

GREEK ROME

Abstract:

This essay takes the reader on a virtual walk through Rome to illustrate the city's deep immersion in Greek culture between Augustus and Hadrian. The five sections discuss the Palatine Apollo library as presented in Galen's *Peri alypias*, the *Pinax ton didaskalon* inscription viewed in its Roman context, the *Tabulae Iliacae* and their ties with Lycophron's *Alexandra*, the *Hypogaeum* of the Porta Maggiore, and the testimonies on the career and literary output of Lucius Iulius Vestinus.

Keywords:

Roman libraries, Galen, *Peri alypias*, Aristotle, Callimachus, *Pinax ton didaskalon*, *Tabulae Iliacae*, Lycophron, *Hypogaeum* of the Porta Maggiore, Iulius Vestinus

One of the remarkable doings of our *honorandus* whose direct results may be less tangible – which makes them all the more worth chronicling – is organizing trips to Rome for his students. These are, for the most part, peripatetic tours of Rome's monuments, with, from what we understand, a fine deal of convivial atmosphere. *Peripatetic* is the key term here, because, quite famously, lots of walking is involved; even the sturdiest of our friends who participated in these celebrated events spoke with amazed awe of the (quite characteristic) undefatigable stamina of their cicerone. Regrettably, we have never been on one of these trips, yet even we are well aware of their legendary status; to offer a small token of our appreciation to Adam Ziółkowski for introducing us, and so many others, in so many ways, to the wonders of Rome, we would like to take him on a short, and wholly virtual, sightseeing tour of *our* Rome.

Our Rome, at least for the purpose of this essay, is a Greek city – albeit a strange one – becoming such through its inhabitants' ardently embracing Greek culture. We will make our point in five steps, by visiting five sites or artefacts,



The *honorandus* with Filippo Coarelli and students in Rome, 2010.
Photo by Piotr Kasprzyk

dating roughly from the Augustan era to the Hadrianic age, which are emphatically Roman and whose origin can be easily located within the topographical boundaries of the city of Rome or just outside it, yet at the same time Greek culture can justifiably claim them. Our aim may be, admittedly, a not entirely serious one, but this is not just a futile exercise in sophistry. Even if we do not, in the end, persuade absolutely *everyone* that Rome is a Greek city just like any other of the Greek *poleis*, we think that the monuments and documents we approach bespeak the level of Hellenization of Rome that is astounding, even in light of the common knowledge about how *Graecia capta victorem cepit*. Even if Rome's Greekness is always tinged with a specifically Roman agenda, there is clearly a major part of Rome that is purely Hellenic (or better – Hellenistic) in character – a fascinating starting point for reflecting on what constitutes the Roman-ness, Greek-ness, and perhaps especially Hellenistic-ness of Roman culture between August and Hadrian.¹

Our tour has a serious start, and its two first stations will be grand, monumental public buildings, namely what must have been Rome's most iconic

¹ For a path-breaking approach to these issues (in a study of the *Tabulae Iliacae*), see Squire 2011: 372–375.



Adam Ziółkowski among students in Rome, 2018.
Photo by Aleksander Ujazdowski

libraries. As we will see, this discussion of libraries and book culture will set a leit-motif for the remainder of our essay. These two opening sections are authored by Katarzyna Pietruczuk. The three sections that follow are penned by Jan Kwapisz. It is characteristic of Hellenistic – and, in a bigger picture, Roman-Hellenistic – culture that grand themes are accompanied by the small and the subtle (*lepton/*

lepidum),² and in this vein our tour will continue to concentrate on the search for Roman *memorabilia* of small-scaled art: first the miniature reliefs of the so-called *Tabulae Iliacae*, and second the (not-so-small) stuccoes of the mysterious *hypogaeum* of the Porta Maggiore. Finally, we will wrap up our walk by taking a path outside of the city limits and forward in time to find traces of a librarian at Hadrian's court, whose rich career and works illustrate the persisting Hellenization of Rome and may serve as an apt coda for our discussion of a Greek Rome.

The Palatine Apollo Library

Our walk commences in the heart of Rome, on the Palatine, with paying a visit to the imperial libraries there. Our guide just for this station will be Galen; the Palatine libraries' special function, which arguably emerged under heavy Greek influence, is brought to light by Galen's recently discovered treatise *Περὶ ἀλυπίας* (or, perhaps more correctly, *Περὶ ἀλυπησίας*) – *On Avoiding Distress*. The fortunate discovery of the long-lost writing by Antoine Pietrobelli at the Vlatadon Monastery, in MS *Thessalonicensis Vlatadon* 14, in 2005, led to the publication of the *editio princeps* by Véronique Boudon-Millot in 2007, and the subsequent appearance of the *editio maior*, with *Les Belles Lettres*, in 2010, prepared by Boudon-Millot with Jacques Jouanna and with the assistance of Pietrobelli.³ The 25-page treatise has the form of a letter to an anonymous friend in Pergamum, to whom Galen recounts his fight with depression after he had lost in Rome's great fire of AD 192 his book collection and medical equipment, deposited during his trip to Campania in the storerooms by the Via Sacra. Galen presents a *sui generis* catalogue of lost books, not only of his own collection, but also of the collections lost in the same fire at the Palatine imperial libraries. The relevant passage is as follows (Gal. *Ind.* 12b–18):

τὸ γάρ τοι δεινότατον ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν βιβλίων ἀπολείαι λεληθῆ σε μὴδὲ ἐλπίδα ἔτι τῆς κατασκευῆς ὑπολειπομένην ὥς ἂν τῶν ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ βιβλιοθηκῶν πασῶν κατακαυθεισῶν ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ. οὔτε οὖν ὅσα σπάνια καὶ ἀλλαχόθι μηδαμόθεν κείμενα δυνατόν ἐστιν εὐρεῖν, οὔτε τῶν μέσων, διὰ δὲ τὴν τῆς γραφῆς ἀκρίβειαν ἐσπουδασμένων, Καλλίνια καὶ Ἀττικιανὰ καὶ Πεδουκίγια καὶ μὴν Ἀριστάρχεια οἵτινές εἰσιν Ὅμεροι δύο καὶ Πλάτων ὁ Πανατίου καὶ ἄλλα πολλὰ τοιαῦτα, διασσωζομένων ἐντὸς τῶν γραμμάτων ἐκείνων αὐτῶν ἃ καθ' ἕκαστον βιβλίον ἢ ἔγραψαν ἢ ἀντεγράψαντο οἱ ἄνδρες ὧν ἦν ἐπώνυμα τὰ βιβλία. καὶ γὰρ γραμματικῶν πολλῶν αὐτόγραφα [Vlat. ἀντίγραφα Jouanna] βιβλία τῶν παλαιῶν ἔκειντο καὶ ῥητόρων καὶ ἱατρῶν καὶ φιλοσόφων. ... [16] λυπήσει δέ σε καὶ ταῦτα μάλιστα ὥς τῶν ἐν τοῖς καλουμένοις πίναξι

² For this crucial realization, see, above all, Porter 2011 and Squire 2011.

³ Boudon-Millot 2007; Boudon-Millot, Jouanna, Pietrobelli 2010. Another text is supplied by Kotzia and Sotiroidis 2010, who, unlike Boudon-Millot, had direct access to the MS and not only its digital images.

γεγραμμένων βιβλίων ἔξωθεν εὖρόν τινα κατὰ τε τὰς ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ βιβλιοθήκας καὶ τινα ἐναντίως ᾧ φανερώς <οὐκ> ἦν οὐπερ ἐγγράπτο, <οὔτε> κατὰ τὴν λέξιν οὔτε κατὰ <τὴν> διάνοιαν ὁμοιούμενα αὐτῶι. καὶ τὰ Θεοφράστου καὶ μάλιστα τὰ κατὰ τὰς ἐπιστημονικὰς πραγματείας – ἔστιν ἄλλα τὰ περὶ φυτῶν βιβλία κατὰ δύο πραγματείας ἐκτεταμένας ἡρμηνευμένα – πάντες ἔχουσι· ἢ δ' Ἀριστοτέλει σύναρμος ἀκριβῶς ἦν εὐρεθεῖσά μοι καὶ μεταγραφεῖσα ἢ καὶ νῦν ἀπολομένη· κατὰ δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν τρόπον καὶ Θεοφράστου καὶ ἄλλων τινῶν ἀνδρῶν παλαιῶν μὴ φερόμενα κατὰ τοὺς πίνακας, τινὰ δὲ ἐκεῖνοις γεγραμμένα μὲν, μὴ φαινόμενα δ' αὐτά. τούτων οὖν ἐγὼ πολλὰ μὲν ἐν ταῖς κατὰ τὸ Παλάτιον βιβλιοθήκαις εὖρον, τινὰ δ' ἐναντίως κατεσκεύασα. διεφθάρη δὲ νῦν τὰ μὲν ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ κατὰ τὴν αὐτὴν ἡμέραν τοῖς ἐμετέροις, τῆς πυρκαϊᾶς οὐ μόνον ταῖς κατὰ τὴν ἱερὰν ὁδὸν ἀποθήκαις λυμνηαμένης ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸ αὐτῶν μὲν ταῖς κατὰ τὸ τῆς Εἰρήνης τέμενος, μετὰ ταῦτα δὲ ταῖς κατὰ τὸ Παλάτιόν τε καὶ τὴν Τιβεριανὴν καλουμένην οἰκίαν ἐν ἧ καὶ αὐτῇ βιβλιοθήκῃ τις ἦν πολλῶν μὲν καὶ ἄλλων βιβλίων μεστή, τινὰ δὲ ἐναντίως διὰ τὴν ἀμέλειαν τῶν ἐκάστοτε πιστευομένων [Garofalo ληιστευομένων Vlat.] ἐκ διαδοχῆς αὐτὰ [Boudon-Millot, Jouanna, Pietrobelli 2010 suggest a lacuna here] καθ' ὃν χρόνον ἐγὼ ἀνέβην εἰς Ῥώμην πρῶτον ἐγγὺς ἦν τοῦ διεφθάρθαι.

