all of his soldiers, "Chinggis Khan expected absolute obedience to his commands."¹⁵ Upon the Imperial Guard's official establishment in 1206, Chinggis reorganized his own army to improve its ability to defeat armies larger than itself.¹⁶ The *keshig* had apparently undergone at least two incarnations under the reign of Chinggis, and possibly more under the control of his successors—particularly in the case of Hulegu, as mentioned earlier. In a broader view, the *keshig* "was normally composed of the sons and relatives of Mongolian noblemen and military commanders, but included as well individuals of different social and ethnic backgrounds who possessed some talent or skill useful to an aspiring prince."¹⁷ As the Mongol Imperial Guard became "the home of the best, brightest, and most promising of the Mongol army's military commanders and staff officers,"¹⁸ nearly the same can be said of the Praetorian Guard,

¹³ Hsiao, 148.

¹⁴ Hsiao, 148.

¹⁵ Timothy May, "The Training of an Inner Asian Nomad Army in the Pre-Modern Period," *The Journal of Military History* 70, no. 3 (2006): 633.

¹⁶ Gabriel, 37.

¹⁷ Allsen, 507.

¹⁸ Gabriel, 40.

its members “perfectly integrated into the Roman military establishment by virtue of their recruitment, careers, and functions.”¹⁹

Another difference between the two imperial corps is that the Mongol Imperial Guard was never run by a Republican Senate, as the Roman Praetorian Guard was. The Roman emperors were in sole control of ruling the Roman Empire, but they usually consulted the Senate on important decisions. There may have been some sort of political body performing actions such as these under the Mongol Empire, especially in the case of the Yuan Dynasty, but even if such a body existed, its members certainly respected the decisions of their khan without planning a political coup of some sort.

Another difference between the two can be found in their personal requirements and expectations. While the Praetorian Guard was stationed in Rome²⁰ on a permanent basis under direct command of the emperor, the Mongol Imperial Guard was expected to learn to operate siege machinery on the battlefield and took “its place next to the Great Khan in the center of the line, to be employed at his command.”²¹ Even in battlefield situations when the Roman emperor was present, the Praetorians never left his side, allowing the infantry, cavalry, and auxiliary units to resolve the conflict.

The same level of loyalty exhibited by the Mongol Imperial Guard toward the khan was not usually felt by the Roman Praetorians toward their emperor. In one instance, Emperor Gaius Caligula, the great-great grandson of Augustus—the man who created the Praetorians—was murdered by them, with “the most prominent role being given to Cassius Chaerea, a tribune of the Praetorian Guard.”²² In this particular case, Chaerea was seen as a man “motivated by a profound commitment to Republican liberties,”²³ and as one who, despite being “very manly in personal tastes, had a weak, high-pitched,

¹⁹ Sinnigen, 66.

²⁰ Marjorie & C.H.B. Quennell, *Everyday Life in Roman and Anglo-Saxon Times* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1959), 88.

²¹ Gabriel, 38.

²² Anthony A. Barrett, *Caligula: The Corruption of Power* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989), 161.

²³ Barrett, 161.

voice, that sounded effeminate.”²⁴ Chaerea was repeatedly mocked by Caligula, who “called him *gynnis* (‘lass’).”²⁵ Therefore, the mission of the Praetorian tribune was sparked by his loyalty to the Senate or his ideals of Republican liberty as well as his personal grudge against Caligula. According to author Anthony Barrett, in other scenarios, “behind the military figures there lurked idealistic or ambitious senators.”²⁶ In further examples, the Praetorian Guard proclaimed Claudius, Caligula’s uncle, emperor without the consent of the Senate,²⁷ deserted Nero when riots took to the streets of Rome,²⁸ and murdered Emperor Pertinax before selling the title of emperor to the highest bidder.²⁹ Nothing even resembling this sort of disloyalty of an imperial bodyguard toward its leader appears in the history of the Mongol Empire.

While Emperor Caligula and subsequent rulers in his line were either slain or deserted by their Praetorian Guards, the elite soldiers under Chinggis Qan can be seen as just as loyal as his original “Four Dogs,” whom he trusted with his life. Perhaps the same can be said for a generalized audience of Mongols and Romans, but history seems to point out that the latter were, as a whole, a more egocentric people. Ever since the Roman Empire was first established, its people were subjected to exhibitions of torture, execution, and bloody gladiatorial games—all for the sake of spectacle. As the average Roman of the time regularly witnessed the spilling of blood in the arena during all-day festivities, it seems a bit more likely that the Praetorian Guard, stationed in Rome and surely having witnessed such indifferent slayings, may have been a military corps far less averse to shedding blood for personal gain than the Mongol Imperial Guard. With a more skewed view of right and wrong, the Romans as a whole must be seen as a people much less willing to preserve life. For the Mongol Empire to have become what it was, people of course had to die along the way. At times during his reign, Chinggis Qan established his

²⁴ Barrett, 161.

²⁵ Barrett, 161.

²⁶ Barrett, 161.

²⁷ Kerrigan, 70.

²⁸ Kerrigan, 109.

²⁹ Kerrigan, 189.

regimes with religious tolerance in mind, while part of Roman blood sport was watching innocent Christians be devoured by starved lions.

It is probable that the Mongol Imperial Guard viewed some of the khans with contempt, but in the slaying of Roman emperor Caligula, the first instance in which the Praetorian Guard betrayed its ruler, certain patterns were perhaps developed in the Roman psyche, passing down from one generation of Praetorians to the next. These patterns refer to the ousting of one emperor for a newer, better, wealthier, or more popular one. It also seems most definite that the Mongol Imperial Guard was scarcely familiar with the Roman Empire's administrative tactics, or the perhaps the Roman Empire in general. This conclusion can be drawn simply because the Mongol Imperial Guard never developed, even in the Yuan state, such untrustworthy patterns of betrayal exhibited in the Praetorian Guard.

The Mongol Imperial Guard not only mirrored the more loyal elements of the Praetorians, but they also mirrored those of the Chinese dynasties into which they later came to be incorporated. According to Hsiao, "each dynasty in Chinese history—native or conquest—strove to keep large numbers of elite troops directly under the central government as Imperial Guards."³⁰ The conquest element of the quotation surely alludes, at least in part, to the Mongol Yuan establishment in China. The most interesting fact here is that the Imperial Guard established by Chinggis Qan was able to continue to flourish centuries later in Kubilai's Yuan China, thanks in part to it being such an integral aspect to both the histories of the Mongols and the Chinese. This commonality surely meant a smooth transition into Yuan establishment, with the conquered and incorporated Chinese already familiar with the idea of an Imperial Guard.

Before Mongol integration, the Chinese Imperial Guard more closely resembled the often treacherous Praetorian Guard. In Hsiao's book, he writes that the early Chinese "guard corps, if not well controlled, tended to become mutinous praetorian cohorts, their actions sometimes resulting in a

³⁰ Hsiao, 33.

change of emperors.”³¹ This passage could very well be taken out of the context of *The Military Establishment of the Yuan Dynasty* and placed in a text on Roman history. The Chinese had faced such treacherous acts in the dynastic lines, but this pattern of betrayal had apparently vanished almost completely once Kubilai had established the Yuan. The word praetorian, used surprisingly often in Hsiao’s passage when describing Chinese elite guards, comes from the Latin word *praetor*, a term referring to a commanding field general recruited to be an elite guard by the Roman emperors. The passage uses the words praetorian and emperor, which is a curious and interesting finding in itself, especially when comparing the Roman guards and the Chinese guards which were later incorporated into the Mongol Imperial Guard.

In order to properly compare the Praetorian Guard and the Imperial Guard, the latter must be categorized into their two different forms. Hsiao gives some insights on these two forms, and how they differed from one another. He writes that “the system (*keshig*) would appear to have evolved from the *nököd* (sing. *nökör*) or ‘companions’ of the Mongolian clan-tribal chieftains.”³² In the system he speaks of, the incarnation taken by the Imperial Guard around the turn of the thirteenth century,³³ the *keshig*, perhaps not even referred to by this particular title by the year 1200, had already been transformed into a more imperial form under the later khans in Chinggis’ line—namely, under Kubilai in his establishment of Yuan China. The *nököd*, according to Hsiao, seems to refer to the original form of the Guard under Chinggis Qan, in which they “served as bodyguards for their masters and performed household services for him.”³⁴ This passage undoubtedly refers to the original bodyguard. The *nököd* and the *keshig* can further be distinguished from one another as the original guard under Chinggis and the corps incorporated into the Chinese Imperial Guard in Kubilai’s Yuan Empire.

³¹ Hsiao, 33.

³² Hsiao, 34.

³³ Hsiao, 34.

³⁴ Hsiao, 34.

Whether in the original incarnation under Chinggis Qan or the later one under Kubilai, the Mongol Imperial Guard never performed such criminal and conspiring acts that the Roman Praetorians did under Caligula, Nero, and Pertinax. Yet another Praetorian, Lucius Aelius Sejanus, under the rule of Tiberius, strove for absolute power over the emperor even though he was still seen as “a functionary.”³⁵ This status failed to stop him from “embarking on a series of treason trials, aimed at the most important families in the Roman establishment,” including that of Tiberius, Caligula’s grandfather. “The proceedings,” as Michael Kerrigan writes, “were a cynical sham, with the prosecutions based in the spurious ‘evidence’ of his paid informers; the intention was to neutralize any opposition to Sejanus’ rise.”³⁶ Sejanus had not committed any political murders, but he had surely profited from them. Instances of Praetorian betrayal continually show up in Roman sources, while none appear in those on the steppe Mongol or Yuan Empire, more than likely due to the latter’s probable purge of the untrustworthy Guards of the Chinese Song Dynasty, mentioned earlier in this paper. Some of the Roman emperors covered in this topic executed their share of innocents and performed acts considered to be tyrannical during their reigns, and this behavior perhaps has something to do with the difference in loyalties between the Imperial Guard and the Praetorians. The Mongols, even upon incorporation with the Chinese, seemed a much more disciplined people as a whole, retaining their virtues of honor. Chinggis Qan was a much respected man long after his reign over the Mongol Empire ended, and the loyalties of the later form of Imperial Guard speak to their reverence for the accomplishments of Chinggis and the rest of their ancestors.

In both the Mongol and Roman Empires, the establishment of a personal bodyguard was a strategic form of protecting the man deemed the most important in the empire. Chinggis Qan’s Guard was formed from the members of his household and his oldest, most trusted comrades. Those of Caesar Augustus were composed of field commanders and generals with personal religious and political

³⁵ Kerrigan, 48.

³⁶ Kerrigan, 49.

affiliations. Ideally, the Praetorian Guard should have been the backbone of the Roman emperor, seeing to his safety in every situation presented. Inadequate leaders, politics, and personal grudges came into play in the ruling of the Roman Empire, while the Mongols led a simpler life, protecting leaders deemed more competent and able to better control Mongol assets. Many factors must be considered when discussing the loyalties of the Imperial Guard and the disloyalties of the Praetorians. The two prominent empires were run by completely different men under an entirely different set of circumstances, and the Mongol Imperial Guard and the Roman Praetorian Guard were founded to perform the same immediate functions for their emperors—even if the outcomes were not always the same.

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Aging Women and Aging Men: Lydia in Horace's 1.25

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Ancient authors are not known for their sympathy towards women. The poet Horace in particular is usually seen as less interested in women and less sensitive to their concerns than other poets such as Catullus, Propertius, and Ovid. The subgroup within Horace's "women poems" most vulnerable to accusations of chauvinism is perhaps the collection of odes addressed to aging women, 1.25, 3.15, and 4.13, which attack their addressees with the accusation that they have outlived the possibility of being attractive to the poet. The portrait of Lydia in Horace 1.25 is particularly harsh, and responses to this poem have accordingly been difficult. Nisbet and Hubbard, for instance, dismiss Ode 1.25 with the assessment that, "in spite of its conventionalism and inhumanity, this is a good poem," yet further describing it as "ferocious" and "savage."¹ Ronnie Ancona, while rejecting both uncomplicated disgust at and uncomplicated assent to the poem's values, still sees it as a poem in which the male lover uses temporality as a tool to raise himself above the beloved.² This is not a view that lacks either for evidence or for adherents, and it cannot be easily dismissed. This view, however, is one that unnecessarily reduces the complexity of the poem's perspectives. In the following pages, I examine Ode 1.25 in detail, creating a reading informed by comparisons with passages from Horace's predecessor Catullus and with related passages elsewhere in the *Odes* where these are relevant. Michael Putnam, in his book *Poetic Interplay: Catullus and Horace*, argues that while Horace only mentions the poet Catullus once by name, echoes of Catullan text pervade his work and add an additional layer to the complexity of

¹ R. G. M. Nisbet and Margaret Hubbard, *Horace: Odes Book 1* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970), 291.

² Ronnie Ancona, *Time and the Erotic in Horace's Odes* (London: Duke University Press, 1994), 30, 22.

the *Odes*.³ My approach is not only informed by this work, but also by another idea that echoes within a single book of the *Odes*, which is equally important and revealing. Ode 1.5, by my reading, is neither ferocious nor savage, nor is the speaker allowed to remain entirely untouched. Ode 1.25, when read within the context of Book 1 as a whole, reveals a deep sympathy for the figure of Lydia. Moreover, the relationship between Lydia's experiences and the poet's own further move this poem past mockery into an extension of imaginative sympathy.

Horace 1.25

Parcius iunctas quatiunt fenestras
lactibus crebris iuvenes protervi,
Nec tibi somnos adimunt, amatque
lanua limen,

Less and less frequently the brash youths rattle
Your joined windows with frequent tossed pebbles,
Nor do they take your slumbers from you
And your door loves the threshold

Quae prius multum facilis movebat
Cardines. Audis minus et minus iam:
"Me tuo longas pereunte noctes
Lydia dormis?"

Which formerly very easily moved
The hinges. Less and less often now you hear it:
"With me perishing for you through the long nights,
O Lydia, are you able to sleep?"

Invicem moechos anus arrogantis
Flebis in solo levis angiportu,
Thracio bacchante magis sub inter-
Lunia vento,

In your turn, a light old woman, you will weep
For the arrogant adulterers in a lonely alleyway,
With the Thracian wind raging more than usual,
Under a moonless sky,

Cum tibi flagrans amor et libido,
Quae solet matres furiare equorum,
Saeviet circa iecur ulcerosum,
Non sine questu,

While, for you, raging love and desire,
Such as are accustomed to enrage mares
Are savage to your ulcerous liver,
Not without complaint

Laeta quod pubes hedera virenti
Gaudeat pulla magis atque myrto,
Aridas fronds hiemis sodali
Dedicet Euro.⁴

That bright youth rejoices at blooming ivy
Rather than drab myrtle and that
It dedicates dry leaves to the East wind,
Companion of winter.

The poem begins with the familiar scene of the mistress' doorstep.⁵ However, it is clear from the outset of this poem that the female addressee is not the expected mistress. The first two poems addressed to

³ Michael C. J. Putnam, *Poetic Interplay: Catullus and Horace* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2006), 1.

⁴ All texts of Horace in this paper are taken from Daniel Garrison's *Horace: Epodes and Odes, a New Annotated Latin Edition*. All translations are the author's own.

women in this book of the odes, 1.5 and 1.8, are addressed to women, Pyrrha and Lydia, who are other men's lovers; while the poet himself is not courting their favor, they still clearly are defined in the poem as the objects of male desire.⁶ In 1.11, 1.16, and 1.23, Horace is writing to women who either appear to fulfill or who are invited to fulfill the role of mistress or *docta puella*, whose song will grace the symposium. All the women, in fact, addressed in the odes preceding 1.25 are portrayed as attractive objects of male attention. In this context, the later Lydia's age strikes an especially dissonant note, and Horace opens the first line with the word *parcius*, "less and less," painfully emphasizing her deserted condition. This immediate disclosure of her decreasing attractiveness within the structure of the poem mimics the way time will betray her within the "reality" of the poem. Just as she will not be able to pretend to own the youth and beauty that are inevitably leaving her and stave off the loss of love, Horace, by locating Lydia's decreasing attractiveness in the first word of the poem, mercilessly prevents her from even briefly masquerading as sought-after to the reader.

The stanza is not free from the language of love, however. Horace presents the reader with a doorway that "loves the threshold" and *iunctas fenestras* which evoke the word *coniunx*, "spouse," and the "joining-together" that love and marriage provide. Horace shifts the affection present in the stanza from human interactions to interactions between the components of Lydia's house, emphasizing still more her increasing isolation. This isolation is particularly evident in the lineation of lines three and four: after the statements of Lydia's loneliness, line three ends with *amatque*, conjuring up the image of a human lover. The pause of the line break immediately following allows the reader to maintain that impression briefly before the next line makes it clear that this love is limited to the door and threshold. By personifying the physical elements of her house, the poet emphasizes the complete absence of human companionship for Lydia. Ancona's suggestions that *parcius* secondarily modifies *iunctas* as well

⁵ cf. Horace 3.10, 3.26.6-9, Catullus 67, Propertius 1.16.

