

Introduction

The image: a gathering of men, a lavish banquet, conspicuous consumption. The guests have gorged themselves on delicacies – fish in elegant sauce, roasted fowl, fancy pastries – and their dishes litter the table. Wine trickles in rivulets from their lips and spills in puddles beneath their couches. The capacious mixing bowl with its gaping mouth beckons the revelers to imbibe more, even though they're already stuffed and they can feel the food and wine rising in their throats. The shuttered windows fail to muffle the sounds rising from the street below, where a feast day procession wends its way through the city to the great church. The banqueters hear the refrain of the liturgical hymn – half chanted, half sung by the parade of the pious – but it doesn't stop them from their Dionysian revelry, as they provoke each other beyond satiety to a profound drunkenness.

The men sing their own songs, epigrams in the old style, many of them erotic. They imitate what they hear, concocting impromptu variations, and an intense rivalry adds heat to the flirtatious camaraderie. They role-play as kitchen slaves, pretending to cook up fancy poems for fancy guests. But such role-playing is a game for the privileged, for many of these men are lawyers with sterling educations who spend their days poring over legal documents in the Imperial Stoa, and some are very important men indeed, men close to the Emperor – rich men, men with power. It's the middle of the sixth century, the age of Justinian, and these men are citizens of Byzantium, Constantinople, New Rome.

One of these men took it upon himself to collect the poems that he and his friends composed and performed in each other's company. His name was Agathias, one of the lawyers, and he came from a distinguished family in Myrina, on the western coast of Asia Minor. One hundred of Agathias' own poems survive from his original collection of epigrams, and we also have eighty epigrams by Agathias' close friend Paul Silentiarios, one of the wealthy men at the banquet and one who was also very well connected. His name reflects his official title: as *silentarius*, his job was to maintain the

silence of the Imperial palace, especially in the presence of the Emperor. Others were also frequent contributors to the anthology: Julian the Egyptian, Makedonios Consul, John Barboukallos, Damocharis of Cos, and the other lawyers, Leontios, Marianos, Theaitetos, and Eratosthenes.¹ Apart from Agathias and Paul, these names are not well known to either classicists or Byzantinists, and yet these poets, part of the social and literary fabric of sixth-century Constantinople, helped shape early Byzantine culture. Agathias published his anthology around 567, shortly after the death of the Emperor Justinian and the accession of Justin II and his wife, the Empress Sophia. For later generations, Agathias' anthology would rank alongside the renowned poetic garlands of Meleager and Philip, compiled centuries earlier.² Agathias, too, calls his anthology a "garland" or "wreath," but the tenth-century *Souda* lexicon refers to it as "the Cycle of the new Epigrams,"³ and on the basis of this attestation modern scholars now conventionally refer to the sixth-century collection as the *Cycle* of Agathias.

The rowdy banquet of misbehaving men gives readers a boisterous, messy, and lively introduction to the anthology. Agathias' description of his circle's gluttonous gathering evokes the wild world of Aristophanic comedy (in iambic verse, too), and thus sets the stage for the themes to which these poets return again and again: sensual pleasure, desire gratified

¹ The best prosopographical study of the *Cycle* poets remains C&C, which also includes evidence for its date of publication; see also Cameron and Cameron (1967) and the response by McCail (1969). I agree with Schulte (2006) 10–11 that some poets thought by Beckby and C&C to be included in the *Cycle* must have belonged to other collections of an earlier period; these include: Ablabios Illoustrios, Damaskios, Eutolmios Scholastikos Illoustrios, Kyros, Neilos Scholastikos, Palladas, Phokas Diakonos, Theodoretos Grammatikos, and Theosebeia. The eastern Roman Empire underwent fundamental changes in the sixth century, especially during the reign of Justinian, when many aspects of late Roman culture became distinctly "Byzantine"; see Maas (2005b). Throughout this study therefore I use the phrases "late Roman" and "early Byzantine" interchangeably.

² On the formation of the Hellenistic anthologies, see Gutzwiller (1998).