But the worst cut of all in the loss of my books has escaped your notice: there is no hope of recovery since all the libraries on the Palatine were burnt on that same day. For there is no possibility of finding not only the rarities and works that were available nowhere else, but also copies of common works that were prized because of the precision of their text, like those of Callinus, Atticus, Peducaeus and even Aristarchus, including the two Homers, and the Plato of Panaetius, and many others of that sort; within these writings were preserved things written by or copied for the individuals whose names they bore. There were also many autograph copies of ancient grammarians of the books of orators, doctors and philosophers. ... [16] You will be particularly distressed to learn that I had found in the Palatine libraries some books not described in the so-called Catalogues and some, on the other hand, that were clearly not the work of the author whose name they bore, being similar neither in language nor in ideas. There were also writings of Theophrastus, and especially his books on science – the other books on plants, explicated in two long treatises, everyone has. There was also a work of the same name by Aristotle which I carefully found and transcribed but which is now also lost, and likewise works of Theophrastus and other ancient writers that did not appear in the Catalogues, as well as others that were mentioned there, but did not circulate widely. Many of these I found in the libraries on the Palatine, and I managed to procure copies. But now the books on the Palatine were destroyed on the same day as my own, when the fire ravaged not only the repositories by the Sacred Way, but first those next to the Temple of Peace, and later those in the Palace. And as for the so-called House of Tiberius, there was also a library there which was filled with many other books, but the copies, when I first came to Rome, had almost been destroyed because of neglect on the part of those to whom they had been successively entrusted.⁴

⁴ Trans. Nutton 2013: 81–84, slightly adapted; see Manetti 2012: 15–16 on the meaning of 13 αὐτόγραφα, and Tucci 2009: 399 on ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ: the storerooms were situated next to the *Templum Pacis* and the *Domus Tiberiana*, not inside these, and the *Domus Tiberiana* did not burn down in 192.

What Galen means when he speaks of the Palatine libraries, τὰ ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ or κατὰ τὸ Παλάτιον,⁵ is probably the Palatine Apollo library, established by Augustus in the Temple of Apollo. Less than century before Galen, Suetonius referred to it simply as *bibliotheca Palatina* (*Gramm.* 20), but a note on the verso of *P. Oxy.* 2435 mentions the reception of an Alexandrian embassy by Augustus ‘in the Roman library in the temple of Apollo’, which implies the Apollo library’s consisting of two libraries, Greek and Latin.⁶ This explains the plural forms in Galen. In the syntactically awkward, problematic last sentence in the above-quoted passage, the library of the *Domus Tiberiana* is, at any rate, introduced as separate from the Palatine libraries.⁷

The location of the library of the *Domus Tiberiana* is debated. In view of a mention of a damp environment that was destructive to the books even before the fire (*Ind.* 19, the passage immediately following the one quoted above), Pier Luigi Tucci situated the library in the northwest sector of the *Domus Tiberiana*, in a marshy area in the valley between the Palatine and Capitoline Hills where the *Cloaca Maxima* flows, identifying it with the remains of a building neighbouring the later church of S. Maria Antiqua, where S. Maria Liberatrice was built.⁸ The ruins to which Tucci pointed do not bear traces of fire, as observed by Vivian Nutton, but according to Tucci the passage in Galen – probably corrupt – does not imply that the *Domus Tiberiana* burned down in 192; the train of thought in this passage is that the losses from the fire cannot be repaired by recourse to the book collection of the *Domus Tiberiana*, already in poor condition.⁹ Nutton points to the earlier suggestion that these ruins can be identified as Hadrian’s *Athenaeum*, which would, obviously, make it necessary to find another location for the *Domus Tiberiana*, namely within the fire’s range, so that this would confirm that Galen’s account as we have it, without resorting to repairing of the text, is reliable.¹⁰

Even without solving the problems with which the ending of this passage is riddled one feels that the Palatine Apollo library seems to be what Galen has in

⁵ The latter also appear in Galen’s mention of the same fire in *De compositione medicamentorum*, 13.362.5 Kühn; further mentions of the fire of 192 are found in *De libris propriis* 3.7, 3.14 and 14.9. Galen’s account of how the fire spread is confirmed by D.C. 72.24, according to whom the fire started in a house near the *Templum Pacis*.

⁶ On Ῥωμαϊκὴ βιβλιοθήκη (*sic*) in *P. Oxy.* 2435 denoting the Latin library, see Corbier 1992: 899–900.

⁷ According to C.P. Jones 2009: 394, the article in τῶν ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ βιβλιοθηκῶν τὰ μὲν ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ points to the libraries within the imperial palace rather than, more generally, on the Palatine; also Tucci 2009: 339 points to Galen’s clearly distinguishing between the libraries ἐν τῷ Παλατίῳ, i.e. at the palace of the current emperor, and the library at the *Domus Tiberiana*, i.e. in the palace used by the successor.

⁸ Tucci 2008: 142–145; Tucci 2009: 400.

⁹ Nutton 2013: 58; Tucci 2009: 400.

¹⁰ Nutton 2013: 61, directing to the literature cited in Coarelli 1993.

mind when speaking of the libraries *κατὰ τὸ Παλάτιον*. If this is correct and Galen's book collection he talks about largely originated from the Apollo library, this has important implications for reconstruction of the ideological plan of this library, which, as I intend to demonstrate, was heavily indebted to Greek, and more specifically – Alexandrian, models. Tellingly, a ramp connected the temple of Apollo and the library inside with Augustus' palace.¹¹ As T. Keith Dix and George W. Houston note, 'the placement of great libraries in or near the royal quarters of Alexandria and Pergamum provides architectural and ideological precedent for a library associated with the house of Augustus, Rome's emerging "imperial palace"'.¹² The students of the history of the libraries in Rome point to their line of development being essentially different from the book collections in the Greek world. As for the latter, the idea of the 'superlibrary' emerged in Alexandria at the turn of the fourth and third centuries BC, and the establishment of the Pergamene library at the beginning of the second century BC resulted in the fierce competition between the two libraries, which influenced how the Hellenistic age has been perceived. The history of the Roman libraries commences with scattered private collections; even the nascency of the conception of a public book collection in Rome in the second half of the first century BC – when Caesar entrusted Varro with establishing such a library after his stay in Alexandria, but his death intervened – did not result in the rise of a collection matching in scale the library of Alexandria.¹³ When Asinius Pollio saw to the completion of Caesar's undertaking, between 39 and 28 BC, almost instantaneously, between 36 and 28, a public library was established by Octavian, later Augustus. Dix and Houston argue that these two undertakings were carried out practically at the same time, while Asinius and Octavian competed for the reputation of introducing for the first time a public library to Rome.

Let us now focus on reviewing what was irrevocably lost in fire. Alongside rare writings, including those not listed in the *Pinakes* – we will return to this mention further on – Galen lists works particularly valuable in view of the quality of the book copies he had owned: *Καλλίνια καὶ Ἀττικιανὰ καὶ Πεδουκίνια*. Callinus and Atticus are twice mentioned as what amounts to luxury book dealers in Lucian's *Ignorant Book Collector* 2 (cf. 24):

ἵνα δέ σοι δῶ αὐτὰ ἐκεῖνα κεκριμένα, ὅσα ὁ Καλλῖνος εἰς κάλλος ἢ ὁ ἀοίδιμος Ἀττικὸς σὺν ἐπιμελείᾳ τῇ πάσῃ ἔγραψαν...

Yet suppose I grant you that you have selected the very *éditions de luxe* that were prepared by Callinus or by the famous Atticus with the utmost care.¹⁴

¹¹ On the architectural unity of the *Domus Augusta* and the Palatine temple of Apollo, with its library, see Carettoni 1966–1967; Carettoni 1978; Carettoni 1983.

¹² Dix and Houston 2006: 681.

¹³ Similarly, Dix and Houston 2006: 672; Affleck 2012: 34–49.

¹⁴ Trans. Harmon 1921: 175.

Christopher Jones suggests this Callinus can be identified as Callinus of Hermione, a third-century BC disciple of the Peripatetic philosopher Lycon, to whom, according to Diogenes Laertius (5.73), Lycon bequeathed the task of supervising publication of his *Nachlass*. As Jones observes, this identification would be in keeping with the other works listed by Galen, among which the corpus of Aristotle and his successors plays a prominent role – an issue to which we will return shortly.¹⁵ As for the subsequently named Atticus, who is elsewhere mentioned in the context of editions of Plato, Demosthenes and Aeschines,¹⁶ a number of scholars are inclined to identify him as Titus Pomponius Atticus,¹⁷ a famous friend of Cicero, who according to Nepos ran what would today amount to a publishing house in his villa on the Quirinal (*Att.* 13.2–3). The Atticus of Lucian's *Adu. ind.* is characterized as a βιβλιογράφος, but Jones demonstrates that the term may denote one who has book copies made, not just specifically a scribe.¹⁸ No other identifications have been suggested for Atticus.¹⁹ The linguistically problematic adjective Πεδουκίνια may be a (slight) corruption, as suggested by Jones; he points (as in Nutton's translation) to Cicero and Atticus' friend Sextus Peducaeus, warmly mentioned in Cicero's letters to Atticus of 49, 45 and 44 (e.g., 7.13.3; 10.1.1; 16.11.1). In 16.11.1, Cicero, *inter alia*, asks Atticus to read aloud to Peducaeus his *Second Philippic* so as to get his opinion on the speech. Obviously, the identification suggested by Jones strengthens the case for identifying Galen's Atticus as *the* Atticus.