⁶ 1.13, also addressed to Lydia, conforms to this pattern, though Horace's suggestion that Lydia should reject her current lover in favor of a more harmonious union seems to constitute an implicit invitation.

as *quatiunt*, and that Lydia is both less sought after and “more open to [her lovers’] advances,” no longer steadfastly barricading herself within the house, is well taken and anticipates the action of the following stanzas.⁷

In the second stanza, the poet reiterates the inevitability of Lydia’s aging and her loss of beauty, with *minus et minus*, “less and less.”⁸ This statement, though it addresses Lydia’s present, reaches into the future as well; she has become less sought-after, and this process will inexorably continue. The poet assumes the clarity of a god or of time itself, predicting her fall with complete assurance. Moreover, the bluntness of the statement does not seem overconfident; the reader accepts that Horace speaks with time’s authority and that this is simply one of time’s harsh realities. While the complaint of the young men ironically foreshadows Lydia’s later condition, the ironies tell as much against the melodramatic and self-absorbed claims of young male lovers as they do against the beloved ravaged by time. The reader readily assumes that these young men are relatively well-off, like the young lovers Horace addresses in other poems.⁹ Serenading women late into the night is a luxury that belongs to those not significantly exhausted by their labors at that hour. It seems unlikely that any of the *exclusi amatores* will suffer serious physical or even emotional damage. Lydia is replaceable in her old age, and probably was so even in her youth, if the wide variety of beautiful and musical young women named in the odes says anything about female interchangeability. Their language is chilling, however, in view of the fact that Lydia is much more in real danger of perishing than any of these young men. The madness of the young lover is trumped by the lonelier and more damaging madness of the abandoned beloved. Horace’s care in foregrounding her desertion ensures that the reader is fully conscious of these ironies when reading the formulaic complaint. The structure of the poem’s initial lines allows the reader to align himself with Lydia rather than the importunate lover.

⁷ Ancona, 24-25.

⁸ Horace, *Odes*, 1.25.6.

⁹ For example, in book 1 of the *Odes*, 1.9, 1.27, 1.29, and 1.33 are all addressed to young men well-off enough to be present at the symposium.

While Horace alleges that Lydia's sufferings come to her *invicem*, in return for all the suffering she has caused her lovers earlier, this claim, like the words of the complaining lover, is heavily undercut by the rest of the poem. This stanza carries particular echoes of Catullus. As Michael Putnam describes, Horace points to this with his use of the heavily significant words *angiportus*, "alleyway" and *moechus*, "adulterer."¹⁰ "*Angiportu*" seems to indicate a reference to Catullus 58, in which Catullus laments Lesbia's promiscuity, and "*moechos*" to Catullus 11, in which he does the same. The ethos of the poem seems also to find a distinct heritage in the Catullan Carmen 8, in which he addresses a string of rhetorical questions to Lesbia, "*Quae tibi manet vita?/ Quis nunc te adibit?...,*"¹¹ intended to convince her—and himself—that she will be miserable if he finally turns from her. Horace's Lydia is now apparently in the position that Catullus imagined for Lesbia; however, she suffers this abandonment not through the desertion of a singular, all-important lover, but as the inevitable consequence of aging.

Catullus 58

Caeli, Lesbia nostra, Lesbia illa.
illa Lesbia, quam Catullus unam
plus quam se atque suos amavit omnes,
nunc in quadriuiis et angiportis
glubit magnanimi Remi nepotes.

Catullus 58

Caelius, our Lesbia, that Lesbia,
That Lesbia whom alone Catullus
Loved more than himself and all his own,
Now at the cross-roads and in the alleyways
Peels the descendents of great-souled Remus.

Catullus 11.15-24

pauca nuntiate meae puellae
non bona dicta.
cum suis vivat valeatque moechis,
quos simul complexa tenet trecentos,
nullum amans vere, sed identidem omnium
ilia rumpens;
nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem,
qui illius culpa cecidit uelut prati
ultimi flos, praetereunte postquam
tactus aratro est.¹²

Catullus 11.15-24

Announce to my girl
A few unpleasant words:
May she live and prosper, together with her lovers
Whom she holds, three hundred at a time in her embrace
Loving none of them truly, but again and again breaking
The loins of all;
Nor let her look for, as before, my love,
Which her crime has cut down, just like a flower
Of the furthest meadow, after it
Is touched by the passing plow.

¹⁰ Putnam, 11.

¹¹ "What sort of life remains for you? Who will come to you now?"

¹² My text of these poems is taken from Daniel H. Garrison's *The Student's Catullus* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1989). Translations are my own.

Putnam mainly draws a distinction between how the two poets handle time—Catullus’ “brisk distinction between then and now” and the “Janus-like present in the life of Lydia that glances at once forward and backward in time.”¹³ However, this poem’s allusions to its predecessors also create a contrast between feminine guilt and suffering in the poems. The use of the Catullan *carmina* conjures up a specific paradigm of feminine guilt and punishment. In Catullus 58 and 11, Lesbia is charged not only with unfaithfulness, but also with a level of promiscuity that is excessive and disgusting. He uses highly graphic language in each poem to describe her behavior. Lesbia, in 58, “now at the crossroads and in the alleyways peels the descendents of great-hearted Remus,” while in 11 she “holds three hundred adulterers at once in her embrace, truly loving none, but over and over breaking the loins of them all.” In these poems, Catullus enacts a sort of disfigurement of Lesbia, who, morally corrupt, can no longer be allowed to remain beautiful to the reader. In poem 58 in particular the grotesqueness of the image seems to transform Lesbia into some sort of monster, a hundred-handed Briareus, able to clasp three hundred lovers at once.

While Horace’s references allow the reader to be aware of these echoes, his choice to not use these motifs more strongly in this poem emphasizes the difference between his Lydia and Catullus’s Lesbia. Catullus seems to indict Lesbia for being disinterested in him in poem 2. While she can easily find comfort for her sorrow so that “her heavy passion subsides,” he cannot so lightly dismiss the cares of his “sad spirit.”¹⁴ Similarly, in poem 8 Catullus characterizes the relationship as one in which she flies and he chases after her.¹⁵ It is unclear whether Catullus’s Lesbia suffers loss of love at all, since the poet portrays himself as devoted throughout the whole corpus, despite his attempts to break away.¹⁶ If she does, however, as he imagines in poem 8, she does so because she is allegedly guilty of gross

¹³ Putnam, 15.

¹⁴ Catullus 2.7-8, 10.

¹⁵ Catullus 8.10.

¹⁶ While Catullus in the epigrams is ambivalent and critical of Lesbia, he nonetheless consistently portrays himself as in love with her. This is apparent most famously in poem 85, *odi et amo*, but also in 70, 75, 76, and 87.

unfaithfulness to one lover, embracing three hundred adulterers at once, and is also guilty of some degree of apathy towards him. Horace's Lydia, on the other hand, suffers this punishment of desertion without ever having clearly committed the crime of unfaithfulness. Not located within a family or social world, Lydia seems to be a courtesan, and the fact that she has *moechi* can hardly be construed as shocking. Unlike Lesbia, she is not weighted down with a history of graphically perverse sexuality; all the reader perceives in Lydia's case are the commonplaces of the *paraclausithyron*: the sleeping mistress and the importunate lover.¹⁷ While the *angiportus* is the setting of Lesbia's crime and emphasizes her unnatural promiscuity, in Horace's ode, the alley is no longer a scene of even tawdry pleasures; rather, it emphasizes Lydia's place on the outside. This setting is particularly isolating because the reader has already been presented with Lydia's house. Horace has, in fact, taken care to present it to the reader in some detail, mentioning the windows, the doorstep, and the door, complete with hinges.

Lydia weeps in the alleyways, a *levis* old woman. The use of the word *levis* here evokes the dry leaves that describe her at the end of the poem—she is dried-up and thin—but also makes her seem more fragile and pitiful. She, a frail and distraught old woman, is no match for “the Northern winds, reveling more on a moonless night.” *Levis* also carries connotations of fickleness or inconstancy. For instance, in Catullus 61, the speaker reassures the bride, telling her that her intended husband is not a “*levis... vir*,” a fickle man, who will be unfaithful to her. The character overtones of the word *levis* ironically drive home further the tragic realities of Lesbia's situation: it is her male lovers, not she, who are fickle. In this stanza, in fact, she is lamenting the reality that the *moechi* have moved on. Lydia is unchanged in her desires and expectations, and it is the mutability of the inconstant world that undoes her. Horace's use of the word *bacchante* here is also suggestive, as it emphasizes the extent of Lydia's

¹⁷ If this poem and the other two poems in this book of odes addressed to Lydia are meant to be imagined as all directed toward the same woman, admittedly she has slightly more to answer for. Even if this is the case, however, the tone of 1.8 is amused and friendly rather than accusing, and 1.13 appeals to her as the better partner in an “uneven bond.” Distracting one's lover from manly pursuits and being foolish in one's choice are, at any rate, the faults of an unwise woman rather than a depraved one.

exile: the *moechi* are presumably happy and warm in some other woman's house, and even the North Wind is rejoicing. She alone is helpless prey to the conditions of the physical and social weather. The participle *bacchante*, however, makes the idea of the bacchant an inescapable association for the reader. The bacchant seems another half-model for Lydia. While these followers of Dionysus are certainly associated with madness and extremes of passion, they, at any rate, travel in a troop. The basic level of companionship they experience contrasts tragically with Lydia's loneliness; she is here presented as deeply isolated, weeping not in the house which the reader has already heard described, but in the alleyways.

Perhaps the most demeaning moment for Lydia within this poem occurs in line 15, in which her *flagrans amor et libido* is compared to the lust of mares in heat. She is profoundly dehumanized; here her passions, like those of the erring Lesbia, are characterized as bestial. Moreover, the circumlocution *matres...equorum* instead of mares further emphasizes Lydia's increasing age.¹⁸ However, animals are commonly compared to women within the odes. It is important to note, however, that comparison to an animal is not always a negative mark in Horace's moral schema. Chloe is a fawn, *inuleo*, in ode 1.23, while the girl in 2.5 is a heifer, a *iuvenco*; in both poems, the figure reflects the youth and delicacy of the young woman. In 3.15, the addressee's daughter carries herself as a desirous she-goat, *lascivae capreae*, in contrast to her aging mother. While the daughter is engaging in conduct natural for her age, the mother is too old for such things. Certainly comparison to a raging mare is less flattering than comparison to a young heifer, with its accompanying associations of freshness and fertility. Still, for Lydia, it is not her desires themselves that are culpable or shameful; she becomes the object of contempt because her desires are not aligned with the reality of her age and decreasing attractiveness.

Furthermore, Horace counteracts the distancing simile of the first few lines in the second half of the stanza. His depiction of Lydia as suffering from an *iecur ulcerosum* draws the poem into conversation

¹⁸ Ancona, 29.

with ode 13 of the same book, in which the dominating figure also suffers from liver problems and which also contains a woman named Lydia. Horace 1.13 here evokes Catullus 51, which itself imitates and translates Sappho 31. In both poems, the speaker experiences intense emotion at the sight of the beloved, specifically the sight of the beloved as belonging to another. However, Sappho and Catullus's speakers view both the woman and her male companion as objects of wonder—*Ille mi par esse deo videtur,/ ille, si fas est, superare divos*—while Horace is spurred to fierce jealousy as Lydia praises her new lover to him.¹⁹ Sappho and Catullus's speakers feel passive and paralyzing symptoms—they cannot speak, they cannot see, and a thin flame runs under their flesh.²⁰ Horace's persona, on the other hand, turns pale, as Sappho does, but also sheds a tear and primarily suffers from a *fervens...iecur*, an ailment that more closely parallels Lydia's "symptoms" than anything described in the poem's Sapphic model.²¹ Just as Lydia suffers the agonies of burning love, *flagrans amor*, the poet himself, in 1.13, is disclosed by his tears to be worn down by "*lentis...ignibus*," slow fires.²²

The connection between Lydia and Horace is strengthened by the fact that the speaker of 13, presumably Horace, finds himself in a situation parallel to that of Lydia in 1.25: himself middle-aged, he becomes violently jealous at the sight of a woman, also named Lydia, infatuated with a new lover. Horace seems to indicate that Telephus is specifically a younger man. The characteristics Lydia praises him for, his *cervicem roseam* and *cerea...bracchia* stress the youthful beauty of his body; as Garrison states, "[h]is complexion is that of a very young man."²³ Like Pyrrha's lover in 1.5, Telephus is described as a boy, *puer*, and his age also seems to be reflected in his lack of emotional and physical control: he strikes Lydia in drunken quarrels and marks her skin.²⁴ Since the speaker of this poem is not only a

¹⁹ Catullus, 51.1-2.

²⁰ Sappho 31.9-12; Catullus 51.9-12.

²¹ Horace I.13.4.

²² Horace I.13.8.

²³ Horace I.13.2; David Garrison, *Horace: Epodes and Odes* (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 223.

²⁴ Horace I.5.1; Horace I.13.11.

critical observer but also a deeply emotional one, it seems reasonable to foreground this poem in a prior relationship between the speaker and the woman Lydia. The speaking figure within the poem has been replaced with the new lover, Telephus, for reasons that are not stated but could plausibly include Telephus' youth and impetuousness. Horace's situation in this poem has much of the same distress as Lydia's in 1.25. He bears the same sense of having grown old and being unable to stop a former lover from finding a new and younger partner. His final exhortation to Lydia to forgo Telephus' lip-bruising affection for a more tranquil and harmonious bond mirrors the complaint that Lydia utters at the end of 1.25: young men's affections are predicated on the appearance of the love object, and women are rejected as they grow old. Both Horace and Lydia experience this rejection and both react to it with emotional distress.

The women in *Odes* 1.13 and 1.24 are both named Lydia, and the woman who seems to reject Horace in the earlier poem finds herself rejected in the final one. It seems, therefore, at least possible, to view 1.25 as a poem exacting revenge. However, unlike a similar situation in 4.13, Horace does not express satisfaction or state that his prayer has been answered in Ode 1.25. He, in fact, does not record his own emotional response at all. Similarly, in Ode 1.13, Horace does not warn Lydia of future desertion or in fact seem particularly at odds with her. His point seems to be rather that her hypothetical future distress will be caused by the unreliability of her partner than that she herself has done something that should incur punishment. While Lydia's sufferings are more extreme in character, they fundamentally share the nature of Horace's own torment at the hands of middle-aged jealousy in 1.13.

This note of sympathy is reinforced by the vegetal imagery with which Horace ends the poem. Lydia complains that young men prefer green ivy to dull myrtle and have no use at all for the withered leaf. Lydia, poised as she is between a youthful past and an aged future, would seem to correspond to the dull myrtle, scorned but still intact. Intriguingly, the myrtle is chosen as Horace's poetic emblem in Ode 1.38. In this final poem of the first book of odes, Horace forbids his young slave to seek out the late-

blooming rose for him, preferring the simplicity of myrtle as more suitable to them both. This is hardly an encoded declaration of love. However, it does present a very real tension of values which bears on 1.25. While Pyrrha in 1.5 might well be the feminine emblem of the alluring rose, and in fact meets her lover *multa...in rosa*, on a bed of many roses, Horace has long since ceased to worship at her shrine. Pyrrha is as inconstant as the sea, and he informs us that he has already made his sacrifice at the sea-god's altar, hanging up his dripping, shipwrecked clothes. In Ode 33, by contrast, the poet narrates that though a "better" love was offered, the freed woman Myrtale held him *grata...compede*, "with a pleasing fetter." The system which penalizes Lydia is the one which pursues the rose's gaudy and brief beauty. While Horace records her pain without regret, he also distances himself from the demanding appetites which cause her pain. Horace himself is a veteran of rose love-affairs and now chooses, as Lydia will be forced to do as well, to forego the summer rose and be contented with the more attainable myrtle.

Horace 1.25 is not simply a savage attack on Lydia, but combines its censure with a deep sense of sympathy. Horace's echoes of Catullan language pit Lydia favorably against Catullus' Lesbia, while other details link Lydia with the poet himself.

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Roman (Un)exceptionalism: Dispelling Popular Notions of Roman Belligerence

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Samnium

Within the broader context of popular notions of Roman belligerence,¹ the period of the Samnite Wars, c. 343-290 B.C.E., has been considered Rome's imperial point of embarkation.² Among the pervasive notions of modern scholarship concerning the Roman relationship with Samnium is the idea that the Romans sought an antagonistic and deliberate policy of conflict, calculated to eliminate the Samnites and control their territory.³ This idea not only fails to acknowledge the Samnites' own warlike history, but also fails to recognize that aggression displayed by both societies was common among

¹ There are four major studies that present this aspect:

1. William V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome, 327-70 B.C.* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 177;
2. R. J. Rowland, "Rome's Earliest Imperialism," *Latomus* 42 (1983): 759-60;
3. K. A. Raafaub, "Born to Be Wolves? Origins of Roman Imperialism," in *Transitions to Empire: Essays in Greco-Roman History, 360-146 BC, in Honor of E. Badian*, eds. R. W. Wallace and E. M. Harris (Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 277-78;
4. K. A. Raafaub, J. D. Richards, and L. J. Samons II, "Rome, Italy, and Appius Claudius Caecus Before the Pyrrhic Wars," in T. Hackens and R. R. Holloway, eds., *The Age of Pyrrhus*, *Archaeologia Transatlantica* 11 (Louvain-la Neuve, Belgium, and Providence, R. I.: Center for Old World Archaeology and Art, Brown University, 1992), 25-29.

Cornell uses these studies to support his thesis of exceptional Roman bellicosity, as does Gary Forsythe; see Tim Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (C. 1000-264 BC)* (London: Routledge, 1995), 351; and Gary Forsythe, *A Critical History of Early Rome: From Prehistory to the First Punic War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

² Edward Togo Salmon refers to the moment that Rome accepted the Capuan *deditio* (cf. pp 21-22, below) as the "inaugural event" of Roman Imperialism; he admits that the Romans were not aware that this was the case, however. See Edward Togo Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 1.

³ Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome*, 353; Stephen Oakley, "The Roman Conquest of Italy," in John Rich and Graham Shipley, eds., *War and Society in the Roman World* (London: Routledge, 1993), 11.

ancient city-states.⁴ The ostensibly imperial ambitions of Rome were not ambitions at all; they were simply the normal response to the martial conflict endemic in the ancient Mediterranean. Analysis of the similarities and differences between the Romans and Samnites reveals an absence of foreordained Roman superiority; in fact, the balance of power in fourth-century Italy might have been as likely to tip in favor of the Samnites. The reasons for either Samnite or Roman hostility are far more complex than expansion for expansion's sake allows.

Prior to war with Samnium in the fifth and early fourth centuries B.C.E., Rome had evolved from a loosely grouped tribal conglomerate into a city-state. Early Republican Rome boasted the rapid assimilation of Latium through a system of colonies and *virgane* allotments that were connected to Rome through a legally defined network of citizenship. Rome had a proclivity for capitalizing on setbacks, strategically negotiating with enemies and allies, and incorporating ethnically diverse cultures into this framework. Yet Rome was unable to enjoy the fruits of this new commonwealth for long. As Rome acquired territory to accommodate their growing infrastructure, so too did Samnium. The Samnites, having experienced their own growing influence in Italy, would vie for the same region. Not only were they rivals of Rome, but there was also the possibility that the Samnites might even subjugate the Romans. By the fourth century B.C.E. the two states were closely matched in territorial expanse and population.⁵ Although the outcome of the Samnite Wars would be significant in the development of Rome's position in Italy,⁶ the fate of neither Samnium nor Rome was by any means foreseeable.

⁴ For a detailed analysis of the warfare characteristic of the ancient Mediterranean, see Arthur M. Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 2009).

⁵ Cornell, 351.

⁶ Forsythe goes so far as to call the crucial epoch of the Samnite Wars was creating a "blue print" for future Roman endeavors. See Forsythe, 285, n. 9.

Compared to the rich literary history of Rome, little is known about the Samnites.⁷ Archaeology agrees with ancient literary sources that the Samnites were originally conquerors from farther inland Europe, who finally settled in central Italy. Once there, they amalgamated with a group called the Osci,⁸ who themselves displaced the aboriginal inhabitants of that area. There were also significant ties to Campania, which in the sixth century was a mixture of Etruscans, Greeks, and Samnites. However, by the fourth century the people who lived in the rich, fertile plains of Campania had few, if any, remaining ties to their Samnite kinsmen in the hills.⁹

The four main tribes of Samnium were the Pentri, the Caudini, the Hirpini, and the Carricini.¹⁰ Like the Romans, Latins, and Hernici, the Samnite tribes practiced a form of effective unification. The Samnites, however, only united during times of war. Conversely, the Latin League adhered to the Cassian Treaty of 493 B.C.E. for an indefinite period of time. Unlike the Latin League of the fifth and early fourth centuries, the Samnites appointed a single general to lead the tribal coalition.¹¹ This ethnic camaraderie within the Samnite Federation is distinctive when compared to most other Mediterranean city-states,¹² making Samnium relatively exceptional and rather formidable.¹³

The standard procedure outside of Samnium was for each society to show up on the battlefield, each division with its own commander. When the Latin League went to war, for example, the respective powers would deliberate over who was to lead the campaign, which led to diluted command over the constituent parts. As the Samnite threat increased, though, the Romans responded by adopting the Samnite practice of installing a single commander to manage the armies, doing so by appointing a

⁷ For a more detailed look into the history of Samnium, see Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites*, which is regarded as one of the only comprehensive sources on the origins of the ancient Samnites.

⁸ *Ὀπτικοί* is the name in Greek, and the more common *Osci* is the Latin form. The Oscan origin of the Samnites is discussed in Strabo 5.4.12.

⁹ Emma Dench, *From Barbarians to New Men* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 136-37.

¹⁰ Eckstein, 140; For Carricini, see Livy 9.31.4 and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, 17.4.4, 5.1; for Caudini and Hirpini, see Livy 23.42.1.

¹¹ The Samnite League is described in greater detail as the Samnite Federation in Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites*, 80-87. The appointment of a tribal war chief appears in Livy 9.1.2, 9.3.9, 10.12.1, et al.

¹² Cornell, 346.

¹³ Eckstein, 141.

dictator.¹⁴ At the behest of Rome, the Latin League began a similar practice, and it was not uncommon for non-Romans to take the lead.¹⁵ The emphasis was placed on a leader's ability to win a battle and not necessarily on mere status or wealth. Although through different means, both Samnium and Rome used systems that overcame societal divisions in a time of war. A concrete adherence to tribal unification during war allowed the Samnite tribes of the central Apennines to grow quite fearsome. The expanse of Samnite power was a result of these tribes' effective confederacy. Indeed before the rise of Rome, the sixth-century Samnites' sphere of influence ranged as far south as Tarentum.

As illustrated by the Cassian Treaty and the virgine allotments of the sixth and fifth centuries, Rome's early territorial expansion was not entirely due to war. Diplomacy and colonization held sway at times. By contrast, Samnite power spread chiefly through the agency of militarism. Among the examples of the Samnites' predisposition for warfare was the sack of Cumae in 421 B.C.E., in which they massacred the Greeks who lived there.¹⁶ Wholesale slaughter of civilians was not a characteristic common to warring societies in the ancient world. Though it did happen, incidents were relatively isolated within the context of almost annual campaigning. It certainly did not occur on a scale that justifies this Samnite overreaction. Further evidence of Samnite pugnacity has been uncovered in the archaeological discovery that all graves thus far uncovered containing Samnite males have contained weapons. This universal inclusion of weapons as a grave good for males was notably not a characteristic of Roman burials.¹⁷ Archaeological remains of more than eighty hilltop fortifications scattered throughout their Apennine territory, demonstrate the unrelentingly militaristic history of the

¹⁴ The Roman *dictator* was a magistrate with absolute power over the state. The term of office was six months, and was considered an extraordinary measure, usually taken to preserve the security of the state.

¹⁵ Cf. Festus quoting Cincius, and its analysis. See Forsythe, 188.

¹⁶ Kathryn Lomas, *Rome and the Western Greeks, 350 BC-AD 200: Conquest and Acculturation in Southern Italy* (London: Routledge, 1993), 35.

¹⁷ Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites*, 62.

Samnites.¹⁸ The hyperbole used by ancient annalists indicates the extent to which there was a perceived Samnite threat.¹⁹

Perhaps most noteworthy, however, is how the tribes of Samnium managed the resources available in the hills of the Apennines. For varying reasons,²⁰ the Samnites appear to have been migrating onto the plains of Campania in the fifth and fourth centuries. When resources in the central Apennines were limited, the *ver sacrum*, or sacred spring, was performed.²¹ This ritual was a fairly common one among ancient tribes, in which the first fruits of the spring would be sacrificed. Yet for the Samnites, it was a ritual in which the men, whom the tribe could not continue to feed, were sent forth to acquire new land for farming.²² These migrations occurred over the course of centuries. At first these excursions into adjacent, non-Samnite territories were relatively passive and even peaceful. Yet by 450 B.C.E. there was a distinct shift in the nature of the *ver sacrum*. Though perhaps circumstantially necessary,²³ it became invasive, with the Samnites displacing by force the people who dwelt on the plains of Campania. Samnite expansion into Campania also seemed likely to confront the expanding influence of the Romans. However, Rome and Samnium initially encountered one another in a different context and along a different border.

¹⁸ Stephen Oakley, *The Hill-Forts of the Samnites*, Archaeological Monographs of the British School at Rome, no. 10 (London: British School at Rome, 1995), 1.

¹⁹ Polybius's and Strabo's use of the term *Saunitis* for the Samnites has led some to believe that this word was invoking the Greek word for javelin, *σαυτιον*. While Eckstein uses this point to further his argument, Salmon decries it as a trick of "popular etymology." See Eckstein, 138, and Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites*, 28, respectively; also see Vergil, *Aeneid*, 7.729; Strabo 5.4.2; Polybius 1.6.6 (where he likens the Samnite aggression to Celtic military prowess). Even Thucydides, ca. 415 BCE, tells of aggressive Samnite expansion in central and southern Italy.

²⁰ Kathryn Lomas cites a large-scale increase in the Samnite population during this time, calling it a "demographic explosion," See Kathryn Lomas, *Roman Italy, 338 BC-AD 200: A Sourcebook* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 11-12. Dench posits that there existed a paucity of resources in the Samnites' Apennine territory; see Dench, 189.

²¹ Though the genesis of this practice is somewhat debated, even biased sources agree that such a thing existed. Typically it is the practice of sacrificing the first fruits and animals of spring to various fertility gods. The Samnites adopted the unique practice of using humans instead of fruits and animals, and sent them forth to support themselves—in essence, as a colony—instead of sacrificing them. See Neil Faulkner, *Rome: Empire of the Eagles* (Harlow, United Kingdom: Pearson Longman, 2008), 46-47; see also Dench, 189-93.

²² Dionysius of Halicarnassus 1.16; Strabo 5.4.12.

²³ It can be presumed that, given a choice between returning to their tribe in Samnium and vying for decreasingly available land on the Campanian plain, the Samnite colonist chose the latter; see also Lomas, 33.

The first record of any diplomatic interaction between Rome and Samnium was a treaty in 354 B.C.E.²⁴ The background of the treaty is as important as the terms themselves, for the stage was being set for conflict. In the decades before the treaty, the Liris River Valley had become a shared border between the Samnite tribes and the Latin League. Leading up to the treaty, the Samnites were again making a push in Campania to their southwest, and, of greater concern to the Romans, across the Liris River, presumably for the iron deposits and fertile soil.²⁵ In the mid-fifth century B.C.E., Samnite expansion became violent and pervasive,²⁶ and Roman colonization was beginning to affect the makeup of the territory surrounding Latium. In a world with limited international mediation, it would seem likely that two expanding powers like the Romans and Samnites would eventually clash. In central Italy, as in most of the ancient Mediterranean, survival ultimately depended on the ability to either make war or successfully defend from attack.²⁷ The impending confrontation between both cultures was well within this context.

In 358 B.C.E. the Romans created yet another colony of its citizens, this one in Publilia. Though it was an assertive move, the colony might have been a defensive measure to keep the Volsci in check. This new colony was located on the Roman side of the Liris River, but was in Volscian territory. In the fifth century B.C.E., wars between the Volsci and Rome were commonplace,²⁸ threatening Roman regional stability to the extent that the Volsci even marched to the gates of Rome.²⁹ The Liris River Valley became ever more contentious, the Samnites creating a colony on the Roman side of the river in reaction to a perceived power grab by Rome over the Volsci. The Samnites infringed on Roman territory,

²⁴ Livy 7.19.4; Diodorus 16.45.8.

²⁵ Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites*, 189.

²⁶ Specifically, southeast to Apulia, Livy 9.13.7; southwest into Calabria; west to Capua and Cumae, Oakley, *War and Society in the Roman World*, 13; and northwest into Latium. See Eckstein, 139.

²⁷ Eckstein, ch. 3, 4, and 6.

²⁸ During the first half of the century, a campaign against the Volsci occurred almost each year. The historical notation is almost pervasive: Livy books 1-8, Strabo 5.3, Appian, *Italy*, ch.1, and Plutarch, *De Fortuna Romanorum*, to name a few. The constant threat of the Volsci is a mainstay of early Roman history.

²⁹ Livy 3.66.5; the record includes both routine defeats by the Volsci, Dionysius of Halicarnassus 8.84-6; Livy 2.58-60; and epic failures by the Romans, Livy 4.38.

but the Romans acted unexpectedly; rather than come to blows over the disputed terrain and the resources within it, Rome chose peace. The Romans approached the Samnites with a defensive treaty that indirectly addressed the controversial border along the Liris River by creating a line of demarcation between the two powers.³⁰ Although by now the Volsci were in a relative state of decline, they still threatened both Roman and Samnite interests along the Liris River. As a common enemy, the Volsci were a mechanism through which the treaty of 354 B.C.E. was achieved. Thus, when war broke out a decade later over Campania, the Liris River Valley seemed to be a settled matter, but was not.

In 343 B.C.E. Samnite expansion once again reached Campania. Not having developed a centrally governed network of citizen colonies as Rome had, the Samnites continued to use conquest in Campania in order to deal with the lack of adequate resources in the Apennines. They invaded the town of Teanum, which enlisted aid from nearby Capua.³¹ The Capuans fought two major engagements against the Samnites,³² but lost them both. Capua then sent an embassy to ask help of Rome only as a measure of last resort. The Roman Senate informed the Capuan delegation that the treaty with the Samnites was binding and Rome could not interfere.³³ After this initial rebuff, the Capuans offered Rome a *deditio*, or total surrender. Through *deditio*, Capua thus presented itself as property of Rome.³⁴ As such, Samnium would be declaring war on Rome if they were to attack Capua; once they had, the Romans were obligated to defend Capua.

Before forcibly protecting their new diplomatically acquired territory, though, the Romans attempted arbitration between the Samnium and Capua. The Romans sent envoys to the Samnites,

³⁰ Livy and Diodorus note the treaty, but do not discuss its reason, only to describe the common border. Presumably, the treaty was the result of growing tension.

³¹ Livy 7.19.

³² Eckstein, 141.

³³ Livy 7.31.2.

³⁴ Livy 7.31.4-5.

asking them to refrain from waging war against Campania. The Samnite confederation³⁵ reportedly responded to the Roman delegation by giving the army orders, in the presence of the Roman legates, to march to war.³⁶ The first of the Samnite wars began in this way; it was not through Roman imperialism, but as a result of Samnite antagonism as well as Campanian pleas for aid and protection .

The tendency among modern historians is to attribute the Samnite wars to Roman bellicosity.³⁷ In particular, they point out that the Romans recorded these events and that the Samnite perspective cannot be determined. One example is that Livy, by emphasizing the *deditio*, was trying to exonerate Rome for breaking the treaty with Samnium.³⁸ However, to simply doubt the veracity of Livy's report based on the knowledge that he had ulterior motives for writing it hardly proves that the *deditio* did not happen. Without additional evidence, it can be reasonably assumed that a *deditio* had at least taken place. There are also assertions that, in order to coax Samnium into war, Rome accepted the *deditio* with Capua.³⁹ Yet this type of voluntary submission was a frequent aspect of ancient diplomacy.⁴⁰ For Rome to refuse acquisition of territory and resources granted by *deditio* would be exceptional indeed, and quite unexpected of an ancient city-state. Even if the Romans were attempting to draw the Samnites into war, it would likely have been to prevent Samnium from gaining a power base immediately to the south of, and thereby surrounding, Rome.

The First Samnite War failed to achieve lasting peace, partially because the Romans remained in a defensive posture, never moving beyond Campania. The war, in fact, ended in a Samnite victory: Samnium took possession of its original target, Teanum, and the Romans acquired possession of Capua

³⁵ At this time, 343 B.C.E., the Samnite League comprised the Hirpini, the Caudini, the Pentri, the Caraceni, and the Frentani.

³⁶ Livy 7.31.

³⁷ Cf. n. 1, above.

³⁸ Forsythe, 287.

³⁹ Oakley, *War and Society in the Roman World*, 31, n. 2.

⁴⁰ Cornell, 347.

through *deditio*. In the end the treaty of 354 was renewed, with the same terms as before the First Samnite War.⁴¹

By the 330s B.C.E., the paths of Samnium and Rome once again crossed. The Samnites had dispatched a military garrison to Naples, and the Romans alleged that the Samnites were taking up piracy by controlling the port city.⁴² The gravity of the situation is reflected in the Senate's decision to dispatch a colony to the island of Pontia, which is immediately off the coast of Naples.⁴³ Commercial and economic interests were at stake: if the Samnites were to control trade moving north along the Tyrrhenian coast at Naples, then Rome's own harbor along the Tiber could be rendered ineffective.⁴⁴

This escalation was further aggravated when Rome established the colony of Fregellae in 328 B.C.E. This colony was located at a Liris River crossing that connected Samnium and Latium, but it was on the Samnites' side of the river. The Romans had clearly overstepped the territorial demarcation between the two powers, instigating another Samnite War. Although the reason for the colony has been debated, it was nevertheless provocative. Notably, Fregellae was a Latin colony, and not a military garrison;⁴⁵ it was perhaps a more even-handed response to the Samnite garrison in Naples, but it nevertheless had the effect of starting a war. Samnium's garrisoning activities also prompted other, smaller city-states such as Apulia to ally themselves with Rome.⁴⁶

In contrast to the way the Romans waged the First Samnite War, in the Second Samnite War the Romans adopted an offensive policy characterized by military invasions of Samnium.⁴⁷ Until this time, the Romans had remained content to defend vassal states or their own colonies. There were occasional

⁴¹ Livy 8.2.1.

⁴² Livy 8.26.1.

⁴³ Livy 8.28.7.

⁴⁴ Eckstein, 144.

⁴⁵ Salmon, *Roman Colonization Under the Republic*, 56.

⁴⁶ Livy 9.13.6.

