

Dionysian Triumph Sarcophagi

William A. G. Leveritt

Thesis submitted to The University of Nottingham
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

July 2016

Abstract

This thesis explores the meanings of those Roman sarcophagi which show the Indian triumph of Dionysus. This group, found from approximately the early Antonine to just after the Severan period, shows the same mythological characters in similar positions and surroundings. They — together with other groups — tend to be approached from a methodology which either explicitly anticipates homogeneity of meaning or tacitly implies it through the transferral of interpretations from one piece to another. This study attempts to reconsider such actions by exposing the different effects that individual sarcophagi draw.

As a group, these sarcophagi cover a period of significant change in the funerary realm. Since the group straddles important divisions between public imagery and private expression, we can more readily anticipate the latter through knowledge of the former. While studies of the triumph as ritual have begun to recognise it as a rite in flux, to be understood in its various instantiations rather than as a trans-historical event, such an analytical shift has not been applied to sarcophagi.

In explicitly moving away from the assumption that we can assert genre-level meanings, this thesis undertakes an assessment sensitised to the possibil-

ity of case-by-case variation in meaning. This approach is also recommended by the intensely personal nature of the function of the sarcophagi: as the final resting places of lost loved-ones.

First, a survey of prior approaches is made. Next, the group is rigorously defined with a methodology designed not with an intent to imply ancient applicability, but rather to be explicit about the generation of a working set. Subsequently, the sarcophagi are decomposed into their constituent elements and analysed, before in the next chapter being reconstituted and their effect in collusion analysed. Finally, the group is studied as a whole and the reasons behind its development, modifications and decline explored.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitudes to my supervisors, Dr Katharina Lorenz and Dr Andreas Kropp, whose erudition has only been matched by their patience at reading and re-reading the various drafts and incarnations of this work. Their kindness and encouragement have been immeasurable.

I must thank my internal examiner, Dr Lynn Fotheringham, and my external examiner, Prof. Jaś Elsner, for their kindness and insight.

Many staff members at Nottingham have offered helpful advice over the course of this project. I would especially like to thank Dr Mark Bradley, Dr Esther Eidinow, Dr Simon Malloch, and Prof. John Rich. For the generous donation of their time, and for their careful diligence, I would like to thank my proofreaders Danielle Frisby, Harriet Lander, Charlotte Round, Mike Welbourn and Nicholas Wilshere.

I would also like to thank the community of `tex.stackexchange` for their advice regarding the coding of the catalogue in this work, which has probably saved me hours of frustration.

Finally, it remains for me to thank my grandparents, mother, and stepfather for their love and support during the course of this project, without whom it would have been impossible.

This thesis is dedicated to the memories of my grandparents and my father.

*This thing, what is it in and of itself,
in its own construction?*

What is its substance and material?

What is its cause?

What in the world does it do?

For how much time does it exist?

τοῦτο τί ἐστὶν αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ
τῇ ἰδίᾳ κατασκευῇ,
τί μὲν τὸ οὐσιῶδες αὐτοῦ καὶ ὑλικόν,
τί δὲ τὸ αἰτιῶδες,
τί δὲ ποιεῖ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ,
πόσον δὲ χρόνον ὑφίσταται;

Marcus Aurelius *Meditations* 8.11.

Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| List of Figures | xv |
| Abbreviations | xix |
| 1 Introduction | 1 |
| 1.1 The phenomenon | 2 |
| 1.1.1 The panther's tale | 4 |
| 1.1.2 Does a myth always mean the same thing? | 8 |
| 1.2 The importance of iconography | 11 |
| 1.2.1 Two variables: the patron and the sculptor | 12 |
| 1.2.2 <i>aemulatio</i> | 14 |
| 1.3 Prior approaches | 16 |
| 1.3.1 Dionysus and his worship | 16 |
| 1.3.2 Sarcophagus and funerary studies | 18 |
| 1.3.3 The triumph | 25 |
| 1.3.3.1 The rite, the mythology and the sarcophagi | 29 |
| 1.3.4 Dionysian sarcophagi | 30 |
| 1.3.4.1 Religion and the sarcophagi | 33 |

| | | |
|----------|---|-----------|
| 1.4 | Embracing advances, avoiding pitfalls | 34 |
| 1.5 | Trajectory of the thesis | 37 |
| 2 | Defining the corpus | 43 |
| 2.1 | What does a triumph look like? | 43 |
| 2.1.1 | Monumental relief | 44 |
| 2.1.2 | Smaller-scale depictions | 48 |
| 2.1.3 | The chariot's form | 53 |
| 2.1.4 | The influence of other processions | 54 |
| 2.2 | The intersection of the imperial triumph and the Dionysian triumph | 62 |
| 2.2.1 | Standing up to be counted | 62 |
| 2.2.2 | Invoking the triumph on sarcophagi: intersections, intentions and limitations | 65 |
| 2.2.2.1 | Victoria | 72 |
| 2.2.2.2 | Ariadne | 76 |
| 2.2.3 | <i>spectandi causa</i> | 77 |
| 2.3 | A working model of the genre's boundaries | 80 |
| 3 | Analysis of motifs | 89 |
| 3.1 | The Chariot Group | 90 |
| 3.1.1 | The figure-types of Dionysus <i>triumphator</i> | 91 |
| 3.1.1.1 | The significance of the averted gaze | 97 |
| 3.1.2 | The chariot teams | 98 |
| 3.1.2.1 | The panther series | 99 |
| 3.1.2.2 | The elephant series | 101 |

| | | |
|---------|---|-----|
| 3.1.2.3 | The centaur series | 103 |
| 3.1.3 | The dangers of using motifs as diagnostic criteria . . . | 104 |
| 3.2 | Animals in the procession | 105 |
| 3.2.1 | The species | 106 |
| 3.2.2 | Animals and the exotic | 108 |
| 3.2.2.1 | Elephants | 109 |
| 3.2.2.2 | Lions | 111 |
| 3.2.2.3 | Camels and <i>camelopards</i> | 113 |
| 3.2.3 | Animals and the symbolic? | 113 |
| 3.2.3.1 | Rams and goats | 113 |
| 3.2.3.2 | Snakes | 115 |
| 3.2.3.3 | Silenus' donkeys | 118 |
| 3.2.4 | Conclusions | 121 |
| 3.3 | The prisoners | 123 |
| 3.3.1 | Prisoners in detail | 125 |
| 3.3.2 | The prisoner types | 127 |
| 3.3.3 | Ethnicity | 132 |
| 3.3.4 | Interpretation | 135 |
| 3.3.5 | Conclusions | 138 |
| 3.4 | The <i>cista mystica</i> | 139 |
| 3.4.1 | Thinking inside the box | 140 |
| 3.4.2 | Prior scholarship | 144 |
| 3.4.3 | Thinking outside the box: the <i>cista mystica</i> in context | 145 |
| 3.4.4 | A stable symbol with unstable surroundings | 151 |
| 3.4.5 | Interpretation: orchestrating the situation | 154 |

| | | |
|----------|--|------------|
| 3.4.6 | Conclusions | 156 |
| 3.5 | The <i>liknon</i> | 158 |
| 3.5.1 | Definition | 158 |
| 3.5.2 | Dionysus <i>liknites</i> | 159 |
| 3.5.2.1 | The <i>liknon</i> and the afterlife | 161 |
| 3.5.3 | The object on the sarcophagi | 163 |
| 3.5.3.1 | Variant <i>likna</i> | 166 |
| 3.5.4 | Interpretation | 168 |
| 3.5.4.1 | The Cambridge <i>liknon</i> | 171 |
| 3.5.4.2 | The Naples <i>liknon</i> | 177 |
| 3.6 | Hercules | 178 |
| 3.6.1 | The sober Hercules | 182 |
| 3.6.1.1 | Interpretation | 189 |
| 3.6.2 | The growing intoxication of Hercules | 189 |
| 3.6.3 | The drunken Hercules | 191 |
| 3.6.3.1 | Interpretation | 199 |
| 3.6.4 | Conclusions: Hercules in contemporary usage | 201 |
| 3.7 | Conclusions | 204 |
| 4 | Networks | 205 |
| 4.1 | Weighing the networks: the reliefs as wholes | 210 |
| 4.2 | Negotiating the boundaries | 212 |
| 4.2.1 | The portrait face | 212 |
| 4.2.1.1 | From collusion to dissolution | 220 |

| | | |
|----------|--|------------|
| 4.2.1.2 | Proximising and distancing in mythological portraits | 222 |
| 4.2.2 | Conclusions | 224 |
| 4.3 | Negotiating the military | 225 |
| 4.3.1 | The tension between idealised life and myth | 237 |
| 4.3.2 | The tension between real life and rhetoric | 242 |
| 4.3.3 | Conclusions | 249 |
| 4.4 | Negotiating the sympotic | 250 |
| 4.4.1 | The anatomy of revelry: the Pashley sarcophagus | 252 |
| 4.4.2 | The polyvalency of the sympotic | 263 |
| 4.4.3 | Conclusions | 267 |
| 4.5 | Negotiating the personal | 268 |
| 4.5.1 | Divergent tones from similar motifs | 272 |
| 4.5.2 | Conclusions | 274 |
| 4.6 | Negotiating the religious | 276 |
| 4.6.1 | <i>Epiphaneia</i> | 279 |
| 4.6.2 | The internal audience and <i>epiphaneia</i> | 282 |
| 4.6.3 | Conclusions | 287 |
| 4.7 | Negotiating the encounter | 288 |
| 4.7.1 | Conclusions | 294 |
| 4.8 | Conclusions | 295 |
| 5 | Synthesis | 297 |
| 5.1 | Points of engagement | 298 |

| | | |
|----------|--|------------|
| 5.1.1 | Genre-level <i>Brücken</i> between the sarcophagi and contemporary viewers | 303 |
| 5.2 | Points of disengagement | 307 |
| 5.2.1 | Disengaging the mythological triumph and apotheosis . | 313 |
| 5.3 | Rise and fall | 316 |
| 5.3.1 | Stemmata | 316 |
| 5.3.2 | The rise | 319 |
| 5.3.3 | Overview of the transition | 321 |
| 5.3.3.1 | Two non-intuitive comparisons | 324 |
| 5.3.3.2 | The effect of the increasing appearance of portraits | 330 |
| 5.3.4 | The fall | 334 |
| 5.3.4.1 | Parallel example: Achilles and Penthesilea . . | 336 |
| 5.3.4.2 | The processes of change | 341 |
| 5.3.4.3 | Conclusions | 348 |
| 6 | Conclusion | 349 |
| 6.1 | Methodological approach | 350 |
| 6.2 | Implications within sarcophagus studies | 354 |
| 6.3 | Areas of expansion | 357 |
| 6.4 | Closing remarks | 359 |
| | Appendix A Catalogue | 361 |
| | Appendix B List of Triumphs | 439 |
| | Appendix C Triumph chart | 441 |

Bibliography

List of Figures

| | | |
|-----|--|-----|
| 1.1 | Sarcophagus in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (B19) | 1 |
| 1.2 | Detail of sarcophagus in Museo Capitolino (A3) | 5 |
| 1.3 | Detail of sarcophagus in Woburn Abbey (A6) | 7 |
| 2.1 | Select monumental triumphal reliefs | 47 |
| 2.2 | Select triumphal <i>aurei</i> | 49 |
| 2.3 | Select provincial triumphal reverses | 52 |
| 2.4 | Lid of sarcophagus in San Lorenzo fuori le mura (D1) | 57 |
| 2.5 | Monument of Philopappus | 59 |
| 2.6 | Detail of sarcophagus in Woburn Abbey (A6) | 66 |
| 2.7 | Two crowns | 68 |
| 2.8 | Select sarcophagi | 73 |
| 2.9 | Detail of Boscoreale Cup | 74 |
| 3.1 | Types of chariot depiction | 92 |
| 3.2 | Comparison of Dionysus types on coins | 94 |
| 3.3 | Chart of chariot animals | 100 |
| 3.4 | Detail of Pashley sarcophagus (B14) | 117 |
| 3.5 | Detail of sarcophagus in Museo delle Terme (B3) | 119 |

| | | |
|------|---|-----|
| 3.6 | Detail of Woburn Abbey sarcophagus (A6) | 124 |
| 3.7 | Detail of frieze from arch of Trajan | 128 |
| 3.8 | Detail of sarcophagus in Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (A1) . | 129 |
| 3.9 | Detail of sarcophagus in the Uffizi (A9) | 131 |
| 3.10 | Detail of sarcophagus in Palazzo Albani (A11) | 132 |
| 3.11 | Detail of Baltimore sarcophagus (A1) | 136 |
| 3.12 | <i>cistae mysticae</i> comparison | 140 |
| 3.13 | Select <i>cista mystica</i> motifs | 146 |
| 3.14 | Sarcophagus in Casino Rospigliosi (D5) | 152 |
| 3.15 | Detail of sarcophagus in Dresden (D6) | 154 |
| 3.16 | Coin of Commodus with Dionysus <i>liknites</i> | 159 |
| 3.17 | Select <i>liknon</i> motifs | 166 |
| 3.18 | Select variant <i>liknon</i> motifs | 169 |
| 3.19 | Right hand short end of Pashley sarcophagus (B14) | 171 |
| 3.20 | Detail of right hand end of Pashley sarcophagus (B14) | 172 |
| 3.21 | Right hand short end of Museo Nazionale sarcophagus (D17) . | 174 |
| 3.22 | Comparative Hercules types. | 180 |
| 3.23 | Hercules with club downwards. | 180 |
| 3.24 | Hercules holding club upwards. | 180 |
| 3.25 | Coin details. | 181 |
| 3.26 | Origins of Hercules type | 186 |
| 3.27 | Hercules of the Palazzo Mattei | 190 |
| 3.28 | Detail of sarcophagus in Museo delle Terme (D7) | 192 |
| 3.29 | Drunken Hercules type | 194 |
| 3.30 | Comparison of Hercules motifs | 197 |

| | | |
|------|---|-----|
| 3.31 | Hercules and Auge mosaic | 198 |
| 3.32 | Relief of Omphale and Hercules, Museo Nazionale | 200 |
| 4.1 | Comparison of dancing maenads | 209 |
| 4.2 | Sarcophagus in Museo Chiaramonti (D8) | 217 |
| 4.3 | Sarcophagus in Villa Savoia (D9) | 235 |
| 4.4 | Sarcophagus Rinuccini (D10) | 239 |
| 4.5 | Sarcophagus in Museo Diocesano, Cortona (D11) | 243 |
| 4.6 | Sarcophagus in the Cathedral at Salerno (D12) | 243 |
| 4.7 | Sarcophagus in Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican (D12) | 244 |
| 4.8 | Battle sarcophagi | 246 |
| 4.9 | Chart of <i>conclamatio</i> sarcophagi | 260 |
| 4.10 | Lid in Palazzo Borghese (D16) | 270 |
| 4.11 | Pannychis sarcophagus sense-units (D17) | 292 |
| 5.1 | Comparison of <i>denarii</i> with Victoria | 311 |
| 5.2 | Lucius Verus posthumous <i>denarius</i> | 313 |
| 5.3 | Sarcophagus stemma | 318 |
| 5.4 | Comparison of two <i>clipeus</i> sarcophagi | 326 |
| 5.5 | Chart of Ariadne and Dionysus lying sarcophagi | 329 |
| 5.6 | Sarcophagus in British Museum (D20) | 331 |
| 5.7 | Chart of Hercules as secondary protagonist | 333 |
| 5.8 | Sarcophagus with Achilles and Penthesilea (D21) | 337 |
| 5.9 | Chart of hunting sarcophagi | 343 |
| C.1 | Chart of triumph sarcophagi | 442 |

Abbreviations

| Referred to as: | In bibliography as: |
|------------------|-------------------------------|
| AMNG 1 | Pick (1898) |
| <i>ASR</i> I.2 | Andreae (1980) |
| <i>ASR</i> I.3 | Reinsberg (2006) |
| <i>ASR</i> I.4 | Amedick (1991) |
| <i>ASR</i> IV.1 | Matz (1968a) |
| <i>ASR</i> IV.2 | Matz (1968b) |
| <i>ASR</i> IV.3 | Matz (1969) |
| <i>ASR</i> IV.4 | Matz (1975) |
| <i>ASR</i> V.4 | Kranz (1984) |
| <i>ASR</i> VI.1 | Stroszeck (1998) |
| <i>ASR</i> VI.2 | Herdejürgen (1996) |
| <i>ASR</i> XII.2 | Sichtermann (1992) |
| <i>ASR</i> XII.6 | Koch (1975) |
| Bellinger | Bellinger (1961) |
| BMC XV | Poole (1892) |
| BMC XVII | Wroth (1894) |
| BMC Medallions | Grueber (1874) |
| BMC XXV | Head (1906) |
| Geissen | Geissen (1974-83) |
| ILCV | Diehl (1925) |
| REC | Waddington et al. (1912) |
| <i>RIC</i> 1 | Sutherland and Carson (1984) |
| <i>RIC</i> 2 | Mattingly and Sydenham (1986) |
| <i>RIC</i> 2 | Mattingly and Sydenham (1930) |
| <i>RIC</i> 4 | Mattingly et al. (1949) |
| <i>RIC</i> 5 | Mattingly et al. (1933) |
| <i>RIC</i> 6 | Sutherland (1967) |
| RRC | Crawford (1974) |
| SNGvA | von Aulock and Kleiner (1957) |
| Varbanov | Varbanov (2005-7) |

Chapter 1

Introduction

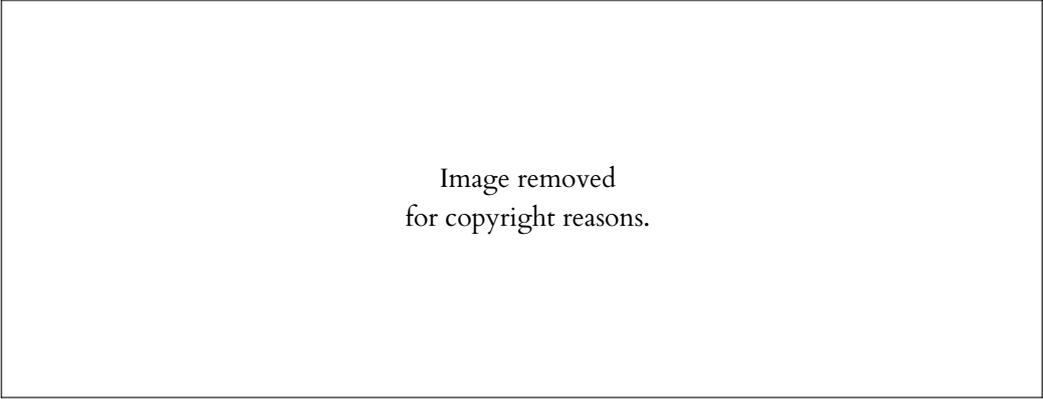


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

1.1: Sarcophagus in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (B19). Image from <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/sarcophagus-with-triumph-of-dionysos-151242> [accessed 14/04/15].*

There comes a point where a summary meaning for a group of mythological sarcophagi might no longer tell us the whole story. Given that we see repetition in the funerary realm of myths which are known from other contexts, and the fact that many sarcophagi appear to be quite similar in their overall composition, it is only natural that we should want to assign

*A letter followed by a number refers to the catalogue: for an explanation see p85.

overarching meanings to categories of pieces. Yet these categories are nothing more than creations of our own desire for order. While we might see sarcophagi of group *A* as generally about sudden death, *B* about the beauty of the deceased, *C* about their strength, do these ‘surface meanings’ do anything more than merely prompt interpreters with diffuse notions (mortality, beauty, strength) from which to begin? Can ‘general’ meanings ever fully incorporate chronological developments or narrative variation? To go some way towards answering this, we might ask: how much variation can one closely related set of sarcophagi support — a set not just depicting the same mythological character but that same character in the same context and action? To what extent can such a tightly related group be directed in its focus?

1.1 The phenomenon

While some sarcophagi depict idealised or ritualised scenes from everyday life, a large portion depict mythological scenes, such as Endymion, Meleager, or Medea.¹ These scenes are usually not unique to sarcophagi but might be found in literature, wall-painting, mosaics, coins, or a number of different media. Dionysian sarcophagi are those which depict the god (diagnosable by attributes or mythological context), or his retinue, the *thiasus*. They number around 400.² We find many different groups of ‘Dionysian’ pieces which focus on varying elements of his mythology, such as the awakening of Ariadne, battles, *clementia*, and vintage scenes. The corpus is not limited

¹Hereafter ‘sarcophagus’ refers only to carved marble coffins.

²ASR IV:1-4.

by a mythology which is only presented in a few forms.

The focus of this study will be those sarcophagi which depict Dionysus in triumphal procession having conquered an exotic land. This subset will be referred to as *Dionysian triumph* sarcophagi.³ These sarcophagi range from the mid-second century to the mid-third, achieving greatest popularity in the early Severan age. They form a good-sized set from a chronological range largely typical for mythological sarcophagi.⁴

In some respects mythological sarcophagi reproduce (in its overall form) familiar 'types' of scene; yet often the scenes are changed in complex and significant ways. It is important that we recognise that scenes on mythological sarcophagi comprise individual visual elements, or 'motifs'; this explains the reappearance of particular postures in separate sarcophagi of differing periods and mythological subjects.⁵ These individual motifs are the building-blocks which make up the narrative structure. For example, Meleager sarcophagi might signal their theme through a boar, and the design of that boar 'part' might be recognisable across different monuments.⁶ Adonis sarcophagi may include similar presentations of the boar part, but delineate their mythological setting through the use of a falling young male hero.⁷ Similarly,

³A rigorous definition is the subject of the next chapter (p43ff).

⁴Zanker (2005) 245.

⁵This is the general case of which the 'quoting' of famous statues might be thought of as a subtype: e.g. the appearance of the *Arrotino* in sacrificial scenes on sarcophagi and monumental reliefs. See further p14ff.

⁶E.g. it is very nearly identical in the Capitoline and Villa Doria Pamphili sarcophagi (*ASR* XII.6: 12 and *ASR* XII.6: 8 respectively), whereas its posture has shifted and the spear moved in the Uffizi piece (*ASR* XII.6: 26). All references to the *ASR* take the form of volume, part, and catalogue number (not page).

⁷E.g. the boar of the Museo Gregoriano Profano piece (*ASR* XII.1: 65) is very similar to the Capitoline example (p3n6). Conversely very different boars can be found in the Palazzo Ducale, Mantua and Museo Gregoriano Profano sarcophagi (*ASR* XII.1: 55, 67) which nevertheless share the seated posture of Adonis.

the posture of Victoria might be reproduced in several different *clipeus* sarcophagi.⁸ As each deity had their attributes, so each group of mythological sarcophagi had its repertoire of motifs. Yet within a group, the same motifs do not always look identical nor develop in step with each other. These internal motif developments together provide important insights into variant messages on sarcophagus bodies which superficially demonstrate extremely close kinship.

1.1.1 The panther's tale

Is there an uncertainty limit, beyond which analysis of individual motifs has nothing to provide for the big picture? Let us examine one small detail.

Big cats are among the most common of the 'building-blocks' found in Dionysian scenes of all types. They are such a ubiquitous feature of the triumphal sarcophagi that they barely warrant a line or two in most discussions, which often limit themselves to the fact that big-cats were associated with Dionysus (let us ignore for a moment the circularity of this argument). One begins to think then that the panthers are nothing more than fixed Dionysian badges. But is this actually true? Does the panther carry no significance beyond the fact of its presence? Or, instead, what might be the consequence for our analysis, if such an apparently quotidian motif as a Dionysian panther could be given fresh meaning by the sculptor?

Consider the detail shown in fig. 1.2, from near the centre of a Dionysian triumph sarcophagus in the Capitoline museum, in which an arched panther

⁸E.g. Pisa and Marseille (*ASR* IV.4: 260, 261). This Victoria has her origins in the Venus of Capua.



Image removed
for copyright reasons.

1.2: Detail of sarcophagus in Museo Capitolino, *ASR* IV.2: 97 (see catalogue A3). From Matz (1968b) pl. 122.2.

rolls on the floor batting at the trunk of an elephant, who joins in the game. The panther curls just as a domestic cat might play. In the same way that panthers occur all over these reliefs, to the Roman mind the elephant too was contextually relevant since they were closely associated with triumphs, funerals, and overlap between the two.⁹

The pleasant connotations of the ferocious panther playing with the giant elephant are obvious, and classically emblematic of a sort of idyll that Dionysus could be associated with. Expressing that idyll through a scene such as this is something many cultures share: ‘the wolf will live with the

⁹Mart. 8.65; Eutr. 2.11-14; Suet. *Iul.* 84 (cf. Pompey’s disastrous yet cautionary use of elephants).

lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them'.¹⁰ This is the sort of scene which predominates in the Dionysian sarcophagi, where the animals form a representation of happy and just obedience to the god's power, and it is with this sort of scene Angelicoussis is familiar when she describes a similar pairing thus:

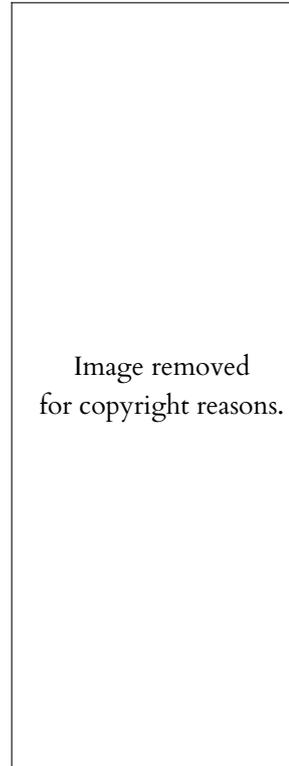
A panther, entangled in garlands, rolls on the ground and playfully nips at the elephant's front leg.¹¹

Were she discussing the creatures in fig. 1.2, this would be true. Yet Angelicoussis is not speaking about this bucolic scene, but the scene on the sarcophagus in Woburn Abbey (see fig. 1.3). This sarcophagus does not show any such sporting cat-like panther, but a fearsome beast who bites the elephant's leg, bringing his hind-quarters to bear as big-cats sometimes do when killing: where before the cat played with the trunk of the elephant, who joined in, now the cat has gripped the foot with its claws and sinks its teeth in, while the elephant wears an angered expression. He tenses his forehead, and the former stately, wrinkled trunk is now contorted and tensed in muscular exertion. Moments after this vignette the elephant will complete the unstoppable step which the placing of weight suggests he has almost completed. The leg which the panther bites is soon to come down against its chest, the instrument of its demise. The elephant and the procession roll onwards unstoppably to the panther's destruction. The scene therefore appears to carry quite the opposite meaning to that which we anticipated from

¹⁰Isaiah 11:6 *NIV*, cf. Verg. *Ecl.* 4.22.

¹¹Angelicoussis et al. (1992) 77.

the prior model.¹²



1.3: Detail of Woburn Abbey sarcophagus, IV.2: 100 (A6). Image author's own.

This error emerges from familiarity with the presentation of these ‘building-blocks’ in other instantiations, which can lead to the overlooking of meaningful iconographic variation. Amedick responds similarly when she describes a panther, who puffs proudly under the protection of his god, as ‘cowering’.¹³ But in analyses of seemingly repetitious sarcophagus reliefs erring in this way is all too easy. Instead we must maintain an open mind and keep

¹²On the reversal of iconographic models, Koortbojian (2002) 198. In general I have only raised awareness of restorations in this discussion where appropriate, but as an example see pl. VII on p379 where all restorations on the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus are shown. Full details of restorations can in each case be found in the appropriate *ASR* reference.

¹³Amedick (2010) 35; for the sarcophagus see D12.

our interpretations sensitised to subtle changes in the iconography on a fine scale — let us say, we must take a *microiconographic* approach.¹⁴ The utility of this might seem apparent, but Beckmann has recently asserted that in sarcophagus workshops

a small number of designs were repeated almost endlessly *with minimal variety*. . . repetition was not intended to aid the viewer's understanding of the whole; rather, it was intended to make production easier.¹⁵

By focussing on the repetition in an image, Beckmann's approach blinds us to subtleties of inflection in the narrative technique (such as, to take one example, the modification to the panther motif), and reduces personal monuments to little more than embarrassingly intricate boxes.¹⁶

In summary, our interpretations of ancient visual culture can, through a familiarity with popular motifs, be led into overlooking meaningful and reasoned variations. It will be important for us constantly to be on guard for this species of error.

1.1.2 Does a myth always mean the same thing?

Even if, on a microiconographic level, individual motifs which make up sarcophagi are changed slightly, does this translate to a macroscopic and detectable change in meaning, or merely a local inflection of the relief? A full answer to this question cannot be given as yet, and will be examined in due

¹⁴Cf. Wrede (2001) (whose interpretation at times takes account of the number of incised shoelaces), Ewald (2003), Ewald (2010) 301.

¹⁵Beckmann (2011) 192 (emphasis mine).

¹⁶On sarcophagi as personal items, Ewald (2010) 263, Ewald (2015) 399-402.

course. However, I wish to offer a parallel for the dangers involved in interpreting a mythological scene from our own pre-conceived ideas as to its meaning. Consider the funerary epigram of Callicratia, who is compared to Alcestis:¹⁷

I am a new Alcestis. I died for my good husband Zeno,
 the only person who I accepted into my affections,
 whom my heart preferred over daylight or my sweet children.
 I am Callicratia by name, and admirable for all mortal kind.

Ἄλκηστις νέη εἰμί: θάνον δ' ὑπὲρ ἀνέρος ἐσθλοῦ,
 Ζήνωνος, τὸν μοῦνον ἐνὶ στέρνοισιν ἐδέγμην,
 ὃν φωτὸς γλυκερῶν τε τέκνων προὔκριν' ἐμὸν ἦτορ,
 οὔνομα Καλλικράτεια, βροτοῖς πάντεσσιν ἀγαστή.

Greek Anth. 7.691.

The direct and bold comparison with Alcestis gives us pause. Alcestis loved her husband so much she died for him — but in Euripides' version of the myth which is probably the best known to us, they were ultimately reunited. We might then naturally expect Callicratia's comparison with Alcestis, in the context of death, to imply at least some hope for reunion or belief that death might be cheated. Yet this is not the area of the myth Callicratia spotlights. Instead, it is Alcestis' great and enduring love which is the paradigm; the analogy is directed towards her selfless devotion to the husband she adored. Callicratia's marital fidelity and her exemplarity are focalised and other elements of the myth are subordinated. So virtuous is

¹⁷Unless stated otherwise translations are my own.

Callicratia in this aspect that she is a new *exemplum*: by the end of the epigram *she* is the beacon to which all mankind can aspire. The afterlife aspect of the myth is wholly outside her argument. This would probably not be what modern readers might expect given the first word.¹⁸

The same situation can occur in the sarcophagi. It is dangerously easy for us to approach monuments with preconceived notions of what the narrative means, without sufficiently analysing what the iconography promotes, de-emphasises and the way in which the sculptors communicate meaning. It is reductive for us always to interpret the same *Mythenwahl* in the same way, and denies a range of expression which the different relief constructions might provide. It is dangerous to see a particular myth on a sarcophagus and derive one meaning for the piece simply on the strength of what we expect the myth to be about from other instances. We must not presume that because the myth depicts one thing (for example Alcestis), that it is always relevant for us to interpret the iconography in a manner congruent with the myth's appearance elsewhere. Nor is it valid to employ readings of imagery across groups which do not account for local variation.¹⁹ Instead, we must interpret the relief as it is presented.

¹⁸Cf. Gessert (2004) esp. 236, who refocuses the reading from Medea as *exemplum* (obviously problematic) toward a focus on her 'departure', and by analogy the deceased's departure from the living.

¹⁹Sichtermann (1992) 53 particularly cautions against the symbolism of the Endymion sarcophagi being considered as informative for the symbolism of other groups.

1.2 The importance of iconography

As stated above, sarcophagi, particularly within mythological groups, tend to reproduce figures and postures, sometimes to a surprising degree. It is a natural inclination of the modern viewer to typify these figures, first assigning them types and then meanings. Such types promote the idea of ready-made meanings with which to decode all appearances of the motif. But the observation above regarding the panther suggests that once we move beyond the relatively coarse level of overall poses and appearances and focus down onto the details of a scene's presentation and its contributive role within the narrative proper, we reach a level of uncertainty. The interpretation that suits one typified motif and its role within the larger scene in one sarcophagus may be wholly inappropriate in the next.

When approaching sarcophagus reliefs it will be necessary for us to sensitise ourselves to the possibility that what we expect an element to look like may not be accurate in part or entirely. If individual parts of scenes can change quite drastically, where does this leave our assumptions about which parts of a scene bear the chief meaning? This in itself is an important point; without careful examination we cannot be certain which of the elements of the mythological matrix support meaning and which do not, and should not presume parts are mere embellishment without thought or purpose in their construction. Likewise, 'meaning' is not a quantifiable variable: elements of a scene which might bear great meaning in one area (say, expressing emotion or religious affiliation) might be quite extraneous to another part of the relief (say, the mythological narrative).

1.2.1 Two variables: the patron and the sculptor

The patron of a sarcophagus may be conceptualised as the person for whom it was intended when purchased anew (and thus not an occupant who reuses it), but this is only part of the story. Very likely a spouse, family members, or children may have had a contribution to its purchase, selection or commission, but their contribution remains for us generally impossible to recover. By ‘patron’ then hereafter, I shall notionally mean the deceased incumbent, but I cautiously reserve the possibility that others were likely involved. By ‘sculptor’ I mean the persons responsible for physically carving the marble, who may have operated under more or less direction from the patron but certainly knew of other visual instantiations of the myth with which they were working. We should also take account of those who moved the marble, a skilled task too often overlooked in studies of sarcophagi.²⁰

Though the patron may be modelled as having commissioned the sarcophagus and directly shaped its content, we cannot reduce the role of the sculptors to that of a pure conduit for the patron’s desires. We may lay greater emphasis on the patron as the source for personal elements (the acme of which might be portraits), and the sculptor for knowledge of the visual tradition, but in truth these are notional ideas which we must not place before interpretation of the monument itself.²¹ Sadly, the precise relationship between these two variables is seemingly not something recoverable through analysis by modern interpreters, and must be conceived merely as

²⁰Though see Russell (2013).

²¹Trimble (2015) 614-6 discusses the utility and limitation of placing responsibility on the patron. See also Sorabella (2001).

highly changeable.

In order to negotiate this gap, it will be helpful to conceptualise the process of creating sarcophagus reliefs in two stages. Firstly, from the appearance of motifs in various different sarcophagi we can postulate that the sculptor worked within a repertoire, drawing on a ‘bank’ of motifs which come after selecting the mythological matrix from the historically and geographically available set. The selection may have been under direction from a patron or conceived in an intent to please one (and thus effect a sale).

We may think of this ‘bank’ from which the sculptor might draw as the *lexicon* of motifs. Some of these motifs were clearly unique to the Dionysian triumph, and some existed without that group.²² At various times newly created motifs must have entered the lexicon, and others fallen out of use.²³ Nevertheless at any one time the lexicon of suitable Dionysian motifs was sufficiently large and varied that sculptors must have undergone a creative *process of selection* when constructing reliefs. Their decision to compile chosen motifs in a particular arrangement is another selective choice we might call the *process of assembly*. This approach is the one suggested by the typologies and dissection of reliefs we find in sarcophagus corpora.

However, if the case of the panther’s modification can be shown to be a regular occurrence in the reliefs, then we have evidence that the sculptors shaped these selected motifs to support the larger-scale narrative direction. That is to say, that they modify the motifs in order to ‘tune’ the mythological matrix, so that together the motifs communicate a certain meaning. Let us

²²This is one factor problematising a literal copy-book.

²³The most extreme case being Christian sarcophagi.

tentatively call this the *process of adaptation*.²⁴

1.2.2 *aemulatio*

The copy, and its peculiar relevance for Roman sculpture, has been a subject of some attention in the new millennium.²⁵ These studies have generally moved beyond pure *Kopienkritik* towards studying Roman sculptures on their own terms and as original creations.²⁶ Though normally focussing on the ‘reproduction’ (to a greater or lesser extent of verisimilitude) of whole artworks, it will be useful briefly to examine some of the ancient attitudes to such repetition to inform our understanding of the triumphal group.

Quintilian, though praising the emulation of prior models if done with taste and selectivity, cautions that imitation (*imitatio*) alone is not enough.²⁷ Models should not simply be assembled: as Seneca explains using a lively metaphor still current, we must ‘digest’ them.²⁸ ‘It would be shameful’ Quintilian explains, ‘to be content to follow that which you imitate: for, again, what would come about in the future if no-one were to accomplish more than the person they follow?’²⁹ Instead he wishes that (with careful judgement of appropriate models and suitability to the task at hand) the author may

²⁴I do not imply that the ancient sculptor consciously thought in this pattern, only that conceptualising the process thus provides us with a useful model to assist us in interpreting the monuments.

²⁵Anguissola (2015), Perry (2005), Perry (2002), Gazda (2002), Koortbojian (2002).

²⁶Cf. Hölscher (2004).

²⁷*Inst.* 14-15 *primum, quos imitemur . . . tum in ipsis quos elegerimus quid sit ad quod nos efficiendum comparemus*, and 10.2.4 *imitatio per se ipsa non sufficit*. My use of this passage and the Seneca below have been informed by Perry (2002). See also Anguissola (2015), Perry (2005).

²⁸*concoquamus, Ep.* 84.7.

²⁹*Inst.* 10.2.7 *turpe etiam illud est, contentum esse id consequi quod imiteris. Nam rursus quid erat futurum si nemo plus effecisset eo quem sequebatur?*

improve on their models, modulating them in accordance with the usage and effect they wish to make.³⁰

Thus we should consider the importance of *aemulatio*: the successful and creative rivalry which engaged with and attempted to better (absolutely or contextually) prior works through careful selection and modification of their constituent parts.³¹ Recognition of *aemulatio* as a motivating factor goes some way towards explaining not only why we should find so many variations of imagery on a grand level (for example ‘Dionysian triumph’ versus ‘Discovery of Ariadne’) but also why these different instantiations, even if they stem ultimately from the same archetype, should undergo modulation.³²

The varied significances of allusions to famous visual models are complex, and such intertextual elements should be examined on a case-to-case basis; but nevertheless a thread running through them all is the social unity and cachet which recognising the allusion provokes.³³ Private imitation of public imagery (such as monumental relief or numismatic designs) was a popular facet of Roman art, from wide-reaching diffusion of iconographic styles as seen in the *Zeitgesicht*, to studied allusions to specific monuments.³⁴

³⁰10.2.14-18 esp. 15: *utinam tam bona imitantes dicerent melius quam mala peius dicunt*. Cf. Plin. *Ep.* 7.9.

³¹Definition based upon the usages of Gazda (2002) 7, 24, Koortbojian (2002) 190-1 and Perry (2002) 168.

³²Cf. the variants of Ariadne paintings in Elsner (2007b). It should be observed of course that the observation forms a datum without these explanations; the observation is prior, and our explanations must necessarily remain tentative. Over-reliance on our own derived explanations is a circular methodological trap.

³³Koortbojian (2002), Boschung (1989).

³⁴*Zeitgesicht*: Zanker (1982), and for recent discussion Fittschen (2010) 237. For a specific example of detailed quotation from e.g. imperial funerary iconography in a private sarcophagus cf. the eagle below the *clipeus* in *ASR* XII.1: 3 discussed in Elsner (2014b) 322-4, or the personifications of the Hadrianeum before a cloth drape on an Antonine sarcophagus (Palazzo Conservatori, inv. no. 2311, 2829 in Kuttner (1995) 170n29. More diffusely, cf. the adaptation of imperial hunting and sacrifice scenes in Hippolytus sar-

The significance of the rivalry implied by the term *aemulatio* should not be underestimated at any stage of sarcophagus reception. Roman sarcophagus artists depended on being commissioned ahead of their rivals, and Roman patrons wished to make a statement to their superiors, peers, and dependants, part of which required successful modulation in an accepted and recognisable idiom (even in a *quasi*-private medium such as sarcophagi).

1.3 Prior approaches

In the following overview of research, I introduce the main works which are relevant to my study and offer some indication of my position with respect to their stance. The overview is not exhaustive.

My examination of Dionysian triumphal sarcophagi crosses over into three broad areas of research. These are: research into **Dionysus and his worship; sarcophagus and funerary studies**; and **the triumph**. Finally, I look at those scholars who have made a focussed study of **Dionysian sarcophagi** themselves.

1.3.1 Dionysus and his worship

Dionysus' worship was the study of several highly influential works in the second half of the last century, which for our purposes can roughly be divided into two schools: that headed by Detienne, who aimed to establish the god's essential nature, and that headed by Nilsson, who strove to examine the deity as he was conceived at different periods.

cophagi, Ewald (2010) 276-9.

Often indebted to the polarisation of Dionysus against Apollo by Nietzsche, the most popular form of analysis in the middle of the last century, which still influences many works, came from a religio-anthropological perspective; the limits of this polarisation have been thoroughly explored and for our purposes its significance is quite limited.³⁵ Generally the older style of approach has striven to establish the nature of the deity in a monolithic sense; the god's presumed diachronic unity being tacit justification for an eclectic assembly of evidence. Firmly in this tradition was Detienne's influential study.³⁶ After an examination of the god as embodying arrival he moves on to examining the dynamic power of the god, in the sense of his leaping, tripping, swinging aspect. In aiming to find *the* god, a difficult task with such a changeable deity as Dionysus, the reader is in constant danger of considering Dionysus of any period as essentially the same. But a late Severan Dionysus is not an Antonine Dionysus, let alone a Euripidean one.³⁷

Kerényi's work was similarly eclectic in its scope.³⁸ He finds, as the fundamental thrust of the god, concepts of boundless life, which may well be important for the symbolism of the sarcophagi; his anthropological work though is difficult to reconcile with historical movements. The study adopts the style of approach which Otto had taken in order to emphasise the reality of the god for his adherents as manifested through worship.³⁹

³⁵Nietzsche (1886) 19; Spivey and Squire (2004) 246.

³⁶Detienne (1989).

³⁷Cf. Seaford (1990). 'The god who comes' is the conception of Otto (1965) 79-85. On the importance of swinging, see Dietrich (1961).

³⁸Kerényi (1976) ranges from the sarcophagi back to a Minoan Dionysus.

³⁹Otto (1965) (a translation of his 1933 German work). Cf. Otto's reviewer Adkins (1971), who prefers the aim of the argument over the method of survey. A successor to this aim can be found in Wiseman (2001).

By contrast Nilsson examined diachronic changes to the cult from the Hellenistic age to the Roman.⁴⁰ He concluded that by the time of the sarcophagi Dionysism was for those middle-class who appreciated the pleasures of life; those with a taste for philosophical exploration kept to other religious expressions.⁴¹ Studies in the 1990s and beyond have tended to take the form of collections of tightly-focussed explorations.⁴²

In art there exists no single authoritative survey, but useful overviews exist.⁴³ Previous studies and trends in scholarship show the importance of a strong eye toward diachronic change.

1.3.2 Sarcophagus and funerary studies

Approaches to sarcophagi and the funerary realm can be divided into two: those built around corpora and the identification of typologies, and those attempting an interpretative analysis of different pieces. Most works fall more strongly into one of these camps, but few completely exclude the other. The corpora relevant for our discussion will be examined in due course; let us first examine the interpretative camp.

Strong was something of an innovator in her early research into the iconography of the afterlife.⁴⁴ She suggested that the symbolism of tomb art derived originally from a desire to ward off dangerous spirits summoned by the limi-

⁴⁰Nilsson (1953); Nilsson (1957).

⁴¹Nilsson (1957) 145-7. On patron's social class see Burkert (1993) 270, Ewald (2003), Amedick (2010) 33-40, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 13-14, 150.

⁴²Burkert (1993) (D. in the Hellenistic age); Dickie (1995) (D. at Pella); Csapo (1997) (D. and gender); Levaniouk (2007) (ritual implements). See also the collections Carpenter and Faraone (1993); Zinguer (2001); Schlesier (2011).

⁴³See Boucher (1986); Augé and Linant de Bellefonds (1986); Gasparri (1986).

⁴⁴For Strong (1916) 1, the 'sympathetic appreciation of the art of the Roman Empire' was a modern development.

nality of death, which explains why the Romans were so amenable to beliefs such as Orphism which bring the pledge of ‘psychic immortality’: for her Orphism and Dionysiac beliefs went hand in hand.⁴⁵ Vegetal and symposiac symbolism within Dionysian art was therefore seen as allegorical, comprising a parable of resurrection; viewing the sarcophagi as mythologised reality would be too literal and material. She justifies this claim through appeal to her encyclopaedic knowledge of mystery cult and selections from classical authors.

This is an approach which was amplified by Strong’s contemporary Cumont, though one he refocuses onto the history of religion itself. For Cumont, the banquets of literature and funerary art primarily reflected the feasts which the initiated, justified deceased would be promised in the after-life; unlike Strong he insists that the real-life banquets of the living members of this mystic society were ‘a foretaste on earth’.⁴⁶ He saw Dionysian worship as primarily an eastern rite, though he tended closer than Strong towards the valuable reminder that whatever the cult in the hereafter, in the present it promises a thrilling frisson of exoticism.⁴⁷

Nevertheless, Cumont’s main purpose was to show that funerary relief was neither the product of adherence to popular compositions, nor simply decorative, but in fact a meaningful constellation of theological significance.⁴⁸ This he achieves by presenting evidence which has been carefully chosen and from different times and even cultures. For example, he cites inscriptions to

⁴⁵Strong (1916) 114-20, 198, 199-201.

⁴⁶Cumont (1922) 35, 52, 120.

⁴⁷Cumont (1922) 123, Cumont (1929) 195-204.

⁴⁸Cumont (1942); the approach greatly influenced Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen (1942). For individual significance of the generic see Butcher (2005).

show absolute belief by ‘the ancients’ in the ghosts of the ancestors.⁴⁹ He does not introduce those inscriptions which suggest the opposite:⁵⁰

All we who have died and gone under
are ashes and bone: nothing beyond exists.

ἡμεῖς δὲ πάντες οἱ κάτω τεθνηκότες
ὄσπτεά τέφρα <γ>εγόναμεν, ἄλλο δὲ οὐδὲ ἔν.

M. Antonius Encolpus, CIL 6298.

A variety of stances were taken in antiquity, and ‘belief’ was not monolithic. Yet the view of sarcophagi in the Cumontian school, especially of those which feature Dionysian scenes, was that they functioned as allegorical representations of a hope for some sort of life after death.⁵¹ Dissent came sharply from Nock and Beazley in an article which was a deeply incisive manifesto of their position. They particularly opposed Cumont’s detailed attempts to find allegorical significance in the details of iconography. In their view ‘at all times students of ancient religion are . . . maximizers or minimizers’.⁵² Nock and Beazley were firmly minimizers, espousing scepticism of the allegorical nature of the myths, especially given their popularity in domestic contexts. While Cumont saw the decoration as largely prospective (that is directed forwards towards an afterlife to come or communicating belief about the hereafter), they and their successors favoured a reading ranging from the retrospective (looking backwards on the life lived) to the decorative.

⁴⁹Cumont (1922) 62.

⁵⁰See further p306n33.

⁵¹Cumont (1916) esp. 10; Cumont (1922) 62, 114-9, 121-7, 138; Cumont (1929) 38-9. Cf. Turcan (1966).

⁵²Nock and Beazley (1946) 170, see esp. 146n25 on Cumont (1942). Elsner (2010) 9-10 sees Cumont’s interpretative model as a Christianising response.

One of the most detailed discussions of scholarship's varied approaches and their relative positions (to that date) can be found in the monumental handbook of Roman sarcophagi by Koch and Sichtermann.⁵³ Müller's study of a sarcophagus in the Villa Albani is relevant for us in the uncharacteristically firm stance it takes on religious interpretations; for him, sarcophagi are 'not based on religious representations.'⁵⁴ Koortbojian's study of Adonis and Endymion sarcophagi is also a profitable model because of its stated approach to individual motifs.⁵⁵ He urges that variations we find in motifs might hold significance, even stating that they serve to 'particularize' and 'personalize' a sarcophagus' sepulchral message.⁵⁶ Yet while recognising the variations, he tends towards their hierarchical *a priori* valuation:

At times more profound changes were made in addition to . . . minor variations. Yet in every instance, artists and patrons made choices, whether they employed standard designs or completely reworked them. Discrimination and judgement were always involved, whether the goal was conformity with established traditions or their rejection for the sake of innovation.

Some decisions led to more striking visible results than others.⁵⁷

Might certain decisions which appear arbitrary or 'for the sake of innovation' only be explicable in the context of the wider relief? Might seemingly insignificant modifications only be understandable when the contributory effect of

⁵³Koch and Sichtermann (1982) 583-617.

⁵⁴Müller (1994) 157.

⁵⁵Koortbojian (1994) 17-8.

⁵⁶Koortbojian (1994) 19.

⁵⁷Koortbojian (1994) 13.

surrounding motifs is considered? In such cases might the seemingly non-striking results coalesce into an overwhelming redirection of the narrative? Koortbojian continues in a vein which also gives pause for thought:

... [T]hose sarcophagus reliefs that deviated from both the established models and the canonical texts asserted the primacy of their images, as they impelled their beholders to decipher the language and meaning of their sculptural forms.⁵⁸

Is this only true of reliefs which modulate appreciably away from our (perhaps severely skewed) conceptual norm? If so, how do we reconcile this with motifs which appear most strikingly repetitious (such as the *cista mystica* in this study)? What value do these motifs hold such that their carving was repeatedly undertaken at some effort? More generally, do modulations assert the images' primacy, or might they reflect sensitivity to contextual demands within the funerary realm?

More recently, scholars such as Zanker and Ewald have stepped somewhat outside the debate between the views championed by Cumont and Nock. They differentiate themselves from a prospective-retrospective dichotomy by refocussing emphasis onto the viewer, and especially the context of mourning, seeing in it forms of *consolatio*.⁵⁹ From this they interpret the mythological scenes as primarily allegories of virtue, and thus that certain motifs 'create an aura of sanctity and veneration.'⁶⁰ This is especially important since it attempts to integrate those elements previously dismissed as decorative.

⁵⁸Koortbojian (1994) 13.

⁵⁹Zanker and Ewald (2012), Ewald (2012), Zanker (2005); also Gessert (2004). On *consolatio* see Hulls (2011).

⁶⁰Zanker and Ewald (2012) 143.

Their revision of the decorative or meaningful debate will be employed in the analysis of the motifs, in order to delineate how and where the (probably porous) boundary between these can be drawn.

Smith drew the line in a wider study slightly differently, and divided approaches into the pure ‘Plinian’ tradition, and the approach of Zanker *et al.* The former he saw as art-history with an emphasis on individual artists, with trends *towards* something (be that greater naturalism, expressionism, or so on as fashions change), while the latter is more concerned with the historically informed exploration of the motivation and mentalities of the audience and commissioner.⁶¹ One major advantage of Zanker’s approach over the Plinian for Roman art is that we do not possess sufficient knowledge of individual artists to build a Plinian history of art through their innovations, and appeal to ‘art’ itself rather than named geniuses does not seem satisfactory. It seems more profitable to follow the approach of Zanker and examine the monuments with an eye to their function and purpose in their historical and, emphatically, social context.⁶²

The first dedicated edited volume of essays on sarcophagi in English came with Elsner and Huskinson’s 2010 volume.⁶³ The differing strands of accessing attitudes to death in the Roman mind were recently teased out in a further edited volume by Huskinson and Hope, with contributions on *consolatio*, funerary epigram, elegy or grave goods.⁶⁴ By considering death in terms of

⁶¹Smith (2006) 69.

⁶²Leaving aside for now discussion of how broad Zanker’s conceptualisation of historical and cultural context is; it is arguably too narrow, especially, with respect to Dionysian sarcophagi, in his exclusion of religious elements from his social exploration.

⁶³Elsner and Huskinson (2010).

⁶⁴Hope and Huskinson (2011). See also Hope (2009).

its presentation in differing aspects they attempt a holistic approach which is in contrast to the more tightly focussed studies of the past few decades.⁶⁵ Each study in the collection attends to its own theme, and thus as a whole the collection presents an instructive case for the limitations on how miscible various approaches are in such a vast and varied topic as death.

Self-contained studies on aspects of sarcophagi are emerging, such as Birk's study of portraits on sarcophagi, as well as exploratory edited volumes.⁶⁶ As a sign of the rising interest in sarcophagus studies in English we begin to find summaries of trends and emerging patterns being produced.⁶⁷ An entire edition of the journal *RES*, edited by Pellizzi and guest edited by Elsner and Hung, was recently devoted to analyses of Roman and Chinese sarcophagi.⁶⁸

Zanker and Ewald's approach offers the big picture, and one which sensibly takes account of the role of the bereaved viewer.⁶⁹ But it does not drill deeply into the possible variant meanings within groups of sarcophagi. In many ways this has been a failing that has run through the scholarship since the days of Cumont. His interpretations do not explore sufficiently the possibility that the meaning of motifs was malleable, or that motifs could carry meaning parallel (and not just complementary) to religion. Zanker

⁶⁵Hope and Huskinson (2011) xi, similar to Huskinson (1996), a more general study of children's sarcophagi. E.g. Morris (1992) (the archaeology and ritual associated with burials); Toynbee (1971) (tomb architecture); Hopkins (1983) (who favours inscriptions); Edwards (2007) (the literary side of death); Erasmo (2008) (funerary ritual in literature).

⁶⁶Birk (2013), Galinier and Baratte (2013).

⁶⁷Ewald (2015), Koortbojian (2012), Ewald (1999a) (who perceives experimentation in methodology as a response to the lack of some volumes of the *ASR*, which otherwise acts as a 'corset', 344).

⁶⁸Pellizzi et al. (2012).

⁶⁹On bereavement especially see Lorenz (2010).

and Ewald, in their wide-ranging analyses, leave one to wonder whether in the individual cases there is room in the iconography for nuanced meanings or divergent foci. Their interpretations of sarcophagi in an ‘enjoy the moment’ light are compelling and it is almost doubtless that they are true on the level of corpus-wide generic import. But does this explain the persistent invocation, say, of the Dionysian triumph series?

Any overarching interpretation, in order to be satisfactory, should be able to account for the continued rejuvenation of the group in the hundred years or so it was used; an interpretation ought to account for the myriad details, drifting emphases, motifs which are unstable and shift meaning across the corpus. The need for a careful eye to chronological variation in a sarcophagus group, and in some respects the slow pace of its acceptance, is well demonstrated by Sichtermann’s words in his 1992 study of Endymion sarcophagi (amongst others):

Ich kann hier nur das wiederholen, was ich bereits vor über zwanzig Jahren ausgesprochen habe, daß ‘die Suche nach einem einmaligen, sozusagen kanonischen Bedeutungsgehalt, um dessentwillen der früheste und auch noch der späteste Endymion-Sarkophag wie alle anderen geschaffen und benutzt worden sind, notwendig in die Irre gehen’ muß.⁷⁰

1.3.3 The triumph

A viewer of a triumph sarcophagus was viewing a mythological version of a contemporary (albeit infrequent) rite. We might divide the studies of the

⁷⁰Sichtermann (1992) 52.

triumph into those which focus on the triumph in general and those which study the triumph in art. The general examinations can be divided into three: those focussed on surveying the ritual and establishing the facts and details of its performance; those which seek to establish the origin or aetiology of its elements; and most recently, those which seek to expose the developmental process of a rite in flux.

The most thorough, and indeed still the only dedicated treatment of the triumph in the imperial age is that of Barini.⁷¹ The aim of her study was to give an overview of the issues and raw data behind the imperial triumph; she lists all (though Crook debates three) recipients of triumphs and triumphal honours between 12 BC and AD 404. During the transition from Republic to Empire, the triumph was immediately made an imperial prerogative; the last *triumphator* who was not a member of the imperial household was Cornelius Balbus as early as 19 B.C. This imperial monopoly is unsurprising.

To permit successful generals not of the imperial family . . . to parade in triumph through the streets of Rome, to be hero-worshipped by the people, was to raise up dangerous rivals. The combination of military might and popularity was potentially threatening.⁷²

As Brilliant reminds us, the supreme honour of the Republic, which was a public recognition of civic achievement, had by the time of the sarcophagi long been a parade of *adulation* for the victor.⁷³ At the time these sarcophagi

⁷¹Barini (1952), rather harshly reviewed in Crook (1955). His objection to her omission of discussion regarding the origin of ritual elements of the *imperial* rite seems strange; her decision to focus on the imperial rite discrete from its origins seems immensely productive. On the elements of the triumph constant between the Republican and Imperial age (by no means all), see Bonfante Warren (1970), Taisne (1973) 487.

⁷²Maxfield (1981) 103-4.

⁷³Brilliant (1963) 40.

were popular the emperors would have a careful eye on the military route to power — as like as not it was how they had achieved it.

Barini's study of the imperial age shows that triumphs had long been rare events and the preserve of the imperial family. It also shows that they fell into long stagnation and even disuse.⁷⁴ McCormick's study of the triumph in late antiquity and beyond provides closure in its examination of the transition and afterlife of this rite.⁷⁵

Perhaps as a response to the many voices arguing details, Versnel attempted an examination of the rite through considering its origins. Though he does not venture far into discussion of the imperial triumph, his work is important as a rational consideration of often very intricate discussions.⁷⁶ Such an approach, however, can only go so far before it becomes inhibited by its appeal to balancing opinion; Beard's recent work attempts to cut through this.⁷⁷ Her book comes at a time of renewed interest in the triumph, and the general trend of scholarship has been towards considering the triumph more as a developmental event rather than a fixed rite (and thus integrating the often neglected imperial triumph).⁷⁸ This in particular will have significant

⁷⁴Barini (1952). For a list of triumphs of the second and third century, see p440.

⁷⁵McCormick (1986).

⁷⁶The bibliography of Versnel (1970) is thorough. In general, since we are dealing with the triumph of the late second and early third centuries, we need not be too concerned here with the origins and precise detail of the ritual rite; however, relevant discussion is to be found in: Mommsen (1876) 410-11, Fowler (1916), Abaecherli Boyce (1942) (on the appearance of the *triumphator*); Weinstock (1971) 60-79 (on Caesar's triumphs); Flory (1998) (women at the triumph); Mader (2006) (animals at the triumph); Rüpke (2006) (triumphs and the ancestors).

⁷⁷Beard (2007).

⁷⁸See Krasser et al. (2008) (focussed on the tipping point, triumph in the Augustan age), Östenberg (2009). Interest remains strong: there was the major exhibition *Trionfi Romani* at the Colosseum, 2007 (see la Rocca and Tortorella (2008)), and a conference at the Danish Institute in Rome, 2013 (Lange and Vervaeat (2014)).

ramifications for our exploration of the sarcophagi.

Scholarship on the triumph in art can be divided into two groups: those examining the historical, and those examining the mythological triumph. As regards the former, still the best overview is Ryberg's study, while individual monuments such as triumphal arches command detailed discussions.⁷⁹ For the mythological triumph scholarship has generally divided the topic into individual studies, though Matz addresses the origins.⁸⁰ Mosaics are the most numerous medium for mythological triumphal expression.⁸¹ Textiles, though the surviving examples are rather late, offer a valuable insight into which elements were modulated into late antiquity.⁸² In metalwork, Alexander examines silverware depicting the triumph, and in observing elements which once bore gilding provides a rare insight into how colour might have been used on the sarcophagi.⁸³ There also exist a few ivory pyxides.⁸⁴

However, even though we might produce neat groups of studies, some focussed on the origins of the real rite and others on the mythological triumph, reality defies our typologies. The major problem is that the boundaries are porous; the mythological scenes reflect elements of the real Roman rite, and the scenes showing historical triumphs incorporate mythological aspects. We will need to be sensitive to this porosity in our examination.

⁷⁹Ryberg (1955). Brilliant (1967) (arch of Septimius Severus in the forum); Townsend (1938), Ward-Perkins (1948) (Severan art at Leptis Magna); Ryberg (1967) (triumphal reliefs of Marcus Aurelius); Rothman (1977) (triumphal arch of Galerius).

⁸⁰Matz (1955).

⁸¹Aside from numismatic images. See Dunbabin (1971); Dunbabin (1982); Gozlan (1992); Kondoleon (1994); López Monteagudo (1999).

⁸²Mate and Lyapunova (1951), Lenzen (1960).

⁸³Alexander (1955). See also Rosenthal-Heginbottom (2001) 34. On colour see p229n53.

⁸⁴Rosenthal-Heginbottom (2001) 35.

1.3.3.1 The rite, the mythology and the sarcophagi

In his study of an Achilles sarcophagus, Giuliani strongly urged for recognition of the differing layers of discourse in sarcophagus imagery:

Wir können und müssen den Sarkophag demnach auf zwei verschiedenen Ebenen interpretieren. Als narrative Darstellungen verstanden führt er, aus klassischem Bildungsgut schöpfend, Episoden des Mythos vor Augen. Zugleich lassen sich seine Bilder aber auch als eine Allegorie bezeichnen, exakt im Sinn der antiken rhetorischen Theorie.⁸⁵

Adopting a concept from rhetorical theorists such as Quintilian he terms this dual-layer communication *allegoria apertis permixta*.⁸⁶ The triumphal sarcophagi straddle an uncomfortable boundary in that they depict what may be considered in some respects as a mythologised version of a Roman rite but one denied to private patrons. A further complexity is that the mythological scene was cross-pollinated by the rite, to the extent that it is unclear which was perceived as influenced by the other.⁸⁷ Bielfeldt employed this approach in her study of Orestes sarcophagi, stressing the interrelationship between the mythological narrative and the allegorical layer, which functions both within and without the marble relief.⁸⁸

The concept of *allegoria apertis permixta* is related to Zanker and Ewald's concept of elements redolent of the bereaved visitors' circumstances forming bridges (*Brücken*) between the mythological world and the real.⁸⁹ This helps

⁸⁵Giuliani (1989) 38.

⁸⁶Quint. *inst.* 8.6.47. For recent extension see Elsner (2014b) 328-31, Lorenz (2010) 310.

⁸⁷Beard (2007) 315-8.

⁸⁸Bielfeldt (2005), Bielfeldt (2003).

⁸⁹Zanker and Ewald (2012) 34, 76-7, 88-91.

to negotiate the division Ewald perceives in the differing ways in which the ‘words’ of rhetoric and the ‘images’ of sarcophagi function.⁹⁰ We are on slightly firmer ground here, and study of this element of the sarcophagus imagery should go some way towards illuminating the purpose of its funerary invocation.⁹¹

1.3.4 Dionysian sarcophagi

We can divide the studies of Dionysian sarcophagi by the tension between typological analysis, the acme of which was Matz’ corpus, and analysis of meaning, most obviously typified by Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen.

The first dedicated typological analysis of the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi was Graef’s.⁹² He attempts a stylistic survey; unfortunately a significant number of relevant sarcophagi were unknown to him, and so his typology is in places slightly distorted. Perhaps the most influential later attempt at a typology (though of all Dionysian sarcophagi, not merely the triumphal ones) was Turcan’s.⁹³ The initial part of his monumental work attempted to establish chronology through the use of contextual information external to the sarcophagi: he demonstrates that external information can, in all but a few cases, shed very little light on interpretation. Subsequently Turcan attempts to establish a chronology on the evidence of the sarcophagi themselves, and goes on to discuss the portraits, themes, historical trends and religious motivations, in a strongly Cumontian vein. He does not deal

⁹⁰Ewald (1999b) 78n427. Ewald (2012) 54 explicitly distinguishes the approach of Zanker and Ewald (2012).

⁹¹See esp. pp258ff.

⁹²Graef (1886).

⁹³Turcan (1966).

satisfactorily with the Indian triumph, presenting the allegorical religious reading supported through ancient (recherché) philosophical texts without accounting for viewers less familiar with the literature, or the different focusses in the mood of the pieces. The approach also leaves one wondering why so much shorthand for the soul's survival should be popular in domestic mosaics.

Typological analysis is best exemplified here by Matz in the series *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*.⁹⁴ His analysis of the stylistic development of the sarcophagi and especially the triumphal depictions, with the exception of a few pieces unknown at the time of writing, is thorough. He does not venture deeply into questions about the motivation of the patron but offers the framework with which to assess such a question.

One of the most influential analyses of the meaning of the sarcophagi was made by Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen. Building on the prior work of the Cumontian school they found in the Dionysian sarcophagi what they considered to be a highly symbolic visual set. They turned this towards religion: in a study of the sarcophagi from the Licinian tomb they posited sustained religious belief within a family group, and even identified this religious belief as particular worship of Dionysus-Sabazius.⁹⁵ Their work, while focussed on what may or may not be a group of pieces which belong together, has repercussions for studies of all mythological sarcophagi. They aimed the sarcophagus' narrative thrust not towards earthly concerns (such as virtue, mourning or commemoration of the deceased) but towards aspirations for

⁹⁴Matz (1968a), Matz (1968b), Matz (1969), Matz (1975), hereafter *ASR* IV.1-4.

⁹⁵Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen (1942).

the afterlife. Though strongly criticised by Nock and Beazley, this approach was accepted whole-cloth by eminent scholars, and the attitude has by no means entirely left sarcophagus scholarship.⁹⁶

Matz's framework was brought to bear by Geyer, who attacked the idea of connection between Dionysian sarcophagi and actual expressions of cult practice.⁹⁷ Her results are generally very persuasive, though of course we must always be cautious in such instances, since we can never fully access what viewers may (or may not) have thought in antiquity and interpretations must be couched in such a way that scholarship does not seek to implicitly control what its conceptualised viewers did; such arguments are dead-ends.

Gabelmann devotes a section to the sarcophagi in his discussion of the arch at Zagarolo.⁹⁸ Boardman's more recent study of the Dionysian triumph also takes in the sarcophagi during its wide-reaching exploration of the myth prior to and well beyond the Roman period.⁹⁹

Boardman continued his explorations of India which he expanded in his 2015 volume.¹⁰⁰

However, there has not been a firm movement in scholarship away from the idea that the prime motivator for the artist of the triumphal sarcophagi was to communicate *a* belief, be that a religious one or otherwise. Developments have not helped us to move beyond billboard-level interpretations. We must instead analyse the group, taking careful stock of variant iconography,

⁹⁶Such as Ward-Perkins and Dodge (1992). Smith (2006) 90-1 laments this. Recent remarks *contra* concrete belief in the afterlife can be found in Borg (2013) 161 and *passim*.

⁹⁷Geyer (1977). For discussion of her methodology see pp144.

⁹⁸Gabelmann (1992).

⁹⁹Boardman (2014). See discussion p81ff. On Roman India see Parker (2008) and also cf. Boardman (2015) on the Greeks in Asia.

¹⁰⁰Boardman (2015); see also Parker (2008).

in order to establish the possibility of variant meanings and tunable narrative directions.

1.3.4.1 Religion and the sarcophagi

Despite strong feeling to the contrary (Elsner calls the idea that Dionysian sarcophagi had a religious significance ‘not the normative view’), and Geyer’s profoundly convincing argument that the sarcophagi do not present religious hope grounded in real practice, scholars assessing Dionysian sarcophagi even in passing have often defaulted to an interpretation of the *Mythenwahl* as chiefly eschatological.¹⁰¹ To take one earlier but influential example, Valerie McCann states:

The epiphany of the god in the Badminton sarcophagus gives explicit hope of an afterlife for the departed, who must have been a member of a Dionysiac mystery cult,

though she does not explain more fully *why* they must have, nor indeed why Dionysian imagery, so prevalent in the Roman *Bilderwelt*, should shed its other associations and adopt a unity of meaning when placed within the funerary sphere.¹⁰² The actual triumph and an allegorical ‘triumph’ of life over death are not as immediately interchangeable as many works might imply.

¹⁰¹Elsner (2014b) 318, Geyer (1977).

¹⁰²McCann (1978) 97 writing about *ASR* IV.4: 258. See also McCann (1977). Cf. the similar attitudes expressed at Várhelyi (2010) 183, Spivey and Squire (2004) 282, Rosenthal-Heginbottom (2001), Rasmussen (2001), and de Grummond (2000a) (who attempts to use sarcophagi to interpret the enigmatic second-style megalographia in the Villa of the Mysteries).

One cannot deny that the Dionysian cult existed in the second and third centuries AD — though by this point its nature is not directly recoverable from its origins in the centuries prior, and it may have mutated (as Nilsson believes) into little more than dining clubs with the trappings of pseudo-religious and pseudo-philosophical exclusivity.¹⁰³

1.4 Embracing advances, avoiding pitfalls

The safest means to avoid the dangers of misinterpreting motifs is to be ever vigilant of how they can change. Our interpretations must stem from the assemblage of motifs as it was created rather than the (often thematically quite distant) iconographic origins of constituent elements. Roman sculptors were happy to make what was seemingly generic (*a* Hercules) into the specific (commissioning a portrait face); to what extent might the rest of the narrative be subject to such modulation? Though the form may be generic, might the symbol be particular?¹⁰⁴

We are able to access meaning through several techniques. Most important of these for our purposes will be the comparative analysis of the differences and inflections given to the sarcophagi. By examination of these inflections we will be able to come to some understanding of the scope of meaning which could be given within a restricted group.

It will be helpful continually to be explicit regarding the distinction between a modern viewer of the sarcophagi (for whom antiquity can so readily appear synchronic), and the funerary purpose for which the sarcophagus was

¹⁰³Nilsson (1957) 145-7.

¹⁰⁴Cf. Butcher (2005) 149.

created.

The question of who a normal ancient viewer of a sarcophagus might have been is largely insoluble, and complicated by the fact the work of art and its viewer function under ‘mutually imbricated spacial and temporal conditions’.¹⁰⁵ We should be wary of that species of error which comes from our modern viewpoint, where any and all aspects of antiquity seem equally distant and so equally applicable to any other point. It will be important to keep in mind what knowledge the viewer could be expected to bring to their interpretation (and, plainly, to recognise when we stray towards gaining support from particularly arcane evidence).

If scholars such as Cumont, Kerényi or Lehmann-Hartleben can so easily stray into interpretations which do not seem appropriate to the ancient function of the sarcophagi, we must be careful to avoid the over-deployment of obscure or irrelevant information in this analysis. This might be more succinctly expressed as maintaining a strong awareness of the audience’s horizon of expectations or *Erwartungshorizont*. This term was coined by Jauss in his study of literature, and defined as the objectifiable reference-system (*Bezugssystem*) of expectations

das sich für jedes Werk im historischen Augenblick seines Erscheinens aus dem Vorverständnis der Gattung, aus der Form und Thematik zuvor bekannter Werke und aus dem Gegensatz von poetischer und praktischer Sprache ergibt.¹⁰⁶

Attendance to this with respect to grounding our interpretations in an ap-

¹⁰⁵Kemp (1998) 181. Elsner (2010) 7, Kampen (1995) 377.

¹⁰⁶Jauss (1979) 130; discussed with reference to visual culture in Trimble (2015) 606-10.

appropriate frame of reference will be especially important. So too will be consideration of the *Gegensatz von poetische und praktischer Sprache*. Trimble recently considered this

‘opposition between poetical and practical language’ at first sight more difficult to apply directly to the study of visual material.¹⁰⁷

Yet sarcophagi in particular might offer an unusually elegant substrate, if we conceptualise the poetical and *empirical* contrast as a contrast between the ‘mythological, social and cultural’ aspects of the iconography and the ‘experiential effects / *Brücken*’.¹⁰⁸

The focus of the study will primarily be on the *implicit beholder* of the sarcophagus as the privileged primary observation point from which to interpret the iconography. The term comes from Kemp, for whom recognition of an artwork’s ‘ideal beholder’ was key to understanding its meaning, since the formulation of this viewer was ‘a constitutive moment in [the artwork’s] creation from its very inception’.¹⁰⁹ This seems peculiarly apposite for our study of sarcophagi, though I will here express some cautious resistance to the idea of an ideal or even an ‘archetypal’ beholder, since it seems unsound to constrain ancient perception in this way. However, with this *caveat* expressed, in part then the ‘tasks’ of Kemp’s expression of reception aesthetics will be useful in this analysis, though modulated towards our focus on sarcophagi:

1. . . . to discern the signs and means by which the work establishes contact with us, and to read them with regard to

¹⁰⁷Trimble (2015) 609.

¹⁰⁸Recent discussions of experiential effects include Birk (2013) 37-9, Platt (2012), Platt (2011). On the overlooked significance of the experiential, Ewald (2012) 54, Fittschen (2010) 225.

¹⁰⁹Kemp (1998) 183.

2. their sociohistorical and
3. their actual aesthetic statements.¹¹⁰

In sum, it will be important to keep an eye towards temporal style while trying to access personal style. But it is important not to assume automatically that the only route to accessing personal choice is in identifying deviations from type, or that conformity within a trend reduces individuation. Care must also be taken when exploring the meaning of these sarcophagi since we come to them with a different socio-cultural background and viewing context; for us there is no immediacy of personal loss.¹¹¹ We lack entirely the sense of the monument as a personal container of the deceased loved-one's corpse; both the *Erwartungshorizont* and sensitisation towards possible experiential mechanisms of meaning will be important to a holistic understanding of the iconography.

1.5 Trajectory of the thesis

In seemingly well-understood sarcophagi iconographic elements can occur in a context in which their form is separated from what would be expected given the corpus, and the overall presentation is profoundly altered. This is demonstrated by the Capitoline panther (p4ff.). Are modifications able to support new storylines, and redirect the focus of the iconographic assemblage? This is a question we need to explore. Our assessment should be sensitive to the importance of approaching the iconography of Dionysian sar-

¹¹⁰Kemp (1998) 183.

¹¹¹Cf. Elsner (2012).

cophagi (and sarcophagi in general) not as a storyline block-built from stable units, but as multi-relational, networked fields of meaning, which might be invoked in order to fuel very different narrative trajectories.

Moving away from the prior approaches in its precise method, this study will focus on an interpretation which emphasises the implicit beholder in the context of mourning. It will sensitise its analysis towards variance in the narrative units but not use the extent of variation as a diagnostic method in itself; the approach will be microiconographic, permitting case-by-case interpretations.

The first chapter, **Definitions**, will undertake a rigorous identification of the corpus in order to form and justify a group for analysis. It will expose the varying (and mutually problematic) sets of the Dionysian triumph group in prior scholarship and propose reasons behind a definition which rely on under-appreciated elements of triumphal imagery. With the corpus thus formed, in the next chapter we can analyse a selection of these narrative units or **Motifs**. The motifs chosen for analysis are arranged as a progression from analysing the mythologically localising elements of the sarcophagi (and detecting in this their general meaning), through elements traditionally seen as religious, towards exploring more deeply the extremes to which the narrative could be attuned.

The first motif analysed, *Dionysus and the triumphal chariot* (pp90–105), aims to explore why depictions of the god are so popular, why variance in the presentation exists, and how the attendant figures contribute to the scene. The triumph is localised as exotic through the *animals* (pp105–122). These will be studied for their effect on the wider narrative, and the level of meaning

they can be induced to bear. It is militarised by *the prisoners* (pp123–138); previous interpretations of these have ranged from pure enjoyment of the exotic, to allusions for the initiated. The motif will be considered here for some quite worldly aspirations and motivations.

The ‘religious’ iconography by contrast presents the opportunity to diagnose cultic messages in motifs which can be shown to remain largely stable, and to answer those who wish to see these sarcophagi purely in religious terms. The examination of the *cista mystica* (pp139–157) will consider the possibility that the motif’s import is more attuned to locating the myth. Do some previously highly-charged symbols contribute a diffuse, atmospheric message? This study is designed to unpick the function of those repeated and seemingly stable motifs. Religious aspects are further tested against another object which interpretations frequently charge with cultic symbolism, the *liknon* (pp158–178). An instance of supposed intense religious meaning will be challenged, and an interpretation put forward which attempts to make sense of its variant forms across the corpus.

The sarcophagi are narratively robust enough to support the inclusion of another male, heroic figure. The study of *Hercules* (pp178–204) examines the form of this secondary protagonist. It probes variations in his presentation and a key development in the iconography.

Armed with these case studies, the latter part of the thesis analyses the networks presented by different pieces, in a manner sensitive to individual re-emphases and nuances of meaning in the context of the sarcophagi as wholes. The chapter **Networks** will take the form of studies of individual phenomena which elements of the iconography of different pieces seem

particularly to negotiate. These studies will begin with the exoteric themes the sarcophagi promote and move gradually towards more experiential considerations. It begins with a case study of the *boundaries* between viewer, relief and deceased, proposing a reading quite alternate to the idea that reliefs provided a place for the ‘insertion’ of the deceased into a mythological realm (pp212–225). The surface-meaning of triumphal iconography is then examined: *military* imagery (pp225–250). This is followed by a study of the characteristically Dionysian nature of the pieces in an analysis of the *symptotic* elements (pp250–267). As sarcophagi have a particular and significant function in the mourning process of the bereaved, it will be necessary to consider them not on the level of their direct narrative but rather their relationship with the *personal* (pp268–275). This is modulated through an analysis of the *religious* elements (pp276–288) which does not primarily examine the group in the traditional sense discussed above but in terms of the effect of the supernatural imagery on the viewer. Finally, an analysis is undertaken of the effect of the *encounter* with the materiality of the monument (pp288–295). Each of these studies are placed into their wider context by frequent comparison with sarcophagi from outside the Dionysian triumph group.

The final chapter undertakes a **Synthesis** of the preceding analyses in order to examine wider issues. It begins therefore with *points of engagement* (pp298–307) in which the sarcophagi can be thought of as bridging the gap between bereaved viewer and lost loved one. *Points of disengagement* are then examined (pp307–315), in particular the mechanisms in which they employ triumphal iconography for private ends but modify it through an admixture of mythological imagery tuned to differing tones and sensibilities,

in ways which are significant in terms of modulation of purpose evidenced in the adoption. Finally, the group is considered as a whole and the *rise and fall* of the group is placed into the context of diachronic changes in mechanisms of personal expression within the funerary realm (pp316–348).

Chapter 2

Defining the corpus

2.1 What does a triumph look like?

Dionysian triumph sarcophagi are not an absolutely discrete set, and the intensity of their allusions to the triumph is variable. Prior treatments have not agreed on what makes a Dionysian scene ‘triumphal’ and actually, as will be explored later, have employed mutually irreconcilably different methodologies. Therefore it is necessary to conduct an iconographic survey to explore what is meant by triumphal imagery in the sarcophagi, in order to securely generate appropriate criteria which we might say are quintessential of the triumphal series. These will be my criteria, no more; where I differ from the preceding scholarship it is not so much through a desire to divine what pieces constitute the ‘true’ triumphal group — such an attitude in sarcophagus studies, where designs are communicable across thematic genera as much as workshop floor, would be problematic — but instead to facilitate discussion of wider issues in all sarcophagi through clearly establishing a working

set for analysis.

2.1.1 Monumental relief

The origins of the triumph of Dionysus can be traced back in various respects to the parade of Ptolemy II Philadelphus or the ‘Indian triumph’ of Alexander, yet underwent constant communication with the Roman rite.¹ Despite recent dissent it seems that the Roman triumph did have its origins in Etruscan ceremonies.² As early as the triumph of Aemilius Paullus (167 BC) the triumph had become a mechanism for the magnification of the *triumphator* personally, rather than communal purification-rite. After the restrictions Augustus placed on the triumph later emperors cemented and intensified the imperial association of this rite (post-Augustus only the emperor or his family could triumph, and the emperor’s status was increasingly legitimised through his role *qua triumphator*).³ In the following study I shall focus explicitly on the Imperial triumph, since I intend to show that it is representations of this which are the generative impetus behind the sarcophagi.

The iconography of the triumph seems to be rather stable in its kernel.

¹See Beard (2007) 168-9, 316-7, Versnel (1970) 69, 90, 251-2, Nock (1928).

²On Etruscan origins of the triumph see Hölscher (2005) 474, Bonfante Warren (1970), Versnel (1970) 89-93 *et passim*, Payne (1962), Ryberg (1955) 141, *etc.* The Romans perceived the triumph as Etruscan: Holliday (1997) 132n20. *Contra* is Beard (2007) 305-13. Her comment that the debate between Rüpke (2006) (who proposes a later C4 origin) and Versnel (2006) (who retains the ‘Etruscan’ late C6 origin theory) is intriguing: ‘framed in these precisely chronological terms [their learned debate] seems a sadly fruitless one.’ But recognition of the diachronic changes within the ritual are fundamental to its understanding: keeping a close eye on the chronology for the period under study in this work will be absolutely paramount to understanding the imagery, which cannot be profitably digested through recourse to its origins (cf. Beard (2007) 316-7 on the sarcophagi). *Contra* Beard see de Grummond (2015).

³Bonfante Warren (1970) 64-5, Hickson (1991). Later changes and their relevance to the period of the sarcophagi are discussed more fully on p307ff.

Laying aside its earlier origins, certainly by the late Republican period we find its classic form in a relief from the Capitoline Museum. The general stands in a chariot drawn by four horses (the *quadriga*) at the extreme edge, attended by lictors and with a trumpeter.⁴ The scene is very similar in the triumphal relief of Trajan from the arch of Beneventum, with the standing general being crowned, attended by officers of state.⁵

On the column of Trajan, where space is limited and the easy decodability of imagery is a necessity, we see a triumphal arch surmounted simply with the chariot group and rider.⁶ But the reliefs on the arch of Titus are generally seen as among the fullest and finest depictions of a triumph. Fig. 2.1a shows the general standing at one edge of the relief in a *quadriga*. Victoria bestows him with a laurel crown, while lictors bearing *fascēs* precede the chariot. A male leads the horses, while allegorical figures (variously identified) appear among the participants.⁷

The panel relief of Marcus Aurelius (fig. 2.1b) suggests that the attendant figures need not be numerous, since the scene is reduced to the *quadriga* with Victoria, trumpeter, and only one adoring attendant.⁸ The figure in

⁴See Ryberg (1955) fig. 19a. For earlier depictions see Bonfante Warren (1964). On the trumpeter see Ryberg (1967) 17.

⁵Ryberg (1955) fig. 82e.

⁶Boundary between scenes 83-4; see Settis et al. (1988) pl. 43.

⁷See discussion of the rhetorical workings of the arch in Elsner (2014a) 11-8, and Sobocinski and Thill (2015) 278. The term 'state-relief' is problematic (see Sobocinski and Thill (2015)); sadly, no ready alternative suits the particular nuance I wish to emphasize, of distinguishing private commissions such as the sarcophagi with works intended for a public audience (be they commissioned by the emperor, imperial house, senate, clients, etc). I certainly do not mean to imply by 'state-relief' or in general observations that triumphal iconography was restricted in its availability that the emperor necessarily occupied himself with the design and commissioning of such monuments personally.

⁸Capitoline Museum, inv. no. MC808. See Ryberg (1967) 15-7 and figs. 9a, 10c, 11b, 13.

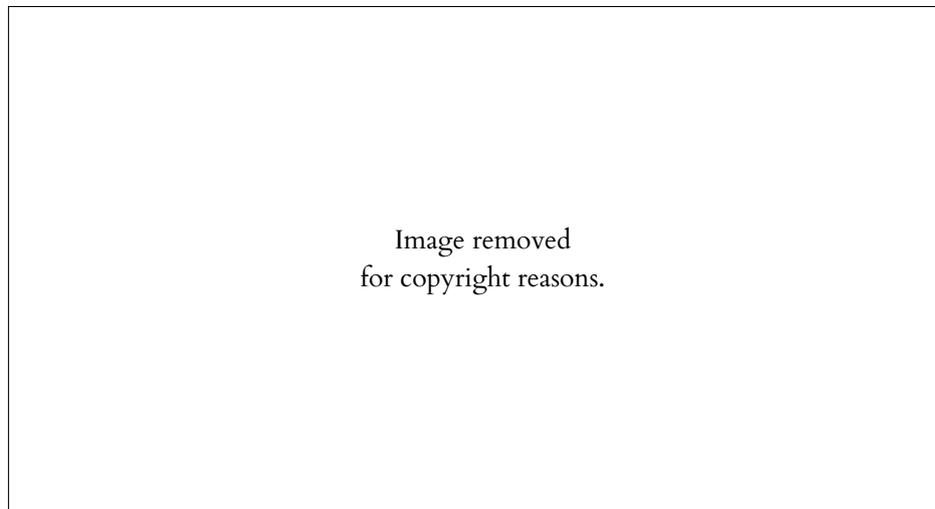
the chariot is the focus here, since it is he who signalled the victory which increasingly the emperor came to embody in himself. Such is the conclusion we must also draw from both the relief found at Nikopolis commemorating Augustus' victories at Actium (which though only fragmentary shows clearly the *quadriga* and palm-branch held by the general in the chariot) and a more complete though still fragmentary relief in a private collection in Cordoba (showing the general with palm branch and *scipio eburneus*, being drawn in a *quadriga* led by a female figure).⁹

The later relief from the arch of Septimius Severus at Leptis Magna (fig. 2.1c) is a complex case. In the key scene four horses draw a richly decorated chariot, in which Severus stands flanked by his two sons, while prisoners process in front (see fig. 2.1c). The scene is triumphal. Others have objected, since 'triumphs took place only in Rome' whereas landmarks in the scene identify its location as Leptis.¹⁰ Yet there can be little doubt but that the scene is consciously triumphal. The emperor and his successors appear standing in the *quadriga*, with the off-centre positioning of the chariot and later attendant officers familiar from earlier depictions (though no Victoria appears crowning the *triumphator*).¹¹ This represents one of the strongest assertions of the imperial house moving the triumph from military award to imperial dynastic display. The *currus triumphalis* itself bears a mythological image of Hercules and Dionysus offering a wreath and a *thyrsus* (respectively)

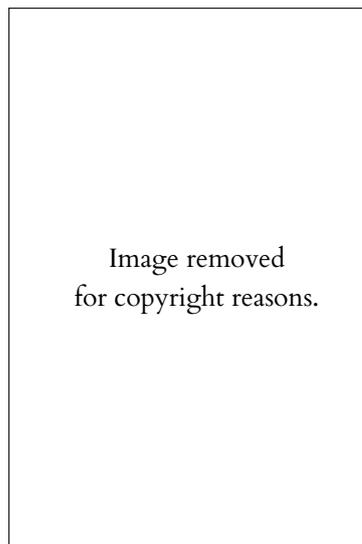
⁹See Zachos (2007) and fig. 17, Schäfer (2007) and fig. 1. On the *scipio eburneus* see p48n15.

¹⁰Kleiner (2010) 251. *Contra* see Newby (2007) 206-11.

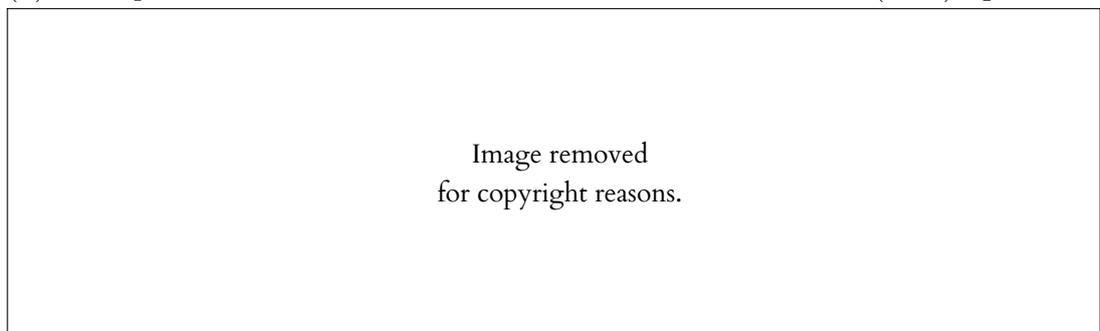
¹¹Two thorough studies of the arch both conclude the scene is triumphal: Townsend (1938), Strocka (1972); also Ryberg (1955) 162 and Ward-Perkins (1948) 76-7.



(a) Triumphal procession from the arch of Titus. From Ryberg (1955) fig. 79a.



(b) Triumphal relief from the arch of Marcus Aurelius. From Beard (2007) fig. 31.



(c) Triumphal relief from the arch of Septimius Severus at Leptis Magna, 1.70m high, from Ward-Perkins (1948) pl. 10.

2.1: Select monumental triumphal reliefs.

to a personification of the town.¹² Given the emperor's association with Leptis Magna, and the association of his two sons with the gods, the image on the chariot offers a potent allegory for those inside it.¹³ The overall message therefore at Leptis is somewhat special, since it nuances the overarching import of imperial virtues towards specific ends.

2.1.2 Smaller-scale depictions

A sensible though frequently overlooked source of evidence through which to establish the core, defining elements of triumphal iconography is numismatic imagery; its neglect is the more surprising given the almost ubiquitous imagery of victory in Republican *denarii* in particular. Small-scale scenes securely labelled as triumphal offer a rich source for the kernel of the triumph's iconography.¹⁴

The *aureus* in fig. 2.2a depicts the emperor Vespasian in a chariot drawn by four horses, in his triumph of 71. He bears aloft a laurel-branch in his right hand, with the eagle-tipped staff, or *scipio eburneus* in his left.¹⁵ He

¹²Ward-Perkins (1948) 516. Severus was very careful with triumphal imagery — perhaps due to the complexities of his rise to power.

¹³Severus built a new temple specifically to the worship of these gods, Kleiner (2010) 245. Another relief from the same arch strengthens this association: see Townsend (1938) 522. There exists an *aureus* of Caracalla, sadly rather elusive, which depicts Dionysus in a panther-drawn quadriga, which can only have increased the popularity of the motif: see Damsky (1990) 88. On the imperial uses of such an association see Hekster (2002) 192–3. Compare the relief of Marcus Aurelius (2.1b) where Dionysus is flanked by Poseidon and Athena.

¹⁴The methodology here is similar to that of Fittschen (1972) in his study of the arch of Beneventum, and has been employed also by Zanker (1997), Schäfer (2007). I do not imply primacy of the numismatic iconography, only that the exigencies of the medium precipitate informative selection.

¹⁵See Isid. *Etym.* 18.2.5. The form of the *scipio eburneus* can be seen clearly in an *aureus* of Augustus commemorating Tiberius' triumph of 12, BM inv. no. 1867,0101.613, *RIC* 1, 223.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(a) AU of Vespasian, 71, 7.33g. Obv: laureate portrait of Vespasian r., IMP CAESAR VESPASIANVS AVG TR P. Rev: Vespasian in quadriga with laurel and sceptre, crowned by Victoria, with trumpeter, soldier, and captive, TRIVMP AVG. Image courtesy British Museum, inv. no. 1864,1128.255, *RIC* 2, 1127.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(b) AU of Vespasian, 72-3, 7.25g. Obv: laureate portrait of Vespasian r., IMP CAES VESP AVG P M COS IIII. Rev: Vespasian standing r. in quadriga, with laurel and sceptre, Image courtesy British Museum, inv. no. R1874,0715.15. *RIC* 2, 364.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(c) AU of Trajan, 103-11, 7.07g. Obv: laureate portrait of Trajan r., IMP NERVA TRAIANVS AVG GER DACICVS. Rev: Trajan in *quadriga* l. with *scipio eburneus* and laurel, P M TR P COS V P P. Image courtesy British Museum, inv. no. 1864,1128.52. *RIC* 2, 86.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(d) AU of Trajan *divus*, issued under Hadrian, 117-8, 7.238g. Obv: laureate, draped portrait of Trajan r., DIVO TRAIANO PARTH AVG. Rev: Trajan in *quadriga* r., with laurel and *scipio eburneus*, TRIVMPHVS PARTHICVS. Image courtesy British Museum, inv. no. R.8040. *RIC* 2, 26var (Hadrian).

2.2: Select triumphal *aurei*.

is crowned by Victoria, while a soldier (or *genius populi Romani*) leads the team.¹⁶ (In the sarcophagi, with Dionysus as *triumphator*, we frequently find an analogue of the soldier/genius figure in Pan.)¹⁷ A bound captive walks in front of the team, while a trumpeter heralds the march, a regular gesture which may be apotropaic.¹⁸

In fig. 2.2d (labelled as Trajan's *triumphus Parthicus*, 118) the emperor again wields the palm branch and the *scipio eburneus*, but the scene is otherwise utterly stripped down. This suggests that an image of a *quadriga*, with a standing man inside bearing aloft palm and sceptre was enough to denote the triumph. The coin of Vespasian shows us that the iconography of the triumph could be elaborated with prisoners, trumpets, and Victoria — all of which have an obvious place at the event — but that equally the artist could perceive of a reduction in the pomp to this fundamental nucleus.

Provincial coins offer information about the transmittability of the triumph outside metropolitan issues. In several coins issued in Alexandria (amongst others under Domitian, fig. 2.3a and Trajan, fig. 2.3b) a reverse appears which places the triumphing emperor in an elephant *quadriga*; his posture and staff mark him out as a *triumphator*. In the earlier coin this is further signed through the presence of Victoria (shifted slightly awkwardly but imperiously forward), but her presence was not vital to the imagery, and she was dropped by the later issue.