With regard to the other editions mentioned by Galen, there is a general consensus that the phrase Ἀριστάρχεια οἵτινές εἰσιν Ὅμηροι δύο refers to Aristarchus' recensions and commentaries, separately on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.²⁰ The copies may have been brought to Rome by Didymus in the first century BC; at any rate, he used Aristarchus' text at that time, as evidenced by the fragments of his treatise Περὶ τῆς Ἀριστάρχου διορθώσεως extant in *Venetus A*, a famous MS of the *Iliad*. Πλάτων ὁ Παναϊτίου is probably another reference to a work of ancient textual criticism. Panaetius, a Platonizing (as implied by Philodem. *Stoic. hist.*, *P. Herc.* 1018 col. 61.2–3 and *Cic. Fin.* 4.79) Stoic philosopher of the second century BC, who during his extended stay in Rome had ties with the circle of Scipio, returned

¹⁵ C.P. Jones 2009: 391–392.

¹⁶ For a discussion, see Boudon-Millot, Jouanna, Pietrobelli 2010: 50–52.

¹⁷ Blümmer 1911: 644; Gourinat 2008: 145–148; C.P. Jones 2009: 392; Boudon-Millot, Jouanna, Pietrobelli 2010: 51–52.

¹⁸ C.P. Jones 2009: 391.

¹⁹ Nicholls 2011: 133 suggests that Atticus' book collection may have found its way into the Pataine library after his daughter had married Marcus Agrippa, who according to Pliny the Elder (*NH* 35.26) advocated collecting art in public rather than private collections.

²⁰ Boudon-Millot, Jouanna, Pietrobelli 2010: 52. Nutton 2013: 54 is inclined to think that this refers to two different recensions of Homer, which reflect two different phases of Aristarchus' textual research.

to Athens after Scipio's death in 129. *Peri alypias* brings the first piece of concrete information on the character of his involvement with Plato. Nutton suggests that a copy of Plato's writing was brought to Rome after Sulla's capture of Athens in 86, yet I would not rule out the possibility that in view of Panaetius' long stay in Rome, a copy of his edition may have remained there after he had left for Athens.²¹

The two editions discussed in the previous paragraph quite spectacularly exemplify in Galen what he said in general terms in the successive part of the sentence: διασφoζομένων ἐντὸς τῶν γραμμάτων ἐκείνων αὐτῶν ἃ καθ' ἑκάστον βιβλίον ἢ ἔγραψαν ἢ ἀντεγράψαντο οἱ ἄνδρες ὧν ἦν ἐπώνυμα τὰ βιβλία, 'within these writings were preserved things written by or copied for the individuals whose names they bore'. Galen apparently has no doubts as to the legitimate origin of both editions. A noteworthy detail comes with the following sentence; where Boudon-Millot and Jouanna emend the text to speak of more mundane copies of the books of several classes of ancient writers, the *paradosis* – which I print above, following Nutton's English text – has a mention of the autographs of ancient grammarians.²²

It is striking that none of the writings listed by Galen postdate Cicero. The fact that Galen lists the whole collections labelled with collective terms, probably in the order in which these were acquired, suggests that these treasures obtained in the Augustan period formed the very core of the collection gathered in the Apollo library.

In the next paragraph (omitted in the quotation above), Galen proceeds to listing his own losses, emphasizing that his collection included the writings he copied with his own hand, or perhaps whose copying he personally oversaw. He stresses the importance of painstaking precision, with special attention paid to every critical sign and punctuation mark, in transcribing the writing of the more demanding authors, such as Theophrastus, Aristotle, Eudemos, Phaenias or Chrysippus (with the exception of the latter and Aristotle himself these are all disciples of Aristotle). The next thing Galen says is that he had found in the Palatine library writings – now irretrievably lost – of which 'the so-called *Pinakes*' made no mention.²³ This is followed by a difficult passage whose problematic syntax suggests

²¹ Relevantly, Nicholls 2011: 131 suggests that the Apollo library may eventually have included the books collected by Scipio's circle in the second century BC – this collection was formed around the library of the king Perseus imported from Macedon after the battle of Pydna; Plut. *Aem.* 28.7; Isid. *Etym.* 6.5.1.

²² For Latin parallels for the term αὐτόγραφα, see Manetti 2012: 15–16.

²³ I assume, with Boudon-Millot, Jouanna, Pietrobelli 2010: 63–64, that the Alexandrian (i.e. Callimachean) *Pinakes* is meant. Nicholls 2011: 134–135 argues that Galen has in mind a catalogue prepared by Tyrannio and Andronicus, the Roman editors of Aristotle and Theophrastus, on the basis of an account in Plutarch (*Sulla* 26, quoted below), but this overlooks the fact that in both passages of *Peri alypias* where a mention of *Pinakes* appears it is in reference to other authors besides Aristotle and Theophrastus. Athenaeus boasts about his knowledge of

corruption – Nutton’s translation above may only serve as an *exempli gratia* text – but what is certain is that Galen returns on the one hand to the works unregistered by the *Pinakes* and on the other to Aristotle and Theophrastus, whose writings are apparently intended to exemplify the discoveries Galen made in the Palatine libraries with a copy of the *Pinakes* at hand. What deserves attention, as has already been duly noted by the students of Galen,²⁴ is the privileged position Galen affords to the writings by Aristotle and Theophrastus in his ‘catalogue of lost works’.

Nicholls was the first to suggest that Aristotle and Theophrastus’ writings of which Galen speaks were a part of their original book collection brought to Rome by Sulla after the sack of Athens, so that *Peri alypias* adds another chapter to the famous story of Aristotle’s library as recounted by Strabo and Plutarch.²⁵

I submit that the evidently central place Galen assigned to Aristotle and Theophrastus’ book collection, which bespeaks its analogously prominent place on the shelves of the Palatine library – as I mentioned, Galen’s account implies that books were arranged there by collections from which they originated – has important implications for our understanding of a programme underlying this institution. In order to see this more clearly, let us recall the fate of Aristotle and Theophrastus’ book collection as recounted by Strabo (13.1.54):

ὁ γοῦν Ἀριστοτέλης τὴν ἑαυτοῦ [sc. βιβλιοθήκην] Θεοφράστῳ παρέδωκεν, ὥπερ καὶ τὴν σχολὴν ἀπέλιπε, πρῶτος ὧν ἴσμεν συναγαγὼν βιβλία καὶ διδάξας τοὺς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ βασιλέας βιβλιοθήκης σύνταξιν. Θεόφραστος δὲ Νηλεῖ παρέδωκεν· ὁ δ’ εἰς Σκῆψιν κομίσας τοῖς μετ’ αὐτὸν παρέδωκεν, ιδιώταις ἀνθρώποις, οἱ κατὰ κλειστα εἶχον τὰ βιβλία οὐδ’ ἐπιμελῶς κείμενα· ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἤσθηοντο τὴν σπουδὴν τῶν Ἀτταλικῶν βασιλέων ὑφ’ οἷς ἦν ἡ πόλις, ζητούντων βιβλία εἰς τὴν κατασκευὴν τῆς ἐν Περγάμῳ βιβλιοθήκης, κατὰ γῆς ἔκρυσαν ἐν διώρυγί τινι· ὑπὸ δὲ νοτίας καὶ σιγῶν κακωθέντα ὄψε ποτε ἀπέδοντο οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους Ἀπελλικῶντι τῷ Τηίῳ πολλῶν ἀργυρίων τὰ τε Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ τὰ τοῦ Θεοφράστου βιβλία ... εὐθὺς γὰρ μετὰ τὴν Ἀπελλικῶντος τελευτὴν Σύλλας ἤρε τὴν Ἀπελλικῶντος βιβλιοθήκην ὁ τὰς Ἀθήνας ἐλὼν, δεῦρο δὲ κοιμισθεῖσαν Τυραννίον τε ὁ γραμματικὸς διεχειρίσατο φιλαριστοτέλης ὧν, θεραπεύσας τὸν ἐπὶ τῆς βιβλιοθήκης ...

At any rate, Aristotle bequeathed his own library to Theophrastus, to whom he also left his school; and he is the first man, so far as I know, to have collected books and to have taught the kings in Egypt how to arrange a library. Theophrastus bequeathed it to Neleus; and Neleus took it to Scepsis and bequeathed it to his heirs, ordinary people, who kept the books locked up and not even carefully stored. But when they

Callimachus’ *Pinakes* in Rome in the second century AD (*Epit.* 2.70b; 8.336e; 11.496e–f), and in a tone similar to that of Athenaeus, Galen records, in his commentary on Hippocrates’ *De articulis* 1.45 (18a.379 Kühn), his doubts as to the authorship of *De glandulis* ascribed to Hippocrates in view of the absence of this writing from *Pinakes*. It is inconceivable that it is not Callimachus’ catalogue that is meant here.

²⁴ Nutton 2013: 56; Nicholls 2011: 134.

²⁵ See Nicholls 2011: 134 and (independently, as it seems) Rashed 2011: 73–77. On Aristotle’s corpus in Rome in the first century BC, see Barnes 1997: 44–50 and Tutrone 2013.

heard how zealously the Attalic kings to whom the city was subject were searching for books to build up the library in Pergamum, they hid their books underground in a kind of trench. But much later, when the books had been damaged by moisture and moths, their descendants sold them to Apellicon of Teos for a large sum of money, both the books of Aristotle and those of Theophrastus. ... Immediately after the death of Apellicon, Sulla, who had captured Athens, carried off Apellicon's library to Rome, where Tyrannio the grammarian, who was fond of Aristotle, got it in his hands by paying court to the librarian ...²⁶

A further account of what happened with this library in Rome is supplied by Plutarch (*Sulla* 26.1–2):

ἀναχθεις δὲ πάσαις ταῖς ναυσὶν ἐξ Ἐφέσου τριταῖος ἐν Πειραιεὶ καθωρμίσθη· καὶ μυηθεὶς ἐξέειπεν ἑαυτῷ τὴν Ἀπελλικῶνος τοῦ Τηΐου βιβλιοθήκην, ἐν ἧι τὰ πλεῖστα τῶν Ἀριστοτέλους καὶ Θεοφράστου βιβλίων ἦν, οὕτω τότε σαφῶς γνωριζόμενα τοῖς πολλοῖς. λέγεται δὲ κομισθεῖσης αὐτῆς εἰς Ῥώμην Τυραννίωνα τὸν γραμματικὸν ἐνσκευάσασθαι τὰ πολλά, καὶ παρ' αὐτοῦ τὸν Ῥόδιον Ἀνδρόνικον εὐπορήσαντα τῶν ἀντιγράφων εἰς μέσον θεῖναι καὶ ἀναγράψαι τοὺς νῦν φερομένους πίνακας.