⁴⁷ Eckstein, 145.

skirmishes with allies of Samnium,⁴⁸ but this first major incursion into Samnite territory met with disaster. In 321 at the Caudine Forks, the Roman forces suffered a humiliating defeat and were forced to surrender. As a result, the Samnites compelled Rome to surrender Fregellae.⁴⁹ Rome had not only attempted to respond to Samnium, but was also soundly defeated in the process.

In the nearly three decades that followed, the Romans were able to bounce back. This recovery was due to their ability to reorganize and respond quickly and effectively. Also as a result of the defeat, the Romans discovered the importance of the Samnites' smaller and more mobile infantry tactics. This experience led Rome to develop the manipular legion. It is at this time that the aforementioned office of *dictator* became crucial. Having all the resources of Rome at its disposal, the office of *dictator* was used effectively in times of severe distress. The census also played a critical role by making sure that the maximum number of eligible recruits was available and by maximizing tax revenues. Thus, only the needs of the military action were addressed, with little distraction and optimal resourcing. The marshalling of resources, the adoption of Samnium's superior military tactics, and a mobilization of the entire society toward this end all led to a triumphant invasion of western Samnium in 305 B.C.E.,⁵⁰ decisively ending the Second Samnite War.

The Third Samnite War, which was fought from 298-290 B.C.E., was characterized by the same cross-border operations as the Second Samnite War. Once the war broke out, both the Romans and the Samnites were responsible for various invasions. Samnite aggression culminated in alliances with the Gauls and Etruscans to effect a massive invasion down the Tiber River Valley.⁵¹ The Romans, working with Campania and the Latins, responded proportionally. Once again, there is some debate on the

⁴⁸ One example is in 326 B.C.E., when the Romans fought with the Vestini, a Samnite ally; see Livy 8.25.4.

⁴⁹ Livy 9.4.4.

⁵⁰ Eckstein, 145.

⁵¹ Cornell, 361.

genesis of aggression: was it Roman, or was it Samnite?⁵² This question fails to adequately capture the context: in tribal Italy, war was endemic. It truly was a world in which only the strong would survive. With either society poised to control Italy north of the Aufidus River, and given that cultural assimilation was too often the result of defeat in the ancient Mediterranean, survival was at stake for both Samnium and Rome.

The Romans did not win the Samnite Wars because they were inherently more bellicose and warlike; it was that Rome was better able to adapt, exercised a more effective political structure, and demonstrated an aptitude for revising their tactics in the face of adversity. None of these advantages is to say that Rome's motives were by any measure altruistic, nor that Samnium is culturally or even militarily inferior to Rome; it would be another two centuries before the last Samnite tribes were brought fully under Roman control. It does, however, illustrate that Rome was unexceptional in its level of belligerence. However, it was also better able to contend with Samnium by less martial means. Through treaties, compromises, and capitalizing on losses, the Romans adopted and maintained very successful policies. Rome adjusted as the situation required, paving the way to peninsular hegemony.

⁵² For the pro-Roman view, see Eckstein; for the view that Rome was a sole antagonist, see Salmon, *Samnium and the Samnites*.

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Devotion and Disillusionment: The Catullus Persona in Carmen 63

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I. Introduction

Catullus's *Carmen* 63 is one of his most interesting and surprising works and, in my opinion, a unique poem in the whole of his *libellus*. This uniqueness, however, does not indicate that the poem differs thematically from the other poems in the collection. Glenn W. Most published an article in which he claims that Catullus's *carmina maiora* are arranged "as a series of concentric rings balanced symmetrically around c. 64."¹ The large and thematically and structurally complex poems at the center of the book are no doubt connected, as Most correctly indicates. However, he does not examine any links outside their immediate neighbors, other than briefly mentioning in his concluding chart that the *carmina maiora* are preceded by "various lyric meters" and followed by "elegiac dystichs."² He explains this interpretive vagueness by writing that either scholars try to account for every poem, which results in a useless mess, or hand-pick a group of poems from the whole, but the patterns and connections thus achieved are limited to that narrow selection.³ I disagree that every poem needs to be accounted for and believe that there are many different themes that connect the poems and unite the book.

Paul W. Harkins contributes an interesting layer to the argument specific to poem 63.⁴ He

¹ Glenn W. Most, "On the Arrangement of Catullus' *Carmina Maiora*," *Philologus* 125 (1981): 109-225.

² Most, 124.

³ "[E]ither an attempt is made to account for every poem, with the result that the patterns are of an arbitrary and artificial complexity of questionable interpretative utility; or else the arbitrariness is restricted to the prior selection of a small number of poems, which, if carefully chosen, can certainly be made to yield attractive patterns, but ones for which the very strategy precludes extension to other poems and begs the question of the organization of the corpus as a whole." Most, 110.

⁴ Paul W. Harkins, "Autoallegory in Catullus 63 and 64," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 90 (1959): 102-116.

writes that c. 63 is an allegory for Catullus's love life, with Attis representing Catullus and Cybele representing Lesbia.⁵ His argument is certainly attractive, but I disagree with two main points. First, Harkins is much too literal⁶ with his interpretation of the poem and would like Attis to represent the historical Catullus, about whom we know next to nothing. His argument and evidence are not completely flawed, but he fails to recognize the poetic Catullus for what he is—a creation of the poet Catullus. Second, although Harkins' evidence is compelling, he uses it only to provide proof that Attis can be read as an allegory for the historical Catullus and fails to notice that his evidence provides useful thematic links between c. 63 and the rest of the book. For example, he identifies the conclusion of c. 63 as a prayer that links this poem to poem 76, but he does not examine the other thematic links between the two. Harkins' most compelling and relevant point is that Catullus associates the word *furor* with love in c. 50, a link I will make use of in this paper. I will expand on Most's and Harkins' arguments to show that c. 63 is not only thematically linked with the *carmina maiora*, but is also, in fact, a continuation of a consistent theme present in many other poems.

II. Catullus's Persona

Catullus the character appears in several poems, many of which involve his feelings towards Lesbia. I will start by examining the poems in which both the character Catullus and Lesbia appear in order to construct the traits and themes of the persona. This thematic examination will allow for a comparison between the characters Attis and Catullus, which I will use to show that c. 63 indeed contains the same themes. Poems in which Catullus describes himself using feminine terms provide

⁵ "It is apposite to inquire, therefore, whether Catullus, essentially the lyricist, is not giving expression to his own life and experience in at least some of these longer poems, even if he may have veiled the expression in allegory. Specifically, the purpose of this inquiry is to re-examine *Carmina* 63 and 64 to see if it be a fact that these poems, allegorical in content, are indirectly referable to the poet's relations with Clodia and, in this sense, are autoallegoric." Harkins, 110.

⁶ "Attis made a journey over the sea to Phrygia (vv. 1-2); Catullus did, too, on his way to Bithynia. Attis made the trip eagerly, goaded on by a madness which bewildered his mind (vs. 4); Catullus went off in a last effort to escape Lesbia's poisonous charms. Attis' madness had led him to destroy his manhood by his own hand (vs. 5); Catullus had cut himself off from Lesbia, his life." Harkins, 110.

more comparisons that I will briefly explore at the end of the paper. Specifically, I will focus on c. 50, c. 51, c. 64, c. 65, c. 68, c. 72, c. 75, c. 76, and c. 85, all poems in which I feel that there are important similarities. These comparisons will show that Attis is, in fact, an allegory for the Catullus lover persona.

Symptomatic Love

Poem 50, in which Catullus describes his desire to meet again with his fellow poet Licinius Calvus, is an important part of Harkins' argument. He uses this poem to compare Catullus's use of the word *furor* with that of c. 63, a point of contention for some authors.⁷

*ut nec me miserum cibus iuaret
nec somnus tegeret quiete ocellos,
sed toto indomitus furore lecto
versarer, cupiens videre lucem,
ut tecum loquerer simulque ut essem.* (50.9-13)

so that neither food helps poor me,
nor sleep covers my eyes with rest,
but untamed I move about in my bed with complete fury
desiring to see the light,
so that I might speak with be together with you.

This description is remarkably similar to that of Attis in c. 63. Here, Catullus cannot eat or sleep and is described as *indomitus* (50.11), not unlike the way in which Attis and her companions are described as exhausted *nimio e labore...sine Cerere* (63.36), from too much labor without bread, and Attis is at one point compared to an *indomita* heifer (63.33). Both poems also end with a plea to avoid the wrath of a certain goddess: Nemesis in one (50.20-21) and Cybele in the other (63.91-93). There are enough links between the Catullus of c. 50 and Attis to suggest that both characters are a variation on the same theme: the overpowering nature of desire. Harkins writes that "these characteristics of loss of appetite

⁷ Ruurd R. Nauta, "Catullus 63 in a Roman Context," *Mnemosyne* 57 (2004): 598: "Now, although the conflict between irrational abandonment and rational control is certainly an important theme in Catullus' poetry, reading poem 63 as autobiographical allegory is problematic. Catullus does occasionally describe his infatuation as *vesanus* ('mad'), and once describes his love as an illness from which he prays to be cured, but he does not conceive of his love as a frenzy comparable to Attis' *furor* or *rabies*."

and sleep, exhaustion and unconquerable frenzy...give a picture of *furor* comparable to the famous description of frenzy in Sappho's *Ode to Anactoria* and in Catullus's no less famous adaption of it."

In the following poem, c. 51.9-12, Catullus uses a similar description to describe his love for Lesbia:

*lingua sed torpet, tenuis sub artus
flamma demanat, sonitu suo
tintinant aures, gemina teguntur
lumina nocte.*

But my tongue goes numb, a thin flame
flows down my limbs, my ears ring
with their own sound, my eyes are covered
with a twin night.

Here Catullus again employs the pathology of love and describes a list of symptoms that culminate in what one author refers to as a "physical blackout."⁸ Thus, if Catullus uses the word *furor* to describe a desire that is accompanied with physical symptoms, then it does not seem too much of a stretch to link Attis's *furor* with that of the Catullus character in poems 50 and 51.

The Beginning of the End

Another important aspect of the same theme is found in c. 72. There, the Catullus persona briefly describes his affair with Lesbia so far, admitting that even though he now knows her true colors he will stay with her:

*Nunc te cognovi: quare etsi impensius uror,
multo mi tamen es vilior et levior.
Qui potis est, inquis? Quod amantem iniuria talis
cogit amare magis, sed bene velle minus.*

Now I know you: therefore I burn more,
Yet you are far less precious and important to me:
How is this possible, you ask? Because such an injury
Forces a lover to love more, but to be less well disposed.

⁸ Ernest A. Fredrickmeyer, "On the Unity of Catullus 51," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 96 (1965): 153-163.

Here we see Catullus beginning to explore his feelings as the relationship deteriorates. Attempting to find the right words for his feelings, he struggles towards the perfection of c. 85. Some important paradoxes appear: Catullus knows the real Lesbia now, yet he desires her more; he loves her more but at the same time is less happy toward her. The same feelings appear in the Attis poem, which I will compare later on in the paper. Catullus is trapped between two feelings, love and hate. Both Attis and the Catullus of c. 72 are in a situation which they should leave, but one in which they are forced to stay. This inter-spatial tension appears not only in c. 72 and c. 63, but also in several other poems, all of which involve the persona of Catullus.

Poem 75 is another poem which I will use to reconstruct the persona of Catullus. The themes of powerlessness and liminality are further developed:

*Huc est mens deducta tua, mea Lesbia, culpa
atque ita se officio perdidit ipsa suo,
ut iam nec bene velle queat tibi, si optima fias,
nec desistere amare, omnia si facias.*

My mind has been dragged down here by your infidelity, my Lesbia
and thus it has destroyed itself in such a way
that it is now unable to feel fond of you, even if you become very good
but is unable to stop loving you, even if you do everything.

The use of the passive voice (*est ... deducta*, line 1) and, more literally, the words *nec queat* (line 3) highlight Catullus's sense of helplessness and loss of power. His mind has been dragged down by Lesbia and he cannot feel fond of her, yet cannot stop loving her. In these four short lines, Catullus demonstrates that he is completely unable to control what happens to him.

So far, many main traits of the poems featuring the Catullus persona are *furor* in the form of a list of physical symptoms, the simultaneous feeling of two conflicting emotions, and the character's inability to remove himself from the situation. Poem 76 provides an example of Catullus, the poet, combining all of these themes together. Here, the Catullus persona briefly describes his "disease," along with more instances of inability, and his proposed solution to the problem (76.11-26).

*quin tu animo offirmas atque istinc teque reducis,
 et dis invitis desinis esse miser?
 Difficile est longum subito deponere amorem,
 difficile est, verum hoc qua lubet efficias:
 una salus haec est, hoc est tibi pervincendum,
 hoc facias, sive id non pote sive pote.
 O di, si vestrum est misereri, aut si quibus umquam
 extremam iam ipsa in morte tulistis opem,
 me miserum aspice et, si vitam puriter egi,
 eripite hanc pestem perniciemque mihi,
 quae mihi subrepens imos ut torpor in artus
 expulit ex omni pectore laetities.
 Non iam illud quaero, contra me ut diligat illa,
 aut, quod non potis est, esse pudica velit:
 ipse valere opto et taetrum hunc deponere morbum.
 O di, reddite mi hoc pro pietate mea.*

Why do you not set your heart and lead yourself back from there
 And stop being miserable, against the will of the gods
 It is difficult to suddenly lay aside a long love,
 it is difficult but manage this somehow:
 This is your sole salvation, you must overcome this,
 Do this, whether it is possible or not.
 O gods, if it is your job to feel pity, or if ever you have brought
 extreme help to those who are already in the throes of death,
 Look at wretched me and, if I have lived a pure life,
 take this curse and ruin from me,
 which creeps like paralysis deep into my limbs and
 drives out happiness from my entire heart.
 I no longer ask for this, that she should feel affection for me,
 or, something that is not possible, that she should wish to be chaste:
 I wish that I myself am healthy and get rid of this foul disease.
 O gods, give this to me in return for my piety.

Catullus begins by questioning his inability to remove himself from his despair and stop loving Lesbia. The problem, however, is that no longer loving her may be impossible. So, Catullus prays for divine intervention. Harkins notes that this poem is a prayer and compares it to the ending of c. 63.⁹ I agree that this prayer for sanity provides a link between the poems, but it also presents similarities with several other persona poems I have previously mentioned. As in poems 50 and 51, Catullus's feelings are

⁹ "Carmen 76, therefore, is a prayer; in it Catullus makes in unveiled language the same petition for release from *furor* which is cloaked in the Attis allegory. It is not too far fetched to see an allegorical connection between the frenzy of a Cybele worshipper and the frenzy of a lover—a connection between Attis and Catullus himself." Harkins, 110.

described with symptoms (*indomitus*, 50.11, *lingua sed torpet*, (51.9)), although this time things have taken a turn for the worse. In c. 50 he is overcome with desire to see Licinius again, and in c. 51 he blacks out merely from being in the presence of his love. In c. 76 the symptoms are similar but described in completely different terms. This time love is a cancer creeping into his limbs “like paralysis” (76.21), driving all happiness from his heart. Catullus also admits that he cannot free himself from love on his own, a powerlessness similar to his inability in poem 72 to leave Lesbia even though she has scorned him. The prayer certainly has links with the end of c. 63 (63.91-93), but it is important to note that in poem 76 Catullus asks to be delivered from his current situation, whereas in poem 63 the narrator wishes to avoid ever being in the situation in the future. Poem 76 thus combines the cataloguing of the symptoms of love found in poems 50 and 51 with the sense of powerlessness found in poem 72.

Unconditional Surrender

The Lesbia poems leading up to this point have shown a Catullus struggling to define his feelings. He has described himself as torn between love and hatred and unable to make a decision either way, even to the point of asking for divine help. In poem 85, he is finally able to completely summarize his feelings in just two lines:

*Odi et amo. Quare id faciam, fortasse requiris?
Nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.*

I hate and I love. Why do I do this, you might ask?
I do not know, but I feel it happening and I am tortured.

These lines describe the Catullus persona, the character whom Catullus himself developed in poems 50, 51, 72, 75, and 76, in two brief lines. The character hates and loves simultaneously, a contradiction he cannot himself explain. Like the Catullus of poems 50, 51, and 76, he experiences a physical symptom, although this time it is reduced to a single feeling of torturous pain. He exhibits the same passive traits that Catullus describes in c. 75 and the powerlessness that the poetic Catullus feels in c. 72. It is

interesting to note that poem 85, although it nearly perfectly describes the same emotions Catullus portrays in poems 72, 75, 76, and the Attis poem, takes a step back from poem 76. In c. 76 Catullus is still fighting to remove himself from his painful relationship, even though he admits he needs the help of divine intervention. In c. 85, however, we see the Catullus character at his most resigned. Like Attis, he is a mere spectator trapped in the moment, no longer wishing to escape; he can be cognizant of his situation and nothing more. He can only remain passive, experiencing the physical and emotional consequences of loving Lesbia, but never having any direct control.

Up to this point, the emotions of the persona have progressed from a desire so great that it causes physical symptoms, to the confusion of love and hate, to a state of resigned and completely passive observation, and finally to pain. These six poems all include similar traits and add up to create a consistent theme: the story of a tragic lover named Catullus. He was madly in love, then realized the flaws of his beloved and his own mistakes, became unable to escape, and eventually gave up hope, submitting to resignation.