Several coins minted at Nikopolis and Markianopolis depict a crowded

¹⁶On this figure see Bieber (1945); on sound and the triumph, Brilliant (1999).

¹⁷This figure is female in the triumphal fragments in the Belvedere (inv. no. 1022, Spinola (1996) 62-3) and Cordoba: for both see Schäfer (2007) 473no9 and fig. 1.

¹⁸Versnel (1970) 128.

and insistently triumphal scene. It is important to note that they do not all commemorate a historical triumph; in many cases they are a form of wish-fulfilment. The people of Nikopolis had every reason to flatter the emperor in the hope of fostering military protection for their city, placed rather near to some of Rome's more troublesome neighbours. A reverse type first found under Septimius Severus, reused intermittently afterwards but issued heavily under Macrinus, is instructive for the conception of triumphal imagery by those distant from Rome (see fig. 2.3c and cf. 2.3d). The emperor stands in the 'slow' *quadriga* (the 'fast' in 2.3d) moving rightwards, holding what is perhaps the *scipio eburneus* but may be simply a staff by this point, gesturing with a raised hand, while Victoria crowns him.¹⁹ In front of the horses walks a tall male figure in what is perhaps military dress, wielding a *vexillum*. Above (displaced, and to be interpreted either in front or behind) is a *tropaion* with symmetrically flanked prisoners. The imperious gesture of the emperor is one which evokes mastery of the situation, a confidence which is explained by the defeated prisoners, who crouch on a reduced scale at most a third that of the Roman leading the horses.

But Macrinus never triumphed. By his time, this did not matter, nor had it for a long while. Triumphal iconography was an imperial attribute and was as much promoted by the emperors as legitimisation of their position as echoed by those who wished to be protected under that same aegis.²⁰ The utility of the triumph in this respect is further supported by a little-published vase from Vienne depicting the city herself in a mural crown triumphing in

¹⁹AMNG 1, 1327. For the terminology see p54.

²⁰Lusnia (2006) 274.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(a) AE32 of Domitian from Alexandria, year 15 (approx. 96). 20.45g. Obv: laureate head of Domitian r., ΑΥΤ ΚΑΙΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΥΙΟΣ ΔΟΜΙΤ ΣΕΒ ΓΕΡΜ. Rev: see p50, LIE in ex. BMC XV 339. Image from British Museum, inv. no. 1845,1217.88.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(b) AE33 of Trajan from Alexandria, year 15 (approx. 111-2). 20.09g. Obv: laureate head of Trajan r., ΑΥΤ ΤΡΑΙΑΝ ΣΕΒ ΓΕΡΜ ΔΑΚΙΚ. Rev: see p50, LIE in ex. BMC XV 507. Image from Classical Numismatic Group, Inc., electronic auction 88, Lot: 1080.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(c) AE of Macrinus, 12.79g, Nikopolis ad Istrum. Obv: laureate, cuirassed bust r., ΑΥ Κ ΟΠΠΕΛ ΣΕΥΗ ΜΑΚΡΙΝΟΣ. Rev: See p50, VII ΑΓΡΙΠΠΑ ΝΙΚΟΠΟΛ ΙΤΩΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΙC. Image courtesy Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung, electronic auction 115 (05.03.02) lot 1273. AMNG I, 1713.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(d) AE38 of Elagabalus from Perinthos, Thrace. 218-22, 35.2g, currently part of the Berlin Antikensammlung, inv. no. 18202206. Obverse: ΑΥΤ Κ Μ ΑΥΡΗΛΙ ΑΝΤΩΝΕΙΝΟΣ, laurel-wreathed cuirassed portrait of Elagabalus r. Reverse: See p50, ΠΕΡΙΝΘΙΟΝ, in exergue Β ΝΕΩΚΟΡΩΝ, triumphal *quadriga* r.

2.3: Select provincial triumphal reverses.

the *quadriga*, crowned by Victoria.²¹

In short, this evidence indicates that the triumph is delineated through the standing general in the *quadriga* and confirmed through additional though optional elements such as Victoria, prisoners, trumpeters and so on.

It is worth observing that the triumph is not confined purely to Dionysus or mortals; there was a heavily issued series of republican *denarii* showing Jupiter being crowned by Victoria in an elephant *biga*,²² while Venus also appears in a horse *biga* crowned by Victoria,²³ and Neptune in several mosaics (though unlike these other instances, frontally emerging toward the viewer).²⁴

2.1.3 The chariot's form

The chariot was a vital part of the triumph, to the extent that *currus* could stand synecdochally for the triumph itself.²⁵ In figures 2.2a and 2.2d, both of which depict the triumph, the form of the *currus triumphalis* is very different. In the former it is the high-sided, rounded and cylindrical design familiar to us, for example, from the panel relief of Marcus Aurelius (fig. 2.1b) and which is, according to Dio at least, the proper form for the triumphal chariot.²⁶

In fig. 2.2a the chariot of Vespasian is sleeker, lower formed with curved, falling sides. Yet in another *aureus* of Vespasian the tall cylindrical chariot is employed (fig. 2.2b). The sleeker chariot form is closer, chronologically,

²¹Musée Gallo-Romain de Fourvière, C2.

²²RRC 269/1.

²³RRC 391/1. For the 'triumph' of Venus in marine mosaics, see Dunbabin (1978) 154-8, but this is not a true triumph.

²⁴E.g. Dunbabin (1978) fig. 154 and that at the Bardo, Dunbabin (1999) fig. 114, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 164, fig. 154.

²⁵Beard (2007) 222-3, 310.

²⁶63.20.3. For a thorough exploration of the precise names for these types of chariot, Abaecherli (1935).

to Vespasian's Jewish triumph of 71, so we cannot imagine that the artist 'forgot' its proper form.

If one compares this with the form of the chariot in the Boscoreale cup (fig. 2.9), we see the sleeker, sloping form even at this early stage of the 'imperial' triumph.²⁷ The artist has clearly taken pains over the chariot itself: detail such as the raised chasing on its rim, the figural relief on its body (compare fig. 2.2c, 2.2d), the lion's head hub-cap, and Hercules' club spokes suggest the importance of the chariot to the scene.

This suggests that either form of chariot could be depicted, the traditional tall, cylindrical chariot (dubbed the 'slow' by Kuttner) and the sleeker, sloping body chariot (the 'fast'), and that therefore the form of the chariot must be used with care as a criterion for establishment of triumphal scenes.²⁸

2.1.4 The influence of other processions

The *pompa triumphalis* was not the only ritualised procession. Descriptions of the *pompa circensis* seem to have a good deal of overlap with the procession we see in the sarcophagi.²⁹ Dionysius describes chariots with sons on horseback (redolent of the barbarian boys we see riding the sarcophagi's chariot animals) followed by naked athletes, dancing youths and boys, flute and lyre players. The atmosphere was lively: the participants even imitated

²⁷See la Rocca and Tortorella (2008) 124-5.

²⁸Kuttner (1995) 147. This is one of the many ways we can distinguish these scenes from those of the *Wagenfahrt* (see *ASR* I.4 no. 30, 79, 160, 247, 254, 298 for a non-exhaustive but representative sample). These do not stray into triumphal scenes despite occasional presence e.g. of *tropaia*. Note especially the presence of seated women in the chariot in these scenes. On *Wagenfahrt* sarcophagi and *loculus*-slabs see Weber (1978).

²⁹Dion. Hal. 7.72, Ov. *Ars am.* 1.136-228 (inc. triumph).

satyrs.³⁰ In Juvenal, the whole event seems disconcertingly proximate to triumphal imagery:

What if [Democritus] had seen the *praetor* standing out in lofty chariot and elevated from the dust of the circus, in the tunic of Jupiter and carrying off his shoulder the purple drapery of the *toga picta* and a great crown so big around, that no neck was qualified for it? Naturally a sweating *servus publicus* holds it and, so the consul is not too pleased with himself, the slave is carried in the same chariot. Now add the bird which soars from his ivory staff and here trumpeters, there the preceding officials in a long column, and the pale Roman men whom handouts, squirreled into money-boxes, made into friends.

quid si uidisset praetorem curribus altis
extantem et medii sublimem puluere circi
in tunica Iouis et pictae Sarrana ferentem
ex umeris aulaea togae magnaеque coronae
40 *tantum orbem, quanto cervix non sufficit ulla?*
quippe tenet sudans hanc publicus et, sibi consul
ne placeat, curru servus portatur eodem.
da nunc et uolucrum, sceptro quae surgit eburno,
illinc cornicines, hinc praecedentia longi
45 *agminis officia et niueos ad frena Quirites,*
defossa in loculos quos sportula fecit amicos.

³⁰On these boys see p133ff. It seems prudent here not to belabour the observations Dionysius makes of the similarity between events of the *pompa circensis* and the funerary rites of the sort popular in the republic but long antiquated by the time of the sarcophagi. See Versnel (1970) 115-28. In Republican Rome certainly, and perhaps in the early empire, the major *pompae* were the *pompa circensis*, *triumphalis* and *funeris*: Versnel (1970) 94.

Juv. 10.36-46.

However, by increasing the triumphal nature of the imagery, Juvenal increases his hyperbole and thus intensifies the effect he is trying to draw. Juvenal here exaggerates the triumphal nature of the *pompa circensis* to suit the extreme nature of the spectacle focalised through Democritus. The two rites were likely not so proximate as this passage would suggest. Contextual information should not be ignored; there is no indication that the sarcophagi suggest a reading localising the circus.

A key difference between the triumph however was that in the *pompa circensis* images of the gods were carried in *fercula*.³¹ This was an element fundamental to the rite, and a part sufficient to call the whole thing to mind at least for Ovid's informed readers:

And when the procession populous with ivory gods will pass . . .

at cum pompa frequens caelestibus ibit eburnis . . .

Ov. *Ars am.* 1.147.

The visual evidence is less than clear. Some scenes have been identified tentatively with the *pompa circensis*, while others contend that no representations of it have survived.³² A later lid from San Lorenzo fuori le mura

³¹Perry (2015) 656-7.

³²Considered unattested: Long (1987) 242 and less forcefully Beard (2007) 283-4. Scene strongly identified as *pompa circensis*: Naples, Museo Nazionale 37.939, see Wrede (2001) 81, pl. 20.2. Possible depictions: Staatliche Museen inv. no. SK 967, *ASR* I.3: 5, p. 192, around 280 A.D. See also Borg (2013) 191. Also a lost sarcophagus known only in a Renaissance engraving (see Beard (2007) fig. 35). On the *pompa circensis* and sarcophagi in general see Wrede (1981) 78-82.

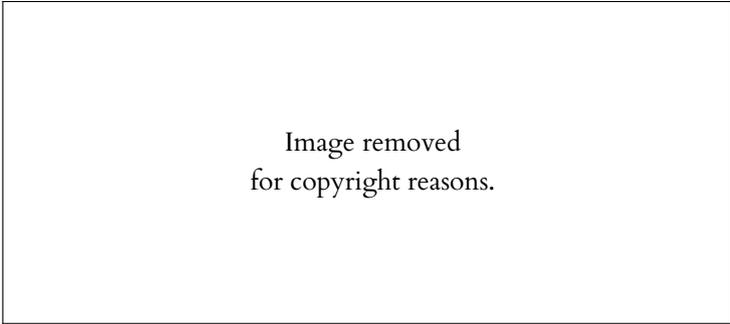


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(a) Detail of D1.

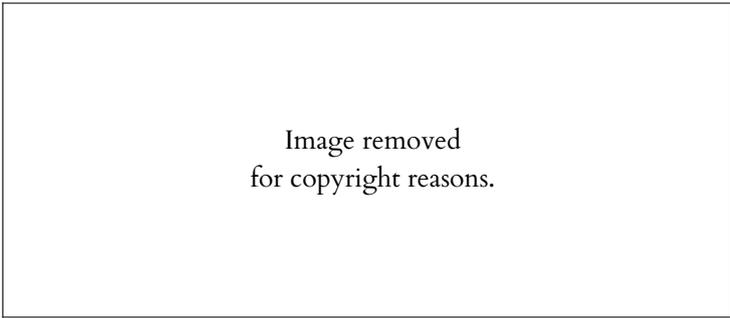


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(b) Detail of D1.

2.4: San Lorenzo sarcophagus lid, D1. Image from Bianchi Bandinelli (1971) fig. 60.

seems to depict the rite, but may depict another procession entirely (fig. 2.4).³³ Here the *tensa* is replaced with a low wagon pulled by an elephant *quadriga*, and the divinities paraded on *fercula* are clearly intended to be statues within the relief.

Regardless of its precise identification, we can be certain that the scene could in no way be confused with the triumphal scenes in the sarcophagi or elsewhere. The similarities, which strike us far more in the textual treatments than they do visually, seem to have been due to cross-fertilisation between the ceremonies of the triumph and the *pompa circensis*.³⁴ However,

³³For the arguments on both sides, see Madigan (2012) 47-52.

³⁴Versnel (1970) 101-14, Ryberg (1955) 99n.

in the sarcophagi the display of prisoners, booty, the presence of Victoria and the mythological contextualisation of the sarcophagi all point to Dionysus' triumph rather than the opening of circus games.

Another type of procession was the *processus consularis*, the inaugural parade of new consuls, which also bore points of intersection with the triumphal parade.³⁵ The most important monument in this regard is the monument of C. Julius Antiochus Epiphanes Philopappus on the Mouseion in Athens, erected 114-6 (fig. 2.5).³⁶ Here, Philopappus himself appears standing in a chariot drawn by four horses, wearing a crown and preceded by lictors, in a scene which looks undeniably like a triumph.

Philopappus grew up in an awkward position: heir to the Commagene throne, he never ascended to the power he expected due to the kingdom's absorption by Rome under Vespasian. However, he attempted to gain status within the new system of the conquering power, and his skill and ambition is demonstrated by the measure of success he had. Rising to the highest ranks in Rome (suffect consul in 109) and Athens (culminating in *archon*), he and his family assisted in the Jewish wars, the triumphs of which are so familiar. That Philopappus never fully assimilated the loss of his throne and was driven by an ambition to 'live up to' his lost familial pride is a significant factor in his self-presentation in this monument. The inscription begins βασιλεύς, and directly below his seated (divine looking) portrait appears a strange *pseudo-*

³⁵For an outline of which see Borg (2013) 187-8, Versnel (1970) 302-3.

³⁶Datable through Trajan's titulary. The authoritative survey is Kleiner (1983). Also Smith (1998), Beard (2007) 278, Mittag (2009), and especially Bergmann (2010) 107 who sets out the reasons this is not a triumphal relief and does the same for the supposedly triumphal Praeneste relief thought to depict a triumph of Trajan (on which also Kropp (2013a) 381).

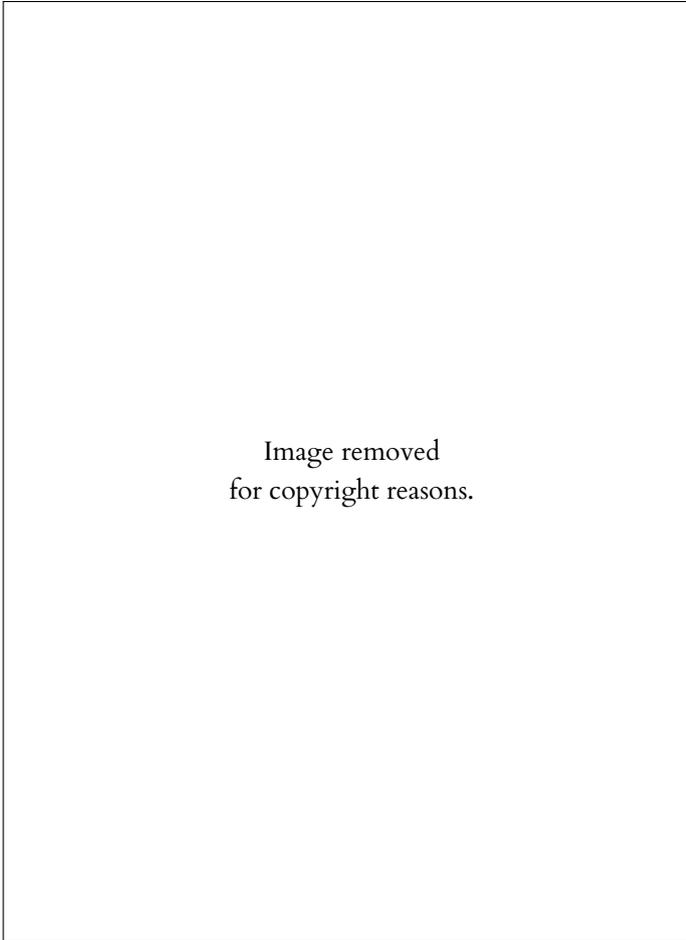


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

2.5: Monument of Philopappus, Athens. Image from Bergmann (2010) fig. 41a.

triumphal panel. Philopappus continued to attempt to present himself in the guise of a powerful ruler, masquerading as ‘the *basileus megas* of a non-existent kingdom well into the Trajanic period.’³⁷

The similarities with the triumph on the Arch of Titus have been proven beyond reasonable doubt by Kleiner; the differences are also instructive.³⁸

³⁷Kropp (2013b) 86-7; see Kropp *ibid.* on a coin issued by Selinus in Cilicia showing the monument.

³⁸I express strong reservation however that the direction of the procession is a persuasive allusion to the depiction on the arch of Titus given numismatic directional variance (e.g. fig. 2.2c).

The laurel crown of Titus is swapped for a radiate crown on Philopappus' head; this has the double advantage of recalling his noble ancestry, and distinguishing the imagery from authentic triumphal iconography.³⁹ The garlands on the chariot of Titus are replaced for Hercules in a *naiskos* on Philopappus', an appropriate choice in tune with his family's self-presentation.⁴⁰ Where Titus has the appropriate complement of twelve lictors, Philopappus (despite holding sufficient rank to have the same) presents a half-dozen.⁴¹ Victoria is nowhere to be seen, nor is anyone else in the chariot.⁴² The monument really comes as close as Philopappus dare (or as anyone seems to have dared) to appropriating triumphal iconography. But it stays within the bounds of what could be taken for the *processus consularis* which, lacking definitive iconography of its own, appropriated imagery from the triumph. The monument is a singular blend of the consular procession, Hellenistic imagery and the triumph.⁴³

In this monument even a king, who fought on the side of the imperial

³⁹This rejection is more noticeable since laurel was appropriate for the commencement of consular office also: Beard (2007) 278. Kleiner (1983) 89 is incorrect in suggesting the radiate crown alludes to coinage of Antiochos I; while she is correct that a Roman emperor would not wear a radiate crown at a triumph, they *did* wear one in coinage which would be far more familiar to the audience than Antiochos' rather old, foreign coins would.

⁴⁰Kleiner (1983) 87 — and probably not as a suggestion of apotheosis. The idea that 'Hercules, like Philopappus, was not born a god but attained immortality through heroic deeds' is to my mind not sufficiently supported by the monument. The scene is more focussed on Hercules' divinity than his transition *to* divinity. It seems tenuous that 'the vehicle of Hercules' apotheosis was [also] a chariot' (88).

⁴¹Kleiner (1983) 83 attempts to reconstruct lictors on the other side, but this is not totally secure.

⁴²The figure standing right of the chariot is depicted with their hands behind their back in some reconstructions; their dress, posture, and appeal to the remaining detail of their forearms on the monument suggest to me they are not intended to be a captive: cf. Kleiner (1983) pl. 18b.

⁴³It bears foreshadowing here that this does not mean we can expect those Dionysian triumph sarcophagi which can be tied to senatorial patrons were the most triumphal.

house, was careful not to cross a perceived line and stray into triumphal iconography proper even outside Rome, but rather chose a ‘triumphalised’ consular procession. The monument suggests the inadvisability of seeming to aspire to the emperor’s prerogative. Later, when triumphal associations were enmeshed with imperial representation, the *processus consularis* developed its own iconography dominated by clothing based status-display on foot. It is mostly to be found well after the triumphal group has finished being produced and we can therefore lay aside the problems of its precise identification for the purposes of this study.⁴⁴ This composite, the rather triumphal-looking *processus consularis*, is made possible by the fact that the consular procession was intimately bound up with triumphal elements due to the nature of the history of both rites, stemming from a time when triumphant generals might the very next day be sworn as consuls.⁴⁵ Such a world was very distant even by the time of Philopappus, but the more so some half-century later when the first Dionysian triumphal sarcophagi emerge.

⁴⁴An iconography of the parade was first proposed by Andreae (1969). For issues around the parade’s identification including up-to-date bibliography see Borg (2013) 188. Key sarcophagi regularly identified with the *processus consularis* include: the ‘Brothers’ sarcophagus (*ASR* I.3: 36, c. 270, Birk (2013) 179, fig. 169, Borg (2013) 190-1, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 182-4, Wrede (2001) 63, 71, Zanker (1995) 279-81, Himmelmann (1973) 5-8); the lid of Q. Petronius Melior (c. 250, the inscription of which confirms his social class: see Borg (2013) 187, 191, Wrede (2001) 63); and the Acilia piece formerly associated with Gordian III (see I.3: 88, Andreae (1969), Birk (2013) 69-71, cat. 645, fig. 32, Borg (2013) 186-9, Himmelmann (1973) 1-12, Brilliant (1963) 201-2). The later date of the Acilia sarcophagus given by Borg and Reinsberg (c. 280) is convincing, and its move away from the comparison with Gordian sensible.

⁴⁵On the overlap between the *processus consularis* and triumphal imagery see Beard (2007) 277-86, Versnel (1970) 303.

2.2 The intersection of the imperial triumph and the Dionysian triumph

The myth of Dionysus' successful conquest of India and subsequent triumph is a relatively popular one, even though it was never really treated at great length; still, the god's subjugation of India (with Hercules' assistance) is a trope running through many references to the triumph.⁴⁶ Let us generate our quintessential characteristics for defining the Dionysian triumph in the light of the information above.

2.2.1 Standing up to be counted

In the reliefs we have examined no triumphant general has been depicted reclining, and such a posture seems to have been considered inappropriate for the *triumphator*.⁴⁷ I believe this important point has so far been somewhat neglected. A recent work even describes the *triumphator* as sitting as if this were the usual posture.⁴⁸ But this is far from usual. Likewise, when making an unrelated point, Vout translates a passage as follows:

So when he [Commodus] returned to Rome, he headed the triumphal procession with Saoterus, his partner in depravity, seated in his chariot in such a way that rather often he would turn around and kiss him in full view.⁴⁹

⁴⁶On Dionysus as Ur-*triumphator* see p69n67.

⁴⁷Beard (2007) 155.

⁴⁸Ziólkowski (2013) 403. Gabelmann (1992) 44, 66 and Holliday (1997) 133 identify the *triumphator* as standing but without further elaboration.

⁴⁹Vout (2007) 138 quoting SHA, *Comm.* 3.6, *Romam ut rediit, subactore suo Saotero post se in curro locato ita triumphavit ut eum saepius cervice reflexa publice oscularetur.*

Yet here *in curro locato* merely means ‘positioned’ or ‘placed’ and is not evidence of sitting of any kind. Likewise when Constantius II processes ‘as if in triumph’ but *absque nomine*, he does not ‘sit’, as many translations render *insidebat*, but ‘occupies’ the triumphal chariot. If he were seated he would not have then needed to stoop when passing through the gates (nor really have been safely able to).⁵⁰ The apparently triumphal Hague Cameo presents a *seated* couple (identified as variously as Claudius and Messalina or Constantine and Fausta), but is a forgery perhaps of Rubens’ time.⁵¹ In fact (with the obvious exception of equestrian depictions), the seated posture is somewhat rare amongst emperors and Hellenistic kings in general.

So much for the unsuitability of the seated posture; inversely, while reclining would be dissonant with the military nature of the occasion, emphasis on a standing posture was appropriate, since it is a military stance.⁵² We know the *triumphator* stood over the axle, an uncomfortable position which at least one bemoans.⁵³

The laying posture, where it does appear, seems designed to establish

⁵⁰Amm. Marc. 16.10. The arch of Galerius bears a relief commonly called triumphal, but it does not resemble the triumph in the sense that it was presumably understood at the time of the sarcophagi. For the problems of the scene’s interpretation see Rothman (1977). For a further clear example of a standing *triumphator* see quote on p123.

⁵¹The defeated soldier writhing on the ground is depicted in Roman armour, a rather peculiar choice. The *scipio eburneus* has metamorphosed into a lightning-bolt, an over-elaboration of an engraver who understood the *triumphator* to be linked with Jupiter. The centaurs and incongruous *cantharus* rolling on the floor are contamination from the Dionysian triumph (with which Renaissance artists were familiar from the sarcophagi, Neverov (1979) 428); these elements have no place in this presentation. See also Flory (1998) 493-4.

⁵²Versnel (1970) 56.

⁵³Beard (2007) 223 discusses compelling evidence that such a chariot (with no suspension, either) would be very unforgiving; Suet. *Vesp.* 12. This interpretation is supported by the SHA *Septimius Severus* 16.6, which states he refused a triumph (though he passed it on to Caracalla) because he could not stand (*consistere*) in the chariot due to rheumatism.

other scenes by moving the iconography away from the triumph. This is common in the wedding procession of the god, the identification of which is made fairly secure by the presence of a large torch-bearing winged male figure (Hymen or Cupid) instead of Victoria.⁵⁴ In other scenes the god may ride side-saddle in a languorous pose (as on the famous Badminton sarcophagus) which suggests a luxurious and untroubled progress; the appearance of this motif with Seasons might point more towards allegory for the implacable march of time, but at any rate the scene is distanced from triumphal imagery.

In this regard we might compare depictions of Dionysus seated high up in the chariot on sarcophagi. This motif is strikingly redolent of the reverses of coins which show the parade of a deity seated atop a lofty chariot, often drawn by elephants.⁵⁵ The seated parade of a figure in a chariot, especially when drawn by an elephant *quadriga*, seems to have been iconic of the display of statues of divinities, and not at triumphs, but rather during the *pompa circensis* or the opening ceremonies of theatrical events.⁵⁶ When seated figures do appear in the chariot, they do not seem to represent the living emperor nor employ iconography otherwise confirmatory of the triumph (Victoria crowning them, prisoners, and so on).⁵⁷

The sarcophagus reliefs depicting the seated Dionysus seem to focus on the god's journeys (his wanderings were an important part of the mythology), rather than a ritual procession. This also seems to be behind the

⁵⁴E.g. *ASR* IV.2: 84.

⁵⁵E.g. *RIC* I 42, issued under Tiberius and depicting Augustus *divus*.

⁵⁶Plin. *HN* 34.5, 34.10, Cass. Dio 44.6.3, 43.45.2-3, and Madigan (2012) 42-4, 48-9, who shows that this was not a regular occurrence in performance but rather a 'well-established visual tradition' (emphasis mine).

⁵⁷Manders (2012) 80-2.

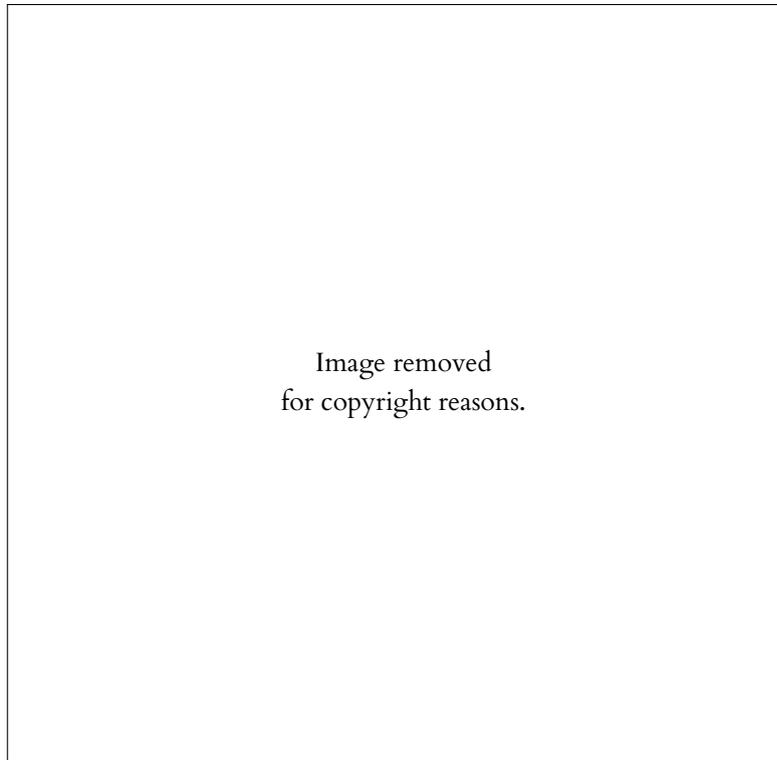
motif on coins. In several coins of Nicaea (issued under Antoninus Pius and Commodus) the seated god is drawn by elephants, while the legend above identifies him as founder (κτίστης, πηγῆ) of the city.⁵⁸ The focus is on the journey of the god and his journey *qua* god, from which the city traced its establishment.

For these reasons, I believe those sarcophagi depicting the seated Dionysus can be sufficiently grouped as focussed on the journeying of the god, and the seated posture employed as a criterion to exclude pieces from being included in the triumphal group. The seated pieces are not only compositionally more distant from the triumph but in general direct their narrative towards quite separate aims from those with the standing Dionysus, and do not present Victoria crowning the deity.

2.2.2 Invoking the triumph on sarcophagi: intersections, intentions and limitations

In many of the sarcophagi consciously triumphal elements are so clear they do not require lengthy exegesis. If we compare the sarcophagus detail in fig. 2.6 with the depiction of the triumph on the arch of Titus, fig. 2.1a, the similarities are very strong. Both depict a standing male figure in a commanding posture. Victoria crowns the male, who rides in a chariot led by a standing figure. On the arch of Titus he is isolated by his greater height and the flow of movement caused by Victoria's striated wings. His

⁵⁸REC 80.1-2, 269. A rarer standing Dionysus κτίστης issue exists under Commodus, Waddington et al. (1912) 270. Here the bunch of grapes the god holds again steer us more towards the journey on which he spread the vine.



2.6: Detail of triumphal procession from sarcophagus at Woburn Abbey, A6. Image author's own.

imperiously thrust right arm is amplified by the echoed gesture of the *genius populi Romani* below.⁵⁹

In the sarcophagi, coming from a context where viewers are not looking from below and a style which treats open space differently, the delineation of the *triumphator* is instead through the direction of gaze; note in fig. 2.6 how Victoria, the attendant satyr in the chariot, Pan and the panther all stare at the god, and that the containment area formed by the oblique lines of the *thyrsus*, *lagobolon* and Victoria's arms bracket and focus Dionysus' face.

The crown of Dionysus, where it appears, seems a relatively secure means

⁵⁹See Brilliant (1963) 94-5, Bieber (1945).

of identifying allusions in the sarcophagi to triumphal imagery. That in A1, in particular, is strongly redolent of the laurel-crown of the *triumphator* with its central shield-like medallion (fig. 2.7b, perhaps recalling the *clipeus virtutis*?). In a coin of Augustus likely issued in Colonia Patricia the same crown is found alongside the *ornamenta triumphalia* (fig. 2.7a).⁶⁰ The strength of the triumphal allusion in these cases is difficult to doubt. This crown, however, by no means appears in all the sarcophagi.

Since the effect of the *thiasus* as a wild band would be heightened by having a chaotic, multi-directional scene, unidirectionality must be a deliberate effort to invoke processional movement on the part of the artist. On the sarcophagi the flow is usually rightward, though a few exist which are leftward; no figure enters from the direction to which the procession is heading.⁶¹

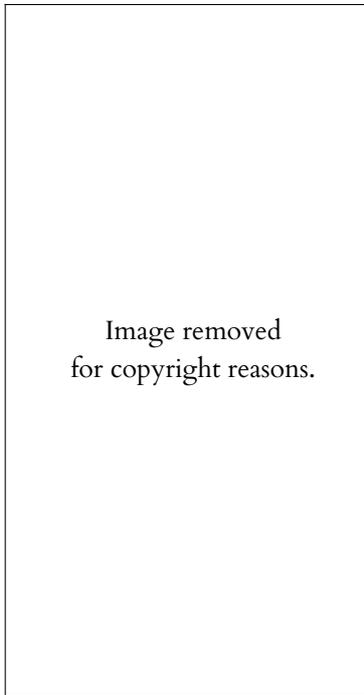
In the sarcophagi, we do not find the chariot pulled by an equine *quadriga*, only a team of two centaurs, panthers or elephants. This seems a disjunction since the vast majority of depictions of the triumph present a team of four horses. Not all, however; even Augustus was depicted in the slow chariot holding a laurel-branch and *scipio eburneus* standing upright in an elephant *biga*.⁶² This may be down to constraints of space, adherence to the tradition of the image more than the ritual, or perhaps to the custom of parading a standing effigy of the triumphal deceased in a *biga*.⁶³ There may be a complementary influence from iconography of Victoria, since she is frequently

⁶⁰See Bergmann (2010) cat. 58, p87-9 Gabelmann (1992) 61. On the *ornamenta* see Abaecherli Boyce (1942).

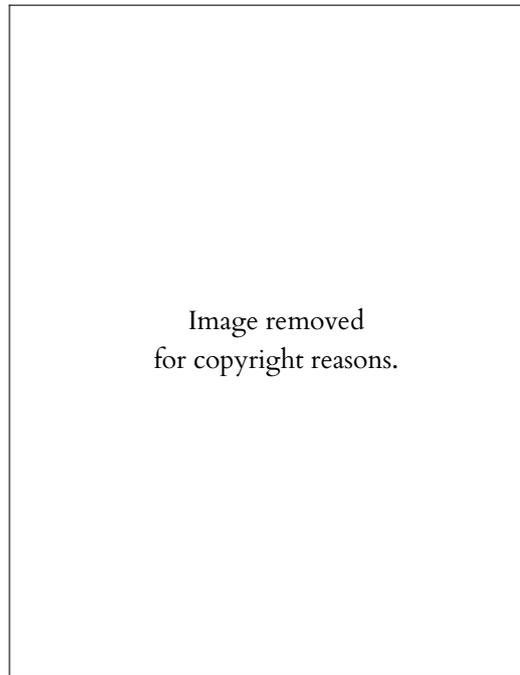
⁶¹B6, B16. Graef (1886) 14.

⁶²*RIC* 1, 301.

⁶³Cf. Versnel (1970) 127.



(a) AR *denarius* of Augustus (Colonia Patricia?). Obverse has *toga picta* over *tunica palmata*, *scipio eburneus* and crown with central shield-like medallion. Reverse has triumphal *quadriga*, small *quadriga* above. *RIC* 1, 97. Sold by Gorny & Mosch Giessener Münzhandlung, 09/10/06, auction 151, lot 380. 3.81g.



(b) Crown of Dionysus *triumphator*. Detail of A1. Image from Matz (1968b) pl. 117.2.

2.7: Two crowns.

depicted driving *bigae*.⁶⁴ Isidore does not specify the number of chariot-pulling beasts at the triumph.⁶⁵ But Martial conclusively shows that being drawn by two beasts instead of four was simply part of Dionysus' accepted triumphal iconography when (following Domitian's triumph over the Chatti

⁶⁴For Victoria coin types in general see Noreña (2011) 153-6. Imperial coins bearing Victoria riding a *biga* are not uncommon; examples include *RIC* 3, 1698, p.349 (Marcus Aurelius depicting Faustina), *RIC* 4, 299, p.128 (Septimius Severus) and *RIC* 5, 74, p.136 (Gallienus).

⁶⁵Isid. *Etym.* 18.2.

in 83) he writes:⁶⁶

Your arena, Caesar, has beaten the Erythraean triumphs
and the wealth and riches of the victorious god;
for when *he* led captive Indians before the chariot,
Bacchus was content with a pair of tigers.

*vincit Erythraeos tua, Caesar, harena triumphos
et uictoris opes diuitiasque dei:
nam cum captiuos ageret sub curribus Indos,
contentus gemina tigride Bacchus erat.*

Mart. 8.26.5-8.

The triumphal parade was state-imagery *par excellence*, in that it was the emperor's private idiom. It was accessible to private patrons only through the filter of mythology in the quasi-private funerary realm. Mythology functioned as a filter which diffused a concrete event, the Roman triumph (which by this period was always the triumph of the emperor), into a scene which stood parallel to time or historical events. Dionysus is the vehicle for this since he was perceived as the original *triumphator*; by going to the mythological fountain-head of the rite, patrons avoided inappropriate adoption of imperial iconography.⁶⁷ Mythologised depiction of the triumph takes the visual dialect

⁶⁶See Schöffel (2002) 247-55.

⁶⁷For the triumph as Dionysian in origin see Ov. *Fast.* 3.729, Plin. *HN* 16.144, Gabelmann (1992) 50-3, Turcan (1966) 463n7; see also Diod. Sic. 4.3.1, Paus. 10.29.4, Arr. *Anab.* 6.28.2, *Indica* 5, Otto (1965) 197-8, Beard (2007) 315-8. For Dionysus in triumph over India see Ov. *Ars am.* 1.189-90, *Met.* 15.413, Verg. *Ecl.* 5.29, Servius *Aen.* 3.125, Plin. *HN* 8.4.1-5, Mart. 8.26, Stat. *Theb.* 4.652-80; for this as the origin of the rite of triumph, see Plin. *HN* 7.191, Curtius 3.12.18; 8. On the triumph as imperial flattery see McCormick (1986) 24-32, Gagé (1932).

carefully set up at an imperial level and creates an employable means of self-representation which does not trespass beyond its station but does not lose the positive associations. As Brilliant observed,

The assumption of Imperial motifs by private persons was undertaken in a deliberate effort to clothe themselves in the recognizable trappings of prominence.⁶⁸

Without the layer of mythology the iconographic system of the triumphal procession remained inaccessible (thus we do not find private citizens parading in triumph in other genera; such a depiction would be surely unthinkable). Triumphal imagery is not the only visual system which was denied to private citizens. Portraits in the *habitus* of the seated Jupiter were equally controlled, available *only* for the emperor's usage.⁶⁹ The absorption of triumphal motifs into private art is actually rather a non-controversial form of self-aggrandizement.⁷⁰

Desire to imitate public iconography is to be found in other examples, the most pertinent of which are those sarcophagi depicting a *clementia* scene, *dextrarum iunctio* and sacrifice. These show imitation too of the costumes of power, be that togate, cuirassed or naked. In one rather grand example (D2, fig. 2.8a) Victoria stands with palm branch behind the general receiving the conquered peoples' obeisance, and the central sacrificial scene in its arrangement looks to be straight out of monumental relief.⁷¹ The scenes are probably intended not to be documentary biographical information but as

⁶⁸Brilliant (1963) 160.

⁶⁹Hallett (2005) 259.

⁷⁰This has important ramifications for the genre at its end; see 334ff.

⁷¹E.g. similarities to panel of Marcus Aurelius showing triumphal sacrifice in Museo Conservatori, Ryberg (1955) fig. 86.

symptomatic of the deceased's virtues. Victoria is there to indicate the battle bringing about the *clementia* was successful. The sacrifice the 'general' is making in the centre cannot be part of the triumphal sacrifice, since he lacked his own *imperium*.⁷²

On a sarcophagus in the Belvedere (D3, fig. 2.8b) we find Victoria herself crowning the sacrificant deceased. Such iconography seems rather daring. Perhaps it was made acceptable through the dilution of the triumphal elements by their placement within the marriage formula: thus the sacrifice is a nuptial rite rather than state triumphal offering, and his wife appears with attendant divinities promoting a sense of her virtues (his being best expressed through balancing military virtues). The scene is therefore appropriately distinguished from the triumphal sacrifice he could not have given, though to which he alludes in composition.

This is comparable to the martial turn the imagery takes in a sarcophagus in the Belvedere (D4, fig. 2.8c). The iconography carefully localises the action at the point of the enemies' surrender, at the moment of making (forced) obeisance to the general. Roman soldiers stand by in arms and armour to secure this new domination. As such, though the general is crowned by Victoria to indicate the success of the battle, the soldiers are still on guard and the general still wisely keeps a weather eye on the suppliants, sword in hand. Needless to say, though concerned with victory this is not a triumphal parade; it throws the easy festal air of the Dionysian parade, where the

⁷²Ryberg (1955) 164. On virtues in these scenes Rodenwaldt (1935) 8. By contrast *clementia*, though an imperial virtue, was something all men could practise: Sen. *Clem.* 1.3.3, Gabelmann (1992) 56.

thiasus cavorts drunken and naked, into sharp relief.⁷³

These scenes suggest it is emphatically *not* the presence of Victoria herself crowning the deceased that was perceived as problematic (since she appears here and in a few other instances) but rather the kernel of the triumph itself: the chariot procession, at which Victoria might or might not appear. Let us consider this further.

2.2.2.1 Victoria

Victoria seems only to hover and crown Dionysus when he stands in the chariot. Her crowning is a clear sign that this person is the triumphant general.⁷⁴ A link with the triumph is sometimes further emphasised through Dionysus wearing the laurel crown, one of the *ornamenta triumphalia*.⁷⁵

In many of the standing processional sarcophagi, particularly those without Victoria, Dionysus has a satyr accompanying him in the chariot. This is redolent of the *servus publicus* who rode with the *triumphator* (as on the Boscoreale cup, fig. 2.9).⁷⁶ It may also result from the influence of those

⁷³Köhler (1995) attempts to solve the problem he perceives of a private general being depicted in triumph by appeal to the fact that the patron was dead at this point and that divinisation post-mortem rendered the scene acceptable. While I am not wholly convinced by the practicalities of this I do not believe the proximity between the scene and the triumph proper is close enough to be problematic — though this probably marks the edges of acceptability. Köhler's identification of the patron as a general who fell out of favour under Commodus (379) seems somewhat speculative. My interpretation is, I think, confirmed by comparison with a sarcophagus from the Via Collatina which shows a similar scene but with much more violent subjugation (see Brilliant (1963) fig. 3.141): since the sculpted chains and swords at the backs of necks render Victoria's presence superfluous, she retires to the lid. On the interpretation of these sarcophagi, see p203n256.

⁷⁴Cf. Kropp (2013a) 380. The major study of Victoria is still Hölscher (1967).

⁷⁵Abaecherli Boyce (1942) 131; this should not be confused with the *corona triumphalis* which is more properly the golden crown held over the general's head, Versnel (1970) 174-7.

⁷⁶See Ryberg (1955) fig. 77 a-d. On the rarity of the slave (who is not to be found in coin issues) Kropp (2013a) 381.

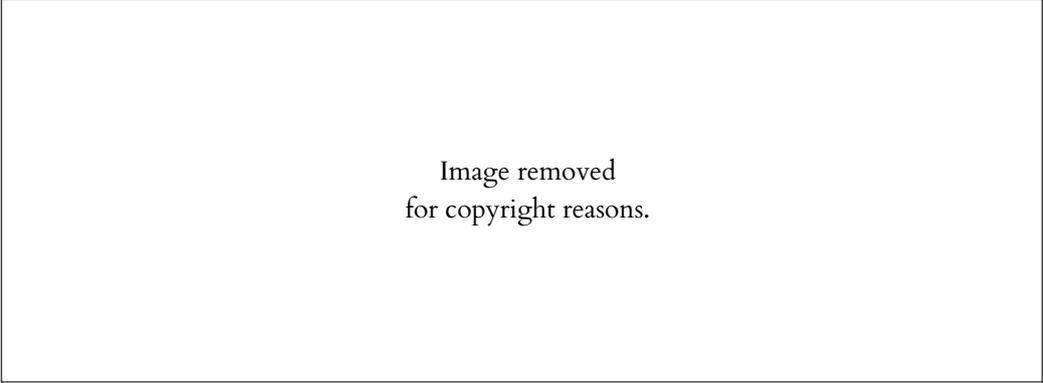


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(a) Uffizi Sarcophagus, D2. Image from Ryberg (1955) fig. 91.

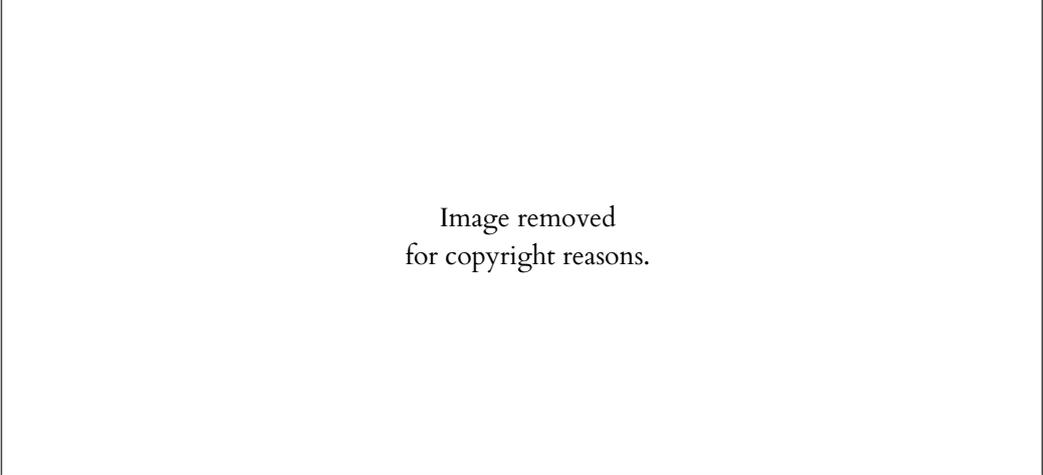


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(b) Belvedere Sarcophagus, D3. Image from Ryberg (1955) fig. 93.

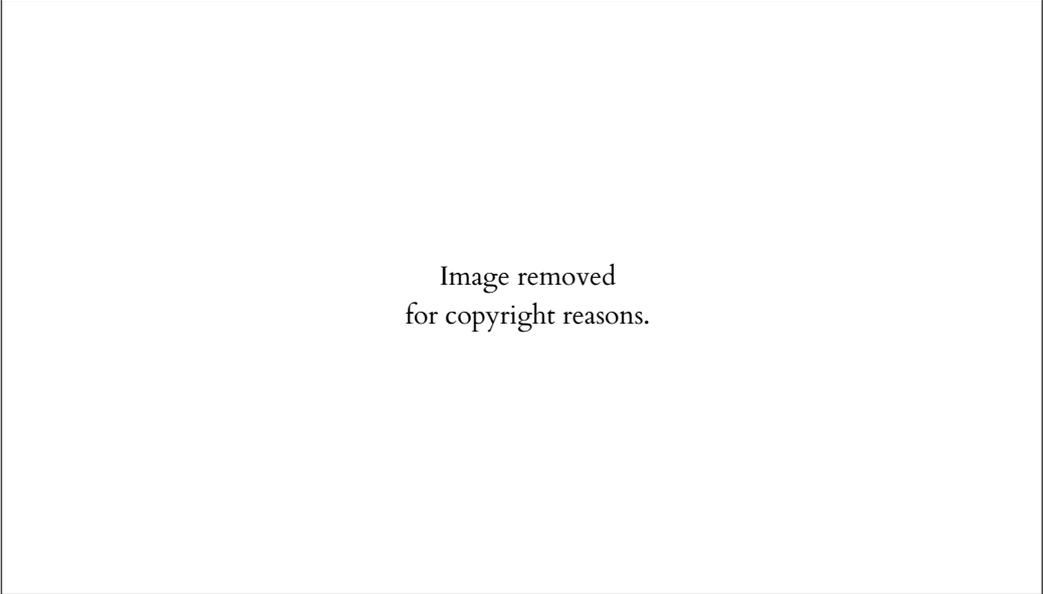
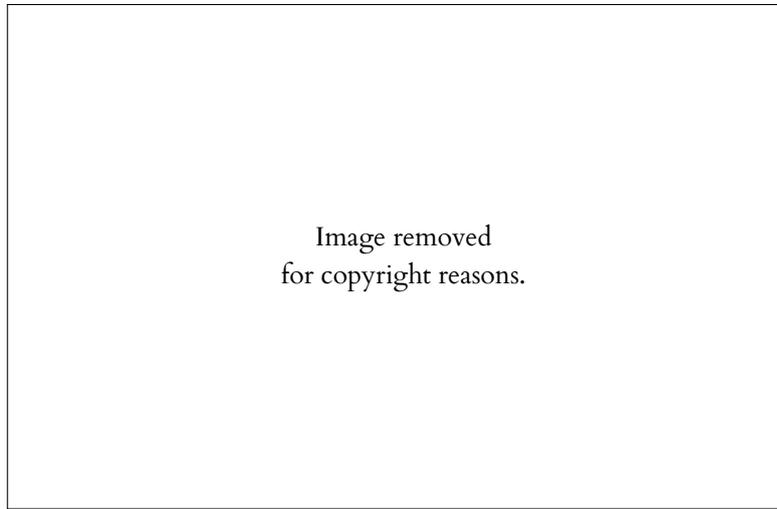


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(c) Belvedere Sarcophagus, D4. Image from Arachne database.

2.8: Select sarcophagi.



2.9: Detail of Boscoreale Cup. Image from Bergmann (2010) fig. 37b.

scenes which emphasise dynastic heredity through crowding the chariot with heirs, as Caracalla and Geta in the arch of Severus, and Commodus before he was removed in the panel relief of Marcus Aurelius.⁷⁷

In a processional scene, Victoria's presence is *sufficient* to invoke the triumph.⁷⁸ Where she appears crowning the god in the composition familiar from monumental relief, we can be sure that the scene is aligned with the triumph. But she is not a *necessary* element. Though usual in large-scale relief, Victoria is not compulsory: the Boscoreale cup, Leptis relief and many coin issues (e.g. figs. 2.2b-2.2d, 2.3b) do perfectly well without her crowning the general. This suggests that standing processional sarcophagi may be triumphal even if Victoria does not appear.

I must disagree with Beard that the absence of the slave and presence of Victoria in most (though not all) depictions of historical triumphs inverts

⁷⁷See Ryberg (1955) fig. 88, Ryberg (1967).

⁷⁸I specify 'processional' since the Indian battle scenes, some of which contain Victoria, depict her in order to confirm the outcome of the battle: they are thus *pre-triumphal*.

the message of humbling mortality.⁷⁹ Surely the presence of the flying deity, alongside transmitting legitimacy to the *triumphator*, highlights the difference between divinity and mortal more clearly than depicting a power balance as vertiginous as emperor and slave. The (ostensible) function of the slave is to prevent the general becoming too conceited; in mythologised state-relief, the gap between mortal and divine is made manifest through depicting an actual deity. The general is crowned, but only because a deity graces him. The real shift in attitude comes when Victoria loses her autonomy and becomes not the awarder of recognition but exhibited pet of the emperor (see further p307ff).

Victoria's positioning in the sarcophagi is changeable. She may stand inside the chariot behind or in front of Dionysus, or else hover in front. When she appears behind the god, her posture is in accord with contemporary triumphal iconography. After Augustus makes the triumph an imperial prerogative, Victoria permanently moves from hovering bestower of victory to the emperor's accompaniment in the chariot, (almost) without exception.⁸⁰ Her regular appearance *inside* the chariot seems to be under influence from representations of the imperial triumph. Her displacement in the majority of the sarcophagi (in front of the figures in the chariot and facing backwards or even hovering over Dionysus) is an element which places the composition at

⁷⁹Beard (2007) 88-91.

⁸⁰Hölscher (1967) 81 shows that Victoria permanently moves from hovering above the *triumphator* to joining him in the chariot. This echoes the move of the triumph towards an imperial virtue (see p307). To Hölscher's single exception (a medallion of Marcus Aurelius) I am able to add two important others, both provincial issues: a billon *tetradrachm* of Hadrian from Alexandria (130-1, Geissen 1038) and a Phrygian AE34 of Gordian III (BMC XXV 403) where Victoria hovers in much the way she does on the sarcophagi. Otherwise her move to the chariot was invariable *post*-Augustus.

a modest distance from contemporary triumphal iconography and in extreme cases (such as at Woburn Abbey, A6) towards far closer accord with late Republican representation. This displacement *from* the chariot has the effect of driving the imagery a small distance away from the (politically sensitive) present and closer to an ‘antique’ version of the triumph.

2.2.2.2 Ariadne

The historical triumph was a procession with fixed ends — the sacrifice at the temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus. But triumphal iconography generally lays no great emphasis on this destination (the Boscoreale cup is one exception). Processional triumphal reliefs tend to leave the destination of the procession to be understood by the viewer, since in this context it is the act of the movement and the spectacle that mattered most.

As *Ur-triumphator*, we need not imagine Dionysus was thought of as heading up the Capitoline: perhaps his triumphal entry was perceived as crossing the sacred bounds of Olympus rather than the *pomerium*, if it was conceptualised in concrete terms at all. The sarcophagi leave the destination to be supplied by the viewer. This serves to distinguish the triumphal group from those sarcophagi which *do* show a destination-point for the travelling band: the sleeping Ariadne. These sarcophagi employ a processional composition since they are localised within Dionysus’ journeys in the east, during which he discovered Ariadne jilted by Theseus. The mythological setting, with strong overtones of recognition and the cessation of emotional strife, has fascinating meaning in the funerary realm (see discussion p291ff), but drives the scene away from triumphal iconography.

Therefore those sarcophagi which show Ariadne as outside the procession, and therefore a stopping-point, will be excluded from the triumphal group. This should clearly be distinguished from her presence *in* the procession, which is not problematic and is in fact found; nevertheless we do not find Ariadne standing in the chariot with Victoria or other strongly triumphal indicators.⁸¹

2.2.3 *spectandi causa*

Above all a triumph was a ritual to be seen. In this capacity if no other it was exceedingly appropriate for a sarcophagus relief. At a triumph, viewers of all social strata would be shown displays designed to influence their emotions, loyalties, self-positioning. In Roman art in general there is no ‘viewer’: ‘the audience’ insofar as it has any meaning at all can only be conceptualised as a highly diffuse assembly of partially overlapping, partially differing viewpoints.⁸²

But the situation is different with sarcophagi. Almost uniquely in Roman art we can confidently assert a certain audience for the iconography: mourners (be that family members, family slaves, or whomever was invited). Equally certainly, these were not the only viewers. As far as it goes we can construct others (the sculptor, the purchaser, *amici*, *clientes* and so on), and

⁸¹I leave aside for now reliefs where a separate scene occurs alongside the triumphal procession. For evidence that women could be present at the triumph see Flory (1998); cf. the relief in Warsaw with Julia Domna taking the role traditionally allotted to Victoria and crowning Caracalla (212-5), see Kropp (2013a) 382. Ariadne is present standing next to Dionysus in a third century mosaic, at the House of Liber Pater in Sabratha (inv. no. 728), where a flying Victoria crowns him. See Dunbabin (1971) 57, pl. 14a, Boucher (1986) no. 140, Foucher (1975) 61.

⁸²Kampen (1995).

where appropriate their role in creating or digesting the iconography will explicitly be discussed. But the opportunity which sarcophagi provide, to interpret scenes through their expectable audience, is one we must embrace. Sarcophagi provide us the opportunity to explore mechanisms of expression which the family or deceased chose to associate with in perpetuity. In this work I therefore privilege their viewpoint, while cautiously admitting that more precisely the context is less easy to construct.⁸³

The historical triumph was an occasion whose mechanism of operation relied on the engagement of the viewer. As we see on the arch of Titus, attendants in the parade bore *tituli* explaining the significance of the booty, origins of the prisoners, or story behind the large paintings.⁸⁴ These *tituli* are absent from the sarcophagi; in some cases, we might suggest that, where found, the inscription below the scene functioned in a similar manner. But it is the relief itself that, like the parade of a real triumph, commands the viewers to engage with the imagery. Compare the words of Ovid, who advises how to woo girls at a triumphal parade:⁸⁵

And when she asks the name of some king among them,
 or what places, what mountains, or what rivers are being paraded,
 Reply to everything; and if she asks for it, go on.
 If you don't know, reply as if you knew well.
 Why, *this is Euphrates, his forehead girt with reeds:*

⁸³I distinguish my methodology here therefore from that of e.g. Favro (1996), who attempted to interpret urban space through creative shifts in interpretative viewpoints, encompassing various different classes of (the multitude of possible) observers of Augustan Rome; such an approach is in danger of becoming rather speculative.

⁸⁴Holliday (1997) 146; more generally Tuck (2015). On triumphal painting see Holliday (1997), Lusnia (2006), Beard (2007) 179-80.

⁸⁵This appears after a long section also discussing other spectacles.

The one whose azure hair hangs down will be Tigris.

I class these as Armenians; this is Danaean Persia:

That was a city from the Achaemenid vales.

He or he: leaders. And you might tell her what their names will be

— if you can, truthfully; if you can't, appropriately.

atque aliqua ex illis cum regum nomina quaeret,

220 *quae loca, qui montes, quaeve ferantur aquae,*

omnia responde, nec tantum siqua rogabit;

et quae nescieris, ut bene nota refer.

hic est Euphrates, praecinctus harundine frontem:

cui coma dependet caerulea, Tigris erit.

225 *hos facito Armenios; haec est Danaeia Persis:*

urbs in Achaemeniis vallibus ista fuit.

ille vel ille, duces; et erunt quae nomina dicas,

Si poteris, vere, si minus, apta tamen.

Ov. *Ars am.* 1.219-28.

As the triumph invited viewers to interpret and experience the spectacle, so the triumphal sarcophagi are objects which invite the viewer to engage with their iconography.

2.3 A working model of the genre's boundaries

We have thus found several quintessential factors for identifying depictions of the mythological triumph. But how does this scheme sit with prior scholarship?

Ryberg, in her survey of the iconographic representation of several major rites, proposed the following criteria for identifying a depiction of a Roman *state* triumph: a *pompa*, led by trumpeters and closed by the *triumphator* in his chariot, with officials bearing ritual objects and soldiers who had fought in the victorious campaign. She considers other elements optional (such as sacrificial victims, *victimarii*, provincial crowns, captives, and booty).⁸⁶ This is broadly in conclusion with our findings above; certainly, the scenes must all have the form of a procession, with movement suggested from one side of the relief to the other, opposed only by the occasional figure.

Nevertheless as shown by the Boscoreale cup (fig. 2.9) the trumpeter was dispensable, and the reduced scenes in the *aurei* (figs. 2.2a, 2.2b, 2.2c) show that the officials bearing *fascēs* could also be omitted; in fact they suggest that at its innermost kernel the standing charioteer (and he must be standing) was the prime bearer of meaning. This will be considered a necessary element within the mythological scenes.

The presence of a destination-point external to the *thiasus* which is outside the triumphal route (such as the sleeping Ariadne) will also be sufficient grounds to exclude a sarcophagus, since it drives the iconography too far

⁸⁶Ryberg (1955) 151.

from triumphal imagery. I do not deny that an undercurrent of triumphal allusion may be present in such scenes, but it is not the dominant thread. So much seems unobjectionable; but two of the most influential treatments of the mythological triumph take very different approaches.

In Boardman's recent study of the Dionysian triumph, he tackles the issue of defining the Dionysian triumph in Roman art in a very inclusive manner. For Boardman, the triumph of Dionysus 'affects almost all representations of the god for the rest of antiquity, and beyond, helped by the various enactments of it in a context of mortal triumphs and of mortal aspirations to divinity.'⁸⁷ This is congruent with Beard's opinion that as early as the first century B.C. the 'return' of Dionysus from his eastern campaigns had been permanently interpreted in the Roman world as the 'triumph' of Dionysus (in the technical, culturally Roman sense).⁸⁸ Hereafter all processions of Dionysus came to partake in his 'triumph' to a greater or a lesser extent. This leads Boardman to include images which *prima facie* do not seem primarily or even particularly concerned with the triumph proper. For example, scenes such as those which show Dionysus and Ariadne seated, with torch-bearing cupids, seem to simply be wedding processions.⁸⁹

In contrast to this inclusive methodology Friedrich Matz took a far more restrictive view. He considers the Indian triumph:

dargestellt in den Umzügen, die indische Gefangene und Beute mitführen, und (oder) in denen die Siegesgöttin neben Dionysos erscheint.⁹⁰

⁸⁷Boardman (2014) 27.

⁸⁸Beard (2007) 316-7.

⁸⁹This is especially noticeable in the cameos, Boardman (2014) 22-6.

⁹⁰*ASR* IV.4 560.

Matz considered bound Indian prisoners with booty, Victoria, or both, within a processional scene, as indicative of the triumphal sarcophagi. The discrepancy between these two scholars' work is probably due to Matz' intent to forge fine groupings for analytical purposes, Boardman's intention to survey across different genres, contexts and greatly different periods (even prior to the establishment of the triumph *qua* state ritual). Accepting, as I believe we must, that nearly all Roman depictions of 'Dionysian processions' partake to some extent in iconography of the triumph, nevertheless greater precision will be necessary for this study, in order to assemble the sarcophagi under discussion.

Victoria's presence in processions confirms triumphal scenes. But the parading of bound prisoners or booty is a common (but not compulsory) element of triumphal iconography.⁹¹ The prisoners are important, but I cannot, as Matz did, accept the presence of prisoners in scenes which show the decentralised, seated Dionysus as sufficient for inclusion in the triumphal group.⁹² I believe we can reject these. They only appear after the standing Dionysus group has ceased to be produced, and are localised in or just after the Gallienic period. They rescind the previously almost uniformly adhered-to preference for placing Dionysus at one edge. If it is correct that this awkward positioning (when centrality would seem otherwise desirable) is designed to promote links with monumental triumphal relief, then its rejection in the small, late 'seated Dionysus with prisoners' group seems to confirm

⁹¹Present in numismatic scenes, figs. 2.2a, 2.3c, 2.3d; absent in 2.2b, 2.2c, 2.2d.

⁹²*ASR* IV.2: 142, 143, 145, 146. This last piece was also considered triumphal by Graef (1886). IV.2: 103 is surely (as Matz (1968b) 244 suspected, though he did not place it as such in his catalogue) part of this seated-god Gallienic group.

the appropriateness of their exclusion from this study.⁹³ While recognising that the presence of prisoners makes for a strongly triumphal scene, I cannot accept that the absence of booty (surely paraded prisoners were a subset of that category?) precludes a triumphal scene, since display of booty was not compulsory in the other genres examined above.

The application of these criteria establishes a set of sarcophagi denoted in the catalogue through the prefix **A**.⁹⁴ But following Matz here leaves us in a strange position: we are outsourcing the definition of the Dionysian triumph to elements either added to or placed far after the chariot and its occupant, when numismatic and literary evidence suggests that it is precisely these that were the key elements of the triumphal iconography.

Following Matz' scheme and our criteria rigidly does not work flawlessly in practice; the boundaries it forms are not sharp but intensely diffuse. A sarcophagus in the Villa Medici (*ASR* IV.2: 130) is admitted as triumphal because grim prisoners march later in the scene, while the sarcophagus in Cambridge (*ASR* IV.2: 129), which presents the god, attendant satyr and

⁹³On centrality in the sarcophagi: *ASR* IV.2: 130 and 131 evidence experimentation with removing the focus on off-centre composition. They repeat much the same chariot and elephant motifs. However, in the second sarcophagus this whole group has been relocated to the centre of the scene. The translation to the centre of the field makes a lot of sense: it seems strange indeed that the divine leader of the procession should appear so far off at the edge, but this seems to be a rare (perhaps unparalleled) experiment.

⁹⁴Observe that Matz does not include sarcophagus 130 in his list of triumphal examples. Either this is a simple error on his part (it satisfies his criteria for inclusion), or else he has more rigidly applied his requirement for booty *as well as* prisoners than seems reasonable. Such a focus on booty may not even be supported by the evidence: Ryberg (1955) 146 proposes extremely plausibly that our focus on booty in triumphal relief is skewed by our interest in the arch of Titus, where booty is given unusual prominence because of the magnificence and significance of the spoils taken in that war; it may thus be a special case. The triumphality of sarcophagus 130 (hereafter A10) is beyond question: note the presence of the trumpeter just behind the sloping back of the first Indian prisoner, a conscious allusion to monumental relief (Matz (1968b) 270).

chariot form in almost exactly equivalent composition would be excluded because its eastern participants (in the form of the animals and magnificent elephant) march joyously. Certainly the Cambridge scene is less insistently triumphal than it would be had it included Victoria or prisoners, but it would be unsound to suggest that the scene overall (comprising in prime position almost the same compositional unit of Dionysus processing in the chariot) did not have a share in triumphal iconography: it too partakes in the mythology of the ‘Dionysian triumph’ and positions its imagery in accordance with the cultural perception of that rite. Likewise while in *ASR* IV.2: 101, where a drunken Hercules and Indian prisoners are marked as certainly triumphal by Victoria crowning the god, sarcophagus 140, with a similar Hercules, is excluded because Victoria is absent and the Indian riders are joyous. Should we exclude 131, where women appear in the position where we would expect male prisoners? If the scene is not triumphal, and he is not the *servus publicus* who accompanied the *triumphator* in the chariot, whom do we expect the satyr to be who stands next to the god in Boston?

The ‘triumphality’ of a scene, if such a crude term might be employed, was variable. Many sarcophagi present substantially the same scene as the strongly triumphal group, but lack the intensifying motifs of Victoria and prisoners. For the sake of clarity then, rather than through a desire to imply this division represents consistent direction in the meaning of the iconography, I group those sarcophagi which seem to satisfy the criteria for triumphal pieces except for presenting Victoria or Indian prisoners under a separate category. Among these (as for the previous group) there is great variation; some appear so triumphal that it seems needlessly fastidious to

group them separately, while others seem under analysis only superficially triumphal and actually directed very differently by their assembly and attunement. Nevertheless, since they all present a standing Dionysus and a largely unidirectional procession with exotic elements while not suggesting they are heading towards battle, the foundation of a city, the slumbering Ariadne or marriage, they are collected together under the prefix **B**. The design behind making the methods for generating the group under study so explicit is that it enables us to form a set which are apparently closely related, in order to explore the range of meaning even this related group can incorporate. Thus to summarise,

All admitted sarcophagi must:

1. Show Dionysus in the chariot,
2. Show neither Dionysus nor any chariot-occupant sitting or laying down,
3. Present figures suited to the Dionysian retinue (some or all of *maenads*, *satyrs*, *centaurs*, *Pan*),
4. Be composed of a unidirectional flow opposed only by the odd figure,
5. Not show the procession moving towards an external destination (e.g. Ariadne).

If they furthermore display either of the following they are admitted to group **A**, *Strongly Triumphal sarcophagi*:

6. Victoria crowning the god,

7. Bound prisoners in the retinue.

Otherwise they are admitted to group **B**, *Quasi-Triumphal sarcophagi*. The pieces under study are therefore as seen in the tables on p88.⁹⁵

This is a working-model which has evolved out of the material as presented. It is emphatically not an attempt to generate a causal typology, but rather to marshal a workable set with which to explore pressing questions about sarcophagi. The formal groups thus created do not represent semantic groups. By being so explicit about the methodology of generating this group, my intention was to derive a sieve with which to group together supposedly related and relatable sarcophagi against which to test their uniformity of meaning.⁹⁶ I do not describe the boundaries of this group in order to close it off in terms of its interpretation, nor do I wish to deny the obvious interrelation between different sarcophagus groups. I do not imply that the ancient viewer held in their head the details of various compositional possibilities for the Dionysian triumph and could consider and contrast them directly (though doubtless they were more familiar with the imagery and its possible uses and functions than we are).⁹⁷ Rather it is my intent to expose the range

⁹⁵This table only lists the pieces which are complete in their front relief to a sufficient extent to confirm that they satisfy the established criteria. No attempt has been made to give a catalogue raisonné of fragmentary possible triumphal sarcophagi, though these will be referenced in analysis where appropriate. The catalogue includes references to plates of the sarcophagi which are placed after each group. *ASR* IV.2: 94 has been tentatively admitted, though its prisoner is to be found in the shallow relief on the chariot. *ASR* IV.4: 341, which seems to satisfy these criteria, is a modern pastiche. It will be observed that the stipulation of a unidirectional flow excludes *clipeus* sarcophagi. These function in a slightly different manner, which will be discussed in section 5.3.3.1 though again, these pieces will be discussed throughout where appropriate.

⁹⁶In making explicit my intent in this manner, I hope to avoid the criticism sensibly levelled by Smith (2006) 97: ‘often it has been assumed that modern descriptions and typologies of figured artefacts (Types A, B, and C) correspond unproblematically to historical ancient categories.’

⁹⁷Koortbojian (2002) 194 discusses the (highly sophisticated) mental set ancient viewers

of modulation this related group could support. For modern viewers, that effect is best accessed via close comparison.⁹⁸

may have been expected to hold.

⁹⁸On this approach cf. Ewald (2010) 274-5.

| <i>Strongly Triumphal sarcophagi</i> | | <i>Quasi-Triumphal sarcophagi</i> | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| Catalogue | ASR IV no. | Catalogue | ASR IV no. |
| A1 | 95 | B1 | 106 |
| A2 | 96 | B2 | 107 |
| A3 | 97 | B3 | 108 |
| A4 | 98 | B4 | 112 |
| A5 | 99 | B5 | 113 |
| A6 | 100 | B6 | 114 |
| A7 | 101 | B7 | 116 |
| A8 | 105 | B8 | 117 |
| A9 | 115 | B9 | 118 |
| A10 | 130 | B10 | 119 |
| A11 | 131 | B11 | 120 |
| A12 | 138 | B12 | 124 |
| A13 | 139 | B13 | 125 |
| A14 | 141 | B14 | 129 |
| A15 | 58A | B15 | 140 |
| A16 | 94 | B16 | 151 |
| | | B17 | 58 |
| | | B18 | (Ann Arbor) |
| | | B19 | (Boston) |

Chapter 3

Analysis of motifs

It is clear that there cannot be a correct catch-all interpretation for the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi. Then how are we to explain sculptors' efforts at variation? Why do sculptors not simply copy without embellishment or modification? In what ways can individual parts be inflected, and what ranges of meaning can they support?

I intend to examine these questions by focussing on a selection of motifs from the Dionysian triumph and by exploring, with careful attention to their formal differences in style and composition, the ranges of meaning they can hold. I first test the motif of Dionysus in the chariot as a diagnostic criterion, with which to divide the sarcophagi, and find it to be insufficient for grouping whole reliefs. To probe whether this is a failing of using this motif as diagnostic tool or of the approach more widely, I then examine the animals pulling the chariot, which were used by Matz to divide the pieces. I show that the chariot animals are an insufficient category with which to divide the sarcophagi. After a study of animals in the procession more widely,

I examine the meaning of the prisoners, key drivers of the iconography towards association with the triumphal, probing them for the significance of the varied ethnicities which are echoed elsewhere in the reliefs. I next examine iconography of a religious nature, and consider its atmospheric meaning, before finally undertaking an analysis of the peculiar ‘secondary-protagonist’ in these sarcophagi: Hercules.

The reasons governing the choice of elements for analysis will become clear in the undertaking; however, not all elements examined here appear on all the sarcophagi, nor does their selection imply they are more significant. Selections were made here in an effort both to minimise repetition of previous or forthcoming elements within this work and to foreshadow those where appropriate. Omission of analysis of a particular motif does not imply its significance is lesser: I made selections in order to provide breadth but also depth. The holistic significance of the motifs in their combination and larger context will be discussed at length in the next chapter. Lastly, it remains to observe that the ordering of elements in this discussion was influenced by a desire to progress in a logical manner into and out of the triumphal parade, and not to reflect what the author considers symbolic weighting.

3.1 The chariot group

Dionysus himself, his brow bedecked with clusters of grapes,
shakes a spear covered with fronds of vine;
around him lay tigers and the empty likenesses of lynxes,

and savage bodies of decorated panthers.

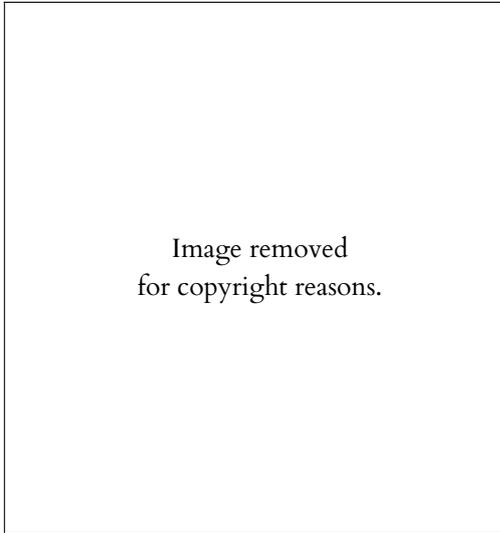
*ipse racemiferis frontem circumdatus uvis
pampineis agitat velatam frondibus hastam;
quem circa tigres simulacraque inania lyncum
pictarumque iacent fera corpora pantherarum.*

Ov. Met. 3.666-9.

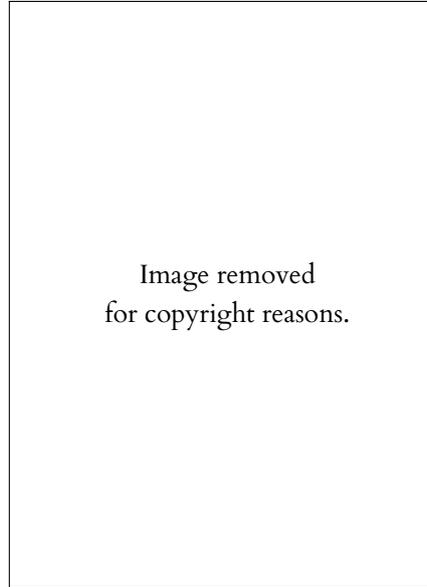
As outlined in the previous chapter, it is the figure of the god-general himself that I find to be the primary element localising triumphal imagery. I therefore begin from the figure of Dionysus, in order to tease out the significance of the various presentations of the god. I find that there are significant limitations on the utility of the figure-type as a criterion from which to diagnose the meaning of the wider relief. This methodology is fundamentally different from the prior approach, which I then tackle. Matz categorised the processional sarcophagi (of which the triumphal group are a part) according to the animal which pulls the chariot of the god, taking this as his fundamental criterion of division and analysis of transmission (as shown in the stemma reproduced in fig. 5.3). In making such divisions Matz implies that the creatures pulling the chariot are symptomatic of the relief's (wider) compositions; I test this, and find it likewise insufficient for categorising the meaning of sarcophagi.

3.1.1 The figure-types of Dionysus *triumphator*

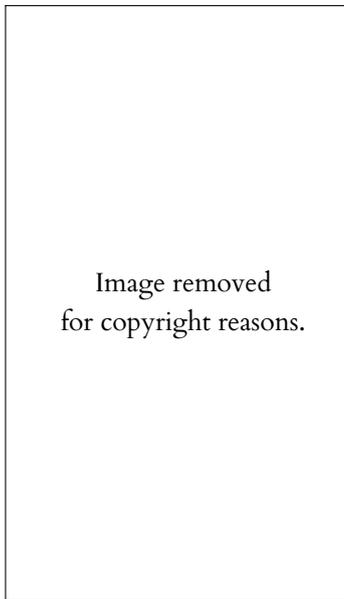
The corpus of Dionysian triumph sarcophagi encompasses four broad figure-types. The earliest is the Cambridge type, (fig. 3.1a), which is found in



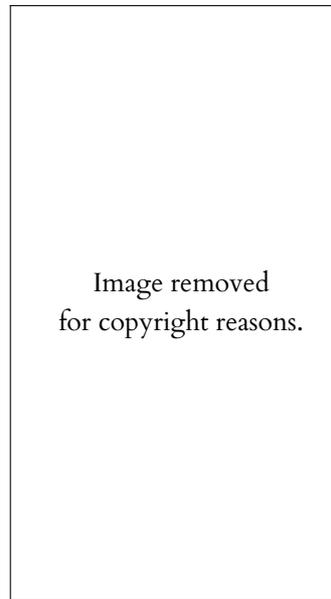
(a) Cambridge type, detail of B14. Image from Matz (1968b) pl. 144.1.



(b) S. Agostino type, detail of B7. Image from Matz (1968b) pl. 135.1.



(c) Lateran type, detail of A13. Image from Matz (1968b) pl. 160.1.



(d) Lyon type, detail of A7. Image from Matz (1968b) pl. 127.

3.1: Types of chariot depiction.

the later Hadrianic to mid-Antonine period.¹ The type is exemplified by the standing Dionysus (identifiable by his *thyrsus* and hairstyle), the subservient, bowed satyr and chariot team lead by a figure. The god stands upright in a box-like chariot and gazing forwards, while the satyr is generally bent. The chariot may be drawn by elephants or centaurs. In this type the postural differences suggest status-inequality rather than intoxication. If we account for the perspective technique, the chariot-form is redolent of that of Septimius Severus at Leptis Magna (fig. 2.1c). The Cambridge type can be found on a coin of Methymna in Lesbos (fig. 3.2a) from just the same period as this group of sarcophagi, and shows the same erect god in the distinctive frontal stance with exaggeratedly cowed satyr, though exchanging the elephants or centaurs for panthers. The coin suggests the iconography was not restricted to funerary uses (so I would urge wariness over ideas that the sarcophagi's primary thrust was towards a Dionysian rebirth or triumph of 'life over death').²

The Cambridge type is not in vogue for very long. The more popular S. Agostino type (fig. 3.1b) is found across the full chronological range of the group. Despite this the type is rather self contained, in that all the pieces bar one are of quasi-triumphal status and have a centaur as chariot-animal.³ The chariot has mutated into a more sharply sloped 'fast' vehicle, redolent of that of the Boscoreale cup (fig. 2.9). Dionysus has slimmed too, and now gazes backwards, sometimes nude. Early examples (as the S. Agostino) express

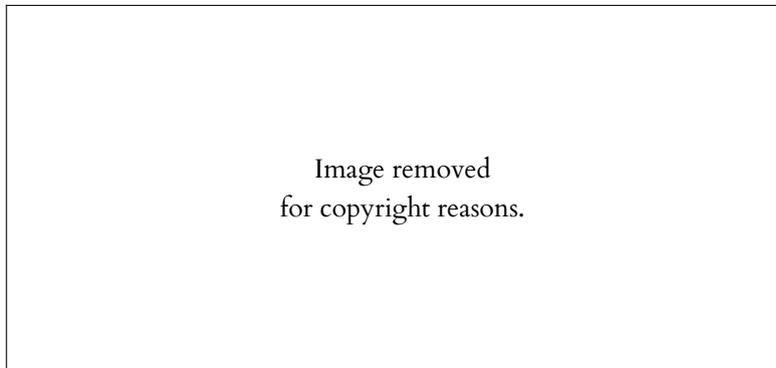
¹E.g. A10, A11; B14, B18.

²Methymna, in all likelihood, displays the scene because it was renowned for wine-production: Sil. *Pun.* 7.211.

³E.g. A9; B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, B10, B11, [B12?], B13, B16.



(a) AE37 of Methymna, 161-2. Obv: laureate, cuirassed bust of Marcus Aurelius, ΑΥ[Τ] ΚΑΙ ΜΑΡ ΑΥΡΗΑΙ []ΟΣ ΑΥΓΟ. Rev: Cambridge type Dionysus, ΣΤΡ ΓΑΙΟΥ ΜΑΘΥΜΝ. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, inv. no. 29077. Image <http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/9752/> [accessed 10/10/14].



(b) AE42 of Cyzicus, 191-2. Obv: laureate, draped bust of Commodus, ΑΥ ΚΑΙ Λ ΑΙ ΚΟΜΜΟΔΟC ΕΥ ΡΩΜ ΗΕΡΑΚΛΗC. Rev: S. Agostino type Dionysus, ΚΥΖΙΚΗΝΩΝ ΝΕΟΚΟΡΩΝ. Private collection. Image <http://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/coins/4/741/> [accessed 10/10/14].

3.2: Comparison of Dionysus types on coins.

an exaggerated contrapposto which somewhat softens towards the end of the group. Dionysus is supported by a bolder satyr, with whom he seems to be on very intimate terms — in some instances (e.g. B3) this intimacy is such that he seems to go beyond his analogue as the slave who reminded the *triumphator* of his mortality (as is much more obvious in the status-difference in the Cambridge type). Instead, the adoring gaze of the satyr seems to touch on the erotic; the conjunction of his naked form, in most cases, with the nudity of the god, creates an intriguing intimacy. This is enhanced by the framing drapery or *parapetasma* behind the figures. We find the sinuous Dionysus in provincial coins, but he gazes forward and the adoring satyr is absent (see fig. 3.2b). Though iconographically the semblance is clear, the import of the figure in the coin is driven nearer to the journeying god. This is the most popular figure type selected for quasi-triumphal scenes, as the effete, sexual presentation of the god offers a ready means for the artist to explore rather less martial imagery.

The third type, the Lateran (fig. 3.1c), is localised within the Severan period.⁴ The contrapposto has changed to a forward lean, which gives a suggestion of pace, though the rearward gaze is maintained. Those of this type which are of group A invariably position Victoria before the god, facing backwards in the chariot. Group A and B pieces may depict panthers or elephants as the chariot-team. Dionysus has now become clothed, with a well-defined *zona*. Its frequent pointed shape (not found in the Lateran piece) is extremely feminine, as is the voluminous clothing clasped at the top of the shoulders and teamed with a long-sleeved tunic (the dress itself may

⁴E.g. A2, A12, A13, A14; B15, B17, B19.

be a *stola* or *chiton*).⁵ The god's chest has also swelled into an ample bust.

Dionysus' breasts may appear odd for a *triumphator*, but they are merely a continued expression of the androgynous Dionysus which in this context can first be detected on a fragment from the 150s, and well before in others.⁶ At least one text implies that this androgyny is Dionysus' most significant characteristic.⁷ It is not problematic for the god to be effeminate since he was functioning within his sphere, nor does there exist a simple equation of effeminacy as an undesirable virtue in the Roman mind (in fact at times it seems to have been a desirable expression of status and role).⁸

Finally the Lyon type (fig. 3.1d) is exclusively of group A and found from the late Antonine period to the end of the series; panther-teams predominate, but centaurs can be found.⁹ It is characterised by the erect stance over the forward lean. A greater number of figures now appear behind Dionysus in the chariot. The femininity of the Lateran type is continued, and sometimes made more manifest by contrast with a very butch satyr (as in A5, and in B19 of the Lateran type). The Lateran and Lyon types are not reflected in coin issues, which may be because the type is more closely attuned to state-relief. More likely, however, it reflects the fact that the Lateran and Lyon type drive the iconography so close to triumphal imagery that it was not considered a desirable or relevant in provincial issues.

Most of these types involve Dionysus standing in a chariot and holding a

⁵Cf. Dionysus on the Pergamon altar.

⁶A16. He is the 'girlish god' in Ov. *Met.* 3.603-5, the 'effeminate stranger' in Eur. *Bacch.* 353. He exposes a fully female breast in mosaics (Lenzen (1960) 2), in the silver relief discussed by Alexander (1955) 65, and certain of the textiles, Lenzen (1960) 2-4.

⁷*Priapeia* 36.3.

⁸Birk (2010) 242 and cf. Kampen (1996).

⁹A1, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8 (centaur), A15.

staff. The staff of the *triumphator* was the *scipio eburneus*. This is refracted in the Dionysian presentation into the ubiquitous *thyrsus*, and the god thus holds a contextually appropriate alternative, one fitted to his divinity.¹⁰

In general we cannot use individual motifs as diagnostic criteria for the rest of the relief. We can draw broad observations — for example, that the S. Agostino type is rarely fully triumphal or that panthers (mostly) predominate the Lyon type — but the sarcophagi defy such simplistic categorisation, and the rest of the scenes vary greatly. Moreover, this is less a diagnostic classification and more a descriptive division of the extant pieces. Outlying examples are ill-served by the typology. A16 for example seems to evidence a transition from the Cambridge to Lateran types. Supporting their excision from the triumphal group most *clipeus* sarcophagi maintain the same languorous pose which is itself distinct from these types,¹¹ though some utilise the Cambridge¹² or S. Agostino type.¹³

3.1.1.1 The significance of the averted gaze

After the Cambridge type, all the sarcophagi present Dionysus gazing in the opposite direction to that in which the procession moves; in only a few examples does the god gaze forward.¹⁴ These pieces are experimental in other respects (also attempting an interesting bracketing of the Hercules motif, a novel grove-scene and a second charioteer respectively). In general the natural forward gaze was rejected in the early Antonine period. The compo-

¹⁰Gabelmann (1992) 64.

¹¹IV.4: 260, 268-70, 272-3.

¹²IV.4: 265.

¹³IV.4: 261, 263, 271, 275.

¹⁴A3 (Lyon-type), A9 (Cambridge-type), B10 (S. Agostino-type).

sitional difficulty with the retrograde posture was recognised, and solutions attempted, but the series reverts to it. What might be the reason behind this insistence?

The retrograde gaze is balanced by the end-figure moving round the edge and works to dissolve the physical limitations of the marble to promote a sense of fluid procession (especially noticeable in A1). Another reason may be found in the famous but enigmatic injunction associated with the triumph, to ‘look behind you’.¹⁵ If this were a more important part of the actual process of the triumph than is usually realised, then this would explain why such an apparently trivial command (‘look behind you’) is reproduced alongside the seemingly more significant second part (‘and remember you are mortal’).¹⁶ While the retrograde gaze cannot be found in grand state relief, it does appear in a cameo depicting Hadrian being crowned by Victoria, where he gazes back from the chariot direction, and in a honey-cake mould depicting Marcus Aurelius in triumph; the emperor turns his gaze as he passes through the *porta triumphalis*.¹⁷ Its rejection by state-relief may be explicable by the similar lack of interest in depicting the slave in the chariot.

3.1.2 The chariot teams

The chart, fig. 3.3, shows the sarcophagi divided by animals pulling the chariot and displayed by estimated date range.¹⁸ As we see, it is difficult

¹⁵Tert. *Apol.* 33.4, Jer. *Ep.* 39.2.8, Arr. *Epict. diss.* 3.24.85, Zonar. *Epitome* 7.21.

¹⁶See also Ryberg (1955) 142n5.

¹⁷Aquincum museum, inv. no. 51.595, la Rocca and Tortorella (2008) 144.

¹⁸It is not the intent of these charts, which reoccur in this work, to imply precise accuracy or mathematical abstraction. The intent is merely to represent the dates allotted approximately to the pieces in a visual form, more easily to display chronology. I have consequently deliberately refrained from giving fine gradations on the y-axes.

to discern any great diachronic preference for particular yoked animals beyond broad outlines. The dataset does not allow us to make any convincing case beyond general observances such as that the panther series enjoys more popularity a little later than the others, while the centaur series was popular early on and is the most frequent.

But given that these types are modern constructions, with the inherent utility and limitations thereof, we should not be surprised to observe that animal motifs are transmissible across the borders of types — in fact are rather strongly traded; the boundaries between the groups are porous, and cross-fertilisation occurs. For example, the lion pacing forwards and turning to the viewer on the Lyon sarcophagus occupies a slightly awkward gap in front of the elephant's leg, a technique which is employed with little variation in front of the centaur's leg in a piece from the Vatican.¹⁹ The same prisoner-bearing camels appear in the panther series piece in Cliveden and in the elephant series piece in the Villa Doria Pamphili.²⁰

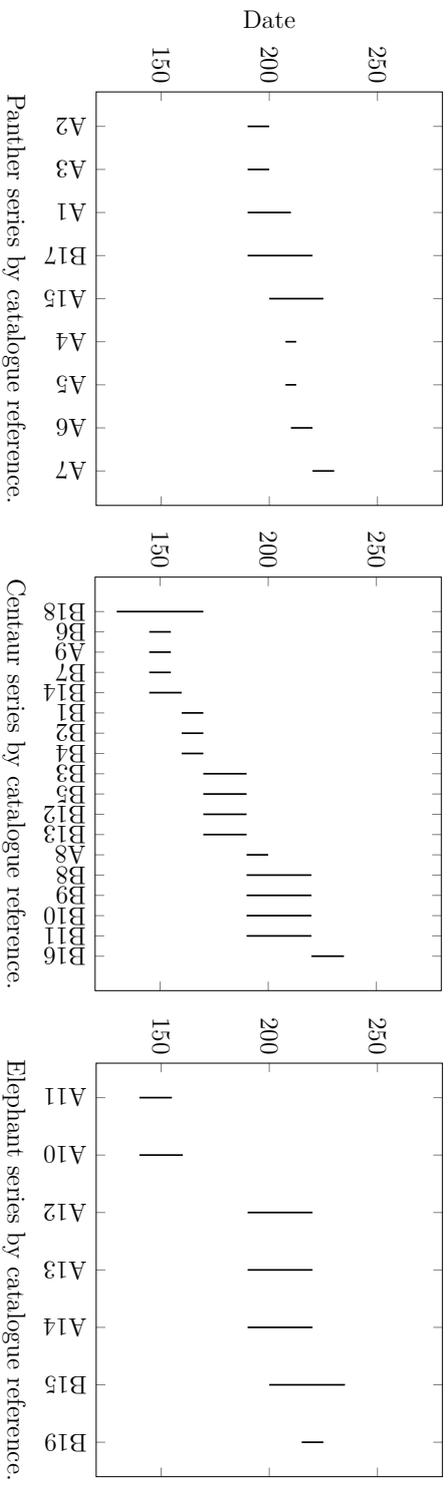
Let us try, then, to split the sarcophagi by the animal team which pulls the chariot, considering the broad sorts of scenes which follow; particular attention will be paid, in this breakdown, to the presence of other species of pack-animals within the scene.

3.1.2.1 The panther series

This is the group which represents the greatest number and variety of animals. Examples tend to lay their emphasis on the exoticism of the procession;

¹⁹A7, A8.

²⁰A5, A14.



3.3: Chart of the dates for the triumph sarcophagi by yoke team.

the processions mostly (but not invariably) include an elephant later in the procession, which frequently bears prisoners on its back (see p123). Camels sometimes appear sufficiently near to the elephants to suggest they might bear some prisoners, but this is perhaps a collision of discrete motifs.

In one instance, the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus (A6), Hercules appears in a later chariot pulled by centaurs. While unusual to the series, this seems more appropriate for the hero than the Dionysian panthers, given Hercules' mythological dealings with this difficult race.²¹

3.1.2.2 The elephant series

Unlike centaurs and panthers, elephants were actually used in historical triumphs.²² The elephant series is in general far more anthropocentric.²³ Hercules, especially drunken, is popular in this series, and so too are diminutive figures and exaggerated scaling of *putti* and Pans. We also find barbarian riders in this series, including rather grown up ones.²⁴

Sculptors normally get around the difficulties of translating the harness, which was designed for equine anatomy, to the larger beast by dispensing with representing it altogether and settling for implying a connection between the elephant and the chariot. As so often, artists preferred conceptual consistency to naturalism.²⁵ A naturalistically scaled double team of elephants would

²¹On the ancestry of this motif see Matz (1955). There is one *clipeus* panther sarcophagus, IV.4: 265.

²²Östenberg (2009) 173.

²³A10, A13, A14, B15, B19.

²⁴B15, A14.

²⁵This approach can be found as far back as a fourth-century *pelike* attributed to the Pasithea painter (Beazley no. 230398, Musée du Louvre MNB1036) which depicts the chariot drawn by a bull, a panther and a gryphon but defies their respective anatomies to make them more suitable to pulling.

appear too large for the *currus triumphalis*. Consequently they are scaled and compressed; in some cases the elephants would be unable to pace adequately without fouling the chariot's movements (B19). In these the elephant is skewed forward at an exaggeratedly oblique angle, with its rear foot placed behind the chariot it is pulling (an impracticable position in reality). But in others they are reduced in scale still more (e.g. A14).

Sarcophagi do not always work on an internally consistent scale: a lion might be the same size as a *putto* later in the procession. Nevertheless, when elements are combined they tend to work on the same scale — a lion will tend to look about the correct size relative to Silenus if Silenus is engaging with it. But it is unusual to see scaling of elements within an internally consistent motif, as is the case with the chariot and the chariot-animal. I believe this is due to the influence of familiarity with the size of horses on the part of the artist. Panthers are sometimes scaled up, while elephants are frequently scaled down. Since the chariot and Dionysus need to be of a certain size to fill the height, the animals must seem neither too massive nor too puny to oblige. Evidence for this is provided by the centaurs; as the creatures closest to the horses for which the real chariot was made they fit the chariot most convincingly. Even here, the odd hoof strays behind the chariot itself, though never as much as in the elephant series. Especially after the late Antonine *Stilwandel* this probably reflects *horror vacui* winning out over concerns regarding naturalism.

