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From Thetis to Venus: Echoes of the Homeric in the *Aeneid*'s Mother Son Relationships

Selections from the Æglogues of Theocritus

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Guard Stones: Street Infrastructure in Pompeii

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Foreword

I am pleased to present the 2015 volume of *Aisthesis*. In our fourth year of publication, we attracted a range of submissions diverse in both provenance and genre. It is my hope that the four articles printed in this publication will provide engaging and informative investigations in the fields of Roman History, Comparative Literature, and Archaeology.

I would like to thank the Stanford Department of Classics for their continuous support and the Associated Students of Stanford University (ASSU) for their generous funding. I would also like to extend my thanks to all the students who submitted their work to *Aisthesis* this year. Finally, I would like to commend the hard work and dedication of the *Aisthesis* staff, without whom this journal would be a shadow of what it has become.

Dominic Delgado
Senior Editor

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FROM THETIS TO VENUS
Echoes of the Homeric in the *Aeneid*'s Mother-Son Relationships

Kathleen Cruz
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ABSTRACT

There is a dearth of discussion surrounding female characters, especially mothers, in Latin epic. In those studies that do exist, the scholar generally asks moralistic questions–such as whether a mother is a "good" or "bad" one– and then provides an answer based on anachronistic conceptions of motherhood. In contrast to this trend, my paper does not attempt to decide whether a mother is good or bad. Instead, it considers the relationship between Venus and Aeneas in Virgil's *Aeneid* in light of the literary precedent of the Homeric mother embodied by Thetis and Anticleia. Situating Venus within the epic tradition reveals that she differs significantly from her literary ancestors; whereas Homeric mothers enjoy/maintain close relationships with their sons, Venus constantly establishes distance. Venus' interrupted embrace in Book 8 offers one moment, albeit unfulfilled, in which the goddess attempts to become the Homeric mother for whom Aeneas longs. The intratextual difference between Venus and Euryalus' mother further emphasizes the intertextual difference between Venus and earlier Homeric mothers such as Thetis and Anticleia. Euryalus' relationship with his mother offers echoes of Greek epic that only serve to remind the reader of Venus' failed attempt.

Mothers Overlooked and Mothers Moralized: Establishing the Scholarly Tradition

A.M. Keith opens his study of the role of female characters in Latin epic with a general but revealing observation: "From Homer to Claudian, classical Greek and Latin epic poetry was composed by men, consumed largely by men, and centrally concerned with men."[1] As scholars have tended to follow this literary trend by focusing on male characters, it is all too easy to believe that women in Latin epic are relatively unimportant. Despite his admirable effort to challenge this widely held belief, Keith repeats many of the mistakes his classicist ancestors do. This is most obvious in the book's analysis of female characters in Virgil's *Aeneid*, or lack thereof. Not only does Venus never receive any substantial attention, but Juturna, who in many ways dominates Book 12, is mentioned only twice.[2]

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[1] Keith, A.M. *Engendering Rome; Women in Latin Epic*. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1.

[2] Others, like Camilla, do get a more lengthy treatment. But even in these cases, Keith utilizes a traditional and problematic masculine-feminine binary that does little to advance his cause (Keith 2000: 27).

As this example suggests, the study of women in Latin epic has been sparse; the study of mothers even sparser. Mairéad McAuley reiterates this point in her 2011 review of *Motherhood and the Other: Fashioning Female Power in Flavian Epic*, and *Freud's Rome: Psychoanalysis and Latin Poetry*, two books that address female characters in epic. According to McAuley, "mothers in Roman epic (and in particular the *Aeneid*) have often appeared as no more than a series of shadowy, marginalised voices and figures, ignored by critics (until relatively recently) in favour of more glamorously transgressive females such as Dido or Camilla".[3] To add to McAuley's point, these mothers have also been overlooked in favor of fathers.[4] Considering the fact that Aeneas repeatedly turns to his father throughout the epic, happy to follow him blindly and always ready to use Anchises' spirit to validate his actions, one could say that Aeneas himself begins the time-honored tradition of attending disproportionately to the father.[5]

Though critical studies of mothers have been scarce, they do exist; they are, however, problematic. Let us narrow our scope to Venus: for she, of all the *Aeneid*'s mothers, has received the most polarizing treatment. While many studies have addressed Venus' role in the *Aeneid*, the majority return again and again to the same question: Is Venus a good mother? To illustrate this point, one could look to W.D. Anderson (1955), Brooks Otis (1964), and Kenneth Reckford (1995-1996), all of whom label Venus an inconsiderate and cruel mother.[6] By way of contrast, several recent scholars have attempted to find a lens through which to view Venus' actions so as to rehabilitate her reputation. Among this increasing group, one might point to Robert Coleman (1982), Eleanor Winsor Leach (1997), Lorina Quartarone (2006), and Stephanie McCarter (2012). While these studies include worthwhile investigations of Venus' actions throughout the *Aeneid*, their tendency either to vilify or validate her actions both limits their literary interpretations and compels them to use contemporary Roman *mores* in order to substantiate their views.[7] Another flaw of these studies is

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[3] Mairéad McAuley, "Self and Mother; Recent Critical Approaches to Maternity in Roman Literature." *Scholia: Studies in Classical Antiquity* 20 (2011): 146.

[4] As the abounding scholarship on Anchises and his relationship with Aeneas demonstrates: cf. Lloyd (1957), Lee (1979), Lloyd (1999), O'Sullivan (2009) and Kondratieff (2012).

[5] For examples of these incidents, see Books 2-3 and 7.107-7.147. Throughout Book 3 especially, we see Aeneas repeatedly trust Anchises' judgment in their travels despite the fact that he is consistently wrong. In Book 7, Aeneas identifies a prophecy of Celaeno's as Anchises' in his attempt to demonstrate that the prophecy has been fulfilled.

[6] It seems Antonie Wlosok (1967) may also be concluded in his list. Winsor Leach (1997), if her interpretation may be trusted, also points to Wlosok as a strong proponent of Venus' maternal failings.

[7] As one example of a scholar who seems to be working outside of this binary, Edward Gutting's work should receive some attention. Gutting (2008) is a bit less afraid of accepting contradictions, even if he does at times resort to viewing Venus through a strictly "Roman societal" lens.

that they tend to view Venus in isolation, despite the fact that there are many mother-son relationships in the *Aeneid* that could be used as points of comparison. In contrast to these trends, I will neither ascribe a moral status to Venus nor ignore her foils. Rather, I will investigate the nature of her relationship with Aeneas on its own terms, and in its proper context.

I will begin by sidestepping another pitfall of previous mother-Venus scholarship: the assumption of what motherhood is. There is an inherent difficulty with a term like motherhood in that "the state of being a mother" is in no way an unchanging and wholly definable concept. Scholars often attempt to avoid this difficulty by grounding their analysis in the role of women and mothers in Augustan society. However, I would like to take a different approach. Rather than look to the world outside the text, I will turn to the worlds inside two other epics: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Since Virgil alludes so often to the Homeric epics in the *Aeneid*, I will examine these epic foundations on which the *Aeneid* rests in an effort to craft a portrait of the Homeric mother that Virgil inherited.

By establishing this framework for our investigation, we will see that Venus' relationship with Aeneas is dramatically different from the relationships between Homeric heroes and their mothers. Where those mothers are deeply interested in their sons' personal identities and the details of their current situations, Venus remains a distant figure more interested in Rome's imperial future than the immediate needs of her son. In doing so, she denies him the Homeric mother he asks for. However, this is not a relationship Venus is entirely averse to changing: Venus' interrupted embrace in Book 8 is one attempt to be that Homeric mother. The text's portrayals of other mothers and sons throw this discrepancy into greater relief. These relationships echo the Homeric concept of motherhood, further emphasizing the fact that Venus does not embody this concept.

Thetis and Anticleia: Maternal Relationships in Homer

The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* present similar relationships between their heroes and their respective mothers. These similarities allow us to understand what tradition Virgil is working with and against in his conception of motherhood in the *Aeneid*.[8]

Achilles' relationship with Thetis quickly takes a primary role in the *Iliad.* In *Iliad* 1, after Agamemnon makes good on his promise to seize Briseis from Achilles' possession, Achilles immediately approaches the sea and begins a retelling of his complaints with "μῆτερ ἐπεί μ' ἔτεκές γε

[8] Of course, there are many other noteworthy depictions of mothers in Homer besides Thetis and Anticleia, including Hecuba and Penelope, to name only two. However, the mothers chosen here stand out due to their relationship to the focal character of each text, and, as a) this is not a paper focused primarily on motherhood in Homer and b) much of this paper will focus on the relationship between Venus and Aeneas (aka: the hero and his mother), it seems best to limit our discussion here.

μινυνθάδιόν περ ἐόντα" (*Mother, since you bore me, although having a short life*).[9,10] The line opens with "μῆτερ," both giving Thetis a place of emphasis and highlighting her maternal role while also drawing attention to the fact that, when he finds himself in a state of helplessness, Achilles' first instinct is to call to his mother. By approaching the sea, Thetis' domain, and addressing her directly, Achilles also demonstrates that he expects her to both hear and listen to his plea. After Achilles recounts the dishonor he has suffered at the hands of Agamemnon, his mother swiftly fulfills this expectation:

> τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε πότνια μήτηρ
> ἥμένη ἐν βένθεσσιν ἁλὸς παρὰ πατρὶ γέροντι:
> καρπαλίμως δ' ἀνέδυ πολιῆς ἁλὸς ἠΰτ' ὀμίχλη,
> καί ῥα πάροιθ' αὐτοῖο καθέζετο δάκρυ χέοντος,
> χειρί τέ μιν κατέρεζεν ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζε[11]
>
> His revered mother heard him
> As she sat in the depths of the sea beside her elderly father.
> Immediately she rose from the gray sea like mist,
> She sat before him as he shed a tear,
> And she caressed him with her hand, spoke a word, and called him by name

The fact that Thetis "καρπαλίμως" (*immediately*) heeds her son is notable. Despite sitting at the bottom of the ocean, Thetis is finely tuned to her son's voice and instantly arrives at his side when he calls to her. Achilles starts a conversation with the assumption that his mother will reply, and Thetis' response justifies this expectation.

Once Thetis joins Achilles on the shore, she inquires, "τέκνον τί κλαίεις; τί δέ σε φρένας ἵκετο πένθος; / ἐξαύδα, μὴ κεῦθε νόῳ, ἵνα εἰδομεν ἄμφω" (*Child, why are you crying? What grief has reached your heart? Speak it out loud, don't hide it in your mind, in order that we both may know together*).[12] These lines reveal two significant aspects of their relationship. Through her repeated pressing for what has caused Achilles' grief, Thetis expresses concern for her son's personal problems. She is engaged in his personal affairs and views them as worthy of her attention. At the same time, Thetis' natural response to Achilles' sadness is to bring him closer to her; she desires that he speak openly "ἵνα εἴδομεν ἄμφω" not "ἵνα εἴδω."

Next we learn that Thetis is not just emotionally engaged in Achilles's affairs, but eager to do what she can to help. As their conversation continues, Achilles explains his anger at Agamemnon and his wish that the Greeks be punished for this affront. He directs his mother to beseech Zeus on his behalf, and she, after lamenting the "κακῇ αἴσῃ" (*poor lot*) to which

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[9] All translations are my own and aim to express the text's meaning rather than be poetic.
[10] Homer. *Homera Operi: Iliadis Libros, I-XII Continens,* eds. David B. Munro and Thomas W. Allen. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1920), 1.353.
[11] Ibid., 1.358-1.361
[12] Ibid., 1.363-1.364.

she has born her son, fulfills his command.[13] Ever mindful of her "ὠκύμορος" (*swiftly dying*) offspring, Thetis hastens to carry out his demands. In this relationship, there is a palpable connection between mother and son; Achilles' knows that he can rely on Thetis to aid him in times of distress, and she, as he expects, eagerly does what she can.

Some scholars have found Thetis' motivations self-serving rather than based on some maternal devotion to her son. For example, Winsor Leach argues that "Thetis embraces the cause of *honor*." Like Achilles, "[s]he is aware that a short life is the price to be paid for lasting glory (kleos; 9.410-16), but the crux of her fear…is that his cause might be so thwarted that even this short life will lack its merited respect."[14] While Achilles' complaint is based upon the dishonor he has received at Agamemnon's hands, there is nothing to indicate that Thetis prioritizes her son's honor above her son's desire, which just happens to be honor. This is evidenced by the fact that Thetis does not act on her own accord to concoct a way to restore honor to Achilles once the assembly of the Greeks has ended. We know that Thetis was already aware of the affront to Achilles' kleos, since Achilles asks why he must repeat a tale of which she is already aware.[15]

A later parallel provides additional support for the idea that Thetis is attending to her son's needs rather than to his kleos. In Book 18, Thetis rises from the waves to comfort her son after Hector slays Patrocles. How Thetis responds to her sons initial cries emphasizes their closeness in particular. When grieving for Patrocles, whom Hector has slain, Achilles "σμερδαλέον δ' ὤμωξεν" (*wailed terribly*).[16] When Thetis hears this cry, she herself immediately "κώκυσέν" (*shrieked*).[17] Simultaneously, son and mother are filling the land and sea with their cries. At the close of this encounter, Thetis responds to her child's grief once again and journeys to the gods to bring him aid.[18] In this episode, neither Thetis nor Achilles expresses any concern for his honor; Achilles has turned his mind to revenge, and Thetis again seeks to assist her son.[19]

Furthermore, the *Iliad* is not shy in suggesting how this legitimate bond and attachment have been long established: Thetis' involvement in Achilles' upbringing and life before the war at Troy is mentioned repeatedly. Thetis recounts to the Nereids how "τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ θρέψασα φυτὸν ὣς γουνῷ ἀλωῆς

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[13] Ibid., 1.364-1.428; 1.488-1.530.

[14] Eleanor Winsor Leach, "Venus, Thetis, and the Social Construction of Maternal Behavior." *The Classical Journal*. 92.4 (1997): 355; emphasis added.

[15] Homer, *Iliadis Libros*, 1.365.

[16]Homer. *Homera Operi: Iliadis Libros, XIII-XXIV Continens,* eds. David B. Munro and Thomas W. Allen.)New York: Oxford University Press, 1920), 18.36

[17] Ibid., 18.38.

[18] Ibid., 18.78-18.147; 18.368-467.

[19] It is true that just because a character does not express an agenda does not mean that (s)he does not have that agenda in mind. However, considering the fact that I see no personal obsession with honor in Thetis during her earlier scenes, I find it unlikely that she possesses one here. Achilles' state of mind is more questionable but not entirely relevant to this paper.

/ νηυσὶν ἐπιπροέηκα κορωνίσιν Ἴλιον εἴσω" (*I raised him, my offspring, like a shoot in a garden / I sent him on the beaked ships to Ilium*).[20] In Thetis' account, she was directly involved in guiding Achilles through childhood and was also present upon his departure for Troy. This detail is an echo of an earlier aside given when Achilles searches for a cup to pour libations to Zeus after Patrocles decides to enter the fray. Then Achilles "χηλοῦ δ' ἀπὸ πῶμ' ἀνέῳγε / καλῆς δαιδαλέης, τήν οἱ Θέτις ἀργυρόπεζα / θῆκ' ἐπὶ νηὸς" (*lifts the lid from a chest beautifully wrought, which silver-footed Thetis had placed on his ship for him*).[21] This chest is one "ἐὺ πλήσασα χιτώνων / χλαινάων τ' ἀνεμοσκεπέων οὔλων τε ταπήτων" (*she filled well with shirts and cloaks to protect from the wind, and wooly carpets*).[22] Here, not only is Thetis' continued presence emphasized, but, since her presence provides Achilles protection from the wind and the cold, it is portrayed as a considerate one.

These details about the past are complemented by both Achilles' and Thetis' views about what might have followed the Trojan War if events had played out differently. Thetis laments that "τὸν δ' οὐχ ὑποδέζομαι αὖτις / οἴκαδε νοστήσαντα δόμον Πηλήιον εἴσω" (*I will not receive him hereafter having returned home to the house of Peleus*).[23] Here, she alludes to both the possession of a prior place in Peleus' household and a fruitless hope that she will be there to welcome her son upon his return. Achilles repeats this same regret less than 300 lines later: "ἐπεὶ οὐδ' ἐμὲ νοστήσαντα / δέξεται ἐν μεγάροισι γέρων ἱππηλάτα Πηλεὺς / οὐδὲ Θέτις μήτηρ" (*Since neither the old-man, the horse-tamer Peleus nor Thetis, my mother, will receive me, having returned, into the halls*).[24] Thetis is clearly a part of Achilles' past, and as these accounts of their sorrow illustrate, both parties had hoped that she would be part of his future as well.

Despite the fact that they interact only briefly, the relationship between Odysseus and Anticleia in the *Odyssey* shares several characteristics with that of Achilles and Thetis. In recounting his journey to the Underworld, Odysseus tells Alcinous and the assembled Phaeacians that "ἦλθε δ' ἐπὶ ψυχὴ μητρὸς κατατεθνηυίης" (*the soul of my deceased mother arrived*).[25] However, although Odysseus weeps and feels pity for her (τὴν μὲν ἐγὼ δάκρυσα ἰδὼν ἐλέησά τε θυμῷ), he is unable to speak to her until after he addresses Teiresias.[26] Here, Anticleia's first appearance has two effects. The arrival of her shade initially presents a mystery, since Odysseus claims to have left her "ζωὴν" (*alive*) upon his departure to Troy.[27] The emphasis this curious appearance bestows upon Anticleia is matched by Odysseus'

[20] Ibid., 18.56-18.57.
[21] Ibid., 16.222-16.224.
[22] Ibid., 16.224-16.225.
[23] Ibid., 18.60-18.61.
[24] Ibid., 18.331-18.333.
[25] Homer. *Homera Operi: Odysseae Libros, I-XII Continens,* ed. Thomas W. Allen. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1922), 11.85.
[26] Ibid., 11.88-11.89.
[27] Ibid., 11.87.

strong, sorrowful reaction. This stems both from finding her among the dead and, as John Heath observes, because Anticleia "does not even recognize Odysseus" before he can offer her a drink of blood; this is "an additional source of pain to the bereaved son and struggling hero."[28] The grief he displays suggests from the outset that the two have a bond of some emotional significance.[29]

The encounter that follows confirms this expectation. When Anticleia does have the chance to address Odysseus, she immediately asks:

> τέκνον ἐμόν, πῶς ἦλθες ὑπὸ ζόφον ἠερόεντα
> ζωὸς ἐών; χαλεπὸν δὲ τάδε ζωοῖσιν ὁρᾶσθαι…
> ἦ νῦν δὴ Τροίηθεν ἀλώμενος ἐνθάδ' ἱκάνεις
> νηί τε καὶ ἑτάροισι πολὺν χρόνον; οὐδέ πω ἦλθες
> εἰς Ἰθάκην, οὐδ' εἶδες ἐνὶ μεγάροισι γυναῖκα;[30]
>
> My child, how did you arrive here below the shadowy darkness
> Being alive? These things are difficult for the living to see…
> Do you now arrive here wandering from Troy
> With your ship and companions, after a long time? Did you not yet go
> To Ithaca and see your wife in the halls?

Anticleia is interested in two things: how Odysseus managed to arrive in the Underworld and what state he is currently in. To view her questions more broadly, she is interested in Odysseus' life: the experiences that have led him here and the consequences of those experiences. Like Thetis, Anticleia is engaged in her son's personal affairs and wellbeing.

Odysseus' response to Anticleia's questions confirms his own investment in their relationship. After answering his mother's inquiries, the first question Odysseus introduces is "τίς νύ σε κὴρ ἐδάμασσε ταναηλεγέος θανάτοιο;" (*What form of woe-bearing death overcame you?*).[31] Only after this does he ask about his father, wife, and son (11.174-11.179). Anticleia then reveals, "με σός τε πόθος σά τε μήδεα, φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ, / σή τ' ἀγανοφροσύνη μελιηδέα θυμὸν ἀπηύρα" (*Longing for you and your counsels, shining Odysseus, and your honey-sweet gentleness robbed me of life*).[32] In this exchange, Odysseus' first utterance focuses on his mother and what could have caused her demise; in response, Anticleia reports that she could not

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[28] John Heath, "Blood for the Dead: Homeric Ghosts Speak Up." *Hermes*. 4 (2005): 393.
[29] At this point, we have to address the fact that Odysseus relays this in a suspect, self-narrated tale that may be entirely fabricated. However, I would contend that even if Odysseus has crafted this entire episode himself, he still decides to include this narrative. He then creates his own grief over his mother's death; in turn, he imagines that she would die from his absence. In theory, Odysseus could have replaced this incident with one focusing on his father, Laertes, but he does not. Instead, the mother-son relationship remains the focus, whether or not the meeting truly occurred.
[30] Homer, *Odysseae Libros*, 11.156-11.157; 11.161-11.163.
[31] Ibid., 11.171.
[32] Ibid., 11.203-11.205.

live without her son. Their questions and answers are bracketed around one another, suggesting a poignant relationship between the two. The closing of their exchange further strengthens this suggestion, as Odysseus cries out: "τρὶς μὲν ἐφωρμήθην, ἐλέειν τέ με θυμὸς ἀνώγει, / τρὶς δέ μοι ἐκ χειρῶν σκιῇ εἴκελον ἢ καὶ ὀνείρῳ / ἔπτατ'. ἐμοὶ δ' ἄχος ὀξὺ γενέσκετο κηρόθι μᾶλλον" (*Three times I was stirred up, and my heart ordered me to grasp [her], and three times she flew from my hands like a shadow or a dream. And there was very sharp grief in my heart*).[33] In response to the tales of suffering they have shared, Odysseus yearns to embrace his mother but cannot, as Anticleia explains, due to her ghostly form.[34]

In both of these examples, there is a similar conception of the relationship between a mother and her son, or at least, a mother and her son when that son is the hero of the epic. Both Thetis and Anticleia are deeply interested in their sons' current problems and emotional states. They share their sons' grief and care deeply about who their children are as individuals; Thetis recounts the promising man she raised in Peleus' halls, and Anticleia says she wasted away while missing Odysseus' "ἀγανοφροσύνη μελιηδέα." In return, Achilles and Odysseus reciprocate this familial closeness. Achilles immediately turns to Thetis in times of trouble for both comfort and revenge, and Odysseus, in his barrage of questioning, inquires about his mother first of all.