III. The Mask of Attis

Next, I will examine poem 63 and compare its motifs with those of the Catullus persona theme in order to demonstrate that c. 63 should be taken as a part of the same theme running throughout the book. The Attis story follows a very similar plot to that of the Catullus character. John P. Elder provides a basic explanation: "The poem presents a study of two moods of [an emotionally torn] man. The first is one of wild and dominant fanaticism which culminates in a terrible self-sacrifice; the second is one of awakening and bleak despair when Attis realizes what he has done, what he now is, and recalls the world to which he may now never return. In brief, it is a study of fanatic devotion and subsequent disillusionment."¹⁰ These stages, I would like to suggest, line up well with the experiences through which

¹⁰ John P. Elder, "Catullus' Attis," *The American Journal of Philology* 68, no. 4 (1947): 394-403.

the Catullus persona transitions. First, both begin with an extreme level of passion and devotion. They then both proceed to a brief moment of temporary sanity, as shown in c. 72. Finally, both characters make clear their regret and their desire to leave the situation, which inevitably proves impossible. Finally, each situation ends with the demise of each character into resigned submission.

Early Devotion

A more detailed look into c. 63 will make the similarities immediately apparent. Much like the Catullus character's early passion for Lesbia, the Attis story begins with a fit of devotion. After arriving in Phrygia, Attis immediately commits self-castration without a second thought. David Wray notes the similarities between the *pondera* of Attis and the warp weights used while working on an ancient loom.¹¹ The matter-of-fact way in which Attis cuts off his *pondera* highlights the dispassionate nature of the castration and shows that he is already completely out of his mind. Attis's early frenzy of devotion, like Catullus, begins with physical symptoms as well. Not including the obvious physical changes, Attis is soon described as having white hands (*niveis...manibus*, 8), and tender fingers (*teneris...digitis*, 10), both physical traits commonly associated with women. Much later in the poem, in verse 74, s/he is described as having rosy lips (*roseis...labellis*). Along with the imagery of the warp weights, which was a traditionally feminine act, these other physical descriptions add up to paint a picture of a feminized, although not yet completely passivized, Attis. S/he retains enough agency to lead the group of frenzied followers up the mountain, where another physical feature is described.

Line 33, in which Catullus compares Attis to a heifer (*iuvenco*), is one of the most symbol-laden

¹¹ David Wray, "Attis' Groin Weights," *Classical Philology*, 96, no. 2 (Apr. 2001): 122: "The word *pondera*, in the plural, in addition to meaning 'weights' in general, had a specialized technical meaning that nearly every ancient reader would have known, and the act of cutting the testicles and letting them fall to the ground closely resembles an act within that technical sphere. The warp threads of an ancient loom hung loose from a crossbeam at the top, steadied only by weights attached to their lower ends... As the work progressed, the woven fabric was wound around the top crossbeam, which turned like a spool. By the end of the work, the warp weights were hanging near the top of the loom, and though no ancient author describes it explicitly, there was only one efficient way to remove the warp weights from the finished fabric: a blade was drawn across the hanging threads, and the weights, still tied to the cut ends, dropped to the ground."

verses in the poem:

Veluti iuvenca vitans onus indomita iugi...
Like an untamed heifer, shunning the burden of the yoke...

K. M. W. Shipton writes a brief yet informative article on the simile.¹² He convincingly argues that the *iuvenca* simile does not depict a heifer fleeing the possibility of a yoke, but that it shows the animal's frantic and desperate movement to shake the yoke off after it has been put on. This movement, he argues, mirrors the violent head tossing of Maenads, which is described in line 23.¹³ I also believe that this movement can be compared with Catullus's violent movement around his bed in poem 50 (*sed toto indomitus furore lecto*) and, in fact, the same word is used to describe both Catullus and Attis as "untamed" (*indomitus*, 50.11 and *indomita*, 63.33). Along with self-castration, white hands, and tender fingers, this sort of frenzied movement is another physical symptom that Catullus the poet uses to describe a fit of early devotion in poems 50, 51, and now 63.

Realization

Finally, exhausted from lack of food and sleep, Attis falls asleep. He is soon awakened by the "golden-faced" sun that drives away the shadows of night while sleep removes the madness from Attis's mind. As Traill notes, this awakening marks the transition section and the center of the poem—the moment when Attis becomes aware of his/her actions.¹⁴ Thus, along with providing a moment to which poem 72 can be compared, this section also provides some last physical symptoms.

I have already compared the Catullus persona's inability to eat or sleep in poem 50 with Attis's

¹² K. M. W. Shipton, "The Iuvenca Image in Catullus 63," *The Classical Quarterly*, New Series 36, no. 1 (1986): 268-70.

¹³ "It is more likely, however, that we are to imagine such an attempt has been made and that the phrase 'vitans onus ... iugi' describes her wild efforts to throw off the yoke. Her action will then be a blind charging accompanied by vigorous tossing of the head and neck as she tries to shake off the yoke." Shipton, 268.

¹⁴ David A. Traill, "Catullus 63: Rings around the Sun," *Classical Philology* 76, no. 3 (July 1981): 211-14; "In the center of the poem our attention is focused on the forces that temporarily release him from Cybele's power. Thus, the description of Sun and Sleep (39-43) lies at the thematic as well as the structural center of 63."

lack of food in 63.37, but there is one more comparison I would like to make. In poem 51, Catullus is so filled with desire that he momentarily blacks out, just as Attis collapses from exhaustion. The blackness that covers Catullus's eyes (*gemina teguntur lumina nocte*, 51.11-12) is mirrored in the shadows that the sun drives away (*noctis umbras*, 63.41). Furthermore, just as the moment of sensory blackout is immediately followed by a stern self-admonishment in c. 51.13 (*otium, Catulle, tibi molestum est*), Attis's collapse is followed by a painful moment of clarity and self-reflection. This tragic moment of awakening from madness is first described in three lines (63.44-46):

*ita de quiete molli rapida sine rabie
simul ipsa pectore Attis sua facta reolvit
liquidaque mente vidit sine quis ubique foret...*

Thus as soon as Attis, woken from soft rest without raging madness,
went over in her mind what she had done,
and saw with a clear mind without which things and where she was...

Just as Catullus in c. 72 now "knows" Lesbia, Attis now realizes his/her actions and "knows" the true Cybele. However, just like Catullus cannot bring himself to leave Lesbia, even though she behaves worse to him, Attis soon realizes that s/he will never be able to leave Cybele either.

Helplessness and Regret

After Attis awakens and realizes what has happened, s/he immediately returns back to the beach (described as *vada*, the shallows) and makes her lament (63.47). This lament is a very important part of the poem and it is very similar to the way Catullus describes his persona. To begin, the Attis of the lament is torn between two states and helpless to make a decision. His/her in-between gender parallels this tense liminality. As Catullus is torn between love and hate, Attis is stuck between male and female and cannot decide who s/he is. Attis's description of his/her past and future life underscores this feeling (63.62-73):

*quod enim genus figuraest, ego non quod obierim?
ego mulier, ego adulescens, ego ephebus, ego puer,*

*ego gymnasi fui flos, ego eram decus olei:
 mihi ianuae frequentes, mihi limina tepida,
 mihi floridis corollis redimita domus erat,
 linquendum ubi esset orto mihi Sole cubiculum.
 ego nunc deum ministra et Cybeles famula ferar?
 ego Maenas, ego mei pars, ego vir sterilis ero?
 ego viridis algida idea nive amicta loca colam?
 ego vitam agam sub altis Phrygiae columinibus,
 ubi verva silvicultrix, ubi aper nemorivagus?
 iam iam dolet quod egi, iam iamque paenitet.*

What kind of shape is there which I might not assume?
 I am a woman, I was an adolescent, an *ephebe*, a young boy,
 I was the flower of the gymnasium, I was the glory of the palaestra:
 My doors were crowded, my thresholds were warm,
 My house was wreathed with flowery garlands,
 As soon as I had to leave my room after the sunrise.
 Now will I be carried as a slave of the gods and maid of Cybele?
 Will I be a Maenad? A part of myself? A barren man?
 Will I inhabit the cold regions of verdant Ida, wrapped in snow?
 Will I live my life under the high peaks of Phrygia,
 where the forest-dwelling doe and forest-roving boar dwell?
 Already what I have done hurts, already I regret it.

In just enough detail that the audience can imagine itself in a similar situation, Attis describes his/her old life and then immediately goes on to describe his/her future life in the future tense. It is important to note that s/he offers hardly any description of his/her current state; apart from *ego mulier*, there is no way to describe what s/he is in the present. The fact that *adulescens*, *ephebus* and *puer* appear in the same sentence as *ego mulier* creates the same feeling of liminality as *notha mulier* did earlier. S/he used to be *flos gymnasi* and will soon be a *Cybeles famula*, but at this moment s/he is somewhere in-between. Like the Catullus persona, Attis is uncertain what s/he is and is trapped between two states of being. Furthermore, both Catullus and Attis cannot think of a word to describe their feelings; they can only describe the two stages they are between. Catullus contrasts, for example, “*odi et amo*,” and Attis contrasts *flos gymnasi* and *Cybeles famula*. Also, to further highlight this sense of liminality, Catullus starts the lament in the middle of the poem (line 50 of 93) and places Attis at the beach, the space between the land and the sea. Catullus has placed Attis “in-between” in nearly every way possible:

gender, location, life stage, and a mental state between temporary and perpetual madness. In this way, Attis's lament is clearly a precursor to *odi et amo*.

Surrender

By the end of the poem, Attis has given up any degree of agency and is chased back into the woods, where s/he will forever be a slave to Cybele. Like Catullus in poem 85, s/he has become completely passive and is at the mercy of a goddess. In the last moments of the poem, Attis is overpowered by Cybele and her lion, who become the main characters of the final twenty lines. Shipton correctly notes that Cybele's lion represents and mirrors the actions of the mad followers of Cybele, as seen in lines 19-34.¹⁵ The lion scene, therefore, not only shows Cybele frightening Attis back into the woods and thus into madness, but also gives a second description of the type of *furor* Attis will exhibit for the rest of his/her life. It seems that the last twenty lines or so, along with the closing prayer, are meant to be taken as a possible future for the poem's speaker, the Catullus character. Harkins attempts to explain the apparent lack of connection, writing that the narrator is praying that his madness will not return lest he suffer the same fate as Attis.¹⁶ I agree with his explanation and believe that this prayer resembles the one in c. 76, although it is slightly more hopeful. In c. 63 the narrator himself seems to be free, at least temporarily, from *furor*. Yet he still does not have complete control. Unlike c. 76, in which the narrator prays to be released from his turmoil, the speaker at the end of c. 63 prays in the hopes that the madness will not return.

¹⁵ "In view of these parallelisms between the behavior of Catullus' lion and that of initiates in the Cybele cult, we may reasonably claim that the lion's angry head tossing in 83 is a further allusion to the wild Cybele-inspired head-tossing described in line 23." Shipton, 270.

¹⁶ "In fact Catullus fervently prays to Cybele that he may be spared such frenzy. Perhaps in the light of the allegory he may be said to pray that he be spared a *return* to frenzy such as Attis suffered." Harkins, 111.

Catullus and Femininity

One final feature of the Catullus persona, which should now include Attis, is Catullus's tendency to compare or liken himself to female characters. To begin with, many of the characteristics previously described are feminine in nature. Catullus describes Lesbia's infidelity and his own inability to leave her, which seems to be the opposite of a "normal" Roman relationship. Lesbia represents the cool, uncaring, and unfaithful male half of the relationship, whereas Catullus represents the emotional, feminine half. His continuing loss of agency, culminating in c. 85, highlights his feminine role.

There are also four poems which highlight more literally Catullus's depiction of himself as feminine. Along with Attis, Harkins includes Ariadne in his investigation of possible auto-allegory. Her lament, he argues, mirrors Catullus's love life because both stories tell the tale of a faithless lover: Ariadne trusted her lover and he abandoned her, just as Catullus trusted Lesbia and was deserted by her.¹⁷ Harkins further writes that both Theseus and Lesbia are faithless and worthless and both are tragically trusted by their lovers. As with Attis, the situation of Ariadne reflects the love life of the Catullus persona and, in both poems, the character who embodies the theme is a woman.

In poem 65 there is another brief comparison to a female character. Catullus uses an interesting simile to tell Hortalus that his promise has not slipped his mind like an apple rolling out from under a maiden's lap. The simile itself is strange and comes unexpectedly, taking up a full quarter of the poem. The apple is the secretive gift of a fiancée (*sponsi furtivo munere*, 18), and the maiden forgets she has hidden it in her lap as her mother approaches, causing it to roll out. This simile may or may not be related to Catullus and Lesbia's secret romance, but regardless, it is important because in this manner Catullus once again compares himself to a young girl.

In poem 68.135-140, Catullus again compares his situation to that of a woman:

Quae tamen etsi uno non est contenta Catullo,

¹⁷ "Just as in *Carmen* 63 the lament of Attis seemed possibly to be autobiographical, here again in *Carmen* 64 the lament of Ariadne finds application in Catullus' own experience." Harkins, 113-114.

*rara verecundae furta feremus erae,
ne nimium simus stultorum more molesti.
Saepe etiam Iuno, maxima caelicolum,
coniugis in culpa flagrantem concoquit iram,
noscens omnivoli plurima furta Iovis.*

Yet, even though she is not content with one Catullus,
I bear the rare affairs of a modest mistress,
Lest I become too annoying in the manner of foolish men.
Often even Juno, greatest goddess of those in heaven,
endures her burning anger at the faults of her husband,
knowing the very many affairs of all-desiring Jove.

Harkins notes this comparison in the beginning of his article¹⁸ and shows the similarities between Catullus and Juno. Like Juno, Catullus must endure the infidelity of his lover even though it hurts and angers him. Catullus explores these feelings in the many other poems that serve as examples, but they are especially present in c. 85. He loves his companion and will not and cannot leave her, even though he knows her faithlessness and is deeply hurt. In all of these poems, Catullus compares himself to a female character. The Attis poem is a more literal description, as s/he is transformed from a man into a character with feminine aspects in c. 63. Not only does Catullus dare to portray himself as an unsuccessful lover, but he also pushes the idea further by showing himself in the passive role in the relationship and even compares himself to women.

IV. Conclusion

The Attis poem is undoubtedly one of Catullus's most vivid and intense poems. At first glance, it seems to be unique in his body of work. It is, as Elder puts it, a "the sympathetic delineation of a mind undergoing a psychological experience of a most powerful sort."¹⁹ Catullus certainly creates the feeling of madness and frenzy with amazing skill. The poem moves along with frantic speed inevitably towards Attis's demise, aided by the drum-like galliambic meter. Scholars have already realized that Catullus

¹⁸ "Yet [Catullus] must keep his anger within bounds as Juno does, even though she knows the many amorous faults of *omnivorus* Jove (vs. 140)." Harkins, 103.

¹⁹ Elder, 395.

thematically weaves together the *carmina maiora*, poem 63 included. These scholars have, however, failed to notice the links that poem 63 shares with the rest of the collection. I have shown that many different poems throughout the book feature a character named Catullus and that these poems can be taken together to reconstruct the poet Catullus's persona. Poems 50, 51, 72, 75, 76, and 85 show the development and evolution of this character from a devoted, desirous lover into a resigned, powerless man. After examining c. 63 in detail and comparing its traits with those of the Catullus persona, it becomes clear that c. 63 is carrying on the same theme. Also, there are several times when Catullus compares himself directly with a female character. These comparisons provide further evidence that the feminized Attis reflects the traits of Catullus's persona. Both the Catullus persona and Attis begin devoted to their lovers and soon realize their mistakes. They regret their decisions and try to escape, but eventually lose hope. The poems of Catullus are truly rich and wonderfully complex, and no poem of his exists in a vacuum. There are real and definite themes woven throughout every poem, and the Attis poem is no exception. Its seemingly strange protagonist and exotic narrative obscure the true nature of the poem, which represents a stage in the development of the Catullus persona from a blissful lover to disheartened shell of a man.

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The Aporia of Divine Economy vs. the Socratic Ideal of Service: A Close Reading of the Fifth *Elenchus* in Plato's *Euthyphro*

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My concern in this paper¹ is not to engage the substantial literature on Plato's *Euthyphro* or the *Apology*. Nor will I tackle directly the ethical and theological implications put to us perennially by the "Euthyphro dilemma."² Rather, I invite my readers to join me in a thought experiment. Plato's dialogues follow Socrates from the porch of the king-archon (*Euthyphro*), to the *dikastérion* where he is tried for impiety (*Apology*), to the prison cell in which he prepares to take his own life (*Phaedo*). By the time Socrates is arguing the immortality of the Soul, though, the narrative has left behind an instructive foil for Socrates' own soul: the misguided Euthyphro himself, the Athenian religious professional³ who meets Socrates at the very threshold of the latter's final sacred act.

But what if Euthyphro had not parted ways with Socrates on the steps of the *dikastérion*? What if, instead, he had paralleled the gadfly's course into the courtroom, taking a seat among the assembly? Would Euthyphro have cast his stone with those who condemned Socrates on the count of impiety? Or would his dialogue with Socrates have occasioned a change of heart? In this paper I attempt to supply a rationale—one endogenous to the original text of the *Euthyphro* itself—for my claim that Euthyphro would indeed have voted to convict Socrates at trial.

¹ I would like to thank Nancy Evans, Professor of Classics at Wheaton College, Massachusetts for her invaluable assistance during the preparation of this paper.

² For a very brief introduction to these issues, see John Hare, "Religion and Morality," from *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Edward N. Zalta, Fall 2010 ed. (Stanford, Calif.: Metaphysics Research Lab, Center for the Study of Language and Information, Stanford University), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2010/entries/religion-morality>.