3.1.2.3 The centaur series

The centaur series is the most numerous and permits of the most variations. The following broad trends will give an overview of their composition. The most common scene the centaur team presages is that where Silenus rides on a donkey or in a donkey-pulled chariot; in both cases the animal stumbles forward.²⁶ But Silenus' presence is not invariable.²⁷ We also see Silenus riding the donkey more successfully, looking slightly alarmed but relatively sober.²⁸ A very similar scene appears at the end of a sarcophagus in the Villa Medici, from the elephant series.²⁹ Broadly, though, these sarcophagi tend to focus more on the bibulous side of the deity. Those *clipeus* sarcophagi with the standing Dionysus overwhelmingly show centaur teams.

In the centaurs' form the sculptor seems to make more or less obvious allusion to the form of the Furietti centaurs, a learned quotation for the ancient viewer to detect.³⁰ Centaurs are suitable for Dionysus, but Hercules is also associated with them. In the Woburn sarcophagus (A6), Dionysus therefore gets a panther team while Hercules has centaurs. Nevertheless the opposite occurs too, where the sleek panthers were deemed more suitable for Ariadne in the chariot while these boisterous, ribald creatures pull Dionysus' chariot (A9).³¹

²⁶B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B8.

²⁷B9.

²⁸B7.

²⁹A10.

³⁰From Hadrian's villa, Capitoline Museums, signed by Aristias and Papias of Aphrodisias.

³¹On Hercules' chariot pulled by centaurs see Matz (1955). Note *ASR* IV.2: 115 is inconsistent, identifying the female charioteer as both Ariadne and Semele.

3.1.3 The dangers of using motifs as diagnostic criteria

Beyond the above broad trends, it is difficult to use the chariot teams as a diagnostic tool with which to predict the rest of the scene. Efforts to do so offer a viewpoint with too fine a granularity — they only tell us about the pieces they name.³² Sometimes, elephant-team sarcophagi focus on assembling different creatures — the Boston sarcophagus (B19) has a lion, panthers, giraffe, and goat. Conversely in one of the Lateran sarcophagi (A13) the animals are contained generally within the elephant chariot-group, and the rest of the relief promotes the abandon of the revellers — handsome boys ride so fast their cloaks stream behind them, while maenads, satyrs and a centaur frolic.

Whatever creature pulls the chariot, *putti* riding on their back are a popular motif. Their presence is an allusion to triumphal practice which links the scenes with the triumph, since the young sons of the general would ride in just such a position in the triumphal parade.³³

This does not mean their presence heralds a strongly military scene. The chariot-animal riding *putti* often introduce scenes with a heavier focus on sympotic elements.³⁴ By contrast, the presence of Victoria would naturally be thought to herald a scene more focussed on the trappings of the campaign, such as a strong, sober Hercules or conquered prisoners, but this is not always the case either.³⁵ In fact riding *putti* and Victoria can be found in both strongly martial *and* strongly sympotic sarcophagi. In the Lyon sarcophagus

³²E.g. Kondoleon (1994) 195n6.

³³See Ryberg (1955) 21. Cic. Mur. 11, Val. Max. 5.7.1, Suet. *Tib.* 6.4. Adult sons rode in the chariot: Tac. *Ann.* 2.41 (Germanicus), Livy 45.40.8 (Aemilius Paulus) and cf. e.g. the Leptis triumph relief.

³⁴See B1, B2, B3, B9, B11, B19.

³⁵As A1, A2, A6, A14, A9 (note here the re-emergence of prisoners).

(A7) we find Victoria but a rather drunken Hercules, while in one of the Villa Medici pieces (A10) the *putti* introduce a sombre scene of paraded prisoners.³⁶ The S. Agostino figure type, which here only introduces quasi-triumphal scenes, is utilised for some of the most strongly martial *clipeus* sarcophagi.³⁷ It is vitally important for us to take the measure of whole scenes, rather than anticipate overall composition from individual parts.

3.2 Animals in the procession

Animals crowd the sarcophagi. They pull the chariot of the god, carry prisoners on their backs, bother satyrs for wine, and march along under the influence of Dionysus.

Boundaries between sarcophagus types seem to be porous. Pursuing them far can lead to precise histories of the cross-fertilisation between the groups that add no new information, and are forced to give conclusions which tell us about what that group of pieces do and nothing more. This section, then, will attempt to cut through this by considering broad groups of motifs on their own terms, being sensitive to compositional trends and narrative intent, but also to the use and, it may not be too much to say, misuse of the animals within scholarship.

³⁶Cf. A6 and A7, where both Victoria and riding *putti* appear in very differently toned scenes.

³⁷IV.4: 261, 263, (275?).

3.2.1 The species

The majority of the animals on the sarcophagi are famed for being somewhat fierce, but in most cases these have been sculpted in wholly pacific postures; they are calm, almost tamed. Wild animals renowned for their savagery becoming docile celebrants creates an easily interpretable message of idyll. The effect is one which is familiar to us even now; often our rhetoric of idyll constructs worlds where uneasy bedfellows frolic together. As explored in section 1.1.1, a closely comparable construction existed within Roman visual culture.³⁸ In other cases Dionysus' animals seem conscious of their wild state, but exist in a world where it is subordinated. Though they arch, snarl, and snap their jaws, they still partake in the organised procession under (modest) protest. The aim is probably to show the strength of Dionysus to dominate the barely-controllable creatures, in a manner which would be less obvious were they depicted as tame.

In the Roman mind few of the animals bear allegiance only to Dionysus. Nevertheless his most familiar and ardent animal followers were big cats of any species.³⁹ But there are a great variety of other animals on the sar-

³⁸Also see the pleasure-park painted on a wall of the truncated peristyle in the house of Romulus and Remus at Pompeii, Zanker (1998) 185, fig. 106. Compare Hor. *Epod.* 16.33, Verg. *Ecl.* 4.22-3, and the Sibylline Oracles 3.791-4.

³⁹Mart. 14.107, 8.26, Ov. *Pont.* 2.9.31, Ov. *Met.* 668-9, Stat. *Theb.* 7.564-608, Verg. *G.* 2.380; see Bömer (1969) 610ff. Matz persists in identifying the species as tigers. I use panther to denote a non-lion big cat without specific identification; in many cases such identification does not seem of concern to the artist over and above association with a big cat. Such was the independent finding of Jácome (2013) in her extensive study of this issue. I cannot however agree this indifference reflects a 'lack of skills' (528). Her wider conclusions (that the 'tigers' are feminine because in Latin/Greek the word is grammatically feminine, and that this also echoes the maenads' gender), seem uncertain. In the first instance the argument from grammatical to natural gender would seem to me a little strong. In the latter, her focus on the feminine seems to ignore the presence of the satyrs.

cophagi, such as snakes, elephants, giraffes, donkeys, horses, eagles. In some instances the animals are depicted with sufficient naturalism that scholars such as Toynbee wish to identify the species (often through discussion of historical appearances at triumphal parades or the games); the elephants in particular have aroused interest, since they seem more often to be African than Indian.⁴⁰ Given the depiction of some of the *other* creatures in Dionysian sarcophagi (a sarcophagus which presents highly dubious ‘panthers’ forms a pertinent example) we should not assume that naturalism was of prime concern to the artist nor that geographical attribution had much relevance in the funerary context.⁴¹

Camels and giraffes have no place in the real geography of India. The conflation of Indian and African fauna creates a fantastic foreign and exotic ‘other’; the intensity of the exoticism is heightened by the accretion of different animals to a level entering the fabulous. The effect is also found in the fashion for garden paintings which show improbably verdant and lush scenes with trees offering their fruit regardless of seasons, or those which depict rare birds flocked together, who would in reality be found in far different locations.⁴² In the sarcophagi I would argue the animals’ geographic origin, be it African or Indian, was less important than their exoticism.

Otto wished to see in the kinds of animals Dionysus appears with a reflection of his double nature, a literal manifestation of his ‘bimorphic’ character:

Even the animals who accompany him and in whose forms he himself

⁴⁰Toynbee (1973) 48-9.

⁴¹*ASR* IV.2: 88, D20; for the inevitable counterexample see p263.

⁴²E.g. Roberts (2013) fig. 161 from the House of the Golden Bracelet, and several from the House of Sallust, Zanker (1998) 174-6, figs. 98-9. Cf. modern fantasies of the ‘pole’, with penguins and polar bears together.

appears from time to time stand in sharp contrast to one another, with the one group (the bull, the goat, the ass) symbolizing fertility and sexual desire, and the other (the lion, the panther, the lynx) representing the most bloodthirsty desire to kill.⁴³

This broad division does not work for the sarcophagi. Not only do the supposedly savage creatures not always seem so savage (e.g. A3) but the apparently lustful animals, as far as our sarcophagi show them, do not seem to be overtly lustful (see below on Silenus' donkeys). In fact, we have already seen how supposedly standard depictions of idyllic frolicking could turn into violence.

Dispensing then with the idea of using animals as diagnostic motifs for the wider relief, I shall in the following section analyse those animals which have been seen in the scholarship as lacking a (religious) significance and hence merely being set-dressing, with regard to establishing why the sculptor bothers with them. Then, I will consider those animals which have been interpreted as supportive of a predominantly eschatological interpretation of the sarcophagi, ultimately finding this not as simple as it may be thought.

3.2.2 Animals and the exotic

Let us consider the appearance of animals beyond the chariot team and within the processions themselves.

⁴³Otto (1965) 110-1.

3.2.2.1 Elephants

Familiar from historical triumphs, the elephant recommends itself to the sarcophagi because of its eastern connotations.⁴⁴ They could be invoked to call to mind both, as for example in the little-discussed painting of the triumph of Cybele from the front of the *caupona* of Fabius Memor in Pompeii. The Romans generally describe the elephant as a rather dignified, even sensitive beast; authors recount a certain justness concerning the avenging of their mistreatment by Pompey.⁴⁵ Plutarch provides various moving, sentimental, or credulous examples of the tenderness and rectitude of the elephant.⁴⁶ Conversely, they were seen as the enemy's weapon of choice against Dionysus during his expedition:

In a hurry they [the Indians] took up their weapons and, when they'd saddled their elephants, set up the towers, and put their bridles on, they marched out against them.

ἐνταῦθα ἤδη σπουδῇ ἀνελάμβανον τὰ ὄπλα καὶ τοὺς ἐλέφαντας ἐπισάξαντες καὶ ἐγγαλινώσαντες καὶ τοὺς πύργους ἀναθέμενοι ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἀντεπεξήεσαν.

Lucian *Dionysos* 3.

For these reasons Amedick is surely wrong in supposing that that the elephants of a comparable sarcophagus (A1) recalled for a late second century

⁴⁴On triumphal elephants see Östenberg (2009) 173-84.

⁴⁵Plin. *HN* 8.7.20, Sen. *de brevitate vitae* 13, Cass. Dio 62.16.

⁴⁶*Moralia, de sollertia animalium, passim* (it seems they were even considerate lovers, 18).

viewer the elephants of *Republican* military experience over more contemporary artistic and literal appearances of the beasts.⁴⁷

In texts elephants might be charming foreign monsters, weapons of war, emblems of *luxuria*, and varying combinations of the intersections of these.⁴⁸ This is reflected in their polyvalent characterisation in the sarcophagi, where they may be outlined as violent opponents (A6, A15, where they attack the panthers), docile celebrants (A3, A11 where they play with panthers), or *exotica* (A2, B14 where they are garlanded or richly caparisoned).

Alternatively, Toynbee saw in the elephants a symbol of ‘light’ and of ‘eternity’, because of their longevity, extending this further to seeing them as allusions to a victory of life over death.⁴⁹ This seems to go beyond their presentation here. While the elephant might be long-lived, it makes a poor analogy for ‘eternal life’ for the incumbent patron, who was in that literal sense very much dead. Nor does it account for the tusks paraded as booty on the sarcophagi, emblematic of the despoilment of vanquished (and one might add therefore, dead) elephants. Besides, other animals were more usually perceived as long- (and longer-) lived.⁵⁰ At any rate seeing them as symbols of ‘eternity’ is not sensitive to variations in their characterisation.

In some they are massive and frightening creatures made into docile celebrants; in others, subjugated emblems of the east. Studies such as Östenberg’s, which give a diachronic change in attitudes towards elephants, while thorough and authoritative, degrade in utility when looking at the triumph

⁴⁷Amedick (2010) 37.

⁴⁸As weapons of war: Cass. Dio 43.8.1-2, 60.21.2, 74.16.2-5 (as emblems of the east corrupted through *luxuria*), Livy 37, 39-44, Toynbee (1973) 33-8.

⁴⁹Toynbee (1973) 44.

⁵⁰Hesiod frag. 304, or the thousand year old hind, Sil. *Pun.* 13.126-36.

sarcophagi due to the contextual and experiential nature of their iconography, necessitating a case-by-case interpretation sensitive to their role within the network (see section 1.5).

3.2.2.2 Lions

Lions, like all big cats, are Dionysian creatures. They appear on nearly all of the triumphal sarcophagi but again support different functions in the processions.

One: Their most basic use, and a use which they do not shed in the other appearances, is as an exotic element, marching peaceably in the god's retinue.⁵¹ Their acquiescence (and thus the potency of the god) is amplified by having them ridden. We find several *putti* on their backs, and Silenus exchanges his more usual donkey-mount for the nobler beast.⁵² In the Villa Medici sarcophagus (A10) the artist has replaced Silenus' lion with the sleeker panther. This makes a far more striking contrast between the corpulent figure and the sleeker beast, but it also suggests that the artist did not attach great interpretative significance to Silenus' mount being a lion rather than simply a big-cat. This frees him to employ the lion later on in the procession for the second use to which they are put.

Two: Like the elephants, lions are used to demonstrate idyllic mingling among humans and animals. Pan and satyrs both rather brusquely tousle lions' manes, and thus try and prove the extreme docility of the beast under Dionysus' sway. We also find this with Silenus, presumably for the

⁵¹A8, B4, B10, A13.

⁵²B9; A2. An adult male lion probably could support a man's weight on its back — if it could be convinced.

contrast between drunken bumbling and latent ferocity, though most often this meaning is supported through showing the more puny and vulnerable *putti* undertaking this feat of bravery.⁵³ Corroborating the theory that the artist did not see the lions as outside the set of big-cats (even though the lion motifs are relatively stable), we find the tousling scene with a panther in the Palazzo Mattei sarcophagus.⁵⁴

The *third* use is the boldest. In the S. Agostino sarcophagus (B7) where an ithyphallic Pan grabs the lion sharply it seems the confidence-display has spilled over into rough-handling. In three other pieces we find a *putto*, a scaled-down satyr and a full sized satyr seemingly poised to beat a docile lion with a *lagobolon*. But the scene is not as it first appears. In the Woburn Abbey example (A6), weighing the positioning of the figures suggests the diminutive satyr is not striking the lion but the elephant, which as we have explored is crushing the Dionysian panther. In the Doria Pamphili piece (B15), the *putto* mimics the movements of the barbarian boys riding the elephants and there is the suggestion that it is guiding the beast benevolently — thus the frightening lion is taking guidance from the diminutive and chubby *putto*, and the scene is evocative of idyll.⁵⁵ This is confirmed by appeal to the Baltimore sarcophagus (A1), where the different posture of the satyr-*mahout* is nevertheless copied by the satyr next to the lion.

⁵³B19; A3, A5, perhaps A7 (damaged, but a hand seems to remain in the mane).

⁵⁴B11.

⁵⁵The apparent link between the *putti* playing with the lion and Arcesilaus' sculpture group of the same overall composition (Plin. *Nat. hist.* 36.41) is tempting, but probably spurious.

3.2.2.3 Camels and *camelopards*

Giraffes can be found peeping over the top of the procession. Their usual form is linear, with spots indicated through drill-work and their lower parts assumed, though sometimes effort is made to depict spindly legs.⁵⁶

By contrast the Villa Medici sarcophagus (A10) presents a rather chunky giraffe; under comparison with the Palazzo Giustiniani piece (A4) I suspect this reflects contamination with camel motifs (to which the Romans believed giraffes were related).⁵⁷ Camels nearly always occur in close proximity to the elephants, such that sometimes it is difficult to discern whether the prisoners are sat on the former beast or the latter.⁵⁸ Indeed, one of the Doria Pamphili sarcophagi (A14) actually shows them riding the camels, while their favoured youths ride the elephants.⁵⁹

3.2.3 Animals and the symbolic?

We briefly considered whether elephants are markers of a belief in eternal life and found the evidence less strong than has been suggested. Let us examine several other motifs which have been similarly interpreted in the past.

3.2.3.1 Rams and goats

Rams' heads often occur on the ends of the sarcophagi and in the processions themselves, either littering the ground or on altars, and so Lehmann-

⁵⁶A1, A2, B19. In A1 the interaction between the complex surface from the drillwork and any paint must have been intriguing.

⁵⁷Toynbee (1973) 141-2.

⁵⁸A3, A5, A7.

⁵⁹See further, section 3.3.

Hartleben and Olsen wished to see the ram's head as a religious element. It is somewhat surprising, however, that they wish to pin it down to communicating that the iconography is aimed towards Sabazius, and that it is the 'one element that has enabled modern scholars to identify a great number of representations and votive objects of this particular god.'⁶⁰ This is especially surprising given not only the presence of the ram's head on sarcophagi which have nothing to do with Sabazius (nor for that matter Dionysus), but also its frequent absence on those objects which *do* relate to Sabazius.⁶¹

The ram's head could signify military prowess, but here the head lies on an altar, and is probably there to indicate a sacrifice.⁶² Sacrifice, though of a bull, was an integral part of the triumphal ritual.⁶³ But there was a tradition that those celebrating victory with an *ovatio* (rather than a full triumph) would sacrifice a sheep (folk etymology linking the two).⁶⁴ Whether this distinction was of concern to the ancient viewers, or they merely valued the pious sacrificial enactment in the funerary realm, we cannot be certain.

Live goats tend to appear in two types of scenes. In one, they are man-handled by a satyr or butting heads with Pan, a broadly comic scene.⁶⁵ This may reflect the idea that goats were inimical to Dionysus, since they are fond of eating his grapes; they were therefore sacrificed to him.⁶⁶ Thus we find

⁶⁰Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen (1942) 22; cf. 46.

⁶¹E.g. ram's head on the Orestes sarcophagus, Keuls (1970) fig. 9. Rams' heads only appear on 16 of the 30 votive hands assessed by Lane (1980).

⁶²Maxfield (1981) 98.

⁶³Gabelmann (1992) 62.

⁶⁴Plut. *Marc.* 22.4, Beard (2007) 315 doubts the etymology, but its veracity is not here what matters.

⁶⁵B7; B15.

⁶⁶Verg. *G.* 2.392-6, Mart. *Epigrams* 3.24, Hor. *Carm.* 3.8.1-8, Serv. ad *Aen.* 8.43, 343, Ov. *Fast.* 1.354-60.

their other use within idyllic scenes, positively scampering towards the altar or suffering *putti* to tickle their chins.⁶⁷

3.2.3.2 Snakes

Snakes themselves are intimately associated with Dionysus, but rare outside the *cista mystica* from which they are usually emerging (for a definition and analysis of which see 3.4). In the Baltimore sarcophagus (A1) one slithers down a rocky outcrop, but the artist has sculpted it in the same manner as the snake escaping the *cista mystica* at the right of the piece. On the lid, the infant Dionysus has conjured a snake, a chthonic creature, out of a rock, but the origins of the motif in the *cista mystica* are even to be seen here. Snakes will be best explored in the context of the *cista mystica* then. It will suffice here to offer one observation against a religious, particularly Sabazian interpretation of the snakes.

Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen write that

more than any other of the creatures in this zoological garden, the snake, not well fitted to keep pace with such procession, deserved a religious explanation.⁶⁸

One might observe that however slow a slithering snake may be, it is still better able to keep up with the procession than the (non-Sabazian) wine-jars, herms, and cymbals which are strewn along the ground.

A significant part of Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen's identification of the Licinian sarcophagi as belonging to adherents of the Sabazius-cult involves

⁶⁷A13; A6.

⁶⁸Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen (1942) 28.

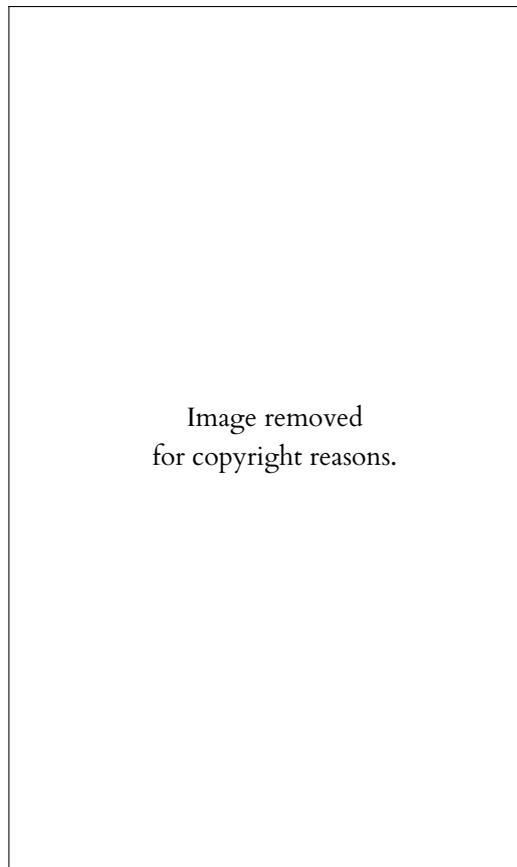
the tree at the far right of the Baltimore sarcophagus (A1), which bears several animals. At the base a snake enters through a hole; it emerges higher up to bite the tail of a scurrying lizard, while in the leaves at the top some eagles nest. Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen claim an eagle is *also* to be found in the tree at the right hand end of the Pashley sarcophagus (B14).⁶⁹ Yet as we observe in fig. 3.4 no such eagle can be found. When their reference to Pashley's original publication is followed up, it transpires that he was speaking about not the sarcophagus but the next item in his discussion, a terracotta lamp — an astonishing error.⁷⁰

Does the eagle, snake and tree motif have Sabazian overtones? There *is* a superficial parallel between the scene on the Baltimore sarcophagus and a motif on a metal plaque attributed to the Sabazius-cult, now in the Copenhagen museum.⁷¹ Yet it is only superficial. The eagle and the snake on the plaque are not really even part of the same motif; the lizard is attempting to flee, the snake to capture and devour it, while the eagles merely roost. In the sarcophagus, the snake pursues a lizard, while the plaque shows no lizard in the scene. The sarcophagus' tree is verdant and in full leaf, that on the plaque a stump. The eagles in the sarcophagus roost with young, in the plaque the single eagle holds a wreath in a heraldic manner. Most damning, however, seems to be that due to the eclectic and highly overlapping iconography of Sabazius, we cannot use such superficial similarities to posit a primary significance in religio-mystic terms. As Lane concludes after an enormous survey of the data, 'Dionysus is *never* identified with Sabazius,

⁶⁹Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen (1942) 29n57.

⁷⁰Pashley (1837) 18-19.

⁷¹See Lane (1980) 16.



3.4: Detail of Pashley sarcophagus (B14) at the right hand end; no eagle can be found in the tree. Image author's own.

and certainly no more frequently *associated* than is Hermes.⁷²

What does the snake climbing a tree mean then? It probably has parallels in depictions of Hercules slaying the snake in the tree of the Hesperides (see fig. 3.26a). But what appears to be happening is the Dionysian creature, the snake, is pursuing the lizard, destructor of vines. It is wholly normal behaviour for certain Mediterranean snakes to climb trees and eat lizards there.⁷³ In mosaics we find Dionysus surrounded by his gambolling creatures

⁷²Lane (1989) 14 (emphasis mine).

⁷³Ogden (2013) 374-6.

drunkenly quaffing wine, restraining a lizard with a tether. Dunbabin correctly sees this as vengeance of the deity against an animal inimical to him.⁷⁴ In the sarcophagus, we see the Dionysian snake discharging this duty.

3.2.3.3 Silenus' donkeys

Silenus was commonly depicted either riding a donkey or lolling on a donkey-pulled chariot.⁷⁵ The ass is a Dionysian animal in itself, but in the sarcophagi it almost only occurs with Silenus.⁷⁶ The Silenus and collapsing donkey motif normally occurs in the centaur series. A variant on the motif shows the donkeys stumbling to the ground, the front one sometimes even head-butting the earth.⁷⁷ The *moscophorus* figure type, Matz's epitome type TH74, nearly always appears with the collapsing donkeys. However, this is almost certainly due to compositional grounds (it creates interest at an upper register to balance the action at the lower register) rather than reflecting a symbolic relationship.⁷⁸ The scene shown in fig. 3.5 is typical. Silenus, wears a loin-cloth exposing his belly and flabby pectorals, lolling, holding a cup, in a pose evocative of languid drunkenness. The low, flat, two-wheeled wagon is pulled by a pair of donkeys. The wagon's supposed resemblance to a *liknon* is not very convincing, and is certainly due to the requirements of depict-

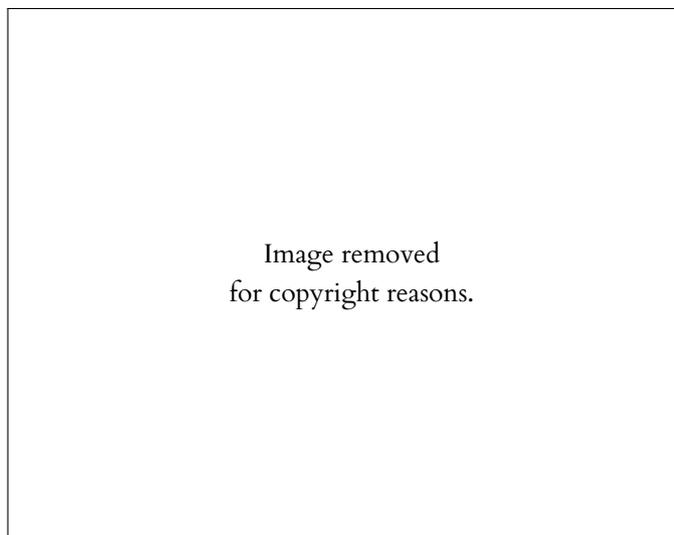
⁷⁴House of Bacchus, El Djem, See Dunbabin (1978) 184-5. Cf. similar idea in the later Codex-Calendar of 354, Salzman (1990) 103-4.

⁷⁵The exception in this group is the Kelsey Museum piece (B18), where he lolls in a decorated hammock.

⁷⁶The triumphal series shows him *on* a donkey in B7, B8; in A10 the figure on the donkey is probably a prisoner. The association goes back to the sixth century BC, Keuls (1970) 46. Cf. the C3 mosaic showing a donkey suckling the panther- or lion-cubs from North Africa currently in Boston MFA, inv. no. 60.531.

⁷⁷B1, B2, B3, B4, B5.

⁷⁸See *ASR* IV.1 48.



3.5: Detail of Museo delle Terme sarcophagus (B3) showing stumbling donkey motif. From *ASR* IV.2 pl. 134.2.

ing a lolling Silenus rather than bizarre allusion.⁷⁹ The donkey nearest the viewer stumbles forwards, its front legs folded inwards, its face flat against the ground. A satyr grasps the rear one under its chin, apparently in an effort to hoist it up.

By far the most influential study of the Dionysian donkey was undertaken by Keuls in 1970, who proposes a mystical reading for this motif. Keuls wishes to see the donkey not as a ‘burlesque’ nor an emblem of stubbornness, and attempts to identify an original form.⁸⁰ She wishes to see the scene from Naples (B1) as thoroughly linked to the mystery rites on account of the apparent *parapetasma* behind the lolling Silenus, which she interprets as a ‘well established iconographic reference to the secrecy of the mystery rites’.⁸¹ But the *parapetasma* is not a clue to the mystery rites; it appears behind

⁷⁹ *Contra* Gabelmann (1992) 42, Keuls (1970) 62 Matz (1968b) 250.

⁸⁰Keuls (1970) 63.

⁸¹More strongly present in B2, presumably unknown to her. Keuls (1970) 64.

deities (see for example the S. Agostino Dionysus type, p92) but also behind people who are definitely mortal, and with whom we have no good reason to imagine had anything much to do with mystery cults.⁸² She further argues that the scene where there are two figures in the donkey-drawn chariot is the one proper to its meaning (and not the far more common variant with Silenus).⁸³ The ‘ready transfer of the theme to the figure of Silenus’ apparently shows that the two figures in the chariot were initiands, and that the procession moves towards a feast in celebration of the ‘mortal’s guarantee of access to the happy afterlife.’⁸⁴ In Keuls’ view the asses stumble because they symbolize the suffering, conversion and initiation of mystery cult adherents. One wonders why the procession might not more aptly reflect the graveside feasts which actually occurred and why the stumbling donkey need not be chiefly a comic, wine-induced act. Ultimately this line of argument leads to unhelpful conflation of the initiatory and earthly realms, a translation which is not as methodologically simple as is often implied.

Regarding the scene’s meaning, appeal to the textual sources does not get us much further; Strabo quoting Poseidonius tips us off to an obscure (probably fictional) group of female worshippers of Dionysus whose system of worship included, strangely, ritually re-roofing the deity’s temple. Any woman who stumbled was subject to immediate *sparagmos*.⁸⁵ Pausanias makes a brief and oblique reference to Dionysos *Sphaleotas*, which perhaps

⁸²Lawrence (1958) *passim*. I cannot see the link Keuls suggests (p65) that ‘the two asses and the chariot they pull sound a mundane pictorial echo of the proud, frisky horses pulling the chariot on the stormy rape-of-Proserpina sarcophagi.’

⁸³See *ASR* IV.2: 152 for Keuls’ example, plus B4; Gabelmann (1992) 43 agrees, calling Silenus’ presence *Kontamination*.

⁸⁴Keuls (1970) 65.

⁸⁵4.4.6.

means something like ‘stumble-bringer.’⁸⁶ However, I doubt there is a particularly strong causal link between worship of Dionysus *Sphaleotas* and the depiction of the stumbling donkey; it would seem odd to reflect the key element of the deity’s expression through such a comic and lowly-perceived animal as the donkey.

It would be obtuse to deny a comic element to the overweight geriatric perched precariously on the much-maligned donkey. When Silenus fell off drunk in Ovid’s *Fasti*, the satyrs ran to help him, but ended up doubled over in laughter: even Dionysus had to laugh before helping him.⁸⁷ In a mosaic from Pompeii the donkey is humorously unimpressed by its bibulous burden, and here too satyr-attendants urge it on by its ears and tail.⁸⁸ Rather, Dionysus is called *Sphaleotas* for the same reason the donkey stumbles: because that is what one does under the influence of strong drink. Most likely the donkeys stumble to show they have been at the wine and Silenus is clumsy and heavy.

3.2.4 Conclusions

This section has aimed to give a selective account of some of the major animal elements within the sarcophagi. The intention was to tease out whether the animals can be interpreted in a uniform manner. After exploring the evidence, this section has argued for the unhelpfulness of using the chariot animals as a predictor with which to interpret the rest of the scene. Certainly, beyond the broadest of trends, we must admit that the boundaries between

⁸⁶On Dionysus *Sphaleotas* see Daux and Bousquet (1942), Detienne (1989) 49-50.

⁸⁷3.755-59.

⁸⁸Peristyle of the House of Cuspius Pansa.

groups were porous and typologies of a diagnostic sort are either too vague to be of use, or merely sum the examples we have. Even the animals themselves do not always have a monolithic import; elephants can be dignified and docile exotic markers, or dangerously foreign enemies to be dominated.⁸⁹

Most importantly, this study has shown that animals which have been interpreted as symbolic in some instances need not always hold that significance in *all* instances. Errors of this sort can lead to interpretation giving pre-eminence to certain motifs to the occlusion of the rest of the network. The results of this study suggest that we must be very careful about drawing general conclusions; I suggest that it is unsound to derive set-wide interpretations from element-level analysis. Certain observations, such as those concerning the snake in the tree, are particularly helpful in disentangling the long-running trend in scholarship for eschatological interpretation. This study suggests the importance of examining the *network* with an eye to its interaction between the contributory elements.

⁸⁹Cf. the change in meaning applied to pagan imagery in a Christian's seal in Clem. Alex. *Praed.* 3.59.2.

3.3 The prisoners

Now I seem to see a triumph weighed down not with the spoils of provinces and gold wrenched from our allies, but with enemy arms and the chains of captured kings ... I seem to admire the wagons laden with the exploits of the barbarians, and with hands tied each following after [depictions of] his own deeds: and soon you yourself, elevated, and standing in the chariot behind the defeated tribes.

videor iam cernere non spoliis provinciarum, et extorto sociis auro, sed hostilibus armis captorumque regum catenis triumphum gravem ... videor intueri immanibus ausis barbarorum onusta fercula, et sua quemque facta vinctis manibus sequentem: mox ipsum te sublimem, instantemque curru domitarum gentium tergo.

Plin. *Pan.* 17.

In terms of the mythology, there are two contradictory interpretations of the exoticism in the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi. The first is that this represents the god's triumphal parade after conquest of this *limes*-nation. The second is that it represents the triumphal parade of the god after some other conquest, the 'Indian' elements being present to recall the tradition of the god's birth in that country.⁹⁰ The currency of this tradition should not be exaggerated: aside from Diodorus most other authors, not least Longus who was roughly contemporaneous with the sarcophagi, perceived the Indians as the people conquered by Dionysus, not from whom Dionysus originated.⁹¹

⁹⁰E.g. Diod. Sic. 1.19.7, 3.63.3.

⁹¹Longus 4.3.2: Εἶχε δὲ καὶ ἔνδοθεν ὁ νεὼς Διονυσιακὰς γραφὰς ... ἐπῆσαν καὶ Ἴνδοι νικώμενοι. Also Prop. 3.17.21-2, Verg. *Aen.* 788-808, Ov. *Ars am.* 1.549-50, Sil. *Pun.* 645-50.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

3.6: Detail of Woburn Abbey sarcophagus, A6, showing barbarian figure. Image author's own.

Aside from the geographic inexactitude of the relief (discussed further below), it is the presence of the bound prisoners which are somatically differentiated from the rest of the *thiasus* that suggests the former interpretation is the most likely.

Captive persons, dressed in non-Roman clothing, are a regular feature of the sarcophagi and accentuate the exotic atmosphere, and are strongly redolent of Roman triumphal ritual (compare the passage from Ovid discussed above, p78).⁹² That captives were a highly valued component of the triumphal parade is indicated by their presence in triumphs which did not in reality provide such prisoners — as for example Domitian’s dress-up Germans.⁹³

3.3.1 Prisoners in detail

Consider the two prisoners astride an elephant to be found in the Woburn sarcophagus (A6, fig. 3.6). One is bound and defiant, one less securely fixed and in an attitude of defeat (judging by his rather plangent expression and desperate gaze). His long sleeves, trousers and boots (felt perhaps, with an inscribed circular detail on the instep) are very different from the billowing drapery of the *thiasus*. The front figure’s posture is unusual and renders the placement of the leg slightly unsuccessful: the anatomy of his thigh is difficult to reconcile, and naturalism seems to have been subordinated to a dynamic, even defiant posture. The imbalanced positioning of his feet creates a complex gap, which is softened by the curve of an ivory tusk. The tusk’s

⁹²Östenberg (2009) 128-62, Beard (2007) 107-42, Versnel (1970) 95-6.

⁹³Tac. *Agr.* 39.

prominence, proximity to those of the live elephant, and the rough evidence of its removal (the serrated stump indicated by the use of a drill) point to its significance. The tusk is utilised by the sculptor as a sensitive addition with which to accentuate the meaning of the scene. As the men who are bound on the beast are defeated, while around them triumph exultant figures, so too on the elephant we see the symbol of its defeated brethren. This echo between victorious and defeated animals amplifies the contrast between victorious and defeated men.

A thick *chlamys* is held at the prisoner's shoulder by a large brooch, and falls in heavy swags over his torso. His lips are deeply incised and slightly open and his eyes heavily lidded, rising in dramatic, high arches. The hair takes the form of corkscrew-curls which fall in three banded layers and are constructed from oblique excisions and judicious use of the drill (for which see especially the central curl of the lowest layer in the hair of the frontally facing prisoner).⁹⁴ His exotic coat is redolent of the *paludamentum* and suggests his military nature: his prominence suggests he is a defeated general or commander of the enemy forces.

His right arm is raised up, fingers partially closed. His left arm is bound, and so at least is the right arm of his companion, but he is given the liberty of his right arm. This is quite a range of freedom to allow a prisoner, especially given that the expression he wears is far from one of submission. This creates a tension within the scene, an enlivening of the threat these people might

⁹⁴The progress of the later second century seems to show a trend from using the drill to create naturalising contrasts of light and shadow by freeing parts to more schematic use of the drill highlighting the corners of eyes, foaming masses of locks, etc. See Ward-Perkins and Dodge (1992) 45, McCann (1977).

pose.

3.3.2 The prisoner types

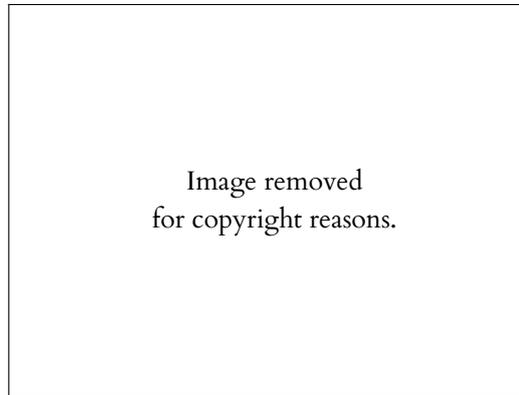
The corkscrew-curls distinguish the prisoners from the ‘somatic norm’ of the *thiasus*, and therefore in one sense cause them to operate in a different field of content from the surrounding figures (in a manner similar to the portrait head on Hercules).⁹⁵ The composition as it appears in Woburn is the first of the prisoner types (fig. 3.6), depicting a pair of prisoners sitting astride a beast, usually an elephant. The prisoners of this type are nearly always somatically differentiated. This forms a vivid demonstration of their exoticism which heightens the effect of the parade of animals.⁹⁶ The prisoners here probably again have their origin in state triumphal relief; a very similar conception can be found in the ox-drawn wagon of Trajan’s arch at Beneventum (see fig. 3.7). The later Gallienic group discussed above (p82) also show a pair of mounted prisoners but the sculptors appear to have combined the chariot-animal riding figures with the captives, since these prisoners appear on a greatly reduced scale. They are also presented wholly frontally and in a less naturalistic and more symmetrical, stylised manner.⁹⁷ Congruent with the ‘detriumphalisation’ of this later group (a term to which I return, p307) the artist seems to have re-purposed the earlier separate motifs he no longer required for the triumphal tenor.

The might of the *triumphator* is inextricably bound with his power to

⁹⁵Somatic terminology from Ako-Adounvo (1999).

⁹⁶This motif appears from the Late Antonine to Late Severan period; examples include *ASR* IV 71B, 103, 136; A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A14, A15.

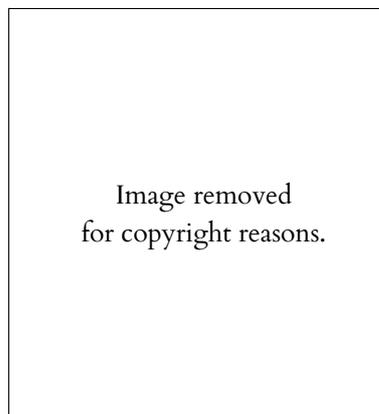
⁹⁷*ASR* IV.2: 142, 143, 145 LHS.



3.7: Detail from the narrow band of frieze from the arch of Trajan at Ben-
eventum, from Beard (2007) fig. 22.

dominate, and this power is most naturally expressed through the submission of defeated people. The back-to-back arrangement of the barbarians across the elephant probably has its origins in the motif of two similar sitting bound prisoners found repeatedly from Republican coinage onwards.⁹⁸ Perhaps as a desire to indicate this back-to-back positioning (or else to avoid sympathetic identification with the prisoners) in some instances the rear captive is reduced to extremely shallow relief. In many of these the sculptors delineate the prisoners as of differing ethnicities through varying the form of the hairstyle: the frontal prisoner is given shaggy hair and a beard while the rear captive has the corkscrew-curls and is reduced to almost a bundle of cloth (see fig. 3.8). This type seems only to occur in the triumphal series, suggestive of its

⁹⁸E.g. *denarius* of Caesar, RRC 468/1 and *passim* in Roman coinage. *ASR* 26, 134, 237 (lid), D12, and in *clipeus* sarcophagi below the shield itself in 260, 261, 262, 263, 266. This composition is more closely followed in several other Dionysian sarcophagi where bound prisoners appear as a symmetrical pair balancing the upright of a *tropaion* or a palm-trunk, but is not to be found inside the triumphal parade proper. Bound prisoners also appear on the *ferculum* on the Temple of Apollo Sosianus; see Shaya (2015) 628-9 and fig. 6.3.2, la Rocca and Tortorella (2008) 120-1, Ryberg (1955) 145 and pl. LI. One here is elder and bearded, one younger. They have the beginnings of separately designed hair but are not as strongly differentiated as within the sarcophagi.



3.8: Detail of Baltimore triumph sarcophagus (A1). From Matz (1968b) pl. 118.2.

contextual significance.⁹⁹

Captives walking in solemn procession with their hands bound behind their back is a motif which aligns the sarcophagi with historical triumphal processions (see fig. 3.9), though this is also to be found in other scenes.¹⁰⁰ However, it is not always the case that both figures are somatically differentiated from the *thiasus*: in A2 the frontally-facing prisoner is an old man with balding forehead and shaggy beard, while his co-captive (reduced to very shallow relief) bears especially strongly delineated corkscrew-hair. Other examples come from the Battle series; here the Indians are not somatically differentiated except in a sarcophagus showing a scene of *submissio*, where a figure with corkscrew-curls is led before the *ferculum*.¹⁰¹ Turcan is unhelpful when he writes of D13 that the prisoner is

un barbare de type germanique ou danubien (et non pas indien ou

⁹⁹A1, A2.

¹⁰⁰A16 (relief on wagon), 134, 135, A8, A9, A10, D12.

¹⁰¹D12; cf. D11, D13.

asiatique, comme il se devrait)¹⁰²

since there is no binding cause that he should be so somatically delineated (which is of course separate from whether the viewer is intended to think of them as Indian or not). Instead, the closer alignment of the *submissio* and *clementia* scenes on these sarcophagi with depictions of contemporary enemies seems wholly explicable, as too does the slight distancing effect of the ‘Indian’ figures on the politically more delicate triumph scenes.¹⁰³ Turcan continues that the nationality of the barbarians was of no consequence to the sculptor (*indifférente au marbrier*) and that instead significance lies in the comparison between the Oriental conquest of Dionysus with the Occidental wars of the ‘general’ (standing, not unproblematically here, for the sarcophagus patron) against the Quadi and the Marcomanni. He furthermore appeals to a transhistorical concept when he says

la confusion du mythe avec l’histoire a une signification idéologique.

La *virtus* des généraux romains réactualise celle de Bacchus, comme

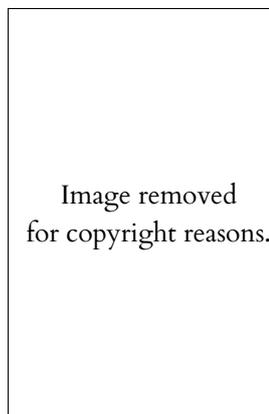
la *clementia* généreuse de Bacchus préfigure celle des Romains.¹⁰⁴

But instead the discourse seems to be not a ‘confusion’, since there is no authoritative version of the ‘myth’ against which to base such a comparison; there are only varied instantiations of it. Rather than ‘updating’ and ‘foreshadowing’ (*réactualise, préfigure*), it might be more helpful to consider the effect of the excision from historical progression that mythology provides,

¹⁰²Turcan (1987) 432.

¹⁰³The ‘romanisation’ of some of the arms, discussed by Turcan, supports this. On these pieces see further p242ff.

¹⁰⁴Turcan (1987) 433.



3.9: Detail of Uffizi triumph sarcophagus (A9). From Matz (1968b) pl. 135.2.

even when points of intersection are included (such as the contemporary barbarian figure-types); that is, instead of looking at the extrahistorical myth as being actualised by the historical ramifications of the iconography, we considered the reverse, the effect of placing a desired and fleeting expression of Roman military power as outside history, and therefore constant and cosmically ordained.¹⁰⁵

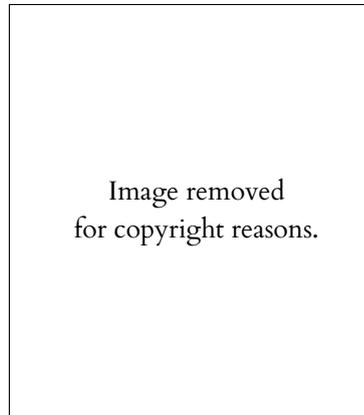
The final prisoner type (see fig. 3.10) is tentative, and their status as captives is hard to discern with absolute certainty. They take the form of two females riding a camel forwards in the procession. Their dejected nature and compositional placement suggest their captivity.¹⁰⁶

In general, a pair of diminutive figures riding the panther or elephant chariot-team tend to appear when mounted prisoners are present, and to be depicted with the same somatotype as the prisoners.¹⁰⁷ In scenes without prisoners they *tend* to appear as winged *putti* standing on the chariot-

¹⁰⁵See further p202ff.

¹⁰⁶132, 133, A11. Note Matz would classify the captives in 71B with these but their presentation is more congruent with the type discussed p127n96.

¹⁰⁷Examples include A1, A6, A15 (Corkscrew-curls); A10 (somatically undifferentiated).



3.10: Detail of sarcophagus in Palazzo Albani (A11). From Matz (1968b) pl. 159.1.

animal.¹⁰⁸ Riding *putti* may appear without prisoners (as B19), and in some other cases riders appear with clear corkscrew-curly without prisoners further in the scene. In these they are enlarged and given the body proportions of older children or youths (as A13, B15), but as ever this is a compositional trend and not a rule. In A14 the corkscrew-curled youths are about the same size as the corkscrew-curled prisoners. Hard and fast rules cannot be applied here.

3.3.3 Ethnicity

Thus it transpires corkscrew-curly are not only to be found on the unhappy prisoners. They can also be found on the favoured children or youths who ride the chariot-animals. Turning to the Baltimore sarcophagus (A1, see fig. 3.11) we see a pair of boys riding the panthers of the chariot team. The leftmost (nearest to the viewer) sits barefoot astride a strong and muscular back. Naked aside from a thin garment pinned at his left shoulder (probably

¹⁰⁸B1, B2, B3.

a *nebris*), he turns backwards and gestures with his right hand at the hand of an ecstatic maenad. The boys' heads are large for their body, giving them a childlike appearance. The left has a wide face with generous features, a large mouth with heavily set lips, strong nose and deep eyes. His thick hair is heavy, almost helmet like. His companion is of a similar ethnicity but his face is thinner, his hair more vertically arranged, his face more inquisitive. He sits in a similar posture to his friend except his right arm is held in to his body. Both of them display a soft musculature, with some delineation of physique around the shoulder of the rear rider; their physiognomy links them with the prisoners, but they seem to be in an honoured position *within* the *thiasus*, in a position otherwise given to small satyrs or *putti*. In fact, they sit in a place where the general's sons might have sat in a historical triumph, if they were as young as these boys are.¹⁰⁹

Due to their localisation within the *thiasus* they also function differently from the curly-haired elephant riders found in bronze statuettes, whose meaning has recently been shown to lie in martial overtones.¹¹⁰ They therefore are unlike the prisoners in this respect, whose ethnicity they nevertheless share. Demonstrating the status of boundary figures inside and outside the *thiasus* may well have contextual resonance within the funerary realm, activating the liminal process of boundary crossing which is also intimately tied up with the cultivation of the grave.

Iconographically their hair-type normally indicates 'African' peoples in

¹⁰⁹Dion. Hal. 7.72. Note however the presence of elephant-riding boys in the much later *pompa circensis* sarcophagus from S. Lorenzo fuori le mure (ASR I.3 115 (c. 360). Heads of these boys from a lost triumph sarcophagus can be found in the MMA: see McCann (1977).

¹¹⁰See Franken (1999).

the Roman mind, but it might just as well be pressed into service for ‘Indian’ peoples.¹¹¹ Granted that the triumph of Dionysus is an Indian affair, this leaves us with several possible implications for the prisoners and boys. Either *a*) they are definitely intended to be Africans, *b*) definitely intended to be Indians, *c*) the artist did not distinguish between them or did not care, or *d*) the artist consciously placed African prisoners in the Indian triumph.

Ako-Adounvo conclusively shows that there were not sharp delineations made in Roman sarcophagus iconography between peoples of India or Africa, and the evidence of textual confusion or conscious equation between the two races is thorough and convincing. She argues that artists conflate Africans and Indians in their imagery.¹¹² We should therefore be wary of Snowden’s earlier thesis, that the prisoners are intended to be Indians and the boys Aethiopians (seen as a pious and just race, on account of which they received this place of honour).¹¹³ There is simply insufficient somatic differentiation between the boys and the prisoners to justify the idea they were intended to be from separate continents, and without strong evidence that this is the manner in which these figures were to be perceived, I do not think it is sustainable.

In the two instances where barbarian boys ride the animal pulling the chariot but there are no adult prisoners in the scene, the artist has compensated by presenting them as admirable figures, young men who will grow to

¹¹¹On the iconography of Indians in Roman art see Graeven (1900), Snowden (1970) 7-11 *et passim*, Amedick (1991) 124, Franken (1999).

¹¹²Ako-Adounvo (1999) 188-9. (Discussed as ‘Ethiopian’ in the sense of more generally ‘African’). As she shows, mosaics and paintings have their own problems. A similar conclusion is drawn by Franken (1999) 156. Parker (2008) in his discussion of the sarcophagi (125-31) does not problematise the identification of the figures.

¹¹³Snowden (1970) 149-50.

virtue. In the Lateran scene (A13), even on a sarcophagus showing impressive anatomy they display a striking length of bone and well-proportioned musculature. They seem no longer passive, but to be actively directing the elephants (a task to which their elder years recommend them). In the Villa Doria Pamphilli example (B15) they are doughy but happy youths riding securely in the procession.¹¹⁴

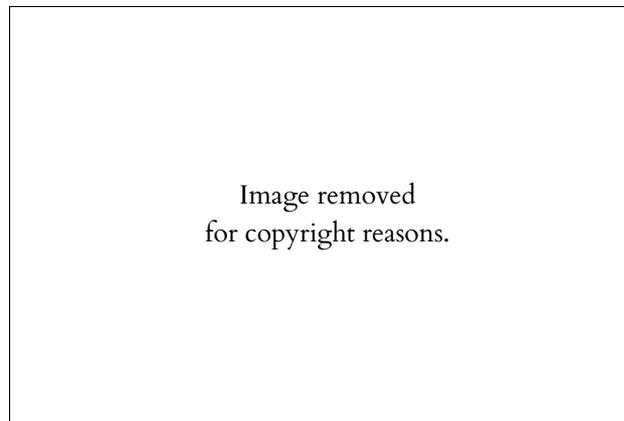
3.3.4 Interpretation

It seems we must consider the boys and adult prisoners as from the same people — likely ‘Indian’, but perhaps ‘African’, or even an indeterminate yet distant location. This generates a sense of universality to the progression of the parade: it chimes with concepts familiar from the funerary realm such as the continued progression of life and the changing favour of Fortune. Such concepts were most appositely explored within the framework of the triumph, which encapsulated (especially within the figures of the displayed and defeated generals) highly pertinent examples of the variability of one’s lot in life.

Confirmation can be found in those scenes in which the artist shows care to demonstrate that the prisoners are of differing ethnicities (such as is shown in type B prisoner scenes). These have a long history too, and can be found in the triumphal arch of Trajan at Beneventum (fig. 3.7).¹¹⁵ We should probably not play complex games attempting to ascribe these figures perhaps to southern or northern India (*pace* Ako-Adounvo) — such

¹¹⁴That they are localised within the *thiasus* is made clear in the visual rhyming of the postured *peda* with that of the *putto* at the lower right.

¹¹⁵See also la Rocca and Tortorella (2008) 133-4, Fittschen (1972).



3.11: Detail of Baltimore triumph sarcophagus (A1). From <http://art.thewalters.org/detail/33305/> [accessed 15/10/13].

scholastic endeavours are pleasing but seem of questionable pertinence to the root audience, a grieving family viewing the sarcophagus.¹¹⁶ Nor probably should we see them as merely pictorial *variatio*, as Turcan, but still more strongly as an apposite comment on the universality of mortality: the image of the bound prisoners, some little more than a bundle of rags, some in royal diadems, seems peculiarly appropriate for the funerary realm.¹¹⁷ Likewise, the solemnity of the defeated prisoners and the joyous entry of the riders into the *thiasus* are, when united through similar ethnic demarcation, a message pointing to the liminality of the grave. Such meaning serves as an instructive visual mechanism of *consolatio* for the family. This liminality may be further modulated into a message concerning the eventual passing of the pain of mourning.

We know that universality is an important *topos* within *consolatio*.¹¹⁸ In

¹¹⁶Ako-Adounvo (1999) 188-212.

¹¹⁷Turcan (1966) 445-6. Royal diadem: A3. Turban: A1. Severely reduced: A2.

¹¹⁸See Hulls (2011). Finglass (2007) 150 collects important instances of the *non tibi hoc soli* type, such as Cic. *Tusc.* 3.79.

considering the scenes as emblematic of varied fortunes, *exempla* of the fact life continues or combinations of these, our interpretation is subtly different from previous interpretations which have seen the collision of the somatically differentiated prisoners-and-children motifs as communicating a sense of *be virtuous and embrace the deity, deny him and be destroyed*.¹¹⁹ This idea is slightly challenging in that it presupposes the deceased would identify with the children instead of the adult (occasionally royal) prisoner; by instead seeing the message as a more diffuse commentary on the nature of death, we avoid this problem.

The children may stand allegorically for another well known (and well-worn) trope of *consolatio*, that things will be better in the future.¹²⁰ The frequent insistence on delineating the panthers as nursing females (such as A3) may therefore reflect an intensification of this message; certainly it seems likely the collision of nursing-pantheress and Eastern-infants is significant. If so, then they certainly also invoke a sense of the continuum of the family.¹²¹

The message of the prisoners as symbols of the universality of death comes less strongly in scenes of the prisoner walking in solemn parade. In most cases the artist does not somatically differentiate these ordinary captives. The riding figures sympathetically become winged *putti* or chubby baby satyrs

¹¹⁹E.g. Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen (1942) 26-8, 72, who sees the children as almost literally standing for initiates, and Snowden (1970) 150, who refers to the adults rather unhelpfully as 'old sinners'.

¹²⁰See for example Plin. *Ep.* 2.7, esp. 5; the idea is rather cleverly played with in the ekphrasis at Verg. *Aen.* 8.626-731, where Aeneas' shield bears scenes of the prosperous future. This trope has an interesting inflection in the funerary reliefs which depict young children in adult acts (such as a deceased boy in the toga with a scroll) — they look to a future, but a future expressed in 'optative' virtues (on my use of this term see p272). For discussion of this piece see Taisne (1973) 485-6.

¹²¹Cf. discussion p325ff.

and the emphasis is laid more strongly either on the fantastic parade of animals and thus exoticism (as A10, where consequently and unusually for a prisoner scene Victoria is seemingly absent), or else on the martial nature of the victory *qua* Dionysus' (and his *thiasus*') triumph (A9). However in A8 the walking prisoner is clearly equipped with corkscrew-curly and appears as an island of solemnity in a scene of studied frenzy, with wild drapery and flashing gestures.

3.3.5 Conclusions

The prisoners within the reliefs localise the iconography closer to familiar triumphal imagery. They come in several distinct types. Some of them are somatically differentiated from the rest of the members of the *thiasus*. Somatic differentiation can also be found riding the chariot animals. It is difficult to discern the intended ethnicity of these figures, and it is probably only an exercise that would satisfy modern eyes, instead of reconstruct ancient sensibilities.

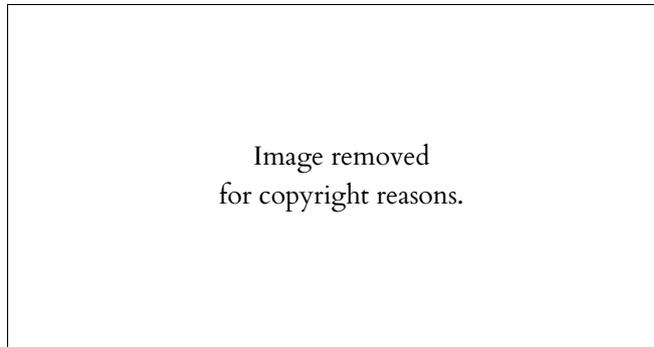
The confluence of prisoners and riders from the same ethnic groups both within and without the *thiasus* has resonance in the funerary realm, itself a liminal place. Nevertheless, single interpretations are insufficient to assess the meaning of the sarcophagi, and attention must be paid to individual reliefs in order to ascertain contextual meaning.

3.4 The *cista mystica*

cistae mysticae litter the sarcophagi. They appear most often (with very few exceptions) strewn on the groundline, past which the raucous procession marches. The *cista mystica* is a motif that enjoys a very long life: it appears fully formed on the famous cistophoric tetradrachms of Pergamon from as early as the second century BC, and appears in art of at least the third century AD barely changed in the interval. The obverse of the archetypical cistophores bear a woven basket, lid askew, from which a snake emerges. An ivy crown generally surrounds the motif. Often the reverse bears coiled serpents in what is generally accepted as a Dionysian motif. Occasionally cistophoric Pergamene tetradrachms bear a quiver, which symbol is occasionally amplified; van Hoorn gives examples which bear the lion-skin and club, removing any doubt that Hercules fits within this Dionysian context even at such an early age.¹²² It is striking how little the form of the *cista mystica* develops in the half-millennium separating the cistophores from the sarcophagi (fig. 3.12). The appearance of the *cista mystica* in numismatic representations is strikingly similar to the sarcophagi and stable across a large period of time and geographic separation.¹²³

¹²²van Hoorn (1915) 233-4.

¹²³To take a cross section from the period relevant to the sarcophagi, the following all display on their reverse an opened *cista mystica* with emerging snake: AE of Pautalia, Thrace under Commodus, Varbanov 4598. AE of Thrace under Septimius Severus, Varbanov 4704. AE of Trajanopolis, Thrace under Caracalla, Varbanov 2793. AE of Anchialos, Thrace under Geta, Varbanov 431. AE of Thrace under Philip II, Varbanov 1599. AE of Hadrianopolis, Thrace under Gordian III, Varbanov 3901.



3.12: Comparison of *cistae mysticae* approximately 400 years apart: left, silver cistophorus minted at Pergamum, 2nd century BC, SNGvA 1367 (this exact coin). British Museum inv. no. 1979,0101.174. Image from http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx?searchText=1979,0101.174 [accessed 07/04/14]. Right, detail from sarcophagus B19. From <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/sarcophagus-with-triumph-of-dionysos-151242> [accessed 07/04/14].

3.4.1 Thinking inside the box

This stability enables us to be rather dogmatic about the appearance of the *cista mystica*. It is a cylindrical or gently conical box of fibrous material (wicker or osier) woven into levels displaying horizontal banding with oblique strands between.¹²⁴ The domed lid is (generally unrealistically) opened and a snake is visible. On sarcophagi (though not consistently on cistophores) this snake either moves from the inside to the outside, suggestive of the emergence of content, or peeks from under the lid, tail hanging out, an evocation of the basket's inner content. The snake's form is nearly always exaggeratedly sinuous. The term *cista mystica* exists in modern times as a technical one; it should be observed that in ancient times a *cista* or κίστη was simply a box or basket of woven material, for which reason authors qualify the word when

¹²⁴The ancients were insistent that a κίστη was woven; see Ptolemaeus Gramm. *de differentia vocabulorum* s.v. κίβωτος, Ammon. *Diff.* s.v. κίβωτος. Hence it is 'light' (*levis*), Tib. 1.7.48.

it is used in a mystery context.¹²⁵

A candidate for the earliest mention of *cistae* in a Dionysian context is Aristophanes: he has a priest of Dionysus encourage a celebrant vaguely to ‘bring one with him’.¹²⁶ But Aristophanes also mentions it in definitively religious context: Thratta (Mnesilochus’ slave girl) is ordered to set one down and remove from it the sacred cakes for the ‘twain goddesses’.¹²⁷ *cistae mysticae* appear to be appropriate to mystery contexts in general, not specifically Dionysian ones. Aside from the generally syncretic facets of mystery cults, this fact is likely due to mystery cults appropriating apparatus of the Eleusinian mysteries; Plutarch mentions the *cista mystica* in this context, and we see a *cista* in the air near Demeter on the so-called Eleusinian *hydria*.¹²⁸ It has not yet acquired its coyly opened lid or attendant serpent, but it is probably to this archetypal mystery we owe the origins of the *cistae*.

The *cista mystica* appears in diverse contexts where cult, especially mystery cult, needs to be evoked.¹²⁹ On the funerary altar of Cantinea Procla (first century AD) a *cista mystica* is depicted (the cylindrical body does not indicate woven fibre but the rims do), and the woman presents herself as a priestess of Isis. Her *cistae* differ and evoke revelation; the one on the left hand short side is closed, wrapped around with a snake while that on the right is half-open one with the snake emerging. The closed *cista mystica* is visible on the altar of Babullia Varilla (also a priestess of Isis). Demeter

¹²⁵For κίστη as simply a basket: Hom. *Od.* 6.76; Plut. *Ant.* 85.2; Strabo *Geog.* 3.2.9; Achilles Tatius *Leucippe et Clitophon* 3.20.6.

¹²⁶*Ach.* 1089.

¹²⁷ταῖν θεῶν, *Thesm.* 284-5.

¹²⁸Varrese painter, Antikensammlung Berlin, inv. no. 1984.46.

¹²⁹For Ovid, even worship of Venus could involve the *cista mystica*: *Ars am.* 2.609.

herself could still be depicted sitting on a closed *cista* or standing near *cistae*, even with snakes visible, well into the mid third-century. However, she also appears with the half-open *cista* motif; for example on a bronze coin, where on the obverse, a diademed Salonina faces Gallienus; on the reverse appear Demeter and inverted torches, while a snake slithers from a *cista mystica* at her feet, conjured out by the goddess.¹³⁰ She might appear standing near one with the snake emerging in precisely the manner we find in the sarcophagi.¹³¹ Other deities may also be found with the *cista mystica*, such as Pax,¹³² Salus,¹³³ Mithras,¹³⁴ or Ceres.¹³⁵

If we return to the above quote from the *Thesmophoriazusae*, we find it carries a second implication: that the κίστη is a mere container for the *sacra*, and that its religious import comes from what it contains, not the item itself.¹³⁶ Such a conclusion is not one which could be confirmed by visual evidence; since these *sacra* were *sacra arcana*, ‘about which the profane yearn to know in vain’, we should not expect to find (and, indeed, do not) the basket fully opened to view.¹³⁷ And yet in the sarcophagi it is almost always partly open. The apotropaic snake slithers out, hinting at the contents. The partial openness and guardian serpent are an evocation of the concealed contents.

¹³⁰253-68, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston inv. no. 66.307.

¹³¹E.g. AE of Septimius Severus of Philippopolis, Varbanov 1229, AE of Trajan Decius of Cibyra, Phrygia, SNGvA 3754.

¹³²E.g. AR *denarius* of Augustus, *RIC* 1, 476.

¹³³E.g. AV *aureus* of Faustina Junior, *RIC* 3, 716 (under Marcus Aurelius).

¹³⁴Marble relief in the Louvre, inv. no. Ma3441.

¹³⁵AE *sestertius* of Lucilla, *RIC* 1728. See also the cistophoric coins whose purpose was chiefly political, such as those issued by Octavian and Mark Antony. An interesting meta-function of the *cista* is its appearance on some later coins (e.g. of Vespasian) intended to evoke the cistophoric coins of the then deified Augustus.

¹³⁶As with the monstrance in some Christian churches.

¹³⁷Cat. 64.260.

Fortunately the *cista mystica* is one of the instances where terminology is so uniform that it can be used as a diagnostic method for finding appropriate textual evidence. A *cista* is (unlike most other ritual implements in the Roman world) primarily a box, which is why its mystery occurrences have to employ the qualifying terminology *mystica*. We observe that the emphasis is not on ritual use of the box, but always on the contents. When Minerva has to hide away Erichthonius, offspring of Vulcan's over-enthusiasm, she does so 'in a little *cista*, as if he were something from the mysteries'.¹³⁸ Even the sensational exposés of the mystery secrets by the church fathers are evidently preoccupied not with the basket itself, but its secret contents. We detect this also in the Eleusinian watchword, variously recorded but presented here in Eusebius' words:

I have fasted, I drank the potion, I took from the κίστη; having worked it I stored it away in the κάλαθος and from the κάλαθος [stored it away] in the κίστη.

ἐνήστευσα, ἔπιον τὸν κυκεῶνα, ἔλαβον ἐκ κίστης, ἐργασάμενος ἀπεθέμην εἰς κάλαθον καὶ ἐκ καλάθου εἰς κίστην.

Eusebius *Praep. evang.* 2.3.35.

The significance then is to be placed not on the mystical basket but on the mysteries within the basket.

¹³⁸*in cistula quadam ut mysteria contectum*, Hyg. *Poet. ast.* 2.13.1.

3.4.2 Prior scholarship

The *cista mystica* as a sarcophagus motif has not received a great deal of attention. Initial work focussed on the numismatic context, and it is generally seen as a less potent symbol than the *liknon*.¹³⁹ The major study of the religious symbolism of Dionysian sarcophagi is that by Geyer. She attempts an investigation of how and to what extent the reliefs of Dionysian sarcophagi or their forms and motifs (including those recovered from inscriptions) are based on a cultic reality — that is, a reflection of real-life mystery worship.¹⁴⁰

While an eminently profitable study, it does seem partially problematic that she takes an almost consistently binary approach, observing reality and non-reality as discrete polar opposites.¹⁴¹ While this admittedly is a direct result of her intent, to get closer to the cultic process using the sarcophagi as a tool, it necessarily removes a layer of subtlety in the understanding. To put it another way, there need not be action that was at some point performed in connection with specific worship of the deity for there to be religious symbolic weight attached to motifs. Geyer's generally negative results are nevertheless extremely valuable in the sense that they prompt us to examine these motifs to detect what they did reflect or symbolise, since direct cult ritual references are lacking.

Her approach is to use sarcophagi which appear unusual, since these pre-

¹³⁹Jahn (1869), van Hoorn (1915), Kerényi (1976) 260.

¹⁴⁰Geyer (1977) 42.

¹⁴¹This approach appears throughout her work — it is detectable especially in her discussion of individual character-roles. See Geyer (1977) 83-91. North's objection, along similar lines to mine, is phrased differently: '... interest is also narrowed by the insistence on contrasting reality to non-reality, rather than looking for a series of related levels of fantasy, of which apparent reality may well be one', North (1980) 190-1.

sumably reflect individual commissions and therefore a greater interest in symbolism by the buyer.¹⁴² In general this approach is tempting, but it seems prudent here to highlight some methodological dangers.

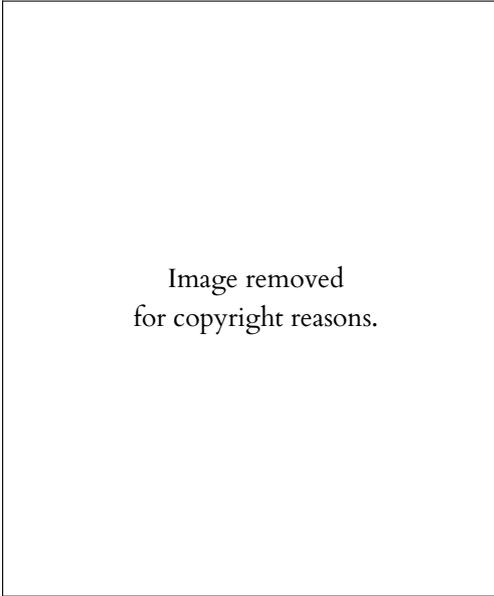
- The assumption is that uniqueness was desirable and considered significant (Geyer herself notes this difficulty).¹⁴³ That unusual or distinguished monuments reflect a personalised out-of-the-ordinary desire for expression seems quite safe, if we think of truly outlandish funerary structures such as those of Gaius Cestius or Marcus Vergillius Eurysaces. Focussed down to the modulation we find in Dionysian sarcophagi, it seems less tenable, especially given the following observations.
- Geyer's approach somewhat depresses the significance of popular compositions. This necessarily implies that the significance of popular compositions is not to be found in religion, which does not seem necessarily to follow without more justification.
- The approach necessarily draws conclusions from unreliable assumptions about survival rates.

3.4.3 Thinking outside the box: the *cista mystica* in context

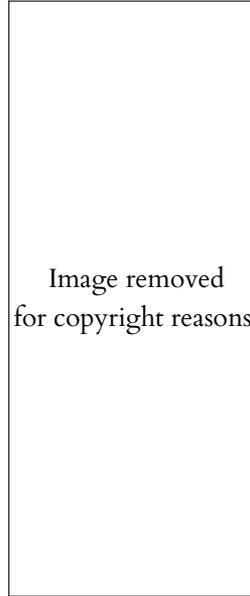
In the sarcophagi there is certainly, for want of a better term, a standard place for the *cista mystica*: under the hoof of the gamboling Pan, where it shows

¹⁴²Geyer (1977) 68.

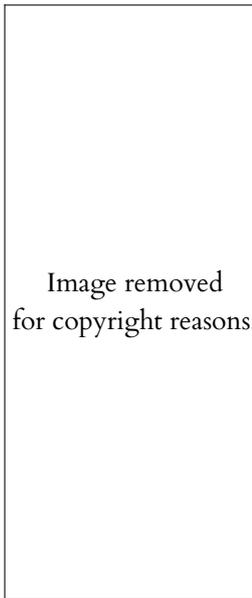
¹⁴³Geyer (1977) 59.



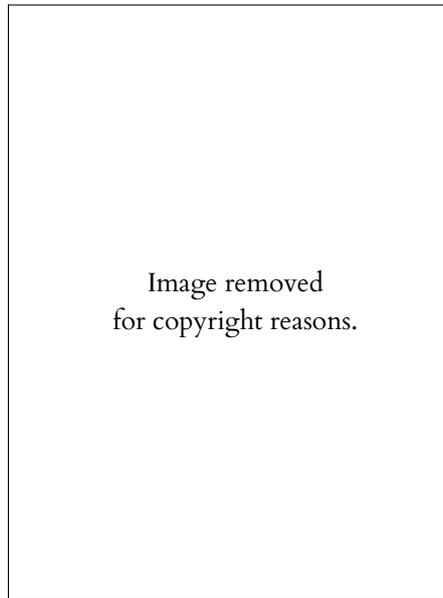
(a) Detail of B3. From Matz (1968b) pl. 134.2.



(b) Detail of A7. From Matz (1968b) pl. 127.



(c) Detail of B9. From Matz (1968b) pl. 138.1.



(d) Detail of B9. From Matz (1968b) pl. 138.1.

3.13: Select *cista mystica* motifs.

its standard form, with a snake slipping out. Little significant iconographic variation in the form of the basket is detectable across the examples of this motif.¹⁴⁴ The *cista mystica* here seems to litter the ground as the procession goes past as a physical manifestation of the Dionysian nature of the parade at that moment it sweeps through. A diegetic function is that ecstatic Pan can, with casual hoof, knock the lid askance and hint at the contents of the basket. A non-diegetic function is that the basket fulfils an atmospheric role, orchestrating the situation. At any rate Pan dances and the snake slips out; both are evidence of the god's projected power, his action-at-a-distance. But why should the *cista mystica* appear so regularly on Dionysian sarcophagi?

An interesting corollary to the above objections concerning Geyer's methodology arises in this curious symbol; it could not, at least by any reasonably diegetic reading of the sarcophagus, be thought of as actually littering the feet of the moving *thiasus*. A fast moving procession like this would very quickly start leaving a Hänsel-like trail of cult apparatus far behind it. The same is true of the *cantharus* trip-hazards Hercules discards, or cymbals and drums tossed aside. We probably should not think of them as discarded litter; certainly the conceit is that the artist has frozen the *thiasus* which is imagined to exist in one moment, with a past and a future.¹⁴⁵ But elements such as the *cista mystica* belie this. The 'reality' of the image is a constructed idealisation, or rather, a reflection of the idiom within which the artist worked. We must be vigilant then not to confuse pictorial convention

¹⁴⁴See for example ASR IV 80, 83, 88, 90, 123, 145, 148, 150, 153-4, B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B9, A12, B16 (this list is not exhaustive) Cf. chariot body on B12.

¹⁴⁵As alluded to in the young boys on the panthers, or the amorous Hercules.

with peculiar realities.¹⁴⁶ Put simply the question is not quite *could* the artist perceive of a Dionysian triumphal procession without *cistae mysticae*, but rather, why should he? Within the Gombrichian ‘mental set’ of Roman visual representation, the *cista mystica* has a solid position where it is redolent of some concept or mood. Let us then examine its presentation with this in mind. Precisely what flavour of meaning does it impart?

A possible answer is provided by Kerényi, for whom these *cistae* are symbolic of erotic mysteries.¹⁴⁷ But on the triumphal sarcophagi, whose tone is variable, this seems less than satisfying. While a piece such as that in the Museo Nazionale at Naples (D17) has erotic overtones — be these overtones eroto-comic, eroto-hedonistic, eroto-cathartic, a combination thereof or otherwise — for the triumphal series at least appeal to sexual overtones is convincing in some instances (especially B9) but not others. If it is intended as erotic in all cases, why is the symbol not reinforced, in the vast majority of other instantiations, by confirmatory motifs? Would the bereaved family viewing the sarcophagus think first of sexual excess on barren hilltops? Perhaps this is unfair, or begs the question from unsound assumptions, but we must admit that other meanings sound louder amongst the crowded *thiasus*.

The relative stability of this motif does not preclude (non-unique) striking variants. On an Antonine piece in Rome, at the Museo delle Terme (B3, fig. 3.13a) the snake does not placidly slither out over the ground (as in B16) but rises in sigmoid curves upwards. Where it is heading can, I believe, be confirmed by comparison with the left hand short side of the sarcophagus in

¹⁴⁶The discussion in this paragraph owes its conception to Gombrich (1960) 72-5, who in turn cites Nietzsche (1887) *Vorspiel* 55.

¹⁴⁷Kerényi (1976) 383.

Lyon (A7, see fig. 3.13b), from around 220-30. Here the *cista* has shed its lid and the snake arises similarly, heading towards the genitals of an ithyphallic Pan with pipes and *lagobolon* — let us term this the *phallopetal* snake.¹⁴⁸ It should be noted that the main side of the sarcophagus presents a rather small and de-emphasised *cista mystica* in front of the panther-team. On the early Severan sarcophagus in Naples (B9, fig. 3.13c) the *cista mystica* clutters the feet of the centaur pulling the chariot, and out of it rises a snake, again towards the mid-foreleg area of the creature: objections concerning the placement of centaur genitalia can, it seems, be answered by the Pan at the right hand of the same sarcophagus (fig. 3.13d), who sports a tapering and similarly sinuous, though not strictly biologically caprid, erection. While the presence of an ithyphallic Pan or satyr is not unusual (for example, just such a Pan appears behind the triumphal chariot on the North wall in north-west corner of the room of the Cherubs in the House of the Vettii), locating this with the *cista mystica* and the snake results in a striking motif-combination. The collision of two otherwise attested motifs has therefore created new meaning. Patently the created image is a mythological scene rather than reproduction of cult activity, but what might it be?

In some respects sarcophagi with this motif are quite similar. Our eye is drawn to the female *liknophoros* who accompanies this snake-phallus scene both in the Rome and Naples pieces (B3, B9). Indeed in the Naples piece a prominent phallus juts from the *liknon* at a rakish angle — if anything were to unsettle Geyer's idea that some elements might not be presented for fear of exposing the profane to imagery they should not be seeing, this

¹⁴⁸For an overview of Dionysian *ithyphalloi* see Csapo (1997).

is it: the scene is in no way coy.¹⁴⁹ The *liknophoros* is absent from the Lyon sarcophagus (A7). Whatever any other meaning of this symbol is, it seems at least that it has a reference to vivifying aspects of the god. The well-trodden view, via the penis as regenerative symbol, is that this denotes 'hope for rebirth'; but there is an obvious message concerning the power of the deity. His presence conjures exuberant life. In all cases this is present with the other effect of the god. Silenus droops wine-heavy on a wagon, and Hercules either stares hungrily at his female companion (as in Naples) or else paws roughly towards her (as in Lyon). This is all semaphoring Dionysus' action-at-a-distance, a mood kindled by the god which has already excited the maenads to their ecstatic dance, the beasts to their obedience, and Pan to his exuberance.

In other respects these sarcophagi are not greatly similar. The Lyon piece is mainly concerned with exoticism and presenting barbarian prisoners, that in Rome a raucous *thiasus*, whereas that in Naples seems at first glance to privilege the physicality of the Hercules-motif. Associating the snake in the *cista mystica* with the penis of Pan demands an explanation; if it were to emphasise the power of the god over erotic or generally pleasurable realms, this would be consonant with the depictions in the rest of the sarcophagus. For the Lyon piece it is most allegorical, acting as a parallel to the punitive display of the prisoners, and in communion with these motifs is indicative of the irresistibility of the deity's power. This allegorical function is why it is removed to the ends of the sarcophagus; while its meaning is complementary, its tone would be disjunctive with the iconography of the rest of the scene. In

¹⁴⁹Geyer (1977) 42.

Naples and Rome the *cista mystica* is a more direct manifestation of physical urges so familiar to the Dionysian realm.¹⁵⁰

3.4.4 A stable symbol with unstable surroundings

A comparison with a number of other Dionysian sarcophagi will show that the *cista mystica* with snake emerging towards the erect phallus is not a motif which shows wide-ranging chronological and stylistic reproduction as a fixed scene, but a motif which exists inside a dialogue arising from discrete motifs combined to create a new effect.¹⁵¹ On the right-hand end of the Pozzuoli sarcophagus of the first quarter of the third century (A15) a very aggressively depicted snake lunges towards and actually makes contact with the ithyphallic Pan figure, indicating the interrelation of the two motifs.¹⁵² Conversely the existence of the rising snake is rare outside the Pan motif, and where it does occur seems to denote the *epidemia* of the god. In a sarcophagus from the Casino Rospigliosi (D5, fig. 3.14) it emerges near Ariadne who is about to be revived from her slumber into union with the divinity: the snake rises as a sempahore of this impending manifestation, and a hint toward impending erotic conjunction. Here significantly a flying *putto* arrests its sinuous ascendance, in what I take to be an evocation of the need

¹⁵⁰Geyer (1977) 48 would see the group as balancing the god on the opposite end. His division from the rest of the thiasus (and the rarity of this figure-type at the foremost position) seems to me to speak against that interpretation.

¹⁵¹Cf. the various presentations listed in p147n144.

¹⁵²A15. The same is true of a piece in Frascati, *ASR* IV.i: 55. Further doubtful cases include 56 (Cagliari), 57 (Poggioa Caiano). Matz (1968a) 169 links D5 to the same workshop as A9 and *ASR* IV.1: 36, *ASR* IV.3: 227. Note that in D5 the female above the centaur-riding *putto* is a maenad and has no iconography of Victoria; A9 shows the workshop's very distinctive style of depicting Victoria, where no confusion with a maenad could occur.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(a) Front.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(b) Rear.

3.14: D5 = *ASR* IV.1: 59. From Matz (1968a) pl. 69.

not to awaken Ariadne before the god is physically closer.¹⁵³ This function is elsewhere shown by, for example, the silencing gesture of the bearded deity upon whose lap Ariadne slumbers in the Ariadne sarcophagus in Baltimore, from the Licinian tomb.¹⁵⁴ When Dionysus has gained physical union with the female and his presence is complete, as is shown on the rear of A15 where a veiled woman stands with the god, the snake is free to again be phallopetal, and it again seeks out the caprid penis of Pan.¹⁵⁵

On the left hand end of piece in the Louvre from the third century (*ASR* IV.3: 222) which depicts the discovery of Ariadne, a very similar ithyphallic

¹⁵³This tactile element has fascinating parallel in the Pannychis sarcophagus discussed on p291, which strongly activates thoughts of the tactile separation of the deceased.

¹⁵⁴See p358n5.

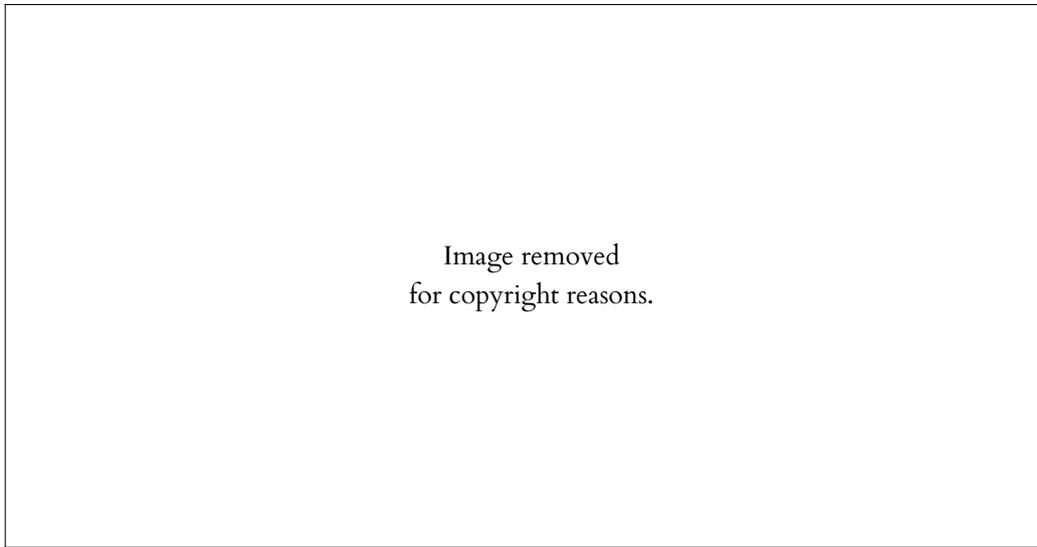
¹⁵⁵The veiling of the female has important connotations of crossing the boundary of death within the funerary realm. Cf. the veiling of the rescued Ariadne in the sarcophagus of Metilia Acte (D8) and Euripides' *Alcestis* 1020ff.

Pan to that found on the Lyon sarcophagus' left hand end dancing over the *cista mystica* with the arising snake occurs (A7). The sculptors have, presumably lest the erotic connotations of the scene elude us, added in a herm of Priapus. The use here is conveniently distinct from that on another piece depicting the discovery of Ariadne, from around 170, currently in the Vatican (*ASR* IV.3: 211). There, the snake rises from the *cista mystica* but not toward Pan. Instead a satyr and an infant-satyr tussle over a vessel, forming a loose pyramidal formation. The wide-based *cista mystica* and the tapering snake, quizzically watching the struggle, create interest and movement as well as filling an awkward shape.¹⁵⁶ As a confirmation of this use, the sculptor has employed another snake at the left hand of the piece to form an answering slope to that formed by the reclining Ariadne.

An erotic message can be found wherever Pan sports an erection: in that respect the *cista mystica* with phallopetal snake acts as an interpretative indicator rather than the primary vehicle of meaning. In one of the most strongly erotic sarcophagi depicting the procession of Dionysus seated on a panther, in Dresden (D6, see fig. 3.15), Pan appears with an especially thick and human-formed erection, and cavorts under the influence of the deity. Confirmatory erotic elements are present: the female figure heading the procession displays full and bare buttocks, while in the lower right under the lion's head *protome* a faun (or smaller Pan) and goat are pictured *in amplexus* in an allusion to the famous statue from the Villa dei Papiri.¹⁵⁷ The presence and effect of the deity is utterly manifest and needs no litmus

¹⁵⁶Compare the similar use on the sarcophagus in Moscow, *ASR* IV.1: 47.

¹⁵⁷Late Hellenistic? Naples inv. no. 27709. The scene is also to be found in a sarcophagus from Ostia, *ASR* IV.1: 54.



3.15: Detail of right hand front of sarcophagus in Dresden (D6 = *ASR* IV.1: 52). From Matz (1968a) pl. 60.1.

cista mystica which is consequently dispensed with.¹⁵⁸ A similar technique, of having the snake seek a locus of significance, can be observed in scenes of the Mithraic tauroctony, where the chthonic serpent moves towards the freshly-cut wound.¹⁵⁹

3.4.5 Interpretation: orchestrating the situation

The meaning of the *cista mystica* is difficult to pin down. If we were to apply Geyer's diagnostic criteria, in particular her focus on uniqueness, we should probably not seek to detect an intense relation to the reality of cult worship. Indeed it is quite satisfying enough to note the effect that the god (present in

¹⁵⁸The naked satyr raising the tail of the pantheress Dionysus rides conceivably has erotic congress in mind. This sarcophagus is identified by Matz (1968a) 161 as being from the same workshop as B15.

¹⁵⁹E.g. a marble relief in the Louvre, inv. no. Ma3441; on the reverse the snake functions in the more diffuse 'divine indicator' sense. Sol, Mithras and Luna are manifest in the heavens while below a *cista mystica* with coiling snake appears.

each of these scenes) wreaks on his devotees. By its presence in a Dionysian context the *cista mystica* suggests the presence of the deity and his power, as the *fascēs* with their axe might symbolise the person who wields power, and the execution of it.¹⁶⁰ However, due to its use with other deities and for other purposes (such as the political use of it in cistaphoric coinage) the *cista mystica* is not evocative *per se* of Dionysian mystery cult without supporting imagery: this is why it acquires confirmatory iconography in those coins which seek to specify the Dionysian association as opposed to general ‘cult’ or other meaning.¹⁶¹ This can be taken to extremes: in a coin of Apamea from 180-2 issued by the magistrate Stratonikianos, we see on the obverse Dionysus Kelaineos. On the reverse appears the chariot, drawn by lions, with an oblique torch and *thyrsus*. The god does not appear again: the chariot itself is ridden by a *cista mystica*.¹⁶²

Any link between the depictions on the sarcophagi and the phallic objects perhaps held within the *cista mystica* seems superfluous, as does appeal to accusations of sexual excess involved within cult worship of Dionysus. After all, Pan is behaving as he is supposed to, showing his affinity with the god through his physical form. Nevertheless, the presence of the god has breathed life into present-but-dormant elements (such as the closed or lethargic snake equipped *cista mystica* and undifferentiated genitals), and by increasing their vivacity creates interest and suggests meaning.

¹⁶⁰Cf. in this regard the sarcophagi’s epiphanic imagery, sec. 4.6.1.

¹⁶¹E.g. the mask on top of the *cista mystica* in an AE of Laodikeia, Phrygia issued under Antoninus Pius, sold by Fritz Rudolf Künker GmbH, e-auction 19 lot 436, 26/06/13, or an AE of Magnesia on the Meander, issued under Antoninus Pius, showing the infant Dionysus with *thyrsus* sat on top, with snake emerging. Sold by Gitbud & Naumann, auction 21 lot 392, 07/11/14.

¹⁶²Head (1887) 352. See also in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, inv. no. 1972.991.

3.4.6 Conclusions

The *cista mystica* exists in a non-cultic form, that is, the *cista* itself. This is quite unlike the great majority of Roman religious apparatus: a *patera* has little practical use, a sacrificial knife has a distinct form, an altar is not a table. Similarly motifs can be fossilised: *boukrania* tend to exist outside the world of the picture as flavouring decoration. The *cista mystica* by contrast has a function in the cult but also a private life; the term *cista* has to be attuned with the adjective to be meaningful for mystery contexts. It lends a meaning, but concomitant with the vague adjective, not a precise one: nowhere does its presence alone mean we can see real cult activity.

The trend of the snakes is outward; like a ‘buzzword’, they connect us with the Dionysian realm and evoke the register in which the iconography should be received by the viewer, but in this respect are little different from a *pedum* or *lagobolon*. Why present them then?

The depictions compel us to notice that the mystical contents are being lulled out by the god’s power. We are invited to view the snakes rather like a miner’s canary, as indicating the presence of the powerful deity. As such the *cista mystica* becomes a convenient barometer for the Dionysian nature of the parade; the contents are not so important as what the emerging snake indicates for the world outside the box, and this is why we find little play made of contents; the artist could have intrigued us as to the contents, but casts them in this different function.

There may be, complementing this, a sense that the escape of the *inner* content of the box through the orchestration of the divine presence is

echoed in the liminal reception of the grave by the viewers, who themselves arrive at the outside of a container whose contents are denied to our gaze and approach: mystical apparatus in the former instance, the corpse of the deceased in the latter. Thus the emergence of the snake indicates allegorically reception of the viewer's presence across the liminal boundary of the marble; positive agency afforded to the otherwise inert contents of the *cista mystica* allegorically implies positive reception of the viewer's cultivation of the grave.

At any rate we can unify the ithyphallic motifs: Pan sports an erection and the snake emerges because they are affected by the same power. The meaning overall is therefore rather diffuse, at least compared to any hopes of a persuasive religious link; the *cista mystica* provides atmospheric emphasis. The artists do not leave the ground-line bare, but add appropriate orchestrating motifs: these take the form of rocks, trees, *canthari* and, I would add, even *cistae mysticae*. The motif may have had its origins in specifically Dionysian cult (or in cult more generally). Yet its numismatic reuse and its occurrence in such a wide variety of funerary and religious contexts speak against an interpretation greater than that of orchestrating the atmospheric tone of the sarcophagi as Dionysian. Its presence is dictated by genre and context rather than religious allusion. Where Pan dances overcome by ἐνθουσιασμός, kicking the *cista mystica* underfoot, it would be pointless to sound out cult activity, let alone cultic aspirations of the patron. Rather, the *cista mystica* alerts us to the Dionysian *thiasus*, and stands in metonymic sympathy for Pan's inflammation with the god himself.

3.5 The *liknon*

The *liknon* is suited for all kinds of mystery rites and sacrifices.

τὸ λίκνον πρὸς πᾶσαν τελετὴν καὶ θυσίαν ἐπιτήδειόν ἐστιν.

Harp. s.v. λικνοφόρος.

3.5.1 Definition

Before we examine the *liknon* on the triumphal sarcophagi, it will be prudent to offer a definition of the object. This, as it turns out, is not as difficult as early scholarship on the matter implied.¹⁶³

Hesychius records an epithet of Dionysus: *liknites*. He defines this as coming from the *likna* in which children sleep.¹⁶⁴ He further specifies it is a basket of reed or cane.¹⁶⁵ By comparison with the peculiarly shaped basket in which the infant Dionysus is placed in some provincial coins (identifiable by his *thyrsus*, see fig. 3.16), it seems safe to say that the *liknon* itself is a basket made of a woven material such as wicker or osier. It is approximately rectangular, with the short ends rounded. One short end has a small lip; the sides rise obliquely towards the other short end, which is high. This is the same basket we see in the sarcophagi and the Villa of the Mysteries frieze.¹⁶⁶

The tapered mouth of the object is distinctive. This form reflects the

¹⁶³See Harrison (1903a), Harrison (1903b), Harrison (1904).

¹⁶⁴λικνίτης: ἐπίθετον Διονύσου: ἀπὸ τῶν λίκνων, ἐν οἷς τὰ παιδιά κοιμῶνται, Hsch. s.v. *liknites*.

¹⁶⁵κανοῦν, s.v. λίκνον.

¹⁶⁶Literature on the villa is extensive; see Mudie-Cooke (1913), Toynbee (1929) (interprets its meaning as primarily to do with marriage), Lehmann (1962) (mystery based), Sauron (1998). See also de Grummond (2000a), Longfellow (2000), Swetnam-Burland (2000), Wilburn (2000).

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

3.16: Æ of Commodus, approx. 175. 3.70g, 18mm, Nicaea. Obv: bareheaded draped bust r., Λ ΑΥΡ ΚΟΜΜΟΔΟΣ ΚΑΙΣ ΓΕΡΜ. Rev: infant Dionysus in *liknon*, with transverse *thyrsus*, ΝΕΙΚΑΙΕΩΝ. Image courtesy Oxford Roman Provincial Coinage Database, no. 5125. See BMC 43.

original purpose of the *liknon*; it was not *designed* as a cradle, nor as a cult object. The *liknon* was intended for a winnowing-fan. Its agricultural use was for tossing the beaten grain, in order that the wind might blow away the lighter chaff.¹⁶⁷ Due the obviously seasonal use of the agricultural implement it was probably rather pragmatically pressed into service as a cradle, a use to which its form is suited, and finally adopted through allegory as a cult object.¹⁶⁸

3.5.2 Dionysus *liknites*

As a cradle, the *liknon* was first used for human infants, and naturally then authors came to represent deities within them.¹⁶⁹ A number of gods are

¹⁶⁷*Suda* s.v. λίκνον. Aristotle *Mete.* 29-33 employs this as an elegant simile; the design can be seen little changed in the nineteenth-century painting by Jean-François Millet, *Le Vanneur*.