Having put to sea with all his ships from Ephesus, on the third day he [sc. Sulla] came to anchor in Piraeus. He was now initiated into the mysteries and seized for himself the library of Apellicon the Teian, in which were most of the treatises of Aristotle and Theophrastus, at that time not yet well known to the public. But it is said that after the library was carried to Rome, Tyrannio the grammarian arranged most of the works in it, and that Andronicus the Rhodian was furnished by him with copies of them, and published them, and drew up the lists now current.²⁷

The main thread of thought in both passages is the unavailability of the writings of Aristotle and Theophrastus, or at least of reliable source copies, throughout the Hellenistic age. According to Strabo, who himself was a disciple of Tyrannio (perhaps the absence of Andronicus in his narrative is due to his intention to highlight his teacher's achievements) and who saw firsthand the establishment of the Apollo library during his stay in Rome since the forties of the first century BC, the precious library had been deliberately hidden from the Attalids, who were strenuously gathering books for the newly established library of Pergamum. As a consequence, the Alexandrian library was not able to get hold of it either.²⁸ It is

²⁶ Trans. H.L. Jones 1929: 109–113, slightly adapted. I discuss these sources in Pietruczuk 2019: 121–144.

²⁷ Trans. Perrin 1916: 407.

²⁸ In an attempt to reconcile the accounts in Strabo and Plutarch with what Athenaeus reports (1.3a–b), according to whom Ptolemy purchased the library of Aristotle and Theophrastus from Neleus, Canfora 1990: 29 suggests that the main part of the collection, i.e. Aristotle and Theophrastus' autographs, were missing from what Ptolemy had acquired. According to Richardson 1994: 10–11, only the beginning and closing parts of Strabo's account are reliable, whereas the story of how the books were buried underground may have been made up by Apellicon. Blum 1991: 59 and Irigoin 1994: 52 unreservedly accept Strabo's account, pointing to the crisis of

striking that this corpus was – perhaps literally – vanished from the face of the earth at a period when the two most celebrated libraries of the ancient world were at their heyday, only to resurface in Athens and immediately be seized by the Romans. This explains the special role this collection played in Augustus' library: quite tellingly acquired as a spoil of war,²⁹ it perfectly fit the larger narrative on how the library established by Augustus in certain respects managed to surpass even the great libraries of Alexandria and Pergamum.

The picture I attempt to draw here corresponds with the already-mentioned reception of Alexandrian ambassadors by Augustus, presumably in AD 13, in the Latin part of the Apollo library, as attested on the verso of *P. Oxy.* 2435. This probably comes from *Acta Alexandrinorum*, since the recto preserves a fragment of Germanicus' speech to the Alexandrians. The choice of 'the Roman library' as a venue for this event is surely not random; what was the meaning of that gesture?³⁰ There can be no doubt as to its propagandistic dimension. As Plutarch reports (*Ant.* 58–59), in order to repair the losses suffered by the Alexandrian book collection in the fire caused by Caesar's soldiers, Mark Antony presented Cleopatra with 200,000 rolls from the Pergamene library – a drastic alteration in the balance of power between the two traditionally competing institutions. Yet Augustus wanted more than that. His gesture of inviting the Alexandrians to the Latin library was a way of announcing that a new power joined in the arms race between the traditional Hellenistic competitors; a power whose interest was not just in the participation in the race to collect as many treasures of Greek literature as possible, but also in redefining the game by proudly chipping in its own culture and its own literature. The game is won before it is played. At the same time, however, the choice of the library for a diplomatic encounter with the Alexandrians bespeaks the importance attached by the Romans to one of the greatest cultural inventions of the Ptolemies, thus revealing Rome's complicated attitude towards Alexandria and its celebrated library.

the study and teaching of philosophy in the Lyceum after the death of Theophrastus, the lack of continuation of the inquiries undertaken by Aristotle and his disciples Theophrastus and Aristoxenus, the lack of dialogue with Aristotle's esoteric works in Alexandrian scholarship, the occurrence of *koine* forms in Aristotle's works, which point to a later redaction, and finally the renaissance of interest in Aristotelian thought in the first century BC. Another source recounting the fate of Aristotle's library is Al-Farabi, an Arab scholar and philosopher of the ninth-tenth century, according to whom Augustus found Aristotle and Theophrastus' writings in Alexandria after the battle of Actium; Theophr. test. 41 Fortenbaugh-Huby-Sharples-Gutas. Battezzato 2003: 24 may be right that this late testimony is an attempt to reconcile Athenaeus' version with the one given by Strabo.

²⁹ Cf. Zadorojnyi 2013 on the fate of famous book collections as reported in Plutarch.

³⁰ *CIL* VI 6314, VI 9520 and VI 9525 attest that Augustus used the Palatine library to hold Senate meetings, but these sources do not specify which part of the library was used.

The *Pinax* Inscription

Where exactly our walk takes us next is unclear; there is even a possibility that we are still on the Palatine and what we have before us is one of its libraries. This is, however, only speculation; the original location of what we now approach is simply unknown, although there is a consensus that the object(s) of our interest must have adorned a wall of one of the monumental imperial libraries. Our concern in this section is with three fragments of a Greek inscription summarizing the history of the Athenian comic competitions: *IG XIV 1098 = IGUR 218*, *IG XIV 1097 = IGUR 216* and *IG XIV 1098a = IGUR 215*.³¹

The first of these fragments, *IG XIV 1098 = IGUR 218*, was discovered in a vineyard near Rome (it is unclear how it got there) in 1762; stored in the library of the Camaldolese monastery of S. Gregorio on the Caelian Hill, the inscription fragment was published in 1765 by Gaspare Luigi Oderico basing on the transcriptions made by himself and the Camaldolese monks Clemente Blasio and Francesco Sandrio.³² The fragment had disappeared before the other fragments were found. Adolf Wilhelm, who made a classic edition of the inscriptions related to the Athenian dramatic competitions, published in 1906, was only able to use transcriptions.³³ In 1960, Luigi Moretti reported the fortunate rediscovery of the inscription, whose three last lines he was able to read on a stone embedded in a wall in the hallway of a clergy house by the church of SS. Andrea and Gregorio on the Caelian Hill.³⁴

The second fragment, *IG XIV 1097 = IGUR 216*, was found, as reported by Oderico in a letter to Gaetano Marini,³⁵ in the Palazzo Maffei; presently it is kept in the Villa Albani. Oderico identified it as another part of the inscription attested by fr. 1098.

The third fragment, *IG XIV 1098a = IGUR 215*, was found near the Piazza Cenci; Giuseppe Gatti published the text in the archaeological reports of 1888.³⁶ Moretti found it in three pieces in the Antiquario Comunale on the Caelian.

The fragments preserve parts, in some cases only several letters, of the total of c. 50 lines. These yield names of Athenian comic poets and archons otherwise attested for the latter part of the fifth and fourth centuries BC. In view of the occurrences of the name of Λήναια in fr. 1098.9 (recurring in line 15) and 1097.25, and of the phrase ἐν ᾧσται in fr. 1097.21 and 26, Oderico saw the inscription to

³¹ For a recent edition, see Millis, Olson 2012: 225–229.

³² Odericus 1765: 360–361.

³³ Wilhelm 1906: 195.

³⁴ Moretti 1960.

³⁵ Odericus 1777, the text of the inscription on p. lxxv.

³⁶ Gatti 1888: 144.

report the history of Athenian dramatic agons and assumed it had been brought to Rome from Athens,³⁷ yet the latter is untenable in view of the interpretation put forward by Alfred Körte (see below).

Eugen Peters was the first to make sense of the document's structure; he demonstrated that the inscription listed all plays of each of the mentioned poets, ordered chronologically by the date of their debut. The plays are grouped by the places won in the competitions and arranged in chronological order within these sections.³⁸ Generally, the information supplied by the inscription repeats that provided by Aristotle's *Didascaliae* – a chronological list of the results of Athenian dramatic competitions based on the Athenian archival documents (which were made, in turn, around a time when Lycurgus commissioned the copies of the plays of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides to be deposited in the public archive, and likely in connection with this undertaking). The *Didascaliae* is fragmentarily preserved in epigraphic form, as an inscription found in the south slope of the Acropolis (IG II² 2319–2325), and additionally attested through a bunch of quotations mostly preserved in the dramatic hypotheses by Aristophanes of Byzantium.³⁹

In comparison with the contents of the *Didascaliae*, however, the Roman inscription exhibits one additional element – a fact of major importance. 1097.9 includes the letters ΑΥΤΑΙΜΟΝΑΙΣΩΙ, which Körte and Wilhelm interpreted as αὗται μόναι σῶναι and Petersen as αὗται μόναι σῶζονται; in 1089a.7, Körte saw the word σῶφ in the sequence ΙΟΔΟΙΣΣΩΙΩ.⁴⁰ What the text of the inscription yielded, therefore, was the complete bibliographies of Attic comic poets which were confronted with the state of preservation of the corpus of their plays at a certain period. Körte realized that the inscription's peculiar formula corresponds with the title of a scholarly writing by Callimachus as reported by the *Suda* (κ 227 Adler): Πίναξ καὶ ἀναγραφὴ τῶν κατὰ χρόνους καὶ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς γενομένων διδασκάλων (*Table and Register of Dramatic Poets, in Chronological Order from the Beginning*).⁴¹ The writing most likely antedates the famous 120-volume catalogue of the library of Alexandria, i.e. Callimachus' *Pinakes*, since from the viewpoint of its structure it may be viewed as an intermediate stage in Callimachus' research between the chronological records of the results of dramatic competitions as given by Aristotle's *Didascaliae* and the alphabetically ordered catalogues of the works of individual authors as offered by the *Pinakes*.⁴²

³⁷ Odericus 1765: 361; Odericus 1777: 8.

