

# THE MATERIAL SIDES OF MARRIAGE

## WOMEN AND DOMESTIC ECONOMIES IN ANTIQUITY

Edited by

RIA BERG



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Direttore degli Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae

MIKA KAJAVA

Department of World Cultures

FI - 00014 University of Helsinki

Comitato scientifico

TUOMAS HEIKKILÄ – MIKA KAJAVA – MIKA LAVENTO

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Woman with a jewel-box.

Ceiling fresco from the Constantinian Palace in Trier  
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## Bibliography

### Bibliographical Abbreviations

Titles of periodicals are abbreviated as in *l'Année philologique*. Other abbreviations:

<i>AE</i>	<i>L'Année Épigraphique</i>
<i>ANRW</i>	<i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i>
<i>CE</i>	<i>Carmina Epigraphica</i>
<i>ILS</i>	<i>Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae</i>
<i>PIR</i>	<i>Prosopographia Imperii Romani</i>
<i>RE</i>	<i>Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i>
<i>RIC</i>	<i>Roman Imperial Coinage</i>
<i>ThesCRA</i>	<i>Thesaurus Cultus et Rituum Antiquorum</i>

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## Preface

This collection of papers is the outcome of a three-day international symposium held at the *Institutum Romanum Finlandiae*, Villa Lante, Rome, in 21–23 November 2013, entitled “The Material Sides of Marriage. Female Goods and Women’s Economic Role in the Domestic Sphere in Greek, Roman and Byzantine Times” – “Aspetti economici del matrimonio. Proprietà femminile e ruolo economico della donna nella sfera domestica nel mondo greco, romano e bizantino”, organized by Ria Berg and Sabine Huebner.

The aim of the symposium was to explore current research on gender and economics in the ancient Mediterranean region. Because of the large temporal and geographical variety of themes and the great number of papers presented, a total of forty speakers, the proceedings will be published in two phases, starting with the present volume on Greece and Rome.

Special and sincere thanks are addressed to all speakers and other participants of the original symposium. We thank in particular our session presidents, and other learned discussants, *in primis* Eva Margareta Steinby and Christer Bruun, Marja-Leena Hänninen, Vincent Jolivet, Jakub Urbanik, Antonio Varone, and Angelina Volkoff. Of the directors of IRF, we are grateful to Katariina Mustakallio, who gave us guidance, support and advice in the initial phases of the project, and Tuomas Heikkilä, who presided over the final phases. Among the members of the Finnish institute, we thank in particular Simo Örmä and Linda Jokela. We are grateful to *Institutum Romanum Finlandiae* and in particular to Mika Kajava, for all support relating to the publication process, from acceptance to fruition.

This volume is dedicated to the memory of Prof. Päivi Setälä.

Rome, July 2016

*Ria Berg*



# Introduction

## *Oeconomicus*: Women, Marriage and Economy in the Ancient World

RIA BERG

The common topic of this collection of articles is the role of women in the economies of the ancient Mediterranean, particularly in the context of marriage, and in the private, domestic and familial environment. Female economies in antiquity – the plural ‘economies’ indicating that we recognize the multiple parallel economic systems in which women acted – have been studied with particularly keen interest in the past two decades.<sup>1</sup> Often, the focus of interest in gendered economics has been on exceptional women, who belonged to the wealthiest families, with elaborate dowries or inheritances, or those who broke out from the domestic sphere, becoming independent entrepreneurs: shop-keepers, wine merchants or brick industrialists. Yet, in the ancient literary sources, starting from the nuclear work of Xenophon, *Oeconomicus*, women are presented as the most active economic agents in the daily life of *oikos/domus*; significantly even the very word ‘economy’ is derived from the sphere of household, family and its accounts. Paradoxically, the gendered mechanics of such familial, small-scale economies have garnered relatively less interest in modern studies.

The economic cycle is gendered in all its phases: production is gendered, distribution is gendered, possession is gendered, and consumption is gendered. Many of the phases of this cycle took place in the domestic unit and the major economic movements in an individual’s life most often took place in the framework of household, marriage and family. Gender was a primary aspect dictating an individual’s share in the common familial assets, through gender-bound legal and social norms. The Greco-Roman household, *oikos* or *domus*, was thus one of the most central *loci* of the ancient economy, of production and consumption, and female agency was central in the management of this unit.<sup>2</sup> In this collection of papers, the focus will thus be on private rather than public, the household rather than the external commercial markets. It aims at fine-tuning further the general picture achieved in previous research, combining, through an interdisciplinary approach, material, visual and literary sources.

### Women in (the Brick) Business

In the mid-nineties, inspired by the flourishing of writings on gender and family economies, professor Päivi Setälä, as director of the *Institutum Romanum Finlandiae* institute, chose as the main theme of her research Roman women and their economic possibilities. In fact, the symposium on *Material Sides of Marriage* was directly inspired by this scholarly tradition of its venue. Setälä’s approach was also a development of the

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<sup>1</sup> P. BERDOWSKI, ‘Some Remarks on the Economic Activity of Women in the Roman Empire. A Research Problem’, P. BERDOWSKI – B. BLAHACZEK (eds.), *Haec mihi in animis vestris templa. Studia classica in memory of professor Lesław Morawiecki*, Rzeszów 2007, 283-98; R. SALLER, ‘Household and Gender’, in W. SCHEIDEL – I. MORRIS – R.P. SALLER (eds.), *The Cambridge Economic History of the Greco-Roman World*, Cambridge – New York 2007, 87-112.

<sup>2</sup> R. SALLER, ‘The Roman Family as a Productive Unit’, in B. RAWSON (ed.), *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, Malden, MA – Oxford 2011, 116-28; L. FOXHALL, *Studying Gender in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge 2013.



Institute's earlier research on the Roman brick industry, including her own study on Roman brick industrials, entitled *Private domini in the Roman Empire. A Historical and Prosopographical Study of Landowners in the District of Rome*, evidencing that of the 150 *domini* appearing on brick stamps, ca. one third were women, and, in the period of Antoninus Pius, even up to half.<sup>3</sup> Among the 'top managers' there were several women, like Flavia Seia Isaurica, owning six *figlinae* and using the services of 16 different *officinatores*.<sup>4</sup> Women appeared not only as proprietors, but also as practical managers, *officinatores*. All this suggests that many women (of senatorial ranks) certainly did not have only the role of passive inheritors and owners, but also an active managerial role in production, sales and investment in the brick industry.

The work of the institute continued in a 1995 conference entitled *Women in Roman Society: Female Networks and Public Sphere*, later published as a collection of articles, developing further the idea of public visibility and the importance of Roman women in economy, politics and religion. In 1997, Päivi Setälä founded at the Finnish Institute a research group on women and wealth, and its work was concluded in 2002 with the publication of the volume *Women, Wealth, and Power in the Roman Empire*. This volume also examined the public roles and visibility of influential women, including studies on the status symbols of women of the imperial family and elite women, such as the article by the present writer that examined jewellery and *mundus muliebris* as forms of female property, investment and inheritance. Janne Pölönen argued convincingly that Roman women could, in fact, inherit much more liberally than earlier thought, and Ville Vuolanto that *tutela mulieris* was, in the Imperial period, little more than a nominal convention.<sup>5</sup> The focus remained on the central triangle *gender – economy – power*, with an emphasis on power, examining the ways in which women in Roman society could have important and visible economic roles and influence.

However, such emphasis underlined the exceptions rather than the rules, the heiresses and the businesswomen somehow invading the male fields of economy, leaving capillary, extensive research on all aspects of female economic activity, also below the elite, still missing.<sup>6</sup>

A decade after the completion of the work, the present project re-examines female economies with a new emphasis on history-from-below, underlining issues of materiality, organized around a core subject, dowry, in collaboration with Institute's research fellow Sabine Huebner. Huebner has for a long time has been analysing family economies in Roman Egypt, and has recently published the volume *The Family in Roman Egypt. A Comparative Approach to Inter-generational Solidarity and Conflict*, examining widely also the question of family economies.<sup>7</sup> Dowry is indeed one of the most universal entities of gendered economies, concerning both wealthy and poor women, an abstract concept materializing in tangible goods, a common denominator recognizable in most sources, laws, historical narrative and anecdote, appearing also in visual evidence; its presence can also be hypothesised in female grave goods and domestic *paraphernalia*.

<sup>3</sup> SETÄLÄ, 'Women and Brick Production', 184.

<sup>4</sup> SETÄLÄ, *Private domini*, 119-21; SETÄLÄ, 'Women and Brick Production', 190.

<sup>5</sup> R. BERG, 'Wearing Wealth. *Mundus Muliebris* and *Ornatus* as Status Markers for Women in Imperial Rome', 15-73; R. HÄLIKKA, 'Discourses on Body, Gender and Power in Tacitus', in P. SETÄLÄ *et al.* (eds.), *Women, Wealth, and Power in Imperial Rome* (Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 25), Roma 2002, 75-104; M. KELTANEN, 'The Public Image of the Four Empresses. Ideal Wives, Mothers and Regents?', 105-46; J. PÖLÖNEN, 'The Division of Wealth between Men and Women in Roman Succession (c.a. 50 B.C. – AD 250)', 147-79; V. VUOLANTO, 'Women and the Property of Fatherless Children in the Roman Empire', 203-43.

<sup>6</sup> BERDOWSKI, 'Economic Activity of Women', 284-85.

<sup>7</sup> S. Huebner, Cambridge 2013. For the gendered economies in Egypt, see also D.W. HOBSON, 'Women as Property Owners in Roman Egypt', *TAPhA* 113 (1983), 311-21.

### Marriage, Dowry, Inheritance

The societies around the ancient Mediterranean can be labelled ‘patriarchal’, and consequently women’s economic roles were not defined independently, but always in relation to male members of the household – as daughters, sisters, wives and mothers. These relations were fundamentally centred on marriage. As a general rule, women were not only legally and socially, but also economically dependent on a father, *pater familias*, husband, brother, son or other male *tutor*, who – at least in theory – was the only member of the household to have the capacity to purchase, sell off, incur debt, stipulate contracts, or make wills. The legislation often considered women merely as links ensuring the transmission of family property between the generations of male members or linking different families.

Thus, ancient marriage was very much an economic affair. This institution set the economic framework for a woman’s life, and the beginning and end of a matrimony often marked the most important economic movements of a lifetime. At the beginning of a matrimony, there was a transfer of assets and goods, in the form of a dowry, from one family to another. At the end of a matrimony, be it through death or divorce, the core economic matters were constituted by the division or returning of the dowry and other property, or legacies and inheritance. These were crucial moments in the lives of the women, and also in the destinies of family properties; well visible and symbolic occasions, regulated by strict legislation and guarded by customs and traditions. These were also often moments of dispute and crisis regarding domestic finances, as documented in numerous legal cases and private correspondence.

Between these polar moments, also in the framework of marriage, took place the ordinary Xenophanean domestic economic ‘daily life’: augmentation and maintenance of family property, reproducing, refining and consuming the resources in the optimal way. The ancient marriage, in fact, in many aspects resembles a business partnership, and the relationship between husband and wife is described with similar terms and expressions to a joint financial enterprise with a trusted partner, in literature and epigraphic rhetoric.<sup>8</sup>

Consequently, in past decades, the mainstream of studies on gender and economy, in both the Greek and Roman worlds, has centred on questions about dowry and inheritance, mostly based on legal sources. On the Greek side, David M. Schaps already attempted a synthesis of female economies in his book *Economic rights of women in ancient Greece*, in 1979,<sup>9</sup> maintaining the traditional view on male dominated households and economies, and underlining the incapacity of women to own property and make economic decisions. Lin Foxhall then took an opposing view in her seminal 1989 article ‘Household, Gender and Property in Classical Athens’, arguing that property was used by households, not individuals, and households consisted of male and female members. She also pointed out that the very concept of ‘ownership’ differed from ours, being a form of rights of management, disposal and use, shared with the whole domestic unit.<sup>10</sup> Up-to-date work on the economy of Greek marriage has been done by R. Sealey, writing on *Women and Law in Classical Greece*, in 1990, and Cheryl Anne Cox, in her 1998 work *Household Interests. Property, Marriage Strategies, and Family Dynamics in Ancient Athens*.<sup>11</sup> More recent ideas are to be found in the 2005 collection of articles edited by Deborah Lyons and Raymond Westbrook – the former contributing also to the present collection – *Women and Property in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Societies*

<sup>8</sup> FOXHALL, ‘Household, Gender and Property’, *CQ* 39 (1989), 22-44.

<sup>9</sup> D. SCHAPS, *Economic Rights of Women in Ancient Greece*, Edinburgh 1979.

<sup>10</sup> FOXHALL, ‘Household, Gender and Property’, 26.

<sup>11</sup> S.C. TODD, *The Shape of Athenian Law*, Oxford 1993; see also A.R.W. HARRISON, *The Law of Athens I. Family and Property*, Oxford 1968; R. SEALEY, *Women and Law in Classical Greece*, Chapel Hill 1990; C.A. COX, *Household Interests. Property, Marriage Strategies, and Family Dynamics in Ancient Athens*, Princeton 1998.

who, in their introduction underline the importance of studying gender and economics together, as “In societies that are generally labelled ‘patriarchal’, and whose wealth was essentially derived from agriculture, the control and use of property was a determining factor in the maintenance of hierarchical, legal, and ideological structures in general”.<sup>12</sup> On the questions of Greek female dowry and inheritance, the latest comments are to be found in the articles of Brenda Griffith-Williams and Paola Tosoni, in this volume.

Concerning the Roman world, a real boom of texts analysing the Roman marriage and its juridical aspects were published in the early nineties, among them the monographic works of Edward Champlin, writing on familial emotions behind Roman legislation (1991), Susan Treggiari examining the *Roman Marriage* (1991), and Suzanne Dixon the *Roman Mother* (1989) and the *Roman Family* (1992). In the same years, more specific analyses of the financial details of marital contracts were written by Suzanne Dixon, studying the ‘Family Finances’ of Terentia and Tullia (1987) and J.A. Crook, in his article ‘His and Hers’ (1990),<sup>13</sup> and, analysing the exact mechanics of the dowry, *in primis* Richard Saller<sup>14</sup> and Jane Gardner.<sup>15</sup> In this volume, the latest contribution on the issues of the returning of the dowry comes from Carlos Sánchez-Moreno Ellart.<sup>16</sup>

### Female Economies – Grey Economies?

According to Lin Foxhall, economics, in general, is engendered in two fundamental ways: through gender-differentiated laws of possession and gender-bound division of work. Both the laws and the labour-division, as has been thoroughly shown in previous research, were strongly unfavourable to women in Antiquity. In Greco-Roman legislation, women’s rights to possess, to buy and sell, to leave and receive legacies, were severely restricted. Moreover, a wide range of cultural and ideological conventions hindered women’s economic progress.

As for the division of labour, it is (still) strongly gendered in most societies, so that some occupations are considered prevalently or exclusively female or male. The quantity and quality of any labour assigned to an individual was, naturally, also very strongly dictated by factors other than gender, such as social status, class, wealth, age, citizenship, education, urban or rural environment. However, all previous research agrees that the occupations available to women were significantly fewer in number than those for men.<sup>17</sup> As

<sup>12</sup> D. LYONS – R. WESTBROOK (eds.), *Women and Property in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Societies*, Washington D.C. 2005.

<sup>13</sup> J. CROOK, ‘His and Hers. What Degree of Financial Responsibility Did Husband and Wife Have for the Matrimonial Home and their Life in Common in a Roman Marriage?’, in K. ANDREAU – H. BRUHNS (eds.), *Parenté et stratégies familiales dans l’Antiquité Romaine*, Roma 1990, 153-72; E. CHAMPLIN, *Final Judgements. Duty and Emotion in Roman Wills, 200 B.C. - A.D. 250*, Univ. of California 1991; S. TREGGIARI, *Roman Marriage. Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian*, Oxford 1991; S. DIXON, *The Roman Mother*, London – Sydney 1989; S. DIXON, *The Roman Family*, Baltimore – London 1992; S. DIXON, ‘Family Finances. Terentia and Tullia’, in B. RAWSON (ed.), *The Family in Ancient Rome. New Perspectives*, London 1987 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1992), 93-120. See also A. ROMANO, *Matrimonium iustum. Valori economici e valori culturali nella storia giuridica del matrimonio*, Napoli 1996.

<sup>14</sup> R.P. SALLER, ‘Roman Dowry and the Devolution of Property in the Principate’, *CQ* 34 (1984), 195-205; R.P. SALLER, *Patriarchy, Property, and Death in the Roman Family*, Cambridge – New York 1994.

<sup>15</sup> J.F. GARDNER, ‘The Recovery of Dowry in Roman Law’, *CQ* 35 (1985), 449-53; J.F. GARDNER, *Women in Roman Law and Society*, London 1986.

<sup>16</sup> See also C. SÁNCHEZ-MORENO ELLART, s.v. ‘*tabulae dotaes*’, in R.S. BAGNALL *et al.* (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, New York 2012, 6509-10.

<sup>17</sup> For Greece, E. HARRIS, ‘Workshop, Marketplace and Household. The Nature of Technical Specialization in Classical Athens and its Influence on Economy and Society’, in P. CARTLEDGE – E. COHEN – L. FOXHALL (eds.), *Money, Labour, and Land. Approaches to Economies in Ancient Greece*, London 2002, 67-99. For Rome, N.B. KAMPEN, *Image and Status. Roman Working Women in Ostia*, Berlin 1981.

noted by Foxhall, most jobs available to them were low paid (or even unpaid) and low status: “what was considered ‘appropriate’... largely centred on the skills and tasks women would ‘naturally’ be expected to undertake as wives and mothers: textiles, food, service and sex”.<sup>18</sup> Also in Antiquity, as emerges from the writings of Aristotle, Xenophon and Columella, the basic labour division saw women ‘naturally’ confined indoors, occupied in domestic tasks, while men acquired the necessary resources from outside the house; female labour outside of the house was an anomaly.<sup>19</sup> The most emblematic example of domestic indoor female occupation is wool-working, as is brought forth in many articles of this collection, both as a symbol of status and a practical toil.<sup>20</sup> Even so, we should not forget that spinning and weaving could also be done by men, or – in contrast with its being symbol of a virtuous matron – by prostitutes.<sup>21</sup>

The interrelationships of various combinations of such conditions of law and labour may have produced paradoxical economic results. Elite women may have had great liberties in economic matters through their patrimonies and de-facto authority, yet their privileges were also under strict control, for example through the laws restricting ‘female luxury’ or conspicuous consumption, like *lex Oppia*, or delimiting female inheritance, like *lex Voconia*, of 169 B.C. However, wealthy aristocratic women also had the best means (money, acquaintances and expensive lawyers) to by-pass many restrictions imposed by the law.

On the other hand, women of lower classes enjoyed many economic and practical freedoms that were unavailable to elite women, who, because of their status as pawns in political and economic games. Women of the lower classes, foreign women and freedwomen could be much more active in commerce, because they were not bound by family interests controlling its patrimony, family honour, and reputation. Freedwomen without male relatives might have been, quite early on, operating legally without a *tutor*, and educated slaves, for example doctors or midwives, may have had considerable possibilities to move, to practice their profession and to earn. The various commercial activities available to Pompeian women have been thoroughly examined by Liisa Savunen.<sup>22</sup> Gradually, in imperial Rome, statutes such as *ius trium liberorum* and the step-by-step abolishment of *tutela mulierum* gave women ever larger commercial freedoms. Based on the Puteolan wax tablets Archive of the *Sulpicii* family, Jane Gardner stated that even if *tutela* seemed to be an active institution, it did not impede women from conducting business.<sup>23</sup> In practice, there were numerous women ship owners, women trading *amphorae* or perfumes, oil, wool and wine.<sup>24</sup>

All in all, the mechanics with which this system allowed for *de facto* freedoms and ways to by-pass laws through loop-holes are particularly interesting. These range from Livia’s extensive privileges and trusts, analysed by Marja-Leena Hänninen in this volume, to elite *amicitiae* above legal restrictions as

<sup>18</sup> FOXHALL, *Studying Gender*, 99, for further reference.

<sup>19</sup> See FOXHALL, *Studying Gender*, 99 and R. BERG, in this volume, for further references.

<sup>20</sup> L. LARSSON LOVÉN, ‘Wool Work as a Gender Symbol in Ancient Rome. Roman Textiles and Ancient Sources’, in C. GILLIS – M.-B. NOSCH (eds.), *Ancient Textiles. Production, Craft and Society* (Proceedings of the First International Conference on Ancient Textiles), Oxford 2007, 229-36; BERDOWSKI, ‘Economic Activity of Women’, 290-91.

<sup>21</sup> E. COHEN, ‘Free and Unfree Sexual Work’, in C. FARAONE – L. MCCLURE (eds.), *Prostitutes and Courtesans in the Ancient World*, Madison WI 2006, 95-124.

<sup>22</sup> L. SAVUNEN, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii*, Helsinki 1997.

<sup>23</sup> J.F. GARDNER, ‘Women in Business Life. Some Evidence from Puteoli’, in P. SETÄLÄ – L. SAVUNEN (eds.), *Female Networks and the Public Sphere in Roman Society* (Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 22), Roma 1999, 11-27, in part. 27. As noted above, similar observations in VUOLANTO, ‘Women and Property’.

<sup>24</sup> L. SAVUNEN, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii*, Helsinki 1997; S. TREGGIARI, ‘Jobs in the Household of Livia’, *PBSR* 43 (1972), 48-77; BERDOWSKI, ‘Economic Activity of Women’, 292; F. CENERINI, *La donna romana. Modelli e realtà*, Bologna 2009. Further contributions on the participation of women in work outside the proper household can be found in A. BUONOPANE – F. CENERINI (curr.), *Donna e lavoro nella documentazione epigrafica* (Atti del I Seminario sulla condizione femminile nella documentazione epigrafica, Bologna 21 novembre 2002), Faenza 2003.

observed by Alessandra Valentini, and to the Pompeian women lending money, mentioned in this volume by Vincenzina Castiglione Morelli.<sup>25</sup> In practice, yet not by law, women could manage their own financial affairs, inherit equally with their brothers, make wills as they wished, own, buy and sell property, and borrow and lend money.

Indirect and unofficial, female economic activities are often absent in our sources, to be read between the lines. The full range of female engagement in domestic production and household maintenance is mostly invisible, unpaid, and unreported, and therefore has not yet been thoroughly understood or examined. Among the most recent approaches to the question of household work is Suzanne Dixon's 2004 paper 'Exemplary Housewife or Luxurious Slut? Cultural Representations of Women in the Roman Economy' and M.J. Groen-Vallinga's 2013 article 'Desperate Housewives? The Adaptive Family Economy and Female Participation in the Roman Urban Labour Market'.<sup>26</sup> Such grey areas include the role of women in controlling and managing the material property of the household, or the possibilities of supplementing domestic resources in non-monetary ways by having a small vegetable garden, producing textiles, working as teachers, wet-nurses, or midwives. Even prostitution and, more broadly, engagement in the hospitality business, tavern keeping, or acting as 'courtesans' or 'professional girl-friends' were possibilities for impoverished freeborn women or freedwomen, imposed on them by circumstance, on the borderline between licit and illicit, moral and immoral.<sup>27</sup>

The scholarly emphasis on cash economy and legal monetary transactions overstates the sectors with minimal female contribution in ancient societies. As noted by Sarah Pomeroy "In societies characterized by strict sexual division of labour, where most women are excluded from the labour market, cash economy, and ownership of the means of production, the categories that have been applied by economic historians are relevant almost exclusively to males who participate in cash economy".<sup>28</sup>

The dual differentiation between the large-scale cash (male) market economies and day-to-day, non-monetary, small-scale (female) domestic economies is reminiscent of the general dispute line of ancient economy studies, during the seventies and the eighties, with a similar division between the two opposing stances of 'primitivists' and 'modernists'.<sup>29</sup> The first followed Moses I. Finley's economic vision underlining the primitive nature of ancient economy, fundamentally based on small-scale subsistence agriculture, little trade and non-programmed economic activities.<sup>30</sup> M.I. Rostovzeff's work, instead, represented the idea of ancient economy as a relatively modern and complex system, actively interested in growth and profit, with widespread trade and markets, and large scale economic planning.<sup>31</sup> In a way, the feminist trend in gendered economic research has tried to 'elevate' female economic activity to the 'modernist' horizon, concentrating research questions on large-scale, regulated and professional trade and commerce undertaken by women, and striving to minimize the role of domestic economy, seen as an expression of 'primitive' economic thought.

<sup>25</sup> A.A. BARRETT, *Livia. First Lady of Imperial Rome*, New Haven – London 2002.

<sup>26</sup> S. DIXON, 'Exemplary Housewife or Luxurious Slut. Cultural Representations of Women in the Roman Economy', in F. MCHARDY – E. MARSHALL (eds.), *Women's Influence on Classical Civilization*, London – New York 2004, 56-74; M.J. GROEN-VALLINGA, 'Desperate Housewives? The adaptive Family Economy and Female Participation in the Roman Urban Labour Market', in E. HEMELRIJK – G. WOOLF, *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*, Leiden – Boston 2013, 295-312.

<sup>27</sup> T. MCGINN, *The Economy of Prostitution in the Roman World*, Ann Arbor 2002; COHEN, 'Free and Unfree Sexual Work', 95-124.

<sup>28</sup> POMEROY, *Xenophon*, 57.

<sup>29</sup> G. VIVENZA, 'Roman Economic Thought', in W. SCHEIDEL (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Economy*, Cambridge 2012, 25-44.

<sup>30</sup> M.I. FINLEY, *The Ancient Economy*, Berkeley – Los Angeles – London 1973, 2nd ed. 1985, exp. ed. 1999.

<sup>31</sup> M.I. ROSTOVZEFF, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire*, Oxford 1926, 2nd ed. 1957.

We might even try to apply the modern concept of ‘grey economies’, ‘shadow economies’, or ‘informal economies’ to a significant sector of female economic activity in antiquity. By modern definition, such activities are not controlled by legislation, or they by-pass laws, are not taxed or monitored, they take place ‘off the books’, or simply independently of the industrial sector. They are also typically easy entry, unstable and small-scale, and require only informal education, exemplified by unpaid family labour or street vendors. In contemporary societies, particularly in the third world, women tend to make up the greatest portion of such ‘shadow economies’, contributing up to half of the total national product. Many of these definitions quite directly apply to the ancient world and occupations typical of women, and the challenge is to render visible these unregulated and not strictly legal activities.

### Gendered Economies and Materiality

The connection between women and objects in antiquity was profound, and both practical and ideological. Besides the viewpoint of ‘grey economy’, another important stance of this volume is the intertwining of material and archaeological evidence with literary sources.<sup>32</sup>

In ancient Mediterranean cultures, land was the most important form of wealth, but one that women had very restricted access to.<sup>33</sup> Instead, certain categories of concrete material goods, such as clothes, jewellery and toiletries, were particularly often owned or controlled by women, and therefore were highly gender-sensitive means of distribution, consumption and displays of wealth, playing a significant role in family economies. Even if providing a woman with a dowry – which represented a daughter’s share of her parental inheritance – at the time of her marriage was common throughout much of the ancient Mediterranean, it usually consisted, in contrast to her brothers’ shares, of material goods such as jewellery, clothing, furniture or cash instead of real estate or land. Material objects were, in fact, central means of expressing and showing gender roles and hierarchies, with multiple functions in articulating economic relations between family members, for example as gifts marking the passage from unmarried to married status, as the private and personal property of married women, or as female goods interred as funerary gifts.<sup>34</sup>

On the other hand, extensive archaeological material, made up of domestic and funerary finds, has only in part been considered from the point of view of gender.<sup>35</sup> Materiality – understood as the way in which material things are woven into the fabric of social life and relations – is, in fact, an important concept for analysing interactions between objects and women’s lives, yet its potential has not yet been fully exploited.<sup>36</sup> Examining the connections between different source materials is one of the most important aims of this volume.

The volume is organized into four major chapters that consider wider thematic blocks, which also loosely follow a chronological framework. The first group of papers (*Wool-Working Women: From Tools to Symbols*) centres on female goods in Iron Age Etruria, indigenous Sicily and Hellenistic Magna Graecia, and

<sup>32</sup> N. SOJC – G. SALTINI SEMERARI – G.J. BURGERS (eds.), *Investigating Gender in Mediterranean Archaeology* (forthcoming).

<sup>33</sup> L. FOXHALL, ‘Access to Resources in Classical Greece. The Egalitarianism of the *Polis* in Practice’, in CARTLEDGE *et al.*, 2002, 209-20.

<sup>34</sup> WAGNER-HASEL, B., ‘Marriage Gifts in Ancient Greece’, in M.L. SATLOW (ed.), *The Gift in Antiquity*, Hoboken 2013.

<sup>35</sup> M. CUOZZO – A. GUIDI (eds.), *Archeologia delle identità e delle differenze*, Roma 2013; M. CUOZZO, ‘Percorsi per una archeologia delle differenze’, in L. GUIDI – M.R. PELLIZZARI (eds.), *Nuove frontiere per la storia di genere* (V Congresso della Società italiana delle Storiche, Napoli 2010), vol. II, Salerno 2013, 17-24.

<sup>36</sup> S.B. POMEROY, *Xenophon, Oeconomicus. A Social and Historical Commentary with a New English Translation*, Oxford 1994.

their basis is archaeological, considering both grave and household contexts, with wool-work as the common denominator. The chapter then moves to discuss material objects as instruments and symbols of female domestic economies in Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic Greece.

**Federica Pitzalis** studies textile production in Etruria between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. Pitzalis observes that in funerary contexts the minimum common denominator for the female gender is the presence of spindles. The author interestingly examines the ‘dramatization’ of the spindle in funerary contexts in an alternative role of ‘female scepter’. She notes that attention should also be given to the economic implications of such labour, as wool-working was an important economic activity organized and governed by women themselves.

**Anita Crispino** and **Massimo Cultraro** write on the basis of archaeological evidence about female economic roles in indigenous Sicily, from the late Bronze Age to the arrival of the first Greek colonies. They conduct their study of gender identities by examining the *necropoleis* of Monte Finocchito and Pantalica, and a household context at Morgantina. The necropolis presents two phases, the first (9<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> cent.) with female burials distinguished by spindle and refined pottery, and the second (8<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> cent.), by the arrival of luxury goods, possibly representing the dowry, and with Greek influence, perhaps referring to women as vehicles of cultural exchange through mixed marriages. A rare and thus very interesting comparison with the funerary world is offered by a contemporary domestic context, the house 16 W in Morgantina, where the large main space can be divided into distinct working areas, the central area used for weaving, with evidence of two looms, underlining the importance of this activity.

**Francesco Meo**’s contribution concentrates on wool-working women in the Magna Grecian city of *Herakleia* (Lucania), based on archaeological material from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. In Herakleia fourteen domestic looms have been identified, enabling the combining of results from experimental archaeology with the spatial distribution of material remains, in order to explore the precise dynamics of domestic wool production. Meo presents an analysis of the domestic vs. commercial textile production through the quality of textiles produced. In three houses two looms were working contemporaneously, producing very fine and standardized thread, alluding to more large-scale production, probably for commercial purposes.

**Nikolas Dimakis** discusses women’s share in status displays on the grounds of female burials in the Classical and Hellenistic Peloponnese. Dimakis starts with a *caveat* on the significance of grave goods in identifying gendered persons, often more illustrative of funerary practice than living realities, deploring the wide lack of skeletal analysis. In Argos, female graves contain a relatively large amount of jewellery; in classical era Corinth, female burials are poor in jewellery, and more useful indicators of gender are offered by vases. Dimakis asks whether this might reveal greater ‘openness’ towards women in Argos, and a more male-centred bias in the society in Corinth. He then discusses the female burials of the Hellenistic period, again rich in gold jewellery and other luxuries, found mainly in Patras, Aigion and Elis, which might also signal dynastic and family status symbolism, rather than the personal wealth and influence of the deceased women.

**Deborah Lyons** has previously written on female goods in the ancient Greek symbolic economies, gendered wealth and division of labour, and in particular gendered gifts, of which the female ones are often fragile and perishable (like textiles), the male ones hard and durable (like gold). Violating this rule was always perilous.<sup>37</sup> In this paper she examines more mundane and domestic objects as female possessions, also pondering the multifaceted question of engendering objects. She observes that most female objects centre on the pivotal moment of marriage, underlining the difference between marital gifts like *himatia kai chrysia* (clothing and gold ornaments), personally owned by the woman, and dowry (land, money), used by the hus-

<sup>37</sup> D. LYONS, *Dangerous Gifts. Gender and Exchange in Ancient Greece*, Austin, Texas 2012.

band. Analysing an eloquent passage of Aristophanes listing female possessions, from grooming equipment and cosmetics to dildos, and the list of garments dedicated by women to Artemis Brauronia at her shrine in Athens, Lyons compares them also with visual and archaeological evidence of grave-goods. She poses a dichotomy between the loom-weight with the inscription *Isodikēs emi*, an unpretentious, cheap object of use, and the *epinetron*, knee-protection for wool-work, luxuriously decorated by Eretria Painter and never actually used, more a symbolic gift to the bride, yet both objects relating to the female role of domestic producer.

The discourse on the visual evidence in the classical Greek context is elaborated further by **Renee M. Gondek**, who discusses women's 'paraphernalia', clothes and jewellery belonging to the dowry, carried in wedding processions painted on Athenian vases. Attesting to the importance of the decorated woman's appearance, black- and red-figure vases from the 6<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. often show wedding processions, with a profusion of material detail like vessels for perfume and caskets of jewels. Some also show rectangular decorated objects, and Gondek specifically concentrates on these objects and their significance. Earlier interpretations, for example by John Beazley, have seen them as folded clothes, but the author interprets them as containers for clothes, emphasising the intimate connection between women and their dress, symbolizing material soon to be incorporated into the groom's estate.

The second major chapter (*Dowry and Inheritance: Legislating Women's Property*) moves on to legal matters regulating the economic relations between families united by blood or marital ties on questions of dowry and inheritance. Two articles discuss the position of women in the classical Athenian legal system, and four discuss women's role in Roman legislation from Republican times until late Antiquity, alternating analysis of actual legislation with historical narrative about individual Roman women negotiating the norms imposed by law to tackle the practical necessities of their lives.

**Brenda Griffith-Williams**,<sup>38</sup> in her paper discusses women in the Athenian inheritance system, concentrating on two exemplary cases from the speeches of Isaios, a fourth century BC logographer specializing in inheritance law. She starts by introducing the central concept of *epiklēros*, which according to her is often inaccurately translated as heiress, but rather refers to the dead man's only surviving offspring, a daughter, who 'came with the inherited property', without really being its proprietor. She also discusses the most central question of the relation between inheritance and dowry, often understood as a sort of female inheritance even though not comparable to it for various motives, for example being smaller and not even obligatory by law. Griffith-Williams underlines the woman's role in Iseus speeches as a crucial link connecting inheritance claims between various male members of the family, as intermediaries or genealogical links in their role of daughter, mother, or wife, creating legal connections with domestic properties belonging to male relatives.

**Paola Tosoni** continues the discussion on the economic roles of women in classical Athens, also basing her analysis on the speeches of Iseus. Her specific approach is to analyse the different female roles in Isean society, from slave to free married woman, placing them on an axis of active-passive economic agents. Women slaves are treated as passive elements, among other hereditary possessions. However, Tosoni also presents examples of women's active economic roles, like the two freed women of Euctemos in speech VI who autonomously manage rented houses as landladies.

The starting point is **Carlos Sánchez-Moreno Ellart**'s discussion of women's position in Roman law, in particular the *pacta dotalia* regarding the wife's rights to recover the dowry in case of death or divorce, treated in length in Digest 23.4 *de pactis dotalibus*. The author presents various ways in which this rather ambiguous and flexible system balanced the husband's legal right of possession and making a dowry

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<sup>38</sup> B. GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS, *A Commentary on Selected Speeches of Isaios*, Leiden 2013.



productive, and the protection of the economic interests of the wife. A crucial question is the deadline of restitution of the dowry in the case of divorce.

Questions of delayed payment of a dowry and its specific motives surface in **Alessandra Valentini's** article on Aemilia Tertia's legacy and *ornamenta*. The timeframe is mid-republican Rome, the protagonists are members of the influential family of Corneli Scipiones, and the particular focus is on the strategies of the family to enable the inheritance to follow a mother-daughter line, not permitted by the law. Valentini starts – following from the Polybian narration – from the marriage of the two daughters of Scipio Africanus Maior and Aemilia Tertia and the payment of their considerable dowries, stipulated in their father's will. Belated payment only after their mother's death, and *fideicommissum* through the adoptive son, Scipio Aemilianus, are among the systems used to by-pass the effects of *Lex Voconia* (169 B.C.), restricting the inheritances of wealthy women. Another legal stratagem transfers to Papiria, the biological mother of Scipio Aemilianus, the material *ornamenta* of Aemilia Tertia, conveying to the latter an aura of benefactress.

**Anna Guadagnucci** examines the economic roles of younger Pliny's female friends as presented in the corpus of Pliny's letters. Guadagnucci starts from the observation that Pliny's tendential purpose is to present himself as an ideal Roman elite male, also through his legal assistance towards women. In the first part, Guadagnucci analyses cases in which women have a passive role in the transmission of properties, starting from cases where Pliny shows generosity towards women of inferior status. In other cases, Pliny is shown as a defendant of women's wills, like in the cases of Sabina and Pomponia Galla. There are further cases of female independence in leaving their legacy, also to vile testament hunters, or cases of independent legal action by daughters in case of unjust testaments in favour of *noverca*. Even more active roles of women include, for example, buying and selling landed estates, lending and receive money, signing testaments even against the will of the male members of the family, and fighting their economic causes in law courts. The independent actions of the wealthy mother-in-law of Pliny, Pompeia Celerina, are a case in point.

**Marianna Thoma** presents cases from Roman Egypt, where the highly multicultural environment presented particular challenges for the legislation on women's inheritance and dowry. The author bases her discussions on passages of the so-called *Gnomon of Idios Logos* (BGU V 1210). Compiled in the second half of the 2nd century A.D., the text has preserved a wealth of legal cases treated by the office of *Idios Logos*, presided by a Roman procurator, as an arbiter in various cases of civil disputes, such as inheritances, fines and confiscation of property. Thoma observes how regulations differ between Roman, Greek and Egyptian contexts, and even between several Greek cities, making their legal position radically different. The question is accentuated in disputes on inheritance and dowry in cases of mixed marriages. However, the economic power of women in Roman Egypt depended also on their age, social status, their husband's status, and the number of children they had.

**Katerina Nikolaou** discusses the contribution of women to Byzantine family properties, based on hagiographical, epigraphical and legal evidence. She starts from the emblematic case of a Byzantine girl, Athenais, who became wife of the emperor Theodosius II after having successfully plead, and won, her cause at imperial court – the case of being excluded from paternal inheritance by her two brothers. Nikolaou states that Byzantine women, in fact, inherited a share of the family fortune after their parents' death. Nikolaou further asks whether Byzantine women were able to manage their own share of inheritance and money after marrying and answers in the affirmative. She cites narratives about women using even in marriage their property at their will, and concluding that women in the Middle Byzantine period had a complete and absolute ownership and possession of part of the family fortune, which came from inheritance, practicing a private profession or trade, and in particular, from dowry.

The third group of papers (*Household Management and Female Goods*) is dedicated to women as practical managers of domestic property, in the sense of Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*. **Maciej Daszuta** examines the hypothesis that the Spartan wife was the principal keeper of Lakedaemonian *oikos*. He starts by noting that the economic efficiency of the household was extremely important for the privileged Spartiates, as it was tied to their very right to citizenship. The author comments on the lively past debate, which on one side – represented for example by Sarah Pomeroy – has seen Spartan women as remarkably independent and active, and on the other, as subjugated to the warlike men. Daszuta discusses the education system as part of 'rearing' Spartan girls as housekeepers who already knew their role when marrying, later than in Athens, and discusses their supposed political activity in support of the family, and economic independence brought by the system of inheritance instead of dowry. Indeed, Daszuta sees the Spartan woman as an important keeper of the *oikos*, having personal and active interest in increasing the household possessions.

**Dimitrios Mantzilas** analyses the roles of female domestic financial managers in late Republican Rome, through the exemplary cases of Turia, Murdia, and Hortensia. He first examines the epigraphic funerary laudation of Turia, who defends her property against male relatives and sponsors and protects her husband economically, and clearly takes all economic decisions together with her him. The other epigraphically preserved laudation, that of Murdia, regards the independently solved question concerning the inheritance of her children from different marriages. Hortensia is acting publically on behalf of the matron's property during the Second Triumvirate. Such cases exemplify, according to the author, notable independent action not conventionally included in the ideal of a Roman matron, actively manipulating possibilities derived from the legislation on marriage, inheritance and dowry.

**Ria Berg** reads collaterally written sources narrating Roman women as house-keepers and primary domestic managers, and the material remains of such households as discovered in Pompeian household inventories. Berg starts by arguing that the finds distribution in Pompeian houses show that household goods were preferably kept in separate, locked rooms. An important domestic task would therefore have been to guard and keep an inventory of the movements of the domestic valuables and utensils, documenting their movements to and from the places of use and custody. Similar models of storage-control have been observed in other pre-modern cultures. Analysing Columella's text on house-keeping, such a managerial role of listing and controlling was ideally female, although in larger households it was often delegated to a female *vilica* or a male *procurator*. However, the role of female *custos domi* would have included a wide variety of account and inventory keeping as well as control of the workforce, which could be described as managerial duties. Mastering such skills may have facilitated Roman women in starting to conduct business also outside of the home.

**Polly Lohmann**, in her article, outlines the potential and the limits of movable objects as a material source of information for tracing particular groups of household members of Pompeian houses. She discusses first the theoretical framework of the formation processes, and the problems of recognizing the artefact function and gender attribution. Lohmann's case-study of artefact distribution within the *Insula del Menandro* shows that assemblages of women's objects were mainly kept in large storage facilities, often located in atria and peristyles or porticoes. These pieces of furniture and their contents were either meant to display the wealth of the family or were simply central collections of precious items within the houses. However, such containers held not only what seems to be the personal jewellery and cosmetics of the *domina*, or other free female household members, but also a range of other domestic objects used for various purposes.

**Marja-Leena Hänninen** discusses one particularly remarkable example of a wealthy Roman woman, analysing Livia's flourishing economic activities. Hänninen states that, in general, at the end of the republic

*sine manu* marriage enhanced the possibilities of wealthy women to control their property, and then sets out to question whether Livia's economic behaviour reflected general trends or was rather *sui generis*, because of her extraordinary husband, Augustus. Like most wealthy Roman women, Livia inherited from her family, but gained her most exceptional possessions during and, in particular, after the marriage, being made a partial heir of Augustus' possessions. She was also exempted from the normal legal restrictions of *tutela* and the inheritance restrictions of *Lex Voconia*. Besides the famous villa at Prima Porta, Livia owned *insulae*, landed estates, brick-works, papyrus-marshes, copper-mines, and slaves. These properties were augmented by donations and inheritances from influential friends and protégées, and produced considerable further annual profit. Hänninen, however, sees Livia as a traditional exemplary Roman matron, completing her duties of domestic economic management, starting from her proverbial dutifulness in wool-work, though also considering her as a practical investor and managing director.

The fourth group of papers (*Beyond the Household: Women in Business*) centres on women who reached out from the familial realm of running the household, actively running productive businesses outside the home, and even overseas. **Vincenzina Castiglione Morelli del Franco** traces female business enterprise in the Vesuvian area. The author examines various cases of archaeologically attested cases that reveal women as being active in business. The first, putative, case of a 'wealthy woman' is the skeleton n. 27 found with rich jewellery and coins, from Villa A of Oplontis. Castiglione Morelli also considers the well-known Pompeian cases of Eumachia, the businesswoman, and Iulia Felix, owner of the *praedia* with baths on Via dell'Abbondanza, and Decidia Margaritis who ran the so-called Sarno baths. She notes also the women mentioned in the wax tablets of Caecilius Iucundus as buying and selling property.

**Rosaria Ciardiello** continues the analysis of women in business in Pompei, concentrating on the figures of Eumachia and Iulia Felix. The author re-examines the known elements of the life of Eumachia, who through her own family and marriage had gained a role in controlling ramified industries in tile, *amphorae*, wool, and being able to finance one of the largest buildings on the Pompeian Forum and even to construct her own long term 'political' programme.

**Maricé Martins Magalhães** maps epigraphic evidence offering glimpses of women of all social strata participating in public and private activities in the lesser known Vesuvian cities of *Nuceria*, *Stabiae* and *Surrentum*. In *Surrentum*, the imperial possessions situated there meant the presence of a number of imperial freedwomen of Livia Augusta, like *obstetrix* Secunda, probably the midwife of imperial female slaves. A woman of equestrian rank, Claudia Capitolina, owned a villa governed by a *dispensator* whom we know from a funerary stela. Those with the most societal influence were the two anonymous priestesses in the office of *sacerdos publica Veneris et Cereris*, members of the important matrons' collegium *Ceres-Demeter*. In *Stabiae* numerous tombs belong to the freedmen and freedwomen of the Poppei family and in particular of Poppaea Sabina, who owned villas and conducted active business in the area, and in *Nuceria*, advancing to the 4<sup>th</sup> century, is attested Mýrina, the wife of a Jewish *grammateús* and herself having the role of *presbytéra*.

**Irene Chrestou** proposes that in the Byzantine world professions open to women were of two kinds, either practiced along with the (male) members of the family, like an inn-keeper's job, or independently, like mime/prostitute work and that of a ship-owner. The profession of mime is exemplified by the biography of Empress Theodora, who, coming from a financially insecure background and without a male protector, followed her mother and two sisters into the career of mime/courtesan. Another empress, Theophano, was an inn-keeper's daughter, even though the inn-keepers job – often conducted together with a father or husband – was also a profession with a strong connotation with prostitution. Empress Theodora was possibly a ship-owner (activity condemned, in an anecdote, by her husband) and was surely involved in business trans-

actions while on the throne, showing her business instinct also when forced to leave the regency, and giving to the Senate a financial account of her reign. Christou notes that normally ship-owning was not considered a suitable elite occupation, yet one that women could succeed in conducting; for example, Eustochiane, a female ship-owner who paid for the decoration of a sixth-century church.

**Paolo de Vingo** studies powerful women in Byzantine Liguria (554-568) proposing an analysis of late antique aristocracies based on historical, epigraphic and archaeological sources. In particular, the article focuses on the role played by elite women during this period of radical change in power structures, in the western Ligurian coastal zone *Liguria Maritima*. De Vingo presents as literary evidence the letters of Saint Gregory the Great, confirming that in many cases women controlled large estates and therefore also had decision-making power at a local level in managing properties, taking personal responsibility for their decisions, or making economic donations to churches. Another important source is the privileged elite burials, which also commemorate female members of the new emerging elites, where the social and cultural standard is shown by the decorated sarcophagi, refined funerary epigraphs, and objects given as funerary gifts.

As noted by Deborah Lyons in her paper, goods and gifts associated with women in literary sources tend to be in perishable substances, whereas those of men were in hard and durable materials. This could also be read as a metaphorical key for the apparent invisibility of female labour in our historical and archaeological sources. Also wool-work is highly emblematic for female work because the organic material is missing from our archaeological record, vanishing like Penelope's daily work, resembling much of the daily female contributions to household economies, that has to be done and redone every day, often without any permanent visible results.

In conclusion, the emphasis in this volume will be on small-scale domestic production and household management, private and family economies, individual solutions to cope with adverse legislation discriminating against women; it will also consider, however, more public economic activities of women, conspicuous consumption by women, and property owning and industry managing women. Not everything has yet been said on ancient women's lives; there still remain grey areas on the map, hidden and invisible realities, that often have to do with the economic struggle, strategies of survival, and the everyday economy of family life.



# I

## WOOL-WORKING WOMEN: FROM TOOLS TO SYMBOLS



## **Filare e tessere in Etruria**

### **Il contributo femminile all'economia domestica tra VIII e VII secolo a.C.**

FEDERICA PITZALIS

Se la ricostruzione di un qualsiasi spaccato sociale delle comunità antiche, soprattutto quelle la cui memoria è affidata essenzialmente alla cultura materiale, pone sempre dubbi e difficoltà, il compito diviene ancora più insidioso quando si tratta di restituire aspetti riguardanti la vita delle donne. Ciò dipende da numerosi fattori. Essenzialmente maschile è, ad esempio, la marca dell'ideologia sottesa ad ogni pubblica manifestazione di identità, come quella connessa al costume funerario, che filtra la maggior parte delle informazioni; la volontà femminile, inoltre, incide maggiormente sulla sfera privata e domestica e si esprime spesso attraverso canali indiretti e alternativi a quelli maschili, il cui potere di persuasione si giova di omissioni e dissimulazioni. La sfida è tuttavia affascinante e merita, pur con tutta la cautela del caso, di essere raccolta.

Da lungo tempo ormai il riconoscimento degli specifici contributi che può fornire ciascuna categoria umana, sia essa basata sul genere, sulla classe d'età, sul ceti, sulla professione o sull'appartenenza ad una minoranza etnica, è percepito dagli studiosi come ineludibile nella ricostruzione delle comunità antiche e la *gender archaeology* "si configura sempre più come una 'archeologia delle differenze', basata su categorie variabili e multidimensionali".<sup>1</sup> Per questo motivo ogni segmento di ricerca può contribuire a tratteggiare con maggior precisione il quadro generale.

In questa occasione, quindi, ci si propone di presentare in particolare alcune riflessioni riguardo al ruolo femminile nell'economia domestica etrusca all'inizio dell'Orientalizzante.<sup>2</sup>

Appare evidente come nel periodo a cavallo tra VIII e VII secolo a.C., quando le aristocrazie tirreniche elaborano e attuano le proprie strategie di affermazione e il processo di formazione urbano può dirsi ormai pienamente compiuto, alle donne deve essere stato concesso un più ampio margine di negoziazione del proprio ruolo e quindi la possibilità di contribuire in modo più incisivo alla determinazione di nuovi equilibri all'interno di ciascuna comunità.<sup>3</sup>

Come in ogni altro gruppo umano, i fattori capaci di influenzare la condizione individuale devono essere stati molteplici e capaci di agire, sia in modo integrato che selettivo, a diversi livelli e con diversi gradi di intensità. Certamente determinante in una società di stampo aristocratico deve essere considerato, su un piano verticale, lo status familiare della defunta, e la possibile conseguente assunzione di specifiche

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<sup>1</sup> M. CUOZZO, 'Percorsi per una archeologia delle differenze', in L. GUIDI – M.R. PELLIZZARI (curr.), *Nuove frontiere per la storia di genere* (V Congresso della Società italiana delle Storie, Napoli 2010), vol. II, Salerno 2013, 17-24, in part. 18. Per l'ampia bibliografia sulla *gender archaeology* si rimanda in particolare a M. CUOZZO – A. GUIDI, *Archeologia delle identità e delle differenze*, Roma 2013, in part. 9-47.

<sup>2</sup> Le riflessioni espresse di seguito prendono spunto da uno studio dedicato all'Etruria meridionale, al *Latium vetus* e all'agro falisco, basato essenzialmente sull'analisi dei contesti funerari: F. PITZALIS, *La volontà meno apparente. Donne e società nell'Italia centrale tirrenica tra VIII e VII sec. a.C.*, Roma 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Sull'organizzazione sociale all'inizio del periodo orientalizzante si vedano in particolare: G. BARTOLONI, *Le società dell'Italia primitiva*, Roma 2003, in part. 30-35; C. RIVA, *The Urbanisation of Etruria*, Cambridge 2010; G. BARTOLONI, 'La formazione urbana', in G. BARTOLONI (cur.), *Introduzione all'Etruscologia*, Milano 2012, 83-126, in part. 103-18 e 124; L. CERCHIAI, 'La struttura economica e politica', in BARTOLONI, *Introduzione*, 127-60, in part. 127-34.



responsabilità civili o religiose. Anche l'eventuale appartenenza ad un gruppo minoritario, ad esempio di stampo etnico, deve aver avuto un peso ben preciso.<sup>4</sup> Su un piano orizzontale, invece, età, condizioni di salute, 'stato civile' e qualità personali possono essere considerati elementi altrettanto importanti, non disgiunti probabilmente anche da variabili situazionali.

Indipendentemente dalla posizione occupata nella comunità, ciascuna donna sembra essere stata comunque impegnata non solo nelle responsabilità familiari che il ruolo di moglie e di madre le imponeva, ma anche nelle attività di filatura e tessitura.<sup>5</sup>

La connotazione funebre delle donne attraverso la deposizione di strumenti tessili è infatti, come noto, una costante nelle sepolture etrusche e più in generale dell'Italia preromana.<sup>6</sup> La fuseruola, normalmente presente nel campione esaminato con un numero di esemplari compresi da 1 a 3,<sup>7</sup> può essere addirittura considerata come una sorta di indicatore minimo di genere che, talvolta in mancanza di migliori elementi di valutazione, si è stati costretti a reputare di per sé un *marker* delle tombe femminili, seguendo purtroppo un'argomentazione circolare.

Nonostante la perdita della quasi totalità degli elementi lignei, che dovevano essere la maggior parte, l'osservazione dei corredi rivela precise ricorrenze nella composizione dei kit artigianali, in cui si distinguono scelte di carattere locale che declinano norme generali ampiamente condivise. La complessità dello strumentario tessile, sia in senso qualitativo che quantitativo, varia prevedibilmente in modo proporzionale alla ricchezza del corredo.

Le sepolture femminili alto orientalizzanti sono spesso sottolineate anche dalla deposizione di fusi e conocchie bronzei, in modo alternativo o combinato. Il tipo maggiormente diffuso di conocchia è quello con terminazione troncoconica campanulata (**fig. 1.4**), mentre le rocche con estremità divaricata, che nell'agro falisco mostrano un'interessante varietà tipologica, si esauriscono a Veio alla fine del II periodo e negli altri centri etruschi sembrano non godere di alcuna fortuna (**fig. 1.1-3**).

La presenza di gruppi di rocchetti, spesso in multipli di tre, concentrati soprattutto in contesti di rilievo di Populonia,<sup>8</sup> Veio, Cerveteri e Bisenzio, ma anche di Narce e Verucchio è stata in passato variamente interpretata, in virtù della polifunzionalità di questi oggetti (**fig. 1.9**). Recentemente, studi condotti in particolare sui reperti di Verucchio hanno evidenziato la stretta connessione di questi utensili con la tessitura cosiddetta a tavolette, funzionale alla realizzazione di raffinate bordature poste a rifinire tessuti e vesti non solo con finalità estetiche, ma con il valore ideologico di indicatori di status.<sup>9</sup> Sarebbe avvalorare questa ipotesi la presenza delle forcelle tessili in bronzo (**fig. 1.5-6**), anch'esse adatte alla realizzazione delle

<sup>4</sup> Sulla possibilità di riconoscere l'identità etnica attraverso le evidenze funerarie, si vedano in particolare A. GUIDI, 'L'etnicità nella documentazione archeologica delle necropoli italiane dell'età del ferro', in GUIDI – PELLIZZARI, *Nuove frontiere*, 25-35; CUOZZO – GUIDI, *Archeologia delle identità*, in part. 22-23 e 72-100; "Origines". percorsi di ricerca sulle identità etniche dell'Italia antica (MEFRA 126, 2), Rome 2014.

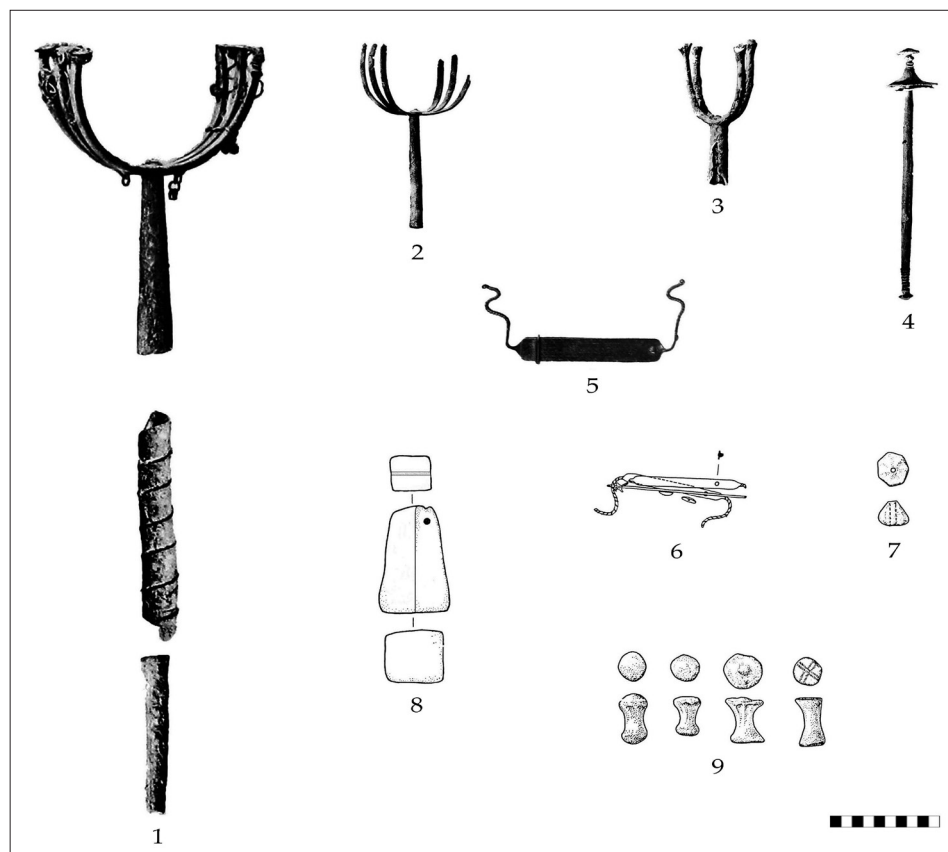
<sup>5</sup> Sull'artigianato tessile in Etruria, si veda: M. GLEBA, 'Italy: Iron Age', in M. GLEBA – U. MANNERING (cur.), *Textiles and Textile Production in Europe from Prehistory to A.D. 400*, Oxford 2012, 215-41, con bibliografia.

<sup>6</sup> Questa realtà è ormai archeologicamente ben comprovata. Sull'argomento si veda in particolare G. BARTOLONI, 'Le società e i ruoli femminili nell'Italia preromana', in P. VON ELES (cur.), *Le ore e i giorni delle donne. Dalla quotidianità alla sacralità tra VIII e VII secolo a.C.* (Catalogo della mostra, Verucchio 2007-2008), Verucchio 2007, 13-23, in part. 18-22.

<sup>7</sup> I casi in cui si assiste alla moltiplicazione degli esemplari sono diversi. Si ricorda in particolare, tra le eccezioni più eclatanti la deposizione di 63 fuseruole nella tomba II di Casaletti di Ceri (PITZALIS, *La volontà*, 78, 88 e 213 con bibliografia).

<sup>8</sup> Un gruppo di ventiquattro rocchetti e sedici fuseruole proviene, ad esempio, dalla tomba 1 di San Cerbone: F. COLIVICCHI, scheda 129, in M. TORELLI (cur.), *Gli Etruschi* (Catalogo della mostra, Venezia 2000), Milano 2000, 582. Sull'argomento in particolare, per un orizzonte cronologico lievemente più antico, G. BARTOLONI, 'Marriage, Sale and Gift. A proposito di alcuni corredi femminili dalle necropoli popoloniesi della prima età del Ferro', in A. RALLO (cur.), *Le donne in Etruria*, Roma 1989, 35-54, in part. 42-44.

<sup>9</sup> GLEBA, 'Italy', 229. Sulla tessitura a tavolette, si veda da ultima L. RÆDER KNUDSEN, 'Case Study: The Tablet-Woven Borders of Verucchio', in GLEBA – MANNERING, *Textiles*, 254-63.



**Fig. 1:** Strumenti tessili da Narce e da Veio (immagine rielaborata da: F. PITZALIS, *La volontà meno apparente*, Roma 2010, tav. II e IV).

strette fasce di tessuto, in contesti di rilievo del comparto etrusco meridionale, oltre che in ambiente falisco-capenate e in area campana.<sup>10</sup> Estremamente rara risulta, invece, la presenza nelle sepolture di pesi da telaio, soprattutto in virtù del loro carattere meno personale rispetto ad altri oggetti (**fig. 1.8**). Al contrario, è proprio la presenza dei pesi che nei contesti di abitato permette di identificare la presenza di telai lignei e, in caso di giacitura primaria, di determinarne localizzazione e dimensioni.<sup>11</sup>

Più difficile appare, invece, allo stato attuale delle conoscenze una valutazione complessiva delle norme sottese al costume funerario infantile. Le bambine, infatti, non appaiono connotate in modo sistematico da utensili tessili. Tuttavia, dal momento che, come osservato da A.M. Bietti Sestieri, A. De Santis e L. Salvadei, la maggiore incidenza di indicatori di ruolo nelle tombe infantili femminili si deve “all’idea, ampiamente diffusa, documentata sia in ambito etnoantropologico che in contesti archeologici, che i ruoli

<sup>10</sup> Per un elenco delle attestazioni si rimanda a PITZALIS, *La volontà*, 185, note 91-93.

<sup>11</sup> Tra i casi più noti, a titolo esemplificativo, si ricordano, per un orizzonte cronologico lievemente più recente, gli esemplari provenienti dalla cucina della casa A e dal cortile della zona L di Acquarossa: C. SCHEFFER in *Architettura etrusca nel viterbese. Ricerche svedesi a San Giovenale e Acquarossa 1956–1986*, catalogo della mostra (Viterbo 1986), Roma 1986, 111. Altri esemplari sono stati rinvenuti a Roselle, in una casa circolare di età orientalizzante e nella nota Casa dell’*Impluvium*: G. CAMPOREALE (cur.), *L’Etruria mineraria* (Catalogo della mostra, Portoferraio – Massa Marittima – Populonia 1985), Milano 1985, 134; A. PARRINI, in L. DONATI (cur.), *La Casa dell’Impluvium. Architettura etrusca a Roselle*, Roma 1994, 139-40. Numerosi pesi sono noti nell’abitato dell’*Accesa*, ben ventiquattro solo nel vano III del complesso X: A. PARRINI, ‘Strumenti per la filatura e tessitura’, in G. CAMPOREALE (cur.), *L’abitato etrusco dell’Accesa. Il quartiere B*, Roma 1997, 197-211, in part. 198. Tra gli altri esempi si consideri anche il caso di Poggio Civitate: K.M. PHILLIPS JR., in S. STOPPONI (cur.), *Casa e palazzi d’Etruria* (Catalogo della mostra, Siena 1985), Milano 1985, 149; M. GLEBA, ‘Textile Production at Poggio Civitate (Murlo) in the VII c. BC’, in D. CARDON – M. FEUGÈRE (cur.), *Archéologie des textiles des origines au V siècle* (Actes du colloque de Lattes, octobre 1999), Montpellier 2000, 77-80. Sull’argomento vd. anche: P. MOSCATI, ‘Pesi da telaio, rocchetti, fuseruole’, in M. CRISTOFANI (cur.), *Caere 3.2. Lo scarico arcaico della Vigna Parrocchiale*, II, Roma 1993, 467-76. Per la presenza dei pesi da telaio in ambito sacrale: L. AMBROSINI, ‘I pesi da telaio con iscrizioni etrusche’, *Scienze dell’Antichità* 10 (2000), 139-62; M. GLEBA, ‘Textile Tools in Ancient Italian Votive Contexts. Evidence of Dedication or Production?’, in M. GLEBA – H. BECKER (cur.), *Votives, Places and Rituals in Etruscan Religion*, Leiden – Boston 2009, 69-84.

femminili siano percepiti come ‘naturali’ e quindi assegnati fin dalla nascita, mentre per quanto riguarda gli uomini l’attribuzione dei ruoli avviene in seguito a un rituale di iniziazione, o comunque a partire da un momento definito, successivo alla prima infanzia<sup>12</sup>, non è infrequente che alcuni corredi di bambine siano completati da utensili artigianali,<sup>13</sup> scelta nella quale possono aver avuto un peso determinante anche fattori di tipo emozionale.

A lungo si è riflettuto sul significato sociale della profonda compenetrazione tra universo muliebre e produzione tessile, sia in senso orizzontale che verticale. M. Torelli, seguito da molti altri studiosi, ha da tempo ipotizzato una precisa gerarchizzazione delle operazioni artigianali, dalla filatura fino alla tessitura, la cui climax sarebbe raffigurata, ad esempio, sul tintinnabulo della tomba degli Ori dell’Arsenale di Bologna.<sup>14</sup>

Meno risalto, invece, è stato dato fino ad ora alle eventuali implicazioni propriamente economiche di questa realtà.

G. Bartoloni ha parlato a questo proposito di “un contributo femminile autonomo al benessere della casa”.<sup>15</sup> In che modo, tuttavia, e con quali limiti questo contributo fosse accettato, rimane un interrogativo ancora non del tutto risolto.

In Etruria, ancora all’inizio del periodo orientalizzante non è possibile identificare vere e proprie aree specializzate per la produzione tessile, che rimane, quindi, essenzialmente relegata all’ambito domestico, pur concedendo un maggiore livello di specializzazione sia degli spazi che delle artigiane in seno a gruppi familiari più numerosi e gerarchizzati.<sup>16</sup>

Tuttavia, non si può trascurare come tra tutte le occupazioni femminili, tra le quali figuravano sicuramente la cura della casa e dei figli e la preparazione del cibo, nonché probabilmente la produzione del vasellame fatto a mano, solo l’artigianato tessile meriti apparentemente un posto nella drammatizzazione funebre. Evidentemente gli strumenti della filatura e della tessitura non dovevano essere percepiti solo come la migliore sintesi delle virtù domestiche, ma anche come un veicolo di valori economici e di mediazione culturale.

Questi oggetti sembrano effettivamente in alcuni casi elevati a veri e propri simboli di status. Si pensi ad esempio alle preziose versioni di fusi e di conocchie definiti ‘da parata’. Non è escluso che oggetti di tale valore, sulla cui reale funzionalità raramente ci si è espressi in senso positivo, fossero considerati come una sorta di ‘scettri femminili’, ossia simboli della preminenza sociale di colei che li possedeva, e alla quale forse potevano essere stati donati in occasione del matrimonio e quindi dell’ingresso nel nuovo gruppo familiare; benché tale primato possa naturalmente intendersi solo come limitato alla compagine femminile. In questo senso risulta suggestiva la somiglianza di alcune conocchie di grande pregio, come quella della tomba 445 della necropoli Banditaccia-Laghetto di Cerveteri, probabilmente associata ad un secondo esemplare<sup>17</sup> e quella, forse più nota,

<sup>12</sup> A.M. BIETTI SESTIERI – A. DE SANTIS – L. SALVADEI, ‘Maschile e femminile. Dinamiche di genere nel *Latium vetus* in epoca protostorica attraverso l’analisi delle sepolture infantili’, in GUIDI – PELLIZZARI, *Nuove frontiere*, 59-76, in part. 63.

<sup>13</sup> Tra le altre, si ricordano le tombe GG 6-7 e KKLL 18-19 di Veio – Quattro Fontanili (PITZALIS, *La volontà*, 216-17). Sulla identità di genere delle tombe infantili e sull’‘archeologia delle età’ si vedano, tra gli altri: M. CUOZZO, *Reinventando la tradizione*, Paestum 2003, in part. 209-10; M. SANCHEZ-ROMERO, ‘Childhood and the Construction of Gender Identities through Material Culture’, in *Childhood in the Past*, I, 2008, 17-37; CUOZZO – GUIDI, *Archeologia delle identità*, in part. 18-21 e 66-71.

<sup>14</sup> M. TORELLI, *Il rango, il rito e l’immagine. All’origine della rappresentazione storica romana*, Milano 1997, 59.

<sup>15</sup> BARTOLONI, ‘Società’, 121.

<sup>16</sup> M. Gleba ritiene a questo proposito che per il periodo orientalizzante si possa parlare di “a household or even workshop mode manufacture, and the existence of, at least, part-time specialist craftspeople” (GLEBA, ‘Italy’, 237).

<sup>17</sup> M. MARTELLI, ‘Sulla produzione di vetri orientalizzanti’, in M. MARTELLI (cur.), *Tyrrhenoi Philotechnoi* (Atti della giornata di studio, Viterbo 1990), Roma 1994, 75-98; P. AURELI, ‘scheda 347’, in G. BARTOLONI, – F. DELPINO – C. MORIGI GOVI – G. SASSATELLI (curr.), *Principi etruschi tra Mediterraneo ed Europa* (Catalogo della mostra, Bologna 2000-2001), Venezia 2000, 278-79.



**Fig. 2:** Campovalano, tomba 119, conocchia in pasta vitrea (R. PAPI in *Eroi e Regine. Piceni Popolo d'Europa*, Roma 2001).

**Fig. 3:** Vetulonia, Tomba del Duce, scettro (S. RAFANELLI in *Signori di Maremma. Élites etrusche fra Populonia e Vulci*, Firenze 2010).



da Campovalano<sup>18</sup> (fig. 2), con gli scettri della tomba 5 di Veio – Monte Michele<sup>19</sup> o della Tomba del Duce di Vetulonia<sup>20</sup> (fig. 3). Sia pure dubitativamente, L. Drago ha recentemente ipotizzato una funzione di scettro, forse almeno complementare a quella di conocchia, per un oggetto rivestito di elementi d'ambra, rinvenuto all'interno della ricca tomba 804 di Veio – Quattro Fontanili. La sepoltura, purtroppo sconvolta da interventi clandestini, è una struttura a fossa con doppio loculo, all'interno della quale la defunta, riccamente abbigliata, esibiva tra gli altri attributi un carro, corredato degli elementi della bardatura equina e una coppa globulare in lamina d'argento.<sup>21</sup> Per un orizzonte cronologico lievemente più recente, è difficile non immaginare che l'assoluta eccellenza della defunta della Tomba Regolini-Galassi di Cerveteri, iconograficamente assimilata ad una entità divina nell'allestimento funebre, non esibisse un attributo capace di sintetizzare il carisma della sua posizione, forse identificabile nel fuso d'argento con una delle sue estremità globulare.<sup>22</sup>

L'analisi delle associazioni di corredo nelle sepolture etrusche a cavallo tra VIII e VII secolo a.C. ha dimostrato, inoltre, come non solo i kit artigianali più complessi e preziosi tendano a sommarsi ad altri indicatori di status e oggetti di valore, ma a volte la rivendicazione di un ruolo produttivo sembra affiancarsi ad

<sup>18</sup> *Eroi e Regine. Piceni Popolo d'Europa* (Catalogo della mostra, Roma 2001), Roma 2001, scheda 556, fig. 77, 102, dove il reperto è presentato come scettro; P. BOCCOLINI in C. CHIARAMONTE TRERE – V. D'ERCOLE (curt.), *La necropoli di Campovalano. Tombe orientalizzanti e arcaiche I* (BAR International series 1177), Oxford 2003, 70, n. 45, tav. 81. 6.

<sup>19</sup> F. BOITANI, 'La tomba principesca n. 5 di Monte Michele', in A.M. MORETTI SGUBINI (cur.), *Veio, Cerveteri, Vulci. Città d'Etruria a confronto* (Catalogo della mostra, Roma 2001), Roma 2001, 113-18, in part. 113 e 115-16, con bibliografia precedente.

<sup>20</sup> F. COLMAYER, 'scheda 3.21', in M. CELUZZA – G.C. CIANFERONI (curt.), *Signori di Maremma. Élites etrusche fra Populonia e Vulci* (Catalogo della mostra, Firenze 2010), Firenze 2010, 131 con bibliografia. Tra i contesti vetuloniesi, la Tomba del tridente è stata a lungo oggetto di discussione proprio in virtù dell'ambiguità semantica dell'eccezionale insegna deposta al suo interno (F. SCIACCA, 'Per una nuova interpretazione del tridente in bronzo dal Circolo del tridente di Vetulonia', *ArchClass* (2004), 269-82; sul contesto: M. CYGIELMAN – L. PAGNINI, *La Tomba del tridente a Vetulonia*, Pisa – Roma 2006). Altri utensili di grande pregio hanno rievocato talvolta la suggestione degli scettri, come la conocchia o fuso della tomba 2 della Banditella a Marsiliana d'Albegna (da ultima: G.C. CIANFERONI, 'Le Principesse d'Etruria', in N.C. STAMPOLIDIS (cur.), *'Principesse' del Mediterraneo all'alba della storia* (Catalogo della mostra, Atene 2012), Atene 2012, 259-75, in part. 272, con bibliografia).

<sup>21</sup> L. DRAGO, 'Aspetti dell'orientalizzante antico a Veio. Dalla tomba a fossa alla tomba a camera', in A. CAPOFERRO – L. D'AMELIO – S. RENZETTI (curt.), *Dall'Italia. Omaggio a Barbro Santillo Frizell*, Firenze 2013, 19-44, in part. 33-34, figg. 41-42.

<sup>22</sup> Sulla tomba si veda da ultimo M. SANNIBALE, 'La principessa Etrusca della tomba Regolini-Galassi', in STAMPOLIDIS, *Principesse*, 307-21, con bibliografia. Si veda anche CUOZZO – GUIDI, *Archeologia delle identità*, in part. 51-53.

elementi allusivi alla sfera sacrale, come la tazza con ansa traforata e l'ascia del Circolo degli Acquastrini di Vetulonia,<sup>23</sup> il carrello della tomba II dell'Olmo Bello di Bisenzio, i coltelli e i sostegni della tomba FF GG 7-8 di Veio Quattro Fontanili o il cinturone con tartaruga, la fiaschetta bronzea, il coltello e le due asce della tomba M6 delle Arcatelle di Tarquinia, per la quale, in particolare, il riconoscimento di una figura femminile di alto rango in qualche modo legata al culto dell'"antica dea dell'area sacra della Civita" si deve a M. Bonghi Jovino.<sup>24</sup>

Inoltre, il grado di abilità artigianale raggiunto dalle donne doveva costituire una fonte di vanto e di orgoglio, appagati forse anche dall'esibizione di particolari monili come i pendenti a fuseruola, in ambra o in impasto, particolarmente diffusi a Narce, o come la collana-pettorale costituita da 14 rocchetti d'impasto, venuta alla luce nella tomba 1914 della necropoli Orientale di Pontecagnano, in proprietà INA CASA.<sup>25</sup> A Taranto, del resto, intorno alla metà del VI secolo, sappiamo che le tessitrici si sfidavano in veri e propri concorsi pubblici.<sup>26</sup>

Il valore materiale dei prodotti tessili, e quindi anche il potere economico che ne deriva, sono dunque evidenti, ma, anche alla luce delle considerazioni espresse, rimane dubbio un ruolo attivo delle donne nella gestione di questo potere, né sembra chiarito se i prodotti di pregio fossero inseriti solo nei circuiti del dono aristocratico o piuttosto in veri e propri percorsi commerciali, già in un orizzonte cronologico così antico.

È verosimile supporre che la produzione tessile fosse, almeno nelle sue fasi principali, direttamente organizzata e gestita dalle donne e destinata non solo ad un ambito strettamente domestico, ma anche, ad esempio, agli arredi di ambienti di rappresentanza se non addirittura pubblici, ai paramenti militari e alle vele delle navi. Tuttavia, è probabile che ciascun gruppo familiare fosse abituato a provvedere al proprio fabbisogno, realizzando oltre a prodotti di carattere funzionale anche tessuti di pregio, custoditi come agalmata, donati occasionalmente a ospiti di riguardo, come il confronto omerico suggerisce, e tenuti, dunque, nella stessa considerazione che in epoca recenziore ne farà delle offerte alle divinità, nei santuari.

Il potere economico dei prodotti tessili, almeno in questo periodo storico, quindi, deve considerarsi forte, ma non in senso propriamente commerciale. Il loro valore è soprattutto legato all'ideologia del lusso aristocratico e, pur ribadendo la possibilità di una più attiva partecipazione femminile alla ridefinizione dei ruoli nel periodo a cavallo tra VIII e VII sec. a.C., la gestione diretta di questa potenziale ricchezza può immaginarsi solo maschile.

Tuttavia, attraverso l'esercizio della propria abilità tecnica e soprattutto grazie alla scelta e alla combinazione dei materiali, dei colori e dei motivi decorativi, le donne devono aver avuto la possibilità, sia pure con un linguaggio non verbale, di dichiarare e affermare la propria identità sia individuale sia intesa come appartenenza di genere, di cultura, di classe e familiare; penetrando quasi in ogni ambito della vita collettiva e partecipando così attivamente al processo di definizione della cultura etrusca.

<sup>23</sup> G.C. CIANFERONI, 'Vetulonia (GR), Il Circolo degli Acquastrini', in STAMPOLIDIS, *Principesse*, 277-93.

<sup>24</sup> PITZALIS, *La volontà*, 264-66, con bibliografia.

<sup>25</sup> CUOZZO, *Reinventando*, 107.

<sup>26</sup> A. MELE, 'Allevamento ovino nell'antica Apulia e lavorazione della lana a Taranto', in M. MOGGI – G. CORDIANO (cur.), *Schiavi e dipendenti nell'ambito dell'oikos e della famiglia*, Pisa 1997, 97-104, in part. 98.

# **Il dolio e il fuso.**

## **Per una ricostruzione del ruolo e della sfera di azione della donna nella Sicilia orientale alle soglie della colonizzazione greca**

ANITA CRISPINO – MASSIMO CULTRARO

### **Introduzione**

L'ampio periodo compreso tra il Bronzo Finale e l'età del Ferro iniziale (1200-900 a.C. in date calibrate) fino alle soglie della colonizzazione greca, rappresenta per la Sicilia una fase ricca di cambiamenti causati dall'azione di forze sia interne che esterne all'isola. Descritte dalla storiografia greca in qualità di *ethne*<sup>1</sup> già distinti, le comunità indigene risultano ancora oggi poco indagate archeologicamente, mentre le nostre conoscenze sulle modalità di interazione con soggetti allogeni appaiono fortemente condizionate dalla 'visione di propaganda greca' tramandataci soprattutto attraverso la narrazione tucididea.<sup>2</sup>

Sotto questo aspetto, quindi, la lettura complessiva dei principali processi culturali che interessano l'isola in tale arco cronologico risulta fortemente condizionata dalla visione dicotomica e conflittuale dei rapporti tra indigeni e centri greco-coloniali. Infatti, nell'ambito della storia delle ricerche, si è passati da una posizione fortemente ellenocentrica, ampiamente abusata in passato e imbevuta di elementi allogeni ricondotti al mondo egeo-miceneo<sup>3</sup> e alla persistenza di essi nel tessuto locale, ad una prospettiva maggiormente ancorata all'analisi interna del mondo indigeno.<sup>4</sup>

Nell'ultimo decennio si è sviluppata una particolare attenzione verso alcuni complessi funerari strutturati sul piano spaziale e dei rituali, alcuni dei quali, pur essendo stati esplorati in passato, sono rimasti per anni conosciuti a livello di resoconti preliminari di scavo. L'edizione di necropoli di ampie proporzioni quali quella del Finocchito,<sup>5</sup> insieme ad altre localizzate nella parte centro-occidentale dell'isola, quali Realmese

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Il testo è il risultato di una ricerca condivisa nell'impostazione e nei risultati, che entrambi gli autori conducono congiuntamente da qualche anno. Gli autori desiderano ringraziare Beatrice Basile, già Soprintendente BB.CC. di Siracusa, e Gioconda Lamagna, direttrice del Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi di Siracusa, per le agevolazioni nell'accesso ai materiali oggetto del presente studio. Le fotografie sono di Germana Gallitto.

Nelle more di questo lavoro abbiamo appreso dell'improvvisa scomparsa del prof. Vincenzo La Rosa, con il quale abbiamo condiviso i primi passi verso la preistoria siciliana; a lui va il nostro ricordo.

<sup>1</sup> V. LA ROSA, 'Processi di formazione e di identificazione culturale ed etnica delle popolazioni locali in Sicilia dal medio-tardo bronzo all'età del ferro', *Pelorias 4. Origini e incontri di culture nell'antichità. Magna Grecia e Sicilia. Stato degli Studi e prospettive di ricerca*, Messina 1999, 159-85, in part. 164-65.

<sup>2</sup> Un punto sullo stato della ricerca in F. DE ANGELIS, 'Re-assessing the Earliest Social and Economic Developments in Greek Sicily', *MDAIR* 116 (2010), 21-53.

<sup>3</sup> V. LA ROSA, 'Influenze di tipo egeo e paleogreco in Sicilia', *Kokalos*, I, 1 (1993-94), 9-47, in part. 39-40; LA ROSA 'Processi', 159-85.

<sup>4</sup> R. LEIGHTON, *Sicily before History. An Archaeological Survey from the Palaeolithic to the Iron Age*, New York 1999, in part. 219-22.

<sup>5</sup> D.C. STEURES, *Monte Finocchito Revisited. Part 1. The Evidence*, Amsterdam 1980; D.C. STEURES, *Monte Finocchito Revisited. Part 2. Seriation and Demography*, Amsterdam 1988; M. FRASCA, 'La necropoli di Monte Finocchito', *Cronache di Archeologia e storia dell'arte* 20 (1981), 11-104.

di Calascibetta (Enna)<sup>6</sup> e Sant'Angelo Muxaro (Agrigento),<sup>7</sup> contribuisce ad individuare numerosi indirizzi problematici sulle modalità e sulle strategie che le comunità indigene e le differenti componenti di esse hanno scelto per rappresentarsi.

Una delle questioni più rilevanti riproposta dall'indagine sull'identità sociale delle comunità indigene nella fase immediatamente anteriore alla formazione delle prime colonie greche, riguarda la definizione dei soggetti e la costruzione sociale del genere.<sup>8</sup> Questo percorso di ricerca, nel caso della Sicilia, risulta assai trascurato dall'indagine archeologica, dal momento che è stato privilegiato lo studio dei sistemi di costruzione delle identità sociali attraverso l'emergere di un'élite locale che progressivamente acquisisce abitudini e pratiche funerarie greche.<sup>9</sup>

Occorre precisare che sul mancato sviluppo di tale problematica hanno negativamente influito alcuni condizionamenti della ricerca, di differente origine e natura: in primo luogo l'attenzione rivolta essenzialmente alle necropoli, e la circostanza che le più vaste della prima età del Ferro siano state in massima parte esplorate agli inizi del secolo scorso, ha determinato una cristallizzazione del dato informativo intorno alle edizioni dell'epoca, non sempre aventi come oggetto la presentazione organica e sistematica del complesso.

Una seconda implicazione può essere riconosciuta nel fatto che, a fronte di una buona edizione delle componenti culturali nelle principali necropoli, non corrisponde un'altrettanto soddisfacente presentazione della documentazione antropologica, dal momento che in molti casi i resti ossei non sono stati conservati.

Più in generale, nel caso degli studi sulle pratiche funerarie della Sicilia del Bronzo Finale/Ferro è mancata una seria discussione critica, non solo su argomenti di carattere teorico che esortano a considerare l'indagine sulle categorie di genere come un elemento fondamentale nell'approccio ai contesti funerari, quanto su questioni di natura metodologica. In quest'ultimo caso la presenza in alcuni complessi, quali la necropoli di Madonna del Piano presso Grammichele (Ct),<sup>10</sup> di una complessa articolazione dei corredi funerari, ha orientato la ricerca verso la ricostruzione delle identità sociali e del loro immaginario, partendo esclusivamente dal riconoscimento di indicatori di rango (armi e rasoi sul versante maschile; accessori per la filatura in ambito femminile) per definire le attribuzioni di genere.<sup>11</sup> (A.C. - M.C.)

### **Un caso studio: le necropoli tra il fiume Anapo e il Tellaro nel territorio di Siracusa**

Il presente lavoro parte da una differente prospettiva, che privilegia la questione delle definizioni di genere all'interno di un approccio integrato che superi il criterio della presenza/assenza, in un determinato complesso, di specifici oggetti considerati maschili o femminili. Questo criterio di tipo oppositivo, che appare, tuttavia, pienamente condivisibile a livello euristico, deve essere verificato su due differenti livelli di lettura: il primo è quello di un'indagine che tenga conto della multidimensionalità dei contesti funerari, ricorrendo, laddove possibile, ad un'analisi di tipo microstorico finalizzata ad una lettura organica e sistematica dell'in-

<sup>6</sup> R.M. ALBANESE PROCELLI, 'La necropoli di Cozzo S. Giuseppe in contrada Realmese', *NSA* 36 (1982), 425-632.

<sup>7</sup> G. RIZZA – D. PALERMO, 'La necropoli di Sant'Angelo Muxaro. Scavi Orsi – Zanotti Bianco 1931-1932', *Cronache di archeologia e storia dell'arte* 24-25 (2004), 1985-86.

<sup>8</sup> Per le problematiche attinenti agli studi di genere nella archeologia pre-protostorica in Italia si veda R. WHITEHOUSE, 'Gender in Central Mediterranean Prehistory', in D. BOLGER (cur.), *A Companion to Gender Prehistory*, Chichester 2013, 480-501; M.A. CUOZZO – A. GUIDI, *Archeologia delle identità e delle differenze*, Roma 2013, in part. 43-51.

<sup>9</sup> R.M. ALBANESE PROCELLI, *Sicani, Siculi, Elimi. Forme di identità, modi di contatto e processi di formazione*, Milano 2003, 61.

<sup>10</sup> L. BERNABÒ BREA – E. MILITELLO – S. LA PIANA, 'Mineo (Catania). La necropoli detta del Molino della Badia: nuove tombe in contrada Madonna del Piano', *NSA* 22 (1969), 210-16.

<sup>11</sup> ALBANESE PROCELLI, *Sicani*, in part. 72-75.

tero *corpus* della cultura materiale. Per questa ragione risulta opportuno indagare, all'interno del medesimo complesso funerario, anche le altre forme di articolazione che possano riflettere fenomeni di adattamento culturale e trasformazione a causa di fattori sociali, economici e ambientali, dalla suddivisione in categorie di età alla distinzione di *status*, fino all'organizzazione topografica della necropoli.

Ad un secondo livello di indagine, il quadro di ricostruzione proposto deve essere misurato e confrontato con quello di altri complessi abitativi e funerari organicamente indagati, che risultino provvisti di un'ampia base statistica e di sufficienti analisi osteologiche.

Una buona base di partenza per un'indagine in tale direzione è offerta dalle necropoli ubicate nella vasta area tra la valle dell'Anapo a nord e il fiume Tellaro sul lato sud, nella *chora* di Siracusa, in quella che sarà la zona di espansione coloniale della colonia corinzia, fertile e vivace terreno di confronto tra mondi e culture differenti.

Le testimonianze provenienti da questi siti indigeni sono di rilevante importanza in termini di modelli di insediamento e di conoscenza della struttura sociale delle comunità locali, perché questi cambiamenti riflettono indubbiamente i rapporti tra indigeni e Greci provenienti da Siracusa nel corso dell'VIII e la prima metà del VII secolo a.C. (M.C.)

### 1. Monte Finocchito

Il sito di Monte Finocchito (Noto), la cui necropoli fu esplorata da Paolo Orsi tra il 1892 e il 1896<sup>12</sup> e oggetto di recenti revisioni,<sup>13</sup> è ubicato su un'alta collina calcarea sulla cui sommità doveva estendersi un abitato, munito di una cinta fortificata, il cui massimo sviluppo si ebbe nel corso dell'età del Ferro (**fig. 1**).

La necropoli risulta organizzata in 570 tombe a grotticella artificiale a pianta ellittica o più frequentemente quadrangolare e soffitto piano, spesso violate o saccheggiate *ab antiquo* con un numero variabile di inumazioni compreso tra uno fino ad un massimo di 10 individui.<sup>14</sup> Presenta due differenti orizzonti di utilizzo: la prima corrisponde allo sviluppo della *facies* di Cassibile/Pantalica Sud, collocandosi tra la seconda metà del IX e la metà dell'VIII sec. a.C.; la seconda, grazie alla presenza di materiali di fabbrica greco coloniale, occupa l'ultimo quarto dell'VIII sec. fino alla metà del VII sec. a.C.

Le sepolture femminili della fase I,<sup>15</sup> oggetto di un recente studio a cura degli scriventi,<sup>16</sup> presentano una chiara composizione del corredo vascolare in cui il servizio di vasi d'impasto risulta contraddistinto dal binomio *askòs*/scodella troncoconica/fuseruola.<sup>17</sup> La tomba 17 (Est)<sup>18</sup> (**fig. 2**) rappresenta uno dei punti solidi della ricostruzione perché il corredo funerario si lega ad un solo individuo. La defunta, una giovane

<sup>12</sup> P. ORSI, 'La necropoli sicula del terzo periodo al Finocchito presso Noto (Siracusa)', *Bullettino di Paleontologia Italiana*, 20, 23-26 (1894), 37-71. P. ORSI, 'Nuove esplorazioni nella necropoli sicula del monte Finocchito presso Noto', *Bullettino di Paleontologia Italiana*, 23 (1897), 157-97.

<sup>13</sup> Si veda *supra* nota n. 5.

<sup>14</sup> STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 1, 80.

<sup>15</sup> FRASCA, 'La necropoli', in part. 71-81, STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 2, 99.

<sup>16</sup> A. CRISPINO – M. CULTRARO, 'Indigenous Women in Eastern Sicily during the First Greek Colonization. Current Methodological Approaches and Archaeological Record', in N. SOJC – G. SALTINI SEMERARI – G.J. BURGERS (cur.), *Investigating Gender in Mediterranean Archaeology* (in corso di stampa).

<sup>17</sup> L'*askòs* globulare risulta costantemente accompagnato dallo scodellone, forma legata alla sfera domestica. Se l'associazione *askòs*/scodellone può riferirsi al banchetto funebre celebrato in onore del defunto, la presenza della fuseruola è un chiaro riferimento al mondo femminile.

<sup>18</sup> Lo scheletro, di età giovanile, era disteso col cranio a Nord sul suo guanciale. Oltre al dischetto in bronzo, che fu recuperato accanto alla fuseruola, il corredo era composto da frammenti di catenina, grandi anelli di bronzo, di cui uno doppio, due sottili presso i piedi, uno scodellone, due *askòi* ed una scodella (ORSI, 'La necropoli sicula', 47).



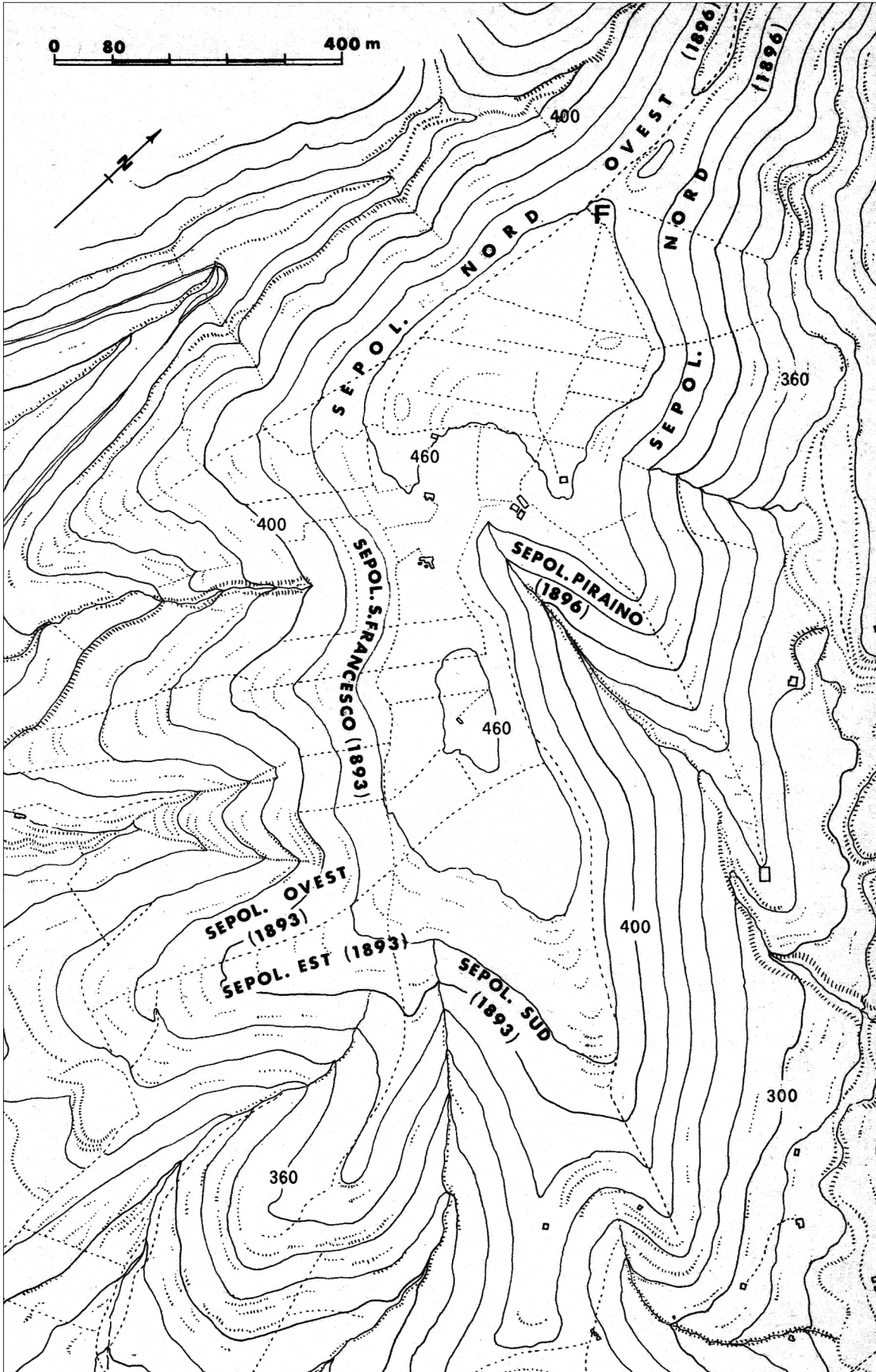


Fig. 1: Planimetria del Monte Finocchito (da FRASCA 1981).



Fig. 2: Monte Finocchito: Tomba 17 Est; Museo Archeologico Regionale "Paolo Orsi" Siracusa.

donna, le cui vesti erano trattenute da fibule e adorna di anelli, è accompagnata da una fuseruola fittile e da un disco in bronzo forato (h. 2, diam. 5,5 cm.) che può essere interpretato come la parte terminale di un fuso, forse in legno, strumento caratteristico del mondo femminile. L'associazione di oggetti legati alla filatura e alla tessitura in sepolture femminili è, infatti, comune nelle necropoli dell'età del Ferro peninsulare.<sup>19</sup>

Oggetti simili si ritrovano in altre deposizioni della stessa necropoli, quali la 28 (Est),<sup>20</sup> 39 (Nord)<sup>21</sup> e 42 (Nord),<sup>22</sup> 54 (Nord)<sup>23</sup> e in sepolture multiple quali la 53 (Nord)<sup>24</sup> e 87 (Nord Ovest).<sup>25</sup> La tomba 28, ad esempio, una delle più ricche, ha restituito un solo scheletro pertinente ad una donna, la quale presentava i tradizionali accessori della filatura, mentre il *set* vascolare risultava più articolato, aggiungendo al tipo dell'*askòs* e dello scodellone, la *cd pisside* con anse a bugna.<sup>26</sup>

Questa diversità nella composizione dei corredi femminili può essere facilmente spiegata alla luce di alcune preziose informazioni ricavate dalla descrizione lasciata dall'Orsi. In tutti i casi in cui ci troviamo in presenza di pissidi con anse a bugnetta, come nel caso delle tombe 28 e 54, il defunto è sempre una donna di età sub-adulta.<sup>27</sup> Questo elemento appare di una certa rilevanza perché permette di distinguere, all'interno

<sup>19</sup> M.A. CUOZZO, *Reinventando la tradizione*, Paestum 2003, in part. 214-19.

<sup>20</sup> Lo scheletro era con cranio a nord circondato da un *askòs*, un fiaschetto, un'olla, una scodella e tre scodelloni, una fuseruola ed una fibula ad arco serpeggiante in ferro. Alle spalle altri due *askòi*, un'olletta ed una scodella (ORSI, 'La necropoli', 47).

<sup>21</sup> Un'unica deposizione (ORSI, 'Nuove esplorazioni', 169).

<sup>22</sup> Un'unica deposizione; all'altezza delle spalle due fibule serpeggianti, dispersi frammenti di scodellini (STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 1, 134).

<sup>23</sup> Scheletro in posto sul quale si rinvenne una gran quantità bronzi: fibula alla spalla sinistra, anelli di varia forma e dimensione, due altre fibule serpeggianti ed una perla biconica in bronzo, una fuseruola. Presso l'entrata lungo lo scheletro tre scodellini in uno dei quali un'olletta. All'altezza della spalla uno scodellone con all'interno un *askòs* (ORSI, 'Nuove esplorazioni', 171).

<sup>24</sup> Due deposizioni, un adulto ed un bambino. La fuseruola era addossata allo scheletro adulto insieme a due anelli in bronzo (STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 1, 142).

<sup>25</sup> Due deposizioni, ambedue con fibula sul petto. La fuseruola era addossata in corrispondenza di un solo scheletro. Tra i due defunti un'*oinochoe* (STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 1, 106).

<sup>26</sup> STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 1, 42-43.

<sup>27</sup> ORSI, 'La necropoli', 42.

della categoria femminile, uno specifico indicatore della classe di età del defunto. Rimane incerta la funzione della piccola pisside, che potrebbe alludere ad un vaso che, proprio per la stretta connessione con la fascia di età sub-adulta, potrebbe essere in relazione con la pratica del matrimonio o, in un significato più ampio, alla miniaturizzazione di un contenitore utilizzato, nelle comunità indigene, dal mondo femminile.

Nella fase II (fine VIII–prima metà del VII sec. a.C.),<sup>28</sup> si assiste all’emergere di deposizioni femminili contraddistinte dalla concentrazione di ricche *parure* in metallo e suppellettili preziose ed esotiche.

In alcune sepolture singole femminili come la Nord Ovest 8,<sup>29</sup> 43,<sup>30</sup> Nord 8 (**fig. 3**),<sup>31</sup> 35,<sup>32</sup> le fuseruole sono associate ad oggetti ornamentali, sia legati alla persona che al vestiario, di maggiore complessità, quali le collane formate da perle bronzee o gli anelli e le armille con o senza pendagli in ambra, o le fibule in bronzo con piastra in osso o avorio. In tal senso la ricchezza di alcune sepolture femminili può spiegarsi nel ruolo delle donne quale veicolo di scambi matrimoniali intercomunitari.



**Fig. 3:** Monte Finocchito: Tomba 8 Nord; Museo Archeologico Regionale “Paolo Orsi” Siracusa.

## 2. Pantalica

A Pantalica, che a partire dall’età del Bronzo Recente rappresenta uno tra i più importanti insediamenti di carattere ‘protourbano’ nella Sicilia orientale,<sup>33</sup> il tradizionale rito dell’inumazione in sepolcri a grotticella artificiale continua nell’età del Ferro e durante la fase dei primi contatti con il mondo coloniale (**fig. 4**).

<sup>28</sup> STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 2, 70-71; FRASCA, ‘La necropoli’, in part. 68-70 e 81-97.