Venus and Aeneas: A Relationship "Out of Sync"

Venus' relationship with her son in the *Aeneid* is vastly different than those of Thetis and Anticleia. Consider her first appearance in the epic. After Aeneas, battered by Aeolus' winds, arrives at Carthage, Venus does not appear at her son's side but at Jupiter's. Initially, she seems focused on her son: Venus, outraged at Jupiter's allowance of Juno's schemes, asks, "quid meus Aeneas in te committere tantum" (*What great thing [could] my Aeneas have done to you?*).[35] However, her interest quickly shifts when she asks, "quid Troes potuere" (*What could the Trojans [have done?]*).[36] After this shift, Venus' continued interrogation refers not to Aeneas specifically but to the Trojans and future Romans; she speaks on behalf of the "Romanos," "Teucri," "Troiae tristisque ruinas", and "tua progenies" (*Romans*, *Teucrians*, *the sad ruins of Troy*, and *your [Jupiter's] lineage*).[37] Aeneas never returns as the focus of her intervention: his plight is only the inspiration for her speech because his potential demise threatens this larger Trojan-Roman line.

Venus repeatedly appears focused on a future empire. When Jupiter sends Mercury to prompt Aeneas to depart from Carthage, he asserts:

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[33] Ibid., 11.207-11.209.
[34] Ibid., 11.216-11.224.
[35] Vergil. Aeneid *Books I-VI.* Ed. Clyde Pharr. (Mundelein: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, Inc., 2010), 1.231.
[36] Ibid., 1.232.
[37] Ibid., 1.235; 1.236; 1.238; 1.250.

> non illum nobis genetrix pulcherrima talem
> promisit Graiumque ideo bis uindicat armis;
> sed fore qui grauidam imperiis belloque frementem
> Italiam regeret, genus alto a sanguine Teucri
> Proderet[38]
>
> This is not the sort of thing [his] most beautiful mother
> promised us and not for this that she saved him twice from Grecian arms;
> but that he would lead Italy swollen with empires and roaring with war,
> and that he would produce a line from the lofty blood of Teucer

Jupiter recalls a vow Venus supposedly made about the worth of her son. In doing so, he makes two claims: first, that Aeanas' life merits preservation because of what he will do and *not* who he is; and, second, that Aphrodite's intervention in the *Iliad* stems from this same grand design. While *Poseidon* asserts Aeneas' future purpose in the earlier epic, [39] Aphrodite makes no such comment in *Iliad* 5. In that text, she is much more deeply engaged in saving her son's life than she appears to be in the *Aeneid*. She rushes upon the battlefield to shield him and after "οἱ πέπλοιο φαεινοῦ πτύγμα κάλυψεν" (*she hid him in the fold of her shining cloak*), Aphrodite physically carries her son away from danger. [40] Here, Virgil recasts Aphrodite's motivations, which Homer never outlines fully.[41]

Venus also reiterates her focus on the future in those moments where she suggests that Aeneas may not be necessary for the future domination of a Venus-sprung, Trojan line. When, in Book 10, Zeus decrees the death of the Trojans, Venus does not beg him to save her son. She only asks the gods that they "liceat dimittere ab armis / incolumem Ascanium, liceat superesse nepotem. / Aeneas sane ignotis iactetur in undis" (*Allow Ascanius to remain uninjured from arms, allow my grandson to survive. Let Aeneas lie wholly in waves unknown*). [42] This suggestion is later echoed by the narrator's description of Iulus as "Veneris iustissima cura, / Dardanius caput" (*greatest care of Venus, [that] Dardanian head*).[43] Of course, Venus' motivations during the council are questionable. She speaks before an assembly of the gods and has a specific agenda opposed to Juno's. This is her opportunity to state her case before Jupiter, who she believes has already promised glory for her offspring in Book 1. Accordingly, much of her speech focuses on stirring up pity for the trials the Trojans have undergone. [44] However, if Venus' ultimate goal here is to garner sympathy for her cause and to bend Jupiter

[38] Ibid., 4.228-4.232.
[39] Homer, *Iliadis Libros*, 20.307-20.308.
[40] Vergil, *Aeneid*, 5.314
[41] One could also turn to Venus' plea to Neptune for another repetition of this emphasis on future city-building (5.779-5.799).
[42] Virgil. Aeneid *VII-XII*. Ed. R. Deryck Williams. (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2010), 10.46-10.48.
[43] Ibid., 10.133-10.134.
[44] Ibid., 10.16-10.62.

to her will, she could focus on the sufferings of the Trojans without suggesting that Aeneas be left to die. Instead, she concedes his life and, as a result, his worth in this grand master plan.[45]

At this point, we have established that Venus cares about the future effects of Aeneas' life rather than his individual affairs. In this respect she differs significantly from Thetis and Anticleia. However, it would be wrong to suggest that Venus never influences the course of Aeneas' journey with an eye toward his personal wellbeing, even if these incidents continue to lack the direct engagement of the Homeric mothers. Venus' moments of direct engagement occur most often as war erupts between the Trojans and the gathered Latin forces. In Book 10, as Aeneas darts through enemy lines, "deflexit partim stringentia corpus / alma Venus" (*generous Venus turned away a part of the rushing [weapons] from his body*).[46] It is also Venus who assists Aeneas near the epic's conclusion when he cannot pull his spear free.[47] In each of these cases, no one interacts with Venus and she, in turn, does not speak with her son or anyone nearby; her contribution remains a helpful but distant and unacknowledged one.[48] While her participation does demonstrate some investment in helping Aeneas to victory, Venus' repeated framing of the event's larger significance does not support the interpretation that her interest in *Aeneas'* safety trumps her interest in the results of Aeneas' conquest. As further proof of this point, it is important to remember that in defending Aeneas from an onslaught of weapons, Venus deflects only "partim" of these threats; and, although she does aid Aeneas in regaining his weapon so that he may face Turnus, she is motivated to do so because she is "indignata" (*frustrated*) by the help Juturna bestows upon her brother.[49] Venus does help her son, but she either does not devote her full attention to the situation at hand or needs an interfering goddess to prompt her into action.

A similar issue arises in what may be Venus' most direct endeavor to assist Aeneas on the battlefield. After Juturna inspires the Latins to reject a treaty with the Trojans, a hostile arrow pierces Aeneas' leg and wounds him. When the Trojan physician, Iapyx, is later unable to heal him, "Venus indigno nati concussa dolore" (*Venus, struck by her son's undeserving*

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[45] In fact, it is entirely possible that Jupiter could stop the council at this moment and simply take Venus up on this offer. How aware of this possibility Venus is, considering the stake she puts in Jupiter's promise in Book 1, is debatable.

[46] Ibid., 10.332-10.333.

[47] Ibid., 12.787-12.787.

[48] Perhaps we could also suggest that Venulus' report of Diomedes' refusal to join the war could be part of this indirect assistance. Not only does Venulus' name, "Little Venus," suggest a relation with the goddess, but his report is oddly Venus-specific (Ahl 2007: 397). According to Venulus, Diomedes was driven "demens" (*out of his mind*) because "Veneris violavi vulnere dextram" (*I harmed the right hand of Venus with a wound*) (11.277-11.288). However, any reader of the Iliad would remember that he also wounds Ares in Book 5. Perhaps, then, Venulus' name and his report of Diomedes' limited remembrance points covertly to Venus' interference.

[49] Ibid.,12.786-12.787.

pain) gathers dittany from Mount Ida and "fusum labris splendentibus amnem / inficit occulte" (*secretly mixes this water poured into the shining basin*) Iapyx has been using.[50] Once Iapyx applies the mixture to the wound, Aeneas instantly loses all sense of pain and seems to be healed.[51] In analyzing this scene, Marilyn B. Skinner claims that although "the psychological consequences of his battlefield injury may persist," Venus "can palliate Aeneas' physical suffering,"[52] It appears that Venus notices that her son is in pain, takes on the role of a medic (a role that she is generally not associated with nor suited for), and succeeds in healing Aeneas.

However, Skinner should stress the idea of "*palliate*" – as opposed to "heal." Later, when Aeneas is in pursuit of Turnus, "tardata sagitta / interdum genua impediunt cursumque recusant" (*his knees, slowed, are now and then hindered by the arrow and hamper his progress*).[53] Venus' potion is a temporary fix, not a true cure: since Aeneas' skill in battle is weakened by this injury, it is debatable whether or not Venus has truly been of any help at all. The reason for the mixture's ultimate failure is uncertain. As mentioned, Venus is not heavily associated with medicinal remedies and knowledge. The *Aeneid* itself concedes that this is the realm of Apollo (12.405-12.406). One could easily conclude that Venus attempts to help Aeneas but steps outside her abilities.

While this is more satisfactory than Skinner's blind acceptance of the worth of Venus' assistance, there are other possibilities to consider. When Venus first departs to locate the dittany, we are told that "non illa feris incognita capris / gramina, cum tergo uolucres haesere sagittae" (*that plant is not unknown to wild goats when hunters stick arrows in their backs*).[54] This is the only outside information the *Aeneid* offers about this plant and, while it is presumably a useful aid to goats, the text does not necessarily imply that it will also aid men. If we imagine that Venus is familiar with this plant because she has seen these goats healing their wounds on Mount Ida, then there are two ways to read this failure: a) Venus, again not fully paying attention to the situation at hand, carelessly assumes this plant will heal Aeneas so that he may defeat Turnus and establish the groundwork for empire or b) Venus is not careless but simply does not consider what has already been suggested - that what cures a goat may not cure a man. If we bow to the first possibility, then Venus simply continues the trend of assisting Aeneas while remaining rather disengaged from his personal state. If, however, we turn to the second, then Venus is unable to truly help her son because she, as a goddess, does not entirely understand him.[55]

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[50] Ibid., 12.412; 12.418-12.419.
[51] Ibid., 12.421-12.425.
[52] Marilyn B. Skinner, "Venus as Physician." *Vergilius*. 53 (2007): 97.
[53] Virgil, *Aeneid*, 12.747-12.748.
[54] Ibid., 12.415-12.416.
[55] I should also mention here, before moving forward, that Venus' Iulus-Cupid swap could classify as another example of disengaged interference; Venus does not consider the

There are in fact moments in the *Aeneid* where this idea that Venus and Aeneas are "out of sync" arises and may explain her distance to a certain degree. When Aeneas begins to scout out the land he has washed up on in Book 1, he comes upon his mother "os habitumque gerens et virginis arma / Spartanae" (*bearing the face, clothing, and arms of a Spartan virgin)* and does not immediately recognize her.[56] This "virgin" then proceeds to answer Aeneas' inquiries about the strange land and provides him useful information about the history of its queen, Dido.[57] Leaving behind the immediate and oft-considered question of how one disguises oneself as a virgin, the motivation for Venus' deception is rather perplexing. Instinctively, one asks, "Why does Venus not simply show herself to Aeneas and give him this information?"[58]

Aeneas, in fact, is quick to point out this issue once Venus sheds her disguise and "vera incessu patuit dea" (*taking a step, stands open as a true goddess*).[59] Aeneas immediately recognizes his mother by her nude form and, frustrated, calls out to her as she retreats, "quid natum totiens crudelis tu quoque, falsis / ludis imaginibus? cur dextrae iungere dextram / non datur ac veras audire et reddere uoces?" (*Why are you constantly cruel to your son with your false games and images? Why is it not allowed [for us] to join hand and hand and to hear and return true voices?*).[60] Venus does not respond but grants her son a protective mist to shield him as he enters Carthage— another instance of indirect assistance.[61]

It is not entirely clear why Venus creates this charade. Her information does not gain anything by coming from the mouth of a Spartan virgin, and the only thing Venus herself gains by this disguise is a continued distance between mother and son. Some critics have pointed, in a somewhat romanticizing way, to Venus' final gesture of assistance, the veil of mist, so that they may deny that there is any interpretive crux to be found in her disguise. Robert Coleman, as one example, argues that "the maternal relationship allows a special intimacy" because "Aeneas reproaches her for having deceived him by the disguise."[62] Yet, it is quite difficult to conjure any sense of intimacy simply because Aeneas feels "safe" in reprimanding his mother for tricking him. Aeneas' criticism, in which he appears truly grieved over the closeness his mother continually denies him,

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relationship between father and son that she could be disturbing nor Aeneas' feelings about having his son snatched away. This issue becomes more complicated when considering, as Ahl and Ziogas suggest, that Iulus is never returned (Ahl 2007: 334; Ziogas 2010). However, this is a more intricate issue and would most likely take us off topic here.

[56] Vergil, *Aeneid*, 1.315-1.316.

[57] Ibid., 1.316-1.370.

[58] Thetis certainly would have.

[59] Ibid., 1.406.

[60] Ibid., 1.408-1.410.

[61] Ibid., 1.411-1.415.

[62] Robert Coleman, "The Gods in the *Aeneid*." *Greece & Rome*. 29.2 (1982): 153.

only draws attention to the distance that Venus has created. Instead, we might point to the fact that, while Venus taking on the role of a healer is generally outside of her wheelhouse, the idea that she may be a virgin is an even more outlandish gesture. By dressing herself in dramatic clothes and, supposedly, stripping away her sexual exploits only to reveal her naked body upon her retreat, Venus teases Aeneas in a way that he finds cruel but that is, as Therese Fuhrer points out, quite comical to the reader.[63] Perhaps it is this humorous reading that Venus originally intends. At the same time, however, this does not in any way diminish the distance this display establishes between Aeneas and herself; one might suppose that a mother would know her son well enough to predict whether or not such a joke would land. In this episode, however, this is certainly not the case.

To fully understand what is at work in this scene, we might look ahead to a much later episode: Venus' bestowal of arms and her subsequent attempted embrace of Aeneas. After convincing Vulcan to forge weapons and armor for Aeneas to protect him from his Italian enemies, Venus orchestrates an omen: "ab aethere fulgor / cum sonitu uenit" (*from the air lightning arrived with a crash*)[64]. Aeneas interprets this sign immediately as one his "diva creatrix" (*divine creator*) revealed to him long ago to mark the time she would bring him arms from her husband.[65] [66] When Venus does arrive, what occurs is rather perplexing:

> At Venus aetherios inter dea candida nimbos
> dona ferens aderat…
> 'en perfecta mei promissa coniugis arte
> munera. ne mox aut Laurentis, nate, superbos
> aut acrem dubites in proelia poscere Turnum.'
> dixit, et amplexus nati Cytherea petiuit,
> arma sub aduersa posuit radiantia quercu.
> ille deae donis et tanto laetus honore
> expleri nequit atque oculos per singula uoluit[67]

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[63] Therese, Fuhrer, "Vergil's Aeneas and Venus acting with words: miscarried dialogues," in *Acting with Words: Communication, rhetorical performance and performative acts in Latin Literature*, eds. Therese Fuhrer and Damien Nelis, 63-78.
(Heidelberg: Bibliothek Der Klassischen Altertumswissenschaften, 2010), 67-69.

[64] Virgil, *Aeneid*, 8.525-8.526.

[65] Ibid., 8.535.

[66] This is one of the few moments where Aeneas suggests that there are prior interactions between Venus and himself to which we are not privy (implying that they may have a closer relationship than the *Aeneid* generally demonstrates and which may mimic that of Achilles and Thetis more closely). Similarly in Book 1, Aeneas claims that it was Venus who showed him where to sail (1.379-1.382). In Book 2, during this retelling of the fall of Troy, Aeneas claims that Venus appears to comfort him and encourage him to save his family (2.595-2.560). However, as Aeneas is the narrator of each of these instances, and the current narrative does not seem to support their veracity, these stories are not necessarily true. Rather, it may be that Aeneas merely wishes that his relationship with Venus were one of this sort.

[67] Ibid., 8.609-610; 8.613-8.619; emphasis added.

> Through the ethereal clouds, the bright goddess Venus
> Arrived bearing gifts…
> "Now the promised services by the skill of my husband are completed,
> No longer, son, hesitate to seek either the
> Proud Laurentines or harsh Turnus in battle."
> She spoke, and *Cytherea sought the embrace of her son*.
> She placed the arms beneath an oak tree with irradiated branches.
> That one, joyful about the gifts of the goddess and such an honor
> Could not be satiated and turned his eyes to everything.

Aeneas proceeds to spend the remainder of the book gazing upon his armor and weapons. Notable here is the fact that "amplexus nati Cytherea petiuit." Elizabeth Belfiore contends that "when Venus embraces her son" she provides him with "a sign of human warmth" which creates a contrast to Book 1: "In the earlier meeting, Venus speaks and turns aside (dixit et avertens 1.402), fleeing his embrace, while in Book 8 she speaks and embraces him of her own accord."[68] However, the description of action in this scene makes such an interpretation, as attractive as its symmetry is, difficult to sustain. Based on the framing of the scene, Venus arrives with her arms full of the weapons Vulcan has forged. After she speaks, she "petiuit" (*sought*) to embrace her son. In order to do so, she lowers the arms to the ground. This is quite logical, as it would be impossible for her to physically wrap her arms around another person with her hands full of weapons. Belfiore attempts to circumvent this issue by calling their joining an "armed embrace",[69] but then we are left questioning how comforting and intimate an embrace with a bundle of hard armor and weapons separating the two parties would be. Furthermore, we are never told that this desired embrace is fulfilled. Rather, Aeneas is immediately drawn to his gifts, and they, not his mother, remain the focus of his attention. Even the description of his immediate response to Venus' announcement minimizes their familial relationship, for there she is referred to as "dea" and not "mater."[70]

The idea of this unfulfilled embrace brings us back to Book 1. There, Aeneas laments the fact that his mother does not physically join hands with him. Yet in Book 8, Venus attempts to do just that and, further, this gesture follows a moment where Venus is finally open with her son. She is not disguised as a Spartan virgin. She is clearly a goddess coming from Vulcan's forge, and, by instructing Aeneas to fear the Turnus and the Laurentines no longer, she shows direct engagement with Aeneas' own feelings and affairs. This is exactly what Aeneas has been seeking, and yet,

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[68] Elizabeth Belfiore, "'Ter Frustra Comprensa': Embraces in the *Aeneid*." *Phoenix*. 38.1 (1984): 26-27.
[69] Ibid., 27.
[70] Virgil, *Aeneid*, 8.618.

distracted by Vulcan's gifts, Aeneas completely ignores Venus' attempt to rectify the previous actions he found so deeply lacking.

When considering the events of this scene in light of Venus' disguise in Book 1, we may return to why Venus initially disguises her identity. Based on Venus' behavior when delivering Aeneas arms, we can assume that Venus was not impervious to her son's earlier pleas. However, since he needs to beg for these embraces before she offers them, it may simply be the case that she does not consider them as natural or as necessary as Aeneas does. That is, Venus needs Aeneas to tell her that he feels a lack before she acts to fill that void.[71] As suggested earlier, Venus' disguise in Book 1, while still perplexing, may make more sense in light of this later episode. This deception is a more natural way to interact with her son because this is often how gods appear to mortals in epics. Consider, as one example, Athena's relationship with Telemachus and Odysseus in the *Odyssey*: although there are moments where the goddess reveals her identity,[72] she repeatedly appears disguised as one of the Ithacan men when she comes to their aid (1.105; 2.383; 6.22; 7.20; and 13.222-222, to list only a few). Gods have a tendency to appear to mortals while wearing a mortal face.

At the same time, if we are to take Thetis as an example, lesser divinity though she may be, it may not be so common for a divine mother to hide her identity from her son. For Venus, however, the difference between a favored human – like Odysseus – and her son may simply not be as distinct as one might expect. Her obsession with the future Trojan line demonstrates that Venus has the greater picture consistently in mind over the struggles of her child. What's more, her hidden identity and general distance emphasize that she lacks an emotional connection with her son, and her inability to properly heal Aeneas' wound showcases her inexperience and lack of knowledge when dealing with mortals and their injuries. This is unfamiliar, unnatural territory for Venus, and her unfulfilled embrace stands as her one attempt to be the mother that Aeneas so badly wants. With this in mind, we may begin to answer Winsor Leach's incisive question: "[For Venus] Does maternal ambition then preclude maternal affection or sympathy?"[73] In light of the unfulfilled embrace, the answer here is clearly no. However, we might say that Venus' ambition, along with her distant status as a divine figure, makes maternal affection and sympathy an unnatural fit.

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[71] The idea that there is some difference in how Venus and Aeneas think due to this divine-human discrepancy is often present in discussions of Venus' maternity, including in Winsor Leach's work (Winsor Leach 1997: 364). Here, I attempt to apply it without the prevalent, moral conclusion that often follows this observation.

[72] Homer, *Odysseae Libros, Odyssey* 13.256-13.365.

[73] Winsor Leach, "Venus, Thetis," 364.