³ στέμμα, *AP* 4.4.61; τὸν Κύκλον τῶν νέων Ἐπιγραμμάτων, *Souda* α 112. The two lemmata to Agathias' preface in the tenth-century Palatine manuscript refer to his anthology simply as a "collection" (συλλογή/συναγωγή). The first lemma, which immediately precedes the text of Agathias' preface and appears in slightly larger letters, is printed in the *apparatus criticus* at *Anth. Gr.* 1, 113. The second lemma, however, which runs down the left-hand margin of the manuscript page and is not included in *Anth. Gr.*, reads: Ἀγαθίου σχολαστικοῦ Ἀσianoῦ Μυριαίου οὐ στεφανὸς ἀλλὰ συναγωγή νέων ἐπιγραμμάτων. ἤκμασεν δ' οὗτος ὁ Ἀγαθίας ἐπὶ Ἰουστινιανοῦ τοῦ μεγάλου. ἔγραψεν δὲ καὶ ἱστορίαν καὶ τὰ ἐπιομοαζόμενα Δαφνιακά. ἔγραψε δὲ ταῦτα ἐπιγράμματα πρὸς Θεόδωρον δεκουρίωνα. ("Not a garland, but a collection of new epigrams by Agathias *scholastikos* of Asian Myrina. And this Agathias flourished in the reign of Justinian the Great. And he wrote also a history and things called the *Daphniaka*. And he wrote these epigrams for Theodoros the *decurio*.") Particularly interesting is the assertion that what follows is "not a garland, but a collection": what for the tenth-century Byzantine anthologist distinguished a poetic "garland" from a (mere?) "collection"? On the title of the collection, see Baldwin (1996) 99.

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and deferred, embodiment and transcendence, domination and submission, sex and power, the rigorous differentiation between masculine and feminine, but also the fluidity and manipulability of gender. Out of this tangle of interrelated themes, patterns emerge. First, the provocative, sensual masculinity that frames the anthology depends upon and receives its energy from the contemporary power of Christian asceticism, a reminder that the austere morality of the desert fathers is never far from the carnival of urban delights. Second, lavish panegyric of Imperial dominance resonates with fantasies of sexual gratification to produce a strange analogy between songs for the Emperor and the songs of Aphrodite. As a corollary to this erotics of conquest and violence, women's voices find ways of speaking out and they have the power to challenge, undermine, and seduce masculine authority and pleasure. Ultimately, Agathias and his circle explore the destabilization of both the Imperial and erotic subject and embrace a shifting positionality that moves between modes of dominance and submission and, along a different axis, between masculine and feminine. If, as Jackie Murray and Jonathan M. Rowland have argued, Hellenistic epigrams of earlier centuries began to experiment with "an entirely new type of gendered voice, a voice that is simultaneously masculine and feminine,"⁴ then the epigrams of the Byzantine poets mark a new phase in that experimentation within an Imperial culture transformed by Christian thought.⁵

In 1970, Averil Cameron recognized that the poetic activities of Agathias and his peers "were not so far removed from contemporary life as one might have thought. There is all the time in their work a blend of the literary and the realistic, the conventional and the new."⁶ It is the aim of this book to take up Cameron's proposition and to uncover just how thoroughly the *Cycle* of Agathias was embedded within late Roman and early Byzantine culture, with all its complexities and contradictions. Along with Averil Cameron and Alan Cameron, the classical scholars Axel Mattson, Giovanni Viansino, and Heinrich Schulte have provided invaluable studies and commentaries on the *Cycle* poets, but for the most part classicists have had little to say about the poetry of the sixth century. Hardly ever central even within studies of classical epigram, the early Byzantine poems from the *Greek Anthology* appear to classicists mostly as fascinating curiosities of literary history, glittering stars flaring up at the

⁴ Murray and Rowland (2007) 213.

⁵ For an overview of the "slippage" that could occur between masculine and feminine gender roles throughout the long history of Byzantium, see Neil (2013).

⁶ Averil Cameron (1970) 24; see now also the excellent survey by Garland (2011).

twilight of classical culture. When classicists do write about poems from the *Cycle* of Agathias, they almost always do so with an apology for their belatedness, as though the refined literary efforts of sixth-century poets would be an affront to classical sensibilities. In her masterful study of epigrams on Timomachus' famous painting of Medea, for example, Kathryn Gutzwiller refers to the poem by Julian the Egyptian (*APL* 139) only once in forty-seven pages, apparently because it is "a much later epigram,"⁷ even though it is centrally positioned within the Medea-sequence (*APL* 135–143). Regina Höschele, too, in a superb essay on the motif of the "traveling reader" in ancient epigram books, feels the need to explain why consideration of Agathias' preface to the *Cycle* merits inclusion in her study. "To be sure," Höschele writes, Agathias' poem is "rather late," but classicists need not fear: "Agathias offers a sophisticated version of the motif and very likely followed a tradition that had been there for centuries."⁸ Among classicists, poems from the *Cycle* of Agathias still have a very bad reputation.