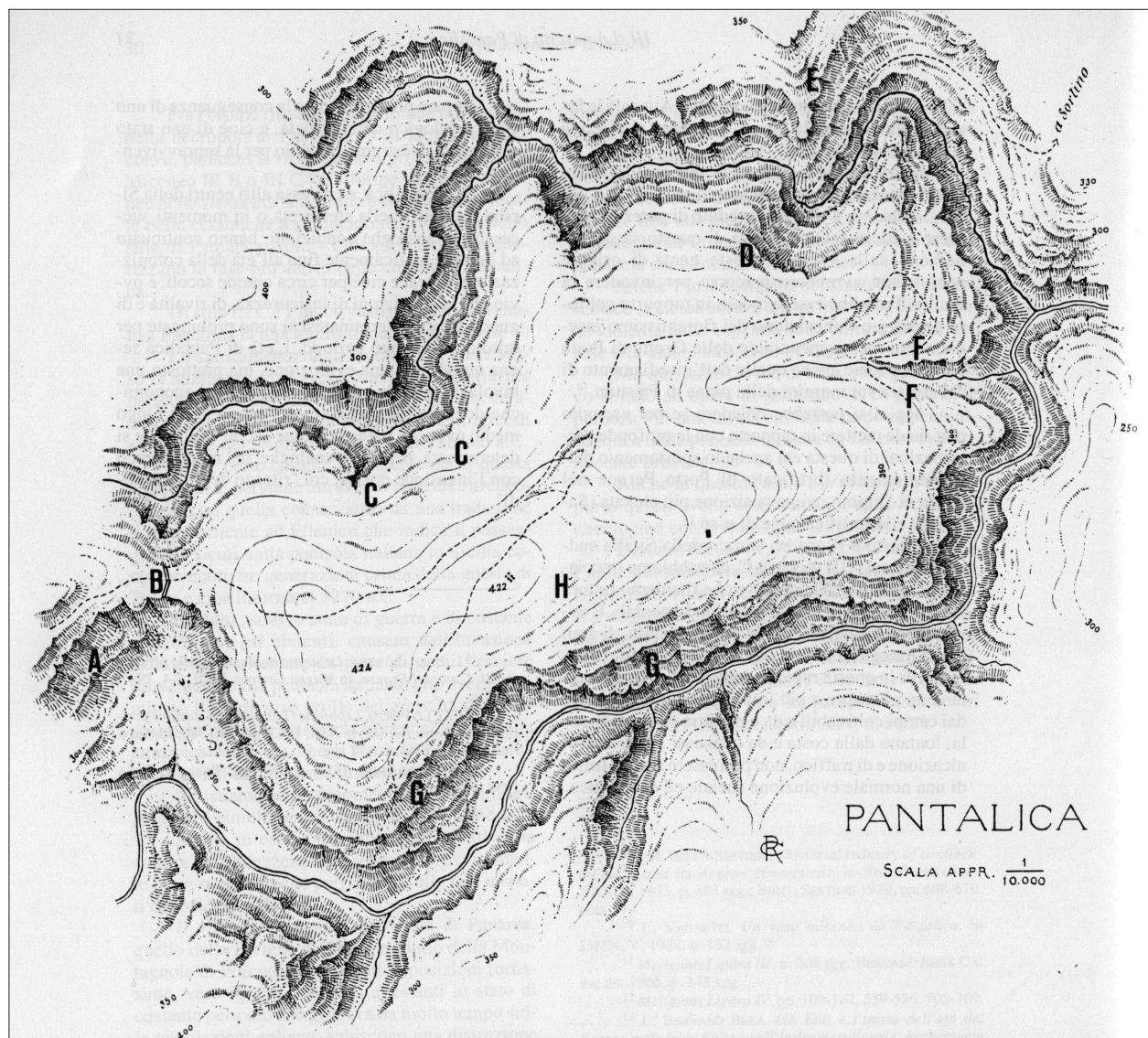
<sup>29</sup> Defunto disteso. Vennero recuperate 11 perle biconiche in bronzo, una a disco fortemente schiacciato, una fuseruola ed un vago in ambra (STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 1, 78).

<sup>30</sup> Un solo defunto con cranio su capezzale a Nord. Sul petto quattro fibule, una perla d’ambra, una fuseruola e 5 anelli in bronzo e frammenti di tre scodellini (STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 1, 92).

<sup>31</sup> Una adolescente; in corrispondenza del collo una ricca collana in bronzo e quattro fibule a navicella. Vennero raccolti perlette a rotella, anelli bronzei e, tra i fittili, uno scodellone, un coperchio, una pisside ed una fuseruola (ORSI, ‘Nuove esplorazioni’, 168).

<sup>32</sup> Uno scheletro disteso con cranio su capezzale; sul petto quattro fibule e quattro perle d’ambra. Al braccio destro due armille ad estremità aperte e presso il cranio una fuseruola, un’*oinochoe* ed un boccale (STEURES, *Monte Finocchito* 1, 130).

<sup>33</sup> Su Pantalica si veda L. BERNABÒ BREA, *Pantalica. Ricerche intorno all’anaktoron*, Napoli 1990, con bibliografia relativa e da ultimo R. LEIGHTON, ‘Pantalica. Sicily from the Late Bronze Age to the Middle Ages. A New Survey and Interpretation of the Rock-Cut Monuments’, *AJA* 115 (2011), 447-64.



**Fig. 4:** Planimetria del sito di Pantalica (da BERNABÒ BREA 1990). A: necropoli di Filiporto; B: porte di Pantalica (fortificazione greca); C: necropoli NO; D: grande necropoli N; E: necropoli sull'altra sponda del Calcinare; F: necropoli Cavetta; G: gruppi di tombe della necropoli sud; H: Palazzo e muri del pendio.

Le tombe delle fasi più recenti si distinguono per una maggiore uniformità nella pratica funeraria, rispetto a quelle del periodo immediatamente precedente di Pantalica Nord. Contengono non più di quattro deposizioni, spesso adulti e bambini insieme, e sono accompagnate da un ricco corredo funerario composto da oggetti di uso personale, tra cui si distinguono in particolare fibule e coltelli a lama ricurva in bronzo. La composizione di questi manufatti, che spesso si accompagnano ad un ricco ed articolato *set* di contenitori fittili, deve essere interpretata in direzione di una maggiore articolazione della società di riferimento, all'interno della quale alcuni individui di sesso femminile, a partire dalla fase più antica di uso della necropoli (fase di passaggio dall'età del Bronzo Medio a quella del Bronzo Recente), sembrano ricoprire uno *status* speciale all'interno della comunità.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>34</sup> Esemplicativa la tomba N37, con la deposizione di una giovane donna il cui corredo era costituito da fittili, una fibula ad arco semplice, un anello in argento, uno specchio circolare in bronzo e una sottile lamina in oro, probabilmente un diadema. (P. ORSI, 'Pantalica', *Monumenti Antichi dei Lincei*, Roma 1899, 33-116, in part. 55; M. CULTRARO, 'La cultura di Pantalica Nord in Sicilia nei suoi rapporti con il mondo egeo', in N. NEGRONI CATACCHIO (cur.), *Protovillanoviani e/o protoetruschi. Ricerche e scavi* (Atti del III incontro di Studi, Manciano – Firenze 12-14 maggio 1995), Firenze 1998, 301-12, in part. 302-3.

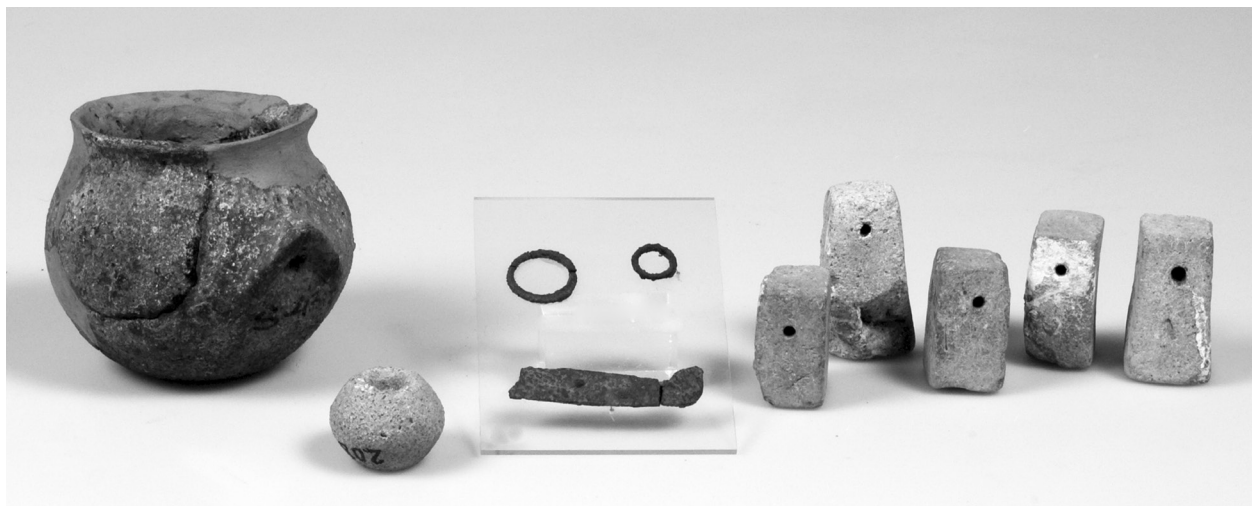


Fig. 5: Pantalica: Tomba 43 Sud; Museo Archeologico Regionale “Paolo Orsi” Siracusa.

È alla fine dell’età del Bronzo, nella fase Pantalica II, che la fuseruola compare quale indicatore di genere nelle sepolture femminili;<sup>35</sup> in generale le tombe delle fasi Pantalica II e III, in particolare nel gruppo della Cavetta,<sup>36</sup> presentano gli stessi oggetti di ornamento personale, bracciali, fibule e anelli, deposti nelle tombe di Monte Finocchito; simile è anche il *set* di vasellame da mensa che comprende scodelloni, brocche e *askòì*. I medesimi corredi sono riproposti nelle tombe Sud 24<sup>37</sup>, 41<sup>38</sup>, 81<sup>39</sup>, 91<sup>40</sup>; il confronto con la tomba 43 (fig. 5) permette di riconoscere, in tutti questi casi, personaggi femminili deposti con una pisside, un coltello con lama a fiamma e utensili per la produzione tessile (fuseruole e pesi da telaio).<sup>41</sup>

Un altro importante indicatore di genere è la presenza di aghi crinali in bronzo, che risultano un significativo elemento di identificazione delle sepolture femminili.<sup>42</sup>

Se, nel corso della fase iniziale dell’età del Ferro, stringenti appaiono le affinità con i corredi femminili della coeva necropoli del Finocchito esaminata in precedenza, tale quadro di convergenze sembra venir meno nella fase successiva, che viene a coincidere con la fondazione delle colonie lungo la fascia costiera tra Catania e Siracusa. Alla ricchezza delle sepolture della II fase della necropoli del Finocchito, corrispon-

<sup>35</sup> Fuseruole in tomba Sud Centrale 28, 29 (deposizione singola, oltre alla fuseruola venne raccolta una fibula, una perla d’ambra e un coltello in bronzo), 31 (unica deposizione associata ad una olletta e a due anelli in bronzo), 32 (12 deposizioni con *askòì*, ollette, scodelle e bronzi; P. ORSI, ‘La necropoli sicula’, 311), 40 (unica deposizione, ibid., 312), Sud Est 60 (tre deposizioni, con fibule serpeggianti ed aghi, ibid., 314), SC 140 (otto deposizioni, tre fuseruole associate a fibule in bronzo e ferro, 1 dischetto e anelli in bronzo, un coltello in ferro); SC143 (una deposizione associata a scodella, fibula ad arco serpeggiante e anello in bronzo), SC144 (quattro deposizioni con due fuseruole, scodelloni, bronzi); SC146 (ibid., 319); SC 148 contenente due inumazioni.

<sup>36</sup> P. ORSI, ‘Pantalica’, in part. 72-74, R. LEIGHTON, ‘Pantalica’, 456.

<sup>37</sup> Cinque deposizioni circondate da tre scodelle, due *askòì*, due ollette, tre fuseruole, una fibula serpeggiante ad occhio, tre anellini ed un bottoncino a calotta. P. ORSI, ‘La necropoli sicula’, 310-11.

<sup>38</sup> Un’unica deposizione; il corredo composto da fuseruola, *askòs* e anello bronzeo (ORSI ‘La necropoli sicula’, 312).

<sup>39</sup> Tre deposizioni con due fibule, due perle in pietra dura e una in metallo, una fuseruola, due *askòì*, frammenti di un coltello in ferro e la brocchetta a decorazione impressa di probabile importazione (ORSI, ‘La necropoli sicula’, 317).

<sup>40</sup> Sei deposizioni con quattro fibule, due aghi, un’armilla in bronzo. La ceramica consisteva in tre *askòì*, tre pissidi ed una fuseruola (ORSI, ‘La necropoli sicula’, 317).

<sup>41</sup> ORSI, ‘La necropoli sicula’, 312.

<sup>42</sup> Gli aghi sono presenti soprattutto nelle tombe della fase più antica; i pochi dati di antropologia fisica riportati da Orsi consentono di identificare inumazioni di sub-adulti e di bambini. Se questa evidenza venisse ulteriormente provata, l’ago in bronzo potrebbe essere un indicatore non solo di genere, ma soprattutto di una specifica classe di età: tombe NW1, 12, 18 (ORSI, ‘Pantalica’, in part. 43-45), SE 58, SE 64 (ORSI, ‘La necropoli sicula’, 314) e 69 (ibid. 316).

derebbe una netta standardizzazione nei corredi di Pantalica; la tendenza ad una progressiva omologazione potrebbe essere il segno che gli interessi dei primi coloni siracusani fossero rivolti al controllo e alla ricerca di beni di sussistenza localizzati principalmente nella zona meridionale costiera, ovvero in quell'area dove da lì a poco sorgerà l'avamposto greco di Eoro, lungo la valle del Tellaro. (A.C.)

### La casa 16 W di Cittadella di Morgantina

Il quadro ricostruttivo finora proposto deve essere validato attraverso il confronto con le strutture domestiche, dove è possibile cogliere utili elementi per una più corretta definizione delle attività femminili. Tuttavia, nel caso della Sicilia tra l'età del Bronzo Finale e l'età del Ferro, a fronte di una più ampia conoscenza delle necropoli, gli insediamenti indagati rimangono ancora assai scarsi. Illuminante in tale prospettiva è l'evidenza offerta dall'abitato di Cittadella di Morgantina (En),<sup>43</sup> di cui sono state indagate tre strutture abitative (29, 31 e 16 W) datate al Bronzo Finale.<sup>44</sup>

L'accurata indagine sulla dislocazione del corredo pavimentale della casa 16 W, in particolare, suggerisce di evidenziare alcuni importanti elementi (**fig. 6**).

L'imponente struttura abitativa, che per le dimensioni (27,5 m. di lunghezza) è al momento una delle più grandi di questo tipo nell'Italia meridionale, risulta divisa in differenti aree di lavoro.<sup>45</sup>

In quella centrale, un'ampia banchina in pietra era in rapporto con attività di tessitura, come indica il ritrovamento di un gruppo di quattro grandi pesi fittili che dovevano appartenere ad un telaio verticale, appoggiato alla parete quando non in uso.<sup>46</sup> Si tratta della parte della casa meglio illuminata, perché in corrispondenza di un'apertura laterale, e anche quella meglio riscaldata perché prossima ad un focolare in pietra e a due fornelli.

La seconda area, posta nella parte più interna della casa e separata da un muretto, risulta contraddistinta da un focolare e da un certo numero di strumenti in selce e ossidiana, e potrebbe essere interpretata come uno spazio di lavorazione per pelli o ossa. Appare, tuttavia, verosimile pensare che quest'area fosse una zona multi-funzionale, perché sono stati trovati un altro peso fittile da telaio, una fuseruola e un gruppo di vasellame potorio. Tra questi figura un *askòs* il quale appartiene ad una classe di vasi presente, come abbiamo precedentemente chiarito, nei corredi femminili delle tombe del Finocchito e di Pantalica.

La presenza di due telai nella medesima casa potrebbe essere spiegata in rapporto alla struttura sociale della comunità che prevedeva unità familiari allargate. In ogni caso, non può certo sfuggire l'importanza delle attività di tessitura e filatura che, all'interno dell'*oikos* domestico,<sup>47</sup> si concentrano nelle stesse zone di preparazione dei cibi e anche di consumazione dei pasti, facendo uso, nel caso della Casa 16W, di contenitori fittili assai raffinati. (M.C.)

<sup>43</sup> R. LEIGHTON, 'La casa 16W del Bronzo finale sulla Cittadella di Morgantina (Sicilia). Aspetti strutturali zone di attività e status sociale', *RSP* 41 (2011), 197-214; R. LEIGHTON, *Prehistoric Houses at Morgantina. Excavations on the Cittadella of Morgantina in Sicily, 1989-2004* (Accordia Research Institute), London 2012.

<sup>44</sup> Le datazioni C14 effettuate su alcuni campioni dalla casa 16 W suggeriscono un periodo di occupazione compreso tra il 1130 e 1010 a.C. in date calibrate; cfr. LEIGHTON, 'La casa', 201, LEIGHTON, *Prehistoric*, 81.

<sup>45</sup> LEIGHTON, *Prehistoric*, 60-61, fig. 1.36.

<sup>46</sup> LEIGHTON, *Prehistoric*, 126.

<sup>47</sup> Sul valore simbolico del telaio e la sua connessione all'*oikos* cfr. M. GLEBA, *Textile Production in Pre-Roman Italy*, Oxford 2008; C.L. COSTIN, 'Gender and Textile Production in Prehistory', in D. BOLGER (cur.), *A Companion to Gender Prehistory*, Chichester 2013, 180-202.

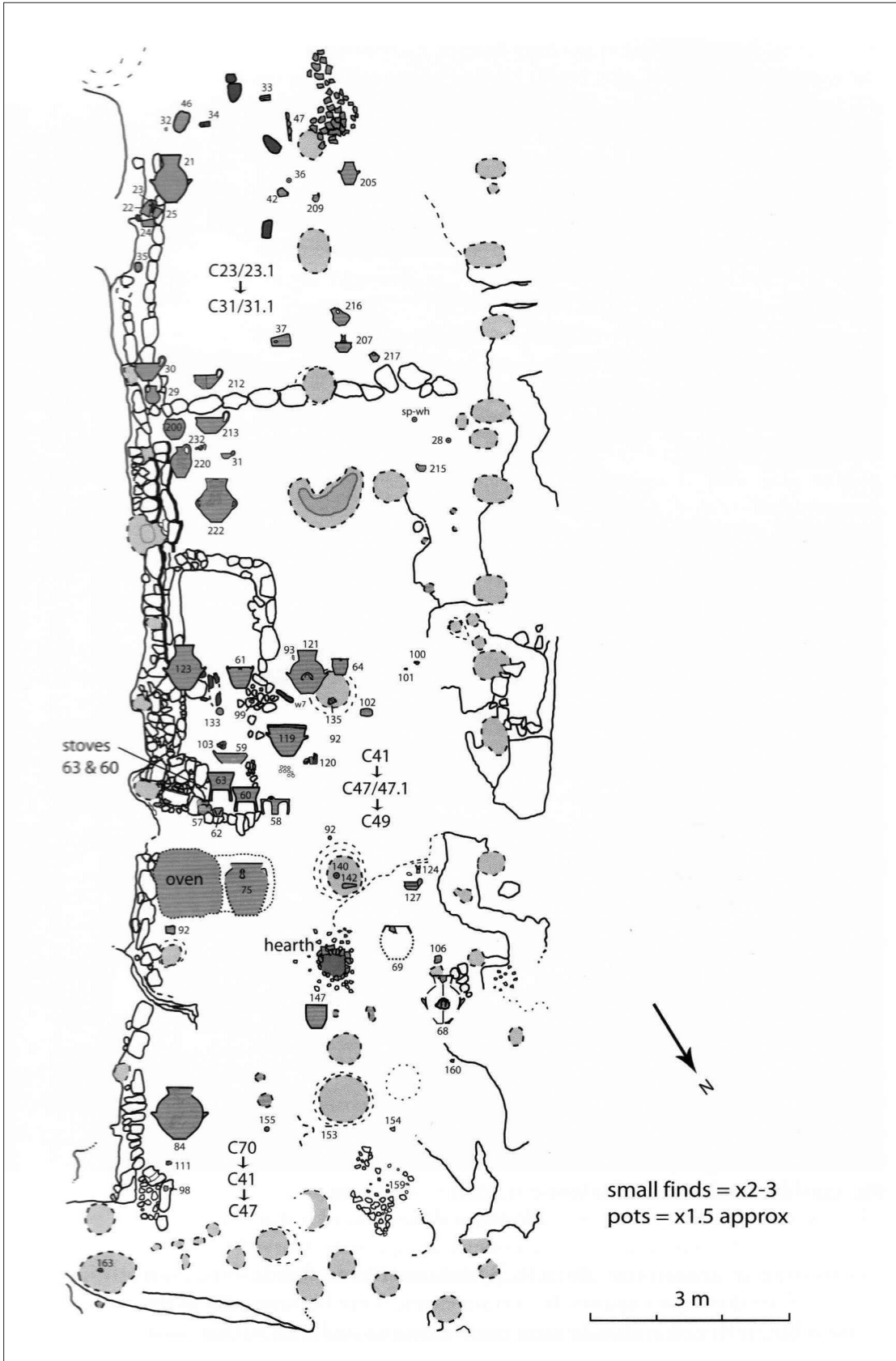


Fig. 6: Planimetria della casa 16 W di Morgantina (da LEIGHTON 2012)

## Conclusioni

I dati relativi alle necropoli dell'entroterra siracusano e dall'abitato del Bronzo Finale di Morgantina forniscono un eccellente quadro documentario per una più corretta interpretazione del ruolo sociale della donna all'interno delle comunità indigene protostoriche.

Come ha correttamente sottolineato R.M. Albanese Procelli,<sup>48</sup> la concentrazione di manufatti in bronzo, ma anche di vasellame assai raffinato in alcune sepolture, potrebbe essere in rapporto con l'usanza dei beni dotali, ben nota in numerosi contesti del Mediterraneo antico. Infatti, oltre ad oggetti di ornamento, nelle tombe della necropoli del Finocchito (fasi I e II) e di Pantalica (settore nord e Cavetta) troviamo anche gli utensili caratteristici del lavoro femminile rappresentati dall'ago crinale, il coltello e la fuseruola. La lavorazione domestica della lana e dei tessuti, infatti, costituiva un tratto distintivo della sfera muliebre, mentre il coltello in bronzo a lama serpeggiante, condiviso con alcune sepolture maschili, potrebbe indicare una posizione sociale di un certo rilievo all'interno della comunità di riferimento.<sup>49</sup>

Il quadro finora proposto appare assai coerente nei suoi principali processi formativi, suggerendo di intravedere in filigrana un modello sociale di strategie di trasmissione ereditaria, secondo il quale l'acquisizione ereditaria del rango risulterebbe collegata a una sorte di dote (tra cui anche gli strumenti di lavoro), che la donna avrebbe ricevuto in età adulta.

Ma il discorso può essere spinto più oltre: il sistema di organizzazione dell'unità familiare, come è possibile ricostruire attraverso la documentazione delle necropoli dell'entroterra siracusano, potrebbe trovare un interessante parallelo nel modello omerico, per il quale Louis Gernet magistralmente aveva colto residui fossili di una struttura più antica risalente all'età del Bronzo.<sup>50</sup>

Non diversamente dalla Grecia dell'età del Ferro, anche le comunità della Sicilia orientale sembrano registrare non solo la coabitazione, all'interno della stessa famiglia, dei figli sposati, ma anche di forme di sororato e levirato, ovvero di quelle istituzioni che risultano rigorosamente fondate sul mantenimento della proprietà femminile nello stesso nucleo.

I processi di interazione tra gruppi diversi vedono nella Sicilia pre-greca il ruolo centrale giocato dalla donna attraverso l'istituto del matrimonio e la trasmissione di conoscenze e specializzazioni lavorative, come quelle nel campo della tessitura. In questa prospettiva potrebbe collocarsi la tomba a grotticella artificiale n. 24 delle necropoli di Cugno Carrube presso Lentini<sup>51</sup>, databile intorno al IX sec. a.C. La donna, di età adulta, è stata deposta con gli strumenti da lavoro (fuseruole, ago crinale e coltelli), ma tra i ricchi ornamenti, fibule, anelli e spirali, spicca uno strumento musicale e un pendaglio a raggi,<sup>52</sup> assai comune tra le sepolture della necropoli di Molino della Badia – Madonna del Piano.<sup>53</sup> La peculiarità del tipo in quest'ultima necropoli, dunque, potrebbe alludere ad una donna allogena proveniente da una comunità diversa, la quale venne integrata nella nuova struttura attraverso l'istituto del matrimonio. In ogni caso si tratta di una

<sup>48</sup> ALBANESE PROCELLI, *Sicani*, 122-23.

<sup>49</sup> Non è possibile dimostrare, nel caso della Sicilia del Bronzo Finale, che il coltello a lama serpeggiante fosse utilizzato per pratiche sacerdotali e sacrificali come nelle contemporanee comunità della Campania e del Lazio meridionale, cfr. CUOZZO, *Reinventando*, 215.

<sup>50</sup> L. GERNET, *Antropologia della Grecia antica* (tradotto da *Anthropologie de la Grèce antique*, Paris 1968), Milano 1983, 185-86.

<sup>51</sup> M. FRASCA, 'La necropoli di Cugno Carrube in territorio di Carlentini' (Cronache di archeologia e Storia dell'arte 21, 1982), Catania 1991, 11-35, in part. 24-26, tav. VII.

<sup>52</sup> BERNABÒ BREA – MILITELLO – LA PIANA, 'Mineo (Catania)', 240. A Madonna del Piano i pendagli a raggi, riferimento al disco solare, sono esclusivamente deposti in sepolture femminili di rango elevato. ALBANESE PROCELLI, *Sicani*, 117.

<sup>53</sup> BERNABÒ BREA – MILITELLO – LA PIANA, 'Mineo (Catania)', 242.



donna di rango elevato, la cui sfera di influenza potrebbe anche coincidere con quella delle attività magico-religiose, come indica lo strumento musicale. Ma il discorso degli ‘stranieri’ può essere esteso ben oltre, perché nella medesima necropoli di Cugno Carrube, la giovane donna della sepoltura 17<sup>54</sup> era stata deposta con uno spillone in bronzo con capocchia ad otto, di un tipo documentato in contesti eoliani dell’Ausonio I e II di Lipari.<sup>55</sup>

I dati finora presentati, pur riferendosi ad una base statistica sufficientemente ampia (Pantalica e Monte Finocchito rappresentano ad oggi le necropoli meglio documentate), attendono di essere verificati soprattutto in relazione al quadro informativo ricavabile da altri distretti territoriali, come l’area dell’Ennese, dove i complessi di Calascibetta sembrano offrire un sistema di organizzazione sociale assai compatibile con quello del comprensorio siracusano.<sup>56</sup> Al momento, l’unico elemento certo è che, sul piano della rappresentazione del mondo funerario, alcuni personaggi femminili, a partire dalle fasi finali dell’età del Bronzo, potrebbero avere progressivamente acquisito un ruolo maggiore all’interno delle comunità di riferimento e, probabilmente, non solo nel ristretto ambito della sfera familiare. (A.C. - M.C.)

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<sup>54</sup> Sepoltura non manomessa. Il corredo era composto, oltre che dallo spillone, da due fuseruole e da una brocca monoansata a decorazione piumata. FRASCA, ‘La necropoli’, 19, tav. V.

<sup>55</sup> FRASCA, ‘La necropoli’, 31.

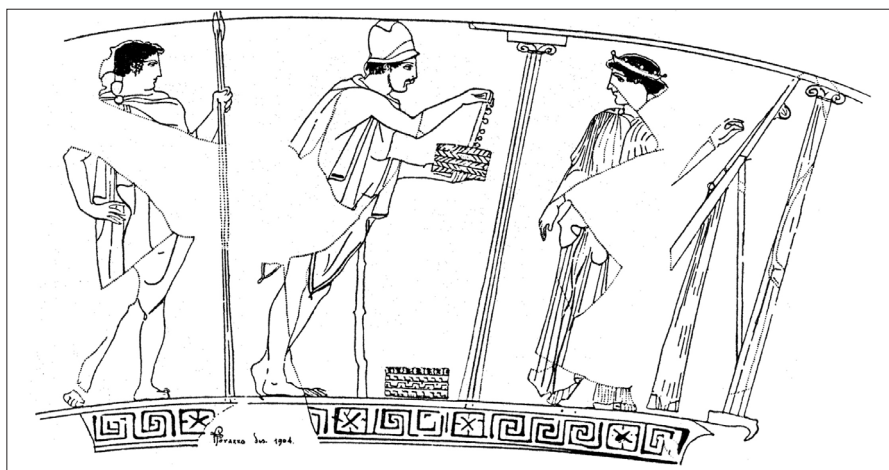
<sup>56</sup> ALBANESE PROCELLI, ‘La necropoli’.

## Alcune considerazioni sui ruoli dei generi nella produzione tessile a *Herakleia* di Lucania

FRANCESCO MEO

Nelle società antiche le donne sono tradizionalmente le protagoniste principali dell'attività tessile che svolgono all'interno delle proprie abitazioni. Già nell'*Odissea* è possibile in più punti individuare, seppur in ambiente aristocratico, i lineamenti dell'attività, ad esempio quando Telemaco invita la madre Penelope a occuparsi dei lavori al telaio e alla conocchia, o quando egli ricorda le ancelle che tessono ai suoi ordini,<sup>1</sup> o ancora nel peplo che Elena tesse e poi gli dona.<sup>2</sup>

Altrettanto significativa è l'attestazione di figure femminili rappresentate in tutte le fasi del processo tessile, dalla filatura alla tessitura: dal *tintinnabulum* bronzeo della Tomba degli Ori di Bologna di VII sec. a.C.,<sup>3</sup> alle donne intente a tessere su un gruppo di stele antropomorfe daune di VII-VI sec. a.C.<sup>4</sup> Anche nella pittura vascolare greca l'immagine femminile compare sempre quale protagonista dell'attività, dalla ben nota *lekythos* a figure nere di metà VI sec. a.C. che ripropone tutte le fasi del processo produttivo,<sup>5</sup> fino al cratere a calice da Pisticci (**fig. 1**) della seconda metà del V sec. a.C. sul quale la figura intenta a tessere è, ancora una volta, una donna.<sup>6</sup>



**Fig. 1:** Pisticci (Mt). Cratere a calice a figure rosse, 440-420 a.C. (da QUAGLIATI 1904, 199, fig. 4).

<sup>1</sup> Hom. *Od.* 21.350-53.

<sup>2</sup> Hom. *Od.* 15.105.

<sup>3</sup> C. MORIGI GOVI, 'Il tintinnabulo della "Tomba degli Ori" dell'Arsenale Militare di Bologna', *ArchCl* 23 (1971), 211-35; A. RALLO, 'Fonti', in A. RALLO (cur.), *Le donne in Etruria*, Roma 1989, 15-34, in part. 17; G. KOSSACK, *Religiöses Denken in dinglicher und bildlicher Überlieferung Alteuropas aus der Spätbronze- und frühen Eisenzeit (9.-6. Jahrhundert v. Chr. Geb.)*, München 1999, in part. 67-68.

<sup>4</sup> M.L. NAVA, *Stele daunie I*, Firenze 1980; M.C. D'ERCOLE, 'Immagini dall'Adriatico Arcaico. Su alcuni temi iconografici delle stele daunie', *Ostraka* 9 (2000), 327-49; M. GLEBA, *Textile Production in Pre-Roman Italy* (Ancient Textiles Series 4), Oxford 2008, in part. 30-31, fig. 10.

<sup>5</sup> E.J.W. BARBER, *Prehistoric Textiles. The Development of Cloth in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages*, Princeton 1991, in part. 72 fig. 2.38, 92 fig. 3.13.

<sup>6</sup> Q. QUAGLIATI, 'Pisticci. Tombe lucane con ceramiche greche', *NSc* 29, 5, s. I (1904), 196-208, in part. 199-200, fig. 4.

È tuttavia attraverso dei passi di fine V - inizi IV sec. a.C. che si iniziano a percepire a pieno il ruolo e le dinamiche produttive relative alla produzione tessile in ambiente domestico. Nel VII libro dell'Economico di Senofonte, Socrate racconta all'allievo Critobulo di un colloquio avuto con un ricco proprietario terriero di nome Iscomaco. Quest'ultimo dichiara di potersi ritenere soddisfatto che la giovane moglie, appena entrata in casa sua, fosse in grado di realizzare un abito con la lana che le veniva consegnata e riuscisse a gestire e distribuire il lavoro della tessitura alle serve.<sup>7</sup> Poco più avanti Iscomaco racconta anche di avere spiegato alla moglie che compito delle donne è di svolgere specifiche attività entro le mura domestiche, tra le quali ricorda la crescita dei figli, la preparazione dei cibi e la produzione di abiti di lana,<sup>8</sup> e continua dicendo di averle illustrato che spetta a lei, una volta che la lana viene introdotta nella casa, vigilare affinché tutti coloro che ne hanno bisogno abbiano i vestiti.<sup>9</sup> Tra le varie occupazioni, la moglie deve anche impegnarsi a insegnare l'arte della tessitura a coloro che non la conoscono affinché valgano il doppio.<sup>10</sup>

La donna, pertanto, pare rivestire un ruolo di notevole rilevanza all'interno dell'*oikos* poiché rappresenta il fulcro di tutte le attività domestiche, tra le quali quella tessile, dall'introduzione della lana in casa fino alla produzione di stoffe per tutti coloro che ne hanno bisogno, assume un ruolo molto importante e ben strutturato.

Circa un secolo più tardi, tuttavia, attraverso alcuni epigrammi di Leonida di Taranto,<sup>11</sup> è possibile delineare un'attività specializzata e destinata non più all'ambito dell'*oikos* ma alla vendita. In particolare, in uno (6.288) si fa riferimento a un nucleo familiare composto da Licomede e dalle sue figlie, le quali hanno offerto parte dei guadagni ottenuti per mezzo della tessitura e dedicato gli strumenti di lavoro (fuso, rocca, cannelli, pesi) alla dea Atena, colei che presiede a tale attività; in un secondo epigramma (7.726) protagonista è la vecchia Plattide, morta ottantenne, la quale fino all'ultimo ha lavorato in casa anche per tutta la notte con conocchia, fuso e telaio per poter sopravvivere e combattere la povertà. Partendo da tali epigrammi A. Mele è riuscito a ricostruire un quadro secondo il quale le donne non producono per se stesse e non sono neanche le proprietarie della materia prima ma guadagnano del proprio lavoro e, attraverso i pochi proventi, riescono a sopravvivere.<sup>12</sup> La produzione non riguarda più, dunque, il consumo interno all'*oikos* ma è esplicitamente rivolta alla vendita del prodotto ed è grazie ad essa che è possibile sostenersi.

La rarità di studi archeologici sistematici sui materiali relativi all'attività tessile e la qualità delle informazioni da essi ricavabili non consentono di fornire, tuttavia, alcun apporto in merito alla comprensione delle dinamiche produttive per le quali tali reperti venivano utilizzati.<sup>13</sup>

Soltanto negli ultimi anni, l'applicazione di metodi d'indagine sviluppati dal *Centre for Textile Research* dell'Università di Copenhagen e del CNR Danese sta consentendo di focalizzare l'attenzione sulla produzione tessile vera e propria;<sup>14</sup> basati su anni di ricerche sperimentali, essi hanno consentito di compren-

<sup>7</sup> Xen. *Oec.* 7.6.

<sup>8</sup> Xen. *Oec.* 7.21.

<sup>9</sup> Xen. *Oec.* 7.36.

<sup>10</sup> Xen. *Oec.* 7.41.

<sup>11</sup> Leon. *Anth. Pal.* 6.286; 6.288; 7.726.

<sup>12</sup> A. MELE, 'Allevamento ovino nell'antica Apulia e lavorazione della lana a Taranto', in *Schiavi e dipendenti nell'ambito dell'"oikos" e della "familia"* (Atti del XXII Colloquio GIREA, Pontignano 19-20 novembre 1995), Pisa 1997, 97-104.

<sup>13</sup> Ad esempio lo studio di P. DOTTA, 'I pesi da telaio', in M. BARRA BAGNASCO (cur.), *Locri Epizefiri III. Cultura materiale e vita quotidiana*, Firenze 1989, 185-201 per l'analisi dei materiali in contesto e i numerosi cataloghi di musei nei quali i pesi, decontestualizzati, sono presentati in relazione agli apparati decorativi o epigrafici.

<sup>14</sup> Per lo sviluppo di tali metodologie si veda: E.B. ANDERSSON STRAND, 'From Spindle Whorls and Loom Weights to Fabrics in the Bronze Age Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean', in M.-L. NOSCH - R. LAFFINEUR (cur.), *Kosmos. Jewellery, Adornment and Textiles in the Aegean Bronze Age* (Proceedings of the 13th International Aegean Conference, Copenhagen 21-26 April 2010), (Aegeum

dere l'importanza delle dimensioni e del peso di ogni componente della strumentazione nella filatura e nella tessitura del prodotto. La realizzazione di un filo di determinata grammatura è infatti frutto di una scelta dettata sia dal peso e dal diametro della fusaiola, sia dalla lunghezza del fuso stesso; tale fase è direttamente collegata al set di pesi da telaio a disposizione in quanto dal rapporto tra peso e spessore di ogni singolo peso da telaio dipendono la tensione applicabile ai fili utilizzati e la densità del tessuto realizzato (numero di fili per cm).

Il primo contesto archeologico in Italia nel quale tali metodi sono stati applicati è stato il quartiere occidentale della collina del Castello di *Herakleia* di Lucania (fig. 2a), un'area di circa 2 ettari occupata da una serie di isolati al cui interno le abitazioni, impiantate dagli inizi del III secolo a.C., si alternano ad ampi spazi scoperti, privi di strutture murarie e con pozzi per l'approvvigionamento idrico, interpretati come gradi cortili comunitari.<sup>15</sup> Già nel 2004 L. Giardino, sulla base della considerevole quantità di pesi da telaio rinvenuti nel corso dello scavo,<sup>16</sup> aveva ipotizzato che tra le attività produttive del quartiere quella tessile avesse avuto una notevole importanza.<sup>17</sup>

La contestualizzazione dei materiali (fig. 2b) ha consentito di disporre di una nuova serie di dati: la percentuale maggiore del materiale (ca. il 70%) è stata rinvenuta nelle *insulae*, che occupano circa l'80% della superficie indagata. Ad un'analisi più attenta è possibile notare come i pesi da telaio non siano distribuiti omogeneamente all'interno di tali isolati (fig. 2c); ben il 42% degli esemplari è infatti localizzato in corrispondenza delle case individuate le quali occupano soltanto una minima porzione della superficie complessiva, pari a circa il 20%, con un rapporto area/n° individui inversamente proporzionale.

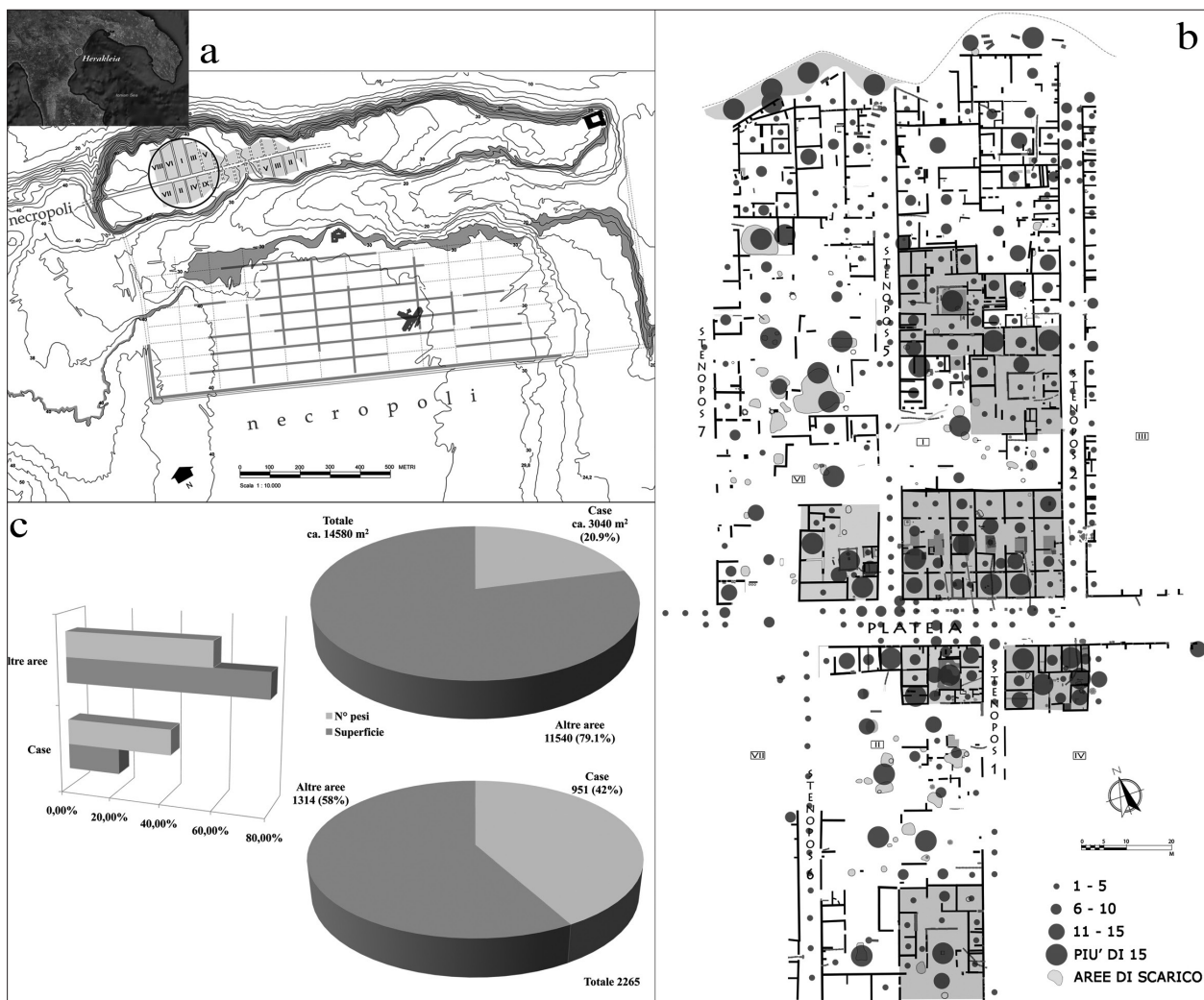
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33), Leuven – Liege 2012, 207-13, tav. XLIII; E.B. ANDERSSON STRAND, 'The Textile Chaîne Opératoire. Using a Multidisciplinary Approach to Textile Archaeology with a Focus on the Ancient Near East', *Paléorient* 38, 1-2 (2013), 21-40; E.B. ANDERSSON STRAND, 'Sheep, Wool and Textile Production. An Interdisciplinary Approach on the Complexity of Wool Working', in C. BRENIQUET – C. MICHEL (curr.), *Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean. From the Beginnings of Sheep Husbandry to Institutional Textile Industry*, Oxford 2014, 41-51. Per la loro applicazione in Italia meridionale si veda: F. MEO, *Allevamento e industria laniera tra III e I secolo a.C. in Italia meridionale attraverso le fonti letterarie e i dati archeologici: Herakleia, il suo territorio e la fascia costiera ionica tra Taranto e il Sinni* (Tesi di Dottorato, Università del Salento) Lecce 2013; F. MEO, 'New Archaeological Data for the Understanding of Weaving in Herakleia, Southern Basilicata, Italy', in M. HARLOW, M.-L. NOSCH (curr.), *Greek and Roman Textiles and Dress. An Interdisciplinary Anthology* (Ancient Textiles Series 19), Oxford 2014, 236-59; F. MEO, 'From Archaeological Finds to High Quality Textile Fabrics. New Data from Herakleia, Southern Basilicata, Italy', in S. LIPKIN – K. VAJANTO (curr.), *Focus on Archaeological Textiles* (MASF 3), Helsinki 2014, 75-85; F. MEO, *L'attività tessile a Herakleia di Lucania tra III e I secolo a.C.* (Fecit Te 7), Roma 2015. Più di recente, si è iniziato ad applicare le stesse metodologie anche in Italia settentrionale: A.R. TRICOMI, *Archeologia tessile nella Venetia romana. Testimonianze materiali per una sintesi storica* (Tesi di dottorato, Università degli Studi di Padova), Padova 2014.

<sup>15</sup> La bibliografia di riferimento sul quartiere è: L. GIARDINO, 'Il periodo post-annibalico a Heraclea', in *Atti del XV Convegno di Studi sulla Magna Grecia* (Taranto 1975), Taranto 1976, 549-60; L. GIARDINO, 'Architettura domestica a Herakleia. Considerazioni preliminari', in F. D'ANDRIA – K. MANNINO (curr.), *Ricerche sulla casa in Magna Grecia e in Sicilia* (Atti del Colloquio, Lecce 23-24 giugno 1992) (Archeologia e Storia 5), Galatina 1996, 133-59; L. GIARDINO, 'Aspetti e problemi dell'urbanistica di Herakleia', in *Siritide e Metapontino. Storie di due territori coloniali* (Atti dell'incontro di studio Policoro 31 ottobre - 2 novembre 1991), Napoli – Paestum 1998, 171-220; L. GIARDINO, 'Herakleia. Città e territorio', in D. ADAMESTEANU (cur.), *Storia della Basilicata. I. L'antichità*, Roma – Bari 1999, 295-337; A. DE SIENA – L. GIARDINO, 'Trasformazioni delle aree urbane e del paesaggio agrario in età Romana nella Basilicata sudorientale', in E. LO CASCIO – A. STORCHI MARINO (curr.), *Modalità insediative e strutture agrarie nell'Italia meridionale in età Romana*, Bari, 129-67; L. GIARDINO, 'Herakleia e Metaponto. Dalla polis italiota all'abitato protoimperiale', in *Atti del XLIV Convegno di Studi sulla Magna Grecia* (Taranto 2004), Taranto 2005, 387-432; L. GIARDINO, 'Il ruolo del sacro nella fondazione di Eraclea di Lucania e nella definizione del suo impianto urbano. Alcuni spunti di riflessione', in M. OSANNA – G. ZUCHTRIEGEL (curr.), *ΑΜΦΙ ΣΙΡΠΙΟΣ ΠΟΑΣ. Nuove ricerche su Eraclea e la Siritide*, Venosa 2012, 89-118.

<sup>16</sup> Lo scavo è stato realizzato nel 1973-74 da L. Giardino per conto della Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Basilicata. Colgo l'occasione per ringraziare L. Giardino per la condivisione dei dati di scavo necessari alla contestualizzazione del materiale e per i numerosi momenti di confronto fondamentali allo sviluppo della ricerca; A. De Siena per avermi concesso la possibilità di accedere allo studio dei materiali; R. Berg per avermi dato l'opportunità di partecipare al convegno e di contribuire alla definizione dei ruoli dei generi nelle case di una città italiota.

<sup>17</sup> GIARDINO, 'Herakleia e Metaponto', 429.



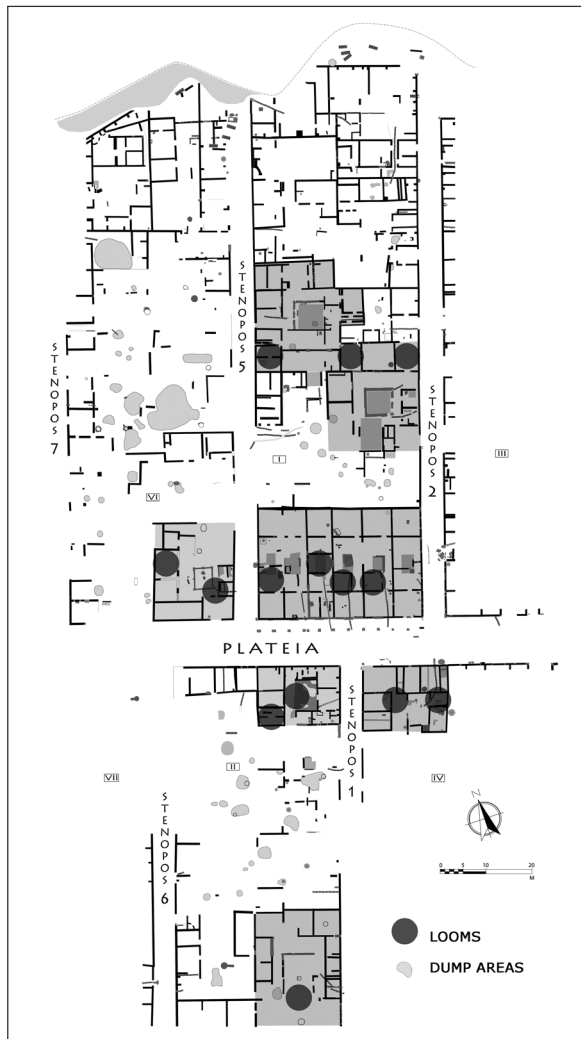
**Fig. 2:** Ubicazione e planimetria del quartiere occidentale della collina del Castello di *Herakleia* di Lucania con le case individuate (in grigio) e la distribuzione dei pesi da telaio rinvenuti (a-b); rapporto tra pesi individuati nelle case ed esemplari rinvenuti nel resto della superficie degli isolati (elaborazione grafica C. Bianco).

Per tentare di far luce sulle probabili dinamiche produttive relative all'attività tessile è stata quindi realizzata un'approfondita analisi degli esemplari rinvenuti nelle case, ai quali sono stati applicati i metodi d'indagine sviluppati a Copenhagen.<sup>18</sup> La loro applicazione a tutte le case del quartiere occidentale ha consentito di individuare 14 telai in 6 abitazioni più un complesso modulare individuato nell'isolato I così distribuiti (**fig. 3**): nelle case I/8, II/1, IV/1 e VI/1 sono stati identificati due telai per ciascuna; nelle case I/9 e II/2 presente un telaio per ciascuna; nel complesso modulare sono stati individuati altri 4 telai all'interno delle case I/1, I/3, I/4 e I/5.

L'analisi dei materiali delle quattro case entro le quali sono stati individuati due telai ha messo in luce che in un caso essi sarebbero appartenuti a diverse fasi di frequentazione dell'edificio, mentre negli altri tre i telai avrebbero potuto lavorare anche contemporaneamente; tale testimonianza può essere letta in funzione di una produzione destinata alla vendita del tessuto, la cui lavorazione si svolge in casa, come ipotizzato da A. Mele sulla base degli epigrammi di Leonida.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Per una visione di dettaglio delle case di Eraclea vedi MEO, *L'attività tessile*, 71-105; MEO, 'New Archaeological Data'; MEO, 'From Archaeological Finds'.

<sup>19</sup> MELE, 'Allevamento ovino'.



**Fig. 3:** *Herakleia*, collina del Castello, quartiere occidentale. Distribuzione dei telai individuati nelle case (elaborazione grafica C. Bianco).

Assieme a tale anomala notevole quantità di telai in un numero limitato di abitazioni, l'applicazione delle metodologie danesi su tutti i gruppi di pesi rinvenuti ha permesso di calcolare la tensione applicabile ai fili degli orditi lavorati e, di conseguenza, la loro qualità. Ben 13 telai su 14 avrebbero consentito la lavorazione di fili a cui applicare una tensione compresa tra 10 e 15 g, con un diametro medio di 0.3-0.5 mm; tutti i contesti di rinvenimento hanno restituito materiale ceramico relativo al II secolo a.C. Soltanto un telaio, ubicato nella casa 'a cortile' II/1 e pertinente alla fase di inizi III secolo a.C., avrebbe consentito la lavorazione di un filo con tensione di 7.5-10 g, di diametro medio 0.2-0.3 mm. Anche la densità degli orditi risulta costante, mediamente compresa tra 12 e 17 fili/cm a seconda della grammatura utilizzata e mai inferiore ai 10 fili/cm. L'insieme dei dati consente di delineare una produzione tessile 'standardizzata'; considerando ancora una volta Leonida, è probabile che tale produzione fosse legata alle richieste di committenti per i quali i tessuti sarebbe stato realizzati.

L'epigrammista tarantino descrive certamente una realtà che ben conosce ma che è tuttavia relativa ad un'altra città italiota. Taranto è però la madrepatria di *Herakleia* e il legame tra le due *poleis* nell'ambito della produzione tessile è testimoniato dalla presenza di una percentuale di pesi da telaio in argilla tarantina tra quelli rinvenuti nella città eracleota, sia nel quartiere

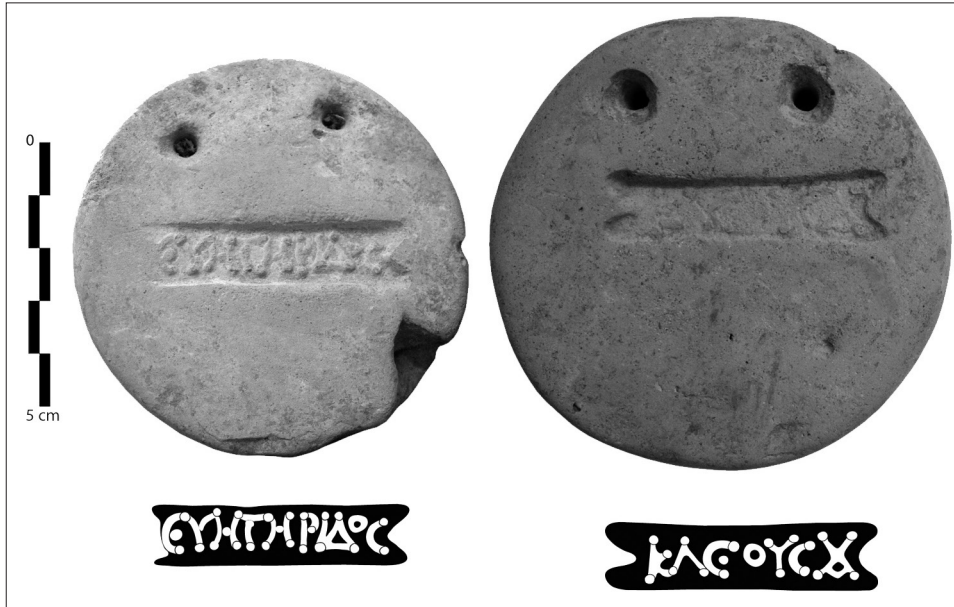
occidentale della collina del Castello (108 su 3279 esemplari, pari a circa il 3.3%), sia nella c.d. area sacra del Vallo (8 esemplari su 76, pari a circa il 10.5%).<sup>20</sup>

Dato che Leonida riconduce l'attività tessile a un universo femminile, resta a questo punto da chiarire se essa venisse svolta a *Herakleia* soltanto dalle donne e se esse si occupassero esclusivamente della produzione del tessuto. A tale proposito la documentazione archeologica risulta determinante poiché ha restituito una serie di patronimici, incisi o a stampo sui pesi da telaio, dei quali 18 non frammentari. 14 di essi sono femminili e 4 maschili. I nomi femminili sono al nominativo e al genitivo dorico (**fig. 4**), a testimonianza ancora una volta del legame eracleota con Taranto, mentre quelli maschili sono solo al nominativo.

Innanzitutto una così numerosa attestazione di nomi femminili a stampo entro bollo conduce ad escludere che i patronimici attestati siano collegabili all'attività dei figli.

Considerando verosimile la presenza di un'attività produttiva 'standardizzata', si possono ipotizzare alcune soluzioni che giustifichino la presenza dei nomi sui pesi da telaio. È innanzitutto possibile che si tratti dei nomi delle proprietarie e dei proprietari del set; essi si sarebbero recati dal ceramista per far marchiare i pesi in produzione come di loro proprietà. Data l'attestazione di patronimici maschili, questo comporterebbe

<sup>20</sup> MEO, *L'attività tessile*, 279-89.



**Fig. 4:** Esempio di nomi femminili di II secolo a.C. apposti al genitivo e al nominativo su pesi da telaio dal quartiere occidentale della collina del Castello di *Herakleia* (elaborazione grafica di C. Bianco).

che anche gli uomini sarebbero stati coinvolti attivamente in un'attività tradizionalmente associata al mondo femminile.

Altra ipotesi è che i nomi facciano riferimento ai committenti, coloro che avrebbero fornito la materia prima affinché venisse lavorata e ritirato il prodotto finito pagando le donne per la manodopera prestata. È possibile che essi lasciassero nelle case una parte del set necessario alla tessitura assieme ad alcuni pesi contrassegnati con il loro nome; considerando infatti verosimile la proposta di Mingazzini,<sup>21</sup> secondo il quale un peso sarebbe rimasto attaccato alla stoffa per identificare la proprietà del tessuto, è possibile che a restare legati al tessuto fossero i pesi con i nomi. La presenza di patronimici femminili e maschili implicherebbe, tuttavia, che persone di entrambi i sessi avrebbero commissionato i tessuti e, probabilmente, si sarebbero anche occupati della loro successiva commercializzazione.<sup>22</sup>

Nonostante tali proposte restino in attesa di riscontro da altri contesti, il dato a mio avviso significativo è che a *Herakleia*, nel III-II secolo a.C., uomini e donne sarebbero intervenuti nella stessa fase della produzione tessile; e i patronimici entro bollo testimoniano una pianificazione riferibile a un processo che non pare più, dunque, limitato all'ambito dell'*oikos* e destinato al soddisfacimento dei bisogni familiari, ma che svolge verosimilmente un ruolo economico tra le attività produttive della città italiota.

<sup>21</sup> P. MINGAZZINI, 'Sull'uso e sullo scopo dei pesi da telaio', *RendLinc* 29, s. VIII (1974), 201-20, in part. 206.

<sup>22</sup> Il ruolo di una donna, Eumachia, all'interno del processo dell'attività laniera nella Pompei di fine I secolo a.C. è evidente; tuttavia l'orizzonte cronologico è più tardo. Per Eumachia, vedi i contributi di Castiglione Morelli e Ciardiello nel presente volume.

## Women's Share in Status Display Some Observations on Female Burials<sup>1</sup>

NIKOLAS DIMAKIS

Even if we do know enough about women in Classical and Hellenistic periods from documentary sources, the potential of textual evidence increases in direct proportion to the amount of other types of sources. However, above all other classes of information it is the evidence from burials which has traditionally ranked paramount in archaeological approaches to social phenomena. Burials from the Classical and Hellenistic Peloponnese, identified on the basis of their offerings as of females, are here treated in order to discuss if the treatment of women in death reflects their status in life, contribute to our understanding of women's status in the Classical and Hellenistic Peloponnese, and provide us with insights into women's social persona otherwise unnoticed.

Despite the many constraints imposed by limited evidence, the lack of skeletal and bioarchaeological analyses,<sup>2</sup> and of previous research on 'female burials',<sup>3</sup> a search through past investigations of Classical and Hellenistic burials in the Peloponnese has been too valuable to disregard. Yet, it is not an easy task to use burial data to reconstruct societal or individual identities.<sup>4</sup> An individual identity is a complex issue of varyingly situated roles and identities that may transect each other in time and space. Moreover, in death people often become what they have not been in life. Burial ritual may be used as part of an ideology which faithfully represents and mirrors aspects of a society, but it is equally possible that the ideology may be concerned with distorting, obscuring, hiding or inventing particular forms of social relationships.<sup>5</sup> The only truly individual materialities left in a grave are the deceased's own bones. In the ideal world of the archaeologist, the skeletal remains from all burials would be analyzed to determine the age and gender of each individual and better still reveal genetic affinities or differences in diet and living conditions. But classical archaeology in Greece is very slowly moving toward that ideal.

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<sup>1</sup> This paper has been developed from a relevant section of my PhD thesis on *Social Identity and Status in the Classical and Hellenistic Northern Peloponnese. The Evidence from Burials* (University of Nottingham, 2012) soon to appear as a monograph by Archaeopress.

<sup>2</sup> R.-P. CHARLES, 'Étude anthropologique des nécropoles d'Argos. Contribution à l'étude des populations de la Grèce antique', *BCH* 82 (1958), 258-313; R.-P. CHARLES, *Étude anthropologique des nécropoles d'Argos. Études péloponnésiennes* III, Paris 1963; A. BANAKA-DIMAKI, 'Hellenistike Keramike apo to Argos', *Hellenistike Keramike apo ten Peloponneso* (2005), 126-42; J. EDWARD – J.M. FOSSEY – L. YAFFE, 'Analysis by Neutron Activation of Human Bone from the Hellenistic Cemetery at Asine, Greece', *JFA* 11 (1984), 37-46; X. ARAPOGIANNI, 'Nekrotapheio Klassikon Chronon sto Staphidokampo Eleias', *ArchEph* (1999), 155-217.

<sup>3</sup> E.g. A. MARGARITIS, *O Thanatos tis Agamou Kores sten Athena ton Klassikon Chronon* (unpublished PhD thesis), University of Thessaly 2010; N. STAMPOLIDIS – M. GIANNOPOULOU (eds.), *Princesses of the Mediterranean' in the Dawn of History*, Athens 2012.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. I. MORRIS, *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge 1992.

<sup>5</sup> E.g. I. HODDER, *The Present Past. An Introduction to Anthropology for Archaeologists*, London 1982, in part. 146; I. HODDER, 'The Identification and Interpretation of Ranking in Prehistory. A Contextual Perspective', in C. RENFREW – S. SHENNAN (eds.), *Ranking, Resource and Exchange. Aspects of the Archaeology of Early European Society*, Cambridge 1982, 150-54, in part. 152.



As a result, we are left with an offerings-based treatment which inevitably prejudices conclusions about the purpose of offerings.<sup>6</sup> Any attempt to determine which types of offerings, if any, were reserved for individuals of a particular age or gender serves two purposes: it gives some indication of how the community's response to the death of an individual varied according to the age and gender of the deceased, and it sheds some light on the function of grave goods within the funerary ritual. Modern scholarship based mainly on iconographic evidence and modern bias, and less on the actual burial evidence, assumes that presence of strigils and wreaths in a burial largely reflect the deceased's athletic prowess or symbolizes his association with the male social sphere of the *palaistra*.<sup>7</sup> Weapons and armour are associated with the world of men since their 'owners' are identified as warriors.<sup>8</sup> The presence in a grave of toilet or wedding-related objects is usually conceived as reflecting woman's social role; therefore jewellery, *pyxides*, *exaleiptra*, *gamikoi lebetes*, loomweights, and pigments are usually attributed to the world of women. However evidence has shown that such associations may not always be as clear-cut. Deviations from a preconceived norm should not be easily dismissed simply because they reflect a social reality more complex than is often acknowledged.<sup>9</sup>

Based on the presence/absence of such objects in graves of the Peloponnese a large number of such burials can be identified.<sup>10</sup> Though only a limited number has been confirmed as of females through observations made by the archaeologists on the field to detailed skeletal analyses. The relative ratio of burials in the latter case points to greater number of female burials in the Hellenistic period<sup>11</sup> rather than in the Classical.<sup>12</sup> This may be partly due to the larger number of Hellenistic burials preserved, and partly to the rather

<sup>6</sup> E.g. A. STRÖMBERG, *Male or Female? A Methodological Study of Grave Gifts as Sex-Indicators in Iron Age Burials from Athens*, Jonsö 1993.

<sup>7</sup> E.g. D.M. ROBINSON, *Excavations at Olynthus XI. Necrolynthia. A Study in Greek Burial Customs and Anthropology*, Baltimore 1942, in part. 202; C.W. BLEGEN – H. PALMER – R.S. YOUNG, *The North Cemetery (Corinth 13)*, Princeton 1964, in part. 70; D.C. KURTZ – J. BOARDMAN, *Greek Burial Customs*, London 1971, in part. 208; R. GARLAND, *The Greek Way of Death*, Ithaca 1985, in part. 1-13; J.C. CARTER, *The Chora of Metaponto. The Necropoleis*, Austin 1998, in part. 583.

<sup>8</sup> KURTZ – BOARDMAN, *Greek Customs*, 190.

<sup>9</sup> KURTZ – BOARDMAN, *Greek Customs*, 209; also E.A. GARDNER, 'Ornaments and Armour from Kertch in the New Museum at Oxford', *JHS* 5 (1884), 62-73, in part. 68, discussion on the presence of a mirror and earrings in the tomb of what was apparently a male warrior buried with armor; CARTER, *Metaponto*, 584.

<sup>10</sup> DIMAKIS, *Social Identity and Status*, in part. 138 and 139-43.

<sup>11</sup> Female burials of the Hellenistic period in Achaia: J.A. PAPAPOSTOULOU, 'Archaïotetes kai Mnemeia Achaias – Patra – Nekrotaphia', *ArchDelt* 31 (1976), 88-97, in part. 95-97 grave 8; J.A. PAPAPOSTOULOU, 'Hellenistikoi Taphoi tes Patras, I', *ArchDelt* 32 (1977) *Meletai* 281-343; J.A. PAPAPOSTOULOU, 'Hellenistikoi Taphoi tes Patras, II', *ArchDelt* 33 (1978) *Meletai* 354-85; J.A. PAPAPOSTOULOU, 'Kosmemata Patron kai Dymes. Paratereseis se Typous Kosmematon tou 4<sup>ou</sup> aiona p.Ch. kai tes Ellenistikos Epoches', *ArchEph* 129 (1990), 83-140; L. PAPAPOSTOULOU, 'Anaskaphikes ergasies – Aigio – Odos Aghion Apostolon – Odos Anageneneses 1, Kouloura', *ArchDelt* 45 (1990), 138; M. PETROPOULOS, 'To Voreio Nekrotaphio ton Archaion Patron: Oikopedo Odou Poukevil', *Hellenistike Keramike apo ten Peloponneso* (2005), 59-72, in part. grave 20); in the Argolid: O. FRÖDIN – A.W. PERSSON, *ASINE: Results of the Swedish Excavations 1922-1930*, Stockholm 1938, in part. Hellenistic graves 4, 11 and 12; O. ALEXANDRI, 'A' Argos', *ArchDelt* 16 (1960), 93; P. BRUNEAU, 'Tombes d' Argos', *BCH* 94 (1970), 437-531, in part. graves 3, 58, 85 and 185; CH. KRITZAS, 'Argos', *ArchDelt* 28 (1973), 122-35, in part. 122-23; E. PROTONOTARIOU-DEILAKI, 'Argos', *ArchDelt* 28 (1973), 94-122, in part. 97-99 grave III, 109-11, graves 4 and 7; I. HÄGG – J.M. FOSSEY, 'The Hellenistic Necropolis and Later Structures on the Middle Slopes, 1973-77', in I. HÄGG – R. HÄGG (eds.), *Excavations in the Barbouna Area at Asine*, Fasc. 4, Uppsala 1980, in part. graves B 21, B 22-23, B 43-44 and B 46; A. BANAKA-DIMAKI, 'Argos, Parodos Odou Belinou (Oikopedo Photemis Kontou), Odos Aghiou Georgiou 44 (Oikopedo Pan.Bouboureka)', *ArchDelt* 46 (1991), 88-89; CH. PITEROS, 'Odos Herakleous, O.T.38, Oikopedo Aphon Xentaropoulou', *ArchDelt* 53 (1998), 109-12, in part. graves 4 and 7; CH. PITEROS, 'Argos, Odos Kalmouchou (O.T. 19, Oikopedo A. kai I. Boulmeti), Koite Charadrou (Xeria)', *ArchDelt* 54 (1999), 137-40, in part. 137-39, grave 1; BANAKA-DIMAKI, *Hellenistike Keramike apo ten Peloponneso*, in part. grave 1); in Corinthia: H.S. ROBINSON, 'Excavations at Corinth, 1960', *Hesperia* 31 (1962), 95-133, in part. 119, graves 4 and 6; in Elis: ARAPOGIANNI, 'Staphidokampos', in part. *pithos* 2 and 3.

<sup>12</sup> Female burials of the Classical period in the Argolid: E. PROTONOTARIOU-DEILAKI, 'Mikra Skaphe Taphon en Mylois Argolidos', *ArchEph* (1955), 1-8, in part. grave A; A. BANAKA-DIMAKI, 'Argos – Portitses Akova – Zogga – Myloi – These Synoro Maladreniou', *ArchDelt* 49 (1994), 138-47, in part. 146-47, grave II; A. BANAKA-DIMAKI, 'Argos, Odos Papaoikonomou, Oikopedo I. Kotsogianna – Odos Kallerge, Oikopedo Aphon Vlogiare', *ArchDelt* 53 (1998), 114-17; E. SARRI, 'Anaskaphe Tmematos Nekrotaphieion ton Klassikon kai Hellenistikon Chronon sto Argos', in *Praktika E' Diethnous Synedriou Peloponniakiou Spoudon*, Athens 1998, 395-

distinctive way females were being buried in the Hellenistic period with more 'personalized' offerings in to their graves. Could this be an indication that women enjoyed more social freedom in the Hellenistic period than in the Classical?

A standard scholarly view of the status of Greek women in the Classical period holds that these were sheltered at home, in separate quarters, and only occasionally ventured out into the public sphere; in this view, women would have had little to do with civic business, and were seen and heard by the male public as little as possible.<sup>13</sup> Several scholars have recently discussed a great deal of evidence overturning that image of sequestered Greek women, demonstrating that Greek religion, at least, demanded female participation in many aspects of civic life whereas in Sparta in particular women were participating in athletic competitions, training half-naked in public, they even fought, all in order for them to give birth to healthy and strong children.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, although women's most curious ventures in the community were regularly discouraged, their participation in burials was an exception. They may have gone to more of them than they desired. Ideological differences are due to the diverse material used to reach in each hypothesis; ancient Greek tragedy, for instance, may sometimes create the superficial impression that women consisted a social group with rather envious by men privileges. Scholars like Gomme, favouring this sort of evidence concluded accordingly. On the opposite direction moved scholars using information from fourth century BC law dialogues giving the picture of women's rather undermined role,<sup>15</sup> even accepting that the political role of women at least in the Classical period was lower than that of men.

But what do the burials tell us? A way of identifying signs that have been codified, in the most extensive sense, through funerary customs is to determine regularities through archaeological sources. Since most of the Classical evidence comes from Argos and Corinth I focus on these *poleis*. Jewellery offerings in graves are overall very scarce – throughout the Peloponnese,<sup>16</sup> even though written sources mention that Greek woman in general legally owned little but her clothing and jewellery; these personal effects were independent of her dowry, and she was permitted to take them with her when she was divorced, widowed or remarried but apparently not in death.<sup>17</sup> A different approach may prove to be more rewarding. *Alabastra*, *pyxides*, *exaleiptra*, *lebetes gamikoi* and *chytrai* are usually considered by archaeologists to be as pottery

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413, in part. grave 14; A. KOSSYVA, 'The invisible dead of Delpriza, Kranidi', in H. CAVANAGH – W.G. CAVANAGH – J. ROY (eds.), *Honouring the Dead in the Peloponnese* (available on-line at <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/csps/documents/honoringthedead/kossyva.pdf>), Nottingham 2011, in part. grave 12; also K. BARAKARI-GLENI, 'Oi Nekropoleis ton Archaikon kai Klassikon Chronon sten archaia pole tou Argous', *Praktika E' Diethnous Synedriou Peloponniakiou Spoudon*, Athens 1998, 509-33; in Corinthia: BLEGEN *et al.*, *North Cemetery*, graves 263, 364 and 448; A.N. STILWELL, *The Potters' Quarter* (Corinth 15.1), Princeton 1948, in part. 29-30 grave A, 33-34 and 59-60; also P.A. CLEMENT – M.M. THORNE, 'From the West Cemetery at Isthmia', *Hesperia* 43 (1974), 401-11; in Elis: ARAPOGIANNI, 'Staphidokampos', graves ι, στ and θ.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. E.A. WIGHT, *Feminism in Greek Literature. From Homer to Aristotle*, New York 1923; J.P.V.D. BALSDON, *Romaies Gynaikes* (Greek trans.), Athens 1982; R. FLACELIÈRE, *La vie quotidienne en Grèce aus siècle de Périclès*, Paris 1971, in part. 81-116; S.B. POMEROY, 'Selected Bibliography on Women in Antiquity', *Arethusa* 6 (1973), 125-57.

<sup>14</sup> R. VAN BREMEN, *The Limits of Participatio. Women and Civic Life in the Greek East in the Hellenistic and Roman Periods*, Amsterdam 1996; M. DILLON, *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion*, London 2002; B. GOFF, *Citizen Bacchae. Women's Ritual Practice in Ancient Greece*, Berkeley 2004; J.B. CONNELLY, *Portrait of a Priestess. Women and Ritual in Ancient Greece*, Princeton 2007; also M. HADAS, 'Observations on Athenian Women', *CW* 39 (1936), 97-100; A.W. GOMME, 'The Position of Women in Athens in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BC', in A.W. GOMME (ed.), *Essays in Greek History and Literature*, Oxford 1937; D.C. RICHTER, 'The Position of Women in Classical Athens', *CJ* 67 (1971), 1-8; S.C. HUMPHREYS, *The Family, Women, and Death. Comparative Studies*, London 1993, suggesting a relative socio-political 'freedom' of women in Athens; *Thesmophoria* was a festival restricted to women, Ar. *Thesm.*; on women in Sparta, Eur. *Andr.* 597-98; Plut. *num.* 3.5-9; *Lyc.* 14.4, 15.12, 16.4; in general, see FLACELIÈRE, *Vie quotidienne*.

<sup>15</sup> W. XENIDOU-SCHILD, *Oi Gynaikes sten Hellenike Archaioτητα*, Athens 2001, in part. 280.

<sup>16</sup> See notes 11 and 12; cf. note 22.

<sup>17</sup> D.M. SCHAPS, *Economic Rights of Women in Ancient Greece*, Edinburgh 1979, in part. 70-102.

offerings indicative of female burials. Based on the number of such vase types found in Classical burials in Argos and Corinth then women seem to be far more commonly represented in the mortuary record of Argos and less frequently in Corinth where the large number of other types of vases found along with strigils imply a male-centered society with an emphasis on burial ritual.<sup>18</sup> Such a divergence although not necessarily fully representational can be considered as indicative of the varying treatment women received in death in the Argive and Corinthian societies. If this is indeed the case then it can be further indicative of women's role in the socio-political structure of each one of these *poleis* and perhaps also of family's role in these societies; to be more explicit the moderately democratic Argos seems to have been more open when it comes to women as opposed to the largely aristocratic and male-centered Corinth.<sup>19</sup>

But I would like to go a step further by suggesting that the roots of Argos' 'openness' to women may have been deep in the Argive history. Telesilla is an Argive lyric poet of the early-fifth century BC. According to a tradition or myth when the Spartans annihilated the Argive male population at Sepeia in 494 BC and they marched against the polis of Argos, she armed the women and repulsed the Spartan invasion (or according to another version the Spartans did not want to fight against women and withdrawn). Telesilla then received heroic honours by the polis of Argos while a stele picturing her on a shallow relief standing in front of her books and holding a helmet was erected near the sanctuary of Aphrodite.<sup>20</sup> Even though Telesilla and the aforementioned incident may be mythical not bound to pragmatic reality, they may well reflect some sort of social transformation concerning the status of women in fifth century B.C. Argos that was plausibly introduced as part of the wider socio-political transformations in the Argive society following the devastating battle at Sepeia. A tale after all is not, and cannot be, an accumulation of atomic sentences but rather is a sequence in time, linking different stages by some internal necessity.<sup>21</sup>

In the Hellenistic period female burials can be relatively grouped into modestly furnished burials and extremely lavish burials. The former comprise the vast majority while the latter have been unearthed only at the North Cemetery of Patras and Aigion in Achaea, and Ancient Elis in the region of Elis.<sup>22</sup> The abundance of gold jewellery in this latter group of burials suggests that some women had access to gold and precious metals. But does this equal access to a higher social position or were they women simply 'dressed' in the wealth accumulated by the male members of their kin? Interpretation may not necessarily exclude any of these; the examples of women acquiring high status and wealth in the Hellenistic period are rather numerous ranging remarkably in the social ladder from queens, mainly in the Eastern kingdoms, to economically

<sup>18</sup> See Classical burials, note 12, above.

<sup>19</sup> On the history of Argos e.g. R.A. TOMLINSON, *Argos and the Argolid*, London 1972; CH. KRITZAS, 'Aspects de la vie politique et économique d'Argos au Ve siècle avant J.-C.' (*BCH Suppl.* 22), Paris 1992, 231-40; on Corinth, e.g. J. SALMON, *Wealthy Corinth. A History of the City to 338 B.C.*, Oxford 1984.

<sup>20</sup> Plut. *Mor.* 245C-E; Paus. 2.20.8-10; Polyaeus 8.33, 9.26; TOMLINSON, *Argos and the Argolid*, 94-95.

<sup>21</sup> W. BURKERT, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual*, Berkeley 1979, in part. 3.

<sup>22</sup> i.e. a tile grave at the North Cemetery in Patras with five *lekythia*, two miniature *pyxides*, one *kantharos*, two *phialai*, a lamp, a *kyathion*, a *krateriskos*, two cylindrical *pyxides*, a glass *alabastron*, four elaphantine dove reliefs, a bronze mirror, four earrings (PAPAPOSTOULOU, 'Archaïotetes kai Mnemeia', in part. 95-97, grave 8); a soft limestone-lined cist grave at the same cemetery with one unguentarium and a gold wreath, diadems, earrings, two bracelets, seven rings, silver foils, a mirror, gold string, a gold coin, an iron strigil (PAPAPOSTOULOU, Patra I'); a cist grave with silver vases and gold jewels at Patras' South Cemetery (PAPAPOSTOULOU, 'Patra II'); a soft limestone-lined cist grave at Aigion with two clay *pyxides*, two bowls, one gold wreath (oak tree), one gold coin, three gold rings, three gold foils, one necklace, one bronze mirror, one silver strigil, five seashells, two bronze fibulae (PAPAKOSTA, 'Anaskaphikes Ergasies'); a *pithos* burial at Elis with vases and a gold necklace, two gold earrings, gold foils, a gold leaf inscribed *EYΞENH* (G.A. PAPAATHANASOPOULOS, 'Archaia Elis', *ArchDelt* 24 (1969), 152-54, in part. 153); also see P.G. THEMELIS, 'O Taphos tes Eleias Philemenas', *G' Epistemonike Synantese gia ten Hellenistike Keramike*, Athens 1994, 146-58.

independent women found basically all over the Hellenistic world.<sup>23</sup> Although information on such women in the Peloponnese is scanty they seem to have existed there too. We hear from Plutarch that women of the *oikos* of Agis were in the third century BC the richest women in Sparta.<sup>24</sup> In Athens, on the contrary, such socio-political and economic liberties were restricted for women already from the classical period whereas by the late-fourth century BC Demetrios Poliorketes imposed measures to control the lavishness of *symposia* as well as the attitude of women.<sup>25</sup> Be that as it may, even though women's social standing was displayed *post mortem* through a largely male symbol, wealth, it was probably because of the nature of monarchic constitutions that gender differences were so evidently superseded for dynastic interests.

However, some observations seem to apply on evidence from both the Classical and Hellenistic periods. Firstly, we should consider the case that relatively poor women or women engaging on a daily basis with manual work in order for them to survive or supply their dependents with the essential, may have been buried in unfurnished graves.<sup>26</sup> Common women of either time period were not able to make a significant social role for themselves. Secondly, in both the Classical and the Hellenistic period females seem to share significantly more attributes with children than either shared with men thus suggesting a common treatment of these social groups in death.<sup>27</sup> In Hellenistic Achaia and Elis, however, this *post mortem* symbolism has become more individualised as wreaths resembling myrtle fruits and flowers are often found associated with what archaeologists have identified as burials of young girls.<sup>28</sup> Were they the off-springs of prominent families? Were they young initiates to the Orphic cult? Or was it because of their premature death that they received a more elaborate treatment in death than even some men did in the Hellenistic period? Last but not least, individuals of both genders were allocated gravestones but female names seem to have been significantly fewer than male.<sup>29</sup> How the selection of those to be marked was made, if there was a selection process, I cannot say. However in Sparta under state law, women who had died in child-birth and men who died in serving their country both equally deserved the honor of having their names inscribed on their gravestones.<sup>30</sup>

## Conclusions

No matter how complex it is to speak of gender and status, in the Classical and Hellenistic Peloponnese the treatment of women in death bears some predictable relationship to their social status in life. Burial evidence

<sup>23</sup> H.W. PLEKET, *Epigraphica II. Texts on the Social History of the Greek World*, Leiden 1969; S.B. POMEROY, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt. From Alexander the Great to Cleopatra*, Michigan 1984, in part. 3-40; E. CARNEY, 'Women and Basileia. Legitimacy and Female Political Action in Macedonia', *The Classical Journal* 90 (1995), 367-91; XENIDOU-SCHILD, *Gynaiques*, 388-402 and 408-12, note 58; cf. P. LOMAN, *Mobility of Hellenistic Women* (unpublished PhD thesis), University of Nottingham 2004.

<sup>24</sup> Plut. *Agis* 4 and 7.3-4, 13.2-3; also S. HODKINSON, 'Female Property Ownership and Empowerment in Classical and Hellenistic Sparta', in T.J. FIGUEIRA (ed.), *Spartan Society*, Swansea 2004, 103-36; S. HODKINSON, 'Female Property Ownership and Status in Classical and Hellenistic Sparta', in D. LYONS – R. WESTBROOK (eds.), *Women and Property in Ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean Societies*, Harvard 2005, on female property ownership and status in Classical and Hellenistic Sparta.

<sup>25</sup> On *gynaikonomoi*, see C. WEHRLI, 'Les Gynèconomes', *Museum Helveticum* 19 (1962), 33-38.

<sup>26</sup> E.g. Ar. *Vesp.* 1388-98; *Thesm.* 384-88, 443-58; *Ran.* 549-78; also P. HERFST, *Le Travail de la Femme dans la Grèce Ancienne*, Utrecht 1922, on working women in antiquity.

<sup>27</sup> DIMAKIS, *Identity and burial*, 138-57, 176-83.

<sup>28</sup> E.g. Archaeological Museum of Patras, inv. number 3772; ARAPOGIANNI, 'Staphidokampos', 196-205, *pthos* 2 and 3; cf. P.G. THEMELIS – G.P. TOURATSOGLU, *Taphoi tou Derveniou*, Athens 1997, in part. 147-49.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. M. MITSOS, *Argolike Prosopographia*, Athens 1952 (Argos and the Argolid); J.A. PAPAPOSTOULOU, *Achaean Grave Stelai*, Athens 1993 (Achaia); A.D. RIZAKIS, *ACHAIE II. La Cité de Patras: Epigraphie et Histoire* (Meletimata 25), Athens 1998, in part. 63-76, 137-50 (Patras); B.W. MILLIS, 'An Inscribed Funerary Monument from Corinth', *Hesperia* 76 (2007), 359-64 (Corinth).

<sup>30</sup> Plut. *Lyc.* 27.2; *Mor.* 238d; Paus. 3.12.8, 3.14.1, 3.16.6, 6.1.9.

from the Classical period has indicated that women in Argos and Corinth received diverse burial treatment that seems to have been in line with the sociopolitical organization of the society to which they belonged. In the Hellenistic period substantial wealth differences in burials of women may relate to the growing social divide marking the period. On the one hand, unfurnished or relatively poor burials may have been attributed to women of ordinary status, whereas on the other hand, lavish burials such as those found at Patras, Aigion and Elis, possibly indicate women with access to higher social positions, or 'dressed' in the wealth accumulated by male members of their kin. In either case marriage alliances were a key feature in Hellenistic society, showing how strongly personalized political life had become and how personal relations really mattered over and above all constitutional structural considerations.

As stated at the beginning of this paper even if we do know enough about women in Classical and Hellenistic periods from documentary sources, the potential of textual evidence increases in direct proportion to the amount of other types of sources. Nonetheless, most of the relationships discussed above are based on an interpretation of the variety and nature of grave goods and as such should be viewed with caution. All in all what can be suggested with relative certainty is that burial evidence, a type of evidence furnished both by artifacts and ideologies, and therefore informative for understanding social and cultural identities, can provide us with insights into women's social persona otherwise unnoticed and, therefore, can contribute remarkably to our understanding of women's status in the Classical and Hellenistic periods.

# Female Goods in the Ancient Greek Domestic and Symbolic Economies

DEBORAH LYONS

In a recent book, I examined the role of precious objects in the construction and maintenance of ancient Greek gender ideology, specifically in the context of marriage.<sup>1</sup> The objects in question were mythic, as were the contexts in which they operated. In this article, drawing on archaeological, visual, and literary evidence, I turn my attention to the real and usually more mundane objects that can be identified as the property of once-living ancient Greek women, to see what can be learned by comparing them with the precious, highly charged, and sometimes dangerous objects of Greek myth.<sup>2</sup>

In my analysis of mythic gifts, I drew on the anthropological concept of gendered wealth, itself closely related to the gendered division of labor found in many traditional societies. Ethnographies from a range of cultures offer examples of the division of labor, and more specifically of production.<sup>3</sup> The gender of an object may correspond with that of its producer or the person for whose use it was made, or it may be assigned a gender on purely symbolic grounds.<sup>4</sup> That said, it is nonetheless possible to generalize: female wealth is nearly always soft and perishable, consisting mainly of textiles and other woven objects; male wealth by contrast is durable, made of stone or shell, or (as in the Greek case) precious metals, especially gold. I argued that when women violate the ‘protocol of the gift’ by giving or taking precious objects of male wealth, this functions explicitly as either a cause or an effect of the breakdown of the marriage relationship. To give two examples, Eriphyle is bribed with a necklace to betray her husband (*Odyssey* 11.521) and the abduction of Helen is accompanied by theft of precious objects from Menelaos’ palace (*Iliad* 3.70 and repeatedly thereafter).

The objects discussed in the book are the stuff of myth, like Eriphyle’s gold necklace, which was originally made by Hephaistos as a wedding gift for Harmonia.<sup>5</sup> In the mythic and epic contexts, some highly valued textile gifts are also set apart from more quotidian objects: in book 6 of the *Iliad*, the Trojan women bring a most beautiful *peplos* (robe) to Athena; in the *Odyssey*, Helen gives Telemachos a garment as a guest-gift, to correspond to the silver bowl that her husband offers him (15.101-8). Other mythic gifts

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<sup>1</sup> D. LYONS, *Dangerous Gifts. Gender and Exchange in Ancient Greece*, Austin, Texas 2012.

<sup>2</sup> In this article, I address only physical objects owned by women. The complicated topic of land ownership by women (which was rare in Athens but not in Sparta) is outside the scope of this short study.

<sup>3</sup> E. FRIEDL, *Women and Men. An Anthropologist’s View*, New York 1975; N. PEACOCK, ‘Rethinking the Sexual Division of Labor. Reproduction and Women’s Work among the Efe’, in M. di LEONARDO (ed.), *Gender at the Crossroads of Knowledge*, Berkeley 1991, 339-60. See also LYONS, *Dangerous Gifts*, 14.

<sup>4</sup> On the various ways that objects may be gendered, see M. STRATHERN, *The Gender of the Gift*, Berkeley 1989; E. SCHWIMMER, ‘Objects of Mediation. Myth and Praxis’, in I. ROSSI (ed.), *The Unconscious in Culture. The Structuralism of Claude Lévi-Strauss*, New York 1974, 209-55; D. GRAEBER, *Toward an Anthropological Theory of Value. The False Coin of Our Own Dreams*, New York 2001, and the articles of R. BERG and P. LOHMANN in this volume.

<sup>5</sup> The classic text on precious objects in Greek myth is LOUIS GERNET’s 1948, ‘La notion de valeur en Grèce’, published in English as ‘Value in Greece’, in R.L. GORDON – R.G.A. BUXTON (eds.), *Myth, Religion and Society*, Cambridge 1981, 111-46.

include the golden distaff and silver wool basket given to Helen by Polydamna, the wife of the Egyptian Polybus (*Odyssey* 4.125-32).<sup>6</sup> These gifts to Helen, like much of the women's property to be discussed below, are connected with textile production. At the same time, they are set apart as luxury items by the use of precious metals in their construction. Objects with a homely purpose they may be, but their fashioning from gold and silver locates them squarely in the mythic world of Homeric epic.

Adding actual objects to our analysis introduces several problems not faced by the reader of ancient texts or the interpreter of myth. There is some difficulty in establishing which objects actually belonged to women, in the sense that they had the right take them from the conjugal home if a marriage was dissolved. There is an additional difficulty of arriving at a comprehensive inventory of the kinds of objects that were owned by women, given their often perishable nature. Then there is the difficulty of divining the gender of the owners of objects that have survived. The objects cannot speak to us and tell us who their owners were. The written and visual sources at times provide us with some guidance. From literary sources, we know that in Athens the personal possessions brought by a woman into her marriage, usually referred to as the *trousseau*, were called *himatia kai khrysia*, i.e. clothing and gold (jewelry)<sup>7</sup> – Long after the Classical period, the word *parapherna* came into use, the source of the more familiar Latin word *paraphernalia*. Unlike the dowry, usually consisting of money or land, which remained under the control of the husband for the duration of the marriage, these were considered her personal property, and remained under her personal control.<sup>8</sup>

The details of what a woman's clothing and other accoutrements might include is humorously provided by Aristophanes:

[Speaker A] razor, mirror, scissors, wax, soap,  
 wig, dress-trimmings, headbands, barrettes,  
 rouge – sheer devastation! – white face-powder,  
 perfume, pumice-stone, brassiere, hairnet,  
 veil, orchid paint, necklaces, mascara,  
 soft gown, hellebore, headband,  
 slip, shawl, negligée, bordered robe, long gown  
 – the stocks, the death-pit! – striped jacket, curling-iron.  
 And the best is still to come.  
 [Speaker B] What's next?  
 [Speaker A] Earring, set gem, hoops, choker, cluster-pin,  
 bracelet, brooches, wrist-band, necklaces, anklets,  
 bubble-hats, signets, chains, rings, plasters,  
 bubble-hats, breastbands, dildoes, carnelians,  
 leis, hoops, and lots of other things that you [masculine]  
 couldn't name if you tried . . . (Fr. 332)<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> LYONS 2012, 74-75, discusses in detail the troubling implications of the gifts received by Penelope from the suitors in *Odyssey* 18: a necklace and a robe with golden adornments. See also M. KATZ, *Penelope's Renown*, Princeton 1991, 78-93.

<sup>7</sup> See the article by R. GONDEK, this volume. The bland phrase does not reveal that the personal possessions accompanying a wife could include slaves.

<sup>8</sup> A woman retained an interest in her dowry, which had to be returned in case of death of the husband, or in divorce not caused by the woman's adultery.

<sup>9</sup> Translation by J. HENDERSON, *Aristophanes. Fragments*, Cambridge, Mass., 2007. My thanks to Mireille Lee for calling this passage to my attention.

The catalogue deliberately jumbles up different kinds of things: cosmetics, grooming instruments, items of clothing, and jewelry. The jumble allows Aristophanes to smuggle in a risqué item, dildoes (*olisboi*) a form of female property about which more sober ancient sources are largely silent.<sup>10</sup>

Clothing is highly perishable, so with few exceptions we have to make do with evidence such as that provided by Aristophanes. A quite different and perhaps more reliable source is the list of garments dedicated by women to Artemis Brauronia at her shrine in Athens:<sup>11</sup>

Archipe [dedicated] a dotted, sleeved tunic in a box during the year Callimachos was archon, Callippe a short tunic, scalloped and embroidered; it has letters woven in. Chaerippe and Eucoline a dotted tunic in a box. Philumene a silken tunic, in the year Theophilus was archon. Pythias a dotted robe in the year Themistocles was archon. There was an embroidered purple tunic; Thyaene and Malthace dedicated it. Phile [dedicated] a woman's girdle; Pheidylla a white woman's cloak in a box. Mneso a frog-green garment. Nausis a woman's cloak, with a broad purple border in a wave design.<sup>12</sup>

These garments, with their rather playful dots, scallops, and waves, appear to be a far cry from the magnificent peplos the Trojan women offered to Athena in the *Iliad*, or the one given by Helen to Telemachos in *Odyssey* 15. Unlike the textiles dedicated to Artemis Brauronia, which come alive to us in their specificity, the mythic garments are of such beauty that they can only be compared to natural phenomena: “and it shone like a star as it lay beneath the others” (*aster d'ōs apelampen; ekeito de neiatos allōn*, *Il.* 6.295 = *Od.* 15.108).

Gold, except that found undisturbed in burials, has mostly been melted down. Enough examples survive, however, going back to the earrings of the ‘Rich Athenian lady’ (c. 850 BCE).<sup>13</sup> There are also textual references to women wearing jewelry, especially earrings, bracelets, and brooches. To give only one example, *Lysias' Against Eratosthenes* describes the gratuitous greed and cruelty with which Melobios, one of the Thirty Tyrants, rips the gold earrings from the ears of Polemarchos' wife (*Lysias* 12.19). To add to the poignancy of this example, if Borthwick is correct, the Greek should be construed to read, “which she happened to be wearing when she first entered the house (as his wife)”.<sup>14</sup> This would indicate that they were part of the *himatia kai khrysia* she brought with her to the marriage.

The dedications lists from the Brauronia at Athens also provide us with an idea of other kinds of objects possessed by women, most of them jewelry. (The votive objects I discuss here are those that clearly belonged to women during their lifetimes, rather than objects acquired for the sole purpose of dedication.)

<sup>10</sup> They do however play an important role in Herodas' sixth *mimiambos*, a dialogue between two women in which a maker of fine dildos comes in for high praise. There are a number of vases on which *olisboi* are represented, among them the following, listed in the Beazley archives ([www.beazley.ox.ac.uk](http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk)): 200587, St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum, 14611; 200634, Magnoncourt, Musée, Unknown, Canino Collection, 34; 201043, London, British Museum, London, British Museum, 1867.0508.1064; 30493, Rome, Mus. Naz. Etrusco di Villa Giulia, 48239; 201129, Paris, Musée du Louvre, Boston (MA), Museum of Fine Arts, S1378; 202175, Syracuse, Museo Arch. Regionale Paolo Orsi, 20065. My thanks to the anonymous reviewer for this information.

<sup>11</sup> Textiles have survived more often in the dryer climates of Egypt and the Ancient Near East. Very little fabric from the archaic or classical period survives from Greece. See E.W. BARBER, *Prehistoric Textiles. The Development of Cloth in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages with Special Reference to the Aegean*, Princeton 1991. For women and textile production in Magna Graecia, see F. MEO in this volume.

<sup>12</sup> *IG* II<sup>2</sup> 1514.G, translation from M. LEFKOWITZ – M. FANT, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*, Baltimore 1992, 284.

<sup>13</sup> S. LANGDON, ‘Views of Wealth, A Wealth of Views. Grave Goods in Iron Age Attica’, in D. LYONS – R. WESTBROOK (eds.), *Women and Property in Ancient Mediterranean and Near Eastern Societies*, Washington D.C. 2005 (<http://chs.harvard.edu/CHS/article/display/1219>, accessed 15/1/15). For women's grave gifts, see N. DIMAKIS in this volume.

<sup>14</sup> E.K. BORTHWICK, ‘Two Emotional Climaxes in *Lysias*’ “Against Eratosthenes”, *CW* 84 (1990), 44-46.



Five perforated earrings: these Thaumarete the wife of Timonidaes dedicated in a wooden...box... An ivory lyre and wooden pick inlaid with ivory in a carved box, which Cleito daughter of Aristocrates, Cikon's wife, dedicated ... A seal with a gold ring: Dexilla dedicated it ... To Artemis Brauronia, a punctured golden ornament with a golden chain, which Callion dedicated, weight two drachmas... a silver bowl which Aristola dedicated ... A gold ring which Dorcas who lives in Peiraeus dedicated to Artemis Brauronia ...<sup>15</sup>

Visual representations such as vases and grave monuments represent a rich source for information about the objects with which women surrounded themselves. Vases showing women in domestic spaces, such as scenes of the preparation of the bride, show them using objects connected with the toilette. Other scenes depicting the procession of the wedding party provide a partial inventory of objects that went with the bride to her new home.<sup>16</sup> Vase painting may even provide indications of the uses of certain kinds of containers for perfumes and cosmetics. Often the objects, such as the *pyxis*, a round box used for cosmetics, echo the form of the vase on which they are painted. Mirrors figure prominently in scenes of women's interior spaces, and many such mirrors have survived.<sup>17</sup> Jewelry boxes, often held out to the deceased matron by a female slave, play an important role on Athenian grave steles of the fourth century. These and other objects linked to marriage preparations can safely be called women's wealth.

The best source for jewelry and other precious items is grave goods, but here we encounter our biggest difficulty. Since the development of more sophisticated methods of osteological analysis, it is now generally possible to distinguish accurately male and female burials. But even when we know the gender of the human remains, it can be difficult to assign ownership to grave goods. In cases of multiple burials, mere proximity to a body is not always enough to determine ownership.<sup>18</sup> And even when there is proximity in an undisturbed burial, entrenched gender assumptions can lead to misinterpretations. Not long ago there occurred an incident that drives this point home. The press reported that an intact Etruscan burial had been found in Tarquinia. In it was a skeleton on a stone bed, with a javelin lying nearby. On the opposite bed were found the partially cremated remains of another body with a jewelry or pin box. It was assumed therefore that the body with the weapon was male, and it was identified as a prince because of its proximity to another tomb identified as belonging to a queen. The body with the jewelry box was assumed to be female. Sometime later it was announced, based on analysis of the bones, that the 'prince' was actually a 'princess', and the remains of the body with the box were male.<sup>19</sup> Was the woman a warrior princess, as some hastened to call her? Impossible to tell, just as it is impossible to say what the relevance of the box was to the deceased male lying across from her.

This points to an additional problem with grave goods: it is impossible to know the exact relationship of the objects with the body next to which they were buried. Objects buried with the deceased might well have belonged to them in life. They could also have been family heirlooms or objects chosen by the family of the dead person for their symbolic value and perhaps also to enhance familial prestige. In the case

<sup>15</sup> This list has been assembled from the following inscriptions: *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1388. 78-80, 82-83 and *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1400. 41-42, 46, 47. G, and translated by M. LEFKOWITZ – M. FANT, Baltimore 1992, 284.

<sup>16</sup> See J. OAKLEY – R. SINOS, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens*, Madison 1993, 31, and figs. 75-78, for discussion of a scene of procession with objects from the bride's trousseau on a *pyxis* by the Marley Painter (London 1920.12-21.1).

<sup>17</sup> The significance of bronze mirrors is discussed by M. LEE in her forthcoming article 'The Gendered Economics of Greek Bronze Mirrors. Reflections on Reciprocity and Feminine Agency'.

<sup>18</sup> A. STRÖMBERG addresses the problem of assigning gender to grave goods in *Male or Female? A Methodological Study of Grave Gifts as Sex-Indicators in Iron Age Burials from Athens*, Jonsered 1993.

<sup>19</sup> M. GASPERETTI, writing in the *Corriere della Sera*, September 22, 2013 refers to the skeleton of a warrior-prince. A corrected account can be found in R. LORENZI, 'Long Undisturbed. A Remarkable Etruscan Burial is Discovered in Famed Necropolis', *Archaeology* 67 (2014), 37-41.

of women (and men) who died before marriage, the inclusion of wedding vessels like the *loutrophoros* provides a symbolic compensation for the rites of passage of which they were deprived by an untimely death.<sup>20</sup> Here it is important to remember the different ways that gender can be assigned to objects, as discussed above. It may well be that grave goods often include a mix of items used by the deceased in life, together with others that relate to their status or the status of their families. These fulfill the categories of metonymic and symbolic identification which I have discussed elsewhere.<sup>21</sup>

In the context of these difficulties, it is gratifying to come across an object that actually does speak to us across several millennia, to tell us exactly who owned it. This is a loom weight, found in the colony

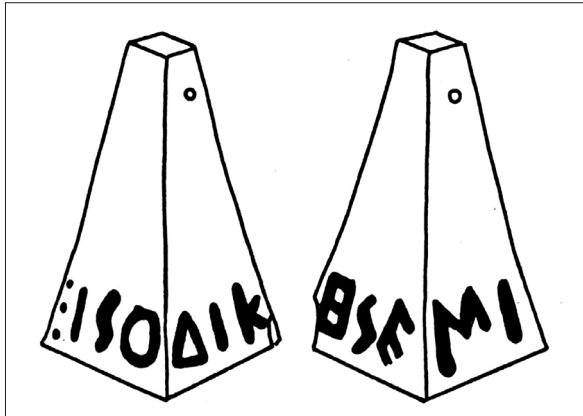


Fig. 1: Clay loomweight from Siris (NSc 1912, suppl. p. 61).

of Siris in Magna Graecia and dating to the mid-6<sup>th</sup> c. BCE (fig. 1).<sup>22</sup> This somewhat unprepossessing object comes right out and says: *Isodikēs emi* (“I belong to Isodike”). This is certainly not the only object from Greek antiquity that identifies itself as property of a woman, but it is among the few of which I am aware.<sup>23</sup> Given the modest nature of the object, it seems likely that the inscription indicates, rather than pride of possession, a desire to prevent the loom weight being accidentally carried off by another weaver. Like many of the female goods depicted in epic, the loom weight is related to textile production. Unlike those epic items,

however, the loom weight is, by itself, of little economic or symbolic value.

At the opposite end of the scale of value, but not quite reaching the magnificence of the Homeric or tragic objects, is an exceptionally ornate and pristine *epinetron* by the Eretria Painter, in the National Archaeological Museum in Athens.<sup>24</sup> This object, with its elaborately sculpted end-figure and elegant painted scenes along the sides, raises interesting questions that perhaps throw into question the dichotomy I have proposed here. This luxury item, which does not look to have ever seen a day’s work, was most likely a high-priced gift for a bride, its apparent function more symbolic than actual. The myths depicted on it are appropriate for a wedding gift, as they depict scenes from the marriages of Peleus and Thetis, Harmonia and Cadmos, and Alkestis and Admetos.<sup>25</sup> With its elaborate decoration, it has more in common with Helen’s silver wool basket than with a simple unglazed and unadorned *epinetron*, wholly functional but not elegant enough have been preserved in a grave.

<sup>20</sup> Demosthenes, *Against Leochares* (44.18 and 30) has been adduced to make this point, although it is unclear whether the *loutrophoros* he mentions as a grave-marker of an unmarried man is a statue of someone carrying water, or a vase of the type that modern scholars call a *loutrophoros*. See R. GARLAND, *The Greek Way of Death*, Ithaca 2001, 87.

<sup>21</sup> See above, note 3 for bibliography. STRÖMBERG, in *Male or female?*, notes that in general, prestige seems to weigh more heavily in the selection of grave goods than the gender of the deceased.