The Mother of Euryalus: a Reiteration of the Desired Homeric

The cumbersome nature of Venus' relationship with Aeneas is constantly highlighted by the fact that the *Aeneid* has an example of mother-son relationships that does resemble those of Thetis and Achilles and Anticleia and Odysseus: that of the unnamed mother of Euryalus and her son. She is first mentioned when Nisus attempts to dissuade Euryalus from joining his raid into the enemy camp by evoking her possible suffering: "neu matri miserae tanti sim causa doloris, / quae te sola, puer, multis e matribus ausa / persequitur" (*Don't let me be the cause of such great pain for your pitiable mother who was the only one of many mothers who dared to follow you*).[74] These "multae matres" are the Trojan women who earlier chose to stay in Acestes' city after they were bewitched by Iris to burn the ships during Anchises' funeral games.[75] Euryalus' mother here holds a place of distinction for remaining with her son and deciding to bear the difficulties of the journey and the upcoming war with him. Euryalus, loyal to his companion and his cause, refuses to be deterred, and the two reveal their plans to Iulus and the Trojan leaders. Before they depart, Euryalus reveals that he has not told his mother, who "tenuit…not moenia regis Acestae" (*did not hold the walls of king Acestes*), about his departure because "nequeam lacrimas perferre parentis" (*I could not bear a parent's tears*).[76] He then asks Iulus, "tu, oro, solare inopem et succurre relictae / hanc sine me spem ferre tui" (*I beg you, comfort her, she who is without means, and aid her, being left behind. Grant this hope from you to bear with me*).[77]

The relationship between this mother-son pairing begins to take shape from these initial exchanges. Euryalus' mother has been incredibly faithful to her child. She refuses to join the other Trojan women and thereby rejects a comfortable, peaceful life in a stable city; instead, she follows her son to war. Most critics agree that Euryalus' mother is dedicated to her son. Barbara Pavlock, however, does not think Euryalus reciprocates this loyalty: in her view, Euryalus' statement that "nequeam lacrimas perferre parentis" indicates "only that he would rather avoid a female display of emotion." She also believes that, "while Euryalus is obviously concerned

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[74] Virgil, *Aeneid,* 9.216-9.218.

[75] The Trojan women's status as mothers is repeatedly asserted by the text, for the group is thrice referred to as "matres": "sic Dardanidum mediam se matribus infert"; "at matres primo ancipites oculisque malignis"; "transcribunt urbi matres" (5.622; 5.655; 5.750; emphasis added). However, there may be a question of whether or not these mothers still have children. There is no description in Book 5 about any men being sorrowful that they are leaving these women behind, and no discussion from these mothers about regret for leaving their sons. This might initially imply that the children of these mothers have been lost (perhaps they died in Troy). However, Nisus' comment here, where Euryalus' mother is the only one "multis e matribus" marks her out because she followed her son while the others did not. Perhaps the relationships between the other Trojans and their mothers were more problematic. With this in mind, Euryalus' mother receives special notice because of her similarity to her Homeric counterparts.

[76] Ibid., 9.286-9.287; 9.290.

[77] Ibid., 9.291-9.292.

about his mother, he fails to consider fully his familial obligations, the pietas that he owes."[78]

There are, however, several problems with Pavlock's observations. The first is her superficial treatment of "nequeam lacrimas perferre parentis" as a rejection of "female emotion." There is nothing inherent in "parens" that emphasizes the female nature of its subject. The term can easily be used to describe a male figure, such as a father, and this is in fact done throughout the *Aeneid*. For one example, one could turn to Aeneas' dedication to Anchises in Book 5. There, he is addressed as "sancte parens" (*sacred father*).[79] Euryalus does not shy away from his mother's tears because they are too womanly; he finds the grief of a parent, the sorrow of one who raised him, impossible to bear. Furthermore, if Euryalus' loyalty to his mother were so slight, he would have no reason to ask Iulus to care for her. During the majority of the pair's interaction with Iulus, Euryalus' is virtually ignored in favor of Nisus, and so his decision to finally assert his presence in the conversation in order to argue for his mother's care gives it great emphasis. Lastly, the fact that Euryalus' dedication to Nisus overrides his consideration for his mother's peace of mind is consistent with Homeric precedent; Achilles, too, chooses to stay at Troy and revenge Patrocles, even though he is aware of his mother's sorrowful prediction that he will thereby perish and leave her to grieve.

Euryalus' mother's response to the news of her son's death further confirms the depth of her own devotion. After wailing over the sight of Euryalus' mangled head, impaled on the point of a hostile spear, she laments that she cannot fulfill her designated responsibilities: "nec te tua funere mater / produxi pressive oculos aut vulnera lavi" (*Your mother cannot organize your funeral rites; I cannot press closed your eyes or wash your wounds*).[80] She then begs, "quo sequar? aut quae nunc artus avulsaque membra / et funus lacerum tellus habet?…o Rutuli, me primam absumite ferro" (*Where do I follow? What land now holds your limbs and mutilated parts, and your mangled burial? … O Rutulians, consume me first with the sword*).[81] In response to her son's death, Euryalus' mother longs to know where she can find him and even begs for her own death in order to join him, wherever he is. Although her reward for following her child through constant trials is to see his decapitated head waving in the enemy camp, she only wishes to follow him once more. This display of grief is so intense and affecting that Ilioneus orders that she be hidden away lest she endanger the army's morale.[82] This is a mother who stays beside her son until the end, who demonstrates a true devotion to his cause and aims to support him in both life and death. This is the expressive, tactile mother that Aeneas calls for in Book 1, and,

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[78] Barbara Pavlock, "Epic and Tragedy in Vergil's Nisus and Euryalus Episode." *Transactions of the American Philological Association*. 115 (1985): 219-220.
[79] Vergil, *Aeneid*, 5.80.
[80] Virgil, *Aeneid*, 9.488-9.489.
[81] Ibid., 9.491-9.492; 9.495.
[82] Ibid., 9.501-9.503.

perhaps, the type of mother that Venus attempts to be, if only for a moment.

Here, the close and dedicated nature of the relationship between Euryalus and his mother echoes those shared by the Homeric heroes and their own mothers; it also stands in stark contrast to Aeneas' interactions with Venus. We should now briefly expand how the loyal portrayal of the mother of Euryalus affects our understanding of the fraught relationship between Venus and Aeneas. As this example demonstrates, the *Aeneid* does in fact have a mother that showcases a relationship with a son that is close and entirely devoted in the Homeric style. Allowing this portrayal such a prominent place in the epic only serves to further highlight the fact that Venus and Aeneas do not share this intimacy. Besides the greater body of Trojan mothers, whose situation is relatively unclear, Venus stands alone as the one mother who either cannot or simply does not connect with her son: making her one attempt to do so that much more of an unfulfilled gesture.

Through its depiction of mothers and the relationships between mothers and sons, the *Aeneid* interrogates its epic predecessor. Where Homeric mothers of heroes, exemplified here by Thetis and Anticleia, showcase a close bond with their children, interactions between Venus and Aeneas in Virgil's text are marked by the significant, yet lamented, distance between mother and son. Although both parties express a desire to overcome this distance, Aeneas through an outright plea and Venus by her unsuccessful embrace, neither is successful in imitating this Homeric relationship. Instead, it is Euryalus and his mother who embody this precedent, reemphasizing both the lack of a connection between Venus and her own son and, to take a step back, the epic's awareness that her relationship with Aeneas falls short of what might be expected. In this way, the *Aeneid*'s depiction of mothers and sons is both a call to and a divergence from the Homeric tradition; Virgil allows this literary past into his text, yet denies it utterly to his titular hero.

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SELECTIONS FROM THE ÆGLOGUES OF THEOCRITUS

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FORWARD

The poetry of Theocritus is at some times so beautifully simple, at other times so terribly difficult, and at all times so delectably contrived and artificial, that it seemed a perfect candidate to be rendered into Spenserian English. The qualities that delight the reader of Theocritus, namely the richness of language and dialect, the natural imagery, the rustic wit, and, most importantly, the confusion of genre: these same will delight the reader of Spenser. And so, drawing largely from *The Shepheardes Calender, The Amoretti,* and *Colin Clouts Come Home Againe* for the pastoral poems, and from the enormous *Faerie Queene* for the epic, I have tried to tune, so to speak, Spenser's pipe to Theocritus' songs. This meant the cross-checking of usage and spelling of words and idioms (which entailed the consideration of multiple manuscripts), the understanding of historical phonology, and the fitting of lines to meter and rhyme (for the most part the translations are line-by-line). The 'ARGVMENT' before each poem is stylized and orthographically constructed in accordance with the notes of a certain E.K. in *The Shepheardes Calender*, whence I also took the word 'æglogue' to use instead of 'idyll'.

Sixte Æglogue: The Countrie Bards *Damœtas* and *Daphnis*

ARGVMENT

In this Æglogue tway shepheards boyes meet when that they driue theyr flockes to pastur, them selues being versed in the Art of songe. They han betweene them bothe a singing competitioun. So near is thone to thother in skill, howeuer, that there ys declared a tye, which is a drawn matche.

Damœtas and the neatheard *Daphnis* mett
Whenas their flockes in field they diden guide.
The one was newly downed, th' other sett
With halfe a beard, and each on eyther side
Of some fountain him sate neath heat of noon.
Sith first he vyde, first *Daphnis* gan his tune.

DAPHNIS

Lo, *Polyphemus*, see how *Galatee*,
Hurlth apples at thine heard, the whiles with shouts
Of 'loue bungler' and 'boor' insulting thee.
But stayst, sad swayn, ne heedest thou her flouts,

Who pypest fair. But look againe! She strikes
The dog that keepes thy sheep, answ'ring with shrikes.

The louely waues whereon the dogges gaze
Is kest reflect it, running o'er the shore
That bubbleth softlich. Beware, least it raze
The maydens legges and marr for euermore
Her beautifull complexion, whenas shee
Ycomen freshly bee out from the see.

And in that selfe same spot she puts on aires;
[1]Her lockes are parcht, like thorne in Sommer whot.
She flees who loues her, hunts who not to dares,
Ne leaues a stone vnturnd, ne ceaseth not.
Loue, *Polypheme*, oft maketh ill seem well.
Thereat *Damœtas* answ'ring gan his spell.

DAMŒTAS

I sawe, by *Pan*, when she mine herd was hurting,
Ne did it scape my sole sweet eye, whereby
I staren may (but may that seer, ay spurting
Some [2]tele or other, *Telemus* apply
His tele at home and keepe it for his sonnes).
So now to vex her, her vew mine eye shonnes.

And moe, I clayme to haue some other dame,
The which perceiuing shee with gealosee
Doth cloy, by *Pæan*, inly prickt with flame,
And earnth my caues and flockes from in the see.
I bad the bitch t' amate her, for when I
Woo'd her, it vs'd to nousle at her thigh.

Mayhap, if oft she sees me treat her sore,
Eftsoones she will an herald hither send.
But I shall keepen closely shut the dore
Vnlesse she sware her selfe my bed t' attend.
Forsooth, they say I am no miscreate:
In fact, I saw it for my selfe of late.

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[1]Though Gow is convinced that χαίτη means 'thistle,' I rather think it takes its usual meaning, and that Galatea's hair is merely dry and frayed because she has just been in salt water, and the sun has evaporated all its moisture. The word καπυρός is perhaps like κάγκανος, only with nasal loss (cf. Gothic 'huhrus'), from root *kenk- 'be dry, thirst.'
[2]From OE tǣl = 'evil speech' (glossed as *blasphemia*); I sensed a little word-play in the Greek (τέλος and Τήλεμος, Telemus being the man who had prophesied that Odysseus would blind Polyphemus), and so this was my effort to account for it in English. However, if Theocritus didn't have this intention, neither do I.

I looked on the mere when it was mild.
Methought my beard and onely eye yfere
A pleasaunt sight, and seemd, whenas I smild,
Pearles whiter than *Parian* marble there.
Least I be grudg'd, [3]I spat vpon my breast
Three times, at old *Cotyttaris* beheast.

Sich having sayd, *Damætas Daphnis* kist
And gaue a pype, and gat a flute for share.
So playing leng – so leng as them it list –
Damætas fluted, *Daphnis* pypt an aire.
The heighfers daunst about the hewen haye,
Ne neither synger won, ne neither lost that laye.

Thirteenth Æglogue: *Hylas*

ARGVMENT

This Æglogue, which is properlie a short epick poem, pertayneth to thilke issew of the poursuite of the golden fleese, whereto also Apollonius framed hys fabulous worke of the same æra. Hylas, the squyre of Heracles, seeking water after the euening meale, is taken by the Nymphes of a fount, wherevpon his syre, being excessiuelye wroth thereat, chaseth after him. It endeth with an account of the same, though the poem is itselfe vnfinished.

Born not for vs alone was *Loue*, as wee,
Nicias, thought– of whiche'er god yborn–
Ne first seem beauteous things to beauteous bee
To vs who mortall liue vnsure of morn.
Amphitryons bras-hearted boy, who forn
Withstood the Lyon wood, adord a iouth:
The handsom *Hylas*, with his heares vnshorn.
Him he kend sich crafte as him was couth,
As father would, that made him selfe well-sung in sooth.

They parted neuer, not when noon appeard,
Ne when *Dawn* draue to *Ioue* her snowy teme,
Ne whenas sleepie chickes to their nest peerd,
Whereouer their mother watcht from wanne beam.
Full rightlich he that child to rear did deme,
That in his wise it wexe a worthy gome.
When *Iason* sayld the golden fleece to neme,

[3]Polyphemus does this, Gow says, to keep the goddess Nemesis, dispenser of desert, from punishing him for his boast.

Vnto the sonne of *Æson* weren come
Of all the citees rinks ycoren of renome.

And vnto wealth' *Iolcus*, euer wreckt
Of woe, went *Midean Alcmenaes* sonne
Whom *Hylas* ioynd on *Argo*, nobly deckt,
Which ship the purple *Symplegades* did shonne
And rushing, like an Ægle, ouerronne
To *Phasis* gulf, whenceforth they beene empight.
When *Pleides* rise and remotest wonne
Feedes the iong lambe, and spent is Springes spright,
Then was that godly partie mindfull of its plight.

All seated on the hollow *Argos* hull
They raught the *Hellaspont* within three dayes,
The South-wind hauing blown her sayles full.
They ancred at *Propontis*, where alwayes
The *Cian* ox for ploughing ioked stayes.
Thus disembarkt they toyled two in measure
To make a meal, and after each him layes
Vpon one bed, for near lay, to their pleasure,
A mead which had of strawe and Galengale a threasure.

Blonde *Hylas* then sought water for the laue
For *Heracles* and hardy *Telamon*,
Which twayn one table ay were wont to haue.
With brasen vase in hand he fand anon
A fountain fixt in sunken earth whereon
There bloomed many bloosmes: som perchaunce
Dark Celandine, some Maydenhaire so won,
Some Cel'ry tall, some bents that leng aduaunce;
And in the waters middest Nymphs deuizd their daunce.

Vnsleeping Nymphs, that rustick folk affray:
Eunice, Malis, and *Nychië* bright.
Whenas the lad that wyde vat would assay
To dip in drink, they all him gropen quight,
For loue of th' *Argiue* boye had put to flight
Their daintye hartes. So in the depths he fell
Headlong, just as a fyrie star at night
Falls seaward and some sailer then will yell:
Ready the ropes, my laddes; the breezes blow a spell.

But whilest the Nimphs the boy in hande hadde,
Whom they assayd to soothe with speeches softe,
Amphitryonid, fretting for the ladde,

Went out with well bent *Scythian* bow alofte
And club which seldom his right hande doffte.
Thrise hight he *Hylas* name, loudlich as maye
The mortall gorge a sound haue euer cofte.
Thrise aunswerd *Hylas*, who neath water laye:
Therefore, though hee was near, he seemed farre awaye.

[4]As when some bearded Lyon – carrion beast –
A brayand Fawn in far-off mountain heares
And hastneth from his denn to readie feast,
Euen so *Heracles* through barrein breares
In search of the ladde euerywheare inqueares.
Relentless aren louers: for as long
As hee went roming peaks and groues, his peares
Remained all with *Iason* in a throng
Aboard the ship, which had alofte her sayles yhong.

Yet at midnight the heroes hauld adowne
The sailes againe, awaiting *Heracles*,
Who whitherso his feet would haue him throwne
Went rauing, for his inner hart did frieze
Which a cruell god reaued of all ease.
Thus *Hylas* has abode among the Blest,
But heroes mockt the iump-ship *Heracles*,
For [5]he romd far from *Argo* and the rest.
For thy on foot to *Phasis* he his way addresst.

Twentie-firste Æglogue: The Fisheres

ARGVMENT

This Æglogue hath in it the raritie of marityme pastorall, as may bee seen also in Plautus his Rudens, *which signifyeth 'soole' in Englisch. Herein two frends discuss a troublous dreame that hindreth one from his rest. The other, at length giuing aduice, sayth that it is not wyse to trust what he saw, and urgeth him to the current taske.*

'Tis Pouertee alone prouoketh Skill.
She teacheth toyle her selfe, ne neuer will

[4]Likely a scribal addition to account for the difficulty of a sudden, paratactic simile. I kept it, nevertheless, because it describes the lion as ἠυγένειος or "well-bearded." This description is as fantastic in itself as it is fitting to the subject of the simile: Heracles, who is no doubt ἠυγένειος.

[5]This word-play, between the words ἥρωες ("heroes") and ἠρώησε ("he escaped"), is far more accountable than the last.

Graunt workmen slomber well for euill woes:
Yf one gets but a wynke at night, she knows,
And suddeine cares perturb his siluer sleepe.
  There once dwelt twaye old fischeres of the deepe,
On strewen bed of Mosse long hauing layn
Vnder theyr thatched tent, and both the twayn
Hadde mochell toiles at hande: the basketts greate,
The roddes, the hookes, and the seaweedye bayte;
The lynes, the weeles, and netts of rushes made;
Cords, ores, and ragged skiff on rafters stayd;
Weedes, schoes, a little matt to rest ones selfe.
Siche was theyr whole way of lyfe, sich their pelfe.
They had ne kaie ne locke, ne watch houndes ward.
These seemd profuse, for Poornes was their gard.
No neyghbour knewen they, and by theyr hutt
The waues the bruzed lond were wont to butt.
  Not yit had Moone her carre raught halfe its course
Whenas did work the fischers wake perforse
And, hauing wypd the sleepe from eyther lidd,
Launched their hartes to sayn that which they hidd.

ASPHALION

They lied, my frend, who claym'd the nightes to shrink
In Sommer, whan the Sonne is slow to sink.
I had ten thousand dreams, yet still no dawn.
How I regrett how greate the nightes are drawn.

COMPERE

Asphalyon, playnst fayre Sommer? Passeth nought
The Season of its selfe. 'Tis rather thought,
Rendand thy reste, maketh thy nyght to stay.

ASPHALION

Kenst thou deem aught of dremes? For mine were gay.
I would partake thee of the visions seeme.

COMPEERE

As we share our catch, share with mee thy dreeme,
If by my witt I read it may– the best
Reader of dreames obeyth hys witts behest.
Besides, we haue the tyme. What can he doon
Who liggeth by the sea but doth not swoon?
[6]Songbyrds in breres, the lamp at *Hestias* hall:

[6]Whatever are the words constituent of these first two feet, the idiom is not familiar. We certainly hope it deals something with sleeplessness. Also, the Prytaneum, or "*Hestias* hall,"

They sayn these things get not a wink at all.
But speke, o freend, whylest night remaineth here,
And tell the syghte thou sawst to thy compere.

ASPHALION

At eue when I slept after our sea swinck
(Not quight well-fed, sith wee, if thou bethinck,
Are wont to slight our mawes) I saw my selfe
Bestridden high vpon a rockie shelfe,
And searching for fishes thereon I sate
And kest adowne my roddes beguyling bate.
A big one caught it! Ay, alle dogges wish
For loaues when that thei slepen: I for fish.
Fast dyd the hook him hold, forth the bloud flowde;
My rod was crooked quight beneath the lode.
With tway handes taute, back bent, I mett my match:
How moughte weake tackle vnderfong this catch?
I prickt him lightlich so he mynd the hook,
Then gaue him slack, ne fled he, so I shook,
And lo! the meed I caught – a fysch yclad
Of gold all ouer! Much tho I was drad
Least hee were vnto *Dan Posidons* pleasure
Or were, perchaunce, whyte *Amphitrytes* threasure.
I drew him carefullich fro off my clawe
Lest it should gripe the gold from off his iawe,
And, syth me seemd my loot on land to bee,
I swore to sett my foot no more to see
But stay ashore and lord it vp with gold.
These thoughtes me woke. What's left, syr, to bene told
Ys thine ythonk. I sware an othe, I feare.

COMPEERE

Ne dred thee nat. Thou sworest no oathe heare,
Ne sawst the fish thou sawst, though syght 'twere like.
If not in slombere search thow places sike,
Shalt fynd thy vision: seeke substantiall fisch
Least thou of hungre and golden dreems perisch.

customarily houses a hearth instead of a λύχνιον ("lamp-post"), but the sense of the restless, undying fire is unchanged.

Twentie-fourthe Æglogue: The Little *Heracles*

ARGVMENT

As it was with the xiii. Æglogue, herein will be found a narratiue that is beholden to epick verse. It telleth of Heracles as a little babe, and how he dispatched bloodie monsters euen before he had been weaned of his mothers milke. It detayleth then the soothsayer Tiresias his instructions to the upbringing of the child, which the mother maketh done of a suretee. The last thirtie verses of the poem are either damaged beyond recognition or lost entirely, so that we are left somehow, but not ouermuch, to wonder.

Whylere, when *Heracles* was ten moneths grown,
Midean queene *Alcmena* well him nourst
And *Iphicles*, by one nyght th' yonger sone,
And in *Pterelas* brasen shild immerst,
Whose corse thereof *Amphitryon* raft erst.
Caressing tho their heares shee spake this speech:
Sleep, children, though sweet sleep is soon disperst.
Sleep, darlings, brothers twaye, and blessed each.
Be blest whenas ye dream and blest when dawne ye reach.