³ Hare, "Religion and Morality."

Euthyphro's conception of piety (*tò hósion*), the basis on which he would presumably make a legal decision in Socrates' case, is only intelligible within a holistic reading of the five *elenchi* (refutational exchanges) that figure into the rhetoric of the dialogue. Euthyphro advances five different definitions of piety and Socrates interrogates each in turn. In section I, I outline the first three *elenchi* and what McPherran calls the "aporetic interlude" between the third and the fourth. In so doing, I explain why my hypothetical scenario invoking Euthyphro's role at Socrates' trial puts in question the sense in which this dialogue is "aporetic"—or, better, how my approach raises the issue of for whom it is aporetic. Section II analyzes the rhetorical situation of the fifth *elenchus* in a close reading of Greek text at *Euthphr* 14d6-15b6. In concert with intertextual evidence from the *Apology*, the fifth *elenchus* flushes out Euthyphro's traditional understanding of the Olympian gods as cooperative participants in an economy or commerce of goods. We shall see that Euthyphro clings to this problematic paradigm for *tò hósion* even in the midst of aporia, and I will show that there is good reason to believe that his stolid dogmatism would have persisted even unto the verdict at Socrates' trial. Finally, I argue in section III that we may infer Socrates' own radical view of piety from his elenctic treatment of Euthyphro's proposed definitions.

I.

When Socrates meets Euthyphro on the porch of the king-archon, the latter indicates that he has come to press charges of impiety against his father.⁴ Given Euthyphro's own legal agenda and Socrates' impending trial, Burns writes, "if *anyone* is confident that he knows the meaning of 'impiety,' Euthyphro is; and if anyone is interested in finding out what it means, Socrates is."⁵ To the end of instructing Socrates, his self-appointed pupil,⁶ Euthyphro, offers four successive definitions of *tò hósion*

⁴ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 4.

⁵ Steven A. M. Burns, "Doing Business with the Gods," *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 15, no. 2 (June 1985), 312.

⁶ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 5a4.

which, together with their Socratic refutations, form the first four *elenchi*. Here, in telegraphic form, is a rendering of these definitions:

- E1. The pious consists in those actions (e.g., Euthyphro's prosecution of his father) done in obedience to divine will. (5d9–6d4)
- E2. The pious is what is dear to the gods. (7a1–8b5)
- E3. The pious is what is dear to *all* the gods. (Socrates' refutation presents the well-known "Euthyphro dilemma": either something is (a) pious because it is loved by the gods or (b) loved by the gods (god-beloved) because it is pious. 9e1–11b5)⁷

Euthyphro then admits, "I have no way of telling you what I have in mind,"⁸ since each proposed definition so far has proved intractable. From here through 11e1, Socrates embarks on what McPherran calls the "aporetic interlude"—aporetic because Euthyphro has demurred with a claim to have reached a conceptual impasse. Socrates likens Euthyphro to Daedalus and the former's propositions to the locomotive mischief of the latter's statues.⁹ Euthyphro then attempts to pin on Socrates the Daedalian elusiveness of an adequate definition of piety. To be fair, Socrates has to this point "overwhelmed Euthyphro with his idiosyncratic principles of proper definition" and a fair share of acerbic jests.¹⁰ With both Euthyphro and Socrates "profess[ing] a desire to find stable proposals" about piety, however, the aporetic interlude serves a conciliatory role.¹¹ It reaffirms an earnest ethos behind the stinging Socratic irony that, nevertheless, continues into the fifth *elenchus*—where, I contend, we get the clearest implications of Socrates' own view of what constitutes an acceptable account of piety. Before that refutation, however, comes a series of inchoate definitions to the effect that:

- E4. The pious is the part of justice that has to do with a kind of care toward or ministering to (*therapeía*) the gods (12e5–14a8).

⁷ For concise treatment of the Euthyphro dilemma as a genuine dilemma, see Burns, 317–19.

⁸ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 11b6.

⁹ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 11b9–c5.

¹⁰ Mark L. McPherran, "The Aporetic Interlude and Fifth Elenchus of Plato's *Euthyphro*," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 25 (Winter 2003), 7.

¹¹ McPherran, 10–11.

Because each *elenchus*—the four that I have listed so far and, as we shall see, the fifth also—terminates in inferences that Socrates shows to be untenable, it is often thought that *Euthyphro* offers no conclusive conception of piety attributable to Socrates. For this reason, Platonists have traditionally classed *Euthyphro* among the so-called “aporetic” dialogues.¹² I join several recent commentators in rejecting this classification on the grounds that a positive Socratic conception of piety may yet be reconstructed from the *elenchi*, however inconclusive they might be.¹³ Scholars who have mounted this challenge have typically taken Socrates’ remarks at the end of the fourth *elenchus*¹⁴ to be decisive. The standard rebuttal to an aporetic reading of the dialogue infers that Socrates must have known what piety is, since he mourns that Euthyphro was on the brink of giving a satisfactory account of piety.¹⁵ Just as Euthyphro is about to characterize a definitionally adequate form (*eidós*) of “the many fine things that the gods achieve,”¹⁶ however, he “turns away” (*apotrápou*), toward specific instances of piety (i.e., prayer and sacrifice) that bring about public and private goods.¹⁷ My contention is that a close reading of a slightly later passage in the Greek text, the much-neglected fifth *elenchus* (excerpted here in 14d6–15b6),¹⁸ brings into relief the differences between what Euthyphro thinks of the gods’ work (*tò ergón*) and Socrates implied (positive) view of the same. Although that final *elenchus* too will result in aporia, I will show that it is a *local* aporia, one that ensnares Euthyphro’s arguments but has no purchase on the implied view of Socrates.

¹² Burns, 311.

¹³ See Burns, 311, and David M. Parry, “Holiness as Service: *Therapeia* and *Hyperetike* in Plato’s *Euthyphro*,” *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 28, no. 4 (December 1994), 529. For an extensive bibliography of recent literature taking this argumentative tack, see Parry, 529, n. 2.

¹⁴ *Euthphr* 14b9–c5

¹⁵ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14c1–4.

¹⁶ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14b7–8.

¹⁷ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14a9–b5; Parry, 530.

¹⁸ See appendix for my translation of *Euthphr* 14d6–15b6.

II.

Back in the fourth *elenchus*, Socrates drew out Euthyphro's implication that the pious is the part of the just concerned with the care (*therapeía*¹⁹) of the gods, more precisely, a care that is a kind of service (*hê hypêretiké*).²⁰ According to McPherran,

Socrates shapes his elenctic investigation of [Euthyphro's] new, fifth account of piety so as to address the still unresolved issue of piety's nature as postulated by the fourth definition: that is, the identity of the chief product of the gods that we assist them to produce and, thus, the kind of *non*-therapeutic service to them that piety would be.²¹

To this end, Socrates significantly reverts at the beginning of the fifth *elenchus* to "service"-talk in a new key. Socrates asks Euthyphro not about *hê hypêretiké*, but about one of its morphological variants: *hê hypêresía*, a feminine noun related to *ho hypêrêtês*.²² Xenophon, a contemporary of Socrates, uses *ho hypêrêtês* as a quasi-verbal noun meaning "help in a work" with the objective genitive (e.g., *érgou*).²³ While there is no objective genitive at 14d6, the mere fact that *ho hypêrêtês* can govern the genitive²⁴—unlike the earlier formulation, *hê hypêretiké*, which governs the directional dative ("service to/toward")—suggests that the object taking of this noun is prepositional—neither direct nor directional.²⁵ Put another way, *ho hypêrêtês* indicates a kind of service that "helps" a prepositional object in some sort of work. Since the noun avoids taking an accusative of person, the "verbalness" of the noun is by all accounts intransitive. In light of Euthyphro's intransigent "turn away" from identifying the sort of divine work in which human piety is serviceable, Socrates' emphasis of a clearly intransitive notion of service (in *ho hypêrêtês*) proposes something positive about the *structure* of that service. The fifth *elenchus*, therefore, presupposes a form of service that is non-affecting (at least directly) and non-

¹⁹ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 12e6.

²⁰ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14d7.

²¹ McPherran, 19–20.

²² Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14d6.

²³ Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*, 1889 ed., s.v. "hypêrêtês."

²⁴ "Helper [in a work]" differs from the model *hê toũ paĩdos paidotrophía*, "the nurturing of a child," because the implied "work" is the indirect object of "help," whereas the "child" is a direct (albeit prepositional) object of "nurture" and therefore transitive.

²⁵ I return to the semantic feature of directionality vs. stasis in section III.

directional. This form is implicitly opposed to the *transitive* articular infinitives of *aiteîn* and *didónai* that Socrates correctly attributes to Euthyphro's notion of service.²⁶

Socrates makes this juxtaposition more explicit at 14d7: "[W]hat is this service... [*intrans.*]? You say it is to ask for [*trans.*]...and to give to [*trans.*]"?²⁷ Just what is Socrates getting at by shifting "service" into the intransitive and then recapitulating Euthyphro's transitive definition of service as asking and giving?²⁸ Let us first note the sort of "asking" on which Socrates and Euthyphro have agreed. *Aiteîn* denotes a begging, a demanding, a craving, and as a verb takes two accusatives: (a) the things *asked for* (accusative of thing) and (b) the person they are *asked from* (accusative of person).²⁹ If piety (*tò hósion*) is, in part, to ask for something (*aiteîn*), it is reasonable to suggest that, insofar as it "begs" the form of piety that Socrates is imputing to Euthyphro,³⁰ values the *desideratum* in parity with the *person* from whom it is desired. In other words, Socrates proposes that for Euthyphro, the pious *desiderator* (man) does not make a value distinction between what he desires—e.g., "[the preservation of] private houses and public affairs of state"³¹—and from whom he desires it (the gods). "What is this *service* to the gods"³² is thus a loaded question, though Euthyphro is oblivious—or, else, indifferent—to the ultimatum it poses. "Take me to task on my equivocation between *ho hypêrétês* and *aiteîn*," Socrates seems to admonish, "or else equate the intransitive with the transitive, which is to say, treat the gods as value-equivalent with things." Yet Euthyphro simply condones this equivocation, this objectification of the gods in an economy of goods to be procured.

²⁶ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14d1–2.

²⁷ Italics mine.

²⁸ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14c8–9.

²⁹ Liddell and Scott, s.v. "aitéō."

³⁰ Recall the indirect discourse here, set off by *phês* (Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14d7).

³¹ The original reads *sôizdei tà toiaûta tous te idíous oíkous kai tà koinà tôn póleôn* (Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14b4–5). This reference and all subsequent references to *external* translations of the *Euthyphro* are to Plato, *Euthyphro*, in *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, ed. and trans. G.M.A. Grube, rev. John M. Cooper, 3rd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2000).

³² Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14d6.

So much for the syntactic equivocations on the notion of *tò hósion* as *aiteĩn*. Yet what about *tò hósion* as *giving* (*didónai*)?³³ By inquiring not only about “giving” but, qualifying that, about “giving *rightly*” (*didónai orthôs*),³⁴ Socrates again prompts Euthyphro to reflect on his as of yet unaltered position. Here the subtext seems to read, “Is it actually giving (*didónai*) *rightly*³⁵ at all to *bring presents* (*dôrophoreĩn*) to someone when that someone is a god?”³⁶ With this slide in connotation from the earnest offering of *didónai* to the bribery and trinket exchange of *dôrophoreĩn*,³⁷ Socrates grants Euthyphro yet another opportunity to abjure his mounting economization of divine service—and yet the pigheaded “teacher” does not. Under the weight, presumably, of his stolid dogmatism, Euthyphro plows on, impervious to the expediency implicit in *dôrophoreĩn*.³⁸

Euthyphro then accedes to the claim that the giver would not be *skillful* (*ou...technikón*) if he were to present in return (*antidôreĩsthai*) things for which the gods have no need.³⁹ This is a particularly telling admission from Euthyphro. “Skill” (*hê téchnê*) denotes craft or efficacy in the “means whereby a thing is granted.”⁴⁰ If an act—here, giving to the gods—can properly be modified by the adverbial predicate “skillful” (*technikón*), it necessarily follows that that act is a means to some end. Euthyphro apparently sees nothing amiss in the instrumentality that his brand of *dôrophoreĩn* connotes. He is likely accustomed to this idiom of utility;⁴¹ mutual need is, after all, the impetus behind *quid-pro-quo* exchanges,⁴² both among merchants at market and among priests at temple.⁴³ It comes as little surprise,

³³ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14d7.

³⁴ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e1.

³⁵ Note the emphatic placement of *orthôs* after the verb.

³⁶ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e1–4.

³⁷ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e1–3; Liddell and Scott, s.v. “*didómai*,” “*dôrophoréô*.”

³⁸ In light of this spatial metaphor, Socrates’ use of *orthôs* may be a pun on the obstinate *straightness* of the “path” that Euthyphro is taking through the argument, despite Socrates’ every appeal to veer off into contestation.

³⁹ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e1–3.

⁴⁰ Liddell and Scott, s.v. “*téchnê*.”

⁴¹ See *deĩtai* in Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e4.

⁴² See *antidôreĩsthai* in Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e2.

⁴³ One need only look to the cache of votive offerings to Athena in the Parthenon to justify this comparison between commercial and sacerdotal interests.

then, that Euthyphro assents, if somewhat listlessly, to Socrates' equation of the pious with the "art of conducting business transactions" (*hê emporikê téchnê*).⁴⁴

From here to the end of the fifth *elenchus*, it is clear that Socrates and his readers are complicit in the dramatic irony that unfolds as their counterpart, Euthyphro, again and again fails to detect any cognitive dissonance in Socrates' increasingly provocative prompts. As Burns observes, this section is thick with irony, and Euthyphro is slow to comprehend it.⁴⁵ For Euthyphro, it is business as usual that a *do-et-des* arrangement (*aiteîn/didónai*) would redound to the mutual benefit (*hê ôphelía*, connoting "profit," "advantage," "gain"⁴⁶) of gods and men. It is simply an artifact of a happy imbalance in trade (*hê emporía*⁴⁷) that man's gifts to the gods (*tà dôra*)—his worship, honor, and gratitude—are as unabashedly exploitive as bribes.⁴⁸ Other commentators have cited the inadequacy of Euthyphro's instrumental model for *tò hósion*, on which petitionary prayers (asking) and sacrifices (giving) are seen as so many "business transactions."⁴⁹ Burns, for example, points out that sacrifice, unlike forms of attending that take human beings as their objects, does not render unto gods what they need (for they need nothing); it is a giving up of something we, as givers, need and therefore value.⁵⁰ This distinction certainly eludes Euthyphro, but it presupposes something even more basic to a reconstruction of the Socratic view implicit here.

The gods *do not* need (i.e., *ôpheleĩsthai*, "have use for"⁵¹) anything from humans.⁵² Being themselves perfectly *eudaímôn*, the gods do not stand to gain from the "gifts" of prayer and sacrifice

⁴⁴ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e6–8.

⁴⁵ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 323.

⁴⁶ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e10.

⁴⁷ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15a3.

⁴⁸ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15a8–10; Liddell and Scott, s.v. "tò dôron."

⁴⁹ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e5.

⁵⁰ Burns, 323.

⁵¹ I think my translation of *ôpheleĩsthai* as "have use for" is preferable to Grube's "are benefitted by," because the former dissociates what is useful (and therefore instrumentally good) from what is beneficial and not necessarily instrumentally good. Even so, both imply a "making better" that cannot apply to the gods.

⁵² Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15a8–9. Or so Socrates would have to believe, perhaps by begging the question in favor of perfectly *eudaímôn* gods. See McPherran, 28.

any kind of happiness.⁵³ And, curiously, Euthyphro has already conceded as much in alleging (a) that pious prayers and sacrifice are gratifying to the gods;⁵⁴ (b) that the gods do not stand to benefit from our gifts;⁵⁵ and (c) that it is not artful to give gifts that meet no needs of their recipient(s).⁵⁶ Given Euthyphro's admissions (a)–(c), he contradicts himself when he claims, at 15a8–9, that the worship, tokens of honor, and gratification that the gods get from us are in some way needed. He tries to resuscitate the notion of a gratitude that man offers to the gods (*cháris*),⁵⁷ which naturally pleases the gods in the sense of courting their favor (*kecharisménon*).⁵⁸ Perhaps Euthyphro's perversity on this point owes to his view that piety must be, if anything, an artful sort of transaction that "knows the market."⁵⁹

Catching Euthyphro in this contradiction, Socrates attempts a last-ditch rhetorical move in order to induce Euthyphro to commit *reductio ad absurdum* and bring this fifth *elenchus* to a close. If gods are analogous to clients at market, then what is merely pleasing to them is less useful—and thus, on Euthyphro's value scheme, less valuable—than what they love or hold dear. If an Athenian religious professional like Euthyphro knows the market optimally well, he will naturally offer his clients the most useful or valuable goods that it is within his skill to provide. The *mántis*⁶⁰ knows that the customer-gods are always right; he is directed, transitively, toward affecting them so as to bring about receipt of things that are publically and privately useful for human beings (*tà chrēmata*). Therefore, when Socrates asks whether piousness is what is pleasing to the gods, not what is beneficial or dear to them,⁶¹ Euthyphro is committed to saying, as indeed he does, that piety (as superlatively pleasing to the gods) is "of all things [...] most dear to them."⁶² By sliding from what is pleasing to the gods to what is loved by them,

⁵³ McPherran, 22.