³⁸ Petersen 1885. The same conclusions were reached by Wilamowitz, as reported by Kaibel in *CIG* XIV (1890).

³⁹ Arist. fr. 566–578 Rose; see Jachmann 1909; Pietruczuk 2019.

⁴⁰ For a detailed discussion, see Capps 1906.

⁴¹ Körte 1905: 437 also identified fr. 1098a as a part of the same inscription.

⁴² On Callimachus' method in composing the *Pinax ton didaskalon*, see Blum 1991: 137–142.

The identification of the Roman inscription as Callimachus' *Pinax ton didaskalon* is now commonly accepted. As a consequence, it is assumed that the whole inscription must have included material from the beginning of the dramatic agons in Athens until probably the end of the Hellenistic period (the *Didascaliae* inscription from Athens also included a period after Aristotle's death).⁴³ It is clear that the inscription had a monumental size; the stone containing fr. 1097 measures 46 x 56 cm at its widest points.⁴⁴ The crucial questions arise: what was the function of the inscription in its original Roman setting and what effect did it have on its readers?

Although in all likelihood, the inscription was carved on a wall of a library, any attempt to view it as this library's catalogue must be categorically rejected. The annotation on one of the titles stating that this is the poet's sole surviving comedy and on another reporting that the play was lost clearly demonstrate that the inscription was not meant to provide information on the library's holdings; there is a basic impracticality in the idea of an actual catalogue including long lists of lost works.⁴⁵ The chronological order of the listed plays, according to the places won in competitions, reflected the original context of the composition of the plays rather than their newly acquired context of a library, in which alphabetic arrangement would be more appropriate.

Incidentally, we may note that the form of Callimachus' *Pinakes*, in 120 volumes, is likely to have closely resembled a library catalogue (yet the scarcity of available sources prevents us from firm conclusions as to its character and extent); it was, therefore, more suited to be inscribed on a library wall, even other than the Alexandrian library. The familiarity with the *Pinakes* in Rome in the first century AD is attested by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Din.* 1), and in the second century by Athenaeus and Galen (see the previous section, n. 23). It was evidently in good taste for an intellectual, when discussing little-known works, to drop a remark betraying the knowledge of a scholarly discussion – in the Alexandrian as well as Pergamene circles – whenever doubts as to the authorship emerged.

The inscription is hard to date. Christian Hülsen suggested the first or perhaps the beginning of the second century AD.⁴⁶ According to Moretti, the pal-

⁴³ See Millis, Olson 2012: 58–117.

⁴⁴ See Dittmer 1923: 7.

⁴⁵ Dittmer 1923: 38 suggests that whereas in the opening part of the inscription, which pertained to a period from which not many plays were extant, the cases of preservation were remarked on using a proper formula, in the latter part, by which later periods were covered, from which most works were available in Alexandria, for economy of space only lost plays were indicated as such using the phrase οὐ σφίεται.

⁴⁶ In Wilhelm 1906: 208; Wilhelm dates to the first century AD another inscription dealing with Greek dramatic competitions found in Rome, namely *IGUR* 223–230, discovered in fragments by Filippo Buonarroti – it contains a list of the actors winning in dramatic competitions on Rhodes.

aeography of the inscription suggests the Augustan period, although he notes that comparative material available for Greek inscriptions in Rome for the first centuries BC/AD is too scant to allow firm conclusions.⁴⁷ I submit that not only for epigraphic reasons, but also in view of how its rhetorics closely matches the ideological programme of the Palatine libraries as discussed in the previous section, the *Pinax* inscription can be convincingly placed in this period (even if there is no sufficient ground to posit the Palatine libraries as the inscription's original location). A likely commissioner of the inscription seems to be, then, Augustus himself, whose taste for Alexandrianism we saw in the previous section, or perhaps Domitian, who according to Suetonius (*Dom.* 20), after the fire of Rome of 80 compensated the libraries for their losses by copying the Alexandrian collections.

Whence the choice of Callimachus' *Pinax ton didaskalon* for a grand inscription on a Roman library? Apart from the problems of size – the 120 volumes of the *Pinakes* must have made it difficult to excerpt a self-contained whole for inscribing on stone⁴⁸ – the embedding of the *Pinax ton didaskalon* in a strictly Roman context has interesting implications. For one thing, the *Pinax* at once documents the history of one of the most emblematic instruments of the cultural domination of classical Athens – the dramatic competition in the Theatre of Dionysus – and testifies to the grandeur of Alexandria's scholarship, as exemplified by one of the major products of Callimachus' librarianship. When this document is transferred to the setting of Rome, there is a rather obvious suggestion of the cultural continuity from Athens to Alexandria and Rome.

Here, however, I would like to focus on a more subtle aspect, namely the annotations on the state of preservation of single plays. With regard to the *Pinakes*, we can only formulate informed conjectures based on the fragmentary sources available; yet if we decide that the catalogue of Aeschylus' plays preserved in two MSS, *Laurentianus Mediceus* 32.9 and *Venetus Gr.* 468, representatively illustrates the structure of the *Pinakes*, we must conclude that the *Pinakes* only registered the plays as these were to be found in the Alexandrian library.⁴⁹ The *Pinax ton didaskalon* does something else: it takes as the starting point the original dramatic corpora

⁴⁷ Moretti 1960: 281.

⁴⁸ In the original catalogue, each title was accompanied by stichometric information and the work's incipit; on the extent and structure of the *Pinakes*, see Blum 1991: 150–160 and Pietruczuk 2019: 171–197, with further bibliography.

⁴⁹ What suggests that the Medicean catalogue reflected the actual library holdings is the absence of some play titles from the list and the annotations γνήσιοι and νόθοι (i.e. 'genuine' and 'spurious') next to the repeated title of one of the plays (*Women of Aetna*), surely reflecting two versions of the text found in the library. In addition, if a play circulated in the third century BC under different titles, they were probably all recorded in the *Pinakes*. On the Medicean catalogue of Aeschylus' plays, Steffen 1958: 8–22; Gantz 1980; Pietruczuk 2019: 189–191.

of each poet and shows how many plays the Alexandrian scholars managed to track down and preserve.

Encounters of Roman readers with the inscription which informed them about what the holdings of a library far away from Rome were three hundred years earlier must have provoked making comparisons. For instance, after studying the complete list of Alexis' plays as supplied by the grand inscription, a library user may have taken a stroll to the pertinent shelf so as to find out what the Roman library had to offer. In some cases, the reader may have been disappointed to find that a certain title is missing. Of course, the same would have been a possibility if the library wall had been inscribed with the alphabetical list of Alexis' plays available in Alexandria, as in the *Pinakes*. Yet the *Pinax ton didaskalon*, with its annotations accompanying the titles: 'extant' and 'missing', may have also led to positive surprises. A bold message communicated by Callimachus' writing was that if some work was not to be found in the Alexandrian library it did not exist at all.⁵⁰ When this document was placed before the user of a well-equipped library at Rome it put the bold rhetorics of Callimachus' celebrated scholarly achievements to a test, with a possible outcome being, at least in some cases, demonstration of superiority of a Roman library.

We have evidence to prove that this is not just speculation; such spectacular bibliological triumphs did occur in Rome in the first and second centuries. In a passage of *Peri alypias* I discussed in the previous section, Galen tells his friend (admittedly the relevant portion of the text is probably corrupt and much-debated) that he found in the Palatine libraries writings not listed in 'the so-called *Pinakes*' (*Ind.* 16–17). Boudon-Millot and Jouanna convincingly argue that Callimachus' catalogues are meant (in this case this must be the *Pinakes*, which circulated in Rome in book form).⁵¹

The most iconic book collection which reportedly did not reach Ptolemaic Alexandria but found its way to Rome's imperial collection and, as Galen's testimony implies, was afforded a central position within it is the corpus of Aristotle and Theophrastus I discussed in the previous section of our essay. I like to think that the complicated fate of this precious book collection, which waited out underground the period of the most intense book hoarding by the libraries of Alexandria and Pergamum and re-emerged in Athens only to be seized by the Romans, must have come to mind for some readers of the *Pinax* inscription. Incidentally, it is a striking coincidence that the *Pinax ton didaskalon* was based on a work of Aristotle. On the one hand there is Callimachus' work immortalized on

⁵⁰ On the rhetorics of Callimachus' pinacological works, see Kwapisz and Pietruczuk 2019: 223–229.

⁵¹ See n. 23 above.

Roman marble, which documented the state of preservation of Athenian comedy in Alexandria, and on the other the thrilling story of Aristotle's library, with its happy end once the collection found its way to the Apollo library – these two stories that begin in Athens and end in Rome intriguingly resonate with each other. A sophisticated user of Rome's imperial library such as Galen felt philological urge to re-enact the role of Callimachus and verify anew the state of preservation of Greek literature. All in all, the *Pinax* inscription is another striking testimony to the (aggressively agnostic) Alexandrianism of the imperial book collections.