Thus matheling she rockt the mickle shield
Where sleep her little babes ystolen had.
But when the Beare at midnyght setting wheeld
Vnto *Orions* shoulder, great and glad,
The crafty *Hera* sent forth omens drad,
Tway drakes bedight in shiuering coiles of blew,
And shee with threatning speech the serpents bad
To wenden their abodes wyde threshold through
And eaten *Heracles*, a babe tho born anew.

The tway, vncoiled, twynd vpon the erthe
Their gorye mawes, and from their eyne fey fyre
Did flash, whylest they spewd balefull poyson ferthe.
But as their twitching tonges yoden nyre,
The babes awoke – all goth to *Ioues* desyre –
Alcmenaes imps. A lamp was light thereat,
And *Iphicles*, when hee those creatures dyre
And shameless teethe ouer the shild [7]angat,
Eftsoones cried out and, fleeing, would not them combat.

[7]Not really used in Spenser, but viably Spenserian, which is to say it was just as likely a candidate as any to be revived for effect. A preterit form of a hardly-existent ModE 'anget,' derived from OE ǫnʒitan = 'perceive, recognize' (from a more literal 'get face-to-face').

But *Heracles* his eager hondes assayd
And in his grieuous gripe the tway comprest
By the gorge, where the serpents spew is made,
Which mortall drug euen the gods detest.
Tho bothe the twain with twisting sought to wrest
That late-born, milk-fed, euer-tearless child,
But, sith they weren woefully distrest,
They loosed once againe their scayles vild
Them selues from his forsefull grip to haue reconcild.

Alcmene hearing the shrike abrayed streyte:
Arise, *Amphitryon*, for fears me freeze.
Arise, ne fit the sandales to thy feete.
Ne heerest thou the ionger babys plees?
Or seest not how, though deep nights howres are these,
The walles all things reueal as cleare as day?
My loue, som thing is in our home, ywese.
Thus spake she, and her lord was rathe t' obay
Who hent the sweard which hong aboue their bedd alway.

The whiles he raught its newly wouen thong,
Withal vpholding shield of Lotos wrought,
But thester thick the halle again did throng.
He rouzd his thralls, whom deepest sleep had bought:
Bring fyre, from heat of hearthe attones ybrought,
And thrash, ye thralls, what bolts debarre the dore!
Arise, stout thralls. Seek what your sire would sought.
[8](This said a *Punic* wife who hande stones bore.)
Eftsoons the thralls came bearand flaming brands afore.

With each man hurrying the house was fild,
And when they saw how ioungling *Heracles*
Held fast the monsters tway, they weren thrild
With fright, but much did his ionge prowess please
Him selfe, who leaping vp in giddy glees
Shewd the snakes to father *Amphitryon*,
The wondrous wights that deadlye swoon did freeze.
Alcmena tho her owen breast vpon
Took ill bestad ionge *Iphicles* with fear fordone.

Amphitryon put th' other neath his cloke
Of lambskin, bending his mind back to rest.

[8]"This" refers only to the preceding line; first the master calls, then a certain γυνὰ Φοίνισσα, having heard the cry, relays it unto the other servants. Gow adheres closer to the Greek: "... cried a Phoenician woman who slept by the corn-mills."

Whenas the cockes had thrise made daybreak croke,
Tiresias, who sayeth sooth the best,
Alcmena calld, rehersing her vnrest,
And bad him answeare how it did portend:
If aught of ill the gods bode, my behest
Is that thou hide it not: man may not shend
What thing soeuer *Wyrd* along her spindle send.

Thee, seer of *Eueres*, I teach though wise.
Sich quoth the queen, and th' other answeard sich:
O noblest bride of *Perseus* brood, let rise
Thy hart: t' heed things to come it booteth mich.
By the sweet sighte that long hath left my lich,
Full many *Achean* maydes, whenas at eue
They sit yfere with supple yarn, the which
They roll by honde, *Alcmenaes* name will yeue
Glory through song, and shalt all *Argiues* awe receeue.

Sike an heroic sonne is that of thine
As sikerly shall bear starres vnto the sky,
Than who, when strength and stature doen combine,
All beasts and heroes liche are not more hy.
To liuen in *Ioues* house he mote aby
Twelue toyles, thereafter burnt on *Trachine* pile.
He shall be nempt the groom of gods, e'en by
Them that sent serpents dirke him to defile:
Tho euen sawe tootht Wolf will fear the Fawne to rile.

But Lady, haue a fire ylight neath ashes,
And get drie Thistell boughs, or Paliure,
Or Brere or Peare wood, which the wynd ay bashes.
Ouer the firewood these tway drakes adure
At midnight, when they would haue slayen sure
Thy babe. Tho haue an hondmaiden ywooke
To get the dust when day first gins his tour,
And, bearing ouer riven rock and brooke,
Forkest it farre abrode, ne think aback to looke.

Als purge thine house with Sulphurs holy reeke
Eftsoones, thereafter sprinkling, as is thew,
Brine mixt with water cleene as is the leeke
From a shoot, whereto clingeth woollen clew.
Slaughter a bore, as to high *Ioue* is dew,
That thou be higher than thy fone for ay.
Tiresias spake thus and thus withdrew
From seat of Yuorie steering his way,

Vpon whose heauie corse full many seasons lay.

So *Heracles* was reard by mothers heed,
As aren tender shoots nigh garden gate,
Yclept *Argiue Amphitryons* owne seed.
His letters *Linus* hore did educate,
Apolloes sone, a watchfull gard and great,
But *Eurytus* to shoot the mark him sheowd,
Whose forefathers lond was well worthy freight;
Yet *Philammons* sonne *Eumolpus* him seowd
In laycrafte and round boxwood lyre his hondes gleowd.

As wrestling men of *Argos* wont to whirl
Their shankes to tip each other, and as will
Boxer brawl with gloues and pancratiast hurl
His foe, for each hath hon'd with wysdom skill,
So too of all this lore he learnd his fill,
With *Hermes* sonne *Panopean Harpalyke*
As his guide, whom, whenas he felt the thrill
Of seeing from farre, none durst, though bold, to stryke
Adowne, so grim his gaze and manner were alyke.

To steer his steeds in charett round the post
Withouten fayle, garding the naue the while,
Amphitryon, sith hee excelled most
In races swifte, taught hys sonne with a smile
Him selfe, for hee hadde learned well the stile
And won in *Argos*, where the horse is fed,
So many prizes that from many a mile
The leathern reins that oft his charet led
Had beene dissolued quight and were as supple thred.

To launch a man with shoulder neath the shield
And launce afore, to bide the blow of sweard,
To draw the ranks, to count the men in field
Who fall on fone, to haue the horse gard reard;
Hippalid Castor taught, from *Argos* steard
In exile, whose wyde rich estate whyleare
Tydeus had from *Adrastus* hondes sheard.
None warrior like to *Castors* sort was theare
Vntyll that oldnes came and turned hore his heare.

Thus liefest mother learned *Heracles*,
And for his bairn the father bad bin made
A bed beside his owen, that would pleaze
Him much, for thereon Lyons skin was lade.

At euening meal his table was arrayd
With rosted meats and mochell *Doric* cake
That sikerly would sate him who works the spade.
Yit hee by day but little fare would take,
Ne were his weedes uncouth, which neath his ham did shake.

GLOSSARY

Spenser's orthography, particularly in the case of the pastoral poems, is highly variable. This means that a given word (or personal name, or the name of a character) may be spelled any number of ways, even within the same stanza. That the forms 'honde,' 'hande,' 'hond,' and 'hand' (all of which occur in Spenser) appear together here, then, will come as no surprise. This glossary will provide glosses, alternate spellings (in parentheses), and a few brief explanations.

Sixte Æglogue:
15: least – 'lest'
18: ycomen – 'come' (past participle); the "aorist" particle 'y-' (a standardized form, reduced from OE [9]ȝe-) has chiefly two functions: the one is to give a verb (often a past participle) perfective force, which is to say the "action" of the verb to which it is affixed becomes complete; the other is to give a word (often a noun) associative force, as is the case with 'yfere' (OE ȝefēra = "with-goer"; cf. L *comes*), although 'yfere' is here used adverbially.
35: amate – 'dismay, abase'
44: yfere – 'together'

Thirteenth Æglogue:
69: wexe – 'grow, become'; gome – 'man' (cf. L *homo*)
70: neme – 'take'
72: [10]ycoren – 'chosen' (see note 18)
78: empight – 'fixed, planted'
79: wonne – 'dwelling, place'
91: laue – 'washing (as of hands)'
94: fand – 'found'
113: doffte – 'did off, put away'
115: cofte – 'expressed with a great expulsion of air'
119: brayand – 'braying'; '-and' is a poetical archaism, drawn from the OE participle '-end(e)' ('rendand,' 164; 'bearand,' 259; cf. L *ferent-*)

[9]Indeed, this 'ȝe-' (Gothic 'ga-') is itself a reduction of Proto-Indo-European *ko(m)-, cognate with Latin 'com-', Sanskrit 'sam-', Old Bulgarian 'sǫ-' (as in 'сѫдъ'), etc.
[10]Here we have an example of the intervocalic (sonant) sibilant '-s-' becoming the liquid '-r-.' This process is called 'rhotacism,' and it is the reason Latin has nominative 'flōs' and genitive 'flōris' (< *flōzis, cf. Oscan 'Flūzai' = L 'Flōræ', dat.)

Twentie-firste Æglogue:
140: siluer – 'soft, peaceful'; evidently an innovation of Spenser
144: mochell (mickle, 215) – 'great, large'
148: weedes – 'clothes' (as in 358); schoes – 'shoes'
149: pelfe – 'wealth, booty'
162: playnst – 'complain (of)'
166: seeme – 'semblance, seeming'
171: liggeth – 'lie down'
187: moughte (mote, 291) – 'may'
191: tho – 'then' (OE þā)

Twentie-fourthe Æglogue:
206: Whylere (whyleare, 346) – 'formerly, erewhile'
248: ywese – 'indeed, surely'
282: lich – 'body, self'
285: yeue – 'give'
291: mote – 'must'
304: Forkest – 'cast away, do away with'
321: seowd – 'guided, served as an attendant'; ModE 'sue,' originally meaning 'follow' (from L *sequor*) comes to mean 'wait on, attend to'
322: gleowd – 'made cleave (to), glued'

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VISIONS OF THE REPUBLIC
Depictions of Tiberius by Velleius Paterculus, Tacitus, and Suetonius

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ABSTRACT

Modern scholarship on Tiberius' emperorship relies on the assumption that an "objective truth" forms the foundation for ancient accounts, though each "truth" may be uniquely distorted by each ancient author's implicit and explicit motivations. However, upon comparing three different authors' works – Velleius Paterculus, Tacitus, and Suetonius – about the emperor it becomes apparent that such disparate accounts suggest otherwise. Reading ancient historians' accounts of Tiberius does not give readers better insight into how his contemporaries, or even later authors, evaluated the emperor. Instead, Tiberius is best understood to function as a literary device in each narrative. Velleius, Tacitus, and Suetonius' evaluations of the emperor are indicative of the government he represents, and their satisfaction with that government. Such a judgment is inevitably based upon a comparison between the empire and its predecessor, the republic. Therefore, a comparison of Velleius, Tacitus, and Suetonius reveals, not each author's evaluation of Tiberius, but their perception of the republic and their place in their own governmental system. This paper examines those perceptions, in the process modeling an innovative approach to scholarship in classical studies – examining *why* texts are written as they were, rather than *what* the text explicitly says.

I. INTRODUCTION

In their writings, three Roman authors – Velleius Paterculus, Tacitus, and Suetonius – construct three different versions of Tiberius Claudius Nero. The first writer asserts that Tiberius was "destined to be the defender of the Roman empire"[1] and that he upheld the restoration of the Roman state that Augustus initiated.[2] He prays that his successor "may be as capable of sustaining bravely the empire of the world as we have found [Tiberius] to be."[3] Tacitus writes that the man was a "noble" private citizen, but as emperor continually sought to disengage from and absolve himself of administrative duties. At the end of his life, Tacitus writes,

[1] Velleius Paterculus, *Historia Romana*, trans. Frederick W. Shipley (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924.), 2.75.2
[2] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.126.1
[3] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.135.2

Tiberius "plung[ed] impartially into crime and into ignominy."[4] Suetonius presents a similar character, recounting that Romans were so relieved by the emperor's death that "some ran about shouting, 'Tiberius to the Tiber,' while others prayed to Mother Earth and the Manes to allow the dead man no abode except among the damned."[5]

Three different authors, three different "Tiberii." How does one reconcile such disparate accounts? Most modern scholarship decides to ignore the outlier – Velleius – working with the more pessimistic accounts by Tacitus and Suetonius. Ronald Syme, for example, relied heavily upon on Tacitus' writings in his seminal *Roman Revolution*. He did not bother to hide his vehement dislike of Velleius, asserting that the author had a "palpable and flagrant" intention to omit the successes of Tiberius' rivals in his writing "so as to create the impression that Tiberius was Rome's sole and incomparable general." [6] He seems to agree with Tacitus, who disdainfully asserted two thousand years earlier that Velleius, among other authors who published evaluations of living emperors, composed untrustworthy accounts that were "distorted because of fear."[7]

However, temporal distance from the emperor does not imply that Tacitus wrote a more accurate account than Velleius, even less that he wrote a history *sine ira et studio*. Nobody can compose a truly objective account of any historical event; as Croce wrote, "All history is contemporary history." Therefore, in my paper, I take as a premise that Velleius, Tacitus, and Suetonius composed equally valid descriptions of Tiberius.

I propose that the disparity between the authors can be reconciled when one recognizes that no account is more "right" than the others, and begins to examine why such differences arise. In this paper, I suggest that scholars should not read ancient sources intending to find an accurate description of the public's reception of Tiberius. Instead, scholars should understand Tiberius to be a straw man. Every author's evaluation of the emperor reflects that author's expectations for the imperial system Tiberius represents. Such a judgment entails a comparison to the empire's

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[4] Tacitus, *The Annals: the Reigns of Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero*, trans. John Yardley (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 6.51

[5] Suetonius, *The Lives of the Caesars*, trans. JC Rolfe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914), 75.1

[6] Ronald Syme, *Roman Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1952), 393.

[7] Tacitus, *Annales*, 4.33.

Syme's heavy reliance on Tacitus' writings and dismissal of Velleius in the *Roman Revolution* could explain later scholarship's affinity for Tacitus and Suetonius; it is very difficult to depart from what is generally viewed as one of the most authoritative analyses of the beginnings of the Roman empire. A few other factors may explain why modern scholarship tends to rely on Tacitus and Suetonius. Both provide more detailed accounts of Tiberius' reign than Velleius; naturally one would prefer to use those works when trying to understand events of the time period. Further, Tacitus' Latin is generally considered more "readable" than that of Velleius, which causes some to gravitate towards his work.

predecessor, the republic. Therefore, each depiction of Tiberius allows scholars to better understand each ancient author's perception of the republic and his own place in the empire.

First, I will begin with a brief introduction to each author and his text. Then, I will examine the way that each author characterizes Tiberius. Next, I will suggest what these differences mean in relationship to each author's beliefs about the empire and the republic. Finally, I will conclude by examining the implications of this thesis for future study.

II. AN OVERVIEW OF THE AUTHORS AND THEIR TEXTS

A. Velleius and the Historia Romana

The *Historia Romana*, a "pocket-sized universal history," is "the only extant historical depiction of the time of Augustus and Tiberius by a contemporary witness"[8] and was published around 30 AD when its dedicatee, Marcus Vinicius, obtained the consulship. In it, Velleius presents a Roman empire that has been guided by almost-divine leaders through various difficulties, but that has reached an apogee under Tiberius, "the highest point yet reached on Earth."[9]

Velleius had many reasons to approve of the empire he lived under and Tiberius, a man he described as no less than a "defender of the Roman empire."[10] Some suggest that Velleius' personal connection with Tiberius inappropriately colored his appraisal of the man. Velleius enjoyed an extensive military career, serving at times under Tiberius himself; he also had a political career.[11] The latter was made possible by the practice of opening prestigious political positions to non-*nobiles*, initiated by Caesar and continued by his successors. Others accuse the work of flattery because of the date of its publication, suggesting that the laudatory tone is forced because the work was published while Tiberius was still emperor. Scholars, beginning with Tacitus, suggest that Velleius may have edited his work to place Tiberius in a favorable light, either to avoid censorship or to advance

[8] "Velleius."
[9] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.131.1
[10] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.75.3
[11] Velleius served as a military tribune to Gaius Caesar, *praefectus equitum* to Tiberius, and as a legate in Germania, Pannonia, and Dalmatia; this probably explains his particularly detailed descriptions of military events (at the expense of political events) in the *Historia*. He was elected quaestor in 6 AD, and in 14 AD was designated praetor by Augustus (Cowan, "Introduction," x). The political alliance between the two families (Sumner describes "a family tradition of *amicitia*" between Tiberius and Velleius [GV Sumner, "The Truth about Velleius Paterculus: Prolegomena," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 74 (1970): 265]), along with the political and social promotion they enjoyed because of the revolution, indicates one probable factor in Velleius' positive view of Tiberius.

Tiberius' propagandistic agenda.[12] Finally, others assert that the overt purpose of the text and its intended audience may have contributed to an overly optimistic tone: In writing a history of the Roman empire to celebrate the government that his ally, Marcus Vinicius, was about to inherit, Velleius was likely to omit pessimistic predictions about Rome's future.[13] Ultimately, however, while these reasons help to justify Velleius' positive impression of the empire, they do not serve as evidence that the work is mere sycophancy and unworthy of study. The simplest solution always remains a possibility: Velleius was simply describing what he perceived to be the true state of affairs.

B. Tacitus and the Annales

Tacitus was born in 55 AD, a couple of decades after Tiberius' death; the *Annales* were written around a century after the *Historia Romana*. Asserting that this frees him from the chains of fear shackling the historians who wrote under Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius, and Nero, he claims to be writing a history "sine ira et studio."[14] His history is an accounting of the

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[12] The former possibility seems unlikely, only because his desire to avoid criticism of the government and emperor does not preclude *any* criticism whatsoever. By Suetonius' own admission Tiberius allowed open criticism of his reign, at least in the beginning: "[Tiberius] was self-contained and patient in the face of abuse and slander, and of lampoons on himself and his family, often asserting that in a free country there should be free speech and free thought" (*Ti.* 28.1). This is, of course, not to say that Velleius would take the opportunity to utterly "lampoon" Tiberius, but there was probably less of a need to remain entirely complimentary. I also recognize that 30 AD was closer to the end of Tiberius' reign than the beginning, but if Suetonius (who generally views Tiberius in a negative light) suggests there was almost complete freedom of speech in the beginning of the reign, there was likely room for (minimal) criticism in 30 as well.

Sumner dismisses the latter possibility, commenting that Velleius does not intentionally downplay the accomplishments of Tiberius' rivals (specifically, Gaius Caesar) in an attempt to make the emperor look better: "Velleius' first-hand testimony about Gaius Caesar cannot simply be dismissed as the outpourings of a 'flatterer of Tiberius.' As we have just seen, he is not wholly antagonistic [towards Gaius Caesar]. Indeed, he is judicious" (Sumner, "Truth," 266).

[13] I recognize that the work, while I (and many other scholars) read it as primarily panegyric, may be viewed as an instructional work to Vinicius or Tiberius, or, as Sumner suggests, a "plea for caution" in future political appointments (Sumner, "Truth," 296). That may be true—while it does not resemble an "obvious" instructional piece, like Seneca's *De Clementia*, it may be similar to Tacitus' *Agricola*, which strives via exemplarity to show Romans how to avoid vices, but also how to maintain dignity under a sometimes-repressive regime. Of course, instead of a detailed study of a single man, Velleius presents a multitude of brief examples—Caesar, Augustus, and Tiberius being longer positive ones, but people like Antony serving as shorter negative ones. This is a very interesting discussion, and one that merits further exploration. Ultimately, however, the topic of categorization is a minor one and thus will not be explored here.

[14] "Claims" being the operative word; virtually everybody acknowledges Tacitus' rhetorical inflection on the history he was writing. As G.A. Harrer notes, "Tacitus is to take the photograph and touch it up; or he is to add his own colors to a clearly outlined drawing" (Harrer, "Tacitus and Tiberius," 60). In Eleanor Cowan's article "Tacitus,

principate, and thus he begins the work with Tiberius' accession to the throne in 14 AD—as Anthony Barrett notes, Tacitus viewed Tiberius' accession as "the point where the personal autocracy of Augustus became the institutionalized autocracy of Rome."[15]

Barrett indicates surprise at Tacitus' negative appraisal of the principate given that, if anything, the historian benefited from the government.[16] However, in assuming Tacitus' critical tone was directed towards the government alone, he disregards other motivations behind the author's abrasive rhetoric. Scholars have noted Tacitus' heavy reliance on familial aristocratic lore for his sources, signs of "insider privilege,"[17] and that the work was written "with the aristocracy in mind as his audience."[18] As a *novus homo*, Tacitus might therefore have used his work as an exercise in self-styling and an attempt to embed himself within the class of *nobiles*. Additionally, there is no denying that time of publication might have played a role in Tacitus' cynical view of Tiberius. While Velleius was writing in 30 AD, by his report a peaceful time, Tacitus had experienced other events that might have led him to impose the negative attributes of his own government onto earlier times. As Syme writes, "Consul in 97, Tacitus witnessed the disintegration of a government, the menace from the army commanders and the veiled *coup d'etat* that brought Trajan to power";[19] Syme also asserts that after the year of four emperors, "the imperial power continued to grow steadily at the expense of the senate in every field and aspect."[20] This too might have predisposed Tacitus to view the entirety of the principate in a negative light, imposing an anachronistic condemnation upon Tiberius. Finally, Tacitus' highly critical tone furthers his rhetorical purpose. In the *Annales*, Tacitus states that history is intended to instruct people and teach them how to navigate their political system. "Thus," he writes, "it will prove edifying for these apparent trivialities to be gathered together and recorded because few have the foresight to distinguish the decent from the dishonorable, or the useful from the harmful—most people learn from the experiences of others."[21] For him, a

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Tiberius, and Augustus," she continually uses the phrase "Tacitus' Tiberius," elaborating that "there is something distinctly *Tacitean* about the presentation of Tiberius' deference to Augustus in the *Annals*" (183).