<sup>22</sup> The loom weight, which has apparently been lost, was first published by P. ORSI, *Notizie degli Scavi di Antichità* (1912) suppl. p. 61, fig. 63. Its date and the Ionic form of the letters are discussed by L.H. JEFFERY in ‘Comments on Some Archaic Greek Inscriptions’, *JHS* 59 (1949), 25-38, esp. 33 with a sketch reproduced as figure 9 (page 29). My thanks are owed to Irad Malkin, who called my attention to the existence of this object.

<sup>23</sup> Another possible example is a lead object from the Aphrodision at Merenda, interpreted as a loom weight, which appears to bear the name Lysilla or Lysima, discussed by A. GLAZEBROOK, ‘*Porneion*: Prostitution in Athenian Civic Space’, in A. GLAZEBROOK – M. HENRY (eds.), *Greek Prostitutes in the Ancient Mediterranean*, Madison 2011, 34-59. The reference is to page 50 and note 53. Given the location of the find, it may well have been a dedication. Loom weights were indeed dedicated in large numbers. See I.K. RAUBITSCHKE, *The Metal Objects (1952-1989)*, Isthmia VII, Princeton 1998, 111-12.

<sup>24</sup> NM 1629; *ARV*<sup>2</sup>, 1250.34, 1688.

<sup>25</sup> See J. BARRINGER, *Divine Escorts. Nereids in Archaic and Classical Greek Art*, Ann Arbor 1995, 93 with n. 100.

## Conclusion

In Greek epic and tragic texts, as I argued in my book, gifts that violate gender protocols signal trouble, revealing that marriage was a site of anxiety about women and exchange. Furthermore I related this both to concerns about self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*) arising from the fact that wives come from outside the oikos, and to the Hesiodic slander that women were not producers but only consumers of household wealth (*Theogony* 592-93).<sup>26</sup>

If we compare the situation in epic with what we might call ‘real life’, it is possible to make a few observations. A consideration of actual objects owned by women also unfolds largely in the context of marriage, but it points in a more benign direction. Marriage appears to represent a pivotal moment, in which not only a woman’s social status, but also her relationship to property, changed. In addition to the dowry, the woman brought her personal effects to her new home, and they were thereby thus redefined as her trousseau, her *himatia kai khrysia*. At least in a wealthy family, her store of personal possessions would have been enriched by wedding gifts intended for her use, like the ornate *epinetron* discussed above. These possessions remained under her control and were hers to keep if the marriage ended.

As we have seen, the symbolic division of male and female wealth does not always correspond perfectly with the facts of everyday life. The gendered protocols of exchange mark gold and other metal objects as male wealth, whose control by women usually signaled trouble. However consistently this notion holds true in myth, it did not prevent real women from owning gold jewelry, as is clear from the phrase *himatia kai khrysia*. No doubt women’s possession of heirlooms and gifts from family members was considered unremarkable. On the other hand, any gift to a woman from an extraneous man, whether or not it violated gender protocols, would be cause for alarm.

In one way, the more mundane objects discussed here are not unlike the mythic gifts, as many of them are items of dress and adornment, relating to the expectation – reinforced in the scenes of wedding preparation – that a wife was to make herself attractive. It is also worth noting that many of the objects we can assign to women are related to their roles as domestic producers, specifically producers of textiles, thus giving the lie to the ancient slander of the poet from Boeotia.

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<sup>26</sup> A similar attitude is found in Semonides 7. For misogyny in both these authors, see LYONS, *Dangerous Gifts*, esp. 38-47.

# τὰ χρυσία καὶ τὰ ἱμάτια: Women's 'Paraphernalia' in Marital Processions on Athenian Vases<sup>1</sup>

RENEE GONDEK

“Hera...never yet did desire for goddess or mortal woman so shed itself about me and overmaster the heart within my breast”.<sup>2</sup> Thus exclaims Zeus in Homer’s *Iliad*, ensnared by the visual and aromatic allure of his wife. The statement demonstrates the efficacy of the decorated woman and the power of articles of dress, for, upon bathing and perfuming her body, Hera is clothed in an embroidered robe and a many-tasseled girdle and is additionally decorated with gold brooches, earrings, and a glistening, white veil.<sup>3</sup> As if these physical accoutrements were not enough, the goddess requests Aphrodite’s ‘broidered *zone*’, a magical item containing the power of love and desire.<sup>4</sup>

Unlike with a man, a woman’s physical appearance was important both before *and* throughout her marriage. To this end, in addition to a dowry, a bride may have been furnished with the so-called ‘woman’s paraphernalia’, known in the textual sources simply as ‘jewelry and clothes’ (τὰ χρυσία καὶ τὰ ἱμάτια).<sup>5</sup> Indeed, these items were viewed as essential and possibly were included in representations of wedding processions from the mid-sixth to the first quarter of the fifth century BCE. Aside from the bride, groom, and identifiable gods (e.g., Hermes, Apollo, Dionysos), these processions illustrate as many as one to eight female attendants. Although most simply raise torches (objects that were both functional and symbolic), some female participants carry rectangular objects or containers. This paper investigates these containers. How

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<sup>1</sup> Abbreviations include: *ABV* (J.D. BEAZLEY, *Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters*, Oxford 1956); *ARV*<sup>2</sup> (J.D. BEAZLEY, *Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Oxford 1963); BAPD (Beazley Archive Pottery Database); *Christie* (Christie, Manson & Woods [sale catalogue]); Christie NY (Christie, Manson & Woods, New York [sale catalogue]); *CVA* (*Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum*); *LSJ* (Liddell – Scott – Jones Lexicon of Classical Greek); *Para.* (J.D. BEAZLEY, *Paralipomena*, Oxford 1971); Sotheby (Sotheby [sale catalogue]); *ThesCRA* (*Thesaurus cultus et rituum antiquorum*). Unless otherwise noted, all translations are from the Loeb Classical Library (Harvard University Press).

<sup>2</sup> Hom. *Il.* 14.315-16.

<sup>3</sup> According to S. Blundell “clothing... is more sexually alluring than nakedness, because in concealing the body it excites curiosity and a desire to remove the wrappings which shield the body from view”, S. BLUNDELL, ‘Clutching at Clothes’, in L. LLEWELLYN-JONES (ed.), *Women’s Dress in the Ancient Greek World*, London 2002, 143-69, in part. 143. For Hera’s preparations in Homer, see Hom. *Il.* 14.159-223.

<sup>4</sup> For Aphrodite’s ‘broidered *zone*’, see Hom. *Il.* 14.214-23. As we are told in the *Iliad*, the Graces weave ambrosial raiment for Aphrodite (Hom. *Il.* 5.338), and the *zone* (imbued with magical, seductive powers) could be made of this very cloth. For more on the role of the Graces and their connection to female dress, see B. WAGNER-HASEL, ‘The Graces and Colour Weaving’, in L. LLEWELLYN-JONES (ed.), *Women’s Dress in the Ancient Greek World*, London 2002, 17-32, in part. 19-20. For the term ‘*zone*’ (ζώνη), see S.D. OLSON, *The “Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite” and Related Texts. Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Berlin 2012, 220.

<sup>5</sup> On ‘woman’s paraphernalia’, see R. SEALEY, *Women and Law in Classical Greece*, Chapel Hill 1990, 26. For ancient sources and the phrase ‘jewelry and clothes’ (τὰ χρυσία καὶ τὰ ἱμάτια), see Eur. *Hipp.* 627-33; Dem. 41.27-28; Isae. 2.9, 8.8. While Solon proscribes three ἱμάτια to accompany women into marriage (Plut. *Vit. Sol.* 20), an attempt to align the specificity of this particular law with the visual evidence presented in this paper is futile. For a recent discussion on the nature of this law and the high value of clothing see B. WAGNER-HASEL, ‘*Tria Himatia. Vêtement et mariage en Grèce ancienne*’, in F. GHERCHANOC – V. HUET (eds.), *Vêtements antiques: s’habiller, se déshabiller dans les mondes anciens*, Paris 2012, 39-46.

are they depicted by vase-painters and what could they contain? Why are they associated with the brides and women? And, finally, how did these items contribute to the groom's overall estate?

### Wedding Processions and Nuptial Encumbrances

A typical black-figure wedding procession can be found on an *amphora* located in the Logie Collection at the University of Canterbury and attributed to the Painter of the Vatican Mourner (ca. 540-530 BCE) (**fig. 1**).<sup>6</sup> At the far left of the frame, the bride and groom ride in their four-horse chariot, and, at the far right, Hermes strides forward, turning his head back towards the wedded pair. In the center of the composition are two female attendants balancing slim, rectangular objects atop their heads. These rectangular objects display incision lines through the center with additional white dots alongside and added red color along the upper half.

When cataloguing this vessel in his *Paralipomena*, Sir John Beazley classified these items as 'folded garments'.<sup>7</sup> In 1971, A.D. Trendall maintained this identification and included a citation to Beazley in his Logie Collection catalogue.<sup>8</sup> Upon examining the details of these particular objects, one can understand how scholarship continually regarded them as 'folded garments'. The added ornamentation of horizontal lines and dots and the use of variegated coloring mimics the patterning found upon the dresses of the women in this particular scene. Such is true for numerous other later sixth century wedding processions featuring these objects, like, for example, a black-figure *hydria* attributed to the Antimenes Painter, a black-figure trefoil *oinochoe* akin to the Class of Würzburg 346, and an unattributed black-figure column *krater*.<sup>9</sup> Additional evidence that favors this interpretation includes depictions of specific cults where garments are considered appropriate offerings. For example, on a black-figure Panathenaic *amphora* attributed to the Princeton Painter (ca. 550-540 BCE), a woman approaches a cult statue of Athena carrying a *stephane* and balancing a rectangular object on her head.<sup>10</sup> While this item was initially interpreted as a "peplos, neatly folded over a board", a recent assessment of this vase has concluded that this type of object cannot be made of fabric.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, when viewing images positively identified as folded garments, like those on the Amasis Painter's black-figure *lekythos* or even those on the much later red-figure *chous* attributed to the Meidias Painter, one can easily see that their resemblance to our thin, rectangular feature is tenuous.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>6</sup> On the Painter of the Vatican Mourner, see *ABV* 140.

<sup>7</sup> *Para.* 58.2bis.

<sup>8</sup> A.D. TRENDALL, *Greek Vases in the Logie Collection*, Christchurch 1971, 59.

<sup>9</sup> For the *hydria*, see New York, Market (Christie NY 12.6.2002, 19, no. 17; BAPD 24474). For the *oinochoe*, see Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania 4838 (*ABV* 420; BAPD 303197). For the *krater*, see London, Market [ex Ascona, Rosenbaum] (Christie 18.10.2005, 104-5, no. 119; BAPD 20578).

<sup>10</sup> For the Panathenaic *amphora*, see New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art 53.11.1 (*CVA*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 4, 12-13, pl. 13.3). On the Princeton Painter, see *ABV* 297-301; M.B. MOORE, 'The Princeton Painter in New York', *MMJ* 42 (2007), 21-56.

<sup>11</sup> For "peplos, neatly folded over a board", see *CVA*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 4, 12. It was not until Moore's article on the Princeton Painter that the identification of this object was questioned and judged to be a box (MOORE, 'Princeton Painter', 29).

<sup>12</sup> For the Amasis Painter *lekythos*, see New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art 31.11.10 (B. BURKE, *From Minos to Midas: Ancient Cloth Production in the Aegean and in Anatolia*, Oxford 2010, 106, fig. 52). For the Meidias Painter *chous*, see New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art 75.2.11 (L. BURN, *The Meidias Painter*, Oxford 1987, pl. 52.B). On the Amasis Painter, see *ABV* 150-58; D. VON BOTHMER (ed.), *The Amasis Painter and His World: Vase-Painting in Sixth Century B.C. Athens*, Malibu 1985. On the Meidias Painter, see *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1312-14; BURN, *Meidias*.

Rather than 'folded garments', these articles are most likely representations of flat baskets or containers, and several of the illustrations insinuate that the object is heavy or awkward since they require doughnut-shaped cushions.<sup>13</sup> Ancient references to and depictions of various containers have been investigated by scholars for decades, and there exist numerous types – from those that are thin and rectangular (**fig. 1**), to ones that are circular in diameter; from those that appear like large trunks, to ones that are minute in scale and display hinged lids.<sup>14</sup> Although containers are featured most often in domestic contexts, specifically the domestic adornment representations of the late fifth century, they are also found in numerous black- and red-figure wedding processions.<sup>15</sup>



**Fig. 1:** Marriage procession with chariot, Hermes and female attendants. Attic Black-figure Amphora, type B. Attributed to the Painter of the Vatican Mourner. 540 BCE. The James Logie Memorial Collection and the University of Canterbury, Christchurch (NZ), inv. no. 43/57.

<sup>13</sup> For examples of containers and doughnut-shaped cushions in wedding processions, see (1) Fiesole, A. Costantini (*CVA*, Fiesole, Collezione Costantini 1, pls. 20.2-4, 23.1-2; BAPD 6811); (2) Ascona, Market [ex Rosenbaum, 1967] (Christie 5.7.1995, 80-81, no. 173; BAPD 44026); (3) Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 3799 (*CVA*, Firenze, Regio Museo Archeologico 5, pls. 6.3-4, 8.1-2; BAPD 8094). On the doughnut-shaped cushions, see MOORE, 'Princeton Painter', 50, n. 49.

<sup>14</sup> For discussions about containers in the ancient Greek world, see D.A. AMYX – W.K. PRITCHETT, 'The Attic Stelai: Part III', *Hesperia* 27, 4 (1958), 255-310, in part. 268-71; I. KRAUSKOPF, 'Eine attisch schwarzfigurige Hydria in Heidelberg', *AA* (1977), 13-37, in part. 16-28; E. BRÜMMER, 'Griechische Truhenbehälter', *JDAI* 100 (1985), 1-168, in part. 94-107, 134-51; F. LISSARRAGUE, 'Women, Boxes, Containers: Some Signs and Metaphors', in E. REEDER (ed.), *Pandora: Women in Classical Greece*, Baltimore 1995, 91-101; *ThesCRA* V, 2b GR, 262-86; MOORE, 'Princeton Painter', in part. 29, 32-33.

<sup>15</sup> In addition to the vases listed in n. 9 and 13, the following should be appended to Krauskopf's catalogue of marital processions with rectangular containers. While some are fragmentary, they are all, without a doubt, wedding scenes. For black-figure, see (1) Los Angeles, County Museum M77.48.1 [ex Basel Market, M.M.] (H. LAXANDER, *Individuum und Gemeinschaft im Fest*, Basel 2000, pl. 31.1; BAPD 350444); (2) Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria 1729.4 (*Para.* 58.4 bis; LAXANDER, *Fest*, pl. 35.1-2; BAPD 350445); (3) New York, Fromboluki [ex San Simeon (CA), Hearst] (*ABV* 264; BAPD 302298); (4) Syracuse, Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi 50819 (*ABV* 328.4; F. ZISA, *Ceramica Ateniese a figure nere del Museo Archeologico Regionale "Paolo Orsi" di Siracusa*, Turin 2007, 19, 31-32, no. 5; BAPD 301761); (5) St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum B74.144 (T.J. SMITH, 'Black-Figure on the Black Sea: Art and Visual Culture at Berezan', in S. SOLOVYOV (ed.), *Archaic Greek Culture. History, Archaeology, Art and Museology* (Proceedings of the International Round-Table Conference, St-Petersburg June 2005), Oxford 2010, 75-88, in part. 87, fig. 22; BAPD 9023822); (6) St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum ST34 (BAPD 26146); (7) Tarquinia, Museo Nazionale Tarquiniese RC968 (C. TRONCHETTI, *Ceramica attica a figure nere*, Rome 1983, pl. 30; BAPD 8226); (8) Athens, Acropolis Museum 1957 Aa 2560 (Ch. PAPADOPOULOU-KANELLOPOULOU, *Iero tēs Nymphēs melanomorphes loutrophoroi*, Athens 1997, 131, no. 289); (9) Athens, Acropolis Museum 1957 Aa 307 (PAPADOPOULOU-KANELLOPOULOU, *Loutrophoroi*, 186, no. 454); (10) Athens, Acropolis Museum 1959 Na K931 (PAPADOPOULOU-KANELLOPOULOU, *Loutrophoroi*, 195, no. 476a); (11) Athens, Acropolis Museum 1957 Aa 197 (PAPADOPOULOU-KANELLOPOULOU, *Loutrophoroi*, 195, no. 477). For red-figure, see (1) Athens, Acropolis Museum NA57 Aa 1100 (**fig. 3**); (2) Athens, Acropolis Museum NA57 Aa 798.



**Fig. 2:** Nuptial adornment scene with erotes and ritual containers. Attic Red-figure Pyxis lid. 390 BCE. © Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, inv. no. GR.10.1923.

Although the contents of these containers only have thus far been surmised, details from later adornment compositions provide visual proof that they could encase clothing.<sup>16</sup> A *pyxis* lid dating to around 390 BCE (**fig. 2**) depicts numerous women assembling, and the presence of *erotes* and a marital vessel (*lebes gamikos*) aid in the interpretation of the image as nuptial in nature. To the left of the *lebes* bearer, one of the figures pulls out a long piece of fabric from an opened container. Similarly, on a *lekanis* lid in St. Petersburg (ca. 360-350 BCE), women are shown wearing patterned garments and holding mirrors and jewelry.<sup>17</sup> One segment displays two beautifully adorned women assisting one another in their preparations. As one woman sits holding a rectangular container with the lid tilted upwards, her female companion delicately lifts out a piece of fabric. Since vases sometimes display clothing as careless heaps thrown into trunks or placed on top of furniture (e.g., chairs), our thin, rectangular containers used for clothing storage suggests that there may have been an attempt to separate and protect *significant* garments. Such protection may be necessary for more specialized or richly decorated items, like those intended for nuptial ceremonies or as divine gifts.

The first instance of these rectangular containers in images of wedding processions dates to around 550 BCE and, in black-figure, examples of these objects can be found in depictions until the discontinuation of the technique. While some painters, like Group E or the Group of London B174, enjoyed illustrating

<sup>16</sup> On these containers as trousseaus, see J.H. OAKLEY – R. SINOS, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens*, Madison 1993, 28-29). On the supposition that these wedding containers held clothing, see KRAUSKOPF, 'Hydria', 24.

<sup>17</sup> For the *lekanis* in St. Petersburg, see St. Petersburg, Hermitage Museum 1791 (H. FOLEY, 'Mothers and Daughters', in J.H. OAKLEY – J. NEILS (eds.), *Coming of Age in Ancient Greece*, Hannover 2003, 112-37, in part. 127, fig. 18; BAPD 230433).

these objects and included them in all of their marital processions, others, like the Antimenes Painter, only occasionally incorporated them.<sup>18</sup> This information suggests that these containers were auxiliary items and, despite the consistency of these black-figure compositions, painters were somewhat capricious with regards to the details of each scene.

Even though it seems depictions of containers are far rarer in red-figure processions, their numbers are proportionate to the significantly smaller body of evidence. While there are close to 200 black-figure wedding processions, there are only a little over 50 known examples in red-figure. With a change in technique came a change in tone. Overall, the mood of these scenes is far more intimate, and the bridal couple walks alongside the other participants.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, although continuing the black-figure tradition of depicting containers for personal effects, these objects differ in their appearance (**fig. 3**).<sup>20</sup> Instead of a thin, rectangular form, they appear wider and are sometimes even square with patterning that mimics wicker-work. In addition to these objects, red-figure processions also include containers like caskets and perfume vessels, items that are relevant to the current discussion on 'women's paraphernalia'.

At least three red-figure wedding processions display female attendants carrying items known as caskets.<sup>21</sup> The casket is a rectangular container with feet, a hinged lid, and bosses. Although it could be used for items of clothing, money, or papyri, it appears most often in conjunction with jewelry.<sup>22</sup> For example, a red-figure *hydria*, dating to around 450 BCE, depicts a woman in the center pulling a pendant necklace from a casket.<sup>23</sup> Likewise, in



**Fig. 3:** Marriage procession on foot with female attendants. Attic Red-figure Loutrophoros fragments from the Sanctuary of the Nymphae. Attributed to the style of the Meidias Painter. 430-420 BCE. Acropolis Museum, Athens, inv. no. NA 1957 Aa 1100.

<sup>18</sup> On Group E, see J.D. BEAZLEY, 'Groups of Mid-Sixth-Century Black-Figure', *BSA* 32 (1931/32), 1-22, in part. 3-4; *ABV* 132. On the Group of London B174, see *ABV* 141. On the Antimenes Painter, see *ABV* 266-82; J. BUROW, *Der Antimenesmaler*, Mainz 1989.

<sup>19</sup> Red-figure processions did not divorce themselves entirely from their black-figure counterparts, and elements from the earlier black-figure scenes often make an appearance (e.g., divine figures, attendants).

<sup>20</sup> KRAUSKOPF, 'Hydria', 24.

<sup>21</sup> For red-figure wedding processions showing caskets (all depicted on *loutrophoroi*), see (1) Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 03.802 (E. REEDER, *Pandora: Women in Classical Greece*, Baltimore 1995, 165-67, no. 24; BAPD 15815); (2) Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1966.888 (REEDER, *Pandora*, 168-69, no. 25; R. MÖSCH-KLINGELE, *Braut ohne Bräutigam. Schwarz- und rotfigurige Loutrophoren als Spiegel gesellschaftlicher Veränderungen in Athen*, Mainz 2010, 65, figs. 25A-B; BAPD 34); (3) Athens, Acropolis Museum 1957Aa1148.

<sup>22</sup> The casket was a specific container that could have held clothing, money, papyri, and/or precious objects, like jewelry, BRÜMMER, 'Truhenbehälter', 98; R. PROSKYNIPOULOU, 'Small Casket', in N. KALTSAS – A. SHAPIRO (eds.), *Worshipping Women: Ritual and Reality in Classical Athens*, New York 2008, 332. For an example of a fifth century BCE bronze casket (Athens, National Museum, X 8002), see PROSKYNIPOULOU, 'Casket', 332, no. 150.

<sup>23</sup> For an example of a woman retrieving a necklace from a casket, see London, Market (Sotheby 7.7.1994, 17-19, no. 337; BAPD 20342).



sculpture, the Classical stele of Hegeso (ca. 410-400 BCE) shows a matron inspecting a single earring.<sup>24</sup> Presumably, she has just retrieved it from the casket held by the attendant to her left.

For perfume vessels, only two shapes are discernible: the *alabastron* and the *exaleiptra*.<sup>25</sup> The *alabastron* has a narrow neck, vertically sagging body, and round bottom. Probably having Egyptian origins, it contained perfumed oil and was primarily used by women at their bath or as votive offerings. The *exaleiptron* appears like a toy top positioned on a tapering base. The mouth of the vessel is usually as wide as the foot and it has a knobbed lid. Although its contents are not known absolutely, it is thought to have held scented water for personal or ritual use.<sup>26</sup>

### ‘Women’s Paraphernalia’ and Bridal Adornment

While it is clear containers sometimes accompanied marital pomp, it has not been ascertained yet to whom the objects belonged. It is not difficult to imagine, however, that the bride would be shown taking special garments, jewelry, and perfume to her new home. Indeed, the importance of a woman’s appearance and her intimate relationship with items of dress and ornamentation is attested to in the ancient literary and visual realm. This connection is even more pronounced when the woman is either discussed or illustrated as a bride.<sup>27</sup>

The earliest written account relaying this association is Hesiod’s tale of the creation of the first woman, Pandora. Although Pandora is referenced separately in *Works and Days* and the *Theogony*, both accounts highlight the overall physical decoration of her body.<sup>28</sup> Not only does she wear silvery raiment, but she is also bedecked with a crown wrought by Hephaistos and adorned with golden necklaces. Shining splendidly in her apparel, Pandora represents the quintessential bride.<sup>29</sup> At the same time, however, her dazzling appearance was necessary in order to trick and punish both Epimetheus and mankind.<sup>30</sup> Indeed, in the *Theogony*, she is described as a netlike trap – a “sheer irresistible snare for men”.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>24</sup> For the stele of Hegeso, see Athens, National Archaeological Museum, 3624.

<sup>25</sup> For red-figure wedding processions showing *alabastra* (all depicted on *loutrophoroi*), see (1) New York, Brooklyn Museum 34.279 (ARV<sup>2</sup> 1225.3; BAPD 216676); (2) Athens, Acropolis Museum 1957Aa1879. For red-figure wedding processions showing *exaleiptra* (all depicted on *loutrophoroi*), see (1) Berlin, Antikensammlung F2373 (R.F. SUTTON, ‘Nuptial Eros: The Visual Discourse of Marriage in Classical Athens’, *JWAG* 55/56 (1997/98), 27-48, in part. 34, fig. 10; BAPD 220570); see also Boston *MFA* 03.802 in n. 21.

<sup>26</sup> An *exaleiptron* (pl. *exaleiptra*; ἐξάλειπτρον), also known as a *kothon* or *plemochoe*, is an ‘unguent-box’ (*LSJ*). The vessel has a broad, oval body, either a low or high foot, and it is often lidded. Used to hold perfumed oil, the shape has been found in both domestic adornment and funerary contexts (B. SPARKES, *Greek Pottery: An Introduction*, Manchester 1991, 81; A.J. CLARK – M. ELSTON – M.L. HART, *Understanding Greek Vases: A Guide to Terms, Styles, and Techniques*, Malibu 2002, 89-90). See recently D. RODRIGUEZ-PÉREZ, ‘Evocative Objects. The Attic Black-Glazed *Plemochoai* (*Exaleiptra*) between Archaeology and Vase Painting’, in J. BOARDMAN – A. PARKIN – S. WAITE (eds.), *On the fascination of objects: Greek and Etruscan art in the Shefton Collection*, Philadelphia 2015, 17-29.

<sup>27</sup> For more examples of women, especially brides, associated with clothing and jewelry, see Ar. *Lys.* 42-48; Dem. 41.27-28; Isae. 2.9, 8.8. In art, Greek men were often depicted as nude, and, in literature, they were disinterested in their own dress. Conversely, in both visual and literary modes of representation, garments and items of adornment were quintessentially feminine in character (BLUNDELL, *Clutching Clothes*, 145-46).

<sup>28</sup> Hes. *Op.* 73-77; Hes. *Theog.* 574-84.

<sup>29</sup> For the identification of Pandora as a bride, see OAKLEY and SINOS, *Wedding*, 19; F. ZEITLIN, ‘The Economics of Hesiod’s Pandora’, in E.D. REEDER (ed.), *Pandora. Women in Classical Greece*, Baltimore 1995, 49-56, in part. 49; R. RESINSKI, *Cosmos and Cosmetics. Constituting an Adorned Female Body in Ancient Greek Literature*, PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles 1998, 29; J.S. CLAY, *Hesiod’s Cosmos*, Cambridge 2003, 102, 120.

<sup>30</sup> As described by one scholar: “... Pandora herself is the product of divine *techne*, made, not born, of earth, resembling both immortal goddesses and a respectable maiden, yet, at the same time a seductive object of painful desire – and dressed to kill” (CLAY, *Cosmos*, 119).

<sup>31</sup> Hes. *Theog.* 588-89. See also: ZEITLIN, ‘Economics’, 49-50; J.L. SEBESTA, ‘Visions of Gleaming Textiles and a Clay Core. Textiles, Greek Women, and Pandora’, in L. LLEWELLYN-JONES (ed.), *Women’s Dress in the Ancient Greek World*, London 2002, 125-42,

Just as Pandora is dressed and presented as a bride, so too is Aphrodite in the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 5 (*HH* 5).<sup>32</sup> After being adorned by the Hours, the goddess approaches Anchises, a beautiful youth, who is playing his lyre in a grassy pasture. Upon taking in her form, Anchises marvels at her godly appearance since “she was dressed in a robe brighter than fire-light, and she wore curved ‘twists’ and ‘flower-buds’ vibrant with color, and lovely necklaces, beautiful, golden and elaborately worked, were around her soft neck, and something like moon-light shown about her soft breasts”.<sup>33</sup> After explaining her genealogy, Aphrodite identifies herself as an unwed maiden and, per the instructions of Hermes and the deathless ones, she is to be his bride.<sup>34</sup> In the goddess’ speech, she also requests that her parents be contacted so that they will send the appropriate wedding gifts: ‘gold in plenty’ and ‘woven stuffs’.<sup>35</sup> Anchises, dubious of her mortal status but overwhelmed by the power of her appearance, proclaims that if she is indeed his intended betrothed, they should lay with one another immediately.<sup>36</sup>

Just like Homer and Hesiod, later authors also note the close connection between women and their decoration. In fact, objects of embellishment and fine clothing become so intertwined with the female identity that some men feel obligated to comply with this tradition and provide these ‘necessities’.<sup>37</sup> In Aristophanes’ *Plutos*, for example, the character Chremylos imagines a world without Poverty. According to Poverty, however, his absence would be disastrous since the world would lack the necessary craftsmen to create everyday commodities. Furthermore, Poverty elaborates that grooms would no longer be able to give their new brides perfume and “rich embroidered cloaks dyed with dazzling colors”.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, Euripides’ *Hippolytos* describes in an exaggerated manner the fiscal ruin that is sure to accompany a new bride. He says that “...[a] husband takes pleasure in adding finery to the statue, lovely finery to a statue most worthless, and tricks her out with garments, wretch that he is, destroying by degrees the wealth of his house”.<sup>39</sup> Of course, one could adopt the approach of Ischomachos in Xenophon’s *Oikonomikos*. Therein, the character earnestly instructs his new bride to abandon her stereotypical feminine disposition and restrain from using deceptive

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in part. 136. The association of Pandora with a dangerous cloth-like equivalent is truly suitable—not only are women and textiles connected, but also Pandora’s comparison to a hunting implement aptly relays her dangerous nature (SEBESTA, ‘Textiles’, 136).

<sup>32</sup> For the appearance of Aphrodite in the hymn, see V.L. KENAN, ‘Aphrodite. The Goddess of Appearances’, in A.C. SMITH – S. PICKUP (eds.), *Brill’s Companion to Aphrodite*, Leiden 2010, 29-49, in part. 35-42.

<sup>33</sup> *HH* 5, 86-90 (translation by OLSON, ‘Aphrodite’). The ‘twists’ and ‘flower-buds’ are thought to have referred to hair-ornaments. For a discussion, see OLSON, ‘Aphrodite’, 185-86.

<sup>34</sup> J.S. CLAY, *The Politics of Olympus. Form and Meaning in the Major Homeric Hymns*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Princeton 2006, 177. While relaying the circumstances that brought her before Anchises, Aphrodite describes her dances for Artemis, and Clay notes that this act concretely identifies her as both a young, marriageable maiden and one with a proper upbringing (*HH* 5, 118; CLAY, *Politics*, 176).

<sup>35</sup> *HH* 5, 139-40. See also: CLAY, *Politics*, 177. For Homeric wedding gifts of clothes, see B. WAGNER-HASEL, ‘Marriage Gifts in Ancient Greece’, in M.L. SATLOW (ed.), *The Gift in Antiquity*, Hoboken 2013, 158-72, in part. 164-66. Krauskopf believes that these containers cannot be gifts since these objects are often found in other types of scenes (e.g., the Ransom of Hector, genre compositions), KRAUSKOPF, ‘Hydria’, 22, 24.

<sup>36</sup> Aphrodite is led to the tent of Anchises with her “fine eyes cast down”, a description clearly illustrated in many red-figure wedding processions, and Clay notes that the gesture could be more than an indication of modesty (*HH* 5, 156). Since her eyes sparkle, her downcast head was a way to conceal her divinity (CLAY, *Politics*, 179, n. 92); just like Pandora, Aphrodite successfully deceives her intended target. Interestingly, as if the audience was not aware already of Aphrodite’s magnificent garb, a catalogue of the objects decorating her body appears as each item is removed in Anchises’ tent (*HH* 5, 163-65).

<sup>37</sup> For female identity and its connection to jewelry see B. COHEN, ‘Les bijoux et la construction de l’identité féminine dans l’ancienne Athènes’, in F. GHERCHANOC – V. HUET (eds.), *Vêtements antiques. S’habiller, se déshabiller dans les mondes anciens*, Paris 2012, 149-64.

<sup>38</sup> *Ar. Plut.* 530.

<sup>39</sup> *Eur. Hipp.* 627-33. Aside from being described as an ornamental ‘statue’ (ἀγάλματι), the bride is also (unfairly) regarded as a ‘creature of ruin’. This negative assessment, however, cannot be regarded as wholly factual since women were caretakers of both the children and the home. For a discussion of Pandora as a statue in the *Theogony*, see CLAY, *Cosmos*, 122-23.

commodities like cosmetics and items of adornment.<sup>40</sup> In this manner, Ischomachos is essentially having his wife embrace a more masculine constitution, and, for the benefit of their household, ‘transcend’ a woman’s ordinary nature (i.e., unproductive and deceptive).<sup>41</sup>

In the fifth and fourth centuries, vase-paintings abounded with domestic adornment illustrations.<sup>42</sup> In brief, many of these scenes have strong visual connections to bridal preparation, and they are often found on vessel shapes associated with both weddings and women. For example, on a red-figure *lebes gamikos* attributed to the Painter of Louvre MN558 (ca. 410 BCE), an active nuptial illustration is visible.<sup>43</sup> At the center, the bride sits wearing a diaphanous *chiton* and jewelry in added clay, and Eros hovers above offering another piece of jewelry.<sup>44</sup> On each side of the bride are three female attendants carrying objects that either further decorate her body (i.e., sashes, necklaces, and perfume) or containers for items of corporeal ornamentation. As if all of these objects in the main composition were not enough, winged female attendants fly beneath the handles and carry sashes and an *alabastron*.

Like the bride and her attendants on the *lebes gamikos* just discussed, women on these vases are often richly adorned and the focus of the illustration is the further enhancement of the female form. Interestingly, even though the rendering of adornment images appears rather schematic starting in the late fifth century (fig. 2), they become so prevalent that one has no trouble recognizing the women’s formulaic action. The imagery, therefore, seems to be both a product of the already established connection between women and their dress, and, at the same time, propaganda that ensures the continuance of the stereotype. When examining these scenes further, containers of the kind found in wedding procession are extremely prominent. As such, these depictions contribute to our understanding of *both* the function of the containers *and* their connections to women and brides in particular.

### Joining the Estate

If we are to believe Euripides’ exaggerated account, the wife is a consumer and destroys her husband’s wealth. This certainly does not accord well with other literary sources since verbal contracts for marriage betrothals often indicated the amount allotted for the bride’s dowry or *proix* (προίξ).<sup>45</sup> In the *Dyskolos*, for example, the betrothal statement is as follows: “I betroth, for the bearing of legitimate children, my daughter, young man, to you, and as a dowry I give, in addition to her, three talents”.<sup>46</sup> Once the couple was wed, the dowry would have contributed to and merged with the groom’s assets, theoretically allowing for the bride

<sup>40</sup> From the writing of Hesiod to Xenophon, women and their objects of adornment are closely aligned with deception, CLAY, *Cosmos*, 121-23; A. GLAZEBROOK, ‘Cosmetics and *Sôphrosunê*. Ischomachos’ Wife in Xenophon’s *Oikonomikos*’, *CW* 102.3 (2009), 233-48. For a discussion on the (dis)use of cosmetics and adornment in Xenophon, see GLAZEBROOK, ‘*Sôphrosunê*’.

<sup>41</sup> GLAZEBROOK, ‘*Sôphrosunê*’, 243, 248.

<sup>42</sup> For more on domestic adornment illustrations, see S. BLUNDELL – N. RABINOWITZ, ‘Women’s Bonds, Women’s Pots: Adornment Scenes in Attic Vase-Painting’, *Phoenix* 62, 1 (2008), 115-44.

<sup>43</sup> For the *lebes gamikos*, see Athens, National Museum 1658; REEDER, *Pandora*, 231-33, no. 58; BAPD 220542. On the Painter of Louvre MN558, see *ARV*<sup>2</sup> 1320.1-3.

<sup>44</sup> For discussions on added clay, color, and gilding see B. COHEN, ‘Added Clay and Gilding in Athenian Vase-painting’, in B. COHEN (ed.), *The Colors of Clay. Special Techniques in Athenian Vases*, Malibu 2006, 106-48; A. LEZZI-HAFER, ‘Clay, Gold, and Craft. Special Techniques in Three Vases by the Eretria Painter and Their Apotheosis in Xenophantos’, in K. LAPATIN (ed.), *Special Techniques in Athenian Vases*, Malibu 2008, 173-86.

<sup>45</sup> A.R.W. HARRISON, *The Law of Athens*, Oxford 1968, 52-54; R. JUST, *Women in Athenian Law and Life*, London 1989, 48; SEALEY, *Women/Law*, 26. The definition of *proix* (προίξ) in *LSJ* is: ‘gift’, ‘present’, and, after Homer, ‘marriage-portion’ or ‘dowry’. See also: *Lys.* 19.9; *Andoc.* 4.14; *Pl. Leg.* 774c; *Dem.* 47 [Evergus and Mnesibulus] 57.

<sup>46</sup> *Men. Dys.* 842-43.

to join her new home without being a financial burden.<sup>47</sup> Although the dowry could contain valued goods instead of money, the 'woman's paraphernalia' is thought to be distinct from the dowry since it was both intended for the bride's daily maintenance and (theoretically) freely accessible.<sup>48</sup> Some scholars maintain that visually it is impossible to distinguish wedding dowries from the woman's paraphernalia.<sup>49</sup> The abundance of these containers in adornment compositions, however, strongly suggests that they enclosed contents of a feminine *and* personal nature. Their appearance in nuptial processions, then, conveyed *always* by women, correlates to both female adornment and physical maintenance.

If the bride was equipped with extra jewels and garments, not only would she have been less of a financial burden, but also these items would have only increased the overall value of the groom's household.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, when discussing estates and dowries, both Isaeos and Demosthenes include jewelry and garments. In one of Isaeos' orations, he simply states that, in addition to a dowry, clothing and jewelry are provided.<sup>51</sup> Demosthenes' speech against Spudias, goes further and monetizes these objects. He says that "...the jewelry and the apparel, to the value of a thousand drachmae, were reckoned in with the forty minae dowry".<sup>52</sup> Such literary evidence confirms that the personal effects of a woman (i.e., her jewelry and clothes) were important enough (intrinsically) to be acknowledged alongside the dowry.

## Conclusion

As S. Blundell aptly states: "A woman who is adorned is a woman who is to be looked at".<sup>53</sup> Attesting to the importance of a woman's dress and appearance, black- and red-figure wedding processions repeatedly illustrate bridal accoutrement. As demonstrated by the visual evidence, these objects include containers for special garments, vessels filled with perfume, and/or caskets of jewels. While the containers in black-figure scenes remain roughly homogenous, those in red-figure display more variety and their introduction coincides with the advent and burgeoning popularity of contemporary nuptial adornment compositions. The prevalence of these fifth century adornment scenes indicates that vase-painters were in accord with ancient authors regarding the intimate connection between women and their dress, an affiliation that appears to be intensified when women are brides or are preparing for their wedding day. The choice, then, to depict containers that conceal special articles of clothing and adornment in numerous wedding processions acts as a visual display of the bride's material wealth and the future assets of the groom's estate.

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<sup>47</sup> HARRISON, *Law*, 52-54, 236; JUST, *Law/Life*, 29, 72-75; SEALEY, *Women/Law*, 26; N. DEMAND, *Birth, Death, and Motherhood in Classical Greece*, Baltimore 1994, 12; W. INGALLS, 'Demography and Dowries. Perspectives on Female Infanticide in Classical Greece', *Phoenix* 56, 3 (2002), 246-54, in part. 250.

<sup>48</sup> SEALEY, *Women/Law*, 26.

<sup>49</sup> LAXANDER, *Fest*, 63-64.

<sup>50</sup> LAXANDER, *Fest*, 64.

<sup>51</sup> Isae. 8.8.

<sup>52</sup> Dem. 41.27-28.

<sup>53</sup> S. BLUNDELL, 'Scenes from a Marriage: Viewing the Imagery on a Lebes Gamikos', in S. KEAY – S. MOSER (eds.), *Greek Art in View*, Oxford 2004, 39-53, in part. 43.



## **II**

### **DOWRY AND INHERITANCE: LEGISLATING WOMEN'S PROPERTY**



# “She was treated abominably, gentlemen” Women in the Athenian Inheritance System<sup>1</sup>

BRENDA GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS

## Introduction: Athenian Women as ‘Heiresses’?

In classical Athens, as in all patrilineal societies ancient or modern, the inheritance system centred on the transmission of property from father to son. When a male Athenian citizen died, any legitimate sons who survived him had an absolute claim to his estate, which was divided equally among them. A man who had no sons could effectively choose his own heir by adopting a son, either in his lifetime or in a will to come into effect after his death; and if he left no sons, natural or adopted, it was even possible for his surviving kin to arrange a ‘posthumous adoption’, designating an heir from within the family who would take over the property of the dead man and continue his line of descent.

Athenian inheritance law did not completely exclude women, but the principle of male precedence meant that a woman could not inherit unless she was more closely related to the deceased than any of his surviving male relatives. When the dead man’s only surviving offspring was a daughter, she was known as an *epiklēros* (literally meaning ‘along with the property’ and commonly, but inaccurately, translated as ‘heir-ess’) and her father’s next of kin could claim her in marriage, along with her paternal estate. But Athenian women could not legally own or dispose of their own property, so the estate ‘inherited’ by the *epiklēros* would be managed by her husband until it passed to the son or sons of the marriage when they came of age. And a woman who had a living brother or brothers could expect no share in their father’s estate apart from the dowry she was given on marriage. Some modern scholars, such as Lin Foxhall and Cheryl Cox, have described the Athenian dowry as ‘a woman’s patrimonial inheritance’,<sup>2</sup> but that statement needs some qualification if it is not to be misleading. First of all, as both Foxhall and Cox concede, the value of a dowry was unlikely to be as much as a man’s share of his father’s estate. Secondly, and more importantly, there was no legally enforceable right to receive a dowry at all, whereas a legitimate son’s right to inherit was enshrined in law. Most importantly of all, although a woman could expect to benefit from her dowry, it did not actually

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<sup>1</sup> An earlier version of this paper was given, under the title ‘Women and Inheritance in Ancient Greece. Heiresses or Objects for Disposal?’ at the annual conference of the Classical Association of Canada, Halifax, Nova Scotia, May 2011.

<sup>2</sup> L. FOXHALL, ‘Household, Gender and Property in Classical Athens’, *CQ* 39 (1989), 22-44, particularly 32: “In fact, dowries served as a woman’s patrimonial inheritance, received at marriage; a function which has been quite extraordinarily unrecognised even in recent studies. Girls’ dowries are the equivalent of (though not usually equal in value to) what their brothers receive as inheritance on their father’s death”. Cf. C.A. COX, *Household Interests. Property, Marriage Strategies, and Family Dynamics in Ancient Athens*, Princeton 1998, 117: “... the Athenian *oikos*, which was always concerned with the devolution of property, practised an extreme form of male inheritance by excluding daughters from any share besides the dowry. Brothers shared equally in their paternal estate, while daughters were given a dowry as a pre-mortem inheritance. The dowry, consisting of cash or real estate and movable items valued in cash, was meant to take care of a woman’s needs in her marital *oikos* and to consolidate the ties between her children and her natal *oikos*. Apart from this, a woman had no further material claim on the paternal estate, if she had brothers who themselves had sons. Furthermore, the daughter’s dotal wealth never seems to have been equal to the wealth inherited by any one brother”.



belong to her in any meaningful sense: it was given, with her, to her husband, and could be recovered by her father's family if her marriage ended by death or divorce.<sup>3</sup>

Most of our information about the Athenian inheritance system comes from speeches delivered in court in disputed cases, and in particular from eleven speeches written by Isaios, a fourth century logographer who apparently specialized in inheritance law. Some of these cases involve female claimants, but the woman never speaks in her own voice; her case had to be put in court by her husband or adult son acting as her *kurios*,<sup>4</sup> and it was invariably the man speaking on her behalf who really stood to gain if she won the case.<sup>5</sup> And in many of the cases where a male litigant spoke on his own behalf, he was claiming the estate of someone to whom he was related only through his mother.<sup>6</sup> That reflects the importance of the woman's position in the Athenian inheritance system as a link between her father's *oikos* and that of her husband, enabling her children, in the appropriate circumstances, to claim the estate of her father or brother. As we shall see from the two speeches discussed below, in each of which Isaios's client claims the estate of his maternal grandfather after his mother has already died, a woman sometimes continued to occupy that position even after her own death.

### Case 1: The Daughter of Kiron (Isaios 8)

We are told that Kiron, whose estate is in dispute in Isaios 8, married twice. He had a daughter by his first wife, and two sons by the second, but the sons died young and the daughter also died after marrying twice and producing two sons by her second husband. When Kiron died, his only surviving descendant was one of his daughter's sons.<sup>7</sup> This grandson, who may also have been called Kiron, is the speaker of Isaios 8, claiming the estate. His opponent, Kiron's nephew, says that the speaker is not entitled to inherit because his mother was not a legitimate daughter of Kiron.

In his attempt to prove that his client's mother really was Kiron's legitimate daughter, Isaios builds up an idealized picture of an exemplary female citizen without providing any information about her as an individual. Respectable women, by convention, were not named in Athenian forensic oratory,<sup>8</sup> so we do not even know her name. According to Isaios, Kiron formally gave his daughter in marriage, with a dowry, first to Nausimenes of Kholargos, then to her second husband, the speaker's father, who celebrated the marriage with a wedding feast for his friends and family and a banquet for the members of his phratry – none of which he would have done if she had not been legitimate. Later, she was chosen by the wives of her husband's fel-

<sup>3</sup> Cf. D. SCHAPS, *Economic Rights of Women in Ancient Greece*, Edinburgh 1979, 23: "Two effects of [the Athenian] law must be noted. Most obviously, although a woman was legally competent to inherit, she was not guaranteed a share. Every man was entitled to a share of his father's estate; but only certain women – those without brothers – could ever expect to inherit anything at all. The dowry was in some respects a compensation for this; although it did not ... belong to the woman in a legal sense, it was a share of the patrimony, which was set aside for her maintenance, and which every woman was likely to count on".

<sup>4</sup> In Isae. 3 the estate of Pyrrhos is claimed by his sister, who is represented in court by her son. In Isae. 7 the speaker's opponent is a woman (a first cousin of the *de cuius* Apollodoros), represented in court by her husband, Pronapes. And at an earlier stage of the long-running dispute known to us from Isae. 11 and [Dem.] 43, the estate of Hagnias had been awarded to his cousin Phylomakhe.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. R. JUST, *Women in Athenian Law and Life*, London, 1989, 33: "In fact the question of a woman's vulnerability due to her lack of independent legal status cannot readily be answered in general terms. Such cases of mistreatment or of fraud as occur in law-court material are by definition the extreme ones concerning matters, usually financial matters, weighty enough to have been taken before a court. And what was generally at issue was in any case the competing claims of *men* to the wealth of women in their charge or to wealth which they might obtain through their connections with women."

<sup>6</sup> Isae. 5, Isae. 7, Isae. 8, Isae. 9, Isae. 10, [Dem.] 43, and (probably) Isae. 1.

<sup>7</sup> On the (unlikely) possibility that Kiron was survived by both of his grandsons, see B. GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS, *A Commentary on Selected Speeches of Isaios*, Leiden 2013, 105.

<sup>8</sup> See D. SCHAPS, 'The Woman Least Mentioned. Etiquette and Women's Names', *CQ* 27 (1977), 323-30.

low demesmen to preside at the Thesmophoria, a festival reserved exclusively for women of citizen status. When the speaker and his brother were introduced to their father’s phratry, he swore the customary oath that their mother was an Athenian citizen and legally married wife, and none of the phratry members raised any objection.

Even though it was not a legal entitlement, there was a strong expectation that a legitimate Athenian daughter would be given in marriage with a dowry, so the absence of a dowry, or the provision of an unusually small one, could arouse suspicion about her legitimacy. In this case, it seems that Kiron’s nephew had argued that the two dowries given to the speaker’s mother, especially the second one, were suspiciously small, so Isaios had to provide an explanation. He says that when she married Nausimenes Kiron gave her a dowry of twenty-five minas, including clothing and jewellery. Nausimenes died a few years later, and she returned to Kiron’s *oikos*, but Kiron was unable to recover the dowry in full because of Nausimenes’s financial difficulties. So he was able to give her to her second husband, the speaker’s father, with a dowry of only a thousand drachmas (that is, only ten minas). It is difficult to assess the value of either of these dowries as a percentage of Kiron’s estate, although Cox argues that the first dowry was in fact generous.<sup>9</sup>

Kiron’s daughter never became an *epiklēros* because she died while her father was still alive, but her son appeals to the law on *epiklēroi* in support of his own claim to the estate. Isaios’s paraphrase of the law is clearly designed to make the best case for his client, but it accurately reflects the position that it is not the *epiklēros* herself, or even her husband, who are the real beneficiaries of her father’s estate, but their sons:

If my mother, Kiron’s daughter, were alive, and if he had died without leaving a will, and if my opponent were his brother, not his nephew, he would be entitled to marry Kiron’s daughter but not to claim the estate, which would go to their sons when they came of age: that is what the laws prescribe. So, since the sons would have gained control of the woman’s property if she were still alive, it is clear that since she is dead and has left us her sons behind, it is not our opponents but we who are entitled to inherit the estate (8. 31).<sup>10</sup>

## Case 2: The Daughter of Aristarkhos (Isaios 10)

In our second speech, Isaios 10, the speaker argues that his mother was a defrauded *epiklēros*, cheated by her family out of the estate of her father, Aristarkhos of Sypalettos. The family’s situation, as Isaios describes it, is quite complex, and the facts of this case are more than usually obscure: the narrative section of the speech is exceptionally short, and the chronology is vague. But my concern is not to produce a complete reconstruction of the facts (which I think, in any event, is impossible) or a full explanation of the law applicable to the case, but to consider the rôle of the speaker’s mother.

In brief, the story as Isaios tells it is that Aristarkhos died leaving two sons and two daughters. One of the sons, Kyronides, had been adopted into a different family, so he was no longer entitled to inherit from Aristarkhos. The other three children were still minors, so their uncle, Aristarkhos’s brother Aristomenes, became their guardian, with responsibility for managing the estate until the remaining son, Demokhares,

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<sup>9</sup> “The largest percentage of wealth devoted to a dowry comes from one of the smallest estates in the orations (Is. 8.7-8): from an estate of approximately one and a half talents, Ciron dowered his daughter with twenty-five *minae* or about 28 percent of the estate’s value. He then gave her in a second marriage with a smaller dowry of ten *minae* or 11 percent of the estate. Because a one-and-a-half talent estate was well below the income of wealthier families who were required to perform state services (three to four talents minimum), Ciron was giving a large dowry relative to his means to secure a suitable marriage for his daughter. . . . However, the one and a half talents is the figure estimated from the real property of the estate, and Ciron also had an unspecified amount of money out on loan”, Cox, *Household Interests*, 117-18.

<sup>10</sup> Translations are adapted from M. EDWARDS, *Isaeus*, Austin, Tex. 2007.

came of age. But Demokhares and one of his sisters died while they were still children, so Aristarkhos's only surviving child was the second daughter, who later became the mother of Isaios's client. According to Isaios, either Aristomenes or his son Apollodoros should have claimed her in marriage as *epiklēros*, along with the estate; but instead, they gave the estate to one of Kyronides's sons, the younger Aristarkhos, making him the posthumously adopted son of Aristarkhos senior, while marrying the daughter off with a dowry to someone outside the family (the speaker's father).

The speaker's parents were – again, according to Isaios – not happy with this arrangement, and the husband complained on his wife's behalf. But he reluctantly accepted the *status quo* under the threat of an enforced dissolution of his marriage:

My father received my mother with a dowry when he married her, but while my opponents were enjoying the estate, he had no way of claiming it back, because when he raised the question at my mother's instigation, they threatened him, saying they would themselves claim her by adjudication and marry her, if he was not willing to keep her with only a dowry. My father would have allowed them to enjoy an estate of even double the value so as not to lose my mother. That is the reason why my father did not pursue a claim for the estate (10.19-20).

Isaios appeals to Athenian sentimentality about women in this passage, implying that the speaker's father was too fond of his wife to risk losing her, but the reality may have been more mundane: he would also have had to repay her dowry in the event of a divorce, and that would not have been an attractive option if it made a significant contribution to the household economy.<sup>11</sup> One might have expected the speaker to complain that the dowry was unacceptably small, but in fact he never mentions its value – perhaps an indication that it was actually a generous one, which his parents, at the time, were happy enough to accept.

Isaios presents his client's mother as a victim isolated within the family, because the men who should have protected her have abused the system to her disadvantage. The pathos of her situation, as Isaios describes it, is exploited as a rhetorical strategy to arouse the indignation and solicit the support of the jurors. And, as I have pointed out elsewhere: “By portraying his client as a dutiful son seeking to redress an injustice against his mother, Isaios gives him a creditable motive for claiming the estate, deflecting any suspicion that he was acting out of personal greed”.<sup>12</sup>

Some of the language in the speech implies that the speaker's mother is still alive, leading some commentators to think that he was claiming the estate on her behalf.<sup>13</sup> In particular, one sentence in the narrative has sometimes been taken to support this view:

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. JUST, *Women*, 102: “The speaker's claim is that his mother was a defrauded heiress; thus, ironically, his father, who had taken her in marriage by *engue* with only a dowry, could not press her claims to her paternal estate without risking losing her altogether should her claims prove successful. For as an *epikleros* she could then be demanded in marriage by her father's closest relative. And we are given to understand that for reasons of sentiment her husband was quite unwilling to risk this. It might be noted, of course, that he would also have lost her dowry. But it is still personal attachment to a wife which is stressed, and even if the argument is dismissed as a piece of pleading designed simply to sway the jury in the speaker's favour, it is still significant that this sort of emotional argument was considered valid”.

<sup>12</sup> GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS, *A Commentary*, 215.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. W. WYSE, *The Speeches of Isaeus*, Cambridge 1904, 650: “All commentators appear to hold that the opponent of Xenaenetus II, for whom Isaeus wrote this speech, was acting as κύριος of his mother and claimed in her name. The use of the plural pronouns, ‘we’, ‘ours’ (§§1, 21, 23), and the appearance of ταύτη in §8 ... may be cited in favour of this view. ... But his language is so loose and vague that I feel no confidence that his mother was still alive; and in some passages he certainly speaks as if he hoped to get the property himself ...”.

And so from the start all this estate really belonged to my mother, and she ought to have been married, with the property, to her father’s nearest relative, but she was treated abominably, gentlemen [πάσχει δεινότητα, ὃ ἄνδρες] (10.5).

In the Greek text the main verb of this sentence, *πάσχει*, is in the present tense, so a more obvious reading would be “she is being treated abominably”; but in the context it reads more naturally as a historic present<sup>14</sup> representing the aorist *ἔπαθεν*: she was treated abominably (on the occasion when she was given in marriage by *enguē* to an outsider instead of being claimed as an *epiklēros* by her father’s next of kin).<sup>15</sup> And, as we shall see, there are indications later in the speech that the speaker was in fact claiming the estate on his own behalf.

The speaker seems determined to get across his message that the estate of Aristarkhos rightfully belonged to his mother, which he repeats no fewer than five times.

You will see that this estate belonged, from the start, not to my opponents but to my mother, who inherited it from her father, and furthermore that Aristarkhos (junior) took possession of it without the sanction of any law, and that he and his relatives are wronging my mother in violation of all the laws (10.3).

Demokhares died while a child, as did his other sister, and so the estate became my mother’s (10.7).

But from their own statements it will become even clearer to you that they are illegally and impudently holding my mother’s property (10.11).

I, gentlemen, am absolutely certain that neither Xenainetos nor anyone else will be able to prove that this estate is not my mother’s (10.14).

But now it is only right, gentlemen, for my opponent to say who gave him the estate ... and how my mother was not *epiklēros* to this property (Isa. 10. 21).

Like Kiron’s grandson, the speaker of Isaios 10 refers to the law on *epiklēroi* in terms that emphasize the rights of the ‘heiress’s’ sons rather than of the woman herself or her husband:

Furthermore, gentlemen, neither Aristomenes nor Apollodoros, who were entitled to claim my mother in marriage by adjudication, had any right to the estate. Since it would not have been possible for Apollodoros or Aristomenes to gain control of my mother’s property, if either of them had been married to her, according to the law that does not allow anybody to control the property of an *epiklēros* except her sons, who obtain possession of it when they come of age, it would be amazing if Aristomenes were to be allowed to marry her to someone else and then introduce a son for adoption to inherit her property. That would be truly scandalous (10.12).

And at the end of the speech he asserts his own claim to the estate in much more explicit terms: “Since I behave in a law-abiding manner, perform my prescribed duties, and serve in the army, I demand not to

<sup>14</sup> Cf. “he wronged [ἀδικεῖ] ... my mother” (10.3), where the subject, Aristarkhos junior, is undoubtedly dead, so the verb ἀδικεῖ must be a historic present.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS, *A Commentary*, 218. Some published translations support this interpretation: “elle fut indignement traitée, juges”, P. ROUSSEL, *Isée Discours*, Paris 1926; and “she was treated on that occasion, judges, with extreme iniquity”, W. JONES, *The Speeches of Isaeus in Causes Concerning the Law of Succession at Athens*, London 1779. But cf. “she is being abominably treated” (E.S. FORSTER, *Isaeus*, Cambridge, Mass. – London 1927) and “she is being treated terribly, gentlemen” (EDWARDS, *Isaeus*).

be deprived of my mother's patrimony. I have proved to you ... that this estate then became my mother's" (§25). Ultimately, then, it is the speaker himself, rather than his mother, who is the victim of the alleged injustice. So the mother, who was supposedly cheated out of her inheritance during her lifetime, becomes a channel through which her son can claim it after her death. Moreover, the woman herself remains completely anonymous, and we learn even less about her as an individual than we did about Kiron's daughter in Isaios 8.

### Conclusion

The specific circumstances of these two cases were, no doubt, unusual. In the situation in which Kiron found himself after his sons had died, most Athenians would probably have adopted a grandson to ensure that the estate would go to him directly.<sup>16</sup> And the speaker of Isaios 10 seems to be making a rather desperate case for the revocation of an arrangement which may not have been strictly in accordance with the law, but which had been agreed by the family of Aristarkhos and remained unopposed for many years. Atypical as they may be, however, these cases do illustrate the general tendency of the Athenian inheritance system to transmit the property of a deceased citizen to his nearest male relative, using a female as intermediary if necessary. When the speaker of Isaios 10 says that his mother was 'treated abominably', he is criticizing her uncle and cousin for abusing the system; he is not criticizing the system for subordinating a woman's economic interest to that of her male kinsfolk. An Athenian woman's economic interests were, in any event, inseparably linked with those of the *oikos* to which she belonged, and any property was always under the control of the male head of the *oikos*. A married woman would benefit from the wealth of her marital household, including whatever contribution she had brought to it from her father's property (whether she had 'inherited' the whole of his estate as an *epiklēros* or had been married with a dowry), and this would eventually pass to her sons as part of their patrimony. After the woman's death, even when she had not been *epiklēros* to her father's estate, her son was still entitled to claim it – provided always that the grandfather left no descendants (natural or adopted) through a male line. So, in effect, the real function of women in the Athenian inheritance system was not as 'heiresses' in the modern sense but as genealogical links through which men could inherit from other men.

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<sup>16</sup> The speaker's opponent apparently argued that Kiron could not adopt one of his grandsons because they were illegitimate. Cf. GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS, *A Commentary*, 98.

## Dalla schiava alla donna libera Ruoli economici della donna ateniese in età classica\*

PAOLA TOSONI

Gli aspetti legati a quella che definiamo economia dell'*oikos* e, in particolare, le specificità di genere nella produzione e la gestione della ricchezza al suo interno, sono stati al centro di importanti contributi, anche in anni recenti.<sup>1</sup> L'indagine sul ruolo economico della donna nell'Atene di età classica, potrebbe tuttavia ulteriormente arricchirsi nel metodo e nel contenuto, avvalendosi di fonti ricche di informazioni ancora da indagare e facendo interagire discipline che, in modo diverso, tentano di ricostruire il quadro variegato e per noi frammentario della società ateniese.

Questa breve indagine, ovviamente lontana da ogni pretesa di esaustività rispetto al tema trattato, vuole mettere in luce l'esigenza di allargare l'orizzonte degli studi nella direzione di cui si è detto, intende proporre questioni utili come spunto di riflessione per chi cerchi di ricostruire la società ateniese e, in particolare, la complessa realtà dell'*oikos* e il ruolo economico della donna al suo interno.

Le orazioni isaiche a noi pervenute – come è noto, tutte concernenti cause legate alla trasmissione dell'eredità – costituiranno la fonte privilegiata di questo studio;<sup>2</sup> ciò che rimane della sua produzione costituisce per noi una testimonianza preziosa: grande ricchezza di informazioni si può trarre, a proposito della 'vita privata'<sup>3</sup> e dell'ambito economico, anche per quanto riguarda le specificità del genere femminile.

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<sup>1</sup> Cfr. E. COHEN, 'Juridical Implications of Athenians Slaves' Commercial Activity', in B. LEGRAS – G. THUR (curr.), *Symposion 2011* (études d'histoire du droit grec et hellénistique, Paris, 7-10 septembre 2011) = *Vorträge zur griechischen und hellenistischen Rechtsgeschichte*, Wien 2012, 211-23, con risposta di A. DIMOPOULOU, 'Le rôle des esclaves dans l'économie Athénienne: réponse à E. Cohen', *Symposion 2011*, 225-36; D. PLACIDO, 'La mujer en el oikos y en la polis: formas de dependencia económica y des esclavización', in F. REDUZZI MEROLA – A. STORCHI MARINO (curr.), *Femmes-esclaves. Modèles d'interprétation anthropologique, économique, juridique* (Atti del XXI colloquio internazionale GIREA, Lacco Ameno-Ischia 27-29 ottobre 1994, Napoli, 1999, 13-19; D. PLACIDO, 'Polis y oikos. Los marcos de la integración y de la desintegración femenina', in M.J. RODRIGUEZ MANPASA – E. HIDALGO – C.G. WAGNER (curr.), *Roles sexuales. La mujer en la historia y la cultura*, Madrid 1994; R. JUST, *Women in Athenian Law and Life*, London 1989; C. MOSSÉ, *La femme dans la Grèce antique*, Paris 1983; D. SCHAPS, *Economic Rights of Women in Ancient Greece*, Edinburgh 1979; G.E.M. DE STE. CROIX, 'Some Observation on the Property Rights of Athenian Women', *Classical Review* 20 (1970), 273-78; P. VIDAL-NAQUET, *Esclavage et gynécocratie dans la tradition, le mythe, l'utopie. Recherches sur les structures sociales dans l'antiquité classique*, Paris 1970.

<sup>2</sup> L'oratore è stato solo di recente rivalutato da parte della comunità scientifica: le undici orazioni che ne compongono il corpus, oltre a rappresentare un riferimento imprescindibile per gli specialisti del diritto attico, sono diventate oggetto di studio per lo storico. Il rinnovato interesse per i contenuti delle orazioni ha stimolato una nuova attenzione per il testo che si è tradotta in recenti edizioni critiche, nuovi e organici commenti a singole orazioni e studi specifici su singoli aspetti della società ateniese. Cfr. in proposito: B. GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS, *A Commentary on Selected Speeches of Isaios*, Leiden 2013; P. COBETTO GHIGGIA (cur.), *Iseo. Introduzione, testo rivisto, traduzione, note e glossario giuridico attico*, Alessandria 2012; S. FERRUCCI (cur.), *Iseo. La successione di Kiron*, Introduzione testo critico, traduzione e commento, Pisa 2005; P. COBETTO GHIGGIA (cur.), *Iseo. Contro Leocare (Sulla successione di Diceogene)*, Introduzione, testo critico, traduzione e commento, Pisa 2002; S. FERRUCCI, *L'Atene di Iseo. L'organizzazione del privato nella prima metà del IV sec. a.C.*, Pisa 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Sulla necessaria cautela con cui utilizzare le categorie di pubblico e privato per studiare la civiltà greca, si veda: D. MUSTI, 'Pubblico e privato nella democrazia periclea', *QUCC*, n.s. 20, 49 (1985), 7-17; V. DASEN – M. PIÉRART (curr.), *Idia kai demosia les cadres "privés" et "publics" de la religion grecque antique* (Actes du 9. Colloque du Centre International d'Étude de la Religion

Le orazioni isaiche presentano numerose situazioni emblematiche rispetto al ruolo economico della donna. Una fra le possibili classificazioni applicabili alle singole vicende – peraltro già nota e praticata dagli studiosi in contributi specifici<sup>4</sup> – propone una distinzione tra ruoli femminili che, rispetto all'economia dell'*oikos*, possono essere considerati attivi e passivi. Quello che vorrei proporre di seguito è un saggio di questa classificazione e, successivamente, la verifica della sua validità.

La prima situazione che prendiamo in esame è quella della schiava che presta servizio dentro l'*oikos*:<sup>5</sup> essa viene indicata nella maggior parte delle attestazioni – in Iseo in particolare, ma il dato è confermato da una verifica effettuata sull'intero *corpus* oratorio – con il termine *θεράπεινα*<sup>6</sup> il corrispettivo femminile di οἰκέτης, meno frequentemente con quello di *δοῦλη*.<sup>7</sup>

*Θεράπειναι* e *δοῦλαι* vengono rappresentate, nelle orazioni superstiti, in situazioni in cui svolgono un ruolo del tutto passivo, spesso in rapporto a questioni patrimoniali e quindi come oggetto – e non soggetto – di proprietà. Consideriamo, fra gli altri,<sup>8</sup> il caso dell'ottava orazione isaica e in particolare la descrizione del patrimonio del defunto, descritto da chi parla con l'obiettivo di ottenere per se una simile fortuna.

*Κίρων γὰρ ἐκέκτητο οὐσίαν, ᾧ ἄνδρες, ἀγρὸν μὲν Φλυῆσι, καὶ ταλάντου ῥαδίως ἄξιον, οἰκίας δ' ἐν ἄστει δύο, τὴν μὲν μίαν μισθοφοροῦσαν, παρὰ τὸ ἐν Λίμναις Διονύσιον, χιλίας εὐρίσκουσαν, τὴν δ' ἑτέραν ἐν ἧ αὐτὸς ᾧκει, τριῶν καὶ δέκα μνῶν· ἔτι δὲ ἀνδράποδα μισθοφοροῦντα καὶ δύο θεραπαίνας καὶ παιδίσκην καὶ ἔπιπλα δι' ὧν ᾧκει τὴν οἰκίαν, σχεδὸν σὺν τοῖς ἀνδραπόδοις ἄξια τριῶν καὶ δέκα μνῶν· σύμπαντα δὲ ὅσα φανερά ἦν, πλεόν ἢ ἐνενήκοντα μνῶν· χωρὶς δὲ τούτων δανείσματα οὐκ ὀλίγα, ἀφ' ὧν ἐκεῖνος τόκους ἐλάμβανε.*

Kiron, infatti, aveva una fortuna che si componeva, o giudici, di un terreno a Flia del valore di un talento, due case in città, una data in affitto, nei pressi del Santuario di Dioniso alle Paludi, che poteva valere mille dracme, l'altra dove egli stesso abitava, del valore di tredici mine; poi schiavi che dava in affitto,<sup>9</sup> due ancelle, una giovane schiava e mobilio che si trovava nella sua residenza, del valore in totale, compresi gli schiavi, di circa tredici mine. Complessivamente tutti i beni visibili<sup>10</sup> assommavano a più di novanta mine. Inoltre c'erano non pochi prestiti, dei quali percepiva gli interessi.<sup>11</sup>

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Grecque Antique, CIERGA, tenu à Fribourg du 8 au 10 septembre 2003), Liège 2005. Per quanto attiene specificatamente l'ambito religioso, PARKER affronta la questione nell'introduzione ad *Athenian Religion, a History*, Oxford 1996, in part. 5-7.

<sup>4</sup> Cfr. JUST, *Women*, 76-104; SCHAPS, *Economic Rights*, 4-47.

<sup>5</sup> Per una panoramica generale sulla questione si veda: K. BRADLEY – P. CARTLEDGE (cur.), *The Cambridge World History of Slavery I, The Ancient Mediterranean World*, Cambridge 2011; M. MOGGI – G. CORDIANO – M. PETTINATO (cur.), *Schiavi e dipendenti nell'ambito dell'oikos e della familia* (Atti del XXII colloquio GIREA; Pontignano (Siena) 19-20 novembre 1995), Pisa 1997; F. REDUZZI MEROLA – A. STORCHI MARINO (cur.), *Femmes-esclaves: modèles d'interprétation anthropologique, économique, juridique* (Atti del XXI colloquio internazionale GIREA, Lacco Ameno-Ischia 27-29 ottobre 1994), Napoli 1999; M.I. FINLEY, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, London 1980. Sul riferimento agli schiavi nelle liste patrimoniali in Iseo si veda FERRUCCI, *L'Atene di Iseo*, 130-32; S. FERRUCCI, 'Gli schiavi nell'oikos ad Atene: la testimonianza delle orazioni di Iseo in Routes et marchés d'esclaves', in M. GARRIDOHORY (cur.), *Routes et marchés d'esclaves* (Actes du XXVI Colloque du GIREA, Besançon 27-29 septembre 2001), Paris 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Cfr. ad es. Isae. 8, 9, 10, 35; Andoc. 1.64; Dem., 21.159, 27.46, 29.25, 56, 30.35, 36.14, 40.51, 45.28, 46.21, 47.56, 70, 72, 58.19, 59.35, 42, 120, 123, 124, 125; Lys. 1.8, 16, 18, 23, 37, 32.28.

<sup>7</sup> O più genericamente e talora con connotazione dispregiativa, di ἡ ἄνθρωπος. Cfr. ad es. Antiph. 1.17; Lys. 4.1, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 19; Isae. 6.20, 21, 29; Isocr. 18.52, 53; Dem. 47.5-11, 13-17, 36-40, 46-47, 51, 59.46.

<sup>8</sup> Cfr. anche Aesch. 1.99; Dem. 27.46, 36.14, 45.28, 40.51, 59.35, 42.

<sup>9</sup> Per la corretta interpretazione di questa categoria di schiavi, la cui forza lavoro era ceduta in appalto esterno, si veda W. WYSE, *The Speeches of Isaeus with Critical and Explanatory Notes*, London 1904, 615-16; FERRUCCI, *La successione di Kiron*, 197-98; M. EDWARDS (cur.), *Isaeus*, Austin 2007, 116-17.

<sup>10</sup> Sulle nozioni di φανερά οὐσία e ἀφανής οὐσία, difficilmente del tutto sovrapponibili a quelle di beni immobili e mobili, si veda: L. GERNET, *Anthropologie de la grèce antique*, Paris 1968 (trad. in it. a c. di R. Di Donato, Milano 1983), in part. 405-14; V. GABRIELSEN, 'Phanera and aphanes ousia in Classical Athens', *Classica et Mediaevalia* 37 (1986), 99-114; A. COZZO, *Le passioni economiche nella Grecia antica*, Palermo 1991, 48-50, 68-71; FERRUCCI, *L'Atene di Iseo*, 237-40; S. FERRUCCI, 'La ricchezza nascosta. Osservazioni su aphanes e phanera ousia', *MedAnt* 8 (2005), 145-69.

<sup>11</sup> Isae. VIII, 35.

Della proprietà di Kiron farebbero dunque parte: un terreno, due case, schiavi di diversa tipologia, mobilio e suppellettili della casa di residenza e infine denaro prestato. La descrizione dell'*ousia* segue uno schema interno chiaro: da un lato terra e case, proprietà fondiarie arricchite (*ἔτι δὲ...*) da beni di natura del tutto eterogenea – dai mobili e gli oggetti d'uso quotidiano agli schiavi nelle loro varie mansioni, viene menzionato tutto ciò che rende l'*oikos* abitabile, funzionante e funzionale.<sup>12</sup> Dall'altro ci sono i prestiti e il denaro liquido (*δανείσματα οὐκ ὀλίγα*).

Il passo isaico mette quindi chiaramente in luce il ruolo della schiava nelle liste patrimoniali; essa viene presentata come un elemento del tutto passivo e fa corpo unico con il resto dei beni mobili.

Se, tuttavia, rispetto alla figura della schiava, estendiamo l'indagine all'intero *corpus* degli oratori attici,<sup>13</sup> alcuni elementi contribuiscono a delineare un quadro apparentemente contrastante con quello fin qui descritto e si rivelano perciò quanto mai adatti ad integrarlo. Diversi passi evidenziano chiaramente la partecipazione attiva delle schiave al lavoro domestico e il loro contributo all'economia dell'*oikos*; oltre a ciò, non di rado, viene ricordata la specializzazione dei loro compiti. La figura che ricorre più frequentemente è quella della nutrice, la *τίτθη*.<sup>14</sup> Tra gli esempi più celebri si può pensare al racconto della *Contro Evergo e Mnesibulo* (Dem. 47), in cui viene descritto un episodio di violenza di cui è vittima l'ex-nutrice della casa, una schiava che era stata liberata dal padre dell'attore. Nel novero dei lavori tipicamente servili troviamo anche quelli delle lavoratrici della lana (*ἔριθοι*) e delle vendemmiatrici (*τρυνήτριαι*).<sup>15</sup> Ricordiamo infine il caso di una schiava addetta ad un lavoro altamente specializzato, la tessitura del pregiato amorgino (fibra di stelo di malva), poi destinato al mercato, menzionato da Eschine.<sup>16</sup>

A questo punto possiamo ampliare ulteriormente il ventaglio delle fonti e, grazie all'ausilio di documenti epigrafici coevi, non solo confermare la presenza di attività produttive riconducibili alle schiave dell'*oikos*, ma – con particolare riferimento alla tessitura – segnalare la loro rilevanza, che doveva essere, anche quantitativamente, notevolissima. A questo proposito può essere utile, a scopo esemplificativo, un confronto con le liste delle cosiddette *φιάλαι ἐξελευθερικαί* – un gruppo omogeneo di testi ascrivibile al periodo compreso tra il 330 e 320 a.C.<sup>17</sup> Si tratta di liste connesse ad atti di liberazione di schiavi da parte di cittadini, nelle quali, tra gli altri dati viene talvolta precisato il mestiere che lo schiavo era in grado di svolgere. Su 158 schiavi dei quali si precisa la specializzazione 63 sono donne e, fra loro, 51 sono lavoratrici della lana (*ταλασιουργοί*). Delle restanti dodici due sono flautiste (*ἀύλητρις*), una suonatrice di cetra (*κιθαρωδός*), una nutrice (*τίτθη*), due commercianti (*καπηλίσ*), una rammendatrice (*ἀκέστρια*), due venditrici di sesamo (*σησαμόπωλις*), una venditrice di incenso (*λιβανωτοπῶλις*), una venditrice di miele (*μελιτόπωλις*), una venditrice di unguenti (*μυροπῶλις*).

Colpisce naturalmente il numero elevatissimo, sia in assoluto, sia rispetto alle altre occupazioni, delle lavoratrici di lana. Ciò è coerente, del resto, con importanti studi sul lavoro servile, sulla base dei quali tutto

<sup>12</sup> Si veda in proposito la distinzione operata da M. FINLEY in *Land and Credit in Ancient Athens, 500-200 B.C. The Horos Inscriptions*, New Brunswick 1952, 53-73, nel capitolo dedicato alla proprietà: con l'aggettivo 'miscellaneous' egli identifica un'ampia categoria di beni – come nel nostro caso, di natura anche molto diversa (schiavi, oggetti e mobilio) – che vengono studiati in parallelo ad altre tipologie di proprietà come la terra, le case, le attività commerciali. Per un'ulteriore approfondimento si veda anche: 'Dalle carte di M.I. Finley', in R. DI DONATO (cur.), *Opus VI-VIII* (1987-89, aprile 1991), 261-321.

<sup>13</sup> Cfr. ad es. Aeschin. 1.97.; Dem. 27. 46, 59.35; Lys. 1.16.

<sup>14</sup> Cfr. a questo proposito S. VILATTE, 'La nourrice grecque: une question d'histoire sociale et religieuse', *AC* 60 (1991), 5-29; A. TADDEI, 'Diritto e prediritto in casa del Trierarca', *SCO* 46, 3 (1998), 833-44.

<sup>15</sup> Cfr., per entrambe le mansioni, Dem. 57, 45.

<sup>16</sup> Aeschin. I, 97: *ἀμόργινα ἐπισταμένην ἐργάζεσθαι καὶ εἰς τὴν ἀγορὰν ἐκφέρουσαν*.

<sup>17</sup> I testi sono raccolti in *IG II<sup>2</sup>*, 1553-78.



il ciclo di lavorazione della lana, fino alla tessitura, poteva essere compiuto all'interno dell'*oikos*.<sup>18</sup> Non solo ma, una volta soddisfatto l'autoconsumo, un ricco padrone di casa (cioè a capo di un *oikos* in cui il numero di schiave tessitrici fosse elevato) poteva consapevolmente destinare parte della produzione al mercato, proprio grazie alla manodopera servile.<sup>19</sup> Sappiamo del resto che nell'*agorà* di Atene vi era un determinato settore noto come *ἱματιόπωλις ἀγορά*,<sup>20</sup> specificatamente destinato al commercio dei vestiti.

Alla luce di tutto ciò possiamo ancora considerare la schiava, come sembrava suggerire l'esempio isaico esaminato, una figura passiva rispetto alla proprietà e alla produzione di ricchezza nell'*oikos*?

Senz'altro no; ma nemmeno un soggetto attivo indipendente. Proporrei piuttosto una definizione che tenga conto delle sfaccettature che il ruolo della schiava nell'*oikos* porta con sé, cioè quello di una figura (economicamente) ambivalente. Ma su questo torneremo tra poco.

La rapida indagine, che andiamo via via conducendo, sul ruolo economico della donna nell'*oikos* non può prescindere dalla menzione – seppur concisa – dell'*epiklēros*. Com'è noto, numerose e complesse sono le questioni legate alla definizione esatta delle dinamiche che hanno rapporto con l'epiclerato,<sup>21</sup> rispetto alle quali Iseo è senz'altro una fonte di prim'ordine. Nella III orazione il logografo ateniese difende gli interessi del nipote adottivo del defunto Pirro; a questo si contrappone una donna, Phyle, che tramite il suo *kyrios* pretende di acquisire l'eredità dichiarandosi figlia legittima del *de cuius*. Tra i vari argomenti addotti<sup>22</sup> dall'oratore, decisivo risulta il fatto che se la donna fosse davvero stata *epiklēros*, senza dubbio avrebbe dovuto sposarsi con il figlio adottivo di Pirro, Endio, oppure con uno degli zii paterni.<sup>23</sup> Nella VII orazione chi parla vuole far valere il proprio diritto alla successione in qualità di legittimo figlio adottivo di Apollo-doro; egli trova un accanito avversario, tuttavia, nel fratello del defunto, Eupoli, che proprio tramite il ruolo delle sue due figlie femmine vuole rivendicare l'eredità.<sup>24</sup> Complesse sono, infine, le vicende successorie ricordate nella X orazione – che vede contrapposti la figlia legittima del defunto Aristarco, rappresentata dal figlio, e la famiglia del fratello del *de cuius* – ma l'argomento portante avanzato da Iseo consiste, tuttavia, nel ricordare che l'unica figlia legittima di Aristarco non è stata considerata *epiklēros*, ma completamente estromessa dalle dinamiche successorie.<sup>25</sup>

Non mi addenterò oltre nello specifico delle singole vicende.<sup>26</sup> I casi appena ricordati, tuttavia, possono suggerire una considerazione generale che dallo studio delle orazioni isaiche trae spunto e nondimeno è coerente con il tentativo di classificazione in ruoli attivi e passivi che cerchiamo di delineare.

<sup>18</sup> Cfr. *Femmes-esclaves*, in part. M. FARAGUNA, 'Aspetti della schiavitù domestica femminile in Attica tra oratoria ed epigrafia', 57-71.

<sup>19</sup> Cfr. Xen. *Mem.* 2.7,1-14 e l'ipotesi interpretativa che del passo fornisce FARAGUNA, 'Aspetti della schiavitù', 74-75, secondo il quale potrebbe trattarsi dell'"unico esempio noto per Atene di un laboratorio che produceva tessuti per il mercato sotto la diretta supervisione di un 'imprenditore' e con l'ausilio di manodopera servile".

<sup>20</sup> Pollux 7.78. Si veda in proposito: R.E. WYCHERLEY, *The Athenian Agora, II.: Literary and Epigraphical Testimonia*, Princeton 1957, 200; E. GRECO, *Topografia di Atene. Sviluppo urbano e monumenti dalle origini al III secolo d.C.*, Atene – Paestum 2010.

<sup>21</sup> Per una panoramica generale si veda R. DI DONATO, 'Introduzione', in L. GERNET, *Forme e strutture della parentela nella Grecia antica*, *AION (Archeol.)* (1983), 109-210; L. GERNET, 'Sur l'épicleat', *REG* 34 (1921), 337 = L. GERNET, *Droit et société dans la Grèce ancienne*, Paris 1955, 135.

<sup>22</sup> Ricordo i principali: il nome che viene utilizzato nel processo (diverso da quello rituale assegnato nel rito del decimo giorno); il fatto che non fosse presente nel testamento (che automaticamente l'avrebbe resa riconoscibile come legittima e che tuttavia non è mai stato contestato da nessuno); la condotta del suo *kyrios* che avrebbe dovuto difendere i suoi diritti fin da subito (sono infatti passati oltre vent'anni dalla morte di Pirro).

<sup>23</sup> Cfr. Isae. 3.42, 46, 48, 74.

<sup>24</sup> Cfr. Isae. 7.18-23.

<sup>25</sup> Cfr. Isae. 10.10, 12, 21.

<sup>26</sup> Tuttavia si veda anche Isae. 6.46, 58, 7.13.

Anche l'*epiklēros* ricopre un ruolo che sfugge alle moderne categorie economiche. Essa è un soggetto attivo, cruciale, per la trasmissione del diritto all'eredità, per la sopravvivenza dell'*oikos* e, in definitiva, della polis stessa, poiché è in grado, con la sua funzione, di scongiurare la scomparsa dei gruppi famigliari. Allo stesso tempo, del resto, nel suo essere inderogabilmente vincolata alla trasmissione dell'eredità ai propri figli tramite l'unione con il parente maschio più prossimo l'*epiklēros* non ricopre che un ruolo vettoriale e transitorio.

A conclusione di questa breve indagine sui ruoli economici femminili in Iseo vorrei menzionare il singolare caso di donne che ricoprono ruoli economici attivi a tutti gli effetti, ruoli che riterremmo di pertinenza esclusivamente maschile e che portano la donna a vivere lontano dallo spazio a lei deputato all'interno dell'*oikos*<sup>27</sup> e dalla tutela e dal controllo di un *kurios*.

Questi esempi – che potremmo considerare dei 'casi limite' rispetto alle tradizionali mansioni conosciute e studiate in relazione alla donna libera ateniese – si trovano nella VI orazione isaica; il discorso ci mette a conoscenza della vicenda di Euctemone, che, a scapito della propria famiglia legittima, si intrattiene con altre donne, le quali svolgono mansioni piuttosto particolari:

- Ὅθεν δὲ καὶ ὅπως ταῦτ' ἐγένετο, ὡς ἂν δύνωμαι διὰ βραχυτάτων δηλώσω. Ἀπελευθέρῃ ἦν αὐτοῦ, ὃ ἄνδρες, ἡ ἐναυκλήρει συνοικίαν ἐν Πειραιεῖ αὐτοῦ καὶ παιδίσκας ἔτρεφε. Τούτων μίαν ἐκτίσατο ἢ ὄνομα ἦν Ἀλκή, ἦν καὶ ὑμῶν οἶμαι πολλοὺς εἰδέναι.

Da dove e in che modo scaturì la vicenda, ve lo mostrerò nella maniera più breve possibile. Euctemone aveva una liberta, o giudici, che gestiva un caseggiato al Pireo di proprietà dello stesso Euctemone, dove teneva ragazze. Fra queste, la donna ne acquisì una di nome Alké, che, credo, anche molti di voi conoscano.<sup>28</sup>

- τὴν Ἀλκήν, καθίστησιν Εὐκτέμων ἐπιμελεῖσθαι τῆς ἐν Κεραμεικῷ συνοικίας, τῆς παρὰ τὴν πυλίδα, οὗ ὁ οἶκος ὄνιος.

Euctemone allora mise Alké ad amministrare il caseggiato al Ceramico, quello che si trova presso la porta dove si tiene il mercato dei vini.<sup>29</sup>

Si tratta di due donne libere: un dato chiaro nel primo caso (grazie alla presenza del sostantivo *ἀπελευθέρῃ*); meno evidente, ma altrettanto certo nel secondo.<sup>30</sup> Nella medesima orazione sono testimoniati due casi – gli unici a mia conoscenza – in cui è una donna a gestire la locazione di immobili, ad essere *ναύκληρος* di una *συνοικία*.

Osserviamo più da vicino questa professione, avvalendoci di uno studio di tipo lessicale. Per quanto riguarda *ναύκληρος*, il termine è chiaramente mutuato dal lessico nautico, nel quale il *ναῦλον* indicava il prezzo da pagare per il trasporto via mare e il *ναύκληρος* era l'armatore, il comandante di una nave da carico o da trasporto. Un termine dunque decisamente legato al genere maschile, tanto per l'attività che definisce, quanto per la nozione di comando che vi è sottesa. Il termine in accezione astratta indica genericamente la gestione, il comando; inoltre, nello specifico della vita della polis di età classica, definisce un'altra precisa attività professionale. Il *ναύκληρος* ad Atene designa anche la professione di chi gestisce e affitta un grande

<sup>27</sup> Si veda in proposito J.-P. VERNANT, *Mito e pensiero presso i Greci*, Torino 1970, 147-200.

<sup>28</sup> Isae. 6.19.

<sup>29</sup> Isae. 6.20.

<sup>30</sup> Come giustamente osserva WYSE (*The Speeches of Isaeus*, London, 1904, cfr. commento *ad loc*, in part. n. §20, 3-4.), se così non fosse stato la questione della legittimità dei figli che Euctemone ha avuto da Alké – oggetto della contesa nella VI orazione – non si sarebbe nemmeno posta. Il fatto che in questo passo e altrove (cfr. §49) la donna sia chiamata *δοῦλη ὁ ἄνθρωπος* viene convincentemente giustificato come una licenza non rara negli oratori per definire una donna di cui si sta tracciando un cattivo ritratto (Cfr. Lys. 13.18.64; 30.27).

edificio, tipicamente diviso in piccoli appartamenti, la *συνοικία*, appunto. Costruzione collocata nelle zone a più alta densità abitativa, come il Ceramico o il Pireo, nel panorama delle forme residenziali ateniesi la *συνοικία* svolgeva un ruolo importante soprattutto nell'accogliere gli stranieri che si fermavano in città. Non conosciamo i dettagli dei contratti che legavano il locatario al padrone; i dati che possediamo e la fama ambigua di certe case (come quelle descritte nei passi di Iseo VI appena esaminati), tuttavia, paiono indicare che i ceti interessati non fossero particolarmente abbienti.<sup>31</sup>

Torniamo ora ad allargare la prospettiva sulla panoramica dei ruoli economici femminili di cui le orazioni isaiche danno testimonianza e al tentativo di classificazione, in ruoli attivi e passivi, che ha costituito lo spunto della nostra indagine. Siamo partiti dalla figura della schiava come oggetto passivo di proprietà, per poi passare a definirla una figura economicamente ambivalente sulla base della grande varietà di specializzazioni di cui fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche danno testimonianza e che la ritraggono come fautrice di ricchezza per l'*oikos*; abbiamo poi ricordato il ruolo dell'*epiklēros* – com'è ovvio assai ricorrente in Iseo – a sua volta definito da contorni non del tutto inequivocabili: un ruolo dunque decisamente attivo, eppure vettoriale e temporaneo; sulla base di due passi isaici tratti dalla VI orazione abbiamo, infine, preso in considerazione due casi del tutto particolari rispetto al panorama tradizionale del lavoro femminile ateniese: la menzione di donne che non solo svolgono un lavoro all'interno della *polis*, ma precisamente hanno un ruolo di gestione diretta, manageriale potremmo dire, una professione insomma eminentemente maschile.

I pochi esempi presentati in questa rapida ricognizione sarebbero dunque già di per sé sufficienti a far sì che la classificazione astratta proposta inizialmente come strumento ermeneutico si dimostri inadeguata. Oltre a elementi di contenuto, ricaviamo pertanto anche una considerazione metodologica valida anche per il resto della documentazione in nostro possesso. Modelli astratti e classificazioni a priori rischiano di indurre a risultati fuorvianti: la complessità di alcune nozioni antiche, non di rado, male si adatta alle categorie moderne. È dunque preferibile che tali nozioni vengano studiate, a seconda dei singoli momenti storici, dei luoghi geografici, dei contesti sociali in cui hanno luogo.

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<sup>31</sup> Altri esempi di *συνοικία*: Isae. 5.27, Dem. 45.28, 53.13; Aeschin. 1.124. Per ulteriori approfondimenti intorno al termine '*synoikia*': A. MAFFI, 'L'accordo di *synoikia* fra Orcomeno ed Euaimon (IPArk 15)', *ZRG* 115 (1998), 394-403; H. LIND, 'Ein Hetärenhaus am heiligen Tor? Der athener Bau Z und die bei Isaios (6, 20 f.) erwähnte *Synoikia* Euktemons', *Museum Helveticum* 45, 3 (1988) 158.

# The Principle of not Lessening the Rights of the Wife in the *Pacta Dotalia*

CARLOS SÁNCHEZ-MORENO ELLART

The greatest strength of the Roman dotal system was perhaps its adaptability: customs and rules changed and various purposes were served.<sup>1</sup> This regime sometimes entailed a complicated situation in financial and especially in legal terms. As it is widely known, the husband was in theory the owner of the dowry but in practice he was bound to administer the dowry as a bonus *pater familias* in the sense that any careless disposal of property was to be paid at the moment of the return and he was then liable for any negligent damage. As the jurist Paul states, he ought to exercise the same carefulness (*diligentia*) standard that he exercised with regard to his own property (D. 23.3.17 pr. Paul. *ad Sab.*). By way of offset, the husband had the right to use the benefits of the dowry to his own benefit but the dowry was essentially conceived as a way of mitigating the burdens of marriage (*onera matrimonii*).<sup>2</sup> Some Roman law handbooks – more or less accurately – describe this situation with the term ‘functional ownership’,<sup>3</sup> since the dowry, although administered by the husband, was conceived as a contribution to the common household.

On the other hand the wife also had personal interests in the dowry. As Frier points out, that is why the Roman jurisprudence coined the expression *quasi patrimonium* (*dig.* 11.7.16 Ulp. 25 *ad ed.*) or even *patrimonium proprium* (*dig.* 4.4.3.5, Ulp. 11 *ad ed.*) as a way to express this reality.<sup>4</sup> Both facts (the husband’s

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\* I must express my gratitude to Prof. Dennis P. Kehoe and Prof. Bruce W. Frier, who have read previous versions of this paper, for their accurate and illuminating commentaries. I must also thank Prof. Frier for allowing me to read his yet unpublished paper on the dowry that I quote according to the University of Michigan website. Mistakes of course remain my own.

<sup>1</sup> S. TREGGIARI, *Roman Marriage. Iusti coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian*, Oxford 1991, 357. I deliberately avoid the discussion on other topics, such as whether all the *pacta dotalia* could be conceived as *pacta de non petendo* – this is A. SÖLLNER’s theory (cf. *Zur Vorgeschichte und Funktion der actio rei uxoriae*, Cologne 1969, 94), nor is the place for tackling their possible effects in favour of a third, see G. WESENBERG, *Verträge zugunsten Dritter*, Weimar 1949, 48-60.

<sup>2</sup> *Dig.* 23.3.56.1 (Paul. 6 *ad Plaut.*); *dig.* 10.2.20.2 (Ulp. 19 *ad ed.*); *dig.* 49.17.16 pr. (Papin. 19 *reg.*). Of course the old interpolationist approach had denied the authenticity of these definitions, see E. ALBERTARIO, ‘La connessione della dote con gli oneri del matrimonio’, *RIL* 58 (1925), 85-97 = *Studi di diritto romano* I, Milan 1933, 295-316.

<sup>3</sup> It is important to stress that while the dowry was conceived as a contribution to the common household its *fructus* was not actually tied to that purpose. It is worth noting that although this arrangement is not exactly a Trust (in Anglo-American terminology), it has some similarities: the husband could be understood as a trustee owner; the wife as a beneficial owner.

<sup>4</sup> B.W. FRIER, ‘The Roman Dowry. Some Economic Questions’ (<http://www.law.umich.edu/centersandprograms/lawandeconomics/workshops/Documents/Paper%2012.Frier.Roman%20Dowry-%20Some%20Economic%20Questions.pdf>, last accessed date 4<sup>th</sup> January 2016). Either ignoring or not paying attention to this ambiguous conception of the dowry has moved some scholars to consider fragments such as *dig.* 23.4.7 (Pomp. 15 *ad Sab.*) *quoniam iam adquisita mulieri dos tum esset* as interpolated, cf. *Index Interp ad loc.* What I consider especially creative of Frier’s approach is the use of the law and economics paradigm in a critical way. He therefore takes advantages of some elements but rules out some others such as Gary Becker’s strict market orientation. This is not the place to develop this point but Frier’s use of the economic analysis of law proves to be a useful tool to discard some preconceptions of the interpolationist approach, in particular some ideas on shifting the risk. Other approaches such as the social anthropological study by J. GOODY – S.J. TAMBIAH (eds.), *Bridewealth and Dowry*, Cambridge 1973, offers interesting points of view, but sometimes too wide to be extrapolated to the complicate evolution of Roman dowries. For example, the concept of dowry as a ‘pre-mortem inheritance’ is not always useful to describe this institution.

property and the wife's interest) must be kept in mind in order to understand some legal problems arising from this ambiguous institution.

Starting from this framework, the *pacta dotalia*, closely linked<sup>5</sup> to the *actio rei uxoriae* can be defined as agreements aimed at modifying some elements of the dotal contract. They were mainly concerned with the return of the dowry through death or divorce but sometimes also with some financial questions during the marriage. Modifying the rules to determine who must run the risk in some particular situations is a typical example of *pactum dotale*.<sup>6</sup> It is known as a form of a *permutatio dotis*.

The *pacta dotalia* are also commonly mentioned in the literary sources,<sup>7</sup> sometimes as “anecdotal memorabilia of the more sensational cases”<sup>8</sup> and are developed in *dig. 23.4 (de pactis dotalibus)*, but for practical reasons (mainly that we are dealing with a casuistic system) some are also treated in other titles or chapters of the Digest or tangentially affected by imperial constitutions included in CI 5.14. This is the case of the *permutatio dotis*, which is dealt with in other titles and which offers some controversial cases that have something to do with the principle – assumed by part of the scholarship as typical of Justinian – of not lessening the wife's rights. This is the focus of this paper, a subject that we shall tackle in rough outline because of the limited pages available. My contribution shall be devoted to giving another perspective on the question of the alleged principle of not lessening the wife's rights, as a part of a work in progress. Along these lines I am going to shorten problems such as the interpolation critique to the essential basics. Only the main texts can be analysed and unfortunately only in a succinct way.

Nineteenth century literature defended the existence of this principle<sup>9</sup> but the problem of its scope and even its actual existence in classical Roman law was already stressed and discussed in the old book by Corbett.<sup>10</sup> Since that time the topic has become controversial for many scholars. Some have insisted on the texts of the Digest in which some pacts against the interest of the wife are explicitly forbidden,<sup>11</sup> while others have focused on fragments which allow the wife to contract to her disadvantage as a proof of the nonexistence of such a principle in the classical law.

That a general principle of this kind has been therefore denied by a part of the scholarship is probably as a consequence of a preconception, i.e. that this ideological attitude – the wife's protection – was more typical of Justinian's times than of the so-called classical jurisprudence. As Volterra points out, some scholars have identified this principle as an interpolation based on the legislation of Justinian himself as *legislator uxorius*.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>5</sup> M. KASER, *Das römische Privatrecht*, Munich 1971, 341.

<sup>6</sup> The assertion by Susan TREGGIARI, *Roman Marriage*, 357, in the sense that the dowry “could be returnable by contract” is not exact. The contract only was a means to regulate the restitution not the cause of this restitution that could not be excluded.

<sup>7</sup> TREGGIARI, *Roman Marriage*, 165, points out that they are normally described in the literary sources of the Principate as *tabulae nuptiales*, after the documents on which they were drawn up. Also the legal sources used this denomination or other similar ones such as *instrumentum dotale* or *nuptiale instrumentum*. On the *Tabulae dotalis*, see C. SÁNCHEZ-MORENO ELLART, s.v. *tabulae dotalis*, in R.S. BAGNALL et al. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Ancient History*, New York 2012, 6509-10, and above all the classical contribution by B. KÜBLER, s.v., *RE IV A* (1932), 1949-45, who mentions in detail the different denominations and their corresponding sources. Concerning the part played by the *instrumentum dotale* in the wedding ceremony, see K.K. HERSCH, *The Roman Wedding. Ritual and Meaning*, New York 2010, 129-32.

<sup>8</sup> S. DIXON, ‘Family Females: Terentia and Tullia’, in B. RAWSON (cur.), *The Family in the Ancient Rome. New Perspectives*, New York 1997, 93-120, especially 94.

<sup>9</sup> A.V. BECHMANN, *Das römische Dotalrecht*, vol. II, Erlangen 1867, 227-28; C. CZYHLARZ, *Das römische Dotalrecht*, Giessen 1870, 291. In both cases the principle is affirmed in the field of the *permutatio dotis*.

<sup>10</sup> P.E. CORBETT, *The Roman Law of Marriage*, Oxford 1930, 200-2.

<sup>11</sup> For example, terms for restitution were subject to be shortening, but not to be lengthening (*dig. 23.4.14-18*). On this point, see *infra*.

<sup>12</sup> E. VOLTERRA, ‘In tema di *permutatio dotis*’, *RIL* 66 (1933), 295-302 = *Scritti giuridici I*, Naples 1991, 421-28, quotes, 421, P. BONFANTE, *Corso di diritto romano I*, Rome 1925, 534, n. 8.

A quite spread article by Burdese published as a criticism of Volterra's position insisted in its turn on the Justinianic nature of the principle of not lessening the wife's rights with regard to the *pacta dotalia*. Burdese admits the existence of punctual limits, such as a pact according to which the risk run by the husband is limited to *dolus* or a pact allowing a longer term for the *dotis restitutio*, but does not accept a general principle in that sense.

Starting from this preconception – i.e. that the protection of the wife is a feature of the Justinian legislation – the interpolation critique has pinpointed many allegedly altered fragments in the Digest that could justify this decision as typical of Justinian. Alternatively but not independently from the interpolationist approach, some scholars have insisted on considering every probable damage to the woman, even when it is only secondary, as a proof of this alteration.<sup>13</sup> As we shall try to stress, a mere reassignment of risk cannot necessarily be evaluated *per se* as a detriment to the wife, especially when the structure of the *actio rei uxoriae* allows a careful evaluation of the husband's administration of the dowry.

This principle of not lessening a wife's rights is directly but only partially stated, at least where due date for *restitutio dotis* is concerned in a fragment of Proculus, as widely known a jurist dated to the early 1<sup>st</sup> cent. AD.<sup>14</sup> This fragment is essentially significant because, apart from its date, it is difficult to distinguish whether it points out a principle or a specific regulation.

*Atilicinus Proculo suo salutem. Cum inter virum et uxorem pactum conventum ante nuptias factum sit, ut quibus diebus dos data esset, isdem divortio facto redderetur; post quinquennium quam nuptiae factae sunt uxor viro dotem dedit: divortio facto quaero, utrum quinquennii die vir uxori dotem redderet an statuto legibus tempore. Proculus respondit: quod ad diem reddendae dotis attinet, pacto existimo meliorem condicionem mulieris fieri posse, deteriore non posse: itaque si cautum est, ut propiore tempore, quam legibus constitutum est, reddatur, stari eo debere, si ut longiore, nec valere id pactum conventum. Cuius sententiae conveniens est dicere, si pacto convento cautum est, ut quanto serius quaeque et post nuptias data fuerit, tanto post divortium reddatur, si propiore, quam in reddenda dote constitutum est, data sit, valere pactum conventum, si longiore, non valere (dig. 23.4.17, Proculus 11 epist.).*

The principle involved in this text has been stated in other fragments included in the Digest (*dig.* 23.4.14 Paul. 35 *ad ed.*; *dig.* 23.4.15 Gai 11 *ad ed. prov.* and *dig.* 23.4.16 Paul. 35 *ad ed.*) but this is the oldest expression of it.<sup>15</sup> The question submitted to Proculus points out to an agreement that was made between a man and his wife before marriage,<sup>16</sup> according to which in case of divorce, the period granted for the return of the dowry ought to match the delay in its bestowal. The wife took five years to give the dowry to her husband and the question is whether the same period should be granted to the husband in order to return the dowry. The structure of Proculus' *responsum*, as Krampe outlines it, can be divided into three parts:<sup>17</sup> 1) *pacto-posse* tackles the basis of the decision: *pacto existimo meliorem condicionem mulieris fieri posse, deteriore non posse*; 2) *itaque-conventum*: Proculus illustrates the use of this principle by mentioning some

<sup>13</sup> This is the case of A. BURDESE, 'In tema di convenzioni dotali', *BIDR* 62 (1959), 157-84, who accepts the interpolationist theory and consequently identifies the mere change of the risk in the hands of the wife as a clear reason to distrust the principle of not lessening the wife's rights.