¹⁶⁸In form it is not too dissimilar from the modern Moses-basket.

¹⁶⁹Callim. *Hymn.* 1.47 with scholia ad loc.

associated with the *liknon*; it served as the cradle for Hermes,¹⁷⁰ and Zeus.¹⁷¹ Its agricultural use leads to the epithet of Demeter *λικμαΐη*,¹⁷² and Athena is prayed to by craftsmen bearing *likna*.¹⁷³ Due to its ubiquity, Nilsson concludes that ‘in the Classical age the *liknon* was not sacred in itself, but like other profane implements sometimes occurred in sacral use’.¹⁷⁴ This is congruent with our findings above regarding the *cista mystica*.

By the Hadrianic period the *liknon* could be used in religious processions with no particular link to Dionysus. As Harpocration suggests, the *liknon* was suitable for religious ceremony in general.¹⁷⁵ Nevertheless, it does seem to have been an object important to cult practice. We know through the inscriptions that a certain role in certain mystery cults involved carrying the *liknon*: the *liknophoros*.¹⁷⁶

Nevertheless, the god most often associated with the *liknon* is Dionysus. Discussion here normally centres around the god’s epithet *λικνίτης*. But is this justified? As Nilsson pithily observes, ‘much more attention has been paid to Dionysos Liknites in modern writings on Dionysos and his religion than in ancient literature’.¹⁷⁷ He then gives the (mere) three instances he finds of its use.¹⁷⁸ It seems somewhat mean of Nilsson to exclude the careful

¹⁷⁰Hom. *Hymn Herm.* 150, Arat. 268.

¹⁷¹Callim. *Hymn.* 1.48.

¹⁷²*Anth. Pal.* 6.98.1; see also Hom. *Il.* 5.499-502.

¹⁷³Soph. fr. 844.

¹⁷⁴Nilsson (1957) 30.

¹⁷⁵τὸ λίκνον πρὸς πᾶσαν τελετὴν καὶ θυσίαν ἐπιτήδειον ἔστιν. On the meaning of *τελετή* I follow Harrison (1903a) 313, *contra* Harrison (1914), since Harpocration here seems to be emphasising the serviceability of the *λίκνον* through contrasting the ordinary *θυσία* with the more unusual *τελετή*.

¹⁷⁶On the inscriptions see Alexander (1932), Vogliano (1933), Cumont (1933) 250-2, Nilsson (1957) 45-59.

¹⁷⁷Nilsson (1957) 38. See also Otto (1965) 193-4 for the same sentiment.

¹⁷⁸Plut. *De Is. et Os.* 365a, *Hymn. Orph.* 46, 52.3.

Hesychius' definition of the *liknon* as an epithet of the god (p158n164), but even including this instance we must admit the term is rare.

3.5.2.1 The *liknon* and the afterlife

Most discussions of the Dionysian *liknon*, perhaps due to the paucity of textual sources, engage with Servius' discussion of the phrase *mystica vannus Iacchi* at *Georg.* 1.166, equating this with the *liknon*.¹⁷⁹

Servius states that by *mystic fan* of Iacchus, Virgil meant an implement used to separate grain and chaff — though he seems hazy on the details (*liknon* cannot really be called a 'sieve' or 'riddle' (*cribrum*): it is worked through tossing). He continues that the rites of Liber Pater, who is equated with Dionysus, concern the purification of the soul (*ad purgationem animae pertinebant*), through the allegorical comparison of grain and people. Such is an understandable and ready allegory.¹⁸⁰ Next, the same sort of belief occurs in the worship of Osiris, who is equated with Liber Pater. Furthermore, the *liknon* housed the infant Dionysus (*positus esse dicitur, postquam est utero matris editus*). Others, he continues, claim that the *vannus* is a large wickerwork basket for offerings of first fruit to Liber and Libera. Even Servius, ultimately, indicates that the best we can say about the *liknon* is that it had a symbolical role through which souls could be purified (*animas purgat*): note especially that he does not state any comparison between the grain and an afterlife of the initiate, instead focussing on the allegorically

¹⁷⁹Harrison (1903a), Harrison (1903b), Harrison (1904), Nilsson (1957) 36-9.

¹⁸⁰To be found, though with more violence, in Matthew 3:12 οὐ τὸ πτύον ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ, καὶ δι' ἀκαθαρσιῶν τὴν ἄλωνα αὐτοῦ, καὶ συνάξει τὸν σῖτον αὐτοῦ εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην, τὸ δὲ ἄχυρον κατακαύσει πυρὶ ἀσβέστῳ. Here πτύον is used, a tool similar to the *liknon* but more fork-like (see Harrison (1903a)).

purificatory nature of the process.

Despite the paltry textual occurrences of the *liknon*, it is richly present in the visual evidence, especially that often overlooked source, coins, which closely associate the object with the god.¹⁸¹ Scenes in sarcophagi outside the triumphal group seem to show its use in initiatory rites.¹⁸² Nevertheless studies have shown the *liknon* in the sarcophagi to not have cultic meaning.¹⁸³

It is not the aim of this thesis to add another voice to the religious possibilities the *liknon* presents. It seems quite possible that the act of winnowing grain, of separating unwanted chaff from chosen wheat, which then enters the cold earth and is reborn anew, could come, through association of the object with infancy, to be used in mystery rites which evoked the rebirth of the deity, and even then perhaps have some part in a belief in rebirth by the members of that cult. I find difficulties in understanding the link between the rebirth of grain which is cyclical and must inevitably die again, and permanent rebirth, especially when that rebirth is perceived not as life anew but translocation to a different realm of existence. Nevertheless the familiar idea is that the triumphal sarcophagi come allegorically to symbolise life's conquering of its opponent, death — disregarding the fact that on many of these sarcophagi, an actual earthly enemy is depicted, and moreover, that the corporeal form of sarcophagi seems only to emphasise the inner decay of the body it hygienically seals away.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸¹Kerényi (1976) 44 seems unaware of the coins when he says 'only the designation of the god as "liknites" shows that the *liknon* was his container.'

¹⁸²IV.1: 37, *ASR* IV.2: 79.

¹⁸³Geyer (1977) esp. 83-4 (though she does go further and argue its presence is explicable simply by the motif's *dekorativen Qualität*).

¹⁸⁴*Contra* Ewald (2010) 261. See Elsner (2012). Particularly, *lenos*-shaped pieces (see here A15, B17, D6) do not seem readily to support the interpretation that they form a

In following this question we come against what I see as the fundamental trap in examining these sarcophagi; knowing that certain motifs have religious connotations, it is far too easy to claim religious feeling on the part of the sarcophagus patron and thus neatly ‘solve’ the iconography. In fact, such an approach fails to account for visual choices at all, since the corpus neither shows the same set of motifs, nor depicts those motifs in a stable manner. If we accept the *liknon* as the quintessential religious element of Dionysian cult imagery, and as Matz we find in it the litmus test of cultic activity, we are met with the significant problem that some triumphal sarcophagi depict *likna* with fruit inside, some with phalluses, some depict them with peculiarly distorted forms, and significantly, many do not depict them at all.¹⁸⁵ We should therefore examine the different forms of the *likna* and probe their varying functions.

3.5.3 The object on the sarcophagi

A brief examination of the triumphal sarcophagi reveals *likna* of vastly different styles. For this discussion, I have rejected Matz’ division of the types of female *liknaphoros* (TH 47, 48 and 49) since, together with the Pan type TH 108, they offer no clue as to the form the *liknon* itself will take, only its attendant support.

An excellent place from which to commence this survey of the varying

‘pious act of substitution in which the integrity of the body is symbolically reinstated.’ The form to me seems to point aggressively towards the *liquefaction* (and thus decorporalisation) of the cadaver.

¹⁸⁵Matz (1964) 16; Boyancé (1966) 42-5 objects to the significance laid on the *liknon*, and I would agree with the urge for care, lest we privilege an implement to the detriment of analysing the surrounding iconography. For a useful summary of the opinions see Heslin (2005) 61-4.

types of *liknon* is that found on the sarcophagus in Naples (B9, see fig. 3.17a). It depicts a woven basket, roughly two head-widths in length, and half as tall. At the top centre it tapers down diagonally towards the bottom which ends in a small lip. Over its surface there are several bands of cross hatching, such as we find on the *cistae mysticae*, with a smooth lip over the oblique edge. A *phallus* emerges at a rakish angle, standing perpendicular to the diagonal of the basket. It is smooth and cylindrical in form, a shade under the thickness of the nearest maenad's arm, with the long and tapered prepuce so favoured in classical antiquity.¹⁸⁶ We must posit some form of support, since it is difficult to reconcile the position of the phallus with its place in the basket and the motion of the *thiasus*.

This short and tall form of the *liknon* is found elsewhere in the Dionysian triumphal sarcophagi (A5, B3). We also find veiled objects within the *liknon* in the triumphal series and also elsewhere in the Dionysian sarcophagi.¹⁸⁷ The peaked drapery renders the concealment not particularly effective; while it covers, in many ways it actually emphasises the *phallus*. This is most easily visible in the *thiasus* sarcophagus in the Vatican (fig. 3.17b, c. 140-50). Here, a maenad lifts a basket casually, with wickerwork unindicated but of substantially the same shape as before, with a bundle inside seemingly composed of material wrapped around some object, looking to modern eyes quite like a loaf of bread. The object appears in rather closely similar orientation as the phallus in Naples, and it seems we have no reason substantially to doubt the (lightly) concealed phallus was intended. The motif of the draped

¹⁸⁶On which see Hodges (2001) and Dover (1978), 127.

¹⁸⁷B19; ASR IV 35, 169, 209, 359.

though obvious phallus-in-*liknon* can be found as far back as a Hellenistic relief.¹⁸⁸ That the sculptor intends the audience to be concerned with what is under the drapery is made clear by the scene shown in the lid of *ASR* IV.2: 75 (fig. 3.17c), which shows a maenad privately unveiling the *liknon*; a tree and her body bracket the scene off as a private unit. Indeed, Matz saw the revelation of the contents of the *liknon* as the defining characteristic of cultic scenes.¹⁸⁹ The sense of revelation is amplified on the lid by another scene where a kneeling maenad (on a wholly different scale both from the preceding maenad and the figure next to her) opens a *cista mystica* while a satyr shades his eyes from the revelation (we might compare the similar scene from the lid of 161, where the *cista mystica* is uncovered for the benefit of Dionysus himself).¹⁹⁰

In several of the sarcophagi (such as A8, fig. 3.17d and B4 of the triumphal series, and also *ASR* IV 88, 173, 175) we see the *liknon* with round objects resembling fruits inside. The *likna* on sarcophagi *ASR* IV.3: 173 and 175 have been reduced to shallow platters; we may infer that significance could be laid more on the fruit in these instances than the basket. Of course, we find depictions of *likna* with fruits and a phallus inside, though not on the triumphal sarcophagi.¹⁹¹

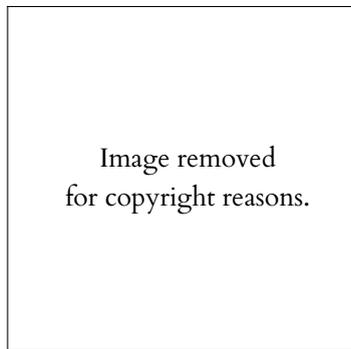
Strikingly, on the end of the Pashley sarcophagus in the Fitzwilliam (B14 and also on D17 = *ASR* IV.3: 176) we find an infant in a *liknon*, held by two satyrs of mixed ages and swung; inside the *liknon* and with the baby are to

¹⁸⁸See Nilsson (1957) fig. 6.

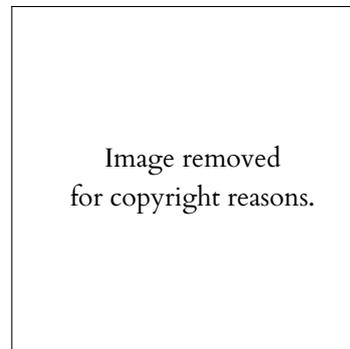
¹⁸⁹Matz (1964) *passim*, esp. 16. And, of course, the scene in the Villa of the Mysteries.

¹⁹⁰On *epiphaneia* in the triumphal group see p279ff.

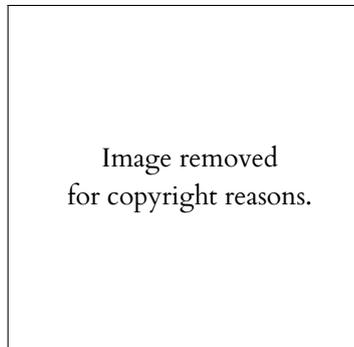
¹⁹¹See Harrison (1903a) fig. 5.



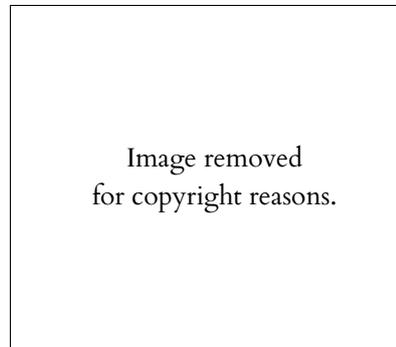
(a) B9. From Matz (1968b) pl. 138.1.



(b) Detail of *ASR* IV.1: 35, from *ASR* IV.1 pl. 32.4.



(c) Detail of *ASR* IV.2: 75. from *ASR* IV.2 pl. 85.



(d) A8. From Matz (1968b) pl. 134.1.

3.17: Select *liknon* motifs.

be found round fruits. The *liknon* here is a longer, shallower version of that found in B9; the artist has been careful to indicate that the object is woven of wicker or a similar medium. We shall return to this subsequently.

3.5.3.1 Variant *likna*

The *liknon* does not always appear as above. In several of the sarcophagi, such as D17 (fig. 3.18a), we find the *liknon* has lost the lip and tapered form of its body: this renders its use as a winnowing-fan impossible.¹⁹² Instead it

¹⁹²See also *ASR* IV.3: 199.

has gained a lid and become a sort of average of the *cista mystica* and *liknon*. No other *liknon* or *cista mystica* appear in this scene, only the hybrid. We also find it in the form of a cylindrical basket, sometimes in a gentle curve, but significantly lacking its tapered front; this is how we find it in 153 and 157. In 176 and 199 (fig. 3.18a) it has lost its tapered lip, but retains its wicker-work indication. It is too wide and shallow to be called a *cista mystica*, and there is some indication of either a lid or, as seems more likely, material covering. We also see it as an empty basket. This is how we find it on A5 and B3, and elsewhere in 80 (probably), and 148.

In 153 (fig. 3.18b) the *liknon* has become a sort of soft basket which a maenad pulls down in a convex curve against her head. In 175 (fig. 3.18c) it has been reduced to a shallow platter-like form for bearing the fruits. Such a basket, if it is a *liknon*, is also to be found on a fragment of the *ara pietatis*, where the veil is arranged to just reveal three fruits.¹⁹³ Lastly in A2 (fig. 3.18d) it has become quite peculiar indeed.¹⁹⁴

It is particularly in scenes such as these, where the deviation from the functional form of the *liknon* means the scenes cannot readily be linked with cult practice, that the disjunction between the religiously motivated activities of a particular set of worshippers and the motif as constructed symbol inside funerary relief becomes clear. In the deviation of the *liknon* from its canonical form we detect the increasing dislocation between the origins of the motif and its role in the scene. It is no longer of great consequence to the artist to depict an object which could function as an agricultural tool, as

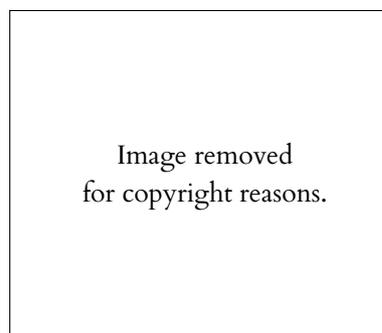
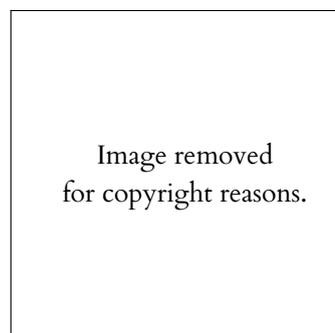
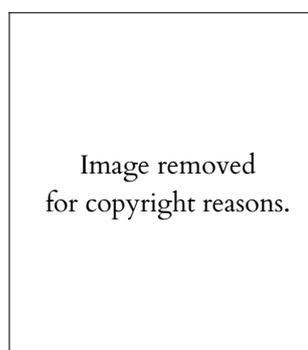
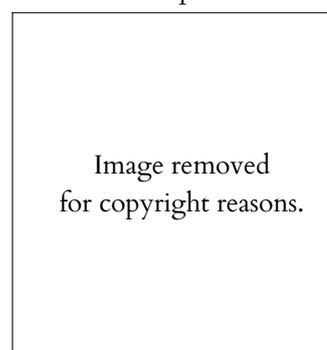
¹⁹³Ryberg (1955) fig. 36e (where it is erroneously described under 36c at p71). The bearer here is male.

¹⁹⁴This variant is not unparalleled: cf. A5.

a winnowing fan. The increasingly antiquarian nature of the implement is, after all, clear from the careful but vague descriptions of its use in Servius and Hesychius. The artist is only concerned that in Dionysian processions women carry long baskets; like the *cistae mysticae* the *likna* come to be *de rigueur* for processions, even when their precise form (and, we may surmise, their original use) are uncommunicated in the iconography — presumably since they were unknown or considered irrelevant. This is, of course, to say nothing of the fact that the *liknon*-bearer is a useful motif for compositional reasons, as it creates interest at the upper register and illusory depth through giving an opportunity for a shallow carved figure, a fact of particular concern after the late-Antonine *Stilwandel*.

3.5.4 Interpretation

As far as we can deduce meaning in the symbols of an ancient and lost religion, I wish to observe firstly that we should not see the fruit as a coy substitute for the cultic *phallus*. It seems more prudent to see the fruit which is also sometimes present in these *likna* not as a stand-in, present due to prudery, but an alternative vehicle for the message; that is, not that the fruit appears at a remove from the purpose of the *phallus*, but as another route towards that purpose. If we accept, as we might, that the symbolic import of the *phallus* has its roots in the generative, fertility-based powers of Dionysus (in the broadest sense), then we find no difficulty in finding fruit a suitable vehicle for the same message. We find, for example, in many places Priapus either with fruit in the fold of his toga (raised to show his erect

(a) D17. From *ASR* IV.3 pl. 196.(b) Detail of *ASR* IV.2: 153.
From *ASR* IV.2 pl. 169.1.(c) Detail of *ASR* IV.3: 175.
From *ASR* IV.3 pl. 224.1.(d) A2. From *ASR* IV.2 pl.
122.1.3.18: Select variant *liknon* motifs.

penis) or standing next to baskets of fruit.¹⁹⁵

Given the famous scene from the second-style megalographia in the Villa of the Mysteries, there was probably some religious significance in the transition from a veiled *liknon* to an unveiled one. Nilsson wishes to see the origins of the fruit and phallus filled *liknon* in the Priapus cult, and I have no difficulty in agreeing with him, particularly since there may well be an

¹⁹⁵E.g. a bronze coin of Julia Domna from Nikopolis (Varbanov 2858a), the famous wall painting at the entrance of the House of the Vetii in Pompeii, the altar at Aquileia (Bianchi Bandinelli (1971) fig. 96), and a great number of statuettes: fine examples include Boston MFA RES.08.34a from 170-240, Museo Arqueológico Nacional Madrid 1962/33/1 (1st century), and several have been sold at auction; Christie's sale 1384 lots 159-60, sale 1466 lot 479.

allusion to the ceremonial unveiling in the presentation of these erect Priapi: they are depicted in the *anasyromenus* posture, in the act of revealing their phallus to the viewer.¹⁹⁶

Ultimately, even the most ardently non-religious interpretation of the sarcophagi must acknowledge that the *liknon* was originally a religious object. Problems arise, though, when we conflate discussion of why the *liknon* occurs in real cult use with discussion of why we find the *liknon* in sarcophagus scenes; though one may inform and illuminate the other, the two discussions should not be expected to be unproblematically congruent.

Nevertheless none of the other motifs in the scenes have been interpreted as so thoroughly religiously symbolic as the *liknon*: yet if the *liknon* were purely evocative of Dionysian religion, and the *sine qua non* of cultic scenes, how are we to account for the meaning of its varying forms, its occasional absence, and the failure of the rest of the iconography to promote cultic elements? If we consider the presence of the *liknon* to be based more around desire to invoke Dionysian worship, as distinct from a desire to communicate religious feeling on the part of the commissioner, its variant forms need not cause us to worry. That is to say, while the commissioner may or may not have been an adherent of the cult of Dionysus, the *liknon* in particular is not sufficient to sustain this interpretation. In order to situate ourselves between these poles, let us examine two case-studies of *likna* from the sarcophagi. These will be the so-called Pashley sarcophagus in the Fitzwilliam Museum

¹⁹⁶Nilsson (1957) 35. Note the *liknaphoros* in the Priapus-sarcophagus D17. I should like to see in the famous painting of Priapus-Mercury from Pompeii (IX.12.6) the god just having whisked away a small veil from the bulbous tip of his penis, but I suspect this is in fact a rather flimsy purse, itself another attribute of Mercury.

(B14), and the Naples sarcophagus (B9). The former shows a scene traditionally interpreted as initiatory, the latter a scene apparently focussing on the erotically charged side of the symbol.

3.5.4.1 The Cambridge *liknon*

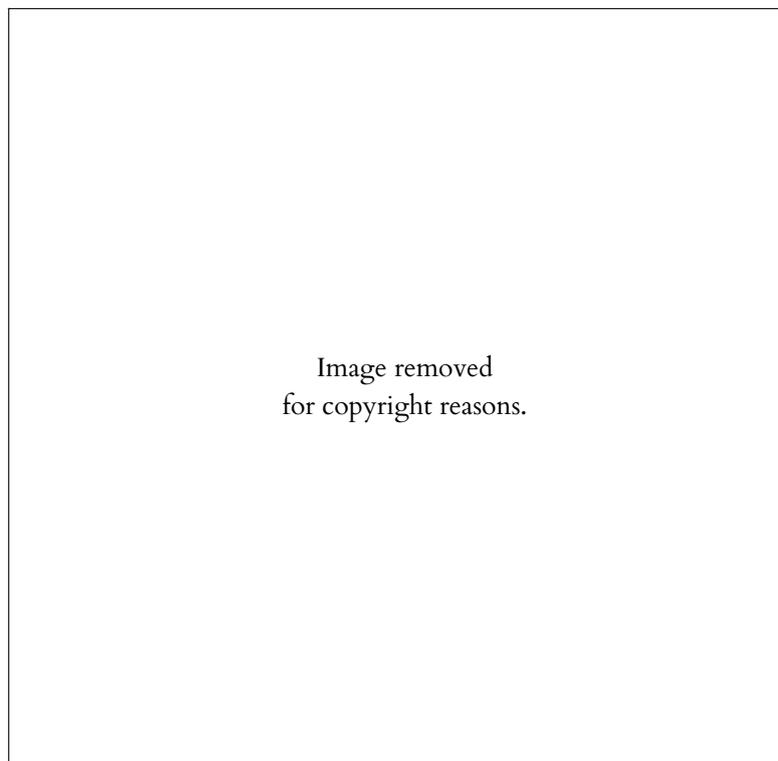
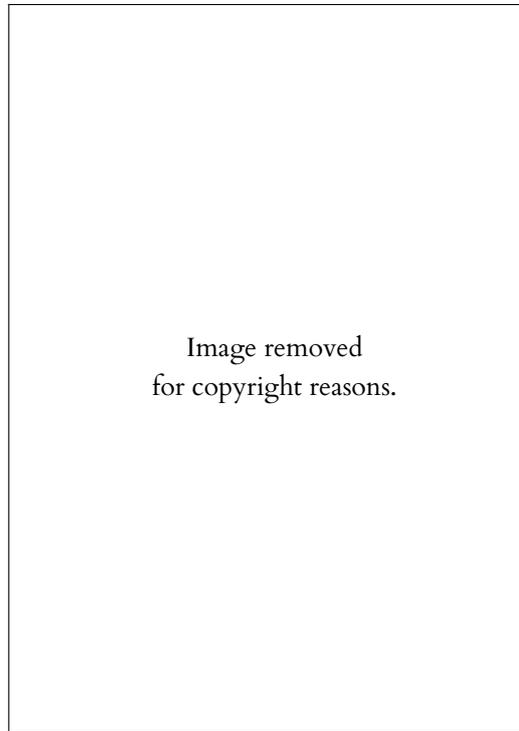


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

3.19: Right hand short end of Pashley sarcophagus (B14). Inv. no. GR.1.1835. From <http://data.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/id/object/65460> [accessed 04/10/14].

The left hand short end of the sarcophagus in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, depicts a drunken and ithyphallic Pan supported by two erotes. The sarcophagus' first publisher, Pashley, deals with this embarrassing relief in the space of two and a half lines before breathlessly continuing 'the other end of the monument presents a less common and much more interesting



3.20: Detail of right hand short side of Pashley sarcophagus (B14) showing the elder satyr's ear. Image author's own.

subject' (fig. 3.19).¹⁹⁷

It shows two standing satyrs of mixed ages. The left one is beardless and wearing a loin-cloth, facing and looking right, his chest frontal. He holds in his right hand a torch with parallel flame, placed over his right shoulder. The satyr on the right is older and bearded, wearing a *chlamys* and holding an unlit torch. He is facing and looking left, his chest slightly turned rightwards. Between trees a swag of drapery is hung. The tree on the left intrudes from the frontal frieze even though it does not bring the rest of the narrative with it: a clever, economical construction. Between them the two satyrs hold a *liknon*. Inside the *liknon* are placed some fruits and a baby (of slightly

¹⁹⁷Pashley (1837) 18-19.

unnaturalistic proportions).

The scene is certainly mythological. The figures are identifiable by their physiognomy as satyrs, and comparison with the coins (see fig. 3.16) shows the baby to be Dionysus.¹⁹⁸ One cannot view the scene as anything but mythological. It seems peculiar, then, that Nilsson should comment as follows:

How were children initiated when they were too small to take part in any ceremonies themselves and perhaps even to walk? I think by being placed in a liknon, just like the child Dionysos, and being swung in it, I have inferred this rite from the relief on one of the small ends of a sarcophagus in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. Two men with torches, one youthful and the other bearded, carry between them a liknon, in which a child is seated. There is nothing mythical about the men.¹⁹⁹

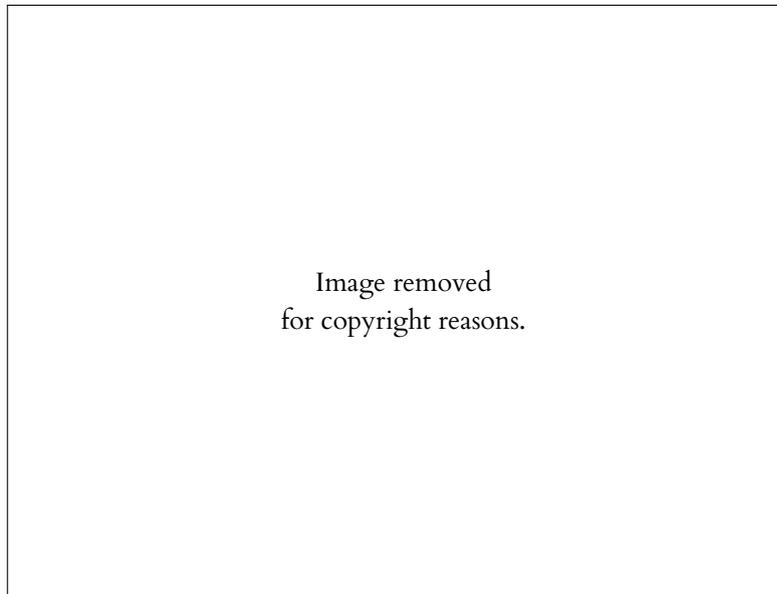
But it is unsound to use mythological iconography to inform us of real cult practice. Despite Nilsson's claims — that there is 'nothing mythological about these men' — the figures' ears are enough to mark them as satyrs (fig. 3.20). The ears immediately transfer the figures in our mind to the mythological realm; or perhaps, it would be better to say, there is nothing which moves our interpretation from the mythological realm it operated on when viewing the front and left-hand side, to a 'real' one.

Bizarrely, Nilsson did not later recant this stance; his later book which grew in part out of the earlier article even expands this misunderstanding

¹⁹⁸For the same motif with a *cista mystica* see coin of Magnesia on the Meander in p155n161.

¹⁹⁹Nilsson (1953) 179.

by balancing this scene with the ‘two children’ on the opposite short end.²⁰⁰ Their wings alone show them to be erotes — let alone the fact that these two infants, less than half the size of Pan, are able to lift the incapable reveller with no apparent effort. If we compare the scene with its presentation on another sarcophagus in Naples (D17, fig. 3.21), we can see the satyric nature of the bearers more clearly. On a Campana relief in the British Museum, the same scene is depicted, though the figures are far more frenzied, and the older satyr replaced with a maenad.²⁰¹



3.21: Right hand short end of Muzeo Nazionale D17. Image from the Warburg Institute Iconographic database, record no. 10625.

It would seem that Nilsson’s main source of evidence for child initiation is the fourth-century writer Himerius. This poor father lost his child, and wrote a moving lament for him:

²⁰⁰Nilsson (1957) 107-10, 108n5.

²⁰¹BM Terr. D525, c. 25-50 A.D.

Alas O Dionysus, how could you endure the seizure of this devoted child from your jurisdiction? The trophy has been set up jointly by the Erinyes against you and my hearth. O miserable Bacchic festival! O Cithaeron has been outdone by my misfortunes.

...

He will be initiated, I foretell, but in the jurisdiction below, and not with his father as mystagogue, but a miserable and bitter spirit.

οἴμοι Διόνυσε, πῶς ἤνεγκας ἐκ τοῦ σοῦ τεμένους
παῖδα τὸν ἱερὸν ἀρπαζόμενον; κοινὸν ἔστηκε κατὰ σοῦ καὶ
τῆς ἐμῆς ἐστίας Ἐρινύσι τοῦτο τὸ τρόπαιον. ὦ σκυθρωπῆς
βακχείας· ὦ Κιθαιρῶνος ταῖς ἐμαῖς νενικημένου συμφοραῖς·

...

τελεῖται μὲν, ἀλλ' ἐν τῷ κάτω τεμένει, οὐ πατρὸς μυσταγω-
γοῦντος, ἀλλὰ τινος οἴμαι σκυθρωποῦ καὶ πικροῦ δαίμονος.

Himerius 8.61-7.

Nilsson comments that this passage refers to

the initiation of babies into the Dionysiac mysteries. ... Apparently, the child was not yet initiated, but it had been intended that he should be very soon.²⁰²

Note that, even though to us it may make a great deal of allegorical sense, there is nothing in the passage to corroborate the idea that the child was swung in the *liknon*. However, more importantly, according to the most recent edition of Himerius the best estimates of Rufinus' age at death suggest

²⁰²Nilsson (1957)106.

around twenty years, or at the youngest, seventeen.²⁰³ One cannot imagine this precocious teenager being swung in a wicker basket! The other evidence Nilsson adduces, a third-century relief, is equally flawed; it merely depicts a child with the attributes of the god, in precisely the form of optative praise the Romans adopted for lost children.²⁰⁴ Nothing about it speaks of childhood initiation, let alone swinging in *likna*.²⁰⁵ The origin of the idea seems to be contamination with a known rite during the *Anthesteria*.²⁰⁶

I have pursued this point since the idea that children were initiated through being swung in a *liknon*, derived as it seemingly is from the mythological scene on the Pashley sarcophagus, is frequently encountered though not secure.²⁰⁷ How, then, are we to account for the scene on the end of the Pashley sarcophagus? It will need to be placed within its wider thematic context, but there seems to me nothing precluding a reading of the scene as coming from the childhood of the god.²⁰⁸ The god is borne by his attendants, just as on the opposite short end his effects are made visible in Pan's drunken eroticism.

²⁰³Penella (2007) 5, 21-2.

²⁰⁴On the term, see p272.

²⁰⁵Nilsson (1957) 107. Dietrich (1958) 246 adduces as evidence of the purificatory role of swinging the *liknon* the scholiast to Callimachus 1.48, who writes: λίκνον ἢ τὸ κόσκινον· τὸ γὰρ παλαιὸν ἐν κοσκίνῳ κατεκοίμιζον τὰ βρέφη πλοῦτον καὶ καρποὺς οἰωνιζόμενοι· ἢ τὸ κουνίον, ἐν ᾧ τὰ παιδία τιθέασιν. It is difficult to see how this supports Dietrich's interpretation of purificatory swinging; moreover, τὸ παλαιόν suggests that it was seen as an antiquated practice.

²⁰⁶Dietrich (1961).

²⁰⁷Cf. Huskinson (1996) 114 on the difficulty of finding evidence of initiating children in sarcophagi.

²⁰⁸Cf. 3.16.

3.5.4.2 The Naples *liknon*

The Naples sarcophagus' *liknon* contains an obvious *phallus* (B9, fig. 3.17a). The penis inside the *liknon* follows the line of the *liknaphoros*'s upper arm. At the left of the basket, a satyr meets our intruding gaze. There may be here a confrontation since we gaze upon the mystic object when properly its revelation is an act of religious significance. We are shown how we ought to behave by the figures averting their gaze from the unveiling of the *liknon* in the Villa of the Mysteries frieze, and the importance seemingly placed on veiling the initiate, as suggested by a funerary urn in the Museo Nazionale, Rome.²⁰⁹ Yet the sarcophagus does not show an unveiling; the phallus is not the object of revelation, it is on show, and only an outward-looking satyr is suggestive of its importance. Why might the phallus here then be so prominent?

Instead of the message being a precipice of movement from profane to sacred, as the unveiling seems to indicate, the openly displayed *liknon* may instead imply that we are inside the sacral atmosphere already; the message is then not primarily around revelation but around the status of the tomb as a *locus religiosus*, the mere sight of which implies the viewers' arrival inside the boundaries of the restricted tomb space. The outer surface of the marble in this sense would be orchestrating the register of cultivation it demanded from the viewer.

Nevertheless in sarcophagi, such interpretations must always be placed into their visual context. As noted above (p149ff), the *cistae mysticae* on

²⁰⁹C1 BC, inv. no. 11301.

this sarcophagus contain unusually phallopetal snakes. One rises towards the centaur's genitals, another towards Pan's erect caprid penis. Erotes ride the Dionysian creatures. Hercules stumbles drunkenly and reaches out to a woman, whose slipping drapery is evocative of Venus. Another outward-staring centaur here invites us to compare the two scenes. Might there be a unifying theme of eroticism in this Hercules group? We will explore this in the next section.

3.6 Hercules

‘Make allowances, Diogenes, for the fact that I [Alexander] imitate Hercules, ... and follow in the footsteps of Dionysus, ... and want victorious Greeks to dance in India, and to return the Dionysian procession to the wild and mountainous folk beyond the Caucasus.’

νῦν δὲ σύγγνωθι, Διόγενης, “Ἡρακλέα μιμοῦμαι ... καὶ τὰ Διονύσου μετιῶν ἴχνη, ... βούλομαι πάλιν ἐν Ἰνδία νικῶντας Ἑλληνας ἐγχορεῦσαι καὶ τοὺς ὑπὲρ Καύκασον ὀρείους καὶ ἀγρίους τῶν βακχικῶν ἀναμνησαί κώμων.

Plutarch *Moralia* 332B.

Hercules is a second male leading figure in the scene, and a thematic rival to Dionysus: presenting these two mythological males in one contemporaneous scene is striking, an effect which demands our attention. Textually and iconographically though they were closely associated. Their military conquests of India become gradually conflated and conjoined, while their amorous conquests are likewise interwoven.²¹⁰

²¹⁰Among many examples, compare Ov. *Fast.* 2.305ff. Note especially how with a rhetor-

Hercules was an appropriate choice for the triumphal theme; the decoration of his cult statue in the Forum Boarium had been a part of the rite from its earliest days.²¹¹ Hercules may also, as a step away from the divinity of Dionysus, have been a prudent and manipulable choice of mythological addition; the alignment of the deceased with Jupiter in this manner, the other likely male choice associated with the triumph, would be far more problematic (see p70).

Hercules is a familiar vehicle for private portraiture, as the many depictions in this *habitus* attest;²¹² nevertheless the majority of the Hercules figures in the triumph and quasi-triumphal series do not include portrait features.²¹³ In the discussion of the motif below, I will not be exploring how the presence of Hercules (and the modifications) nuance the sarcophagi as whole compositional units — this exploration will come later, when we have considered the major building blocks on their own terms.

The nature of Hercules' appearances will be explored in two parts, divided iconographically into those depicting Hercules sober and those depicting him drunk.

ical salvo Prudentius *C. Symm.* 1.116-131 joins the amatory sins of the pair; for him the two naturally *were* a pair. Nonnus in contrast keeps them quite distinct, even if he does catalogue their paramours at length: *Dion.* 41.227, 33.335, 48.870ff. Cf. also the decoration in the *stibadium* at Cosa, Clinton (1977) 23, and the numerous coin reverses such as a grand *sestertius* of Septimius Severus, *RIC* 4, 1, 666.

²¹¹de Grummond (2015) 230-1.

²¹²Private representations with the attributes of Hercules begin to appear in funerary sculpture from the second century. For an overview see Wrede (1981) 238-53, pl. 15-22, Hekster (2005), Hallett (2005) 197-200.

²¹³For the frequency of various male divinities with portrait faces see Birk (2013), Platt (2011) 379-81, Newby (2010) 202.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.22a)

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.22b)

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.22c)

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.22d)

3.22: Comparative Hercules types.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.23a)

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.23b)

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.23c)

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.23d)

3.23: Hercules with club downwards.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.24a)

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.24b)

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.24c)

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(3.24d)

3.24: Hercules holding club upwards.

Figure details

- 3.22a: AR *denarius* of C. Antius C. f. Restio. Hercules moving rightwards, stepping, with club uplifted in right, *tropaion* and cloak in left. RRC 455/1a. Roma Numismatics, auction 2, lot 502 (02/10/11).
- 3.22b: AR *denarius* of Man. Acilius Balbus. Hercules with club raised up and *tropaion* in left. RRC 255/1. Pegasi Numismatics, auction 142, lot 267 (22/08/12).
- 3.22c: AV *aureus* of Hadrian. Hercules with club resting jauntily, seated on arms. *RIC* 2, 55. Roma Numismatics, auction 6, lot 877 (29/09/13).
- 3.22d: AE *sestertius* of Commodus. Hercules facing holding club, lion-skin draped, placing hand on *tropaion*. *RIC* 3, 640. Numismatica Ars Classica, auction 54, lot 477 (24/03/10).
- 3.23a: AR *antoninianus* of Aemilian. Hercules facing left holding bow, lion-skin draped, club in right resting on ground. *RIC* 4, 3 3b. Roma Numismatics, e-sale 3, lot 710 (30/11/13).
- 3.23b: AR *antoninianus* of Maximianus. Hercules left, club resting, wearing lion-skin. Holding *victoriola* in right. *RIC* 5, 2, 369. Gitbud Naumann, auction 10, lot 696 (01/12/13).
- 3.23c: AV *aureus* of Trajan. Hercules holding club and lion-skin on base. *RIC* 2, 50. Auctioes GmbH, e-auction 32, lot 6 (21/12/14).
- 3.23d: AV *aureus* of Hadrian. Hercules holding club and apples in outstretched left, all within tetrastyle temple. Facing head left of steps. *RIC* 2, 57v. Numismatica Ars Classica, auction 51, lot 274 (05/03/09).
- 3.24a: AV *aureus* of Lucius Verus. Hercules with olive branch raised in right, club upright and lion-skin draped in left. *RIC* 3, 517. Leu Numismatik AG, auction 87, lot 36 (06/05/03).
- 3.24b: AE medallion of Commodus. Hercules by flaming altar holding club upright, lion-skin draped, crowning himself victor. BMC Medallions p. 24, no. 14 and pl. 30, 1. Numismatik Lanz München, auction 148 lot 114 (04/01/10).
- 3.24c: AV *aureus* of Trajan. Hercules with club upright and lion-skin draped, pouring out cup over flaming altar. Numismatica Genevensis SA, auction 7 lot 361 (27/11/12).
- 3.24d: AE22 of Otacilia Severa, from Ionia, Smyrna. Hercules with club upright, lion-skin and pouring out amphora. SNGvA 2232. MPO Auctions, sale 42 lot 316 (21/05/14).

3.25: Coin details.

3.6.1 The sober Hercules

Now the East will give you great triumphs.

You shall go where Hercules and Dionysus went,
beyond the stars and the flaming sun.

nunc magnos Oriens dabit triumphos.

ibis qua vagus Hercules et Euhian

ultra sidera flammeumque solem

Stat. *Silv.* 4.3.154-6.

The sober Hercules is rarer than the drunken, and appears in several different forms. On the sarcophagus in Woburn Abbey (A6), we see the sober Hercules. Though with his cup and garland Hercules aligns himself with Dionysus, in his attitude he invites other interpretations. Upright and strong, garlanded, he gazes out at us. The lionskin falls over his arm and curves almost as if had some potency left and were threatening the centaur, who seems wary of it.²¹⁴ Here very much Hercules is the virtuous military man, who wandered in foreign lands where Bacchus would follow, spreading a new and better age.²¹⁵ In his almost brutish muscularity there is no hint of that femininity of mourning which was undesirable to some Roman males.²¹⁶

The martial side of Hercules was familiar from a number of images where his club is raised to smite enemies; his martial power had for a long time also been signalled through his raising up the club against no enemy, but instead

²¹⁴Cf. its passive limpness in B19 where Hercules is severely drunk: is this a sexual allusion? One is reminded of *διὰ τί οἱ μεθύοντες ἀφροδισιάζειν ἀδύνατοί εισιν*; Arist. [*Pr.*] 872b11.

²¹⁵Verg. *Aen.* 6.791-801.

²¹⁶Vout (2014) 311, Sen. *Epist.* 99.1-3, SHA *Hadrian* 14.5.

in triumph. The advancing Hercules of C. Antius Restio's coinage (see fig. 3.22a) waves his club menacingly rather than resting it, but his successful prosecution of the conflict is shown by his possession of a *tropaion*.²¹⁷ This figure is often called Hercules *triumphalis* on account of Pliny's report that a statue so-called and dedicated by Evander was dressed up in triumphal clothes during triumphs.²¹⁸ The same figure appears to be situated within the triumphal chariot in a coin of Acilius Balbus (fig. 3.22b) which seems to confirm the link. The differences from the Woburn Hercules are stark: though both appear in a chariot, the Woburn Hercules-deceased does not presume to take up the *tropaion* nor wave his club menacingly, but instead rests it and subordinates himself to Dionysus by holding an emblem of an element within that deity's sphere of influence: the *cantharus*.

The Hercules we see in fig. 3.22c is seated on a pile of arms and armour resting his club; his battle is long won and he rests. The image is substantially similar to the tondo from the Arch of Constantine showing the sacrifice scene, where a seated Hercules appears above on a small plinth similarly enthroned on arms but holding also a *victoriola*. Palagia calls this type Hercules *invictus*, an appropriate epithet but not definitively 'the' correct one, as substantially the same 'Hercules seated on armour' type can be found in later coins labelled HERCVLI VICTORI.²¹⁹ In third-century coinage the epithet *invictus* (HERCVLI INVICTO ... e.g. fig. 3.23b) seems only to occur with Hercules standing and holding his club downwards or resting it beside him

²¹⁷On the coin see Ritter (1995) 67-8.

²¹⁸Plin. *HN* 34.33. See also Ritter (1995) 27fn31.

²¹⁹Such as e.g. *aureus* of Maximian, *RIC* 6, 13. Palagia (1990) 60 and for the tondo, fig. 12. On Hercules *invictus*, Ritter (1995) 239 (index) s.v.

while holding out a *victoriola*. As such, it seems uncertain to conclude the Woburn Hercules is to be identified with this epithet; even allowing for the necessity of his raised club because of the chariot, the *cantharus* seems too great a deviation. Likewise, the Hercules of the Palazzo Mattei (B11) does not seem to be a great distance removed, iconographically, from the Hercules of the Commodus coin (3.22d); however the sculptor re-purposes the grand and noble hand gesture almost totally by having Hercules steady the entirely drunken Silenus.²²⁰

The legend *victor* is found with a greater variety of objects held by the standing Hercules, including the bow we see in 3.23a, but the club is held downwards, presumably to suggest the conclusion of its requirement in conflict, and the object held never progresses as far from the martial realm as Woburn's *cantharus*.

A sense of the exertion the hero has been put to is behind the Hercules figure types we see which hold the club downwards and the apples of the Hesperides; that this figure was known from a famous sculpture is suggested by coins showing it on a pedestal (fig. 3.23c) or inside a columned temple (3.23d). This is an extremely widely disseminated figure-type for Hercules. It shows strong similarity with the bronze Hercules from the theatre of Pompey which was buried due to being struck by lightning; both have a strong contrapposto with the hand held out.²²¹ It is also redolent of the famous Lansdowne Hercules,²²² and inside the *naiskos* on the chariot of Philopap-

²²⁰There may be a slight allusion to the Farnese Hercules in B11.

²²¹Museo Pio Clementino, inv. no. 252, inscribed F[VLGOR] C[ONDITVM] S[VMMANIVM]. Cf. the similar Hercules in gilded bronze, Museo Conservatori inv. no. 1265. The different posture of the club seems likely due to it being a renaissance restoration.

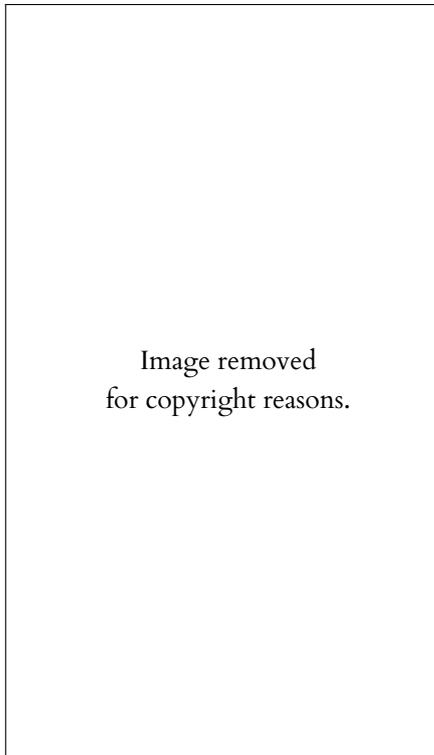
²²²See Howard (1978).

pus (see p58).²²³ This may be the iconographic origin behind the Hercules we see in Cliveden (A5); I might tentatively promote the similarities with this composition and that in the coin of Lucius Verus (3.24a), though in the sarcophagus the adaptation to the processional context obscures close identification of the figure-type. The similar figure type is better shown by comparison with a first century AD statuette of Hercules holding the apples of the Hesperides (see fig. 3.26). A similar effect limits our identification of the Hercules of the Palazzo Giustiniani, A4: here, it is tempting to interpret Hercules' torch in a manner which privileges it as an allusion to the torch which kindled his funeral pyre (and through which he attained immortality). I would urge caution here, however, since the sarcophagus form was not (despite instances of reuse) primarily designed for cremated remains and so this link might be more mercurial than it first appears. Instead, perhaps Hercules' torch here is a more experiential allusion to the torches of funeral ritual, or those which lit the tomb-space for the viewing bereaved, or both.

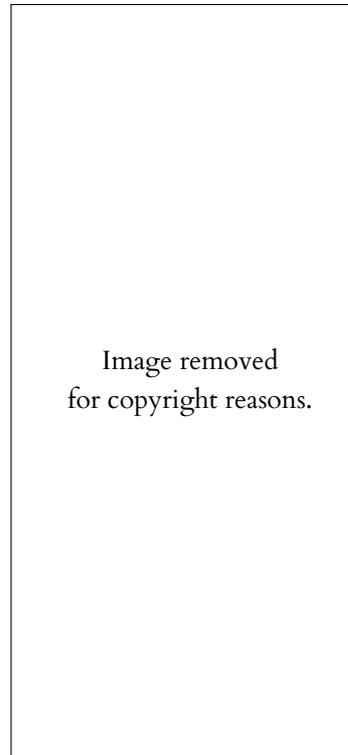
The posture of the arm of the Woburn Hercules which holds the *cantharus* could well be descended from this figure type; the posture of the hand, underneath the cup, is more redolent of the 'apple-holding' Hercules than Hercules holding a cup to pour it out. We find this composition on a coin of Trajan showing Hercules as a sacrificant pouring out a *kylix* over a flaming altar, or in a provincial coin of Otacilia Severa where he tips out a small amphora (3.24c, 3.24d). In the latter example we see evidence of the continued association of Hercules with Dionysus.²²⁴ The same posture

²²³See Kleiner (1983) fig. 17a.

²²⁴On Septimius Severus and his relationship to Liber Pater and Hercules, Rowan (2012) 32-109.



(a) First century bronze statue of Hercules, BM inv. no. 1805,0703.-38, 104.5 cm (h). Image from http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx?searchText=1805,0703.38 [accessed 06/10/14].



(b) Detail of A5. From Matz (1968b) pl. 124.

3.26: Figure demonstrating origins of Hercules type.

of pouring out the amphora is also to be found with Dionysus on a reverse of Septimius Severus:²²⁵ but these do not seem securely to be behind the Woburn Hercules type.

In the later Antonine period we find coins with the club upraised where the hero is concerned with martial success (as in 3.22d of Commodus, inscribed *HERCVLI ROMANO*); the military success of Hercules is inextricably

²²⁵ *RIC* 4, 1, 32.

bound up with the self-presentation of this emperor: his independence is suggested by the medallion of Commodus which features the standing Hercules dispensing with Victoria and crowning himself as victor (3.24b).²²⁶ The Hercules of the Villa Doria Pamphili (A14) strongly reproduces the sense of the posture of this Hercules, especially in the right arm and the proximity to the altar: this may well represent a common ancestry or even conscious allusion to the piety of this Hercules.

Commodus took the association of Hercules with the emperor to a far greater degree than any others previously had done, but in doing so he only amplified a side of Hercules that had long been present.²²⁷ Though often seen as the acme of his Hercules-mania, Commodus was not even the first emperor to have himself depicted wearing the Nemean lion-skin helmet; Hadrian is depicted in this way in some coin issues and sculpture, and coins of Septimius Severus would later follow suit.²²⁸

Readily comparable is the statue of a private person in the guise of Hercules from the Palazzo Barberini, itself of the Hercules Cherchel type.²²⁹ Here the hero stands besides the dead Erymanthian boar and with his lion-skin stands *capite velato*, which localises the *habitus* mythologically at a different point from the triumphal Woburn scene, but both intersect in their martial overtones. The Barberini Hercules has far heavier musculature, that of

²²⁶Also to be found with Dionysus under Septimius Severus: *RIC* 4, 1, 112b.

²²⁷Hallett (2005) 252-4.

²²⁸Later Gallienus too; for further examples Bastien (1994) 372-84, and for the Hadrian coins pls. 53.5, 54.8. On Hercules as a model for C2 emperors see Hekster (2005). Note too Philopappus associated himself with Hercules on his chariot (see p184). For Hadrian in the *habitus* of Hercules, Hallett (2005) 253.

²²⁹See Hallett (2005) cat. no. B251, Wrede (1981) cat. 126, pl. 15.2, 16.2-3. Hercules Cherchel: over life-size statue (2.60m remains), Severan copy of a C5 BC original, LIMC Hercules no. 428.

Woburn a much leaner, sinewy anatomy which sits uneasily with his sympotic attributes of garland and cup. Wrede dates the portrait by comparison with late portraiture of Severus Alexander but notes the similarity (especially in the beard) with portraiture of Macrinus' period.²³⁰ To me the hair seems not to have reached the stage of representation that it has by the time of, say, Balbinus, but has changed from the looser hair (especially in the sideburns) of Macrinus' portraiture towards but not quite attaining the style of the more impressionistic beard of Severus Alexander with its chiselled-in wisps. I therefore think it possible the statue may date from half a decade closer to the sarcophagus. That the Woburn portrait dates to the time of Macrinus or just after is suggested not only by its distinction from Caracallan-period hair, which is practically absolute, but by the presence of the Macrinus-like ridge of hair rising from the forehead (which certainly distinguishes it from later portraiture such as Gordian I, where the hairline's transition is more fluid). The fleshy bulge of the Woburn's forehead muscles is typical of this type of Macrinus' portraiture and acts as a link to his immediate predecessor Caracalla.²³¹ In another type, probably the one more familiar to us at least, Macrinus adopts the grand beard deliberately redolent of the mid-Antonine period, but the Woburn Hercules belongs to the other type; thus the shorter-cropped beard without strong use of the running drill is congruent with what we should expect.²³²

²³⁰Wrede (1981) 241.

²³¹Angelicooussis et al. (1992) 75-7, and for the portraiture of Macrinus Wood (1986) 30-2. On the limits of using portraiture for dating, Fittschen (2010).

²³²For Macrinus' portrait types and discussion see Wood (1986) 32-5.

3.6.1.1 Interpretation

Allusions to famous depictions of works of art generate meaning when recognised by the viewers; they contribute to a sense of the culture and learning of the onlooker.²³³ Nevertheless these Hercules figures are not simply copies of previous versions. In many instances a desire to allude to a work of art comes into collision with the contextual presentation of Hercules. For example in the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus the sculptor must contend with the chariot which forces him to depict the club raised, and echo the Bacchic context through addition of a *cantharus*.

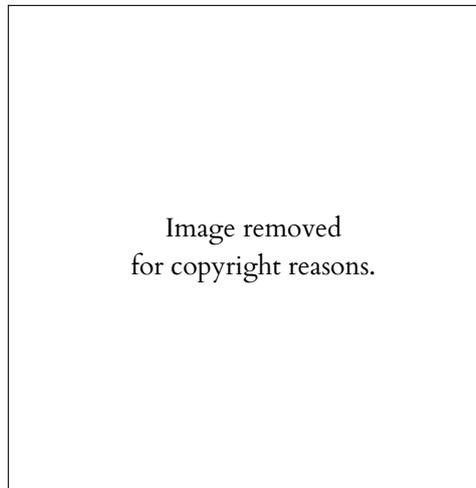
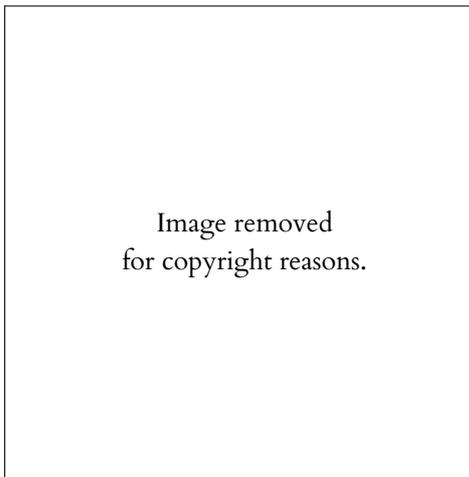
Numismatic evidence suggests it is insecure to attribute specific epithets to Hercules figure types as we find them on the sarcophagi, since the contextual variables add an element of uncertainty to the postural presentation. Therefore, we will have to turn to consideration of the figures' wider presentation within the scene to understand their meaning more fully.

3.6.2 The growing intoxication of Hercules

On the sarcophagus in Cliveden, approximately 210, Hercules is proud (A5, see detail in fig. 3.30a). His lion-skin cap is placed firmly on his head, his club erect, stance wide and strong, musculature taut, standing in contrast to the jugs and cult apparatus strewn by the *thiasus* in their abandon. The female to the right of the piece has her origins in the priestess/procession-leader found on these forms of processional sarcophagi.²³⁴ Hercules is an independent

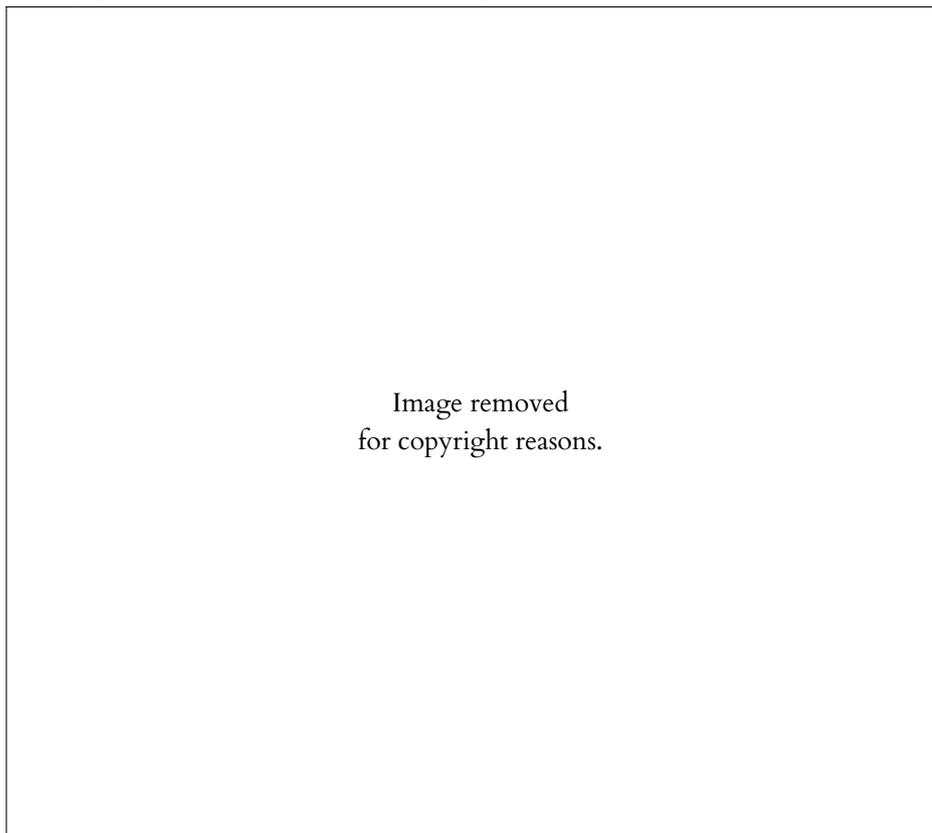
²³³See p14ff.

²³⁴E.g. the figure heading the procession in A1. For debate over her significance, see Geyer (1977) 87-8.



(a) Detail of drawing of B11 from Codex Coburgensis. From Matz (1968b) pl. 58.2.

(b) Detail of drawing of B11, Dal Pozzo Windsor. From Matz (1968b) pl. 58.3.



(c) Detail of B11. From Matz (1968b) pl. 142.2.

3.27: Hercules of the Palazzo Mattei (B11).

character who accompanies but does not join the *thiasus*. Yet as we can see from the iconographic comparison in fig. 3.30, this is not always the case, and we can chart his increasing subsumption into the Dionysian world. This is an unstable presentation which undergoes quite serious development in its brief period of popularity; these attunements of meaning demand our attention.

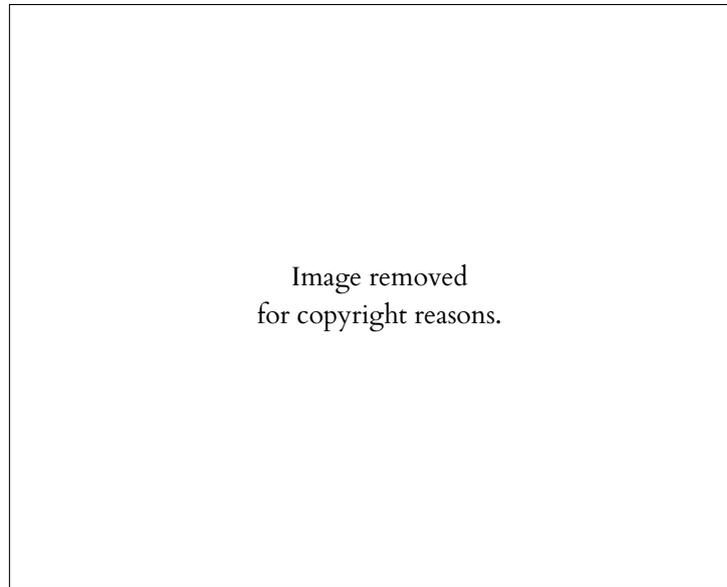
3.6.3 The drunken Hercules

The drunken Hercules has no venerable High Classical Greek origin; strong presentation of the hero as inebriated seems to have been a Roman composition.²³⁵ Unlike the Hercules of before, this drunken version of the hero sags heavily, requiring support from his companions. In the most simplified version of the scene as we find it, in B11, we see him lean on the shoulder of Silenus, his lion-skin a rather limp drape. Hercules looks to be quite tiresomely talking the ear off Silenus, and is clearly the worse for wear. It appears to have developed out of early examples which show a staggering Silenus ogling the rightmost maenad (D7, fig. 3.28); he is remarkable for his hairy belly, but the proximity of the *krater*, which reoccurs in the Hercules examples, is probably a clue to this transmission.

Here, however, it seems prudent to again reiterate the importance of close observation of the objects themselves, since two early drawings of this sarcophagus offer instructive cases of the viewer's expectation of the figure-type affecting what they see of it.²³⁶ The sarcophagus in the Palazzo Mattei (B11, fig. 3.27c) features a figure whose draped lion-skin and heavier mus-

²³⁵Only far less intense depiction of the drunken Hercules in the late Hellenistic period: Ridgway (1997) 302. See also Ritter (1995) 73, 103, 114.

²³⁶See Matz (1968b) fig. 58.2-3.



3.28: Sarcophagus in Museo delle Terme (D7). From Zanker and Ewald (2012) fig. 124.

culature compared to the other figures, as well as his juxtaposition with Silenus (whom he might otherwise be taken for) identifies him as Hercules. This sarcophagus was drawn in the Codex Coburgensis (fig. 3.27a) which exaggerates the musculature and softens the sense of inebriation while intensifying a sense of his intimidating the supporting Silenus. By contrast in the dal Pozzo-Windsor drawing (3.27b) Hercules is presented as a corpulent and distinctly un-muscled *bon vivant* chatting conspiratorially to Silenus who grins in delight; his pot belly seems greatly exaggerated. The photograph of the sarcophagus itself seems to present the hero somewhere between these two poles (fig. 3.27c). Which is 'right' it is hard to say, since not only does the drawing suggest that to its author Hercules seems thus, but documentary photography of three-dimensional figures is complex. In the photograph Hercules appears relaxed and quite drunk, but nevertheless has an imposing,

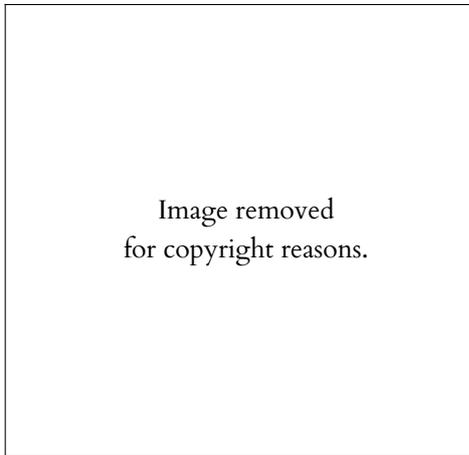
strong figure. We must be careful both to be constantly aware that drawn reproductions can distort our view of artefacts (as these mutually irreconcilable drawings show) but also that it is equally unhelpful to explicitly privilege one photograph, with its single viewpoint and lighting. Such an approach moreover strips the experiential context of the object, upon which so much of its meaning was in all likelihood pendant.²³⁷

This Hercules, who has comically stopped off on the parade to engage Silenus, is a rather unusual depiction of the drunken hero. The more popular conception involves other supportive figures in Hercules' drunken staggering (see fig. 3.29b). This motif does not emerge first on sarcophagi, and is certainly to be found on provincial coinage, where it appears on the coins of several emperors at Alexandria Troas.²³⁸ The poor state of preservation of these coins has recommended the utility of a drawing (see fig. 3.29a); this drawing is intended to communicate the general composition but cannot reproduce the subtleties of the engraved figures. Hercules, identifiable by his muscularity, is supported by a satyr who throws his arms about the hero's middle; another satyr grasps his hand (and may heft his club with his left hand in some instances).

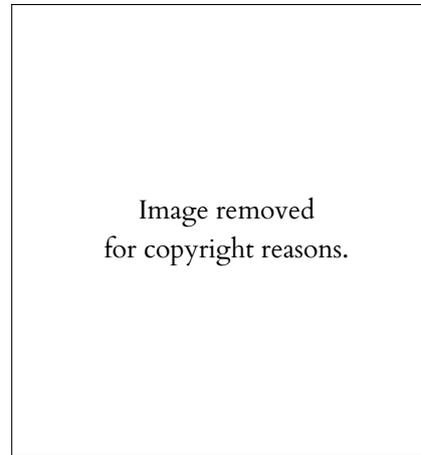
On the coins Hercules grasps at a rather sedate Pan (identifiable by his legs and probably his *lagobolon*), while in the sarcophagi Pan appears earlier in the procession and is exchanged for a female figure (see 3.29b). This exchange demands our attention: to what purpose is this modification from

²³⁷On the difficulties of photographically representing sculpture, Bergstein (1992). On the experiential context, p288ff.

²³⁸Commodus: BMC XVII 74, Bellinger A200. Caracalla: BMC XVII 101, Bellinger A282, 299. Severus Alexander: BMC XVII 130, 164, Bellinger 335. Valerian: BMC XVII 164, Bellinger A435.



(a) Drawing of reverse type found in coins of Alexandria Troas.



(b) Detail of sarcophagus in Boston (B19). From www.mfa.org/collections/object/sarcophagus-with-triumph-of-dionysos-151242 [accessed 06/10/14].

3.29: Most popular drunken Hercules type.

a pre-existing figure-group made?

Hercules' concern with this female is intriguing. Her involvement emerges from the coalition of formerly separate motifs — that of Hercules and the female priestess leading the procession. She is a common feature of the series and usually somewhat aloof (A1, A2), but in A5 she begins to acknowledge Hercules' presence; her involvement with him becomes increasingly intimate (see the iconographic comparison, fig. 3.30). Where once the upright Hercules busied himself with the march the female priestess led, gradually these two separate motifs coagulate into a new scene with a changed meaning. I intend to show that the development encompasses the migration of a largely undifferentiated female 'leader' of the procession into an identifiable mythological character.

As the satyrs move in to support his sagging bulk, so too does the female

figure involve herself directly in the scene. Where once she and he were separate elements, in their fusion new meaning is created. In the Boston sarcophagus (B19, see detail in fig. 3.29b) the drunkenness of Hercules arouses the glance of the female figure at the right of the sarcophagus, who catches the muscle-bound hero just in time to save her drapery from his clutches. Compared to the scene in the Museo Capitolino (A3, see detail in fig. 3.30b), the hero has got a lot drunker: in the Capitolino piece it is difficult to reconstruct what the female was doing (the apples are a well-meaning but erroneous restoration, as too her head and his cup), but it seems more than likely she too was saving her clothing. Her involvement with Hercules is a distinct change from, for example, the Cliveden scene (A5).

This motif increases in intensity on the later Lyon piece (A7, fig. 3.30c), where Hercules has taken up his lion-skin and abandoned propriety. He looks utterly incapable as he staggers at the oblique, with his face somewhat blank, and his left hand strays rather close to the female's crotch. Her drapery is all but off and caresses more than it conceals, covering only her upper calf and lower thigh. Perhaps this partially explains why the figures, who support Hercules, glance away. By the Naples scene (B9, fig. 3.30d) she stands frontally out as she did in Boston but now engages the hero with a piercing and erotic gaze: she demands our attention, and piques interest beyond that of a staffage maenad.

What is the female figure doing, who now presumes to involve herself in the motif? Or rather, to what ends has the sculptor demoted the procession-leading priestess and called this new woman out of the marble? After all, she is individualised through frontality, near nudity, and engagement with

the hero of the scene. Her nudity is out of place in this world of fully dressed maenads, and she resists the relentless rightward motion of the train.²³⁹ Movement towards the right is the preferred direction in later Antonine art, probably because it frees the right arm to view and for no other symbolic reason.²⁴⁰

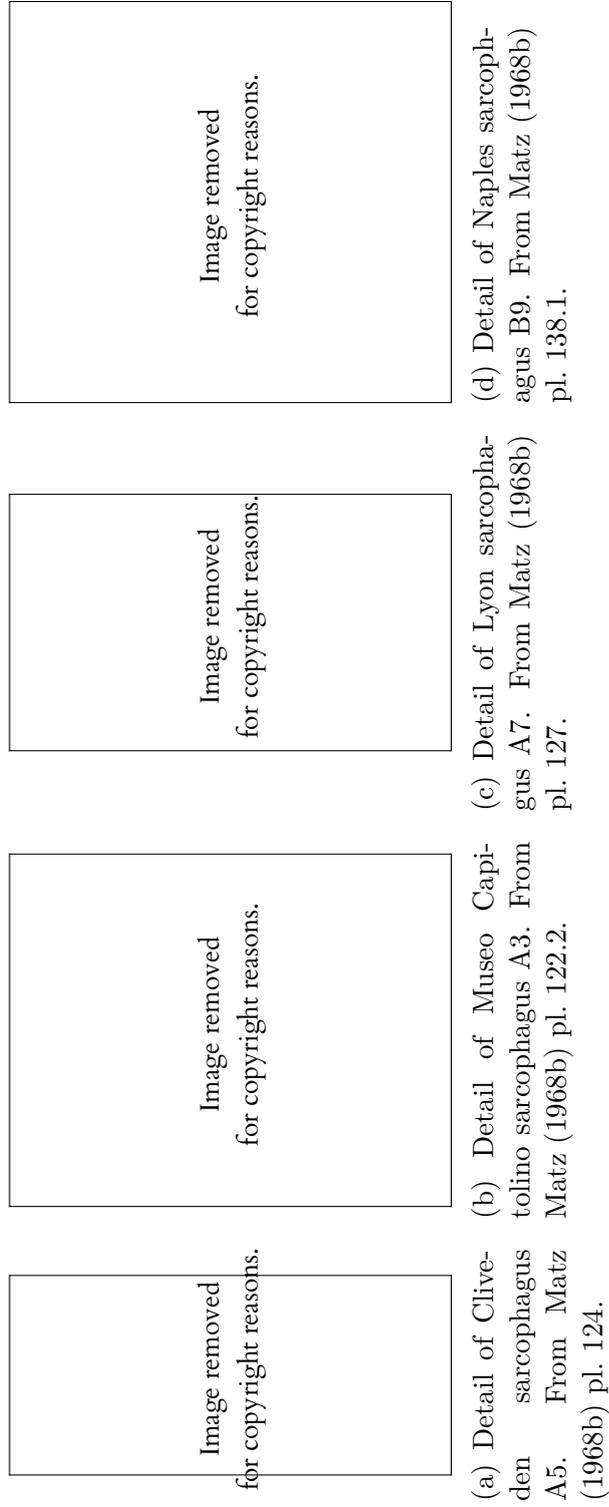
It is this involvement with Hercules which brings to light another new feature: that of the sexual desire present between Hercules and this woman. A theme of exposure is present in A3, since Hercules can see the girl's nudity (but we cannot). This is amplified in A7 and reaches its apogee in B19 and B9. It does not seem to have been observed that the manner in which Hercules reaches for the drapery of the girl in A3, A7 and B19 is strongly redolent of the familiar presentation of Auge, mother of Telephus, such as we find it especially in a mosaic from the baths of Themetra in Tunisia (first half of the third century, see fig. 3.31).²⁴¹ This represents a secondary form of her more familiar iconography where she stands while Hercules is seated, as found in several coin issues contemporary to the sarcophagi: nevertheless here too the same slipping drapery and the same touch are to be detected.²⁴² However the similarity of the mosaic to the sarcophagus representation is

²³⁹The overall rightward motion is (almost) never violated and it is noticeable when figures oppose it — generally only to mark complete Dionysian *ekstasis* or incapability. No figure ever properly enters from the right (Graef (1886) 14), excluding the four pieces which mirror the rightward flow to a leftward flow — B6, B16, and *ASR* IV.2: 157, 158.

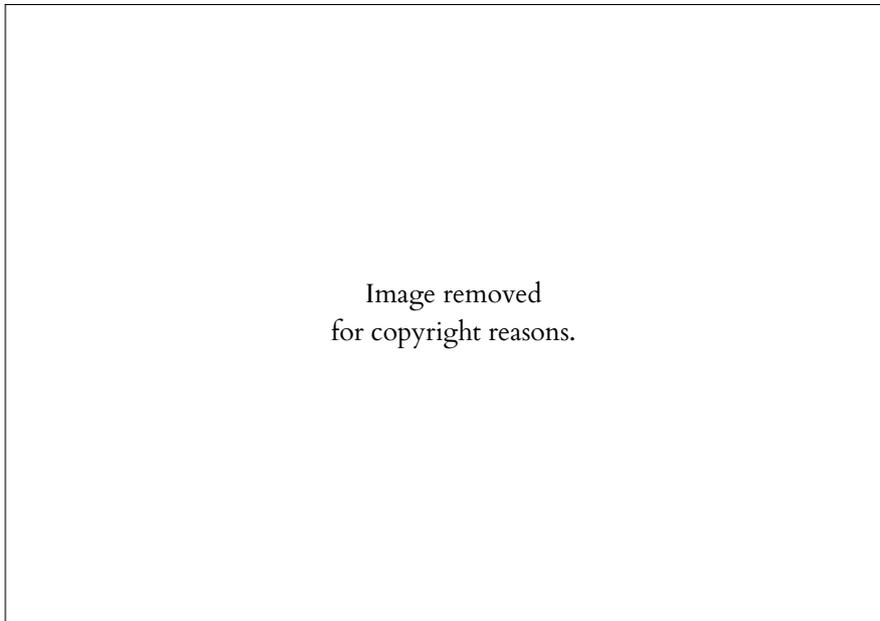
²⁴⁰Brilliant (1963) 141, 158. *Contra* Kleiner (1983) I do not think that the direction of a triumphal procession was of particular import to a viewer, especially considering its varying direction in numismatic imagery.

²⁴¹I am particularly grateful to Professor Stansbury-O'Donnell for helpful guidance on this issue. For the mosaic, Dunbabin (1978) 183, Bauchhenss-Thüriedl (1986) cat. 16 (plus bibliography).

²⁴²AE of Lucus Verus from Pergamon, SNGvA 7506, Bauchhenss-Thüriedl (1986) cat. 22, and of Antoninus Pius from Ligea in Ionia, SNGvA 7811, Bauchhenss-Thüriedl (1986) no. 21.



3.30: Comparison of Hercules motifs.



3.31: Mosaic from the baths of Themetra (modern Chott Maria), Sousse, showing Hercules and Auge. Image from Bauchhenss-Thüriedl (1986) cat. 16.

undeniably close: it too seems to owe a common ancestor to the reverse-type with the drunken Hercules and Pan (see fig. 3.29a) presenting nearly the same supporting figures (Dionysus has been exchanged for the right hand satyr, though Hercules' drunkenness is not in doubt given the huge empty *krater* at his feet. Auge does not seem to be in great distress and mosaic representations of this scene are rather broader than we might expect, but not more so than the sarcophagi.²⁴³

Nevertheless I do not feel Auge sufficiently explains the presentation of the hero and the female in Naples (B9), where her attentions are devoted to

²⁴³Other mosaics can be found at the Bardo in Tunis, inv. no. A267, Bauchhenss-Thüriedl (1986) cat. 17, where a supremely casual celebrant catches us looking at Auge's bare buttocks (beginning of C3), and a fragment in Marseille at the Musée Borély, inv. no. 1726, Bauchhenss-Thüriedl (1986) cat. 18, where Auge's buttocks have swelled to extremely generous proportions.

him in a more matrimonial manner. The group is conveniently emphasised on both sides by two satyrs who face outwards at the viewer — perhaps recognising that we look on a private scene — and they are plainly delimited from the surrounding *thiasus*. As Matz observes,

die Gruppe des trunkenen Herakles mit Satyrn und einem Mädchen ist auch dionysisch ..., hat aber mit der Pompe eigentlich nichts zu tun.²⁴⁴

In her haughty expression she seems less the protesting local ravished by the wandering drunken hero, and more his knowing equal — to say nothing of her having gained control of her drapery. Instead we might more profitably compare her presentation here with Omphale, such as we find her in a small relief in Naples (fig. 3.32).²⁴⁵ Her manner of expression is similar at least, as is her attention to her Venus-like drapery.

3.6.3.1 Interpretation

The drunken Hercules undergoes strong developments in the sarcophagus series, entering it after modification from a pre-existing figure group also found in numismatic imagery. Hercules pawing at the female's clothing seems to be the key innovation and is diagnostic of the female-priestess being re-purposed to a new mythological guise: Auge. This drives the scene strongly into a boisterous one of drunken indulgence and devotion to the erotic element of Dionysus' power. The ability of the sculpture here to present a hero drunken and in high spirits must have been emotionally restorative for the bereaved

²⁴⁴Matz (1968b) 259.

²⁴⁵For further discussion of this relief and bibliography, Kampen (1996) 239.

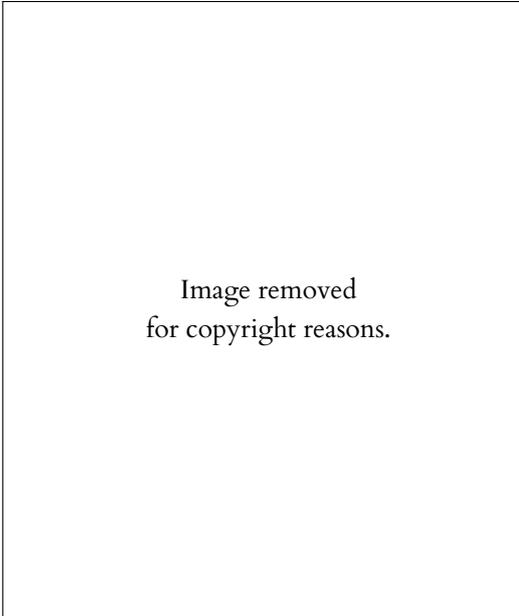


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

3.32: Relief showing Omphale, Hercules and his labours. Circa 125-50. Currently in Naples, Museo Nazionale #6683. Photo DAI, Inst. Neg. 60.2504, from Arachne Image Database.

viewer, especially when focussed through the experiential lens formed if the family brought offerings of wine to the deceased.²⁴⁶ Hercules' drunken and bawdy games contrast with the funereal flavour we might anticipate. In Euripides' *Alcestis* Hercules wanders in drunk, but shakes his inebriation off for sober action immediately he learns of Admetus' mourning. By contrast the sarcophagus sculptor deliberately imposes a sympotic, erotic atmosphere to promote resolution of the distress of grief.

In Naples (B9) at least the mythological scene of Auge undergoes further modification such that it may be intended to recall Omphale. The reason for this further modification may be that Omphale was, by the time of the sarcophagi, a more suitable vehicle for positive female commemoration.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁶On tomb visits see Birk (2013) 37-9.

²⁴⁷Cf. the Vatican Omphale, see Zanker and Ewald (2012) fig. 88, Kampen (1996) fig.

The presentation of the two figures, Hercules and the female, supports this interpretation in that it is decidedly more ‘marital’ than the Auge-like depictions.

3.6.4 Conclusions: Hercules in contemporary usage

Hercules was a popular hero, exemplifying much of the Roman male ideal, and was an obvious choice for military flattery.²⁴⁸ As noted above (p187), Commodus was not the first emperor to associate with Hercules. He did however intensify the association beyond all prior measure, even taking the title *invictus Romanus Hercules* in 192.²⁴⁹ It can be no surprise then that it is during and after the reign of Commodus that Hercules emerges as a secondary figure in the Dionysian sarcophagi (for a chart of which see fig. 5.7 and discussion 332ff).

Identification of rulers with Hercules continued apace after Commodus’ death.²⁵⁰ It is Hercules who appears behind the imperial family in the arch of Septimius Severus at Leptis Magna. Hercules is prominent on the arch of the Argentarii (dedicated 204).²⁵¹ A private commission, it reflects the guild’s desire to praise the imperial family in their own dialect: this involved

96, *contra* Suhr (1953) and for literary evidence that Omphale had by this point become an acceptable vehicle for commemoration, Kamphen *ibid*.

²⁴⁸From the time of Trajan Hercules had been used as an emblem for regimental standards, Hekster (2005) 206-7.

²⁴⁹Weinstock (1957) 242-3. Cf. *Hist. Aug.* Comm. 12.8: ‘his flatterers even renamed the months from his names in his honour: Commodus for August, Hercules for September, Invictus for October.’ Cf. the slightly rearranged Cass. Dio. 72.15.3.

²⁵⁰Severus eagerly associated himself with Hercules and Dionysus in many issues, for whom these deities were patron gods: Palagia (1986) 149. See for example *RIC* 6:1, 79, 97, Severus with Hercules, naked, holding club. *RIC* 257, Hercules at right with lion skin, Liber at left with *thyrsus* and panther, *aureus* and *denarius*. The same scene is reversed in a *sestertius*, *RIC* 667. Patronage implied by the coin legend *dii patrii*, Barnes (1967) 104.

²⁵¹Brilliant (1967) 39.

Herculean flattery. Naturally, the relief also shows the imperial household with victorious imagery such as captive barbarians, and depicts Hercules in a manner which shows kinship with the Hercules of our sarcophagi. Moreover, Hercules' female consorts were employed for similar flattery of imperial wives.²⁵²

Sarcophagus relief is a place where we can detect social ambitions.²⁵³ We could interpret the uptake of Hercules imagery on private monuments such as the sarcophagi as a success of the policy of *reification*, where the state presented through Hercules the new leader (the unchosen, emperor-by-birthright Commodus, Septimius who took power by arms, and so on) as emperors whose succession was natural and proper, almost as if they stood outside the flow of historical events, as immune to everyday concerns as Hercules himself.²⁵⁴ Indeed such a notion is doubly appropriate here, because it is precisely this sense of excision from the concerns of the earthly realm that a portrait face promotes (see discussion further, p222ff).

Hercules and Dionysus had, by the time of these sarcophagi, become the imperial deities *par excellence*. Triumphs were the preserve of the imperial household alone, and had been since 19 BC.²⁵⁵ Consequently the triumphal sarcophagi straddle differing representational modes. They are not wholly mythological, such as the depictions of the labours of Hercules, since they

²⁵²Especially in cameos: for Marcia in *habitus* of Omphale and Commodus as Hercules, see King (1881), King (1885) 238 pl. 74.4. Likewise cf. the Vatican Omphale funerary portrait which has Julia Domna's hairstyle.

²⁵³Amedick (2010) 33-40 on the ranges of social status detectable in sarcophagi; also Zanker and Ewald (2012) 13-14, 150, 177, 182, 193, 241, Ewald (2003), Müller (1994) 159.

²⁵⁴On 'reification' see Hekster (2005) 209, adapting the terminology of Thompson (1990) 65-6. On the tomb space as both outside and participating in the 'collapse of the horizon of time' see Ewald (2010) 288-9.

²⁵⁵That of L. Cornelius Balbus, Beard (2007) 69.

depict a divine prototype for a human institution. Yet neither are they purely earthly, like those *vita Romana* sarcophagi which depict hunters. They are a private representation of a deity acting like an emperor. This offers alliance with imperial ideals in an appropriately mythologised context.

It would of course be hollow for a private individual to present themselves in the guise of a *triumphator* and, indeed, we do not find this. Yet as Hercules, the assistant or facilitator of this triumph, they may safely align themselves with three species of virtues; the familiar expression of masculine duty through military iconography, the alignment *in formam dei* with divine strength, and also the reflected glory of the popular and official iconography.²⁵⁶ The patron enjoyed, as it were, the benefits of alluding to carefully constructed imperial imagery without the dangers of trespassing on imperial prerogatives. Through the addition of Hercules, whom we find as a constant figure in the latter portion of this series, the triumph sarcophagi were revitalised to be in accord with current, fashionable terms.

The Hercules-mad Commodus achieved deification after death.²⁵⁷ But the apotheosis was probably not very convincing in his case. It probably was not the aim and intention of much imperial usage of Hercules.²⁵⁸ I contend that while those portraits which allude to Hercules may or may not promote notions of apotheosis, they can definitely be shown to communicate

²⁵⁶Cf. Muth (2004) who modulates Rodenwaldt (1935) away from understanding Generals' sarcophagi as expressing the four cardinal virtues (*clementia, pietas, concordia, virtus*) towards areas of life in which the general was virtuous (within his *familia*, to community and towards the gods). This has informed my discussion here.

²⁵⁷The establishment of the *flamen Herculanus Commodianus*, *SHA* Comm. 17.11. Probably for his successors to claim legitimacy (and legitimate succession), Palagia (1986).

²⁵⁸The *SHA* rationalise the act by seeing it as a cynical insult to the senate by Severus. On the limits of the credibility of deification, compare Fishwick (2002) (Claudius) and Vout (2007) 111-21 (Antoninus).

in the popular, state-sponsored idiom familiar from numismatic rhetoric, public display and imperial commissions.²⁵⁹

3.7 Conclusions

The sarcophagi present a great variety of motifs. The preceding study has selected certain elements and pursued analysis of them in an effort to ascertain the meaning of constituent elements of the reliefs. These elements were in turn tested for their utility as diagnostic tools for the relief; however, beyond the broadest of generalisations these were found lacking. This has significant implications for sarcophagus studies, pointing towards the necessity of case-by-case analyses. It will be necessary now to place these constituent parts together and analyse their function in collusion, in order to more fully understand the mechanisms by which the networks of motifs generate meaning. This will be done by sensitising our analysis to various non-mutually-exclusive phenomena which sarcophagus artists negotiate.

²⁵⁹Cf. the adoption of the enthronement motif into sarcophagus reliefs, Brilliant (1963) 74-6, Koortbojian (1994) 52. Jongste (1992) 139-40, 28-31 shows that the imperial use of Hercules at this time is behind a period of sustainment in the otherwise consistent decline in popularity of twelve-labour sarcophagi.

Chapter 4

Networks

An isolated image will most likely remain mute; a network of images, on the other hand, begins to give up its meanings through the similarities and differences shown by the combinations.

Bérard and Durand (1989) 25.

In order to form any meaningful assessment of the almost bewildering variety of imagery in any group of sarcophagus reliefs, it is generally necessary to commence from an examination of separate motifs. The preceding study has considered the major motifs of the Dionysian triumphal sarcophagi, removing them from the context of the relief and making a cross-corpus analysis of their meaning.

Anyone who studies sarcophagi must necessarily admit that motifs reoccur with some regularity: no one would insist that sarcophagi were created by the sculptors *ex nihilo*. Nor should we: the ability to select the appropriate part from an assemblage of possibilities is a creative act; so at least

thought Dionysius of Halicarnassus, when he tells his famous tale of Zeuxis selecting the leg of one Crotonian maiden, the arm of another, the neck of still another and so on, in order to assemble the nude Helen.¹ But we should not be tempted by the similarity between motifs which occur in different places and in different narratives into assuming stability of meaning.

The recognition of repeated motifs has led to the production of line-drawn epitomes in sarcophagus volumes.² But as we examined in the preceding chapter, it is too easy for these epitomes to lead us to overlook variation. If we create an ideal form for a motif by epitomising it in line-drawing, we tacitly encourage the reader to overlook differences between the figure on the marble and the epitomised form, or else downplay the differences in the light of the taxonomic classification. It is inherently dangerous to attempt to derive an *Urform* since it encourages the modern eye to gloss, blur or smooth out difference.

Consider the visually arresting maenad seen from the back in a state of undress which Matz typifies as *TH52: Tänzerin, Rückenackt* (see fig. 4.1a). The drawing which accompanies his taxonomic discussion is an elegant reproduction of the figure as she is seen on the sarcophagus in the Munich Glyptothek (*ASR* IV.2: 85). Yet when we compare drawing and object, differences emerge (see fig. 4.1b). The drawing tells us only about the maenad's posture and little of the three-dimensionality of the sculpted form; it removes the dancer from her context (she becomes merely a pirouetting exercise in

¹ *De imit.* 1.1-5. An example of repeated motifs in sarcophagi is the same curling panther in A6 and a Venus and Adonis sarcophagus, c. 190, in the Palazzo Ducale at Mantua, see *ASR* XII.1: 55 and Platt (2011) 365, Koortbojian (1994) 42-4, fig. 9. Elsner (2014a) esp. 24-5 discusses the passage from Dionysius with respect to rhetoric.

²Beginning with Carl Robert of course, but still to be found; e.g. Grassinger (1999).

form rather than narrative character); and it obscures detail (for example it is difficult to gauge how thin the dancer's drapery is, how much the line of the leg is reproduced beneath its surface).

We might defend epitomes against the first two accusations: it is useful to isolate parts to examine contributory role, and it is necessary to simplify and schematise to bring out key detail. But in removing that information we lose the tone of the original. The line-drawing is only a representation of what the modern viewer deemed significant and contributory to function and meaning. When this drawing is used to form taxonomies, it encourages the viewer to consider that epitome as 'correct' and, crucially, to elide differences either as aberrations from an ideal or to overlook them as insignificant, with no better authority than the vicarious viewpoint of the epitome's maker.³

When one compares another example of TH52 with the epitome in mind, it is an unfortunate fact of our nature as pattern forming animals that we are prejudiced to prioritise the similarities. Thus when confronted with the dancer from Verona (see fig. 4.1c), it is easy to miss that she no longer has bare breasts but wears a band of material about her torso, or that her drapery has become thicker and less diaphanous, that her left arm has bent inwards instead of being stretched, or that she now turns in the direction of her gaze where before she had coyly looked in a different direction to that in which she moved. It is dangerous to dismiss these as insignificant.

This is not a criticism of this epitome in particular, but of the method. Compare TH72, the *askophoros*: in *ASR* IV.2: 84 he is muscular and serious,

³Cf. the similar species of error regarding restoration of the Holkham Hall Aelius Verus as Lucius Verus, Fittschen (2010) 225-6.

occupying an interstice between the centaur team and the wagon, without the panther looking up at the wine-skin. Yet in the scene familiar from Cambridge (B14) he appears at the end with the comic panther, younger and more jovial, his musculature lighter. Likewise Silenus *am Wanderstab* (TH99) is old and bearded in A1, with an outward stare, draped heavily yet with bare forearms, leaning on a thick staff, pacing slowly. In A8 he is more heavily draped, with covered forearms, and bent nearly double. His mantle has a ragged hem and he is altogether clumsier. Yet in A13 he is more lightly draped, more elegantly attired, more upright with a stately tread. We must allow for the possibility that these are meaningful effects and not merely pointless vibration to be averaged in an epitome.

We ought consciously to lay aside prejudices to examine why these images might be shaped in a way which differs from the epitomised form. This is especially important given that the form chosen for depiction in the sarcophagus corpus need not reflect the form of the motif ever present in the sculptor's mind; indeed such a concept can only have real meaning when carefully modulated across the time-period in which a motif is found. Epitomes obscure this fact and tempt us to ignore the role of *variatio*, novelty, sellability in the creative process.

We must examine the networks of which these building-blocks are part. Then, we may find that these variations are evidence of a conscious shaping towards a selected narrative. After all, the ancient sculptor assembled these elements into whole reliefs. Meaning is generated at the point where the viewer engages with the relief through the interplay of these elements, which are interlinked and mutually sensitive. Assembly of motifs into a cohesive

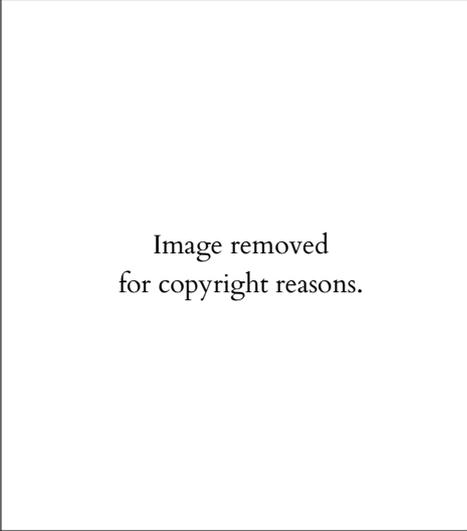


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(a) Type TH52 from Matz (1968a) 40.