⁵⁴ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14b2.

⁵⁵ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e10–15a6

⁵⁶ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e1–3.

⁵⁷ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15a10.

⁵⁸ Liddell and Scott, s.v. "charízdomai."

⁵⁹ Cf. Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e5–6.

⁶⁰ "Prophet," a term Socrates ascribes to Euthyphro at Plato, *Euthyphro*, 3c3.

⁶¹ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15b1–2.

⁶² Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15b3

presumably because it pleases them, Euthyphro fails to detect the qualitative difference between, on the one hand, what is pleasing (*prophilés*)⁶³ and directionally courts another's favor and, on the other, what is dear (simply *phílon*) and redounds, intransitively, to love.⁶⁴

Once Euthyphro claims that "god-gratifying powers and sacrifices" are loved by the gods, Socrates needs only to substitute "the pious" for these observances in order to prove that Euthyphro has committed a fatal reduction of piety to what is absurd.⁶⁵ The definition of piety as what is loved by the gods has already been refuted in the third *elenchus*, where Socrates gets Euthyphro to concede that the pious and the god-loved are not the same, but different.⁶⁶ As Socrates hereupon informs him,⁶⁷ Euthyphro has come full circle to his previously invalidated proposition about the pious.⁶⁸ So it is that Euthyphro's traditional understanding of the Olympian gods has remained static throughout the dialogue, ineluctably bound to the notion of piety as a commercial exchange driven by men's coaxing of personally and socially advantageous *goods* (*tà agathá*)⁶⁹ from placated gods.

III.

To conclude, I shall try to draw out a reconstruction of Socrates' implied view of piety based on the foregoing analysis of Socrates' elenctic argumentation against Euthyphro's dogmatic instrumentalism. We may suppose, from his alleged expertise in spiritual matters,⁷⁰ that Euthyphro is a member of the sacerdotal establishment in early fourth-century Athens. With an abrupt departure from dialogue with Socrates,⁷¹ this prominent civic figure turns⁷² from a volatile debate on the king-archon's porch to the intellectually predictable environs of the *stoá*, where merchants hawk and sell and buyers

⁶³ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 6d10.

⁶⁴ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15b2.

⁶⁵ McPherran, 22–23.

⁶⁶ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 10e10–11b5, 15c1–2.

⁶⁷ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15b7ff.

⁶⁸ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15b6–c3.

⁶⁹ See Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15a4.

⁷⁰ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 5a, 6bff.

⁷¹ Which occurs soon after the fifth *elenchus*, 15e3–4.

⁷² See *apetrárou*, as Socrates charges; Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14c1.

bustle and buy. Here there is motion; he need not stay still too long, for his work—the advancement of his house’s cachet and of the city’s affairs⁷³—has him ever pleasing others, whether he is conciliating statesmen or offering up the votives he esteems “dear” to the gods. Though he may have denied it at the end of the fifth *elenchus*, Euthyphro sees his activity, above all, as pleasing to the gods (*prosphilés*).⁷⁴ The compounding of *philós* with *pros-* carries a pronounced sense of directionality, of motion from one place to another, as befits an economy of trade. In short, the notion of divine love for Euthyphro is in every sense—morphologically, ethically, and theologically—shot through with a quantitatively optimized economy that seems to say, “What can be gained? What must be given? What is so dear to the buyer-gods as will induce their giving lavishly to the city? At the end of the day, with Olympus pleased, what capital will we have garnered from trade?”

For such a venal prophet as Euthyphro, exchange with the gods is but a means to personal and civic ends. In the end, though, the pursuit of “things one needs or uses” (*tà chrēmata*)⁷⁵ haunts Euthyphro’s divine economy. His calculations—like the bad faith with which he departs the dialogue—usher in a self-defeating aporia: the more he seeks, the less satisfying are the goods he receives in return (*tà agathá hà antidôreĩtai*). Giving (*dôrophoreĩn*) leads to increase but also to indebtedness as the returns come rolling in, creating a vicious circle of commercial trading. For *tà agathá* are good only for some purpose; these desiderata of Euthyphro’s piety are always instruments that find their intrinsic value depreciated once even better goods (*tà ámeinon agathá*) arrive at market, and so on forever.

⁷³ Cf. Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14b4–5.

⁷⁴ See Plato, *Euthyphro*, 6e10.

⁷⁵ Liddell and Scott, s.v. “chrēma.”

In contrast, for one so inspired as Socrates by divine presence—by that abiding voice that calls so softly that it drowns out the cries of commerce and politics⁷⁶—for such a man, divine exchange is an end in itself:

[A]s I say to you, “Wealth does not bring about excellence, but excellence brings about wealth and all other public and private blessings for men.”⁷⁷

Such excellence is possible once Socrates approaches the Divine Other with humility, a desire to obey,⁷⁸ and to stand still and listen in those moments when the mercantile Euthyphro would prattle and prod, sing *paean*s and supplicate. Reciprocity emerges in the interstices of shared presence with the divine, wherein that which is *absolutely* good—the wisdom and truth that require no price comparison and no cost-benefit analysis—comes to instill the soul (*psychê*).⁷⁹ This does not happen all of a sudden or gratuitously; for Socrates, the soul is cultivated by virtue of elenctic philosophizing, itself “a pre-eminently pious activity.”⁸⁰ Being the gadfly involves the sort of “sacrificial gifts of time, pride, and conventional goods”⁸¹ that enable the donor to help the gods in the never-ending work (*ho hypêrêtês*) of perfecting the donor’s own (recipient) soul.⁸² A bond of friendship forms in this work, and a love (*philia*) that is content to stand rapt for hours on the roadside saves the human soul from wickedness and injustice.⁸³ The pleasing blessings (*tà agathá*)⁸⁴ that Athens desires may yet come, but these do not occasion an aporia *à la* Euthyphro because they supervene on what is true⁸⁵ and excellent (*hê aretê*),⁸⁶ and not vice versa. Excellence inheres in divine reciprocity; it stands in infinite qualitative distinction to

⁷⁶ Plato, *Apology*, 31c-d. This reference (33–34) and all subsequent references to the *Apology* are to Plato, *Apology*, in *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, ed. and trans. G. M. A. Grube, rev. John M. Cooper, 3rd ed. (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 2000), 20–42.

⁷⁷ Plato, *Ap.*, 30b. See Grube, 32–33.

⁷⁸ Plato, *Apology*, 29b.

⁷⁹ Plato, *Apology*, 29e–30b.

⁸⁰ McPherran, 29.

⁸¹ McPherran, 29.

⁸² For more on the notion that service is importantly reflexive, see Parry, 535.

⁸³ Plato, *Apology*, 40b.

⁸⁴ Plato, *Apology*, 30b.

⁸⁵ Cf. Socrates’ *parenthesis* at Plato, *Euthyphro*, 14e8: “Ah, but to *me*, nothing is pleasing if it chances to be untrue.”

⁸⁶ Plato, *Apology*, 30b2–3.

even the greatest goods (*tà mégista agathá*) extracted from the divine economy. Socrates' *hê areté* is a self-validating subject, gendered and organically whole, whereas Euthyphro's *tà agathá* are mere contingent objects, neutered and atomistically plural.

Had Euthyphro been attentive to his equivocations on *aiteĩn* and *didónai*; had he come to terms with Socrates' corrective foils of intransitive service (*hê hypêrétês*) and uncompounded love (cf. *philón*) to his own transitive transactions (*hê emporikê*) and pleasing calculations (*prosphílos*)—indeed, had he stood still before, and amenable to, Socrates' solicitous prompts, perhaps he would not have hastened off at dialogue's end, presumably to cast a “guilty” vote.⁸⁷ Euthyphro's piety is, in the end, extrinsic. For him, *tò hósion* is inexplicably bound up with a Realpolitik that equates the pleasing (*prosphílos*) with the morally good, never to question whether the good and the true⁸⁸ cannot itself engender—*a fortiori*, whether excellence alone can engender—the pleasing and the useful (i.e., *tà agathá*). That revolutionary Socratic notion of piety as intrinsically excellent, as intransitive, as reciprocity among divine friends,⁸⁹ alas, is lost on Euthyphro, the chief exponent of traditional Athenian piety.⁹⁰

⁸⁷ Plato, *Euthyphro*, 15e.

⁸⁸ i.e., *hê areté*, which is “such as to be loved,” *oíon phileĩsthai*. See Plato, *Euthyphro*, 11a5.

⁸⁹ See Plato, *The Symposium*, in *The Symposium and the Phaedrus: Plato's Erotic Dialogues*, ed. and trans. William S. Cobb (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 48 and 211c.

⁹⁰ For a discussion of the extent to which Euthyphro is a “mouthpiece for traditional Athenian religion,” as opposed to a carefully keyed narrative device, see McPherran, 4.

Appendix: Original Translation of *Euthphr 14d6–15b6*

SOCRATES. ...But tell me, what is this service⁹¹ to the gods? You say it is to ask⁹² and to give to them?

EUTHYPHRO. I do indeed.

SOC. To beg *rightly* would be to ask⁹³ from them those things we need, wouldn't it?

EUTH. What else?

SOC. And, conversely, to give⁹⁴ *rightly* is to present to them, in return, those things they need from us? For it wouldn't be in any way skillful⁹⁵ if one were to bring someone presents⁹⁶ that were in no way needed.

EUTH. You speak the truth, Socrates.

SOC. Might the pious, then, be a certain art of conducting business transactions⁹⁷ between gods and men?

EUTH. Trading skill, yes, if it's pleasing to you to call it that.

SOC. Ah, but to *me*, nothing is pleasing if it chances to be untrue. But tell me, what actually is the benefit⁹⁸ of these gifts the gods receive from us? What they give to us is obvious to all; for we have nothing good that they haven't given to us.⁹⁹ But from the gifts that they receive from us, what benefits *them*? Or do we have such an advantage over them in this trade¹⁰⁰ that we receive all goods¹⁰¹ from them, while they receive nothing from us?

EUTH. Do you think, Socrates, that the gods have use for the things they receive from us?

SOC. Well, if not, Euthyphro, what then would these gifts¹⁰² from us to the gods be?

EUTH. What do you think they'd be, besides worship and tokens of honor and the very thing I just now mentioned,¹⁰³ namely, gratification?¹⁰⁴

⁹¹ *hê hypêresía*; also: help *in a work*, with objective genitive; *intrans.*

⁹² as in, for *things* (acc.) from person (acc.); *trans.*

⁹³ *aiteîn*

⁹⁴ *didónai*

⁹⁵ *technikón*

⁹⁶ *dôrophoréô*

⁹⁷ *hê emporiké téchnê*

⁹⁸ *hê ôphelía*

⁹⁹ i.e., *unless* they have given it to us

¹⁰⁰ *tên emporían*

¹⁰¹ *tà agathá*

¹⁰² *tà dōra*

¹⁰³ i.e., in *Euthphr 14b2*

¹⁰⁴ *cháris*

SOC. So the pious, then, is what's pleasing¹⁰⁵ to the gods, not what's beneficial or dear¹⁰⁶ to them?

EUTH. I think of all things it is most dear to them.

SOC. So then the pious is, once again, what is dear to the gods.

EUTH. Most certainly.

¹⁰⁵ *kecharisménon*

¹⁰⁶ *tò phílon*

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The Italian Doctor During the Black Death

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Italy was the first part of Europe to witness the Black Death firsthand after Genoese sailors carrying the disease brought it to Messina in October 1347.¹ From there the plague spread to the remainder of the country within months. By the time England had even received word of the plague's existence, one-third to one-half of the residents of Italy had already succumbed to its lethal effects.² Italians were known and prized throughout Europe for their medical knowledge, credited for introducing Arabic texts to the Latin-reading West³ and revered for their pioneering studies of surgery and anatomy. By the fourteenth century the University of Bologna was the most prestigious medical school in all of Christian Europe,⁴ and the first recorded human autopsy was performed there by Bartolommeo da Varignana in 1302.⁵ However, despite housing Europe's premier physicians, Italy was hit every bit as hard as its neighbors, if not worse, and at the peak of the epidemic in Italy the doctors themselves often proclaimed that the pestilence was simply God's wrath and could be neither cured nor avoided. Chronicler and Piacenzan lawyer Gabriele de' Mussis (d. 1356) lamented in his *Historia de morbo* that "many physicians began to realize the futility of their medicine and refused to visit the sick, hiding away to preserve their own health rather than add themselves to the list of those whom they could not

¹ John Lerner, *Italy in the Age of Dante and Petrarch, 1216-1380* (London, Longman, 1980), 257.

² This figure reflects most modern estimates. Contemporary chroniclers generally claim that the death rate was much higher, in whose accounts 90 percent is not an uncommon figure. See John Aberth, *From the Brink of the Apocalypse: Confronting Famine, War, Plague, and Death in the Later Middle Ages* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 124.

³ Katherine Ludwig Jansen, Joanna H. Drell, and Frances Andrews, *Medieval Italy: Texts in Translation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2009), 309.

⁴ Edward Grant, *The Foundations of Modern Science in the Middle Ages: Their Religious, Institutional, and Intellectual Contexts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 26.

⁵ George Sarton, *Introduction to the History of Science*. 3rd ed. Vol. 3, Part 1 (Washington D.C.: Williams & Wilkins, 1947), 243.

heal.”⁶ However, the profession as a whole never gave up on fighting the plague completely. The proposed cures, remedies, preventatives, theories and, if nothing else, documentation, were both detailed and varied.

During this time, not everyone who practiced medicine received a formal education. Of the physicians, surgeons, barber-surgeons, apothecaries, and non-professional practitioners who did, only physicians and surgeons received their training at a university, and the latter only on occasion.⁷ For those who did receive a formal medical education, the University of Bologna and other Italian schools⁸ offered a program similar to those offered elsewhere in Europe at the time, often based around a cathedral where admittance to the clergy was often a requirement for admittance to the university.⁹ The curriculum focused on the reading of scientific texts written by established authorities, most notably Hippocrates (c. 460-370 BCE), Galen (c. 129-199 CE), and Avicenna (c. 980-1037 CE).¹⁰ Students then analyzed these texts according to the principles laid down by Peter Abelard in his twelfth-century text *Sic et Non*,¹¹ where the scholar compared two arguments and used both to reach a conclusion through logic. In addition, an aspiring physician would train in the seven liberal arts.¹² Yet these subjects and classical authors were the sum total of a physician’s education, meaning his or her training relied far more on centuries-old literature than clinical research. A syllabus of the medical curriculum at the University of Bologna a few years after the plague featured forty-six lectures over its four-year program, each focusing entirely upon a particular text. With only two exceptions, all lessons came from

⁶ Rosemary Horrox, *The Black Death* (Manchester, U.K.: Manchester University Press, 1994), 22.

⁷ Robert Steven Gottfried, *The Black Death: Natural and Human Disaster in Medieval Europe* (New York: Free, 1983), 104.

⁸ The universities of Salerno and Padua were also well known for their medical curricula.

⁹ A. C. Crombie, *Medieval and Early Modern Science* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 235.

¹⁰ Gottfried, 105.

¹¹ David C. Lindberg, *The Beginnings of Western Science: the European Scientific Tradition in Philosophical, Religious, and Institutional Context, 600 B.C. to A.D. 1450* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1992), 115.

¹² The Trivium (grammar, rhetoric, and logic) and the Quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy). Gottfried, 106.

Hippocrates, Galen, or Avicenna.¹³ This trend extended beyond universities and into the works of professional doctors. A treatise typical of those found in Italy in the decades before the plague was that of Francesco di Piedmonte, who explained the method of his work in a therapeutic text for his patron, Roger, the king of Naples and Sicily from 1309-1343, titled *De egritudinibus cordis*. First, he said, one should identify the nature of the disease using a list of symptoms classified by Galen, then prescribe the proper medicine¹⁴ using remedies also borrowed from older sources. In fact, there is hardly an original opinion expressed in the entire work, for he preferred to depend almost entirely on earlier authorities.¹⁵ Many physicians also made a side business of translating the works of the authorities into Latin, such as the physician Pietro d'Albano (d. 1316), a professor of philosophy and medicine in Bologna, and Niccolò da Reggio, a physician for several Angevin kings.¹⁶

After six to eight years of education¹⁷ the student would receive his degree, either abroad or from one of the many universities in Italy, and in the case of the latter, perhaps from one of the four new schools established in the first half of the fourteenth century.¹⁸ These credentials alone were generally enough for the individual to consider himself a physician and begin practicing, although by the fourteenth century Naples had developed a standardized system for licensing doctors.¹⁹ In general, education and reputation were what made doctors more so than any official qualifications, but for anyone with any of these assets there were ample opportunities available. Most fourteenth-century

¹³ Those exceptions were the first and second halves of *Colliget*, a twelfth-century text written by Islamic scientist Averroës. See Jansen, 328-29.

¹⁴ "*Cura confestim sequitur cognitionem facientis cause et etiam substantie.*"

¹⁵ Francesco di Piedmonte died in 1319, but cautioned his patron against corrupted air in a manner almost identical to later doctors' advice on avoiding the plague. See Sarton, Part 1, 835-36.

¹⁶ Sarton, Part 1, 242-43.

¹⁷ Grant, 48.

¹⁸ The University of Rome (founded by Pope Boniface VIII in 1303), Perugia (1308), Treviso (1318), Pisa (in 1343, though curtailed in growth by plague and conquest of Pisa by Florence), and Florence (1349, just as the plague there was ending). See Sarton, Part 1, 470-78.