[15] Anthony Barrett, introduction to *The Annals: the Reigns of Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero*, translated by John Yardley (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), ix-xxix.

[16] "Ironically, Tacitus seems to have flourished under the imperial system, even under the despised and despotic Domitian, and his consulship and his governorship of Asia show him in many ways to have been a 'company man.' The antipathy towards the system that emerges from the *Annals* is thus all the more surprising. It was a system under which he seems to have done so well." Barrett, introduction, xviii-xix.

[17] See for example, Frank Burr Marsh, "Tacitus and Aristocratic Tradition," *Classical Philology* 21.4 (1926): 289-310.

[18] Ronald Syme, *Ten Studies in Tacitus* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 6; 10.

[19] Syme, *Ten Studies in Tacitus*, 3.

[20] Syme, *Ten Studies in Tacitus*, 125.

[21] Tacitus, *Annales*, 4.33.

subtle, balanced characterization of Tiberius would not be as useful in an instructional work. As with the *Agricola*, Tacitus needs a paradigmatic hero or villain to prove his point. Regardless of Tacitus' intentions, however, his interpretation of Tiberius pervades the majority of modern scholarship on the emperor.

C. Suetonius and the Lives

Born around 70 AD, Suetonius is even further removed from the "republic" than Tacitus. *The Lives of the Caesars*, written about 121 AD, was published slightly later than the *Annales*[22] and examines the lives of Roman rulers from Julius Caesar through Domitian. A *grammaticus*, Suetonius' job was to instruct Rome's elite youth; he was never a senator himself. This perhaps frees him from Tacitus' major grievance with the empire – the anxiety of diminished power and respect among the elite senatorial class – though he does identify with the elites when describing class conflict.[23]

Unlike Velleius and Tacitus, who self-identified as historians, Suetonius strove to write biographies. According to Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, this meant that his purpose in the *Lives* was "neither to instruct nor to titillate but to inform."[24] This very well may be true, but it does not validate Wallace-Hadrill's following conclusion that Suetonius' depiction of Tiberius is necessarily "without condemnation"; in fact, a disapproving tone pervades the *Lives*. However, Suetonius' negative evaluation of Tiberius is far less harsh than that of Tacitus'. While Tacitus ostensibly claims neutrality but does not bother to hide his disgust within his writing, Suetonius' disapproval is marked through more subtle indicators of tone. Regardless, as with Velleius and Tacitus, Suetonius' account, *precisely because* it is not neutral, allows the reader to better understand his views on

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[22] G.A. Harrer, at least, argues in favor of this idea (64); I am not as certain because the publication dates of both works are so approximate, and so close to each other. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill argues that the two-decade age difference between the two authors is important, stating that Suetonius "betrays the attitudes of a younger generation. Still probably in his teens at the time of the tyrant's assassination, he had no real experience of the dangers of public life during the reign of terror" (201).

[23] E.g., in the *Life of Tiberius,* he describes that Drusus' "grandsons' grandson, called 'Patron of the Senate' because of his *distinguished services* against the Gracchi…" (4.2, emphasis added), signaling support of those who opposed *populares*-leaning politicians.

[24] Andrew Wallace-Hadrill. *Suetonius: The Scholar and his Caesars*. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 16-18. See further: "History was about the state, the polis, and its conflicts, external and internal: its relations with external powers in peace and war and its internal power relations in the arena of public, political life. Biography has a different subject—the life, personality, and achievements of an individual. Suetonius goes out of his way to avoid making his subject-matter historical" (Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius*, 16); history is "high politics and great events" whereas Suetonius "gives details of the everyday life and business side of imperial administration" (Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius*, 18).

Tiberius' government, Suetonius' contemporary government, and the republic as a foil to both.[25]

III. THREE AUTHORS, THREE "TIBERII"

In this section, I analyze each author's depiction of Tiberius, with an eye towards emphasizing the remarkable differences in each author's characterization of the emperor.

A. Velleius' Depiction of Tiberius

Velleius' assessment of Tiberius' character and abilities is glowing. In relating his adolescence, the writer describes him as "a youth equipped in the highest degree with the advantages of birth, personal beauty, commanding presence, [and] an excellent education combined with native talents."[26] He rapidly lists his early political and military accomplishments: becoming quaestor at eighteen, he "skillfully regulated the difficulties of the grain supply and relieved the scarcity of corn at Ostia" and "restored" the eastern provinces to Rome, impressing the Parthian king so much that he "sent his own children as hostages to Caesar."[27] He consistently emphasizes Tiberius' just and kind nature, describing him as a man who settles disputes "by restraint rather than by punishment," conducts warfare "with moderation and kindness" and who listens to the trials of traitors "not in the capacity of emperor, but as a senator and a judge."[28] He is modest and does not seek power for himself, even leaving Rome after Gaius and Lucius Caesar mature "in order that his own glory might not stand in the way of the young men at the beginning of their careers."[29] When offered the title of emperor, "the senate and the Roman people wrestled with Caesar to induce him to succeed to the position of his father, while he on his side strove for permission to play the part of a citizen on a parity with the rest rather than that of an emperor over all," finally taking the role only because "he saw that whatever he did not undertake to protect was likely to

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[25] This, of course, runs directly counter to Wallace-Hadrill's assertion that any parallels between Suetonius' government and Tiberius' government should not be examined: "From the coincidental to the controversial, any of these points and more may have struck the Hadrianic reader of the *Caesars*… It is possible too that the author was aware of them, and even intended to make his readers aware. But their interpretation is another matter—whether to see in such parallel signs of loyal support, of malice, or of a gradual movement from one to another. Intriguing though such speculations are, the safest course is to abstain" (Wallace-Hadrill, *Suetonius*, 200).

[26] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.94.2

[27] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.94.3-4

[28] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.121.1; 2.111.3; 2.129.2

[29] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.99.2; Velleius notes the "tears of all" Roman citizens accompanied this action (2.99.3).

perish."[30] He is the only man "to whose lot it ha[d] fallen to refuse the principate for a longer time, almost than others had fought to secure it."[31] In sum, Velleius provides readers with a robust characterization of Tiberius far from that of the incompetent, power-grasping tyrant depicted by later historians.

However thorough Velleius' description of Tiberius' character is, the author provides a comparatively vague recounting of Tiberius' reign. This is especially apparent when compared to Velleius' painstakingly detailed account of Tiberius' military ventures. Such an intra-textual change in writing style merits greater examination. Lack of detail can be attributed to a concern for space, an issue that Velleius notes being mindful of.[32] It can also be attributed to Velleius' interest—as an ex-military man he would understandably be more interested in Tiberius' campaigns than senatorial affairs. However, the vagueness is also indicative of Velleius' greater motive in his work: he is not interested in exactly *what* Tiberius does, or how he does it, but in how his actions affect Rome. As elaborated upon in Section IV, this intra-textual variation in turn allows readers insight into the criteria by which Velleius evaluates an emperor – what Velleius believes an ideal emperor to be.

B. Tacitus' Depiction of Tiberius

Tacitus largely presents Tiberius as Augustus' last-choice successor,[33] a weak and morally derelict man[34] whose actions are directed by his mother Livia.[35] Upon Augustus' death, Tiberius feigns disinterest in continuing the monarchical ruling model.[36] His reign is one dominated by treachery and

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[30] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.124.2

[31] Ibid; Velleius' description of Augustus is strikingly similar: he mentions his clemency (2.66.1-2; 2.86.2) and his lack of desire to hold inordinate amounts of power (Velleius 2.89.5).

[32] Ibid.

[33] After the deaths of Lucius and Gaius Caesar and Claudius Drusus, "Tiberius was the only surviving stepson; everything shifted towards him" (Tacitus, *Annales* 1.3); "[Augustus] recognized Tiberius' arrogance and ruthlessness and had sought renown from the worst of comparisons" (Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.10).

[34] He had the "old, ingrained arrogance of the Claudian family and, despite all efforts to suppress them, numerous hints of his viciousness broke through to the surface… Even in his years of exile on Rhodes (passed off as 'retirement') resentment, hypocritical behavior and covert depravity were the focus of his life" (Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.4).

[35] Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.3-4. Tacitus suggests that Livia might have played a role in Lucius and Gaius Caesar's death, allowing Tiberius the next claim to the throne. She then encourages Augustus to place Tiberius in public roles to gain visibility (Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.3). As Augustus lays dying, people fear that Tiberius' reign will signal that Romans "would be slaves to a woman and two youngsters with her" who would "terrorize the state… and later tear it to shreds" (Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.4).

[36] Assuring the senate of his lack of ambition, Tiberius claims that only Augustus was capable of holding the position of emperor: "In fact, their community relied on the support of many distinguished men, he said, and within it they should not make one

plotting; Tacitus emphasizes that the new principate's first act—which he adds is a "criminal act"— is Agrippa's murder. His contempt for Tiberius is further emphasized when he explains that Tiberius refused to take responsibility for the crime, claiming that it had been ordered by Augustus. Also prominent in Tacitus' account is Tiberius' near-crippling insecurity, which contributes to his almost constant struggle to prove his legitimacy and to fetter potential rivals.[37] This is not to say that his portrayal of Tiberius is unilaterally spiteful. He relates instances in which Tiberius refuses to prosecute cases of little importance, and his initial dismissal of several false treason charges, as well as various acts of generosity.[38] However, these initial moments of responsible rule devolve, beginning with Libo Drusus' treason trial when Tiberius begins changing laws to allow forgery of evidence, thus corrupting the judiciary system.[39] At the end of the work, Tacitus describes Tiberius as a man noble as a private citizen, relatively benign (if not excellent) as an early emperor, and only truly given to vice after Sejanus died in 31 BC.[40] Thus, Tacitus' assessment of Tiberius diverges drastically from Velleius' at the point when Tiberius becomes emperor. Importantly, as will be explained later, Tacitus' greatest disapproval is not for Tiberius but for the senate. Though they understand Tiberius' respect to be a façade, they nonetheless "rush into his servitude."[41]

C. Suetonius' Depiction of Tiberius

Suetonius appears to be nonjudgmental because he is much more willing than Tacitus to attribute positive characteristics and actions to Tiberius and appears to defend the emperor against Tacitus' charges at some points. Like Velleius and Tacitus, Suetonius describes a Tiberius that is highly competent as a military leader and early politician.[42] However, he

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individual responsible for everything – it would be easier for a number of people to work together to carry out the duties of state" (Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.11).

[37] Tiberius commands that the senate's only action on the first day of its meeting be the reading of Augustus' will (1.7); this would serve to emphasize his legitimacy. Tacitus notes that Tiberius dislikes Lucius Arruntius "because he was wealthy and enterprising with outstanding qualities to a corresponding high public profile" (1.13); he later tries to assassinate Arruntius (1.13). Also notable is his removal of Germanicus from military posts after he had been successful in numerous foreign wars, as he did not want the man to become too popular (2.26).

[38] Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.72; "Tiberius was ever eager to spend money on honorable causes, a virtue that he retained long after he sloughed off all the others" (Tacitus, *Annales*,1.75).

[39] Tacitus, *Annales,* 2.27

[40] Tacitus, *Annales,* 6.51

[41] Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.7; on the senators understanding the truth of the situation, see *Ann*. 1.11 ("The senators, whose only fear was that they might appear to understand him, burst into tearful laments and appeals, holding out their hands to the gods, to the statue of Augustus, and to the knees of Tiberius himself.")

[42] In court, he helped to alleviate a "deficient" grain supply and instigated an investigation "of the slave-prisons throughout Italy," which were engaging in criminal

also tends to fill in gaps of information with speculation apparently designed to deride Tiberius and present him as a weak individual. This initially emerges in describing Tiberius' attempts to return from his first exile in Rhodes. Though Tiberius' exile was ostensibly "self-imposed," he was denied permission to return to Rome and forced to remain abroad, with only "the title of envoy of Augustus…to conceal his disgrace."[43] Suetonius notes that Tiberius became given to luxury in a very un-Roman fashion in his extended exile at Rhodes. He writes that Tiberius "gave up his usual exercises with horses and arms, and laying aside the garb of his country, [taking] to the cloak and slippers; and in this state he continued for upwards of two years, becoming daily an object of greater contempt and aversion."[44] Perhaps most humiliatingly, Tiberius' second bid to return from exile was only successful because his mother joined in the plea, arguing that his life was in "peril" on Rhodes because the people held such contempt for him. Furthermore, he adds, the man making the decision was currently in an argument with Marcus Lollius, who wanted Tiberius to remain in exile.[45] Thus his decision was more out of spite for Lollius than support for Tiberius. Suetonius, like Tacitus, assigns Tiberius a role in Agrippa's death, [46] and condemns Tiberius' cowardice in not taking responsibility for it. When describing the reading of Augustus' will, he frames Tiberius' grief as inauthentic, noting that he "groaned aloud, *as if* overcome by grief."[47] His criticism is more overt in the accession scene: While Tiberius "did not hesitate at once to assume and exercise the imperial authority," "he refused the title for a long time, *with barefaced hypocrisy*."[48] Though I do not have the space to cite more examples, this mix of implicit and explicit derision and criticism of Tiberius occurs throughout the text, indicating that Suetonius is not quite as neutral as Andrew Wallace-Hadrill thought.

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acts. As leader of an army, he restored thrones to their rightful owners and recovered the military standards stolen by the Parthians (Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 8-9). In exile at Rhodes, he lives a modest lifestyle, generally living among the Greeks "almost as an equal" though once using his tribunician powers to arrest those who criticized him. Regarding defense from Tiberius' charges, see Augustus' death scene. Suetonius acknowledges that some people believe that Augustus did not like Tiberius, but states that "I cannot be led to believe that an emperor of the utmost prudence and foresight acted without consideration, especially in a matter of so great a moment. It is my opinion that after weighing the faults and the merits of Tiberius, he decided that the latter preponderated…" (Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 21.3).

[43] Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 11-12.

[44] Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 13.

[45] Ibid.

[46] This is particularly interesting because Velleius places Agrippa's death well before Augustus' death (*Historia* 96.1). This suggests that Suetonius is, at least in part, playing into the story Tacitus constructed about Tiberius.

[47] Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius,* 23.1 [emphasis added].

[48] Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 24.1 [emphasis added].

Otherwise, Suetonius describes a Tiberius rather similar to that of Tacitus': one who is generally a good man early in life, highly competent as a military commander and early politician, merciful, and (as a whole) moral. Some cracks in his good character emerge from time to time—for example, the above-noted scene in which he coyly refuses to become "emperor" while already exercising an emperor's authority—but for the most part, the beginning of his emperorship is also good.[49] In an account strikingly similar to one found in Tacitus, he describes that Tiberius "even introduced a semblance of free government by maintaining the ancient dignity and powers of the senate and the magistrates; for there was no matter of public or private business so small or so great that he did not lay it out before the senators."[50] He also soundly rebukes senators who attempt to flatter him. It is not until a little over a third into the *Life* that Suetonius' Tiberius "unmasks the ruler," at first simply assuming more authority but later using that authority to Rome's detriment.[51] Eventually, upon his second self-imposed exile to Capri, he "utterly neglect[s] the conduct of state affairs"[52] and allows matters in Rome to fall apart while he engages in various acts of moral perversion.

If a reader takes each of these accounts as fact, it would be impossible to reconcile all three portrayals of Tiberius. Velleius' praiseworthy emperor does not match with Tacitus' tyrant, and Suetonius' ruler – who falls somewhere in between – fails to align with the other two authors' characterizations. Even events, such as Agrippa's death, fail to chronologically match among all three accounts. Therefore, the reader must assume that one or more of these portrayals is depicting something other than fact, and that these texts should not be taken literally. Scholars should move a step deeper into understanding not only what differences exist, but also *why* they exist. As was suggested previously, and as will be proven in the following section, these inconsistencies can be indicative of underlying differences in each author's opinions about the republic and empire. The authors projected their conceptions of what an emperor should be onto to their portrayal of Tiberius. Because they did so, readers can understand the authors' beliefs about republic as well, since an evaluation of empire necessarily entails a comparison with its predecessor.

IV. TIBERIUS AS A LITERARY DEVICE FOR BELIEFS ABOUT EMPIRE AND REPUBLIC

A. Velleius

[49] Suetonius states that Tiberius "at first played a most unassuming part, almost humbler than that of a private citizen" (Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 26.1).
[50] Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 30.1
[51] Suetonius describes reduced funding for public games, increased sumptuary legislation, harsh punishments for minor matters, and religious intolerance, among other faults.
[52] Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 41.1

1. Velleius' Ideal Conception of Emperor

Ultimately, Velleius' approval of the emperor is founded in Tiberius' ability to maintain the Rome that Augustus created. Tiberius' first legislative act as emperor is to regulate the *comitia* by "instructions … which Augustus had left in his own handwriting" and to elect candidates to office (such as Velleius and his brother) that had been recommended by Augustus.[53] In listing Tiberius' accomplishments, Velleius focuses on the peace in the city rather than any drastic societal change:

> Who would undertake to tell in detail the accomplishments of the past sixteen years, since they are borne in upon the eyes and hearts of all? … Credit has been restored in the forum, strife has been banished from the forum, canvassing for office from the Campus Martius, discord from the senate-house; justice, equity, and industry, long buried in oblivion, have been restored to the state; the magistrates have regained their authority, the senate its majesty, the courts their dignity; rioting in the theatre has been suppressed; all citizens have either been impressed with the wish to do right, or have been forced to do so by necessity…[54]

Economic stability, erasure of public violence, and restoration of the court system: Velleius seems to want nothing more than a Rome no longer rocked by civil strife or political corruption. Velleius does not appear to be suggesting that Tiberius initiated these changes, either. In an earlier passage describing Augustus' achievements, Velleius writes that

> The civil wars were ended after twenty years, foreign wars suppressed, peace restored, the frenzy of arms everywhere lulled to rest; validity was restored to the laws, authority to the courts, and dignity to the senate… Agriculture returned to the fields, respect to religion, to mankind freedom from anxiety, and to each citizen his property rights were now assured; old laws were usefully emended and new laws passed for the general good…[55]

Velleius' inventory of Augustus' successes is nearly identical to that of Tiberius': resolution of violence, agricultural soundness, and judicial validity. This suggests that Tiberius was not responsible for "saving" Rome, only maintaining the stable state put in place by his predecessor. Given this, Velleius' equal praise of Tiberius and Augustus suggests that Velleius holds an emperor's ability to maintain a peaceful and stable society more important than – or at least, as equally important as — his ability to make drastic societal changes.

Additionally, the substantive similarities between the two passages quoted above outline the "peace trope" repeated throughout the entire work in which Velleius typically refers to property security, courts that

[53]Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.124.3-4
[54]Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.126.1-4.
[55]Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.89.2-4.

abide by the law, future prosperity, and respect for the senate.[56] The repetition of this motif and its central role in the evaluation of each emperor's accomplishments reinforces the importance that Velleius places on Rome's stability. Effectively, a good emperor is one who can ensure a peaceful Rome. Hence the closing prayer of his book: "I pray in the name of this people: guard, preserve, [and] protect the present state of things, the peace which we enjoy…"[57]

2. Velleius' Ideal Conception of Republic

In the passage describing Augustus' accomplishments quoted above, Velleius briefly interrupts his catalogue of peace with the statement that "the old traditional form of the Republic had been restored."[58] The terminology he uses – "republic" – is interesting given that Velleius acknowledges that the Roman state is a monarchy, not a republic; in describing the transition from Augustus to Tiberius, he writes that, "the world whose ruin we had feared we found not even disturbed, and such was the majesty of *one man* that there was no need of arms either to defend the good or to restrain the bad."[59] To Velleius, then, the idea of "republic" is distinct from that of "government," a social term rather than a political one. "Republic" signals the peace and prosperity of stable times. Thus, one can have a monarchical government under the continuation of the "republic." In describing the current state of affairs as a "republic," therefore, Velleius is not "playing the propagandist"[60] but earnestly describing the way in which he views his world.

If Velleius' evaluation of Augustus and Tiberius is reflective of his perception of government as a whole rather than the emperors themselves, it seems that he is satisfied with the government yet deeply anxious that it might relapse into instability. This fixation on peace is slightly unusual, as Velleius was born around 20 BC, well after the civil wars and "Octavian" had become "Augustus." He would not remember an empire in which there was no peace. However, he certainly knew many people who had lived through this time period; perhaps the focus on peace in his writing is reflective of the general society's anxiety about a relapse into its previous state. It might also echo the anxiety that occurred over the transition from Augustus to Tiberius—as he writes, "Of the misgivings of mankind at this time, the trepidation of the senate, the confusion of the people, the fears of the city, of the narrow margin between safety and ruin on which we then found ourselves, I have no time to tell as I hasten on my way, nor could he tell who had the time."[61]

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[56] See Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.89.2-4; 2.103.5; 2.126.1-4
[57] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.130.1
[58] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.89.3
[59] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.124.1 [emphasis added].
[60] Sumner, "Truth," 257-97.
[61] Vell. Pat., *HR*, 2.124.1.