The *Tabulae Iliacae*

Let us leave the Palatine and the libraries of Rome; it is unclear how to proceed, as it is not one, but an assembly of relatively small objects we are now after. The precise locations of the artefacts this section sets out to discuss have seldom been properly registered by their discoverers, so let us pick a symbolic site: we are now headed north, to stop on via Venti Settembre near the S. Maria della Vittoria. Here, in 1882, among the ruins of a mediaeval wall, a curious ancient object was found.⁵² The size of a smartphone, this stone disk bears a relief which should make one think of the famous ecphrasis of *Iliad* 18; that this is, indeed, a (miniature) shield of Achilles is immediately confirmed by an appropriate inscription, and on closer inspection strikingly small letters inscribed on the rim of this stone shield yield a text of *Il.* 18.483–608 – i.e., obviously, the Shield of Achilles. This artefact is now known as *Tabula Iliaca* 4N; it currently rests between the starting point of our walk on the Palatine and where it was found – in the Sala delle Colombe of the Musei Capitolini.

The so-called *Tabulae Iliacae* (the conventional label is somewhat misleading) are twenty-two miniature reliefs, roughly the size of iPads or similar devices; most represent scenes of the Trojan myth, not only the *Iliad*, but also the *Odyssey* and other poems of the Epic Cycle, and a mention of Stesichorus is notable. Other themes include, however, the Theban Cycle, the deeds of Heracles, and the achievements of Alexander the Great. Their mythology and imagery are purely Greek – although, as we will see, adapted by artists whose agenda is to a significant extent Roman. The *Tabulae* boast particular intermediality: pictorial representations are accompanied by elaborate inscriptions – all of these in Greek – which include apropos epigrams and quotations from Homer, and a penchant for wordplay is noticeable, as evidenced above all by letter grids resembling magic squares on the reverse of some of the tablets. The *Tabulae Iliacae* are now scattered

⁵² Bieńkowski 1891: 183–184, with n. 1 on p. 184.

in museums throughout the world; we have one in Warsaw, the *Tabula Rondanini*, whose discovery prompted Anna Sadurska to publish in 1964 what continues to be a first-reference monograph on these objects. A half-century of research, however, and simultaneous advances in the study of Hellenistic culture, resulted in spectacular progress in our understanding of what the *Tabulae* are, as evidenced by two books which will be standard reference works for decades to come, by Michael Squire and David Petrain, with the way paved by Nina Valenzuela Montenegro.⁵³

What is important, to us, is that although the circumstances of how most of the *Tabulae* had emerged after the Middle Ages have not been properly recorded, what we do know allows us to say that probably the origin of all of the tablets can be traced to Rome or the ruins of villas in its vicinity.⁵⁴ Nearly all may be suspected to originate in the Augustan period, although at least one example (the *Tabula Albani*, 19J), proves that they were still popular, and copied, as late as the age of Hadrian.⁵⁵ There is a concrete place and time, then, where the phenomenon of such elaborate art in miniature thrived; the Roman-ness of the *Tabulae* is warranted by their being endemic to the area of 'Greater Rome', and additionally confirmed, as has been noted, by the prominence of the Roman gaze in approach to Greek myth, as evidenced by the centrality of the Aeneas myth in the *Tabula Capitolina*.⁵⁶

In his seminal discussion of the *Tabulae*, David Petrain made a notable effort to assert their Roman-ness;⁵⁷ in its climactic part, he argued that several features, from their provenance from sophisticated households to the specific mode of their visual communication with their recipients, suggest that they are best viewed as having much to do with the complex 'rhetorics of display' of the Roman public library. He even devoted several pages specifically to the Palatine library and to attempting to reconstruct what impression it made on its users.⁵⁸ It should be observed, therefore, that the discussions of Rome's public libraries and the Iliac tablets are aptly juxtaposed in the present essay; we share the feeling that the sorts of Greek-ness displayed by Rome's libraries and the *Tabulae Iliacae* have tantalizing points of contacts.

On the other hand, however, the way how the appropriated Greek-ness manifests itself at once in grand Roman libraries and in the small-scale art of the

⁵³ Valenzuela Montenegro 2004; Squire 2011; Petrain 2014.

⁵⁴ For the details, see Squire 2011: 65–67 and Appendix I, and Petrain 2014; the latter book opens with a vivid account of how the *Tabula Capitolina* (tablet 1N) was found in the remains of a villa at Tor Ser Paolo, a place near, but not identical with, Bovillae.

⁵⁵ Squire 2011: 58–65.

⁵⁶ E.g., Squire 2011: 59.

⁵⁷ Petrain 2014: 137–181 (Chapters 5 and 6); note that the subtitle of his book puts emphasis on the tablets' Roman context.

⁵⁸ Petrain 2014: 160–164.

Tabulae Iliacae – the oscillation between the monumental and minute subtlety – is characteristically Hellenistic, as already mentioned.⁵⁹ Michael Squire has illuminatingly discussed this oscillation as an essential feature of the *Tabulae*,⁶⁰ and it is in particular in view of this feature, as well as further numerous points of contacts between the *Tabulae* and works of Hellenistic art and literature (such as, e.g., the Hellenistic *technopaegnia*, i.e. figure poems⁶¹), that one should feel tempted to regard the *Tabulae* as belonging to Hellenistic, rather than Roman, culture.

In this light, it is only reasonable to ask whether the surviving Roman tablets can actually have been modelled on Hellenistic originals; after all, it is an all too familiar scenario when a stone copy of a lost artefact in precious metal survives.⁶² We should briefly mention that earlier scholars were inclined to accept that the *Tabulae* might have been made after larger, even monumental reliefs;⁶³ what makes this particular theory doubtful, however, is the fact that the miniature form of the *Tabulae* is their essential, defining feature. Yet would it be inconceivable to imagine that at least some of our tablets imitated, or were more indirectly inspired by, similarly small-scaled, and equally refined, Hellenistic artefacts? Recent students – again, Squire and Petrain being my primary points of reference – were hesitant to pursue this hypothesis, even though they are fully aware of, and constantly emphasize, the Hellenistic affiliations of the *Tabulae*. They point to a consistent net of reflections of the programme of Augustan propaganda and specifically Roman interests, in particular in the *Tabula Capitolina*, with its central representation of Aeneas' flight from Troy.⁶⁴ In addition, Squire warns us that '[i]n the dearth of any evidence, we must resist the inherent philological urge towards *Quellenforschung*: it is wholly typical of classical archaeologists to judge objects that do survive as secondary copies of supposed prototypes that do not'.⁶⁵

Yet if I may, for a while, adopt a purely subjective perspective, to someone like me, a philologist whose starting point for the interest in the *Tabulae Iliacae* is the overarching concern with Hellenistic poetry, the question of sources is of nagging importance, even if straightforward answers will, of necessity, remain beyond reach. It is well enough to know that Augustan poetry and the *Tabulae*

⁵⁹ Cf. n. 2 above.

⁶⁰ Again, Squire 2011; see esp. 247–302 ('The Art and Poetics of Scale').

⁶¹ See Squire 2011: 231–236.

⁶² However, one should be careful to not think of the *Tabulae* as inferior copies of *better* originals. As both Squire 2011: 63–65 and Petrain 2014: 21 observe, extant traces prove that at least some of the tablets were gilded and painted; these are, at any rate, highly refined works of skilled artists who are guided by a complex aesthetic programme.

⁶³ E.g., Sadurska 1964: 17 and 34.

⁶⁴ Squire 2011: 59, with Chapter 4 and p. 375; Petrain 2014: 23, with 129–130; this is also a prominent theme in Valenzuela Montenegro 2004: 387–391.

⁶⁵ Squire 2011: 63.

mutually informed and inspired one another, but may there have been a similar relationship between the tablets' prototypes and Hellenistic poetry? How Hellenistic, exactly, are the *Tabulae*? This is not to say that I reject Squire's formula, already mentioned, of avoiding prescriptive labels that would make us regard the tablets as more Greek than Roman, or the other way round;⁶⁶ on the contrary, what I choose to do is make matters even more complicated.

Recent scholarship on the *Tabulae* has, understandably, concentrated on their interactions with Augustan poetry, but there is one poetic text that, to my knowledge, remains underexplored in those more recent (and perhaps earlier as well) studies. What I have in mind is (Pseudo-?)Lycophron's *Alexandra*. The much-debated issue of the authorship is relevant, to us, insofar as the poem's dating depends on the solution of this larger problem. My personal view is, in accordance with the emerging consensus (though dissenting voices are still to be heard), that the poem was composed by a poet (mockingly) assuming the identity of the tragic poet Lycophron at the beginning of the second century BC, with a subtle encomiastic intention of embellishing the *aristeia* of Titus Quinctius Flamininus with an elaborate Hellenic context; hence the poem's notorious 'Roman passages' (*Alex.* 1226–1282 and 1446–1450).⁶⁷ For the purpose of the present discussion, let us assume that this view is correct.

In the three recent monographs on the *Tabulae*, the *Alexandra* receives little attention; Valenzuela Montenegro briefly discusses it as an early source for the Aeneas myth, and Squire comments, in relation to the hermeneutical toil to be expended by the recipient of the *Tabulae*, on the challenge of unpacking the meanings condensed in a single line of Lycophron.⁶⁸ The latter suggestion directs us, I argue, on a rewarding path, yet what I would like to submit in the first place is that there is a strikingly wide and complex web of interdependencies between the *Alexandra* and the *Tabulae*, at various levels. First, the thematic level: the centrality of Aeneas in the Capitoline tablet, and the overall usefulness of the Trojan myth as represented in the *Tabulae* for the Roman discourses of self-assertion, corresponds with the analogous programme of the *Alexandra*, and in particular with the prominence of Aeneas in the first of the 'Roman passages' – possibly with Stesichorus being a shared source.⁶⁹ Intriguingly, there are even further thematic correspondences: the personifications of Europe and Asia represented on the *Tabula Chigi* (17M) in the context of the Alexander the Great's conquests, and

⁶⁶ See, once again, Squire 2011: 372–375.