<sup>14</sup> See., e.g. W. KUNKEL, *Herkunft und soziale Stellung der römischen Juristen*, Weimar 1952, 123-25.

<sup>15</sup> It is remarkable, that Gaius' fragment is intercalated between two fragments of Paul's book 35 *ad edictum*. I shall return to this point later.

<sup>16</sup> This aspect of the question is not pointless, since there was probably a different regime according to whether the *pacta* had been agreed before or during marriage, see VOLTERRA, 'Permutatio dotis', 424: "Nei testi che trattano della *permutatio dotis* senza accennare alla condizione della mancanza di lesione da parte della donna, nè senza mostrare di averla adempiuta, ci troviamo invece di fronte ad una convenzione intercorsa fra le parti in un momento anteriore alle nozze, quando la costituzione dotale non era ancora perfezionata".

<sup>17</sup> Ch. KRAMPE, *Proculi epistulae. Eine frühklassische Juristenschrift*, Karlsruhe 1970, 49.

cases such as what happens if the dowry were returned in a shorter period or the opposite case, if it was returned within a longer time period; *cui-valere* includes the actual *responsum*, the answer to the problematic case submitted to the jurist: the agreement would only be valid if the return stipulated with a shorter delay. If the agreed delay were longer, such an agreement would not be valid.

Proculus deals with a case focused on the restitution of a dowry and debates the legitimacy of a pact on giving the dowry back after the due date, considering that the husband acquired the dowry five years after the wedding. The purport of the text makes clear that some limits for taking care of the wife's interests were included in the dotal pacts, but the main question is still the background of such a regulation.

It is obvious that some limits to the husband's administration of the dowry were laid down in order to protect the interests of the wife but at issue is the scope of these limits. Even Burdese, who denies that a general principle of not lessening the wife's rights existed in the law, admits this fact:<sup>18</sup> some rights such as the deadline or the liability of the husband including both *dolus* and *culpa* were indefeasible.<sup>19</sup> On the other hand, if this principle existed it is difficult to decide whether it was clearly stated in the *lex Iulia et Papia*, as Krampe suggests<sup>20</sup> or whether it was instead deduced by the classical jurisprudence from its general framework or whether it was first constructed by the classical jurists and subsequently delimited by them. In other words, was this principle only clearly stated around few matters such as the deadline concerning the restitution of the dowry and afterwards developed and generalised and carefully delimited by the jurisprudence? Probably this is the most sensible answer if we consider the distribution of the matters in the classical jurisprudence books excerpted from the Digest.

It is in my opinion significant that Proculus' fragment (*dig.* 23.4.17 11 *epist.*) is placed among other fragments dealing with the same subject: it follows two fragments of Paul (*dig.* 23.4.14 and 16 35 *ad ed.*) and in its turn a short fragment of Gaius is interspersed (*dig.* 23.4.15 11 *ad ed prov.*) between both. After Proculus' text comes another by Julian (*dig.* 23.4.18, Iul. 18 *dig.*) specifying that the forbidden agreement on lengthening the period of restitution of the dowry would be valid if made after the divorce. It is also significant that the two texts of Paul tackling this problem are excerpted from book 35 *ad edictum*. From this fragment comes also *dig.* 23.4.12.1 (Paul. 35 *ad ed.*).

*Ex pactis conventis, quae ante nuptias vel post nuptias interponi solent, alia ad voluntatem pertinent, ut mulier dote promissa se alat et donec nupta sit, dos ab ea non petatur, aut certam summam viro praestet et ab eo alatur, et his similia: alia ad ius pertinent, veluti quando dos petatur, quemadmodum reddatur, in quibus non semper voluntas contrahentium servatur. Ceterum si convenerit, ne omnino dos petatur, indotata erit mulier (dig. 23.4.12.1, Paul. 35 ad ed.)*

This fragment offers a clue that the *lex Iulia et Papia* laid down some specific prohibitions and at the same time established a general freedom to agree, otherwise such a distinction between *ius* and *voluntas* would have been unnecessary.<sup>21</sup> This fragment has been called into question by the interpolation critique

<sup>18</sup> M. HUMBERT in his interesting book *Le remariage à Rome*, Milan 1972, 277, n. 35 avoids tackling the problem, since in an ambiguous way it refers to the principle of not lessening the wife's rights, ("le principe général proclamant la nullité des conventions dotales") but he points out only to "conventions retraignant le droit de la femme à la restitution". He is aware of the complexity of this question since he quotes BURDESE, 'In tema di convenzioni', 181-82 but does not tackle the problem.

<sup>19</sup> BURDESE, 'In tema di convenzioni', 182.

<sup>20</sup> KRAMPE, *Proculi epistulae*, 50.

<sup>21</sup> J.F. STAGL, *Favor dotis. Die Privilegierung der Mitgift im System des römischen Rechts*, Vienna – Cologne – Weimar 2009, 308, insists on this point.

on fairly weak grounds. According to Koschaker, who based his affirmations on Lenel's *Palingenesia*<sup>22</sup> this general classification of pacts does not make sense in this part of Book 35 and in particular as concerns this specific case.<sup>23</sup> Koschaker's explanation implies in my opinion some preconceptions, which are difficult to prove. In a systematic approach a previous classification is more suitable than a sudden treatment like that of Paul. But Paul deals with a casuistic system where a classification is made provided it is needed. The jurist would tackle every case by using the argumentation which – in his opinion was required. It is unnecessary that a systematic contrast between both kinds of pacts be stressed at the beginning of the chapter, and that is especially significant in a work in which the edict is commented upon, bearing in mind the complexity – in our present conception – systematic structure of the edict itself and, at the same taking into account the regulations of the *lex Iulia et Papia*.

It is likely that the origin of the very generalisation of this principle through involving texts dealing with different questions that in their turn were laced on the same footing) ignoring their differences can be traced in the Basilica, in the *scholium* 1 *καὶ συνεστῶτος τοῦ γάμου* to the Greek translation of *dig.* 23.3.26 (Mod. 1 *reg.*):

*Ita constante matrimonio permutari dotem posse dicimus, si hoc mulieri utile sit, si ex pecunia in rem aut ex re in pecuniam: idque probatum est (dig. 23.3.26, Mod. 1 reg.).*

The scholium comments the expression in this way:

B. 29.1.22 sch. 1 (SCHELEMA B. V) *καὶ συνεστῶτος τοῦ γάμου*  
*Ὡστε μήπω συστάτος τοῦ γάμου, κὰν μὴ συμφέρῃ τῇ γυναικί, δυνατόν ἐστὶν ἐναλλαγὴν γίνεσθαι τῶν ἐπιδοθέντων πραγμάτων λόγῳ προικός, ἐπειδὴ μήτε ἤρξατο προιζ εἶναι τὰ ἐπιδοθέντα μήτε τοῦ γάμου συστάτος. Ἐναλλαγὴν εἶπον ἐπὶ γὰρ τοῖς δεδομένοις καὶ μείνασιν ἐν προικὶ πράγμασιν οὐδὲ πρὸ τῶν γάμων δύναται συμφωνεῖν τὰ ἐπὶ βλάβῃ αὐτῆς ἢ γυνῆ ὡς ὁ Πρόκουλος ἐν τῷ ἐξῆς τιτ. διγ. ιζ' φησίν.*

According to this commentary, when a marriage has not yet been contracted (*μήπω συνεστῶτος τοῦ γάμου*) the *permutatio dotis* is possible even when it was not favourable to the wife's interest.<sup>24</sup> It is in this context that the above-mentioned fragment of Proculus is quoted, but we hardly need to say that this comparison implies a view that likely was not the conception of classical jurisprudence.

In my opinion the scholiast takes into account a contrast between a *permutatio dotis* in the case of a marriage not yet contracted and the same institution in the framework of a current marriage and is at the same time concerned to put the situation of a *permutatio dotis* in a not yet contracted marriage on the same footing as that of the statement of Proculus. Proculus was dealing with a case in which probably the *lex Iulia* was unequivocal as to the deadline for restitution. However, from this categorical statement and some others (such as forbidding a limitation of the husband's liability for *dolus*) classical jurisprudence deduced a general principle of not lessening the wife's rights that could have been in some aspects – as in the case of the

<sup>22</sup> O. LENEL, *Palingenesia Iuris Civilis: Iuris consultorum reliquiae quae Iustiniani digestis continentur ceteraque iurisprudentiae civilis fragmenta*, vol. I, Leipzig 1889 (repr. Graz 1960), 535-38.

<sup>23</sup> P. KOSCHAKER, 'Unterhalt der Ehefrau und Frucht der *dos*', *Studi in onore di Pietro Bonfante* IV, Milano 1930, 3-27, especially 24-25.

<sup>24</sup> This text has not been analysed by J.M. SONTIS, *Die Digestensumme des Anonymos. I. Zum Dotalrecht*, Heidelberg 1937, whose theories were highly interpolationist. BURDESE, 'In tema di convenzioni', 160-61, interprets this scholium as a proof of an interpolation by Justinian. In my opinion this scholium is a proof of the new Justinianic policy: the compilers tried to remove the apparent contradictions with this commentary. That means that the essential of the text have been not altered in a significant way.



*permutatio dotis* – narrowly interpreted. The scholiast deduces from Proculus' text that the *ratio decidendi* was exactly the same as in the *permutatio dotis*, which is not directly stated in the sources.

The generalization of this principle was probably far from the last stage of development of classical jurisprudence, which doubtless explained and delimited the scope of it. In this sense Burdese's contribution is well aimed, but on the other hand he is too radical in deeming as interpolated the texts in which the risk is put onto the wife as an example of a pact detrimental to the wife's interests. In my opinion the existence of a general principle of protecting the wife's rights is compatible with different degrees of protection according to different cases. The scope of this principle was diversely developed by the classical jurisprudence by taking into account different cases and the *permutatio dotis* was a case in which many interests should be borne in mind.

We can extract from the sources essentially two areas in which some controversial cases of *pacta dotalia* arise: the *permutatio dotis* and the *pactum de dote non reddenda*. Both cases entail limits to the principle of not lessening the wife's rights but do not directly contradict this principle. The latter case is not the focus of this paper but for the sake of clarity we can briefly tackle *Vat. Frag.* 120 (Ulp. 33 *ad ed.*).

*Inter cetera de reddenda dote pacta praeter legitimam ut retentionum ratio habeatur si quidem convenit, eo pacto verendum est, ne non deterior dotis causa fiat, nisi in eum casum, quo filii extant, convenerit; hoc enim iure utimur et Iulianus scribit et est rescriptum. Tum igitur et universa dos retineri uno filio interveniente potest, si modo non culpa viri divortium factum est. Quod si nihil convenit, exercendae retentiones non sunt nisi legitimae (Frag. Vat. 120, Ulp. 33 ad ed.)*

In this case the very definition of dowry, related to mitigating the burdens of marriage, implies the importance of the offspring and its value in causing a conflict of interests between the offspring and the wife. The *pactum de dote non reddenda* is allowed and the dowry would be retained by the husband as long as at least one child from the marriage existed and the marriage was not terminated by misconduct of the husband. That could also explain the fragments of higher complexity such as *dig.* 33.4.1.1 (Ulp. 19 *ad ed.*).<sup>25</sup> To sum up, these cases involved a limit to the wife's rights: 1) dowries are conceived to ease the burdens of marriage and 2) the offspring plays an important part.<sup>26</sup> We must bear in mind that the protection of the wife must be understood and contextualized within the framework of a system in which marriage itself was of public interest.<sup>27</sup>

Other fragments developing the principle of not lessening the wife's rights regarding *permutatio dotis* (*dig.* 23.3.26 Mod. 1 *reg.*; *dig.* 23.4.21 Iul. 17 *dig.*; *dig.* 23.4.29 pr. Scaev 2 *resp.*), include the clause that the wife's right cannot be lessened. According to the interpolationist approach these three fragments would have been manipulated<sup>28</sup> or at least abridged by the compilers and on these grounds can be discarded as evidence

<sup>25</sup> About this difficult fragment see the recent commentary by R. KNÜTEL, 'Uxores constrictae', *Fundamina* 12 (2014), 467-77, esp. 471-73.

<sup>26</sup> Because of the importance of the offspring, the *Senatus Consultum Orfitianum* protected the children of the first marriage against the mother who marries again, see HUMBERT, *Remariage*, 277.

<sup>27</sup> STAGL, *Favor dotis*, 309, by commenting *dig.* 23.4.12.1 (Paul. 35 *ad ed.*) underlines that according to the *ius publicum* (implicitly pointed out by the use of the term *utilitas*) women should have a dowry in order to get married, to have offspring and to achieve the continuity of social order. As F. HORAK, *Rationes decidendi. Entscheidungsbegründungen bei den älteren römischen Juristen bis Labeo*, Innsbruck 1969, 254, pointed out: "Im Dotalrecht, insbesondere im Bereich der Dotalpacta, spielten also rechtspolitische Erwägungen – Interessenabwägung – eine große Rolle, und hier war ein weites Feld für Kontroversen für und gegen *ius cogens* und *ius dispositivum*".

<sup>28</sup> Of course, sometimes the ancient scholarship, which defined the principle of not lessening the wife's right as present in the classical regulation of the dowry, resorts to interpolation critique too. E.g. see on the above quoted *dig.* 33.4.1.1 (Ulp. 35 *ad ed.*), CZHYLARZ, *Dotalrecht*, 433-34.

because in other texts the wife was allowed to contract in her damage. In my opinion, however, the signs that indicate these texts are interpolated seem inconclusive. Regarding to the second alleged reason, I think that this assertion is simplistic, for only in the context of the whole dowry could a shift of the risk be evaluated and especially when the character of the *actio rei uxoriae* is borne in mind. A rapid commentary of these texts concerning the *permutatio dotis* is the last part of my paper.

A *permutatio dotis* could involve many legal difficulties, including that of the prohibition of gifts between spouses.<sup>29</sup>

*Si pacta sit mulier, ut sive pluris sive minoris fundus aestimatus venierit, pretium quanto res venierit in dote sit, stari eo pacto oportet: sed si culpa mariti minoris venierit, et id ipsum mulierem consequi (dig. 23.4.12.2, Paul. 35 ad ed.)*

In this fragment also included into book 35 *ad edictum*, Paul takes into account an agreement by virtue of which a wife agrees that a plot of land given by way of dowry could be sold for either more or less than the appraised value, with the consequence that the final price shall be part of the dowry. According to Burdese the text makes no sense because the references to the benefit of the wife are likely interpolated, but the warning *sed si culpa mariti minoris venierit, et id ipsum mulierem consequi* seems in my opinion a logical consequence of Paul's argumentation. The price of the plot of land is subject to market demands and consequently remains out of the control of the parties, but when the husband for some reason could be held responsible for not having managed a better price he must liable for it. The text does not develop in which way the husband could be liable for having sold it at a final price that implied damages to the wife's interests, whether because he did not negotiate with the same care as for his own interest or whether he acted dishonestly.

It is significant that the sources do not explain which were the specific contents – in this context of dowry – of *periculum*, but only point out who ran the risk in some cases,<sup>30</sup> but the structure of the *actio rei uxoriae* involves subsequent control of the husband's administrating of the dowry and quantitative determination of the possible damage to the wife's interests.<sup>31</sup> In any event we are not dealing in this case with a damage to the wife's interest immediately ascribable to the husband, but with a mere consequence of market fluctuations.

*Si mulier dotis causa promiserit certam summam et pro ea mancipia in dotem dederit ea condicione, ut periculo eius essent et si quid ex his natum esset ad eam pertineat, stari pacto convento oportebit: nam constat posse inter uxorem et virum conveniri, ut dos, quae in pecunia numerata esset, permutaretur et transferatur in corpora, cum mulieri prodest (dig. 23.4.21, Iul. 17 dig).*

This fragment of the *Digesta* of Julian presents a case where a wife had promised an amount of money by way of dowry but gives instead of which some slaves under the condition that they ought to be at her risk. According to Burdese (but also according to other scholars<sup>32</sup>) the last remark (*cum mulieri prodest*) must

<sup>29</sup> This is not the point here, but it was briefly dealt with by BURDESE, 'In tema di convenzioni', 166-67.

<sup>30</sup> H. HONSELL, 'Das *periculum nominis* in Dotalrecht', *ZRG* 78 (1966), 365-73.

<sup>31</sup> H.-J. WOLFF, 'Zur Stellung der Frau im klassischen römischen Dotalrecht', *ZRG* 53 (1933), 297-371, especially 299. The system is flexible where the elements of the dowry are concerned, even the *fundus dotalis* could be sold provided its value could be guaranteed to the wife (D. 23.5.13.4 Ulp 5 *de adult.*).

<sup>32</sup> VOLTERRA, '*Permutatio dotis*', 422, rejects the interpolation of this part. BURDESE, 'In tema di convenzioni', 158-59, esp. n. 9, affirms that the last remark is interpolated and that this idea is shared by Volterra, which is not exactly accurate. In general, vid. *Index interp. ad loc.*

be interpolated because it does not fit well with the rest of the text, in which some damage is inflicted to the wife's interests. But actually it is the wife herself who modifies the dotal object and the modification implies a higher risk, which is why it seems reasonable that she runs the risk. The mere switch of the risk, linked to a modification decided by the wife, does not mean damage, since this element cannot be evaluated in isolation from the rest of the data of the contract itself.<sup>33</sup>

Burdese quoted the above quoted fragment along with *dig. 23.4.29 pr. (Scaevol. 2 resp.)*

*Cum maritus, qui aestimata praedia in dotem acceperat, manente matrimonio pactus est circumscribendae mulieris gratia, ut praedia inaestimata essent, ut sine periculo suo ea deteriora faceret: quaesitum est, an secundum priores dotalis tabulas praedia aestimata remanerent et periculum eorum ad maritum pertineret. Respondi non idcirco pactum de quo quaereretur impediri, quod in matrimonio factum esset, si deteriore loco dos non esset: nihilo minus eo pacto admissio, si deteriora praedia faceret, eo etiam nomine dotis eum actione teneri (dig. 23.4.29 pr., Scaevol. 2 resp.).*

This text by Cervidius Scaevola is in my opinion fundamental to understand the aim and function of the *actio rei uxoriae* (in the text of the compilers *actio de dote*) as a way of defending the wife's interests by taking into account the *pacta dotalia* and their practical result. Sometimes the very notion of damage in a specific *pactum dotalis* cannot be evaluated during marriage but at the moment of the restitution of the dowry.

The husband had received by way of dowry two *aestimata* plots of land probably<sup>34</sup> *venditionis causa*, but during the marriage the wife is persuaded by the husband, who acts under the will to defraud her (*circumscribendae mulieris gratia*), to accept those pieces of land as *inaestimata*, which of course implies a risk to the plots. That entails, of course that the risk will be for the wife. The jurist is asked whether the plots remain as conceived in the *tabulae dotalis* or whether the pact should be valid.<sup>35</sup> In his answer Scaevola affirms that the pact in principle must be accepted when no lowering of the amount of the dowry will occur, but also that always the total amount should be covered by the *actio rei uxoriae*. As Volterra outlined the possible alterations of the text do not discard that the final decision was that of Scaevola<sup>36</sup> and he took into account the principle of not lessening the wife's rights.

But which of these could be the reason that justifies a different treatment of the risk in the *permutatio dotis* where the rights of the wife are concerned? Probably starting from the comparison of dowry with agency is especially fruitful in understanding the scope and also the limits of this concept. As Frier warns we use the term 'agency' of course not in its legal sense but as conceived in New Institutional Economics.<sup>37</sup> According to this paradigm, agency tackles the problem of how the principal can "face difficulties in trying to monitor the actions of his agent". The principal knows essentially the results but these could be influenced by outside disturbances. The principal should also try to induce the agent to act in favour of the principal and so avoid opportunistic behaviour by the agent. In such a context the allocation of risk for dowry between the

<sup>33</sup> On shift of risk in contracts, vid in general R. COOTER – TH. ULEN, *Law and Economics*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., Boston 2008, 245-310.

<sup>34</sup> The nature of the *dotis aestimatio* is a controversial subject we cannot develop in depth, see A. CALONGE, 'Aestimatio dotis', *AHDE* 35 (1965), 5-57.

<sup>35</sup> I do not share Calonge's opinion ('Aestimatio dotis', 30) on the *actio dotis*. According to this scholar, this name – i.e. 'actio dotis' – could be an 'actio ex stipulatu' instead of 'actio rei uxoriae'. I think Lenel's reconstruction (*Palingenesia*, 243) as *actio rei uxoriae* is trustworthy.

<sup>36</sup> VOLTERRA, 'Permutatio dotis', 423.

<sup>37</sup> FRIER, 'Roman Dowry', 10; E.G. FURUBOTN – R. RICHTER, *Institutions and Economic Theory. The Contribution of the New Institutional Economics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Ann Arbor 2005, 162-70.

husband and the wife is a major concern. The husband is the agent who manages the property, but he has a right to do so to gain an income from the dowry to offset the *onera matrimonii*. The wife is the principal, one who has an interest in having the dowry returned to her intact, but who, during the course of the marriage may in some circumstances have no knowledge of how the husband handles the dowry.

This view of the protection of the wife takes also into account the reality of upper-class Roman women, who are essentially the subject of the texts included in the Digest. They were familiar with business and their protection through the *actio rei uxoriae* was based on the restitution of dowry bearing in mind its amount. Probably if not the wife herself then her family organised an agreement: “in a way that reduces the *agency costs* associated with the transaction” especially by monitoring her husband’s behaviour.<sup>38</sup>

Within this framework it makes sense that the imperative rules were reduced to essentials: the deadline of restitution or the scope of the husband’s liability. From them the jurists deduced a general principle of protection of the wife’s interests but of course no right can be conceived as absolute and consequently a line ought to be drawn somewhere: the limits were by the very nature of the dowry closely bound to marriage and offspring and the economic importance of making a dowry productive in the hands of the husband. In this context it is difficult to decide whether a pact could be against the wife’s interest or not where the running of the risk is implied. In order to give some incentives to the husband it could be reasonable in some cases to grant some advantages that at first sight could be interpreted as damages to the wife. But with the final evaluation of the *actio rei uxoriae* this possibility could be subsequently examined, as Cervidius Scaevola argues in his *responsum*.

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<sup>38</sup> FRIER, ‘Roman Dowry’, 12.



## From Mother to Daughter Aemilia Tertia's Legacy and *Ornamenta*

ALESSANDRA VALENTINI

As is well known, during the third century B.C. and throughout the second century B.C. the *gens* of the Cornelii Scipiones played an important role in the political, military and religious life of the Roman Republic.<sup>1</sup> Episodes referring to the women of this family, in which history and legend are often inextricably bound, allow better understanding of the role played by matrons in the management of the property of the Roman *gentes*. Analysis of the literary tradition enables tracing the strategies of the family's members to ensure an inheritance following the mother-daughter line, not permitted by the law.

According to scholars, Scipio Africanus Maior engaged his elder daughter, Cornelia Maior, with P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica Corculum before his death, which probably occurred in 184-183 B.C., and himself made the formal promise to pay the dowry.<sup>2</sup> Otherwise we can assume that his wife Aemilia Tertia encouraged the wedding of her second daughter, Cornelia Minor, with Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus.<sup>3</sup> This would certainly be after the death of her husband, in agreement with the *consilium propinquorum*. Polybius bears witness to how the dowry of the two Cornelias (their father's will established the amount of both) was paid to the husbands:

Μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα ταῖς Σκιπίωνος μὲν τοῦ μεγάλου θυγατράσιν, ἀδελφαῖς δὲ τοῦ κατὰ (θέσιν) πατρός, \*\*\* λαβόντος, αὐτὸν ἔδει τὴν ἡμίσειαν ἀποδοῦναι τῆς φερνῆς. ὁ γὰρ πατὴρ συνέθετο μὲν ἑκατέρᾳ τῶν θυγατέρων πεντήκοντα τάλαντα δώσειν, τούτων δὲ τὸ μὲν ἥμισυ παραχρῆμα τοῖς ἀνδράσιν ἔδωκεν ἢ μήτηρ, τὸ δ' ἥμισυ κατέλειπεν ἀποθνήσκουσα προσοφειλόμενον.<sup>4</sup>

Half the sum was paid by Aemilia, while the other half was handed over to the husband only at the woman's death: the amount of the dowry and the method of its payment was established by Scipio Africanus Maior but, because of the large sum to be given to the sons-in-law, the payment was deferred.<sup>5</sup> Again,

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<sup>1</sup> On the Scipiones' family see A.E. ASTIN, *Scipio Aemilianus*, Oxford 1967; C. NICOLET, *Les Gracques*, Paris 1967; H.H. SCULLARD, *Scipio Africanus. Soldier and Politician*, Bristol 1970; D. STOCKTON, *The Gracchi*, Oxford 1979; J.L. FERRARY, *Philhellénisme et impérialisme. Aspects idéologiques de la conquête romaine du monde hellénistique*, Rome 1988, in part. 589-616; L. PERELLI, *I Gracchi*, Roma 1993; G. BRIZZI, *Scipione e Annibale. La guerra per salvare Roma*, Roma – Bari 2007; M. JEHNE, *Roma nell'età della repubblica*, trad. it., Bologna 2008, in part. 43-64; 93-101.

<sup>2</sup> On Scipio Africanus Maior's death see ASTIN, *Scipio*, in part. 101.

<sup>3</sup> See S. DIXON, *Cornelia. Mother of the Gracchi*, London – New York 2007, in part. 5. At least three ancient authors attested Aemilia's active role in the choice of Cornelia Minor's future husband. See Liv. 38.52.8; Val. Max. 4.4.10; Plut. *TG* 4. In particular, the story told by Valerius Maximus, according to which Cornelia's dowry would be paid by the state (rejected by modern scholars) attests the fact that Aemilia's opinion was required by the *consilium propinquorum* to provide for the dowry to her daughter. See Val. Max. 4.4.10.

<sup>4</sup> Polyb. 31.27.1-4: "In the next place he had to pay the daughters of the Great Scipio, the sisters of his adoptive father, one-half of their portion. Their father had agreed to give each of his daughters fifty talents, and their mother had paid half of this to their husband at once on their marriage, but left the other half owing on her death".

<sup>5</sup> According to the Roman legal system (Polyb. 31.27.5) the payment of the dowry had to be made within three years from the marriage. So Africanus Maior could himself have betrothed his eldest daughter and the remaining sum could be paid over time. After Scipio's death, the heir, Aemilia, became responsible for the payment. The woman, before her death, would have paid at least the first part of the dowry of both her daughters (Polyb. 31.27.3).

Polybius says that, when Aemilia died, only half the sum had been paid to each of them and that this fact was part of the agreement established by the parties, according to which the second instalment would be paid only at the woman's death:

κατὰ δὲ τοὺς Ῥωμαίων νόμους δέον ἐν τρισὶν ἔτεσιν ἀποδοῦναι τὰ προσοφειλόμενα χρήματα τῆς φερνῆς ταῖς γυναῖξί, προδοθέντων πρώτων τῶν ἐπίπλων εἰς δέκα μῆνας κατὰ τὸ παρ' ἐκείνοις ἔθος, εὐθέως ὁ Σκιπίων συνέταξε τῷ τραπεζίτῃ τῶν εἴκοσι καὶ πέντε ταλάντων ἑκατέρᾳ ποιήσασθαι τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν ἐν τοῖς δέκα μηνί. τοῦ δὲ Τεβερίου (καὶ) τοῦ Νασικᾶ Σκιπίωνος, οὗτοι γὰρ ἦσαν ἄνδρες τῶν προειρημένων γυναικῶν, ὅμα τῷ διελθεῖν τοὺς δέκα μῆνας προσπορευομένων πρὸς τὸν τραπεζίτην καὶ πυνθανομένων, εἴ τι συνετέτακτο Σκιπίων αὐτῷ περὶ τῶν χρημάτων, ἀκείνου κελεύοντος αὐτοὺς κομίζεσθαι καὶ ποιοῦντος τὴν διαγραφὴν ἑκατέρᾳ τῶν εἴκοσι καὶ πέντε ταλάντων, ἀγνοεῖν αὐτὸν ἔφασαν· δεῖν γὰρ αὐτοὺς οὐ πᾶν κατὰ τὸ παρόν, ἀλλὰ τὸ τρίτον μέρος κομίζεσθαι κατὰ τοὺς νόμους.<sup>6</sup>

The Greek historian also says that when the two brothers-in-law requested the payment of the banker and he gave them twenty-five talents instead of the third part of it, they thought it a mistake because the law allowed Scipio to retain them for three years. But Scipio Aemilianus maintained his decision to pay off the debt as soon as possible.

ὁ δὲ Σκιπίων ἔφησεν ἀγνοεῖν τούτων οὐδέν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς μὲν τοὺς ἀλλοτρίους τὴν ἐκ τῶν νόμων ἀκρίβειαν τηρεῖν, τοῖς δὲ συγγενέσι καὶ φίλοις ἀπλῶς χρῆσθαι (καὶ) γενναίως κατὰ δύναμιν. διὸ παραλαμβάνειν αὐτοὺς ἐκέλευε πᾶν τὸ χρῆμα παρὰ τοῦ τραπεζίτου. οἱ δὲ περὶ τὸν Τεβέριον ταῦτ' ἀκούσαντες ἐπανήγον σιωπῶντες, καταπεπληγμένοι μὲν τὴν τοῦ Σκιπίωνος μεγαλοψυχίαν, κατεγνωκότες δὲ τῆς αὐτῶν μικρολογίας, καίπερ ὄντες οὐδενὸς δευτέρου Ῥωμαίων.<sup>7</sup>

Besides Polybius' intention to offer an example of his patron and friend's moral qualities, the payment terms ensured that a substantial amount of money, previously belonging to Aemilia, passed to her daughters at their mother's death, through an inheritance following the mother-daughter line, not admitted by the law.<sup>8</sup>

The ancient tradition allows us to assume that Aemilia Tertia married Scipio Africanus Maior *cum manu*, a kind of legal bond by which the woman abandons her family's line of inheritance to become part of her husbands'.<sup>9</sup> So when her husband died, Aemilia became legally *sui iuris* and, although subject to the

<sup>6</sup> Polyb. 31.27.5-8: "According to Roman law the part of the dowry still due had to be paid to the women in three years, the personal property being first handed over within ten months according to Roman usage. But Scipio at once ordered his banker to pay the whole twenty-five talents to each of them in ten months. When the ten months had elapsed, Tiberius Gracchus and Scipio Nasica, who were the women's husbands, applied to the banker and asked if he had received any orders from Scipio about the money. When the banker asked them to receive the sum and made out for each of them a transfer of twenty-five talents, they said he was mistaken; for according to the law they should not at once receive the sum, but only a third of it".

<sup>7</sup> Polyb. 31.27.14-16: "Scipio answered that he was quite aware of that, but that while as regards strangers he insisted on the letter of the law, he behaved as far as he could in an informal and liberal way to his relatives and friends. He therefore begged them to accept the whole sum from the banker. Tiberius and Nasica on hearing this went away without replying, astounded at Scipio's magnanimity and abashed at their own meanness, although they were second to none in Rome".

<sup>8</sup> See S. DIXON, 'Polybius on Roman Women and Property', *AJPh* 106 (1985), 147-70, in part. 156.

<sup>9</sup> Scholars have much discussed the legal form of the marriage of the women of this *gens*. Some clues in Polybius' narration related to Aemilianus' sisters allow us to assume that these marriages were *cum manu*. On these aspects, in general see R. VIGNERON, 'L'antiféministe loi Voconia et les Schleichwege des Lebens', *Labeo* 29 (1983), 140-53; J. GARDNER, *Women in Roman Law and Society*, London – Sydney 1986, in part. 11-14; S. TREGGIARI, *Roman Marriage. Iusti coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian*, Oxford 1991; C. FAYER, *La familia romana. Aspetti giuridici e antiquari*, vol. II: *Sponsalia, matrimonio, dote*, Rome 2005, in part. 199-222. See also DIXON, 'Polybius', in part. 157: "It is, therefore, notable that in his account of the family fortunes of the Aemilii Paulli and the Corneli Scipiones, Polybius apparently assumes that both generations of women were *in manu mariti*. Witness are his statement that the elder Aemilia had shared in her husband's wealth, and her succession to his estate – which is suggestive, if not conclusive. Aemilianus' sisters, the younger Aemiliae, both lived after marriage in the homes of their fathers-in-law.

formal control of a *tutor* (whose identity we don't know), she could own and administer her properties as well as set up economic relations with other people. From a legal point of view, after her husband's death, in fact, she received the same rights as their children did.<sup>10</sup> According to S. Dixon, Aemilia's act (or Scipio Africanus Maior's act if the daughters' marriages were arranged before his death) was planned to establish a form of inheritance that followed the mother-daughter line, avoiding the effects of the *lex Voconia*, promulgated in 169 B.C.<sup>11</sup>

Scholars identify two legal systems used to bypass these rules, the *legatum per damnationem* and the *fideicommissum*: the former was used to create a bond at the heir's expense and in favour of the legatee. Thus the daughter became legatee because a future son-in-law, of uncertain identity (in fact at the moment of the will's draft he was an *incerta persona*), couldn't become heir.<sup>12</sup> Instead, through the *fideicommissum* the heir was asked, either orally or in writing, to transfer the inheritance to the woman. In this case the will created an obligation on the heir founded on the *fides*: this had no legal value but it does constitute a 'moral commitment'.<sup>13</sup>

S.B. Pomeroy thinks that Aemilia's legacy is one of the first examples of the many systems used to bypass the *lex Voconia*: as a widow, Aemilia would set up as her heir Scipio Aemilianus, without affecting her daughters' rights. So it is possible that in 162 B.C. Scipio Aemilianus, claiming to pay the last part of the two Corneliae's dowries, allowed Aemilia to leave a great sum to her daughters, which was left out of the inheritance.<sup>14</sup> From this perspective, Scipio's decision permitted fulfilling Aemilia's (his adoptive aunt) will, to which, as the heir, he was bound by the *fides*: his action was not then, as Polybius asserts, a demonstration of his generosity.

Another event Polybius brings out, the later transfer of Aemilia's *ornamenta* to Papiria, Scipio Aemilianus' biological mother, can be read as an attempt to ensure the ownership of property to women. During her life Aemilia Tertia owned a very rich *apparatus*, used during religious ceremonies:

συνέβαινε δὲ τὴν Αἰμιλίαν, τοῦτο γὰρ ἦν ὄνομα τῆ προειρημένη γυναικί, μεγαλομερῆ τὴν περίστασιν ἔχειν ἐν ταῖς γυναικείαις ἐξόδοις, ἅτε συνηκμακυῖαν τῷ βίῳ καὶ τῆ τύχῃ τῆ Σκιπίωνος· χωρὶς γὰρ τοῦ περὶ τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὴν

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Polybius' insistence that the younger Aemiliae had no claim in law on their mother's estate implies that they had passed formally into a different family grouping on marriage... It is evident that, once her (Aemilia's) husband's death rendered her *sui iuris*, a woman owned property, made wills, and created obligations. The great difference between Aemilia, wife of Scipio Africanus Maior, and Terentia, wife of Cicero, was Aemilia's status as widow".

<sup>10</sup> See E.A. HEMELRIJK, *Matrona Docta*, London – New York 1999, in part. 101-2; FAYER, *La familia*, in part. 185-222.

<sup>11</sup> According to this law, women of the first census class could not become heirs of more than hundred thousand *axes*. To ensure that this law wasn't bypassed, the Senate decided also that the *legatum* could not exceed the sum received by the heir. The law was proposed by the tribune Q. Voconius Saxa, supported, if not inspired by Cato. See Cic. *Pro Balbo* 21; Gell. *noct.* 17.6 e 20.1.23; Gaius *Inst.* 2.226; 274. The *lex Voconia* also rearranged the legal matters concerning the *legata*, already treated by the *lex Furia*. See C. HERRMANN, *Le rôle judiciaire et politique des femmes sous la république romaine*, Paris 1964, in part. 82-84; GARDNER, *Woman*, in part. 170-77; J.P. HALLETT, *Fathers and Daughters in Roman Society*, Princeton 1984, in part. 93-97; J.A. CROOK, 'Women in Roman Succession', in B. RAWSON (ed.), *The Family in Ancient Rome*, Beckeham 1986, 58-82, in part. 65-67; F. GORIA, 'Il dibattito sull'abrogazione della Lex Oppia e la condizione della donna romana', in R. UGLIONE (ed.), *La donna nel mondo antico* (Atti del Convegno Nazionale di Studi Torino 21-22-23 April 1986), Torino 1987, 265-303, in part. 265-303; J.K. EVANS, *War, Women and Children in Ancient Rome*, London 1991, in part. 72-83; L. MONACO, *Hereditas et mulieres. Riflessioni in tema di capacità successoria della donna in Roma antica*, Napoli 2000, in part. 185-99; F. CENERINI, *La donna romana. Modelli e realtà*, Bologna 2002, in part. 38; N.F. BERRINO, *Mulier potens. Realtà femminili nel mondo antico*, Galatina 2006, in part. 15-17.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. G. BOYER, 'Le droit successorial romain dans les oeuvres de Polybe', *RIDA* 4 (1950), 169-87, in part. 175 and DIXON, 'Polybius', in part. 154. However, a son-in-law, when the marriage was celebrated, assumed full control of the dowry.

<sup>13</sup> See J.A. CROOK, 'Intestacy in Roman Society', *PCPhS* 19 (1973), 38-44; DIXON, 'Polybius', in part. 154.

<sup>14</sup> Based on the assumption of S.B. POMEROY, 'The Relationship of the Married Woman to her Blood Relatives in Rome', *Ancient Society* 7 (1976), 215-17, in part. 223-24, EVANS, *War*, in part. 76 argues that this trick allowed men as well to transfer to their daughters a substantial part of their capital by claiming that it was a posthumous payment of the dowry.



ἀπὴν κóσμου καὶ τὰ κανᾶ καὶ τὰ ποτήρια καὶ τᾶλλα τὰ πρὸς τὴν θυσίαν, ποτὲ μὲν ἀργυρᾶ, ποτὲ δὲ χρυσᾶ, πάντα συνεξηκολούθει κατὰ τὰς ἐπιφανεῖς ἐξόδους αὐτῆ, τό τε τῶν παιδισκῶν καὶ τὸ τῶν οἰκετῶν τῶν παρεπομένων πλῆθος ἀκόλουθον ἦν τούτοις.<sup>15</sup>

In public occasions Aemilia thus used a rich *apparatus* and so exhibited her family's wealth to the public eye: through her the men of the Scipiones' *gens* showed *per imagines* their economic and political importance. Such a display of grandeur, achieved through the parade of objects and people, could be achieved for Aemilia only after the repeal of the *lex Oppia*, when once again it became possible for women to display their social status.<sup>16</sup>

In 162 B.C., the year of its owner's death, Aemilia's *apparatus* became part of an inheritance that followed the female line within a different *gens*. According to Polybius:

ταύτην δὴ τὴν περικοπὴν ἄπασαν εὐθέως μετὰ τὸν τῆς Αἰμιλίας τάφον ἐδωρήσατο τῇ μητρὶ, \*\*\* ἢ συνέβαινε κεχωρισθαι μὲν ἀπὸ τοῦ Λευκίου πρότερον ἤδη χρόνοις πολλοῖς, τὴν δὲ τοῦ βίου χορηγίαν ἐλλιπεστέραν ἔχειν τῆς κατὰ τὴν εὐγένειαν φαντασίας. διὸ τὸν πρὸ τοῦ χρόνον ἀνακεχωρηκίαις αὐτῆς ἐκ τῶν ἐπισήμων ἐξόδων, τότε κατὰ τύχην οὐσῆς ἐπιφανοῦς καὶ πανδήμου θυσίας, ἐκπορευομένης αὐτῆς ἐν τῇ τῆς Αἰμιλίας περικοπῇ καὶ χορηγία, καὶ πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις καὶ τῶν ὀρεοκόμων καὶ τοῦ ζεύγους καὶ τῆς ἀπῆνης τῆς αὐτῆς ὑπαρχούσης, συνέβη τὰς γυναῖκας θεωμένας τὸ γεγονὸς ἐκπλήττεσθαι τὴν τοῦ Σκιπίωνος χρηστότητα καὶ μεγαλοψυχίαν καὶ πάσας προτεινούσας τὰς χεῖρας εὐχεσθαι τῷ προειρημένῳ πολλὰ κάγαθά.<sup>17</sup>

Through Scipio Aemilianus' gift, Papiria, who after the divorce from her husband L. Aemilius Paulus suffered from economic hardship, regained her social status.<sup>18</sup> In giving part of Aemilia's inheritance to his mother, Scipio Aemilianus allowed her to participate again in public religious ceremonies in order to offer, through the rehabilitation of the woman in her rank, a public expression of his devotion to his mother: but this act allowed him above all to display his wealth, useful to promoting his political career.<sup>19</sup> During public ceremonies, as in the case of the matrons' *funera* and especially during the *laudatio funebris*, the women

<sup>15</sup> Polyb. 31.26.3-5: "This lady, whose name was Aemilia, used to display great magnificence whenever she left her house to take part in the ceremonies that women attend, having participated in the fortune of Scipio when he was at the height of his prosperity. For apart from the richness of her own dress and of the decorations of her carriage, all the baskets, cups and other utensils for the sacrifice were either of gold or silver, and were borne in her train on all such solemn occasions, while the number of maids and men-servants in attendance was correspondingly large".

<sup>16</sup> The *lex Oppia* was proposed by the tribune Caius Oppius in 215 B.C. during the second Punic war (Liv. 34.1) with the purpose of preventing the display of the *gentes'* wealth. It was repealed in 195 B.C. On this law see M. BONAMENTE, 'Leggi suntuarie e loro motivazione', in *Tra Grecia e Roma. Temi antichi e metodologie moderne*, Rome 1980, 67-92; P. CULHAM, 'The Lex Oppia', *Latomus* 41 (1982), 786-93, in part. 785-92; E.M. AGATI MADEIRA, 'La Lex Oppia et la condition juridique de la femme dans la Rome républicaine', *RIDA* 51 (2004), 87-99; I. MASTROROSA, 'Speeches pro and contra Women in Livy 34, 1-7', *Latomus* 5 (2004), 590-611.

<sup>17</sup> Polyb. 31.26.6-8: "Immediately after Aemilia's funeral all these splendid appointments were given by Scipio to his mother, who for many years had been separated from her husband, and whose means were not sufficient to maintain a state suitable to her rank. Formerly she had kept to her house on the occasion of such functions, and now when a solemn public sacrifice happened to take place, and she drove out in all Aemilia's state and splendour, and when in addition the carriage and pair and the muleteers were seen to be the same, all the women who witnessed it were lost in admiration of Scipio's goodness and generosity and, lifting their hands, prayed that every blessing might be his".

<sup>18</sup> On Papiria's marriage see S. BARNARD, 'Cornelia and the Women of her Family', *Latomus* 49 (1990), 383-92, in part. 386-87.

<sup>19</sup> Scholars suggest that the members of the *nobilitas* wanted to free their women from the legal prohibition on wearing and possessing more than fifteen ounces of gold, because the women could then become a means for visually displaying the *gens'* wealth. See G. CLEMENTE, 'Le leggi sul lusso e la società romana tra III e II secolo a.C.', in A. GIARDINA – A. SCHIAVONE (eds.), *Società romana e produzione schiavistica*, III, Bari 1981, 1-14; P. CULHAM, 'The Lex', in part. 786-93; P. DESIDERI, 'Catone e le donne (il dibattito liviano sull'abrogazione della *lex Oppia*)', *Opus* 3 (1984), 63-76; F. GORIA, 'Il dibattito sull'abrogazione della *Lex Oppia* e la condizione della donna romana', in R. UGLIONE (ed.), *La donna nel mondo antico* (Atti del Convegno Nazionale di Studi Torino 21-22-23 Aprile 1986), Torino 1987, 265-303; A. VALENTINI, *Matronae tra novitas e mos maiorum. Spazi e modalità dell'azione pubblica femminile nella Roma medio repubblicana*, Venezia 2012, in part. 8-21.

became the means through which the men openly displayed their political and economic power.<sup>20</sup> Polybius bears witness that Scipio Aemilianus achieved this goal: the women who attended to such display admired his generosity toward his mother. From this perspective Polybius' comment is remarkable: the other matrons recognized the objects used by Papiria as Aemilia's property, providing further confirmation that this *apparatus* showed the status of the Roman matron.

The history of Aemilia's sumptuous *apparatus* doesn't end with the transfer of ownership to Papiria, which marked the departure from the Scipiones' *gens*: when its new owner died, all objects and vehicles were given to two other women, Scipio Aemilianus' biological sisters:

\*\*\* φήμης περὶ αὐτοῦ (δια)διδομένης, μετέλλαξεν ἢ μήτηρ. ὁ δὲ τοσοῦτον ἀπέσχε τοῦ κομίσασθαί (τι) ὧν πρότερον ἐδωρήσατο, περὶ ὧν ἀρτίως εἶπον, ὥστε καὶ ταῦτα καὶ τὴν λοιπὴν οὐσίαν τὴν τῆς μητρὸς ἅπασαν ἀπέδωκε ταῖς ἀδελφαῖς, ἧς οὐδὲν αὐταῖς προσήκε κατὰ τοὺς νόμους. διὸ πάλιν τῶν ἀδελφῶν παραλαβουσῶν τὸν ἐν ταῖς ἐξόδοις κόσμον καὶ τὴν περίστασιν τὴν τῆς Αἰμιλίας, πάλιν ἐκαινοποιήθη τὸ μεγαλόψυχον καὶ φιλοίκειον τῆς τοῦ Σκιπίωνος προαιρέσεως.<sup>21</sup>

After her death in 159 or 158 B.C., Papiria, who had no legal ties with her son (he having been adopted by another *gens*), or with her daughters, who became parts of other families through their marriages, instituted Scipio Aemilianus as her heir: S. Dixon assumes that Papiria gave her property to her son for the purpose of leaving, again with Scipio Aemilianus' mediation, Aemilia's *apparatus*, previously given to her by her son, to her daughters.<sup>22</sup> Polybius describes this act as an expression of his generosity but it is clear that his behaviour was imposed by his mother's bequest.

C. Petrocelli proposes to explain the famous anecdote told by Valerius Maximus, concerning the matron from Campania and Cornelia, mother of the Gracchus brothers, as a polemical reference to the management of her mother Aemilia's property and *apparatus*: "Così si separarono per sempre le strade fra il patrimonio dei preziosi materni e Cornelia, e chissà che nella famosa frase attribuitale non si nascondesse anche la vena polemica per un bene che non fu mai suo".<sup>23</sup>

This analysis is, however, challenged by scholars because Scipio Africanus, becoming legatee of the woman's will, guaranteed that Aemilia's legacy (twenty-five talents) be handed over to her daughters after her death as a part of their dowries. But also Cornelia arranged the marriage of her daughter with Scipio Aemilianus. Plutarch also tells us that Tiberius Gracchus's political career began in his brother-in-law's shadow, thus confirming their good relations.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>20</sup> On these aspects see A. VALENTINI, 'Pratiche performative e costruzione dell'identità nella Roma repubblicana. I funerali femminili', in G. BALDACCINI – E.M. CIAMPINI – E. GIROTTI – G. MASARO (eds.), *Percorsi identitari tra Mediterraneo e Vicino Oriente antico*, Padova 2013, 49-66.

<sup>21</sup> Polyb. 31.28.7-9: "While the report of this was fresh, his mother died, and Scipio, far from taking back any of the gifts I mentioned above, gave the whole of it and the residue of his mother's property to his sisters, who had no legal claim to it. So that again when his sisters had thus come into the processional furniture and all the establishment of Aemilia, the fame of Scipio for magnanimity and family affection was again revived".

<sup>22</sup> See S. DIXON, *The Roman Mother*, London 1988, in part. 47.

<sup>23</sup> C. PETROCELLI, 'Cornelia, la matrona', in A. FRASCHETTI (ed.), *Roma al femminile*, Roma – Bari 1994, 21-70, in part. 41. Vd. Val. Max. 4.4: *Maxima ornamenta esse matronis liberos, apud Pomponium Rufum collectorum libro --- sic inuenimus: Cornelia Gracchorum mater, cum Campana matrona apud illam hospita ornamenta sua pulcherrima illius saeculi ostenderet, traxit eam sermone, donec e schola redirent liberi, et 'haec' inquit 'ornamenta sunt mea'* ("We discover that children are a married woman's greatest jewels from the following story in one of the collections of anecdotes by Pomponius Rufus. A lady from Campania was a guest at the house of Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchus brothers. While she was showing off her jewels, which were the most beautiful in that era. Cornelia kept her talking until her children came back from school. Pointing to them she said, 'These are my jewels'").

<sup>24</sup> On Sempronia's marriage and on the beginning of Tiberius Gracchus' political career, see Plut. *TG* 4.5.



## Il ruolo economico delle amiche di Plinio

ANNA GUADAGNUCCI

Plinio pubblica personalmente nove libri di lettere da lui inviate ad amici e conoscenti. Gli argomenti sono molto vari, ma lo scopo della raccolta è unico: presentare il loro autore come un modello di tutte le virtù morali e intellettuali della sua epoca; nel fare ciò, tuttavia, Plinio tramanda, più o meno incidentalmente, informazioni molto importanti sulla vita e sulla mentalità dei suoi giorni, cosicché è possibile ricavare indicazioni sul ruolo economico delle donne, nell'epoca e nella cerchia pliniana, attraverso alcune lettere inviate ad amiche e parenti<sup>1</sup> o incentrate sulle vicende economiche di donne dell'alta società:<sup>2</sup> tali epistole possono essere lo spunto per pettegolezzi, ma soprattutto danno a Plinio l'opportunità di mostrarsi come un generoso benefattore, o un grande avvocato, o il difensore della volontà dei defunti, o ancora un amico di signore importanti.

Per cominciare, Plinio autorappresenta la propria generosità verso donne di condizione sociale inferiore in tre lettere. Nella prima, scrive alla parente Calvina;<sup>3</sup> è stato davvero molto generoso verso questa giovane donna, poiché da una parte le ha donato 100.000 sesterzi per la dote quando suo padre era ancora vivo,<sup>4</sup> e dall'altra dopo la morte del padre ha annullato i debiti che il defunto aveva verso di lui e ha pagato quelli verso altri.<sup>5</sup> Nel contesto della lettera, quindi, Calvina ha un ruolo economico passivo, è oggetto della generosità del parente, nonché mezzo del suo compiacimento, espresso con subordinate complesse, che hanno lo scopo di simulare grande modestia: tutta la lettera intende mostrare quanto Plinio si prenda cura dei familiari e degli amici. Tuttavia Calvina, grazie al denaro ricevuto, riacquista un suo ruolo nel mondo e una sua indipendenza: non deve più preoccuparsi dei debiti, mentre il ricordo del padre prodigo è riabilitato. Degno di nota è, poi, il fatto che non si parli del marito: visto che Plinio le ha donato una buona dote e visto che non viene citata alcuna vedovanza, è probabile che Calvina sia sposata; di conseguenza è interessante che Plinio scriva direttamente a lei, che riceve direttamente il denaro dal ricco parente, in maniera indipendente rispetto ai suoi familiari di sesso maschile.

Nella seconda lettera,<sup>6</sup> Plinio si conferma attento alle doti delle giovani poco abbienti: non a caso offre alla figlia di *Quintilianus*, *animo beatissimum, modicum facultatibus*,<sup>7</sup> un dono di 50.000 sesterzi per

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<sup>1</sup> Plin. *epist.* 1.4, 2.4, 6.3, 7.11, 7.14. R. SYME, 'Correspondents of Pliny', *Historia* 34, 3 (1985), 324-59; R. SYME, 'People in Pliny', *JRS* 58 (1968), 135-51; R. SYME, 'Pliny's Less Successful Friends', *Historia* 9 (1960), 362-79.

<sup>2</sup> Plin. *epist.* 4.17, 3.19, 6.10, 2.20, 4.10, 5.1, 6.33, 8.18.

<sup>3</sup> Plin. *epist.* 2.4. Forse acquisita attraverso il matrimonio: Plinio la definisce *adfinis*, J.M. CARLON, *Pliny's Women. Costructing Virtue and Creating Identity in the Roman World*, Cambridge 2009, partic. 123-24.

<sup>4</sup> Plin. *epist.* 2.4.2. I 100.000 sesterzi sono donati da Plinio in aggiunta a quelli già stanziati dal padre: *praeter eam summam quam pater tuus quasi de meo dixit*. Questa intricata espressione probabilmente significa che la somma era dovuta a Plinio come creditore: come dice Sherwin-White, questa lettera è un notevole documento della mancanza di tatto dei Romani, A.N. SHERWIN-WHITE, *The Letters of Pliny. A Historical and Social Commentary*, Oxford 1966, partic. 149-50.

<sup>5</sup> Plin. *epist.* 2.4.2.

<sup>6</sup> Plin. *epist.* 6.32.

<sup>7</sup> Plin. *epist.* 6.32.2.

acquistare *vestes et comitatus* adatti al futuro marito, uomo importante. Qui, la giovane riceve una sorta di dote supplementare da parte di Plinio, che si dimostra generoso e rispettoso sia dell'*amicitia* nei confronti del padre, sia dello *status* del fidanzato.

La generosità verso le donne è oggetto anche di un'altra lettera: questa volta la beneficiaria non è una fanciulla, ma una donna anziana, la nutrice di Plinio,<sup>8</sup> che riceve in dono un *agellum*, del valore iniziale di 100.000 sesterzi,<sup>9</sup> un regalo generoso che dimostra il rispetto e la gratitudine del senatore verso una persona significativa della sua *domus*. Considerando la nota cura che Plinio riserva ai suoi liberti<sup>10</sup> e la sua grande disponibilità a manometterli,<sup>11</sup> non sorprende l'entità del dono per la balia, la cui rendita annua si aggira tra i 4000 e i 6000 sesterzi:<sup>12</sup> in questo modo la donna diventa una proprietaria indipendente, per mezzo di Plinio una donna con un ruolo economico, per quanto piccolo, autonomo nel suo tempo a prescindere della presenza di parenti di sesso maschile.

In altre lettere, invece, Plinio desidera mostrare la propria onestà morale tradizionale, mentre rispetta e cerca di realizzare le ultime volontà dei defunti:<sup>13</sup> tra questi ci sono anche donne, i cui voleri, espliciti o impliciti, valgono quanto quelli degli uomini.<sup>14</sup>

Così nel caso del testamento di Sabina:<sup>15</sup> Plinio, uno dei due eredi, decide, contro il proprio interesse, di rispettare un legato che è stato destinato allo schiavo *Modestus, quem liberum esse iussi*;<sup>16</sup> si tratta di un caso di coscienza: la signora ha dimenticato di prescrivere che Modestus venga liberato e niente obbliga gli eredi a liberarlo; tuttavia Plinio, rispettoso del palese desiderio della donna, propone al suo coerede di manumettere lo schiavo e rinunciare così al possesso di quel legato, che la legge avrebbe loro concesso.

Il senatore è, poi, erede di un'altra matrona, Pomponia Galla,<sup>17</sup> che ha diseredato il figlio Asudius Curianus e lasciato i suoi beni ad altri. Plinio respinge le subdole proposte del figlio diseredato, ma vuole ascoltare il suo punto di vista e organizza con lui un'udienza privata,<sup>18</sup> in presenza di due saggi uomini, Frontinus<sup>19</sup> e Corellius:<sup>20</sup> tuttavia Plinio è difensore della volontà di Pomponia Galla e giudica che la donna aveva buoni motivi per diseredare il figlio.

Se da una parte, queste lettere hanno lo scopo di sottolineare correttezza e dirittura morale di Plinio, nello stesso tempo, mostrano donne autonome nel redigere il proprio testamento, apparentemente non

<sup>8</sup> Plin. *epist.* 6.3. R.K. GIBSON – R. MORELLO, *Reading the Letters of Pliny the Younger. An Introduction*, Cambridge 2012, partic. 36-73.

<sup>9</sup> Purtroppo il terreno ha perso valore a causa della cattiva gestione dell'amministratore precedente. Plin. *epist.* 6.3.2.

<sup>10</sup> *CIL* V 5262, ll. 11-13.

<sup>11</sup> Quando Plinio parla della manumissione dei liberti dice: *Cupio enim patriam nostram omnibus quidem rebus augeri, maxime tamen civium numero; id enim oppidis firmissimum ornamentum*, Plin. *epist.* 7.32.1.

<sup>12</sup> L. LENAZ (cur.), *Plinio il giovane. Lettere ai familiari*, Milano 1994, partic. 444-45.

<sup>13</sup> Plinio rispetta non solo la volontà delle donne morte, ma anche degli uomini. È chiaro in Plin. *epist.* 5.7. *Saturninus* vuole lasciare una somma in eredità alla città di Como, ma la legge non lo permette: Plinio fa in modo che la città abbia il denaro. Poi Plinio, uno dei due eredi di *Acilianus*, decide di rispettare comunque la volontà del defunto, espressa nei codicilli, anche se essi non sono validi legalmente. A causa di questi due esempi, sono contraria all'opinione di Carlon, che dice: "Their inexperience or unfamiliarity with the law must often have hindered Roman women in the correct disposition of their estates, sometimes with dire consequences of those, like Modestus, they wished to benefit from their will" (CARLON, *Pliny's Women*, 128-29). Infatti, anche *Acilianus* e *Saturninus*, due uomini, commettono errori nel proprio testamento.

<sup>14</sup> Come nel caso del già citato Saturnino.

<sup>15</sup> Plin. *epist.* 4.10.

<sup>16</sup> Plin. *epist.* 4.10.1.

<sup>17</sup> Plin. *epist.* 5.1.

<sup>18</sup> Plin. *epist.* 5.1.5: *adhibui in consilium duos, quos tunc civitas nostra spectatissimos habuit, Corellium et Frontinum*.

<sup>19</sup> Ex-console e autore del *De aquis Urbis Romae*.

<sup>20</sup> Amico di famiglia transpadano, padre e fratello delle *Corelliae* citate nel seguito dell'articolo.

condizionate dagli uomini di casa: addirittura Pomponia Galla agisce contro il suo legittimo erede e figlio maschio, e manifesta così un effettivo potere sulla famiglia.

Se nell'ambito delle eredità Plinio è un modello positivo e nobile, esiste nel suo epistolario anche un esempio di comportamento opposto: M. Regulus, diventato ricco con la caccia all'eredità di ricchi vecchi e malati, ha recentemente raggirato Verania Gemina,<sup>21</sup> vedova di Pisone adottato da Galba; un oroscopo favorevole di guarigione, fatto redigere ad arte da Regulus, ha a tal punto sollevato lo spirito della dama malata, che questa ha disposto un legato per il truffatore. Regulus è disprezzatissimo da Plinio, visto che addirittura si abbassa a chiedere lasciti di scarsissimo conto e chiede ad Aurelia,<sup>22</sup> una matrona ignota, di lasciargli in eredità l'abito che indossa nel giorno della firma del suo testamento: la donna presa di sorpresa ubbidisce a Regolo, che si mostra tanto abietto, quanto grottesco.

Dunque le donne scrivono i loro testamenti e sono abbastanza economicamente indipendenti da attirare i cacciatori di eredità: il denaro di una donna vale quanto quello di un uomo.

Ancora più interessante è vedere che le donne possono agire legalmente nel campo dei beni di famiglia e così rivendicare i propri diritti in tribunale, come nel caso di Attia Viriola, ricordata in un'altra epistola pliniana.

In tale lettera, Plinio vuole dare mostra delle sue grandi doti di avvocato e così invia all'amico Voconius Romanus il resoconto del processo da lui patrocinato e intentato da Attia Viriola contro la matrigna.<sup>23</sup> In qualità di avvocato Plinio ha difeso Attia,<sup>24</sup> matrona *splendide nata*<sup>25</sup> e moglie di un senatore di rango pretorio: la donna rivendica i beni paterni davanti alle quattro sezioni riunite del tribunale centumvirale,<sup>26</sup> perché sostiene di essere stata diseredata ingiustamente a causa della matrigna. Infatti, solo undici giorni dopo il matrimonio, il vecchio padre, *amore captus*,<sup>27</sup> modificò il testamento in favore della nuova moglie. Plinio pronuncia una splendida *oratio*, il suo capolavoro, tramite cui ottiene che alla *noverca* vada un solo sesto dell'eredità.<sup>28</sup>

È interessante notare che in tale processo sono protagoniste due donne, che si contendono la stessa eredità: il ruolo economico femminile passa dalla *domus* ai tribunali, dove la legge stabilisce chi ha il diritto di possedere la ricchezza di famiglia e chi l'ha usurpata ingiustamente.

Ma si pensi anche a Domitia Lucilla, che diventa erede di una grande fortuna: in questo momento è il principale argomento di conversazione a Roma e coinvolge una famiglia ricca e molto in auge sotto i Flavi.<sup>29</sup> Plinio ne parla per lodare il comportamento inaspettato dello zio, nonché padre adottivo della donna, Domitius Tullus: in vita s'era circondato di adulatori e cacciatori di eredità, ma con la morte si è dimostrato migliore, visto che ha nominato unica erede Domitia Lucilla, mentre mostra ulteriore rettitudine lasciando all'ultima moglie soltanto alcuni *legati* di grande valore: una *noverca* ben diversa da quella di Attia Viriola.

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<sup>21</sup> Plin. *epist.* 2.20.

<sup>22</sup> Plin. *epist.* 2.20.9.

<sup>23</sup> Plin. *epist.* 6.33.

<sup>24</sup> Forse strettamente imparentata con Sextus Attius Suburanus Aemilianus, prefetto del pretorio sotto Traiano, console suffetto nel 101 e ordinario nel 104. Secondo la Carlon, Attia è sorella di tale personaggio che è stato diseredato dal padre, CARLON, *Pliny's Women*, 113; secondo Sherwin-White è sua sorella o nipote, SHERWIN-WHITE, *The Letters*, 399.

<sup>25</sup> Tale espressione potrebbe alludere al rango equestre della famiglia, SHERWIN-WHITE, *The Letters*, 399.

<sup>26</sup> Normalmente una sola sezione è sufficiente: tale procedura è usata probabilmente quando più di una persona è citata in giudizio da più parti, SHERWIN-WHITE, *The Letters*, 399.

<sup>27</sup> Plin. *epist.* 6.33.2.

<sup>28</sup> Plin. *epist.* 6.33.6.

<sup>29</sup> SHERWIN-WHITE, *The Letters*, 469.

Plinio si sofferma a narrare le complicate vicende patrimoniali di Domitia Lucilla: il nonno Curtilius Mancina la nomina erede a patto che il padre Domitius Lucanus, genero odiatissimo, la emancipasse;<sup>30</sup> allora lo zio Domitius Tullus adotta la giovane, che rimane nella famiglia e che diventa così erede delle fortune del padre naturale, del nonno, del padre adottivo, nonché del padre adottivo di Lucanus e Tullus, Domitius Afer. Dunque un'altra ricchissima donna che nella società del suo tempo mostra fama, potere e influenza: basti pensare che il figlio di sua figlia diventerà imperatore col nome di Marco Aurelio.<sup>31</sup>

Non è da escludere, poi, che Plinio lodi tanto il testamento di Tullus Domitius proprio perché lui stesso ha forse ricevuto un *legatus*: nel *Testamentum Dasumii*,<sup>32</sup> probabilmente il testo del testamento di Tullus, si ricorda un legato per due senatori, Secundus and Cornelius,<sup>33</sup> da identificare con Tacito e Plinio.<sup>34</sup>

Le donne ricche e nobili fino a qui ricordate sono attive soltanto nell'ambito delle eredità ovvero nella trasmissione della ricchezza già esistente e creata dai predecessori: tuttavia in Plinio troviamo anche donne attive negli affari e proprietarie a nome proprio di beni e denaro.

Esempi di questo tipo si trovano tra le Corelliae, matrone cisalpine, appartenenti a una nobilissima famiglia legata da amicizia e forse parentela alla casa di Plinio:<sup>35</sup> in particolare, sono interessanti due lettere che riguardano Corellia, sorella di Corellius Rufus,<sup>36</sup> senatore e amico più anziano di Plinio. La prima lettera è una risposta al nonno della moglie preoccupato perché un liberto di Plinio ha venduto alcuni *agri* sul lago di Como prima dell'asta stabilita e a un prezzo troppo basso:<sup>37</sup> 700.000 sesterzi, invece che il reale valore di almeno 900.000. Plinio spiega che Corellia, migliore amica di sua madre, qualche tempo prima ha espresso il desiderio di acquistare una proprietà sul Lario: quando Plinio eredita alcuni *agri* sul lago, scrive subito all'amica per vendergliela. Successivamente Corellia,<sup>38</sup> a causa della *vicesima hereditatum*,<sup>39</sup> viene a conoscenza del prezzo reale della proprietà e desidera offrire a Plinio i 200.000 sesterzi mancanti: Plinio naturalmente rifiuta qualunque aggiunta.

Attraverso la pubblicazione di queste lettere Plinio mostra la propria generosità verso i pari ed esalta il culto dell'*amicitia* a lui tanto caro,<sup>40</sup> ma nello stesso tempo entra in affari, sebbene per lui svantaggiosi,

<sup>30</sup> Dunque, *Domitia Lucilla* è legalmente emancipata dalla tutela: non è possibile dire se le altre amiche di Plinio sono emancipate, perché per avere la *testamento factio activa*, non è necessaria l'*emancipatio*.

<sup>31</sup> Domitia Lucilla sposa P. Calvisius Tullus Ruso console nel 109, la loro figlia Domitia Lucilla la giovane sposa M. Annius Verus, console nel 97, 121, 126, e nel 121 partorisce il futuro imperatore Marco Aurelio.

<sup>32</sup> *CIL* VI 10229.

<sup>33</sup> *CIL* VI 10229, ll. 17.

<sup>34</sup> R. SYME, 'The *Testamentum Dasumii*. Some Novelties', *Chiron* 15 (1985), 121-46; F. CHAUSSON, 'Amitiés, haines et testaments à Nîmes et en Bétique: Cn. Domitius Afer, Sex. Curvius Tullus et leur descendance', in F. CHAUSSON (cur.), *Occidents romains. Sénateurs, chevaliers, militaires, notables dans les provinces d'Occident (Espagnes, Gaules, Germanies, Bretagne)*, Paris 2009, 191-216.

<sup>35</sup> Le epistole di Plinio mostrano forti legami tra la famiglia di Plinio e quella dei Corellii: tali legami sono espressi anche attraverso i *cognomina* delle donne della famiglia. Infatti, la figlia di Corellius Rufus si chiama Corellia Hispulla (Plin. *epist.* 1.12, 7.11 e 4) e ha lo stesso *cognomen* della zia della moglie di Plinio, e prende tale *cognomen* dalla propria madre, e moglie di Corellius, Hispulla (Plin. *epist.* 1.12.9); per tale comunanza di *cognomina* è possibile ipotizzare un legame di parentela o, almeno, di parentela acquisita per via matrimoniale, tra la famiglia della moglie di Plinio e quella dei Corellii (Plin. *epist.* 1.12, 7.11); inoltre Corellia sorella di Corellius Rufus e moglie di Minicius Iustus è amica della madre di Plinio (Plin. *epist.* 7.11.2. Poi, un'iscrizione, proveniente dalle *Valles supra Bergomum et Comum*, ricorda una Plinia Maxima moglie di un M. Minicius, *CIL* V 5198.

<sup>36</sup> Plin. *epist.* 7.11, 7.14.

<sup>37</sup> Plin. *epist.* 7.11.

<sup>38</sup> Plin. *epist.* 7.14.

<sup>39</sup> Questa lettera è una testimonianza per l'esazione della *XX hereditatum*: i pubblicani raccolgono la tassa non in denaro, ma in terre che vendono.

<sup>40</sup> L. CASTAGNA, 'Teoria e prassi dell'amicizia in Plinio il Giovane', in L. CASTAGNA – E. LEFÈVRE (curr.), *Plinius der Jüngere und seine Zeit*, München – Leipzig 2003, partic. 145-72.

con una ricca dama: una donna dell'alta società, con un marito vivo,<sup>41</sup> acquista e discute il prezzo di una proprietà terriera e autonomamente esercita il suo ruolo economico.

Un'altra lettera riguarda ancora una donna della famiglia dei Corellii, Corellia Hispulla,<sup>42</sup> nipote della precedente. Clusinius Gallus chiede a Plinio di assumere la difesa della donna nel processo intentato contro di lei da Caius Caecilius, *consul designatus*: a causa dell'antica amicizia che lega le due famiglie, Plinio accetta con grande piacere. Tuttavia la natura del processo è oscura: si parla solo di una *nova lis fortasse ut feminae intenditor*,<sup>43</sup> dove *lis* esclude un'accusa criminale. Considerando che Corellia è un'amica e che le lettere sono state pubblicate dallo stesso Plinio, è inverosimile che la causa riguardi qualcosa di infamante, ma è più probabile, a mio avviso, che tale *lis* riguardi proprietà e interessi di natura economica che oppongono due ricchi esponenti dell'aristocrazia romana, tra i quali uno, per puro caso, è una donna,<sup>44</sup> attrice economica nel suo tempo, attiva nell'aristocrazia tanto da essere portata in tribunale da un senatore.

Tuttavia, nell'epistolario di Plinio, la donna che mostra il più interessante ruolo economico è sicuramente Pompeia Celerina, ex suocera<sup>45</sup> di Plinio, a cui è molto legata.<sup>46</sup> Donna dell'alta società, è figlia di L. Pompeius Vopiscus C. Arruntius Catellius Celer, *consul suffectus* intorno al 77; il suo primo marito, il padre della moglie di Plinio, è forse L. Venuleius Montanus Apronianus console nel 92;<sup>47</sup> la donna è forse madre di L. Venuleius Octavius Priscus *consul ordinarius* nel 123,<sup>48</sup> mentre è sposa anche di Q. Fulvius Gillo Bittius Proculus, *consul suffectus* in 98.<sup>49</sup> Dunque, Pompeia Celerina è nobile di famiglia, ha sposato due consoli ed è molto ricca: Plinio è fiero del loro legame e, nella sua autorappresentazione epistolare, vuole sottolineare quanto sia stretto.

Per esempio, in una lettera, Plinio scrive direttamente alla suocera per ringraziarla dell'ospitalità<sup>50</sup> presso le sue ville a Otricoli, Narni, Carsoli e Perugia: loda la ricchezza di queste terre e l'accoglienza riservata a lui dai dipendenti di Pompeia Celerina. Ormai non è necessario che Pompeia scriva per annunciare l'arrivo del genero, e lo stesso Plinio gode delle terre della suocera come se fossero sue: la lettera è incentrata sulla disinvoltura con cui l'autore tratta una nobile e ricca dama. Ancora, Plinio parla di una sua visita alla ricca suocera, presso una villa non citata nella lettera precedente: la splendida villa di Alsio che fu del grande Verginius Rufus:<sup>51</sup> l'amicizia verso questa ricca dama continua ad essere importante per Plinio, nonostante il passare del tempo.

Tuttavia, la lettera più interessante è un'altra: Plinio scrive all'amico Calvisius Rufus per ricevere consigli sull'acquisto di alcune terre.<sup>52</sup> Plinio ha adocchiato alcuni *praedia* che costano tre milioni di sesterzi: non ha tutta la somma in contanti, ma può chiedere alla suocera, visto che *accipiam a socru, cuius arca non secus ac mea utor*.<sup>53</sup> Dunque, Pompeia Celerina non solo è ricca e affezionata al genero, ma ha anche

<sup>41</sup> *Sunt mihi et cum marito eius, Minicio Iusto, optimo viro, vetera iura.* Plin. *epist.* 7.11.4.

<sup>42</sup> Plin. *epist.* 4.17.

<sup>43</sup> Plin. *epist.* 4.17.11.

<sup>44</sup> Le donne, nonostante la tutela, erano competenti in molte azioni di diritto civile. SHERWIN-WHITE, *The Letters*, 295.

<sup>45</sup> È madre della prima moglie di Plinio, morta in un anno non definito.

<sup>46</sup> Plin. *epist.* 1.4, 3.19, 4.10.

<sup>47</sup> In base a *CIL* XI 1735 è sposato con Celerina.

<sup>48</sup> *CIL* XI 1525. CARLON, *Pliny's Women*, 105-6.

<sup>49</sup> Plinio lo chiama patrigno della moglie che ha perso: Plin. *epist.* 9.13.13.

<sup>50</sup> Plin. *epist.* 1.4.

<sup>51</sup> Plin. *epist.* 6.10.

<sup>52</sup> Plin. *epist.* 3.19.

<sup>53</sup> Plin. *epist.* 3.19.8.



grandi somme a disposizione per investimenti economici, a prescindere della presenza di mariti, figli, o altri parenti di sesso maschile: può offrire denaro al genero e in un certo modo entrare in affari con lui. Certo, Plinio scrive tutto ciò per mostrare l'amicizia che lo lega alla dama, ma d'altra parte non potrebbe pubblicare un'epistola che contenga falsità: Pompeia è davvero disponibile nei confronti di queste operazioni e forse ha offerto (o prestato) denaro a Plinio già in precedenza.

Bisogna, quindi, notare che nella mentalità dell'epistolario è normale che le donne abbiano un ruolo economico, sia come testatrici che come eredi, e in generale come proprietarie di denaro e beni; nell'ambiente sociale di Plinio le donne ricche e meno ricche mostrano una certa indipendenza e non sembra che debbano rendere conto delle loro azioni economiche agli uomini di casa: comprano terreni, prestano o ricevono denaro, firmano testamenti, ereditano beni, fanno causa ad altre donne e sono citate in tribunale.

Certo, il tono di Plinio verso le corrispondenti femminili può essere paternalistico, quando vuole mostrare la propria generosità verso deboli donne, ma la situazione femminile che emerge dalle lettere mostra donne indipendenti e autonome nelle decisioni,<sup>54</sup> tanto da essere mira dei cacciatori di eredità. Tuttavia non si pensi che le donne siano più raggirabili in virtù del loro sesso, visto che Regulus di certo non è diventato ricco solo grazie alle eredità femminili.<sup>55</sup>

Infine, il fatto stesso che Plinio vanti la frequentazione di alcune di queste matrone mostra la considerazione sociale e morale che la posizione e la ricchezza davano a queste donne: nell'alta società il denaro delle donne vale quanto quello degli uomini e il prestigio sociale conseguente è il medesimo.

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<sup>54</sup> Diversa è l'opinione di Carlon, che vede nelle epistole di Plinio donne sole, che hanno bisogno di un uomo che le protegga, CARLON, *Pliny's Women*, 136-39.

<sup>55</sup> Regolo addirittura cerca di raggirare il figlio per ottenere l'eredità della madre, Plin. *epist.* 4.2.

# Women's Role in Domestic Economy of Roman Egypt The Contribution of the *Gnomon of Idios Logos* (BGU V 1210)<sup>1</sup>

MARIANNA THOMA

Roman Egypt was a multicultural society placed at the cultural crossroad of Near East and Eastern Mediterranean, where various legal systems, social traditions and religious beliefs coexisted. Roman emperors used to govern Egypt through a prefect<sup>2</sup> chosen from the equestrian order, who exercised his numerous duties in cooperation with other officials sent out from Rome, as the *dioecetes*,<sup>3</sup> the *procurator usiacus*<sup>4</sup> and the *idiologus*. The office of *Idios Logos* has its roots in Ptolemaic Egypt as an offspring of the financial administration.<sup>5</sup> Augustus continued the department of *Idios Logos*, which was located in Alexandria.<sup>6</sup> The office had dual capacity as protector of the government's title to an inheritance and as final arbiter in civil disputes involving rival claims to an estate.<sup>7</sup>

A person unknown to us in the second half of the second century A.D. compiled a wealth of detailed information important to the procurator of *Idios Logos* for practical purposes. This document is called in the first line of the text *Gnomon* and deals with the revenues of the office of *Idios Logos*, mainly fines and confiscation of property. *Gnomon* is a very important document, although not easily comprehensive, because it represents all matters of status and inter-class relationships in Egypt. Many of the surviving 115 clauses of BGU V 1210 regulate status, marriage and inheritance and some can be related to the department's jurisdiction over the problems of inheritance. Roman conquest in Egypt introduced Roman law, but it mainly applied to the Roman citizens in the province, who were a minority of the population. The rest of the population – Greeks, Egyptians and other nationalities – continued to be subject to the Greek or to the Egyptian legal norms inherited from the Ptolemaic period.<sup>8</sup> In numerous papyri from Roman Egypt women appear as

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<sup>1</sup> For the abbreviations of editions of papyri the system of Checklist is used: <http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/scriptorium/papyrus/texts/clist.html> (consulted in 5/1/2016).

For the translation of the text of *Gnomon* see the most recent one: J. MÉLÈZE MODRZEJEWSKI, 'Gnomon de l' Idiologue', in P.F. GIRARD (ed.), *Les lois des Romains*, Napoli 1977, 520-57.

<sup>2</sup> Egypt was a special province with a great wealth of natural resources. As a result, the prefect's position was one of a great power. See Tac. *hist.* 1.2. for the idea that since Egypt was a province difficult of access, prolific of grain, divided by religious and other passions, Augustus decided to keep it under his personal control and to appoint an *eques* to govern it as viceroy. See also A.K. BOWMAN – D. RATHBONE, 'Cities and Administration in Roman Egypt', *JRS* 82 (1992), 107-27, in part. 108.

<sup>3</sup> The *dioecetes* was a finance minister.

<sup>4</sup> For *procurator usiacus* see G.M. PARASSOGLU, *Imperial Estates in Roman Egypt*, Amsterdam 1978, 84-90.

<sup>5</sup> It began its history as a special account which recorded the revenues received from the sale of property confiscated to the king. See P.S. SWARNEY, *The Ptolemaic and Roman Idios Logos*, Toronto 1970, 7.

<sup>6</sup> The head of the department had the title *ὁ πρὸς τῷ ἰδίῳ λόγῳ*. He was the final authority for all of the diverse activities of the office of the *Idios Logos*. According to the papyri from Ptolemaic and Roman era he was always referred to as 'supervising' the *Idios Logos* and was never himself called *Idios Logos*.

<sup>7</sup> SWARNEY, *Idios Logos*, 100.

<sup>8</sup> The social, legal and fiscal implications of all distinctions between Romans, Alexandrians, *gymnasials*, *metropolitae* and Egyptian villagers are described in parts of *Gnomon* which reflect the way in which law and practice shaped and controlled the social structure.

landowners or owners of houses and movable things.<sup>9</sup> Their economic power depends mainly on their right to share in family's property by dowry and inheritance. In the text of *Gnomon* one can get valuable information about the women's rights of succession to parental or marital property, which differ depending on the social status and the legal system to which they belong. In my paper I tend to focus on the economic rights of women in the domestic sphere as implied in *Gnomon*'s regulations.

Female Roman citizens in Egypt were subject to the same laws as Roman women in the rest of the empire.<sup>10</sup> Augustan legislation about marriage and inheritance aimed to encourage the family in order to stabilize the transmission of property and consequently of status from generation to generation.<sup>11</sup> *Gnomon* §28 indicates that the woman's capacity of inheritance depends on the childbirth and the age of fertility: if a woman is fifty years old, she does not inherit. However, she can inherit if she is under fifty years old and has also three children. This clause reflects the well-known *ius trium liberorum*<sup>12</sup> and the *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus*,<sup>13</sup> which intended to promote fertility. Various privileges were granted to people with husband and children, whereas on the other hand severe economic and social disadvantages were imposed on unmarried or childless persons.<sup>14</sup> Since women at the age of fifty were not supposed to get children, their capacity to inherit was restricted. Roman men at the age of sixty were also excluded from inheritance rights, if they had not their own family.<sup>15</sup> However, the existence of wife<sup>16</sup> could grant them the half of the given inheritance. Hence, the *ius liberorum* influenced mainly the women's life by ensuring them certain privileges.

Economic restrictions on unmarried women are also introduced by §29: a free-born or a freedwoman who has an estate of 20,000 sesterces, as long as she is unmarried, pays a hundredth part annually to the  *fiscus*.<sup>17</sup> This is the first taxation imposed on unmarried women in the ancient world concerning both free and freedwomen owners of important property who have not fulfilled their maternal role.<sup>18</sup> Valerius Maximus<sup>19</sup> describes that in fifth century B.C. a fine was imposed on the individuals – mainly men – who lived in

<sup>9</sup> See S.B. POMEROY, 'Women in Roman Egypt. A Preliminary Study Based on Papyri', in H.P. FOLEY (ed.), *Reflections of Women in Antiquity*, New York – Paris – London – Montreux – Tokyo 1981, 303-22, in part. 304, 308-9. For the property ownership of women in the village of *Soknopaiou Nesos* see D.W. HOBSON, 'Women as Property Owners in Roman Egypt', *TAPhA* 113 (1983), 311-21.

<sup>10</sup> In Roman law of succession male and female children received equal shares in the paternal inheritance. See Gaius *inst.* 3.1-2.

<sup>11</sup> A. WALLACE-HADRILL, 'Family and Inheritance in the Augustan Marriage Laws', *PCPhS* 27 (1981), 58-80, in part. 59.

<sup>12</sup> Parents of several children enjoyed certain privileges, first introduced by the Augustan Legislation. The most important application of *ius liberorum* concerned women. A freeborn woman with three children and a freedwoman with four children (*ius trium vel quattuor liberorum*) were freed from guardianship to which women were subject (*tutela mulierum*) and had the right of succession to the inheritance of their children.

<sup>13</sup> The *Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus* dealt with the regulation of marriage, the incentives for having children and the penalties for refusing to do so. See A. BERGER, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law*, Philadelphia 1953, 553-54.

<sup>14</sup> See B.W. WINTER, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows*, Cambridge – Michigan 2003, 54-55. Marriage was a duty incumbent on all Roman men between 25 and 60 years of age and all Roman women between 20 and 50. Failure to procreate was punished by diminution of the right to inherit from anyone except cognates to the 7<sup>th</sup> degree. See R.I. FRANK, 'Augustus Legislation on Marriage and Children', *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 8 (1975), 41-52, in part. 44-45.

<sup>15</sup> According to *Gnomon* §27 the  *fiscus* confiscated what is inherited by a sixty-years old Roman who has neither wife nor child.

<sup>16</sup> In that case they could inherit provided that they made their own registration.

<sup>17</sup> The *Fiscus* called in the Ptolemaic period  *βασιλικόν* and in the Roman period  *ταμειών* or  *φίσκος* was a unit representing an independent part of the state's property. He sold land, farmed out taxes and hired workers for state buildings.

<sup>18</sup> Roman society, like most ancient societies, considered marriage an honorable institution for the purpose of concordant life and the begetting of children.

<sup>19</sup> Val. Max. 2.9.1 and Plut. *Cam.* 2.4. The censors of 403 B.C., M. Furius Camillus and M. Postumius Albinus, imposed fine on people who preferred to live in celibacy during a time when citizens were forced by the state to marry. We should remember that in Ancient Sparta too failure to marry was an offence and there was a fine imposed in such cases. See R. DARESTE, *La science du droit en Grèce. Platon, Aristote, Théophraste*, Amsterdam 1968, 61. Cf. Plat. *leg.* 721b: *Γαμείν δέ, ἐπειδὴν ἐτῶν ἦτις τριάκοντα, μέχρι ἐτῶν πέντε / καὶ τριάκοντα, εἰδὲμή, ζῆμοδοῦσθαι χρήμασιν τε καὶ ἀτιμίᾳ / χρήμασι μὲν τόσοις καὶ τόσοις, τῇ καὶ τῇ δὲ ἀτιμίᾳ*. WALLACE-HADRILL, 'Family and Inheritance', 60.

celibacy in old age. Moreover, Augustan legislation used rewards as an encouragement also to freedmen in order to produce children. Special regulation is provided for *Latini Iuniani*<sup>20</sup> who were slaves manumitted in violation of the provisions of the *Lex Aelia Sentia* and the *Lex Iunia Norbana*.<sup>21</sup> They actually came free, but did not acquire Roman citizenship.<sup>22</sup> Paragraph 22 reproduces<sup>23</sup> the *Senatus Consultum Largianum*, which in 42 A.D. established the order of succession of *Latini Iuniani*: in the first class their patrons who manumitted them, in the second the patron's sons and daughters and last his heirs.<sup>24</sup> It is interesting that *patronus'* daughters have the same rights as sons.<sup>25</sup>

As one can judge, the Augustan legislation about marriage and inheritance aimed to limit the economic power of women of upper classes who had neither husband nor children. *Gnomon* §30 reflects this legislation, as the inheritances left to unmarried and childless Roman women who have 50,000 sesterces are confiscated. In earlier times, *Lex Voconia*<sup>26</sup> was intended to inhibit not only men, but also women from leaving large sums to other women, as no woman could be heir to an estate having a value greater than a fixed amount.<sup>27</sup> However, §30 focuses on unmarried and childless women holding some economic power.<sup>28</sup> Moreover, it is mentioned in §33 that a Roman woman could not leave a legacy<sup>29</sup> to a Roman female infant.<sup>30</sup> Not only minors, but also unmarried women over twenty-five years of age were deprived of the right of liberality testamentary according to *Leges Caducariae*.<sup>31</sup> This paragraph is closely connected with §32 which prevents unmarried and childless Romans who have more than 100,000 sesterces to inherit.<sup>32</sup> It is remarkable that women are excluded from their inheritance right, if they possess half the amount compared

<sup>20</sup> For the name *Latini Iuniani* see Gaius, *inst.* 1.22-23.

<sup>21</sup> They could also be manumitted in a form which was not recognized by the *ius civile*. For *Lex Aelia Sentia* and *Lex Iunia Norbana* see BERGER, *Dictionary*, 547 and 555.

<sup>22</sup> *Latini Iuniani* had only Latin status without political rights. Justinian (*inst.* 3.7.4) said that they lived as free men, but they died as slaves. They had no right to make a testament and after their death their property was going to their patron.

<sup>23</sup> See also Gaius *inst.* 3.59, 63.

<sup>24</sup> This provision describes the special legal status of *Latini liberti* which was different from Roman citizens' freedmen. *Lex Papia Poppaea* defined that if the freedman had three children, he could exclude his patron from any claim on his estate. See Gaius *inst.* 3.42. If the freedman had only two children, then the patron was entitled to one third of the estate and one half, if there was only one child.

<sup>25</sup> One should also remember that in Roman law male and female children received equal shares in the paternal inheritance.

<sup>26</sup> *Lex Voconia* was instituted in 169 B.C. and contained several provisions concerned with the law of succession. It had as purpose to restrain the luxury of women inheriting big patrimonies. The incapacity of women to be instituted testamentary heirs was somehow alleviated by the Augustan legislation on marriage and lost its practical significance no later than the beginning of the second century. See BERGER, *Dictionary*, 561.

<sup>27</sup> At least 200,000 asses. The restriction did not apply to intestate inheritance and to legacies, nor to testaments of Vestal virgins and of the *flamen Dialis*.

<sup>28</sup> Although by the time of Gellius, the *Lex Voconia* had fallen into disuse, the theory that unmarried and childless women should not inherit large sums of money survived as *Gnomon* §30 states, Gel. 20.1.21-23. Aulus Gellius reported a discussion he had attended during the reign of emperor Pius (138-161 A. D.), in which the Voconian Law had been cited as an example of a statute initially well-conceived to stem the tide of luxurious ostentation, but had been rendered anachronistic by the increased wealth of Roman society and fallen into disuse. See S. DIXON, 'Breaking the Law to Do the Right Thing: The Gradual Erosion of the Voconian Law in Ancient Rome', *Adelaide Law Review* 9 (1983/85), 519-34, in part 531.

<sup>29</sup> Legacy was the most important and the oldest type of the clauses which a testator could include in his will disposing of particular parts of his estate and is already mentioned in the law of the Twelve Tables. See *Lex. XII Tab.* 5.3., Gaius *inst.* 2.191.

<sup>30</sup> Girls between fourteen and twenty-five years old were considered as infants. Lenel holds that the second part of §33 is not a ruling, but a citation of a case that fell under the *Lex Voconia*. See O. LENEL – J. PARTSCH, *Zum sog. Gnomon des Idios Logos* (Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Bd 11), Heidelberg 1920, 25.

<sup>31</sup> *Leges Caducariae* were statutes which introduced incapacity of certain persons to take under a will and so-called *caduca*, ie. inheritance becoming vacant because of the incapacity of the instituted heir. The most important *Leges caducariae* are the *Lex Julia et Papia Poppaea* and the *Lex Iunia Norbana*.

<sup>32</sup> Gaius (*inst.* 2.42) believed that this provision applied only to freedmen. However, in Roman Egypt it concerned free men of upper class too.

to men. Given that women in Roman Egypt had more legal and social disabilities than men, it is normal that they were more often economically disadvantaged by the office of *Idios Logos*.

We have already discussed the Roman women's economic rights in Egypt, but we should also consider the economic power of women who did not have the Roman citizenship. In such a multicultural society, the inhabitants fell into rather clearly marked groups<sup>33</sup> and women of different nationality belonged to different legal systems. Greek *poleis* possessed internal autonomy with their own constitution.<sup>34</sup> Especially Alexandrians were proud of their city, which was the seat of the prefect and the other high officials, as the procurator of *Idios Logos*.<sup>35</sup> They possessed many advantages over the native Egyptians, who constituted the group lowest in the social scale. *Gnomon* includes some legislation concerning exclusively Alexandrian women and not the women from the other three Greek *poleis*: Ptolemais Hermiou, Antinoopolis<sup>36</sup> and Naukratis. Papyri from Roman period describe that the husband could bequeath his property to his wife, but more often if there were no descendants. *Gnomon* §6 provides some restrictions regarding Alexandrian women and according to whether the testator had children or not. In the former case a woman could get the smallest part bequeathed to a son, in the latter she could inherit a quarter of husband's estate. This clause is reminiscent of similar provisions of classical Athenian law<sup>37</sup> or the Law of Gortyn.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, Alexandrian women could get only a small part of their husband's property, a fact that limited their economic power in domestic sphere. It is interesting that we find no age restriction as described in §28, where a Roman woman at the age of fifty cannot inherit. If one considers that a Roman woman cannot bequeath to her husband more than a tenth of her property (*Gnomon* §31), he realizes that in several cases Alexandrian women were more advantaged and mostly if they did not have children, unlike Roman women.<sup>39</sup> However, §9 cites that the daughters of an *astos patronus* were excluded from the inheritance of their father's *libertus*, although the daughters of a *Latinus patronus* in §22 have the same right of succession to their father's *libertus*' property, as their brothers.<sup>40</sup> The term *astoi* found in many *Gnomon*'s clauses is not very clear and has raised different opinions between the scholars. Most of them believe that *astoi* were the main stock of the Greek population, the citizens of all autonomous cities,<sup>41</sup> while Alexandrians formed a smaller and more exclusive circle within the *astoi* identified with

<sup>33</sup> For the social classes distinguished in the text of *Gnomon* see T. REINACH, 'Un code fiscal de l'Égypte Romaine. Le Gnomon de l'Idiologue', *Nouvelle Revue Historique de Droit Français et étranger* 44 (1920), 5-134, in part 16.

<sup>34</sup> L.E. TACOMA, 'Settlement and Population', in E. RIGGS (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, Oxford 2012, 122-35, in part. 123.

<sup>35</sup> Alexandria was the gateway of Egypt to the Mediterranean world and all the Egyptian commerce passed through this city. Diodorus Siculus (17.52.5) described Alexandria as the first city of the civilized world. Alexandrian citizens like those of all Greek *poleis* enjoyed special privileges like the exemption from the poll-tax. For further details, see M.S. VENIT, 'Alexandria', in E. RIGGS (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, Oxford 2012, 103-21, in part. 104.

<sup>36</sup> Antinoopolis was founded by emperor Hadrian to commemorate his young beloved Antinous who was drawn on the east bank of the Nile in 130 A.D. By the time that the Berlin papyrus was written (after 149 A.D.), Antinoopolis already existed as one of the Greek *poleis*. See S. RICCOBONO, *Il Gnomon dell'Idios Logos*, Palermo 1950, 6-8 for the time that *BGU V* was written.

<sup>37</sup> In Athenian law each son should have equal share in parental inheritance. See Graeca Halensis (Hg.): *Dikaiomata. Auszüge aus den alexandrinischen Gesetzen und Verordnungen in einem Papyrus des Philologischen Seminars der Universität Halle (Pap. Hal. I), mit einem Anhang weiterer Papyri derselben Sammlung*, Berlin 1913, 66.

<sup>38</sup> *Gortyn Code* III.20. In the donation *mortis causa* the two husbands cannot bequeath to each other more than a hundred staters.

<sup>39</sup> REINACH, 'Code fiscal', 75.

<sup>40</sup> The *liberti* of *astoi* were also allowed to bequeath to their offspring, patron and his family and in their absence only to persons *eiusdem condicionis*. Moreover, the *astoi* could bequeath to their male and female *liberti* not more than 500 *drachmae* or a rent bigger than 5 *drachmae* a month (§14).

<sup>41</sup> The term also applied probably to the members of the *πολιτεύματα*. For the meaning of the term *astos*, its relationship with the term Alexandrian and the different scholars' views see D. DELIA, *Alexandrian Citizenship during the Roman Principate*, Atlanta 1991, 8-9 and M.A.H. EL ABBADI, 'The Alexandrian Citizenship', *JEA* 48 (1962), 106-23, in part. 116.

the Greeks. In that case, we can assume that women of the other Greek cities described in §9 (*astes*) were more disadvantaged in comparison with Alexandrian women.

Till now I have considered the women's rights of succession to their husbands or parents, but it is also interesting to study the mother's succession to children's inheritance and the children's capacity to inherit their mother's property. For the first time the *Senatus Consultum Tertullianum* of the time of Hadrian<sup>42</sup> granted a mother who had the *ius trium liberorum* a right of succession on intestacy to her children's inheritance, but it gave priority to the children's children, their father and some *agnates*. At the time that the papyrus of Berlin was written, a woman from the Greek city Krene<sup>43</sup> could not inherit from her child.<sup>44</sup> Although the regulations of *Gnomon* applied to all of Egypt, Roman administration cultivated an Alexandrian-centered mentality. Clause 11 could be possibly interpreted as a special case concerning women who come from a city near Alexandria, where the office of *Idios logos* was situated. *Idios Logos* may have found in Krene a chance for increasing 'caducaria' for the *fiscus*' benefit. However, Reinach claims that the inhabitants of Krene were considered as *peregrini in genere* and not *dediticii*, the lowest social class in Egypt.<sup>45</sup> In that case, the children of a woman from Krene and a foreigner could inherit from both their parents,<sup>46</sup> because they shared the same status.

Next paragraph (§13) mentions that children of the union between an *ἀστυή* and a foreigner follow the lower status of the father and they cannot inherit their mother on intestacy. As it seems, Romans retained and extended Ptolemaic legislation designed to keep Alexandrian and Greek land to Alexandrian and Greek citizens.<sup>47</sup> This clause reflects the *Lex Minicia*,<sup>48</sup> which ordered that a child born of parents of different *status civitatis* received the lower status and could inherit from the parent to whose status he belonged. A whole series of marriage bars described in *Gnomon* made sure that if mixed marriages took place between an Egyptian and a higher status Greek or Roman, the children were cast down to the lower status of the Egyptian mother or father.<sup>49</sup> However, according to §38 children born of an *aste* and an Egyptian may remain Egyptians, but inherit from both parents. In a similar way, in *Gnomon* §39 children of a Roman man or woman who marries by ignorance<sup>50</sup> an Egyptian follow the lower status. A wider interpretation of §38 could mean that children of unions described in §39 should also inherit from both parents. Moreover, Roman men or *astoi* who marry by ignorance Egyptian women should be exempted from liability and their children

<sup>42</sup> The Law of Gortyn, the classical law of Athens and the *ius civile* till the second century A.D. did not provide the mother's succession to her children's property. For the classical Athenian law see L. BEAUCHET, *Histoire du Droit Privé de la République Athénienne*, vol. 3, Amsterdam 1969, 548.

<sup>43</sup> Krene was a Greek city west of the Nile Delta at the border of Cyrenaica near Paraitonion also mentioned later in §57, according to which the children of a union between a man from *Praitionium* and a foreigner or Egyptian woman follow the lower status of the mother. For Krene, cf. *P.Tebt* II 508.

<sup>44</sup> *Gnomon* §11.

<sup>45</sup> REINACH, 'Code fiscal', 34.

<sup>46</sup> *Gnomon* §12.

<sup>47</sup> BOWMAN – RATHBONE, 'Cities and Administration', 115.

<sup>48</sup> *Lex Minicia* was instituted about 90 B.C. See BERGER, *Dictionary*, 557. See also R.S. BAGNALL, 'Egypt and the Lex Minicia', *JJP* 23 (1993), 25-28. For *Gnomon* §13. cf. Gaius *inst.* 1.75; 78.

<sup>49</sup> We should note that Hadrian granted the *Ἀντινοεῖς ἐπιγαμία* with the Egyptians, which other Greeks evidently did not enjoy. So, in the exceptional cases children are granted an 'Antinoic' status even though their mother is Egyptian or Greco-Egyptian. Mixed marriages were possible and frequent in Roman Egypt, but were heavily discouraged by civil sanctions threatening the status of the children and by legal curbs on their rights of succession to their parents' property.

<sup>50</sup> *Gnomon* shows how weak the ethnic base of social classes in Roman Egypt was, as a Roman could be married to a Greek or an Egyptian woman without knowing it. See K. VANDORPE, 'Identity', in E. RIGGS (ed.), *Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*, Oxford 2012, 260-76, in part. 262.

follow the paternal status with all the privileges (§46).<sup>51</sup> Paragraph 46 probably introduces a milder provision for children's favor in such unions. In addition, according to clause 47 if an ἄστη marries an Egyptian by ignorance, she should be also exempted from liability<sup>52</sup> and the child should follow the maternal status. Applying the exception of §38 to §47 would mean that these children could inherit from both parents.

*Gnomon* §45 provides that if an ἄστος marries an Egyptian<sup>53</sup> and dies childless, the *fiscus* appropriates his possessions. At this point, it is remarkable that although Alexandrian wife without children could inherit a fourth part of her husband's property (§6), childless Egyptian women have no right to share in their Greek husband's inheritance. If there are children, the *fiscus* confiscates only two-thirds. But if the *astos* has begotten children of an ἄστη and has three or more children, his possessions go to them.<sup>54</sup> Different legislation is applied depending on the existence and number of children and the mother's status. Although the children's economic power in the household depends to a degree on their maternal status, it is often greater than the mother's power. Since many Greeks used to marry Egyptian women, an important percentage of their properties were confiscated and mainly if they had no offspring. During second century A.D. the woman's legal status in the family was improved and in 178 the *Senatus Consultum Orfitianum* permitted children to inherit from mothers in intestacy. Until the legislation of Hadrian, Roman women could make wills only by a very complicated procedure, the *coemptio fiducaria* as described in §33,<sup>55</sup> but freedwomen of *astoi* in §15 were not allowed in any case to make wills, just as *astai* were not.<sup>56</sup> The marriages between freedmen of Alexandrians and Egyptians were also prohibited and void.<sup>57</sup> However, in unions of freedwomen of *astoi* and Egyptians, the practice wavered. Norbanus<sup>58</sup> did not recognize these unions as marriages and considered the children as *spurii*. As a result he confiscated the property of a freedwoman of *astos* who had children by an Egyptian (§50). Rufus<sup>59</sup> considered such unions as unequal, where children acquired the status of their mother and in such cases he granted the property to the children. It is curious that §50 does not mention the patron's succession to his freedwoman's inheritance like §9 seen above. We cannot be sure if there was difference between *libertus'* and *liberta's* succession or if *Gnomon* refers only to the cases in which patron was excluded.

<sup>51</sup> In §46 we can recognize a *causae probatio*. Gaius (*inst.* 1.67) refers to a *Senatus Consultum* according to which the father could prove a justifiable error and then the wife and the son become Roman citizens. See also T. REINACH, 'Code fiscal', 27-28 and BAGNALL, 'Lex Minicia', 26. It is claimed that §39 represents the main thrust of the *Lex Minicia* and §46 the burden of the *Senatus Consultum*.

<sup>52</sup> In the case that both parents have registered the child's birth. The term ἀπαρχή is found in *P. Cattaoui* (MITTEIS – WILKEN, *Chrestom.* N. 372, col. 4.1.7) and corresponds to Alexandrian ὑπόμνημα ἐπιγεννήσεως.