Byzantinists, on the other hand, tend to read the sixth-century epigrams as inconsequential expressions of classical *paideia*, even if they recognize that the poets themselves were men of consequence in sixth-century culture. Claudia Rapp, for example, in her survey of literary culture in the *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, notes that, alongside the works of Agapetos, John Malalas, and Romanos the Melode, the *Cycle* of Agathias was one of the most popular books in the sixth century and in later generations. But Rapp also perpetuates the relative devaluation of classicizing epigrams within an emergent Byzantine culture, for the hymns of Romanos provide serious "spiritual edification," while the poems by Paul and Agathias offer merely "light literary enjoyment."⁹ Anthony Kaldellis, too, wonders with curiosity at the fact that Agathias and his peers "exchanged and collected erotic (and even homoerotic) epigrams as well as Christian and pagan poems. Apparently, there was nothing incongruous in writing a description of Hagia Sophia one day and an epigram about feeling up a woman's soft breasts on the next. We should not assume that any of this was a faithful reflection of contemporary life."¹⁰ Despite the apparent triviality of classicizing epigram in the sixth century, however, Rapp nevertheless emphasizes the practical function of such literary activity for poets eager to display their *paideia*, because "education marked a man's position in society. Not only did it provide him with the skills to

⁷ Gutzwiller (2004) 367.

⁸ Höschele (2007) 362.

⁹ Rapp (2005) 394.

¹⁰ Kaldellis (2007) 177.

make a living, it also guaranteed his membership in a circle of like-minded intellectuals.”¹¹ From this perspective, the *Cycle* appears as a strange cultural product indeed: a collection of frivolous diversions totally irrelevant to the more serious spiritual concerns of the age, while paradoxically also an ultra-refined instrument of social ambition within an elite class of learned men.

This paradox is worth pursuing, and the historian Peter N. Bell, in *Social Conflict in the Age of Justinian: Its Nature, Management, and Mediation*, breaks new theoretical ground with his impressive sociological approach to understanding the “extreme cultural complexity”¹² of the eastern Roman Empire in the sixth century. Bell carefully untangles the intersecting ideological discourses that produced the rich trove of literary and material evidence from this period. Early Byzantine culture thus emerges not as a “conscience collective” (to use Durkheim’s phrase)¹³ but as a network of overlapping conflicts in nearly all spheres of life, from religion, class, and politics, to literature, public entertainments, and marriage. When it comes to the *Cycle* poets, however, Bell, too, succumbs to the temptation to see their works as opaque expressions of classical *paideia*. Though he discusses Paul Silentiarios’ *Ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia* at length, Bell refers to the epigrams of Agathias and Paul only once in his book. For Bell, their erotic and “Pagan” epigrams are emblematic of the difficulty facing historians in determining the “ideological shifts from an underlying classical to a Christian cultural paradigm.”¹⁴ Choosing to work within a refined, allusive, and erudite classical genre, in other words, the poets make it impossible to penetrate to their supposedly real social and political motivations. But if we read the *Cycle* epigrams simply as late expressions of classical *paideia* on “un-Christian erotic themes”¹⁵ that appear to have nothing to do with real life, then we fail to read the poems as complex artifacts exhibiting the very conflicts that Bell rightly identifies as definitive of the age. It’s more productive, I argue, to think about the rich connections between the erotic themes of the *Cycle* and the ambient Christian culture of Byzantium, and philology can help to trace the ideological intersectionality that these classicizing epigrams display right on their surface for all to see.

Justinian’s consolidation of ecclesiastical, legal, and Imperial power sought to produce subjects who enthusiastically identified with a Mediterranean-wide, unified Rome steadfastly grounded in Christian orthodoxy. Justinian’s

¹¹ Rapp (2005) 390. ¹² Bell (2013) 213. ¹³ Bell (2013) 214. ¹⁴ Bell (2013) 220.