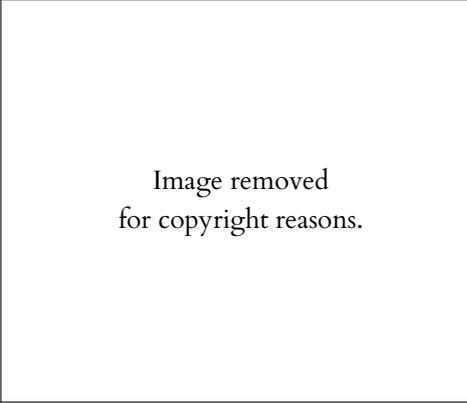


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(b) Detail of *ASR* IV.2: 85, from Matz (1968b) fig. 98.



Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(c) Detail of *ASR* IV.2: 83, from Matz (1968b) fig. 106.

4.1: Comparison of dancing maenads, so-called TH52-type.

and novel network is a creative act which can shape narratives in ways which were not completely limited by their origins: they underwent what Brilliant has happily termed ‘contextual reformation.’⁴

It is only by an examination of the reliefs in their entirety, and then placing that whole into its wider context, that we shall come to a fuller understanding of the reliefs. Let us commence by considering some of the key themes in the light of select sarcophagi, in order to illumine the ranges of connotations which the ancient sculptor was able to generate within the triumphal series.

4.1 Weighing the networks: the reliefs as wholes

This analysis will not take the form of providing a sarcophagus by sarcophagus ‘key’, but rather make it possible to locate the nuances and ranges of connotations for pieces within the series and beyond. We do not need new typologies, epitomes, tighter family-trees of sarcophagi, or narrower date-ranges. On the contrary, ‘broader dates — up to a generation, for instance — do more justice to our present level of knowledge’.⁵

The fashion for more precise dating often offers a false sense of exactitude and scientific impartiality in a manner which is not only demonstrably prone to error but also abstracts individual expressions to a moment in the development of something above and outside the individual families such as so-called historical or artistic trends. The following chapter is instead a study

⁴Brilliant (1984) 125.

⁵Fittschen (2010) 239 and for an instructive case see esp. the Trajanic portrait-herm of Heliodoros which *looks* Flavian, discussed 238-9; Sobocinski and Thill (2015) 285.

of the phenomena these pieces bring out, intended to show that what is true of the Dionysian triumphal scenes is representative of wider issues within sarcophagi as a whole.

I begin with a case study of the manner in which the Woburn sarcophagus negotiates the boundaries between viewer, relief and deceased. Having explored the delicate positioning of these players, I move to the surface theme of the corpus: the martial world. Next, I examine the areas to which they more commonly make reference: feasting, drinking and revelry. Subsequently I examine the sarcophagi's functional role as personal objects, which is tied up with their religious effects. Finally, I consider elements of the relief which move most strongly from the surface layer of meaning to engaging with fully external factors, when I consider the encounter of the viewer with the object itself. As will become clear however, these issues are endemic to the iconography and it is impossible to separate them into absolutely discrete studies.

Above all, it is my intent to show that though these are all Dionysian triumphal reliefs and hence all depict the same 'myth,' the sculptor has in each case shaped the network to different chosen meanings.⁶ These meanings can be very different; I hope it will be clear that we must look beyond the idea of finding one meaning for one myth.

⁶On the importance of following artists' cues, see Brilliant (1984) 126-8.

4.2 Negotiating the boundaries

But Athena arrived,
and made the limbs of the people's shepherd stronger,
made him taller than he was before, and stouter to behold.

αὐτὰρ Ἀθήνη
ἄγχι παρισταμένη μέλε' ἤλδανε ποιμένι λαῶν,
μείζονα δ' ἠὲ πάρος καὶ πάσσονα θῆκεν ιδέσθαι.

Hom. *Od.* 24.367-9.

In this section I build the examination of the Hercules motif in the previous chapter to a higher level of analysis, exploring the motif's meaning in its wider network. I analyse part of the complex relationship between the viewer, the relief and the deceased, challenging the notion that the relief functions generally to 'insert' the deceased into a mythological realm. I accomplish this by examining a case study where the effect seems more to be about distancing, and the relevance this effect has for the function of the sarcophagus on its primary audience: the bereaved viewer.

4.2.1 The portrait face

Among the greatest attractors for our interpretation are portrait faces, though this may not always be helpful. Portraits are rare overall; recent estimates found about seventy from a sample size of 1200 sarcophagi, or roughly 6%. Hercules' labours are not an unpopular choice for portraits (three out of twelve), but they are rare in the triumphal series, in that we find only one

definite example in the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus (from the time of Macrinus).⁷

The deceased patron of the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus appears with his head attached to a naked Hercules body. Regarding this figure, Angelicoussis writes:

The veneration of Heracles, reflected in the artistic context from Commodan times onwards, where he frequently appears as a member of the Dionysiac retinue, is novel on this example with the figure's emphatic presentation. No longer merely one of the god's companions, he has become his counterpart.⁸

But of course, Hercules was never just one of Dionysus' companions. He is a special case, since he retains his own mythological conception without being subsumed into the Dionysian world entirely. This depiction of Hercules collaborating with Dionysus but not being fully enrolled in the *thiasus* and the generation of a sense of collision between two distinct characters, Dionysus *qua* god and Hercules *qua* deceased, speaks against a simple interpretation of the *habitus* as a mechanism of insertion into the mythological realm.⁹ Yet Hercules' meaning in this scene is in a large part dependent on the triumph which belongs properly to Dionysus.¹⁰ Where then does all of this leave the deceased?

⁷Statistics from Newby (2010) 191-3. Portraits are found in the *clipeus* after the Severan period in IV.4: 268-70, 272-3. On the dating of A6 see p187.

⁸Angelicoussis et al. (1992) 77.

⁹The term *habitus* is from *habitu enim Iovis in templo Caesar est constitutus*, schol. Luc. 7.458, and is discussed by Hallett (2005) 257.

¹⁰Nonnos says nothing of Hercules' involvement in the triumph, probably a reflection of practice at his time.

He wears a ‘costume’ (in Bonfante Warren’s term). We are not prompted to see the deceased naked while holding Herculean attributes: this would be improper. Instead most interpretations conclude that we are asked to see in the Herculean costume-body associated with the portrait face of the deceased a hybridisation of the two.¹¹

Dionysus himself seems only to gain portrait features on sarcophagi twice (and not at all on triumphal pieces).¹² The reasons behind this are obscure, but I cannot *a priori* accept the familiar interpretation as most recently expounded by Platt that the paucity of portraits in the *habitus* of Dionysus reflects the ‘cultic and eschatological significance’ of the deity — not least because of the portraits in the guise of Cybele and other divinities with similar significance, deliberate imitation of Dionysus and his followers in cult ritual, and among certain leading men.¹³

In Birk’s recent study of portrait faces on sarcophagi, it was argued that ‘the point of departure of any interpretation must be the portrait figure itself’.¹⁴ But how helpful is this interpretative direction? In most cases, the

¹¹Bonfante Warren (1989). See also Hallett (2005) and Ewald (2008).

¹²Museo Nazionale (inv. no. 124682, c. 200-25) where the central portrait couple (unfinished) adoring each other suggests a marital scene, and a strigillate sarcophagus from the Praetextatus catacomb, (later than 250): here the contemporary and bearded portrait is arrestingly dissonant with the typical effete Dionysian body; see Zanker and Ewald (2012) 156 fig. 145. Even given the fact that this dissonance would be less marked to a contemporary viewer, nevertheless a disjunct is present, and I would urge deliberately so (*pace* Zanker): perhaps an alliance is intended with the Dionysian world of *joie de vivre* while grounded in more familiar *virtus*? See also Newby (2010) 203n65.

¹³Most obviously Mark Antony, Philo *Leg.* 88, Dio Cass. 48.39. Platt (2011) 379; cf. Seaford (2006) 64, Heslin (2005) 233, Csapo (1997) 262. Platt’s supportive evidence regarding the Licinian tomb relies on ideas about the origins and arrangements of the sarcophagi which have been placed into doubt: Bentz (1997), Kragelund et al. (2004). For the idea that objections to Dionysian portraits were cultural, Birk (2013) 148, Newby (2010) 203.

¹⁴Birk (2013) 46.

bearing of a portrait is optional for the figure, and certainly in the triumphal group it is clearly possible for Hercules not to bear a portrait. Nor would it be prudent to argue from absence of evidence regarding portrait faces on Dionysus that identification with him was not desired.

We cannot know why portraits were chosen or not; but we can observe that we find the portrait on Hercules and not Dionysus. Despite the regular assertions otherwise, this is surely not because of the reluctance to identify the deceased with Dionysus; it may conceivably however reflect a reluctance to represent the deceased in a triumphal context. I do not believe the avoidance is because Dionysus was seen as an unfit vehicle for comparison with the deceased, especially given the presence of portraits in other potentially problematic guises, such as Pelops, Hylas, Adonis, Ceres, Admetus.¹⁵ The presence of portraits in the *habitus* of Bacchus at earlier periods in the private realm and later in sarcophagi seems to me conclusively to disprove notions that he was seen as a problematic comparison for Roman males.¹⁶

Recent studies have tended to approach sarcophagus imagery from a position of assuming that in the later second and early third-century the general Roman attitude to death was one of hope for a pleasant or untroubled state *post mortem*, without concrete or firm belief in a particular form of existence in the life hereafter; the attitudes instead are of vaguely expressed surcease

¹⁵See Birk (2013) 37-9.

¹⁶Portraits as Dionysus are collected by Hallett (202-4) and include the poet Lucan himself (so Stat. *Silv.* 2.7.124-31 informs us), Ovid (*Tr.* 1.7.1-4), Lepolemus (Apul. *Met.* 8.7), an unknown man with *nebris* from the end of C1 in the Villa Albani (pl. 123), and Wrede (1981) cat. 181. Two further statues are listed in his catalogue (B245, B246), as well as the two sarcophagi mentioned above in p214n12. However, surely the most striking of all portraits of men in the *habitus* of Dionysus, though divinised, are those of Antinous.

of sorrow.¹⁷

If one were to look for a suitable mythological figure as a vehicle for expressing hope for an afterlife, Hercules might seem an obvious candidate, since it is apparently by his virtues he achieved deification.¹⁸ The *locus classicus* for life-after-death scenes in sarcophagi must of course be those showing Alcestis, which literally do depict the heroine defeating death and demonstrating life *post mortem*. The most famous example, the sarcophagus of C. Junius Euhodus and Metilia Acte (D8, fig. 4.2), shows Hercules returning Alcestis to her husband's side, veiled to satisfy some unclear religious taboo.¹⁹ The central scene shows the deathbed of Alcestis, and left of it is a scene with hunting elements and Apollo (who flees the death-pollution), while right of this Admetus is pictured in *dextrarum iunctio* with Hercules, the veiled Alcestis. Finally at the end appear Pluto and Proserpina. The handshake-scene is redolent of marital *concordia* and bears the contextual addition of Cerberus.²⁰ Hercules is positioned as the mediator between Admetus and Alcestis in a reflection of the manner in which he mediates between the status of the two parties and across the life-death boundary.²¹ The veritable pantheon of divinities that appear in this scene raises the register of the piece and are an evocation of the *virtus* of the deceased; in some respects the demonstration of this seems more important to the artist than the marital reunion which

¹⁷Borg (2013) 160-3.

¹⁸This does not mean he was a morally unproblematic figure. Cf. pseudo-Senecan *Hercules Oetaeus*, which is more of an exercise in rhetoric and allusion (and exploration of some rather ghoulish plot-points) than morality play.

¹⁹As she must also be in Euripides' play.

²⁰Cf. D2, D3, D10.

²¹Note the similar spacing in the painting of the scene in cubiculum N of the Via Latina catacomb.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

4.2: Sarcophagus of Metilia Acte and Gaius Euhodus, D8. From Zanker and Ewald (2012) fig. 182.

ultimately lacks the consummation of tactile reunion. This must be why the bodies which bear portraits of Euhodus wear a striking *chlamys*: Euhodus is cast *venatorio habitu* to show off his masculine virtue (and to counteract the negative tones of Admetus in some textual treatments).²²

The traditional interpretation of the sarcophagus has been that of Wood, who believes ‘the hope for a possible reunion of the pair in the afterlife is suggested through identification of themselves with those mythological archetypes of marital devotion who achieved a similar sort of reunion.’²³ One problem with this interpretation is that the returned Alcestis lacks a portrait face which might less ambiguously imply such a desire. Newby observed this and came to a different, and more convincing conclusion about the scene, that ‘this could be read as a poetic lament, a rebuke that Euhodus is not allowed to recover his wife from the underworld, even though Admetus was.’²⁴

In support of her argument and against the idea for hope for a reunion

²²Hallett (2005) 216.

²³Wood (1978) 500.

²⁴Newby (2014) 282.

with the deceased in the afterlife, I would add that this is not a direct or simple interpretation of the iconography, which instead can more easily be taken to display the quite understandable wish for the deceased to literally ‘return’ to the world of the living viewers. After all, this is what Alcestis does in the literary treatments of the myth. The possibility of a chthonic *rendezvous* with his dead wife does nothing to cheer up Euripides’ Admetus. Instead he wishes to fasten on to a carved likeness, to have at least something to hold. Might the meaning of the sarcophagus instead be taken as an evocation of a desire for the deceased to return to the viewer? If so, we must also acknowledge the corollary effect this has, of highlighting that the departed are indeed dead and definitely separated from the viewer.

In this sense the schema of consolation might not be ‘like Alcestis cheated death, there is existence in an afterlife’ but instead ‘Alcestis returned to the living. Would your loved-one might, were Hercules to wrestle Death: alas, they are gone’.²⁵ A significant *experiential* interpretation is the more general one from the specific identification of the mythological characters with the deceased which has been so favoured, despite the sarcophagus being earlier than the period at which this identification was common (probably triggered by the somewhat early portraits). A reading of significance to the bereaved family in particular is that they, in entering the tomb space to view the sarcophagus iconography, are experientially reliving the reunion with the deceased (here Euhodus *and* Acte) which is also undertaken inside the imagery, forming a bridge between the viewer and image. Such effects are

²⁵Though of course, belief was not monolithic in Roman society. On this sarcophagus see also p322n61

not unique and significant cases are discussed later in this work.²⁶

However, the classic approach to portrait faces was that of Henning Wrede, who saw the presence of the deceased in the *habitus* of a divinity as evidence that the deceased was perceived as approaching the divine being, and was thus *in formam dei*.²⁷ He thus implies that the mythological bodies go some way to elevating the portrait, and with it the deceased, to their own realm, and that therefore they speak of the apotheosis (to greater or lesser extents) of the deceased.

Though well suited to some scenes, it is difficult to accept that in all scenes we are intended to find the deceased as divinised. The funerary rites lack the apparatus of the cult of a deified deceased such as we find with emperors promoted in this manner. Borg convincingly argued against the idea by recalling the words of Cicero, who sets up a sanctuary for his daughter ‘so that she might get as near as possible to apotheosis’ (*ut maxime adsequar ἀποθέοσιν*): if even he did not suggest actual apotheosis even for her, we probably should not expect it elsewhere.²⁸ Given careful wording elsewhere, such as with Claudia Semne who is described as only ‘*in the guise of the gods*’ (*in formam deorum*), one wonders if we should imagine funerary portraiture

²⁶Sec. 4.7.

²⁷Wrede (1981); see *contra* Borg (2013) 163-4 and Birk (2013) 95-6 for a useful summary.

²⁸Borg (2013) 163-4, Cic. *Att.* 12.36.

on sarcophagi implied apotheosis at all. Cicero does not hold back:

I could not be persuaded to connect any dead person with the worship of the immortal gods.

adduci tamen non possem ut quemquam mortuum coniungerem cum deorum immortalium religione.

Cic. *Phil.* 1.6.13.

He continues that the presence of a sepulchre is, for him, sufficient to preclude ideas of that person's apotheosis. We do need to express caution though in our terminology; while apotheosis must clearly imply deification and is generally used as such, in scholarship there is often a sense that *heroisation* is a convenient halfway point, which can be seen to carry overtones of immortality and divinisation. This is not congruent with how Romans of the Antonine or Severan period understood the term.²⁹ In fact, the more common invocation of Hercules in funerary rhetoric is as an *exemplum* of the inevitability of death for all, regardless of their social stature or famous deeds: 'even Hercules died,' καὶ ὁ Ἡρακλῆς ἀπέθανε.³⁰

4.2.1.1 From collusion to dissolution

The rise in Hercules figures and the presence of a portrait-face on Hercules rather than Dionysus emerges from a reluctance to identify a private citizen with a *triumphator*. While triumphal iconography was employable (even to the extent of depicting seated generals crowned by Victoria) the trappings of

²⁹Nock and Beazley (1946) 166n95, Koortbojian (1994) 127-8.

³⁰From an inscription in the Vatican, for discussion of which see Müller (1994) 109. For other examples, Lattimore (1962) 218.

the rare imperial ritual of triumphal parade have been ruled out as much out of a sense of taboo as the simple fact it was unattainable. Nevertheless the reflection of triumphal iconography allows the deceased to unlock the symbolism of an imperial prerogative and reflect some of its system of virtues. The absorption of triumphal motifs into private art might therefore be seen as a cleverly conformist method of self-aggrandizement. Imperial flattery employed certain constants, among them approbation of the emperor as he who pacified the universe.³¹ This is the thrust of the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus. It places martial commemoration (of the deceased *qua* Hercules rather more than of Dionysus) at the forefront. Identifying the deceased with Hercules presents him in absolute concord with Dionysus *triumphans*, a highly flattering and aspirational position congruent with contemporary ideals of funerary rhetoric which praised the deceased in terms which imitated specifically imperial mechanisms of self-presentation.³²

A significant difficulty with prior approaches is that they tend to consider the portrait-bearing character from a unified position, where head and body combine to make meaning.³³ This is despite the widespread acceptance that the body and portrait are not viewed with the same interpretative manner (that is, that the viewer never expected the body to be a portrait in the manner the head was, regardless of the extent of idealisation of the portrait-head).³⁴ The mortal head and the mythological body are seen to coalesce, and the mythological allegory is seen to be the orchestrator of overtones of

³¹Taisne (1973) 486.

³²Ewald (2003) 565.

³³Cf. the Gestalt school's law of *prägnanz*.

³⁴Trimble (2015) 607.

apotheosis. But what is important to separate out here are interpretations which are fundamentally proximising and interpretations which are fundamentally distancing.

4.2.1.2 Proximising and distancing in mythological portraits

For a modern viewer the mythological *habitus* is more noticeable than the portrait face, to the extent that it is difficult always to ascertain whether there was a portrait intended or not. In this sense the mythologisation of the portrait therefore appears *proximising*. A modern interpreter viewing a portrait head on a mythological body observes anonymous individualisation localised against a character who brings a wealth of mythological, literary and scholarly associations. While the modern viewer is strongly tempted to classify the portrait and ascertain its *Zeitstil*, it is not possible to go beyond, whereas by contrast the modern viewer *knows* Hercules, and can name him and his family, his exploits, his character, the female beside him. For the modern viewer the mythological *habitus* is a *proximising* attribute, with or without a portrait. It creates a personality from the staffage, giving them a (*pseudo*-)life story. As modern viewers then we become aware of our ignorance, and demand of the mythological body: ‘where lies the overlap between the set of your “mythological disguise” which we can access, and the “character of the deceased”, which we cannot?’ And our interpretations then necessarily circle around broad, culturally probable reasons. Thus the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus’ patron, on account of his choice of Hercules, probably thought strength was a positive virtue and even (note the higher stage of removal) that he would wish to be remembered as brave. But such interpretations

flounder when they attempt to move beyond generalisations in a panegyric vein, or come against mythological guises not so easily unpacked in a positive manner.

I believe it would be more helpful to recall instead how *distancing* mythological portraits could be. In his recent study Hallett favours the view that portraits insert the deceased into the world of the heroes. I would myself place the emphasis on the corollary, that it acts to remove the deceased from the realm of the living. But again, this implies cohesion of the *habitus* and the individual. The accessibility of the costume necessitates the audience appreciate the disjunction between deceased and disguise — otherwise viewers in the context of mourning simply were gazing on their disrobed father, uncle, brother.³⁵ A tension between the real departed and the mythological disguise is necessary for meaningful engagement with the image. We should not attempt to ‘solve’ this tension. Instead we should recognise the effect of the scene’s oscillation between these realms, and the dynamism this instability creates in the viewers’ minds.

We should consciously recall in our minds — we, who did not know the deceased — that portraits are not the deceased; they do not perfectly represent the deceased as they looked at any point, nor do they resemble the deceased as their loved ones saw them last, or even regularly. They are ide-

³⁵The perception of this disjunction *may* be detectable in an anecdote regarding Zeuxis. After painting an old woman (presumably in mythological disguise) Zeuxis was so tickled by the result that he died of the resulting laughing-fit. Though this obviously tells us nothing of Zeuxis’ time, it may be an insight into the perception of the disjunction in the time of the author of the anecdote (Augustan/Tiberian: recorded in Festus Paulus s.v. *pictor*, and attributed to Verrius Flaccus). On the disjunct between portrait and body see also Koortbojian (2002) 193-4; that it could be perceived in antiquity is also shown by the example he discusses where attempt is made to soften it.

alisations which remove a great deal.³⁶ This would have been more than obvious to the intended viewers. Portraits are not intended to be perfectly congruent with the deceased they represent — a viewer cannot fail to have noticed how unlike the deceased inside the coffin was the portrait on the outside.

The relative closeness or distance between the deceased and/or patron of the sarcophagus on the one hand and the mythological exempla (including protagonists and basic storyline) on the other must have varied considerably from case to case (for example in terms of age, gender, the manner of death).³⁷

To state this more strongly, the mythologisation acts as a *distancing* filter. The deceased which the bereaved viewer knew did not look like their portrait entirely, did not have a body like is depicted, and did not act in this manner. Their loved one has been removed from the realm of the tangible world and entered into a mythological realm.

4.2.2 Conclusions

For us, the mythological guise is proximising since it adds information to what otherwise would be an anonymous visage. For the ancient, bereaved viewer

³⁶See Birk (2013) 133, Ewald (2010) 264 and Gombrich (1960) 59-60. Hallett (2005) 293-5 collects a few examples of portrait heads on non-ideal bodies. Without dealing with each piece individually, I will note that none are particularly far from the ideal body-type: B210=pl. 109 in particular, which is described as having the ‘heavy, corpulent body of a middle-aged man’ does not appear such on first glance; particularly contrasting with the ‘corpulence’ of this figure is the visible striation between the pectoral muscles, an aesthetically desirable display of strength emerging only from a *lean* physique. Significantly, it is to be found also in the Hercules of B19, but not on the muscular frontal satyr.

³⁷Ewald (2010) 264.

it had more of a *Verfremdungseffekt*, diluting the personality of the deceased with an admixture of mythological character, and presented the deceased as already relocated to the world of the *other*, even as they still scintillate between these two worlds at the liminal point of the grave. Comparison of the deceased with Hercules enables recognition of the reunion when the bereaved view the tomb, but also of its temporary nature.³⁸ A greater awareness of *distancing* effects and their role for the bereaved viewer in future will profit our discussions.

4.3 Negotiating the military

Black fate killed even these staunch soldiers
while rescuing their sheep-rich fatherland.
The fame of the departed survives, who steadfast
to the last are clothed by the dust of Ossa.

Κυανέη καὶ τούσδε μενεγχεῖας ὤλεσεν ἄνδρας
μοῖρα, πολύρρηνον πατρίδα ρυομένους.
ζωὸν δὲ φθιμένων πέλεται κλέος, οἳ ποτε γυίοις
τλήμονες Ὀσσαίαν ἀμφιέσαντο κόνιν.

Anth. Pal. 7.255, attr. to Aesch.

It was not compulsory for the sculptors to focus on the martial world beyond the localisation of the triumphant charioteer. It is, in fact, rather

³⁸Elsner (2012) 186. Vout (2014) 294 makes a parallel point about those seemingly strange hybrid Flavian female portraits, urging that incongruous matching of contemporary heads to the bodies of high-art beauties does ‘not conjure up the dead woman, but dissolve[s] her flesh through metamorphosis. They exploit the suppression of description or truthfulness as a positive.’

rare. Nevertheless a few pieces do prioritise that realm. This discussion will examine the military, martial side of the sarcophagi, and attempt to ascertain the purpose and effect of the iconography. The results are then placed in their historical context: first they are distinguished from the techniques of generals' sarcophagi, then the overall composition is compared against battle sarcophagi.

Even in the really very unusual Woburn sarcophagus, sculptors never depict the military world foremost. In most cases (especially in the Baltimore piece, A1) we are left to interpret the collection of Dionysian objects that the celebrants wave about in the air as repurposed implements that the *thiasus* used for war. The retinue is never seen as an actual army, and it is often the incongruity of them turning their feminine, old, childish or feeble hands to battle that is part of the underlying charm of the mythology.³⁹ Consequently when wishing to draw out martial aspects the sculptors must negotiate a difficult line between tensioning that element without submerging the retinue's nature as a motley, wine-loving band.

This tension can be found in those sarcophagi which depict the *thiasus* with prisoners, to make their military exploits clear.⁴⁰ This also has the effect of driving the iconography closer to that of public triumphal imagery. When we find the drunken Hercules drawn into those scenes with prisoners the effect is to heighten the contrast between the martial victory and the *thiasus*' sensuous side.⁴¹ Nevertheless many scenes with Hercules and prisoners cast

³⁹Cf. Lucian's *Bacchus passim*.

⁴⁰As in A1, A2, A3, A8, A9.

⁴¹A7 and in change A14.

him in the role of a sober military man.⁴² The effect is slightly to distance Hercules from the *thiasus* (which he only associates with, never joins) and by that distancing bring him closer to identification with the deceased whom the viewers knew.⁴³

Ward-Perkins believed that Matz's dating of the rather martial Baltimore sarcophagus (A1, to 170-80) was incorrect, and should be closer to 200-220, on the grounds that the Victories piece allegedly from the same chamber of the Licinian tomb is also Thasian marble and that it is 'stretching the bounds of credulity a long way to suggest that these two were ordered on separate occasions' since 'Thasian marble sarcophagi are otherwise unrecorded in Rome.'⁴⁴ Despite the subsequent discovery of other Thasian sarcophagi in Rome, when editing the article Dodge remarked Ward-Perkins 'may still be correct in linking the two on stylistic grounds.'⁴⁵ Yet the body proportions are hardly comparable, and the drapery shows significant differences (particularly between the seated captives and cupids, and the rightmost maenad). The use of the drill in the manner of depicting the two trees' leaves (likely oaks) is far more liberal in the Victories sarcophagus than the Triumph sarcophagus, where the whole retains far more of the impression of an unfreed mass of marble, even though Ward-Perkins can see 'no substantial difference.' The figures of A1 are by far more petite, with heads more naturalistically proportioned than those of the Victories sarcophagus (though one might see

⁴²A4, A5, A6.

⁴³See discussion above, p222ff, and section on *Entmythologisierung*, 5.3.4.

⁴⁴Ward-Perkins and Dodge (1992) 40, 42; he states incorrectly that Matz dates it to 160-70.

⁴⁵Ward-Perkins and Dodge (1992) 42n20. See also eighteen Thasian blanks of late C2 / early C3 Torre Sgarrata wreck, Russell (2013) 121. Sarcophagus A1 which Ward-Perkins uses extensively in discussing production may also be highly atypical: Russell (2013) 87.

the beginnings of that trend, especially in Dionysus and the leftmost maenad). In my opinion Ward-Perkins seems too late in his dating, but Matz almost certainly too early; we should perhaps most safely tentatively agree with Meinecke in a date of 190-210 for the Triumph sarcophagus (A1).⁴⁶ Due to the differences I would urge a date a little later for the Victories piece.⁴⁷

Such a modification to Matz' date has the fact also to recommend it that it simplifies the date-range of sarcophagi in this piece's (alleged) findspot, chamber C of the Licinian tomb. It also removes a layer of complexity in Matz's stemmata of these pieces.⁴⁸ With all this in mind, I still emphasise that dating is a delicate and difficult process, and in the absence of confirmatory evidence should be kept to general propositions. I have therefore tried to keep to broad divisions and wider ranges, the better to observe overall trends and progressions.⁴⁹

In the Baltimore sarcophagus martial elements (such as the prisoners, Victoria, booty, muscular forearms hefting bludgeons) exist in melange with the exotic and luxurious, while the lid with its vignettes from the birth of Dionysus hint at a consolatory sense of *vita transcurrit*.⁵⁰ The most *directed* expression of the martial world is found in the large Woburn Abbey sarcophagus. When standing in front of the object the grandeur of its execution creates a strong sense of its monumentality. The central cut, though it mars

⁴⁶Meinecke (2014) 331.

⁴⁷Meinecke (2014) discusses some of the stylistic differences (especially in body proportions) but is untroubled by them, following Ward-Perkins' argument that the unusual marble suggests simultaneous commissions. I do not believe this is a necessary conclusion; were the pieces demonstrably from the same workshop, this would be more convincing.

⁴⁸For discussion of which see p316.

⁴⁹Cf. p210.

⁵⁰Sen. *Ep.* 1.1.3.

the surface, fortuitously heightens our recognition of the balance created on the surface of the relief. The eyes of the nearer panther, the roaring lion, the standing bearded satyr, the prancing centaur and Hercules himself converge at a viewpoint a small distance out from the centre-line. These figures appear to direct their attention out of the relief (averaging 0.085m in depth) and towards a centrally placed viewer. I have no doubt that the sarcophagus was intended to be installed on some raised plinth or in some niche, since the outward staring eyes of the lower-positioned figures gaze slightly up, and those of the figures at the top outwards, converging at a point about level with and just left of the portrait head of Hercules.⁵¹ From a viewpoint superior to the lower frame details such as the mask of Silenus at the lower-right, which suffer from a level-viewpoint, become more illusionistic.⁵² The positioning of these eyes seems to have been of concern to the sculptor, since they are carefully and deeply drilled. The eyes of the panther have even been shaped so that the sclera is clearly delineated from the socket, to give the effect of a rolling ball, casting its glance about; they must have thrown lively shadows by lamplight. The bottom rail shows intermittent diamond-shaped hatching with vertical lines through the apexes. Perhaps these are markers for painting though sadly, bar some possible remnants in the fine interstices, traces are otherwise invisible.⁵³

⁵¹Cf. 'It is sweet to look upon loved ones by night, however brief the time.', ἡδὺ γὰρ φίλους / κὰν νυκτὶ λείσσειν, ὄντιν' ἄν παρῆ χρόνον, Eur. *Alc.* 355-6.

⁵²Cf. Borg (2013) 213-40 on the display of sarcophagi in antiquity, Elsner (2012) 186-8 on illusionary elements.

⁵³Concerning colour: whilst some sarcophagi were presumably at one point polychrome, due to the fact that most were discovered before modern archaeological techniques were implemented, few traces of colour remain. Some fragments bear remains of red-colouring at the canthi (fleshy corners of the eyes), McCann (1977) 124. Aside from these tantalising remains the marble seems blanched. We might use other representations of the myth to

When viewed in its entirety the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus functions as a unified whole. The sculptor has achieved this unity by manipulating details to support the overall narrative. As evidence we might take the example of the lion-skin of Hercules. Narratively, it is a reminder of the hero's past endeavours, meant to recall his great prowess. But here, it is not depicted naturalistically as a decorative fur. In fact in both the sober and drunken Hercules figures the lion-skin is consciously shaped by the sculptor to reflect the hero's state at that narrative point. In the former, the sort we see in the Boston sarcophagus (B19), it hangs soft and flaccid in broad agreement with its owner; as he is drunk and incapable, so the skin dangles limply. It is constructed of gentle furrows and smooth edges, reflecting the wine's influence on Hercules through its soft and shrunken presentation; the sculptor has given us a litmus-paper for Hercules' state. At Woburn, it almost rears away from the vertical line, casting a threatening glance. While its owner stares outward, it glances about as if ready to renew the fight. The use of the running drill in particular gives its pelt a threateningly bristling look: the vigorous Hercules is accompanied by a reinvigorated skin. The technique of giving agency to inanimate objects is further visible in the Farnese Hercules'

reconstruct in outline a general image of the colouration; for example, in the silver relief Alexander (1955) discusses, traces of gilding perhaps delineate areas that to the ancients were considered important or desirable to differentiate or highlight. In Callixenus 200d-f we read about the statue-float of Dionysus having purple cloak, golden embroidered slippers, and so on. Textiles are often monochrome (see Lenzen (1960) 1-2). Mosaics certainly represent our best information, particularly with regard to the representation of the animals. Without a doubt paints would make details on the sarcophagi stand out, and resolve questions such as the species of big cat. Overall, the evidence from mosaics would suggest no fixed palette of hues for specific characters, but rather a choice sensitive to the aesthetic of the context. I am grateful to Amalie Skovmøller of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek for drawing my attention to the possible interpretations of the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus' hatching. On colour-traces in D4, see Köhler (1995) 375-6 and for a recent reconstruction of colour on the *clipeus* sarcophagus of Ulpia Domnina, Siotto et al. (2015).

limp lion-skin, and the inflated wine-skin which pretends to be a viable mount for Silenus in a comic bronze from Pompeii.⁵⁴ The technique is not without parallel in literature: Seneca gives the lion-skin agency when he refers to it as the *minax uasti spoliium leonis*.⁵⁵ We ought not to undervalue the comforting effect for the bereaved onlookers of seeing a version of their deceased depicted in such a strong, energetic way.⁵⁶

The relief strongly promotes martial elements; Victoria is present, and so are rather fearsome looking prisoners, a strong, virile-looking Hercules, and savage animals. Where we might expect an exotic camel to fill interstices in the upper register of the relief (compare A3) the sculptor depicts the more martial horse. The big cats have lost the docility they possess elsewhere in the iconographic heritage; they appear in almost identical postures in A7 but march with practically bewitched calm. The Woburn animals are wild ones brought under Dionysus' sway yet returned to a wild state. By recapturing some of the wildness they are more usually depicted as having lost, the sculptor rings the changes. Statius uses a similar technique when the Bacchic tigers are touched with Tisiphone's goad and returned to savagery.⁵⁷ It is details such as these, which are not merely copied from a repertoire but sensitively composed to forge a narrative, which create a unified whole and prevent the scene from decomposing into so many juxtaposed motifs.

The relief is emphatically a militarised procession, moving rightwards.

⁵⁴Naples inv. no. 5015.

⁵⁵Sen. *Phaedra* 318.

⁵⁶The sarcophagi for which we have evidence of the patron's gender, A6 and B19, are both for males. However, this does not mean this was invariably the case (particularly in those pieces more strongly localising non-military areas); the remainder of the inscription on B4 hints at a more complex gender divide (see catalogue).

⁵⁷*Theb.* 7.564-607.

Figures march and ride, instruments are raised and played, and Victoria's wings flutter.⁵⁸ Movement is especially fore-fronted in the elephant-panther scene, which as we saw (sec. 1.1.1) positions the motif at the very transitional point between the states of life and death through the impending demise of the panther. The panther, although alive, is marked inevitably for death and is in a sense not a living or a dead creature, but one about to pass between those two states.

By highlighting this tipping point where those two states come as close as they could possibly be, the sarcophagus evokes an uneasy liminality which is ultimately a transcendence of the static narrative and an attempt to move beyond the restrictions of the binary nature of life and death; the scene reminds us not of life or death as discrete states but the *process of moving* between those two states.⁵⁹

If we direct our gaze from the panther to the figure of Hercules, we see that elements are orchestrated to support the distancing effect outlined above and distinguish him from the narrative flow. The application of movement and consideration of the liminal journey of death to this figure cause the portrait-figure of Hercules to become less illusionary; the Hercules-deceased is deliberately presented in a subversively non-illusionistic manner.

Firstly, he stands in a studied and very strong contrapposto, which draws the eye and marks him as redolent of statue-postures. With this must come the recognition that his frontal and artificial positioning strongly evoke Her-

⁵⁸This is what the *clipeus* sarcophagi lack, even when they include Victoria (though holding the *clipeus*, never crowning) or prisoners; the two sides take on an almost heraldic air without implied movement or motion (under which the two bands would of course disastrously collide). See IV.4: 260-3, all Antonine and sec. 5.3.3.1.

⁵⁹Cf. Elsner (1995) 197-8 on time in the *ara pacis*.

cules' iconographic tradition, and acts thus to bracket the figure in our attention from his surroundings. Most tellingly, the Hercules-patron has no regard for the thematic direction of the procession. The exaggerated contrapposto places weight on his left leg with his right leg free and very slightly raised. This is contrary to what we should expect illusionistically, since it reverses the pose one would naturally adopt for stability in a chariot moving forwards. The sculptor has trained spotlights on the scene's irreality.⁶⁰

This is a recognisable technique. By ensuring that the representation of the departed was not too 'close to home', the sculptor ensures that the effect of the portrait-face is to encourage acceptance of the deceased's transition, and not to present a disconcerting facsimile, as Julian, prefect of Egypt laments:

The painter [has painted] Theodote exactly; if only his skill
had failed him, and given surcease to our laments.

αὐτὴν Θειοδότιν ὁ ζωγράφος. αἴθε δὲ τέχνης
ἤμβροτε, καὶ λήθην δῶκεν ὄδυρομένοις.

Greek Anth. 7.565.

The bracketing of Hercules from the illusion is emphasised by two other bearded males, one a centaur, the other an old satyr, who join him in staring out at us. The unusual constellation of outward gaze is confrontational for a modern viewer; for the grieving family, who would certainly have charged this semblance of the deceased which physically and literally intervened between viewer and corpse with emotive force, the effect must have been powerful

⁶⁰On the concept see Koortbojian (1994) 104.

indeed. The fixity of the stare is direct and challenging; the sculpture seems to defy the passive dynamic of interpretation and insist its own meaning towards the viewer.⁶¹ The sarcophagus in a sense regenerates the lost gaze of the deceased *in effigie*, and generates a complex discourse for the bereaved viewer; yet by directly reproducing what was so consciously lost the active-but-ersatz gaze of the marble portrait might tip over into a self-refuting evocation of the marble's materiality. Is the message then one of a comforting recreation of the deceased's gaze, or a direct demonstration of what has been permanently lost? Is the bereaved viewer intended to be comforted by the illusion of the deceased's active gaze, or confronted with their transition to death?⁶² The iconography seems robust enough to generate meaning in both these directions.

This effect can also be found in the enigmatic Uffizi piece (A9), where an aggressive seeming satyr stares outward alongside Semele (or Ariadne), while Pan gazes raptly at her in an internal cue to where our attentions should fall. The effect generated is similar, though its mechanism of generation does not here accentuate the implication through a portrait-face.

Through the distancing techniques the deceased, *in formam dei*, is neither wholly integrated into the myth nor wholly excluded. This effect is only promoted by the power of the portrait face to act as a distancing and not a proximising element. As the relief is constructed, we are not invited to recognize that the deceased is Hercules, or even that the deceased has become

⁶¹On the fixed gaze see Elsner (1995) 186n69, 193-4, and Vitruvius *de arch.* 4.5.1 who suggests temples should be so arranged that statues of the deities look at the suppliants.

⁶²On the significance of the gaze around death/abandonment, Elsner (2007a) 77, Elsner (2007b) 24-4, 28, Toynbee (1971) 44, 50 (note the eyes would be opened at certain points of the funerary ritual e.g. cremation on a pyre).

a new Hercules.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

4.3: Villa Savoia sarcophagus, D9. Image from Matz (1968b) pl. 168.1.

Instead, we find a portrait of a man whose virtues are allegorically played out around him. Flattery of the deceased by comparing them with the martial Hercules is a direct and clear statement, and one with a decent pedigree.⁶³ Amidst a wild and tumultuous scene Hercules is isolated as an island of masculine virtue, strong enough to achieve success in battle and morally fit to associate with a god. It is no small compliment to imply that the deceased was fit to be the vehicle for this illusion. A sarcophagus at the Villa Ada Savoia (D9, fig. 4.3) offers, if the interpretation of one aspect be correct, an almost unique point of comparison with the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus. At the right hand end of the frontal relief is an inversion of the Hercules scene, in the form of a calm, sober centaur-chariot pulling a standing, drunken Silenus. Hercules has been shifted to the centre-field where he staggers, clutching at a female, supported by satyrs who spirit away his club, naked save for a garland (the scene familiar in its approximate form from B9). At the left we see Dionysus in a panther-drawn wagon. He is seated, with an attendant satyr nearby and a Pan figure at the right, bracketed by a *parapetasma*.

⁶³E.g. Hor. *Od.* 3.14.1-12 on Augustus. On second century emperors' use of Hercules see Hekster (2005) and on the labours-sarcophagi Jongste (1992).

Drapery slips from his thighs exposing a naked and rather muscular body. His face bears no discernible features, but his hair seems to be short and individualised, perhaps akin to that shown on the general in a famous piece at the Uffizi.⁶⁴ An early drawing of the object from the Codex Coburgensis shows the face still visible; for these reasons, Matz sees the figure ‘*offenbar mit einem Porträtkopf, dessen Gesicht aber bis zur Unkenntlichkeit zerstört ist*’.⁶⁵ The association of the deceased with the youthful Dionysus then casts the Hercules group at the centre in a particular light, especially in contrasting the calmly seated god with complex gender associations with the archetypically masculine Hercules rolling drunkenly. Moreover, I think it significant that this scene, which of all the seated-Dionysus type pieces seems most closely akin to the triumphal sarcophagi, nevertheless insists that Dionysus is sat down. Sadly, the piece is too damaged for us to form any firm interpretations.

The funeral was a ritual which encouraged the bereaved to accept the departure of the deceased from the earthly realm.⁶⁶ The Woburn relief assists that process by placing the deceased into this timeless other-world.⁶⁷ The translation of the deceased from the mortal realm is illustrated vividly by the relief itself, which serves to emblematised this resolution, and support the bereaved in coming to terms with their loss.⁶⁸

Those scenes with Hercules somewhat distance themselves from the main

⁶⁴Inv. no. 82.1784, see *ASR* I.3: 12, c. 180.

⁶⁵Matz (1968b) 285.

⁶⁶Cf. the *perideipnon*: ‘this was an occasion to demonstrate that the living and the dead no longer share the same family circle’, Lindsay (1998) 68.

⁶⁷Burke (1979) 223 says time ‘cease[s] to matter’ in the procession.

⁶⁸Compare the use of masks at the Republican funerary procession. οἱ τεθνηκότες are a people unified by death; the deceased join the ancestors in the ranks of the departed and the procession marks the crossing of that boundary; see Toynbee (1971) 47.

theme of the iconography, the triumph of Dionysus. That event becomes increasingly subordinate to contextualising the hero's *virtus* or his indulgence. This tension creates appreciable and powerful effects, but it is a tension nevertheless; the division of thrust between this and the Dionysian martial realm is problematic and creates a difficult network for the viewer to navigate. In the most extreme cases, does the rise of the Hercules scene go some way to negating the Dionysian theme?

4.3.1 The tension between idealised life and myth

The events of the Woburn scene occur in a mythological realm which any Roman could claim to share in as part of their cultural heritage. The differences between the relief scene and scenes popular on generals' sarcophagi are underscored by the sustained mythologisation, and removal of the deceased from comparison with the *triumphator*: it is Dionysus, not Hercules, who is crowned.⁶⁹ The sculptor treads a balance between sketching the military overtones of the iconography, but avoiding motifs which would shape the scene towards one more redolent of inaccessible military processions. This explains the relative scarcity of depictions of loaded *fercula* in the Dionysian sarcophagi (and their absence in the triumphal and quasi-triumphal groups) and, where they do occur, the shift of emphasis onto the display of booty rather than the *triumphator*.⁷⁰

⁶⁹By contrast Turcan (1987) 432 (and Turcan (1966) 444ff) stresses the *parallélismes iconographiques et sémantiques qui unissent et solidarisent les deux cycles*. It does not seem necessary with Turcan to presume the patrons of such sarcophagi actually held rank in the military.

⁷⁰See *ASR* IV.2: 134 (Villa Albani) and 135 (Frankfurt), both fragments of a sarcophagus lid, where there is a *ferculum* loaded with arms and armour borne by satyrs, with chained prisoners following. As Turcan (1987) 432 highlights, the presence of Roman arms

One of the most significant mythologisations is the manner in which the deceased at Woburn Abbey is partially inserted into the scene. As we have discussed, the scene is not wholly mythological (after all, the real deceased has been placed into it) nor is he definitely the protagonist (he occupies an odd secondary prominence with the divine Dionysus). The scene is, we might say, mythologo-biographical, in the sense that it communicates biographically directed virtue display yet localises the scene within a more widely understood mythological framework.⁷¹ Compare this technique with that deployed in the slightly earlier Rinuccini sarcophagus (D10, fig. 4.4). It depicts two different narratives separated by a brickwork arch; that on the left shows *vita Romana* scenes, that on the right a mythological one. I wish to distinguish my interpretation below from the suggestion of Ewald that it is ‘unlikely that an ancient viewer would have felt the tension between myth and real life as strongly as the modern observer does, for whom it constitutes the special charm — or even, for earlier observers, the “dissonance” — of the Rinuccini sarcophagus.’⁷² If by ‘tension’ one means the more important or documentary of the two scenes, I agree. While the ancient viewer who knew the deceased certainly knew that the scenes on the left — for quite

and armour on the *ferculum* is strange. 136, a drawing of a fragmentary and now lost piece once in Rome, may once have depicted a panther-drawn wagon loaded with the standard jug and flanked prisoner motif alongside the bound barbarians on elephant, but unfortunately no trace of Dionysus’ chariot is present.

⁷¹The relationship between the triumphal iconography and biographical sarcophagi was observed by Rodenwaldt (1935). He argued that the kinship reflects a shared virtue system. See also Kampen (1981) who ingeniously moves beyond the kinship to observe the reasoned ‘transformations in meaning’ (47) which the sarcophagi display. Elsner (2014b) 325-7 discusses the mythologo-biographical scene (under the term ‘ideal-biographical’) of Metilia Acte’s appearance as Alcestis, stressing its meaning in the exemplary register, inviting (in decreasing order of similitude) correspondence, analogy or contrast with the deceased.

⁷²Zanker and Ewald (2012) 305.

obvious reasons — were not ‘real life’, but a constructed version of *idealised personal* events, they also surely knew they stood in contrast to the *culturally communal* myth in the other half of the relief. The scenes are markedly different, and the message of the sarcophagus lies in appreciating this division of manners of expression.

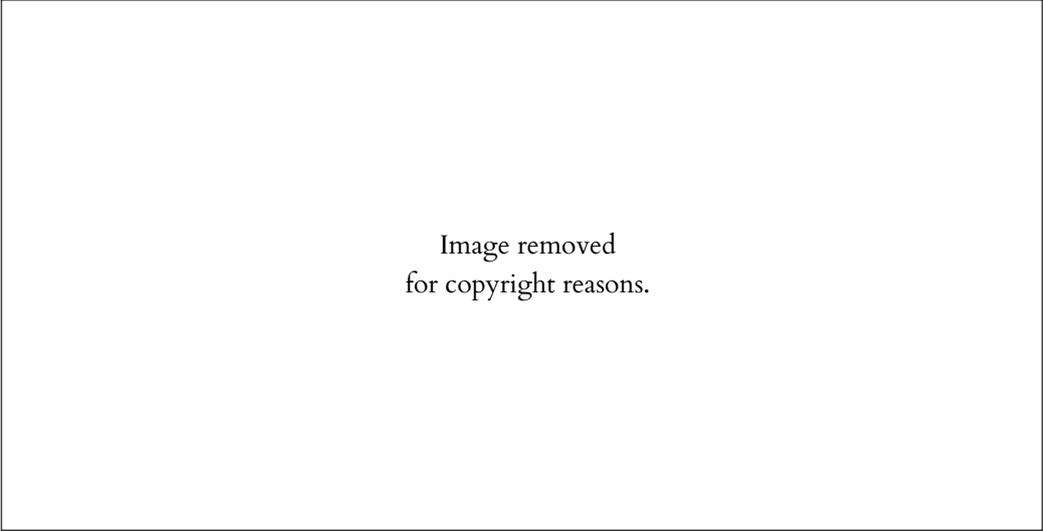


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

4.4: So-called Rinuccini sarcophagus (D10). Image from <http://smb-digital.de/eMuseumPlus?service=ExternalInterface&module=collection&objectId=677423&viewType=detailView> [accessed 24/05/15].

At the left, the deceased stands with his wife clasping her right hand and advertising their *concordia*. Both wear portrait faces. Balancing this, the deceased male stands in armour officiating at a sacrifice, pouring libation. This second scene is rather condensed: the *victimarii* are reduced in scale and there is no altar, but the message of the scene is to communicate the deceased’s *pietas*. Divine figures or personifications accompanying the scene testify to the deceased’s worthiness.

In the right hand scene the composition immediately communicates dif-

ference. Muscular, heroically-nude figures hunt a preternaturally vast boar (note the two halves work on different scales) while the divine twins ride at the upper register, apparently as heavenly succour but certainly too late — perhaps then as *psychopompoi*. The hunting scene functions as an *exemplum bucolicum*, and the hunter's virtues complete a triad formed by those of the *dextraum iunctio* and the sacrifice; Adonis, with whom we are almost certainly meant to identify the deceased, falls in death.⁷³

In terms of the composition of the Rinuccini piece, while it is vastly more common to find the *vita humana* scene with a *clementia* scene and not a mythological one, or conversely to find the death of Adonis scene with a farewell motif and not a *vita humana* one, the sculptor has orchestrated the juxtaposition deliberately. The mythological scene does not 'substitute' for a *clementia* scene, nor the *vita humana* scene 'replace' a farewell scene.⁷⁴ We must reject for good the idea of comparing reliefs against an ideal or schematic which we have devised, and interpret the scene as we have it.

The key lies in the presence of the Dioscouri and the Adonis-deceased. In his death-throes he falls backwards and cuts through a boundary; he is partly in one scene, partly in the other, and partly across the divide. The message here is by no means coy. As in Woburn, this figure invites the bereaved

⁷³See Koortbojian (1994) 78-84. The head of the Adonis figure is severely damaged but enough remains of the hair behind to suggest to me that he did not originally bear a portrait face.

⁷⁴Both terms used by Zanker (2010) 305. Cf. Brilliant who, as recently as 1992, was examining the scene for its 'Roman' and 'Greek' elements. Brilliant recognises Adonis crossing the boundary, but sees that as him entering the 'Roman' *Bild*-space. If the Adonis scene is 'Greek', one wonders then how 'Roman' can be the usual posture of the *cultrarius* in sacrifice scenes (such as the one he reproduces in fig. 4), which surely derives from the *Arrotino*?

viewer to recognise the deceased as a liminal figure.⁷⁵ In one sense it does this quite literally, since Adonis is in the process of dying, frozen between life and death (compare the atmosphere evoked by the crushed panther). In another, it achieves this visually, since it depicts the Adonis-deceased in the act of crossing over the archway which separates the two realms, that of the 'earthly' and that of the supernatural.⁷⁶ By doing so, part of him lies outside the visual logic of the imagery. He is shown protruding out of his proper realm. One imagines that the relevance of this in the context of viewing death must have struck the bereaved powerfully.

The sarcophagus then forms something of a tricolon. The *vita humana* part presents a narrative sequence of two scenes in one half of the sarcophagus, while presenting the climax in a single mythological scene. The death of the hero in that part of the sarcophagus acts as the culmination of the progression of marriage-ritual-death set up on the *vita humana* side. Thus the imagery can again most profitably be read through consideration of the mythological distancing which I identified above (section 4.2.1.1).⁷⁷

Where in Berlin the Adonis-deceased falls out of the mythological scene and into one which by that picture's logic does not exist, in Woburn the Hercules-deceased braces himself the wrong way and the centaur and satyr stare out of the picture. The Woburn relief attempts to fold this excision from the *Bilderwelt* into a whole rather than separate it as in the Berlin

⁷⁵On liminal figures cf. the doorway scene in the Velletri sarcophagus: see Bianchi Bandinelli (1971) fig. 41.

⁷⁶It is doubtless significant that Venus herself, whose power to cross between the earthly and divine realm is key to the myth, is shown with arm flung over the dividing boundary in the Venus and Adonis sarcophagus referred to above, p206n1.

⁷⁷I am grateful to Jaś Elsner for his advice on these thoughts.

scene, but they are directed towards the same ends. In Woburn, inserting the mythologo-biographical Hercules-deceased at the position he occupies into the narrative is the trigger for funerary meaning. In Berlin, the positioning of the dying Adonis on the point of distinction between the *vita humana* and mythological scenes is the prime mover of funerary meaning.

4.3.2 The tension between real life and rhetoric

In this light let us turn to the Indian battle sarcophagi, *ASR* IV.3: 237-45, all of which are Antonine. Though undifferentiated by Matz beyond ‘Inderschlacht’, these can be profitably divided into two types: one depicting combat itself and another depicting the submission of Indian captives and the granting of *clementia* by the Dionysus-general. Of the first type is a piece in the Museo Diocesano, Cortona (D11, fig. 4.5). Dionysus stands in his chariot in a striking stellate form.⁷⁸ The centaur team pulling the chariot have exchanged their instruments for arms and clash with heroic though doomed Indians. The strife is constant and sharp: while at Woburn Abbey the sense is of tension immediately after a struggle successfully concluded, here events are ongoing. The ground line of the sarcophagus is strewn with battle-field litter — both bodies and armour. Particularly noticeable are the discarded helmets, a motif which the lid cleverly concludes by having them crown *tropaia*. An outward staring Indian amplifies the outward staring bust of Dionysus housed in a Victory-held *clipeus* directly above on the lid.

The other type focuses on the *clementia* of the victorious Dionysus. In its most detailed incarnation, that in Salerno (D12, fig. 4.6), we find a *ferculum*

⁷⁸See p4.3.2 below on the Grand Ludovisi sarcophagus.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

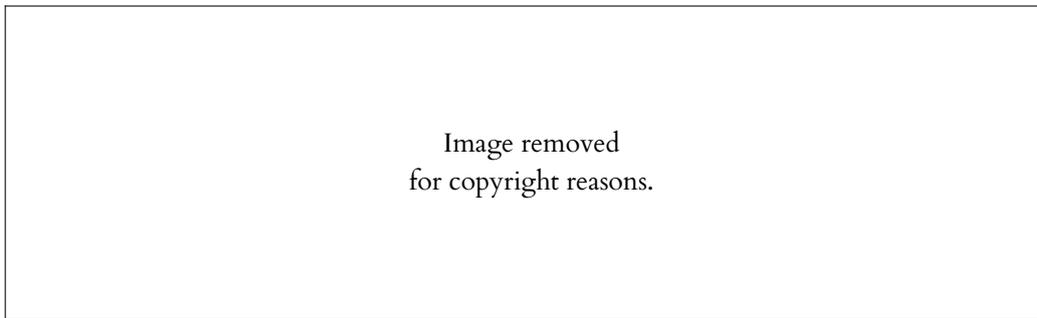
4.5: Indian battle sarcophagus in Museo Diocesano, Cortona (D11). Image courtesy Andreas Kropp.

depicting either diminutive prisoners or statues flanking a large *krater*. Next are taller, elegantly proportioned prisoners, while the latter half is given over to more stately, bearded and moustached prisoners beseeching the seated Dionysus. The god looks masculine, albeit with slipping drapery; he also has an attendant Pan and faithful panther. The whole rightward flow is orchestrated for his benefit, and is focussed on the power of the god-general to show mercy to the defeated. The message of this sarcophagus lies in the unshakable power of the gods, perhaps with a reflected meaning about mortality, but certainly with a reflection of a virtue desirable for expression in the funerary realm.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

4.6: Indian *clementia* sarcophagus in the Cathedral at Salerno (D12). From Matz (1969) pl. 259.2.

Finally, some pieces strive to combine these two messages, and so derive a more tensioned narrative. We find this in the Museo Chiaramonti piece (D13, fig. 4.7). The battle with the Indians occupies the first half, and the *clementia* scene the latter. Cleverly, it is the falling of a charioteer which marks the start of the transitional moment between the two segments, a dynamic moment of action effective in prompting transition.



4.7: Combination of battle and *clementia* sarcophagus, Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican (D13). From Matz (1969) pl. 258.2.

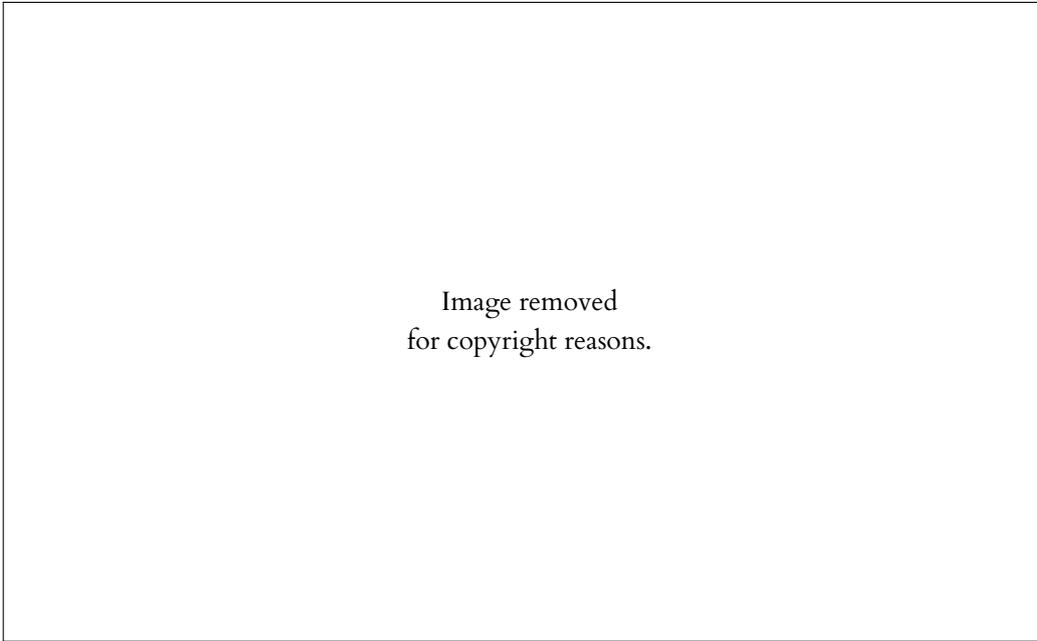
We must note the paucity of Dionysian trappings in most of these scenes. They are generally limited to a tamed panther, some centaurs and Pan; beyond these, the scenes are rather un-supernatural. Given the close chronological coherence of these scenes to the Antonine period, it is tempting to view them as emerging from the great contemporary victory monuments; similarities between the two are detectable to an extent we do not find, for example, in the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus, which having orchestrated the scene to a sufficient extent that we recognise the triumphal trappings, moves more firmly into mythology. This ought to be examined.

The relief in strongly martial triumphal sarcophagi is quite different from the rhetoric familiar from other sarcophagi since it presents masculinity

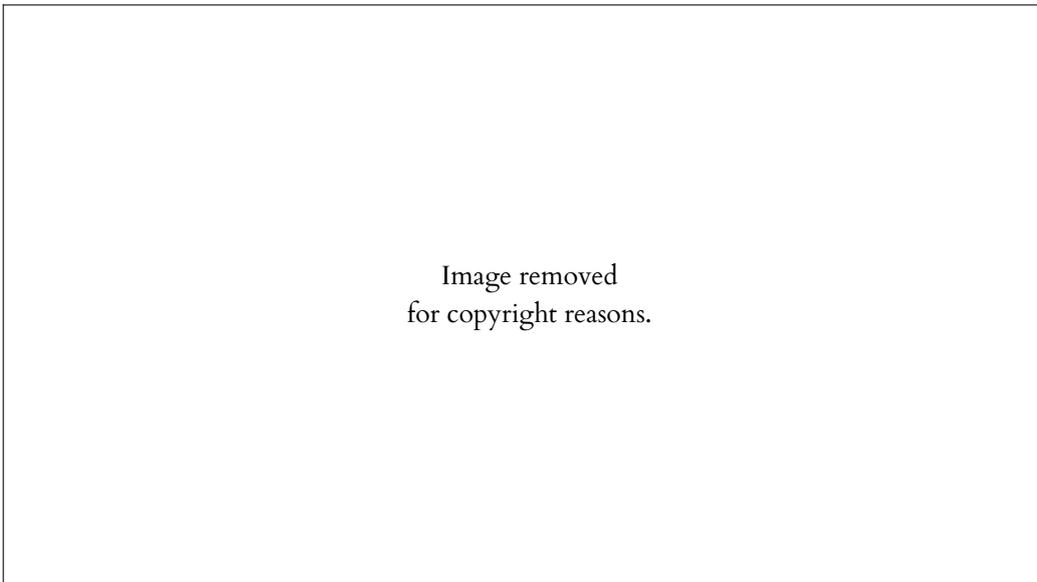
and strength in a martial setting strongly influenced by imperial *triumphal* iconography, but actually quite divorced from contemporary *military* iconography. Let us compare some avowedly military pieces: the battle sarcophagi proper. The Portonaccio battle sarcophagus (180-90, see D14, fig. 4.8a) captures the general at the moment of hefting his spear aloft. In this sense the scene pretends to be set *in medias res*, but the outcome of the battle is in no doubt; the Roman soldiers, arrayed in fine armour are each involved in bringing victory for the general, be that in trampling a barbarian with their mount, spearing his throat or, in the case of the fine bearded soldier in the *lorica segmentata* at the lower centre, beheading their enemy. The barbarian prisoners, unlike in Woburn, are utterly defeated. Bound, they consist of the elderly or the vulnerable, and they wear their defeat in the anguish on their faces. As if this were not enough, in the Portonaccio sarcophagus two massive *tropaia* broadcast the inevitability of triumph; that at the right has a cavalry mask which hauntingly stares outwards, that at the left fashions a face from the negative space of the empty helmet. They insistently direct our attention to the consideration of the centrally placed general, whose face is blank. The very yawning blankness of his visage is set antithetically to the pseudo-faces of the *tropaia* equidistant from him: it asks for complex and sophisticated analysis by the viewer, in recognising both the key message, the general's role as bringer of success, and the limitations of the medium.⁷⁹

Other elements of the relief direct our attention to the primacy of the

⁷⁹Vout (2014) 297-8 observes the tension the blank face creates in elegant terms: 'these faceless faces do more than create a distance between deceased and image, deceased and viewer. They create a lacuna and an overwhelming need to fill it.' However, she does not outline the effect of the *tropaia* which, for me, is so important to this effect.



(a) D14, Portonaccio sarcophagus. From Wrede (2001) pl. 6.1.



(b) D15, Ludovisi sarcophagus. From Wrede (2001) pl. 6.3.

4.8: Battle sarcophagi.

general in less demanding terms, most obvious among them the gesticulating barbarian at his horse's feet. Unlike at Woburn there is no balance here between a great man and his divine superior; there is only absolute and inevitable military conquest. We are left to turn to the lid for the *clementia*, which appears with a *concordia* scene, both acting as symptoms of the general's character, while the sarcophagus' short ends provide other elements in the narrative cycle.

The Portonaccio relief is focused on instantaneous time; the general at Portonaccio was clearly powerful and mighty, but technically from the moment frozen onwards he need not be, since the battle is won. Inevitably, spears will thrust, the horse trample and heads roll to the ground. The battle is frozen in the moment as close to its positive outcome as possible. The sculptor has favoured a narrative arrangement which communicates this scene as one exemplary of the deceased's virtues, and focuses thus on his character at one point, implying tacitly this moment is typical of his character, that victory is symptomatic of his wider virtues. By contrast and in keeping with its promotion of transitional time the *post*-battle Woburn sarcophagus demands that we extrapolate the virtues of the deceased back from the moment presented and, via the prisoners' uncrushed spirit, forward to the continued suppression of the enemy. By this it derives an implication of the continuing might of the Hercules-patron. Of concern at Portonaccio is the absolute and unquestionable might of the victor at that instant; the viewer is invited to extrapolate it as symptomatic of their character. At Woburn, the emphasis is on the continued strength needed to hold victory, the rounded worthiness of the patron as companion to a god.

Battle sarcophagi such as the Portonaccio sarcophagus fall out of favour after the beginning of the third century; martial depictions of males move towards lion-hunt scenes, and have pretty much disappeared by the fourth.⁸⁰ The Grand Ludovisi sarcophagus (D15, fig. 4.8b) stands as a reappearance of the genre after about half a century of disuse.⁸¹ Here, the general with a portrait face rides centre-stage. Arrayed around him are barbarians in varying states of wretchedness: some, such as the one at the lower left, slump transfixed by spears; others, as his counterpart at the other side, gaze up in vain at their executor, who stands with *gladius* in hand. Still others are reduced to pathetic rag-dolls, yanked by the beards by their dominators.

The scene is rather brutal for a modern eye, but might have brought comfort at a time of military instability. The general perches, stelled into an almost abstract assemblage of limbs.⁸² His head turns, unmoved by the tumult; his left leg, defying the naturalistic bounds of its socket, juts down into the morass of grovelling barbarians. His right hand and arm are magnified and flung wide open with the autonomy they are often given in Roman art. He has no need of weapon or shield, only of an imperious gesture to rally his already victorious troops. At the edges, diminutive *tropaia* signal in miniature the inevitable victory. The general has no need to involve himself, remaining in his calm bubble of abstraction. There is no great narrative cycle, only a continuous display of the general as victor.

⁸⁰Borg (2013) 184, Birk (2013) 145.

⁸¹At least, so prior scholarship and indeed I somewhat high-handedly assert, despite the problem posed by uncertain survival rates.

⁸²Cf. Brilliant (1963) 185-7.

4.3.3 Conclusions

The change in manner visible between the Portonaccio and Ludovisi sarcophagi brackets the Woburn sarcophagus, and shows us its position within a period of iconographic flux. The snapshot of symptomatic prowess which the Portonaccio sculptor invites us to interpret as typical of the deceased's virtues, with the deceased in the thick of the action and actively butchering his foes, gives way to the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus' emphasis on the virtues of the deceased as long-standing ones; the Indian campaign is presented as successfully concluded, but the enemies are still dangerous and threatening, and Hercules still has need of his club which he carries ready. Nevertheless, so strong and soldierly is the Hercules-patron that even in this situation he may stand in a striking posture and not wholly involve himself in the suppression of the low-level protestations of the conquered. The emphasis on this ease becomes intensified by the time of the Ludovisi sarcophagus, where the general is excised from the narrative still further — he is unarmed, without shield or helmet, and is presented as above the action, perched in perfect power, arm thrust out in an artificial and imperious gesture.⁸³

The motif of the general vanquishing his foe is further intensified by the time it appears on Roman bronze coins of the fourth century, a use which exemplifies both the ease with which this message could be understood and

⁸³Brilliant (1963) 143-4 reproduces a piece of highly decorated bronze-work, the breast-plate of a horse, from the Museo Romano Brescia (fig. 3.96) and attributes another piece in Turin to the same tack (3.97), dated to the end of the second century. The mounted general performs the same wide-flung arm gesture as the sarcophagus, and doubtless the two gestures are related. I cannot however accept that the vastly more sedate gesture shown in some coin issues (such as that of Commodus in Brilliant fig. 3.98) is related beyond a superficial similarity of the raising of the arm being a means of catching attention.

its importance.⁸⁴ It is against this trend which we may see part of the decline in popularity of the Dionysian triumph; it requires subordination of personal identification and the postponement of the instant of narrative victory, in a manner which simply fell out of favour. We will explore the reasons for the decline of the genre more fully in the next chapter.

4.4 Negotiating the sympotic

But even she [Niobe] thought about food, when she was tired of pouring forth tears.

ἦ δ' ἄρα σίτου μνήσαστ', ἐπεὶ κάμε δάκρυ χέουσα.

Hom. *Il.* 24.613.

While the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi are notionally about martial endeavour, many of them are given over in significant part to Dionysus' power to woo his followers with the finer side of life. Many of the ground-lines are littered with the drained containers of the liquid god, and his followers cavort and gambol, filled with its effects. Grapes, garlands and other obvious indicators of abundance and fecundity fill the scenes.⁸⁵ In several instances we see the triumphal procession teamed with a fantastic banqueting scene on the lid. Sympotic elements are by no means difficult to find: the army of Dionysus most certainly marched on its stomach. It is on the expression of

⁸⁴See *gloria Romanorum* series of Theodosius I, Arcadius and Honorius in particular. Cf. a denarius of Domitian, *RIC* 957.

⁸⁵On the significance of garlands, *boukrania*, *paterae* and other offerings/equipment as substitutive 'enduring' offerings to the dead in lieu of the corruptible real offerings see Elsner (2014b) 319-20. Cf. in this regard the garland of 'everlasting flowers' in the British Museum (inv. no. 1890,0519.7) made from real plants and dating to C2-3.

this side of Dionysus that I wish to focus in this section.

Though sometimes sympotic appliances are re-purposed as booty in an otherwise sober scene (as the *krater* in A1), and though some sarcophagi suggest visible intoxication is more due to *enthusiasmos* than wine (B7, B8), nevertheless most scenes include some element of drinking, eating, and merrymaking, but these range in the intensity of their relaxation. In some, as noted above, it is the contrast between the merry band and their military victory (shown through captives) that is the real tensioning element.⁸⁶ In others, the *thiasus* seems to have no need to flaunt its captives and instead rolls along (perhaps on its way to the feast often shown on the lids).⁸⁷ Those not focused on the military elements seem to lay greatest emphasis on the movement, and the fact of the *thiasus*' travel. Still others seem to be given over far more to the sympotic side of Dionysus.⁸⁸

An approach which unduly privileges singular expressions of iconography is methodologically flawed, since it presupposes unverifiable ideas about survival rates. In fact despite the repetition of imagery, the deployment of motifs for the family was in all likelihood highly personal. The structure of any formalised iconography may appear, when the viewpoint of the reader is elevated from involvement, too formulaic to be specific, but we should not overlook the personal emotional involvement they entail. The structured nature of funerary rhetoric may even have made meaning more accessible due to the prevalence and pre-existence of the manner in which the majority of the message itself was delivered. Excessive novelty may have been an

⁸⁶A2, A3, A7, [A8?], A9, A10, [A11?].

⁸⁷B3, B4.

⁸⁸B9, B10, B11, B14.

impediment to communicating desired messages; this could offer a reason *why* sculptors valued modulation within a familiar motif-set. This approach is comparable methodologically to that recently expounded by Wypustek in his work on funerary epigrams. These can be astonishingly repetitive and composed from seemingly block-built units, but he argues that the assembly of the epigrams represents a choice in itself, calling them ‘consciously formulaic.’⁸⁹ Their assembly from units which are more accessible to the reader because of their familiarity removes a layer of distancing and actually allows the personalisation to come through more readily.

4.4.1 The anatomy of revelry: the Pashley sarcophagus

Let us consider the Pashley sarcophagus more closely (B14). How do the sympotic elements contribute to the narrative? How do they sit with the triumph, which is surely supposed to be a military affair? What is the meaning of the sarcophagus as a whole for the bereaved viewers?

As the style of the relief shows, this is an early sarcophagus. Dionysus is clearly the chief agent in the procession, who stares forwards, supported by an exaggeratedly cowed satyr. The male of a mixed gender centaur team also gazes back at the god, as does Silenus, whose stumbles in obvious alcohol-fuelled merriment. Just after the chariot group Pan dances over an empty *krater*, and the torsion of his musculature afforded the sculptor an opportunity to demonstrate a close familiarity with surface anatomy. The *serratus* and muscles of the arm in particular show close attention to detail — even

⁸⁹Wypustek (2013) 5-28. This argument runs *contra* to Ewald (2010) 264 who sees a tension between the generic and the specific; instead, might the generic have been rendered specific, though comfortingly accessible, by its invocation in such a personal context?

the long hairs of the armpit are indicated with skilful incision. The hairy armpit (rather a surprising naturalistic detail) is probably intended for a bestial trait. Roman males may well have trimmed or even removed axillary hair, but its presence in the visual arts is very rare.⁹⁰

At the right hand end an elephant carries figures, and finally a satyr carries a *putto* on its back in an idyllic scene. The gesticulating Silenus forms a balancing point which gives a second possible division for the relief; thus we may either divide the sarcophagus by the mass of the bodies into three parts (chariot and team, dancing figures, elephant and walking figures) or across Silenus' form into two equally balanced sides. The dual possibilities make the arrangement dynamic but organic. Tripartite composition is of course popular (compare B7) but the central division at Silenus forms here also an approximate analogue for the symmetrical division of the banqueters on the lid into two sides.

The lid shows a busy banqueting scene, with material drapes to create a varied surface behind the figures and couches thrown with animal skins, the paws of which dangle at the head and feet. Cups and drinking accoutrements (notably a ladle near the centre) add interest and variation to the lower register. The reclining figures make a ready modular unit longer than it is tall with which to build a lid-frieze, and the utility of the composition for filling the awkward space of the lid should not be ignored, but neither must it be overestimated.⁹¹ The Roman sculptor was strongly drawn to representing banqueting scenes on lids, doubtless encouraged not only by their thematic

⁹⁰Cf. Suet. *Iul.* 45, Williams (2009) 24 for more unusual depilatory techniques.

⁹¹Zanker and Ewald (2012) 321.

suitability but also due to their compositional utility in occupying shallow registers. This draw must be behind an experiment on a peculiar lid in the Sala degli Animali in the Vatican which combines elements from a banquet scene (reclining figures, sympotic accoutrements) with a processional scene (exotic animals, wagons).⁹² The failure of this experiment to reappear in the record may be due to its challenging rendition of movement.

The central figures of the Pashley lid are probably not Dionysus and Ariadne, merely an elder satyr and a maenad, since his face is puckish and snub-nosed, with indications of satyr-ears. The maenad at the right offers him grapes and a garland, but he seems to be lifting his cup with the intention of having it filled by the small old woman entering near the maenad's feet. The head of the animal skin — a panther in this case — strains to get at the cup in another amusing instance of animation applied to the skin. Left of the central couple an amorous maenad and a satyr are drinking from a single cup; he proffers it to her and she touches his beard in an intimate gesture. This is not them 'drinking a toast.'⁹³ It is an erotic scene. A *putto* greedily eats grapes below. Divided off from this scene by a fall of drapery we find the musical accompaniment: a maenad plays a large lyre while two satyrs listen appreciatively, the nearest one proffering her a garland. Moving back to the centre, after the maenad at the midpoint there is a fracture, after which a reclining satyr and a drinking maenad. The latter is being addressed by a satyr composed of two distinct halves; his upper portion converses with her, while on his lower portion a *putto* bounces, tended to by a final maenad.

⁹²*ASR* IV.2: 161, Spinola (1996) 145.

⁹³Budde and Nicholls (1964) 101.

There is a disjunct between the two halves of his torso, which cannot be reconciled with his having a spine.

The central maenad herself, who lies with horizontal shoulders, oblique torso and horizontal thighs all in the same plane, must also have a rather rubbery backbone, and the triumphal procession also began with a peculiarly distorted maenad (her tambourine-holding right arm would in reality have to be broken). Are these anatomical difficulties evidence of a careless composition? It would be difficult to reconcile the hands which made these ‘errors’ with those which carved Pan. The effect of this figure is to give an extremely lively, motion-filled start to the procession, and strongly indicate movement right from the start. The same is true of the satyr bouncing the *putto* on the lid. Budde and Nichols are on the right track when they suggest his form is due to the combining of different motifs from the repertoire; however, it is too much to ask us to believe that a sculptor blunderingly combined two elements without noticing the effect, especially when that effect is creative. Clearly for the sculptors, the naturalistic constraints of anatomy were secondary to effect, which here is the clever unification of an otherwise pair of closed off scenes. It enables the sculptor at this troublesome right side to depict figures thoroughly occupied, engaging with their companions through direct gaze, whilst not undesirably bracketing off the final figures.⁹⁴

The pleasant banqueting scene on the lid is reflected in the relief on the sarcophagus front.⁹⁵ At the end of the frontal relief a satyr hefts a vast skin

⁹⁴The *locus classicus* for the positive discussion of non-naturalistic elements is the 1901 essay by Alois Riegl, for a translation of which see Riegl (1985).

⁹⁵For the imagery of Roman banqueting in general see Dunbabin (2003), and esp. 187-9 (Pagan funerary banquets through the Christian evidence) and 120-9 (banquets on sarcophagi).

of wine onto his shoulder, the effects of which are manifest on Silenus at least, and which are enjoyed at leisure on the lid. As noted above, on the lid the panther-skin on the couch eyes the *krater* thirstily. The satyr at the end wears an animal-skin, the empty head part of which has again been afforded agency, and with its empty eyes (indicated by the flat relief and running drill) meets with a leer the living panther, who looks nervously at it (with pupils carefully drilled to indicate direction of gaze).⁹⁶

In the Pashley scene the elephant does not object to its load but marches happily, and the covering which has been de-emphasised to a vestigial cloth in the Woburn piece is here a rich and flowing blanket upon which figures recline. They have with them a round wickerwork object which close examination distinguishes from a *cista mystica*. Instead the maenad rests an elbow and her *cantharus* on it, and seems to treat it rather like a picnic-basket. The group coheres, and resembles a party out to enjoy a shared meal. Such an image has funerary significance, as will be discussed below, but it bears highlighting the vast difference between the elephant here and at Woburn Abbey. Here, he is a hulking, exotic vehicle, and really not much more than that: his purpose is to *bear* — both his light burden of day-trippers and an air of exotic compliance. The foreign has been brought under total pacific control and embraced the new Dionysian world. The elephant is complicit in the scene but does not engage the figures. The extent of his peaceableness is made clear by comparison with the Woburn elephant, who involves himself in the scene, engaging with and inviting the action of figures within the

⁹⁶Compare the famous relief in the British Museum depicting a panther doing the same (C1 A.D., inv. no. 1805,0703.128, L: 1.21 H: 0.99).

procession. The difference is not primarily one of manner as it may at first appear, and certainly not of ability. It is the *function* which differs. The elephant's function in Cambridge is as exotic emblem and stately conveyance, a role which he fulfils superbly.

Aside from Pan and Silenus, the *thiasus* is a stately one. The centaurs (a typical mixed-gender team), satyrs and especially the mounted maenads are all calm and enjoying the moment. The religious interpretation of the scene on the right hand end has been dealt with above (see p165ff); we will probably interpret the scene most correctly as a simple allegory for the fact that Dionysus is the bringer of a fruitful bounty, and by doing so we are able to unify the three sides of relief. The ithyphallic Pan at the left is fulfilling his role as a barometer for the deity's presence, in the manner in which we saw him function when dancing around the *cista mystica* and on the front. He is literally drunken with the flowing god, and excited by his bounty. That association is echoed on the right, by the physical juxtaposition of the infant god and his fruits; the enjoyment of his gifts is shown on the front by the attitude of the revellers and the discarded banqueting equipment, as well as the potential for it to continue long into the night evinced by the satyr struggling with the still full wineskin. On the lid, figures recline handsomely with food and wine, all while music is played. Thus each side communicates the god's association with banqueting. All things, of course, appropriate for

consoling grieving family members:⁹⁷

Then Chiron urged her [Thetis] to nibble on the banquet and the riches of Dionysus, and . . . at last brought out the lyre and plucked the strings which console pains . . .

tunc libare dapes Baccheaque munera Chiron

orat et . . .

elicit extremo chelyn et solantia curas

fila movet . . .

Stat. *Achil.* 1.184-7.

The reclining scene on the lid is thus not simply a useful way to fill an awkward space, but a sounding board which amplifies the sympotic associations of the god. In one respect it is aspirational: the feast is lavish and joyful. Dunbabin has drawn attention to the social distinction shown by banqueting posture; while those of normal means sit, the affluent recline.⁹⁸ Zanker quite rightly highlights that the familial nature of the scene on the relief (with the father-satyr and his child) coupled with the idyllic scene on the lid force us to consider the scene as a *Brücke* between the mythological world and that of the bereaved.⁹⁹ A feast is a comforting image for a family

⁹⁷For discussion of the passage see Heslin (2005) 87. One cannot help but be reminded, as the passage continues and Chiron instructs the beautiful youth Achilles in the soothing properties of the lyre, of the wall-painting from the basilica at Herculaneum. For our purposes here, Chiron's unusual nature as the one 'civilised' centaur need concern us no more than the fact we find a docile pair of centaurs on the sarcophagus, one of them a female which did not exist according to earlier writers. Philostr. *Imag.* 2.3 is conscious of this discrepancy in art and embraces it; we probably ought thus to embrace the docility of the sarcophagus centaurs and consider the reasoned intent of such a depiction.

⁹⁸Dunbabin (2003) 83.

⁹⁹Zanker and Ewald (2012) 155. For discussion of this bridge-building see p30.

viewing a tomb; it also forms a pleasant link between the lives of the bereaved onlooker and the deceased, who share in the practice.¹⁰⁰ The allusion to the feasting aspect of the *silicernium* or the annual *parentalia* is surely too strong for it to be accidental; the temporally focussed message is the more powerful due to the specificity of its design. It was intended for consumption at a specific occasion by a specific group, an effect likely pre-considered by the sculptor.¹⁰¹

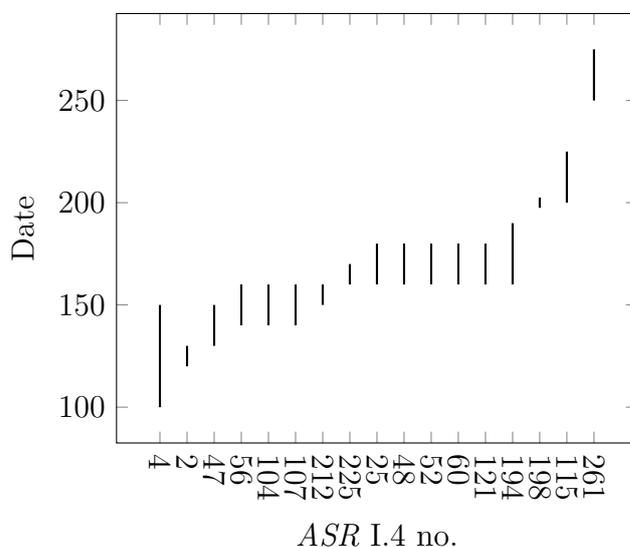
The Roman sculptor did not shy away from depicting scenes which were less strongly veiled references to the funerary ritual. The generally Hadrianic to mid Antonine *conclamatio* scenes present the deceased lying on a *kline* almost as if in repose at a feast, and the similarity of composition with these scenes and those of feasting is marked, mediated perhaps through the Totenmahl scenes.¹⁰² They fall off in popularity quite sharply by the last quarter of the second century (see fig. 4.9); this may be under the influence of changes in funerary focus, which will be scrutinised in the next chapter.

This is a seemingly rather non-mystery or non-cult based view of the imagery, but it is more congruent with what we should expect were prime concerns at the point of losing a loved one, and also more in tune with the commonly derived meanings of contemporary sarcophagi than advertising membership of the Dionysian cult. The import of sarcophagus relief tends to

¹⁰⁰On the graveside banqueting in the later Roman empire see p255n95 and Rebillard (2013) esp. 142-53, and on the rites of the *parentalia* Kellum (2015) 428-9, Dolansky (2011), D'Arms (2000) 127-35 (on Q. Cominius Abascantus' inscription), Lindsay (1998) 75, Koortbojian (1994) 13-5. On when sarcophagi might be seen, Brilliant (1984) 126. For sarcophagi depicting the *Sigma-mahl* see *ASR* I.4.

¹⁰¹There seems to be no doubt that the ... *silicernium* occurred at the tomb itself,' Lindsay (1998) 72. For funerary banquets in Latin inscriptions see Lattimore (1962) 133-5.

¹⁰²E.g. Uffizi inv. no. 381, Amedick (1991) no. 47 and pp79-81.



4.9: Chart showing the spread of datable *conclamatio* sarcophagi; data from Amedick (1991).

focus on the life of the individual (their various virtues or erudition) or the fact of their loss (allegorical representations from mythology, for example); that is to say, they are ‘retrospective’ instead of ‘prospective’, in Panofsky’s terminology.¹⁰³ They do not tend to praise the departed in terms of their membership of a social group unless based on office or rank. Rather, they tend to offer a point of localisation for thought concerning the emotions and reflections surrounding the death. At this time, we should expect diffuse, family oriented messages instead of personal identification.¹⁰⁴ It is of course the intensely personal, private meaning which we are unable to recover, even when it emerged from familiar iconography.¹⁰⁵

Consider the unusual though sadly lost B6. In a retrograde motion Diony-

¹⁰³Panofsky (1992) 31-8. See also Wrede (1981) 139-57 and of course Nock and Beazley (1946). For a *prospective* reading of Adonis sarcophagi see Koortbojian (1994) 49ff.

¹⁰⁴See discussion p332.

¹⁰⁵Ewald (2003) 563.

sus leans heavily on a satyr while fingering grapes which sprout supernaturally from the vine as the procession passes.¹⁰⁶ The foremost centaur holds a *krater* the size of which is unparalleled (though the location of which is not: compare B19). Panthers pester him, trying to get at the wine. Silenus tumbles out of another chariot, but here the driver Pan seems partly to blame, drunk as he is, for the usual collapse of Silenus' donkeys. Curiously, the animal scenes are not of the idyllic cast we might expect, but show a lion chasing down a panther. Likewise, where we might expect the satyr at the end to heft a wine-skin, instead he is hefting a calf. The *moschophoros* is a common occurrence with the stumbling donkeys, but the artist could have substituted a wine-skin had he so wished. The scene must carry some meaning then; perhaps it resonated with the family, or perhaps they felt the scene needed something to distinguish the Dionysian nature of the procession from the purely sympotic. This would explain the *liknaphoros* who appears centre-stage. But the precise reason behind the rather strange iconographic choice will remain elusive.

What then can we detect of the purpose of sympotic imagery? Traditional interpretations often favour the idea that the banquet had a religious meaning, alluding to a banquet in the afterlife. The popularity of funerary banqueting imagery in such diverse contexts as Etruscan cinerary urns, Dionysian sarcophagi and late antique Christian scenes, alongside the vagueness of hopes expressed in inscriptions, suggests to me that such meaning

¹⁰⁶The preference for left to right scenes is marked; on Endymion and Selene sarcophagi the same is true, with the few right to left examples all but disappearing by 180. See Koortbojian (1994) 68.

can only have been conceptualised very diffusely.¹⁰⁷ In fact, the scenes are rather embarrassingly redolent of earthly enjoyment of the pleasures of wine and food. There are probably elements of both echoing graveside dining of the bereaved and hope for a pleasant repose, but only in vague terms.

We have no images of an emperor banqueting from this period.¹⁰⁸ This is in contrast to the triumphal elements, which engage overtly with monumental relief. But as the more baroque tales of Suetonius and the writers of the *Historia Augusta* like to point out, amongst the elite's more memorable status-displays is the throwing of lavish banquets. Unlike the triumph, feasting was not subject to imperial sanction: if you were wealthy enough, you could hold banquets, and Romans could adjust their menus according to their wealth. Thus even though banquets were accessible to patrons in reality while triumphs were not, both are socially aspirational. The depiction of indulgent sympotic elements on a sarcophagus is therefore a statement of wealth, generosity and abundance.

Presenting a banqueting scene, or even (as the Pashley scene) showing a journey to a banquet forms a *Brücke* for the family going to the graveside to feast with the dead. The Pashley sarcophagus demilitarises the triumphal procession and presents a mythologised, fanciful and idyllic translation of the grieving family's journey. The presentation of the sympotic elements shows a joyous world where the cares of the deceased and the trials of their last days are expunged. It also implies the cultivation of the deceased and obedience to certain burial rites, thus advertising the *pietas* of the family, and acts as

¹⁰⁷See further Borg (2013) 161.

¹⁰⁸Dunbabin (2003) 15.

a hortatory *exemplum*.¹⁰⁹ The sculptor does not merely reproduce what the deceased hopes his visiting family members will be like on their journey to his resting place, but also exhorts them to that same journey by laying such great emphasis on it.¹¹⁰

Despite being metropolitan in manufacture the Pashley sarcophagus was found as far away as the isle of Crete, at Arvi, and as such is the easternmost metropolitan sarcophagus to have been found.¹¹¹ The reason for this is difficult to fathom; most likely it reflects the patron's maintenance of metropolitan taste.¹¹² The relief's references to Dionysus' eastern wanderings might have been considered in the context as a playful allusion to the patron's location.

4.4.2 The polyvalency of the sympotic

In order to illuminate the range of meaning the sympotic iconography could accommodate, let us compare two other sarcophagi from the Dionysian triumphal series, that in the Museo delle Terme (B3) and that in the Museum of Fine Arts (B19). Both are fortunate enough to possess their lids, which depict symmetrically arranged banqueters, but the matrices are attuned differently. The scene in Rome removes nearly all reference to excessive drinking. There, Dionysus and Ariadne (so their depiction here suggests) recline in the centre.

¹⁰⁹On the non-gender specificity of mythological *exempla* see Newby (2014) 269-70.

¹¹⁰Cf. Plut. *Per.* 1.4 on display of virtue prompting imitation.

¹¹¹Burn (2013) 125-6, Paton and Schneider (1999) 293. Russell (2010) 127-31 proposes a survival rate of 20%, significantly higher than Koch and Sichtermann (1982) who proposed 2-5%. Chief among Russell's reasons are the fact that sarcophagi are attractive candidates for re-use (see Stewart (2008) 37) as well as later being seen as *objets* and status-symbols.

¹¹²It does not reflect Cretan taste; it is the only Italian sarcophagus found on Crete from C2-3, compared with two Asiatic, twelve Attic and three of local type: Sanders (1982) 47-8.

They gaze lovingly at each other, while a *putto* brings a torch to the god and a garland to his lover. The left half of the party is made up of Pan with a syrinx, a tree trunk, and a reclining satyr; the right comprises a tree, reclining Silenus with attendant *putto*, a further tree, and finally a kneeling female stoking a fire beneath a pot.¹¹³ The composition is by no means raucous. The *putti* who attend to the central couple seem to point towards a marriage scene, which is congruent with the rather non-military sarcophagus body. There, the composition is balanced around a central maenad in *velificatio*; the left half bears the utterly naked, rather sensuous looking Dionysus with a cupid replacing Victoria. The right shows the enigmatic stumbling donkey scene, shallow *liknaphoros*, and phallopetal snake emerging from the *cista mystica*. The focus seems rather to be on the divine love between Dionysus and Ariadne: references to human concerns seem rather removed from these supernatural incidents.

In Boston the same symmetrical feasting is present, but with a different tone. For a start, there are no flying *putti*. Dionysus is far more muscular, clad in slipping drapery which exposes his heavier torso. Ariadne reclines, deep in conversation while holding a mask of Silenus. Left of Dionysus a maenad lies holding a large horn. Damage has obliterated the next figure but the legs show he was a gesticulating Pan; at the leftmost corner a satyr stokes a pot. On the right of Ariadne a reclining elder satyr (Silenus?) holds a baby satyr aloft in a rather sweet and very human scene. Rightmost we find a young satyr of lithe, strong musculature holding up another mask. The relief ends with a *cista mystica* on the rocks.

¹¹³The stoking figure appears in non-mythological scenes, e.g. I.4: 29.

In the Museo delle Terme, the focus is divine love. Erotic aspects stem from the amorous power of Dionysus himself. But in Boston similar parts are attuned not towards Dionysus' love *qua* divine union, but the effect of Dionysus on the human realm, Dionysus as the bringer of eroticism and *luxuria*. Indeed surely part of Dionysus' draw was the provision of an acceptable eastern vehicle for expressing otherwise somewhat frowned-upon *luxuria*.¹¹⁴ The charming scene on the lid with the satyr-baby and the erotically presented figures chime with what is set up on the sarcophagus front. There, the artist's enjoyment of the male form is clear from the standing satyr at the head of the elephants and the prancing satyr by the altar, but that eroticism is directed towards the Hercules group which closes the scene. They are clearly influenced by Dionysus' gifts (as the sympotic accoutrements evidence) and their conception lays emphasis on two things; how those gifts have removed the cares of the deceased, and how those gifts can remove the cares of the bereaved. In the other scene, it is the divine concord which provides a comforting example for the viewer.

It is probably under this section that the Kelsey Museum piece (B18) ought to be discussed; it is a strongly figure-dominated relief, which has entered our group due to passing the criteria devised above (sec. 2.3). A glance however shows it to be markedly different from the other pieces, most notably in the presence of Ariadne within the chariot.