¹⁹ This system covered both men and women, which was an unusual case. See Jansen, 309.

towns had at least one physician, and there were doctors attached to every court, both secular and ecclesiastical.²⁰

While there were a number of general theories dictating medicinal practice, one outlook took precedence in a way that would serve to lead—or mislead—doctors in nearly all of their diagnoses. The theory, a combination of ideas proposed by Galen and Avicenna,²¹ was that the universe was composed of the four key elements and their corresponding qualities of either hot or cold and either wet or dry. Earth was believed to be cold and dry, water cold and wet, fire hot and dry, and air hot and wet.²² All medical drugs were likewise classified according to these qualities, a practice already well-established by the mid-twelfth century. In his *Circa instans*, Mattheus Platearius, a physician from Salerno, opens each description of an herb with its elemental properties. “Aloe wood is hot and dry in the second degree,” he says, while “[m]andrake is cold and dry, but its degree is not specified by the authorities,” and “[s]ugar is hot and moist in the second degree, more or less.”²³ The human body, however, unlike most objects, did not generally have a dominant set of qualities, although very rarely was a person completely neutral, either. Rather, their *complexion*, or temperament, was determined by the mix and balance of the elements in the body, which in turn dictated health and disposition. Balance was maintained by the four bodily humors—phlegm, blood, black bile, and yellow bile—which cycled throughout the body to maintain elemental balance.²⁴ A body in equilibrium was known as *eukrasia*. This represented a state of good health. Sickness was the result of an imbalance of humors, called *dyskrasia*.²⁵

In the case of *dyskrasia*, it was the role of the doctor to analyze a patient and to first determine his or her particular ratio of humors. This analysis was considered simple if the physician was attached to a wealthy patron. The reasoning was that the doctor would be able to observe his employer’s day-to-

²⁰ Sarton, Part 1, 240.

²¹ Jansen, 310.

²² Gottfried, 105.

²³ “The authorities” to whom Mattheus Platearius refers are Avicenna and Galen. See Jansen, 318-20.

²⁴ Lindberg, 332.

²⁵ Gottfried, 105.

day activities over an extended period and would therefore be highly attuned to his or her particular disposition. Otherwise, the doctor would have to make do by asking the patient a series of questions about his or her lifestyle and habits. Next, if he determined the patient's alignment to be out of the ideal range, he would prescribe the proper countermeasure to bring the ratios back in line, restoring balance with "cool" medicines if the patient were too hot, and so on.²⁶

Another theory which permeated nearly every facet of fourteenth-century medical thought was the role of stars, planets, and other heavenly bodies on human health, a connection made by Hippocrates.²⁷ In the first half of the century, Pietro d'Albano composed a treaty on poisons. Though written slightly before the plague, its theories would be used later in describing the plague as a miasma. It also featured comparisons between poisons and astrology. Not all bought into this theory, however. The fourteenth-century poet Petrarch was a staunch critic of astrology, dismissing d'Albano's cosmic analysis as being a part of "the medical taste of the time."²⁸ In spite of Petrarch's criticisms, however, astrology and medicine remained intertwined in the minds of most Italian doctors, and nearly every medical practitioner was also an astrologer to some degree. Other medico-astrological writers well-known to their contemporaries included Niccolò di Paganica and Ugo de Castello, both Dominican friars and physicians; Andalò di Negro; Paolo dell' Abbaco; and Maino de Maineri. Maineri, who studied at the University of Paris, was a royal physician to the Visconti family of Milan, and his plague tract *Libellus de preservatione ab epydimia* written in 1360 put particular focus on the astrological roots of the initial outbreak of the plague in 1347.²⁹

When the Black Death arrived in Italy in the later months of 1347, doctors were quick to ascribe its causes and characteristics to their perceived laws of the universe. Most attributed the cause to a planetary alignment that had occurred on March 20, 1345. "And so this came to pass," wrote chronicler

²⁶ Lindberg, 333.

²⁷ Lindberg, 339.

²⁸ Sarton, Part 1, 242.

²⁹ Sarton, Part 1, 243.

Giovanni Villani of the plague of Florence in 1348, “according to the astrologers and naturalists, because of the conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter and Mars in the sign of Aquarius.”³⁰ Medico-astrologers viewed all three as traditionally “hot” planets, and viewed both Jupiter and Saturn as wet.³¹ Since this alignment took place in the house of Aquarius, a warm, humid sign, the resulting conclusion that the pestilence should be classified as a hot, humid disease was clear. By extension, this classification denoted it as corresponding to the element of air, and medico-astrologers thus recognized it as an airborne disease. To them, the nature of the disease explained the speed and universality of its spread and its ability to jump from person to person without contact, as well as its high mortality rate, since the disease could reach the center of the body in a single breath as it entered the lungs.³² Most interpreted the plague as a miasma: a poison or “corruption of the air.” The latter phrase shows up as the predominant description in contemporary texts of all varieties, from plague tracts to city ordinances.³³ Astrology also played a role in other ways: for instance, Gabriele de’ Mussis noted that “the illness was more dangerous during an eclipse, because then its effect was enhanced, and it was at such times that people died in the greatest numbers.”³⁴ The physician Gentile da Foligno, a professor at the University of Bologna and Perugia, wrote the largest plague tract of anyone to personally witness the Black Death, the *Consilium contra pestilentiam*. In his work he followed many of the traditional scientific structures set in place, such as the use of Abelard’s method—the four humors, elemental balance, and their astrological connections—and wrote commentaries on Galen, Avicenna, Hippocrates, and others, following the scholastic method precisely.³⁵ He also proposed alternate theories that did not use astrology, arguing that a series of earthquakes could have opened up ancient wells or caverns full of stagnant, corrupted

³⁰ Book 12, Chapter 23. Toward the end of his chronicle, Villani left a blank space so he could record when the pestilence ended, but it took his life before he could fill it in. See Jansen, 23, and Aberth, 123.

³¹ Gottfried, 111.

³² Luis García-Ballester, *Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 106.

³³ Horrox, 106.

³⁴ Horrox, 25.

³⁵ These commentaries were written at the request of the University of Perugia at the onset of the plague. See Sarton, Part 1, 849.

air, or dislodged poisonous gases and “evil smells” from lakes and ponds.³⁶ There had been, in fact, a large earthquake in 1347 just a few months before the plague hit Italy. Giovanni Villani recorded a powerful tremor in 1347,³⁷ as did Petrarch, who was in Verona at the time.³⁸ The idea of corrupt air trapped in long-closed caverns and wells originally came from Galen and Avicenna, although Gentile only expressly cited the former in that argument.³⁹

The theories of established authorities guided not only doctors’ reasoning for the cause of the Black Death, but also its treatment. Alberto de’ Zancari wrote a plague treatise titled *De febre pestilentiali super primam fen quarti canonis Avicennae*, borrowing heavily from Hippocrates’ ideas on diet and the influence of air on health. Earlier, Niccolò Bertruccio, a physician, anatomist, and a professor of logic and medicine at the University of Bologna, wrote a general pre-plague treatise on dealing with fever (*De aegritudinibus universalibus hoc est de febribus*), poison (*De venenis*), and maintenance of inner balance in day-to-day activities (*De regimine sanitatis*). He would later apply his principles to the plague, but died during the initial outbreak in Bologna despite his own advice in 1347.

Physicians in general saw the disease as both hot and wet, and they gave recommendations accordingly. People considered particularly vulnerable were those whose temperaments were already on the warm and moist end of the spectrum, which included anyone who was young, active, had a large appetite, or was over-passionate about anything. Such personality types were thought to be a result of predominantly hot humors, which in turn made them more susceptible.⁴⁰ The anonymous early fourteenth-century treatise *Tacuinum sanitatis* stressed moderation in all aspects of life so as to maintain proper balance and keep humors at peak efficiency, and to “avoid foods that spoil quickly,

³⁶ Sarton, Part 1, 853.

³⁷ John Kelly, *The Great Mortality: An Intimate History of the Black Death, the Most Devastating Plague of All Time* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 104.

³⁸ Ernest Hatch Wilkins, *The Life of Petrarch* (University of Chicago Press, Illinois, 1963), 74.

³⁹ Garcia-Ballester, 255.

⁴⁰ Gottfried, 113.

since the bad smell aids in corruption of the air.”⁴¹ Doctors generally advised avoiding wet areas like coasts, marshes and stagnant waters, as well as southern exposures, since southern wind came from “hot” places like Africa and the Middle East, and instead recommended moving to cool and dry areas, like mountains. Failing that, one could simulate such conditions by staying cool and covering brightly lit windows. Likewise, bathing and exercise were discouraged as they made the victim literally hotter and wetter along with opening the pores, which let corrupt air in more easily.⁴² Gentile da Foligno also advocated control of habits and emotions in order to maintain balance. He particularly recommended against fear, worry, weeping, speaking ill of others, excessive cogitation, and wrath, all of which “overheated the members” with heat, the trait thought to be most out of balance in plague victims. Sadness was seen as a cool emotion, but also a wet one, and should therefore also be avoided as something that would predispose an individual to plague.⁴³

Aside from general lifestyle advice, more direct intervention was sometimes taken to defend against plague. The act of phlebotomy, or bloodletting, was supported by a wide number in the medical community as a means of reducing the natural heat of the body.⁴⁴ De’ Mussis described the process of a typical doctor during the height of the pestilence. The doctor would cut “from the arm if the upper part of the body was affected, from the tendon of the foot if it was the lower part which was affected. When this was followed up with medicinal means, using mallow or a plaster of marsh mallow to ripen the boil and draw the humors from the seat of the illness, and then cutting out the boil, the patients received the blessing of health.”⁴⁵ In a set of instructions on diet and medication in the style of Galen and Hippocrates, Gentile added phlebotomy as another fine method of balancing the humors,⁴⁶ as did John of Penna, a professor at the University of Naples. However, both he and Gentile cautioned that it was

⁴¹ Bread, eggs, fruit and vegetables were best, as they aided digestion. See Gottfried, 114.

⁴² Gottfried, 114.

⁴³ Kelley, 173-74.

⁴⁴ Crombie, 230.

⁴⁵ Horrox, 26.

⁴⁶ Sarton, Part 1, 853.

only effective at the first sign of symptoms, and only if done in the proper place relative to the swellings, or buboes.⁴⁷ John also warned that such a process could weaken the heart and should be preceded by consumption of heart-strengthening supplements like rose syrup, bugloss or borage juice, the bone of a stag's heart, or sugar mixed with precious stones.⁴⁸ Gentile was partial to emerald.

Everyone, it seemed, had his own special list of herbs and ingredients that he thought best prevented infection. Marchione di Coppo Stefani of Florence, who lived through the plague, noted that during the epidemic, apothecaries "sold poultices of mallow, nettles, mercury, and other herbs necessary to draw off the mortality."⁴⁹ Others thought that the best way to fight an airborne disease was to purify the air rather than the person. Boccaccio noted that some "moved about freely, holding in their hands a posy of flowers, or fragrant herbs, or one of a wide range of spices, which they applied at frequent intervals to their nostrils, thinking it an excellent idea to fortify the brain with smells of that particular sort,"⁵⁰ while de' Mussis mentioned that "doctors attending the sick were advised to stand near an open window, keep their nose in something aromatic, or hold a sponge soaked in vinegar in their mouth."⁵¹ Gentile, meanwhile, recommended wine as a part of a good diet to keep the four humors in balance, preferably something old and light. Lettuce and the filbert nut also appeared on his list of preventatives.⁵² He also composed a weekly regimen, beginning with Monday, which included "doses of syrups of a group of seven herbs which (as we have seen) had no elementary qualities and did not therefore act by complexion. These were *enula* (elecampane or houseleek), St John's wort (*hypericon*), which was also known as *perforata*; the daisy; *rafancus*; dittany; long and round birthwort

⁴⁷ Kelley, 173-74.

⁴⁸ Sarton, Part 1, 860.

⁴⁹ Kelley, 111.

⁵⁰ Giovanni Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. G. H. McWilliam (Harmondsworth, U.K.: Penguin House Classics, 1972), 53.

⁵¹ Horrox, 106.

⁵² Kelley, 173.

and lettuce,” which all worked according to “Whole Substance action,”⁵³ making them particularly appropriate “to counter the poison of the pestilence.” “Take their juice, or their powder,” he continues, “in wine or honey water...” and so on through Sunday.⁵⁴ De’ Mussis was pessimistic about the aid of any worldly items, preferring prayer as the best preventative. “I have, however,” he noted, “known a case where, although there was a stench arising from the patient, the use of the best theriac expelled the poison and prevented it proving fatal.”⁵⁵ Theriac was an ointment made from snake flesh and other ingredients was believed to draw poison from the body in a sort of “fight fire with fire” sense, and had been used as a cure-all since the days of Hippocrates.⁵⁶ Gentile included theriac as part of his Tuesday and Wednesday regimen, and directly compares some of his other drugs to the snake-flesh mix, which “[are] each... as strong as the theriac in healing poisoned wounds and all the ancients used them for wounds before theriac was known.”⁵⁷ Preventative steps were still urged, however, since doctors “realized the inadequacies of their curative abilities.”⁵⁸

The enormous number of surviving plague tracts demonstrates an absolute clamor for a cure,⁵⁹ as did the massively inflated wages for working doctors, such as a case in the town of Orvieto, where one of the town doctors, Matteo fù Angelo, received a salary of £25 per year in 1346, but which was raised to £200 per year and exception from civic taxes after the plague.⁶⁰ Still, it is equally clear that people realized the prescribed cures were frequently not enough to ward off death. Boccaccio wrote of Florence that:

⁵³ Natural substances that worked according to Whole Substance action, which Gentile refers to as “Specific Property,” “depended upon the action of the whole [of the substance] and not only manifest elementary qualities.” See Roger Kenneth French, *Canonical Medicine: Gentile Da Foligno and Scholasticism* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 168.

⁵⁴ French, 291.

⁵⁵ Horrox, 25.

⁵⁶ Sarton, Part 1, 850.

⁵⁷ French, 291.

⁵⁸ Gottfried, 113.

⁵⁹ Other authors of note who wrote plague tracts well known to their contemporaries include Dioniso Colle da Belluno, Tomasso del Ganbo, and others. See Sarton, Part 2, 1668.

⁶⁰ Modern scholars place the death rate at Orvieto at around 50 percent. See Philip Ziegler, *The Black Death* (New York: John Day, 1969), 56.

Numerous instructions were issued for safeguarding people's health, but all to no avail... Against these maladies, it seemed that all the advice of physicians and all the power of medicine were profitless and unavailing. Perhaps the nature of the illness was such that it allowed no remedy; or perhaps those people who were treating the illness (whose number has increased enormously because the ranks of the qualified were invaded by people, both men and women, who had never received any training in medicine), being ignorant of its causes, were not prescribing the appropriate cure.⁶¹

At the same time de' Mussis lamented, "to flee is impossible, to hide futile,"⁶² and Agnolo di Tura del Grasso, writing in 1348 after burying his wife and five children, mourned that "no medicine or any other defense availed."⁶³ When Gentile himself succumbed to the plague in 1348, it was clear that even the most renowned authorities were at a loss to stop the epidemic.⁶⁴

Still, even if they were unable to produce an effective cure, doctors were nevertheless methodological and accurate in describing the symptoms. The prescriptions and advice may have been based on outdated writings, but the analysis and identification is fairly consistent from author to author in describing the size of the swellings and time between contraction and death. Some, like Gabriele de' Mussis, were even able to separate between the various different strands of plague,⁶⁵ although others like Gentile did not, believing it to be identical to ancient pandemics referred to in older texts, as well as a minor outbreak of disease he had personally experienced in Padua.⁶⁶ Matteo Villani, a physician who survived the initial outbreak and who continued to work through several waves after it until his death during the plague of 1361-1363, wrote in his 1357 *Cronica con la continuazione di Filippo Villani* that

⁶¹ Boccaccio, 51.

⁶² Horrox, 20.

⁶³ William M. Bowsky, ed., *The Black Death: a Turning Point in History?* (Huntington, N.Y.: R. E. Krieger Publishing, 1978), 14.

⁶⁴ Garcia-Ballester, 241.

⁶⁵ Aberth, 121.

⁶⁶ Garcia-Ballester, 241.

“[a]t this time, diseases of tertiary, *quartene*, and other fevers with long-drawn-out illnesses afflicted our territory.”⁶⁷ It seems, however, that no writer ever connected the plague with either fleas or rats.⁶⁸

Yet while skepticism was widespread and many doctors threw down their books in defeat, others continued to apply their knowledge, however flawed, and work toward a cure, often to their last breath. The Great Mortality served as an eye-opener to many who realized that the authorities of the past may not have been sufficient to deal with the problems of their present, a shift in thinking that may have paved the way for later Renaissance physicians. Bologna began to carry out postmortem examinations of victims to try to find a cause through experimentation,⁶⁹ and after the first pandemic outbreak of plague passed, the rest of Europe universally accepted surgery, a practice until then the exclusive domain of the Italians.⁷⁰ With perhaps one-half of Italy lying in unmarked graves, the doctors of 1300-1350 could not deny that they had been thrust into a situation for which their education had not prepared them. Even so, still they argued, reasoned, theorized, and worked to maintain their place as the reputed leading medical practitioners of the Western world.

⁶⁷ Jansen, 326.

⁶⁸ Gottfried, 101.

⁶⁹ Crombie, 235.

⁷⁰ Sarton, Part 1, 244.

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