⁶⁷ My views, which mostly follow Fraser 2003, are briefly summarized in Kwapisz 2021; for the second-century origin of the *Alexandra*, see now, above all, Hornblower 2015 and Hornblower 2018; McNelis, Sens 2016, and also K.R. Jones 2014.

⁶⁸ Valenzuela Montenegro 2004: 398; Squire 2011: 274 (and cf. 235).

⁶⁹ See Hornblower 2015: 57.

the possible presence of Alexander's legend on two other tablets (18L and 22Get), find a striking parallel in Lycophron's focus on the clash of Europe and Asia in an extended passage with which the *Alexandra* ends (1283–1450), with the marked presence of Alexander at 1339–1445. One might go as far as to say that from the thematic perspective, the narrative span of the reliefs on the *Tabulae* matches the contents of the *Alexandra*. Even the appearance of Heracles on the *Tabula Albani* (19J) curiously corresponds with his prominence throughout the *Alexandra*.

I see further reasons, some not easy to verbalize, to argue that the *Alexandra*, as a peculiar cultural phenomenon, can be instructively compared with the *Tabulae Iliacae*. One of these is the hermeneutic density of the poetic tapestry of the *Alexandra* we saw mentioned in passing by Squire. The intricately segmented narrative of the poem – which itself is somewhat suggestive of the fragmented pictorial discourse of the *Tabulae* – poses an unparalleled challenge to the reader, a challenge rarely even met, because just like the pictorial-textual richness of the *Tabulae*, the poem must have much more often been approached in pieces than read in full. The poem is notorious for its riddling style, yet the text offers much more than a catalogue of learned charades; the intricate composition creates an emphatically non-chaotic maze, which invites the reader to discover passageways between various parts, overarching motifs, and the ordering principles of the poem.⁷⁰ To be sure, there is nothing particularly novel about my characterization of the poem; these features amount to its Hellenistic-ness, the same one finds in other products of Hellenistic culture, such as, e.g., the Hellenistic anthologies (of epigrams, or other short poems), whose refinement is not only in distinct qualities of self-contained poems, but also in how the assemblage of the smaller wholes creates an intricate pattern of a poetry book.⁷¹ Yet due to its enhanced complexity, the *Alexandra* supplies a particularly emblematic specimen of this Hellenistic-ness.

Experiencing this condensed Hellenistic-ness is perhaps not much different from making sense of meanings that emerge from the many sophisticated inter-medial messages of the *Tabulae Iliacae* – the pictorial representations, the inscriptions, the letter grids. The reception processes at play have been instructively described in the recent studies by Squire and Petrain. My suggestion is that on the whole, the hermeneutic response that the *Tabulae* seek to evoke may not be much different from the misery of the average reader of the *Alexandra*. Although unlike the *Alexandra*, whose notoriety is for its obscurity (as early as in Antiquity), we have no evidence of ancient responses to the *Tabulae*, one feels that the categories of 'enigmatic' and 'obscure' are not out of place in characterizing the experience

⁷⁰ For a thought-provoking treatment of this intricacy, see now Żybert 2019.

⁷¹ On the elaborate workings of Hellenistic anthologies, see, e.g., the essays collected in Gutzwiller 2005.

of approaching them, not only single tablets, but also larger sets and the resulting bigger narratives. The *Tabulae* sought to be meticulously studied, to entrap the recipient in a process of painstaking decipherment. This act of making sense does not even have to be fully successful; the joy is in experiencing what has been aptly termed in reference to the *Alexandra* the ‘titillation de l’énigme’.⁷²

As a result, the *Alexandra* and the *Tabulae* offered a similar story, or a set of stories, delivered in a somewhat similar mode, although through different media. This mode of sophisticated communication is characteristic of Hellenistic culture; moreover, even the Roman agenda of the stories the tablets tell us has, as we have seen, a prototype in an elaborate Hellenistic composition. This does not necessarily entail that the extant tablets are copies of second-century BC Greek originals – although this possibility should not be ruled out – yet perhaps this is sufficient, especially in the broader context of this essay, to see them anew with a fresh amazement. The tablets are, quite emblematically, artefacts of Hellenistic culture, whose affiliations with the *Alexandra* might make most or even all of them feel at home anywhere in South Italy near the date of the composition of that poem – yet those we know originated in Augustan Rome, and gained enough popularity to continue to be manufactured under Hadrian. Like the monumental *Pinax* inscription, yet at the microscale, these shards of condensed Hellenistic-ness contribute to the image of Rome as a Greek city.

The *Hypogaeum* of the Porta Maggiore

Most of Rome’s attractions we present in this essay are only virtual: the libraries perished, the inscriptions are lost, the tablets are dispersed around the world. Yet in this section, our concern is with a spectacular monument that still can be seen and visited in Rome today, although neither we nor many others have seen it in person: the Basilica, or *Hypogaeum*, of the Porta Maggiore, a short walk from the previously mentioned sites. It was accidentally discovered in 1917. Due to difficult environmental conditions, the *Hypogaeum* was unavailable to the public since the late eighties of the previous century, yet a limited access was allowed at the beginning of 2021 – until the *Hypogaeum* was, again, closed due to the COVID-19 restrictions; when these are lightened, however, there is a chance the site can be accessed. I have not much to say about this fascinating subterranean structure, but I sketch this brief amateurish picture in the hope that its coinciding with the reopening of the *Hypogaeum* might help provide a much-needed stimulus

⁷² Cusset, Prioux 2009: 9; cf. LeVen 2014: 175 – in reference to fourth-century dithyrambic poetry, which arguably foreshadows tendencies of Hellenistic poetry.

for cognoscenti – art historians, archaeologists and the like, ideally grouped in transdisciplinary teams – to reapproach the obscure decoration of the *Hypogaeum*.

The *Hypogaeum* is usually believed to have been constructed between the Augustan age and Nero and to have been in use only for a short time and then abandoned; the cancellation due to a sort of *damnatio memoriae* has been suggested. A recent study points to traces of earlier frescoes visible under the present decoration, which would suggest two stages of the *Hypogaeum*'s functioning.⁷³ The three-aisle structure, with rows of columns supporting a vaulted ceiling and an apse closing the main hall, gave rise to referring to this subterranean structure as a basilica:⁷⁴ the Basilica of the Porta Maggiore. The most striking feature of this site is its stunningly rich decoration: a large number of stucco reliefs on the ceiling and columns represent a mosaic of scenes and figures of mythology – Attis, Bacchantes, the punishment of Marsyas, Orpheus and Eurydice, Jason seizing the Golden Fleece, the rape of the Leucippides, and many others – and what seem to be scenes of everyday life, which, however, might have a symbolic sense (as illustrations of the life of a mystes?) – education, attributes of athletic contests, religious rites. The central relief on the vault has usually been interpreted as the rape of Ganymede, and another scene of special importance, due to its central placement in the apse, must be Sappho's Leucadian leap, making one think of the details supplied in Ov. (♀) *Epist.* 15.163–184: Sappho holding a lyre descends into the sea, assisted by winged Eros, with Apollo with a bow welcoming her, and a Triton ready to receive her.⁷⁵ In sum, an amazingly varied assortment of scenes. The symbolism of many of these seems to be of transcendence and afterlife, and that scenes of unhappy love abound is surely telling;⁷⁶ all in all, the mood is melancholy rather than convivial cheerfulness, but every time one's mind begins to make some sense of a cluster of scenes and find what seem to be meaningful correspondences between various stuccoes the hermeneutic process is thwarted by an image that seems out of place in the bigger picture. A pygmy? A school scene? What programme underlies the whole of the artistic decoration of the *Hypogaeum* – as well as the *Hypogaeum* itself?

The usual answers to this question is that the subterranean building either had a sepulchral function or served as a secret meeting-place of a mystic cult. The Neo-Pythagorean interpretation is a leading one, with versions highlighting the syncretistic character of the cult as evidenced by the stucco reliefs, in particular its Orphic and Dionysiac connections. There is much that is persuasive in this theory,

⁷³ Polcaro et al. 2019: 62.

⁷⁴ Cf. Vermaseren 1977: 55.

⁷⁵ Curtis 1920.

⁷⁶ See Vermaseren 1977: 55–57.

yet there is also frustration – the frustration of bashing one’s head against the hard wall of hermeneutic aporia, and the added frustration of getting too little from the piles of the scholarship on the *Hypogaeum*.⁷⁷ Much of it was published shortly after the *Hypogaeum*’s discovery in 1917; some of it retains usefulness, but like so many contemporary discussions on Greek and Roman religion, most is largely outdated. Jérôme Carcopino’s monograph, which remains the most extensive treatment of the *Hypogaeum*, exemplifies these tendencies; the elaborate theory Carcopino puts forward, according to which the *Hypogaeum* is a secret cult place of a Neo-Pythagorean sect, remains a major contribution to this debate and Carcopino may have even got much of it right, yet all of it needs to be reconsidered due to a considerable eyebrow-raising factor of a theory where everything is connected with everything.⁷⁸ There is surprisingly little recent high-quality scholarship on the *Hypogaeum*.⁷⁹ What it calls for is a wave of attention like the one the *Tabulae Iliacae* have recently received; the *Hypogaeum* should be reappraised as a complex anthropological phenomenon between religion and art (and whose ramifications stretch out to literature), and the preliminary work of cataloguing the stucco scenes and reviewing earlier scholarship should probably be done before further steps are taken.