Ultimately, to Velleius the republic and the empire are inseparable.[62] He is satisfied with Tiberius and the government he represents because it maintains peace and order; he is anxious that it will at some point lose its power to do so. Tacitus' dismissal of Velleius' work as sycophantic is unmerited; he had deemed Velleius' writing false because he had assumed the earlier historian had held the same idea of "republic" and contemporary government as he, an incorrect assumption.

B. Tacitus

1. Tacitus' Ideal Conception of Empire

Assuming, as was previously explicated, that Tacitus' main grievance with the principate concerns its effects on the aristocracy, and that Tiberius acts as the government personified, a clear pattern emerges in Tacitus' history. Tacitus describes many individual episodes demonstrating Tiberius' tyranny and incompetency, but when he steps back and performs his occasional sweeping assessment of the reign, the most salient feature is Tiberius' relationship with the senate. He praises instances in which Tiberius allows the senate to conduct business affairs and elects men of "noble ancestry" to high offices:

> At the start of his rule, public business – and the most important items of private business – was handled in the Senate, with leading men given the opportunity for discussion, and the emperor himself arresting any lapses into sycophancy. Tiberius would also assign offices with an eye on noble ancestry, military distinction, and outstanding attainments on the domestic front, so there was general agreement that there were no better candidates.[63]

Similarly, Tacitus writes of an instance in 22 AD when provinces must plead for their rights, explaining that the senate "had the liberty, *as in earlier days*, to ratify or emend." These, and similar anecdotes, amplify the numerous other instances in which Tiberius does *not* allow the senators to make decisions. Clearly, Tacitus is concerned with the *dignitas* of the senate. His most important criterion for election to senatorial positions, "noble ancestry," implies that the *dignitas* is maintained only by the election of certain individuals – certainly not the nouveau-riche or the provincials allowed in by Caesar. Thus, while Tacitus wants public business to be conducted by the senate, he wants a senate composed only of landed aristocracy.

However, Tacitus also expects Tiberius to act as a sort of moral enforcer for the senate. The men in the senate are not the type of men

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[62] In the introductory chapter of her book, *Roman Republics*, Harriet Flower argues in support of a similar idea: the periodization scholars impose between "republic" and "empire" is too anachronistic. The definitions would have been more fluid for contemporary Romans.

[63] Tacitus, *Annales*, 4.6; 3.60.

Tacitus advocates being in charge in an ideal republic; those men, "the most dynamic men," had been killed in the civil war or through proscriptions. The men remaining in the senate are the ones who "rose to wealth and offices in proportion to their appetite for servitude."[64] Thus, it falls on Tiberius to ensure that the senators act honorably. However, as already noted, Tiberius is a weak figure. While he can force already-slavish individuals to do his bidding, he cannot do the same for more powerful figures and often ends up converted to their cause; thus the escalation of the treason trials. Augustus was able to enforce peace because he was a strong ruler; Tiberius, however, could not do the same. Thus, while Barrett claims that "Tacitus' great achievement was to trace the degradation of Roman politics through the course of Tiberius' reign, to show that his character and personality were unable to withstand this debasing force of the imperial system,"[65] it appears that Tacitus might be doing the opposite: showing that Tiberius' already-weak character allowed the principate to become a degrading force of society.

Finally, Tacitus also disapproves of the lack of respect Tiberius allows the senate. Early in his reign he denies financial aid to the poverty-stricken senator Marcus Hortalus; later in the reign he refuses to even appear before the senate, mandating that all communication to him be conducted via letter.[66] Such a grievous insult to the senate's remaining dignity was unforgivable to Tacitus. In sum, then, the major problems Tacitus views with the principate can be outlined as follows: the senate was essentially neutered, and was only allowed to conduct business when the emperor decided it was appropriate; the emperor did not keep a moral check on those senators who were of dubious character; and the emperor did not accord enough respect to the senate. All these again fit with the idea that Tacitus' "republic" is a world in which greater respect is given to the aristocracy and greater power is given to a senate composed of *nobiles* of good character.

Interestingly enough, the idea that Tiberius personifies the government is furthered by Tacitus' final accounting of the emperor's life. Like Tiberius, the principate saw "different phases," beginning well under Augustus – as Tiberius' political career began well – and gradually disintegrating into an oppressive government under Domitian, just as Tiberius' reign gradually devolved into "an orgy of crime and ignominy."[67] Such parallelism emphasizes the ease with which a single person can serve as a literary device – synecdoche – for his government, in an account which makes the author's core argument more vivid.

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[64] Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.2.
[65] Barrett, introduction, xix.
[66] Tacitus, *Annales*, 4.39
[67] For the summation of Tiberius' life, see *Ann*. 6.51.

2. Tacitus' Ideal Conception of Republic

Velleius made no secret about dissociating the idea of "republic" from that of "government." Tacitus writes about them as if they are one and the same, often deriding the principate while eulogizing the republic. However consciously he puts forward this idea, his writings suggest that in his mind "republic" and "government" are two separate concepts. For him, the "republic" is indicative of an idyllic time of better morality and more just legal systems,[68] in which only the noblest men held power. It does not function as a practical governmental structure. It is associated with greater respect for the aristocracy and more power for the senate. Thus it functions excellently as a counterexample to his current governmental system, one that he clearly dislikes.

While Tacitus claims that the transition from republic to principate occurred exclusively under Augustus,[69] he describes the period before Augustus' rule—which must therefore be labeled "republic" – as one that is insecure and fraught with moral corruption:

> They preferred the security of the current regime to the dangers of the old. The provinces were not as averse to this arrangement, either. Rivalries between the powerful and the greed of magistrates had raised doubts about the rule of the senate and people, and there was little help to be had from the laws, which were constantly undermined by violence, political engineering, and most importantly, by graft.[70]

Tacitus' "republic" is therefore dysfunctional and corrupt. When contrasted with his description of Rome's peaceful state under Augustus, it seems obvious that the principate is a far better form of government:

> At that time no war remained except that against the Germans, fought to erase the disgrace of the loss of the army under Quinctilius Varus rather than from a desire to advance the bounds of empire or win some worthwhile prize. At home there was tranquility, and officials bore the same titles as before. Younger people had been born after the victory at Actium and even the old, for the most part, had been born during the period of the civil wars, leaving only a minute fraction that had witnessed the republic.[71]

Tacitus' acknowledgement that the republic was rife with problems suggests that he recognizes the republic is the government that he – and other senators in Rome—*want*, but not the one they *need*. His grievances

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[68] In speaking of the corrupt trial of 24 AD in which Varro prosecutes Silius, Tacitus exclaims: "It was therefore with great earnestness that the senators were convened—as though the case of Silius was based on law, and as if Varro were really a consul and this were the republic!" (Tacitus, *Annales*, 4.19).

[69] "The nature of the state had changed." (Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.4)

[70] Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.2

[71] Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.3

with the principate lay in the fact that, in a principate, "everybody focuse[s] on the emperor's commands,"[72] necessarily at the expense of senatorial autonomy. As an author who clearly identifies with the senatorial class, then, and who makes conscious efforts to style himself as an aristocrat (a class which had lost its prestige as more doors were opened to *novi homines* during Caesar's rule), it is understandable that he rails against the principate. When he states that there was no "equality" under Augustus' rule, he is far from suggesting anything along the lines of modern conceptions of the term – his hatred of the mob precludes that. He is instead implying that the societal structure was not the plutocracy it should be. The *nobilitas* did not have as much power as it should have had, or used to have.[73]

C. Suetonius

1. Suetonius' Ideal Conception of Empire

If for Suetonius, Tiberius is merely synecdoche for the principate rather than a studied biography of the man himself, he is quite clearly stating that the role of emperor too easily corrupts men's characters.[74] Suetonius' work can be divided into two parts – the first third and the second two-thirds – divided by a drastic change in Tiberius' character. While he always had faults—Suetonius notes that Tiberius had a "cruel and cold-blooded character" in childhood— he becomes much worse after an extended period of time as emperor.[75] The only apparent solutions to the problem would be to choose a man not as easily influenced by vice, or

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[72] Tacitus, *Annales*, 1.4

[73] Tacitus' writings in the *Annales* reveal a deep-seated fear of "the mob"; his many descriptions of military rebellions – the ones in Germany and Pannonia, for example – and the resultant chaos and violence make clear the consequences of a government in which the "right men" are not in charge. Social class is a constant on his mind, and is often one of the first identifiers he uses to describe actors as they enter the story. While senators are slavish and morally corrupt, non-*nobiles* are often the people behind the basest schemes.

[74] That Suetonius is *not* writing a biography about Tiberius is further indicated by the formulaic nature of his biographies. The *Life of Tiberius* is very similar to the *Life of Augustus*. Both men have similar early lives, coming from reputable families, accompanied by good omens, and entering early into public life via the delivery of funeral orations. Both men expect strict morality and discipline in others, while ceding to similar vices (notably, adultery) in private life. Both men are insecure in their position, as manifested by their ruthless condemnation of people they view as competitors. Suetonius notes in each man's biography an interest in liberal studies, especially Greek. The similarities run down even through the men's phobias: both fear thunder.

[75] Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 57.1. Suetonius encapsulates the latter statement by claiming that this nature "grew still more noticeable after he became emperor" (ibid). Suetonius lists particularly heinous examples of Tiberius' cruelty in 61, among them rampant treason trials that condemned even women and children. He is cruel even to his own family, exiling his daughter-in-law and grandchildren and thereafter "never [moving] them anywhere except in fetters and a tightly closed litter" (Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 64.1).

to eliminate a government in which a single man has so much access to corrupting power. His preference between the two, however, is inscrutable. Reading the *Life of Tiberius* only, it would seem that Suetonius believes the best solution to be the total elimination of single-man rule. Relating a speech that that Tiberius had made to the Senate explaining his refusal of the title "Father of the Country," he writes that the emperor said: "I shall always be consistent and never change my ways so long as I am in my sense; but for the sake of precedent *the senate should beware of binding itself to support the acts of any man*, since he might through some mischance suffer a change."[76] Thus Suetonius warns his audience of the danger in relying upon one man's volatile personality.

However, the *Life of Augustus* suggests that Suetonius' solution to the problem of empire is in choosing a man with a strong will, whose character cannot be distorted by the power he holds. A strong will does not imply that the emperor applies good morality to his private life – Suetonius lists off Augustus' many vices, including adultery and blasphemy of the gods[77] – and he does *not* have to mask his power. Suetonius describes how Augustus "usurped the consulship" at the age of twenty,

> Leading his legions against the city as if it were that of an enemy, and sending messengers to demand the office for him in the name of his army; and when the senate hesitated, his centurion, Cornelius, leader of the deputation, throwing back his cloak and showing the hilt of his sword, did not hesitate to say in the House, "This will make him consul, if you do not."[78]

Despite all this, however, Suetonius provides a relatively positive assessment of Augustus' reign.[79] A large section of the *Life* is devoted to Suetonius' oft-cited recitation of Augustus' good deeds as emperor: he built many public works, including his eponymous forum; he restored morality to the empire and "revived some of the ancient [religious] rites"; he brought peace to the empire and justice to the courts; restored the senate to its "former limits and distinction"; and was very generous, "[surpassing] all his predecessors in the frequency, variety, and magnificence of his public shows," among other things.[80] Thus, Suetonius suggests that the principate is not an inherently ruinous governmental structure. It does have the ability to corrupt emperors of weak character, which leads to chaos within the

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[76] Suetonius, *Life of Tiberius*, 67.3 [emphasis added].
[77] Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 69-70.
[78] Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 26.1.
[79] This is *not* to say that he wholeheartedly approves of the emperor. As with Tiberius, he inserts subtle criticism via tone to indicate disapproval of the man even while relating positive events. For example, the scene in which Rome bestows upon him the title "Father of the Country" (58) is so melodramatic that it can only express a certain amount of sarcasm in the relating of the story.
[80] Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 29-56.

empire. However, when a man of strong character and good judgment takes on the role, the empire benefits.

2. Suetonius' Ideal Conception of Republic

The concept of "republic" is not featured nearly as prominently in Suetonius' work as in Tacitus'. Unlike Tacitus, Suetonius does not yearn for a return to the republic. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill suggests that this difference is due to Suetonius' membership in a "younger generation"; Tacitus, he said, had seen the tyranny of Domitian's government and thus was more disillusioned with the governmental structure. However, Tacitus was only slightly older than Suetonius; if Tacitus was old enough to participate in government during Domitian's rule, Suetonius certainly was old enough to remember what life was like under the same emperor. Further, Tacitus accepts the necessity of one-man rule; as argued before, he was not actually advocating a return to the republican governmental structure. Therefore, the logical explanation for Tacitus' continual calls for the republic in light of Suetonius' near-silence on it is that the republic functioned as different concepts for the two men.

While Velleius views the republic as a state of peace, and Tacitus views the republic as an imagined idyllic past when more power and respect were accorded to *nobiles*, Suetonius appears to view the republic purely as a governmental structure. He mentions the term only once in the *Life of Augustus*, explaining that Augustus considered "restoring the republic" twice: the first time after an accusation that Rome would have reconverted into a republic if not for him, and the second time after Augustus became ill. Ultimately, however, he chose not to do so, "as he himself would not be free from danger if he should retire, so too it would be hazardous to trust the State to the control of more than one, he continued to keep it in his hands…"[81]

Unlike Velleius, then, who believes republic and principate can coexist as parallel structures, Suetonius notes that they are mutually exclusive options. Augustus can restore the republic, but doing so necessitates relinquishing his power. Unlike Tacitus, Suetonius does not look to the republic as a desired foil to the principate when he describes Tiberius' misdeeds; thus it does not serve as some personification of a moral or ideal state either. To Suetonius, the "republic" is only a form of government – no implications attached. The best form of government, at least for the time being, is the principate. In the *Lives* he seeks to reveal to his audience—if not to instruct, as Wallace-Hadrill so vehemently argues against—that the only way the principate will function is if men with good intentions and character not warped by power become emperor. Thus Suetonius' writing also held relevance for contemporaneous – and future—government.

[81] Suetonius, *Life of Augustus*, 28.1

V. CONCLUSION

This paper highlights an important problem in the way that current scholars of classical studies analyze ancient literature. Often they are seeking to derive fact from these accounts, when in reality there is no way to derive an objective reality from accounts that are necessarily subjective. This does not mean that it is worthless to read these ancient works, or that no facts can be derived from historical texts. It does suggest that scholars can derive equally valuable information from the same sources if they read the text with a different set of questions – *why* the text was written as it was, rather than *what* the text says. This suggests that the discipline as a whole could be enriched by an effort to use differences in historical accounts to inform our understandings of the authors' individual beliefs and perceptions of contemporary and historical society rather than working in the opposite direction – by trying to find the "facts" by removing the author's context from each account.

For example, in attempting to reconcile three distinct narratives to better understand Tiberius, it becomes apparent that uncovering some "objective truth" about the emperor is impossible. Each historian's account is no more, or less, "true" than the others. However, this does not mean that reading ancient historians is a fruitless effort. For Velleius, Tacitus, and Suetonius, an evaluation of "Tiberius" is in truth an evaluation of the government Tiberius represents, the concept of "empire" and a reflection of the government the historian is living under. Further, the accounts also reveal what each historian understands the "republic" to be – a state of peace compatible with the principate; an ideal plutocratic society; or simply an alternative, but less desirable, government structure – proving that the term meant different things to different people at different times. This is helpful in furthering certain arguments already proposed about the anachronistic imposition of a republic/principate dichotomy, such as those set forth by Fergus Millar and Harriet Flower.[82]

Therefore, attempting to reconcile three distinct visions of Tiberius was immensely profitable, leading to the discovery that doing so is impossible but that the differences between the authors reveal other important information. Though no closer to a "true" portrait of Tiberius, the reading makes more salient a robust understanding of Velleius', Tacitus', and Suetonius' attitudes towards the principate, and secondarily—though no less important – each author's vision of the republic.

[82] See "The First Revolution: Imperator Caesar, 36-28 BC" and "Periodization and the End of the Roman Republic."

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GUARD STONES
Street Infrastructure in Pompeii

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ABSTRACT

Pompeii's destruction in 79CE left many artifacts completely intact, including a collection of 370 unusual stones that protrude from the curb into the streets. Through simple observation, these stones appear to have no obvious purpose. Through the use of ArcMap and other technologies to collect data during three field campaigns at Pompeii, this research examines their origins, what functions the stones served for traffic patterns, and their evolving functions in the city's history. The following thesis will explore the multifunctional use of the stones, with the primary function being to protect pedestrians, objects, and activities from cart wheel hubs. Through the meticulous analysis of these stones, this paper will reveal an infrastructural practice not preserved in historical sources and offer a glimpse at the evolution of civic development and street usage unique in the ancient world.

INTRODUCTION

> The flames, which in full career overran the level districts first, then shot up to the heights, and sank again to harry the lower parts, kept again of all remedial measures, the mischief travelling fast, and the town being an easy prey owing to the narrow, twisting lanes, and formless streets typical of old Rome.
> Tacitus 15.38.10

Although Pompeii suffered a different fiery fate, its eldest roads resembled Tacitus's depiction of ancient Rome prior to the great fire of 64CE. Its streets in the old quarter, or Altstadt, were like that of Republican Rome—narrow and winding, creating a crooked urban plan. Pompeii's roads suffered from the same congestion that forced Rome to enact its law prohibiting day-time cart traffic (Humphrey et al. 2006, 436). But there was hope for Pompeii's bustling, narrow roads.

As seen in Figure 1, a collection of stones lined the curbs within the street as a method of traffic management currently unknown outside of Pompeii and nearby Roman cities. These stones have been given multiple names such as narrowing stones (Poehler 1999, 5) and *bornillons* (Saliou 1999, 162). They will be referred to here as guard stones. The guard stones were relatively small, averaging about 30,000 cubic centimeters (or the average size of a bread box). They were mostly made of volcanic rock—a material shared by the pavement stones and many of the curbstones (Saliou

1999, 183). Their installation was along the edge of the curb and between the stones constructing the *summum dorsum* (or pavement stones) of the street. Within the walls of Pompeii, there were a total of 370 guard stones. They varied in shape, size, wear due to wheel collisions, and installation. More importantly, there is no apparent pattern by which they are organized throughout the city. Because of their varied morphology and their lack of order, these stones warrant thoughtful consideration.



Figure 1. Example of a guard stone

HISTORY OF THE PROJECT

In 1999 Eric Poehler completed his master's thesis on these guard stones. As a professor, he spoke enthusiastically about his research in archaeology lectures at the University of Massachusetts Amherst where I was introduced to the project. Outside of his work, very few scholars have examined or even acknowledge the stones in their writings. Catherine Saliou dedicates a paragraph to guard stones in her article on Pompeian sidewalks, while Sumiyo Tsujimura references them in two paragraphs in her article on street ruts. Unfortunately, their descriptions of the stones lack detail or analysis, due to the articles' focus on other street matters. While working on the Pompeii Quadriporticus Project for Poehler in the summer of 2013, I was given the opportunity to conduct my own research. With Poehler's invitation to reevaluate his previous conclusions on the subject and two additional campaigns in Pompeii the following year, I had amassed enough data to tackle this research question.

PURPOSE AND THESIS

This paper will examine the historical, distributional, and morphological data pertaining to these guard stones to determine their primary function in traffic management and to disprove less credible theories. Through the exploration of motive and agency, these guard stones exemplify how one city's infrastructure evolved to meet the changing needs of a growing and adapting city. Although the guard stones had multiple plausible functions, their main duty was to protect pedestrians, curbs, and soft objects on the sidewalk from carts and their wheel hubs. Although this is not the first time this theory has been proposed, this is the first time it can be strongly justified through rigorous data collection and analysis.

This paper has been structured to paint a complete picture of the objects in question. First, I will evaluate the environment of the streets, including their construction and the various types of traffic that frequented them. After a discussion of the theories and methodologies that shaped the research, I will present the data collected in the field, accompanied by analysis and interpretation. I finish my evaluation of the guard stones by combining the finalized analyses within a single, interpretive framework. This framework will include a detailed discussion of who was responsible for the installation of the guard stones and the implications of their ability to do so for the development of the ancient city.

PREVIOUS THEORIES

For a city that has been extensively studied for over two centuries, there has been little acknowledgement of the guard stones. One Pompeian scholar, Catherine Saliou, briefly mentioned the stones in her article, *Les trottoirs de Pompéi: une première approche*, but offered little speculation about their purpose. One of her theories stated that they "may have been to define the width of the roadway for the purpose of marking a boundary" (Saliou 1999, 164, author's translation). Saliou's theory was commonly discussed and incorporated into other informal theories; one such theory claimed the stones delineated the sidewalk area for external shop stalls and offered support for their wooden beams.

Saliou briefly offered another hypothesis, more commonly accepted, that the blocks "protect[ed] the edges of sidewalks from potential collisions" (Saliou 1999, 164, author's translation). Sumiyo Tsujimura argued a similar concept in her article, *Ruts in Pompeii: the traffic system in the Roman city*. She agreed the stones protected the curbstones, adding that the stones "were erected to prevent damage by wheels to the water facilities" (Tsujimura 1991, 61), in reference to the many public water fountains. This idea that the stones served to protect curbstones is the most prevalent theory circulating in current academic and popular spheres.

In his 1999 thesis, Poehler concluded that the stones functioned as a way to narrow the street. The stones would encourage carts to make wider turns when turning in intersections, and would deter carts from striking

objects on the sidewalks or clipping corners (Poehler 1999, 8). In the summer of 2013, while working on the Pompeii Quadriporticus Project, we speculated about the positioning of a guard stone in an intersection and its possible utility as a traffic cue to drivers. Specifically, we believed that the stones might have been placed to prevent carts from going the wrong direction on one way streets, signaling to drivers at the intersection that turning onto a certain street was inappropriate.