<sup>53</sup> According to §48 *astoi* who marry women from Islands (Νησιώτιδας) – probably some small islands along the coast of Marmarica – must obey the same rules as if they married Egyptians. Strabo 17.1.14 describes some islands east of Alexandria like Sidonia, Ainesipia and Tyndaric rocks. Islands which depended on Egypt are mentioned by the geographer of Ravenna, Scylax (*Peripl.* 84), the anonymous *Stadiasme* (22-230) and the papyrus of Isis (*P. Oxy* XI 1380). See REINACH, 'Code fiscal', 31-32. Most scholars claim that it is unlikely that *Gnomon* refers to the Cyclades.

<sup>54</sup> If two children, a fourth or fifth to each and if one child a half.

<sup>55</sup> Roman women should have their guardian's authorization and they also had to change guardians by *coemptio* before making wills.

<sup>56</sup> Paragraph 15 is probably influenced by the attic legislation. Attic law allowed only men to make their own wills. Women did not have the right to make wills and were subject all their life long to a *kyrios*, a man with power and authority over them.

<sup>57</sup> Children born of such *damnatus coitus* were illegitimate and Egyptians. See R. TAUBENSCHLAG, *The Law in Graeco-Roman Egypt in the Light of the Papyri: 332 B.C. - A.D. 640*, Warszawa 1955, 83.

<sup>58</sup> Norbanus may be the prefect of Egypt after 89 A.D. or the *Idios Logos* under the emperor Nero. For further information, see P.A. BRUNT, 'The Administrators of Roman Egypt', *JRS* 65 (1975), 124-47, in part. 144.

<sup>59</sup> Rufus mentioned here may be the *Idios Logos* Seppius Rufus (after 16 A.D.), the prefect Mettius Rufus (89-91, 92 A.D.) or Junius Rufus (after 94-98 A.D.) For further information, see P. BURETH, 'Le Préfet d'Égypte (30 av. J.C.-297 ap. J.C.)', in *ANRW* 10, 1 (1988), 472-502.

It should be noted that special regulations apply for the women and the daughters of ex-soldiers. As marriage was forbidden to soldiers of Roman army,<sup>60</sup> the offsprings of unions during the military service were illegitimate.<sup>61</sup> According to *Gnomon* §35 the children and relatives of soldiers inherited from those who died as Roman soldiers, provided that they belonged to the soldier's *γένεος*. *Veterani honeste missi*<sup>62</sup> are granted *conubium* with their Egyptian wives who retain however their status, while their children become *cives Romani* and fall under the *patria potestas*. So, Ursus<sup>63</sup> did not allow an ex-soldier's daughter, who had become a Roman citizen, to inherit from her mother, if the latter was an Egyptian. Moreover, if an Egyptian wife of Roman soldier registers illegally herself as Roman, loses one fourth of her property.<sup>64</sup>

*Gnomon* is also interested in the woman's dowry, which in the ancient world was considered as a contribution from the bride to the marital household and the husband possessed important rights for its use and disposal. In §36 a tenth of the property confiscated from certain criminals was allowed to their children and their wives were granted dowries in cash.<sup>65</sup> This clause is influenced by an edict of Tiberius Julius Alexander<sup>66</sup> about woman's right on her dowry.<sup>67</sup> Unlike her children, the woman was usually excluded from husband's inheritance, but not from her dowry, which ensured her some economic power.<sup>68</sup>

Finally, by studying the regulations of *Gnomon* one realizes that the economic power of women in the Roman Egypt's household depended on their nationality and social status, their husband's status in case of marriage, the birth of children and their age as well. An unmarried and childless woman regardless of origin was in the most disadvantaged position, as Roman and Greek legislation were interested in the transmission of property between members of the same status. Although in papyrus documents from Roman Egypt women do not appear as seriously legally and economically disadvantaged compared to men, the fiscal interest sometimes deprived them of the right of succession and especially in case of mixed marriages. This deprivation weakened their role in the economic life of Roman Egypt and very often the women had fewer rights and less economic power in the household than their own children.<sup>69</sup> The social stratification of Egypt is clearly reflected in *Gnomon*'s regulations about marriage and inheritance, as there are many clauses preventing social mixture through intermarriages.<sup>70</sup> Economic restrictions were imposed in such cases and the regulations differ between Roman, Greek, Egyptian and even women from several Greek cities. It is clear that the procurator of *Idios Logos*, as investigator and 'judge' of everyday problems, could enter the life of everyone being a member of Roman Egypt's society. But, as *Gnomon* was only a legal handbook, it is possible that what really happened in some cases was quite different from *Gnomon*'s norms.

<sup>60</sup> MITTEIS – WILCKEN, *Chrest.* N° 458 and E. WERNER, *Die Verwaltung des Römischen Reiches in der hohen Kaiserzeit. Ausgewählte und erweiterte Beiträge*, Basel 1995.

<sup>61</sup> These children belonged to the third class of heirs (*unde cognati*), as the legitimate children born after the military service of the father were in the first class.

<sup>62</sup> At the time of Hadrian, Egyptian soldiers who served in Roman legions were granted the *civitas Romana*. *Honeste missus* was a certificate of good behavior.

<sup>63</sup> He was probably Julius Ursus, the Egyptian prefect of 79-80 A.D.

<sup>64</sup> *Gnomon* §42,53.

<sup>65</sup> Dio Cassius (47.14) states that the sons of criminals were granted a tenth of their father's property and the daughters a twentieth.

<sup>66</sup> C.5.17.1.

<sup>67</sup> However, Plutarch on *Life of Gaius Gracchus* 17 describes that Licinia, Gracchus' wife, was deprived of her dowry.

<sup>68</sup> The return of the dowry was vitally important, especially when women married young and were liable to be widowed young, to secure them a second marriage.

<sup>69</sup> *Gnomon* §12, 36, 45, 53-54.

<sup>70</sup> The legislation did not reward such relationships in order to avoid the creation of a social machine assimilating different social classes.





# The Contribution of Women to Byzantine Family Properties Hagiographical, Epigraphical and Legal Evidence

KATERINA NIKOLAOU

In AD 420, at the age of twenty, the emperor Theodosius II desired to marry.<sup>1</sup> He discussed the matter with his older sister Pulcheria, who then began to search for a bride among maidens of patrician or imperial blood throughout the Empire. At this time a girl named Athenais had come to Constantinople. She was the child of the Athenian sophist Leontius, who had recently died, leaving his estate to his two grown sons Valerius and Gesius. He stated in the will: *Ἀθηναίδι τῇ ποθεινοτάτῃ μου γνησίᾳ θυγατρὶ δοθῆναι βούλομαι νομίματα ἑκατὸν καὶ μόνον· ἀρκεῖ γὰρ αὐτῇ ἢ αὐτῆς τύχῃ ἢ ὑπερέχουσα πᾶσαν γυναικείαν τύχην.*<sup>2</sup> The two brothers had refused to set aside their father's will and share his wealth with their destitute sister, who was begging them for the one third of their possessions.

After being driven out of their father's house, her mother's sister had brought her to Constantinople, and her father's sister, who resided there, was able to arrange an audience with the empress: "The girl was admitted and explained in an eloquent address that she had been treated with violence by her brothers".<sup>3</sup> Pulcheria was astonished at her beauty and at the intelligence with which she presented her grievance, and after a little while Theodosius, who had fallen in love with her, converted Athenais to Christianity and made her his wife. That is how, according to the legend, a young girl from the province became empress of Byzantium. But this legend also demonstrates that in the 4th century AD current Roman legislation gave unmarried Byzantine women a right to the family fortune, indeed a right equal to that of male offspring,<sup>4</sup> as well as the chance to claim her share.

Yet what happened when the woman married? Did she, within the confines of her new family, keep part of her inheritance? Was she able to earn her own money, for the handling of which she was personally responsible? The present paper will show that the answer to these questions is affirmative and it will specify the sources whence that fortune could come. All references will be to the Early and Middle Byzantine periods (mainly the latter), and as for the sources, we will examine the legal framework (the *Corpus Juris Civilis*, the *Ecloga*, the legislation of the Macedonian emperors), as the main basis on which our answer rests, as well as the hagiographical texts, which proved to be a textual source of great value to the study of Byzantine society in all its facets. Regarding women, even when saints' biographers were not focusing their attention

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<sup>1</sup> Details and relevant literature may be found in K.G. HOLM, *Theodosian Empresses. Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity*, Berkeley – Los Angeles 1989, 112-15.

<sup>2</sup> Malalas, *Chronographia*, I. THURN (ed.), *Ioannis Malalae Chronographia* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 35), Berlin – New York 2000, 273-74, ch. 4. In English translation: E. JEFFREYS – M. JEFFREYS – R. SCOTT (with B. CROKE, J. FERBER, S. FRANKLIN, A. JAMES, D. KELLY, A. MOFFATT, A. NIXON), *The Chronicle of John Malalas. A Translation*, Melbourne 1986, 192, ch. 4: "to Athenais, my beloved and legitimate daughter, I bequeath 100 nomismata only; for her good fortune, which exceeds that of all other women, is sufficient for her".

<sup>3</sup> JEFFREYS *et al.*, *Malalas*, 192, ch. 4 (the Greek text: Malalas, *Chronographia*, 274, ch. 4: *καὶ δὴ προσελθοῦσα ἐδίδαξεν ὡς βιαζομένη παρὰ τῶν ἰδίων αὐτῆς ἀδελφῶν, διαλεγομένη ἐλλογίμως*).

<sup>4</sup> Athenais was asking her brothers *κατὰ τὸ τρίτον μέρος μερίσασθαι μετ' αὐτῶν τὰ πατρῶα*: Malalas, *Chronographia*, 274, ch. 4.

on portraying a feminine role model, as was the case with the *Lives* of women saints, even if reality has been glamorized or stereotypes are repeated, the texts of hagiography bear witness to the reality of women that is unknown from other types of sources.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the testimony of inscriptions contains several pieces of information relating to female business activities, as has already been demonstrated by modern research.<sup>6</sup>

Although it had been claimed that the legislation of the Iconoclastic emperors introduced into legal practice the system of community property, as a matrimonial regime to regulate property ownership between spouses, as well as between a surviving parent and children,<sup>7</sup> it was proven that one cannot infer from the provisions of the *Ecloga* that spousal properties formed an integral marital estate which subsumed individual contributions.<sup>8</sup> In provisions (2.5.1, 2.5.2) that regulate property ownership between parents and children after the death of a spouse there is a clear division of family property into three parts: dowry – marriage portion (*προίξ*), male or husband's property (*ἀνδρῶα ὕπαρξις*) and property not included in the marriage portion (*ἐξζώπρροικα*).<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, when determining the way to draw nuptial endowment contracts, which specify a man's obligations towards family property (2.3), it is stressed that the husband manages the dowry and prenuptial donation, while the wife's property out of settlement is not mentioned at all. This observation has led to the convincing argument that property not included in the marriage portion – which the wife was obliged to collate to the family property once her husband died and to prove that she herself had brought it to his household and that it was there after his death<sup>10</sup> – was still subject to the wife's unlimited ownership and management, as was also prescribed in the *Corpus Juris Civilis*.<sup>11</sup>

Another parameter that advocates in favor of the possibility that women were allowed to own private property and to dispose of it at will is the provision in the *Ecloga* which allows girls of legal age, 13 or older, to draw a will.<sup>12</sup> This latter provision refutes the established view that “women... lacked legal capacity”.<sup>13</sup> A will, as an act declaring a person's volition in order to set up, alter or abolish a right, definitely constitutes

<sup>5</sup> The contribution of hagiographical texts in the study of the position and role of Byzantine women has been demonstrated in K. ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ, *Η γυναίκα στη μέση βυζαντινή εποχή. Κοινωνικά πρότυπα και καθημερινός βίος στα αριολογικά κείμενα* (Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών. Ινστιτούτο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών, Μονογραφίες 6), Athens 2005.

<sup>6</sup> K. ΜΕΝΤΖΟΥ-ΜΕΙΜΑΡΙ, ‘Η παρουσία της γυναίκας στις ελληνικές επιγραφές από τον Δ΄ μέχρι τον Γ΄ μ.Χ. αιώνα’, *XVI. Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress. Akten = Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32/2 (1982) 433-44, in part. 437-39.

<sup>7</sup> Among others, G. CASSIMATIS, ‘La notion du mariage dans l'Éclogue des Isauriens’, in P.G. VALLINDAS (ed.), *Μνημόσυνα Παππούλια*, Athens 1934, 85-92, in part. 92; D. BOSDAS, *Περί γάμου. Συμβολή εις την μελέτην του γάμου κατά την Εκλογήν των Ισαύρων*, Athens 1937, 55-56.

<sup>8</sup> A. CHRISTOPHILOPOULOS, *Σχέσεις γονέων και τέκνων κατά το βυζαντινόν δίκαιον, μετά συμβολών εις το αρχαίον και το ελληνιστικόν*, Athens 1946, 38-39. However, these legislative arrangements confirming social practices do not constitute a reformation of marital law on the part of the Isaurian emperors via the *Ecloga*, but already existed in Justinianic and pre-Justinianic law; on this see L. BURGMANN, ‘Reformation oder Restauration? Zum Ehegüterrecht der Ecloga’, in D. SIMON (ed.), *Eherecht und Familiengut in Antike und Mittelalter* (Schriften des Historischen Kollegs, Kolloquien 22), Munich 1992, 29-42. Furthermore, according to J. BEAUCAMP, ‘L'Égypte Byzantine. Biens des parents, biens du couple?’ in SIMON, *Eherecht und Familiengut*, 61-76, common ownership in marriage is not confirmed by the papyrological material of Byzantine Egypt either. From most of the cases she studied it transpires that there was some reciprocity in contributions towards establishing a new family or securing its standard of living, but also a clear distinction of assets, either into paternal and maternal, if there was a question of inheritance, or into husband and wife property, if it was a case of consensual divorce.

<sup>9</sup> It was Constantine I who first separated *bona materna* from the family fortune and decreed that in case of the mother's death it was to be passed on directly to the children, not to the surviving husband (*CTh.* 8.18.1, a. 319 [a. 315?]) and *CTh.* 8.18.2, a. 319); see M.T. FÖGEN, ‘Muttergut und Kindesvermögen bei Konstantin d. Gr., Justinian un Eustathios Rhomaios’ in SIMON, *Eherecht und Familiengut*, 15-27, in part. 17.

<sup>10</sup> *Ecloga* (L. BURGMANN, ed., *Ecloga, Forschungen zur byzantinischen Rechtsgeschichte* 10, Frankfurt 1983), 2.5.1.

<sup>11</sup> CHRISTOPHILOPOULOS, *Σχέσεις γονέων και τέκνων*, 39.

<sup>12</sup> *Ecloga* 5.1: *Κωλύονται διατίθεσθαι... και οί ἀνήλικοι, τουτέστιν οί μὲν ἄρρηνες ἤττονες ὄντες τῶν δεκαπέντε ἐτῶν, αἱ δὲ θήλειαι ἤττονες τῶν δεκατριῶν οὖσαι*. Cf. *Procheiros Nomos* (I.P. ZEPOS, ed., *Jus Graecoromanum*, vol. II, Athens 1931 (repr. Aalen 1962), 21.3: ‘Ο ἄρρην πληρώσας τὰ ἰδ’ ἔτη διατίθεται, ἡ δὲ θηλεία τὰ ἰβ’.

<sup>13</sup> A. ΚΙΟΥΣΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ, *Ο θεσμός της οικογένειας στην Ἡπειρο κατά τον 13ο αιώνα*, Athens 1990, 118.

a legal instrument. Furthermore, all cases of women donating their property, at which point donation deeds were obviously drafted,<sup>14</sup> underpin the aforementioned argument.

The hagiographical texts of the period make clear this ability of women within a family to handle themselves money that exclusively belonged to them. Saints' miracles mention cases of women who turned to saints for healing, after they had spent all their fortune to doctors,<sup>15</sup> without clarifying whether the women were married or not. Given the fact that the presence of unmarried women in this particular genre of sources is negligible, they were most probably married women, for whom biographers made a distinction regarding private property. A member of the senatorial class in Nicaea, Bithynia, was definitely married and, while her husband was still alive, she is mentioned by Savvas the monk, author of the Miracles of Peter of Atroa, as residing in a rural estate that belonged to her<sup>16</sup>. The distinction between female and male or family fortune was also observed in the imperial family. For example, Emperor Leo VI issued a chrysobull donating a piece of land belonging to his wife to the newly-founded monastery of Patriarch Euthymios.<sup>17</sup> Likewise, the *augusta* Helen, wife of Constantine VII, kept her own money, which she used in order to reward Basil the Younger.<sup>18</sup>

The story of St. Mary the Younger is a significant contribution to the subject at hand. In her married life she followed practices that would cross the line and cause the wrath of her husband. In order to save from prison some of her fellow villagers who could not pay their taxes, Mary originally used her own property,<sup>19</sup> but it was not enough to pay the entire debt. Thus, she turned to her friends and asked them for a loan. However, when the time came to repay the loan, Mary was unable to meet her obligation, as her fortune, which she did not manage in such a way as to increase it, but gave it away to charities instead, had evaporated. She then decided to sell her cloak, but her husband offered to pay the creditors himself so that his wife's cloak would be left to their children and not be treated as a piece of goods for peddling.<sup>20</sup>

Mary never looked to her husband's property to finance her own charities: "she never touched any of her husband's property, so that her actions not occasion opprobrium, and that she not give cause for

<sup>14</sup> See for instance *Eisagoge* (I. and P. ZEPOS, eds., *Jus Graecoromanum*, vol. 2, Aalen 1962 [Reprint of 1931 edition]) 13.2: *Κελεύομεν τὰ πράξεις καὶ ἐναλλαγὰς καὶ δωρεὰς καὶ δόσεις ἀρράβωνων καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐγγράφως γινόμενα συναλλάγματα καὶ τὰς ἐγγράφους διαλύσεις μὴ ἄλλως ἐρρώσθαι, ἐὰν μὴ καὶ εἰς καθαρὸν ἐνεχθῶσι καὶ ὑπογραφῶσι παρ' ἐκατέρων τῶν μερῶν· καὶ εἰ δια ταβελλίονος γίνονται τὰ ἐγγραφα, λάβωσι καὶ τοῦ ταβελλίονος τὸ τέλοςμα.*

<sup>15</sup> See for example: G. COZZA-LUZI (ed.), *The Life of Sabas the Younger. Historia et laudes SS. Sabae et Macarii iuniorum e Sicilia auctore Oreste Patriarcha Hierosolymitano*, Rome 1893, 61, §44: *καὶ πολλοῖς ἰατροῖς ἅπαντα τὰ αὐτῆς ἀναλώσασα; The Greek Life of St. Leo Bishop of Catania (BHG 981b)*, A.G. ALEXAKIS (ed.), Eng. trans. S. Wessel (Subsidia hagiographica 91), Brussels 2011, 186, §37: *πᾶσάν τε τὴν προσοῦσαν αὐτῇ περιουσίαν εἰς ἰατροὺς καταναλώσασα.* Despite that both cases hark back to the healing of the bleeding woman (Mk 5:25, Luc 8:83), the fact remains that references are made to the private property of women, which catches the reality of the times.

<sup>16</sup> *The Life of Peter of Atroa*, V. LAURENT (ed.), *La Vie merveilleuse de Saint Pierre d'Atroa († 837)* (Subsidia Hagiographica 29), Brussels 1956, 169, §51: *χωρίον ἔχουσα καὶ ἐν αὐτῷ διατρίβουσα.*

<sup>17</sup> *The Life of Patriarch Euthymios*, P. KARLIN-HAYTER (ed.), *Vita Euthymii patriarchae CP. Text, Translation, Introduction and Commentary* (Bibliothèque de Byzantion 3), Brussels 1970, 55: *τὸ ἐν τῷ Πυλατικῷ ὄν κτήμα τῆς ταπεινῆς ἐκείνης μου γυναικός.*

<sup>18</sup> The *augusta* gave an order *καὶ ἠνέχθη τὸ κιβώτιον ἐν ᾧ τὸ χρυσίον αὐτῆς ἀπεθσαύριστο: The Life of Saint Basil the Younger*, D. F. SULLIVAN – A.-M. TALBOT – ST. MCGRATH (eds.), *The Life of Saint Basil the Younger. Critical Edition and Annotated Translation of the Moscow Version* (Dumbarton Oaks Studies 45), Washington, D.C. 2014, I.29, 126. Another *augusta*, Eudokia, wife of Basil I, in addition to the money the emperor himself distributed after his inauguration, *πολλὰ τῆ πολιτεία χρήματα ἀπὸ τῶν ἐαυτῆς ἐδωρήσατο*, as the public treasury was empty: *Vita Basilii*, I. ŠEVČENKO (ed.), *Chronographiae quae Theophanis continuati nomine fertur liber quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris amplectitur* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 42), Berlin – Boston 2011, 29.12-13.

<sup>19</sup> *ἀπέιδε πρὸς τὴν ἐαυτῆς οὐσίαν, χρυσίον ἐζήτει πρὸς ἐλευθερίαν τοῖς πάσχουσιν, οὐχ εὔρισκε τοῦτο παρ' ἐαυτῆ: The Life of Mary the Younger*, ed. *Acta Sanctorum*, Nov. 4: 692-705, in part. 693, §3.

<sup>20</sup> *The Life of Mary the Younger*, 696, §10.

accusations of squandering <his property>, and creating tumult in the household”.<sup>21</sup> It was easier to spend her own property, leaving that of her husband alone, to avoid disturbing the family.

It was clear in the Byzantines’ mindset that women in the Middle Byzantine period had complete and absolute ownership and possession of part of the family fortune, the *εξώπροικον*, which came from inheritance or potentially from women practicing a private profession or trade, at least as far as the lower classes were concerned, for whom those types of activities were not inappropriate.<sup>22</sup> However, a woman’s primary contribution to family property was dowry. The legal framework governing it throughout the course of Byzantine history remained unchanged since the time of Justinian.<sup>23</sup> Its purpose was to strengthen and support the family, mainly the children, who were first in line to inherit it anyway.<sup>24</sup> Ownership of dowry property belonged to the wife, while the husband held usufructuary right.<sup>25</sup> In this way the wife became the primary factor in the creation of the new family property, a fact that guaranteed her the right to speak and/or act on any financial issues the family might have to face. In an emergency and in order to save the family, she was entitled to liquidate her dowry,<sup>26</sup> which was protected against the husband’s creditors.<sup>27</sup>

Information regarding dowry that is found in hagiographical texts reflects the core principles defined by legislation.<sup>28</sup> However, the case of St Philaretos the Merciful (†792) displays a peculiarity bordering on illegality. The saint’s wife, Theosebo, was a noble (*εὐγενής*) woman who contributed to her new family a rather large fortune.<sup>29</sup> Philaretos, however, used up the entire vast family fortune on his charity work, leading his wife to the position of being unable to feed their starving children.<sup>30</sup> So what happened to the large fortune that she had brought as dowry to her husband? The latter, without his wife’s consent, had donated her fortune to the poor. This act of philanthropy landed Philaretos among the saints instead of in a court of law.

<sup>21</sup> *The Life of Mary the Younger*, 694, §5. The English translation from A.-M. TALBOT (ed.), *Holy Women of Byzantium. Ten Saints’ Lives in English Translation*, Washington, D.C. 1996, 261, §5.

<sup>22</sup> On women’s business activities, see the articles of V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI and R. CIARDIELLO, in this volume.

<sup>23</sup> On the changes in Roman legislation regarding dowry brought about by Justinian, under the influence of ancient Greek law and the law of the Eastern provinces, see D. WHITE, ‘Property Rights of Women. The Changes in the Justinian Legislation Regarding the Dowry and the *Parapherna*’, *XVI Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress. Akten = Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32/2 (1982) 539-48.

<sup>24</sup> A. LAIOU, ‘The Role of Women in Byzantine Society’, *XVI Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress. Akten = Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 31/1 (1981) 233-60, in part. 237. See also the specialized study by FÖGEN, ‘Muttergut und Kindesvermögen’.

<sup>25</sup> *Ecloge* 2.3: ...ὥστε ἐν αὐτῷ ὁμολογεῖν τὸν ἄνδρα τὴν τε ἐντελὴ τῆς προικὸς οἰκείωσιν, καὶ ἀδιάπτωτον καὶ ἀμείωτον αὐτῆς παραφυλακὴν καὶ συντήρησιν; *Eisagoge* 18.3: ὁ ἄνθρωπος τοὺς καρποὺς τῆς προικὸς λαμβάνει διὰ τὰ βάρη τοῦ γάμου and op. cit. 18.20: Εἰ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ τοῦ ἀνδρός ἐστὶν ἡ προῖξ, ὁμως τῆς γυναικὸς ἐστὶν.

<sup>26</sup> *Eisagoge* 18.18: Συνεστῶτος τοῦ γάμου δύναται ἡ προῖξ ὑπὸ τῆς γυναικὸς κενοῦσθαι ἐκ τούτων τῶν αἰτιῶν· οἷον ἵνα ἑαυτὴν καὶ τὸν ἄνδρα καὶ τοὺς ἰδίους παῖδας θρέψῃ, ἵνα ἀγρὸν ἐπιτήδειον ἀγοράσῃ, ἵνα τὸν ἐξόριστον πατέρα θρέψῃ, ἵνα τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς πενομένους ἐλεήσῃ. ταῦτα δὲ κρίσει τοῦ ἐπάρχου ἢ τοῦ κοιαιστωροῦ ἢ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἢ τῶν ἐπισκόπων γινέσθω.

<sup>27</sup> *Ecloge* 3.2: Ἡ γυνὴ εἰσάγουσα προῖκα τῷ ἀνδρὶ αὐτῆς, εἰάν συμβῆ ἀπὸ συμφορᾶς τινος τὸν ἄνδρα ὑποπεσεῖν εἰς ζημίαν ἢ χρέη, εἴτε τῷ δημοσίῳ εἴτε ἐτέρῳ οἰωδήποτε προσώπῳ, καὶ τελευτήσῃ, μὴ ἔχειν ἄδειαν μῆτε τὸν δημοσίον μῆτε ἕτερον ἄνθρωπον ἐπιβῆναι εἰς τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐπάραι τι, μέχρις ὅτου ἡ γυνὴ τὴν ἰδίαν αὐτῆς προῖκα ἀποπληρωθῇ. μετὰ δὲ τὴν ταύτης πλήρωσιν τὰ περισσευόμενα κατὰ ἀναμοιρίαν οἱ χρεωφειλέται μερίζεσθωσαν. Cf. also *Eisagoge* 18.31.

<sup>28</sup> See NIKOLAOU, *Η γυναίκα*, 304-5.

<sup>29</sup> *The Life of Philaretos the Merciful*, A. VASILIEV (ed.), ‘Zitie Filareta Milostivago’, *Investija Russkago Archeologičeskago Instituta v Konstantinopole* 5 (1900) 49-86, in part. 65: προσάξασαν αὐτῷ περιουσίαν ἱκανήν. See also NIKOLAOU, *Η γυναίκα*, 305-6.

<sup>30</sup> Εἴτα καθεζομένη ἡ μήτηρ μετὰ τῶν παιδίων αὐτῆς νῆστις μὴ ἔχουσα ἄλευρον πόθεν ὀπήσει ἄρτους καὶ ἐμπλήσει τὰ τέκνα αὐτῶν, μὴ φέρουσα θεωρεῖν ταῦτα λιμώττοντα ἀνέστη καὶ ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὴν γειτονίαν ζητοῦσα ἄρτους ἐν δάνει. *The Life of Philaretos the Merciful*, L. RYDÉN (ed.), *The Life of St Philaretos the Merciful written by his Grandson Niketas. A critical Edition with Introduction, Translation, Notes, and Indices* (Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia 8), Uppsala 2002, 80.

After their husbands' death and provided they had children, women came into possession of the entire family fortune and, as mentioned above, could manage it as they saw fit.<sup>31</sup> In case the husband died without the couple having procreated, the wife reclaimed her dowry and a share of the male fortune proportionate in size to that of the dowry. The balance of the estate went to those he himself had named in his will or, if not, to his legal heirs.<sup>32</sup> In any event, the wife found herself with a small or large fortune at her disposal, a fortune she was able to manage. Even in the case of a poor woman who had married without having contributed a dowry, after the death of her husband and if there were no children, a share of the family fortune came into her possession.<sup>33</sup>

Therefore, the cases of women who, as we are told by the hagiographical texts, after they had decided to become nuns divided their belongings among the poor or donated them to the monastery where they sought refuge were in accordance with the spirit of the law.<sup>34</sup>

Byzantine women, married or unmarried, inherited a share of the family fortune after their parents' death. No distinction is made in legislation between male and female heirs to the paternal property.<sup>35</sup> Even in the case of an agreement between father and daughter that the latter would settle for her dowry, that agreement became null and void after the father's death.<sup>36</sup>

Anna of Leukate inherited the family fortune she donated to charity.<sup>37</sup> Plato, brother of the mother of Theodore Studites, left part of the paternal estate to his two sisters, even though at least one of them, Theodore's mother, would have certainly received a dowry when she married.<sup>38</sup> When Theodore of Edessa decided to donate the family fortune in order to become a monk, he gave part of it to his already married sister.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>31</sup> *Ecloga* 2.5.1.

<sup>32</sup> *Ecloga* 2.4.2.

<sup>33</sup> *Ecloga* 2.7: *Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἀπόρῳ γυναικὶ πρὸς νόμιμον γάμον συναφθῆ τις καὶ τελευτήσῃ παίδων καὶ διαθηκῶν χωρὶς, κομίζεσθαι τὴν γυναικὰ ἐκ τῆς ἀνδρῶς ὑποστάσεως ὑπὲρ ἐξ ἀπαιδίας κάσου τέταρτον μέρος κατὰ τὴν εὐπορίαν τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἕως λιτρῶν δέκα· εἰ δὲ καὶ ἐπάνω τῶν δέκα λιτρῶν εὐπορεῖ ὁ ἀνὴρ, μὴ ἔχειν αὐτὴν ἄδειαν ἕτερόν τι κομίζεσθαι, καὶ τὰ ὑπόλοιπα περιέρχεσθαι ἢ εἰς τοὺς ἐξ ἀδιάθετου αὐτοῦ κληρονόμους ἢ μὴ ὑπόντων κληρονόμων εἰς τὸ μέρος τοῦ δημοσίου.*

<sup>34</sup> Theodora of Thessalonike, Athanasia of Aegina and the nun Anna, mentioned in the *Life of Stephen the Younger*, each divided her fortune before taking vows; see ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ, *Η γυναικὰ*, 310-11. However, Anna of Leukate did the same immediately after inheriting her parents' fortune, yet she did not follow the monastic life; *The Life of Anna of Leukate*, ed. *Acta Sanctorum*, Jul. 5: 486-88, in part. 487: *Ἐγκρατῆς δὲ ἡ Ἀγία ὡσπερ ἀρετῆς, οὕτω δὴ καὶ πλούτου γενομένη, τοῖς πτωχοῖς καὶ ἐνδεέσι τῶν χρειωδῶν μετεδίδου.* A woman's ability to manage her private property is widely attested to by other types of Byzantine sources as well. An illustrative case that might be mentioned is that of the widow Danielis (*Vita Basilii*, I. ŠEVČENKO, ed., *Chronographiae quae Theophanis Continuati nomine fertur Liber quo Vita Basilii Imperatoris amplectitur* [CFHB 42], Berlin 2011, 40-46, ch. 11 and 250-64, ch. 73-77) which, despite containing strong fictional elements, echoes Byzantine reality on the subject in question. See the relevant literature in Π. ΑΝΑΓΝΟΣΤΑΚΗΣ, 'Το επεισόδιο της Δαναηλίδας. Πληροφορίες καθημερινού βίου ἢ μυθοπλαστικά στοιχεία;', *Πρακτικά Α' Διεθνούς Συμποσίου, Ἡ καθημερινή ζωὴ στο Βυζάντιο. Τομές καὶ συνέχειες στὴν ἐλληνιστικὴ καὶ ρωμαϊκὴ παράδοση* (Κέντρο Βυζαντινῶν Ἐρευνῶν/Ἐθνικὸ Ἰδρυμα Ἐρευνῶν), Athens 1989, 375-90. Also, two tenth-century marginalia in a Patmian manuscript refer to the buying and selling of workshops belonging to women; β.Ν. ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔΗΣ, 'Quelques boutiques de Constantinople au Xe s.: Prix, Loyers, Imposition (Cod. Patmiacus 171)', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 26 (1972) 345-56, in part. 345, 346, 348 n. 23.

<sup>35</sup> *Ecloga* 6.1: *'Εάν τις ἀδιάθετος τελευτήσῃ καὶ ὕπῃσιν αὐτῷ τέκνα ἢ καὶ ἔγγονα, ταῦτα κληρονομεῖτωσαν.* Πρβλ. καὶ *Procheiros Nomos* 30.2: *Οἱ κατιόντες, κὰν ἄρβενες κὰν θήλειαι ὦσι, προτιμῶνται τῶν ἀνιόντων καὶ τῶν ἐκ πλαγίου;* *Eisagoge* 33.14.

<sup>36</sup> *Procheiros Nomos* 30.11: *Εἰ πατὴρ προικίζων τὴν ἑαυτοῦ θυγατέρα συνεφώνησεν ἀρκεῖσθαι αὐτὴν τῇ δοθείσῃ ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς προικὶ καὶ μὴ ἔχειν μέρος ἐκ τῆς αὐτοῦ κληρονομίας, οὐκ ἔρρωται τοῦτο τὸ σύμφωνον, οὐδὲ κολύεται κληρονομεῖν ἀδιάθετον αὐτὸν τελευτῶντα ἢ θυγάτηρ τὴν προῖκα τοῖς ὑπεξουσίοις μείνασιν αὐτῆς ἀδελφοῖς συνεισφέρουσα;* *Eisagoge* 33.11.

<sup>37</sup> *The Life of Anna of Leukate*, 487.

<sup>38</sup> Theodore of Studios, *Ἐπιτάφιος εἰς Πλάτωνα*, PG 99, 804-50, in part. 809, §8.

<sup>39</sup> *The Life of Theodore of Edessa*, I. POMJALOVSKIJ (ed.), *Žitie iže vo svjatyh otca našego Theodora arhiepiskopa Edesskago*, St. Petersburg 1892, 1-120, in part. 7, §7.

Apart from property coming from the father's family,<sup>40</sup> women of the middle and lower classes could also earn money through business or commercial activities, as is attested by the texts of Byzantine authors and by epigraphic sources.

Within the framework of the family as unit of production, women provided paid work either as individuals or by assisting their fathers or their husbands, for example in the various workshops or inns.<sup>41</sup> The business sector that was most accessible to womenfolk was retailing, such as selling bread, vegetables, meat, poultry and other types of foodstuffs, as well as objects like rope or incense. The professions of midwife and doctor were profitable to the women who practiced them, while their occasional employment as wet nurses allowed them to contribute to the family income. Women, either unmarried or widowed, who lived alone and were inclined to monasticism sought a way out by offering their services to the Church for a fee. Finally, even illegal or irregular activities, such as magic or prostitution, were a means, if not of getting rich, at least of earning enough money for a woman to subsist.<sup>42</sup>

There is a clear distinction between men's and women's property in Byzantine texts, which undoubtedly mirrors social practice regarding this issue. It was actually the law, by dividing family property into three shares, which safeguarded a minimum of financial autonomy for Byzantine women. They were able to dispose of their money however they saw fit: either for their family and themselves or, mainly, for charity and acts of philanthropy. We should not fail to comment on the fact that their families and Byzantine society for the most part accepted and respected this autonomy, the preservation of which was attended to by the State.

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<sup>40</sup> Until the 11th c. a Byzantine woman's dowry remained protected and could not be sold off. After the 11th c., and particularly during the Palaiologan era, the line between dowry and family property became blurred; see Laiou, 'The Role of Women', 238-39. The deregulation of dowry also affected women in a positive way. In the 13th and 14th c. they were able to invest their money themselves, either in commerce or in small-scale manufacturing businesses: F. MIKLOSICH – I. MÜLLER, *Acta et Diplomata graeci medii aevi, sacra et profana*, vol. II, Bonn 1862, 358-59, 399-400, 511-12; see also LAIOU, 'The Role of Women', 240-41. In such cases the dowry functioned as liquidated capital and women were able to take advantage of it.

<sup>41</sup> The most famous Byzantine woman to work in her father's inn was Anastaso, the future *augusta* Theophano [Skylitzes, I. THURN (ed.), *Ioannis Scylitzae Synopsis Historiarum* (Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae 5), Berlin – New York 1973, 240; Zonaras, T. BÜTTNER-WOBST (ed.), *Ioannis Zonarae epitomae historiarum libri XIII-XVIII* (Corpus Scriptorum Historiae Byzantinae), vol. 3, Bonn 1897, 485].

<sup>42</sup> On epigraphic testimonies regarding women's professions until the tenth century, as well as female services to the Church, see MENTZOU-MEIMARI, 'Η παρουσία της γυναίκας', 435-38. Data on the subjects in question found in the hagiographical texts of the Middle Byzantine period has been documented and evaluated in NIKOLAOU, *Η γυναίκα*, 285-98, 299-302. On women's potential business ventures in general, see E. MARGAROU, *Τίτλοι και επαγγελματικά ονόματα γυναικών στο Βυζάντιο. Συμβολή στη μελέτη για τη θέση της γυναίκας στη βυζαντινή κοινωνία* (Κέντρο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών. Βυζαντινά Κείμενα και Μελέται 29), Thessaloniki 2000. Regarding the title of the aforementioned study, it should be noted that the use of the term 'titles' is problematic, since it implies that Byzantine women were holders of honorific titles in their own right, whereas the only specifically female dignity was that of *zoste patrikia*; see A. KAZHDAN, 'Zoste patrikia' in A.P. KAZHDAN (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, New York – Oxford 1991, 2231.

### **III**

## **HOUSEHOLD MANAGEMENT AND FEMALE GOODS**





# The Spartan Wife The Real Keeper of Lakedaemonian *Oikos*?

MACIEJ DASZUTA<sup>1</sup>

Within Lacedaemonian society, the Spartiates constituted a privileged group.<sup>2</sup> As landed property owners, each necessitated a sufficient agricultural output in order to sustain his own family and fulfill the civic requirements necessary for participation in the *syssition*. In fact, according to our ancient sources, if a Spartiate failed to contribute a common meal, it would result in the loss of citizenship.<sup>3</sup> The agrarian productivity of the Spartan *oikos*, therefore, was an extremely important issue that determined one's membership in the political community.

With regards to the crops produced in each estate, it seems the types were at least partly determined by the needs of the *syssition* and this may have resulted in a similar output by each household.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is likely that each household cultivated similar types of plants and bred the same types of animals. Most probably every *oikos* has been also processing its annual harvest largely on its own, producing almost everything it might need. Wealthier households, however, were different. Not only did they produce more, but also they would have had more diverse products and more demanding species, such as horses.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the scale of some Spartan landholdings were impressive enough to warrant a comment by Plato in his *Alcibiades*. According to the fourth century author, Athenian estates could not compare to Spartan “in extent and excellence, nor again in ownership of slaves, and especially of those of the helot class, nor yet of horses, nor of all the flocks and herds”.<sup>6</sup> The day-to-day operations of a Spartiate estate, then, must have been extremely demanding.

The ancient sources inform us unanimously that the entire burden of agricultural production of the Spartan *chora* fell on the slaves – helots, who had to provide their masters with a substantial part of the harvest.<sup>7</sup> Their main duty was undoubtedly the cultivation of the land, but probably they also carried out other minor tasks within Spartan households. Ancient authors note, for instance, that some slaves could be responsible for the production of clothes or care of animals.<sup>8</sup> It is likely, however, that the list of their obligations was much longer, since slaves were supposed to be constantly at the disposal not only of their owners but also of other Spartiates.<sup>9</sup> Their labour must certainly have required proper administration and

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<sup>2</sup> D.M. MACDOWELL, *Spartan Law*, Edinburgh 1986, 23-51.

<sup>3</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1271a.

<sup>4</sup> Dikaiarchos *FGH* 2.242, fr. 23 = Athen. 141c; Plut. *Lyc.* 12.2.

<sup>5</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 5.3; 6.3.

<sup>6</sup> Plat. *Alc.* 1.122d-e, trans. by W.R.M. LAMB. However, it needs to be mentioned that the authenticity of this dialogue is disputable. Cf. N. DENYER, *Plato: Alcibiades*, Cambridge 2001, 14-26.

<sup>7</sup> Tyrt. 6-7 (5); Plat. *Leg.* 6.776c; Arist. *Pol.* 1269a35 – b13; Plut. *Lyc.* 24.2; Paus. 4.14.4-5.

<sup>8</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 1.4; Hdt. 6.68.

<sup>9</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 6.3.

supervision. In other *poleis* it often happened that this function was conducted by a bailiff or specialized overseer, often a slave. Although a presence of such person was theoretically possible also within the Spartan estate (whether it was a helot, non-Laonian freedman or someone drawn from the perioicic population), there is no trace of their existence in ancient sources. Moreover, some scholars suggest that the specific character of the relationship between the Spartans and their subjugated population rather excluded the possibility.<sup>10</sup>

With the assistance of a bailiff or without it, the central figure of the household in other Greek *poleis* was always the head of the *oikos*, i.e. a male owner.<sup>11</sup> He was at the top of the domestic hierarchy and he had the decisive word in every matter. However, in Sparta this social pattern may be supposed to have been strongly distorted since, as is usually assumed, a Spartiate could not simultaneously play the roles of master of the house and of exemplary citizen because these two functions seemed to be mutually exclusive. It is often emphasised that the Spartiates were forbidden to get involved in any sort of economic activity and especially in labour, but they were expected to spend the majority of their free time not in home but participating in public activities.<sup>12</sup> The paradox was that, on the one hand, the civic ethos obliged every Spartiate to prefer the public sphere of life over the private, while on the other his public status was highly dependent upon the economic efficiency of his private property – which he could not supervise properly. It seems however, that this popular picture is highly idealistic and not always consistent with the information in our sources, but that question will be discussed later on.

If we nevertheless follow that image, excluding the Spartiates, the helots or some bailiffs/overseers as potential supervisors of Spartiate property, it is easy to conclude that the only possible group capable of conducting such a task were the Spartan women. And indeed, it seems very probable that the women of Sparta were in charge of the Spartan *oikoi*, fully dominating the domestic sphere of life.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, such a responsible function soon became the source of their special status in the Lacedaemonian society. For on the practical level, it might be they, and not their husbands, who were the real keepers of the *oikoi*, especially (but not exclusively) in the economic dimension. Such a view seems to be confirmed by some ancient authors:

“the women abstain from wool-work, but weave themselves instead a life that is not trivial at all nor useless, but arduous, advancing as it were halfway in the path of domestic tendance and management and child-nurture, but taking no share in military service”.<sup>14</sup>

The issue of the position and role of females in Lacedaemonian society occupies an important place in the scholarship devoted to the history of women in antiquity. It has also become a topic of passionate discussion among some scholars,<sup>15</sup> the main issue being the degree of Spartan women’s (in)dependency on

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Plut. *Per.* 16.5. Cf. CH. CHANDEZON, ‘Some Aspects of Large Estate Management in the Greek World during Classical and Hellenistic Times’, in Z. ARCHIBALD – J.K. DAVIES – V. GABRIELSEN (eds.), *The Economies of Hellenistic Societies. Third to First Centuries B.C.*, Oxford 2011, 98-102. M.H. DETTENHOFER, ‘Die Frauen von Sparta. Gesellschaftliche Position und politische Relevanz’, *Klio* 75 (1993), 72; S. HODKINSON, *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta*, Swansea 2000, 336.

<sup>11</sup> Which task he could share with his wife, if he wished to: Xen. *Oec.* 3.10.

<sup>12</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 7.2-3; Plut. *Lyc.* 24.2.

<sup>13</sup> DETTENHOFER, *Die Frauen*, 61-75; B. KUNSTLER, ‘Family Dynamics and Female Power in Ancient Sparta’, in M. SKINNER (ed.), *Rescuing Creusa. New Methodological Approaches to Women in Antiquity*, Lubbock 1987, 31-48; B. ZWEIG, ‘The Only Women Who Give Birth to Men. A Gynocentric, Cross-cultural View of Women in Ancient Sparta’, in M. DEFORD (ed.), *Woman’s Power, Man’s Game. Essays on Classical Antiquity in Honor of Joy K. King*, Wauconda 1993, 32-53.

<sup>14</sup> Plut. *Leg.* 806a, trans. by R.G. Bury; but also: Xen. *Lac.* 1.9; Plut. *Cleom.* 7.3.

<sup>15</sup> I mean particularly noticeable dispute over Paul Cartledge’s article: P. CARTLIDGE, ‘Spartan Wives. Liberation or Licence?’, *CQ* 31 (1981), 84-105. See: S. POMEROY, *Spartan Women*, Oxford 2002, 159-61.

men.<sup>16</sup> The Spartan female has often been characterised by ancient authors as educated, wealthy, ambitious, imperious and greedy. This has made her quite a character and a real phenomenon in the classical Greek world, where women were usually mute, confined to their *oikoi* and highly dependent on their menfolk.<sup>17</sup>

In this paper I would like to suggest, that these extraordinary traits ascribed to the Spartan women should be seen above all in the light of their functions in their husbands' *oikoi*. It confirms their important role in the *oikoi*, and *via* these *oikoi* in Spartan society as a whole, but it could also be used as proof that the household comprised the main everyday surroundings of a Spartan female and her primary frame of reference, a location which consequently resulted in her strong attachment to matters of family such as its subsistence, well-being and reputation. I will also try to point out some aspects which may make us believe that the Spartan household, although to a large degree supervised by a citizen's wife, was not her domain alone and that a male Spartiate was not entirely remote from it.

### Education and Autonomy

To begin with the famous education of Spartan women, not only the sons of citizens in Sparta but also their daughters were supposed to go through some kind of public education.<sup>18</sup> It is however not exactly clear which disciplines it might comprise.<sup>19</sup> Nevertheless, no matter how we imagine the overall shape of it, one would probably agree that it had not been designed for its own sake. And even though whatever aims of the *polis* lay hidden behind the education of women might be various, it is worthwhile to look at its basic, i.e. preparatory character. A woman in Sparta, as in other Greek *poleis*, was supposed to be above all a wife and a mother of citizens. As the former, she was expected to co-create an *oikos*; as the latter, she should allow its perpetuation. These were the two functions for which Spartan women were to be prepared by the state in the first place, because they lay in its vital interest. The ancient sources strongly emphasised the eugenic character of physical exercises, which aimed at preparing a young woman for the effort of giving birth,<sup>20</sup> while modern scholars pay attention instead to the overall character of girls' participation in the system controlled and planned by the state.<sup>21</sup> It was supposed to ease their integration into society, familiarize them with its values and norms and introduce them to the role of Spartan wives – wives whose values and abilities would help their husbands to become as close to the citizen ideal as was possible.<sup>22</sup> The whole process was probably supplemented with some educational efforts on the part of the girls' relatives and might take considerable time, since we are informed that in Sparta women used to marry later than in other Greek states.<sup>23</sup> Thanks to that, by the time of marriage not only the body of

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<sup>16</sup> The broad scope of the discussion could be illustrated by pointing at the two opposite stands. For on the one side, some scholars believe in an extraordinary independence of the Spartan women (Pomeroy, Dettenhoffer, Kunstler, Zweig) seeing them almost as the proto-feminists. On the contrary, others perceived them as extremely subjugated to their warrior menfolk (e.g. Cartledge).

<sup>17</sup> It should be remembered, however, that the general image of Spartan females is undoubtedly deeply rooted in the Spartan mirage. Moreover, we can clearly observe in that picture some traces of the anti-Spartan agenda. Cf. E. MILLENDER, 'Athenian Ideology and the Empowered Spartan Woman', in S. HODKINSON – A. POWELL (eds.), *Sparta: New Perspectives*, Swansea 1999, 355-91. Kulesza emphasises that, as long as the classical evidence matters, there is nothing very peculiar about the Spartan women: R. KULESZA, 'The Women of Sparta', *Anabasis* 4 (2013), 18.

<sup>18</sup> Although one should not rather draw a direct parallel between these training systems.

<sup>19</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 1.4; Plat. *Leg.* 805e; Plut. *Lyc.* 14.2.

<sup>20</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 1.4; Plut. *Lyc.* 14.3.

<sup>21</sup> For instance: J. DUCAT, 'La Femme de Sparte et la Cité', *Ktèma* 23 (1998), 385-406.

<sup>22</sup> CARTLEDGE, *Spartan Wives*, 93.

<sup>23</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 1.6; Plut. *Lyc.* 15.3.

a young woman but above all her character was already moulded. It was important, since in other *poleis* where the age difference between spouses might well be substantial, it could often occur that the husband had to ‘bring his wife up’, if he wished to introduce her to the responsibilities of his household.<sup>24</sup> The Spartan female was probably different from her Greek counterparts in that respect since, as we can imagine, she entered marriage when being much more experienced and developed than they, and not that much younger than her man.<sup>25</sup> The reason for this, besides the recurring eugenic motif, might relate precisely to the style of a Spartan man’s life. Because of his duties there could simply be no time for any ‘wife’s rearing’. Perhaps from the very beginning she had to be autonomous enough in domestic matters to let him be occupied with the things he was supposed to do as a citizen.

A wife’s self-reliance might be, indeed, of great significance for the efficient management of property, which from the first day of married life probably became her main everyday responsibility. As has been already mentioned, some scholars believe that a Spartan wife was almost entirely responsible for her husband’s social status.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, it was a matter of high importance that she should be capable of dealing with that task competently from the very beginning, for were she to commit any sort of negligence in husband’s absence, squandering family resources and making him unable to provide his due share to the *syssition*, it might cause the loss of his citizenship. Naturally, it was also in the wife’s vital interest not to let that happen, since his social degradation would, in all probability, entail the social degradation of the entire family, i.e. her and their children as well.

### **Ambition / Political Involvement**

According to Powell, the frequent daily absence of males, caused by the specific model of Spartan society and the growing involvement of the *polis* in politics beyond the Peloponnese, not only contributed to the domestic autonomy of females but was also to stimulate their political activity.<sup>27</sup> If women had been sustaining the ‘political being’ of their husbands one could easily imagine that it might naturally result in a tendency for them to raise their voices also in the public sphere of life. It seems however, that at least until the second half of the 4th century BC the tendency should not be overestimated. Besides, a more important reason for any political involvement could be derived from the pattern of female education as mentioned above, than from the frequent absence of men or their reliance on women. By gathering together, exercising and competing with each other, the females of Sparta could experience the sphere which was typical of men. Because of that they might adopt, in part at least, the system of values which characterised the civic (i.e. male) ethos, and might develop an interest in the affairs of the *polis*.<sup>28</sup> According to Ducat, it might even make them the guardians of the Spartan code, publicly praising or reprimanding male behaviour as supporters of the state in its observance.<sup>29</sup> It should be remembered, however, that they could influence their men much more effectively and frequently in a less formal way – behind the closed door of the *oikos*. Certainly, female intrusion into political matters, if really happened, was never direct. For sure, Spartan policy like the policy of other

<sup>24</sup> Xen. *Oec.* 7.10.

<sup>25</sup> KUNSTLER, *Family Dynamics*, 41. Although marriages between people of different age are also attested: Xen. *Lac.* 1.7.

<sup>26</sup> DETTENHOFER, *Die Frauen*, 61-75; ZWEIG, *The Only Women*, 47.

<sup>27</sup> A. POWELL, ‘Spartan Women Assertive in Politics?’, in HODKINSON – POWELL, *Sparta*, 412-13.

<sup>28</sup> As it has been pointed out by Loraux – it is striking that, in some sense, a Spartan girl was preparing to fulfil her main duty, i.e. giving birth, in a very similar way to a boy who was preparing to fulfil his, by taking care of a good health and body condition: N. LORAUX, *Les expériences de Tiresias. Le féminin et l’homme grec*, Paris 1989, 29-53.

<sup>29</sup> DUCAT, *La femme*, 398.

Greek *poleis*, was always conducted by men and men only. The sole influence which women might have on it was possible only through their husbands, fathers, sons etc.

Moreover, the main aim underlying such interference, in all probability, was nothing else but the maintenance or strengthening of family renown. It has been already said that the ‘political existence’ of a Spartiate depended to some degree on the economic efficiency of the *oikos*. But the financial requirement of citizenship, although very important, was not the only requirement that had to be fulfilled in order to sustain privileged status. The rest lay in the hand of a Spartan male himself, and depended upon whether he acted in accordance with state expectations or not. If he openly misbehaved, he could expect to be punished. The most severe form of prospective punishment was *atimia*, which could comprise the partial or complete loss of a citizen’s rights.<sup>30</sup> Yet, the loss of privileged status was not the sole consequence. Listing the sanctions to be imposed on a Spartiate accused of cowardice, Xenophon wrote that:

“he must support his spinster relatives at home and must explain to them why they are old maids”.<sup>31</sup>

This information is supported by Plutarch, who claimed that in Sparta it was regarded as indecent to marry a girl related to a coward.<sup>32</sup> Taking all this into consideration, it can be assumed that women had a lot to lose if their menfolk did not comply with civic requirements. Thus, their ‘meddling’ or ‘intervening’ in men’s businesses might not be caused merely by their ‘female immoderation’ or political ambitions, as it has been seen by some authors both ancient and modern, but rather should be perceived as striving after some assurance of security for themselves and their offspring.

Yet the fear of social degradation was not the only reason why Spartan females could try to affect male decisions and actions. Since to some degree they were seen through the prism of their menfolk’s acts and achievements, the honours obtained by men radiated also towards their *oikoi*, i.e. also to women. Therefore it seems natural that women cared if their husbands, sons and brothers were acting properly and were making their way in the social hierarchy. In ancient sources we can find some examples of such female attitudes: they are mentioned celebrating the promotion of their male relative to the rank of a *geron*; being proud mourners of those who died in battle for their *polis*, and boasting of the fact that: “Kings of Sparta are my father and brothers”.<sup>33</sup>

### Wealth / Greed

Spartan women also gained the reputation of being exceptionally rich, and were accused of being greedy.<sup>34</sup> These two characteristics, even if not necessarily universally applicable to all Spartan womenfolk, are still also closely connected with the domestic sphere of life. First of all, their ‘wealth’, if we can use that word, was derived primarily from their family *oikos*, for, as it has been convincingly demonstrated by Hodkinson, there were no dowries in Sparta, since citizens’ daughters, like sons, took their part of an inheritance.<sup>35</sup> It meant that from the very beginning of marriage, a Spartan female could be regarded not as the ‘mere

<sup>30</sup> H. MICHELL, *Sparta*, Cambridge 1964, 45. Xen. *Lac.* 10.7.

<sup>31</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 9.5, trans. by E.C. Marchant.

<sup>32</sup> Plut. *Ages.* 30.3.

<sup>33</sup> Plut. *Lyc.* 26.8; Xen. *Hell.* 6.4.16; *IG* v.1.1564a, trans. by M.D.

<sup>34</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1269b; Eur. *Andr.* 940.

<sup>35</sup> HODKINSON, *Property*, 98-103.

addition' to the dowry received by her husband, but as a legitimate owner of her own property, which she contributed to his *oikos*.<sup>36</sup> That might give her a very strong basis for making her own decisions and taking her own initiatives in the field of family matters, since they were her matters no less than her husband's.<sup>37</sup> It could also provide a strong stimulus for women's engagement in managing the household. Some scholars have even gone so far as to perceive Spartan policy toward women as a very pragmatic, almost manipulative planning, aimed at the economic activation of women in the first place.<sup>38</sup>

Accusations of women's greed seem to remain linked to the *oikos* as well. For if the economic aspect of the Spartan family was the woman's responsibility, one can easily imagine that with time she could find personal satisfaction or fulfilment in extending or adding to her *oikos*' welfare. We can only guess how it could happen. For sure it might be achieved through the effective management of crops and household production. The other way could be, as in the case of political influence, that of keeping pressure on family menfolk so as to make them use all the possibilities to increase family possession. Perhaps that is exactly what Aristotle meant when writing that: "errors as regards the status of women seem not only to cause certain unseemliness in the actual conduct of the state but to contribute in some degree to undue love of money".<sup>39</sup> The ancient sources contain also some information, which at first glance could be thought to attest a particular and irrational attachment of Spartan women to their property, even in the face of a direct threat to the entire community. Both Xenophon and Aristotle mention Spartan female behaviour during the Theban invasion of Laconia. The first of them says that women could not bear the sight of smoke from plundered and burning households.<sup>40</sup> The second claims that during these events Spartan women not only proved themselves useless but caused even more trouble than the enemy.<sup>41</sup> Xenophon tries to explain this behaviour by pointing to the fact that it was the first time ever that they had seen enemy intrusion into their land. Aristotle blames the erroneous policy of the Spartan state towards women in general. If we however put these descriptions into the context of women's involvement in household and estate management, their behaviour could be seen in a less critical way. If the *oikoi* for whose existence and welfare Spartan women were responsible had been falling apart before their very eyes, it is easily understandable that it could drive them to despair and be perceived by them as a sort of personal tragedy.

There is therefore much justification for seeing Spartan women as closely involved in household management. However, that sole fact makes them rather similar to the women of other *poleis*, since even in his *Oeconomicus* Xenophon has portrayed Ischomachus, an exemplary landholder, as instructing his wife in such a way: "Your duty will be to remain indoors and send out those servants whose work is outside, and superintend those who are to work indoors, and to receive the incomings, and distribute so much of them as must be spent, and watch over so much as is to be kept in store, and take care that the sum laid by for a year be not spent in a month".<sup>42</sup> As has been mentioned earlier, the question is rather the degree to which the *oikos* was dominated by women in Sparta. The starting point of many discussions concerning this issue has com-

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<sup>36</sup> The term *patrouchos* used by Herodotus, which literally means 'the owner of patrimony', seems to be essential (Hdt. 6.57). Moreover, clear analogy with *The Law of Gortyn*, where a daughter had many tenurial rights, may make us entitled to believe, that the situation in Sparta could be similar: D. SCHAPS, *Economic Rights of Women in Ancient Greece*, Edinburgh 1979, 6-7.

<sup>37</sup> KUNSTLER, *Family Dynamics*, 42.

<sup>38</sup> R.K FLECK – F.A. HANSEN, "Rulers Ruled by Women". An Economic Analysis of the Rise and Fall of Women's Rights in Ancient Sparta', *Economics of Governance* 10 (2009), 224.

<sup>39</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1270a 20, trans. by H. Rackham.

<sup>40</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 6.5.27-28.

<sup>41</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 2.1269b.

<sup>42</sup> Xen. *Oec.* 7.35-36, trans. by E.C. Marchant.

prised the conviction that Spartiates were constantly absent and largely remote from domestic realities.<sup>43</sup> They have been seen as constituting a warrior class, continually occupied with either war or preparations to one. Moreover, there still prevails a belief in a prolonged barrack-life, which is supposed to separate them physically from their *oikoi*.<sup>44</sup> Kulesza points out that modern scholars used to assume ‘unwittingly’ that in the daily life of Spartans there was simply no space for anything else apart from civic duties.<sup>45</sup> It seems, however, that some ancient authors were not aware of that fact at all. On the contrary, a Spartiate is quite often (as far as our evidence goes) placed by them in the domestic context, for instance: he is expected to return to his *oikos* in the evening, after the common meal.<sup>46</sup> He was obliged to send from there some meet to his companions, if it happen that he sacrificed.<sup>47</sup> In case of need, he could make use of someone else’s slaves, horses or wagons, which one assumes will have served his private interest, not his public duties.<sup>48</sup> Also, we are informed that in wartime three of the *homoioi* were responsible for arranging that a king and his chief officers had all they needed, which would be rather difficult if not impossible to organize for men who had nothing to do with any sort of practical skills.<sup>49</sup> Apart from that, the inscription of Damonon shows us a Spartiate who was proud of the horses he bred in his estate.<sup>50</sup> Furthermore, we are also informed that it was improper for a man in his twenties to enter the agora by himself in order to obtain some house supplies, what clearly suggests that it was quite a normal activity for mature men.<sup>51</sup> Finally, Cinadon, preparing to his rebellion, was to assert that on each Spartan estate there was a Spartiate, whom he termed the *δεσπότης*.<sup>52</sup> All of this authorises one to believe that a Spartan citizen was not a rare and casual guest in his own household. And if that was really so, he was surely interested in issues concerned with its functioning, and can be imagined as involved in making decisions concerning the *oikos* along with his wife.

The unique features of the Spartan woman, which are believed to distinguish her sharply from her Greek counterparts, remain in close connection with her function in the *oikos*. Her education, social stance and actions served to take proper care of her family and of her household’s economic efficiency, security and well-being. Taking all of this into consideration, the answer to the title question should be positive. Yes, we can call the Spartan wife the real keeper of the Lacedaemonian *oikos*, but we should not regard her as the only one.

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<sup>43</sup> For instance Kunstler believes that by the time a citizen moved in to the house, his wife had already a very strong position there: KUNSTLER, *Family Dynamics*, 31. Zweig claims that the strong sex-segregation typical of the Spartan society has been clearly working in favor of women’s position within it: ZWEIG, *The Only Women*, 47.

<sup>44</sup> For instance Scott writes about Spartan citizen’s ‘lack of cohabitation with the family’: A.G. SCOTT, ‘Plural Marriage and the Spartan State’, *Historia* 60 (2011), 423.

<sup>45</sup> He also strongly emphasises that the evidence for any barrack-life of Spartan citizens is very meagre and restricted only to some remarks made by Plutarch. KULESZA, ‘The Spartan Family’, *Eos* 100 (2013), 211.

<sup>46</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 5.7.

<sup>47</sup> Plut. *Lyc.* 12.2.

<sup>48</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 6.3.

<sup>49</sup> Xen. *Lac.* 13.1.

<sup>50</sup> *IG* v.1.213.

<sup>51</sup> Plut. *Lyc.* 25.1.

<sup>52</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 3.3.5.





# Female Domestic Financial Managers Turia, Murdia, and Hortensia

DIMITRIOS MANTZILAS

A Roman matron had four distinct roles to play during her life: a daughter, a sister, a wife or widow and a mother, showing her respect and devotion (*pietas*) to her father, brother(s), husband and children. The texts we intend to examine reflect Roman society, giving a great deal of information about the Roman family ideology and mentality, related often to Roman law, covering themes as: different types of marriage, scale, style and social standing of the family, divorce and remarriage with a substitute wife, widowhood, guardianship by a tutor, management of family property, will redaction and fair distribution of the heritage after death. Women, single or married had to prove that they were the true guardians (*custodes*) of the house, even though men officially played the dominant role. Male predominance was always considered perfectly normal in the Roman family although under Roman law the matrons had considerable independence.<sup>1</sup>

What is even more striking is the preponderance of some exceptional ladies over men, which contrasts with the general status and connubial ideology of Roman women; it was exceptional for them to suffer hardship or to have achievements. In this context, we observe an inversion of the conventional gender-roles.<sup>2</sup> Through their actions, these ladies who all belonged to the elite proved to be superior to other – ordinary – women. Furthermore, some of them demonstrate a very dynamic aspect of their character. There is a contrast between the usual view, i.e. that the woman should stay at home (*domiseda*),<sup>3</sup> and her heroic actions, but this did not disturb the ideals of marriage,<sup>4</sup> They acted like men without losing their feminine touch, trying to live with their husband and children in love and harmony.

A legal situation mentioned in the texts is that of inheritance: someone's property is equally shared among the children. When the children were boys, there was no difficulty in dividing the inheritance equally. However, a girl (and a woman) was not independent (*sui iuris*) and had to have a guardian, her husband or fiancé, under whose power (*manus* or *potestas*) she found herself. Originally this protection of women (*tutela mulierum*) was connected with the Roman system of succession. Given the fact that a daughter could inherit a considerable estate from her father as a dowry (*collatio dotis*), it was in her agnatic male relatives' (*agnati*)

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<sup>1</sup> A. ARJAVA, *Women and Law in Late Antiquity*, Oxford 1998, 154. In general on the legal position of women and their financial issues, see J.F. GARDNER, *Women in Roman Law and Society*, London 1986 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 1990); J.F. GARDNER, *Being a Roman Citizen*, London 1993; J.F. GARDNER, 'Gender-role Assumptions in Roman Law', *EMC/CV* 39, n. s. 14 (1995), 377-400; L. PEPPE, *Posizione giuridica e ruolo sociale della donna romana in età repubblicana*, Milano 1984; S. DIXON, 'Family Finances. Terentia and Tullia', in B. RAWSON (ed.), *The Family in Ancient Rome. New Perspectives*, London 1987 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1992), 93-120; S. DIXON, 'Exemplary Housewife or Luxurious Slut. Cultural Representations of Women in the Roman Economy', in F. MCHARDY – E. MARSHALL (eds.), *Women's Influence on Classical Civilization*, London – New York 2004, 56-74; S. TREGGIARI, *Roman Marriage. Iusti Coniuges from the Time of Cicero to the Time of Ulpian*, Oxford 1991. P. SETÄLÄ, 'Female Property and Power in Imperial Rome', in L. LARSSON LOVÉN – A. STRÖMBERG (eds.), *Aspects of Women in Antiquity*, Jonsered 1998, 96-110.

<sup>2</sup> E.A. HEMELRIJK, 'Masculinity and Femininity in the *Laudatio Turiae*', *CQ* 54 (2004), 185-97, in part. 185, 190.

<sup>3</sup> See M. TORELLI, '*Domiseda, lanifica, univira*. Il trono del Verucchio e il ruolo e l'immagine della donna tra arcaismo e repubblicano' in M. TORELLI (ed.), *Il rango, il rito e l'immagine*, Milano 1997, 52-86, who summarizes in three words the women's main values.

<sup>4</sup> N. HORSFALL, 'Some Problems in the *Laudatio Turiae*', *BICS* 30 (1983), 85-98, in part. 92.

personal interests to see that she did not dispose of any property which would otherwise after her death revert to the family.<sup>5</sup> Later on “the husband, as the owner of his own fortune (*patrimonium*) and guardian (*tutor*) of his wife’s, was formally in control of the whole of the property;<sup>6</sup> and handled it outside business relations, while the wife worked on the inside and looked after the administration of the common property”;<sup>7</sup> with attentiveness and careful management (*diligentia*).<sup>8</sup> But it should be noted that the husband had neither legal power over his wife nor full ownership of her property; their properties remained in fact separate.<sup>9</sup> The passage from the one guardianship to the other was called emancipation (*emancipatio*).<sup>10</sup>

Another issue is related to the type of marriage, which determined who had control of the bride. The first one, *matrimonium cum manu / in manum*, which conferred the bride (*sponsa*) on the groom’s family along with her property and gave the wife equal rights with her children, was divided into three types: a) *confarreatio*, an elaborate religious ceremony, where the grain *far* was baked into a special wedding cake, *farreum*, b) *coemptio*, where the wife carried a dowry into the marriage but was ceremoniously bought by her husband, to whom her possessions belonged thereafter and c) *usus*, where after a year’s cohabitation, the woman came under her husband’s *manus*, unless she stayed away for three nights (*trinoctium abesse*). In this type of marriage she acquired some freedom.

The second one, *matrimonium sine manu*, meant that the bride was still under the control of her *pater familias*. This legitimate marriage was conventionally accompanied by a dowry from the wife or her father to the husband in order to underwrite the expenses of the household. This dowry had to be returned if the marriage was dissolved by divorce or death of the husband. Any non-dotal property which the woman inherited after the death of her father remained in her ownership.<sup>11</sup> This type of marriage became very popular in the 1<sup>st</sup> century BC.<sup>12</sup> In essence, the wedding was a private ceremony, during which they offered sacrifices to the divinities of marriage in the presence of family and friends and in the absence of any priest or magistrate, and they signed a contract, the *instrumentum dotale*, as proof of the union.<sup>13</sup>

In the case of the first text, because of a break in the inscription, the names of both the husband and the wife are missing.<sup>14</sup> Earlier scholars attributed it to Q. Lucretius Vespillo, consul in 19 B.C., and his wife Turia. That is the reason why it was given the conventional name *Laudatio Turiae*, which has not been accepted by everybody.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>5</sup> ARJAVA, *Women and Law*, 112.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. J. CROOK, ‘His and Hers. What Degree of Financial Responsibility Did Husband and Wife Have for the Matrimonial Home and their Life in Common in a Roman Marriage?’, in K. ANDREAU – H. BRUHNS (eds.), *Parenté et stratégies familiales dans l’Antiquité Romaine*, Roma 1990, 153-72; S. TREGGIARI, *Roman Marriage*, 365-96, n. 4; L. DE LIGT, ‘De significatione verborum. Romeins erfrecht in de *Laudatio Turiae*’, *Lampas* 34 (2001), 45-61, in part. n. 3; HEMELRIJK, ‘Masculinity’, 195.

<sup>7</sup> E. WISTRAND *The So-Called Laudatio Turiae. Introduction, Text, Translation, Commentary*, Göteborg 1976, 39; cf. T.E.V. PEARCE, ‘The Role of the Wife as “Custos” in Ancient Rome’, *Eranos* 77 (1974), 16-33.

<sup>8</sup> E.S. RAMAGE, ‘The So-Called *Laudatio Turiae* as Panegyric’, *Athenaeum* 82 (1994), 341-70, in part. 349.

<sup>9</sup> On these delicate issues, see ARJAVA, *Women and Law*, 153-54.

<sup>10</sup> *LTur* I 15, *emancupata*.

<sup>11</sup> R.P. SALLER, *Patriarchy, Property, and Death in the Roman Family*, Cambridge – New York 1994, 202-24; R.P. SALLER, ‘Symbols of Gender and Status Hierarchies in the Roman Household’, in S.R. JOSHEL – S. MURNAGHAN (eds.), *Women and Slaves in Greco-Roman Culture. Differential Equations*, London – New York 1998, 85-91, in part. 87.

<sup>12</sup> GARDNER, *Women in Roman Law*, 97, 102, 105; SALLER, *Patriarchy*, 94.

<sup>13</sup> M. DURRY, *Éloge funèbre d’une matrone romaine (éloge dit de Turia)*, Paris 1950 (2002<sup>3</sup>), LXVI-LXVII; H. LINDSAY, ‘The Man in Turia’s Life, with a Consideration of Inheritance Issues, Infertility, and Virtues in Marriage in the 1<sup>st</sup> C. B. C.’, *JRA* 22 (2009), 183-98, who deals with complicated legal issues.

<sup>14</sup> *CIL* VI 1527, 37053 = *ILS* 8393, dated between 8-2 BC.

<sup>15</sup> The most important scholars in favor of the identification with Turia are: TH. MOMMSEN, ‘Zwei Sepulcralreden aus der Zeit Augustus und Hadrians’, *AAWB* (1863), 455-89, who invented the conventional name *Laudatio Turiae*; G. COSTA, ‘Ancora sulla *laudatio Turiae*’, *BCAR* 43 (1915), 3-40; G. BARBIERI, ‘*Laudatio*’ and ‘*Laudatio Turiae*’, in E. DE RUGGIERO, *Dizionario epigrafico di*

This bold and virtuous woman,<sup>16</sup> who lived a highly eventful life, avenged her parents' murder<sup>17</sup> by securing the punishment of the guilty, possibly her parents' servants, which would normally be the duty of the son. After that, she saved her property from her male relatives (*gentiles*), who wanted to dispute the will on the basis of their legal rights to it (*gentilitas*), and provided her husband (who was in fact under her protection) with money, servants and provisions.<sup>18</sup> She also gave financial support to her sister, who was under legitimate guardianship during the absence of her husband in another expedition.

Turia, during the defence of her father's will (her father remarried her mother by *coemptio*, in order to be able to leave a will)<sup>19</sup> undertook the case as a patron (*patronus*) and saw it through all by herself. In the event of her husband dying first, under his *manus* or *patria potestas* she would be *filiae loco*; i.e., on his death she would take an equal share of the inheritance with each of the children, as if she were his daughter in the legal sense.<sup>20</sup> Both she and her sister seem to have been married *cum manu*. Under the father's will, Turia and her husband were equal heirs, an entitlement granted equally to her sister and her brother-in-law Cluvius, who may have given Turia and Lucretius a *fideicommissum*<sup>21</sup> on behalf of them.

She also saved her husband's life<sup>22</sup> during the proscriptions of the triumvirs in 43 BC, which took place in the civil wars, seeking Octavian's clemency. Their marriage lasted for more than forty years, and came to an end through death, not divorce, which was a rarity. Moreover, due to the fact that she could not bear children (*infecunditas*), she proposed that she should provide a suitable fertile woman for him to marry so that he would not remain childless, and "even more importantly, she would not force the dissolution of their jointly held property, indicating of how financially damaging a divorce would be".<sup>23</sup> It is obvious that their cohabitation also meant co-operative financial decisions.

She was willing to regard any children produced as a result of this as her own, sharing her property with them, a noble act of self-sacrifice that her husband did not accept. In the laudation, he also expresses

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*antichità romane* IV, 1 (1978), 471-75; A.E. GORDON, 'Who's Who in the *Laudatio Turiae*', *Epigraphica* 39 (1977), 7-12; L. PEPPE, 'Turia. Funzione riproduttiva e funzione educatrice della donna romana' in Id., *Posizione giuridica e ruolo sociale della donna romana in età repubblicana*, Milano 1984; A. KALABRUN, 'De Turia Romani amoris coniugalis exemplo', *VoxP* 5 (1985), 75-80; LINDSAY, 'The Man', 191-92; contra O. HIRSCHFELD, 'Die sogennante *Laudatio Turiae*', *WS* 24 (1902), 233-37; DURRY, *Éloge funèbre*, passim; L. STORONI MAZZOLANI, *Una moglie*, Palermo 1982; P. CUTOLO, 'Sugli aspetti letterari, poetici e culturali della cosiddetta *Laudatio Turiae*', *AFLN* 26 (1983-4), 33-65; D. FLACH, *Die sogennante Laudatio Turiae Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar* (Texte zur Forschung 58), Darmstadt 1991; A.M. GOWING, 'Lepidus, the Proscriptions and the *Laudatio Turiae*', *Historia* 41 (1992), 283-96; A. DELLA CASA, 'Virtù cristiane nella cosiddetta *Laudatio Turiae*', in *Scritti scelti di Adrianna della Casa* (Paideia Cristiana: Miscellanea di studi in onore di M. Naldini), Pisa 1994, 305-17; E.S. RAMAGE, 'The So-Called *Laudatio Turiae* as Pannegyric', *Athenaeum* 82 (1994), 341-70; E.A. HEMELRIJK, 'De *Laudatio Turiae*. Graftschrift voor een uirzonderlijke vrouw?', *Lampas* 34 (2001), 62-80; HEMELRIJK, 'Masculinity', 185; I. PIRO, 'Quod emancipata esset Cluvio... Riflessioni intorno ad alcuni passaggi della *Laudatio Turiae*' in *Studi per G. Nicosia VI*, Milano 2007, 155-96; F. LAMBERTI, 'Donne romane fra *Idealtypus* e realtà sociale. Dal domum servare e lanam facere al meretricio more vivere', *Quaderni Lupiensi di Storia e Diritto* 4 (2014), 61-84, in part. 63-64.

<sup>16</sup> For Turia's character and deeds, cf. M. LEFKOWITZ, 'Wives and Husbands', in I. MCAUSLAN – P. WALCOT (eds.), *Women in Antiquity*, Oxford 1996, 67-82; P. KEEGAN, 'Turia, Lepidus, and Rome's Epigraphic Environment', *SHT* 9 (2008), 1-7.

<sup>17</sup> This action had a double meaning: it was in conformance with the principal of piety towards the parents and with the law that the heirs had to punish the assassins in order not to leave the crime unpunished and therefore lose the inheritance; cf. *Cod. Iust.* 6.35.6, 9; *Dig.* 10.3.9; DURRY, *Éloge funèbre*, 30.

<sup>18</sup> *LTur* 1.3-12, 2.2a-5a.

<sup>19</sup> Modern commentators appear to assume that the couple converted *usus* into a formal *conventio in manum*; see LINDSAY, 'The Man', 191, who adds that "the result of the *coemptio* would be to alter the *sui heredes* by changing those under the *potestas* of the testator. The wife would have become a *sua heres*, and the will would break the rule that *sui heredes* must be expressly included or excluded. Intestacy would ensue, hence a role for *gentiles*, since there are no male heirs".

<sup>20</sup> Cf. WISTRAND, *Laudatio Turiae*, 62.

<sup>21</sup> The *fideicommissum* was a gift of property, usually by will, to be held on behalf of another who cannot receive the gift directly.

<sup>22</sup> *LTur* 2.6a-18.

<sup>23</sup> LINDSAY, 'The Man', 196.

his wish that he might have been the one to die first, so that she could have been his adopted daughter, who would carry on his name.<sup>24</sup> The purpose of this adoption was to strengthen her position against relatives and dependents of the family, as there were many restrictions on women becoming heirs. Before dying, Turia made certain recommendations before her death, which included instructions for her funeral, household directions, manumissions of slaves and gifts to friends.<sup>25</sup>

A similar case (to which attention has never been drawn until now) is Alcestis *Barcinonensis*,<sup>26</sup> a 4<sup>th</sup> century AD *ethopoeia* on Alcestis, a true pious (*pia*) wife. Even though Alcestis is a mythological figure, the poet, inspired by women of his era, attributes to her characteristics of actual Roman matrons. Just like Turia, Alcestis supported her husband and king of Pherae, Admetus; she even sacrificed herself so that he could live on. She also gave specific instructions for after her death, including the allocation of her property and fortune in her will and her wish for her husband to find a new wife.<sup>27</sup> In both texts we find an inversion of the traditional gender roles: both husbands become scared little human beings in the face of death, while their wives escaped from being simple housewives and became heroines, possessing the common stereotypical virtues (piety, honesty of character, modesty, loyalty and obedience to the husband, love and devotion to family and relatives, generosity, ingenuity, courage, kindness, sobriety of attire and others), which appear also in *Laudatio Matidiae* and *Laudatio Paulinae*, the other two extant eulogies, in the inscription of Allia Potestas (a parody of laudations) and various funerary inscriptions.

The second lady, Murdia, praised in the *Laudatio Murdiae*,<sup>28</sup> had been married twice to worthy husbands that had been provided by her parents.<sup>29</sup> After having once been a widow, a status where he was in fact legally in the lowest category of intestate heirs,<sup>30</sup> she remarried. She had children from both marriages. She left a will (which the extant portion of this laudation has a strong emphasis on)<sup>31</sup> settling all her legal issues. At the beginning of this incomplete *encomion* we learn that she made all her sons equal heirs after she made a bequest to her daughter. According to Roman law, reverence (*reverentia*) and obedience (*obsequium*) were owed by children to their mother, who in turn had a duty to look after their interests.<sup>32</sup>

Murdia also left her second husband a fixed sum, as a dowry, hopefully increased eventually by investments. Her son – from her first marriage – (who is here the *laudator*) would later inherit his deceased father's property, which had passed into the ownership of his mother on the decision of her husband. This is why she gained the approval of her fellow citizens, since the division of her estate indicated her honourable intentions towards her family. As a woman married *sine manu*, Murdia was under the *potestas* of her father (not that of her husband). Since she was at an age that most Roman women had no living father, we may suppose that she was *sui iuris* (which is the reason that she was able to make the provisions for the *laudator*

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Livia's adoption by Augustus.

<sup>25</sup> WISTRAND, *Laudatio Turiae*, 75.

<sup>26</sup> For more details, see D. MANTZILAS, 'Receptions and Genre Cross-reference in *Alcestis Barcinonensis*', *SPFB (klas)* 16 (2011), 61-90, in part. 87-89.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Alc. Barc.* 83-103, where we find an alteration of the motif: the heroine's husband can re-marry, as long as he does not love his new wife more than he loves her. Probably the anonymous writer of the laudation had in mind Propertius' *regina elegiarum* (4.11).

<sup>28</sup> *CIL* VI 10230 = *ILS* 8394. For the speech that dates from the Age of Augustus, see N. HORSEFALL, 'Allia Potestas and Murdia. Two Roman Women', *AncSoc* 12 (1982), 27-33.

<sup>29</sup> *LMur* 14.

<sup>30</sup> P. KEEGAN, 'Faint Praise in Pain(t)ed Phrases. A Narratological Reading of the *Laudatio Murdiae*', *Eras Journal* (Reference: 07 January 2016 <<http://arts.monash.edu.au/publications/eras/edition-4/keegan.php>>), 2002, in part. 5.

<sup>31</sup> H. LINDSAY, 'The *Laudatio Murdiae*. Its Content and Significance', *Latomus* 63 (2004), 88-97, in part. 94.

<sup>32</sup> S. DIXON, *The Roman Mother*, London – Sydney 1989, 61-65; SALLER, 'Symbols of Gender', 86.

for which she was praised in the inscription). This would also allow her to dispense with a tutor under the *ius trium liberorum* – if she had three or more children – a ruling which did not apply to women under *potestas*.

Hortensia<sup>33</sup> was a young lady in her twenties who received an extensive education. As soon as she was chosen as the matrons' representative, she delivered a famous speech in 42 B. C. in front of the members of the Second Triumvirate, who were waging war against those who killed Julius Caesar.<sup>34</sup> To fund the ongoing war, the triumvirs had resorted to selling the property of citizens killed by proscription. But this proved to be an insufficient measure. Hortensia represented 1400 wealthy women on whom taxes were imposed, in order to sponsor the military legions. The tax would amount to one year's full income plus a special donation (in form of a loan) to the government calculated as a percentage of their properties. The women refused to contribute because they had no participation in the wars, and because their social position would be seriously aggravated if they lost their properties, having already been deprived of the male members of their families. Hortensia also notes that their mothers once rise superior to their sex and made contributions when the empire was in danger through the conflict with the Carthaginians. The difference is that then they contributed voluntarily, not from their landed property, their fields, their dowries, or their houses, without which life is not possible to free women, but only from their own jewellery, and even these not according to the fixed valuation, not under fear of informers or accusers, not by force and violence, but what they themselves were willing to give.<sup>35</sup> The triumvirs ordered the lictors to drive them away from the tribunal but the crowd supported women. On the following day they reduced the number of the women, who were to present a valuation of their property, from 1400 to 400, and decreed that all men who possessed more than 100,000 drachmas, regardless of nationality and rank, should lend it with the interest calculated as a fiftieth part of their property and contribute one year's income to the war expenses.

It is not clear whether or not Hortensia was married and what her relationship to the proscriptions or the Triumvirate was. Maybe she was married to Q. Servilius Cepio, adopted son of Brutus.<sup>36</sup> Another possible explanation is that her brother, Q. Hortensius, had been a victim of the proscriptions. When he was the proconsul of Macedonia, he ordered Gaius Antonius' (Marcus Antonius' brother) murder.<sup>37</sup> A third interpretation sees in her a speaker by nature, being the daughter of the famous orator Q. Hortensius Hortulus.<sup>38</sup> Unfortunately her father had already died in 50 B. C. so Hortensia had no male support in her actions and took over the protection of her fortune herself, as did the rest of the 1400 wealthy women. Hortensia's

<sup>33</sup> App. *BC* 4.1.32-34; Val. Max. 8.3.3; Quint. *inst.* 1.1.6. For her personality, the conditions under which she boldly delivered a speech to a public forum where women were strictly excluded, and the reactions she provoked, see f. ex. D.H. GRANADOS DE ARENA, 'Actitud admirable de dos mujeres en épocas difíciles. La *uxor ignota* de la *Laudatio funebris* y Hortensia, la hija del orador', *REC* 17 (1986), 93-107; R.A. BAUMAN, *Women and Politics in Ancient Rome*, London 1992, especially 78-90 on the triumviral period; A. LÓPEZ LÓPEZ, 'Hortensia, primera oradora romana', *Florilib* 3 (1992), 317-32.

<sup>34</sup> See M.H. DETTENHOFER, 'Frauen in politischen Krisen zwischen Republik und Prinzipat', in M.H. DETTENHOFER, *Reine Männersache? Frauen in Männerdomänen der antiken Welt*, Köln – Weimar – Wien 1994, 133-57, for the role of women (Servilia, Fulvia, Hortensia, and Sempronia) during the crisis that followed Caesar's murder, a theme first dealt with by F. MÜNZER, *Römische Adelsparteien und Adelsfamilien*, Stuttgart 1920.

<sup>35</sup> App. *BC* 4.1.32.

<sup>36</sup> F. MÜNZER, *RE* 8.2481-82, s.v. *Hortensius*, n. 16; A.G. WOODHEAD, 'Delos. Honores Q. Hortensii, a. 44a. (17-357)', in A. CHANIOTIS – T. CORSTEN – R.S. STROUD – R.A. TYBOUT (eds.), *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, Brill Online 2016. Reference: 07 January 2016 <[http://static.ribo.brill.semcs.net/entries/supplementum-epigraphicum-graecum/seg-17-357-delos-honores-q-hortensii-a-44a-a17\\_357](http://static.ribo.brill.semcs.net/entries/supplementum-epigraphicum-graecum/seg-17-357-delos-honores-q-hortensii-a-44a-a17_357)>; contra W. DRUMANN – P. GROEBE, *Geschichte Roms in seinem Übergang von der republikanischen zur monarchischen Verfassung*, Königsberg 1837 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Leipzig 1899; reprint Hildesheim 1964), III, 104, n. 6, who argues that she was not married.

<sup>37</sup> Plut. *brut.* 28.1; *ant.* 22.1; Val. Max. 8.3.3· cf. F. HINARD, 1985, *Les proscriptions de la Rome républicaine*, Roma 1985, 475-76.

<sup>38</sup> E. GABBA, *Appiano e la storia delle guerre civili*, Firenze 1956, 183, even though he prefers Hinard's theory. Two more ladies' rhetorical performance reflects their fathers' eloquence. These are Laelia, daughter of orator Gaius Laelius (Cic. *brut.* 211) and Tullia, Cicero's daughter (Cic. *ad QFr.* 1.3.3)

common point with Turia is that they both challenged the triumvirs' authority, something unthinkable even for a man.<sup>39</sup>

She is one of the examples of ladies who claimed their legal rights, often associated with the cases of Carfania and Maesia.<sup>40</sup> Her attitude demonstrates a clear antithesis towards the Roman mentality that forbade women from speaking in public in an assembly. The cultural anthropology of the era dealt on the one hand with the rhetoric of rational and wise men and, on the other hand, with the voices of crazy women, who were considered as being androgynous and monsters, when they tried to speak in publicly.<sup>41</sup> This is the reason why the occasions in which Roman women appeared in public and participated in politics were rare.<sup>42</sup>

Summarising the above, from the socio-cultural and ideological point of view, the aforementioned texts give a unique insight into Roman family structures. In general, all the literary sources offer a sense of the complexities of personal conduct and public ideology, due to the moral revitalization of the upper classes from the age of Augustus onwards, which was introduced in order to restore conservative social values and control social conduct, thereby reinforcing duty and community. The legal regulations had to do with the position of women in the Roman family, the nucleus of Roman society, which was the ultimate moral judge on issues of marriage and reproduction, because women had an effect on the community as a whole. In other words, even though women did not have the dominant role in the family, they were expected to support it by all means at their disposal. The financial aspect was also included in this support, by providing a dowry, by keeping the family's fortune safe, and by being wise domestic financial managers. A pious attitude always guaranteed society's approval and the family's eternal gratitude and praise after death, when such a woman would enter into an after-life period that was full of glory.

## Conclusion

In the *Laudatio Turiae*, Turia saved her property from her male relatives, and provided her husband (who was under her protection) with money. She also gave financial support to her sister, who was under legitimate guardianship. During the defence of her father's will, she undertook the case. Being childless, she suggested to her husband to remarry, willing to share her property with the eventual children. In the *Laudatio Murdiae*, Murdia, had been married twice to worthy husbands and had children from both marriages. She left a will settling all her legal issues, making all her sons equal heirs after she made a bequest to her daughter. She also left her second husband a fixed sum, as a dower. Hortensia delivered a speech in front of the members of the Second Triumvirate against their decision to impose taxes on 1400 wealthy women, in order to sponsor the military legions. The women refused to contribute because their social position would be seriously aggravated if they lost their properties. These texts give a unique insight into the Roman family ideology and mentality, related often with the Roman law. In this article we try to illuminate the legal aspects dominating Roman society, but also the wife's position as the true guardian of the house.

<sup>39</sup> DETTENHOFER, 'Frauen', 141. On the contrary, the episode of Tanusia (App. *BC* 4.44.187; Suet. *Aug.* 27.2) demonstrates an acceptance of, rather than a challenge to, the authority of a triumvir. T. Vinius was proscribed by the triumvirs in 43 BC, and owed his life to his wife Tanusia, who concealed him in a chest at the house of his freedman Philopoemen, and gave out that he was dead. She afterwards obtained his pardon from Octavian, who raised Philopoemen to the equestrian rank for his fidelity to his former master.

<sup>40</sup> Maesia of Sentinum pleaded her own case in court and earned thereby the name of 'Androgynous', cf. A. MARSHALL, 'Roman Ladies on Trial. The Case of Maesia of Sentinum', *Phoenix* 44 (1990), 56-68. She defended her case in court bereft of male legal representation. Carfania, wife of the senator *Licinius Bucio*, repeatedly made public pleadings in court. She is referred to as impudent, a barking dog and a monster.

<sup>41</sup> Val. Max. 8.3.1-2; L. PERNOT, 'Femmes devant l'assemblée en Grèce et à Rome', *Logo* 7 (2004), 201-11; E. HÖBENREICH, 'Andróginas y monstruos: mujeres que hablan en la antigua Roma', *Veleia* 22 (2005), 173-82.

<sup>42</sup> G.S. SUMI, 'Civil War, Women and Spectacle in the Triumviral Period', *AncW* 35 (2004), 196-206.

*Dominae apothecarum.*  
**Gendering Storage Patterns in Roman Houses**

RIA BERG

**Women, Economy, and Domestic Order**

The role of women as managers of order, or of the constant flow of domestic material resources, is plausibly one of prime importance, albeit one that rarely surfaces in literary or iconographic material. This article will examine this important aspect of female domestic agency through both literary sources and the distribution patterns of objects in Roman households in Pompeii. My focus will shift from assigning a gender to single rooms to doing so for the whole system of storage. Gender, I think, is a crucially important and omnipresent fibre entwined in that system.

According to Richard Saller, the central importance of the *familia* as an economic unit in ancient Roman culture can hardly be overestimated: “the Roman family was the primary site of production, reproduction, consumption and intergenerational transmission of property and knowledge undergirding production in the Roman world”.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, not only production, but several other crucial events in the economic chain took place within the domestic unit: conservation, redistribution, consumption and discarding of various goods. Modern academic work has often considered under the heading ‘economy’ only monetary, productive and purely commercial activities, whereas non-monetary actions, such as domestic conservation and consumption, have not been given similar weight. In the Roman family, it was primarily women who were responsible for the family economy, making decisions on (parsimonious or lavish) modes of consumption of goods, how to distribute goods in various deposits (thus determining their conservation or loss), and managing the efforts of other household members, particularly the slaves, with a crucial impact on the economic efficiency of the household.<sup>2</sup> A lack of attention to such non-monetary activities has, in fact, meant that women have had little visibility in the study of ancient economies.

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<sup>1</sup> R. SALLER, ‘The Roman Family as a Productive Unit’, in B. RAWSON (ed.), *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, Malden MA – Oxford 2011, 116-28, in part. 116. For the feminist and gender research discourse and reactions to stressing family economy as a particularly female field, see S.B. POMEROY, *Xenophon Oeconomicus. A Social and Historical Commentary with a New English Translation*, Oxford 1994, in part. 89-90. For further considerations on the Roman family as an economic unit and the role of women within it, see S. DIXON, ‘Exemplary Housewife or Luxurious Slut? Cultural Representations of Women in Roman Economy’, in E. MARSHALL – F. MCHARDY (eds.), *Women’s Influence in Classical Civilization*, London – New York 2004, 56-74; M.J. GROEN-VALLINGA, ‘Desperate Housewives? The adaptive Family Economy and Female Participation in the Roman Urban Labour Market’, in E. HEMELRIJK – G. WOOLF, *Women and the Roman City in the Latin West*, Leiden – Boston 2013, 295-312, in part. 301. See also P. SETÄLÄ, ‘Female Property and Power in Imperial Rome’, in L. LARSSON LOVÉN – A. STRÖMBERG (eds), *Aspects of Women in Antiquity* (Proceedings of the First Nordic Symposium on Women’s Live in Antiquity, Göteborg 12.-15. June 1997), Jonsered 1998, 96-110.

<sup>2</sup> For general remarks and references on women in the Roman domestic economy see L. FOXHALL, *Studying Gender in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge 2013, 95-96. For considerations on the very meaning of the concept ‘ownership’ in Antiquity, with various definitions ranging from ‘the right to alienate’ to ‘the right to use and to benefit from’ objects, see L. FOXHALL, ‘Household, Gender and Property in Classical Athens’ *CQ* 39 (1989), 22-44, in part. 31. See also SALLER, ‘The Roman Family’; POMEROY, *Xenophon*;



The principle of men acquiring goods from outside, and women preserving, managing and reproducing them inside the house, had been deeply rooted in the ancient mind-frame since Homer, and then theorized by Aristotle, and most famously by Xenophon in his *Oeconomicus*.<sup>3</sup> Sarah Pomeroy underlines how Xenophon, our primary source on attitudes towards domestic labour in classical Greece, does not in any way downgrade female domestic economic work as inferior to male, even though modern scholars have often read such allusions in his words: “Xenophon asserts that women and men are complementary... in their contribution to the domestic economy, but this difference does not imply inequality”.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of the woman as prime organizer of domestic order is consolidated by several Greek writers, who compare the woman’s role in the home with that of the queen bee in a hive.<sup>5</sup> *De re rustica* of Columella contains a latinized version of Xenophon’s ideas, in a chapter dedicated to the economy of a villa rustica. Columella repeats the idea of the basic dual division of economic activities: men, outside, acquire the goods; women, inside, administrate and guard them. The importance of this (female) work is underlined by repeating three times – in a relatively short passage – the verb to guard, *custodire*. Besides guarding, women should also administrate the property (*administrari*), and care for all domestic affairs (*domestica negotia curanda*). In Columella’s view, diligence (*domestica diligentia*) in economic matters is a basic female virtue; furthermore, ‘natural anxiety’ is seen to make women better custodians of the household goods. Economic diligence as a female virtue can also be traced to the Greek concept of *sophrosyne*, as well as to Roman funerary appraisals such as *frugi, custos fidelis*, or *fidei ac diligentiae gravissima coniunx*.<sup>6</sup> Both textual and material sources tend to be more informative about the wealthier households, but I argue that the same general mind-sets and principles applied also for women running more subaltern independent households.

In Greco-Roman antiquity the order of the house was an economic, rather than hygienic, matter: for the ancient authors order does not mean cleanliness or tidiness, but is an instrument with which to control domestic income and expenditure. According to Columella, not controlling the order of proper belongings is like not really possessing them at all.<sup>7</sup> In the Roman world, a glimpse of similar ideology can be recognized, for example, in the funerary epitaph of Allia Potestas underlining her role in administrating domestic order: she never goes to bed before having put all things in order, *positis ex ordine rebus*.<sup>8</sup> A veritable cult of order can be detected in many texts: both Xenophon and Columella spend numerous pages praising order in the household, evoking images like well-ordered pots and pans singing as a harmonious chorus line, or an

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P. BERDOWSKI, ‘Some Remarks on the Economic Activity of women in the Roman Empire: a research problem’, in P. BERDOWSKI – B. BLAHACZEK (eds.), *Haec mihi in animis vestris templa. Studia classica in memory of professor Leslaw Morawiecki*, Rzeszów 2007, 283-98.

<sup>3</sup> Arist. *Politics*, 1277b 20-25. In Xenophon’s much analyzed work, in being productive in the household, the female *sophrosyne* is a novelty, considering the older literary conception of domestic women as wasteful and unproductive, as suggested by H.F. NORTH, ‘The Mare, the Vixen, and the Bee. *Sophrosyne* as the Virtue of Women in Antiquity’, *Illinois Classical Studies* 2 (1977), 35-48; POMEROY, *Xenophon*; further discussed by A. GLAZEBROOK, ‘Cosmetics and *Sôphrosunê*. Ischomachos’ Wife in Xenophon’s *Oikonomikos*’, *CW* 102.3 (2009), 233-48, in part. 240.

<sup>4</sup> POMEROY, *Xenophon*, 88.

<sup>5</sup> For references, NORTH, ‘*Sophrosyne*’, 36; 46 et passim. For further discussion on women’s public and private virtues, see E.P. FORBIS, ‘Women’s Public Image in Italian Honorary Inscriptions’, *AJP* 111 (1990), 493-512; L. LARSSON-LOVÉN, ‘*Lanam fecit*. Woolworking and Female Virtue’, in L. LARSSON-LOVÉN – A. STRÖMBERG (eds.), *Aspects of Women in Antiquity* (Proceedings of the First Nordic Symposium on Women’s Lives in Antiquity, Göteborg 12-15 June 1997), *Jonsered* 1998, 85-95; W. RIESS, ‘*Rari exempli femina*. Female Virtues on Roman Funerary Inscriptions’, in S.L. JAMES – S. DILLON (eds.), *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, Oxford 2012, 491-501. See also, especially on women as *custos* of the household economy, T.E.V. PEARCE, ‘The Role of the Wife as *Custos* in Ancient Rome’, *Eranos* 72 (1974), 16-33.

<sup>6</sup> NORTH, ‘*Sophrosyne*’, 41, et passim.

<sup>7</sup> Colum. 12.2.3.

<sup>8</sup> *CIL* VI 37965 = *CLE* 1988, vv. 12-13.

orderly equipped cargo ship ready to face a storm. The woman in charge of the domestic organization is, as observed also by Allison Glazebrook, confronted with various male leadership roles, such as the general, the guardian of the laws, the commander of the watch, the captain of a ship, the director of a chorus.<sup>9</sup>

### Tracing Female Objects and Storage Patterns

Relatively much has already been written about women in the ancient domestic arena. In Pompeian archaeology, these discourses have tended to concentrate on efforts to assign a gender to single domestic objects, activities, or spaces.<sup>10</sup> All in all, scholarly discussion has concluded that no permanent, separate, exclusive gendered rooms or areas existed in the Roman house, confirming the closing passages of Cornelius Nepos and Vitruvius which state that the Roman matron roamed freely everywhere in her house.<sup>11</sup> The wide research by Penelope Allison on the distribution of finds in Pompeian houses has produced no clear patterns for female presence or female labour in the houses. It has shown, however, the frequent finding of loom-weights in the *atria*, stereotypical areas of public and family representation, and some concentrations of toiletry items in the *cubicula*.<sup>12</sup>

With regard to the Classical Greek world, a parallel path has been taken by Nicholas Cahill in his analysis of the finds from the houses of the city of Olynthus (sacked and burned in 348 B.C., determining the preservation of many house-floor artefact assemblages *in situ*), mapping also the gender-bound patterns in their distribution.<sup>13</sup> Among his examples, in Olynthus, the House of Many Colours is particularly rich in female objects, found primarily in the two rooms of the kitchen complex. These rooms were, according to the author, consequently particularly important *loci* of female activities, including weaving and ritual.<sup>14</sup> However, these same rooms contained not only the majority of female finds, but also most of all the finds in the house.

In my dissertation tracing Pompeian female toiletry items, including mirrors, the presence of female objects was found not to be clearly concentrated in the most plausible places of use, the decorated *cubicula*.

<sup>9</sup> GLAZEBROOK, 'Cosmetics', 243.

<sup>10</sup> One of the first gender approaches to Pompeian habitations was Amedeo Maiuri's attempt to identify women's quarters in five Pompeian houses, looking for something akin to the *gynaikonitis* of the classical Greek house, A. MAIURI, 'Ginecéo e "Hospitium" nella casa pompeiana', *MemLinc* Ser. 8 vol. 5, 9 (1954), 449-67. More modern approaches to the theme include the seminal article of A. WALLACE-HADRILL, 'Engendering the Roman House' in D.E.E. KLEINER – S.B. MATHESON (eds.), *I Claudia. Women in Ancient Rome*, New Haven 1996, 104-15, which looked at how gendered values can be expressed in Pompeian houses in more flexible ways, for example on the axis private – public, or inside – outside, or by temporary differentiation. In the end, material finds were looked at with great expectations, suggesting that female activities, for example, wool-working, could be mapped more precisely looking at the distribution of loom-weights. In fact, we can presume that the activities of socially sub-alternate classes, women, children and slaves, would be more visible in mobile finds, than in permanent architectonic solutions L.C. NEVETT, *Domestic Space in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge 2010; P. ALLISON, *Pompeian Households. An Analysis of the Material Culture*, Los Angeles 2004; J. BERRY, 'Household Artefacts. Towards a Re-Interpretation of Roman Domestic Space', in R. LAURENCE – A. WALLACE-HADRILL (eds.), *Domestic Space in the Roman World. Pompeii and Beyond*, Portsmouth 1997, 183-95; N. CAHILL, 'Functional Analyses of Ancient House Inventories', S. LANDSTÄTTER – V. SCHEIBELREITER (eds.), *Städtisches Wohnen im östlichen Mittelmeerraum, 4. Jh. v. Chr. – 1. Jh. n. Chr.* (Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums 24.-27. Oktober 2007 an der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien), Wien 2010, 477-96. See also P. LOHMANN in this volume.