The scene is sparsely populated with almost no overlap (except in the centaurs). We should probably date it stylistically to the later Hadrianic

¹¹⁴On death as removing opportunities for *luxuria* cf. Sen. *Ep.* 82.15. Borg (2013) 266, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 148-9, Zanker (1990) 337.

or rather early Antonine period.¹¹⁵ There are several highly unusual figures within the relief. The female with the drum, seen naked and face on with a thin *velificatio* is a singular variant apparently of Matz's type TH21.¹¹⁶ The satyr who accompanies her is likewise a seeming variation of a figure-type found elsewhere, but significantly modified (TH18). Silenus, in being borne in a hammock, adopts a posture found only in a few other fragments (IV.2: 78, 93, 209) and always within the wedding-procession of the god. This is probably our clue towards a correct interpretation here. I believe it would be too simplistic to ascribe the variants we find to the early date of this sarcophagus. Instead, this sarcophagus seems to mark the point of greatest proximity between the quasi-triumphal group and wedding-scenes. We should then see this as striking reminder of the porosity of our groups, which in some respects are coterminous. Its meaning is therefore more strongly modulated towards that of the wedding-processions and strongly away from martial expressions, but also seemingly away from emotional sensibilities; it aligns the meaning of the scene quite firmly in an enjoy-the-moment sense.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵Despite observing similarities with *ASR* IV.2: 85-7, de Grummond (2000b) dates the sarcophagus to the second half of the second century. I believe we can rule out the latter portion of this range, and edge slightly earlier in its lower bound.

¹¹⁶Cf. her appearance in D7 and in the quasi-triumphal group proper, in B3.

¹¹⁷Assuming that all of the carving is from antiquity. Certain features are sufficiently unusual that they merit analysis beyond what is possible here. The presence of a standing Ariadne within the chariot is, for example, highly strange. As are: the intaglio carving of the wheel of the chariot, where it is otherwise carved in relief; the presence of *cistae mysticae* of two different designs within the same relief; the satyr holding a snake in his outstretched arm (though found in the bell-bedecked priest, TH97 in a very different posture), his windswept hair, his holding a drum; the undifferentiated patterning of hair on Silenus' body; the quatrefoil-like design of the centaurs' harness instead of the almost universal tri-lobed bell-shaped design (see the centaur of B7) depicted together with plain straps, the unusually low insertion of the human torso below the equine point of shoulder on the centaurs — all these, to my mind, deserve examination. de Grummond (2000b) suggests that Ariadne and the central, frontal, naked maenad may bear portrait faces. A portrait on the maenad would be highly unusual, as would a portrait on Ariadne standing

4.4.3 Conclusions

In the light of this clear polyvalency we can more readily appreciate the great distance in the manner of funerary rhetoric between the Pashley and the Woburn Abbey sarcophagi. The two encompass nearly the full chronological range of this type and the extremes to which the Dionysian triumph could be attuned. In the former, personal identification of the deceased with a character in the relief was at the forefront of the message, and the relief the medium by which to transmit the character of the deceased. In Cambridge, the scene is orchestrated to create a more diffuse air, but one more specifically aimed at evoking a particular notion, that of taking comfort in the enjoyment of Dionysus' gifts. Conversely at Woburn the triumph is a martial opportunity for the male deceased to be presented as conquering hero, powerful and dominant, fit to consort with gods. It directs its message outwards at a centrally positioned viewer, who is master-interpreter of a scene orchestrated for his benefit. The Cambridge piece, by contrast, through invocation of sympotic imagery both depicts and encourages familial unity. By choosing the resonant theme of a journey to a feast, the relief reaches out to the onlooker, and invites the viewer to position themselves as part of the dutiful family group, rather than detached interpreter of the deceased's mythologo-biographical relief. One cannot, after all, feast alone.

inside the chariot; both would also be rather early examples. Both females seem to me to have genre faces without individualisation; certainly the hairstyles do not seem to recall particularly strongly the distinctive hairstyles of this period.

4.5 Negotiating the personal

A likeness of your bodily form, made by the skilled hands of craftsmen, will be laid out in our bed; falling upon it and throwing my hands about it and calling your name it'll seem as though I have my dear wife in my arms, though I do not. Yes, it's a cold comfort. But all the same it might lighten the burden on my soul.

σοφῆ δὲ χειρὶ τεκτόνων δέμας τὸ σὸν
 εἰκασθὲν ἐν λέκτροισιν ἐκταθήσεται,
 ᾧ προσπεσοῦμαι καὶ περιπτύσσων χέρας
 ὄνομα καλῶν σὸν τὴν φίλην ἐν ἀγκάλαις
 δόξω γυναῖκα καίπερ οὐκ ἔχων ἔχειν:
 ψυχρὰν μὲν, οἶμαι, τέρψιν, ἀλλ' ὅμως βάρος
 ψυχῆς ἀπαντλοίην ἄν.

Eur. *Alc.* 348-54.

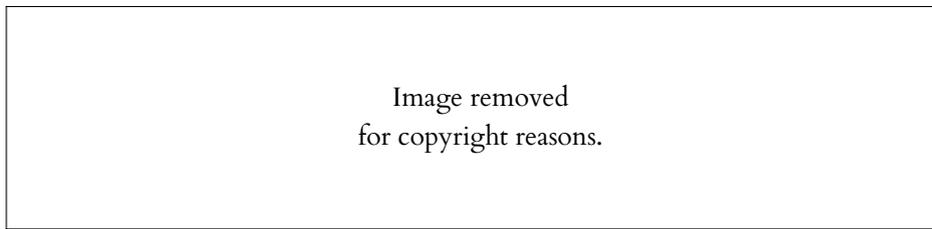
It would be difficult to look at the Naples sarcophagus (B9) and imagine the primary focus was military. Hercules is quite occupied with Omphale, his club relegated to the satyrs, who support him by his wine-filled belly. If his intentions were not clear, there is the phallographic *liknon*, while the phallopetal snakes emerging from twinned *cistae mysticae* frame the scene and balance across the empty *krater* at Hercules' feet. Dionysus stands in a chariot, but bracketed by a *parapetasma*. Perhaps this distinguishes him from the carnal scene which occurs in the main relief? Two *erotes* join in, one encouraging the music-making centaurs along, the other accompanying them on his lyre while riding a stately lion.

The sarcophagus has some of the aims and intent of the Pashley sarcophagus, yet shows the beginnings of the personal identification we find later, such as at Woburn. The sarcophagus invites its viewers to witness the procession as a joyous one which travelled in easy abundance. The evident consumption of wine may have offered one of those *Brücken* between the mythological world and the real, but a stronger bridge might be found in the clear expression of amorous feeling, especially in the central Hercules motif.¹¹⁸ The centrality of this figure and his great height (erect he would be too tall for the frame) is an indication that we are to direct our attentions towards him. The drunken Hercules is of course a figure-type associated with amorous intent — compare the sarcophagus at Ince Blundell where Hercules in the swag of one garland drunkenly blunders towards the reclining female in another.¹¹⁹ But the element most strongly bringing him to the viewer's attention is the outward staring satyrs who flank the pair-group.

Let us lay aside for the moment questions regarding Hercules' function as communicating a belief that the deceased might achieve apotheosis. These tend to suppress the presentation of the hero in favour of a particular element of his mythology, taking no account of the actual depiction of the hero in that instance. There has to have been some motivation for the vastly differing styles of Hercules. In some cases that motivation seems to be a desire to use Hercules as an acceptable vehicle for depicting enjoyment of the

¹¹⁸Note that Hercules is doing the same in the fragments from the Villa Albani and from S. Paolo fuori le mura (*ASR* IV.4: 344 and 345), the latter of which was from a rather naively carved piece, evidence of the popularity and accessibility of this motif.

¹¹⁹*ASR* IV.1: 28. The female reclines in the posture of Ariadne; perhaps there is a playful element here, since the figure approaching her is not the effete Bacchus but the rolling drunk Hercules.



(a) Left hand side of D16.



(b) Right hand side of D16. Image from Matz (1975) fig. 333.



(c) Diagram of niche numbers.

4.10: Lid in Palazzo Borghese (D16).

Dionysiac feasts. In the Naples instance, the aim is not to use Hercules as a demonstration primarily of the deceased's bodily perfection, strength, and martial prowess, but as a route towards depicting the deceased amongst a divinely-sanctioned revel in amorous tones without negative connotations.

In short, a significant motivation for the drunken Hercules scene is that it offers the opportunity for an appropriate image of a male hero enjoying themselves. We should not underestimate the power of the scene in the eyes of the bereaved, particularly after the deceased had undergone a long or protracted illness.

Compare Hercules on the lid of a sarcophagus dedicated by a foster-mother to her foster-son (*alumnus*, D16, fig. 4.10). The lid, in the Palazzo

Borghese, Rome, has a central inscription panel flanked on either side by four niches of alternating domed and peaked roofs. Niche 1 shows offerings of the harvest at a hip-herm, and 7 and 8 a harvest scene and *putti* treading grapes in a *lenos*. Niche 4 has Pan engaged with a maenad in an amorous exchange of glances. We cannot say for certain whether scenes 5 and 6 originally would have contributed to the figural repertoire or the vintage scenes (though clearly the fruits of one fuel the other), since they were recut later with a secondary, Christian inscription and a portrait. 3 shows the drunken, supported Hercules ogling the shapely form of a maenad in scene 2. Her slipping drapery is a clearly erotic sign. The main inscription declares that Pompeia Fulcinia Candida dedicated it to her *alumnus* Quintus Pompeius Callistratus Darenus on account of his well-deserving it.¹²⁰ Evidence would suggest that *alumni* were generally younger; in one survey, 70% were found to be under 14.¹²¹ Perhaps, given that it is likely Darenus died before puberty, the intent is to demonstrate the potential, wished-for virtues of the untimely deceased, or outline the joyous activities in a fecund world he would have shared in had he lived. If so, then there is a *Brücke* formed between the scene showing the leaving of offerings and graveside offerings. There is secondary praise of Candida herself, in the shapely form of the maenad who arouses Hercules' attention. The motif is polyvalent, and we must remain aware in our interpretations of the inaccessible familial context which must have strongly influenced interpretation of the sarcophagi.

¹²⁰I have been unable to ascertain why Borg (2013) 207 reproduces this demonym (if Disselkamp (1997) 59 is correct in deriving *Darenus* from the city name *Dara*) as 'Daphnus.' The dating of this piece and the process behind the recutting of panels 5 and 6 are not wholly secure.

¹²¹Bellemore and Rawson (1990) 6.

This manner of hoped-for though unattainable virtues is comparable with the triumphal scenes; let us call this manner *optative* iconography. The sarcophagus presents ways the deceased would like to be seen (in military glory) — despite the fact that the precise manner of the expression was unattainable. This is comparable to various other techniques in Roman funerary relief. We might think of *vita Romana* sarcophagi, which often display idealised, heroised or simply unattainable ideals. Most wealthy sarcophagus-buyers did not hunt lions in heroic nudity, but their tombs evoke virtues as though they did. The most extreme type of optative reliefs are those depicting deceased children with adult virtues they would have possessed (so urge the bereaved parents) if they had lived — such as Julia Secunda (died aged 11) who appears with a hairstyle and torso of an adult woman.¹²²

4.5.1 Divergent tones from similar motifs

In order to examine the polyvalency of the Dionysian triumph, it will be useful to compare the Naples sarcophagus with that in Boston (B19) considered above, p263. The inscription states that the monument was made for Marcus Vibius Liberalis by Marcus Vibius Agesilaus. The family to whom this sarcophagus belonged were relatively illustrious; while Agesilaus seems never to have achieved the fame of his foster-father, who achieved the important rank of *praetor*, the dedication and familial sentiment is touching. Of the family little is known: there was a M. Vibius Liberalis who was *consul suffectus*

¹²²Hope (2009) 140, Huskinson (2011) 120, fig. 7.1 where Huskinson also highlights the split nature of *consolatio* we find in Pliny and Cicero which praise a deceased child's juvenile innocence as well as adult virtues well beyond their years. Cf. Lorenz (2010) 318 and the boy on the Acilia sarcophagus, who, it is implied, will aspire to the status of his father (see p61n44).

in 166; perhaps this was the father of the man mentioned here.¹²³ There is probably a pun in the iconographic choice, Agesilaus highlighting the fact that ‘Liberalis’ is redolent of ‘Liber’. This is not unknown: compare the stele of T. Statilius Aper which makes meaning out of an image of a boar.¹²⁴ This would appear to offer us a route into accessing that lost context which shapes the sarcophagus’ meaning, but caution is necessary. This rather weak joke gets us no further to understanding the choices behind the iconography in any but a most superficial sense.¹²⁵ Such nominative determinism was not unknown to the Romans (a similar ‘confusion’ delights Trimalchio’s guests) and comparable effects were accomplished by those with names such as Tyche or Diadumenus.¹²⁶ I would argue that outside deliberately comic misunderstandings such as that of Trimalchio’s slave (which is deliberately contrived) and the hyperbole of Roman comedy, this sort of nominative jesting delighted the Romans, whose names carried a semantic content vastly more accessible than most English names at least, with their foreign or antique roots, rather less than it does us.¹²⁷ This pun may have offered an initial motivation for the iconographic choice on the grossest scale. But the real motivation for

¹²³There survives an epitaph (ILCV 56) to an unknown ‘Liberalis’, *factus de consule martyr* – see Mitchell and Young (2006) 307; certainly however, this refers to a consul of at least a century after the sarcophagus.

¹²⁴Koortbojian (1994) fig. 10.

¹²⁵As Wrede (1981) 39 highlights. Koortbojian (1994) 8 however considers ‘facile’ interpretations of this sort baseless.

¹²⁶Petron. 41.6-8: translations garbling this pun are wittily lamented by Housman (1918) 164. Nevertheless there was scope at least for some Romans to hold certain deities as tutelary; cf. Mark Antony and Dionysus, Plut. *Ant.* 75.4-6. For Tyche Dea / Cornelia Tyche see Huskinson (2011) fig. 7.1. The funerary altar of T. Octavius Diadumenus includes an allusion to Polykleitos’ work; see Koortbojian (2002) fig. 8.12.

¹²⁷This is not to say that jokes were not made on names (but cf. how Martial 8.77 does not make such an obvious joke even though the opportunity presents itself); such jokes patently were made, but that there is a great deal too little evidence to suggest that in general names had much to do with the choice of iconography in these sarcophagi.

commissioning a monument which would have represented a considerable financial outlay must have been the desire to present the deceased (who was clearly very dear to the patron) in a positive light.

It is tempting to understand the balance between the two male figures in Boston (which is rather unusual) in the light of the inscription; the male dedicant and male dedicatee could be read in the light of the two figures. The advantage of such an interpretation is that it helps us explain the unusual balance of the two male figures (but not by extension its occurrence elsewhere, such as A6).

It is primarily by comparative analysis that we are able to assess meaning in sarcophagi. One of the most interesting observations from this is the difference in compositional emphasis. The Boston sarcophagus has a consciously symmetrical form: Dionysus balances Hercules, with the mid-point unashamedly flagged by the giraffe. In Naples this complex interplay between the two protagonists of the scene is submerged in favour of placing Hercules centre-stage (the mid-point strongly delineated by the outward gazing satyr). Dionysus' presence is consequently reduced in potency as his role changes from narrative character to atmospheric, that is, from the foil to Hercules to explaining his drunkenness and eroticisation.

4.5.2 Conclusions

In the Naples sarcophagus (B9) the depiction of the *liknon* dispenses with all allusion. In one respect this openness could reflect the privileged nature of persons admitted into the tomb space (who might dispense with veil and al-

lusion). In isolation, such would probably be our predominant interpretation (though not ‘wrong’ for this fact). Yet comparison flags another aspect.

Where the Boston sarcophagus emphasises the natural power of Dionysus through the pacification of wild beasts and his ability shown through the intensification of the revelry to create joy and remove cares (note that Hercules’ eroticisation is explained by his balancing Dionysus), in Naples the emphasis seems to be far more on Dionysus’ power to remove inhibition. The garland Hercules wears only makes his nudity more noticeable, and the female to whom he directs his attentions is now made acutely aware of her audience. The accoutrements of Dionysian life echo this facet: the *liknon* with its *phallos*, while presumably beyond the pale for depiction in a cult context, is here a symbol of the sexual power of the god, as are the phallopetal snakes and erect Pan. The sculptor strongly de-emphasised Dionysus and reduces him to an explanatory element for the central Hercules. He paws at the woman motivated by a desire to touch; such a yearning for tactile reunion must have formed a ready analogue in the viewers’ minds with their desire to once more interact with the departed deceased.

4.6 Negotiating the religious

There is no other matter concerning which not only the ignorant but also the learned disagree so much; and of which the opinions are so varied and differ to such an extent among themselves, that while on the one hand it could turn out that none of them is true, on the other it couldn't turn out that more than one is true.

res enim nulla est de qua tantopere non solum indocti sed etiam docti dissentiant; quorum opiniones cum tam variae sint tamque inter se dissidentes, alterum fieri profecto potest ut earum nulla, alterum certe non potest ut plus una vera sit.

Cic. Nat. D. 1.2.

We cannot hope to use iconography to reconstruct the ancient viewer down to the finest granular level, that of individual beliefs. We can only use the reliefs to understand what religious effects they wished to create. In this section therefore I shall focus on detectable *internal* elements which contribute to a religious atmosphere, rather than use these elements to form unprovable *external* ideas about the beliefs of the deceased.

If we examine the scene we find in B7, we can see how the animals change the overall tenor. The diminutive Pan grasps at the lion's mane, while an infant satyr rides the fearsome beast. A panther darts among the centaur's legs, careless of its hooves and the lion. Silenus, on a stable if slightly laboured looking donkey, stares outwards with a look of vacant ecstasy, his *enthusiasmos* plain. A satyr grasps at a goat: his intentions are made clear by the garlanded altar at the right hand-end. The ram being dragged to its sacrifice

may seem rather brutal to us, but not so to the Roman viewer, whose tastes in this matter were rather different.¹²⁸ Three women attend this altar, next to which stands a cult-figure in heavy drapery, standing in *contrapposto*. On a basic level the relief promotes a sense of religious duty.

Demonstrations of piety on sarcophagi are not unusual, and the very act of coming to the tomb of a lost family member is in itself mediated through religious duties.¹²⁹ The god stands in an untroubled posture and his power over nature, shown by the pacified animals and the fact Pan has become ithyphallic, is clear. Silenus, positioned centrally and looking outwards at the viewer, wears a look of vacant alarm, which promotes a sense that he is outside himself — pure *ekstasis*. The bereaved viewer in the midst of a chaotic period of bereavement is then presented with a scene where the seductive deity, properly cultivated, brings a contradictory but comforting riotous order; the viewer sees the elderly Silenus in a changed and alarming state but one which brings with it cease of cares and troubles. It is not too difficult to imagine the bereaved viewer contemplating against the centrally placed, outward staring and rather disturbed looking Silenus their own emotional response to bereavement.

In B1 and B2 Silenus again rides on his low wagon gazing out at us. The marked corpulence with which the sculptor has imbued him forms a startling contrast to the god, whose slender and sensuous body is the picture of epicene allure. Silenus here is obviously drunk, but pleasantly so: he reclines with his

¹²⁸Compare the famous ode of Horace 3.1 where the young ram is pictured ‘growing its horns for love and war — in vain, for he shall colour the icy stream with scarlet blood.’

¹²⁹On the visits see Borg (2013) 236-40. On *pietas* in mythological sarcophagi see Wrede (1981) 29, 33, and in *vita Romana* sarcophagi Reinsberg (2006) 174-8.

right arm back and gazing out like an obese Endymion or bearded Ariadne, while the presumably travelling *parapetasma* creates a sense of the indoor, and hence banqueting. Above all the character is thoroughly good natured. I believe that here too the onlooker could not help but draw parallels between this jovial old man and their lost loved one. At any rate, it is difficult, faced with Silenus here casting off cares, not to think of the deceased enjoying the pleasures of food and drink, and then the graveside banqueters too, long before we think of ideas of initiation into complex systems of eschatological belief.

The centrally placed and differentiated Silenus thus seems to form a permeable motif through which the viewer might contemplate the world of the relief in the context of mourning; in B5 we see Silenus stood in his wagon, supported by a satyr and utterly exposed by his falling drapery in a deliberate echo of Dionysus' posture. The dancing maenad at the far end attends a hip-herm; perhaps a message of enjoyment of the deity and his gifts runs through the relief, but it would be unhelpful to attempt to pin down *a* meaning.

However, the different emphases are manifest when we compare this outlier with the very slightly earlier piece in the Uffizi, A9. The face of the centrally placed male figure looks somewhat Silenus-like, as compositional sensibilities might urge, but his posture shows a high degree of poise (his lower arm with jug and the legs of the cupid are both restorations). Dionysus here is gazing forwards in the procession (which as explored above, sec. 3.1.1.1, is unusual) and throws his gaze towards the female in the panther-drawn wagon. There is nothing by which we might decide whether she is Ari-

adne, Semele, or a favoured maenad, though the former seems most likely.¹³⁰ She looks leftwards in the procession, back at the god (her face, *thyrsus* and lower arms are restorations). The panthers, who turn to the female, show where our attention should fall while an outward staring satyr challenges our scopical intrusion and arouses our interpretations. His face is again a restoration, but I should stress one sensitive to the clues in the remaining marble. Thus midway between Dionysus and the female (let us say Ariadne) stands the striking Silenus-like figure, utterly naked. It can be no accident that he has a cupid on his shoulder, acting as he is at the midpoint between the two lovers. What then are we to make of the solemnly trudging Indian prisoners at the right?

On one level we have the same sense of rightful pacification indicated by the panther-riding Indian boys. It also serves to localise the relief in myth as the Indian triumph. But then we are faced with the problem of the female in a low wagon riding *ahead* of the *triumphator*. While we know women could be present at the triumph, they were usually behind.¹³¹ Perhaps the reason is the strong desire to present Dionysus at the left, preceded by his great train: the experiment of moving him even a short distance forward (see B10) does not catch on.

4.6.1 *Epiphaneia*

One of the most striking ways in which which the sculptors orchestrated a religious sentiment was by depicting *ekstasis*, as we saw in B7. The entire

¹³⁰Matz (1968b) 256 calls her both, seemingly in error.

¹³¹Messalina rode in a *carpentum* behind Claudius, for example. See Dio Cassius 60.22.2 and Flory (1998).

chariot team is bracketed off by a *parapetasma* and closed-off in terms of the participants' gazes: most are concerned with the god himself. An ecstatic maenad forms a break between the *thiasus* and the chariot team, placing Silenus in centre-stage. The donkey he rides is relatively caparisoned, with good bridle and thick cloth throw. Silenus himself gazes slightly back and slightly outwards: the implication is that he is in the throes of *ekstasis*, and the significance of this has been explored. His divine revelation is, however, slightly puzzling since he is part of the travelling retinue, and so for him the deity is not (in the technical sense) *epidēmic*. The sculptor has seemingly subordinated this fact and used the character as a vehicle for an audience surrogate, through which we can see the effects of the deity's *epiphaneia*.¹³²

The right hand portion is taken up by a sacrificial scene. A satyr leads a goat to an altar, at which are three women of various ages; one of them is quite elderly, stooped and clad in the *sakkos*. A garlanded altar bearing fruits stands in front of a cult-statue, clad in a chiton and mantle, which falls to the floor and covers the statue's feet. This fact accentuates the feminine appearance of the figure's body-structure. Nevertheless, the figure is clearly male, since he wears a beard. In the right hand he holds a *patera* or perhaps a *tympanon*. What he held in the left hand it is impossible to say, but it probably enabled recognition of the otherwise unclear deity. He bears a *polos*-crown, which makes him look rather like Serapis, though the beard is a little too short.

¹³²Of all deities, Dionysus is arguably the one whose presence is most often to be conceptualised as epiphanic (seemingly especially with the presence of a *parapetasma*). On epiphany in general see Platt (2011). See also Otto (1965), Detienne (1989). On the audience surrogate cf. Kemp (1998) on Maes' *Eavesdropper*.

Serapis' appearance at the end of the Dionysian procession would be highly irregular. Could he simply be a bearded Dionysus? If it were not for his beard, the figure would seem to be dressed in a female manner, and this is something which seems to point most towards identification of the deity with Dionysus.¹³³ If this is the case then the overall theme is the god's *epiphaneia*. The processional aspect is secondary to the *epidēmic*: triumphal elements have been suppressed almost wholly.

The rightmost scene is somewhat enigmatic. It is categorised by Matz as a *Hahnenopfer*, but the reason behind the choice is hard to fathom.¹³⁴ The frequency of its occurrence in sarcophagi of the sleeping Ariadne type supports the idea that it is associated with the *epiphaneia* of the god, probably as an indicator of the god's manifestation (similar to the *cista mystica* with emerging snake) rather than the direct causal origin of his arrival. Compositionally its popularity is also due to its ability to complicate the narrative of what are otherwise strongly linear reliefs.¹³⁵ The significance of the sacrificial animal being a bird is obscure: if it were painted black, we might explain the act as a chthonic sacrifice, but this is conjecture. Certainly, cocks appear elsewhere in the funerary realm, for example perched proudly though slightly surprisingly on the reclining figure of the deceased at the *Totenmahl* in T. Aelius Evangelus's sarcophagus from 180-90.¹³⁶ The presence of the

¹³³A similar bearded figure at the right hand side of an early Severan pyramid-form sarcophagus in Copenhagen is identified by Matz as Dionysus on analogy with a bearded bronze from Pompeii. Perhaps appearance of Dionysus in two forms ought to be thought of in rhetorical terms as an example of *antanaklasis*: see Vout (2014) 290-1.

¹³⁴*Hahnenopfer* scenes: *ASR* IV.1: 63, 77, 98, 116, 140, 163, 164, 164A, 169, 171, 211, 212, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 223, 327, 332, 364, 380, 383.

¹³⁵Cf. Elsner (2012) 190-3.

¹³⁶*ASR* I.4: 68. Appropriately, Evangelus is described as a *homo patiens*.

cock here probably points to chthonic cult practice or else funerary custom. Though it is obviously relevant to the triumph, perhaps the sacrifice at the end of our sarcophagus more directly reflects the status of the grave as a *locus religiosus*, and is intended to evoke the nature of the tomb as such in the viewer's mind.¹³⁷ Instead, perhaps it points to the deceased's involvement in cult activity, but this is equally uncertain. What is certain is that the atmosphere of the sarcophagus could scarcely be more different from the martial or sympotic themes we have explored above.

4.6.2 The internal audience and *epiphaneia*

Sarcophagus B16 is comparable here because of the spacial complexities it introduces to the motif of encountering the god. Early in scholarship it had been subject to discussion over its authenticity, but the discovery of other sarcophagi sharing in some of its iconographic elements dispelled these concerns.¹³⁸

The relief is unusual in that the flow is retrograde, and the sculptor inserts a scene before the familiar procession. In the procession we find the god nearly naked and relatively, though youthfully, muscled. The *thyrsus*, large drinking vessel and elaborate hairstyle identify him as Dionysus. Leaning heavily on Silenus, he looks backward as the double-centaur team of mixed gender pulls him towards the left, while they accompany the journey on the lyre and flute. I believe Matz is incorrect in saying that the deity is seated;

¹³⁷On the sanctity of tombs and the sanctions against their mistreatment see Cic. *Leg.* 2.57, *Dig.* 11.7, Lattimore (1962) 118-26 for inscriptions so attesting, Toynbee (1971) 75-8, Platt (2011) 341-4. Cf. also the so-called Nazareth Inscription.

¹³⁸For the discussion see Matz (1968b) 293.

were he supported by a seat he would not have his legs arranged in the manner familiar from the standing-scenes nor require the support of Silenus.¹³⁹ His posture is intended instead to convey drunkenness. Panthers and lions appear on the march, and a *putto* rides the lion in a broad display of pacific idyll. The *thiasus* itself is singularly musical. The latter half is made up of a cymbal-player (who strains to look back at the god so eagerly one worries for her neck), a Pan who dances over the *cista mystica*, a large tambourine-wielding maenad, and a flute-playing satyr. This last figure is adored by a diminutive satyr who functions as an internal audience to heighten the sense of the music.¹⁴⁰ The standing satyr's musculature is soft, his belly rounded, and he stands utterly naked. With her hand on his shoulder and the other seemingly around his far flank stands another maenad. She is highly exposed: the drapery covers very little, and her breasts are fully uncovered. The nudity is further heightened by her wearing a band, just below the breasts (perhaps a slipped *strophium*). The eroticisation of these two figures is contextually appropriate given that they occupy roughly the same portion, at the end of the procession, as the similarly eroticised Hercules-and-female groups. This probably reflects an awareness of the tradition. A maenad completes the procession by playing the flute at an altar, which is in some form of secluded area distinguished by a hanging curtain.¹⁴¹

Crucially, the right hand scene lies outside the processional world. The

¹³⁹Matz (1968b) 292.

¹⁴⁰Cf. Elsner (2014a) 7: '... the work of art must build into itself the impact it wants to have on the audience'.

¹⁴¹Matz (1968b) 292-3 wishes to see this scene as also outside the procession and within the same world as the following scene at the right; I do not believe this is supported by comparison with other scenes which place an altar-scene at the procession's furthest edge.

taller, standing figure must be Dionysus again since he wears the same hair and holds an enormous drinking vessel over a fruit-topped altar. His posture is rather sinuous, his body soft. Opposite stands a gesturing man; his face has been recarved at a later period with an awed expression (not an unlikely one though; the bucolic additions in light relief at the edge are also later). He wears a loin-cloth type covering which is redolent of the clothing worn by *victimarii* or simply by working people: the so-called *Dying Seneca* wears clothing not too far removed. Functionally it distinguishes him from the satyric followers of Dionysus and removes him from the *thiasus* of the Bacchic retinue.

The man stretches out grapes to the god; behind him in a tree a maenad looks on at the scene, while below a *putto* struggles to bring a reluctant goat to the altar. Was the man's face recarved due to damage, or does it suggest that the face was left uncarved in antiquity? The latter possibility is intriguing, but sadly must remain speculation unless an early drawing is discovered. The scene, though unusual, is not unparalleled, and we can detect its key features by comparison with its stripped down appearance on the lid of another sarcophagus, *ASR* IV.2: 159. There we find a man (for he cannot be a satyr, to whom Dionysus is familiar and welcome) stretching out a hand to Dionysus, who has the typical quasi-feminine hairstyle and *thyrsus*, and stands sacrificing over a fruit-topped altar. It seems strange for a deity to be shown in religious worship, but there is clear precedent for it in the wall-painting at the villa of Asellius in Boscoreale, where the god pours out a *paterna* over a garlanded altar accompanied by a sacrificial goat and his ever-present panther. The man viewing the god in the sarcophagus wears an

astonished expression and wrestles a goat toward the altar. The key elements then seem to be the presence of the god in his awe-inspiring, mostly nude form, an adoring spectator, an altar and sacrifice. In our sarcophagus the scopophilic overtones are heightened by the onlooking maenad who perches in the tree (very possibly a broad allusion to the similar tree-climbing escapade in Euripides' *Bacchae*).

The scene is thus one of seeing and recognising; it is one of religious *epiphaneia*, and specifically the moment that the mortal recognises the distance between his station and that of the god and reacts accordingly.¹⁴² It will come as no surprise that on the main relief of *ASR* IV.2: 159 appears a scene of Dionysus arriving at the sleeping Ariadne.

On B16, the man who offers grapes to Dionysus functions as a complex internal character, since he appears within the mythological scene but behaves in the manner of one outside it. There is a didactic element here, since it offers evidence about how one ought to behave in a religious environment (appropriately, given the funerary context). This is delivered appositely through Dionysus since recognition is such an important facet of his mythology. The proper behaviour of the man recalls the consequences of its opposite; those who deny the god find themselves punished by choking vine-tendrils, transformation into dolphins, and so on. Sarcophagi with epiphanic imagery employ the triumphal iconography to portray the divinity in an authoritative manner alongside meaning within the epiphanic scene.

However, the scene also acts to delineate the mythological, supernatural

¹⁴²Cf. the unequal status of mortals and god in epiphanic sarcophagi such as Venus and Adonis, Koortbojian (1994) 28-9.

realm (to which the deceased has crossed) from the earthly realm in which the bereaved onlooker remains by spotlighting an instance of the two realms coming into proximity but not parity; notice especially that the characters' statuses do not overlap in the manner in which that of Dionysus and his *thiasus* does. They heft cups in revel or even physically support the drunken god, but the man indicates intensely the deity's superiority and surprise at his manifestation. This might explain why the scene is coupled with a triumphal procession in B16; the lengthy, raucous, musical march takes on a psychopompic atmosphere. Perhaps the intent is to suggest the removal of the deceased from their realm in the minds of the bereaved. This interpretation emerges from the external relevance of the gesturing man.

On an internal level, the gesturing man has the epiphanic experience within the scene while gazing at the god; the audience look on merely an image of the god. However, by the use of the man as an internal audience who locates the outside viewer's response within the scene, the sculptor evokes unsettling questions regarding the stability of the division.¹⁴³ For the audience-surrogate the image of the god is a disturbing manifestation; but through him the actual audience is less able to distance the visual narrative from themselves, and the *epiphaneia* leaks from the world of the relief into ours.¹⁴⁴ The transfixative effect is designed not just to evoke unease of course; it generates the sense that one is being confronted by something outside and beyond oneself. The intent is to influence the reception of the

¹⁴³On characters within the image prefiguring the audience's response see Kemp (1998) 187.

¹⁴⁴Cf. a similar effect observed by Zanker and Ewald (2012) 145 on *ASR* IV.3: 206 (c. 140), where Dionysus leans on the altar divorced from the action, seemingly manifest for the viewer.

tomb as a *locus religiosus* and create an appropriately subordinate position of the viewer with respect to the no-longer familiar, changed presence of their former family member. The triumph is an eminently suitable vehicle for this form of expression since it formalised and tensioned the act of crossing a boundary in another context; in the literature we find a strong focus on the significance of the general crossing the *pomerium* while retaining *imperium*.¹⁴⁵ Thus by activating recognition of the viewer's entry into the funerary realm, the iconography assists the bereaved viewer to negotiate the extremely complex (and emotionally challenging) transgression of the living viewer into the visual world belonging to the dead. Thus the effect is a surprising, non-intuitive form of *Trauerhilfe* insofar as it gives the bereaved a clear place in the delicate power-dynamic of viewing death.

4.6.3 Conclusions

It is rare that we find the internal audience within epiphanic scenes. In the great series of epiphanic sarcophagus reliefs — Ariadne and Dionysus, Rhea Silvia and Mars, Endymion and Selene — we are positioned inside the mythical, supernatural realm looking with the deity upon the mortal. The slumbering mortal never sees the divine presence and the revelation is not depicted.¹⁴⁶ The scenes are tensioned by this very focus on the moment before recognition. Platt argues this reflects apprehension at depicting the moment of epiphany (standing in for death), but that the enthusiastic depic-

¹⁴⁵Phillips (1974).

¹⁴⁶Though cf. the painting with human audience member reacting to Selene's appearance: Domus Volusi Fausti, *tablinum*, see Koortbojian (1994) 70-1, fig. 33. On *epiphaneia* in the hygeum of the Aurelii, see Petsalis-Diomidis (2007) 277-83.

tion of signs and symbols alluding to it reflects an attempt to ‘suppress the threat that death poses and allay potential grief’.¹⁴⁷ By contrast, sarcophagus B16 seems to relish depiction of the *epiphaneia*; tension is created by the threatening possibility of the god’s *epidēmia*, and the sense that one has intruded into a religiously protected tomb-space. The iconography is somewhat baroque in its effect and must have been challenging for the bereaved viewers. It is not so surprising that sarcophagus B16 comes from towards the very end of the popularity of the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi, at a point which shows the greatest experimentation in possible effects.¹⁴⁸

4.7 Negotiating the encounter

I saw the seeing one.

ὄρων ὄρωντα.

Eur. *Bach.* 470.

Unlike the iconography discussed above, in the Naples sarcophagus (B9) Hercules and the female are compositionally bracketed. He has already feasted, and now busies himself in a manner which does not seem to allude to funerary meaning for the onlooker. If the iconography considered above is *inclusive* of the viewer, does that mean this scene is *exclusive*? And what of the encounter of the bereaved viewers with the sarcophagus in the tomb?

¹⁴⁷Platt (2011) 355, *contra* Koortbojian (1994) 66.

¹⁴⁸See further p334ff.

The placement of the innermost satyr's hands onto Hercules' stomach is not really for support — their placement offers no help to the sagging hero's weakened legs. Instead it suggests the excess of being part of the Dionysian retinue and the need to restrain his exuberance. Clearly he has overindulged, as the empty *krater* yawning out at the viewer shows. The satyr who draws our attention to Hercules' full stomach also stares out, as does the satyr at the opposite side near the phallographic *cista mystica*. These figures have a function of bracketing the central group who are the focus of our attentions, but also they meet the gaze of the viewer.¹⁴⁹ This focussing of the protagonist by representations of 'a theatre of gazes' can be found in the constellation of figures surrounding Hercules in A6 and also in Campanian painting.¹⁵⁰

It might seem as if they confront us as we look at the cult objects — the *liknon* with the *phallus* for example, but this is not congruent with other depictions. In the Villa of the Mysteries it is not the unveiling of the *liknon* which prompts an outward stare but the scene at the other side of the same wall, where a youth attempts to involve the audience in the game of recognition he plays with a credulous young man.¹⁵¹

The satyrs' effect is to activate recognition by the viewer of their act of looking. Viewing and interpreting the iconography of sarcophagi is an act which must be preceded by arrival in front of the object. By catching the arriving viewer in their gaze the satyrs make the viewer conscious of looking upon the scene, and prompt awareness of the arrival at the tomb. As Elsner observes, despite our paucity of knowledge regarding the viewing

¹⁴⁹On eye-contact cf. Kemp (1998) 189.

¹⁵⁰See p233ff, Elsner (2007b) 29.

¹⁵¹Using a mask; cf. the mask the females hold in the wagon on B4.

of sarcophagi *in situ* by the ancient viewers

their showing was clearly ritualised, exceptional, candle- or lamp-lit
and special in every way.¹⁵²

The iconography here seems especially strongly to achieve resonance through such showing. This experiential meaning, it should be stressed, is an often neglected part of understanding sarcophagi which Ewald and Fittschen have recently called to be more strongly addressed.¹⁵³

A useful comparison is Sartre's thought-experiment. He asks you to imagine peeping through a keyhole at some scene you ought not be looking upon; caught up in the act, you lose yourself in the scene you see unfolding. Then, he says, imagine you hear a passer-by in the hall. Because you are suddenly aware of being seen — of being caught looking — you are immediately made self-aware, and no longer lose yourself in the scene in the room, even though you might still stare through the keyhole.¹⁵⁴

The satyrs' outward gaze functions like internal versions of the person passing in the hallway (as if an agent inside the room into which you peeped were to dart a glance at the keyhole). The arriving viewer is shifted by the gazing satyr from *subject*, prime actor who does the viewing, to *object* of the satyr's gaze. By altering the arriving viewer's interpretative dominance of the scene the sculptor places the viewer in a more subordinate position: a position which is most appropriate for the family member visiting the tomb

¹⁵²Elsner (2010) 14.

¹⁵³Ewald (2012) 54, Fittschen (2010) 225. On the experiential significance of the triumph see Brilliant (1999). For sarcophagi challenging the viewer cf. the *clipeus* sarcophagus with a central *gorgoneion* (IV.4: 263). Turcan (1999) 109 sees this as 'un *apotropaion* qui fascine et paralyse l'ennemi, c'est-à-dire la mort'. I would refocus this onto the viewer.

¹⁵⁴Sartre (1956) 347-50 and discussion in Catalano (1974) 161-2.

of their loved one and to whom they are showing piety, since it elevates the deceased and their tomb in the relationship between viewer and object, and gives a species of agency to immobile stone.¹⁵⁵

Thus the closed erotic scene does not exclude the viewer, but functions in a different way to the *inclusive* iconography seen above. Rather, the sculptor has created a composition which actively confronts the interpretative gaze of the bereaved onlooker and promotes a reflective awareness of the subject matter.¹⁵⁶

Exploitation of the outward gaze is not unique to this sarcophagus; other pieces are able to engage with the viewers' arrival to generate meaning. Let us examine an unambiguously direct example where recognition of this effect enables us to understand an otherwise strange aspect of the relief.

The sarcophagus in the Museo Nazionale (D17, fig. 4.11) depicts a nocturnal religious celebration of Priapus. The first and central scene shows the god Priapus (identifiable by the swelling at his crotch), who staggers drunk-

¹⁵⁵Cf. Sichtermann (1984) 289-305 on Ganymede sarcophagi, Koortbojian (1994) 141. We might also compare in this regard the famous and rather early Actaeon sarcophagus in the Louvre (*ASR* VI.2: 26, c. 130, see Zanker and Ewald (2012) 294-8, Bianchi Bandinelli (1971) fig. 319). The complexity of the narrative this richly-carved piece presents is incisively discussed by Brilliant (1984) 125-33; yet I do not think the experiential significance of the bathing Diana scene has been sufficiently brought out. When entering the tomb the viewer's eye falls upon the surface of the marble and translates the depiction of the woman into recognition that it is the naked, bathing Diana. But this act of translation is delayed through the slight impediment to immediate recognition formed by the depiction of Diana in the crouching posture we more readily associate with a famous Venus (attributed to Doidalsas). This increases the sensation of 'stumbling upon' the goddess at her toilet by stretching out the process of recognition to conscious levels. We as viewer experientially relive the narrative of scopic encroachment whose originating events and concluding parts are played out elsewhere on the surface. Cf. in this regard the *tropaia* of the Portonaccio sarcophagus (D14).

¹⁵⁶The experiential 'enclosing' power of the iconography may have been amplified through resonance with the painted decoration of the tomb space: this would enable extremely efficacious nested interaction between the imagery of a sarcophagus (which contains the corpse) and the tomb (which contains the viewers): see Elsner (2010) 7.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

4.11: Units of gaze in the Pannychis sarcophagus (D17). Museo Nazionale (Gabinetto Segreto), inv. no. 27710. Image from ancientrome.ru/art/artworken/img.htm?id=5032 [accessed 15/08/15].

only in flowing, feminine robes, holding a wine jug and symptotic crown. A naked and a partially clothed satyr support the god while staring at him. A satyr behind holds a torch, illuminating proceedings, while a *thyrsus* creates a balancing frame at the other side; a *parapetasma* brackets the scene.

Priapus' gaze is fixed at the form of the maenad in the next scene. She claps cymbals together to the delight of a child-satyr, who holds a torch. Both gaze intently at each other. Her twisted body is probably intended to suggest swift and seductive action, which has caught the eye of the amorous god. His directional gaze moves our view across the relief, assisted by the maenad carrying the basket of religious apparatus. Following this flow we come to the rightmost scene, again bracketed with *parapetasma*. A kneeling female faun crouches in front of a statue of Pan. The faun behind her, whose excitement is obvious, is probably about to whip her. A helpful satyr illuminates the scene, and stares into it.

There is another balancing sexual scene at the left also bracketed with *parapetasma*. A female follower of Pan grabs at a statue's hair and places

her hoof on an altar to steady herself as she mounts its erect penis. The supernatural tenor of the scene is heightened by the evident assistance the statue gives to her efforts with its bucking hips, straining face and trenchant gaze. The action is so potent that it has lured the cult-figure of Pan himself out of a small temple, where he gesticulates incarnate, eager to join.

So far we can understand each scene in terms of units of gaze. All the figures are either explicitly *viewing*, like the ogling god, or else *being viewed*, as the two fauns at the ends (see the divisions shown in fig. 4.11). Yet one figure is conspicuously outside these units of introverted gaze. Rather than involving herself in the scene, she engages with our movement in coming to see the sarcophagus — and pay our respects to the deceased.

The enigmatic reclining female seems to be asleep, yet gazes out towards the viewer. We cannot help but notice how her face is only roughly approximated; this is the more striking since the rest of the sarcophagus has undergone the final stages of production, the fine drilling and polish. Her posture marks her out as Ariadne; it is she who lay down in her grief when abandoned by Theseus and whom we see on the verge of awakening into the presence of Dionysus on so many other sarcophagi. Normally scenes of the slumbering Ariadne show either the departing Theseus or the arriving Dionysus, but here neither is visible. Their absence is unusual.

In the sarcophagus so far our voyeuristic gaze has looked into self contained scenes, intruding into moments of a private or religious nature. But here, the figure we gaze upon is no longer passive. Ariadne looks back at us, and we are made conscious of our intrusion. She does not engage with the

illusory world of the relief but with us, as we arrive:¹⁵⁷

Like a stone statue of a bacchante [Ariadne] looks out; alas,
she looks out. . .

*saxea ut effigies bacchantis, prospicit, eheu,
prospicit. . .*

Catull. 64.61-2.

4.7.1 Conclusions

Ariadne's blank face lacking detail further prompts removal, and offers a clue that we are to interpret her not primarily as a participant in the scene (by which she is ignored), but rather to compare her with the real deceased who reclined within this coffin.¹⁵⁸ This translation of the mythical framework then causes our position to be reinterpreted, and we stand as Dionysus, whose arrival by his loved-one's side removes the pain of separation. It is us who have stolen into the tomb and arrived at the slumbering deceased, whom we look at and who actively receives our glance. With us we have brought our vivifying gaze. Our arrival and reunion with the remains of the deceased (who, though they slumber herein, acknowledge that arrival and devotion) encourages resolution of the grief which surrounds the moment of the deceased's separation, death itself.

The evidence suggests that sculptors were able to anticipate the arrival of a viewer, and orchestrate iconography to engage powerfully with this en-

¹⁵⁷See discussion of this passage Elsner (2007b) 22.

¹⁵⁸On intentional indeterminacy see Kemp (1998) 188.

counter, for profitable effect within the funerary realm.¹⁵⁹

4.8 Conclusions

By necessity these studies have been selective. The chief intention has been to explore some of the loci of meaning into which the sculptors of different pieces move such a similar mythological setting. By examining the various phenomena which different sarcophagi explore I have intended to take a predominantly (though of course not exclusively) synchronic approach to the corpus, in order to show that one 'myth' does not necessarily mean one 'group' of meanings. In the prior chapter these different meanings were examined through the motifs which contribute to them. In this chapter the overall tenor of the sarcophagi's direction was digested. These studies of differing phenomena were then located within a wider context among comparative sarcophagi. It will now be necessary to undertake a diachronic examination of the group, in order to examine precisely how this synchronic breadth of meaning relates to chronological changes in fashion, in desire and indeed in the changing patterns of self-negotiation in social-history.

¹⁵⁹On artwork aware of the viewer's arrival, Kemp (1998).

Chapter 5

Synthesis

What is needed now is not further specialization, but more attempts ... [at] linking the iconographic, typological and stylistic development of Roman funerary monuments to the historical (including social, economical, cultural and mental) circumstances of their time.

Ewald (2003) 561n1.

It now remains for us to place the sarcophagi into their wider social and historical context. Having considered what ranges of meanings these objects can support, it is time to explore why the group undergoes modulation. This is a difficult task necessitating broad analyses. This is because beyond a certain granularity, discussions tend toward implying temporal homogeneity, implying that all viewers thought in a certain manner at a certain time.¹ I intend to guard against this difficulty as far as possible by testing interpreta-

¹As Ewald (2008) 287 warns.

tions and diachronic changes against evidence rather than making a stratified analysis of fixed chronological points.

Firstly, we must examine the *Mythenwahl*. What is its funerary significance? Where are the points of intersection and active engagement between the triumph and its funerary use, and where must we cut the ties between the ceremonial rite and the mythological scene? Finally, might we postulate some grounds for the waxing of this group which are sensitive to the many threads of change that run through this period? Can we tease out some of the processes and highlight some of the gradients which contribute to the multi-faceted reasons behind the genre's decline?

5.1 Points of engagement

It was a funeral most like a triumph.

funus triumpho simillimum.

Sen. *ad Marc.* 3.1.

The Romans associated funerals and triumphs. Examples of the association — most famously encapsulated in Seneca's quip above — appear alongside the triumph, and survive just as long as it bore relevance. This was not a private predilection; monumental constructions such as the arch of Titus (with which we began our exploration) combine these spheres.² But why were they associated?

²It is 'ambiguous whether the small attic frieze represents (or re-enacts?) the sacrificial procession of the triumph of Vespasian and Titus in AD 71, or Titus' imperial funeral of AD 81, or both.' Elsner (2014a) 11-2. See also Heidenreich (1958).

There appear to be three main reasons that triumphs were redolent of death in the Roman mind, which seem not to have been previously formulated in the following way. Firstly, triumphs necessarily involve communication with the funerary sphere; military action inevitably cost the lives of men who were piously remembered by the *triumphator* in the midst of his glory.³

Secondly, the Romans seem to have enjoyed the juxtaposition of the triumph, the moment of supreme achievement, with the finality of death. The motivation behind the retelling of Aemilius Paullus's response to losing his sons in his triumphal period, for example, seems to be a fascination with this opposition, tied in with concerns about a protective apotropaic response to the pomp.⁴ By contrast Pompey's triumphs, which were perceived as lacking in suitable modesty, are seen as prefiguring his fall.⁵ Addition of funerary elements may have seemed a prudent, apotropaic means to avert the evil eye.

Lastly, the triumph had a place at the funeral itself on account of its prestige. An *ex-triumphator* would be seen at his funeral arrayed in triumphal garb. What is more, those of his ancestors who had won this honour would be represented (until the third century) by family-members in masks but dressed in triumphal garb.⁶ Triumphal imagery at the funeral magnified the status of the deceased and family, a particularly important aspect of funerary iconography in the Antonine period (see p321). Like all status-symbols, its

³Even Domitian's black dinner was a fitting ceremony to commemorate the dead, as explicitly stated by Cass. Dio 67.9.6 (*contra* Beard (2007) 257-8).

⁴See Beard (2007) 137-8, Livy 45.40.7-8. Plut. *Aem.* 34.3 makes the deaths, (35) the wages of boasting. On the limits of the association in the Republican period see Johansen (2008) 48-54. His concerns are not so applicable in the imperial period.

⁵Beard (2007) 35-6, Plin. *Nat.* 37, 14-6, Plut. *Pomp.* esp. 46.1; Pompey's triumphs presaging the ultimate fall is a theme that runs right through the *Pharsalia* of Lucan.

⁶Polyb. 6.53.6-7.

original meaning became eventually diffused, especially in the Antonine and Severan periods when the triumph had been unavailable to private citizens for so long.⁷ In the second century especially this would be increased by the desire of non-imperial senatorial families to associate themselves with the imperial status-symbol.⁸

Triumphs were the preserve of the imperial household alone, and had been since 19 BC.⁹ A triumph on a sarcophagus must have recalled *imperial* displays of triumph to an ancient viewer, since the imperial household was the only one which performed this ritual. Indeed, the majority of Dionysian triumph sarcophagi appear in a period of forty years which contains four triumphs (see table, p440). It is doubtful whether very many people who saw the earliest in 166 saw the previous one, the posthumous triumph of the deified Trajan nearly fifty years prior.¹⁰ It would make sense for the imperial household not only to tolerate but even to sanction the resolution of status-tension through mythological emulation of a securely imperial rite, since employing triumphal iconography makes a status-symbol of association with the imperial super-status; it is not a threat when the iconography is mediated through mythology and appearance in a non-competitive realm, and in fact heightens the potency of its imperial use.¹¹

This can be observed in an element previously seen as unnecessary. In

⁷Morris (1969) 66-8.

⁸On the ubiquity of imperial imagery, Kellum (2015) 423.

⁹Beard (2007) 69.

¹⁰However on the psychological longevity of the triumph in the viewers' minds see Brilliant (1999).

¹¹On this terminology see Morris (1969) 41-76. On the strength of societal ties, which are easy for us to forget, cf. Stat. *Silv.* 5.205-8 where a significant source of comfort for Abascanthus, after the death of his wife Priscilla, is loyalty to the emperor. Cf. Fronto *Ep.* to Marcus Aurelius as Caesar, 4.12.6, discussed in Kellum (2015) 423.

several sarcophagi, Dionysus holds the reins of his chariot while Pan or a satyr *also* leads the animals.¹² This doubling of the driving methods has been seen as naturalistically erroneous, indicative of the unthinking assemblage of separate motifs (especially in the Quasi-Triumphal group), since it was thought superfluous to have two guides for the chariot. Centaurs might be trusted to go where they ought, but the presence of Pan or the satyr leading an elephant or panther team while Dionysus also holds the reins has seemed unsatisfying or unnecessary.¹³ But this is a reflection of actual practice; we can see it for example in the arch of Titus, where the triumphing general holds the reins of the *quadriga* while being crowned by Victoria, yet a figure at the head of the horses also holds the reins at the bit. The *triumphator* must be seen to ‘hold the reins’ (*habenas* is a natural term to use and the metaphor works in Latin and English).¹⁴ He can also be found on the arch of Septimius Severus at Leptis Magna, and even in provincial coin issues.¹⁵ It would take a skilled and strong horseman to drive a team four-in-hand standing up. No sensible emperor would attempt it while juggling ritual objects, and under the critical gaze of the public. That this doubling is preserved even when a god drives the team shows the great strength of imperial triumphal iconography, and the kinship between the iconography of the mythological and historical triumph.¹⁶

¹²A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, (A10?), A15, B15, (B19?).

¹³Matz (1968b) 244.

¹⁴E.g. Cic. *De or.* 1.226, 3.166, *Rep.* 1.9.7.

¹⁵For the arch see fig. 2.1c and cf. the coin of Macrinus from Nikopolis ad Istrum, fig. 2.3c and that of Marcus Aurelius showing the triumph of Dionysus, 3.2a.

¹⁶The desire to manifest this leading figure generates true doubling only in B7, where the centaur team are preceded by a lion, with Pan leading this beast in the same position he would be in if the lion were harnessed.

It would be untrue, however, to say that imperial emulation is the motive force behind the iconography of all the sarcophagi. While the Baltimore sarcophagus (A1, which we can probably ascribe to a senatorial patron) is closely aligned with imperial triumph display, this is not its only route of meaning. Yet the early S. Agostino sarcophagus (B7) bears only a very slight relationship to state triumphal iconography. The sexually alluring, effete Dionysus is hardly an expression of imperial power; the ithyphallic Pan, Silenus *ekstatikos* and sacrifice scene all point to a concern with the religious nature of Dionysus and an indifference towards the state triumphal message, whose origins behind the iconography are not strongly promoted. We can divide the sarcophagi into the strongly triumphal,¹⁷ and those primarily oriented in other regards;¹⁸ when we do so we find they fall across the A/B group defined above into approximately even groups, as our initial examination would predict. But such simple division does not encapsulate all variation. A *third* group is equally demonstrable, which mixes more explicit triumphal iconography with imagery chiefly oriented elsewhere.¹⁹ As examination of the chart on p442 shows, such divisions in no way coincide with stylistic or chronological groupings.

Complicating this narrative is the fact that we cannot tie the embrace of the triumph securely down to social class.²⁰ The successors of the Licinii Crassi who commissioned the triumphally oriented Baltimore sarcophagus

¹⁷A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, A12, A15.

¹⁸B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B9, B10, B11, B16, B17, B18.

¹⁹A10, A11, A13, A14, B8, B14, B15, B19.

²⁰On the problems of overemphasising social class in sarcophagus studies see Ewald (2003) 570-1. While Wrede (2001) can use the presence of curule chairs, special shoes, lictors etc. to identify social rank in *vita humana* scenes, this is not possible with the mythological triumph scenes.

(A1) were very probably senatorial, yet Vibius Liberalis was certainly senatorial and made far less overt reference to triumphal iconography (B19). This only really becomes obvious under detailed comparison, and is easy to overlook given the superficial mythological content. For example, Várhelyi has stated that Liberalis' sarcophagus functions as a

stand-in for actual military glory achieved by these senators in their lifetimes,²¹

but this does not chime with the iconography as assembled and shaped in this instance. The genre offered great latitude for martial or triumphal elements to be accentuated (such as A6), but in this commission the patron/sculptor quite emphatically chose not to do so. Social class is not a sufficiently sophisticated criterion with which to modulate our understanding of differing emphases.

5.1.1 Genre-level *Brücken* between the sarcophagi and contemporary viewers

A sarcophagus acted, for individual bereaved viewers, as a *locus* of memory; the imagery sarcophagi bore might comfort the family, recall the deceased directly, or offer a catalyst for comparative thought.²² The sarcophagus became, after the deposition of the corpse and its sealing, the ultimate physical point to which the bereaved could approach their deceased loved one. Sar-

²¹Várhelyi (2010) 183, agreeing with Wrede (2001) 38-9.

²²Koortbojian (1994) 114-7 on sarcophagi as *loci*. That a Roman viewer might associate physical locations strongly with particular memories cf. the method of *loci* used in rhetorical training (see Quint. *Inst.* 11.2). This point is also made by Elsner (2014a) *passim*.

cophagi mediate a mentally uncomfortable role between administrating that approach, but physically preventing closer union.²³ Negotiating that charged boundary impregnates much of the relief with the possibility of special meaning for the contextually intended viewer. We can only access a small part of this special meaning, where general messages are circumscribed; these were important to the popularity and utility of the *Mythenwahl*, but we should regularly recall that we have irretrievably lost a lot of the private, individual meaning. One way to access this area is through examination of intersections with what we expect of the funerary ritual or grieving process.

The fundamental point where relief and reality meet is the procession. Servius calls mourning a period of inversion: what more striking inversion could there be than the sarcophagus's joyous train in revelry commemorating a sombre funerary train in mourning?²⁴ The flute-players at funerals and in the *thiasus* are also congruent with the Roman fondness for presenting death and funerary ritual as an inversion of the usual order.²⁵ There was also general overlap: both the funeral and the triumph included chariots and portraits.²⁶ Other authors record that the funerals of distinguished men involved satyric choruses.²⁷

By the time of the sarcophagi the ritual of the Republican *pompa funebris*

²³See Elsner (2012). The popularity of double-internments might be readily understood; cf. the desire to cheat these divides: *ossibus hic uxor miscuit ossa meis* (CIL 6.24085), also expressed in Hom. *Od.* 24.76 of Achilles and Patroclus, Ov. *Ars am.* 3.21-2, *Met.* 4.6, etc. On the mythological episodes of Achilles represented in sarcophagi see Brilliant (1984) 134-44.

²⁴Serv. Aen. 11.93: Šterbenc Erker (2011) 44 on how a family would exchange dark clothes for light (or *vice versa*), fast, abstain from bodily hygiene, and generally invert prior behaviour.

²⁵Carroll (2011), fig. 8.2. On culturally Roman aspects see Schultze (2011).

²⁶Polyb. 6.53.

²⁷Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 7.72.12.

can hardly have been more than a scholarly note, but the journey to the tomb, located as it is at a distance both physically and socially (being a *locus religiosus*) must have retained a ritual character.

Regular cultivation of the grave is mandated in many inscriptions and by religious custom, and the journey to the tomb was a deliberate one with fixed ends; seeing a procession in the sarcophagus relief must have been a form of *Brücke*. As we saw in the prior chapter, alongside other forms of rhetoric sarcophagi could activate ‘experiential and visceral’ responses rather than necessarily mythological understanding, and the procession is a relatively unproblematic vehicle for this which can operate in conjunction with other layers of meaning.²⁸

I wish to distinguish the possible presence of this link in the viewers’ minds from personal identification of the deceased with Dionysus; the two need not be congruent. Though such identification may have been desirable in the Severan period, the popularity of the composition in the Antonine period and the blossoming of Hercules types speaks against this being usual.²⁹

Affluent Roman patrons, the sort who might commission pieces such as B14 or B19, would likely have felt the restrictions which were placed on funerals in the high empire, which curtailed grand display of the deceased’s *humanitas* through gestures such as mass manumission.³⁰ The patron who decorated their tomb with images of Dionysus — the archetypal liberator —

²⁸Sec. 4.7ff. On levels of meaning see Giuliani (1989), Ewald (2012) 54 (and 42-3 for a definition of embodiment).

²⁹See p333ff.

³⁰On the restrictions see Hope (2009) 163. The display of *imagines* was also legally controlled, and restrictions placed upon the general ostentation of funerals: see Brooke (2011) 96, Hope (2009) 147, Carroll (2011) 128. Stat. *Silv.* 5.5.58 laments these restrictions.

were restricted in the numbers of slaves they could manumit at death, by the *leges Fufia Caninia* and *Aelia Sentia*.³¹ Previously, the large cohort of liberated slaves would have the twofold benefits of continuing as a repository of memory for the family and, more immediately, delivering theatrical mourning without the social restrictions imposed upon freeborn members of a wealthy family.³² Might the restriction of this outlet be reflected in the Hadrianic and Antonine fondness for populous, raucous, processionally focussed triumph sarcophagi? The sarcophagus' *pompa* could analogously suggest a fantasy funeral train, freed from societal restraints. Gesturally, the abandon of maenads is not irreconcilably dissonant with wild expressions of grief. If so, by use of the Dionysian triumph the family attains vicariously display of emotive outflow and large processions denied to them on such scale in life.

Beyond this, we are limited by generalities. Once we focus down beyond a particular point, the granularity of our study requires individual attention. There was, after all, no 'Roman belief' concerning death ritual, as there was no 'Roman belief' concerning the afterlife.³³ These are some of the main points of engagement on a macroscopic level between the sarcophagi and contemporary customs and trends. But beyond the general associations sketched in outline above we cannot go. The sarcophagi themselves do not

³¹Eur. *Bacch.* 421-31. Only repealed by Justinian *Dig.* 1.7, see Carroll (2011) 127-9, Wiedemann (1985).

³²That visible mourning rites were desirable is suggested in several epitaphs; see Lattimore (1962) 202-5.

³³Lindsay (1998). For a taste of the bewildering variety of ideas even about what happened after death see Lattimore (1962) 48-55 (for Latin and Greek epitaphs which express or imply belief in immortality), 55-64 (for those suggesting it), and 74-81 (for those expressly denying it).

confront mortality directly, like deathbed scenes, nor by allegory, as with Meleager or Endymion scenes.

As we outlined in the previous chapter, many of them carry significant meaning alongside any triumphal elements. Let us sketch the points of *disengagement* with some of the common tropes the triumph is thought by necessity to bring.

5.2 Points of disengagement

It is only the successful detriumphalisation, a process which was aggressively pursued by successive emperors from Augustus onwards, which made the imagery of Dionysus' mythological triumph available to non-imperial patrons in the Antonine period. By detriumphalisation, I mean the process of re-locating the triumph from a recognition of military success to an imperial virtue. This process opens triumphal iconography to funerary use because it becomes chiefly about aligning with imperial ideology rather than competing for recognition of martial valour.

The first stage of detriumphalisation had been begun by Augustus with the restrictions he placed on the celebration of the actual triumph by any but the emperor or his very close associates. Claudius removes even the *ovatio* as early as 47.³⁴ The completion of this first stage came under Hadrian, who made even the surrogate *ornamenta triumphalia* inaccessible to private citizens.³⁵ This process marks a movement away from the triumph as an

³⁴Last awarded to Aulus Plautius, consular governor of Britain.

³⁵See appendix; however, Maxfield (1981) 108 dates the last award to Haterius Nepos around 130-40. Ryberg (1955) is incorrect in attributing the late second century sarcophagi

earned right which the successful and dutiful could demand, to an imperial pleasure or token recognition.

The second phase refocused triumphal regalia and status from closer proximity with martial success to closer proximity with the imperial house. Thus when deceased members of the imperial house were given a *funus censorium*, an honorific funeral of great pomp and show funded by the state (also called the *funus publicum*), an integral part of this event, as at other funerals, was the display of triumphal status. But triumphal elements increasingly became a litmus of imperial rank rather than martial excellence, as shown by their deployment by those outside the paradigm such as Marciana and Faustina.³⁶ Phase two was completed when the *funus censorium* became the preserve of the imperial house; this occurred later than the removal of the *ornamenta triumphalia* from accessibility. The last person who was not a member of the imperial house to receive a *funus censorium* was L. Licinius Sura under Trajan, around 110. Triumphal elements were tied up with this imperial display, and subsumed still further into imperial control alongside the public rite. Where once it was the supreme accolade achievable by private generals, in the imperial period the triumph was progressively removed not only to an imperial preserve, but to an imperial right, and eventually an attribute.

By the time of Domitian the triumph had been thoroughly associated with the emperor *qua* embodiment of continuous victory rather than the emperor *qua* general.³⁷ By then, Statius could have Janus absurdly promise

in her figs. 90-2 to patrons awarded this honour.

³⁶Arce (2010) 321-2, accepting with him that the term *censorium* does not, at this age, imply censorial office.

³⁷See Hallett (2005) 251-2, McCormick (1986) 23-6, Brilliant (1963) 92-102, L'Orange (1947) 63-6.

the emperor ‘you will carry off a thousand *tropaia*; allow yourself to celebrate that many triumphs’.³⁸ Perhaps feeling it his due after being relegated to horseback in the triumph of his father and brother (and at the age of twenty), once emperor Domitian’s constructed image became one of victory.³⁹ The coin from Alexandria discussed previously (fig. 2.3a) presents a slightly diminutive Victoria pointing imperiously ahead. Domitian desired to channel all victory through him.⁴⁰ While not everyone was convinced by the pretence, from here on it became wholly normal for emperors to present themselves as the fountain-head of victory.⁴¹ Trajan was particularly fluent in this idiom (fig. 2.3b).

That it took quite so long for even the *ornamenta triumphalia* to be restricted is surprising, given what hindsight shows of the increasing association of the emperor himself with victory. This association — that the emperor was a victor and victors were imperial — may be due to the increasingly personal involvement the imperial house took with military affairs.⁴² The completion of the second stage — the separation of the triumph from specific and documentary military achievement to continuous and constant imperial trait — is hard to pin down, but was certainly accomplished by the time of Constantius II:

Victory, whose altar was removed in 357 . . . from the Roman senate,
no longer flutters above the Emperor’s head, a divine dispenser of

³⁸Stat. *Silv.* 4.1.39 *mille tropaea feres, tantum permittite triumphos.*

³⁹On the trend toward increasingly military self presentation up to Domitian see Hallett (2005) 341.

⁴⁰Tac. *Agr.* 39, Brilliant (1963) 95.

⁴¹Dio Cass. 67.7.

⁴²McCormick (1986) follows this trend into late antiquity and beyond.

favours. Now she crowns him, standing on the globe which he himself, as Cosmocrator, holds balanced in his hand.⁴³

Bianchi Bandinelli observes the mutation of numismatic representations of Victoria standing on the globe from a statue, that is, an object within the representation without agency, to an active figure within the scene, who uses their new agency obediently to crown the emperor. Bianchi Bandinelli sees in this process the removal of Victoria's autonomy; victory is disengaged from martial success and becomes an imperial attribute. He traces this movement back, quite credibly, to the scene on the Nancy cameo where Victoria crowns the apotheosing Caracalla. But such an elite and probably court object can only have had limited dissemination and likely had little relevance for patrons such as those of the sarcophagi.

We can detect the early stirrings of the transition of Victoria's function earlier. As observed above (sec. 2.2.2.1) Victoria's movement from hovering visitor crowning the general to the *triumphator's* co-traveller in the chariot is almost universal.⁴⁴

Nevertheless it is in the far more widely disseminated and accessible medium of numismatic iconography that I believe we can truly evidence Bianchi Bandinelli's observation of this phenomenon, and somewhat earlier at that. Compare in this regard two *denarii* showing rulers holding *victoriolae* (fig. 5.1).

On the first, fig. 5.1a, the emperor's name runs over the obverse to the reverse, unifying the imagery with great effect. It strongly suggests that the

⁴³Bianchi Bandinelli (1971) 31-2. See also McCormick (1986) 11-34 on the increasing identification of the emperor with Victory itself.

⁴⁴See for example the arch of Titus, and Hölscher (1967).

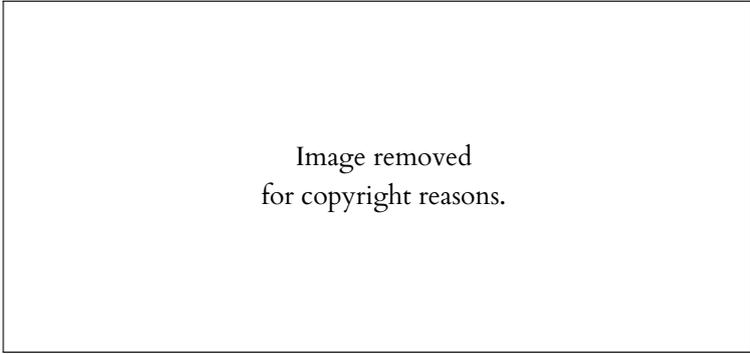


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(a) *Denarius* of Nero, 64-8. Obv: laureate head of emperor r., NERO CAESAR. Rev: Nero facing, in radiate crown, holding a palm branch in r. and *victoriola* in l., AVGVSTVS GERMANICVS. 3.31g, *RIC* 47. Sold by Numismatica Genevensis, auction 7 lot 338, 27 Nov. 2012 (also image source).



Image removed
for copyright reasons.

(b) *Denarius* of Caracalla (issued under Septimius Severus), 199-201. Obv: laureate draped bust r., ANTONINVS AVGVSTVS. Rev: Caracalla in military costume holding spear in l., *victoriola* in r., captive on floor, SEVERI PII AVG FIL. 3.28g, *RIC* 45. Sold by The New York Sale, auction IV, lot 352, 17 Jan. 2002. (also image source)

5.1: Comparison of two *denarii* showing Victoria.

facing figure in the generous robes and bare feet who holds a laurel-branch and *victoriola* is the emperor himself.⁴⁵ Careful examination of Victoria's breasts and flying drapery shows she faces outwards and slightly to the right — in effect moving away from the emperor, perhaps to hover about his head and assert her function by crowning him. By so doing she and he face out and to the right, inviting the viewer to link them. Yet even in this somewhat striking imagery, where Nero appears arrayed in unusual garb and in a position and pose more usually associated with a god, Victoria retains autonomy.

The situation is totally different in the coin of Caracalla (fig. 5.1b), where the boy appears as conquering hero; boy, emphatically, since he was only a precocious eleven years old at the beginning of this issue.⁴⁶ Where Nero held a palm branch, Caracalla holds a spear. The power of the boy (or properly the imperial mythos) to dominate is shown by the contrast between the two women in the left field. Below, a crumpled captive crouches, scarcely recognisable in her abjection. Above, Victoria strains to leave her globe and crown the child; the boy-general gazes impassively at her. His crowning will come only at his pleasure. Whereas the reverse of Nero's coin shows the emperor divested of his military attire and intimates the successful conclusion of a single campaign (however great it be), by the time of Caracalla's childhood the emperor has been reframed as the motive force behind a cycle of triumph. The poles of that continuous cycle are represented by Victoria

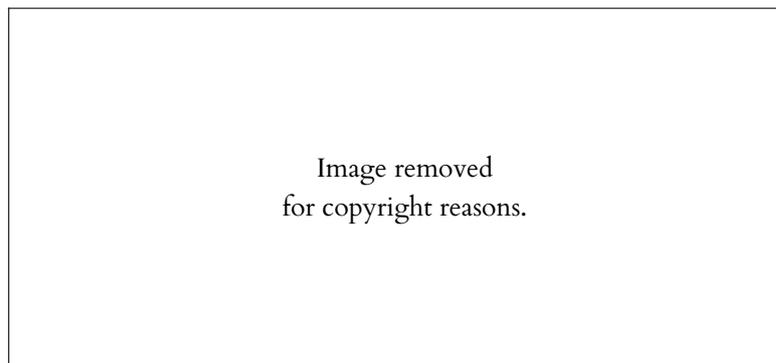
⁴⁵On the radical change in Nero's iconography post-64 see L'Orange (1947) 57-63. Figures holding *victoriolae* go back at least to the *denarius* of Octavian, c. 30 BC (RIC 270), where he holds one in his outstretched hand while seated on a curule chair.

⁴⁶I have used the same methodology in both coins for identifying the reverse figures as the rulers.

hurrying to crown the emperor as fast as she might, while suppliants grovel; he still brandishes the spear, ready to renew the sequence. Victory was not a single event for this emperor, but a continuous facet of his presentation.

Given the strength of the ideological changes with which the imperial houses were rebranding the triumph throughout the period of the sarcophagi, it would be generally unsound to argue the private patrons intended to tap into the triumph in aims of achieving it directly; certainly in the Antonine period a more general association with imperial virtues seems more likely.

5.2.1 Disengaging the mythological triumph and apotheosis



5.2: Posthumous *denarius* depicting the *ustrinum* of the deified Lucius Verus; issued under Marcus Aurelius, 169. Obv: bare head right, DIVVS VERUS. Rev: funeral pyre, CONSECRATIO. *RIC* 262. 3.05g, 188mm. Sold at The New York Sale, Auction 3, lot 692 (also image source).

We do not have evidence that sarcophagus relief was an area of competition the imperial household entered in the Antonine and Severan periods; for quite obvious reasons, the grand and rather final display of consumption by fire was the preferred method to dispose of successful ex-emperors. This gives

rise to the numerous coin issue depicting vast imperial *ustrina* such as that seen in fig. 5.2.⁴⁷ Sarcophagus reliefs would therefore be an attractive area in which to create status-displays in the current idiom, since they may invoke a state level visual language relocated to a non-threatening genre which was relatively lacking in directly translatable imperial conflict.

The act of imperial cremation is one which refined the *corpus* into its constituent parts, *umbra* and *pulvis*.⁴⁸ Imperial deification depended as much on power of the public spectacle as the mechanism of cremation, but we cannot easily separate that notion of deification from the pyre. It is through the refinement of the heavenly elements from the earthly that the deceased emperor could be thought of as achieving life in the hereafter, even at a point where inhumation was the more common practice: ‘cremation, a prerequisite for the deification of Roman emperors, is independent of the introduction at Rome, progressively after the second half of the second century AD, of the

⁴⁷ *Contra* Morris (1992) 55-7. The following evidence for cremation is not exhaustive: Trajan: Cass. Dio 69.2.3; Hadrian cremated by his successor once his mausoleum was completed, Cass. Dio 69.23.1, see also apotheosis of Sabina from a pyre shown in relief, Boatwright (1985) fig. 2. The standard discussion of imperial apotheosis is Zanker (2000). Later evidence is chiefly numismatic. Antoninus Pius’ *ustrinum* post-deification appears on a *sestertius*, see *RIC* 3 1266, cf. the apotheosis scene on his column base and the *decursio*, common around pyres; Lucius Verus in *RIC* 3 596b; Marcus Aurelius see *RIC* 3 275. On the funerary monuments of emperors Augustus – Marcus Aurelius see Davies (2000). Commodus’ *ustrinum* in *RIC* 4 94; Pertinax see *RIC* 4 660c, cremated in effigy dressed in the clothing of a *triumphator* (Cass. Dio 75.4.1-5.5), the effigy having been born by an elephant-team immediately the political turmoil made this practicable (75.4.1). Note here that it is specifically the application of fire that liberated his soul; Septimius Severus see *RIC* 4 191f, for whose successors valued cremation so highly that he was burnt once in York, Hdn. 3.15.7, and again in effigy at Rome, 4.2.10. On the imperial funeral as a distinct, separate right see Hope (2009) 91. The presence of imperial *ustrina* (for which see Boatwright (1985)) on coins would be hard to reconcile with inhumation, and I am unconvinced by the possibility that the numismatic *image* had become separate from the *event* by this age. Cf. in this regard also the ivory diptych of Q. Aurelius Symmachus (BM, inv. no. 1857,10-13,1) dated to early in the 400s. The figure apotheosing on the eagle has been liberated by the *ustrinum* below.

⁴⁸ Terminology from Hor. *Od.* 4.7.16.

custom of inhumation.⁴⁹ In images of deification the cleansing flame is a potent symbol.⁵⁰

The fact that the emperor was frequently praised in triumphal terms is not causally related to this mechanism of deification; the triumph on the sarcophagi does not imply *per se* a ‘triumph’ of life over death, as many have argued, nor is conquering death (perhaps an abstruse idea on a sarcophagus containing an actual corpse) the motive force behind the triumphal group. The triumphal sarcophagus group in fact is lacking in motifs redolent of the key elements of deification: sarcophagi seem more akin to eternal houses of the deceased, for whom *nox est perpetua una dormienda*, rather than (as *ustrina*) mechanisms which generate the refinement of apotheosis.⁵¹ Their messages are directed more towards contemporary customs or the generation of meaning for the family through the viewer, and do not seem in general actively to prosecute alignment with the triumph *qua* means of apotheosis.

⁴⁹Arce (2010) 320. Cf. Cass. Dio 75.5.5 on Pertinax’ cremation, or even Ov. *Met.* 9.262-4. On the fiery nature of the ‘soul’ (I use the word warily) see Cumont (1922) 13-15. On the resolution of the liminal corpse see Šterbenc Erker (2011); on the relevance of the corpse to the meaning of the iconography through *synkrisis*, Elsner (2014b) 329-31.

⁵⁰See Cumont (1922) 119, 176, 184-7. What better method of liberating the fiery spirit to its solar *genitor* can be imagined than fire itself, as Cumont (1922) 102.

⁵¹Catull. 5.6. Compare Stat. *Silv.* 5: of Priscilla’s sarcophagus (*marmor*, 230), *domus ista, domus! quis triste sepulchrum / dixerit?* For sarcophagi as houses Thomas (2010), Lattimore (1962) 166-7, Platt (2012) 218-24. On the permanence of stone over graves Hom. *Il.* 17.434-5.

5.3 On the rise and fall of the Dionysian triumph group

It is now appropriate for us to expand our viewpoint still further and ask, with reference to other sarcophagus groups, whether it is possible to say anything of the reasons that this group came into creation in the form it did.

I do not wish to propose a simple system under which great changes in funerary art (of which the rise and fall of the Dionysian triumph group are partially representative) are summarised by a scheme of the type which epitomises the process as a simple ‘change from x to y .’ We must ‘move beyond generalisations and ready made solutions,’ which anyway can never be sensitive to the whole story, and instead attempt to unravel individual threads within the process, staying conscious of the fact that it is only in conjunction that these threads give any sense of the multi-stranded and interconnected process of change.⁵²

5.3.1 Stemmata

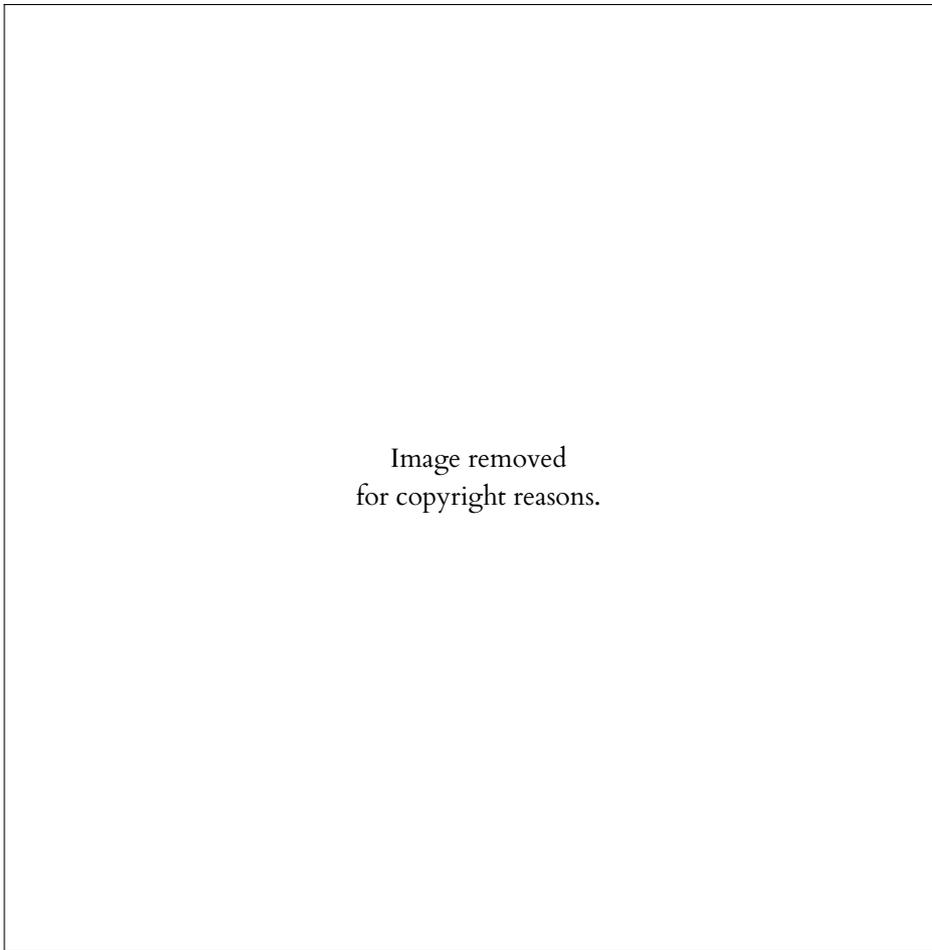
In this regard it is worth discussing briefly the significance of stemmata such as those of Matz. His ‘family-trees’ of sarcophagi (such as that of his type II3b α , the tiger-drawn standing Dionysus type, shown in fig. 5.3) are derived ultimately from a seemingly autochthonous *hellenistischen Original* through anonymous and hypothesized conduits X, Y, Z. The scholarship of these charts is irrefutable; they are of great utility for tracing the transmission of overall arrangements. But by their similarity with a genealogical transmis-

⁵²Ewald (2012) 42.

sion they imply progressive development in generations, when sculptors may have looked at any, all, or no points in the tree for inspiration.⁵³ Worse, they imply unity of intent throughout the tree (or at least, de-emphasize changes of tone and meaning).

It also is too easy to attack such stemmata in their details. Laying aside the question of the dating of the pieces (Matz's dating of A1 is probably too early, see p227), there are other problems. How does Matz account for the re-emergence of the rightmost female in *ASR* IV.2: 101 (A7), present in all other examples bar 100 (A6) which he cites as its immediate ancestor? How does the lamp-bearing female of 95 (A1) get onto 100 (A6)? How do we account for the unknown variable of survival rates? How are fragments to be assimilated? We might ask more impertinently, excluding hypothesized pieces why is no line of descent more than two sarcophagi long? Three is the point where we begin to be able to strongly test transmission, as we have an intermediate piece. An equally grave problem is that the chart implies insularity of composition, which is unhelpful. The compositions do not exist in a vacuum, else how could A15, which is excluded from the tree, reproduce the positioning of the panthers' heads and Indian riders, distinctive of descent from transitional piece Z? Given then that it is related, why does the sculptor remove Hercules? Why does the same distinctive type of Victoria with feather-like palm-branch appear in 138 (A12) and again later in 101 (A7), with which it shares compositionally almost nothing else? Why are the Hercules of 101 (A7) and 140 (B15) substantially similar? My answer would

⁵³This is an artefact of, as Koortbojian (2002) 173 remarks about *Kopienkritik*, the 'essentially philological method'. Cf. also Gabelmann (1992) 60.



5.3: Stemma from Matz (1968b) 220.

be that we must not ask these charts to do too much: they show similarities and the transmission of *some* elements of the composition and not, we must recall, of *tones* or *details*. They greatly simplify by ignoring parallel inputs from other sarcophagi and other visual sources, and somewhat obfuscate the significance of individual pieces in favour of their role in the continuum; such an approach may have great utility for reconstructing archetypes but does not answer questions about the pieces themselves.

5.3.2 The rise

The statistical studies undertaken by Ewald offer some useful data for the problem of accounting for the genre's rise.⁵⁴ The popularity of Dionysian sarcophagi in general is very strong in the Hadrianic to middle Antonine period (making up about a third of sarcophagi at that time), but falls off sharply and continually thereafter. Mythological scenes lag slightly behind, reaching peak popularity only later, in the middle to late Antonine period (Ewald's dates 150-90), but go into decline thereafter. This suggests that the Dionysian triumphal group, while linked in with the general decline of mythological sarcophagi, is also subject to other pressures which affect its popularity. What might these be?

The sarcophagi under our study are predominantly of the Antonine and very early Severan period. This period is characterised by

a close connection of senatorial families with, and their dependence on, the imperial family. The senatorial loyalty towards the emperor and his family and the values the imperial family stood for is, on the iconographic level, reflected in the emulation of imperial modes of self-representation.⁵⁵

Contemporary feeling among the upper classes that service to the imperial house was a virtue to advertise gave rise to the adoption of manners of imperial/state display. The popularity of the triumphal series is therefore partly attributable to the positive influence of that contemporary spirit; it is also

⁵⁴Ewald (2003) and see Zanker (2005).

⁵⁵Ewald (2003) 565.

attributable to the negative influence of the want of iconography expressing public offices, the heyday of which would come much later.

The popularity of the Dionysian triumph series was further enhanced by the increase in desire to display the aristocratic *paideia* of the patron family, and more widely the rise of Greek culture in the west.⁵⁶ This leads us to an interpretation which sees the iconography as trickling down from its Greek, scholarly origins to its wider use by the Roman patrons, with the senatorial class as the conduit for this transmission. This is congruent with some of the classic interpretations of prior scholarship, explaining the strongly state-oriented imagery of the most triumphal pieces.⁵⁷ But it does not convincingly account for the meaning of those early pieces which suppress the triumphal nature of the relief. This interpretation would predict that the series would progress from strongly to weakly triumphal in focus, but actually the most strongly triumphal pieces come later in the series. The senatorial trickle-down can only be a tributary in the river of meaning which these complex networks supported; the granularity of the corpus defies neat theories which catch all of the reasons for the group's inception, a problem exacerbated by the malleability of meaning to which the mythological matrix could be shaped.

⁵⁶Müller (1994) 156, Borg (2013) 162.

⁵⁷Most influentially Rodenwaldt (1935) who traces the process to one of the tension between national identities ('Greek' and 'Roman') and Bianchi Bandinelli (1971) (who traces it to class); Ewald (2012) urges that these approaches are insufficiently nuanced, and questions the validity of ascribing sociocultural changes to 'transhistorical entities' (41).

5.3.3 Overview of the transition

Zanker and Ewald identify a trend towards internalisation in Roman commemorative art from the first century onwards.⁵⁸ Around the time of the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi we can detect this process in a movement away from themes which more explicitly engage the family and their station, towards more insistent focus on the individuality of the deceased.

This can be detected in the group's early and late pieces. The early group show a strong preponderance for scenes of larger parade and movement, with overtones of *bonhomie* (B6, B14, B18). They lend more of a focus to the mythological plot (A9, B7) than pieces from the later group which tend to present a frozen tableau of the expedition to India's successful outcome (A6). From scenes with their emphasis then in parade and movement, which more strongly emphasise the bereaved viewing family, sarcophagi move in the later group to an emphasis on the individual. They do this through the rise in inscriptions (B19) and portraits (A6), as well as the insistent balancing of Hercules against Dionysus. They also take up a stronger focus on the individuality of the bereavement, highlighting the emotional bonds which are severed and tactile loss of the deceased. For example, we detect a strong diachronic tensioning of Hercules' significance, prominence and worthiness in sarcophagi A4 to A5 to A6, which undergoes modulation to emphasise tactile loss in A7 and B19.

Sarcophagi of the Antonine period can approximately be said to be predominantly organised around themes of the family's social standing and ed-

⁵⁸Zanker and Ewald (2012) 175-94.

ucation, and offer frequent, clever *Brücken* to the family, with iconography designed to ‘enhance the event of the funeral’.⁵⁹ They tend to direct their messages in an *extroverted* manner towards the viewing family. By contrast in the later Severan period the sarcophagi favour individual comparison of the deceased with Hercules in the relief and, though they increase the number of figures drastically, begin to reduce narrative polysemy to emphasise the values they wish to align with the deceased. They can be summarised as displaying an increasingly *introverted* focus.⁶⁰

Sarcophagi of the middle of this group display tendencies in both these areas. A1 for example presents quite a sweeping mythological scene whose erudition is intensified by the childhood cycle on the lid. Nevertheless it is redolent of later pieces in its reduction of the sense of an indulgent and travelling band. A3, another mid period piece, shows the beginnings of Hercules’ introduction as a balancing figure, yet does not demonstrate his virtue or sensual-tactile functions as the later group tend.⁶¹ It is worth making ex-

⁵⁹Borg (2013) 177. On C2-3 style changes in senatorial sarcophagi see Reinsberg (1995) and more widely in the Severan period Newby (2007).

⁶⁰An interesting parallel can be found in Antonine and Severan histories; Kemezis (2010) shows how while the former do not award great attention to current, contemporary, or recent affairs, the latter increasingly employ them, and use a growingly inward emphasis to negotiate their approach. Müller (1994) ascribes the rise of mythological images on sarcophagi to a desire for demonstrating *paideia*.

⁶¹The famous sarcophagus of Metilia Acte and C. Julius Euhodus (D8) is rather securely dated to 160-70 by the reference to the XXI *lustrum* of his guild and the hairstyles — Euhodus’ is strikingly similar to Lucius Verus (though Rodenwaldt (1935) 18 dates it to 170-80). With its scenes of Alcestis and portrait faces, it would seem to diametrically oppose the trend I outline above; yet while certainly a somewhat precocious piece and early in its use of portrait features, it is consistent with my interpretations in other respects, such as depiction of mourning onlookers, a narratively lengthy and complex scene of strong literary ancestry, and an interest in displaying the rank and influence of the family. It is also of its time in its interest in such an emotional narrative, as is the fact that the mourning onlookers bear in several cases portrait features: the activation of the mourning family through portraits is especially consistent with my approach.

plicit that all sarcophagi at all periods had a meaning both for the deceased and for those left behind: these functions are necessary parts of the operation of the object, and iconography cannot be so directed that it deactivates one of these channels.⁶² Yet the triumphal group demonstrate quite neatly some of the effects sculptors drew in this movement from outwardly to inwardly directed rhetoric.

This trend is an overall observation which has emerged from the group. It is also an encapsulated and instructive example showing that the wider trend of movement away from ‘darker myths’ towards ‘visions of bliss’ identified by Zanker and Ewald, while offering clues about the uptake or abandonment of myths, does not explain modulation *within* the *Mythenwahl* at this time of ideational flux.⁶³

In sarcophagi outside this group the change of emphasis away from expressions of grief and the rise in portrait heads is a direct result of the same increasing introversion of the relief. So too is the increasing excision of the character to be identified with the deceased from the scene, and the abandonment of displays of intricate or diachronically lengthy narratives for more tightly focussed or selected elements.⁶⁴ This transition of emphasis is one of

⁶²Elsner (2014b): ‘A sarcophagus simultaneously makes claims about the person or persons honoured ... and the person or persons who have dedicated the offering’ (320); Pagan sarcophagi were ‘fundamentally eulogistic,’ though the introversion we detect would give ground in Christian sarcophagi to ‘praising God and placing the deceased in a pattern of relationship to the new divine order’ (333), though the shift of register is complex and defies summation here (see also 347-9).

⁶³Zanker and Ewald (2012) 254.

⁶⁴This explains the change from displaying learning through showing complex mythological scenes in the prior century to the display of learning through more literal means such as the seated philosophers and the use of scrolls we find subsequently; the change from extroversion to introversion can be thought of as one from a learned *myth* to a learned *person*. B16 is highly unusual (see 282ff); note that I urge that its effect is not to speak to the family, as we might expect in the period prior, but to elevate reception of the de-

the threads I wish to pick up behind the shift we see at this period in Roman funerary art more widely.

5.3.3.1 Two non-intuitive comparisons

Are all scenes able to undergo and survive the modulation which this shift in discursive direction demands? Let us consider two cases; in the first I intend to show that even scenes whose later popularity colours us to think of them as inherently introspective underwent the same broad modulation, and secondly that it is probably the difficulties this shift demands which bring about the fall in favour of another scene.

clipeus-sarcophagi

Compositionally the Dionysian *clipeus*-scenes undergo sharp changes between the Antonine period and the Severan and post-Severan period. Initially they present stripped-down versions of the triumphal scenes. The processions are sedate and the shields tend to be held by Victories, such as the grandest sarcophagus in this group (D18, fig. 5.4a), where the shield bears a long inscription.

The iconographic draw of the scene for this senatorial patron, L. Julius Larcius Sabinus, may have been its scholarly nature, or the grandeur of its conception, or even the enjoyment of life's fruits in the funerary realm. The presence of Victories writing on shields, with (rather mournful) captives below is a nod to martial iconography which may also have appealed. The

ceased. Borg (2013) 177 argues that this trend is detectable earlier, with the Hippolytus sarcophagi in the second century.

former tribune of the people had much to boast about, despite dying at a not particularly great age; yet the effect of the inscription is to place him within the carefully constructed context of his supporting family, which both nourished him and survives him. The gathered figures about the *clipeus* seem to pay obeisance to this central memorial, as might the family gather about the sarcophagus itself. It is fatuous for us to play rhetorical games where we link up the inwardly-heading Dionysus and Ariadne with male and female personages from the inscription and belabour the parallel between the arrival of the mourning viewer and the arrival of these mythological characters at this *clipeus virtutis*; nevertheless, this species of comparison may well have presented itself to the viewers' minds.⁶⁵ It is certainly a composition which elevates the central message to dignity and grand display.