¹⁵ Bell (2013) 220.

legislation, for example, attempts to stabilize gender and to condemn illicit forms of desire along religious lines. Two new regulations targeted sexual activity between males, allegedly to protect the Empire from God's wrath. The first law, *Novella* 77, issued in 538, was directed at men "possessed by the power of the devil" who "have both plunged themselves into grievous licentiousness and do what is the opposite of nature itself." The second law, *Novella* 141, issued in 559, demanded the repentance of "those growing putrid together with the loathsome and unholy deed justly hateful to God; indeed we mean the corruption of males, which in an ungodly manner some dare, males with males, by committing obscenity," this last phrase a quotation of Paul's Epistle to the Romans 1:27.¹⁶ And what about women? As Leslie Brubaker puts it, men were the "normative legal gender," and women only appear in "legislation dealing with marriage, the family, or the protection of female virtue."¹⁷ Justinian's regulation against sex trafficking, for example – *Novella* 14, issued in 535 – however admirable, was premised not on the belief that violence against girls and women is inherently wrong, but that forcing girls and women into the sex trade prevented them from maintaining their chastity (*sōphrosynē*), "which alone has been able confidently to commend the souls of mankind to God." Even at its most protective and humane, Justinian's legislation nevertheless sought to keep women in their place in society.¹⁸

But Justinian's legislation was just one mechanism within a much larger social and cultural context that scripted for Byzantine subjects normative ideas about sex, gender, and desire. This study builds on Judith Butler's theory that gender is performative, a repertoire of "acts, gestures, enactments" – taught, mimicked, and repeated over the course of a life and from generation to generation – that produce the *illusory* effect that identity possesses a "gender core," and the illusion of gender is "discursively maintained for the purposes of the regulation of sexuality within the obligatory frame of reproductive heterosexuality."¹⁹ The gendered subject is, in other words, a role prescribed by our social and cultural conditioning that we learn to play from infancy and that we internalize to such a degree that we feel that both the role and the performance are natural and real. But to be aware of the illusory quality of one's gendered identity also means that one can glean the possibility of other, new performances, that one could in fact

¹⁶ On Justinian's persecution of sexual activity between males, see Smith (2015) 501–503, with bibliography.

¹⁷ Brubaker (2005) 436–437.

¹⁸ On the paramount significance in late antiquity of *τάξις/taxis*, "a place for everyone, and everyone in his/her place," see Taft (1998) 79–80.

¹⁹ Butler (1990/1999) 173.

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inhabit a different role. Put another way, there will always be ways of *reimagining* gender and desire that escape normative scripting, and these new reimaginings, if they do not entirely subvert, at least productively trouble the ideological system in which they are embedded. Justinian himself may even have grudgingly agreed with Butler, for this Emperor, like no other in late antiquity, saw it as his job to reinforce and regulate at all levels the discursive framework that would produce good Roman men and women who were pleasing to God.

Independently of Justinian's zealous imposition of normative Byzantine identity from the top down, men and women of every social status cultivated an orthodox self by means of their active participation in liturgy. As Derek Krueger has demonstrated, the elaborate narratives crafted by the sixth-century hymnographer Romanos the Melode and chanted during the all-night vigils before major church festivals involved the laity in the probing interiority of biblical sinners before Christ.²⁰ Romanos was a contemporary of Agathias and Paul Silentiarios – they all lived in the same city at the same time – but he composed a very different kind of poetry that offered powerful models of Christian selfhood and that invited participants in the liturgy to actually vocalize for themselves the formation of Christian subjectivity. The epigrams of the *Cycle* poets, by contrast, give voice to an “I” for whom Christian liturgy is not enough.

Consider Romanos' hymn *On the Harlot*, a conflation of two stories about sinful women from the New Testament,²¹ which was performed on the Wednesday of Holy Week. The hymn is an elaborate masterpiece that typifies Romanos' dynamic poetic imagination, but focusing on just a few details here will suffice to bring Romanos' hymn into dialogue with early Byzantine epigram. In every stanza of the hymn, the poet revels in the sensual details of life that throw into sharp relief the allure of the material world as an enticement for new pleasures at the side of Christ. The hymn opens with the arresting image of Christ's words falling upon the harlot (ἡ πόρνη) like herbs or spices sprinkled on food for a fine banquet (καθάπερ ἄρώματα | ῥαινόμενα, 10.1.1–2). The experience awakens in the harlot a sense of shame and a desire to partake of the “breath of life” (πνοὴν ζωῆς, 3) that Christ offers to the faithful. At this point the singer/narrator imagines that there must have been in attendance at that transformative scene also male harlots (τότε τοῖς πόρνοις ἐκεῖ, 7), and he confesses that he counts himself as one of that group and likewise ready for the same scourges that terrified the sinful woman to repent of her