<sup>11</sup> Nepos, *vitae* pr. 6-7; Vitruvius 6.7.2-5. L. NEVETT, *Domestic Space*, 96.

<sup>12</sup> ALLISON, *Pompeian Households*, 156. In the case of Pompeian house I 10, 8, Allison presents the relevant problem of whether we should read the loom-weights in the atrium of this small non-elite house as evidence for female (domestic) work, or male (industrial) work, P.M. ALLISON, 'Engendering Roman Domestic Space', in R. WESTGATE – N.R.E. FISHER – J. WHITLEY (eds.), *Building Communities. House, Settlement and Society in the Aegean and Beyond* (British School at Athens Studies 15), London 2007, 343-50.

<sup>13</sup> N. CAHILL, *Household and City Organization at Olynthus*, New Haven – London 2002.

<sup>14</sup> CAHILL, *Olynthus*, 93.

High concentrations of female toiletries were encountered in the rooms where the majority of other valuable utensils of the household were also placed, in line with the households' general storage patterns.<sup>15</sup> This kind of pattern is, in fact, also observable in the houses discussed by Allison and Cahill.

To start with, in order to briefly illustrate the dynamics of household storage in general and the distribution of female vs. other finds in Roman households in particular, I present, as examples, two Pompeian habitative units, a modest *thermopolium* (VI 16, 39.40) and a small atrium house, Casa delle Origini di Roma (V 4, 13). I will examine their finds in two very elementary ways, that have not, however, been systematically attempted earlier: First, by looking at the quantity of *all* objects, found in each room. Second, by looking at the quantity of *female-associated* objects in each room, and then comparing their relative locations.

The question of how certain objects have been labelled female requires a short aside. Normally, two types of objects have been considered female in Roman culture: 1) instruments of gender-bound work, wool-work in particular, and 2) instruments for body-care, and jewellery. Such divisions and associations have been widely discussed in the past, in particular in an early summary by Allason-Jones, and more recently by Allison.<sup>16</sup>

We might, however, say that all objects are – to varying degrees – associated with gender, conveying gradations of gendered meaning, rather than belonging to binary yes/no categories. To consider this aspect in a simple way I have divided gender-bound items into two types: 1) strong gender association and 2) weak gender association. The first group includes items that can be considered almost exclusively, male/female, for example the razor, the hair-pin, used only for grooming and holding long (female) hair, and earrings, that can be considered almost body-parts of the cultural construct of Roman woman.<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, this group also contains objects that have a very strong symbolic gender association, ideologically almost exclusively connected with one gender even though, in practice, they were evidently used by both to some degree (mirrors, strigils).<sup>18</sup>

The other group, items of weak gender association, contains the most vaguely gender-bound objects, objects that are preferably seen in either male or female use, but can be used by all, and also for several purposes – such as *unguentaria* or tweezers, cosmetic *spatulae* and spoons. The ambivalent and loose gender association of such items has often been seen as a hazard for any attempts to assign a gender to all objects. The value of such an object is rather in corroborating the association, considering their relation with other objects, their number, type, and quality.

The first house, the so-called **thermopolium of Felix and Dorus** (VI 16, 39.40) is located on a street corner just opposite the entrance of the House of the Vettii.<sup>19</sup> This small commercial unit consists of a room with a sales counter opening onto the street (B), closet under the stairs leading to an upper storey (A) and three rooms at the back (C, D, F), with latrine (G). During the excavation, numerous objects were found

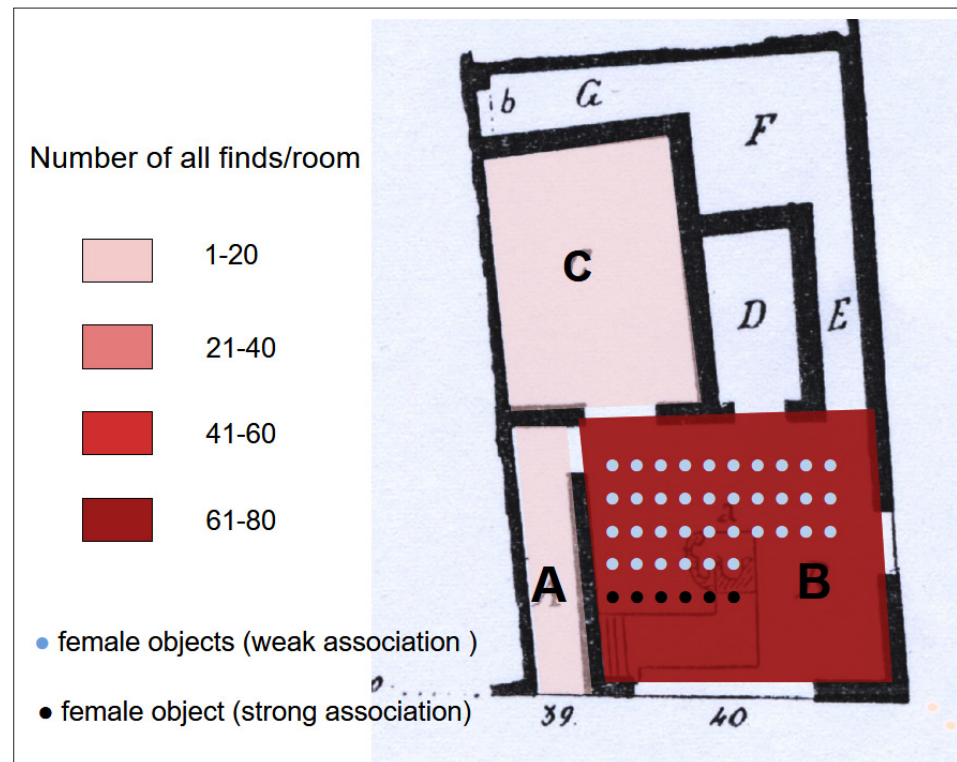
<sup>15</sup> R. BERG, *Il mundus muliebris nelle fonti latine e nelle case pompeiane*, PhD, Univ. Helsinki 2010.

<sup>16</sup> L. ALLASON-JONES, 'Sexing Small Finds', in P. RUSH (ed.), *Theoretical Roman Archaeology. Second Conference Proceedings* (Worldwide Archaeology Series 14), Aldershot 1995, 22-32; P.M. ALLISON, 'Characterizing Roman Artifacts to Investigate Gendered Practices in Contexts without Sexed Bodies', *AJA* 119 (2015), 103-23. See also the articles of P. LOHMANN and D. LYONS in this volume.

<sup>17</sup> ALLASON-JONES, 'Sexing', 25, discusses the case of earrings, conceived as exclusively female in Roman culture, and male earrings being characteristically barbarian features. However, in the Roman Empire, this usage could also be widely applied because of foreign soldiers etc. Similarly, she presents valid counterarguments for considering all pins as exclusively female objects in all parts of the Empire, in all periods. However, in the central Italian imperial sites the usage of decorated hair-pins and earrings could be identified as being almost exclusively female.

<sup>18</sup> ALLASON-JONES for bracelets and necklaces, 'Sexing', 27.

<sup>19</sup> The *thermopolium* was excavated in May 1903: *NSA* 1908 (Sogliano), 368-70, plan 360; *PPM* V, 996-98; BERG, *Il mundus muliebris*, 411.



**Fig. 1:** Thermopolium of Felix and Dorus, Pompeii VI 16, 39.40: Collocation of finds with female association.

on the sales counter, and elsewhere in the *thermopolium* room (B), probably originally kept in a cupboard, of which hinges and lock are preserved; indeed, these were by far the most numerous group of objects in the house, seventy all in all. The room was not decorated, except for a particular feature: a gold/glass paste earring set into the wall plaster. Two further finds were made in the closet A (under the stairs), and three in the larger back room C. The finds with female associations present in the thermopolium were numerous (**table 1**). They included six objects with a *strong gender association*: a bronze mirror, a bronze finger ring with snake figure, three bone spindles, a bone hair pin with a figure of a hand, and also 36 objects with a *weak gender association*: a silver crescent pendent, a bronze jug, a cup, four probes, two spoons, two tweezers, three spoon-probes, a basin, a group of nine bone *spatulae*, a spoon, a group of four sea shells, seventeen glass unguentaria, and a faïence box. If we code this data on the map, representing the quantity of all finds with shades of colour, the preponderance of one room, the *thermopolium*, is evident. By adding dots representing female items, with strong or weak gender associations, we can see that their position coincides with the principal storage room of the house (**fig. 1**).

**The House of the Origins of Rome** (V 4, 13) is a modestly decorated, irregular house (295 m<sup>2</sup>).<sup>20</sup> Atrium B has an oblong transversal form and was simply painted white, with a floor in *opus signinum*. The kitchen contained ashes in the fireplace, making it plausible that the house was inhabited at the time of the eruption. It may also have been active in the hospitality trade: in its last phase, a third *triclinium* completed the two earlier ones and the room opening onto the street was converted into a stable.

Also in this case, one room dominates all others in terms of its finds: room Q - an undecorated little room that functioned as a passage between the *triclinium* R and garden P, and held a cupboard (**table 2**). While in many of the rooms, the painted *triclinia* and *cubicula* also contained some objects, none of them

<sup>20</sup> The house was excavated between 1902-1903; NSA 1905, 85-97, in part. 92-93 (Sogliano); L. ESCHEBACH – H. ESCHEBACH – J. MÜLLER-TROLLIUS, *Gebäudeverzeichnis und Stadtplan der antiken Stadt Pompeji*, Köln – Weimar – Wien – Böhlau 1993, 143; S. TASSINARI, *Il vasellame bronzeo di Pompei*, Roma 1993, I, 171-72; II, 475.

<b>ROOM A (under steps) 2 finds</b>	<b>ROOM B (Thermopolium/ shop) 70 finds</b>		<b>ROOM C 3 finds</b>
Bronze jug (Tassinari D)	<i>Silver crescent</i> (2994)	<i>Bone spoon</i> (2998 B=55485)	Bronze cauldron Tassinari U
Bronze amphora (Tassinari A)	4 bronze fixtures (guardaspigoli) (2981 A-B)	Group of 8 bone hinges (2999)	Group of 3 bronze coins
	<i>Bronze jug</i> (Tassinari B) (2982)	<i>Group of 4 sea shells</i> (3000)	Bronze lock elements
	Bronze cup (Tassinari L) (2983)	Group of 5 glass paste game counters (3001)	
	Bronze dipper (Tassinari G) (2984)	2 bone dices (3001)	
	Bronze cup (Tassinari O) (2985)	<i>17 glass unguentaria</i> (3002; 3004, 3006-7; 3010)	
	Bronze lamp (2986)	Glass askos (3008)	
	<b>Bronze mirror</b> (2987=55451)	Glass bottle (3003)	
	<i>4 bronze probes</i> (2988 A=55452, B=55453, C=55454, D=55455)	3 glass cups (3005)	
	<i>2 bronze spoons</i> (2989 A=55456, B=55457)	Glass funnel (3009)	
	<i>2 bronze tweezers</i> (2990 A=55458)	Group of 20 bronze coins (3111-4)	
	<i>3 bronze spoon-probes</i> (2991 A=55459 B=55460)	<b>ROOM B On the counter</b>	
	<b>Bronze finger ring with snake figures</b> (2992)	Terracotta incense burner	
	5 bronze rings of different sizes (2993)	Terra sigillata cup	
	<i>Bronze basin</i> (s.n.)	<i>Faïance box</i>	
	<i>Group of 9 bone spatulae</i> (2995 A-I)	Bronze lamp with chains for suspension (plate inscribed FELIX ET DORVS MAG L F D D, four bells and a phallic dog)	
	Antelope horn fragments and boar teeth (2996)	Bronze stud with ring	
	<b>2 bone spindles</b> (2997)	Marble statuette	
	<b>Bone hair pin</b> (2998 A)	<b>Bone spindle with 3 discs</b>	

**Table 1:** Thermopolium of Felix and Dorus, Pompeii VI 16, 39.40: Table of finds.

FAUCES A (6)	ATRIUM B (4)	KITCHEN G (11)	TRICLI-NIUM K (2)	ROOM L (4)	ROOM R (17)	ROOM S (19)	ROOM Q (58)	
Bronze bell	Bronze bulla	2 terracotta jugs	Bronze <i>situla</i>	Bronze amphora	Bronze jug (Tassinari D)	Bronze signet ring M FAB SECUNDI	Bronze lock	Glass cup
Iron nails	2 glass bottles	4 terracotta mugs	Bronze hook	Grinding stone	Group of 18 bronze/2 silver coins	Bronze lock	Bronze stud	Group of 20 glass gaming counters
Iron lock with key	Terracotta mug	4 terracotta bowls		<b>Under stairs:</b>	2 bronze hinges	Bronze fibula for horse	2 bronze 'Casseroles'	<i>Glass probe for perfume</i>
2 iron handles		Terra sigillata cup		Terracotta amphora	Bronze fibula	<i>Bronze tweezers</i>	<i>Bronze cup O with bronze chains</i>	Glass beaker
Iron bar				Grinding stone mola	Bronze handle	Bronze jug	<b>Bronze mirror</b>	4 terra sigillata cups
				<b>On two skeletons:</b>	terracotta lamp	Bronze amphora	<i>4 bronze tweezers</i>	3 terra sigillata plates
				<b>2 gold earrings</b>	Group of 4 bone hinges	Bronze hinge	Bronze strigil	Terracotta lamp
				<i>Gold ring with green stone</i>	3 stone weights with iron handle	Group of 13 bronze coins	<i>Bronze needle</i>	<i>2 terracotta cups with traces of colour</i>
				<i>Gold ring with cameo /amoretine</i>	Terracotta jug with text <i>LIQ-VAMEN</i>	Iron hinge and key	Group of 3 cylindrical bronze tubes (furniture elements)	3 terracotta mugs, one containing:
				<i>Gold chain</i>	Small bronze cauldron	<b>Bone hair pin with Venus</b>	<i>2 bronze pumice holders</i>	<i>bronze instruments</i>
				Bronze ring	Bronze fibula for horse	4 glass bottles	Iron rake	Terracotta jug
				1 bronze coin	Group of 6 bronze rings	Terracotta basin	5 iron hoes	Terracotta <i>olla</i>
					<i>2 glass unguentaria</i>	Terracotta jug	Lead weight with iron handle	3 bone dice
						Terracotta mug	<i>6 glass unguentaria</i>	Group of 5 glass gaming counters
						Terracotta lamp	2 glass bottles	<i>Decorative plate for casket</i>
						Group of 40 lead weights		<i>3 sea-shells</i>

**Table 2:** The House of the Origins of Rome, Pompeii V 4, 13: Table of finds.



**Fig. 2:** The House of the Origins of Rome, Pompeii V 4, 13: Toiletries from room Q (mirror, glass stick, three shells, glass *unguentaria*, bronze tweezers, pumice stone holders).

had more than 20. Room Q with its 58 finds is an exception and clearly the principal storage room in this house.

Female objects of the house were, once again, mainly stored in the principal storage room, room Q (**fig. 2**). Only one object in room Q, the bronze mirror, has a strong female association. Objects with a more ambivalent female association are twenty-two, and include four tweezers, two cups for pumice stone (for skin care), six glass *unguentaria*, and a probe in glass paste (to extract perfume), three sea-shells and two cups with traces of colour (for cosmetics?), an ornamental plate in glass paste to decorate a casket. Other unidentified bronze instruments were most likely probes, the oval bronze bowl O possibly contained detergent, and the bronze needle could be functional in sewing or forming hairdos. Possibly even the miniature strigil might be associated with female, not necessarily male toilet. Another small group of female items (a hair pin and tweezers), was found in the large *oecus* S, in the second largest deposit of the house. The female jewellery found with the two skeletons in room L, obviously, is not relevant for household storage.

Visualizing this on the plan of the house (**fig. 3**), the presence of female objects not as a separate, reserved group but in the principal storage room of the house, together with the majority of other utensils, is again clear.

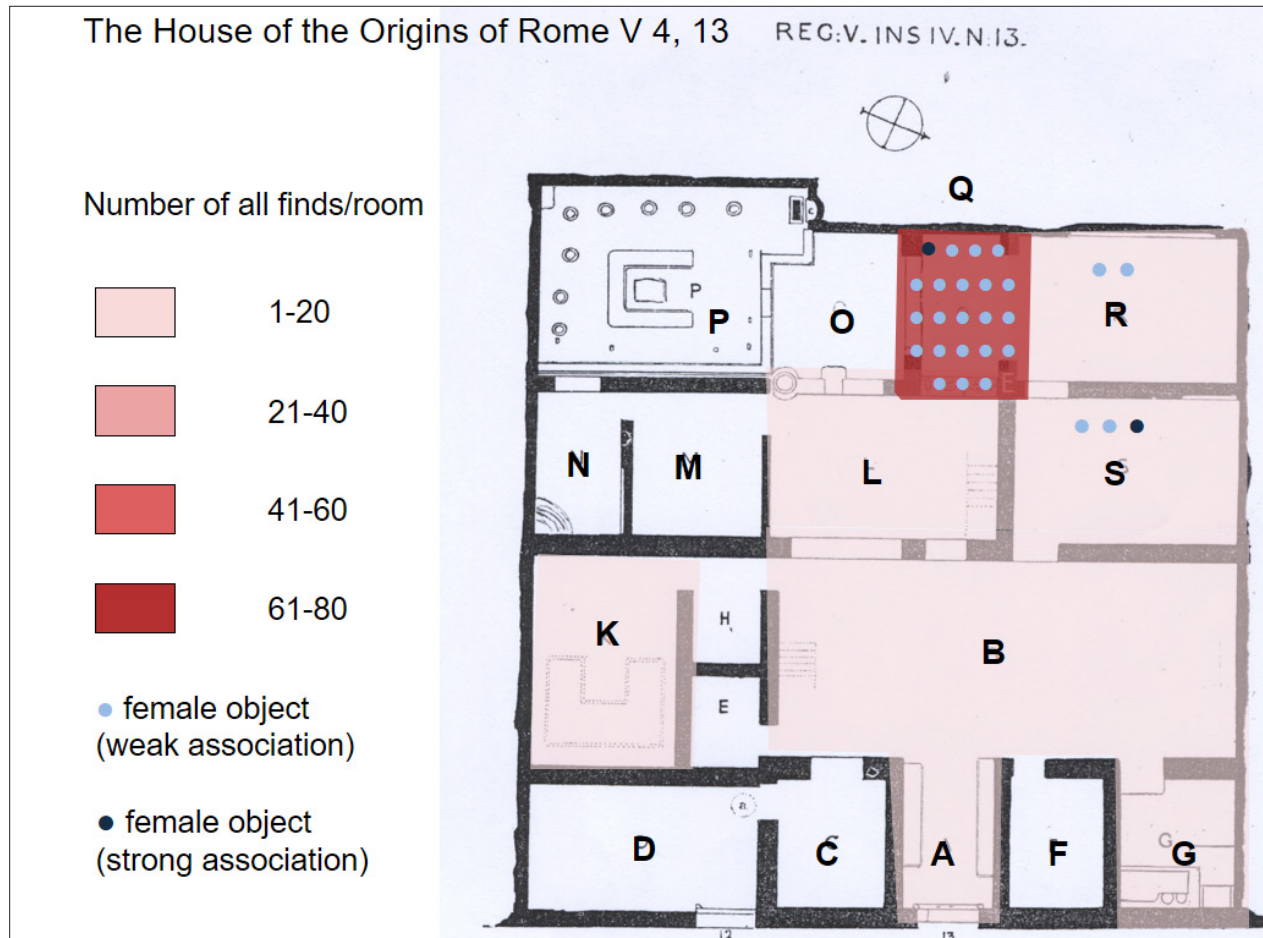


Fig. 3: The House of the Origins of Rome, Pompeii V 4, 13: Collocation of finds with female association.

### Principles of Roman Household Storage

*A priori* logic would suggest that female toiletries, which were relatively prestigious objects, were used for intimate activities, to be used and stored in similarly prestigious, private and intimate rooms.<sup>21</sup> As these two houses, chosen as examples of a more general pattern, show, female toiletries are generally not found in rooms definable as ‘female boudoirs’, i.e. in small, closable, decorated cubicula, *diaetae*, or *oeci*, but together with other valuable utensils of the house, in store rooms or in closable cupboards in *atria* or peristyles. Often the female toiletries were found in undecorated *cubicula* that would qualify as large store-rooms, and that also contained the largest amount of all the precious possessions of the house – major bronze and glass vases, images of the *Lares*, coins, but also hardware and tools. I have earlier defined such rooms as the *principal deposit room* of the house.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Bibliography on Roman storage is not very extensive. Besides ALLISON 2004, particular attention to the question has been given by Elisabetta COVA, ‘Cupboards, Closets, and Shelves. Storage in the Pompeian House’, *Phoenix* 67 (2013), 373-91, examining the *alae* as storage spaces, by Stefan Mols and Ernesto De Carolis discussing storage furniture (S. MOLS, *Wooden Furniture in Herculaneum. Form, Technique and Function*, Amsterdam 1999; E. DE CAROLIS, *Il mobile a Pompei ed Ercolano. Letti, tavoli, sedie e armadi. Contributo alla tipologia dei mobili della prima età imperiale*, Roma 2007), by Pia Kastenmeier analyzing the fixed-storage installations in Pompeii (P. KASTENMEIER, *Luoghi del lavoro domestico nella casa pompeiana*, Studi della Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei 23, Roma 2007, in part. 44-51), and, more generally, by Lisa NEVETT, in her chapter on *Domestic Space*, Pompeii.

<sup>22</sup> Earlier presented in R. BERG, ‘La casa come cassaforte. Riflessioni sulle zone di attività e zone di deposito nelle case pompeiane’, in J.M. ÁLVAREZ MARTÍNEZ, – T. NOGALES BASARRETE, – I. RODÀ DE LLANZA, *Centre and Periphery in the Ancient World* (Proceedings of the XVIII International Congress of Classical Archaeology, Mérida 2013), vol. II, Mérida 2015, 1029-32.



There are two ways to interpret this situation: The first is to deduce that the assemblages were temporarily removed from their original context, misplaced for some reason to protect them from ongoing work or downgraded conditions in the city. The second interpretation is that putting more or less precious objects of use into storage areas was just the normal way to keep things in a Roman house. I opt for the second interpretation, presuming that female objects, like other utensils, were, as a rule, placed in storage areas rather than in the *loci* of their use. They would have been fetched from time to time from storage, and brought to an appropriate space to be used. This tendency is confirmed by iconography: female toiletries are always shown in boxes ‘on the move’, not permanently settled on boudoir tables or shelves.<sup>23</sup>

This suggests that in the storage systems of ancient households, goods were normally stored in specific rooms, and not left in their places of use. If this is true, consequently, the activities of single family members or groups (men/women, young/old, slave/free etc.) can hardly be traced according to the distribution patterns of objects. However, the very mobility of the goods back and forth, between the areas of use and deposit, would result in a large amount of work dedicated to controlling such movement.

Strikingly similar patterns of storage can be recognized in other pre-modern societies, characterized by the presence of many servants and slaves in the households.<sup>24</sup> We could, in fact, presume, that the more servants there were circulating in the house, and the more expensive the household *mobilia* were, the more important it was to lock things up in boxes, cupboards and specific rooms at all times except for the moment of use. A very important parallel is offered by Renata Ago’s study *The gusto for things*, discussing the organization of objects in Roman aristocratic houses in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with interesting similarities with the model that I have suggested for Pompeian elite houses.<sup>25</sup> As summarized by Paula Findlen in her *Introduction* to the English edition of the volume,<sup>26</sup>

“...the household objects were stored in several locked rooms: the *sala* containing the credenza (unlocked only during meals to protect the silver and plate), *dispensa* (storeroom filled with foodstuffs), *bottiglieria* (wine cellar containing wine and glasses), and most importantly the *guardaroba* (the wardrobe containing all the precious and portable things of the household to be brought out as needed and otherwise kept under lock and key)”.

This *guardaroba* would roughly equal the Roman principal storage room, but also the *bottiglieria* seems to echo Columella’s description of one, well-lit store room reserved for breakable things, like bottles and glass vessels.

*Nam quod excelsissimum est conclave, pretiosissima vasa et vestem desiderat; quod denique horreum siccum atque aridum, frumentis habetur idoneum; quod frigidum, commodissime vinum custodit; quod bene illustre, fragilem supellectilem.* (Colum. 12.2.2)

The highest room (*conclave*) in the house claims the most precious vessels and clothing; a granary which is dry and and free from moisture is considered suitable for cereals; a cold place is best adapted for keeping wine; a well-lit room invites the storage of fragile furniture (*supellex*) (trans. E. S. Forster).

<sup>23</sup> See R. BERG ‘Lo specchio di Venere. *Mundus muliebris* nella pittura pompeiana’, in I. BRAGANTINI (ed.), *Atti del X congresso internazionale, Association Internationale pour la Peinture Murale Antique* (Napoli, 17-21 settembre 2007), Napoli 2010, 289-300.

<sup>24</sup> S.R. JOSHEL, ‘Geographies of Slave Containment and Movement’, in M. GEORGE (ed.), *Roman Slavery and Roman Material Culture*, Toronto – Buffalo – London 2013, 99-128; J.M. VLACH, *Back of the Big House. The Architecture of Plantation Slavery*, Chapel Hill 1993.

<sup>25</sup> R. AGO, *Gusto for Things. A History of Objects in Seventeenth-Century Rome*, with a foreword by P. Findlen, University of Chicago 2013 [trans. of *Il gusto delle cose*, Roma 2006].

<sup>26</sup> XXviii.

Keeping things stored away when not in use augments the need for moving the objects, and controlling that movement. It is a significant extra duty absent in modern households, where all spaces can be considered equally ‘safe’.

Even though this idea sounds familiar and is no novelty as such, surprisingly little has been written about household management by Roman women, which is eclipsed, for example, by abundant analysis of the symbolic wool-working task.<sup>27</sup> One of the few articles that concentrates on the role of the woman *custos* of the household is T.E.V. Pearce’s paper, which collects literary evidence on the expressions of praise *custos domi* and *domun servavit*, but does not analyse the female managerial role more profoundly.<sup>28</sup>

To summarize, I argue that gender is not that visible in identifying female objects and activity areas in the house, but that it is in tracing the movement of all objects of the household, the controlling of which was primarily a female role. Women, female activities and their instruments are not isolated from other household goods, but seamlessly merge into one general pattern of conserving all the goods of the household.

The managerial work of keeping records, inventories and accounts, as a female duty, was in reality more time consuming and economically significant than the ‘cameo-role’ of spinning wool.

### Managing Storage and Keeping the Accounts

Richard Saller points out that Columella on the one hand stresses how the female supervisory duties were essential to keep a farm productive, and on the other – by contrast – adheres to the imperial age stereotype of the elite *materfamilias* as idle and self-indulgent.<sup>29</sup> Andrew Wallace-Hadrill also sees Columella’s description of the female role as being about an idealized Greek past rather than contemporary realities, and considers other polarities (free/slave, work/leisure, production/display) more central to the organization of the Roman household, concluding that accepting the idea of the wide interpenetration of areas and activities means “the image of the Roman *materfamilias* as a sort of Mrs. Beeton fades further”.<sup>30</sup>

Such modern *topoi*, like the housekeeping icon of the English Victorian era Mrs. Beeton, or more recent desperate housewives cooking and cleaning, may, in fact, unconsciously distort our image of the Roman *materfamilias*’ duties, that ideally did not consist of manual labour, but rather, of managerial duties and account keeping. However, not even Mrs. Beeton’s 19<sup>th</sup> century manual described the housewife as a domestic labourer, but rather as a household general whose task of governing the staff was compared with commanding an army, and who was supposed to ultimately control all domestic finances.<sup>31</sup>

Columella, often cited for the ‘idleness’ of the Roman elite *materfamilias*, literally only states that Roman women loathed supervising the country estate – which does not necessarily imply that they would

<sup>27</sup> On the extensive discussion of the significance of domestic wool-working, see LARSSON-LOVÉN, ‘*Lanam fecit*’, 85-95; and more recently, for example GROEN-VALLINGA, ‘Desperate Housewives?’, 298, and especially K. HERSCH, ‘The Woolworker Bride’, in L. LARSSON LOVÉN – A. STRÖMBERG (eds.), *Ancient Marriage in Myth and Reality*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2010, 122-35, in part. 125-26.

<sup>28</sup> PEARCE, ‘Wife as *Custos*’.

<sup>29</sup> SALLER, ‘Roman family’, 121.

<sup>30</sup> WALLACE-HADRILL, ‘Engendering’, 107.

<sup>31</sup> “As with the commander of an army, or the leader of any enterprise, so is it with the mistress of a house”, I. BEETON, *The Book of Household Management, comprising information for the Mistress, Housekeeper, Cook, Kitchen-Maid, Butler, Footman, Coachman, Valet, Upper and Under House-Maids, Lady’s-Maid, Maid-of-all-Work, Laundry-Maid, Nurse and Nurse-Maid, Monthly Wet and Sick Nurses, etc. etc. also Sanitary, Medical, & Legal Memoranda: with a History of the Origin, Properties, and Uses of all Things Connected with Home Life and Comfort*, London 1861.

have given over to others also the management of the possessions of their town houses. And even if not all Roman matrons may have participated actively in the management of their domestic economies, I think it is of crucial importance that *ideally* this was considered a female task.

Re-reading Columella's description of the tasks that are the duty of the *vilica* on a country estate – responsibilities that ideally would belong to the wife – it is striking that she is not assigned any practical tasks at all. This is easily illustrated by having a closer look at the verbs used to describe her duties. The most concrete tasks can be described as actions to manage and govern the movements of people and things in the household: she must receive the goods, set apart those that must be consumed, prepare suitable store-rooms, put each article in its place, ensure that they are brought out to air from time to time, she is to send out or keep in the slaves, and check the sick wards. The rest of the duties primarily require being present and overseeing – extrapolating just from the verbs, the *vilica* must 'inspect', 'guard', 'see', 'visit', 'teach' and 'learn', 'look after', 'come unawares upon', 'be present', 'keep a watchful eye on', 'count', 'compare' and 'remember'.

Even for the wool, she is not instructed to participate in spinning, only to measure out the rations of wool and keep them ready in stock for indoor work on rainy days. The last of the tasks mentioned in the list, to keep a watchful eye on the wool, count the fleeces and compare the number of sheep with that of the fleeces, is an operation also clearly implying account keeping. Even in Tibullus' rustic fantasy his mistress Delia, in the role of *custos*, would, among her other tasks, count the sheep, *numerare pecus*.<sup>32</sup>

Karen Hersch also states that while the Roman *materfamilias* might have had some skill in *lanificium*, "her primary occupation would have been to supervise the handiwork of others".<sup>33</sup> Being a Roman *vilica* or a housewife did not, therefore, primarily mean cleaning or spinning, but keeping an eye on those that were; it implied presence and control, decisions on the movements of the workforce and distribution of the material means.

As noted by Sarah Pomeroy, in the Xenophonian economy it is Ischomachos' wife who regulates the household budget on a monthly basis, so as to divide a year's supplies per month, and it is she who is thus expected to keep a record of income and expenditure.<sup>34</sup> In the case of Cicero, we know that it was his mother who kept the domestic inventory, counted and listed (*obsignabat*) the exact number of wine jars in the house, both empty and full.<sup>35</sup> Seneca similarly addresses his mother Helvia: "you employ much time in diligent examination of your accounts (*rationum accipiendarum diligentia*) and in the management of your estate (*patrimonii administratione*)".<sup>36</sup> Tracing the movements of the income, distribution and expenditure of household goods by writing accounts and inventories may, therefore, be considered a central female occupation in the domestic economy. If Columella's passage is taken to refer to the whole conservation system of the house, as seems to be the case, and not only to agricultural instruments, this means that controlling the movements of each utensil of the household, by detailed inventory lists, was a major domestic task:

*Quibus autem ad dies festos et ad hospitium adventum utimur et ad quaedam rara negotia, haec promo tradidimus, et loca omnium demonstravimus, et omnia annumeravimus, atque annumerata ipsi exscripsimus, eumque admonuimus, ut quoquumque opus esset, sciret unde daret, et meminisset atque annotaret, quid et quando et cui dedisset, et cum recepisset, ut quidque suo loco reponeret. (12.2.4)*

<sup>32</sup> Tib. I 5, 21-30; see also PEARCE, 'Wife as *Custos*'.

<sup>33</sup> HERSCH, 'Woolworker Bride', 125-26.

<sup>34</sup> Xen. *Oec.* 9.8, 7.36; POMEROY, *Xenophon*, 56-57. For more on written accounts, Xen. *Oec.* 1.4, 3.15, 6.3, 7.13, 7.33.

<sup>35</sup> Cic. *fam.* 16.26.2.

<sup>36</sup> Sen. *dial.* 17.2.

“As for the things which we use on the days of the festivals and on the arrival of the guests and on certain rare occasions, these we handed over to the steward and pointed out the places where they all were and numbered them all and we ourselves wrote out a list of what we had numbered and warned him that he must know whence to produce whatever was needed and that he must remember, and note down what he has given out and when and to whom, in order that he might put back each article in its proper place” (trans. E.S. Forster).

Among the relevant iconographic evidence, we have to remember the portraits of Roman women with a wax tablet in their hands, and in particular, the marble relief from Trastevere, where a woman is shown seated on a cathedra, holding a wax tablet, and clearly keeping the accounts of a butchery shop, beside her husband who is working on the counter (fig. 4).<sup>37</sup>

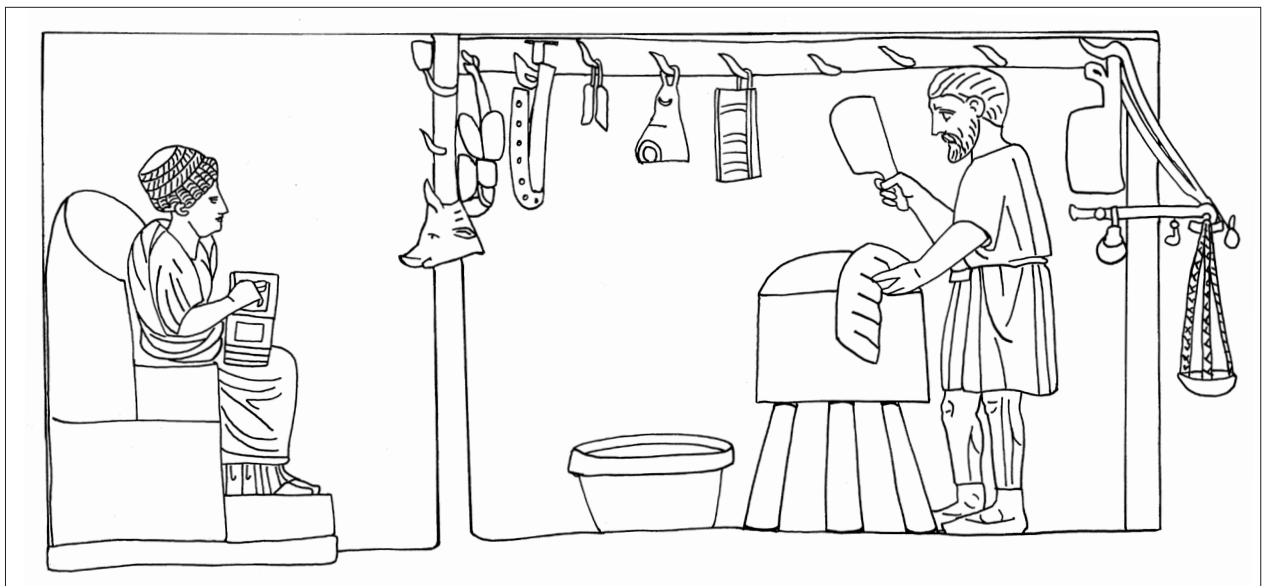


Fig. 4: Marble relief depicting a woman and a man in a butchery shop, Dresden, Skulpturensammlung, inv. 415.

According to Pearce, the epithet *custos domi* – *custos fidelis* – *fidissima custos* in fact refers to economic reliability, rather than sexual faithfulness.<sup>38</sup> This could be compared with the role of a trusted account keeper or *offinator* in a commercial enterprise, and indeed Roman wives are often described with expressions paraphrasing business partnership.<sup>39</sup>

A further case in point is the association of domestic keys with *materfamilias*.<sup>40</sup> From various indications, we may presume that the keys to storage areas were given to the bride upon arrival at her new home,

<sup>37</sup> Marble relief found in Rome, 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the II cent. AD, now in Dresden, Skulpturensammlung, inv. 415. See E. LA ROCCA – C. PARISI PRESCICCE – A. LO MONACO (eds.), *L'età dell'equilibrio. Traiano, Adriano, Antonino Pio, Marco Aurelio 98–180 d.C.* (Catalogo mostra, Roma, Musei Capitolini, 4 ottobre 2012 – 5 maggio 2013), Roma 2012, 256, 357-78, cat. VI.23 (A. MARCHELLO), where the author notes that the woman is also holding an abacus. However, Marchello sees the female figure as distanced from the commercial space, because seated on a low podium, and representing ideals of culture, *pudicitia* and *fides*, rather than practical participation in commercial activities of her husband.

<sup>38</sup> PEARCE, 'Wife as *Custos*': *vixi viro cara custosque fidelis* (CE 381.1); *rerum omnium fidem reple[vit optime]* (CE 1887); *fidei ac diligentiae graviss(ima).... coniux* (ILS 8437); *totius industriae et fidei matrona* (ILS 8444). For example, in the *Laudatio*, Turia is renowned also for *custodia* of the household of her husband: *officia ita partiti sumus ut ego tutelam tuae fortunae gererem, tu meae custodiam sustineres* (1.37). Cf. also the funerary epitaph of *Allia Potestas*, v. 8: *fortis, sancta, tenax, insons, fidissima custos* (CIL VI 37965 = CLE 1988). FORBIS, 'Women's Public Image', 493-512. However, J.L. SEBESTA underlines that both meanings might be present contemporaneously, the inviolability of the matronly body symbolizing that of the household, see 'Women's Costume and Feminine Civic Morality in Augustan Rome', *Gender & History* 9 (1997), 529-41, in part. 529.

<sup>39</sup> FOXHALL, 'Household, Gender, and Property', 30.

<sup>40</sup> PEARCE, 'Wife as *Custos*', 16-33.

and thus symbolized her role as domestic supervisor. Cicero, citing the Law of the Twelve tables, indirectly points to this in mentioning the act of taking the keys away from the wife upon divorce.<sup>41</sup> Later, Tertullian makes a longer list of duties of the wife, mentioning also the keys: she administrates the house, rules the family, supervises the woolwork, is the custodian of the keys and storage-boxes (*domum administrandam, familiam regendam, loculos, claves custodiendas, lanificium dispensandum*), hinting at the risk that the unmarried run of losing their belongings without a proper supervisor to manage them, the wife.<sup>42</sup> Ville Vuolanto has interestingly discussed the role of elite mothers in the socializing process of their daughters, in particular offering a model of how to administer a household.<sup>43</sup> Vuolanto cites John Chrysostom's description of a girl imitating her mother in taking care of the household, having her small treasures in a small case that she can lock in a closet and then guard the key.<sup>44</sup> Saint Augustine calls the wives patrons of storerooms and cellars, *dominae apothecarum et cellariorum*.<sup>45</sup> Arising from this idea – storage management as a prime economic occupation in the ancient households – I will argue that the most prestigious and economically significant role of the Roman woman may have been 'keeper of the keys' of these locked rooms, i.e. being the primary manager of domestic storage.

Further evidence for the female responsibility for domestic goods is offered by passages mentioning women guarding the silverwares of the household, which can be seen as the most central form of accumulating and displaying the wealth of the Roman household. According to our textual passages, the pride of possession and display of silver seems to have been a strongly female trait. Petronius tells exactly of this: *Fortunata* does not rest, in a banquet, before she has seen that the silver cups have been safely stored away (*nisi argentum composuerit*).<sup>46</sup> It may have been a satirical exaggeration to lock the silver up when the banquet was still going on, but I would see that the role of the wife in controlling the silver, in general, would also follow a regular pattern. Similarly, Plutarch tells an anecdote about controlling the silver in the household of the parents of Mark Anthony.<sup>47</sup> His mother notices that a silver bowl is missing – evidently it was she who kept the inventory and regularly controlled the presence of the silver – and starts searching for it among the slaves, even by means of torture.

## Conclusions

The archaeological household context from Pompeii suggests that domestic material possessions normally tended to be kept in locked-up storage, rather than in the place of use. One room, the *principal storage room* of the house, would have harboured the most important collection of belongings of the house, containing also the majority of female objects. We can thus state, for one thing, that the instruments of female grooming and work were perfectly integrated in the general storage system of the house.

Secondly, Pompeian contexts also testify that controlling the movement of domestic goods to and from these locked storage areas must have been a major domestic occupation, at least in the more well-to-do households, demanding a large amount of time, effort and skills in account keeping. Ancient authors,

<sup>41</sup> Cic. *phil.* 2.28.69.

<sup>42</sup> Tert. *castit.* 12.1.

<sup>43</sup> V. VUOLANTO, 'Elite Children, Socialization, and Agency', in J. EVANS GRUBBS – T. PARKIN – R. BELL (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*, Oxford 2013, 580-99, in part. 587.

<sup>44</sup> John Chrys. *virg.* 73. I thank Ville Vuolanto for drawing my attention to this passage.

<sup>45</sup> Aug. *conf.* 9.8.17.

<sup>46</sup> Petr. *sat.* 67.

<sup>47</sup> Plut. *Vit. Ant.* 1.

particularly Columella in *de re rustica*, also offer us glimpses of such an ideology of conserving domestic goods, suggesting that the duty of controlling their movements and safeguarding them not only from theft, but also from deterioration in storage, was of crucial importance and a major economic operation in the Roman household. The ultimate responsibility for this account and inventory management may plausibly have been that of the women.

This important and demanding female economic role does not surface in male oriented ancient literature, but lapidary funerary epitaphs such as *custos domi*, understood in a strict economic sense, conserve the memory of such domestic tasks and their prestige. Ultimately, the discourse on the custody of everyday utensils in Pompeian houses suggests that the role of the keeper of the locks and the keys to the storerooms, and that of keeper of inventories of domestic goods, must have been an important form of female agency and status display in the Roman *domus*, demanding a wide range of managerial skills.



# Tracing the Activities of Female Household Members within the Roman *domus*? A Methodological Discussion of Artefact Distribution in Pompeii

POLLY LOHMANN

## Introduction

Whereas many works have concentrated on the role of the *paterfamilias* within the semi-public sphere of the Roman house by linking evidence from literary sources directly to certain room types, locating the activities of female household members remains a *desideratum*\*.<sup>1</sup> Being, like slaves, socially marginalized and having only restricted rights, free women – and also children – are difficult to trace within the textual and material culture.<sup>2</sup> Apart from a few prominent, influential women about whom the literary sources tell us, the everyday activities and whereabouts of Roman (including Pompeian) *matronae* linger in darkness. As L. Nevett has pointed out, our ignorance of this issue is either due to the lack of archaeologically traceable evidence itself or due to the lack of research based on such evidence.<sup>3</sup> The present paper argues for (small) finds as a material source for tracing the activities of female household members, but at the same time seeks to draw attention to the limits of this approach; it discusses *artefact distribution analysis* by combining text and image representations of Roman women with the archaeological record from Pompeian households. The first two sections explain and justify the method of *artefact distribution analysis* (I) and include a short note on the so-called *Pompeii Premise* and its impact on household archaeology (II). The following section gives a brief overview of typical female attributes as represented in literary, epigraphic and archaeological sources (III), before exploring the distribution of such (gendered) objects in Pompeian households, for which the *Insula del Menandro* shall serve as an example (IV); this case-study is a kind of playful experiment aiming to outline some methodological points. Finally, the relationship between symbolic representation and ancient ‘reality’ as reflected in Pompeian household contents as well as the potential and limits of *artefact distribution analysis* in Pompeii will be recapitulated.

## Why Artefact Distribution Analysis?

Roman literary sources remain almost silent on the whereabouts of women during everyday activities and rarely mention separate women’s rooms. There are some casual mentions of *diatae* or *cubicula* as sleeping

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. A. WALLACE-HADRILL, ‘Engendering the Roman House’, in D.E.E. KLEINER – S.B. MATHESON (eds.), *I Claudia. Women in Ancient Rome*, New Haven 1996, 104-15, in part. 112. Only Ria Berg has recently dealt with this topic; her dissertation ‘Il mundus muliebris nelle fonti latine e nei context Pompeiani’ is still in print.

\* I would like to thank Ria Berg and Sabine Hübner for organising this inspiring conference and for offering me the opportunity to publish my paper in the conference proceedings; many thanks also go to the peer-reviewer of this paper and to Emrys Schlatter for his help with proof-reading.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. M. GEORGE, ‘Repopulating the Roman House’, in B. RAWSON – P. WEAVER (eds.), *The Roman Family in Italy. Status, Sentiment, Space*, Oxford – Canberra 1997, 299-319, in part. 299; 301-2; S. DIXON, *Reading Roman Women. Sources, Genres and Real Life*, London 2001, 44.

<sup>3</sup> L.C. NEVETT, ‘Separation or Seclusion? Towards an Approach to Investigating Women in the Greek Household in the Fifth to Third Centuries BC’, in M. PARKER PEARSON – C. RICHARDS (eds.), *Architecture and Order. Approaches to Social Space*, London 1994, 98-112, in part. 103.



rooms of women, and in several cases, the Greek term *gynaecoonitis* (*gynaecaeum*) is applied to descriptions of Roman housing.<sup>4</sup> Nonetheless, there is no reference to the location and layout of these rooms; furthermore, the rare literary examples of spaces attributed to certain female household members lack a coherent terminology.<sup>5</sup> And not only are different terms used in these descriptions, but these terms also appear in other literary sources in connection with a variety of activities.<sup>6</sup> Whilst in some of these anecdotes the women's rooms are used as places to hide away, which suggests small, closed-off rooms, the atrium is referred to as the primary or central space of a house, where women would be present and conduct wool-working.<sup>7</sup> In general, however, the Latin texts reflect the view-point of (wealthy) male authors and therefore do not pay much attention to the living conditions of women.<sup>8</sup>

Studies of architecture and decoration have revealed social patterns and spatial hierarchies within the Roman house, but they have mainly highlighted the interaction of the *dominus* with his clients or guests – a relationship that is prominent in literary sources, e.g. in references to the *salutatio*.<sup>9</sup> Some attempts to identify residence quarters of female household members limit themselves only to rare cases and focus on separate, closed-off rooms with ‘romantic’ frescoes.<sup>10</sup> These interpretations, however, are based on modern assumptions and do not take into account spaces which may have been used only part-time. Neither sleeping or dressing rooms, where the *domina* could have kept her personal belongings, nor the locations of her day-time activities are proved by literary sources or traceable by looking only at architecture and decoration – and this is why artefact distribution, derived from the field of prehistoric archaeology as a comparatively new approach in Roman household archaeology, is valuable for shedding new light on the use of rooms. The basic idea of this approach is expressed by Nevett, who regards movable objects as indicators for “*small-scale, short term activities*” that have taken place, whereas architecture is considered a ‘container’ that can only reflect the primary or intended function of a room.<sup>11</sup> Location, size and decoration of rooms did not even necessarily correspond to or mirror their actual use; nor did rooms always continue to be used according to their primary purpose.<sup>12</sup> Artefacts, by contrast, can indicate specific activities that have taken place in a room; their location and any associated finds are “the results of specific decisions”.<sup>13</sup>

By regarding position and location of finds as the relicts and traces of certain activities, *artefact distribution analysis* depends on closed archaeological contexts where sudden destruction has preserved the *status quo* of daily life. The method does not work for cities or houses destroyed during wars or left by their

<sup>4</sup> For a collection of literary sources of rooms attributed to women, see P. LOHMANN, ‘Idealbild und Lebenswirklichkeit. Literarische, epigrafische, archäologische Quellen und Befunde zu den Handlungsräumen der Frau im römischen Wohnhaus’, *Thetis* 21 (2015), 63-108, in part. 88-90.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. J.-A. DICKMANN, *Domus frequentata. Anspruchsvolles Wohnen im römischen Stadthaus* (Studien zur antiken Stadt), München 1999, 28.

<sup>6</sup> See e.g. DICKMANN, *Domus*, 26-27 on the use of term *cubiculum* and L.C. NEVETT, ‘Perceptions of Domestic Space in Roman Italy’, in RAWSON – WEAVER, *Roman Family*, 281-98, in part. 291 on the term *diaeta*.

<sup>7</sup> *Nep. praef.* 6-7; *Liv.* 1.57.9.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. P.M. ALLISON, ‘Artefact Distribution and Spatial Function in Pompeian Houses’, in RAWSON – WEAVER, *Roman Family*, 321-54, in part. 323. Equally NEVETT, ‘Perceptions’, 286.

<sup>9</sup> Lately F. GOLDBECK, *Salutationes. Die Morgenbegrüßungen in Rom in der Republik und der frühen Kaiserzeit*, Berlin 2010, in part. 139-40.

<sup>10</sup> A. MAIURI, ‘Ginecéo e “Hospitium” nella casa pompeiana’, *MemLinc* Ser. 8 vol. 5, 9 (1954), 449-67; on these and other such interpretations see LOHMANN, ‘Idealbild’, 90-94.

<sup>11</sup> L.C. NEVETT, *Domestic Space in Classical Antiquity*, Cambridge 2010, 96.

<sup>12</sup> Q. MOULD, ‘Domestic Life’, in L. ALLASON-JONES (ed.), *Artefacts in Roman Britain. Their Purpose and Use*, Cambridge 2011, 153-79, in part. 157.

<sup>13</sup> J.T. BERRY, ‘Household Artefacts: Towards a Reinterpretation of Roman Domestic Space’, in R. LAURENCE – A. WALLACE-HADRILL (eds.), *Domestic Space in the Roman World: Pompeii and Beyond* (JRA Suppl. 22), Portsmouth 1997, 183-95, in part. 183.

inhabitants, because in such cases objects would have been either plundered by the victorious enemies or removed by the former inhabitants. Thereafter, abandoned spaces would be open for an indefinite period to looting or resettlement; both scenarios obscure former living conditions and prevent their material traceability. The Vesuvian cities were therefore regarded as an appropriate Roman archaeological context for conducting artefact studies, and P.M. Allison in particular has done fundamental work in this area; in her dissertation, Allison assorted a massive amount of finds from 30 Pompeian houses and classified the artefacts as well as relabelled room types in an attempt to create a terminology as a neutral basis on which to interpret artefact assemblages.<sup>14</sup> When dealing with movable objects, however, it is worth mentioning the methodological debate which took place between the 1960s and 1980s.

### Artefacts and the ‘Pompeii Premise’

Referring to earlier scholarly debates on the value of the archaeological record in opposition to W. Taylor, R. Ascher posited in 1961 that the reconstruction of ancient ‘reality’ was not possible on the basis of the archaeological record, and that the aim of working with material culture could therefore only be description. He criticised the idea of the archaeological record as what has since then become known as the ‘Pompeii Premise’: a direct and undisturbed source of individual human lives and single events frozen in time. He argued that “every living community is in the process of continuous change with respect to the materials which it utilizes” and that archaeological finds cannot ever reflect “the remains of a once living community stopped, as it were, at a point in time”.<sup>15</sup> 15 years later, M.B. Schiffer, representing the school of ‘Behavioural Archaeology’, re-opened the discussion, addressing ‘New Archaeology’ in the person of L.R. Binford, who had spoken of a “‘fossil’ record” of extinct societies.<sup>16</sup> Schiffer countered that there was a difference between the dynamics of the past and the static archaeological record because of the culturally and non-culturally conditioned transformations of the material from the systemic context (past) into the archaeological context (present).<sup>17</sup> In the debate between ‘describers’ and ‘reconstructionists’, Schiffer, building on Ascher’s arguments, established eight major formation process categories of house-floor assemblages as a new approach to the material culture and explanation of the location and condition of objects.<sup>18</sup> The correspondence between Schiffer and Binford therefore resulted in a methodological issue, which can be profitably applied to the material culture from Pompeii itself – although the formation process categories were originally supposed to be applied to all other sites, diverging from the Pompeian ‘standard’:<sup>19</sup>

<sup>14</sup> P.M. ALLISON, *Pompeian Households. An Analysis of the Material Culture*, L.A. 2004. Further studies of movable objects have been conducted by B. SIGGES and J.T. BERRY, the latter of whom writes: “Roman domestic artefact studies are still in their infancy” (BERRY, ‘Household Artefacts’, 195).

<sup>15</sup> R. ASCHER, ‘Analogy in Archaeological Interpretation’, *Southwestern Journal of Archaeology* 17, 4 (1961), 317-25, in part. 324.

<sup>16</sup> L.R. BINFORD, ‘A Consideration of Archaeological Research Design’, *American Antiquity* 29, 4 (1964), 425-41, in part. 425.

<sup>17</sup> M. SCHIFFER, *Behavioural Archaeology*, New York 1976, 11-12.

<sup>18</sup> M. SCHIFFER, ‘Is there a ‘Pompeii Premise in Archaeology?’’, *JAR* 41, 1 (1985), 18-41, in part. 24. The approaches which I. Hodder and others developed during the 1980s in response to new (or ‘processual’) archaeology have been labelled post-processual archaeology. For a brief summary of this development see M. SHANKS – I. HODDER, ‘Processual, Postprocessual and Interpretive Archaeologies’, in I. HODDER *et al.*, *Interpreting Archaeology. Finding Meaning in the Past*, London 1995, 3-29. On general interpretative approaches in post-processual archaeology see, e.g., I. HODDER – S. HUTSON (eds.), *Reading the Past. Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology*, Cambridge 2003, 206-47.

<sup>19</sup> ALLISON, *Households*, 4 briefly handles the Pompeii Premise as well, but neglects the debate as a whole and treats the work of Ascher, Binford, and Schiffer indiscriminately, as if all were arguing for the same approach.

Formation processes that objects can undergo (from Schiffer, Pompeii Premise, 24-30):

1. Primary refuse: Items lost or discarded during the main period of use.
2. Abandonment refuse: Items lost or discarded during the period of abandonment, if anticipated.
- 3. De facto refuse: Items left where they lay when the area was abandoned.**
4. Ritual deposits.
5. Post-abandonment use: Items moved, taken away or brought in after abandonment.
6. Secondary refuse: Trash disposal/items thrown in after abandonment.
7. Post-occupational collapse and fluvial action: Items deposited by collapse or fluvial/ aeolian actions
8. Post-occupational disturbances: Items brought in or out by cultural or environmental processes.

What archaeologists *hope* to find in Pompeii are, so to speak, objects of ‘*de facto* refuse’ – i.e. objects that were disregarded left where they lay at the time of abandonment and therefore stand in spatial association with the activities for which they were used.<sup>20</sup> This is an important background for the following case-study and will be referred to again in the conclusion.

### Defining ‘Gendered’ Artefacts

Due to restraints of space and to the existence of several studies already dedicated to representations of Roman women in different genres, I shall only briefly outline what usually is referred to as the ‘world of the women’.<sup>21</sup> I have elsewhere compiled a collection of literary, epigraphic and archaeological sources that, although not claiming to be exhaustive, analyses the visual symbols and literary *topoi* used for describing Roman *matronae*.<sup>22</sup>

Women were thought to belong to the domestic sphere, a belief which was justified by the *infirmitas* attributed to them in Latin literary sources.<sup>23</sup> Because of their intellectual weakness, women were under the *potestas* or *tutela* of men; because of their physical weakness, they were assigned to domestic work.<sup>24</sup> The micro-cosmos of the house therefore offers the only space in which we can attempt to trace women’s daily activities. Within the house, a Roman *domina* – probably with the help of female relatives or slaves – contributed to the family life by organizing the household and educating the children; she may also have taken part in the evening *convivia*, but such (inter)actions do not require the use of objects and are therefore not materially traceable.<sup>25</sup> For the study of artefact distribution as a source for female activities, we can speak of

<sup>20</sup> Schiffer states that most archaeologists believe floor assemblages to be ‘*de facto* refuse’ (SCHIFFER, ‘Pompeii Premise’, 26).

<sup>21</sup> To name only a few – but central – studies: M. WYKE, ‘Woman in the Mirror. The Rhetoric of Adornment in the Roman World’, in L. ARCHER – S. FISCHLER – M. WYKE (eds.), *Women in Ancient Societies. An Illusion of the Night*, London – New York 1994, 134-51; J. LYNN SEBESTA, ‘Women’s Costume and Feminine Civic Morality’, in M. WYKE (ed.), *Gender and the Body in the Ancient Mediterranean*, Oxford 1998, 105-17; G. SCHENKE, *Schein und Sein. Schmuckgebrauch in der römischen Kaiserzeit* (Monographs on Antiquity 1), Leuven 2003; L. LARSSON LOVÉN, ‘Wool Work as a Gender Symbol in Ancient Rome. Roman Textiles and Ancient Sources’, in C. GILLIS – M.-B. NOSCH (eds.), *Ancient Textiles. Production, Craft and Society* (Proceedings of the First International Conference on Ancient Textiles), Oxford 2007, 229-36; L. SHUMKA, ‘Designing Women. The Representation of Women’s Toiletries on Funerary Monuments in Roman Italy’, in J. EDMONDSON (ed.), *Roman Dress and the Fabrics of Roman Culture*, Toronto 2008, 172-91.

<sup>22</sup> LOHMANN, ‘Idealbild’, 70-88.

<sup>23</sup> S. POMEROY, *Frauenleben im klassischen Altertum*, Stuttgart 1985, 229; E. HÖBENREICH – G. RIZZELLI (eds.), *Scylla. Fragmente einer juristischen Geschichte der Frauen im antiken Rom*, Wien – Köln – Weimar 2003, 40.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. DIXON, *Reading*, 87.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. GEORGE, ‘Repopulating’, 319.

three categories of objects that appear in textual and visual sources as typical attributes of women: jewellery, toiletry items, and wool-working equipment.<sup>26</sup>

Jewellery, clothing, and cosmetics formed what was labelled as the *mundus muliebris*.<sup>27</sup> In contrast to men, women were limited in their actions and spatial movements and barred from civil, religious and military office; they could only gain recognition through the insignia of their body.<sup>28</sup> The female body thus became a medium for displaying moral integrity (*pudicitia*), yet the line between virtue and vice was thin: care and adornment of the body were seen as genuine female tasks, but excessive jewellery and cosmetics were condemned as signs of sexual availability. In contrast to the ambivalent perception of the bodily appearance, the activities of spinning and weaving clearly belonged to the concept of *pudicitia*. In the case of Lucretia, the historic-mythological example of a Roman matron, the female virtue demonstrated by her wool-working attracted Tarquinius Superbus and evoked his sexual desire.<sup>29</sup> The picture given of Lucretia in Latin literature illustrates the combination of visual appearance and behaviour, which together comprised a woman's virtue and desirability in Roman society. Wool-working was commonly listed among the virtues of the deceased in funerary inscriptions; likewise, funerary reliefs often depict mirrors, perfume jars, jewellery cases, sewing needles or distaffs and spindles, and such objects were also used as actual grave goods to represent female activities.

### Case-study: Gendered Artefacts in the Insula del Menandro

The distribution of artefacts in Pompeii can only be examined where the necessary information about the circumstances of excavation and the documentation of find spots is available. The *Insula del Menandro* has here been chosen as a case-study because of its relatively late excavation in the 1930s and because the volumes edited by R. Ling provide detailed information about architecture, decoration and finds.<sup>30</sup> The *insula* encloses the *Casa del Menandro* (I 10,4), by far largest house of the block, together with three smaller atrium-houses, of which only the *Casa degli Amanti* (I 10,10-11) also includes a peristyle. Architecturally independent units used for commercial purposes were situated at two corners of the *insula* (I 10,9, I 10,13) as well as in I 10,6 and I 10,12. The north-east corner features three very small houses with commercial facilities at the northern street front. We must presume that little necessity for specialised areas and fewer possibilities for spreading out activities over different rooms of a house exist when the house is smaller.

As mentioned above, this section is more of a playful case-study, which culminates in several methodological points rather than a detailed analysis of objects.<sup>31</sup> A look at the distribution of the finds published by Allison reveals jewellery, toiletry items, and wool-working tools spread among 31 ground floor rooms (**fig. 1**, rooms marked in grey).<sup>32</sup> Many of these objects appear singly or in pairs; one or two loom weights,

<sup>26</sup> The clothing does not find further discussion here, since this paper deals only with the concrete finds from Pompeian houses.

<sup>27</sup> On the term *mundus muliebris* see R. BERG, 'Wearing Wealth. *Ornatus* and *Mundus Muliebris* as Status Markers of Women in Imperial Rome', in P. SETÄLÄ *et al.* (eds.), *Women, Wealth and Power in the Roman Empire (Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 25)*, Rome 2002, 15-73, in part. 17-31.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. the extensive discussion in WYKE, 'Woman in the Mirror', 135.

<sup>29</sup> DIXON, *Reading*, 46.

<sup>30</sup> R. LING (ed.), *The Insula of the Menander at Pompeii*, Oxford 1997-2006.

<sup>31</sup> For a broader statistical analysis of the distribution of women's objects, based on Allison's work, see LOHMANN, 'Idealbild', 97-103.

<sup>32</sup> The four one-room and two-room commercial units are left out. On find assemblages from upper-floor rooms, see below. Exact references to P.M. ALLISON, *The Finds. A Contextual Study (The Insula of the Menander at Pompeii III)*, Oxford 2006 are not given in the remainder of this article, since the artefacts are listed and easy to find in Allison's clearly organized catalogue.

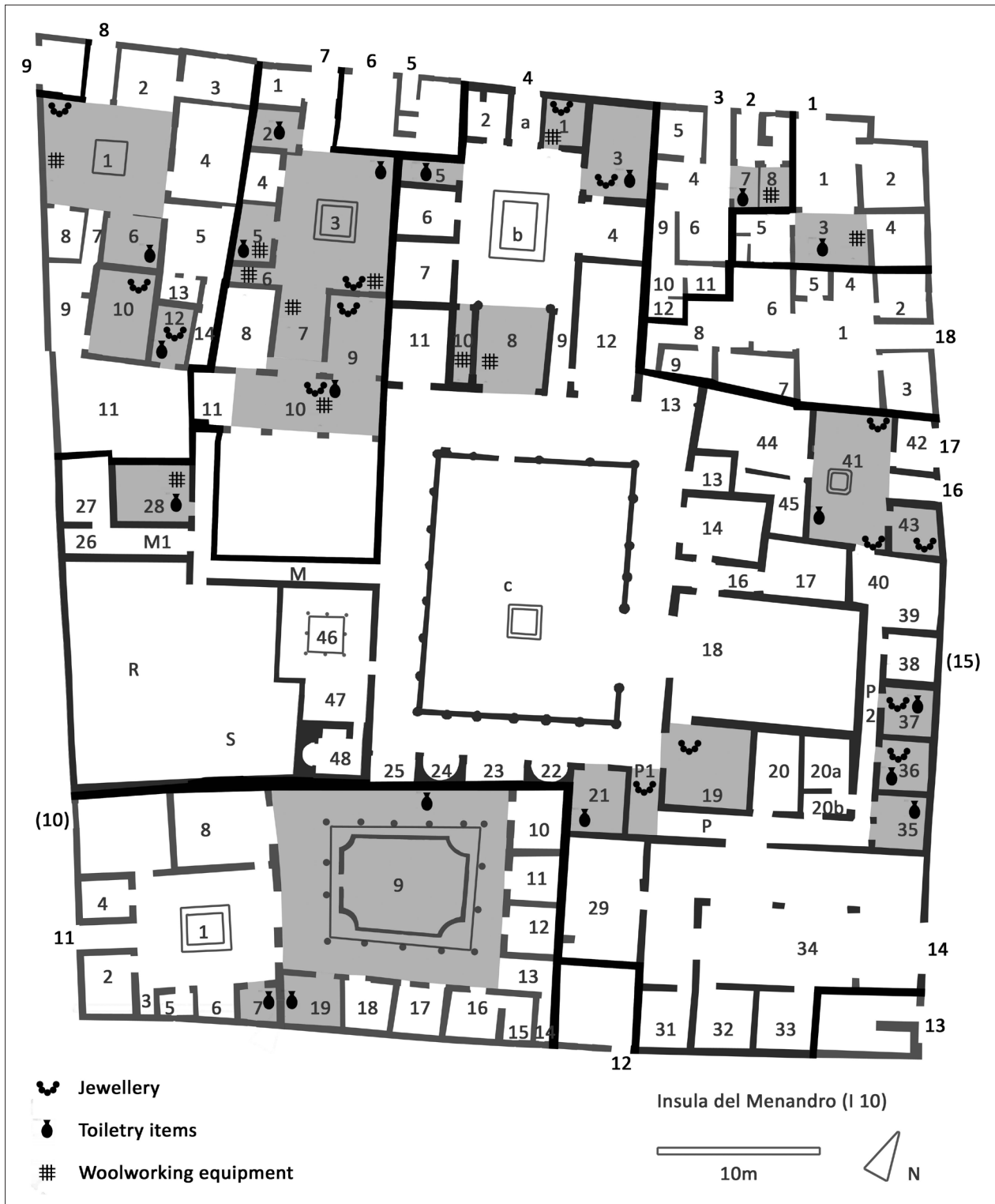


Fig. 1: Distribution of ‘gendered’ artefacts, not indicating their number per room (by author; map based on R. LING, *The Structures* (The Insula of the Menander at Pompeii I), Oxford 1997, 346 fig. 24).

however, hardly make a loom and a single *unguentarium* cannot speak for a set of female toiletries nor can we plausibly reconstruct a woman’s personal jewellery from only a handful of beads. The first step of the present study is therefore to exclude all single items and look at *assemblages* of objects of interest, which drastically reduces the number of relevant artefacts (fig. 2, rooms marked in grey). The distribution of pre-

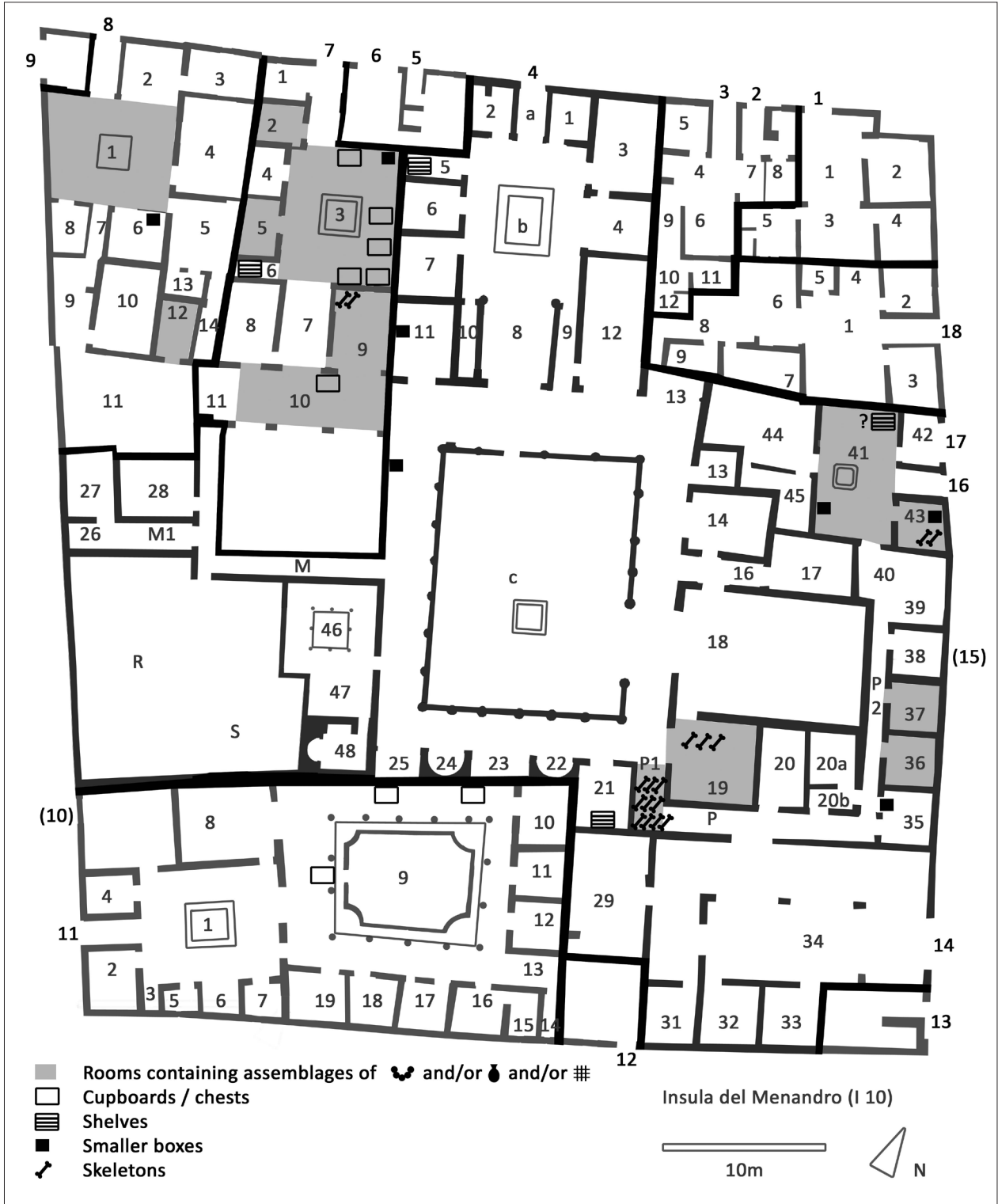


Fig. 2: Mapped assemblages of ‘gendered’ artefacts combined with evidence for storage facilities and skeletons (by author; map based on R. LING, *The Structures* (The Insula of the Menander at Pompeii I), Oxford 1997, 346 fig. 24).

cious jewellery correlates with the distribution of the 19 skeletons found within the *insula* (fig. 2). Apart from several groups of glass beads and a few isolated finds of bronze rings, rings of gold, silver and bronze as well as cloth and leather bags with more precious materials in them were discovered with the skeletons in rooms 19 and 43 of the *Casa del Menandro*; bronze and iron rings, along with a bag of coins, were also

found on some of the bodies in corridor P1.<sup>33</sup> One of the two people in room 9 of house I 10,8 held a wooden box filled with coins and two bronze rings, the other a cloth bag containing money. Because all these pieces of jewellery were either worn or collected by people trying to escape, they must have been removed from their original keeping-place.<sup>34</sup> If we then, as a second step, leave out the finds connected with people trying to hide or flee, the number of rooms with objects indicative of possible female activities is reduced even further, to a mere nine rooms. According to J.T. Berry, very few valuable artefacts have been found in Pompeii at all in comparison to other categories of finds.<sup>35</sup>

There remain the rooms that contain women's objects in assemblages and seem not to have been disturbed by those fleeing. The assemblages come from both smaller rooms containing a variety of objects and from the storage furniture in atria and porticoes, which held a similar assortment of artefacts: one chest in the atrium of the so-called *Casa del Fabbro* (I 10,7) contained several unguent bottles as well as ceramic jugs, bronze writing utensils, and coins; a cupboard held what appears to have been the personal belongings of a woman, consisting of a golden necklace, ring and earrings as well as possible toiletry items and a sewing needle. Another chest in the portico 10 of I 10,7 held a variety of household objects, among which were many iron tools, but also hair pins and sewing needles. Either the central storage of such items was the most practical way to keep belongings together or it allowed them to be displayed more easily, as when Petronius' Trimalchio shows his guests precious items which he keeps stored in the atrium.<sup>36</sup> Further storage facilities were located in the peristyles of the *Casa degli Amanti* and *Casa del Menandro* (cf. fig. 2) and in the atrium of the *Casa del Procuratore* (I 10,16; part of the *Casa del Menandro*). The majority of the objects was apparently in storage at the time of the eruption; this is also the case for many of the single items excluded at the beginning, coming e.g. from the shelved storage rooms 6 (I 10,7), 5 and 21 (I 10,4). The largest amount of precious items, a set of silver tableware together with a box of coins and jewellery, was stored in a chest the underground room B of I 10,4 and is known as the Menandro treasure.<sup>37</sup>

In house I 10,8, a considerable number of loom weights, 54 total, was found in the atrium – an amount of loom weights which is comparable to that found in VI 16,26 and in the *Casa del Principe di Napoli* (VI 15,8). In general, loom weights have often been found in atria, presumably because the natural light in the atrium made it a convenient location for weaving; literary sources also present textile working as taking place here.<sup>38</sup> How can we be sure, however, that it was still common to produce textiles at home in the first century AD? And if it was, would it be the *domina* and other free women who did this work, or rather the slaves, perhaps as part of a workshop? When we recall, however, that the atrium was a place for displaying family honours and ancestral busts, it also becomes possible to interpret the primary function of the loom not as textile production, but rather as displaying the virtue of the *domina* of the house.<sup>39</sup> Smaller numbers

<sup>33</sup> Less precious or parts of jewellery were found in rooms 1, 3, 41 of the *Casa del Menandro* and room 1 of house I 10,8. J.-A. DICKMANN, however, interprets the skeletons in room 19 of the *Casa del Menandro* as later looters (J.-A. DICKMANN, 'Insula Pertusa. Indizien einer Kriminalgeschichte', in H. MELLER – J.-A. DICKMANN (eds.), *Pompeji – Nola – Herculaneum. Katastrophen am Vesuv* (exhibition catalogue), München 2011, 299-308, in part. 306-8).

<sup>34</sup> Only in the case of rooms 9 (I 10,7) and 43 (I 10,4), in each of which two skeletons were found near a bed, could one conceive of the spaces as bed rooms or personal rooms in which people tried to hide. It is, however, not possible to prove that the objects they were holding originally came from these rooms.

<sup>35</sup> BERRY, 'Household Artefacts', 185.

<sup>36</sup> Petr. *sat.* 29.

<sup>37</sup> On the storage of household objects see also R. BERG, 'La casa come cassaforte. Riflessioni sulle zone di attività e zone di deposito nelle case Pompeiane', in J.M. ÁLVAREZ – T. NOGALES – I. RODÀ (eds.), *Actas XVIII Congreso Internacional Arqueología Clásica*, Mérida 2014, 1029-31. Her examples show that objects were often stored in *cubicula* and smaller rooms though.

<sup>38</sup> See section "Why artefact distribution analysis?"

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Asc. *de Milone* 43 on the display of woven texture in the atrium, representing the virtuous *materfamilias*.

of loom weights occasionally found in Pompeian houses are difficult to interpret, since we do not know how many of these were necessary for a loom or even how big usual looms were (their wooden frames have not been preserved).<sup>40</sup> Spindles, also commonly made of wood and therefore rarely preserved, were not recorded from the *Insula del Menandro*; conversely, sewing needles were distributed over several rooms, especially in the *Casa del Fabbro* (I 10,7).

Apart from the storage furniture located mainly in atria and porticoes, several smaller rooms contained assemblages of women's objects, namely rooms 2, 5 (I 10,7), 12 (I 10,8), 36 and 37 (I 10,4). Here, however, the assemblages were again found with different kind of objects, such as amphorae and a cooking pot in room 37. It is clear that objects for various purposes were stored in these rooms, which indicates that the rooms probably did not serve exclusively as personal rooms or sleeping chambers.<sup>41</sup>

Several object assemblages are assumed to come from the upper floors, among them a significant amount of sewing needles in I 10,7 – but separation of finds from the ground floors and upper floors is rarely possible, since stratigraphic observations were not always documented in the excavation reports.<sup>42</sup> Irrespective of this methodological problem, the possible upper-floor assemblages are mixed with other household items as well. Early excavations of Pompeii were also rather selective in their search for precious marble and gold objects: finds regarded as unimportant were either not recorded at all or never catalogued and are now lost somewhere among the 50,000 artefacts stored in the Pompeian depots.<sup>43</sup>

It is striking that almost no women's or other objects have been found in the *Casa degli Amanti*; this lack may have been caused by looting, as there is evidence for digging after the eruption.<sup>44</sup> The number and locations of the finds could have been affected not only by the looting of survivors and their contemporaries, but probably also by plundering in the following centuries.

## Conclusion

This article has aimed to outline the potential and limits of movable objects as a material source for tracing a particular group of household members. The study of artefact distribution within the *Insula del Menandro* has shown that assemblages of women's objects were mainly kept in large storage facilities, often located in atria and peristyles or porticoes. These pieces of furniture and their contents either were meant to display the wealth of the family or were simply central collections of precious items within the houses. But they kept not only what seems to be personal jewellery and cosmetics of the *domina* or other free female household members, but also a range of other domestic objects used for various purposes. Smaller rooms contained a similar mix of objects with different functions. The finds do not confirm the existence of separate women's quarters or personal rooms; rather, they are proof for multiple uses of single rooms or at least the use of these spaces for storing various items.

Artefact distribution analysis can – at least in theory – make visible activities which cannot otherwise be traced. But the approach itself is limited in several ways: firstly, not all materials lend themselves to preservation; organic finds mostly slip through our fingers. Secondly, not all actions require objects

<sup>40</sup> On the differing survival rates of artefacts see MOULD, 'Domestic Life', 153; J.T. BERRY, 'The Instrumentum Domesticum. A Case-Study', in J.J. DOBBINS – P.W. FOSS (eds.), *The World of Pompeii*, London 2007, 292-301, in part. 293.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. NEVETT, 'Perceptions', 297.

<sup>42</sup> On the difficulties regarding the circumstances of the excavations and the excavation records see BERRY, 'Household Artefacts', 186-87; ALLISON, *Households*, 30-32.

<sup>43</sup> BERRY, 'Instrumentum', 292; ALLISON, *Households*, 4.

<sup>44</sup> DICKMANN, 'Insula', 299-300; 302-5. Cf. also BERRY, 'Instrumentum', 293; ALLISON, *Households*, 23.



– social interaction and activities which do not produce or use artefacts cannot be traced. Thirdly, we cannot know how often objects were used and whether they indeed belonged to ‘daily life’ or were only used on special occasions. Fourthly, we usually interpret an object according to its original purpose, i.e. the function we ascribe to it. Any secondary use or disuse of an artefact might not be recognizable for us; if an object is found at an (to our understanding) unusual place, we are often quick to assume a state of disruption or the abandonment of the area.<sup>45</sup> Likewise, it is sometimes unclear whether an object fulfilled a practical use or was intended for symbolic display. Finally, two points affect the application of the method for the topic at hand: A) If we try to distinguish female from male household members on a material basis, we have to rely on sources which relate only the typical or ideal tasks and attributes of women. We then have to apply these to the archaeological context, but without being able to exclude fully the use of some characteristically female objects by men as well (e.g. mirrors). The present article has therefore focussed on assemblages rather than on single objects. Apart from certain rings, jewellery is the ‘safest’ category of finds to attribute to women. B) We might be able to distinguish artefacts according to the gender of their user, but not according to his or her age and status. That means that we are unable to attribute an assemblage of women’s objects to the *domina* of a house with absolute certainty; even if it is improbable, certain artefacts theoretically could have belonged to female slaves or female relatives of any age.<sup>46</sup> It is for this reason that the title of this paper refers only generally to female household members and does not distinguish them further. These are the methodological difficulties concerning the method of artefact distribution. Further problems regard the special circumstances of Pompeii as an archaeological context for artefact distribution analysis.

Returning to Schiffer’s eight formation processes, it seems that we find objects of almost every kind of formation process – except for the ‘*de facto* use’ we were looking for. The Pompeian formation processes may be distinguished by three phases: 1. During the volcano eruption, inhabitants hid or tried to escape; the precious items they brought with them and the jewellery they wore had been removed from their original locations. 2. After the eruption, survivors and looters searched for valuable objects. This post-eruption looting period may have lasted many centuries. 3. During the time of the excavation, many finds were rearranged or selectively recorded. The Pompeian formation processes can be made to correspond with Schiffer’s (slightly modified) categories (**fig. 3**), although he had actually established them in contrast to the (assumed frozen in time and sealed) archaeological context of Pompeii. Due to these formation processes, Pompeii is not the time-capsule some still regard it as being – and these formation processes might also be the reason why we rarely find objects at their place of usage, but rather at places where they were stored.

Artefact distribution analysis is the only method that can trace female household members. But its potential can only be fully explored in an ideal, perfectly encapsulated archaeological context, in which sudden destruction had overtaken the inhabitants in their daily routine.<sup>47</sup> Unfortunately, not even Pompeii can offer this. It can offer us only a limited view into ancient life, but for this very reason, it can also sensitise us to the different formation processes affecting interpretation.

1. Primary refuse and storage: Items lost, discarded or stored during the main period of use.	√ Artefacts in storage.
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<sup>45</sup> On this problem, see MOULD, ‘Domestic Life’, 155.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. the inscription on a gold bracelet found in Pompeii, in which a slave girl is named as possessor (BERG, ‘Wearing Wealth’, 46).

<sup>47</sup> Cf. SCHIFFER, *Behavioural Archaeology*, 14 on the “closest [...] approximation of a ‘fossil’ of a cultural system”.

2. Abandonment refuse: Items lost or discarded during the period of abandonment, if anticipated.	√ 1. Disturbance: Escaping persons taking away their possessions.
<b>3. De facto refuse: items left were they lay, caused by the abandonment.</b>	-- (Loomweights?)
4. Ritual deposits.	?
5. Postabandonment use: Items moved, taken away or brought in by squatters, vandals or temporary users.	√ 2. Disturbance: Looters/former inhabitants taking away objects or leaving their own items.
6. Secondary refuse: Trash disposal / items thrown in after abandonment.	? 2. Disturbance: Looters/former inhabitants possibly leaving trash.
7. Postoccupational collapse: Items deposited by collapse.	√ Collapse of the roofs: Artefacts from ground and upper floors being mixed (if only after excavation).
8. Postoccupational disturbances: Items brought in or out by cultural or environmental processes.	√ 3. Disturbance: Exavation, selecting and accumulating finds.

**Fig. 3:** Schiffer's formation processes as applied to Pompeii (table by author).



# Livia's Economic Activity

MARJA-LEENA HÄNNINEN

When Livia, the spouse of the first emperor of Rome, Augustus, died, she was one of the wealthiest women in the Roman empire. She was by no means the only Roman woman of substance in her time. During the Late Republican era, the changes in the Roman marriage institution had increased the economic freedom of Roman women in general. Transition to the so-called *sine manu* marriages meant that husband no more got the legal control of his wife and the wife could more independently manage her own property.<sup>1</sup> Women were, however, still under the perpetual guardianship, *tutela*. A reform of the Augustan era, the *ius trium liberorum* meant that women who had given birth to three children were freed from the *tutela*.<sup>2</sup>

Elite women with wealth of their own specifically benefited from the new situation. Livia can be seen as an illustrative example of the trend. On the other hand, however, her status was extraordinary in many ways. Livia's wealth has been traced by Willrich (1911), Barrett (2002) and Kunst (2008).<sup>3</sup> Even if it may be possible to track new evidence about Livia's property, this paper rather aims to analyse the nature of Livia's wealth and personal economy. How exceptional or typical was her economical behavior for a Roman woman of her time? It will also be discussed how the marriage with Augustus affected Livia's personal economy. Finally, it will be asked what does Livia's economy look like in comparison with economic activities and attitudes of Roman senatorial class, in general. Was it a question of rational and profit making economy or rather of keeping up one's prestige?

Considering Livia's wealth her marriage with Augustus seems essential. She appears to have gained her wealth mainly during and after her marriage with Augustus.<sup>4</sup> For the majority of the Roman elite women, however, the family in which they were born was the principal source of wealth. Livia was born in a noble and influential family, but by the time of her first marriage with Tiberius Claudius Nero Livia's prospects were not particularly positive. Her father had been proscribed and her husband exiled. It is improbable that Livia would have been very wealthy at this point of her life. The marriage with Octavian/ Augustus changed Livia's life radically for ever. The extraordinary status of Augustus was reflected in the life of his family which gradually also got a special status which has recently been demonstrated by Beth Severy in her book *Augustus and the family*. Livia became an exemplary figure for all Roman women: a loyal and virtuous wife and a good mother. Livia seems, however, to have been most powerful and influential after Augustus' death. This is due to the unconventional will of Augustus. He adopted Livia in his will and she inherited a third of his vast property.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> S. DIXON, *The Roman Family*, Baltimore – London 1992, in part. 74-75.

<sup>2</sup> For the *tutela*, see J.F. GARDNER, *Women in Roman Law and Society*, London 1986, in part. 5-22.

<sup>3</sup> H. WILLRICH, *Livia*, Leipzig – Berlin 1911, in part. 71; A.A. BARRETT, *Livia. First Lady of Imperial Rome*, New Haven – London 2002, in part. 174. C. KUNST, *Livia. Macht und Intrigen am Hof des Augustus*, Stuttgart 2008, in part. 262.

<sup>4</sup> KUNST, *Livia*, 262, however, believes that Livia was rich already when marrying Augustus.

<sup>5</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 101.1-2; Tac. *ann.* 1.8; Dio 56.32.1. For a general view on Augustus' testament, see E. CHAMPLIN, 'The Testament of Augustus', *RM* 132 (1989), 154-65.

Considering Livia's economic activities it is important to point out two other remarkable changes in her status. In 35 BC, during the second triumvirate, the Roman senate granted some extraordinary honours to Livia as well as Augustus' sister Octavia. These honours included the exemption from the *tutela*, meaning that Livia and Octavia could administer their properties without a guardian.<sup>6</sup> At that time only the Vestals enjoyed similar privileges. Furthermore, in 9 BC Livia was an object of great honours after the immature death of her son Drusus. The senate granted her the *ius trium liberorum*, which also meant exemption from *tutela muliebris*.<sup>7</sup> This new honour did, thus, not practically bring any new liberties to Livia but rather strengthened her official status. Furthermore, Livia was exempted from the *Lex Voconia* which restricted the inheritance rights of the richest Roman women. According to Cassius Dio, Augustus specifically asked the senate to grant Livia this exemption in his will. Otherwise it would have been illegal to give Livia such amount of inheritance.<sup>8</sup>

So, Livia had a legal status that allowed her quite an independent status in economic matters already before Augustus had consolidated his rule. But what did she actually own before she married Augustus? One property that is generally connected with Livia is the illustrious villa at Prima Porta near Veii.<sup>9</sup> This estate presumably once belonged to Livia's father or his family, anyway, and it may have been a part of her dowry by the time of her first marriage. Since Livia's father was proscribed, Livia must have got the villa before this happened.<sup>10</sup> Another possibility is that she bought it later. Omens and stories concerning the fate of Augustus and Livia were connected with the villa. This estate was famous for its special breed of white hens and therefore it was sometimes called the *villa ad gallinas albas*. Furthermore, the villa was known for its laurel grove which, according to some sources, was planted by Livia herself.<sup>11</sup>

What kind of possessions did Livia practically have? First, she owned real estates, such as *insulae* in the city of Rome. Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, she had landed property. In addition to farmland, she owned, e. g., brickworks in Campania, papyrus marshes in Egypt and copper mines in Gaul.<sup>12</sup> Thirdly, Livia also owned a significant number of slaves. Many of Livia's slaves are known from inscriptions, especially from the so-called *Monumentum Liviae* which is a columbarium of Livia's slaves.<sup>13</sup> Livia also inherited slaves, not only from Augustus but also from private citizens. The inheritance Livia got from Augustus increased her wealth remarkably. She inherited both land and slaves from Augustus. She shared parts of her inheritance with Tiberius, such as an estate in Tusculum and lands on the island of Lipari.<sup>14</sup> Slaves and freedmen owned jointly by Tiberius and Livia are known from inscriptions.<sup>15</sup> There is also evidence for a procurator of Tiberius and Julia Augusta (Livia) on Lipari.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Dio 49.38.1.

<sup>7</sup> Dio 55.2.5.

<sup>8</sup> Dio 56.32.1. The *lex Voconia* limited the proportion of estates apportioned in legacies and, specifically, restricted the possibility of the landowners to appoint a woman a single heir. The law forbade testators of the first census class to nominate women as heirs. For *lex Voconia*, see GARDNER, *Women*, 170-78.

<sup>9</sup> Suet. *Galb.* 1.136-37. For the excavations on the site, see C. CALCI – G. MESSINEO, *La villa di Livia a Prima Porta*, Roma 1984.

<sup>10</sup> BARRETT, *Livia*, 28-29, 181-82.

<sup>11</sup> Suet. *Galb.* 1; Plin. *nat.* 15.136-37.

<sup>12</sup> *CIL* X 8042, 41, 60; Plin. *nat.* 34.3-4 (copper mines); BARRETT, *Livia*, 182-84.

<sup>13</sup> Susan Treggiari has analysed these inscriptions and reconstructed Livia's staff. See S. TREGGIARI, 'Jobs in the Household of Livia', *PBSR* 43 (1972), 48-77.

<sup>14</sup> WILLRICH, *Livia*, 72-73.

<sup>15</sup> P.R.C. WEAVER, *Familia Caesaris*, Cambridge 1972, in part. 44, 51, 63.

<sup>16</sup> *CIL* X 7489.

Livia eventually owned estates all over Italy and throughout the Roman empire. How did she acquire these estates? Many of her possessions are known but it cannot be said with certainty which possessions she inherited from Augustus and which she acquired during her marriage with him. At any rate, Livia benefitted from her marriage with Augustus, both during his lifetime and after his death. Augustus and Livia had together a vast network of friends and clients.<sup>17</sup> Augustus got a lot of legacies from his friends and used this wealth mainly for the benefit of the state. It has been estimated that the income Augustus got from the legacies yearly almost doubled the annual revenue from the provinces of Egypt and Gaul.<sup>18</sup> Livia, too, enjoyed the willingness of private persons to show their loyalty by giving donations. Families and private persons who had enjoyed Livia's favour gave her gifts and legacies. According to Roman legislation, gifts between husband and wife were restricted, but Livia could receive gifts and legacies from her friends and Augustus' friends.<sup>19</sup> Even freedmen of their friends could mention Augustus and Livia in their wills. The members of the imperial family benefitted from their foreign friends and clients even economically. They inherited not only land from client kings, but also slaves, for example.<sup>20</sup> And nothing could prevent Livia from becoming rich, since she was exempted from laws that restricted women's possibilities of inheritance and ownership.

Papyri and inscriptions as well as ancient literature testify Livia's estates. She owned large estates in Egypt, Judaea and Asia Minor, in particular, as well as in various parts of Italy.<sup>21</sup> There is evidence on at least 11 estates in Egypt owned by Livia since 5 AD.<sup>22</sup> Landowning in Egypt was profitable, since Egypt was the largest and richest grain-producing area in antiquity. Imperial family of Rome was the most remarkable landowner there as Cleopatra's private fortune went to Augustus after the Roman conquer of Egypt.<sup>23</sup> It has been stated that Augustus gave estates of Egypt to the members of his family and his favourites. This view has also been criticized, since this practice seems to be in conflict with the principles of Augustan administration.<sup>24</sup> Parassoglou suggests that Livia did not get all the estates from Augustus but may have bought some of them in public auctions, often by the help of intermediaries.<sup>25</sup> In Judaea, she inherited land from Salome, the sister of Herodes the Great. Herodes had earlier left money to both Augustus and Livia.<sup>26</sup> Livia had strong connection with the ruling family of Judaea and a close friendship with Salome, in particular.<sup>27</sup> According to Josephus, Salome left Livia the toparchy she had inherited from her brother in the Jordan valley near Jericho, as well as palm plantations in Jamnia and Phasaelis.<sup>28</sup> Phasaelis was famous for its palms and dates in antiquity.<sup>29</sup> Herodes the Great had first supported Mark Anthony but switched sides as Augustus proved victorious. He showed hospitality and made donations to Augustus and his friends after the battle of

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<sup>17</sup> BARRETT, *Livia*, 174-75.

<sup>18</sup> CHAMPLIN, 'Testament', 160.

<sup>19</sup> BARRETT, *Livia*, 175. For the gifts between husband and wife, see GARDNER, *Women*, 69-70, 74-75.

<sup>20</sup> B. SEVERY, *Augustus and the Family at the birth of the Roman empire*, New York – London 2003, in part. 151.

<sup>21</sup> S. MRATSCHEK-HALFMANN, *Divites et praepotentes. Reichtum und soziale Stellung in der Literatur der Prinzipatzeit* (Historia Einzelschriften 70), Stuttgart 1993, in part. 270-80.

<sup>22</sup> MRATSCHEK-HALFMANN, *Divites*, 280.

<sup>23</sup> G. PARASSOGLU, *Imperial Estates in Roman Egypt* (American Studies in Papyrology 18), Amsterdam 1978, in part. 3; MRATSCHEK-HALFMANN, *Divites*, 43.

<sup>24</sup> PARASSOGLU, *Imperial Estates*, 5-6.

<sup>25</sup> PARASSOGLU, *Imperial Estates*, 5-6.

<sup>26</sup> Joseph. *AJ* 17.146.190.

<sup>27</sup> BARRETT, *Livia*, 196-197.

<sup>28</sup> Joseph. *BJ* 2.9.1.; Joseph. *AJ* 18.2.2.

<sup>29</sup> Plin. *nat.* 13.4.44.

Actium.<sup>30</sup> Thus, legacies to Augustus and Livia were in line with these proofs of loyalty. Livia, for her part, made donations to the temple of Jerusalem.<sup>31</sup>

What I find essential in Livia's possessions is that she owned estates which produced something: grain, wine, oil, dates, papyrus, etc. Even the mention of the white hen and the laurel grove at the villa at Prima Porta suggests that the villa was a productive estate, not just a place of rest and peace. The copper that was mined in Livia's lands in Gaul, was called *aes Livianum*, and the copper mines were among the most productive ones in the Roman Gaul.<sup>32</sup> Livia's property brought her every year remarkable capital income in the form of rent from the real estate assets and profit from the estates dedicated to manufacturing. Brick industry was a typical source of wealth for the members of the senatorial order during the Principate. Names of many men and women of high status – imperial women, too – appear in brick stamps. High ranking women usually let their freedmen manage the brick business for them. Wealthy noblemen could own manufactures in several localities.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, it was usual that Roman senators owned both houses for their own use and *insulae* to rent in the city of Rome. Landed property and urban property together constituted the basis of their income.<sup>34</sup> Traditionally, agriculture and landed property was the only socially acceptable source of living for the Roman senatorial elite. Commercial activity was considered morally dubious. By the Early Empire, however, the Roman aristocracy seems to have learned to exploit the economic opportunities even commercially. Their involvement in commerce was typically indirect.<sup>35</sup> Roman aristocrats seem to have taken an active interest in the management of their property and business. As for the brick industry, the owners of the clay-bed areas (*figlinae*) made contracts with an officinator about the production of bricks. The landowners (*dominus, domina*) had the control of the production and bricks remained their property. For a woman brick production could be a livelihood or an investment.<sup>36</sup> For a woman like Livia who certainly did not need to be involved in brick industry because of living it was apparently a question of an investment. Livia's brickyards seem to have been very productive and tiles produced in her *officinae* widely distributed.<sup>37</sup>

It may not be quite accurate to characterize Livia as a calculating business woman who personally managed all her holdings. Specialised slaves and freedmen, so-called procurators (*procuratores*) took care of the imperial estates. Slaves and freedmen of the imperial family gradually developed to officials of the state.<sup>38</sup> It has been estimated that Livia's personal staff comprised more than 1000 persons.<sup>39</sup> Livia's staff included workers with such titles as *dispensator, arcarius, tabularius*, which all refer to responsibilities with Livia's vast wealth. Some of these workers known from *Monumentum Liviae* may have been free employed workers. Slaves with the title *insularius* specifically took care of the management of the *insulae* owned by Livia and collected the rents. Livia also had her own private scribes and secretaries.<sup>40</sup> Many kinds of prod-

<sup>30</sup> MRATSCHEK-HALFMANN, *Divites*, 264.

<sup>31</sup> Joseph. *BJ* 5562-3.

<sup>32</sup> Plin. *nat.* 34.3-4; MRATSCHEK-HALFMANN, *Divites*, 280.

<sup>33</sup> MRATSCHEK-HALFMANN, *Divites*, 103-4.

<sup>34</sup> I. SHATZMAN, *Senatorial Wealth and Roman Politics*, Bruxelles 1975, in part. 22, 50.

<sup>35</sup> J.J. D'ARMS, *Commerce and Social Standing in Ancient Rome*, Cambridge, Ma. – London 1981, in part. 149-63.

<sup>36</sup> P. SETÄLÄ, 'Women and brick production – some new aspects', in P. SETÄLÄ *et al.* (eds.), *Women, wealth and power in the Roman empire* (Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 25), Rome 2002, 181-203, in part. 182-84.

<sup>37</sup> D'ARMS, *Commerce*, 78.

<sup>38</sup> See SEVERY, *Augustus Family*, 140.

<sup>39</sup> MRATSCHEK-HALFMANN, *Divites*, 280.

<sup>40</sup> TREGGIARI, 'Jobs', 49-50.

ucts – luxury products, too – were manufactured inside the household of Augustus and Livia and there were highly skilled and specialised handworkers in their staff. Livia personally owned a silver smith (*argentarius*) and maker of pearl jewels (*margaritarius*), for example.<sup>41</sup> One special group of Livia's staff consisted of slaves who regulated the access to their patrons.<sup>42</sup>

Conspicuous consumption was one means by which the Roman elite manifested its status. The amount of slaves owned by the family was one aspect of the expenditure even if the number of the staff was supposed to reflect the status of the owner in a sensible way.<sup>43</sup> Slaves should, however, not be considered only status symbols for their owners. Slaves may also be characterized as investments whose wellbeing had to be taken care of by the owners. Thus, Livia had doctors who took care of her sick slaves. Slave children, in particular, can be seen as investments who would bring profit in time passing. Slave children born in the household, so-called *vernae*, were considered especially valuable.<sup>44</sup> There is epigraphic evidence for Livia's *vernae* at Capri, for example.<sup>45</sup> There were several midwives and wet-nurses among Livia's slaves. Slave children of the imperial household also got some education and there were teachers specifically for them. We do not know if Livia had her own school for the children of her slaves or if she shared the school with other members of the imperial family.<sup>46</sup>

Livia's economic activity and ownership can be seen in the background of the economy of Roman aristocracy in general. Landowning was regarded as the most valuable form of property. It was also considered rational to diversify the assets geographically and to produce different goods in different estates. The richest members of the Roman aristocracy favoured the practice of owning estates in various parts of Italy and provinces. The influence of different kinds of soils and climates on the productivity of land had to be taken into account.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, this is exactly what modern finance suggest investors: they should diversify their portfolio to include as many different profitable investments as possible. "One should not put all the eggs in one basket", is an advice that is shared by both modern financial theory and the ancient Roman elite. Livia's economy is perfectly in line with these principles. What sets Livia apart of the other Roman aristocrats is the scale of her owning.

As for the economic role of Livia as a Roman matron it can be said that she was not an exception from the rule. Roman matron traditionally had a great responsibility in the managing of the household, especially in textile and food production, storing and accounting. The responsibility also brought authority to the matrons.<sup>48</sup> There was a long tradition of seeing wife as her husband's business partner who had her own important duties in the household.<sup>49</sup> An elite matron did not perhaps do much with her own hands but rather supervised work done by slaves and servants in the household. Matrons could be praised for their economic skills even in funerary inscriptions. In the famous *Laudatio Turiae*, a funerary eulogy of an unknown Roman noblewoman, the deceased matron is also praised for the excellent care of the common property, not

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<sup>41</sup> TREGGIARI, 'Jobs', 55.

<sup>42</sup> SEVERY, *Augustus Family*, 147, 148.

<sup>43</sup> TREGGIARI, 'Jobs', 60-61.

<sup>44</sup> For *vernae*, see DIXON, *Family*, 128-29. For the *vernae* of the imperial family, see WEAVER, *Familia Caesaris*, 51-52.

<sup>45</sup> WILLRICH, *Livia*, 73.

<sup>46</sup> TREGGIARI, 'Jobs', 55-56.

<sup>47</sup> G. VIVENZA, 'Roman economic thought', in W. SCHEIDEL (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Economy*, Cambridge 2012, 25-44, in part. 27-29; SHATZMAN, *Senatorial Wealth*, 45, 49; MRATSCHEK-HALFMANN, *Divites*, 95.

<sup>48</sup> See SEVERY, *Augustus Family*, 12.

<sup>49</sup> TREGGIARI, 'Jobs', 63.



forgetting the traditional matronal task of wool-working.<sup>50</sup> Woolwork (*lanam fecit*) is frequently mentioned as matronal virtue of women of a more modest standing in funerary inscriptions.<sup>51</sup>

Woolwork also belonged to the public image of Livia. According to Suetonius, Augustus used clothes produced by the women of his household.<sup>52</sup> Production and care of the textiles in the imperial household obviously was on Livia's responsibility.<sup>53</sup> Even if we would not believe that Livia herself stood at the loom, it is noteworthy that her public image was that of a traditional Roman matron. A good Roman matron was supposed to administer well the household, to be industrious and prudent. The poet Ovid expresses in a poem a fear that Livia takes so much trouble in managing her business that she has no time to take care of herself.<sup>54</sup> In the eyes of the contemporaries, Livia was not an idle lady or oriental queen, but a virtuous matron busy in matters of her own household and those of the empire.