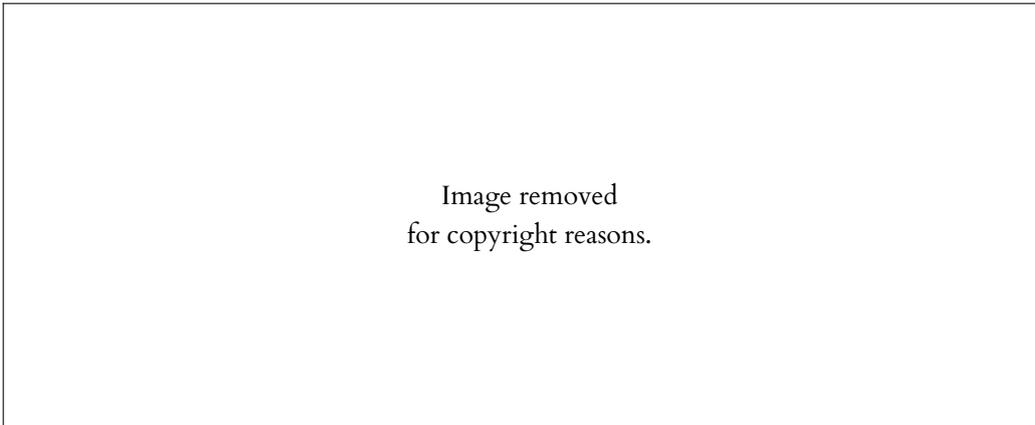
During the Severan period a far busier scene becomes dominant (fig. 5.4b). Dionysus and Ariadne appear with a vast host of attendant figures who blast trumpets, pluck lyres, or challenge goats in single combat. Two registers develop; an upper, populated by centaurs, gods and maenads, and the lower, populated by *putti*, animals and Dionysian accoutrements. Whereas before the centaurs paraded in a stately manner, increasingly the intensity of their motion is heightened. They rear upwards, creating room compositionally for the lower register, as well as a pyramidal focus. The energies of the whole raucous band become directed towards the apex of this triangular composition where, oculus-like, the shield appears.

Inside the shield, the absolute focus of the arrangement, appear portraits of a man and a woman. The compositional cues demand that we gaze upon

⁶⁵Cf. p290n153.



(a) *clipeus* sarcophagus in Campo Santo, Pisa (D18). Photo courtesy Andreas Kropp.



(b) *clipeus* sarcophagus in Louvre (D19). Photo courtesy Noel Luoh.

5.4: Comparison of two *clipeus* sarcophagi.

these figures as the climax of the relief — though the deceased appear incongruously decorous amidst the *thiasus*, which take on an almost heraldic air. The sarcophagus seems to offer an uncomfortable portal through which two worlds, the mythological world of the *thiasus* and the emphatically of-their-age portraits shimmer and oscillate in relation to each other; the internal occupants of the monument insist themselves on the external, and our gaze seems to penetrate the surface into an idealised introspection. Such an effect

has powerful meaning in the funerary realm, which naturally straddles this liminal position.

We begin to see the *clipeus* not as a solid shield, but in fact as a tear or puncture through the mythological scene which exists only on the marble's surface. The symbol is no longer an illusory solid within the relief, but an aperture through which we look: the artist invites us to see through the symbol. Thus the portrait-realm is afforded superiority in the scene, and through it an idealised version of the internal occupants of the monument insist themselves on the external realm. Those deceased who literally resided within the marble coffin are given agency and their gaze penetrates the surface through the aperture of the *clipeus* — albeit in idealised and aloof introspection. The portrait-realm attacks the integrity of the mythological illusion and serves to dissolve the illusory integrity of the scene; the more we look at the mythological realm, the more artificially composed it seems, the more it seems constructed only for the benefit of the *clipeus*. The illusory motion which their procession is given is not coherent. If we imagine pressing 'play' on the moment here frozen, the positioning of the participants and the placing of their weight suggests the whole band would immediately descend into collision and collapse. The shield itself is not even afforded illusory mass within the scene: two centaurs-rampant balance it without effort, while it lacks a trunk upon which it might be rested.

The effect suggests that the portrait-realm is the promoted one and the mythological scene a commentary, whose meaning should only be understood with reference to the portraits.⁶⁶ But the point of the effect is in fact its corol-

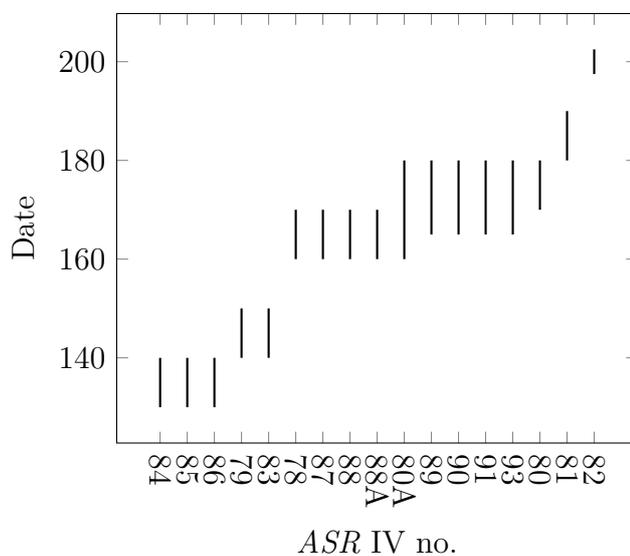
⁶⁶*clipeus* sarcophagi form the largest group of 'portrait' sarcophagi.

lary: by sharply delineating the divide between the mythological realm and the deceased by the borders of the *clipeus*, the artist is able to imply that at this point the marble permits communication between the bereaved onlookers arriving at the tomb and the real deceased within. Thus by consciously flagging part (and only a part) of the solid marble surface as an aperture, the artist is able more strongly to suggest that through this oculus-like shield the real deceased and the bereaved viewer can come into closer proximity. The artist is able to go some way towards dissolving the distressing boundary the marble forms between deceased and viewer, and permit a form of comforting reunion between these two parties. That is to say, the artist has designed this imagery to go some way to negotiating the difficult and complex liminal nature of the grave. The artist spotlights the approach of the ‘world of the bereaved’ and the ‘world of the deceased’ by orchestrating this scintillation between the two registers of imagery. But I wish only here to outline the change in emphasis we detect between the two manners in *clipeus*-sarcophagi, which seemed initially to not be subject to the trends I outlined above.

Marital scenes

Another instance where the situation is complex can be found in those scenes which depict the god and Ariadne inside the wagon laying, often in a scissor-like posture, gazing lovingly at each other. Scenes typically avoid most reference to the exotic except where such creatures fulfil an internal function of pulling the wagon; they do not depict Victoria or prisoners.⁶⁷

⁶⁷On Ariadne as a common vehicle for female praise, Elsner (2007b) 25.



5.5: Chart showing the spread of datable sarcophagi showing Ariadne and Dionysus lying in the wagon; data from Matz (1968b).

Though falling foul of the movement away from mythology we might expect these scenes to be popular in the mid-later Severan period at least; after all, they seem to offer a ready-made couple to act as appropriate vehicles for memory and *loci* for engagement by the mourning viewer. Yet this is not the case; as we see in fig. 5.5, these sarcophagi begin in the Hadrianic period and reach their greatest popularity in the mid-Antonine period, being already in decline by the dynasty's end. Appearances are deceptive: the meaning of Ariadne and Dionysus here instead seems to be directed towards representation of a joyous procession in a manner similar to the processional aspects of the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi.

Consider D20 (fig. 5.6). The procession is close to a wedding-like scene.⁶⁸ But the genre is not adopted strongly in the Severan period and Ariadne does not get fitted with a portrait face as she does in the epiphanic sarcophagi of

⁶⁸E.g. Matz (1968b) 188-92.

Dionysus discovering her on Naxos. The Dionysian sarcophagi move away from this mode of expression towards others, such as the aforementioned reclining Ariadne on Naxos scenes. The reason partially lies in the fact the wedding scene, if shifted from analogous interpretation by the mourning family as a display of *luxuria* and mythological story towards introspective meaning, places the wife in an acceptable role and the husband in a position of analogy with Dionysus.

Though this was never enthusiastically embraced by Roman male patrons, I maintain it probably was not seen as problematic *per se*, and its avoidance in the triumphal group is indicative of avoidance of identification with Dionysus *triumphans*.⁶⁹ As a mythological scene it lacks the powerful *tableau* effect which would become popular during the transition towards more introspective iconography, being firmly localised in a parade-like event that suited earlier sensibilities. When later an introspective scene of marriage was desired, the trend in this period was towards the use of the pre-existing and dominant iconographic arrangement of the standing figures *dextrarum iunctio*, which unlike this scene provided opportunities for a centralised *tableau* and stronger introspective individualisation. Thus with the changes in funerary discourse came the end of this scene's utility.

5.3.3.2 The effect of the increasing appearance of portraits

Evidently the presence of portrait faces is a great interpretative draw for us, but we must exercise great caution, both in assessing their meaning in

⁶⁹Newby (2010) 203, Birk (2010). For portraits as Dionysus in statues and sarcophagi see p215n16.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

5.6: Sarcophagus in British Museum (D20) showing Ariadne and Dionysus laying down (D20). inv. no. 1805,0703.130. Image from http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1655882&partId=1&searchText=1805,0703.130&page=1 [accessed 14/02/15].

context and also translating information from sarcophagi bearing them to sarcophagi without. Portraits rise in popularity after the decline in the use of *imagines*. While *imagines* were still in use at the time of the earliest triumphal sarcophagi (Appian saw them in use approximately 150-60) and so were not necessarily alien to the Antonine age, by the early third century the display of *imagines* at funerals had become yet another imperial preserve.⁷⁰ The removal of the ancestors from the funeral procession probably created a tension of absence which was a contributory factor in the rise in popularity of portraits within the relief itself. Sarcophagus portraits go some way to fulfilling a need curtailed by the restriction on *imagines*. Sarcophagus portraits also side-step the requirement of a lengthy and stable lineage for ancestral busts; this may well have been a boon at this time. The number of aristocratic families of long standing was probably at a rather low ebb given the attitudes of some of the preceding emperors towards the senatorial class. Sarcophagus portraits by contrast were simply open to those financially able.

⁷⁰As we find in e.g. Cass. Dio and Pomponius Porphyrio, Flower (1996) 263.

The choice of the triumphal myth, given the particular emphasis accorded to ancestors of triumphal status, is perhaps bound up with this, as surrogate display.

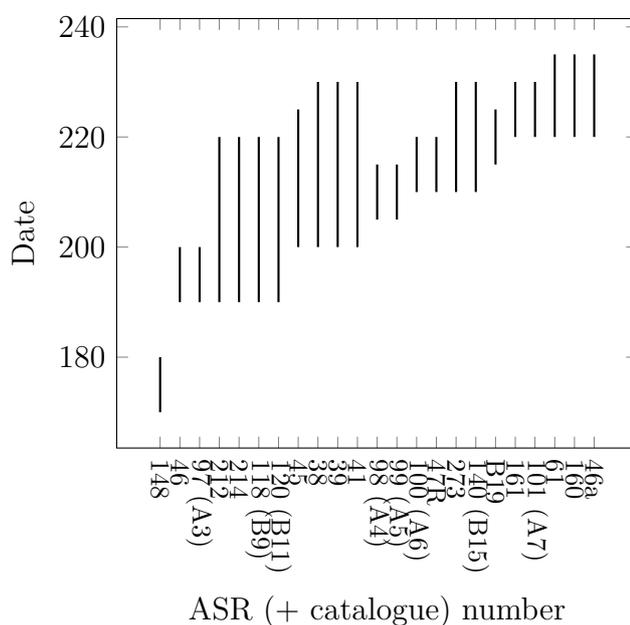
It is anachronistic to expect from the bereaved personal identification of a character within the relief with the deceased, in general prior to the third century.⁷¹ The change towards such identification is detectable through the blossoming of Dionysian sarcophagi featuring Hercules as ‘secondary protagonist’ in the third century. By this term I here mean scenes where the hero appears with the god in a significant role; paralleling is deliberately made between the two figures, who make an unusual scene with two male leads.⁷² As shown in fig. 5.7, round the turn of the century and the start of the preference change in the manner of rhetoric, we find the strongest appearance of these sarcophagi across many types, and a significant part of them are from the triumph group. Nevertheless, since these scenes are not the most readily adapted to support this rhetoric-change, the fashion does not last very far into the third century itself.

However, as always in sarcophagus studies absolute statements are not possible. The stele of Statilius Aper discussed above (4.5.1) shows that quite clearly the audience could be expected to identify elements inside a relief with the deceased at an earlier date — though perhaps not quite in the manner so popular later.⁷³ Nevertheless the rarity of the portrait face within the triumphal series ought to prompt us more strongly to recognition of the power such an image must have had for the intended onlookers, particularly

⁷¹Borg (2013) 163, Birk (2013).

⁷²Cf. the echoing of their postures in B11.

⁷³On this see 5.3.4.



5.7: Chart showing the appearance of Hercules as secondary protagonist in the Dionysian sarcophagi.

since they existed in a world so far preceding the age of mechanical reproduction.⁷⁴ For persons outside the imperial circle their own likenesses were not *numerous*, and it is important for us to recall how vastly rarer likenesses were in Roman experience than modern. In a context as emotionally charged as that of the funerary sphere, we must not unduly suppress recognition of the emotive force of the encounter, nor the probable effect of such to postpone higher-level analysis for a time.⁷⁵ It is when we stand too far outside the special context of the sarcophagi that we misread the intent of iconography. I believe Koortbojian errs in this regard when he suggests that the decline

⁷⁴‘Keineswegs zufällig steht das Portrait im Mittelpunkt der frühen Photographie. Im Kult der Erinnerung an die fernen oder die abgestorbenen Lieben hat der Kultwert des Bildes die letzte Zuflucht.’ Benjamin (1936).

⁷⁵On the intervention of the sarcophagus between viewer and corpse, see Ewald (2012) 43.

of portrait-bearing mythological sarcophagi can in part be attributed to the difficulties viewers had with the fashionable, contemporary portrait elements meeting the idealised, seeing their clash as ‘inelegant.’⁷⁶ By contrast the disjunction has been shown to be acknowledged and creatively utilised (sec. 4.2.1.1). The process behind the end of the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi is more multi-stranded.

5.3.4 The fall

What might we say of the reasons behind the decline of this group? Sarcophagus sculptors were always selective in their choice of myths, and of the mythological panoply only very few myths are represented. The triumph of Dionysus was popular, but fell out of use; what changed?

In one respect the increasing absence of emperors from Rome and the rarity of their triumphs in the mid third century rendered the Dionysian triumph group increasingly outmoded. Yet this would be a simplistic catch-all interpretation, and one not perfectly congruent with actual historical timings. The real reasons must be analysed in not a cessation of action but a change in sensibilities. It is in the fall of the group then that I wish to pick up two further diachronic threads; the first is the process of *demythologisation*, and the second the process of *desensualisation*.

The Dionysian triumph sarcophagi disappear at the beginning of *Entmythologisierung*, which can be approximately defined as the process of the drift and conscious shift away from mythological narrative.⁷⁷ It involves a

⁷⁶Koortbojian (1994) 136.

⁷⁷See Gerke (1978), Dumbabin (1978) 38-45, Wrede (1981) 171, Koch and Sichtermann (1982) 615-7, Koortbojian (1994) 138-41, Ewald (2003) 566-7, Borg (2013) 162-3, Borg

suppression of narrative context in favour of focus on individual figures in a stage-like setting.⁷⁸ Two decades after the end of the triumph sarcophagi, mythological subjects give ground drastically to scenes such as Seasons, garlands, lions, and *vita humana*.

This change has been maligned in the past, as it removes the rich narrative complexity of scenes; yet as more recent scholars have pointed out, abbreviated depiction of scenes necessitates educated interpretation on the part of the onlooker.⁷⁹ Wrede sees *Entmythologisierung* as thus a turn to civil iconography and the senatorial class, which is supported by the flourishing of iconography for civil offices and the focus on personal traits.⁸⁰ The change might thus be seen as a transition away from emulation of the imperial house. In these turbulent times imperially-aligned iconography might not retain currency long. It bears stating explicitly that *Entmythologisierung* is not due to a decline in education, as complex mythological imagery is found outside the funerary realm; the process within the funerary realm was designed for a deliberate effect.⁸¹

It would be an unhelpful reaction formation to imagine though that edu-

(2014).

⁷⁸See Borg (2013) 177-8, though I will here express reserve about a trend for sarcophagi to avoid displays of 'passionate love' (178) given the surge in the Achilles and Penthesilea sarcophagi, to be discussed below, p336ff. On the decline in mythological topics in sarcophagi during the Severan period see Newby (2007) 234.

⁷⁹E.g. Koortbojian (1994).

⁸⁰Wrede (2001), Ewald (2003) 566.

⁸¹See especially Borg (2014). Dunbabin (1978) 38-45 shows that with mosaics the situation is complex; in general one finds reduction of mythological variety and defocalisation of the narrative (mosaics become 'symbols in an allusive game', 44), but this lags behind *Entmythologisierung* in the funerary realm (Ewald (2012) 45n17). Mythological scenes do not disappear, and in fact this reduction is not found everywhere; an astonishing Constantinian-era series at Nabeul show a sequence of scenes undoubtedly alluding to the *Iliad*.

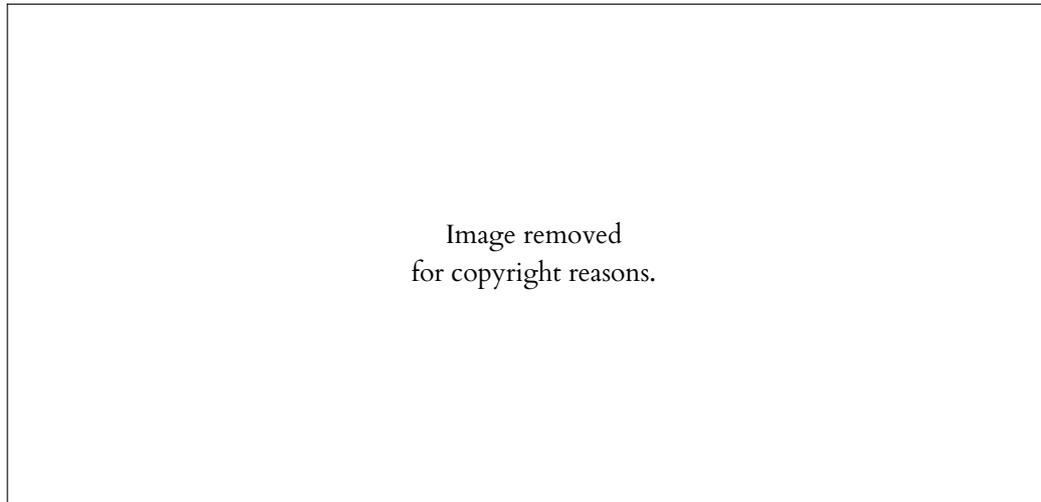
cation increased; such a spectrum based approach is too restrictive. Instead, it seems that the greater apparent ability of the viewers to understand seemingly highly selective imagery is because, freed of the need to communicate general meaning to the family and enabled to embrace the directness of specificity, the points of intersection were very clearly focused by the sculptors. I believe the problems with *Entmythologisierung* come when we fail to appreciate all that sculptors did to allow only the point of intersection to be activated in the onlookers' minds.

5.3.4.1 Parallel example: Achilles and Penthesilea

A sarcophagus from the Achilles and Penthesilea group gives a pertinent example. These are found from the beginning of the third century (*ASR* XII.1: 118 is probably the earliest), but flourish in the second and third quarters of the century, with the majority appearing between about 225-65.⁸² D21 depicts Achilles and Penthesilea in the battle between the Greeks and Amazons (see fig. 5.8). The leaders are placed in the centre and magnified, while around them the tumult of war is played out by the tangled bodies of other combatants. The sarcophagus, whose size indicates it was made for two people, bears portrait-faces of the dead couple on Achilles and Penthesilea; hers is redolent of Julia Mammaea, and so the piece is dated to 230-40. The Achilles-deceased turns his head in a heroic gesture, while Penthesilea takes full advantage of the frontal viewpoint to look outward at the viewer. The small (and deliberately exotic) shield she holds bears a gorgon-head which looks out at us too, as does the Amazon nearby, employing familiar

⁸²See Grassinger (1999).

techniques of catching our gaze and making conscious the process of looking and viewing (see p290ff).



5.8: Sarcophagus showing Achilles and Penthesilea (D21). From Hallett (2005) pl. 131.

The limits of the myth's suitability can be found in the events either preceding or following the moment frozen here. For example, Penthesilea is, as a warrior, a woman acting out of her allotted Roman role. And more to the point, textually, she was killed by Achilles. Was her beauty only seen by her murderer-husband *post mortem*? Why on earth then should the sculptor select this myth of all the possibilities, and why would it appeal to a patron?

Zanker and Ewald argue that third century reliefs demand an 'abstract' reading, and in these sorts of sarcophagi 'the unfolding of the tale is actually a distraction or even an annoyance'; that the sarcophagus workshops expected the viewers to 'see the essential point behind the way the tale is related'.⁸³ But can the viewers have reasonably been expected temporarily to forget the

⁸³Zanker and Ewald (2012) 47.

μῆνιν Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος?⁸⁴ Could they reliably be expected to select the positive from an array of interpretative options? At best this would make for a challenging relief: while it is not unreasonable to imagine an ancient viewer would understand that they are meant to see the positive comparisons rather than follow the story to its unsuited conclusion, they cannot have failed to have been aware that Achilles murdered Penthesilea. Why should the sculptor allow such ambiguity?

In fact, this ambiguity is not allowed to exist. The sculptor had to find a way to encourage recognition in the viewer's mind of the limits of the comparison drawn between the deceased and Penthesilea, and keep focus on the intended alignment; the sculptor must find a method by which to highlight the disjunction between the portrait of the deceased and the mythological persona, while not severing their alignment.⁸⁵

They achieve this by having the problematic Penthesilea, murdered victim, remove herself from the narrative. She, in the midst of a battle, takes advantage of the arrival of the viewer to meet their gaze directly. By confronting our gaze, she engages our attention and becomes the focus; as with Hercules at Woburn, the scene's irreality is highlighted. The couple appear centre-stage, unaffected by any of the background action. There is no suggestion of the backstory, nor any hints as to what follows; the scene only

⁸⁴Wrath was a necessary part of Achilles' character. Cf. Hor. *Epist.* 2.2.42, *Ars P.* 120-1.

⁸⁵'When the mythical protagonists assumed portrait features of the deceased, they had to guard their decorum.' (Borg (2013) 178). On the murdering of Penthesilea: 'of course no causation may be intended in the case of the deceased man and woman represented in such figures, but the visual narrative certainly offers the potential for such meanings and the need to police interpretative assumptions within a broadly eulogistic framework.' (Elsner (2014b) 327).

exists in the moment. The central couple are not even on the same scale as the rest of the scene, but appear significantly larger than the other figures. The female figure, likewise, is not a murdered victim — she has no helmet to be removed, and neither of them have any actual weapon. The body, part of the costume the deceased wears, shows no wound. Penthesilea's head does not flop nor her face fall in death; she holds it upright and her features remain placid. The woman does not look like she is in her death throes, but dips in her lover's arms with studied insouciance. These incongruities, these impediments to the 'story' of the myth, act to block the viewer from extrapolating the 'plot' ahead from or prior to the moment here frozen. In short, the sculptor demands we recognise that this is the deceased playing the role of Penthesilea — not Penthesilea herself. Errors in interpretation come again, I believe, from a failure to appreciate the distancing effects of the portrait instead of the proximising (as discussed p222ff).

The removal of the female deceased from the illusion then does not just invite us to see her as a woman in the guise of Penthesilea, but prompts us to recognise the artificiality of the staffage; this scene does not say the female was Penthesilea. It instead eschews naturalism and shows a marble likeness of a woman acting one element of the Penthesilea story (congruent with the shift in focus to the deceased we expect at this period); thus we are invited to see how well she plays this role — since both women were beautiful, noble, loved. By these methods the sculptor encourages active deselection of the mythical baggage she brings, and by this means avoids interpretational conflict between the myth and the new function of the iconography.

This enables the Roman female to present herself in an exciting manner

without transgressing social values. The character of Penthesilea brings with her an exciting body and some exotic clothes — the cheeky, breast-exposing *exomis* and the thigh-skimming *chlamys*, teamed with calf-high boots, serve to eroticise the mythological costume, whereas the outward-looking portrait face dissolves the association between the deceased and her disguise. In this there lies the reason why the sculptor chose this apparently troublesome myth; the choice enables him, when carefully distanced, to display the Roman lady playing at the role of this erotically presented exotic woman. He is able to present her sprawling seductively in a man's arms, exposing a breast, some thigh, and her beauty. The exploration of this sensuality is a key element which we must acknowledge in scenes which have undergone *Entmythologisierung* but come from before the midpoint of the century. I would argue therefore against 'selective reading' in sarcophagi of the early third century, and against the idea that these scenes 'tried hard' the ancient viewer, since such an attitude obscures our recognition of the effects the sculptors achieved. In these scenes alternatives, contrary views, negative interpretations, are simply not allowed to exist.

The fall of the Dionysian triumph group then can be attributed partially to *Entmythologisierung*. The idea of the mythological triumph was simply no longer relevant in the manner it had been. The emperor was increasingly rarely at Rome. When previously funerary iconography had faced outward onto the family and been imperially aligned, the triumph was an interesting and manipulable scene; when funerary iconography became introspective (directed more towards the deceased inside) and society moved away from emulation of the increasingly short-lived imperial display, it prompted sculp-

tors to innovate and elaborate. Equally, fashion was moving towards greater centrality (as the *clipeus* scenes show). The inherent eccentricity of focus formed by the deity at the edge in the Dionysian triumph scenes created an incipient unease which encouraged the balance of the hero at the other end.⁸⁶ It is of course in the dying embers of the triumphal group we find the greatest experimentation and variety of meaning; though subject to attempts at modification, other scenes would more readily satisfy these new desires.

5.3.4.2 The processes of change

Among causes external to the group chief is the greater suitability of scenes other than the Dionysian triumph for expressing contemporary feeling in the funerary realm. The spiritual successors to the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi are probably the hunting scenes (see fig. 5.9). As a genre, they undergo a clear slow beginning, a period of strong popularity, and a gradual decline. From modest numbers these begin their rise to prominence in the 220-30s, precisely the time when the Dionysian triumph group had irretrievably ebbed. Hunting sarcophagi fulfil a similar niche to the triumph as they strongly telegraph masculine virtues in an idiom familiar from state iconography (the thrown-out right hand, discussed above p248ff, is nearly ubiquitous at the height of the genre). Enhancing this is the exotic lure of fighting wild beasts (in all likelihood fanciful for the patrons). They are also not localised within the less fashionable mythological register; in fact, sculptors swiftly do away with the few mythological elements the group starts off with as soon as they

⁸⁶Note this effect is also suggested by the experiments at making Hercules more central, such as B9 and B11.

become unmarketable.⁸⁷ The genre's suitability is confirmed by its sustained appearance well into the tetrarchic period.⁸⁸

Myths act as group-accessible content, which had a unifying and solidifying effect in the minds of the viewers, particularly in the funerary context. It is probably true that the act of obeying narrative markers, identifying, and accessing the imagery on sarcophagi had a consolatory effect since it necessitated the sharing of a mutual cultural heritage. A recent and very compelling approach in fact deprioritises the attempt to elucidate embedded virtues, and instead sees the myths on sarcophagi as emanations from the 'culturally sanctioned repository of images' which were opportunities for patrons to access and explore extremes of sensation as widely separated as eroticism and suffering.⁸⁹ Thus these mythological stage-curtains provided opportunities both to depict and explore scenes of violence and emotional extremes mediated through the quasi-theatrical nature of the register, as well as drunkenness, excess, great mourning, bravery, rashness, beauty and fate; for brevity's sake I shall refer to this area by the term *sensual* (in its meaning relating to the senses), but the term should be understood to encompass all these facets. I shall refer to the progressive diminishment of these sensual elements (which commences from the mid- to late-Severan period) as *desensualisation*.⁹⁰ By separating desensualisation out, traditionally thought of

⁸⁷Andreae (1980) 17-18.

⁸⁸Borg (2013) 179; Andreae (1980).

⁸⁹Ewald (2012) 54. Cf. Koortbojian (1994) 9, who argues that in general sarcophagi 'present analogies, not identifications'. However, understanding must at all times be modulated against chronological trends.

⁹⁰Ewald (2012) 50-5 traces this through 'a voyeuristic pleasure in viewing violence in often highly stylized, "mannered" forms' (51), observing in the 240-60s the ultimate rise of emotionally untaxing philosopher, Muse, and (in its stylisation) lion-hunt scenes, then to seasons and bucolic imagery taking over by the 260-70s.

as a constituent part of *Entmythologisierung*, I wish to indicate the distinct progression of both and their significance for the triumphal group.

The broad, sensual humour of the naked Hercules pawing at the female is only accessible through the mythological register; the studies of the naked human form, which take an obvious and extremely tactile joy in the exploration of this area, are a direct benefit of the mythological setting. Examples are to be found at the end of the series in the sensuous, full length figure of the elephant-leading satyr in Boston (B19, where he represents an inspired break from the iconographically expected shaggy Pan), or the rippling arms and shoulders of Pan himself in the Pashley scene from the series' start (B14).

Both the expression of virtues and delight in myth as a key to exploring the sensual are detectable in the Dionysian triumph sarcophagi; what should be emphasised however is that initially these channels of meaning were not varied independent of regard for the other. For example, the tensioning of *virtus* we see in the Hercules at Woburn (A6) has the effect of creating an opportunity to explore — or rather, to enjoy — violence softened by the mythological register into attractive staffage.⁹¹ It is when these channels do become independent that we find the sort of scene in a Vatican Adonis sarcophagus from the end of the third century.⁹² There, the channel of virtue display has become dominant; the departure scene of Adonis leaving Venus has gained another figure, Venus has modestly covered up, and the group is driven closer to *concordia* scenes. Adonis' *virtus* is semaphored in broad

⁹¹On the desirability of its exploration cf. Newby (2014) 258 on Statius: 'his concentration on the grief and despair felt by the bereaved sets him in opposition to the philosophical calls to moderation in grief which appear in prose consolations.'

⁹²Zanker and Ewald (2012) fig. 191 and Ewald (2012) 45n14.

signs in later scenes showing his journey to the hunt and his death. Yet the channel through which sensational extremes were enjoyed has not only been suppressed but repressed. Adonis dies in an untroubled, seated posture, and looks to the honest viewer like a weary traveller pausing for a rest. The composition is paratactic and emotionally undemanding, in much the manner of pieces such as the Brothers' sarcophagus.⁹³

By this point Adonis' nudity is unusual; but the construction of his body suggests no particular delight in exploration of the form.⁹⁴ Similarly, the re-clothing of the hunter in lion-hunt sarcophagi is due to the separation of these two channels: the hunter's *virtus* is transmitted through the soldier's uniform, and the exploration of sensual form repressed.⁹⁵

In a recent article Ewald distinguishes his own interpretation from that of Zanker; for Zanker it is myth itself which is found to be problematic, and this is the motive force behind *Entmythologisierung*.⁹⁶ There certainly was a detectable turn away both from complex mythological stories and from mythology *per se* which must be attributed to a decline in its desirability in the funerary realm (as opposed to more widely). Yet for Ewald, it is the 'experiential quality' of the mythological scenes that causes difficulties, leading to a conscious shift away from 'somatocentric discourse' and a rejection of emotional expression or exploration of the sensual, which for the sake of

⁹³See p61n44.

⁹⁴Ewald (2012) 55n61.

⁹⁵For the trend see Ewald (2012) 59. That sarcophagi could modulate to support and thrive under strong shifts in rhetorical strategy is evidenced by their survival in explicitly Christian usage, whereas other forms of funerary art 'were not seen as useful or conducive to the new religious and cultural order', Elsner (2014b) 318.

⁹⁶Zanker and Ewald (2012) 256.

brevity I shall again call the process of desensualisation.⁹⁷ For him, it is a shift away from using mythology as a different register in which to express ideas, but rather a fantasy, a ‘necessary fiction’ which enabled the ‘experience of the self and the world around oneself.’⁹⁸ I see room for both of these processes to occur; that is, a diminishing of the desirability of mythological scenes coupled with a strong shift away from desires for the corporeality, emotion and sensuality which mythology itself brought. Evidence for this is that the detectable progression of *demythologisation* predates the detectable progression of *desensualisation*, though the two became increasingly coincident by the latter half of the third century.⁹⁹ Desensualisation cannot, sadly, be neatly explained; Ewald himself is surely correct in attributing part of its cause to the increasing popularity of philosophical expressions, and it was probably also encouraged by the turmoil of society in the period after the mid 230s. But such a large sociocultural paradigm shift defies neat encapsulation, and it would be a delicate task requiring constant qualification to attempt to factor in other influences as well, such as Christian rhetoric, the increasing possibilities for expressions of social rank, and so on.

I would therefore see mythological sarcophagi which Gessert saw as em-

⁹⁷Ewald (2012) 60 and n82 and 61n89 for a masterful list of emotionally demanding or charged myths with latest appearances generally in the Antonine period — none of those listed make it through the Severan period without heavy modifications, such as the Adonis scene discussed above.

⁹⁸Ewald (2012) 49n28, 48.

⁹⁹For *Entmythologisierung* without *desensualisation* see the Achilles and Penthesilea sarcophagus discussed above, p336. A later example in the British Museum (inv. no. 1947,0714.7, c. 300) also shows the independence of desensualisation and the shift away from mythology; Achilles holds Penthesilea who simply sags like a rag-doll, while he gazes away with apparent unconcern. Dying combatants recline rather like the Adonis discussed above, while it is only Achilles who has musculature which suggests an interest in its exploration — and even then his drooping wife, *paludamentum*, boots and shield mean that in practical terms only his torso is exposed.

bodying negative exempla, such as those rather strange ones which depict Medea, as a particular subset of the trend for exploring the sensual.¹⁰⁰ Certainly, it may well have been an intended facet of the mythological story that the patron's death is implied to be 'perfect and transcendent by comparison', but we should not expose this side of the story to the detriment of recognising the pleasure the family took in being able to understand the scholarly and theatrically popular myth, nor downplay the significance of *Brücken*, such as Medea's supernatural flight from that world recalling the departure of the family's beloved from their world.¹⁰¹ Gessert does not strongly bring out what is surely quite a significant fact: that Medea sarcophagi showing problematic elements of her mythological story are abandoned by the close of the first decade of the Severan period.

Identification of this movement and the change in ideology surrounding victory outlined in the coin of Caracalla above (p312) is congruent with the scene in *clipeus* sarcophagi. Here in the reign of Marcus Aurelius and up to the Severan period the customary figures placed below the central shield are grieving prisoners in the manner familiar from coinage.¹⁰² Either side of the shield appears Victoria in the posture of the Capuan Venus. However, these are dispensed with completely and later examples (which last up to at least Aurelian) reposition their iconography with dancing Pans or inoffensive

¹⁰⁰On negative *exempla* see Quint. *Inst.* 5.11.10, Gessert (2004).

¹⁰¹Gessert (2004) 237. Fittschen (1992) made the masterful suggestion that we are meant to identify Creusa with the deceased and not the murderous Medea; nevertheless, the choice to explore such a scene itself is what requires the most explanation. Moreover as Newby (2014) 278 insightfully observes, the narrative detail goes far beyond that which would be necessary to delineate the tragedy of Creusa and instead relishes depicting scenes from the mythology of Medea. Compare this with the narrative brevity we find on the Achilles and Penthesilea scene (sec. 5.3.4.1).

¹⁰²For which see p128n98.

theatrical masks.¹⁰³

Desensualisation in the funerary realm removes one of the key motivations behind the triumphal group, that of expressions of *luxuria*. These were a facet of the strongly triumphal group (A) but greatly emphasised in the quasi-triumphal series (B). Movement away from desirability for this expression rendered a large area of the genre's mechanisms of meaning increasingly obsolete.

5.3.4.3 Conclusions

The disappearance of this avenue of expression is the final thread in the contributory changes which bring about the end of the genre. We cannot place our finger on one simple cause — such an approach is reductive — but the genre seems particularly vulnerable to the types of change in funerary discourse which were occurring at the later period of their production. The genre's end is characterised by the increasing anachronism of the types of display to which this mythological scene seems most readily to lend itself. This prompted the variety and experimentation we see in the last years. Ultimately though, these experiments could not reinvigorate the group, nor could they compete with the more fitting genres we have examined above which more readily suited desired expressions. The Dionysian triumph group would give ground to other scenes which were able better to satisfy contemporary fashions, and it was very different sarcophagi which would come to dominate the later half of the third century and beyond.

¹⁰³IV.4: 260, 261, 262, 263 (Victoria and prisoners); 267, 271 (masks); 268, 269, 273 (Pans).

Chapter 6

Conclusion

This work began with a quotation from Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*. In many ways the ensuing study has taken as its point of departure the very questions that emperor urged we regularly examine, applying them to a fixed group of sarcophagi. The triumphal group represents an excitingly proximate mythological version of a scene so familiar in monumental relief and state numismatic imagery; however, while studies of the triumph have begun to recognise the imperial triumph as a process in flux, to be understood in its various instantiations rather than as a trans-historical fixed rite, such an analytical shift has not been applied to sarcophagi. The sarcophagi have not been closely examined for their individual presentation of meaning but instead considered as emanations from a notional 'type'. Such an approach has been challenged in this work.

It would be easy but unsound, given its detectability in studies of the triumph, to suggest that this is a failing of the sarcophagus corpora, which group pieces according to pre-selected criteria (which may, it emerges, have

greater or lesser validity). It is only through close comparison of the type facilitated by the corpora that variations become manifest, and it is only through the existence of the corpora that a study such as this was able to be undertaken.

6.1 Methodological approach

My approach has been to examine the breadth of meanings which could be connoted within an enclosed group of sarcophagi, those depicting the Indian triumph of Dionysus, which are otherwise frequently interpreted in mutually similar manners. It set out to undertake an examination of whether the constituent parts of sarcophagus relief ('motifs') could support changes in narrative direction, and what the co-operative effect of modulations was on the wider narrative network.

In order to effect this analysis I established a group of sarcophagi which satisfied criteria emerging from an analysis of the 'real-world' counterpart of the mythological triumph: representations on a state level. These two were in mutual communication. As part of this, I argued for the necessity of a standing *triumphator*. Rather than defining a group to imply necessarily that ancient perceptions would agree with the grouping my aim was to martial a group which ought to cohere in meaning, since the key contributory elements identified in the establishment of criteria were similar. Nevertheless, and in contrast to previous approaches, I proposed an initial division according to how explicit the allusion to state triumph imagery was, into Strongly Triumphant and Quasi-triumphant. By definition, the first group was found

to more strongly localise the martial realm than the latter. It was not, however, totally discrete in its emphasis and both overlap and mixed channels of meaning were found.

As part of my methodological approach I have explicitly eschewed the idea that the sarcophagi within a group necessarily all modulate in one area of meaning. Indeed in the ranges of my analysis I have attempted to show that ‘meaning’ cannot be absolutely quantified, and that instead elements contribute in different ways to generate meaning in separate areas. The hypothesis was that parts do not hold ‘more’ or ‘less’ meaning, but contribute differently to the whole. Far from emerging from sheer experiment, the motivation behind the hypothesis was that in considering every element of a relief as potentially governing meaning (a relief which, after all, was constructed not blindly but under some considerable physical and financial exertion), we form an interpretation which emerges from the monument itself, rather than one which echoes back to us our preconfigured interpretation of the scene.

Findings can be divided under several headings.

1. **Motifs are not *a priori* diagnostic tools.** Under testing, novel and previously attempted means of dividing the sarcophagi (such as by Dionysus’ figure type or chariot animal) turned out to be inadequate for predicting the intent of the rest of the relief. The value of this observation is that it implies the unsoundness of grouping sarcophagi according to selected elements which to us seem the primary focus. If Dionysus in the Dionysian triumph is not sufficient easily to group the objects then meaning must be collective, and the rest of the relief sub-

jected to equally close analysis. This has methodological implications for sarcophagus studies more widely.

2. **Motifs change in meaning and function.** This was hypothesised from the outset through the study of the panther, and observed in lion, elephant, and other animal motifs. Evidence for it more widely was demonstrated through the great modifications made to the Hercules figure types: the hero can be shown to develop an increasing interest in and involvement with the female at the end of the procession. While he increases in lasciviousness, she sheds her primary function as an officer within the *thiasus* leading the route around the edge and away from our perceptions, and becomes involved with Hercules.
3. **Motifs do not only hold one meaning.** The primary driver of this observation has been my focus on meaning parallel or complementary to religious/eschatological elements. I have stressed the polyvalency of funerary belief in the Roman world; by showing where meaning might lie I have not intended to preclude religious interpretations which may also be present in imagery (though several supposed cases have been shown to be less secure under analysis) but instead to show that this need not be the only function of imagery. This channel of meaning should not be privileged to the detriment of others.
4. **Motifs undergo sympathetic modelling to support changed tones.** This observation was supported throughout, perhaps most obviously in the changes to the animal skins. These can range from a limp fur to quasi-animated agent (often seen in the way the satyr's animal

skins eyeball wary panthers). This agency could be further nuanced to a violent and threatening tone (as the Woburn Hercules'). This has implications for the validity of approaches which employ iconographic elements as mechanisms of diagnosing tones without analysis of their presentation.

5. **Motifs require analysis *in situ*.** This emerged particularly from the study of the prisoners. Previous focus on ethnic origins was shown to be untenable from the outset given the eclectic menagerie of animals depicted. Significance was instead found in the complementary presence of favoured boys of the same race in addition to the bound elder members. This is an element which does not directly seem to emerge from triumphal imagery. It was interpreted not in a martial manner *per se* but instead as a comment on universality and even *consolatio*, which has obvious resonance within the funerary realm. The examination of drawn epitomes further supported the dangers of typification by demonstrating how the tone of a motif can be distorted by the artist; such distortion must effect our perception.

The findings above do not logically and necessarily privilege variation as the sole driver of meaning. A particular motif was found to be highly iconographically stable. The *cista mystica* was a symbol which was extraordinarily regular in its iconographic composition and interpretations have generally seen it as connoting rather bland religious atmospheres. However unlike many other iconographic elements the primary locus of this motif's significance was not on the object but what it held within it (notionally at least,

sacred apparatus). The nested microcosmic parallel thus drawn with the sarcophagus itself generates contextually relevant effects; both the *cista mystica* and the sarcophagus present to our eyes a surface only, yet negotiate their meaning through the promise of what they contain and conceal. In context the *cista mystica* is shown to act as a diagnostic indicator for the presence of Dionysus, which has an understandable function within the narrative; its mechanism of suggesting the god's arrival is what so strongly recommends it in scenes of parade, and especially scenes of the band arriving at the slumbering Ariadne, even though naturalistically its presence is incongruous (a travelling procession would quickly leave the *cistae mysticae* behind as it moved). But in semaphoring the presence of Dionysus it does not merely alert us to that god's presence but also the nature of the tomb space as one outside normal existence and itself a *locus religiosus*. Analogously the viewer is alerted to the presence of the deceased. As the *cista mystica* acts under the influence of the presence of the arriving *thiasus*, so by implication do the deceased receive and welcome the cultivation of the bereaved. The significance of this is that it emerges an apparently purely religious symbol can have experiential meaning which is relevant to the context.¹

6.2 Implications within sarcophagus studies

As a result my methodology emphasised a focus on the sarcophagus coming into existence not with trans-historical longevity in mind but with a distinct temporal function. By disentangling the diachronic origins of imagery

¹The funerary function described is further supported by the great rarity of *cistae mysticae* in mosaics depicting the Indian triumph.

from contextually far more pertinent ideas, significant observations emerged. These were divided into different studies: *Brücken*, the distancing effect of portraits, *epiphaneia* and the arrival of the viewer.

However, I would here urge a synthetic approach to these phenomena. They all emanate from the same desire. This is the desire of the patron/sculptor to generate a relief which effectively engages with its audience; it is detrimental to all analyses of sarcophagi to elide the specificity of their audience. Such elision is as tempting when viewing sarcophagi in brightly-lit museums about which the viewer is invited to perambulate disinterestedly, as when studying them, marshalled and typified, in sarcophagus volumes. We are in danger of neglecting the experiential effects the sarcophagus imagery embodies, and the interaction it encodes, exhibits or exhorts.

In the case of the Pashley *liknon* (B14) links with initiatory rites were severely challenged. Instead meaning was found to lie far more with reference to the bounteous fruits held within the *liknon*, which was subsequently lent credence by their resonance with the sympotic focus of this sarcophagus. General bridging effects (collected together under 5.1 ‘Points of Engagement’) emerged within the group as a whole under this species of analysis, and examples individual to sarcophagi were drawn out where relevant. A corollary of their detection in these instances is the cautionary fact that many other such effects must pass unnoticed because we simply lack the knowledge of the deceased which the intended audience had. Nowhere is this more acutely demonstrated than in the case of Vibius Liberalis (B19). Did Agesilaus select the design to play on the name? Though we can never know for sure, the case is instructive.

This very lack of knowledge proved methodologically significant in generating an awareness of the distancing effects of portraits. New understanding of the reasons behind compositional effects (such as Hercules' bracketing in A6) emerged from a systematic re-emphasis of interpretative positioning. While, as stated, we *gain information* about the unknown deceased through mythology, the bereaved viewer who knew the deceased had their recollections muddled and intermingled through the analogue; in some respects the dissolution of mythological portraits into deceased and *habitus* generates more relevant and powerful meaning than the fact of their conjunction. If this has seemed a bold stance, it should be understood alongside its historical context of the trend towards demythologisation and desensualisation. This methodology is most especially applicable to seemingly more problematic later scenes (such as Penthesilea and Achilles) in which recognition of demythologisation provides only a partial and somewhat unsatisfactory part of the answer. Recognition not only of the presence of the intended dissolution but also its power has offered exciting possibilities for reinterpreting the beginnings of the shift away from portraits in mythological guises.

Sarcophagi are, by nature, static objects. Though we know very little about the circumstances of their viewing, their location outside everyday life for the bereaved made their approach an 'event'. Sculptors therefore developed mechanisms for generating effects which would embrace this 'approach'. In some this was achieved through strongly didactic scenes of exemplary audience-response through manifestation of divinities (see sec. 4.6.2). The analogue here for the bereaved viewer approaching the sacred tomb space is clear. But others generated appropriate reception through engagement with

the kinaesthetic process of approaching the sarcophagus. This was made manifest though comparison with the Pannychis sarcophagus (D17), yet it is an effect which was plainly employable in other examples (A6 and B9 most obviously). In negotiating the instant of a viewer's arrival sarcophagi orchestrate what their patron/sculptor considered appropriate reception and engagement. This has methodological implications for sarcophagus studies more widely; a further study in this area would go some way towards ameliorating (though not substituting for) the loss of archaeological context in so many sarcophagi.²

These studies acted as litmus-tests for the effects the genre could, and was desired to, support. Rather than attempting to give a single catch-all interpretation for the genre's development and abandonment, we have teased out the interrelated processes which governed the genre's lifespan. Their desirability governed the group's generation; once tastes developed away from demanding certain effects, other sarcophagus designs took over. Though ever conscious not to imply temporal homogeneity, this analysis was designed to demonstrate that we cannot effectively excise sarcophagi from the horizon of their patron/sculptor's desires, wishes and expectations.

6.3 Areas of expansion

Analysis has not explicitly focussed on the tomb context. Given the peculiarly Roman fondness for and sophistication in pendant display, the effects

²New finds offer exciting opportunities, however; cf. Merola (2009).

generated may have been striking.³ Despite some sarcophagi (A1, the Baltimore sarcophagus from the ‘Licinian tomb’ most famously) offering opportunities to undertake such an approach, the lack of context for the majority of the group did not offer sufficient material to expose diachronic changes, or render findings rigorously testable on sufficient pieces without the introduction of a large volume of comparative material from other mythological groups.⁴ Constraints of space also rendered this avenue difficult to explore. In the case of A1 preliminary examination supports my hypotheses regarding the dangers with selecting a primary route of meaning from the several possible, since the assemblage in its original chamber emphasised both a military, martial atmosphere (through its appearance in a chamber with a Victories sarcophagus), but alongside this an emphasis on the arrival of Dionysus (through an Ariadne on Naxos scene), as well as (through the collection of three grand pieces of rare marble in one close chamber) the wealth and exotic taste of the patrons.⁵

Throughout this study the *clipeus* sarcophagi have been introduced as comparative material where appropriate, and it was demonstrated that they observe patterns found in the larger group (sec. 5.3.3.1). Brief examination showed that, for example, the selection of under-*clipeus* motif was strongly influenced by changing sensibilities. Given more space a wider comparative

³On this see Koortbojian (2002) 196 and within domestic spaces (emerging from rhetorical training), Lorenz (2014), Lorenz (2008), Elsner (2007b) 28-33, Bergmann (1994).

⁴On the Licinian tomb, see for example Meinecke (2014) B66, Kragelund et al. (2004), van Keuren et al. (2003), Bentz (1997), Ward-Perkins and Dodge (1992), Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen (1942). On context see Borg (2013), Meinecke (2014), Bielfeldt (2003).

⁵Victories sarcophagus: Walters Art Gallery Baltimore, inv. no. 23.36, Kragelund et al. (2004) cat. 23. Ariadne: Walters Art Gallery Baltimore, inv. no. 23.37, Kragelund et al. (2004) cat. 21, *ASR* IV.3: 216.

study of these would be profitable since, in a similar manner to the numismatic imagery I introduced as evidence, they can be shown to strip the scene down to suit their purpose, which is similar but slightly parallel to the linear processions.

6.4 Closing remarks

Applying the hypothesis that sarcophagi of the same *Mythenwahl* could support widely divergent meanings has led to some startling results. Our study has shown that sarcophagi do not sustain genre-level meanings. It is methodologically unsound to attribute similar meanings to pieces simply because they depict the same mythological characters in much the same setting and act. This line of argument, in which findings are unproblematically transferred between pieces, can lead to the suppression of distinct expressions. Instead we should conceptualise sarcophagi as offering a set of areas within which the sculptor might attune the direction of the iconography. The iconography is attuned by selection, adaptation and development of the constituent parts of a relief. Within the possible ranges of modifications some are capable of considerable overlap, others are mutually exclusive. Since the reliefs existed in a state of conceptual flux, we must be ever conscious that modern groupings are only best-fit exercises and do not necessarily reflect ancient perceptions. The attunement nevertheless emerges as bounded; the genre is not modulated beyond a certain point, but dies away when it can no longer satisfy. The validity of this statement is clear from examination of its limits; the Dionysian triumph group would not sustain modifications

necessary when fashions and desires within the funerary realm changed beyond a fixed point just following the Severan period. Modulations were made within a matrix which had a theoretical limit. Recognition that modulation must operate within bounds is important in nuancing trends in sarcophagus production beyond merely changes in the popularity of different myths.⁶

⁶See Perry (2005) 111-22 on similar bounds in assembling models in rhetoric and their application to the visual arts.

Appendix A

Catalogue

| Category | Group |
|----------|-------------------------------|
| A | Strongly triumphal sarcophagi |
| B | Quasi-triumphal sarcophagi |
| C | Rejected/false pieces |
| D | Comparative sarcophagi |

A: Strongly Triumphal Sarcophagi

A1: Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore

Plate I.

Inv. no: 23.31.

Dimensions: Body: L: 2.34 H: 0.99 D: 0.99; Lid: L: 2.37 H: 0.32 D: 0.99.

Condition: Very minor chips, light plasterwork repairs.

Lid: Three scenes. The first shows the deathbed of Semele, then the thigh-birth of Dionysus, lastly the childhood of the god. The third scene is unevenly large.

Front: Panther-drawn chariot. Dionysus stands crowned in chariot, Victoria behind. Mahout satyr guiding elephant behind chariot team. Satyr leading panthers. Further two elephants centrally, bearing booty and 'Indian' prisoners, mahout satyrs on each. Elderly Silenus with thick staff near giraffe, satyr with lion, priestess closing parade.

Ends: Mirrored griffins with paw on ram's head (RHS); the same scene but only right griffin roughed out (LHS).

ASR: IV.2: 95.

Date: 190-210 (see p227).

Bibliography: Ako-Adounvo (1999) cat. 37, Bartman (1993), Bentz (1997), Gabelmann (1992) pl. 21, Gasparri (1986) cat. 133 = 142 = 245, van Keuren et al. (2003), Koch and Sichtermann (1982) 192, 254, Kondoleon (1994) 195, Kragelund et al. (2004) 55-65 cat. 22, Lenzen (1960) 6, McCann (1977), McCann (1978) 88-90, Meinecke (2014) B66 no. 9, Rasmussen (2001), Snowden (1970) 149-50, Toynbee (1973) 49, Ward-Perkins and Dodge (1992) 39-54,

Zanker and Ewald (2012) 329-34, 143-4.¹

A2: Casino Rospigliosi, Rome

Plate II.

Dimensions: L: 2.25 H: 0.87.

Condition: Minor damage to surface, especially some limbs and tips of features. Light restoration.

Front: Dionysus attended by Victoria in panther-drawn chariot, Pan leading, elephant with mahout behind. 'Indian' prisoners on elephant with booty. Giraffe in parade, Silenus riding a lion. Satyr riding a camel at right (?) with walking 'Indian' prisoner.

ASR: IV.2: 96.

Date: 190-200 (Matz).

Bibliography: Ako-Adounvo (1999) cat. 38, Kondoleon (1994) 197, 211.

A3: Museo Capitolino, Sala delle Colombe

Plate III.

Inv. no: 81a.

Dimensions: L: 2.26 H: 0.88.

¹The bibliographies given here are intended to cover larger treatments of the sarcophagi only; they do not cover works published before Matz' catalogue (unless especially significant to this discussion). A full bibliography prior to the date of publication can be found in the latter. A full concordance with Turcan (1966) can be found in Matz (1975) 539-42.

Condition: Damage to tips of detail; large lunate-shaped restoration in upper right half.

Front: Dionysus crowned in panther-drawn chariot, Pan leading. Pair of 'Indian' prisoners mounted on elephant, pair of camels behind. Elephant playing with panther. Maenad observing, with Silenus leaning on thick staff, forming a division of scene. Next scene shows drunken, supported Hercules interacting with a maenad (apple in her hand incorrect restoration).

ASR: IV.2: 97.

Date: 190-200 (Matz).

Bibliography: Ako-Adounvo (1999) cat. 38.

A4: Palazzo Giustiniani, Rome

Plate IV.

Inv. no: E424.

Dimensions: L: 2.64 H: 0.79.

Condition: Light damage to upper register and some faces/limbs.

Front: Dionysus crowned in panther-drawn chariot, Pan leading. Prisoners on elephant, torch-bearing sober Silenus, torch-bearing sober naked Hercules in lion-skin helmet; scene of offering at end.

ASR: IV.2: 98.

Date: around 210 (Matz).

A5: Cliveden, Buckinghamshire

Plate V.

Dimensions: L: 2.31 H: 1.03.

Condition: Several large pieces missing, several large restorations in plasterwork.

Front: Dionysus crowned in panther-drawn chariot, Pan leading. Mixed prisoners on elephant or camel behind. Elephant interacting with panther at bottom, tone unclear. Sober Silenus leaning on staff, sober Hercules naked but for helmet with observing woman at right.

ASR: IV.2: 99.

Date: around 210 (Matz).

Bibliography: Ako-Adounvo (1999) cat. 41.

A6: Woburn Abbey, Bedfordshire

Plate VI and VII.

Dimensions: L: 2.43 H: 1.12.

Condition: Sawn down the middle, front cut away from body. Tips of limbs restored, some limbs entirely, right hand side and upper register lightly.

Front: The figures in the relief appear roughly half life-sized within an upper and lower frame (c. 0.035m). Dionysus crowned by flying Victoria in panther-drawn chariot, Pan leading. 'Indian' prisoners on elephant which is crushing panther at base. Hercules with portrait face (Macrinus period) standing in chariot drawn by lively centaur team. Hip-herm at end.

Ends: Sawn away except for a small part (c. 0.18m). Remains suggest male

dancing satyr with dangling animal skin (RHS); left hand of prancing maenad (LHS).

ASR: IV.2: 100.

Date: Time of Macrinus (Angelicooussis), late reign of Caracalla (Gabelmann), 210-220 (Matz).

Bibliography: Ako-Adounvo (1999) cat. 42, Angelicooussis et al. (1992) 75-7, Birk (2013) cat. 589, Gabelmann (1992) 63, Gasparri (1986) cat. 246, McCann (1977) 134, McCann (1978) 93, Newby (2010) 203-4, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 156-7.

A7: Musée St. Pierre, Lyon

Plate VIII.

Dimensions: L: 2.26 H: 1.03 D: 0.11.

Condition: Tips of faces and ends of limbs broken away.

Front: Dionysus crowned by Victoria in panther-drawn chariot, Pan leading 'Indian' prisoners on elephant, camel behind. Hercules in lion-skin quite drunk, supported but staggering, pawing at interested female figure.

Ends: Ithyphallic pan with *lagobolon* and pipes, phallopetal snake emerging from *cista mystica* at feet (LHS). Maenad with lyre being grasped by satyr, both looking round to front side (RHS). Note how the slipping drapery of the female figure on the front exposes full buttocks to the figures on the RHS.

ASR: IV.2: 101.

Date: 220-30 (Matz).

Bibliography: Ako-Adounvo (1999) cat. 43, Turcan (1999) 108.

A8: Belvedere, Vatican

Plate IX.

Inv. no: 75.

Dimensions: L: 2.05 H: 0.76.

Condition: A lot of surface detail worn away and significant damage to upper part especially but over the whole surface.

Front: Dionysus crowned in centaur-drawn chariot. Pan seemingly leading lion in front. Bound, walking prisoners, *liknaphoros*, outward-glaring Silenus, elephant and female attending to altar.

ASR: IV.2: 105.

Date: 190-210 (Matz).

Bibliography: Ako-Adounvo (1999) cat. 44, Spinola (1996) 69.

A9: Uffizi, Florence

Plate X.

Inv. no: 1914/152.

Dimensions: L: 1.96 H: 0.51 T: 0.53.

Condition: Only light surface damage to fine details.

Front: Dionysus attended by Victoria with wings outspread stands in centaur-drawn chariot. Drunken satyr naked staring outward/backward. Semele or Ariadne stands in a panther-drawn chariot attended by Pan while an out-

ward looking satyr stands next to her. Bound and solemn prisoners walk ahead while infant riders mount the panthers.

Ends: Sitting griffins, facing towards relief (both ends).

ASR: IV.2: 115.

Date: Early Antonine, around 150 (Matz).

Bibliography: Gasparri (1986) cat. 242, McCann (1978) 89-6.

A10: Villa Medici, Rome

Plate XI.

Dimensions: L: 1.83 H: 0.37.

Condition: Severe abrasion to surface detail.

Front: Dionysus facing forwards with cowed-satyr in elephant-drawn chariot.

Panther in front ridden by Silenus. Large horse (?) to rear, scene with Pan and satyrs leading a lion. Walking, bound prisoners with prisoner on donkey.

ASR: IV.2: 130.

Date: Mid C2 (Matz).

Bibliography: Beard (2007) 316-8, Gasparri (1986) cat. 243.

A11: Palazzo Albani (Palazzo del Drago), Rome

Plate XII.

Dimensions: Body: L: 1.85 H: 0.50.

Condition: The object is now lost and has been since at least 1925. The front and sides were separated, presumably in order to mount the former as

in A6.

Front: On the evidence of the Cambridge-type Dionysus, probably an elephant-drawn procession. Unusually the god and his wagon are in the centre of the image. The procession cannot be complete as the figures at either end are cut. Left of the chariot group are Indian figures on horseback (prisoners?); right we find a panther ridden by a youth and *putti* riding the elephants. A leftward staring satyr stands at the head of the team, while later we find Indian females (?) on camels (?).

Ends: Baetyl, dancing maenad with tambourine and panther watching the swing of her drapery, and a satyr hefting an enormous krater (LHS); trumpeter with an extremely large instrument, bound prisoner, standing female (?) figure, and next to them an utterly naked satyr and baetyl.

ASR: IV.2: 131.

Date: Early Antonine (Matz).

A12: Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome

Plate XIII.

Inv. no: 8566.

Dimensions: L: 2.11 H: 0.62 D: 0.69.

Condition: Severe damage to surface; many places of abrasion or missing parts.

Front: Dionysus in elephant-drawn chariot with Victoria holding palm-branch. Elephant crushing panther. Altar centrally; satyrs playing instruments, dancing maenads, hip-herm at right.

Ends: Ecstatically dancing satyr (LHS); satyr with double-flute, Dionysus right with *thyrsus* and *cantharus*.

ASR: IV.2: 138.

Date: Early Severan (Matz).

Bibliography: Gasparri (1986) cat. 244.

A13: Lateran, Rome

Plate XIV.

Inv. no: 10428.

Dimensions: L: 2.10 H: 0.90 D: 1.12.

Condition: Good, but some parts missing, including entire limbs or heads.

Front: Dionysus with grapes in hair attended by Victoria, in elephant-drawn chariot. 'Indian' youths riding elephants. Silenus walking. Centaur centrally ridden by corkscrew-curved youth. Satyr with goat at altar at right.

Ends: Satyr pursuing maenad (LHS); similar scene with figures facing, tree between (RHS).

ASR: IV.2: 139.

Date: Early Severan (Matz).

Bibliography: McCann (1978) 90, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 133-4.

A14: Villa Doria Pamphili, Rome

Plate XV.

Condition: Good.

Front: Dionysus with Victoria holding palm-branch in late placed elephant-chariot. Older 'Indian' boys, almost adults, riding elephants; adult 'Indian' prisoners later in relief on camel. Flamboyantly gesturing garlanded satyr at right end next to fully clothed female attending to cult statue.

ASR: IV.2: 141.

Date: Early Severan (Matz).

Bibliography: Ako-Adounvo (1999) cat. 45.

A15: Antiquario Flegreo, Pozzuoli

Plate XVI.

Note: *lenos-shaped.*

Dimensions: L: 2.02 H: 0.59

Condition: Missing: rear; left hand in larger part; front upper part of Dionysus in chariot.

Front: Lion-head bosses left and right (left missing). Panther-drawn procession, with 'Indian' boys riding. Pan leading the team. 'Indian' prisoners on elephant centrally, with elephant attacking panther while mask on floor looks on. Number of exotic animals. Overall composition similar to A6.

Ends: Remains of human and panther legs (LHS); ithyphallic Pan, *cista mystica* and phallopetal snake (RHS).

ASR: IV.1: 58A.

Date: 200-225.

Bibliography: Ako-Adounvo (1999) cat. 40.

A16: Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican**Plate XVII.**

Note: *A fragment.*

Dimensions: H: 0.60.

Condition: All that remains is the chariot, its rider and the leftmost maenad.

Front: Maenad striding; inside the triumphal chariot is Dionysus with grape-bedecked hair. He holds onto a chariot with Pan, a satyr and lion, and bound prisoner decorating the front (hence inclusion in this group). It is not absolutely certain that this is not from a *clipeus* sarcophagus.

ASR: IV.2: 94.

Date: Mid C2.

Bibliography: Liverani (1989) XIX.1.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate I: A1. From Matz (1968b) pl. 116.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate II: A2. From Matz (1968b) pl. 122.1.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate III: A3. From Matz (1968b) pl. 122.2.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate IV: A4. From Matz (1968b) pl. 121.1.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate V: A5. From Matz (1968b) pl. 124.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate VI: A6. From Matz (1968b) pl. 126.

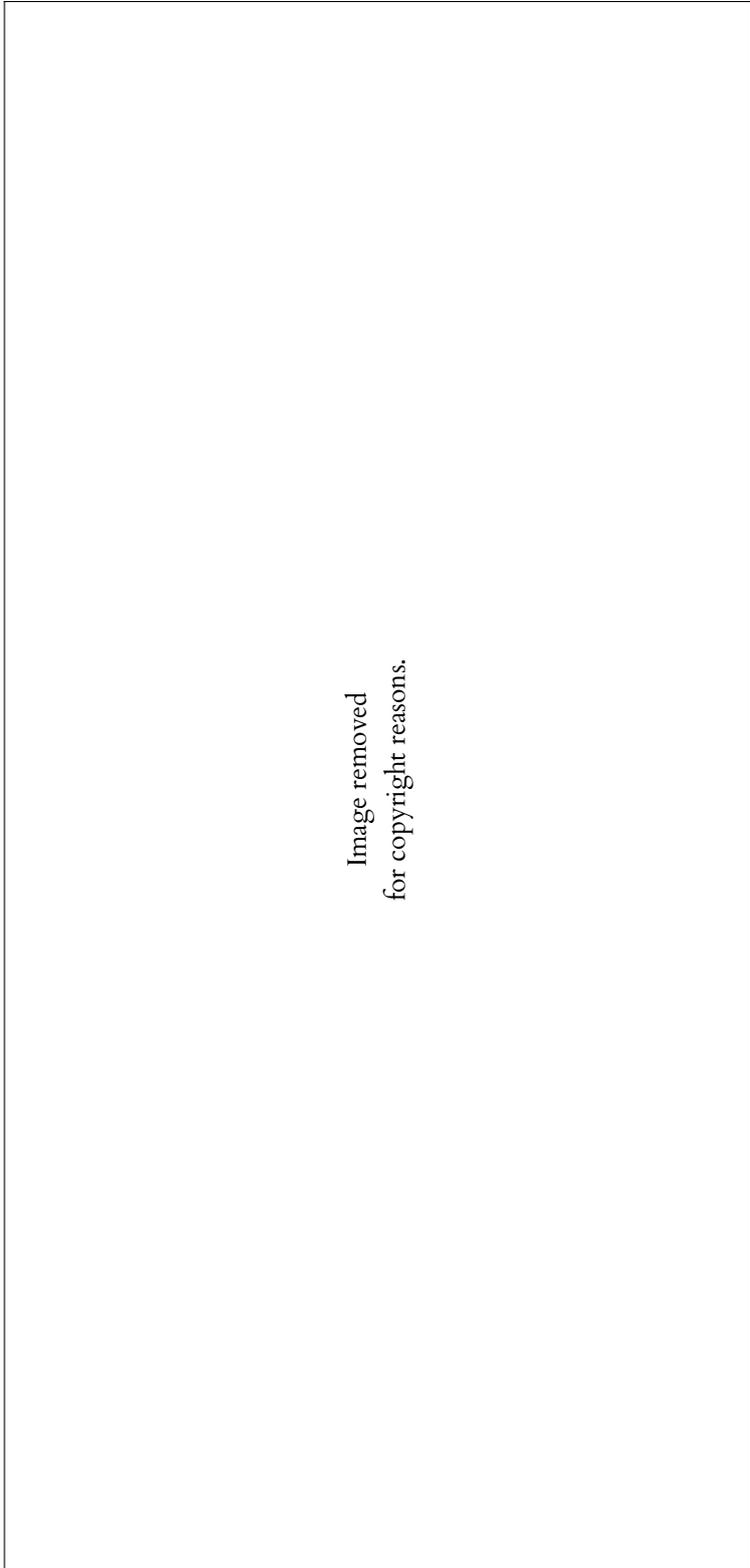


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate VII: Image illustrating the restorations on the Woburn Abbey sarcophagus; compiled from information in Angelicoussis et al. (1992) 75-6 and the Coburgensis drawing (ibid, fig. 26). Adapted from Matz (1968b) pl. 126.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate VIII: A7. From Matz (1968b) pl. 127.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate IX: A8. From Matz (1968b) pl. 134.1.

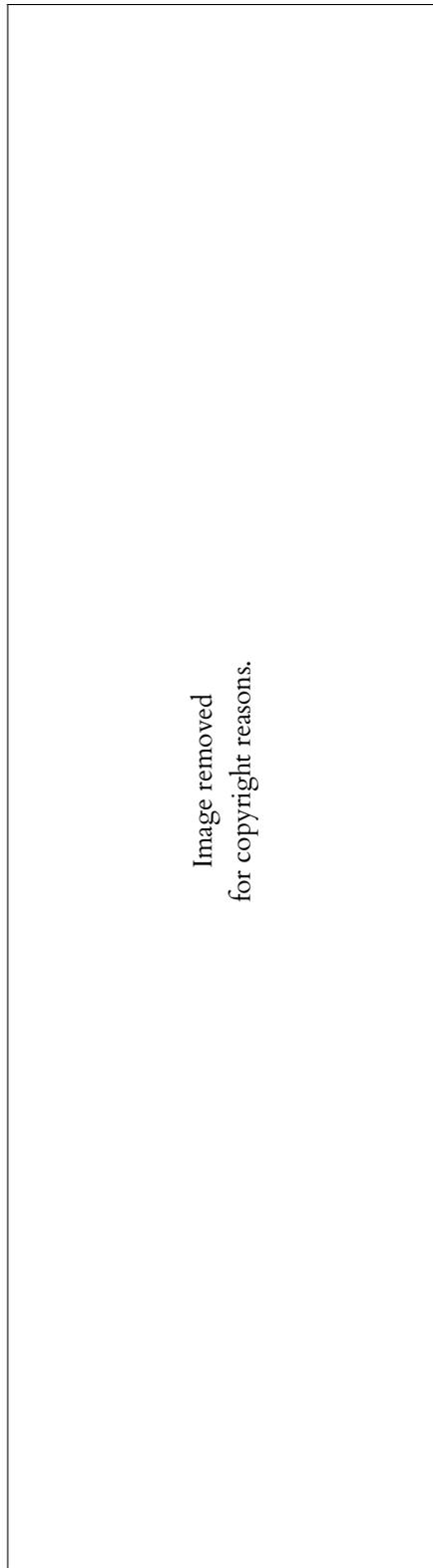


Plate X: A9. From Matz (1968b) pl. 135.2.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XI: A10. From Matz (1968b) pl. 158.1.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XII: A11. From Matz (1968b) pl. 159.1.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XIII: A12. From Matz (1968b) pl. 165.

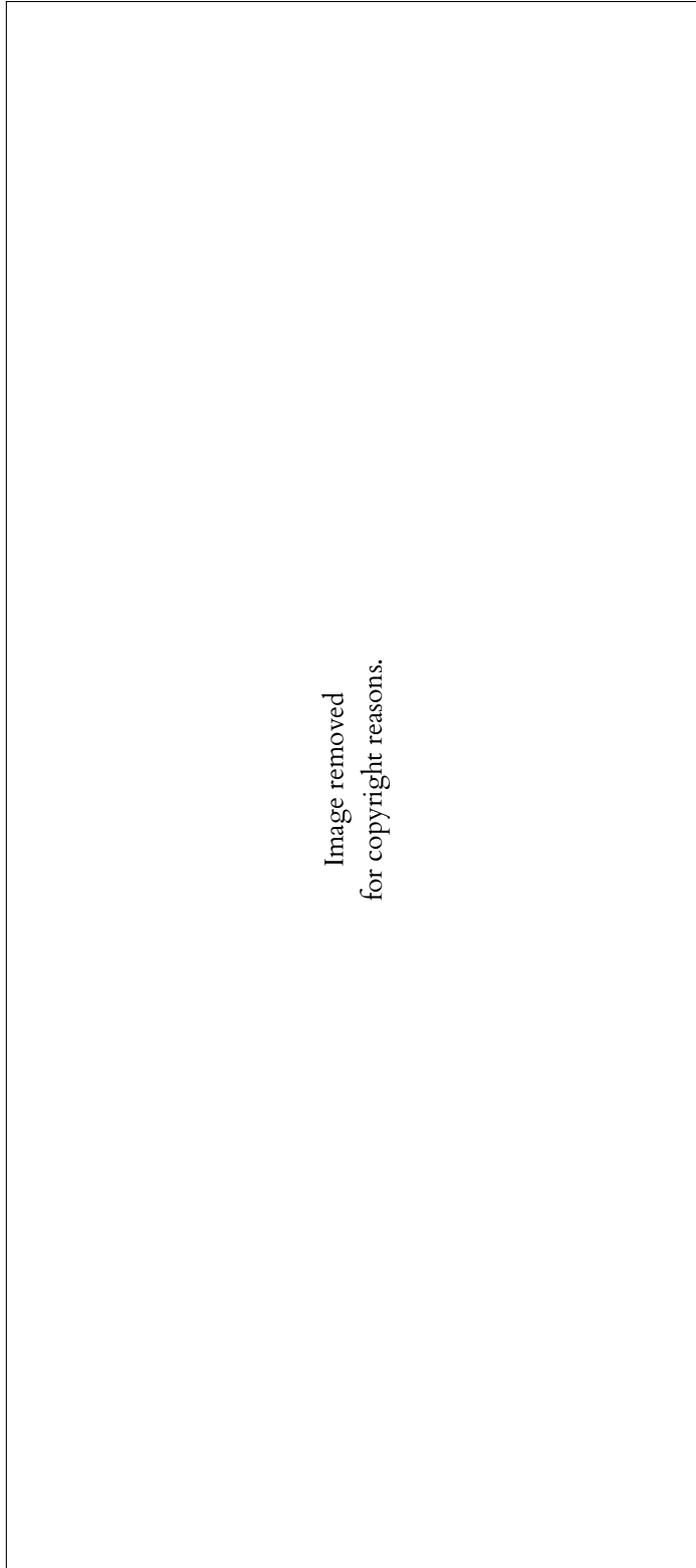


Plate XIV: A13. From Zanker and Ewald (2012) fig. 121.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XV: A14. From Matz (1968b) pl. 158.2.

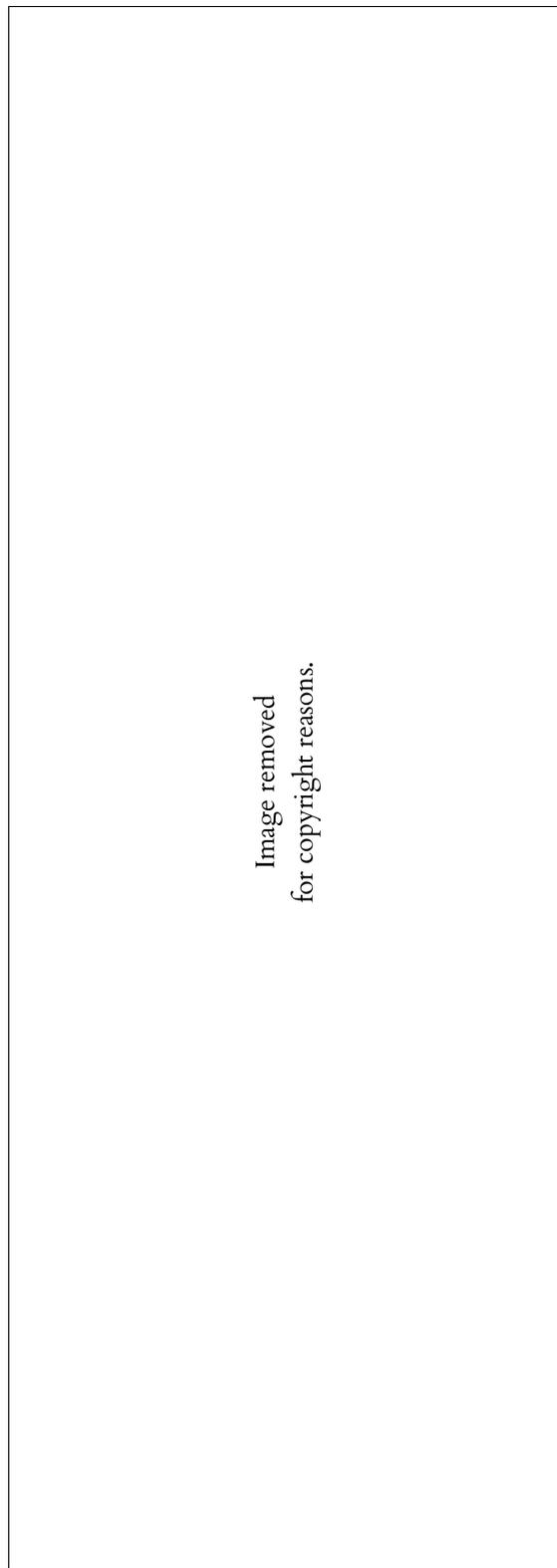


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XVI: A15. From Matz (1968a) pl. 76.1.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XVII: A16. From Matz (1968a) pl. 123.3.

B: Quasi-Triumphal sarcophagi

B1: Museo Nazionale, Naples

Plate XVIII.

Inv. no: 6693.

Dimensions: L: 2.28 H: 0.58 D: 0.71.

Condition: Light damage to frame. Otherwise good. Since Matz' work was published the restorations (lower right corner, leftmost centaur's arm, and some other minor details) have been removed.

Front: Dionysus leaning in a centaur-driven chariot in sinuous contraposto with drapery slipping off exposing a soft yet sensuous torso. Centaurs playing instruments. Pan dancing over *cista mystica*. Silenus reclines on wagon with stumbling donkey-team while satyr pulls donkeys onwards; satyr *moschophoros* at right.

Ends: Dancing maenad with *tympanon*, ithyphallic satyr showing interest with outward-staring panther skin (LHS); satyr stealing upon sleeping Ariadne (RHS). Though shallower than the frontal relief, these ends are unusually deeply carved.

ASR: IV.2: 106.

Date: 160-70 (Matz). See also under dating for B3.

Bibliography: Gabelmann (1992) 41-9, 54-67, pl. 13.2.

B2: Palazzo Rospigliosi, Zagarolo

Plate XIX.

Condition: Great deal of damage to upper portion of relief and details of surface.

Front: Similar in composition to B1, except for Dionysus being completely naked, a tree between Pan, the double-flute playing maenad and several other details.

Ends: Differ from B1; ithyphallic satyr approaching drum-playing maenad (LHS); maenad with *thyrsus* holding out grapes for prancing panther.

ASR: IV.2: 107.

Date: 160-70 (Matz). See also under dating for B3.

Bibliography: Gabelmann (1992) 41-9, 54-67, pl. 13.1.

B3: Museo delle Terme, Rome

Plate XX.

Inv. no: 128577.

Dimensions: L: 1.98 H: 0.47 D: 0.44, H lid: 0.15.

Condition: Light damage, mainly confined to upper frame, more damage to tree in right third.

Lid: Reclining banqueters, Dionysus and Ariadne central.

Front: Dionysus holding cup supported by satyr, standing in centaur-drawn chariot veiled with *parapetasma*. Shambling panthers between figures. Silenus on stumbling donkey-cart. Gesticulating satyr perhaps an elaboration after satyr of B1, whose similar gesture holds up *parapetasma*. Tree dividing scene of shallow *liknophoros* and dancing Pan over *cista mystica* with emerging phallopetal snake.

Ends: Satyr dancing next to altar (LHS); same motif, slightly wilder (RHS).

ASR: IV.2: 108.

Date: Late Antonine (Matz). Gabelmann (1992) 41-3 sees B1 and B2 as from the same workshop but dates B1 to 170-80 and B2 to 160-70, a reversal of Turcan (1966) 176n10, 189 who places B2 later than B1. Gabelmann also places B3 earlier than than B1 and B2 on stylistic grounds. I cannot agree, since the gesturing satyr by Silenus' wagon on B3 is a remnant of the figure's purposeful gesture in B1 and B2, where he holds the *parapetasma*, who is retained on compositional grounds even though his original purpose has been modified.

B4: Campo Santo, Pisa

Plate XXI.

Inv. no: XX.

Dimensions: L: 2.18 H:0.58.

Condition: Most of the ancient surface has been abraded obscuring much fine detail.

Front: Dionysus with cup, veiled by *parapetasma*, stands in centaur-drawn chariot. Lions and panthers in a mostly figure dominated scene. Stumbling-donkeys draw a low wagon with two female figures inside. Satyr at right pulls donkey onwards; his musculature does not seem naturalistically rendered to reflect his action.

Inscription: ... CONIVG

ASR: IV.2: 112.

Date: 160-70.

B5: Oratorio di S. Andrea, Rome

Plate XXII.

Dimensions: L: 2.07 H: 0.45 D: 0.64.

Condition: Extremely worn surface.

Front: Dionysus stands in centaur-drawn procession. Silenus standing, un-surprisingly unsteadily, in a donkey-pulled wagon. He is supported by figures who may be inside the chariot. Cult statue at right-hand end attended by maenad.

Ends: Sphinx before tripod (both ends).

ASR: IV.2: 113.

Date: Late Antonine (Matz).

B6: Lost piece from Palazzo S. Croce, Rome

Plate XXIII.

Condition: Only known now from a drawing in the Carpio Album, held by the Society of Antiquaries, London. There is apparently a large lunate piece (approximately one quarter of the sarcophagus' length) missing from the monument centrally.

Front: Unusual leftward flow (may not reflect the direction of the original monument). Dionysus (S. Agostino type) leans on a satyr. The chariot is centaur-pulled. The front centaur holds aloft a very large bowl around

which panthers curl (cf. bowl on B19). A *liknophoros* appears centrally, while Silenus stands in a double donkey drawn chariot at a sharp angle, supported by another satyr. One satyr is inside, one satyr without the chariot. The scene is closed by *moschophoros*.

ASR: IV.2: 114.

Date: Around 150 (Matz), though clearly this date is tentative at best.

B7: S. Agostino, Genoa

Plate XXIV.

Dimensions: L: 2.42, H: 0.62.

Condition: Fracture from upper register. Upper frame restored.

Front: Dionysus behind *parapetasma* standing in centaur-drawn chariot. Pan leading lion mounted by *putto* in front. Shocked-looking Silenus on stable, harnessed donkey wearing cloth. Naked satyr leading goat towards altar at right hand end, attended by women. Raised, bearded statue of a deity, presumably Dionysus, at right.

ASR: IV.2: 116.

Date: Around 150 (Matz).

Bibliography: Gasparri (1986) cat. 249, McCann (1978) 89.

B8: Museo Nazionale delle Terme, Rome

Plate XXV.

Dimensions: L: 2.03 H:0.61 T: 0.59.

Condition: Very bad damage to the surface which is almost entirely abraded in some places. Other parts missing.

Front: Centaur-drawn chariot. Centaurs are unusually long-legged; Dionysus too of unusual proportions with wide hips and narrow waist. A panther darts between the centaurs' legs. Silenus on a stable donkey, but drunken and supported by satyr. 'Indian' prisoner on foot towards middle (?). Musicians close parade at right.

Ends: Wildly-dancing satyr in star-formed posture, with panther (LHS). Seated male with standing male who seems to be engaging with the front relief. Matz (1968b) 259 identified the seated figure as Marsyas.

ASR: IV.2: 117.

Date: Early Severan (Matz).

B9: Museo Nazionale, Naples

Plate XXVI.

Inv. no: 6776.

Dimensions: L: 2.18 H: 0.87 D: 0.97.

Condition: Near complete.

Front: Dionysus holding cup standing in centaur-chariot, in *parapetasma*. Phallopetal snakes emerging from *cistae mysticae* below centaur, while winged *putti* ride on the centaur. Hercules, naked and drunken, staggers while gazing at female centrally, who holds up her drapery but meets his gaze. *liknaphoros* with unconcealed phallus, satyr staring outward next to her. Ithyphallic Pan leading lion while dancing over *cista mystica*, while impossibly contorted

satyr closes parade.

Ends: Griffin with paw resting on ram's head.

ASR: IV.2: 118.

Date: Early Severan (Matz).

Bibliography: Zanker and Ewald (2012) 137-8.

B10: Villa Medici, Cagiano de Azevedo, Rome

Plate XXVII.

Inv. no: 28.

Dimensions: L: 2.00 H: 0.60.

Condition: Heavy damage to upper register.

Front: Dionysus in later-placed centaur-drawn chariot. Silenus marching sober. Scene divided by tree trunk, showing maenad and crouching satyr probably allowing an infant satyr to drink.

ASR: IV.2: 119.

Date: Early Severan (Matz).

B11: Palazzo Mattei, Rome

Plate XXVIII.

Dimensions: approx. L: 1.10.

Condition: Much damage, some restoration.

Front: Dionysus leaning heavily on satyr in centaur-drawn chariot. Silenus and Hercules in conversation right of centre echo this posture. Satyr holding

wineskin at right, while final figures are a bearded satyr holding an infant horizontally. This is identified by Matz as a boisterous game (*übermütiges Spiel*).

ASR: IV.2: 120.

Date: Early Severan (Matz).

B12: Museo delle Terme, Rome

Plate XXIX.

Note: *Small fragment.*

Condition: Fragment, displaying enough to strongly suggest triumphal.

Front: Dionysus standing in centaur pulled chariot, panther darting between legs. Maenad following with Pan next. Wagon carved with *cista mystica* and dancing Pan.

ASR: IV.2: 124.

Date: Late Antonine (Matz).

Bibliography: la Rocca and Tortorella (2008) 114.

B13: Sir John Soane's Museum, London

Plate XXX.

Note: *Small fragment.*

Dimensions: approx. L: 0.32 H: 0.58.

Condition: Fragment, displaying enough to strongly suggest triumphal.

Front: Dionysus supported by cowed satyr in centaur-drawn chariot, tail of panther visible between centaur's legs. Further satyr with cup.

ASR: IV.2: 125.

Date: Late Antonine (Matz).

B14: Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Plate XXXI.

Inv. no: GR.1.1835.

Dimensions: Body: L: 2.17 H: 0.49 D: 0.63 Lid: 2.21 H: 0.25 D: 0.67.

Condition: Assembled from broken pieces and plastered together; the plastering means the lid cannot now be removed.

Lid: Reclining feasters balanced around central couple (Dionysus and Ariadne, probably).

Front: Carrara marble. Dionysus facing forwards with extremely cowed satyr in centaur-drawn chariot. Pan dancing contortedly over *krater* in place of usual *cista mystica*. Rearward gesturing Silenus centrally; elephant with reclining *thiasus*-members in semblance of journeying to a picnic. Satyr, naked, with wineskin at right; panther eyeing his dangling animal skin nervously closes procession.

Ends: Putti supporting ithyphallic Pan (LHS); older and younger satyrs swinging infant Dionysus in *liknon* with fruits (RHS).

ASR: IV.2: 129.

Date: Second quarter of C2 (Matz and Budde, Nicholls); c. 150 (Zanker and Ewald).

Bibliography: Budde and Nicholls (1964) 98-102 no. 161, Burn (2013) 121-6, Harrison (1903a), Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen (1942) 29n57, Nilsson (1957) 106-10, Pashley (1837) 2-19, Toynbee (1973) 49, Vout (2007) 161, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 154, 275.

B15: Villa Doria Pamphili, Rome

Plate XXXII.

Dimensions: L: 2.00 H: 0.58.

Condition: Minor damage.

Front: Dionysus in elephant drawn chariot with 'Indian' youths riding. Tightly packed relief. Pan, garlanded, leading elephants. Muscular, staggering and drunken Hercules with female who has slipping drapery. At right hand end, figures at altar before cult statue of bearded male (Dionysus?).

ASR: IV.2: 140.

Date: Between early and late Severan (Matz).

B16: Casino Rospigliosi, Rome

Plate XXXIII.

Dimensions: Body: L: 2.05 H: 0.47.

Condition: Light plaster repair to surface.

Front: An unusual leftward flow. Ignoring for a moment the figures behind Dionysus, the god leans heavily back in his chariot on Silenus. Centaurs with musical instruments pull the chariot. A lion is ridden by a chubby *putto* while

Pan dances over an open *cista mystica*. Further musicians close the scene before another motif of a female musician by an altar. Behind Dionysus at the right is an enigmatic scene of *epiphaneia* (see discussion p282).

ASR: IV.2: 151.

Date: Late Severan (Matz).

B17: Palazzo Mattei, Rome

Plate XXXIV.

Note: *lenos-shaped*.

Dimensions: L: 1.30

Condition: Missing: parts aside from front flat panel. Damage at upper centre

Front: Lion-head bosses left and right. Dionysus stands in panther-drawn procession, led by naked satyr. Silenus on donkey centrally, supported by club bearing satyr (perhaps Hercules?). Adult satyr attends to inquisitive infant satyr at right while *putto* and panther inspect a *cista mystica* beneath the right lionhead. Several masks litter the ground.

ASR: IV.1: 58.

Date: Early Severan (Matz).

B18: Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, Michigan

Plate XXXV.

Inv. no: 1981.3.1.

Dimensions: L: 1.83 H: 0.41.

Condition: Assembled from several large fragments, otherwise very good.

Front: Dionysus and female figure in centaur-drawn chariot; *cistae mysticae* of two different types on ground. Silenus carried in swag in figure-dominated procession.

Ends: Satyr with drum by tree, musculature and proportions strikingly different from those of the front (LHS); satyr with *thyrsus* by *cista mystica* with emerging snake (RHS).

Date: Second half of C2 (De Grummond). Later Hadrianic / Early Antonine? See discussion p266.

Bibliography: de Grummond (2000b).

B19: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Plate XXXVI.

Inv. no: 1972.650.

Dimensions: Body: L: 2.08 H: 0.59; Lid: L: 2.08 H: 0.185.

Condition: Very light damage to body of sarcophagus; portions of lid missing entirely. Unrestored.

Lid: Balanced feasting scene (Dionysus and Ariadne centre).

Front: Dionysus standing in elephant-drawn chariot with satyr; winged *putti* ride. Chariot led (?) by naked satyr, Silenus tousling lion near centre. *Liknaphoros* and giraffe in shallower relief, with ecstatic *thiasus* dancing. At right, Hercules, drunken, naked and supported, interacts with female holding her drapery up.

Inscription: M ~ VIBIO ~ M ~ FIL ~ LIBERALI ~ PRAET ~ M ~ VIBIVS
~ AGESILAVS ~ IVNIOR ~ NVTRICIO ~ SVO ~ FEC.

Ends: Shallow griffins.

Date: 215-25 (MFA).

Bibliography: Comstock and Vermeule (1976) 152-3, Gabelmann (1992)
pl. 21.2, Várhelyi (2010) 183, Wrede (2001) 15, 39.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XVIII: B1. From Matz (1968b) pl. 144.2.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XX: B3. From Matz (1968b) pl. 134.2.

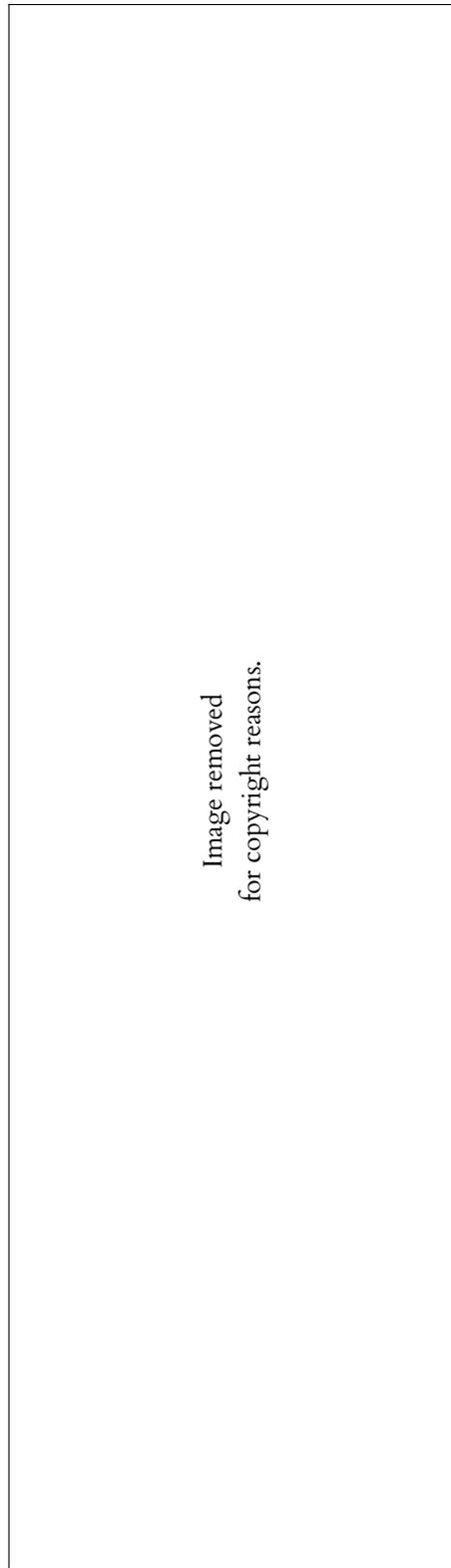


Plate XXI: B4. From Matz (1968b) pl. 142.1.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXII: B5. From Matz (1968b) pl. 143.2.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXIII: B6. From Matz (1968b) pl. 147.3.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXIV: B7. From Matz (1968b) pl. 135.1.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXVI: B9. From Matz (1968b) pl. 138.1.