I have nothing to offer except tentatively suggesting a potentially rewarding path of approach by juxtaposing the *Hypogaeum* with a discussion of the *Tabulae* – these two phenomena of Augustan art may be rather different, created in different scales and with different aims, but there is much to suggest that both originated in the same context and I cannot shake the feeling that they share some important features. In both, a complex and intricate, all-encompassing rhetorics seems to be involved, in which a tendency towards deliberate obscurity – hence *titillation de l’énigme* – seems to be an essential element. The art of the *Hypogaeum* lacks the intermedial substrate of the *Tabulae*, yet one does not have to go as far as to assume that *all* reliefs reflect a narrative of a single work of literature⁸⁰ to realize that interactions between art and literature are a remarkable feature of the reliefs of the *Hypogaeum*. This is clearest in the case of the Leucadian Sappho relief; the correspondences between the picture – if this is, indeed, Sappho’s Leucadian leap! – and *Heroides* 15 have been seen to be rather striking.

As in the case of the Aeneas of the *Tabulae*, however, the Roman connotations of this relief may be an illusion imposed on us by the Roman context of the

⁷⁷ Cf. Dowden 2011: 299.

⁷⁸ Carcopino 1927.

⁷⁹ See Beard, North, Price 1998: 273–274; Dowden 2011: 291–292. Vermaseren 1977: 55–57 stands out as an inspiring, if brief, interpretive attempt to make sense of the *Hypogaeum* and contextualize it.

⁸⁰ In a rather idiosyncratic attempt, it was suggested that the art of the *Hypogaeum* reflects episodes of the *Aeneid*; see van Kasteel 2016, with a rebuttal of this theory in Dewez 2017.

Hypogaeum. The elements that *Heroides* 15 and the *Hypogaeum* relief share may be, quite likely, due to reminiscences of a shared source, either a work of art or of literature. The story of Sappho's unhappy love for Phaon is first attested, for us, in a fragment of Menander's *Leucadia* (fr. 258 Körte = 1.11–16 Arnott), in a way that clearly implies a pre-existing tale. Like the *Tabulae*, the reliefs of the *Hypogaeum* have an unmistakable aura of Greek-ness around them; the imagery is likely to be exclusively Hellenic. Although the *Hypogaeum* was not situated in the heart of the ancient city, it was within a short walking distance from it – a striking testimony to how Rome embraced Greek culture everywhere, from the top of the Palatine to the level underground.

The *Via Ostiensis* Monument for Lucius Iulius Vestinus

In the closing chapter, our walk takes us outside Rome, on *via Ostiensis*. This is admittedly a little bit vague, but the last item in our itinerary is, again, only a virtual attraction, and *in uia Ostiensi* is the sole account of the location provided by our best source. Our interest is now, as a matter of fact, not in an object, but in a man, a Roman official, as depicted by a Greek inscription, now lost, which is preserved in a ninth-century *sylloge* of Rome's inscription, *Einsiedelnensis* 326, and also in the so-called *Sylloge Signoriliana*;⁸¹ unless the latter is based on an earlier source, the inscription was still to be seen in early Renaissance.⁸² The recorded text is as follows (*IG XIV 1085*; *IGUR* 62):

ἀρχιερεῖ Ἀλεξανδρείας καὶ Αἰγύπτου πάσης Λευκίῳ Ἰουλίῳ Οὐῆσι|νοι καὶ ἐπιστάτῃ
τοῦ Μουσείου καὶ | ἐπὶ τῶν ἐν Ῥώμῃ βιβλιοθηκῶν Ῥωμα|κῶν τε καὶ Ἑλληνικῶν καὶ
ἐπὶ τῆς παιδ|είας Ἀδριανοῦ τοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος καὶ ἐπὶ|στολεῖ τοῦ αὐτοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος
[— — —]

To Lucius Iulius Vestinus, high priest of Alexandria and of all Egypt, director of the Museum, commissioner of the Latin and Greek libraries in Rome, *a studiis* of the emperor Hadrian; head of correspondence of the same emperor.⁸³

More likely than not, the inscription was placed on Vestinus' funeral monument, whose prominence may have facilitated the recording of the text in the Middle Ages.⁸⁴ Our essay began with capturing Rome's instinct to become a new Alexandria and it ends with portraying a man who, under Hadrian, evidently devoted his life to nurturing the Greek-ness of Rome, after intimately experiencing the Greek-ness of Alexandria while fulfilling the function of the director

⁸¹ On which see Buonocore 2015: 26–27.

⁸² Cf. Del Longo 2020: 191.

⁸³ Trans. after Houston 2014: 237.

⁸⁴ As suggested by Del Longo 2020: 192.

of the Museum.⁸⁵ It has been suggested that the inscription, which was already incomplete in the ninth century, was likely to have been accompanied by a Latin text,⁸⁶ but it would by no means be inconceivable – especially in the context of what precedes in this essay – that after his death, Vestinus was presented, through a monument built on the outskirts of this strange Greek city known as Rome, as a champion of Greek culture.

This is consistent with Vestinus' image as preserved for us in a fragmentary mosaic of precious testimonies to complement the above-quoted inscription.⁸⁷ He is likely to have had family ties with the well-known prefect of Egypt under Nero, of the same name.⁸⁸ According to the *Suda* (o 835 Adler), he authored an abridgement of the lexicon of Pamphilus. The importance of this achievement cannot be overstated, insofar as it allows us to see Vestinus in a chain of lexicographers that extends from Aristarchus – Pamphilus' affiliation with his school is reflected in how the *Suda* refers to him as 'Aristarchean' (π 142 Adler), and his association with Alexandria may reflect his administrative role in its scholarly institutions⁸⁹ – to Hesychius and his lexicon. Vestinus is not just a Roman in Alexandria; in addition to having purely administrative responsibilities of the director of the Museum, he actively sought to contribute to the tradition of Alexandrian scholarship in the spirit of his predecessors, by combining institutional engagement with doing actual philology. Furthermore, the *Suda* portrays Vestinus as author of Atticist lexicographical works, in keeping with the *Zeitgeist*. This is all fitting for an Alexandrian intellectual, but these qualifications are more striking in an imperial court official in charge of libraries in Rome and eventually buried on the city's outskirts.

The portrayal of Vestinus is complemented by a curious Greek poem which Byzantine manuscripts ascribe to a 'Besantinus', which, as Carl Haeberlin saw, is likely to be a scribal corruption of a Greek form of the name of Vestinus.⁹⁰ The form of the poem is, strikingly, in keeping with the intellectual profile of Vestinus as an heir to the tradition of the learned and refined Alexandrian poets-philologists and the context of his lifetime in the first half of the second century AD: it is a pattern poem, in the shape of an altar, additionally embellished with an acrostich; it is written in the Ionic dialect, in keeping with the contemporary antiquarian revival of the Ionic in artistic prose; it is composed of a variety of metres known to be in use in the

⁸⁵ I follow here my earlier discussions on Vestinus: Kwapisz 2013: esp. 177–178, and Kwapisz 2019: esp. 90–106.

⁸⁶ Del Longo 2020: 192.

⁸⁷ On Vestinus and his career, see, in addition to the discussions quoted in this section, Pflaum 1960: 245–247; Puech 2002: 467–468; Kłodziński 2011: 56; Bowie 2013: 253–255; Stebnicka 2015.

⁸⁸ Pflaum 1960: 245.

⁸⁹ On Pamphilus and Vestinus in the context of ancient lexicography, see Matthaios 2015 and Hatzimichali 2019.

⁹⁰ Haeberlin 1887: 65–66 with Haeberlin 1890: 283–284.

Imperial period; and it is packed with learned poetic glosses, some of these betraying a taste for Atticism.⁹¹ After Haeberlin, the hypothesis of Vestinus' authorship was developed by Ewen Bowie, who ingeniously suggested that the altar shape and the address to an Olympian in the poem's acrostich point to its addressee being Hadrian; the poem would have been composed immediately after Hadrian's dedication of the Olympieion in Athens in AD 131/132 and resulting adoption of the title of Olympian, when numerous material altars were set up to celebrate Hadrian in the East.⁹²

The text of the poem is available in several editions, most recently in my own edition of the Greek figure poems and in the late Neil Hopkinson's Loeb edition of the Greek bucolic poets.⁹³ Here I quote only Anthony Holden's translation, which has the virtue of not only rendering the poem's shaped form, but also its acrostich:⁹⁴

Sacrificial juices, as dark purple
As the trickling flux-drops of the
Cuttlefish, never flow over me.
Raised high above, the knife spares all Pan's property
Its Naxos rock-honed blade; nor am I ever blackened as
Fragrant oils drip, thick fumes curl up, from Nysian twigs.
In me you see no altar built from gold, no
Construct of bricks or Alybean silver nuggets;
Even less did that Cynthus-born race of two make
Me from the horns of those bleaters
Around the smooth Cynthian ridges,
Nourished by its mountain pastures.
Yet I may match any in the balance.
You look on an altar built by the
Earth-born Nine, with Heaven's daughters'
Aid; the supreme lord of the undying
Rendered their skill here immortal.
So now, drink deep from the spring
Of the Gorgon's child's hoof; pour
Libations freely, make me sacrifice;
Your prayers merit offerings far richer than those
Made by the young girls of Hymettus. Come now,
Proceed, approach boldly, for I conceal no
Impurities, no poisonous creatures such as hid in that
Altar set up by the purple ram thief at Neae of Thrace,
Near Myrine, to you, holy daughter of three fathers.

⁹¹ See my discussion in Kwapisz 2013.

⁹² Bowie 1989: 201; Bowie 2002: 185–189.

⁹³ Kwapisz 2013 and Hopkinson 2015.

⁹⁴ Holden 1974: 202.

In Holden's rendering, the acrostich reads, 'Sacrifice many years, Olympian'; in Greek this is, Ὀλύμπιε, πολλοῖς ἔτεσι θύσειας. Since this is no real altar, no real sacrifice is meant; the wish is that on this immaterial altar of the Muses, the honoree's offerings of words may pour in abundance for years. It is with this wish that our birthday gift to our *honorandus* appropriately ends.

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