Livia's status and property brought her also duties. She helped her friends and clients and showed generosity even to people she didn't personally know. She sponsored public building and religious cults, e. g., by restoring the temple of Concordia, rebuilding the sanctuary of Fortuna Muliebris and donating valuable objects to sanctuaries in various parts of the empire.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, she gave money for the expenses of religious festivities and public banquets.<sup>56</sup> She also established a fund for bringing up poor children and giving dowries for poor girls.<sup>57</sup> This activity of Livia can be compared to Augustus' practice of helping individual senators with preserving the economic qualifications of the senatorial class.<sup>58</sup> Augustus and Livia acted like father and mother of the community. Inheritances and legacies provided them with the resources for euergetism.<sup>59</sup> As for friendships and patron client relationships, it is good to remember that they were mutual relationships – both parties benefited from the relationship. Eventually it was a question of a kind of an exchange.<sup>60</sup> Senatorial families sought for a relationship with the emperor, since showing loyalty to Augustus helped them to guarantee their status and economic benefits in the changed political system.<sup>61</sup> Legacies were one way of showing this loyalty. Livia also had a role in this theatre of loyalty, since she had her own network of friends and clients. Many private citizens and notable provincials could appeal to Augustus by approaching Livia first.<sup>62</sup> Showing gratefulness by giving legacies and donations to Livia was also a gesture of loyalty meant to please Augustus.

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<sup>50</sup> CIL VI 1527. See also M. DURRY, *Éloge funèbre d'une matrone romaine (Éloge dit de Turia)*, Paris 1950 and D. FLACH, *Die sogenannte Laudatio Turiae. Einleitung, Text, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, Darmstadt 1991; M.-L. HÄNNINEN, 'Currus avorum. Roman Noble Women in Family Traditions', in H. WHITTAKER (ed.), *In memoriam. Commemoration, Communal Memory and Gender Values in the Ancient Graeco-Roman World*, Cambridge 2011, 42-59, in part. 50-51.

<sup>51</sup> For the significance of woolworking, see L. LARSSON-LOVÉN, 'LANAM FECIT. Woolworking and Female Virtue', in L. LARSSON-LOVÉN – A. STRÖMBERG (eds.), *Aspects of Women in Antiquity* (Proceedings of the First Nordic Symposium of Women's Lives in Antiquity, Göteborg 12. - 15. June 1997), Jonsered 1998, 85-95.

<sup>52</sup> Suet. *Aug.* 73.

<sup>53</sup> TREGGIARI, 'Jobs', 54.

<sup>54</sup> *Ov. pont.* 3.1.139-45.

<sup>55</sup> SEVERY, *Augustus Family*, 132-33; WILLRICH, *Livia*, 77.

<sup>56</sup> WILLRICH, *Livia*, 78.

<sup>57</sup> Dio 58.2.2-3; SEVERY, *Augustus Family*, 137, 142.

<sup>58</sup> SEVERY, *Augustus Family*, 142.

<sup>59</sup> SEVERY, *Augustus Family*, 155.

<sup>60</sup> VIVENZA, *Economic Thought*, 35.

<sup>61</sup> MRATSCHEK-HALFMANN, *Divites*, 107.

<sup>62</sup> SEVERY, *Augustus Family*, 148-51.

The scale of Livia's wealth was reflected in her own testament. She was so generous to her favourites that Tiberius was not willing to follow all the orders of the testament.<sup>63</sup> Since Livia, many women of the imperial family owned considerable landed property and great amounts of slaves. Among the Julio-Claudian women of substance, Antonia Minor and Agrippina Minor are the most notable ones.<sup>64</sup>

Livia acted according to the expectations and principles of her social standing. Her public image was that of a traditional Roman matron and, even if the later historiography may have written some bitter words on Livia, she matched the social expectations during her lifetime. Modesty was a part of her public image but, on the other hand, her social status required a great amount of slaves and certain dignity in the life style. As a wealthy woman she enjoyed greater economic freedom than most Roman women of her time. Furthermore, she also enjoyed a special status, special privileges that set her apart from other Roman noblewomen. Augustus had an extraordinary status which also meant an extraordinary status to his wife and family.

It is interesting to speculate if owning was to Livia just something that happened to her, something that belonged to her status and display of the status or if she was an active agent in economic matters. Considering the scale of her owning, could she be characterized as a great investor, or a managing director or rather a chairwoman of the board if we anachronistically use modern terms? In any case, economy is an essential part of her status and power and a part of her image what should be looked at more carefully. Evidence for Livia's wealth indicate to economic activity that brought profit. There appears to be a very practical and sensible woman behind the images of the cunning intriguer described by ancient historians and of the idealized spouse of the Emperor Augustus, a worthy partner of the *paterfamilias* of the *Domus Augusti*.

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<sup>63</sup> WILLRICH, *Livia*, 79.

<sup>64</sup> WEAVER, *Familia Caesaris*, 63-64.



## **IV**

### **BEYOND THE HOUSEHOLD: WOMEN IN BUSINESS**



# Sulle tracce di una imprenditoria al femminile a Pompei e nel Vesuviano

VINCENZINA CASTIGLIONE MORELLI

Questo contributo nasce con l'intento di dare in qualche modo un volto a donne che persero la vita durante l'eruzione del 79 d.C., e di ricostruirne le vicende, inquadrandole nella condizione generale delle donne pompeiane. Di poche di tali donne conosciamo in realtà il vero volto (fig. 1).

## Donne senza nome vittime dell'eruzione

Tra le 54 vittime dell'eruzione del 79 ad Oplontis, nell'ambiente 10 della villa B,<sup>1</sup> come si sa divise in un gruppo di 'poveri' senza corredo e in un altro di 34 ricchi', benché 10 soltanto di essi con notevoli gioielli e somme di denaro, mi è capitato in passato<sup>2</sup> di occuparmi di due individui, esattamente 2 donne, che purtroppo posso crudamente ancora ora nominare soltanto 'scheletro 7' e 'scheletro 27'.<sup>3</sup> Si tratta, nel primo caso, in base ad esame paleopatologico eseguito dalla Professoressa M. Elva Torino, di una donna di 25-35 anni morta a causa del primo dei sei surges che colpirono il territorio di Oplontis.<sup>4</sup> La donna, e come tale la connotavano anche lo spillone per capelli di bronzo aderente al cranio, forse di fabbrica locale, e un bracciale in argento frammentario a testa di serpente,<sup>5</sup> aveva vicino una borsa in tela con ben 409 monete: due aurei, 189 denari in argento, 218 monete in bronzo diverse, per un totale di 1062 sesterzi e due assi. La somma in sé, la più bassa di quelle rinvenute nella stanza nei pressi dei dieci 'ricchi', si fa notare per

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<sup>1</sup> Per la Villa B e le vicende dello scavo, L. FERGOLA, 'Oplontis La Villa B', in A. D'AMBROSIO – P.G. GUZZO – M. MASTROBERTO (curr.), *Storie da un'eruzione*, Milano 2003, 154-57, con bibliografia precedente e, a seguire, catalogo di una scelta dei reperti. Per bibliografia più recente sulle Ville A e B e l'attività qui della Soprintendenza archeologica, cfr. *RSP*, Notiziario, Ufficio Scavi di Oplontis, relazioni annuali di L. FERGOLA e, in particolare nella *Rivista* 2014 in preparazione, 'Indagini archeologiche nell'area di Villa B' a firma M. PREVITI – A. BONINI, 151-53. Inoltre, per l'attività, in accordo con la Soprintendenza, dell'Università del Texas at Austin, J.R. CLARKE, 'The Oplontis Project 2005-2008', in A. CORALINI (cur.), *Vesuviana. Archeologie a confronto* (Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Bologna 14-16 gennaio 2008), Bologna 2010, 427-30; J.R. CLARKE – N.K. MUNTASSER (curr.), *Oplontis. Villa A ('of Poppaea') at Torre Annunziata – Italy*. Vol. I, *The Ancient Setting and Modern Rediscovering*, New York 2014; per Villa B, M.L. THOMAS *et al.*, 'The Oplontis Project 2012-3. A Report of Excavations at Oplontis B', *Fasti on Line, Documents and Research* (295), 1-9.

<sup>2</sup> V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI, 'Un gruzzolo dalla stanza degli ori di Oplontis', *RSP* 11 (2000), 187-226; V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI, 'Lo scheletro 27 e il suo tesoro monetale', in FERGOLA, 'Oplontis'; V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI, 'Intervento al dibattito' in V. MARRAZZO (ed.), *Presenza e circolazione della moneta in area vesuviana* (Atti Convegno 2003, Istituto Studi Numismatici), Roma 2007, 395-99; V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI, 'L'indotto economico', in *Ager Pompeianus et ager Stabianus. L'esempio della Villa B di Oplontis e della Villa Cuomo di S. Antonio Abate* (Istituto per la diffusione delle Scienze naturali), Napoli 2013, 169-97.

<sup>3</sup> Con maggiore *pietas* L. CAPASSO, *I fuggiaschi di Ercolano. Paleopatologia delle vittime dell'eruzione vesuviana del 79 d.C.*, Roma 2001, *passim*, ha saputo trovare un soprannome per ognuna delle vittime anonime esaminate: 'la piccola lavoratrice, la bimba con il braccio speciale, la signorina gracile ecc.'

<sup>4</sup> Il sesso, l'età e le patologie furono esaminati da M.E. Torino, della Federico II di Napoli, cfr. V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI, 'Gruzzolo', cit. a nota 2, e, *ivi*, Appendice: M.E. TORINO, 'Analisi paleopatologica di una vittima dell'eruzione del Vesuvio', *RSP* 11 (2010), 233-34, mentre la fine delle vittime è stata precisata da E. DE CAROLIS, 'Oplontis', 233 e, più di recente, E. DE CAROLIS – G. PATRICELLI, 'Vittime dell'eruzione', in D'AMBROSIO – GUZZO – MASTROBERTO, *Storie da un'eruzione*, 56-72.

<sup>5</sup> Cfr. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI, 'Gruzzolo', 190 e figg. 6-7 per le schede di spillone e bracciale.

la consistente presenza di moneta in bronzo, di circolazione comune, non tesaurizzata, quasi uguale come consistenza a quella d'argento, invece da accumulo, mentre i due aurei spesso sono presenti nei gruzzoli personali rinvenuti presso vittime. La donna non doveva essere una *domina*, perché non ha gioielli d'oro, mentre la somma che reca con sé è senza dubbio macroscopicamente più alta di quanto necessario per più giorni per la vita di una famiglia.<sup>6</sup> Pertanto, continuo a pensare ad una donna imprenditrice, cioè con una attività esterna, diversa da quella di casalinga, di cui nella borsa è portato il ricavato di più giorni. Se si fosse magari in presenza di un'abitante della villa, e non di una delle persone che durante la fuga in essa credero di trovare riparo, si potrebbe pensare alla responsabile o titolare di un'attività commerciale connessa a quelle anfore rinvenute nel peristilio e poste lì ad asciugare in attesa di essere riempite col vino della nuova vendemmia<sup>7</sup> o, ad esempio, con la lavorazione dei melograni anch'essi rinvenuti in numero cospicuo, per pozioni medicinali o altro.<sup>8</sup> La donna in questione, dati gli ornamenti molto modesti, potrebbe essere stata anche una liberta, in qualche modo 'procuratrice' di un ricco proprietario di *fundus* agricolo, o addirittura del proprietario della Villa A con i suoi annessi. Comunque, una donna imprenditrice che gestiva una attività e quindi recava con sé la somma rappresentante il ricavato da reinvestire.

Sempre nello stesso ambiente della villa trovò la morte un'altra donna, il csd. scheletro 27;<sup>9</sup> nei suoi confronti ho un grave torto: per l'altissimo valore della somma trovatale accanto e per la mancanza di un esame paleo patologico che potesse precisarne sesso ed età, oltre all'impossibilità, al momento della preparazione del catalogo della Mostra *Storie da un'eruzione*, di consultare i giornali di scavo per la



Fig. 1: Statua femminile in bronzo da Ercolano, teatro (inv. MANN 5589).

<sup>6</sup> Cfr. i fondamentali articoli di L. BREGLIA, 'Circolazione monetale e aspetti di vita economica a Pompei', in A. MAIURI (cur.), *Pompeiana. Raccolta di studi per il secondo centenario degli scavi di Pompei*, Napoli 1950, 41-59 e di E. POZZI PAOLINI, 'Circolazione monetale a Pompei', in H. KYRIELEIS – B. ANDREAE (eds.), *Neue Forschungen in Pompei*, Recklinghausen 1975, 229-307, citati e ripresi recentemente in T. GIOVE, 'La circolazione monetale a Pompei' in D'AMBROSIO – GUZZO – MASTROROBERTO, *Storie da un'eruzione*, 26-33, part. 32 per i prezzi della vita quotidiana. Però vedere anche A. STAZIO, 'Moneta e vita economica a Pompei. Un restauro di conoscenza ed immagine della città antica', in L. FRANCHI DALL'ORTO (cur.), *Restaurare Pompei*, Milano 1990, 83-94; per considerazioni sui gioielli presso le vittime cfr. A. D'AMBROSIO – E. DE CAROLIS – P.G. GUZZO, 'I contesti di oggetti trovati presso le vittime', in D'AMBROSIO – GUZZO – MASTROROBERTO, *Storie da un'eruzione*, 73-83.

<sup>7</sup> A. LAGI DE CARO, 'Notiziario 1980-1983 Oplontis Villa B', in *Pompei Herculaneum Stabiae* 1 (1983), part. 372-74.

<sup>8</sup> A. LAGI DE CARO, 'Notiziario', 374; P. PASQUETTI, 'Il melograno nella cultura antica', in *Ager Pompeianus*, 129-39; G. ALIOTTA – G. DE ANGELIS – C.R. SALERNO, 'Il melograno', in *Ager Pompeianus*, 143-48.

<sup>9</sup> Cfr. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI, 'Lo scheletro 27', e il più recente 'Intervento al Dibattito'.

ricostruzione del ‘corredo’ completo della vittima,<sup>10</sup> ma soprattutto per un pregiudizio comune, sostenuto anche da illustri studiosi,<sup>11</sup> che solo gli uomini recassero con sé somme importanti durante l’evento catastrofico, il cospicuo gruzzolo, sulla cui composizione non ci sono dubbi, fu attribuito da me ad individuo di sesso maschile. In seguito ad un’attenta lettura del giornale di scavo, ho potuto con sicurezza riconoscere come pertinenti allo scheletro 27 un certo numero di gioielli: in parte da un cassetto, che quindi anche un uomo avrebbe potuto portare con sé, ma in parte invece indossati, costituenti anzi una ricca parure,<sup>12</sup> tra cui 3 anelli, 3 paia di orecchini, 3 armille, di cui una indossata, 4 collane di cui una a bandoliera, anch’essa indossata: ci troviamo dunque in presenza di una donna, una *domina* questa volta per la ricchezza di ornamenti, a cui senz’altro posso attribuire, fatta ammenda, la somma più grande trovata nel vesuviano presso una sola vittima: 10.952 sesterzi, divisi in due parti: parte in un cassetto con pezzi di argenteria e gioielli, per 2204 sesterzi; parte in borsa di tela, poi dissoltasi, posizionata sul torace, per 8748 sesterzi, grazie alla presenza di ben 86 aurei e 37 denari. Nel testo originario affermavo, e affermo, che nel cassetto fossero i beni di famiglia, compresi gioielli e soldi tesaurizzati, con netta prevalenza tra questi delle monete repubblicane, con possibilità di precisare addirittura il momento in cui il grosso della somma sarebbe stato messo da parte, cioè tra 48 e 31 a.C., mentre tra i 15 aurei presenti prevalgono quelli di Nerone. Nella borsa invece ci sarebbe stato il patrimonio frutto di una attività imprecisabile, soldi destinati ad essere reinvestiti: dominano, tra gli aurei, rappresentanti per il loro valore il pagamento di transizioni di affari, quelli di Vespasiano, seguiti in minor misura da quelli degli imperatori meno recenti, il più antico tra essi un aureo di Nerone. Postulavo allora<sup>13</sup> come personaggio detentore della somma, un *procurator* o addirittura il proprietario dell’impresa, forse con sede nella villa, o un proprietario ovvero *procurator* del circondario. Tali conclusioni valgono anche per la donna effettiva detentrici sia della somma che dei gioielli: ricca *domina* e imprenditrice, i cui cospicui gioielli in questo caso potrebbero essere stati parte della dote e quindi gioielli della famiglia di origine.<sup>14</sup> Riguardo a questa sconosciuta, dato lo splendore dei monili, escludo che possa essersi trattato di una liberta. Infatti, non sono del tutto d’accordo con Ria Berg<sup>15</sup> quando afferma che i gioielli non siano indicatori in qualche modo di classe sociale: perso-

<sup>10</sup> Nel breve tempo imposto agli Autori dalle esigenze editoriali di rapida uscita del Catalogo della Mostra *Storie da un'eruzione* non fu possibile confrontare i rispettivi testi, relativi a ulteriori oggetti preziosi provenienti dall’ambiente né correggere di persona le bozze, con conseguenti, banali errori di soppressione di spazi separatori, nell’originale esistenti, per cui risulta attribuita in stampa all’individuo 27 la borsa di cuoio, per i giornali di scavo non attribuibile a nessuno individuo in particolare.

<sup>11</sup> A. D’AMBROSIO – E. DE CAROLIS – P.G. GUZZO, ‘I contesti di oggetti’, in part. 75: “possiamo immaginare che solamente il capofamiglia tenesse con sé gli oggetti di valore che aveva preso per la fuga” e, più oltre, parlando di individui con *parures* complete o quasi di gioielli, sia pure con riserva: “sembrerebbe trattarsi di individui femminili. Tale osservazione... potrebbe giustificare ... l’assenza di monete... potendosi ipotizzare che il patrimonio monetale fosse portato in salvo dal capofamiglia”.

<sup>12</sup> A. D’AMBROSIO – E. DE CAROLIS – P.G. GUZZO, ‘I contesti di oggetti’, 76, ma anche A. D’AMBROSIO, ‘Gli ornamenti femminili dell’area vesuviana’, in D’AMBROSIO – MASTROBERTO – GUZZO, *Storie da un'eruzione*, 45-55, part. per l’associazione di monili, tab. 8, 54.

<sup>13</sup> V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI, ‘Lo scheletro 27’, 174: osservazione corretta, come detto, in MARRAZZO, *Presenza e circolazione* e in *L’indotto*, con attribuzione definitiva a vittima di sesso femminile.

<sup>14</sup> Cfr. V. GIUFFRÈ, *Il diritto dei privati nell’esperienza romana. I principali gangli*, Napoli 2010, ove molto chiara è l’esposizione del matrimonio e, nell’ambito di esso, della possibilità di dote costituita, anche da gioielli, 337-38; T. SPAGNUOLO VIGORITA, *Casta domus. Un seminario sulla legislazione matrimoniale Augustea*, 3. edizione, Napoli 2010, part. 70-72, per filiazione e dichiarazione di nascita, la *professio* per i legittimi, la *testatio* per gli *spurii*, specie sulla possibilità anche per le donne di ereditare patrimoni attraverso il travalicamento della *Lex Voconia*, che invece fissava i limiti della possibilità femminile di ereditare; J. PÖLÖNEN, ‘The Division of Wealth between Men and Women in Roman Succession (50 a.C. – 250 d.C.)’, 147-79, specie conclusioni 178-79, in P. SETÄLÄ *et al.* (curr.), *Women, Wealth and Power in the Roman Empire* (Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 25), Rome 2002; *ibidem*, R. BERG, ‘Wearing Wealth. *Mundus Muliebris* and *Ornatus* as Status Markers for Women in Imperial Rome’, 46-47. In pratica, i gioielli facevano parte della dote ed erano come un anticipo del patrimonio paterno di cui la donna poteva essere legataria, mai erede.

<sup>15</sup> BERG, ‘*Mundus Muliebris*’, part. 46 (qui non sono personalmente del tutto d’accordo), 57, sull’oro; 58 per la posizione dei gioielli nel patrimonio.



nalmente, non mi sembra possibile che anelli in ferro o argento possano essere stati di una *domina*, mentre certamente gioielli sontuosi erano in possesso di matrone, salvo casi eccezionali in cui potevano essere stati donati (senza entrare in diatribe ‘ancillari’),<sup>16</sup> anche a donne di rango inferiore, segno di lussuria o di un tipo di legame ‘speciale’.<sup>17</sup>

Per una futura estensione della ricerca ad altri scavi, vecchi o nuovi, credo dunque che indizio di una attività di tipo imprenditoriale possa essere, in assenza di fonti o iscrizioni, l’aver ritrovato un individuo con una cospicua somma di denaro, in valuta non pregiata,<sup>18</sup> per cui frutto dell’attività stessa e non di un accumulo come patrimonio da tesaurizzare. Al contrario, in presenza di notizie da fonti o iscrizioni relative a donne attive in qualche modo nel mondo del lavoro, non abbiamo spesso il contesto che possa confermarlo, come avviene per i casi che illustreremo appresso. Se abbiamo dunque finora menzionate due anonime donne imprenditrici del vesuviano, è nostra intenzione ora dimostrare che non si è trattato di casi isolati, ma anzi che possono essere delineati in qualche modo i profili, a volte dotati però anche di nome, di altre donne imprenditrici.

Iniziando dalle figure femminili in cui mi sono imbattuta negli anni di lavoro a Pompei, voglio riservare almeno un cenno alla giovinetta con ori della Casa di C. Giulio Polibio,<sup>19</sup> di cui mi occupai su invito del Soprintendente de Franciscis, Direttore dello scavo della casa:<sup>20</sup> certo, dato la giovane età e la relativa modestia del peculio personale di 23 denari nel borsellino e i gioielli di qualità non eccelsa di cui era adorna,<sup>21</sup> non doveva essere una imprenditrice, ma al contrario, se non ci fosse stata l’eruzione, probabilmente sarebbe stata destinata ad una vita di *mater familias*, più o meno sottoposta al marito e al suocero,<sup>22</sup> e a prendersi cura dei figli; poiché il suo corpo è stato ritrovato in un ambiente insieme con altri corpi, secondo studi recenti, tutti di membri della stessa famiglia,<sup>23</sup> forse fu proprio figlia di Polibio, di famiglia di liberti e uomo politico, come prova la numerosa propaganda elettorale rinvenuta in casa e nelle immediate vicinanze, asceso nel 73

<sup>16</sup> P.G. GUZZO – V. SCARANO USSANI, ‘La schiava di Moregine’, in *Les citées enfouies du Vesuve. Nouvelles Recherches iconographiques et archéologiques* (Actes du Séminaire de Rome, MEFRA 13), Rome 2001, n. 1, 98-99; F. COSTABILE, ‘Ancilla Domini. Una nuova dedica su armilla aurea’, in *Minima Epigraphica Papirologica* 4,6 (2001), 446-74; F. COSTABILE, ‘Contra meretricium ancillae Domini’, *Ostraka* 12, 2 (2003), 259-62.

<sup>17</sup> BERG, ‘Mundus Muliebris’, part. 72-73; A. D’AMBROSIO – E. DE CAROLIS – P.G. GUZZO, ‘I contesti’; A. D’AMBROSIO – E. DE CAROLIS – P.G. GUZZO, *I gioielli nella pittura vesuviana* (Quaderni Studi pompeiani 2), Pompei 2008, passim.

<sup>18</sup> M. TALIERCIO MENSITIERI, ‘Ritrovamenti monetali a Pompei: il caso delle *Regiones* VII – VIII – IX’, in MARRAZZO, *Presenza e circolazione*, 27-70; M. TALIERCIO MENSITIERI, ‘Introduzione’, in MARRAZZO, *Presenza e circolazione*, 5-13, e ‘Considerazioni conclusive’, 111-66, in M. TALIERCIO MENSITIERI (cur.), *Pompei, rinvenimenti monetali nella Regio IX* (Atti Convegno Napoli 2003, Ist. Studi Numismatici), Roma 2007.

<sup>19</sup> N. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI DEL FRANCO, ‘Leoreficerie della casa di Giulio Polibio’, in A. DE FRANCISCIS (cur.), *La Regione sotterrata dal Vesuvio. Studi e prospettive* (Atti Convegno Internazionale Napoli 1979), Napoli 1982, 789-808.

<sup>20</sup> Per la casa di C. Giulio Polibio: A. DE FRANCISCIS, ‘La casa di Giulio Polibio’, in *RSP* 2 (1988), 15-36, poi riprodotto in Appendice a M. OLIVA, *La casa di Giulio Polibio. Giornali di scavo 1966-1978*, Pompei 2001. Inoltre F. ZEVI, ‘La casa di Giulio Polibio’, in M. BORRIELLO – A. D’AMBROSIO – S. DE CARO – P.G. GUZZO (cur.), *Pompei. Abitare sotto il Vesuvio* (catalogo mostra), Ferrara 1996, 73-85; L. FERGOLA, ‘La casa di Giulio Polibio (IX 13, 1-3)’, 421-23 e, a seguire, schede di reperti, in D’AMBROSIO – GUZZO – MASTROROBERTO, *Storie da un’eruzione. Caio Giulio Polibio. Storie di un cittadino pompeiano*, V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI – E. DE CAROLIS – C. SALERNO (cur.), ed. fuori commercio, IDSN, 2016.

<sup>21</sup> Cfr. N. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI DEL FRANCO, ‘Leoreficerie’, passim.

<sup>22</sup> E. CANTARELLA, *I volti dell’amore*, Milano 1998, 27-28 sul matrimonio, ma anche più di recente, E. CANTARELLA, *Passato prossimo. Donne romane da Tacito a Sulpicia*, Roma 2012, 8 e part. per il matrimonio, 76-90 e nelle ‘Riflessioni finali’, 133-46 il ruolo della donna dopo l’emancipazione; GIUFFRÉ, *Il Diritto*, passim, su condizione della donna e matrimonio nelle sue varie forme a Roma.

<sup>23</sup> M. HENNEBERG – J. HENNEBERG, ‘Skeletal Material from the House of C. Iulius Polybius in Pompei 79 a.D.’, in A. CIARALLO – E. DE CAROLIS (cur.), *Studi interdisciplinari. La casa di Giulio Polibio*, Pompei 2001, 79-91.

all'edilità e nel 78 al duumvirato,<sup>24</sup> imprenditore nel settore alimentare (*panem bonum fert*, come apprendiamo da iscrizioni elettorali, quasi una garanzia di onestà non solo nel commercio ma anche, di conseguenza, in politica), settore tra quelli più remunerativi nella Pompei post 62.<sup>25</sup> Niente nella Casa di Polibio però suggerisce un cambio di rango sociale (parafrasando Lepore in A. Maiuri (cur.), *Pompeiana* 1950) nonostante le botteghe aperte sulla facciata, forse per la vendita dei prodotti di propria produzione, bensì solo una espansione dell'attività per cogliere il momento favorevole del dopo terremoto<sup>26</sup> mentre lo stato della dimora al 79 testimonia un desiderio di legittimizzazione sociale, col conservarne volutamente il nobile, più antico carattere, vedi ad es. il primo atrio, verso la strada, risalente nell'assetto originario a precedenti proprietari.

### Donne imprenditrici con nome noto

Parlando di Polibio, oggetto come detto di nutrita propaganda elettorale, non bisogna dimenticare che molte donne furono sue sostenitrici, nel senso che invitavano nelle iscrizioni murarie a votare per lui. Come si è giustamente osservato,<sup>27</sup> generalmente le matrone non compaiono (si intende come *sponsor*, non come candidate) nelle iscrizioni di propaganda elettorale: chiuse come sono o avrebbero dovuto essere nelle proprie dimore, non conoscevano o non avrebbero dovuto conoscere i possibili elettori. Tra le eccezioni di donne rispettabili sostenitrici di Polibio è una Fabia Prima,<sup>28</sup> moglie di L. Ceio Secondo, che raccomanda un C. Iulius, evidentemente Polibio, come duumviro, con una iscrizione all'ingresso della casa (I 6,15) su Via dell'Abbondanza, ma poiché Ceio Secondo si candidava anch'egli nella stessa zona, si trattava evidentemente di uno scambio di favori tra candidati. Invece diverse, più modeste figure femminili della zona lo sostengono, come una Specula, che lavora come operaia nella lavanderia di Stephanus (I 6, 7),<sup>29</sup> e un'altra dell'officina di Verecundus (IX 7, 5-7), Cuculla,<sup>30</sup> il cui nome Polibio fece dealbare forse perché aveva cattiva fama. Così come fece dealbare il 'manifesto' murario di Asellina,<sup>31</sup> che gestiva una famosa *caupona*, in cui lavoravano fanciulle di provenienza esotica e non specchiate virtù: quindi comunque una imprenditrice,

<sup>24</sup> Per il duovirato ed edilità di C. Giulio Polibio, presente su tavolette cerate dell'archivio di Cecilio Giocondo e nella propaganda elettorale fuori e dentro la casa, cfr. DE FRANCISCIS, 'La casa di Giulio Polibio', 30, con bibliografia precedente a nota 58 (Spinazzola, Della Corte ecc.); C. GIORDANO, 'Le iscrizioni graffite e dipinte nella casa di Giulio Polibio', in *RAAN* 59 (1974), 21-28; J. ANDREAU, *Les affaires de Monsieur Jucundus* (Collection de l'École française de Rome), Rome 1974, 190-200 e passim; R. ETIENNE, *La vita quotidiana a Pompei* (trad. ital.), Milano 1973, tabella p. 144 con nomi magistrati ordinati per anni: qui Polibio è presente come duoviro nel 78, edile nel 73; P. CASTRÉN, *Ordo populusque pompeianus. Polity and society in Roman Pompeii*, Rome 1975, ivi 'Index of Families', 179 e 'Appendix. B', 273. In effetti nella casa è una iscrizione per Giulio Polibio come duoviro, mentre sul collo di un'anfora vinaria della casa sono le sigle *CIP AED*, che sia stato il Nostro produttore o destinatario del vino.

<sup>25</sup> E. LEPORE, 'Orientamenti per la storia sociale di Pompei', in MAIURI, *Pompeiana*, 1950, 144-66 e part. 161-66; E. LEPORE, 'Il quadro storico', in F. ZEVİ (cur.), *Pompei 79. Raccolta di studi per il decimonono centenario dell'eruzione vesuviana*, Napoli 1979, 5-23, part. 19-20.

<sup>26</sup> A. MAIURI, *L'ultima fase edilizia di Pompei* (Istituto di Studi Romani 20), Roma 1942, passim e 216-18, da confrontare anche l'aggiornamento bibliografico e le considerazioni di F. Pesando nella ristampa anastatica a cura Associazione Internazionale Amici di Pompei, 2011; LEPORE, 'Orientamenti'; per un breve excursus sulla economia del dopoterremoto a Pompei, cfr. V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI, 'Le monete della Villa della Pisanella di Boscoreale. Dalla schedatura virtuale al mercato globale', in *RSP* 22 (2011), 37-48, part. 43-44, con accenno alla fondamentale trattazione di Rostovzev, e alle considerazioni più recenti di F. CASSOLA, 'La conquista romana. La regione fino al V sec. d.C.', 103-45, part. 124-29 e F. DE MARTINO, 'Attività economica e realtà sociale', in G. PUGLIESE CARRATELLI (cur.), *Storia della Campania. L'evo antico*, Napoli 1991, 193-233.

<sup>27</sup> M. D'AVINO, *La donna a Pompei*, Napoli 1964, cap. I, 'Le politicanti'.

<sup>28</sup> Su Fabia Prima, D'AVINO, *La donna a Pompei*, 33-40; M. DELLA CORTE, *Case ed abitanti di Pompei*, 3. edizione, Napoli 1963, 271, n. 541.

<sup>29</sup> Su Specula, operaia nella lavanderia di Stephanus, l'unica di cui si ha il nome, cfr. M. DELLA CORTE, *Case e abitanti*, 287, n. 581.

<sup>30</sup> Su Cuculla, unica operaia nota nell'officina di Verecundus, probabilmente *vestiarius*, DELLA CORTE, *Case e abitanti*, 280, n. 569.

<sup>31</sup> Su Asellina, DELLA CORTE, *Case e abitanti*, 307-8, n. 634, 635, a et c.

sia pure in piccolo. Ma propaganda elettorale fa anche più seriamente Ascula, che con il marito L. Vetutius Placidus gestiva un'accorsata *caupona* di Via Abbondanza (I 8, 8-9) da cui proviene un notevole gruzzolo, il ricavato di più giorni di fortunata attività.<sup>32</sup>

Accenno solo alla grande Eumachia,<sup>33</sup> una delle poche pompeiane di cui conosciamo il volto, oggetto del contributo in questa sede della collega Ciardiello. Non posso non ricordare che, secondo una felice espressione del D'Avino,<sup>34</sup> Eumachia era degna di stare alla pari con un grande capitano di industria. Di cospicua famiglia non latina del ceto agrario, produttrice di vino ma arricchitasi anche fabbricando anfore, dolii, mattoni, Eumachia fu patrona del sodalizio dei *fullones*, e, oltre all'edificio da lei costruito per la Concordia Augusta a nome suo, *sacerdos publica* di Venere, e del figlio L. Numistrio Fronto nel Foro, ebbe l'onore di una statua, mentre un ricco sepolcro a Porta Nocera costruì per sé e i suoi. Per quello che ci interessa, è una delle poche matrone che a Pompei sia stata una imprenditrice indipendente, oltre che mecenate illuminata, che agisce, anche a nome di un maschio, il figlio, nel Pubblico; quindi donna moderna, anche se legata alla religione tradizionale e, soprattutto per la carica, alla dea per antonomasia della colonia pompeiana: ragioni di opportunità politica, di adesione ai dettami di Augusto? Ciò ci suggerisce la considerazione che non sempre nel matrimonio la donna perdeva il legame,<sup>35</sup> a parte quello affettivo, con la famiglia di origine, e non sempre i beni dati in dote passavano nella disponibilità del *pater familias* della nuova *gens* a cui col matrimonio ci si era uniti. Sicuramente, come fa notare di recente Pölönen<sup>36</sup> che parla addirittura del 40/50% dei beni che andava al lato femminile, la donna, in una grande famiglia almeno, non era in realtà discriminata in negativo nell'ereditare i beni paterni.<sup>37</sup> I beni degli Eumachii, cioè i beni dal lato femminile, a quel che appare, sono comunque quelli alla base delle liberalità verso la città di Pompei.

Un altro accenno debbo a Giulia Felice,<sup>38</sup> della cui dimora (Reg. II, ins. 4) qualche anno fa ebbi dalla Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei in affidamento lo studio archeologico propedeutico al restauro.<sup>39</sup> Alla luce dei documenti di archivio consultati integralmente, di tutta la documentazione grafica

<sup>32</sup> Su Ascula e Vetutius Placidus, cfr. Della Corte, *Case e abitanti*, 325-26, n. 673; per il loro esercizio commerciale cfr. V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI DEL FRANCO – R. VITALE, 'L'insula VIII della Regio I. Un campione di indagine socioeconomica', in *RSP* 3 (1989), 185-221 e, in particolare per la *caupona* I, 8, 8, C. GUILAR PELEGRIN – J.L. SALVADOR – R. MAR – M.A. MORENO – A. MOSTALAC CARRILLO – M.A. SÁNCHEZ, 'Missione archeologica spagnola a Pompei. La casa-caupona I 8, 8-9 di L. Vetutius Placidus', in *RSP* 5 (1991-1992), 89-110.

<sup>33</sup> Su Eumachia vasta bibliografia tra cui: A. DE FRANCISCIS, *Il ritratto romano a Pompei*, Napoli 1951, 53-54 per la statua; D'AVINO, *La donna*, 32-34; per l'edificio, MAIURI, *Ultima fase*, 40-43; ANDREAU, *Les affaires*, 78 e 293; E. DOZIO, 'Die Priesterin Eumachia', in H. MELLER – J.-A. DICKMANN (curr.), *Pompeii, Nola, Herculaneum. Katastrophen am Vesuv* (Katalog zur Ausstellung in Halle, Landesmuseum für Vorgeschichte, 09.12.2011-08.06.2012), München 2011, 149-51; G. SPANO, 'L'edificio di Eumachia a Pompei', *RAAN* 633 (1961-62), 3-35.

<sup>34</sup> M. D'AVINO, *La donna*, 32.

<sup>35</sup> Per gli Eumachii produttori di vino cfr. A. TCHERNIA, 'Il vino. Produzione e commercio', in ZEVİ, *Pompei* 79, 1979, 87-96, part. 95: la marca degli Eumachii è presente a Ampurias, Alesia, Ostia ecc. Per la produzione di mattoni degli Eumachii, ma anche di anfore, M. STEINBY, 'La produzione laterizia', in ZEVİ, *Pompei* 79, 1979, 265-71, part. 268-69; sulla possibilità per le donne di ereditare fabbriche di mattoni, P. SETÄLÄ, 'Women and Brick Production. Some New Aspects', in P. SETÄLÄ et al. (curr.), *Women, Wealth, and Power in Imperial Rome* (Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 25), Roma 2002, 147-79.

<sup>36</sup> PÖLÖNEN, 'The Division', 147-79, part. 178-79.

<sup>37</sup> PÖLÖNEN, 'The Division', 148-49; sarebbe opportuno sapere con quale tipo di matrimonio la donna si era unita al marito e le condizioni scritte sul contratto nuziale: per questo GIUFFRÈ, *Il diritto*, per i tipi di matrimonio, 332; per la dote e i beni, 337-38.

<sup>38</sup> Per Giulia Felice, D'AVINO, *La donna*, 77-78; V. SAMPAOLO, in *PPM* 3, s.v., 186-310 con bibliografia precedente; M. MASTROROBERTO, 'I *praedia* di Giulia Felice (II 4, 3)', in D'AMBROSIO – GUZZO – MASTROROBERTO, *Storie da un'eruzione*, 386-90.

<sup>39</sup> Per il restauro poi portato a termine per la parte strutturale, in attesa di completamento, si spera rapido, dei rivestimenti, cfr. V. CASTIGLIONE MORELLI – P. RISPOLI – F. SAMPAOLO, 'I pavimenti ritrovati dei *praedia* di Giulia Felice a Pompei (II,4). Il restauro dei *praedia* all'interno dei programmi della Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei', in C. ANGELELLI (cur.), *Atti del XIV Colloquio dell'Associazione italiana per lo studio e la conservazione del mosaico* (Spoleto, 7-9 febbraio 2008), Tivoli 2009, 211-20.

e fotografica esaminata,<sup>40</sup> con l'ausilio della abbondante letteratura relativa, è possibile affermare penso senz'altro quanto segue: Giulia Felice, di famiglia libertina, forse illegittima di nascita (*Spuri filia*),<sup>41</sup> di cui non si conosce una figura maschile di riferimento, marito o tutore, divenuta in qualche modo proprietaria dei *praedia*, cioè di un possedimento che è più di un' *insula*,<sup>42</sup> comprendente non solo casa ma bagni, già impiantati almeno nel I a.C. (come provano i pavimenti di II stile presenti), un ampio *hortus*, botteghe, *pergulae*, o ammezzati, quartini al piano superiore. Trovandosi per qualche motivo a corto di liquidità, invece di vendere e trasferirsi altrove, oppure trasformare la casa in una officina, come fatto invece da molti proprietari pompeiani, specie nella centralissima, commerciale Via dell'Abbondanza in cui si erge,<sup>43</sup> Giulia Felice decide di proporre in affitto una parte dei suoi possedimenti, col lussuoso bagno già esistente ma privato e invece ingrandito ora per uso pubblico, abilmente, in un momento in cui nel dopo terremoto i bagni pubblici in pratica erano quasi del tutto inefficienti,<sup>44</sup> le botteghe con ammezzati, le *pergulae* cioè i quartini indipendenti con accesso da scale posizionate all'angolo quasi dell'edificio. Con una mentalità imprenditoriale e capacità di farsi pubblicità, fa dipingere una bella targa col "si loca" che fa affiggere sulla facciata presso l'ingresso alle Terme, con una suadente presentazione di quanto offerto e le condizioni per la locazione: da agosto ad agosto, rinnovabile ogni anno salvo disdetta. Lei si sarebbe ristretta in una parte più che decorosa e spaziosa della casa, con ingresso sul vicolo ovest: atrio, cucina, camere di soggiorno, con ampie aperture verso l'*hortus* a frutteto, un piccolo sacello isiaco, un ricco peristilio che, per l'euripo dai bordi popolati di statue di fauni ma anche una di uno dei sette Saggi, sembra volersi porre come una Villa dei Papiri in miniatura, a testimonianza della cultura della proprietaria; l'*hortus* stesso infine forse coltivato da un proprio colono, non dato in fitto come il resto. Una donna del genere era così 'moderna', nel farsi pubblicità, non tanto per gli antichi, per i quali doveva essere una prassi non rara per fare soldi, altrimenti non sarebbe ricorsa ad un sistema che potesse spaventare e distogliere possibili locatari, quanto, all'epoca dello scavo, per i nostri predecessori, tanto da attirarle le più terribili e volgari insinuazioni sulla sua moralità, tanto da indurre poi Amedeo Maiuri ad intervenire cavallerescamente in difesa di questa dama dell'antichità con una delle sue pagine più accattivanti.<sup>45</sup> Qui in Giulia Felice abbiamo dunque una donna certamente imprenditrice dei suoi stessi beni, e anche qui dobbiamo trovarci d'accordo con quanto detto da Lepore nel 1950: "Il caso di Giulia Felice sembra dimostrare che sia pure con sacrifici, lesivi peraltro più del tenore di vita che della sostanza patrimoniale stessa, il vecchio ceto residenziale non viene veramente sostituito né scompare, così che si può parlare di industrializzazione

<sup>40</sup> Lo studio completo di documenti, presso le Soprintendenze di Napoli e Caserta e di Pompei e i relativi archivi storici era finalizzato alla conoscenza approfondita della dimora, della storia degli scavi, attuati in epoche successive, e dei restauri, non sempre leggibili attualmente, dati confluiti, insieme a quelli derivati dalla schedatura autoptica delle strutture murarie, rivestimenti parietali e pavimentali e di eventuali reperti in situ o musealizzati, in una relazione consegnata al RUP arch. P. Rispoli, che ha costituito la base del progetto di restauro studiato e redatto dall'arch. F. Sampaolo.

<sup>41</sup> SPAGNUOLO VIGORITA, *Casta domus*, 74-75.

<sup>42</sup> SAMPAOLO, *PPM*, cit., e MASTROBERTO, 'I *praedia*'; inoltre cfr. i recenti, vari contributi di C. PARSLAW, sui suoi saggi di scavo ma anche sui vecchi scavi settecenteschi, tra i quali i 'Preliminary Report', in *RSP* 9 (1998), 199-207; 10 (1999), 190-96; 11 (2000), 238-49; C. PARSLAW, 'Archaeological Evidence for dating the *praedia Iuliae Felicis*', *AJA* 105 (2001), 261; S.C. NAPPO, 'L'impianto idrico a Pompei nel 79 d.C.: Nuovi dati', in N. DE HAAN – G.C.M. JANSEN (curr.), *Cura aquarum in Campania* (Proceedings on the History of Water Management and Hydraulic Engineering in the Mediterranean Region) (BaBesch suppl. 4), Leiden 1996, 37-45.

<sup>43</sup> Per la via dell'Abbondanza, da ultimo, S.A. CURUNI – N. SANTOPUOLI (curr.), *Pompei, Via dell'Abbondanza. Ricerche, restauri, nuove tecnologie*, Milano 2007.

<sup>44</sup> MAIURI, *Ultima fase*, ristampa 2002: Terme Stabiane, 70-72; Terme del Foro, 73-74; Terme Centrali, 74-77.

<sup>45</sup> A. MAIURI, 'Giulia Felice gentildonna pompeiana', in *Pompei ed Ercolano tra case ed abitanti*, 1. edizione, Napoli 1950; edizione 1983, 51-54: è questo uno soltanto dei numerosi contributi del Maiuri sui *praedia* e su Giulia Felice; per cui cfr. M. MASTROBERTO in D'AMBROSIO – GUZZO – MASTROBERTO, *Storie da un'eruzione*.

solo riferendoci ad una trasformazione delle forme economiche e al sorgere di nuove attività, non anche a una vera e propria trasformazione sociale e sostituzione di ceti".<sup>46</sup>

Di un'altra donna, *Dicidia Margaris*, che gestiva o che era proprietaria di un bagno, le csd. Terme del Sarno (VIII 2, 23), in ristrutturazione al momento dell'eruzione, sappiamo da tavolette cerate: come è noto nel 1877<sup>47</sup> durante lo scavo del complesso, presso il *praefurnium*, ai piedi di una scaletta che recava ai serbatoi d'acqua, fu rinvenuto un grosso involto di stoffa, di cui si riconoscevano le tracce, contenente un gran numero di vasi in argento costituenti un servizio da tavola per 4, del peso di ca 3 kg, tre paia di orecchini d'oro, una statuetta da larario in argento e oro e 2 trittici di tavolette cerate, in cui è traccia di una interessante transazione tra due donne, appunto *Dicidia Margaris* e *Poppea Note*. Quest'ultima, una liberta, aveva chiesto un prestito alla prima di 1450 sesterzi, somma non piccola dato l'ammontare di quelle contenute nei documenti d'archivio del banchiere Cecilio Giocondo, dando in pegno e garanzia della restituzione della somma due schiavi che, se il prestito non fosse stato restituito entro il termine fissato, più o meno secondo la prassi, di poco più di 40 giorni, sarebbero stati messi in vendita tramite un banditore e dal ricavato la creditrice avrebbe ripreso quanto prestato. Felice Costabile<sup>48</sup> fa notare che, essendo tutti i due documenti da collocare nel 61 d.C., la vicenda doveva essere comunque conclusa al 79 d.C., eppure *Decidia Margaris*, fuggendo dalla dimora, nasconde in posto sicuro l'argenteria perché troppo pesante da portare con sé, ma anche queste tavolette, 17 anni dopo la stipulazione del mutuo che esse attestano, come del resto avviene per altri archivi ritrovati, ad es. a Muregine, conservati per parecchi decenni, quando il loro valore doveva essere ormai nullo: forse perché, sempre per Costabile, non c'era un regime di prescrizione delle obbligazioni. Naturalmente per noi moderni ciò è stato positivo, perché ci ha permesso di conoscere molti dati sulla vita economica e sociale del I d.C. Nel caso in questione, abbiamo una imprenditrice, *Decidia Margaris*, che doveva aver raggiunto, con la gestione del bagno, un notevole livello di benessere, come dimostra l'argenteria anche di antiquariato che possiede, e una buona disponibilità di liquido, che le permette di prestare soldi, o ad una conoscente, e allora sarebbe un fatto isolato, episodico, o ad una cliente più o meno abituale come ad altri che non conosciamo, e allora quello del prestare su pegno avrebbe potuto essere una seconda attività. Pare però sicuro che *Decidia Margaris* non sia stata un *coactor argentarius* come Cecilio Giocondo.

L'archivio di quest'ultimo è risultato importantissimo per la ricostruzione della vita economica di Pompei. Come sappiamo<sup>49</sup> sulle tavolette ci sono attestazioni o riconoscimenti relativi a vendite occasionali, *auctiones*, legate alla gestione di capitali privati. Poiché in queste vendite il banchiere, figura molto diversa da quella omonima odierna, serviva da intermediario tra compratore e venditore, e versava al venditore la somma corrispondente all'ammontare della vendita, anticipandola insomma al compratore (di cui non è mai registrato il nome), sulle tavolette è la ricevuta, l'attestazione del pagamento fatto, sottoscritto da diversi testimoni. Le tavolette dell'archivio riguardano transazioni fatte tra 50 e 62 d.C.: dopo forse Cecilio Giocondo si ritirò perché non compaiono altri atti registrati presso il suo 'studio'. Per quanto riguarda il nostro discorso, sottolineiamo che tra coloro che firmano come testimoni non sono mai donne, mentre 14 donne appaiono come venditrici, in diversi atti, non come venditrici professionali peraltro ma occasionali, per lo

<sup>46</sup> LEPORE, 'Orientamenti', 163.

<sup>47</sup> Per *Dicidia Margaris* e *Poppea Note*, NSA (1887), 415-20, con relazione di G. DE PETRA, 'Degli oggetti di metallo prezioso e dei libelli scoperti a Pompei'; J. ANDREAU, *Les affaires*, 272-88; T. GIOVE, 'Il balneum del Complesso delle Terme del Sarno', in D'AMBROSIO – GUZZO – MASTROBERTO, *Storie da un'eruzione*, 292-97.

<sup>48</sup> F. COSTABILE, *L'auctio della fiducia nelle tabelle dell'agro Murecine*, Soveria Mannelli 1992, 22-23; M. MASTROBERTO, 'Origine e distribuzione della ricchezza a Pompei. Una interpretazione', in D'AMBROSIO – GUZZO – MASTROBERTO, *Storie da un'eruzione*, 35-36.

<sup>49</sup> ANDREAU, *Les affaires*, passim; MASTROBERTO, 'Origine e distribuzione', 35-36.

smaltimento di oggetti, mobili ecc., in occasione di divisioni ereditarie e qualche volta vendita di schiavi: non è vera e propria imprenditoria ma richiede almeno nelle donne una certa tendenza agli affari.

Sempre una tendenza agli affari e forse una dose di spregiudicatezza hanno fatto sì che a Pompei ci siano state almeno due donne a praticare l'usura: Vettia e Faustilla:<sup>50</sup> concedevano il prestito, mai grosse somme, e a breve scadenza la restituzione, con un tasso di interesse vario: almeno Faustilla, che pare fosse conosciuta per tutta Pompei, era dunque in qualche modo una imprenditrice del settore.

Sempre da alcune tavolette cerate, rinvenute questa volta ad Ercolano nella Casa del Bicentenario (V 15-16), al piano superiore del n. civico 16 considerato abitazione di un M. Helvius Heros per un anello con sigillo, si è venuti a conoscenza della vicenda umana di Giusta e del relativo 'processo di libertà'.<sup>51</sup> Le 150 tavolette vennero lette da V. Arangio Ruiz e Giovanni Pugliese Carratelli e pubblicate su *La Parola del Passato* del 1948.<sup>52</sup> Le vicende della giovane Giusta figlia di Spurio cioè probabilmente illegittima, nata dalla schiava liberata Petronia Vitale, che rivendica la sua nascita da madre ingenua (cioè già liberata al momento del concepimento) e quindi la completa libertà dalle mire di Calatoria Themis vedova di Petronio Stefano, padrone e poi *patronus* della madre, sono a tutti note, perché all'epoca della prima pubblicazione della vicenda vi si interessò tutta la intelligenza napoletana, compreso il Filosofo Benedetto Croce<sup>53</sup> e tutti parteggiavano per la 'giovane' contro la 'vecchia' e ci furono molte illazioni sulle ragioni per cui Giusta si interessava tanto a questo riconoscimento (si parlò di un pretendente di classe più elevata che non avrebbe potuto sposare se libera), e su quelle dell'ostinazione di Calatoria a negarglielo (si pensò anche che Giusta fosse figlia illegittima proprio di Stefano, da cui il rancore della vedova). In realtà, se Giusta fosse nata da madre ancora schiava e solo dopo liberata, Calatoria avrebbe avuto diritto di imporre alla stessa Giusta una serie di obblighi e prestazioni verso il *patronus*:<sup>54</sup> assistenza verso lo stesso in caso di bisogno, limitazioni ad es. nel fare testamento; tutti obblighi a cui la giovane avrebbe voluto certo sottrarsi e stesso motivo per cui Calatoria invece premeva, anche perché avrebbe potuto contare sull'eredità probabilmente cospicua della libera. Sappiamo che Giusta chiese il vadimonio presso il tribunale di Roma nel 75, due volte a distanza di mesi, con chiamata in giudizio di testimoni, di cui si sa che dieci furono favorevoli a Giusta e tre a Calatoria. Non sappiamo se si arrivò alla vera e propria sentenza, che avrebbe dovuto essere favorevole a Giusta, o ad un accordo tra le parti, ma le tavolette vennero comunque conservate, probabilmente presso il legale di una delle 2. Quello che qui preme sottolineare è la posizione socio-economica di Giusta, pur figlia di una libera, Vitale<sup>55</sup> e di padre illegittimo: innanzi tutto i testimoni<sup>56</sup> a suo favore sono di elevata posizione sociale, esponenti della borghesia agiata. Giusta appartiene quindi, sembra, allo stesso loro ambiente sociale ed economico e dunque molto superiore a quello della figlia di una semplice libera. Ciò spiega come abbia potuto affrontare gli oneri legali della chiamata in giudizio in un processo che si svolgeva a Roma, quindi con avvocati di grido. Inoltre, cosa importante, sembra che sia stata sullo stesso piano di parità con la rivale

<sup>50</sup> ANDREAU, *Les affaires*, sul piccolo prestito usurario, per Vettia, 119-21; Faustilla, 119-22.

<sup>51</sup> Le tavolette cerate furono lette per la prima volta da G. PUGLIESE CARRATELLI e V. ARANGIO RUIZ e per 'puntate successive' pubblicate sulla *Parola del Passato*: per il Processo di Giusta, *PdP* 3 (1948), 130-84; cfr. F. COSTABILE, 'Nuove luci sul processo di Giusta', in *Studi in onore di Cesare Sanfilippo*, I, Milano 1987, 185-230, con esauriente bibliografia. Per una trattazione attuale ed esauriente della vicenda, G. FRANCIOSI, 'Vita e diritto nella Società ercolanese. Le vicende di Petronia Giusta', 135-38, in *Gli antichi ercolanesi. Antropologia, società, economia*, Napoli 2000.

<sup>52</sup> Cfr. i contributi di PUGLIESE CARRATELLI – ARANGIO RUIZ, cit.

<sup>53</sup> G. FRANCIOSI, 'Vita e diritto', 36; G. CAMODECA, 'Le tavolette cerate', in M. PAGANO (cur.), *Gli antichi ercolanesi. Antropologia, società, economia*, Napoli 2000, 71-76, part. 71.

<sup>54</sup> Per gli obblighi e le prestazioni dei liberti, cfr. GIUFFRÈ, *Il diritto*, 85-86.

<sup>55</sup> Liberazione forse ottenuta per *manomissio vindicta* pre 56 d.C., cfr. F. COSTABILE, 'Nuove luci', 89; GIUFFRÈ, *Il Diritto*, 2010, 86.

<sup>56</sup> Per una disanima dei testimoni al processo cfr. F. COSTABILE, 'Nuove luci', 193 e 202-9.

Calatoria. Fu dunque anche Giusta una imprenditrice che seppe sfruttare i beni comunque a lei arrivati da parte materna e/o, in qualche modo, anche paterna per migliorare la sua posizione sociale? Non lo sapremo mai.

In conclusione dell'intervento, vorrei ricordare Poppea Sabina Minore, Poppea Augusta (**fig. 2**), anche in memoria del mio Maestro, Alfonso de Franciscis, che scavò la sua dimora campana e volle identificare le sue fattezze in un busto sempre trovato nella Villa A di Oplontis.<sup>57</sup> I Poppei, produttori di vino ma anche produttori di mattoni, a Pompei avevano alcune sontuose dimore, quale quella del Menandro.<sup>58</sup> Poppea Sabina apparteneva al ramo romano ma in una delle tavolette di Ercolano<sup>59</sup> si dice: *in figlinis Poppeae Augustae*; si sa inoltre che Poppea inviò doni preziosi al tempio di Venere a Pompei,<sup>60</sup> e forse ad Oplontis veramente soggiornò, ed è anche sembrato possibile che i lavori nella villa poterono essere interrotti dalla sua tragica morte.<sup>61</sup> Mi piace pensare, e concludo, che se Poppea non fosse stata dotata (o afflitta?) da quella leggendaria bellezza di cui parlano le fonti<sup>62</sup> forse avrebbe sposato un modesto, ricco proprietario terriero della zona, ne avrebbe avuto figli, e forse sarebbe divenuta una imprenditrice, sfruttando al meglio i beni della propria famiglia di origine, e avrebbe vissuto a lungo, invece che essere vittima di un femminicidio,<sup>63</sup> sia pure per mano (o per piede) del divino Nerone.

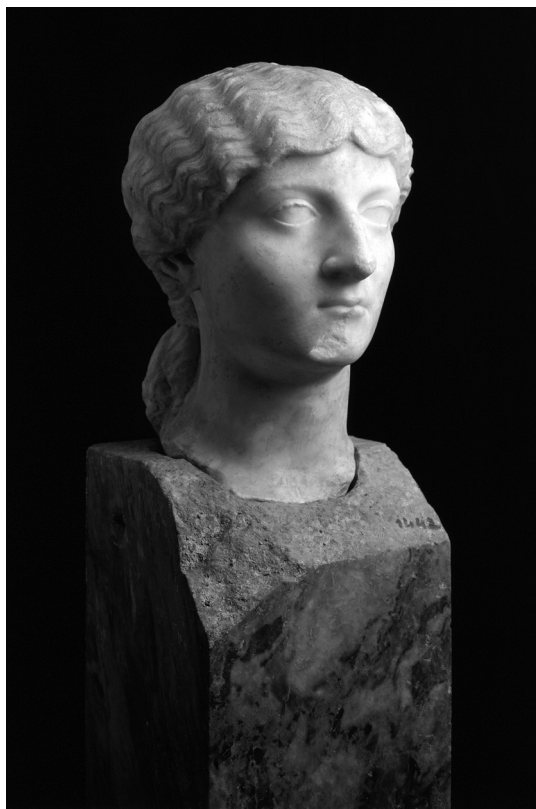


Fig. 2: Busto csd. di Poppea dalla Villa A di Oplontis.

<sup>57</sup> A. DE FRANCISCIS, 'La villa romana di Oplontis' in B. ANDREAE (cur.), *Neue Forschungen in Pompeji und den anderen von Vesuviusbruch 79 n. chr. Verschlütteten Städten* (Internationales Kolloquium Essen 1973), Recklinghausen 1975, 9-17; A. DE FRANCISCIS, s.v. 'Oplontis', in *The Princeton Encyclopedie of Classical Sites*, 1976; A. DE FRANCISCIS, 'Oplontis', in *La regione sotterrata dal Vesuvio. Studi e prospettive*, Napoli 1982, 907-25; 'La dama di Oplontis', in *Eikones. Studien zur griechischen und Römischen Bildnis*, Bonn 1980, 115-17.

<sup>58</sup> A. MAIURI, *La casa del Menandro e il suo tesoro di argenterie*, Roma 1932; G. STEFANI (cur.), *Menander. La casa del Menandro di Pompei* (catalogo Mostra Boscoreale 2003), Milano 2003.

<sup>59</sup> *PdP* 9 (1954): *Testi e documenti. Tabulae herculanenses*, IV 55-56; LXI tab. I e II p. 1: *in pompeiano in figlinis Arrianis Poppeae Augustae VIII Idus Maias*.

<sup>60</sup> S. DE CARO, 'Le ville residenziali', in BORRIELLO - D'AMBROSIO - DE CARO - GUZZO, *Abitare sotto il Vesuvio*, 21-27 e part. 24-25: qui considerazioni sulla Villa A di Oplontis e i Poppaei pompeiani, con paralleli su particolari struttivi della villa oplontina e della Domus Aurea, opera forse degli stessi architetti ispiratisi alle ville campane, poiché De Caro assegna Villa A alla famiglia dell'imperatrice Poppea, che sarebbe stata in Campania, e a Pompei, come attestano graffiti nella casa di Giulio Polibio allusivi a doni votivi a Venere, di Poppea stessa e di Nerone. Viene anche supposto che il tesoro del Menandro, troppo ricco per la dimora in città dei Poppaei, potesse essere in origine custodito nella Villa A, e poi trasportato per sicurezza in città quando nella proprietà oplontina cominciarono lavori di riassetto. Cfr. S. DE CARO, 'La lucerna d'oro di Pompei. Un dono di Nerone a Venere pompeiana', in *I culti della Campania antica* (Atti del Convegno Internazionale di studi in ricordo di Nazarena Valenza Mele, Napoli 15-17 maggio 1995), Roma 1998, 234-44.

<sup>61</sup> DE FRANCISCIS, 'Oplontis', 923-24.

<sup>62</sup> *Tac. ann.* 13.45-46, ed. Rusconi 1978, 522-24.

<sup>63</sup> Per il racconto dell'assassinio di Poppea, *Tac. ann.* 16, par. 6, ed. RUSCONI 1978, 663.

## Donne imprenditrici a Pompei. Eumachia e Giulia Felice

ROSARIA CIARDIELLO

Non è compito facile illustrare il rapporto tra donne e lavoro nel mondo romano. Le difficoltà principali sono da attribuire ad una parte della letteratura antica che tende a dividere le figure femminili in due grandi categorie: le donne ideali, esempi di virtù e le donne di potere, modelli negativi.

Così troveremo elencate da una parte le donne devote e caste come Cornelia, la madre dei Gracchi, oppure Porzia, la moglie di Bruto e dall'altra quelle assetate di potere, disposte a tutto per ottenere i propri fini anche procurando gravissimo danno alla *res publica*, come Messalina, Agrippina, Poppea. È quindi estremamente complesso ricavare un quadro della situazione reale basandosi esclusivamente sulle fonti letterarie. A tal fine appaiono fondamentali i rinvenimenti archeologici vesuviani che, grazie all'eruzione del 79 d.C., restituiscono vivide testimonianze dalla vita quotidiana e consentono di conoscere una parte del mondo femminile che le fonti avevano celato. Grazie alla documentazione archeologica campana unita alle nozioni di diritto romano possiamo oggi ricostruire, almeno in parte, il volto di due imprenditrici romane: Eumachia e Giulia Felice.

Le due donne sono un esempio di indipendenza come dimostrano le iscrizioni a loro relative nelle quali non si trova nessuna figura autoritaria maschile nell'esercizio della attività e nella gestione del patrimonio e nel caso di Eumachia non solo a Pompei ma anche in luoghi lontani come l'Africa.

Nel corso della sua storia la società romana mantenne sempre ben saldo un principio fondamentale, oltre il quale l'emancipazione femminile non si poteva spingere perché le donne erano incapaci non solo di partecipare al governo dello Stato, ma anche di svolgere qualunque compito 'virile'. Il solo pensiero che esse potessero invadere i territori maschili autorizzava a formulare funesti presagi e quindi il pericolo fu evitato con una serie di divieti.

Col tempo non fu però possibile impedire che alcune attività prettamente maschili venissero di fatto svolte da donne, che erano comunque guardate con estremo sospetto. In età repubblicana, ad esempio, le fonti ricordano figure femminili che avevano sostenuto in giudizio le proprie ragioni come Ortensia, Mesia Seminate, Afrania.<sup>1</sup>

Uno degli aspetti fondamentali dell'essere donna nella società romana era la mancanza della capacità giuridica, elemento essenziale per definire le persone soggetti di diritti e di obblighi che si acquisisce al momento della nascita e si perde solo con la morte. Il diritto privato romano prevedeva che una persona *sui iuris* (ovvero appartenente alla specie umana, libero e cittadino romano) doveva godere dell'"autonomia familiare' che consentiva di non essere soggetti alla *patria potestas*, alla *manus maritalis*, al *mancipium* altrui. In realtà solo i maschi potevano avere sotto la propria *potestas* altre persone libere e le donne nel sistema giuridico romano arcaico erano considerate addirittura *alieni iuris*, cioè soggette al potere di qualcuno.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> F. CENERINI, *La donna romana. Modelli e realtà*, Bologna 2009; E. CANTARELLA, *Passato prossimo. Donne romane da Tacita a Sulpicia*, Milano 2012, 92-97.

<sup>2</sup> J. DONALDSON, *Woman. Her Position and Influence in Ancient Greece and Rome, and among the Early Christians*, New York 1907; M.R. LEFKOWITZ – M.B. FANT, *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*, London 1982; J.F. GARDNER, *Women in Roman Law &*



Gaio, giurista del II secolo d.C., nelle *Institutiones* afferma che lo stato di inferiorità della donna deve essere attribuito alla volubilità e alla superficialità del suo animo, in contrasto con la fermezza di quello maschile, con la serietà che l'uomo mostra in ogni attività della sua vita, ma anche all'ignoranza della legge da parte delle donne, alla debolezza della loro mente e alla inadeguatezza tipica del sesso. Ma già nel tempo in cui Gaio scriveva, ossia nel II secolo d.C., la pretesa *levitas animi* del sesso femminile era solo un luogo comune smentito sia dall'esperienza della vita quotidiana che dalla disciplina normativa vigente in quell'epoca.<sup>3</sup>

A proposito dell'eredità, il diritto romano riconosceva alle figlie femmine gli stessi diritti dei maschi, anche se nella pratica le donne non potevano disporre liberamente dei propri beni, essendo sottoposte alla tutela per tutta la vita.

Le donne, anche se sempre prive di potestà familiari, erano ritenute titolari esclusive del loro patrimonio<sup>4</sup> e potevano scegliere un tutore di loro gradimento, che faceva esattamente ciò che la *domina* chiedeva. Secondo Gaio<sup>5</sup> il diritto della donna di poter cambiare tutore a suo piacimento, dal 186 a.C. divenne addirittura illimitato.

Che gli uomini fossero infastiditi e preoccupati dalla ricchezza femminile e che la *lex Voconia*<sup>6</sup> (169 a.C.) sia stata approvata per evitare che le donne ricche e potenti aumentassero ulteriormente, è evidente tanto che anche Cicerone nella Repubblica<sup>7</sup> la definì una legge ingiusta nei confronti delle *dominae*. Molte erano le donne che disponevano in questo periodo di ingenti patrimoni come testimonia un episodio del 42 a.C. quando i triumviri decisero di imporre a millequattrocento donne, tra le più ricche della città, di partecipare alle spese militari.<sup>8</sup>

I timori degli uomini romani avevano un fondamento. In condizioni sociali ed economiche diverse da quelle dei primi secoli, la capacità patrimoniale riconosciuta alle donne (unita alle libertà d'azione che erano state via via loro concesse, anche giuridicamente) aveva messo in pericolo le regole tradizionali del rapporto fra i sessi e l'istituzione fondante della società, il matrimonio. Il riconoscimento dei loro diritti ereditari aveva messo inoltre le donne in una condizione di privilegio.

Fu riconosciuto alle mogli il diritto di ereditare dal proprio marito soltanto nella tarda Repubblica, dopo che le continue guerre avevano decimato la popolazione maschile e quindi a ricevere l'eredità erano in buona parte donne e orfani. Fu da questo momento, tra il I secolo a.C. e il I secolo d.C., che nelle loro mani si concentrò una notevole ricchezza e la loro condizione cambiò radicalmente; non furono più solo padrone e custodi del focolare ma divennero, con l'avvento dell'impero, autonome, indipendenti e in molti casi influenti a tal punto da poter 'manovrare' la storia.<sup>9</sup>

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*Society*, London 1986; E. FANTHAM – H. FOLEY – N. KAMPEN – S. POMEROY – H. SHAPIRO, *Women in the Classical World. Image and Text*, New York 1994; P. SETÄLÄ, 'Female Property and Power in Imperial Rome', in L. LARSSON LOVÉN – A. STRÖMBERG (curr.), *Aspects of Women in Antiquity* (Proceedings of the First Nordic Symposium on Women's Lives in Antiquity, Göteborg 12–15 June 1997), Jonsared 1998, 96-110; A. ROTTLOFF, *Lebensbilder römischer Frauen*, Mainz 2006; E. D'AMBRA, *Roman Women*, New York 2007; CENERINI, *La donna romana*, passim; CANTARELLA, *Passato prossimo*, passim; P. GIUNTI, *Il ruolo sociale della donna romana di età imperiale: tra discriminazione e riconoscimento*, Napoli 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Gai *inst.* 1.190; A. GUARINO, *Diritto privato romano*, Napoli 1992; GARDNER, *Women in Roman law*, passim; CENERINI, *La donna romana*, passim.

<sup>4</sup> Ulp. *dig.* 16.49; GUARINO, *Diritto privato*, 287-88; CANTARELLA, *Passato prossimo*, 89-90.

<sup>5</sup> Gai *inst.* 1.114-115; GUARINO, *Diritto privato*, 622.

<sup>6</sup> M. BALESTRI FUMAGALLI, *Riflessioni sulla lex Voconia*, Milano 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Cic. *rep.* 3.17; CANTARELLA, *Passato prossimo*, 90-91.

<sup>8</sup> App. *bell. civ.* 4.32-34; Val. Max. 8.3.3; E. CANTARELLA, 'Qualche considerazione sul lavoro femminile a Pompei', *Saitabi* 49 (1999), 259-72, part. 263. Vedi anche articolo di Matzilas in questo volume.

<sup>9</sup> M. TALAMANCA, *Istituzioni di diritto romano*, Busto Arsizio 1990; GUARINO, *Diritto privato*, 301.

Il matrimonio era di fondamentale importanza, perché da esso derivava la struttura base della società, ossia la famiglia, comportava la sottomissione della moglie al marito e dunque la sottomissione dei figli nati nel matrimonio. Il marito era giudice della moglie, aveva su di lei il diritto di vita o di morte e la moglie adultera poteva essere assassinata.<sup>10</sup>

Anche quando nelle epoche successive ci sarà il riconoscimento delle donne come soggetti con diritto, l'innata infermità mentale femminile non consentirà di avere un'autorità sui discendenti, di adottare, fare da tutore e curatore, testimoniare, di contrarre obbligazioni a favore di terzi.

Col tempo, però, l'istituzione del matrimonio venne sempre più concepita e praticata come una libera unione, soggetta agli umori e ai capricci dei coniugi.

Nel regime patrimoniale inerente il matrimonio, i beni presenti e futuri della *mulier non in manu* erano considerati in regime di separazione di beni, anche la dote che la donna portava all'atto del matrimonio, poteva rientrare nella sua disponibilità attraverso una serie di azioni giuridiche se il matrimonio veniva sciolto. A prescindere dalla dote, la donna quindi poteva avere un suo personale patrimonio, sottratto alla disponibilità del marito e successivamente ottenne la possibilità di agire in giudizio contro il marito per riuscire ad avere la restituzione dei suoi beni in caso di furto, appropriazione, o custodia sleale. La capacità di essere titolare di un patrimonio e di disporre liberamente, resero la donna indipendente e le assicurarono la possibilità di essere imprenditrice, di spingere la carriera politica e militare di un figlio, di tessere trame politiche, pur essendo costretta a restarne fuori, perché per il diritto pubblico romano, essa sarà sempre incapace di agire.

La donna assunse quindi un ruolo sempre più vicino a quello di un soggetto *sui iuris*, disponendo della facoltà ereditare, del *patrimonium* economico, portando avanti un'attività economica, essendo titolare di diritti e doveri.<sup>11</sup> Tale *status* giuridico, tuttavia, non sarà mai ufficializzato; si tratterà per lo più di espedienti tecnici della giurisprudenza e soprattutto della prassi. I grandi cambiamenti e l'emancipazione delle donne soprattutto relativa all'amministrazione dei beni, alla capacità di ereditare e di gestire patrimoni fu dovuta alla necessità di non far disperdere le proprietà e assicurare che i beni familiari restassero in famiglia. La popolazione femminile acquistò così sempre maggiori diritti e maggior autonomia e spesso, se appartenevano alle classi più alte, le donne riuscivano a concentrare nelle loro mani anche notevoli ricchezze.

Anche a Pompei, divenuta colonia romana dopo la conquista sillana, le donne erano sostanzialmente libere e socialmente emancipate.<sup>12</sup> La maggior parte di esse continuava a comportarsi da buona compagna, nella buona e nella cattiva sorte, rispetto al proprio uomo, ma si notava quella nuova abitudine a vivere non più come moglie ma come coinquilina del marito.

La ricca documentazione proveniente dalla Campania ci consente di ricavare un quadro piuttosto ampio sulla vita quotidiana delle donne. Se da una parte le iscrizioni non attestano la partecipazione femminile nelle magistrature, molte di loro erano insignite del rango sacerdotale. Nel campo degli affari invece le donne sono ben documentate;<sup>13</sup> alcune gestivano personalmente i patrimoni familiari, altre lavoravano alle dipendenze altrui e molte si impegnavano nella propaganda elettorale. Molte erano operaie, tessitrici, contadine, cameriere,

<sup>10</sup> A. ROMANO, *Matrimonium iustum. Valori economici e valori culturali nella storia giuridica del matrimonio*, Napoli 1996; CANTARELLA, *Passato prossimo*, 58-63.

<sup>11</sup> SETÄLÄ, 'Female property', 96-110; J. EVANS GRUBBS, *Women and the Law in the Roman Empire. A Sourcebook on Marriage, Divorce and Widowhood*, London 2002; GIUNTI, *Il ruolo sociale*, passim.

<sup>12</sup> M. D'AVINO, *La donna a Pompei*, Napoli 1964; J.F. GARDNER, 'Women in Business Life. Some Evidence from Puteoli', in P. SETÄLÄ - L. SAVUNEN (curr.), *Female Networks and the Public Sphere in Roman Society* (Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 22), Roma 1999, 11-27; EVANS GRUBBS, *Women and the Law*.

<sup>13</sup> L. SAVUNEN, 'Women and Elections in Pompeii', in R. HAWLEY - B. LEVICK (curr.), *Women in Antiquity. New Assessments*, London 1995, 194-206; L. SAVUNEN, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii*, Helsinki 1997; P. BERDOWSKI, 'Some Remarks on the Economic Activity of Women in the Roman Empire. A Research Problem', in P. BERDOWSKI - B. BLAHACZEK (curr.), *Haec mihi*

ma anche meretrici come dimostra il caso di Pompei dove esse avevano acquistato una certa autonomia economica e sociale.<sup>14</sup>

### Eumachia

Esempio emblematico delle conquiste raggiunte dalle donne grazie alle nuove leggi emanate da Augusto sulla gestione del patrimonio e dell'eredità che consentirono loro di amministrare il denaro liberamente e di condurre un'attività economica è Eumachia, una delle figure femminili più celebri di Pompei.

Esponente della famiglia degli *Eumachii*, fu uno dei personaggi più in vista della città di Pompei in età giulio-claudia, sacerdotessa pubblica di Venere, eresse a sue spese nel Foro della città, l'edificio che oggi porta il suo nome (fig. 1).

La famiglia, di origine greca, si stabilì a Pompei, provenendo da Napoli e controllava l'industria anforaria e delle figline. Anfore vinarie rinvenute in Gallia meridionale e in Africa settentrionale, risalenti alla metà del I secolo a.C., e numerose tegole trovate a Pompei, portano, infatti, il bollo degli *Eumachii*.<sup>15</sup> Eumachia sposò Marco Numistrio Frontone, membro della facoltosa famiglia irpina dei Numistri che possedeva terreni da pascolo in Lucania.<sup>16</sup> Essi si distinsero perciò anche nel commercio della lana e del cuoio. Ebbero un figlio, M. Numistrio Frontone, ricordato dalla madre nella dedica dell'edificio del Foro, forse *aedilis* nel 2 a.C. e duoviro a Pompei tra il 2 e il 3 d.C.<sup>17</sup>

Infaticabile e operosa, quanto un capitano di industria, Eumachia fu riconosciuta come patrona della ricca corporazione dei *fullones*, la più numerosa e potente di Pompei,<sup>18</sup> e ottenne l'onore di una statua.<sup>19</sup>

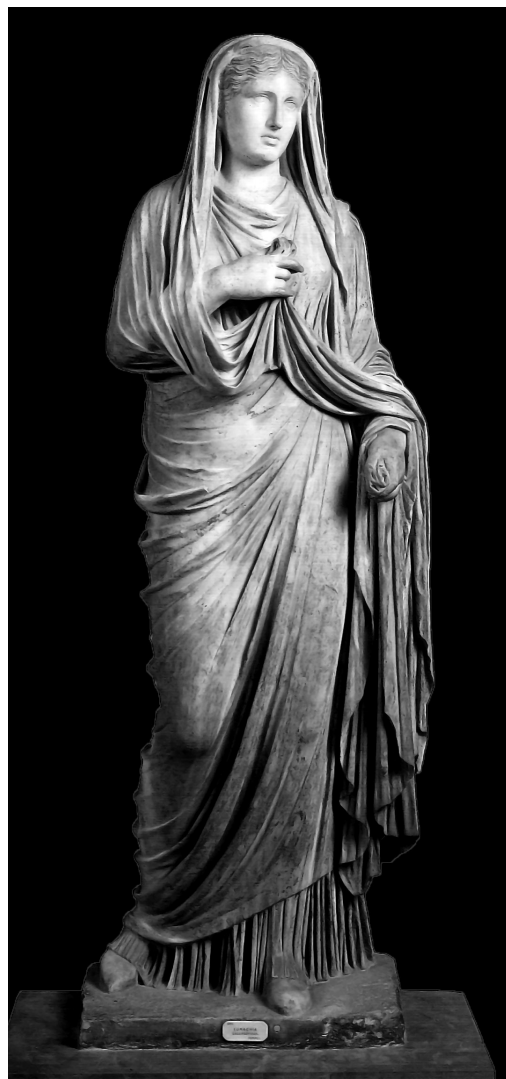


Fig. 1: Statua della sacerdotessa Eumachia (MANN, inv. 6232).

in animis vestris templa. *Studia Classica in Memory of Professor Lesław Morawiecki*, Rzeszów 2007, 283-98; CENERINI, *La donna romana*, 165-83.

<sup>14</sup> D'AVINO, *La donna*, passim; CENERINI, *La donna romana*, 165-83; si veda nota 13.

<sup>15</sup> P. CASTRÉN, *Ordo populusque pompeianus. Polity and Society in Roman Pompeii*, Roma 1975, 165-66, n. 160.

<sup>16</sup> CASTRÉN, *Ordo populusque*, 197-98, n. 280; E. LA ROCCA – M. DE VOS – A. DE VOS, *Pompei. Guide archeologiche*, Milano 2002, 120; J.E. SALISBURY, s.v. 'Imperial Women', in *Encyclopedia of Women in the Ancient World*, Santa Barbara 2001, 307; E. DOZIO, 'Die Priesterin Eumachia', in H. MELLER – J.A. DICKMANN (eds.), *Pompeii, Nola, Herculaneum. Katastrophen am Vesuv* (Katalog zur Ausstellung, Halle, 09.12.2011-08.06.2012), München 2011, 149-51.

<sup>17</sup> G. SPANO, 'L'edificio di Eumachia in Pompei', *RAAN* 36 (1961), 5-35; W.O. MOELLER, 'The Date of Dedication of the Building of Eumachia', *Cronache pompeiane* I (1975), 232-26; P. ZANKER, *Augusto e il potere delle immagini*, Torino 1989, 338-40. Di diverso avviso è CASTRÉN, *Ordo populusque*, 197, che sostiene che ad essere eletto duoviro fu il padre e non il figlio.

<sup>18</sup> W.O. MOELLER, *The Wool Trade of Ancient Pompeii*, Leiden 1975; P. BORGARD – M.P. PUYBARET, 'Le travail de la laine au début de l'empire. L'apport du modèle pompéien. Quels artisans? Quels équipements? Quelles techniques?', in C. ALFARO – J.P. WILD – B. COSTA (cur.), *Purpurae Vestes. I Symposium Internacional sobre Textiles y Tintes del Mediterraneo en época romana*, Valencia 2004, 47-59; M. FLOHR, 'The Social World of Roman Fullonicae', in M. DRIESSEN – S. HEEREN (cur.), *TRAC 2008. Proceedings of the Eighteenth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference*, Oxford 2009, 173-86.

<sup>19</sup> MANN inv. 6232; M. GRIMALDI, 'Ritrovata la statua di Concordia dall'edificio di Eumachia a Pompei', *Eutopia*, serie III, 1-2 (2003), 33-63.

Ella ebbe il sepolcro più sontuoso della Necropoli di Porta Nocera e fece erigere nel foro, fulcro della vita politica ed economica, un edificio elegantissimo, di certo il più imponente del periodo augusteo a Pompei, la cui costruzione è ricordata da due iscrizioni, una posta sulla facciata dell'ingresso che dà sul Foro e l'altra sulla porta che si apre sul lato sud dell'edificio, in Via dell'Abbondanza:<sup>20</sup> “Eumachia, figlia di Lucio, sacerdotessa pubblica, a nome suo e a nome del figlio Marco Numistrio Frontone, col suo denaro costruì e dedicò alla Concordia e alla Pietà Augusta il calcidico, la cripta e i portici” (fig. 2).

Grazie a tutto ciò ella primeggiò su tutte le donne di un certo rilievo sociale che la città aveva conosciuto tanto da spingere il Maiuri<sup>21</sup> a definirla come “donna di gran classe, che reggerebbe il confronto con i migliori dirigenti delle attuali società operaie”.

L'industria laniera era una delle attività più importanti di Pompei e ai *fullones*, che avevano tra l'altro l'esclusivo compito di mantenere bianche le vesti dei sacerdoti, erano affidate le fasi fondamentali del ciclo di produzione. Ben tredici officine a Pompei lavoravano la lana grezza, in sette si provvedeva alla filatura e tessitura, in nove alla tintura, in diciotto esclusivamente al lavaggio.<sup>22</sup>

L'importanza della corporazione dei *fullones* è attestata dalla loro costante presenza negli affari politici della città tanto che il sostegno ai loro candidati o alle loro stesse candidature è testimoniato dalle iscrizioni sui muri delle vie di Pompei.<sup>23</sup>

Per quanto riguarda l'edificio eretto da Eumachia nel foro si è a lungo sostenuta l'ipotesi che si trattasse della sede della corporazione dei *fullones*, ma, grazie a recenti analisi, oggi tale supposizione non è più

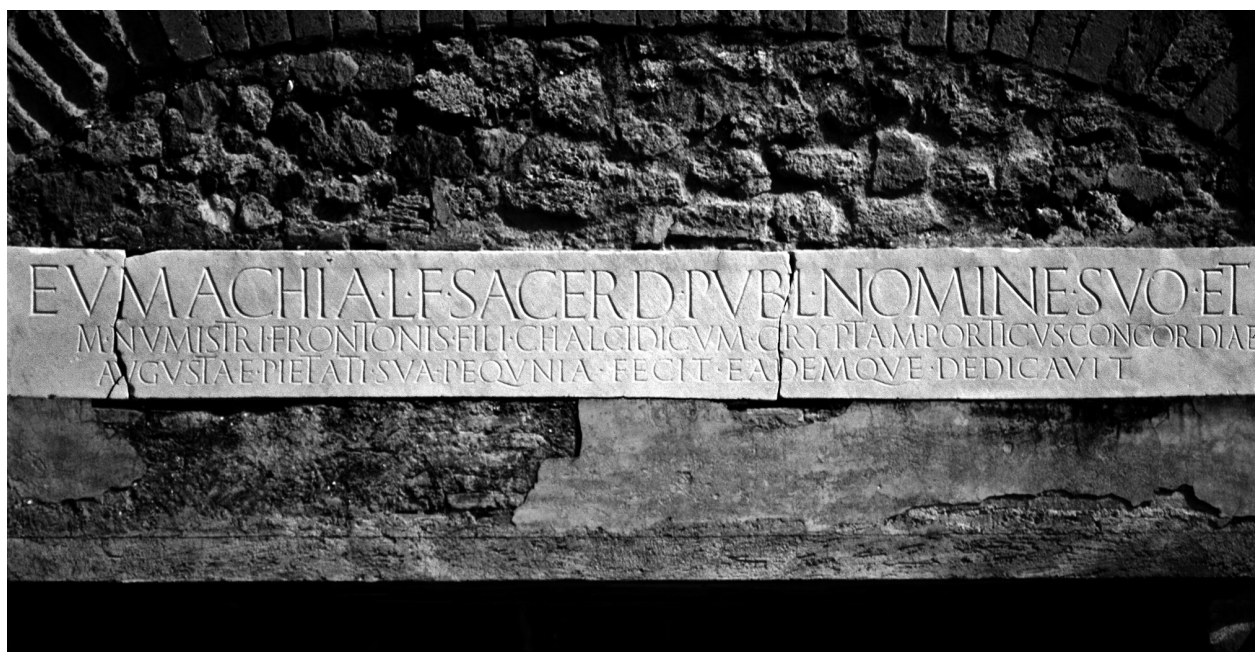


Fig. 2: Iscrizione celebrativa posta sull'ingresso secondario dell'edificio di Eumachia, in Via dell'Abbondanza (CIL X 811).

<sup>20</sup> CIL X 810 e 811.

<sup>21</sup> A. MAIURI, 'Il sepolcro di Eumachia' in C. BELLÌ (cur.), *Amedeo Maiuri. Mestiere di archeologo*, Milano 1987, 207-13 (= *Pompei ed Ercolano fra case e abitanti*, Milano 1959).

<sup>22</sup> Le fasi della lavorazione della lana erano svolte quindi in differenti strutture alcune delle quali potevano anche accorpate in sé due o più fasi della lavorazione, ma in generale la tessitura era sempre svolta in impianti dedicati esclusivamente a questa fase, che veniva per lo più compiuta dalle donne. Da ultimo: M. FLOHR, 'The Textile Economy of Pompeii', *JRA* 26 (2013), 53-78.

<sup>23</sup> R.A. STACCIOLI, *Manifesti elettorali nell'antica Pompei*, Milano 1992; A. VARONE – G. STEFANI, *Titulorum pictorum Pompeianorum qui in CIL vol. IV collecti sunt. Imagines*, Studi della Soprintendenza archeologica di Pompei 29, Roma 2009; A. VARONE, *Titulorum graphio exaratorum qui in C.I.L. vol. IV. collecti sunt: Imagines*, Studi della Soprintendenza archeologica di Pompei 31, Roma 2012.

unanimente sostenuta. Ancora oggetto di discussione, l'edificio poteva avere molteplici funzioni: sede di scambi all'ingrosso della lana, borsa valori in cui si contrattava all'asta, mercato degli schiavi.<sup>24</sup> Si può sostenere anche l'idea che esso facesse parte di un complesso di edifici dedicati al culto imperiale, simile nella forma all'*Augusteum* di Ercolano, e che si rifaceva alla *Porticus* di Livia a Roma, costruita nel 7 a.C. nel luogo in cui sorgeva il palazzo di Vedio Pollione.<sup>25</sup>

La data della costruzione dell'edificio si aggira tra il 2 d.C. e il 3 d.C.; dopo il terremoto del 62 d.C. era stato ristrutturato e probabilmente i lavori al momento dell'eruzione non erano ancora terminati.<sup>26</sup> La grande costruzione nel foro pompeiano era stata eretta da Eumachia con finalità di propaganda elettorale per il figlio e di adesione ai modelli augustei. Nella decorazione dell'edificio infatti venivano riecheggiate tematiche care all'ideologia augustea come testimoniano ad esempio gli *elogia* di Romolo ed Enea, i mitici fondatori di Roma collocati nel calcidico. Anche l'enorme numero di basi per statue ritrovate sembra imitare la 'galleria di *summi viri*' realizzata nel Foro di Augusto a Roma.

All'interno l'edificio era delimitato da un portico a tre braccia e al centro del lato breve, in asse con l'ingresso, era posta una statua della Concordia Augusta che nelle fattezze del volto e della capigliatura rappresentava Livia.<sup>27</sup>

Eumachia volle quindi riproporre nelle forme del suo edificio la moda e l'ideologia di Augusto e, come Livia, aveva costruito un magnifico edificio per il figlio. La facoltosa pompeiana si era inoltre fatta dedicare dai *fullones* una statua<sup>28</sup> che la raffigurava pia e con il capo coperto secondo i canoni augustei e l'aveva fatta collocare nella cripta, apparentemente un luogo appartato e nascosto, ma in asse simbolico con la statua della Concordia Augusta.

A Pompei Eumachia si esibiva quindi come emula di Livia, presentando suo figlio Numistrio Frontone, come Livia fece con Tiberio. La sacerdotessa di Venere, la donna imprenditrice, ormai vedova e orfana, aveva verosimilmente lo scopo di proporsi sulla scena pubblica, anche se alle spalle del figlio, del quale inizialmente sfruttò la possibilità di far carriera politica e di avere cariche pubbliche a lei negate in quanto donna.

Lontano quindi dal semplice gesto di evergetismo, l'edificio fu costruito per una serie di motivazioni, la principale delle quali va riconosciuta come una dedica alla Concordia e alla Pietà Augusta, ossia a Livia stessa, la quale aveva sostenuto la carriera del proprio figlio. Il programma 'politico' di Eumachia era progetto a lunga scadenza; ella non gestì solo la corporazione dei *fullones* ma sostenne la carriera del figlio, si occupò dell'amministrazione del patrimonio familiare, rese perenne il ricordo del suo nome, di quello del figlio ed in via indiretta del marito con l'iscrizione del calcidico di uno degli edifici più imponenti ed importanti del Foro di Pompei.

<sup>24</sup> F. COARELLI, 'Pompei. Il foro, le elezioni, le circoscrizioni elettorali', in *AION (Archeol)* n.s. 7 (2000), 87-111; E. FENTRESS, 'On the Block. *Catastae, chalcidica* and *cryptae* in Early Imperial Italy', *JRA* 18 (2005), 220-34; F. PESANDO – M.P. GUIDOBALDI, *Pompei, Oplontis, Ercolano, Stabiae*, Roma – Bari 2006, 49-51, part. 50.

<sup>25</sup> Ov. *fast.* 6.643-648; R. SYME, 'Who Was Vedius Pollio?', *JRS* 51 (1961), 23-30; J. BODEL, 'Monumental Villas and Villa Monuments', *JRA* 10 (1997), 5-35, part. 7.

<sup>26</sup> MOELLER, 'Building of Eumachia'; J.J. DOBBINS, 'Problems of Chronology, Decoration and Urban Design in the Forum at Pompeii', *AJA* 97 4 (1994), 629-94; K. WALLAT, 'Der Marmorfries am Eingangsportal des Gebäudes der Eumachia (VII 9, 1) in Pompeji und sein ursprünglicher Anbringungsort', *AA* 2 (1995), 345-73; K. WALLAT, *Die Ostseite des Forums von Pompeji*, Mainz am Rhein 1999; FENTRESS, 'On the Block', 220-35; V. KOCKEL, 'Altes und Neues vom Forum und vom Gebäude der Eumachia in Pompeji', in *Lebenswelten. Bilder und Räume in der römischen Stadt der Kaiserzeit* (Symposium am 24. und 25. Januar 2002 zum Abschluss des von der Gerda Henkel Stiftung geförderten Forschungsprogramms "Stadtkultur in der römischen Kaiserzeit"), Wiesbaden 2005, 51-72.

<sup>27</sup> MANN, inv. 6362; GRIMALDI, 'Ritrovata', 33-63; W. VAN DER LEEST, *Eumachia. Livia van Pompeii*, Deventer 2006.

<sup>28</sup> MANN, inv. 6232; *CIL* X 813; ZANKER, *Augusto*, 338-40; GRIMALDI, 'Ritrovata', 33-63; VAN DER LEEST, *Eumachia*.

## Giulia Felice

Tra le altre donne imprenditrici pompeiane va annoverata anche Giulia Felice che era forse discendente da liberti imperiali. Ella era proprietaria dell'intera *insula* (II 1) a nord della Palestra, scavata nel 1754-57, rimessa in luce tra il 1933-34, liberata del tutto nel 1951-52 e a lei attribuita sulla base dell'avviso di affitto posto sulla parete esterna dell'edificio in prossimità dell'ingresso alle terme (n. 6 su via dell'Abbondanza) che recita: "Nella proprietà di Giulia Felice, figlia di Spurio, si fittano un bagno degno di Venere e signorile, botteghe con annessi ammezzati, cenacoli al piano superiore, dal prossimo 1 agosto fino a quando ricorrerà la stessa data per la sesta volta e cioè per cinque anni consecutivi. Se non sorgeranno obiezioni, la locazione sarà rinnovata tacitamente" (fig. 3).<sup>29</sup>

Da questo avviso apprendiamo che Giulia Felice, il cui ritratto è sapientemente delineato dal Maiuri,<sup>30</sup> era proprietaria dell'intera *insula* e aveva pensato di ricavare una rendita da alcuni ambienti. Era figlia di Spurio e alla sua famiglia appartennero almeno un duumviro L. Iulius Ponticus (*CIL* X 827), un edile Ti. Iulius Rufus (*CIL* X 801) e tre candidati alle cariche municipali: M. Iulius Simplex, Iulius Modestus e C. Iulius Polybius.<sup>31</sup>

Scoperta nel 1756 accanto alla porta del *praedium* sulla facciata principale, l'iscrizione, era un avviso di locazione, una *proscriptio locationis*, dove erano indicate la proprietà, specificate le parti offerte in affitto, la data di inizio della locazione e il periodo della *conductio* e, in sigle, le modalità della stipula o della proroga contrattuale secondo una formula convenzionale.<sup>32</sup>



Fig. 3: Sopra: Iscrizione dipinta rinvenuta scoperta nel 1756 accanto alla porta del *balneum* dei *praedia* di Giulia Felice (MANN, inv. 4713); Sotto: Trascrizione dell'iscrizione dipinta dal *CIL* IV 1136.

IN · PRAEDIS · IULIAE · SP · F · FELICIS  
 LOCANTVR  
 BALNEVM · VENERIVM · ET · NONGENTVM · TABERNAE · PERGVLAE  
 CENACVLA · EX · IDIVS · AVG · PRIMIS · IN · IDVS · AVG · SEXTAS · ANNOS · CONTINVO · QVINQVE  
 S · Q · D · L · E · N · C ·

<sup>29</sup> *CIL* IV 1136: *In praedis Iuliae Spurii filiae Felicis locantur balneum venerium et nongentum. tabernae, pergulae, cenacula ex idibus Augustis primis in idus Augustas sextas annos continuos quinque S(i) Q(uinquennium) D(ecurrerit) L(ocatio) E(rit) N(udo) C(onsensu).*

<sup>30</sup> A. MAIURI, 'Giulia Felice, gentildonna pompeiana', in C. BELLÌ (curr.), *Amedeo Maiuri. Mestiere di archeologo*, Milano 1987, 199-206.

<sup>31</sup> *CIL* IV 771; CASTRÉN, *Ordo populusque*, 178-79, n. 205.

<sup>32</sup> MANN inv. 4713; *CIL* IV 1136; V. SAMPAOLO, 'Avviso di locazione', in A. DONATI (curr.), *Romana Pictura*, Milano 1998, 305-6, n. 111.

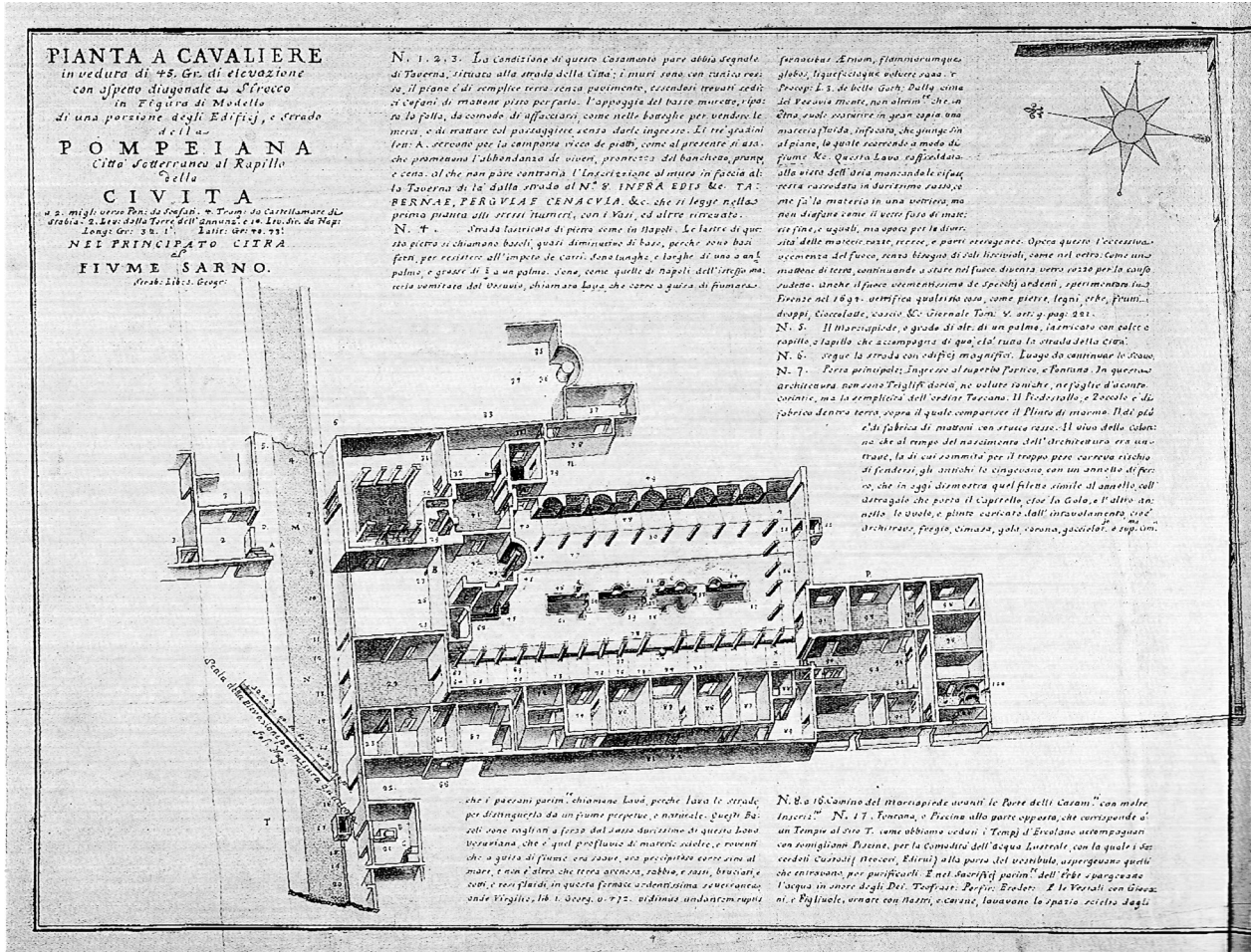


Fig. 4: Assonometria dei praedia di Giulia Felice, K. WEBER 1757.

Il testo è stato oggetto di varie interpretazioni.<sup>33</sup> Il termine *praedium* può designare tanto una proprietà rurale che una proprietà urbana e infatti l'area della Casa occupa meno della metà dell'insula mentre il resto, delimitato da bassi muri di cinta, era coltivato ad orto (fig. 4).

Il *balneum* ha l'ingresso principale su Via dell'Abbondanza e introduceva ad un atrio con portico che serviva anche da vestibolo d'attesa con panche e stanzini accessori per gli addetti alla custodia, mentre dal grande ambiente rustico adiacente si accedeva al *praefurnium* e alle caldaie. Il bagno vero e proprio, particolarmente lussuoso, era composto dall'*apodyterium* con vasca utilizzata come *frigidarium*, dal *tepidarium*, dal *calidarium* e, inoltre, dal *laconicum*; tutte e tre le stanze del bagno caldo hanno pavimenti con *suspensurae* e pareti concamerate. L'impianto venne spogliato dei marmi, mosaici, delle pitture e delle condutture nel Settecento.

Il complesso termale era connotato da due aggettivi *venerium* e *nongentum* sui quali molto si è discusso. Inizialmente si ritenne che *venerium* indicasse un ambiente riservato ai piaceri di Venere e che non-

<sup>33</sup> A. MAIURI, 'Il "Balneum venerium". Commento alla "proscriptio locationis"', in C. BELLI (cur.), *Amedeo Maiuri. Mestiere di archeologo*, Milano 1987, 555-59 (= "Due iscrizioni veneree pompeiane. Il "Balneum venerium". Commento alla «proscriptio locationis»», in *Saggi di varia antichità*, Venezia 1954, 285-99); V. SAMPAOLO, in *Pompei. Pitture e Mosaici*, Roma 1991, II, 184-310; C.C. PARSLow, *Rediscovering Antiquity. Karl Weber and the Excavation of Herculaneum, Pompeii and Stabiae*, Cambridge 1998, 37-48; M. MASTROBERTO, 'I praedia di Giulia Felice', in A. D'AMBROSIO - P.G. GUZZO - M. MASTROBERTO (cur.), *Storie da un'eruzione. Pompei Ercolano Oplontis*, Milano 2003, 386-94; PESANDO - GUIDOBALDI, *Pompei*, 141-45; F. PESANDO - M.P. GUIDOBALDI, *Gli ozi di Ercole. Residenze di lusso a Pompei ed Ercolano*, Roma 2006, 153.

*gentum*, ovvero ‘900’ indicasse il numero delle *tabernae* in affitto. Lo Zangemeister<sup>34</sup> ipotizzò invece che il *balneum* prendesse il nome da Venere come altri bagni pubblici prendevano il nome da divinità (*balneum Dianae*, *balneum Apollinis*) e Mommsen<sup>35</sup> spiegò il secondo epiteto riferendosi a un passo di Plinio<sup>36</sup> dove si attesta che con il termine *nongenti* si indicavano i cittadini di maggior riguardo, incaricati di custodire le urne contenenti i voti dei comizi. Secondo il Mommsen, dunque, *balneum nongentum* equivaleva a *balneum iudicum* cioè “riservato a cittadini di particolare distinzione”.