I often overheard tour guides offering additional explanations. One of these stated that the stones functioned as permanent step-up stones for those mounting horses or stepping onto raised carts. This theory explained the stones seen outside of the city along the roads that lead to the major gates. Two minor theories pertained to the protection of carts. In one, the stones serve as emergency brakes or parking spaces (Poehler 1999, 47). Particularly on inclined streets, carts could park their back wheel against a stone thus preventing the carts from rolling away while the driver was preoccupied. The other postulates that the stones' purpose was to push carts away from uneven curbs. If the protruding wheel hub, a section of the axle that extended past the wheel, got stuck on a higher curb, the wheel would lose traction on the pavement and the cart would become stuck.

STREET ENVIRONMENT AND PRIMARY SOURCES

One of the core concepts of archaeology states that an object must be examined within its context in order for us to fully understand its function and importance. For these guard stones, their context is the Pompeian street. Almost all of the stones are found within the streets and a small selection are found on the sidewalks. Pompeian streets would have had three major objects in motion: wheeled traffic, pedestrian traffic, and waste or water removal. The streets and these three forms of motion are essential for understanding this research.

The Romans had a particular way to construct their many roads. Layer upon layer of different construction materials assured stability and strength. Statius was well known for his praise of the via Domitiana, describing its construction. The first step was to "[rip] up the maze of paths, and then excavate a deep trench in the ground" (*Silvae,* IV.3 trans. Chevallier, 83). This trench, while forming the area for the new road, also removed any irregularities on the surface created by previous cart travel. Four main layers were then laid to complete the construction of a paved street: the first, the *statumen*, was comprised of flat stones; then, the *rudus* or *ruferatio* (sometimes called the *audits*), was made of concrete containing small stones and brick to create a water proof foundation; thirdly the *nucleus,* a layer of finer concrete made of sand and lime; and lastly, the *summum dorsum*, made of either gravel or paving stones, created a stable and traversable surface (Chevallier 1976, 86).

The streets in Pompeii followed a similar construction. Although not all were paved as some lesser streets remained dirt paths. The paved streets'

summum dorsum were comprised of lava stones, which, despite their irregular shape, fit snuggly together. Unlike many inter-city Roman roads, Pompeii's streets were lined with curb stones and sidewalks instead of drainage ditches. Curbstones were predominantly carved from lava stone but materials also included limestone and tufa (Saliou 1991, 183). These tall curbstones made the streets deep and channel-like, a slight problem for pedestrians. To facilitate crossing these deep streets, rows of stepping stones were installed.

Pedestrian traffic was most likely the largest form of traffic for Pompeii. With the advent of sidewalks, pedestrian and wheeled traffic became separated, making pedestrian travel significantly safer (Laurence 2014, 403). Hartnett, in his chapter titled *Movement in the Roman City: infrastructure and organization*, did a beautiful job of expressing just how these busy streets would have bulged with masses of people. The occasional procession or parade had the ability to cripple cart traffic (Hartnett 2011, 140). Likewise, streets might have been a place for people to "escape from rooms made hot and stuffy by the Mediterranean climate" (Hartnett 2011, 140-141). It would also be common to see wealthier citizens traveling the streets by litter (Humphry et al. 2006, 428). Even today, walking is the easiest and most efficient way for someone to travel in an urban setting—commuters may prefer to take public transportation into the city and travel the rest by foot, in an attempt to avoid the city's congestion and the restrictions brought on by cars.

Cart traffic would have included a variety of types of carts pulled by animals. The Roman author Marcus Terentius Varro mentioned briefly some types of carts in his piece, *On the Latin Language*. He mentions three in particular, the *vehiculum*, the *arcera*, and the *plaustrum*. A *vehiculum* was a wagon whose main purpose is to carry objects, such as beams. An *arcera*, or covered wagon, would have been shorter than the *vehiculum*. Finally, the *plaustrum*, or heavy cart, was uncovered and carried heavier material (5.140(31), trans. Humphrey et al.). We are fortunate enough to have examples from Pompeii to give us measurements which will be crucial for the analysis of the guard stones. A "box type" cart was excavated at the Casa di Menandro. Tsujimura described the cart as having a wheel span of 139 centimeters including the iron tire thus making the axle 69.5 centimeters off the ground. Its axle was 179 centimeters long including wheel hubs that measure to about 18.5 centimeters each past the wheel. Its box dimensions were 135 x 100 x 41 centimeters (Tsujimura 1991, 61). Other discovered carts varied slightly in size.

It is curious that in a city with no street signs, these carts would manage to abide by a set of traffic guidelines. Wearing from the iron wheels of carts on curb stones, guard stones, stepping stones, and other street features that have lead Poehler to believe the carts operated within a system of traffic (Poehler 2006, 58). Through this analysis, he was able to express the overall system of traffic, explaining which directions carts travelled on certain streets. In his discussion, he was able to prove that the Pompeians drove on the right side. Additionally, certain streets were designated one-

way or prohibited to carts (Poehler 2006, 73; Hartnett 2011, 141; Chevallier 1976, 75). These regulations created paths for traffic that organized the movement of wheeled carts.

Lastly, water and waste were also common in the streets. Pompeii's streets acted as both storm drain and sewage system (Keenan 2004, 156). Similar to a cohesive traffic system, the streets had a system to manage water flow. Acting in tandem with the natural terrain, the cambered shape of the streets directed run-off to the street exterior, allowing citizens to manage water movement throughout the city (Poehler 2012, 99). Examples of human interference with water movement included the implementation of ramps or curbstone blockages which prevented water from flowing down particular streets (Poehler 2012, 99-100). This, along with other street features located throughout the city, created large drainage basins, resulting in a system that could handle a large volume of water and waste (Poehler 2012, 112).

Unlike the structure of traffic patterns and water management, the environment of the streets would have been busy, cluttered, and chaotic. Hartnett, again, describes in detail just how bustling and chaotic the ancient streets could have been, pointing out various obstacles that would have impeded cart and pedestrian traffic. Of particular interest to my analysis of the guard stones is his discussion on merchandise that would have "spilled from shop doorways into the sidewalk and street" (Hartnett 2011, 138) as well as street traders temporarily setting up stalls on the sidewalks (Hartnett 2011, 139). Hartnett recalls at least one hundred benches installed in the sidewalks which would have interrupted pedestrian flow. All of these factors would have made the Pompeian streets quite hectic and packed with obstacles and people.

While ancient literature frequently is a good resource for studying ancient life, there is no mentioning of guard stones. Such a lack of primary sources is most likely due to the utter banality of the subject and the small scope in which these stones are seen throughout the Roman Empire. Roman law, however, is discussed in several primary sources and reveals information on street maintenance, city organization, and administrative duties.

The *Tabula Heracleensis*, a bronze tablet discovered at Heraclea (on the south coast of Italy) explains legislative matters and various Roman regulations in detail. One such regulation relates to the amount of traffic permitted within Rome. After a period of large urban growth in Rome, it suffered from heavy congestion of cart traffic. This law enacted by Julius Caesar attempts to mitigate traffic. In it he states:

On those roads that are or shall be within the city of Rome among those place where habitation shall be continuous, no one, after the first day of next January shall be permitted in the daytime… to lead or drive any freight wagon except when it is necessary to bring in or transport material for the sake of building the sacred temples of the immortal gods, or for the sake of building public works… (*CIL* 1.593.56, trans. Humphrey et al.).

This law decrees that traffic will be restricted to the nighttime with the exception of religious or public works. This law had the potential to significantly reduce the hustle and bustle the Roman roads suffered.

Additionally, the *Tabula Heracleensis* discusses the ways in which a road must be maintained. It demarcates the duties of the *aedile*, a magistrate who managed city life and city maintenance:

> In regard to the roads that are, or will be, in the city of Rome or within one mile of the city of Rome, where it is continuously inhabited, it shall be the duty of all people before whose building any road will run to maintain that road to the satisfaction of the *aedile* to whom that part of the city will be assigned by this law. And that same *aedile* shall take care that all people require by this law to maintain a road in front of their building shall maintain that road to his satisfaction… (*CIL* 1.593.20, trans. Humphrey et al.)

Here, the *Tabula Heracleensis* claims that all property owners are responsible to keep in good order the street adjacent to their building. The only tasks actually identified are that the citizen must keep it in good condition and remove all standing water from that segment of street. Today, we have a similar concept though not as extreme: often building owners are responsible for shoveling the snow off of the sidewalks along their properties, yet are not tasked with repairing them. While it is unknown to what degree these laws affected Pompeii as we have little to no remaining records of domestic legislation, Pompeii most likely would have followed similar rules as a Roman city.

METHODOLOGY

Data collection and analysis was conducted over three campaigns in Pompeii. In the summer of 2013, I conducted research as a student worker doing masonry analysis for the Pompeii Quadriporticus Project. By the fall of 2013, I had adopted the research question—originally posed by Poehler—as my own, and started analyzing the material under his guidance at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. A need for additional data led to my return to Pompeii in January of 2014, with permission from the Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei, to carry out my own study. During this time, I measured all accessible guard stones. Finally, in the summer of 2014, I worked for the Pompeii Archaeological Research Project: Porta Stabia where I continued to work on masonry analysis of two neighborhoods, insulae VIII.7 and I.1, east of the Quadriporticus. During this time I traveled the city to fill various holes in my data sets and to find evidence of damage produced by traffic.

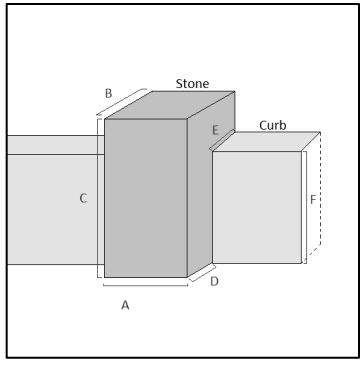


Figure 2. Graphic of each measurement

Using a standard measuring tape, I took the following measurements for each stone; width (A), depth (B), height (C), extended distance (D), embedded distance (E), and curb height (F) (Fig. 2). All measurements were then recorded on a fourth generation iPad using the FileMaker Pro app to create a database. Each entry represented a single stone. It was also possible to add or remove entries based on field observations as previously identified stones sometimes vanished between field sessions. Some stones disappeared for the purposes of putting up scaffolding for nearby building repairs while others vanished for no apparent reason. The handful of missing stones was not included in this research because no applicable data could be gathered on them; instead, their original locational data were saved on an earlier version of the database. Each entry included identification number (labeled as the "layer" input), and street information included street name, the side of the street, the direction of street traffic, the number of lanes within that street, and the rut depth found at that spot within the street. Additionally, sections were created for information on how the stone interacted with the curb, and to load pictures taken by the iPad's camera. Also recorded in an input box labeled "notes" were unquantifiable yet relevant field observations, such as commentary on intrusions, discolorations, proximity to tether holes, etc.

Outside the field, the database was exported into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. I combined it with Eric Poehler's previous data set. This finalized dataset was then imported into the mapping program, ArcMap. Stones that could not be located from Poehler's previous study were removed in the program and stones that had not been noted before were added. Once placed in the map it was possible to compare each stone's properties and locations to those of other stones, and to city-wide characteristics. All maps included in this thesis are from this data compilation. Objects in red represent guard stone locations. All maps are positioned so that north is oriented to the top of the image.

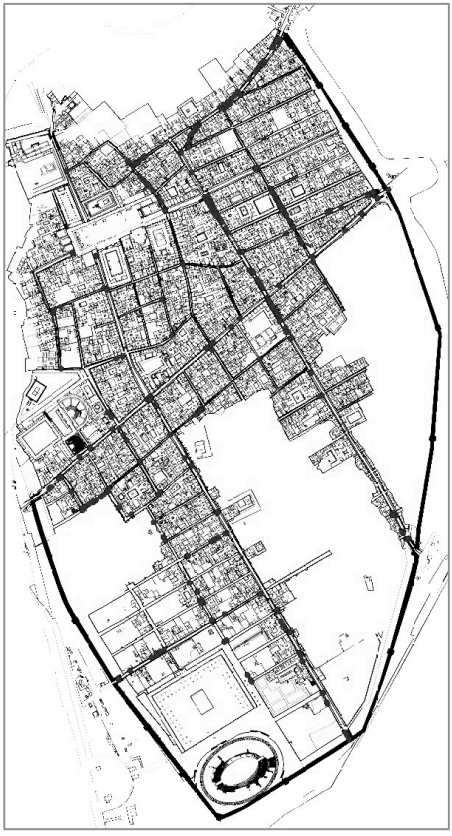


Figure 3. Map of Pompeii with 370 identified stones represented as dots

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Height, Width, and Depth

The average height for the stones is 37.9 centimeters. Height is the most varied morphological feature and is the largest of the stone's dimensions. There are more stones which exceed fifty centimeters in height than in depth or width. Depth was measured as the length of the stone perpendicular to the curb, the average being 24.6 centimeters. Because a stone may protrude into the curb, the depth measurement is the combined distance of the "extended distance" from a curb and "embedded distance" into a curb. Width was measured as the length of the stone parallel to the curve, the average width being 32.9 centimeters. In the simplest of terms, by being parallel to the curb, this is simply a measurement of how much the stones was an extension of the curb. As the wheels are most likely to strike the stones in a force direction parallel to the curb, the width is an

expression of their strength. The wider the stone the more likely it will withstand impact with a cart wheel and prevent breakage.

Curbs

Pompeian curbs, in general, tend to be tall. Their average height was 34.5 centimeters. This is almost twice the average 6-8 inch (15.24-20.32 centimeter) curbs found in modern American cities ("Chapter 4: Design Criteria"). It is important to mention that the curb and the sidewalk function to differentiate pedestrians from both cart traffic as well as waste and water removal. In 79 CE, the city was still primarily using deep channels (i.e., its streets) to direct water flow (Poehler 2012, 99). Highly raised sidewalks translated to better waste management and safer passage for pedestrians.

DIFFERENCE IN HEIGHT	# OF STONES	PERCENTAGE
0-9 cm	106	49.3%
10-19 cm	47	21.9%
20-29 cm	22	10.2%
30-39 cm	18	8.4%
40-49 cm	8	3.7%
50-59 cm	9	4.2%
60-69 cm	0	0%
70-79 cm	5	2.3%

Figure 4. Differences in height between guard stones and their associated curbs

The comparison of curb height in relation to guard stone height was particularly useful in my research. It is important to note that stones which relate to fountains and which have no curb are excluded from this section. There is minimal variation in the differences between curb and guard stone height. Figure 4 illustrates that 49.3% of stones differ from the curbs by less than 10 centimeters, 71.1% by less than 20 centimeters, and only 10.2% by more than 40 centimeters. Generally, the stones are close to their curbs in height. Because of this, they appear as a horizontal extension of the curb and their function relates more to their other dimensions.

This fact disproves two of the theories already put forth about the purpose of these guard stones. One theory suggested that guard stones served as steps from which to mount animals. However, since the majority of them are negligibly taller than their related curbs, the gaurd stones would not function well in giving a citizen a lift. The other theory stated that the guard stones served to push carts away from curbs higher than the radius of the wheel of a cart. Curbstones were noted as a possible nuisance to carts by Hartnett, who references at least 45 places where the curbs would have been higher than cart axles (Hartnett 2011, 154). If a wheel hub managed to mount the curb and if the curb was higher than the radius of the wheel, the cart wheel would lose traction and get stuck—the same would hold true with tall guard stones.

However, due to the generally shorter nature of the curbs to wheel radii, it is unlikely that curbs or guard stones were ever a serious threat. The hypothesis cannot be completely tossed aside, as there are some tall curbs that would have hindered carts and are accompanied by shorter guard stones, as seen in the western curb of Via Consolare. Two guard stones are posted outside of a house's entrance and higher curb, GS_080 and GS_081. Their respective curbs are 66 and 78 centimeters tall, higher than the average height of a cart axle (Miniero1987, 181) while the stones are 55 and 56 centimeters tall. Still, the number of stones positioned in this manner are too small to suppose that the main purpose of the guard stones was to stop carts from getting stuck on tall curbs.

There are two ways a stone can interact with a curb- it can either abut against the curb (62%) or be embedded within the curb (38%). A stone which abuts a curb in no way intrudes into the curb; the stone simply touches it. An embedded stone is one which either is fitted in between two curbstones or the curbstones are cut to fit the guard stones within them.

How a guard stone relates to its curb (be it abutting or embedded) is most likely a reflection of the agent responsible for installing the guard stones. There are a significantly higher number of guard stones that abut against the curb rather than are embedded into the curb. There are two possible explanations for the low frequency we see of embedded guard stones. It would be easier, if someone needed a stone installed after the curb was already in place, to install the stone against the curb rather than within it. In the cases where the curbs are cut to accommodate for the guard stone, this would require more labor and financial investment; and so the agent responsible chose the more cost-efficient option.

Extended and Embedded Distance

The extended measurement is the distance that a stone extends out from its curb, which on average was 21.8 centimeters. Since stone height is the only other measurement to regularly interact with traffic (as seen in reaction to axle height), this set of data is the most important to consider. The distance a stone extends into the street would most likely affect wheeled traffic. On average, these stones act to push a cart a little more than 20 centimeters away from the curb and sidewalk. At intersections, if a stone was directly on the corner, it forced carts to take wider turns to avoid hopping onto the curb corner (Poehler 1999, 58).

The embedded distance is the measurement of how deep a stone protrudes into the curb. Unlike the extended distance, this measurement was less informative. It is important to note that since some of the curbstones were cut for the guard stones, it was hard to always measure the distance at which a stone intruded into the curb. In total, only 55 stones have measurements for how deep they are embedded into the curb. The average embedded distance was 16.8 centimeters. This characteristic may be a reflection on the installation practices, as previously mentioned. It may also be an attempt at stabilizing the stones. As many of the guard

stones were subject to frequent collisions with traveling vehicles, they would serve their purpose better by being installed sturdily. Embedding the guard stones in both pavement and curb rendered them better able to absorb those impacts.

TRAFFIC DIRECTION	SIDE OF STREET	# STONES
East	Left	14
East	Right	24
West	Left	6
West	Right	31
North	Right	29
North	Left	20
South	Right	16
South	Left	23

Figure 5. Direction of traffic and side of the street comparison in one lane streets

TRAFFIC DIRECTION	SIDE OF STREET	# STONES
East	Left	24
East	Right	30
West	Left	13
West	Right	22
North	Right	33
North	Left	38
South	Right	16
South	Left	7

Figure 6. Direction of traffic and side of the street comparison in two lane streets

Side of the Street and Traffic Direction

Considering Romans drove on the right side of the street (Poehler 2006, 73), we would expect there to be more stones on the right side of the street depending on the direction one is traveling. To examine this, I have divided the streets by number of lanes. Figure 5 shows the distribution of stones found in one lane streets. They are divided by the direction of traffic flow and the side of the street they were installed on. All but southbound streets fit this expectation. On northbound streets, for example, 9 more stones are found on the right side of the street than the left. This pattern is particularly strong for westbound streets. The presence of stones on the other side of the street may be a reaction to the rather narrow streets. Pompeii was known for its small cramped streets and because of this, protection for either side would have been important. Two way streets provide an exception, as seen in Figure 6. This is because the two lane streets have traffic going in both directions, and so stones will be needed for either side.

Intersections

A little over a third of guard stones, approximately 138, are individually dispersed within a three-meter radius of an intersection. We had previously hypothesized that the stones were visual indicators to cart drivers to prevent them from going the wrong way down a one-way street. That is to say: if a cart arrived at an intersection, a stone on the first corner to its right would indicate that the cart cannot turn right onto that street. However, after comparing locations of stones within intersections to traffic patterns as proved by Poehler's conclusions (2006, 58), only 25 stones out of the total 370 fit this hypothesis. Fifteen stones directly contradict this hypothesis and the others are on the wrong corners of the intersection for them to affect cart drivers' decisions. Because less than 7% of the stones are positioned in a way to support this theory, it is difficult to argue in favor of it. There was little coherence with the theory and how a stone was placed in an intersection, and so it is highly unlikely that the stones direct traffic.

The large number of guard stones found in intersections calls into question the possibility that the guard stones acted as parking stones. The parking theory states that a guard stone acted as an emergency break the cart could be parked against to prevent it from rolling down inclined streets. Distributional data helps disprove this theory as many of the stones are on flat streets such as Via della Fortuna. For the theory to hold, streets with greater change in elevation would warrant more stones, such as Via Stabiana (which has few). Additionally, one third of stones are found in intersections, places that are certainly poor parking spaces. Based on the large number of stones found in intersections and found on flat streets, it is unlikely the stones functioned as parking devices.

Ruts

Ruts were carved into the streets by the iron tires of carts slowly eroding away the pavement stones. Sumiyo Tsujimura categorized and mapped out the locations of the different depths of ruts: deep, shallow, faint, and no rut (1991, 64). Of the guard stones found, more than half are found in deeply rutted street sections (60%). Only a little under a quarter of the remaining stones are in sections of streets that are shallow (12%), faint (5%), or lacking ruts (5%). For the remainder of stones (18%), there is no rut data available for the street segments they inhabit.

At first glance, ruts appear to be important when considering traffic and street management. On the contrary, depth is commonly misinterpreted as an indicator of traffic volume. There are two variables to consider when looking at rut depth: amount of traffic, and length of time. Traffic volume measures the number of carts. Length of time measures how many days or even years over which traffic occurs. It is impossible to measure either of these factors based on rut patterns alone. That is to say, one cart in one hundred days would make the same marks as one hundred carts in one day. Moreover, a newly paved street would remove previous deep rutting and would make it seem less traveled than others. Thus, since

no one knows how long or how many carts made the ruts currently present, it is unclear what the ruts reflect. This means that even though guard stones are found predominantly on deeply rutted streets, it cannot be determined whether those deep ruts are a sign of heavy daily traffic or the accumulation of many days of light traffic.