²⁰ Krueger (2014) 29–66. ²¹ Luke 7:36–50, Matthew 26:6–13, and Mark 14:3–9.

harlotry. Figuring himself as a male harlot, an avowed lover of sexual pleasure, Romanos' singer/narrator signals his humility before the sublime biblical model and at the same time offers the laity a way of identifying with the liturgical drama about to unfold. But to identify with the drama in this way is also to express longing to change, to be scared (πτοούμενος, 10) of sinfulness. Despite her own spiritual awakening, however, the repentant harlot still speaks as one enslaved to the appetites of the body: unlike Agathias' gourmand-poets, her soul is now awakened by "the scent of Christ's table" (ἡ ὄσμη τῆς τραπέζης τοῦ Χριστοῦ) to which she arrives "at a gluttonous run" (λίχνω δρόμω, 10.3.1–5). Abandoning all her "former men" (τοὺς ποτέ) she directs her longing now toward Christ alone, who has become her "lover" (τὸν ἐραστήν μου, 5.1–6). Even as Romanos' singer/narrator at the beginning and end of the hymn confesses his failure to live up to the ideal of the harlot's repentance, the laity communally shares the hymn's refrain, repeated eighteen times:²² a desire to be cleansed "of the filth of my deeds" (τοῦ βορβόρου τῶν ἔργων μου).

Compare now a remarkable epigram by Paul Silentiarios, who adopts the persona of a woman as she delights in the abject pleasure of her promiscuity:

Ἴππομένην φιλέουσα νόον προσέρεισα Λεάνδρω·
 ἐν δὲ Λεανδρείοις χεῖλεσι πηγνυμένη
 εἰκόνα τὴν Ξάνθοιο φέρω φρεσί· πλεξαμένη δὲ
 Ξάνθον ἐς Ἴππομένην νόστιμον ἦτορ ἄγω.
 πάντα τὸν ἐν παλάμησιν ἀναίνομαι· ἄλλοτε δ' ἄλλον
 αἰὲν ἀμοιβαίοις πῆχεσι δεχνυμένη
 ἀφνειὴν Κυθήρειαν ὑπέρχομαι. εἰ δὲ τις ἡμῖν
 μέμφεται, ἐν πενήνῃ μιμνέτω οἰογάμω. (AP 5.232 Paul Silentiarios)

Kissing Hippomenes, I set my mind on Leander. And while planted on the lips of Leander, I bear in my heart an image of Xanthos. And while embracing Xanthos, I lead my heart back to Hippomenes. I spurn each one that's in my grasp, and sometimes receiving one man and sometimes another in my promiscuous arms, I seek to procure for myself a rich Kythereia. And if someone finds fault with me, let him be content with the poverty of monogamy.

It must be stressed first that although the theme of celebrating multiple loves was a traditional one within the epigrammatic tradition, Paul's poetic models appear in what is now Book 12 of the *Greek Anthology*, containing

²² Twenty times, if we count the two *prooimia*.

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Hellenistic poems on pederastic themes and the infamous *Mousa Paidikē* assembled by Straton in the second century.²³ Most of the earlier poems on this theme depict a male lover rhapsodizing about the charms of the boys whom he desires, but Paul has transformed the homoerotic scenario so that the speaker is a woman who can't be satisfied by just one man – a courtesan (*hetaira*) perhaps, or possibly, as Waltz tantalizingly suggests, “a certain corrupt great lady from the court of Justinian.”²⁴ But the epigram is no less queer for its overtly heterosexual camouflage, for, as I have written elsewhere, “a provocative, transgressive sexuality remains.”²⁵ Nor has Paul's feminine persona prevented the historian Wolfgang Liebeschütz from describing this epigram as frankly “homoerotic.”²⁶

Liberated from a controlling narrative of salvation and spiritual cleansing, Paul's harlot remains joyfully unrepentant. Her mind and her arms flow easily from one man to the next, from Hippomenes to Leander, from Leander to Xanthos, and from Xanthos back to Hippomenes in what appears to be an endless cycle. In a metapoetic sense, as she makes the rounds from lover to lover Paul's harlot creates her own erotic garland. Indeed, the names of her lovers have literary and mythological pedigrees, strongly suggesting that Paul's epigram is playing with its status as a self-consciously literary work of art. Hippomenes, the famous lover of Atalanta in myth, won his bride by tossing golden apples in her way to distract her from the footrace in which she bested her many suitors; Paul's harlot, by contrast, is distracted only by other men.²⁷ The name Leander recalls the equally famous lover of Hero, whose story as recounted in Musaeus' well-known epyllion inspired Paul and Agathis in other epigrams, too.²⁸ In Musaeus' poem, Leander's beloved, though a priestess of Aphrodite, must be persuaded to give up her commitment to chastity and submit to romantic *erōs*; unlike Hero, Paul's harlot needs no erotic instruction from her Leander.