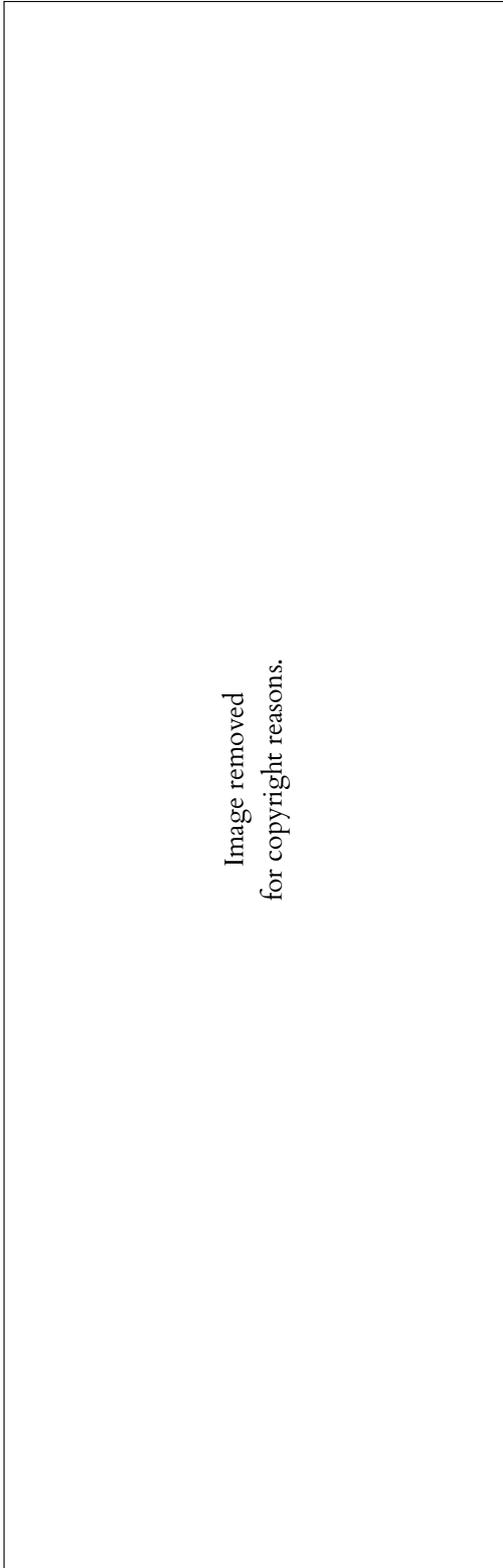


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXVII: B10. From Matz (1968b) pl. 138.2.

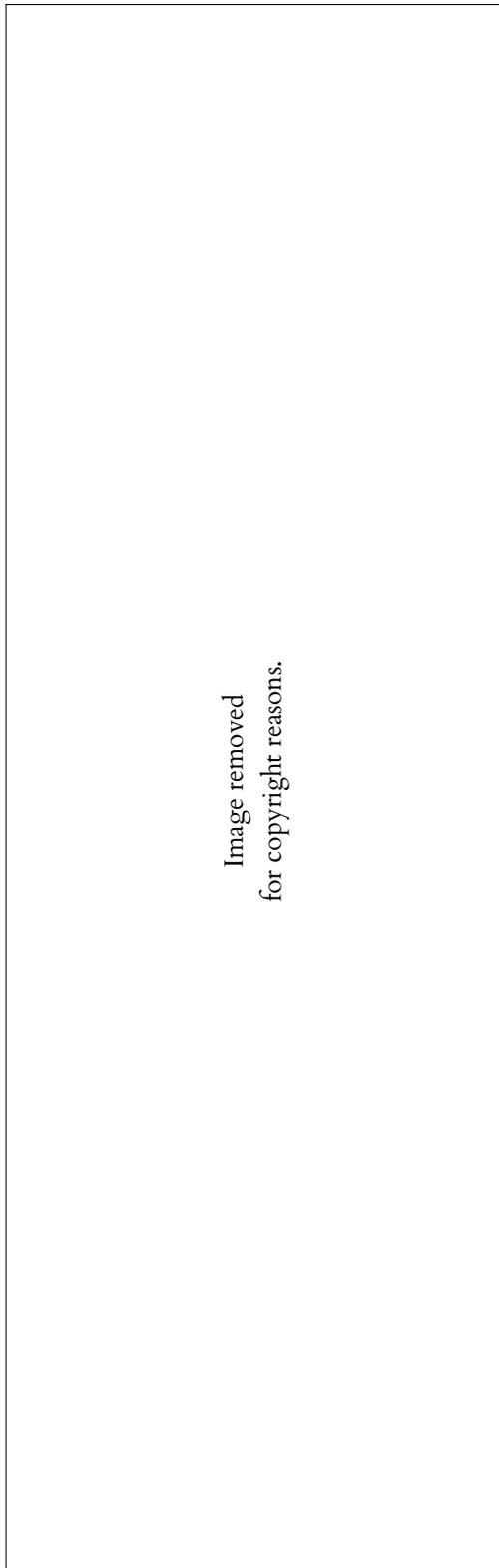


Plate XXVIII: B11. From Matz (1968b) pl. 142.2.

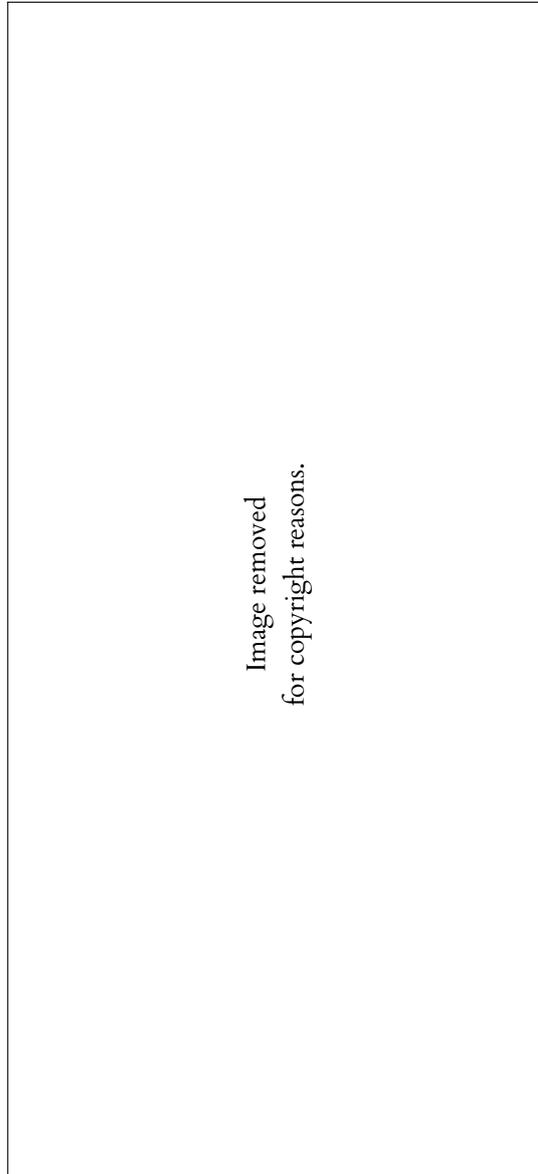


Plate XXIX: B12. From la Rocca and Tortorella (2008) 114.

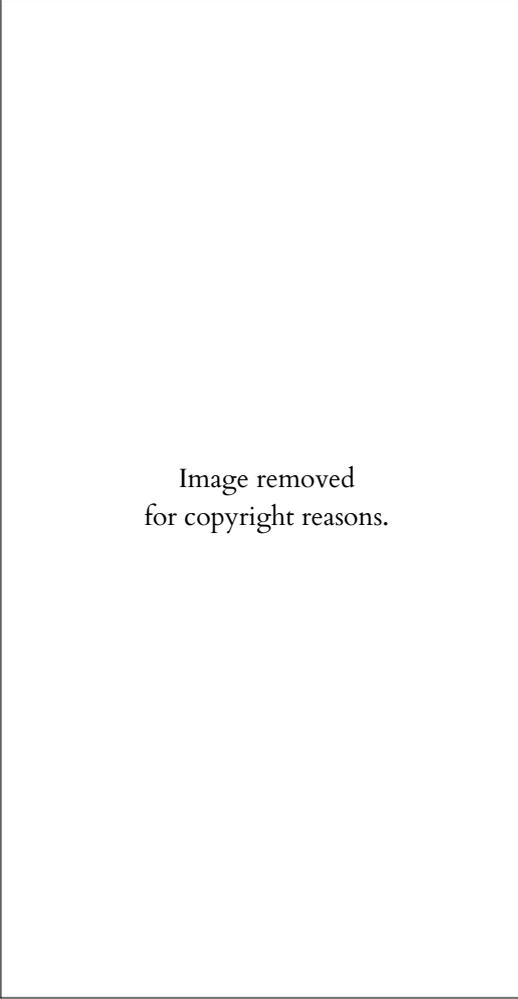


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXX: B13. From Matz (1968b) pl. 147.1.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXXI: B14. From Zanker and Ewald (2012) fig. 144.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXXII: B15. From Matz (1968b) pl. 166.1.

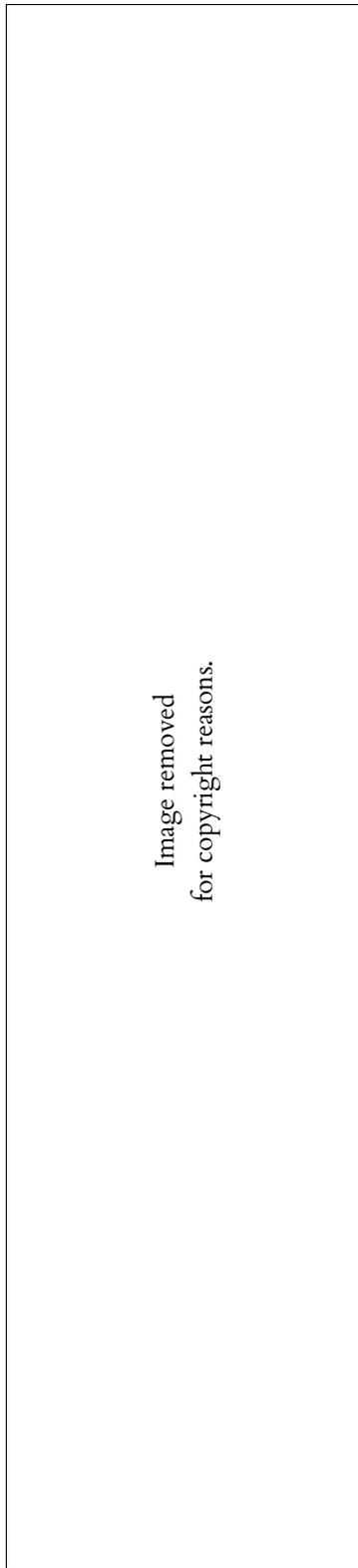


Plate XXXIII: B16. From Matz (1968b) pl. 174.2.

Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXXIV: B17. From Matz (1968b) pl. 71.3.

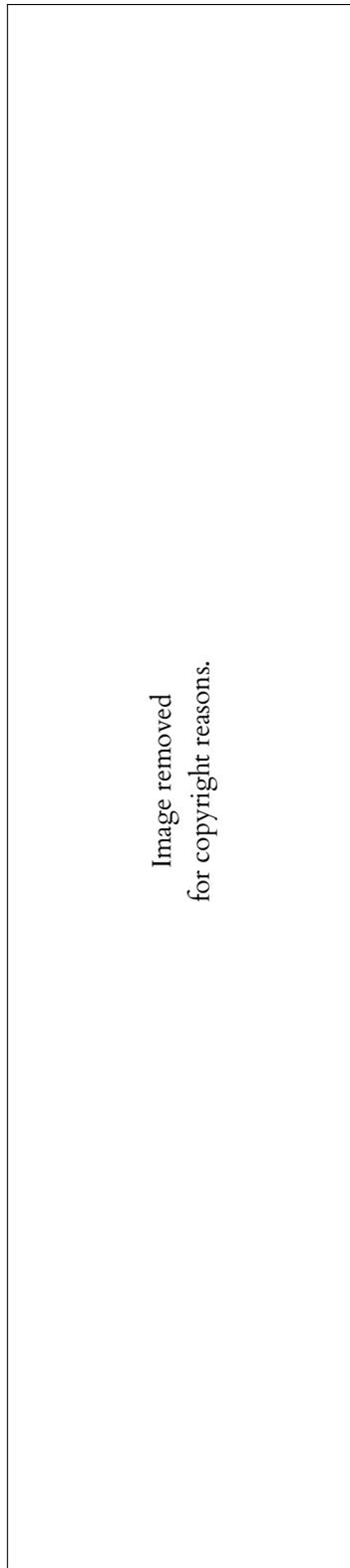


Plate XXXV: B18. Image from Geneva Kornbluth, kornbluthphoto.com/KelseySarcophagus.html [accessed 16/04/15].

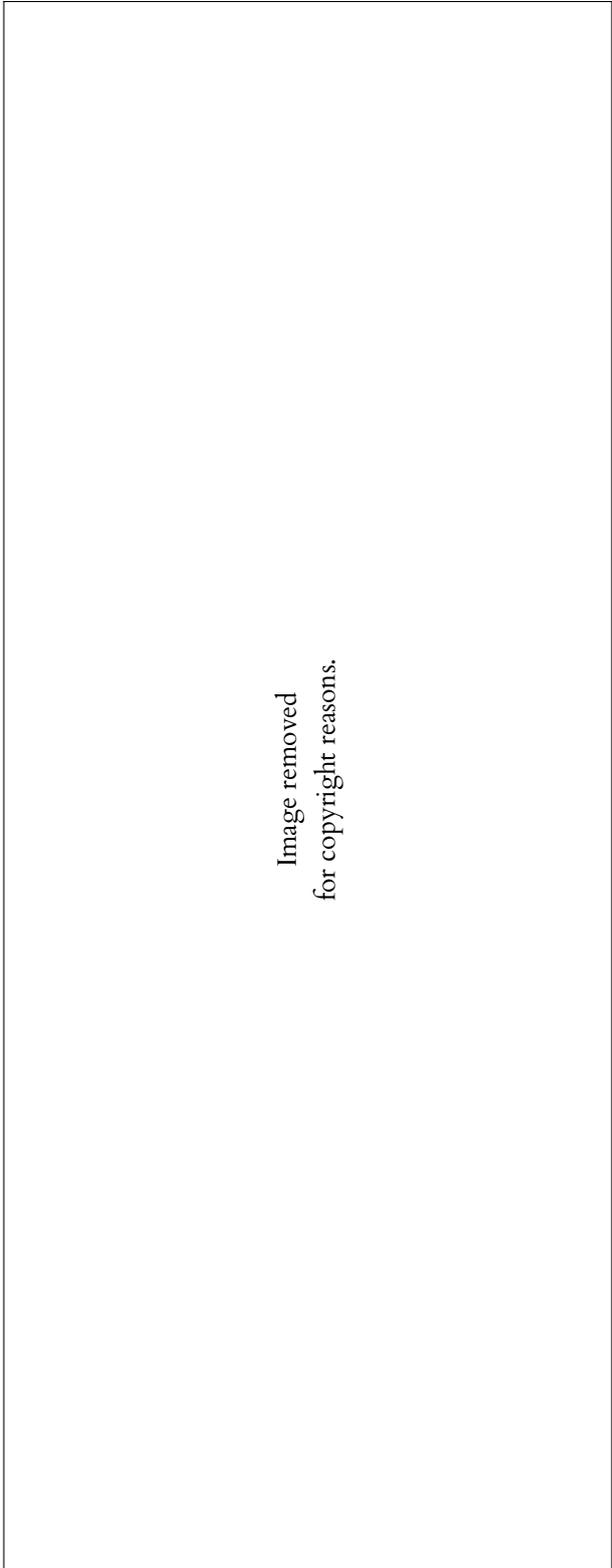


Image removed
for copyright reasons.

Plate XXXVI: B19. Image from <http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/sarcophagus-with-triumph-of-dionysos-151242> [accessed 05/03/15].

C: Rejected/false pieces

C1: Polesden Lacey, Dorking

Inv. no: 1246926.

Dimensions: L: 2.17 H: 0.66 D: 0.775.

Condition: Minor chips to frame; otherwise good.

Front: Panther-drawn procession. Prisoners ride on elephants in the centre.

A maenad leads the procession round; the *cista mystica* is of unusual form.

In all details the composition follows that of A1. Published by Rasmussen (2001), who seems unaware of Vermeule (1955), who shows it to be a modern relief carved into an antique sarcophagus.

Ends: Unusual lion-griffins rampant in strange deep-framed relief.

Bibliography: Rasmussen (2001), Vermeule (1955).

C2: Museo Torlonia, Rome

Dimensions: L: 1.20 H: 0.51.

Condition: Generally rather good.

Front: An utterly singular composition with Hercules in the place normally occupied by Dionysus and Dionysus in a later chariot. The piece has undergone extensive work in modern time which render its (highly unusual) iconography of minimal utility for our purposes. Matz (1975) 493 despaired: 'Vor dem Original schien mir antik nur einzelnes an der linke Ecke unten. Was von dem Rest antik sein könnte, ist durch rücksichtslose Überarbeitung entstellt. Ikonographisch ist das Stück mit derselben Vorsicht zu benutzen

wie stilistisch.'

ASR: IV.4: 341.

Bibliography: Turcan (1999) 150, fig. 170.

D: Comparative pieces

D1: S. Lorenzo fuori le mura, Rome

Fig. 2.4 on p57.

Note: *Only the lid survives.*

Dimensions: L: 2.05, H: 0.40.

Condition: Large fragment missing above wagon on left.

Lid: Two scenes split across a blank *tabula ansata*. On the left, two mounted elephants pull a wagon with relief on the side, before which are two togate officials. On the right, figures bear *fercula* on which appear Victoria standing and a seated female with a lion in front (therefore, probably Cybele). Trumpeters appear at the rear.

ASR: V.4: 144, I.3: 115.

Date: c. 360 (Reinsberg).

Bibliography: Abaecherli (1935), Bianchi Bandinelli (1971) fig. 60, Himmelmann (1973) 35-41, Himmelmann (1973)37ff, Long (1987) 242, Madigan (2012) 46-51, la Rocca and Tortorella (2008) 151, Wrede (2001) 82, 85, 108.

D2: Uffizi, Florence**Fig. 2.8a on p73.****Inv. no:** 82.**Dimensions:** L: 2.43 H: 0.94 D: 1.10.

Front: Left, standing general receiving obeisance attended by Victoria with palm-branch; central sacrifice scene before temple (seemingly unidentified); right, *concordia* scene. See discussion p70.

Ends: Seated male in armour with face somewhat redolent of Hadrian, attended by crouching figure who affixes his greaves; standing male in falling tunic holding oversized sword and unidentified object with rider galloping towards front (LHS). Scene of a seated female observing the bath of an infant, while the Fates appear with scroll, and globe on a pillar. At right appears a seated tutor and infant reading, while a male stands holding a wigged mask (RHS).

ASR: I.3: 12.**Date:** c. 180 (Reinsberg).

Bibliography: Birk (2013) cat. 656, Brilliant (1963) 157-60, Ryberg (1955) 165, fig. 91, Wrede (2001) 21-4, 37-9.

D3: Belvedere, Vatican**Fig. 2.8b on p73.****Inv. no:** 1089.**Dimensions:** L: 2.05 H: 1.00 D: 1.05.

Front: Central sacrificial scene, with Victoria crowning male sacrificant. See discussion p71.

Ends: *dextrarum iunctio* of portrait couple before *parapetasma* (LHS). Mounted figure moving towards front with arm outstretched (RHS).

ASR: I.3: 153.

Date: 190 (Reinsberg).

Bibliography: Birk (2013) cat. 664, Brilliant (1963) 157-60, Ryberg (1955) 165-6, fig. 93, Spinola (1996) 80, Wrede (2001) 44-5.

D4: Belvedere, Vatican

Fig. 2.8c on p73.

Inv. no: 942.

Dimensions: L: 2.41 H: 0.78 D: 1.02.

Front: Scene of Roman soldiers leading defeated barbarians towards *submissio*; seated general crowned by Victoria. See discussion p72.

Ends: Donkey-pulled cart carrying female in attitude of mourning, with boy. Armed Roman soldiers guide and compel (LHS). Figures with crescent-topped staffs carrying a frame (seemingly distinct from a proper *ferculum*) upon which some arms and three figures in an attitude of mourning.

ASR: I.3: 152.

Date: c. 170-80 (Reinsberg), 180 (Köhler)

Bibliography: Brilliant (1963) 160-1, Köhler (1995), Spinola (1996) 94, Turcan (1999) 63.

D5: Casino Rospigliosi, Rome**Fig. 3.14 on p152.***Note: Front and rear separated and built into the Casino wall. Addition to ends in order to effect the transition of the surfaces.***Front:** Front: Dionysus arriving in a centaur-drawn chariot at sleeping Ariadne. Gorgon head bosses. Rear: Dionysus standing with veiled female, amidst *thiasus*. Matz (1968a) 169 links it to the same workshop as A9 and ASR IV: 36, 227.**ASR:** IV.1: 59.**Date:** Mid C2.**Bibliography:** McCann (1978) 89, 90.**D6: Staatliche Skulpturensammlung, Dresden****Fig. 3.15 on p154.****Inv. no:** 271.**Dimensions:** H: 0.53 D: 0.58.**Front:** *Lenos*-shaped. Dionysus seated on panther centrally. Lion's head *protomes*. Reverse has heads of Medusa *protomes*, central Pan and satyr-maenad revellers symmetrically. Same workshop as B15 (Matz (1968a) 161). See discussion p153.**Ends:** Continuation of front revel.**ASR:** IV.1: 52.**Date:** Early C3 (Matz).

D7: Museo delle Terme, Rome

Fig. 3.28 on p192.

Note: Found in Licinian tomb, with A1 etc.

Inv. no: 1303.

Dimensions: L: 2.19, H: 0.51, D: 0.78.

Condition: Reassembled from fragments, some parts missing.

Lid: No figural relief; swirling vegetal design.

Front: Thiasus without Dionysus. Various dancing maenads and satyrs, with a large *cista mystica*, altar with garland and mask. Cf. the supported figure identified by Matz as a Satyr, but in fact the same Priapus group as D17, also to be found in the childhood sarcophagus, Kragelund et al. (2004) cat. 16, Baltimore Museum inv. no. 23.33.

ASR: IV.2: 73.

Date: Late Hadrianic (Meinecke).

Bibliography: Kragelund et al. (2004) cat. 16, Meinecke (2014) B66 no. 5, Turcan (1999) 104-5, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 133, 137. See A1 for bibliography on the tomb.

D8: Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican

Fig. 4.2 on p217.

Inv. no: 1195.

Dimensions: L: 2.10 H: 0.54 D: 0.92.

Lid: Symmetrical torches, musical instruments and masks with Victories flying inwards supporting *tabula* reading:

C.IVNIVS.PAL.EVHODVS.MAGISTER.QQ
 COLLEGI.FABR.TIGN.OSTIS.LUSTRI.XXI
 FECIT.SIBI.ET.METILIAE.ACTE.SACERDO
 TI.M.D.M.COLON.OST.COIVG.SANCTISSIM
CIL xiv 371.

Front: Alcestis on her deathbed, attended by Admetus, both wearing portrait faces. See discussion 216.

Ends: Roughed out griffin (LHS); rough point dressing (RHS).

ASR: XII.1: 76.

Date: 160-70 (Wood). Note resemblance of portraits to Lucius Verus.

Bibliography: Birk (2013) cat. 552, Cumont (1942) 30, Gessert (2004) 219-20, Hallett (2005) 216-7, Koortbojian (1994) 94, Lehmann-Hartleben and Olsen (1942) 67, Liverani (1989) I.2, Mucznik (1999), Newby (2010) 194-8, Newby (2014) 281-2, Turcan (1999) 46, Wood (1978), Zanker and Ewald (2012) 200-2, 309-10.

D9: Villa Ada (Savoia), Rome

Fig. 4.3 on p235.

Dimensions: L: 2.15 H: 0.58 D: 0.59.

Condition: Damage to surface; in many cases limbs and heads missing.

Front: Dionysus reclining on panther-drawn wagon. He bears a blank portrait face. Hercules staggers drunk in the centre with female, while Silenus stands in a centaur-drawn wagon. Lion, Pan dancing over *cista mystica* and *liknophoros* fill in the interstices.

Ends: Dancing, stellate satyr with *thyrsus*, next to altar (LHS); small satyrs with *lagobola* treading grapes in *lenos* next to herm (RHS).

ASR: IV.2: 148.

Date: Late period of Marcus Aurelius (Matz).

Bibliography: Gasparri (1986) cat. 251, la Rocca and Tortorella (2008) 115.

D10: Staatliche Museen, Berlin, known as Rinuccini sarcophagus

Fig. 4.4 on p239.

Inv. no: 1987.2.

Dimensions: L: 2.15 H: 1.01 D: 0.99.

Condition: Light damage to rail. Heads of *victimarii* missing, head of Adonis obliterated, some other limbs also missing.

Front: Two scenes divided by archway. Leftmost scene divided into two subjects. On the left is a *dextrarum iunctio*. The male and female figures bear portrait faces. Right of this is a condensed sacrifice scene; the general (portrait faced) pours libation though the altar is not depicted and instead the sacrificial bull is attended to by the muscular slaves. On the right hand scene we find the death of Adonis, with boar depicted. He is assisted by the Dioscouri. The dying Adonis crosses the archway.

Ends: *Victimarii* leading the decorated bull to the sacrifice (LHS); Adonis (?) and bull advancing (RHS).

ASR: I.3: 6, XII.1: 59.

Date: 200-10 (Ewald, Reinsberg).

Bibliography: Birk (2013) cat. 648, Blome (1990), Borg (2013) 169-70, Brilliant (1992), Koortbojian (1994) 82, 135, Muth (2004) 269-70, Newby (2007) 237-40, Reinsberg (2006) 26-9, Turcan (1999) 64-6, Wrede (2001) 21-3, 27, 29, 32-7, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 303-6.

D11: Museo Diocesano, Cortona

Fig. 4.5 on p243.

Note: *This is the sarcophagus which Donatello told Brunelleschi about, piquing his interest so much he dropped everything to dash off to view it, as Vasari tells in his life of the latter. It was also used as a reliquary.*

Dimensions: L: 1.95 H: 0.45, D: 0.54. Lid H: 0.25

Condition: Minor damage to extremities, such as centaur's right leg. Chips to lid, most obviously half right mask missing.

Lid: Exaggerated curve; prisoner and *tropaion* scenes balance Victories holding *clipeus* bearing bust of a youthful Dionysus.

Front: Symmetrically balanced battle scene. Dionysus emerges L→R in a centaur-pulled chariot; Indians emerge from archway at right.

Ends: Satyr versus Indian, defeated Indian laying dead (LHS); Satyr spearing fallen Indian (RHS).

ASR: IV.3: 237.

Date: c. 160 (Zanker).

Bibliography: Gabelmann (1992) 55, Gasparri (1986) cat. 234, Zanker and

Ewald (2012) 7-11.

D12: Cathedral, Salerno

Fig. 4.6 on p243.

Dimensions: L: 2.24 H: 0.60. Lid H: 0.21, D: 0.56.

Condition: Only minor surface abrasion.

Lid: Plain, with theatrical masks placed between corner masks and un-inscribed central tablet.

Front: Loaded *ferculum* and *clementia* scene with Dionysus as general.

Ends: Drunken Silenus on donkey (LHS); Silenus satyr-supported (RHS).

ASR: IV.3: 244.

Date: Time of Marcus Aurelius (Matz).

Bibliography: Gasparri (1986) cat. 236.

D13: Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican

Fig. 4.7 on p244.

Note: *The dimensions suggest this may be a child's sarcophagus.*

Inv. no: 1347.

Dimensions: L: 1.37 H: 0.39.

Condition: Fractures to limbs, including the head of Dionysus in the chariot.

Front: Two part scene; leftmost a battle, right supplication and *clementia*.

ASR: IV.3: 243.

Date: 160-70 (Matz).

Bibliography: Abaecherli (1935) pl. 5.3-4, Gabelmann (1992) 55, Gasparri (1986) cat. 235, Liverani (1989) XI.1, Turcan (1987) 432, Turcan (1999) 63.

D14: Museo Nazionale, Rome, known as Portonaccio sarcophagus

Fig. 4.8a on p246.

Inv. no: 112327.

Dimensions: L: 2.39 H: 0.365 D: 1.16.

Condition: Light damage especially to lid.

Lid: Left to right seated blank portrait of female, blank male and female centre *dextrarum iunctio*, seated general with blank portrait in *clementia* scene.

Front: Battle between the Romans and Barbarians. At either side stand bound prisoners beneath large *tropaia*. The general spears at a barbarian and wears a blank portrait face.

Ends: Barbarians over sea (LHS); *supplicatio* of barbarian before soldiers (RHS).

Date: 180-90 (Kleiner)

Bibliography: Birk (2013) 57, 143, 173, 174, cat. 626, Brilliant (1963) 154-7, Kleiner (2010) 226, Wrede (2001) 22-5, 32, 34, 37, 40.

D15: Palazzo Altemps, Rome, known as Grand Ludovisi sarcophagus

Fig. 4.8b on p246.

Inv. no: 8574.

Dimensions: L: 2.73 H: 1.53 D: 1.37.

Condition: In almost all respects complete.

Front: Battle between the Romans and Barbarians. At either side the figures turn inwards, directing our attention to the general, precariously mounted with right arm flung wide, in centre field. The general wears a portrait face, with an X cut into the forehead.

Ends: Continuation of battle in shallower relief; tall Roman against charging mounted barbarian (LHS); charging mounted Roman against diminutive barbarian (RHS).

Date: Time of Gallienus (Wood).

Bibliography: Bianchi Bandinelli (1971) 59-60, Birk (2013) 19, 132, 140, 145, cat. 625, Borg (2013) 183-6, Brilliant (1963) 185-7, Turcan (1999) 64-5, Wood (1986) 107-8, Wrede (1981) 66-70, Wrede (2001) 22, 25, 64, 66, 67, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 207, 229.

D16: Palazzo Borghese, Rome

Fig. 4.10 on p270.

Note: *Lid.*

Condition: Scenes 5 and 6 recut with Christian inscription (CIL VI 37072b)

and portrait.

Lid: See description and discussion on p270. The main inscription as expanded by me reads

POMPEIA FVLCI
 NIA CANDIDA C[LARISSIMA] F[EMINA]
 Q[UINTO] POMPE[IO] CALL
 ISTRATO DARE
 NO ALVMNO
 BENEMERENTI

CIL VI, 37072a

ASR: IV.4: 332.

Date: c.275-300 (Matz).

Bibliography: Borg (2013) 207, Walker (1990) 92.

D17: Museo Nazionale (Gabinetto Segreto), Naples

Fig. 4.11 on p292.

Inv. no: 27710.

Dimensions: L: 2.04 H: 0.50.

Condition: Light repair done in gypsum (thus easily discernible by the different tone) largely to the penises. Some limbs missing entirely (e.g. supporting satyr left of Priapus).

Front: Nocturnal rites of Priapus. A highly sexually charged scene.

ASR: IV.3: 176.

Date: Mid second century.

Bibliography: Nilsson (1957) 108, Turcan (1999) 105, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 139-41.

D18: Campo Santo, Pisa

Fig. 5.4a on p326.

Dimensions: L: 2.39 H: 1.00, D: 1.22.

Condition: Several missing heads (e.g. captives), left riding-*putto* obliterated, chip to upper register and inscription slightly damaged in lower parts.

Front: Symmetrically arranged composition. Dionysus in centaur-pulled chariot of mixed gender holding instruments, with attendant *putti*, all riding inwards towards Victoriae-held inscribed *clipeus* beneath which two captives. Right Ariadne moves centrewards in similar.

D · M

L · IVLIVS · LARCIVS

SABINVS · TRIB · PL · QVI · VI

XIT · ANNIS · XXVIII · DIB · V · EID

IN HO · TRIB · SVPERSTITIT · FIL · NE

POS · PRIF · PAETI · CONS · FILIVS

IVL · LVCANI · PRET · CVRAM

CORPORIS · AGENTE CORNELIA LF

PRIVIGNA · VXORE MATRE

CO/MVS // // ///

Ends: Satyr and maenad dancing in archway. A panther warily eyes the paw of the satyr's animal skin, the head of which stares eerily outwards (LHS); Pair of seductive, naked maenads dance near opposite gateway by flaming altar (RHS).

ASR: IV.4: 260.

Date: Marcus Aurelius (Matz). 180-90 (Turcan). 200 (Gabelmann).

Bibliography: Gabelmann (1992) 46 pl. 18, Turcan (1966) 38. Photo courtesy Andreas Kropp.

D19: Louvre, Paris

Fig. 5.4b on p326.

Inv. no: F243.

Dimensions: L: 2.17 H: 0.85.

Front: Symmetrically arranged composition in two registers. Dionysus and Ariadne ride inward towards *clipeus* bearing late-Severan portraits. The centaurs also hold musical instruments and rear up. In space beneath their hooves a second register of *putti* and diminutive figures sport; centrally below *clipeus* Pan and a goat butt heads while an outward-staring figure (Silenus?) supports the shield on his head.

ASR: IV.4: 268.

Date: 230-40 (Matz).

Bibliography: Birk (2013) cat. 461, Zanker and Ewald (2012) fig. 170. Photo courtesy Noel Luoh.

D20: British Museum, London**Fig. 5.6 on p331.****Inv. no:** 1805,0703.130.**Dimensions:** L: 2.195 H: 0.535, D: 0.645.**Condition:** Minor damage: the grape-holding *putto* is a minor modern addition.**Front:** Dionysus and Ariadne recline on a two-wheeled wagon pulled by centaurs. Silenus rides a donkey later while a very strangely shaped panther (?) appears at the end.**ASR:** IV.2: 88.**Date:** 160-70 (Matz).**Bibliography:** Gasparri (1986) cat. 214.**D21: Cortile del Belvedere, Vatican****Fig. 5.8 on p337.****Inv. no:** 933.**Dimensions:** L: 2.52 H: 1.19, D: 1.02.**Front:** Achilles and Penthesilea, both central and wearing portraits, amid scene of fighting.**ASR:** XII.1: 127.**Date:** 230-40.**Bibliography:** Berger (1986) cat. 54c5, Birk (2013) cat. 547, Borg (2014) 247-8, Hallett (2005) 217-8, pl. 131, Newby (2007) 234-5, Spinola (1996) 100,

438

Turcan (1999) 46, Zanker and Ewald (2012) 291-4.

Appendix B

List of Triumphs

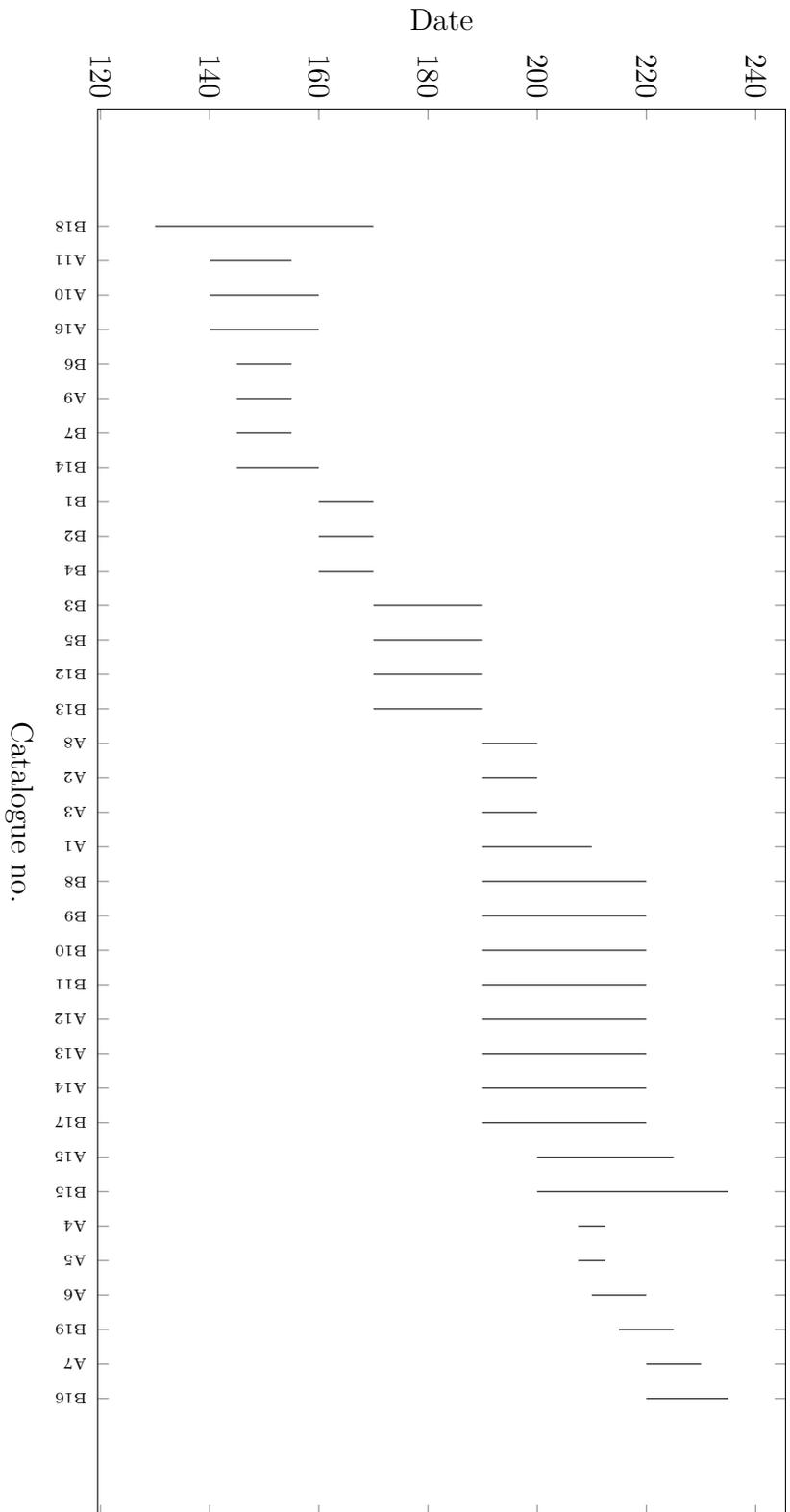
Triumphs (T) and award of the *ornamenta triumphalia* (OT) in the second and third centuries. Data from Barini (1952).

| Year | Award | Victory over |
|-------|--|--|
| 102 | T: Trajan | Dacians |
| 106 | OT: A. Cornelius Palma | Nabataeans |
| 107 | T: Trajan | Dacians |
| 107 | OT: L. Licinius Sergius Sura | Dacians |
| ? | OT: T. Haterius Nepos | ? |
| 118 | T: Trajan (<i>posthumous</i>) | Parthians |
| 133/4 | OT: Sextus Julius Severus | Judaeans |
| 166 | T: Marcus Aurelius | Parthians |
| 176 | T: Marcus Aurelius | Marcomanni, Quadi, Sarmatians |
| 180 | T: Commodus | Marcomanni, Quadi |
| 202 | T: Septimius Severus (<i>celebrated by Caracalla</i>) | Parthians |
| 233 | T: Severus Alexander | Parthians |
| 274 | T: Aurelian | Palmyrene Gallic empire (<i>seperately</i>) |
| 281 | T: Probus | Germanii, Blemmii |

Table B.1: List of triumphs of C2-3.

Appendix C

Chart of Dionysian Triumph Sarcophagi



C.1: Chart showing the approximate date ranges of Dionysian triumph sarcophagi across time.

Bibliography

- Abaecherli, A. (1935), 'Fercula, Carpentia and Tensai in the Roman Procession,' *Bollettino dell'Associazione Internazionale degli Studi Mediterranei*, 6: 1–20.
- Abaecherli Boyce, A. (1942), 'The Origin of *ornamenta triumphalia*,' *CPh*, 37, 2: 130–41.
- Adkins, A. W. H. (1971), 'Review of "Dionysus: Myth and Cult" by Otto, W. F.' *CR*, 21, 1: 147–8.
- Ako-Adounvo, G. (1999), *Studies in the Iconography of Blacks in Roman Art*, Ph.D. thesis, McMaster University.
- Alexander, C. (1932), 'A Bacchic Inscription of the Second Century A.D.' *BMM*, 27, 11: 240–2.
- (1955), 'A Roman Silver Relief: The Indian Triumph of Dionysos,' *BMM*, 14, 3: 64–7.
- Amedick, R. (1991), *Die Sarkophage mit Darstellungen aus dem Menschenleben: Vita Privata, Teil 4*, vol. I of *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.

——— (2010), ‘Immortal Ambitions: Sarcophagi and Social Distinctions in Roman Culture,’ *BABesch*, 15: 33–46.

Andreae, B. (1969), ‘*processus consularis*: Zur Deutung des Sarkophags von Acilia,’ in *Opus Nobile: Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Ulf Jantzen* (Zazoff, P., ed.), Wiesbaden, 3–13.

——— (1980), *Die Sarkophage mit Darstellungen aus dem Menschenleben: die Römischen Jagdsarkophage, Teil 2*, vol. I of *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.

Angelicoussis, E., Dettloff, G., and Laev, R. (1992), *The Woburn Abbey Collection of Classical Antiquities*, Monumenta Artis Romanae, Mainz.

Anguissola, A. (2015), ‘“Idealplastik” and the Relationship Between Greek and Roman Sculpture,’ in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Friedland, E. A., Sobocinski, M. G., and Gazda, E. K., eds.), Oxford, 240–59.

Arce, J. (2010), ‘Roman Imperial Funerals *in effigie*,’ in *The Emperor and Rome: Space, Representation and Ritual* (Ewald, B. C. and Noreña, C. F., eds.), Cambridge, 309–24.

Augé, C. and Linant de Bellefonds, P. (1986), ‘Dionysos (in Peripheria Orientali),’ in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, vol. III, Zürich, 514–31.

von Aulock, H. and Kleiner, G. (1957), *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum*,

Deutschland, Sammlung Hans Von Aulock: vol. 1, Pontus, Paphlagonia, Bithynia, Mysia, Troas, Aiolis, Lesbos, Ionia, Berlin.

Barini, C. (1952), *Triumphalia: Impresse Ed Onori Militari Durante D'Impero Romano*, Turin.

Barnes, T. E. (1967), 'The Family and Career of Septimius Severus,' *Historia*, 16: 87–107.

Bartman, E. (1993), 'Carving the Badminton Sarcophagus,' *MMJ*, 28: 57–75.

Bastien, P. (1994), *Le Buste Monétaire des Empereurs Romains*, Wetteren.

Bauchhenss-Thüriedl, C. (1986), 'Auge,' in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, vol. III, Zurich, 45–51.

Beard, M. (2007), *The Roman Triumph*, Cambridge, MA.

Beckmann, M. (2011), *The Column of Marcus Aurelius: The Genesis & Meaning of a Roman Imperial Monument*, Studies in the History of Greece and Rome, Chapel Hill, NC.

Bellemore, J. and Rawson, B. (1990), "'Alumni": The Italian Evidence,' *ZPE*, 83: 1–19.

Bellinger, A. R. (1961), *Troy: The Coins*, Princeton.

Benjamin, W. (1936), 'Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit,' *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung*, 5, 1: 40–66.

Bentz, K. M. (1997), 'Rediscovering the Licinian Tomb,' *JWAG*, 55/56: 63–88.

- Bérard, C. and Durand, J.-L. (1989), 'Entering the Imagery,' in *A city of Images: Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece*, Princeton, NJ, trans. Lyons, Deborah, 23–37.
- Berger, E. (1986), 'Penthesilea,' in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, vol. VII, Zürich, 296–305.
- Bergmann, B. (1994), 'The Roman House as Memory Theater? The House of the Tragic Poet in Pompeii,' *ABull*, 76, 2: 225–56.
- (2010), *Der Kranz des Kaisers: Genese und Bedeutung einer römischen Insignie*, Berlin.
- Bergstein, M. (1992), 'Lonely Aphrodites: on the Documentary Photography of Sculpture,' *ABull*, 74, 3: 475–98.
- Bianchi Bandinelli, R. (1971), *Rome, the Centre of Power: Roman Art AD 200–400*, London, trans. Green, Peter.
- Bieber, M. (1945), 'Honos and Virtus,' *AJA*, 49: 25–34.
- Bielfeldt, R. (2003), 'Orestes im Medusengrab: Ein Versuch zum Betrachter,' *Römische Mitteilungen*, 110: 117–50.
- (2005), *Orestes auf römischen Sarkophagen*, Munich.
- Birk, S. (2010), 'Man or Woman? Cross-Gendering and Individuality on Third Century Roman Sarcophagi,' in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi* (Elsner, J. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Berlin, 229–260.

- (2013), *Depicting the Dead: Self-Representation and Commemoration on Roman Sarcophagi with Portraits*, Aarhus.
- Blome, P. (1990), 'Der Sarkophag Rinuccini. Eine unverhoffte Widerentdeckung,' *JBerlM*, 32: 35–68.
- Boardman, J. (2014), *The Triumph of Dionysos*, Oxford.
- (2015), *The Greeks in Asia*, London.
- Boatwright, M. T. (1985), 'The "Ara Ditis-Ustrinum of Hadrian" in the Western Campus Martius and Other Problematic Roman Ustrina,' *AJA*, 89, 3: 485–97.
- Bömer, F. (1969), *P. Ovidius Naso Metamorphosen: Kommentar, Buch I-III*, Heidelberg.
- Bonfante Warren, L. (1964), 'A Latin Triumph on a Praenestine Cista,' *AJA*, 68, 1: 35–42.
- (1970), 'Roman Triumphs and Etruscan Kings: The Changing Face of the Triumph,' *JRS*, 60: 49–66.
- (1989), 'Nudity as a Costume in Classical Art,' *AJA*, 94, 4: 543–70.
- Borg, B. (2013), *Crisis and Ambition: Tombs and Burial Customs in Third-century CE Rome*, Oxford.
- (2014), 'Rhetoric and Art in Third-Century AD Rome,' in *Art and Rhetoric in Roman Culture* (Elsner, J. and Meyer, M., eds.), Cambridge, 235–55.

- Boschung, D. (1989), 'Nobilia Opera: Zur Wirkungsgeschichte griechischer Meisterwerke im kaiserzeitlichen Rom,' *AK*, 32: 8–16.
- Boucher, S. (1986), 'Dionysos (in Peripheria Occidentali),' in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, vol. IV, Zürich, 908–23.
- Boyancé, P. (1966), 'Dionysiaca: a propos d'une étude récente sur l'initiation Dionysiaque,' *REA*, 68: 33–60.
- Brilliant, R. (1963), *Gesture and Rank in Roman Art*, New Haven, CT.
- (1967), 'The Arch of Septimius Severus in the Roman Forum,' *MAAR, Supplement*, 29: 5–271.
- (1984), *Visual Narratives: Storytelling in Etruscan and Roman Art*, Ithaca.
- (1992), 'Roman Myth / Greek Myth: Reciprocity and Appropriation on a Roman Sarcophagus in Berlin,' *SIFC*, 10, 2: 1030–45.
- (1999), "'Let the Trumpets Roar!" The Roman Triumph,' in *The Art of Ancient Spectacle* (Bergmann, B. and Kondoleon, C., eds.), New Haven, 221–9.
- Brooke, E. (2011), "'Causa ante mortua est quam tu natus es': Aspects of the Funeral in Cicero's *Pro Rabirio Perduellionis Reo*,' in *Memory and Mourning: Studies on Roman Death* (Hope, V. M. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Oxford, 93–112.
- Budde, L. and Nicholls, R. (1964), *A Catalogue of the Greek and Roman Sculpture in the Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge*, Cambridge.

- Burke, J., Paul F. (1979), 'Roman Rites for the Dead and *Aeneid* 6,' *CJ*, 74, 3: 220–8.
- Burkert, W. (1993), 'Bacchic *teletai* in the Hellenistic Age,' in *Masks of Dionysus* (Carpenter, T. and Faraone, C., eds.), Ithaca, 259–75.
- Burn, L. (2013), 'Robert Pashley and the Pashley Sarcophagus,' in *Excalibur: Essays on Antiquity and the History of Collecting in Honour of Arthur MacGregor* (Wiegel, H. and Vickers, M., eds.), BAR International Series, 121–6.
- Butcher, K. (2005), 'Information, Legitimation, or Self-legitimation? Popular and Elite Designs on the Coin Types of Syria,' in *Coinage and Identity in the Roman Provinces* (Howgego, C., Heuchert, V., and Burnett, A., eds.), Oxford, 143–56.
- Carpenter, T. A. and Faraone, C. A. (eds.) (1993), *Masks of Dionysus*, Ithaca, NY.
- Carroll, M. (2011), "'The Mourning Was Very Good": Liberation and Liberality in Roman Funerary Commemoration,' in *Memory and Mourning: Studies on Roman Death* (Hope, V. M. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Oxford, 126–149.
- Catalano, J. S. (1974), *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre's "Being and Nothingness"*, Chicago.
- Clinton, J. C. (1977), *A Late Antique Shrine of Liber Pater at Coca, Ansedonia*.

Comstock, M. B. and Vermeule, C. C. (1976), *Sculpture in Stone: the Greek, Roman and Etruscan Collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston*, Boston, 1976: Boston, MA.

Crawford, M. H. (1974), *Roman Republican Coinage*, Cambridge.

Crook, J. (1955), 'Review of "Triumphalia: Imprese ed Onori Militari durante l'Imperio Romano" by Barini, C.' *JRS*, 45: 238–9.

Csapo, E. (1997), 'Riding the Phallus for Dionysus: Iconology, Ritual, and Gender-Role De/Construction,' *Phoenix*, 51: 253–95.

Cumont, F. (1916), 'Un Fragment de Sarcophage Judaeo-Païenne,' *RA*, 5: 1–16.

——— (1922), *After Life in Roman Paganism*, New Haven.

——— (1929), *Les religions Orientales dans le paganisme Romain*, Paris.

——— (1933), 'La Grande Inscription Bachique du Metropolitan Museum. II. Commentaire Religieux de l'Inscription,' *AJA*, 37, 2: 232–63.

——— (1942), *Recherches sur le symbolisme funéraire des Romains*, Paris.

Damsky, B. L. (1990), 'The Stadium Aureus of Septimius Severus,' *AJN*, 2: 77–105.

D'Arms, J. H. (2000), 'Memory, Money and Status at Misenum: Three New Inscriptions from the *collegium* of the Augustales,' *JRS*, 90: 126–44.

Daux, G. and Bousquet, J. (1942), 'Agamemnon, Télèphe Dionysos Sphaleôtas et les Attalides,' *RA*, 16, 19: 113–25.

- Davies, P. J. E. (2000), *Death and the Emperor: Roman Imperial Funerary Monuments from Augustus to Marcus Aurelius*, Cambridge.
- Detienne, M. (1989), *Dionysos at Large*, Cambridge, MA.
- Dickie, M. W. (1995), 'The Dionysiac Mysteries in Pella,' *ZPE*, 109: 81–6.
- Diehl, E. (ed.) (1925), *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres*, Berlin.
- Dietrich, B. C. (1958), 'Dionysus Liknites,' *CQ*, 8: 244–8.
- (1961), 'A Rite of Swinging During the Anthesteria,' *Hermes*, 89, 1: 36–50.
- Disselkamp, G. (1997), *Christiani senatus lumina: Zum Anteil römischer Frauen der Oberschicht im 4. und 5. Jahrhundert an der Christianisierung der römischen Senatsaristokratie*, Bodenheim.
- Dolansky, F. (2011), 'Honouring the Family Dead on the Parentalia: Ceremony, Spectacle, and Memory,' *Phoenix*, 65: 125–57.
- Dover, K. J. (1978), *Greek Homosexuality*, London.
- Dunbabin, K. M. D. (1971), 'The Triumph of Dionysus on Mosaics in North Africa,' *PBSR*, 39: 52–65.
- (1978), *The Mosaics of Roman North Africa: Studies in Iconography and Patronage*, Oxford.
- (1982), 'The Victorious Charioteer on Mosaics and Related Monuments,' *AJA*, 86, 1: 65–89.

——— (1999), *Mosaics of the Greek and Roman World*, Cambridge.

——— (2003), *The Roman Banquet: Images of Conviviality*, Cambridge.

Edwards, C. (2007), *Death in Ancient Rome*, New Haven.

Elsner, J. (1995), *Art and the Roman Viewer: The Transformation of Art from the Pagan World to Christianity*, Cambridge.

——— (2007a), *Roman Eyes: Visuality and Subjectivity in Art and Text*, Princeton.

——— (2007b), 'Viewing Ariadne: From Ekphrasis to Wall Painting in the Roman World,' *CPh*, 102, 1: 20–44.

——— (2010), 'Introduction,' in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi*, Berlin, 1–20.

——— (2012), 'Decorative Imperatives - Between Concealment and Display: The Form of Sarcophagi,' in *Sarcophagi: Chinese and Greco-Roman* (J, E., W, H., and F, P., eds.), RES, Cambridge, MA, 178–95.

——— (2014a), 'Introduction,' in *Art and Rhetoric in Roman Culture* (Elsner, J. and Meyer, M., eds.), Cambridge, 1–34.

——— (2014b), 'Rational, Passionate and Appetitive: the Psychology of Rhetoric and the Transformation of Visual Culture from Non-Christian to Christian Sarcophagi in the Roman World,' in *Art and Rhetoric in Roman Culture* (Elsner, J. and Meyer, M., eds.), Cambridge, 316–49.

- Elsner, J. and Huskinson, J. (eds.) (2010), *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi*, Berlin.
- Erasmio, M. (2008), *Reading Death in Ancient Rome*, Columbus OH.
- Ewald, B. C. (1999a), 'Death and Myth: New Books on Roman Sarcophagi,' *AJA*, 103, 2: 344–8.
- (1999b), *Der Philosoph als Leitbild: Ikonographische Untersuchungen an römischen Sarkophagreliefs*, Mainz.
- (2003), 'Sarcophagi and Senators: The Social History of Roman Funerary Art and its Limits,' *JRA*, 16: 561–71.
- (2008), 'Review of "The Roman Nude: Heroic Portrait Statuary 200 B.C.–A.D. 300" by Hallett, C. H.' *ABull*, 90, 2: 286–92.
- (2010), 'Myth and Visual Narrative in the Second Sophistic — A Comparative Approach: Notes on an Attic Hippiytos Sarcophagus in Agrigento,' in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi* (Elsner, J. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Berlin, 261–307.
- (2012), 'Paradigms of Personhood and Regimes of Representation: Some Notes on the Transformation of Roman Sarcophagi,' *RES*, 61/2, Pellizzi, Francesco and Elsner, Jas and Hung, Wu (eds.): 43–65.
- (2015), 'Funerary Monuments,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Friedland, E. A., Sobocinski, M. G., and Gazda, E. K., eds.), Oxford, 390–406.

- Favro, D. (1996), *The Urban Image of Augustan Rome*, Cambridge.
- Finglass, P. J. (2007), *Sophocles Electra: Text and Commentary*, Oxford.
- Fishwick, D. (2002), 'The Deification of Claudius,' *CQ*, 52, 1: 341–49.
- Fittschen, K. (1972), 'Das Bildprogramm des Trajansbogen zu Benevent,' *AA*, 87: 742–88.
- (1992), 'Der Tod der Kreusa und der Niobiden. Überlegungen zur Deutung griechischer Mythen auf römischen Sarkophagen,' *SIFC*, 10: 1046–59.
- (2010), 'The Portraits of Roman Emperors and Their Families: Controversial Positions and Unsolved Problems,' in *The Emperor and Rome: Space, Representation, and Ritual* (Ewald, B. C. and Noreña, C. F., eds.), Cambridge, 221–246.
- Flory, M. B. (1998), 'The Integration of Women into the Roman Triumph,' *Historia*, 47, 4: 489–94.
- Flower, H. I. (1996), *Ancestor Masks and Aristocratic Power in Roman Culture*, Oxford.
- Foucher, L. (1975), 'Le Char de Dionysos,' in *La Mosaique Gréco-Romaine* (Picard, A. J., ed.), vol. II, Paris, 55–61.
- Fowler, W. W. (1916), 'Jupiter and the Triumphator,' *CR*, 30: 153–7.
- Franken, N. (1999), 'Elefantenreiter: Zum Typus der Barbarenstatuette von Großsachsenheim,' *JDAI*, 114: 125–56.

- Gabelmann, H. (1992), *Der Triumphbogen in Zagarolo*, Cologne.
- Gagé, J. (1932), 'Un thème de l'art impérial romain : la Victoire d'Auguste,' *MEFRA*, 49: 61–92.
- Galinier, M. and Baratte, F. (eds.) (2013), *Iconographie funéraire romaine et société: Corpus antique, approches nouvelles?*, Paris.
- Gasparri, C. (1986), 'Dionysos/Bacchus,' in *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, vol. III, Zürich, 541–66.
- Gazda, E. K. (2002), 'Beyond Copying: Artistic Originality and Tradition,' in *The Ancient Art of Emulation: Studies in Artistic Originality and Tradition from the Present to Classical Antiquity* (Gazda, E. K., ed.), Michigan, 1–24.
- Geissen, A. (1974-83), *Katalog alexandrinischer Kaisermünzen (5 vols)*, Cologne.
- Gerke, F. (1978), *Die christlichen Sarkophage der vorkonstantinischen Zeit*, Berlin.
- Gessert, G. (2004), 'Myth as Consolatio: Medea on Roman Sarcophagi,' *G&R*, 51, 2: 217–49.
- Geyer, A. (1977), *Das Problem des Realitätsbezuges in der Dionysischen Bildkunst der Kaiserzeit*, Würzburg.
- Giuliani, L. (1989), 'Achill-Sarkophage in Ost und West: Genese einer Ikonographie,' *JBerlM*, 31: 25–39.

- Gombrich, E. H. (1960), *Art and Illusion*, Oxford.
- Gozlan, S. (1992), 'La Maison du Triomphe de Neptune à Acholla, I: Les mosaïques,' in *Collection de l'École française de Rome*, vol. 160, Rome.
- Graef, B. (1886), *De Bacchi Expeditione Indica Monumentis Expressa*, Berlin.
- Graeven, H. (1900), 'Die Darstellungen der Inder in antiken Kunstwerken,' *JDAI*, 15: 195–218.
- Grassinger, D. (1999), *Die mythologischen Sarkophage: Teil 1, Achill bis Amazonen*, vol. XII of *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.
- Grueber, H. A. (1874), *Roman Medallions in the British Museum*, A Catalogue of the Roman Coins in the British Museum, London.
- de Grummond, E. (2000a), 'Bacchic Imagery and Cult Practice in Roman Italy,' in *The Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii: Ancient Ritual, Modern Muse* (Gazda, E. K., ed.), Michigan, 75–83.
- (2000b), 'A Bacchic Sarcophagus in the Kelsey Museum,' *BMusUM*, 13: 114–7.
- de Grummond, N. T. (2015), 'Etruscan Connections,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Friedland, E. A., Sobocinski, M. G., and Gazda, E. K., eds.), Oxford, 224–39.
- Hallett, C. H. (2005), *The Roman Nude: Heroic Portrait Statuary 200 B.C.–A.D. 300*, Oxford.
- Harrison, J. E. (1903a), 'Mystica Vannus Iacchi,' *JHS*, 23: 292–324.

- (1903b), ‘Note on the Mystica Vannus Iacchi,’ *ABSA*, 10: 144–147.
- (1904), ‘Mystica Vannus Iacchi (Continued),’ *JHS*, 24: 241–54.
- (1914), ‘The Meaning of the Word TELETE,’ *CR*, 28, 2: 36–8.
- Head, B. V. (1887), ‘Notices of Recent Numismatic Publications,’ *The Numismatic Chronicle and Journal of the Numismatic Society*, 7: 349–55.
- (1906), *Catalogue of the Coins of Phrygia*, A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum, London.
- Heidenreich, R. (1958), ‘Tod und Triumph in der römischen Kunst,’ *Gymnasium*, 58: 326–40.
- Hekster, O. (2002), *Commodus: An Emperor at the Crossroads*, Leiden.
- (2005), ‘Propagating Power: Hercules as an Example for Second Century Emperors,’ in *Herakles and Hercules: Exploring a Graeco-Roman Divinity* (Bowden, H. and Rawlings, L., eds.), Swansea, 205–21.
- Herdejürgen, H. (1996), *Stadtrömische und Italische Girlandensarkophage: die Sarkophage des Ersten und Zweiten Jahrhunderts, Teil 2, Faszikel 1*, vol. VI of *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.
- Heslin, P. (2005), *The Transvestite Achilles: Gender and Genre in Statius’ Achilleid*, Cambridge.
- Hickson, F. V. (1991), ‘Augustus *triumphator*: Manipulation of the Triumphal Theme in the Political Program of Augustus,’ *Latomus*, 50, 1: 124–38.

- Himmelman, N. (1973), *Typologische Untersuchungen an römischen Sarkophagreliefs des 3. und 4. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.*, Mainz.
- Hodges, F. M. (2001), 'The Ideal Prepuce in Ancient Greece and Rome,' *BHM*, 75: 375–405.
- Holliday, P. J. (1997), 'Roman Triumphal Painting: Its Function, Development, and Reception,' *ABull*, 79, 1: 130–47.
- Hölscher, T. (1967), *Victoria Romana*, Mainz.
- (2004), *The Language of Images in Roman Art*, Cambridge.
- (2005), 'The Public Monumentalism of the Roman Republic,' *JRA*, 18: 472–8.
- van Hoorn, G. (1915), 'De Origine Cistophorum,' *Mnemosyne*, 43: 233–7.
- Hope, V. M. (2009), *Roman Death*, Cornwall.
- Hope, V. M. and Huskinson, J. (eds.) (2011), *Memory and Mourning: Studies on Roman Death*, Oxford.
- Hopkins, K. (1983), *Death and Renewal*, Cambridge.
- Housman, A. E. (1918), 'Jests of Plautus, Cicero, and Trimalchio,' *CR*, 32: 162–4.
- Howard, S. (1978), *The Lansdowne Herakles*, Los Angeles, CA.
- Hulls, J.-M. (2011), 'Poetic Monuments: Grief and Consolation in Statius *Silvae* 3.3,' in *Memory and Mourning: Studies on Roman Death* (Hope, V. M. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Oxford, 150–175.

- Huskinson, J. (1996), *Roman Children's Sarcophagi*, Oxford.
- (2011), 'Bad Deaths, Better Memories,' in *Memory and Mourning: Studies on Roman Death* (Hope, V. M. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Oxford, 113–125.
- Jácome, P. M. (2013), 'Bacchus and Felines in Roman Iconography: Issues of Gender and Species,' in *Redefining Dionysos* (Bernabé, A., de Jáuregui, M. H., San Cristóbal, A. I. J., and Hernández, R. M., eds.), Berlin, 526–40.
- Jahn, O. (1869), 'Die Cista Mystica,' *Hermes*, 3, 3: 317–34.
- Jauss, H. R. (1979), 'Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft,' in *Rezeptionsästhetik* (Warning, R., ed.), Munich, 126–62.
- Johansen, C. J. (2008), *Spectacle in the Forum: Visualizing the Roman Aristocratic Funeral of the Middle Republic*, Ph.D. thesis, University of California.
- Jongste, F. B. (1992), *The Twelve Labours of Hercules on Roman Sarcophagi*, Rome.
- Kampen, N. B. (1981), 'Biographical Narration and Roman Funerary Art,' *AJA*, 85, 1: 47–58.
- (1995), 'On Not Writing the History of Roman Art,' *ABull*, 77, 3: 367–91.
- (1996), 'Omphale and the Instability of Gender,' in *Sexuality in Ancient Art* (Kampen, N. B., ed.), Cambridge, 233–46.

- Kellum, B. (2015), 'Imperial Messages,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Friedland, E. A., Sobocinski, M. G., and Gazda, E. K., eds.), Oxford, 423–35.
- Kemezis, A. M. (2010), 'Lucian, Fronto, and the Absence of Contemporary Historiography under the Antonines,' *AJPh*, 131, 2: 285–325.
- Kemp, W. (1998), 'The Work of Art and its Beholder: The Methodology of the Aesthetic of Reception,' in *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary Perspectives* (Cheetham, M. A., Holly, M. A., and Moxey, K., eds.), Cambridge, 180–96.
- Kerényi, C. (1976), *Dionysos: Archetypal Image of Indestructible Life*, Princeton.
- Keuls, E. C. (1970), 'The Ass in the Cult of Dionysus as a Symbol of Toil and Suffering,' *Anthropological Journal of Canada*, 8: 26–46.
- van Keuren, F., Trillmich, W., Trillmich, C., Ghezzi, A., and Anderson, J., Jr (2003), 'Unpublished Documents Shed New Light on the Licinian Tomb, Discovered in 1884–1885, Rome,' *MAAR*, 48: 53–139.
- King, C. W. (1881), 'Omphale, in the Spoils of Hercules,' *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 2: 233–5.
- (1885), *Handbook of Engraved Gems*, London.
- Kleiner, D. E. E. (1983), *The Monument of Philopappos in Athens*, Rome.
- Kleiner, F. (2010), *A History of Roman Art*, Boston, MA.

- Koch, G. (1975), *Die mythologischen Sarkophage: Teil 6, Meleager*, vol. XII of *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.
- Koch, G. and Sichtermann, H. (1982), *Römische Sarkophage*, Munich.
- Köhler, J. (1995), 'Zur Triumphalsymbolik auf dem Feldherrnsarkophag Belvedere,' *MDAI(R)*, 102: 371–9.
- Kondoleon, C. (1994), *Domestic and Divine: Roman Mosaics in the House of Dionysos*, Ithaca, NY.
- Koortbojian, M. (1994), *Myth, Meaning and Memory on Roman Sarcophagi*, Berkeley, CA.
- (2002), 'Forms of Attention: Four Notes on Replication and Variation,' in *The Ancient Art of Emulation: Studies in Artistic Originality and Tradition from the Present to Classical Antiquity* (Gazda, E. K., ed.), Michigan, 173–204.
- (2012), 'Recent Sarcophagus Studies,' *JRA*, 25, 2: 631–6.
- Kragelund, P., Moltesen, M., and Østergaard, J. S. (2004), *The Licinian Tomb: Fact Or Fiction?*, Copenhagen.
- Kranz, P. (1984), *Jahreszeiten-Sarkophage: Entwicklung und Ikonographie des Motivs der vier Jahreszeiten auf kaiserzeitlichen Sarkophagen und Sarkophagdeckeln, Teil 4*, vol. V of *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.
- Krasser, H., Pausch, D., and Petrovic, I. (eds.) (2008), *Triplici invectus triumpho. Der römische Triumph in augusteischer Zeit*, Stuttgart.

- Kropp, A. J. M. (2013a), 'Crowning the Emperor: an Unorthodox Image of Claudius, Agrippa I and Herod of Chalkis,' *Syria*, 90: 377–89.
- (2013b), *Images and Monuments of Near Eastern Dynasts, 100 BC – AD 100*, Oxford.
- Kuttner, A. L. (1995), *Dynasty and Empire in the Age of Augustus: The Case of the Boscoreale Cups*, Berkeley, CA.
- Lane, E. N. (1980), 'Towards a Definition of the Iconography of Sabazius,' *Numen*, 27, 1: 9–33.
- (1989), *Corpus Cultus Iovis Sabazii, vol. 3: Conclusions*, New York.
- Lange, C. H. and Vervaet, F. J. (eds.) (2014), *The Roman Republican Triumph: Beyond the Spectacle*, Rome.
- Lattimore, R. (1962), *Themes in Greek and Latin Epigraphs*, Urbana, IL.
- Lawrence, M. (1958), 'Season Sarcophagi of the Architectural Type,' *AJA*, 62, 3: 273–95.
- Lehmann, K. (1962), 'Ignorance and Search in the Villa of the Mysteries,' *JRS*, 52: 62–8.
- Lehmann-Hartleben, K. and Olsen, E. C. (1942), *Dionysiac Sarcophagi in Baltimore*, Baltimore.
- Lenzen, V. F. (1960), 'The Triumph of Dionysos on Textiles of Late Antique Egypt,' *University of California Publications in Classical Archaeology*, 5: 1–38.

- Levaniouk, O. (2007), 'The Toys of Dionysos,' *HSPH*, 103: 165–202.
- Lindsay, H. (1998), 'Eating with the Dead: the Roman Funerary Banquet,' in *Meals in a Social Context* (Nielsen, I. and Nielsen, H. S., eds.), Aarhus, 67–80.
- Liverani, P. (1989), *Museo Chiaramonti*, Rome.
- Long, C. R. (1987), *The Twelve Gods of Greece and Rome*, Leiden.
- Longfellow, B. (2000), 'A Gendered Space? Location and Function of Room 5 in the Villa of the Mysteries,' in *The Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii: Ancient Ritual, Modern Muse* (Gazda, E. K., ed.), Michigan, 25–37.
- López Monteagudo, G. (1999), 'The Triumph of Dionysus in Two Mosaics in Spain,' *Assaph*, 4: 35–60.
- L'Orange, H. P. (1947), *Apotheosis in Ancient Portraiture*, Norway.
- Lorenz, K. (2008), *Bilder machen Räume*, Berlin.
- (2010), 'Image in Distress? The Death of Meleager on Roman Sarcophagi,' in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi* (Elsner, J. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Berlin, 309–36.
- (2014), 'The Casa del Menandro in Pompeii: Rhetoric and the Topology of Roman Wall Painting,' in *Art and Rhetoric in Roman Culture* (Elsner, J. and Meyer, M., eds.), Cambridge, 183–210.
- Lusnia, S. (2006), 'Battle Imagery and Politics on the Severan Arch in the

- Roman Forum,' in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome* (Dillon, S. and Welch, K. E., eds.), Cambridge, 272–99.
- Mader, G. (2006), 'Triumphal Elephants and Political Circus at Plutarch *Pomp.* 14.6,' *CW*, 99, 4: 397–403.
- Madigan, B. (2012), *The Ceremonial Sculptures of the Roman Gods*, Leiden.
- Manders, E. (2012), *Coining Images of Power: Patterns in the Representation of Roman Emperors on Imperial Coinage, A.D. 193–284*, Leiden.
- Mate, M. and Lyapunova, K. (1951), *Khudazhestvennyie tkani koptskovo Egipta (Artistic Fabrics of Coptic Egypt, Iskusstvo series)*, Moscow.
- Mattingly, H., Sutherland, C. H. V., and Carson, R. A. G. (1949), *The Roman Imperial Coinage, vol. 4: Pertinax - Uranius Antonius*, London.
- Mattingly, H. and Sydenham, E. A. (1930), *The Roman Imperial Coinage, vol. 3: Antoninus Pius to Commodus*, London.
- (1986), *The Roman Imperial Coinage, vol. 2: Vespasian to Hadrian*, London.
- Mattingly, H., Webb, P. H., and Sydenham, E. A. (1933), *The Roman Imperial Coinage, vol. 5. including part 1: Valerian I to Florian and part 2: Probus to Diocletian*, London.
- Matz, F. (1955), 'Belli Facies et Triumphus,' in *Festschrift Carl Weickert* (Bruns, G., ed.), Berlin, 41–58.

- (1964), *Dionysiakē teletē: archäologische Untersuchungen zum Dionysoskult in hellenistischer und römischer Zeit*, Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Mainz.
- (1968a), *Die Dionysischen Sarkophage: Die Denkmäler 1-71B. Teil 1*, vol. IV of *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.
- (1968b), *Die Dionysischen Sarkophage: Die Denkmäler 72-161. Teil 2*, vol. IV of *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.
- (1969), *Die Dionysischen Sarkophage: Die Denkmäler 162-245. Teil 3*, vol. IV of *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.
- (1975), *Die Dionysischen Sarkophage: Die Denkmäler 246-385. Teil 4*, vol. IV of *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.
- Maxfield, V. A. (1981), *The Military Decorations of the Roman Army*, Berkeley, CA.
- McCann, A. M. (1977), 'Two Fragments of Sarcophagi in the Metropolitan Museum of Art Illustrating the Indian Triumph of Dionysus,' *JWAG*, 36: 123–36.
- (1978), *Roman Sarcophagi in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York, NY.
- McCormick, M. (1986), *Eternal Victory: Triumphal Rulership in Late Antiquity, Byzantium and the Early Medieval West*, Cambridge.
- Meinecke, K. (2014), *Sarcophagum posuit: römische Steinsarkophage im Kontext*, Mainz.

- Merola, M. (2009), 'Family Secrets,' *Archaeology*, 62, 1: 50–2.
- Mitchell, M. and Young, F. (2006), *Cambridge History of Christianity: Volume 1, Origins to Constantine*, Cambridge History of Christianity, Cambridge.
- Mittag, P. F. (2009), 'Processus Consularis, Adventus und Herrschaftsjubiläum. Zur Verwendung von Triumphsymbolik in der mittleren Kaiserzeit,' *Hermes*, 137, 4: 447–62.
- Mommsen, T. (1876), *Römisches Staatsrecht*, Leipzig.
- Morris, D. (1969), *The Human Zoo*, London.
- Morris, I. (1992), *Death Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge.
- Mucznik, S. (1999), 'Roman Priestesses: the Case of Metilia Acte,' *Assaph*, 4: 61–78.
- Mudie-Cooke, P. B. (1913), 'The Paintings of the Villa Iam at Pompeii,' *JRS*, 3: 157–74.
- Müller, F. G. J. M. (1994), *The So-Called Peleus and Thetis Sarcophagus in the Villa Albani*, Amsterdam.
- Muth, S. (2004), 'Drei statt vier: zur Deutung der Feldherrnsarkophage,' *AA*, 1: 263–74.
- Neverov, O. (1979), 'Gems in the Collection of Rubens,' *The Burlington Magazine*, 121, 916: 424, 426–432.

- Newby, Z. (2007), 'Art at the Crossroads? Themes and Styles in Severan Art,' in *Severan Culture* (Swain, S., Harrison, S., and Elsner, J., eds.), Cambridge, 201–49.
- (2010), 'In the Guise of Gods and Heroes: Portrait Heads on Roman Mythological Sarcophagi,' in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi* (Elsner, J. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Berlin, 189–228.
- (2014), 'Poems in Stone: Reading Mythological Sarcophagi through Statius' Consolations,' in *Art and Rhetoric in Roman Culture* (Elsner, J. and Meyer, M., eds.), Cambridge, 256–87.
- Nietzsche, F. (1886), *Die Geburt der Tragödie, oder: Griechenthum und Pessimismus*, Leipzig.
- (1887), *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*, Berlin.
- Nilsson, M. P. (1953), 'The Bacchic Mysteries of the Roman Age,' *HThR*, 46, 4: 175–202.
- (1957), *The Dionysiac Mysteries of the Hellenistic and Roman Age*, Lund.
- Nock, A. D. (1928), 'Notes on Ruler-Cult, I-IV,' *JHS*, 48: 21–43.
- Nock, A. D. and Beazley, J. D. (1946), 'Sarcophagi and Symbolism,' *AJA*, 50, 1: 140–70.
- Noreña, C. F. (2011), *Imperial Ideals in the Roman West: Representation, Circulation, Power*, Cambridge.

North, J. A. (1980), 'Novelty and Choice in Roman Religion,' *JRS*, 70: 186–91.

Ogden, D. (2013), *Drakon: Dragon Myth and Serpent Cult in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, Oxford.

Östenberg, I. (2009), *Staging the World. Spoils, Captives, and Representations in the Roman Triumphal Procession*, Oxford.

Otto, W. F. (1965), *Dionysus: Myth and Cult*, Indianapolis, trans. Palmer, R. B.

Palagia, O. (1986), 'Imitation of Herakles in Ruler Portraiture,' *Boreas*, 9: 137–50.

——— (1990), 'Two Statues of Hercules in the Forum Boarium in Rome,' *OJA*, 9, 1: 51–70.

Panofsky, E. (1992), *Tomb Sculpture: Four Lectures on its Changing Aspects from Ancient Egypt to Bernini*, London.

Parker, G. (2008), *The Making of Roman India*, Cambridge.

Pashley, R. (1837), *Travels in Crete*, vol. 2, Cambridge.

Paton, S. and Schneider, R. M. (1999), 'Imperial Splendour in the Province: Imported Marble on Roman Crete,' in *From Minoan Farmers to Roman Traders: Sidelights on the Economy of Ancient Crete* (Chaniotis, A., ed.), Stuttgart, 279–304.

Payne, R. (1962), *The Roman Triumph*, London.

- Pellizzi, F., Elsner, J., and Wu, H. (eds.) (2012), *Res: Anthropology and Aesthetics. Sarcophagi*, vol. 61/62.
- Penella, R. J. (2007), *Man and the Word: The Orations of Himerius*, Berkeley, CA.
- Perry, E. (2005), *The Aesthetics of Emulation in the Visual Arts of Ancient Rome*, Cambridge.
- Perry, E. E. (2002), 'Rhetoric, Literary Criticism, and the Roman Aesthetics of Artistic Imitation,' in *The Ancient Art of Emulation: Studies in Artistic Originality and Tradition from the Present to Classical Antiquity* (Gazda, E. K., ed.), Michigan, 153–72.
- (2015), 'Human Interaction with Statues,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Friedland, E. A., Sobocinski, M. G., and Gazda, E. K., eds.), Oxford, 653–66.
- Petsalis-Diomidis, A. (2007), 'Landscape, Transformation, and Divine Epiphany,' in *Severan Culture* (Swain, S., Harrison, S., and Elsner, J., eds.), Cambridge, 250–89.
- Phillips, J. E. (1974), 'Verbs Compounded with *trans-* in Livy's Triumph Reports,' *CPh*, 69, 1: 54–5.
- Pick, B. (1898), *Die antiken Münzen von Dacien und Moesien*, vol. I of *Die antiken Münzen Nord-Griechenlands*, Berlin.
- Platt, V. (2011), *Facing the Gods: Epiphany and Representation in Graeco-Roman Art, Literature and Religion*, Cambridge.

- (2012), 'Framing the Dead on Roman Sarcophagi,' *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, 61: 213–27.
- Poole, R. S. (1892), *Catalogue of the Coins of Alexandria and the Nomes*, A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum, London.
- Rasmussen, T. (2001), 'Bacchus Triumphs on the North Downs: the Polesden Lacey Sarcophagus,' in *The Archaeology of the Roman Empire: a Tribute to the Life and Works of Professor Barri Jones* (Higham, N. J., ed.), Oxford, 335–42.
- Rebillard, E. (2013), *The Care of the Dead in Late Antiquity*, London.
- Reinsberg, C. (1995), 'Senatorensarkophage,' *MDAI(R)*, 102: 353–70.
- (2006), *Die Sarkophage mit Darstellungen aus dem Menschenleben: Vita Romana. Teil 3*, vol. I of *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.
- Ridgway, S. B. (1997), *Fourth-Century Styles in Greek Sculpture*, Madison, WI.
- Riegl, A. (1985), *Late Roman Art Industry*, Rome, trans. Winkes, R.
- Ritter, S. (1995), *Hercules in der römischen Kunst von den Anfängen bis Augustus*, Heidelberg.
- Roberts, P. (2013), *Life and Death in Pompeii and Herculaneum*, London.
- la Rocca, E. and Tortorella, S. (eds.) (2008), *Trionfi romani*, Milan.
- Rodenwaldt, G. (1935), *Über den Stilwandel in der Antoninischen Kunst*, Berlin.

- Rosenthal-Heginbottom, R. (2001), 'The Iconography of Dionysos' Indian Triumph,' in *Dionysos: origines et résurgences* (Zinguer, I., ed.), Paris, 33–8.
- Rothman, M. S. P. (1977), 'The Thematic Organization of the Panel Reliefs on the Arch of Galerius,' *AJA*, 81, 4: 427–54.
- Rowan, C. (2012), *Under Divine Auspices: Divine Ideology and the Visualization of Imperial Power in the Severan Period*, Cambridge.
- Rüpke, J. (2006), 'Triumphator and Ancestor Rituals between Symbolic Anthropology and Magic,' *Numen*, 53, 3: 251–89.
- Russell, B. (2010), 'The Roman Sarcophagus "Industry": a Reconsideration,' in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi* (Elsner, J. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Berlin, 119–148.
- (2013), *The Economics of the Roman Stone Trade*, Oxford.
- Ryberg, I. S. (1955), 'Rites of the State Religion in Roman Art,' *MAAR*, 22: 1–227.
- (1967), *Panel Reliefs of Marcus Aurelius*, New York.
- Salzman, M. R. (1990), *On Roman Time: The Codex-Calendar of 354 and the Rhythms of Urban Life in Late Antiquity*, Los Angeles, CA.
- Sanders, I. F. (1982), *Roman Crete: an Archaeological Survey and Gazetteer of Late Hellenistic, Roman, and Early Byzantine Crete*, Warminster.
- Sartre, J.-P. (1956), *Being and Nothingness*, New York, trans. Barnes, H. E.

Sauron, G. (1998), *La Grande Fresque de la Villa des Mystères à Pompéi*, Paris.

Schäfer, T. (2007), ‘Ein frükaiserzeitliches Relief mit *pompa triumphalis*,’ in *Nikopolis II: Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Nikopolis*, Preveza, 471–81.

Schlesier, R. (ed.) (2011), *Different God? Dionysos and Ancient Polytheism*, Berlin.

Schöffel, C. (2002), *Martial, Buch 8: Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung, Kommentar*, Stuttgart.

Schultze, C. (2011), ‘“The Sole Glory of Death”: Dying and Commemoration in Dionysius of Halicarnassus,’ in *Memory and Mourning: Studies on Roman Death* (Hope, V. M. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Oxford, 78–92.

Seaford, R. (1990), ‘Review of “Dionysos at Large” by Detienne, M.’ *CR*, 40, 1: 173–4.

——— (2006), *Dionysos*, London.

Settis, S., la Regina, A., Agosti, G., and Farinella, V. (1988), *La colonna Traiana*, Turin.

Shaya, J. (2015), ‘Ancient Analogs of Museums,’ in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Friedland, E. A., Sobocinski, M. G., and Gazda, E. K., eds.), Oxford, 622–37.

Sichtermann, H. (1984), ‘Der Schlafende Ganymed,’ *Gymnasium*, 91: 289–305.

——— (1992), *Die mythologischen Sarkophage: Teil 2, Apollon, Ares, Bellerophon, Daidalos, Endymion, Ganymed, Giganten, Grazien*, vol. XII of *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.

Siotto, E., Dellepiane, M., Callieri, M., Scopigno, R., Gratziu, C., Moscato, A., Burgio, L., Legnaioli, S., Lorenzetti, G., and Palleschi, V. (2015), 'A Multidisciplinary Approach for the Study and the Virtual Reconstruction of the Ancient Polychromy of Roman Sarcophagi,' *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, 16, 3: 307–14.

Smith, R. R. R. (1998), 'Cultural Choice and Political Identity in Honorific Portrait Statues in the Greek East in the Second Century A.D.' *JRS*, 88: 56–93.

——— (2006), 'The Use of Images: Visual History and Ancient History,' in *Classics in Progress: Essays on Ancient Greece and Rome* (Wiseman, T. P., ed.), Oxford, 59–102.

Snowden, F. (1970), *Blacks in Antiquity: Ethiopians in the Greco-Roman Experience*, Harvard.

Sobocinski, M. G. and Thill, E. W. (2015), 'Monumental Reliefs,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Friedland, E. A., Sobocinski, M. G., and Gazda, E. K., eds.), Oxford, 276–91.

Sorabella, J. (2001), 'A Roman Sarcophagus and its Patron,' *MMJ*, 36: 67–81.

Spinola, G. (1996), *Il Museo Pio-Clementino, vol. 1*, Vatican City.

Spivey, N. and Squire, M. (2004), *Panorama of the Classical World*, London.

Šterbenc Erker, D. (2011), 'Gender and Roman Funeral Ritual,' in *Memory and Mourning: Studies on Roman Death* (Hope, V. M. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Oxford, 40–60.

Stewart, P. (2008), *The Social History of Roman Art*, Cambridge.

Strocka, V. M. (1972), 'Beobachtungen an den Attikareliefs des severischen Quadrifons von Lepcis Magna,' *AntAfr*, 6: 147–72.

Strong, E. (1916), *Apotheosis and Afterlife: Three Lectures on Certain Phases of Art and Religion in the Roman Empire*, New York.

Stroszeck, J. (1998), *Löwen-Sarkophage: Sarkophage mit Löwenköpfen, Schreitenden Löwen und Löwen-Kampfgruppen, Teil 1*, vol. VI of *Die Antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, Berlin.

Suhr, E. G. (1953), 'Herakles and Omphale,' *AJA*, 57, 4: 251–63.

Sutherland, C. and Carson, R. A. G. (1984), *The Roman Imperial Coinage, vol. 1: Augustus to Vitellius*, London.

Sutherland, C. H. V. (1967), *The Roman Imperial Coinage, vol. 6: Diocletian's Reform to the Death of Maximinus*, London.

Swetnam-Burland, M. (2000), 'Bacchus/Liber in Pompeii: A Religious Context for the Villa of the Mysteries Frieze,' in *The Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii: Ancient Ritual, Modern Muse* (Gazda, E. K., ed.), Michigan, 59–74.

- Taisne, A.-M. (1973), 'Le thème du triomphe dans la poésie et l'art sous les Flaviens,' *Latomus*, 32: 485–504.
- Thomas, E. (2010), "'Houses of the Dead"? Columnar Sarcophagi as "Micro-Architecture",' in *Life, Death and Representation: Some New Work on Roman Sarcophagi* (Elsner, J. and Huskinson, J., eds.), Berlin, 387–485.
- Thompson, J. B. (1990), *Ideology and Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication*, Stanford.
- Townsend, P. W. (1938), 'The Significance of the Arch of the Severi at Lepcis,' *AJA*, 42, 4: 512–24.
- Toynbee, J. M. C. (1929), 'The Villa Igem and a Bride's Ordeal,' *JRS*, 19: 67–87.
- (1971), *Death and Burial in the Roman World*, Ithaca.
- (1973), *Animals in Roman Life and Art*, London.
- Trimble, J. (2015), 'Reception Theory,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Friedland, E. A., Sobocinski, M. G., and Gazda, E. K., eds.), Oxford, 606–21.
- Tuck, S. L. (2015), 'Epigraphy and Patronage,' in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Sculpture* (Friedland, E. A., Sobocinski, M. G., and Gazda, E. K., eds.), Oxford, 407–23.
- Turcan, R. (1966), *Les sarcophages Romains a représentations Dionysiaques*, Paris.

- (1987), 'Déformation des modèles et confusions typologiques dans l'iconographie des sarcophages Romains,' *ASNP*: 429–46.
- (1999), *Messages d'Outre-Tombe: l'iconographie des sarcophages romains*, Paris.
- Varbanov, I. (2005-7), *Greek Imperial Coins and their Values, Vols. I-III*, Burgas.
- Várhelyi, Z. (2010), *The Religion of Senators in the Roman Empire*, Cambridge.
- Vermeule, C. C. (1955), 'Notes on a New Edition of Michaelis: Ancient Marbles in Great Britain,' *AJA*, 59, 2: 129–50.
- Versnel, H. S. (1970), *Triumphus: an Inquiry into the Origin, Development and Meaning of the Roman Triumph*, Leiden.
- (2006), 'Red (Herring?) Comments on a New Theory Concerning the Origin of the Triumph,' *Numen*, 53, 3: 290–326.
- Vogliano, A. (1933), 'La Grande Iscrizione Bacchica del Metropolitan Museum,' *AJA*, 37, 2: 215–31.
- Vout, C. (2007), *Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome*, Cambridge.
- (2014), 'The Funerary Altar of Pedana and the Rhetoric of Unreachability,' in *Art and Rhetoric in Roman Culture* (Elsner, J. and Meyer, M., eds.), Cambridge, 288–315.

- Waddington, W., Babelon, E., and Reinach, T. (1912), *Recueil Général des Monnaies Grecques d'Asie Mineure*, Paris.
- Walker, S. (1990), 'The Sarcophagus of Maconiana Severiana,' in *Roman Funerary Monuments in the J. Paul Getty Museum, vol. 1* (True, M. and Koch, G., eds.), Malibu, CA, 83–94.
- Ward-Perkins, J. B. (1948), 'Severan Art and Architecture at Lepcis Magna,' *JRS*, 38: 59–80.
- Ward-Perkins, J. B. and Dodge, H. (1992), 'Taste and Technology: the Baltimore Sarcophagi,' in *Marble in Antiquity: Collected Papers of J.B. Ward-Perkins* (Dodge, H. and Ward-Perkins, B., eds.), Rome, 39–54.
- Weber, W. (1978), *Die Darstellungen einer Wagenfahrt auf römischen Sarkophagdeckeln und Loculus-Platten des 3. und 4. Jh. n. Chr.*, Rome.
- Weinstock, S. (1957), 'Victor and Invictus,' *HThR*, 50: 211–47.
- (1971), *Divus Julius*, Oxford.
- Wiedemann, T. E. J. (1985), 'The Regularity of Manumission at Rome,' *CQ*, 35, 1: 162–75.
- Wilburn, D. (2000), 'The God of Fertility in Room 5 of the Villa of the Mysteries,' in *The Villa of the Mysteries in Pompeii: Ancient Ritual, Modern Muse* (Gazda, E. K., ed.), Michigan, 50–58.
- Williams, C. A. (2009), *Roman Homosexuality: Second Edition*, Oxford.

Wiseman, J. (2001), 'Bacchic Mysteries: Spiritual Life in Antiquity,' *Archaeology*, 53, 3: 10–14.

Wood, S. (1978), 'Alcestis on Roman Sarcophagi,' *AJA*, 82, 4: 499–510.

——— (1986), *Roman Portrait Sculpture 217–260 A.D.*, New York, NY.

Wrede, H. (1981), *consecratio in formam deorum: vergöttlichte Privatpersonen in der römischen Kaiserzeit*, Mainz.

——— (2001), *Senatorische Sarkophage Roms: Der Beitrag des Senatorenstandes zur römischen Kunst der hohen und späten Kaiserzeit*, Mainz.

Wroth, W. (1894), *Catalogue of the Coins of Troas, Aeolis and Lesbos*, A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum, London.

Wypustek, A. (2013), *Images of Eternal Beauty in Funerary Verse Inscriptions of The Hellenistic and Greco-Roman Periods*, Leiden.

Zachos, K. L. (2007), 'Τα γλυπτά του βωμού στο Μνημείο του Οκταβιανού Αυγούστου στη Νικόπολη,' in *Nikopolis II: Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on Nikopolis, 11-15 September 2002*, Preveza, 411–34.

Zanker, P. (1982), 'Herrscherbild und Zeitgesicht,' in *Römisches Porträt. Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin*, (Klein, H., ed.), Berlin, 307–12.

——— (1990), *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, Ann Arbor, trans. Shapiro, A.

- (1995), *The Mask of Socrates: The Image of the Intellectual in Antiquity*, Berkeley, CA.
- (1997), 'In Search of the Roman Viewer,' in *The Interpretation of Architectural Sculpture in Greece and Rome. Studies in the History of Art* (Buitron-Oliver, D., ed.), London, 179–91.
- (1998), *Pompeii: Public and Private Life*, Cambridge, MA.
- (2000), *Die Apotheose der römischen Kaiser*, Munich.
- (2005), 'Ikonographie und Mentalität: zur Veränderung Mythologischer Bildthemen auf den kaiserzeitlichen Sarkophagen aus der Stadt Rom,' in *Lebenswelten: Bilder und Räume in der römischen Stadt der Kaiserzeit*. (Neudecker, R. and Zanker, P., eds.), Wiesbaden, 243–51.
- (2010), *Roman Art*, California, trans. Heitmann-Gordon, H.
- Zanker, P. and Ewald, B. C. (2012), *Living with Myths: the Imagery of Roman Sarcophagi*, Oxford.
- Zinguer, I. (ed.) (2001), *Dionysos: origines et résurgences*, Paris.
- Ziółkowski, A. (2013), 'Civic Rituals and Political Spaces in Republican and Imperial Rome,' in *The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rome* (Erdkamp, P., ed.), Cambridge, 389–409.