Il Della Corte,<sup>37</sup> sulla base della teoria del Mommsen, attribuì l’epiteto *Venerii* alla *juventus* pompeiana e leggendo *venerium* come un genitivo arcaizzante per *veneriorum* ipotizzò che il *balneum* fosse riservato al *Collegium Pompeianae juventutis* e che l’edificio fosse un ginnasio/palestra.

Il Maiuri facendo riferimento allo stesso luogo di Plinio,<sup>38</sup> dove l’autore si riferisce ai titoli attribuiti alle *decuriae*, ritiene che *nongentum* avesse anche valore aggettivale e che, riferito a *balneum*, significasse semplicemente ‘bagno scelto’, ‘adatto a persone di riguardo’. Allo stesso modo, nella *proscriptio* dell’*insula Arriana Polliana* i *cenacula* in locazione vengono definiti *equestria*, cioè ‘degni dei cavalieri’. Così anche con l’aggettivo *venerium* si poteva indicare un ‘bagno ben arredato e servito di tutti gli agi e comodità’ e quindi ‘degno di Venere’.

Secondo il Maiuri lo *scriptor* aveva fatto ricorso a due eleganti e ricercati vocaboli del gergo popolare per indicare che il *balneum* che si fittava era il massimo dell’eleganza e della comodità.

La tradizione ha accettato che con *venerium* debba intendersi ‘elegante’ e con *nongentum* ‘degno di gente di riguardo’. Il Pesando<sup>39</sup>, tuttavia, ritiene che, interpretati in questo modo, i due aggettivi esprimerebbero quasi lo stesso concetto, cosa inaccettabile per una *proscriptio* che doveva essere concisa. Sulla base di una glossa di Servio all’Eneide,<sup>40</sup> ha quindi ipotizzato che con *venerium* si debba intendere *calidum* e nei *nongenti* vadano identificati i funzionari incaricati di sorvegliare le urne delle elezioni. Pertanto nell’iscrizione le terme erano definite ‘calde e custodite’.

Alle spalle delle terme vi è un vasto giardino attraversato da un *euripus* e racchiuso da un lato con un portico a pilastri marmorei, dall’altro con rustici pilastrini che sorreggono un pergolato con statuette e getti di fontana. Tale allestimento, secondo il Maiuri, è un’ulteriore prova contro l’ipotesi che il giardino fosse usato come palestra che deve invece riconoscersi nell’area scoperta ad est delle terme presso la *natatio* all’aperto.

Le *tabernae* in affitto sono identificabili una presso l’angolo tra Via dell’Abbondanza e il vicolo occidentale (Via dell’Anfiteatro) e l’altra al n. 7 del decumano dotata di triclinio e mensa. A queste erano associate le *pergulae*, usate come ammezzato di deposito, di esposizione di merce e spesso per i servi. Quanto ai *cenacula* sono da riconoscere negli ambienti posti al piano superiore il cui accesso era dal vicolo occidentale (nn. 6-7).

Contrariamente all’avviso della Casa di Alleio Nigidio Maio (o Casa di Pansa, VI 6 1) nell’*insula Arriana Polliana*,<sup>41</sup> dove insieme alle *tabernae*, alle *pergulae* e ai *cenacula*, si fittava anche la *domus*, resta-

<sup>34</sup> C. ZANGEMEISTER in *CIL* IV 1136, 66.

<sup>35</sup> T. MOMMSEN in *CIL* IV 1136, 66.

<sup>36</sup> Plin. *nat.* 33.2.3: *etiamnum nongenti vocabantur ex omnibus selecti ad custodiendas suffragiorum cistas.*

<sup>37</sup> M. DELLA CORTE, *Juventus*, Napoli 1924, 71.

<sup>38</sup> Plin. *nat.* 33.2.3: *Et divisus hic quoque ordo erat superba usurpatione nominum: quem alius se nongentum, alius selectum, alius tribunum appellaret.*

<sup>39</sup> PESANDO – GUIDOBALDI, *Pompei*, 142.

<sup>40</sup> Serv. *Aen.* 8.387-89; PESANDO – GUIDOBALDI, *Pompei*, 142.

<sup>41</sup> E. DE ALBENTHIS, ‘Indagini sull’*Insula Arriana Polliana* di Pompei’, *DArch* 7, 1 (1989), 43-84; F. PIRSON, *Mietwohnungen in Pompeji und Herkulaneum. Untersuchungen zur Architektur, zum Wohnen und zur Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte der Vesuvstädte* (Studien zur antiken Stadt 5), München 1999, in part. 15-52.



rono esclusi dalla locazione di Giulia Felice sia gli ambienti del settore sud-occidentale riconoscibile come il vero e proprio quartiere d'abitazione, sia il quartiere del giardino con le stanze che vi si affacciano sul lato ovest. In questo modo l'edificio, pur restando privo dell'intero quartiere del *balneum*, conservava un carattere signorile ed elegante.

L'ingresso su Via dell'Abbondanza che conduce solo alle terme poste appare molto raffinato abbellito da un magnifico portale con semicolonne in laterizio e quadri figurati incassati entro telai di legno,<sup>42</sup> mentre l'accesso al sontuoso giardino avviene attraverso un'ampia stanza terranea. Al contrario l'ingresso al quartiere di abitazione sul vicolo occidentale (n. 10) appare umile, angusto e non organicamente collegato al giardino. Tali anomalie possono essere giustificate supponendo che solo la casa fu gravemente danneggiata dal terremoto del 62 d.C. e la proprietaria, spinta dalla necessità, modificò e ampliò il precedente *balneum* non più per uso familiare ma per uso pubblico, per fittarlo e unì a questo le parti più commercialmente utilizzabili: le *tabernae*, le *pergulae* e i *cenacula*. Posto in affitto il quartiere sul decumano, quello che forse era in origine il quartiere servile o del *procurator*, divenne il vero e proprio quartiere padronale.

Giulia Felice restaurò e mise in affitto un *balneum* poiché delle terme pubbliche a Pompei, dopo il terremoto, solo la sezione maschile delle Terme del Foro era stata riparata, mentre erano in corso di restauro le Terme Stabiane e in costruzione le nuove Terme Centrali. Il bagno di Giulia Felice avrebbe quindi offerto alla sua clientela quello che alla Palestra danneggiata mancava, una terma provvista di tutte le comodità e degna di persone di riguardo.

All'estremità meridionale del giardino nel Settecento fu scoperta una piccola stanza con un sacello di Iside, oggi perduto e noto solo da un disegno di Piranesi<sup>43</sup> e al cui interno fu recuperato il tripode bronzeo itifallico (**fig. 5**).<sup>44</sup> In considerazione dei riferimenti isiaci e del fatto che gli ambienti in locazione erano troppi e molto costosi, Pesando<sup>45</sup> suppone che solo una corporazione poteva prenderli in affitto. Egli presume quindi che Giulia Felice li avesse fittati per cinque anni alla Corporazione degli Isiaci. In realtà però si tratta di un falso problema in quanto la *proscriptio* elenca singolarmente le parti in affitto ma non specifica che gli ambienti dovessero essere fittati tutti insieme da un'unica persona o corporazione, quanto piuttosto solo che erano soggetti al medesimo tipo di accordo di locazione e peraltro del costo non si fa cenno.

Prima che il Maiuri riscavasse la casa, si era supposto che la gentildonna gestisse un lupanare come quello di Asellina, ma di levatura più rispettabile diretto con un altro stile e un altro lusso. L'esame della struttura edilizia e dei vari documenti ha invece dimostrato che Giulia Felice fittava stanze della sua casa in un momento di grande crisi economica e offriva ospitalità a coloro che la chiedevano. Nella ricca documentazione epigrafica raccolta in tutto l'edificio, infatti, non si è rinvenuto nessun graffito che faccia riferimento ad attività di meretricio da parte di Giulia Felice.<sup>46</sup>

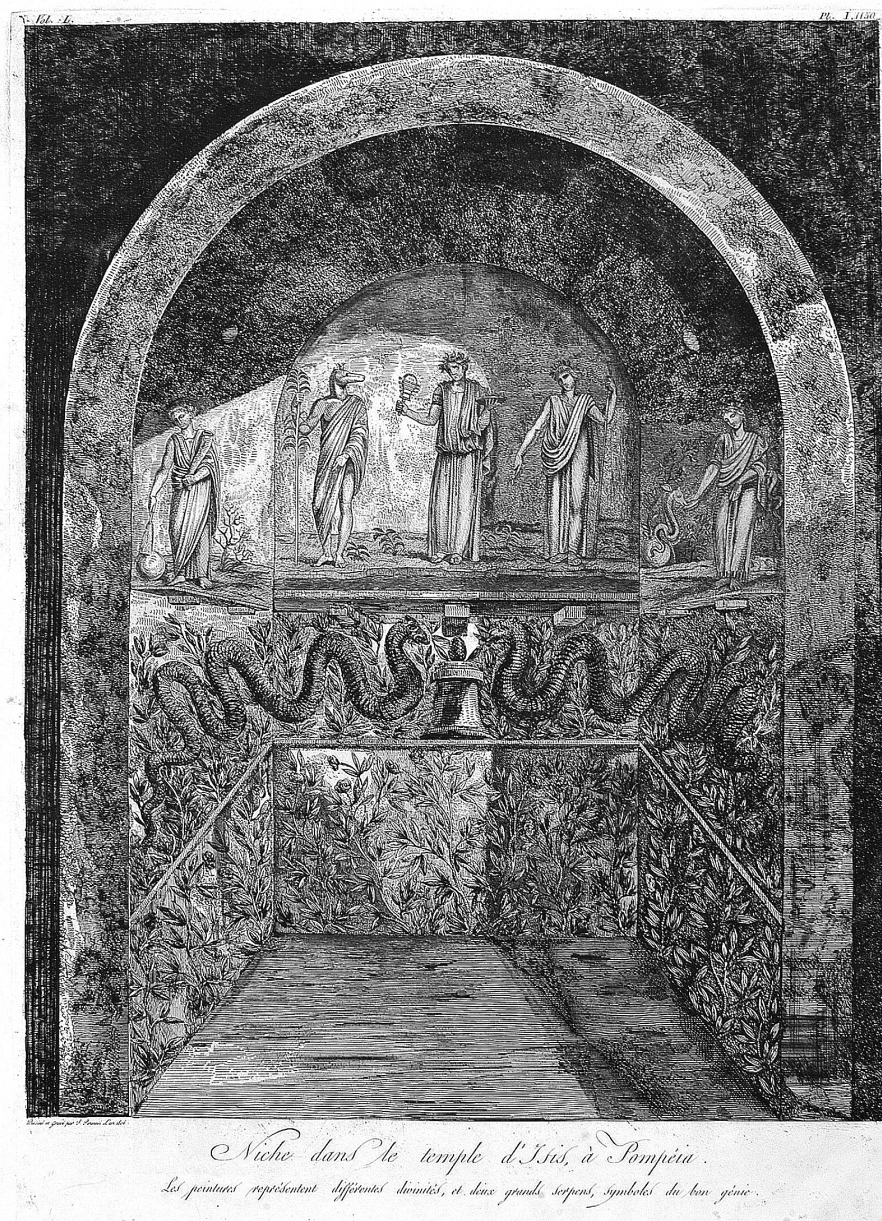
<sup>42</sup> Maiuri sostiene che tali quadri, le cui impronte sono riconoscibili anche nell'ingresso alla stanza terranea, provenivano da altri ambienti ed erano stati recuperati dopo i danni del terremoto del 62 d.C. A. MAIURI, 'Picturae ligneis formis inclusae. Note sulla tecnica della pittura Campana', *RendLinc* 7, 1 (1940), 138-60.

<sup>43</sup> Il *sacrarium* fu rinvenuto il 15 giugno 1755, *PAH* I 1 21, add. 98; F. PIRANESI, *Antiquités de la Grande Grèce, aujourd'hui royaume de Naples*, Paris 1807, pl. 1. Il dipinto è andato perduto ma forse una parte con i serpenti è riconoscibile nel frammento di affresco MANN, inv. 9693 in W. HELBIG, *Wandgemälde der vom Vesuv verschütteten Städte Campaniens*, Leipzig 1868, n. 79. Si veda anche G.K. BOYCE, *Corpus of the Lararia of Pompeii*, Roma 1937 (*MAAR* 14), 95, n. 471; M. PAGANO – R. PRISCIANDARO, *Studio sulle provenienze degli oggetti rinvenuti negli scavi borbonici del regno di Napoli*, Napoli 2006, 17 e nota 47; T. FRÖHLICH, *Lararien und Fassadenbilder in den Vesuvstädten*, Mainz 1991, L40, 265, tav. 30.1; C.C. PARSLAW, *Rediscovering Antiquity*, 110, 345, note 8 e 9.

<sup>44</sup> MANN inv. 27874. Da ultimo si veda A. AVAGLIANO, 'Tripode con braciore', in E. LA ROCCA – C. PARISI PRISICCE – A. LO MONACO – C. GIROIRE – D. ROGER (CURT.), *Augusto* (Catalogo della mostra), Milano 2013, 270, n. VII.1.

<sup>45</sup> PESANDO – GUIDOBALDI, *Pompei*, 145.

<sup>46</sup> VARONE, *Titulorum graphio*, 107-12, appendice 521-26.



**Fig. 5:** Incisione del sacello dipinto dai *praedia* di Giulia Felice in F. PIRANESI, *Antiquités de la Grande Grèce, aujourd'hui royaume de Naples*, Paris 1807, pl. 1.

A giudicare dall'architettura della sua casa e dagli oggetti<sup>47</sup> che ella scelse per decorarla, Giulia Felice doveva essere raffinata e di buon gusto. Era donna accorta e saggia, capace di amministrare bene la sua azienda domestica e, rimasta sola, aveva fatto dipingere sulla facciata della casa un avviso di locazione a lettere chiare e grandi, affrontando la crisi successiva al terremoto del 62 d.C. trasformandosi in imprenditrice per non svendere la sua casa come altri stavano facendo.

L'analisi e lo studio delle figure di Eumachia e Giulia Felice si rivelano così fondamentali per ricostruire il ruolo delle donne nel quadro sociale, economico e legislativo dell'impero romano agli inizi del I secolo d.C. Le storie delle due facoltose *dominae* pompeiane documentano i radicali cambiamenti in atto nella società romana in età giulio-claudia: l'una, donna romana di origine non-imperiale, poté occuparsi attivamente degli affari economici della sua famiglia, fu protagonista di atti di evergetismo e fu coinvolta

<sup>47</sup> Notissime sono ad esempio le pitture con scene di vita dal Foro dall'atrio (24): MANN, invv. 9057, 9059, 9061, 9062, 9063, 9064, 9065, 9066, 9067, 9068, 9070. SAMPAOLO, *Pompei. Pitture*, II, 251-57; F. GRASSO, 'Schede', in I. BRAGANTINI - V. SAMPAOLO (curr.), *La pittura pompeiana*, Napoli 2009, 502-11.

in politica, grazie al prestigio che le veniva dall'essere sacerdotessa pubblica di Venere; l'altra, grazie ad un forte spirito imprenditoriale, riuscì da sola a salvare il patrimonio e riportare all'antico splendore la proprietà di famiglia. E allora parafrasando Amedeo Maiuri "onore a Eumachia e Giulia Felice, gentildonne pompeiane, imprenditrici e accorte amministratrici dei loro beni".

# Le testimonianze epigrafiche della partecipazione femminile alla vita pubblica e alle attività della *domus* – tra *Surrentum*, *Stabiae* e *Nuceria*

MARICÍ MARTINS MAGALHÃES

Davanti alle migliaia d'iscrizioni riguardanti la presenza e la partecipazione femminile nella società del mondo antico,<sup>1</sup> e particolarmente a riguardo dei modi diversi in cui queste donne erano attive nella società romana di epoca imperiale, ho deciso di presentare quelle epigrafi, già da me edite durante i miei sedici anni di ricerche *in situ* e venticinque di pubblicazioni in Italia, provenienti da alcuni noti centri vesuviani della *Regio Campania* presso il Golfo di Napoli: così, la mia presentazione inizierà a partire dal *municipium* di *Surrentum*, passando poi nel *vicus* di *Stabiae* e infine arrivando alla colonia di *Nuceria*.

Ovviamente non mi tratterò in spiegazioni dettagliate sull'amministrazione pubblica delle municipalità qui presentate, o ancora su riflessioni o dibattiti su questioni di carattere prettamente giuridico, già lungamente discusse da me e da altri studiosi in altre sedi. Tratterò, invece, in primo luogo, soltanto le testimonianze di cultura materiale, in questo caso specifico le epigrafi e i relativi dati archeologici,<sup>2</sup> siano esse in perfetta consonanza o meno con i dati storici a nostra disposizione. In secondo luogo, più in generale, farò un approccio tematico singolo per richiamare solamente le istituzioni sociali legate alle iscrizioni e ai loro personaggi.<sup>3</sup>

## *Surrentum*

Vediamo quindi la partecipazione femminile a *Surrentum*,<sup>4</sup> su cui ho prodotto un'opera completa anche di catalogo dell'intero suo *corpus* epigrafico. In ragione della prossimità di questo *municipium* viritano all'isola di *Capreae*, proprietà imperiale sin da Augustus e dove è vissuto Tiberius dal 27 al 37 d.C., ho avuto modo d'ipotizzare che la *Familia Caesaris* avrebbe posseduto anche delle proprietà nella Penisola Sorrentina, data la presenza massiccia di suoi schiavi e liberti in tutte le necropoli circondanti le mura urbane, e lungo le vie che escono dal centro urbano. Così vedremo, ad esempio, non solamente la presenza di numerosi liberti

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<sup>1</sup> Innanzi tutto ringrazio le curatrici dell'evento e del volume, le Dottoresse Sabine Hübner e Ria Berg per l'invito a partecipare a questo *Symposium* e al relativo volume, che mi ha molto onorata, e anche per la professionalità, la precisione e la simpatia con cui hanno condotto l'organizzazione di tutti i lavori. Sono sentitamente grata al Prof. Antonio Varone (Ministero dei Beni e Attività Culturali) il quale, con la gentilezza che lo contraddistingue, ha revisionato il mio italiano.

<sup>2</sup> Voglio aggiungere che tali approcci archeologici sono praticamente pionieristici in Brasile, e sull'argomento rinvio alla collega M.R. CANDIDO, 'Refletindo sobre as possibilidades de Arqueologia de Gênero', in M.R. CANDIDO (ed.), *Mulheres na Antiguidade. Novas Perspectivas e Abordagens*, NEA-UERJ, Rio de Janeiro 2012, 266-76.

<sup>3</sup> I testi delle epigrafi serviranno solamente come documento probatorio di quanto si è affermato. Allo stesso modo, non entrerà in considerazioni legali su *status* giuridico e diritto successorio, relativamente ai personaggi e alle proprietà di cui si parla. Sull'argomento, si v., ad esempio, J. PÖLÖNEN, 'The Division of Wealth between Men and Women in the Roman Succession (c.a. 50 BC – AD 250)', in SETÄLÄ *et al.* (eds.), *Woman, Wealth and Power in the Roman Empire (Acta Instituti Romani Finlandiae 25)*, Rome 2002, 147-79.

<sup>4</sup> M.M. MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e prosopografia di Surrentum romana. La collezione epigrafica del Museo Correale di Terranova*, Castellammare di Stabia 2003. Oltre a tutte le iscrizioni del Museo propriamente detto, l'opera presenta anche la silloge epigrafica fino a quei tempi nota della Penisola Sorrentina.

dell'imperatrice Livia,<sup>5</sup> moglie di Augustus e madre di Tiberius, come anche di una sua ex schiava molto particolare e *sui generis* per il territorio, la cui iscrizione è stata ritrovata da me con il collega Mario Russo (fig. 1):<sup>6</sup> denominata solamente con il *cognomen Secunda*, fungeva da *obstetrix*, ovviamente ostetrica delle altre schiave della *gens Iulia*. Il testo era stato inciso su un cippo funerario in marmo bianco, con molta probabilità proveniente dalla cd. Porta Parsano Nuovo, a Sud, fuori le mura urbiche. Manca la parte superiore, dove dovrebbe esserci stato un profilo a forma di testa umana, secondo la tipologia locale di segnacolo detta *columella*.

La mia integrazione *Augusta* si deve al fatto che, secondo le mie ricerche, solamente le imperatrici e gli altri membri femminili delle casate imperiali avevano schiave e liberte responsabili delle funzioni esclusivamente 'femminili' legate ai lavori della *domus*.<sup>7</sup> Ovviamente è possibile escludere la *gens Livia* dalla formula onomastica di questa liberta, e restituire *Iulia Secunda*. Poiché lei si dichiara *Augustae liberta*, ciò sarebbe accaduto soltanto nel 14 d.C., quando l'imperatrice è stata adottata dal marito C. Iulius Caesar Octavianus, e ha cambiato il suo nome in *Iulia Augusta*, ereditando così il gentilizio degli Iulii. Così, l'iscrizione di *Secunda* sarebbe databile dopo il 14 d.C., ma prima del 29 d.C. ossia, all'epoca di Tiberius: l'imperatrice, morta nel 29 d.C., ha ricevuto il titolo commemorativo di *Diva* nel 41 d.C., per volontà di suo nipote Claudius, e tale titolo non compare nel testo. Infine, si osservi che la liberta già era stata manomessa prima di compiere i 24 anni, quando è morta; intanto, l'età legale per le manomissioni era di 30 anni. Così, possiamo collocarla nella categoria dei cd. *Latini Iuniani*,<sup>8</sup> un privilegio concesso frequentemente, e comune ancora di più tra liberti imperiali.

Ancora nell'ambito delle schiave imperiali, sicuramente di un'imperatrice di stirpe giulio-claudia, conosciamo l'apografo di *CIL X 7099* con il testo della lapide funeraria della serva Hedymele VENER,<sup>10</sup> rinvenuta nella necropoli di Chiommenzano a SE fuori del centro urbano. Per alcuni, potrebbe trattarsi sem-



Fig. 1: Cippo funerario di *Secunda obstetrix*, liberta dell'imperatrice Livia (MAGALHÃES – RUSSO, 'Iscrizioni inedite di Surrentum', fig. 2).

<sup>5</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> L 301. Livia Drusilla o semplicemente Drusa, è vissuta tra il 59/58 a.C. e il 29 d.C.; è stata imperatrice tra il 27 a.C. e il 14 d.C. e divinizzata *post mortem* da suo nipote, l'imperatore Claudius nel 42 d.C.

<sup>6</sup> M.M. MAGALHÃES – M. RUSSO, 'Iscrizioni inedite di Surrentum. Un'*obstetrix* imperiale e un nuovo classario', in *Epigraphica* 67 (2005), 408-21.

<sup>7</sup> J. LE GALL, 'Métiers des Femmes au *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*', in *Revue des Études Latines* 47 bis (1970), 123-30, in part. 127, dove accenna a quindici *obstetrices*. Più puntuale è S. TREGGIARI, 'Jobs for Women', in *American Journal of Ancient History* 1 (1976), 76-104, part. 86-87 dove elenca le mediche ed ostetriche. Infine v. sempre S. TREGGIARI, 'Jobs in the Household of Livia', in *PBSR* 43 (1975), 48-77 e 48-49: il 90% dei servi e liberti finora ritrovati nei *columbaria* appartenevano a Livia. Essi sono distinti nella seguente maniera: prima del 14 a.C., sono tutti di M. Livius – padre o fratello – o di Livia, dopo questa data, appartengono a *Iulia Augusta* (adozione di Livia da parte di Augustus), e poi con la sua morte nel 29 d.C. e la sua successiva deificazione nel 41 d.C., avrebbero appartenuto alla *Diva Augusta*.

<sup>8</sup> Su questa categoria particolare detta dei *Latini Iuniani*, e anche su tutte le sue implicazioni giuridiche, rinvio a P.R. WEAVER, 'Where have all the Junian Latins gone? Nomenclature and Status in the Early Empire', in *Chiron* 20 (1990), 275-305; P.L. BARJA DE QUIROGA, 'Junian Latins. Status and Number', in *Athenaeum* 86, 1 (1998), 133-63.

<sup>9</sup> Necropoli di Chiommenzano a SE del centro urbano, cfr. MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e prosopografia*, 66, nn. 178; 267.

<sup>10</sup> MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e prosopografia*, 69, n. 201.

plicemente di una trascrizione trascurata del vocabolo *verna*, che significa ‘schiava nata in casa’<sup>11</sup> o di un errore del lapicida stesso. Certo si tratta di una serva perché non esiste dichiarazione di *libertinitas* nel testo. Altri studiosi, intanto, avanzano tre altre ipotesi ugualmente convincenti: a) che Veneria fosse, in realtà, lo scioglimento da dare a VENER, intendendo così la schiava come addetta o guardiana di un sacello dedicato al culto di *Venus*; b) o ancora un epiteto dato al mestiere di *sage-femme* cioè, addetta a cure come la *medica* e l'*obstetrix*; c) infine, che Veneria fosse un *agnomen*, o secondo *cognomen*, più che naturale anche nel mondo servile.<sup>12</sup> Sarà stata, comunque, sempre una serva di un’imperatrice,<sup>13</sup> e per questa ragione ho deciso di sciogliere l’abbreviazione AVG dell’epigrafe come *Augustae* (dell’Augusta), e non già Augusti (dell’imperatore). Dal formulario del testo, confrontabile con altre iscrizioni sorrentine, non esiterei a datare questo testo all’epoca giulio-claudia, come già *supra* detto.

Sempre da *Surrentum*<sup>14</sup> proviene l’epigrafe funeraria del gladiatore *scaeva mirmillo* (scil. un mirmillone mancino)<sup>15</sup> denominato Valerius. L’epigrafe, su cippo funerario marmoreo antropomorfo (*columella*), è stata ritrovata nella necropoli di Sottomonte, a est fuori le mura cittadine. Intanto, non possiamo scartare del tutto l’ipotesi che *Scaeva* possa essere anche un *cognomen* del personaggio.<sup>16</sup>

Una tra le proposte di lavoro accettabili, con molta cautela però, è che possa trattarsi di un liberto dell’imperatrice Valeria Messalina<sup>17</sup> moglie dell’imperatore Claudius, la quale possedeva tale scuola gladiatoria, e una proprietà nella regione. Per questa ragione Valerius adopera il *nomen* della *gens Valeria*, al contempo nascondendo il proprio *status* di liberto, che non viene esplicitato nel testo. Ricordo che lo *status* giuridico dei gladiatori, nella maggior parte, è abbastanza particolare, un *medium* tra schiavo e liberto,<sup>18</sup> e già discusso in altre sedi. Comunque sia, tale proposta sta in perfetta consonanza con le caratteristiche paleografiche delle incisioni del testo, ossia di età giulio-claudia. Come già *supra*, si osservi che il vocabolo *Scaeva* è stato anche registrato come un *cognomen* romano, ipotesi che non può essere del tutto esclusa, nonostante la scarsità persino di gentilizi tra gladiatori.<sup>19</sup> Infine, se egli fosse veramente un manomesso, ricordo che già gli imperatori giulio-claudi e tante nobili famiglie romane usavano i propri gladiatori per difesa personale e guardia del corpo.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Sullo *status* del *verna* e dello schiavo dello schiavo, v. F. REDUZZI-MEROLA, Servo Parere. *Studi sulla condizione giuridica degli schiavi vicari e dei sottoposti a schiavi nelle esperienze greca e romana*, Napoli 1990, 131-208. Specif. per i *vernae*, rinvio a E. HERRMANN-OTTO, *Ex ancilla natus. Untersuchungen zu den “hausgeboren” Sklaven und Sklavinnen in Western des Römischen Kaiserreiches*, Stuttgart 1994, partic. 217.

<sup>12</sup> Già noto proprio a *Surrentum*, cfr. MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e società*, 170-71. Per gli *agnomina* e *supernomina* in maniera generale in questi casi, vedi I. KAJANTO, *Supernomina. A Study on Latin Epigraphy* (Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 40, 1), Helsinki 1960, e specif. per il nostro, 75.

<sup>13</sup> LE GALL, ‘Métiers des Femmes’, partic. 127, dove menziona una Iulia Veneria di *CIL VI 9722* (Roma). Sul ruolo della serva o *ancilla* nella *domus* romana nel suo aspetto economico e sociale v., tra altri, R. SALLER, ‘Women, Slaves, and the Economy of the Roman Household’, in D.L. BALCH – C. OSIEK, *Early Christian Families in Context. An Interdisciplinary Dialogue*, Michigan 2003, 185-204.

<sup>14</sup> MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e prosopografia*, 51.

<sup>15</sup> MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e prosopografia*, 51, spiega che è possibile che il gladiatore fosse veramente mancino. Sui *mirmillones* v. P. SABBATINI TUMOLESI, *Epigrafia anfiteatrale dell’Occidente Romano*, I, Roma 1988, 119 e 135; e G.L. GREGORI, *Epigrafia anfiteatrale dell’Occidente Romano*, II, *Regiones Italiae VI-XI*, Roma 1989, 101-2.

<sup>16</sup> Ovviamente un *cognomen* collegato alla capacità del mestiere, cfr. SABBATINI-TUMOLESI, *Epigrafia anfiteatrale*, 94 e 137-38; della stessa opinione I. KAJANTO, *The Latin Cognomina* (Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum 36, 2), Helsinki 1965, 243.

<sup>17</sup> FOS 774: vissuta tra il 17 e il 48 d.C., è stata imperatrice tra il 41 e il 48 d.C. Pronipote di Octavia (la sorella dell’imperatore Augustus) e terza moglie dell’imperatore Claudius.

<sup>18</sup> Per cui v. A. GUARINO, *Diritto privato romano*, Napoli 1997, 24.6 e sul suo statuto di lavoro, 87.1 (*locatio operarum*). Sostanzialmente lo stesso dice SABBATINI TUMOLESI, *Epigrafia anfiteatrale*, 71 e ancora, sulla possibilità della categoria dei *peregrini dediticii*, 137.

<sup>19</sup> Cfr. GREGORI, *Epigrafia anfiteatrale*, 103 e 114.

<sup>20</sup> Sul punto ancora SABBATINI TUMOLESI, *Epigrafia anfiteatrale*, 131.

Passando ora alle famiglie equestri, presento l'esempio dell'iscrizione di *Cursor* (fig. 2),<sup>21</sup> su cd. *columella* acefala in marmo. Trattasi di un servo *dispensator* cioè, amministratore-intendente della gran villa di *otium* della *domina* denominata nel testo Claudia Capitolina,<sup>22</sup> probabilmente ubicata ad Ovest fuori le mura urbliche. Il primo dato importante per le nostre conoscenze è l'identità della signora, che va identificata appunto con la *Capitolina* di rango equestre, figlia di Ti. Claudius Balbillus,<sup>23</sup> *praefectus Aegypti* in età claudia o neroniana, che aveva sposato in prime nozze C. Iulius Antiochus Epiphanes, figlio di Antiochus IV (re di *Comma-gene* in *Syria*), e pertanto onorata pubblicamente a *Pergamum* col titolo di *Basilissa*.<sup>24</sup> Dopo la morte del marito, sposò il cavaliere M. Iunius Mettius Rufus,<sup>25</sup> console *suffectus* nel 128 d.C.

In secondo luogo, apprendiamo un dato, non del tutto nuovo, ma che arricchisce la prosopografia sorrentina: dentro la gerarchia servile della *domus* di *Capitolina*, c'era un *dispensator*,<sup>26</sup> con le funzioni specifiche di tenere uso e controllo della sua cassa, come la tenuta dei registri dell'amministrazione, il fare dei pagamenti, ecc., unico nel suo genere nella regione.<sup>27</sup>

Degne di evidenza sono le iscrizioni che ci portano le testimonianze di due sacerdotesse pubbliche, provenienti da un gran monumento funerario costruito nella zona del *pomerium* in una porta ad est di Sorrento. Della prima, di cui è rimasto solamente il *cognomen Magna* su lastra marmorea mutila,<sup>28</sup> sappiamo soltanto che è stata *sacerdos publica Veneris et Cereris*.<sup>29</sup> Conosciamo invece un po' meglio dati importanti sull'altra *sacerdos publica Veneris et Cereris* della seconda lastra marmorea integrata (fig. 3 e 4),<sup>30</sup> sepolta nello stesso monumento, la quale apparteneva al tradizionale collegio di *matronae*, attivo in numerose città della *Campania*. A causa della visibile frattura a sinistra della lapide, il nome purtroppo ci rimarrà anonimo.



Fig. 2: Cippo funerario di *Cursor*, *dispensator* della *Basilissa Claudia Capitolina* (MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e società*, fig. 65).

<sup>21</sup> MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e prosopografia*, n. 20.

<sup>22</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 1086.

<sup>23</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> C 813.

<sup>24</sup> Il titolo è stato concesso prima del 113 d.C. Ebbe due figli: il *rex* C. Iulius Antiochus Epiphanes Philopappus (*rex* e console nel 109 d.C.) e Iulia Balbilla.

<sup>25</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> I 812.

<sup>26</sup> Per i *dispensatores*, v. G. BLOCH, s.v. '*dispensator*', in CH. DAREMBERG – E. SAGLIO, *Dictionnaire des Antiquités Grecques et Romaines* (rist. Graz 1989), II, 1, 280-90; e da ultimo J. CARLSEN, *Vilici and Roman Estate Managers until A.D. 284* (*Analecta Romana Instituti Danici* 24), Roma 1995, passim e partic. 147-58; per i *dispensatores* dell'amministrazione imperiale, G. BOULVERT, *Esclaves et affranchis impériaux sous Le Haut-Empire Romain. Rôle politique et administratif*, Napoli 1970, 429-33. Vedi anche articolo di BERG in questo volume.

<sup>27</sup> Ricordiamo solamente che il noto personaggio Trimalchio possedeva un *dispensator*, il quale i suoi pagamenti (*Petr. sat.* 30). Gli altri esempi in MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e prosopografia*, 163, n. 201.

<sup>28</sup> MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e società*, n. 17.

<sup>29</sup> E' collegata al cavaliere T. Clodius C.f. C.n. Proculus, legato di Augustus nella provincia *Lusitania* come censore, se si considera la prossimità dei *clipei* con i rispettivi busti.

<sup>30</sup> MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e società*, n. 18. Molti personaggi simili di *Pompeii*, con sacerdozio e funerali pubblici o meno, sono commentati da L. SAVUNEN, *Women in the Urban Texture of Pompeii*, Pukkila 1997, 61, 129-41 e 152-59. Per le somme e le spese per i funerali di rango equestre, v. R. DUNCAN JONES, 'An Epigraphic Survey of Costs in Roman Italy', *PBSR* n.s. 20 (1965), 241-45.

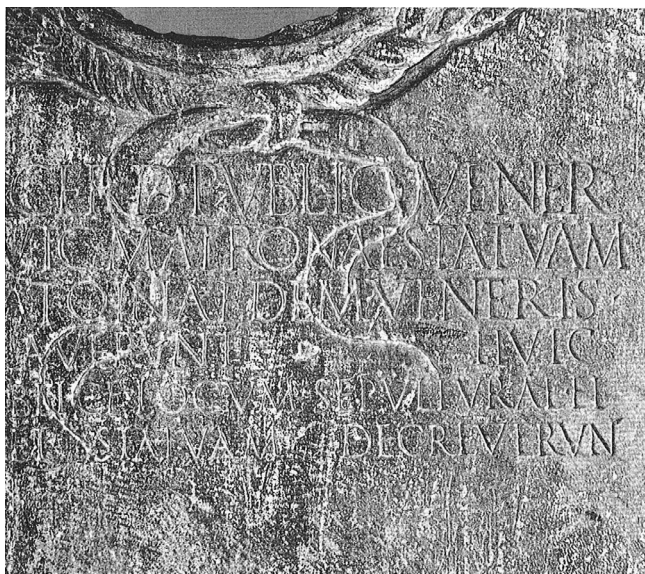


Fig. 3: Lastra monumentale dell'altra anonima sacerdotessa pubblica di *Venus* e di *Ceres* (MAGALHÃES, *Stabiae romana*, fig. 58).



Fig. 4: Disegno ricostruttivo dell'iscrizione a Fig. 3 (MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e società*, fig. 4 b).

Dal testo della seconda, possiamo capire che apparteneva al collegio matronale di *Ceres-Demeter*, noto epigraficamente in molte città della *Regio Campania*, e che ha fatto scuola a *Neapolis*, con l'importazione di sacerdotesse greche di *Demeter*.<sup>31</sup> Inoltre da questo collegio la stessa ha ricevuto una statua con il denaro raccolto tra i membri, collocata nel tempio di *Venus*. Infine, è stata onorata per decreto dell'*ordo decurionum* con un'altra statua, con il luogo della sepoltura su suolo pubblico e 5000 sesterzi per le spese del suo funerale.<sup>32</sup> Date alcune testimonianze epigrafiche, queste signore di rango equestre erano elette, nella maggior parte, dal consiglio cittadino, cioè *sacerdos publica electa a splendidissimo ordine*,<sup>33</sup> per cui dovevano versare anche una *summa sacerdotum*, visto che trattasi di un sacerdozio di carattere politico, e dato ancora che qui il termine stesso *matrona* di per sé richiama la *Mater Collegiorum*, dignità sacra e civica.<sup>34</sup>

### Stabiae

Ora andiamo a *Stabiae* (sul cui territorio ho anche pubblicato un catalogo d'iscrizioni lapidarie, bronzee e di bolli laterizi),<sup>35</sup> diventata un *vicus* dopo la Guerra Sociale nel 89 a.C., e incorporata nel territorio della colonia di *Nuceria*, di cui parleremo di seguito.

<sup>31</sup> MAGALHÃES, *Storia, istituzioni e società*, 157-60. Ulteriori e esaurienti spiegazioni in I. CHIRASSI COLOMBO, 'Funzioni politiche ed implicazioni culturali nell'ideologia religiosa di *Ceres* nell'impero romano', *ANRW* II, 17, 1 (1981), 403-28, 421 e passim.

<sup>32</sup> Per l'integrazione della lacuna e il confronto con le somme concesse per gli altri funerali.

<sup>33</sup> *CIL* X 3920 *Capua* = *AE* 1979, 339 = *AE* 1982, 680; *CIL* X 7352 (da *Antia*); *CIL* VI 2139 (una *Vestalis* di Roma), etc. Sul sacerdozio pubblico in maniera generale abbastanza convincente è anche M. GUERRA GÓMEZ, *El Sacerdocio Femenino (en las religiones greco-romanas y en el cristianismo de los primeros siglos)*, Toledo 1987. Un accenno fa H. HENZEN, *Bull. dell'Ist. di Corrisp. Archeol.* 34 (1862), 160, sull'iscrizione 'lanuvina' con lo stesso contenuto.

<sup>34</sup> GUERRA GÓMEZ, *El sacerdozio femenino*, 159; 314-20. Sempre per illustrare il potere di queste figure femminili in colonie e municipi della *Regio Campania*, v. ad esempio M. TORELLI, 'Donne, domi nobiles ed evergeti a *Paestum* tra la fine della Repubblica e l'inizio dell'impero', in M. CÉBEILLAC-GERVASONI (cur.), *Les élites municipales de l'Italie péninsulaire des Gracques à Neron* (Actes de la table ronde de Clermont-Ferrand, 28-30 novembre 1991), Rome 1996, 153-78.

<sup>35</sup> M.M. MAGALHÃES, *Stabiae romana. La prosopografia e la documentazione epigrafica: iscrizioni lapidarie e bronzee, bolli laterizi e sigilli*, Castellammare di Stabia 2006: non solamente iscrizioni lapidarie e bronzee, ma anche come indica il titolo, sigilli su terracotta e anelli.



Tramite lo studio delle iscrizioni di una necropoli, ho potuto constatare la presenza di lapidi le cui iscrizioni indicavano che i defunti erano stati servi e liberti imperiali (fig. 5),<sup>36</sup> fatto che ci ha permesso di provare che un'altra nota imperatrice possedeva una villa rustica nelle vicinanze: Poppaea Sabina,<sup>37</sup> la seconda moglie di Nero. Tra gli undici sepolcri, presento qui solamente due iscrizioni in marmo bianco venato di grigio, su cippi funerari a forma della già menzionata *columella*. Sia la tipologia del supporto epigrafico, sia lo stile delle lettere collocate tra testa e spalle, non lasciano dubbi su una datazione all'epoca tiberiana. Si aggiunga che in altre due tombe sono state ritrovate monete del periodo di Augustus e dell'inizio del principato di Tiberius, e anfore che ci hanno aiutato per la conferma di questa datazione.<sup>38</sup> Il personaggio Q. Poppaeus Blastus era liberto o discendente di liberti della *gens Poppaea*, visto che il suo *cognomen* grecanico non lascia dubbi sulla sua estrazione. D'altro canto, Poppaea Fausta, la quale è stata manomessa da un Q. Poppaeus, sembra essere stata la moglie dello stesso Q. Poppaeus Blastus sopra-mentzionato, il cui sepolcro era ubicato appunto a fianco al suo.

La proprietà è stata sicuramente ereditata o appartenente alla sua omonima madre,<sup>39</sup> la quale è stata prima sposata con il padre di Poppaea Sabina, T. Ollius, di rango senatorio e *quaestor* sotto Tiberius, e poi sposatasi in seconde nozze con P. Cornelius Lentulus Scipio, console del 24 d.C.<sup>40</sup> Secondo le evidenze epigrafiche a noi note finora, sarebbero stati questi ultimi (Poppaea madre e Lentulus) i veri proprietari della cd. Villa 'A' di *Oplontis* (nell'odierno Comune di Torre Annunziata); essi avrebbero avuto anche degli interessi a *Herculaneum*, data la presenza di un Q. Poppaeus Felix in quel *municipium*; e ricordo inoltre che le note *figlinae Arrianae a Pompeii* erano gestite da un loro *libertus communis*, P. Cornelius Poppaeus Erastus:<sup>41</sup> ovviamente prima che la futura Augusta ereditasse tutto ciò. Comunque, la datazione dell'intera necropoli e delle sue epigrafi, artefatti e corredo funerario è assicurata anche dai reperti numismatici e dalle anfore,<sup>42</sup> che la confermano con un *terminus post quem* all'epoca augustea-tiberiana.

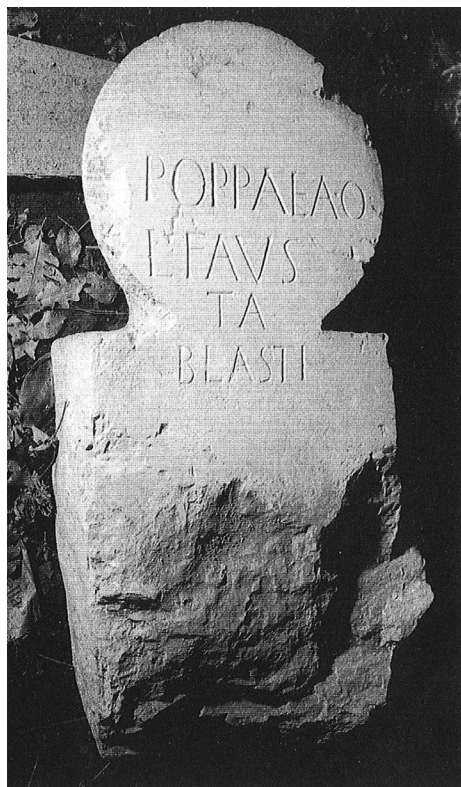


Fig. 5: Cippo funerario di liberto della casata dell'imperatrice Poppaea Sabina, Poppaea Q.l. Fausta (MAGALHÃES, *Stabiae romana*, n. 36).

<sup>36</sup> M.M. MAGALHÃES, 'Le iscrizioni e l'area funeraria dei Q. e C. Poppaei a Stabiae (loc. Calcarella di Privati)', *RSP* 10 (1999), 224-35, nn. 5, 9, 10 e 11; MAGALHÃES, *Stabiae romana*, nn. 42-44 e 47. Tutte le altre iscrizioni nella stessa necropoli sono anche riportate in questo volume.

<sup>37</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> P 850. È vissuta dal 30 al 65 d.C. ed è stata imperatrice solamente dal 62 al 65 d.C. Nero è stato il suo terzo marito: in prime nozze aveva sposato il cavaliere Rufrius Crispinus e, in seconde nozze, il futuro imperatore Otho.

<sup>38</sup> Tutto il materiale dello scavo e i cd. 'fossili guida' per alcune importanti datazioni sono stati da me pubblicati nello stesso contributo: MAGALHÃES, *Le iscrizioni e l'area funeraria*, 224-35.

<sup>39</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> P 849: sposata in prime nozze col padre di Poppaea Sabina, T. Ollius, di rango senatorio e *quaestor* sotto Tiberius (*PIR*<sup>2</sup> O 96).

<sup>40</sup> Sul personaggio, MAGALHÃES, *Le iscrizioni e l'area funeraria*, 224-35.

<sup>41</sup> Per cui MAGALHÃES, *Le iscrizioni e l'area funeraria*, 235 e nota 39, la quale riporta, tra altri, M. DELLA CORTE, 'Tabelle cerate ercolanesi', *PdP* 6 (1951), 224.

<sup>42</sup> Monete di Augustus e di Tiberius: *RIC* I, 78, n. 181 e *RIC* I, 96, n. 6. Anfore Dressel 18 (ancora in uso all'inizio del I sec. d.C.) e Dressel 20 (epoca di Tiberius), cfr. MAGALHÃES, *Le iscrizioni e l'area funeraria*, 84 e 87-95; MAGALHÃES, *Stabiae romana*, 494-95.

*Nuceria*

Infine voglio concludere con la colonia di veterani di Caesar, ai quali sono stati assegnati lotti da parte di Octavianus mentre era triumviro, e finalizzata dallo stesso già in veste dell'imperatore Augustus. La colonia ricevé pertanto il nome di *Nuceria Iulia Constantia*, anche per la sua fedeltà a Roma all'epoca della Guerra Sociale del 89 a.C.<sup>43</sup> Il suo vasto territorio ci ha restituito finora almeno 232 iscrizioni (lapidarie, bronzee, graffiti, senza includere i bolli laterizi e sigilli) – tutte da me raccolte tra il 1996 e il 2005 – e il cui catalogo è stato praticamente finito da me, ma ancora non pubblicato per questioni burocratiche e operazionali.<sup>44</sup>

Nonostante ciò, da *Nuceria* ho portato una rilevante dimostrazione della partecipazione femminile alla vita pubblica cittadina del IV sec. d.C.<sup>45</sup> Trattasi di un'iscrizione funeraria,<sup>46</sup> in lingua Greca e appartenente ad un membro femminile della comunità ebraica fiorente nella regione; si osservi anche la *menorah* (o candelabro *heptalychnos*) inciso alla fine dell'iscrizione. Il personaggio si chiamava *Mýrina*, ed era moglie di un *grammateús* (*grosso modo*, dottore nelle Leggi Giudaiche) denominato Pedônus, sepolto in un'altra tomba a suo fianco, con la sua specifica iscrizione. La signora è stata qualificata nell'epigrafe come *presbytéra* che, nella mia opinione, potrebbe riferirsi piuttosto a un incarico 'para-sacerdotale' nella sinagoga,<sup>47</sup> data la dignità del personaggio.

Per concludere, mi auguro che questi pochi, ma significativi contributi, basati su documentazione materiale redatta come le epigrafi, coniugati ai dati archeologici, siano stati utili per chiarire un piccolissimo aspetto della partecipazione femminile alla vita pubblica e alle attività della *domus* in epoca romana, nel territorio a Sud del *Mons Vesuvius*. Evidenze visibili della loro influenza, rispetto, importanza e direi proprio 'indipendenza', non solamente per quanto riguarda la vita sociale cittadina, ma anche nei confronti del loro non tanto 'ristretto' mondo casalingo.

<sup>43</sup> M.M. MAGALHÃES, *De Nuceria Alfaterna a Nuceria Constantia: uma Reflexão sobre as Especificidades do Domínio Imperial Romano*, Rio de Janeiro 2016, 84-88.

<sup>44</sup> M.M. MAGALHÃES, *Ordo Populusque Nucerinus. Storia, istituzioni e prosopografia di Nuceria romana. I: Catalogo d'iscrizioni. II: Storia, istituzioni e prosopografia*, in attesa di stampa.

<sup>45</sup> Tra numerosi lavori pubblicati, rinvio all'*editio princeps* di M. DE' SPAGNOLIS, 'Una testimonianza ebraica a Nuceria Alfaterna', in L. FRANCHI DELL'ORTO (cur.), *Ercolano 1738-1988. 250 anni di ricerche archeologiche* (Atti del Convegno Internazionale, Ravello – Napoli – Pompei – Ercolano 1988, Monografie SAP 6), Roma 1993, 243-51, Tav. LIX, 1-3: tomba 17, blocco del lato NE, necropoli di S. Clemente a NE fuori mura.

<sup>46</sup> DE' SPAGNOLIS, *Una testimonianza ebraica*, 243-51. Le iscrizioni cui si fa qui riferimento sono riportate nel volume I di MAGALHÃES, *Ordo Populusque Nucerinus*, nn. 127 e 128.

<sup>47</sup> Per il dibattito su alcune altre possibilità del significato di *presbytéra* e di *grammateús*, rinvio a DE' SPAGNOLIS, 'Una testimonianza ebraica', 243-51, con ampia bibliografia sull'argomento.



## Innkeepers, Ship-owners, Prostitutes Three 'Female' Business Activities

IRENE CHRESTOU

Female professions, in other words activities and serviced provided for a fee in Byzantium's medieval society, may be distinguished into two groups: those in which women assisted their fathers or husbands in the latter's business activities and those where women practiced a profession on their own, without support from a male member of their family. The first instance includes the profession of innkeeper (*κάπηλος*). In the second, where women worked alone, there was a wide array of professions which included, among others, the *μίμος* (= actress), who also worked as a prostitute, as well as the *ναυκλήρισσα* (= ship-owner). With these activities women contributed to family finances and in certain cases earned the means for their subsistence, if they were unwed or widowed.

It is interesting to observe that two of the professions mentioned above were practiced by two women, Theodora in the sixth century and Theophano in the tenth, in private life, before they ascended the throne as the wives of emperors. At the same time, the third profession was deemed unworthy as a means of earning money by a member of the imperial family, through another royal consort, Theodora, in the ninth century.

Theodora,<sup>1</sup> wife of Emperor Justinian I (527–565), before she was discovered by the then heir to the throne, who changed the law so that he could marry her,<sup>2</sup> was a professional actress in the Hippodrome.<sup>3</sup> According to the historian Procopius, who for his own political reasons made sure to reproach and mock in his *Secret History* or *Anecdota*,<sup>4</sup> the imperial couple and their immediate circle young Theodora was forced by the circumstances of her family life to participate as an actress, along with her older sister Comito, in the

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<sup>1</sup> With regard to modern literature on the life and personality of Theodora, I will selectively mention the studies of J.A. EVANS, *The Empress Theodora. Partner of Justinian*, Austin 2002; J.A. EVANS, *The Emperor Justinian and the Byzantine Empire*, Westport, CT – London 2005, in part. 33-48; J.A. EVANS, *The Power Game in Byzantium. Antonina and the Empress Theodora*, London – New York 2011. See also P. CESARETTI, *Teodora. Ascesa di un'imperatrice*, Milano 2003; A. CAMERON, *Procopius and the Sixth Century*, London – New York 1996, in part. 66-82; L. BRUBAKER, 'The Age of Justinian. Gender and Society', in M. MAAS (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, Cambridge 2005, 427-47. Of wider interest is the study of R. WEBB, *Demons and Dancers. Performance in Late Antiquity*, Cambridge 2008.

<sup>2</sup> *Codex Justinianus* 5.4.23. This law prescribed that a penitent actress could petition the emperor for permission to marry a man in high office or, if the repentant woman had been awarded an honorific title in the meantime, she would have the right to marry without having to appeal to the emperor. Such was the case with Theodora, the first actress ever to be awarded the dignity of *patrikia*, because of her attachment to Justinian. Along with Theodora, other fellow actresses also benefited; see Procopius, *Historia arcana (Anecdota)*, G. WIRTH (ed.) (post J. Haury), *Procopii Caesariensis opera omnia*, vol. 3, Leipzig 1963, 17-35.

<sup>3</sup> A. KAZDHAN, s.v. 'mime', *The Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 1-3, New York – Oxford 1991, 1375.

<sup>4</sup> On the subject of Procopius and *Historia arcana*, see for instance A. CAMERON, *Procopius and the Sixth Century*, Berkeley – Los Angeles 1985 (cf. S. TOUGHER, 'Review Discussion, Cameron and Beyond', *Histos* 1 (1997), 205-10, in the work's second edition, Routledge 1996). Especially on Procopius and Theodora, see among others: E.A. FISHER, 'Theodora and Antonina in the *Historia Arcana*: History and/or Fiction', *Arethusa* 11 (1978), 253-79 (cf. the reprint in J. PERADOTTO – J.P. SULLIVAN (eds.), *Women in the Ancient World. The Arethusa Papers*, Albany 1984, 287-313); K. ADSHEAD, 'The Secret History of Procopius and its Genesis', *Byzantion* 63 (1993), 19-28; L. BRUBAKER, 'Sex, Lies and Textuality. The Secret History of Prokopios and the Rhetoric of Gender in Sixth-Century Byzantium', in L. BRUBAKER – J.M.H. SMITH (eds.) *Gender in the Early Medieval World, East and West, AD 300-900*, Cambridge 2004, 83-101.

spectacles at the Hippodrome, in the public areas of theaters and in private shows at the houses of the rich and powerful.<sup>5</sup> In the collective mentality of Byzantine society, the acting profession was connected to that of courtesan<sup>6</sup> and actors were disapproved of in both civil and ecclesiastical legislation. It was this connection between actress and prostitute that Procopius stresses in chapter 9 of the *Secret History*, where he uses the rhetoric device of *ψόγος* (invective) to paint a very dark picture of the activities and conduct of Theodora as an adolescent and a young woman: when her mother promoted her children on the theater stage in order of age, the oldest (Comito) had already won a distinguished place among the courtesans of her time, while Theodora escorted her as her assistant during shows and when she matured (apparently at the age of 12) she began to work in theater and immediately became a prostitute, indeed a second-class one (*πεζή*).<sup>7</sup> It is obvious, therefore, that their mother pushed the girls of the family into a profession she herself knew, so that after their father's death and their abandonment by the circus faction of the Greens they would be able to survive in the Constantinopolitan circles, which could be very harsh for a woman and her three underage daughters.

When Theodora became empress, she took particular care of unfortunate women, as even her greatest enemy, Procopius, admits in one of his official works.<sup>8</sup> Under her influence, Justinian's legislation made provisions for women to become financially independent. Furthermore, Novel 14 outlawed the activities of pimps, as well as the existence of 'houses of pleasure' in the capital and the Empire's major cities; of course this law was never enforced, but it proved Theodora's care for her former co-workers.<sup>9</sup> Finally, she built a monastery called *Tὰ Μετανοίας*, in other word a convent for penitent courtesans, where nuns and pious women attempted to rehabilitate 'loose' women.<sup>10</sup>

*Μιμάδες*,<sup>11</sup> *ὀρχηστρίδες* (= chorus girls),<sup>12</sup> and *θυμελικοί* (women who danced, sang and played music),<sup>13</sup> that also practiced prostitution are not found very often in hagiographical texts,<sup>14</sup> where on the contrary there are frequent references to prostitutes who, with the help of a male or female saint, repented and returned to a life of virtue.<sup>15</sup>

Women often worked at inns, hotels, hostels and highway stations, contributing to the family income. Inscriptions and hagiographical texts contain information regarding women who helped their husbands keep lodgings for soldiers and travelers or a tavern offering food and entertainment in urban or semi-urban

<sup>5</sup> Procopius, *Historia arcana*, 9.17.

<sup>6</sup> See H.J. MAGOULIAS, 'Bathhouse, Inn, Tavern, Prostitution and the Stage as seen in the Lives of the Saints of the Sixth and Seventh Centuries', *Επετηρίς Εταιρείας Βυζαντινών Σπουδών* 38 (1971), 232-52, in part. 247-48; S. LEONTSINI, *Die Prostitution im frühen Byzanz*, Wien 1989, 123. J. BEAUCAMP, *Le Statut de la femme à Byzance (4e-7e siècle), II: Les pratiques sociales* (Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation de Byzance, Collège de France, Monographies 6), Paris 1992, 338, n. 1, observes that the terms *πόρνη*, *μιμάς* and *εταίρις* are not always identical. See also E.L. MARGAROU, *Τίτλοι και επαγγελματικά ονόματα γυναικών στο Βυζάντιο. Συμβολή στη μελέτη για τη θέση της γυναίκας στη βυζαντινή κοινωνία*, (Βυζαντινά κείμενα και μελέται, Κέντρο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών), Thessaloniki 2000, 220, n. 1, which cites examples of the characterization of actresses as prostitutes-courtesans.

<sup>7</sup> Procopius, *Historia arcana*, 9.11-12.

<sup>8</sup> Procopius, *De bellis*, G. WIRTH (ed.) (post J. Haury), 7.31.14.

<sup>9</sup> Novella 14, R. SCHÖLL – G. KROLL (eds), *Novellae, Corpus Juris Civilis*, vol. III, Berlin 1895 (repr. 1972).

<sup>10</sup> Procopius, *De Aedificiis*, G. WIRTH (ed.) (post J. Haury) I 9.6-10.

<sup>11</sup> MARGAROU, *Τίτλοι*, 238-40.

<sup>12</sup> MARGAROU, *Τίτλοι*, 242-43. See L. RYDÉN (ed.), *The Life of Andrew the Fool*, Uppsala 1995, 2376-7.

<sup>13</sup> MARGAROU, *Τίτλοι*, 222.

<sup>14</sup> *The Life of Andrew the Fool*, 2206-10, 2433-43. Cf. A.J. FESTUGIÈRE – L. RYDÉN (eds.), *Léontios de Néapolis, Vie de Syméon le Fou et Vie de Jean de Chypre*, Paris 1974, 154-55.

<sup>15</sup> K. ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ, *Η γυναίκα στη μέση βυζαντινή εποχή. Κοινωνικά πρότυπα και καθημερινός βίος στα αγιολογικά κείμενα*, (Εθνικό Ίδρυμα Ερευνών. Ινστιτούτο Βυζαντινών Ερευνών, Μονογραφίες 6), Athens 2005, 292-93, with references to the relevant lives of saints.

centers,<sup>16</sup> or women who owned hostels without any co-operation from men. The case of St. Theodore of Sykeon is characteristic: he was born of a Byzantine official spending a night in the arms of Maria, who owned an inn with her mother and sister.<sup>17</sup>

The association of women who worked in such establishments with prostitution was self-evident in the eyes of the Byzantines.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, we ought to be surprised that a young woman of unknown and 'vulgar' origins, an innkeeper's daughter, very attractive, by the name of Anastasia-Anastaso, would in the middle of the tenth century become the wife of Romanos II, heir to the throne, and be renamed Theophano (= manifested by God).<sup>19</sup> If we take it for granted that the female members of an innkeeper's family would assist him in his work, as is often mentioned in hagiographical texts,<sup>20</sup> it is easy to imagine the place where young Romanos, who had a propensity for entertainment and the joys of life,<sup>21</sup> met the gorgeous Anastaso.

Contrary to the impeccable behavior of Theodora, who after ascending the throne became Justinian's rock and was not blamed for her private life, apart from the suspicion mentioned by Procopius that she had fallen in love with one of her servants, a rumor that she herself hastened to dissolve by evicting the youth from the palace,<sup>22</sup> Theophano's conduct was anything but impeccable. Her love for John Tzimiskes and her participation in the plot to assassinate her husband, Emperor Nikephoros, was the culmination of a series of actions, such as rumored attempts to poison members of the imperial family.<sup>23</sup> The assassination of the emperor did not lead, as she had hoped, to a marriage with the new ruler, but to a denial on his part and her exile. She returned to the palace only after her lover's death, when the reins of power fell to the hands of her son, Basil II, and nothing is heard of her since.

Theophano's origin, her rise to the highest position a woman in the Byzantine Empire could occupy and especially her romantic affair with Tzimiskes, which ended in murder, have served as background to literary works and plays. It is the same motif that fascinated modern literary authors, even poets too, and prompted them to deal with her, as they did with Theodora as well.<sup>24</sup> The low-born yet enchanting woman, whose past was scandalous because of her profession, seduces the heir to the Byzantine throne and rises to high office, while at the same time receiving the submission and reverence of the empire's

<sup>16</sup> See NIKOLAOU, *H γυναικα*, 286; MAGOULIAS, *Bathhouse*, 240-46.

<sup>17</sup> A.J. FESTUGIÈRE (ed.), *Vie de Théodore de Sykéon*, Bruxelles 1970, ch. 3.

<sup>18</sup> NIKOLAOU, *H γυναικα*, 286. See MAGOULIAS, *Bathhouse*, 240-46 and MARGAROU, *Τίτλοι*, 227-29, 241-42, 243.

<sup>19</sup> Skylitzes, I. THURN (ed.), *Ioannis Skylitzae, Synopsis Historiarum* (CFHB), Berlin 1973, 240, 246. See also Zonaras, Th. BÜTTNER-WOBST (ed.), *Ioannis Zonarae, Epitomae historiarum libri XIII-XVIII*, I-III (CSHB), vol. III, Bonn 1897, 485. Cf. Leon Diaconus, C.B. HASE (ed.), *Leonis Diaconi Caloënsis, Historiae libri decem* (CSHB), Bonn 1828, 31. Theophanes Continuatus, I. BEKKER (ed.), *Theophanes Continuatus, Ioannes Cameniata, Symeon Magister, Georgius Monachus* (CSHB), Bonn 1838, 458 and Leon Diaconus, 49, attempt to beautify Theophano's lineage. See Vat. Gr. 163, A. MARKOPOULOS (ed.), 'Le témoignage du Vaticanus gr. pour la période entre 945-963', *Σύμμεικτα* 3 (1979), 94, ch. 10.

<sup>20</sup> See MAGOULIAS, *Bathhouse*.

<sup>21</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, 472; Leon Diaconus, 6; Skylitzes, 248, 253.

<sup>22</sup> Procopius, *Historia Arcana* 16.9-16.

<sup>23</sup> Leon Diaconus, 84-92; Skylitzes, 279-81 (Theophano's participation in the assassination of Nikephoros). Leon Diaconus, 31; Skylitzes, 246, 255 (rumors regarding the attempt to poison members of the imperial family).

<sup>24</sup> Theodora became a heroine of literary, theatrical and cinematic works, and the first modern author to immortalize her was French novelist and playwright Victorien Sardou (1831-1908), in the theatrical play *Théodora* (1884), with contemporary star Sarah Bernhardt in the leading role. Greek playwright Georgios Roussos (1910-1984), as well as actress and playwright-adaptor Mimi Denissi (1953-), produced plays inspired by the life of Theodora. See G. ROUSSOS, *Θεοδόρα η Μεγάλη* (Theodora the Great), Athens 1968 and M. DENISSI, *Θεοδόρα η αγία των φτωχών* (Theodora, Saint of the Poor, Athens 1996). Roussos also wrote a novel about Theodora, titled *Φλογισμένη Πορφύρα* (Fiery Purple, last edition, Athens 2011). On the same subject, including the filmography on Theodora, see Pr. MARCINIAR, 'And the Oscar Goes to... the Emperor! Byzantium in the Cinema', in I. NILSSON – P. STEPHENSON (eds), *Wanted Byzantium. The Desire for a Lost Empire*, Uppsala 2014, 247-55, in part. 249-50.

subject's and officials. In the case of Theophano, fiction had more reasons to deal with her: adultery and murder.<sup>25</sup>

Theodora, the wife of Theophilos, heir to the throne, is not accused of improper or scandalous behavior before her marriage and it is certain that she did not practice any profession. She came from one of the empire's provinces, Paphlagonia; her father was in the military, but did not hold a high rank in the hierarchy of provincial administration. It is possible that the family was in the merchant marine business and that it possessed some wealth and connections.<sup>26</sup> This, however, is deduced from the business activities of the region's inhabitants (seafaring and swine herding) and not from any specific testimonies referring to the family of Theodora. In actual fact, we are not informed as to the reasons why she and her family were chosen to be honored with marriage into the imperial family. It is generally accepted<sup>27</sup> that Theodora was selected along with other candidates to form a body of beautiful young maidens, from among whose number young Theophilos would choose the one suitable to become his wife.<sup>28</sup> That was Theodora, who lived with the emperor until 842 and after his death was for 14 years regent to her underage son Michael. She became famous in Byzantine history and is celebrated as a saint by the Eastern Orthodox Church because she was the one who permanently restored the veneration of icons and put an end in the internal strife between Iconoclasts and Iconophiles that had lasted for more than 100 years.<sup>29</sup>

The reason that we are interested in her in this context is an original one. Contrary to previous empresses, Theodora was involved in business transactions while on the throne. The incident described by contemporary authors is characteristic: Theophilos, who took a particular interest in the commercial activities of his subjects, saw from the palace one morning a magnificent, heavy-laden ship sailing on the sea. He wanted to know to whom the merchantman belonged and, when he found out that it was the property of the Augusta, he ordered it burned along with its cargo. His argument was it was not possible for him, an emperor, to be turned into a ship-owner by his wife and he wondered who among the Roman emperors or their wives had ever been involved with commerce.<sup>30</sup> The profession of ship-owner was practiced by men and women who might have been wealthy, but within the stratification of Byzantine society belonged to the middle class. Thus, apart from the fact that never before had an imperial family been involved with any type of trade, it was even more demeaning for one of its members to have a share in commercial interests, however lucrative they might be.

<sup>25</sup> Theophano was the main character in works written by Greek literary authors and playwrights, such as Angelos TERZAKIS (1907–1979), who originally wrote a novel about the *augusta* (*Theophano*, Athens 1953) and three years later a play with the same title, which was staged many times in Greek theaters. Furthermore, Kostas KYRIAZIS (1920–1991), who was particularly active in the field of Byzantine historical novels, wrote the novel *Θεοφανώ, η εστεμμένη φόνισσα* (*Theophano, Murderess with a Crown*, Athens 1963). These authors had been preceded at the turn of the twentieth century by Pol. DEMETRAKOPOULOS, who wrote the Byzantine-themed novel *Theophano* (1906). Furthermore, other Greek authors, among them N. Kazantzakis (1883–1957), also wrote plays set in the time of Nikephoros Phokas. Theophano was also the heroine of F. Harrison's novel *Theophano, the Crusade of the Tenth Century. A Romantic Monograph*, London 1904.

<sup>26</sup> J. HERRIN, *Women in Purple. Rulers of Medieval Byzantium*, London 2001, 188.

<sup>27</sup> HERRIN, *Women in Purple*.

<sup>28</sup> The events surrounding the selection of Theodora as wife of Emperor Theophilos survive in two versions. See Pseudo-Symeon, in *Theophanes Continuatus*, 624–25; cf. *Symeonis Magistri et Logothetae Chronicon*, St. WAHLGREN (ed.) (CFHB), Berlin 2006, 216 and A. MARKOPOULOS, 'Βίος της αυτοκράτειρας Θεοδώρας (BHG 1731)' *Σύμμεικτα* 5 (1983), 249–85, in part. 259–60.

<sup>29</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, 148–54. Unlikely to the other two empresses, Greek literary authors showed little interest in Theodora, wife of Theophilos, whereas Kassiane, her rival in the beauty contest designed to single out a wife for the emperor, became the protagonist of a Greek-language novel by Georgios Roussos, titled *Κασσιανή, στέμμα και ράσο* (*Kassiane, the Crown and the Habit*, Athens 1952) and of a film by the same name (1960). See MARCINIAK, 'And the Oscar goes', 253. On Kassiane, see I. ROCHOW, *Studien zu der Person, den Werken und dem Nachleben der Dichterin Kassia*, Berlin 1967.

<sup>30</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, 88–89. Cf. Skylitzes, 51. See K. ΝΙΚΟΛΑΟΥ, 'Οι γυναίκες στο Βίο και τα έργα του Θεοφίλου', *Σύμμεικτα* 9 (1994), 137–51, in part. 142–43.

Theodora's dealing with financial issues and the proper management of public finances is also proven by the fact that, when she was forced to leave the regency, she convened the Senate, to which she gave a financial account of her reign, stating that the wealth she had left the treasury had been accumulated by her husband Theophilos, as well as by herself after his death.<sup>31</sup>

Women who are involved in commerce and the shipping of goods are not often found in textual sources. On the other hand, there is a dedicatory inscription which mentions a woman ship-owner, Eustochiane, who paid for the decoration of a sixth-century church on the island of Kos with mosaics.<sup>32</sup>

There is a clear classification and differentiation, as far as female initiative or involuntary acquiescence-consent to forced choices is concerned, in the three professions that, as we briefly presented above, were practiced among others by three exceptional Byzantine women. The case of Theodora, who worked as an actress (*μυμώς*) and concomitantly offered her services as a courtesan, constitutes a characteristic instance of a young woman without a protector, coming from a financially insecure background and a low social stratum, unable to follow any way of subsistence other than the one imposed on her by her mother. The environment into which she was born and raised, as well as her family's social status, left her no option, given the fact that not only state law but also the views prevailing at the time allowed no escape and no social upward mobility. In the case of inn-keepers there is a small-scale but essential differentiation. Women who worked at inns also came from the lower classes, but they were of higher social standing compared to the former. They practiced their profession under the supervision, and if necessary the protection, of their father or husband, in whose work for the most part they assisted. Of course, there were also instances of independent business activity, but they usually involved widows or orphaned daughters of innkeepers. The third case, that of ship-owners and of Empress Theodora in particular, is different on many levels. To begin with, women involved in that type of business venture belonged to the middle class, acceptable to their circle and morally impeccable. Their autonomous business activities presupposed a degree of initiative-taking and demanded complex mental processes that cast doubt over the female ideal model that was put forward, by attributing masculine qualities and skills to women. Perhaps this is one of the causes behind the rarity of women attested as ship-owners and a further reason that explains the violent reaction of Theophilos.

Even if women had the capacity, the opportunities and the qualifications to go into business for themselves, they collided with the stereotypes of a male chauvinist society, which limited their field of action, confining them to professions lacking in social acceptance and distinction. In other words, Byzantines, at least when it came to perceptions, sought (with success) to keep women away from the business arena, in which, however, some of those women managed to put up a fight, facing a greater or lesser degree of difficulty.

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<sup>31</sup> Theophanes Continuatus, 171-72. Cf. Skylitzes, 95-96.

<sup>32</sup> K. MENTZOU-MEIMARE, 'Η παρουσία της γυναίκας στις ελληνικές επιγραφές από τον Δ' μέχρι τον Ι' μ.Χ. αιώνα', *XVII Internationaler Byzantinistenkongress. Akten, Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 32/2 (1982), 433-44, in part. 438, n° 97. See NIKOLAOU, *Η γυναίκα*, 295.





# Powerful Women in Byzantine Liguria (554-568). An Analysis of Late Antique Aristocracies based on Historical, Epigraphic and Archaeological Sources

PAOLO DE VINGO

The aim of this contribution is to develop methodological-based considerations regarding a very complex issue: the relationship between archaeological research and the history of social groups and, specifically, the use of archaeological indicators to reconstruct various aspects of the transformation of Italian ruling groups between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. In particular, the analysis will focus on the role played by women during this period of change, examining a small but important group of epigraphic and archaeological sources from one of the areas reconquered by Justinian I after 553, i.e., the western Ligurian coastal zone. This area, the *Liguria Maritima* – governed by the *municipia* of *Albintimilium* (Ventimiglia), *Albingaunum* (Albenga) and *Vada Sabatia-Savo* (Vado Ligure-Savona) where political as well as episcopal hierarchies arose after 476 – remained under direct Byzantine control until 643 when it was conquered by the Langobards, like the rest of the territory that, from a socio-political perspective, formed the Roman-age *Regio IX* (fig. 1).<sup>1</sup>

While this is, obviously, a limited perspective – since it does not take into account the numerous variables that, during the same period, involved other Italian regions governed for some time by the Byzantine authorities – it is also no less interesting, since during the transition of the Italian Late Roman society to the early medieval epoch the regions that once again fell under Byzantine control were of fundamental importance.<sup>2</sup>

These specific territorial contexts preserved the organisational form of the Roman State during the Late Antique centuries and, as such, played a leading role in the transition of this political-cultural legacy to the early medieval period. Such contexts were the main players in the complex transformation of the socio-economic organisational structure of the early Byzantine world following Justinian's reconquest, and during the profound changes that took place in the Italian peninsula between the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> and early 7<sup>th</sup> century. Finally, owing to their ties with the eastern authorities, the Italian Byzantine areas continued to be a privileged and active sector of a society that was quite complex – probably more intricate and structured than that of the Langobards which also continued to feel the effects – and characterised by extensive mobility.<sup>3</sup>

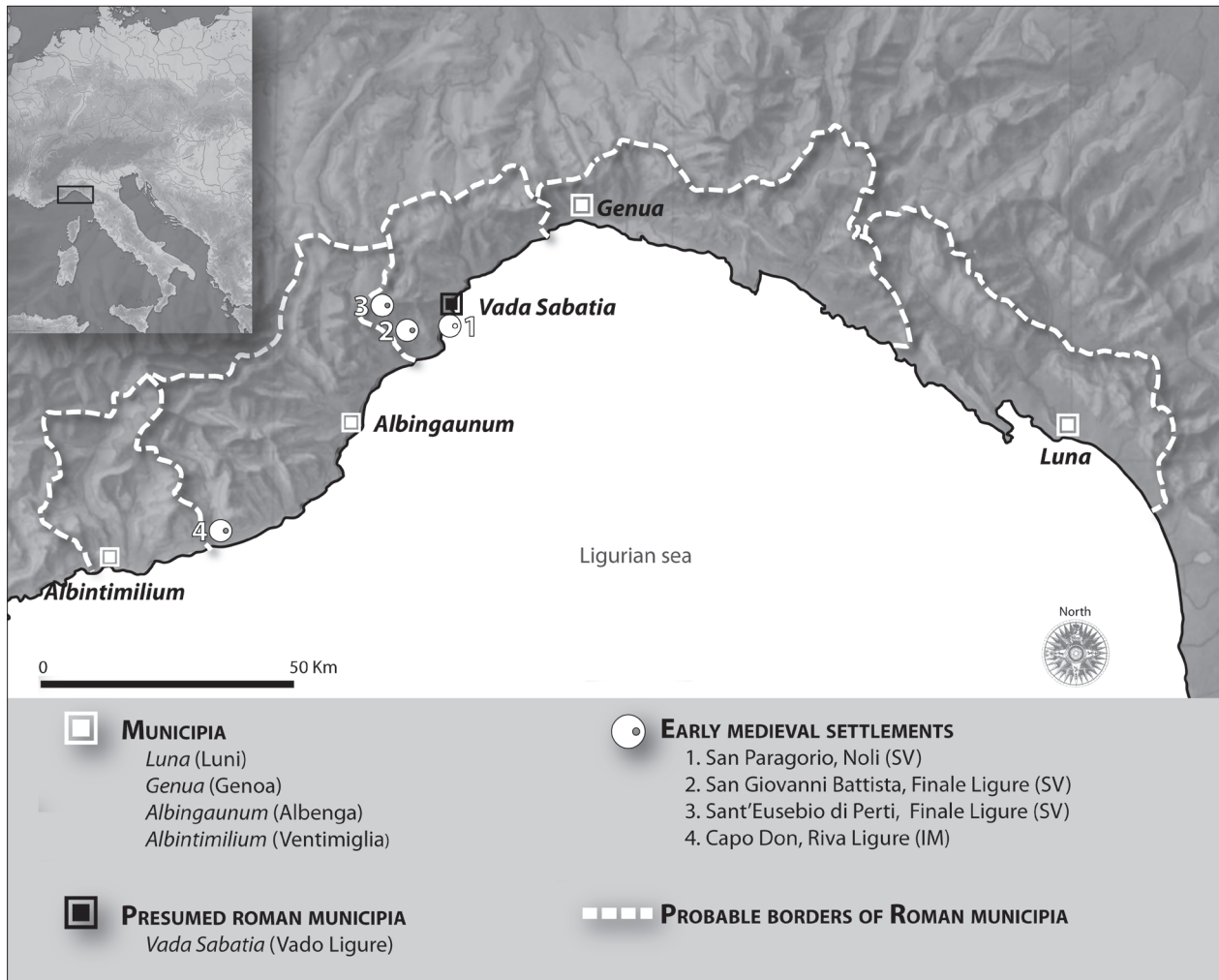
Based on these considerations it becomes necessary, first and foremost, to define – in a more precise manner than what has been realised to this point – the characteristics of the ruling social classes in the second half of the 6<sup>th</sup> century, and to use written sources along with traditional archaeological indicators to sub-

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<sup>1</sup> P. DE VINGO, 'Le trasformazioni insediative urbane nella *Liguria maritima* tra il V e il VII secolo sulla base delle fonti scritte e delle fonti archeologiche', in C. VARALDO (cur.), *Ai confini dell'impero. Insediamenti e fortificazioni bizantine nel Mediterraneo occidentale* (Conference Proceedings, Genova-Bordighera 14-17 March 2002), Bordighera 2011, 323-407, in part. 323-24.

<sup>2</sup> E. ZANINI, 'Archeologia dello status sociale nell'Italia bizantina. Tracce, segni e modelli interpretative', in G.P. BROGIOLO – A. CHAVARRIA ARNAU (curr.), *Archeologia e Società tra tardo antico e alto medioevo* (Documenti di Archeologia 44), Mantua 2007, 23-46, in part. 23.

<sup>3</sup> ZANINI, 'Archeologia dello status sociale', 23-24.



**Fig. 1:** The territory of *Liguria Maritima* between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages with locations of known or presumed Roman *municipia* (© Rossana Managlia).

stantiate the role played by women in such a changing/transforming society and, specifically, in the *Liguria Maritima* prior to the Langobard conquest that would trigger an irreversible process of social change.

### Archaeology of Social Status in Byzantine Italy

The characteristics of Italian society after 564 were extremely complex since it is almost never clear who truly wielded power and, above all, which authority or system of social relationships could legitimately wield such power. The letters written by Saint Gregory the Great are indicative of this situation since they outline minor as well as significant injustices by members of the central administration against the local functionaries, by components of the religious hierarchies to the disadvantage of the military ones, and by them to the detriment of all the others, with different explanations for each mechanism.

Firstly, the long-term development of a kind of ‘personalisation of power’ implies that the relationships between members of the various hierarchies were not necessarily established in a definitive manner but tended instead to change, in a territory whose features and characteristics differed from others, in relation to individual status and depending on the strong or weak character of those holding individual offices. A second explanation could be the rapid change, over the years, of the role and importance of individual aristocracies, that in this case also involved a complex interaction between the collective fortunes of a social ‘class’ and the individual

successes of some of its members. A final reason could be the complex transformations that occurred within each social group in relation to the change of a multitude of distinct factors over time.

There is no doubt that the power of the senatorial landowning aristocracy, as a social class in the Italian political scene, declined during this period. In particular, it progressively lost its traditional role as rulers while the individual social and economic status of its individual members gradually decreased and finally disappeared. This entailed a long-term process, that began in the 5<sup>th</sup> century and continued into the 6<sup>th</sup>, to end definitively in the 7<sup>th</sup>, with the even formal break-up of the Byzantine social hierarchy, as well as a complex change, that developed at different rates, involving a progressive loss in political leadership, which began already in Late Antiquity, along with an even greater loss, during the Byzantine centuries, in social role and, above all, economic prosperity.<sup>4</sup>

Another equally interesting aspect is the transition of a significant number of members of the old ruling class into the roles of the new hegemonic classes, i.e., the ecclesiastic hierarchies, through a long and intricate phase that also had important 'gender' aspects.<sup>5</sup>

The profound crisis of the landowning aristocracy does not coincide in any manner with the total disappearance of the social hierarchization since the decline of the old ruling class corresponded to the rapid success of the new and complex elite whose members were continuously being defined. Hence, this can be considered a composite elite, which included first and foremost members of the military and ecclesiastic hierarchies, but also those with positions in the government, provincial and local administrations. However, it should also be recalled that it was individual status rather than the office held for which individuals were considered members of that elite. It is almost redundant to emphasise how some members of the new ruling class, the administrative bureaucracy and, at least initially the military hierarchies, wielded their power above all in cities, which continued to act as the nodal points of the administrative, defensive, economic and fiscal system of Byzantine Italy.

One of the factors linked in some way with the local characteristics is the ethnicity of the large groups of the new ruling class, since functionaries and military commanders, at least up to the mid 7<sup>th</sup> century, came from the eastern areas, spoke Greek and were the direct expression of a society, like the early Byzantine one, that during these decades underwent a profound social and cultural transformation. It is no coincidence that the few written sources that refer to western Liguria during this period would seem to confirm that outsiders played military command roles, as with the *comes et tribunus Tzittanus*, husband of Honorata, in Albenga in 568, for which an Armenian origin is proposed.<sup>6</sup> A similar situation is confirmed by a document from Ravenna, dated 591, that refers to someone called Rusticana, described as the Roman wife of an Armenian soldier.<sup>7</sup>

The continued presence in the Byzantine Mediterranean of a monetary-based economy created the conditions for which the poorest and most dynamic parts of a middle class consisting of artisans, merchants and middle-level functionaries, could aspire to achieve high social visibility and enjoy freedom of action, which traditionally were denied to them.<sup>8</sup> As a consequence, through a non-linear process, the old ruling

<sup>4</sup> T.S. BROWN, *Gentlemen and Officers. Imperial Administration and Aristocratic Power in Byzantine Italy (AD 554-800)*, Rome 1984, 21-37.

<sup>5</sup> M.R. SALZMAN, *The Making of a Christian Aristocracy. Social and Religious Change in the Western Roman Empire*, Cambridge 2002; R.W. MATHISEN, 'The Christianisation of the Late Roman Senatorial Order. Circumstances and Scholarship', *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 9 (2002), 257-78.

<sup>6</sup> BROWN, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 75-76.

<sup>7</sup> BROWN, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 104; P. SKINNER, *Le donne nell'Italia medievale*, Rome 2011, 41.

<sup>8</sup> E. ZANINI, 'Le città dell'Italia bizantina. Qualche appunto per un'agenda della ricerca', in C. VARALDO (ed.), *Ai confini dell'impero. Insediamenti e fortificazioni bizantine nel Mediterraneo occidentale* (Conference Proceedings, Genova-Bordighera 14-17 March 2002), Bordighera 2011, 173-98, in part. 180-81.

class was replaced by one or more new ruling groups, and a change occurred owing to the success of a new social hierarchization model, with the birth of a new and internally highly differentiated class of *potentiores*, that included all those who, with different titles and in various degrees and forms, were able to play a socially active role.<sup>9</sup>

In the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries the presence in the *Liguria Maritima* of a specific component like that of the local *possessores*, supported by the Byzantine civil and military hierarchies, emerges not so much from the rare written sources but from the archaeological and above all the epigraphic ones. The presence in *Albinganum* (Albenga) of at least two rural churches with cemeteries (S. Calocero and S. Vittore) indicates that the *municipium* had social characteristics in which leading political offices had to be assigned and managed by a class that had acquired power and political legitimacy.<sup>10</sup>

The areas outside the previously indicated main urban contexts also had burial centres located near large baptismal churches (S. Paragorio-Noli, S. Giovanni-Finale Ligure, Capo Don-Riva Ligure): this provides direct evidence of the presence of a social class, with specific cultural characteristics, that requested privileged funerary environments, with burials in sarcophaguses and in masonry structures.<sup>11</sup> The first case refers to stone sarcophaguses with a monolithic, double sloping cover and *acroteria angularia*, on which surfaces are decorated with double crosses in relief – generally with a processional cross on one side and another with equilateral arms on the opposite side (**fig. 2**) – similar to a model that starting from the 4<sup>th</sup> century was widely diffused in the Mediterranean and in the transalpine area based on an iconographic model utilised extensively in the 8<sup>th</sup> century Merovingian sarcophaguses in France. Such artefacts allow us to infer the presence of an ecclesial hierarchy with a hierarchical order and clients, i.e., members of the elite social class, who demanded privileged burials.

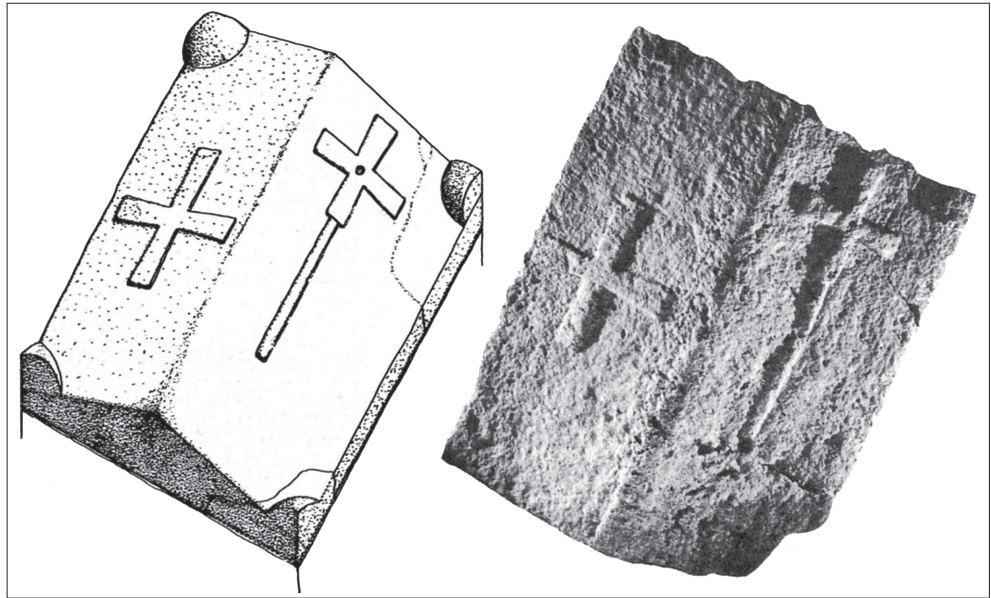
The social and cultural standard of these classes is also exemplified by refined funerary epigraphs that in some cases contain solemn poems written in metric verses. This is the case of *Heliades* and of the anonymous *ancilla Dei* of *Albinganum* (Albenga), of the *bonae memoriae Maria claro veniens de stirpe parentum* found in the cathedral of capo Don, of the girl *Paula* whose inscription in dactylic verses comes from S. Giovanni (Finale Ligure) and, above all, of the *Domina Lidoria* (**fig. 3**), reutilised in a burial in the baptismal church of S. Paragorio in Noli.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> E. ZANINI, 'Artisan and Traders in the Early Byzantine City. Exploring the Limits of Archaeological Evidence', in W. BOWDEN – A. GUTRIDGE – C. MACHADO (eds.), *The Social and Political Archaeology of Late Antiquity*, LAA 31 (2007), 373-411, in part. 378-79.

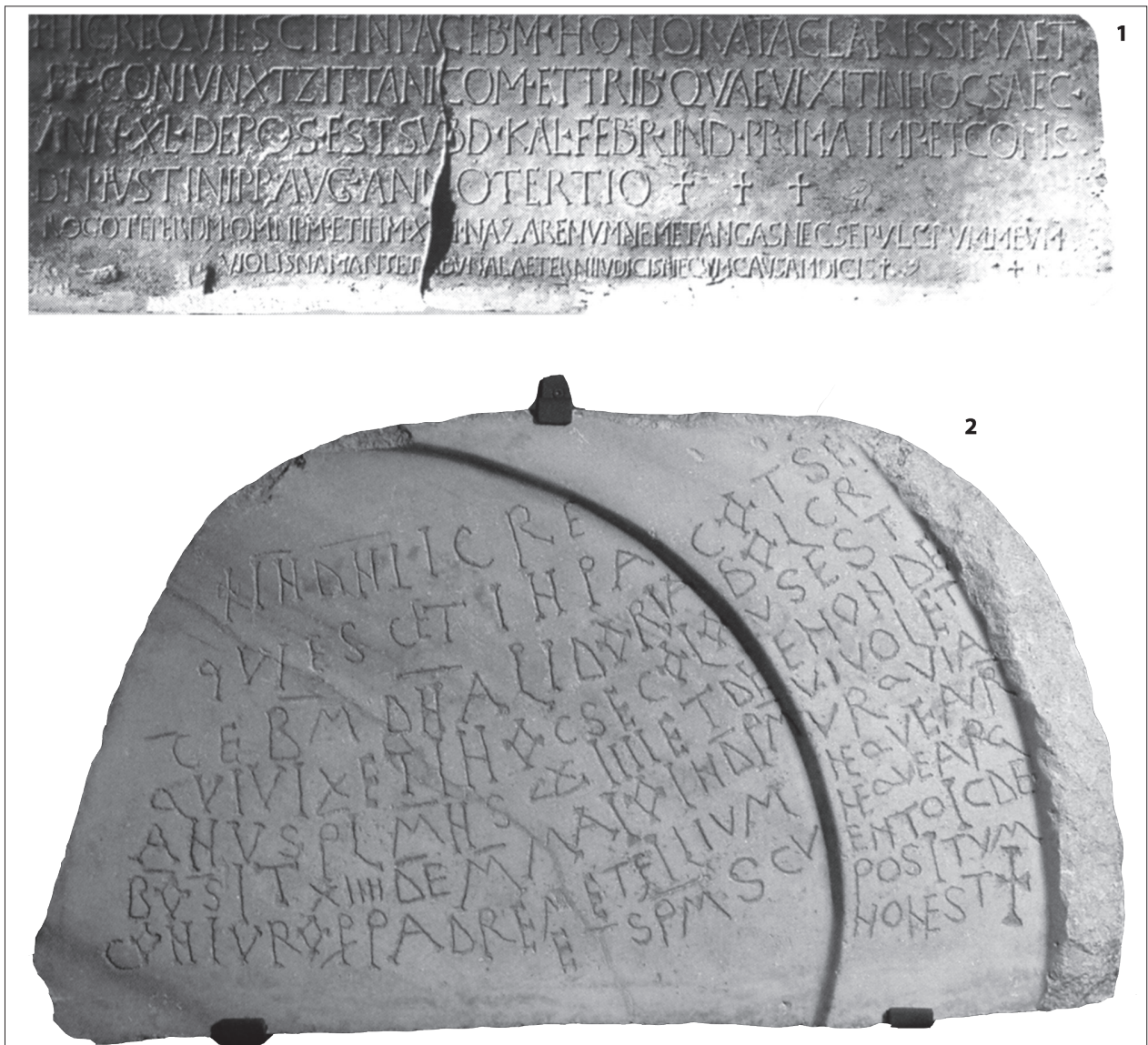
<sup>10</sup> G. MURIALDO, 'Conclusioni: il *castrum* di S. Antonino nell'Italia nord-occidentale in età bizantino-longobarda', in T. MANNONI – G. MURIALDO (eds.), *S. Antonino. Un insediamento fortificato nella Liguria bizantina*, Bordighera 2001, 749-96, in part. 770-71.

<sup>11</sup> A. FRONDONI – P. DE VINGO – L. GAMBARO, 'La basilica paleocristiana e l'area archeologica di Riva Ligure (Imperia): gli ultimi risultati di scavo', in O. BRANDT – S. CRESCI – J.L. QUIROGA – C. PAPPALARDO (eds.), *Episcopus, Civitas, Territorium* (Acta XV Congressus Internationalis Archaeologiae Christianae, Toleti, 8-12 settembre 2008), Città del Vaticano 2013, 1279-302, in part. 1281-82.

<sup>12</sup> N. LAMBOGLIA, 'Il recupero dell'iscrizione paleocristiana *ancilla tua* (CIL V 7795)', *RII* 20 (1965), 22-24, in part. 22; PH. PERGOLA – P. BATTISTELLI – F. COCCHINI – M. GIACOBELLI – E.M. LORETI – R. MARTORELLI, 'Nuove ricerche sul complesso paleocristiano tardoantico e altomedievale di Capo Don a Riva Ligure', *Bollettino d'Arte* 55 (1989), 45-56, in part. 51-52; G. MENNELLA – G. COCCOLUTO, *Regio IX. Liguria reliqua trans et cis Appenninum* (Inscriptiones Christianae Italiae IX), Bari 1995, 119-20; N. LAMBOGLIA, 'L'iscrizione paleocristiana della Pieve del Finale', *RSL* 12 (1956), 226-31, in part. 226-27; A. FRONDONI, 'La cristianizzazione in Liguria tra costa ed entroterra: alcuni esempi (V-IX secolo)', in M.R. CARRA BONACASA – E. VITALE (eds.), *La cristianizzazione in Italia fra tardoantico e altomedioevo*, Proceedings of the 9<sup>th</sup> National Congress of Christian Archaeology, I, Palermo 2007, 765-66, in part. 745-78; P. DE VINGO, 'Églises baptismales, églises et chapelles funéraires dans les zones rurales de la Ligurie occidentale aux premiers siècles du haut Moyen Âge', in O. ACHÓN – P. DE VINGO – T. JUÁREZ – J. MIQUEL – J. PINAR (eds.), *Eglésies rurals a Catalunya entre l'Antiguitat i l'Edat Mitjana (segles V-X)*, (Round Table Proceedings, Esparraguera – Montserrat 25-27 October 2007), Bologna 2011a, 125-59, in part. 144-48.



**Fig. 2:** Graphic reconstruction of a sarcophagus cover with form and dimensions similar to those indicated in the text (© Rossana Managlia).



**Fig. 3:** Sepulchral epigraphs of *ancilla tua* (1) (from de Vingo 2011b, fig. 8.3, 336), *Maria* (2) (from de Vingo 2011a, fig. 15, 148), *Paula* (3) (from de Vingo 2011a, fig. 13.3, 144).

### The Forms of Representation of Power

Of the previously mentioned epigraphs, those of Honorata – even though the original location is unknown it can be assumed that it was placed on her grave and therefore in a private space rather than a public one – and of *Domina* Lidoria are explicit collective indicators of status since they celebrate a particular individual condition indicating the means through which the elite considered themselves and of how, as a consequence, they deemed it necessary to be represented. The linearity of the text and its compositional characteristics, in the first case, and the surface on which the dedication was engraved, in the second, would seem to confirm how the first subject had indirect contacts with the military hierarchy and how the second belonged, in a direct manner, to the administrative one.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to the ‘implicit’ indicators of status – those that, although part of a shared and perceivable language, do not explicitly qualify as the means for conveying a message of self-representation – it is also necessary to consider those individual or ‘explicit’ indicators that are not only simple accessory elements used to publically denote a status, but also the basic elements constituting a significant part of the social-political position since they are actively rather than passively involved in the formation of a social identity.<sup>14</sup>

Such a context can be linked to those objects placed in graves that are not part of the male or female costume but can be identified as ‘grave goods’, i.e. items that because of the quality and nature of the raw materials with which they were made and the means by which they were produced are potential indicators of a middle-high social condition and therefore of membership in that part of the population that could commission such elaborate artefacts and invest significant economic resources to buy them. Therefore, it is no coincidence that the grave of the *Domina* Lidoria, dated to the 6<sup>th</sup>–7<sup>th</sup> century, contains a glass bottle (5<sup>th</sup> century) that, although reused and similar to a type that was rather common in the Roman age, is an important indicator of a privileged social condition. In this case, even though each single archaeological artefact must be carefully evaluated, some considerations can be made taking into account above all how the Byzantine society in which the *Domina* Lidoria belonged no longer perceived the luxury object as something sought after or useable only in life but as an accessory and to some extent functional even after death. Hence, it could confirm how the person, next to whom the artefact was placed, could maintain his/her social position with respect to a consolidated system of values even in the journey into the afterlife. The luxury product, through the various material and immaterial factors based on which its quality was defined, represented an absolutely intrinsic and innate component in defining the social status of the person who possessed it.<sup>15</sup> In the early medieval society, that based its hierarchical structure on the economic wealth of individuals and on their membership in a more or less extensive group of those wielding power, the possession of luxury goods also denotes membership in these two contexts: it emphasises the real richness of the owner and certifies his/her membership in the group of those who had access to the complex mechanism involving the trade of the goods that could have been either purchased or received as a gift from those with even greater power.<sup>16</sup> Finally, it is also important to consider that where prestige represents an added value and in many cases is completely independent with respect to the intrinsic quality of the object, such value is determined because

<sup>13</sup> ZANINI, ‘Archeologia dello status sociale’, 29-31.

<sup>14</sup> K. BOWES – A. GUTTERIDGE, ‘Rethinking the Later Roman Landscape’, *JRA* 18 (2005), 405-13, in part. 411.

<sup>15</sup> A. CUTLER, ‘Uses of Luxury. On the Functions of Consumption and Symbolic Capital in Byzantine Culture’, in A. GUILLOU – J. DURAND (CUR.), *Byzance et les images*, Paris 1994, 287-327, in part. 326-27.

<sup>16</sup> ZANINI, ‘Archeologia dello status sociale’, 37-38.

the person being examined has a clearly recognisable position of membership, attribution or ties with a well-defined social group, no matter what it is.

### **Deciphering and Using All Available Sources**

Based on the epigraphs examined and after cross-referencing them with archaeological data, although limited and difficult to interpret, it is likely that there were women in the *Liguria Maritima* who belonged to an identifiable social group like the *potentiores* or *possessores* who were involved in managing even important socio-economic activities. The letters of Saint Gregory the Great confirm that in many cases women controlled large estates and therefore also had decision-making power at a local level in managing properties, taking personal responsibility for their decisions. The Gregorian documents clearly indicate that women lived according to Roman law that granted them a legal personality and considerable independence in administering their interests. This is also confirmed by the 'Ravenna papyri' which describe Flavia Xanthippi, daughter of an imperial secretary, who donated a property to the church of St Mary Major in Rome to increase its economic resources.<sup>17</sup>

In the letters written by Saint Gregory the Great 6<sup>th</sup> century Roman-Byzantine women often appeared as cultured and aristocratic supporters of ecclesiastic projects who were also free to administer their properties: on the same level we can also include the *Domina* Lidoria and Honorata in the *Liguria Maritima*. 'Romanitas' is a simple but effective attribute that precisely expresses this attempt to refer to a world that had disappeared or was on the verge of doing so completely. Despite the fact that the military campaigns of Justinian I had re-established the Byzantine *status quo* on the Italian peninsula, any possible survival of an exclusively Roman culture seemed to waver before the change, now already in progress in the Po Valley areas, that would soon lead to the formation of a new but 'Roman-Germanic' cultural base.

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<sup>17</sup> BROWN, *Gentlemen and Officers*, 186; SKINNER, *Le donne*, 35.





## List of Contributors

RIA BERG, University of Helsinki; *Institutum Romanum Finlandiae* (riaberg@hotmail.com)

VINCENZINA CASTIGLIONE MORELLI DEL FRANCO, Redazione Rivista Studi Pompeiani  
(nellacastiglione@inwind.it)

IRENE CHRESTOU, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (ichres@arch.uoa.gr)

ROSARIA CIARDIELLO, Università degli Studi Suor Orsola Benincasa, Napoli (gianchicchi@libero.it)

ANITA CRISPINO, Museo Archeologico Regionale “Paolo Orsi”, Siracusa (anita.crispino@regione.sicilia.it)

MASSIMO CULTRARO, IBAM CNR, Catania (massimo.cultraro@cnr.it)

MACIEJ DASZUTA, University of Wrocław / University of Liverpool (maciej.daszuta@gmail.com)

PAOLO DE VINGO, Università di Torino (pdevingo@gmail.com)

NIKOLAS DIMAKIS, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (nikdim26@yahoo.gr)

RENEE M. GONDEK, George Washington University (rmg8m@virginia.edu)

BRENDA GRIFFITH-WILLIAMS, University College London (b.griffith-williams@ucl.ac.uk)

ANNA GUADAGNUCCI, University of Neuchâtel (anna.guadagnucci@virgilio.it)

MARJA-LEENA HÄNNINEN, University of Helsinki (mlhannin@mappi.helsinki.fi)

POLLY LOHMANN, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München (Polly.Lohmann@campus.lmu.de)

DEBORAH LYONS, Miami University (Ohio, USA) (lyonsd@miamioh.edu)

MARICÍ MARTINS MAGALHÃES, Museo Storico Nazionale di Rio de Janeiro (MHN)  
(marici.magalhaes@uol.com.br)

DIMITRIOS MANTZILAS, Democritus University of Thrace (mantziladim@yahoo.gr)

FRANCESCO MEO, Università del Salento (francesco.meo@unisalento.it)

KATERINA NIKOLAOU, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (anikolaou@arch.uoa.gr)

FEDERICA PITZALIS, Università La Sapienza di Roma (f.pitzalis@katamail.com)

CARLOS SÁNCHEZ-MORENO ELLART, University of Valencia (carlos.sanchez-moreno@uv.es)

MARIANNA THOMA, University of Athens (mrnthm@ath.forthnet.gr)

PAOLA TOSONI, Università di Pisa, Laboratorio di Antropologia del Mondo Antico (p.tosoni@yahoo.it)

ALESSANDRA VALENTINI, Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia (valentini@unive.it)



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