The literary allusion behind Paul's use of the name Xanthos is more ambiguous. The Hellenistic poet Moero of Byzantium (third century BCE) in her work known as the *Curses* recounted the story of Alkinoe, a woman

²³ *AP* 12.87–90 (*adesp.*), 91 (Polystratos), 93 (Rhianos), 94 (Meleager), 95 (Meleager), and 173 (Philodemos). For commentary, see Veniero (1916) 129–131, Viansino (1963) 150–152, Beck (1984) 68, Smith (2015) 508–509, and *Anth. Gr.* 11.103. On Straton's *Mousa Paidikē*, see Steinbichler (1998) 13–33 and Floridi (2007) 1–55.

²⁴ *Anth. Gr.* 11.103: “quelque grande dame corrompue de la cour de Justinien.”

²⁵ Smith (2015) 508. ²⁶ Liebeschütz (1996) 90n93.

²⁷ In the *Greek Anthology*, the only other epigram referring to Hippomenes is by another *Cycle* poet: *APL* 144 (Arabios Scholastikos).

²⁸ *AP* 5.263 (Agathias) and 293 (Paul Silentiarios).

so consumed by her love for the young man Xanthos that she abandoned her husband and children, an apt poetic archetype for Paul's harlot.²⁹ The most famous Xanthos from myth, however, is not a human male at all, but a horse, and not just any horse, but the horse of Achilles that speaks with a human voice at the end of Book 19 of the *Iliad*. If we are not meant to imagine Paul's harlot in the monstrous embrace of an equine lover,³⁰ then an erotic allusion to the famous horse of Achilles at least represents a comic degradation of epic. Jeffrey Henderson notes that when characters in Old Comedy refer to the horse, they "refer only to the phallus,"³¹ and so Xanthos' name also suggests the lover's prodigious physical endowment: Paul's harlot lusts for a man hung like a horse. This interpretation gains support by the fact that the embrace of Xanthos makes Paul's harlot think once again about Hippomenes, whose name, from *hippos* ("horse") and *menos* ("spirit, passion") insinuates that he, too, is a "spirited horse" of a lover. Such word play even motivates readers to imagine that the harlot's lovers may be star charioteers from the hippodrome of Constantinople.

Paul's wicked literary games imply pure artifice, but the epigram illustrates precisely how the fantasies of art can take on the scandalous force of reality, for though in one moment Xanthos resides only as an "image" (εἰκόνα) in the woman's heart, we see her in the very same verse suddenly entangled in Xanthos' arms. In Paul's literary imagination, image and *logos* can be made flesh. The harlot who speaks in Paul's poem may herself be an image, whether painted portrait or polychromatic mosaic,³² but Paul has the pleasure of giving her a voice, and she claims that she lives and loves and works in the poet's own world, for she makes a living from lust and calls her Aphrodite a "rich Kythereia" (ἄφνειήν Κυθήρειαν). The adjective ἄφνειός ("rich") comes from the noun ἄφενος, the "revenue" that has made this woman wealthy and powerful. Paul uses the same adjective once also in his verse *Ekphrasis of Hagia Sophia*, where he describes the holy altar of the great church as being "embellished with the radiance of precious (ἄφνειῶν) stones" (754). Paul's language insinuates that the jewels encrusted upon Christ's altar are the same kind of costly jewels that decorate the harlot's body.

²⁹ Parth. 27; on Moero, see Skinner (2005): a statue of Moero stood in the Zeuxippos before its destruction in the Nika Riots of 532.

³⁰ Cf. Ps.-Lucian *Onos* 50–51. ³¹ Henderson (1975/1991) 127.

³² The lemma for this poem says only that it is "on a woman who has many lovers: Hippomenes, Leander, Xanthos" (εἷς τινα γυναῖκα πολλοὺς ἔραστὰς ἔχουσαν Ἴππομένην, Λέανδρον, Ξάνθου); see *Anth. Gr.* II, 103.