That is not to say that ruts can be ignored when examining guard stones. The presence of ruts signifies the general presence of cart traffic, though not the degree to which that traffic occurred. More importantly, rut depth speaks of street maintenance and evolution of use. Ruts or the lack thereof can signify instances of repaving. A perfect example of repaving is the eastern stretch of Via della Fortuna, seen in Figure 7. Smooth pavement stones denote the areas of new pavement. In certain areas, such as Via della Fortuna, it is clear that repaving took place, but the same cannot be said for the majority of the city.



Figure 7. Via della Fortuna looking west

There are only twenty stones which appear in segments of streets without ruts. This number is deceptively high, however, as twelve of them are found in Vicolo del Farmacista. As Vicolo del Farmacista was repaved, the construction crews did not replace the existing *opus incertum* curb. Its curb is not comprised of large lava stone blocks as seen in much of the city but rather is a conglomeration of a smaller varied stones. Instead of installing a new curb in style with the rest of the city, they simply built on top of it by adding more stones. In doing so, they neglected to remove the guard stones in the process and instead incorporated them into the

masonry. Because of this, these guard stones are artifacts of an earlier street and at the final stage of Vicolo del Farmacista they could have lost their main function and become simple construction blocks. In the end, of twenty stones found in streets without ruts, three protect fountains and twelve are on Vicolo del Farmacista. Only five are found outside of these contexts. Therefore, it is highly likely that these stones are no longer being installed as the streets are undergoing maintenance and re-paving. The implications of this interpretation will be examined further below.

Property Type

The usage or property type of a building, as defined by Eschebach (1993), is the most important characteristic when examining how a building interacted with a guard stone. Can the usage of a building correlate with the need for a guard stone? A building according to Eschebach could be one of the following: an entertainment building, a guild, a market garden, a private dwelling, a public building, a shop, a temple, a building relating to the urban water supply, a workshop, or, in the case of much of the unexcavated portions of the city, a building of unknown function. The guard stones were mostly found in the streets adjacent to private dwellings (29%) and shops (22%) with market gardens and temples with the fewest (2% each). The apparent preference for guard stones to occur outside private dwellings might imply that their purpose was related to the domestic sphere.

The varied size of property types and their resulting occupancy of varied linear distance on the street makes it difficult to make conclusions on this data alone. A simple comparison of property type to number of stones associated could be irrelevant. Private dwellings, for example, dominate the area of the city, and so it follows that they have more stones associated with them than other types of buildings. Alternatively, because large private dwellings rented out the frontage of the house to shops (Hales 2003, 103), a domestic space may have less relation to streets than what would be expected. A better discussion should be had on each individual building rather than property type, as rented space complicates our understanding of the how Pompeians utilized their buildings. As the data on how rooms or building types create whole buildings is incomplete, we cannot understand how the stones are influenced by property type or property owner.

Based on the current data available, very little can be said about the importance of property type. From the raw data, it appears that the stones are more likely related to private dwellings and shops than the majority of the other property types. Saliou's belief that the stones could delineate space would not be applicable here. There are many instances where houses have more than one stone associated with them and so it would be unlikely that the stones divide those spaces.

Fountains

Water supply was a crucial part of city planning. There are forty-three public water fountains situated throughout Pompeii. Thirty-four of forty-three fountains have at least one guard stone touching them. These fountains are all made of stone, usually tuff or lava stone, and are usually square (Nishida 1990, 92). Due to the fountains' presence in or in very close proximity to intersections, these fountains would have been large obstacles to turning traffic, and would have required protection. Vicolo di Narciso, for example, joins Via Consolare in a Y-shaped intersection (Fig. 8). In the inner corner of that intersection, there is a fountain that is protected by five guard stones. Due to its position in the intersection, this fountain was at a high risk of damage from vehicles. All of the thirty-four fountains which have guard stones have their stones on the side of traffic or in places where the fountains intrude into the street. The stones appear to act as a barrier to protect an important street feature.

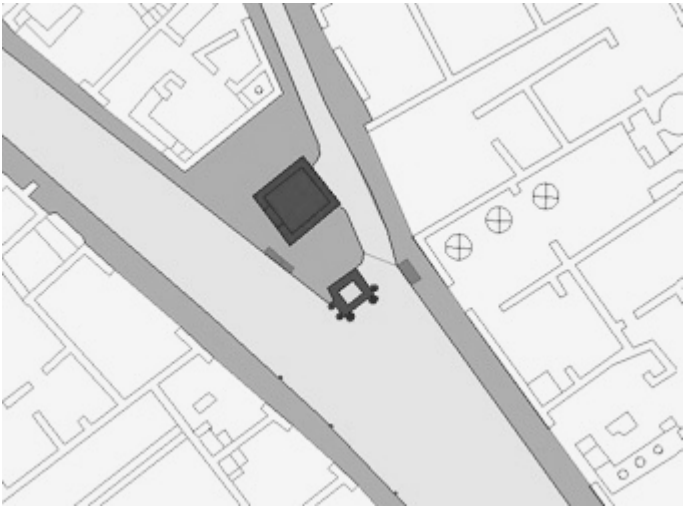


Figure 8. Fountain at intersection of Vicolo di Narciso and Via Consolare

Ramps

Similar to fountains, ramps were important aspects of the city in danger from passing carts. A ramp, for the purpose of this study, is a planar change in elevation that extends from the street to an interior space of a building, usually cutting into the sidewalk in the process. These ramps permit carts to enter a building from the street. Twenty-two guard stones are located on ramps. These stones are either protecting the curbstones near the street, as seen in Figure 9, or are against the building associated with the ramp. Frequently, these ramps enter a building such as an inn

(Poehler 2011, 199), and in doing so expose other features of the city to cart interference.

The placement and frequency of these stones at ramps is another clue to their function. At these locations it is clear that the stones protect something such as the change in elevation between street and sidewalk, the abrupt end to a string of curbstones, or the walls of the entrance into the buildings. These guard stones are then protecting city features, encouraging them not to strike objects as they turn into or off of the ramp.



Figure 9. Ramp #26 (in dark grey) with GS_252 and GS_253

Groupings of Stones

With the use of GIS, spatial patterns begin to emerge. Groups of guard stones started forming where stones shared similar characteristics. For example, there is a clear grouping of stones on the north side of the western stretch of Via di Nola near the intersection with Via della Fortuna (Fig. 10). These fourteen stones are all lower than the curb and abut against it. These stones are regularly roughly 3 meters to 4.5 meters apart from each other and get closer in proximity as they approach the intersection. Their height and depths are within the 20's and 30's centimeter range, with their height between 30 and 39 centimeters. In addition to this, they all have the same, distinct domed or hemispherical shape. There are many other collections of stones like these. These prominent patterns found throughout the city are indicators that stones were most likely installed in groups. Although the groups are unlikely to be contemporaneous to each other, the stones within them are.

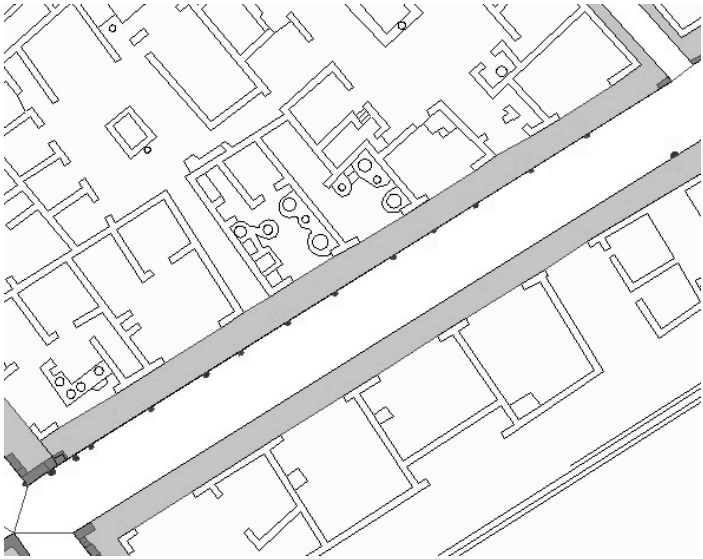


Figure 10. Segment of Via di Nola

Special Case: House of the Vettii

The southern wall of the House of the Vettii on Vicolo di Murcurio is an interesting case. The house encroaches into the street, eliminating the sidewalk. For most of the city, the sidewalk functions not only as a place for pedestrians to walk but also as a buffer between the cart traffic and the buildings. Here, the house lacks that protective buffer. To compensate, the house has installed twelve stones to protect its wall and relatively soft exterior layer of plaster. The *domus* was not only a domestic space but also functioned to create and maintain important social and political ties (Hales 2003, 107). It would have been in the homeowner's best interest to maintain the physical appearance of their domestic space and protect it from carts, particularly their wheel hubs, which could easily damage the plaster—gouging large channels into their interfaces.

CONCLUSIONS

Through the meticulous examination of the 370 stones, I have come to a conclusion that aligns with Tsujimura (1991, 61) and Saliou (1999, 164), agreeing that the guard stones were installed for the purpose of protecting. Although both scholars propose that the guard stones protect curbstones, the guard stones were most likely installed for the protection of pedestrians, objects, and activities on the sidewalks, as expressed in *Street Environment and*

Primary Sources, from carts' wheel hubs. It is clear from the guard stones' interactions with street features that these guard stones were installed in response to the presence of wheeled traffic.

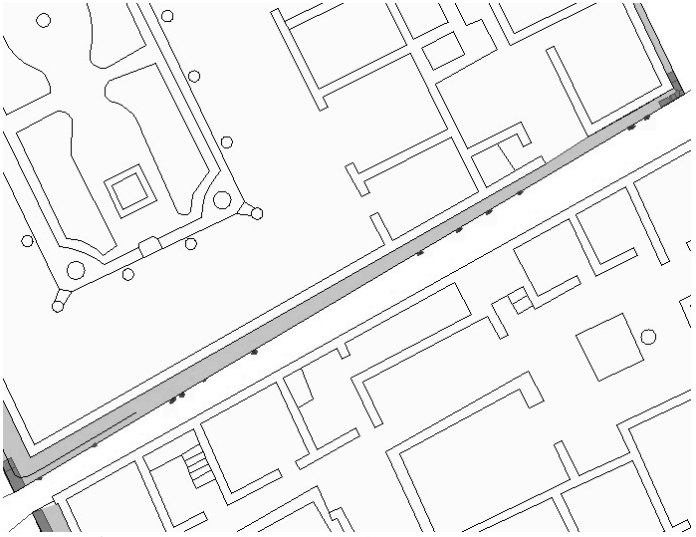


Figure 11. Southern wall of the House of the Vettii along Vicolo di Murcurio

These guard stones form a system of protection. The guard stones force carts to move out of the way just enough to prevent them from harming street-side objects. On average, the stones extended from the curb by 21.8 centimeters while wheel hubs added 18.5 to 20 centimeters to either side of the width of a cart (Tsujimura 1991, 61). Based off of these lengths, the stones would have encouraged carts to deviate away from the sidewalk just enough to eliminate the hub as a potential danger. Damage from wheel hubs has been recorded in some parts of the city, as seen in an inn in insula I.1 which has extensive damage to its brickwork (Fig. 12) where carts entering to park in the lower level of the building struck the walls (Poehler 2011, 212).

In accordance with Tsujimura, the high rate of stones found adjacent to fountains implies they would need protecting from wheel damage (1991, 61). Here, the stones, as catalysts, push carts away enough that the wheel hubs cannot strike such an important feature of the streets. Similarly, this function can be seen on the southern façade of the House of the Vettii where the stones protrude enough to stop wheel hubs from damaging the exterior plaster and at the northern end of Via dei Vettii, where six stones stop carts from approaching a very important building, the Castellum Aquae or the main urban water supply building. The extra positioning of six rather large stones serves to protect the end of a street, where the

building is more likely to suffer from head on collisions from carts. We have similar features in our modern roads called bollards, which, as large cement or metal posts painted yellow, stop cars from traveling into restricted areas.



Figure 12. Wearing on a brick pillar in insula I.1

My conclusion rejects previously held speculations that the stones served to protect curbs. It is more likely that the stones protected pedestrians, objects such as shop stalls, and other various activities carried out on the sides of the streets. First, curbstones were under no serious threat; they would be subject to casual, parallel erosion from iron tires rather than direct impacts and so physical damage to them would be insignificant (Poehler 1999, 45). Additionally, curb stones would take a long time to wear down and could be easily replaced if necessary. The same cannot be said for human beings or other soft objects. Secondly, most of these theories, focusing on the abrasive nature of the wheel's iron rim, neglect to address the wheel hub. A wheel could easily pass next to a curb without damaging it, but its driver could forget how far the axle hub intrudes into the sidewalk space. This negligence could seriously injure pedestrians and other softer objects, such as stalls and shop merchandise, on the sidewalks, not to mention the wheel hubs themselves.

As explored in *Data and Analysis*, many proposed theories could not hold up under scrutiny. For many of these theories, their faults were not in their concepts, but in their application. Most are situational—they are applicable in certain circumstances and fail to apply to the majority. The original thesis that spurred me on this research, stating the stones were traffic directional cues was disproven by an insufficient number of stones within intersections acting under this premise. Although this was a very tempting theory given Pompeii's structured system of traffic in the apparent absence of traffic signs, there was little to no evidence to support it. The larger percentage of stones in close proximity to or found in intersections disproves the theory that the stones functioned as parking stones. Also due to the lack of significant height differences between the stones and their associated curbs, the stones would not be as efficient as the curb to aid citizens who were climbing onto carts and horses. This lack of a difference in height also makes the theory that the stones stop carts from getting caught on taller curbs less likely. However, this function relates to the guarding nature of the stones and although it is not the main form of protection, it could be part of the larger protecting scheme and should not take precedence over the guard stone's more universal application. More research is needed to dispel the remaining theories. The areas of research particularly lacking relate to property type and management. For example, Saliou's belief that they may have been representations of property lines (1999, 164) has not been explored here due to the difficult nature of interpreting property and street side ownership.

In conclusion, and contrary to those alternative theories, the 370 guard stones found along the streets of Pompeii protected the pedestrians, merchandise, shop stalls, and all other soft objects on the sidewalk. The busy and chaotic sidewalks, bursting with activity, were in grave need of a protecting force. The guard stones accomplished this by pushing carts away from the curb just enough to eliminate the cart wheel hub as a danger to the sidewalk activities.

AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Although strong evidence supports this theory that the guard stones protected objects on the sides of the streets, there are a few fundamental issues and questions remaining from this research. The most noticeable remaining questions examine the chronology, environment, and agency responsible for installing the guard stones. While we can understand the function the guard stones served for the city, understanding their greater context is a little bit more difficult. This section will explore these questions, trying to examine all possible solutions based off of the data and material available.

When examining the correlations between rut depths and guard stone locations, it is surprising to see the number of stones in repaved sections to be significantly lower than others, implying that the stones are being phased

out in the later periods of the life of Pompeii. As the streets are being re-paved to deal with the devastating ruts, the guard stones are not being re-installed. This is rather confusing; if the stones have such a crucial function for traffic management and safety, why would they no longer be installed?

One clue to why this is may be in the urban environment of the Mediterranean at this time. Pompeii's utilization of guard stones is uncommon. Of the many major ancient cities I have examined along the Mediterranean, only three other cities have guard stones; Herculaneum, Norba, and Egnazia, all of which are in the middle to southern areas of the Italian peninsula. Similar to the removal of the stones from Pompeii, this lack of stones found elsewhere is perplexing due to the stones' apparently vital nature. There are a few reasons why we may not see guard stones in the majority of ancient cities contemporaneous and asynchronous to Pompeii. First, many cities from this time period were not well-preserved in their original state or built over throughout the proceeding centuries. Thus the evidence simply does not remain. Second, many cities have wider streets than those in Pompeii. This is seen in the Via Flaminia, which when it entered Rome was seven meters wider than Via dell'Abbondanza at its widest, and seen in the new Severan Street in Leptis Magna, which was three times wider (Laurence 2014, 404). Logically, carts would have more room to avoid the sidewalks in these cities. Thirdly, cities began to implement the use of other city planning and architectural schemes to deal with increasing urbanization. For example, adopting the use of colonnades to better separate foot traffic from cart and animal traffic. Although this was a common theme for the reconstruction of Rome after the great fire of 64CE (Laurence 2014, 403), it can be seen throughout the empire. Pompeii was going through similar infrastructural changes at this time; where once they used the streets for water and waste removal, they began experimenting with underground sewerage (Poehler 2012, 116). Both the water system and the guard stones could be part of a grander re-structuring of infrastructure. It just so happened that Pompeii's plans for infrastructural redevelopment were interrupted by Vesuvius.

Pompeii's cramped and relatively small streets would have suffered from crippling congestion. The narrow streets and tight corners at intersections made the carts a significant danger to other forms of traffic. Too much was going on in such small spaces. With this in mind, it is truly baffling that the Pompeians were phasing out the use of guard stones. As Hodder discusses the concept of catalysts, he is expressing how human agencies react to and motivate change (2012, 166). The guard stones here are a deliberate catalyst which motivates cart drivers to steer away from the curb. But it is unclear who is responsible for creating such a catalyst.

There are two candidates for the human agents behind these stones: property-owning citizens and the city government official known as the *aedile*. The main origin of this debate comes from the inscription, the *Tabula Heracleensis*, from Rome dating back to 44 B.C.E. mentioned earlier. It states that "it shall be the duty of all people before whose building any road

will run to maintain that road to the satisfaction of the *aedile* to whom that part of the city will be assigned by this law" (Humphrey et al. 2006, 412). Romans encouraged their wealthier citizens to maintain the streets adjacent to their properties. The House of the Vettii's owner, for example, would have managed the installation of the stones protecting his house. This particular building lacked a sidewalk and thus a buffer between carts and the relatively soft, aesthetic exterior of the house. Furthermore, there is a large variation in installation practices such as height, width, depth, shape, relation to the curb, etc. There is no unifying feature to these stones. An ordinance from an official would imply a more unified set of stones: all stones would be installed in the same way, be the same shape, and have similar sizes. Since there is variation in physical traits and installation practices, and the differences are expressions in variation of expenditure and purpose, it seems to represent individual agency.

Alternatively, some of the data collected in this research may argue that the *aedile* was responsible. The simplest example of this is the occurrence of stones found in relation to public buildings. The five stones which block cart access to the forum are made of marble and hold decorative as well as functional purposes. It is likely that they were erected by the manager of public space, the *aedile* (Humphrey et al. 2006, 412). There is sufficient evidence that the stones were installed in groups and those groups most likely passed property lines; therefore, one cannot conclude all stones are attributable to individual property owners. The main argument against individual responsibility is the presence of large scale order throughout the city. An evolving system for water management was a city-wide project, organizing water flow into major water basins (Poehler 2012, 112). Traffic patterns are also an example of this, where although there were no street signs to direct flow, there clearly was a system in which drivers operated (Poehler 2009, 304). Although it is difficult to say the same for the installation of the guard stones, as they lack an obvious form of organization and pattern, there was a systematic removal of the stones in the later period of the life of Pompeii. If the stones were being phased out yet still had purpose for individuals (as seen in the House of the Vettii), it would indicate that there would have been a central figure who managed their maintenance. Thus, their installations could have been part of the larger scale processes which together create the basic street infrastructure.

Finally, a third option which finds the middle ground. This theory states that groups of citizens worked together to install these objects under the management of the *aedile*. It is clear through the wording of the *Tabula Heracleensis* that the *aedile*, being a manager of streets and city infrastructure, would ensure that the citizens were maintaining the streets to his satisfaction. But based off of the groupings of stones which most likely crossed property lines mentioned at the end of *Data and Analysis*, it could be that instead of individual agency, it is group agency. Multiple property owners along one stretch of street realized they had a mutual need for the

stones and banded together to install them. Similarly, because they were acting under the wishes of the *aedile*, the stones could be removed systematically through his desire for city wide change in traffic management.

Although it is difficult to pinpoint the agents behind the guard stones' installations or why the stones were being removed near the end of Pompeii's life, there is enough evidence to argue that guard stones were installed for the purpose of protection. With the data collected from a city-wide survey of the guard stones in the streets of Pompeii, there is strong evidence to support the idea that these stones protected the pedestrians, objects, and activities happening on the sides of the streets from wheel hubs that would have intruded into the sidewalk. These guard stones, along with the system of traffic and the systems of water management, create infrastructural processes intending to manage and maintain street order.

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Resources

Journals

Brown Classical Journal, Brown University
http://brown.edu/academics/classics/undergraduate-program/brown-classics-journal

Persephone, student journal of Harvard Classics Club
http://www.hcs.harvard.edu/~classics/?page_id=2

Helicon, Yale Undergraduate Journal of Classics
http://www.yale.edu/classics/undergraduates_helicon.html

Vexillum, Undergraduate Journal of Classical and Medieval Studies
http://www.vexillumjournal.org/

Ephemeris, Classical Journal of Denison University
http://www.denison.edu/academics/departments/classics/ephemeris.html

Conferences

Miami University Undergraduate Conference in Classics
http://www.units.muohio.edu/classics/news/news.html

Northwest Undergraduate Conference on the Ancient World
at Willamette University
http://www.willamette.edu/cla/classics/resources/conference/index.html

High Tech Heritage, University of Massachusetts Amherst
http://scholarworks.umass.edu/hightechheritage/

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